

On Critical Theory and Others

ZEYNEP ÖZDAMAR

Urban Planner

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was the first founder of the critical theory that emerged following the Industrial Revolution, with his critique of capitalism. Marx's concept of social rationalism is based on production paradigms.

The first steps based on this critical theory were taken with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, and similar theories were developed in Germany. The leading names of the Frankfurt School established in Germany towards the middle of the 20th century were Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979) and Theodor Adorno (1903-1969). With the Frankfurt School critical theory was given a name, stressing the need to give priority to nature, society and human beings in a world from which meaning and freedom was slipping away. Another thinker who left his mark on the same school was Jürgen Habermas (1929-...), who redefined the concept of rationality with what he called 'communications rationality'. Habermas focused on the need for consensus when taking every kind of decision.

After 1960, Jane Jacobs became the first to focus on the need for social as well as physical analyses in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. What is more, architecture had then begun to be recognised and accepted as a language of symbols. In this respect meaning, that is semiotics, gained importance.

The critical planning theory won prominence from the 1980s onwards in the areas of consensus and participation. Another name in this field is Schön, founder of the Organisation Development method.

Where architecture is concerned, the impact of critical theory is examined with respect to three examples. In the *Power of Place: Los Angeles* study, the contributions of different ethnic communities to the urban shape of Los Angeles has been examined. At the Catholic University of Louvain the architect Lucien Kroll carried out a design process with the participation of users, taking their wishes into account. Günther Behnisch and his partner meanwhile have drawn attention to the human scale and user opinions in their projects.

There is a strong connection between critical theory and architecture. When viewed from this angle, the principle of participation that emerges particularly in planning and architecture can cause confusion with respect to design and aesthetics.

Although the concept of power appears to be in direct opposition to participation, it is the most fundamental requirement in the implementation of a decision. Therefore it is necessary to find a middle way between the two extremes.

Critical theory has not just opened new horizons for us, but brought new questions. From this point of view, the impact of the theory on architecture and planning has introduced new approaches.



Views of Los Angeles.

Solutions Proposed by Six Architects' for Istanbul

Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality 's Planning and Urban Design Centre (IMP) commissioned projects from six internationally well-known architects, and selected those by **Zaha Hadid** and **Ken Yeang**.

The six projects were examined by an international committee, the members of which were Istanbul's mayor Dr. Kadir Topbaş, Dr. Suha Özkan, Prof. Hüseyin Kaptan, Prof. Michael Sorkin, Dr. Sumet Jumsai, Elias Torres Tur and Prof. Dr. Necati İnceoğlu. The committee selected Zaha Hadid's Kartal Lower Centre and Kartal-Pendik Coastal Zone Urban Transformation Project and Ken Yeang's Küçükçekmece-Avcılar Inner and Outer Beach Area Urban Transformation Project.

The committee recommended that the two projects be taken to the second stage, expanding the main ideas in detail, and investigating conditions of the project areas in situ with the participation of the designers. At this second stage the authors of the winning designs would work in close cooperation with IMP in the development of the main planning decisions, looking into the practicality of the proposals by focusing on one or more parts of the projects as examples; and through this process of clarification develop the projects further.

The other projects' architects and their teams were as follows:

Kartal Lower Centre and Kartal-Pendik Coastal Zone Urban Transformation Project

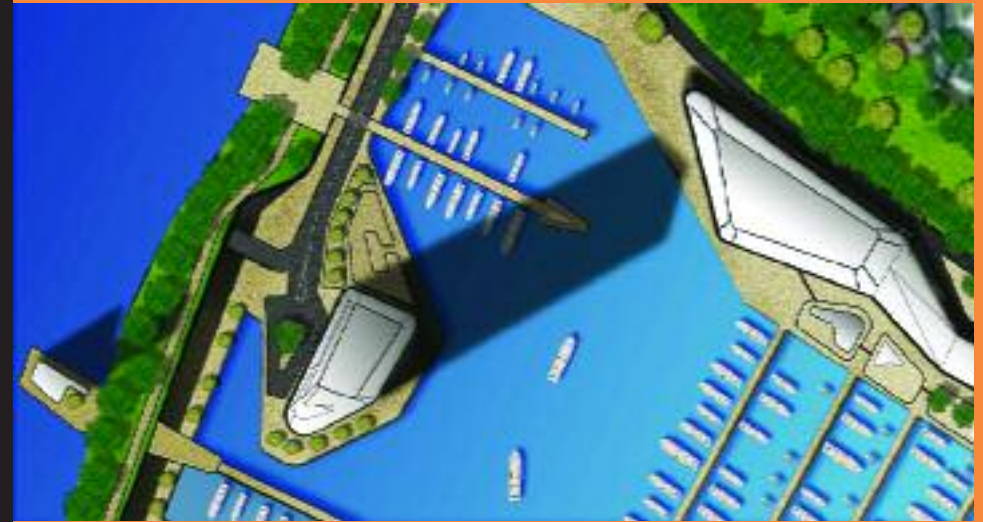
- Massimiliano Fuksas Group: Massimiliano Fuksas, Fabrizio Arrigoni, Fabio Cibinel
- Kisho Kurokawa Group: Kisho Kurokawa, Risa Natsuki, Peter Charles

Küçükçekmece-Avcılar Inner and Outer Beach Area Urban Transformation Project

- Kengo Kuma Group: Kengo Kuma, Teppei Fujiwara, Yosuke Kondo
- MVRDV Group: Wilhelmus Maas, François Jacob Wiedenhoff, Marc Joubert.



Zaha Hadid's project.



Ken Yeang's project.

S.O.S. Istanbul

Alternative Proposals for the Transformation of Istanbul's Dock Areas

The competition organised by Istanbul Association of Freelance Architects for Alternative Proposals for the Transformation of Istanbul's Dock Areas invited architectural students to submit conceptual designs. A jury consisting of Emre Arolat, Ersen Gürsel, Doğan Hasol, Cem İlhan, Haydar Karabey (jury chairman) and Timur Kayserilioğlu (reporter) evaluated the 26 projects which were submitted.

In its announcement at the conclusion of the competition, the jury said the following: 'Istanbul Association of Freelance Architects congratulates all the participants for the youthful, contemporary, sensitive and original alternative ideas which they put forward, and invites the authorities to lend an ear to the idea expressed by the entrants that 'another Istanbul is possible.' This competition proves how important it is to consult the inhabitants of the city as well as listening to experts in the decision-making process, and that if diverse and urban groups (local authorities, non-governmental organisations, professional organisations, universities, investors, the general public and so on) were to sit down together for discussions, 'win-win' solutions could be found. The competition is the first of its kind in this respect, and a significant initiative. It reveals once more what interesting perspectives could emerge if a platform for debating the future of the city were to be established.'

The jury selected the following projects as equally deserving of commendation:

- **Gökhan Kodalak** Yıldız Technical University Department of Architecture
- **Göksenin Ekiyorum, Özden Demir, Sinem Serap Duran** Bilgi University Institute of Sciences Department of Architectural Design (postgraduate)
- **Tuğba Okçuğlu, Uygur Yüksel** Bilgi University Institute of Sciences Department of Architectural Design (postgraduate)
- **C. Alper Derinboğaz, Nil Aynalı** Bilgi University Institute of Sciences Department of Architectural Design (postgraduate)
- **Ekin Aytaç, Birge Yıldırım, Alper Çakıroğlu** Istanbul Technical University Institute of Sciences Department of Architectural Design (postgraduate)
- **Erdem Yıldırım** Dokuz Eylül University Institute of Sciences Department of Architecture and Building Science (postgraduate)



International PROSteel 2006 Steel Structure Design Competition

The results of the PROSteel 2006 Steel Structure Design Student Competition held by the Turkish Structural Steel Association and Borusan Mannesman Boru and organised by the Building & Industry Centre YEM have been announced.

The aims of the competition, the subject of which this year was a 'University Student Social Centre', are as follows:

- Developing creative solutions that emphasise the superior qualities of steel construction,
- Encouraging cooperation between students of architecture and civil engineering,
- Enabling students to gain experience in steel construction and design and implementation,
- Furthering mutual understanding between students from the participating countries,
- Increasing the international experience of the entrants,
- Providing an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and culture between different countries and educational systems,
- Encouraging participants to establish multinational as well as national teams of students.

Of the 40 entries, three received awards, one was selected for the Borusan Mannesmann Special Prize and a further three were commended. The competition jury consisted of Prof. Dr. Harun Batırbaygil, Necati Çeltikçi (engineer), Yaşar Marulyalı (architect), Prof. İhsan Mungan, Prof. Dr. Ali Muslubaş, Prof. Dr. Hasan Şener and Prof. Dr. Nesrin Yardımcı.

After the first two rounds of eliminations, the remaining projects were evaluated according to the following criteria: compatibility with the architectural specifications, extent to which the characteristics of the steel material were taken into account in the architectural form, the design and topology of the steel construction load-bearing system, compatibility between the steel load-bearing system and the architectural spaces, mass, surfaces and other elements, and the search for a diverse and original solution in shaping the architectural environment through the use of steel. The winners of the PROSteel 2006 Awards selected according to the final evaluation are as follows:

First Prize: Selahattin Tüysüz (Yıldız Technical University), Bora Çetin (Istanbul Technical University)

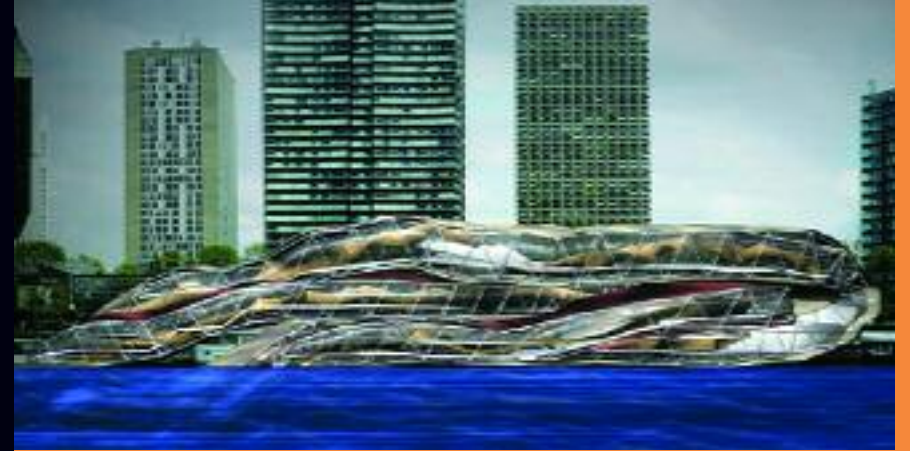
Second Prize: Hasan Deniz, Jurtin Hajro, Fatma Ali Osman, Alper Kanyılmaz (Middle East Technical University)

Third Prize: Erhan Vural, Hasan Sıtkı Gümüüşsoy, Ozan Özdilek (Yıldız Technical University), Adnan Onar (Selçuk University)

Borusan Special Prize: Muzaffer Korkmaz, Rıdvan Emre Öztürk, Şafak Delice, Sabahattin Kulu (Istanbul Technical University)

Commendations (equally ranked):

- Melek Duru Takış, Eser Ergün (Yıldız Technical University), Emre Ersin Özer, Fatih Çardak (Boğaziçi University)
- Özge Kırlioğlu, Cihangir Şafak (Middle East Technical University)
- Berke Debensason, İlgin Avcı, Zafer Ziyatinov Nuriev, Can Cihan Cankat (Istanbul Technical University)



First prize; view from north-west.

The Scottish Parliament Building

Edinburgh, UK

Architectural Design: *EMBT ARQUITECTES ASSOCIATS, S.L.*

Scotland is a land... It is not a series of cities.

The Parliament should be able to reflect the land, which it represents.

The open site is a crucial image in understanding the possibilities of the site.

The land itself will be a material, a physical building material. We wanted the qualities that the peat gives to the water and turf to be the basis for the new Parliament.

This is a way of making a conceptual distance from Holyrood Palace. Whereas the Palace is a building set on the landscape, related to the garden tradition, the Scottish Parliament would be slotted into the land.

The perception of the place and the scale of the site will change drastically when the end of Canon Gate is opened.

The small scale of the houses along the Canon Gate will appear again and distant views will open to the Robert Burns Monument and the rock of Arthur's seat.

The Parliament is set in the land, because it belongs to the Scottish land.

This is our goal.

We do not want to forget that the Scottish Parliament will be in Edinburgh, but will belong to Scotland, to the Scottish land. The Parliament should be able to reflect the land it represents. The building should arise from the sloping base of Arthur's seat and extend into the city, almost surging out of the rock. The seats of the parliament are a fragment of a large amphitheatre where citizens can sit on the landscape.

It is a diagram that could be built in many ways...The social form could have many 'forms'...

The natural amphitheatre will be the first form in the landscape.

How is it going to be fundamentally distinct from other European Parliaments?

What is the mental image of the new Parliament?

How will all of us, citizens, relate in our mind to the new Parliament?

The Parliament should belong to a broader concept. The specific place should not be crucial. The Parliament building should come out of a clear and strong statement.

The Parliament is a form in people's mind. It is a mental place. That place should be expressed in the site. We have the feeling that the building should be land. Neither a building in a park nor a garden.

Citizens, sitting, resting, thinking but in a similar place and position as members of Parliament.

From our recollections of Scotland we find it is these images that stick in our minds.



DR Byen

Danish Radio and Television Building Copenhagen, Denmark

Architectural Design: *VILHELM LAURITZEN AS*

The Danish Radio and Television Building DR Byen is situated in Orestad Nord, a large development area in Copenhagen. Plans for the area allocate 60 percent of the land to commercial property, 20 per cent to residential areas, and the remaining 20 percent to cultural, educational, sports, entertainment and service buildings. The design for DR Byen was selected by international competition. In accordance with the specifications, Vilhelm Lauritzen AS, which won the Master Plan competition, made the design for Section 1. As a result of separate competitions, Dissing+Weitling's design was chosen for Section 2, Gottlieb & Paludan's and Nobel's design for Section 3, and the Jean Nouvel architectural firm's design for Section 4 (concert hall).

The DR Byen master plan was inspired by the 'casbah' concept of Middle Eastern cities. In this 'casbah' where the four buildings designed by four different architects are situated, the buildings are linked by an inner street that is also designed to be the meeting place for DR Byen. This inner street which rises from the second to sixth floors creates a glass roofed communal area.

This transparency creates light, open and inviting spaces that dominate the entire complex.

SECTION 1

Section 1, which is the largest building in DR Byen, has gigantic transparent glass façades that provide an open view. Section 1 contains studios for broadcasting everything from news to food programs, and editors' rooms. As well as the Main Control and Channel Production Centre, which is one of the most important elements of DR Byen, a range of different broadcasts, including children's hour, radio concert and news, and internet services will be based here.

The DR Square overlooked by three large studio blocks has been designed as a space with a capacity for audiences of 3000 people at concerts and live broadcasts.

One of the most notable features of Section 1's main buildings, one of which is designed as two large cubes, is the facing of glazed and glossy porcelain panels measuring 40x120 cm, custom-made by a Turkish manufacturer Eczacıbaşı Vitra.

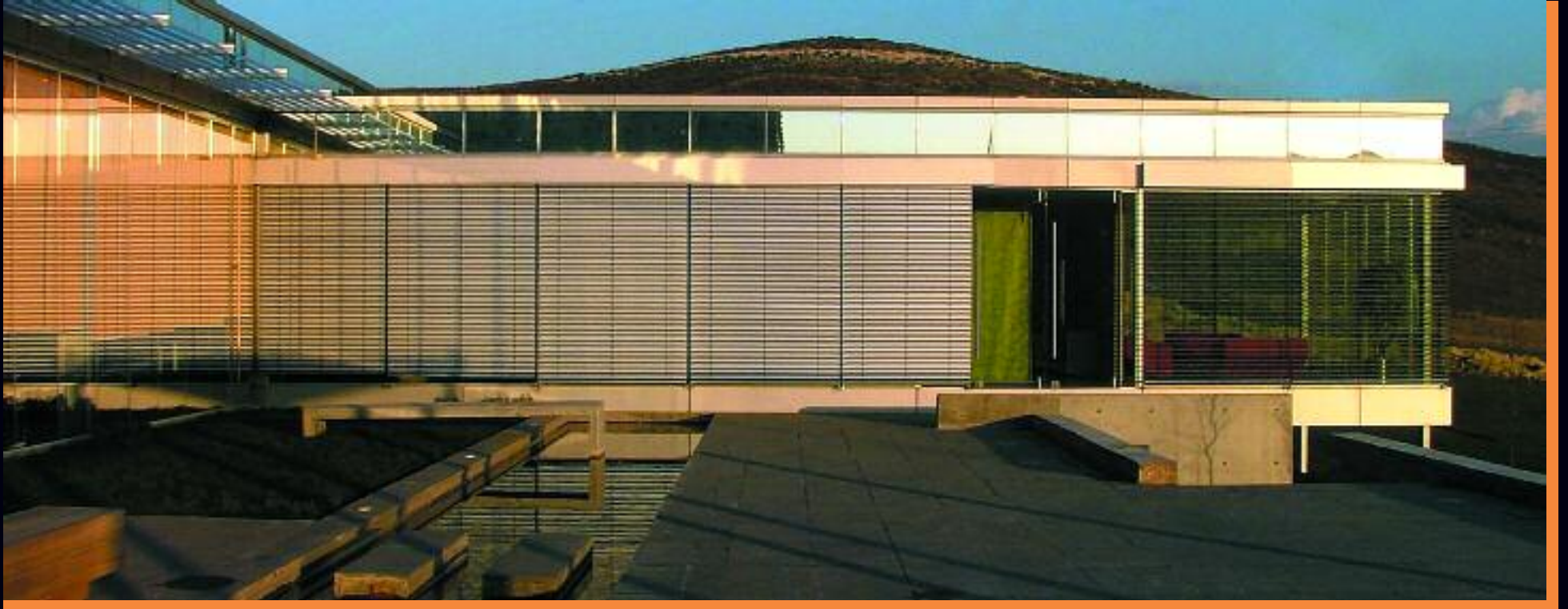


The shiny glazed porcelain panels produced by Vitra reflect the sun on the façade, and surround the boxes on the inner street, so forming an interior element

ESTON Housing Showroom & Sales Office Istanbul, Turkey

Architectural Design: *BORAN EKİNCİ MİMARLIK*

This building has three functions: advertising and sales office, marketing management, and client representation office. In the advertising and sales office, there is a model house showing different floor plans, a space for client entertainment and a space for sales. These are designed along a spine of circulation connecting open, semi-open and closed spaces to each other. The building is planned so that once the construction firm has completed sales in the region, it can be used for community activities (sports, clubs, etc).



Sungate Port Royal Resort

Antalya, Turkey

Landscape Design: *WEST 8*

Erasmian Garden, is a place where you can read and celebrate stillness. A garden in a garden, the university, wine.

In the past the park was self explanatory, the antithesis of the city. In every significant city there was a rich urban park. Nowadays, this rich place is gone. The current urban landscape, with its complex infrastructure, fragments of archeological landscape and spreadout suburbs does not demand a new autonomous park. Parks need a dense urban culture. Park design must choose another direction. Now park design is based on a middle scale but it should be focused on a grand scale with essential garden art. In the current landscape this ambition is lacking. New expansive nature is required in the chaotic city environment, for quietness, darkness, stillness, ecological regeneration and witnessing the seasons. Areas of more than 40,000 acres are relevant to the current city, otherwise they are merely a fragment. In urban Holland camping places and military ranges have the chance to be 'Yellowstone Parks.'

On the other hand, there is an ultimate need for new garden types. Gardens serve exclusively gardens. Isolated, enclosed and hidden in the metropolis. Garden art is a very important discipline for self-reflection and the creation of illusion. Gardens are small, maintained and cherished and forever evolving to maturity.

The design for the Erasmian Garden is a new extension of Arboretum Trompenburg in Rotterdam. By making pergolas on the existing canal system, the design creates a journey along the punting tunnel of blue rain, a quiet boat trip through the morning dawn and water lillies and the azure blue flowers, enclosed by the green of the ferns on the Arboretum slopes and red walls, and the Erasmian Garden appears.

The Erasmian Garden with its pavilion has the theme of evolution, life and decay. The garden is playing with the illusion of 'garden' and living nature. The garden is designed as a still life; a composition of textures, broken fossil trees and falling down and broken hellenistic capitals next to living Methasequoia's with undulating trunks and pointy vertical stones with the excrement of crows. Quick growing prehistoric equisetum in shallow water are also printed on glass walls. The continuous transparent walls enfold both the pavilion and garden (creating dramatic and ambiguous reflections). The pavilion has a magnificent view onto the garden, and the glass panels can be pivoted to the garden. The red walls around the garden are freely perforated to enhance the mystery. In this space, sloping to the water, one can meditate and read. It is a place for the university and city alike, with the kitchen serving the Erasmian Garden with food and wine.

With the Erasmian Garden, the Trompenburg Arboretum becomes a mature green icon. The city is receiving a secret within itself, an enclosed oasis.



Ultimo Consultancy Office Istanbul, Turkey

Architectural Design and Application: *AHMET ALATAŞ*

Ahmet Alataş's design is for Ayşe Yarsuvat's Ultimo purchasing and design consultancy firm, occupying 500 m² on the 19th floor of the Park Plaza building in Maslak. The design is a contemporary example of the search for unconstraint, flexibility, a lack of boundaries and transparency, which are evident in Alataş's designs from the first sketches to the finished states. In his search for new answers to known problems of office design, in the Ultimo project Alataş has achieved new forms by means of light design, legible structures, improved structural components and endeavouring to make every system simpler and lighter, so creating flexible spaces that admit far more light and air.

Reinforcing communication within the office and providing the flexibility, lack of constraint and transparency to allow for changing needs over time were the primary considerations. In the design process, the theme was given shape by several functional requirements independent of one another, and developed with the input of other disciplines such as human psychology and mathematical theory.

The existing structure was divided by partition walls and had a suspended ceiling 2.3 m high in the circulation areas and 2.45 m high in the working areas. Since this did not meet the acoustic, lighting and ventilation requirements of an open plan office of 500 m², it was redesigned.

All the ceiling panels can be easily removed and replaced, so providing great flexibility and ease of maintenance for the office infrastructure.

The surfaces of the reinforced concrete columns inside the open plan office and on the façade were faced with epoxy painted metal panels, the smooth plain surfaces of which made the columns appear far less bulky.

Those walls facing the hub of the building were covered by membrane tie-rod systems lit from behind, creating illuminated surfaces, a feature in contrast to the other storeys.

The wall membranes are decorated with floriate motifs that question the relationship between human beings and nature in high-rise buildings.

The conference rooms and other enclosed rooms are situated in the centre of the open plan office, and their partition walls are made entirely of glass. The glass walls of the conference rooms can be slid aside by means of a specially designed mechanism enabling the different spaces to be combined, so providing flexibility.

The fluidity of the space is reinforced by the flooring that extends uninterrupted throughout the entire office, the suspended ceiling and glass partitions.

During the day the offices are filled with light that reaches even into the most remote corners, and as darkness falls light bands arranged according to mathematical principles regulate the light level.



Conservation of Cultural Heritage and the Situation in Turkey

ERDEM YÜCEL

Archaeologist

Human beings have been producing works of material culture for thousands of years, ever since the discovery of fire and the first use of tools, and the totality of these forms the common heritage of mankind. Conservation of these works, which throw light on life in the past and shape the future, is a responsibility that all of us share today.

Since the end of the 19th century laws have been drawn up for the preservation of the material cultural heritage, and societies established for this purpose. Projects have been carried out with the aim of achieving a united approach and cooperation in the field of conservation, in line with research and methods developed by museums around the world. By this means it is hoped that different cultures will have the opportunity to understand each other better, and the methods of conservation, restoration and renovation will improve.

How conservation should be carried out is a matter for debate today. It is very important to determine what should be conserved, and why and how this should be done. It is necessary to evaluate each work at the same time as deciding how to conserve it.

Socio-economic and political upheavals in Turkey, often exacerbated by ignorance and structural problems, have led to many historic buildings and other works of material culture being damaged or destroyed. Unplanned urbanisation, bringing with it housing development, road building, and the construction of factories and thermal power stations, during the second half of the 20th century, has been the main cause of destruction of our cultural heritage.

Damage to the cultural heritage in Turkey today is caused both consciously and unconsciously. Even the fact that this heritage attracts foreign tourists and so generates foreign currency revenues is not taken into account in some quarters. Permitting building development on forest and agricultural land, treasure hunting and indiscriminate exploitation of coastal areas are among the factors resulting in the destruction of or serious damage to our cultural heritage.

Under the Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation Act, Turkish museums are responsible for preventing the destruction of our cultural heritage and solving the problems involved. However, no teams responsible for conserving the historical environment have been set up at our museums. Museums are in a difficult situation, having enough on their hands just taking care of their own collections, with the result that the hundreds of settlement mounds, tumuli and ancient sites in Turkey are inadequately protected. Conserving Turkey's cultural heritage for future generations is a matter that should be given priority.



The Mahmud II şadırvan (ablution fountain) at Haghia Sophia was restored by the Ministry of Culture in 1993-94.

The Question of Realistic Interpretation of Art

ÖZKAN EROĞLU

Art Critic

Realistic interpretation takes two forms, one in the public/social sphere and the other in the non-public sphere. What matters here is to capture the realistic interpretations that serve the non-public sphere. In this context one concept is of foremost importance: fine tuning or deep sensitivity (*Stimmung*). The aware observer wishing to appreciate and understand artists who achieve deep sensitivity, and because they achieve it are creative, want to conduct studies in order to attain deep sensitivity and by this means to reach 'realistic interpretations'. This article is a step-by-step summary of the endeavours of the observer to become aware, and sets out to put the question of 'doing or not doing like' in art on the agenda.

Another aspect of achieving full maturity of deep sensitivity that begins with the question of functional knowledge, is 'seeing and depth of seeing'. And still another is 'becoming aware and preparing the philosophical foundation'. The internal supports of this aspect are 'identifying the signs in works of art', 'becoming emotionally aware of these identified signs', and 'seeking comparisons on the basis of this awareness'. The observer of the work of art requires certain clues in making comparisons, and these clues called 'development clues of deep sensitivity philosophy' are as follows: The sum total, called Romanticism, of artistic, philosophical and political behaviour that rejects all rules and instead attempts to replace it by individual free creation, emotion and sincerity; Realism, which is the attitude of those who claimed that existence is independent of human consciousness and has an objective existence; Structuralism, the term for a shared viewpoint in various disciplines which asserts that the subject of study has to be a structure; and Symbolism, which is the process of explaining by means of symbols.

When we look at the no longer living names of art history, those who are described as artists, it can easily be seen that their works, or rather the foremost among them, exist through their discourses. That is how it should be. A name is nothing, whereas a work is everything. In our time, the first quarter of the 21st century, I believe that the artist/subject will lose its importance, and the work/object come to the fore. For this reason, I think that art history will focus primarily on objects/works, rather than explaining artists. In my view this is crucial for capturing true originality beyond any influence. This means that observers themselves will be able to decide what has been done 'like something else' and what has not. This is the right step towards a new breath and survival in art, and particularly the art milieu.



Kayhan Erkan; "Men"; detail, digital print.