

# **ביטוי הזהות המקומית בנוף העירוני:**

**ראש העין הותיקה - כמקרה לדוגמא**

**חיבור על פרוייקט**

**לשם מילוי חלקי של הדרישות לקבלת התואר**

**מגיסטר למדעים בארכיטקטורה**

**איתי הורביץ**

**הוגש לסנט הטכניון – מכון טכנולוגי לישראל**

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## תקציר

פרוייקט-תזה זה מציע דרך לטיפול באנונימיות ובחזרתיות המאפיינים את מרבית הנוף העירוני המודרני. הפתרון המוצע בעבודה זו הוא עיצוב סביבתי הנשען על מאפיינים מקומיים והיסטוריים הקשורים לאנשים ולקהילה. העבודה מבוססת על מתן ייצוג וביטוי בנוף העירוני להיבטים של אופי המקום, זיכרונות עבר, קהילה וזהות, ובדגש על אספקטים יום-יומיים הנוגעים ל"רוב הדומם", או לחילופין לקבוצות שוליות או לתת-תרבויות. איפיונים אלה מעטים מאוד בנוף העירוני בישראל, ונעדרים גם מפרקטיקות התכנון ועיצוב הסביבה המקובלות.

פרוייקט-התזה מגדיר את תחומו, מבסס רקע תיאורטי-ספרותי, סוקר תקדימים ודן בהם. פרוייקט-התזה מציע הצעות יישומיות לעיצוב סביבתי באתר ספציפי- חלק מראש העין הותיקה- תוך הסתייעות במהלך מחקר-הוראה ושיתוף סטודנטים. לבסוף יש הערכה ביקורתית של ההצעות העיצוביות (כולל הצגתן לקהילה לתגובות), הערכת פרוייקט התזה כולו והצעות להמשך מחקר ופעילות.

פעולה זו היא דרך לשיפור מצב הערים ולמעורבות מקצועית-חברתית. פרוייקט-התזה שואב השראה מתקדימים שנמצאו בעולם. ברוח תקדימים אלה, מוצע כי פרוייקטים קטנים יחסית של עיצוב סביבתי יכולים להביע מאפיינים מקומיים. לשם הדגמה, מדובר על יצירת ריהוט רחוב ייחודי, דוגמאות ריצוף, שילוט, אמנות ציבורית וכדומה. יש בכך תרומה לסביבה ייחודית ומעניינת, להזדהות וחיבור התושבים למקום, להעצמה אישית וקהילתית, ולאסתטיקה של העיר.

מהלכים אלו נובעים מתפיסה של רב-תרבותיות כערך רצוי וכדרך למתן ביטוי למגוון קהילות וסיפורים. חוויות התושבים ורגשותיהם הם הבסיס לסיפור המקומי. התפיסה שונה לחלוטין מזו המודרניסטית, אשר יצרה אי-זהות, התעלמה מרגשות ומייחוד מקומי. להבלעה והרדמה סביבתית זו של זהות וזיכרון יש השפעות חברתיות מהותיות ושליליות.

גישת פרוייקט-התזה קוראת לעיסוק בחיי היום-יום בכמה דרכים: מאפייני חיי היום-יום הם הבסיס לסיפור המקומי, והם גם המקום לפעול- אמצעים מינוריים הנוכחים בסביבת היום-יום, בניגוד לאנדרטאות מבודדות. זהו נסיון לחלן את הזיכרון ולגונון מעבר להנצחה הלאומית- קאנונית, אשר היא כמעט היחידה המובעת במרחב הישראלי (בנוסף לייצוג המסחרי-פרסומי הגובר).

זוהי דרך מרתקת ואמצעי שחשוב שיעמוד לרשות העוסקים בעיצוב הסביבה וערים לסוגיות של קהילה וחברה כאמצעי לחיזוק תחושת המקום ("Sense of place"), למתן פתחון פה לקולות וזכרונות מקומיים, להעצמה קהילתית ולפיתוח סביבתי מקורי.

### רשימת קיצורים

רח' = רחוב  
תב"ע = תכנית בינוי עיר

אדר' = אדריכל  
מ"ר = מטר מרובע  
עמ' = עמוד

**Expressing Local Identity in the Cityscape:  
Older Part of Rosh Ha'ayin- a Case Study**

**Project-Thesis**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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**Itai Horwitz**

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*"A deep human need exists for associations with significant places. If we choose to ignore that need, and to allow the forces of placelessness to continue unchallenged, then the future can only hold an environment in which places simply do not matter.*

*If, on the other hand, we choose to respond to that need and to transcend the placelessness, then the potential exists for the development of an environment in which places are for man, reflecting and enhancing the variety of human experience.*

*Which of these two possibilities is most probable, or whether there are other possibilities, is far from certain. But one thing is clear- whether the world we live in has a placeless geography or a geography of significant places, the responsibility for it is ours alone."*

*Edward Relph (1976, p. 147)*

*"Identity is closely linked to memory, both personal and collective. Urban landscapes are storehouses for these social memories. Decades of "urban renewal" and "redevelopment" of a savage kind have battered these important memories.*

*Yet even totally bulldozed places can be marked to restore some shared public meaning. In ordinary neighborhoods it is possible to enhance social meaning in public places with modest expenditure, sensitive to all citizens and their diverse heritage."*

*Dolores Hayden (1995, p. 9)*

## **Abstract**

### **Forward**

This project-thesis explores issues of identity and local memories in the older part of the town of Rosh Ha'ayin. The project-thesis offers ways to create a sense of place and enhance a place identity closely linked to local customs and tradition. The neighborhood scene lacks aspects of local identity and culture, as do most contemporary urban settings. The project aims to reveal and surface local and particular spatial habits, social and cultural characteristics and symbols. Various design schemes are suggested to incorporate these elements into the contemporary cityscape. These designs are modest in scope, not requiring major changes.

These issues are significant to personal and community environmental wholesomeness and place attachment. Such improvements can be an effective tool for empowerment, community building and the quality of the urban scene.

While being also an academic inquiry into these forgotten issues, the project-thesis develops methods for presenting and promoting different, often subjugated cultures in the urban realm. The project-thesis also aims to provide tools for other such projects and explorations in other localities and communities, by providing a theoretical

background, surveying methods, means and precedents in general, and by examples of implementation in an Israeli context in Rosh Ha'ayin.

### **Background**

Environments of alienation and anonymity are the typical produce of the planning and building practices in the state of Israel. This is an outcome of deliberate ignoring and suppressing of issues of identity and representation in the first decades of the country's existence (Kallus & Law-Yone 2003). Modernistic concepts of planning, which prevailed throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (and in Israel), are now subject to criticism for lack of ethnic and gender diversity among the planners, for ignoring aspects of community and identity (Yiftachel 2001, Sandercock 1998), for creating neutral and characterless cities (Sennett 1990), and for a functional and not human-oriented attitude towards public spaces (Hood & Erickson 2001). Today's planning practices in Israel are criticized for a "unifying", rather than "diversifying" approach, based on "professional knowledge", rather than "local knowledge" of the specific community (Fenster 2001).

This downplaying of memory and identity has fundamental social consequences. A basic attribute of identity is its presentation, both within a group (as a declaration of belonging) and outwards, towards "others". Environmental cues are an important factor in representing identity (Rapoport 1981). Representations of cultural markings in the living environment have strong implications on the making of social identities (Zukin 1996) or on their disappearance. The act of remembering enacts a confrontation - or suppression - of painful issues (Gandhi 1998). Personal sense of security and wholesomeness are served by knowledge and encountering the past (Lowenthal 1985).

### **Changing attitudes**

A substantial change in social-urban studies, mainly since the 1980's, calls for a broader view of the complex social-urban fabric (Hayden 1995, Crawford 1999). Layperson's, local perceptions have been recognized, as well as the use of varied and less analytical tools (Lynch 1985). The planner (or Scholar) can be thought of as part in a multifaceted "dialogical space", including other professional disciplines and various community elements. Such interaction can also be a tool for community and personal empowerment (Schneekloth & Shibley 1995). A broader understanding of the relations of man, community and place is provided, for example, in the emerging field of cultural

landscape studies. Everyday, vernacular environments are considered worthy and important to research, as are marginalized or subjugated social groups. Everyday life and everyday surroundings become a target for scholarly work as well as action (Hayden 1995, Gardiner 2000). Multicultural approaches prevail and allow for minorities and subjugated groups to voice their presence and their culture in the public sphere.

### **Call for action**

Along with other local and communal identity expressions (such as festivals, codes of dressing, slang, museums, etc.), the cityscape can – and should- convey a local identity. Many times it is also the carrier or conveyer of memories which compose parts of that identity (or identities). Signs of these identities need not be monumental or exceptional. This approach bids for small, abundant and subliminal gestures, embedded in the local environment and everyday encounters. Their effect is not less than that of monumental expressions (Lynch 1972). These signs and hints enliven the stories and ways of appropriation which, according to de Certeau, breath life into the stones and streets (de Certeau 1988). The often overlooked and neglected (but very dear) backyards of our consciousness and of our neighborhoods are the places in which to unravel these forgotten treats (Hough 1995, Kaliski 1999).

It takes a complex, inter-disciplinary, community based and free spirited action to uncover, facilitate and give new meaning to the simple, local, human “place-geist” (Hayden 1995).

Inspiration and methods can be learned from precedents done, mainly in the United States, such as:

- Projects by the “Power of Place” in Los Angeles (The Bidy Mason Homestead, Little Tokyo).
- Work by the New York based artist group “REPOhistory”.
- “Rosie the Riveter Historical Park” in Richmond, California.
- Public art projects by Cambridge Art Council, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The project-thesis reviews a substantial body of such examples.

### **Description of project-thesis's structure**

The project-thesis first establishes a wide conceptual-theoretical framework for the communal-environmental approach described above. These are the specific subjects: place, place-identity, image, representation, memory, culture, public art, everyday life.

Dozens of precedents were found and analyzed. The precedents are briefly described, and methods and products listed.

The neighborhood in Rosh Ha'ayin is described, with an emphasis on social and cultural aspects. The present community is the focal point, but other historical and social attributes are also regarded. The development of the town and physical aspects are studied- building types, public spaces, ornamentation, etc. Firsthand, subjective impressions were sought by frequent visits and using tools of observation, casual conversation, in-depth interviews, etc.

These are the foundations for the design stage, in which took part students participating in a Technion course. The course was especially designed for this purpose. The students were given the relevant background and acquainted with the project site. Then each of them developed a design suggestion for the neighborhood. Additional designs were developed by the researcher. All are displayed in the research.

Involving the community is a major aspect of such projects, as suggested by the precedents. The designs were therefore presented to the community at an open public event in Rosh Ha'ayin. This event was also a forum for feedback and criticism both for the general idea and for the particular designs.

The final chapter sums up the design projects, including the response in Rosh Ha'ayin, and the entire research project.

### **Contribution**

This project-thesis is a pioneering exploration into the potential and promise of local identities' expression in the Israeli cityscape. The precedents and the design proposals for Rosh Ha'ayin show numerous ways in which this tool can be used. I believe this can be a real contribution to methods of urban design, emphasizing a local, cultural and social inclination. Perhaps the main point is that design of the environment is not an end by itself; Nor should its main purpose be maximizing profit or serving hegemonic practices. The main end is to serve in creating an environment people are comfortable in and identify with. That requires a certain approach to design and development. This project-thesis offers one possible way to act.