

## Spatial Stories of Izmir

### A Narrative Study on the Influence of Trader Families on the Spatial Development of the Port City

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### KEYWORDS

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### ABSTRACT

*In March 2020, UNESCO received a submission regarding to the cultural value of Izmir. Izmir is an East Mediterranean port city, located on the western coastline of present-day Turkey, which has been a significant hub in international trade throughout its history especially during the nineteenth century. Commerce brought merchants from all over the world to settle in Izmir, with their unique habits, interests and socio-spatial practices, which deeply affected the urban and architectural image of the city. In this contribution, we wish to investigate how these processes of influence took place by tracing the narratives of these merchants' life in Izmir.*

*The submission to the UNESCO World Heritage List defined the port city of Izmir based solely on the physical boundaries of the historic urban fabrics, thereby not addressing the impact of the cosmopolitan life of the city in its wider territorial context, extending beyond historical waterfront. Our contribution will show how the culture of the port city affected the former residential neighborhoods of the trading families, that are today interwoven with the modern districts of Izmir. We chose to focus our inquiry on the urban life of the 19th century: looking at the stories of those who inhabited, used, and visited the city at the peak of its cosmopolitan culture, it is possible to understand the tight relationships between waterfront and hinterland of the city.*

*Metadati in italiano in fondo*

# Spatial Stories of Izmir

## *A Narrative Study on the Influence of Trader Families on the Spatial Development of the Port City*

“For the family built and spread and extended the village: indeed, they created a good deal of it. The newer parts were almost entirely theirs:

their stately houses and the gardens which surrounded them, their church, their clubs, the village water system; the road which led to the sea-port and the warehouses which financed all this splendor [...]”



Ray Turrell, 1987

In March 2020, UNESCO<sup>2</sup> recognized the cultural value of the historical city of Izmir. Izmir is an East Mediterranean port city, located on the western coastline of present-day Turkey, which has been a significant hub in international trade throughout its history especially during the nineteenth century. Commerce brought merchants from all over the world to settle in Izmir, with their unique habits, interests and socio-spatial practices, which deeply affected the urban and architectural image of the city. In this contribution, we wish to investigate how these processes of influence took place by tracing the narratives of these merchants' life in Izmir.

The submission to the UNESCO World Heritage List defined the port city of Izmir based solely on the physical boundaries of the historic urban fabrics,<sup>3</sup> thereby not addressing the impact of the cosmopolitan life of the city in its wider territorial context, extending beyond historical waterfront. Our contribution will show how the culture of the port city affected the former residential neighborhoods of the trading families, that are today interwoven with the modern districts of Izmir. We chose to focus our inquiry on the urban life of the 19th century: looking at the stories of those who inhabited, used, and visited the city at the peak of its cosmopolitan culture, it is possible to understand the tight relationships between waterfront and hinterland of the city.

## INTRODUCTION: NARRATIVE METHODS TO TRACE HISTORICAL URBAN PRACTICES

As Michel de Certeau argued, narratives are crucial for the study of everyday urban life. De Certeau makes clear how stories of social practices simultaneously reveal spatial practices, as they imply the use of and movement in space. "Every story", states de Certeau, "is a travel story - a spatial practice."<sup>4</sup> It is through stories that we might be able to trace the socio-spatial practices of Izmir's cosmopolitan environment, and their urban and architectural implications. A narrative research will allow us to investigate the spatial impact of the culture of commerce through the stories of its trading families. In this contribution, we will focus on a specific family of international merchants: the British family Whittall. The Whittalls were traders that settled in Izmir and went on to have intertwined marriages with other trading families of European descent. Together, these families played a crucial role in affirming the importance of Izmir in the sea trade over the whole of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> As a reflection of the influence that they gained through their commercial activity, the trader families exerted a significant influence on the architectural and urban development of the city from the waterfront to its outskirts.<sup>6</sup> We have studied travel manuscripts, novels, tourist guides, and personal notes of several of these families, of their guests, and of their descendants.<sup>7</sup> Through these documents, we carefully brought together diverse accounts of socio-spatial practices, reconstructing some scenes of the cosmopolitan urban life of Izmir based on the factual analysis of the narratives of different characters.

We wish to embark on a mental journey with our readers. After presenting the stage – Izmir's historical background – and the main characters, we will walk along an imaginary route starting from the waterfront and moving into the city, until its furthest

outskirts, the villages where the trader families established their residence. Linking multiple narratives, we will try to show a glimpse of how an international family of merchants lived and worked in the city. We borrowed the word *scene* from the field of theatre, thus acknowledging that we could regard the port city as a stage for a wide variety of cross-cultural urban phenomena. The singular story of the Whittall family might provide us with a glimpse of Izmir's cosmopolitan past. We would like to point out that this narrative approach could be a vital tool to expand our understanding of urban and architectural spaces that have been developed in relation to trade activities, such as in port cities. In doing so, we wish to stimulate further discussions on the true value of the historical heritage of Izmir, in regard to its UNESCO WHL submission.

## SETTING THE STAGE: IZMIR AND BORNOVA

In the nineteenth century, the social, political, and governmental structure of the Ottoman Empire promoted Izmir as a welcoming liberal place for business.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, international treaties strongly encouraged mobility among traders. Particularly in the mid nineteenth century, new technologies like the telegraph emerged, gaslighting was established, and railways were constructed, connecting the city to its hinterland. These rapid developments did not affect just the historical center of Izmir, but also the residential in the outskirts of the city where the international trader families lived.

One of these settlements is Bornova, a village located about ten kilometers away from the port on the eastward route to the city, an ancient Persian caravan path.<sup>9</sup> **Fig.1** Since Bornova lay on the trade route between the hinterland and the port, on any day one could have seen a long line of camels stretching along the streets of the village, moving along silently. Bornova was largely affected by the arrival of the international trader families, such as the Whittalls, whose increasing wealth had been gained through commercial activities in the port. The houses in which the Whittall family members used to live (and where their descendants still live today) are located on the main roads of Bornova. As they moved into the village, not only did they expand existing tenements, but they also built new houses, infrastructures, and new urban spaces. These interventions lead to the creation of a "family quarter"<sup>10</sup> as Ray Turrell, a relative of the Whittall family called it in her recollections of her visits to Bornova. Infrastructures, large manor houses, religious spaces, and social spaces were all integral part of their daily activities, and came to define the character of the neighborhood. Wealthy traders and consuls of Izmir preferred to settle in this village to enjoy European luxuries in large houses within splendid gardens, irrigated through canals leading to the Melez river.<sup>11</sup> The villages surrounding Izmir were covered with evergreen vegetation, and often offered picturesque sights.<sup>12</sup> The European trading families including the Whittalls brought along with them to Bornova their culture, beliefs, and everyday life practices. These practices include weekly visits to the Magdalene Church, grand Christmas dinners in the Whittalls' Big House, winter gatherings around the *tandır*<sup>13</sup>. This cosmopolitan society shaped the character and identity of the city's outskirts. Present-day Bornova still bears the trace of these families' socio-spatial practices, as in the Edward Whittall Garden, in the main square, in the Big House, and in the Youth Club.



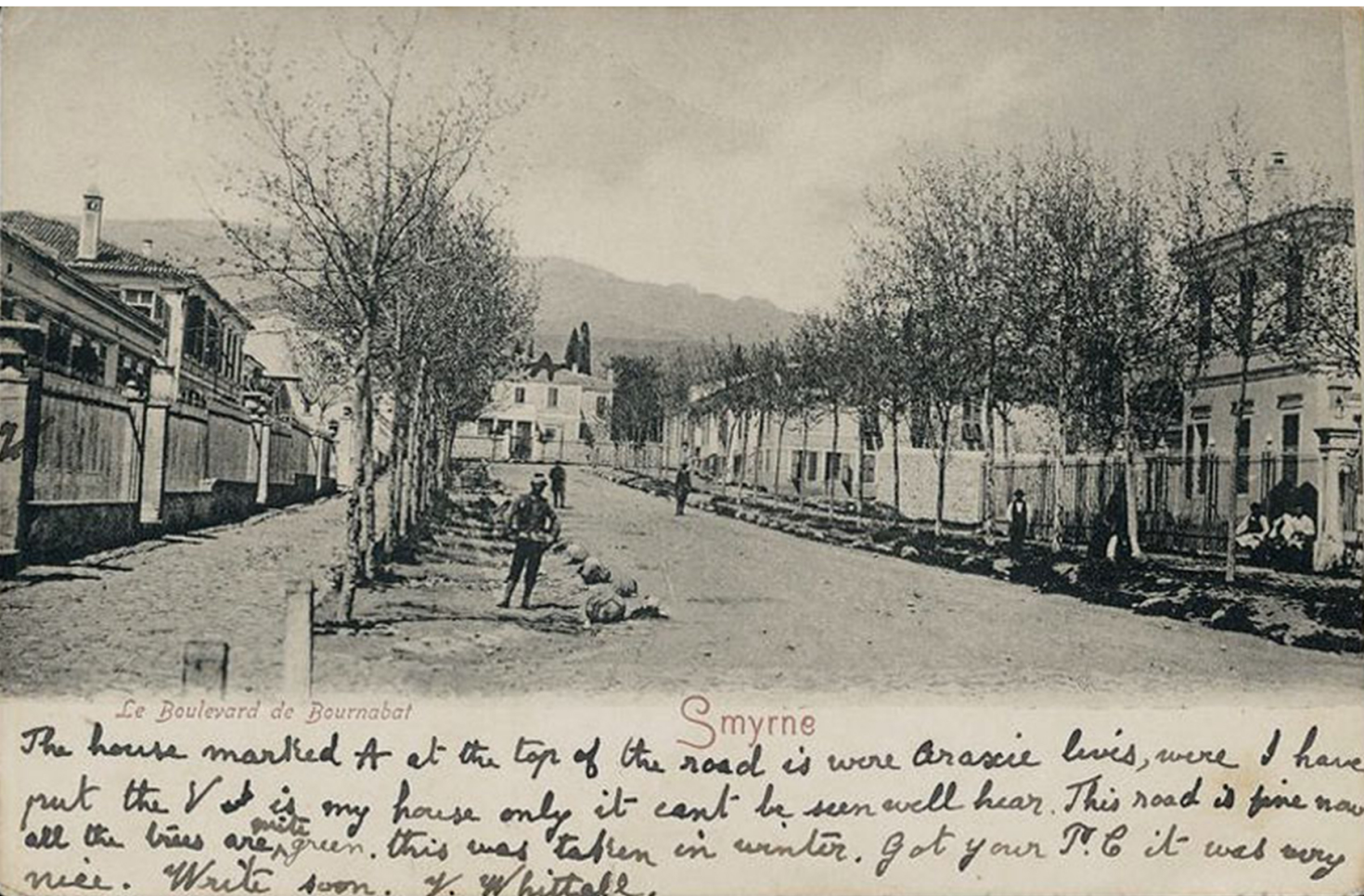
1

## GETTING ACQUAINTED: THE WHITTALL FAMILY AND THEIR VISITORS

The main characters of this narrative are members of the Whittall family<sup>14</sup> of Izmir.<sup>15</sup> Others are mere witnesses to the everyday practices of the family, such as the travelers who visited the trader families' and consuls' houses.<sup>16</sup> The Whittall family showed hospitality to each of their guests upon their arrival in the city.<sup>17</sup> We will now introduce some of these characters in further detail. We will start by the heads of the Whittall family, Charlton and Edward Whittall who will be blended in the fictional character of Mr. Whittall. An important secondary character will be that of Ray Turrell, granddaughter of Edward Whittall. She was a keen observer of the everyday life of her family. Another one will be Gertrude Bell, a regular visitor of the Whittall house in Bornova who has left notes and other traces that vividly describe her everyday life in Izmir.

## CHARLTON WHITTALL

Charlton Whittall was born in Liverpool.<sup>18</sup> He was the first family member to come to Izmir in 1809 as a representative of the trade company Breed & Co. The Whittall family heads have made their fortune through import and export. Soon after his arrival, in 1811, Whittall founded the firm C. Whittall & Co.<sup>19</sup> His brother James Whittall joined him in 1817.<sup>20</sup> He was in charge of transshipment from Izmir to Liverpool of madder roots, valonea, figs, raisins, silk, petroleum, olive oil and of wool.<sup>21</sup> The firm C. Whittall and Co. was also importing goods from Manchester such as manufactured iron.<sup>22</sup> Charlton Whittall adopted the trading principles of the British Levant Company that allowed his firm to prosper in trade for over a century.<sup>23</sup> Living in Izmir, the Whittalls acquired the knowledge and cultural perspectives from both Europe and the Ottoman Empire, a factor that greatly contributed to their commercial success.<sup>24</sup>



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1  
Izmir and Bornova on the Captain Richard Copeland's map, 1834 (courtesy of the British Library)

2  
A postcard shows the road that connects the train station to the Magdalene Church (courtesy of the Levantine Heritage Foundation)

### **EDWARD WHITTALL**

Edward Whittall was the son of James Whittall (1819–1883), who was in turn Charlton's second son.<sup>25</sup> Edward was known to have deep interest in botany.<sup>26</sup> Although he was not a professional, his interest and knowledge in this field had a great impact on the Whittall property in Bornova. At the same time, Edward Whittall contributed to botanic literature through publications like the *Kew Bulletin*.<sup>27</sup> Edward Whittall kept a correspondence with the director of the Kew Garden between 1890-1907.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, he was a consultant of the local governor called *Vali*.<sup>29</sup>

In the following scenes, we have merged the aforementioned characters into one generic representative of the family: Mr. Whittall. This fictional character is used in reference to either Charlton, James, or Edward Whittall. We thus hope to bring to the fore a more general perspective on the Whittall family, on their attitude towards the city and their residential environments, and towards their guests.

### **RAY TURRELL**

Ray Turrell (1911–2000) was born in Bornova as the great-granddaughter of Charlton Whittall,<sup>30</sup> and grand-daughter of Edward Whittall.<sup>31</sup> She was a keen observer of her relatives' life and of their practices in Bornova. Her brilliant detailed

descriptions, often supported with hand drawings, have been collected in a scrapbook. Turrell's scrapbook<sup>32</sup> contains her reflections on the spaces and on the landscapes of the village, describing her perceptions at particular moments in relation to her emotional condition. She had an extensive understanding of the spatial and cultural aspects of the village life in which her family had been involved. Her observation of spaces and individuals is a first-hand source, an insider's perspective, and provides us with detailed information on the family quarter in the early twentieth century. The scrapbook shows on the one hand how physical spaces had created a framework for their residents, and on the other hand how the daily needs of the residents' life caused the emergence of new spaces. In some of the following scenes, Ray appears as a child, for it's her childhood experience that has been recorded in the scrapbook – one of the key sources of our narrative reconstruction.

### **GERTRUDE BELL (1868–1926)**

Gertrude Bell is known as the "Desert Queen". She was an archaeologist, policy maker and traveler. She played a key role in the foundation of modern Iraq. Bell resided at Whittall's house during her stays in Izmir in 1902, 1907 and 1914. She described Whittall's "Big house"<sup>33</sup> and its surroundings in her diary and letters to her stepmother in March 1902. She also took note

of the everyday life of the Whittall family as Ray Turrell did, however from a different perspective, for she was not a family member but an outsider.

## THE TRAVELER

To bring the stories of these characters together, we have created a fictional persona who acts as the narrator of our story. We imagined this fictional character to be an informed traveler, who arrives to Izmir by boat and visits the Whittall family both in their business premises at the waterfront and in downtown Izmir. To help the reader see the city through the eyes of the traveler, we have opted for a first-person narrative in the descriptions that follow.

## FIRST SCENE

### SPACES OF TRADE: WHITTALL WAREHOUSES IN DOWNTOWN IZMIR

It was almost evening when our steamboat arrived at the pier in Izmir. The customs building stood on the left. I took a moment to look at the city. At first glance, the quay's liveliness and variety caught my attention. The quay, called *Birinci Kordon Caddesi* was paved with stone. A horse drawn tram was carrying a group of children. To them, city must have looked like a playground.<sup>34</sup> The shoreline seemed quite long. Many people from different social groups and nations seemed to blend in harmony. The quay, commissioned by the traders of the city, was a central place in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Izmir. Most of the encounters happening in public space were due to commercial needs. I saw, for example, peddlers selling bagels, and porters in traditional clothing, waiting next to the ships until all the goods were loaded. The sunset and sea breeze of Izmir – called *imbat* – seemed to invite the inhabitants to walk along the waterfront. Every evening, the upper class of the city strolled on the quay with their fine clothes reflecting the latest European fashion,<sup>35</sup> while middle-class men fished under the light of gas lanterns. This dynamic landscape was complemented with diverse buildings and functions.<sup>36</sup> There were cinemas, theaters, cafes, hotels, banks, post offices. Some warehouses were located in close proximity to the port.

I landed on the quay to meet the famous Mr. Whittall. There he was in his finest clothes, wearing a hat. We saluted each other. Before going to his house, where he would host me during my stay in Izmir, he proposed to show me his warehouses. He usually worked there until late in the evening.<sup>37</sup> One of the warehouses was located in a strategic point of the city, Konak Square, on the Eastern side of the port, along the route to the historic bazaar called Kemeraltı, which had been completed in 1901.<sup>38</sup> The square was bordered by military barracks to the south, the government's office to the east, and the Whittall warehouse to the north, next to Izmir's mosque. The square opened directly to the waterfront, close to the port where our ship had approached the city. I could see that the location of this building had been chosen with much care, so as to favor the activities of trade.

All of the family's warehouses, where their goods were processed, stored, and traded, were located in prominent locations within the city: they had been built in the nineteenth century, close to the port and to other infrastructures such

as the horse-drawn tram. As Gertrude Bell had noted,<sup>39</sup> the construction of the Whittall Hans next to Turkish warehouses revealed how close a relationship this trading family had with the city's administrators. Warehouses were the main source of wealth for the Whittall Family. Storing goods in safe spaces until they were loaded to ships was fundamental for the oversea trade. Many warehouses, which had been built in the early twentieth century along Hükümet Street, furthered the development of the city southwards. At first, those warehouses belonged mostly to Turkish traders,<sup>40</sup> but three of them were the property of the Whittall family. The Whittalls continued building new warehouses as a result of their increasing success in trade. The typical features of these new Whittall warehouses set them apart from the local warehouse typology which was known as *han*. Traditionally, *han* had also been used for visitors accommodation in Izmir. The traditional *han* typology was based on a rectangular plan, with a large internal courtyard. The Whittalls removed the courtyards from their modern warehouses, in line with the idea that optimization of the space was necessary for an efficient activity.

I had already an idea of these new warehouses. I recalled seeing some images of the buildings standing along a street with tramlines. I saw them in the trade catalogue of a company associated with the Whittall Family.<sup>41</sup> On the façade of the building there was a balcony leaning over the main entrance. This balcony had already caught my attention in the photos with wrought iron. Back then, it had seemed to be in stark contrast to the local wooden constructions. I asked about this warehouse to Mr. Whittall. We did not visit it at the time, but he showed it to me from afar as we arrived at a street intersection on the way to another Whittall *han*, completed in the late nineteenth century, which was located behind the government building.<sup>42</sup>

## SECOND SCENE

### SPACES OF TRANSPORT: APPROACHING TO BORNOVA

The village hardly existed before the family adopted it. After that it became theirs as surely if they had created every inch of ground.<sup>43</sup>

Ray Turrell, 1987

After visiting the warehouses, Mr. Whittall and I began to walk towards the Basmane Train Station. During our walk, he explained to me how his family used to commute between their work and home. They used to take a boat from the pier in front of Konak Square and sail to Bornova Pier, which was two miles away. Then they had to ride on donkeys for the rest of the road. In the early days, donkeys were the primary means of transportation over land<sup>44</sup>. In more recent times, the trains swiftly made this kind of transportation obsolete.<sup>45</sup>

Mr. Whittall continued to illustrate the developments of sea and land transportation. The first ferry connection between the English Pier<sup>46</sup> downtown and the Bornova Pier had been established in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> The English pier became distant from the water for the sea was filled with land over time. The connection over land between Bornova, where the trader families like the Whittalls lived, and the city of Izmir, where they worked, had been developed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup>



century. Mr. Whittall told me that a merchant of French origins, Mr. Charnaud, granted the rights for building and controlling a new road. Izmir's first toll collect road was initiated in 1860.<sup>48</sup> In 1861 it was completed and covered with asphalt.<sup>49</sup> After the emergence of the new factories in Darağcı and Halkapınar, this road, called Mersinli, became a prominent land route for the everyday commute of traders.

Mr. Whittall and I arrived to the train station. The station was the starting point of the Kasaba-Izmir Railway, and, as Mr. Whittall told me, his family had played a big role in its realization. Mr. James Whittall (1819–1883) had been the first to stress the urgency of railway construction for the development of oversea trade to the traveler Nassau William Senior during his visit to Bornova in November 1854.<sup>50</sup> Almost a decade later, in 1864, the construction of the Basmane Kasaba broke ground, and was completed in just two years, in 1866.<sup>51</sup> The railway stretched all the way to Uşak, a city located in the hinterland, to collect handmade carpets and raw. Mr. Whittall bought two tickets, eight *lira* each: they were thick and grey-colored.<sup>52</sup> A control officer made a hole on each ticket as we got on the train.<sup>53</sup> We passed through Hilal, Mersinli, and we eventually approached Bornova.

The Bornova station had been built especially for the trader families living in the village. This rectangular, one-storied building, covered with a gable roof, marked the entrance to the family quarter. Along the longitudinal façade of the station there was a porch. A single pitched roof, carried by twelve wooden pillars on the front, and by two pillars next to the walls of the building, protected the passengers from the rain and the sun. The roof was not steep, which seemed very appropriate to the local climate. The train conductor blew his whistle.<sup>54</sup> We arrived in Bornova.

We began to walk towards the house. Mr. Whittall told me that his family had commissioned the road that led from the station to the Magdalene Church, cutting through the neighborhood,<sup>55</sup> in 1867. Mr. Whittall continued to talk about the latest infrastructural developments of the village. The Glasgow based firm "Laidloux and Sons" set up the Izmir Gas Company which first provided electricity to Izmir on June 25, 1864. Gaslight was introduced to Bornova twenty years later, in 1884.<sup>56</sup> Another infrastructural service to the neighbourhood had been promoted by the Whittall Family: the water system, supplied by an elevated reservoir on top of the hill of Bornova. This system was fed by rainfall and mountain streams. Clean water for drinking was drawn from the wells that stood in the gardens of every house.<sup>57</sup>

### THIRD SCENE

#### SPACES OF DOMESTIC LIFE: THE HOUSE AND GARDEN OF EDWARD WHITTALL

Within the walls, it is still possible to imagine their family garden parties and lavish marriage celebrations. The grounds carry the echo of their voices in Turkish, French, English, Greek, Italian and Dutch; the language does not matter. Their tones are ringing with good cheer, with happiness and laughter. Remember the poets, Pierre Loti, Lamartine and Lord Byron who have walked the same

paths of this historic garden. Hear the chatter of the guests of Prince George and the Duke of Edinburgh as they banqueted beneath the same trees and the click of their heels as they danced beside the lily ponds one September evening. And bow your head for a moment to remember with respect that half a century later Atatürk walked on the terrace before he rallied his troops to retake Izmir.<sup>58</sup>

Brian Giraud, November 2018

I was told that Edward Whittall's garden was an extraordinary example of the hidden treasures of the domestic gardens in Bornova. I did not see any of them as we were walking along the streets, for they were surrounded by high walls on every side. Most of the entrances to the houses from the garden gates were paved with a mosaic of black and white pebbles. After walking through the main gate, I was greeted by young green bushes, but I could not yet see the house or any of its inhabitants. A few steps later, I could get a glimpse of Whittall house on the right-hand side: a two-story, old house with a rectangular outline, looking like it had been built well before the eighteenth century, with two more recent symmetrical wings on its right and on its left, and two verandas on the front and on the back of the house.<sup>59</sup> There was a beautiful little girl standing in one of the verandas. She was looking very fancy in her red and white striped dress.<sup>60</sup> She was looking at us with welcoming, yet curious eyes. Mr. Whittall told me to wait in the veranda. He went to shut down the irrigation system of the garden. After just a few moments, I began to chat with the little girl. Her name was Ray. She was related to Mr. Whittall. I told her about my day first, then she began to talk about hers.

The veranda was connected to the living room, also known as the drawing room, and to the dining room. Victorian watercolors and portraits of family ancestors decorated the walls of this space.<sup>61</sup> Ray showed me a table with coffee glasses. Obviously, there had been guests before me. "My grandmother", she said, "sat here in the afternoon with her visitors. They were arranged in a circle of chairs around her."<sup>62</sup> In the evening, Ray preferred to stay with her grandparents. I joined rest of the Whittall household who gathered around the *tandır*.<sup>63</sup>

In the morning, at first light, Mr. Whittall and I visited the botanic garden. It was full of specimens collected over several centuries. As Mr. Whittall explained to me, its first owner had been a French botanist who had planted a four-acre plot.<sup>64</sup> After its landownership had passed to Edward Whittall,<sup>65</sup> the species in the garden had been greatly enriched with trees imported from India, the Far East and South America.<sup>66</sup> It was a terraced garden, spanning over several levels.<sup>67</sup> On the lower terrace along with numerous plants I saw a cottage for the gardener and a barn. A paved path allowed us to walk through the garden. There also stood a well, which worked as the main water source for the family.<sup>68</sup> The local irrigation system fed by the lake was used for watering the plants.<sup>69</sup> The garden-keeper was responsible for controlling and distributing the water evenly to the houses. Homeowners used their wells to cooling food. For example, it was not uncommon to see watermelons left hanging down the well shafts so that they could be chilled in a very short time.

The garden was a well-hidden and private space; however, it

was also a social place for occasional and yearly gatherings. Mr. Whittall told me that on August 15 of every year, the citizens of Bornova held fancy balls and fairs that lasted for two weeks. In these fairs, lace works and scarves, handmade by local young girls were being sold.<sup>70</sup> These handmade works were also used for decorating the environment. In their own gardens, the Whittalls and other families prepared long stands and buffets.<sup>71</sup> In the houses, some of the biggest rooms were turned into large ball rooms by removing every piece of furniture. Violins were played until late night. Young girls and boys used to dance together.<sup>72</sup> I wished I had been there in August! Alas, next time.

#### **FOURTH SCENE**

##### **SPACES OF DOMESTIC LIFE: THE BIG HOUSE**

After the visit to the garden, I joined the Whittall Family to church. Ray wore a red velvet dress and a red velvet bonnet. Going to church was an important part of their social life.<sup>73</sup> Ray showed me the way that led there, the rest of the household followed us. She chose to take me to church through the garden. We could have also walked along the main boulevard, but the path that cut through the Whittall property was her favorite. We followed her lead.

Before arriving at church, we strode by another grandiose house. This was the oldest Whittall residence, known as the Big House in Bornova. The Big House was purchased by the Whittalls in 1820. Their regular guest Gertrude Bell had resided in this property during her multiple stays in Izmir. It had hosted many other important guests as well, such as King Otho of Greece in 1833, the Ottoman Sultan in 1863 and Prince Andrew of Greece in 1921. I didn't visit the house, but I had the privilege to learn more about it. Ray told me about the Christmas Dinners that used to take place in the grand ball room. Her grandmother hosted large feasts for more than a hundred members the Whittall Clan every year.<sup>74</sup>

The Big House stood next to a garden like other traders' houses. The garden had multiple purposes. Until after the church had been completed, religious rituals used to take place in the Whittalls' garden.<sup>75</sup> The garden was a place for picnics, but it was also a playground for children. The artificial *belvedere*, for instance, was a perfect climbing spot. Ray told me that she had played many times in the Edward Whittall Garden with the other children of the family. One some occasions, she explained, they had been allowed in the Big House garden, too. Here, they had played hop-scotch.<sup>76</sup>

#### **SPACES OF SOCIAL LIFE**

##### **FIFTH SCENE**

##### **SPACES OF SOCIAL LIFE: BORNOVA SQUARE AND MAGDALENE CHURCH**

We arrived at the true social core of the family quarter. The Church of Saint Mary Magdalene was where the weekly ceremonies as well as the wedding ceremonies took place.<sup>77</sup> The families used to gather on the steps of the church and on the churchyard. Not only Ray, but everyone wore their best clothes for this important weekly gathering. The church had been built in Neoclassical style. Ornamented columns on the façade contributed to the monumentality of the building, window pediments complemented the Neoclassical look. The

gable roof with Marseille roof tiles covered the rectangular building. On the inside, an ornamented barrel vault gave a classical image to the church aisle. The ceremony began with a bell clang.

After the ceremony, Mr. Whittall offered to walk with me on the main boulevard, back towards Edward Whittall House. Along the way, he showed me some houses that belonged to other families associated to the Whittalls: Richard Whittall's house beside the Church, La Fontaine's house on the right, and Sir Edwards' house: these buildings seemed to define the entire boulevard. Soon, we arrived at Bornova Square. The entrances to the Big House, to Mrs. Hortense Wood's house, to Mr. Ernst's House and to the English Club were all around the square, at the junction of several streets. Each house had a characteristic front gate. The square was lighted with a lamp-post.<sup>78</sup> Mr. Whittall told me that the square was a very important space for commerce: it had a sort of magnetic power, bringing people together to discuss their business.<sup>79</sup> Through the grand entrance gates the families also shared their free time and leisurely activities. The loggias, the stone benches in front of the houses, lined the square, providing a smooth transition from the private domestic sphere to the public space. In the summer afternoons and in warm winters, the households sat on those benches. The square was a true center of social life in Bornova.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

In our article, we limited our inquiry to the everyday activities of the elite trading dynasties of Izmir to illustrate the cosmopolitan character of the city. Commercial relations amongst selected trader family members, of local and European descent, defined a unique kind of socio-spatial practices. We have shown how the presence of trader families had gradually influenced the development of the city through spaces of productive life such as warehouses on the waterfront, through domestic spaces and gardens, and through spaces of residential and social life in the outskirts of the city.

We have composed a fictional narrative out of a large number of historical sources, from different authors. Through a series of scenes, we have described the life of the port city at the peak of its cosmopolitan trading decades. To reconstruct these scenes, we used a narrative approach which has allowed us to bring diverse materials together to investigate the physical traces of the socio-spatial interaction of the trader families in Izmir. We have thus tried to bring forth the social dimension of the transformations of the port city. In particular, we have shown how the socio-spatial practices of the Whittall family ensured the continuity and cohesion of their domestic and business relations and how these have simultaneously influenced the development of urban spaces and buildings. In doing so, we have also proved how the impact of oversea trade was not limited to the waterfront of Izmir, but stretched way into the hinterland where it radically changed settlements such as the village of Bornova.

Our sequence of scenes started from the waterfront and brought the reader to the outskirts of the city, while at the same time illustrating the everyday life of the traders, commuting between the waterfront and the village, from business life to

domestic life. The stories of Izmir have shown how the public and private spheres of the trader families blended into the family neighborhoods. Gardens and houses were often meant as collective spaces for a larger social circle, extending beyond the family boundaries. They accommodated multiple functions, they were staged the annual gatherings for the inhabitants of the family neighborhood (e.g. balls, large family dinners) intended to consolidate those social relations that were so essential for a successful commercial activity. The gardens, the Big House and the Edward Whittall House in particular have also acted as exclusive social spaces for diplomatic gatherings strengthening the social and economic role of the Whittall family.

Architectural elements like the loggias or the grand entrance gates and urban elements such as the squares were part of a seamless whole, and contributed to the transformation and redefinition of public space in Izmir. Different sources (i.e. paintings, diaries, letters, scrapbook, travelogues) and viewpoints (i.e. outsiders like Gertrude Bell and insiders like Ray Turrell) were essential for us to construct an accurate narrative. Cross-checking between personal notes and publicly available sources allowed us to establish the validity of each narration. By re-telling the stories of this port city, we hoped to raise awareness on the social forces that constantly shape the built environment. As it was true in the past, also the spaces of contemporary Izmir are the product of the socio-spatial practices of different groups.

The social perspective adopted in our narrative approach might be particularly important to gain some insight on the present-day inhabitants of the city and on the local actors involved in decision-making. Moreover, the spaces of the nineteenth century city are coextensive with contemporary uses. These stories are an integral part of the cultural heritage of the port city of Izmir. In conclusion, we wish to offer two suggestions to the Permanent Delegation of Turkey and Turkish National Commission for UNESCO: first to revise the definition of the boundaries of the port city; second to take into further consideration the sixth selection criterion for the UNESCO World Heritage List: "to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance."<sup>80</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ray Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922* (London: Richard Bell, 1987), 3.

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO stands for: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

<sup>3</sup> "The Historical Port City of İzmir is surrounded by Karataş and Göztepe to the west, Alsancak to the east, Tepecik to the south and the Gulf of İzmir to the north, and encompasses the Kemeraltı, Basmane and Kadifekale regions." From the submission titled "The Historical Port City of İzmir", reference number 6471, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6471/> (Last accessed on June 16, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 115.

<sup>5</sup> More about the importance of the intertwined families including the Whittalls both in international trade and spatial construction in Izmir, please see the article: Fatma Tanış and Carola Hein, "Space, Representation and Practice in the Formation of Izmir During the Long Nineteenth Century," in *Migrants and the Making of the Urban-Maritime World: Agency and Mobility in Port Cities, C. 1570-1940*, ed. Christina Reimann and Martin Öhman (New York: Routledge, 2020), 44-61.

<sup>6</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 27.

<sup>7</sup> Octavius Whittall, "A Week among Brigands," *Murray's Magazine: A Home and Colonial Periodical for the General reader* 2, no. 12 (1887): 769; Eustace Clare Grenville Murray,

"Turkey", *Being-Sketches from Life in 1854* (New York: G. Routledge, 1877); Edmund H. Giraud, *Family Records - A Record of the Origin and History of the Giraud and Whittall Families of Turkey* (London: Adams Bros. and Shardlow, 1934); Charles Greenstreet Addison, *Damascus and Palmyra: A Journey to the East*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: E.L. Carey & A. Hart, 1838).

<sup>8</sup> Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Public Space and Urban Citizens: Ottoman Izmir in the Remaking, 1840-1890* (Berkeley: University of California, 2001), 7.

<sup>9</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 147.

<sup>10</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 151.

<sup>11</sup> Addison, *Damascus and Palmyra*, 205.

<sup>12</sup> George Thomas Keppel, *Narrative of a Journey across the Balcan, by the Two Passes of Selimno and Pravadi, Also of a Visit to Azani, and Other Newly Discovered Ruins in Asia Minor: In the Years 1829-30*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831).

<sup>13</sup> The *tandır* was a local heating system: burning coals under a table covered with a sheet.

<sup>14</sup> Gertrude Bell wrote about the Whittall family in a letter dated March 10, 1902: "There is an enormous colony of them." Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell to her stepmother, Dame Florence Bell," letter, March 10, 1902, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1293](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1293). (Last accessed on May 29, 2020).

<sup>15</sup> Gertrude Bell wrote about the Whittall family in a letter dated April 4, 1907: "They have the bulk of the English trade in their hands, branch offices all down the southern coast, mines and shooting boxes and properties scattered up and down the SW corner of Asia Minor and yachts on the seas." Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell to her stepmother, Dame Florence Bell," Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1294](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1294). (Last accessed on May 29, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Francis Vyvyan Jago Arundell, *Discoveries in Asia Minor: Including a Description of the Ruins of Several Ancient Cities, and Especially Antioch of Pisidia*, vol. 2 (London: Richard Bentley, 1834), 417-8; George Christian Roeding, *The Smyrna Fig at Home and Abroad: A Treatise on Practical Smyrna Fig Culture, Together with an Account of the Introduction of the Wild or Capri Fig, and the Establishment of the Fig Wasp (Blasiophaga Grossorum) in America* (Fresno, California: published by the author for general circulation, 1903), 16.

<sup>17</sup> Gertrude Bell, "Diaries," April 1907. Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1294](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1294). (Last accessed on May 29, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 8.

<sup>19</sup> C. Whittall and Company, *Trading in the Levant: centenary of C. Whittall & Co., Smyrna 1811-1911* (Manchester: C. Whittall and Company, 1912).

<sup>20</sup> Alison and Martyn Rix, "Edward Whittall (1851-1917) and his Contribution to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew," *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* 28, no. 3 (2011), 214.

<sup>21</sup> Hugh Whittall, *The Whittalls of Turkey 1809-1973* (Moda: Hugh Whittall, 1973), 15.

<sup>22</sup> Whittall, *The Whittalls of Turkey 1809-1973*, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 183.

<sup>24</sup> Fatma Tanış and Carola Hein, "Space, Representation and Practice in the Formation of Izmir during the long nineteenth century," in *Migrants and the Making of the Urban-Maritime World*, edited by Martin Öhman, and Christina Reimann (London-New York: Routledge, 2020), 44-61.

<sup>25</sup> C.F. Derrick, "Edward Whittall," *Bulletin of the Alpine Garden Society* 433 (1975): 240-246.

<sup>26</sup> Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell to her stepmother, Dame Florence Bell," letter, March 11, 1902, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1294](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1294). (Last accessed on May 29, 2020).

<sup>27</sup> *Kew Bulletin*, Vol. 1893, No. 79, (1893): 147.

<sup>28</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 43.

<sup>29</sup> Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell's letter to her stepmother Dame Florence Bell," letter, March 11, 1902, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1294](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1294). (Last accessed on February 13, 2020). In 1907 she added: "The clan plays a considerable role in AM (*AM in notes of Bell must be referring to Asia Minor*). Edward W. was the most intimate friend of the last Vali, Kamil Pasha. I believe he consulted him in everything." Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell's letter to her stepmother Dame Florence Bell," letter, April 4, 1907, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1572](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1572). (Last accessed on June 1, 2020).

<sup>30</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 183.

<sup>31</sup> Susan O'Carroll, "Turrell Family of Smyrna," <http://www.levantineheritage.com/turrell-family-su-ocarroll.html>. (Last accessed on January 8, 2019).

<sup>32</sup> The scrapbook, meant for private use, became publicly available with limited prints when Ray Turrell's son Richard Bell published it in London in 1987.

<sup>33</sup> Gertrude Bell, "A Collection of Gertrude's Diary Entries," diary, 1902, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/diary\\_details.php?diary\\_id=120](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/diary_details.php?diary_id=120). (Last accessed on June 16, 2020).

<sup>34</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 59.

<sup>35</sup> Roeding, *The Smyrna Fig at Home and Abroad*, 13.

<sup>36</sup> The Elhambra, the Sporting Club and the Hotel Kramer were along the quay. Bülent Şenocak, "Levant'in Yıldızı İzmir," *Levantenler, Rumlar, Ermeniler ve Yahudiler, Şenocak*

- <sup>37</sup> Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell's letter to her stepmother Dame Florence Bell," letter, March 18, 1902, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/diary\\_details.php?diary\\_id=120](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/diary_details.php?diary_id=120). (Last accessed on May 30, 2020).
- <sup>38</sup> Charles E. Goad, Plan d'assurance de Smyrne (Smyrna), Turquie: plan, index. Scale: 300 ft 1 inch. Harvard Map Collection, Harvard University, <https://id.lib.harvard.edu/curiosity/scanned-maps/44-990093754910203941>. (Last accessed on June 16, 2020). Planchet 7, island 129.
- <sup>39</sup> Gertrude Bell, "Gertrude Bell's letter to her stepmother Dame Florence Bell," letter, March 11, 1902, Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle: University Library, Newcastle University, [http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter\\_details.php?letter\\_id=1294](http://gertrudebell.ncl.ac.uk/letter_details.php?letter_id=1294). (Last accessed on May 29, 2020).
- <sup>40</sup> Çınar Atay, *Kapanan Kapılar: İzmir Hanları* (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2003), 233.
- <sup>41</sup> The catalogue and the building on the street can be seen at: <http://www.levantineheritage.com/giraud.htm#0>. The building is registered on the Goad map as the Whittall Han. The company belonged to the Girauds, who close to the Whittall family.
- <sup>42</sup> Roeding, *The Smyrna Fig at Home and Abroad*, 35.
- <sup>43</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 2.
- <sup>44</sup> "[...] In the evening we took a boat and sailed to the low spit of land about two miles below the town, where we found donkeys ready bridled and saddled, and mounting them we proceeded along a pleasant lane bordered with hedges and trees, through corn-fields, rich vineyards, and groves of olives, to the village of Bournabat [...]." Charles Addison wrote this on July 5, 1835. Addison, *Damascus and Palmyra*, Vol.1, 186.
- <sup>45</sup> A glimpse of what a visitor could have seen in the late nineteenth century can be grasped by watching Jean Baptiste Camille Corot's oil painting (1873). The painting depicts the arrival of the boat and the donkey for further connections. Jean Baptiste Camille Corot, *Smyrna Bournabat*, 1873. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean-BaptisteCamilleCorot\\_1873\\_SmyrneBournabat.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean-BaptisteCamilleCorot_1873_SmyrneBournabat.jpg). (Last accessed on June 16, 2020).
- <sup>46</sup> The name often appears on the maps as *Quai Anglais* or *İngiliz İskelesi*.
- <sup>47</sup> Rauf Beyru, 19. *Yüzyılda İzmir Kenti* (İstanbul: Literatür, 2011), 264.
- <sup>48</sup> Hasan Mert, *Geçmişten Günümüze Sosyal, Ekonomik ve Kültürel Yönleriyle Bornova* (İzmir: Bornova Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2008), 39.
- <sup>49</sup> Mert, *Geçmişten Günümüze Sosyal*, 39.
- <sup>50</sup> Nassau William Senior, *A Journal Kept in Turkey and Greece in the Autumn of 1857 and the Beginning of 1858* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1859), 206-7.
- <sup>51</sup> Beyru, 19, 265; Nurddoğan Taçalan, *Ege'de Kurtuluş Savaşı Başlıklar*, vol. 4 (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1970), 86.
- <sup>52</sup> Socrates Prokopiou, *Sergiani in Old Smyrna*, 2nd edition (Athens, 1949). Translated and published in: Hasan Arıcan, *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler Ve Anılar* (İzmir: Tepekule Kitaplığı Yayınları, 2003), 22.
- <sup>53</sup> Arıcan, *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler ve Anılar*, 22.
- <sup>54</sup> Arıcan, *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler ve Anılar*, 22.
- <sup>55</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 147.
- <sup>56</sup> Sadık Kurt, "İzmir'de Kamu Hizmeti Gören Kuruluşlar 1850-1950" (PhD diss., Dokuz Eylül University, 1996), in Hasan Arıcan, *Bornova Tarihinden Yapraklar* (İzmir: Tepekule Kitaplığı Yayınları, 2009), 105.
- <sup>57</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 149.
- <sup>58</sup> Brian Giraud, "History & Information", <http://www.edwardwhittallgarden.com/about.aspx>. (Last accessed January 24, 2020).
- <sup>59</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 146.
- <sup>60</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 36.
- <sup>61</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 51.
- <sup>62</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 34.
- <sup>63</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 162.
- <sup>64</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 146.
- <sup>65</sup> Until 1867, foreigners were not able to buy any land in the Ottoman Empire, the landownership had to be claimed by Ottoman citizens, or by foreigners registered as Ottoman subjects. İnci Kuyulu, "Bornova Levanten Köşklere Mimari Açından Bir Bakış," in *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler ve Anılar*, (İzmir: Tepekule Yayınları Kitaplığı, 2003), 35-47.
- <sup>66</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 147.
- <sup>67</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 32.
- <sup>68</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 149.
- <sup>69</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 98.
- <sup>70</sup> Arıcan, *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler ve Anılar*, 26.
- <sup>71</sup> Prokopiou, *Sergiani in Old Smyrna*, translated and published in Arıcan, *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler ve Anılar*, 27.
- <sup>72</sup> Arıcan, *Bornova Köşklere Gezinler ve Anılar*, 27.
- <sup>73</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 4.
- <sup>74</sup> Turrell, *Scrap-Book 1809-1922*, 16.
- <sup>75</sup> Addison, *Damascus and Palmyra*, 186.

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# Racconti di Izmir: Uno studio narrativo sull'influenza delle famiglie di commercianti sullo sviluppo territoriale della città portuale

Fatma Tanış  
Klaske Havik

## PAROLE CHIAVE

metodo narrativo; architettura delle città costiere; trans-culturale

## ABSTRACT

Questo contributo tratta dell'uso di un metodo narrativo per l'indagine del patrimonio culturale. Le storie narrate contengono un grande potenziale per rivelare le tracce fisiche delle pratiche socio-spaziali. In questo studio, indaghiamo il ruolo delle pratiche interculturali nelle città portuali per offrire una migliore comprensione dell'influenza delle attività commerciali e sociali di un porto sulla costruzione culturale delle città. Ci siamo concentrati sulla città portuale di Izmir nel Mediterraneo orientale e abbiamo studiato le storie e le tracce della famiglia Whittall, impegnata nel commercio internazionale. Mettendo in relazione il materiale di archivio, visivo e narrativo, con gli spazi urbani e domestici della vita quotidiana di questa famiglia di mercanti, abbiamo costruito una narrazione immaginaria che restituisce l'impatto di uno specifico gruppo sociale sullo sviluppo urbano della città, nei suoi waterfront e nella sua periferia. Spesso non si comprende la reale estensione geografica delle attività legate ad un porto, né sulle mappe governative, né nelle ricerche esistenti sulle città portuali, che spesso si limitano ad analizzare le sole aree dei waterfront. Lo studio tenta quindi di comprendere le tracce del porto, oltre il porto stesso. Il metodo narrativo ci ha permesso di porre in evidenza gli elementi tangibili e intangibili del patrimonio culturale di Izmir. In questo modo, abbiamo dato alcune indicazioni per la sua conservazione e valorizzazione. A livello metodologico, traducendo materiale storico d'archivio in una narrazione immaginaria combinata, abbiamo fornito una nuova prospettiva sul metodo narrativo che include diverse informazioni spaziali, dalla scala urbana a quella domestica.

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