



IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HATUNIYE SUBURB AND YALIBOYU HOUSES IN AMASYA CITY

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Abstract

Transferring the architectural marks of the respective era of communities that have lived since most ancient times in history to the next generation is a necessity. Marauding of our cultural assets of the past through rapidly changing live conditions, urbanization, population growth, gradual depletion of natural resources, industrialization, deliberate and unconscious destruction renders protection of cultural assets necessary. History of Amasya City is also a settlement that dates back to ancient civilizations. It has succeeded in protecting its historical texture substantially up to date. However, the city is gradually facing the risk of losing the unique characteristic due to unplanned urbanization. This study presents the cultural, historical and architectural characteristics of Yalıboyu Houses, which hold abundant examples of the civil architectural of Amasya City, and examines and evaluates the layout characteristics, plan and facade arrangements and the load bearing systems of the registered civil architectural examples in detail.

INTRODUCTION

Amasya City is one of the important cities of settlement in Anatolia since the beginning of history. It houses a great number of marks of civilizations from the prehistoric and historical eras. A part of these marks succeeded in reaching today by evading the impacts of disasters, wars, malpractices, vandalism and unconsciousness that continued for centuries and are still sustaining their existence. In this context, Hatuniye Suburb and Yalıboyu Houses are also of importance in terms of the housing texture of the late Ottoman period. Documentation of the houses in this area, which survived up to date with very minor damage, is of importance in terms of learning things from the past. In addition to physical characteristics, their relationship with the street, river and among themselves, material conditions, floor and spatial characteristics, the social and cultural aspects of the life in the past are also of importance. This data is important in terms of the studies to be conducted in the future.

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AMASYA CITY

Amasya City extends over a long valley, which is located in a narrow area in the northeast to southwest direction on both banks of Yeşilırmak river. The north slope of the rivers is rather steep with the ruins of Harşena Castle on top and the king Rock Tombs on the hillside. Enderun Castle, which currently consists of ruins of foundations of a few houses, is located to the North side of the river. History of the city dates back to 4000 years ago. It is believed that the first settlement is around Harşena Castle [3, 5]. The first written sources regarding the city date back to the Hellenistic era on the Pontus - Rome wars. Amasya, which was first the administrative centre and later an important city of Pontus Kingdom, was substantially

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developed especially with the interest of the famous Mithridates Eupatoria, and continued its importance as a cultural centre in addition to its military-wise and strategic location. The city, developing rapid due to its location at an intersection of trade routes, extended over to its current areas also outside the city walls. Amasya, being a rich city as a result of the commercial importance of the intersecting routes, become a metropolis of Galatia-Pontus in 2 B.C [3].

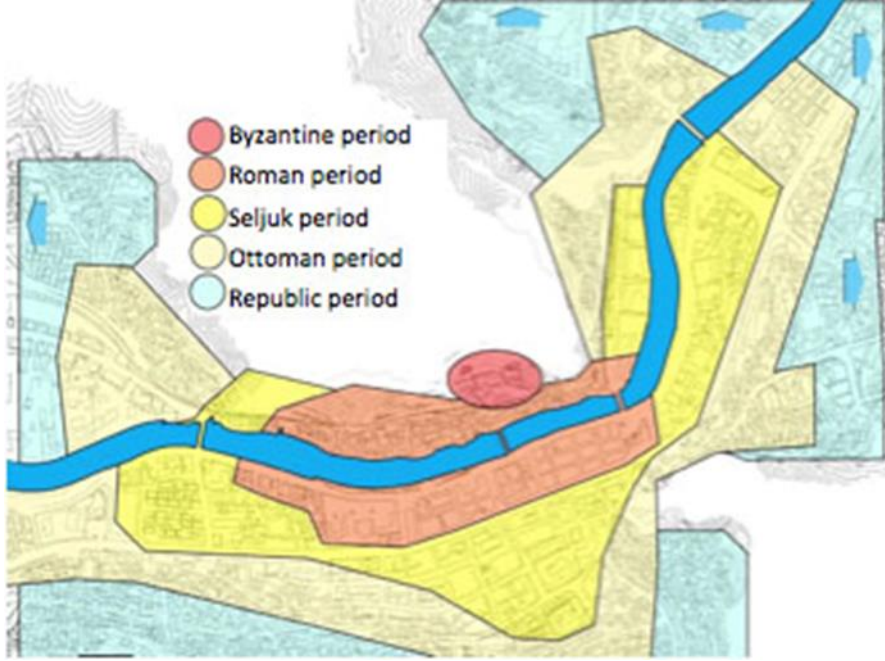


Figure 1. Historical Development of Amasya City (It is taken from ilke planlama and rearranged)[1].

It continued its development in the proselytization years of Christianity and as a Christian city of Byzantine. It gained importance especially in the upper castle section as a result of its strategic location and its characteristic of being a military base which could not be conquered easily until it was conquered by the Turks. Large developments did not occur in the city during the Danishmends era, in which sovereignty quarrels were intense. However, the trade life in Anatolia gained dynamism with the Seljuks establishing political union in Central and East Anatolia and taking the Antalya port in the Mediterranean and the Sinop and Samsun ports in the Black Sea. Being located at the intersection between these ports and the trade routes between the east and west, the city showed great development in the Seljuks era. This development continued under the domination of the Mongols but reached its peak after its domination by the Ottomans. Amasya continued to serve as the place where the lineage of the Sultan was raised and educated in the first 150 years of the Empire. This strengthened the cultural identity of Amasya in addition to its characteristic of being large and developed trade city. Today, the ancient city is located on both sides of Yeşilirmak River. The city, which maintained this unique and meritable texture from the past, lost its 1/3 with the fire it suffered in 1913. The old city texture, existing today is located to the north of Yeşilirmak River at Hatuniye suburb, and the ascending mountains straight after the river, castle ruins and the King Rock Tombs create the unique settlement structure of the region. Mainly monumental structures are located on the south of Yeşilirmak River, and it is distant from creating a housing and monumental structure unity. Fire areas, which were opened to development after the fire in 1913, was planned in the form of broad plots with wide and asphalt roads providing for vehicle traffic, which led to ruining of the unique and traditional texture of the city. Today, the city continues to develop and grow in line with the Yeşilirmak valley.



Figure 2. View from Yassı Kaya, 1925 [6]

CHARACTERISTICS OF HATUNIYE SUBURB AND YALIBOYU HOUSES

Hatuniye suburb is located along the river bank to the north of Yeşilırmak River. Due to the mountains ascending right after the river, the castle ruins and the king rock tombs, the structures have adopted the shape of Yeşilırmak River on a very narrow area in a thin row. The connection between the two sides, divided by the river, is established with 4 bridges. These bridges are the Istasyon Bridge from the Period of Beyliks, and the Alçak Bridge, Hükümet Bridge and Magnedus bridges from the Pontus State era.[1] The texture located at the river and the area after the river which is not suitable for settlement is referred to as “Yalıboyu Houses” with its unique name.

Street texture in the region shows parallelism to the Yeşilırmak River. In addition to streets with dead-ends, there are streets with small squares at the bridge connection locations. These small squares created in narrow streets breaks the monotony between the narrow streets and gives dynamism to the suburb. There are fountains at different points of the street to fulfil the water needs of the inhabitants. However, these fountains have lost their functionality today.



Figure 3. View of Yalıboyu Houses a)from the East b) from the West

There are currently 154 unique housing structures in the region. However, it is known that this number of decreasing from day to day. Fahri Yetman identified 59 housing structures in his study in, which were listed as “*In the photographs of 1900s starting from the east, 12 houses were identified between Hükümet and Alçak bridges, 23 between Alçak and Madeniş Bridges and 24 housings were identified between Magdeniş and İstasyon Bridges*”[4]. This number increased with the houses constructed with the traditional construction techniques in the 1900s and afterwards. Number of unique houses, registered in 1992 and identified after updating in the scope of the Conservation Development Plan in 2010 is 72 and the total number of houses is 184.(Figure 4)In addition, there is a 1 public bath and 1 mosque as monumental works in the region. [1]



Figure 4. Yalıboynu Houses(Blue legend:Historical Building, Orange legend: traditional housing)

Most of the houses are constructed in the form of attached buildings as they are located on the bank of Yeşilirmak River. Specific use of the buildings is housing. Trade areas have also appeared in time. Following the conservation development plan, the function of the region was set as housing+tourism+trade, and this led to an increase in boarding-houses in the region. Trade functions cover a rate of 12%, which general consist of small scale units. Today, 42% of the 72 registered structures are used as housing. 46% is used for tourism purposes. (Table 1) The houses also have varying number of floors. Basement floor is used widely in the Yalıboynu housings. Generally, structures with 1-2 floors are the most common ones. Percentage of one-floor structures is 2%. Structures with basement + 1 floor constitute 15%. Percentage of building with 2 floors is 47% in the region. Percentage of structures with a basement and 2 floors is 33%. Although not very common, percentage of 3-storey structures is 3%. (Table 2)

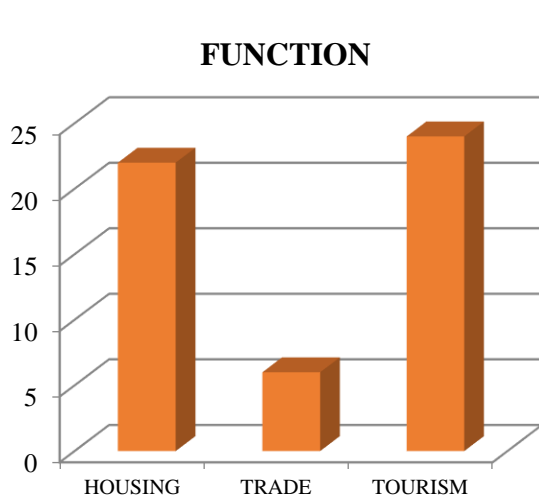


Table 1. Function situation of buildings

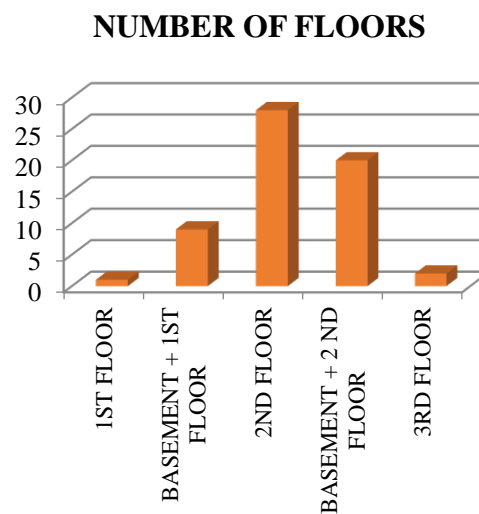


Table 2. Number of floors of buildings

Percentage of registered structures constructed with brick masonry is 31%. Percentage of structures constructed with stone masonry is 3%. Structures with timber frame (ahşap karkas) constitute 66% of the other traditional structures in the region. The remaining structures are the more recent reinforced concrete structures. (Table 3) Generally, wood, adobe-brick, stones bricks were used in the construction of houses due to geographic location. Timber frame structures consist of stone masonry on the lower floor with wooden frames on the upper floors with adobe-brick filling. (Figure 6) Mainly, brick is used between the timber frame in the late period traditional structures. Although not very common, there are also masonry constructions (yığma yapı) in the region. Stone and bricks are preferred materials in this system.

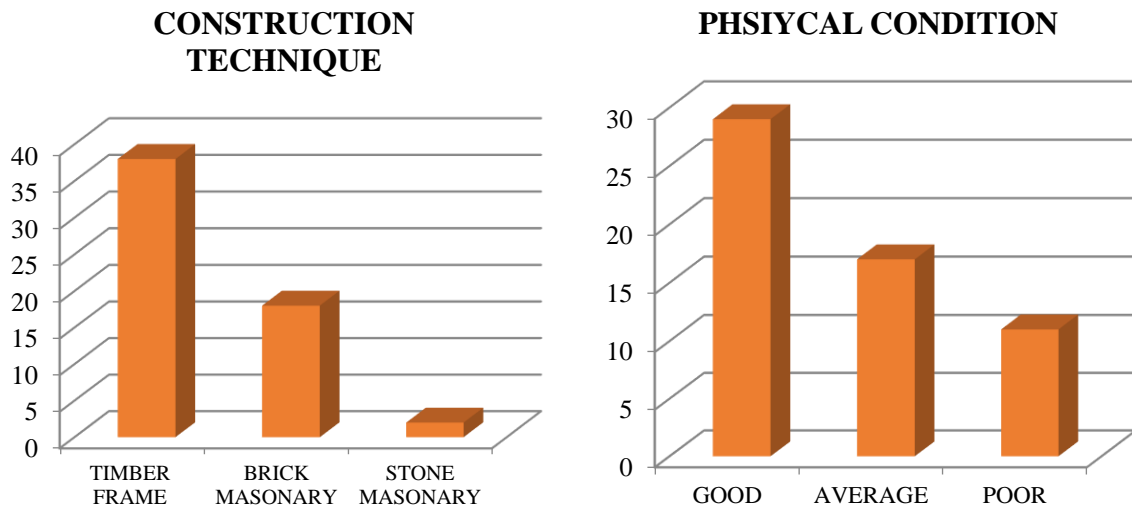


Table 3. Construction techniques of Yalıboynu Houses

Table 4. Physical conditions of Yalıboynu Houses

Considering the physical condition of the structures, it is seen that most of the structures are in good or medium condition. Buildings with a physically poor condition, which are in need of repair, constitute 19% of the region. (Table 4)



Figure 5. Street-house relation (Hazeranlar Street) [2]



Figure 6.Structural systemPhoto a) Adobe-brick filling between timber frame b)Brick filling between timber frame [1]

Relation of the houses with the street is though a courtyard leading to the house or doors opening directly into the building or both through a courtyard and direct access. Although most houses have courtyards, there are also ones without courtyards. The courtyard is the area that is used the most in the houses. These are locations with daily chores are made. Stables, storages, kitchen etc. sections can be seen in the courtyard. Based on the location of courtyard and access to the houses, the locations of the structures inside the land differ. In ones that are arranged with men and women seated separately, the courtyard is located at the centre of the land. This gives a more enclosed arrangement to the houses. The houses at Hatuniye suburb are divided into 3 groups by use of the plot, namely being houses facing the street, houses facing the street partially and houses without street-facade.

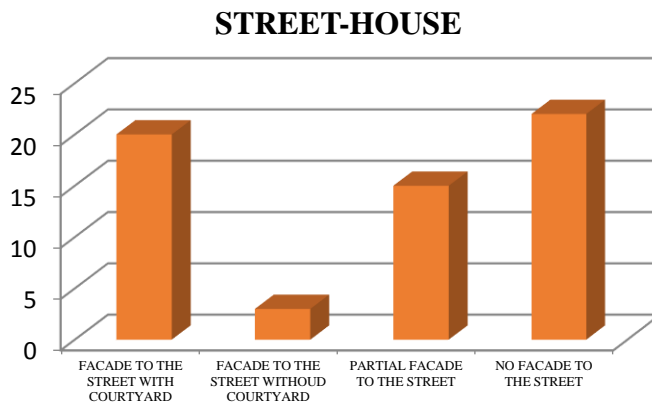


Table 5.Situation of Yalıboyu Houses with the Street

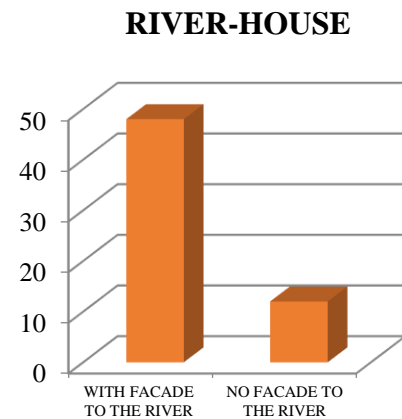


Table 6.Situation of Yalıboyu Houses with the river

Due to high number of registered structures along the river, most houses have facade facing the river. (Table 6) For this reason, courtyards are located on the facade facing the street. As some houses have two sections (separate for women and men), they have sides facing both the river and the street. It is seen that the structures have street-facing sides towards the inner sections. The courtyard is located in the inner section of the land in these houses. Due to low number of houses without a courtyard, the houses with the lowest percentage are ones with facade towards the street. (Table 5.)

Architectural characteristics of Yalıboyu houses are the same as the typical Turkish house architectural characteristics. Location of the plot according to the street determines the form of the ground floors. While the ground floors of the structures are constructed in conformity with terrain structure, the upper floors have greater architectural flexibility. While the ground floors are more enclosed for privacy, the upper ones are extroversive. Ground floors mainly serve as cellars or serving spaces. The rooms are constructed in square or rectangular shall for greater functionality. While some structures have two sections (separate for women and men), some have single sections. The upper floors accommodate the sofas and rooms seen in traditional houses.

As in traditional houses, architectural arrangement in which the rooms open to the sofa is also seen in the Yalıboyu houses. Sofas differ according to the location and number of the rooms around them and the location of the stairway inside the sofa.

However, although rare, there are houses without an sofa. Accesses to the rooms are through corridors in these houses.

Examples with outer sofas are very common in the region. These types of houses have plans providing access to the rooms through covered sofa. Generally, examples with exterior sofa are seen in houses with courtyards. 'In this plan type, three or more rooms open to the sofa which is accessed through the stairway

in the courtyard.’ [2]. In addition to sofas with only the front side facing the courtyard, there are examples with 2 or 3 sides open. In this type of houses, sofa is accessed through a stairway from the courtyards, and the rooms are accessed from the sofa.

Classic Turkish house type with central sofa, which is named “karnıyarık” type is also seen in addition to examples with external sofas. In this plan type, the sofa extends in rectangular form between the rooms. ‘In the plan layout of houses with a central sofa, the stair well is located at two different locations of the back wall of the sofa and behind the room row outside the sofa.’ [2]

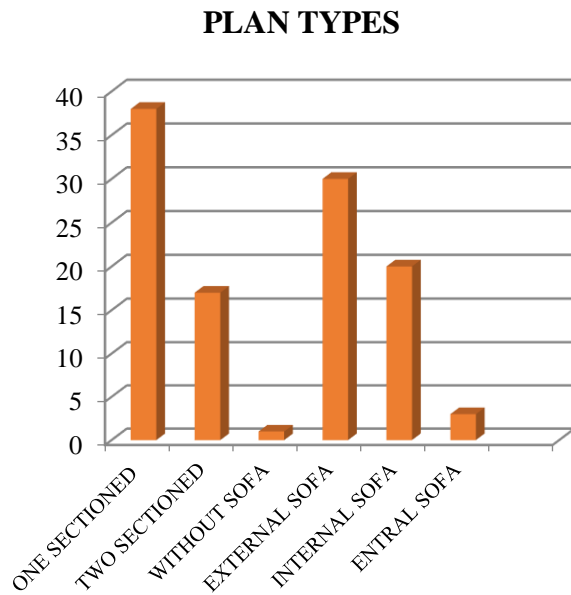


Table 7. Plan types of Yalıboynu houses

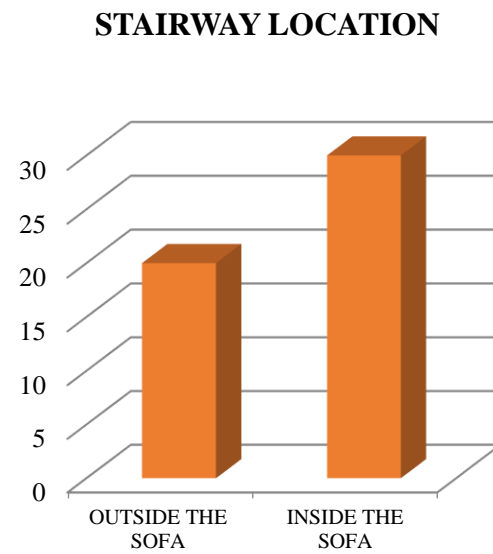


Table 8. Location of stairways opening to the sofa in Yalıboynu houses

Although there are plan types with central sofa, these types of houses have been constructed more recently and are not common in the region. Some sofas create an *iwan* (recess) with projection (çıkma) sections between rooms. House types vary in terms of number rooms and order, sofa location, facade situation and location of the structure on the land. Another frequent sofa type is the corner sofa. This is seen in houses with courtyards. Sofa is located indoor or outdoor. As it is understood from its name, it is located at the corner of the house and the rooms open to this corner sofa.

As it can be seen from the table, majority of the houses are constructed with a single section. First of the most common plan types in the study area is houses with external sofa. All types of external sofa can be seen here. In addition examples which have three open sides, there are more examples which have all facades covered. In most houses with an external sofa, access is provided to rooms from both sides of the sofa. Examples with central sofa are also common. Most central sofas have projection sections facing the river or the street. Although there is only one house without an sofa, there are only 3 houses with a central sofa plan, which is very common in Turkish houses, in the registered building in this region. (Table 7)

Location of the stairway varies according to the sofa type. Although most stairways are located inside the sofa, there are stairways located inside the courtyard and provide access to the upper floors from outside the sofa. While 40% of stairways of registered structures have external access, 60% is located inside the sofa. In 12 of the 30 houses with an external sofa, the stairway is outside the sofa. Out of the 20 houses with an internal sofa, the stairway of 7 houses is outside the structure. Only one of the 3 houses with central

sofa, the access from the stairway to the sofa is from outside. In examples where the sofa is located at the corner, the stairway is located at one of the corner walls. (Table 8)

NUMBER OF ROOMS

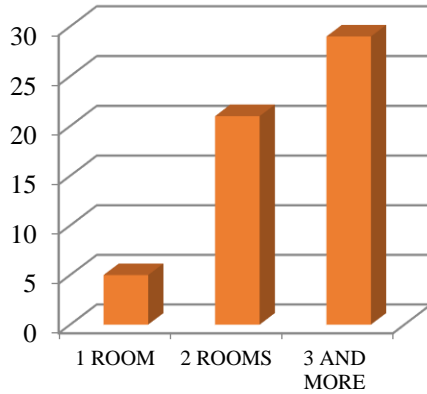


Table 9. Number of Rooms of Registered

FACADE TYPE

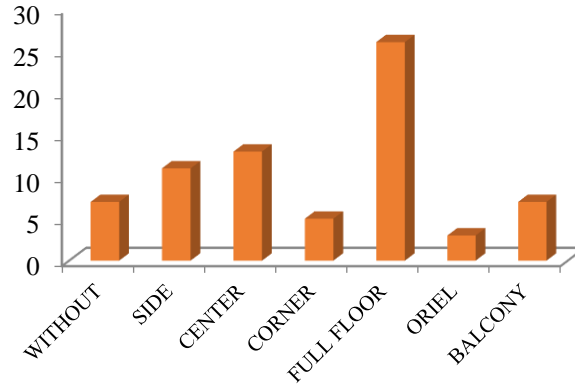


Table 10. Facade types of registered structures

Houses

Houses are generally with one or two floors. Some houses have a basement floor. Structures have projection towards both river and the courtyard/street facade on upper floors for orientation towards the scenery. The structure, which is adjusted to the topography in the lower floor, is able to capture symmetrical solutions in the upper floors. Number of rooms of the houses varies according to the location of the sofas and stairways. The first floors determine the number of rooms of the houses. Percentage of houses with one room is 9%. Percentage of houses with two rooms is 38%. Houses with three or more rooms are the most common structures with 53%. (Table 9)

The positioning of the houses generally in the form of row housing. Thus, the projection sections generally face the street or the river. This texture can be seen clearly on the fortification wall on the riverside. Number of projection sections can increase in corner houses located at ends of the blocks. This results in different perspectives on both the riverside and the street texture for the traditional houses located in a narrow area.

Better illuminated and broader spaces are obtained with the projection sections and thus the number of windows is increased in upper floors. This resulted in creation of better illuminated spaces. Most windows are made in guillotine style and arranged in groups of 3.

Projection sections of the houses are the most important elements providing integration with the street. Moreover, row houses are freed of monotony and given dynamism with the projection constructed. Projection sections are seated on different shapes and kinds of supports. Facade types differ according to the positioning of the houses. Structures with projection sections on the right or left side or on both sides are common in the Yaliboyu Houses. Another frequent projection section type is the centreprojection. This projection is built with an extension of the sofa at the centre or extension of the centreroom. This is the most common projection section type. Houses of different types with zigzag shape are seen as a result of the square or rectangular room shapes of the upper floors of lower floors, which are adapted to the terrain. These types are houses are generally seen in houses facing the street.

Another projection section type seen in Yaliboyu houses is the floor over the lower floor having a projection on all sides. These types of houses are seen in ones that are not in row housing form.



Figure 7. Type of projection

Number of projection sections may be more on houses that are on corner plots compared to ones in row house form. These types of houses with projection on 2 or 3 facades are named houses with corner projection. Corner projection examples are seen rarely in Yalıboyu Houses.

Majority of houses in Hatuniye suburb have sides facing the river and these facades give dynamism to the texture with the projection sections along the river.(Figure 7f) Houses facing the streets give dynamism to the street with projection towards the street in upper floors. Some structures also have balconies on the river facade. (Figure 7e) %10 of the houses in the region have balconies. Houses facing the streets give dynamism to the street with projection towards the street in upper floors.

The most common projection type in the region is completely projection floor. Maximum benefit from the scenery is derived in 36% of the traditional structures having a completely projection facade.(Figure 7b) Number of projection sections in corner plots is 7%. Facade type percentages are shown in the table. (Table 10)

Some houses have bay windows or oriels on the projection section of the first floor or the second floor. These projection sections, which are rare, are the windowed on three sides with the most beautiful scenery on the sides facing the river or the street.

The roof on the traditional Amasya houses consist of saddle roof with gradient on two sides. Roofs are covered with pantile.

Most of the structures from the early period have guillotine type windows. Modern windows are seen in most of the structures from the late Ottoman and early Republic period. Although more rarely, 2 types of windows are used together in some houses. The percentage of window types in the registered houses is 61% guillotine, 33% modern and 6% mixed type.(Table 11)

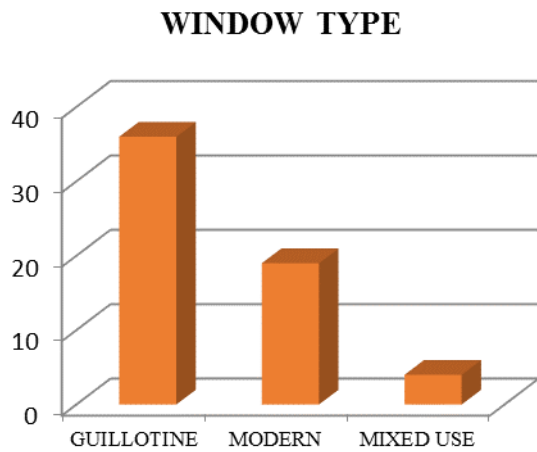


Table 11. Window Type of Yalıboylu Houses

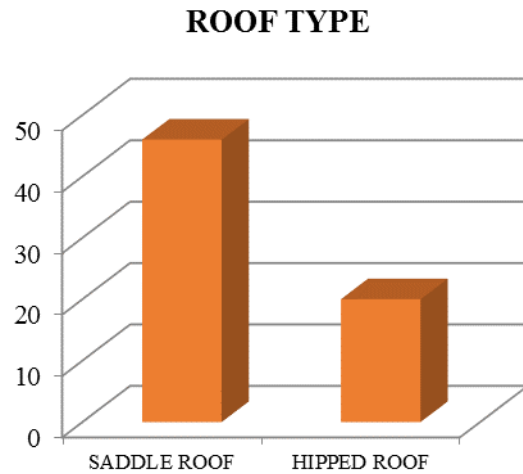


Table 12. Roof types of Yalıboylu houses

Majority of the houses in Hatuniye suburb are built in the row house form. However, there are individual houses in plots also. For this reason, the majority of structures in the region have saddle roof. The most common material used in roofing is pantile. French tiles are also seen in the houses of more recent periods. Roofs of the houses in corner plots or independent houses inside the plots are hipped roofs. Both roof types may be seen together in some houses. Out of 61 houses in the region of which the roof types are examined, 41 houses have saddle roofs and 20 have hipped roofs. (Table 12)

CONCLUSION

Hatuniye suburb exhibits the traditional architectural and archaeological examples with the most distinctive characteristics of the texture of Amasya city. The traditional structures along the Yeşilirmak riverside and rock tombs, creating an archaeological heritage, add to the unique characteristics of the region. This is a region in which mainly the civil architecture examples of the city are seen and monumental works are rare. Region is bordered by the river and the area where the rock tombs are located and man-made borders such as rivers and railways. Yalıboylu houses constitute an important tourism potential for the city thanks to the accelerated urban conservation after 1970 in the region.

Although not located inside the main transportation axes, the transportation flow in the region is dense. The density has increased with the increasing tourism activities in the region and continues to increase. Tourism activities have brought the need for trade and additional service areas with them. Considering that most plots are occupied in the region, more functional solutions are necessary.

Moreover, disruption has increased and is increasing due to reasons such as rapid and dense urbanization, atmospheric events, landslide/falling rocks affecting the city, unsuitable transformations in the structures due to ongoing touristic activities in the region, dense utilization and unconsciousness.

The City is of importance in the Anatolian region with its historical and cultural history, and its protection and transfer to the next generation is necessary. For this reason, more detailed documentation works regarding the houses and textures which are documented above and conversion of these studies to data to create source for development/conservation of the region are of importance.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared by authors.

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