

Theme 2: Urban Culture for Social Development

responsibility for preserving it mainly rests with the private sector. While in Sana'a the mobilization of resources is facilitated by the fact that the old city is part of a dynamic urban agglomeration and continues to play a significant role for its commercial, recreational and residential activities, in Zabid the mobilization is constrained by the economic marginalization of the historic city and by the poor financial situation of most businesses and households. In Yemen, the provision of investment incentives is however problematic. Because of the limited administrative capacity and accountability of the civil service, the provision of fiscal incentives and subsidized loans presents multiple risks that make it inadvisable. The best solution appears the provision of investment support grants awarded according to transparent criteria by trustworthy institutions. The SFD could be one of these institutions. Given the presence of a vital economy, in old Sana'a, investment grants could be highly selective in terms of purpose (e.g., rehabilitation of buildings in advanced status of decay) and beneficiaries (e.g., poorest households and businesses). Conversely, given the existence of a depressed economy, in historic Zabid, investment grants could be provided effectively only in the context of a comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation programme extending simultaneously to the entire housing stock.

Conclusions

The inscription of monuments, sites and cities on UNESCO's World Heritage List requires that the country concerned ensure their effective protection and management. The experience of Sana'a and Zabid confirms that for many national and local governments the mobilization of the human and financial resource needed to meet this obligation is a daunting challenge. It also confirms that the challenge of mobilizing financial resources is often dwarfed by that of finding qualified people and creating the conditions that allow them to perform effectively. UNESCO assisted the government of Yemen to create the General Office for the Preservation of Historic Cities of Yemen (GOPCHY) as a means to meet the above obligation. Unfortunately, GOPCHY's efficiency is challenged by Yemen's weak juridical and administrative context that hinders law enforcement and accountability. Technical assistance by international organizations and donors proved inadequate or insufficient to counter this weakness. Unless the overarching problem of improving governance in Yemen is addressed, there is little hope that GOPCHY, or for that matter any other institution, could function effectively.

The mobilization of human and financial resources calls for partnership first and foremost among national entities and secondly between these entities and foreign donors. Unless subject to strong conditionality in terms of obligations and results, the mobilization of human and financial resources is bound to fail. UNESCO should contribute to this objective by monitoring closely that the national and local governments responsible for the preservation and management of World Heritage cities meet the above conditionality. To this effect, UNESCO may enlist the assistance of rich and committed countries and cities and ask them to act as guarantors. The notion of guarantor would need to be clearly defined in terms of legal content and practical responsibilities. Obviously, it goes well beyond the notion of twinning.

Very few World Heritage cities demonstrate as much as Zabid that the preservation of their historical urban fabric and architectural heritage depends on a general revitalization of the local economy. Unless this objective is achieved, there is little hope that they will be able not only to preserve their stock of historical buildings on a sustainable basis but also to ensure the essential urban services, such as solid waste collection, traffic management and security that make them liveable and accessible to visitors. The urgent approval by government of an economic revitalization plan and its commitment to mobilize human and financial resources for implementing it should be prerequisite for maintaining Zabid on the World Heritage List. Finally, the preservation of the urban fabric and architectural heritage of Sana'a and Zabid can be achieved only if their inhabitants support it. Adequate human and financial resources should be mobilized to promote widespread awareness and appreciation of the cities and their patrimony and to secure popular participation to their protection and preservation. Because of the lack of domestic expertise in the areas of communication, community development and civil society organization and reluctance to invest in these areas, at least initially, this endeavour would have to rely on substantial international partnership.

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Social Housing and Urban Conservation in Istanbul Historic Peninsula (Turkey)

by Nuran Zeren Gülersoy

Turkey, as a developing country, has been facing an ongoing population explosion in major urban centres since the 1950s. There have been mass migrations from rural to urban areas. In addition to creating squatter settlements—informal housing—on the outskirts of the city, this migration trend has also become one of the reasons for the deterioration and demolition of traditional houses in the historic core of the city. This paper examines the case of the Istanbul Historic Peninsula as an example of this process and summarises findings related to social housing and urban conservation in the historic city. These findings are examined in the context of building conditions and the physical qualities of the area,

the socio-economic level of the residents, and public attitudes concerning the conservation of the area's historic houses and their surroundings.

Situated on two continents, Istanbul lies on the Peninsula of Pashaeli in Europe and the Peninsula of Kocaeli in Asia. Due to this strategic location, the city was an important capital during several different periods. It was an administrative, commercial and cultural centre in Byzantium, and continued to be so under Ottoman rule. Istanbul was the only city in the Ottoman Empire with a population of over a million inhabitants at the dawn of the last century, and most of the country's service industry and foreign trade houses were located here. After the foundation of the Turkish Republic, Ankara was chosen as the new capital. However, as a major port and a base for Western institutions, Istanbul continued to play an important role as a commercial, industrial and cultural centre. The city enjoys an architectural heritage of historical buildings and monuments dating from all periods of its rich past. Through a decision of the World Heritage Committee in 1985, historic areas of Istanbul, including masterpieces like the ancient Hippodrome of Constantine and the 16th century Süleymaniye Mosque, as well as entire neighbourhoods, such as Süleymaniye and Zeyrek, were inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The historic core of the city has always been the focal point of the Greater City of Istanbul, and contains the city's principal historic sites, including Topkapı Palace, Sultanahmet Square, Hagia Sophia, the Sultan Ahmet Mosque Complex, the Covered Bazaar and the Golden Horn. It remains an important centre for trade and wholesale business, with many warehouses and thriving small business. Putting aside the limited number of settlements along the Bosphorus and Galata, the city of Istanbul was confined to the Historic Peninsula until the middle of the 18th century. Today, because it lies at the heart of the Istanbul Metropolitan Area, the Peninsula is facing pressures from urban concentration, heavy transportation use and structural deterioration. On the other hand, during the rapid urbanization process that Turkey underwent following the 1970s, development in a number of cities has been occurring in an unplanned way. Substantial demolition and reconstruction took place in the historic centres of these cities. Traditional urban patterns have largely disappeared: streets and boulevards have had to be run through reconstructed areas and multi-storey buildings are now higher than ever before.

In 1965, a new piece of legislation, the Flat Ownership Law, came into force, allowing the ownership of single units in apartment blocks. This led to the creation of a new type of enterprise in the urban housing market, in turn spurring the conversion of historic houses into apartment blocks for economic ends. In addition to the legal regulations stated above, the rules set out in the development plans—which defined a high density to floor area ratio—also led to the demolition of traditional Turkish houses built on large plots and to the prevalence of multi-storey housing. Other factors accelerating this phenomenon include social evolution in general, the growth of the urban population, changes in family structure and, in particular, the fact that living in a multi-storey apartment block has come to be seen as an indicator of social status.

Examples of social housing and conservation process can be found in research carried out in the historic districts of the Istanbul Historic Peninsula (namely Zeyrek, Süleymaniye, and Yenikapı) with the support of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre. Zeyrek, Süleymaniye and Yenikapı are three historic districts in the Istanbul Historic Peninsula where the original settlement pattern has been preserved. The monumental buildings and civil architecture in Zeyrek and Süleymaniye are highly important from the standpoint of a historical, aesthetic and architectural perspective, which is why they have been included on the World Heritage List. Süleymaniye is located on the third hill of the Historic Peninsula. The area is an affluent residential area where high-level bureaucrats of the Ottoman Empire lived from the 16th to the 19th centuries. The pressure of increasing business activities in Süleymaniye on the residential buildings has led to demolition of traditional wooden houses. Zeyrek, particularly around the Pantokrator Monastery, is one of the historic settlement areas on the Golden Horn. The inhabitants of Zeyrek have low incomes, and most of them work in local small businesses, giving rise to a temporary migrant population from the east and southeast parts of Anatolia. Most of the existing traditional buildings in Zeyrek have been subdivided and are shared by more than one family. Yenikapı is located on the south shores of the Historical Peninsula. Yalı Mahallesi is an area bounded on the south by the Marmara seashore and on the north by the railway that connects Istanbul to Europe. Yalı Mahallesi is a typical historic urban quarter of old Istanbul with stone and timber civil architecture and a substantial cultural heritage. An historic Armenian church, the Church of Surp Tartios Partihiminius, is located in the district and still holds services.

Comparative Evaluation of the Physical Survey and Analysis of the Architectural Heritage

The study included a transportation survey, as well as a survey of individual buildings and spaces, examining land and building use, living conditions in the buildings, building dimensions, materials used, property ownership, occupancy, and compatibility between newer construction, listed historic buildings and the overall architectural of the area.

The dominant use for both ground and upper floors in Süleymaniye, Zeyrek and Yenikapı is housing. Zeyrek shows a rather different trend, relative to Süleymaniye and Yenikapı. In Zeyrek, 68% of street level building space is used for housing, compared to 93.2% on upper floors. In Süleymaniye and Yenikapı (26.5% and 47.9% of ground floor space is used for housing, respectively, while 47.2% and 75.9%, respectively, of upper floor space is housing. The recently built Bazaar on Atatürk Boulevard has had an important impact on the development of commercial and manufacturing facilities in the area, and on the type of residents. Earlier housing has been replaced by warehouses or manufacturing complexes. In the case of Yenikapı, a shortage of residential units has resulted from the multiplication of nightclubs and



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manufacturing facilities on the surrounding transit roads. The buildings in Yenikapı are in better condition than those of Süleymaniye and Zeyrek, but there seems to be significant deterioration in the listed timber structures in all areas.

A large percentage of the structures in Süleymaniye, Yenikapı and Zeyrek are two or three stories high, 72.5%, 78.7% and 52%, respectively, including both listed and non-listed buildings. The majority of the structures are made of masonry or concrete in the planning areas. When listing status is considered, nearly half of the total listed structures are of the masonry type in both Süleymaniye and Yenikapı. Although timber structures predominate in the conservation areas, they represent only 11% of the total in Süleymaniye and 7.1% in Yenikapı. Zeyrek has a rather higher percentage of timber structures, 28%, of which 58% are listed. Of the lots included in the survey, almost all are privately owned, in every area. In Süleymaniye, 78.3% of the listed buildings are privately owned, while the percentage rises to 90% in Yenikapı and 92.6% in Zeyrek.

The percentage of occupied buildings is rather higher in Süleymaniye and Zeyrek, but the vacancy problem often affects listed structures, due to high maintenance costs, and the vacancy ratio is high in each location. In the evaluation of newer structures that are in harmony with the area's traditional architectural character, Süleymaniye, Zeyrek and Yenikapı have relatively different profiles. Of the buildings studied, 65.1% are said to be in harmony with the architectural character of Süleymaniye, on the contrary, only 44% and 26.2% in Zeyrek and Yenikapı, respectively, are in harmony. However, nearly 80 percent of the listed structures of Süleymaniye, Yenikapı and Zeyrek are in harmony with the traditional character of the area. According to the survey, the lion's share of the structures are examples of civil architecture, the ratio differing in Yenikapı, which has fewer listed monumental buildings. The percentage of empty lots that were formerly sites of listed buildings (now demolished) is rather high in Süleymaniye and Zeyrek, compared to Yenikapı.

Comparative Analysis of the Social Structure in the Study Areas

The study analysed social structure in the areas under consideration, and examined demographic and socio-economic aspects of the planning areas as well as residents' interaction with their environment, their expectations, and their approach to urban conservation and the historical environment. Information was gathered from households in both listed and non-listed buildings. One hundred questionnaires were prepared, with fifty for listed and non-listed buildings in Zeyrek and Süleymaniye, while seventy questionnaires were circulated evenly between listed and non-listed buildings in Yenikapı.

Most of the families surveyed in the study areas are extended families of more than 5 people. This statistic is a result of increasing immigration rates from economically undeveloped areas of Southeast or East Anatolia. "Bekarevleri" or "single men houses", which house 8 to 10 men in a single room represent one of the most important problems Süleymaniye faces. A greater number of the families in Süleymaniye and Zeyrek were born in the cities of Southeast Anatolia, generally in Siirt, Adiyaman or Mardin. Most of the mothers living in Yenikapı were born

in the cities of East Anatolia, most often in Siirt, Diyarbakır and Elazı, while fathers are from Southeast Anatolia. Süleymaniye is a centre where most of the distribution of goods for Istanbul's European half takes place, and much of the young labour force lives there. Yenikapı primarily houses the labour force for nearby commercial centres and entertainment businesses. Zeyrek has less commercial activity, and is more residential. Most of the residential population in the planning areas are housewives or are self-employed. The number of fathers with no income is rather higher in Süleymaniye compared to Zeyrek and Yenikapı. Again, a higher percentage of fathers earn between US\$ 124-186 a month in Süleymaniye and between between US\$ 62-124 in Zeyrek, while most fathers earn more than US\$ 284 in Yenikapı thanks to the thriving entertainment business.

In each district, most families are tenants, but the percentage of renters is lower in Zeyrek. A small portion of families in Yenikapı and Zeyrek live in their buildings free of charge. In Süleymaniye and Yenikapı, almost half of the residents have lived in their current homes for less than 5 years. Although the portion is lower in Zeyrek, again, the majority have lived in their current residences for less than 5 years. Ongoing immigration from economically undeveloped regions of Turkey has given rise to a dynamic, mobile population in all three areas. According to the survey, the percentage of families expressing a desire to stay in the same district, but unable to do so due to economic reasons is 44% in Zeyrek, 36% in Süleymaniye and 40% in Yenikapı. The families living in non-listed buildings more frequently express a desire to move than those residing in listed buildings. There are more common areas for neighbourhood gatherings in Süleymaniye than in Yenikapı, because of its role as a centre for tourism. The percentage of families who feel their area lacks public space is highest in Zeyrek with 76% of those polled expressing this opinion.

It was determined that a small portion of residents understands the conservation issues in Süleymaniye, Zeyrek and Yenikapı. Although awareness is low, the majority of the population nevertheless see urban conservation in general as an important issue. Compared to Süleymaniye and Yenikapı, more residents in Zeyrek are of the opinion that local listed properties must be preserved. Residents in both Süleymaniye and Yenikapı tend to favour the replacement of listed houses with modern, multi-story buildings, whereas Zeyrek residents think the opposite.

General Evaluation of the Present Situation of Historic Houses

The study found that the original social structure of Istanbul's Historic Peninsula Districts has completely changed. Most of the current users are low-income immigrants and are unconcerned about the historic value of their houses and of the local environment. According to the results of the survey, the main problems with conservation efforts seem to be related to maintenance difficulties and outmoded sanitary facilities. Another difficulty lies in the very dense occupancy of many historic buildings. Originally, these houses were built for single families, but today the common spaces in such houses (e.g. bathrooms and toilets) must be shared by the members of more than one family. Users also complain about the costs of maintenance and repairs, the difficulties of cleaning, and insect

and rodent infestation. Another factor contributing to the high demolition rate of historical buildings is the sense of social status gained by living in a modern apartment flat. Most of the residents who support demolition of historic houses claim that the houses are old-fashioned and dilapidated. They also believe that the district would be much cleaner and tidier after demolition. Most of the owners would rather demolish and build multi-storey buildings, as these would be much more profitable. However, tenants generally do not agree, fearing eviction and the prospect of higher rents in new, similar lodgings.

In spite of the New Act No. 2863 for “The Conservation of Cultural and Natural Entities” and its June 1987 amendment, and irrespective of the regulations and various arrangements undertaken in the institutions as a result of the Act, the conservation objectives and the criteria for selecting and listing buildings and sites have still not been clearly defined. A comprehensive, nationwide framework for conservation and the necessary technical staff are still lacking. The tools and resources required by the central and local authorities to raise the living conditions in the houses, or to purchase and expropriate them if necessary, are also far from sufficient. The Protection Fund for Restoration and Conservation of Privately-Owned Immovable Cultural Entities, which was established for this purpose, has proven difficult to use effectively. Only in some conservation areas with heavy tourism can the owners of listed buildings benefit from the loans that are available to adapt ancient buildings for tourism uses. As decisions regarding heritage conservation cannot be combined with income-raising activities other than tourism, they generally remain unimplemented; particularly as regards historic houses with less than satisfactory living conditions. The residents or owners of these houses tend to reject the idea that they need to be preserved, and thus react negatively to conservation efforts.

The study found that very few owners of listed buildings approved of the decision to list their buildings, and that the great majority was either indifferent to, or disapproved the decisions. Owners of the listed buildings, seeing and envying the multi-storey modern buildings under construction nearby, more often try to roll back the listing decision in order to replace their old-fashioned historic buildings with modern apartment blocks.

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Istanbul, Turkey: Social Housing in Historic Buildings

The World Heritage site of Istanbul, inscribed in 1985, is composed of four areas, best known for their monumental complexes, notably Hagia Sophia and the Süleymaniye Mosque, and the Rampart. But the site also harbours districts lined with timber houses from the Ottoman period – Zeyrek in the Fatih District -, in majority privately owned and inhabited by a population of modest income. Many of these buildings are dilapidated, rendering them dangerous to inhabitants. Strict conservation norms make restoration costs prohibitive for many dwellers, forcing them to move from the area, causing the buildings to deteriorate beyond repair, leaving the door open to property developers. The latter are taking over a growing number of houses, in some cases restoring them into multistorey apartment buildings, in others constructing new houses with timber facing to evoke Ottoman style, undermining authenticity.

In the aim of improving housing conditions for the poor while simultaneously protecting cultural heritage, UNESCO carried out a feasibility study in 1998 with European Union MEDA funding for the rehabilitation and revitalization of the Fatih district, where many of the Ottoman houses are located. A wide consultation ensued over six months, with authorities, conservation experts, jurists, sociologists, students and inhabitants joining in the task. The study spurred TOKI (Toplu Konut İdaresi), the national social housing authorities to consider, for the first time, the investment of social housing funds to rehabilitate historic buildings, instead of restricting investment to the construction of new low-rent housing buildings in the urban periphery. A Heritage House was established in 1999 by the Fatih Municipality with support from the UNESCO World Heritage Committee to provide advice to inhabitants and to carry out socio-economic studies and inventory work of the Fatih district.

The European Commission approved 7 million euros in grant aid in 1998 to execute the project which, after some delay, began in 2002. A consortium led-by Foment, a public agency of Barcelona specialized in urban renewal, has put into place a team of international and Turkish experts to begin the consultation process with the local inhabitants for the selection of the houses to be rehabilitated. Meanwhile, through the France-UNESCO Co-operation Agreement, the conservation plan for Istanbul's protected areas was evaluated in 2000 and again in 2002 in collaboration with local authorities. Updating the inventory of historic buildings, evaluation of their state of conservation together with socio-economic surveys of the inhabitants in Zeyrek, Süleymaniye and Yenikapı districts where the timber buildings still mark the townscape, are also underway by the Istanbul Technical University with funding support from UNESCO's World Heritage Committee.