

GELENEKSEL DİYARBAKIR EVLERİNDE GÖRSEL ETKİ ANALİZİ¹AN ANALYSIS OF VISUAL EFFECTS ON THE TRADITIONAL HOUSES
IN DİYARBAKIR*Mine BARAN¹, F. Demet AYKAL², Meltem ERBAŞ³**¹⁻²⁻³ Dicle University Architecture Faculty, Department of Architecture, Diyarbakir / Turkey**ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9012-9603¹, 0000-0003-2424-0407², 0000-0003-2077-8728³*

Öz: Amaç: Kentler ve toplumlar, ekonomik, sosyal ve fiziksel olarak sürekli bir değişim içindedirler. Kentleşme ve modernleşme süreçleri, kentsel alanlarda yapısal dönüşümlere yol açarken çeşitlenme biçimlerini de beraberinde getirmektedir. Özellikle konutlardaki farklılaşmanın en belirgin göstergelerinden biri; imaj, kimlik ve anlam bütününde ortaya çıkan görsel etkidir. Gestalt ilkeleri görsel etkiyi sağlayan bu organizasyonun temelini oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı; kentlerin önemli bir parçası olan konutların görsel etkisini oluşturmaya yönelik; imaj, kimlik ve anlam oluşturma tekniklerini Diyarbakır Sur İçi konutlarında ortaya koymaktır. **Yöntem:** Bu amaçla foto- anket yöntemiyle, Diyarbakır kent kimliğinde önemli yeri olan, geçmişten günümüze kadar farklı mimari dönemlerde inşa edilmiş ve farklı niteliğe sahip sur içi konutlarının görsel etkisiyerinde incelemelerle tespit edilmiştir. **Bulgular:** Tespit çalışmasında; Diyarbakır İli Sur İçindeki 5 geleneksel ve yakınında bulunan 5 günümüz konutlarının görsel etkileri Gestalt ilkeleri doğrultusunda değerlendirilmiştir. **Sonuç:** Çalışmada kullanılan görsel etki değerlendirme ölçütlerinin tasarlama evresine veri sağlayacağı ve bu konuda yapılacak incelemelere yöntem oluşturacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Geleneksel Evler, Gestalt, Görsel Analiz

Abstract: Aim: Cities and societies are always in change in terms of economic, social and physical ways. Urbanization and modernization processes bring variation forms while they lead to structural transformations in urban areas. One of the most distinctive indicators of differentiation in buildings is visual effect which appears in integration of image, identity and significance. Gestalt principles set ground for this organization which provides visual effect. The aim of the study is to show image, identity and significance creation techniques in Diyarbakır Sur İçi buildings with a view to representing visual effects of buildings as important parts of cities. **Method:** In this regard, with the photo-questionnaire method, visual effects of Sur İçi buildings which have significant places for Diyarbakır city identity were determined in on-site works. **Result:** Within determination works; visual effects of 5 traditional houses and 5 new houses near them located at Sur İçi were assessed in Gestalt principles. **Conclusion:** In conclusion, it is considered to provide data to designing stage of visual effect evaluation criteria used in this study and represent a method to next studies about this issue.

Key Words: Traditional Houses, Gestalt, Visual Analysis

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INRODUCTION

Cities and societies are always in change in terms of economic, social and physical ways. Increasing city population needs to consider the issue of environmental quality more seriously, because the most remarkable factor of quality understanding is person. The concept of quality in urban environment must be searched, evaluated in each item building environment and integration of all items (Kodal, et al., 2014: 2)

In ancient urban pattern rich in historical and architectural elements, “houses” are building groups which are required to be primarily scrutinized under the quality of urban environment. As a result of industrialization, rapid urbanization affected traditional fabrics and caused structural changes in these fields. Historical identity of cities was affected from this situation negatively. It is necessary to reveal quality criteria at first and evaluate them in details in order to improve urban life quality, environmental quality and visual quality, protect city identity in historical environment. Thus, quality criteria may be determined and suggestions may be made about increasing quality criteria focused on future (Kuğu, et al., 2008: 1).

The process of urbanization brings differentiation and variation forms while it leads to structural transformations in historical fields.

In particular, one of the most apparent indicators of differentiation in houses is visual effect which appears in the integration of image, identity and significance (Benliay, et al., 2015: 41). Hereby, Gestalt principles, which represent determinism in visual perception, become foremost. Gestalt principles underlie this organization representing visual effects.

AIM

The aim of the study is to reveal image, identity and significance creation techniques in the houses of Diyarbakır Sur İçı region; oriented at building visual effect of houses as important parts of cities.

MATERIAL

Fronts are reflections of both cultural and physical changes at houses in Diyarbakır with a remarkable history in which various social and physical structure transformations were presented in each period of the development process. So a system of description-evaluation-interpretation was applied in frontal samples at the Sur İçı Region chosen from Diyarbakır city construction.

The samples were determined from literature screening, photography stages. Before choosing (during literature screening and on-site determinations), a great number of street samples was studied, the fronts of five traditional houses and five new houses near them at the

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Sur İçi Region were assessed in order to limit the study.

The Sur İçi Region, the historical-traditional settlement area of Diyarbakır has become a local area with certain values in each period of history. It has been a cradle to many civilizations, served as a trade center since it has been on an important trade transportation

center line for long years. This situation has been seen on the fronts of houses.

DİKTUM-DER, Ahmet Arif Museum, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı Museum, Esmâ Ocak House, Cemil Pasha Mansion, 5 traditional buildings included in the marked areas of the Sur İçi region map and 5 new houses near these ones were dealt in (Figure 1).

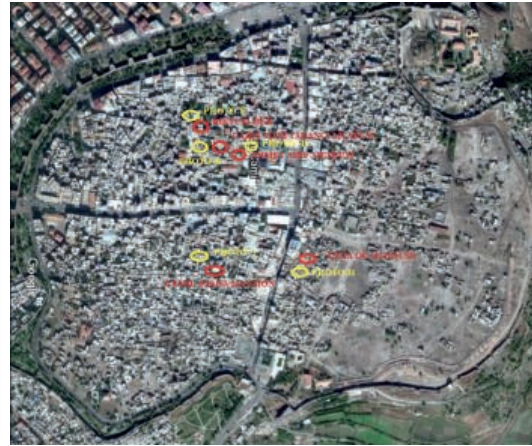
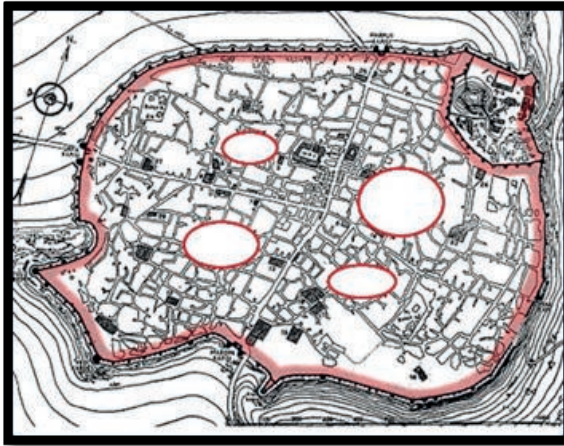


Figure 1. Working Areas of Sur İçi Region¹

METHOD

In the study, traditional houses and current houses near them located at the Suriçi region as historical traditional settlement area of the province Diyarbakır were analyzed.

The study aimed at showing the importance of landscape architecture and urban landscape design in providing cultural sustain-

ability and leaving them as liveable places to next generations by protecting city centers, the studies about issues such as urban aesthetic and urban landscape design, Gestalt principles were analyzed on the basic content of the research.

In the light of the above mentioned data, photographs primarily taken in work area, visual studies and observations were assessed to carry out the research. Then 187 persons, the

¹ (<https://earth.google.com>)



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students at Architecture Faculty of Dicle University were provided with questionnaire to determine landscape quality on the relevant photographs in terms of Gestalt principles. The questions included in this questionnaire were asked in an understandable, simple language. Interview time was approximately 15 minutes. With this aim, pre-experiment work was done, data was recorded in the most appropriate and sensitive way.

In the questionnaire form used in the study; the first section consisted of questions about demographical information.

In the second section, for introducing the fronts of chosen houses in the Suriçi region; as seen at Table 2, grading system was applied in 5 point likert scale to make subjective evaluations of Gestalt principles such as

figure-ground relation, form, symmetry-balance, rate-proportion (visual hierarchy), repetition- rhythm, proximity-similarity, closure (integration), continuity (permanance), contradiction, articulation, fabric and color.

In the study, for the subjective evaluation, 5 point likert scale was used in the questionnaire, the points between “49-60” were regarded to be “very high”, the points between “37-48” were “high”, the points between “25-36” were “normal”, the points between “13- 24” were “low” and the points between “0-12” were “very low”.

LIMITS of the STUDY

The study was limited with Diyarbakır traditional houses and their façades. Also the gestalt principles were selected as below;



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Table 1. Visual Effect Evaluation Principles and Analysis

Figure-Ground	the back or fore plan development effect of structure contour on their structure position in urban pattern under figure-ground relation,
Form	the view of building form and building from various directions in form analysis,
Symmetry- Balance	the tractive force of form or front elements for gravity center to their own side on a certain axis in house front in symmetry- balance analysis,
Rate-Scale (Visual Hierarchy) /Focus Point	the strong effect of an element or a form design on visual perception rather than all in rate-scale (visual hierarchy-focus point) analysis,
Repetition-Rhythme	whether building elements more than one are used in a certain order in repetition-rhythm analysis,
Proximity-Similarity	the perception tendency of elements close and similar to each other as a combined group in visual field in proximity-similarity analysis,
Closure (Integration)	whether building form and front-roof systems create unity in closure (integration) analysis,
Continuity (Permanance)	whether elements included in visual perception are continuously placed in continuity (permanence) analysis,
Contradiction	whether there is an element against all designs in contradiction analysis,
Articulation	whether roof and front movements follow each other to provide integration in articulation analysis,
Color	the role of color used in external shell of building in visual perception color analysis,
Fabric	visual effect of materials used in external shell of building via lights in fabric analysis.

(Şentürer, 1995: 28, Güner, et al., 2004:6, Güngör, 2005:15)

PROBLEM of the STUDY

Modern designs have positive and negative effects on historical environments. In the historical environment, it is necessary to make designs which are compatible with the environment which will give a historical architectural value.

SUB-PROBLEMS

The sub-problems of the study are; loss of historical texture consciousness; growth of incompatible buildings; failure to detect functions from building façades; deterioration of visual integrity.



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THE HYPOTHESIS

The façades of traditional houses are more suitable to gestalt principles than modern buildings.

The façades of traditional buildings are suitable to their functions.

Modern buildings functions are not suitable to their façades

RELATION of HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT and VISUAL LANDSCAPE QUALITY

The main basis of environment, ecology and sustainability concepts in planning is to create settlement areas in harmony with nature or to provide sustainability by making settlement areas compatible with nature (Zeren, Selçuk, 2004: 2).

Historical environments originated from previous life styles. New buildings to be designed in these environments must be appropriate for current fabrics. Also, they must present high life quality and comfortable places to their users.

Visual items and items high in architectural value of historical fabric in a city provide specificity in visual perception. The integration of both cases represents identity value of the city.

Urban images do not include only architectural items. People's emotions and opinions contribute the creation/formation of urban images. Image varies in different ages, abilities, socio-cultural characteristics, symbolic values, behaviours, traditions of societies and people with different educational backgrounds (Rapoport, 1977: 114)

As cities having historical fabrics have many visual values, they have significant problems such as neglect, wrong restoration and destruction. These problems must be dealt in evaluation of quality criteria, referred to solutions. Diyarbakır Sur İçi Region, which is high in historical traditional features and rich in civil architectural samples, must be assessed in this scope. In this regard, visual landscape quality will be increased when historical fabrics are improved, reflected on new buildings.

GESTALT PRINCIPLES

Perception is described as “transfer of environment to conscience by senses, design of image coming from outer world by senses in conscience” (Hançerlioğlu, 1989: 12).

Owing to sensory organs and cases regarding mental process, perception occurs when perceiving and understanding stimulant effects from environment. In fact, perception is a complex process. It is both information resource of the relevant environmental system



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and field for action. The center of behaviours is based on the thinking style about the perceived object (Aydınlı, 1986: 91). Perception is information process from environment or about environment (Lang, 1987: 257).

Spontaneous perception by taking information from environment is effective in interpreting and evaluating these information, and also changing these into acts in correct ways. The basic characteristics of perception are expressed as followings (Aydınlı, 1986: 93).

- Perception changes in persons,
- Mobility is important for perception,
- Individuals take information appropriate for their objectives from environment.

There are some principles of perception case. These are described as figure-ground relation, fixed perception rules such as light, color, figure, growth, depth perception and Gestalt principles. The most important principle of perception is figure-ground relation.

In perception, Gestalt Theory takes a significant place. This approach called Gestalt Theory based on ancient ages defends a principle of integration. According to this theory, the important thing is formal integration (Hançerlioğlu, 1989: 15).

Gestalt Theory justified by Max Wertheimer was developed by Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt

Koffka. In accordance with Gestalt Theory revealing the relation of human mind with the perceived one; an individual evaluates stimulants from outer world as a whole instead of one by one (Wertheimer, 1997). Behaviours are determined by an internal nature which in parts create a whole but not by separate elements. The main melody differs from the total of sounds (Gestalt Theory, 2010).

Gestalt principles underlie this organization providing visual effect (Aydınlı, 1993: 98). In accordance with Gestalt principles; mind firstly divides objects it perceives visually into two parts including figure-ground. Also, there are other grouping methods such as symmetry-balance, rate-scale (visual hierarchy), proximity-similarity, closure (integration) and continuity (permanance) (Guberman, 2015).

Since visual perception is a concept varying from person to person, it may be more reliable to evaluate visual effect in formal ways without depending on interpretations. In this concept, visual effect evaluation of a building may be analyzed in accordance with design elements used in the building and the principles of these elements to gather (Aydınlı, 1992: 93).

That's why, visual effect study criteria were primarily described in order to evaluate visual effect on the front systems of houses in



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this study. Based on Gestalt principles, these criteria were figure-ground relation, symmetry-balance, rate-scale (visual hierarchy), repetition- rhythm, proximity-similarity, closure (integration) and continuity (permanance), contradiction and articulation. In addition to these principles, form, color and fabric elements from basic design elements and playing roles in visual effect were included in criteria.

RESULTS

For 5 traditional buildings which were located at the Diyarbakır Suriçi Region and protected its historical feature and 5 different current houses near them, 57% males, 43% females participated in the study, 92% of them was aged between 16-25, 8% was aged between 26-35.

The buildings included in the Part 2 of the questionnaire were evaluated in accordance with photo-questionnaire, data were presented at Table 2.



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PHOTO A1	PHOTO A2	PHOTO A3	4,07	3,86	3,4	3,67	3,86	3,95	3,62	3,67	2,71	2,76	3,72	3,92	43,21 High
			1,73	1,72	2	2,01	1,98	1,97	2,24	2,03	2,85	1,95	1,5	1,5	23,48 Low
PHOTO B1	PHOTO B2	PHOTO B3													
			3,86	3,92	3,95	3,96	4,09	4,01	3,84	4,07	3,53	3,61	3,79	3,86	46,49 High
PHOTO C1	PHOTO C2	PHOTO C3													
			1,94	1,98	2,58	2,48	1,68	1,54	2,53	1,62	2,7	1,28	1,81	1,74	23,88 Low
PHOTO D1	PHOTO D2	PHOTO D3													
			4,42	4,45	4,22	4,32	4,35	4,28	4,2	4,23	3,37	3,91	4,31	4,42	50,48 Very High
PHOTO E1	PHOTO E2	PHOTO E3													
HOUSES			Relation of Figure-Ground	Form	Symmetry-Balance	Rate-Scale	Repetition-Rhyme	Proximity-Similarity	Closure (Integration)	Continuity (Permanence)	Contradiction	Articulation	Color	Fabric	Quality Point

Table 2. Visual Quality Evaluation of Houses in Photo- Questionnaires

HOUSES	Relation of Figure-Ground	Form	Symmetry-Balance	Rate-Scale	Repetition-Rhythm	Proximity-Similarity	Closure (Integration)	Continuity (Permanence)	Contradiction	Articulation	Color	Fabric	Quality Point
  	2,36	1,45	2,17	2,23	1,01	2,2	1,54	2,18	3,1	2,44	1,39	1,25	23,32 Low
  	4,18	4,16	4,19	4,03	4,08	4,1	4,12	3,93	4,17	4,06	4,26	4,05	49,33 Very High
  	1,6	1,43	1,41	1,53	1,47	1,55	1,72	1,55	2,57	1,63	1,41	1,31	19,18 Low
  	3,74	4,16	4,26	3,98	4,35	4,28	4,31	4,46	4,17	4,15	4,21	4,02	50,09 Very High
  	1	1	1,03	1	1,02	1	1,02	1,08	1,04	1,06	1	1,02	12,27 Very Low

CONCLUSION

As a result of the questionnaire evaluation in the Diyarbakır Suriçi Region, it is clear that visual quality of chosen traditional houses was high. But visual quality was low in current houses near them.

In all perceptions; there is a relation between figure and ground. Figure is a center an individual focuses on. Ground is an infrastructure remained back and not considered. Figure has more attractive characteristics than ground. In questionnaire evaluation; it is seen that back or fore plan development effect was correctly built on the positions of structures buildings

in urban pattern in chosen traditional houses under the relation of figure-ground. However, there was not any relation between figure-ground in current houses chosen near them.

A ground is necessary for placing forms in composition. When forms are arranged in closely spaces and without space on the ground, eyes classify forms into groups, perceive them. Since eyes have tendency for completing missing forms, it must be paid attention while placing forms on the ground. Even if forms used in light colors on the ground with dark colors have small dimensions, they seem to be more forefront. According to this, forms placed in traditional fabric samples cho-



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sen for the study are in accordance with a certain order, and that's why, the questionnaire participants grouped forms, perceived them. As seen at Table 2, the view of building form and building from different directions in current houses was neglected in terms of construction.

Balance shows itself in forms, colors, movements, dark-light issues. When colors, values, fabrics, directions, spaces and scales of objects included in an arrangement are compared in each other, these features are assessed together, a balance is required and searched.

When unbalance is observed in any work, items involving unbalance are studied in terms of issues such as color, scale, value, space, direction, and so on, then balance is kept. If unbalance does not come to attention in any arrangement, balance is a matter of subject.

By virtue of the questionnaire; the subjects seemed to be balanced in traditional fabrics in terms of color, scale, value, space. In current houses, it was seen that there was not attractive force of form or front elements to gravity center on a certain axis of building front in symmetry-balance analysis.

Dimensional perception is regarded as a part of visual perception. Measurements of objects are associated with relations of measure-

ments with other ones and scales. The type of dimensional perception represents the effect of scale in perception of place. When mentioning about the scale in place, one who uses the relevant other places and objects, is a person, the scale of person is based on design. In consequence of the questionnaire; the analysis showed that measurements of objects in fronts, relations of measurements with other measurements and scales were correctly built in chosen traditional houses but there was no such a construction in other samples.

Repetitive elements draw our attention to the type, direction and mobility of fronts and are perceived immediately. When regular usage of lines achieves in rhythm naturally, rhythmic character occurs (Kızıllı, 2000: 43).

Repetitions and rhythms were regularly applied in both window apertures and patterns in traditional house fronts within the study. In current houses, b elements were completely arranged at random, there was not any order, more than one elements were not used.

Objects similar to each other make perceptual integration in a group. Objects close to each other in persons' mind are grouped. Stimulants close to each other are assessed in a pattern (AOF Publications, 2015).



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DISCUSSION

In architectural design, it is necessary to meet new requirements and demands within social change conditions; most considerably, increase social consciousness level in parallel with the change. Otherwise, housing lack of quality and objective is rapidly multiplied, visual quality is affected in negative ways. Due to these relevant issues, this study aimed to respond to problems guiding current negative developments via positive values in our past and contribute to enhance visual quality of houses to be done in recent times.

Within this study, visual landscape quality of fronts was evaluated for traditional and current houses chosen as samples in the Diyarbakır Suriçi Region towards Gestalt principles, missing quality criteria were determined. In these determinations, it was concluded that quality of traditional houses was high but low in current houses.

SUGGESTIONS

Today increasing quality in design of houses to be built must be considered in terms of Gestalt principles. Hereby, in new houses to be built within regions especially involving historical traditional houses, the following items must be considered;

- the back or fore plan development effect of building contour on their building

position in urban pattern under figure-ground relation,

- the view of building form and building from various directions in form analysis,
- the tractive force of form or front elements for gravity center to their own side on a certain axis in house front in symmetry- balance analysis,
- the strong effect of an element or a form design on visual perception rather than all in rate-scale (visual hierarchy-focus point) analysis,
- whether building elements more than one are used in a certain order in repetition-rhythm analysis,
- the perception tendency of elements close and similar to each other as a combined group in visual field in proximity-similarity analysis,
- whether building form and front-roof systems create unity in closure (integration) analysis,
- whether elements included in visual perception are continuously placed in continuity (permanence) analysis,
- whether there is an element against all designs in contradiction analysis,



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- whether roof and front movements follow each other to provide integration in articulation analysis,
- the role of color used in external shell of building in visual perception color analysis,
- visual effect of materials used in external shell of building via lights in fabric analysis.

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