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CULTURAL IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY TURKISH ARCHITECTURE CASE STUDY IN KONYA

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Abstract

Today in many countries, new solutions and trends in architecture field to express cultural identity against the pressure of internationalism appear in different qualitative values. In the example of Turkey, even today, if the problem of the identity affirmation in architecture continues, in fact, the historical origin of this problem coincides with the last period of the Ottoman Empire and early Republican period. Since the 20s to today, we can see the efforts to reflect national and modern identity in architectural designs, especially in public buildings.. In this study, firstly, the relationship between architecture and identity will be examined. Then after, buildings reflecting identity trends designed by famous architects such as Sedat Hakkı Eldem and Turgut Cansever from different periods in Turkey will be presented. The current architectural achievements in the generality of our country will be reviewed

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by a critical perspective. The city of Konya will be chosen for the special study areas. These buildings are banks, administrative and culture buildings. Trend analysis of identities in the current architectural achievements will be realized taking into account the following criteria: the metaphor, interpretation - synthesis and direct imitation. The architectural elements belonging to the Seljuk Empire that Konya was the capital between 11 th and 13 th century, will be frequently present in the selected samples. In conclusion, the defended ideas will be the following: New products of art and architecture should always be designed with an original and innovative approach. The use of direct imitation in new architectural achievements to establishing a link with the past does not always positive effect on architectural quality. The historic architectural elements used in order to create an identity in modern architecture should be interpreted with caution.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, the world has witnessed a series of accelerating changes on technological, scientific, economic, cultural and social areas. By the effects of those changes, new modes of living and new patterns of settlements have been developed and as a result housing forms have changed accordingly. Thus, urban spaces were pushed to be in a dynamic process to adapt those changes. Besides its immutable place in forming urban spaces and societies, home, as being the center of the world, has always been on the agenda with its importance in people's lives. Thus, besides only being physical shelters, housing environments have variety of meanings attributed to them in addition to their power of giving shape to social interactions. Therefore, the analyses of residential areas seem to be critical for the evaluation of social and cultural composition of cities for humanity. Gated communities have emerged as new forms of residential settlements due to these changing urban dynamics.

Gated communities are defined as "residential areas with restricted access such that normally public spaces have been privatized" (Blakely and Snyder, 1997). These types of settlements are the reflections of a border between public and private and they require private planning, and a micro-local government. Gooblar (2002) explains the notion of gated communities similar to Blakely and Snyder (1997) and suggests that they are the developments, which focus on residential environments where there is restricted access and the public spaces are privatized. A number of factors have contributed to the widespread proliferation of these communities around the world. Among the most prominent factors include the need for privacy, exclusivity, conveniency, and a growing desire on the part of residents to be segregated from other sectors of society

(Dillon, 1994; Low, 2001; Marcuse, 1997; Wilson-Doenges, 2000; Roitman, 2003). The most common worldwide explanation, however, for the growth of these enclaves is the increasing fear of urban crime and violence (Atkinson and Flint, 2004; Landman, 2000; Landman and Schonteich, 2002). In the past two decades they become popular and widespread residential forms in almost all metropolises around the world and there has been a remarkable growth in this number. However, gated communities differ from country to country, from city to city, and from development to development, and the reasons for their appearance are nearly the same. The types of gated communities differ from each other according to the issues and degrees of amenities, exclusivity and security. Blakely and Synder (1997a; 1997b) classify gated communities in three basic categories that are based on the primary motivation of their residents. In this typology, there are 3 main categories, viz. lifestyle communities, prestige communities and security zone communities. For example, lifestyle communities are very much developed in South California, US, by retaired communities (Blakely and Synder, 1997b). South Africa has lots of examples of security zone communities because of high rate of crime in the country (Landman, 2000). Gated communities in Turkey are examples of prestige communities because of their target user profile that is high- income group (Arradamento, 2003). Prestige gated communities are conceptualized, represented, and envisioned as affluent fortressed islands of prestige (Blakely and Synder, 1999). Prestige communities are not only housing settlement places for people to live. They also involve sports facilities, shopping areas, swimming pools, parks, gardens, playgrounds for children, restaurants and similar areas which meet the daily needs of the residents. Thus, they make “public” needs “private” for residents; they are located disjointedly in the city center or on the city peripheries; they are separated from the city and other city residents by their security barriers (walls, doors, cameras, security staff etc.) and they are in general places where people in the same income group live (Yıldız, 2011). Those residential areas have impacts on the surroundings they are located. These impacts can be figured out as restricting access, causing some social inequalities, discrimination and segregation. Gated communities are frequently criticized and treated as an indicator of increasing levels of social division (Calderia, 1996) and by increasing the privatizm they are charged to destroy traditional community ties of neighborliness, community and cohesion.

Because of the above mentioned reasons, the issue of gated communities raises important questions about the future forms of urban development. The purpose of this study is to

examine the emerging process of prestige gated communities in Turkey, and in Konya specifically, and to determine the reasons for the preference for these housing settlements. The Konya Meram Yeniyol Residences, which appeal to high-income groups, were chosen for the stated purposes of the present study. The architectural styles of some buildings recently constructed in Turkey reflect "eclectic" approaches to the creation of cultural identity in the name of historical reminiscence. Although most construction projects are publicly funded, the major decision-making powers are exercised by a small number of executives. Executives of municipalities and major public institutions are especially supportive of the eclectic use of historical architectural elements in contemporary architecture and do not perceive any conflict in such approaches. Such kinds of architectural applications, which are considered nice services offered to public may have been situated in important centers of cities, on valuable lands of transforming area and even in touristic spaces. Artistic and architectural knowledge, cultural, politic opinions and worldviews of decision-making authorities can influence the emergence of such architectural practices. From our perspective, such executives play a leading role in shaping those architectural products by giving messages to inhabitants, such as, "how full of beautiful and rich architectural examples our past was, we need to revive our ancient architecture and we must be proud of these". In a scientific sense, however, the accuracy and ethical dimensions of those messages are disputable. The matter of how the symbolic and meaning dimensions of modern buildings that are considered reminiscent of historical buildings take part in public memory must be excogitated. The boundary between real historicity, originality, synthesis-interpretation and simple replica must be determined appropriately. These kinds of practices and associated historical misrepresentation may pose ethical problems. The influences of those practices, on city memory and the generation of the artistic and architectural culture of society, must be evaluated over the long-term. The study has been tried to take place within that problem area.

The study examines a variety of historical emulations evident in the forms and façade compositions of public buildings recently constructed in Konya city, Turkey. Selected examples were designed in line with the demands of public sector executives within the Konya city administration. The buildings are analyzed based on form and façade arrangements, originality, direct imitation and innovation. Form, façade arrangement and decorative elements, which are effective on the outer perception

of buildings, were researched in detail and attempts were made to identify their similarities and differences.

2. Cultural Identity, Globalization and Architectural Identity

Identity consists of all the factors that influence an individual's unique persona, incorporating human-specific indications, qualification and features. Identity can be defined as non-cliché, rare qualifications (İnceoğlu 2004). People or societies are generally identified according to some of their distinct characteristics that are common to large groups of people, in order to answer the question, "Who are you?". It is possible to classify the identity notion as below (Dönmez 2006):

1- Personal Identity (Who am I?)

2- Psychosocial Identity (Who are we?)

3- National Cultural Identity (in what culture or nation we are included?)

Via identity, a social feature is desired to be emphasized, such as: religious, secular, traditional, scientific, linguistic (lingual), political, national identities etc.

2.1. Culture, Cultural Identity and Globalization

Samuel von Pufendorf, who lived in the 17th century, used the notion of culture in a manner similar to its current significance, stating that culture is a work of all people that are against nature and emerge within an apparent social context. Kant, the famous German philosopher, also identified the culture at the end of the 18th century in a close sense, stating that culture itself comprises the whole of the aims and ideals that people actualize freely owing to self-rational and logical soul. Herder, the German philosopher who is the real originator of the concept of culture developed in age of enlightenment, defined culture as "a lifestyle of a nation, a public or a community" (Özkul 2005).

Culture is the most significant and notable element that identifies a person or people. Cultural identity shows the belonging to cultural values of a person or community. Cultural identity is manifested in the desire to conserve and sustain manners, customs, morality and language. Basic elements that generate cultural identity can be inherited from family and society; New values could be incorporated into cultural identity via new experiences and knowledge via education.

Culture is a concept that is open to interaction and development, and therefore change and transformation is often seen in world history. Such interactions and changes may be regarded positively and, equally, as threatening, as in current perceptions of globalization.

Globalization has provided mutual interaction among different cultures. In order to perceive globalization in a positive way, those interactions should occur in a balanced manner, but presently often occur in a one-way manner, dominated by certain cultural themes. The "cultural codes" and "culture models" of the countries that keep the power of cultural information production especially in publishing have a significant oppressive impact on other countries. Globalization has facilitated a one-way transfer from dominant cultures, leading to monotony in life-sustaining habits, fashion, art and architecture. In such an environment, peoples all over the world have made efforts to embalm their cultural identities in very different fields and exhibit reactive behavior.

2.2. Identity Concept in Architecture

A society can reflect its values to large masses via architecture in an explicit and easy way. Architectural products can transfer an ideology or opinion that is frozen-in-time (Tay, 1995). Architectural products that are considered to have been inherited from the past, and are seen as cultural heritage, portray concrete values reflecting the national and cultural identity of a society. Nowadays, societies want also to boast about being modern and progressive.

Architectural and identity issues must be considered, not only through the values of the past, but also through desired and idealized values. Particularly when discussing the role of architecture in identity in the present, the first two concepts that spring to mind are traditionalism and modernism. It is seen today that people cannot abandon these two concepts in a rooted way; instead, they want to have both of them in their lives in a sort of way. In many cities all over the world, especially in urbanism that reflect a synergy between these two value systems (Photo 1). Architectural products that are inherited from the past and convey historical values are reflections of social identities. Conservation and preservation of these structures come true with a nostalgic emotion and reflexing.

Photo 1: *The Louvre Pyramid in the main courtyard of the Louvre Palace (Paris, 2005)*

The identity of an architectural product may be labeled with the culture of the society that generates it. Architectural act creates a thing that does not exist in the nature. It is an

original cultural product, brought into existence by humans. Historically, architectural products were shaped according to the climatic, topographic and cultural characteristics of a region.

The perception of the world varies between cultures , and therefore introduced original approaches in the interpretation of architectural space. In different regions that share the same climatic characteristics, different architectural products are seen to have been emerged despite the climatic similarity. Architectural identity comprises place and linkage in a natural way. This approach is the most naive and the most original approach to composing architectural identity and is very valuable.

2.3. Searches for Cultural Identity in the Modern Period

Prior to the modern period, the physical conditions (climate, local materials) of an area and cultural features would determine the identity of an architectural product. These two elements have been superseded in the modern period. Particularly during early periods of modernism, architectural identity began to create behaviors such as progressivism, innovative opinions, and the rejection of elements originating from the past. Along with the view that functionality and expedient design would be an ethical approach, notably classic architectural approaches that are seen on the façades of prestigious buildings, were considered non-essential and their use was even regarded as a crime (Vanlı 2007).

Leading modern architects created their theories and practices according to new living conditions (Aksu 2007). Modern architecture developed in rationalist, functionalist and purist ways in the first quarter of the 20th century and became a self-isolating situation. Subsequently, architecture around the world has developed according to modernist paradigms to the present day. The effect of this homogeneity has increased as a result of globalization. Modernism was sometimes accepted as a proud symbol of development, and sometimes an enemy threatening differences and cultural accumulations.

In the early stage of modernism, practices reflecting local features were not supported at all. Local examples incorporating local culture and climate were seen in the work of Finnish architect Alvar Aalto and Mexican Luis Barragán. On the other hand, the Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy, Iraqi Rifat Chadirji and Sedad Hakki Eldem from Turkey supported the role of local physical and cultural values in architecture.

Views and architectural practices supporting the use of features conveying the climatic and cultural identity of an area have emerged since the 1970s (Özkan 1992). Those ideas, in a

general sense, can be expressed as "Regionalism". Regionalism in architecture criticizes the modern architecture movement in terms of internationalism and content. Regionalism is based on developing design strategies that depend on the region, and incorporate several different approaches (Özkan 1992):

-Vernacularism: conservative vernacularism and new vernacularism (neo-vernacularism)

-Modern Regionalism: concrete regionalism and abstract regionalism

Defenders of vernacularism criticized the modern architectural movement for ignoring local data. Conservative vernacularism has respect for existing traditional architecture and supports its necessity for sustainability. It considered construction techniques and utilization of materials in new architectural practices, of which the best example is the work of Hassan Fathy. Neo-vernacularism, however, takes as reference and source the traditional architecture. It tries to direct modern practices by interpreting the past. The most extensive area of application was found in tourism and cultural architecture

It is possible to classifying modern regionalism as either concrete or abstract regionalism (Özkan 1992); concrete regionalism is also referred to as post-modernism. Post-modern architecture borrows direct adaptations from architecture of the past to achieve an identity for current architectural practices.

Abstract regionalism, on the other hand, aims to ascertain historical architectural elements by making interpretations. Instead of simply imitating a window, a roof or an ornament detail applied in the past without any endeavor, regionalism found it acceptable to evaluate these architectural elements by adding new interpretations in architectural practices. This is not a simplistic approach, and required familiarity with architectural elements inherited from the past, researching their historical depths and developing new opinions and interpretations. Abstract regionalist architecture may be seen as a suitable means of ensuring continuity.

3. Searches for creation of Modern and Local Identities in the Historical Process of Architecture in Turkey

In Turkey's social structure, there have been unstable periods, hesitations or notable disagreements about the adoption and sustentation of modern-universal and local-cultural values. Appropriation of modernism, conservation and sustenance of national-religious values involves inherent dilemmas and conflicts. The geography of Turkey, its history and close relationships with Asia, the Middle East and Europe shaped its identity and were sometimes the cause of identity confusions. Modern architectural practices in Turkey have also been affected

by confusion about cultural identity (Balamir 2003). Architectural practices differentiated affecting from or become responses to certain problems and conflicts experienced throughout the history of the Turkish Republic.

The efforts to create consciously a national architecture occurred during the last periods of the Ottoman Empire. Nationalist trends, that increased from 1908, made new searches in architecture a topical issue. The new classical period in Turkish architecture began with the movement headed by the architects Kemalettin Bey and Vedat Bey, with the "Neoclassic Turkish Style" or National Renaissance in Architecture. The movement, which is generally referred to as the First National Architectural Movement, was more of an attempt to incorporate the use of wide eaves, domes, pointed arches, pillars, overhangs, triangular stalactite (muqarnas) and ceramic coatings, found mostly within old religious buildings, within the civil architecture.

Seljuk and Ottoman architectural elements and ornaments were particularly used in a selective manner. The movement attempted to originate an architectural style that would represent national Turkish identity freeing itself of the effects of other cultures. The effects of this movement were seen more in public buildings and were effective during the last periods of the Ottoman Empire and the first years of the Republic (Sözen 1984).

In the first years of the Republic, the new and young Turkish State desired modernism to be part of its social identity. A period of conflict occurred, related to the matter of being modern in architecture or the continuation of the national style. The first national architecture movement started to lose its influence at the end of the 1920s and Turkey entered a new architectural period. Along with developments in architecture all over the world as of 1927, international modernist effects started to be seen in Turkish architecture. Executives of that period approved and supported such developments, as the modernist identity reflected their own ideology. Despite the reactions of some architects, the design and construction of most public buildings in Ankara, the new capital of the Republic in this time, were given to Austrian and German architects. Those buildings thereby assumed the role of reflecting the Republic's modern identity. The architects of the first modernist period of the Republic, which was dominant between 1930 and 1940, were Seyfi Arkan (Florya Atatürk Pavilion), Clemens Holzmeister (The Grand National Assembly of Turkey and Supreme Court Building), Paul Bonatz (Ankara Opera House) and Bruno Taut (Faculty of Languages, History and Geography at Ankara University) (Photos 2,3).

Photo 2: *Florya Atatürk Pavilion , 2011*

Photo 3 : *Ankara Opera House, 2011*

The period referred to as the Second National Architectural Movement started between 1940 and 1950. Ultra-nationalist movements, particularly in Germany and Italy, had an impact upon architecture in Europe and Turkey. The inspirer of this movement was respectively civil architecture. Ornamental elements of buildings of that period were narrowly prescribed. The most important representatives of the Second National Architectural Movement were Sedad Hakkı Eldem and Emin Onat. These architects could actualize the synthesis of tradition and modernism with their own unique ways.

The main idea of Sedad Hakkı Eldem, who played a significant role in Republic period-Turkish architecture, was to create architecture which is unique for Turkey (Tanyeli 2001). His original interpretation of traditional architecture, inherited from the past without denying the modern technology, put him in a different place among other architects of that period. He constituted basic principles of unique architecture by interpretation of traditional architecture, using methods of abstraction. He also explicated and used the traditional Turkish architecture forms in the buildings he designed. However, in due time, Sedad Hakkı Eldem found his own level in modernist and internationalist architectural design, suitable for international style. Major works by Sedad Hakkı Eldem include the Istanbul Faculty of Science and Letters (with Emin Onat, 1942–1947) (Photo 4), Ankara University Faculty of Science (1943–1945), Istanbul Courthouse (with Emin Onat, 1948–1971) Social Insurance Institution Complex (1962–1964), Atatürk Library (1973–1975) (Photo 5) and Rahmi Koç House (1975–1980). He played a partial role in the design of the Istanbul Hilton Hotel (1952–1955). The influence of this movement ended in 1950s, as it could not adapt to the requirements and new technologies of the period. Governmental domination of architecture in Turkey subsequently declined and architectural practices entered a period of pluralism.

Since the 1980s, besides, on architectural practices produced within an independent environment in Turkey, discussion began of the loss of character and identity in the built environment. The new dominant architectural character of

growing cities and features of the urban fabric were not pleased for any person. The problem of asserting identity was mentioned in relation to built environments, where complexity and ambiguity were so dominant.

Modernism was blamed for the creation of those objectionable environmental conditions. Two main concerns were discussed in debates of the period (Balamir-2- 2003): the first was based on cultural concern. New residential areas were charged with not reflecting national culture. The second, nevertheless, was that there was not an obviously created conscious identity, not to mention a national one. In both cases, the absence of difference and distinctness was discussed. During those years, post-modernism started to be considered as a denouement for the identity issue in architecture. In the polyphonic and free environment from the 1980s to the end of the 1990s, the ways in which the identity issues in architecture were handled can be seen via buildings of Merih Karaaslan. While defending the new Anatolian synthesis, Karaaslan was implementing collage architecture using adaptations from Greek, Rome, Seljuk and Ottoman arrangements.

Photo 4: *Istanbul University Faculty of Science and Letters, 2011*

Photo 5 : *Atatürk Library, İstanbul, 2004*

Another famous Turkish architect, who tried to synthesize historical architecture with modern architectural vision, was Turgut Cansever, who died in 2009. Cansever was one of the rare architects who could implement his unique design ideas, taking a stand against the prevailing architectural perception in Turkey's recent period architectural environment. He struggled to find solutions for the problems of modern architecture and tried to synthesize Turkish architectural traditions with modern architectural perception. To achieve this continuity in his works, he made original interpretations rather

than formal imitations. His major works include: design of Beyazit Square in Istanbul (1958), Turkish Historical Society Building (1951–1967, Ankara, with Ertur Yener) (Photo 6) and Demir Vacation Site (1992) (Photo 7).

Photo 6: *Turkish Historical Society Building, Ankara, 2011*
Photo 7: *Demir Vacation site, Bodrum*

4. Cultural Identity Problem in Current Architectural Practices in Konya Examples

Konya city, located in the Central Anatolian Region, is an ancient settlement that has hosted many civilizations since the earliest periods of human history (Figure 1). Konya region had been a settlement place since 7000 B.C. and was ruled during different periods by Hittites, Phrygians, Lydian, Persians, Pergamon, Romans, Seljuks and the Ottoman Empire. Konya had been the capital city of Anatolian Seljuks from 1097 to 1277.

The main cultural heritage of Konya belongs particularly to Seljuks and Ottomans. As in many Turkish cities, the ancient historical architectural elements belonging to these two civilizations have been used recently in Konya in new public buildings implemented by the government authorities and urban administration. Selected examples are located in the important parts of the city.

Figure 1: *Location of Konya city in Turkey (http://www.answers.com/topic/turkey-1)*

4.1. Example Analysis

The New library building and various spatial arrangements in Kültür Park:

The project "Mevlana Culture Valley" initiated by Konya Metropolitan Municipality, has an important function in the transformation works throughout the city. This project was intended to reveal, protect and maintain the historical and cultural properties of Konya city. Located in Konya city center,

Kültür Park, which is one of the oldest and the most important parks of the city, has been rearranged within the scope of this project.

The new library building, the construction of which is ongoing, attracts attention by its massive size and location in the park (photo 8). The form of the building consists of the unity of rectangular prisms of various sizes. The filled parts of the building above the ground floor are white, the windows and the frames are dark color. Dark marble colonnades and wall surfaces are present on the ground floor. The entrance of the building is inside the park and the arrangements based on historical architectural elements are mainly located on that façade.

Photo 8: *The new library building in Kültür Park, Konya 2011*

Photo 9: *The stylized portal in the new library building, 2011*

As in other examples analyzed, the entrance of the building has been brought forward with a portal, which is one of the main elements of Anatolian Seljuk architecture. Portals, as a symbol of Anatolian Seljuk architecture, were distinctive in the entrances of mosques, madrasas, public houses and caravansaries. Arched doors, mostly with a muqarnas niche, are framed with various forms of masonry borders. Fine masonry ornaments feature the portal as a sculpture. Portals took part in fore mentioned building types as different shapes and sizes including these features. Beautiful examples of portals can be observed in Alâeddin Mosque (photo 10), Sahip Ata Mosque (Photo 11), Karatay Madrasa and Ince Minare Madrasa in Konya.

Photo 10: *Portal in Alâeddin Mosque (13th century), Konya, 2001*

Photo 11: *Portal in Sahip Ata Mosque (13th century), Konya, 2005*

The portal of the library building was stylized, taking historical portals as references (Photo 9). The use of a portal entrance on the axis of symmetry attempted to give a monumental characteristic to the building. The lancet arch of the portal and its revelation in an asymmetrical position reflect the originality seek of the architecture. The surface of the entrance gate was designed with a simple, neutral and modern view. The part with the lancet arch consisting the portal and this transparent part create an interesting balance of duty cycle. While examining the whole building, however, the consistency in one part of the portal cannot be seen in the general parts of the building. The pattern lattice system, existing in the traditional architecture on both two sides of the entrance mass, is an eclectic approach. On all façades of the mass in which a modern synthesis is attempted, the presence, below the windows and roofs, of distinctive elements (moldings) used in classical and neoclassical architecture, has a negative effect on the general character of façade composition.

The New Courthouse:

The main entrance of the courthouse once more featured a portal. With white curbs and partition walls on a dominant transparent surface, the traditional portal was isolated and gained a symbolic meaning. The entrance façade as a monumental character and generally follows simple lines. Openings consisting of blue -color glass surfaces and white fillings feature in the façade composition (Photos 12, 13). From our standpoint, parts with bows in the right and left of the façade, the cage surface reminiscent of traditional patterns and the arched parts featuring numerous moldings, are odd in terms of the general composition. Similar consoles are also located on the side façade. The building also features “Buttresses”, which are not necessary to support consoles, and which were used entirely for decorative purposes. In contrast, the rear façades have simple characteristics. On entrance façades and on one part of the side façades of the Konya courthouse building, historical architectural elements are sometimes stylized and sometimes plain. Considering other façades of the mass, about the structure conveys an inconsistency in general meaning.

Photo 12: *General view of the new courthouse, Konya, 2011*

Photo 13: *The stylized portal of the main entrance, Konya, 2011*

Martyrs Memorial:

Martyrs Memorial was built in a historical and touristic area of the city estimating to contribute to tourism and the cultural life of the city. With its location and monumental architectural features, a new symbolic value particularly for the city was tried to be redounded to it (Photo 14).

The spectacular Muqarnas portal of the memorial (Photo15) is located on a pedestrian route, and was constructed of fine stonemasonry featuring a symbolic cupola carried with columns. In order to generate a historical identity, many architectural and decorative elements were used, including: a courtyard identified with interesting columns, ceilings featuring fine woodwork and tiles, including traditional patterns. In the most significant area of the city, near Mevlana Museum, referring to the city's history using such an eclectic approach increases the risk of historical misrepresentation.

Photo 14: *Main entrance of Martyrs Memorial, Konya, 2011*

Photo 15: *Muqarnas detail, Konya, 2011*

The plan of Martyrs Memorial reminds, in a manner, the planning schema of historical madrasa buildings. As for us, the design of a high spiritual space would have been better if it had been designed with a more original rather than a formal mentality.

Municipality Buildings in Konya and Selçuk University:

Konya city center consists of 3 districts. Each district has its own municipality, subsidiary to Konya Metropolitan Municipality. There are 4 municipal buildings in total. The Konya Metropolitan Municipality building was completed at the end of the 1980s (photo 16). The building has a modern architectural language. It is possible to see that approach in the general composition of the mass and in the character of the façades. Only the main entrance door of the building incorporates historical references. In contrast to current practices, this historical reference is, however, of a more humble scale, lacking an impressive effect in mass general.

Photo 16: *Main entrance of Konya Metropolitan Municipality building*

Photo 17: *Main entrance of Meram Municipality building*

Photo 18: *Main entrance Selçuklu Municipality building*

The main entrance doors of Meram and Selçuklu Town Halls have portals. The gate of the Meram municipal building is located on the main façade, facing the street. On this front, the disproportionate decorative columns evoke ancient Greek columns and have no structural purpose (Photo 17). The portal of the Selçuklu municipal building is smaller. The general character of the building is closer to a post-modern line (Photo 18). Towers in certain places of the mass increase this effect. In Karatay municipal building, direct historical references cannot be observed. The only remarkable architectural element is the conical skylight.

Photo 19: *Main-gate entrance of Selçuk University*

Photo 20: *Main-gate entrance of Selçuk University*

Photo 21: *Main-gate entrance of Selçuk University*

The newly built main entrance to Selçuk University includes a pedestrian overpass linking residences with the campus. An eclectic range of architectural elements was used intensely, in parallel with the wishes of the university administration. There was a desire to emphasize prestige and monumentalism in both formations.

5. Evaluation and Conclusion

Artistic and architectural products have historically taken various influences from previous styles and conventions. Benefitting from the past in the architecture can be generally described as: making the same, taking some parts and interpretation/innovating. Technical opportunities and development processes of the time can entail and legalize benefitting from the past in architecture. The assessments carried out in this study, show that some current arrangements made to create buildings "with identity" consist only of historical adaptations on the façade. The reason of realizing this purpose might be a reaction to the monotony of globalization, concern about making connection with the past, personal satisfaction, or prestige.

Offering original solutions by interpretation is necessary to make connection with the past, to ensure historical consistency and to have a legitimate base in architecture. A profound and meaningful evaluation is probably the most convenient approach. In investigating the principle of honesty in architecture in a simple way, it is easy to notice the inconsistencies in the buildings that use direct imitation. Providing consistency in solutions by interpreting historical architectural elements seems more possible. Originality depends entirely on the degree of interpretation. Plans, façade organizations and mass rates of ancient architectures in current original architectural practices are conformed through synthesis following detailed examination.

The pretension of new buildings to be inherited from the past causes mistakes, chaos and problems of originality. The way to benefit from past architecture should not be limited to simply creating visual and monumental effects. Traditional architecture is a source of knowledge that must be applied in order to be able to re-learn currently forgotten ecological approaches. Considering these features of the architectural heritage originated by trial and error can provide much more creative and original solutions.

Contextual consistency plays an important role in current architectural practices based on ancient historical architecture. The thing that is meant by context is to implement an

architectural product in accordance with the space and time. Accordance with space means to consider climate, the existing built environment, field conditions and socio-cultural data. The time factor can be explained as being in accordance with the facts of that era**:** comfort, function, technology and even artistic pleasure. Cultural identity attributed to architectural products cannot be considered as disconnected.

Obtaining new building designs, representative values of which are high and which are in significant spots of the city, without competition but on order basis, carried out by Municipal administration is an inappropriate approach. Such an approach limits artistic ideas, creativeness and innovation in architecture. Showing resistance to changes is an unacceptable mentality in architecture. Architecture, as a versatile technical and artistic activity, can develop with just courageous and innovative approaches and arouse excitement, as in all ages. We think that current formational aims and esthetic concerns in architecture must be addressed within the scope of technological, economic and ecological realities.

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