

A (FORGOTTEN) VERNACULAR FROM ANATOLIAN VILLAGES: GUESTROOMS IN SİVAS/TURKEY¹

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Abstract: This study aims to introduce a deep-rooted and essential component of authentic folk architecture typology in Anatolia, namely guestrooms/village rooms. The main aim of the study is to analyse traditional lifestyle and architectural structures under the effect of traditional rural lifestyle over a particular sampling area. The social functions of these buildings are limited not merely to housing guests, but also involve rather complex and joint spatial functions, such as providing room for public ceremonies, including weddings and funerals. However, it has been proven during the study process that these buildings, which are on the verge of disappearance, are generally not used for their intended purpose. It is also argued that although the social functions of these buildings are similar, they have their peculiarities in spatial arrangement. To this end, the authors undertook a detailed study of the researches concerning traditional Turkish houses and evaluated, both synchronically and diachronically, the architectural relationship and interactions of the sampled guestroom with the neighbouring dwelling culture. Moreover, other than the literature review, in situ research was conducted at the sample sites in Çallı village, Sivas province, and the social facilities and spatial features of these buildings were analysed. Field studies, interview and observation methods were used during the research. Furthermore, the plan and front elevation reliefs of one of the studied buildings were drawn. The similarities of the sitting plan and spatial structure, both in function and organisation, with divanhane (audience/council hall) and başoda (head room) of Anatolian Turkish houses were discussed over the deductions related to the spatial plan that was created using the aforementioned reliefs. Also, the possible extensions of Central Asian spatial tradition were interrogated and joint architectural details of Turkic spaces of entertainment and housing guests were scrutinised. Moreover, typological concordances were investigated after architectural and decorative interactions had been determined. In short, the cultural and spatial components of guesthouses were studied with a view to contribute to local and international sustainability of such buildings, which symbolise the productivity of rural lifestyle, to provide room for these in the architectural literature.

Keywords: Anatolian dwelling culture, guestrooms, rural architecture, Sivas

INTRODUCTION

Alison Snyder, in a research article concerning the rural culture of Yozgat region, emphasises that “time and space look eternal in the village, but they are not” (Snyder 2009: 42). Snyder uses the concept of “a cultural re-making” in order to determine a simultaneous condition that marks the temporal and spatial coincidence of rural lifestyle. She sees this condition as a re-making, in which a series of spaces pertaining to the earlier lifestyle join the newly built structures and articulate a new situation (Snyder 2009: 46). Snyder’s approach points to the fact that new meaning directories are needed for the vestiges of traditional lifestyle that villagers have left behind in their changing life cycle. New cultural and spatial formations appeared during the process of change, and a heterogeneous landscape was constructed. Traditional buildings and building styles have disappeared in contemporary Anatolian villages, giving way to a “hybridized landscape” (Snyder 2005: 24). Thus, in Anatolian villages researches concerning the historical and sociological dimensions of the cultural layer prioritise sorting out the “hybridized landscape” that stems from the physical change and transformation. Furthermore, it is very likely that the hybridized landscape will continue within this intertwined position. It might also be easily maintained that the sample guestrooms underwent such a series of change. This building typology, which lost its architectural functions owing to cultural changes, is on the threshold of disappearing due to physical destruction. As far as the literature consulted is concerned, the rich variety of local building typologies in Anatolia were not adequately investigated, nor were they studied whilst rural lifestyle was gradually disappearing. That is to say, many of the studies evaluated local building typologies within the framework of the dominant “Ottoman-Turkish house” typology (Eldem 1954). The main concern of these studies was to investigate the architectural interactions between urban and rural lifestyles, limiting the understanding of spatial contents merely to architectural relations.

As a starting point, with Sedat Hakkı Eldem’s well-known definition, the “Turkish house” became established within the borders of the Ottoman Empire, and developed and persisted for around five centuries as a distinct building typology (Eldem 1954: 12). Many researchers after Eldem abandoned the framework set by this definition, and numerous researches on geographically and culturally different local dwelling typologies were carried out. Although large in number, the mentioned studies failed to encompass small-scale authentic samples including guesthouses. These buildings might be considered as a micro-scale cultural heritage, reflecting the identity of their respective settlements and holding historical value, as they document the social life system of the histori-

cal period that they date from. There are still examples of spatially protected village rooms and guesthouses against all odds. In this regard, architectural material will be analysed considering the architectural and social dimensions of this building typology from a historical perspective. In this context, a detailed study of a sample building, the spatial characteristics of which were exploited and shaped by lifestyle, beliefs, customs and traditions, is undertaken. Although many authentic samples might be found as dispersed throughout Anatolia, Çallı village in Sivas province was selected as the research area, as it was maintained that findings from a province that comprises a vast rural region would be more rewarding. There are authentic samples of guesthouses in this village, in which the traditional building system is complete. The surviving guesthouse samples date back to approximately the second half of the twentieth century.

Given the abovementioned conditions, the research was conducted in 2010, and it was established that four or five guestrooms were still in use in the village at that time. A detailed *in situ* analysis of the buildings was carried out, and drawings were made of a building that was not in use, but had retained its structural details. The findings were then compared to other samples in the vicinity, by discussing architectural interactions and possible shared origins.

SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF VILLAGE ROOMS/GUESTHOUSES: SOCIAL FUNCTION AND FACILITIES THAT DETERMINE THE SPATIAL LAYOUT

Doğan Kuban (1970) mentions three major elements in the planning of vernacular Anatolian village houses: human section, livestock section, and storage and display section. This integrated functional classification used by Kuban might be accepted as a true definition of the spatial requirements for Anatolian vernacular settlement typology. Moreover, in view of these social functions the spatial organisation formed a common structural language in Anatolian villages, and as Kuban (1982) asserts, such structuring dates back to the Neolithic Age. In this spatial organisation, the inability to read and distinguish which blocks belong to human, livestock or storage section appears to be a cultural derivation of the peasant ideology. A limited lifestyle based on agricultural activity increased human dependency on animals and crops, resulting in an equal importance assigned to the cellar, storeroom, barn and life spaces in the spatial organisation (Abalı 1989: 126).

Furthermore, as mentioned by Eldem (1954), every inhabited room becomes a house in its own right, which leads to variations of social activity based on the concept of room. So much so that not only every room inhabited but every

room where a service is provided becomes a 'house'. For instance, 'the house of the older bride', or 'the house of the younger bride', 'oven house', 'storage house', 'barn house', 'visitor house (guesthouse)', 'courtyard house' (assembly room), 'horse house', 'bread house' (bakery), and 'food house' are some of the places in the case of which rooms are transformed into houses. These spaces planned in response to the social needs in diverse regions of Anatolia commonly exhibit a pattern of rooms lined around a courtyard in an organised and equivalent manner. However, it has to be noted that in this egalitarian house plan the units reserved to the elders of the family and to the guests are differently and extrovertly situated. Considering the entire architectural organisation, one does not come across an understanding of spatial hierarchy based on the status quo. On the contrary, an egalitarian understanding of structuring exists especially in a constructive format. In short, both in terms of terminological and physical arrangement, each space occupies a separate yet equal category (Abalı 1989: 126). So the 'guests' might be entertained both in a room within the house and in an independent space outside this spatial organisation. The understanding of independent planning mostly observed in villages is a product of rural architectural culture and this situation represents a social stage achieved in rural life.

This egalitarian understanding also indicates the importance of the guest in Anatolian culture. Guesthouses contain the social facilities of their period and they speak the vernacular of the unique structural patterns. They perform similar functions in different parts of Anatolia, yet with slight architectural differences varying by the region that they belong to. The main function of these structures, which increased in number and gained their basic characteristic components during the nineteenth century, is entertaining the village guests and gatherings of the village folk especially for free time activities (Kaş 1988: 29).

The roots of the tradition concerned with the social function of village rooms might be traced back to the Ahi order. The Ahi dervish lodges dispersed all through Anatolia might be regarded as the earliest examples of guestrooms, and their functional schemes are parallel to the social facilities of the Seljuk Caravanserai (Canozan 1992: 45). These spaces that were used for cultural exchange through socialising activities, such as talks and festivities, were built by the contribution of the wealthier villagers or the inhabitants' cooperation. All wealthy villagers had a village room and these rooms were named after the hosts (Çınar 1991: 68). All the costs of the village room, including the daily expenditures of the guests staying there, inclusive of boarding and subsistence, were covered by the owner of the room. In these rooms people from all age groups gathered and shared their knowledge and experience. Especially during public festivities or grief all the guesthouses in the village were opened to visitors with a spirit of sharing the sorrow or the happiness of the day. How-

ever, the interviews in the Sivas region indicated that women and girls were not allowed to join these gatherings; yet, they gathered in other guestrooms during weddings and funerals.

Although Anatolian village guestrooms, including the guestrooms in Sivas, look almost the same in terms of exterior design and materials, they carry traces of a better workmanship and higher quality materials inside, as compared to other houses in the vicinity. The doors, window frames, closets, and especially the ceiling decorations testify that village rooms were built with a good workmanship, out of respect for the guests (Kaş 1988: 29). These guestrooms derive their functions from the importance attached to guests, and the origins and functions of these rooms and their spatial relationships with other dominant building typologies in Anatolia should be explicated.

TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL CULTURAL LAYER: SIMILARITIES AND INTERACTIONS RELATED TO THE ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE AND ORIGINS

Before discussing the building groups that spatially interact with the village rooms/guesthouses built in Anatolia, mention should be made of the assumptions concerning the origins of these buildings. In the first place, concepts such as ‘guest’ and ‘being a guest’ should be etymologically investigated, since they are related to the social function of the mentioned buildings. The main theme here derives from Central Asian spatial culture (Erdoğan 2000: 37). Another source is the morphological meaning of the room in the house culture of the Turks. The guesthouses that were built with a specific sitting plan exhibit a hierarchical understanding in their spatial organisation. In short, the main factor in the formation of different vernacular types seems to be the morphological interactions based on the independent variations of the room in Turkish house culture.

In order to achieve a better understanding of the issues under debate, the building typology that has developed in Anatolian villages during the nineteenth century under the influence of the concepts of ‘guest’ and ‘being a guest’ will be discussed. For instance, in some of the surviving nineteenth-century adobe buildings with courtyards and earth-sheltered roofs in Turkmenistan we encounter the indispensable units of Turkish Anatolian houses, *sedir* (sofa) and *sergen* (shelf), which are called the same.

Furthermore, in line with the saying “Guests are greater than fathers”, the understanding of hospitality has led to the emergence of spaces called *mihmanhane* (guesthouse). These spaces share many common features with the *divanhane* (audience/council hall) and the *başoda* (head room) in Anatolian

Turkish houses, both in terms of function and organisation (Tajibayev 2007: 36). In other words, it might be asserted that there are common and unchangeable components in this theme of ‘house’ culture that has survived both in Anatolia and in Central Asia. Spatial understandings have been shaped by

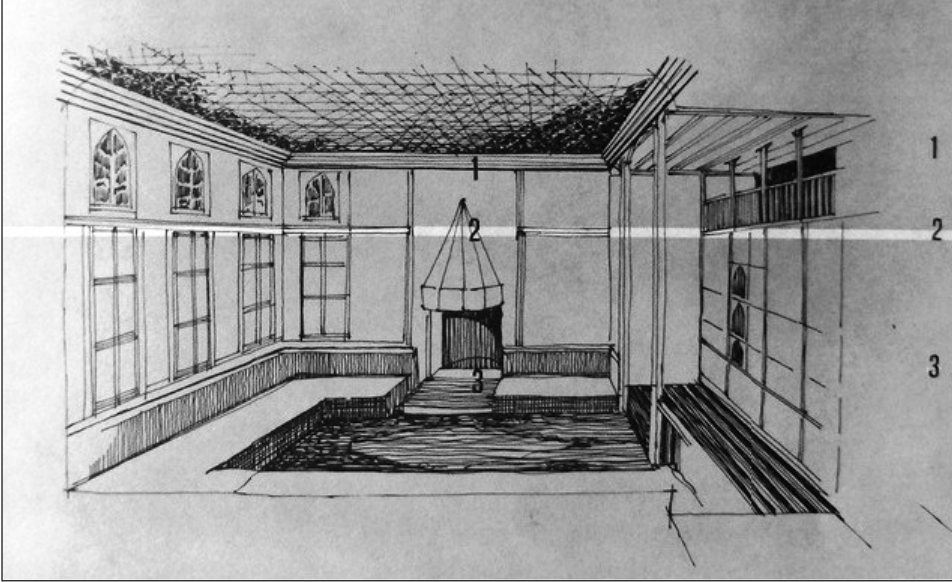


Figure 1. *Sitting plan in a traditional Turkish house (Küçükerman 1973: 42)*

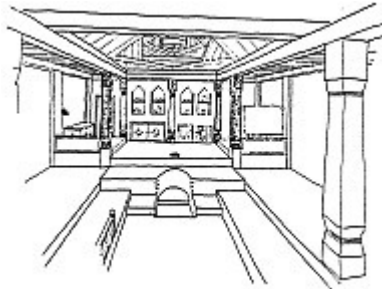


Figure 2. *Sitting plan in a Tajik House (Akın 1988: 17)*

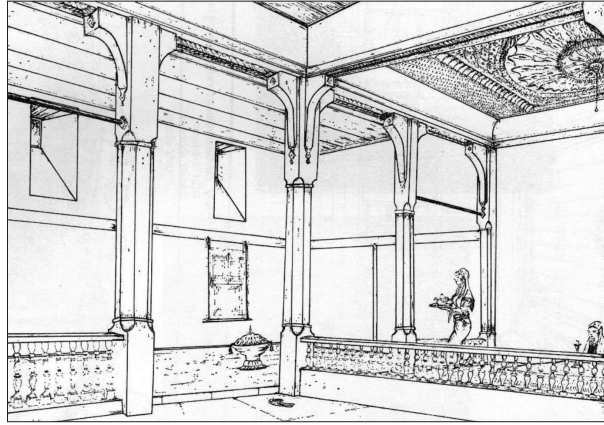


Figure 3. *Perspective from Divriği-Yolgeçti Toyhanesi (Sakaoğlu 1978: 38).*

Figure 6 (below). *Ahır Sekisi house of Hamza Erdoğan in Nevşehir-Hacıbektas (Abalı 1989: 129).*

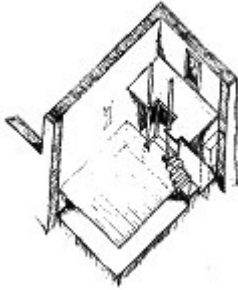


Figure 4 (above). *A guestroom in Konya: sitting plan (Çınar 1991: 65).*

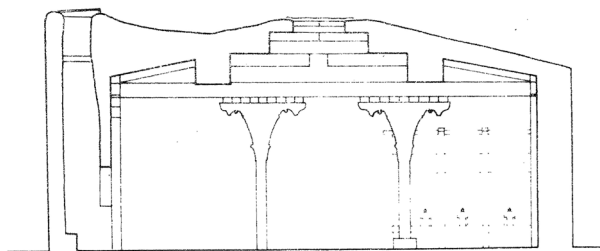


Figure 5 (above). *Cross-section: Cem Evi, Yahyalı Village, Sivas (Akın 1985).*

the dominant cultural and social elements for centuries. Mention should also be made of the *toyhane* in the Divriği district in Sivas province, as it resembles the plan of guestrooms, and there are etymological coincidences in their spatial connections. The *toyhane* is a larger multifunctional section of the local Divriği house, in which daily activities were performed especially in winters; meals were eaten, guests were hosted and children and elders slept at night. The *toyhane* is situated in the *hareem* (women's section) and it resembles the Seljuk winter rooms called *tabhane*. It should also be noted that historically the ceremonies and receptions were named *toy* (wedding) in Central Asia. In addition to that, the origins of the Barana Rooms, which are used for entertainment purposes especially in Yozgat, Çankırı, Konya and Balıkesir, might also be traced back to Central Asia (Yakıcı 2010).

As mentioned above, the relationship among the spatial relations in village rooms/guesthouses should be investigated in the coincidences with the Turkish sitting plan. Günkut Akın, in his study that investigates the expression codex of the sitting culture and status for Turks, identifies a shared relationship as observed from the nomadic culture to Ottoman settlement culture (Akın 1988: 13–14). Even though Akın does not overlook the possible differences, the main activity is related to the spatial layer that determines the sitting plan in the “Turkish” house room: the *seki altı* (lower stone base) and *seki üstü* (upper stone base) planes (Figure 1).² Although differences and variations might be observed in local samples, this stratification that enables horizontal and vertical isolation is related to the spatial organisation of the *seki altı* and the larger and higher sitting section *seki üstü*. This stratified plan of the “Turkish house” was functional while it also stressed status, which exemplifies the Turkish aspiration to sit on elevated planes (Figure 2). Ayda Arel thinks that the principle of superiority is related to such an expression (Arel 1982: 79). While this stratification enables sitting in an elevated position, it also defines sitting on a lower plane. The existence of another layer between the *seki altı* and *seki üstü* shows the spatial variations and interactions that emanate from the prevalence of this core type (Figures 3–6).³ For instance, there is a fourth dimension added to this stratification in the *toyhane*, which we have claimed to have a spatial kinship with village rooms in terms of spatial organisation and function (Figures 15, 16). This layer called *nimseki* is named *kilimüstü* in Divriği, and it is a plane isolated from the *seki üstü*, slightly elevated and with a railing. Sakaoğlu (1978: 31) claims that this section was reserved for the use of younger people. A similar spatial organisation, i.e., the sitting plan of older and younger villagers, might also be observed in the guesthouses.

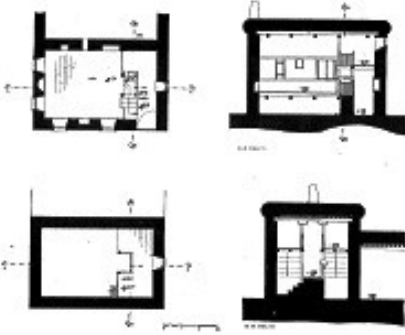


Figure 7a. “Room and mabeyn” relationship in vernacular Anatolian dwellings (Ahır Sekisi house in Nevşehir-Hacıbektaş) (Abalı 1989: 129)

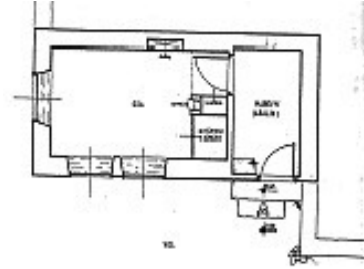


Figure 7b. Konya-Yörük Village Guestroom (Çınar 1991: 64).

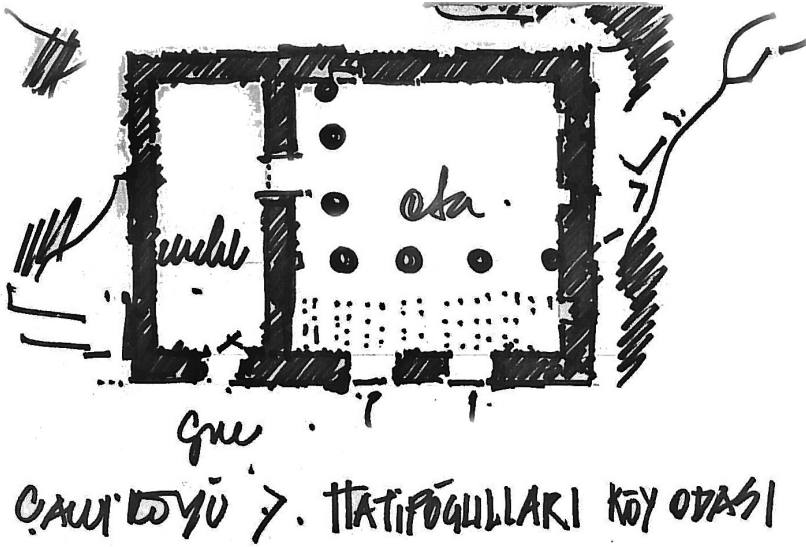


Figure 7c. Hatipoğulları Guestroom in Çalı Village, Sivas (Drawings: Uğur Tuztaşı 2010).

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN GUESTROOMS IN TERMS OF ARCHITECTURAL ORGANISATION

Having identified the spatial and social functions of the guestrooms and noted that guestrooms follow a common pattern of spatial organisation in many regions of Anatolia, it can be argued that even though the social functions of the guestrooms (entertaining guests, talking, and leisure) are parallel, the vernacular types were formed in terms of spatial organisation. A common principle in this architectural organisation is the structural contrast between inner and outer spaces. According to this principle, the main theme of many samples constructed in Anatolian villages, whether synchronically or diachronically, gives no clues about the richness of the inner space, which is a portrayal of the cross-section of life. Whether the outer surface is made of adobe brick or stone or mixed (stone, wood, adobe) materials, the inner decoration is strikingly different from other local dwellings with excellent woodwork. As repeatedly emphasised in the study, this condition reflects the importance given to the guest by Anatolian villagers, while it also marks the prestige attached to the owner of the house, as well as the philanthropy of the latter. As a result of the interviews with the



Figure 8. Location of the sample village room on the map of Turkey.
Source: <http://www.vidiani.com/?p=4556>.

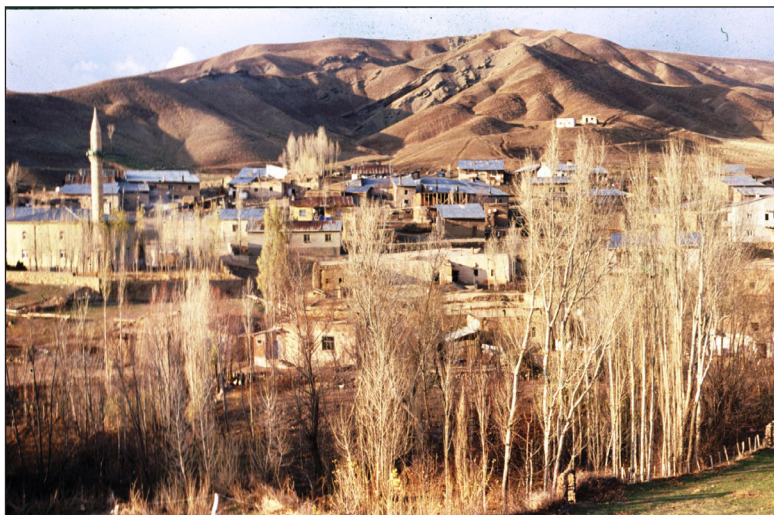


Figure 9. *A view of the northern side of Çallı village. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010*



Figure 10. *A view of the southern side of Çallı village. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.*

villagers living in the research area it was proven that a positive rivalry played an important role in the increasing number of these rooms.

It is further argued that the spatial transmission between urban and rural house cultures increased within the process of change in the Ottoman lifestyle during the nineteenth century. Hence, the efforts of wealthier families in transporting spatial parameters of urban dwellings to the village might be reflective of the mentioned process of change.

Nevertheless, a common pattern of spatial organisation might be observed in the guesthouses built especially in central Anatolia, in which a single room or two rooms open to a hall (Figure 7). Although it has different names, this hall is generally called *mabeyin*. It is smaller than a typical hall and forms a spatial connection that meets the entrance. Indeed, the typical spatial understanding here is the same as in the planning of Anatolian village houses. The units have been developed on the basis of this organisation scheme, with names 'one room-*mabeyin*' or 'two rooms-*mabeyin*'. A third and fourth joint are added to the plan with a separate 'room-*mabeyin*' configuration, which suggests the existence of an understanding of modular growth (Abalı 1989: 126). In short, the simplest guestroom is composed of an entrance (*mabeyin*), living room and a small stable (Çınar 1991: 64). In some regions the stable is placed next to the guestroom, but in Sivas such samples were not observed. Probably, the mounts of the houseguests were kept in the stables of the host, which were adjacent to the village houses.



Figure 11. Exterior view of Hatipoğulları village room (entrance and rear front). Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.

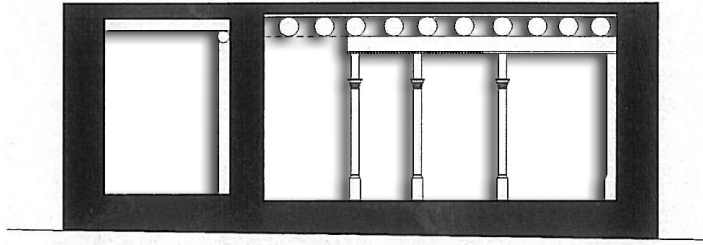
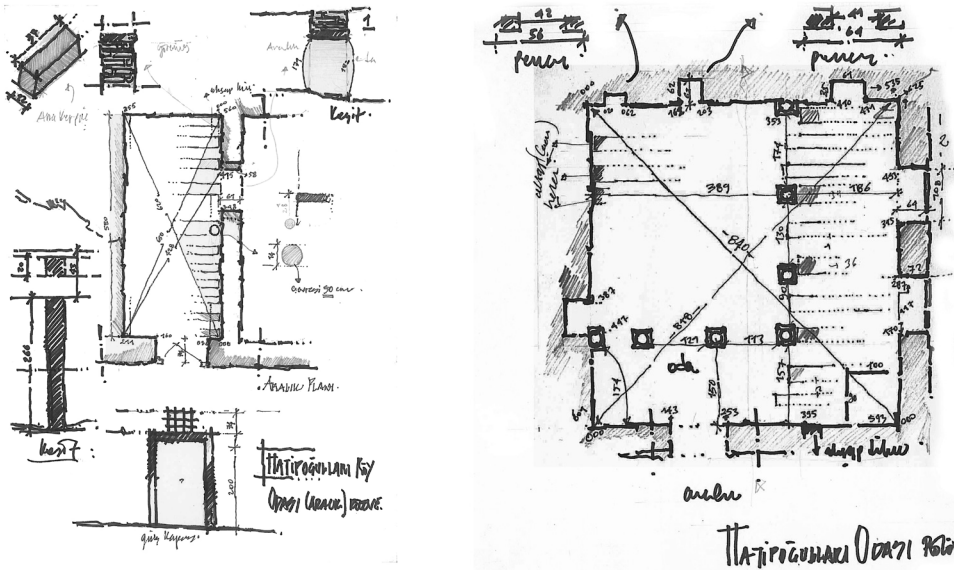


Figure 12. Plan and cross section relief of Hatipoğulları guestroom. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.



HATİPOĞLU'S VILLAGE ROOM, ÇALLI VILLAGE: DEFINITION AND LOCATION OF THE RESEARCH AREA

The current study was carried out in Çallı village, which is located in the central district of Sivas province (Figure 8). The village is in the region known as Kırkköylü and Elbeyli, and the mentioned villages dispersed over a relatively small area were populated by İlbeyli Turkmen tribes, migrating from the vicinity of Aleppo, Syria; the exact dates of migration are not known. The village is on the 28th kilometre of the old Sivas-Kayseri highway and the 30th kilometre of the Sivas-Yıldızeli highway, with an average altitude of 1400 metres above the sea level. The village was built in the bed of a stream named Çay, which flows in the east-west direction. Most of the houses were built to the north



Figure 13. Local adobe settlement, Çallı Village. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.



Figure 14. Contemporary use of mud plaster (clay) for maintenance. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.

of the stream, while a few were also on the southern banks (Figures 9–10). The houses on the southern side were built on the northern slopes of Sivri and Güdük hills, where the dirt surface is slightly slanting northwards. The houses to the north of the river are located on the southern slopes of Küçük Şahşah and Büyük Şahşah hills, where the surface is considerably slanting to

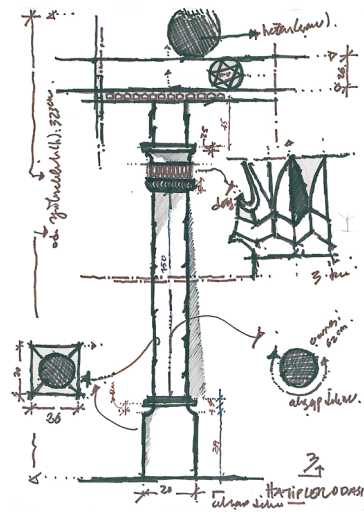


Figure 15. Hatipoğulları village room, wooden posts and detail relief. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.



Figure 16. *Hatipoğulları* village room: wooden posts, motifs on wooden beams. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.



Figure 17. *Details from Hatipoğulları* village room: wooden posts and beams (Mühr-i Süleyman (Seal of David) motif (hexagram) on the beam. Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.



the south. According to a cadastral record book, dated 1844, the village had 75 households with a population of 375 people. Before most of the villagers had immigrated to Sivas, the village had approximately 300 households, while the current number of households is below 100 (Pürlü 2002: 96). As a result of the migration, almost 70% of the population migrated elsewhere, while 30% are still living in the village.

There are a number of significant local dwellings other than the studied Hatipoğulları guestroom in the village, namely Ümmet'in Oğlu room, Sülük Paşagilin room and Kaya Kahyan`s Gezenekli house, all of which are dated to the nineteenth century. According to the interviews and the epitaphs, Ümmet'in Oğlu guestroom is dated to 1852, while Kaya Kahyan's house is dated to 1838.

HATIPOĞULLARI GUESTROOM

Located on the northern slope of the village, the entrance of Hatipoğulları guestroom faces south. There are no functionally related buildings in its immediate vicinity. It might be asserted that the building was planned to stand independently. The outer walls of the building, which were built using rocks gathered from the nearby stream, are about to collapse, and the natural elevation of the building has also changed. In terms of the structural and spatial style of Hatipoğulları guestroom, it is estimated to have been built during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is one of the remaining three or four guestrooms in the village; it has fallen into disrepair and is about to collapse. The



Figure 18. *Stone floor remains of the gusülhane located to the right of the sitting space.
Photo by Uğur Tuztaşı 2010.*

guesthouse looks like a simple building from the outside. Like other guesthouses in Sivas region, it has a rectangular plan and a single unit (Figures 11–12). The main room is accessed through the entrance section called *aralık*. The outer walls are made of rocks gathered from the nearby stream, and the clay and straw plaster has peeled off due to lack of maintenance. The other guesthouses in the village are constructed using adobe bricks, and the walls are plastered with clay (Figures 13–14). The top layer of the building consists of an earth roofing over a wooden ceiling, in accordance with the local building language. In the region, large wooden beams made of thick tree trunks are called *hezen*. The entrance space called *aralık* has a wooden door with a tiny window. The sitting space opens outside through two successive windows, with a wider inner window in the entrance facade. There are wooden beams above and below the windows. While the wooden posts and beams of the building survive, the ceiling has fallen down. Thus, we can deduce that the main sitting space was divided with posts as in other guestrooms that are similar in spatial organisation and typological features. The room is divided into two parts by four wooden posts



Figure 19. Remains of the *yaşmaklı ocak* (gypsum-plastered oven) and a coffee closet. Photo by Uğur Tuztaş 2010.



Figure 20. *Eski Aparadı village, guestroom and the ceiling of the kilimüstü section (Ünlüdil 2005: 551–552).*



Figure 21. Halil Koçak guestroom, Merkez Aylı village, Sivas province. Source: <http://www.sivaskulturenvanteri.com/halil-kocak-konuk-odasi/#more-1056>.

on the sides. The workmanship and ornamentation on these posts and joining beams is spectacular (Figure 15). The dimensions and ornamentations of the beams are different as compared to other regions in Sivas province and other guestrooms in the village that we had the opportunity to investigate. The “tree of life” and “Mühr-i Süleyman” (Seal of David) motifs are especially significant (Figures 16–17). As mentioned above, the ornamentations on the ceilings of the sections reserved for the elders and the younger are different, and in many samples the section of the elderly has a sliced ceiling rose carved on wood. The sides are decorated with wooden frames. Since the ceiling of this room is not in place, our interpretations are derived from other samples. Another issue that we would handle with a restitutive approach is the separation of the sections divided by posts with wooden railings. In almost every sample we have observed wooden railings in this section. The inner walls are plastered with lime, although it has largely peeled off. Opposite the door that opens to the room from *aralık* there are traces of a gypsum-plastered oven (*alçı yaşmaklı ocak*). However, the exact shape of the oven cannot be restored since it was largely destroyed. A vast majority of the rooms in the region called *mum sekili* have built-in closets for bedding and next to them a stone or marble bathing cubicle is placed. There are traces of the *gusülhane*, a closet-like bathroom, in this building (Figure 18). While studying other samples, we can deduce that



Figure 22. Ceiling of the kürsü section, the heating place around which the family members gathered for eating and talking, Divriği-Tevrüzlü Konağı Toyhanesi (Ünlüdil 2005: 305–307).



the small built-in closet next to the oven was used for coffee sets and books, while the other closet called *çırakman* (Figure 19) was meant for storing lamps and firewood.

As mentioned before, these rooms are significant with reference to their inner space organisation. The rich ornamentation of the inner space of Hatipoğulları room, although in ruins, leads us to an exciting restitution, which might also be observed in other surviving samples in Sivas region. For instance, the richly ornamented inner space and proximity of the village room in the nearby Eski Apardı village is significant (Figures 20–21). In order to determine the sources of this interaction related to vernacular spatial connection, the *toyhane* should be studied. The wooden posts in the room separated by low parapets, the hand-carved ornamentations on the ceiling, the beam consoles, the gypsum-plastered oven, and the gypsum niche called *mihrab* are similar to those of the *toyhane*. As observed in the inner spatial organisation of the *toyhane*, the ceilings of the

kilimüstü, *nimseki* and *seki altı* sections are ornamented (Figure 22). In addition to that, the hand-carved ornamentation takes the spectator to another dimension. Although woodwork and plasterwork are very similar, hand-carved ornamentation is rare in the *toyhane* (Ünlüdil 2005: 550–551).

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

This study aims at introducing the spatial features and social contents of a building typology observed in Anatolian villages. The guestroom as a distinctive type observed in Turkish rural settlement and building typology confirms the importance of hospitality for Anatolian villagers and marks the depth of the roots of hospitality in Anatolian culture. Let alone guestrooms, the tradition of hospitality even resulted in the building of separate residences for guests. Regarding the present situation, such concerns seem to be disappearing in today's Anatolia, or at least they are losing their original meaning and contents. That is to say, although guests are still valuable for Anatolian villagers, they do not feel the need to build separate rooms for them.

As a matter of fact, architecture extends culture to future generations through spaces. However, in contemporary Anatolian villages such vernacular structures survive only in memories. These buildings that penetrated into the holistic structure of the village and even attracted more attention compared to other building types in most Anatolian villages are culturally and physically disappearing. A repeatedly raised issue in this research has been the spatial components of this building typology and its shared roots with other building types. In the present study the buildings located within the research area were comparatively studied and some similarities were observed. It was deduced that the *toyhane* in the Sivas-Divriği region has strong architectural and decorative kinship with guestrooms. Although this relationship might be reduced to the interaction of the “Turkish house” and “room” typologies, one should also consider the fact that the rich building culture in Anatolia formed many other special types throughout time. Thus, spatial analyses with semiotic insights should be used to reconsider the possibility of interaction in rural Anatolian building types with reference to locality. It would not be correct to assume that the traditional architectural language resulting from the repetition of a certain typology causes extraordinary and special solutions. So much so that only a thorough analysis would lead to success in determining both the authentic identity of the “place” and the protection approaches to be applied to the site. How societies perceive the past is directly concerned with the perception of time. In this regard, protecting such authentic structures that shed light upon the socio-

economic structure and architectural language (both structural and spatial) of their respective time periods should be regarded as a cultural responsibility.

The cultural makeup of the research area has changed due to social, physical and technological advancements, and the process of change has led to the erosion of the functions of guestrooms, which might be regarded as an authentic expression of rural social and architectural characteristics. Although, in Snyder's terms, a "hybridized landscape" is not observed in the mentioned region, it is possible to observe hybridized guestrooms which are affected by contemporary building and communication technologies in other parts of Anatolia. The guestrooms that should be evaluated outside the "Turkish house" typology but still interact with it, especially the sampled guestroom, not only demonstrate rural architectural structuring but also epitomise remains of excellent handcrafting and workmanship. It is also suggested that in pre-industrial times a clear-cut difference between rural and urban architecture is not always possible. Today we can come across reflections of heterogenised urban spaces in rural areas, which physically represent "hybridized landscapes". It goes without saying that the preservation of the cultural, social and architectural features of the studied guestrooms is essential not only in terms of giving a halt to time and taking snapshots of architectural structures, but also in terms of providing future inspiration for architecture and workmanship. What is important beyond restoration or even restitution appears as rehabilitation of guestrooms through assigning contemporary functions to these buildings and opening them to the use of non-governmental organisations for charity work or education.

In this regard, it should be mentioned that although Hatipoğulları guestroom was registered as cultural heritage by the Ministry of Culture, Sivas Regional Directorate of Foundations, currently no attempts have been made to restore it. Today the building is deserted and in ruins. As a matter of fact, in Anatolian villages there are examples of such buildings used as warehouses or stables. In short, there may be considerably more to learn from the remains of a forgotten building tradition. There is still hope to revive such samples of cultural heritage within a disappearing locality.

NOTES

¹ A previous version of this study was presented at the ISVS-6 conference and published in the proceedings.

² In the traditional room, the entrance and service space called *seki altı* is separated from the main sitting area called *seki üstü*, with a difference in elevation in both the floor and the ceiling. *Seki* is the only stair climbed up for reaching the sitting platform

of the room. *Seki üstü* and *seki altı* are the planes located above and below this stair (Göker 2009: 167).

³ For instance, Zekiye Abalı mentions a vernacular type built in room-*mabeyin* organisation called *ahır sekisi* in her study covering the Hacibektaş region of Nevşehir province. According to Abalı, the most important feature that distinguishes this type from Anatolian vernacular building types is the relationship of the area reserved for humans with the stable (Abalı 1989: 125). In the *ahır sekisi* the sitting plane that is the *seki* is separated with a platform and divided by using wooden posts.

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