

## Space forged through the narratives of (collective) memory: The built environment

*Editorial*

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Memory, a fascinating cognitive faculty, has been a subject of exploration in scholarly, scientific, and poetic realms for centuries. The interplay among reality, memory, and perception forms a foundation for philosophical inquiry and scientific revelations. In the contemporary era of rapid urbanization, the relevance of memory in the built environment cannot be overlooked.

Spaces we inhabit are not passive backdrops but active contributors to the narratives of our lives. Thoughtful environmental design enhances well-being, fosters a sense of belonging, and contributes to the richness of our memories. Shaping our world necessitates an awareness of its enduring impact on human memory. With its extraordinary flexibility capacity, the human brain responds to environmental stimuli beyond the visual and spatial realms.

Architects and designers, once primarily concerned with aesthetics and functionality, now play pivotal roles in the nuanced interplay between the mind and the built environment. This relationship unlocks the potential to create environments that resonate with the past, enrich the present, and inspire the future.

Every architectural element becomes a visual repository of our experiences as we navigate the built landscape. The interplay of light and shadow, the vibration of the city, and the harmony of natural elements are engraved in our memories. Structures we create are not merely physical entities but tools for preserving and enhancing memory. The spaces we inhabit become integral components of the narrative of our lives, influencing the rhythm of our memories and leaving an indelible mark on our collective consciousness.

Consider the dynamic cityscape where architectural diversity and spatial planning converge. Urban design shapes how we navigate and experience our environment. Crowded streets, squares, and architectural wonders become chapters in a city's collective memory. The design of public spaces influences the rhythm of our daily lives, encouraging a sense of community or solitude, connection or isolation.

Architects, urban planners, and designers bear significant responsibility as custodians of collective memory. Their decisions reverberate over time, leaving an indelible mark on communities' stories about themselves. Today's design choices reflect on the future and shape the narratives of future generations. In this context, architecture is not just about erecting buildings; it involves crafting the fabric of our collective memory.

Choices in architectural design and spatial planning transcend aesthetics and functionality, enhancing a sense of place, identity, and continuity. By weaving the threads of memory into our cities' plans, we transform the built environment into a living archive—a testament to the stories, experiences, and aspirations of the communities that call these places home.

Architecture, often lauded for its aesthetic appeal, transcends mere visual appreciation. It becomes a mediator of memory, a storyteller etching narratives into the fabric of our environment. Historic landmarks, contemporary structures, and neighbourhood architecture all find a place in our collective memory. The built environment is an evocative tool, providing visual cues that trigger memories and emotional responses to specific places.

Spatial planning and urban design create complexity and shape our mental maps and spatial memory. A well-designed urban landscape fosters a sense of community and belonging, creating environments where memories are not only formed but are woven into the city's infrastructure.

Design assumes a highly personal dimension in the intimate spaces we call home. The layout of rooms, the interplay of light, and the choice of materials contribute to the atmosphere,

influencing our daily experiences and the memories we associate with them. Architects, urban planners, and designers become guardians of collective memory, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of memory.

In an age of rapid urbanization and architectural innovation, those who shape our built environment bear immense responsibility. They are not only creators of spaces but also keepers of a community's collective memory. Their decisions ripple over time, influencing future generations' stories about the places we call home.

Ultimately, the convergence of memory and the built environment creates a dynamic interaction that shapes the essence of our lives. As we enter an era of rapid urbanization and architectural

innovation, let us embrace the potential to create environments that inspire, connect, and endure in the collective memory of future generations. Memory will always exist in our cities and our places.

This issue coincides with the culmination of the 250th Anniversary of our university. Simultaneously, November is a month devoted to remembering our roots. Hence, it is with great pride and honour that I write this editorial and dedicate it to Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk whose memory accompanies me at all times and in every place.

Enjoy our November 2023 issue watching the rain and sipping your drink from the window for an unforgettable memory!