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A Creative Inquiry Attempt in Architecture Education: Producing an “...ism”

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Abstract

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This study examines the pedagogical boundaries of freedom in architectural education through a student-centred and critical classroom experience. In the process structured on researcher–student collaboration, students were positioned not merely as receivers of knowledge but as actors who generate value. The discussion, conducted around the question “What would postmodernism criticize if it emerged today?”, encompassed critiques ranging from class inequality to the urban skyline. The students’ proposals were compiled within the framework of problem definition, supporting arguments, and counterarguments. These proposals were evaluated in relation to the positioning of creativity against institutional, political, and technological boundaries; the relationship between spatial justice and design; and the balance between individual freedom and collective responsibility. The findings reveal the creative potential of free thought in architecture and demonstrate education as a field of polyphonic production. It is anticipated that the participating students’ recognition of architecture’s potential to transform the social and physical environment, as well as its intellectual dimensions, will have a lasting impact in helping them position their own roles within this transformation.

Keywords: Critical Architectural Education; Architectural Freedom; Creative Pedagogy; Alternative Learning Practices; Student Participation.

1. Introduction

Active learning is a concept associated with practical efforts in the context of teaching activities that encourage student participation (Brownhill, 2024). Active learning can be achieved by making lessons more interactive; incorporating breaks, organizing engaging activities, improving attitudes toward learning, and increasing students’ attention levels and retention of information (Brownhill, 2024). Course content, teaching style, and students’ learning experiences are components of active learning (Grainger et al., 2004, p. 246; Brownhill, 2024). As cited by Jeffrey and Craft (2006), creative learning involves the experience of dynamic atmospheres (Jeffrey & Woods, 2003), climates of expectation and excitement (Jeffrey, 1996), the emergence of emotional expression (Woods, 1993), and the development of understanding, skills, processes, appreciation, and the capacity for thinking. Creative learning encompasses “a combination of intrapsychological and interpsychological processes that lead to new and personally meaningful insights for oneself and others” (Beghetto, 2011). Creative learning enables students to create and develop their own projects; thus, it involves processes of identity formation, self-actualization, increased empathy and curiosity, enriched relationships, multidimensional thinking, and the generation and exploration of multiple possibilities (Carbajal & Baranauskas, 2025). Through creative processes, students may move beyond the classroom and make lasting and positive contributions to addressing issues within communities and broader contexts (Beghetto, 2011). In creative practice, practitioners become researcher-practitioners, using their knowledge or experience in practice as a mode of knowledge production and thereby advancing both their own and others’ knowledge within their disciplines or across interdisciplinary contexts. Such work may take many forms and produce a wide variety of outputs. In creative practice, knowledge is neither singular nor fixed. There are multiple ways of arriving at what needs to be known (Batty & Zalipour, 2024). Underlying all of these processes is the need for creativity (Brownhill, 2024).

In education, particularly in design education, the contemporary architectural environment constitutes one of the key pillars in establishing a bridge between theory and practice. Architectural education aims not only to convey formal design knowledge but also to develop the ability for critical thinking, conceptual inquiry, and the interpretation of cultural contexts. Architectural education shares characteristics similar to those of creative learning. Design production is grounded in creative practice. The creative practice of designers derives from the architectural practices within their environment, the actors operating within the profession, the ways in which projects are implemented, the reflection of theory in practice, the cultural context, and the values and beliefs associated with that context (Rylander Eklund et al., 2022). Therefore, creative learning within the architectural discipline may be regarded as valuable in exploring the

complex or as-yet unresolved problems of the contemporary world. The implementation of creative practices together with the young colleagues to whom we will entrust the future of architecture may advance and reshape potential solutions. In this way, future architects can reconsider the concepts of freedom and limitation, question how creativity can be balanced with social responsibility, and develop new perspectives on the ethical, cultural, and political dimensions of design practice.

In contemporary Türkiye, the architectural profession faces numerous structural challenges that directly affect architects' professional autonomy and creative production (Balaban, 2016). In the post-1980 period, the construction sector came to be regarded as an instrument of economic development, a situation that directly influenced the architectural profession (Balaban, 2016). During the 2000s, the rapidly expanding sector increased its share of the Gross Domestic Product, thereby also enlarging employment opportunities within the field of architecture (Topraklı & Işıklar Bengi, 2020). However, this rapid growth simultaneously generated uncontrolled expansion within the sector, bringing with it environmental, economic, and social problems. The crises and fluctuations experienced after 2008, together with the treatment of the built environment as an "investment vehicle," led to a qualitative devaluation of architecture. One of the most evident consequences of this transformation was the reduction of architecture to a process of commodity production (Onur, 2018). The figure of the architect moved away from the identity of a "creative subject" and became a provider of rapidly consumed products (Harvey, 2012). Capitalist relations of production have displaced architects from their role as creative subjects, positioning them instead as intermediaries responding to the demands of capital (Işıklar Bengi & Özkan Üstün, 2022).

While the fundamental pillars of architecture, such as aesthetics, sociology, and cultural context, receded into the background, the number of young architecture graduates increased, whereas employment opportunities declined. The growing number of graduates, the proliferation of architecture faculties, rising unemployment rates, and income inequality within the sector have also transformed the public perception of the architectural profession. The architect, once idealized as a "creative genius," has gradually been devalued and transformed into a professional lacking job security (Onur, 2018). This situation has profoundly affected not only the profession itself but also architecture students' motivation and confidence in their future careers (Topraklı & Işıklar Bengi, 2022). Vacant quotas in university architecture programs constitute another significant indicator supporting this shift in perception. This picture reveals that the architectural profession has moved away from individual creative freedom and has become increasingly constrained by economic crises, educational policies, and approaches to urban governance. Today, in Türkiye, economic contraction, fluctuations in exchange rates, reductions in public projects, difficulties in procuring imported materials, and limited access to expensive architectural software directly affect the production and decision-making processes of architectural offices. Moreover, structures that have become standardized and formally homogenized under the pressure of high costs have contributed to a decline in societal aesthetic awareness, while architects have increasingly come to be perceived as actors serving investors rather than the public interest. The quantitative expansion of architectural education has also brought qualitative challenges. Faculties characterized by rapid graduation rates, insufficient oversight, and curriculum-related problems have contributed to the weakening of professional competence. This situation signifies not only a contraction of the profession but also a restriction in terms of professional ethics, social responsibility, and creative freedom. Consequently, "freedom" within the architectural profession should be understood not solely in relation to individual production but also in connection with economic structures, public policies, and the direction of education. In this context, freedom should be conceived not merely as the liberty of individual choice but as the courage to participate in, question, and transform the processes through which the built environment is produced. Freedom in architecture should therefore be addressed through its multiple dimensions, including the preservation of individual creativity, the promotion of social benefit, and the strengthening of professional independence. The contemporary architectural environment requires architects to act not only within the framework of aesthetic concerns but also with regard to ethical, cultural, and social responsibilities.

Architecture students have not yet been constrained by the challenges of professional life, nor has their creativity been diminished by the demands of practice. This condition enables young people to speak more openly against institutional structures, established norms, and formal impositions through the freedom of experimental thinking. Within the contemporary architectural environment, students can move beyond the role of learners to become active producers of critical thought, urban and social actors, and potential agents of transformation in design processes. In addressing contemporary issues, the academic environment can provide a space of freedom that nurtures and supports students' potential. Through workshops, exhibitions, and public discussions, students can make their voices heard and contribute to the formation of new norms. Moving beyond the position of passive learners, they may be defined as creative subjects who produce knowledge, engage in critique, make proposals, and, at times, intervene through the development of alternatives. This approach will strengthen the social role of architectural education and facilitate the participation of future architects in professional practice as stakeholders who question freedom and generate alternatives. Freedom should be understood not only as the ability to make choices but also as the courage to question, critique, and transform dominant paradigms. Such practice will prepare students for the future as architects who carry both individual and collective responsibilities.

In this study, an experimental classroom practice designed to position undergraduate students as active participants in a culture of critique is presented. The study aimed to foster prospective architects' understanding of the importance of critical thinking and inquiry, to employ creative practice as an educational tool, to encourage students to generate ideas freely, and to establish a productive rather than judgmental environment for discussion. Within the Contemporary Architecture course, an elective offered in the final year of undergraduate architectural education, a creative association exercise was initiated by asking students the following question: "If a movement similar to postmodernism were to emerge in 2025, which contemporary architectural approach would it challenge?" Rather than directly teaching a historical architectural movement (postmodernism), the exercise sought to initiate a new process of conceptual production by

encouraging students to interrogate its intellectual foundations. The study aimed to develop students' abilities to question, critique, propose solutions, and generate concepts. As an outcome of the exercise, students were expected to recognize that architecture undergoes periodic transformations, understand the critical ruptures that have emerged between different periods, and identify and articulate the potential areas of development, grand narratives, standards, clichés, and commonly criticized aspects of contemporary architectural discourse and practice. In this way, it was intended that prospective architects, as the future practitioners of the discipline, would develop an understanding of the architect's position within institutional and political constraints, explore how a more egalitarian approach to the city might be established, recognize the obstacles limiting designers' creativity, reflect upon the ethical responsibilities of designers, and examine the role of designers within broader social processes and events. The various "...isms" generated through the exercise were compiled and discussed in this paper by the moderator of the discussion session.

2. Method

A qualitative in-class experimental design was conducted with students enrolled in the Contemporary Architecture course, a senior-year undergraduate elective offered during the Spring Semester in the Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Adana Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University. Within the discussion-based activity, students were positioned as actors who generate knowledge and engage in critical inquiry. The study incorporated discussion sessions, group work, and conceptual production activities. Through original conceptualizations, students' proposals questioned the boundaries of creative practices in architecture and generated outcomes that contributed not only to the learning process but also to academic knowledge production. Participation in the discussion process was structured on a voluntary basis, and transparency and clarity regarding the purpose of the study were maintained throughout. Students joined the process of their own accord, expressed their ideas freely, and assumed active roles in content generation. The researcher participated in the process as a moderator, facilitating deeper engagement with the topic by posing probing questions.

In the activity, the following steps were implemented:

- Stage 1- Establishing the Conceptual Ground: Within the scope of the course, a lecture was delivered addressing the questions "What is Postmodernism?", "When did it emerge?", and "What did it critique?". It was emphasized that postmodernism emerged as a reaction to modernism. In contrast to modernism's functional, minimalist, and universal narrative, postmodernism was presented as a pluralistic and critical approach characterized by multiplicity of meaning, formal diversity, play with classical styles, references to different cultural contexts, and sculptural forms. It was further emphasized that postmodernism reopened the cultural, historical, and aesthetic dimensions of architecture to discussion.
- Stage 2- Classroom Discussion: The question "If a movement similar to postmodernism were to emerge in 2025, which contemporary architectural approach or cultural context would it challenge?" was discussed in a classroom setting. The moderator deepened the discussion through the guiding sub-questions presented below.
 - What, in your view, constitutes "excessive seriousness" or "rigid rules" in contemporary architecture today?
 - Which narratives in today's architectural production (e.g., standards, green architecture, sustainability, technology, minimalism, artificial intelligence, digital culture, social media, capitalism, public space, state-led projects, etc.) are being accepted without critical questioning?
 - From a postmodern perspective, which building, approach, or trend in contemporary architectural production could be critically challenged?
 - Following such a critique, what kind of built environment would emerge?
 - What would be the name of this new movement?
- Stage 3- Concept Production: Students were asked to develop a new "post...ism" concept and to provide an explanation of the concept they produced.
- Stage 4- Presentation of Ideas: Participants presented their generated "-ism" concepts to the class in terms of conceptual definition, key characteristics, and critical dimensions. Contrasting views among students were also expressed during the presentations. Throughout the presentations, the moderator and other participants enriched the discussion by providing examples and comments that either supported or challenged the proposed ideas.

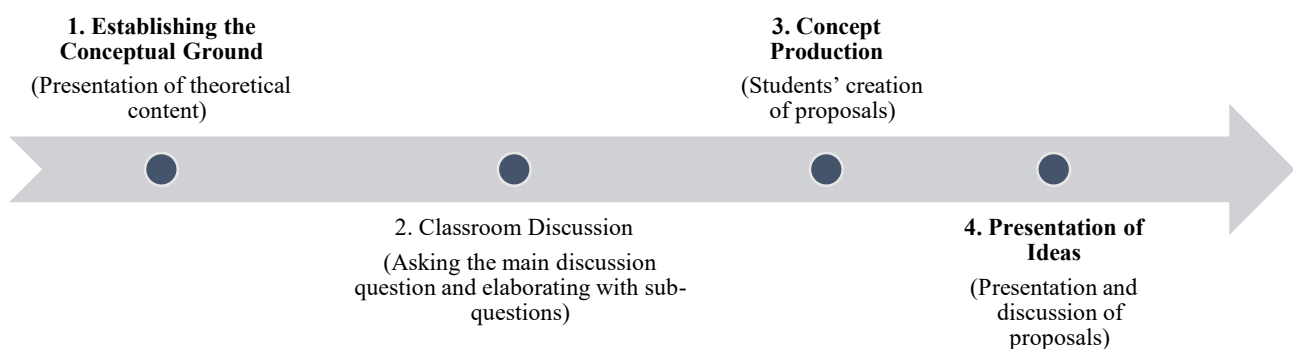


Figure 1. Structure of the Study (Developed by the Author).

3. Student Contributions: New Generation “...isms”

In the initial phase of the discussion, 14 points of critique were identified. These points are presented below, translated into academic terminology by the moderator.

1. Insufficient integration of landscape in urban design
2. Lack of sense of belonging in the built environment (production of soulless cities)
3. Inability of buildings to establish a relationship with context
4. Reading of class-based inequality through urban fragments
5. Instructor-driven direction in architectural education
6. Monotony in passive design elements
7. Homogenization of building typologies
8. Problems related to urban skyline composition
9. Design of buildings for a single, homogeneous user type
10. Potential negative impacts of artificial intelligence on architecture
11. Lack of genuine sustainability in “sustainable” buildings
12. Urban spatial implications of technological development
13. Exclusion of politics from architectural discourse
14. Production of low-quality and short-lived buildings driven by consumer culture in architecture

Five of the ideas listed above were further developed within the scope of the course. The main ideas of the proposals, the concepts developed, and the related discussions are presented below.

3.1. Proposal: “Anticritical”

3.1.1. Problem of the proposal

The main problem of this proposal lies in an educational system based on fixed truths and the hierarchical relationship between students and instructors. It is argued that in architecture faculties, instructors often present their own interpretations as universal truths, and although students are expected to be experimental and free in their design processes, they are in fact guided according to predefined patterns. In addition, the proposer identifies as a problem the divergent approaches among instructors, which result in conflicting positive and negative critiques for the same assignment.

3.1.2. Definition of the proposal

It is emphasized in the proposal that the aforementioned problems in architectural education are in contradiction with postmodernism’s concepts of “relativity of truth” and “plural perspectives.” Within this framework, the student argues that each individual may hold a distinct perspective and that architecture should be an open field that accommodates difference. The proposal positions itself against authoritarian structures in education. In this context, instructors’ views are understood as perspectives rather than absolute knowledge, thereby allowing space for individuals to develop their own interpretations. Within this framework, the concept of “Anticritical” is produced, which enables space for the individual to generate their own interpretations. This approach proposes the use of a “plural studio” model that allows different ideas to coexist within the same educational environment.

3.1.3. Statements supporting or opposing the proposal

- During the class discussion, it was stated that inconsistencies among instructors in grading criteria, as well as the lack of clear communication of these criteria to students, constitute a significant problem.
- It was emphasized that the successful implementation of the “plural studio” experience is directly related to the number of students in the studio. It was noted that this proposal would be difficult to implement in the context of architectural departments in Türkiye due to the uneven distribution of student quotas.
- It was also argued that the diversity of project topics within plural studios may lead to variations in difficulty levels. This situation was suggested to potentially hinder fair grading among students.

3.2. Proposal: “Silhouettism”

3.2.1. Problem of the proposal

In contemporary cities, it is observed that buildings are increasingly conceived as investment-oriented objects, leading to the emergence of vertical structures that seek to assert dominance over surrounding buildings. It is argued by the proposer that this situation causes distortions in the urban skyline, particularly posing problems in historic environments. It is also stated that it creates inequalities in access to resources such as sunlight and views.

3.2.2. Definition of the proposal

As a proposed solution to silhouette-related problems, “Silhouettism” is introduced. This approach involves grouping buildings according to floor area ratio in urban planning processes and raising awareness among designers and practitioners in order to achieve a more homogeneous skyline within these designated zones.

3.2.3. Statements supporting or opposing the proposal

- The silhouette problem was exemplified through the case of Anıtkabir. Anıtkabir is located at a relatively higher elevation compared to the surrounding buildings and holds a significant position within the urban skyline. However, over time, the silhouette has changed due to the emergence of high-rise buildings in the surrounding area, and the hierarchical prominence of Anıtkabir has begun to diminish. This situation is also presented as an issue that can be discussed within the context of the influence of politics on urban design.

- Another example supporting the proposal was provided in relation to the city of Adana, where the course was conducted. It was emphasized that residential buildings, which constitute the majority of the urban fabric, reaching heights of 25–30 stories is not compatible with the human scale.
- It is argued that silhouette-related problems can be resolved within new urban planning approaches before they emerge. It is suggested that a planning strategy could be developed in which high-rise buildings are located at the urban periphery, while development gradually transitions toward a more human scale closer to the city center. Within this framework, it is also proposed that parcel-based restrictions on building height could be implemented.

3.3. Proposal “EMPARCH (EMPathetic ARCHitecture)”

3.3.1. Problem of the proposal

The design of buildings for a single, standardized user type has been identified as a problem. It is argued that this situation hinders the development of user-oriented structures that would enable users to access spaces in accordance with their own needs and expectations.

3.3.2. Definition of the proposal

The proposal is derived from the idea of developing an architecture that empathizes with human needs. The proposals of EMPARCH are listed as follows: Contractors could be required to undergo training, and authorization could be granted based on specific criteria. Laws and regulations could be revised in a way that prioritizes flexibility, freedom, originality, and diversity, rather than fixed standards and prescriptive constraints. Professionals and qualified architects could take part in governance structures, and legal frameworks related to architecture could be designed and approved under their authority. User participation could be made legally mandatory, either directly or indirectly, within the design process. Regulations could require buildings to be designed according to at least three different user profiles. Throughout their life cycle, buildings could be monitored and analyzed by governing bodies, with periodic evaluations conducted, and if they fail to meet user needs, they could be reprogrammed or refunctionalized. In particular, for publicly funded buildings, participatory environments could be established in which members of the public and their representatives are involved in decision-making processes through meetings and studio-like workshops. Within these settings, society would be able to express its demands, while decision-makers involved in governance and construction would shape design decisions accordingly, with continuous feedback, revisions, and iterative development throughout the design process. Finally, it is proposed that all these principles should not be limited to the scale of individual buildings involving architects, contractors, and structures, but should also be implemented at the level of urban planning.

3.3.3. Statements supporting or opposing the proposal

- Designing according to user needs can be considered a valuable approach; however, in current practice, designers may not be able to fully identify the expectations and needs of all building users. At this point, it is often expected that designers adopt an approach oriented toward an “average user.”
- Designers do not maintain an active role during the building’s use phase. In cases where the building evolves into different functions over time, designers may not be aware of the physical requirements associated with such changes. Consequently, issues may arise regarding the inability of the existing design to meet new functional needs.
- Similar to the approach described, participatory design models already exist. However, the reasons why these models cannot be effectively implemented in Türkiye should be further examined. Several issues require investigation, including the way designers practice their profession, time constraints, procurement and tender systems, regulatory limitations, communication gaps between clients and designers, cost-driven approaches, the reduction of the built environment to basic housing needs due to economic conditions, users’ inability to define their expectations and needs, and consequently the reduction of their demands.

3.4. Proposal “Rebellion”

3.4.1. Problem of the proposal

The exclusion of politics from architecture has been identified as a problem.

3.4.2. Definition of the proposal

With the “Rebellion” approach, politics is incorporated into architecture in a humorous and critical manner. According to the proposer, raising public awareness of the social issues of the period is of particular importance. Within this context, the concept of “Rebellion” is proposed. The aim of the proposal is to enable social events and problems to be observed through architectural environments and to increase collective awareness. For instance, in order to draw attention to economic inequality, a highly luxurious and comfortable residential building could be designed with façades that do not reveal any indication of the privileged living conditions within. Similarly, in a building that critiques access to information, a façade could be designed using unreadable texts or books that are forbidden to be read, thereby constructing a critical architectural expression.

3.4.3. Statements supporting or opposing the proposal

- Within the scope of “Rebellion” installations, examples can be observed in Türkiye such as the hanging of 440 pairs of women’s shoes on a building façade to represent 440 women in order to draw attention to femicide (Url-1), or the construction of a sculptural work at the grave of Özgecan Aslan, who was murdered, by a sculptor (Url-2).

- The reflection of politics on the built environment can be observed more prominently in public buildings where ideology is mediated through state power. For example, imam hatip high schools in different cities designed with identical façades, or libraries constructed with references to Seljuk-period architectural typologies, may be cited. However, the use of such architectural elements often remains at the level of imitation and pastiche, which constitutes a problem in terms of their detachment from both context and function.

3.5. Proposal “NA”

3.5.1. Problem of the proposal

The reading of class-based inequality through urban fragments is identified as a problem. In cities, emerging forms of spatial segregation allow inferences to be made about the economic and socio-cultural conditions of residents in different districts.

3.5.2. Definition of the proposal

With this proposal, buildings of different types and programmatic diversity would coexist within the same neighborhood, and users would consist of people from all economic backgrounds. A built environment would be created in which public spaces are predominant and economically accessible structures are prioritized.

3.5.3. Statements supporting or opposing the proposal

- The transformation of urban space into a representation of class division, along with socio-economic differences, reinforces spatial injustices in the built environment and complicates social integration. Through the proposed egalitarian utopia, diversified building typologies and economically accessible urban facilities could enable individuals from different social classes to live together. In this way, both social cohesion could be enhanced and the principle of spatial justice could be supported.
- The realization of this ideal objective depends on a range of structural issues. Market conditions, infrastructural limitations, proximity to urban attractors, the predominance of private-sector-led housing production, and cultural differences among social groups may all restrict the feasibility of the proposal.
- Questions such as whether people from different socio-cultural classes can live together, what the economic conditions would be, whether higher-income groups would accept class-based diversity, what common ground would exist among different socio-economic groups, and how shared public spaces and commercial activities could be jointly used remain unresolved. The applicability of this proposal would therefore require the development of accompanying social policies that enable different groups to coexist within the same spatial context.

4. Discussion

The proposals address important issues such as architectural education, urban aesthetics, and user satisfaction. They emphasize architecture's capacity to shape social life. However, in general, the proposals make only limited use of the ironic nature of postmodernism. Instead, they are mostly developed within the framework of ongoing and frequently criticized issues in the architectural context. This demonstrates that students are aware of contemporary problems. This study can be considered a starting point for developing proposals that address the question: “The problems are well known, but why has the solution not been achieved?” Although some of the proposals remain somewhat utopian in terms of implementation, the necessity of interdisciplinary studies, project proposals, and pilot applications within the architecture–politics–regulation triangle has once again been highlighted. Within the study, students were asked to think in a multifaceted manner, define problems, name them, and develop proposals. In this way, a practical exercise was conducted for the problem-solving responsibilities they will undertake in the future. As seen, future architects hold the potential to play an active role in addressing contemporary challenges. They are aware of the transformative power of the architectural profession on society. When individual creativity is aligned with collective decision-making, it may contribute to social equality, the more equitable distribution of resources, professional autonomy, distinctions between expectations and needs, and even the reduction of social problems. The architect may emerge as an initiating actor in this transformation. Of course, ongoing problems cannot be solved with a “magic wand.” However, encouraging future decision-makers and enabling them to recognize their own agency may well be one of the primary responsibilities of their predecessors.

The potentials of the student-generated proposals developed in this study can be discussed under different headings:

Positioning of proposals in relation to the institutional, political, and technological boundaries of creativity:

- The “Anticritical” proposal challenges pedagogical patterns that constrain creativity within institutional boundaries. It advocates for providing students with space for free thinking and creative production. It also suggests that students, in their future practice, should be able to act freely against similar constraints when designing the built environment.
- The “Silhouettism” proposal critiques investment-driven and politically guided forms of construction, advocating for the architect to develop solutions focused on urban aesthetics and skyline integrity.
- The “EMPARCH” proposal argues that architects should occupy a more free, sensitive, and responsible position within the design process.
- The “Rebellion” proposal suggests that architecture should not remain silent in the face of issues such as politics, inequality, and injustice. It highlights the critical and activist dimensions of creativity.

Positioning of the proposals in relation to spatial justice and design:

- In the “Anticritical” proposal, the student’s right to interpretation, as well as equality and pluralism within the studio environment, are emphasized.
- In the “Silhouettism” proposal, the emphasis on how differences in building heights restrict access to resources such as views and daylight points to issues of spatial justice.
- The “EMPARCH” proposal advocates for design approaches that respond to the diverse expectations and needs of each individual. This approach can be interpreted as a pursuit of justice in ensuring that every individual’s needs are addressed within space.
- The “Rebellion” proposal supports the capacity of architecture to make injustice visible and to communicate critical messages. It is directly oriented toward the expression of crises. It argues that, during periods of crisis, architects should not remain silent but should intervene through production.
- The final unnamed proposal directly addresses inequalities in the use of space. It prioritizes the right to the city for users from all socio-cultural backgrounds.

Positioning of the proposals within geographical and cultural boundaries of creativity:

- The “Anticritical” proposal emphasizes contextual and individual differences rather than universal truths in architectural critique.
- The “Silhouettism” proposal implies that the urban skyline should function as a carrier of cultural identity.
- Through the “EMPARCH” proposal, the direct inclusion of diverse user needs in the design process can be seen as an opportunity to integrate local knowledge and cultural values into design.
- The “Rebellion” proposal may generate an attitude that diversifies architectural modes of expression across different geographical, cultural, and political contexts.

Positioning of the proposals between individual freedom and collective responsibility:

- The “Anticritical” proposal aims to develop individual thought within a collective studio environment. It critiques the hierarchy between instructor and student.
- The “Silhouettism” proposal advocates for collective visual coherence. This represents an approach that seeks to balance individual creativity with public responsibility.
- The “EMPARCH” proposal offers an opportunity for the direct participation of users and different social groups in the design process, as well as the integration of local knowledge and cultural values into design. This highlights architecture as a collective product.
- The “Rebellion” proposal defends the individual right of the artist or architect to critique, while also emphasizing that this critique should serve the public interest.
- The unnamed proposal underlines the collective responsibility of the architect and highlights the responsibilities of planning and planners in establishing an egalitarian framework.

Within the scope of this study, the proposals developed by students open up the boundaries of creative practices in architecture for discussion through different thematic frameworks. These proposals redefine the roles of the architect across various domains, such as pedagogical relations, user representation, urban hierarchies, and the political stance of architecture, and suggest a multi-layered field of critical thinking within architectural education. For instance, the “Anticritical” proposal questions the culture of critique in education, while “EMPARCH” proposes a user-oriented and flexible system based on individual experience and needs. The “Silhouettism” proposal discusses freedom within the axis of aesthetic-political relations in the built environment, whereas the “Rebellion” proposal introduces an activist approach that interrogates the socio-political responsibilities of architecture. At this point, it may be considered that future architecture students are calling for architectural activism, ethical approaches, or pedagogical reform.

5. Conclusions

With this study, an example of critical evaluation practice has been added to architectural education. It has been demonstrated that critical thinking in architectural education can be developed not only in design studios but also in theoretical courses through creative practices. In particular, a creative task such as “deriving a new movement” enabled students to approach a theoretical course through personal interpretation. The activity once again highlighted the importance of positioning the student as an active producer within the learning process.

As a result of the activity, students have achieved the following learning outcomes:

- A better understanding of the critical nature of postmodernism was achieved, and it was recognized that architecture is not only a formal field but also an intellectual one. Awareness of the power of conceptual naming was developed.
- Learning was made more lasting and engaging. Discussions and presentations supported a collaborative learning environment between instructors and students.
- While producing their own “-isms,” students developed different intellectual attitudes.
- The activity contributed to students’ understanding of the architect’s position within institutional and political boundaries, how an egalitarian approach in the city can be achieved, the obstacles to designers’ creativity, designers’ ethical responsibilities, and the role of designers within social events and processes.

Çalışmada derlenen öneriler bir eğitim deneyimi aktarmaktadır. Ancak öğrenci fikirlerinin bugünün kuramsal ve yapısal yansımalarını yansıtmaması, mimarlığın geleceğine dair yaratıcı sinyaller sunması dikkate değer bir noktadır. Öğrenci fikirlerinin eleştirel yaratıcı üretim olarak kıymeti, onların yalnızca teorik bilgiye dayalı yansımalar değil, aynı zamanda güncel mimarlık kültürüne yönelik özgün ve cesur sorgulamalar içermesinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Öğrenciler, eleştirel düşünme becerilerini kullanarak kurulu pratiklere alternatifler geliştirmiş; böylece, mimarlık eğitiminin yaratıcı düşüncüyü teşvik eden yapısını aktif biçimde deneyimlemişlerdir. Çalışmada geliştirilen öneriler, salt çözüm önerilerinden ibaret değildir; aynı zamanda normların, kuralların ve otoritenin sınırlarının nasıl sorgulanabileceğine dair değerli

örnekler sunar. Çalışmaya katılan öğrencilerin, mimarlığın sosyal ve fiziksel çevreyi dönüştürme potansiyelini ve bu potansiyelin düşünsel boyutlarını fark etmeleri; kendi rollerini bahsedilen dönüşümde konumlandırımları açısından uzun vadede etkili olacağı öngörülmektedir. Bu deneyin bir metin haline getirilmesiyle ise mimarlık eğitiminde yenilikçi öğretim yöntemleri örneklendirilmiştir. Tartışma temelli uygulamaların, kavram üretme çalışmalarının mimarlık öğrencilerinde eleştirel ve yaratıcı düşünme becerilerini geliştirdiğini vurgulamıştır.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author report no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

All data generated and analyzed during this study are included in the manuscript.

CRedit Author Statement

The author contributed to all aspects of the study, including Conceptualisation, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft, and Writing – Review & Editing. The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

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