

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACES: A CASE  
STUDY ON COASTAL PARK IN MERSİN

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STUDY ON COASTAL PARK IN MERSİN**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACES: A CASE STUDY ON COASTAL PARK IN MERSİN**

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Mersin that was established as a port city in the mid 19th century, has been part of a commercial network that has led to economic, demographic and cultural interactions with Eastern Mediterranean countries. The multicultural structure of the city, which was the result of these interactions, has been preserved even though its content has changed due to different historical circumstances. Today, Kurdish and Alevi populations who migrated from the South-Eastern Anatolia in the 1990s, and Syrian Migrants forced to leave their country due to the Syrian Civil War that started in 2011 are important minority groups within the multicultural structure of the city today. It is observed that there are differences in the use of public spaces of the city between cultural groups, which lead to discontent among different groups in the city. Based on this observation, the thesis aims to evaluate the effects of the culture on the use of public spaces. The coastline of Mersin has been chosen as the case study area. For this purpose, interviews have been conducted with local people, internal immigrants and Syrian Migrants on the coastline, which is a frequently used public space in the city. At the same time, the observations have been deepened. The findings of the case study illustrate that the reason for the differences observed in the practices is not only related to the cultural differences, but they are related with the different tactics developed by the immigrants to adapt to their new environment. As a result of the thesis, it has been

shown that migrants develop different ways of adaptation to their new environment which reflects on their use of public spaces.

Keywords: Migration, Adaptation, Culture, Behavior, Public Space

## ÖZ

### **KÜLTÜREL FARKLILIĞIN KAMUSAL MEKAN KULLANIMI ÜZERİNE ETKİSİ: MERSİN SAHİL ŞERİDİ ÖRNEĞİ**

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19. yy'ın başlarında Akdeniz'de bir liman kenti olarak kurulmuş olan Mersin; iki yüz yıllık tarihi boyunca Doğu Akdeniz ülkeleri ile ekonomik, demografik ve kültürel etkileşimlere sebebiyet veren bir ticari ağ içerisinde bulunmuştur. Bu ticari ağ sayesinde ortaya çıkmış olan kentin çok kültürlü yapısı, tarih içerisinde içerik olarak değişiklik göstermiş olsa bile her zaman korunmuştur. Bugün, 20.yy'ın başında iç göçle Güneydoğu Anadolu bölgesinden gelen Kürt ve Alevi halk, ve ayrıca 2011 yılında başlayan Suriye İç Savaşından dolayı ülkesini terk etmek zorunda kalan Suriyeli bireyler kentin sahip olduğu çok-kültürlü yapının önemli bir bölümünü oluşturmaktadır. Ancak, kentin çok-kültürlü yapısını oluşturan bu grupların kentin kamusal mekanlarını kullanımlarında farklılıklar gözlemlenmiştir. Bu gözlemlerden yola çıkılarak bu tez çalışmasında, kültürün kamusal mekan kullanımı üzerine olan etkisinin değerlendirilmesi amaçlanılmıştır. Bu doğrultuda, kentin önemli bir kamusal mekanı olan sahil şeridinde yerel halk, iç göçmenler ve Suriyeli Mülteciler ile röportajlar gerçekleştirilmiş ve gözlemler derinleştirilmiştir. Yapılan saha çalışması sonucunda, kamusal mekanda farklı pratiklerin ortaya çıkmasının altında yatan sebebin, göçmenlerin yeni çevrelerine karşı geliştirdikleri farklı adaptasyon stratejileri olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Tez sonucunda çevreye adaptasyon sürecinde kültürel etkiler ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göç, Adaptasyon, Kültür, Davranış, Kamusal Mekan

To all forced migrants

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Definition of the Problem

Today, the human history is at a new turning point, and its impact on cities is not very well known yet. This change is human movement. People no longer feel obliged to live where they were born. They are abandoning the regions where they live to migrate to places that offer them more opportunities. This is sometimes an arbitrary decision, but sometimes it becomes compulsory. In some parts of the world, some people are forced to migrate because of famine and war. On the other hand, others migrate to reasons such as a more comfortable life, education, and so on. Even if states take measures to protect their borders, these efforts usually are useless in the face of human migratory movements.

Actually, migration is not a new concept in the human and urban history. It is a situation that has always existed in history; human societies were nomadic before they settled. But today, this migration movement in the world has become *a human flow*<sup>1</sup>. The cities receive more immigrants from different cities, different countries, and different continents than in the past. In the past, the migration movement took place mostly in between the neighboring regions. However, today, the news of people who lost their lives with the overturning of a boat while they are moving away from their country has become a news that we often hear unfortunately. The situation shows the seriousness of the migration movement that people perform even by endangering their

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<sup>1</sup> The term was taken from the Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei's of the documentary "*Human Flow*".

lives. People no longer want to live with the fate of the region where they were born, and they migrate from there whatever happens.

These intensive migratory movements have severe impacts on cities. They are subject to transformation in many ways. As a result of immigration, groups and their cultures are involved in a dynamic interaction process. Mersin is a specific example where the traces of these transformations can be easily observed. Because of the socio-economic opportunities that the city has offered, it has hosted many immigration movements during its short history of two centuries. So, it has experienced the interaction of different cultures which came together as a result of migrations more than once, and its multicultural structure evolved following these interaction processes. Recently, it has experienced a new wave of migration. A high number of Syrian Migrants who escaped from the Syrian Civil War have settled in Turkey since the beginning of the Syrian conflict. According to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), there are currently 206.700 Syrian Migrants in Mersin.

Mersin has entered into a new interaction process with this recent wave of migration. The process of interaction has always been dynamic in Mersin in contrast to many other cities. There has not been a process in which migrants are forced adapt to the existing local culture of the place. Instead, the city's culture and spaces has entered into a dynamic transformation process with the arrival of the newcomers. The transformation particularly manifests itself in the public spaces of the city. These places are being used by Syrian Migrants in crowded groups and more actively. There are differences in the spatial behavior of different cultural groups. While this situation brings new daily life practices in the city, it has been observed that it also causes changes in the built environment. This thesis study is based on these observations on the public spaces of Mersin. The transformation of the coastline as a public space has been evaluated through culture-space-everyday life practices.

Although this thesis examines the transformation process through the case of Mersin, similar processes are taking place in many big cities of the world today. And each city



is influenced differently from this interaction process with its identity and culture. However, this process is not a smooth one, as seen in the major changes that made up the milestones of urban history. It is a new challenge for humanity and urban history. Cities are now much more colorful and crowded than before, and continuous changes occur in their social pattern. People have to live with people from a different race, religion, and language. They often have difficulties in adapting to living together.

There is generally a prejudice and exclusion against the newcomer. The situation mostly shows itself in public spaces. These places, which are defined as “*publicly accessible space*”, may become spaces of exclusion within the city. While they are accessible by certain groups, they become inaccessible by other groups. Although there is no physical boundary in these places, certain social attitudes obstruct the access of the public spaces. These invisible boundaries are caused by the tense atmosphere created. The fact that a policeman harshly checks the identity card of an immigrant, and that the different one is continuously gazed causes them to feel tense in public spaces.

Such social behaviors affect the city that is a social construct. For example, the fact that most immigrants do not know the language constitutes a big obstacle in relation to the city and society. In addition to language, cultural differences are also one of the critical factors that prevent the adaptation of the newcomers to the city. Instead of learning to live together as a society, people prefer to withdraw from urban spaces. Reflection of this situation to the city is seen in the form of segregation in urban spaces. In her article, C  n   Bilisel, argues that the *segregation* of social groups in urban space and the *spatial fragmentation* of the city trigger each other. As a result, the city turns out to be a patchwork of urban areas divided by the social/cultural groups that could not come together, and it is the public realm of the city, which is fragmented.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Bilisel, F. C. (2004). Kentsel bařkalařım ya da merkezka  kuvvetler karřısında kamusal alanın par alanması. *Mimarlık*, (316), 210.

Actually, how the immigrants adapt to living with different cultures in the environment where they migrate constitutes an important element in the transformation of the city with migration. Berry distinguishes three strategies of adaptation: Adaptation by adjustment, by reaction, or by withdrawal. In the case of adjustment, the individual wants to live in harmony with his/her new environment. So, behaviors change in an attempt to minimize the conflict between the behavior and the environment. In the case of the reaction, behavior changes in a direction that retaliates against the environment. In the case of withdrawal, people retreat from the adaptive environment. Behaviors change to reduce the pressure of the environment.<sup>3</sup>

Robert E. Park and Ernest Burgess have linked the city and migration phenomena on the problems of living together with the theories that they developed in the Chicago School. Park defines the city as the reflection of the human essence that is behind the social structure of these human groups. According to Park, urban movements and the urban space created by these movements represent a natural process. In other words, immigration within the city and the derelict these migrations are completely related to the nature of human beings, and they are inevitable. He uses the concepts of *extension*, *competition*, *succession*, *invasion*, which are developed in the ecology of plants and animals and transfer these concepts to the preferences and mobility of social groups in urban space.<sup>4</sup>

The living beings who have to live in the same place within the interdependence relationship enter into a struggle with each other, and in this ecological balance that is formed as a result of this struggle, every living being chooses its place as it deserves- the right mentioned here means the living beings' innate advantages over other living

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<sup>3</sup> Berry, J. W. (1981), "Cultural Ecology and Individual Behavior, Human Behavior and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research, I. Altman, A. Rapoport", (Volume 4), Plenum Press. p84.

<sup>4</sup> McKenzie. (1925). p. 63-79. cited in Serter, G. (2013). Şikago Okulu Kent Kuramı: Kentsel Ekolojik Kuram. *Planlama Dergisi*, 23(2), 67-76.

things. Members of the Chicago School have seen the city as an ecosystem or organism in a way that will automatically balance itself in the long run. According to this view, urban society finds balance through competition, invasion and succession processes. In this way, ghettos, where inequality is visible in the city are shown as a result of an inevitable and natural process.

The French urban sociologist Henri Lefebvre finds this approach *reductionist*. According to him, these basic functional actions cannot even be said to be animal. Urban justice cannot be shaped by the biological characteristics of individuals. According to Lefebvre, individuals have equal rights in the city as everywhere. This is basically what makes human societies civilized. An important element that planners need to consider during their design process is to achieve social justice in the cities.

However, the world is becoming more global with these human movements day by day. To establish a balance between the diversity and identity of a city, new urban design methods are required. Urban public spaces have to respond to the physical and psychological needs of people from different cultures. For this reason, the physical structure of the space should be determined in terms of its effects on human psychology and the psychological needs of the user. At this point, environmental psychology theories play an essential role in the construction of a psychological dimension in urban design. Environmental psychologist assumes that human being and the environment are not separable from each other as interrelated elements, and they should be examined together.

Until the 1960s, architects, planners and urban designers were not interested in the psychological impacts of the environment on people. However, the importance of environmental psychology theories and interdisciplinary studies in urban design has been recognized by the increasing effect of the problems with growing cities on human life. The relationship between the built environment and people has been the focus of researches based on environmental psychology and urban design, to increase the quality of urban spaces. Cities have started to be examined through people's

perceptions on and behaviors in urban spaces. Kevin Lynch's studies on environmental perception and urban images are one of the first essential studies in urban design theory based on environmental psychology.

Although human psychology has widely been referred to in urban design studies, human needs and problems related to urban space have been generalized. The cultural dimension that is one of the most important variables in the urban design process has not been much emphasized. However, nowadays, studies on culture-environment relations have gained a more critical role in the face of increasing migration movement and globalization problem. These studies offer differences and similarities among cultures that should be noted designers in the design process. Although cultures are different from each other, there are also similar common points in most cultures due to human nature. Culture-based studies make it easy to recognize the differences and similarities of culture for the designer and contribute to the design process.

## **1.2. The Aim and Hypothesis**

As mentioned before, this thesis study is based on the observations made on the use of public spaces along the Mersin coastline. In these places, it is observed that there are differences in the spatial behavior of different cultural groups. The present study aimed at examining the cultural factors that cause these differences, with the hypothesis that culture greatly influences spatial behavior, and in this context, it transforms the built environment. However, when observations have been deepened and interviews have been conducted with different cultural groups, a new hypothesis was needed. This new hypothesis is when individuals enter a new environment, they develop different adaptation strategies depending on their culture and behave in line with their strategies. The continuation of the study has been based on this hypothesis, and the results have been evaluated accordingly.

### **1.3. Methodology and Structure of the Study**

The methodology of the study is based on studies on culture-environment, behavior-environment, and culture-behavior relations. Behaviors and adaptation strategies of different cultural groups in the public spaces of Mersin have been examined in the cultural context. Qualitative techniques have been used in the research. Three different cultural groups have been identified as local people, internal immigrants, and Syrian Migrants using the coastline of the city. Firstly, observations have been made on the activities of these user groups in public space, and then, interviews have been conducted with them considering the data obtained from the observations. The answers have been converted into numerical data by the content analysis method. And finally, the responses of the three cultural groups have been examined by considering the data obtained by observation.

In the second chapter of the study, the theoretical framework has been formed. In the third chapter, the historical development of Mersin is studied through the examination of the socio-economic and morphological aspects of the city. The transformations that it experienced are analyzed by investigating its migration history in particular. In the fourth chapter, field observations and the responses obtained by the interviews are evaluated. In the concluding chapter, the data obtained has been evaluated by considering the multicultural structure of Mersin.

#### **1.3.1. The Literature Survey Related to the Theoretical Framework of the Subject**

A theoretical framework based on environmental psychology, anthropology, urban design, and architecture has been developed while examining the effect of culture on behavior and the adaptation process. These four fields are mutually studied in a complementary way. So, this thesis study is at the intersection of these four fields.

At the beginning of the second chapter, the basic concepts in the human-environment relationship and the process of behavior are examined. This section mostly is based

on the studies in the field of environmental psychology as well as anthropology. In this section, the theoretical framework has been from Rapoport's book "*Human aspects of urban form*" and his article "*Cross-cultural aspects of environmental design*", Lang's book of "*Creating architectural theory: The role of the behavioral sciences in environmental design*", and also, Özdemir's thesis study "*Çevresel Psikolojinin Kamusal Alan Kullanımına Etki Değerlendirmesi, Taksim Gezi Parkı Örneği*".

In the continuation of the chapter, it has been focused on what is culture and its components. Culture-environment and behavior-culture relations have been examined. In this section, especially studies in the field of anthropology have been considered. Particularly, Harris's discussion on culture in his book published in 1998, "*Theories of culture in postmodern times*" has shaped this part. Furthermore, Aiello and Thompson's study "*Personal space, crowding, and spatial behavior in a cultural context*", and again Rapoport's book "*Human aspects of urban form*" are the important sources referenced in this section.

In the last part of the chapter, a discussion on the public space has been carried out by examining the studies in the field of urban design and architecture. In particular, Ali Madanipour's book "*Whose Public Space?: International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development*" has contributed to this discussion. In the continuation of the discussion, public space practices have been classified as Jan Gehl defended in his book "*Life between buildings: using public space*".

### **1.3.2. The Literature Review on the Urban Design Studies in Mersin**

Melike Selin Durmaz's study "*Karşılaşma Mekanında Ayırışma Halleri: Mersin Sahil Bandının Suriyeliliği*" investigates the practices of Syrian Migrants and local people in public space. She examines the practices by splitting into three phases: getting out to space, encountering and positioning. Durmaz analyzes the process of getting out to the place and encountering, and questions how physically, spatially, and even mentally

they are positioned against each other in the public space. In her study, she emphasizes the situation of segregation during the encountering and positioning in public space.

There are two thesis studies on the public spaces of Mersin. One of them is Sara Züleyha Belge's thesis study named "*Increasing walkability capacity of historic city centers: The case of Mersin*". This research primarily examines the concept of *walkability* as part of the *liveability* literature. In this respect, Sara Belge focuses on the concept of walkability in public space. As a case study, Uray and Atatürk Streets, which constitute the backbone of the old city of Mersin, are examined in accordance with the determined walkability criteria.

Another study is "*An assessment on paths as an urban element: Gazi Mustafa Kemal Boulevard case, Mersin*" which belongs to Gizem Aydın. The study includes the synthesis of academic studies on individuals' perception of the city and the urban image, their formation processes, and the factors contributing to these processes. Aydın firstly presents the importance of urban perception and its contribution to the formation of urban image, and then analyzes the urban image of Gazi Mustafa Kemal Boulevard, which is the main backbone of the city of Mersin.

The other important study on Mersin belongs to Eylül Özdemir. Her thesis study entitled "*Reflections of cultural differences on urban politics: Case of Mersin*" examines the social and political processes of different cultural categories come together in Mersin. This sociology study, which deals with the cosmopolitan structure of Mersin through urban theories, has also been an important source for this thesis study.





## CHAPTER 2

### HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE RELATIONSHIP

The places that people live in can be studied with respect to two interrelated dimensions. These are the physical structure of a place consisting of physical variables, and its psychological effects on the users. Environmental psychology is the field of study on the relation between places and people. It is defined as “*psychological study of behavior as it relates to the everyday physical environment*”.<sup>5</sup> This field is assumed generally to comprise anthropology, sociology, psychology and architecture. It focuses on the interrelation of human beings and the environment. In order to examine the human quality of life, one must consider the quality of living spaces, such as schools, housing environments, parks, neighborhoods. As the environmental psychologist Gifford mentions: “*Wherever you go, there you are... We are always embedded in a place*”.<sup>6</sup> So, the design of the built environment means to enhance the quality of people’s lives.<sup>7</sup> In general, people prefer places that make sense for them and feel themselves belonging to. The preferences are the result of emotional reactions that space engenders in people. People expect a space to be comfortable, safe and

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<sup>5</sup> Craik. (1970). Srivastava. (1971). cited in Lang, J. T. (1987). *Creating architectural theory: The role of the behavioral sciences in environmental design*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co. p21.

<sup>6</sup> Gifford, R. (2014). cited in Fleury-Bahi, G., Pol, E., & Navarro, O. (2017). Introduction: Environmental Psychology and Quality of Life. In *Handbook of Environmental Psychology and Quality of Life Research* (pp. 1-8). Springer, Cham. p1.

<sup>7</sup> Després, C., & Piché, D. (2017). Linking People-Environment Research and Design. What Is Missing?. In *Handbook of Environmental Psychology and Quality of Life Research* (pp. 65-83). Springer, Cham. p65.

having the ability to meet their needs.<sup>8</sup> These feelings are the result of the reflection of the physical and social environment on the individual psychology. For this reason, urban design studies are directly related with environmental psychology.

The quality of urban space is the level of space that responds to the physical and psychological needs of users. Psychological dimensions and social aspects, which are effective in the success of the design have made imperative to benefit from the human-environment studies for professions related to urban design. Many of architects, urban designers and planners do not generally pay enough attention to the behavioral, social and cultural factors, individual perceptions and preferences. Most of the architectural and urban design implementations have been done only based on the decision of the architect or planner without any regard to user expectations. In other words, the psychological dimension of space is not paid due attention.

However, in the vernacular production of the built environment, the relation between the craftsmen and users were much tighter.<sup>9</sup> The physical and psychological needs of the designer and the user matched. In other words, the designer had a lot of information about the user needs and expectations. The matching of needs and expectations between the craftsmen and users is relatively straightforward. However, today this relation together with social modernization is much more difficult and mismatches frequently. This matching situation has changed like so many things in the globalized world. The distance between professions and the people/users has increased considerably. Their relations have become impersonal as different from traditional societies. The designer usually does not know the user anymore, and there are many reasons for this gap.

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<sup>8</sup> Özdemir, B. (2011). *Çevresel Psikolojinin Kamusal Alan Kullanımına Etki Değerlendirmesi, Taksim Gezi Parkı Örneği* (Doctoral dissertation, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü). p7.

<sup>9</sup> Rapoport, A. (1980). Cross-cultural aspects of environmental design. In *Environment and culture* (pp. 7-46). Springer, Boston, MA.

One of the important reasons is due to the fact that cities have grown excessively and people living in cities have diversified. Cities have become more complex; the majority of the world population live in cities. Both internal and foreign migrations make difficult the social and spatial relationships of the urban environment. Planners now have to design for crowds.<sup>10</sup> The other important reason; an architect can make a design for a location where he has never been before. For example, international urban design competitions are declared, and planners and architects determine the urban life of the societies which they do not know at all. So, in a globalizing world, the relation between designer and design also became global. Therefore, the mismatch situation, which is less common in vernacular design, has become inevitable because of this hard-changing relationship between user and designer. Environmental psychology as the joint interdisciplinary field of study that involves psychology and anthropology, aims to fill in the gap. According to Després and Piché<sup>11</sup> interior designers, architects, urban designers, landscape architects and planners are responsible to learn the human aspects of design.

In urban design studies, environmental psychology focus on *“how people perceive the environment”, “how people are affected by the environment”, “how attitudes and behaviors are affected, but also how behaviors shape the environment”, “what are the physiological and psychological needs of users”*.<sup>12</sup>

### **2.1. The Basic Concepts of Human-Environment Relationships**

Environmental psychology theories play an important role in the design of psychological dimension for designing high-quality space. Environmental psychology

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<sup>10</sup> Páramo, P. (2017). The City as an Environment for Urban Experiences and the Learning of Cultural Practices. In *Handbook of Environmental Psychology and Quality of Life Research* (pp. 275-290). Springer, Cham. p275.

<sup>11</sup> Després, C., & Piché, D. (2017). op. cit., p67.

<sup>12</sup> Özdemir, (2011). op. cit., p7.

theories by focusing more on human behavior, try to understand the relationship between people and environment.

After the World War II, the concept of the human-environment relations was put forward by environmental psychologists to create a new interdisciplinary field of research. According to Després and Piché the concept is “*the outcome of psychologists close collaboration with planners and architects to search for more liveable environments.*”<sup>13</sup> It focuses on issues such as perception, cognition, social relationships, and culture.

Behavior is generally taken as an outcome of perception and cognition of the environment. Lang states that “*to understand the role of the built environment in people’s lives one has to understand the nature of human behavior*”.<sup>14</sup> The psychological dimension of the space is studied by observing the behavior of individuals. Observation and interview are the most effective methods of research in understanding the relationship between individual behavior and the environment. However, human behavior has a highly complex structure to easily understand. It has physical and psychological dimensions, such as the environment, and it is also the only concrete indicator of human psychology. It provides fundamental data for environmental psychology studies. Therefore, researchers' interest in “*behavioral science*” has increased over time.

In classical psychology, behavioral science studies were conducted in clinics and laboratories, and human response to certain stimuli was measured. However, thanks to advances in environmental psychology, the interaction between the environment and the individual could be studied whereas the results obtained in the clinical settings have been accepted as misleading. These studies came of the clinics and moved to the

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p65.

<sup>14</sup> Lang, J. T. (1987). *Creating architectural theory: The role of the behavioral sciences in environmental design*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co. p99.

everyday environment of the individual. The individual has been studied in its everyday environment. While psychologists and anthropologists have proceeded from the human to the environment, the opposite has happened for planners, urban designers and architects. Those who realized that the quality of space depends on the satisfaction of the user have turned to the human psychology and their needs. As a result, they face to the people-environment intersection.

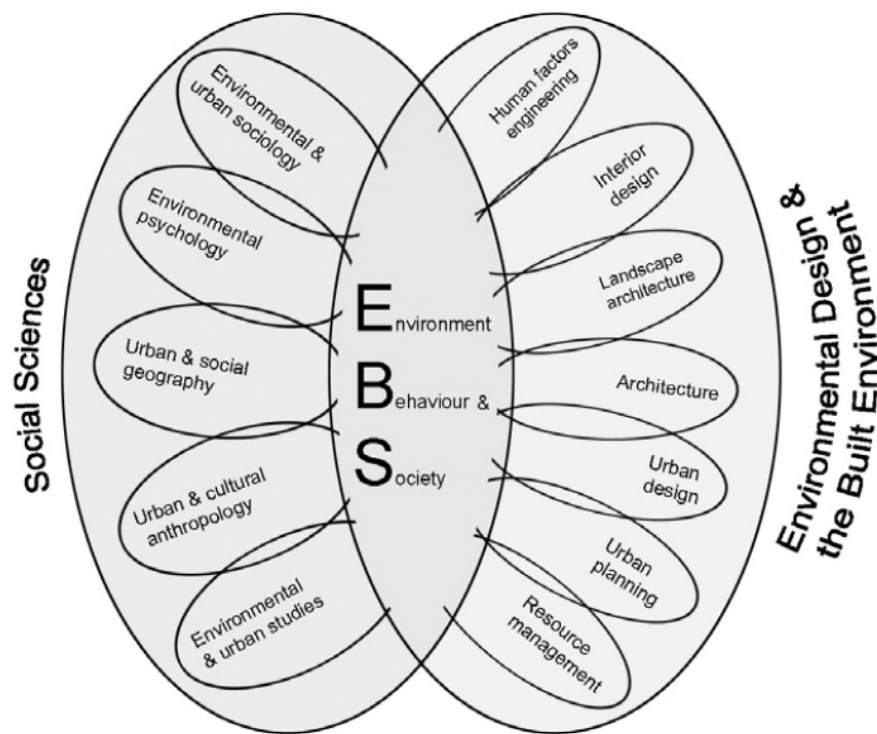


Figure 2-1 The intersection of the social sciences and the built environment professions <sup>15</sup>

The intersection has two sets of complementary concerns, one of them is the professional disciplines of environmental design and the design of the built environment, and the other is the socio-cultural and behavioral sciences. The field, therefore, is very broad, and the intersection is somewhat unclear as a field of study.

<sup>15</sup> Moore, G. T. (2004). Environment, behavior and society: A brief look at the field and some current EBS research at the University of Sydney. In *The 6th International Conference of the Environment-Behavior Research Association Tianjin, China*. p3.

Moore argues, “*it includes parts of disciplines and studies that may not know they are a “part” of environment-behavior studies*”.<sup>16</sup>

### **2.1.1. Components of the Environment**

The word *environment* is widely used today is a concept studied by many fields of science. Environment consists of physical, animate, social, and cultural components. All of them affect the lives of human being.<sup>17</sup> Although environment is defined by focusing on their fields of interest, there is often confusion over what is being discussed because there is no clear distinction between these components. When the word “environment” has been used in social science disciplines, it generally refers to the socio-cultural environment-not the physical, planned and designed environment.<sup>18</sup> On the contrary, the architects and planners mostly refer to the physical environment. Therefore, it is essential to make first a general description of the environment that integrates all these components. According to Gibson’s definition, “*the environment is everything that surrounds people*”.<sup>19</sup> So, any definition of the environment must be related to something surrounded.

Lang emphasizes, “*fundamental to an understanding of the role of the built environment in people’s lives is an understanding of what is meant by environment*”. Therefore, it is necessary to understand all components of the environment before starting an environment-behavior study.

There are various environmental models that have been established to categorize the components of environment such as ecological, psychological, social and behavioral concepts. The goal of these categorization schemes is to provide a framework for those

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p2.

<sup>17</sup> Lang, (1987). op. cit., p93

<sup>18</sup> Moore, G. T. (2004). op. cit., p3.

<sup>19</sup> Gibson, J. J. (2014). *The ecological approach to visual perception: classic edition*. Psychology Press. p37.

things that have an impact on our lives. One of these belongs to Ittelson.<sup>20</sup> He defines the environment as an ecological system with seven components- *perceptual, expressive, aesthetic values, adaptive, integrative, instrumental, general ecological*. Lang also categorizes the environment into four groups.

- **The physical environment** consists of terrestrial and geographical areas, and the built environment
- **The social environment** refers to the organization of individuals and groups,
- **The psychological environment** consists of images in people's minds.
- **Behavioral environment** refers to elements that people react. <sup>21</sup>

Koffka distinguishes the behavioral environment from the geographical environment. The geographical environment refers to objective environment- what is really around; the behavioral environment refers to individual images of the world that shape behavior.<sup>22</sup> Other scholars proposed similar categorizations of environment. For example, Kirk categorizes the environment as *the phenomenal* and *the personal* environment. The personal environment consists of the behavioral component that is the cognitive image of the physical environment and the experiential component that is set of beliefs and attitudes about it.<sup>23</sup> In line with this approach, Lang defines environment as an abstraction, an image itself. He states that the individual creates a *mental image* of the world that surrounds him/her. And the image is different from other people's image because it is not the reality. It is an abstraction of the environment in our mind. <sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ittelson, (1973), cited in Rapoport, A. (1980). Cross-cultural aspects of environmental design. In *Environment and culture* (pp. 7-46). Springer, Boston, MA. p8.

<sup>21</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit. p78-80.

<sup>22</sup> Koffka. (1935). cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

<sup>23</sup> Kirk. (1963). cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

<sup>24</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

Rapoport argues:

*“These and other models proposed, have two things in common? Firstly, they suggest a multiplicity of environments-social, cultural and physical. Secondly, they imply a link between changes in the physical environment and changes in other areas-psychological, social and the like. The environment has a structure and is not a random assemblage of things. It is a series of relationship among elements and people. It represents the congruence between social and physical space.”*<sup>25</sup>

Rapoport sees the environment as “a series of relationships between things and things, things and people, and people and people.”<sup>26</sup> Jale Erzen, in her book *Three Habitus: The World, the City and the Building*<sup>27</sup> states that the movement of the body within the space is a choreography created with the surrounding world and things. All environments constitute complex interrelationships between people and things.

In this thesis study, the environment is categorized into four groups; geographical/physical environment, social environment, cultural environment and built environment. However, they should be considered as components that cannot be precisely separated from one another because these components are in a mutual relationship. That is, a component may be effective in shaping another component, but may also be affected by other components.

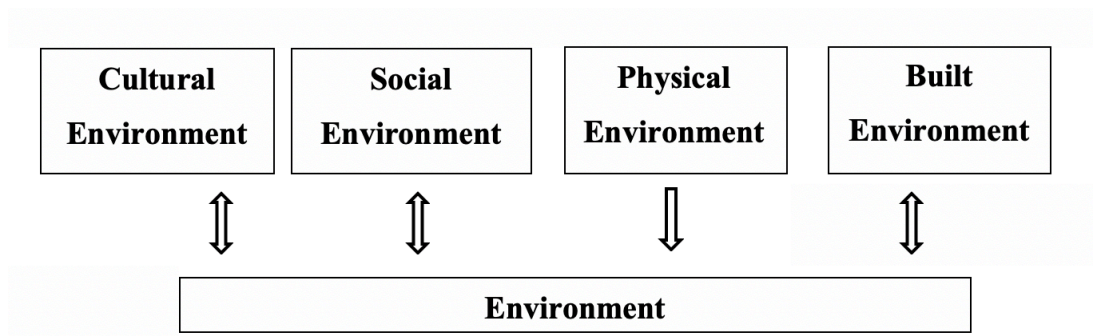
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<sup>25</sup> Rapoport, A. (1977). *Human aspects of urban form* (Vol. 3). Oxford: Pergamon. p8.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p9.

<sup>27</sup> Erzen, J. N. (2015). *Üç Habitus: Yeryüzü, Kent, Yapı*. Yapı Kredi Yayınları.





*Figure 2-2 The Relationship between Components of Environment, diagram drawn by the author*

Only the physical environment has a different position in this chain. While the human being is the main subject in other components, it is ineffective in the physical environment. Therefore, while the physical environment can affect other components, it is not affected by them. The human beings shape their environment which, in turn, has an impact on them.

**The geographical or Physical Environment:** Some architects and planners prefer to use the term physical environment to refer to the environment, which includes buildings and the other man-made things. However, the term of physical environment and the geographical environment refer also to the nature of the earth. It includes just gravity, climate, seas, trees, hills, and the other forms of nature.<sup>28</sup> In this thesis study, the term physical environment will be used.

All forms of nature have specific geographical features. Some things are similar in different parts of the earth, but the climatic conditions vary. In that sense, physical or geographical environments afford different things for people. So, as Lang puts it, physical environment affects human behavior very much.

**The Social Environment:** Rapoport defines the environment as the relationships of things to things, people to things, and people to people. The social environment

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<sup>28</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit. p80-81.

consists of the relational aspect of environment.<sup>29</sup> Our culture, daily activities, lifestyles, attitudes, and beliefs are all related to the social environment.

Human beings are distinguished from other living things with their thinking ability and beliefs. Although other creatures live instinctively; the human beings can communicate with each other with the ability to talk; they form a social entity depending on the personality of the communication and interaction with others.<sup>30</sup> Every person has a social environment. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau stated, the society is not the collection of human bodies, but the collection of souls in unity. People share common values and beliefs of their culture within this social environment. These values constitute the laws that are specific to their social environment and, these laws affect the individual who is a social being. In this way, the social environment controls the individual's behaviors.<sup>31</sup>

**The Built Environment:** If it is approached through Rapoport's definition again, the built environment is something of a thing to thing and people to thing relationships. It covers of the physical and social environment. Lang regards the built environment as the set of adaptations that people have made to their physical and cultural environments.<sup>32</sup>

**Cultural Environment:** Our beliefs and attitudes toward other people, the physical environment, our roles in society, and the way we carry out daily activities are all parts of our culture. Each cultural environment is a unique environment created by the society and used by the society to cultivate new members. A new-born child is born into a previously organized society. This society has formed its own language,

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<sup>29</sup> Rapoport. (1980). op. cit. p9.

<sup>30</sup> Tuncay, S. (2011). İnsan Davranışlarının Ekolojik Sisteme Etkilerinin Çevre Psikolojisiyle Örtüştürülmesi. *Sosyal Ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(7). p155.

<sup>31</sup> Eren, S. (2007). İnanç ve Sosyo-Kültürel Çevre Etkileşimi. *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 11(1), p129-152.

<sup>32</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit.

clothing, eating-drinking style and practices that are effective in daily life within a historical process. For this reason, human beings are in constant interaction with their cultural environment from the moment they were born. On the one hand, while he/she is learning the symbols to understand the cultural values and appropriate behaviors of the environment, on the other hand, he/she enhances what he/she has learned from his/her environment and presents it to the environment again.<sup>33</sup>

The cultural environment emerges as a result of the interaction between the physical environment and society over time. For example, communities whose lands are suitable for agriculture or livestock breeding, produce cultural pattern suitable for the living conditions required by their physical environment. Social and cultural values that have emerged depending on the physical environment generally continue to maintain the symbolic value in the society even if they lose their relationship with the physical environment. Thanks to this feature of the culture, people have migrated from one part of the world to another taking many aspects of their own culture with them.

### **2.1.2. The Affordances of the Environment**

The term affordance is firstly used by Gibson in his book “*The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*”.<sup>34</sup> Lang defines the term as;

*“The affordances of anything, be it material or nonmaterial, are those of its properties that enable it to be used in a particular way by a particular species or an individual member of that species.”*<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Tuncay. (2011). op. cit.

<sup>34</sup> Gibson, J. J. (2014). *The ecological approach to visual perception: classic edition*. Psychology Press.

<sup>35</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit. p81.

There are some different terms and concepts to define affordance in behavior science. As Lang mentions; Louis Kahn uses the word *availability* and Lancelot Brown uses the term *capabilities* in the same way with Gibson. Kahn describes his term, “*a brick wants to be an arch.*”<sup>36</sup> Although Koffka<sup>37</sup> and Lewin<sup>38</sup> use different concept to explain the affordance of the environment, their approach is generally similar with the others. Koffka argues that objects have a *demand* or *invitational* quality.<sup>39</sup> Lewin uses a German word, *aufforderungscharakter* of the object. Its English meaning is *invitational quality* or *valence*. He argues that while an object does not change its valence changes according to perceiver’s needs.<sup>40</sup>

## 2.2. The Processes of Human Behavior

Environment should respond to the psychological needs of the individual as well as the physical needs. However, it is not easy to understand the psychological dimension of the individual. For this purpose, behavior as a concrete expression of psychology is an important indicator for studies on human psychology.

Although behavior is a concrete indicator of human psychology, the process of behavior has a psychologically complex structure. Anthropological, sociological, and psychological research has reduced unknown of this complex structure of behavior, but much remains unknown.<sup>41</sup> According to the information obtained from scientific researches so far, behavior is an organized attempt carried out to satisfy the individual's needs. With this definition, it can be concluded that the origin of the behavior is the fulfillment of the needs.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid. p77.

<sup>37</sup> Koffka. (1935). cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

<sup>38</sup> Lewin. (1936). cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

<sup>39</sup> Koffka. (1935). cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

<sup>40</sup> Koffka. (1935). cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p77.

<sup>41</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit.

Behaviors that occur to satisfy individual needs arise at the end of three psychological processes. These three processes are; perception, cognition and spatial behavior. They vary depending on the individual's physiological abilities, personality, social group and culture from person to person.

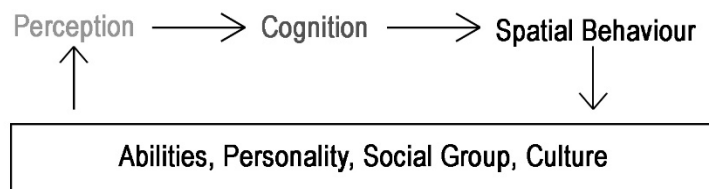


Figure 2-3 The Process of Behavior by author

Considering the effect of the variables on human behavior, it can be concluded that the behavior of the person should be examined within his/her environment. Brunswik who advocates ecological psychology, suggests that behavior should be examined in its “*natural-cultural habitat*” and describes the task of psychology as “*the analysis of the interrelation between two systems, the environment and the behaving subject*”<sup>42</sup>

### 2.3. Built Environment and Human Behavior

In terms of behavioral sciences, the built environment offers rich opportunities for human experiences and the behaviors. People shape and adapt their environment in line with their needs and expectations. In this context, the human-environment relationship is the result of the interaction of cultural, physical and perceptual variables. One of the best ways of understanding the behavior of the individual or group is to examine the possibilities and constraints of the environment. However, there are different approaches to the relationship between environment and behavior.

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<sup>42</sup> Hammond. (1966). cited in Berry, J. W. (1981), “Cultural Ecology and Individual Behavior, Human Behavior and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research, I. Altman, A. Rapoport”, (Volume 4), Plenum Press. p84.

These are; *free-will approach*, *possibilistic approach*, *probalistic approach*, and *deterministic approach* as categorized by Rapoport.

*The Free-will approach* argues that the environment has no impact on behavior. An individual has some choice in how he/she act and assumes that he/she is free to choose his/her behavior, in shorts, people are self-determined. According to free-will approach, behavior is not arbitrary, however individual is free from the causal influences of past events.<sup>43</sup>

*The Possibilistic approach* was developed by the French school of thought after the first world war. It developed mainly in early 20th century. As Taylor puts it, they suggest the following:

*“Nature does not drive man along a particular road, but it offers a number of opportunities from which man is free to select. There are no necessities, but everywhere possibilities, and man as master of these possibilities is the judge of their use.”*<sup>44</sup>

This approach doesn't deny the influence of environment but studies the man-environment relationship from human point of view. The human being is free to make choices.

*The Probabilistic approach* argues that the built environment consists set of possibilities for choices but some of them much more probable than others. Therefore, there is a limitation to choose in given physical environment.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> McLeod, S. (2008). Cognitive dissonance. *Simply psychology*, 31(1), 2-7.

<sup>44</sup> Taylor, G. (Ed.). (2015). *Geography in the twentieth century: a study of growth, fields, techniques, aims and trends*. Routledge.

<sup>45</sup> URL: <http://www.eufram.com/probablistic.cfm>, 22.12.2018

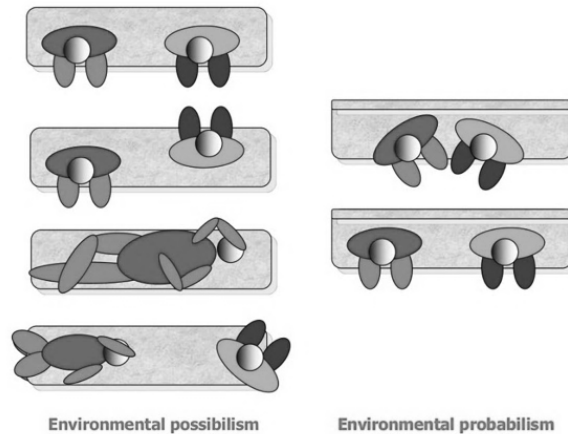


Figure 2-4 Environmental possibilism and probabilism <sup>46</sup>

According to the *deterministic approach*, the physical environment determines human behavior. Changes in the forms of environments can lead to major changes in behavior. One can argue that the deterministic approach is generally adopted in environmental design studies.

According to Gibson's definition, the environment is everything that surrounds people.<sup>47</sup> People affect the environment, and the environment also affects people. The environments that surround the human beings consist of geographical, physical, social, and cultural components. All of them affect people's lives and their attitudes toward the built environment.<sup>48</sup> There is a continuous and dynamic interaction between human beings and the environment. While the environment produces behaviors, at the same time behaviors produce environment. When looking at the interaction process; people create the built environment to sustain their lives. The built

<sup>46</sup> S.J. Eklund, M.M. Scott, (1985) "Barker's Behavior Setting Theory: A Useful Conceptual Framework For Research On Educational Administration", Journal Of Educational Administration, Vol. 23 Issue: 1, Pp.82-90, <https://doi.org/10.1108/Eb009903>

<sup>47</sup> Gibson. (1966). Cited in Lang. Lang, J. T. (1987). *Creating architectural theory: The role of the behavioral sciences in environmental design*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co.

<sup>48</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit.p75

environment is shaped by culture and geography, and then it influences human behavior and attitudes.

### 2.3.1. Behavior Setting

The important development in the behavioral sciences is the formation of ecological psychology by Roger Barker and his colleagues. Barker offers research topics called as the *behavior setting* instead of examining individuals and the environment separately.<sup>49</sup> According to Tuncay behavior settings have an internal structure. It is assumed as a structure in which the physical and social elements are intertwined in a cultural context. It focuses on the differentiation of human behavior in different settings. For example, a hospital, a class, a bank or a cinema or a house is considered as a behavior setting. Behaviors occurring in these spaces are not interchangeable.<sup>50</sup> People tend to adapt their behavior to the environment. Tuncay states that the environment with a purpose that a community wants, affects the behaviors of individuals. In this context, some behaviors are promoted, and some are excluded. On the other hand, the interdependence of environment and behavior is not strict. This interdependence varies from individual to individual since behavior setting constitutes a specific environment according to each individual behavior and lifestyle. For example, the standards of crowding, privacy, satisfactory living conditions, and environmental aesthetics vary from culture to culture and also person to person.<sup>51</sup>

A *behavior setting* is regarded to be a stable combination of activity and place. Lang states that “*the same physical setting may be part of more than one behavior setting if different standing patterns of behavior occur within it at different times.*” In other words, a behavior setting provides a “*multiplicity of satisfactions*”<sup>52</sup> While some

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<sup>49</sup> Barker. (1968), Gump. (1979).Cited in Lang. (1987). op. cit. p113.

<sup>50</sup> Tuncay, S. (2011). İnsan Davranışlarının Ekolojik Sisteme Etkilerinin Çevre Psikolojisiyle Örtüştürülmesi. *Sosyal Ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(7). p164.

<sup>51</sup> Tuncay, S. (2011). op. cit. p160-166.

<sup>52</sup> Barker. (1960). cited in Lang. (1987). p114.



people meet their needs for affiliation, the others may meet basic needs in the same physical setting.

Rapoport argues that behavior settings might be inhibiting or facilitating as a catalyst or releasing latent behavior, however it cannot determine or generate activities. He believes that the environment has codes for appropriate behavior and these codes give clues to the behavior of the individual if they are legible, in other words, if the meaning is appropriate to the culture.<sup>53</sup>

*“When settings provide physical cues, and encode the ideas implicit in the situation, they become a useful mnemonic, they reinforce behavior by reminding people how to act, how to behave, what is expected of them, they also provide props and supportive elements appropriate to the situations.”*<sup>54</sup>

### **2.3.2. The Processes of the Interaction between the Built Environment and Human Behavior**

Lang believes that environmental information is obtained as a result of perceptual processes that are guided by schemata motivated by needs. The schemata are partially innate and partially learned. They shape the connection between perception and cognition, and not only affect the perception process, but also affect emotional responses and spatial behavior. And these in turn affect the schemata as the outcomes of behavior are discerned. He shows the basic processes involved in the interaction between people and their environment.

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<sup>53</sup> Rapoport, A. (1980). Cross-cultural aspects of environmental design. In *Environment and culture* (pp. 7-46). Springer, Boston, MA. p7.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p16.

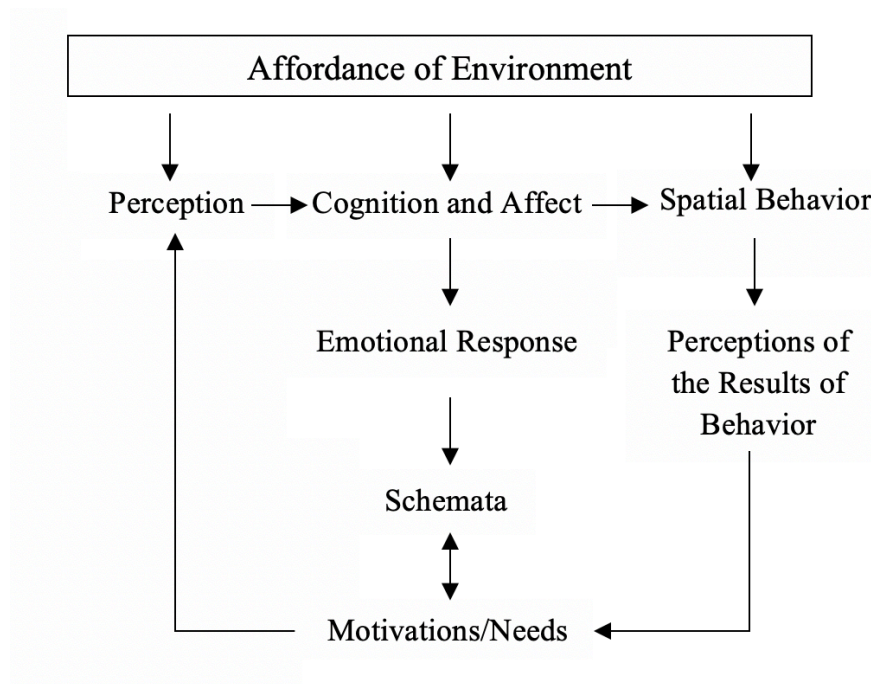


Figure 2-5 The relationship of the built environment and human behavior<sup>55</sup>

Rapoport's views on the human-environment interaction process show similarities with Lang's framework. According to Rapoport, any attempt to deal with the human-environment interaction must involve three areas: knowing something, feeling something about it and then doing something about it. Rapoport makes a distinction between the terms of environmental perception and perceived environment. He defines that environmental perception is a property of mind, but the perceived environment is a construct. It is conceived as construct in people's minds based what is known, expected, imagined or experienced therefore it can be unreal yet still affect behavior. The perceived environment consists of three different phases. These are *perceptions, cognition and evaluation*.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p84.

<sup>56</sup> Rapoport, A. (1977). *Human aspects of urban form* (Vol. 3). Oxford: Pergamon.

## Motivation:

The term of motivation covers human needs and defines motivation as the guiding force behind behavior. According to Lang, behavior is directed toward the satisfaction of needs. So, he thinks that some concepts of human needs are important for environmental design.<sup>57</sup> There are many models that categorize human needs. All of them explain human needs as physiological and psychological from the most basic to the more sophisticated. Abraham Maslow's model of "*hierarchy of human needs*" generally have been accepted by scientists as well as designers to find what the built environment should afford people.

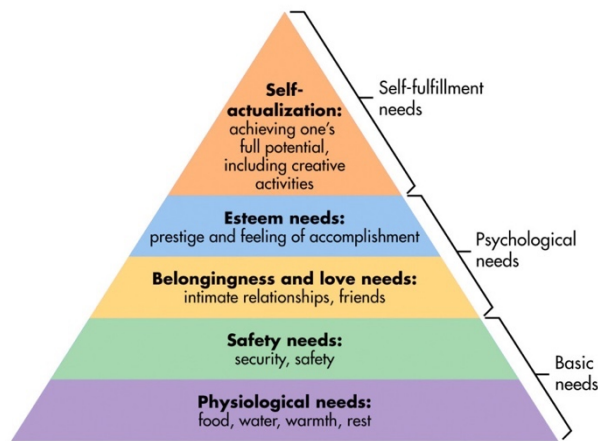


Figure 2-6 Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs

Maslow suggests that there is a hierarchy of needs and the stronger needs take precedence over the weaker needs. The most basic needs are especially physiological such as hunger, shelter, some of the needs are the mixture that both physiological and psychological-security, and the loftiest needs usually are psychological-desire for beauty.<sup>58</sup> However, the degree of needs varies from person to person according to their character and culture.

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<sup>57</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit.

<sup>58</sup> Moleski. (1974). cited in Lang. (1987). p93

## Perception:

Perception refers to the process of the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to understand the presented information, or the environment. *“It is where cognition and reality meet”*.<sup>59</sup> The perceptual process begins with the perception of stimuli that get through the perceptual filters, are organized into our existing structures and patterns, and ends with interpretation of those stimuli.<sup>60</sup>

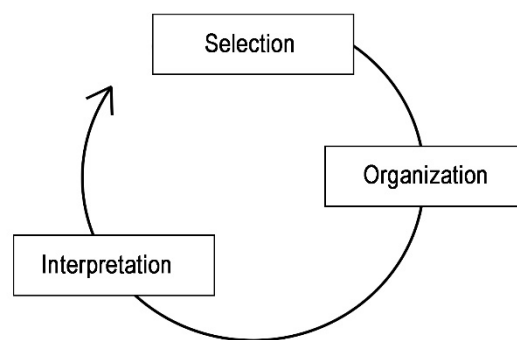


Figure 2-7 The Process of Perception, by author

Downs and Stea define perception as the interpretation of an object through the old experiences. Although perception is an unconsciously cognitive and psychological process, how the environment is perceived affects individual behavior.<sup>61</sup> Perception is not only based on the individual and the stimulus, but also on the situation and conditions of the person. Therefore, the perception process varies according to psychological, physical environment, physiological and socio-cultural factors. The

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<sup>59</sup> Neisser, U. (1976). *Cognition and reality*. San Francisco: Freeman. Nickel, TW (1974). *The attribution of intention as a critical factor in the relation between frustration and aggression*. *Journal of Personality*, 42, 484-492.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Downs, R. M., & Stea, D. (1973). *Cognitive maps and spatial behavior: Process and products* (p.25). na.

difference in perception leads to differences in interpretation and indirectly to differences in behavior.<sup>62</sup>

### **Cognition:**

Cognition is defined as “*the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses*” in Oxford dictionary.<sup>63</sup>

The word “*cognition*” comes from the Latin word “*cognoscere*” which is to “*get to know*”. The process of cognition consists of learning, remembering, feeling, and thinking. Cognition is the mental process relating to the input and storage of information and how that information is then used to guide your behavior. <sup>64</sup>

### **Schemata:**

İmamoğlu gives the example of restaurant to define the concept of schemata. When the individual looks at an unfamiliar building, he/she realizes that it is a restaurant in a second. He/she is able to even guess what kind of restaurant it is, what kind of food it can offer, what kind of people it can be there, how much it can cost.<sup>65</sup> İmamoğlu argues that people can answer many questions of this kind without entering the building. And he argues that people practice this “guessing game” over and over again during the day, and that it is not self-conscious but spontaneous and naturally. According to him, people can practice this through their mental representations called *schemas*. <sup>66</sup>

*“A schema... is internal to the perceiver, modifiable by experience, and somehow specific to what is perceived. The schema accepts information... and*

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<sup>62</sup> Özdemir, B. (2011). *Çevresel Psikolojinin Kamusal Alan Kullanımına Etki Değerlendirmesi, Taksim Gezi Parkı Örneği* (Doctoral dissertation, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü). p15-16.

<sup>63</sup> URL: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/cognition>, 24.12.2018

<sup>64</sup> URL: <http://www.cambridgecognition.com/blog/entry/what-is-cognition>, 24.12.2018

<sup>65</sup> İmamoğlu, Ç. (2009). The role of schemas in understanding places. *METU JFA*, 2, p153.

<sup>66</sup> Cherulnik. (1991). cited in İmamoğlu, Ç. (2009). The role of schemas in understanding places. *METU JFA*, 2, p153.

*is changed by this information, it directs movement and exploratory activities that make information available, by which it is further modified.”*<sup>67</sup>

Schemata provide algorithms to perceive, learn, and behave. There is not biological explanation of schemata. They are images of the environment in individual mind.

## **2.4. Examination of the Human-Environment Relationship in Cultural Context**

### **2.4.1. The Definition of Culture**

*“Culture is not what you get when you study Shakespeare, listen to classical music, or take courses in art history.”* Harris begins his book *“Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times”* with this negative definition of culture and he says that although it is known what culture is not, there is a confusion about what it is.<sup>68</sup>

The term of culture goes back to the Latin verb *colere* that means to *inhabit, care for, till, worship*. The term *cultura* derived from this Latin verb, was first used by the Romans to characterize agricultural activities. Cicero and Horatius who are Roman philosophers, used the term for the first time in terms of cultivation and training of human beings. In this regard, Cicero used the term *culture animi* that means a cultivation of the soul.<sup>69</sup> In the late 18th century, it started to be used as a plural in addition to the single use of the term culture. In this new sense, culture was defined as the whole intellectual, artistic, philosophical, scientific and technical productions and assets of a human society that constitute their lifestyle, sense, thought and value.<sup>70</sup> However, since that time, many different definitions of culture has made in the literature of sociology, anthropology, psychology, and the other related fields. The reason why there are so many definitions is its elaborate structure because culture is

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<sup>67</sup> Neisser, U. (1976). *Cognition and reality: Principles and implications of cognitive psychology*. New York, NY, US.

<sup>68</sup> Harris, M. (1998). *Theories of culture in postmodern times*. Rowman Altamira. p19.

<sup>69</sup> Doğan, 2000, cited in Özdemir, B. (2011). *Çevresel Psikolojinin Kamusal Alan Kullanımına Etki Değerlendirmesi, Taksim Gezi Parkı Örneği*(Doctoral dissertation, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü). p16.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

one of the most complex constitution created by the human being. Therefore, the majority of the definitions are not wrong, but they are incomplete. These definitions are part of a great puzzle to complement each other. Anyone who wants to understand culture in general should carefully examine the pieces of the puzzle.

In this puzzle, some anthropologists argue that culture comprehends values, motives, meanings and moral-ethical rules as a part of a social system. For others, “*culture embraces not only values and ideas, but the entire set of institutions that humans live by*” and some of them defines as learned ways of thinking and behaving while others emphasize genetic influences.<sup>71</sup> Aiello describes as “*representing the accumulation of norms, customary beliefs, and socialization patterns which are used in the transmission of knowledge from one generation to another.*”<sup>72</sup> In the definition of culture, there are some definitions that are incompatible with each other in addition to complementary definitions. For example; some anthropologists argue culture as “*consisting exclusively of thoughts or ideas*”, while others claim that “*culture consists of thoughts and ideas plus associated activities*”.<sup>73</sup> In urban design, the concept of culture generally defines as “*a group's adaptation to the recurrent problems it faces in interaction with its environmental setting.*”<sup>74</sup> It is seen as a “*man's most important instrument of adaptation.*”<sup>75</sup>

Rapoport divides this puzzle which is created by definitions of culture into three areas by generalizing similar approaches.

1- “*as a way of life typical of a group*”,

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<sup>71</sup> Harris. (1998). op. cit.

<sup>72</sup> Aiello, J. R., & Thompson, D. E. (1980). Personal space, crowding, and spatial behavior in a cultural context. In *Environment and culture* (pp. 107-178). Springer, Boston, MA.

<sup>73</sup> Harris. (1998). op. cit.

<sup>74</sup> Edgerton. (1971). Berry, J. W. (1980). Cultural ecology and individual behavior. In *Environment and Culture* (pp. 83-106). Springer, Boston, MA.

<sup>75</sup> Cohen. (1968). Berry, J. W. (1980). Cultural ecology and individual behavior. In *Environment and Culture* (pp. 83-106). Springer, Boston, MA.

2- “as a system of symbols, meanings, and cognitive schemata transmitted through symbolic codes”,

3- “as a set of adaptive strategies for survival ecology and resources”.<sup>76</sup>

Because of this multi-layered structure of culture, Rapoport emphasizes that culture needs to study by subdividing into categories, and he divides as:

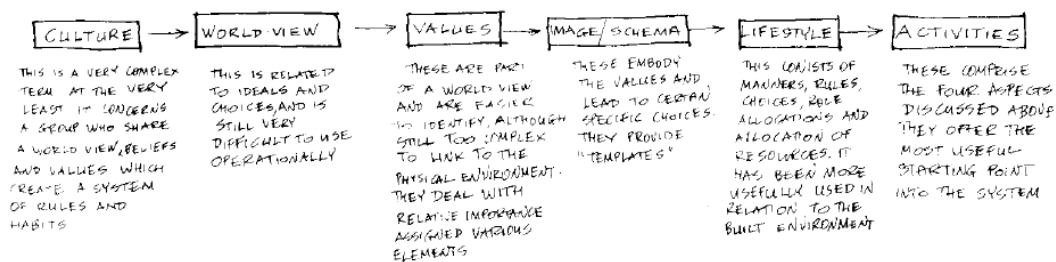


Figure 2-8 Diagram of Culture by Rapoport<sup>77</sup>

Rapoport argues that culture typically leads to a particular world view. World views reflect ideals and values which are embodied in images. Values result in particular lifestyles. People make choices about how to behave, how to allocate resources according to their lifestyle. Activities are an even more specific aspect of lifestyle. He thinks that it should be examined activities to identify more easily differences in lifestyle, values, images, world views and eventually culture. However, the relationship between culture and activities-it can be also said behavior- is quite complex. There are differences of opinion on this issue.<sup>78</sup>

#### 2.4.2. Culture as Idea and Behavior

It is a very difficult task to discern the components of culture within the various definitions of culture. Though there is generally a consensus that ideas are part of our

<sup>76</sup> Rapoport, A. (1977). *Human aspects of urban form* (Vol. 3). Oxford: Pergamon.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. p20.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.



culture, disagreements over the behavior-culture relationship prevail. Some anthropologists have excluded behavior from culture while some others argue that culture and behavior are interrelated. At this point, Harris asks the question of “*whether culture should be defined as consisting of ideas alone or of ideas and behavior together?*”.<sup>79</sup>

William Durham who is an anthropologist that argues the ideational definition of culture, believes that there should be a distinction between culture and human behavior. Durham and majority of anthropologists describe culture as “*an exclusively of shared and socially transmitted ideational or mental entities, such as values, ideas, beliefs and the like, in the minds of human beings.*”<sup>80</sup> In other words, they define culture as pure idea, and describe ideas as guiding social behavior. Durham borrows Richard Dawkins's term “*meme*” to support this definition.<sup>81</sup> He gathers these *mind-things* under the term of *meme*. According to him, “*the meme is the fundamental unit of information that is stored in the brain, transmitted through social learning, and acted upon by the selective forces of cultural evolution.*” Durham thinks that *memes* which ideas in our minds serves as a “*guide*” for behavior.<sup>82</sup> However, there is an asymmetric relationship between ideas and behavior. While ideas guide behavior, behavior does not serve as a guide for *memes*. In a few words, ideas guide behavior, but not the reverse. Harris evaluates this approach as “*the mother error of contemporary anthropological theories*”.<sup>83</sup>

As Harris argues, Durham maintains culture as only one guiding force for ideas and behavior. However, Harris himself refers to the impact of genetic characteristics and

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<sup>79</sup> Harris. (1998). op. cit. p20-21.

<sup>80</sup> Durham. (1992). Harris. (1998). op. cit. p20-25.

<sup>81</sup> Dawkins. R. (1976). cited in Harris. (1998). op. cit. p21.

<sup>82</sup> Durham. (1992). Harris. (1998). op. cit. p20-25.

<sup>83</sup> Harris. (1998). op. cit. p22.

the environment on ideas and behaviors. He gives the example of laughing to explain it.

*“Some degree of genetic preconditioning probably underlies the widespread (but not universal) belief that a smile is a friendly greeting, or that sweet things are good to eat. If these mixed learned-ideational-genetic memes are acceptable as cultural entities, why deny that mixed learned- genetic socially transmitted behaviors are also a part of culture?”*<sup>84</sup>

Harris define culture as ideas and behaviors. He argues that the cultural system contains rules that guide behavior as well as ideas, but culture also contains ideas for breaking those rules. According to him, while ideas affect behaviors in the short term, changes in behavior affect ideas and rules in the long term. So, behavior and ideas must be seen as elements in a feedback relationship and behavior must be considered as part of the culture.

#### **2.4.3. Environment and Culture Relation**

There is an interchangeable relation between culture and environment. The fact that a culture affects and is affected by its environment.<sup>85</sup> A functional interdependence exists among cultural and environmental elements and they are congruent with each other. The physical environment affects the development of culture within any given society. People adopt certain patterns of living thanks to their successful adaptation of environment. This process of adaption has the tremendous impact in the shaping of culture.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, cultural practices cause some modifications of the environment. In the process of being adapted to the environment, people attempt to control or alter environment to meet human needs and to reflect the prevailing

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid. p21-22.

<sup>85</sup> Altman, I., & Wohlwill, J. F. (2012). *Human behavior and environment: Advances in theory and research* (Vol. 2). Springer Science & Business Media.

<sup>86</sup> Aiello, J. R., & Thompson, D. E. (1980). Personal space, crowding, and spatial behavior in a cultural context. In *Environment and culture* (pp. 107-178). Springer, Boston, MA.

attitudes, life-styles, and customs.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, Lang says that “*people have migrated from one part of the world to another taking many aspects of their own culture with them*”.<sup>88</sup>

Rapoport defines environment as a culture specific. He states that the environment does not shape randomly. It has an order, in other words, it has rules which are linked systematically to culture. He puts forward “*the choice model of design.*” At this model, Rapoport argues that the environment offers various opportunity for the human being. In the face of these opportunities, the individual enters the selection and elimination process and shapes the environment with his/her choices. However, these choices and eliminations are not made in arbitrary, they are made depend on some rules. These rules are derived from its culture; lifestyle, values, and word view. The individual makes selection and elimination according to its needs.<sup>89</sup> In being so, one can says that the built environment is a product of culture, it helps shape future generations by serving its unique cultural meanings and symbolisms.<sup>90</sup>

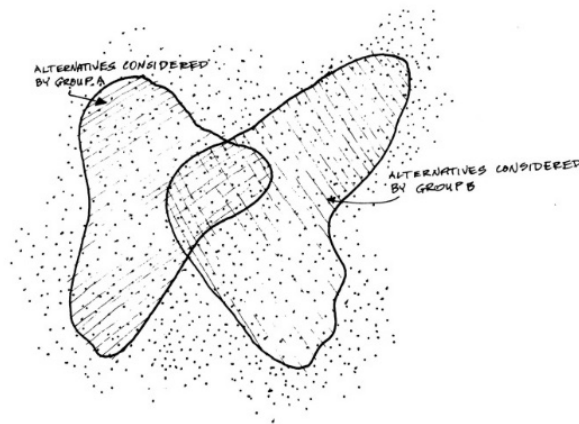


Figure 2-9 Selection and Elimination of Alternatives in Environment<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit. p80.

<sup>89</sup> Rapoport. (1977). op. cit. p15-20.

<sup>90</sup> Aiello. (1980). op. cit.

<sup>91</sup> Rapoport. (1977). op. cit. p16.

#### 2.4.4. Behavior in the context of Culture

*“People behave differently in different settings”* (Barker,1968, cited by Lang, 1987, p.28) They give different responses to similar stimuli in different places. This change originates from their social structure and culture. People tend to exhibit the appropriate behavior that their environment expect from them. Their culture gives them clue about how they should behave. The environment influenced by the culture is an important tool in the process of giving this clue. Rapoport mentions that the environment has codes that guide behavior. She/he interacts with the environment and tries to read them. These codes should be understood as a language and the process can be considered as a form of nonverbal communication. Therefore, Rapoport considers environmental design as *“a process of encoding information so that users can easily decode it.”*<sup>92</sup> If the code is not understood or the language is different to the user, the environment cannot communicate with the individual. The individual feels foreign and uncomfortable about how to behave himself in the environment. For this reason, it is very important that these codes are designed in accordance with the culture of the person in the environmental design, especially in the design of public spaces where many people are expected to behave together in harmony. The designer must be able to speak the same language with the user in order to place these codes in the environment. Therefore, researches focus on *emic* and *etic aspect* in the cross-cultural studies.

*Etic aspects* are valid principles in all cultures and researchers attempt *“to establish theoretical frameworks useful in comparing human behavior in various cultures”*. *Emic aspects* are valid principles of behavior within anyone culture, *“with attention given to what the people themselves value as important as well as what is familiar to*

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<sup>92</sup> Rapoport, A. (1980). Cross-cultural aspects of environmental design. In *Environment and culture* (pp. 7-46). Springer, Boston, MA. p28.

them.” A designer cannot gain insight into *emics* by using foreign tools, so cross-cultural studies are significant in the environmental design.<sup>93</sup>

Individuals and communities use the environment to the extent that they can perceive it from their emic aspect. Rapoport gives the example of a band of Australian Aborigines. These people camped on the top of a seam minerals. They do not perceive this seam because it is not worth for them. However, resources are seen and evaluated differently by more technologically advanced societies. Therefore, even visible urban elements may not be perceived. In order for the person to realize the opportunities offered by the environment, there must be a corresponding in the culture of this opportunity. Otherwise, the person cannot perceive these opportunities. Rapoport argues that perception is based on both external and cultural factors and he believes that the perception depends on the person and the socio-cultural norms.<sup>94</sup>

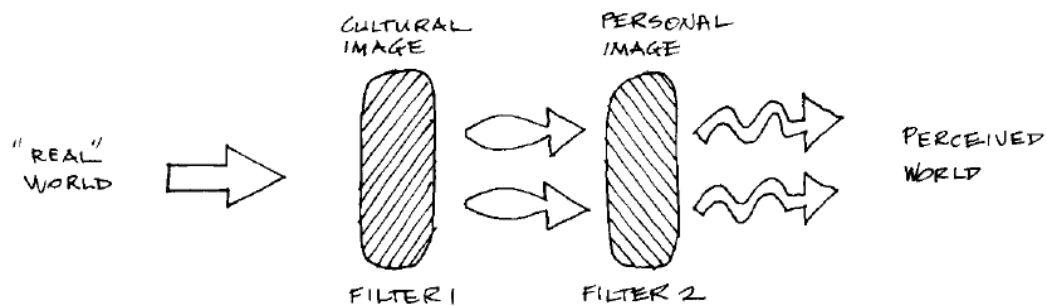


Figure 2-10 Filters in the Perception of the Environment<sup>95</sup>

Lang shows a similar approach with Rapoport to how the environment is perceived and used. Lang thinks humans as highly adaptable creatures, but he emphasizes that “*their perceptions of environment affected by the things to which they have become*

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<sup>93</sup> Brislin, R. W. (1976). Comparative research methodology: Cross-cultural studies. *International journal of psychology*, 11(3), p215-229.

<sup>94</sup> Rapoport. (1980). op. cit. p28.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. p38.

*accustomed*”. Each individual has different competencies to cope with different aspects of the built environment. According to him, some of competencies are physiological and some are social and cultural, and these differences affect how they perceive and use the environment. Individuals cannot perceive all affordances of their environment. Even if they can perceive it, they may be ignoring it because they have not the necessary competency or cultural factors.<sup>96</sup>

## 2.5. Public Spaces of the City

There is a distinction in urban spaces as *social - public* and *private*. While the spaces people use jointly for their needs are defined as *social space* or *public space*, the spaces where individuals meet special needs are defined as *private spaces*. The word of public space consists of parks, squares and streets and etc. Gehl defines public space as all the spaces that exist between buildings in cities.<sup>97</sup> Madanipour states that “*this is the realm of sociability, where face-to-face communication takes place between people who are not part of the intimate circle of household and friends.*” It is a place where people can meet different social classes, races and ethnic organizations.<sup>98</sup> In other words, public space is a place where mutual relations, opposites and dialogues are made.

Madanipour considers public space that is an ever-present vocabulary of urbanism as an integral part of cities throughout history, and he thinks that human settlements would be unthinkable without public space, and asks that “*How could people step out of their front doors if there were no public space to mediate between private territories?*”<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Lang. (1987). op. cit. p103.

<sup>97</sup> Gehl, J. (2011). *Life between buildings: using public space*. Island Press.

<sup>98</sup> Weber, M., (1964), “The Urban Place and The Non-Place Urban Realm”, University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania.

<sup>99</sup> Madanipour, A. (2010). Whose public space. *Whose Public Space?: International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development*. p2-3.

The easy access to public spaces in the cities carries people and activities from private space to public places. On the contrary, public spaces can be designed to be physically and psychologically difficult to access, but this is contrary to the nature of public space. Because the main feature of public space is the inclusion of the whole society. Similarly, Madanipour argues that “*public space should be accessible places, developed through inclusive processes.*” Because of its inclusive feature that public spaces are places where public awareness occurs.<sup>100</sup>

The most important function of public spaces is the creation of *a social life* between buildings. This social life enables people to communicate and socialize with each other in a public space and create a common identity. That is why Jacobs says that streets connect people’s homes and workplaces and form their living spaces.

Public spaces that fill the spaces between buildings are therefore generally considered as outdoor spaces. Kostof emphasizes two distinct features of open public spaces; one of them is the streets; the transition areas for human flow. On the other hand, open public spaces are places that are desired to be reached and spent time. Community activities such as ceremonies, celebrations, festivals, revolts, and individual activities such as taking a walk take place in these public spaces.<sup>101</sup>

### **2.5.1. The Difference between being in the Public and Private Space**

The individual has two dimensions; *person* and *self*. “*Whereas person is encoded in the actions of others, self is encoded in the actions of the subject himself*” Goffman defines these two parts of individual as “*portraits of the same individual*”.<sup>102</sup> There is an obvious gap between the actual self which change according to bodily impulses and social forces, and person which change according to social construction. And, the individual constantly feels tension to strike a balance between this duality. According

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid. p1.

<sup>101</sup> Kostof. (1992). cited in Madanipour, A. (2010). *Whose public space. Whose Public Space?: International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development*. p131.

<sup>102</sup> Goffman, (1969. Cited in Madanipour, A. (2003). *Public and private spaces of the city*. Routledge

to Ali Madanipour, individual rely on “*masks, which are made of socially mediated suppression of impulses to stage a stable, relatively consistent performance.*” Psychiatrist Carl Jung use the term of *persona* instead of mask. And he defines as social face of individual presented to the others.<sup>103</sup>

The mask is a boundary between the inner realm and the outer realm in an individual. It is built to cope with tension which feel by individual because of person and self. And, the boundary determines that “*what makes the public realm and what also limits and characterizes the private realm of the individual*”.<sup>104</sup> Madanipour points out this improvement of the boundary between the public and the private demonstrates the ability of individual to control the self and person.<sup>105</sup>

The individual usually tends to make his/her behavior and attitudes appropriate to the environment. Therefore, individual has more than one mask. The masks are flexible and may vary according to different situations and environments. In other word, these masks are shaped according to society rather than the free behavior of the individual. So, it usually depends on the others.

*“The masks we wear to face others are usually made of normal routines. When moving from the private sphere to the public space, these routines change, from changing clothes to shaving or putting make up, to changing the vocabulary, accent and forms of expression, and adopting a more polite, careful manner. The change of mask is done with care and often with the assistance of the mirror, so as to see with the eyes of the others how we might appear to them. This is not preparation for a special occasion.*

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<sup>103</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003). *Public and private spaces of the city*. Routledge.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. p.105

<sup>105</sup> Ibid. p.105



*It is just a routine social habit of human beings in their daily social life.*"<sup>106</sup>

This boundary-mask between person and self probably exists ever since people started living as a community. However, in today's metropolises, individuals are no longer connected to each other by traditional ties and social hierarchy. Cities are meeting points for people from different classes, cultures and so on. In this chaos atmosphere of metropolises, the individual has much more difficulty in finding the appropriate mask to put on. This situation emerges especially in the public spaces of the city, which are points of encounter with others. Therefore, "*the metropolitan inhabitant takes refuge in an impersonal, rationalistic envelope. To be protected from the threat of profound disruption, the metropolitan person is de-sensitized.*"<sup>107</sup>

### **2.5.2. Public Spaces Activities**

Jan Gehl classifies these public space activities into three categories: *Necessary activities*, *optional activities* and *social activities*.

**Necessary activities:** Everyday tasks belong to this group. These activities; going to work or shopping, waiting for a bus, running errands and so on. According to Gehl, these activities take place all the year round, under nearly all conditions. They are independent of the outdoor space quality. The participants have no choice.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p.104

<sup>107</sup> Simmel, (1978). Cited in Madanipour, A. (2003). Op. Cit.



*Figure 2-11 Necessary activity, Mersin, 2014, photograph by the author*



*Figure 2-12 Necessary activity, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author*

**Optional Activities:** This category consist of activities that are taking a walk, standing around, getting a breath of fresh air, or sitting and sunbathing. These activities take place only when exterior conditions are favorable. They are dependent on quality of exterior physical conditions.



*Figure 2-13* Optional activities, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author



*Figure 2-14* Optional activities, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author



**Social Activities:** These activities comprise activities such as “*children at play, greetings and conversations, communal activities of various kinds and passive contacts, that is, simply seeing and hearing other people*”.<sup>108</sup>

Gehl also term these activities as *resultant activities*, because they are formed when the other two activities categories take place. In other words, social activities occur spontaneously, as a direct consequence of people being in the same spaces.<sup>109</sup>









Figure 2-15 Social activities, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author

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<sup>108</sup> Gehl. (2011). op. cit. p12

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

*“Social activities are indirectly supported whenever necessary and optional activities are given better conditions in public spaces. When outdoor areas are poor quality, only strictly necessary activities occur. People hurry home. When outdoor areas are of high quality, a wide range of optional activities will also occur because place and situation invite people to stop, sit, eat, play and the like”.<sup>110</sup>*

	Quality of the physical environment	
	Poor	Good
Necessary activities		
Optional activities		
Social activities		

*Figure 2-16* The relationship between the quality of the physical environment and the rate of occurrence of outdoor activities<sup>111</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Gehl. (2011). op. cit. p12-13.

<sup>111</sup> Gehl. (2011). op. cit. p11.



## CHAPTER 3

### CHANGING SOCIAL MORPHOLOGY OF THE CITY OF MERSIN: MIGRATION, SUCCESSION AND INVASION IN URBAN SPACE

Mersin differs from other Anatolian cities, due to its being a developed port city in the Mediterranean in the late Ottoman period. Being a port city has considerably affected its urban texture and population structure. And also, the fact that it was established in a period when Ottoman state adopted the modernization movement, had a great effect on its unique urban fabric.

It was a village of fishermen depending on Tarsus before the mid-19th century. When it started to develop as the port of Çukurova region, it underwent a great transformation and gained a multicultural structure with migrations that it has received over time like the other port cities of Middle East Mediterranean. So, it has a cosmopolitan community that can provide important data to cultural studies with its multi-cultural social structure. In order to better understand the multicultural social pattern that differs Mersin from other Anatolian cities in history and today, it should be examined how its establishment as a modern port city in the Mediterranean.

In this chapter, the historical development of Mersinis studied to understand social structure of city which it has today. In the first section, the commercial, socio-economic factors and historical events that are effective in the formation of the city will be evaluated. In the following, it will be investigated the demographic changes and the population structure of the city as a result of these developments. After that, the reflections of these changes to the macroform of the city regarding urban planning activities and social morphology will be examined.

### 3.1. The Development of Mersin in History

Mersin is located in the Eastern Mediterranean region called *Cilicia* in antique age. It first appears in the Neolithic period. Yumuktepe Tumulus is a place where the settlement continues from the early Neolithic period to the Medieval period.<sup>112</sup> Adıyeke stated that Mersin is different from other Anatolian cities in terms of the city history. While many cities established in Anatolia in ancient time were able to protect their existence during the Medieval Ages and the period of Ottoman Empire, Mersin was not able to maintain its existence. For instance, cities located in the same region with Mersin such as Tarsus, Silifke and Antakya have been able to preserve their existence throughout history, Mersin, which first appeared in the antiquity period, reappeared as a newly established city in the second quarter of the 19th century due to the increasing commercial activities of the capitalist economy. Therefore, Adıyeke argues that the history of the region and the history of the city should be considered separately.<sup>113</sup>

The re-emergence of Mersin as a city started with the defeat of the Ottoman armies by Kavalalı Ibrahim Pasha, who settled in the fertile agricultural land of Çukurova in 1832. He seized Adana, Tarsus and Mersin and played an important role in the change of the economic and social development of the region. In this period, Çukurova has emerged as an important agricultural production region with the modern agricultural regulations made by Kavalalı Ibrahim Pasha. He imported cotton seeds from Egypt

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<sup>112</sup> Uçar, M., & Yoloğlu, A. C. (2018). Arkeolojik Alanların Korunmasında Paydaş Olarak Çocuklar: Mersin Yumuktepe Höyüğü Örneği. *tasarım+ kuram dergisi*, 14(25), 114-133.

<sup>113</sup> Adıyeke, N. Adıyeke, N. *Modernleşmenin Doğurduğu Kent, Sırtı Dağ Yüzü Deniz: Mersin*, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2004, p.69



and Cyprus and settled people who know the agricultural affairs from Egypt and Syria to the region.<sup>114</sup>

The functional and geographic changes of the region led to the emergence of Mersin as a port city. At the beginning of the 19th century, Mersin was a fishing village, which consisted of several brick tombs and huts made of tree branches located on the seafront. While Mersin was a village, Tarsus, Adana, Silifke were important settlements that provide their connections with the sea through their own ports.<sup>115</sup> However, some of these ports have become unusable due to geographical changes over time and the others have offered limited facilities to increasing commercial activities of region so they have become unfavorable. For this reason, new ports were needed as a transport link where the products could be shipped. To meet this need, two ports were built in Mersin.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Yorulmaz, Ş. (2002). Doğu Akdeniz’de Bir Osmanlı Liman Kenti Olarak Gelişen Mersin’de Yabancı Tüccarın Rolü ve Mersin’de Levanten Kültürü (19. Yüzyıl), 19. *Yüzyılda Mersin ve Akdeniz Dünyası*, 2-14.

<sup>115</sup> Develi, Ş. *Dünden Bugüne Mersin 1836-2008*, Mersin Büyükşehir Belediyesi, Mersin, 2008, pp.63-64

<sup>116</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Kültürel Farklılıkların Kentsel Siyasete Yansımaları: Mersin Örneği. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Kamu Yönetimi Anabilim Dalı*. İstanbul

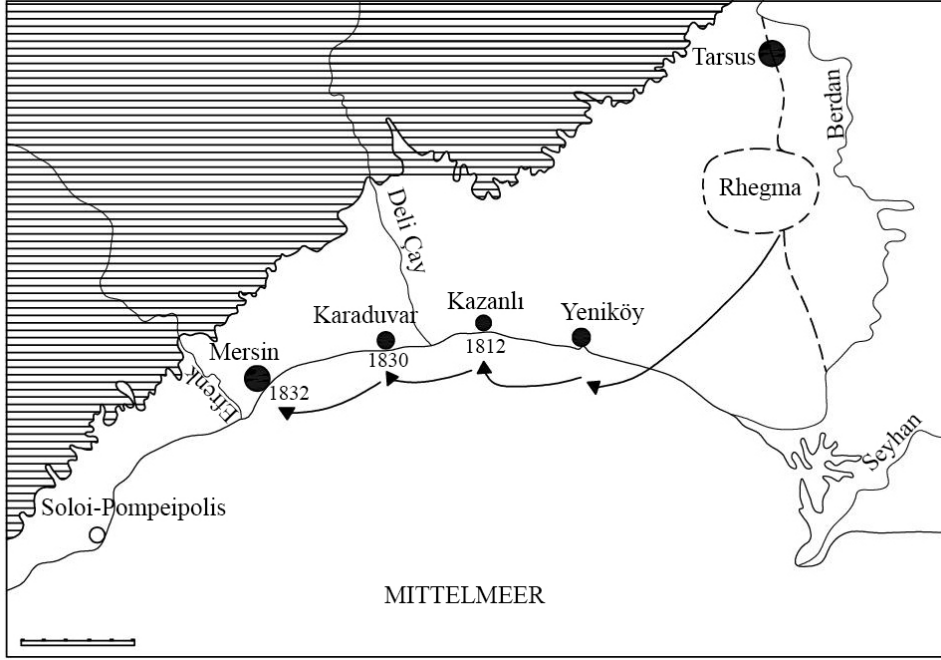


Figure 3-1 The shift of the port from Tarsus (from Rhegma Lake) to Mersin over time

Because of the Crimean war and American civil war, the need of cotton has increased in the world. In this period, England began to give importance to cotton cultivation in Ottoman lands so the importance of Çukurova region increased because of its fertile lands. Çukurova entered into a rapid development process through cotton production. Developing commercial capacity in the region has also increased the importance of Mersin. It was becoming a crucial port city for the region after 1850 and entered into a rapid development process. At the same time, because of construction of Suez Canal started in Egypt, Mersin was a required pier for timber export.<sup>117</sup> In short, the increase in cotton demand in the world because of the Crimean war and American civil war and the construction of the Suez Canal, the importance of Mersin port increased for the region.

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<sup>117</sup> Develi, Ş. *Dünden Bugüne Mersin 1836-2008*, Mersin Büyükşehir Belediyesi, Mersin, 2008, pp.63-64

Mersin entered into a rapid development process with the increase of foreign and domestic investments made to the city. Italians, French, and especially the British made important investments in cotton production and trade. In 1864, the first ginnery factory was opened by the French in Adana and the second factory was opened by the British in 1865. Çadırcı mentions that with the opening of the ginnery factories in Mersin and Tarsus, the region has gradually started to be industrialized and opened to world financial markets.<sup>118</sup> Transportation networks are also an important factor in the development of Mersin. British investors built Adana-Mersin railway for the transfer of agricultural production from Çukurova to Mersin. When Adana-Mersin railway was opened in 1886, Mersin became a more convenient port city and continued to increase its importance as a port city.<sup>119</sup>

### **3.2. The Formation of Multi-Cultural Structure of Mersin with Its Migration History**

Mersin, chosen as the research area, has been a cosmopolitan city where people of different ethnicities and sects lived throughout its history. Özdemir counts the Mersin's current ethnic and religious identities as Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Alevis, Sunnis, a small number of Romany and non-Muslims.<sup>120</sup> The multi-cultural population structure of Mersin has been its one of the most striking features from its first establishment until the present. Although there is a significant content difference between the cosmopolitan population structure implied for the 19th century and today, Mersin has

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<sup>118</sup> Çadırcı, (1997), cited in Özdemir, E. (2009). Kültürel Farklılıkların Kentsel Siyasete Yansımaları: Mersin Örneği. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Kamu Yönetimi Anabilim Dalı*. İstanbul

<sup>119</sup> Ünlü, T.S.19. *Yüzyılda Mersin'in Kentsel Gelişimi*, Mersin Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Tarih Anabilim Dalı, Mersin, 2007

<sup>120</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Kültürel Farklılıkların Kentsel Siyasete Yansımaları: Mersin Örneği. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Kamu Yönetimi Anabilim Dalı*. İstanbul

always been an immigrant-receiving city and has maintained its cosmopolitan structure throughout its two centuries history.<sup>121</sup>

*“The whole Mediterranean consists of movement in space.”*

Fernand Braudel<sup>122</sup>

Being a city located in the Eastern Mediterranean region has been the most important factor in the formation of the multi-cultural structure of Mersin, especially in the first periods of its establishment. The location can be said to have determined the fate of the city. Selin Çoruh points out in her thesis study, *“The Mediterranean, by linking countries with different cultures and representatives of religions around it, made possible the reflection of change on one coast to the other.”*<sup>123</sup>

Due to the increasing of commercial activities and capitalist economy, Mersin shows many common points with Beirut, Haifa, Sayda and many other port cities on the coast of the East Mediterranean, which developed during the same period.<sup>124</sup> In the 19th century, Mersin became the center of migration, like many other port cities where trade developed in the East Mediterranean. Yenişehirlioğlu points out that with the investments of the capitalist world economy, Ottoman citizens or Europeans who invest in many of the Mediterranean cities and the agricultural workforce based on cotton and grain production has led many people to migrate to this new city and the

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid. p.127

<sup>122</sup> Braudel, F., (1996), p.277 cited in Çoruh, S. (2019), *The Latin Catholic Church Settlement in Mersin During the Late Ottoman Period*, (Master Thesis, Middle East Technical Univestiy)

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. p.9

<sup>124</sup> Ünlü, T.S. *19. Yüzyılda Mersin'in Kentsel Gelişimi*, Mersin Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Tarih Anabilim Dalı, Mersin, 2007, p.266

establishment of a modern lifestyle with a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious population.<sup>125</sup>

The reform of Tanzimat Edict and The Free-Trade Agreement signed with Western European countries in 1838 allowed foreign capital inflows; privileges were provided to non-Muslim citizens and Levantines who were foreign merchants and business owners.<sup>126</sup> This situation has been very effective in the development of the coastal cities due to their commercial opportunities. In a short period of time, Mersin turned into a cosmopolitan port city where agricultural products and industrial raw materials were exported, and Western European industrial products were imported.<sup>127</sup>

As a result of the economic and political events in the world, such as the agricultural movements started in Çukurova, the North American Civil War, Suez Canal Construction, Crimean War; the multicultural structure of Mersin began to form.<sup>128</sup> Because of its commercial and employment opportunities, it received so much migration in its two decades history.

The first migration movement known to affect the social structure of Mersin was formed as a result of the defeat of the Ottoman armies by Kavalalı Ibrahim Pasha in 1832. As mentioned before, he seized Adana, Tarsus and Mersin. Ibrahim Pasha brought *the Fellah* –farmers from Syria and Egypt- to Mersin.<sup>129</sup> Fellahs are Arab people and their religious belief is generally Alevism.

The increasing importance of the pier in the 1850s led also to an increase in the Catholic population in the city. The Catholics, who began to settle in Mersin, consisted

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<sup>125</sup> Yenişehirlioğlu, (2004), cited in Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit. p.126

<sup>127</sup> Güneş, A. G. (2010). Mersin Levanten yapıları üzerine bir inceleme. *Master Thesis, Adana: Çukurova University Institute of Natural And Applied Sciences.*

<sup>128</sup> TCDD,(1965:7) cited in Güneş, A. G. (2010). Op. cit. p.17

<sup>129</sup> Tümtaş, M. S. (2007). Türkiye’de İç Göçün Kentsel Gerilime Etkisi: Mersin Örneği. *Muğla: Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.* p80.

of Maronite, European and Latin-Catholics.<sup>130</sup> Those from Europe and Latin-Catholics formed the Levantines and settled in Mersin until the 1850s.

Levantine is first used by Europeans to describe people of European descent who live in the Mediterranean Sea in the eastern Italy. In later times, this word has been used to describe people who are usually engaged in trade, coming from Europe (west), and living in the Levant (east) for a few generations and not having a national language. Levantines are generally of British, Italian, French, Hungarian and Slavic origin. They are seen as a different society and culture among Europeans. They prefer to settle in Istanbul and Izmir because of their commercial activities, began to settle in Mersin due to the developing commercial opportunities. The arrival of Levantines was mostly colonial.<sup>131</sup>

Another group within the Catholic community is the Maronites. They are a group of people living in Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, who have different views in Christianity. After the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Lebanon, they entered the Ottoman Empire, but according to Yorulmaz, they remained under the influence of France in cultural and political aspects.<sup>132</sup> Some Maronite families settled in Mersin because of the conflicts between the Muslim Druze and the Christian Maronites in the 1860s.<sup>133</sup>

Another migration movement in the same period was the result of the construction of the Suez Canal and the increasing of cotton demand in the world because of the Crimean war and American civil war. Because Mersin was the harbor of Çukurova composed of fertile lands for cultivating cotton, Italians, French, and especially the

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<sup>130</sup> Yorulmaz, Ş. (2002). Doğu Akdeniz’de Bir Osmanlı Liman Kenti Olarak Gelişen Mersin’de Yabancı Tüccarın Rolü ve Mersin’de Levanten Kültürü (19. Yüzyıl), *19. Yüzyılda Mersin ve Akdeniz Dünyası*, 2-14.

<sup>131</sup> Güneş, A. G. (2010). Op. cit.p.17

<sup>132</sup> Yorulmaz, Ş. (2002). Op. cit.

<sup>133</sup> Leylek, Hanri, (2005), Mersin Katolik Kilisesi–1853, 150.Yıl, Mersin. p.5

British made important investments in cotton production and trade. The British brought Arab workers from Egypt for cultivating the land. At the same time, timber needed for the construction of the Suez Canal was also met from the mountains of Mersin. Timber trade gathered both peasants (Turkmens and Yörüks) from Toros Mountains and Fellah from Syria and Egypt around this new city.<sup>134</sup>

After the Crimean War, Mersin was also one of the places where migrants from Crimean were settled. Wilson, who travelled to the region between 1879 and 1882, wrote that approximately twenty thousand of the people who left Crimea after the Crimean War had settled in the Adana plain, two thousand families of them remain in the region but he does not mention about how many of them stayed in Mersin.<sup>135</sup>

Another important group of migrants came from the island of Crete. The island was included in the Ottoman lands between 1645 and 1908. During this period, some Turkish people migrated to the island. As a result of this migration, a new community with a unique culture was formed in the island with the assimilation resulting from the fusion between Ottoman societies and the process of acceptance of Islam- *ihitida*. However, the upheavals occurred in the Crete Island with the end of Ottoman sovereignty over the island in late 19th century. As a result of the upheavals in the island, Muslim groups from Crete had to leave their country. Cretans are known to have mostly settled in Çukurova, Ayvalık, İzmir, Bodrum, Side, Mudanya and Mersin because of the use of the sea route.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>134</sup>Tümtaş, M. S. (2007). Türkiye’de İç Göçün Kentsel Gerilime Etkisi: Mersin Örneği. *Muğla: Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü*. p80.

<sup>135</sup>Yorulmaz. (2002). p321. cited in Ünlü, T. S. (2010). Bir İskeleyden Liman Kentine Doğru Akdeniz’in Önemli Bir Limanı Olarak On Dokuzuncu Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Mersin’de Mekânsal Gelişim. *TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası Dergisi*, p9.

<sup>136</sup> Dizdar, S. İ. Girit Göçmen Konutları Örneğinde Mersin Hebilleri Köyü Kırsal Alan Yerleşim Analizi, *Mersin’den Mimarlık Planlama Tasarım Yazıları, Tamer Gök’e Armağan*, p.3-20.

During the Republican period, Mersin has continued to receive migration as in the 19th century. However, the structure of these migrations and their consequences on the city has historical and sociological differences.<sup>137</sup> Because of the characteristics of Mersin such as the suitable climatic condition for agriculture, the close relation with commercial networks as a port city, employment opportunities, and the appropriateness of living conditions, it has continued to be an attractive city for immigration.<sup>138</sup>

Migration continued during the Republican period, has particularly intensified after the 1980s. The population of which were 843.931 in 1980 reached to 1.651.400 in 2000.<sup>139</sup> After 1945, the Anatolian Alevis came to Mersin to escape from the political tensions in the provinces such as Malatya, Sivas and Yozgat and they worked in the gardens of the rich Alevi Arab families-*the Fellahs*.<sup>140</sup>

The greatest immigration wave after the Republic was experienced in the period 1985-1990. According to the ranking of migration rates, Mersin, which ranks 16<sup>th</sup> in the country with a net migration rate of 12.4% in 2000, ranked the 4<sup>th</sup> with a net migration rate of 68% between 1985-1990 years.<sup>141</sup> It is known that this migration movement was generally that of the Kurdish and Alevi citizens living in the Eastern Anatolia Region and Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey. Kurdish and Alevi citizens have migrated to the cities of Çukurova region both for political reasons and for the low living conditions in this period. Mersin has been an important attraction for this migration movement because of its employment opportunities and multicultural

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<sup>137</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Kültürel Farklılıkların Kentsel Siyasete Yansımaları: Mersin Örneği. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Kamu Yönetimi Anabilim Dalı*. İstanbul

<sup>138</sup> Eroğlu, Ö. B., & Gülcan, M. G. (2016). Göçle Gelen Ailelerin Ve Çocuklarının Eğitim Sorunları (Mersin İli Örneği). 218.

<sup>139</sup> URL: [http://tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt\\_id=1067](http://tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1067), Accessed on: 06.05.2019

<sup>140</sup> Tümtaş, M. S. (2007). Op. cit.

<sup>141</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit.



structure. The Kurds, who first came to work as seasonal workers, began to migrate from Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia to Mersin in the 1980s.

As a result of all these migrations, the already multi-cultural structure of the city of Mersin was further reinforced with new migrations.<sup>142</sup> As a result of all these migratory movements throughout the history, the half of the population of Mersin central city was Turks, 1/3 were Kurds and 1/10 were Arabs in the beginning of 2000s.<sup>143</sup>

Table 3-1 *The change of the net migration and net migration rate*

<b>Periods</b>	<b>Receiving Migration</b>	<b>Net migration</b>	<b>Net Migration Rate (%)</b>
1975-1980	73.699	40.273	57,5
1980-1985	89.444	49.593	56,5
1985-1990	131.573	74.717	68,3
1995-2000	117.894	18.429	12,4

Recently, Mersin became the address of another great migration movement. Syrian groups migrated to Turkey because of the Syrian civil war that started in 2011. While a significant part of Syrian Migrants has lived in the camps of refugees which were established in Urfa, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, and Osmaniye, the rest have settled into various cities of Turkey. Mersin is one of the most preferred cities for this migration movement. According to the data provided by TUIK, there are currently 206,700 Syrian Migrants in Mersin.

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<sup>142</sup> Tümtaş. (2007). op. cit. p80.

<sup>143</sup> Göktürk, A. (2006). Göç. *Eleştirel Sağlık Sosyolojisi Sözlüğü*, Nalçacı, Erhan, Hamzaoglu, Onur ve Özalp, Erkin, Nazım Kitaplığı, 34.

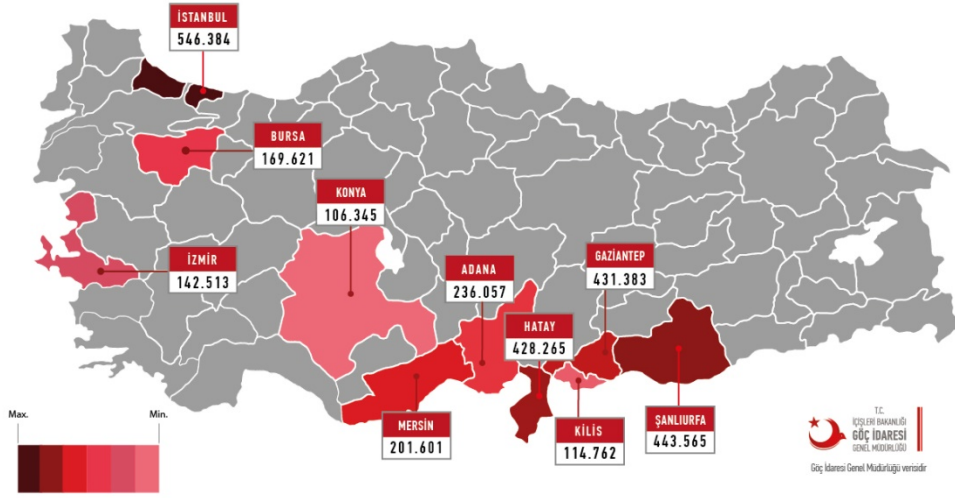


Figure 3-2 The number of Syrian Migrants under temporary protection<sup>144</sup>

### 3.2.1. The Changing Population

The Ottomans showed Muslims as a whole in the majority of the population statistics, and they divided the Christians according to their religious differences. Özdemir mentions that because of this attitude of the Ottomans in the population census, Muslim population is seen as a one-piece society in demographic studies. That is why the multi-ethnic structure of the city in the Ottoman period can only be traced over non-Muslims and this reflects only part of this heterogeneity.<sup>145</sup>

Since Mersin was a village connected to Tarsus until 1850s, there is not any population living only in Mersin in Salname. In 1852, Mersin became a subdistrict-*Nahiye*. Because of the Provincial Regulations in 1864, the name of the provinces-*eyalet* was changed as “*vilayet*” and the administrative division was arranged as: 1-province-*vilayet*, 2-sanjak-*liva*, 3-jurisdiction-*kaza*, 4-subdistrict-*nahiye*, 5-village-*karye*. Accordingly, Adana was transformed from a province to a sanjak within the borders

<sup>144</sup> URL: [http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik3/gecici-koruma\\_363\\_378\\_4713](http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik3/gecici-koruma_363_378_4713), Accessed on: 06.05.2019

<sup>145</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Kültürel Farklılıkların Kentsel Siyasete Yansimasi: Mersin Örneği. *İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Kamu Yönetimi Anabilim Dalı*. İstanbul

of Tarsus, Mersin and Karaisalı. And Mersin become a jurisdiction connected to Adana.<sup>146</sup>

Therefore, the first record of the population of Mersin belongs to *the Adana Province Salname* dated 1872. At that time, the Mersin jurisdiction consisted of Gökçeli, Elvanlı and Kalınlı subdistricts (*Nahiye*) and the total population was 8047.<sup>147</sup> Mersin as a central jurisdiction was in Gökçeli subdistrict. Bozkurt reported that there were 625 Muslims, 147 Greek, 37 Armenians and 50 Catholics living in the center of Mersin in accordance with the information received from *the Adana Province Salname* in 1876.<sup>148</sup> So the population of Mersin was around 900. According to these data, 68% of the population was Muslims while 32% of the population was non-Muslims.

Table 3-2 *The population of Mersin Jurisdiction in 1872*<sup>149</sup>

	Population	Household
Gökçeli Subdistrict	4.110	750 Muslim
	400	193 Christian
Elvanlı Subdistrict	1.876	281 Muslim
Kalınlı Subdistrict	1.661	198 Muslim
Total	8.047	1422

In 1888, Mersin jurisdiction became a sanjak. So, it is possible to find more detailed information about the Sanjak of Mersin in the *Salname* of 1891. According to this, while the total population is 21.576, 1415 of them is non-Muslim.

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<sup>146</sup> Çoruh, S. (2019), *The Latin Catholic Church Settlement in Mersin During the Late Ottoman Period*, (Master Thesis, Middle East Technical University)

<sup>147</sup> Bozkurt, İ. (2001). *Salnamelerde Mersin. Mersin Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Mersin*.p.49

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. p.49

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. P.49

Table 3-3 *The population of Mersin in 1891*<sup>150</sup>

Society Name	Total	Household	Neighbourhood	Village
Muslim	20.161	3465	-	-
Greek	920	238	7	84
Armenian	183	48	-	-
Catholic	312	94	-	-
Total	21.576	3.845	7	84

The French Vital Cuinet reported the total population of Mersin Sanjak was 29.185 in 1890 and the the central jurisdiction population was about 9000. There were 2700 Greek Orthodox, 300 Armenian and 260 Catholic and 6300 Muslim population in the central jurisdiction of Mersin.<sup>151</sup> According to these figures, 90% of the sanjak had a Muslim population and a non-Muslim population of around 10%. Considering the data given by Cuinet, there was a 63% Muslim population against the 37% non-Muslim population in the center. The majority of the non-Muslim population live in the center, and the cosmopolitan character of the central population, which is visible in the 1872 data, conserves itself.<sup>152</sup>

In this period, there were representatives and consulates of most European countries in Mersin.<sup>153</sup> While the jurisdiction of Mersin counted 8,000 inhabitants with two neighborhoods and three sub-districts in the early 1870s, Mersin is the sanjak center with a population of over 20,000 in 1890. Özdemir states that the fact that Tarsus was attached to the Sanjak of Mersin in 1888 was also effective in this increasing of population. However, the population of the center has also increased from 900 to 9000 in the twenty years. The population increase of ten times realized. Özdemir points out

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid, p.50

<sup>151</sup> Cuinet, (1890), cited in Bozkurt, İ. (2001). Op. cit. p.53

<sup>152</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit. p.130

<sup>153</sup> Güneş, A. G. (2010). Op. cit.p.27

that the population increase in the center of Mersin shows that the general population growth is not solely due to this administrative decision.<sup>154</sup>

In 1900, Mersin as sanjak was 76.742 and the center of sanjak was 23.443. Between 1890 and 1900, the population of the center experienced an increase of around 155%. According to Karpat, the population of Mersin Sanjak in the census of 1906-7 was 92,812.<sup>155</sup>

Mersin has showed a continuous increase in population. Especially, migration was intensified after 1980s from Eastern Anatolia Region and Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey. It is observed that the population of Mersin, which was 843,931 in 1980, reached 1,651,400 in 2000.<sup>156</sup>

Table 3-4 *The population of Mersin by years*

<b>Years</b>	<b>Rate of Population Change</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Rate of Population Change</b>	<b>Population</b>
<b>1927</b>	-	211,543	<b>2000</b>	26,47	1.651.400
<b>1935</b>	17,96	244,236	<b>2007</b>	-3,35	1.595.938
<b>1940</b>	10,74	257,790	<b>2008</b>	4,40	1.602.908
<b>1945</b>	16,22	279,474	<b>2009</b>	23,40	1.640.888
<b>1950</b>	25,78	317,929	<b>2010</b>	4,30	1.647.899
<b>1955</b>	31,23	371,667	<b>2011</b>	12,10	1.667.939
<b>1960</b>	35,80	444,523	<b>2012</b>	8,90	1.682.848
<b>1965</b>	27,98	511,273	<b>2013</b>	13,5	1.705.774
<b>1970</b>	28,96	590,943	<b>2014</b>	12,60	1.727.255

<sup>154</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit. p.131

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. p.131

<sup>156</sup> URL: <https://biruni.tuik.gov.tr/medas/?kn=95&locale=tr>

<b>1975</b>	38,06	714,817	<b>2015</b>	10,40	1.745.221
<b>1980</b>	33,21	843,931	<b>2016</b>	16,40	1.773.852
<b>1985</b>	40,63	1,034,085	<b>2017</b>	11,26	1.793.931
<b>1990</b>	40,64	1.266.955	<b>2018</b>	11,38	1.814.468
<b>1997</b>	24,49	1.508.232			

### 3.3. Morphological Development of the City

Mersin, which was born with the Ottoman modernization movement and then experienced the modernization of the Republic, distinguishes itself from the traditional Ottoman city and the Eastern Mediterranean port cities with its unique urban texture.<sup>157</sup> The trade and employment opportunities, which had affected the development of Mersin with the demographic diversity nurtured a different life style than other Anatolian cities. This difference in lifestyle created a unique urban texture by affecting the built environment.

Mersin, which has been separated from other Anatolian cities due to differences in lifestyle, shows some similar characteristics to other Eastern Mediterranean port cities because of the commercial conditions of the period as mentioned in the previous sections. However, there are significant differences that separate the urban texture of Mersin from these port cities. Ünlü states that the formation of the city is effective on the basis of these differences. Mersin is not a port city that emerged as a result of new uses that were added to a previously existing urban texture. In other words, it was not developed by the transformation of a traditional Ottoman city, it developed as a new port city. According to Ünlü, Mersin first emerged as a port and then as a city. For this

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<sup>157</sup> Ünlü, T. S.(2010). Bir İskeleden Liman Kentine Doğru Akdeniz'in Önemli Bir Limanı Olarak On Dokuzuncu Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Mersin'de Mekânsal Gelişim. TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası Dergisi,3-4.

reason, Mersin has an urban texture that supports a combination of commercial and administrative functions, instead of more than one center separated from each other. At the same time, the plain shoreline, which do not form a bay or gulf, affected the linear development of the city, and a second trade center was not developed unlike many other Middle Eastern port cities.<sup>158</sup>

In this part of the study, the process of formation of the macroform of the city will be examined along with the planning decisions and social developments.

### **3.3.1. The Development as a Port City**

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Mersin, where the camel trains of traders passed through its main street and developing linearly in the east-west direction, when it was connected to Adana that is the financial center of the region in 1864, its transportation infrastructure has developed rapidly. Mersin emerged as a port city with the function of the gate opening out of the region. For this reason, a transportation network was needed to connect Mersin to Çukurova for the transfer of agricultural production in region. In order to meet this need, various attempts have been made for the construction of the Adana-Mersin highway and railway since the 1860s. As a result of these initiatives, the Adana-Mersin highway was built in 1885 and the Mersin-Adana railway by British capital in 1886.<sup>159</sup> In this way, the raw material and product coming to the city by rail can be carried by rails running up to the main pier of the city.

These investments made in the field of transportation that were aimed at utilizing the agricultural potential of the region more effectively, have been also effective on the spatial development of the city.<sup>160</sup> Tülin Selvi argues that the port function and the

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid. p.5

<sup>159</sup> Dengeç, E. (1998). 19. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında ve 20. yüzyılın başında Mersin'in ekonomik yapısı. *Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi.*

<sup>160</sup> Yıldız, M. Z. (2008), Kasabadan Büyük Kente Mersin'in Kentsel Gelişimini Belirleyen Faktörler, Mersin Sempozyumu

spatial development of the city produced each other. According to her, the relationship between the station and the port was influential in the development of the city parallel to the shore between these two transportation points in relation to the piers. At the beginning of the 1850s, the commerce houses, which were predominantly located on the sandy places due to their proximity to the sea and the pier, towards the end of the 1850s, gradually moved away from the piers, and the urban settlements began to expand.<sup>161</sup>

Although it is called as the unplanned period by Ünlü, there are legal regulations effective in the formation of the city's macroform in this period. The Tanzimat “*Building Regulations*” (*Ebniye Kanunu*) were at the forefront of them.<sup>162</sup> The modernization movement adopted by the Ottomans during the Tanzimat movement had a significant impact on the spatial development of Mersin. Stefanos Yerasimos by referring to the various correspondence of Ottoman ambassadors who went to Europe in the 18th century mentions that the Ottomans have increasingly started to look at their urban spaces with the eyes of Westerners.<sup>163</sup> In this period, the cities of Ottoman began to change according to the building regulations (*Ebniye Nizamnameleri*) introduced. Yerasimos states that all of these arrangements were aimed at radically westernizing the urban fabric.<sup>164</sup> The law was mainly focused on the road regulations. Arrangements such as the improvement and the extension of roads, and the prohibition of cul-de-sac were introduced. The grid-iron street pattern was intended as an urban development.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Ünlü, T. S. (2010). Op. cit.

<sup>162</sup> Ünlü, T. (2009). Mekânsal planlamanın kentin biçimlenmesine etkisi: Mersin örneği. *Planlama Dergisi*, 3(4), 27-42.

<sup>163</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit. p.132

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Belge, Z. E. (2012). Increasing walkability capacity of historic city centers: The case of Mersin. (Thesis, Middle East Technical University)



In this period, the street, which runs from the station to the main pier, parallel to the shore, forms the main backbone of the city. The street firstly called Istasyon Street, which was later called Hükümet Street, is called Uray Street today. Commercial activities were shaped around this street in relation to the piers. Ünlü advocates the mutual development of the piers with the streets and roads in the city as an important indicator of the interrelationship between the port and the city's spatial development. Uray Street passes through the Customs Square and continues to the west of the city. During this period, the section after the Customs Square of the street connects to new residential areas with Kışla Street.<sup>166</sup>

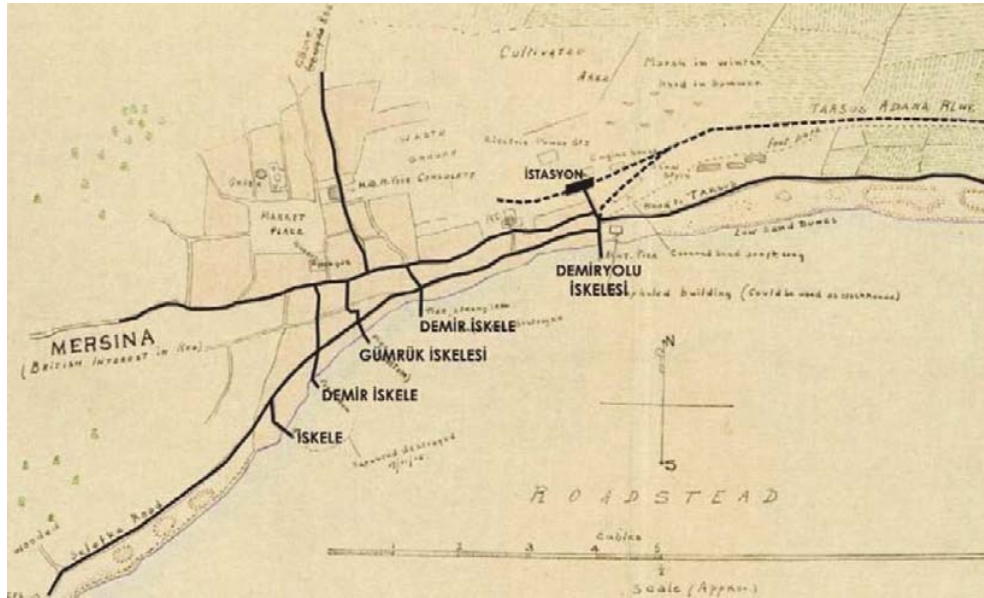


Figure 3-3 The Pier of Mersin in 1916<sup>167</sup>

After the First World War, the immigration of non-Muslim population from Mersin, especially the Greeks and Armenians, who were rich merchants of the city's trade and production life, affected the economic life of the city negatively. But the trade was not completely stopped in the city. Arab, Jewish and Turkish traders have taken place of the Greek and Armenian traders. During this period, Hermann Jansen, who prepared

<sup>166</sup> Ünlü, T. S. (2010). Op. cit.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

the city plans for Ankara and Adana, was invited to prepare a city plan for Mersin. According to Yıldız, the invitation of Jansen is an indicator of the continuing significance of the city for the central government.<sup>168</sup>

The first master plan of Mersin, which entered into force in 1938, can be seen as the impact of Camillo Sitte and the Garden City planning approaches of which Jansen was influenced. Jansen identified two characters for the city of Mersin, one of them is the “*commercial city*” and the other one is the “*coastal city*”. He carried out the planning process by considering these two characteristic features. He divided the city into two regions as “*the old city*” and “*the development zones*”. In these regions, he observed different design approaches. In area of “*the old city*” where the port was located, he protected the existing urban pattern by taking into consideration Camillo Sitte approach and made very limited interventions. In the development zones where the residential areas and recreational uses were prioritized, the influence of the *Garden City* approach appeared. The sea becomes the most important design element, and “*coastal promenade*” is proposed along the coast by Jansen. However, the proposed design decisions for the development zones could not be implemented due to problems such as the transformation of ownership.<sup>169</sup>

Ünlü states that Jansen’s plan of Mersin has an important position in the urban development of Mersin and its planning history. Because, he argues that it brings up discussion topics which are still debated today such as associating the coast with the city-especially the use of a promenade and pedestrian corridors, gaining urban identity-*commercial city and coastal city*.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Yıldız, M. Z. (2008), Op. Cit.

<sup>169</sup> Ünlü, T. (2009). Mekânsal planlamanın kentin biçimlenmesine etkisi: Mersin örneği. *Planlama Dergisi*, 3(4), 27-42.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

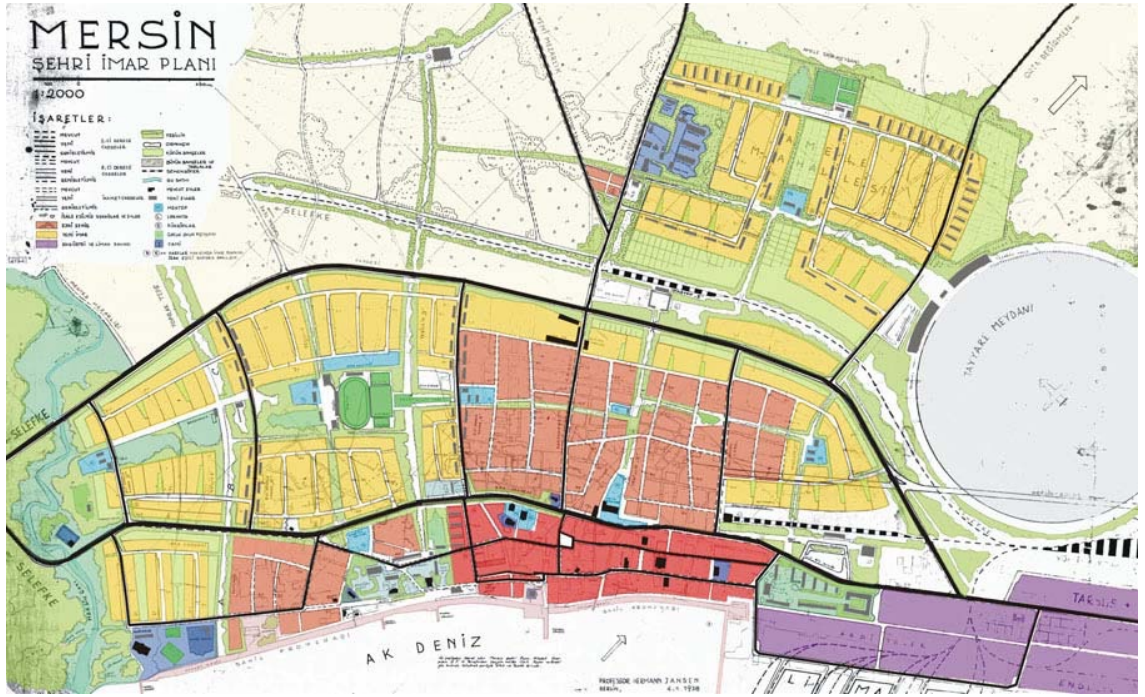


Figure 3-4 The master plan of Mersin prepared by Jansen

From the 1920s to the 1950s, the city showed a development on the east-west axis in the immediate vicinity of the main settlement areas within the arc of the Gazi Mustafa Kemal Boulevard (GMK) and in the coastal areas as predicted in the Jansen plan. Thus, the urban form was conserved.<sup>171</sup>

The second master plan of the city was prepared by the Bank of Provinces (*İller Bankası*). In this plan, “the macroform of the city was determined as a compact city including residential districts with decreasing density from the city center to the peripheries”.<sup>172</sup> The plan focuses on development towards west and north.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>171</sup> Yıldız, M. Z. (2008), Op. Cit.

<sup>172</sup> Belge, Z. E. (2012). Increasing walkability capacity of historic city centers: The case of Mersin. (Thesis, Middle East Technical University)

<sup>173</sup> Ünlü, T. (2009). Op. Cit.

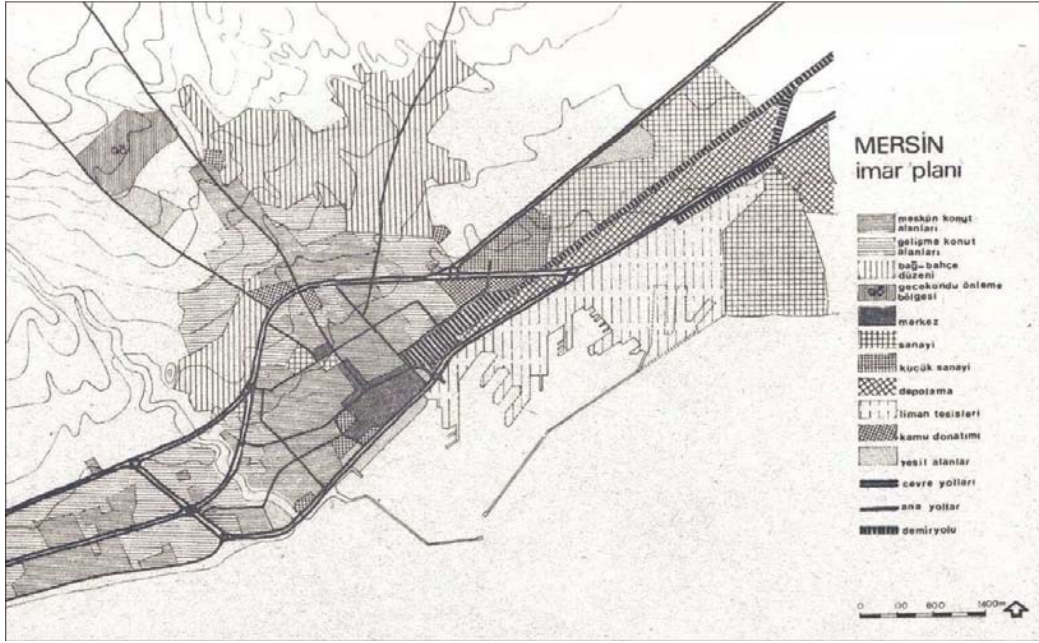


Figure 3-5 The second master plan of the city prepared by the Bank of Provinces (İller Bankası)<sup>174</sup>

As mentioned before, the city developed as a single center unlike many Anatolian and port cities, but after 1970, it started to show a dual structure. The demographic structure, which changed with migration, led structuring of the shanty in the north of the city. Gazi Mustafa Kemal Boulevard had a separative role in this sense. The area to the south of the boulevard was composed of dense apartment buildings and business regions as the old center of the city, while there were shanty houses in the north.<sup>175</sup> Thus, as well as the traditional development to the east and west in the macroform of the city, a spread to the north began. While the old city center was transformed into commercial center for the city, the new residential areas in the west and north continued to be articulated.

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<sup>174</sup> Akçura, 1981, s. 175, cited in Ünlü, T. (2009). Op. Cit.

<sup>175</sup> Doğan, 2002, cited in Yıldız, M. Z. (2008), Op. Cit.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the city also continued to its development in east-west direction. The ring road emerges as the factors that guide the development of urban form. Two new ring roads, parallel to the GMK Boulevard which linearly divide the city from south to north. While the city was limited to the port and industrial zone in the east, it continued to develop around the ring roads in the west and north directions. Yıldız describes this expansionist movement of the city as expansion rather than development.<sup>176</sup>

However, this expansion has changed over time with socio-economic differences. At the end of the twentieth century, the expansion towards the west was carried out by the higher socio-economic communities, while the expansion towards the north was by migrants with low economic levels. By the 2000s, the city had spread to the west for a while and met with the big summer housing complexes that built at the end of the 1900s. For this reason, it can be said that the development of the city towards the west gradually came to end. After this period, the spread to the north continued but it showed socio-economic change. The city continued to expand to the north side with high-rise luxury residential complexes instead of the slums. In these regions, commercial areas have not taken place and they have emerged only as residential areas. Therefore, these areas lack urban quality. They are quiet and isolated areas where residents go to the city center with their vehicles in the morning and return in the evening. The pedestrian movement is ignored in these areas, which are designed for people that have vehicles.

### **3.3.2. The Development of Socio-Spatial Structure**

Because of increasing commercial activities and job opportunities, Mersin has become an attraction point for migratory movement and has experienced a large population growth in a short time. Migrant population is located in a suitable area in the city according to their job skills and interests. Thus, the city's macroform, which has begun

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<sup>176</sup> Yıldız, M. Z. (2008), Op. Cit.

to find a form with the effects of being a port city and has continued to take shape with the migration movements which are the return of the port city.<sup>177</sup> In 1903, Adana Vilayet Salnamesi indicates six neighborhoods in the city. The names of these neighborhoods can be counted as Cami-i Şerif, Kiremithane, Hamidiye (Medrese), Mesudiye, Mahmudiye ve İhsaniye, Bahçe and Frenk.<sup>178</sup>

Uray Street and its surrounding formations are located in Camii Şerif which is the oldest neighborhood of Mersin. Camii Şerif neighborhood is a commercial center which forms the core of the city with its trade structures, inns, religious buildings, banks and piers. This feature of the neighborhood also continues today.<sup>179</sup>

The people brought from Egypt and Syria as agricultural workers by İbrahim Paşa who had invaded Mersin mostly settled in Kiremithane, Bahçe and Kültür neighbourhoods. Within this population, it is seen that the people who understand the agriculture have settled mostly in the Kiremithane and Bahçe Neighborhoods. They formed an urban fabric consisting of buildings with garden in these two neighborhoods according to their interests. At the same time, the population coming from Latakia, which is a port city in Syria, settled closer to the sea in today's Kültür Neighborhood.<sup>180</sup>

In the general sense, Çakmak Avenue forms the east of the city, and the western border of city is Hamidiye Neighborhood (Medrese Neighborhood) ending with Efrenk Stream (today's Muftu River) as a natural threshold. In the north, there is the Ihsaniye Neighborhood built for Cretan immigrants at the end of the 19th century. In the eastern border of the city, there was the Frenk Neighborhood which was mostly inhabited by non-Muslims. The station and a Catholic church are located here.<sup>181</sup> In the north, there

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<sup>177</sup> Ünlü, T. S. (2010). Op. cit.

<sup>178</sup> Çoruh, S. (2019), *The Latin Catholic Church Settlement in Mersin During the Late Ottoman Period*, (Master Thesis, Middle East Technical University)

<sup>179</sup> Yenişehirlioğlu, (2004), cited in Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit.

<sup>180</sup> Özdemir, E. (2009). Op. cit.

<sup>181</sup> Develi, Ş. Düden Bugüne Mersin 1836-2008, Mersin Büyükşehir Belediyesi, Mersin, 2008, pp.63-64

was the “Christian Village” as a detached settlement from the city, then it has been transformed into a neighborhood called Osmaniye Neighborhood.<sup>182</sup>

In this period, it is understood that the culture and interest of the population immigrated to the city from different places were effective in the development of the settlement. Selvi argues that neighborhoods in the city offer the opportunity to observe the physical development of the city, which evoked a garden-city model and its commercial identity in the nineteenth century.<sup>183</sup> When the settlement texture of the districts and the various components of the population are examined together, Selvi's argument is justified.

The Levantines settled in the Camii Şerif and Hamidiye districts due to trade relations have created their own buildings by working with architects who were educated in different countries according to their culture.<sup>184</sup> A building included a warehouse, a store, and a housing. These buildings are mostly located in the wide streets that go down to the harbor or extend parallel to the shore. As mentioned before, the Fellahs, who were engaged in agriculture coming from Syria and Egypt, have created an urban texture similar to the garden-city approach in Kiremithane and Bahçe neighborhoods.

Unlike the Ottoman cities, which were constituted of neighborhoods formed mostly around religious buildings, the settlement in Mersin was mainly shaped by the influence of trade and migration. The population that came with the immigration settled in the neighborhoods according to their work skills and interests and built their religious building in line with their beliefs and formed an urban texture in accordance with their lifestyles.<sup>185</sup> These religious structures reveal how the components of the city's population were diverse. In this period, there were many religious buildings

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<sup>182</sup> Ünlü, T. (2009). Op. Cit.

<sup>183</sup> Ünlü, T. S. (2010). Op. cit.

<sup>184</sup> Güneş, A. G. (2010). Mersin Levanten yapıları üzerine bir inceleme. *Master Thesis, Adana: Çukurova University, Institute of Natural And Applied Sciences.*

<sup>185</sup> Ünlü, T. S. (2010). Op. cit.



belonging to different religious beliefs which were composed of Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Maronite, Chaldean, Syriac Christians and Muslims. These religious buildings give an idea about the social and demographic structure of the area where they were located.<sup>186</sup>

### **3.3.3. Changing Social Morphology**

Mersin is a coastal city that has grown in linear form along the coast. In addition to the geographic determinants, the planning practices related to urban pattern have been influential in the linear growth of the city. According to Ekenler, this growth was carried out in order to open space for the newcomers rather than the spatial segregation. Ekenler emphasises that spatial distances that do not allow the transforming the tension of decomposition into conflict, and the fact that the city is open to space for the newcomers, have created an urban structure that absorbs tension.<sup>187</sup>

As a result of the spatial segregation practices, today the low-income groups, including migrants coming from other parts of the country, i.e. the internal immigrants, while the central part is inhabited by middle-income and culturally similar people, who could adapt to living together in time. Syrian Migrants who migrated to Mersin after the Syrian civil war have settled in the western part of the city. Before the arrival of the Syrian Migrants, higher-middle income groups with a similar population profile with the central districts lived in these districts. However, with the arrival of Syrian Migrants, these people started to withdraw from this part of the city. The northern part where a new residential zone has been developed in the recent years has become the district where high-income groups live. In other words, a spatial segregation continues to affect the city's growing form due to socio-economic factors and migration. Thus,

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<sup>186</sup> Güneş, A. G. (2010). Op. cit.

<sup>187</sup> Ekenler. (2016). op. cit.



the city has been divided into five parts separated by prejudice and there is no prediction on the extent to which this segregation of the city will be achieved.



## CHAPTER 4

### THE CASE STUDY: THE USE OF PUBLIC SPACE BY DIFFERENT GROUPS IN THE COASTAL PARK IN MERSIN

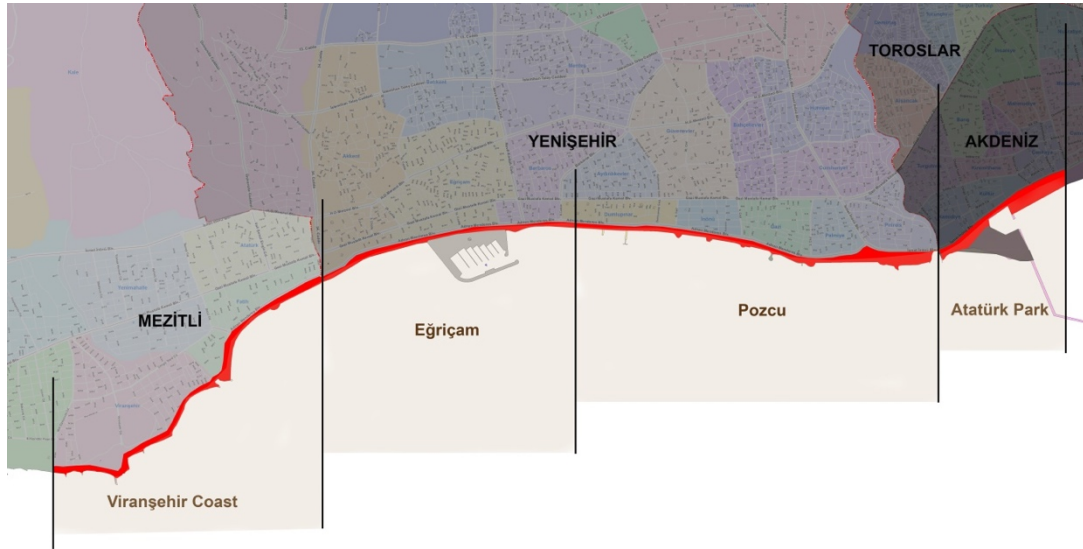
This case study is based on observations made on the Mersin coastline. The coastal strip where one of the most important public parks of the city extends, has been used intensively by different cultural groups. Differences are noticeable in the spatial practices of different groups in this area in particular. The aim of the case study is to investigate the cultural factors underlying these differences between public space practices.

#### 4.1. Introducing the Case Study Area

According to the master plan of Mersin of 1976, the coastline was defined as a recreation zone. In the 1/1000 plan approved in 2016, the following functions are listed for the shoreline; Expo, fair, entertainment, picnic, park, children's playground and playground, outdoor sports facility area.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Akdeniz-Toroslar-Yenişehir-Mezitli İlçeleri 1/5000 Ölçekli İlave Ve Revizyon Nazım İmar Planı, Mersin Metropolitan Municipality



*Figure 4-1* The case study area

The case study was carried out in the four different areas of the coast. These are; Viranşehir Coast, Eğriçam, Pozcu and Atatürk Park. These areas include the coastline that continues through Mezitli, Yenisehir, Toros, and Akdeniz districts. These four districts are the central districts where the impacts of the migrations are seen intensively.

Akdeniz district is mostly inhabited by the low-income groups who migrated from Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia regions of Turkey. In the recent years, the low-income Syrian Migrants have settled in some neighborhoods within the limits of this district. The old city center is also located here. And today, it considerably maintains its commercial function.

Yenişehir is the district, which contains the newly developed sub-center of the city. It is seen that this district shows segregation according to functions and economic affordability of people. The northern parts of this district are being developed as a high-standing dwellings zone. The higher income groups have been settling in this area in the recent years. Gazi Mustafa Kemal (GMK) Boulevard is an important commercial backbone. Commercial functions are mostly gathered around GMK Boulevard. In contrast to these two regions, there is a mixed function in the middle of

the district, which is located between the GMK Boulevard and the high-standing residential area in the north. And also, in this part of the district, there is a mixed population socioeconomically and culturally.

Toros district is located at the northeastern part of the central city. It is an ethnically diverse district such as Yenişehir. It is usually an area where lower-middle and middle-income groups are settled.

The district of Mezitli extends along the western coast of the city. The population structure of the city was similar to that of Yenişehir, until the Syrian immigration. Most of the higher and higher-middle income Syrian population chose to settle in Mezitli since 2011. These groups differ from the Syrian Migrants who settled in the Akdeniz district in terms of economic and educational level.

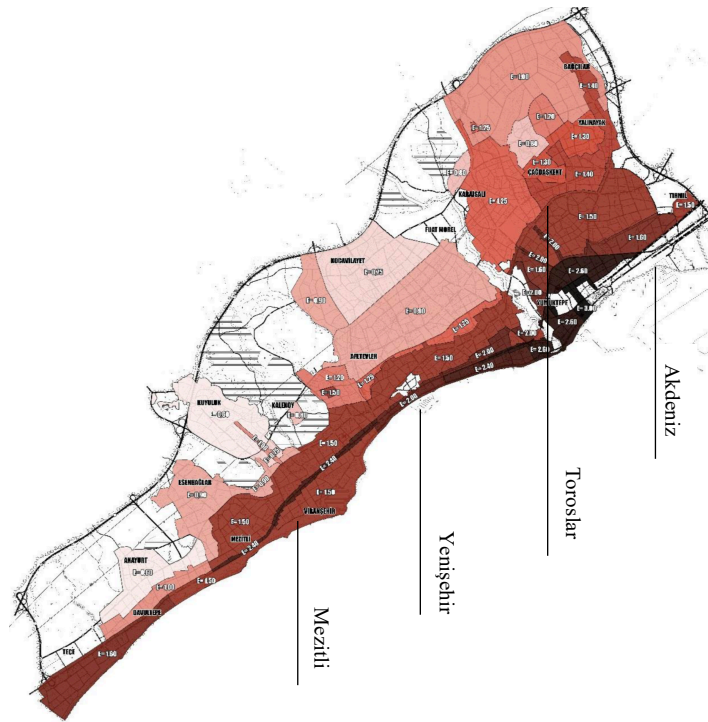


Figure 4-2 Population density in the districts of Mersin<sup>189</sup>

<sup>189</sup> Akdeniz-Toroslar-Yenişehir-Mezitli İlçeleri 1/5000 Ölçekli İlave Ve Revizyon Nazım İmar Planı, Mersin Metropolitan Municipality

## **4.2. Methodology of the Case Study**

The observations were deepened in the selected four areas of the coastal strip, where the presence of the cultural groups of Mersin could be easily traced. Using the data obtained from the observations, three main user groups were identified on the coast. These are: local people, internal immigrants and Syrian Migrants. Subsequently, interview questions were prepared for these three user groups. In these interview questions, there are questions for just internal immigrants and Syrian Migrants, as well as common questions for three user groups. With these questions; it is aimed to conduct the research on how immigrants and refugees relate to the city, the relationship of the individual with the coast, and the reason of the diversity observed in the uses of public space.

In accordance with this purpose, 31 local people, 36 internal immigrants<sup>3</sup>, and 21 Syrian Migrants were interviewed. However, these interviews, which were conducted verbally on the coastline, were not limited to the interviewee. During the interviews, people that the interviewee came with also answered the questions. In other words, interviews were conducted with groups rather than individuals. Their answers were taken into consideration in the evaluation. Therefore, although the numerical data were calculated on the interviewed individuals, the study covered a larger sample.

The interviews have been evaluated with the content analysis method. The content analysis is one of the methods commonly used in the studies of human behavior in social sciences. Using this method in this thesis; the data obtained during the interviews have been coded and then; these codes have been classified by frequency, category and relationship analysis. Finally, they have been converted into numerical data and evaluated.

## **4.3. Observation on the Use of Outdoor Spaces in Mersin**

The use of outdoor spaces in Mersin, where the Mediterranean climate is seen, has a significant role in the spatial formation of the city. The mild climate during most of the year makes “*the life between buildings*” more favorable for the people in the city.

For most of the days of the year, individuals prefer to use open spaces instead of closed interior spaces. The preference of outdoor use by individuals has been influential in the design of urban public spaces. Public and semi-public spaces are mostly shaped as open spaces. It can be said that the social behavior of the inhabitants has produced the built environment. In fact, the physical environment has affected the individual's choices, lifestyle and consequently behaviors, and then, the people's behaviors have affected the built environment. There is an interaction between the physical environment, behavior and the built environment in the arrangement of open semi-public and public spaces in Mersin. This can easily be seen when one looks at the cafes and shopping centers in the city.



*Figure 4-3* Open space of restaurants in the middle of a pedestrian street, 2018, Mersin, photograph by the author

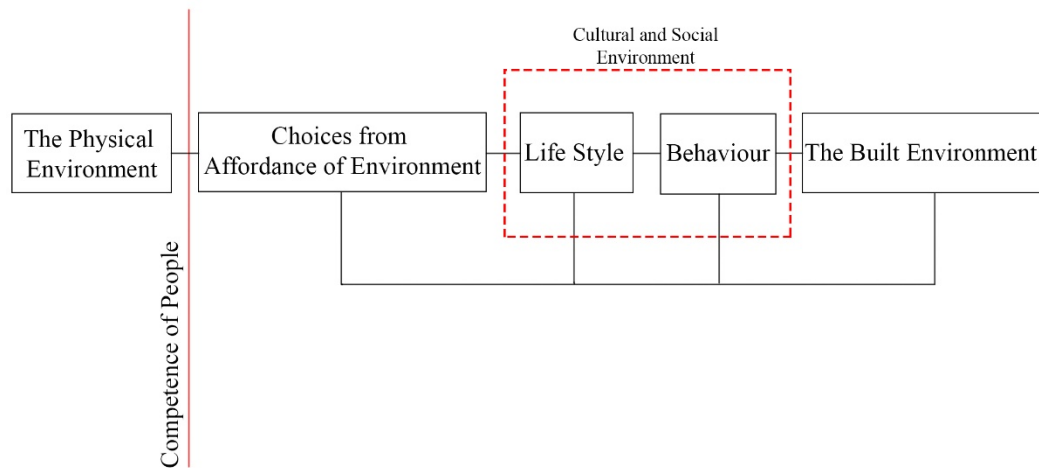


Figure 4-4 The formation of the built environment in Mersin, diagram prepared by the author

Cafés offer clues about the outdoor use in the city. Because these places, which are completely intended to satisfy the user, are designed in accordance with the common preferences of the users without any control of the authority, considering the interests of the owner. In Mersin, unlike many other cities, these spaces are designed to support open space uses rather than being closed boxes according to user preferences.

The interior spaces of most of the cafés are quite small; the exterior space is mostly used, and in some cases even small cafes and coffee houses-*kiraathane*<sup>190</sup> have only one kitchen in their interior spaces. People’s preference to sit in the outdoor space is decisive in that. The exterior spaces of cafés are full even in winter, while their small interiors are mostly empty. It can be thought that individual's desire to establish a visual relationship with the sea is also effective in that. However, in the inner parts of the city, there are also similar choices. People prefer outdoor spaces that open up to a crowded street or square.

<sup>190</sup> *Kiraathane* is a traditional Turkish coffee house for just men. Men come here to socialize and play game such as card game, chess and so on.





*Figure 4-5 A Kiraathane (Coffeehouse) Between Buildings, 2018, Mersin, photograph by the author*



*Figure 4-6 Open Spaces of a Café in the Marina, 2015, Mersin, photographs by the author*

It is observed that the location of a cafe is more effective than the service quality of the cafe on the user's preference in Mersin. The reason why individuals prefer cafes in crowded places can be explained by the fact that they want to perform social activities in addition to seeing and hearing others, besides the optional activity they perform when they come to a café. The biggest evidence of this emerges when the use of cafés in the Forum Shopping Centre of the city is observed. While the cafés where the exterior space opens up to the square are used extensively, the cafés that are located

two minutes away from the square on the outer facade of the shopping center are less frequented because they do not have a visual relationship with the square. This example shows the effect of social environment and social activities on the place preferences of individuals in Mersin. Jan Gehl argues that the quality of the physical environment enhances the social activities, but in this case, it is not the physical elements of the space that enhances the quality of the environment but the social activity itself which attracts people.

The streets, which are used for pedestrian circulation, are the other important outdoor space component of the city. They are quite lively throughout the day and year. The individual who is there to fulfill the necessary activity of walking, is frequently stopped because the streets are supported by activities such as shopping, street musicians and so on. Street vendors seen in many cities of Turkey, it is quite common on the street of Mersin throughout the year thanks to the favorable climatic conditions.

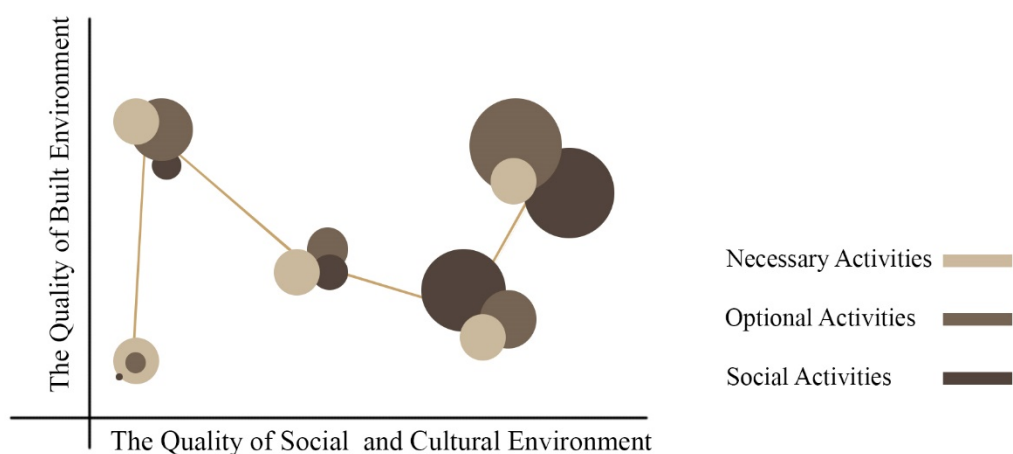


Figure 4-7 Street Life, 2018, Mersin, photographs by the author

Sometimes a person understands the coming of the spring with the appearance of green almond, the coming of the summer with the shouting of a street vendor that “*süt darı, mısır*”, the coming of the winter with the smell of daffodils that he/she buys from a street vendor. This lively and temporal life of the street prevents the individual passing by from running to work, or to home. Sometimes this quality of the streets incites people to walk home or to the work instead of driving. As a person walks home from work, he/she takes the chestnut from street vendor standing on the corner and then, he/she stops and listens to the street musician while he/she is eating chestnut. This makes the street life more vivid.

The physical, social and cultural environments mutually support each other. The physical environment supports the street life with its mild climate, and the culture and social practices places the street vendor on that street, and then the individual wants to stand on the street with the influence of the elements of the social and cultural environment. As a result, in addition to the necessary activity, optional and social activities take place. Gehl explains the realization of these two activities with the quality of the built environment. In the given example, the built environment does not actually support these activities. Because there is no special space for street vendors in the streets of Mersin. The street vendors who are settled on the narrow sidewalk cause narrowing of the street and make the passage difficult, and sometimes even environmental pollution. However, the realization of these activities is not only related to the built environment, but to the physical, social and cultural environment altogether as mentioned before. (Table 3) For this reason, associating the activity patterns to only the built environment means ignoring some parts of the complex relationship between environment and people. Even if the built environment does not support the activity, the individual with the social and cultural influences may want to practice that activity.

Table 4-1 *Graphic representation of the relationship between the quality of outdoor spaces and the rate of occurrence of outdoor activities, diagram prepared by the author*





In Mersin where outdoor activities are actively used, the situation changes when observing public spaces designed for purposes such as parks, squares. Compared to many other outdoor areas of the city, these places are much less demanding. The lack of a practicable city square has been criticized by the citizens for years. In fact, the city has several squares in the center of the city, and also along the coastline. However, none of these squares is widely used by the citizen. The city has only one area that is used as a city square; it is the small square of the Forum shopping center. Although this square is proportionally and functionally suitable for being a city square, people prefer to use this square as a gathering area. Although the built environment offers different squares in different parts of the city, the users do not use the areas. When this situation is examined formally, it is observed that the stopping points placed in the linear form of the city are inadequate to form a well-defined square. While the square of the Forum shopping center has a radio-centric form having the potential to gather people, the other squares remain as interruptions on the linear line and have a broken relationship with the spaces around them; therefore, they cannot gather people. In other words, as Gehl mentions, the low quality of the built environment prevents the citizens from using these squares for optional and even necessary activities, and they are looking for a different place.

Other open public spaces that is also subject to this thesis study are parks and coastal areas. The coastal line extending across the city and the easy access to this coastline from all areas of the city have generally made the existence of the parks in the city insignificant. This is the reason why there are not too many parks in the inner parts of the city.

#### **4.4. The Case Study: Mersin Coastal Strip**

Despite the fact that the use of open space is preferred among all individuals, there appear to be differences among individuals in the use of coastal line. It is observed that some individuals use the public open space only for necessary activities, while the others use it for optional activities. Therefore, there are differences in the social

activities that Gehl also calls the resultant activity.<sup>191</sup> This difference became sharper with the arrival of Syrian Migrants.

Many Syrian people migrated to Turkey because of the Syrian civil war that started in 2011. Thanks to the cosmopolitan structure of Mersin, contrary to many cities, there have not been troubles about the inclusion of Syrian Migrants in the public space. Public spaces have begun to be used intensively by Syrian Migrants with their arrival to the city.

Although Mersin has similar characteristics to Syrian coastal cities such as the climate, the practice of public space shows some differences. The difference is more obvious when the practices in public open spaces are considered. The parks and the coastal strip, which are not used very much by the local people from Mersin, they are being used frequently by the Syrian Migrants. In other word, the vitality of these places has increased with the arrival of Syrians and it can be observed that different forms of practice have emerged with their presence. The coastal strip is mostly used by local people for optional activities such as sports and hiking without giving many opportunities to social activities. The residents mostly use the space for a short time. Social activities are only through hearing and seeing in a passive way. In addition, these activities often occur at certain times of the day- either before or after work. This causes the coastal strip not to be used for the rest of the day.

For Syrian Migrants, the practices at the coastal strip are much more different. They are actively using these spaces throughout the day. Unlike local people, they are spending much longer time in the coastal strip with their family and friends. It is possible to meet many Syrian families having picnic, smoking hookah, playing volleyball in the coastal park. It can be said that they are using these spaces to perform social activities rather than optional activities because they are doing these activities for getting together.

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<sup>191</sup> Gehl, J. (2011). *Life between buildings: using public space*. Island Press.

In Rapoport's culture diagram, the activities are related to the lifestyle. Lang also mentions that our attitudes in everyday life are part of our culture. So, these different practices of coastal line will be examined according to lifestyle of these user groups. The regular practices of the public spaces of the local people are explained with the observations above. The similarities and differences in the coastal use of the three user groups have been observed and evaluated from a cultural approach with observations and interviews.

#### **4.4.1. The Data Obtained from Observations and Interviews**

As mentioned in the previous sections, Mersin has been the address of various migration movements throughout its two hundred years history. This situation has formed the cosmopolitan structure of Mersin that it has today. Many different cultural groups continue their presence in the city. At the same time, there have been transitions between cultures over time. Today, an Alevi resident fasts as a Sunni resident in Ramadan, Sunni individuals give Ashura to their neighbors as an Alevi individual in the month of Muharram which is sacred month of Alevi. While cultures are lived freely in the city, they created a culture unique to this city. Many people liken it to the composition of small mosaic stones. Each culture forms a color of this composition. However, this composition has not taken shape easily. As a result of every migration movement, discontentment was observed in the city. It took a lot of time to get used to living together.

One of the most recent migration movements is from the eastern regions of Turkey in the 1990s. Many Kurdish citizens migrated to Mersin during this period. After this migration movement, the city experienced tension in the first years. Conflicts arose between local people and Kurdish citizens. However, time has absorbed this tension. At the moment, even though there is still discontent among some members of the two groups, they got used to living together and there is not much tension in the city.

The city of Mersin where people have become accustomed to living together became an address for the migration of Syrian Migrants in 2011. The Kurdish and Turkish

groups, who had previously experienced conflicts of living together in Mersin, both have shown dissatisfaction with the arrival of Syrian Migrants.<sup>192</sup> Yet the tension experienced in the previous migration was not experienced this time. Unlike many other cities where Syrian Migrants live in Turkey, there have been no conflicts between these groups in Mersin. This situation can be explained with the fact that the people of Mersin learned to live together with people from different religions, languages, races and cultures.



Figure 4-8 The Coastline of Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author

With these two migration movements in its recent history, there are predominantly three different groups, who have their unique cultures, in Mersin. These are *Syrian Migrants*, *internal immigrants* and *local people*. In the continuation of the study, it will be necessary to talk about the new society that internal immigrants and local

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<sup>192</sup> The fact that these two groups are united against the Syrian Migrants and show their discontent with the social segregation is a sign that these two groups have finally reached the consciousness of being a society.



people formed by blending their cultures over time. For this reason, the expression of *people of Mersin* will be used for the new group, which can be assumed as the fourth group of the Mersin.

In 2011, it was observed that there were differences in the use of public spaces with the arrival of the Syrian Migrants in Mersin. While this situation was more obvious during the period 2011-2014, it has become a softer distinction when Syrian Migrants became accustomed to the city and also people of Mersin became accustomed to them. However, a difference in the use of spaces is still observed. Syrian Migrants use public spaces such as parks and squares for much longer hours than the local people of Mersin. This situation is especially experienced in the coastal strip. The new group of users has increased the density of users in the coastline where the people of Mersin have generally used for walking and sports and for this reason, social activities were not seen much before. The Syrians use the coastal strip for a variety of activities. They have introduced new activities in the coastline. A father with his daughter and wife smoking hookah and watching people, a group of women coming to the beach with their meals and cakes to celebrate the birthday of their friend, a crowded family having barbecue. All these are the changes experienced on the coast of Mersin by the arrival of Syrian Migrants.



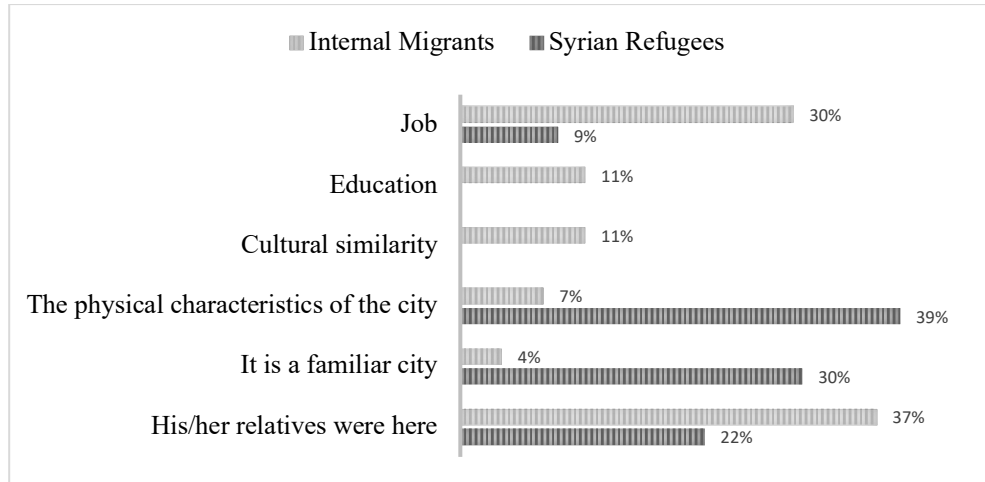
*Figure 4-9 A Syrian Family in Atatürk Park, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author*



Figure 4-10 A group of Syrian Women in Viranşehir, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author

In order to be able to analyze the underlying causes of observation data, interviews were conducted with these three groups on the coast. Firstly, two groups who migrated to Mersin were asked why they chose to live here. While 39% of the Syrians gave answers about the physical characteristics of the city, 30% of them said that it is a familiar city, 22% of them stated that their acquaintances were here. The physical characteristics of the city are only 7% among internal immigrants. In this group, the answer of “*our relatives were here*” was received with 37%. For 30%, their jobs incited them to come here.

Table 4-2 *Why did you choose to live in Mersin?*



When the cause of the differences between the two groups is sought, primarily it should be considered that many of Syrian Migrants do not have any relatives in Turkey. Before they immigrated, none of the cities on the map did mean anything to them. For this reason, it can be predicted that the physical elements will stand out in this selection process. They liken the physical characteristics of Mersin to the city of Latakia,<sup>193</sup> which they visited during the summer holidays in Syria. In general, they mention that this similarity affects their choices. Amir, who has been living in Mersin for 7 years, says that the Syrians, who have good economic levels and do not have to work, have settled in Mersin, and the others who have to work have settled in Gaziantep because of the job opportunities it offers. According to the 2018 TUIK data, there are currently 411.567 Syrian Migrants in Gaziantep. This situation is similar with the internal immigrants who say that they came to Mersin for their job. As

<sup>193</sup> Latakia is one of the important port cities in Syria. Latakia is, also spelled Lattakia or Latakiah. It is the 4th-largest city in Syria. Latakia and Mersin were declared as sister cities in 2008. According to the verbal information obtained from a Syrian interviewee, Muhammad; “People in Syria usually go to Latakia to swim. There are also high mountainous areas, so the air is also nice. In the city of Latakia, there are many houses for rent on the shore called Şalih. These are furnished apartments with balconies and sea view. People rent these houses and spend their holidays there.”

Maslow points out in the hierarchy of needs, the basic needs of the people play the most important role in the selection of the city to settle.

37% of the internal immigrants find their place in the psychological needs section of Maslow's pyramid. The person made a choice depending on his/her social environment so that the sense of belonging and the need of love can easily meet. "A familiar city" response of Syrian Migrants is also related to this need. For this reason, it can be said that this group made the selection according to the third section of the pyramid.

A man from Malatya;

*"Culture and climate [in Mersin] are very similar to Malatya. Here is a city that has received much immigration. In the neighbourhood I live in, there are a lot of people from Malatya."*

Sima who is a Syrian girl mentions:

*"Before the war, I used to come here with my parents for vacation. Sometimes my father came for business. Already we had come for a two-week holiday, but we could not return because the war started during this time. Since it is a familiar city, we never thought of settling in a different city."*

39% of the Syrian Migrants interviewed point out the physical reasons that are the last part of Maslow's pyramid. The person who can meet his/her basic needs and who does not have any social environment choose for physical reasons. However, they chose Mersin because they resemble a summer place where they go in Syria, it carries to the top of the pyramid.

A Syrian man selling tea on the coast explains: *"Because it looks like Latakia. However, people are more open-minded, so I can be more comfortable here."*

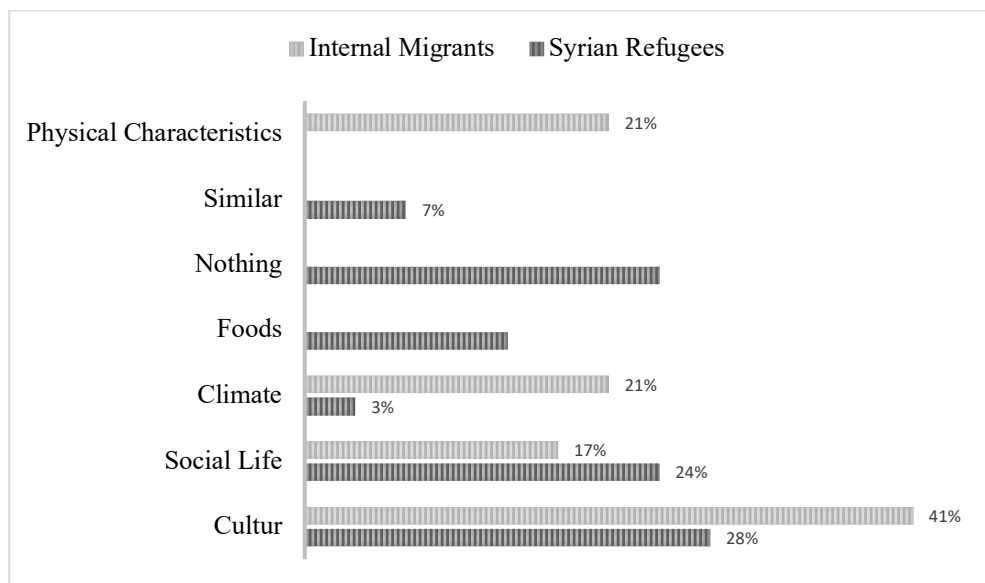
A Syrian woman says: *"Mersin looks like Latakia. Latakia is also nice but neglected, there is not any walking path, the coast is just for restaurants and hotels. Here, the coast is for everyone so it is better."*



Figure 4-11 Latakia before the war, [www.worldaffairs.blog](http://www.worldaffairs.blog)

The question of “*What are the similarities between Mersin and the city you lived in before?*” is directed again to both groups.

Table 4-3 *What are the similarities between Mersin and the city you lived in before?*



The fact that the culture is the most heard response in both groups shows that people are trying to establish a cultural relationship with their new environment. Although the reason why you choose to live in Mersin is very little in terms of cultural reasons, when asked to establish a similarity, first of all, they give the answer of the cultural similarity as a reason. Therefore, in opposition to the answers to the previous question, culture can also be effective in the selection of the city. The desire to live in a place

where people are acquainted is also related to a similar cultural environment, in addition to seeking a similar social environment. In other words, the underlying reason for the answer “*my acquaintances are there*” is that the person wants to continue his/her social and cultural relations that they had there.

In addition to this, culture is defined as the adaptation of the individual to the environment. Searching for cultural similarities between the old and the new environment may be a method used by the person to facilitate the adaptation process. In this way, it struggles with the need for the sense of belonging and make easier to adapt to the new environment.

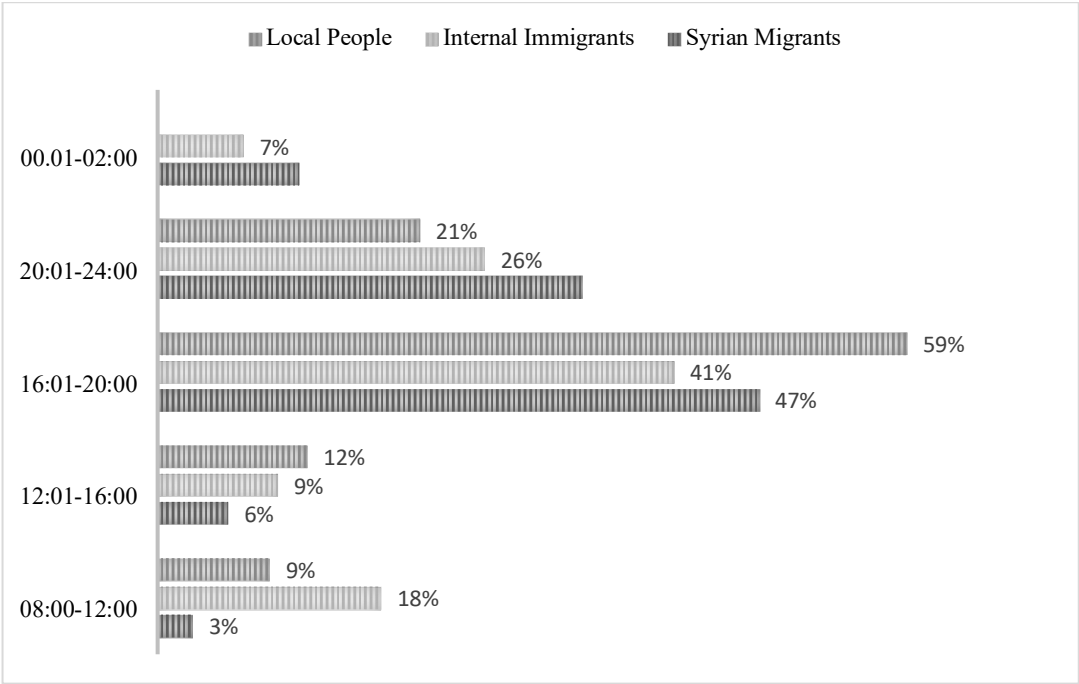
Syrian Migrants have become accustomed to the city in a very short time and they have tried to carry on their living practices here. Adjustment was observed from the adaptation processes mentioned by Berry. However, the processes have been experienced in a different way from what Berry mentioned. They did not try to live in harmony with their new environment and to change their behavior in this direction; on the contrary, they transformed the opportunities offered by the environment in line with their life practices. The changes they brought in the activities on the coast is an attempt to maintain their living practices in the process of adapting to their new environment. In other words, instead of changing themselves according to the environment, as Berry mentioned, they prefer to change the environment according to themselves. It is an undeniable fact that there is the effect of the courage given by being outnumbered. As mentioned in the previous part, the fact that Syrian Migrants have not spread throughout the city supports this. They have settled in certain parts of Mersin, especially in Viranşehir in Mezitli district. Thus, with the power of being the majority in these areas, they have been able to transform the environment in line with their life practices. This situation caused the withdrawal of the local residents of Mersin from these areas. The local residents of Mersin often mention that *some people of Mersin moved their houses from Viranşehir after the Syrians arrived*.

But when it comes to 2018, changes are observed in this situation. Syrian Migrants use the coast of Viranşehir less than they used it before. Fadel who is a Syrian

university student in Mersin, asserts that this is due to the identity card checks carried out by the police on the coast. “*The police officer suddenly comes and wants to check our identity cards. And if you don't have your ID card with you, he's taking you to the police station. Therefore, Syrian Migrants don't want to come here anymore, because it makes them nervous.*”<sup>194</sup>

However, despite all that's happened, Syrian Migrants are still dominant in the use of the coast. During the interviews, all three groups of users were asked *in which time, day, and season they come more often and how many hours they spent*. The answers given in a way that confirms observations revealed that the Syrian Migrants spent much longer hours on the coast than the other two groups.

Table 4-4 Which time do you come more often?



<sup>194</sup> This case also reveals the effect of the authorities on public spaces.

Table 4-5 Which days do you come more often?

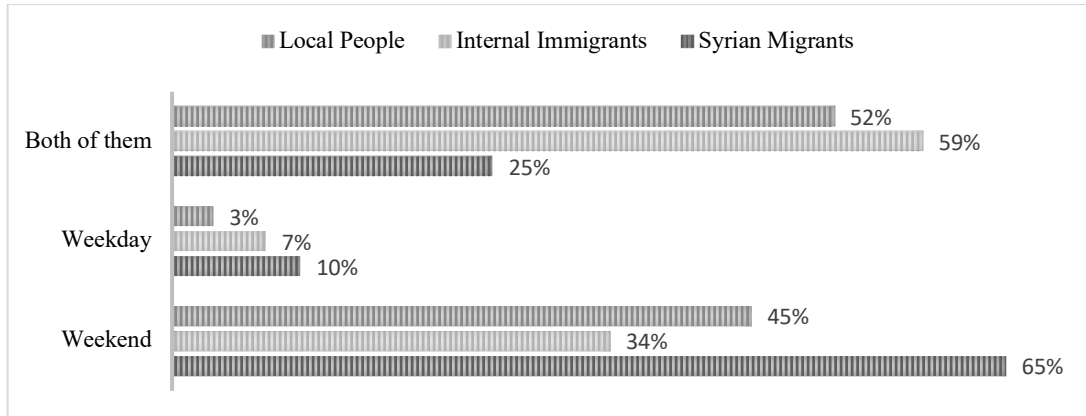
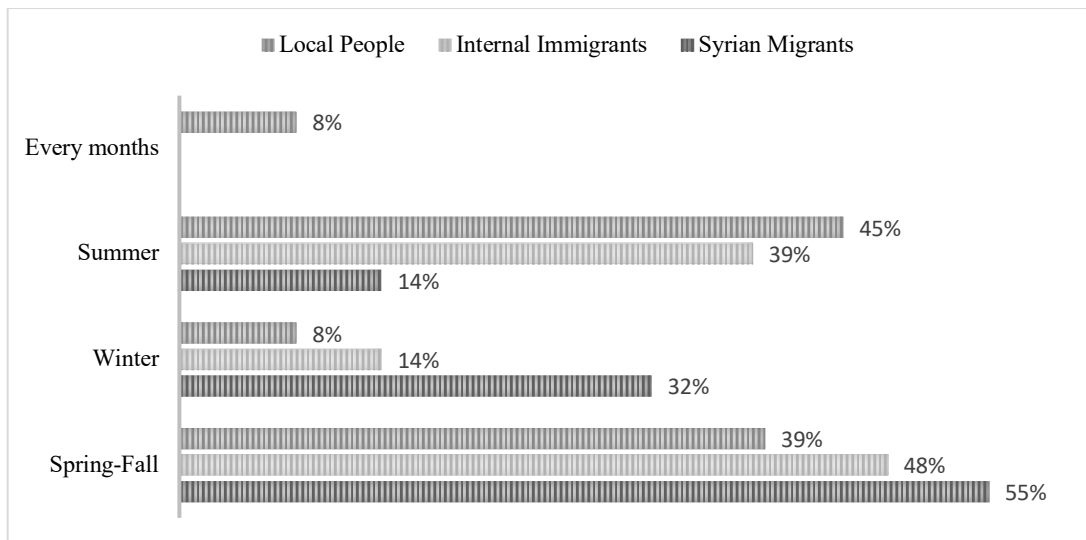


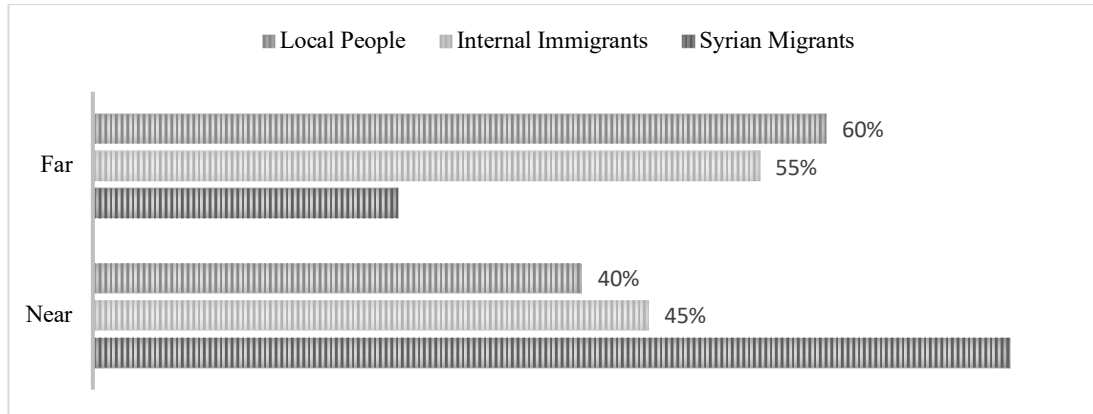
Table 4-6 Which months do you come more often?



Observations along the coastline have shown that Syrian Migrants have widely used the coast of Viranşehir and Atatürk Park. It was noticed that the people of Mersin were more homogenous within the coastline. In order to analyze this situation, in different parts of the coastline, users were asked *which neighborhood they live in*.



Table 4-7 Which neighborhood do you live?



While the majority of Syrian Migrants with the 75% prefer to use the part of the coast that is closer to their houses, internal immigrants with a majority of 55%, stated that the coastal areas used by them are more remote, but they prefer these areas because of their better physical conditions. This question was supported by the question of *how you come to the coast* and 72% of the locals answered with their vehicle. In Syrian Migrants, this rate is only 24%. 71% of the Syrian Migrants, unlike the local people, said that they come on foot. On the other hand, there is a homogeneous situation in the answers given by internal immigrants . To the question of *why they use this part of the coast*, Syrian Migrants answered related to the activities offered in the areas in addition to the fact that they were close to their houses. While Syrian Migrants gave answers like “*I can swim here because it has a beach*”, “*I can barbecue here*” and “*there are playgrounds for children*”, the local people gave answers about the physical characteristics of the place like “*more well-maintained, clean, calm*”.

Table 4-8 *How do you come to the coast?*

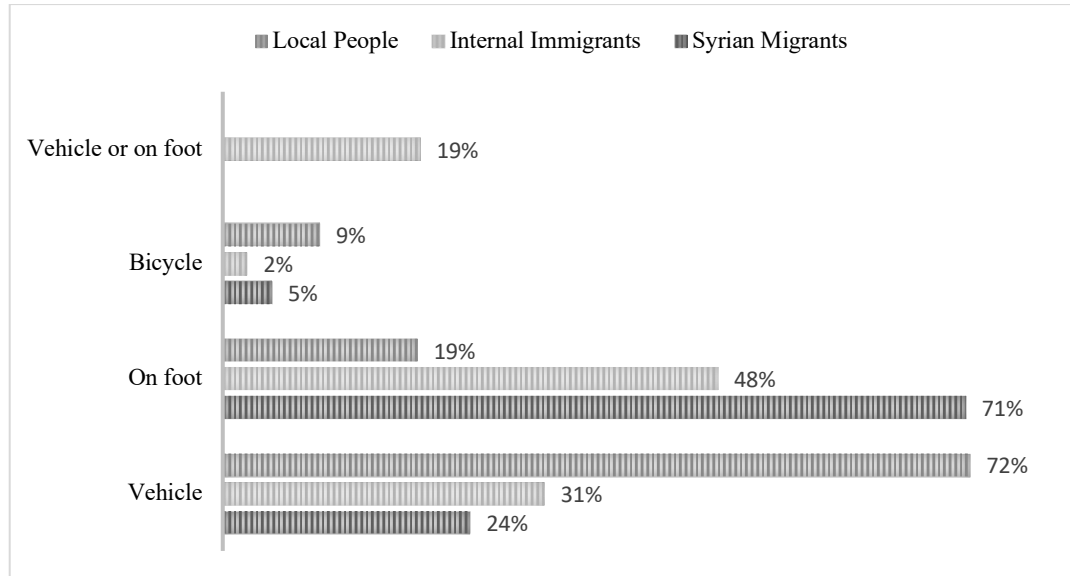


Figure 4-12 Viranşehir Beach, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author



Figure 4-13 Viranşehir Park, Mersin, 2016, photograph by Melike Selin Durmaz Ekenler

Another difference noted during the observations is that the Syrian Migrants come to the coast in much more crowded groups than the other two groups. As a result of this observation, it is asked that; *Do you come to the coast as a group?* And; *How many people come to the coast with you?* Syrian Migrants with a percentage of 35% responded as 8-10 people. 29% of them gave answers 6-7 people. While internal immigrants gave a response as 4-5 people with a rate of 59%, the locals responded with a rate of 43%; 2-4 people and % 33 of them; 1-2 people.

Table 4-9 *Do you come to the coast as a group?*

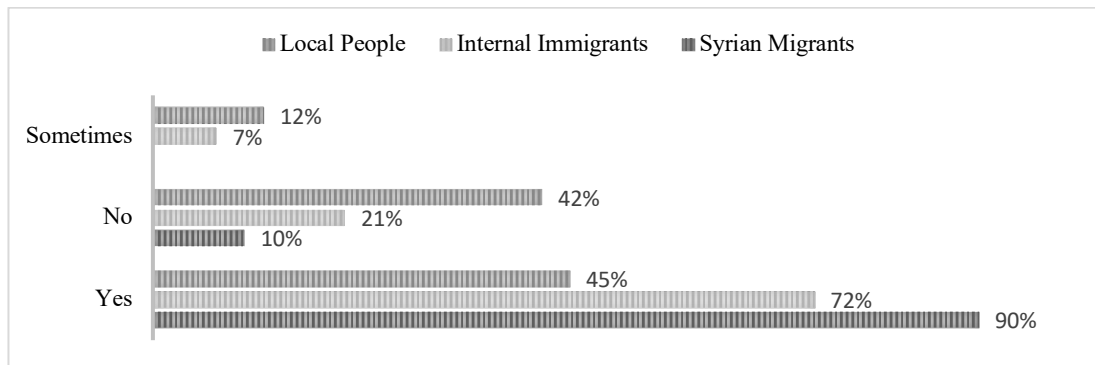


Table 4-10 *How many people come to the coast with you?*

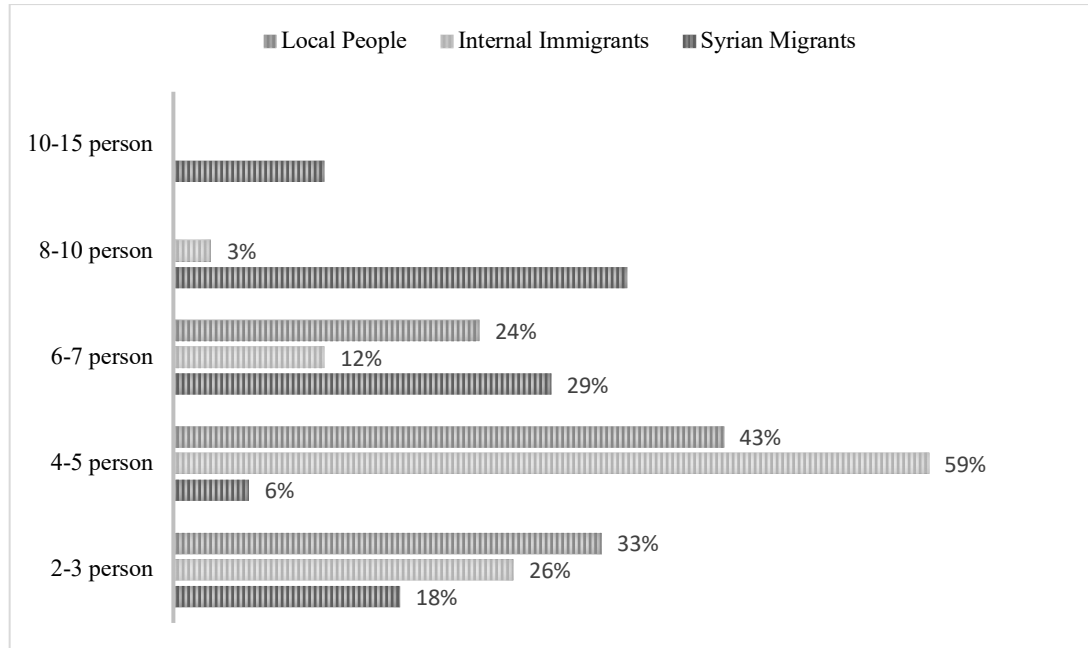


Figure 4-14 A Syrian family, Mersin, 2016, photograph by Melike Selin Durmaz

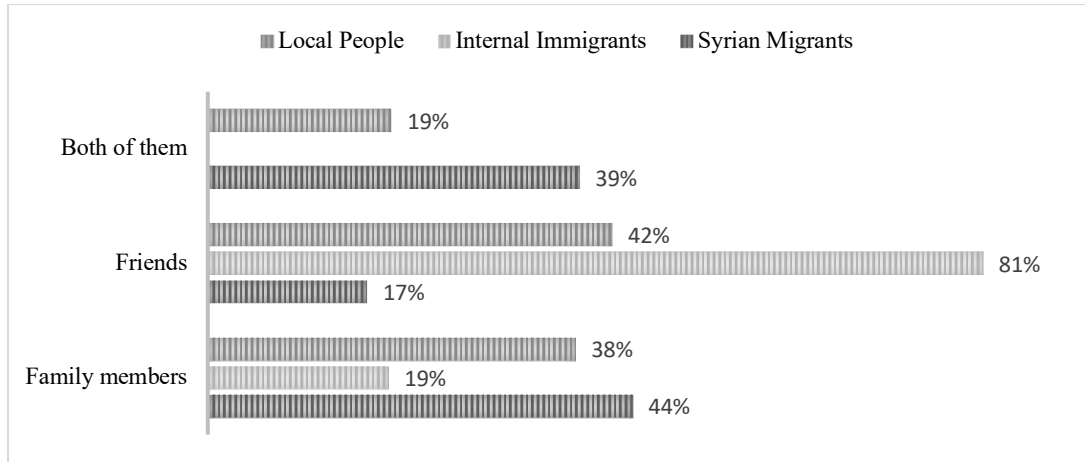




Figure 4-15 A Turkish family, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author

In addition to the size of the groups among the three user groups, there is also a difference about the composition of these groups. While among the interviewees, 44% of Syrian Migrants say that they come with family and their relatives, 71% of internal immigrants and 42% of locals state that they come to the park with their friends. The reason of this case can be found by looking at the social and cultural properties of these three groups. The Syrian's relationships among relatives are much closer. Close family relations have many cultural and social reasons, but the most basic reason; according to the information acquired during the interviews before the war in Syria, the proportion of women who worked and being trained is quite low. The social environment of the women who live depending on their household is mostly limited to their family and their relatives. Lema, who is a Syrian university student in Mersin, and her sister mention; *“relatives in Syria live in a different flat of the same apartment building and usually spend time together.”* And she continues; *“Here, we have a picnic by coming together with two or three families.”*

Table 4-11 *Do you come with your family or friends?*



The difference which is the most noticeable during the observations and which forms the basis of the study is the differences in activity between cultures within the same physical space. Although the physical environment offers the same facilities for all users, users use different places according to their lifestyles. In order to support the observations, the users were asked about *for which purpose they come to the coast* and *what kind of activities they practice*. The responses received supported the observations. Some answers were generally a repetitive response by a user group, while others may have never been mentioned. The Syrian Migrants listed their activities as; *picnics, swimming, walking, barbecuing, wandering, playing with their children*. The people of Mersin; *reading, eating, drinking, watching the sea, resting, chatting, fishing, cycling, drinking coffee, doing sports, walking, picnic, swimming, walking*.

Table 4-12 *What kind of activities do you practice?*

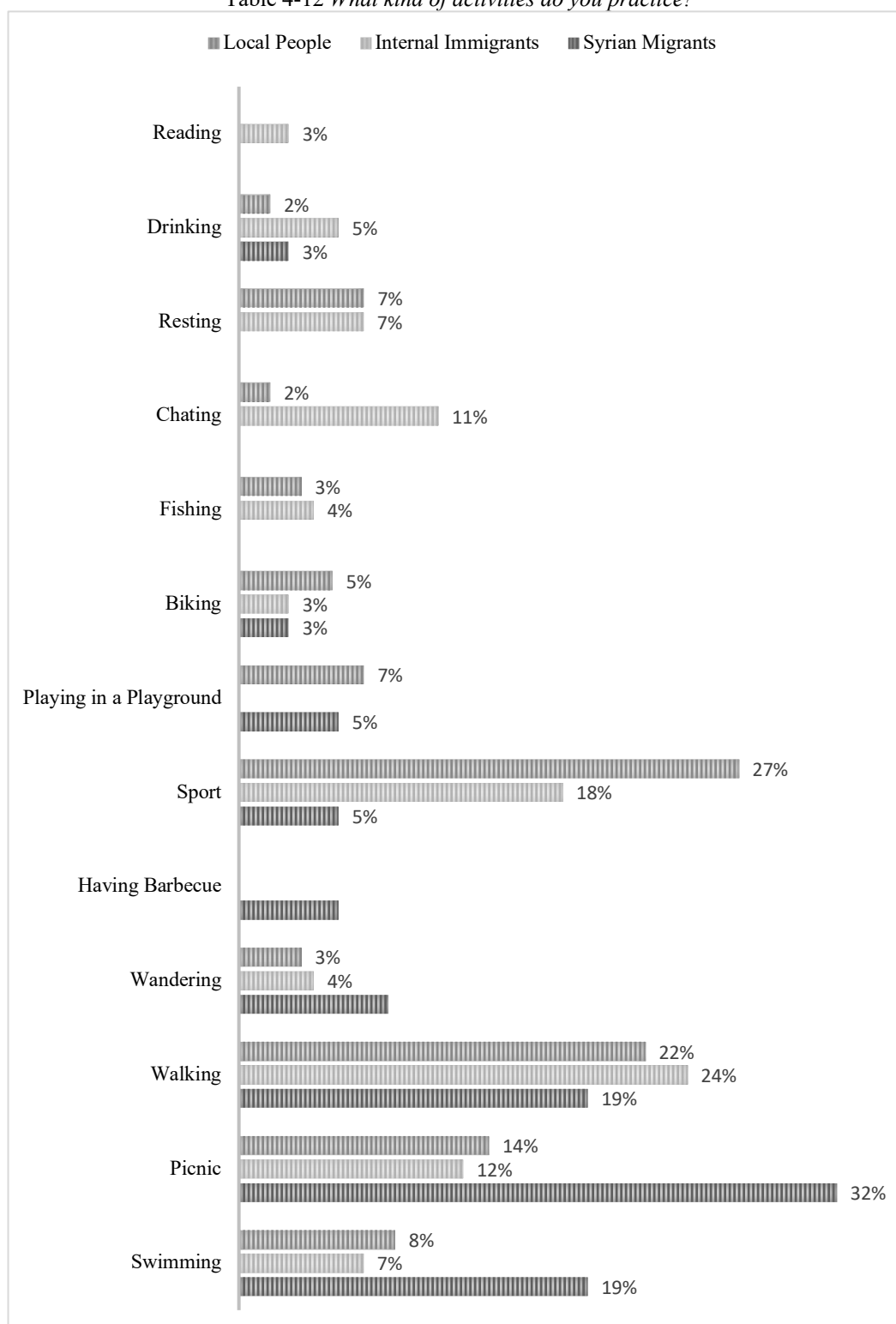




Figure 4-16 The different uses of the coastal park, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author

A Turkish woman sitting in a gazebo states; *“I come with my husband. He goes to the kiraathane, I take my tea with the thermos, I do handcraft. People are coming, we meet and chat. For example, we just met this lady. Sometimes I also go swimming.”*



Figure 4-17 Different uses of the coastal park, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author



A teacher from Muş mentions; *“We do activities such as walking, eating sunflower seeds, fishing, reading books. My husband is fishing, I read books, my child is playing, everyone is doing something according to their own will.”*



Figure 4-18 The different uses of the coastal park, Mersin, 2018, photograph by the author

17-year-old Ali among the local residents; *“I’m riding bike across the coast, and sometimes, we are biking with the cycle club, I met here, and we are sitting in the shade area to rest. Thanks to cycling, I meet girls and we flirt.”*



Figure 4-19 Different uses of the coastal park, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author



Figure 4-20 Different uses of the coast, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author

Syrian Migrants and internal immigrants were asked *whether their activities in the coastal strip of Mersin show similarities with the activities that they practiced before*. While 75% of Syrian Migrants stated that they have similarities, 54% of internal immigrants said that they are not similar. This situation presents two different adjustment cases. Internal immigrants have in time adapted to their new environment and have changed their lifestyles and practices in order to be able to behave in the ways that the physical and social environments suggest them. However, as mentioned

before, Syrian Migrants have transformed the possibilities of the environment in such a way that they can carry out their living practices instead of changing their behavior to adjust to the environment. For this reason, while internal immigrants said that activities do not show similarity, the majority of Syrian Migrants respond that they have similarity.

Table 4-13 *Do these activities show similarities with the activities which they practice before?*

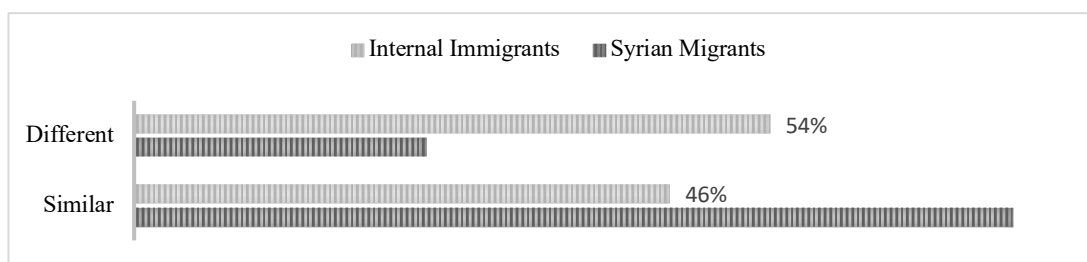
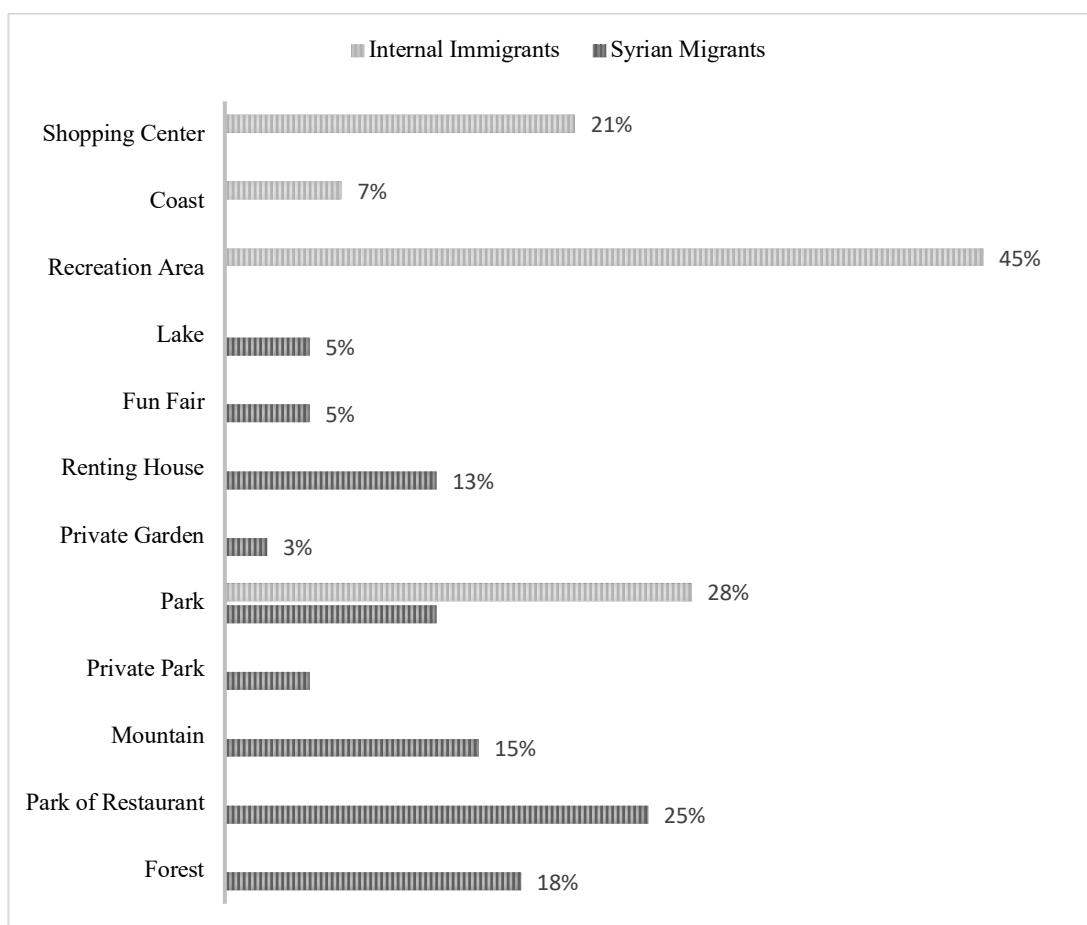


Table 4-14 *Where did you practice similar activities before?*



According to the information acquired during the interviews, privacy is stated to be very important in Syria. In contrast to the public space, outdoor activities take place in recreational areas that do not offer to meet with the other people. Fadel mentions *“in Syria, public space is not common, and there are private parks instead of public parks”*. Syrian Migrants also support Fadel’s argument with their answers; they state that before the war, they perform these activities in the forest, mountains, private parks or in the summer houses which they rented in Latakia. However, this kind of recreational areas in Mersin are far from the city center. For this reason, Syrian Migrants have to use public spaces, especially the coastline, to perform recreational activities. However, while they are using public spaces, they do not limit themselves with the facilities offered by the place. They surround a gazebo with a piece of cloth in order to protect their privacy and to disable the encounter with the public realm. Although 45% of internal immigrants said that they had carried out similar activities in the recreation areas before, they did not transfer their previous practices to the way they use the public space in Mersin.





Figure 4-21 The changing of the environment by Syrian people, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author

During the observations, it was analyzed that Syrian Migrants performed much more social activities than the local residents of Mersin. It has been observed that Syrian Migrants in large groups come to the coast for social activities, rather than performing more optional activities. Because they perform activities such as picnics that offer opportunities to socialize. In order to support the observation, all three groups were asked; *Do you communicate with people you do not know on the coast?* However, the answers are refuted rather than supporting the observations. As opposed to the expectation, the Syrian migrants stated that they do not establish dialogue with other with a percentage of 74%, while the internal immigrants (with 77%) and locals (with 64%) said that they establish a dialogue. When the observations were repeated with these answers, it was understood that the arrival of the Syrian interviewees in crowded groups caused inconsistencies in the interviews and observations. It is not a false

observation that Syrian migrants are more socialized than the local residents in the way they use the coast. However, this socialization is limited with large groups of immigrants, it is isolated from the rest of the social environment. For the local residents of Mersin, socialization occurs with other people, in the form of conversation with the person sitting next to you while sitting on the bench. In other words, as Jan Gehl mentions, it is a spontaneous activity while performing optional activity. This situation clearly showed itself during the request to interview people. While the residents from Mersin accepted easily being interviewed, Syrian migrants hesitated to accept it or not.

Table 4-15 *Do you communicate with people you do not know on the coast?*

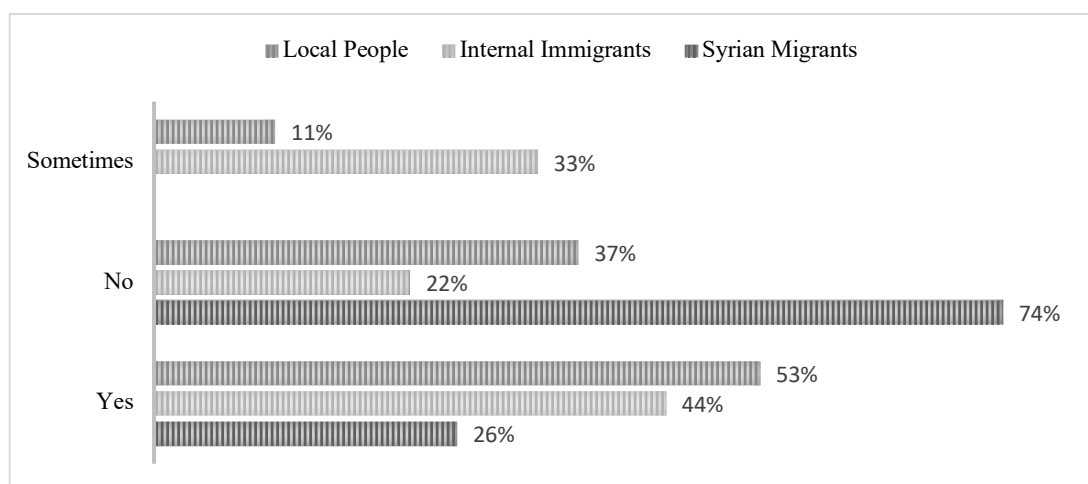




Figure 4-22 Picnic area, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author



Figure 4-23 The different use of coast, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author

Three groups of users were asked *whether they found the activities on the coast adequate*. While the Syrian Migrants (55%) stated that they found sufficient, the

majority of the internal immigrants (73%) and local people (56%) stated that they did not find it sufficient. In the answer to this question; the response rate of internal immigrants is much sharper than the other two groups. This case can in fact be associated with the way people feel themselves in the environment they live. The local residents can behave in the way they want in the built environment they belong to, the activities offered are already shaped by their life practices. For Syrian migrants, the difference of the environment is not a problem, because they already do not exhibit the behavior imposed by the environment. They transform the environment according to life practices. However, the situation for internal immigrants is different from the other two groups. They do not behave according to their usual life practices, but according to practices suggested by the environment, that is, the life practices of the local people. Therefore, it is quite normal for them to experience dissatisfaction with the environment.

*Table 4-16 Do you find the activities on the coast adequate?*

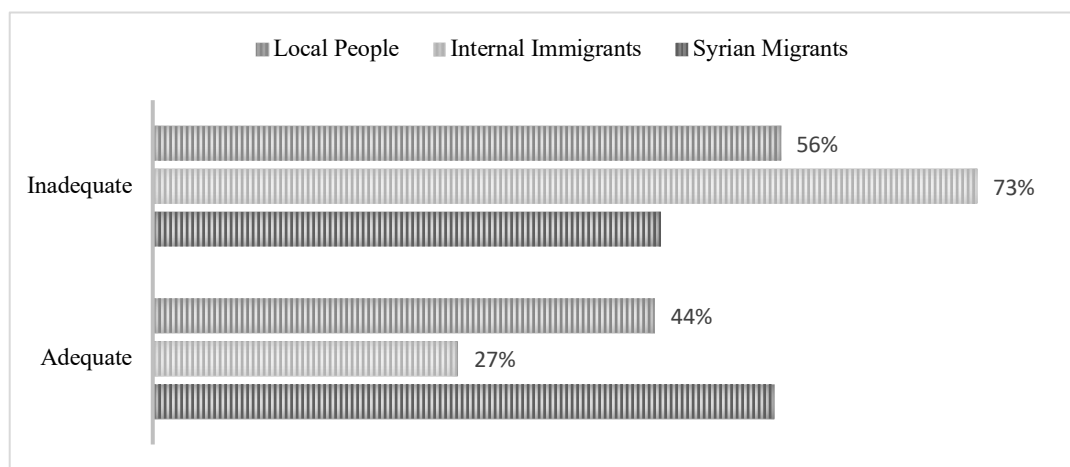






Figure 4-24 Various uses of the coast, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author

Although they seem to be accustomed to their new lives, they are longing for their old lives. Because during interviews asked; *What are the differences between the city you live in and Mersin?* The answers to the question support this hypothesis. They defined the differences between the two cities as social and cultural rather than physical ones. Mehdi living for twenty years in Mersin states; *“Mersin is a cosmopolitan city, Diyarbakir was not. There was neighborhood life there. Everyone knew each other. But everyone is foreign here, you know just the next-door neighbor so I’m not as social as before.”* Yıldız from Hatay mentions; *“Life style and people’s perspectives are different there. Helpfulness is more than here. Because of the influence of the Arab culture, people are more welcoming there.”* The 25 years old Dilan who came from Diyarbakir because of her husband’s job and settled here three years ago; *“I feel like I’ve been imprisoned in my home here. We had more in common because our culture was the same, so I was more social there.”*



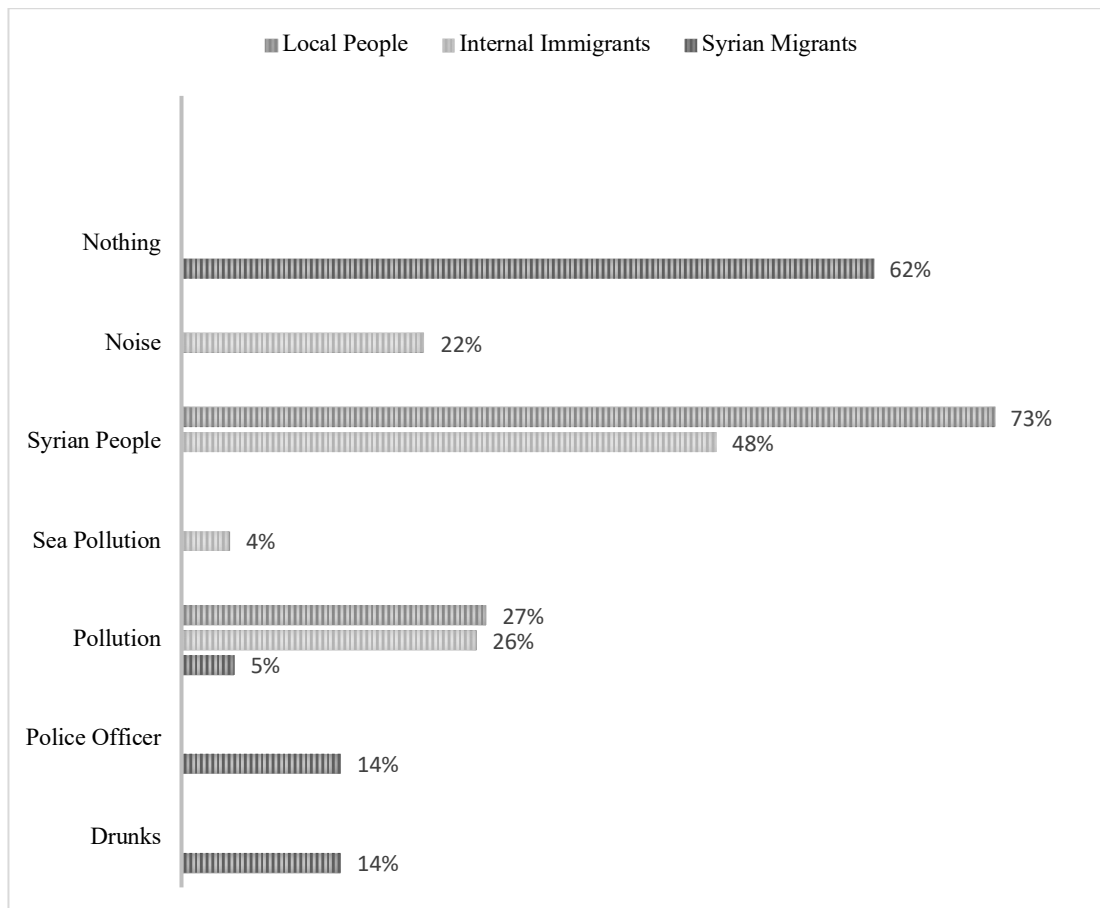
Figure 4-25 The different use of coast, Mersin, 2018, photographs by the author

This group of users independently from how many years they lived in Mersin and where they migrated, mostly mention that human relations are warmer where they lived before. Such a response was not received from other user groups. This condition may be associated with the self-imposed pressure to behave in accordance with the environment applied by internal immigrants. Even though it has been here for years, the behavior setting that an internal migrant creates is not suitable for his/her cultural and social environment. For this reason, even though the self-belonging column in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid is considered to be completed in the behavioral setting, the person is actually unable to fully meet his/her social and cultural needs. It is to note that this is happening in the free environment that Mersin offers to its people to live their culture.

The users were asked about the question of *whether there is an element on the coast that bothers you*. While the similarities between the responses of the internal immigrants and the local people stand out, the responses of the Syrian Migrants vary.

The latter stated that there was no disturbing factor with a ratio of 61% and their answers are mostly the dogs, the drunks and the police officers. However, 48% of the internal immigrants and 73% of the locals interviewed reported their discomfort from Syrian Migrants. Ali who has come to ride with the bike club, says; *“There are too many Syrians, they pollute the environment, I don't want to go to the beach, all of them are used by Syrians, their cultures and food is very different.”* A woman bringing her granddaughter to play on the playground mentions that *“Syrians are too many crowded, we can't find a place, they're not clean, we used to come here for dinner, we don't come now because of them, they come with hookah.”* These discourses can sometimes take a racist dimension.

Table 4-17 *Is there an element on the coast that bothers you?*

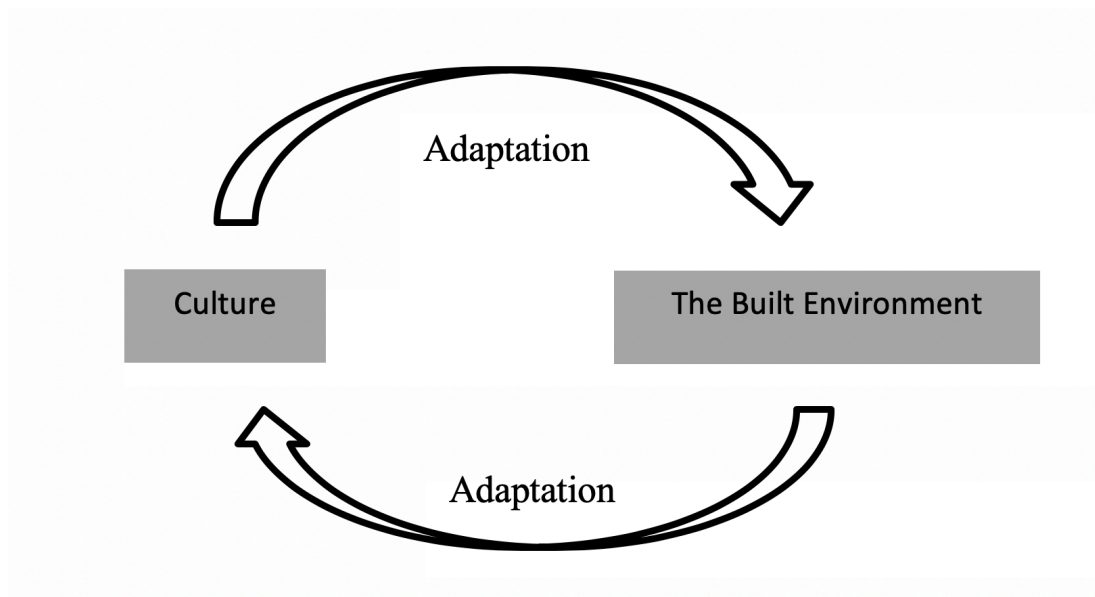




## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The built environment is the result of the activities carried out by people in the process of adaptation to the physical environment. In fact, there is a feedback loop between culture, adaption and built environment. As mentioned in the previous chapters, in urban design, the concept of culture is generally studied from the perspective of “*a group's adaptation to the recurrent problems it faces in interaction with its environmental setting*”. In other words, culture is the adaptation of individuals to the environment. The result that can be drawn here is that the elements constituting the built environment are part of the culture.



However, human beings find new and different solutions to the problems, which they face in the environment. The process of adaptation to the changing environment begins again and causes changes the culture in the long run. In other words, the formation of the built environment is processed backward this time. While culture forms the built

environment, the built environment causes changes in the culture. In short, culture and environment are two concepts that give birth to each other.

This complex relationship makes it difficult to understand the link between culture, environment and behavior. Some anthropologists maintain that culture consists of thoughts and ideas plus associated activities. In fact, culture alone does not carry the ideas of appropriate behavior. But when the concepts of the culture and environment, which give birth to each other, come together, one can have the ideas of appropriate behavior.

This can be supported by Rapoport's argument for behavior and environment relationship. As mentioned in the previous chapters, Rapoport maintains that people behave by reading codes placed into the built environment. In the ideas transported by means of culture, the knowledge of the language is required to read the codes stored in the environment. The person reads the built environment with this language, and then, appropriately behaves. In short, it is not behavior transmitted by culture, it is a language. In other words, the culture shapes the built environment, places codes for appropriate behavior. People read the environment-*codes* with the help of this language, that necessitates a cultural acquaintance. If the environment is not written in the language, which the individual knows, in other words, if it is not designed in accordance with his/her culture, he/she cannot read its codes. For this reason, culture does not only enable people to adopt appropriate behavior, but it also helps them to decode the environment. The reason why Syrian Migrants cannot behave according to the preexisting social practices in the given environment is that they are not familiar with the language of the environment.

When the individual goes to the public space, he/she tends to behave appropriately to the environment. In this case, he/she puts on a mask to achieve a balance between self and others. However, if the individual cannot read the codes placed in the environment, he/she has difficulty in finding the appropriate mask and cannot adapt

to the environment. To find the appropriate mask for his/her environment, he/she must know the culture and can read the codes.

However, culture is also a concept that can be learned like language. The distinction between the behavior adopted by the internal immigrants and Syrian migrants is about wanting to learn this language. Internal immigrants firstly reacted against the existing system to live their own culture as Berry mentioned. The tension between the local people and them mentioned in the previous chapters was experienced in this period. However, they have started to adapt to the environment when their reaction failed.

They began to learn the culture of the city, and then, they form new masks for themselves which they can use in the public spaces of the city. In brief, they find the appropriate mask by reading the codes of the new culture environment. And, they behave in harmony with the environment. Although there is a serious difference between their *self* and *person*, they are able to adapt to the environment with these new masks. In time, this mask also cause changes in the self. For individuals migrating from rural areas, this change of self can be considered as a process of modernization.

However, at this stage Syrian migrants seem to refuse to learn this language. They are more introverted than internal immigrants. Although they have lived here for over eight years, they did not learn Turkish, and are not making any effort to do so. Even some of them who learned Turkish preferred to speak with interpreters instead of speaking Turkish during interviews. This may be since they think that they live here temporarily as guests. However, although they think that the war will continue for many years, they prefer not to make any effort to learn the language. Brown states that *“a language is part of a culture, and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either culture or language”*.<sup>195</sup> For this reason, the refusal of Syrian

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<sup>195</sup> Brown. (2000). p177. cited in Kırmızı, Ö. (2013). Learner attitudes and preferences in terms of learning culture. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 9(1), p160-175.

migrants to learn Turkish is also the expression of refusing to learn the culture. By doing so, they also refuse to adapt to the environment created by another culture and prefer to use the environment in line with their own culture. Even though they live with local people and internal immigrants in the same built environment, their behavior settings are different.

They are aware of the affordances of the environment outside their own use because they see how they are used by other users around them. If they want, they can learn the language of the environment over time. However, as Rapoport points out, the environment is a series of selections, and they want to live according to their own choices, not other people's choices. They do not want to read codes. For this reason, they are trying to transform the existing built environment in line with their lifestyle instead of themselves.

Another result acquired during the observations and interviews is that people choose the place to migrate by considering the cultural and social environment rather than the physical environment. When they migrate, they bring their values, ideas. And with these values and ideas, they try to rebuild the social and cultural environment similar to their previous environment. They prefer to choose a more suitable environment for this. The problems of immigration to adapt to the environment begin at this point. If the built environment does not give the person any opportunity to rebuild his/her cultural and social environment, it causes the individual to feel dissatisfied with the environment. This is the reason why internal immigrants find inadequate the facilities offered by the built environment and longing for their past lives. They have changed their lifestyle with the imposition of the built environment, but they yearn for the past. They still feel dissatisfied with the built environment because they live in different cultural and social environments from them.

However, the Syrian migrants did not accept the imposition of the built environment and transformed the built environment according to their lifestyle. Lang defines environment as an abstraction, an image itself. And the image is different from other



people's image because it is not reality. It is abstraction of the environment in our mind. The built environment has different images in local people, internal immigrants and Syrian migrants' minds. Therefore, the same built environment offers different behavior settings for each of them.

Syrian migrants create their own behavior settings in the public open spaces along the coast of Mersin, unlike the internal immigrants do. As a result of these different behavior settings, it is natural that different practices emerge. They do not behave appropriately with the social expectances set for this environment, but they use the opportunity of free behavior that public space offers them. Internal immigrants could not establish their own behavior settings and feel obliged to behave according to the behavior setting of the local residents of Mersin. The tension experienced in the period when they first migrated can be said to be effective in this. However, the people of Mersin, who learned to live together in time, did not pressure on the Syrian migrants to leave their behavior setting. These are the reasons for differences in the use of public space between three different cultures.

However, the new practices created by the Syrian refugees who come to the public spaces with crowded groups cause discontent in the people of Mersin. Although they do not put pressure on the Syrian refugees, the changes in the public spaces cause the people of Mersin to withdraw from these regions. This situation reveals that the boundaries of the freedom of public space should be determined. While public space allows immigrants to re-establish their own social and cultural environment, and it should not allow disruptions to existing cultural codes and lifestyles of environment.



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## APPENDICES

### A. THE SURVEY PERMISSION OF APPLIED ETHICS REAERCH CENTER OF METU

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
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ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
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08 AĞUSTOS 2018

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof.Dr. F. Cana BİLSEL

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız; yüksek lisans öğrencisi Nazelin PİŞKİN'in "**Kültürel Farklılığın Kamusal Mekan Kullanımı Üzerine Etkisi: Mersin Örneği**" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2018-FEN-044 protokol numarası ile 08.08.2018 - 30.04.2019 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Ş. Halil TURAN

Başkan V

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Üye

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