

The Three Types Of Urban Box In Architectural Design Studio

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Abstract

This paper includes architectural design studio samples, in which the designer, who is also the user of the city, defines the city with a critical eye, identifies its problems and seeks answers to these problems with their own solutions for urban texture. The main purpose of the design studio, which moves away from the idea of the box in the representation of the architectural design process, is to rethink urban awareness and see the different types of the box in the urban space.

In the design studio carried out with the third-year students (VI. semester) of Karadeniz Technical University (KTU) Department of Architecture in the 2017 and 2019 Spring semesters, the main problem focus was determined as Trabzon, which was chosen as the study area, and the urban parts in Trabzon and the urban box theme. Despite the focused topic given in the studio course, the resulting outputs represent their original structure with different intentions arising from the designer's own acquisitions, preferences and character. There are also different scales and functions with the approaches of "Diffusion", "Adaptation" and "Just the Box or The Holistic Box". This study, which brings up the rethinking of the urban form of the local area/community in the context of the box idea, has shown that the ideas produced about the city and its parts are routes that contain functional, social and cultural codes.

Key Words: Urban Box, Architecture, Urban Place, Architectural Design Studio, Trabzon.

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Mimari Tasarım Stüdyosunda Kentsel Kutunun Üç Türü

Özet

Bu çalışma, kentin aynı zamanda kullanıcısı da olan tasarımcının, kenti eleştirel bir gözle tanımladığı, sorunlarını tespit ettiği ve bu sorunlara kentsel dokuya ilişkin kendi ürettiği çözüm önerileri ile cevap aradığı mimari tasarım stüdyosu örneklerini kapsamaktadır. Mimari tasarım sürecinin temsilinde kutu fikrinden hareket eden tasarım stüdyosunun temel amacı, kentsel farkındalıklar üzerine yeniden düşünmek ve kutunun kentsel mekânda farklı hallerini görmektir. Bu bağlamda Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi (KTÜ) Mimarlık Bölümü 2017 ve 2019 Bahar yarıyılında üçüncü sınıf öğrencileri (VI. yarıyıl) ile uygulanan stüdyo çalışmasında, çalışma alanı olarak seçilen Trabzon ve Trabzon içinde yer alan kent parçaları ile kentsel kutu teması ana sorun odağı olarak belirlenmiştir. Kentsel kutu bir tasarım problemi olarak kentin mevcut problemlerine ve/veya olası kurgularına yanıt vermeyi hedeflerken, kentin kullanıcılar tarafından yerler ve özneler ile kurduğu ilişkilerin değişmesine bağlı olarak yerin yeniden üretimini temsil etmektedir. Stüdyo dersinde verilen sınırlı temaya karşın, sonuç ürünler, tasarımcının kendi edinimlerinden, tercihlerinden ve karakterinden doğan farklı niyetlerle kendi özgün yapısını “Yayıma”, “Uyarılma-Uyma”, “Salt Kutu veya Kutuların Bütünlüğü” yaklaşım biçimleriyle farklı ölçeklerde ve işlevlerde temsil etmektedir. Kutu biçimsel sürekliliğini korurken, değişen kurgu, çevre, ilişkiler, organizasyon vb. aracılığıyla farklı mimari biçimlere dönüşmüştür. Yerelin kentsel formunun kutu fikri bağlamında yeniden düşünülmesini gündeme getiren bu çalışma; kente ve kent parçalarına dair üretilen fikirlerin işlevsel, toplumsal ve kültürel kodlar barındıran güzergâhlar olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Kentsel Kutu, Mimarlık, Kentsel Yer, Mimari Tasarım Stüdyosu, Trabzon.

1. Introduction

Design is a field that longs for the new and enables innovative productions. Yet, the design process is the quest of producing countless forms of representation, as defined by the field of abstraction and brought along by abstract thinking, through use of parameters that address the physical conditions and the issues in the built environment (Durmus Ozturk, 2020). This quest is brought to life in design studios, where the foundations of architectural education are laid (Durmus Öztürk and Kuloğlu, 2017).

Design is of core importance in every discipline that deals with the task of designing as a process, where intuitive or rational ideas are configured both absolutely and ambiguously (Lawson, 2006). The core purpose of design education is to allow the realisation of different design experiences and to ensure a strong communication–motivation environment (Kahvecioğlu, 2007). As a major stage for experience, urban places constitute an array of valuable spaces that bring together different research fields.

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Based on the idea of box in the representation of the architectural design process, the purpose of this study is to rethink the design studio through states of urban awareness and to view the various states of the box in the urban space.

The idea of box realises the act of creating a route for users, habitants and tourists by means of subthemes. The subject of the studio study carried out with 2 studio lecturers and 18 students (third-year, VI. semester) of Karadeniz Technical University (KTU), Department of Architecture in 2017 and 2019 spring semesters, is to draw attention to three types of urban box.

In this paper, the box represents the smallest unit in the organisation of the parts of a whole; the urban box represents the end product of the mapping performance that responds to the current problems and/or possible fictions of the city. In perceiving the city based on performance, the designer produces a design concept that deals with the design of the selected city part with a new and inclusive understanding and critical stance.

The field for the design studio is Trabzon, which is a province hosting a multitude of different layers and a selection of urban fragments. The main purpose of the design studio is to discuss the interventions of the box idea at urban and building scale level. The design studio has three functional phases, namely concept production, urban route creation and determination of the approach to the box. In the first phase, that is, the concept production, conceptualisation of the historical, cultural and architectural data of the city is realised. In the second phase, that is, the urban route creation, routes serving various user roles (habitants, tourists, etc.) are determined in the selected area of Trabzon province. For the third phase, the idea of the box, the approaches of the designers to the box were discussed within the framework of the types of “Diffusion”, “Adaptation”, “Just the Box or The Holistic Box”.

2. Design Studio Area: Trabzon

Trabzon province has drawn the attention of many civilisations throughout the history with its geographical and geopolitical location, and has been one of the settlements where the traces left behind by each civilisation, as well as, the physical change occurring from one to another could be observed profoundly. While the walled city, which provided a secure area during the era when the city was first established, is the determinant of the physical texture of the city; the commercial hub associated with the port and highways in the east became the most basic element that established the boundaries of the city. Starting from Aşağıhisar city walls and extending towards the eastern suburbs, this axis has become a center which keeps together the elements that constitute the entire structure of the province (Figure 1). Demonstrating two spatial organisation types, the first point that this axis has in the east is the district known as Meydan today. Having preserved its quality of being a center of commerce throughout the history; this area accommodated stores, warehouses and shops. The second section extending from Meydan towards the city walls comprises bazaars and market halls of different sizes established in different districts, mainly associated with ports and piers, featuring small-sized stores, aratas, hans and bedesten buildings as well as the craftsmen constituting the production leg of the provincial economy (Üstün Demirkaya, 2017). It can be said that Çarşı district, which was

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established right beside Aşağıhisar city walls on the east of Moloz Port, and bedesten and hans built during the Ottoman period constituted the hub of the traditional organisation (Figure 1).

The main arteries of the commercial center which exhibits these two different spatial organisational attributes that are located outside “Meydan”, also known as “Atatürk Square” are Kunduracılar Street, Maraş Street and Uzun Sokak extending in parallel to each other in the east-west direction, and Semerciler Street starting from the point where Kunduracılar Street ends and extending towards Çarşı district. The alleys interconnecting these three streets which have functional distinctions within themselves and connections detaching from these main routes and leading to dead ends are enriching the area (Figure 1).

Today, Uzun Sokak is a street that starts from the end of “Meydan” district and extends further by outlining the boundaries of Kemer kaya-Gazipaşa and Çarşı-Cumhuriyet quarter. Only a few buildings from the unique texture of the street could have survived till now. Being a pedestrian-only area and featuring historical buildings, newly constructed buildings and covered commercial complexes; the street accommodates commercial functions that address the daily needs of the city.

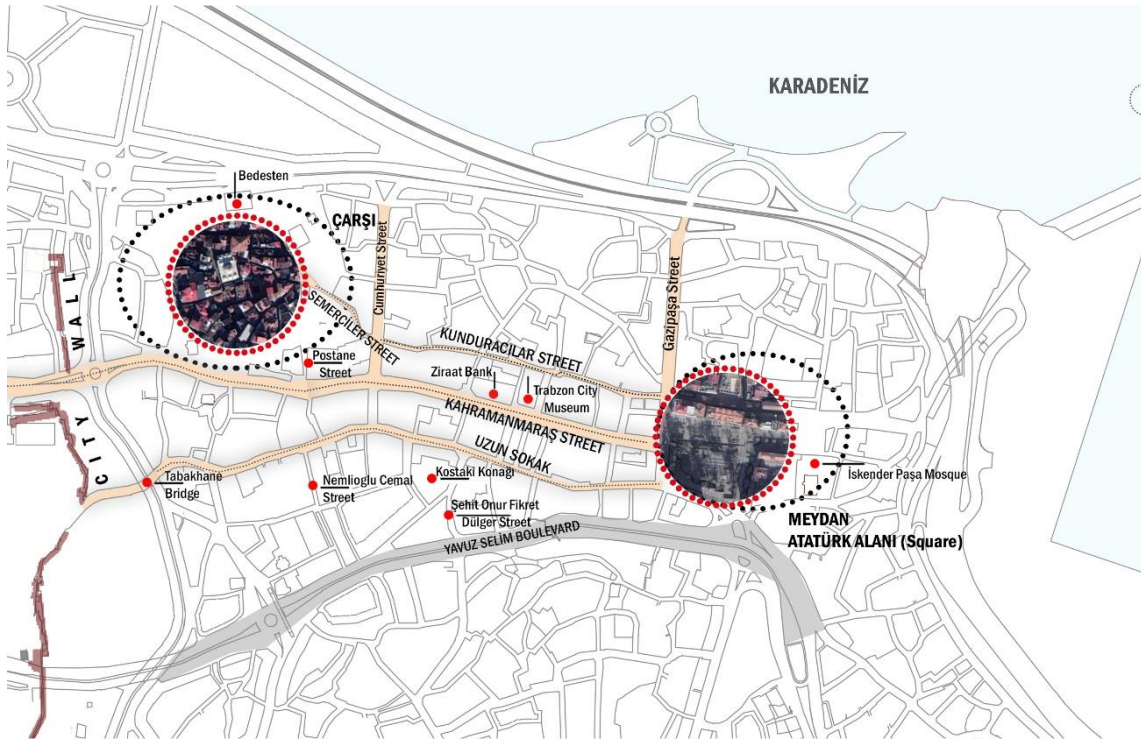


Figure 1: Design Studio Area (prepared by authors)

Maraş Street is located between Kunduracılar Street and Uzun Sokak. Extending from Meydan Park to Ayasofya quarter in the west, the street stands out as one of the main streets of the city, as it is wide and open to traffic, albeit in single direction. The majority of the buildings in this area were demolished due to reconstruction works in the province and they were replaced mainly by banks and commercial buildings on the axis connected to Meydan. Ziraat Bank building which was built in the second half of the 20th century, and buildings serving as

Trabzon City Museum today are two buildings drawing attention with their historical significance and architectural features.

Being the northernmost one of the three streets that run parallel to each other; Kunduracılar Street is distinguished from the other streets with the historical buildings it accommodates as a street where the stores of Muslim and non-Muslim merchants were located in the past. The boundaries of Kunduracılar Street are outlined by Gazipaşa Street in the east and Cumhuriyet Street in the west, which are the vertical axes that connect the region to the sea extending to the west from Meydan and reaching to Semerciler, the historical bazaar of the city in the west. Mostly dating back to the 19th century, the buildings in form of ground floor store+1 storey or ground floor store +2 storeys which feature details such as decorations, moldings and cornices on the façades are complementing the commercial street texture.

Semerciler Street starts from the point where Kunduracılar Street intersects with Cumhuriyet Street and outlines the trade route extending towards Çarşı district in the west. Extending as a single branch until reaching Alacahan, the street disintegrates into a number of side streets after this point. These streets usually lead to the commercial area where craftsmen of a certain craft gather, and they are sometimes named after that craft (Terziler Street) and sometimes addressed with the name of the building they comprise (Bedesten Street) (Figure 1). Comprising Moloç in the north, the first port of the city, this large commercial area maintains its original function; and its fabric embodies shops, hans, stores, as well as different buildings specific to the need such as mosques and baths that served the craftsmen who had used to work there or the merchants who used to stop by in the past.

3. Urban Box

Urban places constitute an array of valuable spaces that bring together different research areas. Users of urban places create a new story for each moment they experience. Stories based on new experiences are restaged with historical and architectural traces recalled by stories from the past. Local culture attaches importance to collaboration while offering an alternative to the singular body that the global arrangements feature in the cities. It comprises all entities and layers that contribute to the character of urban areas.

Focusing on revealing the local dynamics pertaining the city and the urban dynamics pertaining to the local level, the urban box theme provides a symbiotic framework for urban places. Aiming to respond to the problems at global scale from the local level, the urban box theme realises the idea of creating a hub for users, habitants and tourists through subthemes. Within this context, models based on the local culture aim to place the neighbourhoods, streets, marketplaces, arts/culture venues and small businesses that are characterised as local culture in the centre as a fulcrum point (Carr and Servon, 2008).

The traces of the box idea in architecture can be traced depending on the space. Ching (1996), drawing attention to the questionability of spatial relations in terms of perception and size, interprets spaces defined as inside or outside as a box. The idea of a box in architectural design refers to two types, black box and glass box, according to the creative process followed by the designers (Jones, 1980).

The urban box, which is the design concept in question in this study, represents the reproduction of the place depending on the changes in the relations that people establish with places and subjects.

According to Eisenman (2018), architecture is defined as linking intent, function, structure and techniques to form. Similarly, Gür (2013) relates architect's intent to the concept of allotrope as the presence of the same unit in one or more forms. Within the scope of this study, the box idea and its hypothetical types (diffusion, adaptation, just the box or holistic box), put forward conceptually in the architectural design studio, are instrumentalised as a way of observing the intent of the designers.

After the students perceived the selected area within the scope of the study in the city of Trabzon based on experience, the urban box and urban box types, which were given as the studio theme, took their formal forms according to the designers' intentions. While the box represents the smallest unit in the organisation of the fragments of a whole, the urban box is a design issue that aims to provide answers to current problems and/or possible configurations of the city within the scope of the design studio. The urban box theme represents the reconstruction of the place depending on the change in the relations that people establish with places and subjects.

3.1 Diffusion of the Box

Diffusion is the act of spreading something widely in all directions; the fact of being spread in all directions (Essential English Dictionary, 1988a: 215). The urban box suggested within the scope of this study is discussed in terms of concept, function and form with regard to diffusion, distribution and permeation. Design studio samples that are dispersed over the entire area with free geometry or in a functional manner, and that define a corridor connection space or establish a corridor on their own and interconnect the different levels of disconnected spaces, were analysed with diffusion in mind.

The first sample analysed in this context was configured through the concept of "urban musical" which is based on the urban traces by adopting a diffusionist notion. Configured with deconstructive lines, the concept was designed as the intervention points to the urban route. Urban trace has existed as a part of the architectural character and formation that are identical at the scale of landscape, building and equipment. Design that keeps hold of the intervention areas has been introduced to use through streets, corridors and connection spaces. Extending from the base plane to the overhead plane and then transforming into urban equipment, the trace is configured as design interventions that are in an attempt to answer to spot and functional differences. Setting off from the city information center symbolizing the sounds of Trabzon, the urban route consists of closed, semi-open and open spaces that welcome its user. The traces starting along Uzun Sokak takes the user to the Meydan. It is possible to reach İskender Paşa Mosque by making use of the trace which transforms the ground traces followed, into canopies. Canopies of the design, which are terminated with streets and activities, reach to another action or building with new traces.

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The design concept consisting of three intervention areas as the bazaar-overpass and open library axis, the city information center, the activity area and art street axis, the restaurant and workshop axis has been studied by overlapping in a diffusionist manner with the proposed new texture which does not overlap with the existing texture in terms of form, but deforms it. While the design approach that touches the neighboring buildings is diffused with its free and fluid geometry, the displacements between the building and the canopy were brought to forefront. Street improvement or functional development area suggestions such as canopy, green space, information tower and points, seating area, ticket sales, activity area and amphitheater were emphasised at eight different points in the touch, which is in question.

Buildings, canopies, all interventions on the route determined at different spots of the city have made it possible to interconnect both disconnected spaces and the urban texture at different levels on an urban scale. Thus, the sound of the city spreads through the traces and presented to its audience, just like in a musical (Figure 2-3).

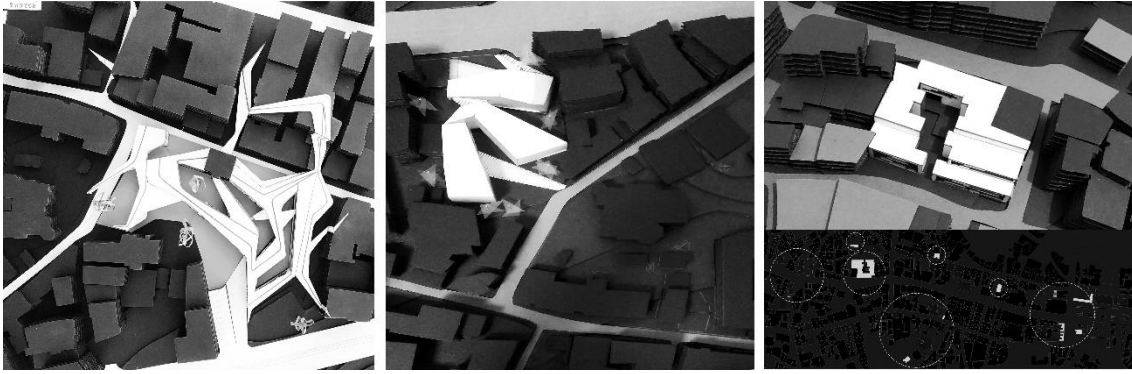


Figure 2: Design Studio Models, Diffusion of the Box (design concepts from left to right: urban musical, filigree, concealed face of the city) (authors archive)

Being inspired by the local handicraft “filigree”, the second sample preserved the vertical connections of the area and was shaped as an adaptation space between the upper level and the lower level. It responds as a vertical axis that runs parallel to the unidirectional loops that occur due to the spatial continuity of the study area, in particular between Uzun Sokak, Kahramanmaraş and Kunduracılar streets; that interconnects the disconnected spaces created by different levels on the urban scale. Based on the analogy of creating patterns by bending/folding the wire used in filigree art, the flat plate defines the functional spaces that form the box progressing by folding, breaking, extending or retracting around the edge axis, articulating to another piece. The floor, wall and top canopy are defined by the folding of this plate starting from the street elevation. Through employment of this folding configuration, it opens up to Şehit Onur Fikret Dülger Street, which extends from Yavuz Selim Boulevard, which defines the exterior periphery of the area and is one of the busiest traffic axes of the city, to Uzun Sokak. One of the arms of the plate meets Kostaki Mansion, the other arm progresses along the boundary of the plot and takes the user inside by defining the opening that acts as an entrance through the vacancies formed due to the fractured structure of the mass.

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The two connected parts, which are designed to be in relation with each other are clearly detached from the entrance mass with the program they accommodate. These two blocks, which are connected to the entrance by being supported comprises the workplaces, the multi-purpose hall and the accommodation unit which has a separate entrance. It is not only the designed mass that bends like filigree, but the streets of the city are also considered as diffusive by the study within this context and it adopts an approach that blends into the historical buildings. While the route diffuses into the urban texture in this framework by being curved uninterruptedly, it extends from Kostaki Mansion to Uzun Sokak and proceeds towards Tabakhane axis.

It is connected to Kunduracılar Street by running around inns, baths and mosques through the Çarşı region in the north, and from that point finally to Atatürk Square by drawing a ring for the historical buildings envisaged on the route, when necessary. Information points fill the self-existing spaces in the urban texture through diffusion- distribution throughout this extended urban route. Thus, the route determined at different spots of the city in the south-west direction have made it possible to interconnect both detached spaces and the urban texture (Figure 2-3).

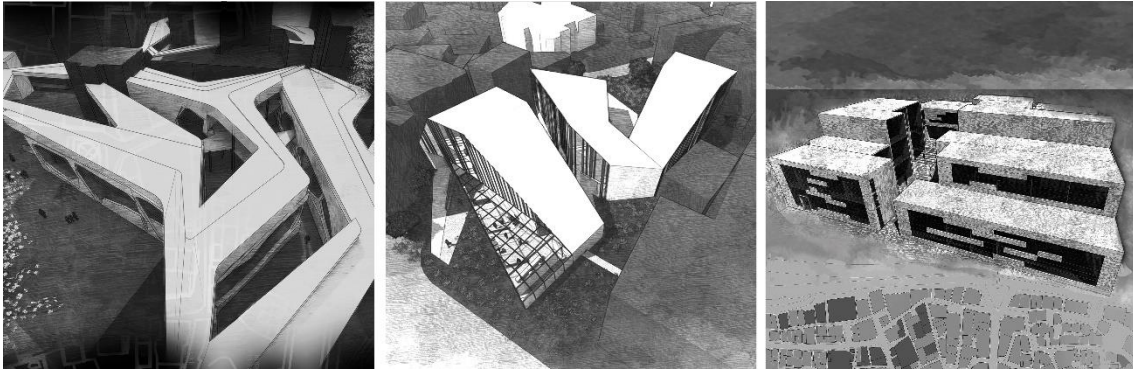


Figure 3: Design Studio 3D Representation, Diffusion of the Box (design concepts from left to right: urban musical, filigree, concealed face of the city) (authors archive)

The concept in the third sample which bases its main configuration on revealing the potentials from the city's past and ensuring the integrity that was disconnected from its history, is the "concealed face of the city". Accordingly, the design takes the existing historical values, natural beauties and recreational areas of the city as reference and adopts an approach that aims to emphasise them. In this direction, the city has been divided into regions considering its existing potentials. Diffusion of the functions was achieved by designing boxes of different scales and functions that are fed by the main box and/or that feed it in the plot where the box is situated and in the sub-regions scattered throughout the study area. The box that is located between Kahramanmaraş Street which is one of the streets of the study area open to traffic and Postane Street where the historical post office building is located claims to exist by not standing out to the forefront in the area in accordance with the concept of "concealed face". The historical inns were guiding the shaping of the mass through transfer to the design process, the traces taken from the space.

The mass defined by fourteen pieces that are arranged together in a row for defining a courtyard had turned its back to the main street and was concealed in a sense. Such created pieces were cascaded by adapting to the elevation differences in accordance with the topography of the land and they accommodated functions compatible with the program sometimes upon combining on the plan plane and sometimes individually. Spaces such as the information center entrance/foyer, exhibition, workspace, cafe and exhibition venues located at different elevations have created a living public courtyard.

Every necessary piece of the urban texture has been intervened through diffusion of functions, and the natural flow provided by these interventions has created the route itself. While the space existing between the historical buildings right to the north of the box was transformed into an amphitheater, another area among the examples of civil architecture on Nemlioğlu Cemal Street was used as an outdoor seating area/cafe. While suggestions for repurposing which strengthen the flow by ensuring emphasis to the lost values of the city at different points in the whole area from Meydan to the box were being developed; suggestions at different scales have been developed to keep the place/building that once had place in the memory of the habitants, yet not standing today, to remain vivid in their minds. Thus, the design concept was diffused throughout the entire study area through spatial interventions extending from building scale to urban scale (Figure 2-3).

3.2. Adaptation of the Box

Adaptation is the act of adapting something to make it suitable for a new purpose or situation. It is the discussion of the idea of the box suggested within the scope of this study in terms of concept and form with regard to adaptation. Design studio samples that are part of the whole or adapted to the part of the city, preserving the existing section traces and street layout, are examined under the topic of adaptation.

The first sample that is examined in this context is shaped by the concept of “cultural mosaic” preserves the side street layout of the city together with the traces of the existing plot on which it is located. Despite the rapidly changing urban textures, the design demonstrates an approach that preserves the unchanging land/plot and side street layout as an outcome of the linear arrangement originating from Trabzon’s unique topography. The box is shaped with functional modules by touching the existing buildings within the possibilities provided by the plot. The modules cascaded on top of each other were aimed to refer to all of the layers that brought the city to existence today within the dense city network. Establishing the relationship of the two important arteries of the city, such as Kahramanmaraş Street and Uzun Sokak, moreover interconnecting them, the building serves as a kind of covered bazaar. While the box is shaped with the spaces created through addition and removal of modules in a way that does not interrupt the flow for the users in this manner, on the other hand, it is embedded in the area and adapts to the urban texture. While the commercial spaces and reception areas of the information center are located on this transition, the workspaces, seminar and reading rooms, meeting spaces on the upper floors were located placed in a single module or a multitude of them.

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It picks up the user over Kahramanmaraş Street at street elevation and leaves her/him to Uzun Sokak which is the first point of the urban route that is suggested to start from Kostaki Mansion. The pedestrian route defined from here follows the traces of civil architecture examples and reaches to Nemlioğlu Cemal Street in particular. While another route is defined by the axis extending from Bedesten, which is the historical trade route of the city, to Meydan, the same axis merges with the current commercial axis and is terminated at the box. The stop, seating-resting unit located on the pedestrian route as additional units and tourist information points outside the main building have created areas that enrich public use (Figure 4-5).



Figure 4: Design Studio Models, Adaptation of the Box (design concepts from left to right: cultural mosaic, dynamism, motion) (authors archive)

The second sample, which is in contrast with the urban texture with its geometry, focuses on the “dynamism” of the city and its inhabitants, while it has a configuration that fits to the boundaries of the existing plot on the outer periphery adapting to its surroundings. The box points out the potentials of dead-ends that are part of the texture of the area and makes reference to them. The slit, which was opened as the identifier of the main mass of the building, defines a precedent of the dead-ends that exist spontaneously in the existing texture, while the city has created a semi-open and sheltered areas that are inviting for the users of the city. Thus, users are offered with spaces that possess a rich potential, which they can experience both on their own and altogether in the vacancy created. Assuming the main function of the building together with the workspaces, exhibition spaces, commercial units and reading halls, the box has created a functional interface open to common use with the connection it has established with the slit. The box creates a joint that adapts to the whole in the middle of Kahramanmaraş Street, which is the only axis open to traffic. While users are dispersed from this point to Uzun Sokak, Kahramanmaraş and Kunduracılar streets that run parallel to each other, it was ensured that pedestrian routes are established with the help of information units placed at the intersection points of the square and side streets outside of the main box. Thus, it was ensured that they reach to Nemlioğlu Cemal Street axis, where examples of civil architecture are concentrated, from the historical commercial axis extending from İskender Paşa Mosque to the Çarşı Mosque and the current commercial axis Uzun Sokak; or to Meydan-Gazipaşa Street and Ganita axis where they can reach the sea.

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Information points, partial structural canopies suggested for the stops are in integrity with the main box (Figure 4-5).

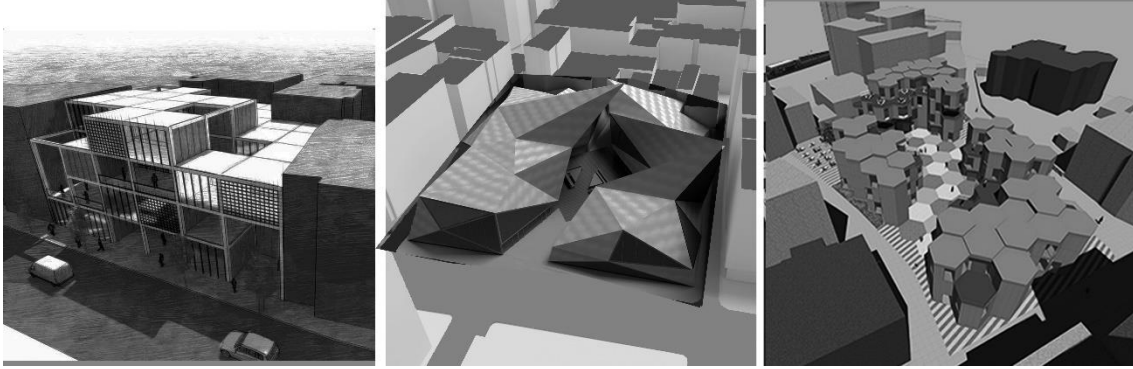


Figure 5: Design Studio 3D Representation, Adaptation of the Box (design concepts from left to right: cultural mosaic, dynamism, motion) (authors archive)

Created with an effort of integration with the existing texture, the third sample is configured on the concept of “motion”, which is defined as the action of an object with reference to a constant point (TDK, 2019). Within this context, it has emerged as a result of three phases that can be defined as the box, disintegration of the box and adaptation of the pieces. In the first phase the hexagonal module was duplicated so that it is completely embedded in the area, and the closed box created was disintegrated on the axes extending to the existing historical building (Kostaki Mansion), which is the own input of the area and triggering motion, and to the historical plane tree. Thus, a fluid mass integrity has been achieved, which consists of four pieces that touch the surrounding buildings from time to, usually move away from them with meaningful public spaces and consequently adapted to the area. While these four pieces have almost identical functional configurations, they include the reception space, workshops and exhibition units. Small public niches were created by retracting the modules at ground level due to the narrowness of the existing street sections surrounding the box from three sides and due to the presence of Kostaki Mansion in the west. Thus, new uses were made possible together with surfaces in different scales and textures rather than solving the space at a single point. The square which is located at the core of the box, eliminates the boundaries separating Uzun Sokak and Kostaki Mansion, which is an important part of the city’s past and configures a continuous experience integrated with the historical texture. Designed to be translucent, the façades of the functions on the ground level of the masses surrounding the created square were made to serve this square as well. Configured for the experience of both habitants and tourist visitors, this square is revived with workspace-exhibition activities planned to be held inside or outside the box. Users, who reach the box either from Yavuz Selim Boulevard which is the upper level or Uzun Sokak level, arrive to the first point of the route where they will experience the city. New focus areas have been determined on the urban route by taking the historical buildings and street texture of the region into consideration, for the visitor groups that are expected to disperse from this point.

The exhibitions held in small-scale boxes designed at different points on the route extending to Nemlioğlu Cemal Street, Meydan, Kunduracılar Street and the historical bazaar are interconnected by continuous pedestrian axes, including the City Museum (Figure 4-5).

3.3. Just the Box or The Holistic Box

The word box can be defined as an area with established boundaries for storing something or segregating it from others and generally enclosed (Özel, 2017). A box is a square or rectangular container which sometimes has a lid (Essential English Dictionary, 1988b: 84). Just the box, which is discussed within the scope of this study, defines solely a square or rectangle, or a single amorphous enclosed volume. The holistic box is configured as the whole of boxes obtained by duplicating the units/modules.

The first sample discussed within this context is designed over the concept of “urban substance” with a formalistic approach that attaches importance to the box itself and remains loyal to the box. Based on creating an interface having the quality of being a focus between the city and the user, the box seeks for the invisible behind the visible and emphasises that the re-creation of the city is ensured by urban substance points. Centralizing the box itself, the design offers solution suggestions by setting off from “just the box” approach. The design, which brings into question the matters of being central and being at the focus in terms of formalistic and urban uses, responds to the issue of creating a spatial interface with the dynamic analysis of the units that constitute the box at the plan and section level. Intended to be a self-contained piece of micro-city, the design consists of a semi-translucent glazing envelope and a modular wooden structure. The two information points on the configured urban route also include on its route the historical buildings that worth visiting. The first information point consists of Kostaki Mansion and the exhibition area design. The second information point consists of Bedesten, the market vicinity and the square design. Both information points are considered as the starting points of the user route and lead the habitant to the main information center. Defined depending on the design concept, the urban substance points were selected as significant historical buildings located on the urban route such as Kostaki Mansion, Bedesten, bazaars and inns, Meydan Park and İskender Paşa Mosque. Information kiosks, seating units, canopies are the micro-scale boxes based on the design of the main box. Boxes from the smallest scale to the largest scale are becoming emphasised at proposed points on the route. Shaping of the design consists of a grid that defines a Cartesian box and the units/modules which shape it. The periphery of the box which is constructed with a wooden structure with reference to local materials, attaches importance to the spatial hierarchy of closed, semi-open and open space with the negative-positive relation it has created at the plan level. The free space configuration was elevated from the ground also allowed by the topography. Therefore, the public space proposed by the box has been reinterpreted both at sectional level and at spatial level (indoor-outdoor space) (Figure 6-7).

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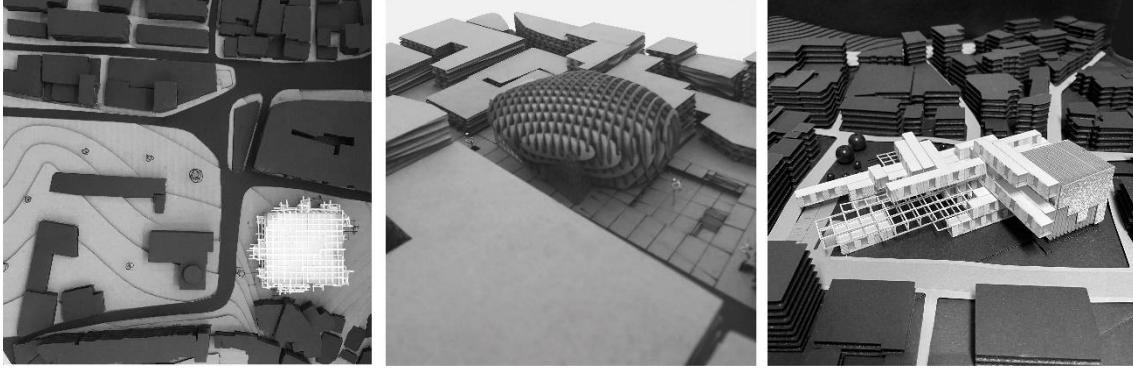


Figure 6: Design Studio Models, Just The Box or The Holistic Box (design concepts from left to right: urban substance, ataraxia, no land) (authors archive)

Unlike the first sample, in the second sample, the box handles rectangular and amorphous volume together, converging them by setting off from “just the box” approach. Configuring its starting point through the concept featured in Epicurus’ notion of “ataraxia”, which is translated as ‘the state of serenity given by knowledge’, the design converges the shaping of the city’s building stock with the connections of the side streets and neighborhoods of the city center. Promising the opportunity to experience the city more efficiently to the visitors of the city, the suggestion also aims to provide the user with utmost knowledge on the city. The box allows the urban habitants and tourists to reach to the city information center while providing a series of spaces of experience. Trabzon has an important position in terms of the richness of the civilisations and cultures it has hosted on its lands throughout its history. A central functional box has been designed so that domestic and foreign visitors visiting the city can get to know the city better in this respect and comprehend the image of the city. On the other hand, access to the box assumes the objectives of participation in the experience and gaining knowledge through the suggested routes. The box provides an impressive and permanent information loading through trainings and workshops, exhibition venues, virtual reality rooms that are provided upon the quick information obtained on the route. In the mass configuration, it has a rectangular prism plan and a structure with no confusion being present in the section level and following certain axes. The form which has an amorphous shape became fluid by sticking into the rectangular prism. The façade of the amorphous shape, facing Maraş Street, assumes the role of an overhang by expanding at the fourth floor level to emphasise the entrance. The amorphous shape which follows linear lines in the plan and the section creates an interface for both the building itself and the city. The urban routes are named as Silk Road route, History route, Uzun Sokak route, Old Sea route, Religion route in the design which approaches the use of box as itself with a dominant and focal form proposal. The Silk Road route was configured with a focus on maintaining the traditional marketplace and trade. The History route focuses on Çarşı region and aims to recall the commercial activities conducted throughout history. Uzun Sokak route focuses on the perceptibility in Trabzon city walls settlement. The Old Sea route includes improvements intended for perceptually strengthening the city’s relation with the sea. On the other hand, the Religion route creates an awareness by associating users from different beliefs with places of worship (Figure 6-7).

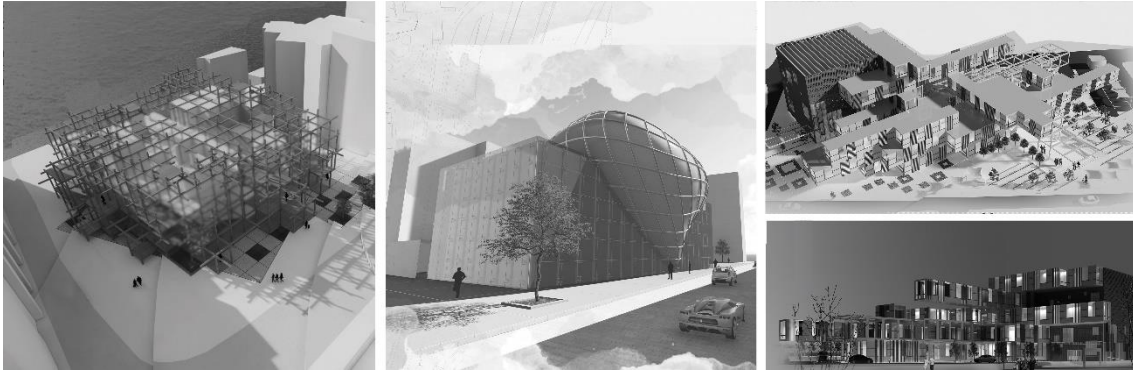


Figure 7: Design Studio 3D Representation, Just The Box or The Holistic Box (design concepts from left to right: urban substance, ataraxia, no land) (authors archive)

The third sample differs from the other two in terms of approaching to the box. The design adopts “the holistic box” approach and establishes the international concept of space with the concept of “no land” through a modular system by taking source of the idea from John Lennon’s album brand ‘Imagine’. The approach that rejects borders aims to ensure continuous interaction through cultural diversity, thus, to explain the urban awareness to its user through spaces. The design aims to offer an uninterrupted interaction while experiencing the space as a pedestrian, and brings active socialisation to the forefront through users in this sense. Therefore, the overlapping of the box has created an effective configuration technique both in the establishment of the spatial organisation in a healthy way and in the definition of public space intended for the urban user. On the other hand, the box placed diagonally on the plot it is suggested for, assumes an approach that emphasises the state of existence of the interface created for building-urban space segregation, as a box itself. The design, for which functional programming is carried out over five levels in total, formal formation is based on modules. Modules positioned on diagonal axes bring users together at different elevations by establishing a promenade, and allow exploration of space. The convergence of square modules exhibits a linear approach at the ground trace level and at the layout plan scale. Pointing out the existence of superposed grids, this state transforms the modules into boxes that act individually or jointly. Interrelationships of the boxes also brings spatial hierarchy into existence. Each of the modules-boxes sometimes turns into a program, sometimes into a semi-open space canopy and sometimes into a ground trace. On the other hand, the boxes used as ground traces have been established by organising the arrangements consisting of sixteen pieces in different figure-ground relations. A main box and a focus box on the proposed urban route and micro-boxes at nine points were configured. Micro-boxes are designed in two ways as ‘a’ and ‘b’ in terms of spatial organisation. Both types of boxes have a hierarchy of closed, semi-open and open space. Micro-boxes are considered as communication points in the city and have undertaken the task of promoting-informing the city. The boxes in question are designed to guide the tourists and local users to the info center and the historical spots that worth seeing in the city. Cafeteria, exhibition area, sales units and information kiosks are available in the boxes.

The boxes constitute an integrity with the ground traces and the proposed partial structural canopies (Figure 6-7).

4. Conclusion

Being the most important and greatest physical product created by humans to organise their life, the city is the venue of predetermined or random meetings and offers people of all classes the opportunity to communicate with each other socially. The city is a space where people exchange ideas on every subject in every period and culture. This dynamic space shall be perceived as an area based on thinking and observation, where rituals such as eating and drinking, performances and dances that are repeated every other day can be carried out. It is eventually the place where people gather and find their own identities, and where new identities are built.

Having hosted many civilisations, in Trabzon, the axis extending from Meydan (Atatürk Square) to the Bazaar, which is the main subject of the study has always been an important center for the city in every period and a focus that witnesses the events and moments in the urban memory. However, the ordinary change-transformation process of the cities showed itself in this important part of the city of Trabzon in a very rapid and destructive way. The historic settings and buildings which maintain their continuity sustain their existence without drawing attention of their user most of the time.

The design studio is an environment where the designer reveals his/her own production decisions, preferences, knowledge, will and skills as a result of many mental processes such as perception, research, thinking, interpretation, evaluation, concept and option development or decision-making. Based on the idea of the box in the representation of the architectural design process, the core purpose of the design studio is to rethink the conditions of urban awareness and to observe the various forms of the box in the urban space. The architectural design studio, which deals with Trabzon and the selected urban fragments of Trabzon within the scope of the urban box theme, discusses the box idea at the urban scale and its states at the level of building scale as “Diffusion”, “Adaptation”, “Just the Box or The Holistic Box”.

The studio samples examined within the scope of the ‘Diffusion’ approach consist of design ideas where the idea of the box diffuses at a formal and functional level that stands out with a binding feature. The studio samples examined within the scope of ‘Adaptation’ consist of design ideas, where the idea of the box is a piece of a whole at a formal and functional level or adapted to the part of the city. The studio samples examined within the scope of ‘Just the box or the holistic box’ consist of design ideas that emphasise the integrity of the boxes obtained through duplication of units while defining Cartesian geometries or a single amorphous enclosed volume.

In conclusion, this study brings into question the rethinking of the urban form of the localities on different scales and functions within the context of the box idea. Within this context, it has been seen that the potential of the cities, which accommodate multidimensional and overlapping networks, can be revealed with the idea of the urban box and its forms of approach.

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While this process gave students the ability to understand and interpret the city, urban and problem area relations, it also encouraged them to explore the variations (types of the box) of evaluating the intention of the problem area in the context of a single concept (urban box). In this context, despite the focused topic (urban box) given in the studio course, the resulting outputs found their own unique structure with different intentions arising from the designer's own acquisitions, preferences and character. While the box maintains its formal continuity, changing fiction, environment, relations, organisation, etc. transformed into different architectural forms.

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