Research Article

Seating units designed inspired by the cultural elements of Anatolian civilizations

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Abstract
Anatolia has hosted various civilizations as a bridge between the continents of Asia and Europe for thousands of years. Among the civilizations that flourished in the region are the Hittite, Phrygian, Urartian, Lydian, Persian, and Ionian periods. In the Furniture Design I course, seating units inspired by these civilizations were used as materials. The aim of this study is to ensure cultural continuity within the context of interior architecture by enabling interior architecture students to use the historical elements of Anatolia as a source of inspiration for contemporary designs. A mixed methods design was utilized in the study. Qualitative methods such as case study, content analysis, and visual analysis were employed. For the quantitative methods, comparative analysis was used. The findings obtained within the scope of the study have revealed that art and religious elements are the most widely used cultural elements in design processes. Additionally, the high integration rates of cultural elements, such as historical and continuous symbols, social life, traditions, and customs into the designs create a bridge between the past and the future and ensure cultural continuity. In this context, the use of cultural elements in designs not only adds aesthetic and functional richness but also serves to preserve social memory and transmit it to future generations.

Keywords: Furniture design, Anatolian civilizations, Cultural elements, Seating units, Interior architecture

Extended Abstract

Introduction: Anatolia, with its geopolitical position and rich history, holds a significant place in world history. Geographically located at the intersection of the continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa, Anatolia has been home to numerous civilizations since prehistoric times. Archaeological excavations have provided evidence that people have lived in this region since the Paleolithic Age. Many great civilizations, from the Hittites to the Ottoman Empire, have left their mark on these lands over a vast period. This study focuses on furniture fittings designed by designers who drew inspiration from the cultural heritage of civilizations that ruled Anatolia. Conducted within the scope of the Furniture Design I course; this study aims to encourage students to create innovative and creative designs by drawing inspiration from their geographical and historical heritage. Another objective of the study is to observe how the cultural elements of Anatolian civilizations can be utilized in contemporary furniture design and to evaluate how these elements can be integrated into final products. During the research process, an extensive literature review on culture and Anatolian civilizations was conducted, and this data was compiled with the support of various methodologies. In the findings section, the cultural elements chosen as sources of inspiration are introduced in detail, and in the conclusion section, connections are made between how these elements were used in the design process and the characteristics of the resulting final products. In this context, this study is considered an important step in supporting cultural continuity and building bridges between history and modern design.

Purpose and scope: The study encompasses multiple objectives. The primary objective is to contribute to the preservation of cultural continuity within the scope of interior architecture education. Another objective is to raise awareness among interior architecture students about the rich historical elements present in their geography, which can serve as sources of inspiration for contemporary designs, thereby ensuring cultural continuity in the context of interior architecture. Consequently, students in the Interior Architecture program at Atatürk University's Faculty of Architecture and Design were tasked with designing seating units inspired by civilizations that ruled in Anatolia as part of the Furniture Design II course. Within this framework, the scope of the study has been defined as cultural elements and the civilizations that ruled

Anatolia. The civilizations considered within the scope include the Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, Ionians, Urartians, and Persians. The seating units designed by using the cultural elements of these societies as sources of inspiration constitute the material of this study.

Method: A mixed methods design was utilized in the study. Qualitative methods such as case study, content analysis, and visual analysis were employed. For the quantitative methods, comparative analysis was used. The study employed a case study where the designed seating units constituted the sample and content analysis was conducted to identify cultural elements. Additionally, a comparative analysis method was used. The results obtained in the study were supported by visual analysis through graphical representations. Various methods were employed within the scope of this study. First, a literature review was conducted, incorporating research on culture and cultural continuity. Subsequently, the civilizations that ruled Anatolia were identified, and information about them was compiled. The seating units, which constitute the sample of the study, were introduced, and these units were examined in connection with the civilizations that ruled Anatolia. In these examinations, the cultural elements used in designing the seating units were identified. The identified cultural elements were evaluated using the classification obtained from the literature review and analyzed comparatively. As a result, the cultural elements and characteristics that were most utilized to ensure cultural continuity were determined. This evaluation was supported by visual analysis through graphical representations.

Findings and conclusion: Within the scope of the study, the most frequently used cultural elements were identified as artworks and religious elements. In the evaluation conducted within the context of the classification of cultural elements used, the characteristic of being abstractable was found to be a feature utilized in all designs. Historical continuity, symbols, social life, traditions, customs, and social activities were features utilized in 66% of the designs. Functional characteristics, values, norms, and rules were used in 50% of the designs. Social integration, religion, and beliefs were present in 33% of the designs. Environmental, public life, personal life, personal curiosity, and attitudes were used in 16.66% of the designs. However, characteristics such as learnability, variability, language, laws, and moral codes were not featured in any of the designs. These findings provide significant insights into how cultural elements can be integrated into modern design processes and underscore the role of design in transmitting cultural heritage to future generations. The research demonstrates how cultural elements can be used as sources of inspiration for designers and highlights the importance of design as a tool for ensuring cultural continuity. In this context, the integration of cultural elements into design not only preserves the legacy of the past but also adds meaning and depth to the designs of the future.

Keywords: Furniture design, Anatolian civilizations, Cultural elements, Seating units, Interior architecture

INTRODUCTION

Anatolia, with its geographical location, rich history, and its role as the host of various civilizations, has held a significant place in world history. When examining the position of Anatolia on the world map, it is known that it is located at the point where the landmasses of Asia, Europe, and Africa, considered the oldest continents, come closest to each other (Çoban, 2013: 29). In this context, Anatolia has held a geopolitically important position throughout history. It has especially served as a bridge connecting the continents of Asia and Europe. Due to its location, the lands of Anatolia have hosted numerous civilizations. Since prehistoric times, various societies have ruled over the lands of Anatolia. It is known that some documents from Mesopotamia dating back to 3000 BCE mention the lands of Anatolia (Konyar, 2010: 6). Archaeological excavations have revealed evidence of human habitation in Anatolia dating back to the Paleolithic Age. Following the Paleolithic Age, the Mesolithic, Neolithic, and Bronze Ages were sequentially experienced in this region (Kılıç, 2015: 120). The societies that ruled during these periods on Anatolian soil have been significant and influential both historically and currently, for regional powers and the world (Çoban, 2013: 29). For thousands of years, these lands have hosted numerous civilizations, bearing the traces of many great empires, from the Hittites to the Roman Empire and from the Seljuks to the Ottoman Empire. The rich historical heritage of Anatolia, with its archaeological remains, architectural structures, and cultural values, continues to maintain its significance in the world. Based on historical documents available about Anatolia, the civilizations that ruled these lands have been identified. These societies are sequentially named as the Hittite Empire, the Phrygian Kingdom, the Urartian Kingdom, the Lydian Kingdom, the Persian Rule, and the Hellenistic Period (Konyar, 2010: 6-8).

This study focuses on various civilizations that have secured a prominent place in Anatolia's rich history. Within the scope of the study, seating units designed in the Furniture Design I course, inspired by the influences of the Hittite, Phrygian, Urartian, Lydian, Persian, and Hellenistic periods, were used as the material for the study. Multiple objectives were determined when structuring the study. The primary objective is to raise

awareness among interior architecture students about the rich history present in their geography, which contains many elements that can serve as sources of inspiration for contemporary designs, thereby ensuring cultural continuity in the context of interior architecture. Another objective of the study is to observe the usability of cultural elements from the civilizations that ruled Anatolia as sources of inspiration in contemporary furniture design and to evaluate the use of these cultural elements in the final products within this context.

Within the scope of the study, the topics were first determined during the literature review phase. The subjects of culture and the civilizations that ruled Anatolia were researched, and the obtained data were compiled and presented. Subsequently, under the heading of material and method, the methods used in the study were conveyed both verbally and graphically. In the findings section, the sample was introduced, and the cultural elements used as sources of inspiration were presented. In the evaluation section, connections between the characteristics of the final seating units and the cultural elements that served as sources of inspiration were demonstrated. The cultural elements used in the study were compared with the data obtained from the literature review.

Literature Review

The literature review for this study addressed two topics. The first topic is culture and research related to culture was conducted and presented. The second topic addressed is the civilizations that ruled over the lands of Anatolia. The civilizations that inspired the examples to be examined in the study are identified as the Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, Ionians, Urartians, and Persians. Research conducted on these identified civilizations was also explained within the scope of the literature review.

Culture

The concept of culture, according to the Turkish Language Association dictionary, is defined as the material and spiritual values created within the framework of the social development process. Additionally, culture is described as a means that demonstrates the extent of human dominance over their social and natural environment, transmitted to subsequent generations (TDK, n.d.). In various sources, culture is characterized as a social heritage. It is defined as the sum of the spiritual and material elements developed in addressing society's basic needs, such as clothing, shelter, and protection (Örnek, 1971: 148; Erdentuğ, 1986: 130). Parekh (2002) describes culture as a system of significance and meaning developed over time. In this context, he provides a broad definition of culture as a system of beliefs and justice used in the understanding, regulation, and structuring of individual and collective life. Herskovits (1952) explains culture in its simplest form, encompassing all these definitions. He states that culture is a human-made environment (Turgut, 1990: 31). Güvenç (2002: 95) approaches the concept of culture in four different meanings: the accumulation of a society or all societies, the society itself, the combination of social processes, and the theory of human and society.

To make the concept of culture, which can be defined in many ways across different disciplines and perspectives, more comprehensible, it is necessary to understand its characteristics and elements. Güvenç (2002: 101-104) lists the characteristics of culture as being learnable, historical and continuous, social, functional, integrative, variable, and abstractable. Barutçugil (2011: 26-27) explains the elements that constitute culture as language, religion and beliefs, values, norms and rules, attitudes, symbols, and laws and moral codes. In his study examining the elements that constitute culture, Taş (2017: 5-6) utilizes Newmark's (2010) classification. In this context, he considers cultural elements as environmental, public life, social life, personal life, traditions, customs and social activities, personal curiosities, and passions.

The continuity of culture, which is shaped uniquely to societies and develops through processes, by being transmitted to future generations is also an important issue. In this context, there are economic, political, physical, social, and religious factors that influence the continuity of culture (Mumcu, 2009: 13-14).

Civilizations that Ruled in Anatolia

The Hittites were a society that continued the Hatti culture within their civilization by being influenced by the culture and art of the Hatti civilization that existed in Anatolia before them (Salihoğlu & Demirarslan, 2018: 1762). The period during which the Hittite civilization lived in Anatolia is examined in various phases.

Initially, the Hittite civilization is studied as the Period of Principalities, the Old Kingdom Period, and the Great Kingdom Period, during which it maintained its dominance in Anatolia for 800 years (Akurgal, 2005: 49-50). The Hittite civilization had a polytheistic religion. The gods, in their beliefs, played an important role in their social and political lives. They had many gods and goddesses that shaped their social and political life, including the Sky God, the Goddess, Local Gods, Animal Gods, and Goddesses (Kayaöz, 2019: 106). As part of the Great Goddess cult, the Hittites worshipped goddesses named Hepat, Kubaba, and Šauška. They used different symbols in their works for these goddesses. Symbols such as ears of wheat, the sun, and pomegranates were associated with the goddesses and used in their artworks and architectural structures (Karakaya, 2022: 7). During the 800 years of Hittite rule over Anatolia, they made significant advancements in architecture and art. They produced notable works, especially in the art of depiction (Sevin, 2004: 176). During the Hittite period, art evolved as a synthesis influenced by all the ethnic groups that made up the society and the surrounding cultures they dominated. One of the major contributions of Hittite architecture to the lands of Anatolia was monumentality (Sivas, 2019: 47). While symmetry was used in the design of monumental structures in Hittite architecture, asymmetrical design was used in other architectural works (Özgül, 2008: 17). Girginer (1996) examined and classified Hittite period furniture through the art of depiction. His classification includes backless stools and thrones with backs.

By the second half of the 13th century BCE, the influence of the Hittite civilization in Anatolia began to wane. During this period, the Phrygians, who are believed to have come from Macedonia, began to strengthen in the region. Following the fall of the Hittites, the Phrygians became a significant political power in the region from the 8th century BCE onwards (Bülbül, 2009: 80). The Phrygians made numerous contributions to the architecture of Anatolia. The tradition of tumuli was established in Anatolia thanks to the Phrygians and was adopted and used by various cultures (Erdan, 2015: 103). They also developed a type of structure known as the megaron, which was used as a large gathering area for men (Bülbül, 2009: 88). The Phrygians employed geometric decorations in their architecture (Sungurlu et al., 2021: 58). They also used wood as a material in furniture making. The furniture they designed was assembled using interlocking techniques and adorned with geometric motifs (Pekyaman, 2008: 16). The Urartian civilization was a kingdom that ruled from 1274 BCE to the early 6th century BCE (Keser et al., 2022: 93). Geographically, the Urartian Kingdom ruled over an area that includes present-day Eastern Anatolia, Northwestern Iran, and the borders of Armenia (Yücel et al., 2023: 11). The Urartian civilization had a polytheistic belief system. They established a state pantheon that included local gods within the administration of the country (Belli, 1979: 29). Inscriptions have revealed that they had a chief god named Haldi (Piotrovskiy, 1965: 37). In Urartian architecture, fortresses were significant structures as they protected their fortresses with monumental walls. Additionally, they carried out interior architectural solutions for temples and palaces within the fortresses (Keser et al., 2022: 93). Urartian art was influenced by various cultures such as Syria, Anatolia, and Assyria, leading to the development of a unique identity in their art (Sivas, 2019: 53).

In the lands of Western Anatolia, the regions of Gediz and Küçük Menderes were under Lydian domination. Although the exact origins of the Lydians are not well known, archaeological remains date their presence in Anatolia between 700 and 300 BCE (Temiz, 2007: 15). The Lydians adopted a polytheistic belief system, with the greatest reverence given to the Mother Goddess Cybele, also known as Kuyaya. One of the Lydians' most significant contributions to human history was being the first society to use money. They used gold coins adorned with lion figures (Sivas, 2019: 58). Architectural remains from the Lydian period that have survived to the present day are quite scarce. However, the royal tumuli known as Bin Tepeler, located 11 kilometers north of the city of Sardis, have survived as examples of monumental architecture. It has been determined that cut limestone and marble were used in these tumuli. These examples are among the most significant works of Lydian stone craftsmanship (Yegül, 2020: 147).

The Persians began their presence in the region, extending from the Iranian plateau to the Kızılırmak River in Anatolia. However, with the fall of the Lydian Kingdom, they also began to dominate Western Anatolia. By the end of the 4th century BCE, they had established control over all of Anatolia (Tosun et al., 2021: 107-108). Ruling Anatolia for over 200 years, the Persians adopted a provincial system in their state administration (Tosun, 2022: 382). Their religious beliefs differed somewhat from other civilizations. According to their beliefs, they performed various worship rituals for Zeus. However, they did not engage in constructing temples

or using different art forms like sculptures to pay homage to their gods (Herodotus, 1991: 131). During their rule, the Persians made significant contributions to the architecture, art, and socio-cultural context of the region they occupied. Architecturally, the apadana reception hall structures of the Persians stood out as notable architectural works they left in Anatolia (Yiğitpaşa & Öztürk, 2020: 242).

The Ionians were a civilization established by tribes that migrated from Athens to Anatolia (Kurt, 2010: 77). The coastline of Ionia is known to be 650 kilometers long. The establishment of Ionia, consisting of 12 cities, was realized through a religious federation (Yüksel, 2012: 10). The Ionians in Western Anatolia were advanced societies both culturally and economically from ancient times. Even during the period under Persian rule, the cultural and economic organizations of the cities were not adversely affected (Pedersen, 2020; Büyüközer, 2022: 68). From the 6th century BCE onwards, the Ionians developed themselves in fields such as philosophy, biology, and architecture (Kortanoğlu, 2019: 72).

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a mixed-methods design was preferred to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Qualitative methods, including case study, content analysis, and visual analysis, were employed. A comparative analysis was conducted using the quantitative method. The reason for choosing the mixed-methods approach was to allow a more in-depth examination of the relationship between cultural continuity and the seating units included in the sample by complementing qualitative and quantitative data. A case study was conducted with the designed seating units as the sample, and a content analysis was carried out to identify cultural elements. Additionally, a comparative analysis method was employed, comparing the data obtained from the literature review with the designed seating units to identify elements that play a significant role in ensuring cultural continuity and to determine the characteristics of these elements. The findings of the study were supported by visual analysis through graphical representations. The visual analysis method expanded the scope of the research by presenting qualitative analysis findings with visual support, thereby facilitating a more comprehensible interpretation of the data obtained. Through visual analysis, it was determined that the cultural elements, symbols, and forms used in the design process contribute to cultural continuity by bridging the past and present. The integration of the methods selected for use in the study extends the scope of the research by comparing findings from qualitative analyses with quantitative data.

In this study, the civilizations that once ruled Anatolia were used as a source of inspiration to ensure cultural continuity. Based on this, third-year students in the Department of Interior Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture and Design, Atatürk University, were assigned the topic of civilizations in Anatolia as part of the Furniture Design I course. The students voluntarily divided themselves into groups, with each group being assigned a different Anatolian civilization. Subsequently, the student groups were asked to conduct research on their assigned civilization. Each group then presented their research on the civilization they were assigned. As a result of their research, each group identified a starting point for their design based on the data they obtained about their assigned civilization. Subsequently, the students designed seating units that bore traces of these civilizations. The limitation of the study lies in selecting the work conducted within a single class as the sample, as the limited number of seating units produced consequently restricts the study's findings. Expanding the sample or selecting designs by professional designers as the sample has been planned as the next step of this study. In this way, the limitations of the study will be addressed.

The designed seating units constituted the sample of the study. The final products obtained within the scope of the study were examined in connection with the civilizations discussed in the literature. These examinations identified which cultural elements from various civilizations were fundamental in designing the seating units. Subsequently, a comparative analysis was conducted using a table to determine the characteristics of the cultural elements utilized. The study aimed to identify the prominent elements that ensure cultural continuity in this context. A graphical representation of the methods used in the study is shown in Figure 1.
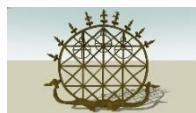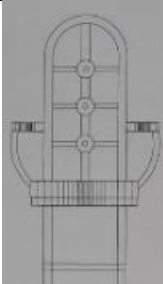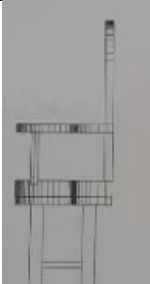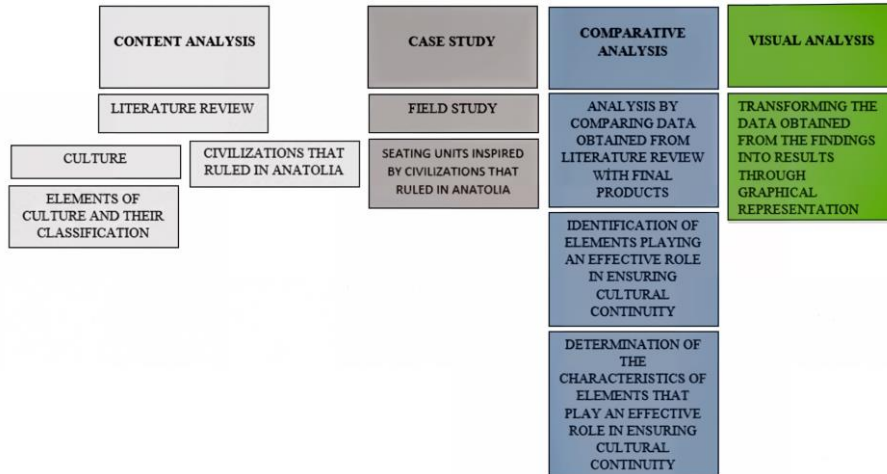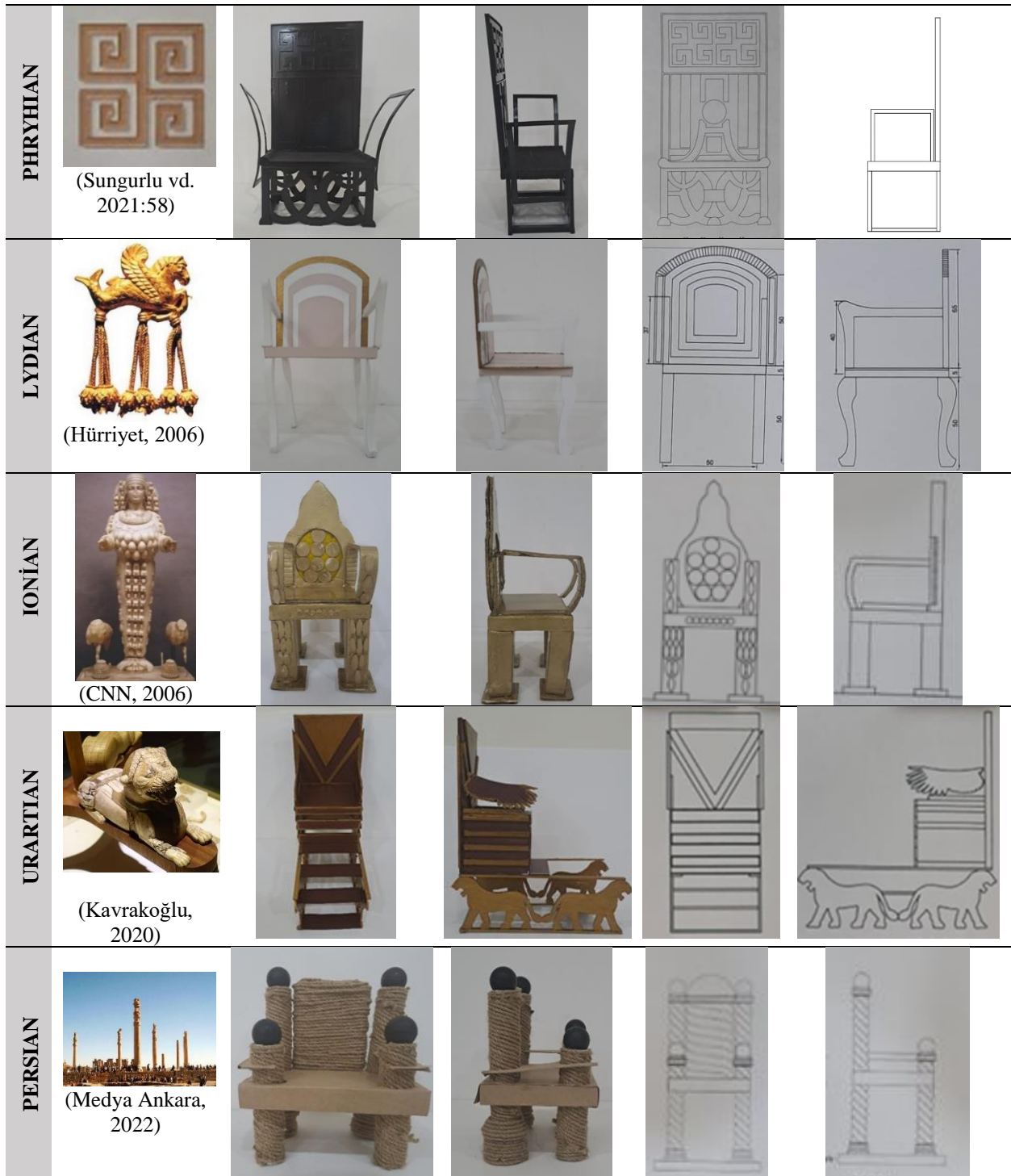
Figure 1. Methods used in the study

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

Within the scope of this study, the designs created by third-year students of the Interior Architecture Department at the Faculty of Architecture and Design, Atatürk University, during a five-week period as part of the Furniture Design I course, were examined. In this context, the students were introduced to the topics of the Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, Ionians, Urartians, and Persians during the first class. Subsequently, the forty-person class was divided into six groups, and the topics were distributed among these groups. The students formed the groups voluntarily. However, before the groups were formed, it was explained that the student groups would engage in tasks such as research, abstraction, sketching, modeling, prototyping, and technical drawing as part of the study. The reason for this was to encourage students to form their groups considering the division of tasks. The instructors did not intervene in the distribution of tasks within the groups. The groups were asked to conduct research on the civilizations assigned to them. During the second class, the students presented their research. Following these presentations, the students were asked to use the civilizations they had researched as a starting point to design a seating unit. In the initial stage, groups faced challenges in identifying their starting points. This was because the instructors emphasized that the selected starting points should contribute to the design. Consequently, students received feedback to ensure that the starting points were chosen from elements reflecting the cultures of their assigned civilizations. During the third class, the students' sketches were reviewed, and feedback was provided for improvement. The most significant issue observed during the feedback sessions was the abstraction process. The groups tended to use the elements they identified in their original forms rather than abstracting them. At this point, the instructors emphasized that the elements should not be used in their original forms and encouraged the students to push their abstractions further to achieve a more modern design. During the fourth class, the refined sketches and models were evaluated. In the fifth class, the final products were collected from the students. The final products, which constitute the sample of the study, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Seating units designed inspired by civilizations that ruled Anatolia

STARTING POINTS	MODEL IMAGES		VIEV SCHEMES	
HITTITE (Şeker, 2024)				

PHRYHIAN	(Sungurlu vd. 2021:58)				
LYDIAN	(Hürriyet, 2006)				
IONİAN	(CNN, 2006)				
URARTIAN	(Kavrakoğlu, 2020)				
PERSIAN	(Medya Ankara, 2022)				

The group, inspired by the Hittites, based their design on the deer sun disk, a religious symbol associated with the Hittite Sun God, as identified through their research. The group explained their choice of this symbol by noting its continued recognition by a broad audience today. In their design, they incorporated a reinterpretation of the sun disk into the backrest of the seating unit. To symbolize the sunrise, they extended the backrest of the seating unit in their design. The group abstracted the sun disk, a religious symbol, into a minimal form to reflect its enduring recognition in the modern day.

The group, inspired by the Phrygians, drew upon a motif commonly used as a decorative element in Phrygian furniture. The group explained that their choice of this motif was influenced by their intention to utilize the

wooden joinery technique characteristic of that period in their design, making the motif a suitable starting point for this technique. Since their starting point was a motif, they incorporated it into their design with minimal transformation, adhering to the principle of repetition. They aimed to create a distinct effect by repeating this motif on the backrest of the seating unit. Additionally, the group applied the wooden joinery technique used in Phrygian furniture when designing the legs of the seating unit.

The group, inspired by the Lydians, based their design on a work of art from the Lydian period. The artwork in question is a brooch made of gold and glass. The group explained that their choice of a gold brooch as their starting point was intended as a reference to the invention of coinage during the Lydian period. In their final product, they incorporated a gold-colored strip to evoke a resemblance to the brooch that inspired them. By abstracting the layers present in the winged figure of the brooch, they integrated these elements into the backrest of the seating unit.

The group, inspired by the Ionians, based their design on a depiction of the goddess Cybele from Ionian art. The group stated that their choice of this starting point was due to the widespread recognition of the Cybele figure. They abstracted the depiction of Cybele and integrated it into their seating unit designs. Traces of this abstraction can be observed in the backrest and leg components of the final product.

The group, inspired by the Urartians, incorporated the lion figure, a symbol of divine power in Urartian art, into their design. They explained their choice of this figure as a starting point due to its association with conveying strength. Through the lion figure, which represents power in Urartian art, the group aimed to emphasize the significance of the person seated on the unit. However, during the abstraction process, they were unable to achieve the desired success in attributing power to the seated individual. Consequently, they decided to use the lion figure in its original form. In this project, the seating unit was designed as a throne accessed by steps, with the legs shaped like lion figures.

The group, inspired by the Persians, based their design on the ancient city of Persepolis. They explained their choice of an ancient city as a starting point by emphasizing its survival to the present day. Highlighting the significance of this city as a representation of Persian civilization in contemporary times, the group introduced it as their point of departure. They abstracted the general appearance of the ancient city and integrated it into the design of the seating unit. In this context, they aimed to make the structure of the seating unit resemble the overall appearance of the city.

The group, inspired by the Hittites, abstracted the sun disk they used as their starting point by employing a process of reduction. They incorporated this abstraction into the backrest of the seating unit, achieving a more noticeable level of abstraction as a result. The group inspired by the Phrygians chose a motif from this civilization for their design. Without applying abstraction, they integrated the motif into their design through the principle of repetition. Without applying abstraction, they incorporated the motif into their design through the principle of repetition. In their design, the group repeated this motif on the backrest and leg components of the seating unit. However, due to the group's choice of color, the repetition of the motif was not particularly successful in making itself felt in the final product. The group inspired by the Lydians selected a brooch made of gold as their starting point. However, they were unable to reflect this in their design effectively due to their inability to execute the abstraction process correctly. The group inspired by the Ionians chose a figure depicting the goddess Cybele as their starting point. Owing to the nature of the chosen figure, they performed the abstraction process more successfully. They effectively reflected the characteristics of the figure in their design by incorporating its elements into the color, backrest, armrests, and legs of the seating unit.

To provide a more holistic perspective on the designs included in the sample, the final products were compared. The comparison was based on the criteria of aesthetic appeal, cultural accuracy, functionality, innovation, choice of starting point, abstraction, and reflection in design. In this context, the six designs were scored for each criterion on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being the lowest and 6 being the highest. The results of the comparison are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of the designs included in the sample

Criteria	Hittites	Phrygian	Lydian	Ionian	Urartian	Persian
Aesthetic Appeal	6	5	4	3	1	2
Cultural Accuracy	5	6	2	4	3	1
İnnovation	4	3	2	5	1	6
Functionality	3	2	6	5	1	4
Choice of Starting Point	5	6	3	4	2	1
Abstraction,	5	4	2	6	1	3
Reflection İn Design	4	5	1	6	2	3
Equal	32	31	20	33	11	20

As a result of the comparison conducted to achieve a holistic perspective on the final products in the sample, it was determined that the groups working on the Ionian, Hittite, and Phrygian civilizations produced better final products. The groups working on the Lydian and Persian civilizations achieved products of equal quality. The group with the lowest-performing outcome was the one working on the Urartian civilization.

Evaluation

The examples discussed within the scope of the study are seating units designed inspired by the Hittite, Phrygian, Lydian, Ionian, Urartian, and Persian civilizations, as introduced in the previous section. The groups researched these civilizations and designed seating units by considering their various characteristics. During the design phase, the groups considered different cultural elements of the civilizations. The starting points of the groups, the cultural elements on which these starting points are based, and the areas used in the design of the seating unit are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Cultural elements of civilizations used in the design of seating units

Civilizations	Starting Point	Cultural Element	Area of Design Where the Cultural Element is Used
Hittite	Sun Disk	Religious	Seating Unit Backrest
Phrygian	Furniture Decoration Motif, Furniture Construction Technique	Furniture Art	Seating Unit Backrest Seating Unit Legs
Lydian	Brooch	Art Piece	Material Color
Ionian	Goddess Cybele	Religious	Seating Unit Backrest Seating Unit Legs
Urartian	Lion Figure	Sculpture	Seating Unit Legs
Persian	Ancient City	Architecture	Structure of the Seating Unit

The groups generally focused on different cultural elements. Religious elements were considered in the design of the seating units for the Hittite and Ionian civilizations. The group, inspired by the Phrygian civilization, focused on Phrygian furniture art. The group that worked on the Lydian civilization drew inspiration from an art piece, specifically a brooch. The group examining the Urartian civilization used a lion figure inspired by Urartian sculpture art. The group that worked on the Persian civilization, incorporated the silhouette of the ancient city into their furniture design, drawing from architecture. However, when examined overall, more groups used art as a cultural element in their designs, considering furniture art, sculpture, and architecture under the umbrella of art. The use of religious elements comes second.

The groups that designed seating units inspired by the civilizations that ruled Anatolia considered different cultural elements of these societies. The cultural elements addressed by the groups were evaluated within the context of the classification of cultural elements presented in the literature section of the study. The evaluation conducted is presented in Table 4.

Table 2. Most cited publications in Türkiye

		Hittite	Phrygian	Lydian	Ionian	Urartian	Persian
Güvenç (2002)	Learnable						
	Historicity and Continuity		▓		▓	▓	▓
	Sociality	▓					▓
	Functionality		▓	▓			
	Integrative				▓		
	Variable						
	Abstractablity	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Barutçugil (2011)	Language						
	Religion and Beliefs	▓			▓		
	Values, Norms and Rules		▓	▓		▓	
	Attitudes						
	Symbols	▓			▓	▓	▓
	Laws and Moral Codes						
Newmark (2010)	Environmental						▓
	Public Life						▓
	Social Life	▓			▓		▓
	Personal Life			▓			
	Customs and Social Activities	▓			▓	▓	
	Personal Curiosities and Passions			▓			

The evaluation was conducted based on the data presented in the literature section of the study. To assess cultural elements from a broad perspective, the criteria established in the works of Güvenç (2002), Barutçugil (2011), and Newmark (2010), which are widely recognized in the literature, were utilized during the evaluation process. Güvenç's (2002) classification was utilized because it addresses the social dimension of cultural elements, making it a relevant source for this study. Barutçugil's (2011) classification of cultural elements was included due to its provision of an analytical approach, offering a structured framework for evaluation. Newmark's (2010) classification of cultural elements was utilized because it considers the relationship between lifestyles and societal dynamics. This approach enabled the evaluation of the functionality of cultural elements in different contexts by employing criteria derived from data collected from various sources. However, the evaluation criteria for the cultural elements used in the study also have certain limitations. At this stage of the study, the evaluation of cultural elements was conducted within the boundaries of social, functional, and personal contexts.

The evaluation utilized the data presented in the literature section. In the first stage of the evaluation, Güvenç's (2002: 95) classification was considered. In this context, the feature of being abstractable is present in all six groups. The feature of being historical and continuous is found in the cultural elements that are the starting points for four of the works. The social feature is present in the elements utilized by the two groups. The functional feature was used by three groups. The integrative feature was used by two groups. The percentage of inclusion of the features in Güvenç's (2002: 95) classification of cultural elements within the study groups is graphically presented in Figure 2.
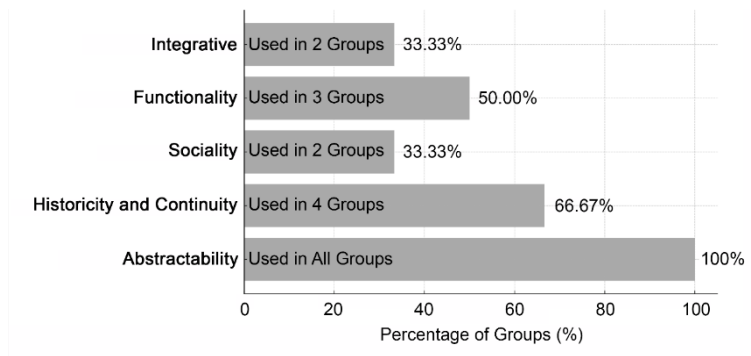
Figure 2. Percentages of features in Güvenç's (2002) classification of cultural elements used in the sample

According to the criteria outlined in Güvenç's (2002: 95) classification of cultural elements, student groups predominantly utilized the feature of abstractability. This preference is thought to be largely due to the emphasis on abstraction within design education. Following abstractability, historicity and continuity emerged as the second most commonly used cultural element in their designs. Functionality ranked third among the cultural elements employed. On the other hand, the criteria of integration and sociality were the least utilized by the student groups.

When the sample is examined within the scope of Barutçugil's (2011: 26-27) classification of cultural elements, the cultural elements considered as starting points by the groups were identified as follows: the feature of religion and beliefs was identified in 2 groups, the feature of values, norms, and rules was identified in 3 groups, and the feature of symbols was identified in 4 groups. The percentage of inclusion of the features in Barutçugil's (2011: 26-27) classification of cultural elements within the study groups is graphically presented in Figure 3.
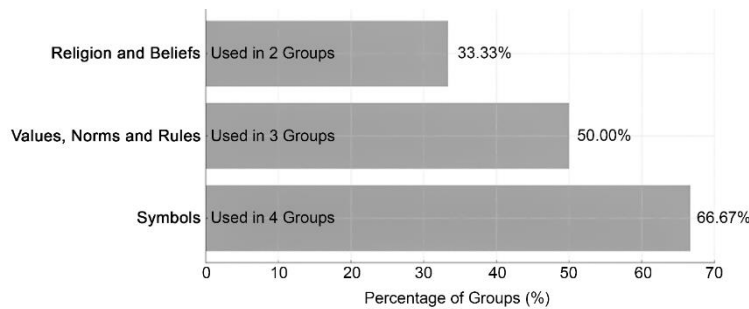
Figure 3. Percentages of features in Barutçugil's (2011) classification of cultural elements used in the sample

In Barutçugil's (2011: 26-27) classification of cultural elements, symbols emerged as a frequently utilized element by the student groups. One of the primary reasons for this was their preference for selecting visual elements encountered during their research to incorporate into their designs. Following symbols, the criterion of values, norms, and rules was the second most commonly used cultural element. Conversely, the least preferred criterion among the cultural elements employed by the students in their designs was religion and beliefs.

In the final stage, the sample was evaluated within the scope of Newmark's (2010) classification of cultural elements. In this context, the cultural elements used as starting points in the groups' designs include 1 element with an environmental feature, 1 element with a public life feature, 1 element with a personal life feature, and 1 element with a personal curiosity and attitudes feature. There are 4 starting points that exhibit the features of social life, traditions, customs, and social activities. The percentage of inclusion of the features in Newmark's (2010) classification of cultural elements within the study groups is graphically presented in Figure 4.
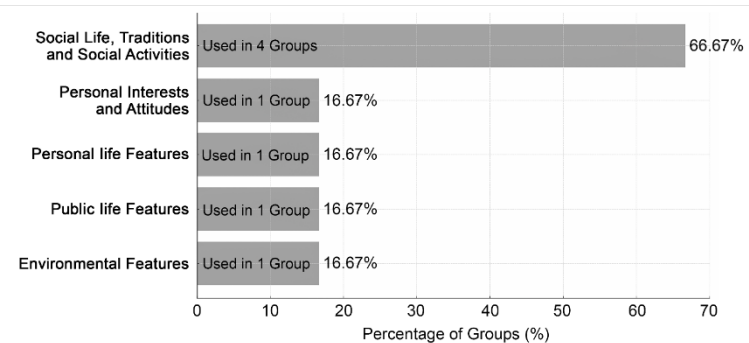
Figure 4. Percentages of features in Newmark's (2010) classification of cultural elements used in the sample

In Newmark's (2010) classification of cultural elements, the criterion of social life, traditions, and social activities was the most frequently utilized by the student groups as a cultural element in their designs. All other criteria included in this classification were employed by the student groups at the same frequency.

CONCLUSION

The lands of Anatolia have been a significant settlement area for various societies since prehistoric times. As a result, it has carried different cultural elements from many societies and has managed to bring some of these cultural elements to the present day. This study was conducted as a step towards ensuring the continuity of cultural elements. Within the scope of the study, the civilizations that ruled Anatolia were considered as a major theme. After researching these civilizations, the cultural elements obtained were used as sources of inspiration for designing seating units. By examining the seating units in the sample, the cultural elements used to ensure cultural continuity were identified. According to the findings, art-related works were the most commonly used elements among cultural elements. Following art, religious elements also stood out as significant sources of inspiration. The results of the evaluation conducted within the context of the classification of the cultural elements used are as follows:

- The feature of cultural elements being abstractable was adopted by all groups, and this feature played a critical role in enhancing the aesthetic and functional richness of the designs.
- Elements such as being historical and continuous, symbols, social life, traditions and customs, and social activities were among the most frequently used features in the design processes, with a usage rate of 66%. This is significant for the preservation of historical continuity and social memory of cultural heritage.
- Functional features, values, norms, and rules were used at a rate of 50% within the context of cultural elements.
- Social, integrative, and religious features were included in the designs at a rate of 33%.
- Environmental, public life, personal life, personal curiosity, and attitudes features were used at a rate of 16.66%.
- Learnable, variable, language, laws, and moral code features were not included in any of the designs.

The findings obtained within the scope of the study have revealed that art and religious elements are the most widely used cultural elements in design processes. Additionally, the high integration rates of cultural elements, such as historical and continuous symbols, social life, traditions, and customs, into the designs create a bridge between the past and the future and ensure cultural continuity. In this context, the use of cultural elements in designs not only adds aesthetic and functional richness but also serves to preserve social memory and transmit it to future generations. These results provide significant insights into how cultural elements can be integrated into modern design processes and underscore the role of design in transmitting cultural heritage to future generations. The research demonstrates how cultural elements can be used as sources of inspiration for designers and highlights the importance of design as a tool for ensuring cultural continuity. In this context, the integration of cultural elements into design not only preserves the legacy of the past but also adds meaning and depth to the designs of the future. Within the scope of the study, contemporary furniture designs were created by drawing inspiration from the cultural elements of civilizations that once ruled Anatolia. This approach aimed to contribute to the transmission of cultural continuity to future generations within the field of interior architecture. The process involved identifying the starting points of the student groups, abstracting their sources of inspiration, and utilizing these abstractions in modern design processes to produce seating units as final outcomes. This methodology was employed as a means of ensuring cultural continuity. The study is considered to make a significant contribution to the literature in the context of achieving cultural continuity in the field of design. By abstracting historical inspirations used in the study, the realization of modern designs not only creates an innovative context but also represents a critical step toward achieving cultural continuity in the design domain.

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