Preserving Tokyo’s Alleyways: from Marginal to Neighbourhood Place?

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Abstract

Marginalised through the emergence of new forms of housing and public spaces, re-appropriated by different fields, and re-invented by contemporary urban design discourse, the social meaning attached to the alleyway roji is being re-interpreted to fit hybrid and multiple concepts of living and lifestyles. Focusing on empirical data collected during fieldwork conducted in the local community of Tsukudajima in contemporary Tokyo between 2007-2009, the paper will first investigate the kind of functions the roji fulfilled in the city in the past, focussing secondly on the question of what kind of consequences the discussed urban design approaches will have on the revival of the roji, and what urban designers are actually aiming for: the re-invention/modernization of local urban areas or the preservation of remaining urban alleys.

Introduction

In times of global change, in which cities compete for positions in a regional, national and international ranking (Sassen, 2006), politicians and urban reformers face various challenges including how aging city centres can attract new high-tech economic developments. Consequently, cities look into different possibilities of how to realise new development—i.e., attracting private developers. In the case of Tokyo, large-scale re-development projects were realised following a Western based, top-down urban planning approach favouring public-private or private cooperation. This resulted in the further fragmentation of the urban landscape and the privatisation of public space and gentrification and commodification of vernacular places like the alleyways.

This paper presents a study of the roji, a form of Japanese urban alleyway, which was once part of people’s personal spatial sphere and everyday life but has increasingly been transformed by diverse and competing interests. Marginalised through the emergence of new forms of housing and public spaces, re-appropriated by different fields, and re-invented by
contemporary urban design discourse, the social meaning attached to the roji is being re-interpreted to fit hybrid and multiple concepts of living and lifestyles. In this vein, the roji presents a unique opportunity to study the pressures of globalisation on small-scale ordinary places and specific preservation activities.

Focusing on empirical data collected during fieldwork conducted in the local community of Tsukudajima in contemporary Tokyo between 2007-2009, the paper will first investigate the kind of functions the roji fulfilled in the city in the past, focusing secondly on the question of what kind of consequences the discussed urban design approaches will have on the revival of the roji, and what urban designers are actually aiming for: the re-invention/modernization of local urban areas or the preservation of remaining urban alleys.

Finally, the paper will present some examples in this research context considered to be sustainable urban design practice, closing with a discussion of what kind of conditions are necessary to develop and realise alternative approaches that try to re-integrate or re-use the remaining urban fabric of the roji. Particularly it is argued that the concept of the roji could be used for new concepts of mixed-use neighbourhood spaces offering a similar scale and atmosphere, as they are accessible for different users and support all kinds of uses and functions. In this way, the paper could be seen as a first attempt to clarify how current urban preservation and sustainable urban design approaches might deal with the roji in the future by either re-incorporating remaining alleyways or re-conceptualising the roji in drawing on aspects as e.g. small scale, pedestrian and mixed uses.

In this context, we can observe on one hand a new realm of ‘central’ places as ‘eyecatching’ landmarks in the city which acquire a new ‘make-over’, losing some part of their historical image for the price of a striving economy and development [Orbasli, 2000]. On the other hand, inner city areas that can not attract or even refuse private investment, turn increasingly into ‘marginal’ areas, which are in the process of urban re-development either becoming erased or gentrified [Alden, Hiroharaetal.,1994; Fujii, Okata et al.a, 2007]. In particular, gentrification processes are causing new conflicts in inner city areas as a new middle-class is moving into lower-class areas with increasing shifts in income, household size, real estate values and rent prices [Smith, 1996; Lees, Slater et al., 2008; Shaw, 2008].

In general, the term gentrification or urban gentrification can be described as a change in an existing urban area caused by the inflow of more affluent people. The term which emerged first in the 1960s is nowadays often used, but has been increasingly criticised as too broad to capture the fine-grain of diverse and complex urban restructuring processes in different
contexts [Lees, Slater et al., 2008]. In the case of Japan, the term gentrification emerged in the mid 1990s when describing the decrease in land prices and the resulting increase in building activities in inner city areas in Tokyo caused the ‘gentrification’ of remaining low-rise areas [Sorensen, 2003].

Furthermore, new urban laws (the Urban Renaissance Law of 2002, for example), stimulated the increase in building activities as seen in urban redevelopment projects in central areas as Kagurazaka or Akasaka, Tokyo. Nevertheless, the gentrification of Tokyo differs from the term strictu sensu as it does not generally involve gentrifiers moving into existing properties, but rather into new emerging high-rise buildings and exclusive apartment blocks. Paul Waley argues in his paper ‘Tokyo: Patterns of familiarity and partitions of difference (1999)’ that the lack of a strategic vision, the generally weak urban planning system and strong economic interests caused and influenced the ongoing re-construction of Tokyo’s urban landscape, as often historical buildings were replaced in a 20-year life cycle. Thus, gentrification as seen in cities such as London is not known, as most people move into new residential developments and as “the newly wealthy do not deem it necessary to lock themselves behind iron gates and high walls.” [Waley, 1999, p.152].

Thus, new developments which were often realised by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, result in the fragmentation of existing urban areas and indirectly drive out lower class residents and cause the ‘gentrification’ of traditional neighbourhoods [Waley, 1999]. Only in some cases are old buildings taken over by ‘new urban trendsetters’ [Smith, 1996] when different kinds of artists move into some areas which are not yet affected by large-scale urban developments. This form of gentrification might be desired by some, as it can result in the revitalisation and regeneration of existing urban areas, a process which is sometimes referred to as ‘soft’ gentrification compared to ‘hard’ gentrification in the form of economically driven large-scale redevelopments of existing urban areas [Lee, Slater et al., 2008, p.274].

In the competition to secure investment for urban re-development projects, local neighbourhoods in bigger cities and smaller communities around the world feel the increasing visual impact of a global culture and the need to think about their image as tourist and consumer attractions and sources of profit, thus welcoming new marketing ideas [Trueman and Cook, 2006]. With the incorporation of private investment and companies who provide new ideas for the tourist marketing, these communities become the new object of consumption, commodity and commercialization, being re-discovered, re-interpreted, re-appropriated, re-developed, re-invented and re-branded in new ways [Kolb, 2006; Trueman and Cook, 2006;
Donald, Kofman et al., 2009]. The promotion of different localities was done in designing new attractions (e.g. retro-chic harbour districts, industrial loft-apartments or event-based passageways) as to be found in New York or London, which in turn increased their symbolic and economic value [Zukin, 1990; Fainstein and Campbell, 2001]. In turn, inhabitants’ everyday life is radically changing, as they live inside or next to the branded areas which become increasingly an object of desire and commodity for different visitors [(AlSayyad, 2001; Cronin and Hetherington, 2008; Donald, Kofman et al., 2009).

In the case of Japan, it should be stated that it was just since the 1990s that urban preservation is increasingly in the focus of local urban planning approaches like *machizukuri*, which aim to preserve distinct urban landscapes [Sorensen, 2004, p. 324]. Nevertheless, the concerns are often about single buildings rather than complex urban landscapes [Hohn, 1997]. Recent attempts observed in Tokyo which aim to preserve prominent buildings like the *Kabuki-za* theater in Ginza often fail; but, for example, the debate over the Tokyo Central Post Office in 2008, shows that a discussion is going on how to secure the preservation of traditional architecture and consequently urban landscapes [Tokyo Reporter, 2009].

In summary, the growing interest and concern about public places are caused by (1) the rediscovery and nostalgia for traditional urban forms [Tibbalds, 1992]; (2) the growing demand of new, attractive public places for the middle-class to enjoy diverse leisure and open-air activities [Loukaitiou-Sideris, 1993]; (3) the increasing interest of cultural institutions such as museums and galleries to create new public places to attract tourists and other consumers [Burgers, 2000]; and (4) increasing concerns as to how to create public places for diverse users and social interaction [Madanipour, 1996]. This results in increasingly contested inner city areas as diverse actors, stakeholders and users re-appropriate different forms of urban places to promote their strategies and ideas. Thus, the challenge consists in finding a more sensitive urban design and preservation approach to achieve the urban revitalisation of vernacular urban forms, like the alleyway, without creating sanitized, mono-functional urban pathways or historicizing replicas of traditional urban life.

A recent conference in Tokyo entitled Landscapes of Global Urbanism: Power, Marginality, and Creativity proclaimed that at a time when privatization and deregulation are becoming global trends and concerns grow about global geographies suppressing public urban life, we need to reconsider how to approach the increasing disjuncture between global and vernacular urbanism, which we can especially observe in Asian cities. In considering ‘hidden frames of global urban landscapes in their social, spatial, political and imaginary forms’ [ISA
RC 21, 2008]; it is important to consider the future of global urbanism and what approach we should take to reconceptualise place, identity and memory in times of global change.

Trying to define a vernacular landscape, Alanen (2000) argues that the term is rarely used outside the realm of academia and may be best understood when referring to terms such as ‘ordinary’, ‘common’ or ‘everyday places’ [Alanen, 2000, p.112]. As one of the first scholars, J.B. Jackson focused on the term vernacular landscape defining a landscape as “a space on the surface of the earth [...] with its own distinct character either topographical or cultural, and above all a space shared by a group of people” [Jackson, 1984, p.5], noting about the use of the word vernacular that “its vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation were capricious, and it was less a work of art than a tool, a rough-and-ready-instrument for workaday relationships and communication” [Jackson, quoted in Alanen, 2000, p.112].

Attempts to study vernacular urban landscapes vary. They have mainly focused on the study of ordinary buildings in applying a diversity of approaches, for example anthropological, conservationist, evolutionary, historical or geographical perspectives aiming to achieve the preservation of historical buildings or structures [Alanen, 2000, p.113]. Similarly, Chong and Nyuk Eun (1992) state that social and architectural aspects of historical buildings have often been analysed but vernacular public places like the alleyway have not been studied, despite being of historical and social significance [Chong and Nyuk Eun, 1992]. In this vein, J.B. Jackson argues that settings such as streets, alleyways, local parks and gardens are also vernaculars and it is important to consider them [Jackson, 1984, p.24].

Within this framework the paper is aiming to study the alleyway roji in contemporary Tokyo considering it as one form of contested, vernacular landscape which is re-interpreted, re-imagined and re-invented by different fields and individuals [Chong and Nyuk Eun, 1992; Kong, 2002]. Furthermore, the paper is concerned with the recent revival of the roji in different fields aiming to provide a critical evaluation and discussion of this current rediscovery, reimagination and representation to clarify the potential and future of the roji. Studying a specific case of contested landscape, the paper provides empirical knowledge, which should offer us new insights to understand how forgotten and remembered places are shaped and transformed by global change. This will be done by considering derelict and abandoned places an element of urban change, not only passive counterparts or side effects of different globalization processes [Lee and Yeoh, 2004].

Thus, taking it not as given fact that marginal places exist and disappear but instead suggesting that we should draw on concepts as co-presence, multiplicity and scale in
reconceptualising vernacular places, the paper examines the past and contemporary role, function and meaning of urban forms like the alleyway. Different scholars argue that derelict places take over new functions in the city [Jansson and Lagerkvist, 2009], often in the form of heterotopia – defined by Michel Foucault as a place in which spatial and temporal shifts converge and the individual experiences aspects of the past: vanished, but temporary present [Foucault, 1997]. The necessity of such places of uncertainty is for example described by J.B.Jackson (1980) who argues that ruins fulfil the role of emotional and imagined geographies allowing us to deal with our hopes, fears and desires in times of modernity [Jackson, 1980]. Furthermore, through the work of Walter Benjamin [Weigel, 1996], we can understand how the city is made up of multiple places and mediated experiences which describe how the processes in the city “rightly (can) be taken for a dreamscape, balancing between ruination and redemption” [Jansson and Lagerkvist, 2009, p. 8].

The Vernacular Landscape of the roji

As a central place of everyday life and social interaction, the roji can be described as a mostly narrow and winding alleyway in traditional wooden, low-rise neighbourhoods which no car can enter or which are only wide enough to allow one person to walk or cycle through. The rojis formed historically inside the block or behind the main streets or side streets; a ‘semi-public, semi-private’ realm, which was a place for collective activities around small shrines, local shops and bathhouses. The enclosed environment of the alleyways became the stage for shared, intimate neighbourhood relations and local, daily life. This kind of ‘intermediate zone’ [Kurokawa, 2006, p. 85] connecting public and private activities formed a kind of communal space. In this context, Nakano and Hirayama argue that rojis are safe places which offer a protecting feeling and ‘to feel at home’ based on the narrowness and their human scale of the alley [Nakano and Hirayama, 2006].

With the modernization of Tokyo, urban lifestyles and forms of living changed, and with it the recognition and perception of life in the roji. The roji turned from a central place of everyday urban life into a marginal place, and life in the alleyways was considered backward, primitive and even dangerous. Nevertheless, the roji was rediscovered when the urban preservation movements gained momentum. In this vein, it is the aim of the paper to critically evaluate the recent revival asking what is the potential and future of the roji [Imai, 2008].
Similar to the re-discovery of alleys through the ‘New Urbanism’ movement in the American context, the Japanese *roji* is since the late 1980s, the centre of attention being re-discovered by different fields and groups. This development is referred to as *rojibūmu* (rojiboom) or *rojiron* (roidiscourse) [Mori, 1987]. In this context, and as the *roji* is more and more fragmented and gentrified, local town planning groups and individuals started to wander through Tokyo in search of a history that is disappearing alarmingly fast. In between the contemporary emerging high-rise apartment blocks, these groups attempt to record, draw attention to and start a kind of counter discourse to criticise the current top-down planning approach [Sorensen, 2003]. However, the strong ownership rights of the residents and the rising number of owners living along the *roji* (e.g., plots are often further divided into smaller plots to pay for the inheritance tax) which would have to agree to new projects making it difficult to realise new developments. The different ward offices might want to stimulate more preservation projects, but in reality only a small number have been realised, as often the local community and its inhabitants have other urgent problems to be solved first, as seen in the case of Tsukudajima.
**Urban Preservation Movements in Tsukudajima**

Tsukishima and Tsukudajima together make up an island of reclaimed land dating back to the middle of the 17th century (Edo Period). The reclamation work finished in 1893 (Meiji period), as the islands of Tsukishima and Tsukudajima were joined together resulting in the urban form it has today. Today the area is characterised by its small scale network of old fashioned alleyways and low-budget nagayas (small, rental houses) which make up the traditional, close-knit community [Waley, 1991]. Nevertheless, in the 1980s the northern part of Tsukishima changed into a new high-rise residential area, when a former plot of the Ishikawajima-Harima shipping company became vacant and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government decided to realise a large-scale project called River City 21, next to the historical sites of micro-scale industries, fish merchants and lower class, single-family buildings which are slowly disappearing. Nevertheless, even if the old town of Tsukudajima still existed, its urban and social life would have become a relic of the good, old days, pushed out of the current urban consciousness, becoming nostalgically loaded and occasionally during festivals as part of the collective memory recalled and celebrated [Waley, 2002].

Next to the blocks of Tsukuda 2-chōme one can find some remaining alleyways and a high-rise building called Lions Tower Tsukishima (2006) designed by the Maeda Corporation and, Tohata Architects & Engineers [Tohata Corporation, 2008]. Before discussing how the architects responded to the pre-existing urban conditions and how they referred to the alleyway roji, one should have a look at how the local city government is dealing with the existing alleyways.

In the case of Tsukishima, the local ward office has developed plans to re-construct houses on existing plots along the narrow alleyways to avoid the further fragmentation of the area caused by large-scale developments in the form of high-rise buildings and to keep/attract more residents to the area [Nishimura, 2006]. Existing houses can be reconstructed up to 3 stories, if the roji is extended from 3.30 m to 4 m resulting a 0.3 m setback along each side [Nishimura, 2006, p. 212].

A central problem is caused due to the fact that all inhabitants along an alley must agree to the changes and widening of the roji, which in reality fails because of financial problems, unsolved conditions of ownership or disagreement between old and new tenants. Walking around the specific area, one can see that since the introduction of the new law, not many reconstruction projects along the existing alleys have been realised. Instead, a total of five new
high-rise buildings have been erected between 2004-2007 in the neighbourhood of Tsukuda 2-chôme Engineers [Yamada, Misawa et al., 2005, p. 408], increasing the imbalance between preservation of the existing urban fabric, modernization and the ‘rising’ process of new developments on large-scale blocks Engineers [Kawasaki, 2006, p.42].

In contrast to the existing dense and mixed-used alleyway units, the plot on which the Lions Tower is situated, is larger and not structured by parallel alleyways (contrary to neighbouring blocks). In this context, it is important to state that Tohata Architects & Engineers has designed the Lions Towers Tsukishima, facilitating open space design around the premisis creating different kinds of ‘rojis’, drawing on different connotations of the alleyway [Tohata Corporation, 2008].

The Concept can be summarized as follows:
1) ‘Roji for Walking’: creates a space that is comfortable, with extensive greenery and flowers.
2) ‘Roji after the Rain’: this is a tiny, silent alley with a sub entrance.
3) ‘Roji for sharing the same sense’: creates a space to share common interests and activities.
4) ‘Roji of Wood’: this is a roji for feeling different materials, such as wood.

Furthermore, the architects argue on their website that they included existing rojis in a new form in their design, developing four rojis concepts [Tohata Corporation, 2008]. In reality, there were no rojis on the property itself, but just in the surrounding blocks. The newly established roji divide the property in the same block pattern as the existing roji surrounding the block, but have little in common with the existing roji. In summary, one questions whether the architects’ design concept was inspired by the surroundings including new typologies of roji, as they created an open space that is a public but privately owned. The space allows only limited usage, but could actively be used for interaction between new and existing inhabitants. Visual hindrances like a fence along the north side of the property could be removed to allow access to the new space from all sides and in turn increase the use and level of interaction. Furthermore, it has been observed that some benches which have been installed along the roji are rarely used, and it should be analysed how to increase the attractiveness of the space and to encourage diverse uses. By allowing various activities, for example, installing a playground and other facilities, the possibilities of diverse interaction between locals and newcomers could be significantly increased.


Posibilities - Alternatives and Future Concepts

After analysing the existing urban characteristics and building typologies, the architect Fabian Dahlberg developed in his master thesis (2007) a sustainable urban design approach for the revitalisation of the kōji in Niigata, Japan. The concept aims to make use of existing urban alleys, work with subtle urban design elements, add new function or extend existing functions and allow new and diverse mixed uses attracting new residents who would help to revitalise the back alleys [Dahlberg, 2007].

The first design idea is to build new small-scale housing on single plots or joined blocks along the alleyway, with a maximum of two stories. Different units would accommodate different occupants (e.g., shops, singles, and families) securing a diversity of uses and users. Users determine by themselves the ‘speed’ of the renovation and reconstruction process, which is divided into different phases where different urban elements are realised and improved (such as lighting and greenery).

Depending on the various needs and financial budgets of residents/users, the houses could have different appearances—for example, individual facades, extended greenery or even a small garden contributing to the diverse ways the area can be perceived or experienced.
Furthermore, the diversity of the apartment units would attract different types of residents and users, which can help to create and support a ‘bustling’ living environment and community that is based on the existing urban fabric which thereby makes use of existing public space.

The second idea proposed the construction of new communal buildings along the alleyway—for example in the form of a ‘community centre’ having a maximum of three to four stories stretching over a maximum of four plots. The community centre could accommodate pubs, cafes or shops offering local products and crafts. By allowing public, recreational and commercial activities, the building could be an alternative place for the residents and outsiders to relax, shop and meet. A combination of old elements and new structural features is planned to distinguish the building as an addition to the existing building stock rather than creating new ‘exclusive’ places and ‘boundaries’ in the area.

These ideas can secure the mixed-use of the roji without widening the space; however the realisation of the following concepts would require the widening of the alley to 5 m. The creation of small pocket parks would make use of derelict plots or strips of land along the roji, which are covered with extensive greenery to create small spots for recreation and gathering. Furthermore, the pockets parks allow the architect to create access to plots in the second row that, until now, could only be reached by very narrow alleys. Instead of creating parking areas which increases traffic and pollution these green areas can improve the ‘climate’ and ‘cooling of the area’ during hot summers. Traditionally, rojis were used as an ‘open recreation space’ to sit under a canopy in the shade, to cool down, take a bath or to chat. The use as a green space would restore some of the former functions.
In comparison to the previous concepts, the last concept is to combine derelict blocks between two alleys into one ‘larger’ green space in the form of a park or a community garden.
This space can be used in the case of earthquakes or fire to secure the evacuation of the area. Similar projects are already realised in other cities such as Fuchū, Tokyo, where parts of public parks are equipped with toilets, water tanks and benches, that can be re-modelled to function as cooking places. Additionally, empty plots along the alleyway will be filled with new types of housing constructed on both sides of the park to create a visible enclosure indicating the specific recognizable function of the area and to be maintained by the different users and inhabitants.

All four ideas reintegrate the alleyway in a different form and to a different degree. The adaption of the alleyway will be necessary and desirable to allow the re-use of the space and realisation of new functions which should not only be recognised as a good idea but as an actual alternative to other realised design ideas. In summary, it can be stated that this urban design proposal should first aim to analyse and understand which functions and form of reconstruction are needed, at which time, in which order and to which extent. In neither proposing ‘make-over’ ideas that copy old elements but have a totally new function, nor preserving the alleyways turning them into more commercially orientated ‘dioramas’, the realization of some of the proposed ideas could promise the successful revitalisation of existing neighbourhood structures including the rojis. These could be used and maintained as common neighbourhood spaces taking over new and old functions (e.g., pedestrian use, common greenery, areas for children and different neighbourhood activities) that they fulfilled in the past.

**Summary**

The discussed theoretical attempts drawing on the roji indicate that this urban form is attractive for use as new sustainable design concepts as the alleyway is based on human scale, supporting a ‘slow life’ and making it possible to experience the area on foot [Demerath, 2003]. Nevertheless, the majority of realised projects show that urban designers and architects draw on the roji as a symbolic term and metaphor standing for ‘traditional’ neighbourhood life. These examples are not ‘re-integrated’ as urban forms or everyday places. Concepts such as in the case of the Lions Tower, Tokyo show that urban design ideas draw on a selection of imagined places, and collective memory to create new places to remember and consume ‘the past’. Consequently, the final project evokes both the process of forgetting and remembering the alleyway at the same time. To clarify that process, we should refer back to the term
heterotopia developed by Michel Foucault [Foucault, 1997]. Sites like the Edo Tokyo Museum in the Sumida Ward, the Shitamachi Museum in Ueno or the Odaiba Decks Shopping Mall, Tokyo might be to some extent heterotypic as they allow us to compensate and experience something like the roji, which is marginal and vanishing yet present. Consequently, it is argued that these projects turn the marginal place temporarily into a central place which is for a short period desired and consumed, but not actively used in fulfilling its actual role.

In summary, projects that draw on specific collective memories and images influence how the realised project looks like and can be used, reflecting new trends in urban design which create themed spaces [Lukas, 2007], spaces for entertainment or new places drawing on different concepts to react to new forms of consumption [Gottdiener, 2000].

Having analysed different concepts and projects including examples of urban preservation practices which focus on the design of housing and other everyday places, it might be possible to make use of the remaining rojis by (1) creating common green spaces that are not used by cars but can increase the amount of green space and evacuation areas in the case of a disaster; (2) promoting regular walks around the area to raise awareness among residents and visitors about the urban changes affecting the local community; or (3) supporting mixed-use projects along the remaining alleys that encourage construction of small-scale housing and businesses which offer local food and thus increase the interaction among residents and visitors.

In a similar way, the concept of the roji could be used for new concepts of mixed-use neighbourhood spaces offering a similar scale and atmosphere, as they are accessible for different users and support all kinds of uses in including those for the elderly and children. The presented ideas could be seen as a first attempt to clarify how current urban preservation and sustainable urban design approaches might deal with the roji in the future by either re-incorporating remaining alleyways or re-conceptualising the roji in drawing on aspects as e.g. small scale, pedestrian and mixed uses.

To realise these ideas, it is necessary to recognise the original role and function of the roji that was once a common shared neighbourhood space offering diverse encounters and forms of social interaction. Thus, instead of asking why we should preserve this marginal urban form, that is recognised by the majority of developers, local city wards and new residents of the gentrified neighbourhoods as ‘dead-space’ or a commodity, urban designers and architects should engage in a dialogue with users of the roji and the residents of the specific area, asking if they require and are interested in revitalizing the roji as an everyday place. Depending on the specific case, a revival might be favoured but not enforceable as local and governmental
bodies have not yet agreed about a mutual design approach which could be achieved with the involvement of the local community.

In summary, the paper argues that it is important to evaluate critically the current revival of a vernacular space like the roji, which is easily appropriated and turned into a commodity. Aiming to understand the fine-grain transformation from an everyday place into a marginal and commoditized place, we can develop a deeper understanding of the future of vernacular landscapes beyond the purview of political power and economical forces. Thus, it is one of the main arguments of the paper, that it is important to develop innovative and sustainable urban preservation approaches and to understand our basic role as urban planners: to design for people, by people, to quote Jane Jacobs [Jacobs, 1985].

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