



**READING THE URBAN TEXTURE IN THE COMMENTS OF ARTISTS FROM THE
PERSPECTIVE OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF ARCHITECTURE; URBAN TEXTURE
DERIVATIONS**

**İLK YIL MİMARLIK ÖĞRENCİLERİ GÖZÜNDEN KENT DÜZLEMİNİN SANATÇI
YORUMLARINDAN OKUNMASI; KENTSEL DOKU TÜRETMELERİ**

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ABSTRACT

The freshman year is an important period in the adaptation of students coming from formal education into training in architecture. In this period, fundamentals are established regarding the transition of the students from classical thinking and questioning habits in formal education, to the versatile way of thinking and questioning in the practice of architecture. Significant issues in this period include students' ability to convert their ideas from tangible to intangible, and from intangible to tangible. In the scope of this issue, students should be supported by various practices to develop this ability. In the academic year of 2015-2016, Semester I students at the department of Architecture at Necmettin Erbakan University were divided into groups in scope of the Basic Design class, and they were asked to compare the languages of urban texture that form the shaping of Western and Turkish-Islamic cities in terms of all values that constitute culture. The students interpreted the works of artists (painters, miniature artists) from different cultures and approaches on urban texture, using different materials in the framework of fundamental elements and principles of basic design. Our study aimed to investigate the extent to which the students were able to use basic design elements in scope of basic design principles within this experience. As a result, it was seen that the students were able to partially perceive urban textures via a visual work, they were not able to reach the potential of using different materials, and they tried to interpret basic design elements in terms of culture via the agency of basic design principles. With this study, it was concluded that multilayer configuration in architecture education may be supported and improved by such experimental practices.

Keywords: Basic Design, Architecture Education, Urban Texture, Culture, Workshop

ÖZ

Örgün eğitimden gelen öğrencilerin mimarlık eğitimine adaptasyonunda ilk yıl önemli bir dönemdir. Bu dönemde öğrencilerin, klasik örgün eğitim düşünce ve sorgulama alışkanlığından, mimarlık pratiğindeki çok yönlü düşünme ve sorgulama biçimine dönüşmelerinin temellerinin atılmaktadır. Öğrencilerin somuttan-soyuta, soyuttan-somuta fikirlerini dönüştürebilmeleri bu dönemin önemli sorunlarından. Bu sorun kapsamında öğrencilerin bu yetilerini geliştirebilmek için çeşitli çalışmalarla desteklenmesi gerekmektedir. 2015-2016 öğretim yılında Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi Mimarlık Bölümü I. Yarıyıl öğrencileri Temel Tasar Dersi kapsamında gruplara ayrılmış, Batı ve Türk-İslam kentlerinin biçimlenişini oluşturan kentsel doku dillerinin kültürü oluşturan bütün değerler bağlamında karşılaştırılmaları istenmiştir. Öğrenciler, farklı kültüre, anlayışa sahip sanatçıların (Resam, minyatür sanatçısı) kent dokusuna ait eserlerini, temel tasar öğe ve ilkeleri çerçevesinde farklı malzemelerle yorumlamışlardır. Çalışmamızda öğrencilerin bu deneyimlerinde temel tasar öğelerini temel tasar ilkeleri kapsamında ne ölçüde kullanabildiklerinin değerlendirilmesinin yapılması amaçlanmıştır. Bu kapsamda öğrencilerin kent dokularını görsel bir çalışma üzerinden kısmen algılayabildiklerini, farklı malzeme kullanma potansiyelini başaramadıklarını ve temel tasar öğelerini temel tasar ilkeleri aracılığıyla kültür bağlamında yorumlamaya çalıştıkları görülmüştür. Bu çalışma ile mimarlık eğitiminde çok katmanlı biçimlenişin bu tip deneysel çalışmalarla desteklenebildiği ve geliştirilebildiği sonucuna varılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Temel Tasar, Mimarlık eğitimi, kentsel doku, kültür, çalıştay/workshop

1. INTRODUCTION

It is known that the education given in schools of architecture in Turkey is experiencing a great change, and nowadays the design studios are diversified by differentiation. It has been seen that architectural education differs based on universities, and the design education varies in different ways. Because the student who has been subjected to the adaptation of a new education system is gradually getting rid of the classical formal education habits of thought and questioning, and, over time, turning into multi-faceted thinker and questioner in architectural education. In this context, it is necessary to open the way for “learning and teaching” in education in the period when the foundation of the architectural profession is laid, for education to have the ability to progress in a challenging process and to apply different techniques, to have a questioning mentality and to produce different solutions.

The first year is an important period for the adaptation of the students coming from formal education to architectural education. In this period, the foundations are laid for students to transform from their mentality and questioning habit of classical formal education to the form of multifaceted thinking and questioning found in the architectural practice. The ability for students to be able to transform their ideas from concrete to abstract and from abstract to concrete is one of the important problems of this period. Within the scope of this problem, students should be supported with various works in order to develop these competencies.

The first year of education, as a transition from primary education to higher education, is important for those institutions offering design education. During primary and secondary education students are exposed to concrete problems and asked to provide concrete solutions to those problems. However, starting from the first year of architecture education students work with abstract and visual materials and they are asked to produce concrete designs in the end. Several problems are faced during this process as students are exposed to different understandings inside and outside the studio environment.

The basic design studio is the place where students coming from secondary education with their quantitative knowledge meet with design for the first time in architecture education. For this reason, the basic design course is important for students to understand design, to express themselves, and to learn to think systematically (Erkan, 2006). While design studios are defined as the heart and brain of architectural education, basic design also forms the basis of these studios (Dutton, 1987). Introduction to the design process and basic design that is essential include being able to think of these concepts as a method and to convey thought products (Denel, 1981). The intellectual features that are desired to be developed in the designer through basic design can be defined as follows: sensitivity to a problem, to be able to express many ideas in different dimensions for a specific purpose, to go through mental development and expansions, improve analysis, originality, reorganize known forms, improve and differentiate a material and idea (Akış, 2008, Odabaşı, 2002). In design education, which is a mental process that develops with the relation of thought and creativity, it is aimed to teach students to make their own creations by evaluating the data they receive from the outside world through thought processes (Özek and Dalgıç, 2008). In the basic design education process, education is carried out from simple to complex, and original solutions to problems are sought (Denel, 1981, Denel, 1979). This process involves the transition from two dimensional designs to three dimensions and the transition to space with regards to architecture (Denel, 1979).

The basic design teaching process in Necmettin Erbakan University Department of Architecture consists of three stages. During this process, basic design elements (Point, Line, Direction, Form, Texture, Color, Movement) and basic design principles (Compatibility, Contrast, Repetition, Sovereignty, Unity, Hierarchy) are taught in and out of the workshop mainly with abstract and three dimensional studies. In the second stage, groups are created from the students and workshops studies that aim to develop 3D description through an abstract concept are conducted, and preparations are made for transition to volumetric and spatial design. In the third stage, students are asked to make designs in 5 steps on a rectangular prism to question the concepts of volume, space, surface, and layer relation.

It was aimed to emphasize duality in design, that is, the formation of dominant elements within the two urban typologies that make up comparison within mutual equilibrium. For this reason, there was a visual differentiation between the two typologies to be shown on the same plane in the study.

Istanbul province was adopted as a subject. It was aimed to abstract the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul with the Turkish-Islamic identity and the newly built European side with the Western cities. In this context, based on the examples shown before, in the light of abstractions in pictures and in miniatures, it was left to the students to make interpretations in three dimensions.

In the study, visual objects were not used purely, but together with all the values that make up culture (music, ornament, architecture, literature, etc.). Artistic products that were shown as examples were expected to be interpreted in the works with other inferior arts, beyond their sole direct use. For example, designers were asked to listen to classical Turkish music and classical western music, and reflect in the design what they felt from these works of music.

It was expected to produce a meaningful design in the light of design principles such as rate, rhythm, repeat, contrast, texture, conformity, symmetry-asymmetry, hierarchy, color, integrity, unity and sovereignty taught within the scope of the Basic Design course. Evaluations were also made in this scope.

2. PROBLEM DEFINITION AND AIM

During the 2015-2016 academic year, freshman students of the Necmettin Erbakan University Architecture Department, were asked “How do you interpret the Urban Fabrics?” within the scope of Basic Design course. This study, in which the answer and the process were sought for this question, consisted basically of two stages: The first stage, in which works of silhouette and fabric were exemplified from the miniatures and paintings primarily of the urban fabric and Istanbul, and the topic was interpreted; and the second stage, in which the questioning would be taught based on the principles learned in the Basic Design.





Primarily, the aim of this study was to express the fabric creating the urban formation (urban pattern) in an abstract way. In other words, with this work, it was aimed to compare the languages of urban fabric, which create the formation of cities, in the context of all the values forming culture. When students made this comparison, they evaluated the cities in pairs, in the existing abstract and concrete components of the cultures. In this context they took as examples the works of the artists (painter, miniature artist, etc.) of the different culture and understanding, which belong to the urban fabric. In terms of implementation of the study, they interpreted the cities, which they have compared, using different materials within the framework of basic design elements and principles.







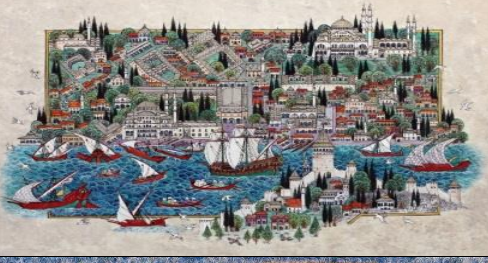



3. SCOPE

In the study, it was requested to compare the urban fabric language that create the formation of Western/European cities with the urban fabric language that creates the formation of Turkish-Islamic cities. This comparison was presented as two separate studies, in which the architectural language used in describing the city in all the modeling materials selected by the students during the comparison and the models produced by the waste materials were questioned separately.

In the study, it was requested to design the urban fabric language in three dimensions, by making use of the abstract works such as paintings of painters who abstracted Western cities and transferred them to the canvas. The works of various artists were shown as examples. Moreover, within the scope of the study, it was expected to benefit from the abstracts of contemporary miniature artists who abstracted and interpreted the Turkish-Islamic cities, and transferred them to miniatures based on their own tradition and belief systems. It was requested to interpret by discussing the effects of the two-dimensional works on the third dimension (Table I).

Table I. The Samples of Urban Texture Paintings and Miniatures

Picasso Guarnica		Nusret Çolpan	
Weber resingel lost papers and urban plans		Nusret Çolpan	

Mark Bradford Contemporary Urban Abstraction		Ayla Renda	
Nusret Çolpan		Gülçin Anmaç	
Nusret Çolpan		Devrim Erbil	
Nusret Çolpan		Devrim Erbil	
Nusret Çolpan		Devrim Erbil	

4. EVALUATION

Istanbul is a city that has preserved its multicultural structure, which has been home as a city to many civilizations. Istanbul possesses a different urban fabric, with its two-continent structure on the one hand, and its historical elements on the other.

In the studies, there were historical monuments such as Istanbul's Historical Peninsula, Sultanahmet Mosque and Square, Hagia Sophia Museum, Topkapi Palace, Beyazit Square, Grand Bazaar, Egyptian Bazaar and Yerebatan (sunken) cistern, in which Turkish-Islamic identity were interpreted. Istanbul is connected to the Anatolian continent by the Sea of Marmara, which surrounds the Historical Peninsula, and three bridges. The new settlement areas were selected from crowded business and housing plots, in which the modern urban fabric were interpreted and which included the skyscrapers located in the European side.

It was welcomed that students often used interpretation of waste materials in their works. In general, all of the waste materials that the students used by coating, painting, and synthesizing their original shape in their interpretations were all recycled materials. Pieces of empty glass or pet bottles, plates, cups, polystyrene rigid foams, pipettes, empty packaging materials, perfume bottles, bottle caps, plastic mixers (tea spoons), newspaper papers, wires in various thicknesses, corrugated cardboards, fabric pieces, and egg viols were the most commonly used waste materials.

In addition, cardboards, sugar cubes, beads, buttons, candles, threads in various colors were used in the abstraction work by supporting the waste materials.

In the models that abstracted the Historical Peninsula in the works, the only material that defined the distinctive sea was provided with repetition of the materials used or continuity. Beside this, the buildings were interpreted in different forms, and it was observed that the towers and bridges were mostly interpreted specific. In the works, color was used as a design item, and color difference was reflected in the models. In this context, technological data that were used, such as aerial photographs, Istanbul city map and Google Street view enabled the study to be supported by a strong set of data.

Materials that could be intertwined and that were repetitive were used when abstracting the Turkish-Islamic urban fabric. It was seen that the material used was selected from the fluid/organic materials that could easily plug into each other. Specific historical buildings in this city type were selected from simple (black or white) colors, and the rest of the urban fabric was fictionalized very colorfully.



In addition, forms with sharper lines were used in the Western urban fabric, and it was seen that the material used was more colorless or monochrome; it was made up of similar forms. A general fabric (uniform and repetitive) encountered in the Western cities emerged in a similar way in the works. Even if they did not have the same types, it was common to see that similar materials were repeated, and similar forms were used in the majority of the works because of the impact they created on the urban fabric (Table II).

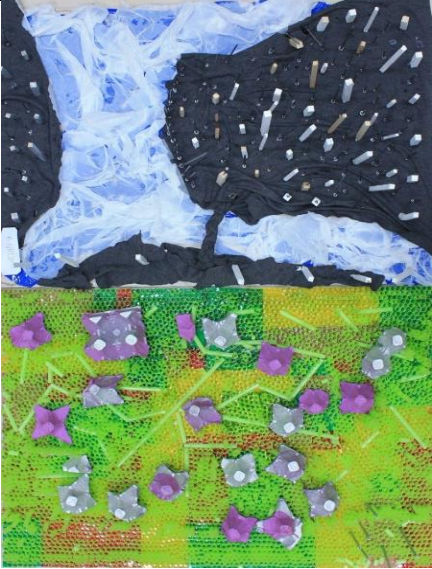
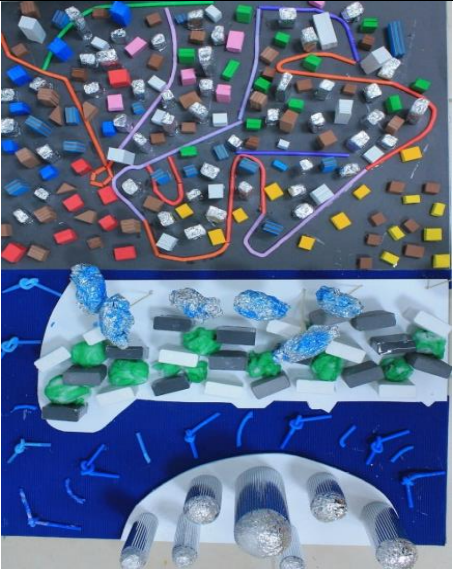


In the works, the designs in which the entire ground and upper structure was fictionalized were found to be successful, whereas those that turned directly into building or structure properties were found to be unsuccessful. Any form's potentialities in the third dimension were explored, even when using the same material (such as wooden bars/candles), rather than the works in which it was repeated. In addition to the interpretation of fusion of organic forms like the sea, the works that searched for dynamism on the ground and in the third dimension were positive.

An obvious success was achieved in abstracting the city in the context of the data obtained from this study, which asked freshman students who just met with the design education to evaluate the cities where they lived from another perspective.

This study sought a response to the question "In fact, how can students with immature design competences interpret the concrete city in an abstract way?" The positive aspect of this study was the fact that it let the perception of urban fabric to be felt strongly. In other words, the study presented the transfer of information that would let the students perceive the city in this direction and look at it from another direction.

Table II. The Samples of Students design - abstractions

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1. Group Student's design - abstraction	
2. Group Student's design - abstraction	

<p>Group Student's design - abstraction 3.</p>		<p>Group Student's design - abstraction 4.</p>	
<p>Group Student's design - abstraction 5.</p>		<p>Group Student's design - abstraction 6.</p>	

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