

Drawing Connections to Archaeological Context: New Mudbrick/*Kerpiç* Designs for Tayinat/Kunulua on the Amuq Plain



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ABSTRACT

A 7th semester interdisciplinary architectural design studio at the Architecture Department of Mustafa Kemal University in Hatay brought together an architect, an urban designer and an archaeologist with architecture students. The project enabled the students to explore the archaeological site of Tell Tayinat on the Amuq Plain from different angles in order to create contemporary designs, aimed at research, preservation and presentation of the ancient site, while drawing inspiration from its historic context. Students determined the challenges that Tayinat presented as an archaeological setting for contemporary designs. They observed characteristics of mudbrick and addressed a variety of associated functional, logistic, topographical, climatic and protective requirements in their projects. Not all designs utilized mudbrick. Some preferred other natural materials, such as wood, though these designs could also be transformed into mudbrick. Those that relied on the vernacular focused on traditional mudbrick technology and were challenged by natural limitations, such as durability, strength and size. Others combined contemporary construction techniques with mudbrick, where mudbrick functioned only aesthetically as a finishing material, or utilized contemporary mudbrick technologies in accordance with current construction and spatial needs. Students explored uses and technologies of mudbrick at the site and elsewhere, addressing issues of climate-control and eco-friendliness, and scrutinizing the adaptability of contemporary designs to archaeological contexts. The results of this elective design studio, which presented the students with the challenges of an archaeological context, also provided on-site experience and research-by-design & design-by-research and defined their experience in architectural learning. The variety in projects and results generated discourse and should be emphasized as it paved the way for addressing similar dynamics also found at other sites.

Keywords: Tayinat, Antakya, *Kerpiç*/Mudbrick, research-by-design, architectural design in archaeological context