

# Müjdat Arı House

*Mustafa Akçaöz*

District of Marmara, Asmalı Neighbourhood, Köyiçi Locality	Construction period/date: 1912
	Current status: <b>Abandoned</b>
GPS: 40°36'58.8"N 27°42'25.7"E	Ownership status: <b>Private ownership</b>
Registration date and number: <b>Bursa KTVKBBK 15.1.1996 - 4904</b>	

## History

The numbers 1912 on the four corners of the protruding keystone of the entrance arch on the southern façade indicate that the building was constructed or repaired in 1912 (Fig. 4). The building must have been rebuilt or repaired after the big earthquake in Thrace on July 27, 1912. The house was abandoned in 1992.

## Architecture

The building has two floors and a basement with a rectangular layout in the north-south direction (Fig. 1). Although the southwest of the upper floor has collapsed, it can be observed that the building has a layout featuring an L-shaped corner *sofa* (inner hall). The southern façade of the house, which is situated on a flat area, was 4-5 m away from



Fig. 1: General view from the southwest

the sea in the beginning of the 1990s (Fig. 2). The façade is currently facing a street due to the land reclamation from the sea. New reinforced concrete buildings have been constructed about 3 m away and across an alley from the eastern façade and 1 m away from the northern façade. There is a small yard to the west of the house. While the basement floor appears to have been reserved for storage, the ground and first floors were likely used as living spaces. The basement and ground floor were built with rubble and brick. Timber bands are used at the level of upper floors. While the western and northern walls of the upper floor are timber framed with brick infill (*humiş*), the eastern and southern walls are timberframe infilled with brick and cladded with overlapping planks. A combination of different construction techniques is visible in the house, but all walls –except the timber-frame ones– are plastered with earth-based mortar and plaster, and coated with paint. Today, most of the plaster is lost. In addition, half of the southern wall and the entire western wall of the upper floor have collapsed, along with the roof.



Fig. 2: Southern façade, general view

The northern and western façades are plain, while the southern and eastern façades are articulated. To the west of the northern façade is a window at the ground floor level, which was later closed. Immediately below this window, there is a channel for water disposal, made of reused material. There are not any articulations at the ground level of the western façade, and the upper floor of which is in ruins.

The western half of the southern façade is allocated to the entrance *iwān* to the upper floor level. The *iwān* is very shallow and framed by a depressed-arched opening that sits on square, gypsum pilasters on both sides. The eastern corner of the façade has a similar pilaster. The pilasters are divided in two by profiled mouldings, which run along the southern and eastern façades and separate the basement from the ground floor. The upper parts of these Doric pilasters are articulated with vertical grooves and have thin capitals with mouldings. The keystone of the recessed arch that sits on the capitals, protrudes outwards. These profiled mouldings are also repeated on the arch. Within the northern wall of the alcove, there is a double-winged, timber

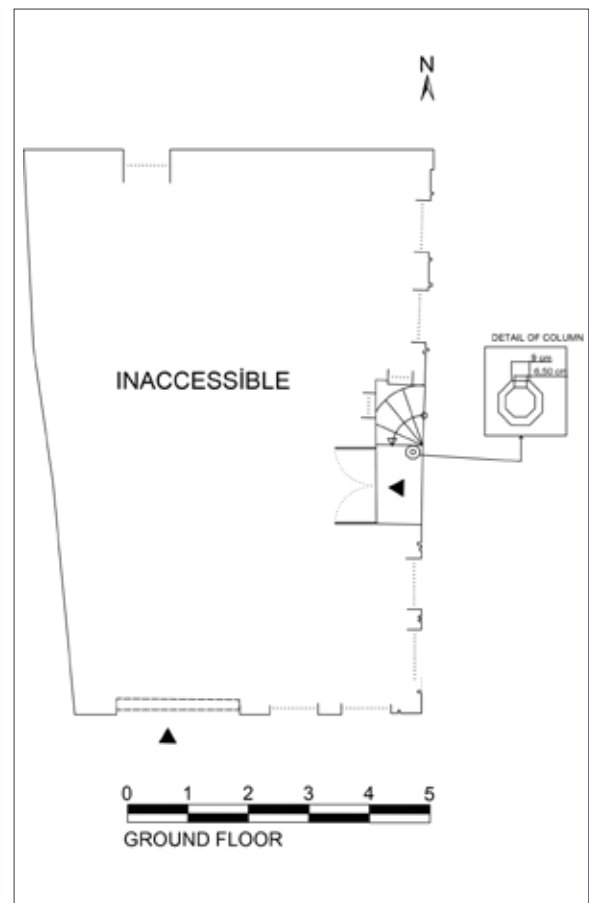




Fig. 3: Eastern façade, general view

entrance door and a rectangular, double-case-ment top window up to the level of the arch. There is a square window at the basement level of the eastern part of the southern façade, which was later closed by timber planks. At the ground floor level, there are two rectangular sash windows with depressed arches and profiled jambs. The upper floor projects along the entire façade. The projection is supported by timber brackets that sit on the pilaster capitals and are covered with laths. The western half of the upper floor façade is ruined. There are two rectangular windows on the eastern half of the façade. The window jambs are placed on timber elements resembling brackets at the bottom, the upper corners of which extend outwards to resemble a cross. These extending parts adjoin the lintels of these two windows. The keystones of the windows are emphasized by their protrusion.

The entrance, which is placed on the central axis of the eastern façade, is arranged as an *iwān* opening outside via two depressed arches (Fig. 3). A five-step, marble staircase in the northern arch leads to a landing. The three-piece marble column is placed on the



Fig. 4: Keystone with date

outer corner of the landing, connecting the arches. This octagonal column sits on an octagonal base and has a square capital. The arches with profiled mouldings sit on square, Doric pilasters at both ends. The corners of this façade also have similar pilasters. The entrance door to the south of the alcove's western wall is reached from the landing by one step and has a window to its north. The northern wall of the iwan has a window. To the north of the entrance, there are two windows on the basement level. Two other windows are placed on both sides of the iwan on the ground floor. All windows on the basement and ground levels are rectangular, topped with depressed arches. The ground floor has sash windows that have jambs with profiled mouldings. The upper floor projects along the façade, narrowing down towards the north. The upper floor is illuminated by four rectangular sash windows. The decorations on the window jambs of the upper floor on the southern façade repeat on the upper floor windows of the eastern façade.

The eaves of the eastern façade rest on triangular brackets with simple decorations and protrude outwards. The six timber elements –resembling brackets– are placed in the extending parts of the window jambs. Their corners have ornamentation composed of square and C-shaped motifs with curved branches. Mouldings consisting of square and rectangular panels cover the area between the timber elements. The timber pieces inserted into the lower part of the mouldings at certain intervals are arranged like saw teeth. The same ornamentation repeats on the lower part of the projection. The interior is ruined to such an extent that it could not be accessed.

### Current Condition

Although the building has suffered much damage, its plan organization and spatial features are understandable. After it was abandoned in 1992, the house has been neglected

and left to its own fate. It is currently in danger of collapsing at any time. The building poses a danger to visitors in its surroundings. There are no information panels around the house.

The house cannot be entered since its doors are locked. Most of the plaster on the façades are lost and the mortar joints are eroded. There are cracks on the walls and some of the flooring has caved in. It is noted that the stairs leading to the upper floor have collapsed. The roof is entirely lost. Most of the upper floor walls, especially the timber-frame sections, have collapsed. Most windows are open and their glasses are broken.

### Risk Assessment and Recommendations

The building resembles Yılanlı House in terms of its plan typology and Zeki Tınaz House with regard to its ornamentation. It is a significant example of the region's civic architecture with its material, architectural, and decorative features. The loss of material and deterioration in the lower levels, especially at the corners, indicate that the building's resistance has minimised and that it cannot survive a few more seasonal changes. Construction activities carried out in the immediate vicinity, materials stacked in front of the door, uncontrolled access, and neglect are other factors that adversely affect the building. The probable collapse of the walls poses a danger for its surroundings.

Despite all this degradation, the building can still be conserved by reinstating its authentic features. The house necessitates urgent conservation and consolidation measures in addition to restoration. Appropriate emergency measures should be taken until a restoration project can be prepared. During restoration, the collapsed parts should be renewed in accordance with the original ones. A landscaping project could also be implemented. The building should be repurposed and opened to visitors. Information panels should be placed to attract visitors.