

A NEW FUTURE FOR ARCHITECTURAL PRAXIS: CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE AMONG CONCEPT, THOUGHT AND RHETORIC

ASSIST.PROF.DR. ZAFER SAGDIC

She is an architect and an architectural historian. She received Master Degree from Istanbul Technical University in 1999 and PhD degree from Yildiz Technical University in 2006. She has attended various conferences all over the world and has written many papers about architecture history. She wrote five books.

PROF.DR.NUR URFALIOĞLU

She is an architect and architectural historian. She received Master Degree in 1989 and PhD degree in 1995, professorship in 2011 from Yildiz Technical University. She has been working at Yildiz Technical University since 1989. Between January 2012 and September 2014, she was founder dean of Abdullah Gul University, Faculty of Architecture. She has been writing four books, books chapters and articles; giving conferences etc. since 1989. In 1995, She worked as an ICOMOS intern in the USA. She draw three Project as an architect at National Park Service. She is a member of the Preservation Councils of Kayseri and Istanbul since 2010.

LECTURER M. ARCH. SEZGIN BILGIN

She was born in İstanbul, Turkey. She has Bachelor and Master of Science degree in Architecture from the Yildiz Technical University. As a scholarship by Council of Higher Education in Turkey she continues to Ph.D.degree at the same University in Construction Programme of Architecture Department.

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Abstract

On one hand, architecture praxis includes two inherent aspects as the architectural thought which lays at the background of the profession and the practice on the field, and on the other hand, it also has two methods on its' communication, rhetoric and drawing. From another perspective it uses signs to communicate its function and meaning. This communication is rhetorical, when it induces its perceiver to use or to understand its' nature. Movements in architecture, such as the Gothic, Baroque or the Revivals Style, promote certain values and beliefs, and can be studied as rhetorical movements. Without any doubt, architecture is a language. Like linguistic communication, architecture consists of codes, meanings, semantic shifts, and syntactic units. It seems that most visible in recent arguments of the designing space and definition of architectural concept is creating an argument of "A New Future for Architectural Praxis", which argues that making the connections among the complexity and contradiction on the nature of the architecture and other disciplines related with creating a space. On contemporary architecture, architects are interested in concept creations more than articulating a theory of architecture on its' rhetoric comparing to the early 20's modernism; it seems that recently the single most important challenge is confronting eco-friendly and easy living spaces on a future-sight of the world, whereas mostly architects are focusing on Utopic concept creations including almost on Baudrillard's simulacr and simulacra theory. Thus, the paper will have the story of contemporary architecture among concept creations, architectural thought, confronting eco-friendly and easy living spaces on a future-sight of the world toward rhetoric of architecture.

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Introduction

Architecture has been formed under movements such as Gothic, Baroque, Revivals, and etc. during pre-modernity, while inside a movement similar architectural features have been shaping on building stock. During this

period, architecture was a practice, which was put through by using of local materials and traditional production methods. On the other hand, before Modernism, architects used architectural representation on a rhetorical reason since Renaissance. Beginning since Modernism, architectural production started to be changed into praxis as having two aspects as the architectural thought, which lays at the background of the profession and the practice on the field, that were inherently included. It is seen that it also acts over two methods on its' communication, rhetoric and drawing. It can be said that there is a paradigmatic structure on architectural representation and as a profession, architecture became an integrity/ unity of expression on inherent professional jargon, design thought and practice, which is known as praxis. The architectural thought of modernism included an international overview, which was timeless and beyond the context, whereas contemporary architecture can be defined as colourful, as full of forms, moreover than this it can be characterised as searching of concept rather than sensitivity of including context on different personal point of views of architects. On some examples, it can be also said that searching of conceptual creation brought architects to create projects almost up to utopical designs. Thus, it can be said that the contemporary architectural production included some examples that are formed almost as if they are a part of Baudrillard's simulacra and simulacra theory and current building stock is formed under timeless extravaganza.

Historical Background of Design and Rhetoric in Architecture

Beginning from the Ten books on Architecture of Vitruvius, including the Four Books on Architecture of Palladio, De Re Aedificatoria known as On the Art of Building of Alberti, till Delirious New York of Rem Koolhaas, and Yes is More of Bijark Ingles there has been always one masterpiece book of the era, sometimes a treatise but mostly a text to criticise the soul of the architectural praxis of its' age, along with the developments on architectural styles, at first during the pre-modernity as long period effects of styles, and after modernism even as individual attempts of personal choices. There have been important 18th century architects, who were also authors, such as Horace Walpole, without any doubt their exchanges between literature and architecture offer, by the definition of Morrisey (1999), "a rhetoric of architecture" to contemporary architecture. On his book, From the Temple to the Castle, he interested in articulating a theory of architecture, which might facilitate a way of making connections between architecture and other disciplines. It seems that Gelertner's (1995) synthesis can be an entrance to understanding how literature might contribute to architectural design theory. Here Morrisey (1999) makes a suggestion, the idea of an architectural form is shaped by its intended function, which can be understood as *form is function*, and that suggestion overlooks that many buildings have a form that is more than what is required by their function. He suggests that according to another theory of architectural design, architectural form is generated within the creative imagination, or in Morrisey's (1999) words architectural genius. According to Gelertner (1995), there are nevertheless similarities between buildings, and according to Morrisey (1999) this makes it difficult to cite them as isolated examples of architectural genius. He argued that architectural form is determined by the prevailing social and economic conditions; however, Morrisey (1999) puts through that similar economic conditions can produce a variety of different forms and defines that as for the belief that architectural form derives from timeless principles of form that transcend particular designers, cultures, and climates. Here it should not be forgotten that according to Gelertner, today only a few architects would argue that the Five Orders provide all the architectural knowledge of a practicing architect needs. On the other hand, there is a general point of view that the prevailing Spirit of the Age is shaping the architectural form. As the history of architecture invites both spatial and stylistic consideration of form of shaped spaces out of styles, such as Romanesque, the Gothic, Baroque, etc. as Mies van der Rohe claimed that, "architecture is the will of the age conceived in spatial terms." Thus, in the terms of classicism of 17th and 18th centuries, as a mechanism for creating spaces with reference to shapes -a ratio of human height to the built height, or of the built height to built width, etc.; therefore, the proportion would then be one way of understanding architecture historically. Horace Walpole's critique of proportionality points out that by the mid 18th century in England architecture no longer uses form to resolve determinate historical conditions, that architecture is no longer the will of the age expressed in spatial terms per se, says Morrisey (1995). He adds (1995) that what is called as a form, created the impression and that which is called form could disprove it. It is for sure, according to Franco Moretti (1988), the study of historical products organized according to rhetorical criteria, and he also offers a way around this impasse in design theory a treat form as rhetoric. Morrisey (1999), suggests that, "the problem that then haunts literary and architectural theory after Walpole is that people mistake rhetoric for form". Then he touch to Walpole's work and says that he suggests that form is rhetorical. That is why form can be apprehended as content; both form and content are rhetorical. Moreover, it is precisely because form is rhetorical that it can be apprehended as content or that there can be a content of the form. Therefore a suggestion is came through, both form and content are rhetorical.

It seems that architects are concerned that linguistic approaches to architecture would separate architecture from what is thought to be its most important part, the hierarchical harmony on parts of the whole composition, with another words on forms and their total imaginative integrity. During 20's, Le Corbusier articulated modernist legacy. According to Boyer and Mitgang (1996), "It is a question of building which is at the root of the social unrest of today." Here Morrisey (1999) says that the concern is which considering architecture in literary, terms means a loss of architecture's social commitments. Thus, it is clear that what is rhetoric is also social and is also political, just like as architecture is too. According to Frampton, as in literary-architectural terms, rhetoric is "critical" and

“contextual”. Here Morrisey (1999) tells, “Saying that literature or architecture is rhetorical does not mean that either one of them is somehow separate from social or political situations; instead, it affects how one imagines connections between the aesthetic and the historical”. Burke (1967) says that, “critical and imagination works are answers to questions posed by the situations in which they arose, with the important proviso that, and adds, the situations are real” (1967).

Thus, here it should be noticed that theoretical means, concerning with or involving the theory of design, rather than its practical application. It is based on theory, therefore it is based on words for sure. As rhetoric also based on words. However, there is a sharp difference in between the theoretical and rhetoric. Rhetoric is the art of using words, while speaking or writing on the architectural process, whereas theoretical can be understood shortly as the defining of the architectural thought, that lays down at the background of the architectural production process by words, such as a manifesto, that is decelerated by the master architect of the architectural application before it starts, including the theme of how should it be foregoing and how important it will be for the field from an architectural point of view.

In architectural production process, which started to be formed by personal preferences/ choices in Modernism, a design thought background was formulated and acceptances were the first born ones, then manifestos appeared as the part of the theoretical spine of the design and project process only then could started to be formulated as affirming manifestos. The form is important in International Style, but it is also far from the context, rather than being relevant to the location and contextual preferences of the place, it emphasizes the simplicity and innovation. On the other hand, the ornament could not pass away to the other side as being *old*, or being a symbol of *the other*, remaining from the past; the ornament was equivalent to *the murder* in architecture. The form would now take the road alone. In this context, the choice of materials became more important, and, the black-and-white harmony reached forward with the sibling in addition to the basic colours such as red, blue and yellow. While de-forming is popularized with Deconstructivism, the histographic background included re-form, de-form continuity / or controversy in different examples. In contemporary architecture, the concept seems to be *the dominant runner* on the race in between the concept and the context. Such a conceptual based perception has been born that the relationship with the ground put to the shelf. For this cause, by a Baudrillardist approach it can be discussed that the concept becomes simulation full of simulacrs in different sizes, little or big, but always in *the game*. However it should not be forgotten that, every approach has been put forward as a part of architectural thought background of manifestar point of view all through these epochs, as rhetoric moves by the conceptual victory on project production in architecture.

Contemporary Architecture Among Concept, Thought and Rhetoric

On his masterpiece Leach (1997) suggests that, “The discipline of architecture has gone through something of a metamorphosis in recent years. There is evidence of a clear shift both in the nature of debates within architecture and in its relationship with other academic disciplines. Not only are architects and architectural theorists becoming more and more receptive to the whole domain of cultural theory, but cultural theorists, philosophers, sociologists and many others are now to be found increasingly engaged with questions of architecture and the built environment. This volume was born of a desire to support this development, and to reinforce these links. It attempts to situate architecture within a broader cultural context, and to consider not only how debates from cultural theory, philosophy and so on might begin to inform a discussion about architecture, but also how architecture and the built environment might offer a potentially rich field for analysis for cultural studies and other disciplines”.

Parallel to the demeanor of architectural project in pursuit of concept, it does not mean that the final architectural production is always in success and/ or becoming a succeeded one. As defining the process of designing as a triangle, which has three corners of the project itself, produced structure/ architectural result and searched concept, is thought that the basic foundation formula of triple sheet pillar, as the sub-pieces of an architectural meaning; it is not always seen that there is a harmony among these three endpoints, which means there should not be a succession in an architectural point of view always. The essence of the architectural expression which exceeds representation and surpasses to rhetoric, from a Baudrillardian point of view, could have simulative results; the results that acts as if they are something else; they pretend to be something else; there can be replica productions; architecture in that point pretends to be like something, but actually at the end it produces something else in a result; it can be said that there is a copycat in the garden of producing; there is an architectural synthesis in the shape of *mimesis*. Thus, it can be said that what once with modernism and the avant-garde, postmodernists reject realism, mimesis, and linear forms of narrative, once again was born in contemporary architecture.

Here, it seems that it comes to a point where Ingles (2010) said once as “Yes is more”, and touched to the suggestion of Darwin, “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change”. Thus, he can make a contemporary suggestion to not only the design side of the architectural praxis, but also to the rhetoric side of the field, too, as suggesting *a theory of evolution* in an architectural point of view. He says that, “The traditional image of the radical architect is the angry young man rebelling against the establishment. The avant-garde is defined by what it is against rather than what it is for. This leads to an oedipal succession of contradiction where each generation says the opposite of the previous”. Without any doubt, it means that this contradiction comes forward with its’ twin-sister complexity in the words of Venturi.

Ingles added that, “And if your agenda is dependent on being the opposite of someone else’s- you’re simply a follower in reverse”; which means you remain avant-garde on your profession. Thus, it seems there are many architects who would like to be named as a pioneer of their ages by making some avant-garde projects on their point of view on contemporary architecture; whereas each and every project should be evaluated by well known worldwide criticsers of course. There is a highlighted complexity lays down at the background of being avant-garde here, contemporary architecture can be seen as *a catwalk of concept contest*, where architects of today would like to catch the best visibility and fast access to be a star architect of contemporary architecture.

Selected Projects and Comments

Antalya Lara Region of Tourist Resort Projects

The most important feature of the Lara-Kundu coastal band, which distinguishes it from other tourism regions in Antalya, Turkey, is the frequent introduction of its’ thematic hotels. Starting of the construction of WOW Topkapi Palace Hotel, which was built by MNG Holding in 1999, followed by the constructions of conceptual search based thematic hotel buildings without slowing down any day. As someone wonders about the area, it can be seen that one may find himself on board of a Concorde or on famous transatlantic Titanic, or can go to another planet in Saturn, or make a visit to St. Mark’s Square in Venice, or be a character in Kremlin Palace. This touristic resort region offers a Baudriallarian simulation with many little-big simulacrs as surreal atmosphere on Antalya to clients.



Figure 1. Lara Region, Antalya (from authors’ personal Archive)

The construction of eight of the twenty touristic resorts, one of which are still under construction, belongs to architect Hasan Sökmen. Alper Erden Engiz is also an architect of these thematic point of view, who designed four hotels on this resort-land.

WOW Topkapi Palace Hotel

WOW Topkapi Palace, which was the first constructed of the thematic hotels in Lara region of Antalya, Turkey, was built in 1999. The architect of the project is Hasan Sökmen, explains why he built a hotel similar to Topkapi Palace in 2004 in the Hürriyet newspaper Cahit Akyol’s report in the following way: ‘It would draw attention with its architecture, and it would create the happiness of staying in the palace instead of the concrete mass in the eye of the tourist (www.hurriyet.com.tr). The hotel’s features are described in the WOW Hotels website as follows: “Accommodation in comfortable rooms resembling to Harem buildings, eating in Palace Kitchens and Aya İrini, to become cool off by Sulttan Ahmet the 3rd Fountain, drinking a wine inside of Justice Tower by the magnificent view of Bosporous and tasting the Ottoman type water-pudding in the Mecidiye Mansion and for having many more experiences..” This resort has 1500 bed capacity in 65.000 m2 land.

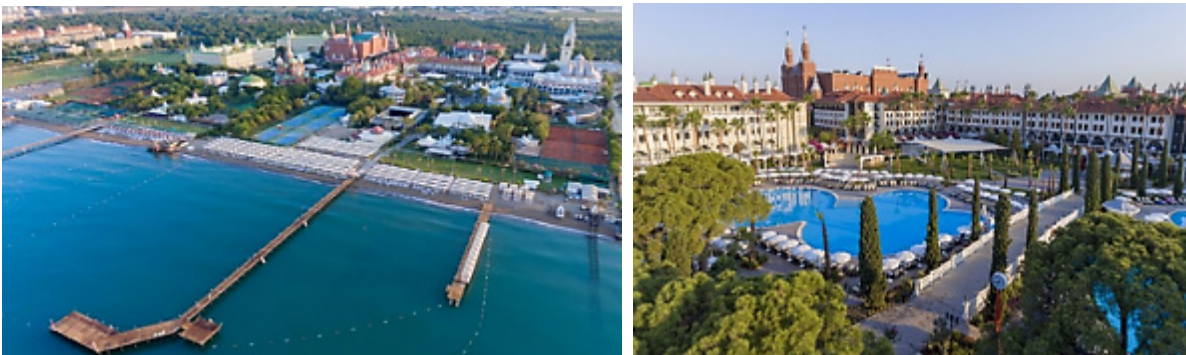


Figure 2-3. WOW Topkapi Palace (from authors’ personal Archive)



Figure 4-5. WOW Topkapi Palace (from authors' personal Archive)

WOW Kremlin Palace Hotel

The entrance of the WOW Kremlin Palace Hotel is named after the Resurrection Gate at the entrance of the Kremlin Square. The main building, with its stylish lobby, main restaurant, reception and conference center, is almost a copy of the History Museum. 2002 is the date of the project, which is located on 80.000 m2.

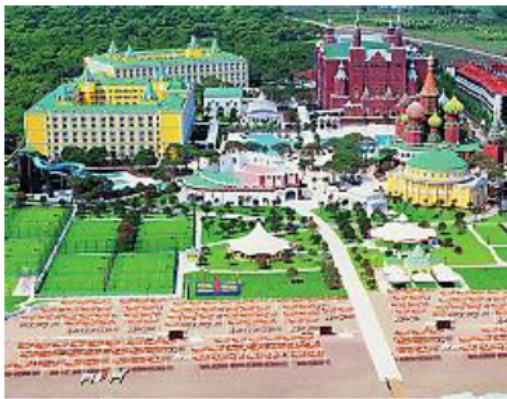


Figure 6-7. Kremlin Palace Hotel (from authors' personal Archive)

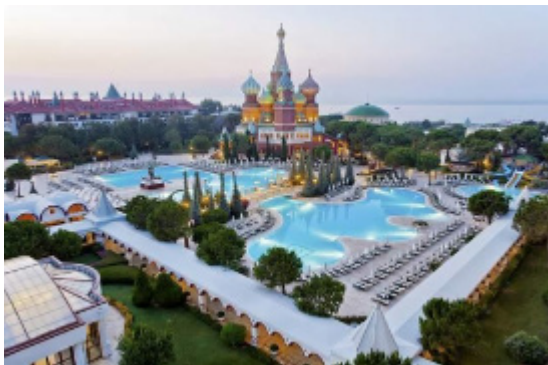


Figure 8-9. Kremlin Palace Hotel (from authors' personal Archive)

Venezia Palace Deluxe Resort

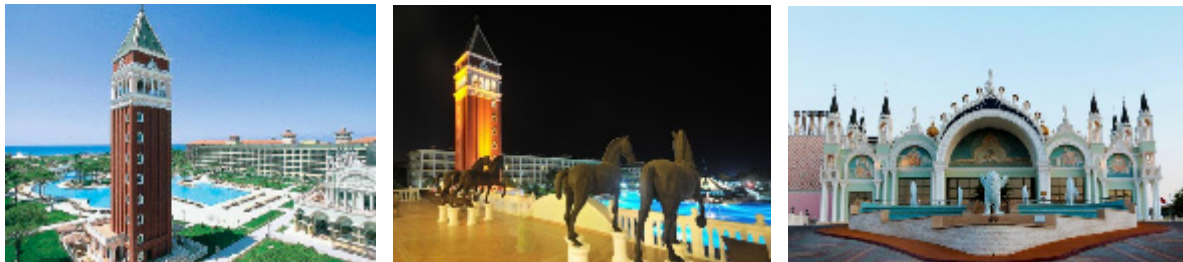


Figure 10-11-12. Venezia Palace Deluxe Resort (from authors' personal Archive)

This 37.200 m2 size touristic resort with 1300 bed capacity, by its' Venice City theme, stands among with the other two resorts on the same region designed by the same architect, Kremlin Palace and Topkapi Palace. The atmosphere of San Marco Square was created and the design of the resort belongs to Hasan Sökmen, in 2002.

Vialand Theme Park

Figure 13-14. Vialand Theme Park (from authors' personal Archive)

Vialand theme Park is a 70's Las Vegas type architectural production, whereas in Las Vegas theme space creation started in the design of the luxury hotels. The project is located in Eyüp district of Istanbul, Turkey in 450.000 m² dated to 2012. Learning From Las Vegas of Venturi, what the strip can teach us about urban planning, David Levene for the Guardian on 2015, February 9th reminds us that, "...what kind of an urban experience has resulted? To a first-time visitor (himself included), the Strip can look and feel like the concretisation of unplanned chaos – with its waves of pulsing lights and scrolling video screens; its "riot" of clashing, garish architectural styles; the wide central river of frequently gridlocked traffic; and the swarms of tourists, all dressed with aggressive casualness and milling blindly every which way. But does it make any sense at all to apply the term "urban planning" to the Strip? Or is this simply what happens when money dictates every aspect of a built environment?" He says that, "The repulsion eventually fuelled a great aesthetic controversy in 1972, when the architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour published Learning From Las Vegas, which dared to approach the built environment of the Strip on its own terms. By their own terms, "Las Vegas is to the Strip what Rome is to the Piazza". Again he argues that (2015), "the trio declared, having a grand old time enumerating the freakish architectural mini-movements that had emerged there, from *Miami Moroccan*, *International Jet Set Style* to *Yamasaki Bernini cum Roman Orgiastic* to *Bauhaus Hawaiian*. But they also noted that, while the Strip originally just grew, they were seeing the emergence of the usual building and zoning controls and even a *Strip Beautification Committee*. It gets them worrying: "What will happen to the Strip when the tastemakers take over?" Here maybe it will be a common question for all of these half-utopic, half-fairytaillish projects while swimming in an *extravaganza ocean*, what will happen to the architecture at all, when the tastemakers take over? Does always becoming fashionable work to be an avant-garde on the praxis?

IC Hotels Tropicana Resort

Figure 15-16. Tropicana Resort (from authors' personal Archive)

According to the statement made by Fatih Dardağan in Turizmde Bu Sabah (www.turizm.com), the architectural feature of the hotel is planned to create a theme in a more flora and fauna environment. Dardağan's description continues as follows, there is a theme designed as a tropical structure surrounded by ponds and gardens, completely decorated by "herbal cover" which is called the Balinese style. So the basically the landscape is processed here. The main aim here is to ensure that the guests will have a more comfortable and relaxing holiday. It doesn't have an eclectic architecture within a far away point of view. Our project criterias are producing an eco-friendly easy living space, having a comfortable rooms, and inside a comfortably solved landscape. The project offers tropical way of being in a holiday to the clients while being far far away from a tropic forests.

Hapimag Hotel Complex



Figure 17-18. Hapimag Hotel Complex (from authors' personal Archive)

Hapimag Hotel Complex is located in Bodrum, Turkey, on a 87.921 m2 land facing to the Aegean Sea. Project is dated back to the year of 1992, and offers an Aegean island type holiday to the clients on the main land of Anatolia. Inside of the resort there are many small streets created full of romantic bougainvillea trees standing next to stone small Greek houses.

The Beamish Museum



Figure 19-20-21. Beamish Museum (from authors' personal Archive)

The Beamish Museum is a place it seems it is full of utopic feelings, whereas it is an old English town, in where people are living according to the 19th century life-fiction. It is an open-air museum of today where visitors can have their own personal experiences that could be dated back to 19th century.

Tianducheng City



Figure 22-23. Tianducheng, Hangzhou, China and Paris (from authors' personal Archive)

As the *city of Love*, by its' well known title, Paris has been always an attraction point. So, why could not be there more of it? In Hangzhou, China, with the title of New Paris, a city is created, Tianducheng City in 2007 on 31 km2. It is almost very hard to say if it is an utopic architectural design, or an ordinary concept creation or what else. Replica

pairs of avant-garde creations thus it can be now seen, not only on fashion, but also in architectural production, too. There is a long way in between mimesis in architecture and creating a synthesis architecture. It seems, in Ingles words, saying “yes” to all possibilities in architectural production creates mimesis instead of catching the possibilities of creating a synthesis architecture in between the past and the future.

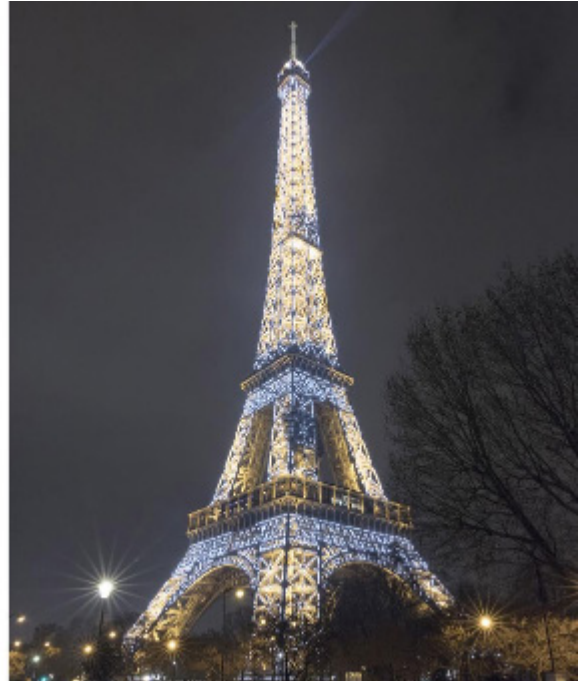
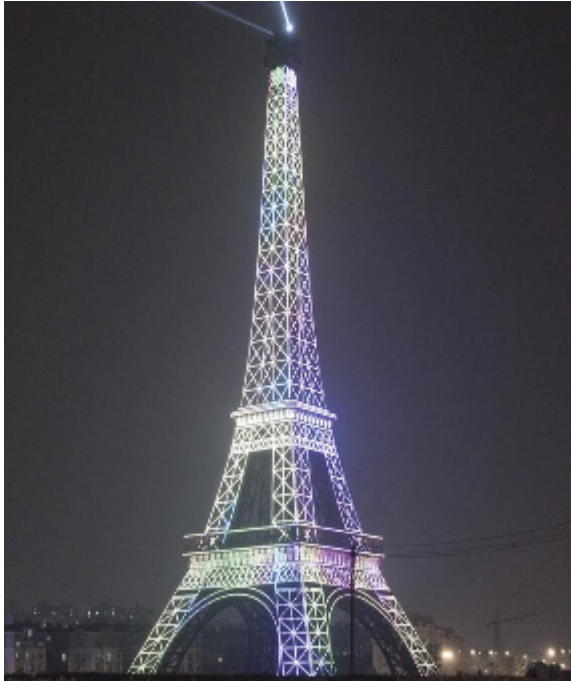


Figure 24-25. Twin of Eiffel Towers, replica one in Tianducheng, Hangzhou, China and the other in Paris (from authors’ personal Archive)



Figure 26-27. Twin city squares, replica creation in Tianducheng, Hangzhou, China and the original one in Paris (from authors’ personal Archive)

Zero Zira Island Project, Azerbaijan

While defending “Yes is More” in architecture, Ingles and his firm Big Architects pushed to the button of creating a concept that includes a designing an instant mountain with seven important peaks of Azerbaijan. Even though, it seems that there is an island with a mountain over with seven peaks, in reality it is almost a monolithic residence project having mix-use details inside, and seems as if it is a real mountained island in Azerbaijan. On the presentation brochure with the words of the team, the project is described as “The Seven Peaks are conceived not only as *icons*, but engineered as entire eco-systems, a model for future sustainable urban development” (http://www.ziraisland.com/downloads/Mipim_brochure.pdf).



Figure 28-29. Zero Zira Island, Azerbaijan (http://www.ziraisland.com/downloads/Mipim_brochure.pdf)

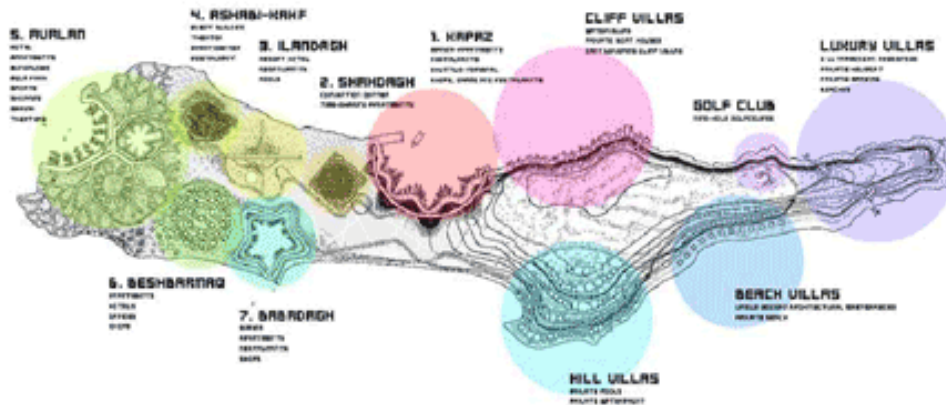


Figure 30. Masterplan Areas and Data (http://www.ziraisland.com/downloads/Mipim_brochure.pdf)

Robot Science Museum, Seoul, South Korea

Melike Altınışık Architects won the project competition of Robot Museum, which will be located in Seoul, South Korea. It is planned to be the World's first pioneer Robot Science Museum. According to the announcement of MAA on their web page (www.melikealtinisik.com) "The competition which was hosted by The Seoul Metropolitan Government called for the ideas to design Seoul Robot Science Museum (RSM) to support public education in robotics and increase the public knowledge and interests in robots". With their words the project is described as: "MAA's design for Robot Museum (RSM), which plays a catalytic role in advancing and promoting science, technology, and innovation throughout society is not only going to exhibit robots but actually from design, manufacturing to construction and services robots will be in charge. In other words RSM will start its 'first exhibition' with 'its own construction' by robots on site in early 2020 and is expected to be completed with the official opening slated for late 2022" (www.melikealtinisik.com). It seems on the near future of architectural praxis, including both the design side and the rhetoric, there will be a new jargon regenerated so soon in a totally different point of view.

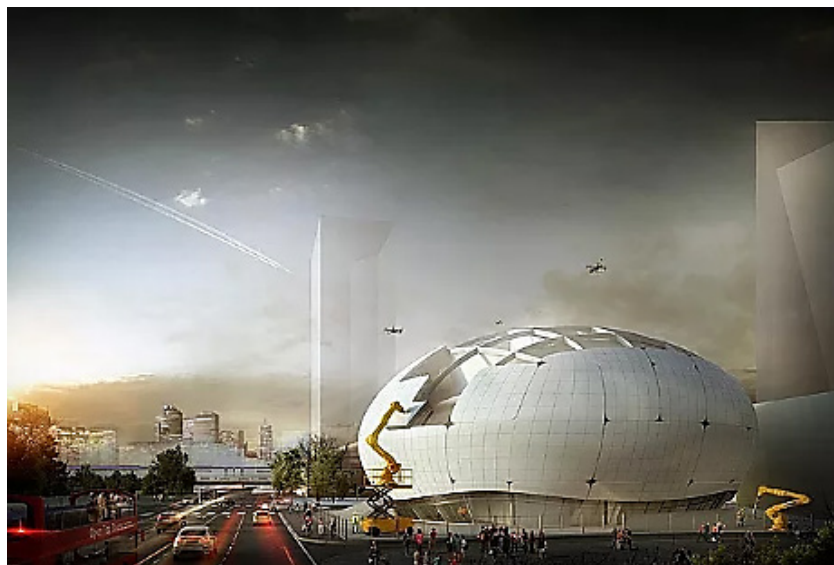


Figure 31. Robot Science Museum, Seoul, South Korea, designed by MAA MELIKE ALTINISIK ARCHITECTS and Visualisation by Ediz Akyalçın www.melikealtinisik.com

Conclusion

As new technologies and constructional techniques are developed, by the light of the words of Bijark Ingles, a pragmatic utopian architecture takes on the designing of socio-economically and environmentally perfect spaces, and yet every will of the humankind started to become real as a practical objective; thus, we assume that we are living on the age and land of Yes is More!

It seems rather than contextual background creation, all of the selected examples are located on a *fictional conceptual bases*, in the words of Sagdic, once indicated on her book-chapter titled, *Searching of the Concept on 21st Century: A Comparison Between World Architecture Examples and Turkish Architecture Examples*, in 2017. She added that, “these fictional conceptual bases are more effectively shaping the form geometry of buildings and contemporary architecture examples all over the world and as it is seen and understood from examples”, the geometrical form based on production of extravaganza, “where extravaganza is more powerful on the market, not only to sell the construction, but also to have a place on architectural discourse and history; thus, it is understood that architects”, by a deep impact of their feelings, “thus, it is understood that architects are forced to make/design their creations under *the deep impact* of finding/ creating a *popular concept*” rather than giving attention to context, where neo-liberal economies make everything more easier on this point of view.

All of the above examples are for users to make a kind of “venue experience”; the places used by aristocratic or bourgeoisie which cannot be reached / reached, or places where a life is not possible, to offer thematic fictions for the purpose of making a premium with this feature and with this feature, produced. All examples are copies of a building complex in another city or another country, or even more replicas of a city, independent of where it was built. However, one of these examples, The Beamish Museum, is a region that is already existed. It has been designed as an open-air museum, to present the process since 1820 to visitors, with the improvement of existing buildings in this town-land and by the reconstruction of extinct structures.

As a result of these projects; the history of a town, the important architectural structures of an iconic city, simulating the places of a historical building and presenting it to the user are determined as common points for all examples. Simulative architectures that become part of real life after the film scenes create an artificial reality for the user. In parallel with the rapid increase observed in today’s technological age of life, it is inevitable that the architecture will increase.

It seems that as once Ingles said “Yes is more”, on the architectural tectonic it might be a new age for architects who would like to say “the strongest of us is gonna be the most adaptable to change” and who is going to create designs for a *robotic production base*, it seems, might be the one who will be standed as the most adaptable to change; who will write down the most appropriate architectural rhetoric. Thus it seems, it will be a proper future for pioneer architects, who might indite the architectural praxis as a formulation of manufacturing of the robotic based tectonic. It might be a future for star architects who will give architectural creations as results of a robotmanship just like to the craftsmanship of Arts & Crafts Movement, and write down a new rhetoric that supports robotic architectural production on the architectural field.

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