

ADALYA

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SUNA-İNAN KIRAÇ AKDENİZ MEDENİYETLERİ ARAŞTIRMA ENSTİTÜSÜ
SUNA & İNAN KIRAÇ RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON MEDITERRANEAN CIVILIZATIONS

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Environmental Anesthesia and False Vernacular Architecture: The Case Study of the Western Taurus Mountains

Kemal Reha KAVAS*

1. Introduction

The use of the term “vernacular” for architecture is grounded on a linguistic analogy¹. In linguistics “vernacular” language is the characteristic tongue of a particular region. Vernacular can be regarded as a dialect entailing the adjectives “native” and “indigenous”². It is assumed that a distinctive cultural identity is encoded in the linguistic patterns of everyday life. In time the term was applied to the field of architecture by assuming that cultural identity is encoded in the architectural patterns of everyday life. Then local culture is considered as a multifaceted and coherent whole whose patterns can be deciphered through different spheres of daily life³. These culture-specific patterns are handed down through successive generations, which leads to the establishment of architectural traditions⁴.

This definition of traditional vernacular architecture as a set of spatial characteristics related to a particular local context is built upon the idea of integrity between man and nature. The natives of a particular region interpret environmental input, such as local building materials, climate and functional requirements in order to produce spaces of habitation carrying the imprints of that particular context. Vernacular architecture compiles two basic tenets of environment: the input of the local context and the human interpretation of these inputs. Humans regulate this process of building by becoming an integral part of the environment. They actively participate in the construction process which is perfected gradually through a historical course of trial and error. The consequent outcome becomes the most appropriate spatial response to architectural problems of the local environment.

The above-mentioned process of perfection necessitates a total integration and cohesion of man and environment. Humans actively participate in natural processes for developing solutions for environmental integration. In this physical participation all senses are used intensively. Unlike the contemporary architectural practice which is established upon a visual and intellectual rationalization of a building project before construction, vernacular design and construction are intermingled phases embracing improvisation and tactile senses. Following

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¹ Carter - Cromley 2005, 3.

² Aran 2000.

³ Miller 2008.

⁴ Doshi 2007.

agreed upon schemes learned from previous generations, vernacular production enables flexible solutions adoptable to the characteristics of site and function⁵. By means of their adoption to human scale, functionality and allocation of components, vernacular architectural traditions disclose the imprints of this bodily engagement.

The integration between man and environment is established through a complete sensual engagement. This can be regarded as a synthesis of all senses that make up the perception and interpretation of the environment. The best term to be employed for representing this synthesis is “aesthetics”. The term has its etymological root in the ancient Greek language and stands for sensuality or sensed perception. Hence, aesthetics defines the scientific branch related with the knowledge of sensual perception. “Aesthetic” knowledge developed by virtue of the sensual “synthesis” engenders a situation of “synesthesia”⁶.

“Aesthetics,” in its original meaning, signifies a deep sensual engagement or the sensual synthesis which incorporates the entire body. However, in the contemporary world the term has acquired erroneous meanings. Due especially to the widespread recognition of “aesthetic surgery”, “aesthetics” is reduced to surface remediation or decoration. Another erroneous employment of “aesthetics” sees it as the substitute of visual “beauty”. The contemporary meaning of “aesthetics” has become “surface delight”, which is addable to or removable from design products.

The misleading conceptions of “aesthetic surgery” may be followed in different examples of contemporary architecture. These examples are produced through a duality instead of integrity. This is the duality of “the constructional fabric”, which is the structural system versus “the representative scenography”, which is the façade design⁷. In this sense the deep-seated understanding of architecture as the simultaneous realization of commodity, firmness and delight is deconstructed. The continuities between the structural system and the “beauty” of architecture have disappeared. The surface claddings reinforced by the latest inventions of the building industry promote addable and removable options in order to realize so-called “aesthetic” effects. In this way “aesthetics”, which should be regarded as an integral web of relations shaped by the tactile and bodily engagement of all senses, is associated erroneously with visual surface qualities.

Of course “aesthetics”, as the systematic knowledge of sensual perception, relates to the concept of “beauty”, wherefore it defines a much deeper and comprehensive ground of which beauty is an outcome. Arising from the depths of the synesthetic relationship between man and environment, original beauty is the outcome of a consistent process of artistic construction, thus it cannot be a secondary application to already-existent products.

Although “aesthetic surgery” as a branch of medical science deforms the original meaning of “aesthetics”, another publicly known medical term helps to reform the correct meaning of the term. “Anesthesia” signifies blocking sensations for a defined period. In medical terms, “anesthesia” is the opposite of “aesthesia”, which stands for the “capacity of sensation and feeling”. This usage is closer to the etymological roots of “aesthetics” in ancient Greek. In this way it is also more practical to understand and explain the origins of the term and to relieve the conception of “aesthetics” from deceiving comprehensions.

⁵ Rapoport 1989.

⁶ Berleant 1997.

⁷ Frampton 1983, 26-30.

When the seemingly unrelated concepts of “vernacular”, “aesthetics” and “anesthesia” are thought in relation with each other in an unprecedented way, they open up prolific perspectives for understanding, evaluating and comparing traditional-vernacular and contemporary spaces. In this way an “aesthetic” criteria can be developed for judging the value of vernacular traditions of architecture and for distinguishing their originality. At this point traditional vernacular architecture should be reviewed in light of contemporary architectural and philosophical frameworks.

Modern architecture of the early 20th century equated the level of civilization with the capacity to “overcome” nature. In contrast with the long vernacular traditions of architecture, “struggle” became the key concept in man’s relationship with nature. However, the post-war period introduced new philosophical trends seeking integration between culture and nature. As a representative of these philosophical trends, “environmental aesthetics” has questioned the conventional meaning of “environment”⁸. Instead of suggesting an isolated focal object surrounded by secondary objects, environment was now related to a web of relationships through which different objects and processes merge into each other⁹. Aesthetics, on the other hand, was associated with environmental synesthesia - the union of all senses - by which humans actively participate in natural processes for developing solutions for environmental integration.

Thus the main conflict of the 20th century in terms of man-environment relations can be formulated as the contrast between environmental “synesthesia” and “anesthesia”. Through the procedures of technology and globalization, contemporary architects and users of space are totally disengaged from the “aesthetic” knowledge of their environment. Architecture has lost its tactile basis and has been set up within the limits of a cerebral and contemplative ordering of space. Rationalized and abstracted drawings pre-designing architecture have replaced the solid, bodily and “in situ” sensation and interpretation of nature and improvised production of space.

The architectural productions of environmental “anesthesia”, namely the examples of the international style, are widely known; however, this issue is out of the present article’s scope. However, there are particular forms of “environmentally-anesthetic” architecture¹⁰, which either justify their very existence or legitimize their intrusions into traditional built environments through surface imitations of vernacular architectural traditions. This “anesthetic” legitimization is underlined by a deceptive image of environmental reality, and its architectural representatives produce a “false vernacular”¹¹. Berleant argues that the most successful examples of “false vernacular” have been contemporary theme parks, themed hotels, restaurant and housing developments, where historical styles and themes are extracted from their original contexts, used in an eclectic way and appropriated with “indifference to time, place and context”.

At this point, it is critical to judge the relationship between a “false vernacular” attitude and “environmental aesthetics”. From these perspectives, “false vernacular” architecture represents an “aesthetically destructive” design attitude because it realizes “aesthetic harm” where “the sensory richness, perceptual fullness and sense of reality of the mankind are ignored”¹².

⁸ Erzen 2006, 9-18.

⁹ Berleant 1992.

¹⁰ I coin the term of “environmentally-anesthetic” architecture by speaking of “environmental anesthesia” in architecture. This article presents the very first usage of the term “anesthesia” in architectural terminology. I hope that this usage of the term will be a contribution to architectural criticism.

¹¹ Berleant 1997, 75.

¹² Berleant 1997, 75-82.

Environmental anesthesia produces “aesthetic harm” through “desensitizing people, diminishing human capacities for experience, misleading the sense of reality and leading to intellectual indulgence unconnected with human experience”¹³.

In order to solve this problem, in other words, in order to reintroduce “environmental synesthesia” into the built environment, new approaches in architectural design have developed especially after the 1960s. For instance, “critical regionalism” has appeared as an alternative view of architectural design aiming to “readdress the tactile range of human perceptions”¹⁴. Nevertheless, most of the practical interpretations could not develop such a consistent and deep understanding of the essence and “aesthetics” of vernacular architectural traditions. Instead, “vernacular styles” are developed by repeating theoretically-unfounded imitations of the historical built environment. The representatives of this vernacular style are produced in industrial contexts detached from the pre-industrial origins of vernacular architecture and due to the lack of natural materials and authentic craftsmanship, the result has mostly become surface imitations of the original scheme. In general the stylized vernacular has ended up with “environmental anesthesia”, by producing a deceptive aesthetic which has undermined real sensual integration with nature.

This paper illustrates the above-mentioned conflict between “environmental synesthesia” and “environmental anesthesia” through the analysis of “false vernacular” examples in the Anatolian Mediterranean region. The traditional vernacular architecture of the Taurus Mountains in south-western Turkey is appreciated for its integration with nature. In the last decades this vernacular tradition is imitated by themed buildings through the use of façade decoration. This surface effect, which never conceives the constructive as well as the philosophical depth of the original construction, lead to a deceptive aesthetics associable with environmental anesthesia. This study evaluates the negative effects of this architectural imitation in terms of environmental aesthetics. In this way, the article aims to develop a general model for similar analyses and comparisons.

2. Environmental Aesthetics and Vernacular Traditions of Architecture

2.1 Conceptual Background

This topic is closely related with how to look at vernacular architectural traditions. The conventional method for analyzing these traditional built environments is typology¹⁵. The clearest manifestation of typological reductionism may be seen in its mode of architectural representation. The conventional approach has emphasized abstract proportional relationships mostly concerning the interior plan organization of the traditional dwellings. The standard graphic language underlying the representation of these dwellings reflects a profound disengagement from the socio-cultural context and local particularities (Fig. 1). In consequence the dwelling is reduced to abstract objects or compositions of measurements / proportions / materials / techniques / plan schemes and isolated from its environment. The abstract language of the orthographic projections obstructs regional characteristics. As a result, the representations of two different traditional dwellings produced in distinct regions, social structures, environmental circumstances and material constraints may look indifferent (Fig. 1).

¹³ Berleant 1997, 75-83.

¹⁴ Frampton, 1983, 29.

¹⁵ Kuban 1995.

The analysis of the rural settlements thus far has demonstrated that rural architecture cannot be conceived independent from the environment. In order to comprehend rural architecture in connection to its environment, it is necessary to understand and explain the experience and consciousness of rural dwellers regarding the construction process. This struggle for understanding and explanation can be successful only if a context-specific method can be developed as an alternative to typology. In order to achieve this goal, the ways by which architecture is analyzed should be compatible with the ways by which architecture is constructed and experienced.

The underlying theoretical approach of this study repudiates the conventional object-oriented typology but emphasizes and explains the environmental continuities of the dwelling. The theory of environmental aesthetics, which focuses on the quality of the relationship between cultural and natural environments, has produced appropriate conceptual references for such an approach¹⁶. Environmental aesthetics provides a conceptual basis for explaining the shaping of environment through architecture and the role of culture during this process. The cultural shaping of environment through architecture is an issue of environmental aesthetics. Environmental aesthetics appeared as an interdisciplinary field with close relations to traditional rural architecture. The field is extensively affected by the relationship of non-Western cultures with their environment. Through their paralleling developments since the 1960s, environmental aesthetics and architectural history have produced similar theories concerning their increasing focus on vernacular architecture.

When the traditional rural architecture is reviewed as a complex of cultural values instead of a typological model, conceptual tools are needed for deciphering the cultural content of architecture. In this framework the concept of “environment” should be reconsidered while approaching the cultural content of traditional rural architecture. For Berleant “environment” is the “physical-cultural realm in which people engage in all the activities and responses that compose the weave of human life in its many historical and social patterns”¹⁷. This definition represent a novel approach considering human presence as an indispensable component of environment because it disapproves the conventional meaning of “environment” loaded with the sharp duality between a focal object and its surroundings¹⁸.

This conception of “environment” develops its alternative view of “aesthetics” as an expanded field of interactions between culture and environment¹⁹. Therefore any human activity underlined by participatory engagement with environment becomes the subject of aesthetics. In this framework aesthetics goes beyond the confinements of an abstract space isolated from the everyday life and becomes a mode of sensual consciousness expanding into environmental scale. Therefore, environmental aesthetics enhances the inclusive conceptions of “environment” as an integral whole merging nature with culture²⁰ and “aesthetics” as an integrated realm of perceptual engagement with environment²¹.

¹⁶ Berleant 1997, 31.

¹⁷ Berleant 1992, 20. Berleant can be regarded as one of the founders of the field of environmental aesthetics. His comprehensive definition of environment unfolds the concept with its many dimensions related with nature, culture and architecture.

¹⁸ Erzen 2006, 126.

¹⁹ Berleant 1992, 128.

²⁰ Berleant 1991, 103.

²¹ Berleant 1992, 19. Berleant argues that “aesthetic perception offers direct awareness of the engagement that attains a harmonized mode of human being, and in environmental experience it is most concrete and immediate... We not only see our living world; we move with it, we act upon and in response to it”. He further states that “those

In this respect it is quite prolific to reconsider traditional vernacular architecture from the perspectives of environmental aesthetics because it enhances a more embracing view of space by recognizing the integrity of culture and environment. Environmental aesthetics refuses object-oriented approach imposed by typology and disapproves the isolation of architecture from environment. The theory entails a new approach that reconsiders architecture as an integral component of environment. The users' active participatory engagement with environment through architectural production should be interpreted from this viewpoint because environmental perception in traditional vernacular society is far more complex than the implications of typological abstractions.

Since cultural identity is molded through a process of mutual interaction with identified environmental factors, the local people's perception of environment frames the continuity between architecture and culture. Therefore it is necessary to discover the ways by which the local people relate themselves to "environment". During this analysis it should be remembered that cultural identity is molded and sustained through the identification of "place"²². The essence of the concept of "place" is embedded inside the architectural tradition which gives its character to environment and furnishes the natives with the sense of belonging.

If architecture can be reconsidered as "environmental design" by going beyond its conventional limitations, then by referring to Norberg-Schulz's approach, architectural elements can be re-conceptualized as "foci where the environmental character is condensed"²³. The construction of these "foci" should also be regarded as the construction of culture. The molding of earth through architectural process is, at the same time, the physical expression of the transmission of cultural tradition, norms and values into successive generations. As J. Erzen argues, "Each contact with the earth or nature becomes also a new acquisition for culture, modifying or changing it"²⁴.

2.2 The Case Study

Vernacular Architectural Traditions in the Western Taurus Mountains

When the traditional vernacular architecture of the Western Taurus Mountains is reviewed against this theoretical background, it is possible to see that struggle for survival and environmental consciousness - the basic elements of the local cultural identity - are constructed through architecture. When the active role of architecture in enculturation is recognized, it is possible to interpret architecture as a comprehensive "environmental design" in broad scale rather than the construction of single buildings²⁵. This integrative approach assumes a characteristic environmental coherence (Fig. 2).

Environmental character is condensed in the characteristic architectural combination of stone and timber especially in the Akseki-İbradı Basin, which is situated at the intersection of the Western Taurus Mountain chain and the historical trade route between Konya (Iconium) and Alanya (Korakesion)²⁶. In other words, the dialogue between the natural character of the

major dimensions of the environment - space, mass, volume, and depth - are encountered not primarily by the eye but with the body in our movements and actions".

²² Norberg-Schulz 1980, 22.

²³ Norberg-Schulz 1980, 10.

²⁴ Erzen 2000, 85-86.

²⁵ Berleant 1997, 31.

²⁶ Kavaz 2009. The environmental and cultural significance of the characteristic construction technique and the traditional rural architecture of the Akseki-İbradı Basin have not yet been investigated in detail. The already established

region and the cultural interpretation of this input is encoded in the architectural joint between stone and timber (Fig. 3). In this respect the joint between stone and timber can be regarded as “the harmonious unity of human contribution and physical location”²⁷. The logic of joint, which is the basic unit of architectural tradition, is also the source of environmental coherence.

The traces of architectural heritage in the Akseki-İbradı Basin demonstrate the historical depth of the harmony between culture and environment. The scarcity of environmental resources is also a problem with respect to building materials. However, the environmental character of the region has presented challenges along with opportunities. Rubble stone, which is abundant in the geomorphologic structure, has been combined with cedar (*katran*), and this combination has derived the characteristic structural system of the region. Local stone, by itself, is inappropriate for construction due to problems of structural resistance. Lintels produced by the use of cedar provide structural resistance of the system by being placed inside the masonry in a well-knit configuration. Stone and timber are combined through a characteristic joint system. The originality of this combination is based upon the interpretation of environmental factors by the cultural identity. The traditional society has developed an architectural approach which demonstrates a perfect adaptation to environmental context and which shapes the natural resources in the most practical and economic ways.

The architectural heritage of the region, which is an indispensable element of the cultural tradition, reflects the accumulation of experiential knowledge in constructing the harmony between building and environment. The characteristic masonry system called “buttoned (*düğmeli*) wall” is the most essential architectural expression of its cultural identity. Multi-scaled spatial configurations, which are a cultural articulation of the environment, are based on this underlying structural system.

Due to its irregular forms and dimensions, rubble stone, which is a component of the masonry, is not capable of forming a consistent structural system. However, when rubble stone is reinforced at certain intervals with timber elements, longitudinal lintels and lateral “buttons”, and when the stone units are interlocked with each other without using mortar, this combination performs as a resistant system. Timber complements rubble stone structurally and reinforces the masonry. This relationship between stone and timber is a good illustration of complementary environmental elements. The principle of completion is embedded in the underlying architectural detail of the environmental coherence. The rural settlement is fabricated by the reproduction of the essential detail in a variety of circumstances, and the joint produces a characteristic spatiality (Fig. 4).

In order to understand the principle of construction, it is necessary to appreciate the role of the projecting tie-beams (*düğme/peştivan*) within the construction process and the later performance of the structure. The local term “*düğme*” in Turkish stands for “button”. The masonry is composed of irregular units of rubble stone interlocked into each other without mortar. This wall system, which is approximately 70 cm. thick, is reinforced every 50-60 cm. along its height with a pair of timber runner-beams (*hatıl*) flush with the faces of the wall on either side. These runner-beams are connected to each other by tie-beams (*düğme/button*) at intervals of 50-60 cm. Each button juts out of the wall around 25 cm. This system, which is called a “buttoned

literature concerning the traditional rural architecture of the region is limited to physical descriptions of the structural system or typological classifications. For exemplary literature limited by physical explanations concerning traditional construction techniques, the following studies may be taken into consideration: Çelik 2009; Duran - Kaya 2001, 59-60; Yıldız 2000, 56-60.

²⁷ Berleant 1992, 133.

wall" (düğmeli duvar), could be reproduced quite practically within the constraints of local material. It has been possible to construct quite high walls up to 15 metres in height, and some of these traditional walls are still in a very good condition.

The arrangement of projecting tie-beams (buttons) constitutes a built-in scaffolding. This system facilitates the construction of higher structures through the reproduction of new rows of rubble stone that repeats the same principle (Figs. 3-4). Therefore the placement of the buttons in several courses coincides with the working rhythm of the builder. This process has codified human scale and tactile sensations of the builder into the traditional masonry system. The masonry wall represents environmental synesthesia.

2.3 Environmental Synesthesia and the Case Study

How the environment is culturally woven through architecture has been a central theme in environmental aesthetics, which is an interdisciplinary approach²⁸. Environmental aesthetics, based upon phenomenological thought²⁹, is closely related with the issues covered by architecture, art history and other social sciences and pays special attention to the relationship of the traditional non-Western cultures with their environment. For A. Berleant, an important theoretician of environmental aesthetics, environment cannot be considered independently from humanity. Berleant defines environment as "a harmonious unity of human contribution and physical location"³⁰.

²⁸ Carlson 2011. Carlson regards environmental aesthetics as "one of the major new areas of aesthetics to have emerged in the last part of the twentieth century.... It focuses on philosophical issues concerning appreciation of the world at large as it is constituted not simply by particular objects but also by environments themselves. In this way environmental aesthetics goes beyond the appreciation of art to the aesthetic appreciation of both natural and human environments". The main causes for the development of environmental aesthetics has been eighteenth-century landscape aesthetics and "two recent factors: the exclusive focus of twentieth-century philosophical aesthetics on art" and "the public concern for the aesthetic condition of environments that developed in the second half of that century".

²⁹ Sharr 2007, 25-29. Sharr's study on M. Heidegger's interpretations of architecture demonstrates that phenomenology has raised many concepts and discussions critical for environmental aesthetics, and therefore it may be argued that phenomenological thinking constitutes the philosophical basis of environmental aesthetics. Sharr regards Heidegger's three key essays concerning architecture, "The Thing" (1950), "Building Dwelling Thinking" (1951) and "... poetically, Man dwells..." (1951), as the indicators of the philosopher's interpretation of architecture. At this point, Heidegger's proposed contrast between "thing" and "object" is critical for grasping his concept of "dwelling". This contrast parallels the opposition set up by environmental aesthetics between "contemplative appreciation" and "participatory engagement". Sharr argues that regarding this contrast between "thing" and "object", Heidegger "follows phenomenology, a strand of thought shaped by E. Husserl". Sharr argues that "phenomenology begins with the bare fact of human existence, stating that the world is always already there before anyone tries to reflect upon it". Accordingly, Heidegger argues that "immediate contact with existence has become clouded in contemporary society, that people should attempt to re-establish this contact with it, and that it has philosophical status". Heidegger's concept of "being" constitutes the basis for Norberg-Schulz's understanding of "place" and "dwelling" as well as the new concepts of "environment" and "aesthetics" raised by the field of environmental aesthetics. Heidegger defined "being" primarily as "phenomenological" rather than "cerebral": "he believed that it was largely preintellectual, and that thinking about being was a subsequent activity". To summarize, Heidegger challenges the position of the "observer who categorizes the world around him from a position of intellectual detachment" because this "detached notion of thinking directed the impetus of philosophy away from daily immediacies of being". For Heidegger conceiving "things" as "objects" distorted the importance of "being" because "things are appreciated primarily through their engagement in everyday human life". Heidegger's concepts of "thing", "place" and "dwelling" are interrelated through the idea of participatory engagement into environment and daily life. For Heidegger, these concepts were related through people's "involvement" with the things of "place". This understanding of human experience and environment has led to architectural phenomenology and environmental aesthetics.

³⁰ Berleant 1992, 132.

“Button”, which is the essential unit of the traditional “buttoned” wall, can be conceptualized as “tectonic joint”, in reference to Frampton³¹; “the *foci* where the environmental character is condensed,” in accordance with Norberg-Schulz³²; and as “harmonious unity of human contribution and physical location” with respect to Berleant’s interpretation³³. The logic of “button”, which is the basic unit of the local architectural tradition, is also the basis of the coherence in environmental scale. This coherence may be traced departing from architectural detail and extending into the environment in its entirety (Figs. 2-4).

For instance, the façade organization of the traditional dwelling is constructed by using a grid system that consists of button units. The dimensions of its architectural elements such as doors and windows and the locations of timber floors and roofs are derived from this grid system (Figs. 5-6). This close relationship among architectural elements gives each of them a comparable scale. If it is reconsidered that during the construction process the buttons perform as built-in scaffolding, it may be understood that anthropomorphic dimensions and proportions constitute the basis of this scale³⁴ (Fig. 7). Human scale, which is the kernel of architectural form, illustrates the integration of man and environment during the construction of the traditional built environment.

The case study of the Akseki-İbradı Basin is a perfect illustration of the concept of “synesthesia” involved with environmental aesthetics. In order to understand the significance of “synesthesia” for research in rural settlements³⁵, it is first necessary to develop a comprehension of the term “environment”. The term has acquired a limited conventional meaning through its successive usage. The narrowest etymological interpretation of the term is “the region that surrounds something” owing to “the French *en*, in and *viron*, circuit”³⁶. Berleant claims that most of the associations are built upon the primary assumptions for the existence of two distinct and separate entities: “an object and its surroundings” or “a self and its setting”³⁷.

Repudiating this conventional conception of “environment”, Berleant proposes a theoretical shift from “the passivity and separation of the standard theory”³⁸. Accordingly, environment is “no foreign territory surrounding the self” because the human habitation is “a contributing and responding part of a dynamic nexus of interpenetrating forces”³⁹. Berleant regards environment as “physical - cultural realm in which people engage in all the activities and responses that compose the weave of human life in its many historical and social patterns”⁴⁰.

³¹ Frampton 1983, 26-30.

³² Norberg-Schulz 1980, 10.

³³ Berleant 1992, 132.

³⁴ Küçükerman 1996, 88-91; Bektaş 2007, 43, states that the ceiling height is determined by the basic principle “it is enough if I cannot touch it”. He claims that this principle is reminiscent of the famous figure in Le Corbusier’s modular system.

³⁵ Berleant 1991, 81.

³⁶ Berleant 1997, 29; Berleant 1991, 81. Berleant refers to the explicit definition of environment by cultural geographers and cultural ecologists. The usual practice regards environment as “the physical surroundings”. This definition is based upon the division between the people and their surroundings and reflects the attitude of Cartesian dualism. Berleant states that the Oxford English Dictionary also gives a conventional definition for the entry “environment”: “the object or the region surrounding anything”.

³⁷ Berleant 1997, 29.

³⁸ Berleant 1991, 84.

³⁹ Berleant 1991, 102-103.

⁴⁰ Berleant 1992, 20.

According to the theory of environmental aesthetics, the categories of “object” and “surroundings”, which are imposed by the conventional definition of “environment”, are erroneous since this opposition itself is a fallacy. Within the continuous web of relations defined by the “environment”, there is no independent or isolated being. Paralleling this new definition of environment, an alternative and more comprehensive view of aesthetics has flourished. In accordance with this new view, aesthetic involves all relationships between culture and environment at the basis of sensual, bodily and participatory engagement and actions and responses. Any human activity underlined by perceptual engagement with environment becomes the subject of aesthetics⁴¹. From this viewpoint, the term “participatory engagement”⁴² becomes a key for understanding the rural dwellers’ conception of environment.

As a result of these theoretical transformations, environmental aesthetics enhances the inclusive conceptions of “environment” as an integral whole, merging nature with culture and “aesthetics” as an integrated realm of perceptual engagement with environment. For Berleant, “the aesthetic character of experience lies ultimately in direct rather than pure perception” and “perceptual engagement is the catalyzing and unifying force of the aesthetic field”⁴³. This new concept of “aesthetics”, which becomes important for this study, involves all situations where humans set up “sensual, bodily and participatory engagement” with environmental elements (Fig. 7). These integral perspectives introduced into human–nature unity by environmental aesthetics reinforces the idea that rural architecture is “the design of the built environment rather than of isolated physical structures”⁴⁴ and furnishes this idea with theoretical depth (Figs. 2, 5-7).

By the dissemination of the constructive logic of “button” from the massive structures into timber frame structures embracing these structures, it has been possible to disperse environmental coherence throughout a range of scales such as building, rural settlement and region by “moving beyond the physical boundaries of a structure to embrace its connections to site”⁴⁵ (Figs. 2, 5-7). The timber frame structures covered with vine leaves compose a different

⁴¹ Carlson 2001. Carlson states that “since aesthetics is the field of philosophy that studies the ways in which humans experience the world through their senses, aesthetics most frequently focuses on works of art and other similar objects that are explicitly designed for human sensory enjoyment”. However, “aesthetic appreciation is not limited to art; it is frequently directed towards the world at large, this is the world that surrounds humans in their day-to-day existence and thus constitutes the everyday environment: the world in which people work, play and live”. Therefore, “environmental aesthetics extends beyond the narrow confines of the art world and beyond the appreciation of works of art to the aesthetic appreciation of human-influenced and human-constructed as well as natural environments”.

Berleant 1997, 36-39; Berleant 1991, 12. Likewise, Berleant touches upon the extended realm of aesthetics due to new philosophical concerns about environment and everyday life. The conventional notion of “aesthetics” is based upon the Enlightenment-Kantian Notion of “aesthetic disinterestedness” and introduced “aesthetics” as a special kind of “awareness distinct from more commonly recognized alternative modes, such as instrumental, cognitive, moral and religious experience”. This Kantian categorization of “aesthetics” has led to the conception of “work of art as an aesthetic object created for contemplative appreciation” in isolation from its environment. This idea of isolated contemplative object has also become a central tenet of conventional architectural historiography adhering to typology. For Berleant, this resulted in “a false aesthetic” by creating “an intellectual indulgence unconnected with human experience”. Berleant calls for a radical shift from this “aesthetics of contemplation” relieved from social relevance to “an aesthetics of engagement” that highlights “the place that art occupies in the larger context of social activity”. At this point Heidegger’s proposed contrast between “thing” and “object” should be remembered (cf. Sharr 2007) in connection with these basic assumptions of environmental aesthetics because “thing” is associated with this notion of “aesthetics of engagement” while “object” is associated with “aesthetics of contemplation”. This leads to a much broader and inclusive definition of the “aesthetic”. This theoretical shift is quite promising for the rural architectural tradition, which had been ignored by the conventional theory of architectural history.

⁴² Berleant 1997, 86.

⁴³ Berleant 1991, 92.

⁴⁴ Berleant 1997, 33.

⁴⁵ Berleant 1997, 33.

micro-climate in their surroundings, and according to necessities, these structures are transformed into timber platforms encircling the buildings. These platforms, raised from the ground level on timber posts, make it possible to produce spaces of refreshment during the summer. These spaces also embrace other facilities of everyday life.

3. "Environmental Anesthesia" and Contemporary Architecture

3.1. Conceptual Background

"False Vernacular" and "Environmental Anesthesia"

In the modern world the process of globalization still continues by imposing universally similar models of production and consumption. The rapid development of communication and transportation technologies have connected different corners of the world in a dramatic way never experienced before. In general, the urban population has increased incredibly. Our world is facing important environmental problems due to the global models of consumption. The prevailing objectives of the new world has been defined according to a technological and quantitative development model⁴⁶. This process has a profound effect on world culture, and specific "places" with distinctive historical, natural and cultural characteristics are losing their soul⁴⁷.

This process of cultural disintegration has significant effects on vernacular architectural traditions all over the world. Local building practices and characteristic spaces are being forgotten, due to the imposition of a universally applicable set of building materials and techniques. Due to this universally imposed paradigm of construction, the same spatial frameworks are built all over the world regardless of environmental and cultural contexts. In all spheres of culture, humans are disengaged from "aesthetic" relations with their environment. Physical engagement and tactile perception of the environment are reduced to a minimal level. The world is experiencing a virtual revolution through the encapsulation of nearly all vital activities within a virtual computerized space guided by a cerebral mode of thought. This latest experience produces a global culture of "environmental anesthesia".

In this context of globalization, architecture has also lost its deep meanings. One forgotten meaning is its being the fundamental "places" for "dwelling". Humans, who used to establish a meaningful relation with their environment through the construction of "dwellings", no longer continue to attribute such deep values to the earth and space. The qualitative identification of space and its spiritual meanings in traditional societies is replaced by a quantitative process of materialization where land and architecture are commodities. This paradigm change holds true not only in urban contexts. Due to the same transformations, the traditional vernacular settings are undergoing profound spatial degenerations.

For instance, in rural settings where the most characteristic examples of vernacular architectural traditions are located, traditional economical models and construction practices are disappearing due to a dramatic population decrease. Migration to urban centers lead to abandoned traditional dwellings in vernacular built environments. These invaluable examples of cultural heritage disappear due to estrepement. In some cases such as the Anatolian Mediterranean, these abandoned settings are starting to be regarded as vacation places. Land loaded with deep meanings through generations is being sold, and intensive construction activity now violates the characteristic built environment. The definition of "place" and "dwelling" is being replaced

⁴⁶ Lyotard 1991, 8-23.

⁴⁷ Augé 1995, 75-115.

by “the impersonal imposition of stock patterns on an anonymous tract of land”⁴⁸. As direct experience of environment is replaced by cerebral projection of buildings on paper, characteristics of site are ignored and all land on earth is regarded “anonymous”. This is the end of the “place-conscious poetic” envisioned by Frampton in his proposal of “critical regionalism”⁴⁹.

Meanwhile, all over the world the value of traditional vernacular spaces is being appreciated by national and international, private and state organizations, and precautions are taken to preserve them. Mediterranean countries, for instance, are involving distinguished territories full of traditional vernacular settlements and architecture. There are ongoing efforts to find strategies for preservation of the cultural heritage. It is realized that preservation should be reinforced by a consistent economic activity. Therefore new economic models are being devised for reinterpreting the traditional vernacular settings, and functional alternatives are being developed for preserving these universal values through reuse.

For the Mediterranean countries tourism is an important economic sector which provides opportunities for the preservation of architectural heritage. If appropriate models of cultural, ecological and rural tourism are developed, threats of globalization may be transformed into new opportunities for revitalizing vernacular traditions and local cultures. In this way economic sources are directed into the preservation of the traditional vernacular architecture through converting them into spaces of tourism, such as hotels and restaurants. This process of reuse is critical. Unconscious activities for “restoring” traditional structures may end up with exemplary cases of “environmental anesthesia” if the underlying thought for restoration is not defined in relation to a historical, cultural and environmental basis.

This article then is concerned with those examples of preservation which interpret the process as surface decoration. Without considering the physical and philosophical depth of the issue of cultural heritage, these examples lead to a deceptive aesthetics.

3.2 The Case Study

False Vernacular Developments in the Western Taurus Mountains

In this section there is an illustration of the conflict between “environmental synesthesia” and “environmental anesthesia” through an analysis of “false vernacular” examples in the Anatolian Mediterranean region. As analyzed in the second part, the traditional vernacular architecture of the Akseki-İbradı Basin in the Western Taurus Mountains is appreciated for its integration with nature. The region is within the limits of the south-western Turkish province of Antalya. This province has a long coastal strip with many touristic resorts. In this sense, Antalya is known as the tourism capital of Turkey as well a worldwide touristic destination.

Antalya exhibits a characteristic Mediterranean geography where the coastal zone is encircled by a mountain range lying parallel to the coastline⁵⁰. Antalya has become a touristic attraction starting from the early 1980s. The long coastal strip around the Gulf of Antalya has been the preliminary zone for the development of hotels. These hotels have been developed according to the logic of mass tourism and “all-inclusive” methods. In this mode of tourism, after arriving in the international airport of Antalya, tourists are taken directly by free shuttles to check into their hotels. These hotels are equipped as self-sufficient “holiday villages”. Between

⁴⁸ Berleant 1991, 100.

⁴⁹ Frampton 1983, 27.

⁵⁰ Braudel 2002, 14-15.

their arrival and departure tourists are not charged for any extra expenses and stay within the limited territory of the hotel. Most of the visitors do not get any sense of the historical, cultural and environmental characteristics of the land but are completely disengaged from the local environment. In this sense, this mode of tourism produces “environmental anesthesia”⁵¹.

From the viewpoint of tourism, not only is the historical center of Antalya forgotten but also the larger section of the Antalya region lying beyond the mountains. However, in the last decade there is a growing awareness on these forgotten sections of the Antalya region. By utilizing international developments in cultural and ecological tourism, investors are foreseeing new potential. In this framework the Akseki-İbradı Basin is considered as an appropriate region to put such plans into application.

From the perspectives of cultural and ecological tourism, the Akseki-İbradı Basin is an invaluable land with a rich flora, fauna, natural beauty and characteristic rural settlements. Through the inquiries of certain investors, cultural tourism has started to provide opportunities for the preservation of the architectural heritage in the Akseki-İbradı Basin. Most of these efforts have been very positive since the investors are the descendants of the natives who had previously migrated to urban areas. Due to this link, the investors are conscious of their responsibilities in preservation. They provide job opportunities for traditional craftsmen, carpenters and masons, who are then able to produce in traditional ways. In this way traditional craftsmanship is sponsored and revitalized. Moreover, the natives have also developed a self-consciousness concerning the incredible value of their cultural heritage. The production of traditional masonry walls in the same manner as done by previous generations reinforce historical links and cultural continuity.

Although most of the efforts of cultural tourism in the Akseki-İbradı Basin have had positive results in revitalizing the characteristic “environmental aesthetics” of the region, there have been some negative architectural approaches which attempt straightforward surface effects that instead produce “environmental anesthesia.” The following case study presents these negative examples. In this study no particular building or investor will be mentioned since this analysis is not related with certain buildings and people. This study is rather related to a general mentality which interprets the architectural heritage in an uncritical and straightforward manner by producing deceptive aesthetics. Therefore, visual information illustrating the resultant “environmental anesthesia” will be given in the form of sketches, which summarize what has been going on recently in various building projects.

The selected case study is quite simple. It is a new manner of producing walls which “try to look like” traditional masonry with projecting tie-beams (buttons). Instead of employing traditional ways for constructing actual masonry, investors prefer to build reinforced concrete structures with an infill wall of contemporary brick. This brick wall and reinforced concrete columns and beams are then covered by a thin layer of stone and timber cladding (Fig. 8). This skin gives a surface effect. In this way the architectural characteristics of the region are reduced to a “theme” carried by the surface veneer of conventional reinforced concrete buildings. This surface effect, which never conceives the constructive as well as the philosophical depth of the original construction, lead to a deceptive aesthetics associable with environmental anesthesia.

This study evaluates the negative effects of this architectural imitation in terms of environmental aesthetics. In this way the aim is to develop a general model for similar analyses and

⁵¹ This issue, which deserves to be studied in more detail, will be the subject of a forthcoming paper.

comparisons. This study also tries to answer the following question: Why are these surface imitations so important and so dangerous for the preservation of cultural heritage?

3.3 The Case Study of “Environmental Anesthesia”

The surface imitations selected as the case study (Fig. 8) violate human aesthetic relationships with the environment. The reasons for this argument may be inferred from the arguments of two important scholars working on architecture and environmental aesthetics, respectively. In this section the arguments of these two basic sources are taken as the perspective for critiquing these surface imitations.

Kenneth Frampton’s proposal of “critical regionalism” shares similar criticism of the universal “world culture” and the negative effects of globalization on local cultures. Frampton argues that architecture can develop a “strategy for resisting the domination of universal technology” through “the tactile resilience of place-form” and “the capacity of the body to read the environment in terms other than those of sight alone”⁵². He further argues that “critical regionalism seeks to complement our normative visual experience by readdressing the tactile range of human perceptions” and “in so doing, it endeavors to balance the priority accorded to the image and to counter the Western tendency to interpret the environment in exclusively perspectival terms”⁵³. These arguments are very relevant for the critique in this case study. The “false vernacular” example (Figs. 8-9) gives priority to the visual experience by overlooking the tactile and bodily sensation of masonry.

At this point “perspectives” is a keyword for illustrating the contrast between visual and tactile experience. Etymologically, perspective signifies “rationalized sight” and presupposes “a conscious suppression” of other senses such as smell, hear and taste. The logic of perspectives leads to “a consequent distancing from the more direct experience of the environment”⁵⁴. “Tactile” and “scenographic” perceptions of environment correspond to the conflicting experiences of synesthesia and anesthesia. Within this range the case study (Figs. 8-9) falls under the category of scenographic image.

Arnold Berleant touches upon the same problem of the visual imitations. He criticizes the deceptive surface effects applied into buildings and calls for a real aesthetic permeating the depths of the architectural section. Berleant argues that it is “etymologically straightforward to identify aesthetics with surface qualities” and states that “it is necessary to introduce other senses into aesthetic perception”⁵⁵. Berleant further argues that human societies, which in their history developed genuine aesthetic relations with the environment, have lost this quality through the process of industrialization. He states that as human beings “our vulnerability to the directness of perceptual experience has been layered over with the hard veneer of what we deceptively call civilization”⁵⁶.

Berleant’s criticism is quite comprehensive since it raises a variety of issues concerning the selected case study in the Akseki-İbradı Basin. In this framework Berleant raises three inter-related points about the erroneous conception of aesthetics in our contemporary world. He

⁵² Frampton 1983, 26-30.

⁵³ Frampton 1983, 26-30.

⁵⁴ Frampton 1983, 26-30; Sharr 2007, 25-29. Frampton refers to Heidegger’s concept of the “loss of nearness” which signifies, in Sharr’s terms, the loss of “the immediate contact with existence”.

⁵⁵ Berleant 1992, 16.

⁵⁶ Berleant 1997, 2.

points out etymology, tactility and surface quality as the distinguishing criterion for anesthesia or deceptive aesthetics.

Firstly, as already stated in this article, delving into the etymological roots of “aesthetics” in ancient Greek leads to sensual synthesis rather than surface qualities. The case study, in this respect, is based upon a false conception of aesthetics.

Secondly, the case study blocks “the directness of perceptual experience” because it has no other objective than imitating a “theme” in visual sense. In the vernacular architectural tradition, the timber lintels and buttons were tactile elements of construction. The basic joint had deep meanings since it recorded the basic materials together with traditional architectural strategies. Through this relationship of materials with humans, the characteristic “place” was defined in accordance with “dwelling”⁵⁷. In addition to this philosophical perspective on the issue, the buttons had a physical depth spanning all the thickness of the masonry. The traditional texture attained through the allocation of buttons (Figs. 2-5) was an outcome of a deeper conception of space and synesthesia. This texture was not a visual end in itself.

Thirdly, Berleant gives a strong criticism of the globalization. He argues that the main obstacle for “direct perceptual experience” is the “hard veneer what we deceptively call civilization”. This hard veneer has both philosophical and physical dimensions. In a philosophical sense, this “veneer” has dissociated man and environment by breaking up the historical perceptual link between the two. Therefore this “veneer” may be seen the main agent of “anesthesia” which has blocked the environmental cohesiveness. The metaphor of “veneer” also has direct physical reflections which can be followed by the deceptive veneer of the reinforced concrete structure in the Akseki-Ibradi Basin (Figs. 8-9).

In traditional society, culture has been congruent with architecture. Dwellings were shaped according to customs, traditions, environmental context and related functional requirements. The façades of these buildings were honest manifestations of the life they contained. For this reason traditional vernacular architecture could be studied as “stepping-stones to learning about the people who used them”⁵⁸. The façades of the traditional dwellings were a transparent interface exhibiting the structural system and functional program. The façade, which is the outcome of traditional masonry, was a thick interface extending to the inner and outer space. This interface had strong continuities with its culture and environment. Real vernacular informs the spectator by stating honestly how the building stands and how it lives. There is a strong link between how it looks and how it comes into being because how the building looks is a natural outcome of how the building comes into being.

In contrast, the “false vernacular” deceives the spectator because there is a strong discrepancy between how it looks and how it comes into being. The contemporary façade is not a thick interface; it is rather a thin screen concealing the real structure. By structure it is not intended to mean only the structural system. Here “structure” involves all of the cultural, economic, professional and technological issues, and stands for the general paradigm of architectural production. This thin layer neither relates to its environmental context nor reflects its spatial organization or functional program. As a rationalized, sterilized and degenerate imitation of the original masonry, it deceives the uninitiated “spectator” by behaving “as if” it had been traditional. This function of the veneer leads to ethical problems. The definition of the problem

⁵⁷ Sharr 2007.

⁵⁸ Carter - Cromley 2005, 3.

is very simple. The veneer does not inform but misleads, and becomes “merely a sensuous surface, a coating calculated to evoke associations of reverence and tradition”⁵⁹. However, this coating may only be possible in the absence or extinction of local tradition.

The deception arising from the existence of the imitative veneer may be better understood by comparing it again with the original construction. As stated before, local materials and techniques, the scale of the user, the movements of the builder and the functional organization are all recorded as part of the traditional “buttoned” wall (Figs. 3-5). This becomes possible by the “active penetration of space by the body” which “shapes contours of space through its dynamic force”⁶⁰.

For instance, in the traditional space the height of the ceiling beams and the spatial dimensions are defined according to human scale and functional requirements. All this information can be read by the direct perceptual experience of the traditional masonry. Through its constructive logic and acting as an “interface”, it becomes a tactile space for bodily experience. It addresses the tactile senses through its natural texture, imperfect finishing and characteristic spatiality. The person who experiences this space is not a “spectator” who contemplates the visual effects, but a “participant” who becomes an integral part of its spatial definitions. In this respect, synesthesia conveyed by the traditional vernacular architecture structures “spaces for the body”, whereas anesthesia conveyed by the “false vernacular” structures “spaces for the eye” because “false vernacular” produces “spaces to be seen but not inhabited”⁶¹.

As Berleant argues, “considering human beings apart from their environment is both philosophically unfounded and scientifically false”. The reason for this is a “tradition embedded in the Western culture since classical Greece that associates experience primarily with seeing and vision with the intellect”⁶². He further claims that experience should “involve all the bodily senses and not just the eye” because “we now recognize that the conscious body does not observe the world contemplatively but participates actively in the experiential process”⁶³.

The deceptive veneer creates “a scenographic image”⁶⁴, in which “third dimension is a practical necessity”⁶⁵. This quality of the veneer deconstructs the unity of architecture with its exterior and interior. The two then have no common existence. While the architectural section of the traditional space is shaped by the human scale, the section of the “false vernacular” is dictated by the conventional dimensions of the contemporary building industry. Reinforced concrete structures have approximate spans and ceiling heights. These dimensional conventions, which are indifferent to the characteristic traditional setting, are applied in a straightforward manner. As long as the skeletal system is covered with the so-called “traditional” skin, it is thought that the setting is preserved with its “traditional” values.

The forms of “false vernacular” are not influenced by the region. They follow ubiquitous typologies and building systems. While “ayazlık”, the semi-closed spaces of the traditional vernacular architecture provide cool spaces and articulate the structure in terms of climatic comfort (Figs. 5, 7), “false vernacular” has the mono-block attitude of the conventional reinforced

⁵⁹ Berleant 1997, 115-116.

⁶⁰ Berleant 1991, 88-89.

⁶¹ Berleant 1991, 84.

⁶² Berleant 1997, 12.

⁶³ Berleant 1997, 12.

⁶⁴ Frampton 1983, 26-30.

⁶⁵ Berleant 1991, 82.

concrete apartment block (Fig. 9). Here, as Frampton argues, “clearly the main antagonist of rooted culture is the ubiquitous air conditioner, applied in all times and in all places, irrespective of the local climatic conditions which have the capacity to express the specific place and seasonal variations of its climate”. The windows of the “false vernacular”, which imitate wood, follow the conventions of the current building industry. The dimensions and locations of the windows are determined by imposed conventions rather than *in situ* perceptions. In this way “the fixed window and the remote-controlled air-conditioning system” become “mutually indicative of domination by universal technique”⁶⁶.

In spite of its dimensions and elements derived straightforwardly from the ubiquitous apartment blocks of the urban environment, the “false vernacular” still claims to be a reverent part of the traditional built environment. This deceptive conception of reverence and preservation originates from the erroneous understanding of cultural heritage solely from the perspectives of “tangible cultural heritage”.

Today cultural heritage is categorized under two main classifications: tangible and intangible. Tangible cultural heritage covers solid findings pertaining to historical cultures such as works of art and architecture. Intangible cultural heritage “includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants”, such as “oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts”⁶⁷. Although they are classified separately for ease of conception, tangible and intangible cultural heritage are inseparable. Cultural preservation may only be possible by the simultaneous preservation of both. Knowledge and skills to produce the traditional masonry is inseparable from the masonry itself. The artificial veneer is not capable of a consistent preservation because it does not have any potential to expand into the intangible cultural heritage.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, it may be claimed that in the veneer of “false vernacular” (Figs. 8-9) a destructive aesthetics is concealed by a sympathetic guise. Overlooking the effects of “false vernacular” in the traditional built environment is to trivialize a serious problem of preservation. The “false vernacular” attitude is appropriated by themed hotels or restaurants which “unimaginatively imitate the earlier architectural style” and “trivialize the past for those who visit or work there by conveying a false sense of history”⁶⁸. The veneer decontextualizes the architectural tradition in order to package its easily consumable image and to share it publicly with visitors and tourists.

Covering the practically-reproducible reinforced concrete building (Fig. 9) is much easier than choosing the painstaking path of constructing the masonry in the traditional way (Fig. 7). In addition, tourists may be eager to consume this neatly packaged image with a minimum

⁶⁶ Frampton 1983, 26-30.

⁶⁷ <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php>.

⁶⁸ Communicating the “vernacular” image within an easily consumable package has close ties with the concept of “kitsch”, but I prefer not to elaborate this issue now. The relation of “vernacular” with “kitsch” is comprehensive and thus deserves to be analyzed in a separate study. Berleant 1997, 62-63. Berleant’s definition for the realization of “kitsch” draws parallels with the effects of the “false vernacular” analyzed in this paper. Berleant argues that when art “panders to sentimentality, fails in the requisite skills of material, technique or style and denies itself, contradicting art’s very function of leading us to living, illuminating experience, then kitsch is realized”. One of the important outcomes of “kitsch” is “proffering sentimentality and surface significance as serious art”.

amount of intellectual and physical effort. Due to these facts, “false vernacular” may be more compatible with the goal-oriented strategies of investment. However, it should not be forgotten that this goal may only be feasible in the short run. For a consistent preservation of traditional values we should remember our moral and ethical responsibilities concerning environmental aesthetics. Otherwise, in the near future no genuine trace of tradition will exist.

As Berleant warns, we ought to “move clearly onto moral ground, for the deceptive incorporates a moral issue in the very heart of the aesthetic one” and “aesthetic deception undermines people’s sense of reality”⁶⁹. “False vernacular” can be “aesthetically destructive” because it leads to “aesthetic harm”, or “the denial of sensory richness and perceptual fullness”⁷⁰. “False vernacular” architecture is a manifestation of “aesthetic harm” which “desensitize people” and “diminish human capacities for experience”⁷¹. In this framework aesthetic harm, which “coarsens perceptual conditions, constricts the development of sensory awareness, constricts the development of the pulsing vitality of the body” and “promotes sensory depravity” also “demeans the meanings embedded in human experience”, “misleads our sense of reality” and leads to “intellectual indulgence unconnected with human experience”⁷².

In this respect “false vernacular” architecture, which can also be seen in a rural setting, is in fact a continuation of “false environments” which are pervasive in the contemporary urban space. In “industrial-commercial societies” we are surrounded by “false environments, the illusion of real spaces instead of substantial ones” and the promotion of “surfaces without any content”⁷³. These “false environments,” which provide “images, not substance”, are structured by “a set of prettifying features imposed upon an already formed urban structure, or a veneer on a functionally complete object”⁷⁴. This “superficial masking”, which facilitates marketing, highlight the decomposition of architecture into two components: “the constructional fabric and representative scenography”⁷⁵. As can be followed through the “false vernacular” in the Akseki-İbradı Basin (Fig. 9), these two components are not interrelated, and “the scenographic masks are applied to the building both inside and out”⁷⁶. Therefore the veneer composes a “compensatory façade” which covers the universal paradigm of construction.

In order to test its theoretical arguments, this article focused on examples of “false vernacular” which uses surface imitations of vernacular architectural traditions as tools of legitimization during construction activity in traditional environments. The contemporary themed hotels, restaurants, housing developments and parks are considered as reflections of this “anesthetic” legitimization and producers of “aesthetic harm”. Through the “false vernacular” examples in the Western Taurus Mountains in the Anatolian Mediterranean region, “environmental anesthesia” has been illustrated. The article evaluated the negative effects of the resultant deceptive aesthetics. By doing so, the reasons for the production of “aesthetic harm” are explained, and general criteria of aesthetic judgment are proposed for similar analyses and comparisons.

⁶⁹ Berleant 1997, 73.

⁷⁰ Berleant 1997, 75.

⁷¹ Berleant 1997, 75.

⁷² Berleant 1997, 75.

⁷³ Berleant 1992, 91.

⁷⁴ Berleant 1992, 98.

⁷⁵ Frampton 1983, 26-30.

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Özet

Çevresel Anestezi ve Sahte Vernaküler Mimarlık: Batı Toroslar Örneği

Orijinal kullanımı dilbilimde gelişmiş olan “vernaküler” kavramı bir bölgenin yerel dilini ve özgün kültürel kimliğini niteler. Kültürel kimliği kodlayan mekânsal kalıpların nesiller arasında aktarıldığı ve mimari gelenekleri oluşturduğu düşüncesiyle bu kavram mimarlıkta da kullanılmıştır. Geleneksel vernaküler mimarlık düşüncesi kültür-çevre uyumu ve bütünlüğü fikirleri üzerine inşa edilmiştir çünkü vernaküler mimarlık yerel bağlamın girdileri ve bu girdilerin yorumlanmasını içerir. İnsan bu inşa sürecini düzenlerken çevrenin bütünlüğü bir ögesi olur. İnşa sürecinde insan bedensel katılımıyla bütün duyularını yoğun biçimde kullanır. İnşa sürecinin çıktısı yerel çevrenin mimari problemlerine verilen en verimli yanıtıdır.

Çağdaş mimarlık pratiğinde uygulama sürecinden önce sonlanan salt zihinsel uğraşa dayalı bir tasarım süreci gelişmiştir. Buna karşın vernaküler mimarideki tasarım ve uygulama aşamaları ise dokunmaya ilişkin duyuları da kapsayarak birbirinin içine geçmiştir. Doğaçılama üzerine kurulu vernaküler tasarım ve uygulama eşzamanlıdır. Üzerinde kolektif mutabakat sağlanmış geleneksel şemaları takip eden vernaküler üretim arazi ve işlev karakterine adapte edilebilen esnek çözümleri mümkün kılar. İnsanın bedensel katılımı sayesinde vernaküler mimari gelenekler insan ölçeğiyle ve arazi özellikleriyle uyumlu işlevsel kompozisyonlar üretir. Anlatılan insan - çevre birliği bütüncül duyumsal katılım ve tüm duyuların senteziyle mümkün olur. “Estetik” duyumsal katılımı ifade eden en uygun terimdir. Etimolojik kökleri antik Yunan diline dayanan “estetik,” duyumsallık anlamına gelerek duyusal algıya ilişkin bir bilim dalına işaret eder. Farklı karakterdeki birçok duyunun sentezi üzerinde gelişen estetik bilgi ise sinestezi (sentezlenmiş duyumsallık, *synesthesia*) durumunu üretir.

“Estetik” kelimesi duyumsal katılım ve sentezi ifade etmesine rağmen çağımızda hatalı anlamlar ile yüklüdür. “Estetik cerrahi” analogisi estetiği yüzeysel iyileştirmeye indirgemıştır. “Estetik,” görsel güzelliğin eşanlamlısı olarak bitmiş tasarım ürünlerine takılıp sökülebilen yüzeysel hoşluk olarak görülmektedir. Bu hatalı yorum üzerinden kurgulanan çağdaş mimarlık örneklerinde birbirleriyle ilişkisiz taşıyıcı sistem ile cephe tasarımı (*scenography*) oluşmaktadır. Böylece işlevsellik, sağlamlık ve güzelliğin eşzamanlı bedenlenmesinden oluşması gereken mimarlığın bütüncül yapısı parçalanmıştır. Mimari ürünü birbirinden kopuk süreçler ile sözde işlevsel, sağlam ve güzel kılma çabası söz konusu olmuştur. Taşıyıcı sistem ve mimari güzellik arasında var olan tarihsel süreklilik ortadan kaldırılmıştır. Yapı sektörünün güncel icatlarıyla desteklenen yüzey kaplamaları sözde “estetik” üretmek için takılır - sökülür alternatifler oluşturmuştur. “Güzel” kavramıyla ilintili olmakla birlikte, estetik güzelin sonuç olarak türediği çok daha derin ve geniş bir ilişkiler ağının konusudur. İnsan - çevre arasındaki sinestetik

ilişkilerin derinliklerinden doğan orijinal güzellik tutarlı bir inşa sürecinin çıktısıdır. Bu sebeple “güzel” hâlihazırda üretilmiş olana sonradan eklenen bir özellik olamaz.

Yaygın şekilde bilinen başka bir tıbbi terim olan “anestezi” estetiğin doğru anlamına geri dönmeye olanak sağlar. Duyuların kesintiye uğratılması anlamını taşıyan “anestezi” ile duyu ve hissetme kapasitesi olarak tanımlanan “estezi” zıt anlamlıdır. “Estetik” terimini bu zıtlık üzerinden düşünmek kelimeyi orijinal anlama yaklaştırır ve kelime üzerine eklenen yanıtıcı çağrışımlar bertaraf edilebilir. “Anestezi” hissizlik ve çevre algısından kopmak ise “estezi” tüm duyu kapsayan bir hislilikle örülü yoğun çevre algısını tarif eder. Bu çalışma, birbirleriyle ilişkisiz görünen “vernaküler”, “estetik” ve “anestezi” kavramlarını daha önce hiç yapılmadığı biçimde ilişkilendirerek geleneksel-vernaküler ve çağdaş mekânları anlamak, değerlendirmek ve karşılaştırmak için yeni ufuklar açmaktadır. Böylece vernaküler gelenekler hakkında değer yargısı geliştirmek ve özgünlüklerini ayırt etmek için “estetik” ölçütler geliştirilmesi hedeflenmektedir.

Tarihte çok uzun sürmüş olan vernaküler mimarlık geleneğinin aksine, modern çağda “mücadele” insanın doğayla ilişkisini tanımlayan anahtar kavram haline gelmiştir. Buna karşın özellikle II. Dünya Savaşı sonrasında kültür ile doğa arasında uyum ve bütünleşme arayışına giren felsefi yaklaşımlar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu felsefi yaklaşımlardan biri olan çevre estetiği “çevre” ve “estetik” terimlerinin anlamlarını sorgulamıştır. “Çevre”, ikincil öğelerce sarmalanan izole bir odak öznesini tarif etmek yerine, öznenin bütünde eridiği, farklı nesne ve süreçlerin geçişken olduğu bir ilişkiler ağı olarak yorumlanmıştır. Bu kavramsal çerçevede estetik, çevresel sinestezinin gerçekleşme durumudur. 20. yy.’ın insan - çevre ilişkileri bağlamındaki temel çatışması çevresel “sinestezi” ve “anestezi” arasındaki zıtlıkta kavramsallaştırılabilir. Endüstri çağında mimarlar ve mekân kullanıcıları çevrelerinin “estetik” algısından kopmuştur. Mimarlık dokunma duyusuna ilişkin zeminini kaybetmiş ve beynin düşünsel sınırlarında mekân düzenleme işlemine dönüşmüştür. Mimari uygulama sürecinden önce sonlanan ussal tasarım doğanın doğrudan duyumsanmasının yerini almıştır. Tasarlama ile uygulamanın geçişken olduğu geleneksel mekân üretimi kaybolmuştur.

Çevresel anestezinin mimari yansımaları olan “uluslararası üslup” örnekleri bu çalışmanın kapsamı dışında bırakılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın araştırma malzemesi varlıklarını ve geleneksel dokuya müdahalelerini vernaküler mimari geleneklerin yüzeysel taklitlerini yaparak meşrulaştırmaya çalışan çevresel anestezi örnekleridir. Bu “anestetik” meşrulaştırma çevresel gerçekliğin yanıtıcı imgesini üreterek “sahte vernaküler” mimarlığı kurar. Bu durumun güncel örnekleri tarihsel üslupların salt biçimsel motifleriyle bağlamlarından kopartılarak devşirildiği, zamana ve yere kayıtsız olarak eklektik şekilde kullanıldığı temalı parklar, oteller, restoranlar ve konutlardır. “Sahte vernaküler” mimarlık, genelde, uzman olmayanlarca korumaya yönelik iyi niyetli çabaların ürünü olarak görülür. Çağdaş malzeme ve teknikleri cephelerinde yansıtan yapılar inşa edileceğine belli durumlarda “sahte vernaküler” yapıların inşa edilmesinin daha olumlu olacağına dair bir klişe gelişmiştir. Oysa yukarıda verilen kuramsal tartışma “sahte vernaküler” mimarlığın çevre estetiği açısından ciddi olumsuzluklara yol açtığını ve “estetik hasar” oluşturduğunu göstermektedir. Çevresel anestezi insanların duyuğunu uyuşturur, çevrenin doğrudan deneyimine engel olur, geçeklik duygusunu yanıltır, cephe yüzeyinde paketlenmiş bir gelenek imgesini izleyiciden zihinsel ve bedensel emek talep etmeksizin iletir ve bedensel tembelliğe yol açan bir zihinsel hazı gerçekleştirecek “estetik hasar” üretir. Bu bağlamda duysal zenginliğin, algısal bütünlüğün ve gerçeklik duygusunun tahrip olduğu bir “estetik hasar” söz konusudur.

“Estetik hasar” sorununu çözmek için çevresel sinesteziyi yapılı çevrede yeniden canlandırmak gerekir. Bu konuda 1960’lardan itibaren oluşan duyarlılık içerisinde “eleştirel bölgeselcilik” akımı dokunmaya dayalı bedensel algıya hitap etmeyi ve özgün çevreyi yorumlamayı hedeflemiştir fakat uygulamaların çoğu “estetik” hususunda bu şekilde tutarlı ve derin anlayışlar geliştirememiştir. Bunun yerine “vernaküler üsluplar,” kuramsal temelden, doğal malzeme ve doğru işçilikten yoksun olarak endüstriyel bağlamdaki yüzeysel taklitler olarak geliştirilmiştir. Genel olarak, üsluplaşan vernaküler ya da “sahte vernaküler” çevresel anesteziye yol açmış, doğa ile duyumsal bütünleşmenin unutulduğu yanıltıcı estetik türemiştir.

Bu çalışma yukarıda sözü edilen “çevresel sinestezi” ile “çevresel anestezi” çatışmasını Anadolu Akdenizi’ndeki “sahte vernaküler” mimarlık üzerinden tartışmaktadır. Türkiye’nin güneybatısındaki Toros Dağlarının geleneksel vernaküler mimarisi doğayla bütünleşme bakımından güçlü örnekler sunar. Bu vernaküler geleneğin, son yıllarda, temalı yapılarda cephe dekorasyonu ile taklit edildiği gözlemlenmektedir. Konstrüktif ve felsefi bakımlardan hiçbir derinliği göz önüne almayan bu maskeleyen çevresel anesteziye varan yanıltıcı estetik ile bağlantılıdır. Bu çalışma “sahte vernaküler” mimarinin olumsuz etkilerini çevre estetiği kavramlarıyla değerlendirmekte ve açıklamaktadır. Bu yol ile benzer inceleme, açıklama ve karşılaştırmalar için genel estetik ölçütlerin ve kuramsal modelin oluşması amaçlanmıştır.

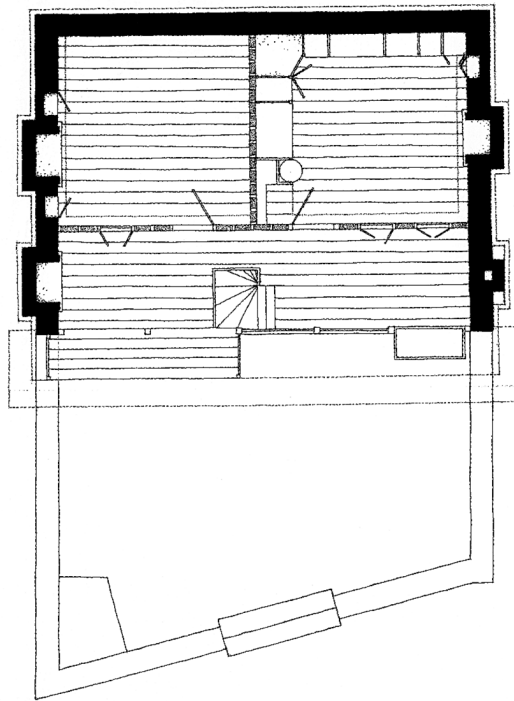


Fig. 1
Although the plan drawing is precise, it represents spaces isolated from their environmental context (Aran 2000, 176-177).

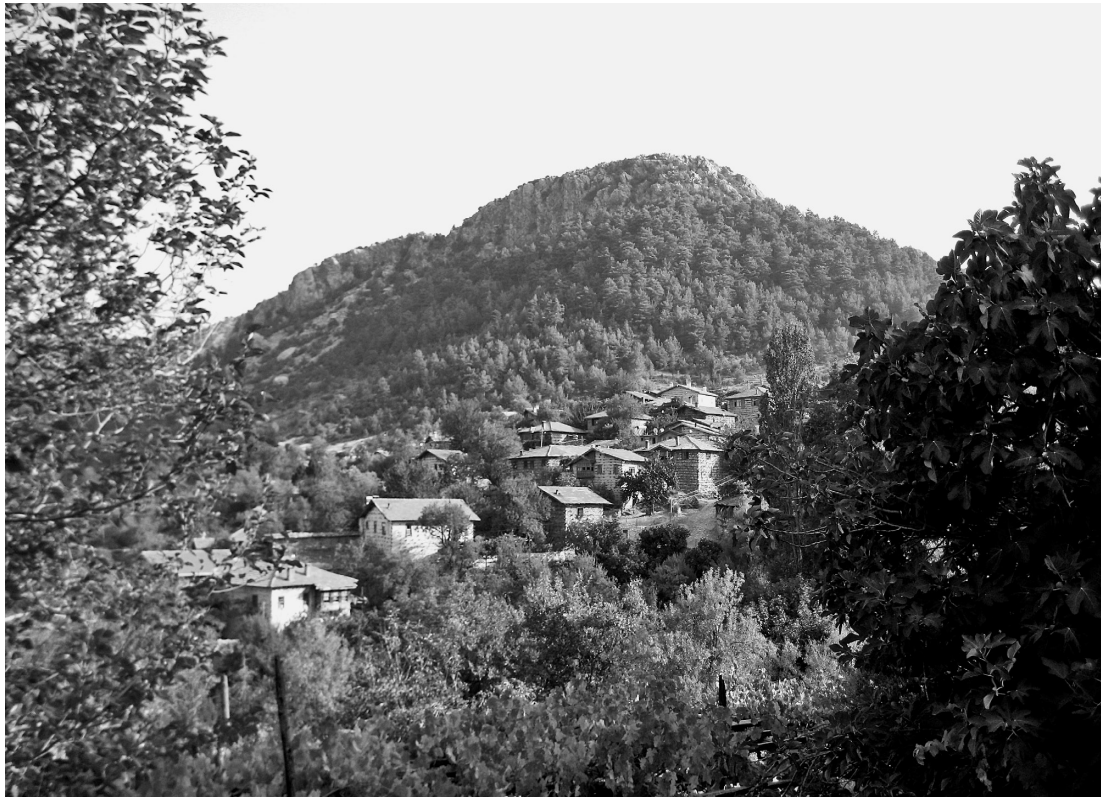


Fig. 2 The characteristic environmental coherence at the village of Ürünlü in İbradı. The traditional rural dwellings and the site are integrated within a continuous environmental structure. No dwellings can be isolated to be analyzed separately.

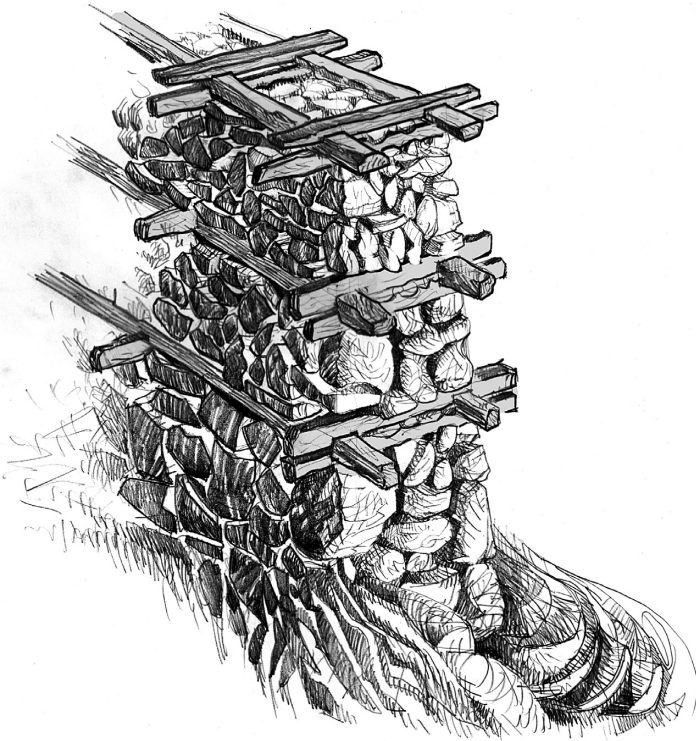


Fig. 3 The characteristic combination of timber elements and rubble stone in the architectural tradition of the Akseki – İbradı Basin indicates the essential tectonic joint fabricating the traditional built environment and cultural landscape.



Fig. 4 The projecting tie beams (*peştivan*) constitute the characteristic spatiality of the traditional environment (Ürünlü).



Fig. 5 The characteristic dwelling of the Akseki-İbradı Basin illustrates human scale and allocation of elements according to environmental context and functional needs (Sarıhacılar, Akseki).



Fig. 6 The projections and characteristic masonry in the rural dwellings (Central district of Ürünlü).

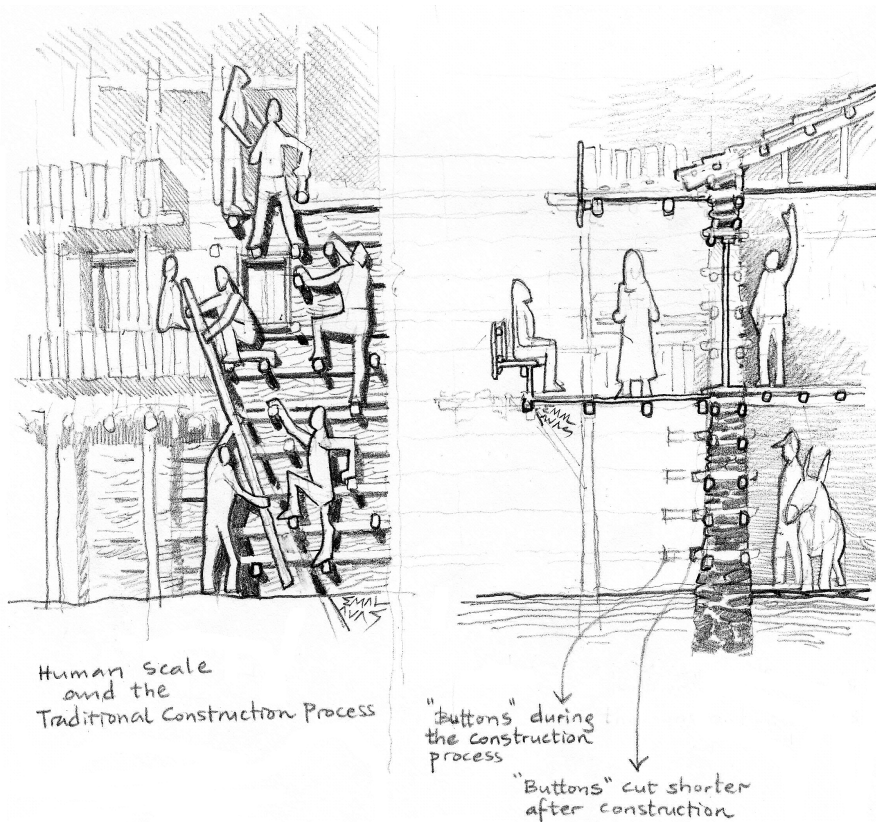


Fig. 7 Superposed Elevation and Section. Poetics of the construction process in the traditional vernacular architecture: human scale and environmental continuity through the semi-closed space (ayazlık)

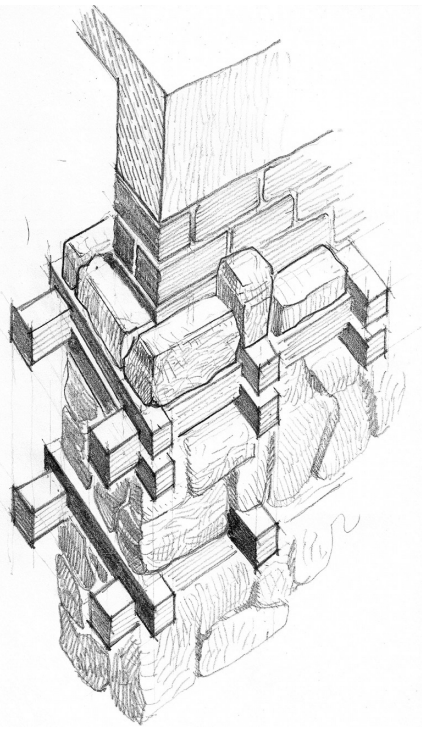


Fig. 8
Veneer of the
"false vernacular",
hypothetical drawing.

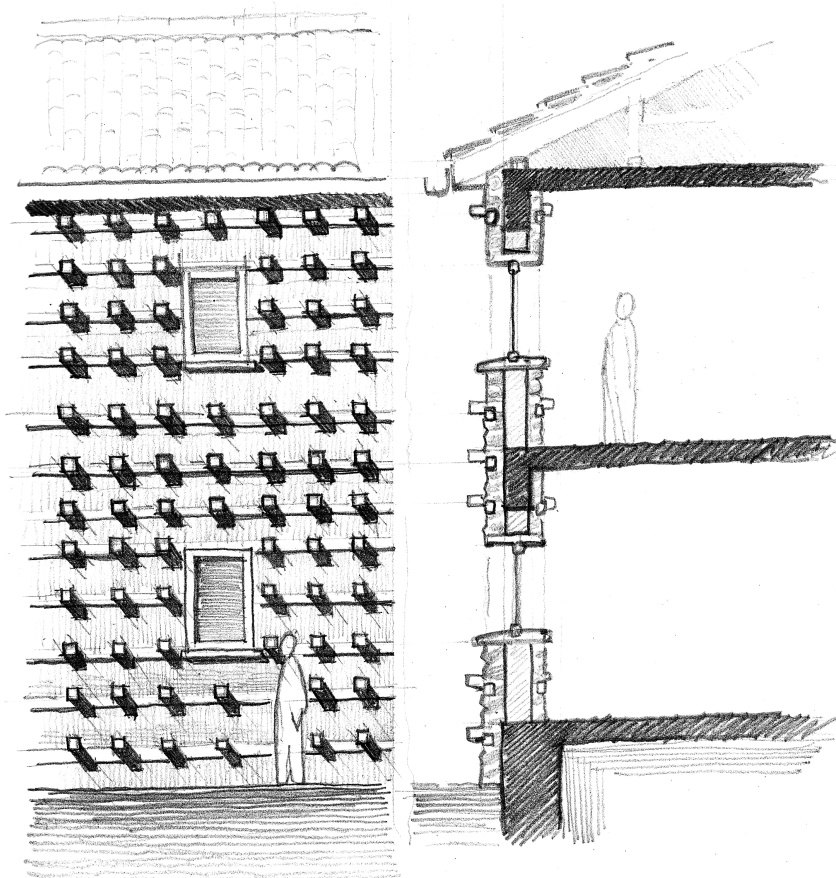


Fig. 9
Superposed Elevation
and Section. The
discrepancy between
the constructional
fabric and the veneer
in "false vernacular".