

An Educational Approach to Preservation of Community Assets (PCA)

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This paper looks at the shift in historic preservation from monuments and masterpieces to commonplace man-made surroundings and landscape preservation (e.g. Jokilehto 1999, 295-318; Stipe 2003, 385-450). This change of focus was part of the historical metamorphosis of modern-age consciousness that legitimized a multiplicity of historical perspectives, objectives, and themes (Samuel 1975) and included a movement away from reliance on the supernatural and toward the secular (Bentley 1999; Breisach 1994; Collingwood 1946). Moreover, cultural heritage, and especially place and space, were recognized as central constituents of the collective memory of a living culture (Nora 1996; Barthel 1996). This heritage gains legitimacy as the cultural past of a community and becomes a major focus for further exploration of lives of ordinary people.

This paper addresses the everyday life of communities possessing a cultural heritage but seemingly lacking appropriate material assets. Such material artifacts or physical settings could anchor the community's heritage by their very preservation or contain and symbolize the cultural inheritance. The apparent lack of tangible assets for cultural preservation characterizes an extensive part of the growing urban population, namely communities living in newly created surroundings of the world's growing metropolises. Frequently, these are marginalized communities of immigrants or refugees who have moved from poor countries to richer ones, from the rural to the urban (Castles 1993; Bauman 1998), from zones of armed conflict, from religious, racial or political crises, oppression, or persecution to allegedly more favorable

surroundings (Loescher 1993; Zolberg and Benda 2001). The very word "immigrant," however, has a pejorative meaning, "outsider" (Berger 1975), and communities of immigrants and refugees are generally undervalued if not actually rejected as inferior by host communities.¹

The situation has changed in many societies, especially in Western countries, and immigrants and refugees are aided by a myriad of benevolent bodies, organizations, and institutions, as well as governmental policies. However, where social, legal, and economic needs are met, cultural problems might persist. Amongst them, "melting-pot" policies have had a special significance. This utopian concept, mostly associated with the U.S. but implemented in many nation states, sought blending of immigrants from different nationalities, ethnic groups, religions, and cultures into one, new, secular and "improved" nation. It aimed at constructing a unified identity in the nation state (Glazer 1963; Smith 1986; Brubaker 1992) and implied cultural assimilation and acculturation towards national conformity. The melting-pot concept has been challenged for more than a hundred years now,² especially after the American Civil Rights movement, the enactment of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989. As a consequence, numerous groups that had resisted the melting pot are continuously emerging (Shafir 1998; Kymlicka 1995). In the U.S., the melting pot analogy has been rejected in favor of the "salad bowl," i.e. every distinctive cultural group is considered to contribute in forming the whole, therefore its original characteristics have to be maintained. (Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Adams and Strother-Adams 2001). Nevertheless, the phenomenon of communities struggling for their cultural

identity is due to the rise of worldwide economic and cultural orders, which transgress former borders and definitions (Smith 1998; Karlsson 2000; Brow 1996). The massive urbanization of the twenty-first century (Smith 2003) can be expected to further enhance struggles for cultural identity. A different approach is elaborated by Dolores Hayden's (1995) *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, which celebrates the historic landscape of the city and its ethnic diversity as a source of self-identity, (re)construction, and socio-political empowerment. Following Hayden's (1995) concepts, this paper suggests that the identity crisis might be met at a local level by involving communities in making urban policy, through education and creativity, and by upholding multiculturalism as a "normal human experience" (Goodenough 1976; Moll et. al. 1992; Rosaldo, 1994).

The paper presents a knowledge-and-art-based intervention in built surroundings, leaning on practices of preservation and directed at the enhancement of local community identity where material-architectural assets are lacking. Such preservation practices have the potential of anchoring the community's intangible inheritance. The proposed Preservation of Community Assets (PCA) is an educational, public-collaborative approach. It is offered both as a tool for community empowerment and as part of architectural curriculums, as well as programs in planning, public history, and public archaeology. PCA combines fieldwork with the community (research, identification, documentation, and recording) with architectural, urban or environmental design, as well as other design practices scaled to a community's everyday physical surroundings.

The development of PCA from an idea drawing on a variety of precedents to an applicable practice and educational method was accomplished using a case study: working with a real community and developing an architectural design course that focused on this community. This paper delineates PCA's conceptual model, its local expression via the case study, and the educational-pedagogical program.

This case study should be seen as just one possible interpretation of the collaboration between a community and a group of designers-scholars. Similar results might also be accomplished through other

forms of public art. PCA focuses on the past history of the community as interpreted by the community itself in its present location, and not, for example, on outlived folklore or commemorations of the old homeland, or other externally imposed narratives. PCA strives to fill a gap that other approaches do not address.

PRESERVATION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS (PCA) IN THE FIELD OF HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

PCA sets out to detect apparently "valueless" artifacts and social and cultural traits, save them from oblivion, and turn them into anchors for constituent collective memory. PCA is close to the American approach to preserving local folklore, wherein an artifact is evaluated as an ideological receptacle for meaning and identity.³

In the great debate over preservation intervention—freezing artifact condition as found or restoring it to the original state (Jokilehto 1999, 174-213)—PCA does not lean towards restoration of any past situation. The local community adds the dimension of storytelling explicitly in the form of present interpretation. PCA is conceived as part of the flow of time, meaning, values, life itself. Therefore, the act of preservation is intended to last no longer than its relevance to the current community. While preservation and conservation usually aim at an arrest in the Heraclitic⁴ flow, PCA regards such arrest as temporal itself: tomorrow's narrative will be different from the one told yesterday, for no reason other than the replacement of the narrator.⁵

PCA is not concerned with world heritage assets or with national or regional heritage but with local and specific heritage. Its objective is the non-canonical, what is excluded from official narrative. Therefore, PCA emphasizes the contextual, wherein different aspects of social and cultural life can be viewed as assets. These are local features detected and centrally placed by the PCA process, rather than already acknowledged forms of ethnic background or folklore cherished elsewhere.⁶ Frequently intangible, such assets might be deemed appropriate for PCA for several reasons: they facilitate

personal and social identities; create identifiable and seemingly stable anchors in times of change and turmoil; service community activity and involvement; help sustain diversity and enrich society as a whole, and can be the basis for unique social, cultural, and economic projects.

As for the authenticity of preservation, i.e. the use of contemporary materials and technologies as opposed to rigorous adherence to the relevant past, PCA is less extreme, due to its focus on impermanence, the usually low architectural/artistic value of the artifact, and the highly probable need for a new physical framework to highlight it. In a broad sense, PCA can convey community spirit and heritage even where there is no existing physical base for preservation. Community assets, deriving from local social and cultural sources, can be preserved and promoted in new elements in the built environment, e.g. new development and construction.⁷

Finally, PCA requires investment and has economic potential, however modest. It may be part of city-center renewal, tourist attractions, or neighborhood rehabilitation projects. It can help communities develop financial institutions (e.g. Policy Link, Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project⁸), which support a wide range of immigrant and low-income programs. This support instills pride and the recognition of previously unrecognized and undervalued local assets. As such, PCA can be comparable to the American National Trust for Historic Preservation - Small Towns Program and could benefit from initiatives like "Your Town: Designing Its Future."⁹ PCA projects could enhance the development of culture and heritage tourism (Hoffman, Kwas, and Silverman 2002); their greatest contributions, however, are likely to be social and educational.

PCA: AN EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

Many documents of the last decades have emphasized the affinity among preservation, education, and community. For example, the 1975 Declaration of Amsterdam promoted "Educational

programs for all ages,"¹⁰ and the American National Council for Preservation Education asserted that "the coordination of education programs is crucial to the success of historic preservation in every town, city, and state across the country."¹¹

Community education as one of the major areas of preservation education is partially congruent with education of the public at large, but while the latter is consumption oriented (e.g. U.S./ICOMOS 2008), the former is grassroots oriented, aiming at empowering and assisting people in revitalizing their own communities (e.g. National Trust for Historic Preservation). Community education is a central component of many U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) programs, including Preservation Leadership Training, Historic Sites and House Museums, Historic Real Estate Program, etc..¹² To a large extent, PCA corresponds in aim and character to NTHP community education. Seeking to protect the authentic sense of place and the history of a community, it can be a tool for social and economic stabilization and development. PCA differs from NTHP mainly in its emphasis on intangible cultural heritage and in incorporating new designs. Thus, PCA can be considered as historic preservation professional education on the one hand and as historic preservation community education on the other. In addition, it connects preservation and community-based art.¹³ Its unique approach and practice is in its prerequisite combination of historic preservation professional and community education,¹⁴ architectural (or urban, or environmental) design, and community-based art.¹⁵

THE FIRST FIVE PHASES OF A PCA PROJECT

The first five parts of any PCA project consist of: community and place; introducing PCA; listening and observing; stones, jewels and crowns; and bazaar. A PCA project could then proceed to implementation, but that phase is beyond the scope of this paper. For the sake of brevity, the conceptual backdrop, its local expression (the case study of the Rambam neighborhood in Rosh-Ha'ayn, Israel), and the educational-pedagogical component will be combined.



Fig. 1. Map of Israel showing location of Rosh-Ha'ayn.

Community and Place

People are always in some “place,” and places, even casual ordinary surroundings, are also “in people”; they are part of the construction (and reconstructions) of the self, of personal identity.¹⁶ Social identity is also linked to place and interacts with it dynamically (Dixon and Durrheim 2006). Shaping the cityscape is a tool in this interaction. Commonplace actions could be seen as acts of “resistance” (Rapoport 1981; Nasse 2003; Salazar 1998), that is assertions of personal identity, which PCA-oriented projects can funnel into a positive community-building enterprise¹⁷ by acknowledging and legitimizing the community’s social identity. Places also bear memories, another important factor in the discourse of identity (Neill 2004; Downing 2001; Lowenthal 1999). Thus, place design can have a neutralizing, anesthetizing, or a nourishing effect, supporting links to the past and to social and cultural strata (Barton 2001). PCA is offered in conjunction with other new attitudes, which view the urban scene as a canvas for community expression, community empowerment, and social justice (Hayden 1995). It is also an attempt to rectify homogenous modernistic planning, which disregarded unique social and cultural factors, resulting in some severe identity crises and negative social outcomes (e.g., Sandercock 1998; Yiftachel 2001).

The Rambam neighborhood in the Israeli new-town¹⁸ of Rosh-Ha'ayn, a first and second-generation immigrant community, serves as a case study. The population is predominantly Jews of Yemenite origin, who immigrated to Israel in the early 1950s and gradually formed their own unique community (Shimshoni 1982). Until recently, the community was poor and had a low self image. Nevertheless, it has been acclaimed for its special traditions and craftsmanship (Seri and Ben-David 1991; Muchavsky-Schnapper 2000). Currently, the originally religious community is becoming more secular, and its traditional assets are being threatened by modernization and assimilation to global culture (Figs. 1, 2).

Rosh-Ha'ayn was founded in 1949 as a “maabara,” a provisional tent camp for immigrants. It was constructed around buildings left from a British Air Force base, itself built on grazing land, and between orchards of nearby

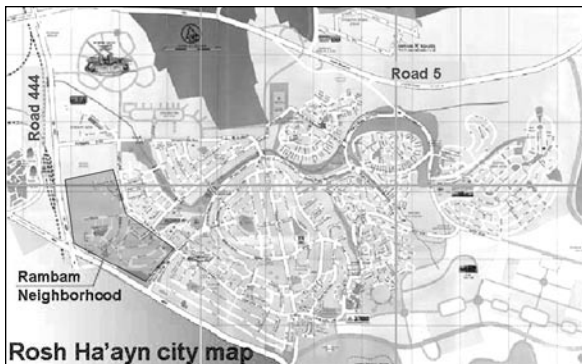


Fig. 2. Rosh-Ha'ayn city map showing location of the Rambam neighborhood.



Fig. 3. Immigrants in Rosh-Ha'ayn on a rainy day, 1949 (Israel National Photo Collection, <http://www.gpo.gov.il>).



Fig. 4. Old house in front of a new housing project in Rosh-Ha'ayn (National Photo Collection, <http://www.gpo.gov.il>; photograph by Itai Horwitz).

Fig. 5. Typical street scene in the Rambam neighborhood, Rosh-Ha'ayn (Photograph by Itai Horwitz).



Arab villages, some of which had been deserted and destroyed since 1948. Tents were later exchanged for tiny family units 16 to 25 square meters. Gradually, residents of the uniform housing project began to diversify its appearance, until the neighborhood acquired a random character based on the native fabric.

Many houses display ethnic artifacts and numerous pictures of family members. The gardens are unique, based on tradition and historic-religious references. Distinct neighborhood features include a network of small, family-sized synagogues and several British military structures, outstanding in their difference.

An intensive urban-renewal project in the center of Rambam during the early 2000s, changed the local scene significantly, introducing new inhabitants and lifestyles. Still, close interpersonal relationships are a major feature of the neighborhood, as is a "genuine 'Rosh-Ha'ayn Yemenite' identity, integrating place and ethnicity... with a major factor of unique culture" (Shimshoni 1982, 193). The relevance of the Yemenite Jews and their local heritage is a continuous presence in peoples' lives. The PCA project process (local research,

dialog, design proposals) was a stimulant in this dialog. Given the so-far unorganized and haphazard attempts at dealing with community heritage on the one hand,¹⁹ and the conventional tendency towards folklore and pre-immigration times on the other, the tools of PCA can be very useful to the Rosh-Ha'ayn community in general and specifically to Rambam.

A preliminary survey was conducted before delving deeper into any original research, interviews, documentation, or educational objectives. The survey uncovered an unfulfilled desire for community expression and the potential for community collaboration with the PCA team. The combination of PCA as a community tool and as an educational program (an academic exercise) requires a genuine connection to real life at the grassroots level. The team included one local agent to act as guide, respondent, and mediator for the project, and a group of students who voluntarily (and preferably enthusiastically) chose to delve into PCA. Consequently, a PCA project, similar to other preservation projects, has to be prepared well (Figs. 3, 4, 5).

Introducing PCA

PCA must be introduced through preservation, community education, architectural design, and community-based art. As a social generator, PCA helps communities bearing the pressures for change, modernization, and globalization; it facilitates the display and utilization of diversity in multicultural communities; aids communities or places in strengthening identity and fostering local pride; and assists in creating economic development true to place and people.

The introductory phase of PCA to prospective participants (students, activists, etc.) is a considerably extended version of the first section of this paper, reinforced by a discussion of small-scale historic preservation projects of local significance (American NTHP, Australian Heritage Places Inventory²⁰). Two subjects require further elaboration: “community based art” (McGilvary 2007; Goldbard 2006; Kwon 2004), with a special emphasis on similar projects worldwide,²¹ and “design as research,” transforming and renewing urban artifacts and conditions through hybrid (design and research) intervention.

For PCA to succeed, collaboration with the community is essential. The intimate knowledge required (Armstrong 1994, 479-486) involves immersion in community and location features and drawing on insiders’ knowledge and points of view (Hood 1997; Hester 1996). Other possible research tools include public workshops, either as festive community activity²² or academic collaborations;²³ youth groups in schools or elsewhere;²⁴ an internet site open to personal entries about places and stories;²⁵ and joint tours or surveys.²⁶

In the Rosh-Ha’ayn project, PCA was introduced through lectures, followed by discussions aimed at creating a predisposition²⁷ towards the next phases. The main attributes of this predisposition are: immediate intimacy and regular presence as key to design elements; preference for “everyday-life” (Harris and Berke 1997); and design that is minor in nature, innovative, and plays on many levels and senses. The predisposition appropriate for

PCA sanctifies neither present nor past. Either may be reinterpreted in changing contexts. Place-time changes are accepted; contextual metamorphosis, transformations, and interpretations relating to current assets are preferred.

Listening and Observing

The fieldwork of a PCA project starts with observing and listening without prejudice. Except for the predisposition mentioned above, nothing is preconceived.

In the Rosh-Ha’ayn project, each student was assigned to a randomly chosen spot. An encounter with a British citizen who had been stationed in Rosh-Ha’ayn as a young soldier more than sixty years earlier produced a valuable contribution.²⁸ Similar information was provided through correspondence with a descendent of Arab refugees from a nearby village.²⁹ Other discoveries in Rosh-Ha’ayn were based on tours and strolls in the neighborhood, allowing time for random talks with locals; visits to a local ethnic museum and archive;³⁰ reading manuscripts of interviews with local residents;³¹ literature research, including newspapers and the internet;³² and discussing local stories (Pinhas 1994, 2004). The commentaries of Yiska Raveh, a local activist, provided an immediate contribution, both in the field and in class. Conversations about all findings were encouraged as a tool for probing and defining feelings and impressions.

Local institutions and merchants were also invaluable sources: the municipality, the library, a local photographer, a music collector, an ethnic tailor, and other craftsmen. Anthologies of comic sketches written by a local journalist over the years (Pinhas 1994, 2004) provided amusement and insight into community issues.³³

Often, interesting findings appeared by chance. A native asking, “What are you looking at?” sometimes led to an invitation to tea and conversation. Casual meetings often led to more formal, indepth interviews. An outsider’s interest was sometimes not understood: “There’s nothing interesting here” was a common phrase. But then the skeptics would go on at length about this “non-interesting” place, often leading to a reconsideration and appreciation of the surroundings.

The PCA approach can highlight the relevance and potential of community assets that have been overlooked or taken for granted.

Stones, Jewels, and Crowns

Listening and observing resulted in identifying some “rough stones” of tangible and intangible community assets for preservation. In the design process, the “stones” were polished into “jewels”—although the minor, homely appearance of the assets is their essence, they had to be placed in the center of architectural and urban-design works, both for emphasis and as a rhetorical-device. Considered as an ensemble, these “jewels” form a “crown” befitting a community’s heritage and place. The following examples present possible relationships between the preserved-designed features and the everyday life of the community. They are based on the work of the class that implemented PCA in Rosh Ha’ayn.

“Coming-Home”
Rotem Apfel

A simple green park, accessible by a dead-end street, borders the neighborhood. Residents’ stories and older maps revealed that for many years this was the main entrance to town. For many, the area still means “coming-home,” even years after the road has been closed. Its main physical features were a metal gate and truss, rows of big eucalyptus trees, and small, sand-colored British-army buildings.

A proposed gap in the current earth rampart will mark the entrance once again. The park layout reproduces the road, and objects for sitting and climbing recreate the feeling of the buildings in a semi-archeological manner.

The park area is expected to form more of a background for everyday life than an object of focused appreciation, as Benjamin (1936, 240) wrote: “Architecture has always represented the prototype of a work of art, the reception of which is consummated by



Fig. 6. The old entrance to Rosh-Ha’ayn, 1950 (Photograph courtesy Rosh-Ha’ayn Municipality).



Fig. 7. The current entrance to Rosh-Ha’ayn (Photograph by Itai Horwitz).

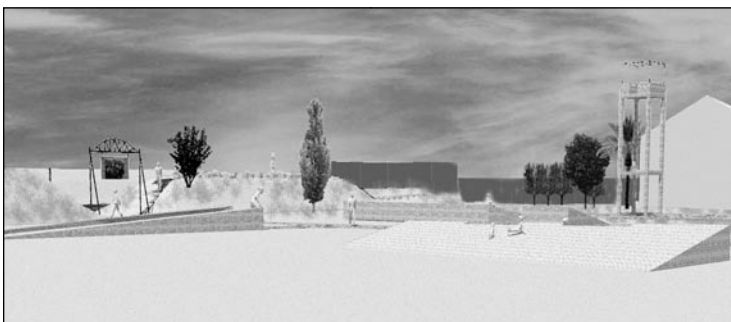


Fig. 8. Proposed entrance to Rosh-Ha’ayn (Student-designer Rotem Apfel).

a collectivity in a state of distraction.” That a community is unaware of its architecture is not a deficiency; it remains meaningful and integral to everyday life (Figs. 6, 7, 8).

“Story and Spectator”

Sara Grib

A large, rundown, abandoned British army brick building stands out in a central location in town. Everybody knows it as “the cinema,” its actual function during the 1960s and 1970s, when it was a major meeting place and an important cultural agent for new immigrants.

Since “the show must go on,” the designer reversed the roles: the community/neighborhood became “the cinema.” Movie theater chairs are mounted in several sites for easy viewing of the surrounding yards, displaying layers of buildings, gardens, and places to listen to family stories. One such story, told at length by Shoshana, while serving the visitor-researcher with soup, reflects an intimate knowledge of her history and the history of her jumbled yard.

In this case, common objects (theater chairs) are reframed as public art. These *objects-trouvés*, transformed by their relocation, serve to draw attention to local heritage, otherwise concealed from the public’s eyes and ears.

This proposal suggests a relationship between artifact and observer (Figs. 9, 10).



Fig. 9. Views of Shoshana’s yard, Rosh-Ha’ayn (Photographs by Sara Grib).

“Place-walking”

Itai Horwitz

Yemenite artisans, now a disappearing breed, created beautiful patterns used in crafts such as jewelry and embroidery, which impart a unique source of pride. These arts can inspire graphic sidewalk arrangements, where people can encounter their legacy every day. Patterns can be made of cleverly arranged, ordinary, “off the shelf” tiles of different colors. It is suggested they be placed in those neighborhoods where jewelers live or used to live.

This proposal represents use of an asset through a medium completely different from the original (McGilvary 2007) (Fig. 11).

“What’s left”

Debora Ribke

A “no-man’s-land” has been created between the small, old houses and a new urban-renewal project. A special garden can bridge this gap and continue local gardening traditions. Some rustic, scattered sheds will evoke memories of the lively market stands that occupied the site; now, only a few tiny stores remain nearby. The sheds will be leased free-of-charge as studios for artists working in traditional crafts in exchange for running workshops with local youth groups.



Fig. 10. Proposed cinema seats (Student-designer Sara Grib).



Fig. 11. Proposed sidewalk jewel (Designed by Itai Horwitz).

A distinct feature of the older houses is a large front porch overlooking the street. Tables, chairs, and low fences encouraged outdoor life and dialog between residents and passersby, evoking a small town familiarity. On the opposite side, in front of the new highrise apartment buildings, the designer proposes a similar scheme of comfortable benches overlooking the sidewalk.

This last example is a variation on the first relationship between artifact and community, only this time it is not just a backdrop to everyday life but also a mediator intended to revive a certain attribute of lifestyle (Figs. 12, 13, 14).

Thus, PCA artifacts may be conceived as generators of one or more relationships to a community's past: backdrop, artistic focus, representation, or lifestyle mediator.

Bazaar

Although all phases of the project are based on recurring student and community interaction, the PCA must end with an event that involves the community as a whole. This is an opportunity for broad and open feedback, clarification of intentions and opportunities, and an evaluation of the significance of the projects. If the project has been successful, its presentation could

be the first step towards actual implementation.

In Rosh-Ha'ayn, a special event called the Bazaar was held at the municipal library to present the projects to the public. Dozens attended, including council members and the mayor. During an earlier exhibition, many people connected with the assets being shown by telling about their own acquaintances, experiences, memories, etc. Old and young alike expressed their satisfaction with PCA proposals, and the response to their surroundings and to their cultural heritage was most encouraging. Many addressed the need for preservation of the British army buildings and their concern that the neighborhood could lose its character because of the urban-renewal project at its center. The mayor committed to realizing one of the design proposals, "Coming-Home" by Rotem Apfel.

Despite an opening lecture that reintroduced PCA to the community, the discussion showed that the approach had not been fully understood, especially by those who had not been in touch with the students previously. Most of the questions came from community members who found the works to have little commercial appeal. Others thought that there were more important assets than those chosen by the PCA.

The Bazaar had the difficult task of legitimizing PCA projects that had little potential to attract the tourists sought by the Rosh-Ha'ayn bureaucracy. It was



Fig. 12. Old stores in Rosh-Ha'ayn (Photograph by Deborah Ribke).



Fig. 13. Proposed community gardens with artist sheds (Student-designer Debora Ribke).

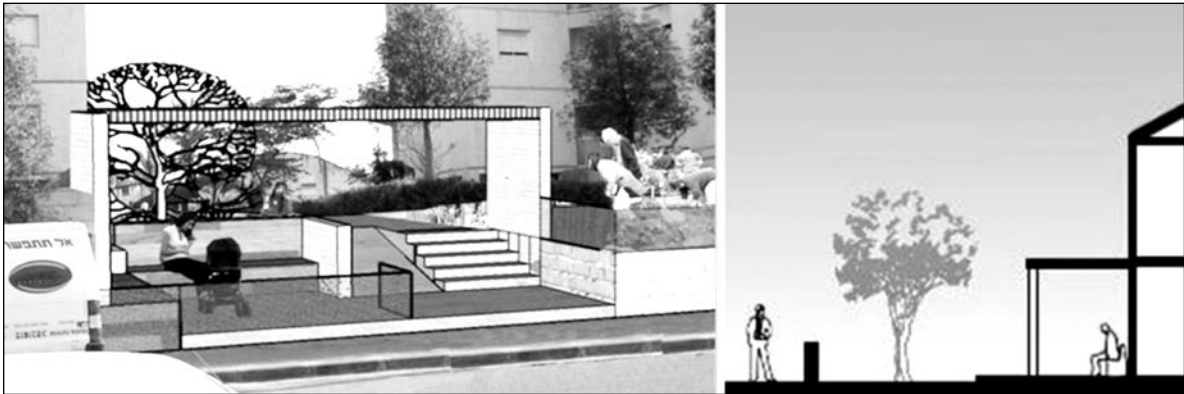


Fig. 14. Proposed bench overlooking the street (Student-designer Debora Ribke).

apparent that although they included repeated cycles of study, design, and feedback, the five PCA phases were merely a first step toward community consensus on the most appropriate projects.

The Bazaar phase also provided the opportunity for project participants to review the PCA process. Teachers noticed that students took readily to the idea of PCA. This was evident in exercises during the course, general atmosphere, response to assignments, design process, and especially the amount of time they chose to spend in Rosh-Ha'ayn and the local contacts they cultivated there. Feedback at the end of the course was reassuring, both in open discussion and in anonymously written responses. Some students remarked that the course was unique in its emphasis on the community, its research methods, and its social commitment. They saw it as a worthwhile experience and a useful tool for future designers.

A PCA project may be implemented to the benefit of any community with historic cultural heritage. In Israel, it opens up a new approach in dealing with immigrant (non-pioneer) communities. More important, PCA projects can enhance immigrant culture, which is much more limited and less apparent in place-oriented projects.³⁴ Other examples of treating physical-spatial aspects and life traits of ethnic groups are to be found.³⁵

PCA CONTRIBUTION

Describing the difference between architecture and preservation education, Tomlan (1994, 193) stated that "the architectural-educator is less likely to be willing to set out the problem with all of its real-world concerns,

whereas the preservation-educator cannot afford to begin without them. In the first case, the student is being trained to be a creator; in the second, to be a curator.” PCA requires the student to be both creator and curator.

Architecture/design and preservation should not be regarded as antagonistic, but as components requiring cooperation and integration. Currently, both focus on physical elements rather than social and cultural aspects. In balancing their intents, PCA can contribute to architects, preservation students, local activists, entrepreneurs, and public officials. To the architect and urban designer, it offers a culturally and socially sensitive design approach, expanding the meaning of preservation to include more than just material assets. PCA’s first steps require observation and a profound awareness of the community and its everyday surroundings as both a source of inspiration and as a fitting platform for design leading to a reevaluation of everyday habits and memories.

In Rosh-Ha’ayn, this process included a new appreciation of the community’s immigrant history. Between the grand narrative of the Zionist melting pot (Lisak 1999), and Jewish Yemenite folklore,³⁶ the twists and turns of everyday life, with its peculiarities, hardships, and joys, had been relegated to the sidelines. PCA brought these to the forefront.

Storytelling has already been acknowledged as part of cultural heritage preservation and as a cornerstone of neighborhood planning (Sandercock 2003). PCA is well in line with Leonie Sandercock’s assertion that “a better understanding of the work that stories do can make us better planners in at least three ways: by expanding our practical tools, by sharpening our critical judgment and by widening the circle of democratic discourse” (2003, 11).

Each person, family and community is in a constant process of defining and developing its “story.” PCA offers tools for listening to and expressing these stories within the context of design. Often these stories and assets have been as weakened, fragmented, and diminished as the communities they reflect. This is where PCA is at its best. Defining, rebuilding and presenting these “bits of stories” is a process for the

community, activists, and professionals of different disciplines. The story can then be treated, supported, and proudly displayed in a variety of fields: arts, scholarly research, education, and environmental design. The stories then become a foundation for social coherence and place-identity, as well as a cultural basis for the future (Glassie 1982).

Places may have memories other than those of the current or prevailing community. The mere fact that the designer-researcher must be open to different narratives of place and community implies consideration of narratives that might be called absent-present. Even if they do not seem to have current relevance, historic justice and preservation ethics suggest they be noted as well. The designer must be both participant and facilitator in an open social-physical multifaceted discourse that is totally site-specific, always eye-to-eye, with intimate contact among people, emotions, and place. Therefore, PCA centers on context, rather than on the value of artifacts or outside opinions.

PCA can make an important contribution to architecture, preservation projects, and educational programs. It reminds students that neither the built environment nor designed objects or preserved artifacts are ends in themselves. Rather, they are means of serving people and social goals, from providing shelter to defining cultural identity. There is a wide spectrum of objects and phenomena worthy of preservation—past and present, tangible and intangible, personal and communal, common and rare. Layer upon layer of social customs, cultural materials, and collective memory can provide a treasure trove of inspiration for design. Dolores Hayden (1995) wrote that “identity is closely linked to memory, both personal and collective. ... 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” (p. 9).

PCA is a community act focusing on immigrant neighborhoods striving to retain their identity. The process is as important as the result, fostering the education of both immigrants and the established local community. PCA provides a chance to draw individual

and collective memories, experiences, and heritage fragments together, using three-dimensional design as a matrix for people to better understand their own cultural heritage, identity, and each other.

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ENDNOTES

1. Immigration is not easy. There used to be a saying among German-speaking immigrants in the 19th century: "Die erste Generation hat dem Tod, die zweite dem Not, und erst die dritte - das Brot" – The first generation [of immigrants] has death [difficulty with the very survival], the second has the need [scarcity], and only the third generation has the bread [proper amenities for living]."
2. The "melting pot" approach has been challenged by the concept of cultural pluralism in the second decade of the 20th century by Horace Kallen (Whitfield 1999).
3. "...a central part of preservation's role. ...[is to help] people understand place and history in a way that promotes a critical engagement with historical agency and the politics of living in, using and constructing place." (Bluestone, 2003 <http://culturalpolicy.uchicago.edu/conf03/papers/Bluestone.doc>.)
4. Heraclitus the Ephesian (c. 535–475 B.C.) was a pre-Socratic philosopher. His best-known aphorism is "Panta rhei," ("Everything is in a state of flux").
5. The paper adopts a phenomenological stance, albeit in a very general way, implying that meaning and temporality are the basic constituents of the human world.
6. For example, the notion of "the back yard" as a guiding design theme for a boulevard in Macon, Georgia (see: Hood, Walter J. & Erickson, Mellisa (2001): "Strong Memories in the Yard." In: Barton, Craig E., (ed.): Sites of Memory: Perspectives on Architecture and Race. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 171-189. Or: revealing and preserving a small town's cherished everyday places, regarded as a "sacred structure" (See: Hester, Randolph T., "Economic Progress Within Community Preservation: The Case of Manteo, North Carolina, U.S.A." *Prostor* 4, 1 (1996): 7-26. http://www.arhitekt.hr/xsite/hr/znanost/nakladnistvo/Prostor/111/rhester-economic_progress.pdf).
7. Some examples: Local graphic elements and peoples' personal memorabilia embedded into the concrete work of a road overpass in Phoenix, Arizona, with community activities (http://phoenix.gov/ARTS/cp_28.html); incorporating local elements and community involvement in the design of multiuser streets (<http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/archive/casestudies/oxbridge/>).
8. NEDAP - <http://www.nedap.org/resources/links.html>
9. http://www.nationaltrust.org/your_town/index.html
10. www.icomos.org/docs/amsterdam.html
11. <http://www.uvm.edu/histpres/ncpe/>
12. <http://www.nationaltrust.org/community/>
13. Mat Schwartzman's definition, in Goldbard, 2006, 21 "any form or work of art that emerges from a community and consciously seeks to increase the social, economic, and political power of that community."
14. A course to 6 graduate and 4-5th year undergraduate students of architecture in the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, was the laboratory for PCA.
15. Public art and artists' initiatives have proven a major factor in PCA-oriented attempts, many with community involvement. The issue is beyond the scope of this paper. Some references for further reading: Kwon, Miwon. 2004. *One Place Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. Boston: MIT Press. Groundwork organization, U.K. (<http://www.artandregeneration.com/>); Community Arts Network (<http://www.communityarts.net/>); The aims of Cambridge Arts Council (http://www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/CAC/public_overview.html).
16. Place and placemaking are basically phenomenological insights, going back to Martin Heidegger's 1995 *Being and Time*. Heidegger has been very influential during the second half of the 20th century in a myriad of fields, including psychology, sociology, architecture, and planning, among others. For example: Norberg-Schulz 1979; Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff 1983; Manzo 2003.
17. For example: Weeksville Cottages (<http://www.weeksvillesociety.org/>); A university-led project in Tampa Bay, Florida. *Practicing Anthropology* 20 (1, Winter 1998): 1-30.
18. Israeli new towns or developmental towns are 34 towns established in 1952-1964 according to governmental policy (Aravot and Militanu 2000).
19. A Center for Yemenite Jewry Heritage is active, mainly in collecting books and artifacts and entertaining group visits; Some private initiatives also cater to ethnic tourism; A private

- initiative, still to be realized, to establish a local-oral-history-oriented archive; A municipal preservation initiative is still in its beginning; so far only a survey has been conducted. The initiative was pushed by private pressure and by Ministry of the Interior demands. Due to private property owners' influence, making of a preservation plan, let alone implementation, is slow.
20. <http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/tourism/index.html#historic>
21. Some examples:
- The Biddy Mason Homestead (Hayden 1995) http://www.publicartinla.com/Downtown/Broadway/Biddy_Mason/
 - Weeksville cottages (<http://www.weeksvillesociety.org/>)
 - Dubrow and Goodman 2003, 221-223.
 - Project Row Houses (<http://www.projectrowhouses.org/>)
 - http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/bruner/1997/row_houses/mainindex.html).
 - Entering Buttermilk Bottom (<http://www.repohistory.org/work.html>).
22. See: Case Study: Oxbridge Home Zone (<http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/archive/casestudies/oxbridge/description.php>).
23. UCLA involved in the Biddy Mason homestead project (see: Hayden 1995, 173).
24. Examples: Public art projects by Groundwork, UK:
- Peases West Railway Walk: <http://www.artandregeneration.com/examples/projects/peases-west-railway-walk.html>
 - Crossways Toilet Block: <http://www.artandregeneration.com/examples/projects/crossways.html>.
25. As done by Place-Matters organization, NY: <http://www.placematters.net/flash/home.htm/>
26. A community mapping its neighborhood and its feelings: Schneekloth and Shibley 1995.
27. In philosophy, physiology, and psychology, a disposition is a habit, a state of readiness, or a tendency to act in a specified way. The best known use of "disposition" as concept is in Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind*. Although for Ryle "disposition" has strong behaviorist affinities, which are remote from the position of this paper, his representative case "To be a 'cigarette-smoker' names a disposition" (Ryle 2000, 113) exemplifies how an acquired trait may become "a second nature." "Disposition" could refer to Merleau-Ponty's "knowledge in the hands" (Merleau-Ponty 1962).
28. Bill Foster and Itai Horwitz, private e-mail correspondence, 2004-2005.
29. Khaled Essale and Itai Horwitz, private e-mail correspondence, 2004-2005.
30. "Merkaz Moreshet Yahdut Teiman" (Heritage Center of Yemenite Jewry), Rosh Ha'ayn.
31. We prepared some interviews especially for this project:
- Naomi Arussi, interviewed by Itai Horwitz, Oct. 10, 2004, Rosh Ha'ayn.
 - Meir Pinhas, interviewed by Itai Horwitz, Sep. 28, 2004, Rosh Ha'ayn.
 - Yona Levy, interviewed by Itai Horwitz, Oct. 1, 2004, Rosh Ha'ayn.
 - Shoshana, interviewed by Sara Grib, May 2005.
 - Other manuscripts of interviews are available at "Merkaz Moreshet Yahdut Teiman," previously done as a community documentation project headed by Yiska Raveh.
32. Sources:
- Rosh Ha'ayn municipality website: <http://www.rosh-haayin.muni.il/default.asp>
 - Local online newspaper: <http://www.roshle.co.il/default.asp>
 - Society for fostering Yemenite Jews' tradition: <http://www.teman.org.il/>
 - Original Yemenite website: <http://www.temani.up.co.il/>
 - Torat Moshe website: <http://www.chayas.com/>.
33. Following are some of the findings in the Rambam neighborhood illustrating local assets, loosely moving from the less tangible (social and cultural) to the more tangible (physical, spatial).
- Some characteristics associated with Yemenite Jews: straightforward, warm, easygoing and informal, stubborn.
 - Social ties are close and informal, especially within the wide family clan (Chamula) and neighbors (Cohen 1959, 18).
 - Events like weddings are the concern of a very wide circle and are a Chamula production. In the past, weddings were held on the street, which was closed to traffic.
 - Religion is still the base of much social life, although less so with time (Shimshoni 1982, 202).
 - Artistic and cultural ways of expression are part of groups' "realms of memory," as Pierre Nora referred to them (Nora 1996): folk stories, music, holidays, historical narratives, dances, religion, etc. Indeed, "Yemenite singers" are a distinct and successful group in contemporary Israeli music – some of them from Rosh Ha'ayn.
 - In the field of applied arts Yemenite traditions are well known (Muchavsky-Schnapper 2000). In Yemen, Jews were mainly artisans: jewelers, tailors, embroiderers, basketweavers, shoemakers, etc. Excellent skills and uniquely beautiful designs were developed. Sadly, much of the expertise and unique craft was lost after immigration to Israel, and very few still know the arts, which are a great source of graphic inspiration, well recognized and emotionally relevant.
34. For example: annual festive events (Moroccans Mimuna, Yemenite festival in Rosh Ha'ayn and Eilat, etc.), museums and heritage centers (Babylonian [Iraqi] Jewry heritage center, Memorial Museum of Hungarian speaking Jewry, etc.).
35. For example: pioneer settlements ("Halutzim": Zichron-Yaakov, Mazkeret Batya, Kinneret, Ein Shemer, etc.), various national narratives (Tel Hai, Neot Kedumim biblical village, military museums, Yad Vashem, etc.).
36. Rosh Ha'ayn residents of Yemenite origin are well aware of the value of their folklore and traditional ceremonies. Local economic initiatives such as Chena Ceremonies are in demand.

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