

The Use of Mud Brick in Architecture of Elazığ and Harput



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ABSTRACT

As a basic building material of Eastern Anatolia the mud-brick has been used for 3000 years in every types of building construction. From the Urartu Civilization, dated between BC 900-580, to today it has been considered as an indispensable material especially in rural areas. The number of historical sites and buildings in surrounding, and natural and cultural richness make Elazığ and Harput as two remarkable touristic cities of Turkey. Harput, which kept its dynamics until the mid-18th century, is like an open museum in terms of its mosques, churches, inns and caravanserai, baths, fountains, tombs, urban settlements and vernacular architecture. The main building materials used in Harput and Elazığ architecture are Stone, mud brick and timber. The mud brick is widely used in external and internal structural walls of traditional houses. It is important to the selection of the soil which is used in mud brick production. This soil is also used to produce mortar and plaster by mixing it with water, rock salt, woo ashes and pieces of straws. The mud based mortar is used to bond the stones in walls, and the plaster is used to smooth the surfaces of mud brick walls. The mud brick blocks which are used in traditional Harput and Elazığ houses are called as “anaç kerpiç / huge mud brick” and “kuzu kerpiç / lamb-small mud brick” according to their sizes. Also 0.10x0.60x0.60 meter sized mud-brick blocks are used in lath and plaster based walls as filling materials.

Keywords: Mud brick houses, Harput and Elazığ.