

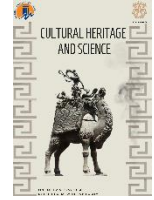


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## Evaluation of Village Rooms within the Scope of Intangible and Cultural Heritage: The Case of Isparta-Yalvaç

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### Keywords

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### ABSTRACT

In rural areas, different cultures, lifestyles, habits, customs and traditions, and structures with different shapes reflected these were built. Village rooms should also be considered intangible cultural heritage values regarding their functional characteristics and implementation. These buildings, built with Folk Architecture characteristics, have started to disappear physically along with the original functions they have lost today. It has been determined within the scope of the "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Isparta" project supported by the Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit of Isparta Yalvaç District, Körküler Village, Süleyman Demirel University, where the examples of this building type exist. Necessary data were collected through multi-disciplinary field studies conducted. There is a typical architectural style in the buildings. As a result of the social value given to the building function and the different dynamics, the buildings have been highly preserved.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the historical process, "the concept of protection" and "values to be protected" have been addressed discussed as problematic issues in every period (Ahunbay, 2016). As a result of the protection concern that emerged with the French Revolution of 1789, theories about protecting the physical built environment were developed, and repair practices were done. A group of experts, who argued that cultural heritage is not just about concrete values, started to express their critical thoughts clearly and consistently; the document referred to as the 'Bolivia Declaration' put forward for the first time the issue of preserving 'folklore' for the preservation of oral cultural heritage (Oğuz, 2013). In line with the developments, this view has been accepted by various institutions, organizations, and the academic

community, and the concepts have expanded and become transparent. As the last significant development, The Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage has been prepared. The concept of intangible cultural heritage has been defined as "practices, representations, narratives, knowledge, skills and related tools, materials and cultural spaces that communities, groups" (Unesco, 2003). In the following process, the "holistic conservation" approach, which requires preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage, emerged and started to be supported. Village rooms are examples of public buildings in rural settlements subject to architectural protection and cultural spaces. It is appropriate to consider them together with their cultural and physical values within the scope of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

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## 1.1. Village Rooms

In the rural life of Anatolia, there are intangible heritages that have essential functions in the social structure and places where they are maintained. Village rooms, which are among these spaces in rural life, are encountered as areas of social and cultural identities. The area mentioned by the travelers of the period in which it existed in the 19th century Ottoman village society (Özdemir & Arslan, 2013), also has a corporate identity. As long as its original function continues, the state has supported the construction and continuity of the buildings. The buildings have been registered to the village legal entity because they have the characteristics of official buildings and facilities that are used in public service, made with funds or aids allocated from their budgets (Osmanağaoğlu, bt). Village rooms, which existed based on "traditional folk law" for many years, were included in the written rules of the existing Republic Period, with the "Village Law" adopted in 1924 (Sevindik, 2018). In one of the two clauses of Article 13 of the law, it was stated that the village room should be built, and the spatial functions that it should have were mentioned in the other. These clauses of law are as follows: "To make a village room for the council of elders to gather on one side of the village square and to meet the works of the village," "If the village is a haunt, to make a guest room with a stove and a barn next to the village room" (Köy Kanunu, 1924). This situation enabled the buildings to develop in a specific typology regarding plan organization, scale, and mass features. The village rooms are included within the scope of this law prepared in 1924 indicates that the buildings have a public and institutional character for many years.

These structures, which exist in many parts of Anatolia, are regionally named differently. The chambers, generally known as "beneficiary organization" ensure that private and meaningful partnerships are open to the public but within the framework of specific responsibilities, conditions, and duties. These structures, which are examples of folk architecture, differ structurally in different regions of Anatolia due to local materials and geographical conditions (Ersoy, 2017).

These buildings have essential functions as spaces that create a sense of belonging in people, remind their values and allow them to live in these areas where tradition is dominant (Aksakal, 2019). Buildings in many village settlements are one of the architectural identity elements of rural settlements, such as squares and mosques (Özhancı & Yilmaz, 2017).

In addition to being a door open to everyone, it is also a mini-conference hall where the village's notables gathered and listened to the news about the country's issues (Özkan, 2012). "Winter meetings and entertainments" constitute an essential part of public entertainment. These activities, which were not realized due to the prevalence of different entertainment options dominated by individuality in urban life, have become traditional in small residential areas (Özdemir, 2005). These locations called "village room" regionally are open to local users and guests, especially men. Volunteering is effective in participating in the room and taking responsibilities related to the room. They have been

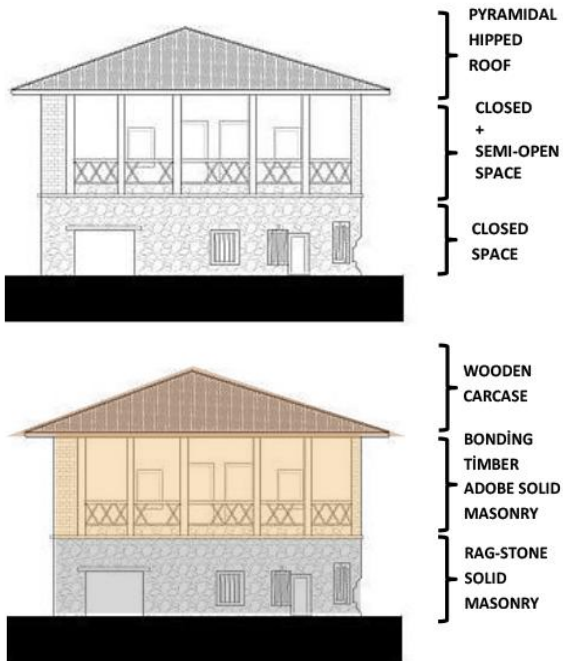
responsible for Anatolia as religious ritual, entertainment, gathering, and guest hosting centers. Structures also promote social solidarity.

## 2. METHOD and RESULTS

They were making the identification and documentation studies of the intangible cultural heritage elements, and their associated places that will face the possibility of extinction in the process will constitute an essential step in the context of holistic conservation. Süleyman Demirel University supported the "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Isparta" project through the Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit, including the Cultural Heritage studies initiated in this context. In the architectural approach of the project; The "spatial relations of SOKÜM elements" showing the interaction of tangible and intangible cultural heritage have been effective.

This work scope; The social and physical data of the village rooms obtained through the field studies carried out during the project process were evaluated in the sample of Körküler Village of Yalvaç district of Isparta province. It creates a small-scale rural texture where typological data can be evaluated thanks to its structures that are more numerous compared to other village settlements. Some rituals, social practices, and entertainment are still being carried out in some village rooms; 7 out of 11 buildings are still standing and documented; these structures are preserved. The high rates are among the reasons for choosing this sampling area.

As a method in the study, firstly, archive and literature survey and then field study was carried out. The priority of the field study was personal interviews with the notables of the settlement (people who took part in the administration, people who have been users of the area for many years, and cultural ambassadors who are experienced in age) aimed at understanding the socio-cultural and economic structure and their reflections on the space. Later, the structures were determined, and the process of documenting them was started. In registration; All village room structures, which are qualified within the scope of tangible and intangible cultural heritage elements, that have survived until today, are included in the scope of the evaluation, regardless of whether they are registered or not and because they still contain their original function and rural characteristics: plan sketches, photographs and address information of the buildings. Building slips containing the information were prepared. Detailed sketch drawings were prepared to compare and evaluate the plan and façade setup, load-bearing system features, architectural elements, and details that can form the settlement texture identity (Figure 1). The results of the study were achieved by preparing a table containing all the data mentioned above.



**Figure 1.** Structural System and Facade Layout Analysis

## 2.1. Isparta / Yalvaç Village Rooms

Village rooms in the village of Körküler in Yalvaç District of Isparta are known as traditional places for hosting guests, some rituals, and entertainment. In the Körküler, seven village rooms where the mentioned rituals were evaluated within the scope of Intangible Cultural Heritage due to their qualities, and social and physical data on the buildings were collected within the study's scope (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Locations of Village Rooms

### 2.1.1. Omarçalar Village Room

The entrance of the building is on the south facade and is below the road level. It consists of two floors and has a rectangular plan. In downstairs used as barn and haystack, the one on the roadside was used as an oil mill. For this reason, a separate entrance to the workshop has been provided through the street. On the upper floor, two-room spaces connect with the open sofa space, where the guests stay, and entertainments are held. The smaller of these rooms was used as a guest accommodation room, while the larger one was used as an entertainment room.

There is a masonry rubble stone system with wooden beams on the lower floor of the building, and an adobe brick masonry wall application is observed on the upper floor. Also, there are six wooden posts on the upper floor, limiting the open hall and carrying the upper cover. The wooden hipped roof has a Turkish-style tile top cover system. The ground floor of the ground floor is made of earth and stone. On the upper floor, it was observed that the adobe plaster technique was applied to the wooden structure. There are niches on the sofa and room spaces' walls, wooden balustrades with cross laths that limit the sofa space. The wooden staircase that provides access to the hall on the first floor is the building's original element (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Omarçalar Village Room

### 2.1.2. Karahalıgil Village Room

It is a humble small-scale building that sits on a slope. The building consists of two floors. The two floors of the building, placed on a slope, are accessed from different elevations. While the ground floor is used as a barn and a barn, only one room is connected to the open sofa used as a room on the upper floor.

There is a masonry rubble stone wall with wooden beams on the ground floor of the building, and plaster application over the adobe brick masonry wall is observed on the upper floor. Besides, there are three wooden posts on the upper floor, limiting the open hall and carrying the upper cover. The wooden railing element limiting the sofa is made of horizontal solid woods. It has a wooden hipped roof with Marseille tile, top cover system. It was observed that the wall was not plastered on the ground floor, and the adobe plaster technique was applied to the wooden structure on the first floor. (Figure 4)



Figure 4. Karahalıgil Village Room

### 2.1.3. Halaöğlülil Village Room

Halaöğlülil Village Room belongs to two brothers named Tokmak. The building has two floors, the entrance is on the west facade, and today it is below the road elevation. Downstairs there is only one room used as a barn and a barn, while the upper floor has two rooms connected to the open sofa space. The smaller one was used as a guest accommodation room and the larger one as an entertainment room. During the process, a latrine room adjacent to the east facade was added to the building.

There is a masonry rubble wall with wooden beams on the ground floor of the building, and the application of plaster over the adobe brick masonry wall is observed on the upper floor. Also, four main wooden pillars on the upper floor limit the open hall and carry the upper cover. Its wooden hipped roof is Marseille tiled. It was observed that the adobe plaster technique was used. There are structural elements such as stoves, wooden door cabinets, and niches in both rooms on the upper floor. The wooden railing with crossed laths limits the open sofa space. The wooden staircase connected to the hall on the upper floor is also an original element of the building with its manufacturing technique. (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Halaöğlülil Village Room

### 2.1.4. Süllügil Village Room

The building has three floors, but it is perceived as two stories from the west facade due to the land's elevation. With the slope on the south road, the basement floor of the building is exposed. There is a separate door to enter this floor. The room spaces on both floors are connected to the open sofa space. There is a latrine on the ground floor, which was added to the building later. The bench space on the upper floor leads to the west facade. It is estimated that the room on the ground floor is where the guest is accommodated, and the room on the first floor is where entertainment and other rituals took place.

There is a masonry rubble stone wall with wooden beams in the basement of the building, and a brick masonry wall application is observed on the ground and first floors. There is plaster on the wall surfaces of the outer hall on the first floor. There are six main wooden pillars on the first floor that limit the open hall and carry the upper cover. However, three of these posts disappeared within the walls of the "toilet" space added later. The wooden hipped roof is covered with Marseille tiles. It was observed that the ground was made of earth and stone in the ground floor and the basement, while wooden ties were applied over the wooden structure on the first floor. Besides, the bench in the first-floor hall is made of wood. There are structural elements such as stoves, wooden cupboards, and niches in the ground and first-floor rooms. Unlike other village rooms in the area, the accommodation and entertainment rooms are located on different floors. The ground floor plan is also organized with an open hall, and it is raised from the ground to the basement level. Later, this hall was covered with brick masonry (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Süllügil Village Room

### 2.1.5. Hikmet Arı Village Room

Hikmet Arı Village Room is privately owned. The building consists of two floors. While the ground floor is used as a barn and a barn, there are two rooms on the upper floor. The smaller of these rooms was used as a guest accommodation room, while the larger one was used as an entertainment room. The structure, which is dated to a later period compared to the village rooms in the surrounding, shows differences in plan and construction system.

There is a masonry rubble wall with wooden beams on the lower floor of the building, and plaster application over the adobe brick masonry wall is observed on the upper floor. The lower floor works separately from the upper floor, with its entrance at the level where it is

located. The upper level where the rooms are located has its single entrance. For this reason, the staircase building element, which is in the plan layout of the other village rooms and connects the lower floor and the upper floor, does not exist in this building. Besides, unlike other village rooms in the vicinity, this building does not include a sofa layout. The entrance to the upper floor where the rooms are located is provided directly from the garden level. Instead of the hall found in other examples, a small-scale, semi-open rectangular passage space in which the room doors are opened.

Marseille tile is used on the wooden knob roof. It was observed that the ground floor was made of earth and stone in the ground floor, and the adobe plaster technique was used on the wooden structure on the upper floor. The big room, which is thought to be the entertainment area on the upper floor, contains structural elements such as a stove, wooden door cabinets, and niches. The room reserved for the guest's accommodation, on a smaller scale than the other, has a simple setup (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Hikmet Arı Village Room

### 2.1.6. Çarkacılar Village Room

The building consists of two floors. There are two spaces used as a barn and a barn on the ground floor, while the upper floor has a single room space that connects with the open sofa space and where the guest accommodates and rituals are performed. It has an open sofa plan type, and there is a wooden bench in the hall. There is damage in the stone staircase and connected flooring area that provides access from the building's garden to the entrance facade.

The building's basement level was built with a masonry rubble stone wall with wooden beams, and an adobe brick masonry wall is observed on the upper floor. Besides, there are six wooden posts on the upper floor, limiting the open hall and carrying the upper cover. Marseille has a wooden hipped roof covered with tile.

Structural elements such as a wooden railing with cross laths, a sofa and a stove, a niche which are in the room are similar to the other village rooms in the vicinity. However, the stone staircase that provides access to the building's upper floor is not related to the ground floor and provides the exterior's connection (Figure 8). Another characteristic of this building is the 'cat hole' on the wall between the sofa and the room space. This opening is made for the cat of the house to shelter, feed, and neutralize other animals. Thanks to the shape of the hole, the air-flow is not linear, but cat entry is possible.



Figure 8. Çarkacılar Village Room

## 3. RESULTS

In rural settlements, village rooms are known as traditional places for socializing, entertainment, and hosting guests. It has been observed that this type of building, which is one in many villages, was built in different numbers such as family, brothers / private rooms in Körküler Village. Of the seven village rooms identified, one was determined as individual and the others as family rooms.

### 3.1. Results in Terms of Intangible Cultural Heritage

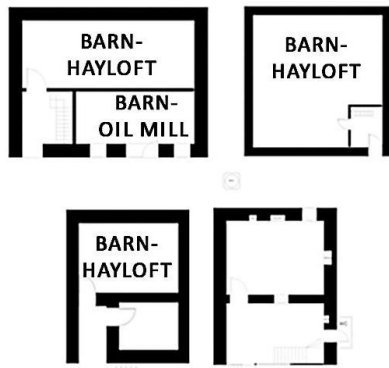
In the study on the Körküler village rooms; Social rituals and practices, traditional handicrafts, the use of local materials, providing a spatial opportunity for the continuation of traditions, which are elements of SOKÜM, have been found to continue actively in some of their social aspects. The buildings are used for different functions by the guests from outside the village settlement and by the local people. There are different places to accommodate the guests coming to the village, and the animals bring with them. It is divided into three main functions as a guest room and a space reserved for entertainment and other activities to meet their needs. In some examples, spaces used with the function of "workshop" were found in the ground floor spaces from time to time, while some of them do not have entertainment rooms.

The expenses/needs of these structures are covered by the person, their family, or their family who have good economic conditions in the village. The village locals use these structures for socializing, such as sacrificing, celebrating, and organizing entertainment. Apart from the holidays, which are used mainly by men living in the village, the buildings can be used by different age groups at different times. Some of the entertainment activities are organized for men over a certain age and last until midnight. Some of the entertainment activities are organized for men over a certain age and last until midnight. The night entertainment is that the person who meets the expenses also provides the need for heating with the stove's help in the room in the winter season. It is known that men eat and play on these nights. This type of ritual entertainment is called "oda yakması" in vernacular language. In this settlement, some traditional activities have been preserved more than in other regions. This situation is that the settlement is located far from the city center, that technology is not used intensively yet, that they only have telephone and television facilities for personal communication and the high average age. It was learned from the users that one of the most played games was the "ring hiding" game

(Hürmüzlü et al., 2019). In the previous periods, it was learned that tales and stories were told in these venues and regularly shared about daily life.

### 3.2. Results in terms of Concrete Cultural Heritage

The buildings' entrances are mainly from the street, and today they are below the road level. Small scale examples of village rooms, which generally consist of two floors, are also available. The buildings are primarily rectangular planned. Some places are mainly used as barns and haystacks on the ground floors where the building entrance is located. It has been found that these places were used as ateliers in some periods. In these examples, a separate entrance is provided through the street (Figure 9).



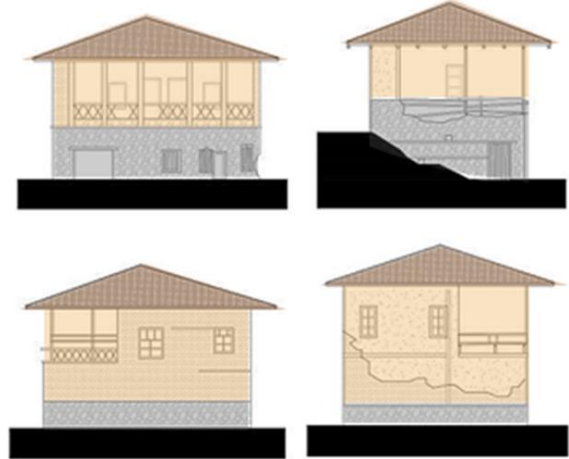
**Figure 9.** Village Rooms Ground Floor Plan Organization (Omarcalar, Halaoglugil, Çarkacılar and Süllügil Village Rooms)

The ground floors are connected by a wooden or mudbrick staircase to the upper floor's open hall. There are two-room spaces on the village rooms' upper floor, mostly attached to the open sofa, where the guests stay, and entertainments are held. The smaller rooms were used as a guest accommodation room, the larger one as an event and entertainment room (Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** Village Rooms First Floor Plan Organization (Omarcalar, Halaoglugil, Çarkacılar and Süllügil Village Rooms)

In general, there is a masonry rubble stone wall with wooden beams on the ground floors and subbasement line of the buildings, and an adobe brick masonry wall is observed on the upper floor. Also, wooden posts bordered the open hall and carried the upper cover on the upper floor. It was observed that the adobe plaster technique on the wooden structure was applied on the upper floors of the buildings with a wooden hipped roof with a pan tile (Figure 11).



**Figure 11.** Village Rooms Carrier System Layout (Omarcalar, Karahalgil, Çarkacılar and Süllügil Village Rooms)

The detail of the wooden railing with cross-lath weaving that limits the open anteroom is similar to many village rooms in the surrounding (Figure 12). The niches in the halls and rooms, the stone walls that cut the ground floors from the street, and the stairs connected to the ground floor and the open hall on the upper floor are examples of these similarities (Şimşek Tolacı & Hürmüzlü, 2020).



**Figure 12.** Detail of the wooden railing with crossed laths

While the buildings' indoor areas are used in the winter season, the inviting "open anteroom" spaces in almost every village room in the region host these events during the summer and bairams. Spatially preferred functional sections; the open anteroom plan type, the construction systems, the materials used, the wooden

stairs that provide access to the sofa space, the way these elements are built, their locations, and the anteroom's railing constitute a typical style for this building group (Figure 13, 14).

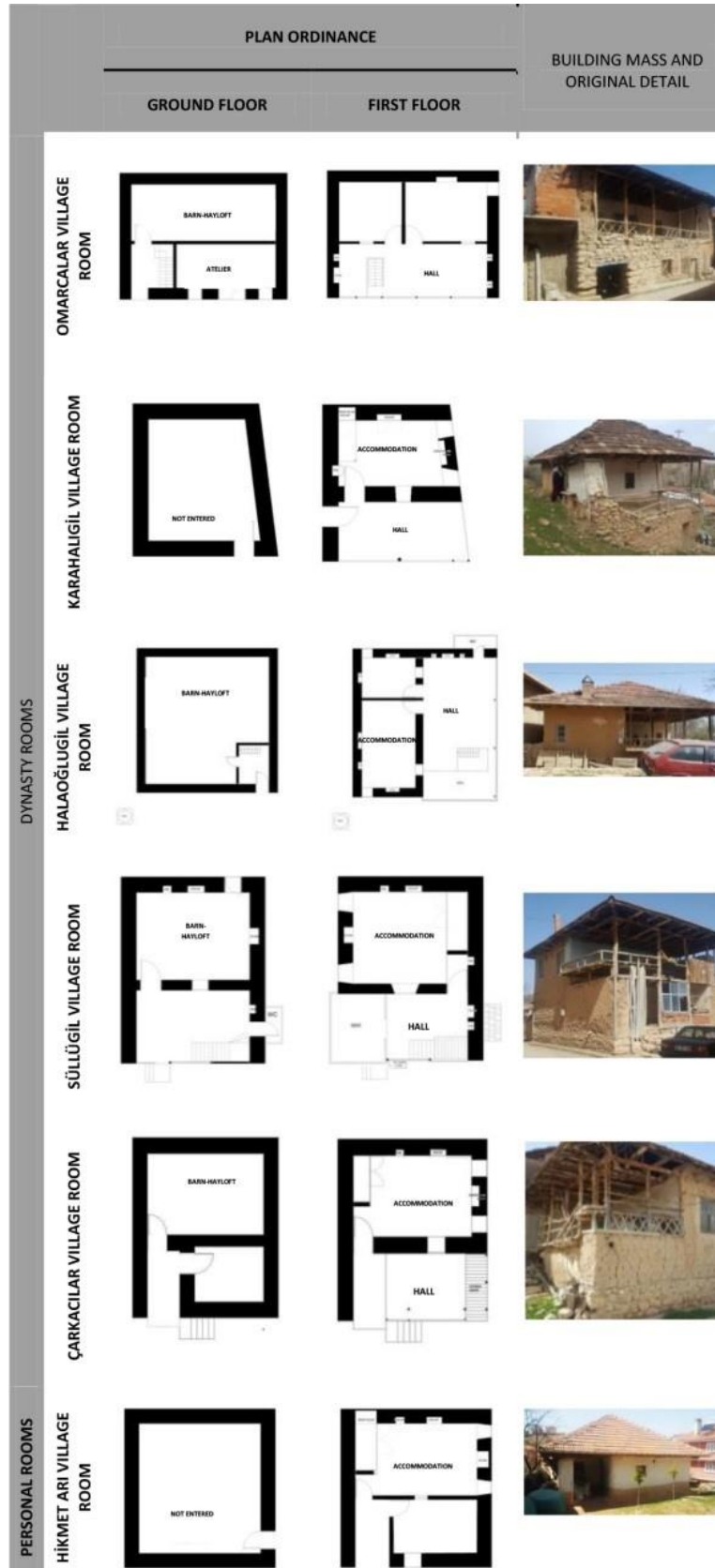


Figure 13. Typological data and features

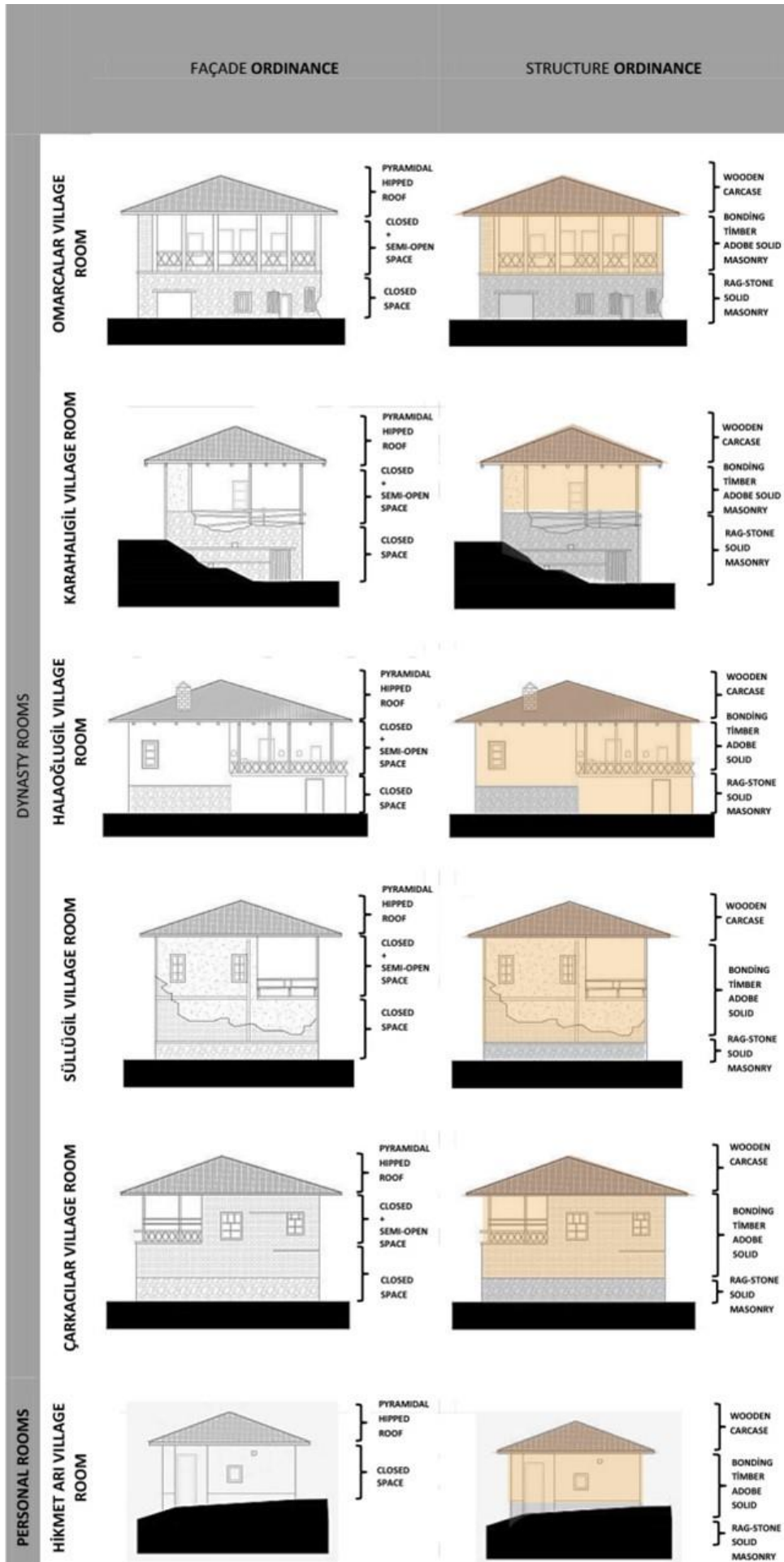


Figure 14. Typological data and features



#### 4. CONCLUSION

Among the village rooms, which are very common in rural Anatolia but began to lose their original functions over time, those located in Yalvaç District's Körküler Village have been identified. In the settlement where eleven village rooms serve simultaneously, seven buildings have managed to survive today. As a result of the studies carried out, it has been determined that these buildings have some similar architectural features such as plan and façade, construction system, and interior space. The critical reasons for this result are the use of local materials and collaboration in constructing the buildings. In some buildings, social rituals, especially on holidays, soldier farewell ceremony, etc. It has been observed that the activities continue, and village rooms are kept ready for hosting guests. It is known that their properties are divided into private rooms and family rooms. The number of buildings preserved in the Körküler village rooms and the buildings' architectural originality level are higher compared to other regions. This decision is that the user still cares about the function of the buildings, accepts them as a social and cultural value. When the study's findings are considered, it has been concluded that the sustainability of the spaces, which are the application areas of the intangible cultural heritage, is, in fact, parallel with the sustainability of its function. Public hands and opinions have protected these places open to the public.

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