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Urban Memory and Experiential Learning in Architectural Education

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Keywords

architectural education, experiential learning, informal learning environments, travellers' narratives, urban memory

Abstract

This paper proposes a workshop-based framework that applies experiential learning to the interpretation of urban memory through the travel narratives of three visitors to the Turkish city of Trabzon. Grounded in Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, this study examines a workshop in which architectural students transformed textual narratives into experiential and representational learning processes. The empirical dataset consists of concept maps, urban memory maps, route proposals, fanzines, posters and reflective notes produced throughout the workshop. These materials are analysed using thematic analysis to examine the relationships between narratives, spatial interpretation and representational practices. The analysis identifies three interconnected themes: (1) walking as experiential learning, (2) mapping urban memory, and (3) concept extraction from narratives. The workshop outputs indicate that travel narratives function not merely as historical documents but as pedagogical resources that foster conceptual thinking, urban memory reconstruction and creative representation. By integrating textual interpretation, spatial exploration and design production, the proposed workshop model offers a transferable pedagogical framework for memory-oriented architectural education.

Introduction: Architecture and memory

Architecture is a discipline that simultaneously engages with time, space, memory and form (Fisher, 2004). As a field that can be defined as the construction of experience and lived space, the notion of memory holds a significant position within architectural discourse. Memory represents existing knowledge about something once known (Bergson, 1896/1919). According to Jung (2008, p. 97), memory is 'the totality of memories and the capacity to reproduce previously perceived and stored events'. Ruskin (1880) identified memory as the 'sixth lamp' of architecture and argued that it materialised in public buildings or dwellings endowed with commemorative and monumental value—structures conceived to endure the passage of time. Memory enables individuals to recall past experiences, acquire new knowledge and apply it to future circumstances (Pallasmaa, 2007).

Beyond its individual, sensory and aesthetic dimensions, memory possesses a multilayered structure that unfolds across social, cultural and spatial levels. The concepts of individual and sensory memory expand into the theory of collective memory, which situates recollection within social frameworks. Memory is shaped less by personal experience than by the values, habits and shared modes of remembrance of the groups to which one belongs, becoming a social construction rather than a purely individual act (Halbwachs, 2017). Assmann (2011) extended this perspective to the cultural domain, emphasising that memory is transmitted not only through social interaction but also through the material and symbolic carriers of

culture across generations. Architecture is positioned as a repository of individual memories and a physical site that sustains the continuity of cultural memory. As a residue of the past, architecture both contributes to memory and simultaneously evokes it (Aykaç Leidholm, 2022). Formed through mnemonic images—the records of events experienced throughout one’s life in time and space—memory inherently embodies temporality and spatiality and thus cannot be conceived independently of architecture or, more broadly, of the spatial context of a given moment (Bergson, 1896/1919). In this regard, Nora’s (1989) notion of ‘lieux de mémoire’ reminds us that the urban fabric may function as the physical manifestation of a society’s connection to its past. However, these sites of memory are not static; they evolve through social events and relationships, continuously contributing to the reconfiguration and reinterpretation of the urban fabric (Üstün Demirkaya, 2017).

In this dynamic process, the city is not merely a physical object but a space continually produced and reconstructed through social relations, everyday practices and both individual and collective experiences (Lefebvre, 1991). Urban architecture is thus shaped by its physical presence, the meanings it conveys, and the memories it embodies. Assmann’s (1995, p. 130) statement that ‘the past exists only insofar as one maintains a relation to it’, together with Rossi’s (1966/1982, p. 130-131) view that ‘urban structures and monuments are fundamental elements that carry traces of the past and continuously regenerate urban memory’, clearly articulate the interdependence of architecture and memory. This relationship shows that the past is not merely remembered but continually reconstituted through space and made legible through acts of narration and representation, creating a continuity that transcends the material existence of place (Nora, 1989). The traces of places that have lost their physical form are mentally reconstructed through written and visual sources of memory. In this context, innovative urban narratives that propose experiential and interpretive methods can be regarded not simply as representations of memory but as dynamic processes through which urban experience is reproduced via language, imagery and rhythm (Durmuş Öztürk & Çıraklı, 2023). This process enables the development of new modes of reading the city and experience-based approaches to urban understanding (Yazıcı & Durmuş Öztürk, 2017). To summarise, the architecture of a city is not solely an aesthetic or functional configuration; it constitutes a narrative that embodies traces of the past and actively shapes collective memory. Just as memory cannot exist apart from place and lived experience, architecture derives its meaning only through the human bonds it sustains.

Against this theoretical background, the architecture of a city can be understood as a narrative embedded within its aesthetic and functional configuration, embodying traces of the past and actively shaping collective memory (Çıraklı, 2022). Its significance lies in its

material presence and its capacity to sustain relationships between people, place and memory across time.

If architecture is understood as a medium through which memory is produced and reinterpreted, architectural education should likewise provide learning environments that enable students not only to acquire historical knowledge but also to experience, interpret and represent these relationships. In this respect, architectural workshops, as informal learning environments, provide an important pedagogical setting in which narratives, urban experience and creative representation are integrated through an experience-based learning process (Üstün Demirkaya & Durmuş Öztürk, 2026). Building on this perspective, the primary motivation of this study is to investigate how such a pedagogical approach can be implemented within architectural education, using urban memory as the context through which the proposed framework is developed and examined. Accordingly, the paper contributes not primarily to the study of travel narratives or urban memory but to the development and demonstration of a workshop-based pedagogical model that employs the historical urban environment as an experience-based learning setting.

Architectural workshops in informal learning environments

Historically associated with the production of space, architecture operates at the intersection of discourse and practice, where perception and thought are simultaneously formed and transformed. Reflecting this multilayered nature, architectural education seeks to accommodate diverse student characteristics within both formal and informal pedagogical frameworks (Dewey, 1938; Schön, 1983). In the literature, formal education encompasses theoretical and practical courses, with design studios at its core (Ciravoğlu, 2003). Complementing this structure, informal education supports the acquisition of disciplinary competencies through autonomous, motivation-driven learning. By allowing learners to regulate their pace and methods, it promotes self-regulation, flexibility and experience-based engagement shaped by personal interests (Tomlinson, 2001; Yürekli & Yürekli, 2004; Zimmerman, 2002).

The first step in understanding architectural education lies in clearly defining its aims and objectives (Uluoğlu, 1990). Within this framework, the question of how students learn occupies a central position (Aydınlı, 2015). Research in architectural education and experiential learning suggests that learning output improves when educational activities are grounded in a clearly defined pedagogical model. However, teaching–learning processes cannot be reduced to a stimulus–response framework; they become meaningful only when informed by cognitive models and experiential engagement (Aydınlı, 2015; Öksüz, 2024).

In this context, informal learning environments in architectural education function as spaces where knowledge emerges through direct experience and where the boundaries between thought and action become fluid. Dewey (1938) argued that knowledge is continuously reconstructed through lived experience, while Schön (1983) extended this view to the studio through reflection-in-action, framing it as an experiential and enquiry-based setting beyond formal instruction. Likewise, Sennett (2008) and Wenger (1998) characterised studio culture as a learning community in which students co-produce knowledge through dialogue, shared reflection and collective modes of representation.

Among the various learning theories proposed in educational research, Kolb's (1984, p. 25) experiential learning cycle provides the conceptual foundation for this study. Kolb conceptualised learning as a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation, arguing that meaningful learning emerges through the dynamic interaction of all four stages.

Architectural education constitutes a multidimensional process that extends beyond the transmission of theoretical knowledge to include experience, observation, creativity and problem-solving (Durmuş Öztürk, 2020). Studio-based workshops play a central role in fostering design thinking, professional identity formation and critical awareness within informal learning contexts (Kolb, 1984; Öksüz, 2024; Salama, 2015; Schön, 1983). Grounded in learning by doing, such activities enable the concretisation of abstract ideas and the development of creative and alternative perspectives (Cuff, 1991). They also encourage learners to manage their own learning trajectories and deepen their critical thinking (Öktem Erkartal & Durmuş, 2017). In this sense, workshops complement formal educational settings by providing opportunities for self-directed, experience-based and collaborative learning.

The theoretical discussions presented above establish the conceptual framework through which the workshop model examined in this study is understood. Building on the concepts of memory and informal learning, the following section outlines the research purpose, research questions and methodological approach.

Research purpose, approaches and methods

The purpose of this article is to examine the role of urban narratives in the formation of memory and to explore how they relate to architectural representation and experience-based learning. It also considers how different forms of representation, including textual and visual material, shape the ways urban space is perceived, remembered and reinterpreted. At the same time, the article investigates how the proposed research approach can be utilised as a pedagogical tool within informal educational environments. The core of this approach

lies in transforming the act of learning into a memorable experience. Such an approach enables students to explore space and place, to recall the knowledge and experiences acquired over time, and to make comparative observations between different urban contexts.

Within this framework, the narratives of travellers who documented the city of Trabzon—namely, P. Minas Bıjışkyan, Âşık Mehmed and Şakir Şevket—serve as the primary research material. Focusing on travelogues that hold a crucial place in the discussion of Trabzon’s urban memory, the article aims to revisit the relationships between concepts and places as textually constructed representations and to re-experience the city through unmapped routes embedded in these narratives. Accordingly, the main objectives of the article can be summarised as follows: to discover the city through texts and experiences, and to interpret urban memory through textual codes and urban imagery.

The research questions guiding the article are as follows:

- RQ1: How do the textual representations and unmapped routes in travelogues influence the ways Trabzon is perceived and remembered by students in this workshop?
- RQ2: How do travel narratives and urban experience facilitate conceptualisation, memory mapping and creative representation within experience-based architectural learning environments?

The research approach constructed around these questions seeks to go beyond conventional modes of interpreting the city’s historical fabric by analysing textual representations and unmediated experiences as alternative means of understanding. The city, shaped by spatial and historical processes, is thus discussed through its potential to offer new perspectives on temporality—linking past and present within a dynamic continuum.

The methodological framework of the article is based on Kolb’s (1984, p. 25) four-step experiential learning cycle, summarised as follows (see Figure 1):

- *Step 1 – Concrete experience:* This step involves learning through direct perception and sensory engagement, characterised by descriptive understanding. Within the scope of the workshop, this step includes the introductory and descriptive content on the city, memory, textual documents, and fieldwork context. Step 1 is considered a concrete experience because students are introduced to the historical and spatial context of the city through textual, visual and documentary materials. (4 hours)

- *Step 2 – Reflective observation:* Defined as learning through observation and reflection on processed information, this step corresponds to the distribution of selected travelogues—provided by the facilitators—to the students, the extraction of textual data, and the tracing of conceptual trajectories related to the city. Step 2 is considered reflective observation because students interpret and discuss the travel narratives, reflecting on the historical meanings, spatial references and urban memory embedded in the texts. (7 hours)
- *Step 3 – Abstract conceptualisation:* This step refers to the act of learning through conceptual thinking and analytical reasoning. In the workshop, this phase involved textual analysis through concept extraction, where chosen terms were transformed into abstract conceptual representations to visualise the knowledge intended to be emphasised about the city without disrupting the original layout of the text. Step 3 is considered abstract conceptualisation because students transform textual interpretations into conceptual frameworks by identifying and organising key concepts. (3 hours)
- *Step 4 – Active experimentation:* Defined as learning by doing, this step transforms the acquired knowledge into action. Within the workshop, it enabled students to explore the city through experiential fieldwork and to trace the textual data physically within the urban environment. They synthesised their observations and experiences by transforming them into creative poster representations and presented these posters to the workshop students and leaders. Step 4 is considered active experimentation because students apply their conceptual interpretations through direct engagement with the urban environment and creative representation. (8 hours)

The progression from textual engagement to spatial exploration and creative production is reflected in the three thematic categories identified in the analysis. In the presentation of the workshop outputs, these themes are discussed as (1) walking as experiential learning, (2) mapping urban memory, and (3) concept extraction from narratives. Although presented in this analytical order, they correspond to different stages of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. Walking as experiential learning reflects the stage of active experimentation, mapping urban memory represents the transition from conceptual thinking to spatial interpretation, and concept extraction from narratives corresponds primarily to reflective observation and abstract conceptualisation. In this respect, the methodological diagram serves not only as a representation of the workshop process but also as a conceptual

framework linking experiential learning with the analytical organisation of the workshop outputs.

Figure 1

Method and sequential steps of activities in the study.

METHOD AND SEQUENTIAL STEPS OF ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDY				
STEPS	STEP 1 Concrete Experience	STEP 2 Reflective Observation	STEP 3 Abstract Conceptualisation	STEP 4 Active Experimentation
	•Initial engagement with travel narratives, historical maps, photographs and visual documents •Introduction to the historical and spatial context of the city •Exploration of textual and visual materials related to urban memory	•Reading and discussing travel narratives •Reflecting on historical perceptions of the city •Identifying significant places, spatial references and recurring themes •Sharing interpretations with other students	•Conducting text analysis through key concepts	•Experience-based exploration of the city on site •Following the traces of textual data within the physical environment •Creative representation, presentation and reflective discussion
TIMELINE	4 hours	7 hours	3 hours	8 hours

The empirical dataset consists of concept maps derived from travel narratives, urban memory maps developed by students, route proposals, fanzines, posters and reflective notes recorded during workshop discussions and presentations. These materials were treated not as design products to be evaluated in terms of aesthetic or technical quality but as representations of learning, interpretation and memory construction. The analysis followed a thematic approach, focusing on the relationships between existing narratives, spatial interpretations and representational outputs. Each concept map, urban memory map, route proposal, fanzine and poster was first examined individually. The interpretation of the workshop outputs was guided by five analytical criteria: concepts extracted from travel narratives, spatial references, memory-related expressions, representational strategies and evidence of experiential learning. Subsequently, all outputs were compared across the dataset to identify recurring patterns and common approaches through thematic

analysis. Through this comparative process, the three interconnected analytical themes were identified. These themes constitute the analytical framework through which the workshop outputs were interpreted and discussed in relation to the research questions. Accordingly, the workshop outputs section is organised around these three themes. In this way, the outputs are derived not from the final products alone but from the thematic relationships established between textual narratives, spatial exploration and representational outputs throughout the workshop process.

Workshop implementation

Within the scope of this article, the workshop implementation is organised under four main headings. The first heading, 'Workshop design', describes the pedagogical structure of the workshop by explaining its organisation as an extracurricular, voluntary and non-assessed informal learning environment, together with the learning principles that distinguish it from conventional design studios. The second heading, 'Descriptions of location', introduces the city of Trabzon, discusses the narratives found in the selected travelogues and explains the rationale for the selection of the travellers. The third heading, 'Process of analysis', presents a systematic account of the stages and procedures of the workshop, outlining the methodological flow and analytical framework adopted in the study. The fourth heading, 'Workshop outputs', presents the analytical interpretation of the workshop outputs—including concept maps, urban memory maps, route proposals, fanzines and posters—produced through the reinterpretation of travel narratives.

Workshop design

The workshop was conceptualised as an informal learning environment based on its organisational structure, participation model and pedagogical objectives. Rather than being integrated into the formal architecture programme, it was organised as a voluntary extracurricular learning activity centred on urban memory and travel narratives.

Participation was entirely voluntary, enabling students to engage according to their own interests and motivations rather than course requirements. No formal assessment or grading was involved. Instead, students present their final outputs—including concept maps, urban memory maps, route proposals, fanzines and posters—in collective discussion sessions where ideas, interpretations and representational strategies are critically examined by both workshop facilitators and peers.

The workshop brought together undergraduate architectural students from the first to the fourth year of the programme. Although all students possessed design skills appropriate to their level of study, their prior knowledge of architectural history, urban morphology, urban

history and heritage conservation varied according to the courses they had completed. While third- and fourth-year students had completed coursework in architectural history, urban design, conservation and the historic environment, first- and second-year students had primarily developed representational skills through foundation design and architectural design studios. Rather than being considered a limitation, this diversity was intentionally incorporated into the workshop design as a means of fostering peer learning and collaborative knowledge exchange. The students therefore learned from one another while collectively reading, interpreting and representing the city. At the same time, the workshop provided first-year students with an early opportunity to engage with urban context and historic environments before these themes were formally addressed in subsequent design studios.

These organisational characteristics and the diversity of students distinguish the workshop from formal educational settings and align it with approaches to informal learning that emphasise autonomy, self-directed participation, experiential exploration, collaborative knowledge construction and peer learning. Learning therefore emerged through the interaction of texts, places and collaborative reflection, positioning the workshop as a flexible, experience-based pedagogical environment that integrated textual interpretation, spatial exploration and design thinking. In this workshop, these processes are operationalised through concept extraction, urban memory mapping, walking-based exploration and creative representation using fanzines and posters.

Descriptions of location

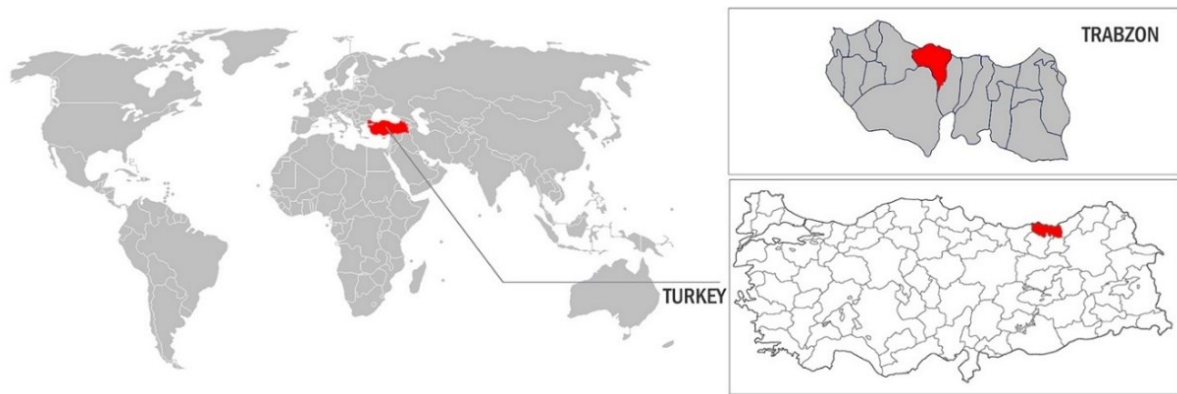
Travelogues are written accounts in which travellers provide detailed observations of the regions they have visited, describing their geographical and climatic characteristics, ancient and contemporary architectural works, transportation systems, road networks and various aspects of everyday life (Üstün Demirkaya & Kırıcı, 2020). The narratives conveyed in these texts possess a strong representational potential for understanding both the historical continuity and collective memory of cities (Üstün Demirkaya & Kırıcı, 2020; Yılmaz, 2013). In this respect, travelogues are not merely compilations of individual impressions but also significant historical documents that reflect the urban imagery, social dynamics and spatial organisation of different periods.

Due to its strategic geographical location and its position at the intersection of major trade routes, Trabzon functioned as both a port and a marketplace, becoming a critical observation point and a key stop along east–west travel itineraries (Figure 2). The travellers visiting Trabzon provided extensive portrayals of the city, shaped by their own perspectives and narrative styles. Travelogues contain detailed information about the city’s geography,

forests, vegetation, climate and natural environment, as well as its settlement patterns, commercial activities, transportation networks, social life, demographic composition and cultural interactions (Üstün Demirkaya & Kırıcı, 2020). Among the numerous travel accounts on Trabzon, the narratives of Âşık Mehmed (16th century), Minas Bijişkyan (19th century) and Şakir Şevket (19th century) were selected because they provide complementary perspectives on the city's historical topography, architectural heritage, neighbourhoods and everyday life. Together, these narratives represent different historical periods and cultural viewpoints, offering a rich textual basis for interpreting urban memory and supporting the pedagogical objectives of the workshop.

Figure 2

The geographical location of Trabzon, Turkey (Üstün Demirkaya & Tuluk, 2018).

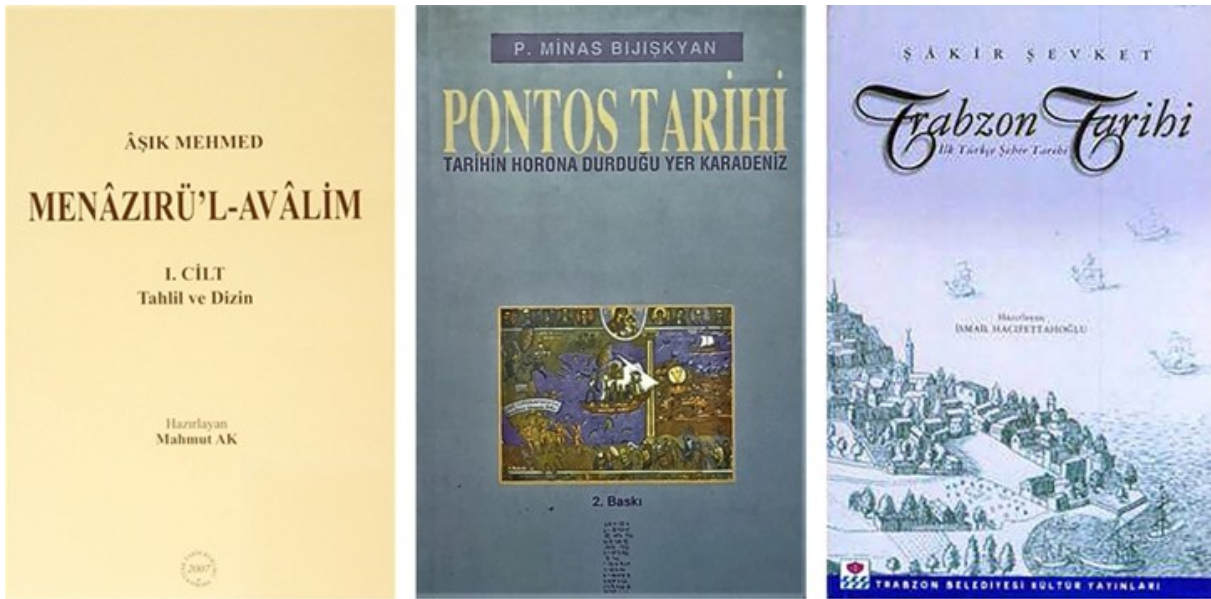


Following the Ottoman conquest, the only known text that provides information about 16th-century Trabzon is *Menazirü'l-Avalim* (an Old Turkish phrase meaning 'perspectives of the worlds'), authored by the Ottoman geographer Âşık Mehmed, himself a native of the city (Ak, 1990, p. 13–31). In the 19th century, two figures offered the most detailed accounts of the city: the traveller P. Minas Bijişkyan and the historian Şakir Şevket. Like Âşık Mehmed, Bijişkyan was also from Trabzon. He meticulously explored both the southern and northern coasts of the Black Sea and, upon visiting his hometown in 1817, produced his work *Karadeniz Kıyıları Tarih ve Coğrafyası* (published in this study as *Pontus Tarihi* [History of Pontus], originally meaning 'geography and history of the shores of the Black Sea'), in which he presented valuable observations of Trabzon). What distinguishes Şakir Şevket's writings from those of other travellers is that his *Trabzon Tarihi* (History of Trabzon), published in 1877, represents the first historical narrative of a city written in Turkish. Unlike other travellers who documented temporary visits, Şakir Şevket described the social structure, demography and built environment of the city in which he was born and raised.

Trabzon was selected as the case study because its layered historical fabric, the continuity of its urban traces, and its rich corpus of travel narratives provide a suitable pedagogical context for implementing a workshop-based approach that supports experience-based architectural learning. During the nineteenth century in particular, the growing attention directed towards Trabzon led to a notable increase in the number of travellers visiting the city. This influx produced multilayered narratives portraying the city's identity as a port settlement and its multicultural urban fabric from diverse perspectives. Within this context, travelogues constitute the primary source material of the present study (Figure 3). Together, the selected narratives enabled students to examine continuity, transformation and loss through processes of concept extraction, urban memory mapping and creative representation, thereby supporting the pedagogical objectives of the workshop.

Figure 3

Covers of the travel accounts examined in this study (Menazirü'l-Avalim, Karadeniz Kıyıları Tarih ve Coğrafyası, Trabzon Tarihi).



Âşık Mehmed (16th century)

Âşık Mehmed was born in Trabzon in 1556 (Ak, 1990, pp. 8–9). At the age of 20, he left his hometown and embarked on a 22-year journey, compiling his observations in the work *Menazirü'l-Avalim* (Usta, 1999, p. 35; Âşık Mehmed, 2007). The book encompasses descriptions of various regions within 16th-century Ottoman geography, including Hungary, Crimea, Cairo, Damascus, Rumelia and Eastern Europe (Aydın, 2012, p. 445). *Menazirü'l-Avalim* contains information on settlement patterns, architectural structures, vegetation, minerals and animals. Written within a geographical framework, the text applies a method known as the 'iklim-i örfi' (customary climate region), which determines latitude based on the relative duration of day and night (Ak, 1990, p. 67).

Per Minas Bijişkyan (19th century)

Per Minas Bijişkyan was born in Trabzon in 1777, and in 1804, he travelled to Venice to join the Mekhitarist Congregation as a priest. Between 1817 and 1819, he explored the northern and southern coasts of the Black Sea, continuing his studies until 1851 (Bijişkyan, 1998, pp. 11–13). In his work *Karadeniz Kıyıları Tarih ve Coğrafyası*, Bijişkyan provides detailed information on the geography, history, ethnography and topography of the Black Sea region. He documented building inscriptions, church manuscripts and spatial dimensions, thus producing a meticulous architectural and geographical record of the region (Bijişkyan, 1998, pp. 11–13).

Şakir Şevket (19th century)

Şakir Şevket was born in Trabzon in 1847. In addition to his involvement in trade, he held various administrative positions in the city and worked as a journalist in both Istanbul and Trabzon (Şevket, 2001, pp. 12–16). Although Şakir Şevket did not undertake a journey specifically for exploration, as a native of Trabzon, he wrote extensively about the city's urban spaces, population, lifestyle, administrative organisation and historical figures (Üstün Demirkaya & Kırıcı, 2020).

Process of analysis

The processes described in Steps 1–4 were undertaken by the workshop students as part of the learning process. The resulting concept maps, urban memory maps, route proposals, fanzines, posters and reflective notes constitute the empirical dataset of the study. The researchers then analysed these outputs using comparative thematic analysis, enabling the identification of recurring patterns from which the analytical themes presented in the following section were derived.

The methodological workflow comprised two complementary phases: textual representation and experiential representation. During the textual representation phase, students extracted key concepts from the selected travel narratives, constructed a concept pool, developed urban memory maps and produced fanzines that reflected their interpretations of Trabzon. During the experiential representation phase, the students selected a central concept, explored the city through historically informed walking routes and synthesised their experiences in poster representations. Together, these activities generated the empirical materials that formed the basis of the comparative thematic analysis presented in the following section.

According to the methodological framework of the article (Figure 1), Step 1, concrete experience, and Step 2, reflective observation constituted the common foundation for both textual and experiential representations. In the subsequent steps, the processes diverged:

Step 3, abstract conceptualisation was integrated into the textual representation, while Step 4, active experimentation was applied within the experiential representation, thereby enriching the analytical dimension of the article.

The workshop process consisted of four steps corresponding to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. In Step 1, concrete experience, the facilitators conducted an introductory presentation explaining the theme and expected outcomes of the workshop. In Step 2, reflective observation, the students individually examined the assigned travellers and their respective travelogues (Âşık Mehmed, P. Minas Bijişkyan and Şakir Şevket). Based on these readings, they identified and presented abstract and concrete concepts describing or referencing Trabzon. The students were then divided into three thematic subgroups to analyse the travellers and their journeys in detail, identifying both the structures and routes mentioned in the travelogues.

In the textual representation process, Step 3, abstract conceptualisation, involved the creation of a concept pool by each student, from which selected words were collaboratively used to produce a Trabzon urban memory map (Figure 4). Subsequently, each student constructed a personal narrative of Trabzon within the framework of the three thematic categories. This process enabled the reinterpretation of urban narratives of Trabzon through the students' self-generated textual representations, allowing the city's memory to be reimagined as a multilayered construct.

In Step 4, the active experimentation phase of the experiential representation process, the students were organised into groups within three thematic categories. Following the routes described by the travellers, they conducted on-site investigations of the locations mentioned in the travelogues concerning the city of Trabzon. During these field observations, existing sites were photographically documented, and analytical studies were carried out to identify the possible locations of vanished structures and spatial traces. Each group examined the spatial evidence corresponding to the traveller and travelogue assigned to them, comparing historical and contemporary photographs to assess changes over time. The data obtained from these comparative analyses were then mapped onto the urban plan of Trabzon, enabling a visual synthesis of temporal and spatial continuity within the city's historical fabric.

According to the methodological framework of the article (Figure 1), the prerequisites and context summarising the overall workshop process are presented in Figure 5.

	travellers; identification of architectural structures and unmapped routes	
	Step 3: Abstract Conceptualisation • Creating a concept pool and a Trabzon urban memory map • Producing text from written accounts • Generating textual representations	Step 4: Active Experimentation • Photographing urban traces and identifying vanished ones • Mapping, comparing and processing data • Producing experiential representations
Sites that were studied	Small urban space at the Ortahisar in Trabzon	
Number of students	21	
Students' background	Architectural students	
Documentation	Forming drafts that establish connections between the city and the text, and producing urban narrative representations both textually and experientially	
Available material	Travelogues (provided by the instructors) Old photographs, postcards, drawings, maps, field recordings and videos. Coloured and various-sized cardboard, A5 paper, sketch paper, sketch pens, black and coloured pencils, cutters, glue, threads of various colours, pins, computers	
Time allowed for workshop process	48 h Hours in field: 2 h Workshop duration: 22 hours	

Workshop outputs

Rather than presenting the workshop outputs as individual student cases, the outputs were organised around thematic patterns that emerged across the dataset. This analytical structure enabled the identification of recurring relationships between travel narratives, spatial interpretation and representational practices while reducing descriptive repetition. Three interrelated themes were identified through thematic analysis: (1) walking as experiential learning, exploring the role of spatial exploration, route construction and embodied engagement in the learning process; (2) mapping urban memory, examining how students identify, visualise and reinterpret historical traces and lost urban elements; and (3)

concept extraction from narratives, focusing on the transformation of textual materials into conceptual frameworks. As illustrated in Figure 1, the workshop process moved iteratively between textual interpretation, conceptualisation and spatial experimentation. These themes correspond to different stages of Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle and provide the analytical structure through which the workshop outputs were interpreted. To ensure analytical balance and representativeness, illustrative examples were purposefully selected from each traveller's narrative and distributed across the three thematic categories. The selected student works are discussed not as individual achievements but as illustrative examples that demonstrate broader pedagogical and methodological patterns emerging from the workshop.

The analytical and visual outputs produced in the form of fanzines and posters within the scope of this research present two complementary modes of expression that transform individual experience into collective memory. These outputs render visible the ways in which urban memory can be reconstituted not only through physical space but also via narrative, image and sensory traces, revealing memory as a dynamic and reproducible phenomenon.

The fanzines, developed under the output 'Textual representation: Generating urban narratives from travel accounts of Trabzon', were abstract representations focusing on different concepts and themes within the context of traveller–travelogue relationships. The posters, associated with the output 'Experiential representation: Following the footsteps of travellers to uncover traces of the past and present', visualised the students' processes of experiencing and interpreting the city, combining text, map and image as analytical representational tools. Each poster centred on a specific urban theme, presenting a visual and integrative output of spatial thinking through narrative forms.

To facilitate readability and cross-referencing throughout the analysis, a coding system was adopted for both student and workshop outputs. Individual students are coded as S1–S9 (Student 1–9). During the experiential representation phase, the students were organised into three working groups, designated G1–G3. Individually produced fanzines are numbered sequentially, beginning with F1 for each student, and are identified using both the student and output codes (e.g. S1F1 denotes the first fanzine produced by Student 1). Posters produced collaboratively by each group are coded as P1 and identified together with the corresponding group code (e.g. G3P1 denotes the poster produced by Group 3).

Theme 1: Walking as experiential learning

The first major finding of the workshop was that walking functioned not merely as a practice of movement or observation in urban research but as an experiential learning method through which space was understood in bodily, sensory and temporal terms. When

integrated with travel narratives, walking enabled students to revisit, test and reinterpret the spatial relationships described in historical texts within the contemporary urban fabric. In this process, the route became more than a physical trajectory; it operated as an analytical device that connected past and present, text and place, and memory and embodied experience. Walking as experiential learning therefore emerged as a pedagogical strategy that supported students in understanding the city through the intersection of historical knowledge, sensory perception and spatial encounters.

In line with this analytical framework, some fanzines and posters were examined as representations of the walking as experiential learning process. As presented in Figure 6 (Traces of travellers: Âşık Mehmed), the fanzines and posters produced by S1, S2, S3, S4 and G1 were constructed through selected pages or paragraphs from Âşık Mehmed's travelogue *Menazirü'l-Avalim*.

The concepts chosen by S1 include

Inhabitants of Trabzon (Trabzon Sükkanları), tower fortress (Kulehisar), middle city (Ortahisar), lower city (Aşağıhisar), and Unbeliever's Square (Gavur Meydanı).

S1 produced two representational works accompanied by explanatory reports.

S1F1 and S1F2 interpret the travel narratives through the process of approaching the city, perceiving the coastline and experiencing its historical urban fabric. In S1F1, the traveller's first impressions upon arriving at the harbour position Trabzon's identity as a port city as the starting point of an experiential encounter with the city. S1F2, by contrast, explores the relationship between the Black Sea, the city's topography, and the walls of the lower fortress (Aşağıhisar), linking the natural landscape with the historical urban fabric.

The concepts chosen by S2 include

City wall (Sur), Zagnos Gate (Bâb-ı Zağnos), dungeon gate (Bâb-ı Zindân), cherry laurel (kara yemiş) and anchovy (hamsi).

S2 produced three representational works accompanied by analytical reports.

While developing the fanzine studies, S2 did not focus solely on Âşık Mehmed's travelogue but also incorporated P. Minas Bijişkyan's narratives. Therefore, the fanzines S2F1, S2F2 and S2F3 contain concepts drawn from both *Menazirü'l-Avalim* and *The History of Pontus* (as presented in Figure 6, Traces of Travellers—Âşık Mehmed, and Figure 7, Traces of Travellers—P. Minas Bijişkyan). The three fanzines—S2F1, S2F2 and S2F3—address the concepts of fortress gate (kale kapısı), moat (hendek), city wall (sur) and dungeon gate

(Zindan Kapısı) derived from both travelogues, centring on the overarching notion of ‘protection and preservation’.

S2F1, S2F2 and S2F3 reinterpret the travel narratives describing the city walls, gates, moats, fortress and natural boundaries through the concept of protection as an experiential reading of the city. In these fanzines, Trabzon is understood not merely as a historical settlement defined by defensive structures but as a spatial environment perceived through its boundaries, thresholds and sense of protection. The organisation of lines, colours and textual elements in relation to the city walls demonstrates how both natural and built defensive features were reinterpreted as an embodied spatial experience of security.

The concepts chosen by S3 include

Coastal settlement (Belde-i Sâhiliyye), three coastal fronts (Selâse Sâhil-i Bahr), ancient buildings (Ebniye-i Kadîme), remaining monuments (Âsâr-ı Bâkî), major conquest (Feth-i Tâ-i Mühmele), elegant people of Trabzon (Zurefâ-yı Halk-ı Tarabzon), and Friday prayer (Salât-ı Cuma).

S3 produced two representational works accompanied by analytical reports.

S3’s works reinterpret the travel narratives through an experiential reading of Trabzon’s topography, climate and cultural layers. In S3F1, the curved lines placed over the quatrain evoke the city’s rugged topography and undulating routes, while the black marks refer to its rainy climate. In S3F2, the concept of religion is interpreted through Trabzon’s historical role as a city shaped by multiple civilisations and religious traditions. Together, these fanzines transform textual narratives into an experiential understanding of the city by connecting topography, climate and cultural traces with spatial perception.

The concepts chosen by S4 include

Provinces of Rum (Bilâd-ı Rum), Laz people (Laz), Circassian (Çerkes), Mingrelian (Megril), Abkhazian (Abaza), Georgian (Gürcü), Chepni (Çepni), conquest (Feth), Bazaar Hammam (Bazar Hâmamı), cherry laurel (kara yemiş), turbot fish (kalkan balığı), anchovy (hamsi), cellar (mahzen), madrasa (medrese), bathhouse (hamam), fortress (hisar), city wall (sur), tower (kule) and Black Sea (Karadeniz).

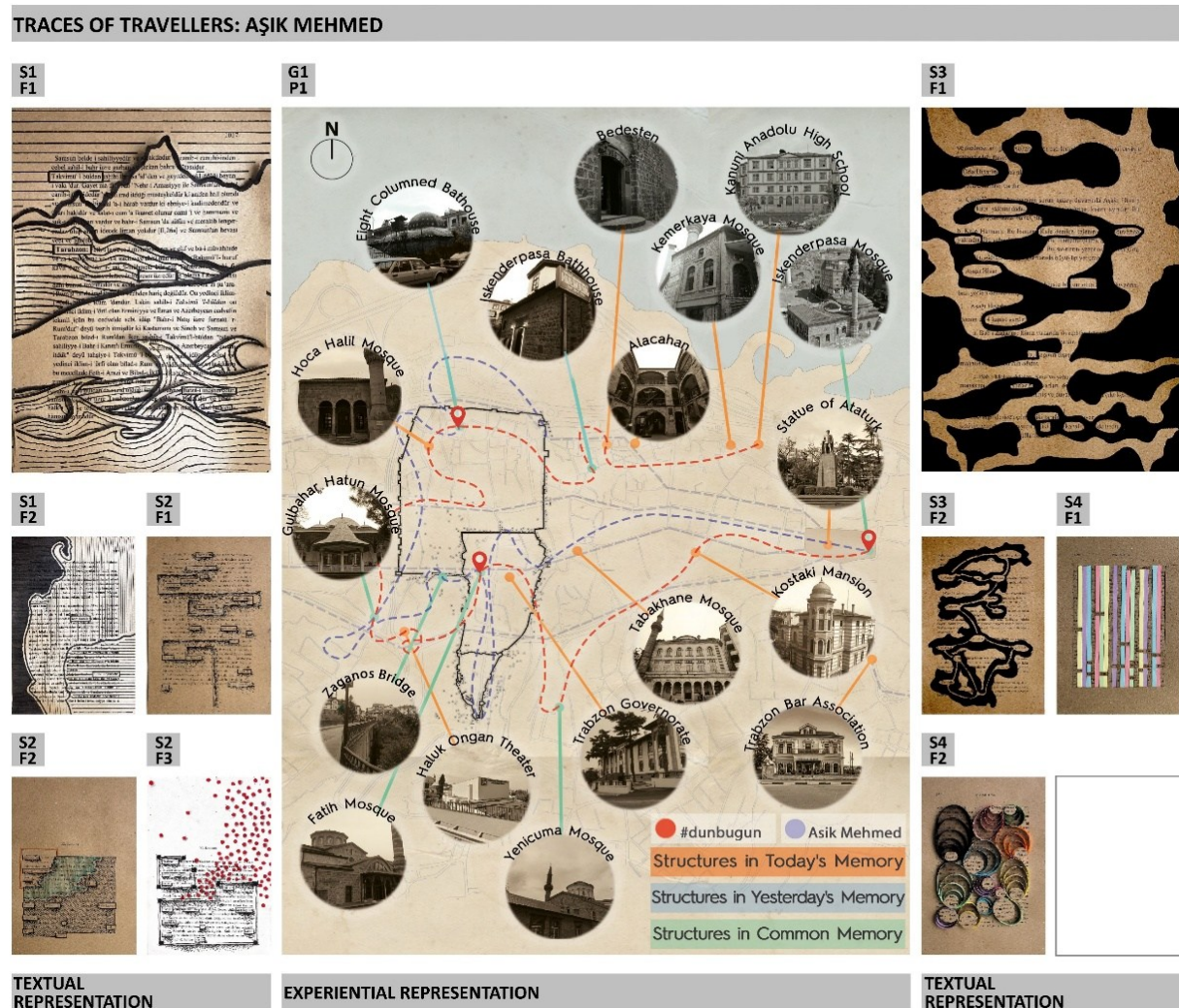
S4 produced two representational works (S4F1 and S4F2), focusing on the concept of cultural diversity.

S4F1 and S4F2 interpret Trabzon’s multilayered social structure through the different ethnic and cultural communities described in the travel narratives. The vertical colour bands

visualise the city's historical diversity, while the connections between the bands emphasise interactions among communities and practices of coexistence. Consequently, the fanzines represent the city not merely as a historical environment composed of physical spaces but as an experiential landscape in which different cultures encountered, interacted and collectively shaped everyday urban life.

Figure 6

Traces of travellers: Âşık Mehmed (source: created by the authors).



The concept chosen by G1 was memory. This concept was explored by comparing the route described in Âşık Mehmed's travelogue with the students' own exploratory walking route through the city. In G1P1, the two routes are superimposed using different colour codes, making visible the continuities, ruptures and intersections between past and present. Students first constructed their own routes through direct engagement with the city and subsequently retraced the historical itinerary presented in Menâzirü'l-Avâlim, allowing the walking experience to connect historical narratives with the contemporary urban

environment. In this respect, G1P1 demonstrates how walking functions as an experiential learning strategy that links textual narratives with lived spatial experience, enabling the students to reconstruct and interpret urban memory through embodied exploration.

According to the workshop outputs of Theme 1, the selected fanzines, posters, memory maps and route proposals demonstrate that walking functioned not merely as a means of moving through the city but as an analytical and pedagogical process linking textual interpretation with embodied spatial experience (Figure 6). Rather than serving as isolated design outputs, these visual materials provide evidence of how the students progressively translated travel narratives into conceptual preparation, spatial exploration and creative representation. The fanzines reveal how key concepts extracted from the travel narratives inform students' initial understanding of the urban environment, while the posters demonstrate how these conceptual interpretations are subsequently tested, negotiated and reinterpreted through walking and direct engagement with the city. Collectively, these representations demonstrate that walking operates as an experiential learning strategy through which historical narratives are transformed into contemporary urban experience, enabling students to reconstruct urban memory through the interconnected processes of interpretation, movement and representation.

Theme 2: Mapping urban memory

Another major finding of the workshop was that the spatial references embedded in travel narratives could serve as a basis for mapping urban memory. In this context, urban memory was understood not only through buildings and places that physically survived but also through traces that had disappeared, been transformed, or continued to exist through narrative. The travel narratives provided valuable clues to the historical spatial organisation of the city while simultaneously enabling the reinterpretation of forgotten, fragmented or partially preserved layers of urban memory. Mapping therefore functioned not merely as a representational technique but as an analytical method through which these narrative traces were spatially visualised and interpreted. By establishing connections between historical narratives and the contemporary urban fabric, the mapping process revealed continuities, ruptures and lost urban traces, providing a multilayered reading of urban memory.

In line with this analytical framework, some fanzines and posters were examined from the perspective of mapping urban memory. As presented in Figure 7 (Traces of Travellers: P. Minas Bijişkyan), the fanzines and posters produced by S5, S6, S7, S8, S9 and G2 were constructed through selected pages or paragraphs from P. Minas Bijişkyan's travelogue, *The History and Geography of the Black Sea Coasts*.

The concepts chosen by S5 include

Rectangular plan of the Trabzon fortress (Dörtköşe Trabzon Kalesi/Trapezon), Komnenos Dynasty, Unbeliever's Square (Gavur Meydanı), Kabak Square (historic sports square in central Trabzon), Degirmendere Stream (Değirmendere), St. Philip's Fountain (Ay Filipo Çeşmesi), Yenicuma District (Yenicuma), fortress (hisar), Gates of Pazar and Mumhane, Moloz Gate, Sotğa Gate, Çiğonos Gate, dyehouse (Boyahane), Tower of Alexios (Aleksi Kulesi), Kanita (a coastal area in Trabzon), Kemer kaya District, Tuzluçeşme District, St. George Church (Aya Ğorĝo), Christ (Hristos), St. Kyriaki (Aya Kiryoki), St. Basil (Aya Vasil), Faroz District, Sotka District, Head of Apollo statue (Apollon Başı) and anchor (çapa).

S5 produced two representational works (S5F1 and S5F2), each accompanied by analytical reports.

S5's works transform the spatial information embedded in the travel narratives into a multilayered reading of urban memory. In S5F1, the city's physical boundaries and their influence on sociocultural cohesion are explored through a visual representation in which the Greek population is depicted in burgundy and the Turkish population in blue. This representation highlights how urban memory is shaped not only by physical structures but also by the historical distribution and interaction of different communities. In S5F2, the square composition refers to the plan of Trabzon Castle and examines the temporal stratification of the city's architectural heritage. The upper layers represent structures that have survived to the present, while the lower layers symbolise buildings that have disappeared over time. Together, these two fanzines demonstrate how travel narratives can be translated into urban memory maps that visualise spatial boundaries, demographic patterns and temporal layers, enabling students to reconstruct historical relationships between place, memory and urban transformation.

The concepts chosen by S6 include

Capital city (başşehir), Trapezon (ancient name of Trabzon), Ozinis (early name of Trabzon), lower city (Aşağıhisar), middle city (Ortahisar), tower fortress (Kulehisar), moat (hendek), cellar (mahzen), mihrab (mihrap), İmaret Hammam (İmaret Hamamı), Ortahisar Mosque (Ortahisar Camii), chapel (şapel), gate (kapı), masonry (kagir), bell tower (çan kulesi), harbour (liman), district (mahalle), population (nüfus), church (kilise), inns (hanlar), city square of Trabzon (Meydan), fountain (çeşme), hippodrome (Hipodrom), and Zagnos Valley (Zağnos).

S6 produced two representational works (S6F1 and S6F2) accompanied by analytical reports.

S6's works exemplify the mapping of urban memory through the spatial locations of the buildings described in the travel narratives and the relationships established between them. In S6F1, the buildings are organised along the east–west and north–south axes, translating the spatial information embedded in the narrative into a linear spatial configuration. The connecting line between the buildings makes historical continuities, transformations and ruptures visible, while the dense red-hatched texture symbolises fading memory and weakening spatial relationships. In S6F2, the concepts of boundary, line and identity are used to explore the relationships between architectural elements within the urban fabric. Together, these two fanzines demonstrate how travel narratives can be transformed into spatial representations that visualise lost, surviving and reconstructed urban traces, thereby enabling students to map urban memory through the relationships between place, continuity and change.

The concepts chosen by S7 include

Fortress (kale), city wall (sur), lower city (Aşağıhisar), middle city (Ortahisar), upper city (Yukarı Hisar), gate (kapı), Moloz District (Moloz), tannery (dabahane), bazaar (Pazar), Mumhane District (Mumhane), İmaret District (İmaret), Zagnos Valley (Zağnos), Sotka District (Sotğa), Çömlekçi District (Çömlekçi), harbour (liman), Yeni Cuma Mosque (Yeni Cuma Camii), Bazaar Mosque (Çarşı Camii), Ortahisar Mosque (Ortahisar Camii), Ortahisar Fountain (Ortahisar Çeşmesi), Kuzgundere Stream (Kuzgundere), İmaret Hammam (İmaret Hamamı), Governor's Palace (Paşa Sarayı), historic sports square in central Trabzon (Kabak Meydanı), Tower Hammam (Kule Hamamı), a coastal area in Trabzon (Kanita) and Aleksios Kommenos (Aleksios Kommenos).

S7 produced three representational works accompanied by reports.

S7F1, S7F2 and S7F3 are unified by the idea of searching for lost traces, which serves as their common representational strategy. This act of searching is constructed as a method of revealing the invisible layers of the historical urban fabric through spatial references found in the travel narratives, including the fortress, city walls, gates, suburbs, squares and harbour. In S7F1, text fragments concealed by black blocks symbolise vanished structures and the obscuring of the city's past. In S7F2, the revealed narrative fragments represent the effort to recover traces that persist within urban memory. In S7F3, the metaphor of the moat functions as a device for uncovering traces hidden between the lines of the historical narrative. Collectively, these three fanzines demonstrate how travel narratives can be transformed into spatial representations that visualise lost structures, erased boundaries

and hidden memory traces, enabling students to reconstruct urban memory through the mapping of absence as well as presence.

The concepts selected by S8 include

Trapezon (ancient name of Trabzon), Monastery of Theotokos Theoskepastos (Altınbaş Rahibeler Manastırı), Trabzon Fortress (Trabzon Kalesi), periphery of the tower (Kuleboyu), lower city (Aşağıhisar), middle city (Ortahisar), tower fortress (Kule Hisarı), inner fortress (İçkale), Zağnos Gate, Tabakhane Gate, Sotka Gate, Moloz Gate, Mumhane Gate, Ortahisar Mosque (Ortahisar Camii), Çömlekçi Harbour (Çömlekçi Limanı), Boztepe Mount (Boztepe), St. Eugene Church (St. Evgenios Kilisesi), spring equinox celebration (hıdırellez), St. George Church (St. George Kilisesi), Tekke District (Tekke Mahallesi), Faroz District (Faro Mahallesi), Bazaar Mosque (Çarşı Camii) and St. Anne Church (St. Anna Kilisesi).

S8 produced one representational work accompanied by a report.

S8F1 examines the squares, churches, gates and neighbourhoods described in the travel narrative through the relationship between part and whole. Using the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle, each spatial element is interpreted as a fragment contributing to the construction of urban memory. The black puzzle pieces make specific squares, churches, gates and neighbourhoods of Trabzon visible, while the missing pieces signify places that have disappeared or whose traces have faded over time. Rather than treating these spatial references as isolated historical landmarks, the representation interprets them through their relationships of continuity, absence and loss within the broader urban fabric. Consequently, S8F1 transforms the travel narrative into a spatial representation of fragmented urban memory, demonstrating how mapping can reveal not only surviving places but also the gaps and discontinuities that shape collective memory.

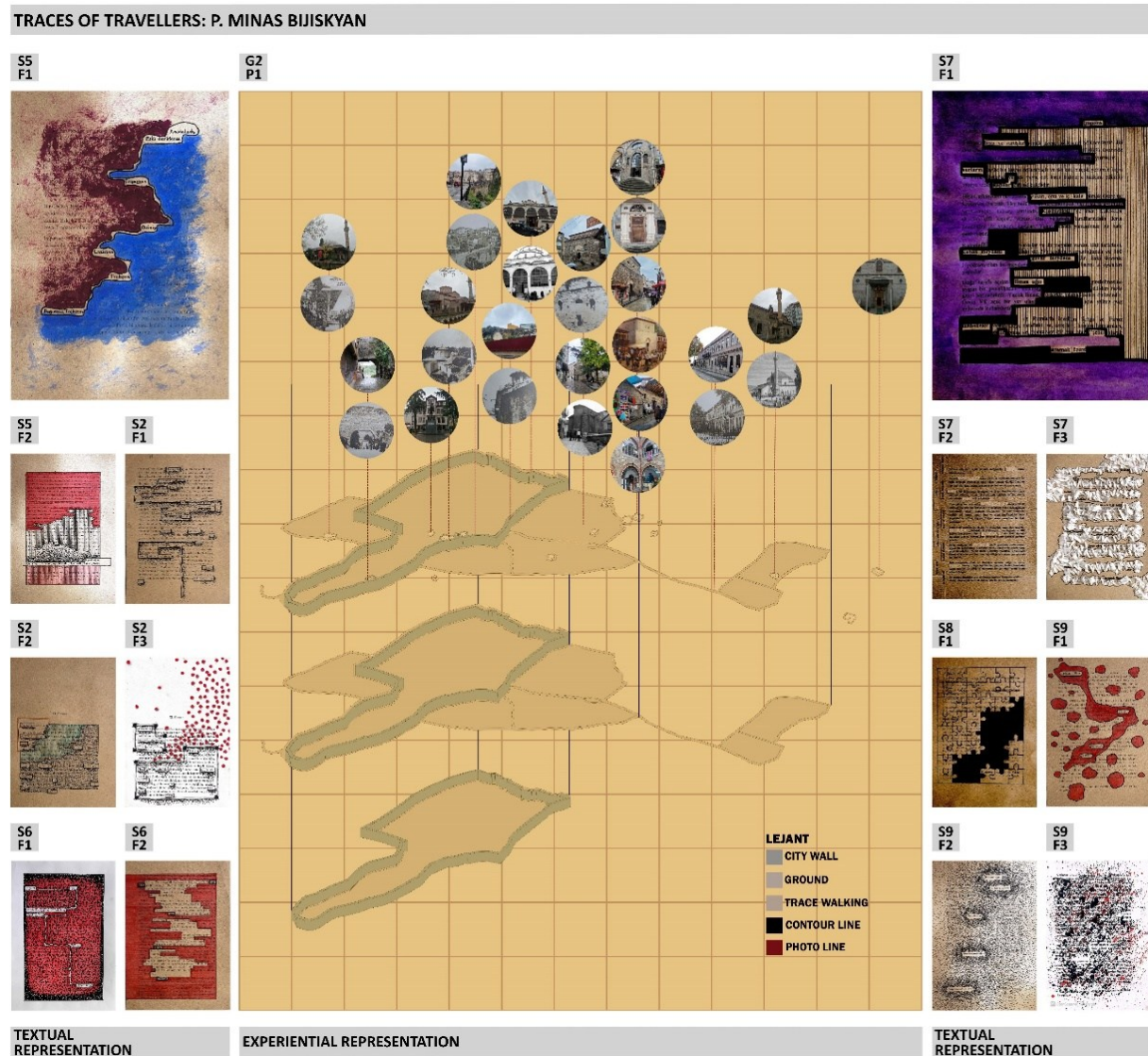
The concepts selected by S9 include

Conquered (Fetih), gate of fortress (Kale kapıları), moat (hendek), city wall (sur), inner city (İç kale), public square (meydan), Zagnos Gate (Zağanos Kapısı), masonry port (kagir liman), public kitchen (imaret), Çömlekçi Harbour (Çömlekçi Limanı), lower city (Aşağı kale), historic sports square in central Trabzon (Kabak Meydanı), Armenian houses (Ermeni evleri), and Bazaar Mosque (Çarşı Camii).

S9 produced three representational works accompanied by reports.

Figure 7

Traces of travellers: P. Minas Bijiskyán (source: created by the authors).



Having identified a wide range of concepts from the travel narrative, S9 used selected textual excerpts as the conceptual and visual foundation for S9F1, S9F2 and S9F3. These three fanzines collectively examine the presence of buildings that have not survived to the present within urban memory. In S9F1, vanished structures are represented as fragmented elements that can be reassembled in memory to reconstruct a symbolic urban whole. In S9F2, clusters of dots that become denser around specific words visualise memory traces and spatial information at risk of disappearing. In S9F3, black marks symbolise forgotten buildings, while coloured watercolour traces represent the process of remembering and recovering the city's hidden layers. Collectively, these works transform travel narratives into symbolic representations of urban memory, demonstrating how mapping can make fragmented, absent and remembered urban traces simultaneously visible.

The concept chosen by G2 was trace. This concept was explored through Trabzon's city walls, urban boundaries, and buildings described in the travel narrative to visualise the spatial traces of urban memory. In G2P1, the city walls function as the principal historical framework defining the relationship between the upper and lower fortress. Around this framework, the traces described in Bijikşyan's travelogue are mapped together with historical and contemporary buildings, producing a layered visualisation of the city's spatial evolution. By integrating urban boundaries, city walls, travellers' observations, and architectural layers, the poster reveals both the continuities that persist and the spatial elements that have disappeared or been transformed over time. Rather than documenting an individual walking experience, G2P1 demonstrates how travel narratives can be translated into a multilayered visual system for mapping the surviving and vanished traces of urban memory.

According to the workshop outputs of Theme 2, the selected fanzines and posters demonstrate that the students did not simply illustrate the buildings, city walls, gates, squares, neighbourhoods and harbour described in the travel narratives; rather, they transformed these spatial references into multilayered representations of urban memory (Figure 7). While the fanzines visualise vanished structures, erased boundaries, fragmented memories and changing spatial relationships through diverse representational strategies, the posters extend this process by integrating historical routes, city walls, urban boundaries and architectural layers into coherent memory maps. Rather than functioning as isolated design outputs, these visual materials provide evidence of how students reconstruct urban memory by identifying continuities, ruptures, absences and transformations within the contemporary city. Collectively, the outputs demonstrate that travel narratives constitute a productive pedagogical resource for mapping urban memory, revealing lost urban traces and translating historical narratives into spatial representations that support critical interpretation and memory-based architectural learning.

Theme 3: Concept extraction from narratives

The final major finding of the workshop concerns the students' transformation of meanings embedded in the travel narratives into conceptual frameworks that informed subsequent design representations. The travel narratives served as generative resources that stimulated conceptual thinking and supported the production of new meanings. Through selection, abstraction and interpretation, students extracted meanings from the narratives and developed them into concepts with cultural and spatial significance. This interpretative process established a link between historical narrative and visual representation, allowing narrative meanings to be translated into conceptual structures that guided design thinking. Concept extraction thus functioned as an initial analytical stage through which textual

narratives were reconfigured as architectural knowledge, demonstrating the pedagogical potential of travel narratives for conceptual enquiry, critical interpretation and creative representation.

In line with this analytical framework, the following fanzines and posters were examined through the perspective of concept extraction from narratives, focusing on how textual meanings were interpreted, abstracted and transformed into conceptual representations.

As shown in Figure 8 (Traces of Travellers: Şakir Şevket), the fanzines and boards produced by S2, S4, S7, S8 and G3 were constructed based on selected pages or paragraphs from Şakir Şevket's travelogue *Trabzon Tarihi – İlk Türkçe Şehir Tarihi* (History of Trabzon – The First Turkish City History).

The concepts chosen by S2 include

Table (Sofra: associated with the etymology of Trabzon's name), Trapeza (ancient name of Trabzon), monumental stone (dikili taş), breaker of the sultan's tughra (Tuğra bozân: associated with the etymology of Trabzon's name), sandy harbour (kumluk liman), historic sports square in central Trabzon (Kavak Meydanı), archery competitions (ok müsabakaları), Boztepe Hill (Boztepe) and sun worshipper (Afitab-perest).

S2 produced two representational studies, S2F4 and S2F5, whose main theme was 'worship' (tapınma).

S2's works derive the concept of worship from the travel narrative's description of Boztepe as a gathering place for sun worshippers. Within this conceptual framework, Boztepe is interpreted not merely as a geographical feature but as a place of memory associated with ritual and belief. In S2F4, the blackout poetry technique is employed to reveal only the word Boztepe, while the setting sun and the figures oriented towards it symbolise the act of worship. In S2F5, Boztepe is emphasised within a circular form representing the sun, and the black coverings evoke ritual practices associated with worship. Together, these two fanzines demonstrate how the students moved beyond the literal content of the travel narrative to extract and reinterpret the concepts of worship, sun, ritual and place of memory, transforming textual references into conceptual frameworks for visual representation.

The concepts chosen by S4 include

Harbour (Liman), masonry port (kagir liman), pagan temple (Puthane), monastery (manastır), Christian monarchs (Hristiyan kralları), imperial capital (pay-ı taht),

Degirmendere Stream (Değirmendere), land of the Rums (Rumistan), Ottoman emperor (padişah) and Virgin Mary (Meryem Ana).

S4 produced two representational works. The theme of S4F3 is 'flow' (akış), focusing on memory and recollection, while the theme of S4F4 is 'historical curtain' (tarih perdesi), focusing on the history of the Komnenos Dynasty (Komnenos Hanedanı) in Trabzon.

S4's works illustrate the process of generating abstract concepts from the travel narratives. In S4F3, the harbour is interpreted not merely as a physical urban element but as a conceptual metaphor of flow, associated with remembrance, waiting, arrival and transience. The composition, structured through vertical lines layered over the text, functions as a mnemonic surface that visually expresses these states of continuity and interruption. In S4F4, Trabzon's multilayered past is conceptualised through the notion of a 'historical curtain, where the relationship between what is visible and what remains concealed becomes the central interpretive framework'. The translucent layer placed over the text symbolises the curtain, while the openings represent the gradual revelation of historical knowledge related to places, buildings and urban space. Together, these two fanzines demonstrate how abstract concepts generated from the travel narratives were transformed into symbolic and formal representations, illustrating the shift from textual interpretation to conceptual thinking rather than direct visual illustration.

The concepts chosen by S7 include

Ancient names of Trabzon (Tuğra-bozan, Tarab-Efzun, Trabzan, Hurşid-abad, Trapeza), Tower District (Kule Mahallesi), Moloz District (Moloz), harbour (liman), Boztepe Hill (Boztepe), Faroz District (Faros Mahallesi), ancient craft (kadim san'at), ancient building (ebniye-i atika), Eastern Square (Meydan-ı Şarki), Güzelhisar Fortification (Güzelhisar Tabyası), middle city (Ortahisar), and Zağnos Bridge (Zağanos Köprüsü).

S7 produced three representational works, S7F4, S7F5 and S7F6, with the shared theme of 'intuition' (sezgi).

S7's works demonstrate how the concept of intuition emerged from the fragmented historical narratives contained in the travelogues. In S7F4, S7F5 and S7F6, the lost traces of Trabzon are explored through the symbolic centrality of the fortress as a locus of urban meaning. Historical place names such as Tarab-Efzun and Hurşid-abad are interpreted as mnemonic codes, while the highlighted words reveal hidden layers of the city's past embedded within the narratives. The threads incorporated into the compositions function as metaphors of weaving, symbolising the intuitive connections established between past and

present. Collectively, these fanzines demonstrate how historical narratives can be reinterpreted through the concepts of trace, memory, connection and intuition, transforming fragmented textual information into symbolic conceptual representations rather than literal visual depictions.

The concepts chosen by S8 include

Degirmendere Stream (Değirmendere), Church of Virgin Mary of the Golden Head (Meryem Ana Kilisesi), St. Philip Church (Ayafilbo Kilisesi), St. Basil's Church (Ayvasıl Kilisesi), St. John Exoteichos Church (Eksota Kilisesi), Erdoğan area (Tekfurçayırı, today's Erdoğan area), Virgin Mary of the Golden Head (Altunbaş Kilisesi), Fatih Mosque (Fatih Camii), public square (meydan), Zagnos Bridge (Zağnos Köprüsü), Boztepe Hill (Boztepe), İskender Pasha Madrasa (İskender Paşa Medresesi), Christian cemetery (Hristiyan Mezarlığı), Tophane Hammam (Tophane Hamamı), Pazarkapı Mosque (Pazar Kapusu Camii), historic sports square in central Trabzon (Kavak Meydanı), and Hagia Sophia District (Ayasofya Mahallesi).

S8 produced one representational work focusing on place and personal names mentioned in the travelogue.

S8's work examines how urban identity is constructed through the concepts of places and people. The names appearing in the travel narrative are interpreted as mnemonic components that contribute to the city's distinctive identity. The representation suggests that urban identity is shaped not only by physical structures but also by the people associated with them and the layers of meaning they embody. In S8F2, the text is partially concealed beneath a red surface, while tears in the overlay reveal the names of places and individuals, symbolising the gradual uncovering of the traces that constitute urban identity within layered memory.

The concept chosen by G3 was 'footprint'. Drawing on both the route described in Âşık Mehmed's travelogue and the student's own exploratory route through the contemporary city, the notion of footprint was interpreted not merely as the trace of physical movement but as a conceptual device connecting narrative, memory, time and place. During the walking process, architectural structures, crafts, sounds, textures and everyday encounters enabled students to relate the historical narrative to the lived urban experience of the present. G3P1 can therefore be understood as the final synthesis of the conceptual thinking developed throughout the workshop. By superimposing the textual route onto the experiential route, the poster transforms the concept derived from the travel narrative into a visual and spatial synthesis. Furthermore, the rephotography collage, combining historical

and contemporary images, makes visible the concepts of change, continuity and loss, ultimately transforming the idea of the footprint into a comprehensive representational framework linking concept formation, spatial experience and urban memory.

Figure 8

Traces of travellers: Şakir Şevket (source: created by the authors).



The workshop outputs associated with Theme 3 demonstrate that the selected fanzines and posters reflect the students' use of travel narratives as generative texts that stimulate conceptual thinking (Figure 8). These representations show how students extract, abstract and reinterpret narrative content to develop concepts that inform their visual and spatial representations. The textual material therefore serves as an analytical resource from which concepts such as memory, ritual, trace, continuity, loss, identity, remembrance and change emerge. The visual materials further indicate that concept extraction forms an initial stage of knowledge production, supporting the progression from textual interpretation to conceptualisation and creative representation. Collectively, the outputs indicate that the

selected student travel narratives operate as active pedagogical resources that foster conceptual enquiry, critical reading and design thinking within architectural education.

Discussion

The workshop outputs suggest that the students' travel narratives functioned as productive pedagogical tools for establishing connections between textual interpretation, spatial exploration and creative representation in architectural education. Beyond the workshop outputs, the learning process itself reveals important methodological and pedagogical implications. Through the iterative movement between reading, reflection, conceptualisation and spatial experimentation, the students transformed historical narratives into both personal and collective interpretations of the city. Rather than producing uniform outcomes, the workshop generates diverse routes, conceptual frameworks, urban memory maps and representational strategies. This diversity reflects differences in students' interpretive depth, representational approaches and ability to establish meaningful connections between the past and present. Rather than being a limitation, such variation demonstrates the open-ended and exploratory character of informal learning environments, where knowledge emerges through interpretation, dialogue and experiential engagement rather than through the reproduction of standardised outcomes.

The informal nature of the workshop is further reflected in the plurality of students' interpretations. Although all students work with the same travel narratives and urban context, they construct different conceptual frameworks and spatial readings, leading to multiple and sometimes contrasting understandings of urban memory. This finding suggests that the workshop functions less as a setting for reproducing predefined knowledge and more as a platform for critical interpretation, reflection and creative meaning-making. Such openness represents one of the key pedagogical strengths of informal architectural learning environments, where narrative, experience and representation collectively contribute to knowledge construction. The following sections discuss these outputs in relation to experiential learning, the interpretation of historical narratives and the pedagogical potential of the workshop model.

Learning through travel narratives and Kolb's experiential cycle

The workshop outputs suggest that travel narratives serve as effective mediators between textual knowledge and spatial experience in architectural education. Rather than functioning solely as historical documents, the travelogues operated as learning resources through which the students engaged with the city across multiple temporal layers. The workshop

process reflects Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. Students first encountered the city through textual and contextual information (concrete experience), reflected on the narratives and extracted key concepts (reflective observation), transformed these concepts into memory maps and conceptual representations (abstract conceptualisation), and finally tested their interpretations through walking, mapping and creative production in the urban environment (active experimentation). The iterative movement between these stages enabled students to construct knowledge through experience rather than through passive reception. In this respect, the workshop demonstrated how narrative-based pedagogies can extend architectural learning beyond conventional studio settings and encourage more reflective and situated forms of knowledge production.

Beyond illustrating Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, the workshop demonstrated that travel narratives can operate as pedagogical mediators linking conceptual thinking, spatial interpretation and creative production. Rather than serving merely as historical sources, the narratives initiated a sequential process through which the students extracted concepts, reconstructed urban memory and reinterpreted the city through embodied exploration and design representation. This progression suggests that textual narratives can actively structure experience-based learning rather than simply providing contextual information.

Interpreting absence: Challenges of working with historical narratives

While travel narratives provide rich material for memory-based exploration, the workshop also reveals several methodological challenges. Historical narratives often contain subjective observations, fragmented descriptions, archaic vocabulary and references to places that have disappeared or undergone significant transformation. As a result, students frequently encountered uncertainty when attempting to relate textual descriptions to contemporary urban conditions. Rather than constituting a limitation, however, this uncertainty became a productive component of the learning process. The students were required to negotiate multiple interpretations, compare historical and contemporary spatial conditions, and make informed assumptions about absent or transformed urban elements. The workshop therefore shifted the focus from reconstructing an objective past to critically engaging with memory, representation and the selective nature of historical narratives. This finding reinforces the idea that urban memory is not a fixed archive but a dynamic process of interpretation and reconstruction.

The process of urban memory mapping proved particularly important in negotiating these uncertainties. By translating fragmented textual references into spatial relationships, the students were able to visualise historical continuities and discontinuities without claiming to

reconstruct an objective historical reality. Memory maps therefore function not only as learning outputs but also as interpretative tools for understanding the relationship between narrative, absence and place.

Pedagogical potentials and limitations of the workshop model

The workshop highlights the pedagogical value of combining textual interpretation, spatial exploration and creative representation within informal learning environments. Through concept extraction, memory mapping, route construction and the production of fanzines and posters, the students developed interdisciplinary connections between architecture, history, geography and literature. The diversity of the outputs further demonstrates the flexibility of the workshop model, allowing students to construct individual pathways of learning and representation.

At the same time, the study reveals certain limitations. The students displayed different levels of engagement with historical sources, varied capacities for abstraction and representation, and differing abilities to establish connections between past and present. Consequently, the outputs demonstrated varying levels of interpretive depth and representational complexity. Nevertheless, this variation reflects the open-ended character of informal learning environments, where the value of the process lies not in producing standardised outcomes but in fostering critical enquiry, reflection and experiential engagement. Future applications of the model may benefit from longer workshop durations, expanded documentation of reflective processes, and comparative implementations in different urban contexts.

The workshop outputs further indicate that narrative-based workshops can expand the pedagogical repertoire of architectural education by integrating reading, interpretation, mapping, walking and making into a coherent learning process. Rather than treating representation as the final stage of design, the workshop positions representation as a means of enquiry through which urban memory is explored, questioned and reconstructed. This suggests that travel narratives function not only as historical sources but also as design resources that stimulate critical thinking, spatial storytelling and reflective design practice.

Conclusion

The relationship between architecture and memory demonstrates that space is not merely a domain representing the past but a dynamic environment in which social and cultural meanings are continually reproduced. In this context, workshops, conceived as informal learning environments within architectural education, enable students to engage with this multilayered memory through experience, narrative and representation. Informed by Kolb's

(1984) experiential learning cycle and Schön's (1983) concept of reflection-in-action, the workshop model demonstrates how knowledge is constructed through lived experience rather than passively transmitted. Against this background, the workshop outputs provide responses to the two research questions and show how Trabzon's multilayered urban memory was reinterpreted through textual narratives, spatial exploration and creative representation.

In response to RQ1, 'How do the textual representations and unmapped routes in travelogues influence the ways Trabzon is perceived and remembered by students in this workshop?', the workshop outputs revealed recurring patterns across the three analytical themes. The students extracted memory-related concepts such as traces, continuity, loss, protection, cultural diversity, ritual, identity and flow embedded in the travel narratives. These concepts were subsequently translated into urban memory maps, walking routes, fanzines and posters, allowing students to reconstruct historical relationships between places, narratives and contemporary urban space. The outputs demonstrate that textual representations and unmapped routes can generate a multilayered perception of the city by making visible historical continuities, spatial transformations and forgotten urban traces. In this process, Trabzon was understood not merely as a physical setting but as a narrativised urban landscape where memory, experience and representation intersect.

The conclusions for RQ1 are primarily organised around the analytical theme of mapping urban memory, supported by evidence emerging from the concept extraction from narratives and walking as experiential learning.

- By comparing historical narratives with contemporary urban exploration, the students made multiple temporal layers visible, enabling the interpretation of the same places across different historical periods and revealing patterns of continuity, transformation and rupture in Trabzon's urban memory.
- The interpretation of the travellers' narratives revealed cultural encounters and diverse perceptions of the city, demonstrating how different social and cultural perspectives contributed to the construction of Trabzon's urban identity and collective memory.
- The comparison of local and foreign travellers' accounts enabled students to construct a multidimensional reading of the city, integrating internal and external perspectives into a richer understanding of urban perception and memory.

- Mapping historical references onto the contemporary city made absent structures, forgotten places and lost urban traces visible once again, reopening gaps in collective memory and encouraging their reinterpretation through spatial representation.

In response to RQ2, ‘How do travel narratives and urban experience facilitate conceptualisation, memory mapping and creative representation within experience-based architectural learning environments?’, the workshop outputs indicate that the workshop process progressively transformed textual narratives into conceptual, spatial and creative forms of representation. The students first extracted concepts from travel narratives, then organised these concepts into collective memory maps, and finally, reinterpreted them through walking, route construction, fanzines and posters. Rather than representing historical information directly, these outputs functioned as analytical tools through which students interpreted urban memory, negotiated historical uncertainty, and connected textual narratives with embodied spatial experience. Collectively, the outputs indicate that travel narratives support experience-based architectural learning by integrating conceptual thinking, memory reconstruction and creative representation within an informal learning environment.

The conclusions for RQ2 are organised according to the three analytical themes identified in the workshop.

Theme 1: Walking as experiential learning

- Walking-based exploration enabled students to validate, reinterpret and spatially experience textual narratives, transforming historical routes into embodied learning experiences.
- The transformation of textual narratives into routes, fanzines and posters encouraged creative representation and strengthened the relationship between interpretation, experience and design production.
- Narrative-based representations encouraged the students to interpret the city through experiential and cultural perspectives rather than solely through technical or physical descriptions, enhancing their critical reading, spatial awareness and storytelling skills.

Theme 2: Mapping urban memory

- Memory mapping practices supported the visualisation of historical traces, lost places and spatial relationships, allowing students to reconstruct urban memory through representation.
- The integration of architecture, literature, history and geography promoted interdisciplinary thinking and enabled the students to establish connections between multiple forms of knowledge.

Theme 3: Concept extraction from narratives

- Travel narratives facilitated conceptualisation by enabling students to extract, organise and reinterpret key concepts embedded in historical narratives.
- The sequential progression from concept extraction to urban memory mapping and finally to walking-based creative representation demonstrates how travel narratives can function as pedagogical mediators between textual interpretation, spatial experience and design thinking.

This study contributes to the preservation of urban memory and cultural heritage not only through the continuity of physical assets but also through their continual reproduction via experience, narrative and representation, in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11.4, which calls for strengthened efforts to safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage. Furthermore, the study aligns with the participatory, culturally sensitive and sustainable design principles emphasised in the 'Urban Quality of Life' Special Expertise Commission Report of Turkey's 12th Development Plan, where the relationship between people and place is considered a fundamental dimension of urban quality of life. From this perspective, the preservation of historical heritage extends beyond the conservation of physical fabric to include the continuity of urban memory through lived experience and interpretation. The proposed workshop model contributes to architectural education by approaching the city as a perceived, interpreted and experienced environment. It offers an innovative pedagogical framework that supports the preservation and transmission of urban memory through experiential learning while fostering cultural continuity and the liveability of cities.

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