SULUKULE UNESCO REPORT 2008

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This report gives the evaluation of the region in material and cultural values while trying to unveil the experiences and subjects arisen from Sulukule process. At the same time, it tries to emphasize the importance of Unesco for Istanbul for the coming years; especially the changing face of the preservation issue with the Law nr 5366 and the necessity of defending and caring the values of Istanbul from local to universal scale from the perspective on the Renovation Area in Sulukule.

This report is a simplified form of a more detailed report started in January 2008 by reconsideration for UNESCO.

The report process was initiated with the dialogue meetings with the participation of Fatih Municipality and other relevant actors and multi-actor development studies, and the signing of the draft protocol by the Municipality and its stop.

In the report, various articles have been included from various experts, and extensive studies have been executed by establishing workgroups: social influence assessment group, architectural and planning groups. And the works were executed through them.

In this report prepared for UNESCO, the actual articles from the press, negotiations from international organizations, and the relevant law are also included.

2. Can Sulukule Platform be a model for the conservation processes in Istanbul?

Aslı Kıyak İğin, Architect, HSA

Sulukule Platform is very disciplined and multi-actor, and dynamic formation, and it has been actively involved in urban renewal processes realized in Sulukule Neslisah and Hatice Sultan neighbourhoods located just near the territorial city walls of the historic peninsula for the last year.

The Platform is a formation knowing and caring the importance of Istanbul’s being in the World Heritage List by UNESCO, and has been powered from this situation. It's aim was never only to criticize the processes but to make them visible, and accordingly tried to create dialogue foundation in order to provide participation and sustainability.

It defends that the protection is not limited only to the extent of physical protection but is an integrated process considering all cultural, social and economical elements, and it advocates that all relevant local, central and international actors should be involved in the process.
The place of international institutions such as UNESCO cannot be ignored, as there is considerable contribution to contemporary protection and preservation concept from the formations such as the World Heritage list and international standards. However, the smallest dimension of the preservation the human dimension should be considered properly as well. The insufficient contribution from both parties is the cause of the present insufficient realization of the preservation processes. At this point, the Sulukule Platform has important contributions and even has become a good candidate as a model. The existing experiences and approaches may be an important sample for the Historical peninsula and the areas in the World heritage list.

In the recent two years, the Platform has worked actively on the Law nr 5366 and Sulukule as one of the implementation areas, and its effects on the region. The platform also:

- has emphasized sustainable, participative, human centered approach,
- has stated that it should be treated as compliant with the UNESCO criteria, meaning being considered as whole with the environment and social-cultural structure not only from the physical perspective,
- has advocated that there is an improvement option with social and economic improvement rather than total demolition and rebuilding,
- has tried to unveil the potential of the location, conceived of the present cultural and social richness, and make it visible to wide populations
- has tried to involve all relevant actors to the process and to form dialogue environment,
- has tried to include the academicians and experts into the process and formed a ground for common opinions and remedies, and assessments,
- has tried to meet the micro and macro variables together, and been a bridge between the institutions and persons,
- has tried to monitor all processes, and to inform the public and locals, and been involved actively in the processes,
- has advocated the transparency in management and application plans, the necessity of the participation from the formation phase of the projects, and emphasized the establishment of economic and social revival center immediately,
- has advised the establishment of technical support, consultancy, and information units.

In better explanation;
The activities include Unesco and Sulukule Press Release organization; law meeting related to the Law nr 5366; support to file lawsuits; to inform and support the locals about their rights; to collect information and carry out field studies; to establish training and art workshops related to children; to support the region on health access; to submit suggestion registration structures, to report crime about the demolished ones; to inform the boards about the demolishes, to support landlords and tenants, to support the region about the health availability, to make workshop studies with universities and international establishments, to support meetings in the neighborhood, to invite lawyers, planners, and other experts in order to support the locals, to work for the establishment of the multi-partner planning and development commission in which CSOs shall work, to prepare evaluation and suggestion reports; to inform domestic and international institutions and persons; to organize activities in the region such as Hidrellez Entertainments (like Spring Fest), 40 days and nights Sulukule.
The process has indicated that planning and preservation needs initiatives which shall facilitate the processes in the interim scale and make them understandable and applicable. The establishment of the support units is required in order to publicize the requirements and needs of the local people, make the process monitored and visible, to impose UNESCO criteria and to provide its application. In this sense, Sulukule Platform is a sample formation. It has acted properly to be followed by the other regions.

The existence of such a formation and civil initiative and experience shall have an influence on preservation and maintenance understanding in Istanbul, and policies and implementations, and support the settlement of preservation consciousness and tradition. The formation of such initiatives and experiences establishes a role model for the other regions as well within the scope of 2010 the cultural capital city in the world concept. And it is particularly important for Istanbul to stay in the World Heritage List by UNESCO.

3. Assessment of the Sulukule Renewal Project Process in terms of the Intangible and Tangible Cultural Heritage

3.1. Location of Sulukule

Architectural and Planning Report Group

Sulukule settlement is located in the Historical Peninsula and within the limits of Fatih District. It consists of Hatiecsultan and Neslişah neighborhoods located at the southwest of Fevzi Pasha Street. The settlement has boundaries with Vatan Street at the southwest, Fevzi Pasha Street at the northeast, 10. Yıl street at the northwest and Sofali Çeşme Street at the southeast. Other neighbors are Kariye at the southeast, Fatma Sultan at the southwest, Topçular at the northwest and Karagumruk at the southeast. A distinguished characteristic of the settlement is its location at the lowest point of the city walls (territorial) in Istanbul.

Sulukule Neslişah and Hatice Sultan neighborhoods have a total area of 90,000 m2 according to the data from the Municipality. This region is also located within the protection band pursuant to the criteria of UNESCO as developed in 70s. And it was declared as the renovation area in 2005.

3.2. The Situation, Role and Identity of Sulukule within The Historical Peninsula

Architectural and Planning Report Group
Prof. İlber Ortaylı defines Sulukule “as one of the neighbourhood of İstanbul that is adjacent to the city walls in Neslişah Settlement within the district of Topkapı and Fatih-Karagümrük”. He continues that “the neighbourhood is by the way, known as ‘Sulukule Road’, which is infront of the city walls between Topkapı-Edirnekapı. It has been demolished completely and moved at the beginning of 1960”. In addition to these he describes the dwellers of Sulukule as the second sedentary gypsy group after Ayvansaray, Lonca Neighbourhood in İstanbul. (Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Encyclopedia, 1994, #7, p. 70-71)

Although it is unknown throughout the history, some resources state that after the conquest of İstanbul some Romanis have settled in Sulukule while some others have settled in Ayvansaray Lonca Neighbourhood. (http://www.mimarizm.com).

**Figure 9: Historical Peninsula and Sulukule**

Sulukule and the people of Sulukule who are living in the district; take attention as a sub-region settlement which exists along the time section, from the conquest of İstanbul to our time, within the physical and cultural geography of the Historical Peninsula.

The role of the Sulukule sub-region can be commented under four main title:

1. **Sulukule Sub-Region is a housing living area.**
The description of a living area intersects with a neighbourhood concept which expresses characters of physical and social sub-region. The neighbourhood unit is defined as the basic unit which a person can perceive, feel a belonging to and where he/she can form a quality of life. At this point Sulukule sub-region expresses the neighbourhood characters; the area has been bordered with artificial and natural thresholds. For that reason it is perceivable and reachable. In addition to these the opportunity of forming social relationships face to face, being a place where the same ethnic culture and social layers of similar life habits live together, but facing with aging condition are some of the other characters of this neighbourhood unit. Sulukule neighbourhood used to comprehend housing and entertainment spaces within itself and used to serve both to the national and international tourism of the Historical Peninsula with its entertainment function until the beginning of the 1990’s. After the removal of the the entertainment function from the neighbourhood at the beginning of the 1990’s, most of the economic resources were cut and now it continues to exist as a housing area. In our contemporary section Sulukule presents the housing area character which has different qualifications within the Historical Peninsula

2. **Sulukule is known as one of the most important address of the World Romany Music.**

It is known as a sub-region where the music culture peculiar to itself is synthesized (see, chapter about music), becomes identical with the space and forms one of the sub identity of the historical peninsula.

3. **Sulukule is one of the cultural mosaics of the Historical Peninsula.**

As it was tried to be explained one of the socio-cultural variety elements of the Historical Peninsula is Sulukule. The continuity of the ethnic cultural structure maintains since the conquest of İstanbul (although the decrease in their numbers). This ethnic cultural structure is one of the important variables that defines the Historical Peninsula as the cultural mosaic (a mediatory space where different cultures live together). Culture is a whole process that provides connection between past and the future (region, language, tradition, custom, art and so on many variables). For this reason the sustainability of the Historical Peninsula is important as much as the preservation of the cultural sustainability.

4. **Sulukule is a different spatial pattern.**

It presents a pattern character peculiar to itself and dissociates from the wholeness of the Historical Peninsula in terms of its way network, urban block, lot dimensions, structure-street relationships, structure-lot relationships, urban block mid, structure typology, sillhouette, third dimension, landscape and similar elements (see analysis chapter). This different social structure which reflects to the pattern should be evaluated as one of the diversity factors within the physical space pattern of the Historical Peninsula.

Sulukule is one of the unique urban patterns of the Historical Peninsula. Sustaining the socio-cultural, economic and spatial dimensions should be rendered possible by preserving it within the Historical Peninsula in terms of indespansable principles of planning fact.

**Socio-cultural continuity/sustainability:** Sulukule presents a specialty of being a society and forming a belonging to with the existence of a specific ethnic origin together. This
togetherness produces a solidarity culture and it is the most important factor for the people to hold on to life within the hard economic circumstances.

**Economic continuity/sustainability:** The main economic networks of the people living in Sulukule depends on the other sub-regions of the Historical Peninsula and its close surroundings. The music sector that is the main economic activity of the dwellers employs in the most important entertainment spaces of the city, such as Galata, Beyoğlu, Kumkapı, Fener. Another economic employment area is the informal sector which has organic relationships with the MIA of the City (Eminönü, Karaköy). As for the manufacturing sector workers are mostly employed in Yeşildirek, Gedikpaşa and Bayrampaşa. As a result the main economic networks of the people living in the area are formed upon the Historical Peninsula. At this point based on the workplace-housing relationship it is clear that removing people from the area will cut their living resources and will deepen the economic breakdown that exists today.

**Spatial continuity/sustainability:** The historical footprints of the area go back to the conquest of İstanbul based on the historical resources and again the spatial pattern quantifications are explicit on the maps of the 1800’s. For this reason preserving and regenerating these historical footprints are extremely important in terms of maintaining the sustainability of the cultural heritage.

As a result it is possible to claim that Sulukule is an element of diversity and cultural richness that is peculiar to the Historical Peninsula and its vital existence is mostly depends on taking part within the Historical Peninsula. In this direction Sulukule Neighbourhood should be accepted as one of the indespansable identity element of the Historical Peninsula and it should be aimed to articulate the neighbourhood to the urban life by increasing the quality of life in terms of economic, social and spatial.

### 3.3. Sulukule Urban Renewal Project – Evaluation In Terms of Historical Heritage

*Derya Nükhet Özer, Art Historian*

The area named as Sulukule comprehending Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Districts on the urban renewal project carries the following features in terms of underground and aboveground historical heritage.

**Aboveground Heritage**

The mentioned area begins from the Istanbul historical city walls. Again a monumental building, Edirnekapi Mihrimah Sultan Mosque forms one of the borders of the district. The district announced as Urban Renewal area stays in the buffer zone of Istanbul city walls. Hagios Demetrios Rum Orthodox Church is present in the district. The configurations of the present residential premises are built of wood, stone or brick and reinforced concrete at different dates among the last hundred years.

**City Walls**
The city walls determining the west border of Sulukule have been made by the II. Theodosius at the beginning of 5th century during Byzantine times and are part of the walls extending as far as the Tekfur Palace from Yedikule. They have been constructed according to a concept constituted of main wall, front wall and ditch. The Porta Pempton (the Fifth Door), one of the main entrance doors of the city is placed in the Sulukule district. Today this door is called as Sulukule Door. The city walls, Kaleboyu Street recline among the residential area.

**Edirnekapı Mihrimah Sultan Külliye**

It has been constructed by Mimar Sinan about the year 1565. The mosque, madrasah, children’s school, double public baths are still extant. There is information in some of the written resources that the Külliye has other constructions, too. Evliya Çelebi mentions about a bazaar and the rooms of a madrasah preoccupying the four sides of the inner courtyard together with a mosque. In Hadika however it is stated that the mosque has two madrasah, a school and a mahfil-i hümayun. The extant madrasah doesn’t have classrooms. This is an extraordinary situation. On the other hand, it is observed that there is only one minaret on such a mosque which was built for Mihribah Sultan the sister of Sultan II. Selim where there should be double minarets according to the tradition of Sultan mosques during that period. This extraordinary situation couldn’t be explained by the architecture historians. Beside some parts of the bazaar which is known that it used to have 63 shops still exists today. There is no information regarding the general organization of the bazaar.

**Sarmaşık**

It is Rum Orthodox Church. The present building has been constructed at 20 April 1834. But Gedeon, regarding the Church, writes that there is an imperial edict remained from II. Mehmet period and that this edict has been perished during a patriarchate fire. Consequently, it is understood that there used to be a Byzantine Church at the same place before the Turkish people enter upon Istanbul. The Church is noted in Paterakis List dated 1604, 1648 Furdresser Guild catalogue, 1669 Thomas Smith List. The Church belongs to monks living in Sarmaşık district during 17th century according to Müller-Wiener.

The name of the church is mentioned as one of the 12 churches which have been burned out and there is no judgment that the church has been re-constructed in 1730. In the list of “churches which have school” prepared by Patriarch Samuel at the second half of 18th century Demetrios is placed as the name Sarmaşık.

Current construction dated 1834 conforms to the general architectural characteristic of that period. There is a marble tablet having a “Dead Meal” subject dated B.C 2nd century buried at the south wall of courtyard and a tablet made of limestone having a “The Mum and Child of the Dead sitting on Saddle” dated A.C. 5th century one pair of which is present in Studios Monastery.

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1 Complex of buildings adjacent to a mosque
2 Gathering/meeting place related with the Sultan
3 Sarmaşık means ivy in Turkish.
There are 33 registered civil architecture examples, beside 11 monument work of art which have been conserved by the conservation committee earlier. These are wooden and stone buildings constructed approximately within the last hundred century. After the announcement of the urban renewal project 85 other building having the same historical, stylistic and technical specifications with the buildings conserved before have been determined by the Sulukule Platform and a list of these has been given to the Nr 4 Conservation Committee requiring to be put under conservation. The importance of the mentioned buildings is that if they are conserved they will provide the opportunity of protecting the continuity of the districts configuration. This configuration comes from coming into being according to the living necessities of the residential area which has a very long past and from the conformity of the life style of the settled people.

**Archeological Data**

It should be noted that beyond the visible the real richness is hidden under the ground regarding the historical topography of Istanbul. As a matter of fact in acts of engraving with building foundation, urban infrastructure works, etc reasons at various times among Historical Peninsula so many foundlings hidden under the ground belonging to this city are obtained. These foundlings while lightening the past of Istanbul constitute a very special archeological study field, too. Two striking examples of these kinds of foundlings are the Byzantine foundlings discovered during Four Seasons Hotel extension building construction works and Yenikapi Marmaray construction works.

This situation is not a surprise given the very long and astonishing history of the Historical Peninsula. The written documents and even the obtained foundlings by coincidence at the construction sites till today give an idea on certain limits about where and with what to be confronted with.

When someone looks at the issue from the point of Sulukule, she/he may forecast some things given that there is less resource compared with the other residential areas. These may give an idea on what could be the potential problems of an urban renewal project to be implemented.

There is no certain information regarding the structuring around Sulukule before the city walls of II. Theodosios. It is known that the East Rome walls of Istanbul have been constructed at I. Constantine period. There is no extant remainder left to today from these walls. However some historians defends that these walls extends approximately in between Samatya-Cibali districts. It is clearly known that there existed to be structuring in the area falling outside of the wall then. As a matter of fact the first construction of Chora Church which is named as Kariye today, is not known exactly however it is known that the word Chora comes from the tradition of using this word for “beside the wall” constructions.

Consequently when the Sulukule district archeology is set as a subject, one shouldn’t forget that the city of Constantinople had a structuring out of the city walls before the present walls. The first subject comes to mind regarding the Sulukule archeology is the water system. Sulukule which is a side of the Lykos valley where the Lykos stream enters to the city from, delivers its name from a castle constituting a part of this water system. Two important historical water system data published by Kazım Çeçen indicates that there is an extant main water system of Istanbul underneath the Sulukule district developed in late Rome and Ottoman periods.

The period when Istanbul reached to a comprehensive water system is the period of Emperor Hadrianaus A.C. 2nd century. It is difficult to trace such a water network due to the transformations passed within the city. However Kazım Çeçen tells about a trace belonging to the water canals of Hadrianaus period reaching ahead from Istranca Mountains to Istanbul “at
220 meters south of Mihrimah Mosque”. When 10 meters of the south of a fixed hole was dig, a canal built of wall stone was reached. The width of this canal is 50 cm and is covered with vault. (1)

It is understood that the main entrance point of that period’s water system is Sulukule district from the 2. Bayezid water canals maps published again by Kazım Çeçen. Çeçen tells this system in his book named “Istanbul’s Water Canals during Ottoman Period” as: “The Bayezid drainage enters in the city from the bridge over the ditch in front of the city walls at approximately 135 meters south of Edirnekapi and follows the east direction from the street at the back of Mihrimah Mosque and goes to the water gauge at Gümrük Square which’s linear distance is 615 meters from the city walls, after following again the streets after the other two water gauge enters in Fatih Mosque courtyard. (2)

Again Çeçen in his same book explains the same water canal once more with new details as: “The drainage line of Bayezid water canals enters in the city under the city walls through passing from the bridge out of the city walls at the south of Edirnekapi. It reaches to the big pond existing in the street at the back of Mihrimah Mosque through passing under the public house beside the vegetable garden and underneath the house of Emin Çavuş. From this big pond it goes to the big pond over the street in the direction of Haliç. The main arm reaches to a water gauge by continuing to flow in the direction of east at Löküncüler Street (today it is named as Prof. Naci Şensoy Street).”

On a surface research done by Feridun Özgümüş and Ken Dark remains of water canal belonging again to this water system has been determined. (4)

These details clearly seen on the maps published by Çeçen also overlap with some of the discoveries encountered today. The well hole in a car jack atelier at Kaleboyu Street Nr 49 expands to a wide canal. On the other hand when the little area which is empty today at the corner of Prof. Naci Şensoy Street lying along the west courtyard wall of Mihrimah Sultan Mosque and (orası bir çığmaz sokak, adımı bilmiyorum) street is dig some with the guidance of the residents a deep water reservoir covered with a plate understood to be belong to Byzantine period is seen. These two water structure conforms to the drainage line of II. Bayezid in terms of their location which Kazım Çeçen has also published its map too.

When somebody looks into the written sources, Alexander van Milligen says in his book named “Byzantine Constantinople-The Walls of the City” as; “There is a district called as Pempton where Saint Kyriake Church and a meadow are located at the back of the entrance (Pempton)”. This area reached today under the name of New Garden tells us that this location was a popular excursion spot before the city walls were constructed, too.

Assistant Professor Gülgün Köröglü emphasizes that the Deuteron which is a district of Istanbul during Byzantine times could be today’s Sulukule and consequently that the palace of Emperor Iustinos could be placed in there.

On the other hand, several foundlings delivered around the city walls at different times and exhibited still in Istanbul’s Archeology Museums gives an idea about what possible to find around Sulukule. The first coming to mind are the mausoleums. An old man still living in Sulukule expresses that a sarcophagus was found during an underground work made on the constituent spot in between Prof. Naci Ersoy Street and Kaleboyu Street.

The pieces of Edirnekapi Mihrimah Mosque which didn’t remain to today and which Professor Doğan Kuban has foreseen that its traces could be found through “archeological studies” shouldn’t be forgotten. On the other hand during a surface search done by Ferudun Özgümüş and Ken Dark, a serial of column probably lying as in situ all along the east of
Edirnekapi Mihrimah Sultan Mosque courtyard, architectural pieces which’s date couldn’t have been determined and the white marble architectural piece inside the southeast wall of the mosque have been appointed.

The surroundings of Hagios Demetrios Church, identified as a monastery church, are again an archeological area which should be carefully examined. As it is known after Ottomans conquered Istanbul they sustained the activities of churches but didn’t give permission to construct a new church. The new churches were constructed only at the areas of collapsed, perished, burnt churches. The building of Hagios Demetrios Church which reached today is dates as 19th century but the real establishment date goes back to Byzantine times as it is supported by the historical records. The wide empty field at the back of the church also belongs to the charitable foundation of the church. Consequently the surroundings of the church and this area are the areas where remains of a church and structures of monastery going back to Byzantine times could probably be found.

Evaluation

The information and the possibilities stated above are collected as a result of brief research of easily attainable references and short site trips to the area. Knowledge on Sulukule remains that are preserved in the depot of Istanbul Archeological Museum could not be reached. It is evident that a more extensive literature review, surface research and archeological study would increase the number of these facts and broaden the content.

There are striking mistakes in the starting of demolition for Sulukule Urban Renewal Project.

The current draft project despite the fact that it contains detailed analyses is very quiet on archeology. There are no analyses regarding the archeological data at all. It is a great lacking that such a study is missing for such a place in the city wall preservation band of the Historical Peninsula. This approach is also worrisome. It either directs the mind to a possible lack of knowledge and method that can not be accepted or to a fact that the importance of such foundlings are undermined and not valued. It is known that archeological foundlings encountered in places such as Istanbul may lead to complete changes of the related projects. In addition, such a possibility would require serious schedule and budget changes.

The fact that supports these concerns for archeological problems is that the registered architecture or the structures that were applied to be registered have been demolished by municipality squads. This act is a crime/guilt according to the code no 2863. However, the municipality perceives itself as the only authority for the demolition. Such a mentality is highly expected to continue during the developments of the project. Moreover the empty space from the city walls to Hagios Demetrios Church that is closed by a line of buildings on the front, is seen as a shopping mall on the contemporary project, although it was mentioned as green park area on the development plan. However, as summarized above, this area is on the water courses from the period of II.Beyazid, where old remnants of church are most likely to be found. This small detail raises worry and fear for the project, for underground historical heritage not to be considered within the development of the project.

In the area there are 33 registered architecture. During the examination there has been 85 more residence determined with similar qualities and 4th Preservation Committee was consulted for them to be under protection. When the so-called residences are registered for protection; preservation of the area as a whole will come to question. Under such
circumstances the contemporary project and the architectural approach should be reconsidered.

City walls and the Mihrimah Sultan Mosque are effective structures on the silhouette of Istanbul. Moreover they have special importance within the city structure due to their architectural characteristics. The architectural project to be developed should be able to have continuation with the city fabric and have such a perspective to discuss the responsibility for history and contemporary world in relating to these two landmarks.

In Sulukule Urban Renewal Project, the criticisms and suggestions for the approach towards historical heritage are not minor details. These details address very major problems.

The vague relationship between the Code 2863 for Preservation of Cultural and Natural Assets and Code 5366 for Preservation of Timeworn Historical and Cultural Immovable Assets via Renewal and Enabling for Usage via prospering seems to be a problem as the code 2863 is undermined.

The 9th article of the Code 2863 states “Any constructive or physical intervention on immovable culture and nature assets that are required to be protected due to the decisions made by the preservation committee in and around the principle decisions of Preservation High Council, and to open these to utilization and change their utilization is forbidden. Restoration, construction, installment, drilling, partial or total demolishing, excavation and the like are considered constructive and physical interventions.” The demolishing of registered structures shows that this code is disregarded. The demolishing of the structures that have applied for registration seems to override the same code.

In practice, it is seen that there is a problem of duty and authority sharing between Preservation Council no.4 and Renewal Council that are responsible from the same region. It is seen that this void has led the municipality authorities to deactivate the two councils and act arbitrarily on their own will. Whatever the uncertainties or voids between the two codes, their interpretation for practice shows the approach of local government authorities. The approach is expected to be in line with universal preservation principles and the international agreements that Turkey has already signed. World Natural and Cultural Heritage Preservation Convention, emphasizes that the parts of a cultural and natural heritage are part of the world heritage of whole humanity. For this reason, the preservation of these areas is the responsibility of the humanity to history. Again, by signing this agreement, Turkey has agreed that she is open to international collaboration; to obey the agreement terms and accept to pay attention to the warnings and criticisms from the international community due to the statement “it is an international responsibility to collaborate to preserve a global exceptional world cultural and natural heritage value, without taking over the related countries state’s activity yet integrate in an effective support under the serious scope of circumstances that cultural and natural assets are under new threat”.

Various articles of this agreement, states in detail the national and international dimensions of this preservation. For example, the convention points to the fact that, since there will not be research and observation possible after a permanent architectural intervention, there should be investigation for underground archeological assets and then having the decisions for the project carried on. Besides Vienna Memorandum states: Article 18: Decision-making for interventions and contemporary architecture in a historic urban landscape demand careful consideration, a culturally and historic sensitive approach,
stakeholder consultations and expert know-how. Such a process allows for adequate and proper action for individual cases, examining the spatial context between old and new, while respecting the authenticity and integrity of historic fabric and building stock.

Article 21: Taking into account the basic definition, urban planning, contemporary architecture and preservation of the historic urban landscape should avoid all forms of pseudo-historical design, as they constitute a denial of both the historical and the contemporary alike. One historical view should not supplant others, as history must remain readable, while continuity of culture through quality interventions is the ultimate goal.

Up until now Sulukule Urban Renewal Project, with its applications on under and above ground historical heritage, has presented a worrying processes, which are already against the codes.

References:

(4) Ken Dark, Ferudun Özgümüş, “İstanbul Rescue Archaeological Survey 2002-The District of Sofular, İskender Paşa, Edirnekapı, Sarıgüzel”

3.4. **An Evaluation over Civilian Architectural Constructions and Protection at Sulukule Scale**

*Aslı Kıyak İngin, Architect*

Sulukule Civilian Architectural Moments Registration Propose Study

In December 2007, beginning from the point of determining by the Human Settlements Association and Sulukule Platform that there were artifacts which were worthy of protection more than listed number, a comprehensive field study was performed in Sulukule, Neslisah and Hatice Sultan districts. As a result of this study 85 building were specified and listed which were worthy of protection and an application was sent to related protection commissions including a comprehensive report study and a petition was put up.

There are 378 parcels and 645 right owner flats in the district are at present in accordance with the data of the municipality. And also in accordance with the municipality data, there are 45 registered buildings in the area before the approval of first draft projects. 11 of these buildings are monumental construction and they are formed of churches, mosques, public baths and fountains and 34 of them are civilian architectural constructions built by using wood and brick.

The report which was first presented to Istanbul Restoration Areas Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage Regional Commission on 04 January 2008, upon it was stated by the
commission that the authority related with the subject has been transferred to Istanbul 4 No Cultural and Natural Heritage Regional Commission in accordance with a decision received from Culture and Tourism Ministry, also an application was sent to 4 No Commission including the same file and application.

The said study was performed by contribution of architectures, planners and volunteers of art and history and also received the thoughts of specialized persons from the commission related with the subject. All of the buildings’ pictures were taken one by one and data of construction block, parcel, house number and street were presented. All these information were marked over the plans by using legend data.

As it is stated at the report presented to the commissions, the principles taken into consideration while determining 85 buildings are these: “...As it is seen at the wooden and bricked built constructions exist at list, They present characteristics that make them worthy of protection with taking into consideration of architecture, history, esthetic, material and construction technology of their period. They also have the same and/or similar characteristics with the buildings specified and registered by the Preservation Commission at the region. In case the exist registered buildings and the other buildings exist in our proposal list considered as whole all together they form and create a characteristic structure and show a historical and architectural combination and integrity.” (The application form dated as 04.01.2008 and the report of Human Settlements Association dated as 2007December)

25 of the proposed buildings are wooden, 22 of them are wooden and covered with coating and 38 of them are built by brick. (Picture 1-2-3)

It was observed in this process that especially wooden buildings have been tried to preserve by the local population by coating or using metal sheets and they have survived until today. But the interviews made at the region showed that declaration of restoration area, the uncertainty created by nationalization and destruction process also put obstacles in front of many house owners and tenants for restoration of maintenance of the houses... This situation caused houses to wear faster especially in the last 2 years. At the same time, because of the notices sent by municipality or being evacuated from his house as a result of a agreement made by the owners of registered or wooden houses this process of wearing and becoming old speed up in a logarithmic way. It is an evidence for the understanding of preservation with human that, the houses which resident by the people are still preserved and in good condition.

Demolitions in Sulukule District...

Beginning from the date of 2007 March continuing demolitions at different times and with interruptions have been performed in Sulukule by the teams of Fatih Municipality. For this reason when there were just 40 days before the demolitions, nongovernmental organizations related with the matter, artists, architectures and local people have come together and organized the activities of “40 Days 40 Nights Sulukule”. So, by this way it is tried to create sensitivity in public opinion for the demolitions and the restoration process and it was stated that a contributive planning approach which is sustainable and where the local people may take place in is required. While these activities which have continued until mid May, it was managed to stop the demolitions and sales of the houses. (www.40Gun40GeceSulukule.com)
But after the general elections in September 2007, the demolitions have been started again. The platform which performed the survey study and typological analysis in the field related with the matter, Human Settlements Association, Sulukule Roman Culture Sustenance and Solidarity Association have put up a petition to the related commission and attended to the evaluation meeting of the Restoration Commission and informed the members of the commission over the demolitions. But even so, the demolitions have been continued.

These demolitions have been started before the approval of the first draft project and formation of the restoration commission and they have been continued after the formation of restoration commission, approval of the first draft project but before the completion of performance project and before the completion of the inspection of buildings by the commission that have proposal registry.

Because the demolitions have been continued before the completion of the project process and not in accordance with a plan and phases for the destruction have not been done, the population live in the region or at the same street where the destruction is performed are aggrieved physically and psychologically by this situation. Refuse material of the buildings after the demolitions also create big dangers especially for the children and cause to important injuries.

The municipality claims that they performed the demolitions within the region in accordance with the written declaration taken from the house owners reached an agreement with that take place in the project. The buildings proposed to be registered that presented to the commissions in January also find their account in demolitions. Even though all of the written and unwritten, oral applications made to related foundations, the destruction process are continuing. Buildings take place at around 70 parcels have been destructed until now. Around 10 of them are formed of 4-5 storey buildings and the others have one or two storey. Among these buildings which have been destructed there are also 20 buildings that these are proposed to the commissions to be registered and also 2 registered building have been destructed. Related with the destructed registered buildings, besides informing the commissions, also the members of the platform made criminal complaint to Fatih Public Prosecutions Office on 22 February 2008.

The Last Decision Related with the Buildings Proposed to be Registered

While the Restoration Commissions approve and inspect the restoration first draft projects, the former commissions that they were related with also make the decisions related with the registration as in the past.

Istanbul 4 No Cultural and Natural Heritage Regional Commission declared its related decision by sending a letter to us relating with the application that we have made to them on 15 January 2008. According the decision dated as 26.03.2008 and numbered as 2016, Because 25 of 85 buildings proposed to be registered have the characteristics make them worthy to be registered it is decided to deliver to the party of the Restoration First Draft Project approved with the decision dated as 02.11.2007 and numbered as 20 and the inventory proceedings,
It is decided to stop the demolitions of the immovable exist at the said parcels and which have not been destructed and the decision of our commission dated as 19.03.2008 and numbered as 2006 are valid.

While the interviews we did with the 4 No Commission after the decision taken, we realized that the approved project has not been received by commission that to be sent from the Fatih Municipality.

Registered Buildings and the Restoration Works Carried Together with Their Owners

There are 34 registered architectural civilian buildings. Whether the house owners, or the tenders have been living in these houses and in the same locations for long years (even beginning from their birth) And these houses except their gardens are also taken under preservation with the first draft project approved on the date of 02.11.2007. But the Fatih Municipality do not present a proposal to the owners of the registered houses who wish to make an agreement and a payment model related with this offer.

At this point we became a part of this mater and begun to make interviews with the house owners. These people were from the families that have low income rate and they didn’t have any experience and technical knowledge over restoration. Firs of all we managed to take two wooden houses under the coverage of restoration project to be performed by master degree students by communicating with and making a written application to Yildiz Technical University Restoration Department. So we have started a plot study to be as an example for the other houses exist at the location.

This process is continuing at present. And negotiations have been started for the second phase and first a meeting together with the house owner and Talip Temizer who is the Deputy Mayor of Fatih Municipality organized and held. The process started together with the university was explained to him and for the second phase of the project he was requested to prepare and propose a payment plan for the owners of registered houses that make them stay and continue to live in their own houses. The Deputy Mayor showed a positive approach to the matter and stated that he will share and discuss this subject with TOKI (Development Administration of Turkey). But unfortunately we haven’t been able to reach and get an answer from him while 3 weeks after this meeting hold however we continuously tried to call and reach him. We just received an answer for the application made while this process. This answer was about providing a right for the house owners to make the restorations of their house by themselves and with using their capacities that subject to completing the work at the same date and they will have the right to use TOKI (Development Administration of Turkey) credit for a 10 years term. But this application even we are aware of unfortunately is not a convenient model for these house owners and other house owners similar to them. The credit provided which include interest of 4% however seems it is given in good and convenient conditions, the monthly payments of it make 1000 YTL and more than this amount. And it is also very difficult to manage the process for the people who don’t have any knowledge and experience over restoration works. (Annex 5)

An application related with simple restorations was made to KUDEP in March. Because the group of is not clear it is expected that frs this decision will be made at the commission. And at the same time, also it is aimed to prepare and develop a project for a more comprehensive
study including other registered houses at the region by the contributions of universities, nongovernmental organizations, local users and foundations and institutions such as Municipality and KUDEP if possible under the coverage of 2010 European Culture Capital City. So it is planned to establish a local restoration and maintenance unit and provide support for the local people at both technical area and performance and production.

Evaluation...

However the 34 civilian building exist at the region are seen as preserved at the registered first draft project, as a matter of fact that it will be a necessity of the people to leave these buildings by their house owners and tenders who live inside them. So the preservation will be performed by cutting the relation of the house with the human who are the part of them. The methods, models and alternatives proposed by the Municipality under coverage of this project cause the people to cut their relation with their house which they have been residing and living since their birth. Because, these people whose technical knowledge and income level are not sufficient, will not be able to perform the restorations and maintenance just by themselves. If we take into consideration that the situations similar to this may be seen at other preservation areas of Istanbul, it is necessary to create and form average solutions.

The registered architectural buildings exist at the region are left alone to wear without taking any measure to preserve them. This situation requires developing and creates effective solutions in order to preserve especially wooden houses. Whether the people living in these houses or not is also very much related with the dimensions of preservation. It is observed that the houses which are left alone as not including people living in them quickly enter a wearing process.

The district structure will have more chance to be preserved as more entirely when 25 houses within the region which are proposed and assumed as worthy to be preserved will be taken under preservation coverage. According to new situation, the existent approved first draft project must also be revised. At this point, the parcel formation which were not preserved in the former project and not survived must be started to be preserved and this will also provide the preservation of the ownership formation and the historical signs, dimensions, heights and also the social and cultural structure.

The preservation of typology of residence with garden which is specific for the region and was not taken into consideration at the approved first draft project is very much important for also the preservation and continuation of this physical and specific structure which is the reflection of socio-cultural formation at the region. It is required that the preservation must be considered as a preservation of integrity of social, cultural and physical organism by getting out from the understanding of preservation of houses one by one. In case all these dimensions that creating and making each other living are exist together, it is possible to mention about a sustainable and healthy preservation.
3.5. The Gypsies of Sulukule; a thousand years of Romani cultural heritage
Adrian Marsh, Istanbul 2008

The ‘Egyptians’ are described by Byzantine authors in the twelfth century AD as ‘soothsayers and sorcerers’ who tell-fortunes and performed magic, but there are earlier tantalising references to groups in Constantinople called “Adsincani” at the court of Basileus Constantine XI Monomachus (1042-1055 AD), who are usually identified with Gypsies. It would seem that the Emperor requested assistance from this group, who are described as descendants of Symeon the Magician and a “Sarmatian people” to rid the royal hunting park close to the Blachernai palace (now known as the Tekfur Saray), called the Philopation. The Gypsies (Adsincani) were employed to rid the park of ferocious beasts that were killing the game animals kept for the Emperor and his guests to hunt, and located nearby outside the walls in the area known as the Mesotechion or ‘middle part’. This section of the Theodosian walls contained the Water Tower that was built by the River Lycus (now buried beneath the Istanbul Metro), and the meadows around the river provided an obvious place to camp for what, at that stage were almost certainly a nomadic group living in the black tents that later travellers and pilgrims passing through the Byzantine Empire record as the dwellings of the “Romitoi” or “Romiti”, from whence the modern “Romanlar” stems. These people were known by the Byzantines as “Atsinganoi” (giving us modern terms such as “Tsigan”) or “Egyptians”, because of their supposed connection with magic and from this latter term we derive the notion of “Gypsies”, a corruption of the Greek “Aigupta” (Egyptian).

Other references to Gypsies in the Byzantine Empire are to be found, but none that specifically describe their characteristics in more elaborate terms, as these are generally from the pens of church writers keen to stop the citizens of Constantinople seeking to have their fortunes told or magical remedies from the Egyptians. There is a clear indication that they spoke a distinct language, that one Byzantine writers in 1415 describes as a “babble”, unintelligible to the surrounding populations. There are references to acrobats, bear-leaders and shoe-makers in the sources that demonstrate a variety of occupations, though none referring to Gypsies as musicians specifically (though clearly the bear-leaders and acrobats may have employed music as part of their acts). It would seem therefore that the association of music as a speciality of the Sulukule quarter is a product of the Ottoman period after the conquest in 1453 of Constantinople.

The Ottoman period is an important point for the cultural heritage of the Sulukule neighbourhood as the community maintain a strong tradition that this area was given to them after the taking of the city in May 1453; the Conqueror Mehmed II was supposed to have awarded this for the efforts of the Gypsy troops (they were most frequently commanded by Crimean Tartars in the Ottoman period, whilst the Gypsy canon-founders and blacksmiths were under the command of Hungarian engineers) in their first attack against the Azi Kapi, or Gate of the Assault (now on the edge of the Sulukule quarter), clearly using them as ‘shock-troops’ to be followed by the attack of the janissaries. This tradition provides the community with its focal point of a claim to historical occupation since 1453, though by the population counts undertaken during the early Ottoman period in Constantinople/Istanbul, the numbers that resided there were at first quite small (a 1477 count suggests some 41 households). The repopulation of the city in the twenty-five years following the conquest brought large numbers of Gypsies from Anatolia (places like Balat) to the area and increased the population rapidly in the neighbourhood. The position of Gypsies in the military organisation of the Ottomans, as
metal-workers (especially in the Tophane complex), drovers, grooms and horse-trainers, porters, powder-makers, fletchers (arrow-makers), tent-makers and a host of auxiliary roles was an essential one in the huge machinery that prosecuted the campaigns of conquest engaged in by the Ottoman sultans and their armies. The most obvious position was one that European observers commented upon (and sometimes recorded in illustrations), that of musicians leading the armies (a role that remains today in the modern Turkish army for many Gypsies undertaking their military service).

The tradition of music-making and the training of children in the Gypsy community through the guild system produced musicians and dancers of the highest quality that serviced the elites of the palace and pashas’ households throughout the Ottoman period. These dancers and musicians were highly paid and extremely important in the daily life of the sultan and his court. Gypsy women also worked as story-tellers, seamstresses and washer-women for the palace harem, acting as mediators with the external world for the secluded women of the palace schools. Coffee-house puppeteers and purveyors of folk tales, the Gypsies occupied a specific and organised place in the complex ethnic and social mosaic that was Ottoman society. Music and dancing were so synonymous with Gypsy identity that even groups of Armenian, Greek and Jewish dancing boys and girls were known as “Gypsy” by dint of their occupation, and we find the evidence of these performers in numerous Ottoman miniatures that depict the festivals, processions and feast-days of the Ottoman calendar. The masters and mistresses of their crafts were located in the Sulukule quarter were the system of educating and training was carried out through a complex ‘apprenticeship’ process that saw young children progressing to accomplished and respected musicians and dancers, then with age to the leaders and teachers of the next generation.

Not only were Gypsies in this neighbourhood the dancers and musicians but horse-dealing and carting also played a valuable part in the local economy. Porters and basket-makers too lived in the area, close by the huge markets of the Grand Bazaar and the Egyptian Bazaar, and in the reign of Ibrahim I the guild of basket-makers paid for the reconstruction of the pavilion that now bears their name on the shores of the Golden Horn (1643). In other parts of the Ottoman Empire we have records of Gypsies as water-engineers (in Salonika for example) and as miners in Bosnia and soldiers in the Kosovo, whilst in the city itself, Gypsies were part of the numerous street-traders that plied their wares in the neighbourhoods and on the highways.

The importance of Sulukule as a centre for high quality music and dance remained even after the fall of the Empire in the early twentieth century, with new elites being catered to by the professionals in the quarter. The decline of the area began in the 1960’s with changing fashions and tastes that saw more ‘liberal’ attitudes undermining the traditional notions of propriety that these entertainments had previously observed, and the insalubrious nature of these, coupled with a growing urban phenomenon of narcotics abuse (general in all societies in this period) further contributed to the decline in the neighbourhood. The first series of demolitions that took place in the mid-sixties resulted in a fundamental shift of the quarter from its old basis of catering to the elites and to a more populist market, but a cycle of poverty and deprivation had begun with the moves to different, less traditional musical tastes and the declining economy in Sulukule was further undermined. Increasingly the area became identified with social problems that were not being addressed by the local or other authorities and the Gypsy population became further marginalised and limited by a narrow and predominantly negative series of stereotypes. The final chapter in this process took place with
the suppression of all the forms of entertainment in the neighbourhood in the mid-1990’s, reducing the entire Gypsy community to abject poverty and emiseration.

The cultural heritage remains in the neighbourhood and the community with the music and dance aspects very much alive despite the difficulties of the recent past. The historical heritage of Sulukule is one that must remain as the oldest Romani settlement, and as the place where Gypsy identity has been moulded and formed in the complex shifts of time and empire…

3.6. Contrary and Traditional Colors

Z. Gonca Girgin Tohumcu, Ethnicity, Identity, Dance, Music: Roman Culture Researcher

The different shaped social structures of the Roman/Gypsy communities live even every region of Turkey as migrant or settled, reflect to their dances and music also. For example; geographical and cultural conditions of Edirne and Kırklareli region and West Thrace and Aegean Romans are expressed in their music as lyrical and like a story, but as different types and imitations in their dances. Furthermore, as a cosmopolite area, Istanbul is covered with diversifications which are more extrovert and show differences at even between two neighbor districts. But, despite the every kind of differences between the regions and settlements, the dance and music are not the forms of entertainment just realized by physical presentation, but also they code the daily life and they are motivation and acquired events depend on a dialectic relation that it is possible to read ethnicity, class and identity related with the communal sexual relations over them, in all Roman groups in Turkey – even at many regions of the Balkans also.

Sulukule is one of the Roman settlements that the identification system can be observed very clearly. Sulukule, which is named as “Belly Republic” by Nazım Alpman who is a news writer, is one of the oldest districts that Roman music and dance traditions live in. The terminology of “Sulukule Nights” remembers the location where the entertainment is rich beginning from the empire period until today also supports this situation. When the historical view is taken into consideration, actually it is necessary to draw the picture of Sulukule with “entertainment” as a single meaningful complement and speak about the inclusions of this, more than music and dance images. Evîya Celebi, one from the travelers of 17. Century, mentions about the artisans of Vâsîlcîlar (bear players) in Sultan District which belongs to today’s Sulukule terminology and says all of these people are Kiptî (Gypsy) while he is explaining the different districts of Istanbul. At Sulukule where also other professions can be seen beside the entertainment, such as operating café, shoe shining, greengrocery, grocery, horse car owner, secondhand dealer; music which is a type of traditional tradesman is the main means of living of the people residing at the region.

Man and woman, who do not stand far a way from each other in the communal life of their internal formation, are shaped with a traditional separation as a professional meaning; “the man plays, the girl dances”. The entertainment houses which were closed in 1992 with the reasons of prostitution and damage of moral senses are the identical places with Sulukule. Sulukule houses, which have been one of the most important entertainment places beginning
from the early 1900s until the end of these years, there is not any certain and detailed information over the historical past of them before this period. But according to the explanation of source people at the area, these houses were entertainment places include music, dancers, alcohol that families could go unreservedly in the past. “The program of the entertainment was beginning with the arrival of the customers when the sun was going down. Dinner tables were prepared diligently, the tables were donated, the meals were eaten and the families came for entertaining were entertained very much until the first lights of the morning and they brought tips as much as how much they were entertained and advised the place to their acquaintances.” “First the cold dishes were eaten, the hosts of the house went to the tables, they inquired after customers' health and after a couple of hours the music and dance were started. Upon the request of the customers a repertory formed of popular Turkish art music songs were prepared, but the night were finalized absolutely with the passed out situation of the customers with the gorgeous dances of oriental belly dancers. The definition of “Sulukule nights” was born because of this becoming widespread, by this way the residents of the district could make their living easily. Moreover, it was possible to meet someone that admit “all people wish to have a son, but because of the thought that a girl will grow up and become a belly dancer and support her family with the money she will earn, a girl is more pleasant for them”

...The closing of entertainment houses in 1992 and the expressions of “prostitution places, immoral people, and thieves” rose before and after this may caused and forced the families to take these measures. The expressions reached over the size and even the Roman populations living at other regions of Istanbul were excluding the Sulukule people with the expressions of “Sulukule is the opprobrium of Romans, they are not real Roman and they can not be, they fall into disrepute…” and similar to these. The expressions of them that from those groups such as “they are not from us” in addition to the marginal peoples’ are being called as “other” was the messenger to take the urgent measures. At this point, whether the expressions are proved or they are fictitious assumptions, I think the purpose of the taken measures are the physiological pressure of fear of being marginalized and the product of anxiety of living conditions becoming worse as a result of this pressure…

The social identities loaded over Romans as a natural inborn characteristic such as, fractious, reactive and the population has no anxiety for tomorrow are not just a genetic fact, but also their characteristics shaped with their historical and cultural past. These distinguishing characteristics which they are used to and assimilated, first shaped their formation, and after that their body language, life and music as a natural result of this. So, their “being inborn capability” over playing instruments which is the cursory reason of their absolute dominance at music market is also actually related with their social posture molded and shaped while these years. It means that, their becoming just at the center of a music world that they create, support and consume which has a very strong effect over music sector include some dynamics different from extraordinary abilities.

4 But news writer Nazım Alpman states his expressions in his book of Başka Dünüyanın İnsanları Çingeneler on contrary to this and nearly called the entertainment in Sulukule as prostitution and a robbery with showing his experiences as references. See (Alpman 1997; 13-25) But beside the expressions, making a research related with the official records will add a certain dimension to the validity of claims.

5 Interviews done at the area (Kemani Cemal and Bergüzar 2006, Hasan and Halil 2007)

6 Because the validity of these claims and expressions are out of this study, I just try to understand and realize these experiences and casual event for the theoretical transformation of historical processes at the social sexual relation.
If we make an evaluation from the socio-cultural respect, today Istanbul has the characteristic of being the city that has the most widespread Roman settlement in Turkey. It is very interesting point that, there are many differences from several respects between these people generally living as a district and another group just 10 km far from them. The reasons for these differences take root from different economic and social structures of them beginning from their origin and shaped by their history and figures adopted from other cultures where they dropped by while passing through. But the common denominator of them is being Roman as it is the same at all around the world.

... Today, there are musical representations in all countries of the world including the dynamics of the culture that Romans belong to, but you can certainly call as Roman style when you listen to them, without knowing from which region they are.

As a result of these, as I mentioned before, their dominance specially at playing instrument part of popular music and entertainment sector, is a situation however adopted by their forced-selective life stories, became a traditional situation with all mutation process that can not be circled. Beside a Roman who works as an official at a public institution keep as secret for his 25 year business friends his being from Roman origin and ethnicity, but on the other hand for a Roman musician becoming the first sentence to introduce himself is “I’m Roman”, is a sample to express the attraction of this compulsory but generally selective profession sector. So, this means that, it must not be so difficult at this point to form a dominant character for a person where the identity can be stated clearly and completely and show himself comfortably without any fear of being criticized. In other words, the most effective weapon for them for the dominance wars secretly continued and supported with historical conditions is musical representations that make possible to transfer the meaningful and relative expressions inside the social statue. In the entertainment sector, becoming traditional process of music-dance couple that Sulukule Romans have an important contribution inevitably includes a dynamic structure and the most important thing is, on the other hand this tradition which is the supplementary group of the contrary colors of the social structure is such rich and child that it doesn’t deserve to perish….

3.7. Chronology of Sulukule History

Sulukule Platform
Sulukule known as one of the oldest roman (gypsies) settlements and this social tissue still persists at our age.

The gypsies forming an important tissue of the social structure in Byzantium Empire used to live around Edirnekapı mostly. And Sulukule located in the same area has survived its existence till our present day.

It is said that the gypsies living in Edirnekapı played an important role during the conquest of Istanbul. In Ottoman period, it is know that new gypsy communities were brought to city to revive the city life, and the most prosperous horse tradesmen, professional associations of basket makers and dancers were among the gypsies. It is possible to see the traces of this information in miniatures.

In our age, some of the houses in the region still have title deeds from the Ottoman period.
The reputation of Sulukule as the entertaining and music center was spread to Europe and the USA in the 19th and 20th centuries.
A map from 1813 still indicates the existence of a similar structure and tissue. According to this map and sources, the oldest ad longest water channel enters into the city walls of Istanbul from this point and spreads into the city in 3 ways. (Kazım Çeçen)

A part of the neighborhood was demolished during the Menderes demolitions when opening of Vatan Street in 1950s.

The neighborhood was subject to demolition in 1982 once more. And Sulukule near Millet Street was completely eliminated.

In 1985, it has been entered into Unesco World heritage list containing Istanbul City Walls as well.

In 1970s, International Gypsy Festival was organized in Sport and Exhibition Palace with the contributions of the Association of Sulukule Revival and Tourism and the Ministry of Tourism. The Ministry of Tourism decided to take the area under protection at that time.

The life and culture in the region have been subject to the movies and TV series for 30 years. The most famous ones: Gırgırıye (1981-1984), Cennet Mahallesi (2004-bugune), Arkadaş (Yılmaz Güney).

4. The Renewal Law 5366, implementations and results: Lessons from Sulukule

4.1. Legal Assessment of the Law 5366

Lawyer Ömer Aykul, Interview, February 2008 Mimarizm

“Even the name of the Law nr 5366 is faulty…”

You stated that you are against the name of the Law at first. Why do you oppose the name of the law and in what point?

The name of the law includes the statement of “protection of the assets by restoration”. “Protection by restoration” is indeed a type of protection. You should not narrow the content of a law. When making legislation, the name of the law should be general and notional where as the content is specific and material. As for that one, the name of the law is narrow, we are trying to extend it, this is obviously wrong.

And the second point that I oppose is “usage by reviving” statement. If we mention this, the aim shall be the usage. However, revival is the aim! So it should be “reviving by usage”.

You make mistake in the name of the law, if the legislation is criticized then the politics making such legislation is criticized as well, and it means that this politics is imperfect...

The Law sounds as if it was related to the historical and cultural properties, however it prescribes urban transformation...

Although the law seems to be oriented to historical and cultural moveable properties, there is urban transformation completely under this mask. And the application of law is itself the application of urban transformation.
We see quite general definitions when we study the content of the law...

Yes, the first article of Law Nr 5366 is like that; “The aim of this regulation is to rebuild and restore cultural and natural existences registered by the protection boards as SIT areas which are eroded and started to lose its characteristics; and it regulates the provisions and bases to form residence, trade, culture, tourism, and social areas, and to take precautions against natural disaster risks, and to protect by renewal and to use by reviving the cultural properties”

Here the statement of “cultural and natural existences registered by the protection boards as SIT areas” is general statement and it should be specified. In the principal resolutions made by the Supreme Board of Cultural and Natural there are resolutions on “archeological SIT areas. Also this Supreme Board already defined the “urban archeological SIT area” term and formed the concept of “urban archeological SIT area”. It means that the SIT concept is analyzed under five categories; “archeological SIT area”, “natural SIT area”, “historical SIT area”, “cultural SIT area”, and “urban SIT area”. What type of SIT areas does the law refers? You cannot state only “SIT area” in this law you have to state what site areas you refer.

Also the statement “to form residence, trade, culture, tourism, and social areas, and to take precautions against natural disaster risks, and to protect by renewal and to use by reviving the cultural properties” is an interesting concept. If there a referral to trade in a SIT area you can establish “trade area”, or a tourism area exists you can establish “tourism area”. If it is not an area designated as residential area then you can’t build residences there, or if it is designated for residences you can’t make social buildings there. But the law mentions that everything may be built at everywhere. But this law mentions that everything may be built at everywhere.

You mean that the law doesn’t match the definitions and decisions made by the Supreme Board of Cultural and Natural Existences?

Now, let us analyze the compliance between the definitions given by the law nr 5366 with the definitions given in urban SIT concept: “Urban SIT area is the area in which cultural and surrounding components are located together having more value than their individual values due to their architectural, local, historical, esthetic, and artistic features and being located together.” In this definition, we include the environment concept as well however in the Law nr 5366 there is neither landscape nor surrounding!

The environment and city concepts are integrated whole. The definition of environment in the Article 56 “the health and happiness shall not be in a concrete build but in a healthy environment”

“In the Law two main constitutional rights are missing!”

The Law is criticized mostly by the lawyers and professional associations by referring its violence of “information obtaining and participation right”...

Another point that I oppose in the law is the lack of “information obtaining and participation right” as the two of the three base rights as the preliminary right in order to use a right that we define as “constitutional rights”. I don’t even mention the right of contestation”. The people do not know what will happen to their places, they don’t even know that they have the right to obtain information. They are not even aware of their participation right. But, how they establish communication without participation?
The law is closed against the participation of the experts meaning universities, associations of architecture and engineers, and civil society establishments and public opinion during the planning and execution phases at the start up. Only it states that; “all control, supervision, auditing, and surveillance transactions are performed by the city private administrations and the local authorities or ordered by them. These transactions are performed by the persons and teams related to the characteristics of the project and subject.” I mean there is only participation in auditing. Although the names of the institutions that we have mentioned are referred in the regulation of the law, there is no point for an authorization which does not exist in the law. It is written in the regulation for nothing.

We have mentioned that the Constitution defines one of the duties of the state is to provide prosperity, peace, and happiness of the persons and communities. Therefore you can’t push a project to people which will make people unhappy. If you do it then there is a big problem here.

Also in the law there is an article saying, “the provisions in violation in the other laws may not be applied.” It is impossible! You should state the law numbers that you revoke, but such an open statement may not be accepted in law writing. Because this law is a project law, and you can’t consider this law as an ordinary private law. The law depends on the principal of being considered by the Cabinet. In that case, this is exactly the acceptance and execution law such as the Law about the North Ankara Uran Transformation Project.

In that case can we call that law is not a healthy one for urban transformation and used only for the urban transformation applications?

Yes, the law is not a healthy law for urban transformation. However, this law does not meet the requirements of urban transformation and support the renovation of the cited cultural and historical assets with “usage by reviving” as stated therein. Because there are differences from definition.

The was intended for many purposes, but achieved nothing since it is separated from the definition of cultural and nature assets and with its tendency ignoring the Culture and Nature Assets Law. The law has problems since it could not settle and therefore execute the “urban transformation” concept formed in our laws from past till our present day, and the public have serious problems in their application areas.

What is the compliant of this law with its international equivalents?

Indeed this law is not in violence with domestic laws but the international contracts to which Turkey is a concerned party. The last item of the Article 90 of the constitution says that “the contracts to which Turkey is a relevant party is domestic law provision, and if there is a conflict between this contract and the domestic law then the international contracts shall prevail.”

The Contract on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (72, Paris), The Contract on European Architectural Heritage Protection (85 Granada), Europe Landscape Contract (2000 Florence), and Europe Urban Conditions which is obtained by extracting the urban history of Europe are existed to which Turkey is a concerned party.
The local administrations may be a party to the European Urban Condition as well as states, and as far as I know no local administration becomes a party to it until now. The principles section related to the residence of this Contract says that; “Each person and a family has a right to have a safe and durable house. It is the principle not to leave people and families with restrictions to the market mechanism conditions. It is a principle that the cost of renewal of old tissue should not be loaded to underdeveloped groups staying there.”

The principles of participation of public, city management, and city planning say that; “it is required to consult with the public for any important project which will affect the future of the society. It should be based on the required information related to city character and specific characteristics, and urban and regional plans.”

Is there any conflict between the Europe Urban Condition and the provisions of the Constitution that we have stated? No absolutely not. However there are certainly big conflicts between this contract and the Law nr 5366 and the applications of this law.

Turkey surely needs urban transformation need. But you can’t say people “we have made the urban transformation you should stay somewhere else from now on.”

“We ought to be in Sulukule not just for criticizing but for establishing

How do you asses Sulukule from a perspective of a lawyer?

The violation of three basic rights required to use a right as I stated in the Law applies in Sulukule. The people living in Sulukule were not informed, and no participation from the public is allowed when projects are made.

Indeed as far as I hear from the intellectuals working in Sulukule, the local administrators listened to the Sulukule Platform and people and joined the meetings but they just ignore what these people say. There is a listening process formally. In a discussion, you may listen and apply the critics or try to convince them to apply your project. None of them is applied here. The administration did not behave democratically and applies what it wants authoritatively by imitating as if it was listening to the critics.

How can we explain the events in Sulukule from your point of view?

The problem in Sulukule is urban rent problem. The rent surely exists in urban projects, and it should be, however it should be discussed who will use this rant. The important thing here is to return the rent to city and city people.

I didn’t see any concrete title deed, but as far as I know the people not having sufficient economic resources are forced to sell their houses against relatively minimal funds. Now, in this case, we can’t talk about urban transformation here, this is rent sharing.

4.2. Chronology of the Sulukule Urban Renewal Project Process

Melih Çetingöz&Sulukule Platform
Sulukule Urban Renewal Project has caused intense activity in the agenda of the city, from its proposal to its implementation. In this section the processes that occurred from its first day to the last will be described in chronological order.

On September 2002 Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality included the areas resided by the Roman population within the scope of the urban renewal projects 2002-2003 investment program with the intention of rehabilitation. In the scope of the project, it was planned to first rehabilitate Sulukule, then the other areas in which the Romans formed the majority resident population.

The main targets of the project at that date were; to enable the Romans to be able to take more advantage of the infrastructure, to construct children’s playgrounds and to introduce green areas into their neighbourhoods, to renovate the buildings, not to disturb the entertainment culture of the Romans while all this is carried out, and to allocate mass meeting facilities where the Romans could exhibit their entertainment routines.7

On 16 June 2005 Act no 5366 on “The Renewal and Protection of Historical Natural Properties and Their Revitalization through Utilization” was passed and was duly notified via the Official Gazette on 5 July 2005.

On November 2005 within the scope of the Act no 5366 the neighbourhoods of Sulukule, Neslişah and Hatice Sultan were declared as Urban Renewal Areas.

On June 2006 the “Sulukule Roman Culture Development and Solidarity Association” was founded and the Sulukule residents held a musical event at the entrance of the Castle Entrance. During the event a statement to the effect “If the municipality wants to protect this area as historical site then financial and architectural support must be made available” was made.8

On 13 July 2006 TOKİ, Metropolitan Municipality and Fatih Municipality signed protocol relating to the urban renewal project. According to this protocol, within the scope of the Act no 5366 on " The Renewal, Protection and Utilization of Real Properties That Have Aged" in Sulukule that was designated as a urban renewal area by, Fatih Municipality a mutual project with TOKİ was proposed.

On July-August2006, Sulukule Roman Culture Development and Solidarity, Human Settlement Association, Achievable Living Association, Chamber of Architects, and Bilgi Universities participation resulted in a period of intense resistance, demonstration and debate.

On 14 September 2006 a letter from the European Romans Rights Centre, Helsinki Citizens Association, Achievable Living Association, Sulukule Roman Culture Development and Propagation Association, Edirne Roman Culture Research, Development, Solidarity and Assistance Association, was forwarded to the Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan outlining the problems faced by Roman families due to the renewal projects in the Roman neighbourhoods.

8 radical

13 December 2006 “Priority Expropriation Decision” was taken by the Ministers Council for Sulukule; Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods.

12 February 2007’de Sulukule residents opened a case at the Istanbul Administrative Court for the cancellation of the Priority Expropriation Decision and for the halting of its enforcement, to be sent to Supreme Court of Appeals with the aid of the Solicitor for the Chamber of Architects Istanbul Cosmopolitan Branch. This litigation, to which the Chamber of Architects Istanbul Cosmopolitan Branch was the intervener, was supported by many Non governmental institutions and the residents of the area...

On 22 February 2007 Fatih Municipality demolished a house belonging to the Güldür family in Sulukule by mistake. The Fatih Municipality Mayor Mustafa Demir issued a statement to the effect that, "Our colleagues while demolishing a vacant unused building also caused damage to the aforementioned property. Its glasses were broken so they thought it was vacant as well. The Municipality operator did it and of course this caused tension. Our institution will recompense for the damage and litigation may be resorted to if necessary".

On 26 February 2007’de Human Rights Association (İHD) Istanbul Branch, sent a letter to Municipality Mayor Mustafa Demir on the demolition works. In the letter it was requested that research be carried out in relation to demolition works and that the Güldür family be compensated for their loss.

Between 24 March-11 May2007 while there was 40 days remaining till the demolition an event titled “The 40 days and 40 nights of Sulukule Events” was organized with the support and participation of NGO’s, volunteers, residents, academicians, and students. In the events panels that examined the different aspects of the region, musical workshops, photo and painting workshops, exhibitions, debates, and concerts were carried out. In this manner the potential of the region emerged and was promoted. The dangers confronting Sulukule was made public form positive perspective. The event was publicized in the press and on TV.9

On 17 May 2007 the subject was communicated to the 2010 Committee, and a meeting was under the auspices of the committee on 17 May 2007. The first part of the meeting comprised presentations on the subject: In the month of May the students in the region and the DPU(The Development Planning Unit University College London) which was carrying out work on participation planning presented an alternative planning approach, Mustafa Çiftçi from the Fatih Municipality, outlined the 30 projects the had developed for Sulukule and their approach; Prof. Yves Cabannes from DPU, made a speech that outlined the general terms of reference on the subject; 40 Days and 40 Nights Sulukule Platform, outlined the work carried out before and after the events in the region, and their observations and their recommendations. The second part continued with questions and answer sessions.. The meeting conclusion; a protocol agreement with multi partners to be included in the agenda rapidly, a multi participation commission to be formed and the suspension of the demolition and sale process. After the meeting the, 2010 Committee visited the Municipality and conducted the first meetings on the subject of a multi protocol .*

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9 http://40gun40gece-sulukule.blogspot.com
On **5 October 2007** The Istanbul Renewal Areas Cultural And Natural Assets Regional Protection Commission meeting was attended as NGO’s interested in the subject, and a presentation, on the 40 days and 40 nights of Sulukule Events event and its results, the results on the survey carried out in September and the area works results, the demolitions that had been started and their effect and the grievances of the residents during this process was.*

*Aslı Kıyk İngin, Sulukule Neighbourhood Inura Presentation

**On 1 November 2007** The Istanbul Renewal Areas Cultural and Natural Assets Regional Protection Commission and the Municipality authorities visited the Sulukule residents and to investigate the project area in situ. They listened to the grievances of the residents due to the process and their claims and requirements and took notes with the intention of including the salient points in the concept project.

**In 2 November 2007** The Sulukule Renewal Concept Project, was approved by the Istanbul Renewal Areas Cultural and Natural Assets Regional Protection Commission.

On **5 November 2007**’de Freedom and Solidarity Party (ÖDP) Member of Parliament for Istanbul Ufuk Uras, Republican Peoples Party (CHP) Member of Parliament for Istanbul Çetin Soysal and Prof. Dr. Baskın Oran visited Sulukule and listened to grievances of the residents. Soysal, said that the problem had been taken into hand by the Human Rights Commission of Parliament. After the meeting the grievance of the residents were transformed into petition form to be submitted to the commission. Uras stated that he was taking the Sulukule problem to TBMM – Turkish Parliament .

**On 6 November 2007** another meeting was organized with the theme “Who can contribute to the development of the project and what can be proposed?”. The meeting held in Istanbul 2010 Commission Meeting Rooms , was attended by Sulukule Platform representative Aslı Kıyk İngin, Local people and Sulukule Roman Culture Development and Solidarity Association representative Şükrü Pündük, Mehmet Erdal as the representative for the Istanbul Renewal Areas Cultural And Natural Assets Regional Protection Commission, Fatih Municipality Mayor Mustafa Demir and his consultant representing the Fatih Municipality and the project coordinator Mustafa Çiftçi.

**On 8 November 2007** The Sulukule problem was discussed in the European Commission. The meeting in Brussels was attended by Fatih Municipality Mayor Mustafa Demir and his consultant’s ile Korhan Gümüş and Hacer Foggo. The meeting was headed by the Turkish-EU Mixed Parliamentarian Commission Vice President Joost Lagendijk.

**On 14 November 2007** The Romans whose houses had been demolished within the scope of the urban transformation project in Sulukule sought support in the parliament. The Environment and Forestry Minister Veysel Eroğlu defended the project by saying "We value the residents of Sulukule. The Project is a magnificent project prepared with the intention of
preparing a beautiful environment in Sulukule. " Çetin Soysal made a speech on Sulukule in parliament.

On 22 November 2007 In the news article of Sevilay Yükselir in Gazetepor, it was claimed that the, Fatih Borough assistant President Lawyer Recep Karaoğlu and the members of parliament of the ruling party had purchased houses that were going to be made in Sulukule and that ETHICS committee that had been setup by the ruling party had requested the resignations of the people in question.

On 23 November 2007 Following the decision taken during the 6th of November meeting, the first meeting of the multi partner local plan development commission was held. The draft protocol prepared by the Sulukule Platform was presented to the views of the participants.

The authorized representatives that participated in the meetings of Fatih Municipality stated that all the work in relation to the work on Sulukule would be decided by the multi partner commission and Fatih Municipality Mayors Consultant Mustaфа Çifçi specifically stated on the meeting on November 2007 that no steps would be taken without a committee decision.

On 2 December 2007 A group of potential renters were taken in eight buses to the incomplete TOKİ apartment blocks at Gaziosmapaşa Taşoluk by Fatih Municipality to have a look.

On 7 December 2007 In order to reach a decision on the protocol text prepared on the work of the Multi partner commission, the Multi partner Plan Development Commission meeting was carried out by Fatih Municipality at Zübeyda Hanım Cultural Centre and its name and content was changed to “Civilian Initiative Platform Meeting”. Whereas this meeting was planned for the 30th of November, the Municipality saw fit to postpone the meeting one week. During this week the Municipality executed two important actions, one taking the Sulukule Renters to Taşoluk and having a draw. Therefore the article specified by the Multi partner Plan multi partner Plan Development Commission in the protocol that stated “all steps in the intervening period while the protocol was finalized and the start of work by the partners, including any implementations that might cause a change in the status of the peoples rights involved in the Sulukule Urban renewal Project, were to be suspended”, was violated. During this no proposals were brought by Fatih Municipality on the draft protocol and it was not signed. Therefore the joint decision taken at the 6 November meeting to create a Commission and work was not heeded and thus became unworkable.

* Multi partner Plan Development Commission draft protocol prepared by the Sulukule Platform

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12 radikal
On 18 December 2007 in the report prepared by the Chamber of Geologists, contrary to the claims of the Fatih Municipality that the area was a great earthquake risk, it was stated that the area was one of most secure areas in Istanbul from the point of view of ground structure.

While all these developments were taking place on December 2007 the “Neslişah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods Association” was setup by the Municipality.

31 December 2007 the Romans and the Roman rights defenders started litigation for the cancellation of the urban renewal project started by the Fatih Municipality. In the petition that was presented the enforcement of the project and its subsequent cancellation was requested. The lawyer for the plaintiffs Hilal Küey, reminded the court that the Istanbul 2. Administrative Court had given an order to stop the enforcement of the 1/100.000 scale plan on 8 November 2007, and further requested that “the continuance of the demolitions in spite of the decision is an open violation of the decision of the court and that the Municipality should stop its actions.”. Küey, stating that the 4th article of Act no 5366 “The Protection of Historical and Cultural Assets Through Renewal and utilization by making it Habitable Act” on expropriation was in violation of the constitution, also stated that the two members of the Renewal Commission that approved the Municipality plan were employed by the Municipality and emphasized that this represented “a violation of the defined objectivity ad partiality principles of law”. 14

On 4 January 2008 The Human Habitation Association, presented a 100 page petition and a detailed file for the inspection and the registration of 85 of the buildings in the area to the Natural Assets Protection Regional Commission. Later on the same a petition was presented to the no 4 Cultural and Natural Assets Protection Regional Commission on 25.01.2008 that was related to the subject. On the same day after submission of the file submitted to the renewal commission, that the demolition on the indicated buildings had been carried out.*

On 8 January 2008’de Replying to a parliamentary question on the urban renewal project at Sulukule the Culture and Tourism Minister Ertuğrul Günay, stated that the neighbourhood would be reshaped in accordance with the ottoman architecture and that the building construction drawings had been prepared by project designers that were university academicians. Günay stating that in place of the buildings that were planned for demolition, 21 different contiguous building types in 7 main architectural styles had been designed and that there was also an additional concept project that included 2 further buildings for accommodation and as commercial and cultural facilities.

On 17 January 2008 the TBMM Human Rights Investigation Commission closed the file on the “Sulukule urban renewal area”. And after evaluating the complaints that the urban renewal project planned for Sulukule by Fatih Municipality, the TBMM Human Rights Investigation Commission gave its final verdict and stated that there was no evidence that the Roman Culture that was existing at the moment in Sulukule would be destroyed. It was decided by the votes of the Commission members that belonged to the AKP and MHP parties that “The eviction of Sulukule residents from their homes was not a violation of human rights”.

14 bianet
On 9 February 2008 Turkish-EU Mixed Parliamentarian Commission Vice President Joost Lagendijk came to Turkey to investigate the problem on site and visited Sulukule. Lagendijk, emphasized that it was important to protect social structure of the area and that similar projects had been carried out in Europe and that many mistakes had been made in this area.

On 11 February 2008 The Fatih Municipality started the demolition work in the scope of the “urban renewal project” at Sulukule. In the first phase 9 houses that were previously determined were demolished. The president of the Sulukule Roman Culture Development and Solidarity Association, Şükrü Pündük made a declaration to the effect "On what grounds have they started demolition while the legal process is continuing. There are people that live here. If there is a decision to stop the project how they will be able compensate for their error”.

On 21 February 2008 Fatih Municipality demolished two buildings in Sulukule that had been registered as civilian architectural examples by the Istanbul No IV Cultural and Natural Assets Protection Commission.

The fact that there was a decision by the Commission to restore these buildings and the fact that they were demolished before this decision was enacted represented a clear violation of law. As a consequence the “Sulukule Platform” presented a petition to the protection commission requesting the start of the legal process

On 22 February 2008, the platform members made a criminal complaint to the Fatih Republic attorney General in relation to the demolition work.

On 7 March 2008 the Fatih Municipality workers placed the X and the Y symbols on the doors of houses that signified “enforced eviction” which still had families residing in them

On 13 March 2008 7 of the marked houses were demolished. While it was rumoured that the demolition was going to precede the, Sulukule Platform made press statement together with the neighbourhood residents in order to protest the demolitions. The number of houses demolished since September has reached 47. Also the Municipality demolition teams also “demolished by error” the neighbourhood coffee house. 15

On 19 March 2008 the 2. Group draw meeting was held. The Sulukule renters in this group took part in drawing the door numbers of the residences of the TOKİ residences at Gaziosmanpaşa Taşoluk that they would move into within the scope of this project. Also the president of the Roman Culture Development and Solidarity Association Şükrü Pündük, that had criticized the project from the day its inception also took to the stage and participated in the draw.16

15 bianet
16 www.fatih.bel.tr
On 19 March 2008 Prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, typified Sulukule as an aberration and said of the opponents of the demolition “They probably haven’t been to see Sulukule once. Even people that know noting about the subject are talking about it”.

On 20 March 2008 The Sulukule Platform replied to the prime minister that had said “We will save Sulukule from its state of aberration”: These people were not born as aberration, and neither was this neighbourhood designed as an aberration, the aberration is the fault of the administrators.

On 26 March 2008, the application by the Human Habitation Association, on the registration of 85 proposed buildings was finalized. 25 of the proposed buildings were considered as registrable and a decision was taken to stop the demolition of the 25 aforementioned houses and the request of the approved concept project on 2 November 2007 and inventory work. The decision was forwarded to the relevant institutions on 04 April 2008.*

*26 March 2008 No 4 Natural Assets Protection Regional Commission decision

On 4 Nisan 2008 The vice presidents of the Helsinki Commission Alcee Hastings and Ben Cardin, requested that the residents of the old neighbourhood be protected instead of implementing the renewal project and that the Roman people should be allowed to live there. The co chairmen of one of the most influential institutions of the American Parliament sent a letter to the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and asked for the cancellation of the demolition of Sulukule.17

On 7 Nisan 2008 T Fatih Municipality teams carried out demolition of 12 more houses within the scope moving Sulukule outside of Istanbul. Some of the house owners that had furniture in their houses were given an additional 24 hour grace period.

On the morning of 8 April 2008 the residents of Sulukule woke up to the sounds of bulldozers. On the day where 7 houses were demolished the people made press statement to the effect that “Today the 8 April World Roman Day, we the residents of Sulukule are in mourning instead of celebrating this day....”.

On 15 April 2008 The Roman director Tony Gatlif, who has many awards to his name for his films on the Romans, visited Sulukule, listened to the grievances of the people and danced to Roman music.

On 22 Nisan 2008 Sulukule Roman Association, applied to Fatih Municipality with 52 petitions for the removal of the demolition debris.

On 24 Nisan 2008, 7 year old Sezgin Say, was wounded due to falling concrete block while playin in the ruins opposite his house. The child whose right hand ring finger had been severed was operated on twice.

On 24 Nisan 2008 The Prime ministry Human Rights Directorate sent a letter on Sulukule to the Istanbul Governorship, Provincial Human Rights Commission. the content of the letter asked, “That the subject be included in the agenda of the Provincial Human Rights 17 milliyet

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Commission, and that the necessary investigations and research be carried out to reach a decision by that institution, whether there is a violation of human rights and to inform the Directorate accordingly of the proceedings.” *

* http://www.ihb.gov.tr/duyurular.htm

On 04 May 2008 A grand celebration of spring event was conducted near the Sulukule walls by the Sulukule platform and the Sulukule Roman Culture Development and Solidarity Association. The Turkish pop music star Sezen Aksu came to the celebrations in support of the Sulukule residents and asked for “Sulukule to be spared from demolition”. *


4.3. After the Law number 5366 of “Urban Renovation Areas” in Istanbul, the rising importance of being in the List of World Heritage of UNESCO: An evaluation over the Sulukule process.

Aslı Kıyak İngin, Architect, Human Settlement Association

Today and especially for the two years a new law and practice process began to become valid in historical sites including the areas in World Heritage List in Istanbul. A new period started in protection process with the article 5366 “Law on the Renovation, Protection and Use of Historical and Cultural Immovable Properties” issued on the Official Gazette in July 2005. Considering protection as a burden and even driving a nail needed an official permission are seen as a reason for the protection practice not so common in the community so far, incoming period with the new law started to indicate that the processes would progress more quickly then before. The law, as the attorney Ömer Aykul said, works as an urban transformation law. As the legal practitioners mentioned in a convention: related authorities and responsibilities started to pass to local municipalities from central governmental authority. The law does not associate with the Protection Law numbered 2863 and its aim is not clear. The law has some deficiencies about social and human aspects. It lacks participating. (The meeting named “Sulukule and 5366”)

The district of Sulukule is an important example as one of the first application areas of the Article of Renovation Areas numbered 5366. It should be examined in this respect and the process can go further after taking lessons from the issues encountered in the process.

- The declaration of Renovation Areas is put fourth by local municipalities to the great municipalities and then to the council of ministers. If accepted, it is proclaimed with the decree of the council of the ministers. When checked, it can be seen that the choosing criteria of the renovation area are not clear. According to the information given by the Chamber of Architects, Sulukule is the first area when there are 47 renovation areas to be proposed in Istanbul. Earthquake risk and being socially wreckage area are shown as reasons while Sulukule is proclaimed as Renovation Area. But on the other hand, it is stated that the area does not have any earthquake risk in the geology survey report.

- The residents of the area were informed by the newspaper that their registered houses had been expropriated all of a sudden. In a panic and uncertainty atmosphere, they
started to sell their properties. There was no struggle to raise the public awareness or no official explanation from the related authorities about that uncertainty.

- The district needs a social and economic improvement. And the residences of the neighborhood want to live in their restored houses with better living conditions. On the other hand, the surveys and observations in the neighborhood show that despite all shortages the people are happy to live in their district and they do not want to leave the neighborhood in any case.

- According to the model offered to landlords of the properties in the neighborhood under the preliminary project, their houses in which they live will be considered as debris and 500-600 YTL have been offered for each square meter of the house. This money will be taken by the municipality as the down payment and the landlord of the house will be debited for fifteen years and they will make payments during that time period. According to the public surveys, neighborhood residents will have difficulties in making regular payments for long time. In case the neighborhood residents will not afford it, then the people would withdraw the money that municipality had gave them proportionally to their property’s square meters. And then they would leave the neighborhood or sell their property to the third party offering the best price, as a result they would go in each situation.

- Even in the districts next to Sulukule renovation area, the price per square meter is 2-3 times more expensive than the price offered by municipality to the residents of Sulukule. And after completion of the project is finished, this amount is expected to excess other neighborhood district’s current prices and amount to 4-5 times more expensive price than today.

- According to the information from the municipality, the 2/3 of the area consists of the tenants. And many of them have been there for many years; even they have been in the neighborhood, in the house since they were born. Generally they are the tenants for a few square meters place in return for low rent. The offer to the tenants is, if they would leave the neighborhood, they would possess the ownership of a house of Mass Housing Administration of Turkey - known as TOKI - in Taşoluk 47 km away from the neighborhood, after regular payment of 15 years. But most of them first thought that this idea was good but now they do not know how they can afford to pay the installments varying from 300 YTL to 500 YTL. In addition to leaving the places they are used to, they would also go away from the places they work.

- The tenants are the very important parts of the culture and social structure of the neighborhood and also of the Roma culture. Their demand of staying in the neighborhood should be taken into consideration too, and a solution must be developed to that demand.

- Even there has been no confirmed application project yet, while the people continue to live in the neighborhood, making the demolition process at intervals and partially cause some earthquake effects in the district that proclaimed as renovation area because of earthquake risk. This hurts the people living there both materially and spiritually.

- There is a remarkable appreciation across the neighborhood resulting from the renovation law and project process. How this appreciation will be reflected on the
neighborhood is not defined; there is not any practice or approach which is said that they will be in favor of either tenants or landowners.

- Since the neighborhood has been proclaimed as renovation area and after that preliminary project has been confirmed, the third parties can come and purchase a house. In this area there is no measurement taken to prevent the landlords to sell their property during 5 years to the third party, unlike in the European Union project in Fener-Balat. On the contrary the municipality says that these measurements must be taken by the people in the district. But when the people have no many earnings, they rarely have the chance not to sell their property. That kind of measurements must have been determined and taken at the beginning of the process.

- The renovation process is applied in only physical structure, only as demolition of the neighborhood and reconstruction of the neighborhood. But social and economical improvements that must be considered before this physical improvement have been ignored and doing this is too late now.

- Preliminary project did not include the participating process. The demands and needs of the neighborhood residents were not taken into consideration and not put in the project.

- Our proposal including evaluation over participation of Preliminary Project of multi-partnered commission for developing plans is not adopted by the municipality.

- The square meter sizes at the beginning of the project have increased as time passed. The landlords’ demands are used for the reason. In the confirmed project there are 120 units 120m² houses, even there are 180m² duplex houses. In addition to that, there seems to be hobby rooms in the projects exhibited at the municipalities.

- According to that public surveys done in the district, the %4 of the people have cars; but there are parking areas under all new buildings.

- Construction of the double sized houses comparing to the old silhouette of the street will be in the construction plan. A few protected houses will be overwhelmed by the view of the houses next to the old houses. By doing this, current street structure and common height in the street can not be protected.

- The property structure of the district has been changed by changing parcels in the district. And new parcel system is defined. This system is hard to say to be continued. The preliminary project handles the district as an empty area and offers a project that is offered to any ordinary place.

- Because the parcel structure is ignored at the beginning, there is no chance for the people to live in the same house and street and they have lost the chance for repairing the houses by themselves.
4.4. The Social-Economical Impacts of Urban Transformation Process in Sulukule

*Edited by Pelin Tan, sociologist, Istanbul Technical University*

**Summary:**

- The habitants of Sulukule are facing socio-economical difficulties that is the outcome of displacement process, which is called “Urban Transformation and Renewal”. The process that aims to renew the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul for urban marketing and global investment began to clean/displace the areas that are ethnically marked by urban poor. Instead of creating socio-political agendas and upgrading the economical conditions of the social communities, the physical demolishment aims to clean them from the areas.

- During the process, poor habitants lose their right of dwelling and houses and force to move to out from the city, which is far from the city center that, especially Romany people cannot follow up their jobs.

- Children and women are the most disadvantaged habitants who do suffer from the process. The children fear to go to their school since the demolishment of the houses began in the neighbourhood. Because they think that their houses will be demolish while they are in the school and also they will lose their friends, relatives.

- The transformation and renewal process is combined with a “criminalization” discourse that marks the Romany people as the most lower community in the social order of Turkey. Sulukule district is continuously marked by the state as “insecure”, “dangerous”, a place with full of “prostitution” in Media. The “criminalization” discourse is a tool to justify the activities of the state and municipalities that forces the urban transformation process.

- Besides the Sulukule Association, another association is established 6 months ago led by the Fatih Municipality that provide information about getting houses in Taşoluk and moving there. Also the association helps the people (who do wants to live in Taşoluk) by providing food, coal and money that are funded by Municipality (through the “poverty fund” of Government). The political strategy of providing help to people who wants to move from the district is leading a segregation in the community / district.

- The outcome of the process such as the condition of the habitants who lose their houses, “criminalization” discourse in the media, the rejection of the existence of Romany culture, the increasing closure of economical opportunities in this area and the dissolution of the texture of this peculiar neighbourhood does effect the social and physiological condition of the people who lives here. Eventually a strong social breakdown in the future is being expected that that can lead to an urban/social conflict in Istanbul. An “exclusive urbanism” that strengthened the discrimination of “otherness” that is being developed in this area.

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18 Hacer Foggo / member of Sulukule Platform
Current and future Social and Economical segregation are supported by the political agendas of Municipality within the urban transformation.

Romany/Gypsy: The Romany/Gypsy population (%80 of total population of the district) and its communal identity give a peculiar meaning of Sulukule. Since centuries, the people of this community provide their music and culture for the city. Sulukule with entertainment houses (that provide Gypsy music) have been closed down in the early 1990s that created an economically disadvantaged place where most habitants lost their jobs. Nowadays, children and women facing poverty and urban poorness marks this district, differs it from the other districts. Gypsy culture is a worldwide strong unique culture, which often the municipality and its association are rejecting its existence in the society. For them Gypsy culture doesn’t exists.

Rights of Dwelling: The urban transformation of Sulukule divides the community into two groups: tenants and owners. The Municipality and its association in the district (Neslişah Neighbourhood Association) try to convince the owners to sell their houses for a very cheap price and offers to buy houses with a mortgage system. According to the current state: buildings (10) are destroyed by the municipality, 100 families who can’t prove their rights and ownership are on the street, 300 people left the district either to live with their relatives or near districts, 437 tenants proved that they own before 2005. 60 families are so poor that either they cannot afford to rent another house or move to Taşoluk. Elderly people and alone women with children suffer the most. They are facing with serious risk of poverty.

“Neighbourhood”: “Neighbourhood” is a micro-spatial element in the cities that provides local urban practices, which contribute the identity of global cities. A neighbourhood doesn’t represent only a simple physical structure but also an intertwined social network. Sulukule is one of the oldest neighbourhoods since early centuries of Ottoman Empire that is surrounded with historical heritage lasted from Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Eventually, Sulukule is a peculiar example of an urban space that represents an intertwined historical, social (ethnically identified community) and physical traces and a network. The features of this district richness the urban life and present a unique cultural heritage of Istanbul. The forced transformation of the district led some habitants to leave their places; some people remained without houses that they began to move to the relatives. In summary, the displacement process leads to break the neighbourhood network that also affect in losing the identity of the place.

Taşoluk / TOKİ: Taşoluk district is placed in the northwest area of İstanbul, outside (40 km) of the city centers. The housing area has been build by TOKİ (Housing Development Administration of Turkey), a department that is closely involved with housing constructing. TOKİ describes generally their activity as building “social housing” and they are offering several mortgage systems to the people who wants to move to housing areas of TOKİ. TOKİ’s houses are 2km far from the neighbourhood Adnan Menderes, which is nearest district in Taşoluk. The housing area is for poor people, 1411 houses/apartments and expected population is 5000 habitant. The municipality forces to move the Gypsies/Romany to this area and offers them several types of process of payment. The municipality buys their

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19 Ashlı Kıyak / member of Sulukule Platform  
20 Neşe Özan / member of Sulukule Platform  
21 The sizes of the flats: 75 m², 2+1, 200 of the flats are 130 m² 3+1
houses from the owners for a very cheap price and with mortgage it offers to buy houses in Taşoluk.

**Socio-Economical Condition**

**Monthly Salary:**
- Lower than 300 Turkish Lira (%25 of total population)
- Lower than 500 Turkish Lira (%45 of total population)

**Since when they live in the neighbourhood?**
- 10 or more than 10 year (% 83 of total population)
- 40 or more than 40 years (%30.4 of total population)
- 30 or more than 30 years (%43.4 of total population)
- %49.5 of total population lives since they born.

**M² of their houses?**
- Under 50 m² (%16 of total houses)
- Under 70m² (%31 of total houses)

**Since how many years are they living in Istanbul?**
- %98: live at least since 10 years.
- %84: live at least since 20 years or more.
- %64: live at least since 30 or more.
- %42: live at least since 40 or more
- %76: birthplace is Istanbul.

**Since when are they living in the same house?**
- % 63: live10 years or more.
- % 41: live 20 years or more.
- % 24: live 30 years or more.
- % 13: live 40 years or more.
- % 51.6 of total population live in the same Neighbourhood even before moving to their current houses.
- %19 of total population live in the same house since they born.

**Profile**
- % 48.5 owner, % 51.5 tenant or user without paying rent.
- % 10.5 user without paying rent.

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22 The Surveys are conducted by Tolga Islam / his group (Yıldız Technical University)
• % 54 live in apartment, % 46 live in houses
• Family members: approximately 3.86 (how many people in the family?)
• Size of houses, approx: 4.06 (how many people in house?)

**Education**
• % 71 of total population has 5 (or less) years education
• They have approximately 5.7 years education.

**Numbers of Rooms in Houses**
• %5 lives in one room
• %23.2 lives in two 2 rooms
• %57 lives in 3 room
• %15 lives more then in 3 rooms

**Monthly Rent**
• % 13: less then 100 Turkish Lira
• % 60: less then 200 YTL.
• % 80 (81.3): less then 300 YTL
• % 16: do not have water in their houses
• The Municipality told to % 54 of the owners that if they do not accept the agreement for moving out, the Municipality will change the state of the property as state owned property.
• % 56 of owners still didn’t meet the Municipality.
• % 37 of tenants did apply to Taşoluk houses.
• %20: owner did sell their houses to individuals
• % 24: gives support to the project of Municipality
• % 66.3: is happy to live in this Neighbourhood.
• %56: is confidence of the security of the Neighbourhood.
• %20: did sell their houses to persons.
• %75: are happy that they sold out their houses
• %62: don’t think to register to Sulukule houses.
• %55: don’t have any legal documents that confirm that they tenants
• %37 of Tenants didn’t apply to Taşoluk houses.
• %63.5: does not have social security
• %67: doesn’t have a job
• %67: looking for a job
• %38: have green card
• %88: doesn’t own any property.
• %5: has a car.
• %21: confirms that he/she is a Romany
• % 7.5 of the population thinks that the municipality asked for their opinion about the renewal project.

Question 47: Do any of your family member face any condition that is indicated below?
• % 46 of the families do not have any family member who faces the conditions below
• % 45: has one family member who is ill
• % 6: has one family member in prison
• % 3.5: has one family member who has problem with alcohol and drug
• % 16.5: has one family member who is really poor

Household Survey 2007 September

The survey is conducted in September 2007 at randomly selected 100 different units within the boundaries of the regeneration area. 44% of the respondents are residing in Hatice Sultan Neighborhood, whereas 56% are residing in Neslisah Sultan Neighborhood.

Duration of residence: The respondents have been living in Istanbul for a significant period. 64% of the population has been living in the city for more than 30 years, whereas 42% more than 40 years. Only 2% of the population has been living in Istanbul for less than 10 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Spent in the Neighborhood</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17,4</td>
<td>17,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16,3</td>
<td>33,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22,8</td>
<td>56,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>69,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30,4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The respondents have strong ties with the neighborhood regarding the time spent in the neighborhood. Half of the respondents state that (49%) they have been living in the neighborhood since their birth. Around one third of the respondents (30.4%) have been living in the neighborhood for 40 years or more, 43% for 30 years or more and 66% for 20 years or more.

**Years Spent in the Current House**

The residents have a tendency to stay in the same residence for a long period. 41% of the respondents have been living in the same house for 20 or more years and around one fourth (25%) for more than 30 years. The previous location for half of the respondents (49%) is within the boundaries of Hatice Sultan and Neslisah Sultan neighborhood.
Satisfaction with the neighborhood:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Satisfied Are You With The Neighborhood?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether satisfied or dissatisfied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of the respondents state that they are **satisfied with** their neighborhood (65%), whereas 29% state their dissatisfaction. The satisfaction about the security level is still high but somewhat lower than that of neighborhood. More than half of the population (55%) state that they are satisfied with the security level of the neighborhood, whereas 36% state their dissatisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Satisfied Are You With the Security of the Neighborhood?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35,7</td>
<td>35,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether satisfied or dissatisfied</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8,2</td>
<td>43,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56,1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Living Conditions:
16% of the respondents state that they do not have running water at their house as a result of accumulated debts at the time when the surveys were conducted. These residents use the fountains in the neighborhoods as a source of water. They are not willing to pay their bills because of the economic constraints and the indecisive atmosphere due to the declared regeneration project.
9% of the respondents state that they do not have a toilet unit within their homes. These residents usually share the toilet unit outside their homes with other families. The answers to this and previous question show the huge disparity in terms of living conditions between a certain segment in Sulukule and the rest of the city.

Socio-Economic Indicators:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent Values</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14,3</td>
<td>14,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 - 199</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>42,9</td>
<td>57,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 - 299</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22,9</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 - 399</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11,4</td>
<td>91,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8,6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the survey, the average rent levels in the two neighborhoods is 187.57 YTL, which is far below the average rent levels in Istanbul, which was 457 YTL in 2006. Almost half of the respondents are paying between 100 and 200 YTL for rent, 57% pay less than 200 YTL and 80% pay less than 300 YTL.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Levels</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 YTL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;100 YTL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-200 YTL</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-300</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301-400</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401-500</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-750</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>751-1000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001-1250</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1501-2000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>97.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;2000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Around half of the respondents’ families (45.7%) have an income of 500 YTL or less per month, one fourth (25.5%) have 300 YTL or less. Only 7.5% of the respondents have a monthly income of 1000 YTL or more. 32% of the respondents state that they are getting external aid and 88% of the respondents state that neither they nor any member of their families have a car, a house or land elsewhere. The income and rent levels reflect the poor socio-economic conditions of the Sulukule residents.

23 The city average for rent levels was 457.15 YTL as of December 2006 (Radikal, 2007, January 01, “Kira artış enflasyonu ikiye katladi”: http://213.243.28.21/haber.php?haberno=209378 –accessed on May 03, 2007)

24 These income figures are the total amount of money that is earned by the whole members of the households.
35% of the respondents are actively working. Informal jobs form the dominant occupation pattern in the neighborhood. 60% of the respondents declare that they have no ties with the social security system. The fact that 28% of the respondents’ families have at least one member holding a green card also highlights the informal employment structure. 67% of the respondents stated that no member in their families is looking for a job. On the other hand, around one fourth (22%) state having one household and 9% state two households looking for a job in their families.

The respondents have low education levels as well. The average years of education for the respondents is 5.63 years. 71% of the respondents have up to 5 years of education, with only 4% with an university degree.

Other descriptive indicators:
- The respondents mostly belong the nuclear families. Only 6% of the respondents live in units where same unit is shared by more than one family. 70% of the families consist of 4 households or less, around half of them consist of 3 or 4 households. Only 6% of the families have more than 6 members.
- 10% of the respondents state that there is at least one musician in their families.
- When asked whether they were a Roma citizen, 79% of the respondents answered as “No”.
- 54% of the respondents are living in apartment units, whereas 46% live in single family houses.
- 48% of the respondents consist of homeowners, 42 of renters and 10% of non-payer users.
- 27% of the respondents are under 30 years, 37 are between 31-49 and 36% are above 50.
- 65% of the respondents consist of females.
- 72% of the respondents were married, 10% were single and 18% were widows.

Attitude towards the project:
The respondents feel that their opinions are not granted by the municipality during the preparation of the project. When asked whether they think that their opinions are taken into account by the municipality, only 7% of the respondents answer as “yes”. On the other hand, 10% of the respondents believe that their opinions are not taken into account. The remaining 83% declare that they have no idea whether their opinions are taken into account or not (which may also be regarded as an indicator showing that their opinions are not asked for)

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25 We have asked how many kitchens are there within the house to discern the number of families living in one unit. We assumed that each kitchen is used by one family.

26 The following question is asked to the respondents to learn the number of musicians in their family: “Is there any musician in your family who plays an instrument, sings a song or performing a dance?”
The attitude of the respondents about the regeneration project is quite clear. **66% of the respondents declare that they do not support the current regeneration project.** Only 23% of the respondents state their support to the project.
HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

Map in 1893

Ottoman House Properties Paper
ENTERTAINMENT TRADITION IN SULUKULE
SULUKULE TODAY

TARİHİ YARIMADA 1995 YILI SİT BÖLGELEMESİ

SULUKULE PLATFORM
Sulukule takes place in the Historical Peninsula and the Historical Protection Area.

- The Conservation Border of Sulukule which developed by the Unesco Criterias of 70’s coincidence with the Regeneration Border of the Area.
- According as the Conservation Plan Decisions There has to be two floors limitation.

Sulukule Regeneration Area: aprx. 80,000 m²

- 645 Eligible of The House Numbers
- 759 Eligible of the Share Holders
- 378 numbers of Building Plot
- 45 Registered Buildings (building plots)
- 474 Eligible of the Renters
What should be the obligatory components in Sulukule Planning Data?

**PRIORITY TARGET**
**INCREASING ECONOMIC LIFE STANDARDS**

- New business opportunities
- Service to music industry
- To make the region as a art and culture plateau, to market such image, open exhibition areas and etc.
- To increase employment opportunities in manufacturing and service industry by educating the labor force

**SOCIAL PLANNING**
Training programs for different layers
- children
- youth
- women
- adults/ labor force

**SPATIAL PLANNING**

- Function (Historical Peninsula): The region is a house settlement area and the functions required for a house settlement area:
  - **Houses**
  - **Social Fittings**
    - Education
    - Culture
    - Health
    - Green Area

- The tissue having the historical sustainability in which the historical sustainability exists should be preserved
- A model should be applied emphasizing:
  - Protection
  - Improvement
  - Reviving
  - And not demolishing the existing values.
- Transportation

**SULUKULE INTEGRATED INTO CITY LIFE BY INCREASING LIFE QUALITY**
housing units around courtyards are reflecting social life and functional usage of spaces.
SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN SULUKULE

Social structure analysis according to field survey of Sulukule platform in September 2007.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature of the neighborhood</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>How much YTL rental is paid</th>
<th>Monthly household income YTL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very hot</td>
<td>I agree</td>
<td>under 250</td>
<td>1000 - 1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot</td>
<td>I agree</td>
<td>250 - 350</td>
<td>800 - 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>I agree</td>
<td>350 - 450</td>
<td>600 - 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cool</td>
<td>I agree</td>
<td>over 450</td>
<td>400 - 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cold</td>
<td>I agree</td>
<td>not sure</td>
<td>200 - 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since when have the inhabitants been living in the neighborhood?

- less than 5 years
- 5 - 10 years
- more than 10 years

Education:

- primary
- secondary
- tertiary
- other

Income:

- less than 250
- 250 - 500
- 500 - 1000
- 1000 - 1500
- over 1500
40 DAYS 40 NIGHTS SULUKULE
PARTICIPATION AND MOBILIZATION IN SULUKULE
THE PROJECT WAS ACCEPTED BY THE RENOVATION BOARD (picture1: existing situation, picture2: renewal project)
NOVEMBER 2nd, 2007
APPROVED PROJECT OF MUNICIPALITY
LISTED BUILDINGS AND PROPOSED CIVILIAN ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS by HSA
Proposed Wooden Houses
Proposed plastered wooden houses
Proposed Bricked Houses
DEMOLITIONS listed Buildings by Fatih Municipality
Demolitions Proposed Buildings by Fatih Municipality
Appendix 1

5366 – Law on the Protection by means of Restoration and Perpetuation by means of Usage of Worn Historical and Cultural Real Properties

05 July 2005 Dated Official Gazette
Number: 25866

Law on the Protection by means of Restoration and Perpetuation by means of Usage of Worn Historical and Cultural Real Properties

Law Number: 5366
Date of Acceptance: 16.06.2005

Intent and Scope
PROVISION 1. — The intent of this law is, restoration and reconstruction of areas entered in official register and announced as protected areas by cultural and natural heritage protection commissions and the protected areas related with this districts which is worn and up to loose their characteristics in accordance with the development of the district and creating and building residential, commercial, cultural, tourism and social lands, taking preventive measures against natural disaster risks, protection of historical and cultural immovable properties by means of restorations and usage of them by means of perpetuation by the metropolitan municipalities, county and first grade municipalities, within the metropolitan municipality territories, province and county municipalities and by the municipalities that have more than 50,000 population and by the special provincial administrations outside of these municipalities’ province.

This law, includes the methods, bases and guidelines related with the determination of the restoration areas to be created and performed in accordance with the intents stated above, determination of technical infrastructure and structural standards, preparing the projects of them and performance, organization, administration, control and inspection, contribution and usage.

Determination of the Areas
PROVISION 2. — Restoration areas must be determined by the decision passed by absolute majority of whole number of members at the provincial council of special provincial administrations and municipal council of municipalities. The decisions taken by the provincial council of special provincial administrations and municipal council of municipalities, which are at the outside of municipalities’ province, must be presented to Council of Ministers Cabinet. And at the metropolitan municipalities, these decisions to be taken by the municipal councils of county and first grade municipalities, must be presented to the Council of Ministers Cabinet in case they are approved by the municipal council of metropolitan municipalities. Council of Ministers Cabinet must make decision on whether the project will be performed or not, within three months.

The performance of the project at the areas approved by the Council of Ministers Cabinet may be prepared as projects divided into several phases in accordance with a program.

The phase of the project and program must be put into practice after the decision of absolute majority of whole number of members at the council and approval of the mayor at the municipalities and after the approval of governor at the special provincial administrations.

All and any kind of immovable within the borders of determined area, will be subject to the provisions of the restoration project to be prepared in accordance with this law after taking the decision by the protection of cultural and natural heritage council on the restoration projects to be prepared by the municipalities and special provincial administrations. The restoration projects within the borders of metropolitan municipalities beside the ones to be performed by them, will come into force by being approved by the mayor of metropolitan municipality after preparing of the projects by county and first grade municipalities and acceptance of them by the municipal councils. The required nationalization and practice will be performed in accordance with this procedure.

The methods, bases and guidelines related with preparing the technical infrastructure and
constructional standards of the restoration areas, contribution of the administrations of these areas and the rightful owners residing at the organization and practice areas and the residents of the region must be determined by the regulations.

Performance

PROVISION 3. — The restoration projects prepared by the special provincial administrations and municipalities or get them prepared and performance of these projects at the areas determined as the restoration areas must be performed by means of the related special provincial administrations and municipalities or have they performed by public institutions and foundations or natural and legal persons and private corporations. It is possible to perform the projects at these areas either as the corporations and partnerships with the Housing Development Administration of Turkey, or also they may be performed just by Housing Development Administration of Turkey alone.

The performances, which are not initiated by the metropolitan municipalities in the metropolitan regions, may be performed or have they performed just by county and first grade municipalities alone or as joint.

While the performances at the construction parcels inside the restoration areas, the buildings to be restored as keeping its own original parcel and construction as the same, may be done by the owner of the parcel, as contingent on not destroying the integrity of the project and being subject to the project accepted and approved by the municipality and as being used in accordance with the intent determined by the municipality and special provincial administration. In case of these situations, it is the main principle to initiate and complete the performance and project at the same time. In case of a situation contrary to this, provisions of this law will be performed by the municipalities and special provincial administrations.

While the performance of restoration projects at the restoration areas, at the areas that they are assumed by the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement as include natural disaster risk, municipalities and special provincial administrations may make required arrangements including cancellation and forbid some activities at the determined areas related with the restoration projects. The methods, bases and guidelines related with this subject will be determined by means of regulations.

All and any kind of inspections and controls must be performed or have performed by the related municipality and special provincial administration and resulted by them. All these procedures must have performed by means of specialists, institutions and teams in accordance with the characteristics of the related project.

The performances at the restoration areas will be free from all and any kind of taxes, charges and expenses.

Required number of Regional Commissions of the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage must be organized in accordance with the 51st provision of law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage numbered as 2863 to approve the restoration projects. The projects approved by the commission will be performed by the municipalities and special provincial administrations.

The merchandise and service purchases and constructions related with the performances at the restoration areas are free from all and any kind of the provisions of Public Tender Law numbered as 4734, with the exception of penalties and jurisdictions of banning from the bids.

The restoration projects are formed of building survey, restitution and restoration projects of the cultural and natural immovable within the performance area and the projects of buildings to be reconstructed defined at the development laws and regulations.

Limitations of immovable savings and nationalization

PROVISION 4. — Special provincial administrations and municipalities may perform all and any kind of temporary limitations over the immovable exist at the areas declared as the restoration areas including all and any kind of constructions, usage and operations until the completion of the project. The main principle while evacuating, demolition and nationalization of the buildings is composition and agreement methods. In case the situation that it is not possible come to a composition, the immovable owned by natural and legal persons and private corporations may be nationalized by the related special provincial administrations and municipalities. The nationalizations to be made under in accordance with this law will be considered as the nationalizations done for performance of settlement projects under the coverage of second clause of 3rd Provision of Nationalization Law numbered as 2942. Also for the immovable that title space in the land register is open and the
immovable, which heir of them are unknown, under dispute, requiring a lawsuit and immovable that incorporeal rights on property established over them nationalization processes are carried on in accordance with the provisions of the same article. While carrying on the nationalization procedures special provincial administrations and municipalities are authorized having to get probate decision, application of a trustee or to carry on the process regarding the last titleholder registered at the land registry office.

The special provincial administrations and municipalities may purchase or establish incorporeal rights over the property in return for flat received from the contractor for landownership and may establish incorporeal rights on property by means of the establishment of usufruct rights or right of construction regulated in accordance with the related provisions of the Turkish Civil Law numbered as 4721, instead of nationalization of those immovable in case they assume this is proper.

The immovable belong to revenue office within the restoration area; will be transferred to the special provincial administrations and municipalities carrying on the project without the requirement of any other process and any cost. In case the project turns to a revenue generating business, the twenty five percentage of the income after deducting the project and performance costs, will be given to revenue office. The processes related with the transfer will be done by the related real estate recording office upon the request of the special provincial administration and municipality. These processes are free from all and any kind of taxes, charges and expenses. At the lands declared as restoration areas, the immovable under the coverage of restoration project can not be sold, rent and allocated by the revenue office.

Transfers may be done from the contributions account of Protection of Immovable Cultural Goods founded in accordance with the 12th provision of Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage numbered as 2863 to municipalities for the usage while the nationalization, plan, project and construction works at the projects within the restoration areas.

For the areas, lands, constructions and facilities allocated for Ministry of National Defense, the lands under the coverage ofMilitary Forbidden Zones and Security Zones Law numbered as 2565, civil and military airfields, lands under the coverage of detainment plans, schools whose ownership belong to Ministry of Education, immovable whose ownership or administration belong to General Directorate of Foundations and the immovable which include foundation commentary over them at the records of land registry office how the provisions of this law will be implemented is determined by the Ministry of National Defense, related Ministry or General Directorate of Foundations and provincial administration and municipality collectively.

Establishment of limited incorporeal rights on property

PROVISION 5. — The buildings and their premises in the hand of Public Foundations and Institutions that carry the characteristics of historical buildings, may be allocated to non-trading corporations, foundations, professional organizations carry the characteristics of public institutions and other public foundations and institutions, universities for education, health, cultural and social purposes and may be allocated to natural and legal persons and private corporations as establishment of limited incorporeal rights on these properties for commercial purposes, by means of making their restorations in accordance with their original construction and/or keeping their historical characteristics and keeping their ownership under the related public foundations and institutions.

The methods, bases and guidelines related with the establishment of limited incorporeal rights on property and the prices and the usage term will be determined by the related public foundations and institutions in accordance with the Turkish Civil Law, special Provincial Administration Law, Municipalities Law and other relevant regulations.

Regulations

PROVISION 6. — The regulations related with the application of this law will be put into force within three months beginning from the publication date of the law by Council of Ministers Cabinet upon the proposal of Interior Ministry.

Provisions not to be applied

PROVISION 7. — The provisions of other laws contrary to this law, saving for the responsibilities rise from international law at the restoration areas under the coverage of this law will not be applied.

Effective
PROVISION 8. — This law will come into force beginning from the date of publication.

Enforcement

PROVISION 9. — The provisions of this law will be enforced by the Council of Ministers Cabinet. 4 July 2005
Appendix 2

The Protocol of the Multi Partners Planning Evaluation Commission

Dear Renewal Areas Cultural and Natural Possessions Conservation Region Council,

The fundamental problem of Sulukule Urban Renewal Project, in this stage, is the absence of participants. So Civil Public Organizations, local participants and Fatih Mayor decided to take part in a management model of incorporated.

On 6th November 2007, a meeting was held and it was agreed that another meeting is going to be held with more participants again.

At the next meeting held on 23rd November 2007 the first step about incorporated committee was taken and the protocol draft text which was prepared by Sulukule Platform was asked to the participants for their opinions.

Fatih municipality representatives who have taken part at the committee meetings said that all the studies about Sulukule will be decided by the committee. Also, Mustafa Çiftçi, who is Fatih Mayor’s consultant, took part at the meeting which was held on 23rd November 2007 and ensured that the municipality is going to do nothing without the decision of the committee.

The revised version of the protocol draft text, that determines the working principals of the incorporated committee, was given in the additions part below.

As stated in the 5th item of the protocol, it is an obligation that all the supposed studies; even the applications, which are going to change the statues of right holders at the Sulukule Urban Renewal Project, will be delayed until the protocol becomes definite and the partners start working. But we are worried about that; in spite of Mustafa Çiftçi’s undertaking at the protocol, Fatih Municipality changed the date of the meeting from 30th November 2007 to 7th December 2007 and announced Sulukule inhabitants that there will be a drawing of lots on 4th December. Therefore, the studies of the committee slowed down.

Yours,

Sulukule Platform
PROTOCOL FOR INCORPORATED LOCAL PLAN IMPROVING COMMITTEE
ESTABLISHMENT AND ITS STUDIES
At the meeting which has been held for the second time in Istanbul 2010 AKB Committee Building on 6th November 2007 (the first meeting was on 17th May 2007) Istanbul 2010 AKB Committee Representatives, Fatih Mayor, Municipality authorized people, Urban Renewal Committee President and Member, Sulukule Romany Culture Improving and Solidarity Association, Human Settlement Association, Anatolian Culture Association and Helsinki Citizens Association, Sulukule Platform have decided to establish an Incorporated Local Plan Improving Committee. After that, one more meeting has been held about this committee on 23rd November 2007. In this meeting, he incorporated committee’s pre-protocol proposal has been presented and sides have made a decision on improving this draft.

The attempt of associations and institutions, suggests that an incorporated committee will be founded and the responsibilities of both sides will be fixed by a protocol between them in order to reach a conclusion which was adopted by Sulukule Street Inhabitants by going over the current plan about Sulukule in a participating way.

At the end of the Incorporated Committee Studies, the current plan will be gone over again and adaptation will be done according to needs of the inhabitants and so the demands and approaches of both sides will be taken into consideration, and also by discussion and by the help of experts new plan arrangement will be able to ensured.

The suggested Incorporated Local Plan Committee’s study will start by a protocol which will be signed by the sides.

Protocol Agreement

1. Aim of the Protocol: An incorporated committee will be founded and the responsibilities of both sides will be fixed by a protocol between them in order to reach a conclusion which was adopted by Sulukule Street Inhabitants by going over the current plan about Sulukule in a participating way. And also the aim is to determine the principals about the evaluation of the suggestions concerning the plan.

2. The sides of the Protocol: The institutions and the people who will sign the protocol decline that they will carry out their responsibilities on the study of examining the current plan of Sulukule Street and improving it. The information about the sides is given in add 1.

3. Working Type: The both protocol sides will appoint a person and these representatives will come together and have incorporated committee meetings so as to ensure coordination and communication. The sides will complete their duties on time which was determined by the committee and they will present their suggestions to the committee as a report.

4. Working Stages and Schedule: The stages of Plan examining study and the working schedule will be agreed on in the first meeting of the committee.

5. The Responsibilities: In the first meeting of the incorporated committee, it will be agreed on what the responsibilities of the sides who participated the “Plan Examining Study” by their signatures are. The protocol sides will help each other on sharing necessary data during the studies. The sides ensure that until the plan improving studies, which were clarified in the protocol, come to an end they will avoid from any attempt or an application (nationalization, destruction, drawing of lots, etc.) which will change the status of the right holders in Neslişah Street and Hatice Sultan Street.

6. Sharing The Studies With Public Opinion: it is base that all the decisions and the revealing conclusions will be shared with the public opinion. This sharing will be carried out not only by national associations and press, but also by European Parliament, UNESCO Observation Group, related departments of United Nations in the platforms such as;
written notifications and web sites. The report which is agreed on by the committee will be announced to the public opinion with a press conference.

7. Application Process and Pursuit: Sulukule Platform is ready to take the responsibility about the meetings of the committee, facilitating and coordinating the studies. Sulukule Platform undertakes the pursuit of the application process and the evaluation after the protocol completes its study.

ADDITION 1:

The Protocol Sides Are Suggested To Be:

Istanbul Governorship
Istanbul Municipality
TR Cultural and Tourism Ministry Istanbul Cultural Directorship
Fatih Municipality
Sulukule Romany Culture Improving and Solidarity Association
Sulukule Platform
ICOMOS Turkey National Committee
UNESCO Istanbul Observation Committee
Istanbul 2010 European Cultural Capital Agency
Istanbul Architects Associations
Istanbul City Planners Associations
Human Settlement Association
Anatolian Culture
Helsinki Citizens Association
Boğaziçi University Social Politics Forum
Universities
Appendix 3

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY 2007 SEPTEMBER / Tolga İslam & Sulukule Platform

The survey is conducted in September 2007 at randomly selected 100 different units within the boundaries of the regeneration area. 44% of the respondents are residing in Hatice Sultan Neighborhood, whereas 56% are residing in Neslisah Sultan Neighborhood.

**Duration of residence:**

The respondents have been living in Istanbul for a significant period. 64% of the population has been living in the city for more than 30 years, whereas 42% more than 40 years. Only 2% of the population has been living in Istanbul for less than 10 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Spent in the Neighborhood</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17,4</td>
<td>17,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16,3</td>
<td>33,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22,8</td>
<td>56,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>69,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40+</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30,4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents have strong ties with the neighborhood regarding the time spent in the neighborhood. Half of the respondents state that (49%) they have been living in the neighborhood since their birth. Around one third of the respondents (30.4%) have been living in the neighborhood for 40 years or more, 43% for 30 years or more and 66% for 20 years or more.

**Years Spent in the Current House**
The residents have a tendency to stay in the same residence for a long period. 41% of the respondents have been living in the same house for 20 or more years and around one fourth (25%) for more than 30 years. The previous location for half of the respondents (49%) is within the boundaries of Hatice Sultan and Neslisah Sultan neighborhood.

**Satisfaction with the neighborhood:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Satisfied Are You With The Neighborhood?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether satisfied or dissatisfied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of the respondents state that they are **satisfied with** their neighborhood (65%), whereas 29% state their dissatisfaction. The satisfaction about the security level is still high but somewhat
lower than that of neighborhood. More than half of the population (55%) state that they are satisfied with the security level of the neighborhood, whereas 36% state their dissatisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Satisfied Are You With the Security of the Neighborhood?</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether satisfied or dissatisfied</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Living Conditions:

16% of the respondents state that they do not have running water at their house as a result of accumulated debts at the time when the surveys were conducted. These residents use the fountains in the neighborhoods as a source of water. They are not willing to pay their bills because of the economic constraints and the indecisive atmosphere due to the declared regeneration project.

9% of the respondents state that they do not have a toilet unit within their homes. These residents usually share the toilet unit outside their homes with other families. The answers to this and previous question show the huge disparity in terms of living conditions between a certain segment in Sulukule and the rest of the city.

Socio-Economic Indicators:

| Rent Values |
According to the survey, the average rent levels in the two neighborhoods is 187.57 YTL, which is far below the average rent levels in Istanbul, which was 457 YTL in 2006\textsuperscript{27}. Almost half of the respondents are paying between 100 and 200 YTL for rent, 57% pay less than 200 YTL and 80% pay less than 300 TYL.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Frequency & Valid Percent & Cumulative Percent \\
\hline
<100 & 5 & 14.3 & 14.3 \\
100 - 199 & 15 & 42.9 & 57.1 \\
200 - 299 & 8 & 22.9 & 80 \\
300 - 399 & 4 & 11.4 & 91.4 \\
400+ & 3 & 8.6 & 100 \\
Total & 35 & 100 & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Income Levels & Frequency & Valid Percent & Cumulative Percent \\
\hline
0 & 2 & 2.1 & 2.1 \\
<100 YTL & 1 & 1.1 & 3.2 \\
101-200 YTL & 6 & 6.4 & 9.6 \\
201-300 & 15 & 16 & 25.5 \\
301-400 & 9 & 9.6 & 35.1 \\
401-500 & 10 & 10.6 & 45.7 \\
501-750 & 21 & 22.3 & 68.1 \\
751-1000 & 15 & 16 & 84 \\
1001-1250 & 8 & 8.5 & 92.6 \\
1501-2000 & 5 & 5.3 & 97.9 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{27} The city average for rent levels was 457.15 YTL as of December 2006 (Radikal, 2007, January 01, “Kira artış enflasyonu ikiye katla di”: http://213.243.28.21/haber.php?haberno=209378 –accessed on May 03, 2007)
Around half of the respondents’ families (45.7%) have an income of 500YTL or less per month, one fourth (25.5%) have 300YTL or less. Only 7.5% of the respondents have a monthly income of 1000YTL or more. 32% of the respondents state that they are getting external aid and 88% of the respondents state that neither they nor any member of their families have a car, a house or land elsewhere. The income and rent levels reflect the poor socio-economic conditions of the Sulukule residents.

35% of the respondents are actively working. Informal jobs form the dominant occupation pattern in the neighborhood. 60% of the respondents declare that they have no ties with the social security system. The fact that 28% of the respondents’ families have at least one member holding a green card also highlights the informal employment structure. 67% of the respondents stated that no member in their families is looking for a job. On the other hand, around one fourth (22%) state having one household and 9% state two households looking for a job in their families.

The respondents have low education levels as well. The average years of education for the respondents is 5.63 years. 71% of the respondents have up to 5 years of education, with only 4% with an university degree.

Other descriptive indicators:

- The respondents mostly belong the nuclear families. Only 6% of the respondents live in units where same unit is shared by more than one family. 70% of the families consist of 4 households or less, around half of them consist of 3 or 4 households. Only 6% of the families have more than 6 members.

- 10% of the respondents state that there is at least one musician in their families.

- When asked whether they were a Roma citizen, 79% of the respondents answered as “No”.

- 54% of the respondents are living in apartment units, whereas 46% live in single family houses.

- 48% of the respondents consist of homeowners, % 42 of renters and 10% of non-payer users.

- 27% of the respondents are under 30 years, %37 are between 31-49 and 36% are above 50.

- 65% of the respondents consist of females.

---

**Table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2,1</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>94</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 These income figures are the total amount of money that is earned by the whole members of the households.
29 We have asked how many kitchens are there within the house to discern the number of families living in one unit. We assumed that each kitchen is used by one family.
30 The following question is asked to the respondents to learn the number of musicians in their family: “Is there any musician in your family who plays an instrument, sings a song or performs a dance?”
• 72% of the respondents were married, 10% were single and 18% were widows.

**Attitude towards the project:**

The respondents feel that their opinions are not granted by the municipality during the preparation of the project. When asked whether they think that their opinions are taken into account by the municipality, only 7% of the respondents answer as “yes”. On the other hand, 10% of the respondents believe that their opinions are not taken into account. The remaining 83% declare that they have no idea whether their opinions are taken into account or not (which may also be regarded as an indicator showing that their opinions are not asked for)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do You Support the Regeneration Project?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attitude of the respondents about the regeneration project is quite clear. **66% of the respondents declare that they do not support the current regeneration project.** Only 23% of the respondents state their support to the project.
Appendix 4

European Parliament Letter
Appendix 5

U.S. Helsinki Commission Troubled by Treatment of Sulukule Roma in Istanbul

Send Letter to Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan Expressing Concern over Demolition of one of the Oldest Romani Settlements in Europe

(Washington, DC) Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL), Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (U.S. Helsinki Commission) and Co-Chairman Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), along with Helsinki Commissioners Congressman Joseph R. Pitts (R-PA), and G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), sent the following letter to Turkish Prime Minister Tayip Erdoğan, regarding the Sulukule urban transformation project. The letter expresses concern about the demolition of this historic community, which dates back to 1054, and whose residents will be forced to relocate to a town 40 kilometers outside of the city. Many residents cannot afford to relocate and will be forced onto the streets of Istanbul. (Please find below a copy of the letter)

April 4, 2008

His Excellency Recep Tayip Erdoğan
The Prime Minister
T.C. Basbakanlik
06100 Bakanliklar / ANKARA
TURKEY

Dear Prime Minister Erdoğan:

We write to express our concern about the Sulukule urban transformation project developed by the Fatih and Greater Istanbul municipalities. It is our understanding that six districts in Istanbul including Sulukule, have been chosen to undergo urban transformation as part of the 2010 European Capitol of Culture. While we understand the need to preserve many historical landmarks in Istanbul, we are deeply troubled that Sulukule, home to a Roma community since 1054 and one of the oldest Romani settlements in Europe, is on the brink of total demolition and will be replaced with new villa style homes. The unfortunate outcome of this urban renewal project will not only destroy this historic neighborhood, but will force 3,500 Sulukule residents 40 kilometers outside of the city to the district of Tasoluk or onto the streets.

Roma are currently one of the largest, poorest, and fastest growing minority populations in Europe, and remain the target of pervasive racial attacks and discrimination. At the OSCE's 1999 Istanbul Summit, Turkey and all other OSCE participating States agreed: "We recognize the particular difficulties faced by Roma and Sinti and the need to undertake effective measures in order to achieve full equality of opportunity, consistent with OSCE commitments, for persons belonging to Roma and Sinti. We will reinforce our efforts to ensure that Roma and Sinti are able to play a full and equal part in our societies, and to eradicate discrimination against them." The protection of human rights and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination required by the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent documents of the OSCE remain critically important to the United States Helsinki Commission, and therefore we are particularly concerned about the eroding conditions for the Romani community in Sulukule.

The Roma community in Sulukule is living on the fringes of society and continues to be treated unfairly. Instead of implementing an urban renewal project that would preserve this centuries-old neighborhood and allow the Roma there to remain together as a community, they will be dispersed and forced to migrate elsewhere.
The Romani residents of Sulukule have essentially been unable to work since 1992, when the municipality closed down the music and entertainment venues that had been the lifeblood of the community and a major tourist attraction. With this source of income gone, the Roma of Sulukule have found it increasingly difficult to earn a living.

We understand that the residents of Sulukule have been offered the opportunity to purchase the new homes that will be built as part of the project. However, we are advised that the homes are quite expensive and, given the Romani community's lack of employment and income, this is an empty gesture. We also understand that the offer of housing in Tasoluk, some 40 kilometers outside of Istanbul, is also well beyond the means of the current residents of Sulukule, making it all the more likely that the majority of them will be forced to live on the streets.

Mr. Prime Minister, we urge you to work to find a common solution that will ensure that the residents of Istanbul are preserved and that they are given the opportunity to work, provide shelter and education to their families and contribute fully to Turkish society.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Appendix 6

OECD Territorial Reviews, Istanbul, Turkey, 2008, sayfalar 169-171

"Current urban regeneration policies need to take a more comprehensive approach. These policies intend to address the specific physical conditions of areas, such as the historical peninsula (Müzekent), earthquake sensitive sub-provinces (Zeytinburnu), old industrial sub-provinces (Kartal) and the mostly informal suburbs (the case of Küçükçekmece sub-province). There are several indicators that the design of the programme will need further improvements. First, relocation policies for families and small-scale industries, currently a component of urban regeneration within the inner city centre and the historical island, should be implemented without disrupting socio-economic ties and community relations, and with sufficient infrastructure to support the newly planned neighbourhoods. Here the newly established urban real estate company will have to develop a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable urban development.

Second, the Urban Regeneration Program will have to be sensitive to Law No. 5366, approved in June 2005, which authorises local authorities to protect and improve abandoned buildings with the approval of the Council of Ministries. This legal framework permits the expropriation of old buildings in two stages. Municipalities or Provincial Special Administration launch the initial request submitted to the Council of Ministries who votes on creating a special "renewal zone" (yenileme alanı). Next, local authorities are given special approval powers over zoning and construction activities.

The Fatih and Beyoğlu sub-provinces represent clear indicators of a general lack of a comprehensive regulatory and financial framework that integrates urban regeneration, housing and urban development objectives, and protects low-income dwellers. These two sub-provinces are the first to operate within the provisions of the law, having designated the neighbourhoods of Nesliah and Hattıce Sultan as renewal zones. Within the limits of these zones, 571 owners and 391 tenants have been invited to participate in the programme, aimed at protecting historical buildings and improving urban design patterns in the areas.

Under the current negotiation framework, tenants without property bills have been simply invited to leave the neighbourhood without financial compensation, while the 571 owner-occupied dwellers have received a lump-sum compensation of YTL 500/m² (around USD 350/m²).

Although the municipality of Fatih declared itself open to alternative proposals, the negotiations framework is too restrictive (only open to owner-occupied dwellers) and complex to allow for effective civil society participation as the inhabitants lack the necessary know-how, financial resources and time to contribute. Another deficiency is that the historical and community networks of some local groups are ignored by the authorities, forcing individuals and families to leave the historical peninsula. These intangible costs of breaking up community networks are not calculated by the local authorities, and are also not followed-up by programmes aimed at financial compensation for the more vulnerable neighbourhood segments. Notwithstanding the UNESCO warnings regarding the consequences of urbanisation on cultural heritage in the historic peninsula, large construction projects are foreseen in the so-called protection programmes of cultural heritage."
Appendix 7

Media Deciphered / November 2007

Sulukule on the EU Agenda (25.10.2007)
The Greens in the EP have invited the residents of Sulukule to talk about the Rehabilitation Programme which is being implemented by the Fatih Municipality of Istanbul. We are now in Sulukule where the residents will be voicing their own opinions about the Project. Even before Sulukule, the Rehabilitation Programmes of Istanbul Municipality forced Roman populations out of their neighborhoods. That is why this is not a new issue in the EP.

Şükrü Pündük, chairman of the Sulukule Association: First of all I’d like to say this project past under the law 5366, is not at all suitable for Sulukule. The main aim of this project is to send us away from our existing neighborhood. We together with other NGOs went to the Renovation Commission to voice our dissatisfaction and we asked to the commission to cooperate with us in the future. But the response we got was the demolition of certain houses in the district.

Question of the reporter: It is said that the municipality promised the tenants new houses in another districts.

Şükrü Pündük: This is not true, because so far no one has seen any new house. The residents of Sulukule are mainly musicians, dancers, shoemakers, and some of them have horsecarts, they have their own peculiar life style, which makes it difficult for them to live in another district. So, if there is going to be a new project in Sulukule, it has to be suitable for our community. We have been living in this area for past 600 years, we are all relatives, and we live here in solidarity, a poor person knows that he or she will never be left hungry; we take care of each other. So we wonder who the new residents of this district will be. We own these houses, but the municipality will confiscate our houses for this project and oblige us to buy them back with high prices. We will not be able to buy them, which means there will be new owners. We have asked the municipality to restore our houses preserving the existing layouts, similar to the Fener Balat Project.

Question: What do you hope from the EU, what do you think will come out from the EU?
Şükrü Pündük: We are not going to the EU just to complain, what we want is a joint project with the participation of the EU, the Municipality, the NGOs, and the population of Sulukule, our aim is a project with multiple partners, and by promoting such a project we hope that Sulukule will become integrated to Istanbul and we will host our guests as we did before. Foreigners are coming to Istanbul for cultural exchange and by demolishing Sulukule we are killing our own human cultural heritage.

Visit of the Renovation Commission to Sulukule (01.11.2007)
Today the Renovation Commission, the people who will decide the future of Sulukule, visited Sulukule for the first time. They were received with a big applause of the local people. It is this commission which will give the final verdict on Sulukule. If they approve the project Sulukule will no longer exist as it does today.
Mustafa Çiftçi vice president to chair of Fatih Municipality arrives and is not very well received. The residents are not happy to see him. Çiftçi accepts his own faults:

Çiftçi: It is true that we did not come here and explain our project to the local population. I apologize for that.

A female resident: They told me that if I don’t sell my house, they will confiscate it and put the money in a bank account. I don’t want to sell my house, how can they force me?

A male resident: They told me if I did not sell my house, they would demolish it and put the money in a bank account.

The second female resident: What do you want from us? Rich people will come to live here in luxurious villas, and we will be thrown to the outskirts of city.

Yakın Plan (02.11.2007)

Today we are here in Sulukule famous for its music and its musicians, but our agenda will not be music. The residents of Sulukule are getting ready to go to the EP, because the Roman people of Sulukule are objecting to the Renovation Programme implemented by Fatih Municipality Istanbul Big City Municipality the Administration of the Housing Estate. The Green parliamentarians in the EP have invited them to Brussels to talk about their problems. Sulukule, an old district of Istanbul with a dominant Roman population, has been partially demolished according to the Renovation Programme. Some of the houses have already been pulled down and others are waiting in uncertainty.

Asım: The people of Sulukule want their houses to be restored not pulled down.

The people of Sulukule who are very pleasant and joyful have a problem. These people although they are located in the middle of the city are living on the margins of the city. The municipality of Fatih and the Big City Municipality of Istanbul have decided to better the lives of the Roman people. According to the Renovation Programme, the municipalities want to better the life quality of the Romans, so why is it that the Roman people are against the project? They say that they will give you new houses, why are you opposed to this?

A female resident: I don’t want my house pulled down, I want to continue living here, I have been living here for the last 50 years.

A male resident: I went to the municipality and they told me that I had the right to own two houses and a shop, but after the renovation they will give me a small house and a shop, and another flat in Taşoluk (an area in the outskirts of Istanbul). We have lived in this area for hundreds of years, I don’t want this project and I am against demolitions.

What are these numbers pasted on your houses? What do they mean?

2nd male resident: They say that these numbers show that these houses will be pulled down, this house belongs to my ancestors, I was born here, and I have 8 children, where can I go?

3rd male resident: If I am forced to move to another area, how will I live? I am a tenant, and I pay 50 YTL rent. I can’t find a house to this price in another area. They are forcing us to leave.

You also have a number pasted on your house, does this mean that your house to be pulled down?

4th male resident: These numbers are labels, we have told the Renovation Commission who visited us today that they have to act with a conscious, because all these poor people will be left the street.
But isn’t it a better idea to live in new buildings, instead of the current conditions?

4th male resident: Of course, we also want to live in better conditions, but what is happening today is that our houses will be sold to new owners. Instead of giving a house to me in Taşoluk, why doesn’t the municipality renovate my own house?

Before coming to Sulukule we entered the internet and found out that the İstanbul municipality had made certain researchers on the Roman people living in different quarters of İstanbul. According to the data there the Romans start smoking at the age of 15, most of them are drug users, and again most of them have criminal records in the police.

What are your objections to the Renovation Programme?

Şükrü: The people of Sulukule want to continue living here. We have lots of tenants who want to continue living here, whereas according to the project they will be send to other areas. Till 1990, as you know, we had our own entertainment centers here, we performed our music and dances, hosted the Turks and foreigners in our own houses. After 1992 we were prohibited from performing our music and dances. After that our economic situation detoriated.

When you go to the EP what will you say? What do you think should be done or should not be done for Sulukule.

Şükrü: We want our houses to be renovated not demolished, and we want Sulukule to become an entertainment center as it is used to be. We want to have dance and music schools. There are a lot of things could be done culturally. We want to live here and promote our culture.

When we come here we see there is a lot of poverty and unemployment and on the other hand we see that the people are extremely tolerant, smiling, and joyful. How do you explain this, and will these problems solved with this project?

Şükrü: Of course not. Sulukule’s problem can never be solved by new buildings. Because, the problem in Sulukule is the human element, we have been living here for past 600 years; we are the people of İstanbul. We are a peaceful community and we want to give everyone our smile, our tea, our hospitality.

The beginning of the 1990s as a place of entertainment was forbidden, why do you think this prohibition was taken?

Şükrü: In 1993-1994, the chair of the Fatih Municipality Suleyman Ulusoy (Hortum Süleyman) began taking very strict measures against our population. The musicians were beaten, the houses were raided, and our women were taken to the zührevi hastaliklar hastanesi. After these incidents we were prohibited for performing and the economic situation of the people detoriated. And our people were left hungry, they turned to crime. If we go away from here to Taşoluk, which is at a distance of 50 km it will be very difficult for us. There is no public transport. They have only 3 busses, and if you miss them you have to walk.

But there are also many people who have come from Sulukule and become very famous like Kibariye (popular singer), so why you are so scared of opening up yourselves to the external world?

Şükrü: We want to stay in our area, and show our abilities to the external world.

Could you tell us shortly what the project is and why the people are opposing to it?
Mustafa Çiftçi, Vice chairman to the Fatih Municipality: When I got involved with this project, one of the first things I said was that we should go to the local people and ask them what they expect. For 2 months, I had special talks with small groups of residents. After 2 months, we made a project in accordance with their expectations. And we shared our project with the chair of Fatih Municipality. This projects take consideration the social and economic situation of the people as well as their cultural background. We also worked with experts, with people who have knowledge about Roman culture as well as city planners. We made an investigation to find out how many people living in the area. This is an area of 80,000 square meters.

How many house owners are in the area?

Çiftçi: We found out there 620 house owners, so in our project we had 620 houses, and there are 45 shops, so we have 45 shops in the project.

But why are the population of this area are forced to leave instead of staying in their own houses?

Çiftçi: The housekeepers have the right to stay, because we are giving them 620 houses, we would like the tenants stay also, but because of the UNESCO standards (bunun açılması lazımdır) we can only rebuild for the householders.

I have heard that some residents of Sulukule have sold their houses, why couldn’t you as the municipality prevent these people from selling their houses.

Çiftçi: In all the meetings I held with the people I always told them not to sell their houses, that their houses would become more valuable. But, all I can do is to talk to them, I have no legal way to prevent them from selling. In order for us to have a legal right the Draft Project has to be approved by the Renovation Commission.

As an architect how would you evaluate this project, and what do you think should be done or not done?

Aslı Kıyak: I think the main problem of this project is in its approach. It does not include the human element, the social and economic conditions of the people living here. The project may be suitable for different areas of Istanbul, but not for the people of Sulukule. If we look at the world there are many experiences for similar situations. And in these models we see that participation of the local population is very important. This participation is not by calling people and talking to them, there has to be a continuous interaction, maybe we have to have offices in the area. And the problems have to be discussed in meetings with experts, local people and municipal leaders.

Is it true that this area is included to the Cultural Heritage List of UNESCO and you have made a demand to stop the demolition of the buildings? Could you inform us about this?

Aslı: The municipality took the decision of urgent confiscation for the houses, we as the Sulukule Platform opposed this and went to court. Because this kind confiscation happens under the conditions of war or state of emergency, whereas this decision was taken without showing any reason. And this led the residents to panic and sell their houses. And because the municipality did not stop the people from selling the whole project turned into a rant raising mechanism. Maybe they didn’t aim this but the end result was this. And as you see now many people have sold their houses. As you know Sulukule is very prominent place as a music center and there are still musicians living here.

Mustafa: Our project was not aimed at rebuilding. We aimed that strengthen the economic situation of local population. We tried to make a project in accordance with the thoughts of local people, and the new houses we plan to build have inner courtyards, which are in accordance with the life style of these people, and culturally we believe that the public space will be shaped by the will of the local people.
And according to that 1500 square meters area will be allocated for a center for entertainment, music and cultural activity.
Appendix 8

Sabah Newspaper / May 2008

She wants to save her house but noone hears her

MÜJGÂN HALİS
Translation: Gülden KALAFAT
3 May 2008, Saturday

Sabah, in Cumartesi Sabah, in Güncel
(http://www.sabah.com.tr/ct/haber,ED3F0BB3F849433CA684C00A3EF2FC82.html)

As well as Sulukule is under the danger of demolitions because of the urban regeneration project, the “registered” historical houses are facing with the same problem too. The owner of one of the registered houses Sezer Tanmış, wants to restore her over 100 year old house but she asserts that the municipality is playing deaf.

Her childhood, the childhood of Sezer Tanmış, passed at the back streets of Sulukule. She was one of the lucky Romanies; her father was working at a insured job, for that reason they were not in need of anybody. While she was running her 18 her mother Sevim and father Saadettin started to look for a house for their two children to live in after themselves. With their terms they have bought this three stories wooden house by exchanging the golds ‘on their necks, ears’ and borrowing money from ‘this and that’. Her most beautiful times passed in this house which is over a hundred year old now. She felt in love in that house, she was seen as a marriageable girl at that house, she became a bride at that house, she lived her most beautiful times with her husband at that house, she gave birth to her three children at the top floor of that house. This is how the 40-year life of Sezer Tanmış passed. Then her “respecteds” who has never realized her for many years came by there. They said to her and many other homeowners like her in Sulukule even they have a Turkish Republic title deed “give your houses us for a price of nothing, live at the houses in Sulukule that we are going to sell them to you with payments”. She says that the life she has lived in her house was like a fairy tale. She is even telling the mulberry tree in the garden when they have bought their house many years ago with her eyes filling with tears: “When we bought it, this house was leaning against a mulberry tree, we had it cut, I still keep its log. Can be a log memory, but it is. How do I leave here and go, whenever I smell I am sensing the smell of my parents.” As for her mother, Mrs Sevim has been defeated by her heart seven months ago. She had her last days within the fear of losing her house that she loves so. Unfortunate woman, Sezen Tanmış one day has gone to the Fatih Municipality to talk the destiny of her house. Here is a coincidence, she has found the officers in front of computers talking about her house and has exposed to their insistences of “sell your house to me Ms”. So Sevim Tanmış explicated these people who have surrounded her until her last breathe.

SHE WANTED TO HAVE RESTORED
The Municipality had estimated a price for 109 thousand Turkish Lira for her house. After her mother’s death, Sezer seesawed between two ideas for a long time. Her house is determined by the municipality and is one of the 37 registered houses that definitely can not be demolished. She could not know whether she should sell her house to third individuals or give it to the Municipality and bought a house from the Sulukule Project in exchange for getting into debt. However according to the Project the Municipality was not giving her own house, but giving any house, in any place in Sulukule. While she was living this indecision, Sezer Tanmış learnt that she had a right. She has not know it at all and nobody has told it to her until now. The entitle of the regulation 5366 which forms the legal
base of the urban regeneration; the right that is given to house owners like her; building their own houses conveniently to the project. Although Sezer could have been an owner of a new home, she inclined towards this solution for the sake of not parting with her memories. She did not give her house to the Municipality and started searching for having her housed restored: “My all desire, if I can, to live in my parent’s place. If I can not do, I do not know what I will do.”

**BUREAUCRACY IS COMPLICATED**

However bureaucracy is too complicated as well as the financial difficulty was too much that Sezer Tanınmış can not meet. When the architects from Sulukule Platform have stepped in, Restoration Department of Technical University of Yıldız, succour. Graduate students of the department undertook the survey, restitution and the drawings for the restoration projects as their term homework. Sezen was relieved, so she has been saved from the financial trouble of 30-40 thousands Turkish Lira. But the work is not over with it. Because she did not know how to restore this house where she lived her memories, although the Project has been drawn. At this point, Sezer Tanınmış who lives with a orphan salary of a 400 Turkish Lira after her mother’s death, meanwhile broke up with her husband, applied to the Municipality. Her meeting with Talip Temizer, the Vice President of the Fatih Municipality, gave hope to her: “I said you are already giving a house to me from the Project, do not give me another house, but give me mine. Because this house is registered, namely I can not build another house. Whatever the cost is, calculate it, I am having the drawings with the support of the university. Reduce the cost of the drawings from the total and charge me for the rest.” The municipality said that they would think this suggestion but later they neither responded her calls nor gave an answer. As she could not get any respond to her verbal request Sezer Tanınmış tried every way and this time she applied with a communiqué. In the arriving respond Housing Administration (TOKI) has been addressed for the restoration. But she has been already knowing this opportunity and that the monthly payments of TOKI is 1500 Turkish Lira. Her monthly income was not convenient for such a high payment. Meanwhile she has done the required application for the basic renovation of her house.

**NEW MODEL SHOULD BE GENERATED**

Sezer Tanınmış who struggle continuously for not parting with her house, could not get any respond for any of her request. She wants the Municipality to regenerate a new model for the house owners like her. She believes that the cooperation of the University-non governmental organizations- municipality will preserve the historical pattern of Sulukule. However on the other hand she is telling the Municipality itself who licensed the registered houses treated loutishly to those too. She is stating that the two houses which definitely should have not been demolished according to the law have been demolished and as a neighborhood they have applied for crime proclamation. She is telling that the house adjacent to hers was registered too and its house owner has moved into a rental. She is saying that the registered houses were not preserved by the Municipality and the ones which were not demolished turned into ruins as soon as they have been emptied. She states that before the houses in Taşoluk finished, the demolitions in the settlement have started and living with another demolition everyday created a war effect. She continues that “While we lead a life here, on the other hand houses are demolishing continuously. Rubbles are not being picked up, electric cables are being left open, children are playing between rebar. Here is also a part of the city. I ask you, can you do this in Nişantaş, while you are leading a life, can you play with other lives?”
Appendix 9

Turkish Daily News, May 2008

ONUR BURÇAK BELLİ

ISTANBUL - Turkish Daily News

3 May 2008

The politics surrounding efforts to demolish or save Istanbul's historic Roma neighborhood of Sulukule took on the appearance of a “gypsy dance” yesterday with everything except swishing skirts and tambourines.

The story of expectations and disappointment here is as complex as one of those dances. A conflict over authority between two commissions results in another hope of the Roma to save Sulukule fading away.

With Turkish municipalities increasingly invoking Article 5366 of the law passed in 2005 which allows the demolition of shantytowns in the name of urban transformation projects, the Roma neighborhood has also become an urban transformation area of Fatih Municipality and the old houses of the Roma will be replaced with Ottoman-style villas under the new project.

Almost five months ago, a group of architects from the Sulukule Platform, launched to save Sulukule from demolition and the Roma being evicted from their homes, applied to the Renovation Commission of Istanbul to evaluate the situation of 85 buildings and register them as historic buildings.

“We went to the Renovation Commission to apply for the registration of 85 buildings in Sulukule. They said another commission had the authority and that we have to apply for these historic buildings to that commission; so we did,” said Aslı Kiyak İngin, an architect and member of the platform.

The mentioned commission was the Fourth Culture and Nature Assets Protection Commission that was responsible for evaluating and deciding the registration of historic assets or buildings in the historical side of Istanbul. Istanbul Renovation Commission was founded in July 2007 to work on projects under Article 5366 and started reviewing transformation projects in August 2007.

Sulukule Platform received a notice Thursday that read their demand was evaluated and 25 houses out of 85 were considered historic buildings and should be registered and protected.

A little hope emerged from the wreckage of the demolished houses to save the oldest Roma neighborhood of Istanbul but that also faded away quickly.

History grounds on political conflicts

The project approved Nov. 2, 2007 by the Renovation Commission included only 45 registered buildings under protection. However, there are many more, İngin argued; “They were ignored and some of them were even destroyed in the last two demolitions. Based on the fourth commission's decision, the municipality should revise and change the current project.”
Bad news from Fatih Municipality

The Fourth Historic and Nature Assets Protection Commission decided on March 28 that those 25 houses be registered and protected and informed the platform, Renovation Commission and Fatih Municipality of its decision April 4.

The Turkish Daily News has learned from Fatih Municipality officials that there is a conflict over authority between the fourth commission and the Renovation Commission, which is authorized to determine the historic assets and their protection in transformation areas and last week in a meeting at the Culture Ministry in Ankara the conflict was resolved. The Renovation Commission is authorized to determine what is historic and should be registered and protected.

“Now, the Renovation Commission is authorized to determine the historic assets in transformation areas. I do not think that the commission will change its first decision and ask the municipality to change or revise the Sulukule project,” said Yahya Koçoğlu, municipality press consultant.

“If some of the houses among those the fourth commission determined as historic were demolished, and I know some of them were demolished, there is nothing to do. For the rest, if the Renovation Commission approves the other commission's decision, again there would be no need to slow down or change the whole project, we might not touch those houses and the rest of the project would continue as it is,” he also explained.

İğin does not agree with this claim and said if the Renovation Commission registers those houses as historic, the whole project has to change. “The types, the heights, the landscape and plans will change, has to change accordingly with those historic houses that are spread around the whole neighborhood,” she said, emphasizing it is easy to demolish everything and build new ones without saving anything but it is not if you have to protect something.

“With the decision of the fourth commission we were hopeful of saving them again. Now there is nothing left but to wait and expect the Renovation Commission to respect the fourth commission's decision,” she said.
Appendix 10

UCL; DPU Project Report May 2007

Placing Sulukule: Towards an alternative proposal to conserve the living heritage of Romani Culture