3rd International Architectural Sciences and Applications Symposium
September 14-15, 2023, Naples, Italy

Degeneration of the Nest Concept: Changes in People's Housing Tendencies

Lütfiye YILMAZ [1]*

ORCID 1: 0000-0002-2670-5979
Research Assistant, Yeni Yuzyil University, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Architecture, İstanbul-Turkey
*lutfiye.yilmaz@yeniyuzyil.edu.tr (Responsible Author)

Abstract

Human has been building for centuries. They create a house by carving a rock, a hut from a tree branch, a mud brick that brings water and soil together and putting what is in nature on nature again. These actions were initially carried out to protect, hide and improve living conditions as the basic instinct of the need for shelter. However, in the historical process, it has left its place to a system based on overconsumption by producing more than it needs over time, just like in the war of human with nature. With the modernist era which tends to consume rather than produce, the concept of peoples housing tendencies, which is assimilated as a home physically and psychologically, has turned into a standardized and ordinary housing concept. Especially with the modernist era which tends to consume rather than produce, the housing concept tendencies has also changed. Analyzing the change in human habitation in the evolutionary process; first of all, it requires understanding people and thinking about the construction of human-made spaces. Because; It is important to read the semantic connotations of the concept of home through the spatial analysis of philosophy, which takes its priority from the way of thinking of people, and to reveal its change. The main purpose of this study, which is prepared on the basis of this problem, is; The aim is to reveal the changing priorities and features of modern man's act of building to dwell, and thus to draw an evolutionary schema of the degeneration of the concept of home. In this context, firstly, Gaston Bachelard and Martin Heidegger's philosophical perspectives on the concept of housing are examined and the changing meaning of the concept of housing is revealed through the philosophy of space.

Keywords: Martin Heidegger, Gaston Bachelard, dwelling, resettlement, build

1. Introduction

Home is our living space where we hide on earth. This need for hiding, which initially arises from physical environmental conditions, points to an order based on protecting our self and soul in the modern age. In this context, the house has become a shelter similar to the medieval cellars of the modern world.

"Home", which is the abode of our memories and moments, is a place where we place our memory (Bachelard, 2013). It shapes and imprisons our memories by witnessing our moments with our dreams that it determines in concrete and abstract terms and the place it has acquired in our minds. The space bounded by this concept cloud constitutes the parts/rooms of our home.

However, with the modern age, housing, which has become uniform and shaped by passing through the mass production line, has lost its spatial meaning and has become an object of consumption. The uniqueness of individuality has become increasingly similar to each other in housing areas, each of which has become a copy of each other. This situation harms not

only individual diversity but also the subjectivity of streets and the cultural identity of cities. In summary, the concept of home is the degenerated shelter of the modern age.

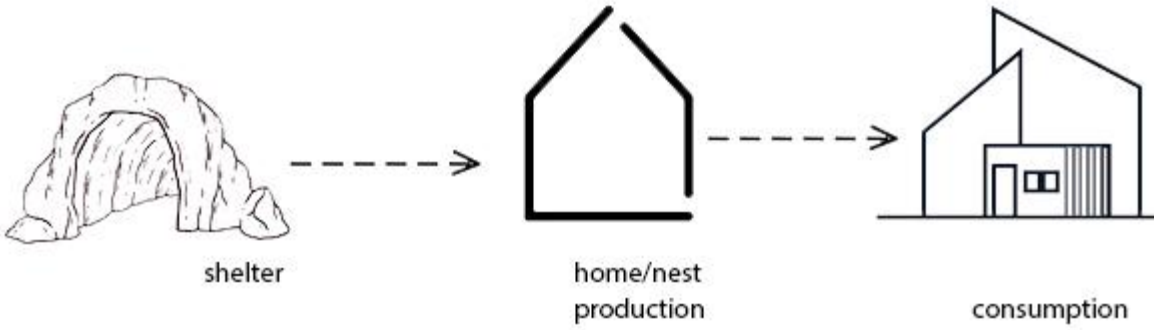

Figure 1. Evolutionary Scheme of the Nest

2. Materials and Methods

The main purpose of this study is to search for the lost meaning of the concept of home by revealing the changing priorities and characteristics of modern man's act of building for shelter. In this context, Gaston Bachelard and Martin Heidegger's perspectives on the concept of home are analyzed. The human-space-time analysis of the concept of home based on the literature review is analyzed through modern examples that seek a new meaning for home.

Gaston Bachelard, who defines space in a poetic language beyond concrete descriptions or abstract analogies, explains in his work The Poetics of Space how language, the main element of this poetic approach, freezes space in time and solidifies it into an image (Bachelard, 2013). In this context, according to him, the overlap of human-space-time is most clearly possible through the depiction of the house on memory and memories because home is the place where memories and dreams are most intensely engraved in our minds. In other words, the house as a place witnesses all our moments and creates memories. Bachelard, who says that even in a new house a whole past lives on, defines "home" - and therefore space - as a "place" that produces memories. According to him, space is the memory of individuals, and this memory is formed by the furniture, the smell and texture of the furniture, and the human experience of these senses. By being furnished with dreams and memories, memory spaces cease to be a physical "object" and into an essence (Leach, 1997).

Heidegger believes that dwelling, which has been lost in the modern world, constitutes the essence of human existence (Sharr, 2013). He explains that the simplification, decontextualisation, standardization and transparency of the home as a result of modernisation processes have turned people into "existential strangers" in the world.Stating that the housing crisis, especially as one of the global effects of World War II, has become a housing problem in the world age, Heidegger emphasizes that, with a similar understanding, the meaninglessness of cultures, lives and artifacts arises from the same source (Sanrı Doğan,

2022). Unlike Bachelard, Heidegger looks at home not as a reflection of happy memories, but as a reflection of inner troubles, and in this context he criticizes the modern world in particular (Heidegger, 1971).

3. Findings and Discussion

The transformation of the home into an object of consumption is a current topic of discussion in interdisciplinary art and design studies. In this context, many manifesto-like works have been put forward. In this section of the study, these works are analyzed.

- **Splitting, Gordon Matta Clark, 1970**

In the 1970s, when the deconstructive design language had not yet become widespread worldwide, American architect and artist Gordon Matta Clarck used a deconstructive style in which he cut, separated and exploded some floors or structural elements of abandoned buildings and in this context reproduced the space in question (Barria, 2011). Just like Derrida's understanding of deconstruction, the concept of "detournement", in which Clarck's work is intertwined, endeavors to critically target the relationship of the capitalist order with the social masses and to create an incentive to realize the questioning of social space. Clarck thinks that for a conceptual interrogation in the production of spaces and the subject of spaces, language, as a condition of the control mechanism of social ideologies, must also be displaced, and in this respect, he exhibits a similar attitude with Derrida (Yılmaz, 2022).



Figure 2. Splitting, Gordon Matta Clarck, 1970 (Can, 2017)

In this context, Gordon Matta-Clark has reproduced the modern "house" from an inverted perspective. Like Heidegger, he rejected the decontextualized, commodity-like structure of housing and based his designs on the movement and temporality Heidegger advocated. Clark, who is interested in social problems in his designs, focuses on the main problem area of "home" with an unusual perspective and reproduces "home" with striking fiction (Sanrı Doğan, 2022).

- **Rachel Whiteread's House, 1993**

The artist Rachel Whiteread, who chose a house in a residential area planned to be demolished by the British government for the purpose of publicization, created a sculpture to be exhibited in its current location by making a mold of the house (Cohen, 2018). This work is an unspoken manifesto of the rebellion of people who refused to leave their homes for many years but eventually had to leave their homes. The interior walls of the house, which had already been ordered to be demolished, were covered with concrete and the bricks on the exterior were removed one by one from this concrete skeleton. In Whiteread's work, rooms that are never entered, doors that do not open, windows that do not look anywhere symbolize the freezing and solidification of "home" as a meaning in a temporal context. With this sculpture, space becomes a mental image beyond representing a physical object as a house.



Figure 3. Rachelm Whiteread's House Street Facade, 1993 (Cohen, 2018)

- **Basic House, Martin Azua, 1999**

Martin Azua has created the Basic House prototype with the idea of a pocket-sized private dwelling as a counterpoint to the problems of ownership and the difficulties of home

ownership. As a "foldable, inflatable and reversible" volume, the house offers a new alternative to the modern concept of property. The artist wanted to create an immaterial house in response to the fact that housing today is the end product of a series of consumption habits of our living spaces. This structure, which adapts to natural conditions, can swell with sunlight and air, and protects from cold when reversed, is based on the basic requirements of shelter. In this context, from a Heideggerian perspective, it reveals a method of having everything without having nothing (Azua, 2012).

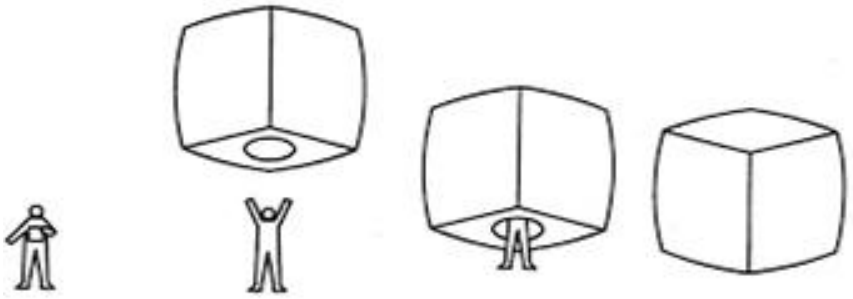

Figure 4. Basic House Working Principle Diagram (Azua, 2000)

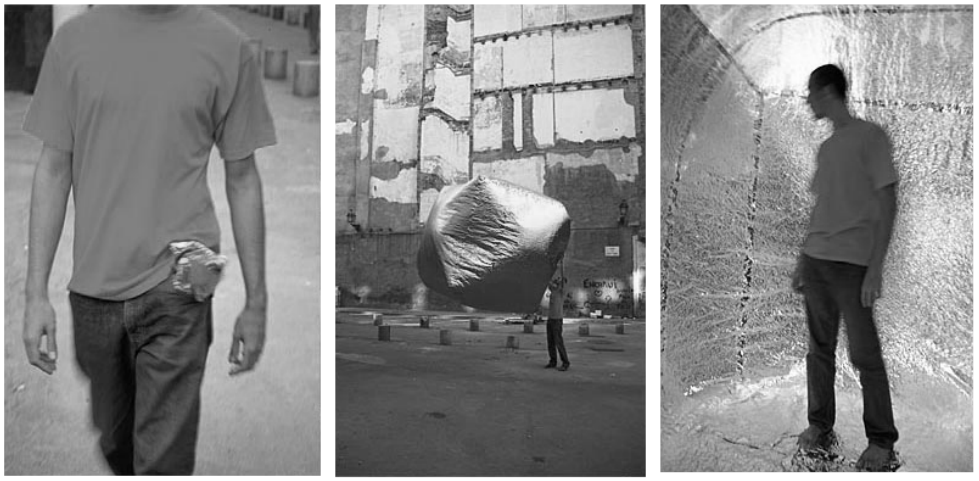

Figure 5. Basic House Phenotype, 1999 (Rosenfield, 2012)

4. Conclusion

The house, as a shelter and a place of living, turns into a home only when it is identified and subjectivised as a whole with memories. The human being produces that space with the desire to be at home and return home. In this state of being, home and subject are one. However, the new housing order of the modern age has made this subjectivity ordinary and easy from an objective point of view. The house has now become a companion space that pursues material concerns.

As a result, housing, which is constantly produced as a copy of each other in today's modern metropolitan cities, is becoming an object of consumption that does not allow for any experience and hosts rootless memories. The decontextualization of spaces creates societies without memory. In this context, it can be said that housing, which provides the opportunity for socialization, encounter, meeting and acquaintance, has become a new design problem.

Thanks and Information Note

This study was prepared as an output of the "Felsefede Mekan Tartışmaları" course in Yıldız Technical University Architectural Design PhD Program. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Çiğdem Polatoğlu, the professor of the course, the publishing team of the book " Felsefede Mekan Tartışmaları " published at the end of the semester, and all my friends with whom I took the course.

References

Azua, M. (2000) Basic House. Accessed on 1 October 2023, available online at: https://www.martinazua.com/product/basic-house-ii/

Bachelard, G. (2013). Mekânın Poetikası. (Trans., A. Tümertekin,). Kesit Publishing, İstanbul.

Barria, H. (2011). The Cut, The Hole and The Eclipse: Matta-Clark's Sections. Arquitetura Revista, 7(2).

Can, A. (2017). Gordon Matta Clarck, Manifold Press. Accessed on 12 October 2020, available online at: https://manifold.press/gordon-matta-clark

Cohen, A. (2018). Rachel Whiteread's House Was Unlivable, Controversial and Unforgettable. Accessed on 1 October 2023, available online at: https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-rachel-whitereads-house-unlivable-controversial-unforgettable

Heidegger, M. (1971). Building Dwelling Thinking, in Poetry, Language, Thought. Harper and Row, New York.

Leach, N. 1(997). Rethinking Architecture. A Reader in Cultural Theory, Routledge London.

Rosenfield, K. (2012). Basic House, Martin Azua. Accessed on 1 October 2023, available online at: https://www.archdaily.com/203413/basic-house-martin-azua

Sanrı Doğan, N. (2023). Heidegger'in Felsefesi ile Evi Yeniden Üretmek. Yıldız Technical University, Felsefede Mekan Tartışmaları, p. 92-109.

Sharr, A. (2013). Mimarlar İçin Heidegger. YEM Publishing, İstanbul.

Yılmaz, L. (2023). Felsefede Mekan Tartışmaları, Konuksever Derrida'nın Yapısökümcülük Anlayışı ile Mekanın Yeniden İnşası. Yıldız Technical University, Felsefede Mekan Tartışmaları, p. 151-165.