



Place, Context and Content Shifts in the 21st Century: Rural and Urban Spaces

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Abstract

The 21-st century is the era in which form of experiencing all the vital accumulation of humanity is changed. In particular, countries that shape the forms of production and consumption are experiencing positive or negative processes, and the consequences of this change. Yet, this change varies for each and every place on earth. While some places on earth pave the way for space age through advanced technology and information networks, it is known that there are communities on earth still living a primitive life. Even though the earth has such a heterogeneous structure, it is overwhelmed by the circumstances generated by globalization. How the practices of life presented by this network of new relationships reflected in the perception of space constitutes the framework of this article. In this context, it is intended to discuss the place-space-belonging relationships and transformations in rural and urban areas.

Keywords: Urban, Rural, Place, Context, Belonging

21. Yy'da Yer, Bağlam ve Anlam Kaymaları: Kırsal ve Kentsel Mekanlar

Öz

İnsanlığın tüm yaşamsal birikiminin deneyimlenme biçimlerinin değiştiği çağ 21yy. olmaktadır. Özellikle üretim ve tüketim biçimlerini şekillendiren ülkeler bu değişimin olumlu ya da olumsuz süreçlerini ve sonuçlarını yaşamaktadırlar. yine de bu değişim yeryüzünün her noktası için aynı olmamaktadır. Yeryüzünün bazı noktaları ileri teknoloji ve bilişim ağı üzerinden uzay çağının zeminini hazırlamaktadır. Öte yandan dünya üzerinde halen ilkel yaşam biçimleri ile hayatını sürdüren toplulukların olduğu bilinmektedir. Yeryüzü böyle bir heterojen yapıya sahip olsa da küreselleşmenin ürettiği durumlara karşı yenik düşmektedir. Bu yeni ilişkiler ağının sunduğu yaşam pratiklerinin mekanın algılanma biçimlerine nasıl yansıdığı ise bu makalenin çerçevesini oluşturmaktadır. Bu kapsamda kırsalda ve kentteki yer-mekân-aidiyet ilişkileri ve dönüşümleri tartışılmak istenmektedir.

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1. Introduction

"People are building in a certain way because they think in a certain way; they think in a certain way because they are building in a certain way." Umberto Eco

In the intersection of time, space relations and acquired identity over residence, architectural thought is able to find a physical response. In this respect, within the scope of the article, it is intended to discuss the relations between place-space-belonging and 21st century practices and the transformation of these relations. After these concepts are explained, urban and rural relations will be examined and the conflicting and interacting aspects of each other will be analyzed.

From the moment that the attempt of people to shelter in a place turns into an attempt to create a power over that place, it also transforms into a context in terms of identity creation. Since being in a space and residing in a place means acquiring identity, it is necessary to look at the forms of this identity status. The identity, therefore the pertain to the place or to the residency, finds its meaning as belonging. In this regard, Christian Norberg-Schulz states that;

"dwelling is the fundamental condition of being human in a qualitative sense. When you are identified with a place, we are committed to a way of being on earth. For this reason, the dwelling makes a request from 'us' and, in the same way, from our 'places' of residence. In order to create an identity, we must have an open mind and places have a rich possibilities " –(Norberg-Schulz, 1980)

Established with the physical equivalents of the relationship established with the place, belonging produces various forms of existence. Various forms of life gain grounds and survive on earth. This approach, pointing out the 'place' as the context condition, reveals that 'its' character and the time it contains should be discussed. Christian Norberg-Schulz evaluates the opinions about the place through the concept of "genius loci." While Norberg-Schulz examines how a space is transformed into a "place", he argues that the organic bond between the space and the place originates from the spirit of the place (genius loci). The spirit of the place is a phenomenon analyzed according to the concepts of space and character. According to him, space becomes an entity only through a character. According to this approach, Schulz argues that the context can be defined by the atmosphere, including the existence and action of human beings;

"Architecture aims to revive the spirit of the place, and the task of the architect is to create meaningful places for human beings to reside." (Norberg-Schulz, 1980)

The meaning in this description is reflected in the design in terms of interpreting the conditions in which the designer is influenced as context. The architectural space is always in a context and the context emerges as a tool to hold on to the environment in which the place is located. Bernard Tschumi mentions that the way the designer interprets the context is revealed through the "concept". Tschumi formulated that the relationship between context and concept can relate in three basic ways. These are, respectively, indifference, reciprocity and conflict (Tschumi, 2005: 11-16). The way Tschumi defines these concepts is as follows;

Indifference: This condition can be defined as in this relationship between concept and context, the designer can be defined as ignoring the context. The

context is inevitably present because it is dependent on a place, but the formation of the concept is independent of context.

Reciprocity: This condition occurs when the architectural concept and the content interacts closely with one another. In this relationship, the physical space created by contextual data is formed spontaneously and appears to be always there.

Conflict: The condition that occurs where architectural concept collide strategically with the context. The form is produced via the contrasts of conflicts. Conflict is defined as a phenomenon that prevents and disrupts the normal. The conflict that this situation creates with the existing contextual conditions can be functional and formal, or as a result of these, it can create conflicts in the social and cultural dimensions (Piquard and Swenarton, 2011, pp. 1-13).

This tripartite approach of Tschumi can be observed in the production of physical space that forms the present world. However, the conflict situation is seen as an auxiliary approach to convey the relationships of ground, context and semantics in 21st century practices. In contemporary life forms, it is possible to say that the contradictions between the nature and environment of human have turned into a conflict. The most significant example of this is being experienced between nature and the city. Due to the effect of globalization, what shapes the daily life relations is not nature anymore. What the body relates to, although it takes its raw material from nature, are transformed into the world of unnatural objects following the transformation of their structure. The inorganic structures of the surrounding objects are most resistant to time. The natural cycle of man is unable to adapt in such a temporality. At this point, a new global interaction is formed which is shaped around human quest for immortality.

On the one hand, these environments where perceptual boundaries are formed through globalization are experienced, while on the other hand, classical representations of the relationships with the existing environment are still encountered on a wide scale from tribal communities to crowded societies. However, it is seen that classical context relations fall short in understanding today's practices. Especially, the current chaotic state of cities is thought to be due to inadequate knowledge about new formed contexts. Another effect of this state becomes evident as a tendency to move away from the cities. Investigating the causes of these situations is seen as a method to understand the present world and to produce ideas on the future.

In the foreword of Marc Augé's book *non-places* where he discussed the space and place, it is said: "The concepts of 'place' and 'space' are one of the most controversial concepts of the architectural world in recent years. The main axis of this discussion is the differences of these concepts and the transformations that they undergo in the process of modernization. The transformation caused by the modernization process emerges especially in the relation of architecture and the place. *Place* as one of the leading components defining architecture begins to bear a declining determinism. At the last point of the modernization process (Marc Augé calls it "superior modernism"), the new architecture programs brought by the world of globalization make the relationship with the *place* absolutely contingent. Spaces such as airports, motorways and shopping malls are frequently experienced as non-places begin to occur independent of their environment." The disappearance of the determinism of the '*place*' detaches the structures that located in different places from their locations and the contexts in which they are located, makes them independent, and makes these places readable only through the programs and concepts defined by the world of globalization.

One of these concepts is 'security', which is more prominent than any other component and becomes the bearer of the relationship the subject has established with that space." Marc Augé, who defines these spaces as 'non-places' in the global world, has identified one of the most controversial issues of architectural society in recent years with this conceptualization (Augé, 2017).

While the definition of place by Marc Augé is based on a general literature, the "non-places"² are defined through the programs produced by the post-modern process. The emergence of these new programs as an architectural act transforms the architectural design approach. At this point, the article argues that there is an alternative third form of architecture that corresponds to space and non-space. Because, in addition to the new needs produced by globalization, the intertwining of the old and the new are observed. This is reflected in everyday life practices and becomes an experience where the boundaries of spatial definitions become ambiguous. This kind of shifts in meaning and loss of belonging leads to profound changes in the structure of the space. According to this third form of architecture, when Marc Augé's non-place concept refers to the program, the space is now in a way of contextually generating a non-place in variety of forms.

Since being in a space and residing in a place means acquiring identity, it is necessary to look at the forms of this identity status. The identity, therefore the pertain to the place or to the residency, finds its meaning as belonging. The belonging established by the physical equivalents of the relationship established with the place reflects these forms in architectural products. The principles that constitute the architectural mind emerge with the relations of place, context and meaning. The environment for the production of these principles as an area of architecture is mostly the cities. The city, which is in different ways but equally belonging to everyone as an open cultural area, is being discussed as the cultural (natural) habitat of human beings created by them and formed human beings over time. In the countryside, life is not dominated by what is demanded from the place but it is dominated by what is demanded by the space (nature). Accordingly, unlike the countryside, the city, as the first artistic and cultural artifact that man transforms and adapts to itself, becomes the nature of the self-expressing human beings residing and surviving in it. (Erzen, 2015).³

This nature does not have a natural cyclical time, like the traditional rural. The city, which bears different layers of history, also offers the memory of the past in a physical or relational sense. Thus, it offers knowledge of the past and knowledge of a culture in a local sense. This memory promises to be a part of the future while displaying the

² "While examining the typologies peculiar to the supermodernity era, Marc Augé, considers that places such as airports, highways, supermarkets, shopping malls, hotel rooms include or describe non-lieu, meaning non-place. Places such as express roads, atms, airports, or large shopping malls which are designed for accelerated circulation of people and goods are the non-places. Non-place does not resemble any of the categories of space we get used to. Memories cannot be accumulated in non-places, and it is not possible to talk about historicity in them. There are two main features related to a non-place: First of all, these places are almost always came up for a specific purpose. Second, the use of these places requires specific instructions for use of the place. Non-place offers designer the flexibility to reveal his/her creativity, and it remains weak compared to other space organizations. Because the functionality of space and structure is mechanical. It is so mechanical that the architect's activity in design reflects the same mechanics. The need to require user instructions for the user as a feature within the definition of the non-place also creates the need of planning instructions for the designer. Non-place transforms the region it is located. It is contrary to the idea of physical space which contains the geographical and cultural characteristics of the region. It is independent of geography, topography, or local values. Non-lieu spaces are, in some cases, the common spaces shared by the cities of the world as another area of representation of electronic technology." Source: <http://www.boyutpedia.com/1613/69627/mimarlikta-non-lieu-kavrami-ve-terminal> and Augé, M. 2017. Non-lieux (non-places) , Daimon Publishing House ,İstanbul

³ The nature here is used in the sense of the cultural nature of man, not in its the biological meaning.

past. The city often provides a space through witnessing any social, cultural, artistic or economic development, and becomes a reference for the future. Thus, the urban dwellers feels equal to the period in which they lived and accordingly this city becomes a significant representation of the culture. The physical environment of this representation is the fabric produced by the built environment. In addition to the monads⁴ (Akarsu, 1975) that form the city, it is necessary to mention a whole that will be formed by the communities. This built environment creates a physical environment shaped by urban culture, starting from the smallest unit to the scale of the community. Most of the time, the urban becomes the center of an order against the spontaneity of the rural. The urban regulator at this point are sometimes managing powers, sometimes architects and city and regional planners, sometimes, even not as strong as in the rural, the actors who gained their places in the city on their own (homeless, migrants, etc.). The search for this order corresponds to a condition demanded by the urban dwellers. Therefore, the disorder in a physical environment that shapes everyday life is often found disturbing.

Human consciousness is closely intertwined and influenced by the material and intellectual texture of its own creation and the environment in which it lives. At this point, the relationship between the urban and human is twofold. Therefore, the cities have a dual behavior that is formed by the subjects that shape it, such as both being demanding and being disturbed. In Robert Park's words, this interaction is explained as follows;

"The city is man's most successful attempt to remake the world he lives in more after his heart's desire. But, if the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live. Thus, indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself." (Robert Park, 1967, p.3)

The structure of the city affects the people who live in it in every moment of the process of social change, while the people who produce in this process also change their environment and their city. For this reason, while human is creating the city, the city is creating the human. The philosophy of consumption society, which is the last creation of humanity, affects architecture and urban design and creates the result that cities resemble each other. With the expansion of multi-story buildings with similar architectural styles using the same kind of construction technology and materials, the cities increasingly resemble each other. While prototype structures, which are produced with the same construction technology and the same construction material, having similar designs, perceptually bringing the world cities closer together, they destroy the urban identities created by the localities. At the end of such a disidentification process, the world becomes perceptibly smaller and a loss of belonging is experienced (Yaylı, 2012). At this point, the loss of belonging caused by the disappearance of locality also leads to a perceptual distance.

2. Context and Content in Urban Space

⁴ Monad as a word literally means a particle, a granule. Also in Leibniz's philosophy, it means the infinitesimal units which encapsulates finite reality, and in ancient Greek philosophy, it means the indivisible unity in which its material characteristics are derived. Each monad is a single, indestructible, dynamic substance that differs from the other monads according to their degree of consciousness. There is no true causality relationship between monads, but each bears a principle of change within itself. Dictionary Of Philosophical Terms - Bedia Akarsu 1975. TDK

Alain de Botton, a 21-st century philosopher who put forth a manifesto about this new environment, "how to make an attractive city"⁵ as a result of a research for the school life platform, mentions that the search for order is a matter of happiness. According to this research, excessive order repetition is disturbing and creates a lethal effect on soul. The desired order in the city becomes a balance that contains diversity within itself. Therefore, extreme order makes people feel rigid and alienated. In this context, the search for order in the city is developing against clutter (Figure 1) (URL - 1).

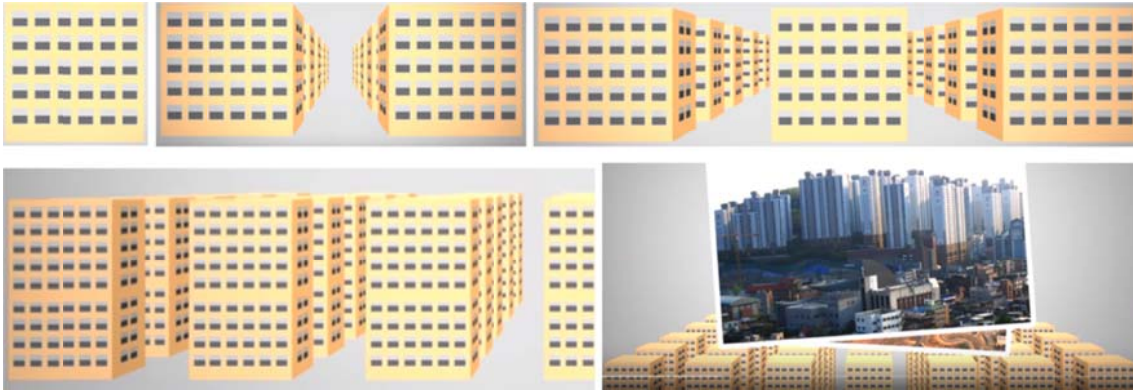


Figure 1. Building and regulation relations in the city, "How to Make an Attractive City" - (URL-1)

There are two cities that exemplify this manifestolike approach. One of these examples is the houses facing Telc Square in the Czech Republic and the other is Jave-Eliande in Amsterdam (Figure 2-3). Although the houses facing Telc Square are the same in size, they vary in form and color. And the rows of houses at Jave-Eliande have different designs, yet they correspond to an urban pattern in proportion. In these house rows, while perceiving the diversity of life profiles, the harmony of the urban order is also felt.



Figure 2. The houses facing Telc Square in the Czech Republic, How to Make an Attractive City- Alain de Botton (URL-1)

⁵ The School of Life/Alain de Botton "The author of the video, The School of Life/Alain de Botton, summarizes his opinion about how to obtain attractive cities in 6 points, which would be:1.- Not too chaotic. Not too ordered. Order and variety. Putting as example the island of Java in Amsterdam or a square in the Czech Republic.2.- Visible life. It refers to the presence of people walking and working on the streets of the city. In the opposite side would be the industrial estates.3.- Compact. The ideal thing they would be the cities to half a way between the lived accumulation centuries behind and the dispersion of last decades, both negative sides. In these compact cities, great importance receives the square, in decline in the last years because of problems with the scale. The city of Barcelona would be a positive example.4.- Orientation and Mystery. The cities need big streets across which to be orientated, and others smaller that allow the mystery and in which getting lost.5.- Scale. It refers to the dimensions of the buildings. According to the author of the video, they should not exceed five plants. They might exceed this height the buildings with a special importance.6.- Make it local. It refers to the character of the cities, his forms and the local materials. For example, Millbrae Crescent in the south of Glasgow."



Figure 3. Amsterdam - Rows of houses in Jave-Eliande, How to Make an Attractive City - Alain de Botton (URL-1)

The manifesto of Alain de Botton, which includes reconciliation with new life practices, can be seen as a valuable solution. However, although such approaches found valuable for the urban dwellers, they are not taken into account by the political powers that manages the physical structures of the cities. In the cities of the present time, with the effect of globalization, there has been a period in which the sheltering is squeezed into the same physical blocks. This condition of housing is actually based on modernism. Modernism has produced living spaces which are defined by numbers against the lives which objectified by the balance of production consumption and which are defined by numbers.

By the 21-st century, not only this understanding does not change, but also an environment in which this understanding reduced to these numbers is further developed is experienced. China is the country which experienced this situation most dominantly. The fact that the political powers that shape the cities focus on the imaginary values of cities are experienced in cities all over the world. In order to illustrate this situation, focusing on China is due to the fact that China, as the center of industrial production, now includes rural areas into the urban (eg: skyscrapers in Shanghai's Pudong District and Chongqing City, Figure 4).



Figure 4. Pekin - Shanghai – Being (URL-2)

It targets a population called "local consumers" rather than self-sufficient and productive masses in the rural. The approach of political powers in China is to produce megapoles in the form of skyscrapers, which accommodate population of millions of people, in order to meet the demand for consumption. Thus, housing areas are created in stacks and human beings are seen as objects. According to this approach, the subject now is the balance of consumption and globalization. These conditions transform the knowledge of the meaning known in conventional terms. Within the scope of the article, this transformation is defined as 'content shifts' that occur in the place and context relationships. Content shifts are experienced in every aspect of everyday life. However, in order to comprehend the architectural effects, various examples from the urban and the rural are chosen and the content shifts mentioned above are intended to be discussed.

The first approach, which is thought to expand this discussion, is Beirut, a place that embraces all the historical layers. Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, has been the economic, intellectual and cultural center of the Middle East for a long period of time. In the aftermath of the social and political turmoil that began in the 1970s and the outbreak of the Lebanon Civil War (1975-1991), it lost its character. Starting with the 1990s, it has become a city where the future is still uncertain and the security problems are active. The city still reflects its post-war pains in its physical structure. At the same time, it has become a place that welcomes visitors from all over the world, where the entertainment and shopping sectors are present. Now, alongside the damaged blocks of the civil war, structures of a global sense of entertainment are being produced (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Beirut –Japanese restaurant and wild bar 2002, Beirut –B108 music and nightclub 1998 (URL-2)

Lebanese architect Bernard Khoury argues that the context should be reproduced against these circumstances. The rethinking of cities and lifestyles, historical processes, urban memory, and all the contextual elements that shape existence is the condition of today's world (URL-3). About this situation, Khoury says;

"Yes, that is [what's] complex of the third world. I am a deep believer in the locals. Because the locals know and own the streets they walk on. They know the bad boys, they know the ins and outs, and they know the tricks. The locals know their stuff. They can throw you in the back of the car, cut your throat, know their own stuff. The local knows itself/its own things. They know the things that are lying within the invisible layers of the city that I think the curious foreigner cannot know. It cannot be achieved by accumulating data in a thick book and turning them into cute graphics. It is not about 500 pages of generic information

that you end up on [in] understanding your context. This produces very, very consensual definitions of a territory, it produces dangerous simplifications of history, and this comes from [what's] complex. The complex of the architectural field is its accountability to context, the context [which] the architect does not know. I do not have that problem. I do not try to be contextual. Simply because I have given up on trying to define what that context is in general terms. I am very proud to reinvent every street corner and construct it around the very specific situation that I am bound to. No matter how sour and how difficult the situation is." (URL-3)

With this discourse, Khoury describes a new environment in which he does not remain loyal to a general context approach. Consequently, if the architectural space is now shaped by which points and places of the global balances, the context creates content accordingly. This creates a new type of content that differs from the conventional practices of place. The concept of context, which bears different contents according to the periodical priorities, produces a new character that is contemporary for its period (Figure 5). The concern to develop an avant-garde architecture for the era turns architecture into a system of rational values in the pattern of economy and technology. On the other hand, a series of action attitude emerged following the rise of local values. Therefore, "context" is in the position to produce a new combination of content according to the pattern of relations. Shaping this process of transformation in the concept of "place" and "space" via consumption is a result of capitalist globalization. This situation can create different contexts in different geographies and different forms of interaction with different identities. Regarding this approach Jean Baudrillard (2004) makes a detailed examination of the phenomenon of consumption in the field of architecture. *He states that consumption is an effective form of relationship established not just with objects, but with collectivism and the world, a systemic activity in which our entire cultural system is established and a form of global response. Baudrillard emphasizes that consumption cannot only be regarded as satisfying the natural needs. In addition, it is mentioned that consumption is not just meeting the natural need, it can be accepted as a phenomenon that is acquired and learned regardless of the nature and value of use, where people are educated socially to feel desirable* (Baudrillard, 2004).

Many factors, such as civil wars, cultural degeneration, economic problems, simultaneously change the patterns of production and consumption. With modernism, fields of architecture and engineering began to intertwine, and space production is no longer considered separate from material science and information systems. This multidisciplinary structure, on the other hand, produces a new field of discussion, apart from the relatively naive and conventional contextual data. For example, security becomes a serious problem especially in urban life. In the Middle East there are masses separated from their lands due to civil wars. In the west, the increases in the number of homeless due to economic and cultural imbalances are too much to be underestimated. For example, people in Istanbul tend to live in high-security residential settlements (sites or residences) where they feel safe, rather than experiencing the city as flaneur (Figure 6). This becomes the vital promise of the global capitalism.



Figure 6. From the book of Jale Erzen- called *Three Habitus*; "I imagine a house from where I can go down to a mall with an elevator." (Erzen, J., 2015)

The settlements that establish their own inner world, offering a life from home to work, from work to shopping mall, from there to the sports center, become the most common forms of construction. Of course, there are many actors in the city and these actors do not experience the same conditions. Istanbul is an environment where various urban traumas are experienced, like the other world metropolises. However, mostly negative aspects of this environment do not affect through an equal distribution. Some return to their own safe and comfortable world, while some return to slum settlements where modernity has not yet been experienced. These imaginative values, which are formed by the combination of security, intelligent technologies and materials of the era, come forward and these new forms of life are produced side by side with other layers of the city (Figure 7). Therefore, the promised lives and the real layers of the city stands side by side and even intertwined.

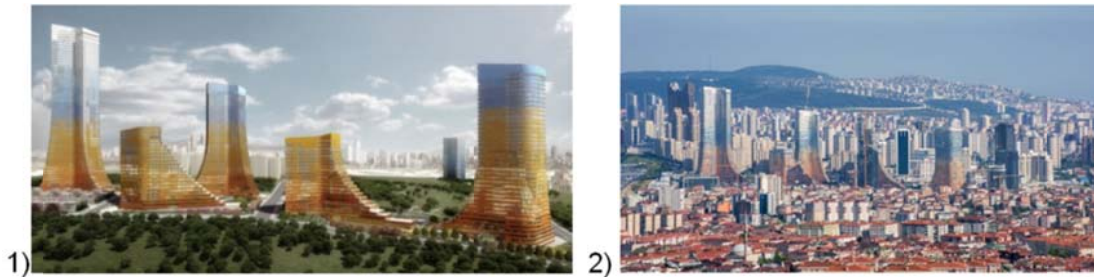


Figure 7. Varyap Meridian Project-Istanbul Ataşehir. 1) promise of the project 2) realization of the project (URL-4-5)

In order produce the criticism of this situation Leticia Lampert poses the question "In a globalized world, are the cities becoming all the same?" and reflects the response to this question in the collages she produces (Figure 8). In this series, different images from the different parts of the world are mixed together. These collages, where globalization and local intertwined and chaotic spatial organization are seen, it may be resembled with the representation of any major city. (URL-6)



Figure 8. new york – sao paulo – buenos aires – adelaide 2)porto alegre – sao paulo – shanghai – la paz – new york 3) dubai – yangshuo – shanghai – porto alegre 4) sao paulo – paris – new york – shanghai. (URL-6)

This collage work describes the loss of content in relation between geographical places, cultural identity and architecture in the globalized work as Random City. The perception that comes to the fore in images corresponds to an atmosphere created by architectural tendencies and global growth desires. According to Lewis Mumford, in the relationship between globalization and the city, on the one hand, very luxurious residences, high protected sites are rising in the silhouette, while on the other hand, unhealthy, low-standard houses and slams are increasing. This unbalanced stratification is observed in the combination of many cities in the collage work given as an example. However, in the cities of Turkey, without the need for a collage, this type of urban perception is present in the existing built environment (Figure 8). The people from various classes accumulated on top of each other in the cities have formed patterns of living according to their own styles. For this reason, a wide variety of spatial elements, from ghettos to high-quality residences, factories to boulevards and luxury shopping centers, can be observed in the urban. This situation leads to social and spatial disintegration, and as a natural consequence, the increasing number of crimes and violence in these cities leads to the definition of global cities as the cities hosting both heaven and hell (Mumford, 2007, p. 675).

Through China, one of the most dominant countries of capitalist globalization, it is possible to explain how consumption is shaped as a new context value. China, on the other hand, does not find the metropolitan environment satisfactory and supports the transition from the metropolis to the megapolis considering it as positive for the development of the country. He wants to use this approach with the formula of creating a “local consumer”. In China, the masses living in rural communities are largely self-sufficient, producing from soil and living adequately in terms of infrastructure. Despite this self-sufficient position, the government that accelerate a rapid urbanization and a radical transition from production to consumption, believes that there will be numerous opportunities for construction companies, transportation, public services and

equipment manufacturers.⁶ (see: figure 4)

“Growth is inevitable if half of China's population begins to consume,” says Li Xiangyang, Vice President of the World Institute of Economics and Politics. In addition, the Chinese government which made the statement “They are living in rural areas they do not consume right now!” aims to dictate places and lifestyles to feed consumption by ignoring all local and historical values of the rural. At this point, as the Chinese power holders consider human communities as bearing a quantitative value, they focus on an architectural production for this purpose. It is difficult to talk about the spirit of a place, the locality and the experiential relationships in the architectural practice when that is shaped in the context of consumption. Another example of an approach that supports consumption and experiences a context and content shift is "One City, Nine Towns" initiative that took place in Shanghai in 2011(Figüre 9-10-11-12). It is planned that satellite cities around Shanghai will be converted into 9 cities reflecting different architectural forms in Europe and that these small towns will attract Shanghai residents and reduce the population inside the city. However, most of them turned into ghost towns and the desired belonging level could not be established. (URL-7)



Figure 9. Paris in Tianducheng with a copy of the 354-meter Eiffel Tower (URL-7)



Figure 10. The Shanghai Minhang People's Court was built in 2011 and its architecture prominently resembles a mixture of "White House" and "Capital Building" (URL-7)

⁶ On the other hand, China does not find metropolitan environment satisfactory and support the transition to megapoles from metropolitans and regards it as something positive for the development of the country. It tries to find this approach with a formula of creating “local consumer”. Those who live in the rural areas in China are self-sufficient to a great extent and can produce from the earth and live sufficiently in terms of infrastructure.

The government, who speeds up rapid urbanization and the radical transition from production to consumption despite this self-sufficient position, believes that numerous opportunities may come up for construction companies, transportation, public services and device producers.” A section of government research institute, Vice President of World Economy and Political Institute Li Xiangyang says that “If the half of China's population starts to consume, the growth is inevitable.” “Now they are living in the rural areas where they do not consume.” [17]



Figure 11. A genuine replica of "Tower Bridge" of London, built in Suzhou, in Jiangsu region (URL-7)



Figure 12. The replica of Hallstatt, the mountain village of Austria, listed in the World Heritage List, built in Guandong (URL-7)

The reason for the lack of belonging is explained with the fact that the local people feel a cultural alienation in an artificially produced environment. In addition, the simulation of an image, even if it gives perception, cannot go beyond the decor. In a globalizing world, such projects produce a virtuality that leads to the illusion of perception, while the information age simultaneously imposes another spatial virtuality. At this point, as a new context, it is necessary to understand the advantages of the information age, especially the ways in which it affects everyday life. However, the rate of change is so short that even the concept of the generation is changing. The addition of a new technology to everyday life in every two years is considered normal.

3. Rural-Urban Relationship Through Technology

The "virtual perception", influenced by all of the above, changes the sense of belonging as the fundamental piece of life. In this new global order, one can experience every place just by being in a place. The physical state of the place is also secondary. A surface covered with information systems can make you feel like you're in the middle of the amazons via the effects. The Media House project produced in 2000 was one of the first examples that tried to achieve this (Figure 13). The media house project is designed to test the progress of information technologies beyond computers and integrate them into everyday life, to build computers from the components of buildings, thus demonstrating that logical intelligence of a structure can grow physically. The technology of the house can provide a visual experience to the body through the surfaces, independent of its location. Therefore, if the desired environment is a rural influence in nature, it can be provided via visual quality and effects. In this case, the context of being in urban or rural perceptually disappears.

In the post-project process, such projects are involved in daily life in various dimension. The reason for choosing the media house as an early example of this process is the discourse that it creates about the house. This project, which is shaped by today's technologies, now defines 'house' as follows: "The house is the computer, the structure is the network." (URL-8)

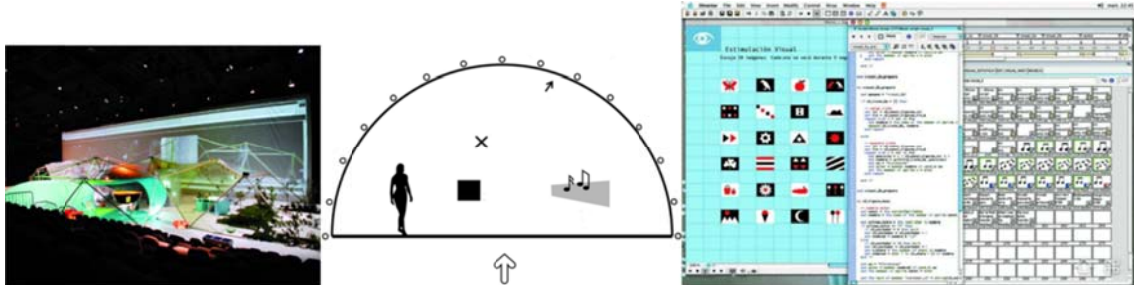


Figure 13. MEDIA HOUSE- Barcelona. Spain. 2000 Guallart Architects With Metápolis, MIT The Center for Bits and Atoms, 12CATElisava Master Interface (URL-8)

Our relationship with the space begins to be defined by the movement of the body. The way of experiencing the place turns it into a ground. The ground turns into a surface, surface into a canopy or a coating... thus, the space shaped by the presence of the body corresponds to the shape of being on earth. Movement is the awareness of time. Therefore, the experience of these forms of being corresponds to a certain time in the relationship between body and space. This is a reference to the familiar definitions of the experiential process belonging to the space and body. However, as in the media house, examples which enable us to experience much more different virtual dimensions in terms of technology now begin to generate questions such as in which place your body is? in which form of time? in which context?

While these transformations are taking place and cities are developing new questions in the context of architectural space, another area where the quality of life is changing is rural areas. It is mentioned in the previous chapters that the urbanization transformed over global balances has the most impact in rural areas. In this phase, while it is associated with rural deprivations, it is seen that urban services have reached rural areas in developed and developing countries. In particular, while the use of the Internet dislodges the human being, it also can trigger the possibility of belonging to another place. The internet offers people the opportunity to take advantage of many of the benefits of city without being physically present in there. Even an individual living in one of the most difficult geographies can be part of the 'agglomeration' if there is an internet connection. It is inevitable that the developments in neuroscience and engineering will bring the relationship between artificial intelligence and humanity to a different level in the future. In addition, the movement possibilities of the body in the rural are changing.

For example, drones can take on work movements of the body in the rural.⁷ Today, in many countries, people living in villages, towns and counties can order products produced in cities via the internet. It is also possible to share ideas with the world and exchange information. Even find the opportunity to study on the internet. (MIT has opened all courses to internet access as an open source). Therefore, the rural

⁷ Drones are air vehicles that can reach an area of 12 square kilometers within 60 seconds. They are used in the field of fire detection and intervention in Australia. A bachelor student from Delft University of Technology has designed a drone to carry medical supplies (ambulancedrone). In addition, in Ireland, a farmer family use them to guide livestock herds in rural.

community can experience the socio-cultural and socio-economic advantages just like an urban profile.

4. The Pressure of Urban to Rural

Natural areas are experiencing the most impressive results of the efforts of humanity to shelter in cities. Eugene Odum, who is known as "the father of modern ecology", defines the cities as "the parasite of rural areas". Because according to him, cities consume natural resources just like parasites. Modern cities, in fact, are consumer centers designed and built to absorb the remnants of capital and protect economic and political power. (Odum,1989) (Tarr, 2005, p.15)

Together with AMO (Office for Metropolitan Architecture - OMA's Think Tank), Rem Koolhaas, carries out various studies as a call for urban to think about the future of the rural community. Although global capitalism has given a lot of product to the space it has managed, Koolhaas questions the changing rural areas of today through his exhibition 'Countryside: Future of the World'.

Koolhaas states that, "The fact that 50 percent of the global population now lives in cities has become an excuse to ignore the other 98 percent of the world's surface: the countryside... The transformation of the city has already fascinated me, but looking closer to the countryside in recent years, I was surprised by the intensity of the change." An example from the exhibition of Koolhaas, which questions the interplay of technology, nature, city and production, is the Koppert Cress (URL-8). Koppert Cress, a well-known field for greenhouses in Westland, has developed some techniques to grow plants with LED lights (Figure 14). More sustainable food production solutions are needed to increase global food production. The irony here is that establishing a relationship with nature with the possibilities offered by technology produces a virtual spatiality. It produces a new contextuality that is created to feed urban life in rural areas.



Figure 14. A field in the Netherlands using low-energy magenta LED lights in greenhouses, in Koppert Cress One of the items that will be included in Koolhaas' 'Countryside: Future of the World' exhibition Photograph by: P.Van Velden (URL-9)

Dr. William Rees from British Columbia, who created the ecological footprint analysis together with Mathis Wackernagel, describes modern cities acting "as entropic black holes, sweeping up the output of whole regions of the ecosphere vastly larger than themselves, and returning all of it in degraded form back to the ecosphere". According

to Rees, New York needs a supply ground of nearly a thousand times the size of its own geographical dimensions. Tokyo needs an area twice the size of Japan to sustain itself. A recent study shows that the 744 major cities on Earth need more carbon dioxide than all the forests of the world can provide (URL-9). This is an indicator of how a sheltering practice, that fulfills the only life-sustaining requirements in the city, affects a different point on the earth when it is established through global balances.

In South Africa, although Capetown is on the verge of Zero Day and the city has not been able to provide water for its 3,7 million residents, the fact that it received the "World Capital of Design" award in 2014 becomes a striking example of the situation mentioned above. The adoption of a global lifestyle negatively affects the process by consuming the natural area at another point on earth (URL-11). Therefore, urban life forms cannot be evaluated only through the city. While cities were formed to accommodate on earth, the transformation in nature in the 21-st century was documented by creating a series of visual series in The Anthropocene Project(Figure 15-16-17). This documentation makes it possible to understand the structure of the urban and its impacts on the rural (URL-12)



Figure 15. Santa Ana Freeway, LA, California, USA, 2017 / El Ejido, Southern Spain, 2010(URL-12)



Figure 16. Royal Purple Raceway, Baytown, Texas, USA, 2017 / Aquaculture, Cádiz, Spain, 2013(URL-12)



Figure 17. Worli, Mumbai, India, 2016 / Salt Flats, Atacama Desert, Chile, 2017(URL-12)

Photographs shows the images obtained from urban and rural areas in various locations around the world. These visuals imply that chaotic states and masses in cities are destroying the nature through activities such as agriculture or mining in the countryside in order to sustain their daily lives. Agricultural is no longer done by natural methods. In order to meet the consumption needs, an agricultural production with a converted organic structure is preferred. Although the mines make it possible to benefit from the resources of the earth, the topographic destruction that it has left produces serious structural problems. At this point, the space in the rural, trying to meet the consumption needs of the urban, starts to become a structure that is out of place and only produced to meet the need. This also transforms the context of location-specific positioning and association in rural (Figure 18). While these transformations are taking place and cities are developing new questions in the context of architectural space, another area where the quality of life is changing is rural areas.



Figure 18. Respectively; Vancouver Island, B.C., Canada, 2016 Palm Oil Plantation, Borneo Malezia 2016 –Solar Power Plant, Seville, Spain, 2013 (URL-12)

Although the transformation of human and nature relationship is based on the act of man dominating nature, today nature is seen as "compressed within the boundaries of the city". In this respect, the postmodern human chooses the path to nature in order to cope with urbanization and the many negative causes it brings, and to escape from the reality of the city. The individual has seen that as his distance to nature increases, nature alienates and thus individual begins a search for happiness.

On the one hand, while an understanding that exploits nature to the end is sustained, on the other hand, nature is in a special position which is missed in the jam of the city, that is filled with a blessing and cannot be replaced with anything else. An example can be given: The increasing number of roof gardens in New York City began to take part in the city plans. According to the rules set by the New York City Planning Department, the roof gardens are planned within the scope of the green zone and the height and area limitation for greenhouses on the roof of the non-residential buildings is

introduced. In order to produce such plans, "Design Trust for Public Spaces", a non-profit organization, was established in 2009. The organization aims to plan these areas and create urban policies through the competitions it has organized. Bringing public institutions, private sector and public communities together, this project model plans to develop urban landscape and produce innovative solutions for urban agriculture (URL-13). The effort to produce a new nature within the urban, while consuming the current structure of the nature in rural, is seen as problematic at this point (Figure 18).

While the marketing strategies, which are aware of the negative effects of this transformation process on humanity, address to individuals with emphasizing nature in their speaks, new technologies focus on using the classical aspirations of individual of nature. Thus, consumption habits in the society are established through the illusion that human beings have relations with nature. This condition becomes one of the most important factors in the persistence of consumption culture.



Figure 19. Alex Maclean/Up on the Roof: New York's Hidden Skyline Spaces Samples, 2012 (URL-13)

It is possible to understand the irony through the book of Reinier de Graaf (Graaf, 2017)⁸ titled "Four Walls and a Roof: The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession". In

⁸ Reinier de Graaf joined OMA in 1996. He is responsible for building and master planning projects in Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, including Holland Green in London (completed in 2016), the new Timmerhuis in Rotterdam

addition to a series of selected works that brought together ideas of Reinier de Graaf about architecture in the 21-st century, his experiences in this field are also presented in the book.

According to him, these transformations also affect the discussion ground of the architecture and it is seen that the concepts used to produce urban spaces have changed. In the cities, mostly, the destruction of nature is observed. However, newly developing spatial concepts such as ecology, organic design, sustainability and green design often make the situation ironic by referring to nature (Figure 20).



Figure 20. Old and new literature approaches on architecture URL-14

It is ironic that in a new global environment in which the emphasis of nature has been made so much, the loss of nature has been experienced simultaneously. This affects all the actors of the earth independent of their distance or proximity. Globalization is effective all over the world, but in different forms, not always being physically. Bhutan Kingdom as a country known with its rural characteristics can be examined here (Figure 21).



Figure 21. Traditional architectural texture of Bhutan Kingdom (URL-15)

The Bhutan architecture consists of sacred buildings called Dzong and examples of civil architecture of daily life. Dzongs in Bhutan have been serving as religious and

(completed in 2015), G-Star Headquarters in Amsterdam (completed in 2014), De Rotterdam (completed in 2013), and the Norra Tornen residential towers in Stockholm. In 2002, he co-founded AMO, the think tank of OMA, and produced *The Image of Europe*, an exhibition illustrating the history of the European Union. He has overseen AMO's increasing involvement in sustainability and energy planning, including Zeekracht: a strategic masterplan for the North Sea; the publication in 2010 of *Roadmap 2050: A Practical Guide to a Prosperous, Low-Carbon Europe* with the European Climate Foundation; and The Energy Report, a global plan for 100 percent renewable energy by 2050, with the WWF. De Graaf has worked extensively in Moscow, overseeing OMA's proposal to design the masterplan for the Skolkovo Centre for Innovation, the 'Russian Silicon Valley,' and leading a consortium which proposed a development concept for the Moscow Agglomeration: an urban plan for Greater Moscow. He has curated two exhibitions, *On Hold* at the British School in Rome in 2011 and *Public Works: Architecture by Civil Servants* (Venice Biennale, 2012; Berlin, 2013). He is the author of *Four Walls and a Roof, The Complex Nature of a Simple Profession*.

administrative centers since the 17th century. Although there are local typologies formed during a peace period in Bhutan at the end of the 19th century, there are also different structures, such as the 'secular lordly houses'. Throughout history and even today Bhutan has been following the Tibetan tradition of Buddhist architecture.

In Bhutan, traditional architecture is built with multi-colored wooden facades, small arched windows and inclined roofs, in accordance with the royal decree. Traditional Bhutan structures are built with traditional techniques, and local materials are used. Natural wood and stone are contemporary production materials. There are also structures in which they develop contemporary interpretations in terms of design with local material and local cultural characteristics (Figure 22).



Figure 22. Contemporary architectural examples of Bhutan Kingdom (URL-15)

With these features, the Kingdom of Bhutan has an environment that is compatible with nature, cultural values are still preserved and sense of belonging is elevated. In addition, the country maintains its characteristic of being carbon neutral by reducing more than 4 million tons of carbon per year and by exporting renewable electricity obtained from high-flow rivers. The clean energy they export compensates for approximately 6 million tons of carbon dioxide from the neighboring countries (China-India). In 2020, it is predicted that the amount electricity export they will do will reach to compensate 17 million tons of carbon dioxide. The relationship of this situation with architecture is that it pursued the ancient knowledge from the past. They still use local construction methods.



Figure 22. Lake in the mountainous areas of the Kingdom of Bhutan, formed within 20 years via the melting of glaciers due to climate change (URL-16)

Bhutan is a country established at the foot of the Himalayas with a population of less than one million. The wealth of the country is measured not by 'gross national product' (GNP) but by 'gross national happiness' (GNH). The country, with 80% of its surface area covered by forests, has the only carbon neutral country in the world, while global warming is getting worse day by day due to the greenhouse effect. They maintain their local identity and maintain these values in everyday life. With its traditional architecture and spatial patterns away from global pressure, the country preserves its rural elements in its urban. Although it has all these positive values, the country is still

exposed to the negative effects of global warming. Glaciers in the high mountains melt, creating new topographic and climatic formations, and some of them poses dangers. (URL-15) This climate change is the basis for various disasters and destructions (Figure 22). Therefore, the spatial environment they see as a source of happiness is in danger!

It is critical that even Bhutan, which is the only country that can be carbon neutral, cannot avoid the effects of increased consumption to generate happy people. On 19 July 2011, the General Assembly of the United Nations unanimously approved that happiness is an independent goal for all countries. In this way, the UN is on the way to encourage world countries to seek a more holistic approach to development. But what has been increasing since 2011 is not the acceleration of happiness, but the rapid loss of the unique nature of the earth. (URL-15)

Conclusion:

To the present day, the discipline of architecture discusses the existing environment in two main contexts: urban and rural. In this process, cities are seen as the center of development and the center of various urban equipment that enriches life. The rural areas represent a condition that its production activities are based on agriculture and can be read in relation to nature. However, as can be seen in the way we live in the 21st century, the distinction between the city and the countryside is blurred. People, who are now overwhelmed by the chaotic state of cities, tend to form their own rural spaces within the city. In rural areas, especially under the pressure of industrialization and technology, although it is physically in rural, life forms that resembles structural and daily life-practices of the urban are formed. At this point, the opposition between urban and rural also becomes ambiguous.

Considered in the light of the discussions, the new environment and meanings produced by this ambiguity have a negative effect. Therefore, thinking about the urban and rural or focusing on the relationship between each other reminds us that nature is an indispensable element at every point. In this case, it is the responsibility of all disciplines as well as architectural thinking and production to seek the methods of converting the negativity created by the ambiguity of urban or rural opposition into a positive ground.

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