

FOREWORD

Having had hosted economic, social, religious, and artistic activities of different ethnic communities, in other words, civilizations, this geography possesses unrivalled cultural wealth. The creative processes that have existed over centuries provide us with the means to better understand the cultural accumulation of our modern day society, shed light upon ethnological, geographic and economic structures. They also constitute reference points for the future. These patterns also play a key role in analyzing concepts related to the identity formation such as traditionality, change, diversity and westernization.

The monuments and artifacts created by the different peoples living in present day Turkey have greatly contributed to the creation of common esthetic values. They all generated added value to our cultural heritage. In this context, the architectural products of different ethnic groups throughout history on Anatolian and Thracian soil prove to be quite significant. It is important that these items of architectural heritage currently facing oblivion, unprotected and endangered by nature and by human intervention be documented and protected, and that the future survival of these cultural products be ensured for shedding light upon historical development and architectural history. Thus, with the aim of protecting these artifacts and ensuring that they reach future generations, it is first and foremost necessary to raise the awareness of the people, draw the attention of local and national authorities to the matter, and create public awareness regarding the protection of cultural heritage. This book presents the results of architectural heritage assessment visits carried out by Anadolu Kultur and the Association for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in a number of cities during 2015-2016. In light of the expertise and professional experience of the participants, the architectural styles, plans, current state and location of these structures were assessed and comparative risk analyses were made during the field visits.

The main goals of this work are to emphasize the necessity of emergency interventions to historical structures at risk, facilitate decision-making processes for the authorities, and relay accurate information to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Just as different stakeholders may benefit from these assessment reports, we hope the information and findings within them will provide guidance for current and future restoration projects along with preservation strategies.

We believe that current and future projects of documentation and assessment are significant contributions to the protection of cultural heritage. The cultural heritage of Anatolia, which reflects a synthesis -and at times a paradoxical combination- of different styles of expression belong to humanity at large. As people currently living on this land, we believe that it is our common responsibility to safeguard for the future generations the monuments and artifacts left by those communities who are no longer living here.