AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHANGES IN THE
IDENTITY OF BAKU BULVAR AND PEOPLE'S IDENTIFICATION WITH
THIS SETTING

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ABSTRACT

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHANGES IN THE IDENTITY OF BAKU BULVAR AND PEOPLE'S IDENTIFICATION WITH THIS SETTING

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Places change as societies change. In today's global context, various scholars argue that the majority of urban transformation processes threaten the identity of places by creating homogenized and standardized environments. Furthermore, a review of the place identity literature shows that not only the identity of places but also identification of users with these places is threatened.

This research investigates people's identification with Baku Bulvar regarding the changes in the identity of this setting. By focusing on the Baku Bulvar case, it concentrates on the historical formation of the identity of this place (pre-socialist, socialist and post-socialist periods), components of identity of this setting (physical setting, activities and meanings) from 1980s to the present, and identification of users with this area from 1980s to the present. The historical analysis shows that changes in social, economic, political and cultural factors influenced the identity of the Bulvar. Massive transformations are observed in post-socialist period. After dissolution of USSR, the area has subjected to various redevelopment projects, which aimed to promote a new identity for the Bulvar. Practices were aimed to turn the site into a representative profile of post-socialist Baku in the global arena. As such, meanings attributed to the site by users have changed.

This study also shows that in addition to psychological aspects (past experiences/memories, beliefs) of individuals, quality of physical environment (e.g. being clean, safe), activities (e.g. diversity, land-use mix) and social environment (affordable, accessible) play a significant role in people's identification with place. The results of this study will help urban planners and designers to create better environments that strengthen and enhance place identity.

Keywords: Identity of place, Identification with place, Baku Bulvar

ÖZ

DEĞİŞEN BAKU BULVAR'ININ KİMLİĞİ VE İNSANLARIN O YERLE KİMLİK BULMASI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİNİN DEĞERLENDİRMESİ

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Toplumlar değiştikçe mekanlar da değişmektedir. Fakat, günümüz şartlarında (küresel başlık altında) mekanlarda ortaya çıkan bu değişim ve dönüşümlerin mekanların kimliklerine tehdit oluşturduğu çeşitli araştırmacılar tarafından ifade edilmektedir. Mekan kimliğine yönelik teorik değerlendirme ise sadece mekanların kimliklerinin değil aynı zamanda kullanıcıların o mekanlarla kimlik bulmasının da tehdit altında olduğunu göstermektedir.

Bu çalışma Bakü Bulvarı'nın değişen kimliğini ve insanların o mekanla kimlik bulması arasındaki ilişkiyi değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Bulvar'ın kimliğinin tarihsel oluşumu (sosyalizm öncesi, sosyalizm, ve sosyalizm sonrası), 1980'lerden bugüne Bulvar'da mekanın kimliğinin bileşenleri (fiziksel ortam, faaliyetler ve anlamlar) ve Bulvar kullanıcılarının kimliği üzerine yoğunlaşıyor. Tarihsel analiz; sosyal, ekonomik, politik ve kültürel faktörler değiştikçe Bulvar'ın kimliğini etkilediğini gösteriyor. Sosyalizm sonrası dönemde alanda büyük dönüşümler göze çarpmaktadır. SSCB'nin dağılmasından sonra, Bulvar'da yeni kimlik oluşturma amaçlı çeşitli yeniden geliştirme projeleri yürütülmüştür. Alanda kurgulanmış yeni çevre; Bakü'nün uluslararası rekabetçiliğini, uluslararası tanınmasını ve sosyalizm sonrası küresel arenada temsilcisi olmasını amaçlamıştır. Bu sebeple, alana atfedilen anlamlar değişmiştir.

Bu çalışma aynı zamanda bireylerin psikolojik boyutuna (geçmiş tecrübeler / hatıralar, inançlar) ek olarak fiziksel çevre kalitesi (örneğin temiz ve güvenli), aktiviteler (örneğin çeşitlilik, karışık arazi kullanımı) ve sosyal yapı (uygun fiyatlı, herkes tarafından ulaşılabilir) gibi özelliklerin kullanıcıların mekanla kimlik bulmasında büyük rol oynadığını saptamıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları; kentsel tasarımcıların ve plancıların mekanın kimliğini arttıran ve güçlendiren çevreler yaratmalarına yardımcı olacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mekan kimliği, Mekanla kimlik bulma, Bakü Bulvarı

To My Beloved Family…

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INTRODUCTION

"To be a human is to live in world that is filled with significant places:
To be human is to have and to know your place"

(Relph, 1976)

1.1 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study is about the change of place identity in Baku Bulvar. Studies about 'place' play a significant role in understanding person-environment relationships. During the last four decades, it has been subject to studies in human geography (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977;), in environmental psychology (Canter 1977; Proshanksy et al., 1983; Gustafson, 2001), and in urban design (Montgomery, 1998; Knox, 2005; Castello, 2010; Carmona et al., 2010). People always establish connections or associate themselves with particular places. Life experiences in terms of 'bad' or 'good' often lead us to link these experiences with specific physical settings that in turn, gain a significance in our cognitions in terms of positive or negative. While for some individuals a particular place can be seen just as a location, for another it might express more than physical layout, or location. An individual's association with a specific physical setting creates a sort of relation between him/her and the setting. As defined by Tuan, "…space becomes a place as we get to know it better and endow it with values" (1977:6). The significance of place in understanding person-environment relationships has been examined by various scholars and it has been studied under various concepts; image of place (Lynch, 1960), nature of place (Canter, 1977), sense of place (Punter, 1991; Montgomery 1998; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006), meaning of place (Gustafson, 2001), and place identity (Relph, 1976; Proshanksy et al., 1983; Hull et al., 1994; Casakin & Bernardo 2012).

One of the most controversial among these concepts is the concept of 'place identity', the main concern of this study, which has been subject to debates in studies of different

disciplines. Here, it would be important to emphasize that, when applying the concept of 'identity' to a place, it has two different yet interlinked meanings (Lewicka, 2008). While environmental psychologists use the term, 'place identity', which refers to 'identity with a place' or 'identification of a person with a place' (i.e. how individuals associate themselves with particular places)[1], 'identity of a place' is mainly used by urban designers, planners and geographers when they discuss the distinctiveness or continuity of a place in time (i.e in terms of form/physical feaures, activities/functions, meanings/symbols) (Ibid). In general, as emphasized by Relph (1976), when studying 'place identity', the differences as well as the relationship should be noted, where he interlinks these two terms; 'identity of a place' and 'identity with a place'. Therefore, it is meaningful to consider these two terms as a whole in place identity studies since they are interrelated in spite of differences. As stated by Hull et al. (1994), it is important to sustain the identity of places since they contribute to self-identity, one's sense of community. For this reason, the term 'place identity', in this study, considers both cases and addresses both meanings.

1.2 PROBLEM DEFINITION

The unstable structure of social relations, cultural diversity, economic and political restructuring are factors that influence urban fabric and its daily life in terms of formation, continuity and change. Today's world has adopted discontinuity of physical and social environment rather than continuity (Akkurt, 2012). The urban environments that have been experienced over the last couple of decades have shown many changes; socio-spatial relations, the modalities of living, working and activities, and the opportunities for enjoying leisure (Sepe, 2013). These types of changes have direct impacts on urban places and the users of these places.

> *"As people live and work in places, they gradually impose themselves on their environment, modifying and adjusting it to suit their needs and express their values. At the same time, they gradually accommodate both to their physical environment and to the values, attitudes and comportment of people around them: the classic socio-spatial dialectic"* (Soja, 1980; cited in Knox 2005: 3).

Therefore, identity of place is not static and unchangeable, but it varies as

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[1] For the purpose of this study, 'identification with place' is going to be used more frequently to address the meaning used in environmental pyschology

circumstances change (Relph, 1976). However, more recently, places and people have been faced with unprecedented changes which are assossociated with economic and cultural globalization (Knox 2005). The influence of this phenomena on urban place identity is very prominent. Various scholars argue that through the increasing force of globalization, places lose their original purposes and become meaningless, and through cultural hybridity and improved communication, places become more alike; in other words, homogenized and standardized (Relph, 1976; Arefi, 1999; Knox & Pinch 2010).

Relph (1976) describes standardisation and homogenisation as 'placelessness', which occurs as a result of improved communications and increased mobility and imitation. Entrikin (1991) proposes two possible scenarios: 'convergence', where sameness through the standardisation of landscapes is emerging; and 'divergence', where disparate elements maintain cultural and spatial distinctiveness. The end result is that, while some places maintain their spatial identities through competitiveness, some places lose meaning and uniqueness by becoming homogenised and standardised.

> *"Many trends towards homogenisation of, and loss of meaning in, places relate to processes of globalization and the creation of global space, through improved communications (whether physical or electronic). Globalization is a multi-faceted process in which the world is becoming increasingly interconnected, with centralised decision-making exploiting economies of scale and standardisation. The changing, and problematizing, of relationships between local and global has significant implications for what constitutes the meaning of place. ...With globalization has come 'mass' culture, emerging from the processes of mass production and consumption, which homogenises and standardises culture and places, transcending, crowding out, even destroying local cultures"* (Carmona et al., 2010: 101).

Likewise, Gustafson (2001) states that as people's experiences are mediated by information communication technologies, places lose their sense of localness and become irrelevant, and personal relationships to places become less stable. According to Arefi (1998), the lack of connectivity between physical landscapes and the meanings they hold in the broader local and cultural context leads to the emergence of placelessness, which transforms (weakens) people's emotional attachments to places. As places change, users of these places are also influenced. For that reason, there is a need for urban designers to understand also individuals' identification with a particular

place since growing concerns about the effects of globalization and communicational technology on place identity have revealed the above mentioned problems. Relph (1976) emphasizes that both the idenity 'of a place' and also the identification of an individual or a group 'with a place' are important. Relph highlighted the need for the continuity of identity of places as follows:

> *"A deep human need exists for associations with significant places. If we choose to ignore that need, and follow the forces of placelessness to continue unchallenged, then the future can only hold an environment in which places simply do not matter. If, on the other hand, we choose to respond to that need and transcend placelessness, then the potential exists for the development of an environment in which places are for humans, reflecting and enhancing the variety of human experience"* (1976:147).

Thus, a strong identity of place has a significant role in human-place bonding; that is, people need an emotional bond to a place in order to be able to overcome their identity crisis and to feel a sense of stability and a sense of presence within the changing world (Hay, 1989; Lewicka, 2008). For Adam (2012), place identity has such significance for an individual that any threat of change in their home environment can be seen as a threat, not just to the character of where they live but also and consequently to his/her own personal identity. According to Relph (1976), there is a need for significant places since meaningful places provide individuals with successful and long association with the setting, as assumed by Proshansky et al. (1983). Associating with a geographically locatable places an individual to create a bond (acquire a sense of belonging) which shapes the meanings that contribute to the purpose of his/her life. In the same way, Scheffler et al. (2009) claim that identity helps users of a place become attached to their environment and confirms that it belongs to them in terms of individual and collective terms, which increases people's willingness to advocate for place care.

Regarding the significance of continuity of strong identity of place that is emphasised by the scholars above, place identity in the context of post-socialist urbanism becomes a significant case for examining the effects of changing political, economic, social and cultural factors. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, urban fabrics, especially those of capital cities in Soviet successor states, experienced rapid transformations. "As post-socialist transformations take place, they produce hybridized cultures of local specificities" (Marciniak, 2009:173). The nations that declared independence adopted new economic and political models which have been reflected directly into urban

structures and daily life. The end of state-socialism produced complex processes of urban change, including the reshaping of urban identities in post-socialist cites. The most significant areas in which changes can be observed are public places as they were symbolic representations of socialist patterns and practises. In many cases, public places are the reflection of a nation's power, economy, ideology and identity. Therefore, for the post-socialist governments, these places became the starting point for the reconfiguration of place identity. The new regimes started to restructure cities, especially capitals, in order to revive pre-socialist history and overcome socialist urban identities. One of the most prominent features of the post-socialist urban milieu is the "nationalization" of urban places (Diener & Hagen, 2013:489). In many cases, these lean toward commemorating and crafting reified and revised "national" narratives by rebuilding, preserving, or creating historical landmarks. Moreover, privatization, access to free markets, freedom to compete for foreign direct investments, restructuring of socio-economic systems for global integration are also characteristics of post-socialist cities that have reshaped identity of places. Diner and Hagen (2013) claim that these processes insert homogeneity into the urban landscapes of post-socialist cities.

To this end, this research focuses on Baku, the capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In the case of Azerbaijan, changes in the identity of place can be observed most clearly in Baku because it is not only the capital of Azerbaijan, but also the capital of the newly-established regime in the country after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the post-socialist period, the most radical changes have been taken place in the capital of the new republic. The city has geographical importance because of oil resources, upon which the economic development of Baku is significantly based. As a result of the second oil boom[2], the economy started to grow, which directly influenced the construction sector in Baku. Urban neighbourhoods have undergone changes to suit the needs and goals of the new nation and overcome the socialist urban identity. The city has experienced a dramatic increase in population since 1991. The impacts of these changed socio-cultural and political systems, entrance to free markets and

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[2] The current oil boom is called the "second" in relation to the first oil boom at the end of the nineteenth century as the utility of oil reserves was identified for the economy. After the 1960s, the Soviet oil industry in Azerbaijan did not invest much in oil industry development, since huge oil and gas reservoirs had been discovered in Western Siberia (Darieva , 2011).

privatization have become more obvious in the urban landscape of Baku over the last two decades. Massive urban construction projects have been carried out and the communist symbolic architectural styles have been replaced by nationalist and global ones.

1.3   AIM OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Post-socialist cities have utilized the existing environment for the creation of an urban identity that reflects the national identity, involving the emergence of competitive ambition due to globalization (Diener & Hagen, 2013). Baku Bulvar[3] (Seaside National Park, also known as Baku Promenade) is a significant example of where the effects of these changes can be observed. The site is a historically important public place of the city that has gone through redevelopment processes over the years. The history of Baku Bulvar and its development can be divided into several periods: as a harbour dominated by economic concerns in pre-socialist times (1870-1920), as a place of 'cultured leisure' and sports symbolizing socialist practises (1920-1991) and as a representative profile of the nation and its competition with other cities in the current post-socialist era. Thus, in its physical appearance, social life and purposes, the place reflects three eras of Baku's continuous developments and manifestations as a pre-socialist, socialist, and post-socialist city. Over the last decade, Baku has faced a new era of urbanism and the process of state supported post-communist redevelopments (Valiyev,2014). As a distinctive public place, the Bulvar exemplifies social hierarchies and the ways in which a post-socialist built environment and urban social life are constantly reshaped by the continuing presence of state power and the everyday metaphors created by people who use these places (Darieva et al., 2011). The material and social life of Baku Bulvar thus reflects pervasive large-scale changes in the urban post-socialist landscapes.

This research examines the place identity of Baku Bulvar in the context of post-socialist urbanism. The study analyses the gradual transformation of the place, from its socialist past to the present time, with an attempt to understand the implementations that function as identity generators. It seeks to investigate how the identity of place has been changed over time. In addition, it examines the identity development process

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[3] The site has many names, but in this study, 'Bulvar' is used to denote this area.

of individuals in the context of post-socialist urbanism. **It tries to understand how changes in social, cultural and economic factors have influenced the identity of place and to what extent individuals' identification with the place have been influenced by these changes in the post-socialist period**.

For that reason, this research has approached the topics (identity of place and identification with place) from interrelated perspectives, and the main question of the study is as follows:

> **Whether and to what extent does a change in 'identity of place' affect people's identification with that place?**

The major motivation to start this research is that there is a lack of comparative (e.g. from socialist to post-socialist period) and interrelated research examining the identification of users with place with respect to the changing identity of that place. Furthermore, little is known about whether and to what extent a change in identity of place can affect people's identification with that place. For that reason, this case study investigates the identity of the Bulvar and the identification of users with this setting within two different periods in order to understand the continuities and differences through the transformations.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The rest of this thesis consists of six chapters.

Chapter 2 presents a general theoretical framework for the concept of 'place identity'. It aims to examine the key concepts related to 'place identity', (i.e. "identification with place" and "identity of place"). The chapter focuses in detail on each component of 'identity of place': 'physical setting', 'activity' and 'meaning'. In addition, the chapter also concentrates on the significance of factors operating at socio-geographical levels; political, social, economic and cultural. Then, it tries to understand the concept of 'place identity' within the context of globalization. The chapter concludes with a model for measuring place identity.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methods used for measuring place identity. The chapter justifies selection of the site – Baku Bulvar. It is followed by an explanation of the

employed comparative design and sub-questions prepared for study. To determine and document changes in 'identity of the Bulvar' and 'identity with the Bulvar', the data to be collected and the source evidence to be used for the research are defined. The quantitative and qualitative research tools used in comparative analyses are explained. Finally, the methods used for participant selection, gathering demographic characteristics and interviewing participants are presented.

Chapter 4 provides the reader with the historical evolution of Baku Bulvar from its early period to the present time. After a short historical introduction of Baku is given, the roles of social, cultural, political, and economical factors on the formation, change, and continuity of identity of the Bulvar are dealt with. The site is examined during three key periods which correspond to three different regimes; the Bulvar in pre-socialist times (colonial experiences), the impacts of socialist practises on the Bulvar, and the post-socialist evolution of the Bulvar. The aim is to show how the various types of regulations and implementations of each regime constituted to the identity of the Bulvar.

Chapter 5 provides an answer to the main question of this study. It concentrates in two time periods; 1980s and the present. It first examines changes in the components of 'identity of place' in Bulvar from the 1980s (socialist period) to the present (post-socialist period): physical setting, activities and meaning. This chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative results obtained from questionnaires and interviews and assesses the changes in the identity of Baku Bulvar and the users' identification with this setting in the pre- and post- soviet contexts.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter. It summarizes and discusses the implications of the results for urban design and further research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF 'PLACE IDENTITY'

This chapter aims to provide a general theoretical framework of the concept of 'place', by analysing different approaches and definitions of the concept of 'place identity': 'identity of place' and 'identification with place'. Then, it focuses on the factors (socio-geographical) that contribute to formation, continuity and change of 'place identity'. It questions the roles of social, economic, political and cultural factors in place identity. This is followed by an investigation of the concept of 'place identity' in the context of globalization in order to figure out its impact on place identity. The final section studies the measurement of 'place identity' in an interlinked approach combining its two notions: 'identification with place' and 'identity of place'.

2.1   THE CONCEPT OF PLACE

Before a definition of place identity can be attempted, it is important to first explain the concept of place in general. Dynamic relations and unstable structures of places have attracted the interest of many disciplines. Due to its significance in social life and common usage, the notion of place has been studied by various disciplines: architecture, urban design, environmental psychology, geography, anthropology, urban planning. The issue of place has been approached from various perspectives, and certain elements of place have been addressed differently by each discipline.

Relph (1976) as a humanistic geographer approaches place from an existential and experience-based perspective. He defines place as a centre of action and intention by referring to Norberg Schulz's (1984:19) statement: place is "a focus where we experience the meaningful events of our existence" (Relph 1976). This approach argues that the essence of place does not depend on location, functions served by the place, or the communities using the place. These are the necessary aspects of places. "Unselfconscious intentionality" determines the essence of places and makes them "profound centres of human existence" (Ibid:43). On the other hand, Canter (1988), as a psychologist, considers Relph's notion of place to be 'romantic' and approaches

place as a 'technical term' (cited in Gustafson 2001). In an early work, Canter (1977) suggested a three-part model of place. According to this model, place is a product of the relationships between *physical attributes, activities and conceptions* as shown in Figure 2.1 (cited in Montgomery, 1998).
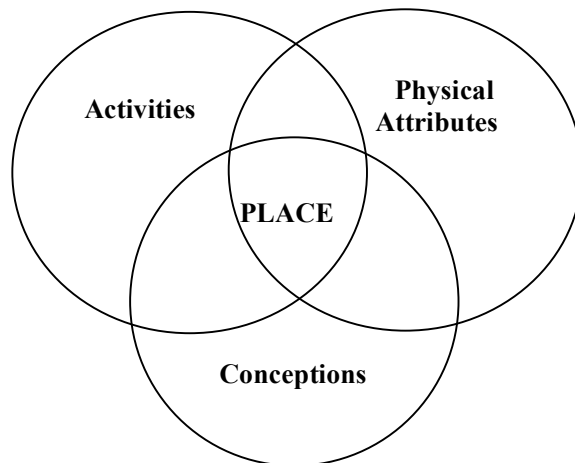
Figure 2.1: A visual metaphor for the nature of place (Canter, 1977)

Canter (1997) later extended his study and developed 'facet theory', identifying four facets of place: *functional differentiation, place objectives, scale of interaction and aspects of design to* indicate the social and cultural aspects of place (cited in Gustafson 2001).

- *Functional differentiation* – deals with activities.
- *Place objectives* – considers individual, social and cultural aspects of place experience.
- *Scale of interaction* – addresses the importance of environment.
- *Aspects of design* – focuses on the physical characteristics of place.

Montgomery (1998) finds Canter's concept (Figure 2.1) less helpful in defining place and develops a new model by pursuing Punter's (1991) model, in which *activity, physical setting* and *meaning* are defined as the components of *sense of place*. Based on the logic set of Punter's model, Montgomery (1998) creates new policy directions in order to foster an urban sense of place where *activity*, *form*, and *image* are the components of the concept of place as illustrated in Figure 2.2.

Diversity, Vitality, Street Life, People, Watching, Café Culture, Events & Local Traditions/ Pastimes, Attractions, Transaction Base, Economy

Activities

Form

Scale, Intensity, Permeability, Landmarks, Space to Bldg. Ratios, Adaptability & Range, Public Realm, Public Realm (Space Systems)

PLACE

Image (cognition, perception &cognition)

Symbolism & Memory
Image-ability & Legibility
Sensory Experience & Associations
Knowledgeability, Receptivity
Psychological Access

Figure 2.2: Policy directions to foster an urban sense of place (Montgomery, 1998)

Since the 1970's, the concept of place has become a prominent subject among geographers. This concept has provided a theoretical basis to the understanding of human-place interactions. Tuan (1975) states that, geographers approached to the study of place from two perspectives: place as a location and place as unique artefact. Lunkerman (1964), as a geographer, understands place as a development of the complex integration of nature and culture in particular locations and these are interconnected by the flow of goods and people to other places (cited in Relph 1976:4). By considering geographical and social aspects of place, Lunkerman (Ibid:4) reveals six major components for analysing the concept of place: *location, integration, interactions, localization, history,* and *meaning* (Table 2.1).

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Table 2.1: Lunkerman's six major components of the concept of place. Source: (Relph 1976, 4).

THE IDEA OF LOCATION	*"The idea of location, especially location as it relates to other things and places, is absolutely fundamental. Location can be described in terms of internal characteristics (site) and external connectivity to other locations (situation); thus places have spatial extension and an inside and outside"*
INTEGRATION	*"Place involves an integration of elements of nature and culture; each place has its own order, its special ensemble, which distinguishes it from the next place. This clearly implies that every place is a unique entity"*
INTERACTIONS	*"Although every place is unique, they are interconnected by a system of spatial interactions and transfers; they are part of a framework of circulation"*
LOCALIZED	*"Places are localized-they are parts of larger areas and are focused in a system of localization"*
HISTORY	*"Places are emerging or becoming; with historical and cultural change new elements are added and old elements disappear. Thus places have a distinct historical component"*
MEANING	*"Places have meaning: they are characterized by the beliefs of individuals"*

Relph (1976) states that geographers try to understand not only why place is a factual event in human consciousness, but what sort of beliefs they hold about place. Therefore, according to Relph "it is this alone that underlines a person's acts which are in turn what give character to a place" (Ibid:3). Rodman (1992) describes the anthropological approach of place from two principal points: place as anthropological construction which she equated with ethnographic locales and place as socially constructed. Place is a product of a person-environment relationship in both subjective and objective contents. Therefore, place is much more than the physical form of the environment where subjective content has a significant role in defining a place.

Furthermore, while describing an event or an act, or a memory, people give reference to a specific location. In the same way, Schulz (1984) finds it meaningless to imagine any happening without reference to locality and describes place as an integrated part of existence. In addition, he describes a 'place' as more than just a location:

"What, then do we mean with the word 'place'? Obviously we mean something more than abstract location. We mean a totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape, texture and colour. Together these things determine an 'environmental character', which is the essence of place" (Schulz, 1984:3).

In contrast, Dempsey et al., (2014) suggests that it is useful to think of place as made up of a range of spatial and non-spatial dimensions as it permits a broad understanding of the setting as not only physical, but also economic, social and environmental:

- a spatial environment in which one lives or spends time
- a social environment consists of residents and other users of place
- a spiritual environment (*genius loci*) (e.g. the natural beauty of a place)
- the political and cultural services and facilities, or the meaning attached to the place and related events held in it
- local context: what it is that gives the place its unique character.

From a combination of any/all of these, Dempsey et al. (2014:6) state that, place is an experienced environment based on the perceptions of the user. In the same way, Knox defines the broad understanding of place as text and context:

"... structures the daily routines of economic and social life; structures people's life paths (providing them with both opportunities and constraints); provides an arena in which every-day, 'common-sense' knowledge and experience is gathered; provides a site for processes of socialization and social reproduction; and provides an arena for contesting social norms" (Knox, 2005:2)

To summarize, there is no one definition of place, but it is considered an essential and an integral component of human life. Different disciplines tried to understand the concept of place and provided useful theoretical frameworks. It is clear that each field (human geography, environmental psychology, urban planning and urban design) has a different approach to the definition and concept of place, but there are similarities in the definitions as well (as shown in **Table 2.2 – concepts of place**).

Table 2.2: Concepts of Place

CONCEPTS OF PLACE	COMPONENTS OF PLACE		
Image of place (Lynch, 1960)	Identity	Structure	Meaning
Place Identity (Relph, 1976)	Activity	Physical setting/appearances	Meaning/Symbols
Nature of Places (Canter, 1977)	Activities	Physical Attributes	Conceptions
Sense of Place (Punter, 1991)	Activity	Physical Setting	Meaning
Sense of Place (Montgomery, 1998)	Activity	Form	Image

2.2 PLACE IDENTITY

So far, the concept of place has been discussed. The aim of this section is to present the characteristics, formation and changes of place identity in urban areas. Any intervention on an urban place affects not only its physical setting but also the character of the place, its identity. Identity of place is one of the most complicated notions existing within the urban disciplines. It is a concept that has been defined and discussed numerous times since the revival of urban design, but it still generates discussion and debate.

At the beginning, two distinct schools approached the concept of place identity from different perspectives. While one focused on the physical elements and aesthetics of built environments, the other considered the social conception of place and identity by emphasizing the functions, activities and interpretations of place above its physical configuration. Later, these two approaches started to be considered closely related, which led to a more comprehensive definition of the term (Marušić & Nikšič, 2012). In order to understand the place identity concept and the related processes in urban areas, it is necessary to analyse the various approaches.

2.2.1 Identification with place

The concept 'place identity' used in environmental psychology proposes that "identities form in a relation to environment" (Gieseking & Mangold, 2014:73). Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff argue that place identity to some degree is a sub-structure of self-identity, but mainly consists of feelings and knowledge accumulated through experiences of particular physical settings and types of settings (Proshansky et al, 1983). Memories, attitudes, values, thoughts, meanings and behaviour characterise the place (Ibid). According to Sandberg (2003), objects, relations and the surrounding physical world shape individuals and are shaped by individuals. Proshansky (1978) in his well-known early work "The city and self-identity" claims that complex patterns of conscious and unconscious ideas, beliefs, preferences, feelings, values, goals, and behavioural tendencies and skills are the dimensions relevant to the physical environment that defines an individual's personality in relation to this environment.

The quality of physical setting and the potential it provides are the factors that influence individuals' perception of the environment. Individuals evaluate the setting via the perception channels and give meaning to it. The meanings attributed to the setting can be defined as guiders for an individual's behaviour and also define his or her self within the particular place. Hull et al. (1994:110) state that "place-based meanings tell us something about who we are, who we are not". Furthermore, there are endless dimensions operating at individual (e.g. age, gender, beliefs) and communal levels (e.g. religion, norms, traditions, collective beliefs) that influence the experience of place. That is, the meanings attributed to a place can be very personal and shared. There are also factors that operate at the socio-geographical level (e.g. social, cultural, economic and political) that influence an individual's identification with a place.

Place-identity, as defined by Proshansky et al. (1983), is a cognitive sub-structure of self-identity that consists of a variety of cognitions related to the past and present. Accordingly, an individual's engagement with his or her environment on the conscious or unconscious level evolves from these cognitions. They also define the process as follows:

"...the individual does more than experience and 'record' the physical environment. The person's needs and desires may be gratified to varying degrees, and there can be little doubt that physical settings vary from one time to the next in their capacity to satisfy these needs and desires. Out of these 'good' and 'bad' experiences emerge particular values, attitudes, feelings, and beliefs, about the physical world – about what is good, acceptable, and not so good – that serve to define and integrate the place-identity of the individual" (Proshansky et al., 1983:59).

However, the experience of place also shifts from the stage of "now going on" to the stage of "being remembered" (Ibid:60) Therefore, *memory* related to setting is an important factor that generates place identity and can be categorised in terms of childhood and adult memory. Proshansky et al also indicate that "place-identity will be modified over the course of individual's lifecycle and is not bound by any of the aforementioned categories" (Ibid:60).

Moreover, *familiarity* or *length of association* with a place is another important factor that creates place-identity. Not every person is aware of the variety of memories, values, feelings that influence his or her responses to the physical world. The individual's long-term and successive use of physical setting may also create interrelated cognition (Gieseking & Mangold, 2014: 78). Long-term use of an environment promotes attachment to the setting in terms of its functions, emotions and symbols. People's successive use of their environments creates bonds between themselves and the setting. As Nanzer (2004) states, a long-term habitation within an environment or repeated use of the setting is more likely to create place-identity. In addition, people's repeated use of the environment generally depends on their preferences, the facilities or opportunities provided by places, other users of the setting or past experiences. All these factors influence an individual's dependence on a place, which has an impact on identification with the place.

To sum up, identification of an individual within a setting has been discussed. An analysis of the literature has revealed that place attachment and place dependence are two concepts interlinked with the concept of place identity. Place attachment and place dependence have been used in the related literature of place identity in order to define the concept. The following sections will define these terms and their relationship to place identity.

2.2.1.1 Place Attachment

The term 'place attachment' (PA) was first introduced by phenomenological studies in the 1970s; however, the term did not mature until Altman and Low (1992), environmental phycologists, published their comprehensive discussions concerning PA (Najafi & Shariff, 2011). In addition to forming attachment to others, people form some sort of attachment to environments and places. As people live and experience their environments, they create relationships or bonds with places. Individuals' relationships with a particular place gets weaker or stronger with respect to their feelings toward that setting. The stronger the relationships with places become, the more people get attached to these places. This relationship is expressed through interactions between affects and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, and behaviours and actions regarding a place (Altman & Low, 1992, Proshansky et.al., 1983). For Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001), the main characteristic of PA is "the desire to maintain closeness to the object of attachment which also describes the special feeling towards a particular place" (cited in Ujang, 2015:712).

PA and place identity are two interlinked concepts. Williams and Vaske (2003) define place identity as an emotional attachment by referring to the symbolic significance of a specific place where emotions and relationships accumulate and give purpose to life. On the other hand, Ujang (2012), considers place attachment as an important contributor to place identity. According to Ujang, functional and emotional attachment have a significant contribution to the continuity of place identity since the identity of a place is formed through the users' positive identifications with the places, their feelings of enjoyment, security and satisfaction (Ibid: 166). In the same way, Relph (1976) states that dimensions of PA can be used as the constructs for the definition of place identity based on the importance of place in the formation and maintenance of self-identity and group identity.

Moreover, besides the affective aspects, attachment includes cognitive and behavioural aspects. In other words, in addition to the feelings people have about a specific place, they have certain memories or beliefs about it and act in certain ways in those places (Najafi & Shariff, 2011). Tuan (2001) argues that the accumulation of experiences and memories in a place generates place attachment. According to Tuan,

people do not feel strong emotions or attachment towards a place unless they have significant or cultural experiences (Tuan, 2011). Farnum et al. (2005) claims that individual-place interactions are formed through psychological procedures rather than physical contacts (cited in Najafi & Shariff, 2011:1057). In other words, people might form strong affections towards places that they have never been to. Najafi and Sharrif (2011) define these places as mental representative places, which means people are not required to have physical contacts with places for creating strong emotional bonds, and the appearance of a place may reveal some sort of emotion whether or not that place has been experienced before.

In contrast, Tuan (2001) argues that the accumulation of experiences and memories regarding a place generate PA. According to Tuan, people do not feel strong emotions or attachment towards a place unless they have significant or cultural experience with it (Ibid). In addition, Altman and Low (1992) states that place attachments comprise culturally shared activities and meanings related to a place which derive from historic, socio-political or cultural sources. They (Ibid) put forward six culturally based processes of PA as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Culturally based process of place attachment: (Altman & Low, 1992)

Types of place bonding	Process of formation of ties
Genealogical	A historical identification of place (occurs in traditional peasant communities where relationship has been established for centuries)
Loss of land or destruction	The breakdown of genealogical bonding creates another kind of place attachment based on the loss or destruction of place
Economic	Utilitarian relationship between people and land (e.g. attachment produced by ownership or working of particular place
Cosmological	Cosmological place attachment refers to a culture's religious and mythological conceptions of the world and the structural correspondence of these ideas with the landscape
Pilgrimage	Formed by the desire to visit a place, participate in a celebratory events
Narrative	Attachment resulting through telling stories, family stories, myths related to a particular place

All in all, literature underlines the view that PA describes peoples' or individuals' emotions and feelings for a particular place. Furthermore, attachment to a place depends on the situations that individuals experience or the meanings they give to places. In general, PA plays a significant role in the formation of place identity. Place attachment plays a positive role in human lives and also in their care of a place which can be considered as one of the criteria in place making. Twigger-Ross and Uzzell (1996) state that place attachment supports the development of place identity.

Places are not constant and they are continuously changing. Consequently, person-environment relations are influenced by these transformations. Thus, feelings and emotions are neither static nor fixed; rather, they are affected by several factors and change under various circumstances. **Socio-demographic characteristics, environmental experiences, culture, place satisfaction, preference, activity, and the place itself** are factors that affect users and their attachment to a place (Najafi &

Shariff, 2011). Therefore, in order to sustain and create meaningful urban places, urban design should pay attention to the bonds established between people and their environments.

2.2.1.2 Place Dependence

The literature reveals that place dependence (PD) and place identity are two interrelated concepts. In studies that investigate place dependence, or dependence on place, PD is defined as a potential of a particular place in satisfying individuals' needs or goals in comparison to other areas (Stokols & Shumaker 1981; Kyle et al., 2004; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Smaldone, 2005). Smaldone states that place dependence comes from two user considerations: the first one is the quality assessment of the current place, and the second one is the comparison of the current place with alternative comparable places in terms of quality (cited in Ujang & Zakariya 2015:712). This type of quality assessment concerns the utilitarian and functional place attachment aspects. It correlates the functional quality of the physical elements with activities that are distinct from other potential places (Ibid:712).

The distinct functional quality of the built environment plays a significant role in the quality of urban design. Therefore, especially in redevelopment processes, urban design practises should pay attention to the users' goals and needs in order to create desired and meaningful places for them. Accordingly, the achievement of highly valued goals helps to produce more positive feelings toward a place than acquiring minor goals. As Stokols and Shumaker (1981) indicates, place can be considered important by an individual due to its functional value. For instance, users of specific resources in recreational areas can be dependent on these settings' unique ability to provide the users with the opportunity to attain the desired experiences. As individuals' dependency on places increases, so their place identity may increase. Stokols and Schumaker (1981: 457) defined PD as an "occupant's perceived strength of association between him or herself and specific places."

2.2.2 Construction of Identity of Place

In a historical flow, socio-cultural relationships, economic development, political structure, geographical aspects, and morphological development contribute to the

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formation of identity of place. The spatial features of cities are the reflection of long period interaction among these factors. In a sense, as a result of these determinants, urban places develop special characters. Accordingly, the special characteristics of a city create its identity, and a person can sense this character as unique and distinct, and the identity forms and develops in historical flow. Oktay and Bala (2015:203) suggest that, as identity is related to the 'character' of a place, the distinction between character and appearance should be noted. The character of an environment is more than the visual or spatial dimension and a place gains character with the passage of time. They state that

> *"…an area's character is experienced through its buildings and network of spaces, modest and grand, intimate or exposed, revealing views to landmarks or glimpses to secluded alleys and courts"* (Ibid:203).

In addition to these constituents, Oktay (2006:4) defined activities and patterns of use as the other important determinants of an area's character. Throughout the formation of identity, the physical and spatial qualities of places play an important role that helps people to recognize, navigate and distinguish places and attribute meaning to them. Oktay and Bala (2015) define climate, landscape, and topography as the major natural elements that are reflected in urban identity. They say that, while some cities have opportunities to use their natural settings to create a unique sense of identity in a place, others have constraints (Oktay & Bala, 2015). For instance, "Istanbul, with it Bosphorus, 'Golden Horn' (the bay of Istanbul which separates the old and new parts of European Istanbul) and 'seven hills', is blessed with unique geography" (Oktay & Bala 2015:203). On the other hand, climate plays an important role in everyday life; it has an impact on the meanings attributed to places. As Oktay and Bala (2015:203) state, it influences the way people experience and remember a place. According to them, landscape also plays a significant role in the formation of urban identity. "A locally characteristic and identifiable landscape (both natural and artificial) could be highly effective on urban identity" (Ibid:204).

Likewise, Hough (1990) indicates a relationship between identity and the characteristics of a place by stating that identity of place tells us something about its physical and social environment, and it is what a place has when it somehow belongs to its location and nowhere else. In addition, in analysing the environmental image, Lynch (1960:8) describes identity, which is identified as a distinctive object from other

things, as a separable entity, not equivalent to anything else that gives a sense of individuality and uniqueness. In his further study, 'A Theory of Good City Form', Lynch defines identity as the simplest form of sense of place:

> *"Identity is the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places-as having a vivid, or unique, or at least a particular, character of its own. Identity and structure are the formal components of sense. Congruence, transparency, and legibility are specific components, which connect environment to other aspects of our lives"* (Lynch, 1981:131).

In his definition of the image of place, Lynch defines identity as a component of the image (see Table 2.2). On the other hand, Montgomery (1998) describes the identity of place by comparing this concept with the image of place. He states that these are different concepts, and each place has both an image and an identity. According to Montgomery (1998:100), "identity is an objective thing (what a place is actually like), but image is a combination of this identity with how place is perceived". Relph understands places as phenomena of experience; to define the identity of a place, he coins the term 'the experience of places'. For Relph (1976:56), the image of a place "consists of all the elements associated with the experience of individuals…" in that setting; and for most purposes, the "image of a place is its identity". He adds that:

> *"It is clear that rather than being a simple address in a gazetteer or a point on a map, identity is a basic feature of our experience of places which both influences and is influenced by those experiences"* (Ibid :45).

The main feature of 'identity', which creates experiences and at the same time exists from experiences, is that it makes a place unique and different from other places. In addition, according to Relph, identity refers not only to the distinctiveness of place but also to the sameness between different places. Relph defines identity as persistent sameness and the unity of something which differentiates that thing from others (Ibid:45). Moreover, by referring to Albert Camus's writings, Relph defines three basic elements of the identity of places: *the physical features or appearance, the observable activities or functions, and meanings or symbols*. For him, the dialectical links between them are the basic structural relationships of that identity. Relph defines the formation of identity through an interrelated combination of setting, activity and meaning:

"Setting and meaning combine in the direct and empathetic experience of landscapes or townscapes, activities and meaning combine in many social acts and shared histories ... all of these dialectics are interrelated in a place, and it is their fusion that constitutes the identity of that place" (Ibid:48).

In addition, Relph argues that uniqueness and the individuality of identity are not the only important factors in our experiences of places. While each place is unique and has a persistent sameness within itself, at the same time it shares various characteristics with other places (Ibid). In terms of a person's experiences this sharing displays certain consistencies that make it possible to distinguish types of identities of places (see Table 2.4)

Table 2.4: Types of identities of place in terms of experiences (Relph, 1976, 61-62)

Existential insideness	*"From the individual perspective or sociality in communion of existential insideness places are lived and dynamic, full with meanings for us that are known and experienced without reflection"*
Empathetic insideness	*"For empathetic insiders, knowing places through sociality in community, places are records and expressions of the cultural values and experiences of those who create and live in them"*
Behavioural insideness	*"From the standpoint of behavioural insideness place is ambient environment, possessing qualities of landscape or townscape that constitute a primary basis for public or consensus knowledge of that place"*
Incidental insideness	*"In terms of incidental outsideness it is usually selected functions of a place that are important and the identity of that place is little more than that of a background for those functions"*
Objective outsideness	*"The attitude of the objective outsider effectively reduces places either to the single dimension of location or to a space of located objects and activities"*
Mass identity of place	*"The mass identity of place is a consensus identity that is remote from direct experience for it is provided more or less ready-made by the mass media. It is a superficial identity, for it can be changed and manipulated like some trivial disguise so long as it maintains some minimum level of credibility. It is also pervasive, for it enters into and undermines individual experiences and the symbolic properties of the identities of places"*
Existential outsideness	*"For existential outsiders the identity of places represents a lost and now unattainable involvement. Places are all and always incidental, for existence itself is incidental"*

2.2.3 Components of Identity of Place

The aim of this section is to define the components of place identity. Table 2.2 shows how the components of place are defined by different researchers. This table also makes it clear that there are some basic similarities among the definitions. *Physical setting or appearance, activity, and meaning/symbols* are the main components of identity of place. This section of the study is going to investigate the components in order to show how each of them contribute to the identity of a place.

2.2.3.1 Physical Setting

In the process of identity formation of a place, physical features and spatial qualities of place have a significant role as these qualities help people to recognize, distinguish or identify places. These physical features and appearance also have an impact on the sense of place by making them more legible to users. According to Hough (1998), physical elements are important in the construction of identity of place and provide users with better information about the cultural roots of a place.

Lynch (1960) analysed how the form of a city can make it more memorable and vivid. Similarly, Hough (1990) says that certain design elements provide the place with qualities by strengthening its meaning and creating a unique region, or a city, or a neighbourhood. In addition, Rapoport (1984:54) states that a recognizable place has an order inside and describes the characteristics that provide the place with its unique character:

- Its location
- Its relation to landscape
- Having certain elements
- Having certain settings
- Having spaces of certain types
- Being named in particular ways
- Using certain oriental systems
- Having certain colours, texture, etc.
- Having certain sounds, smells, temperatures, air movements
- Having certain activities, and so on

Urban centres are the most dynamic places, and according to Hough (1990) the continuity of a built environment – a matrix of built form in urban centres – ensures

its identity. He adds that urban spaces, squares, parks, streets, and the ways in which these are linked are the organizing framework. Moreover, Lynch (1960) states that physical features and appearance influence places, making them more legible to users. This provides users with an identifiable layout and clarity of city scape where places can be identified, organized and navigated by people. By studying Lynch's work, Ujang (2010) defines some attributes of physical elements that contribute to the identity of place (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Attributes of place elements (Ujang 2010, 65)

COMPONENT	ATTRIBUTES	ELEMENTS
PHYSICAL ELEMENTS	Accessibility Legibility	Location Access Layout Signage Greenery/trees View Landscape features Building and façade Landmark/Nodes Shopping complexes

The physical setting of aplace can be analysed in terms of two categories: the physical setting of a **natural place** and the physical characteristic of a **human-made place**. Earth, sky and sea are the physical components of a natural place. Norberg-Schulz (1984) states that a series of places is produced by variations in the surface relief. Plain, valley, basin, ravine, plateau, hill and mountain are places that possess distinctive phenomenological characteristics. The contribution of natural elements to the identity of place is defined by Schulz as follows:

> "*Some places get their identity from a particularly interesting location, whereas the human-made components are rather insignificant. Others, instead, may be situated in a dull landscape, but possess a well-defined configuration and a distinct character*" (Norber-Schulz, 1984:179).

The second category is a human-made place, which is related to nature in three basic

ways: **visualization**, **complementation** and **symbolization**. A human-made place visualizes, complements and symbolizes a person's understanding of his or her environment. As Schulz explains in order to make the natural structure more precise, an individual first visualizes his or her 'understanding' by 'expressing' the existential foothold that has been gained. A person builds what seems to achieve his or her goal. Secondly, by adding what is missing the individual complements the existence nature. Finally, the individual symbolizes his/her understanding of nature by "translating" experienced meaning (Norberg-Schulz, 1984). While this process shows how people sense their environment, it also shows how individuals and communities create the image and identity of their surroundings. Schulz also indicates the importance of appearance as follows:

> *"Whether place is understood and experienced as a landscape in the direct and obvious sense that visual features provide tangible evidence of some concentration of human activities, or in a subtle sense as reflecting human values and intentions, appearance is an important feature of all places"* (Norberg-Schulz, 1984:31).

2.2.3.2   Activities

Activity is the second component of the identity of a place which is related to use and interaction of people. It has a significant role in creating the identity of place as activities held in urban places directly impact on people's perception of environment and experiences. According to Norberg-Schulz (1984), activity is important for place identity since different actions need different places with different characters such as a protective place for dwelling, a practical place for office, a festive place for a ball-room and a solemn place for a church.

The most dynamic places in cities are public places where various types of activities can be observed. Jan Gehl (1987) analysed outdoor activities in public places with respect to the quality of physical conditions which have impacts on the activities in different ways. Gehl divided outdoor activities into three categories: ***necessary, optional, and social.*** It is important to distinguish the types of activities in which people engage since each activity affects how a place is characterized by its users.

Necessary activities include going to school or to work, waiting for a bus or a person,

shopping, running errands – in other words, all the compulsory activities that take place throughout the year under almost all conditions – those in which participants have no choice (Gehl, 1987).

Optional activities are those that require optimal exterior conditions such as suitable whether and time and especially depend on exterior physical conditions. This category includes activities like taking a walk to get a breath of fresh air, sitting and sunbathing, or standing around enjoying life (Ibid).

Social activities are also termed as 'resultant' activities because they evolve in connection with the other two activity categories. This category of activities depends on the presence of others in public spaces and includes such activities as conversations and greetings, passive contacts (seeing and hearing other people) and various kinds of communal activities (Ibid). Gehl states that if only necessary activities occur in a place, then that place is of poor quality. Yet, when the quality of a place is good, the frequency of optional activities increases and leads to a higher level of social activities, as shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Relationships between the quality of physical environment and the rate of occurrence of outdoor activities (Gehl, 1987:11)

Types of activities	Quality of physical environment	
	Poor	**Good**
Necessary activities	●	●
Optional activities	●	⬤
'Resultant' activities (Social activities)	·	●

Furthermore, Montgomery (1998) defines two different but related concepts that

generate activity: *vitality and diversity*. Vitality refers to the compulsory activities taking place in streets, the number of cultural events and celebrations over the year and the number of people in and around the street at various times of the day and night (Ibid). Montgomery states that while vitality can be defined by measuring pedestrian flows and movements with number of facilities, the term 'diversity' has a wider set of indicators. Moreover, a transaction base has to be supplied in order to achieve successful places, and it must be as complex as possible (Ibid). In addition, Ujang and Dola (2007) claim that "a responsive place is able to accommodate human activities". By studying Montgomery's work, Ujang (2012) draws the attributes of place activity (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Attributes of place activity (Ujang , 2012:159)

Component	Attributes	Elements
Activity	Vitality	Liveliness
		Street activity
		People watching
	Diversity/ Choice	Entertainment
		Products/services
		Food and eating spots
		Day and night activities
	Transaction	Mixture of people
		Banking and communication centres
		Street vendors

Besides the basic daily activities, places also hold activities formed in and belonging to the specific location. These are activities which are formed through the socio-cultural characteristics of that geography where climate, geography, and natural resources play an important role. In addition, traditions, rituals, or beliefs of individuals or society are significant factors that contribute to the existence and continuity of these activities, which distinguishes these types of places from others for both insiders and outsiders.

2.2.3.3 Meanings/ Symbols

The third component of identity of place is meaning, which is less tangible and much more difficult to grasp in comparison to physical setting and activity. The meaning of a place can be personal on the one hand, and directly related to the physical aspects and activities in urban areas on the other. Stedman (2003:672) says that meaning is mainly socially constructed: meanings attributed to space are based on people's experiences. The meanings of places can be very personal, experienced individually, such as the places where people fell in love or where they went to school. Creswell (2009) emphasizes that meanings are also shared and social. For example, the Twin Towers of the of the World Trade Center in New York had many shared meanings like the projection of American power or the importance of capitalism (Ibid). Therefore, built structures have a symbolic role in the relationship between environment and the society. Carmona et al (2010), define landscapes or all urban environments as repositories of symbols, values and meanings. Furthermore, they (Ibid) define the process that creates meanings as signification. According to Lane (2000), there are three types of signs:

- *Iconic signs* - directly similar to the object (e.g. a painting).
- *Indexical signs* - related to the object in terms of materiality (e.g. smoke signifying fire).
- *Symbolic signs* - basically constructed through social and cultural systems and having arbitrary an relationship to the object (e.g. classical columns representing grandeur) (cited in Carmona et al., 2010:117)

Places with such signs and activities hold messages and meanings for people which can be perceived, interpreted and decoded through their perception channels. Montgomery (1998) associates meanings with the perceptual and the psychological aspects of environmental experience. Likewise, Stokol and Shumaker (1981) associate meaning with users' internal psychological and social processes that generate the individual's perception. Ujang (2012) claims that generated perception is rooted in the setting and, besides physical attributes, identity of place is designated by meaning and association developed between places and users. According to her (Ibid), cultural

characteristics meld with users' perception and functional needs. For Carmona et al. (2010), perception is not just sensing and seeing the environment, but it involves a more complicated understanding or processing of stimuli. Ittelson (1978) puts forward four types of perception:

- *Cognitive* – includes thinking about, arranging and keeping information about the environment which enables users to make sense of the environment.

- *Affective* – includes human feelings which accordingly influence human perception of environment.

- *Interpretive* – involves meanings derived from the environment. Making an assessment of the new information based on the memories of experienced past.

- *Evaluative* – involves evaluating and preferring elements in the environment, and determining them in terms of good or bad (cited in Carmona et al., 2010:112).

Carmona et al (2010) claims that perception is socially and culturally learnt rather than just being a biological process. Differences in perception can be attributed to the physical, social and cultural environments. In addition, age, gender, ethnicity, lifestyle, usual travel mode and length of residence in an area are also important factors (Ibid:112). Knox and Pinch (2010:203) emphasize the importance of the difference between 'intended' meaning of the architecture and 'perceived' meaning of the built environments as it is required to define understanding of social meaning of the built environment. They claim that while society changes the signification also changes:

> *"...social meaning of the built environment is not static. The meanings associated with particular symbols and symbolic environments tend to be modified as social values change in response to changing lifestyles and changing patterns of socio-economic organization"* (Knox & Pinch 2010:203).

Places can be given meaning through many possible modes and it is important to answer the question of what makes a place meaningful. Gustafson (2001) in his research labelled the dimensions through which meaning emerges as distinction, evaluation, continuity and change (see Table 2.8**).**

Table 2.8: Dimensions of meaning (Gustafson, 2001:13)

DIMENSIONS	EMERGING PROCCESS
Distinction	A meaningful place must have territory distinguishable from surroundings in order to identify it since distinction as a basic feature of individual and social cognition helps people to categorise and understand differences and similarities. Significantly, similarities also help people to categorise a place, showing what kind of place it is and what it has in common with others. Since distinction is not only about establishing uniqueness, similarities as well as differences play a significant role in distinguishing a place.
Valuation	Comparing places creates a distinction that often involves positive and negative valuation. Valuating a place is sometimes significant in making it meaningful. A person's involvement with a place is affected by pleasant and unpleasant meaning valuations of the specific place.
Continuity	Temporal dimension is another contributor to making a place meaningful since places connect to human life path through the length of residence, important events, or frequency of use which affect the meaning given to a place. Place-bound social relations, local traditions and historical development of the environment are significant elements of continuity as well.
Change	The possibility of change is another temporal dimension. Places may gain new meaning in time as a result of changes that derive from external events or developments, and often through conscious efforts of the locals to develop the environmental and social qualities. This means that the meanings are not attributed once and for all; they are unstable. Even a traditionally given meaning may disappear through the modernisation of environment or society.

2.3   Place, Time and Change

Many aspects of urban design change over time: the way the the environment is perceived; the morphological formation of places; how places last and adapt; how robust they are (i.e. on how places change over time); and how places become centres of meaning (Carmona & Tiesdell 2007). The character of a place is transformed over time since built environments as well as peoples' intentions and perceptions undergo

change. For Relph (1976), time is a part of the human experience of place. This scholar associates the changing character of place with the expansion of users' geographical and social knowledge over time. To understand changes in place, a holistic approach is required because there are various changing factors that have impacts on places. Carmona and Tiesdell (2007) state that urban environments and built structures are shaped and reshaped as a result of technological, economic, social and cultural changes and any interventions on the built environment irreversibly affect history for all time, becoming part of that history. They also emphasize that "never static, the built environment stands as testament to process of continuity, change and the passage of time within particular place" (Ibid:266).

Places experience change in both short and long term. Rossi (1999) described the crucial role of time in urbanism, and Castello (2010:17) paraphrased Rossi's reflection by stating that "the form of a place is always the form of a time of places; and there are many times in the formation of a place ". Habraken (1998) suggests that it is important to think of place over the long term as a changing, transformative place. In addition to this suggestion, Carmona and Tiesdell (2007:265), supporting Lynch's (1972) idea, argued that it is important to understand the adaptation of environment to change, and above all, to understand why some environments are capable of adapting to the change more successfully than others.

2.4   Place identity formation: Factors operating at socio-geographical levels

This section defines the importance of geographical and social factors on the formation of place identity. The aim is to explain how urban places reflect the essence of political, social, economic, cultural and national aspects.

One of the significant factors operating at the socio-geographical level is national identity. The terms national identity and place identity are interlinked concepts that are considered together in the seminal literature. The term identity, according to Smith (1993) can be categorized into two types: individual and collective. In his definition, Smith (1993) considers national identity as a type of collective identity. According to him, national identity requires a sense of political community, social space, common institutions and a well-defined territory to which people feel a sense of belonging (Ibid). Here, geographical location and its built environment becomes an important

tool. The significant role of built environment is that it provides the markers of territorial limits, physical manifestations of institutions, key icons and a built heritage where "collective memory can be nurtured" (Andrew, 2010:63). National identity is a complex phenomenon. While some theorists indicate that it is an outcome or an entity, Andrew (2010) states that it is better understood as a process or project.

In the case of post-socialist nations, the construction of nation process and the effort to foster a strong sense of national identity is seen most obviously in the capital cities of countries where the declaration of independence is a reflection of the citizens' efforts. Thus, in this case, the significant role of urban places come to the forefront:

> *"Where cities are conceived or developed synecdochically– to represent the whole nation – the built environment is particularly significant. The purest form of this literal nation-building is the establishment of a new capital, or capital precinct, that supposedly embodies the values of the nation"* (Ibdi:64).

In his research, Liu (2009:34) investigates national identity and its reflection in a capital's urban landscape. According to Liu, national identity is an imagined collective memory related to the nation's political, cultural, and economic features and the urban landscape in a capital city is the representation of these features. Urban landscape plays a significant role in representing national identity since its elements, as defined by Bell (1999), "act as specializations of power and memory, …concretized myths that anchor the projection of national identity onto physical territory" (cited in Whelan, 2005:62). According to Ederson (2002), national identity can also be presented by "iconic sites" – spatial symbols. These are built environments that hold evidence of past cultures which express historical events, or symbolize the progress of a nation's modernization, or express the nation's political and economic power (Liu, 2009).

William (2004:17) states that the relationships between urban planning, architecture and evolving conceptions of national identity are directly influenced by political system, which can be observed most clearly in the capital of a country. The influence of power and ideology of a nation shapes its identity, which has an impact on the identity of place. The built environments of a place can be the tools that symbolize power and ideology. As Kenny (1992) states, "a planning document, possibly more than any other written text, articulates the ideology of dominant groups in the production of the built environment" (cited in Whelan, 2005:66).

Moreover, as was stated previously, the symbolic role of buildings is a key part of the relationships between society and environment. Therefore, Lozano (1990) states that the physical form of a community is the highest cultural expression of the society. He claims that physical form "translates social structure, lifestyle, and values into buildings and spaces, into the physical vessel in which the community lives and evolves" (Lozano, 1990:241). According to Knox (1998), although the source of the symbolization of power has changed over time – from royalty to aristocracy, through industrial capital to present-day big government and big business – the intention has always been the same: "… to legitimize a particular ideology or power system by providing a physical focus to which sentiments could be attached" (cited in Carmona et al., 2010:118). However, the symbolic content of a built environment is multi-layered and there may be competing associations and interpretations. While for some people large office blocks symbolize financial strength and influence, for others it may reflect corporate greed (Carmona et al., 2010).

In the majority of cases, cities developed by previous political regimes or imperial rulers contain a mix of styles that demonstrate the legacy of previous rulers. The built environment was used by many totalitarian and imperial/colonial regimes to symbolize political power. Andrew (2010) explains how the post-colonial nations put forward their own ideologies:

> "Contemporary regimes assert their own version of nationhood by removing, re-semanticizing and adapting existing buildings, as well as imposing styles, statements and statues to make their own ideologies visible" (Andrew, 2010: 64).

The meaning attached to the structures built by previous regimes changes over time as the new regimes make functional and visual interpretations regarding these structures. For example, Kolbe (2007) states that many government buildings representing communist state power have lost their meanings after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and have been transformed into tourist attractions (cited in Liu, 2009).

Another essential factor that has been used as a cultural and political resource is naming urban communities (cities, neighbourhoods, street, squares, etc.). Naming places is linked with the process of nation-building and state formation and change in the naming process is the result of ideological upheavals (Whelan, 2005:65). It plays

an important role in the context of place identity. As van Dam (2005:113) states, in constructing the identity of place, one of the most essential activities is to give a name to a place. The names given to streets have symbolic significance for colonial and post-colonial contexts. Since the latter half of the eighteenth century, naming streets has become an outstanding feature of the period of modern nationalism, colonialism and empire building (Whelan, 2005). van Dam (2005) states that the names of places act as a source of information and play a part in the attachment of meaning to an environment by its users. Whelan (2005) claims that giving the name of a famous person or event to a street perpetuates the historical happenings and figures in the minds of citizens.

Liu (2009) stresses that, besides the iconic sides that may be linked directly with state power, "national-cultural sites" are important features that are considered in a capital city's planning projects. Sites such as national museums, galleries, operas, theatres and libraries symbolize the cultural characteristics and civilization of the nation (Liu 2009). According to Kolbe (2009), in order to create "the image that denotes the resurgence of the nations' previously oppressed cultural development", many capital cities of post-communist Eastern Europe have started to dedicate themselves to the construction of national-cultural sites (cited in Liu, 2009:34).

Since urban places are developed, shaped and reshaped with respect to cultural aspects, in many cases, they are constructed to represent identity of the nation. Urban landscapes play a significant role and they are used by a nation to symbolize its power and ideology. In addition to cultural aspects, political, economic and geographical features play a critical role as the development of urban landscapes is influenced by these factors. It is clear that urban places are developed by a nation's ideologies and strategies and they reflect the economic, socio-cultural and political models adopted by the nation's authorities. However, since these features are unstable and change over time, places are going to be modified as well.

2.4.1 Identity of Place in the Context of Globalization

So far the concepts of place and identity have been discussed, and the importance of the cultural, social and economic relations of place identity have been defined. Growing concerns regarding globalization and its effects on these factors have been

discussed since the revival of the term of place identity. Here, it would be meaningful to investigate these two concepts globalization and place identity) together for a better understanding of the concept of place identity.

Over the last 20 years, the expansion and liberalization of international capital and substantial advances in communication have given rise to the phenomenon known as globalization. The stability of communities and their sense of identity have been affected significantly by the breakdown of national barriers to trade, communication and the increased movement of populations. Globalization is discussed as one of the major generators of identity crisis in urban places. As cities have adapted the new trends and started to position themselves on the global market, place identities have started to alter (Relph, 1976; Knox, 2005; see also Knox & Pinch, 2010; Auge, 1995; Arefi, 1999; Camona et al., 2010)

There are two major outcomes of globalization on urban places: the first one is the increasing homogenized and standardised spaces; and the second one, which is generated as a response to first outcome, is the increasing concern for locality, distinctiveness and familiarity. Entrikin (1991) proposed two possible scenarios: 'convergence', where sameness through the standardisation of landscapes is emerging, and 'divergence', where disparate elements maintain cultural and spatial distinctiveness (cited in Arefi, 1999:185). City design and daily life have been dramatically impacted by the globalization of architectural styles, communication and urban spaces. The main concern is the increasing homogenized and standardised environments that erode the maintenance of place identity which is locally produced and culturally rooted in time. As Zetter and Watson (2006) state, unique and distinctive built environments are replaced by global forms and designs that are poorly adapted to local conditions and needs. Accordingly, Adam (2012) states that, as the less developed countries open up their markets to free trade, the impacts of global communication and consumerism have undermined the symbols of identity, thus giving rise to the so-called "McDonaldization" of the world.

The influences are not only obvious in the physical form of the built environments, but socio-spatial patterns have also been affected. The way that people act, perceive and give meaning to urban places has been changed. Tuan (2001) claims that an

architectural space is capable of articulating social order and impacting human senses and feelings. In the same way, Arefi (1999:190) stresses that social relations are not only the reflection of people-place interaction but they also explain the nature of social production of space. Heideger (1971) had intuited the effects of mass production, mass communication, rationalism and mass values on the social construction of place. He suggested that the inevitable result is the subversion of 'authenticity' of place. In the same way, Knox (2005) emphasizes that places are becoming inauthentic as a result of invented traditions. Knox defines this process as follows:

> *"City spaces become inauthentic and 'placeless', a process that is, ironically, reinforced as people seek authenticity through professionally designed and commercially constructed spaces and places whose invented traditions, sanitized and simplified symbolism and commercialized heritage all make for convergence rather than spatial identity"* (Knox, 2005:3).

In addition, over the last twenty years, one substantial development is the 'iconic' architecture and the star architecture system that supports it. Adam (2012) states that iconic buildings have been constructed for centuries; however, the current international fashion for large and extraordinary icon buildings promotes globalized identity. In addition, he defines the construction of iconic buildings as part of a widely recognised phenomenon – "urban boosterism" (Ibid:185). With the process of globalization, the city's role is growing, generating a new focus in the global arena. Jasson and Power (2006) define the renewed focus on the city as an economy driver. Sharon Zukin identifies the drivers as follows:

> *"City boosters increasingly compete for tourists and financial investments by bolstering the city's image as a centre of cultural innovation, including restaurants, avant garde performances, and architectural design"* (Zukin, 1995:2).

The emergence of new approaches is the result of globalization, which has promoted developers or city authorities in many parts of the world to become much more conscious of the ways in which places are perceived by tourists, business, media and firms. Therefore, places are being increasingly reinterpreted, reimagined, redeveloped, redesigned and marketed. Knox (2005:3) defines these processes as the generation of a 'fast world' – a world of landscapes that are experiencing continuous change in which more places change and they seem to look alike. The less they are capable of

maintaining a distinctive or unique sense of place, the less they are able to sustain public social life. According to Knox:

> *"In the fast world, commonalities among places are intensifying and as a result the experience of spectacular and distinctive places, physical settings and landscapes has become an important element of consumer culture"* (Knox, 2005:3).

In response to this shift, developers have created festival market places, theme parks, shopping malls, renovated historic districts, neo-traditional neighbourhoods and villages. However, Knox claims that the more competitive developers become in terms of providing distinctive settings and the bigger and more splendid the projects, the more convergent the results (Ibid).

Meanings associated with places that are derived from its socio-cultural characteristics have lost their significance as a result of a new cultural economy. According to Relph (1976) the meaning of 'home' has been weakened by commercialization. Relationships between 'global' and 'local' play a central role in the processes of production, reproduction, identity and consumption in today's cultural landscape. The main concern about today's urban spaces is the loss of a sense of locality where the break-down of barriers has brought about a new way of producing spaces. As Terkenli (2005) , the new cultural economy of spaces/places materializes through the creation of landscape spatiality. Terkenli defines six characteristics of the newly-emerging global cultural economy of space: **1) changes in geographical schemata of changing socio-economic relations; 2) break-down of geographical barriers of distance and of place, resulting in new collective experiences of place; 3) changes in geographical schemata of changing socio-economic relations; 4) de-segregation of home and work life from leisure; 5) rapid and widespread exchange and communication of symbolic goods, structures, services and practices; 6) predominance of visual over textual media** (Terkenli, 2005)**.** In addition, Terkenli focuses on newly-emergent spatial patterns that came with 'a new cultural economy' and propose four processes that, according to her, characterized and spread from 'post-modern Western world' (2005). Furthermore, Relph (1976) claims that there is a prevalent and familiar consideration that the localism and variety of the places and landscapes reflected in the characteristics of preindustrial societies and handicraft

cultures are being diminished and perhaps expunged. According to him, such an attitude towards a place (which Relph calls an inauthentic attitude to a place) is an indicator of the emerging possibility of a placeless geography which will lack both diversity in landscapes and significance of places. This loss of sense of place meansindividuals no longer have any appreciation of place identities (Ibid:78). Relph puts forward the term **placelessness** and defines it as a weakening of the identity of places not only in that they look alike but they also offer the same possibilities for experience and evoke similar feelings (1976). There may be a number of reasons why authentic attitudes towards places are lost, but perhaps placelessness is more directly encouraged by media that promote *mass communication*, *mass culture*, *big business*, *central authority*and the *economic system*:

> *"**Mass communication** and modes of diffusion of mass attitudes and fashions of kitsch*
>
> ***Mass culture** of dictated and standardized values; maintained by making possible mass communications*
>
> ***Big business** and multi-national corporations: these encourage standardization of products and needs to ensure economic survival, and they supply the objects of kitsch through the application of technique*
>
> ***Central authorities**: these encourage uniformity of places in the interests of efficiency and through the exercise of a uniform power.*
>
> ***The economic system**: the abstract system, dominated by technique, which underlies and embraces all of the above"* (Ibid:120).

An authentic geography and its significance is based on the geography of place which is understood and felt for its characteristics. According to Relph (Ibid:117), it is a geography that is manifested in the diversity of human-made forms and landscapes, forms that are produced by insiders, those living in and committed to that place, and in accordance with their cultural and physical setting. Relph adds that, deep meanings related to such authentic experiences lose their strength in most contemporary cultures due to increasing inauthentic attitudes to a place and standardised manifestations of these attitudes in the landscapes:

> *"**Other-directedness in places**: Landscape made for tourists, entertainment districts, commercial strips, disneyfied places, museumised places, futurist places"*
>
> *"**Uniformity and standardization in places:** Instant new towns and suburbs,*

industrial commercial developments, new roads and airports etc., international styles in design and architecture"

*"**Formlessness and lack of human scale and order in places:** Subtopias, Gigantism (skyscrapers, megalopolis), individual features unrelated to cultural or physical setting"*

*"**Place destruction:** Impersonal destruction in war, destruction by excavation, burial, destruction by expropriation and redevelopment by outsiders (e.g. urban expansion)"*

*"**Impermanence and instability of places:** Places undergoing continuous, redevelopment (e.g. many central business districts), abandoned places"* (Relph, 1976:118).

2.5   A Conceptual Model for Measuring Place Identity

The theoretical framework of place identity asserts that there are several and interrelated socio-geographical factors (location, climate, natural resources/culture, economy, policies, society) which impact on the formation/continuity/change of place identity. Factors operating at the socio-geographical level play a significant role in people-environment relationships since these factors have an impact on people's experiences. The literature review of the place identity concept reveals that there is no agreement between the researchers about which of these factors are more important than the others. Indeed, as it is stated in the previous sections, each of these factors is important in the formation of urban places, and every urban place is a reflection of these factors. The conceptual model in Figure 2.3 illustrates the development of 'identity of place' and 'identification with place'.
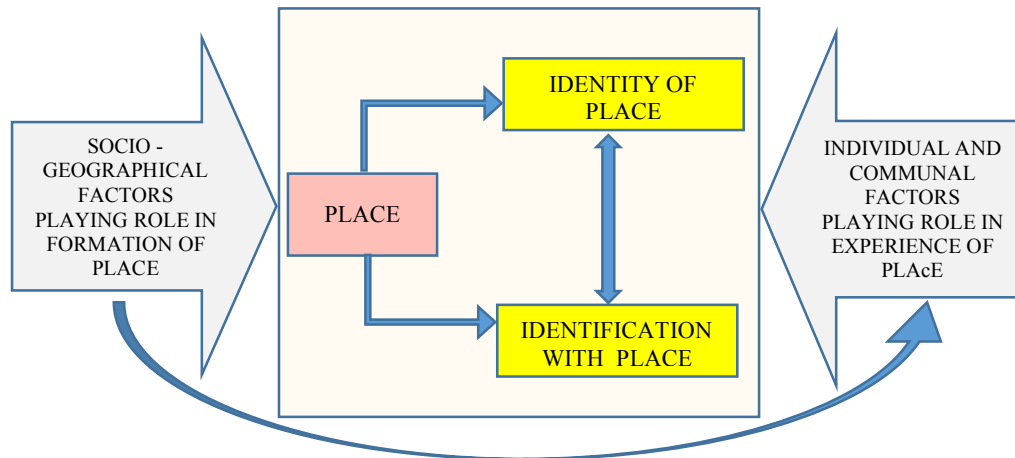
Figure 2.3: Development of 'Identity of place' and 'Identification with Place'. Conceptual Model (Developed by author)

The theoretical framework of place identity also reveals that 'identity of place' and identification with place' are two interlinked concepts (Relph, 1976), and for this reason they should be considered together. As people experience places, they identify these places, and accordingly identify themselves with/against these places. When people get to know the environments better they attribute meanings to it, interpret it, and associate themselves (establishing or not establishing a mutual bond) with this environment. In the previous section, it is stated that place identity is basically an outcome of experiences and each person experiences places differently. Meanings attributed to a place can be shared or individual, thus establishing bonds with a place (may) differ from person to person. Thus, it is meaningful to consider also factors operating at individual and communal level. Figure 2.4 illustrates a conceptual model of the relationship between these two terms (identity of place and identification with place) and possible factors that should be considered in measuring how people identify with places.

FACTORS OPERATING AT THE COMMUNAL LEVEL
- NORMS
- TRADITIONS
- EDUCATION
- COLLECTIVE BELIEFS AND MEMORIES
- PAST EXPERIENCES

FACTORS OPERATING AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL
- AGE
- GENDER
- EDUCATION
- BELIEFS, PREFERENCES (Like/dislike)
- PAST EXPERIENCES

ACTIVITIES

PHYSICAL SETTING

MEANINGS

EXPERIENCE OF PLACE

IDENTIFICATION WITH PLACE

- ➢ Contributes to Self-Identity/ Sense of Community (Hull Et Al., 1994)
- ➢ Acquires Sense of Belonging (Proshansky Et Al., 1983)
- ➢ Identity helps users of place to become attached to their environment (Scheffler Et Al.,2009)
- ➢ Willingness to Advocate for Place-Care (Scheffler Et Al.,2009)

Figure 2.4: Relationship Between Identity of Place and Identification with Place (Developed by author)

2.6   Concluding Remarks

To conclude, urban places experience continuous changes through time, and the dimensions of place are also influenced by these processes. As indicated at the beginning of this study, places are significant components of each individual's life, and people identify themselves with places. Therefore, place identity is an important dimension of place which has attracted the attention of many disciplines over the last decades.

Furthermore, the temporal dimension of urban design and its significance cannot be ignored. Places develop, change, transform over time, not only in terms of physical but also non-spatial aspects. People's thoughts, beliefs and feelings towards a place might also change within a period of time even if the place maintains its visual or social stability. As Castello (2010) claims, the spirit of time and the processes of identification of place are significantly interrelated.

The aim of this chapter was to introduce a reader with a general definition of place identity, its components and its significance for people. Chapter 3 provides an information about the research methods implemented in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This research uses a case study approach to investigate place identity in Baku Bulvar. This research employs a pre and post comparative analysis designed to answer the following research question:

Whether and to what extent does a change in 'identity of place' affect people's identification with that place?

To answer this question, the researcher conducted a study in Baku Bulvar. More specifically, this thesis aims to examine the impacts of the transitional period (socialist & post-socialist development period within the context of changing social, economic, political, and cultural characteristics) on the identity of the public place and person-environment relationships.

To answer the main research question provided above, the researcher asks:

(1) How has the identity of place changed from the socialist to post-socialist periods?
- Which factors affected the process of identity formation and how?
- What were the place identity generators in the socialist and post-socialist periods?
- To what extent did the Soviet place identity change over time? Was the place identity in the socialist period completely lost, or did it manage to partly survive?

(2) To what extent have the physical features (e.g. land uses, urban furniture), activities and meanings (or symbols) in Baku Bulvar changed over time, particularly from the socialism to post-socialist periods?

(3) To what extent have people's identification with Baku Bulvar changed regarding changes in the identity of the Bulvar?

This research seeks to answer these questions by using a mixed-method approach. The major sources of evidence are visual analyses, direct observations in the field, archival documents and surveying (i.e. interview questionnaire and in-depth interviews).

3.1 SITE SELECTION

As defined in the previous chapters, due to changes in political, economical, social and cultural characteristics, urban places have experienced tremendous transformations, which directly impact place identities. In the process of urban transitions, urban places/public spaces are exposed to reshaping according to the new motives. While some places have been successfully modified to these changes, some places have lost their significance. As a matter of course, the case of post-socialist urban transition is an important example of how the impacts of these changes on place identity can be examined. To this end, this research is focused on the case of Baku, the capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Among many urban places in Baku, the Bulvar is one of the most suitable sites to illustrate the place identity formation process for a number of reasons. First of all, historically it is one of the important public spaces of the city, which has experienced changes in three different regimes; pre-socialist formation, socialist developments and practices and post-socialist transitions. Since its construction, the site has evolved over the years and reflected the purposes and desires of each regime. Secondly, it is located on the water-front side of the city near the city centre covering a significant area. The site, which was originally built as an important public space with increasing concerns regarding societal modernity, has evolved during the various periods and become an important urban element of the city. As stated earlier, the post-socialist evolution of urban places, to a great extent, are influenced by global integrations. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and as a result of adapting to new economic, political, and social systems, Baku, has started to experience tremendous urban transformation. The construction of new economic and cultural relationships, especially with Western countries, has been reflected on the urban scale. Major public spaces were re-developed and introduced with new functions in order to attract direct investments and tourists from all over the world. One of those places that underwent transformation is the Baku Bulvar, which has been turned into the new representative profile of the city in the global arena. For this reason, the Bulvar has become a significant example to illustrate the impacts of economic, social, political and cultural changes.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In trying to comprehend whether and to what extent a change in the identity of the Bulvar has affected users' identification with the Bulvar, this analysis was designed in three parts; 1) analysis of the historical development of the site, 2) analysis of the components of identity of place in the Bulvar in socialist and post-socialist contexts, 3) examination of users' identification with the Bulvar regarding the changes in its identity.

Chapter 4 was designed in order to answer the first sub-question of this thesis: how has the identity of place changed from the socialist to post-socialist period? In doing so, chapter 4 concentrates on the historical development of the site since its first construction. More specifically, after providing brief information about the pre-socialist formation of the Bulvar, it concentrates on two periods: the Soviet Period and post-socialist evolution of the site. Since the theoretical framework of 'place identity' has revealed the importance of socio-geographical factors (economic, political, social and cultural factors) on the formation of place identity, this study examines the site in the two different periods in order to understand the role of those factors in the construction of the Bulvar identity and to make distinct comparisons of these periods. The historical analysis of the site related to the Soviet period is concentrated on three key periods: the constructivist period (between 1920 and early 1930s), the Stalinist period (1930s and early 1950s), the post Stalinist reform period (1953-1991). Since the Soviet Union's social, political, economic and cultural systems were not static, the aim was to explain the impacts of these changes during these periods on the construction of the identity of the Bulvar. In the same way, the post-socialist analysis of the Bulvar concentrates on key periods: the Bulvar between at early 1990s and the Bulvar after the re-development (from early 2000 to the present).

In the analysis of the historical evolution of the site under different social, economic, political, and cultural systems, this study uses cartographic documents (i.e. development and land use plans, maps), written documents (i.e. written reports, articles, research and books) and photographic recordings. The main cartographic documents used in this research are the development plans and land use maps which which were found in the studies of Fatullayev (2013) and Afandizade (1986), and

retrieved from Google Maps (www.maps/google.com). However, it was not possible to gain access to the periodic site plans in the archives of the related institutions (i.e. Baku Municipality), which brought some limitations to making more detailed and specific comparisons. However, because of the popularity of the site and its being attractive enough to acquire the interest of photographers and local populations, it was possible to reach valuable old photos of the site which were helpful in visual comparison.

Chapter 5 concentrates on the second and third parts of the analyses. First, chapter 5 analyses the Bulvar with respect to the components of 'identity of place' (*physical setting, activities and meanings*) based on the literature framework as defined in Chapter 2. The aim is to answer the second sub-question of this study: <u>to what extent have the physical features (e.g. land uses, buildings styles), activities and meanings (or symbols) in Baku Bulvar changed over time, particularly from the socialist to the post-socialist period?</u> Besides these tools, in order to reveal changes in the physical setting of the Bulvar, activities in the site, and meanings (or symbols) attributed to the site, this research also employed survey techniques (i.e. questionnaires and interviews) and direct observations in the field. Table 3.1 illustrates the changing factors of each component to be examined in the second part of Chapter 4 according to the research tools defined. Direct observation is also applied for the visual analysis of the site. The Bulvar was visited and photographed to document activities and the physical setting of the site during August and September of 2016. These photographs are used to compare the current situation with photographs of the Bulvar dating back to the Soviet period.

Table 3.1: Identity of place components and variables to be analysed by the research and research tools

COMPONENTS OF PLACE IDENTITY	CHANGING FACTORS TO BE EXAMİNED	METHOD OF DOCUMENTING/ RESEARCH TOOLS
PHYSICAL SETTING	landscape characteristics (soft/hard) green areas/trees lighting natural/man-made environment materials used accessibility size building styles monuments land use types (commercial, industrial)	**Visually comparative analysis showing past and present** areal plans (pre and post) photos of important built structures, monuments (pre and post) development and redevelopment projects /documents
ACTIVITIES	functional organization movement of people cultural events (festivals, sporting events, concerts) economic activities/ business environment tourism/ recreational activities day and night use seasonal use	**Visually comparative analysis showing past and present** functional investigation related to the past and the present photos showing events in past and in present **Surveying** In-depth interviews (with user group over 50 years old who know past and present) **Direct observations**
MEANİNGS	perceived functions, and attractions cultural place symbols place for meeting place for recreation and leisure place to work place for relax/ 'get-away' place special place good place/ bad place (positive negative interpretations/evaluations)	**Surveying** **In-depth interviews with user group over 50 years old who knows past and present of the site**

Secondly**, chapter 5** aims to answer the third sub-question of this thesis: <u>to what extent have people's identification with Baku Bulvar changed due to changes in the identity of the Bulvar?</u> It examines users' identification with the Bulvar with respect to socialist and post-socialist periods and tries to explain the impacts of these changes in the Bulvar on its users. In doing so, this study applies the surveying method (in-depth interviews with the users of the Bulvar).

3.3   DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

To examine how the identity of the Bulvar changed from socialism to post-socialism from the perspective of its users, survey methods were used. Data collected from questionnaire and in-depth interviews were analysed to determine what changes had occurred. The questionnaire, filled out by the users of the Bulvar, is composed of two parts: the questions in the first part are related to the 1980s and the questions in the second part are related to the present. Each part consists of two sections. While questions in the first section are related to the identity of the Bulvar, questions in the second section are related to the user's identification with the Bulvar. In the same way, in-depth interviews, filled out by the users of the site, are composed of two parts (the first part is concentrated on the past situation of the area and the second part on the present), and each part has two sections. While section one is concentrated on the identity of the site, the second section focuses on how the users associate themselves with the Bulvar.

Sample Selection: The seminal literature reveals that place is an experienced environment (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). In the previous chapter, it was mentioned that, as argued by Relph (1976) identity exists as a result of experiences. Based on the main research question of this study (to what extent does a change in the identity of place affect people's identification with that place?), it was meaningful to conduct a survey with relatively older people who have been using the Bulvar at least since the 1980s. The survey (the questionnaire and in-depth interviews are going to be mentioned in the next part) was conducted with people over 50 years old. In order to detect those people who knew the site in the socialist period, people using the site were asked whether they had used the Bulvar in the past. It also should be stated that conducting the survey was a challenging process that brought some limitations to the

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research, which will be discussed in chapter 6. Table 3.2 illustrates the age range of the questionnaire and in-depth interview respondents.

Table 3.2: Age Cohorts of Respondents

Age range of questionnaire respondents

Age		Frequency	Percent
50-60		37	72.54
60-70		12	23.52
70+		2	3.92
	Total	**51**	**100**

Age range of in-depth interview respondents

Age		**Frequency**	**Percent**
50-60		7	70
60-70		2	20
70+		1	10
	Total	**10**	**100**

Here it should be emphasized that, according to the theoretical framework of 'place identity', long engagement with a particular physical setting (e.g. continuous use/visits, memories gathered there) contribute to 'identification with place'. On the other hand, in order understand whether a change in the identity of a place influences the way users identify with that setting, these age cohorts were selected. Thus, it was possible to measure and understand people's feelings towards the site in the socialist period if and only if relatively older users were selected as the survey participants.

The survey was conducted with 64 users in the site. Among the 64 surveyed, 51 were used in the research. The results of 13 participants who stated that they had been using the site since 1989 or later were not incorporated in this study. 1989 corresponds to last year of the Soviet Union's existence, when the political crisis had already started and was reflected in the socio-economic system (the author discusses the effect of the period on urban places in the chapter 4). For this reason, the researcher believed that the results of the respondents who have been using the Bulvar since 1989 could not

give reliable data for a comparison of the Bulvar in the two periods: during socialism and post-socialism.

The survey was conducted by the author in September, 2016 at the Bulvar. Shopping mall, teahouses and resting places which are located on the site were chosen to conduct the survey. Relevantly older people first were asked whether were they using the site in 1980s or early, and then they were asked whether were they willing to participate in the survey. The people who accepted participate in the survey was provided by the questionnaires. The questionnaires were conducted in week day and weekends. Since the site is getting crowded after at nights, the survey was conducted after 18:00pm. It take 8-12 minutes to answer for a single questionnaire.

Furthermore, the in-depth interviews were conducted by the author at the site in September 2016. The author also took audio record of interviews of those participants gave permission for recording. The interviews were conducted between 12:00pm and 16:00pm since the site was less crowded between those time intervals, which made possible to take clear audio record. The interviews were lasted between 1 to 2 hours. In addition, the interviews were conducted at the teahouses, cafes, restaurants located on the site.

Documenting change in the identity of the Bulbar and designing the tool: A review of 'identity of place' does not reveal a standard questionnaire or scale for measuring the identity of a place. On the other hand, it reveals that *physical setting, activities and meanings* are the components of identity of place (Relph, 1976). Based on these components, the site was analysed before preparing the questionnaire. Based on the historical analysis and field investigations, the thirteen statements related to the Bulvar's features in terms of physical attributes and activities (also functional) were determined. As represented in Table 3.2, the general characteristic features of the Bulvar, as related to the site in the 1980s and in the present, were prepared for evaluation by the questionnaire respondents. The questions prepared are given in Table 3.3:

➢ Please picture in your mind the Bulvar in the 1980s. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements based on your mental image of the Bulvar in 1980s.

> ➤ Please picture the present Bulvar in your mind. Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements based on your mental image of the present Bulvar?

Table 3.3: Statements related to the physical features and activities (also functions) of the Bulvar.

The coast/sea **were/are** an important element of the Bulvar
The ships in the sea **were/are** important elements of the Bulvar
The built structures (e.g. buildings in and surrounding) **were/are** important elements of the Bulvar
Lighting **was/is** an important feature of the Bulvar
Recreational areas, vacant lands, parks, trees **were/are** important elements of the Bulvar
The seaport station (Mor Vağzal) **was/is** an important element of the Bulvar
Taking a steamboat tour was an important activity in the Bulvar
The amusement park was/is an important element of the Bulvar
Commercial places (like, cafes and restaurants, clubs) **were/are** important elements of the Bulvar
Open air cinema **was/is** an important activity in the Bulvar
Playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiard, volleyball) **were/are** important features of the Bulvar
The Bulvar **was/is** a popular place for arranging meetings with existing and new friends
Shopping sites **were/are** an important element of the Bulvar

The 'Likert-scale rating technique' is used in order to test variables in the survey. Respondents were expected to rate the statements according to the Likert-scale items where respectively the numbers 1-5:

1 = 'strongly disagree'
2 = 'disagree'
3 = 'neither agree nor disagree'
4 = 'agree'
5 = 'strongly agree'

Besides, physical attributes and activities held in the place, the respondents were asked to identify the Bulvar according to the periods. An open-ended question was asked to determine the meanings attributed by the users to the site in different periods:

Can you define/identify the Bulvar in **the past (1980s)/present** with two or three sentences? (What **did/does** the Bulvar mean to you? ………………………………………………………………….……………… …………………………………………………………………….…………

In addition, the participants of the questionnaire were expected to evaluate the site after renovation in terms of positive and negative. in an effort to understand how people perceived the place after the site had been redeveloped with the help of the following question:

➢ How can you evaluate the Bulvar after renovation?
  • In terms of positive…………….
  • In terms of negative…………….

Furthermore, the research focuses on the **in-depth interviews** in order to comprehend users' past and present perceptions, memories and experiences related to the place to help us gain insight into changes via comparative analysis. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with open-ended questions consisting of two parts. The first part of the in-depth interview was related to past experiences of the place. Questions focused on the user's past perception, feelings, thoughts, beliefs about the Bulvar in the 1980s. The second part of in-depth interview involved questions related to the present perceptions, feelings and thoughts about the Bulvar. The semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out with 10 users of the Bulvar that had been selected due to their past knowledge of the site. Firstly, the interviews were conducted with 6 users in September 2016. The other 4 interviews were conducted in November 2016.

The in-depth interview questions related to both periods:

➢ For what purpose **did/do** you use the Bulvar?
➢ What types of activities **were/are** held in the Bulvar?
  • Which places **were/are** popular in the Bulvar?
➢ How can you define the Bulvar in the socialist period? In the present?
  • Its social life

- Its physical environment
- Activities in it
- The Bulvar during day time – night time
- The site during different seasons
- Functions in it

➤ What **was/is** the meaning of the Bulvar to you?
- Why **did/do** you like/dislike the Bulvar?

In-depth interview questions related to the Bulvar after renovation in the post-socialist period:

- What are the main differences that you have observed between the past and current Bulvar?
- How did the new introduced functions (shopping malls, restaurants, hotels, touristic facilities, etc.) influence the character of the Bulvar in your opinion?

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with an "open framework"; that is, not all of the questions were designed and presented in this study. Some questions were created during the interviews as a result of things mentioned by the respondents. It should also be stated that the general framework of the survey questions for the second group respondents were derived from observations and documental research based on discussions held with 10 people knowing both situations of the site. As such, the main characteristics of the site were evaluated in 13 items related to the site.

Documenting the changes in users' identification with the Bulvar: Unlike the measurement of 'identity of place', a review of 'identification with place' reveals some standard questions and a scale for measuring this construct. It should be stated that, for this study, developing an appropriate instrument for investigating the affects of changes in the identity of place on the identification of users with that place was challenging since there are fewer empirical studies that assess the identification of individuals in pre- and post- contexts with respect to the changing identity of places.

William and Vaske, (2003), Kyle et al. (2004) and Stedman 2006 all developed tools with quite similar questions and scales to assess individuals' identification with places. In this study, William and Vaske's (2003)[4] tool was used to measure 'identification

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[4] Williams, D.R. and Vaske, J.J. (2003) The Measurement of Place Attachment: Validity and Generalizability of a Psychometric Approach. Forest Science, 49(6), 830-840. Retrieved from

with place'. After evaluating the identity of the Bulvar according to the periods (1980s and the present), questionnaire participants were expected to respond to statements related to identification with the site according to each period. Table 3.4 introduces the statements related to place identity measurement used by Williams and Vaskes (2003). The statements were prepared in a 5-point Likert-scale using a scale of 1 to 5, where '1 stands for Strongly Disagree' and '5 stands for Strongly Agree'.

Table 3.4: Williams and Vaske's tool to measure 'identification with a place'

| I feel "Place X" is part of me |
| "Place X" is very special to me |
| I identify strongly with "Place X" |
| I am very attached to "Place X" |
| Visiting "Place X" says a lot about who I am |
| "Place X" means a lot to me |

Interviews: The users' identification with the Bulvar, is also analysed through the semi structured in-depth interviews. The aim was to have the participants explain whether and to what extent changes in the site from socialism to post-socialism affected their identification with that place. According Fao (2008), information gathered from semi-structured interviews provides not just answers to the questions, but also the reasons for the answers. In understanding the significance of language in the "making of places", Tuan discusses the application of the narrative-descriptive approach and states that:

> "*Words have the general power to bring to light experiences that lie in the shadow or have receded into it, and the specific power to call places into being. It may need only a few kind words among friends to change an ordinary kitchen into a bright and happy place*" (Tuan, 1991, 686).

He points out the significance of speech in the construction of place; that is, words play a supporting role in the temporal dimension when visuals remain inadequate (Tuan, 1991:694). For that reason, this research uses the qualitative method to

formulate a detailed understanding of users' identification with the site. The questions related to users' identification with the place are asked following the questions related to the site. It was easier to understand users' feelings/beliefs about the place after some simple question related to place. In that way, it helped the participants to bear in mind past memories/experiences.

The general form of questions asked to interviewees

❖ How important **was/is** this place to your life?
- What **made/makes** this place important to you?
- Friends? The place's characteristics? (Experiences/memories? – questions for the current situation)

❖ How **were you feeling/do you feel** when you **came/come** here?
➢ Can you give some examples of your experiences with this place that made it special to you?

❖ Did changes in the Bulvar affect your feelings?
➢ If yes: How did these changes affect your feelings towards this place?
- Could you give some examples about changes in this place that would make you feel uncomfortable, sad, angry, or even happy?

Data analysis: This study has two data types obtained from the participants: quantitative and qualitative. As defined in the previous section, the qualitative data is represented as textual units.

For the quantitative data collected, this study implies parametric tests that make assumptions about the underlying population (n=51). The reason is that, according to Sullivan and Artino (2013:541-542), nonparametric tests are less powerful than parametric tests and usually require a larger sample size (n value) to have the same power as parametric tests. The quantitative data gathered during the Likert scale ratings are analysed through 'descriptive statistics' and 't-test paired samples'. Descriptive statistics are expected to describe the basic features of the data in a study. T-test statistics determine to what extent the variables have changed from the past to the present situation of the Bulvar. It should be stated that there are some controversies regarding whether ordinal data, converted to numbers, can be treated as interval data. Sullivan and Artino (2013) state that some experts emphasize that frequencies (percentages of responses in each category), contingency tables, x^2 tests, the Spearman rho assessment, or the Mann-Whitney U test (which is also known as Wilcoxon rank

sum test) should be used for analysis instead of parametric tests, which require interval data (e.g. t tests, analysis of variance, Pearson correlations, regression). Other experts assert that if there is an adequate sample size (at least 5–10 observations per group) and if the data are normally distributed (or nearly normal), para-metric tests can be used with Likert scale ordinal data (e.g T-test, Pearson Correlation) (Sullivan and Artino, 2013). As illustrated in Figure 3.1, the way the question was asked to the survey participants (i.e. the use of bar graph where each Likert item is distributed equally on a line) enabled the researcher to treat ordinal data as interval data.

I was feeling the Bulvar part of me

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly (5)
disagree   and disagree   agree

Figure 3.1: An example of statement of 'identification with place' where ordinal data was treated as interval data

Winter and Dodou (2010) in their study "Five-Point Likert Items: t-test versus Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon" found that, for five-point Likert items, the Mann-Whitney U test and the t-test generally have similar powers, and by using the t-test quite similar results can be obtained. Thus, this research applies t-test. The nominal data for 'identification of users with the Bulvar' obtained from the participants was turned into an ordinal continuous variable (e.g. Identification with Place (Respondent) = Statement(S)1+S2+……+S6)) in order to analyze with a t-test, and to see whether and to what extent there are differences between the periods in the participants' identification with the site.

The next chapter focuses on the findings of the historical analysis: an analyses of the formation of the identity of the Bulvar from its construction (pre-socialist period) to the 2010s.

CHAPTER 4

THE FORMATION OF THE IDENTITY OF THE BULVAR UNDER DIFFERENT SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS

This chapter focuses on the development process of the Bulvar and its evolving identity with respect to changing factors such as the economic, social, cultural and political structures of Azerbaijan. It aims to explain the formation of the place and the role of these concepts and their impacts on the formation of the identity of the Bulvar. Following brief historical information about the development of Baku, this chapter mainly focuses on three periods – pre-socialist, socialist and post-socialist – in the formation of the Bulvar. The city has experienced different strategies of development during these three periods, and the Bulvar was accepted as one of the most important parts of Baku by the city authorities of each regime. This chapter aims to answer following sub-questions of the study:

❖ How has the identity of place changed from pre- to post-socialist period?
- Which factors affected the process of identity formation and how?
- What were the place identity generators over the periods?

4.1 Pre-Socialist Urban Development of Baku

Sadri and Zeybekoglu (2009) categorize the urbanization process of Baku into four key eras: Medieval, Oil Boom (1870-1920; also classified as the pre-socialist period), Socialist (1920-1991) and Post-socialist. Spatial traces of the first three eras can be observed in three concentric circles surrounding a core: The medieval period formed the inner core with massive citadel walls of 'İchari Shahar' (Old City); middle orbit was shaped by the Oil Boom; and the third circle was generated during the Soviet era as shown in Figure 4.1. However, the impact of the post-soviet era on the spatial borders is hard to describe (Sadri & Zeybekoğlu, 2009).
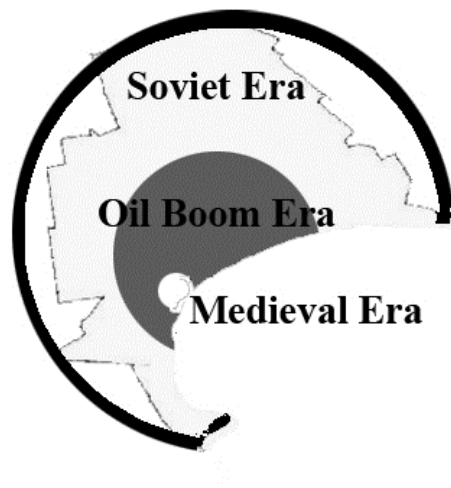
Figure 4.1: Concentric Circles of Baku (Sadri & Zeybekoglu, 2009)

Baku, the largest city on the Caspian Sea, is located on the southern shore of the Absheron peninsula. The city's geographical location and the availability of natural resources shaped the course of its urban planning. The historical image and character of Baku is characterized by various natural factors including climate, the sea, the landscape, and local materials such as limestone, used in the construction of the built environment (Valiyev, 2013). Baku (a small city with a small population) was considered a provincial town until 1806, when Tsarist Russia took control of the city. The built environment of the old city ('İsheri Shahar') reflected typical Islamic urban structure, including the Shirvan-shah palace complex surrounded by mosques, bathhouses, small markets and traditional neighborhoods called '*mahalla*' (Darieva, 2011) (please also see Abu-Logord, 1987 for Islamic urban structure) (see Figure 4.2**)**.
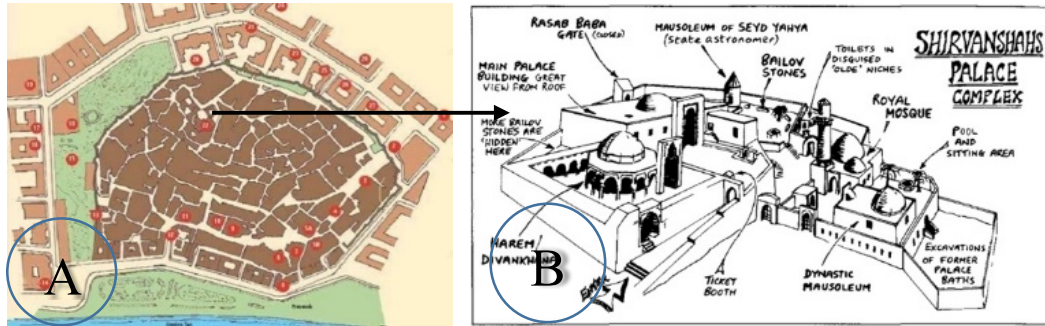
Figure 4.2: *Old City Plan of Baku and Shirvan-shah palace complex*
(A: Resource: http://www.aboutcivil.org/masterplan-of-city-baku-azerbaijan.html)
(B: Resource: http://azerbaijan24.com/about/azerbaijan cities/baku)

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which is known as the Oil Boom era, the city experienced tremendous urban growth. Until the mid-twentieth century, not much attention was paid to urban planning in spite of the growing economy, which led to the enlargement of the spatial borders of the city and growth of the population (Fatullayev, 2013).

The existence of oil reservoirs on the Absheron peninsula had been known about since medieval times, but its significance was only realized in the second half of nineteenth century. Oil became more important as fuels were required for the fast developing industry and transport sectors in the West (Europe and Northern America). Therefore, the main contribution to the city's economy was the investment made by local and foreign investors in the oil fields, which promised quick money for entrepreneurs. Starting from the mid-eighteenth century, when Baku had become one of the Russian Empire's important industrial and economic centres, the small feudal city experienced a new era in terms of urban planning and architecture (Fatullayev, 2013). During that period, civil engineers and architects worked on the first urban plan of Baku, and in 1898, a more detailed and professional plan was prepared (Ibid) (see figure 4.3). According to this plan, new elements were introduced in urban planning which had not been used in traditional urbanity: public open spaces and parks, large boulevards, and monumental structures with a variety of styles (Ibid).
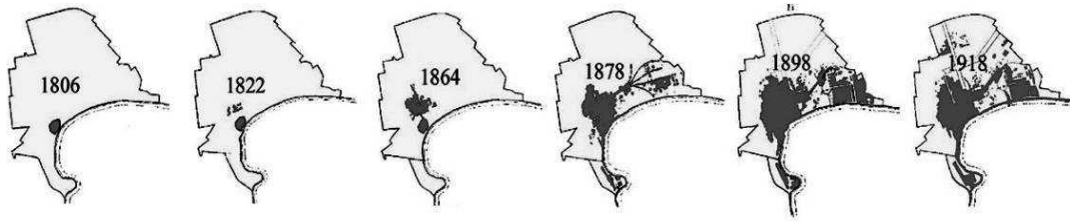
Figure 4-3: Urban development of Baku between 1806-1918 years (Source: Fatullayev, 2013:135)

Architects with different backgrounds were invited to the city to contribute their various architectural styles to the built environment of Baku. The urban legacy of that period (19th and early 20th century), mainly in the central part of the city, is distinguished by the variety of European styles (Neo-classical, German and Italian Renaissance revival, French Gothicand Art Nouveau) which were fused with Eastern styles (Safavid, Persian, Cario, Ottoman and Magrebi) (Khanlou, 1998:24).

In only a few decades, Baku became a very rich town and grew into a multi-ethnic city. The changes in the structure of the former Muslim town were implemented by both foreign investors and local Muslim oil millionaires, the majority whom came from an urban working-class or rural background, were more open towards new cultural experiences, by which they tried to modernize their own society (Grant, 2010). Zeynalabdin Taghiyev, who founded and financed the first ever boarding school for Muslim girls, built an Art Nouveau department store in place of the local *bazaars* in the center of Baku and imported the first printing press in order to publish a newspaper in the Azeri language.

4.1.1 Construction of the Bulvar s a public space: Socio-spatial transition in Baku

After the Oil Boom started, the waterfront area of the city became an important part of Baku. It was the economic and industrial center between the 1870s and the 1920s. While the south-west area (Bayıl district) of the waterfront was planned for industrial use, the part where the Old City was located was a narrow waterfront area. The economic justification was that the site had originally included warehouses, piers and stocks and often industrial buildings (Fatullayev, 2013) (see Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: General plan for 'Bayıl Distict' (South-East part) and for the city center, 1878 (Fatullayev, 2013:68)

The waterfront became a prominent place: its landscape occupying a large part of the Caspian seashore, while also being close to the Old City where the palace of Shirvan-Shah and its prominent Maiden Tower (see Figure 4.5).
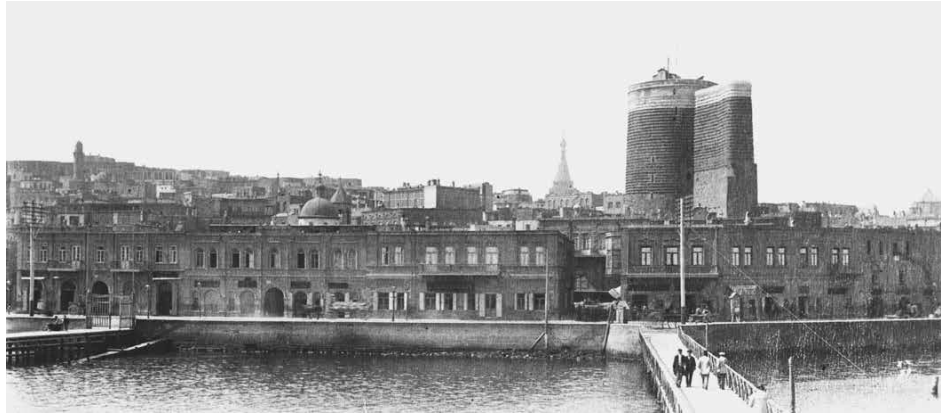
Figure 4.5: Baku waterfront and Maiden Tower during the late of 19th century (Source: Darieva, 2015)

Between the years of 1880 and 1909, the waterfront of the city close to Old City (today's Bulvar) was frequented by working-class people and mainly used for oil transportation, shipping and fishing. Due to the enlargement of waterfront strip, the traditional residential area (*mahalla*) was moved further into the northern part of the city (see Figure 4.4). The seashore area was extended to create an improved transportation system, and some parts of the Old City walls fronting the seashore were removed. In addition to the economic use of the place by private industrial companies, the waterfront was also used for military purposes since the institutions of Russian administration were located there.

The working and living quality of the place decreased as a result of industrial wastes, and the area's economic livelihood had declined by the end of the 19th century. The municipality of Baku set to work on the revision of the area and proposed a reconstruction plan for '*Bakınskoy Guberny* – Baku Province', which was accepted by the Duma (Municipal Parliament) in the early 20th century. In 1909, the first reconstruction plan for the waterfront was launched (Fatullayev, 2013). The harbour was cleared of docks, warehouses, stocks, piers and other structures, and a new public space, with a prominent landscape between the city and the sea, was constructed – today's Bulvar. In 1910, Mammad Hassan Hajinski, who was the Head of Baku's Municipal Construction Department, launched a project to improve Bulvar, in which European architects were involved (Akhundov, 200:37) (see figure 4.6).
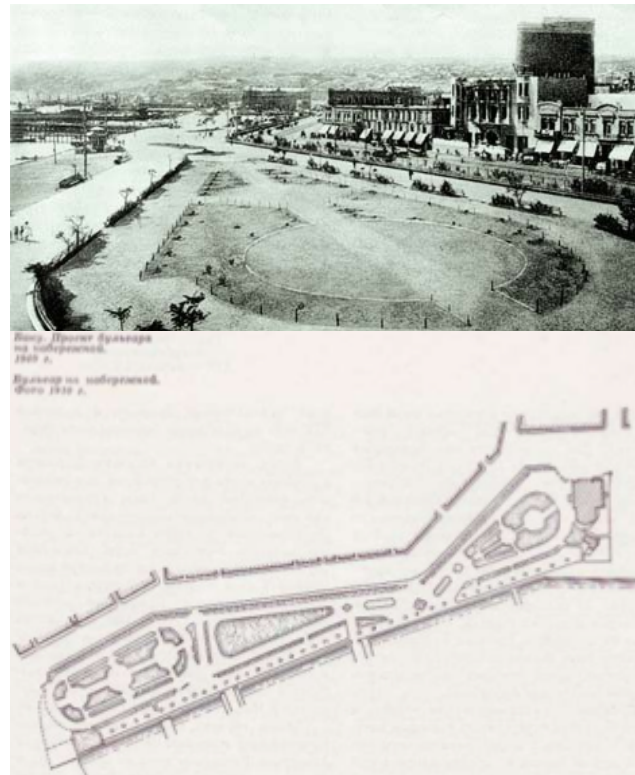
Figure 4.6: Plan for the Bulvar Park in 1909 (Source: Fatullayev, 2013)

The aim was to improve the physical quality of the environment that had deteriorated as a result of shipping and industrial use. Darieva (2014) states that with the construction of this new public space, the seashore began to turn into an aesthetic object, which shaped Baku's urban landscape according to modern sensibilities and drove forward the seascape's aesthetic value. Furthermore, it should be noted that the new public green space was not just the introduction of a new design element in the physical environment, but it was also the beginning of a transition in social meaning and activities. In her early research, Darieva (2011) states that the area for the Bulvar was planned to create a modern 'public place' with open access for both genders. Unlike the Muslim tradition regarding public spaces, which are characterized by the centrality of an inner courtyard, the spatial segregation of men and women, and closable quarters that can be locked for the night (please see Abu-Lugord, 1987), the new urban environment in Baku was distinguished by large straight streets, plazas and edifices, public spaces for green parks and promenades. Therefore, this new public space, the Bulvar, was a tool for modernizing the traditional society. It was turned into

a site for public communication and recreation without gender separation, and for holding activities beyond economic and religious (mosque) purposes.

Baku, as a colonial city, became a zone of transition in terms of both materiality and morality. By the mid of the nineteenth century, Baku appeared as a Provincial Town in official documents, and turned into an important industrial and modernist center of the Russian Empire, which significantly influenced traditional urban structure and city life (Fatullayev, 2013).

4.2 Socialist Urban Places In Baku: The Development of the Bulvar as a Socialist Place

In the 1920s, with the arrival of socialism in Azerbaijan, the urban structure and its daily life in Baku underwent a period of transition quite different from past experiences. The new political regime, economic restructuring, and the creation of a new form of society brought about changes in the organization of urban places. Certainly, socialism had given rise to a different kind of spatial organization from those under capitalistic development. Smith (1996:104) claims that the differences were mainly based on the ideology that socialist society was supposed to be relatively egalitarian, especially in comparison with its capitalist counterpart. Therefore, urban living played an important role in the Soviet Union's encouragement of collective identity. According to Young and Kazmarek (2014), in order to create new forms of society, the shaping of urban places and identity was considered a significant socialist project by the Soviet Union. As such, the physical organization of places and urban life in general promoted collectivist sentiments, as well as giving practical material expression to egalitarian ideals (Smith, 1996:77). The urban landscape and architecture became an important tool for the Soviet Union to reflect an idealized form of socialist society and its daily patterns. As stated by Czepczynski (2008:63), the major tendency of the socialist system was to create a new society by or through design, architecture and cultural landscape. Therefore, urban planning was viewed as a significant tool for achieving the socio-political ideological aims of the regime.

The transformation of Baku into a 'socialist' city brought about changes in the building and use of urban places. It was a new era in the formation of public spaces in both material and moral aspects. The new ways of producing urban places in the Soviet

Union played socially transformative role. It should be noted that socialism in Transcaucasia was mainly associated with the spread of modernity, enlightenment and human progress (Darieva, 2011). The process of modernization of the Azerbaijan society started under Russian Empire period continued after the USSR ascent, through the creation of a socialist egalitarian society with collectivist sentiments. Therefore, public spaces in Baku acquired new meanings since they aimed to serve the purposes of the new society. As stated by Daireva (2011), under Soviet rule reconstruction of the Bulvar was regarded as a symbol of "modernization of traditional patterns of daily life" with respect to the norms of socialism. As such, Bulvar, as a socialist public space, was planned to function in several ways: as a bridge to emancipate individuals from traditional gender roles and to form a new generation; as a locus of political propaganda and technological modernism; and finally, as a place for organized 'cultured leisure' (Ibid). The socialist spirit of urban place in Baku Bulvar was created by constructing sports centres and 'culture places', which aimed to display the Soviet collective values and ideology of raising new Soviet-persons. The place became a sign of the socialist regime and was regularly used for the demonstration of the political and social ideology of the Soviet Union (Darieva, 2011). Soviet idealism was demonstrated in the Bulvar by the celebrations of collective Soviet holidays like May Day on May 1st (Figure 4.7) and Victory Day on May 9th after the end of the Second World War.

Figure 4.7: Celebrating the May1 in Bulvar in 1960 and The monument of Lenin facing Bulvar (Source: Daierva,2015)

Consequently, the physical environment both in and around the Bulvar was shaped by Soviet urban practices reflecting its ideology throughout the urban landscape. The monumental structures and the names of streets, parks, and boulevards were all associated with the 'heroes' or political leaders of the Soviet regime (see figure 4.8). Khanlou (1998) states that Kirov's monument resembled ambitious Stalinist architecture with its grandiose scale overlooking the city.

Figure 4.8: Sergey Kirov's monument in 1970s facing Bulvar (Resource: www.bulvar.gov.az)

4.2.1 The impacts of socialist regulations on the construction of place

The arrival of socialism in Azerbaijan brought a new way of urbanization that led to the emergence of crucial differentiations between the socialist and capitalist cities. The eventual success of the Bolshevik Revolution provided an opportunity for the development of a socialist approach toward urban development. The emergence of a **central planning** approach and **the elimination of private property** in socialism were two factors which played key roles in the formation of socialist urban places.

The main differences between the capitalist and socialist urban spaces were that the latter originated from the collective (mainly state) ownership of urban land and infrastructure by eliminating private property, from the existence of comprehensive

strategies for the development of the national settlement network in the socialist countries, and from the allocation of development funds according to a central plan (Smith, 1996:104). On the other hand, according to Smith (Ibid) capitalist urbanization is led by free market competition, real-estate profitability, private property, local-decision making and physical planning on a city-by-city basis. The existence of the central planning approach along with the state ownership of property under socialism enabled decision makers to have much greater control over urban development than there was under capitalism.

Since urban space, as defined by Günay (1999), is an outcome of production relations (like property), here it would be meaningful to emphasize the significant role of property relations in the formation and production of spaces/places under state socialism. The Soviet Union eliminated all private property in order to have the sole control over the production spaces. "Domination over space through public property" and "abolishment of private property", as defined by Günay (1999), are the two significant notions that define the property relations in the socialist system, which helps us to understand the production (or organization) of spaces in socialist cities. In addition, according to Smith (1988), the state was the institution structuring the market and land use patterns as collective public matters, thus "land use questions inevitably become political" (cited in Gunay 1999:10).

As a result of the socialist approach, privately owned buildings in the Bulvar were de-privatized. Mansions and luxury residences on the Bulvar owned by oil millionaires, foreign companies and important politicians of the previous regime, which covered a significant area in the Bulvar, had been turned into state property and given new functions (communal usage, residential apartments) (Figures 4.9, 4.10). Therefore, public places in Baku became the stage for socialist state scenery, which was supposed to promote an egalitarian society beyond commerce and social inequality (Darieva, 2011).

Figure 4.9: Residence of Hajinski in the Bulvar that was built in 1912.(on the left) During the Soviet period the residence separated in to several apartments (Source: Akhundov, 2000).

Figure 4.10: Bulvar in 1930-1932 years. A new public transport system was also constructed on the main boulevard called Neftchiler Avenue (on the right) (Oil Workers Avenue). (Resource: http://bulvar.gov.az/gallery).

Furthermore, under the socialist regime, the planning of the city and the production of places were done according to the decision of the central authority (government). Within this framework, the socialist state owned not only the asset (the land), but also the tools (central planning) in order to have domination over space (Gunay, 1999). Planners and architects had the opportunity to use spaces with more concern for aesthetic rather than economic issues. This would normally be impossible to realize in capitalistic cities. Therefore, the process of formation of urban place under the Soviet Union was more controlled and the production of urban spaces was based on framing practices of communist society. The dominant philosophy of state socialism was that land does not have any value, which gave urban planners the advantage to operate

without the constraints of land prices (Ivan, 1996).

4.2.2 The reflection of socio-economic and political model of socialism in the Bulvar

The development processes of Baku as an industrial city continued under the socialist regime since 1920, when socialism came in Azerbaijan and lasted for over seven decades. During this period, the new construction projects of public spaces and industrial areas occurred on the seashore of the city. As such, the significance of the waterfront increased during the Soviet period. Furthermore, the Bulvar acquired a new meaning, which was to serve the ideals of socialist society. New squares, streets, parks, monuments and palaces were built in the area in an attempt to reflect the ideals of the socialist state into the urban landscape. However, it should be noted that the urban landscape and socio-spatial relations of the Soviet Union changed over this period, and it is difficult to speak of a singular trajectory or outcome (Diener & Hagen, 2013). Socialist officials faced plenty of challenges in their attempts to realize the idealized 'Soviet-scape'. These challenges occurred mainly because of the unstable layout, aesthetics and functions of Soviet urbanism that resulted from changes in leadership, shifting state priorities, limitations imposed by pre-existing landscapes and economic shifts in the system.

In the case of Baku, the physical environment of urban places, like in other Soviet cities accommodated different practices in planning. For that reason, a total transformation of the pre-socialist built environment was never fully realized. On the contrary, the majority of the already built structures were used and preserved. Another reason is that the Soviet state, throughout its existence, had experienced socio-political and economic reforms, which to a great extent were associated with changes in the leadership of the regime. This was reflected in the socio-spatial organizations of urban environments (Diener & Hagen, 2013:493). In general, the urban planning past of Baku in the Soviet Union can be categorized into four periods when significant changes had taken place: the period between the 1920s and the early 1930s, when constructivist architecture flourished; the architectural style of the Stalinist era between the 1930s and the early 1950s; the era between the mid 1950s and the 1960s, associated with Kruschev's Thaw; the period from the mid 1960s to the 1980s, which

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was influenced by Nikita Brejnev's reforms (Alekberov, 2001; Nasibov, 2004).

Constructivism (Between 1920s and early 1930s): The period between 1920 and the early 1930s is called the 'Decade of Transition', when constructivist architecture emerged from the constructivist art movement and flourished in the Soviet Union. Inspired by the wider constructivist art and the Bauhaus movement, constructivist architecture is characterized by a combination of modern technology and engineering methods and the socio-political ethos of communism. After the revolution in 1917, the new regime required new social demands and industrial tasks. The main aim of constructivist architecture was to instill the avant-garde in everyday life. Constructivism was considered bythe architects as a tool for realizing the desired spaces and monuments of the new socialist utopia. The passion for constructivism in Baku led to the formation of its local variety – 'Baku constructivism'. The application potentials of 'ferro-concrete' in mass construction were very limited – metal and concrete were materials in short supply then; therefore, it was not 'ferro-concrete', but rather an imitation that was used in construction (Nasibov, 2004). Almost all the buildings constructed in Baku between the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s were built of the local stone "*gyusha*" with subsequent plastering to imitate the texture of concrete (Ibid). During those years, the built environment of places in many parts of Baku were shaped by implementing constructivist designs. The Old In-tourist Hotel and the Electric rail-way on Neftchiler Avenue, which were built in Bulvar are significant examples of the period when constructivism was on the ascent (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11: Constructivist building facing Bulvar constructed in early 1930s. The building functions today as In-tourist Hotel. The railway was removed in post-socialist period (Resource: https://www.ourbaku.com/index)

Furthermore, according to the zoning plan of 1927 (Barkhin et al., 1975), planners gave importance to green places by designing recreational areas and leisure spaces. As a result, the area of Bulvar was enlarged and developed eastwards (Figure 4.12).
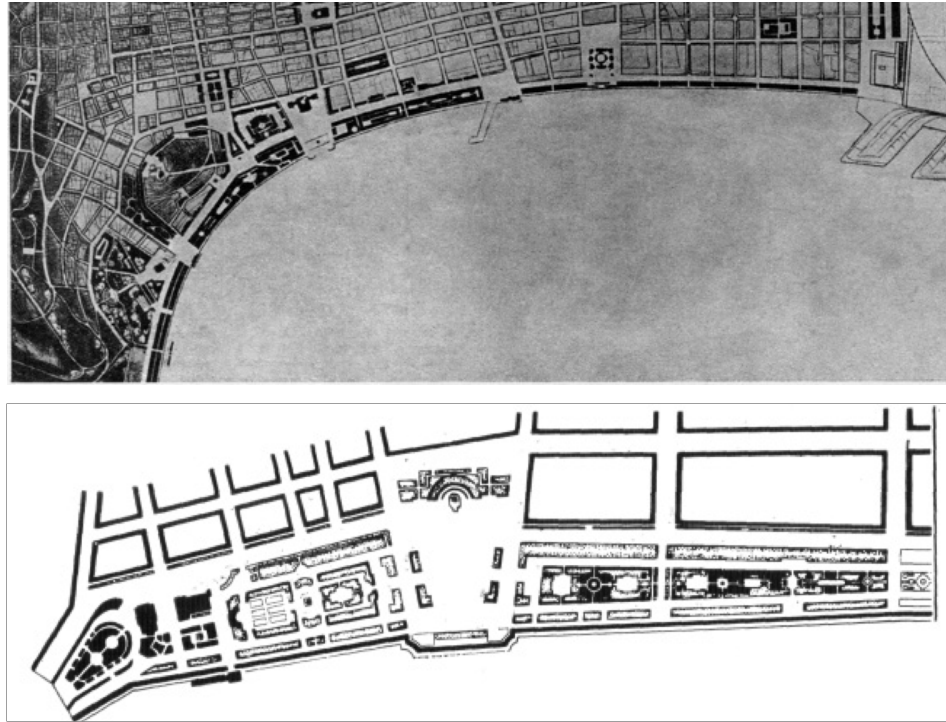
Figure 4.12: Revision plan for Bulvar.and micro scale plan for the new developed part of Bulvar. (Source: Barkhun et al.,1975)

Stalinist Period (Between the 1930s and Early 1950s): Starting in the early 1930s, the urban fabric of the Soviet Union was shaped by the new forms and styles which were associated with Stalin. The constructivist practices ended in the early 1930s, when the state banned all other other architectural organizations (closing local private design studios) and imposed the Union of Soviet Architects in 1932. Then in 1934, Stalin mandated 'Socialist Realism' as an aesthetic principle, insisting on the monumental style to which constructivists in the Union of Soviet Architects objected (Dehaan, 2013:88). Upon the wishes of Stalin, almost every major city in the region, including Baku, underwent massive remodelling to include gigantic parade plazas and boulevards with neo-classic, occasional neo-Gothic and nationalist revival references, which dwarfed any civic-spaces built in the pre-communist era. Until 1953, Soviet

propaganda suggested that Azerbaijan's great architectural achievements were created under the leadership of "the Father of Nations" – Stalin (Alekberov, 2001). According to Dehaan (2013:89), the dominant style of the spaces was referred to as "s*ocialist realism*"*,* but in fact it shared many elements with Western neo-classism. Thus, the urban planning and architecture associated with Stalinism could be considered as 'internationalist'. Besides the international styles, the built environments of the period were simultaneously formed to be compatible with national traditions. As defined by Diener and Hagen (2013:494), the form of the built environments constructed between 1930s and early 1950s in the Soviet Uniuon to some degree reflected the slogan "national in form socialist in content".

Stalin's era is also associated with the of central planning in the Soviet Union. The center of decision making mechanisms was transferred to Moscow, where all regulations were related to its Master Plan (Khanlou, 2005). The development of all cities was based on the-five-years plans. Like many other Soviet cities, between the 1930s and 1950s, Baku was given a master plan in which the size of the Bulvar was enlarged and eastward development of the area was considered. During these years, various public and administrative buildings and infrastructure projects were undertaken. The surrounding environment of Bulvar was shaped with grandiose monumental structures such as the Government House and the former Lenin Museum (Carpet Museum) located in the Bulvar area. After the construction of the Government House of Baku, the new square (Freedom Square formerly called Lenin Square) was created in the area and a monument to Lenin was erected in front of the building (Figures 4.13 and 4.14).
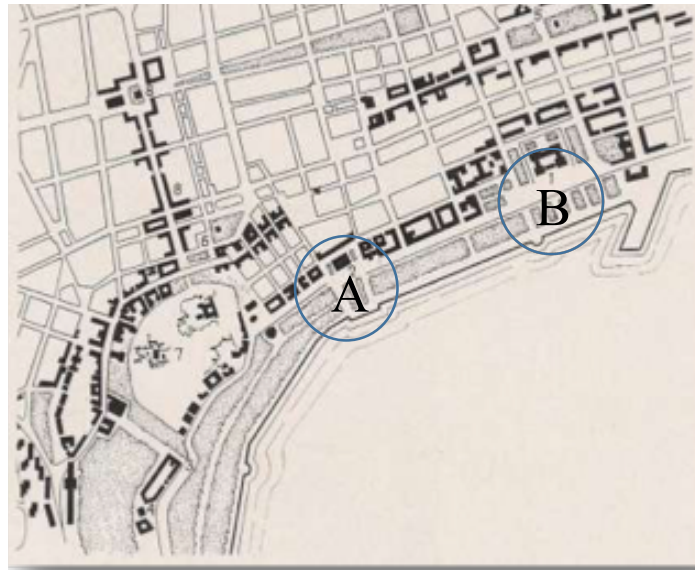
Figure 4.13: Mix-used structures along Bulvar (Source: Efendizade, 1986)

In the early 1950s, architect M. Huseynov made a revision plan of the seaside zone of Baku. The aim of this plan was to provide the site with open ceremonial spaces and buildings for functions: social, cultural (e.g. museums and theatres), residential and administrative along the main boulevard – Neftchiler Avenue. Thisapproach created a mix-used area on the coastline of the city (Efendizade, 1986).
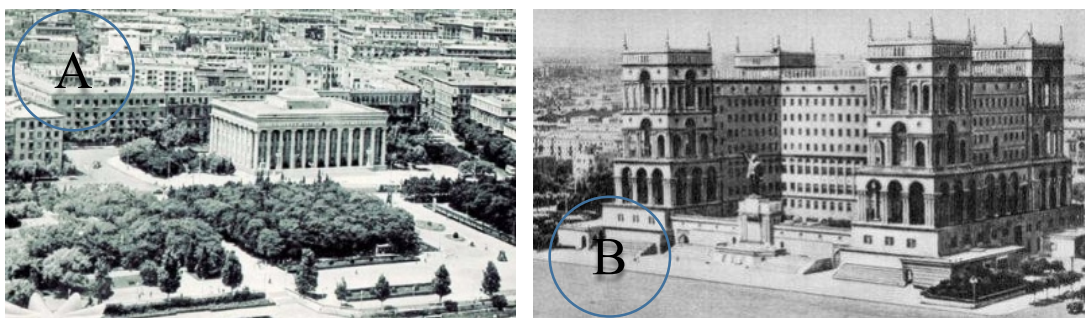
Figure 4.14: Monumental structures in the Bulvar area)
Former Lenin Museu (Azerbaijan State Carpet Museum Centre) facing Bulvar(Resource:http://www.azer.com/aiweb/categories/magazine/82_folder/82 _articles/82_carpet_museum.html) **B)** *Government House with Lenin Statue facing former Lenin Square (Independent Square) and Bulvar (Resource: http://avciya.az/en/culture/architecture-of-azerbaijan)*

A major attraction in Bulvar between the 1930s and the 1960s was the modernist construction of parachute jumping tower, which was built for both public use and professional trainings. The ninety-five-meter-high tower located in the middle of Bulvar near the sea is often regarded as the symbol of Azeri modernization within the socialist Soviet nation (Darieva, 2011) (Figure 4.15). However, as a result of an accident which occurred during a jump in the 1960s, the tower lost is original purpose and was turned into an aesthetic site. The tower today functions as a clock indicating local time and as an anemometer.

Figure 4.15: Former Jumping Tower (today known as Clock tower) (Resource: www.bulvar.gov.az)

It should be noted that the everyday life of citizens in the Soviet Union, especially during the period associated with Stalin, was structured with respect to three key categories; the first one was 'equality', the second one was based on 'abundance', and the third category was 'cultural life' (Gurova, 2006). Therefore, between 1930 and the mid-1950s, the daily life of citizens in public spaces was dominated by the ideology of '*kulturnost*' ('cultureness'). Therefore, places for resting and reading were constructed in the Bulvar to reflect this ideology. People were expected to have intellectual social activities or do sports in their free time, in order to spend their leisure time productively (see Figure 4.16).

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Figure 4.16: People reading and having discussions at a social facility in the Bulvar in the 1950s (Resource: www.bulvar.gov.az)

Gurova (2006:94) states that the adopted life style that characterized socio-spatial relations was Stalin's "the orientation to the prosperous, cultural and cheerful life". Moreover, squares which were built for the meetings of the working masses had meaning for individuals as a reflection of state power (Ronneberger and Schöllhammer, 2010).

The period between the 1953-1991 (Abundance of Stalinist forms) *(a) Between mid-1950s and mid 1960s:* After Stalin's death, most communist regimes abandoned "socialist realism" and embraced the Modernist ideals of industrialized and standardized architectural technology as a necessary prerequisite of efficiency and economy of scale (Diener & Hagen, 2013). In the 1960s, public spaces in the Soviet Union were affected considerably by the new forms of urban planning practices regarding socialist leisure coinciding with Kruschev's Thaw period. Nikita Kruschev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR during the 1958-1964 period, made important political and socio-economical reforms which significantly influenced the planning policies of the Soviet Union. Because of these reforms, the socio-spatial relations also significantly changed as new types of use patterns emerged in urban places. During those years, according to Darieva (2011), Baku's cultural life became more vibrant and the Bulvar acquired new meaning among the society, becoming a favourite place for the citizens of Baku. Besides its socialist ceremonial uses and function as a place for 'cultured leisure', Bulvar had turned into a place for daily practices and urban routines by functioning as a meeting place for city-dwellers (Ibid).

(b) Between mid-1960s and 1980s: Following the Krushchev period, under Brejnev,

large-scale work was carried out in Baku in the spheres of living and cultural-communal construction, in the development of engineering and transport systems, planting of greenery and organization of public services and amenities. Azerbaijani books and newspapers emphasized the role of the Communist Party in beautifying Baku. According to Nasibov (2004), Brezhnev himself repeatedly visited the city and said: "*Baku is a beautiful city. It is a pleasure to live and work in this city*!". His words soon appeared as a slogan on Baku billboards. During this period, the beautification processes of the city were reflected in the Bulvar. Development and construction projects took place in the site (see figure 4.17).

Figure 4.17: Construction processes in the Bulvar, 1968-1969 (Source: www.bulvar.gov.az)

4.2.2.1   The Spatial Development of the Bulvar between mid 1960s and 1980s

Two years after the death of Stalin, in 1955, the Union of Architects released the November 1955 directive against 'ornamentalizm' (Buchli, 1997). The years following his death saw the reestablishment of the State architectural and planning. The party ideology tendency was to find a new legitimacy during the 'Thaw' by turning to the roots of the Revolution to rediscover the principles that had been abandoned by Stalin. Thus, a renewal of interest in the aesthetic vision of Constructivists, the avant-garde of 1920s, once more came to the fore (Ibid). The promotion of modern design, with its emphasis on utility and technology and roots in avant-garde thinking, were on the ascent once more. For the production of new spaces, the reformists advocated functionalist design principles and set out to formulate a 'contemporary style' on the basis of a reassessment of Constructivism and

international modernism (Reid, 1997:77). As such, the newly adopted method was reflected in the visual aesthetics and materiality of the spaces. After abandoning the monumental neoclassicism, socialist architecture had put forward a rather eclectic kind of modernist architecture which distinguished socialist modernism by boxy shapes, austere glass façades and sparse decoration (Diener & Hagen, 2013). Within the new way of developing the urban place, concern for identity continued with respect to socialist ideology. As stated by Diener and Hagen, by keeping socialist ideolgy and identity, the creation of these modernist aesthetics aimed to replace the Stalinist "national in form, socialist in content" with "socialist in form, socialist in content" (Ibid:497). Harris (2005) finds these new socialist places not much different in terms of aesthetics and layout from those urban development projects constructed in capitalist cities. According to Diener and Hagen (2013), these more modernist socialist spaces remained sensitive to the ideology of socialism.

As a result, in the 1960s, the new politics in Baku abandoned the Stalinist "triumphal style" and put into practice new forms of urban planning regarding socialist leisure. These newimplementations in the Bulvar created a distinct image of visual culture in comparison with past experiences. In the following years, the access zone, which had been limited to the area between the Old Town and the Government House, was extended eastwards and ended around the area of the seaport station, which was constructed in 1970 (Figure 4.18).
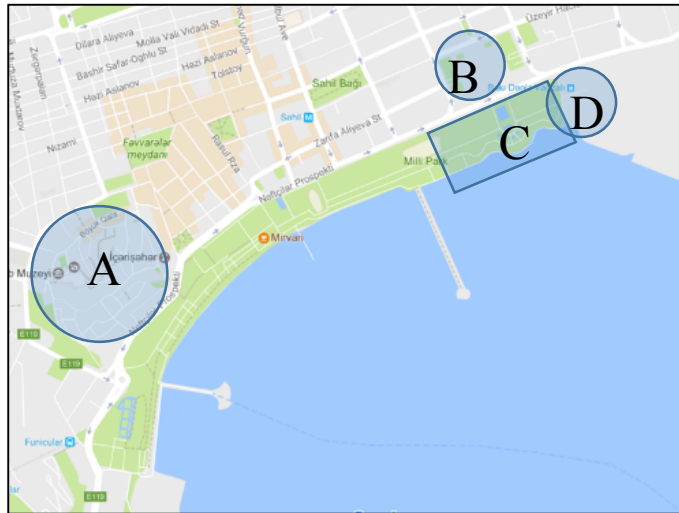
Figure 4.18: The total area of Bulvar in the late years of the Soviet Union (Resource: www.maps.google.com) A – old town, B – Government House C – extended part D – Seaport Station

In the construction of the new structures on the spaces, instead of the marble and stone that were used in monumental places (such as Government House and the former Lenin Museum in figure 4.13), soviet architects used new construction materials like metal and concrete blocks. The new styles in built environment, which differed from the former in their lightness, accessibility and visible 'people-orientedness', were used in the construction of a summer cinema, erected in the 1960s by the architects Shulgin and Nikolov (Darieva, 2011) (see Figure 4.31 in the next part). Having transparent walls with large windows, a light frame structure and proximity to structures like the chess-club and pavilion enabled these places and their users to easily interact with their surroundings (see Figures 4.31 and 4.32 in the next part).

Everyday life in the Bulvar between 1960s and 1980s: The innovations implemented during Kruschev's Thaw brought an end to Stalin's reforms in the Soviet Union., thus leading to the creation of new social and cultural lives in the following years. This period was also characterized by the creation of cultural contacts between the Soviet Union and the West. By the mid-1950s, the Soviet Union and foreign countries had started to rebuild their cultural and economic networks to promote cultural and commodity exchanges (Gurova, 2006). As a result, the republics of the Soviet Union hosted a variety of international events such as art exhibitions and music and cinema festivals, which gave foreign crowds the opportunity to come to the Soviet republics.

Gurova states that in the post-war period western values significantly influenced the daily life of socialist society, at least in terms of consumption (Ibid).

Starting from the 1960s, in the Soviet perception, the image of the city turned from an industrial port into 'the southern city', a city by the sea with its famous Bulvar where people could enjoy a stroll, a drink and live music (Grant, 2010). The opening of new facilities on the Bulvar significantly influenced the social life of the site by making it an area of daily routines and practices. It became a meeting place for the masses beyond displaying the state's political power. The site had moved one step beyond representing the state power, becoming a place where every citizen could enjoy music, art, cinema and sport.

Music, especially jazz, had always played a significant role in the cultural life of Baku citizens. They considered the jazz played and composed in Baku (a special kind of jazz created through combination regular jazz and *mugham* – the Azerbaijani folk music form) to be the best in the Soviet Union. The Azerbaijani jazz was enjoying a real boom and its appeal was expanding. The city hosted many important festivals like 'Golden Autumn' and 'Baku 83', for which most popular jazz groups came to Baku (Grant, 2010). A 61 years-old interviewee used the phrase 'golden times' for the Bulvar. Furthermore, the interviewee described his memories about this setting to the author as follows:

> *The Bulvar was not the most popular place for listening jazz, but the jazz spirit was reflected in every part of Baku, and I enjoyed listening to musicians who played in Bulvar too. Musicians playing there were part of the place* (Interview with P.İ., 61 years-old man).

The social character of the site had become more vibrant with the newly introduced functions. Facilities like summer cinema, the Summer Theater for Children, children's library, Chess club, Pavilion (exhibition hall), traditional open air *chaihanes*[5], a recreation place called 'Little Venice' and amusement parks had been introduced to the Bulvar. In this way, the public space offered access for any city-dweller, children as well as adults. Almost every aspect of everyday life in the public space, from food and clothing, to routine practices had started to display a new character. According to

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[5] *Chaihane* – the local term for a tea house, which usually serves snacks and non-alcoholic beverages.

Darieva (2011), the citizens' favorite site was not popular just because of its landscape features, but also due to its unique architectural structures and its functions. Café Pearl, with its unusual design that was integrated into the landscape, had become an important gourmet place by serving ice-cream with champagne (see figure 4.19).

Figure 4.19: Café Pearl in 1980s (Resource: www.bulvar.gov.az)

The Bulvar had a unique character in the perception of its users, an identity distinct from other places of Baku in many of its characteristics. The location of the area made the promenade unique in that it covered a significant part of the waterfront of Baku. Large paths where people can walk, have a rest and enjoy the sea-view made it more attractive to the users. The interviewees defined the uniqueness of the site with the following sentences:

> *During those times, Baku had many parks and other places where people could spend time. But, the social life, activities, and the spirit of the Bulvar made this place a unique setting for me. Bulvar was a 'get away place' for me. I remember how we skipped lessons and came to hang out in Bulvar, especially, during the spring when the weather was nice and we did not want to attend classes* (Interview with T.F., 58 years-old woman)

> *I liked what we could do in Bulvar, which had not been offered by other places of Baku. And being on the coastline was a privilege* (Interview with S.B 52 years-old woman).

Figure 4.20 shows the photographic poster of the Bulvar in the Soviet period. It illustrates the activity patterns and some physical features of the space. The name of

the poster – 'our friend Bulvar' promoted the space as a part of citizens' life, as a friend rather than just a public space.

Figure 4.20: Poster of the Bulvar– ''Nash Totovarish Bulvar'' (Our friend Bulvar) (Resource: https://www.ourbaku.com/images/0/09/Наш_товарищ_бульвар_2.jpg)

To sum up, as stated at the beginning of this chapter, it is difficult to talk about a singular outcome in terms of the form and social character for the Bulvar. However, it can be stated that in terms of construction and use the meaning of the place was intended to display the ideology of socialism. The physical environment and appearance, everyday life and the activities in Bulvar characterized the changes in the economic, social, political and cultural characteristics of the state socialism. During the years of socialism, everyday life in the Soviet Union, as well as in Bulvar, had been greatly influenced by the reforms in different periods. The space aimed to serve the ideals of socialist society beyond the commerce and inequalities within the site.

4.3   POST-SOCIALIST BULVAR

After the dissolution of the USSR, post-socialist governments started wide-ranging efforts at the restructuring of urban places. The urban transformations that took place in Baku were intended to remake its identity to legitimize the new political, economic and socio-cultural trajectories and to make the city suitable for integration into the global flows (Sadri & Zeybekoğlu, 2009; Valiyev 2013). The end of socialist practices and the break down of geographical barriers were accelerated by the attraction of foreign direct investment, entrance into free market and privatization processes (Czepzynski, 2008). Furthermore, the process of integration into global flows was being realized within the conception of "nationalization" of urban spaces in terms of both material and symbolic aspects. The new nations started to narrate and commemorate their evolving conceptions of national identity through the urban landscape. The revival of pre-socialist history or 'turning back to history' is one of the basic characteristics of post-socialist formation of places (Diener & Hagen, 2013). It would be simplistic to generalize the post-socialist formation of places as "nationalization of urban places" since it ignores the varying degrees of global interaction. For that reason, it is much more meaningful to consider the context of 'post-socialist urban place' and identity within the context of globalization.

In the post-socialist evolution of the area, one of the important factors that affected the Bulvar was the political transformation of the country which gave rise to the ideological break with socialism. The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the declaration of the country as an independent republic brought about changes in the

symbolic signs of the environment. Under such conditions, as stated by Shirokanova:

> "when there was acute necessity for a capital city to build its own strong national identity that would keep the society together, the simplest way to start building a new society was to make use of available symbolic resources" (2010:356).

The process was started with the renaming of streets, squares and administrative buildings associated with the Soviet regime, mainly with its political leaders. Similar to the other ex-Soviet countries, important figures of the pre-socialist or post-socialist periods disappeared from the Soviet-named places (names associated with the Soviet political leaders) all around Azerbaijan. New names were assigned, and new monuments were erected as well, often in memory of intellectuals deceased during the Soviet "repressions" or historical figures that were important to the nation's history (Ibid:357).

After the declaration of independence, the new state had transformed its political system from socialist to democratic norms which triggered the process of removing socialist signs from the urban spaces. The monuments that had represented the socialist ideology and the statues associated with the Soviet political leaders were removed. The gigantic Kirov statue which was erected on the east hills facing Bulvar was removed in the first year of post-socialism. The statue of Lenin that was erected in front of the Government House and facing former Lenin square and Bulvar was also removed in the early 1990s. As stated by Milerius (2008), the Soviet mechanisms of regulating symbolic space through references to ideology were broken, and the capitals excitedly desynchronized by putting the accent on national narratives (cited in Shirokova, 2010). In addition to the transformation processes, the events generated between 1988 and the beginning of the 1990s are significant factors that shaped the meaning of the place. In 1988, the former Lenin square became the meeting place of masses for political protests against the 'Nagorno Karbakh' conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which continued until the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the declaration of Azerbaijan as an independent country. Following these events, the square was renamed 'Azadlıq Meydanı' (Independence Square) to commemorate the meetings and protests as seen in Figure 4.21.

Figure 4.21: Protests in former Lenin Square (Independence Square), facing Bulvar, against conflicts for Nagorno Karabakh in Novmber 17, 1988 (Resource: https://sputnik.az/images/40772/94/407729478.jpg)

4.3.1 Bulvar in the first decade of post-socialism (1990s-early2000s)

The realization of the transformations, however, was a long process with plenty of challenges for many post-socialist cities. Especially, in the early years of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, as result of economic decline and increasing unemployment rates, problems in forming a new political system (political conflicts), and over-migration resulted in disorder in the everyday life of urban places. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to consider the evolution of Bulvar in post-socialist content from two perspectives: Bulvar at the beginning 1990s when the place started to lose its significance and after the redevelopment (or renovation) processes that started in the early years of the twenty first century in Baku.

At the beginning of the 1990s, in Baku, urban planning was not the prime issue for the new government. Urban spaces in the city had experienced functional and structural disorder resulting from the direct shift from a socialist economy to a neoliberal free-market system without any reforms in the political system of the country, such as decentralization of power and construction of local autonomies (Sadri & Zeybekoglu, 2009) (Table 4.1). In addition, the political struggles and collapse of the economy, and most importantly the war situation between Azerbaijan and Armenia, resulted in the organization of public spaces being ignored (Ibid). Therefore, well organized

socio-spatial relations in the city gave place to chaotic dis-order, which was also reflected in the Bulvar. The beginning of the 1990s can also be described as a deterioration of the urban spaces. The urban spaces in Baku started to lose their original purposes that were developed and organized by socialist urban practices.

Table 4.1: On the left: Model of Baku's transition. On the right: Simplified Model of Post-Socialist Urban Transition. (Sadri & Zeybekoglu, 2009:3)

Left model:
Socialist Baku → Cautious Political Transformation; Socialist Baku → Economic
Cautious Political Transformation → Semi-central Planning
Semi-central Planning → Without any Metropolitan Municipality
Semi-central Planning → Capitalist Baku
Shift to Market → Capitalist Baku

Right model:
Socialist City → Economic; Socialist City → Political Transformation
Economic → End of Central Planning; Political Transformation → End of Central Planning
End of Central Planning → Shift to Market → New Urban Order → Capitalist City

Among the factors influencing the changing socio-spatial relations is the changing demographic characteristics of the city. Migration to Baku was one of the main triggers that impacted socio-spatial relations in the city. The main reason for migration in the beginning of the 1990s was the war situation. The majority of the migrating population had left their lands in warzones, predominantly Nagorno-Karabakh and all regions of the current Republic of Armenia, many of them moving to Baku. In addition, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the policy of regulating migration had not been applied and the migration from rural regions of the country to Baku started to increase. People had also started to move to Baku because of economic problems and political conflicts in the early 90s. According to the 1999 population census in Azerbaijan, between 1988 and 1999, the population of Baku increased by 100,000 people despite the mass exodus of Russians, Armenians and other Russian-speaking populations after 1989 (cited in Afandiyev et al., 2014). The number of Russians decreased from

295,500 to 119,400 persons. The number of Armenians fell from 180,000 to 400 persons. The number of Jews also became 20,000 thousand less in Baku city within the 1989-1999 period. Most Azerbaijani refugees displaced from Armenia in 1988 (200,000 people) settled in Absheron (suburban district) (Afandiyev et al., 2014). In addition, many war refugees from occupied Nagorno-Karabakh lands during the war (778,000[6]) come to Baku to save their lives. The main problem in Baku at that time of increasing population was insufficient work due to the collapsed economy. To support themselves, the majority of these displaced people and the refugees started to set up informal economic functions in various parts of Baku.

Like in many other places of Baku, the site became the location of the informal economic functions where 'uncivilized' shops and improvised kiosks were set up by the lower-income population. These facilities were predominantly street vendors who offered everyday goods and beverages. As Sailer-Fliege (1999) states, in the early years of post-socialism, the urban environment of the new states, especially city centres, had turned into sites for small-scale outlets operated by the local population after the socialist retail trade system collapsed. The same scenario was observed in many parts of Baku in the early years of post-socialism. In the case of Baku, most of these were migrantsIn those years, Bulvar shared certain characteristics with other spaces of Baku in terms of informal economic functions: providing contraband goods or self-manufactured commodities at low prices.

The built environment in the Bulvar had been neglected for a long period and some parts became dysfunctional. As a result, during the 1990s, the "citizens' friend" had turned into an "undesirable place" in the eyes of both the newly settled population of Baku and the long-term users of the place. A 58 years-old user who moved away from the city after graduation from Baku State University describes the impacts of these changes on her as follows:

> *When I studied in Baku, Bulvar was my favorite place where I used to hang around. It was a nice place where I could spend my free time. After graduation from university, I could not find the opportunity to return to Baku until 1997. When I moved back to Baku after 14 years, the first thing that I did was visit Bulvar, where I had many beautiful memories. Unfortunately, I could not recognize the place that I knew. All its beauty and joyful spirit were gone.*

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[6] Retrieved from: http://www.refugees-idps-committee.gov.az/az/pages/15.html

Instead, there was a chaotic place with broken-down environment and new guests (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman).

In the early years of the new Republic, the physical quality of the area had decreased because of natural and human-made factors. As a result of the rising sea level, some parts of the pavement in the Bulvar were damaged and had not been renovated for years. The side with terraces that allowed users close interaction with the water was also damaged. Some facilities in the area were damaged or destroyed and had become functionless (Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.22: Damaged parts of Bulvar in 1990s. On the left: People fishing polluted Caspian from damaged part of terraces. On the right: The old schooner called Kodor that once served as restaurants, (Resourse: Gischler, 2000)

The main damage to the site had been made by the industrial wastes that polluted the environment and the sea. In 1999, a team of experts composed of local (State Committee for the Environment, the Academy of Sciences, the Baku Municipality[7], the Azerbaijan Marines, Kasmornyproekt, Kaspbasu) and international groups from Netherlands (IWACO – International Water Consultants) made an environmental inventory by listing related problems and causes (Gischler 2000:40). According to the report:

➢ *"Baku Bay presently receives a surplus of around 400,000 square meters of sewage each day because the city's network of municipal sewers and pumping*

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[7] The Municipality of Baku was founded in 1999; until that time the city had a semi-central administrative structure that was ruled by the Executive Authority of Baku City.

> *stations can convey only part of the wastewater to the main treatment plant at Hovsan, which is 15 km outside of Baku.*
>
> ➢ *Bibi Heybat oil field and oil refineries discharge thousands of tons of oil in to the sea (Bay) every year because of non-functional facilities that designed to separate wastewater.*
>
> ➢ *Abandoned offshore oil wells have begun to leak*
>
> ➢ *Over the past 20 years, many studies have shown that the Bay's bottom sediment is contaminated with 3 to 5 million tons of petroleum hydrocarbons.*
>
> ➢ *Many ships in the Bay do not appear to use the Baku Port Authority's reception facilities for wastewater and waste oil, and can be seen discharging directly into the Caspian.*
>
> ➢ *Roughly 50 shipwrecks, a number of obsolete piers, various uncompleted structures, and dozens of abandoned industrial scrap yards and dumpsites clog the waterfront and need to be removed"* (Gischler, 2000:41).

As result of these problems, the polluted environment had changed users' feelings towards the site. Some of the interviewees primarily talked and complained about the bad smells that influenced their desire not to visit the area in the 1990s;

> *Even in the past the sea was not so clear because of the industry. But, in the 90s it was a total disaster. The coast was smelling so bad. Once we were enjoying walking along the sea and take a breath of fresh air. That was our family's routine night practice. However, because of the smell, especially, during warm summer times it was impossible to come even 15 meters closer to some parts of the waterside. As a result, we did not prefer to come to Bulvar for long years even though we were living near the site* (Interview with K.B., 50 year-old woman).

Other interviewees commented about the recreational site and green sites that had been damaged and lost their significance during the 1990s;

> *Once I was enjoying the smell of flowers, grass and trees which made Bulvar special. However, as a result of not watering and not caring some plants and trees became dry and some were cut off. Bulvar was not clean at all, there were many trashes* (Interview with S.H., 58 year-old man).

Once a socialist space for "cultured leisure" and "citizens' friend", Bulvar had been turned into a place that was avoided and transformed into a post-socialist space of uncertainty and poverty. According to the interviewee:

At that time, the Bulvar was like a hawkers' trade place. At every step there were vendors trying to sell cheap products (Interview with R.M 62 years-old woman)

4.3.2 The new phase of Bulvar: Globalized identity

The new phase of the Bulvar was directly influenced by the tendency to turn Baku into a competitive place within the region. Diener and Hagen (2013:505), in their research "From socialist to post-socialist cities", state that efforts and attempts to achieve global status are quite evident in the case of Baku, where the government played a more central role in urban redevelopments. Urban development/redevelopment and renovation processes in Baku began with the developing economy of the country. Subsequent wealth generated from the country's oil deposits provided the impetus and means to complement Baku's historical districts with massive residential and cultural structures featuring internationalist styles (Ibid).

The first stage of the growing economy of Azerbaijan was marked by oil the contract signed in 1994 in Baku which is known as the "Contract of the Century" (Sadri & Zeybekoglu, 2009). According to Ziyadov (2006), because of increasing oil prices, Azerbaijan experienced one of the fastest economical growth spurts. Rising oil prices, defined as the second "Oil Boom", led to a "Building Boom" in the city (Darieva,2011; Sadri & Zeybekoglu, 2009; Valiyev, 2013). The growing economy and increasing foreign investments made the Bulvar an important area for the city once more. Moreover, the privatization of properties that once belonged to the socialist state is one of the significant factors that created new ways of production and use of the place. Bodnar (2010) defines privatization as the leitmotif of post-socialism (cited in Hirt, 2012).

The created economic networks between Azerbaijan and Western countries have accelerated the transformation of the urban spaces and the creation of new ones. As Western oil companies began to establish offices in Baku, there was an urgent need for modern strategic service industries such as telecommunications, transportation, banking, insurance and hotels. It became crucial to make the country "business-able" (Valiyev, 2013). After 1995, many major commercial and residential construction

projects were initiated.

The main focus of renovation activities in Baku Bulvar (rebuilding a visual, ceremonial and multifunctional place) was to attract not only city dwellers, but also international business people and tourists from the West. It was here that people were expected to know what the new Azerbaijan and Baku mean. According to Darieva (2014), the built environment and the atmosphere of the new Bulvar were intended to center the urban landscape and reflect the presence of a strong nation-state. The spatial boundaries of the Bulvar were enlarged, and new buildings for sport facilities, museums, restaurants, hotels, business offices and shopping malls were constructed. Consequently, Bulvar was to become Baku's new representative profile. The place was redesigned with the purpose of creating a spectacular centerpiece of national identity on the world scale (Darieva 2014). The former Socialist space for cultured leisure was turned into the site of exclusive national representations and of neoliberal business. Here it can be argued that these rehabilitation, regeneration and redevelopment projects changed, produced new meaning, and even eroded the old attributed meanings of the place.

All in all, the aim of this chapter was to explain the formation of the identity of the Bulvar in historical content. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, massive reconstruction and development processes were started in the site. The next chapter analyses the Bulvar from the socialist to the post-socialist period with respect to the identity of place components: *physical setting, activities and meanings.* It also examines the identification of the users with the site regarding changes in the identity of the site.

4.3.3 Concluding Remarks

All in all, after dissolution of the USSR, socio-economical and institutional transformations in Azerbaijan had formed new urbanization process in Baku that has reflected to the Bulvar. The table 4.2 illustrates changes in post-socialist Azerbaijan under four main domains that influenced the identity of the public place: economy, policies, society and culture.

Table 4.2: Trajectory of changes that influenced the identity of place (Derived from: Darieva et al., 2011; Tsenkova, 2012)

Domain	During socialism	In post-socialism
Economy	- Economies of scale in production - Centrally planned investment, economic development, and job creation - Macroeconomic control through central planning, regulation, and control of markets through income and price policies	- Liberalization of markets, - Growing international competition - Service sector growth - Private Investments - International Investments
Policies	- Dominated by central government decision-making - Central planning, state control over investment, property development - Rigid planning norms, coordinated planning for housing, public facilities, and transport, nationalized urban land,	- De-centralized decision making - Entrepreneurial approaches to planning and place marketing - Privatization and marketization in the provision of urban services - Uncontrolled price policies - Privatization of property/land ownership
Society	- Centrally planned population growth, - Egalitarian income distribution - Collective sentiments	- Demographic changes in the city (uncontrolled urban growth) - Growing income inequalities - Loss of collective sentiments
Culture	- Production Culture - Controlled Consumerism - Relatively West-integrated Cultural habits (e.g. music, art, fashion)	-Back to 'roots' (giving importance and reflecting pre-socialist values) -Mass Culture (Integrated with West) -Shift in Consumer Culture

In post-socialist evolution of identity of the place, the site has experienced two important periods; deterioration and losing its significance as a result of socio-economic problems and political struggles, and "reborn" through the increasing economy.

The chapter 5 analyses the impcats of these changes on the identity of the site and users' identification with that setting.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the identity of the Bulvar in the 1980s and in the present (primarily after the renovation of the site) the identification of users with the Bulvar regarding the changes in the identity of that setting. This chapter is composed of two parts. First, it examines the identity of the site regarding the changes in physical attributes (design, form, architectural typology), in activities and in meanings attributed to it. The reason for carrying out this research focusing on two time periods –past and present– is to gain insight into the extent to which the identity of place has changed for the users of the site. More specifically, this part seeks to find answers to the following questions:

To what extent have the *physical features, activities and meanings* in Baku Bulvar changed over time, particularly from the socialist to the post-socialist period?

To what extent did the Soviet place identity change over time? Was the place identity in the socialist period completely lost, or did it manage to partly survive?

What were the place identity generators in the post-socialist period?

To what extent have people's identification with Baku Bulvar changed over time, particularly from the socialist to the post-socialist period

5.1 IDENTITY OF THE BULVAR FROM THE 1980S TO THE PRESENT

5.1.1 Physical Setting

The new era of the Bulvar began after 1998, when the place appeared in the list of

Azerbaijan's environmental problems, as a part of the National Environmental Action Plan (Gischler, 2000). The area was included in the strategic places for city redevelopment and gained new status and name – Seaside National Park. In 2001, the Seaside National Park was included in the list of historically and culturally significant places of Azerbaijan. The regeneration processes of the site started with rehabilitation of the environment. By March 1998, the municipality had begun diving inspections of an obsolete pier along the Bulvar and removed the first object, the Kodor (see Figure 4.22), an old schooner that had served as a restaurant until a fire sank it in August 1999 (Ibid:41). According to the environmental report, an estimated 75 to 100 tons of metal and concrete waste that is sitting along the Bulvar, either in the water or on piers is also scheduled to be removed (Ibid:41).

The environmental rehabilitation was followed by costly redevelopment and renovation activities on the waterfront that were started in 2006. The main focus was the renovation of the area by turning it into a multifunctional area attractive not only to citizens, but also to tourists and investors from abroad. Darieva states that the restructuring of the built environment and atmosphere of the Bulvar is intended to reflect the presence of a strong nation-state into the urban landscape where people are expected to identify what the new Azerbaijan and Baku mean (Darieva, 2011). Therefore, the reconstruction of the social space aimed to function as the representative profile of the new city in post-socialist development.

Size and physical accessibility: One of the significant changes that the place has experienced over the years is the physical accessibility of the area. While the physically accessible areas in the Bulvar used to be located between the Old Town and the Government House, in the post-socialist evolution of Baku, the south-east (Bayıl District) and west (former Black City) parts of the site have been regenerated. The water-fronting site of Bayıl district has been redeveloped and connected to the Bulvar. In the same way, the former Black City, which had been used as an industrial area, underwent functional redevelopment. The site was renamed as White city and mixed-use functions were introduced: residential, business and commercial areas. The water-fronting side of the area was connected to the Bulvar. According to the reconstruction

project[8] of the site, the total territory comprising 47 hectares and reaching 3km in length and 250 meters in width during the late 1980s (between the Government House (where Seaport station is located) and Old Town – Azneft Circle), it will be enlarged by 15 km and will stretch between Bayıl district and Black City (see the Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Total Territory of the Bulvar after reconstruction. The current territory of the site is located between the Bayıl district (marked as A) and the old Black City (marked as B: currently the place undergoing the redevelopment process) (Sotce: plan retrieved from www.arxkom.gov.az

Landscape: The green layout of the site is one of the most diversifying elements of the Bulvar with respect to the past. The green area of the environment was affected by both the reconstruction and the rising sea level at the beginning of the 1990s. One of

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[8] Reconstruction Project of Seaside National Park – www.bulvar.gov.az

the most important elements of the green layout was the local *chinar* trees (plane trees); some of them were cut down to build various buildings; and some dried as a result of not being watered or being exposed to salty water from the rising sea level in the early 1990s. The other important recreational element of the area was the '*Little Venice*', where people walked on the bridges constructed over artificial canals and took gondola tours in the shade of willow trees. Following the redevelopment period of the Bulvar, the side under reconstruction started to function again in 2012. The territory of the site was expanded, the canals were cleaned up, new gondolas were broughtand new restaurants were built between the canals (**Figure 5.2**).

Figure 5.2: Little Venice – recreational area before and after redevelopment:
On the bottom: Little Venice in the 1980s (Resource: bulvar.gov.az).
On the top: The site after reconstruction with its new restaurants (Personal archive).

Furthermore, a variety of new plants and trees that were brought from different countries of the world were introduced to the Bulvar. In the summer of 2009, more than fifty Washington palm trees and numerous other exotic trees from South Africa, Holland, the Canary Islands and Saudi Arabia were imported to Baku and planted at

great expense in the soil of the western part of Baku Promenade (Darieva, 2014). The majority of these expensive trees are planted with informative signboards placed in front. The aim was to make the site more attractive to tourists and users by giving the image of a botanical park. However, the plants seem to have a purely decorative function, since palm trees do not provide enough shelter or shade during the warm Baku summers (Figure 5.3)

Figure 5.3: Some examples of imported trees in the Bulvar. On the left: European Olive Tree 157 years old, Homeland Italy, planting day in National Park 2010 (Personal archive).

Built Structures and Types: Built form is another element of the present Bulvar that significantly differs from the past. In the post-socialist urban development of the city, massive spatial transformations were realized on the waterfront of Baku where the influence of the new economic system can clearly be observed. Therefore, it is reasonable to take the periphery of the Bulvar into account, which has created a new visual identity for this place. The waterfront of the city turned into a site mirroring the new nations and neo-liberal business with the brand new hotels, offices, shopping malls, museums, cultural and sport centers, restaurants, high-rise residences that were constructed. Similar to Western waterfront redevelopment projects – which transform industrial to service based sectors (see, for example, Sieber, 1991), the East (where the former Black City was located) and the West (where Bayıl district was) sides of the Bulvar, which had functioned as industrial areas in pre-socialist period, were developed by the socialist state, and redeveloped during the post-socialist period.

Following global trends, the waterfront was recreated by implementing modernist globalized styles that produced homogenous spaces sharing more or less the same functions as those in other countries of the World. One of the most significant examples of these spaces is the built complexes consisting of shopping mall, hotel, residential building and office tower as shown in Figure 5.4. An envrioenment sharing the same feature can be observed in the case of Baku Bulvar.

Figure 5.4: Examples sharing same characteristics with the redeveloped port site in Baku On the left: Zorlu center İstanbul (Resource:http://www.domusweb.it/content/dam/domusweb/en/architecture/2014/07 /15/cose_turche_maxxi/Istanbul_3.jpg) On the right Next Level Ankara (Resource: http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=1826036)

During the Soviet period, the city was not known for its luxurious hotels. By the increasing its significance in the region as an investment and business area and by hosting some important mega events[9], the city saw an increase in the number of foreign tourists and business people; as a result, construction of new hotels was started. The majority of the luxurious brand hotels were constructed on the waterfront side of the city integrating it with the Bulvar (Figure 5.5).

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[9] Over the last decade, the city has hosted several contests; Eurovision Song Contest, First European Games, Formula 1 started in the summer of 2016 and the organization will last at least 5 years, and in the summer of 2017, the city is going to host the İslamic Games.

Figure 5.5: View from the East side of Bulvar (on the top) where Hilton Hotel, Hotel Absheron, JW Marriott and the old port are located (Personal archive). B) Rendering of the redevelopment project of the port (on the bottom). More than half of the project has already been constructed as seen on the right side of the top photo. The built structure was intended to function as a hotel, residential building, shopping mall and offices. (Resource http://sabahpdi.com/portfolio-crescent.html)

The significance of the Bulvar for the city authority has increased with respect to the developing waterfront as a site of neo-liberal business. After the reconstruction, the old part of the space (located between Old Town and Sea Port Station) provided with a variety of commercial and cultural facilities. The application of new post-modernist materials and technology in the construction of new structures gave a new globalized accent to the physical appearance of the site. A shopping mall and the business office called Baku Business Center were built and the construction of a new shopping mall called Caspian Waterfront Mall was started in 2014 (see Figures 5.6 and 5.7).

Figure 5.6: Baku Business Center (on the left) and Park Bulvar Mall (on the right) (Source: personal archive)
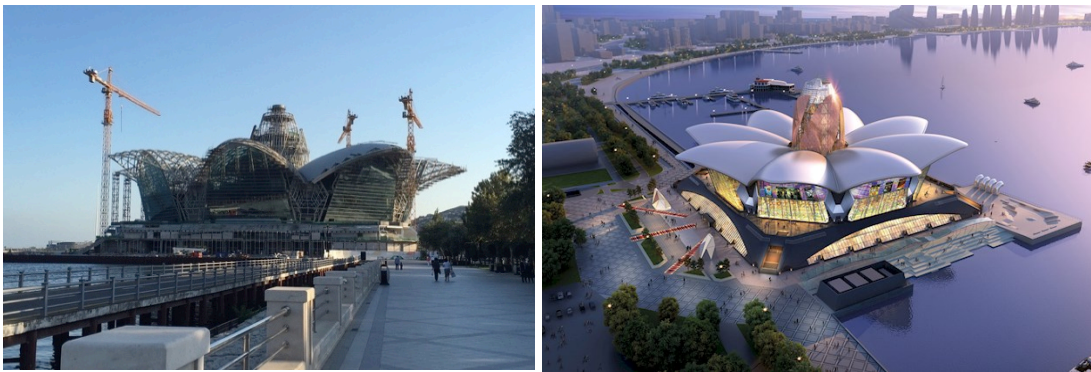
Figure 5.7: Construction of the new shopping mall on the site (on the left) (Personal archive) Render of the Caspian Waterfront Mall design (on the right) (Resource: http://www.benoy.com/projects/caspian-waterfront/)

Besides the contemporary styles described, post-socialist urbanism in Baku features the integration of some traditional notions into architectural practices. Some of new structures in the area were the efforts of architects that aimed to accommodate Azerbaijan's traditional notions and national identity with new norms of global and regional integration. Two significant examples of these structures located in the Bulvar are the new Carpet Museum and the Mugham Center. While the Carpet Museum building was given the form of a rolled carpet, the Mugham Center was designed to remind visitors of the traditional stringed musical instrument called the '*tar', which* was played by Oriental folk artists (Figure 5.8). The building is supposed to be a new ceremonial place and a cultural symbol of post-socialist Azerbaijan's national sovereignty (Darieva, 2011). It is intended to promote the country's national moral values, culture and the Azerbajani *mugham* in the world.
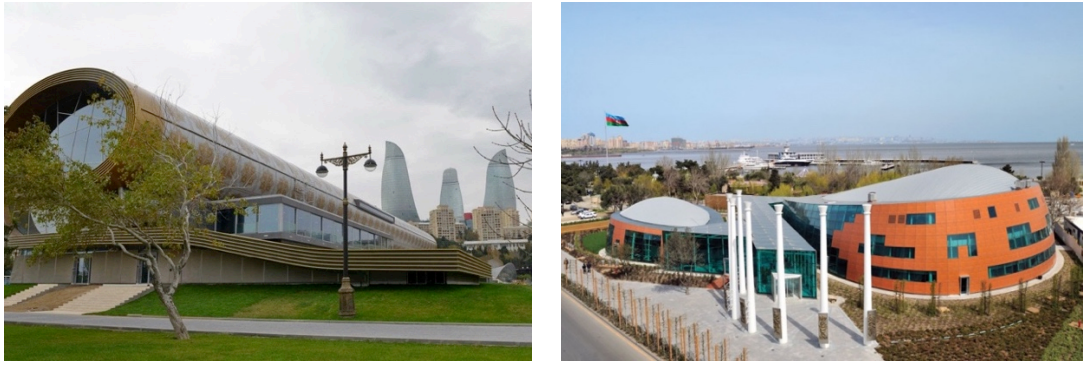
Figure 5.8: The Carpet Museum (on left) was opened in 2014 (Personal archive) and The Mugham Center was inaugurated on December 2008 (on right)(Resource: http://heydar-aliyev-foundation.org/en/content/view/92/93/International-Mugham-Centre)

To conclude, in the case of the Bulvar, visual evidence of its socialist past was only minimally maintained (i.e Café Pearl, Clock Tower), while the majority of the socialist structures (Pavilion, Café Sahil, Chess Club) were removed and replaced with the new structures. Once the buildings like the Former Lenin Museum and Government House and the Bulvar had been an inseparable whole. After the redevelopment of Neftchiler Avenue, it became one of the main roads of the city which resulted in the weakening of the pedestrian connection with the buildings and the space.

The material structures and visual aspects of the environment proclaim the political, cultural, and economic dynamism (as well as global stature) of the city and its nation. By integrating contemporary styles with reference to traditional notions (see figure 5.9), post-socialist urbanism in Baku has produced spaces that demonstrate its antiquity, its resilience over time, and its ongoing push into the future.

Figure 5.9: View from the West side of the Bulvar in the early 1980s (on the top) (Bulvar.gov.az), and the site after redevelopment (on the bottom) (Resource: http://www.allposters.com/-sp/Azerbaijan-Baku-View-of-City-Looking-Towards-Hilton-Hotel-Posters_i9815082_.htm

As stated by Diener and Hagen (2013:490), post-socialist urbanism has featured efforts to reconcile traditional notions of local and national identity with new norms of regional and global integration, where by blending globalized modernist styles with nationalized architectural traditions, these projects have produced hybrid spaces.

5.1.2 Activities

The second component that contributes to the identity of the Bulvar is the activities held on the site. One of the prominent factors that influences activities in urban places is functional re-organization. As stated in the previous part, socio-economical changes

in Azerbaijan have led to the emergence of new functions in the urban spaces. Therefore, to explain the role activities play in the Bulvar, the functional organization of the space was examined. This part examines the activities held in the Bulvar in two different time periods: those of the 1980s and those held in the present, and the functions related to these periods.

5.1.2.1 Perceived functions and activities in the 1980s

When the socio-spatial organization of the socialist state is considered, the site was a public space offering 'egalitarian' access to the citizens with less commercial importance. During the years of the Soviet Union, the Bulvar was a space of daily practices and routines for citizens. The site was the most dynamic place in the city, and besides its visual features, it was distinguished by the activity choices offered in comparison to other public spaces in Baku. This space provided citizens with recreational sites, a large promenade along the coast, playgrounds for children and adults, cultural and social facilities, and a few commercial units that were state property and state-operated. According to the interviewees, Chess Club, Pavilion, movie theatre, 'Amusement Places' and 'Children Summer Puppet Theatre' were popular functions in the site.

Chess was one of the most important interests in the Soviet Union, as well as in Azerbaijan. Throughout the Soviet period, the passion of the nation for the chess was reflected to every part of the city. ***Chess Club,*** built in the Bulvar, was one of the most important facilities in the Soviet period. In the chess club, people could register for and participate in tournaments or play friendly matches with each other. It was a place where both professional and amateur players spent time practicing chess, an important aspect of sport and physical education that the bureaucracy of the Soviet government turned into a cultural component in the lives of Soviet citizens. During the interview with S.B., a 52 year-old woman, she stated that "*People have adopted chess as a daily practice and the game has become a part of our culture*". The other significant point in the site is the '***Pavilion'***, which functioned as an exhibition hall. The site was used mainly for temporary events which people could follow from the monthly calendar. Based on the interviews, the place hosted cultural organizations, art exhibition and science days. The interviewee described the place as follows:

The Bulvar had a 'gallery' role for the city. There were a lot of social activities in a monthly calendar and some of them were related to art which really interested me when I was studying at university. There were also exhibited works of university students… I had a close friend that was studying at Baku Academy of Art. She invited me to the schools' gallery day held in the Bulvar in 1982. It was an exhibition of senior university students' works, which consisted of sculptures and paintings (Interview with S.B 52 year-old woman)

These facilities, chess club and exhibition hall, were important places of the site during the years of socialism as they represented the cultural activities of state socialism in Baku (Figures 5.10, 5.11). After the redevelopment of the area, these places were removed and the pavilion was replaced by the Business center (see Figure 5..6). The essence of the chess culture in the space can still be observed. In recent years, in various parts of the Bulvar, street chessboards have been placed so that visitors can play, as shown in Figure 5.12.

Figure 5.10: The Building of Pavilion (Resource: http://gapp.az/news/311235-baku-kotorogo-net-foto)
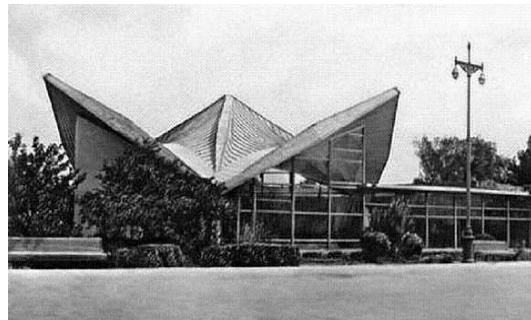
Figure 5.11: The building of chess club in the Bulvar (photo taken in 1960s) (Resource: https://www.ourbaku.com/index.php/Бакинский_бульвар)
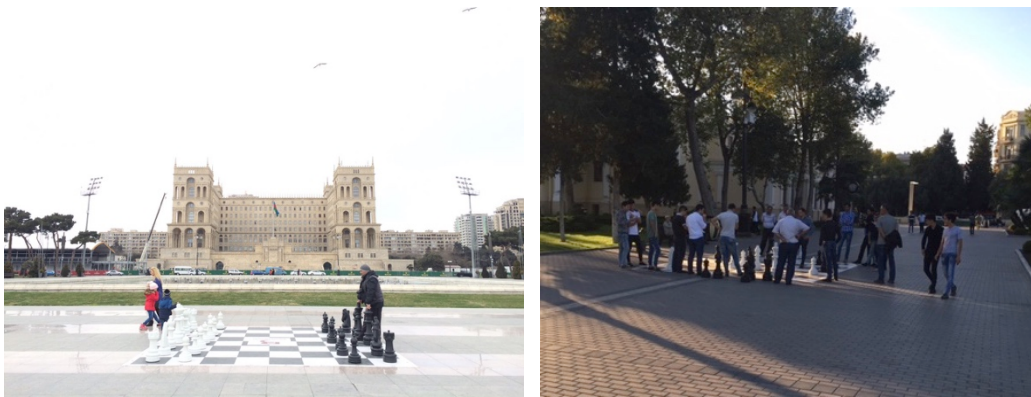
Figure 5.12: Street chessboards in Bulvar (Source: Personal archive)

Furthermore, another essential feature of the site was the movie theatre. Until the late 1980s, going to cinema, especially during the summer nights, was a popular activity among the users of the space. '***Open air movie theatre – Baxar***' had seasonal service, opening at the end of April and closing by the end of September. The place played a significant role as an entertainment activity in the Bulvar. A 61 year-old interviewee who had special memories about the place described this open air movie theatre with these sentences:

> *During those times the television was less popular in Azerbaijan. There were a few TV channels, the important ones were 'Az Tv' and Russian 'Perviy Kanal'... Movie theatres were very popular in Baku, and the summer open air movie theatre in the Bulvar was one the most popular among them. It had a special atmosphere. The place was very crowded and it was so difficult to find tickets. ...In the summer of 1982, I was newly engaged. In that summer, almost every week at least once we were going to watch movies with my fiancée in the Bulvar* (Interview with P.İ., 61 year-old man)

After the reconstruction of the area, the old movie theatre was removed and replaced by a big screen and a stage for the audience, which is used as an advertisements board and as a stage for concerts. The new summer cinema was opened on the newly-developed west part of the place (see figure 5.13)

Figure 5.13: Summer open air cinema – Bahar (www.bulvar.gov.az) B) Summer cinema on the new Bulvar C) The big screen was constructed on the old place of the movie theatre (Resource: https://report.az/en/art/open-air-theater-launched-in-baku/)

In addition, the site had two places of amusement: the first one was located on the east side close to the seaport station, and the second one in the middle of the space near Café Pearl. These places were mostly attractive to children or young people. After the reconstruction, some of the attractions located near Café Pearl were removed. The existing ones were later replaced with new carousels.

According to the interview results, one of the significant differences observed between the two periods was that the east part of the site was more actively used in the 1980s than in the present. After erecting the seaport station's passenger terminal in the 1970s, the east part became one of the most used areas of the space. The seaport station was used for carrying both passengers and cargo to the cities located on the coast of the Caspian Sea. In the present, use of the terminal for traveling has decreased and is not

preferred as a transport tool by the citizens. One interviewee supported these statements as follows:

> *The east side of the Bulvar was one of most dynamic and active used parts, especially when the passenger ships were about to arrive/or depart. There were families and friends to welcome passengers or to see them off. I was always seeing people with luggage walking around, resting in the site before traveling. Today, this part of the place is not used as much as before. I also do not prefer to use that part since that side of the Bulvar has bad quality... There are cafés and 'chaikhana' with low quality and some old boats, and also the noise of construction makes me uncomfortable* (Interview with S.H., 58 year-old man).

Today, the front side of the terminal is used as a car parking area. In addition to the passenger terminal, some parts of the building are used as cafés, restaurants, a congress hall and offices of private companies (see Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14: Seaport station in late the 1970s (on the left) (Source: www.ourbaku.com/images/d/d0/Port.jpg) Seaport station in the present after façade of the building was renovated (on the right)

During the 1980s the commercial significance of the Bulvar increased. It had a small area for shopping where products (i.e. accessories, clothes, small wares for houses, etc.) brought from other regions of the Soviet Union were sold. The area was located near the seaport station, which was state-operated. The other important commercial units were restaurants and cafés. According to the interviewees, the most popular among them were café 'Mirvari' (*Café Pearl*), 'Restaurant Sahil', and 'Kodor' – the schooner. These places often were used as a meeting point by some users of the space or the best places for having food. The interviewees explain their memories with these sentences:

> *Café Pearl had the best coffee and ice creams, and Sahil had the best desserts. These places were my favorite ones in the city and generally we were meeting with friends there* (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman).

> *One could order very delicious fish in Kodor. It was hard to find a place to sit in Kodor in summers. It had few available places and was always full of customers* Interview with K.B., 50 year-old woman)

Among the old commercial units in the space, the only conserved one is the Café Pearl. The other structures were removed, and Café Pearl today functions as a restaurant.

> *Café Pearl like Clock Tower are the few visual evidences of the past. I would prefer more evidences were preserved. These types of place help to keep memories alive. When I see Café Pearl, it reminds me of old times,* (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman).

In the years of socialism, the Bulvar had sport sites for adults where volleyball and tennis, table tennis and billiards were played. In addition, for children, there was the '*Summer Puppet Theatre',* which was functioning during the summer days of the year (Figure 5.15). Another popular activity in the site was the **steamboat tour** along the bay of Baku. In the present situation of the space, some of the playgrounds (like the public open volleyball and tennis courts) were replaced and the summer puppet theatre was removed. The old part of the Bulvar has a new tennis court which belongs to the fitness and tennis club which was constructed in 2010 and new playgrounds were constructed in the redeveloped west side of the Bulvar (see figure 5.16). Steamboat tours are still available on the site and continue to be a popular activity on the site.

Figure 5.19: Playgrounds and building of 'Summer Puppet Theatre' for children in late 1970s (Resource: www.bulvar.gov.az)

Figure 5.15: A–playgrounds in the Bulvar constructed in the Soviet period (Resoucre: https://www.ourbaku.com/index.php/Бакинский_бульвар) B–The playgrounds after renovation in the Bulvar (On the right: www.bulvar.gov.az)
C–Fitness and tennis club in the Bulvar (Personal archive).

5.1.2.2 Perceived activities in present

In the post-socialist evolution of Azerbaijan, the activities held in the public spaces were influenced by the loss of old social habits or by adaopting **new social and integrated cultural habits, and by the advanced communication technologies.** The

breaking down of geographical barriers, the integration of international culture and the massive use of advanced communication technology led to the formation of new patterns in the daily lives of citizens. The second factor that influenced activities in the Bulvar was the **scale of the space** that significantly had been developed and led to change in the spatial mobility. By connecting the water-front parts to the redeveloped industrial areas on the east and west side of space, the interaction area of the users with the space was increased (**see the figure in physical part 4.X**). With the changing scale of the space, the **functional organization** of the site was also influenced, which led to the emergence of new types of activities. In addition, the **temporary activities** like cultural and national festivals, ceremonies and international events are other varieties that affected the post-socialist period.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, one of the main important changes was the spatial practices of the citizens. The changing socio-spatial relationships affected perceived activities in urban spaces. Adapting international cultural habits, mainly western, the Bulvar today reflects new types of activities. The youth culture of the post-socialist nation is evolving due to the influence of global trends that led to the emergence of new social activities in the space. One these acts is the '*flash mobs*' – a brief time act performed by a group of people that suddenly appear in a public place, which was mainly set up through telecommunications or social media (Figure 5.17).

Figure 5.17: Flash Mob in Bulvar acted in 2013 (Resource https://www.pinterest.com/Nazikkkk/azerbaijan/)

In addition, interviewees were asked about their observations reagarding the perceived

activities in the Bulvar in both periods. From the interviewees' comments, it is understood that the new circumstances of communication within the setting transformed the perception of the users. Moreover, changes in the social habits of the people through the years have influenced activities held in the Bulvar. The interviewees mainly pointed out the differences related to the activities of young people (through behavioral patterns) in the area:

> *During those years, there were semi-closed sitting and resting areas fronting the sea. Students used to go there to do homework or read after classes or during the weekends. That site was a favorite place for both university and high school students. It was easy to distinguish the high school students from the dress codes. Today, I generally see young people showing each other something from mobile phones or tablets. Sometimes, I hear conversations like asking each other questions: which photo should I use for my profile picture? or should I post this photo? How many likes did you get for that photo? etc… People have different types of passions and display different types of acts in the Bulvar, quite different form the past* (Interview with T.A 60 year-old man)

> *In the past, people, especially students, had passion for the intellectual discussions. The game 'Chto Qde Koqda'[10] was a favorite TV show that students were playing in the Bulvar. In the resting places, we called them 'Besedka', students were playing an amateur version of it. They were asking each other questions and then discussing the answers. Often elder people were participating in the discussions and starting to play with them. However, those types of activities, which gave an intellectual character to the space, have disappeared from the Bulvar* (Interview with R.M 62 year-old woman).

The above mentioned observations of the users indicate that the acts derived from individual's patterns of use had a significant impact on the formation of the social character of the Bulvar. That is, the social character of the place has changed in the perception of the users' through the newly emerged acts of the people or the disappearance of old ones from the place. The transformation of the social character of the Bulvar is going to be discussed in the following section (**meanings**) of the thesis.

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[10] '*Chto? Qde? Koqda?* ' – 'What? Where? When? is an intellectual TV game show which is well known in Russian-language media. The show was created in September 1975 and continues to be produced in other CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States).

5.1.2.3 Activities through the new functions

In the post-socialist evolution of the city, one of the main changes can be observed in functional re-organization of urban spaces. The massive industrial areas are being redeveloped after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Therefore, changing functional uses in the space can be considered an important factor that changed activities in the space. The main influence on the activities of the Bulvar has been made by introducing new functions on the extended area of the site. As stated in the previous section (physical setting), the area was extended by redeveloping the industrial areas to the west and east sides of the space. Areas for walking, resting, and sitting have been developed; these implementations have influenced spatial interaction, side choices and access zone of users. The sides that were restricted for public access (i.e. used for industrial purposes) have been turned into highly accessible public spaces.

Post-socialist urbanism in Baku shows ambition for the global status over the region in order to attract people from all around the world. Furthermore, the site has been provided with sport centers and event halls. For the well known international music contest (Eurovision Song Contest), the construction of an indoor arena called 'Baku Crystal Hall' was started in August 2011 after Azerbaijan became the winner of the 2011 contest organized in Dusseldorf, Germany. The building was constructed in the west developed area of the Bulvar close to the Bayıl district and was finished in April 2012. The other significant change on the site was the construction of the flag square, where gigantic national flag of Azerbaijan with 162 meters tall was erected in 2010. The opening ceremony of the built complex was held on the three hectare site consisting of the national flag museum, open areas for ceremonies and for recreational use with a promenade connected to the old part of the Bulvar (Figure 5.18).

Figure 5.18: National Flag Square and Baku Crystal Hall on the new developed side of Bulvar (Resource: www.bulvar.gov.az)

After the redevelopment of the waterfront close to the Bayıl district, a number of commercial (i.e. clubs and restaurants) and cultural (i.e. buildings for contemporary art center and museum) places were introduced. Besides functioning as a promenade and leisure site for the citizens, the changes aimed to make the site attractive to tourists visiting the city. Among the eventsthat were planned, two other significant ones are the first European Games (organized in 2015) and Formula 1 (FIA Formula One World Championship), which started in 2016 and will last at least five consecutive years. The construction of new sports center called Baku Aquatic Sports Center was finished in 2015 was used for the first time during the European Games (2015) for the in-water sports (Figure 5.19). The place has a fitness center and pool facilities which are used by both professional national athletes for training and by the citizens.

Figure 5.19: Baku Aquatic Sport Center in the new Bulvar(Resource:http://az.baku2015.com/venues/articl e/bakı-idmanı-mərkəzi.html)

On the east side, after the start of the F1 championship Baku circuit in June of 2016, the old side of the Bulvar started being used as an area for festivals and entertainment programs during the racing days. During the event days, entrance to the Bulvar is allowed only to ticket holders for the championship. The main boulevard parallel to the space (Neftchiler Avenue) became part of the race circuit. As a result, the side of the spaces facing the road are used as tribunes on the racing days (Figures 5.20 and 5.51)

Figure 5.20: Concert and entertainment areas in the Bulvar during Formula 1 championship days in Baku, 2016 (Resource: www.bakucitycircuit.com)

Figure 5.21: Finish/start point of the race on the Freedom Square, 2016 (Resource: www.bakucitycircuit.com)

Among the important factors affecting activities held in the urban places, as stated in the previous sections, is the turning of the country to a neo-liberal economy. The new dominant neo-liberal ideology called for the privatization of economic activities in the area, including commerce and the delivery services that have revealed shifts in the shares of public and private spaces. Due to the emergence of privatization, the majority of the commercial units constructed during the Soviet period, which were state property and state-run, removed and new privately-owned ones were constructed. The following list illustrates the changes and newly introduced functions in the Bulvar:

- Increase in the number restaurants, cafes, clubs
- The construction of shopping malls
- The emergence of working areas – offices
- The yacht club
- Regeneration of the sea-port into mixed-use concepts (hotels, residential buildings, offices and shopping malls)

This increase in private-run functions has resulted in the emergence of new types of perceived activities and patterns of use in the place (see Figure 5.22). When the interviewees were asked the in-depth question 'can you describe activities and functions in the Bulvar related to the past/present?', they generally mentioned the activities between the public space and privately owned commercial sites. One interviewee shared his opinion as follows:

...Even early in hot summer days the space was crowded in the past. But in the present, in some daytimes, the shopping mall is more crowded than the entire area. Often I see traffic jams in front of the shopping mall's parking entrance (Interview with P.İ., 61 year-old man)
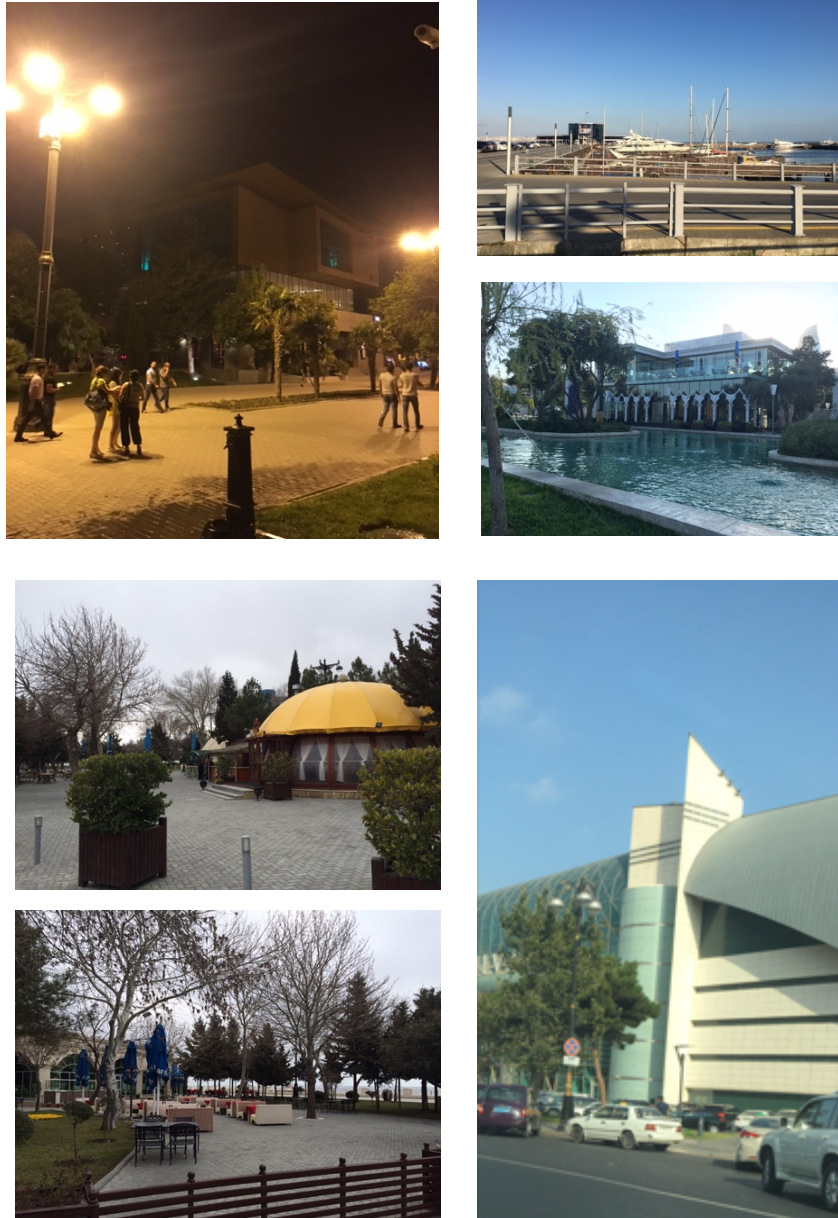
Figure 5.22: Examples of commercial places in Bulvar (Source: personal archive)

5.1.3 Meanings

As the third component of place identity, this part analyses meanings attributed to the Bulvar with respect to the past (1980s) and the present situations. The questionnaire and in-depth interview respondents explained to what extent meanings attributed by the users have changed over the years as a result of changes in physical environment and activities, which were affected by the economica, social, cultural and political transformations.

Results are based on 10 in-depth semi-structured interviews with the old users of the study area. Respondents were asked to share with the researcher their memories and observations about the past and current conditions of the Bulvar. Besides the in-depth interviews, this part also analyzes the results of the 51 questionnaires in which respondents were asked to evaluate features of the Bulvar and briefly define the past (1980s) and current constitution of this area. They were also asked to evaluate changes after the redevelopment in terms of positive and negative.

In the first part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to identify the Bulvar in the past. In the second part of the questionnaire, which is related to the current situation of the site, they were asked to identify the current Bulvar in comparison with the 1980s. From the 51 participants, the author obtained a total of 114 comments related to past and present situations of the Bulvar. While for the past situation of the Bulvar the author obtained 55 comments from 46 respondents (5 of the respondents did not express their thoughts), for the current situation 59 comments were obtained from 48 respondents (3 of the respondents did not express their thoughts). Table 5.1 shows the meanings attributed by the questionnaire respondents to the site in two different periods.

According to the results, compared to the socialist period, respondents perceive the current Bulvar as modern, as different/new, rather than natural or recreational. The new implementations on the site have also led some respondents to perceive the site as touristic. As a result of developments in the site, people perceive it as the symbol of new Baku and as a national place.

Table 5.1: Attributed Meanings in different times

CONTENTS	PAST	Freq.	PRESENT	Freq.
SENSUAL	Meeting Place	14	Place of Memories	12
	Popular	7	Nostalgic place	6
	Relaxed	4	Symbol of new Baku	5
	Calm	3	Touristic	4
	Fun	2	National	4
	Interesting	2	Our place	5
	Place of Lovers	2	Festal	3
SPATIAL/ AESTHETICS	Beautiful	9	Big	5
	Recreational	8	New	5
	Natural	4	Modern	7
			Different	3
Total		**55**		**59**

In addition, while the site in the past was a popular meeting place for the respondents, the current Bulvar is the place of memories which evokes nostalgic feelings.

5.1.3.1   Users' Perceptions of physical space from the 1980s to the present.

Defining the general significant physical features of the space, the respondents are asked to evaluate the main physical elements with respect to past and present situations old part of the Bulvar. The elements are mainly derived from the obtained observations on the site, from the plans, form the related document and from the conversations with people knowing the past situation of the space. The elements to be evaluated are listed as follows:

- The coast/sea was/is an important element of the Bulvar (**CST/SE**)
- The ships in the sea were/are an important visual element of the Bulvar (**SHPS**)
- The built structures (e.g. buildings in and surrounding) were/are important elements of the Bulvar (**BLNGS**)
- Lighting was/is an important element in the Bulvar (**LGHN**)

- Recreational areas, vacant lots, parks, trees were/are important elements of the Bulvar in 1980s (**RECTN)** (see Table 5.2)

Table 5.2: Paired Sample Statistics of the Respondents s to place-related physical setting

Elements related to physical setting with respect to periods		M	N	SD
Pair 1	The coast/sea were important elements of X in the1980s	4.18	51	.767
	The coast/sea are important elements of X	4.45	51	.610
Pair 2	The ships in the sea were important visual elements of X in the 1980s	3.96	51	.774
	The ships in the sea are important visual elements of X	3.51	51	.903
Pair 3	The built structures (e.g. buildings in and surrounding) were important elements of X in the 1980s	3.24	51	1.088
	The built structures (e.g. buildings in and surrounding) are important elements of X	4.31	51	.883
Pair 4	Lighting was important feature of X in the 1980	3.61	51	1.021
	Lighting is important feature of X	4.71	51	.610
Pair 5	Recreational areas, vacant lands, parks, trees were important elements of X in the 1980s	4.12	51	.588
	Recreational areas, vacant lands, parks, trees are important elements of X	3.75	51	1.074

The questionnaire was designed to test to what extent these features of the Bulvar were significant in the past and are significant in the present according to the users' perception. The Likert-scale ranking is the evaluation of the physical features where 1 stands as 'strongly disagree' and 5 as 'strongly agree'. The results of the mean statistics were analyzed through a t-test. The results of the t-test (see Table 5.3) indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the five paired physical elements of the Bulvar (the significance of the results are at $p < 0.05$).

Table 5.3: Paired Samples T-Test related to physical elements of Bulvar

Paired Items		M. Diff.	SD	t	P
Pair 1	**CST/SE**	-.275	.635	-3.088	.003
Pair 2	**SHPS**	.451	1.026	3.139	.003
Pair 3	**BLNGS**	-1.078	1.214	-6.344	.000
Pair 4	**LGHN**	-1.098	1.269	-6.180	.000
Pair 5	**RECTN**	.373	1.248	2.131	.038

When comparing the landscape features of the site in terms of recreational areas, vacant lots, parks and trees, the paired sample statistics show significant changes in the users' opinion between the past and the present (RECTN in conditions; t=2.131, p=0.38). In terms of built structures surrounding the space (BLNGS), the results show that, in the post-socialist evolution of the space, the importance of the buildings surrounding the Bulvar has increased in the perception of the respondents (t=-6.344, p=0.000). When comparing the past and previous situations, after the reconstruction of the site, the newly built structures with modernist global styles and prominent national notions became more important for the respondents as a physical element of the space. Another significant change in the physical element is observed on the urban furniture elements. Due to the redevelopment of the lighting system in the environment, its significance for the users has increased over the years (LGHN in conditions; t=-6.180, p=0.000).

One of the main projects during the redevelopment of the area was the environmental cleaning of the bay of Baku, which had been polluted as a result of industrial wastes. Being located on the seaside is the prominent feature of the Bulvar that greatly contributes to the visual identity. As result of the attempts to clean the coast and creat terraces for direct interaction with the sea, therewas a change on the respondents' opinions. The scores of the t-test show that the coast/sea has become more important for the respondents in the present than it was in the past (CST/SE in conditions; t=-3.088, p=0.003). The other visually important element of the space is the ships

standing or traveling along the bay. However, the significance of this as a constituent element of the visual identity of the Bulvar has decreased over time according to the sample test results of the respondents (SHPS in conditions; t=3.139, p=0.003). That is mainly because of the regeneration processes started on the old port located on the West side of the Bulvar and its reduced functions. In addition, the new port was constructed to the South in the Alat district, 80 km away from the old one, and since 2015 it has functioned as the main port of the city.

5.1.3.2 Users' Perception of activities from the 1980s to the present.

Defining the general significant functions and activities of the space, the respondents are asked to evaluate these features with respect to past and present situations of old part of the Bulvar. The elements are mainly derived from the obtained observations on the site, reports and from conversations with people knowing the past situations of the space. The elements to be evaluated by the respondents are listed as follows:

- Seaport station was/is an important element of the Bulvar **(SPRT ST)**
- Taking a steamboat tour was/is an important activity in the Bulvar **(STBT TR)**
- Sites for amusement were/are important elements of the X **(AMST PR)**
- Commercial places (like, cafés and restaurants, clubs) were/are important elements of the Bulvar in 1980s **(COMRS)**
- Open air cinema was/is an important activity in the Bulvar in1980s **(OPN CNM)**
- Playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiard. volleyball) were/are important features of the Bulvar in 1980s **(PLY GRN)**
- The Bulvar was/is popular place for arranging meetings with existing and new friends in 1980s **(ARG MTG)**
- Shopping site was/is an important element of the Bulvar **(SHPG ST)**

The respondents were asked to evaluate the items on a Likert scale where 1 stands for 'strongly disagree' and 5 for 'strongly agree'. The evaluations of the 51 respondents were analyzed by comparing mean statistics and using t-test pairing samples (see table 5.4).

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Table 5.4: Paired Sample Statistics of the Respondents to place related functions and activities

Elements related to functions and activities with respect to periods		M	N	SD
Pair 1	Seaport station was an important element of X in the 1980s	3.75	51	.845
	Seaport station is an important element of X	2.76	51	.907
Pair 2	Taking a steamboat tour/coast tour was an important activity in X in the 1980s	4.31	51	.678
	Taking a steamboat tour/coast tour is an important activity in X	4.37	51	.662
Pair 3	Sites for amusement park were important elements of the X in the 1980s	4.16	51	.703
	Sites for amusement park are important elements of the X	3.57	51	.831
Pair 4	Commercial places (like, cafés and restaurants, clubs) were important elements of X in the 1980s	2.78	51	.783
	Commercial places (like, cafés and restaurants, clubs) are important elements of X	4.04	51	.692
Pair 5	Open air cinema was an important activity in X in the1980s	3.84	51	.758
	Open air cinema is an important activity in X	2.67	51	1.013
Pair 6	Playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiard. volleyball) were important features of X in the 1980s	4.20	51	.722
	Playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiard. volleyball) are important features of X	3.35	51	.770
Pair 7	X was popular place for arranging meetings with existing and new friends in the 1980s	4.43	51	.700
	X is popular place for arranging meetings with existing and new friends	3.76	51	.764
Pair 8	Shopping site was an important element of X in the 1980s	2.43	51	.878
	Shopping site is an important element of X	3.39	51	1.218

The questionnaire was designed to test to what extent these activity and functional

features of the space were significant in the past and are significant in the present situations of Bulvar in the users' perception. According to the t-test results of the, seven significant changes were observed out of eight paired samples (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5: Paired Sample T-Test related to the functions and activities in the Bulvar

Paired Items		M. Diff.	SD	t	P
Pair 1	SPRT ST	.980	1.225	5.717	.000
Pair 2	STBT TR	-.059	.785	-.535	.595
Pair 3	AMST PR	.588	1.080	3.889	.000
Pair 4	COMRS	-1.255	.913	-9.815	.000
Pair 5	OPN CNM	1.176	1.228	6.841	.000
Pair 6	PLY GRN	.843	.925	6.512	.000
Pair 7	ARG MTG	.667	1.108	4.299	.000
Pair 8	SHPG ST	-.961	1.455	-4.714	.000

No significant change was determined for STBT TR (in conditions; t=-.535, p=5.95). According to the respondents' evaluation (to past M1(4.31) and to present M2(4.37)), taking a steamboat tour, like in the past, was rated as an important activity in Bulvar. The mean scores of two samples (COMRS and SHPG ST) significantly increased, whereas the scores of five paired samples (SPRT ST, AMST TR, OPN CNM, PLY GRN, and ARG MTG) significantly decreased.

It can be observed that the introduction of a shopping mall and an increase in the number of restaurants and cafés has influenced the users' perceptions towards the functional uses and activities of the space. The paired samples' scores indicate that the significance of both COMRS and SHPG ST in Bulvar has increased in the respondents' perception (COMRS in conditions; t=-9.815, p=0.000), and SHPG ST in conditions; t=-4.714, p=0.000). By looking at these results, it can be stated that commercial places in the Bulvar have become an important element of the place for

the respondents (COMRS; for the past M(p)[11] (2.78), for the present M (c)[12] (4.04)). Similar to the results of the in-depth interviews, the questionnaires indicate that the commercial places and shopping mall have become more important in the current situation of the Bulvar. Similar to the results of the question (what type of activities did/do you do in the Bulvar?) comparing the past and current situations of the place, there are differences in the percentage of users doing shopping activities. While 4 out of 51 respondents (7.8%) stated that they were doing shopping activities in the 1980s, 17 out of 51 (33.3%) stated that they do shopping in the present time, which is one of the predominant purposes of using the space. ("Here, it is important to note that the surveys were also conducted in a shopping mall setting. This might have influenced the results obtained by the author").

Some activities and functions that were accepted as important features of Bulvar in the past have become less important in the perception of the current visitors. One of the main features of the place was the seaport station in the 1980s. However, in the current situation of the site, its significance has decreased according to the scores obtained from the respondents (SPRT ST in conditions; M(p)= 3.7 and M(c)=2.76, t=5.717, p=0.000). Among the significant functions of Bulvar that have become less important in the current situation of the space are the open air cinema and the amusement park. The paired samples t-test results indicate that there was a significant decrease in the respondents' opinions (OPN CNM in conditions; M(p)= 3.84 and M(c)=2.67, t=6.841, p=0.000: AMST PR in conditions; M(p)= 4.16 and M(c)=3.57, t=3.889, p=0.000). The t-test results also indicate that the significance of activities held in the playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiards, volleyball) and meeting activities for respondents in the Bulvar has decreased over the years (PLY GRN in conditions; t=3.889, p=0.000, and ARG MTG in conditions; t=4.299, p=0.000).

5.1.3.3 Perceived changes

As stated in chapter 3, the people participating in the survey and in-depth semi-structured interview were selected according to their familiarity with the site in order to determine to what extent changes in the place affect their perceptions and the

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[11] M(p) – mean value for the past situation (1980s)
[12] M(c) – mean value for the current situation

meanings they attributed. Table 5.6 illustrates changes in the users' perception.

Table 5.6: Place attributes that were used to identify the Bulvar in the 1980s and are used in the present (derived from the questionnaire evaluations)

1980s	Present
Seaport Station	Commercial Sites (restaurants, cafes, clubs)
Amusement Sites	
Open Air Cinema	Shopping site (mall)
Playgrounds (chess-club, table tennis, billiards. volleyball)	Coast/Sea
	Built structures (Buildings in and surroundings)
Meeting activities (arranging meeting with existing and new friends, relatives, peers, etc.)	Lighting
Recreational site, (vacant lots, parks, trees were important elements)	Coast tour (Steam Boat tour)
	Walk, rest, hang out
Coast tour (Steam Boat tour)	
Walk, rest, hang out	

In the survey conducted with the second-group, the users were asked to evaluate the place after the redevelopment process. They were expected to evaluate it in terms of **negative** and **positive** changes observed in the site over the years (see Tables 5.7 and 5.8). Among the 51 respondents, 20 respondents evaluated only positive changes, 18 of them evaluated only negative changes, 8 respondents evaluated changes as both positive and negative, and the remaining 5 respondents left them blank. A total of 89 evaluations from 46 respondents were obtained: 44 (49,4%) positive mentions and 45 (50,6%) negative evaluations.

Positive

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According to the evaluations made by the respondents, they are some perceived positive changes in the place after the redevelopment. They gave 44 reasons for positive evaluations that generally referred to environmental quality, interaction, economic contribution, visual aesthetics, reputation and image, and national/traditional values.

Table 5.7: Perceiving changes as positive: Questionnaire results

Positive Evaluations	Freq. of ment.	Ratio
Environmental quality (los of neglected feeling, clean)	13	30%
More area to interact/move (size)	6	14%
Beautiful (visual aesthetics)	10	23%
Sign of modernization (new forms)	6	13%
References to national/traditional values	4	9%
Reputation/Image (for the city /for the country)	5	11%
Total	44	100%

The general comments related to positive changes in the Bulvar are based on the physical features of the site. The questionnaire participants mentioned the increased size of the site, which created more space for interaction. Some comments made by questionnaire participants:

> *Now it's more connected with the sea. I can enjoy the view from multiple locations near the pier*
>
> *It has been stretched in both directions* (Between Bayıl district and old Back City district) *which has added more walkable area*

One of prominent factors creating a positive perception of the redeveloped site is seen when making a comparison between the 90's and the present situation of Bulvar. When

they were asked to make a comparative evaluation of the periods (pre- and post-), some of the comments of the questionnaire respondents referred to Bulvar in 90's:

> *Physically, the neglected place feeling of the 90'shas been lost*
>
> *The Bulvar was "reborn" after the redevelopment. From a polluted and contaminated environment, it has been turned into a clean and modern place*

As described in chapter 4, the deterioration of Bulvar in the 1990s resulted in the loss of its good image in the perception of users. On the other hand, the improved quality through the redevelopment of the place has contributed to regaining the lost reputation of the place in the eyes of visitors. From an economic perspective, beautification of the site with grandiose global trends seems to have positively influenced the perception of some people knowing Bulvar. In addition, some of the interviewees referred to the new phase of the place as a necessary implementation. Some comments from the in-depth interviews in terms of the economic contribution:

> *The seaside promenade is one of the most visited sites in Baku by the foreign visitors. I think the new functions* (museums, shopping malls, clubs*) constructed in the Bulvar, or the brand new hotels around the place are needed since they are good financial contributors.* (Interview with J.G, 53 year-old woman)
>
> *Today one can easily observe tourists around the city. Especially tourists from the countries of Middle East have significantly increased. I met with a family group of tourists from Dubai that were staying in Bulvar Hotel. They told me that lots of people who had visited Baku recommended them to visit. It is a good sign. I guess the city is gaining more international recognition*

There are also positive comments related to the new physical appearance of the area. Similar to the questionnaire respondents, some in-depth interview participants perceived the new visual dimension of the space as a signof the modernization of the environment with respect to national/traditional values and to development. Some quotations from the in-depth interviewees:

> *After the construction of Flame Towers, they have become the symbol of Baku's architecture. I love the visual effects on the façade of the building that are turning on during the nights* (Interview with J.G, 53 year-old woman)

> *From the ancient times, Azerbaijan has been called as 'Land of Fire'. And the Flame Towers symbolize our history in modern form* (Interview with C.V 71 year-old man)

> *After construction of flag square Bulvar has become symbolic place of our independent country. That makes me proud* (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman)

The Flame Towers, which were seen from every part of Bulvar and from many parts of the city, have turned into a symbol of the new Baku that "shades" the visual signs of the socialist past of the city. The 190m tall structure consisting of three towers was constructed in 2013. In the form of a flame, the towers' façades turn into gigantic display screens that visualize the national flag of Azerbaijan, the flame, and are sometimes used to advertise mega events held in Baku (Figure 5.23).

Figure 5.23: View of Flame Towers' from Bulvar representing the colors of the national flag of Azerbaijan (blue, red, green) and visualizing flames (Source: Farid Khayrulin's photo archive)

Negative

The author obtained 45 reasons for negative evaluations that can be categorized in terms of costs (price policy), social capital, sense of old (less evidence related to past)

and greenery. It should also be stated that, while some respondents gave more than one reason, some of the respondents were left it blank. Therefore, the frequency indicates the number of comments, but not the number of the respondents.

Table 5-8: Perceiving changes as negative: Questionnaire results

Negative Evaluations	Freq. of ment.	Ratio
Price policy (High prices of facilities)	13	29%
Social segregation (losing sense of space for everyone)	7	16%
Consumption based/oriented	11	24%
Less conserved structure (Lack of sense of past)	5	11%
Less effective green sites	9	20%
Total	45	100

While the positive evaluations of the questionnaire participants were mainly based on the spatial dimension of the site, negative evaluations mainly (30 comments) relate to the social dimension (price policy, publicity, consumption-based) of the Bulvar. **The in-depth interviewees** also provided more details on some negative aspects of Bulvar. The comments were based on the price regulations in the place, green sites, and the social life of the place. Some comments from the interviewees:

> *...I remember there were complaints about high prices, which was also mentioned on the TV news. After that, the prices of some facilities like amusement park and of goods served in kiosks were decreased. But, it did not last for a long time; after a few months, prices were increased again.* (Interview with S.B 52 year-old woman)
>
> *Today, Bulvar has more restaurants and cafes. There are also clubs that are new for the place. Maybe this is because of the fact that Baku continues to develop as a touristic city. However, the majority of these new places are too luxurious and too expensive. This has resulted in segregation of users* (Interview with S.H., 58 year-old man)

> *It's really disappointing when pricing policies are considered. Price control over amusement facilities, restaurants and cafes is not effective* (Interview with T.A 60 year-old man).

Among the negative evaluations, there were also comments related to physical features of Bulvar. In terms of its physical features, the new Bulvar has weakened people's connections with the past. Interview participants' comments regarding to the transformation of the site were as follows:

Built structures:

> *The environment is totally new, little about the past*
>
> *There are few conserved structures that give a sense of the old times*
>
> *It would better if the environment had been rehabilitated rather than being massively redeveloped*

Recreational sides:

> *The area along the coast was different in the past. There were willow trees in some parts which had made it cool*
>
> *I loved the coolness of the willow trees. It was also a favorite place of elderly people who were sitting for hours and playing 'nard'* (kind of backgammon game)
>
> *Green areas were covered with small canopy trees which created a more comfortable atmosphere for enjoying the park in sunny weather*
>
> *The ratio of green areas has decreased in comparison to past*

As mentioned by interviewees, some of them had special experiences and memories that gave meaning to the setting, some had shared general observations from the past. From the comments of the in-depth interviewees, it can also be observed that the green sites of the place were more functional in comparison with the current situation. Willow trees or plane trees (see Figure 5.24) were significant elements of the place where people had memories and experiences. According to them, in the current situation they are gone and the existing ones or newly planted ones are less effective.

Figure 5.24: Changes in the path way along the coast (Resource: on the left www.bulvar.gov.az, on the right: personal archive)

5.1.3.4   Meanings through the social character: In-depth interview participants

The in-depth interviewees also mentioned public/publicity of the place. The main result was generated by the privatization that emerged after abandoning the ideology of socialism. The new dynamism of activities and meanings in the place were characterized and shaped around the increasing effects of consumer culture**.** Here it is important to emphasize that the consumer culture and ideology in the late years of the Soviet Union was re-modified and leaned more towards goods and products made outside of Soviet Union. However, the motto of "nothing superfluous" (see Gurova, 2006) was maintained in public spaces. The borders in public spaces were not sharp; that is, specifically spaces were not oriented to specific groups. One of the interviewees, a 62 year-old woman, describes her memories and thoughts as follows:

> *The most important thing taught to us was that everyone should consume nothing more than he/she needs, and there were strict policies and supervisions. However, this ideology had started to disappear by the mid-1980s… Separation in income groups also increased in the late years of the Soviet Union, but in public spaces there was no visual differentiation like now* (Interview with R.M 62 years-old woman).

In the current situation of the site, the effects of these changes are quite visible. The

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interviewees describe these changes with the following sentences:

> *Lack of strict pricing policy makes you feel that you can be overcharged considering the money. It also harms "budget-friendly" and "place for everyone" perceptions of the place* (Interview with T.A 60 year-old man).

> *Today, we see how people are used to luxury products and services. That has created a new social character in the Bulvar. In the present, the first buildings located on Neftichiler avenue* (parallel site of the Bulvar; see Figure 5.25) *were luxury brand shops…. Actually, the same scenario is observed in every urban area in Baku. But this place is more luxurious than the other parts of Baku* (Interview N.N., 52 year-old man).

Figure 5.25: Luxury brand shops on the Neftchiler Avenue (Resource: https://www.flickr.com/photos/fran001/18423568058/in/photostream)

The changes mentioned above are the general characteristics that can be observed in the majority of post-socialist urban spaces (Darieva et al, 2011; Sailer-Fliege, 1999; Stalinov, 2012). Among the leading factors of this changing social character in post-socialist urban spaces is the social polarization supported by the privatization that emerged after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. From promoting the ideology of '*cultural life*', '*abundance*', and '*equality*' (see Gurova, 2006) in everyday life, urban places turned into sites of consumerism and social inequality (Darieva et al, 2011; Tsenkova, 2008). As defined by Knox and Pinch (2010), urban spaces reinforce cultures since behavioral patterns reflect the cultural values within the setting. Likewise, the daily life and routine practices of socialist citizens to some degree were

shaped with respect to this ideology. In the same way, soviet ideology rejected 'excess of needs' in daily life and tried to reflect this idea in the socio-spatial relationships in socialist urban spaces. As defined by Kantor (1963):

> *"The democracy of our public life does not leave any opportunity for tasteless luxury, senseless ornamentation, or the desire of making visible 'richness'. Our society rejects such an understanding of 'beauty' which was born during the development of capitalist attitudes, when the word 'beautiful' meant 'expensive' "*(cited in Gurova, 2006: 96).

Post socialist urban spaces under the direct influence of capitalism in the context of globalization display social segregation and consumption. As stated by Knox and Pinch (2010:47), contemporary buildings in the context of globalization represent consumption, hedonism and the creation of profit with little regard for the social consequences. As such, the places reflecting collective sentiments have become places for addressing individuals to satisfy consumption needs. Similarly, the social segregation in the public space has changed the perception of the users. One of the interviewees (N.N, 52 year-old man), mentioned how the perceived environment had changed and how "strict borders" had been created:

> *…The shopping mall is quite dominant in the places that are visited by people a lot. Besides, restaurants and cafes are more expensive than before renovation, which leads to the Boulevard not addressing all parts of society. The same situation can also be mentioned for hotels around the Boulevard. I can see that there are tourist-oriented places and places oriented to local people* (Interview N.N., 52 years old man).

Among the other significant factors affecting meaning attributed to the site, as already mentioned above by the interviewees, is the changed user profile of the site due to the changing demographic characteristic of the city. During the post-socialist time flow, the Bulvar became and address for both the migrated population from other regions of Azerbaijan and visitors from other countries. Among some users, a new perception has been created: from local image it has turned into an international image. A 58 year-old interviewee described how he perceives thecurrent phase of the place with the following sentences:

> *It is a more inclusive place than before. In recent times, it is one of prime places to be visited by people from many other countries, which also gave the new international image to Bulvar* (Interview with S.H., 58 year-old man)

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Another user of the site that lives on the periphery of Baku makes a point about language spoken on the site and describes the international image and meaning through the spoken languages:

> *In the Soviet period, the majority of Baku citizens were talking in Russian. Russian speakers were quite dominant in the public spaces of Baku, as well as in Bulvar. Besides Russian, today I hear different languages spoken in Bulvar. There also billboards on the walkways in different languages. In my neighbourhood, all the talk is in our language. When I come here, I feel like I am in a different country* (Interview with C.V., 71 year-old man)

It should be noted that Russian still has a significant place in the daily life of Baku, and it is one of the main social characteristics of the urban spaces in the city, especially in the central part. In addition, with the growing number of western companies in the city and international-business, the social and physical dimensions of the centre and periphery have started to differ significantly, which leads the visitors to make comparisons between the site and peripheral areas.

To conclude, this part of the chapter tried to explain the changes in the identity of Bulvar from the socialist past (concentrating on the Bulvar in the 1980s) to the post-socialist evolution (mainly after redevelopment). It examined identity through its physical setting, activities and meanings. The following part explains whether and to what extent the place identity of the Bulvar users has been affected over time.

5.2   IDENTIFICATION WITH THE BULVAR

This section of the chapter discusses how the users of the Bulvar identify themselves with this place. It aims to find an answer to the third sub-question of this study:

> To what extent have people's identification with Baku Bulvar changed over time, particularly from the socialist to the post-socialist period

To this end, first, the results obtained from the questionnaire participants were examined by analysing the statistical data in SPSS. It is followed by an analysis of the results obtained from the interview participants. To measure the place identification of the questionnaire respondents, in accordance with the studies of Williams and Vaske (2003), the following six place identity items are used in this research:

- I feel "Place X" is part of me

- "Place X" is very special to me
- I identify strongly with "Place X"
- I am very attached to "Place X"
- Visiting "Place X" says a lot about who I am
- "Place X" means a lot to me

The questionnaire participants were asked to evaluate the items with respect to the past (the 1980s or the socialist period) and with respect to the present time (post-socialist period). Considering the situation of the Bulvar in these two periods, the questionnaire was conducted with 51 respondents. The age range of the respondents varied between 50 and 72, which is categorized into 3 groups (50-60, 60-70, 70+). As stated in the previous chapter, this age group was decided on because it was possible to measure and understand people's feeling with the site in the post-socialist period if and only if relatively older respondents were selected as the survey participants. The general socio-demographic characteristics of the users are illustrated in Table 5.9 In addition, Table 5.10 illustrates the frequency of the visits to the Bulvar by the current users/respondents.

Table 5.9: Socio-demographic characteristics of questionnaire participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	28	54.9
Male	23	45.1
Total	**51**	**100**
Age	**Frequency**	**Percent**
50-60	37	72.54
60-70	12	23.52
70+	2	3.92
Total	**51**	**100**
Education	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Not educated	3	5.9
High school	19	37.3
University Graduate	29	56.9
Total	**51**	100
Birth Place	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Baku	16	31.37
Other	35	68.63
Total	**51**	**100**
Familiarity with the site	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Since 1950s	1	1.96
Since 1960s	6	11.76
Since 1970s	25	49.02
Since 1980s	19	37.26
Total	**51**	**100**

Table 5.10: Frequency of use by questionnaire participants in the present situation

Frequency of visit	Frequency	Percent
Everyday	11	21.6
Couple times a week	19	37.3
Couple times a month	11	21.6
Not much (from time to time)	10	19.6
Total	**51**	**100**

5.2.1 Identification od questionnaire participants with the Bulvar

In analyzing users' place identification with the Bulvar, the mean statistics of the statements related to the two periods were compared. Then, the results of the overall scores of each user for the two periods are compared using a T-test in order to see whether there is a difference between the periods in participants' identification with the site.

The scores of place identity statements related to the current situation of the Bulvar were correlated. Correlation analysis was made in order to see whether there are unrelated 'statements'. Therefore, if there are any unrelated 'statements', they will be eliminated in further research. The correlation analysis of place identity items related to the current situation of the Bulvar indicates that the items are highly correlated (r>0.7 at p<0.01), which gives evidence of reliability of the 'statements' for further studies (Table 5.11).

Table 5.11: Correlated 'place identity' items evaluated for present

	(F)	(S)	(I)	(A)	(V)	(M)
I feel Bulvar part of me **(F)**	1	.864	.869	.851	.881	.853
Bulvar is very special to me **(S)**	.864	1	.892	.873	.871	.902
I identify strongly with Bulvar **(I)**	.869	.892	1	.931	.873	.883
I am very attached to Bulvar **(A)**	.851	.873	.931	1	.860	.844
Visiting Bulvar is saying a lot about who I am **(V)**	.881	.871	.873	.860	1	.914
Bulvar means a lot to me **(M)**	.853	.902	.883	.844	.914	1

Note: the significance value of each correlation is p<0.01

Table 5.12 shows the mean statistics of each place identity item for the selected periods: the 1980s and the present. The results show that, from past to present, there has been an increase in the scores for two feelings: "I felt/feel X to be part of me" and "X was/is very special to me". There was a decrease in 4 items: "I identified/identify

strongly with X", "I was/am very attached to X", "Visiting X said/says a lot about who I was/am", and "X meant/means a lot to me".

Table 5.12: Mean statistics of Place Identity items for each period

	Place Identity Items	M	N	SD
Then, the paired	Pair 1 I was feeling X part of me in the 1980s	3.78	51	.783
	I feel X part of me	3.94	51	1.103
	Pair 2 X was special to me in the 1980s	3.86	51	.849
	X is very special to me	3.98	51	1.049
	Pair 3 I had been identified strongly with X in the 1980s	3.94	51	.881
	I Identify strongly with X	3.75	51	1.278
	Pair 4 I was very attached to X in the 1980s	3.94	51	.835
	I am very attached to X	3.73	51	1.218
	Pair 5 Visiting X had said a lot about who I was in the 1980s	3.86	51	.980
	Visiting X is saying a lot about who I am	3.78	51	1.222
	Pair 6 X had meant a lot to me in the 1980s	4.08	51	1.036
	X means a lot to me	3.84	51	1.223

statements were analyzed using a t-test. The results of the T-test indicate that there are no significant changes among the paired items where p-values of the result are greater than the level of significance (p<0,05 for each item): "I felt/feel X to be part of me" is at p=0.262, "X was/is very special to me" is at p=0.411, "I identified/identify strongly with X is at p=0.255", "I was/am very attached to X" is at p=0.161, "Visiting X said/says a lot about who I was/am" is at p=0.647, and "X meant/means a lot to me" is at p =0.165 (see Table 5.13).

Table 5.13: T-test result for each item

Place Identity Items		M. Dif.	SD	t	P
Pair 1	I was feeling/feel X part of me	-.157	.987	-1.135	.262
Pair 2	X was/is very special to me	-.118	1.013	-.830	.411
Pair 3	I had been identified/identifying strongly with X	.196	1.217	1.151	.255
Pair 4	I was/am very attached to X	.216	1.083	1.422	.161
Pair 5	Visiting X had said/is saying a lot about who I was/am	.078	1.214	.461	.647
Pair 6	X had meant/means a lot to me	.235	1.193	1.408	.165

Finally, to see whether and to what extent identification of users with the Bulvar has changed over the years, each respondents' total scores for the 'place identity' statements [PI (of each participant) = $(s_1 + s_2 + \ldots + s_6)$] were analyzed through t-test. Table 4.X shows the paired mean statistics of the two periods and Table 5.14 gives the t-test results.

Table 5-14: Mean Statistics of Place Identity according to two periods

		M	N	SD
Pair 1	Place Identity (past/1980s)	**23.47**	51	4.658
	Place Identity (current)	**23.02**	51	6.722

The mean scores show that there is a difference regarding the users' identification with the Bulvar between the socialist and current periods (M(p)=23.47) and M(c)=23.02). However, the t-test results show that this difference is not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level (see Table 5.15). However, when the samples' scores were analyzed, it was observed that increase (n=28), decrease (n=20), and no statistical change (n=3) occur between the periods in the scores of the respondents regarding

their identification with the places. The author discusses the possible reasons for these findings and their implications in the final chapter.

Table 5-15: Paired samples for overall scores of place identity for each user

Paired samples	M. Dif.	SD	t	P
Place Identity (1980s) -Place Identity (present)	.451	5.735	.562	.577

5.2.2 In-depth interview results

This section of the study tries to explain individuals' beliefs, thoughts, feelings – their place identity in the post-socialist evolution of the Bulvar. In doing so, the semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand the users' identification with Bulvar through their narratives of the place. More specifically, this stage of the research aimed to understand how people responded to the changes, and to what extent these changes influenced these people's identification with the place. All the participants responded to the questions from different perspectives. According to the results obtained from the in-depth interviews, the historical events, economic conditions, national sentiments, age, and most importantly their long familiarity and continuous use of the place play significant roles in their identification with the site. Out of 10 participants, 5 interviewees stated that they still like the site and have positive feeling towards it, 4 of them indicated that they have been negatively influenced by the changes, and 1 respondent stated that he holds the same feelings. It was observed that even though some interviewees expressed negative feelings to the changes, the place still has emotional significance for them because of their past memories associated with the site.

The following questions were addressed to the in-depth interview participants:

❖ How important **was/is** this place in your life?
  ➢ What **made/makes** this place important to you?
    ▪ Friends? The place's characteristics? (Experiences/memories? – questions

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for the current situation)

❖ How **did you feel/do you feel** when you **came/come** here?

  ➢ Can you describe important experiences with this place that **made/make** it special to you?

❖ Did changes in the Bulvar affect your feelings?

  ➢ If yes: How did these changes affect your feelings towards this place?

  ➢ Could you give some examples about changes in this place that would make you feel uncomfortable/sad/angry/happy?

Table 5-16: Socio-demographic characteristics of the questionnaire participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	5	50
Male	5	50
Total	**10**	**100**
Age	**Frequency**	**Percent**
50-60	7	70
60-70	2	20
70+	1	10
Total	**10**	**100**
Education	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Not educated	1	10
High school	2	10
University Graduate	7	80
Total	**10**	100
Birth Place	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Baku	3	30
Other	7	70
Total	**10**	**100**

5.2.2.1 Significance of the site for the in-depth interview participants

There are both similarities and differences among the respondents in terms of their feelings towards the site. When the interviewees were asked 'what made Bulvar special to you? and 'how important was this place to your life?' or 'what made/makes' this place important to you', it was observed that while some respondents shared their

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experiences, the others stressed the functional uses or the physical characteristics of the space. Five interviewees answered the question '**what made the Bulvar special to you**?' by describing the general characteristics of the site. According to them, the following characteristics of the site made the place special for them during the Soviet period:

> *The most beautiful place in Baku with a panoramic sea view where I loved to spend time* (Interview N.N., 52 year-old man).
>
> *It had a friendly environment, it was a 'warm' place, there were intellectual people. All these made the place special to me* (Interview with R.M 62 year-old woman).
>
> *Very popular, most well-known area and crowded place, with nice facilities* (Interview with T.A 60 year-old man)
>
> *The only place where I could find peace at a beautiful landscape, participate in cultural activities and have fun at the same time* (Interview with S.B 52 year-old woman)
>
> *Being on the seaside with green environment* (Interview with C.V., 71 year-old man).

On the other hand, for 3 interviewees, their past experiences made the site special:

> *It was my escape place, when I was sad, I preferred to come here, the spirit of Bulvar made me feel better* (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman)
>
> *I was working at a factory and Bulvar was a place where I could breath fresh air and feel relaxed* (Interview with S.H., 58 year-old man)
>
> *We had close-knit neighborhood relations, we were coming here all together with neighbors, we were here as a big family* (Interview with J.G, 53 year-old woman).

Two of the respondents said that the Bulvar was a very special place for them. One respondent expressed his feeling as follows:

> *Bulvar is the place where I met my wife. She was a friend of my cousin, and she introduced us here. Bulvar is the place where the second phase of my life started. This has made Bulvar very important to me, to us* (Interview with P.İ., 61 year-old man)

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The other interviewee, who has been living at a residential area near the site, associated this setting with her family memories:

> *We loved to come here as a family. In summer months, almost every day at night we were spending time here. That was special. Sometimes my father was feeling tired after coming back from work; in spite of that, he was saying – it is Bulvar hour, let's go out… The place reminds me of those days, times I spent with family (Interview with K.B., 50 year-old woman)*

Each interview participant specified the features that made the place special for them in the past. With regard to the main question of the study – whether and to what extent does a change in 'identity of place' affect the place identity of users with that place? – the interview participants were asked how the changes affected their feelings towards the site.

Impressions of the in-depth interview participants: As stated at the beginning of this part, positive and negative impressions by the interview respondents were observed. It was also observed that, for one respondent, the changes did not have any important impact, and the respondent still holds the same feelings towards the site.

In addition to long association, familiarity, or memories gathered within the setting through experiences, the other important issue here is the differentiation between private and public. The significant definition made by Barlas (2005:89) who states thatthe transformation of private ones into public places is a relatively easy process since their personalization is controlled less by others. Likewise, for the 71 year-old man who describes Bulvar as just a space that he does not have any emotional attachment to in spite of long familiarity and experiences with the setting. When he was asked 'how important is the Bulvar to your life?', the respondent gave his thoughts as follows:

> *Bulvar for me is the site where I take a walk, rest on the benches watching the sea, taking some air. In other words, to have different types of activities that I cannot do in my neighborhood. I have been coming here for 30 years, only for this purpose, this is the significance of Bulvar for me… I would not call Bulvar important to my life. For me important is where I live with my wife, my neighborhood. Those places are important to me, those which I call my places* (Interview with C.V., 71 year-old man).

For this respondent, distinct features of the Bulvar make the site attractive. The meaning of the setting and its significance for the respondent (C.V., 71 year-old man)

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is thoroughly concerned with the way that he behaves in and uses the setting. In addition, when he was asked 'Did changes in the Bulvar affect your feeling?'. The participant said "Not at all", and he explained the reason through his 'behaviors in the place': *"... because, it is the same from my view, I can do things here that I was doing in the past"* (Interview with C.V., 71 year-old man).

a) Positive impressions

During the in-depth interview, participants were asked '**How have the changes in the Bulvar over the years affected your feelings towards this place?**'. Three of the participants indicated that they still have positive feelings for the site. They were asked to give some examples about the changes in this place that would make them feel uncomfortable/sad, or totally opposite – happy. From the in-depth interviews, itwas observed that the familiarity of the users, long association with place, memories and experiences play significant roles in their interpretation of the new environment. Long association by people created emotional bonds with the Bulvar which led some of the respondents to romanticize the place while commenting on their memories and feelings. A 61 year-old man, for whom the place was very special in the past, described his thoughts as follows:

> *Bulvar is still beautiful, and the memories gathered here make it more meaningful* (Interview with P.İ., 61 year-old man).

Likewise, a 53 year-old woman who associates the site with childhood memories shared her feelings as follows:

> *Until 1998, near the side of Maiden Tower stood a big old plane tree whose shade I used to sit under with my friends from the neighborhood. It was also our neighbors favorite gathering place. In the summer time, we would spend more time in Bulvar than in our 'mahla' (local term of courtyard in neighborhoods) located in 'Old Town'. In November 1998, as a result of a storm the tree fell... After redevelopment, I saw a young plant of the plane tree on the same site. That made me happy because the place was full of memories. Now, it has grown a bit more... This site makes me remember my childhood, my old neighbors, my friends. These memories are priceless. Every time I come here, those feelings remind me of who I was, where I grew up* (Interview with J.G, 53 year-old woman).

As defined by Lang (1987), people respond to patterns of the environment according to how they categorize the place and its elements with respect to associations they have

built up over time and with respect to reinforcements they have received (cited in Barlas, 2005:24). Therefore, it is meaningful in understanding the responses of an individual to the environment to know whether he/she adapts to or accepts these changes and they continue to be part of her/his identification with the place, or are the responses against the changes and the individual no longer identifies himself/herself with the place. S.H. (58 year-old man), at the beginning of the interview, mentioned the economic disadvantages of the site and the disappearance of the old sense of the Bulvar. He also stated that he still enjoys being in the site and loves it. He described his thoughts with these sentences:

> *On the one hand it somehow touches me that the place is totally different from the one that I knew. On the other hand, it is still enjoyable being here, spending time at the beautiful landscape. The Bulvar also awakens good youth memories which is one of the main reasons that I come here* (Interview with S.H., 58 year-old man).

Quite similar to the participant's sentences above, another interviewee explained her feelings with the following sentences:

> *Being here reminds me of the old days, reminds me of the years I spent here as a student with my friends. These things make me positively emotional, which makes the place important to me… In fact, Bulvar has changed a lot due to the redevelopment, and today's Bulvar is totally different from the Bulvar in the Soviet period. There are few things remaining from the past, but there is no change so big that it would make me feel unhappy. There are a few, and they do not prevent me from having nice feelings* (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman).

It is clear from the above response that meaningful past experiences have a significant role in the way of interpreting a place. For the interviewee, the site evokes strong memories that have a significant impact on her sustaining positive feelings for the place. According to her, the increased physical quality has positively influenced her feelings towards the site.

> *When considering the 90's, the environmental quality is much better. It is more ordered. Now it has better lighting at night, which makes me feel more secure, and comfortable. I can state that there are things that have affected me positively.* (Interview with T.F., 58 year-old woman).

The other participant who has positive feelings towards the current situation of the site, expresses her feelings with the following sentences considering the environmental

quality of the site:

> *After redevelopment, Bulvar has become cleaner, safer and bigger than before. I have special memories about this place, with my family. Seeing the place again well-kept makes me feel calm* (Interview with K.B., 50 year-old woman)

After the renovation of the space, people again developed positive impressions about the Bulvar's new phase. The past experiences at the site, especially shared experiences with relatives and friends led some respondents to romanticize the place. Here, it should also be stated that generally positive impressions towards the site are mainly generated around physical features. Besides the physical attributes, the functional dimension of the public places is another important feature that generates significant activities in the site.

As defined in the second chapter, activities in urban place defines socio-spatial relations and has an impact on attributing meanings to that place. For this purpose, it is meaningful to consider a 'space' with its social domain.

b) Negative impressions

The main concern of the respondents was the increasing social segregation in the city, which was reflected in Bulvar, or the weakening social ties among the respondents. While the respondents described their feelings about the area by comparing the past and the present, they mentioned that due to the changes more places "for people with high income levels" had been created. The social dimension is quite important for an individual in terms of attributing meaning to a place and associating himself/herself with a place. A significant comment was made by an interviewee who approachedthe issue from the functional dimension:

> *I could say this, giving an example from myself. Some people come here for the place's facilities in addition to the natural environment They love and use them, and at the same time can afford them. And there are some people who come here for the natural environment and do not use, or cannot afford to use these facilities like me. It is hard for me to confess this, but this is the reality. At every step there are new restaurants and cafes, but generally for people with good incomes, which makes me a little uncomfortable being here.* (Interview N.N., 52 year-old man)

As mentioned in the previous chapters, city authorities, developers, decision makers, planners or architects can generate or produce meanings in urban spaces by or through

designing the urban landscape. On the other hand, meanings are interpreted by internal users, people experiencing these places, and these meanings may differ from the intended ones. In the case of this study, Baku Bulvar, the intention is obviously to make the city recognized in the global arena. This might have an impact for outsiders, since the competitive cities have implemented more or less the same strategies in urban areas, and in some degree, these efforts attract people. However, for an insider who experiences the place and observes these changes might express totally different meanings from the intended. This causes positive and negative perception of the environment, which in turn influences their place identity. As stated in the previous parts, while places are created and modified by people, people are equally influenced by those changes. A significant comment was made by one user of the site, who stresses the influence of the new 'luxury' phase of Bulvar:

> *This place has an important part in my life since I have spent lots of good times here... It is a very beautiful place, but seeing the place becoming excessively luxurious pulls me away from it; it is not for my budget. Being beautiful and grandiose do not mean everything.* (Interview with T.A 60 year-old man)

Besides the socio-economic significance, the quality and diversity of functions play roles in the individuals' well-being in the physical setting. When a particular place satisfies an individuals' needs and desires in comparison to another place, it increases the level of meaningfulness of the place for her/him. On the other hand, people's needs and desires change over time. A 62 year-old woman makes a significant point from this perspective and shares her thoughts as follows:

> *If I compare it with the past, this place is not as desirable to me as before. I would prefer social facilities in the site for people my age. I remember there were places before where old people gathered... In the past, the place for me was a good option for social interaction and a place to spend a good time. I do not mean to walk or rest, eat or drink in cafés or restaurants. But rather to share something with people, talk, discuss. Today, for me, it is a place where I can spend time with my 8 year-old grandson on weekends. He loves to ride a bicycle, and Bulvar is a good place for this, it is safe and away from traffic. Except these, there is nothing to attract me as before.* (Interview with R.M 62 year-old woman)

Age is an important factor here that plays a role in individuals' expectations from a particular place. Thus, diversity and quality of functions must address all parts of society (e.g. age groups). As stated by Tibbalds (1992:9), "an attractive public realm

is very important to a feeling of well-being or comfort". The disappearing diversity of public places decreases people's willingness to use them, as well as their place identity. The interviewee who defined Bulvar in the past as *"gallery role for the city"*, comments on the impact of the changing character of the site with the following sentences:

> *Unfortunately, cultural character of the place which made the Bulvar attractive in the past has disappeared. Today it is more disposed to leisure and commerce... Back in the old days, I spent more efficient time here. There were art days, exhibitions that had increased my willingness to visit. It was more than a park or promenade. I loved the diversity of temporary art activities in the site. Those types of activities were more attractive, and spending time was more meaningful.* (Interview with S.B 52 year-old woman).

All in all, according to the in-depth interview results of T.A., N.N., R.M., and S.B., the site is not as desirable for them as it was in the past. Each participant responded to the changes from different perspectives; from its economic disadvantage, from loss of its old sense, and from the disappearing diversity in the place.

The aim of this chapter was to explain changes in the identity of the Bulvar and the potential effects of these changes on its users. In the following chapter, the possible reasons for these findings and their implications are going to be discussed.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR URABN DESIGN AND FURTHER STUDIES

6.1   Summary

For decades, people's relationship with their environment has been accepted as an essential topic to be investigated by researchers. To understand human-place relationships, scholars of different disciplines (e.g. human geography, environmental psychology, urban design, architecture) have approached it from various perspectives and put forward some concepts (e.g. place attachment, sense of place, place identity, place dependence). Among these concepts, 'place identity', one of the most controversial, has generated the interest of various disciplines. Researchers of different disciplines have tried to explain this concept from different perspectives. Although there is no consensus on a general definition of the term, 'place identity' has always played a significant role in understanding people-place relationships. The physical or spatial features of a place (e.g. built form, size, landscape), activities held there (e.g. functional organization, behavioural patterns) and meanings attributed to it (e.g. regarding cultural values, local context, or through personal beliefs and values) are the components that constitute its identity. In addition, social, economic, and political structures, and the cultural characteristics of a geography where a place is located are factors that play a role in the formation, continuity and change of place identity. The identity of a places is not static or fixed; it can vary and change as these factors change, and this also influences the users of places. Therefore, as stated by Relph (1976), it is not only the identity of a place that is important, but also the identity of a person with that place. Place identity refers to a place's significance, its personal meanings and the symbols it has for its users, visitors and residents (Casakin & Bernardo, 2012). However, in the contemporary context, the recent processes of globalization, integration and homogenization, which threaten the identity of places, have generated concerns about identity. It is also argued that, through these processes, places lose their significance for users and influence their identification with those places.

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The main aim of this study was to explain whether and to what extent a change in the identity of place influences users' identification with that place. The thesis examined the evolving identity of the Bulvar from the socialist to the post-socialist period by examining social, economic, political and cultural factors. To this end, the author applied a case study method. The Baku Bulvar was selected as the case study site, where the author conducted a questionnaire with 51 participants and in-depth interviews with 10 participants. In trying to comprehend whether and to what extent changes occurred between the periods, the researcher first analysed the formation of the identity of the site from its construction. The site was investigated by taking into consideration economic, social, political, and cultural factors under different regimes (more specifically socialist and post-socialist) in order to understand the impacts of these factors on the construction/change of the identity of the site. Secondly, the site was analysed according to the components (physical setting, activities and meaning) that constitute the Bulvar's identity. Finally, the researcher analysed the relationship between the changes in the identity of the site and the identification of questionnaire and in-depth interview participants with this place in the pre- and post- contexts.

6.2   Findings

The site has experienced continuous development and redevelopment processes since its construction. In the years of socialism, socio-spatial relations in the site had characterized periodical changes as result of unstable form of economic, social, political and cultural characteristics of the state socialism. But in general, the implementations on the area had been aimed to serve the ideals of socialist society staying behind competitive ambitions in global arena that, as discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, destroys locality and create standardization and homogenization of spaces. That is, care for locality and ideals of egalitarian society had reflected to the place. After dissolution of the USSR, socio-economical and institutional transformations in Azerbaijan had formed new urbanization process in Baku that has reflected to the Bulvar. Table 4.1 illustrates changes in post-socialist Azerbaijan under four main domains that influenced the identity of the public place: economy, policies, society and culture.

In post-socialist evolution of identity of the place, the site has experienced two important periods; deterioration and losing its significance as a result of socio-economic problems and political struggles, and ''rebirth'' due to improving economy. Efforts at creating a strong sense of nation through urban landscape, the establishment of international business relations (especially with Western countries), and social transitions have put a new accent on the evolution of urban place in Baku; that is, it has been reflected in the identity of the Bulvar. Thus, the essence of the Soviet past has been deleted by re-modifying the site in both social and spatial content. As a result of the changes that illustrated in Table 4.2, in the current situation of the place, the socialist past has not remained a significant part of the every-day live of its users. Table 6.1 shows the impacts of these changes on the physical attributes, activities and meanings (symbols) of the place.

Table 6.1: Identity components of the site in different periods

Component/ Physical setting	During socialism	In post-socialism
Built Form	- Constructivist architecture (local materials in construction) - Stalinist Architecture/ Monumental (predominantly similar to Neo-Classical styles) - National in Form; Socialist in Content - Monuments of Soviet Political Leaders	- Post-modern forms/skyscrapers (multi-functional concepts) - National in form; Global in Content (new materials – predominantly glass and steel use) - Removal of some buildings (e.g. puppet theatre, open air movie theatre, pavilions) - Removal of monuments of Soviet political leaders -Erection of gigantic National Flag
Size/ Access	- Located between Old Town and Black City (industrial area)	- Extended towards East and West - Connected with redeveloped industrial areas - Expanded to several districts
Landscape	- More green areas - More local trees (willows planes - Effective recreational areas and vacant lots	- Decreased green areas - Renovated recreational sites (some areas turned into restaurants) - Decorative/Imported trees - Increased ratio of hardscape - Renovated urban furniture (improved lighting)

*Table 6.1: (**continued**) Identity components of the site in different periods*

Component/ Activity	During socialism	In post-socialism
Functions	- State operated commercial places (cafes, restaurants) - No business environment - Small area for shopping - Dynamic use of West part (where Seaport Station is located) - Active usage of Seaport Station (movement of travellers on the side) - Cultural activities (pavilion, chess club) - Movie Theatre - Social Facilities (reading, discussions) - Playgrounds - Sites for amusement park	- Increased number of privately owned commercial places (restaurants, cafes) - Shopping malls - New business environment (Business centre, multifunctional new concept on the port) - Decreased usage of West part and Seaport Station for travel - Removal of Pavilion and Chess club - Construction of New Museums - Construction of Sport and Concert areas - Less attractive amusement parks
Temporary	- Celebration of Soviet Holidays (May 1st – Labour Day, May 9th – Victory Day) Art Days	- National Holidays (e.g. Flag Day on the National Flag Square in the Bulvar) - International Music and Sports Events (e.g. F1 championship, Eurovision Song content)
Behavioural	- Walk, rest, hang out, spend some time - Meetings - Collective acts/habits (students playing intellectual games, doing homework) - Performing Musicians	- Walk, rest, hang out, spend some time - Decrease in preference of the site for arranging meetings - Loss of past collective acts/habits (place for elderly people where they can have discussions and readings/ students gathering) - New Youth Culture (e.g. flash mob)
Visits	- Mainly visited at nights - Mainly preferred at summer and spring days	- Mainly visited at night - Mainly preferred on summer and spring days

*Table 6.1 (**continued**) Identity components of the site in different periods*

Component/ Meaning	During socialism	In post-socialism
Sensual/Spatial	- Meeting Place - Popular - Relaxed - Calm /Fun /Interesting - Beautiful/Recreational/Natural - Intellectual environment - Cultural	- Nostalgic - Place of Memories/Our place - New/Different/Big/Modern - Beautiful - Symbol of the new Baku /Reputation - Touristic - Aim for international status
Symbolic	**Soviet Socialist Symbolic Places (In and around the Bulvar)** - Names of squares attributed to political leaders of the Soviet Union (e.g. former Lenin Square in the Bulvar) - Monuments, Buildings associated with political leaders or important figures of the Soviet Union (gigantic Kirov statue, former Lenin Museum, Statue for Lenin in former Lenin Square)	**National Symbolic Representations (In and around the Bulvar)** - By constructing new buildings (Flag square, Carpet Museum, Mugham Centre) - By renaming old buildings (Former Lenin Museum renamed as National Carpet Museum Centre) The site itself: officially named as Seaside National Park Renaming based on generated events in early years of post-socialism (Independence Square)
Social	Egalitarian/Collective Sentiments (Sense of place for everyone)	- Social segregation (weakened sense of place for everyone) - Strictly perceived borders, intended as luxury places for people with economic advantages – middle and high income groups

6.3 Discussions on findings

The physical setting of the Bulvar is one of the important features that constitutes the identity of the site. Among the significant elements of the physical environment is the geographical location of the place that creates a distinct identity for the visitors; by being located on the Caspian Bay, and by being located near the city centre. Therefore, the geographical location and natural environment are the static features that constitute the identity of the place. The built environment of the site has gone through various transformations over the years.

The massive change in the physical setting can be observed in the *size and physical access* of the place. The area of Bulvar has been expanded in both directions (east and west) by connecting it to two other districts of the city. *Landscape* is the other feature that has been influenced over the years. While in the past, the green layout was oriented more towards local trees, in the current situation of Bulvar, more exotic and decorative trees have been planted. The significance of the green layout for the participants has decreased over the relevant years. Furthermore, when the *built structures and types* in different periods are compared, it can be seen that the signs and symbols referring to the socialist past has decreased (Café Pearl, Clock Tower, Government House, former Lenin Museum (National Carpet Museum), and the Seaport Station).

The new architectural style became a focal point in the Bulvar area to promote the new desired global identity, and at the same time, to construct and reflect the new national identity. New structures have been introduced to the site and its surroundings with the "National in Form, Global in Content" concept. For example, the construction of 'Flame Towers', which is located near the place (see Figure 5.23 in Chapter 5) was intended to refer to the antiquity of the country. The design of the structure was inspired by the ancient name of Azerbaijan – "Land of Fire" due to the "burning mountain" phenomena (see Figure 6.1). It was constructed with a multi-functional concept: as a hotel, as a conference/event centre, as business offices, as an entertainment area, and as a shopping area for luxury brands.

Figure 6.1: 'Yanardağ' (Burning mountain) in Absheron Peninsula (Source:http://www.mytravelbook.org/objects/gorjashaja_gora_ja nardag/)

Activities on the site are the other essential features that contribute to the identity of the Bulvar. In terms of patterns, the site in both periods was visited mainly at night by both the questionnaire (n=38 for the past, n=42 for the current) and the interview participants (n=7). In terms of seasonal use, the place in both periods was more preferred for use in spring and summer time. In addition, no change was observed in some of the basic behavioural patterns (walk, rest, spend time, hang out with friends/relatives) of the questionnaire participants. Activities in the Bulvar were also analysed through perceived functions with respect to past and present. The results of the analysis show that, while some sorts of activities disappeared from the place, new types of activities have emerged. The increased number of commercial places, especially the introduction of shopping malls in the site, have significantly influenced the perceived activities in the site. It should be stated that in the pre-socialist period, the Bulvar was created as an open public space with the aim of modernizing the traditional society – a new type of daily experience. That same aim was followed when the socialist state turned the site into a place of "cultured leisure" for its egalitarian society. In the post-socialist context, the intention was more to turn the Bulvar into a representative profile of the city in the global arena and into a site of neo-liberal business. As such, the site has been surrounded by brand new hotels, and by Azerbaijan's establishment of international economic and cultural relations, especially with Europe, the Bulvar was turned into a host for mega events. Temporary activities of the post-socialist Bulvar like the Eurovision Song Contest, F1 championships and European Games display efforts at taking part in global competition.

Meanings attributed to the place were analysed as the third component of the identity of the Bulvar in the different periods. In comparison to the first two components, it is more difficult to grasp and make generalizations because of subjectivity of the content. The evaluations of the questionnaire respondents revealed decreases and increases in the items related to the activities and physical features of the site. The results of the questionnaire (n=51) indicate that the post-socialist Bulvar is more commercially oriented in comparison to the socialist past.

Furthermmore, the symbolic places/structures that reflected the socio-cultural signs of the Soviet state have been removed from the site. Referring to Castello's (2010:17) statement – "the form of a place is always the form of a time place" it can be stated that the identity of the socialist past was suppressed to a great extent through the transformation of the environment and by creating a sense of national identity. The gigantic national flag of Azerbaijan erected in the newly developed part of Bulvar is a clear example of how a sense of national identity was created in the site. In the same way, some participants (n=9) identified the site as a national symbol and as a symbol of the new Baku.

In general, today's Bulvar displays the aims of creating a new identity by developing distinctive projects that combine traditional and national notions/values with contemporary styles (e.g. Mugham Centre and Carpet Museum, see Figure 5.8 in Chapter 5). The new environment also shares some features with cities competing in the global arena: landscapes for tourists and investment attractions, commercially constructed spaces, "museumised" spaces and skyscrapers (gigantism). According to the evaluations of the questionnaire participants (n=51), the built structures of the place are accepted as more important in comparison with the socialist period. In addition, the answers for the 'can you evaluate the changes observed in the Bulvar in terms of positive/negative?' shows that, except for the green layout, positive comments are generally concerned with the physical dimension; 'environmental quality', 'beautiful', 'sign of modernity', 'national values'. In the same way, the new physical environment had positive impacts for the in-depth interviewees. In the appraisal of the new phase of the Bulvar in terms of negative, only 5 questionnaire respondents complained about a weakened sense of historical landscape. Likewise, the in-depth interviewees generally commented about the environment being totally renovated, but they also

stated that this did not keep them from enjoying the place. Here, it is meaningful to keep in mind that, in the early years of post-socialism, the site had started to degenerate and lose quality and significance for the residents. When making comparisons in terms of physical environment between the socialist and post-socialist periods, the in-depth interview participants also referred to the early years of the 1990s, when the place was deteriorating. Based on this, the author believes that this might have influenced the users' thoughts regarding the current environment of the Bulvar. In general, users are content that the environment has been renovated.

While positive evaluations mainly concern physical attributes, some negative evaluations were based on social dimension: price policies', 'social segregation', 'consumption oriented'. Both questionnaire (n=15) and interview participants (n=5) commented about the site being luxury and consumption oriented. According to the in-depth interview comments, between the two periods, for some users, the perception of 'place for everyone' changed into 'places for people with economic advantages'. Another observation was that, in the current situation of the site, people perceive the Bulvar area as 'tourist oriented places' and 'places oriented to locals'.

6.3.1 Assessment of relation between changes in identity of the Bulvar and users' identification with this setting

When assessing the changing identity of the Bulvar and the participants' identification with the site, the main influence is related to increased social inequalities in the space rather homogenization or standardization of the environment.. As stated in chapter 2, for Relph (1976), the above-mentioned implementations are inauthentic attitudes towards places create a placeless geography by becoming homogenized and standardized. Knox discussed that the more competitive developers in terms of providing distinctive settings, and pointed out that the bigger and more splendid the projects, the more convergent the results (2005:4). On the other hand, Carmona et al (2010:105) claim that, contrary to what some critics may suggest, people are not necessarily concerned about authenticity - at least, they care less about that than whether or not they like a place. It is people's perceptions that are important, and people enjoy a place, whether it was created over centuries recently (Carmona et al., 2010).

For the selected case, the results of the t-test showed that changes in the scores of the questionnaire participants (n=51) regarding identification with the site from the past to the present are not statistically significant. This general result indicates that participants have continued to identify themselves with the site. In fact, while some participants' place identity scores have increased (n=28), other either have not changed (n=3) or decreased (n=20) see Appendix A). Among the participants (n=20) whose overall scores for place identity items decreased for the current situation, 15 participants considered the changes in the site as negative. According to the answers, these changes have caused social segregation and there are no effective price policies[13]. It can also be observed that 10 of these participants do not use the place as frequently in the present as they had in the past. Results similar to those of the questionnaire participants were obtained from the in-depth interview participants. Four participants stated that they do not have the same positive feelings towards the place as they did before because the new Bulvar is luxury and consumption oriented. Thi has created some negative feelings for them; "feeling a little bit uncomfortable", "pulls me away", "disappointed".

All in all, the results of the study show that personal memories gathered in the setting significantly contribute to the continuity of the user's place identity. As emphasized by Keogan (2010), "both memory and place are woven into the fabric of everyday life where personal memory makes place out of space" (cited in Baker, 2012: 26). Similarly, Marcus (cited in Altman & Low, 1992:87) states that place is that individuals' most powerful memories revolve around – the setting where they first fell in love, the neighbourhood where they established their first home, the secret place of childhood and adolescence. Marcos also states that (Ibid:88), while such memories often becomes sources of inspiration (for poets, for novels, for place makers), sometimes much-loved places of the past create dissatisfaction and sadness in the present. The case of this study shows quite similar results in that for some users the new environment has created positive feelings, while for others it has relatively negative impacts. A meaningful clarification was made by Proshansky et al. (1983):

> "*Whatever the original source of change – the life cycle itself, changing values*

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[13] Based on the answers for the question: Can you evaluate the changes observed in the Bulvar (more specifically after redevelopment)? (Appendix C, question 2.11)

of society, or critical changes in the person – at the root of changes in cognitions of place-identity lie changes in the social roles and social attributes of the person and therefore in his self-identity" (Proshansky et al., 1983:

Thus, place identity can be very personal (e.g. associated with individuals' personal memories and beliefs, preferences and/or expectations) and or shared (based on collective memories, traditions, norms), which indicates that the subjectivity of the context brings about some limitations to robust generalizations regarding the phenomena.

6.4 Limitations of the study

This study has two main limitations. First of all, although this research has tried to approach the issue of post-socialist place-identity from comprehensive perspective that includes social, economic, political and cultural aspects, more research is also needed to advance the psychological understanding of the process of identification with place, the factors that influence the formation of identity with place in communities under transitions. As it is stated, participants that were selected for this research are the people that have relatively long familiarity with the setting analysed, and it was to possible to measure whether does a change in identity of place influence identification of people with that setting if and only if these people were selected. Even if some questionnaire participants have evaluated the changes in the site as negative, it is observed that, long associations and memories gathered in the setting contributes to continuity of place identity of the users. Thus, some interview participants romanticized the place and even ignored unfavourable dimensions of the site.

Last but not least, the second limitation emerges from the methods applied for data collection: interviewing and surveying. The limitation related to surveying is arises from the open-ended questions. Although with the help of open-ended questions the author was able to obtain some personal thoughts of the respondents, it was not possible to get relevant responses from some participants because of the flexible structure of the open-ended questions. Furthermore, some barriers were put up by interview participants not giving the researcher permission to record the interview, which challenged the information collection process. In addition, interviewees were generally not very open to sharing adverse thoughts about the socio-political or economic topics that have impacted the site and its users.

6.5 Implications for further studies

This research has made an assessment regarding the changing identity of place and identification of users with that setting. However, many gaps in generalization and knowledge remain that can be categorized as methodological and empirical. Although the literature includes considerable discussion about identity crisis in the contemporary context and its effects on people, little attention has been given to longitudinal studies that examine places that have undergone transitions/transformations (e.g. from socialism to post-socialism). In addtition, the results of this study shows that psychological dimension of a place play significant role in formation of place identity of people. Thus, place identity can be very personal or shared. For this purpose, in further studies, the psychological dimension of place identity (e.g. in which circumstances people accept or rejects the changes occurred in their living, working, or leisure environments) should be clearly undertaken together with the physical aspects of urban design.

Furthermore, the findings of this study reveal the importance of economic advantage for individuals in associating a setting with their feelings about it. Some participants stated that ineffective price policies, social segregation or a weakened sense of place have created negative impacts on them. Therefore, there is a need for a more comprehensive longitudinal study to examine users' place identity by concentrating on specific user groups such as people with economic advantages and disadvantages or people whose economic standing in the pre- and post- context has improved or deteriorated.

6.6 Implications for urban design

Deriving from the results of this study, implications for urban design can be categorized under four headings:

- **Preservation of historical fabric** especially those that strengthens people's identification with their environments (landscapes of memory)

- **Promotion of high quality public spaces** (e.g. land-use mix, clean and safe public space, places that promote social capital/sense of community)

- **Inclusive public spaces for all** (e.g. affordable, accessible, quality of social environment (sense of place for everyone))

- **Importance of participatory planning and design** in increasing user's place identity

First of all, in contemporary context, majority of urban urban regenerations projects affects people's feelings to their place by transforming the existing environments and by eroding the landscapes of memories. The results of this study shows that people pay attention to the importance of the landscape of memories, which strengthens people's identification with their places. For this purpose, preservation of historical fabric should be encouraged in urban regeneration projects in order to create healthy and sustainable communities.

Secondly, the results of this research has showed that people's willingness to use the site were decreased in early years of the 1990s when the site was deteriorated, and it has increased after the improvement of the quality of the area. For example, after the lightening of the site was improved, people defined the area as more safely, which has created more positive feelings in them. In addition, the participants gave an importance to the quality of activities, which play significant role on their engagement with the environment. Thus, sustaining quality of public spaces is necessary for achieving healthy environments and communities. Therefore, the following suggestions should be considered in urban renovation/regeneration projects in order to create healthy communities:

- **Environmental quality** (clean, safe, place that looked after and cared for)
- **Qualities of activities** (diversity- optional/social)
- **Design quality** (quality of sidewalks, rest places, reflecting cultural values)

Furthermore, in many contemporary cities, it is easy to observe the impacts of economic motives in the (re)production of urban areas not only on the physical aspects but also on social aspects of environment. In contemporary context, implementations on urban places (e.g. regeneration projects) are aimed to seek profit from these places by business elites and politicians. As such, urban spaces turn into place of

consumption, tourism and entertainment that influence the sense of place for everyone. As the results of this study has shown, affordability and accessibility of a public spaces significantly contribute to people's identification with that setting. Therefore, in urban design projects, especially in those areas that are under transformations, there must be given importance to the quality of social environment in order to create an inclusive public spaces for all.

Finally, participatory planning should be encouraged by municipalities or by the related reorganization in urban design projects in order to increase people's place identity, especially in urban redevelopment projects. It is important to understand what people reject or accept related to the changes in their environments.

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OVERALL SCORES OF USERS' IDENTIFICATION WITH THE BULVAR
$(PI=S_1+S_2+\ldots+S_6)$

Users	PI Past	PI Present
Participant 1	27	30
Participant 2	24	26
Participant 3	14	15
Participant 4	28	26
Participant 5	26	22
Participant 6	22	26
Participant 7	24	14
Participant 8	25	24
Participant 9	26	12
Participant 10	25	25
Participant 11	26	24
Participant 12	20	14
Participant 13	12	19
Participant 14	18	24
Participant 15	24	19
Participant 16	26	27
Participant 17	26	29
Participant 18	28	30
Participant 19	15	29
Participant 20	15	16
Participant 21	26	30
Participant 22	26	29
Participant 23	26	30
Participant 24	28	30
Participant 25	28	28
Participant 26	21	17
Participant 27	25	29
Participant 28	26	24
Participant 29	25	27
Participant 30	26	10
Participant 31	24	21
Participant 32	24	16
Participant 33	12	6
Participant 34	19	18
Participant 35	16	10

Users	PI Past	PI Present
Participant 36	22	18
Participant 37	26	13
Participant 38	22	23
Participant 39	26	27
Participant 40	28	29
Participant 41	27	29
Participant 42	12	15
Participant 43	30	30
Participant 44	27	20
Participant 45	22	29
Participant 46	21	30
Participant 47	27	30
Participant 48	25	30
Participant 49	27	30
Participant 50	28	27
Participant 51	24	18

PLACE IDENTITY MEASUREMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR USERS OF BAKU BULVAR

Dear Bulvar user,

First of all, thank you for your interest and participation in this survey. This questionnaire is prepared for the users who have been using Bulvar since the 1980's to the present. We aim to understand how your feelings and behaviours in the Bulvar have been influenced over the years.

This a comparative survey which consists of two parts. In the first part, it is expected from you to describe your past experiences and feeling towards the Bulvar. In the second part, you are expected to describe your current feelings and behaviours related to this setting.

It will take approximately 10 minutes to fill the survey. There is no right or wrong answer in this survey. This survey does not collect identifying information, such as names and addresses. Please do not include any identifying personal information on this questionnaire.

The results of your answers are going to be used for master thesis by Orxan Şekiliyev, student at Middle East Technical University department of Urban Design.

1. When did you first visit the Bulvar? Please provide the year: _____

2. How frequently were you using the Bulvar in 1980s?

   a. Every day
   b. 4-6 times a week
   c. 1-3 times a week
   d. I was not visiting this place at all
   e. (Other) …………….

3. For how long were you staying in the Bulvar when you were visiting this setting in 1980s?

   a. Whole day
   b. Less than an hour
   c. 2-3 hours
   d. (Other) …………….

4. At what times of the day were you more likely to use the Bulvar in 1980s?

   a. Day   b. Night   c. Both

5. Were you visiting the Bulvar in every season of the year?

   a. Yes   b. No

6. In which seasons of the year were you more likely to use the Bulvar? (you can select more than one choice)

   a. Spring   b. Autumn   c. Winter   d. Summer

7. For what purposes did you use the Bulvar? (E.g. meeting, shopping, café/restaurants, walk)

   …………………………………………………………….……………….…………….……
   …………………………………………………………………………………….…………

8. Suppose you are in 1980's, can you define/identify the Bulvar in **the past (1980s)** with two or three sentences? (What **did** the Bulvar mean to you?)

   …………………………………………………………………………….……………….……
   …………………………………………………………………………………….……………
   .…………………………………………………………………………………….……………

9. **Please picture the Bulvar in 1980s in your mind. Please indicate to what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your mental image of the Bulvar in 1980s?**

9.1) The coast/sea was an important element of the Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□------------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.2) The ships in the sea were/are important elements of the Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□------------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.3) The built structures (e.g. buildings in and surrounding) were important

elements of the Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□------------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.4) Lighting was important feature of Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□------------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.5) Recreational areas, vacant lands, parks, trees were important elements of the Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□------------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.6) Seaport station (Mor Vağzal) was an important element of the Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□------------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)

disagree   and disagree

9.6) Seaport station (Mor Vağzal) was an important element of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.7) Taking a steamboat tour was an important activity in the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.8) Amusement park was an important element of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.9) Commercial places (like, cafes and restaurants, clubs) were important elements of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.10) Open air cinema was an important activity in the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.11) Playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiard, volleyball) were important features of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.12) The Bulvar was popular place for arranging meetings with existing and new friends

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.13) Shopping site was/is an important element of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

Answers for the following questions will give us information about your past feelings and thoughts related with the Bulvar when you had used the place in 1980's

10. Please define your relation with Bulvar in 1980

10.1) I was feeling Bulvar part of me

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.2) Bulvar was very special to me

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.3) I had been identified strongly with Bulvar

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.4) I was very attached to Bulvar

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.5) Visiting Bulvar had said a lot about who I was

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.6) Bulvar had meant a lot to me

☐------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

2.2 How frequently do you use the Bulvar in 1980s?

a) Everyday
b) Couple times in a week
c) Couple times in a month
d) Not much (from time to time)
  (Other) ……………

2.3 For how long do you stay in the Bulvar when you are visiting this setting?

a) Whole day
b) Less than an hour
c) 2-3 hours
d) (Other) ……………

2.4 At what times of the day do you more likely to use the Bulvar?

  a. Day   b. Night   c. Both

2.5 Do you visit the Bulvar in every season of the year?

  b. Yes   b. No

2.6 In which seasons of the year were do you more likely use the Bulvar? (you can select more than one choice)

  c. Spring   b. Autumn   c. Winter   d. Summer

2.7 For what purposes did you use the Bulvar? (E.g. meeting, shopping, café/restaurants, walk)

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

2.8 Consider the current situation of the BUlvar, can you define/identify the place with two or three sentences? (What does the Bulvar mean to you?)

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

2.9 Please picture the Bulvar in 1980s in your mind. Please indicate to what extent do you agree with the following statements based on your mental image of the Bulvar in 1980s?

9.1) The coast/sea are an important element of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐
strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.2) The ships in the sea are important elements of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐
strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.3) The built structures (e.g. buildings in and surrounding) are important elements of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐
strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.4) Lighting is important feature of Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐
strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.5) Recreational areas, vacant lands, parks, trees are important elements of the Bulvar

☐------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐
strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.6) Seaport station (Mor Vağzal) is an important element of the Bulvar

☐-------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.7) Taking a steamboat tour is an important activity in the Bulvar

☐-------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.8) Amusement park is an important element of the Bulvar

☐-------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.9) Commercial places (like, cafes and restaurants, clubs) are important elements of the Bulvar

☐-------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.10) Open air cinema is an important activity in the Bulvar

☐-------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.1)1 Playgrounds (like chess-club, table tennis, billiard, volleyball) are important features of Bulvar

☐-------------------☐------------------☐-------------------☐-----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.12) Bulvar was/is popular place for arranging meetings with existing and new friends

□------------------□------------------□------------------□-----------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

9.13) Shopping site was/is an important element of the Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□-----------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

Answers for the following questions will give us information about your current feelings and thoughts related with the Bulvar

2.10   Please define your relation with the current BUlvar

10.1) I feel Bulvar as a part of me

□------------------□------------------□------------------□-----------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.2) Bulvar is very special to me

□------------------□------------------□------------------□-----------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.3) I strongly identify with Bulvar

□------------------□------------------□------------------□-----------------□

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.4) I am very attached to Bulvar

☐-------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.5) Visiting Bulvar says a lot about who I am

☐-------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

10.6) Bulvar means a lot to me

☐-------------------☐-----------------☐------------------☐----------------☐

strongly (1)   disagree (2)   both agree (3)   agree (4)   strongly agree (5)
disagree   and disagree

2.11 I would like you to express your thoughts/opinions: Can you evaluate the new Bulvar (more specifically after renovation)?

      A) In terms of positive

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

      B) In terms of negative

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Age	
Gender	☐ Female ☐ Male
Place of birth	☐ Baku ☐ Other
Education Status	

Are you living within walking distance to Baku Bulvar?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Is your workplace within walking distance to Baku Bulvar?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

APPENDIX C

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. For what purpose **did/do** you use the Bulvar?

2. What types of activities **were/are** hold in the Bulvar?

    a. Which places **were/are** popular in the Bulvar?

3. How can you define the Bulvar in socialist period? In present?

    a. İts social life

    b. Its physical Environment

    c. Activities in it

    d. The Bulvar during day time – night time

    e. The site during seasons

    f. Functions in it

4. What **was/is** the meaning of Bulvar for you?

    a. Why **did/do** you like/dislike the Bulvar?

5. In-depth interview questions related to the Bulvar after renovation in post-socialist period:

6. What are the main differences that you observe between the past and current Bulvar?

7. How did the new introduced functions (shopping malls, restaurants, hotels, touristic facilities etc.) influence the character of the Bulvar in your opinion?

8. How important **was/is** this place to your life?

    a. What **made/makes** this place important to you?

        i. Friends? The place's characteristics? (Experiences/memories?

         – questions for the current situation)

9. How **were you feeling/ do you feel** when you **came/come** here?

    a. Can you give some examples form your experiences with this place that made it special to you?

10. Did changes in the Bulvar affected your feeling?

    a. If yes: How did these changes affect your feelings towards this place?

11. Could you give some examples about changes of this place that would make you feel uncomfortable, sad/even angry, or happy?

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Age	
Gender	☐ Female ☐ Male
Place of birth	☐ Baku ☐ Other
Education Status	

Are you living within walking distance to Baku Bulvar?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
Is your workplace within walking distance to Baku Bulvar?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No