THEMES OF PLACE AND SPACE IN DESIGN TEACHING: A JOINT STUDIO EXPERIMENT IN AMASYA(1)

Türkan ULUSU URAZ and Aydan BALAMİR

Field, wood and garden were to me only a space
Until you, my beloved, transformed them into a place
Goethe (**2**)

INTRODUCTION

The design studio is a medium of intense learning in architectural education. A learning experiment that engages in critical practice, seeking to present values instead of mere techniques, promoting investigative work rather than trying to bring exact definitions to what must be, is typical of architectural studio education. The choice of a theme around which to structure studio work is significant in this respect; themes define the trajectory and act as filters of perception, thought and action, which the instructors and students share throughout the design process (**3**). The theme of the studio exercise presented in this paper consists of the comprehension of place and space qualities and proposing new design in a historic context. While this theme directed learning of pertinent design vocabulary and concepts, it also required that students should develop an ethical approach based on the sense of responsibility towards delicate environments possessing cultural heritage.

Through a studio project set in the historic town of Amasya in North Central Anatolia, the students are engaged in the current debate about place and space. Two opposing views are identified, one stressing the sense of place, the other negating it. Each has equally challenging grounds for architectural thought and pedagogy, demanding from the studio instructor to avoid dictating one position or the other. Whichever path one follows however, place assumes a central role in confronting the ways in which any space is set in context, be it along the premises of place notions or along their total negation.

4. Works of Gordon Cullen (1961) in England, Christian Norberg-Schulz (1979) in Norway, Edmund Bacon (1975) and Kevin Lynch (1960) in the States. More recently, authors like Richard Sennett (1991) and Edward Soja (2000) brought a human, social and historical perspective on the making of place.

5. From the opening remarks of Asada and Isozaki (1992: 16-17) in *Anywhere* Conference. The subject was thoroughly discussed in the Anywhere Conference held in 1992, as part of the series of conferences by ANY (Architecture New York).

6. Those who console themselves with dreams of a Golden Age, according to Evans (2000, 489), see contemporary architecture in a state of degeneracy; "although it cannot recover its original significance in full, its lost past becomes, for them, a subject of endless reminiscence, a droning noise of quotations, images, models and derivations."

7. Moneo's point is clear in the following quotation: "I believe that learning to listen to the murmur of the site is one of the most necessary experiences in an architectural education. To discern what should be kept, what could permeate from the previously existing site into the new presence (…) is crucial for any architect. Understanding what is to be ignored, subtracted, erased, added, transformed, etc., from the existing conditions of the site is fundamental to the practice of the architect" (Moneo 1992, 48). Despite his emphasis on site, Moneo does not suggest that architecture can be derived from site. "There is no cause and effect relationship" he maintains; "to know the site, to analyze and scrutinize it doesn't produce an immediate or obvious answer."

OPPOSED VIEWS: PLACE vs. SPACE, PLACE vs. NON-PLACE

The concept of place entered into architectural thinking during the 1960s, with the growing awareness toward the lack of identity in new towns shaped according to abstract space notions. It was argued that a space becomes place when people attach meaning to it, and that the architect needs a degree of modesty intervening in areas that is considered to have a strong sense of place. Architecture can enhance that sense but it can also diminish it through thoughtless intervention. The concern with the overwhelming 'placelessness' in our time is present in many studies that have instigated the enforcement of place notions in design (**4**). Among architect-thinkers, the works of Team X members were pioneering in their explicit concern with the sense of place and identity in architecture. With their emphasis on cultural rather than functional aspects of design, the intention was to "evolve an architecture from the fabric of life itself" (Agrest 2000). Aldo van Eyck's emphasis on the impact of users, both of buildings and cities, was seminal in its vocabulary: "if one adds people to space and time, one gets place and occasion" (Antoniades 1986, xv).

The idea of place in architecture, having established its corpus of interdisciplinary knowledge and debate, has incited the growth of opposing views that are critical to the faith in an essentially place-bound vision of design. New directions in non-place approaches question whether or not the notions of *genius loci*, or of *fen sui* in the Orient, hold their relevance for the present day (Asada and Isozaki 1992, 16-17) (**5**). Deriving from Derrida's view that meaning tends to be unstable in our society, the search for place is rendered as being nostalgic and conservative, while the idea of space is regarded less loaded and hence radical. Perhaps as a reaction to this nostalgic aping of the past, today's avant-garde argues that there is something positive about 'non-place' with its attendant themes of rupture and disjunction. In extreme situations, the advocates of the conception of non-place would dismiss the followers of place making as being conservative and incapable of understanding the contemporary view. Those who believe that the idea of place still has currency would feel that their opponents are simply detracting from the fundamental purpose of architecture and urbanism.

What ought to be the position of studio teachers in all this? A detached observer would certainly notice a degree of polarization in schools of architecture as well as in the profession. Excluding the extreme cases of nostalgic historicism and regionalism (or any sort of stylism based on the conception of a Golden Age) (**6**). examples from current architecture reflecting this polarization are examined in the studio. Here, the conceptual positions taken by Rafael Moneo and Daniel Libeskind, both in their work and in their writing, will provide a comparison.

A review of Moneo's standpoint refers to the mediatory potential of typology (Vidler, 2000, 284-286): to understand the question of type is to understand the nature of architectural object, which can no longer be considered as a single, isolated event; because it is bounded by the world that surrounds it as well as by its history. Daniel Libeskind's position on the other hand, represents deconstructivism's "denial of urban context and renewed focus on the building as an object" (McLeod 2000, 693). His work, contrasting radically with a traditional urban fabric, cannot join readily with the other buildings to form defined urban space; "the single building once again becomes more important than city, individual creation more important than collective accretion" (McLeod 2000, 693).

Figure 1a. Rafael Moneo, The City Hall at Murcia, 1991 (www.imurcia.org).

Figure 1b. Daniel Libeskind, Extension to the Royal Ontario Museum, 2002 (architect's official site).

Figure 1c. Rafael Moneo, Extension to Prado Museum, Madrid, 2000 (architect's official site).

Figure 1d. Daniel Libeskind, Extension to the Denver Art Museum, 2000 (architect's official site).

Opposed views are keenly expressed; two pairs of designs by Moneo and Libeskind will make their points explicit (**Figure 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d**). For Libeskind (1992, 70), "site is nonexistent" in today's landscapes of anywhere, whereas for Moneo (1992, 48) "without the site, without a singular, unique site, architecture doesn't exist." Moneo believes in stable structures, forms and types that are at the rank of "essentials" in architecture; whereas for Libeskind (2000, 478), "architecture has discovered no permanent structure, no constant form and no universal type." Moneo, whose work unites tradition and innovation, criticizes the denial of history and context in today's architecture. Libeskind, whose work sees no harm in creating autonomous landmarks where relationship to the surroundings is no more a measure, challenges the role of history in the built environment. For Moneo, architecture belongs to the site; his purpose is making legible cities and buildings. For Libeskind, architecture is a communicative art; his iconic shapes are for creating focus in the urban context.

A fruitful path for the studio instructors to follow would be not taking sides but allowing the student to develop his/her own approach. With this in mind, our students were exposed to the spectrum of opposed views. Indeed *place vs. space* or *place vs. non-place* are not the only binary opposites that the investigative culture of the studio encounters. In order to familiarize the student with the current spectrum, class discussions focused on related polarities that are collected under three pairs: *continuity vs. rupture, conformity vs. freedom* and *analysis vs. reading.*

Continuity vs. Rupture in the Town

Historical perspective of any built environment will reveal as much continuity as rupture. Inherent to the city is a never-ending process of becoming; the city as "the only incomplete text" calls for an emphatic mode of understanding, or what Moneo (1992, 48) implies by "learning to listen to the murmur of the site," in order to discern what is to be sustained and what can be inserted or discarded (**7**). For the radically opposing view however, "architecture has no history and it does not follow the fate" (Libeskind 2000, 478). "Seeing the irretrievable rupture and loss, Libeskind sees no point in repetition and only sentiment in reminiscence;" and thus, "all aspects of architecture that are brimful of meaning" can be cut out (Evans 2000, 489). A mediating position would claim the designer's responsibility in assuring continuity where possible, by preserving inherent qualities of place, while at the same time allowing its transformation with the expectations of the day. Discussion of these concepts in class involved further polarities such as *imitation vs. innovation, tradition vs. modernity, unity vs. diversity, locality vs. universality.*

Design Freedom vs. Restraint

Design requires equilibrium between desires and circumstances, no designer can be entirely liberated from constraints, which may come in the form of codes and regulations or clientele demands, expediencies and precedents. While the exercise of unbound freedom may tempt the designer into sheer irresponsibility, total compliance or conformity may lead to the undermining of the designer's domain of expertise responsibility. Forming one's own judgment and decisions implies for the designer, the limiting of one's own freedom and later obeying to such

Figure 2a. Amasya, general view (Aydan Balamir).

SOUTH BANK   NORTH BANK

Figure 2b. Typical section of the town. Drawing by Victor Burbank (Bechhoefer and Yalçın 1991).
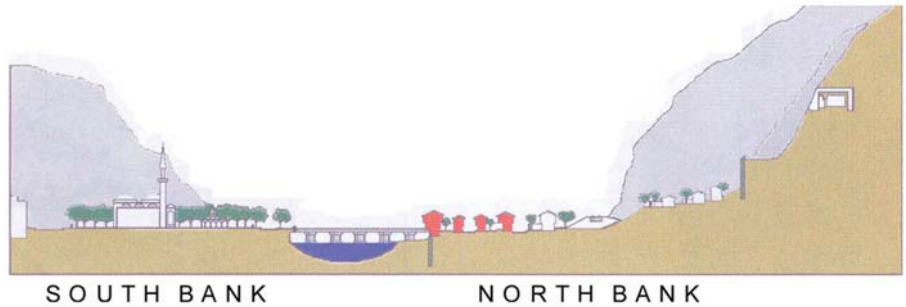

Figure 2c. Amasya, the middle section between two bridges; view from southern heights towards the Harşene Mountain (Fuat Gökçe).

8. An extensive account of the ethical issues of design exists in: Johnson 1994 (Chapter 5: "Ethics and Architecture"), Pieper 1999, Uraz and Yıldız 2004.

9. In Trancik's (1986, 114-115) words: "The crucial question becomes: How do we as designers respond to time and place, where overdesigning and too much planning are almost as dangerous as allowing the marketplace to shape cities in random, ad-hoc fashion"—i.e. the dangers of underdesign, when all is left to individual developer."

10. A relevant passage from Trancik (1986, 112-113) reads: "While types of space can be defined by categories or typologies based on physical properties, each place is unique, taking on the character or *Stimmung* of its surroundings. This character consists both of 'concrete things having material substance, shape, texture and color' and of more intangible cultural associations, a certain patina given by human use over time" (inside quote from Norberg-Schulz, 1979). This does not mean however, that space is any easier to define. According to Vidler (1998, 53), it is space that eludes verbal precision and visual depiction; "space is essentially intangible; it escapes

limitations; according to Pieper (1999), this is the central issue of ethics (**8**). The general attitude of the studio was to avoid immoderate personal freedom as well as the populist submission to what the non-architects think and prefer. This provided ground also for discussing what Trancik refers to as 'overdesign' and 'underdesign' positions in design, each presenting an extremity in planning and urban renewal policies (**9**). Design responsibility based on ethical grounds is discussed under relevant concepts pairs: *objective vs. subjective, collective vs. individual, conformity vs. individuation, obedience vs. liberation*.

Analysis (of spatial form) vs. reading (of place's meanings)

The town planning discipline placed emphasis on the logical positivist notion of analysis, while interpretive notions of 'reading' found followers in cultural studies on towns and places. It is held that spatial structure of a town can be subject to systematic analysis, while reading of its place characteristics requires the responsibility of an interpreter. Place is said to be opaque to positive analysis, requiring foremost, a reading of its textual entities: its material substance, character and emotional presence (**10**). Von Meiss (1990, 145) suggests that an understanding of the land both "as morphology and as history" is essential; this dual concern enables the observer to relate abstract spatial form with meanings embedded into the place. Our students were asked to proceed in both directions, and were encouraged to put down their impressions in verbal medium as well as in sketches. Back in the studio, space and place notions were further discussed under the following pairs of concepts: *time vs. occasion, program vs. event, abstraction vs. materiality, form vs. meaningful content, order vs. character and structure vs. tectonics* (**11**).

BACKGROUND: THE TOWN OF AMASYA

The site in question is in Amasya (ancient *Amasid* or *Amaseia* in the mid-north of Anatolia), a riparian town reputed for its historical heritage and spectacular setting. Located along the banks of *Yeşilırmak* (Iris River), the town is contained in a deep valley where mountains stand as backdrops to the settlement. The town embodies many traces of Anatolian civilizations from antiquity onwards (**12**). Among the relics of its Hellenic

Figure 3a. North bank, waterfront houses (Türkan Uraz).

Figure 3b. North bank, waterfront houses (Aydan Balamir).

Figure 3c. North bank, partial elevation of waterfront houses (courtesy of Ali Kâmil Yalçın).

Figure 3d. North bank, view of Ottoman mosque and remains of Hellenistic walls (Aydan Balamir).

representation." Place is not as abstract as space; "whilst space can be described with terms taken from topology and geometry, the description of a place requires concrete or even phenomenological terms" (Norberg-Schulz 1978, 11). The methods of reading the site or town according to Gregotti, "ranges from the identification of the formal structural characteristics of groupings and subgroupings, to the historic process which has influenced their creation, and from the inventory of materials to their characteristics of form, texture and color" (cited in Meiss (1990, 145) from: V. Gregotti (1982) *Le Territoire de L'Architecture* Paris: L'Equerre).

11. These terms are extracted from several sources, including the early texts of van Eyck (in Smithson, 1968), Norberg-Schulz (1979), Frampton (1983), Trancik (1986), Meiss (1990), Raman (1994), and Vidler (1998).

12. The history of the town goes back to the Hittites (c. 3rd to 2nd centuries B.C.) when the town was known as *Amasid*. Following classical antiquity, the town became an ecclesiastical centre under the Byzantine rule. After the Turkish conquest, especially during the Ottoman period, the town maintained its significance; most of the governors appointed were among young princes; henceforth the town is known as 'The City of Princes.' Reference books include Gabriel (1934) and Lloyd (1997), the former including visual documents on the medieval heritage, and the latter covering especially the ancient history of the town. The town's traditional urban tissue and its medieval orchards were preserved until the 1970s (Sözen, 1996).

13. Recorded quotations in this section belong to the ITU students.

14. For detailed descriptions of the town's present morphology, four articles are worth mentioning: Bechhoefer and Yalçın (1991), Cengizkan and Soğancı (1998), Erman (1998), Bechhoefer (2001). The riverfront buildings are examined extensively by Karakul (2002), with particular reference to the problem of new building in old settings.

and Roman past are the remains of Pontus castle walls (first construction dating back to the Hittites); and of its medieval past, remarkable monuments remaining from Turkish principalities as well as from Seljukid and Ottoman periods. The students stressed this variety in their written observations of the town, as it reads on one of the sketches: "an ensemble of multiple images, formal structures and varying scales"(**13**).

When viewed from the heights, the urban form is legible at a glance, allowing for lucid descriptions of the town (**14**). Displaying a division between two banks of the river, the shape of the town is dictated by the topography that has allowed a linear growth of the settlement (**Figure 2a, b**). The urban fabric on the north bank is composed of attached houses in parallel rows, between the river and the mountain. The south bank in contrast, is marked with singular structures preserving their object positions and strong boundaries; here the fabric is more heterogeneous with miniature tombs, medium-sized mosques and grand scale *külliye* structures that make a variegated urban fabric. While the town's scale and character change toward the east and west ends (where once the medieval orchards stretched), the middle portion (marked roughly by two bridges) maintains its strong references and sense of orientation (**Figure 2c**). The shapes of roofs expose the town's spatial order and tectonic character. The contrast between timber frame houses with tile roofs and the load bearing monuments with domes clad in lead in the historic fabric is visible, while the indiscriminate use of reinforced concrete frame today is concealed with tile roofs. Recalling the town's appearance from the above, our students made a keen observation: "The fifth façade demands attention!"

The north bank is characterized with traditional houses along the riverfront façade, cantilevering from the ancient castle walls right at the edge of the river (**Figure 3a, 3b, 3c**). This is where *İçerişehir* (the inner city)

Figure 3e. North bank, view towards the town's emblemetic mansion (Aydan Balamir).

Figure 3f. North bank, typical street with wooden houses (Türkan Uraz).

has developed and secured itself under a sheltering rock -the *Harşene* Mountain that accommodates the rock-hewn tombs of the Pontus kings. Because of its exposure to southern light and due to the limited amount of land available, northern bank holds a dense fabric of houses; public buildings have seldom found room to exercise monumentality on this side (**Figure 3d, 3e**). The wooden houses that nestle together represent the individual's mortality and frailty against state and religion, as typical to Ottoman dwelling culture (**Figure 3f**). Buildings here stand as fragile figures in front of the rocky mass rising behind them. One can hardly distinguish the individual units; they appear to surrender their identities to become parts of the whole. Student impressions defined the northern settlement as "a unified urban façade in front of the dramatic backdrop of the mountain."

In contrast to the informal and worldly character of the northern settlement, the southern side displays a formal promenade of historic monuments standing in solitude (**Figures 4a-e**). This is where the city is known to have grown along the bank in earlier times, extending nowadays to the outskirts in a rather clumsy manner. Despite enormous changes in its urban fabric, the role of the southern section in programming the town continued well into our day, bringing the spiritual and the worldly in close contact. Call for prayer times for instance, still regulate daily life; social encounters during prayer times in courtyards of mosques intermingle with the idle stroll of visitors. The pleasant courtyards are free from traffic and commerce, while the rush of urban life is concentrated in and around the Republican Square. Buildings are interconnected by the riverside promenade, providing pleasant settings for public life. A group of students expressed this urban asset as "continuity of outdoor spaces, constantly opening to the river, both visually by vistas and bodily by the flow of pedestrians toward the riverside promenade."

Viewing and gazing the scenery is an integral part of daily experience of the town. The deep and narrow valley allows the town to be watched from its heights. The tea gardens situated in the northern *Kızlar Sarayı*
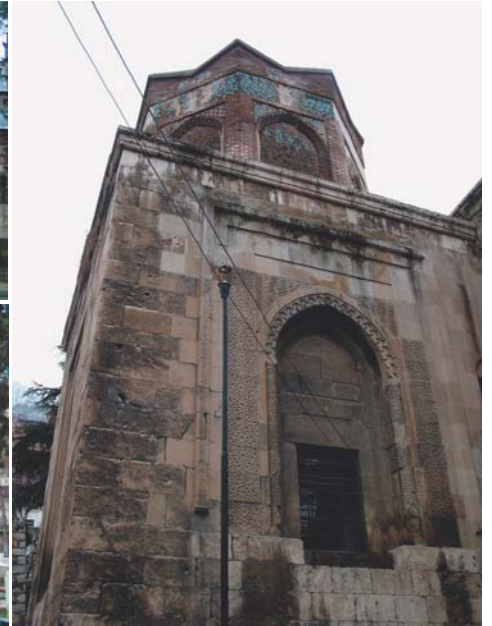

Figure 4a. South bank, *Külliye* of Bayezid II, 1486 (Aydan Balamir).

Figure 4b. South bank, Sultan Mesut Tomb, the first half of the 14th century (Fuat Gökçe).

Figure 4c. South bank, Bayezid Paşa Mosque, 1419 (Aydan Balamir).

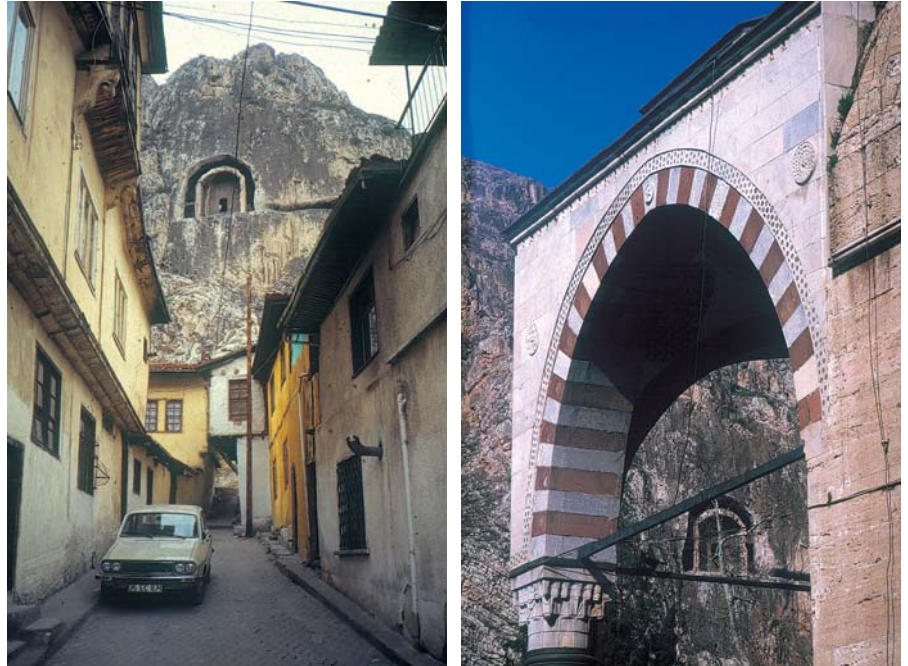**Figure 4d.** South bank, GökMedrese Mosque, 13th century (Fuat Gökçe).

Figure 5a. Sight of a rock tomb from a neighbourhood on the north bank (Türkan Uraz).

Figure 5b. Sight of a rock tomb from *Külliye* of Bayezid II on the south bank (Aydan Balamir).

Figure 5c. Eastern bridge raised on the remains of a Roman bridge (Aydan Balamir).

Figure 5d. Western bridge (Aydan Balamir).

(Maidens' Palace) and southern *Çakallar* locations have viewing platforms for viewing the city as a whole. The town's dual structure celebrates a continuous inter-viewing between the two banks. Bird's eye views of the town cast one-sided and prying looks for those below; nothing can be veiled from sight. Another form of visual contact is far more secretive, elusive and momentary, giving a slightly uncomfortable feeling of being watched. This occurs for instance, as suddenly catching sight of a rock-tomb while idly gazing at a roof, a minaret or dome (**Figure 5a, 5b**). Students in their presentations, referred to the rock tombs as "urban eyes that look you in the eye at every occasion."

The inter-viewing of the banks provides the citizens a mode of communication with their town's past. The southern settlement, although still embracing its historic monuments, has broken bonds with its past; it is the northern side that triggers memory of a more or less sustained past. For those on the north bank, it is the sight of distant landmarks and public ceremonies that make up the repository of collective history. The south bank dwellers and strollers have a closer contact with the past, while watching the picturesque scene in its domestic silence. "Hardly any town in Anatolia is as great an inspiration for the painter than Amasya" wrote a Seton Lloyd (1997, 201). Our students shared the traveler's impressions; notes written on a student sketch read: "The north bank is like a picture painted for the viewers on the opposite side to watch and enjoy, while the south bank presents broken vistas of a bygone urbanism."

In the process of reading the town, our students observed how all this watching and inter-viewing in the town revealed a state of continuity and composure in the lives of inhabitants. Controlled as it may be by looks and stares, daily life had room for unexpected occasions and events taking place in waterfront public spaces and bridges (**Figure 5c**). The bridges did not merely facilitate the connection of the two banks, but served as viewing platforms to experience the rapidly flowing water and perceive the central town in different perspectives. They have become devices of urban promenade, where the river and its bridges act as urban glue. As

Figure 6. Map of Amasya, showing the project sites (İller Bankası).

red: METU Group, Balamir et. al.
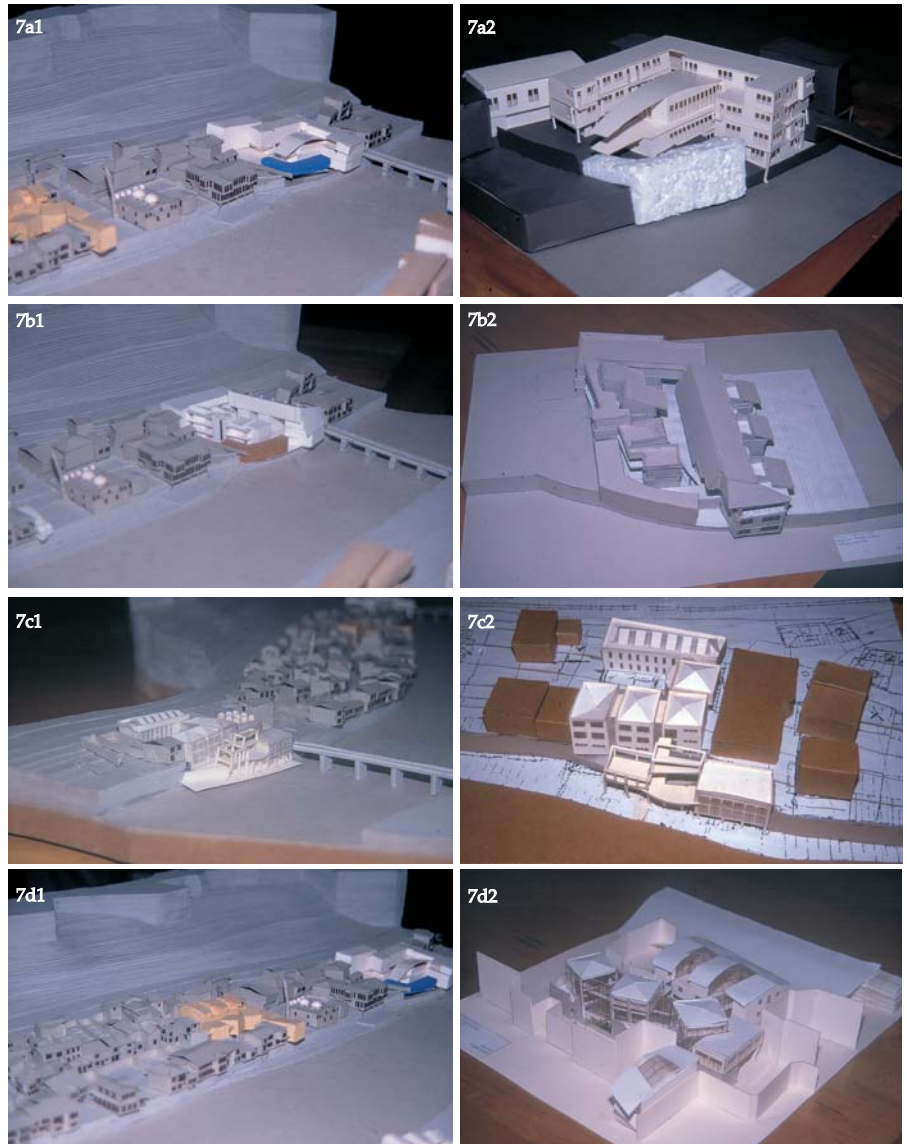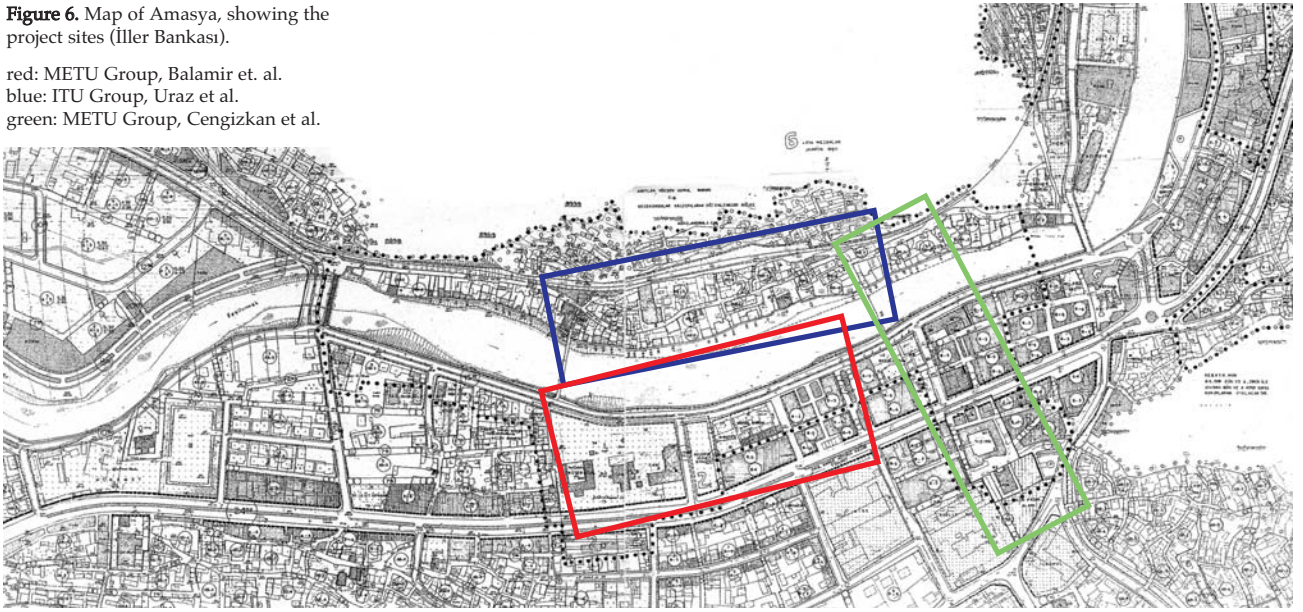blue: ITU Group, Uraz et al.
green: METU Group, Cengizkan et al.

Figure 7. Proposals for the north bank; 8-weeks project (Türkan Uraz).

ITU group (2nd year students, 1998); instructors: Türkan Uraz, Meltem Aksoy.

7a. Traveler's Inn, context and building models, by Gülay Güncü.

7b. Homes for the Elderly, context and building models, by Levent Çetin.

7c. Research Centre, context and building models, by Devrim Ülkebaş.

7d. Study Centre for Visiting Students, context and building models, by Müge Belek.

15. The first studio program in Amasya was conducted in the spring term of 1997, upon Prof. William Bechhoefer's advice to Aydan Balamir during his visit to METU. The infill projects developed for the north bank (led by instructors: Aydan Balamir, Enis Kortan, Arda Düzgüneş, Erkin Aytaç) during this first visit are not available for this paper. The studio works presented here, date from the spring term of 1998, when the METU group (instructors: Aydan Balamir, Ercüment Erman) worked on the south bank, and a joint group from ITU (instructors: Türkan Uraz, Meltem Aksoy) undertook the north bank projects. A third group from METU (instructors: Ali Cengizkan, Şebnem Yalınay) worked on a strip along the east-west direction, also not covered in this paper. During the 2004 spring term, another design studio was conducted in Amasya by a METU group (instructors: Aydan Balamir, Yıldırım Yavuz, Kadri Atabaş, Susan Habib), dealing with a housing project on the north-eastern end.

16. The aim here was to keep the Municipality Building to explore the possibility of generating income through the insertion of a commercial project like a hotel on the adjacent vacant site, that is to say, a form of hybridization in the manner of many Ottoman developments. For example the Selimiye Mosque of Sinan at Edirne, among many others, has an unobtrusive later addition of a Bazaar at its foot.

17. Among class readings on the subject, excerpts from *New Buildings in Old Settings* (Norberg-Schulz 1978) and *Architecture Old and New* (1980) helped introduce the student to the subject. The following passage includes the core argument (Kurrent, 1978, 9; emphasis added): "The *preservation* of old parts of towns and the *renovation* of towns (two concepts which seem to contradict one another) are modern fields of activity for architects. There is the third way. That of making contact, reacting, responding. That of starting reciprocal discussion. Let us beware of forgery, delusion, camouflage and visual deception. Not subordination but *integration* should be the maxim by which we act."

one student described, "the river generates and regulates urban life with its bridges; without the body of water, everything seems doomed to dissolve and leave nothing behind."

The observations of the town and the following discussions in class enabled the students to ponder about the following issues, relating to the polarities discussed during the research phase: 1) any space becomes a place when people grow habits of using the space and give meaning to it in the course of time; 2) whereas similar spaces can be obtained through the use of repeated types, the resulting places with their lived-in boundaries have the potential of attaining unique features; 3) while space can be objectively analyzed into its perceivable entities, place can be read through subjective interpretation, guesswork and curiosity; both are indispensable in the understanding of the city.

DESIGN STUDIOS WORKING FOR DIFFERENT SITES

For the studio exercises, three sites were identified: two strips alongside the banks of the river, each forming scenic importance for the other, and a third one perpendicular to the river, revealing the profile of the town and valley (**Figure 6**). (The perpendicular strip not covered in this paper.) The two strips parallel to the river were taken up in different studios at the Middle East Technical University (METU) and İstanbul Technical University (ITU), respectively (**15**). All the sites were located on the central segment of the town, spanning between two bridges. The significance of this segment is that, the west bridge meets the *külliye* of Bayezid II on the south, while the east bridge connects to the access road that climbs to the rock tombs on the north. In between, the north side holds a number of registered buildings, including an emblematic Ottoman mansion next to the historic mosque (**Figure 3d, 3e**). This part of the town has been inscribed as an urban site, for which the pending conservation plan at the time, proposed strict measures for building volumes and heights.

On the north side, two plots were identified for the term project: one at the riverfront, between the old mansion and the east bridge, the other at the back row, with possibility of extending to the riverfront parcel next to the mosque. The building programs given for the northern side varied, such as traveler's inn, home for the elderly and research center with accommodation (**Figures 7a-d**). On the south bank, an urban block next to the Municipality Building, which lies right next to the historic Bayezid complex was chosen. The riverfront parcel surrounded by the Municipality on the west, a perimeter block on the south, and an L shaped buildings on the east was considered vacant lot, to accommodate a hotel and related facilities (**Figures 8a-c**)(**16**). This group of students undertook also the redesign of a bridges as a short-term exercise (**Figures 9a-d**).

Each site was studied and documented by groups of 3-4 students equipped with cameras, measuring tapes, sketch books and plan sheets. Besides collecting visual surveys, observations were made on the social structure and daily life in the town, in an effort to identify the border and threshold features of each site. The groups were asked to draw as many consecutive sections as possible in two directions, one crossing the river's banks and the other running parallel to the river on both sides. Back in the studio, the measured versions of these sections were cut out of cardboards to obtain a series of profiles; the models constructed in serial planes helped grasping the topography of a wider context. Following this short exercise, which helped remember the solid-void relations in the form of a
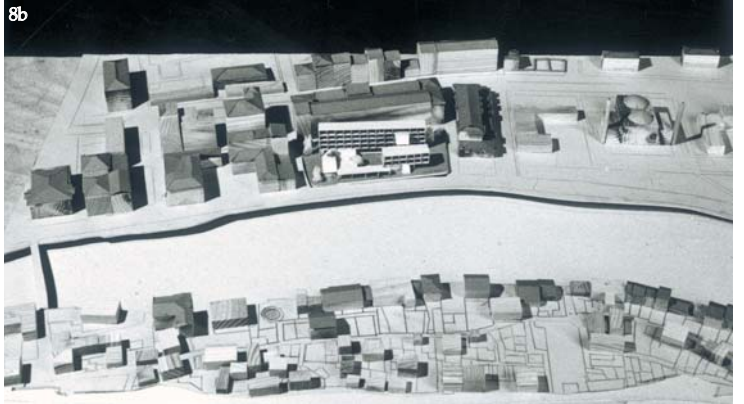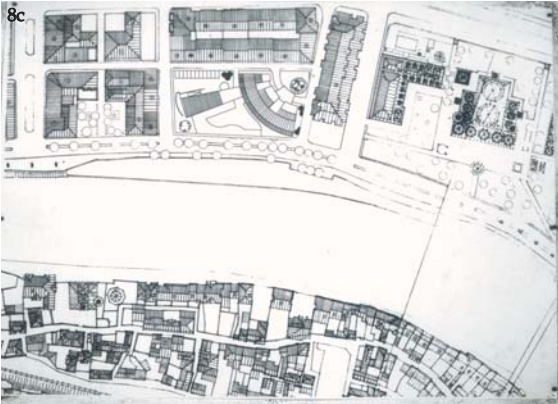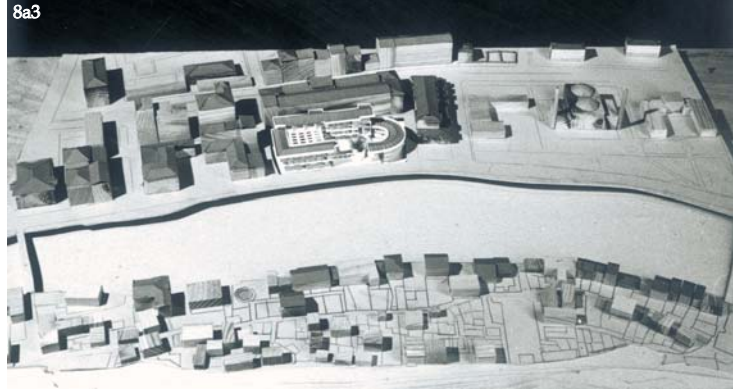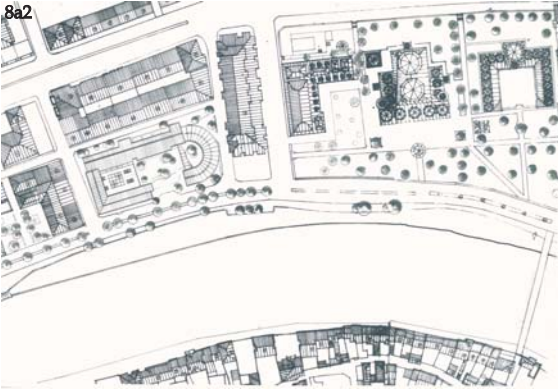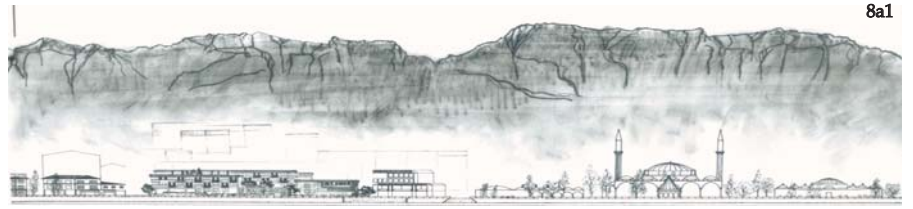
Figure 8. Proposals for the south bank; 8-weeks project (Özcan Karataş).

METU group (3rd year students, 1998); instructors: Aydan Balamir, Ercüment Erman.

8a. Hotel, site plan, elevation and context model, by Gökhan Büyükkılıç.

8b. Hotel, context model, by Seçkin Güven.

8c. Hotel, site plan, by Çağdaş Yavuz.

high relief, 1/500-scale models of both banks were prepared. The aim was to keep in touch with the urban topography through different modeling techniques, seen as tools of investigations and not as final products.

The studio stressed that no singular design strategy for intervening in a precious historic setting could be readily supplied. Working in an urban site having powerful place characteristics helped to instill in the students a general awareness regarding the questions of urban infill, renewal and regeneration. The class readings covered elementary knowledge about preservation and renovation, stressing the significance of integrating the old and new, rather than subordinating one or the other (17). During the first weeks of design work, the concern for place loomed large in the studio; the students felt secure in proceeding from the well-known and guiding characteristics of the existing environment. The instructors' guidance was along mediating lines, stressing the following points that correspond roughly to the three sets of binary opposites discussed during the research phase.

Search for an Architecture Suited to Place and Time

Observing the continuities and ruptures in the town, contextual compatibility and contemporariness in design were given equal emphasis. These measures influenced choices in visual character, form and scale of designs. Regarding character, neither fake traditions nor trendy fantasies were favored; as to the form and scale of interventions, neither a technocratic obedience to building codes nor a violation of the reasonable ones was encouraged. While the codes concerning the height of new buildings were strictly followed on both sides, the size and shape of masses depended on the premises of each case. Care is taken for the very shape of building contours and block configurations rather than sheer sizes. On the north side (**Figures 7a-d**), fragmented forms in modest scales were not seen as the sole answer for a contextual integration; relatively big sized masses were permitted so long as they do not destroy the block configurations radically. The south side (**Figures 8a-c**) already possessed large scales of public buildings with clear shapes, providing strong references. The search for a dialogue with the listed buildings nearby was a major issue on both sides, assigning the creation of temporal depth by the presentness of the new.

Search for Specialized Urban Typologies

The tension between collective and individual values, between objective and subjective grounds of design, between conformity and individuation is managed by freely adapting familiar types to suit special manners. The appropriation of traditional patterns through creative transformation varied in designs, ranging from small interventions guided by typology to proposals based on idealized urban space. Place-bound typologies such as courtyard or perimeter building, corner building, waterfront and bridge-end building, underpass or passage building were helpful in development of the design concepts. In order to avoid stereotype solutions based on schematic functionalism, and to become adapted to the particulars of each parcel, the building contours and edge conditions were thoroughly considered. This allowed for the development of form from outside in, especially in the dense northern side where boundary conditions were dictating. On the southern side, working from outside in or from inside out was equally valid.

Search for the Integrity of Form and Meaning

The distinction between 'space analysis' and 'place reading' was essentially an issue of the research phase; nevertheless, it continued well into the design phase with its corresponding aspects of form and meaning. Whether designing from outside in or from inside out, the pursuit was to understand how the resulting form would give identity and meaning to the space indoors and outdoors. Posing the classical questions as what the place wants for itself, what would a space like to be, what the building can acquire from place, and what it can give to it in return was helpful in this process. The integrity of form and meaning in architecture was explored also regarding the expression of different programs tackled in the studio. Resistance to current practices where the architect's role is reduced to styling was a shared position, as much as the resistance to insensitive orthodoxy of technocratic modernism. What is disparagingly called the plundering of the past in the name of respect to tradition and historical identity was equally avoided. Instead of attaining
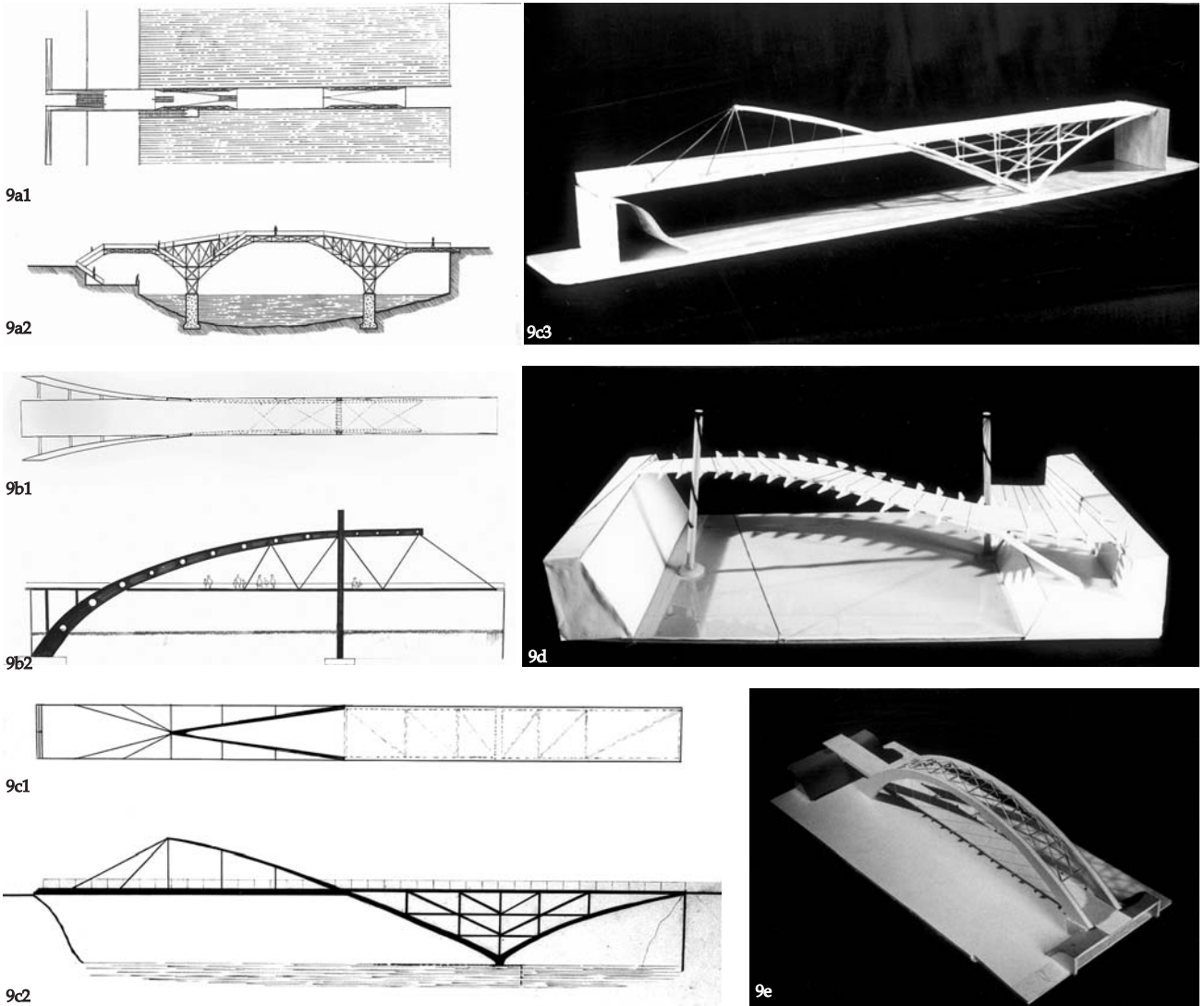
Figure 9. Proposals for a footbridge; 3-weeks project (Özcan Karataş).

METU group (3rd year students, 1998); instructors: Aydan Balamir, Ercüment Erman.

9a. Bridge design; plan and elevation by Burkay Pasin.

9b. Bridge design; plan and elevation by Gökhan Büyükkılıç.

9c. Bridge design; plan, elevation and model by Melike Özbek.

9d. Bridge design; model by Meltem Mimarsinanoğlu.

9e. Bridge design; model by Seçkin Güven.

meaning by spurious imagery or by historical reference, the studio looked into the possibilities of structural and tectonic form.

PROPOSALS FOR THE NORTHERN SIDE

Although the dominant fabric of the northern side displays a cellular composition of solids and voids, to be carried away with the charm of small pieces seemed restricting. Instead of simply repeating this fabric, or struggling to emulate it in appearance, building contours and edge conditions were explored. The bridge-end parcels (**Figure 7a, 7b, 7c**), which stood also as block corners, were aware of their greeting location on the riverside. Among other concerns of the parcel was putting into use the remains of the wide castle wall at the edge of the river and maintaining the continuity of the riverside façade (**Figure 7a, 7b**). On the other hand, the parcels away from the water (**Figure 7d**) were deprived of a riverfront, as well as a unifying wall that would help integration with the fabric. Here the students avoided big volumes; instead the fragmented nature of the neighboring blocks was maintained. Since this parcel was a small urban block surrounded by roads, care was taken for the definition of the

block boundaries and alignment with the neighboring blocks. In all cases, the desire for visual access to the river made the buildings visible, each making its own mark on the urban silhouette. This had significance in sustaining the habits of inter-viewing between the two banks.

Four of the proposals by ITU students are included here. The design for a Traveler's Inn (**Figure 7a**) presents an informal, relaxed grouping of volumes, making a semi-private open space on the approach from the rear side. The rather big size infill is in concert with the massive castle wall right next to the river, where the top of the historic wall also serves as a riverside promenade.

Homes for the Elderly project (**Figure 7b**), displays a combination of small and big sizes. It has an unforced disposition of accommodation units to create a linear outdoor space approachable from many directions, thereby encouraging the elderly to be the participants in the activities of neighborhood.

In the design of Research Centre (**Figure 7c**), highly differentiated volumes for different activities work with the heterogeneous nature of the existing urban fabric. Placing of a linear mass along the street side increases the privacy of the court. The recurrent pattern of riverfront houses projecting over the historic wall, either with buttressed cantilevers or on slender columns, is re-produced in modern vocabulary; the glazing along this riverfront façade presents a spectacular view of the south bank.

The design for Study Centre for Visiting Students (**Figure 7d**) is noticeable with its protrusion towards the water from an inner parcel, where the infill is strongly bound to its context with under-pass buildings over the roads. On the whole, rather than mimicking the existing urban fabric, the design obtains a fresh urban configuration of strong character, using a familiar array of building volumes.

PROPOSALS FOR THE SOUTHERN SIDE

On the southern side, awareness of the larger scales of public buildings and urban spaces was decisive. The buildings that lined the urban promenade along of the river in this section were mostly characterized with their U or L shapes, all opening up to the spacious promenade. Design proposals concentrated on how the new building would behave in this context and present itself to the northern bank. The METU students working on the southern bank were given a short-term structure exercise before starting the Hotel project. The existing footbridge near the historic Bayezid complex was assigned, asking for a complete renewal in steel. The design proposals varied from innovative engineering solutions to relatively more conventional ones (**Figures 9a-e**). When the students passed to their final projects, they were already preoccupied with the question of compatibility, given the dominant size and volumes of the Bayezid complex. The Municipality building, lying between the hotel site and the complex, provided the measures for building height and roofline.

Three of the Hotel proposals are included here. The first one (**Figure 8a**) appropriates the classical courtyard typology as a perimeter block, situating the public spaces on the river façade. The rounded block holding the western edge of the parcel allows a broadened view towards the *külliye* at the front corner, while distancing itself from the neighboring blocks at the rear corner.

The second one (**Figure 8b**), collecting all functions in a single curved form, benefits from its convex and concave sides; while the building is asserting itself as an object on the convex side exposed to the front plaza, the concave side offers an outdoor space to enhance the less fortunate parcel conditions at the back. A wedge-shaped sunken amphitheatre, despite its awkward planning and measures, serves well in dividing the ample front plaza into two parts, as well as connecting them both to the corner plaza through an underpass.

The third proposal (**Figure 8c**) presents two modernist slab blocks, one raised on pilotis and aligned to the riverside promenade, the other stretching the whole width of the parcel at an angle to the perimeter block at the back. Denying its context most among the three, and featuring a period building (refusing the use of traditional roofs, for instance), the architectural object here seems an isolated event rather than a place- and time-bound intervention. However, the angular placement of the block contributes much to the rear side, while the additions scaled to the pedestrians in the front provide a measured barrier between the hotel court and the urban promenade.

CONCLUSION

The relevance of this studio experiment is twofold, one relating to the formation of self in students and the other referring to the building up of a collective studio culture. Team works during and after study trips gave way to shared experiences and nurtured respect for each other's opinions and work. Joint readings of the town led to a competitive collaboration, helping them to develop group-working habits besides giving opportunity for self-expression. The building up of group identities as well as of self-confidences is already an integral aspect of studio teaching based on interactive critiques. In this experiment, getting exposed to competing views and conceptual dualities from the outset helped further in leading to clarification of positions and providing a tool for reflective practice, which ought to be useful beyond the studio.

On the part of the instructors, the joint program carried out in two architecture schools of Ankara and Istanbul was beneficial in terms of institutional communication, enabling exchange of ideas and teaching methods. An immediate feedback from the experience of the two studios would include the following observation: while the northern group benefited from the discussion of two different sites and several building programs throughout the term, the southern group benefited from working on two consecutive projects, warming-up with a short exercise and carrying the experience into the longer one. The students working on the northern side, where the parcels and programs varied, were more fortunate in their search for diversity, notwithstanding their strong inclination for place-bound solutions. On the southern side, where the presence of the *külliye* was rather intimidating, the students shied away from daring solutions, holding on to relatively reserved vocabularies, but with more emphasis on space notions. In both studios, introduction of new urban spaces in joining with the context made the new proposals belong to their place.

The position taken by each student project in relation to place and space varied, but without presenting much extremity. This was to some extent an intended moderation; the instructors were curious in testing the impact of initial discussions and in observing the change of attitude in a group of

students with whom other projects were carried out before the Amasya project. (Some of the students were more liberal and diversified in their previous design work.) The opposing approaches concerning place and space concepts -represented in this paper by Moneo's and Libeskind's positions- stimulated the students. However, despite the equal emphasis laid by the instructors in presenting the subject, concern for urban legibility and formal restraint in the former position found more adherents in the studio; the appeal for exploding object form as starting point in the latter was taken with caution. Working in a small town of strong character must have had a role in this partiality. The town's easy-to-grasp scale made it easier for students to move constantly between the urban whole and its parts, and to keep in mind that they were not working on an isolated site, but on an integral piece of a town. Once the town is experienced and enjoyed, the view that the notion of place is somehow conservative and nostalgic, and that of space is more radical and dynamic seemed rather categoric, leading to doubts about the feeling that the characteristic placelessness of our age is somehow a virtue.

A final word would go to the benefits of study trips in developing a feeling for the place, as a total sensuous experience. The benefits of picking up the scents, hearing the town and listening to its sounds, touching its boundaries, and savoring local tastes increased the students' sense of responsibility and care for the place in which they are intervening. Observing how people frequented some places with greater pleasure while some other places remained deserted; where the town's stray cats and dogs are populated comfortably; why the urban development over the past decades has destroyed the town's orchards, riparian features and building heritage alike; but how the town has still retained its social serenity, the students confirmed that the designer's scope of responsibility embraced all aspects of the environment. They realized that Amasya, once the City of Princes, has undergone irretrievable rupture and loss, and yet it has some preserved qualities and new assets emerging. Instead of boasting or lamenting on its princely past, the students chose to sympathize with the proactive idea that the town is in need of programs for the reclamation of the urban condition *today*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AGREST, D. (2000) Design Versus Non-Design, *Architecture Theory since 1968,* ed. K. M. Hays, MIT Press, Massachusetts; 200-213.

ANTONIADES, A. C. (1986) *Architecture and Allied Design,* Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque, Iowa.

ASADA, A., ISOZAKI, A. (1992) Anywhere—Problems of Space, *Anywhere,* ed. C. C. Davidson, Rizzoli, New York; 16-17.

BACON, E. N. (1975) *Design of the Cities,* Thames & Hudson, London.

BECHHOEFER, W., YALÇIN, A. K. (1991) Amasya, Turkey: Lessons in Urbanity, *Mimar* (40) 24-29.

BECHHOEFER, W. (2001) Amasya, The Future of Tradition, *Traditional Environments in a New Millennium: Defining Principles and Professional Practice*, 2nd International Symposium of IAPS-CSBE (20-23 June 2001), eds. H. Turgut, P. Kellett, YEM Publications; 51-55.

CARLHIAN, J. P. (1980) Guides, Guideposts and Guidelines, *Architecture Old and New,* National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington D. C.; 49-68.

CENGİZKAN, A., SOĞANCI, N. M. (1998) Bir Kent Mekanına Diyalektik Bakışlar, *Arredamento Mimarlık* (108) 77-85.

CULLEN, G. (1961) *The Concise Townscape,* Architectural Press, London.

ERMAN, E. (1998) Bir Kentin Tasarım Kültürüne Katkısı, *Arredamento Mimarlık* (108) 72-76.

EVANS, R. (2000) In Front of Lines That Leave Nothing Behind, *Architecture Theory since 1968,* ed. K. M. Hays, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 480-489 (first in *AA Files* 6, May 1984).

FRAMPTON, K. (1983) Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points For an Architecture of Resistance, *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. H. Foster, The Bay Press, Post Townsend; 16-29.

GABRIEL, A. (1934) *Monuments Turc D'Anatolie*, v: 2, Boccard, Paris.

JOHNSON, P. A. (1994) *The Theory of Architecture*: *Concepts, Themes and Practices*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York; 191-230.

KARAKUL, Ö. (2002) New Buildings in Old Settings: Riverfront Buildings in Amasya, unpublished Master Thesis (Supervisor: Fuat Gökçe), Department of Architecture, METU, Ankara.

KULOĞLU, N. et al. (2001) Context in Design Education: Amasya as a Case Study, *Traditional Environments in a New Millennium: Defining Principles and Professional Practice*, 2nd international symposium of IAPS-CSBE (20-23 June 2001), eds. H. Turgut, P. Kellett, YEM Publications; 94-103.

KURRENT, (1978) New Buildings in Old Settings, *New Buildings in Old Settings*, State Museum for Applied Arts, Munich, 11-13. London: Architectural Association, 1983.

LIBESKIND, D. (2000) Chamber Works, *Architecture Theory since 1968,* ed. K. M. Hays, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 476-479 (from *Chamber Works: Architectural Meditation on Themes from Heraclitus*, Architectural Association, London, 1983).

LLOYD, S. (1997) *Türkiye'nin Tarihi: Bir Gezginin Gözüyle Anadolu Uygarlıkları*, trans. E. Varınlıoğlu, TÜBİTAK Popüler Bilim Kitapları, Ankara.

LYNCH, K. (1960) *The Image of the City*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

McLEOD, M. (2000) Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: From Postmodernism to Deconstructivism, in *Architecture Theory since 1968*, ed. K. M. Hays, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 678-703 (first in *Assemblage* 8, February 1989).

MEISS, P. von (1990) *Elements of Architecture: From Form to Place*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

ONEO, R. (1992) The Murmur of the Site, *Anywhere*, ed. C. C. Davidson, Rizzoli International, New York; 46-53.

NORBERG-SCHULZ, C. (1978) Buildings in Old Setting as a Problem of Place, *New Buildings in Old Settings*, State Museum for Applied Arts, Munich; 11-13.

NORBERG-SCHULZ, C. (1979), *Genius Loci, Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*, Rizzoli, New York.

PIEPER, A. (1999) *Etiğe Giriş,* trans. V. Ataman, G. Sezer, Ayrıntı Yayınları, İstanbul (first print in German, 1994).

RAMAN, P. G. (1994) On Reading City Forms, *Spazio e Societá (*67) 118-127.

SENNET, R. (1991) *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design of the Social Life of the Cities,* Faber, London.

SMITHSON, A., ed. (1968) *Team 10 Primer*, Studio Vista, London.

SOJA, E., W. (2000) *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*, Blackwell, Oxford.

SÖZEN, M. (1996) Bilim ve Kültür Kenti Amasya Kimliğini Korumak Zorundadır, *Arkitekt* (44) 16-21.

TRANCIK, R. (1986) *Finding Lost Space: Theories of Urban Design*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

URAZ, U. T., YILDIZ, D. (2004) Gözün Vicdanı: Tasarımda Etik ve/veya Estetik Olmak, *EtikEstetik,* eds. A. Şentürer, Ş. Ural, F. U. Sönmez, Yapı Yayın, İstanbul; 202-215.

VIDLER, A. (2000), *The Third Typology, Architecture Theory since 1968,* ed**.** K. M. Hays, MIT Press, Massachusetts, 284-295 (first in *Oppositions 7*, Winter 1977; expanded in Rational Architecture: Reconstruction of the European City, 1978).

TASARIM EĞİTİMİNDE YER VE MEKÂN TEMALARI: AMASYA'DA BİR ORTAK STÜDYO DENEYİMİ

Amasya'da 1997-2004 yılları arasında farklı programlarla tekrarlanan üç dönem projesi, tasarım eğitiminde gerek ortak stüdyo kültürünün gerekse öğrencide tasarımcı kişiliğinin oluşturulması yönünde birikim sağlamıştır. Yazıda, ODTÜ ve İTÜ Mimarlık Bölümleri'nden stüdyo gruplarının katıldığı bir ortak gezi ve dönem projesine odaklanılıyor. Projenin amacı, yer ve mekân üzerine farklı görüşler eksen alınarak, tarihî çevrede yeni yapılaşma konusunda öğrencilere bilinç ve deneyim kazandırmaktı. Stüdyonun kuramsal altyapısını oluştururken, birisi yerin önemini savunan, diğeri ise yere atfedilen önceliği sorgulayan, karşıt iki görüşten yola çıkıldı. Güncel mimarlık tartışmaları içinde, yere yönelik duyarlılığı sürdüren yerleşik tutumlara karşılık, yerin toplum ve bireyler için taşıdığı anlamın nostalji ve tutuculukla yüklü olduğunu, soyut mekân duşüncesinin ise öncü açılımlara daha elverişli ve özgürleştirici olduğunu savunan tutumlar incelendi. Stüdyo yürütücüleri, mimarlık düşüncesinde eşdeğer öneme sahip buldukları, (bu yazı için Rafael Moneo ve Daniel Libeskind ile örneklenen) bu iki tutum karşısında taraf olmadan, öğrencinin kendi konumunu belirleyebilmesine yardımcı olacak eleştirel

bir bakış açısı kazanmasını hedeflediler. Kente yönelik gözlemler ve stüdyo tartışmaları, üç ana tema altında yürütüldü: (1) kentteki süreklilik ve kopuşlar, (2) tasarım özgürlüğü ve sınırlanma, (3) mekânın biçimsel analizi ve yerin anlamının okunması. Her temanın ilişkilendiği kavramsal karşıtlıkları konu edinerek gelişen irdeleme ve tartışmalar, kentin soyut mekânsal yapısının kavranmasıyla birlikte, kentin yer özelliklerinin anlamlandırılmasına da yardımcı oldu.

Proje alanı, Amasya'da nehrin kuzey ve güney kıyılarında, iki köprü arasındaki dilim olarak belirlendi. Gruplardan biri kuzeyde tarihî İçerişehir'in yoğun dokusu içindeki iki boşluğa farklı programlarla 'dolgu yapı' olanaklarını çalışırken, diğer grup güneyde Bayezid Külliyesi'nin bulunduğu ön sırada bir kent adasını konaklama ağırlıklı bir programla yeniden yapılandırmayı üstlendi. Her iki grubun da tasarımlarını yönlendiren ana ilkeler, gözlem ve araştırmalar sırasında yoğunlaşılan üç temayla ilişkili olarak, şöyle özetlenebilir: (1) yere ve zamana uygun mimarlık arayışı, (2) özelleşmiş kent tipolojileri arayışı, (3) anlam ve biçim bütünlüğünün aranışı. Kuzey yakasında, özgün konut dokusu içindeki farklı parsellerde yürütülen projelerde, öğrencilerin yere bağımlı çözümler geliştirmeye daha yatkın olmalarına karşılık, kamusal ölçek ve kullanımın baskın olduğu güney yakasında çalışan öğrencilerin kıyı promenadıyla ilişkili mekânsal çözümlerden yola çıkma eğilimleri gözlendi. Öte yandan, kuzey yakasındaki projeler tasarım çeşitliliği bakımından göreli olarak daha özgür olabilirken, güney yakasında tarihî külliyenin varlığı cesur biçimlenmeleri kısıtlayan bir etken oldu. Yere ya da mekâna öncelik tanıyan pozisyonların stüdyolarda eşit derecede önemsenmesine rağmen, projelerin aşırı uçlarda konumlanmayıp karşıtlıkları uzlaştırıcı yollar izleyişi belirgindir. Bu yazıda Moneo ile Libeskind üzerinden örneklenen iki uç pozisyondan ilkinin (yerle güçlü diyalogu öne çıkaran okunaklı kentsel tipolojiler eğilimi) daha kolay benimsenişine karşılık, ikincisinin (yere bağımlı olmayan ikonik biçimlerle mekânsal odak yaratma eğilimi) ihtiyatla karşılanmış olmasını, kentsel bağlamın belirleyiciliğine bağlamak olasıdır. Amasya gibi mekânsal yapısı ve yer özellikleri güçlü bir tarihî kentte çalışmanın yararı, öğrencilerde koruma ve yeni yapılaşma konularında sorumluluk duygusu ve bunun üzerine temellenen bir etik tavrın gelişmesi yönünde olmuştur.