

PRAXIS IN ARCHITECTURE:  
THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN “THINKING” AND “MAKING”

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THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THINKING AND MAKING**

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## ABSTRACT

### PRAXIS IN ARCHITECTURE: THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN “THINKING” AND “MAKING”

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Being a concept that was first raised in the context of Ancient Greek, “praxis” indicates the association of theory and practice in any human activity. As a purposeful and meaningful activity, praxis requires a well-structured theory that leads to the whole production process. At this point, this thesis claims that architectural production should be considered as a purposeful activity and that it should be performed as “praxis”.

In architectural production the theoretical knowledge that is supported by architecture’s inner or exterior sources supports the architectural design process and this process contributes to the production of architectural knowledge correspondingly. In architecture, there is a dialectical relationship between “thinking” and “making” activities that bring out “praxis”.

In this work, that architecture’s autonomous properties stemming from its disciplinary specific rules, norms and qualities, and its relationship with other knowledge fields or exterior theory source lead to the rise of two different types of “praxes” is explored. The first one is “object oriented praxis” that produces the theoretical knowledge through architecture’s own sources, and the second is “context-oriented praxis” that produces its theory by considering the social and contextual factors. Kerem Yazgan and Ziya Tanalı’s theoretical and practical works in architecture will be investigated in order to comprehend these two notions.

**Keywords:** Praxis, Theory of Architecture, Autonomy, Object-Oriented Praxis, Context-Oriented Praxis, Social Agency

## ÖZ

### MİMARLIKTA PRAKSİS: “DÜŞÜNMEK” VE “YAPMAK” ARASINDAKİ DİYALEKTİK İLİŞKİ

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İlk defa Antik Yunan’da ele alındığı biçimiyle “praksis”, herhangi bir insan aktivitesinde teori ve pratiğin birlikteliğine işaret eder. Belirli bir amaca yönelik ve anlamlı bir aktivite olarak praksis, tüm üretim sürecini yöneten, iyi kurgulanmış bir teori gerektirir. Bu noktada, bu tez, mimari üretimin anlamlı bir üretim olarak değerlendirilmesi ve “praksis” olarak uygulanması gerektiğini iddia eder.

Mimari üretimde, mimarlığın içsel ya da dışsal kaynaklarından beslenen teorik bilgi, mimari tasarım sürecini destekler ve bu süreç de karşılıklı olarak mimari bilgi üretimine katkıda bulunur. Mimarlıkta, “düşünme” ve “yapma” eylemleri arasında, “praksisi” meydana getiren diyalektik bir ilişki bulunmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada, mimarlığın disipline özgü kurallarından, normlarından ve değerlerinden kaynaklanan otonom özelliklerinin ve mimarlığın diğer bilgi alanlarıyla ve dış teori kaynaklarıyla olan ilişkisinin iki farklı “praksis” ortaya koyduğu incelenmiştir. Bunlardan ilki, mimarlığın kendi kaynaklarıyla teorik bilgi üreten “nesneye yönelik praksis” ve ikincisi, teorisini sosyal ve bağlamsal faktörleri gözeterek üreten “bağlama yönelik praksis”tir. Bu iki kavramı anlamak için, Kerem Yazgan ve Ziya Tanalı’nın teorik ve pratik çalışmaları incelenecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Praksis, Mimarlık Teorisi, Otonomi, Nesneye Yönelik Praksis, Bağlama Yönelik Praksis, Sosyal Aktörlük

*To the June of 2013*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In the philosophy of Ancient Greek, the notion of *poiesis* indicates an activity that is performed on the account of complementing the action with a concrete outcome that is evaluated according to the quality of the end product. Doing an activity for achieving a tangible end is considered as *poiesis*, rather than starting and processing it. On the other hand, the notion of *praxis* points out a process-oriented activity that regards the course of action and the excellence of the “doing” for the sake of itself, rather than the final product. Despite the fact that *praxis* also has some end beyond the activity itself, it is a rational action, of which main purpose is organizing the process with “virtuous” acts and accordingly “performing well”. The completion of the activity with a foreseen outcome is important, but the manner behind the activity and the organization of the “process” with this manner are the main concerns of *praxis*. To explain the distinction between these two concepts it can be stated that, *poiesis* is considered as “a doing that does not have its goal in itself, but outside of itself in the *ergon*”, while *praxis* is counted as “an action that has its goal in itself, in the perfection of its execution”. (Volpi, 1999, p. 13)

Without giving a direct reference to architecture, Aristotle exemplifies the concept of *poiesis* with the act of building a house, and the *praxis* with the act of playing the flute. As stated in “Nicomachean Ethics”, edited by Roger Crisp, Aristotle (2004, pp. 10-11) considers the activity of building as a “doing”, of which ultimate goal is an “artifact”, so an activity that is pursued for sake of something else rather than the activity itself. On the other hand, Aristotle evaluates playing the flute as “an activity that has its goal in itself” and performed by regarding the process. In the building activity, the performer of the activity regards the finality of the work rather than the process, so the outcome of the activity is of primary importance. On the other hand, to Aristotle, playing the flute is *praxis*, because the performer leads the activity without any concern for a substantial end product, rather he/she concerns the excellence of the activity.

In this thesis it is asserted that, architecture cannot be reduced to the act of building an architectural object that is performed without any concern for the way it is built. Architecture should be evaluated as a theory-based and a process-oriented activity, for which the intention of the subject and the organization of the process are as important as the tangible end product; the built object. *Praxis* involves a degree of creativity and the desire of “improvement” within the action itself, and this “desire” distinguishes it from the act of producing something as a human response to the natural environment. The consideration of *praxis* as the creative process of a production that is led by rational and socially responsible agents differentiates the “architect” from a builder. *Praxis* is accepted as a “purposeful” activity, so it involves the “virtue” of the performer and the “reason” of

the action within the process. Considering this statement, this thesis claims that, a production activity can internalize and convey a “meaning” that is developed through the intention and manner of the subject, only if it is performed as praxis. Architecture is one of the most appropriate mediums for discussing the reliability of this statement, because a meaningful architecture requires the organization of the design process that entails both thinking (reasoning) and doing (practicing) activities inside.

In this thesis, it is intended to make an inquiry into the relationship between theory and practice, and as the outcome of this relation, the concept of praxis in the field of architecture. Within the scope of architecture –if considered as praxis, theory leads the dynamic process of practice, and according to the feedback taken during this process, practice can be strengthened, developed, changed, and modified. Theoria (theory) in ancient Greek points out an active state of mind that leads a determined action. It cannot be accepted as a passive expectation or thoughtful observation. According to Aristotle, theory is the integrant of a well-organized and purposeful activity. Theory exposes a form of “being” through which the performer -architect here- achieves a rational approach and accordingly *eupraxia* (acting well) in a human activity. When evaluated within the discipline of architecture, theory, an evolving discourse developed through the philosophical and practical dimension of architecture, defines, qualifies, and improves the architectural work and production. Besides its concern about practical issues like construction, materials, and use, architectural theory also deals with the issues about the betterment of the society or the human life itself. In Kate Nesbitt’s (1996, p. 16) words, “theory operates on different levels of abstraction, evaluating the architectural profession, its intentions, and its cultural relevance at large.” As stated by Michael Hays (1998) in the introduction of his book, “Architecture Theory Since 1968”, architectural theory is responsible for “the production of relationships between formal analyses of a work of architecture and its social ground or context (however nonsynchronous these sometimes may be).” Assigning a role for architecture in re-production of concepts in the related “spheres of social practice”, Hays states that the objects of the architectural production, buildings and drawings can (or “should” as this thesis claims) have a theoretical base that quests a correspondence between “object and analysis” and proposes new concepts “as fully objective and material as built form itself.” (Hays, 1998)

Architectural theory, developed according to the manner and the “idea” of the architect generates the data set for leading the architectural practice. Architectural knowledge supports the production activity and this process reproduces the knowledge correspondingly. There is a dialectical relationship between “thinking” and “making” activities where the architectural “praxis” emerges. Based on this argument, this thesis claims that architecture is meaningful only if it is considered as praxis. It is believed in this study that, to focus on the association of theory and practice, and their formation of different types of “praxes” suggest a way for architect to deal with the problems and the potentials of architecture. Thus, this thesis intends to explore the conceptualization, problematization, and classification of “praxes” in architecture and their creative effect to the discipline. To emphasize on the issue of “praxis” in architecture, it is necessary to investigate the potentials of theory and practice as artificially separated entities. Here theory and practice are not considered as separate concepts, but evaluated in a dialectical

relationship in which the unity of oppositions achieves the capability of transforming the existing conditions. In the association of these opposites it is crucial to underline that, “theory is never generic or universal; it has, just like practice, a site and an age, as an index of tendencies. Practice is not pure form of local knowledge”. (Zaero-Polo, 2007, pp. 1-2) Theory and practice are changeable concepts that are transformed according to the necessities or desires of the existing age, site, and society.

Considering the importance of the link between theory and practice in architecture, this thesis claims that, without constructing a relationship between these notions, the discipline and practice of architecture is reduced to just an ephemeral discourse or a meaningless construction. Although theory and practice are evaluated as independent notions that do not touch on each other in some academic and professional platforms, here it is suggested that this approach reduces theory to a narrative that does not have any reflection on the practical world, and practice to a mere work of production that is limited in terms of spatial, cultural and functional properties. Here it is emphasized that, it is important to questionize the roles of theory and practice in any production activity and evaluate the potentials of these concepts in architecture’s own territory. In this thesis it is stated that, there are different sources of architecture that contributes to the development of theory, and according to the source, theory constructs a relationship with practice in different ways. In this respect, in order to concentrate on the different fields and sources of theory, the autonomy debate of architecture is re-visited concisely. In the evaluation of the autonomous and the interdisciplinary properties of the discipline, architecture is considered as a hybrid discipline that has various relationships with other disciplines and has also different qualities, properties, and levels specific to architecture. As stated by the editors of “Perspecta” (2002, p. 7), the well-known student-edited architectural journal published by the Yale School of Architecture, the discipline of architecture has a multidimensional character, which comprises many theoretical and practical properties, so it is necessary to qualify architecture with regard to its different interrelationships. Being a discipline, an art and a profession, architecture should be considered as a complex entity; that includes its discursive, aesthetic, and functional aspects. It is possible to claim that there is not a specific source for the knowledge or theory of architecture. Therefore, it is crucial to evaluate architecture both with its internal dynamics and its relationships with external formations and disciplines. Regarding the different aspects of architecture and the internal and external sources of architectural theory, this thesis claims that it is possible to develop theory of architecture through different knowledge fields and associate this theory with practice with different manners. At this point, it is contemplated throughout this work that, this twofold position of architecture leads to the rise of two different types of “praxes” in architecture.<sup>1</sup>

The first type of praxes evaluated here is “object-oriented praxis” that indicates a theory-based production activity. This activity is performed with the aim of advancing the potentials of both design process and the final product (built object) by concentrating on the inner qualities of architecture. Here, the architectural theory is developed through the

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<sup>1</sup> Here the classification of the notion of praxis is done by the author according to the reasons that are explained throughout the thesis.

knowledge that is produced with architecture's own disciplinary codes, in its own disciplinary field and it is used in the design and construction processes. In this type of praxis, theory includes all the crucial norms and rules of architecture that regards the tectonic, material, functional, aesthetical and programmatic requirements defined by the architect. Here, the architect takes on the task of developing the theory by investigating the constituents of design process and their relationship with each other, as well as with the final product. In order to exemplify this method of production, it is thought that Kerem Yazgan is a convenient figure, whose architectural works present a significant profile to make an inquiry in the association of theory and practice in architecture.

According to Yazgan (2003, pp. 11-17), the attitude that leads an architectural practice by borrowing the theoretical knowledge from other disciplines or socio-cultural phenomena produces an architecture that does not concentrate on its own potentials. According to him, this attitude evaluates architecture as a representative tool of the external realities and uses narration for legitimating this representation. Here Yazgan does not reject architecture's interdisciplinary position and its various relationships with other knowledge domains, but supports the production of architectural theory through its own sources. He finds it very crucial to protect and manifest the scrutinized properties of architecture in any architectural production.

Yazgan evaluates architectural production as a concretized form of the architecture's disciplinary knowledge and embodiment of the purpose of the architect, so he considers theory and practice as complementary notions. Theorizing design process by "designing the acts of design" and using diagrams as a tool of producing and recording design knowledge, Kerem Yazgan contributes to the discipline and profession of architecture with the understanding of evaluating architectural production as a work of praxis. Having worked on various projects with different programs and scales, he intends to design architectural objects with his philosophy of evaluating architectural design process as a research field. For him, architectural design is constituted through the acts or events of thinking and design processes. Architect works as an arranger of these acts and events, so each design process is shaped according to the organizational method of the architect, who designs the relations between these acts and events. In order to systematize the organization of these constituents, Yazgan (2003) introduces a new research area named as "designography" in his PhD thesis, "Designography of Architecture". This new research field suggested by him, helps architect to develop the design knowledge inside the boundaries of architecture and put this knowledge into practice during the whole design and construction processes.

On the other hand, the external sources of theory in an architectural production lead to the rise of another praxis named as "context-oriented praxis", in which the architect evaluates architecture as a social product and develops a theory by considering not only the spatial qualities of architecture, but also the determinants of the transformation of social and physical context. Here, architecture is evaluated –as in Michael Hays' words (1984, p. 27)- "not as a passive agent of culture in its dominant ideological, institutional, and historical forms, nor as a detached, disinfected object." At this point, it is crucial to state that, the social role of architect should be re-defined in the transformation of any social entity and he/she should be considered as an active agent of the society with his/her



intellectual and material contributions. In order to make an inquiry into the social responsibility of architect in the social and physical formation, the issue of agency is raised in this thesis.

In Albert Bandura's (1989, p. 1175) interpretation, the concept of "agency" is theorized differently according to the role and the dependence/independence of an agent as an individual and as a productive actor in the "causal processes". As stated by him, there are different types of agencies in the society, but in this thesis the position of architect is evaluated under the title of "emergent interactive agency" that suggests a semi-autonomous position for the social actors. In emergent interactive agency, the activities of social agents are supposed to be determined by both the individual preferences and the societal determinants. In this respect, architect is considered as a social agent whose production activities are influenced by the social formations but managed by individual choices. Architect as a social actor performs production activities through a socially concerned theory developed in his/her own state of mind. In context-oriented praxis, the architect can organize an architectural production by considering both the personal values and external (social, cultural or in other words contextual) determinants by still using architecture's disciplinary specific knowledge.

In this thesis, the concept of "context-oriented praxis" is explained and exemplified through the theoretical and practical works of Ziya Tanalı. The importance of the relation between theory and practice can be realized through his literal and architectural works. Tanalı's architectural and intellectual works focus on different aspects of architecture as a discipline and as a profession. While constructing his architectural discourse, Tanalı concentrates on some key words through which he forms his world of architecture in a theoretical manner. Therefore, it may be convenient to evaluate his viewpoint in architecture through these words: ethics, personality, sensitivity, sincerity, genuineness, and social responsibility. Through the evaluations of these concepts, it is emphasized in this work that, if considered as a social agent, architect's well-grounded intentions provide a medium for architect to lead an ethical practice under the guidance of "practical wisdom". In this way, "architecture asserts its role in providing the 'good' for society through buildings. This assertion of the beneficial goodness of architecture has a long history in Western architectural thought, stemming at least back to Vitruvius". (Wasserman, Sullivan, & Palermo, 2000, p. 39) In the way of seeking the possibilities of the "good architecture" for society, Tanalı underlines the importance of the theory that envelops the value system of the architect through his/her creative acts. For him, "theory" should be evaluated in the Aristotelian perspective that links "theory" to the way in which the developer of the theory (the subject) chooses to maintain his/her life. According to Tanalı, theory indicates a notion that envelops the reason, the purpose and the meaning behind an action, so it is very related with the "becoming" of the agent that leads the activity.

Focusing on architecture's mission of expressing a meaning through a form, Tanalı emphasizes the fact that, the meaning of an artificial object is related with the "idea" and "theory" behind the object that constitutes the content of the work. The quality and the efficiency of the "content" depend on the organizational method of architect. Content should be considered as the "matter" that is revealed when a perfect totality or wholeness

of different architectural elements is achieved in an architectural production. Here this wholeness is achieved by means of a design mechanism according to which different architectural constituents are associated to generate a “unity”. In this unity, all of the components of built environment attain a characteristic and specialty according to their relationship with the pre-existing context. The specialty of these components is related with both their relationship with the social and physical environment and the inner organization of them. Underlying the significance of the architect’s social-being, the relationship between the content, the form and the wholeness of architecture, Tanalı states that all of these dimensions of architecture should be evaluated with an understanding of “universality”. Here, it is comprehended that, the socially concerned theory of the architect regards universal ethics and values and express his evaluations in his theory-based productions.

Based on the explanation above, in a meaningful architectural production activity, architect develops a theory during the design process according to the different sources of knowledge. According to these sources, the notion of “praxis” is classified as “object-oriented” and “context-oriented”. Here it is possible to claim the existence of other types of praxes that regard different external and internal factors like ecology, material, technique or technology in the production of architectural theory. A different orientation of the architect may lead to the rise of a another type of praxis in architecture, but in this work it is asserted that, “object-oriented” and “context-oriented” praxes are two significant notions to focus on, because they deal with the two main matters of architectural production: the substance of the architectural object and the tangible and abstract frame that architectural object is placed. In this thesis, it is stated that object-oriented praxis and context-oriented praxis deals with the thing of architecture and the non-thing of society so it is crucial to examine these two types.

At this point, it is important to underline that; the classification of different tendencies of architects and accordingly different types of praxes in architectural production do not present “object oriented” and “context-oriented” praxes as opposite orientations that does not communicate with each other. Supporting the semi-autonomous properties of architecture and an interdisciplinary position for it, architects may develop architectural theories that are focused on a “object-oriented” production process, while considering the social, cultural, economic and political realities at the same time. Moreover, architects may develop context-oriented theories that are still supported by architecture’s internal principles and laws. For that reason it is crucial to state that, “object-oriented praxis” and “context-oriented praxis” are not defined and evaluated as reverse activities in this thesis. It is supposed that, the comparison of these two notions and their relationship with different theoretical productions may help to comprehend the potentials of contemporary architecture and its relationship with the social phenomena. Today, the rejection of “praxis” in architecture reduces architecture to an object that is realized only for the commercial reasons and architect to a subject that ignores his/her own responsibility in the re-evaluation of physical and social realities. Because of these reasons, this thesis intends to re-visit the concept of praxis and claims that architectural production should be considered, evaluated, performed and read as a praxis activity.

## CHAPTER 2

### AN OVERVIEW ON “PRAXIS” AND THE EXPLORATION OF THE NOTION IN ARCHITECTURE

#### 2.1 Origination & Definition of the Term “Praxis”

The significance and the priority of theory and practice has been questioned and debated by many philosophers, since the notion of “praxis” was first raised by Aristotle, who contemplated the relationship between three essential modes of production; *theoria*, *poiesis*, and *praxis*, in the context of Ancient Greek. As stated by Lobkowitz (1977, p. 16), in Aristotle’s perception, each of these modes of production are identified, developed and led by different types of knowledge: the (theoretical) knowledge attached to the *theoria*, pertaining to the aim of attaining truth or reality; the (poetic) knowledge attached to the *poiesis*, pertaining to the aim of producing a concrete work; and the (practical) knowledge attached to the *praxis*, pertaining to the aim of carrying into “action”. Considering this categorization, it can be claimed that these three concepts; *theoria* (theory), *poiesis* (production), and *praxis* (action) point out different approaches to act of thinking and producing. Within these approaches, Aristotle directed his attention to the differences and diverse qualities of *poiesis* and *praxis*, and he put an emphasis on the superiority of *praxis* with respect to its concern for the ethics and the societal values in the process of designing a concrete object with a well-constructed theory.

In Ancient Greek, *poiesis* was accepted as the outcome of an action, so it pointed out the foreseen instrumentality of a production activity. Accordingly, rather than starting and processing an activity, performing it for achieving a tangible end was accepted as *poiesis*. For example, craftsmanship was considered as a *poiesis*, because craft did not pursue an inventive work, but a technical production that had depended on the predetermined rules and methods. The ultimate purpose of craftsman was the final “thing” that was achieved at the end of a process, so this mode of production meant to have an end “other than itself”. On the other hand, an activity that regards the way in which that activity is performed was evaluated as *praxis*. As stated by Aristotle (1999, p. 87) in *Nicomachean Ethics* translated by Terence Irwin, *praxis* indicates a process-oriented activity, of which aim is not other than the structuring the process, has an end “in itself”. *Praxis* is a rational action of which purpose is “acting well” for the sake of itself, despite the fact that it also has “some end beyond it”. (Irwin, 1999, p. 315) As stated in *Dictionary of Critical Theory* (Macey, 2000), building a dam by a beaver (*poiesis*) is not *praxis* because it is only a human response to the natural environment. It is not a quest for developing the existing building techniques. A dam is always built by a beaver in a similar way however, engineers search for an advanced method or technique for building it, so they regard the advancement of

the production by focusing on the progression. The finality or the realization of the activity is important, but the “process” that is directed with a manner is the main concern of praxis.

Interpreting Aristotle’s works on “poiesis” and “praxis”, John Lloyd Ackrill, in his book titled “Aristotle on Action” (1980), deals with the distinctions of these two production types with respect to the different intentions and reasons implicit in the actions. According to Ackrill’s explanation, praxis and poiesis are dissimilar to each other due to their different approaches to the “aim of action” and the “desire for an end”. As Ackrill states, people ordinarily do activities “with a view to some end” and on the account of something material (poiesis), however in the Aristotelian apprehension, a praxis is done “for itself”, so it can be considered as a virtuous act that is done by the subject virtuously. (Ackrill, 1980, p. 93) As stated by Roger Crisp, in the introduction of *Nicomachean Ethics* (2004), the “virtue” of an actor depends on his/her merit of acting with a good deliberation, which is related with the intention, the purpose, and the planning of the process of the action. In Crisp’s explanation, a virtuous actor always has the capability of performing virtuous actions in the right way: “knowing what he is doing, choosing them for their own sake, and doing them from a well-grounded disposition”. In other words, if an actor is accepted as virtuous, or an effort of him/her is evaluated as the embodiment of a virtue, it means that action is achieved through a good deliberation. A virtuous actor deliberates well during the process of an action to “achieve something good by using the right steps” according to his/her mindset. Herein, deliberation should be accepted as a prerequisite of having practical wisdom that can be developed in relation with the habituation of the subject. (Aristotle, 2004)

Virtue, as we have seen, is a matter of getting it right within particular spheres of human life. Virtue of character rests partly on the development of dispositions towards virtuous action through habituation. This habituation will be guided by, for example, one’s parents or teachers. But the virtuous person is able to get it right in each sphere without guidance from others, and his capacity to do that is what centrally constitutes practical wisdom. (Crisp, 2004, p. xxiv)

If the relationship between virtue and practical wisdom is scrutinized, it can be comprehended that practical wisdom is related with the organization of the process of a “purposeful” activity that should be led in the right way, while virtue is about developing the “purposeful” thought that seeks the “good” for human. As stated by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* edited by Roger Crisp (2004, p. 108), “[p]ractical wisdom must be a true state involving reason, concerned with action in relation to human goods”. At this point, practical wisdom’s deal with the continuum of the activity, its relationship with the “purpose” and the “good for human” associates with praxis, rather than poiesis. As stated before, poiesis is relevant with production, and then it’s emphasis on the end product makes poiesis unconnected with practical wisdom. As stated by Richard Bernstein (1999), in the preface of his book entitled “Praxis and Action”, there can be made a distinction between poiesis and praxis with respect to the (material or virtuous) objections of these activities. Unlike poiesis as a “form of making”, praxis indicates an action “where the end

or telos of the activity is not primarily the production of an artifact, but rather performing it in a certain way, performing the activity well: *eupraxia*".

As deliberative excellences, both craft and practical wisdom are types of knowledge about how to realize goals. In the case of the crafts, (e.g. medicine, navigation, carpentry, flute playing), the goal is an easily specifiable product, result, or activity. That of practical wisdom, by contrast, is "doing well" (*eupraxia*) or "living well" (*eu zen*). Aristotle intends to capture this difference with the general claim that crafts concern production (*poiesis*), while practical wisdom is concerned not with production, but with action (praxis). (Meyer, 2008, p. 73)

A praxis activity always has a desire of "eupraxia" (acting well) in itself and it is very related with the way, through which a praxis activity is performed by a subject in a virtuous manner. In Eikeland's words (2008, p. 127), "[e]upraxia determines what it means to do whatever it is you do". Here, the virtue of an activity and the eupraxia it has, depend on the characteristics of the subject who leads the activity. In this case, if an action is evaluated as "good", it means that, the actor or agent achieves a "good" agency in praxis. There is a mutual relationship between agency and the action with respect to their "goodness" or "excellence"; the action is valued according to the quality of agents and the agency of these agents is valued according to the quality of the action. As stated by Broadie (1993, p. 208), "[w]ith action (praxis), there is nothing by which to judge the case as an instance of doing well (eupraxia) apart from the action itself. If the action is good, it is a case of acting well, and on this basis, we judge the agent good as a practical agent, or as having achieved the perfection of good agency".

Emphasizing the issue of acting well (eupraxia) throughout a praxis activity of a productive agent, the initial point of the action; the decision comes into question. As claimed by Aristotle (1999, p. 87) in "Nicomachean Ethics" edited by Terence Irwin, the essence of action (praxis) is "decision", and the essence of decision is "desire" and an end-oriented request. Herein, "decision" entails "understanding" and "thought" with a state of "prudence" (practical wisdom). Thought serves the purpose of a meaningful action -if it is developed with a "goal-directed" desire. Here the goal (of *poiesis*) that is oriented to the end product and the goal (of praxis) that is oriented to the process differ from each other.

Thought by itself moves nothing; what moves us is goal-directed thought concerned with action. For this thought is also the principle of productive thought; for every producer in his production aims at some (further) goal, and the unqualified goal is not the product, which is only the (qualified) goal of some (production), and aims at some (further) goal. (An unqualified goal is) what we achieve in action (praxis), since acting well is the goal, and desire is for the goal. (Aristotle, 1999, p. 87)

To conclude, it can be conceived that, in the Aristotelian distinction of the two modes of production, *poiesis* is considered as "a doing that does not have its goal in itself, but outside of itself in the *ergon*", while praxis is counted as "an action that has its goal in itself, in the perfection of its execution". (Volpi, 1999, p. 13) Re-visiting these two concepts reveals the idea that there is a close relationship between the activities and the

“becoming” of the actors, who perform them. Here, the excellence of praxis is very relevant with the moral being of the actor, and his/her wish of acting with a humanitarian idea, while the excellence of poiesis is relevant with the actor’s desire of finalizing the work, rather than questioning the meaning or the purpose behind it. (Volpi, 1999, p. 13) Dealing with praxis as a virtuous action that seeks for the “good” for society make us evaluate the actor of praxis as a virtuous man who acts through the practical wisdom. The virtuous actor of praxis knows what to do and how to do through which way by developing a theory in his/her own mindset. This theory (or knowledge) defines, determines, and manages the practice, so the concept of praxis indicates the association of the two concepts; theory and practice. Therefore, in order to make an inquiry into the notion of praxis in any field, it is crucial to explore the relation between theory and practice. In the conventional approach, theory and practice are considered as two distinct concepts, because there is a misunderstanding about the role of these notions in any production process. Theory is sometimes accepted as only a prescription giving information about the technical requirements or rules of an activity, or accepted as a descriptive text narrating the final object. However, it should be conceived as a “guide” that is developed through the state of the mind of the agent, and involves the knowledge about the way in which the action is come into being. As stated by Bardin (2008, p. 2), “[f]rom theory there can be derived general principles (or rules) and these in turn can be applied to the problems of practice, theory is “real” knowledge while practice is the application of that knowledge to solve problems”.

## **2.2 Praxis For A “Meaningful” Architecture**

If architecture as a whole is like a language (langue) then the individual work is like a speech act (parole), which entails that the architect cannot simply assign or take away meaning and meaning cannot be axiomatic. (Hays, 1998, p. 37)

The emphasis on the relationship between theoria and practice in Ancient Greece revealed the crucial role of theory in the process of an architectural production and praxis in architecture. This condition established a ground for the development of architectural theory, and theory has taken on the task of giving a direction to architectural practice, while the content and the role of architectural theory has transformed in different periods. Theory was assigned to accompany practice with various manners in the purposeful activities of different actors.

Perez-Gomez (1998, p. 470) states that, in the period of Renaissance, architectural theory was accepted as a set of technical rules or principles and supported by “metaphysical preoccupations often implicit in the mathematical rules themselves”. The writings of Vitruvius, who is accepted as the first architect to write about his architectural experiences and theoretical works, the issues of architectural education, building techniques, materials, proportions, beauty, and function were raised for the betterment of the art of building. Referring this era in which architecture was considered as a theory-led production, Perez-Gomez (1998, p. 470) states, “[in] this Aristotelian world, there could

be no split between architectural theory and practice. Theory maintained its role as the elucidation and justification of the latter, while practice retained its primordial meaning as poiesis (not merely praxis).” According to him, “liberated from theological determinism, the architect became conscious of his power to transform the physical world. He was often a magus, but his intention was reconciliatory; art was a privileged form of metaphysics—metaphysics made into matter.”

However, as Perez-Gomez continues, in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the content of architectural knowledge was invaded by the scientific instructions, and architects considered the directives of positive science as the only way to develop architectural knowledge. With the denial of the need for metaphysics and the discovery of scientific thought by 1800, theory was divorced from the “mythical world” of ancient times and geometry and mathematics were accepted as the tools of achieving the desired forms in architecture, unconcerned with the values and meanings anymore. Architectural theory was developed with mathematical instructions that only emphasized on the formal configuration of space. Since architecture internalized the principles of scientific thought, theory was no longer considered as the perquisite of producing space in pursue of finding and expressing the virtue and meaning inside. “Deprived of a legitimate poetic content, architecture was reduced to either a prosaic technological process or mere decoration.” (Perez-Gomez, 1998, p. 472)

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was an observable atomization in different fields –related with the instructions of Modernity and the rising politics of capitalist organization, so architecture and its various relationships with related disciplines were redefined. The source and the determinant of the forms of built environment were associated with the “function”, so theory was regarded as the knowledge that only concerns the material dimension of architecture, in parallel with the transformation of Western architecture since the rise of Modernism. Throughout this process, the relationship between theory and practice was carried on according to the belief that, “architecture can derive its meaning from functionalism, formal games of combinations, the coherence or rationality of style understood as ornamental language, or the use of type as a generative structure in design”. (Perez-Gomez, 1998, p. 466) Actually, despite the transformation of the contextual dynamics in various fields, architectural theory undertook similar roles in the period between the end of the Renaissance and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this period, the “meaning” in the core of the theory, which implies the reason, the ethos and the “excellence” of a building activity, was detached from the concrete work of architecture. It was the 18<sup>th</sup> century when theory and practice were reevaluated as inherently connected notions because “[p]ractice was supposed to follow theory since theory now assumed that one day, through the limits of mathematical reason, it would thoroughly control design and building. Eventually, the split between thinking and doing became a critical problem.” (Perez-Gomez, 1998, p. 471) In the 20<sup>th</sup> century theory was limited by the rules and requirements of functionalism and formalism that are determined according to the mathematical reason and scientific thought as in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The assumption that architecture can derive its meaning from functionalism, formal games of combinations, the coherence or rationality of style understood as ornamental language, or the use of type as a generative

structure in design marks the evolution of Western architecture during the past two centuries. (Perez-Gomez, 1998, p. 466)

As a consequence of this process, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, architecture felt exposed to “technological optimization and utilitarianism” and architecture theory “drew on various models in an effort to open architecture into its own as a discipline, a cultural practice, and an irreducible mode of knowledge and experience”. (Hays, 2001, p. 101) In this period, architecture re-questioned the sources of its theory and has been the subject of various autonomy debates. It was now more problematic for architecture that there was a no clear definition of architectural theory because theory had been reduced to the way of linking architecture with the societal realities through linguistics, philosophy, sociology, physiology and other social sciences.

As mentioned so far, there has always been confusion about the identity and the role of architectural theory and its relationship with architectural praxis. Theory has been in an ongoing transformation because different contexts have attached different tasks to it. It’s relationship with rational thought or its poetic dimension has been debated repeatedly, but its desired role in the concept of Aristotelian praxis has remained as a neglected issue. There have always been architects who have searched for the “virtuous act” by concerning the reason, ethos, aesthetics, architectural and social values, however these notions have not supported architectural theory in general sense and architect has not been considered as an agent that contributes to the discipline of architecture from inside and regards the societal realities from outside. If the examples of a meaningful architecture that are have been realized throughout the history is taken into consideration, it can be seen that architecture is not only an activity of playing with forms, orders and developing new shape grammars, but it is also a way of introducing a language within architecture, through which it is possible to “touch on the world” by means of the “purposeful” and “virtuous” productions. In the Aristotelian way of thinking, this activity associates with the praxis of a productive agent, so associates with a “good activity for human” and good architecture.

[G]ood architecture offers societies a place for existential orientation. It allows for participation in meaningful action, conveying to the participant an understanding of his or her place in the world. Successful architecture opens up a clearing for the individual’s experience of purpose through participation in cultural institutions. At its best, it plays with power. The order it conveys, however, is impossible to paraphrase. It is radical orientation in experience, beyond words. Its theory has been rooted in myths, philosophy, theology and science throughout history, yet architecture is none of these but an event. It is ephemeral and has the capacity of changing one’s life in the vivid present—exactly like an erotic encounter. It embodies knowledge, but rather than clear logic it is a bodily, fully sexual and therefore opaque experience of truth. For this reason, its meaning can never be objectified, reduced to functions, ideological programs, formal or stylistic formulas. (Perez-Gomez, 2002)

Here, the crucial relationship between “good architecture”, and the “meaning” that architecture should convey becomes of primary importance. In the definition of the “good”, it is crucial to state that, architectural design should be conceived as a process



through which it is possible to comprehend and express a meaning from inside. As stated by Jacques Derrida (1998, p. 572), “[a]rchitecture must have a meaning, it must present it, and through it, signify”, and as he continues, this meaning must lead the configuration and organization of architecture, anticipating “a transcendence or finality (telos)” in architecture. Here it is important to emphasize on the fact that, meaning of an artificial object is related with the “idea” behind the object and the manner of its creator. Therefore, “meaning” of architecture is related with the idea or *theoria* (theory) of the subject; the architect. In a meaningful architectural production, architect determines the reason behind the action in the beginning of the design process, and develops the data set to theorize the whole production step by step. This data set of architectural knowledge supports the production activity, and this process produces architectural knowledge correspondingly. There is a dialectical relationship between “thinking” and “making” activities where the architectural “praxis” emerges. Although there are some critics that evaluate architecture as a “poiesis” due to its orientation towards an end product, this thesis claims that it should be considered and performed as a praxis, because a “meaningful” architecture depends on the coherent unity of theory and practice in the design and (if applicable) construction process led by the architect, who seeks the ways of expressing the reason and the meaning of “space” by using architectural tools.

### **2.3 Why Revisiting Praxis in Architecture?**

In the Aristotelian thought, praxis indicates the creative process of a purposeful production that is led by the rational and socially responsible agents. In contrast with a poiesis, praxis firstly requires a degree of creativity and the desire of “advancement” within the action itself –as we remember this “desire” distinguishes it from the act of producing something as a human response to the natural environment (for ex. building a dam by a beaver is not praxis; a dam is always built by a beaver in a similar way however, engineers search for an advanced method or technique for building it, so they regard the advancement of the production). Secondly, praxis is accepted as a “purposeful” activity, so it involves the “virtue” of the performer and the “reason” of the action within the process. At this point, as stated before, this thesis claims that, praxis is the only way for achieving a “meaning” in any production activity. Now architectural production activity is evaluated as a convenient medium for investigating the concept of praxis because this production activity involves both the thinking and making activities inside. Here, the first aim of this thesis is to show the potentials of architecture if to be evaluated as a “meaningful” or “purposeful” activity from the Aristotelian viewpoint, and the second is to open a new horizon for the ongoing discussions on the crucial role of architect as a “productive actor” that contributes to social and physical environment through his/her virtuous actions.

In an attempt for re-analyzing the potentials of architecture in any context, it is crucial to examine the already established relationship between architectural theory and practice and find out the reasons that retain this relationship from being praxis. In this work, it is assumed that, the productive actors of contemporary architecture misinterpret the link between theory and practice then, it is important to concentrate on the reasons and the

outcomes of this condition. Through this way, it is possible to enhance the positive tangible and transcendental effects of architecture to the physical and social environment.

Today, the most important reason for the reduction of architecture to a production activity that does not have a purpose rather than responding to the need for a “shelter” is the separation of theory from practice and then the attachment of them in an artificial way. Today, there are two main problematic approaches to the mission of architectural theory. On the one hand, as stated by Perez-Gomez (1998, p. 469) theory is considered as a freestanding concept that is “free of all relations to fundamental philosophical questions” and that only describes the “absolute reality” of the external world.

Subject to the values of technology, its (theory’s) interest is not in meaning, but in a conceptual or material efficiency dominating design and construction. This naturally has created a peculiar tension between theory and practice. Theory may work smoothly on a formal level, but it is unable to come to terms with reality. Correlatively, practice has been transformed into a process of production without existential meaning, clearly defined aims, or reference to human values. (Perez-Gomez, 1998, p. 469)

On the other hand, the narration of the formal properties of an architectural object displaces the concept of “theory”. This displacement causes a perceptual shift in the role of theory and theory takes charge in the promotion of practice. At this condition, theory loses its connection to the design process and works as a tool of providing a poetic dimension to practice. This last situation is explained clearly in the words of Mario Carpo (2005, p. 425), in his evaluation of the contemporary architecture: “Architects occasionally borrow, adopt, adapt, or improve other’s ideas –ideas that originally had nothing to do with building.” In this fashion, they sometimes attach a narration to their works, which is claimed to work as the theory of their praxis. These two attitudes affect both the way architectural design is carried out and the position of the subject that leads the design process. Theory loses its crucial role of conveying a meaning in a purposeful activity, so this condition weakens the significance of architectural production. In other words, architecture loses its meaning and its relationship with social/physical entity. Here, considering the outcomes of the formal, presentational, and economic factors in the production of an architectural work, it is possible to claim that architecture without theoretical and reasoned basis loses its legitimacy.

Michael Hays (2010, p. 1) evaluates architecture as “a way of negotiating the real”, which is responsible for the construction of the set of thoughts (concepts) within or without design activity and the roles (subject positions) that are defined for different actors. As he continues, “specialized theoretical techniques and methods must be brought to bear on this subject”. Therefore, this thesis asserts that, praxis provides architecture a rational organization, through which architect systematizes the design and production process to response to the requirements of architecture mentioned above. As stated already, the denial of “praxis” in architecture deprives the architect from his/her role of being a creative agent, so this attitude reduces architecture to just an object open for marketing. At this point, it is crucial for architects to re-evaluate the “determiners of architectural form” and consider the critical role of the “ideas about the productive

process” –or in other words architecture theory, so it is important to emphasize on praxis as a theory-based production in architecture. (Brown, 1998, p. 63) As stated before, these ideas about the productive process do not imply only the technical knowledge necessary for the production but also the reason and the purpose of the production; so the theory-based production supports the production process from different sides. Considering these reasons, this thesis evaluates architectural production as a praxis activity and intends to investigate the constituents of this theory-based production and the responsibility of theory in architecture. Thus, the role of theory in architectural praxis, the sources that support architectural theory and the relationship between these sources and the type of praxis will be explored.



## CHAPTER 3

### AUTONOMY DEBATE AND THE SOURCES OF THEORY IN ARCHITECTURE

Within the discipline of architecture, a “well-structured” theory is supposed to include all the essential rules and notions of architecture, and any reasonable architecture depends on the relationship between theory and practice. Regarding the crucial role of the link between these two notions in an architectural production, this thesis suggests that, without an “eloquent” theory, a final object of architecture is limited in terms of spatial, cultural and functional properties. Therefore, it is important to re-evaluate the potentials of theory and practice in architecture’s own territory. This evaluation may help to re-define the boundaries of architecture and its position as a discipline. If theory is defined as the knowledge leading the architectural practice, the sources of this knowledge become an important issue. To be able to talk about the sources of architectural theory, it is necessary to concentrate on the viewpoint that considers architecture as an autonomous entity and the other viewpoint that evaluates it with its various relationships with other disciplines. The confliction about architecture’s autonomous position with its own disciplinary qualities and its social “engagement” has been the subject of numerous discussions. The autonomy debate denotes different architectures that are led by different theories produced in different fields of knowledge. Through its own historicity, architectural theory’s crucial role in the organization of a “good” production has been interpreted by many architects, in different eras. Architects and theorists in different platforms have discussed the sources of architectural theory, and accordingly architecture’s autonomous properties and its interdisciplinary position. On the one hand, it is an independent discipline with its internal qualities, forms, rules, directives and language, which belong to the architecture itself. In this view, architecture is a self-ruled domain, due to the power of governing itself by its own mechanism.

Modern architectural theory dictates that form should derive from function; that is, that the physical appearance of a building should be derived totally from the program of physical (and maybe psychological) requirements given by the client, and from the imperatives of structure and construction. The architect’s or client’s previous experience and symbolic associations with form or preferences for certain forms over others should, according to this theory, have nothing to do with the design process, and previous, traditional or culture-based ways of arranging forms –previous “formal languages” – should not be accepted. (Brown, 1998, p. 319)

On the other hand, an object of architecture like Parthenon or the cathedral of Reims may be considered as autonomous works by means of the “mysterious workings of reception” but in reality, it is pointless to evaluate an individual building as a totally autonomous object. (Wood, 2002, p. 49) Therefore, the idea of autonomy in architecture is

not more than a “mystification”. In Wood’s view, the search for autonomy in architecture stems from the ancient idea, for which “the life itself may be thought of as a work of art and shaped according to aesthetic principles”. As stated by him, this idea draws the image of artist as a person who would re-shape the world and change the way that non-artists live. “Trying to reshape the world by making poems or paintings is one thing; trying to do it by making buildings is like operating heavy machinery under the influence of a potent drug. Architectural self-rule would be misrule”. (Wood, 2002, p. 49) Linking the “heroic image” of the artists in society to the idea of autonomy in architecture, he posits that, in the contemporary world, the reason behind the advocating autonomy in architecture is not achieving this “heroic image”, but “asking for a recognition of the systematicity of architecture”. (Wood, 2002, p. 50)

Architecture is autonomous or free, in this view, because it is capable of generating meaning out of its own internal symbolic resources without having to rely on auxiliary iconographical devices and without having to wait for its cue from the commission, the function, or the materials. Architecture is seen to be capable, for instance, of exercising an Adornian, oppositional critique by manipulating differential relationships conventionally established within the history and the system of architecture. [...] According to a structuralist theory of architecture, signs are linked to signified contents only by the internally established customs or conventions of architecture itself. Architects generate meaning by manipulating those conventions. (Wood, 2002, p. 50)

As stated by Michael Hays (1984, pp. 16-17), the proponents of autonomy disregard “any historical or material fact other than those of a dislodged formal system”. By this means, architecture builds its own language with “a specialized vocabulary” that entails a horizon for evaluating and reading architecture in its own boundaries.

Interpretations made from this position are characterized by the comparative absence of historical concerns in favor of attention to the autonomous architectural object and its formal operations-how its parts have been put together, how it is a wholly integrated and equilibrated system that can be understood without external references, and as important, how it may be reused, how its constituent parts and processes may be recombined. [...] The way in which a building as a cultural object in time is possessed, rejected, or achieved is not addressed. (Hays, 1984, p. 16)

According to other view, architecture belongs to a social context and it has a relation with external realities. Therefore, it is not possible to neglect the effect of external factors on an architectural production. In this perspective, architecture is evaluated as an “instrument of culture”, so it depends on the “social, economic, political, and technological processes”, and set its content according to the “cultural values”. (Hays, 1984, p. 16)

[A]s a functional support for human institutions and as a reification of a collective volition, architecture ennobles the culture that produces it; architecture reconfirms the hegemony of culture and helps to assure its continuity. Accordingly, the optimum relationship to be established between

culture and form is one of correspondence, the latter efficiently representing the values of the former. (Hays, 1984, p. 16)

Here, while one approach considers a work of architecture as a pure autonomous form, the other point of view assesses it as a representative of the existing culture. Hays interprets these binary positions as “symptomatic of a pervasive dichotomy in architectural theory and criticism”. (Hays, 1984, p. 17) According to him, the view that considers architecture as an independent self-governing discipline deals with the products of architecture “in their most disinfected, pristine state, as containers of a privileged principle of internal coherence”. On the other hand, the other view evaluates architectural objects as “instruments of the self-justifying, self-perpetuating hegemony of culture”. Here, Hays claims that, architecture should not be evaluated as just a representation of “external forces” or reduced to a “dogmatic, reproducible formal system”. Therefore, there should be also an in-between position between these two poles; “culture” and “form”. (Hays, 1984, p. 17)

Hays suggests a critical position that seeks an architecture that is “resistant to the self-confirming, conciliatory operations of a dominant culture and yet irreducible to a purely formal structure disengaged from the contingencies of place and time”. (Hays, 1984, p. 15) Stanford Anderson (2002), in his seminal article “Quasi-Autonomy in Architecture: The Search for an In-Between”, raises the issue of autonomy by re-visiting both the formal and social concerns of architecture. In his viewpoint, architecture cannot be conceived as a discipline independent from social, political, and economic phenomena and it cannot stand without its own dynamics that make the produced object a pure work of architecture. For this in-between position, Stanford Anderson proposes the concept of “quasi-autonomy”. As Hays and Anderson asserted, architecture should be evaluated as a cultural product with autonomous properties. Architecture is a unique discipline that has strong relations with other disciplines and produces its own theory with its own disciplinary principles.

Michael Hays (1998) in the introduction of his book, “Architecture Theory since 1968”, emphasizes the significance of theory in an architectural production and states that, besides its role in the “production of the relationships” between an architectural object and the social entity that it belongs to, theory also has the potential of reproducing the autonomous properties of the discipline. According to him, theory opens a horizon for architecture to “transcode” the knowledge from other disciplines and “rewrite systems of thought assumed to be properly extrinsic or irrelevant into architecture’s own idiolect”. Emphasizing on the “mediatory” function of architectural theory between different fields, disciplines or “realities that were thought to remain singular, divergent, and differently constituted”, Hays claims that this negotiation provides a rich literature among disciplines.

Based on the arguments of the critics, it is possible to claim that, architectural theory or the theory of architecture has developed according to the different qualities, properties, and levels specific to architecture. That’s to say, different aspects of architecture, with external and internal properties, provide different qualities and characteristics for the discipline. In this manner, it is also possible to claim that there is not a specific source for the knowledge or theory of architecture. In his evaluation of the sources of theory of art

and architecture, Hanno Walter Krufft (1994, p. 14) says that, “the sources of our knowledge about architectural theory are polyvalent, and there is no justification for limiting the scope of enquiry.” In his viewpoint, artificial works have different “aesthetic, philosophical and ideological foundations, which need to be taken into account if the historical position of these works is to be established.”

As a subject, is architecture unique because of the particular combination of disciplinary approaches it comprises and/or is any one of these disciplinary approaches in themselves unique? We could argue that, as a subject, architecture encompasses several disciplines and uniquely brings together modes of research that are often kept apart (historical analysis and material science for example) and so provides possibilities for multi –and interdisciplinary research. We could also suggest that central to the subject of architecture is architectural design, a particular mode of practice-led research whose disciplinary specificity cannot be found in other types of practice or design. We could therefore make the case that architecture is unique as a subject and as a discipline. (Rendell, 2004, p. 143)

In this sense, it is pointless to draw strict borders between different knowledge domains that support the theory of architecture in different manners, because these internal and external domains have a complex and productive relationship. However, it is obvious that these different sources influence the production of theory in various ways, so there are different tendencies or attitudes in the production activities of architects. Rejecting the strict autonomy or social instrumentality ascriptions for architecture, architects may built their theories more “object-oriented” even so considering the social, cultural, economic and political realities, or more “context-oriented” all the same time that are still supported by architecture’s internal principles and laws. At this point, it is important to refer to Diana Agrest’s “design-non design” and Mario Gandelsonas’ “neo realism-neo rationalism” discussions to explore the issue of “object-oriented” and “context-oriented” theory sources. Both of the critics consider theory of architecture a multi-dimensional notion that is in a communication with various knowledge domains. Thus, as a result of these communications there are different theories evolved that contributes to the architectural praxis from different aspects.

### **3.1 “Design” versus “Non-Design” in Autonomy Debate**

Diana Agrest, in her seminal essay, “Design versus Non-Design” (1998) draws attention to the relationship between architecture and other disciplines and the interaction of architecture with socio-cultural conventions. Questioning the existence of architectural autonomy in these relations, Agrest claims that, while architecture is an autonomous system with its own characteristics, it also belongs to a social context. In other words, architecture is both a self-directed discipline with internal qualities and codes, and it is also a social formation constituted in the preexisting context. Michael Hays (1998, p. 198) –interpreting Agrest’s claim says that, Agrest evaluates architecture in an Althusserian view that rejects the existence of any domain that is “fully autonomous”. As Hays continues, she concentrates on architecture’s disciplinary codes that are “permeable to



other cultural codes -what Althusser called the relative autonomy of levels in a social formation organized in a structured but decentered totality". In Agrest's thought (1998, pp. 333-334), this permeability provides both a "closure" for the discipline and an interaction between design and other cultural domains.

Design can achieve a certain plurality. Within its necessary enclosure of specificity -its cultivation of its own autonomous techniques and occlusion of other cultural codes- it is unconstrained by an imperative of representation; it can combine multiple networks of self-reflexive meaning and provide various points of access for filtering material from outside... (Hays, 1998, p. 198)

Commenting on the debates regarding the external relations and internal characteristics of architecture, Agrest (1998, p. 333) posits that, limiting the scope of architecture to its internal mechanism by concentrating on the formal properties of architecture or considering the contextual issues as the main source of architectural theory, introduces the problem of "incorporating the cultural problematic of architecture into its domain of concern". In order to determine a position for architecture in its "social context" and to explore the relationship between "built environment" and culture, Agrest investigates the external inputs of architecture and eventually asserts the existence of two different types of production as "design" and "non-design" (Agrest, 1998, p. 333)

The first, which I shall call design, is that mode by which architecture relates to cultural systems outside itself; it is a normative process, and embraces not only architectural but also urban design. The second, which is more properly called non-design, describes the way in which different cultural systems interrelate and give form to the built world; it is not a direct product of any institutionalized design practice but rather the result of a general process of culture. (Agrest, 1998, p. 333)

According to Agrest, the mode of "design" denotes the technological optimization, utilitarianism, and "functionalism" of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's architectural design. In Agrest's viewpoint, "design" signifies a cultural production led by the de facto "rules and norms" that are considered as the constituents of the required theoretical base of an architectural work. That's to say, there are "normative" texts (acknowledged as theory) in the domain of architecture that controls the autonomous zone defined as "design". As asserted by Agrest (1998, p. 343), these "normative" texts ensure an "institutional character" for design and differentiate it from non-design.

Design, considered as both a practice and a product, is in effect a closed system—not only in relation to culture as a whole, but also in relation to other cultural systems such as literature, film, painting, philosophy, physics, geometry, etc. Properly defined, it is reductive, condensing, and crystallizing general cultural notions within its own distinct parameters. Within the limits of this system, however, design constitutes a set of practices—architecture, urban design, and industrial design—unified with respect to certain normative theories. That is, it possesses specific characteristics that distinguish it from all other cultural practices and that establish a boundary between what is design and what is not. (Agrest, 1998, p. 333)

For Agrest, architecture has its own control over itself, with internal qualities, that reveal the uniqueness of architecture in comparison to other cultural practices. In addition to this specificity, it's also evaluated as a cultural product. In this sense, she finds it meaningless to compare different kinds of architectures by regarding the formal concerns or considering the issue of "social engagement" as criteria. Instead, Agrest distinguishes "design" from "non-design" in order to underline the existence of different "architectures", which are supported by disciplinary or cultural knowledge. Here, it is crucial to convey that there exist different knowledge domains, which support "design" or "non-design", and they identify different praxes in architecture. For Agrest (Agrest, 1998, p. 333), the opposition or diversity between "design" and "non-design" provides different perspectives for reading and evaluating "the built environment in terms of the relationship between different cultural systems". Determining the differences between design and non-design does not imply two self-enclosed fields, because there is an already established relationship between these two fields; so these fields communicate with each other to make a data transfer. In Agrest's words; "design and non-design, in fact, can be seen as two modes of social discourse; and to consider them in this way opens up the question of what might be called the 'active relationship' between design, as one cultural system, and other cultural systems." (Agrest, 1998, p. 333) Here it can be stated that, "design" and "non-design" indicate the "hybrid" formation of architecture that has disciplinary and interdisciplinary levels supported by interior and exterior theory sources.

### **3.2 "Neo-Rationalism" versus "Neo-Realism" in Autonomy Debate**

Mario Gandelsonas (1998, pp. 7-8), in his seminal essay "Neo-Functionalism", explores that there are two challenging ideologies in architecture culture that have risen from the functionalist motto of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Modernism: neo-nationalism and neo-realism. For him these two ideologies evaluate the role of theory in an architectural production from different aspects and assign it different roles.

Neo-rationalism and neo-realism: these two terms describe more or less exactly the two antagonistic ideologies that share the present architectural scene. Neo-rationalism generally encompasses approaches developed in the late 1960s and in the 1970s; approaches that are opposed to those of neo-realists. Where the former is represented by Aldo Rossi in Europe, Peter Eisenman and John Hejduk in the U.S.A, the latter denotes the major currents of thought prevalent in the 1960s and epitomized by the position of Robert Venturi. (Gandelsonas, 1998, p. 7)

According to Gandelsonas, neo-rationalism evaluates architecture as a self-governing discipline that does not consider the external knowledge domains as a determinant in the production of theory. Architecture has its own grammar, and it has the capability of speaking with its own language. As an "autonomous" and enclosed domain, it accumulates the required data within itself. On the other hand, neo-realism indicates an architecture that regards the social and physical reality of the existing context as a source of the architectural knowledge. Neo-realists consider history as storage of various images

and “combine specific historical references with motifs drawn from pop culture and other sources outside of architecture”. On the contrary, according to the neo-rationalists, history is a “source of imagery”, so it is evaluated as a “continuum in which the guiding rules and principles of architecture evolve”. (Editors, 1984)

Neo-rationalism depends on the idea of an architecture that is autonomous, that is, on an architecture, which, in the eyes of the most radical architects within this tendency, transcends history and culture; an architecture, which is a force in itself, a language that speaks about itself and which does not communicate ideas other than its own. Neo-realism, in contrast, is historical and cultural, it cares for the present, for the other aspects and practices of culture, such as pop art, advertising, cinema and industrial design to which it exposes architecture. (Gandelsonas, 1998, p. 7)

Considering these two concepts as the “complex contradictions” of modernist architecture, Gandelsonas claims that these two notions don’t provide architecture an opportunity of “adding and developing the fundamental dimension of meaning” through architectural objects. (Gandelsonas, 1998, pp. 7-8) At this point he introduces another concept; neo-functionalism as an attitude that seeks the methods of conveying a “meaning within the progress of design in a systematic and conscious way”. Implying the importance of the relationship between this “meaning” and the “theory” behind an architectural work, Gandelsonas finds neo-rationalism and neo-realism essentially anti-functional and deficient concepts in theory production. He suggests “neo-functionalism” as a new model that serves the purpose of the development of architectural theory in between the “neo-rationalist” and the “neo-realist” positions.

In the investigation of the various sources of architectural theory, Agrest and Gandelsonas put different concepts forward, but in essence, these concepts indicate similar aspects of architecture. “Design” and “neo-rationalism” imply a mode of production that is supported by the autonomous qualities of the discipline. Both of these concepts develop their discourses with architecture’s own grammar that is constituted through disciplinary-specific norms, laws, concepts, methods and so on. On the other hand, having very close connotations, “non-design” and “neo-realism” are the concepts they are related with the social and cultural dimension of architecture. These two notions regard the relationship between the built environment and the social, historical, cultural, political or economic determinants of the external reality. Here, it is crucial to state that Agrest and Gandelsonas criticize the view that considers these different aspects (disciplinary and interdisciplinary properties) of architecture independently from each other. For Agrest and Gandelsonas, it is pointless to evaluate architecture according to one of these sides because architecture is not a discipline that governs itself according to a specific source. However, theoretical development of architecture can be supported more by one source while still being assisted by other sources at the same time. As stated previously, this thesis asserts that this condition can be investigated under the two different types of praxes supported by these sources. Here, these praxes cannot be evaluated as an activity that is in relation with only interior or exterior knowledge domains but they should be considered as the practical processes that are led by an architect with a more disciplinary-specific language or an interdisciplinary approach. At

this point, it would be proper to examine these praxes and the differences/similarities between them.

## CHAPTER 4

### TYPES OF “PRAXES” IN ARCHITECTURAL PRODUCTION

As stated by Ögüt (1999, p. 59), architecture is a multidimensional discipline through which “the lifeworld is transformed in material, social and symbolic terms”. In the first place, the “materiality” of architecture implies the technicality of the design and production processes, in which the physical and measurable features of architecture are envisaged. This material dimension of the discipline carries out “physical transformations in both natural and man-made environment”. On the other hand, “sociality” of architecture denotes its relationship with exterior world and makes an artificial object as a product of social structure. By means of this characteristic, architecture transforms the social structure and physical environment by building a relationship between society and space. In spite of the fact that an architectural form cannot reproduce or eradicate the existing social relations by itself in any context, it influences the social actors and their behaviors by “promoting or discouraging certain types of relations.” Besides the “materiality” and “sociality” of architecture, the “symbolic” aspects of architecture indicate its potential of representing different qualities of the milieu that it belongs to. Being in contact with the value systems of the social phenomena, architecture changes the “lifeworld” also in “symbolical” terms. Representing the “existing material process” of the existing context, an architectural product as a “cultural symbol” expresses the cultural values through which the society forms itself. As stated by Ögüt (1999, p. 59), “architecture as a “symbol” discloses not only what a society is at a particular moment in its history, but what it strives to be. It is by virtue of this symbolic function that architecture acquires its status as an art”.

To sum up so far, it can be stated that these three aspects of the discipline support and develop architectural theory from different sides. The “materiality” of architecture signifies an object-oriented notion that deals with architecture’s inner laws and principles by concerning the formal, tectonic, functional and aesthetic qualities. The materiality of architecture points out the “zone” where the disciplinary knowledge of architecture is developed. On the other hand, the “social” and the “symbolic” aspects of the architecture indicate architecture’s concentration on a more context-oriented theory, through which architecture’s various relationships with other disciplines are reproduced.

Regarding the different properties (material, social, and symbolic) of architecture and different (internal and external) sources of architectural theory, this thesis claims that this twofold position of architecture leads to the rise of two different types of “praxes”. The first one is the “object oriented praxis” which creates its theory with architecture’s own disciplinary codes; and the second one is the “context oriented praxis” that considers architecture as a social product and architect as a social agent in the existing context and

social structure.<sup>2</sup> In the first type, architect creates a work of architecture with a normative theory, which regards the tectonic, material, functional, aesthetical and programmatic requirements by using the internal codes of architecture. While developing the architectural theory, architect investigates the constituents of design process, and their relationship with each other, as well as with the produced object. In this kind of praxis, theory is produced in the self-governing zone of architecture. Architect still may have some concerns for the exterior of the architecture (the social, economic and ideological concerns), but architectural design is not carried out according to the external values. He/she draws the boundaries of architecture with its scrutinized properties and solves or analyzes design problems by using disciplinary methods. Here it is important to state that, though the field inside these boundaries provides an environment for searching architecture's disciplinary qualities, it has also a certain level of permeability towards other disciplines. This permeability provides the mentioned "social dimension" for architecture but it does not permit the intervention of external knowledge in the production of theory. In the second type; the context-oriented praxis, the architect being aware of his/her social position, constructs and develops a theory not only on the formal, artistic and tectonic rules, but also on the guiding principles for the re-evaluation of the social and physical context. He/she locates himself/herself as a social agent and evaluates architectural production as a social action. In the development of this context-oriented theory, contextual reality is considered as one of the main sources of architectural knowledge.

Here, it is important to state that, defining different tendencies of architects, and accordingly different praxes in architectural production does not introduce them as completely reverse activities or reject the communication between these activities. Therefore this classification does not imply that "object oriented" and "context-oriented" praxes are exclusive of each other. As stated previously, architects may built their theories more object oriented while considering the social, cultural, economic and political realities, or more context oriented all the same time that is still supported by architecture's internal principles and laws. Therefore, "object-oriented praxis" and "context-oriented praxis" should not be read as contrary to each other.

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<sup>2</sup> While classifying and naming these two types of praxes in architecture, the reason behind the production activities were taken into account. Here, the proposed name for the first type, "object-oriented", implies the architect's concern for the improvement of both the production and the use of the architectural object. This concern is oriented to the "object" itself: its aesthetic, function, architectural program, use, material, spatial development, spatial quality, architectural efficacy, production method and so on. On the other hand, the proposes name for the second type, "context-oriented" regards the factors like site, social-physical environment, date, economic and political conditions, artistic atmosphere, ethical values, universal conditions through which the "object" is designed and placed.

## 4.1 Object Oriented Praxis

Nietzsche allows us to see that the formal “images” produced by the act of designing might be separate entities in themselves, autonomous from, yet equally valid as the procedures that engendered them. The traditional way of analyzing the development of architectural culture has emphasized a “reality” that has to be sought beneath the “surface” of events, or has seen the architectural form as a determined response to another reality based in economics, politics, or society; in all cases it has tried to tie an appearance back to its presumed cause. Following Nietzsche’s argument, however, it should be possible to concentrate on just this appearance –the image of architectural design– as a reality of its own. (Dal Co, 1999, p. 156)

Referring to the Nietzschean thought that emphasizes the relationship between the “appearance” of an object and the “existence” of it, Francesco Dal Co (1999, p. 156) states that, this “appearance” should be considered as the “sign” of the object’s “reality”. Interpreting the “formal image” of a design activity through the “reality of appearance” thesis of Nietzsche, Dal Co claims that, the images of an architectural object should be accepted as the “object” itself, rather than as the representation of the object. Despite there is a common view, which regards architectural images and forms as the planes on which the “reality” of the economic, political, or, societal conditions are reflected; “the image of architectural design” should be considered as the “reality of its own”. According to Dal Co (1999, p. 156), the act of focusing on just this image and reading the formal expressions of architecture present “a more certain amount of how architectural culture exists than any reconstruction of how that form was produced by the various modes of design activity.” For Dal Co, Nietzsche’s thesis provides architecture the possibility of passing over the “ideological mechanisms” that are evaluated as the determinants of the “form” and “content” in some architectural platforms. Moreover, this approach suggests a “new and different critical responsibility toward design”.

The responsibility mentioned here indicates the required attention to conserve the disciplinary knowledge of architecture. As stated before, despite architecture’s relations with other social systems, architecture has the capability of setting its own “frames of meaning” by its own language that is developed by design elements. In this perspective, architectural design is not necessarily carried out according to the external values and conditions. This understanding orients architect to seek architecture’s own qualities in the activity of developing a theory that still has a certain level of permeability towards other disciplines. This permeability enables the building of a controlled relationship between the “inside” and “outside” of the discipline. For Diana Agrest (1998, p. 335) this relationship does not pose a threat for architecture, but rather proposes a “dynamic process, which opens up the problem of the production of meaning”. In her viewpoint, while architecture is an autonomous system with its own characteristics, it also belongs to a social context and the relation of architecture with its own social context is stabilized through a “mechanism”. The cultural events occur under the control of that mechanism, which designates the required architectural codes by incorporating the useful external knowledge within itself.

This mechanism allows for the articulation of design with some systems and not with others, a process which operates according to the ‘internal’ determinations of design –that is, according to the rules of architectural language, to the logic of the configuration, and to the meaning proper to the ‘text’ of design.” (Agrest, 1998, p. 335)

In Agrest’s words, “the relationship between design and culture may be stated as the mode by which design is articulated as one cultural system in relation to other cultural systems at the level of codes”. (Agrest, 1998, p. 335) For her, there are three kinds of codes that distinguish the different types of theoretical productions in architecture: the “specific” codes that are inherent in design (for example the ones “establishing relationships between plans and elevations or plans and cross-sections”); the “multiply specific” codes that are shared by different disciplines (such as the concepts, “spatial” or “iconic”); and the “non-specific” codes that are exclusive to one system or discipline and transformed by another system due to a common feature (for example the code “rhythm” that is transformed from “music” is to “architecture”). In order to explain the “specificity” of these codes Agrest (1998, p. 335) states that, “the first type of codes are specific to design, the second have a multiple specificity, and the third are non-specific”. As stated by Hays (1998, p. 9), in Agrest’s model, this “encoding” is related with “recollecting traces of the sacred, cosmological, and magical dimensions of human existence” and “(it) is the aspect of architecture that specifies it as a cultural practice”.

In Agrest’s model, the articulation or transformation of various disciplinary codes from different knowledge fields is also a crucial discussion topic. Here, the operation of changing the data from one format to another during a knowledge-transfer between different disciplines becomes an important issue. Having been introduced by Fredric Jameson (1981, p. 40), the term “transcoding”<sup>3</sup> explains this operation. Transcoding indicates a process through which the notions of different fields are converted to each other by encoding and decoding the meanings that are connoted. As claimed by Diana Agrest, the codes from other socio-cultural formations could be transcoded into the field of architecture. (Agrest, 1998, pp. 335-337) Though there is a data transfer from other knowledge domains in this operation, these codes are re-produced in architecture’s own disciplinary field, so the external factors that arise according to the socio-cultural conditions only give an inspiration for this production stage. The creation of these new disciplinary codes is organized according to the architecture’s internal values. Architectural work becomes a reality and develops its own theory under the control of this system. Architects, while considering constraints such as site, economy, function, and customers’ requests in any architectural design process, can also establish a communication with their own context through transforming these external codes into architecture’s own field. Producing the knowledge in architecture’s own disciplinary field and using it in the design and construction processes, proposes a field of integrating the architectural knowledge with design practice, so provides praxis. In the activity of praxis, the practical wisdom and the manner of architect are accumulated through the whole design and production processes. Here, in order to systematize this accumulation, it is

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Hays (1998, p. 198) also uses the term “transcoding” while commenting on Agrest’s emphasis on interactions of different knowledge fields.



necessary to theorize the whole design and production processes by considering the order and relationship between each action.

#### **4.1.1 Theorizing Design Process**

If considered as a term, the definition of the word “knowledge” or the act of obtaining knowledge; “knowing” emphasizes a time-duration rather than the term itself. When considered as a “state” requiring the acts of experiencing, discovering or perceiving, “knowing” points out the process of achieving or developing the “knowledge”. (Yüncü, 2008, p. 6) Here it can be claimed that the definition of the word “knowing” is very related with the meaning of the term of “praxis” that implies the way of getting or developing knowledge as the aspired matter. In terms of a praxis activity, every architectural production generates its specific knowledge as a result of a course of action.

As a product of architecture, it is possible to evaluate a design object as a concretized form of the “knowledge” that is constituted through the acts or events of thinking and design processes. Each design process is shaped according to the organizational method of the architect, who establishes the relations between these acts and events according to his/her “intention”. Architect conceptualizes a design project and tries to produce specific design rules regarding different paradigms. Bernard Tschumi (1996, p. 181) indicates that, if architecture is interpreted as the act of proposing and constituting relations between events and movements, so the architect can be considered as the arranger and creator of these relations. In this organization, the relations between various overlapped layers of the design should be taken into consideration. Each layer comes into existence according to the internal qualities of architecture (such as form, function, and structure; and architecture’s aesthetic and tectonic qualities) and the theory directs this process by concerning the development of architectural forms, old and new techniques, technological inventions, materials and so on. Here, the attempt for developing a theory that is concentrated on the internal dynamics of architecture and arranging the design process that conveys a meaning through design elements brings about object-oriented praxis in architecture. To exemplify the process of object oriented praxis in architecture; it is assumed that Kerem Yazgan's selected works present a significant profile to make an inquiry in the association of theory and practice in architecture. Yazgan is a well-known Turkish architect and an important amount of his architectural projects has been realized since 1996 when he founded his first architectural firm. Besides his architectural works, he has contributed to architecture by publishing several academic works, giving design lectures at academy, and taking roles in professional societies.

To discover and reveal architecture’s intrinsic characteristics, Yazgan uses the term “interiority” to point out architecture’s own private sphere. Here, interiority does not suggest a strictly autonomous zone that refutes architecture’s relationships with other disciplines; nevertheless it also does not accept these relationships as a determinant in the development of a theory. Interiority refers to the production of knowledge with architecture’s own disciplinary codes. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 9) For him, the concept of interdisciplinarity does not challenge the disciplinary specific properties of architecture,

because it does not suggest a complete permeability to the knowledge from other disciplines. As stated by him, the concern for the external realities of architecture is a prerequisite for the progression of the discipline, but the “involvement with other disciplines through interdisciplinary action does not imply that architectural discipline should be governed by an ‘external phenomena’, such as socio-political framework or cultural conventions.” (Yazgan, 2003, pp. 9-10)

Yazgan claims that, the conventional attitude that feels the necessity of borrowing the theoretical knowledge from other disciplines or the socio-cultural phenomena restrains architecture from concentrating on its own disciplinary issues. According to Yazgan, the reason behind the ambiguity of the boundaries that define architecture’s specific area has different reason, but the main reason is the evaluation of architecture as a representative tool of the external realities and the use narration for legitimating this representation. (Yazgan, 2003, pp. 11-17) According to him, “conceiving design process as solely composed of representation renders architecture being dependent on signifiers and knowledge from other disciplines”. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 55) In his article entitled “*Mimari Tasarımın ‘Öteki’si, Mimari Tasarımın Gündelik Hayatının Keşfi*” (The “Other” of Architectural Design, the Discovery of the Daily Life of Architectural Design), Yazgan (2002) criticizes the viewpoint that sees an architectural work as an object that substitutes the exterior world with a pseudo “narration”. Architectural production is a process that is comprised of two basic parts as “design” and “construction” and there is always a timespan between these two processes. As stated by Yazgan in his PhD thesis; “Designography of Architecture” (2003, p. 4), “there is not only disparity in the time intervals between each phase of the architectural process, but also disparity in the reality of the architectural space in each phase”. Due to the time duration and the difference between the initial design idea of the architect and the physical reality of the constructed object that is experienced by the user, there is usually a gap between the designed space and the experienced space. In this respect, there is a general attitude that considers the experienced space as the reality and feels the necessity of linking the space that is envisaged in the design process to the experienced one by using those constructed narrations. In this way, architects sometimes try to conceal the difference between the intended and the constructed object. (Yazgan, 2002)

Furthermore, as stated by Yazgan (2003, p. 8), even in the conceptualizing process, architect intends to develop his/her design idea by imagining the “future users” of the space. Thereby, he/she tries to foresee the possible experiences of the users of the space by the acts of “philosophizing” and “psychologizing”.<sup>4</sup> Yazgan considers these two acts as commonly used tools for constructing a relationship between the design idea of the architect and the social experience of the user. Using the data of external phenomena, architect sometimes employs “narratives” to control or dictate the user in the way of experiencing the space. Here, the future user of the space is situated in these narrations, written by the architect. However, the real user of the space does not fit with the fictionalized user of architect all the time. There is always a possibility of unexpected

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<sup>4</sup> Quoting from Peter Eisenman (2001, p. 261), Kerem Yazgan (2003, p. 8) uses these two terms: “philosophizing” and “psychologizing” for making an investigation in the possible experiences of the users of a space.

relationships between the future user and space because there are always unexpected events occurring in the space that is designed by architect. Yazgan names this condition as a “signifier–signified disparity”. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 11)

Considering the effort of architect to establish a relationship between the designed and the finalized work, it is possible to claim that the experience of the user is an important determinant in establishing an identity to the built space. Yazgan (2002) states that, the appraisalment of the constructed space depends on the spatial experience of its user. He says that, “constructed spaces always have architectural potentials” that cannot be foreseen in the design process. In this respect, some architects who try to establish a relationship between these spaces of different mediums and consider the designed space as the representation of the constructed space. Accordingly, this attitude ignores the specific characteristics of the unrealized design process, and evaluates theory as a discourse of representation and promotion. For Yazgan, reducing architectural design process to a representation and theory to a narration deplete the meaning attributed to the space. As stated by him, “it is the act of design where a design gains its meaning, significance, expression, and knowledge. Architectural design can be considered more than an abstraction, representation, or narration, but an action.” (Yazgan, 2003, p. 51) In this respect, it is essential to consider architectural design as an action and recognize the role of theory in this process. Now, in order to construct a well-structured theory developed by the action itself, it is necessary to seek the ways of producing design knowledge in a systematic way and developing a flexible design method for the architect according to his/her “purpose”. This viewpoint suggests the method of leading an architectural production through the acts of the design process.

Tschumi indicates that spatial experience occurs through events. Similarly, design experience occurs through ‘events’ of design processes. Thus, architectural design is an experience having processes and activities, which is determined by acts or ‘events’ at the instant of production. These acts or ‘events’ constitute the “interiority” of architectural design and since the manipulation of the design between different phases is through acts, they lead to “the invention of new states and different situations” in designing. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 25)

Yazgan indicates that, developing disciplinary knowledge through the design process of an architectural work and putting this knowledge into practice enable architecture to be nourished from its own disciplinary source. For that reason, he suggests a research field that investigates the “acts” and the “events” of the design process. He says that, architectural theory can be constructed with the knowledge that arises from the “acts” of the design process, and this theory can be put into practice in the architectural production (Yazgan, 2003, p. 27). Herein, the architect concentrates on the different phases of the design process and use the knowledge of every single act in the development of the architectural theory. This attitude emancipates architecture from being a “dependent culture” and provides a method for opening up a horizon for architecture to improve its own discourse. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 2) As interpreted by Jane Rendell, in her essay entitled “Architectural Research and Disciplinarity” (2004), looking through the ways in which

the acts or events of a design process operate constitutes a new field of research in architectural design. Here, it is essential for architect to determine the acts of a design process, explore the possibilities of different relationships between these acts, and decide on the ways for organizing them. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 33) In this way, architectural knowledge arranges a specific data set in each design activity by considering the various relationships between different design elements and acts peculiar to that activity. Architect contributes to the elaboration of architectural theory by using architecture's own grammar that is improved with new codes of the different design processes. In this system, while the production activity is finalized with a concrete object, the fundamental aim is to seek the ways of systematizing and advancing the production of space, so this theory-based production offers a familiar "purposeful action"; praxis.

#### **4.1.1.1 The "Design of Design Acts" in Producing Knowledge**

Designing the design acts means arranging the acts and phases of design process in a systematic way. This activity, proposes a system for theorization, organization and evaluation of design process. Through this system that controls the various relationships between different design phases, architect can see the various potentials and possibilities of architectural design. Kerem Yazgan (2003) uses a term, "designography", for indicating this research area. He introduces designography as a new research area for developing and evaluating design process in the own scope of architecture. Besides contributing to the discipline by proposing a new model for developing architectural theory, he puts his theory into practice during design and construction processes of his architectural projects.

Design process comes into being by means of its acts of practice. Like cinematography, design develops through actions. Whereas cinematography is the art and process of making film, design is the art and process of making design. The investigation concerning how acts are organized opens up a new area of research in the architectural discipline: a research concerning designography in architecture. Hence, by using this knowledge, which is yet to be developed, this thesis claims that architect becomes a designographer. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 3)

As stated by Yazgan, design is an inclusive process that comprises various acts as "researching the activities and production methods", "writing the design program over the initially given program", "researching, investigating and creating the systematics that exist in daily life of architectural design, defining the transitions between the processes and the stages by means of activities and making a research about the effect of each act on the whole". (Yazgan, 2013) In this respect, if architectural design is regarded as a research activity involving the actions mentioned above, "work-being" of an architectural production activity becomes more of an issue rather than the "object-being" of it. At this point, this "work-being" reveals a praxis.

Architectural work becomes a reality under the control of its system that organizes the acts or events of a design process and reveals the internal values of architectural design.

“The total design activity can be denominated as a work. While the different steps and activities of that work are related, they can also be distinguished from each other.” (Yazgan, 2003, p. 19) Architectural production is related with the act of designing, conceptualizing, making or constructing a building. Furthermore, there are other activities considering the act of experiencing or living the building in terms of architectural production. These activities regard the difference between the design process and the construction period of the building.

[A]rchitecture is both substance and act. The sign is a record of an intervention –an event and an act, which goes beyond the presence of elements, which are merely necessary conditions. Architecture can be proposed as an ordering of conditions drawn from the universe of form together with the act of designating conditions of geometry, use, and significance as a new class of objects. (Eisenman, 1998, pp. 197-198)

In this systematic organization, each design phase has an effect on the other phases and there is an interaction between them. These interactions expose a continuous progress, but this continuity does not require a rigorous sequence that is defined at the early stages of design. Due to the different external or internal factors, the order of those phases and the relationship between them may change. In the emergence of an unexpected factor, the logical evolvement of the design may be interrupted.<sup>5</sup> However, if there is a reference system that develops the design knowledge in a systematic way, even if an event or phase of the process is suddenly stopped, the system conveys information about general organization from other phases. This reference system may be transformed or modified in time, so the whole process does not require a constant design rule. Each design phase with its own characteristics regards the order of the earlier phases, but at the same time brings a new order and contributes to the knowledge that leads the process. At this point, while the actions of design process and possible relations of design elements are indefinite, thanks to the reference system theorized by the architect, the general configuration is definite.

#### **4.1.1.2 Architectural Diagram as A Tool of Producing & Recording Knowledge**

In the proposed object-oriented production activity, the knowledge that is produced under the control of a reference system accumulates through different stages of the design process. In order to control this accumulation, architectural diagrams can be used as the tools of visualizing the “design of the design acts” and recording the knowledge produced in different phases. As stated by Yazgan (2003, p. 50), “recording of acts may help to capture the actuality of design process and to collect the data of experience”. Through architectural diagrams, it is possible to evaluate the defined relationships between different design elements, and it is also possible to check the mechanism of the whole system and consider the unforeseen potentials or of design process. Besides serving as a

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<sup>5</sup> Kerem Yazgan, in “Designography of Architecture” (2003, p.27), makes an analogy between the evolution of the design acts and a living system, and points out the similarities between them. He says that, “concerning living organism, an unexpected occurrence, may disrupt its possible evolutionary path and lead to a different form of development. The same issue may occur in the design process as well.”

medium of representation for introducing an idea, architectural diagrams are productive devices for catching the different alternatives of a design process. As indicated by Kenneth Knoespel (2002, p. 10), diagrams are devices for both representing the basic design ideas with simple drawings, and for “thinking” and “thinking through” during the whole architectural production process. Here, in addition to providing a systematic with “order” and “stability”, a diagram opens up a way for discovering the design possibilities.

While a diagram may visually present or reinforce an idea one moment, the next it may provide a means for seeing something never seen before. After commenting on how recent architectural theory has approached diagram, I consider the relationship between diagram and metaphor before turning my attention to the ways that diagrams function within a process that includes design as well as building. Finally, I ask how the use of diagram within architecture points not only to a phenomenology of invention and practice but also to the networks, which constitute architecture. (Knoespel, 2002, p. 11)

Peter Eisenman, in his seminal book “Diagram Diaries” (1999) indicates the autonomous qualities of architecture and mentions his use of the discipline’s interior knowledge. Dealing with the representative and generative qualities of architectural diagram, he investigates architectural diagrams’ contribution to architectural production in the stage of theorization of design process. In this process, the data or knowledge can be produced, developed, transformed and transmitted by means of conceptual diagrams so; these diagrams may be used by the architect to foresee the potentials of design idea. It is possible to see the relations between the events of the process by the help of these conceptual diagrams. As indicated by Peter Eisenman (1999), architectural diagrams take a part in architectural production, and act as a tool of developing architectural knowledge in its own discourse. The use of diagrams in design process enables architects to produce disciplinary knowledge and use it in a systematic way in the whole design process. In Eisenman’s (1999, p. 37) words, “the diagram is part of a process that intends to open architecture to its own discourse, to its own rhetoric and thus to potential tropes which are latent within it.” According to him:

If in the interiority of architecture there is a potentially autonomous condition that is not already socialized or that is not historicized, one which can be distilled from a historicized and socialized interiority, then all diagrams do not necessarily take up new disciplinary and social issues. Rather, diagrams can be used to open up such an autonomy to understand its nature. If this autonomy can be defined as singular because of the relationship in architecture between sign and signified, and if singularity is also a repetition of difference, then there must be some existing condition of architecture in order for it to be repeated differently. This existing condition can be called architecture’s interiority. (Eisenman, 1999, p. 31)

As stated by Eisenman, a diagram is not an abstraction of the form but is the “image” of an idea.<sup>6</sup> A diagram is not an abstraction of the structure but a tool for understanding and expressing the design idea. Examining the general usage of the diagrams in

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<sup>6</sup> Eisenman uses the term “ideogram” for naming the “image of an idea”. (Eisenman, 1999, p. 27)

architecture, Eisenman presents the historical usage of the diagram in architecture as “explanatory or analytical devices” and as “generative devices.” These explanatory devices are used for rendering the systematic organization of an architectural object. Additionally, diagrams as creative devices are used for demonstrating the development of design process. As stated by him, in addition to being a form of representation, a diagram acts as a “generative” mediation between architecture’s interior knowledge and the concrete object. (Eisenman, 1999, p. 27) It is important to expose the architectural knowledge through a realized work, and the diagram provides an opportunity for revealing the data by its communicative aspects. As Eisenman states:

The diagram is one potential means to articulate architecture’s interiority, its sign and its being as a singular characteristic of architecture. A diagram is not a plan, nor is it a static entity. Rather it is conceived of as a series of energies, which draw upon the interiority, and anteriority of architecture as a potential for generating new configurations. (Eisenman, 1999, p. 37)

According to Eisenman, using diagrams in design process provides the possibility of falsifying the general idea that considers the form and content as separate entities. A diagram shows the relations between different design elements and different production phases, so makes it possible for architect to both create and read the object with its content. Here, Eisenman’s use of the diagrams proposes a different rationale that is “more involved with a process of architecture somewhat distant from the design process of the traditional author-architect”.

Such a logic could not be found in form itself, but rather in a diagrammatic process that had the potential to open up the difference between the form/content relationship in architecture and other disciplines, particularly in other plastic disciplines of painting and sculpture. While diagrams of painting, sculpture, and architecture were often seen as similar in their content, my use of the diagram proposed that there was some critical difference between them. This difference was found in the unique relationship in architecture between its instrumentality and its iconicity, between architecture’s function and its meaning, and ultimately between its sign and its signified. (Eisenman, 1999, pp. 49-50)

At this point, the diagram becomes both the “substance” (the sign on which we see the recorded action) and the “act” (the acts of the design process). (Eisenman, 1999, p. 72)

While Jacques Derrida would argue for the free play of linguistic signs, he rarely linked the sign’s physical attributes to its sign value. Previously, specific forms in architecture were always linked to a function (a column must always have a shape and a material dimension) and, therefore, to a meaning. My initial idea in the use of the diagram was that the substrate of form, here referred to as an aspect of architecture’s interiority, could be detached from such programmatic concerns. (Eisenman, 1999, p. 50)

Using diagrams as a tool for organizing the relationship between different design constituents and recording the operations architectural production processes, Kerem Yazgan posits that, drawings and diagrams that are produced during design process should not be reduced to a tool of representing the constructed object. Although drawings give a

clue about the future condition of an uncompleted work, “[t]he drawing belongs to the instant of production”. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 51)

Architectural design can be considered more than an abstraction, representation, or narration, but an action. The drawings detached from “object-being” means they are no longer bound to construction, function and tectonic reality. Their suggestion is that they reveal the possibility of architectural designs to act as another condition that is not related to its function, its meaning or aesthetic, but is related to the unnoticed potential of architectural design: its work-being interiority which can only be conveyed through acts of design. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 51)

#### **4.1.2 Re-Reading Object-Oriented Praxis Through Selected Works of Kerem Yazgan**

Praxis is a type of “procedural knowledge”, a concept that deserves some attention because it suggests that praxis is at one and the same time both a verb and a noun. Praxis, in other words, is a type of situated action – informed, reflective, but unquestionably kinetic, people acting to change conditions in some way. But the concept of praxis suggests a type of knowledge as well – a deep understanding of local situations. (Hocks, Lopez, & Grabill, 2000)

Developing an architectural theory, using it as a guiding tool in the design process, and associating this theory with practice lead to the familiar notion: praxis. If architectural design process is considered as object-oriented praxis, this guiding tool (a normative theory, which regards tectonics, function, program and aesthetics and uses the internal codes of architecture) can be evaluated as the “procedural knowledge” of praxis. Kerem Yazgan quests for a method of organizing his architectural design processes according to a system led by architecture’s internal values, parameters, or requirements. He concentrates on the relations between the acts of design processes and proposes a research method entitled “designography”, as a way of organizing the relationships between different processes of design, producing the knowledge of this organization, and integrating it to the whole design process.

With the proposed research method; “designography”, Yazgan produces architectural diagrams to develop design knowledge at the first stages of the design process. He uses diagrams for constructing new relations between the constituents of design and accordingly the acts of the whole process. Each of these design constituents has a different function, so these diagrams provide information about the ways of associating different functions by illustrating the possible relations between different program elements. According to these possibilities, he develops a reference system that leads the organization of the work. As stated by Yazgan: “specific ‘relations’ are constituted by diagrams between the elements, which compose the design, and these are orientated by acts”. (Yazgan, 2013) As he states:



“Different parts are related to each other by means of classification-grouping, putting side by side, dimensioning, rotating, sliding, making famous, making a part of another, layering, folding, joining, superimposing, moving to the background, increasing the background, intersecting, completing, dividing, surrounding, framing, contracting, expanding etc...These acts are, at the same time, used for editing the whole and orientating it during the process. The relation, which is constituted by diagram, is the modulator and acts as the common denominator of the contractions and expansions in the process. The design of the relations by means of activities dissolves the manual world (which depends on the architect’s hand) and constitutes different reference systems.” (Yazgan, 2013)

One of his most famous projects, the winning project of the competition for Middle East Technical University “MODSIM Modeling and Simulation Research Center”, that was designed in collaboration with architect Burak Turgutoğlu and built in 2009, “displays a unique identity by exhibiting a different knowledge in terms of both the formal, spatial and contextual means of production and the choice of materials”. (Yazgan, 2013) Located at METU Technopark area, the building seems to be harmonized with its site by means of its humble geometry, its proportions, and colors used on the facade layer.

In the general organization of MODSIM building, the arrangement of the design constituents generates a system of “consecutive functional strips”<sup>7</sup>. These concentric strips are basically: “sun shading steel frame of the outer facade, facade itself that is composed of enamel painted glass of five different green colors, working rooms, service band, circulation corridor, atrium void, and the mirror coated pool base in the middle.” (Yazgan, 2013) (Figure 1.1) In this configuration, presenting a different characteristic and spatial organization from other strips, each strip has a degree of autonomy in itself. This autonomy comes into being by means of the separation of different programmatic elements and finally, the placement of these elements into different strips. Nevertheless, due to the required communication between different functions of the program, these self-governing strips establish a relationship with the other strips and serve for the generation of a unity.

This relation between different design elements brings along a unified whole. In the design process of MODSIM building, the first act is to designate a strip as a generic design element and to assign different functions for the multiplied strips. In this process, according to the relation between different programmatic and design elements; the placement, the size, or the form of the strips may change but these re-arrangements don’t block the general layout of the system. (Figure 1.2) In process of the design of the design acts, Yazgan (2003, p.2) searches for the ways of establishing a relationship between different elements by using many “conceptual tools, which themselves indicate an act as well: repetition, mapping, cutting etc.” As a consequence, the main acts of the design activity develop design knowledge that governs the operation of the whole process. This organizational method helps the architect to see the possibilities of an architectural design,

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<sup>7</sup> The organization of the strips resembles Turkish carpet so he names the concept of the project as “Turkish Carpet Abstraction”. This information is provided by Kerem Yazgan in an interview made by the author with him.

so the design process of an architectural object may be finalized by considering these possibilities. In the case of MODSIM building, a probable intervention can be made to the organization of any strip under the control of the developed reference system. METU MODSIM building has two different programs: a simulation center and a research center. Having different organizations and different circulation bands, these different programs have the potential of being integrated in case of a need. It is a “flexible system” as Yazgan calls it.

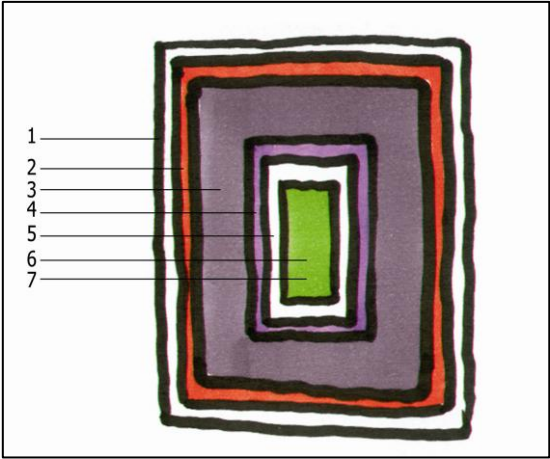


Figure 1.1: The arrangement of the design constituents generates a system of “consecutive functional strips”. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

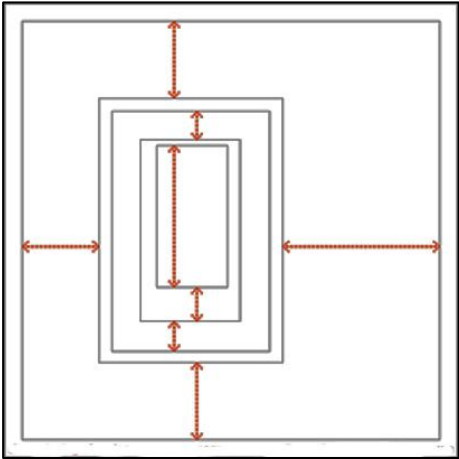


Figure 1.2: The diagram of the flexibility of different strips. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

Besides the flexibility of the plan organization with “layered strip pattern”, the building has also a similar flexibility in the third dimension. The 3D grid (matrix) of the structural system organizes the relationships between different design elements and between different programs. (Yazgan, 2013) (Figure 1.3) All of the constituents of the building are placed according to this system. Like the act of defining o a generic strip layer in the plan organization, Yazgan also defines a generic section in the vertical direction. Through the act of “repeating and rotating” this generic section, he creates a central space in the building named as “atrium space”. (Yazgan, 2013) (Figure 1.4) According to him:

The components that make up of the building inside, which are, walls, windows, suspended ceilings, shafts, lighting elements, ducts, balustrades, switches, etc., and the outside, which are, canopies, floor coverings of the plaza, entrance doors, etc., find a place in the design through this three dimensional matrix. The constructive elements are brutal, easily demountable and remountable and open to re-structuring. Every future changes in the design, may take place within this grid respectively. (Yazgan, 2013)

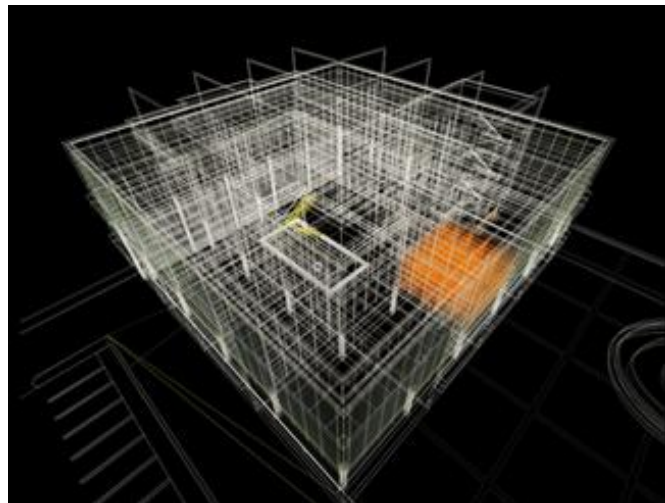


Figure 1.3: The model that illustrates the matrix formed through the general design idea of Modsimmer. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

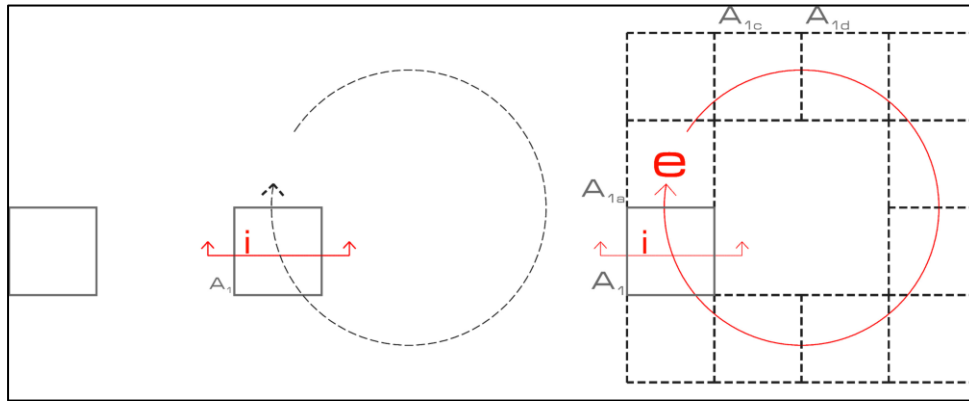


Figure 1.4: Through the act of “repeating and rotating” the generic section, the atrium space is created. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

In the construction period, this systematic organization provides a reference system for determining the relations of the construction elements, so as stated by Yazgan, the 3D grid system “gives way to a peaceful working environment between different actors, such as architects, engineers and craftsmen etc., in the process of construction”. (Yazgan, 2013) As stated by Yazgan, there is always a struggle between the designed space and the constructed space. This systematic organization eliminates this duality.<sup>8</sup> Due to the existence of a theory that leads the whole system, an unexpected situation can be eliminated easily. The adjustment of the matrix according to different structural and technical elements provides the possibility of changing or repairing any of these systems without interrupting the running of the other systems.



Figure 1.5: MODSIM Modeling and Simulation Research Center. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

<sup>8</sup> From a presentation of Kerem Yazgan held on 15 November 2012 at Middle East Technical University. Kerem Yazgan introduced his research of “designography of architecture” through his realized projects.

In another case, the “Orange House” built in Ankara in 2010, Kerem Yazgan developed a theory for designing different relationships between different acts and design elements. According to this theory, there are various acts that manage the whole design process. The first act is determining the program requirements and the spatial needs of each programmatic element, such as the entrance space, guest room, dining room, bedroom, and the office. As an initial act, he classifies these constituents according to the possible/foreseen interactions between them. Yazgan groups those programmatic elements in five different rectangular volumes by the zoning method. (Figure 2.1) The separated volumes are defined as autonomous objects that have a unity in themselves and displaced and dimensioned according to the program requirements. The grid structure of the building works as a reference tool for scaling and forming the volumes. Each of the volumes includes a room inside and these rooms are connected to the main circulation space on the each level. (Yazgan, 2013)

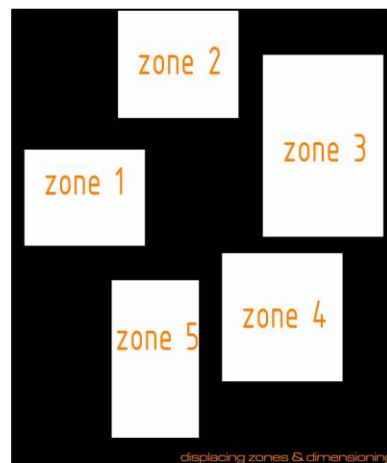


Figure 2.1: Different programmatic elements are grouped by a zoning method. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

In the first phase of the design process, the second important act is combining the separated volumes by another design element. The glass curtain walls constitute a physical relationship between the separated volumes and they also create a central space in between these volumes. Here the initial design idea is grouping the related program elements and then connecting them via glass walls, according to a generic relationship. This method provides flexibility for the architect in re-shaping and re-dimensioning each volume according to the changeable determinants of the design process. Due to the existence of a generic connection method designed by him, there is a possibility of arranging the forms, sizes or the order of the spaces during the design process. (Figure 2.2 and 2.3) For example, in one of the five different volumes, the room of Zone 1 is dimensioned according to a carpet because the future user of the space wants to use a

specific carpet on that space. (Yazgan, 2013) The request of the client and the program requirements can be adapted to the system due to the flexibility of the design idea.

The systematic organization of the design idea also eases the construction process. The autonomy of each volume provides different construction opportunities to the engineer or technician of the project. Moreover, the layered organization of the walls, as the vertical design elements, provides a defined space for other design constituents such as doors, niches, shaft and other technical components. There is a double vertical wall layer around the rooms inside the volumes, so these design elements are embedded between these layers. This design idea is supported by a 60 cm x 60 cm grid structure that designates both the vertical layers and the proportions of the volumes. (Yazgan, 2013) As stated by Yazgan, the intention here is to develop a “flexible relationship” both between different program/design elements and between different actors such as architects, engineers and the users. Constructing a base theory for the building, he both orients the development of the design idea and systematizes the construction process. (Yazgan, 2013) According to him:

The design program is developed by the architect with the aid of the client. The architect aimed at a flexible relationship between program components and materials, user demands, site peculiarities, local climate and habitat, architects and engineers that are involved with the project. The program itself is a ‘design of relationships’, referring to the relations developed between not only design programs, but also between the drawing and the architect, the architect and the owner and the owner and the drawing. The design program is supported by diagrams, giving way to the integration of user with the design process. The building is the product of a flexible-systematic process without losing the initial idea. (Yazgan, 2013)

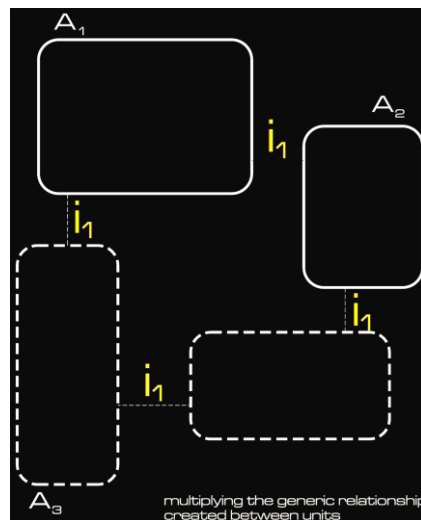


Figure 2.2: There is a generic connection method designed by Yazgan. Source: Kerem Yazgan’s Archive

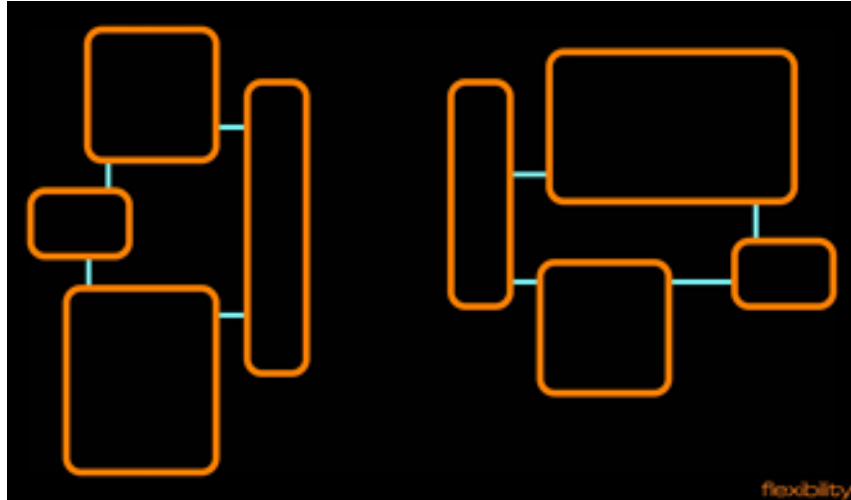


Figure 2.3: There is a possibility of changing the sizes or the order of the volumes in the design process. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive



Figure 2.4: The separation of the units can be perceived from the exterior of the building. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive



Figure 2.5: Different volumes are connected via circulation paths. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

Kerem Yazgan works with a similar method in the plan organization of the “White House”, built in Ankara in 2012. As an initial design idea, he groups various program units in different zones according to their functional proximity. Yazgan defines four different separated volumes and then proposes a generic connection between these volumes. According to this “connection method”, each volume is tied to the central core where the circulation path of each volume intersects. Here, the first design act is again to separate the volumes according to the program and the user requirements and the second act is to attach them for in a unity. These two acts are carried out according to a reference system that organizes the design process. Defining the relationship between different design elements sets up this reference system. As stated by Yazgan (2013), after the relation between one of these separated volumes and the core of circulation is established, the multiplicity is provided by repetition. He considers this tie between a volume and core as a model and multiplies the volumes by rotating this section around the core. (Figure 3.1) The physical relation of each volume with the central circulation core is provided in a systematic way both in the 2D (plan) and the 3D (section) organizations. As a subsequent design act, Yazgan intends to provide a visual integrity for the functionally and physically separated units and uses another design element, an outer skin that wraps around the volumes to join them together. (Figure 3.2) Moreover, he places the roof slab that covers these volumes above and provides a visual integration.



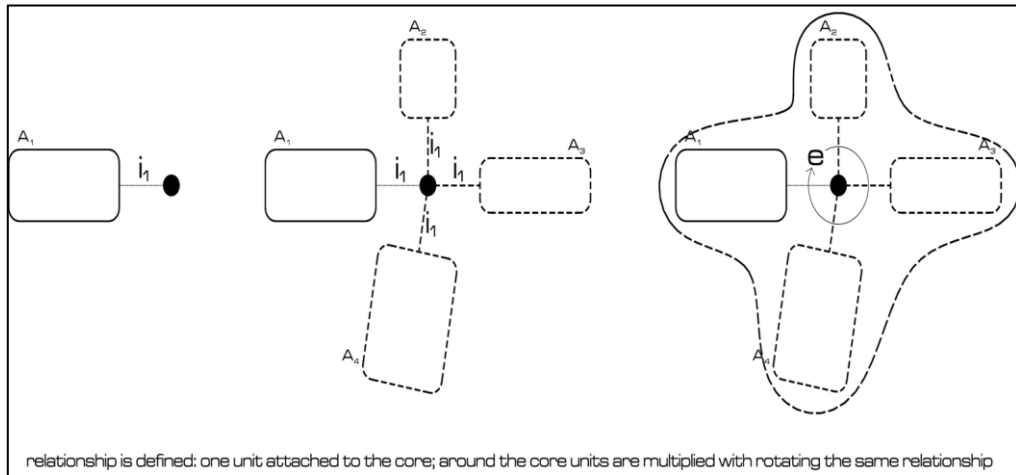


Figure 3.1: Arrangement of the design acts through a reference system. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

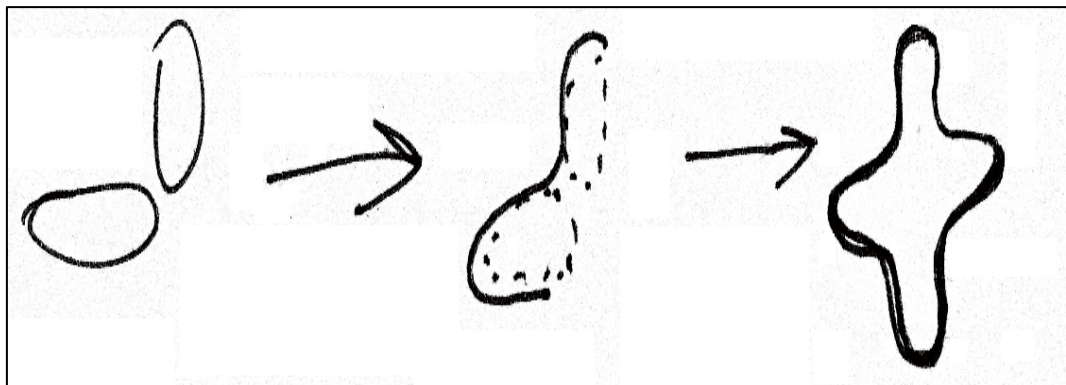


Figure 3.2: The outer skin wraps around the units and joins them together. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

This organization provides an opportunity for the architect to re-shape each of the separated volumes without changing the general configuration during the design process. Repeating the same relationship between the core and the separated units, the “arms” around the core can be multiplied or re-designed by changing the limits of the cover that wraps the volumes. (Figure 3.3 and 3.4) (Yazgan, 2013) Furthermore, the general design rule that proposes a degree of autonomy to each volume provides the possibility of changing the form of the arms or interchanging the function of the spaces to the architect, by means of the flexibility of the system. Here, considering the possible/future changes in the building, Yazgan designs some parts of the volumes as plug in/out systems.

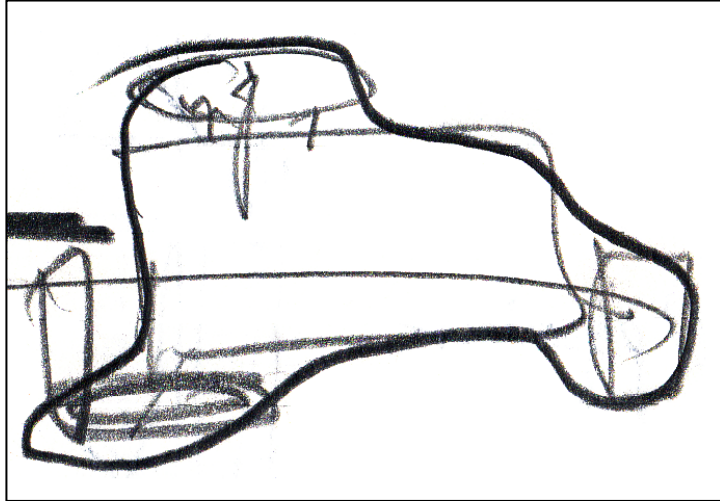


Figure 3.3: The outer skin is like a flexible enclosure. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

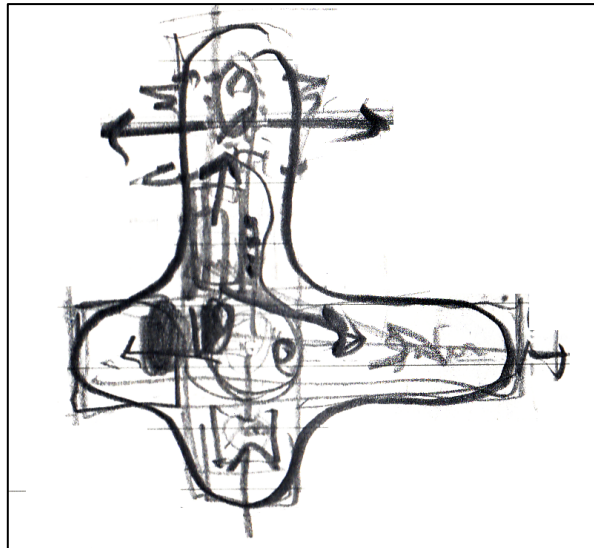


Figure 3.4: The "arms" around the core can be multiplied or re-designed by changing the limits of the cover. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive



Figure 3.5: White House. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

In another work, Kavacık Office built in İstanbul in 2009, Yazgan considers the approximate areas of the different program components and places them in the separate rectangular diagrams that are scaled with respect to each other. (Figure 4.1) Yazgan collects the working areas of the office building in the main volume and groups other spaces as “service”, “circulation”, “shop-car park”, “cafe”, “private meeting” in separate volumes considering the relations between them. As stated by him, each of these volumes “exists in a whole with its own exigency”. (Yazgan, 2013) In order to establish a physical relationship between different design units, he introduces an integrating system. At this stage, he considers both the characteristics of the site and the possible relations to be constructed between different programmatic elements. The volume that involves the working areas is placed at the center of the design scheme and other volumes are attached/connected to the center by two design acts, “joining” and “juxtaposing”. (Yazgan, 2013) (Figure 4.2 and 4.3) Yazgan explains that:

Through this approach, the design sets up a flexible systematic on the road aimed at the built form. It took shape by “adding” various elements of design program together, “grouping” them into volumes, “arranging” them around the main central volume of working areas. “The design of the design act”, an approach based on constructing the design acts, was the motto that gave way to the built form. (Yazgan, 2013)

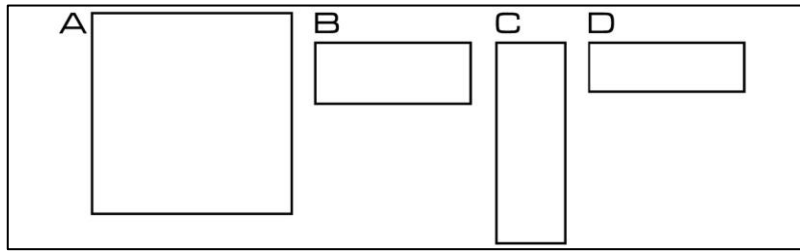


Figure 4.1: The first act is to group program component in different volumes. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

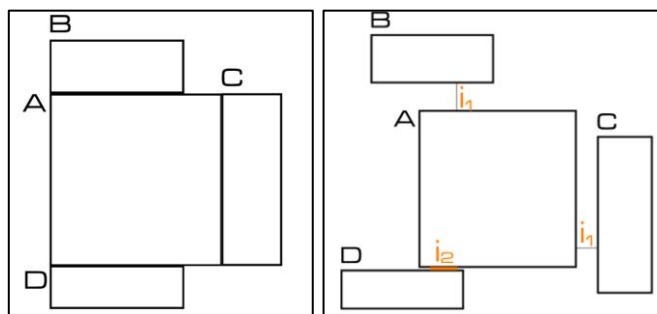


Figure 4.2 and 4.3: The second act is to integrate different elements according to the relationship between each unit. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

The separation of the circulation provides the possibility of arranging the inner spaces of the main volume. As stated by Kerem Yazgan, this organization “brought forward a certain flexibility that provided the grouping together of service shafts, the juxtaposition of wet areas and shaping of the volume according to technical requirements”. (Yazgan, 2013) Moreover, the separation of the circulation volume provides easiness for the users of the space in terms of a direct access to the building. This circulation volume can be observed from the outside of the building, so this condition gives an idea about the organization of the building from the exterior. This systematic organization of the Kavacık Office can be considered as the theory of Yazgan that proposes the arrangement of the “acts” for achieving praxis in architecture.



Figure 4.4: The model of Kavacık Office that shows the connection of the separated volumes. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive



Figure 4.5: The exterior view of Kavacık Office. Source: Kerem Yazgan's Archive

As it is observed through the discursive and practical works of Kerem Yazgan, theory based production activities regards the organization of design process. Each design process is managed according to a systematic organization of the architect, who produces specific design rules according to different paradigms. Yazgan develops a unique research method inside the boundaries of architecture. Hereby, architectural design can be liberated from the viewpoint that evaluates architecture as a representative tool of social phenomena. The knowledge produced in the design and construction processes supports the development of an architecture that has the capacity of resisting to the intervention of the external formations. This resistance does not suggest a strict autonomy for architecture, but a zone for the discipline that is still in communication with other

knowledge domains and transcodes the relevant data from them if necessary, as Diana Agrest suggests. Here architecture produces its own specific codes and reconfigures the external knowledge according to its disciplinary language. This act reveals the significance of a “design method” which leads the production or development of these codes.

The projects examined here can be considered as the examples of object-oriented praxis in architecture. For Kerem Yazgan, architectural production process should be evaluated as a research field that is capable of generating its own theory, systematic and method, through which it is possible to lead a “purposeful” and “meaningful” production activity. As explained before, Yazgan claims that architecture is a semi-autonomous discipline that has the potential of developing its own knowledge despite its permeability to the other knowledge fields. In this respect, he intends to find the ways of generating disciplinary knowledge through the acts of design process. As illustrated with the conceptual diagrams of his “designography” projects, he firstly suggests investigating the “glossary of design terms” that involves the determined acts and events of a design activity. (Yazgan, 2003, p. 54) Secondly, Yazgan emphasizes on the organization of these acts or in his words, the ways of “design of the design acts”. It is essential to determine the generic acts of a design and establish multipliable relations between them. He states that, if there is a reference system developed by the architect, these generic acts can be adapted or changed in the design process:

All the projects are the results of research of the activities and production methods that compose the design process; writing the design program over the initially given program and making the “relations design” before creating the plan solutions and the images of the building; defining the relation and organizing the process by means of the activities which orientate and reference the production; activities and their functions in orientating the design; activities created or revealed within the actuality of the “work”; research, investigation and creation of the systematics that exist in daily life of architectural design; (and) defining the transitions between the processes and the stages by means of activities and making a research about the effect of each act on the whole. (Yazgan, 2013)

According to the explanation above, it can be stated that Kerem Yazgan contributes to the discipline of architecture with his attitude of considering “design” as a virtuous activity that seeks the ways of improving the existing modes of architectural production. In this respect, his architectural works that are generated by theorizing design process and practicing according to a reference system developed through this theory can be considered as products of praxis. In the design process, Kerem Yazgan concentrates on architecture’s inner qualities. Evaluating architecture as a hybrid discipline, he does not ignore its relationships with other knowledge domains but advocates the development of architectural theory with its scrutinized codes. Yazgan intends to protect the intrinsic qualities of the discipline and questions the specific potentials of architecture by putting his theory into practice. At this point it is crucial to repeat that, his method of developing knowledge and establishing a relationship between this knowledge and production activity can be considered as an “object-oriented praxis”. Here, the architect concentrates on the organization of the design process to create a work of architecture with a normative theory

that regards tectonics, function, program and aesthetics using the internal codes of architecture. In this kind of praxis, theory is produced according to the functional, programmatic, aesthetic, and technical concerns. On the other hand, as it is indicated in the previous chapters, architecture's communication with external theory sources leads the rise of another type of praxis; "context-oriented praxis" actualized by the architect who considers himself/herself as a social agent that takes part in the reproduction of the social entity. In the context-oriented praxis, the architect being aware of his/her social position, construct and develops a theory by focusing the re-evaluation of the social and physical context, according to his/her ethical mindset.

## **4.2 Context-Oriented Praxis**

Michael Hays in his seminal essay, entitled "Prolegomenon for a Study Linking the Advanced Architecture of the Present to that of the 1970s through Ideologies of Media, the Experience of Cities in Transition, and the Ongoing Effects of Reification" (2001, p. 101), reinterprets the widely known autonomy debate of 1970s, when the theory of architecture is reclaimed, and started to struggle for distancing the "resistant, critical practice" of architecture from the "degraded languages and ideologies of consumer culture". According to Hays, towards the end of 1990s, the view that previously considered architecture as a resistant discipline with its autonomous properties agreed on a degree of cultural determination of the external forces over theory of architecture. With the rising ambiguity of disciplinary boundaries between different cultural domains, the autonomy of various fields and their authority zones were re-questioned. The shift in the perception of autonomy of architecture caused an uncertainty regarding the position of the discipline between a closed autonomous field and the cultural determinants surrounding it. In order to examine the reasons of this perceptual shift, Hays (2001, p. 101) makes a brief summary about the historical evolution of "autonomy" debate in architecture:

While the ideology of autonomy is properly part of the legacy of modernism, dating from as early as the Enlightenment, the concept gained a renewed resonance in the formation of architecture theory after 1968. This was a time when architecture as traditionally practiced saw itself threatened by technological optimization and utilitarianism, by the demands placed on it as a service industry, as well as by the positivist inquiries of the behavioral sciences, sociology, and operations research, all of which threatened to undermine the specificity of architecture. Architecture theory drew on various models in an effort to think architecture back into its own as a discipline, a cultural practice, and an irreducible mode of knowledge and experience (an epistemology). In particular, architects developed a theory of typology, which allowed the resolution of the contradictory desires for autonomy on the one hand and an architectural representation of the city on the other. (Hays, 2001, p. 101)

As stated by Hays, the external forces that had changed rapidly in the context of 1960s triggered the resistance inside the discipline of architecture that was searching the way of protecting its disciplinary boundaries. Two autonomy types to evaluate architecture's communication with other cultural domains and their own theories through internal versus

external sources started to arise. As indicated by Hays (2001, p. 101), the first type of autonomy seeks an architecture, “whose success at evoking and recollecting solid, concrete memories, depends on its repetition of an already iterable code”. This type considers a product of architecture, as an object of which smallest constituent is still an architectural element, so it is a pure form that is supported by architecture’s own sources. For Scolari, who supports this aforementioned autonomy of architecture, it is crucial to re-define architecture as a discipline “that does not pursue and immerse itself in political, economic, social, and technological events only to mask its own creative and formal sterility, but rather desires to understand them so as to be able to intervene in them with lucidity—not to determine them, but not to be subordinate to them either.” (Scolari, 1998, pp. 131-132) Hays refers to another type of autonomy that also proposes a self-governing architecture but that is still in a relationship with other sovereign knowledge domains. Here, the self-ruling of each domain provides them to improve their disciplinary specific qualities, and their communication with other domains supports a knowledge transfer between them. In this type, due to the grift relationship between different domains, the boundary between the disciplinary knowledge and the interchanged knowledge becomes debatable. According to Hays:

At a different level of the autonomy thesis, there appears a key concept from Louis Althusser, that of the "semi-autonomy" of "levels" or "instances within an ideological field -the economic, political, juridical, cultural, aesthetic realms (and so on). The autonomy of each disciplinary level allows the development and advance of that discipline's particular techniques. But each level also feels pressure from all the others and exerts influence on all the others. What results is a set of insides and outsides that are reciprocally constituted and related by way of their ultimate structural difference and distance from one another rather than their identity, all held together by the "structural totality" of a social formation. (Hays, 2001, pp. 101-102)

As indicated by Hays, in Althusserian view, there is not a social formation (including architecture), which is governed or controlled by other formations, but at the same time there exists no social formation, which can be evaluated as a totally autonomous entity. Here it can be stated that, the existence of social fields depends on both their inner dynamics, and on the (potential or actual) relationships constructed with other fields. “Here we have a non causal model of the whole as a set of insides and outsides that are reciprocally constituted –an enfolded interiority and exteriority that Althusser called the structural totality. Each entity or region was the effect of all the other regions.” (Hays, 1995, p. 42)

Evaluating both of these autonomy types according to their arguments and assertions, Hays suggests a mediating position for architecture. According to him, architecture’s autonomous properties do not propose an isolated field but a “relational concept” that controls and organizes the interactions of architecture with the societal world. (Hays, 2001, p. 102) There is a specific mechanism inside architecture, which transcodes external codes into its disciplinary field, and serves as a “cultural product”. At this point it is crucial to remember Stanford Anderson’s (2001, p. 294) evaluation about the discipline of architecture as a “collective body of knowledge that is unique to architecture and which, though it grows over time, is not delimited in time or space.” To his viewpoint, when



architecture is regarded as a “collective body of knowledge”, it gains its significance in the society with the potential of being both the consequence and the reason of social ideals. Thus, architecture cannot be seen as a discipline, which is completely independent from social concerns. This understanding reveals not only the social dimension of the intellectual, but also the concrete work of an architect and his/her “creative agency” in the activity of commodity production. As stated by Micheal Hays (1984, p. 27), it is crucial to see architecture “not as a passive agent of culture in its dominant ideological, institutional, and historical forms, nor as a detached, disinfected object.” For him, architect should be regarded as an active agent of the context with intellectual and political contributions. In this way, architect as a social agent locates himself in a critical position that seeks a responsive practice to the existing context and re-questions it through a semi-autonomous theory. In this respect, architect concerns, re-evaluates, criticizes and re-produces his/her social and physical context through a “context-oriented” praxis for which he/she constructs and develops a theory not only on the formal, artistic and tectonic rules of the object, but on guiding principles for the re-production of existing structure. This type of praxis conjures up the role of a social actor (architect) in a “purposeful activity” and the agency-structure relationship in the reconstruction of the physical and social environment.

#### **4.2.1 The Concept of Agency and the Role of Architect in the Context-Oriented Praxis**

Social life is essentially practical. All mysteries, which mislead theory into mysticism, find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice. (Marx & Engels, 1978, p. 145)

The outlines of what we might call Marx’s “anthropology” should now be clear. Man is by nature an active, productive animal. “By nature” simply means that man is a creature who cannot survive unless he produces – exercises labor power– in order to maintain himself. This essential productive dimension of human life is praxis. (Bernstein, 1999, pp. 62-63)

In Marxist viewpoint, praxis is a concept that distinguishes human from other species. As stated in the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology (Ritzer, 2007, p. 60), the way they act is an important difference between human and non-human organisms. Non-human organisms do not have “a sense of self” or, they do not have the capability of reflexing it. On the other hand, human organisms have awareness about themselves, about the world and the other members of their environment, and they act consciously. As stated in the same source (Ritzer, 2007, p. 60), “to some extent, what they [human] do, and who they are, is up to them. They are open to the world, and not stuck in the immediately pressing here and now of a local niche. Human identity is not fixed from the start, and so human beings have to make themselves into who they will become.” In this sense, thinking about something, producing knowledge in accordance with this thought and putting this knowledge into practice is an intrinsic characteristic of men. Both men and other species

carry out production activity during their lifetime but as men start to “produce their means of subsistence” the difference revealed in their way of establishing a “physical organization” and producing their “material life”. (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 37) In their mode of production, while non-human animals maintain many activities instinctively, men carry out a “conscious production” that is managed by considering both the physical necessities and the mental condition of men. Marx and Engels argue that:

This (conscious) mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. Hence what individuals are depends on the material conditions of their production. (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 37)

Here, in addition to the viewpoint that emphasizes the distinction between mankind and other species, Giddens refers to another difference between the natural world that exists in the neutral materiality and the social world that is constituted by its “component actors”. Suggesting the “meaning” as a major differentiation between these two worlds, he states that social life is being formed and re-formed through the activities of humankind and these activities re-defines the “meaning” continuously. (Giddens, 1976, p. 79)

The difference between the social and natural world is that the latter does not constitute itself as ‘meaningful’; the meanings it has are produced by men in the course of their practical life, and as a consequence of their endeavors to understand or explain it for themselves. Social life –of which these endeavors are a part– on the other hand, is produced by its component actors precisely in terms of their active constitution and reconstitution of frames of meaning whereby they organize their experiences.” (Giddens, 1976, p. 79)

Giddens defines the social world as a formation established by the productive activities of its members and defines the social structure as a superior constitution over this formation. In Giddens’ words, social systems are formed with the “reproduced relations between actors or collectivities, organized as regular social practices”. Besides, structures are the “rules and resources, or sets of transformation relations, organized as properties of social systems.” (Giddens, 1984, p. 25) Here, the reproduction of structure depends on the conscious production activities of men, and these activities are managed by the social structure.<sup>9</sup> There is a dialectic relationship between the social structures and the productive activities of human being. (Ahearn, 2010, p. 31) According to Giddens (1976,

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<sup>9</sup> The relationship between agency and social structure has been frequently discussed by various people within or without the social sciences. In this relationship, agency indicates the social actors’ capability of acting individually in a purposeful manner and structure indicates a formation that controls/limits these actions. The autonomy of agency versus the dominance of structure is a controversial discussion among various sociologists. According to one side, the actions of agents depend on the capabilities and decisions of the individuals. On the other hand, for the other side, it is impossible to evaluate a social actor as an independent individual because social structure’s determinants run as a control mechanism over the choices of an individual. (Ritzer, *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, 2007, pp. 469-472)

p. 5), this condition indicates the “duality” of structure. As he states; “[s]tructure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of social practices. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and ‘exists’ in the generating moments of this constitution”. Here, in order to comprehend the relation between the social life, structure and the actions of social agents, it is crucial to state that the structure maintains its existence by means of material and cultural production of individual agents. Giddens (1976, p. 75) defines “agency” or “the action of agent” as “the stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world.” For Giddens, “the notion of agency connects directly with the concept of praxis.” According to Sztopka (1991, p. 98), agency and praxis are two constituents of the “incessant social functioning“. The realization of praxis depends on the concept of agency, and agency maintains its existence through the act of praxis. The “reconstitution of the frames of meaning” that Giddens mentions can be actualized by acts of agents through their praxis.

According to Albert Bandura (1989, p. 1175), the concept of “human agency” is theorized differently according to the role and the dependence/independence of an agent as an individual and as a productive actor in the “causal processes”. As Bandura indicates, “agency” can be evaluated under three subtitles: “autonomous agency”, “mechanical agency”, and “emergent interactive agency”. In autonomous agency, the view that stands up for the self-governing properties of the concept of agency suggests the “self-influence” and independence of an individual in a self-determined act. On the other hand, in the concept of “mechanical agency”, the acts of an agent depend on the external forces. In this respect, the running process of an action is determined “mechanistically” by the exterior world, so the action itself does not have “motivative, self-reflective, self-reactive, creative, or self- directive properties”. (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175) Accordingly, the agents do not have the capability of “influencing their own motivation and action”. Besides these two types, “emergent interactive agency” proposes a mediating model between the autonomous and the mechanical agencies. In this view, the actions of social actors are neither realized freely according to the actors’ free preferences, nor totally managed by external factors. As an individual and a member of structure, social actors “make causal contribution to their own motivation and action within a system of triadic reciprocal causation”. As stated by Bandura, there is an interaction between the individual actions and the social/physical contexts, so the acts of agents depend on both the “self-generated influences” and the “environmental determinants”.

Considering the standpoint that evaluates agency as a semi-autonomous concept, it can be claimed that social agents intend to fulfill the needs of society through their praxis activities that are organized according to the agents’ own standpoint (internal) and the societal determinants (external). In Weber’s perspective, these determinants give rise to four different types of social acts that can be names as “instrumentally rational”, “value-rational”, “affectual”, and “traditional”. (Weber, 1978, pp. 24-26) Instrumentally rational acts are performed by considering the necessities of social life and demands of other people. In Weber’s words; these acts are “determined by expectations as to the behavior of objects in the environment and of other human beings; these expectations are used as "conditions" or "means" for the attainment of the actor's own rationally pursued and

calculated ends". The value-rational acts regard some "ethical, aesthetic, religious" values. These acts that are realized in a value-rational intention are performed by the people, who "act to put into practice their convictions, of what seems to them to be required by duty, honor, the pursuit of beauty, a religious call, personal loyalty, or the importance of some 'cause' no matter in what it consists". The effectual acts are carried out according to the state of the agent's emotions and feelings. Because of the instability of the feelings, these acts sometimes may go beyond the agent's purpose. In Weber's words, "[p]urely affectual behavior stands on the borderline of what can be considered 'meaningfully' oriented, and often it, too, goes over the line". Finally, the traditional acts can be considered as internalized activities. In these activities, the social agent responds an "automatic reaction" to the "stimulants" of his/her environment. As stated by Weber (Weber, 1978, p. 25), "[t]he great bulk of all everyday action to which people have become habitually accustomed approaches this type. Hence, its place in a systematic classification is not merely that of a limiting case because, as will be shown later, attachment to habitual forms can be upheld with varying degrees of self-consciousness ad in a variety of senses." Here, it is crucial to state that the classification of the social actions does not imply these acts to be performed in completely different ways with different purposes. Because there are no strict boundaries between the internal and external factors affecting the acts of an individual, a social act can be actualized with a manner that is determined by one of the factors mentioned above, while still being influenced by other determinants.

It would be very unusual to find concrete cases of action, especially of social action, which were oriented only in one or another of these ways. Furthermore, this classification of the modes of orientation of action is in no sense meant to exhaust the possibilities of the field, but only to formulate in conceptually pure form certain sociologically important types to which actual action is more or less closely approximated or, in much the more common case, which constitute its elements. The usefulness of the classification for the purposes of this investigation can only be judged in terms of its results."(Weber, 1978, p. 26)

As stated above, these different types of acts are in a relationship with each other so there should be some common motivation. There are different actors from different domains and the mutual orientation of the action reveals "social relationship" between those actors. According to Weber, the social act of each agent "takes the account of that of the others" and is performed according to the common determinants. (Weber, 1978, p. 27) Considering the "plurality of actors" and various action types, it is possible to affirm that there are different domains that put into practice different social actions in the social life. If the plurality of the social actions and the variety of production activities in a social formation are taken into account, the types of production become more of an issue. Here the productions of social agents that are actualized as a result of a "creative act" can be separated from other production activities. "Creative act" is a crucial notion that implies the inventive production activities of the social actors from various fields of practice. It can be achieved through different production activities by achieving a form according to the content of the activity, but considering it as an "ingenious process", it can be stated that creative act has an inherent involvement with art. Besides the commonly recognized productive agents; workers or engineers, the social agents whose production activities are

considered as creativity based processes; architects, painters, authors, poets should be emphasized on more regarding the importance of the creative actions in “agency-structure debate”.

The phrase of “creative act” refers to the design process of the agent who builds his/her own “frames of meaning”<sup>10</sup> as a tool for re-defining a critical position in the society. This critical position is not independent from the content of the managed work, of which “critical value” is not “embodied in the themes it deals with or in the ‘commitment’ of the artist; on the contrary, it is immanent in the artistic process”. (Heynen, 1992, p. 83) Here, considering the architect as a “commodity” producer in the reproduction of the social structure, it is possible evaluate him/her as a social agent taking role in the (re)transformation of the social entity. Herein, the intention behind the consideration of architect as a commodity producer is not to reduce architecture to a field that is governed by the economic forces or to evaluate architect as an actor whose appointed mission is to serve for meta production, but to indicate that the material work of architecture is “the product of one form of social labor”. (Steinmann, 1998, p. 248) As abovementioned repeatedly, architecture is an important constituent of “relations of production”, so it has a degree of dependency on the ruling powers that can be visualized –as Martin Steinmann proposed by quoting from Walter Benjamin– as the mirrors of a kaleidoscope “thanks to which an image of order can always be brought into being.” (Steinmann, 1998, p. 248) As stated by Steinmann, in general sense, architecture (and art) is “subject to the realization of capital”, but its social determination does not defined by the authority of the relations of commodity production or conversley, the narrations that declares the revolutionary properties and socially transformative function of art. Its social dimension is based on both its substance and its “material” apparatuses. As interpreted by Heynen (1992, p. 84), in Althusserian viewpoint, this “materiality” is considered “in the broadest sense of the word, comprising the concrete stuff from which a work of art is made, the techniques available, the arsenal of images and memories deployed by the artist, and the work's various contexts.” In the case of architecture, its socialness has some common points with that of art with respect to its use of “materials and techniques that are themselves the reflections of social history”, but the issue of social determination should be evaluated in a wider scope.

Despite the common grounds of art and architecture, it is certain that architecture differs from art in a general terms with respect to its maintaining a praxis activity through its disciplinary norms, rules or necessities. Architecture always protects its initial and

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<sup>10</sup> In Giddens’s (1976, p. 79) words “social life is produced by its component actors precisely in terms of their active constitution and reconstitution of ‘frames of meaning’ whereby they organize their experiences.” The “reconstitution of the frames of meaning” that Giddens mentions can be actualized by acts of agents through their praxis. As stated in the Blackwell encyclopedia of sociology (Ritzer, 2007, p. 4868), “social actors possess stocks of mutual knowledge that exist within a wider worldview, and it is necessary to hermeneutically interpret and understand these actors’ worldviews or “frames of meaning” in order to be truly able to grasp what they do and why they do it. An agent would not be able to act in the world without some “knowledgeability” of her circumstances, and this is always knowledge-embedded within a view of the world containing all sorts of formative cultural, social, and religious influences.

autonomous properties no matter how much it regards its social context. As Heynen (1992, p. 85) says; “[d]esign is not simply the management of heteronomous principles such as functional or constructive requirements, psychological needs of the consumers, representational demands, and like. There is always an autonomous moment in the design process in which an architect is occupied with architecture as such.” This autonomous moment that is captured by architecture’s scrutinized properties reveals the above mentioned “creative agency” in the context-oriented praxis. Despite the fact that the degree of autonomy in the theoretical development of a praxis activity may change according to the architect’s intention (object-oriented praxis versus context-oriented), the social integration of architecture always requires some disciplinary knowledge. Here, agency is both related with the capability of leading a design process through this knowledge and responding to society in the way of development of the theory. Nevertheless, architects’ orientations to the interdisciplinary and disciplinary dimensions of architecture may be different and their tendencies towards the interior versus exterior of architecture reveal different praxes as “object-oriented” and “context-oriented”. While the first type exposes the disciplinary qualities of an architectural object and develops a theory with architecture’s own instructions; the second type of praxis reveals the social agency of the architect with a theory developed for re-evaluating of the social and physical context according to the architects own ethical way of thinking.

#### **4.2.1.1 Architect as An Individual: The Personality, Ethics and Self-Actualization**

When successful, architecture allows for participation in meaningful action, conveying to the participant an understanding of his or her place in the world. In other words, it opens up a clearing for the individual’s experience of purpose through participation in cultural institutions. In this way, architecture offers societies a place for existential orientation, and its meaning is bounded by time. (Perez-Gomez, 2011, p. 52)

To describe the relationship between architect (as a social agent) and his/her theory-based productions in architecture (as context-oriented praxis), it is believed that Ziya Tanalı’s architectural works give the clues of his architectural attitude, and indicates an important profile to examine. Ziya Tanalı is a well-known Turkish architect who has designed many architectural projects and an important amount of them have been realized. There are many reasons to study on Tanalı’s individual discourse and architectural projects but the main reason is that, Tanalı is a subject that constructs a relationship between the development of the personality of an individual by considering the humanitarian values/ethics and the way that individual leads an human activity. As it is conveyed through the literary works of Tanalı, he strives to develop a personality that regards the “excellence” and “well-being” of the process in any production activity in terms of serving for the society.

Besides his practical works in architecture, he has also carried out many academic works that questionize the ethical, aesthetical, and immortal dimensions of architecture

both as a discipline and as a practice. As an architect and an intellectual, Tanalı's theoretical works and these works' association with his professional practices exemplify the context-oriented praxis in architecture. It is possible to consider these works that are concerned with the words as the particular way of phrasing his senses, ideas, and experiences formed through his own state of mind. It can be observed through his literary works that, Ziya Tanalı is a steady and well-settled figure that does not abstain from proposing the same arguments and explanations in his individual discourse, so his personality and act can be evaluated as consistent. Tanalı, as an architect, being aware of his social position; constructs and develops his theoretical framework not only on the formal, artistic and tectonic rules of an architecture, but on the ethical principles that regard the role of architecture in the re-production of existing system. In this respect, Tanalı makes many critical assessments about the culture, the position of architecture in society and the responsibility of the architect as a social catalyst. The re-reading of his literary and academic works provides an opportunity to observe how an architect as a social agent constructs his/her theory for an architectural production activity. Tanalı emphasizes the importance of the fact that, the profession and the discipline of architecture should consider the desires and the necessities of society so; he evaluates the quality of an architectural object with regard to its harmonization with the humanitarian values. He calls attention to the content of the design object and the idea, intention and purpose behind it.

Tanalı evaluates architecture as an art, of which aim is to enhance the quality of the production process, rather than the end product itself. Therefore, it is possible to consider architecture as a praxis activity in Tanalı's perspective. According to him, in an architectural production activity, the idea and reason behind the action that is developed through the design process is the starting point of architectural design. The idea mentioned here can be considered as the initial theory of the praxis activity. Tanalı (2000, p. 25) states that, it is very important for an architect to think over the initial idea, and relatively the intention of the work before envisaging the final product. The realization of the design activity as a concrete work is important but the process that is managed with a manner and aim should be the main concern of the architect.

According to Tanalı, the initial idea of architect that is elaborated at the early stages of a design work is the "ground zero" of the architecture. (Tanalı, 2000, p. 23) This initial idea that determines the content of the work is the essence of the final object that transmits a meaning through a form. To explain this relationship between the architectural object and its content, Tanalı (2010, p. 45) underlines two important properties of an architecture that makes it a product of art: *essentia* and *substantia*. *Essentia* (essence) signifies the causation and the purpose behind the production of the object, so its abstract structure, while *substantia* (substance) indicates the physicality of the object through which the *essentia* is embodied. The *substantia* that conveys the personal sensitivities of architect is related with the spatial features and requirements of the object. According to him:

Substance harbours the most basic elements of the physical existence. As an abstract being it may exist alone by itself if these elements are not even discovered. However, substance conveys the meaning and the shape of the thing to the observer. Although appearances change these conveyers

[substantial qualities] are always present and are always already there [like structure]. For example, one of the basic substantial qualities in architecture is “space”, if one takes it out of architecture, there would be no architecture remaining. This substance cannot be evaluated as good or bad; it always stands there regardless of being positive or negative. Its appearance may change according to its day, its age, its function or the person who composes that space. (Tanalı, 2012)<sup>11</sup>

Here, Tanalı does not construct a hierarchical relationship between the “idea” and the finalized “object” in his point of view. For him, an idea that is not materialized through a form cannot be examined in the physical world, so the form should be considered as a tool of architect to express his/her intention, attitude and sensitivity. Tanalı (2000, p. 16) states that, architectural object is a tool of architect to express his personality, so the end product is the final step of a long process that is sharpened and managed by the subject; the architect. Architecture should not be evaluated as a profession of which ultimate purpose is to build a concrete work. Rather, it should be seen as a creative activity to produce an object for enveloping the personal objective and the aim of architect. (Tanalı, 2000, p. 16) Here the architectural object can be considered as a mediator between architect’s “frames of meaning” and the physical environment that he/she belongs to. Being as the materialized form of architect’s subjective attitude, architectural object achieves a meaning according to the intention of the architect that is developed through his/her individual or collective values, beliefs and experiences. In an architectural production activity, this intention forms a general framework through which the architect organizes the whole design process. (Tanalı, 2010, p. 25) As stated before, this framework indicates the theoretical base of the production activity.

For Tanalı, theory indicates a notion that envelops the reason, the purpose and the meaning behind an action, so it is very related with the “becoming” of the agent that leads the activity.<sup>12</sup> A social agent’s “acting well” is linked with his/her “practical wisdom” that points out the concern for the humanitarian values besides the scientific and technical merits in any production activity. It signifies the knowledge that makes the performer of a purposeful activity act wisely. Considering the role of theory in the personal development, Tanalı evaluates it as the agent’s form of behavior to act well in any purposeful activity, rather than a prospective guiding tool. Here, considering theory as a lifeway and a prerequisite of “acting well” raises issue of agent’s way of “constructing the self”.

As stated by Taşkın (2006, p. 39), who analyzed the literal and practical works of Tanalı in her master thesis entitled “A Study on The ‘Creative Act’ Through The Attitude

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<sup>11</sup> This quotation of Tanalı is taken from the paper entitled “Strolling Among the Ethical and Sensate Values of the Creative Act”. An older version of this paper was published in the appendix of the master thesis of A. Ece Onur, named “Alvar Aalto in Search of Existential Self” (2009).

<sup>12</sup> As stated in the previous chapters, in Aristotelian view, theory is accepted as the complementary of a well-organized activity. It signifies a form of “existence” through which a social agent achieves a truly reasoned approach and consequently eudaimonia (acting well) in his/her production activities. In this respect, Tanalı’s interpretation of “theory” corresponds to the Aristotelian perspective that relates theory with the way in which an individual choose to maintain his/her life.



of Architect M. Ziya Tanalı”, it is very crucial for a social actor to “be aware of the self” to continue his/her existence. However for a “genuine existence”, self-consciousness is not enough. For constructing a meaningful life, it is necessary for an individual to judge the excellence of his/her subsistence. Drawing a lifeway and attaining a perspective towards the world help the individual to construct a personality by which he/she can realize his/her existence. In this way, the social actor constructs a self-conscious identity, acts under the control of this identity and achieves “self-actualization”. For Ziya Tanalı, getting a viewpoint to the life and achieving self-actualization is a long journey in the lifetime. In this journey, art is one of the ways through which a human being can evaluate his/her state of existence and construct a unique inner world. (Taşkın, 2006, p. 39) As stated by Taşkın (2006, p. 40), “this inner world can be explored as a storage where the artist stores all his/her accumulations and experiences of the external world”, and through art, he/she gets the possibility of exposing these accumulations. For Tanalı:

According to one approach architecture is one of the fields of professional production. To another, it is the craft of building. Some other see architecture as a job that they can earn money, the others as a staircase or a respected job that will make them reached to the place they want to be in. some people look at architecture as a sculpture to live in it... some of them can be true... however, the most closest meaning to my point of view is architecture is ‘one of the fields that we can question our personality’. I guess it is the reason that I attribute architecture as art.<sup>13</sup> (Tanalı, 2010, p. 39)

In this respect, if considered as an art, architectural design is not detached from the construction of the self, because the course of a design activity provides an environment for architect to develop and then express his/her personality. In an interview published in the book, entitled *Mimarlığa Emek Verenler Dizisi- IV* and edited by Zeynep Onur (2010, p. 39), Tanalı claims that architecture should be regarded as a process to build both a concrete architectural work and the personality of the designer. In this process, the architect develops his/her own intention, manner, and so the theory that leads the design activity. Thereby, it is possible to affirm that Tanalı evaluates the design activity as a praxis.

As stated by Tanalı, architects intend to “touch on the world” and respond to the needs of the social and physical formations by designing an object that express their personality and reflect their sensitivities towards the world. (Tanalı, 2000, p. 30) At this point, design activity provides a medium for people to express their inner or mental world. In Aristotle’s interpretation that was recompiled in Benjamin Jowett’s collection, titled “Aristotle's Politics” (1920, p. 32), the life continues along a way that is an action, rather than a production. As interpreted by Backman (2010, p. 35) Aristotle mentions that human life is not a process that aims a predetermined end, but it depends on a “self-enactment” in the long run. The quality of the life of an individual is related with this self-enactment and his/her way of leading the life. Accordingly, the “quality of an individual life” is

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<sup>13</sup> The translation of the quotation is taken from the master thesis of Özlem Taşkın who analyzed the creative act of Tanalı in her work entitled “A Study on The ‘Creative Act’ Through The Attitude of Architect M. Ziya Tanalı” (Taşkın, 2006).

determined with respect to the “way in which it is lived”, rather than what is attained in the life. In this sense, actions of the people express the personality of the subject.

In this manner, as interpreted by Zeynep Onur (2010, pp. 21-22), Ziya Tanalı considers architecture not only as a profession, but also a way of manifesting oneself in the way of struggling for a “better” existence. In his viewpoint, this intellectual and physical production activity provides a way of thinking, through which the architect has the opportunity of re-evaluating and criticizing his/her individuality. For Tanalı, it is possible for an architect to locate himself/herself in a position that is in a relationship with the external reality and lead a meaningful activity by designing an object with a context-regarding philosophy. This attitude should address a mode of production that corresponds to the existing socio-cultural conditions by considering the settled moral standards. These standards both concern the agent’s sincerity and the position the agent places the maintained work in his/her frame of mind. Here, this evaluation regards the genuineness of the agent and the reason behind his/her production. Architects, who reduces architecture to as a meta production activity that is presented as a “desire object”, copy some context-free images from different mediums and ignores the potential of architecture in constructing a relationship between society, culture and physical environment.

Tanalı claims that, in architectural education, it is important to lay down the conditions of becoming a socially concerned, morally upright and conscientious person to reveal the creativity of the mind. The genuine characteristics of a social actor have influence upon the production activity, and the value attributed to the process and the end product. Interpreting Tanalı’s emphasis on the link between the personal attitude of a social actor and the production activity of him/her, Taşkın (2006, p. 44) states that “[a]ll of the actions arise from the inner world of the individual that shelters all necessary and unnecessary components of the action. The genuineness of these components gives chance to perform a indisputable product that means settling his existence to the external reality, by genuine references”. The genuine constituents of the agent’s inner world that are exposed by according to the agent’s moral being enables him/her to make decisions and judgments well. In the case of architecture, this genuineness enable architect to judge the socio-cultural conditions of the context well and contribute to the transformation of physical environment with a practical wisdom. Despite the fact that there are superior formations over architecture that limit the actions of architect, constructing an ethically concerned attitude and developing “well-grounded” intentions are still the most efficient tools of architect as a social agent. As stated by Perez-Gomez in a similar fashion:

No matter what we produce as architects, once the work inhabits the public realm, it is truly beyond our control. An expressed intention can never fully predict the work’s meaning. It is the “others” who decide its destiny and its final significance. Despite this apparent limitation, understanding that there is a phenomenological continuity between thinking and making, between our words, in our particular language, and our deeds, is still our best bet. What we control, and must be accountable for, is our intentions. Despite the usual saying dismissing good intentions in view of “real” deeds, well-grounded intentions are crucial and rare in the modern world, and they imply a whole style of thinking and action, a past life and thick network of connections with a culture, far more than what an individual is capable of

articulating at the surface of consciousness, or through one particular product. This is the nature of an ethical practice guided by practical philosophy or phronesis, by prudence, in the sense of Aristotle. (Perez-Gomez, 2011, p. 57)

#### **4.2.1.2 Creating An Abstract World by The Tangible Constituents of Architecture**

In Tanali's perspective, the social dimension of architecture is related with the extent of its sphere of influence over its context, as well as the extent of its sphere of interest (the sources of the theory). In the design process of an architectural object, the social and physical environment influence the content of the object, and when the object is placed on its ground, it transforms the ground both in material and abstract manners. As stated before, the theoretical base of the object that is developed by the sphere of interest indicates the *essentia* of architecture, while its materialized form with the spatial features and requirements brings out the *substantia*. *Substantia* cannot be reduced only to the formalization of an idea because it provides the medium for architecture to communicate with the exterior world. It does not complete its mission at the end of the construction process. As the physical embodiment of the *essentia*, *substantia* constructs a relationship with the space. Space here denotes the "void" in the frame in which the *substantia* is placed.

Arnheim (1977, p. 17), in his crucial book entitled "The Dynamics of Architectural Form", deals with the definition of "space", and discusses two different perceptions of it. In the first view, space indicates a "container" in which the physical existences take place, so the spaces between these existences are considered to be empty. In Arnheim's words (1977, p. 17), "everyday experience distinguishes between impenetrable matter such as mountains or tree trunks or the walls of buildings, and openings that we can pass through." This discrepancy is important for the architect who observes the relationship and ratio between the two. On the other hand, in the second view, "space" is considered as a notion, that implies "a relation between objects". According to this view, the relations between objects are recognized through the perception of the observers. For Arnheim, "[t]here are many aspects of experience of which we are not explicitly conscious that nonetheless tinge or awareness in important ways. The visual relations between objects are of this kind". (Arnheim, 1977, p. 17) Here, the space between objects has to be considered not as empty space, but as a medium that establishes the perceptual relations between objects. Therefore, it is not possible to comprehend and evaluate the things or objects when isolated from this in-between space. The objects are characterized with their background so there is a dialectical relationship between the objects and the space, the figure and the ground, the thing and its context.

Take the example of two buildings, one big and one small, standing at a moderate distance from each other. It is possible to deal with them independently by making statements about one of them without considering the other—for example, by discussing the height of only one of them. That is

the sort of disconnected treatment to which we owe the visual, functional, and social chaos of modern life. It derives from the tunnel vision employed for immediate practical ends, especially under social conditions that atomize the human community into a merge aggregate of individuals or small groups, each minding its own business. Perceptually this attitude corresponds to seeing items of the continuous environment in isolation from their context. We readily recognize such dismemberment as a pathological deformation of the natural way of seeing the visual field as a whole. At the less elementary level of viewing social relations, the pathological character of this attitude should be equally evident. Socially as well as perceptually, one cannot understand the nature of either the small house or the large house as long as one considers each only by itself. (Arnheim, 1977, p. 17)

In Arnheim's example quoted above, it is illustrated that the disconnection of architectural objects from their environment, and the evaluation of them as freestanding substances cause the misinterpretation of the relationship between physical existences and social formations. In this respect, it is crucial to remember the relationship between figure and ground in a structure, for comprehending the connection between architecture and social entity: in any composition constituted by solids (objects) and voids (the remained space), the background seems as a "non-thing" but in fact it serves as the space where the "things" are placed. Here, the thing and the non-thing constitute a dialectic relationship and they affect each other. This relationship between the "figure" and the "ground" is investigated by Gestalt studies and as analyzed in these studies, this figure and ground may be perceived as the independent constituent of a general composition but their existence is determined by each other.

Unimpaired vision perceives the two buildings as elements of one image, in which a decrescendo affects leads from the tall house down to the low one, or conversely a crescendo makes our eyes rise from low to high. Also the big mass of the one building is seen as contrasting with small mass of the other, and vice versa, as the viewer's glance moves back and forth between them. Looking at the two is an eminently dynamic experience, in which the space between the buildings is an inseparable part of the image. Far from being empty, that interstitial space is pervaded by gradients. (Arnheim, 1977, p. 17)

At this point, it is crucial to comprehend that the space around the objects in built environment cannot be conceived as an empty container that holds the "things". This space should be perceived as the complementary of a "whole" constituted with architectural objects. At this point, it is more convenient to re-consider the definition of "whole" as the unity of "things" (figures) and "non-things" (ground and context). In architectural scale, the "assemblage" of things and non-things in an order does not make sense if the general composition is comprehended as a unity of "assembled elements". It should be comprehended as a "whole" that has both an autonomous mechanism inside and social/physical involvement with outside.

Besides the "figures" that are put forward the "ground" is transformed both in social and physical means, so every "thing" changes the unpremeditated "non-thing". Architect "explores the non-existent from what already exists". (Tanali, 2000, p. 27) In Tanali's view, if lines are the constituents of the figures, the site and contexts are the ground of the

design object. Tanalı states that everything starts with the first line drawn by the architect, and the latter ones both form the architectural product and the (physical and social) ground where it is placed. In this respect, referring to the Gestalt studies, Tanalı (2000, pp. 28-29) gives the following example: he illustrates some images of Helsinki coastline to explain the figure-ground relationship in the city space. In the first image (Figure 5.1) indicated by him, there are seen some buildings along the coastline. This photograph shows the buildings in their close environment so it is possible to read the relationships between architectural objects and their physical context. It is possible to observe the lines that are defining the specific architectural elements and the boundaries of the buildings. In the second image (Figure 5.2), the vertical and horizontal lines of the buildings (figures) are emphasized more with the white color, so the different objects can be distinguished from each other as separate things. In the third image (Figure 5.3), all of the architectural objects on the land are emphasized as single objects and the environment is perceived as an empty background. By giving this example, Tanalı demonstrates that architecture is a procession to create objects that should be considered as the partials of a “whole”. This whole comprises both the physical formation and the social entity in the space. Referring to the images of Helsinki, Tanalı states that architecture defines the lines and planes that compose the time images of the man-made environment but in reality, these images constitute the “conceived” fragments of the “lived space”.<sup>14</sup> Architecture does not put forward the lines and planes but it (re)produces the ground, the skyline, the green (the physical world) and the daily routines, communications and social relationships (the social world) through its spatial tools. Emphasizing the relationship between tangible and abstract worlds, Tanalı underlines the responsibility of architect in the reproduction and transformation of built environment and accordingly social formation.

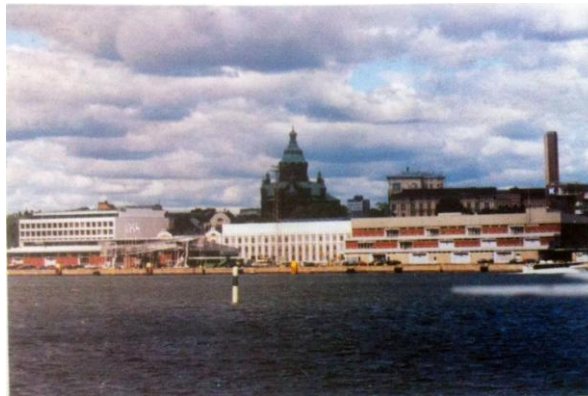


Figure 5.1: A photograph of Helsinki coastline. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

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<sup>14</sup> Here the trilogy of Henry Lefebvre; the perceived, conceived and lived space is referred. (Lefebvre, 1991)



Figure 5.2: The lines that are defining the specific architectural elements and the boundaries of the buildings are emphasized on the photograph of Helsinki coastline. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive



Figure 5.3: All of the architectural objects on the land are emphasized as single objects and the environment is perceived as an empty background. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

Here, the social responsibility of architect is related with two constituents of architecture, according to which architect shows his/her merit of comprehending the social phenomena and expressing his/her attitude as a social agent. These constituents are structure and composition, which essentially have similar denotations with *essentia* and *substantia*. Tanalı defines structure as the “demand of what is going to be done” and the composition as the “answer that is given to that demand”. Despite the common understanding that considers structure only as a “concrete phenomenon that upholds the building in its place”, structure also indicates an “internal and inherent quality” that turns out to be “formal and physical only after the process of creation is complete”. (Tanalı, 2012)

Almost nothing is as fundamental as structure in art. For example form or theme is not as fundamental as structure; sounds, words, colors, and episodes are not as fundamental. Among the several that are considered important none are that fundamental. The created thing is not even a thing unless it has

this value. Of course the artist alone decides what shall be considered as important but this decision is only valid if the artist considers structure as a prerequisite. It may not be wrong to say that structure is also the order that the finished phenomenon should have. It is an abstract configuration, a relative disposition or arrangement of matter that waits to be given shape by genius and presented through composition. (Tanalı, 2012)

If the structure is considered as the substance achieved at the end of a design process, composition is the way that substance is shaped into “original” and “subjective” forms. “As structure is inherent in what will be done, and/or in the material to be utilized, composition is the externalization of an internal phenomenon under the ultimate control of the artist.” (Tanalı, 2012) In this respect, “composition” should not be considered only as an assemblage of the design constituents of an architectural object, but as a “whole” that conveys a meaning. Here what the “meaning” refers is “a sensation that has always existed in mankind. When placed in an art object it is either called meaning, sensitivity, sometimes content or sometimes, magic”. (Tanalı, 2012)

In the construction of this composition, Tanalı states that every line that serves for the composition has a responsibility to the “totality” of both the building and the background. According to the way that architect brings the constituents of the composition together, the building acquires its own identity and conveys its meaning. Through this meaning, an architectural design can be distinguished from other designed “things”. Here, it is important to re-state that, the composition that is put forward by architect does not only introduce a new object to the existing physical environment, but also transforms the “background” of it. Therefore, in a design project, every line added by architect has a responsibility towards not only the final object but also the ground it is placed. (Tanalı, 2000, p. 27) Then, architect also exposes the (substantial and abstract) “things” out of the frame that is defined through the design process of an architectural object.

#### **4.2.1.3 Responsibility towards the Contextual and Universal Values**

In the preface of the book, entitled as “Modern Sonrası Mimarlık Üzerine Notlar” (2010), the committee from Ankara branch of Chamber of Architects in Turkey underlines the reasons that make Ziya Tanalı an important actor by emphasizing on his renovationist attitude as an architect in the context of late 1900’s Turkey. As stated by the committee, as a consequence of the rapid changes in the social and physical formations of Western world, in the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, artistic fields entered in the process of changing their disciplinary methods, and the most importantly, revising the content of their discourses with a direction to the developing a more social concerned outlook. With the increasingly spreading discussion of Modernity project, architecture like other brunches of art, was also assigned a new role that produced its own theory to re-evaluate the relation between the production of space and social, economic, politic and other cultural factors besides architecture’s internal determinants. Throughout and after this process, in the architectural platform of Turkey, there were some conformation problems with respect to the architecture culture’s adaptation to the social and spatial transformations that have been undertaken in the West. The practicing architects in Turkey could not give a

response to the architecture's worldwide quests in the issue of social engagement, so the social agency of architecture has become a controversial debate and architect could not have achieved an active position in society. In this process, the revolutionary movements of Modernity that were accepted as the transformative "ism"s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have entered in Turkey with their formal approaches to the architecture rather than their historically evolved contents. Even though there were some architects, who intended to comprehend and spread the essence of these movements to provide a critical environment for re-defining the social and cultural aspects of architecture, there was an eclectic understanding among architects that adapted various concepts, notions, styles, fashions etc. to architecture without conveying the social and physical factors/reasons to trigger the emergence of them. This condition has given a rise to the development of an architecture that produces its symbolic images to signify these "ism"s with no emphasis on the meaning attributed these movements.

As stated before, this time period in Turkey points out a chaotic process, when there were very few architects, who committed themselves to the development of a socially concerned architecture by contrast with the some popular architects that reduced architectures to just a meta production. When the disciplinary position of architecture and its attitude towards the reformist approaches (in the context of 1990's Turkey) are considered, it is possible to say that Ziya Tanalı is a significant figure, who contributes to the development of architectural theory and praxis in Turkey by his perception of the social responsibility and personal merit of deciphering and re-evaluating the universal values in his own context both in theoretical and practical manner.

As both an intellectual and an architect, Ziya Tanalı evaluates the activity of architectural production as a social process and he states that, it is very crucial for architect to be aware of the universal values and standarts in the way of developing and constructing something original and subjective. As stated by him, architecture has different tools or constituents like "proportion, scale, structure, material, technology" etc. through which it is intended by architect to say something new or re-introduce something old by means of a new discourse with a new language in a new epoch. (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, p. 137) Here Tanalı underlines that (2000, p. 143), it is very critical for an architect to realize that creating something "new" does not mean passing over the essential values. In order to challenge the "old", it is necessary to comprehend the "traditions", customs, and values of the former generations. Here the word "tradition" implies both the cultural accumulation of "old" that is achieved through the creative acts of the actors and the maxima point that culture (vernacular or universal) reaches by that time. (Tanalı, 2010, p. 40) If the "new" does not harbor the traces of the "old" inside, it cannot be transmitted to the next generations as a classicized object. (Tanalı, 2010, p. 41) For Tanalı, the word of "new" means something that is developed through the heritage of yesterday and formed by considering the condition of the contemporary perception. It implies a kind of continuity in time. This continuity conjures up a degree of immortality in an object of art. The primary stipulation of being permanent is to comprehend the answers of the questions that are asked by "old" to take a step more. (Tanalı, 2010, p. 42)



With this attitude, architect conceives and re-evaluates the pre-existing discourses of modern time, so he/she designs something new that is supported and developed through the traces of history. For Tanalı, comprehending the pre-existing discourses that regard the societal values is a virtuous act because it opens the door of conceiving yesterday's and today's contextual ground. Hanging on existing discourses or ideas do not mean maintaining a production by unchanging acts based on old ideas, but producing something with the consideration of the historical continuity. Here, it is crucial to underline that, this comprehension of the "old" does not imply the same meaning with "copying" or "hiring" it. As stated by Tanalı (2012), "creative activity can be defined as exploring the non-existent from what already exists and it starts from a line that has already been achieved from those before." Despite the necessity of starting from the line, which is the maxima of "old", it is also important not to continue the act of creating on the same line. If a creative agent cannot walk through that line, it means that artist does not have the capability of creating with his/her own language. Being aware of the cultural values of the existing context and showing respect to the characteristics of physical environment are the crucial requirements of carrying out a meaningful architecture, but these criteria should not be reduced to the reason of designing a building that looks similar to the architectures of the past. (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, p. 94)

A state of social amnesia is detected also when there is a mode of rupture in the transformation process whereby the ordinary life episodes of a society undergo non-mandatory changes. Breaking away from the natural course, having forgotten what has been done until then, one starts looking for cures. For example, "eclectic", "nationalistic", or "traditional" start to appear as a cure, sometimes reflecting the past, adapting and repeating previous... Attaching facades as "historical extracts" on to new buildings is an example. It is imitative and can be considered as a drawback, a hanging back. Such perverse beliefs may appeal usually in periods of confusion. Yet, some may still think that they are "doing" something "new" by doing so. It is known that answers given to questions according to previous understanding and technology certainly cannot be valid today. (Tanalı, 2012)

Here, Tanalı (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, p. 77) criticizes the fashion of copying various historical forms of different periods and attaching them on a new architectural object. As stated by him, the followers of this trend find it proper to borrow any form from history and use it in any scale with any material. As stated so far, creating something new and formalize it as the product of history is a perverse attitude that misleads the history. (Tanalı, 2000, p. 154) According to Tanalı, the view that supports the eclectically production of architecture passes over both the social values that are put forward through Modernity and these values' contribution to human life. (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, pp. 68-69) Proposing the discourse of "democracy" and "social pluralism", the supporters of this view blame the Modern period for not responding the desires of ordinary people and shaping the physical environment by regarding the principles introduced by upper class. Architects disregard the political/ideological reasons behind the problem of disorganized urbanization of 21th century and propose the act of exchanging the contemporary forms with the historical ones as a way of resolving the problems of urban life. (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, p. 75) For Tanalı, the people who routinize taking a look to the past chooses to repeat the old forms instead of scrutinizing the ideas or reasons behind them. This mode

of production can be evaluated as an insincere and vulgar attitude that only serves for the ephemeral trends or desires of clients. (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, pp. 67-68). Architects, who reduce architecture to as a meta production activity that is presented as a “desire object” with attractive images, ignore the potential of architecture in constructing a relationship between society, culture and physical environment.

Being sincere or acting like himself/herself is a very important notion in Tanalı’s individual approach in architecture. The genuineness proposed by Tanalı does not refer to pass over the old and local cultures to catch originality; rather it implies the consideration of the universal values while scrutinizing the contextual properties. At this point, in order to attach a humanitarian meaning to a design object, the architect should consider the common senses of the all times. As stated by Tanalı, every human being has some right and wrong characteristic features, which can be evaluated differently by others. However, there are also some virtues or ill manners that all have the same denotations. The concept of “universality” is the key word here. Universality indicates a common reasoning towards the general concepts in the world. Tanalı points out the universality of the de facto acceptances or “unchanging senses that belong to the state of being human”. In Tanalı’s view, the concept of “universal” signs the commonly accepted values “that are relevant for contemporary circumstances and also refined throughout time”. (Taşkın, 2006, p. 57) For him, an architect or an artist should feel the necessity of designing by considering the universal values or senses. (Taşkın, 2006, pp. 29-34) He/she should construct a relationship between the universal senses and the content of the designed object.

It is essential for an agent to be contemporary for realizing the universal ideals and traditions however; being contemporary should not be evaluated as ignoring the vernacular values. Despite the resemblance of the attitude towards repeating preexisting forms and design constituents, it is crucial to distinguish the perfect unity of vernacular architecture from the “cacophonous” compositions of eclectic architecture. The architectural objects that are produced by considering the vernacular values and qualities of the existing context create a totality in itself, due to the well established relationships between the fragments and the entire texture. (Tanalı & Onur, 2004, pp. 124-125) Tanalı (2010, p. 44) explains the relationship between the vernacular and universal by associating “vernacular” with “theme” and “universal” with the “content” of any creative act. If the consideration of the vernacular (theme) qualities is a tool of a creative activity, then the “content” is the objective of that action. Here, there is no hierarchy between the vernacular and universal because both of them are necessary to construct a perfect totality in an architectural work. In a similar line, Perez-Gomez states that;

Varied but culturally specific practices are capable of poetic expression precisely through the specificity of languages. Each diverse poetic articulation of a shared more-than-human world contributes to our rich human heritage and is always accessible to others through translation, which is nothing less than the fundamental condition of human understanding. Local architectural practices are like valuable endangered species and must be preserved, for, paradoxically, true understanding depends on difference rather than on homogeneity. (Perez-Gomez, 2011, p. 58)

To sum up so far, it can be stated that, considering architecture as a theory-based activity, Tanalı leads architectural production according to the knowledge that is developed by regarding the social and cultural necessities. He evaluates architectural production as a purposeful activity that regards the universal and vernacular values of the social world of primary importance, in the development of an architectural theory that leads the running of architectural design and production processes. Emphasizing architecture's desire of creating something new for the era that it belongs to, he states that creating the "new" is an important merit for architect but before all else, it is crucial to learn about the "old". As explained above, Tanalı concentrates on the fact that, there are various universal and vernacular values of the architecture put forward throughout the history, so before building a new sentence, it is important to comprehend the meaning conveyed through the old ones. At this point, it is possible to say that, Tanalı seeks for an architecture that regards the everlasting values rather than reformist but fadable attitudes. As stated before, Tanalı is a consistent figure, that constructs a relationship between the theoretical and practical works so his architectural attitude can be recognized through the realized projects of him.

#### **4.2.2 Re-reading Context-Oriented Praxis through Selected Works of Ziya Tanalı**

As stated so far, it can be observed through his architectural discourse that, Ziya Tanalı is a social agent, who evaluates architecture not only as a practice, but a process that is reasoned, organized and managed within a theoretical framework. In his architectural production activities, Tanalı develops a theory not only on the disciplinary-specific rules of architecture, but on the ethical principles and humanitarian values. Tanalı makes many critical evaluations about the re-production of social formations and the role of architect as a social catalyst. Being an architect, who contributes to the development of architectural theory in Turkey by his perception of the social responsibility and his personal merit of deciphering and re-evaluating the universal values in his own context, both in theoretical and practical manner. In this respect, the re-reading of his literary and academic works provides an opportunity to observe which factors an architect as a social agent regards in the development of a theory for an architectural production activity.

For Tanalı (2000, p. 16), architectural object is a tool of architect to express his/her personality and ethical approach to the exterior world. Here, the end product of an architectural activity is the final step of a long process that is formed and managed by the architect. In this respect, it can be observed that, Tanalı uses architecture as a medium through which he reflects his socially and ethically concerned mindset can be traced in his buildings. Interpreting the architectural attitude and practical works of Ziya Tanalı, Zeynep Onur (2010, p. 14) states that, when deconstructed the architectural language of Tanalı, it is possible to observe the perfect relationship between different architectural constituents like scale, structure, materials and spatial transitions, which integrate to each other for the aim of expressing a "sensitivity".

As mentioned before, in his architectural discourse, Tanal puts emphasis on two constituents of architecture; “structure” as the “demand of what is going to be done” and the “composition” as the “answer that is given to that demand”. He considers the composition as a way through which an architect transmits a sensitivity through architecture’s spatial tools. At this point, Tanal pursues the method of “purifying” in the way of developing a composition for an architectural object. In Tanal’s perspective, it is possible to achieve a qualified architecture and convey a meaning through architectural form, only if all of the unnecessary architectural elements and ornamentations are subtracted from the architectural object. In this respect, Tanal uses the method of purifying for create the architectural object in its simplest form that is the most genuine form in fact. According to Tanal:

If acquiring a sublime purity where nothing can be subtracted any more, a joy that has no solid reason, a place where loneliness can be felt, a secret that can not precisely be comprehended, an affinity that can warm the soul, a feeling that one cannot be named properly but feel that it really exists, a hate, a madness, something felt as wild, be aware that one is standing in front of a work of art that is successful enough to convey a meaning that has a content. (Tanal, 2012)<sup>15</sup>

In one of his most famous works of Tanal, the “State Audit Offices Complex” that is built in 2002 in Ankara, it can be observed that the general layout of the project is very plain: there is a horizontally placed and distorted prismatic volume at the base of the structure and a vertically elongated volume over this base. The simple organization of the main masses is elaborated in different parts of the complex according to the different requirements of the architectural program.

Despite it is a very large-scale building placed along the Eskisehir Highway, it seems to be harmonized with the site by means of its proportions and material. Tanal intends to construct a unity between the building and its physical context, so he puts an effort for developing a figure and ground relationship and achieving “wholeness”. In this figure-ground relationship, Tanal considers the “purification” and “simplification” again as the way of associating the “things” and “non-things” in the general composition. In this way, the built object adjust to the space in which it is placed. Here, Tanal designs a humble building that does not need a reference other than itself to be evaluated as meaningful. He does not need the feel for using showy architectural elements to make the building more remarkable; rather he preferred to design a modest building that looks like a piece of the pre-existing environment and seems to have been there for decades. (Figure 6.1)

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<sup>15</sup> This quotation of Tanal is taken from the paper entitled “Strolling Among the Ethical and Sensate Values of the Creative Act”. An older version of this paper was published in the appendix of the master thesis of A. Ece Onur, named “Alvar Aalto in Search of Existential Self” (2009).



Figure 6.1: State Audit Offices Complex. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

As stated by Onur (2010, p. 33), architectural products can be considered as the artificial objects that are placed in urban spaces but in Tanalı's works, due to the fragmentations in the general configuration of the buildings, the perception of mass is shifted with the perception of a totality of architectural constituents. Consequently, the architectural object is perceived as a horizontal line that goes along the urban space. In Onur's words; constituting the architectural language of Tanalı, these "calm and continuous" lines reveal a "sensitivity" that goes beyond the limits of object. In "State Audit Offices Complex", the extended mass is sensed as a composition of horizontal lines that are laid on the ground. Through these lines, the frame of the building disappears and the disparity between figure and ground fades out, so the land and the object melt into each other mutually. (Figure 6.2) The linear strips divide the longitudinal façade horizontally into smaller fragments and break the massiveness of the building. These smaller fragments shift the perception of the proportions of the building and make it perceived closer to the human scale.



Figure 6.2: The extended mass is perceived as a horizontal line goes along the urban space. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

The facade organization of the building does not propose a single layered surface but a three dimensional arrangement of the architectural elements. Besides the use of linearity, this layered façade arrangement also shifts the massiveness of the object. In this layered surfaces of the façade, Tanalı uses repetitive architectural elements that provides continuity along the building. Here it can be observed that, the order of repetition in Tanalı's buildings proposes a perception of "wholeness". (Figure 6.3)



Figure 6.3: The of repetition of architectural elements on the façade. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

It is possible to observe a similar approach to the organization of mass by means of linearity, in Tanalı's another project; the building of "Faculty of Veterinary in Elazığ University" built in 1977. With the perfect use of pure horizontal forms designed close to the human scale, this building can be declared as one of the best examples of Modern architecture in Turkey. Here it should be underlined that, Tanalı's internalization of the Modernist ethics does not reveal an architecture that copies previously used architectural forms but provides him a standpoint that suggests the beauty of the simplicity and plainness in the organization of built environment, and consequently, an architectural object. Also in this building, Tanalı considers purification as a way of reflecting his sincerity and transmitting his spatial sensitivity to the architectural form, so concentrates on the simplification of the architectural constituents.

In this building, Tanalı proposes three prismatic volumes for different requirements of the architectural program and puts these volumes on the topography of the site as if they were naturally placed there. (Figure 7.1) He designs the passages between these volumes that provide an access to each of them. He defines two voids in between these volumes and passages, and attaches smaller programmatic elements to one of these voids, while defining the other one as an atrium. (Figure 7.2)

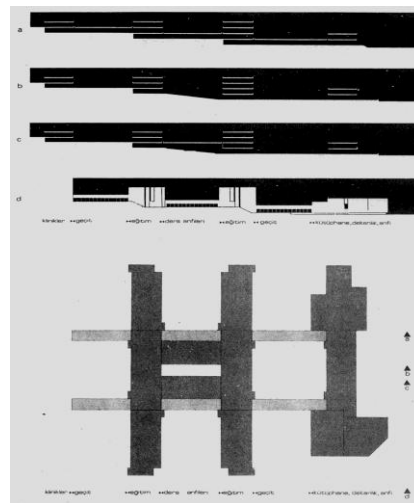


Figure 7.1: The plan and the section organization of Faculty of Veterinary in Elazığ University. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive



Figure 7.2: Faculty of Veterinary in Elazığ University. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

As stated by Taşkın (2006, p. 79), “Tanalı constructs the building through the sense that he wants to evoke through the existence of building and never permits any unnecessary element”. Tanalı does not need a feel for using vernacular or symbolic elements for attaching a meaning to his architecture; rather he intends to propose a perfect unity of the materials, proportions and details to convey the sensitivity. Tanalı achieves a beauty in the purest form of an architectural object that is theorized with a simple language. The minimalism of facades was also revealed in the plan organization with the use of pure geometric forms. The strips that define the opening of the facade in the exterior, overlap with horizontally organized living spaces. The linear organization is arranged both for outside and inside of the building, so he achieves a consistency between the exterior and interior by using linearity as a conceptual idea that fulfills the functional demands of the interior space besides providing qualitative values. (Figure 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5)



Figure 7.3: The interior of Faculty of Veterinary in Elazığ University. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive





Figure 7.4 and 7.5: The interior of Faculty of Veterinary in Elazığ University. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

Tanalı uses a similar minimalistic architectural language in the building of “Faculty of Pharmacy in Ankara University” built in 1973. Being a major design element in the organization of the facade, the horizontal strips are used inside of the building and they determine the boundaries of an interior atrium. While these strips are used to divide the extended surface of the facade into linear fragments that defines the façade openings in many building of Tanalı, here they also used in the interior of the building, going along the open corridors of each floor.



Figure 8.1: Faculty of Pharmacy in Ankara University. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

Tanalı re-interprets the use of linearity as an architectural attitude in building of “Research, Diagnosis and Rehabilitation Center for Substance Abuse” built in 2001 in Ankara. Here it is possible to see that, the other buildings in the site of the project have a vertically extended formalization, but Tanalı chooses to design a low-rise building that is perceived closer to the human scale. In this modest approach, in order to achieve a degree of movement in the building, Tanalı plays with the architectural elements and achieves a three dimensional façade that has different characteristic in each side. In this way, the building becomes visible in the site and introduces new qualities to the context. (Figure 9.1 and 9.2)

As a new approach in his way of architectural design, Tanalı designs the façade and the inner organization of the building independently in a Modernist approach. Unlike the layered surface arrangement of the exterior, he prefers a simple and rational plan organization in the division of the interior spaces.



Figure 9.1: Research, Diagnosis and Rehabilitation Center for Substance Abuse Building.  
Source: Ziya Tanalı’s Archive



Figure 9.2: The plurality occurs in a pure expression not complex. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

In the building of “Shell Foundation” built in 1992, in Ankara, Tanalı designs a vertically extended building and that also has a very simple configuration. As a consistent attitude, he again considers the “wholeness” as an important concept and tries to achieve a unity between different volumes and plays with the geometry of them by using the same materials. In order to shift the perception of the height and make the building closer to the human scale, he uses horizontally placed rectangular frames on the glass façade.

Above the ground floor of the building, the façade is broken into two sections and the upper part becomes a cantilever. (Figure 10.1) Here, Tanalı both purposes to distinguish the planes of upper and lower section from each other and then connect them in a common architectural language. He uses an undulating glass in the façade of the ground floor and separates the lower section from the upper one. In this way, he puts an emphasis on the entrance of the building. (Figure 10.2) On the other hand, by using the same materials, glass and concrete, and continuing the frames of the glass in the lower part, he also achieves a continuity.



Figure 10.1: The Building of Shell Foundation. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive



Figure 10.1: The undulating glass in the façade of the ground floor. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

In “Kızıldel House”, a housing project built in 1977 in Bodrum, he achieves a simple but sensitive architecture without feeling the necessity of using an eclectic language that symbolizes the architecture of the area. (Figure 11.1) Without using the vernacular elements of architecture, Tanalı refers to the living culture of the context with his architectural articulations. He achieves an architecture that is very familiar to Bodrum, but that is also unique in Bodrum. Tanalı seeks the way of being adherent to the “ground” and the context. Here he chooses to learn from the context, rather than feeling the need for copying from the pre-existing architecture. (Onur, 2010, p. 15) In order to explain his

attitude Tanalı gives an example of the window blinds of the house. He states that, these architectural elements are the only things that are borrowed from the vernacular architecture of Bodrum. As he continues, these elements do not refer to something about the site or symbolizes something about the local architecture but shows the proficiency of the craftsmanship in there. He says that these window blinds are the best ones to adapt with his building, so he did not refuse to use them. (Figure 11.2)

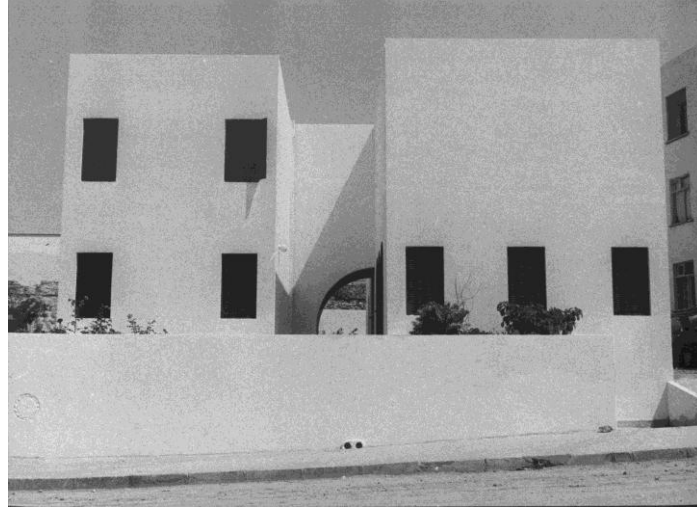


Figure 11.1: Kızıldel House. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive



Figure 11.2: The window blinds of Kızıldel House. Source: Ziya Tanalı's Archive

As exemplified through the selected works of him, it can be observed that Tanalı traces the possibilities of creating an architectural object that merges within the site while it still protects its figure-being in the general composition. As indicated by Onur, the planes that cover the building melt into each other in continuity and the frame that defines the

building merges into the ground and the sky, and then fades out. Here the object and the ground are mixed to each other. In this approach, each architectural element achieves a different identity according to the perspective of the observer. (Onur, 2010, p. 17)

Through these linear planes, figure and ground continuously transform into each other. A surface of lines starts as an anterior and transforms into an exterior. The frame and the framed are inverted. One can easily mix the planes as which was created and which has been appeared. While tracing real planes, you feel perceived ones. Some preferences of the planes are underlined and some are left aside. Planes that appear throughout the building as lines, are constituted of fragmented pieces and deformations formed by lines. What constitute the total are the parallel realities, which you can perceive by those parallel planes. The transformation of the relation between the figure and ground at the borders and corners constitutes an ambiguity. These create extreme perspective delusions. When observed from an opposite angle these architectural components have a diverse effect.<sup>16</sup> (Onur, 2010, pp. 15-16)

To conclude, it can be stated that Tanalı is a consistent actor, who does not find it inconvenient to repeat the ideas that have similar connotations in his theoretical works. He sometimes emphasizes on the same subjects in the discussion of the different issues, because the essence of these issues are very related to each other. In this respect, he also uses similar forms in his architectural projects that are built in different scales and different sites. He practices the same architectural language in different building, but this attitude does not reduce the spatial qualities of architectural objects. He grasps different sensitivities in the design processes of these buildings. His buildings, which may be conceived -at first glance as the examples of “ordinary” and “repeated” compositions, are the variations of the same language. There are added new words to this language in every single work, but the purpose behind it remains same. As stated before, in Tanalı’s view, architecture is a composition of different architectural elements and this composition should not be evaluated as the unity of architectural forms, rather it should be read as a “whole” that has different qualities in itself.

In this thesis it is asserted that Tanalı’s evaluation of architecture as a social product that is formed through both architect’s personal qualifications and social, economic, and ideological factors makes him a social agent that considers the act of designing and building as a praxis activity formed in a well-organized process. The word “process” is a very important notion in his viewpoint; Tanalı does not consider architecture as an activity of which only purpose is to build something concrete but to achieve a progression through which the architect develop his/her personality and seeks the ways of building the “good” for the society.

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<sup>16</sup> The translation of the quotation is taken from the master thesis of Özlem Taşkın who analyzed the creative act of Tanalı in her work entitled “A Study on The ‘Creative Act’ Through The Attitude of Architect M. Ziya Tanalı” (Taşkın, 2006).

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, the meaning of “praxis” and its difference from the notions of “theory” and “practice” were scrutinized with respect to the “means” and “ends” indicated by each of them. As explained in the previous chapters, the concept of praxis cannot be assessed as a practice, of which ultimate purpose is to achieve a concrete end without feeling any concern for the “meaning” attributed to the work. On the other side, praxis also cannot be evaluated as a theory that has no reflection on the material world, if not being actualized through a practice. Actually, praxis implies an action that involves both the notion of theory and practice in itself and requires the association of them throughout a process. In praxis, theory and practice -as inherently opposing notions, engage in a dialectical relationship that points out the mutually utilization of them. Here, what makes this relationship significant is the “meaning” that is exposed through the established communication between theory and practice. According to the “reason”, the “purpose” and the “intention” put forward by the performer of praxis activity, a “meaning” is conveyed through the process. These determinants of the action define both the position of the subject in any formation that he/she belongs to and the quality of the performed activity. As stated by Robin Stewart (2011), praxis “involves the critical and inextricable meld of theory and practice”. In this respect the performer of praxis concerns for developing new knowledge, challenging the old beliefs and speculating on the ‘what ifs’ of” the pre-existing theories and human activities.

In the Marxist viewpoint, praxis has ideological/political connotations of “theory”; theory is developed by aiming the transformation of the existing social, political and economic structures that are connected to each other inherently. In this perspective, the subject of praxis is considered as an actor that constructs his/her theory with the purpose of changing the pre-existing social conditions. The agent that leads a political praxis determines and realizes various purposeful acts during his/her lifetime. Praxis here indicates a degree of commitment for the subject –that is considered as architect in this thesis. In the case of architectural praxis, architect seeks the ways of developing new styles, building techniques, design methods as well as socially concerned architectural discourses in his/her production activity, and this attempt of architect cannot be evaluated differently from the political praxis of an agent from another platform.

In this respect, it is essential to state that, architectural production cannot be reduced merely to the activity of building, so it cannot be considered as a practice that is performed for only to achieve a concrete result. Moreover, it cannot be equated to a theory and its abstract or descriptive connotations, because architectural praxis requires an action in addition to this transcendental phenomenon. In architecture, the consideration of the

production activity as praxis protects architecture from being reduced to a building activity that is performed as only a human response to the nature and a meta production that is led by disregarding the relationship between architecture and the social entity. It is asserted in this work that, it is possible to improve both the disciplinary and practical qualities of architecture in each design activity and contribute to the re-transformation of societal formations by developing a socially concerned theory. Here it is significant to reconsider the significance of the subject of architectural praxis; the architect and the content of architectural production developed and performed by him/her. In this respect, praxis in architecture re-defines architect's position as a creative actor rather than a builder and re-determines the content of architectural production as a meaningful product rather than a commercial object.

In this work, it is asserted that, the theoretical base of the architectural design process result in different types of praxes that are directed by different intentions and purposes. Consequently, these praxes expose different meanings that contribute to the disciplinary and interdisciplinary properties of architecture in different ways. As mentioned repeatedly, both of these "object-oriented" and "context-oriented" approaches are "significant" activities that contribute to the discipline and profession of architecture in different ways. Here, dealing with the source that supports the development of the architectural theory and the way on which the relationship between theory and practice is constructed, it can be stated that these object-oriented and context-oriented praxes can be distinguished from each other. The variety of the knowledge fields that theory is developed through and the extent of the sphere that praxis activity is addressed reveal the distinctions between these two praxes.

In this work it is explored that, the first type of praxis (object-oriented) is built on a design process that is concentrated on the perfection of the spatial qualities of any design product, the development of the architecture's disciplinary methods and language, and the improvement of the building techniques by considering the needs of the both the builders and users of the space. On the other hand, the second type (context-oriented) is realized on the grounds of a theory that is developed by considering a wider scale than the produced object. Here the word "scale" is of primary importance, because both of praxes are evaluated according to the scale of the sphere that the theory is influenced from, and the scale of the sphere that these praxes activities influence. As explained throughout this thesis, the knowledge fields that orient architect in the determination of the reasons and purposes of the object-oriented and context-oriented praxes may differ according to the different tendencies of the architects.

The variety of the knowledge sources that support the development of architectural theory or the extent of the area that a praxis activity influences does not affect the quality of the activity. Then, it is crucial to comprehend that; there is not a hierarchy between these two praxes. The excellence of praxis depends on the eupraxia and practical wisdom of the subject, so the source and orientation of theory does not affect the quality of the outcome. Here the word "outcome" does not indicate a concrete end product, rather it signifies the virtue behind the purpose of architect, and the meaning that is tried to be achieved or conveyed during the design process. Considering the architect as the subject that leads to the process of production through a practical wisdom, it is possible to say that



the theoretical development of praxis is very related with the personality, principles and ethics of the architect. At this point, it is possible to claim that a praxis activity is also formed according to the personal qualifications and choices of the architect. Architect is the actor, whose architectural and social evaluations, judgments and decisions orient the process of architectural production. In this respect, as the subjects of praxis in the domain of architecture, the theoretical and practical works Kerem Yazgan and Ziya Tanalı are investigated in this work in order to comprehend the relationship between architect and his/her way of conducting a meaningful production. In this thesis, the architectural productions of Kerem Yazgan are evaluated as the examples of the manifestation of object-oriented praxis in architecture, while the ones of Ziya Tanalı are considered as the examples of context-oriented praxis. The architectural approaches of Yazgan and Tanalı to the praxis activity in architectural production differs from each other in many ways, but as a common ground, it is possible to say that the praxes of these agents contribute to the discipline of architecture from different sides. Kerem Yazgan pursues an architectural production that is supported by the theoretical base of architecture; on the other hand, Ziya Tanalı pursues an architecture that regards the social conditions as another theory source.

Besides the disparities in the contents of the architectural discourses developed by both of the architects, the language the architects use also have some major distinctions; Yazgan uses a considerably instructive language that aims to define the operations of a design process step by step. He constructs a more tangible discourse that provides the information about the method he pursues in the designing and building activities: he considers architectural production as the arrangement of the required acts of a process with a rational approach. In his literary works that inform us about his working method, he concentrates on the organization of the different stages of the architectural production and consequently the final product as the medium, in which this systematic organization is embodied. In Yazgan's discourse, the theoretical base of the praxis led by him regards the development of a convenient method of producing architectural knowledge that contributes to the achieving a more rational and systematic architectural organization. On the other hand, Tanalı constructs a more abstract discourse that is not grounded only on the disciplinary requirements of architectural production, but also the self-actualization of the architect. For Tanalı the theory, content and meaning behind the architectural form are very related with the self-actualization of the architect. In this respect, he develops a theoretical framework that considers the construction of the self of primary importance. Thus, rather than pursuing the goal of developing a discourse that informs about the methodology of the production activity, Tanalı concentrates on some keywords like ethics, morality, social responsibility and universal-contextual values. Here, the difference between the tones and the structures of architectural discourses can also be distinguished in the ways of describing their own architectural projects. In the re-reading of the realized projects of Yazgan and Tanalı, the disparity, by means of tangibility and intangibility of the discourses are also reflected in the language of this study. In the investigation of Yazgan's works, the methodological approach was tried to be explored throughout the text, while in the evaluation of Tanalı's works, the relationship between the architect, his architectural language and the context these works belong to were analyzed.

As a final remark, while investigating the notion of praxis and exemplifying it through the works of Kerem Yazgan and Ziya Tanalı, it is crucial to underline that; the classification of “praxis” developed through different tendencies of the subjects does not imply an attempt to draw a strict boundary between “object-oriented” and “context-oriented” production processes. As stated in the previous chapters, an architect leading his/her production activity through an object-oriented theory still consider the social, cultural, economic and political realities, while another architect pursuing a “context-oriented” approach uses the disciplinary-specific codes of architectural in a production activity. This condition is related with the multi-dimensional formation of architecture. Therefore the consideration of various aspects of architecture in the process of architectural production is a must for the architect rather than a choice. At this point, it can be stated that, the “object-oriented praxis” and the “context-oriented praxis” should not be evaluated as opposite approaches to the issue of “purposeful production”. Considering the differences and the common grounds of these two notions, this study suggests that, the classification of “praxes” may help to comprehend the built environment with regard to its communication with social formations and explore the ways of enhancing the potentials of contemporary architecture, of which theoretical questions become merely replaced by reproducible techniques and commercial concerns.

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