

The Use of Mud brick in Village Institutes: A Modern Interpretation of a Traditional Material in 1940's



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ABSTRACT

Established in 1940 in Turkey, Village Institutes were teachers' training schools for the village primary schools, which would provide the future teachers with necessary practical training for coping with the problems of the villages, and which would enhance the productivity and efficiency of the village life. The Village Institute Project was a part of the peasonist ideology of the single party period, which were expected to lead radical changes in the "backward" village society, and to overcome the inequality between the opportunities of urban and village life styles. Moreover, Village Institutes were perceived as the tools to create the national culture of the newly established Turkish Republic. By the law numbered 3803 and dated 17 April 1940, the Village Institutes were began to be established. At the end of 1948, the number of the Village Institutes all over Turkey had reached 21.

After the transition of the single party system to the multi-party system in 1946, the village institutes began to be closed down; and by the year 1951, all the Village Institutes were closed by the government. Lasted only 11 years, the Village Institutes contributed to cultural history of Turkish Republic to a high extent. At the end of 1990s, 12 of the Village Institutes Campuses and buildings are registered as cultural heritage by Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and a general decision to regard all Village Institute Campuses as cultural heritage was taken by the same authority. However, most of buildings and campuses belonging to village institutes are not in good condition, and they need urgent acts of restoration. The architectural projects of all Village Institutes were acquired by national architectural competitions announced in 1940. In the specifications of the competitions, the use of local and traditional materials and building techniques was encouraged. As a result, in most of the Village Institute Campuses like Hasanoğlu in Ankara and Çifteler in Eskişehir, the use of mud brick can be observed. "Village Institutes Journal" was the publication of Village Institutes between 1945-47. As a reflection of interest of Village Institute Project to village life and culture, the journal included research papers on the use of mudbrick in villages.

Keywords: Conservation of mudrick, earthen architecture, village institutes, village institutes journal.