

## Chapter 5

# Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul

**Gülhan Benli**

*istanbul Medipol University, Turkey*

**Aysun Ferrah Güner**

*istanbul Medipol University, Turkey*

### **ABSTRACT**

*Suleymaniye and Zeyrek areas in the Historical Peninsula containing a combination of the architectural works of different religions, different cultures and communities are two districts which were entitled to be included in UNESCO world heritage list from Istanbul in 1985. Traditional architectural texture in Zeyrek and Suleymaniye among some unique districts of Istanbul, which brings neighborhood-centered lifestyle of Ottoman period in the past to the present, basically consists of wooden houses. Diverging process has affected on these two unique residential areas having their own hierarchical and political characteristics by planned development activities in time and it was forced to sacrifice many works belonging to Ottoman period within the borders. Another modern building obtained as a result of the competition in the Republican Period practically undertakes the task of combining these two estranged areas. Characteristics of the said two protected areas, diverging process and modern heritage acting as a buffer shall be examined in this study.*

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-1744-3.ch005

## **INTRODUCTION**

Despite the numerous earthquakes and fires suffered in the past, Istanbul managed to maintain its original architectural identity until the 19th century. However, its urban structure was changed in the last century rapidly; thus, it has become a city that is exposed to constant change regarding the avenues, boulevards, and modernist architecture. Deterioration in the organic street pattern formed by wooden houses with bay windows has occurred in Istanbul through the reshaping processes by western norms and urbanism which started in the 1930s. The city attempted to be reshaped under planning incompatible with its multi-layered socio-cultural identity. Within the scope of modernization acts, many architects and urban planners from Europe were invited to Istanbul by the government. In this study, a section of the process of converting the old Istanbul with its strong culture and history into dynamic new Istanbul will be analyzed through the old and new neighborhood textures, how these two have been thrown away from each other during this process, and how efforts are made to compensate this alienation with life complexes that are suitable for the city.

## **BACKGROUND**

Consisting of 1,117 shop units, Istanbul Drapers Bazaar (IMC) is a market place located between Suleymaniye and Zeyrek districts within the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul. A competition was organised in 1958 to make a development plan for the region, and the first and second phases of the project winning the grand prize were completed in 1967 and 1968, respectively. There are a total of 2,300 business firms with 10,000 people working in the bazaar, which is considered as one of the major works of the period, with social units, restaurants and other service units. There are some artifacts such as famous ceramics and wall paintings of modern artists of the period in the IMC which is recognized as one of the examples of the first shopping centres in the city of modernised Istanbul. Symbolizing the modernization period, the IMC building has recently been confronted with the issue of either demolition or re-functioning. Located between two protected areas, the existence of the IMC building integrated with current urban texture and the sustainability of its natural architectural identity will be discussed under the theme of *Architectural Documents* in this book.

## **TWO UNIQUE PROTECTED SITES IN THE HISTORICAL PENINSULA**

### **Importance of the Study**

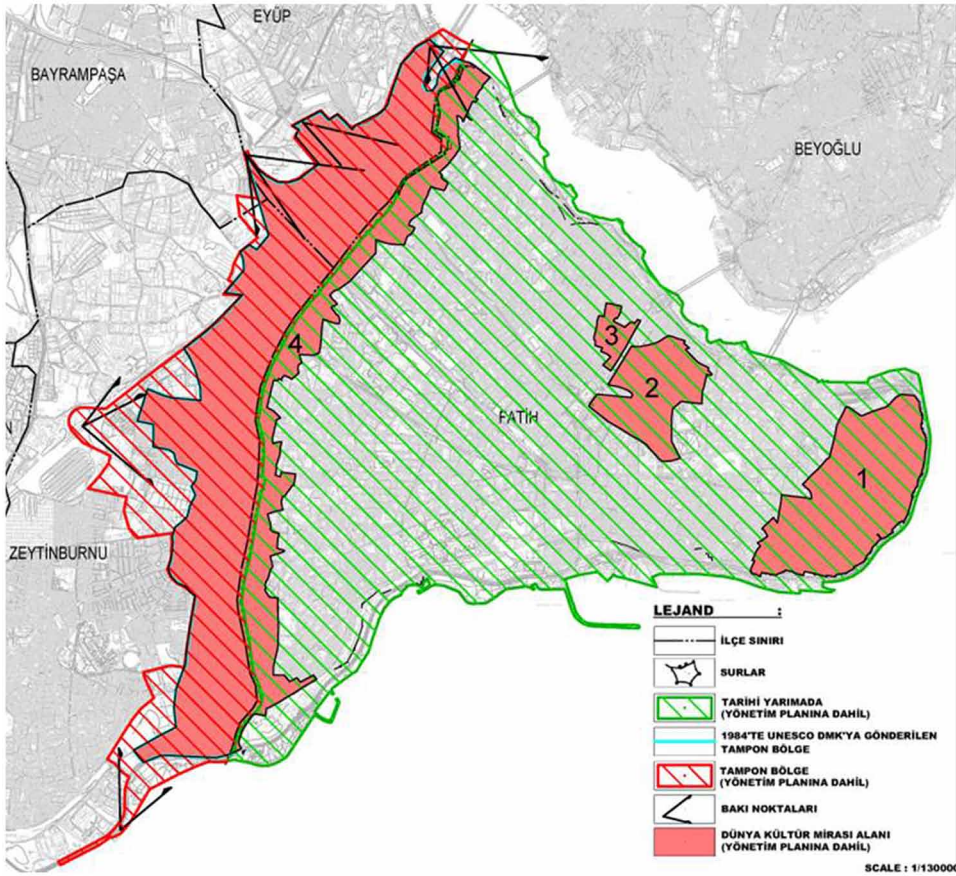
The Historical Peninsula is the name given to the area surrounded by the Bosphorus Strait and the Marmara Sea, the place where the city was established and developed. As a result of the archeological excavations carried out for the Marmaray Metro construction in Yenikapı district which is located in the Historical Peninsula, it was understood that the Historical Peninsula has a history of 8,500 years and has the feature of being one of the most important centres of the Roman Empire. Being the capital of the Byzantine Empire for 1,058 years and also of the Ottoman Empire for 469 years, the area has the feature of hosting many important historical structures belonging to these civilizations (Freely & Çakmak, 2009). Dozens of ancient palaces, mosques, churches, fountains and obelisks, wood, and masonry houses from the Roman Empire, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods are all the symbols of the Historical Peninsula.

### **Zeyrek Mosque (Pantokrator Monastery) and the Surrounding Area as One of the World Heritage Sites in Istanbul**

Having several cisterns and a high retaining wall reaching up to 15 meters and being located on the fourth hill of the city in the Fatih district, the Zeyrek Area was established on various platforms and terracing which survived from the Byzantine period to the present time. The Zeyrek Mosque and its surroundings were declared a protected area in 1979 by the Turkish Ministry of Culture. Under the “Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage” of UNESCO signed by Turkey in 1983, “Zeyrek Mosque and the Surrounding Protected Area”, along with three other protected areas in Istanbul (Suleymaniye Mosque and the Surrounding Protected Area, Sultanahmet Archaeological Park, and Istanbul Land Walls) were placed on the World Heritage List in 1985 by definition of “Historic Areas of Istanbul” with serial number of 356” as seen in Figure 1. A total of 271 buildings located in Zeyrek were placed on the registered masterpieces list by the Turkish Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection Board during those years. The Zeyrek Mosque and Surroundings World Heritage Site consists of approximately 10.30 hectares, and it is known that more than 50% of the area consists of residential areas (IMM, 2011). Mosques, shrines, and tombs located in this area come into prominence as the major usages besides residential and associated functions.

## Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul

Figure 1. Zeyrek (number 3) and Suleymaniye (number 2) in the Historical Peninsula  
Source: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 2006.



### The Geographical Position, Location, and Importance in Historical Process of the Zeyrek Area

The district between the walls surrounding the city during the period of Emperor Constantine (324-337) had the feature of being a “sacred place” in the city with monasteries of all sizes built within the Havariyyun Church and the surroundings where the tombs of the emperors were placed such as the Agiou Apostolou, a basilica built in 550 (Eyice, 1986). It is understood that a large part of the monastery, which was initiated by Queen Irene who was the wife of Emperor Ioannes Komnenos (1118-1143) in the 12th century, was completed before 1136 by following the construction regulations called “Typikon” (Eyice, 1986).

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

Based on these sources, it is also understood that a hospital and some rooms allocated for priests were available around the monastery churches (Mathews, 1976). Before 1136, a second small church was built in the north of the large main abbey as well as an additional funerary chapel in between the two. Thus, the same area was one of the most important points of the city all the time during the mid- and late-Byzantine period though the Pantokrator Abbey started to be built at the beginning of the 12th century and consists of a combination of three chapels (Eyice, 1986). Pantokrator Abbey is the second largest ancient church still standing after the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul and a small section of the southern part is currently used as a mosque.

Another major abbey in Zeyrek is the Pantepoptes Monastery converted into a mosque known as Old Imaret Mosque. Other buildings belonging to this monastery outside the mosque have not been able to survive to the present day. Among the cultural assets in the area, particularly the Zeyrek Mosque which gave its name to the area, has great importance. Among other monumental buildings, Zembilli Ali Efendi Ottoman Elementary-Primary School, Barbaros Hayrettin Pasa Turkish Bath, Bicakci Alaaddin Mosque, Seyh Suleyman Mosque, Haydar Pasa Madrasah, Divitdar Mehmet Efendi Mosque, Kasap Demirhun Mosque, and Haliliye Madrasah are also located in the Zeyrek area (Çelik, 1976). It is considered that some ruins related to the monasteries, churches or cisterns could be existing under many Ottoman monuments in the area (Wiener, 1977).

## **Socio-Economic and Cultural Structure of Zeyrek**

During the reconstruction process after the conquest of Istanbul by the Ottoman Empire, Fatih Sultan Mehmet wanted the Byzantine people who moved away to return to the country and demanded that those who stayed in the country not to leave their places. Houses in the area were allocated to some Turkish, Armenian, Greek, and Jewish families coming from Anatolia and Rumelia. Subsequent to the takeover of Istanbul by the Ottoman regime, as a result of the Turkish-Islamic settlement structure settlements around religious buildings were introduced to the whole city. Thus, the city was organised through large residential centres formed by large and small size Islamic-Ottoman social complexes located on the easily-noticeable large hills, and religious buildings to strengthen the connection between them and the neighbourhoods.

The social structure of the district showed no major change until the 19th century. Decisions made regarding the allocation of Golden Horn and the Marmara Sea coasts to commerce and industry in the Master Plan of Istanbul, prepared by Professor Henri Prost from the Paris City Planning Institute in 1936, came into force

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

in 1939 and caused the former residents of the district to leave the area. When some of the houses were evacuated, the district turned into an area where migrants from Turkey's less developed provinces settled or which was used for the purpose of storage. Today, some factors related to the area such as uneducated or unskilled labour force and absence of adequate socio-cultural opportunities for women, children and young people make the area an unfavourable district in which to live.

### **Architectural Urban Texture of Zeyrek**

Wooden and attached type traditional housing texture has always maintained its neighbourhood characteristic. Street patterns and architectural identity of the area was largely determined by the topography. Curved, steep, and narrow streets caused by differences in elevation are the typical examples to extant original Ottoman settlements. Housing texture usually consists of 2-3 story wooden attached houses less than 100 square meters. The common living room is located towards the street. Almost all the houses have small gardens in the back. Bay windows that facilitate particular movement to the street are available in front of most Zeyrek houses (Figure 2).

*Figure 2. Zeyrek district with wooden houses with bay windows*  
*Source: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 2006.*



## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

As well as attached houses, four-fronted mansions with one front forming the boundary line to street are available (IMM, 2011). Zeyrek was frequently exposed to great fires in the past due to the wooden texture of housing. Although the traditional texture disappeared in recent years due to some significant factors such as fires, preventative zoning arrangements, road widening work, and growing multi-storey concrete structures, it is observed that traditional street pattern and architectural characteristics of the World Heritage Site of the Zeyrek Mosque and the surroundings have reached today to a large extent.

### **Planning Decisions Regarding the Zeyrek Area**

While the housing texture of the Zeyrek district was destroyed in time due to various reasons such as fires and lack of maintenance, it is known that the users of the district changed in the 1950s when Istanbul was exposed to a massive flow of migration. Fast-spreading tower block-construction process in particular between 1960-1975 caused some trouble in the Zeyrek Area. Although new settlements were limited in 1980, a reduction in the number of wooden houses occurred after the area was taken under protection (IMM, 2006). Projects for the protection of civilian cultural heritage carrying value as the examples of traditional Ottoman wooden architecture have been prepared, and restoration activities have been conducted in the area since the early 2000s. These studies are carried out by public establishments such as Governorship of Istanbul, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, First Regional Directorate of Foundations of Istanbul, and Fatih Municipality as well as by private property owners. Dominant usage foreseen for Zeyrek Mosque (Pantokrator Monastery) and the Surrounding Protected Area in the Reconstruction Plan for Protection of Fatih District Urban Protected Area in 1/5000 Scale is concentrated on the medium density (500 persons/ha) residential areas. Overall in the area the creation of social and cultural facilities as well as parks and recreation areas to support the use of the housing are recommended (IMM, 2006).

### **Suleymaniye Mosque and the Surrounding Area as One of the World Heritage Sites in Istanbul**

Suleymaniye Mosque and the Surrounding World Heritage Site are located on the slopes of the third hill of Istanbul overlooking the Golden Horn in the north of the Historic Peninsula. The area is named by the Suleymaniye Social Complex located within the boundaries. The district shows the typical neighbourhood characteristics of the Ottoman Period settlement with traditional Turkish houses and the streets protecting their organic forms. The architectural identity of the area is formed by the wooden houses developed around Suleymaniye Complex just like the Zeyrek

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

Area (Benli, 2015). It is seen that units to meet civil and social needs of the residents such as mosques, hazire (burial area reserved for special people especially in mosques), imaret (houses for the poor), bazaar, Ottoman elementary-primary schools, madrasahs, darussifa (hospitals), and libraries are available among the building groups forming the neighbourhood in the area (Kuban, 2010).

Suleymaniye Mosque and the Surroundings World Heritage Site were declared protected areas in 1977 by the Turkish Ministry of Culture (Figure 1). In 1995, Suleymaniye district was identified as an urban and historical protected area under decision of Istanbul No 1 Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation Council dated December 7, 1995, and Law No. 6848, along with the declaration of protected area of all Historical Peninsula (IMM, 2011). A total of 525 wooden houses, which are under protection in the district of Suleymaniye Mosque and the Surroundings World Heritage Site, as one of the four heritage areas included in the World Heritage List by definition of ‘Istanbul’s Historic Areas’ as well as Suleymaniye Social Complex built by master architect Sinan by an order of Suleyman The Magnificent are available in the area.

### **The Geographical Position, Location, and Importance in the Historical Process of the Suleymaniye Area**

The Suleymaniye Area, located on the slopes between the north elevations of the Historical Peninsula and the Golden Horn and developed around the Suleymaniye Social Complex as an ulema district with the characteristics of a religious centre, is an area of dense wooden building structure as an example of civil architecture (Eyice, 2006). The area contains the Suleymaniye Social Complex (1551-1557) and the Sehzadebasi Social Complex (1543-1548) built by Sinan the Architect as well as the Vefa Church Mosque (MollaGurani Mosque), the Kalenderhane Mosque and such like monumental works. It is known that the Kalenderhane Mosque, which is considered to be dedicated to Theotokos Kyriotissa, was constructed in the East-Roman era and transformed into a mosque during the Ottoman Empire era in the 18th century (Krautheimer & Curcic 1986). The Vefa Church Mosque, which is considered to be dedicated to Saint Theodoros, was constructed in the form of the Eastern Orthodox Church belonging to Komnenos and Palaiologos periods of the Byzantine architecture. It was used as a mosque following the conquest of Istanbul. The Valens Aqueduct (Bozdoğan Kemer), which was completed by the Roman Emperor Valens at the end of the 4th century, is also located in this area.

Furthermore, several education buildings which had very important roles in the country’s history such as Istanbul University, Vefa High School, and Atif Efendi Library as well as the health buildings such as Hifzissihha Institute and Esnaf Hospital, and Istanbul Drapers Bazaar (IMC,) the largest and most important trade



## **Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul**

*Figure 3. Suleymaniye Mosque surrounded by wooden houses and madrasahs with domes*

*Source: Postcards archive in Atatürk Library, 2016.*



building of the Republic Period, are the important buildings among the most valuable ones of the area (Eyice, 1986; Kuban, 2010). Streets which have a traditional pattern with the attached civil architecture examples in the Zeyrek District such as Kirazli Mescit, Yogurtcu Street, and Ayranci Street can also be seen today (Goodwin, 1971) (Figure 3).

### **Socio-Economic and Cultural Structure of Suleymaniye**

Structures giving the name and features to the district include madrasahs along with the Suleymaniye Social Complex, Darulhadis, Darussifa (hospital), Darulkurra, imaret (houses for the poor), Turkish baths, caravanserais, tabhane, hazire (a burial area reserved for special people especially in mosques), shrine, and Ottoman bazaar. Suleymaniye became one of Istanbul's most important regions in the 16th century as the residential area for notable governors of the palace, religious scholars, and rich merchants as well as for various functions. In addition, urban texture formed

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

in this area from the beginning of the 16th century until the beginning of the 19th century included large craftsman workshops, factories, workplaces, and commerce houses around the Suleymaniye Complex. Copper engraving works known as “Suleymaniye Work” are conducted especially in the shops of the social complex on the Mimar Sinan Street and around.

Towards the Mercan, the shopping and commercial centre of the part outside the World Heritage Site and at the Haliç, activities of several developing manufacturing units particularly coppersmiths, moulders, wood lathers, mouthpiece makers and shepherd’s felt cloak makers have survived until today (Kuban, 2010). Educational and scientific functions of the district through various buildings and faculties of Istanbul University located in the area still continue today. Despite being a developing area in terms of its residential and commercial functions in the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul earlier, Suleymaniye was later transformed into an area mainly hosting trade, manufacturing and storage fields as well as housing, car parks and educational institutions.

The formation of new commercial and storage functions not compatible with the existing architectural and socio-cultural identity of the region, related changes in the social structure and sense of belonging problems of the people migrating to the area after the 1960s has led to social, economic, and cultural corruptions in the whole area. Along with the problems related to cultural protection, expected quality in the restoration and protection processes of historical buildings could not be attained.

### **Architectural Urban Texture of Suleymaniye**

The majority of conventional housing of Suleymaniye has been constructed using frame construction techniques to be two/three-storied. The parcels in the area are of long and thin form. When the plan schemes of the housing settled on these narrow parcels are examined, it is seen that the rooms and anterooms as common place between the rooms have been built. Anterooms are the most important factors in the housing construction layout, and they were used as the centre of the connection between rooms (Benli, 2015). Rooms were used to meet specific functions on their own in the structure. Each room accommodates living, eating, working, resting and suchlike actions. The formation of the room is composed of a combination of the space components necessary for these actions.

Despite the housing with the corner anterooms, inner anterooms are seen as the layout type in the area, mostly the central anteroom layout type was applied (Benli, 2015). Entrance into the attached houses, which are usually constructed in the same way as those in the Zeyrek area, is mostly realised on the side of the street front. Houses with a back or side gardens with high walls are the important elements

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

brought on the streets. In this manner the streets are kept away from a monotonous layout and they are activated by the duty cycle.

Bay windows situated in front of the houses in Suleymaniye have also had a direct impact on the street silhouette. Bay windows built for eliminating the distortions caused by the unevenness of the land on the ground floor and for creating proper spaces on the top floor not only dynamised the street with their aesthetic values but also gave the street a rhythmic appearance (Vatan & Benli, 2014) (Figures 3 and 4). As well as controlling the effects of the wind and sun on the house, providing light and shadow effects in fronts, protecting the house from the natural impacts acting as eaves on the entrance, bay windows are an important element that complement a building, allow people to expand their outlook and gain dominance over the landscape.

### **Planning Decisions Regarding the Suleymaniye Area**

Similar to the Zeyrek Area, mainly fires and the arrangements made with the aim of preventing fires, road widening works, efforts to create new squares and new

*Figure 4. The timber residential characteristic in Suleymaniye district  
Source: Taken by the photographer Kargopulo in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Atatürk Library.*



## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

public spaces caused the loss of the original street texture from place to place. The Suleymaniye Mosque and Surroundings World Heritage Site preserved their traditional structure as urban texture until the 1950s. Although some examples of civil architecture with the streets keeping their traditional characteristics are still present today, Suleymaniye has been exposed to fires frequently just like other old districts of Istanbul with wooden structure. It could also be said the original texture has been corrupted slightly especially after the opening of the Ataturk Boulevard and the construction of the blocks of the IMC (Vatan & Benli, 2014). The bazaar that was built in order to bring together drapers and cloth traders in and around Sultanhamam was activated in the late 1960s.

Buildings used as housing in the area were minimised in time; mostly, single population who arrived as internal migrants and because of the proximity of district to the university, students moved into the remaining houses. Increasingly turning into a poorer district during the last century, Suleymaniye is still trying to maintain its vitality with education, health, and related functions. In the Suleymaniye area the creation of social and cultural facilities as well as parks and recreation areas to support the use of the housing are projected by a Reconstruction Master Plan for Protection on a 1/5000 scale (IMM, 2006).

Density range of 600 - 400 people/hectare is projected by maintaining the current situation in the residential areas. It is stated that the trading types that do not require storage activities and the functions such as retail, service units, commercial buildings, production-marketing-merchandising units can take place in the area. Maintaining the original structure and function of IMC, it can be provided with the new usages of culture-tourism purposes. Madrasah buildings around the Suleymaniye Mosque are defined as cultural facilities in the Plan as seen in Figure 5. These areas can be used to serve as cultural centres, libraries, museums, exhibition centers, conference facilities, and nursing homes. In the plan, it is indicated that the function of the Istanbul University Botanical Garden, which is one of the largest green areas of the site, will be kept and no addition to the existing buildings will be made.

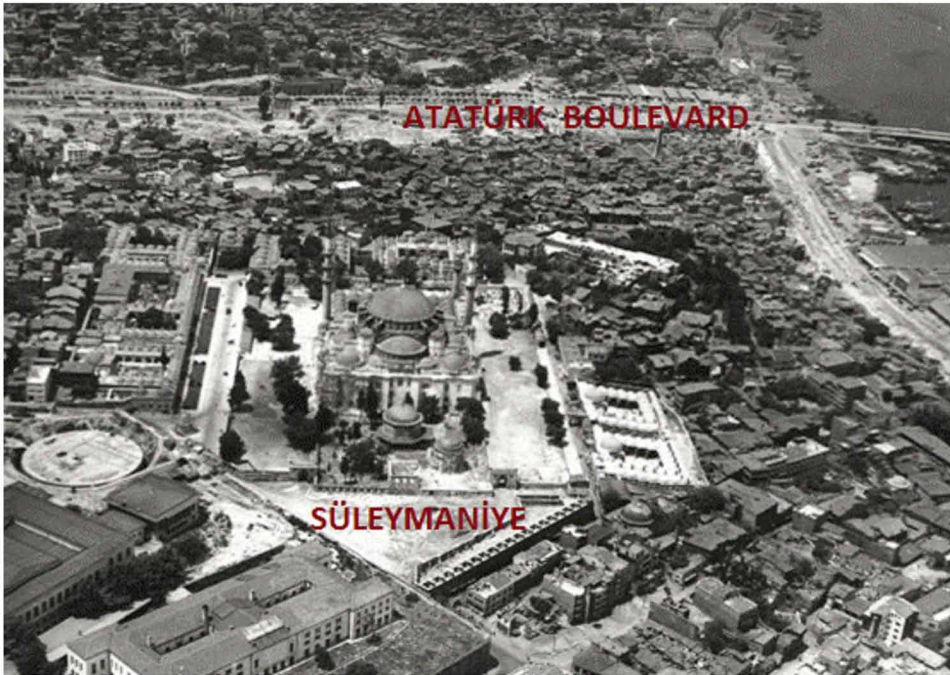
### **Opening of Ataturk Boulevard as the Urban Development Concept**

Turkey underwent a restructuring period after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 at the end of Ottoman Empire era. This period in Istanbul started with the official invitation of French Urbanist Henri Prost by the Turkish government for the preparation of city's master plans in 1933. Paris Region Chief Urbanist Professor Henri Prost from Paris City Planning Institute began his works to make plans for Istanbul in 1936, which were to be finished until 1951. Professor Prost first worked on the solutions for protection and evaluation of historic silhouette

## **Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul**

*Figure 5. Suleymaniye district & Atatürk Boulevard*

*Source: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 2006.*



and historical monuments of Istanbul within their environments (Aydemir, 2008). Although Prost's idea was to modernize Istanbul without damaging its natural and historical integrity, provide transportation, and reveal the architectural values, his certain decisions related to transport axes could be read clearly when the master plan decision solutions were evaluated (Figure 6).

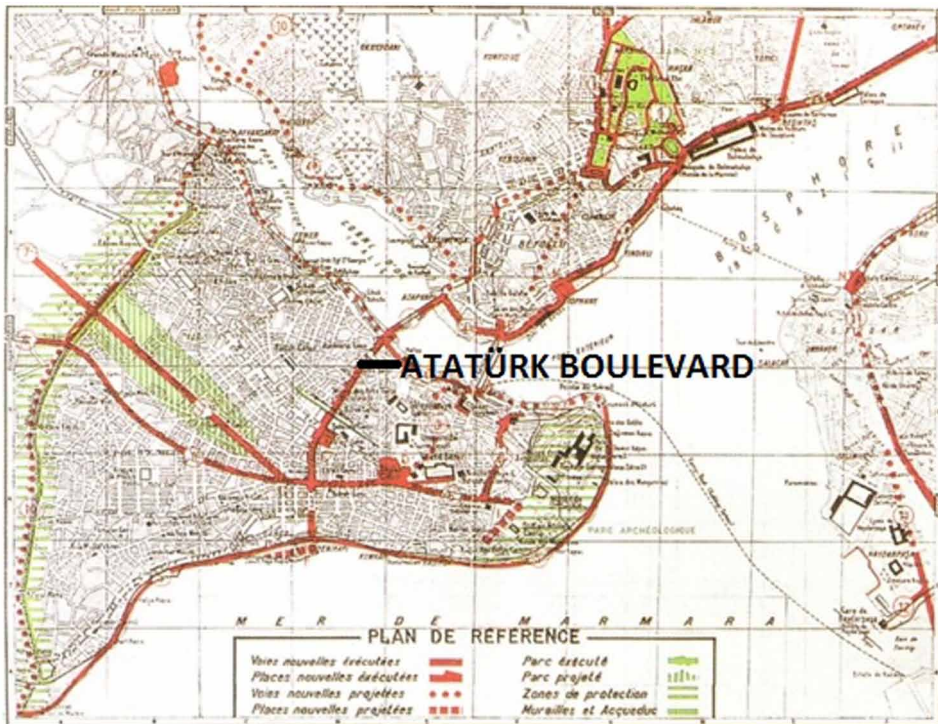
Prost prepared partial plans that could be described in parts rather than prepare a strategic plan for the whole city in those years. One of those partial plans was prepared on the Historical Peninsula. The plan for Istanbul Prost prepared related to opening new squares, boulevards, and wide avenues. Prost categorised the city in the context of functionality in his plan, and he put the transport axes at the centre of urban development. He determined the centre as the new commercial, industrial, and residential area to be developed around the transport axes. However, leading Turkish and foreign architects of the period expressed that this plan was made to assimilate Istanbul to Paris, and that, in particular, the existing architectural identity and character of the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul was not considered at all.

The construction of the boulevard which is a boundary point between Suleymaniye and Zeyrek was started in 1941 under Prost's Master Plan. The area where the

## Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul

Figure 6. Prost's plan

Source: Megaron, 2008.



Byzantine and Ottoman civilizations were situated one after the other experienced a functional change through the modern planning principles of that period. Split of the existing texture into two parts meant split of the neighbourhoods feeding each other.

The area where Ataturk Boulevard was built was known as a region with an original identity with examples from the Byzantine and Ottoman architecture. Integrated individual examples described the centuries of the urban texture of old Istanbul including many mosques, schools, fountains, wooden houses with narrow streets in the area such as Valens Aqueduct (Bozdoğan Kemerı), a work from the Roman Period, Zeyrek Cistern, Zeyrek Pantockator Monastery Church from the Byzantine Period, Gazanfer Aga Madrasah, Seb Sefa Hatun Mosque, and Pertevniyal Valide Sultan Mosque from the Ottoman period.

The features of the city did not go through very significant change after the conquest of Istanbul. Distinguished with their spiritual identities, the Suleymaniye and Zeyrek Areas maintained their functional identities in terms of socio-cultural and religious aspects in the Ottoman period just like in the Byzantine period. However, this identity changed negatively with the plans made during the period of the Turk-

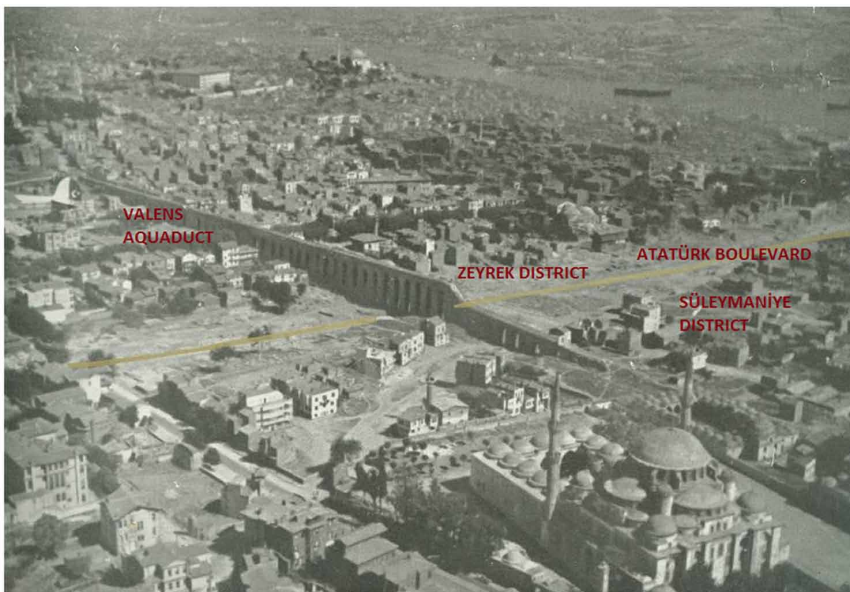
## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

ish Republic. As can be seen in Suleymaniye and Zeyrek examples, by damaging the organic structure of the districts, the boulevard which is shown as a symbol of modernization, and these two unique settlement textures were separated by a sharp line (Figure 7).

These districts located on both sides of the boulevard were negatively affected because of the transport network and commercial functions assigned to the boulevard. Shops and business centres opened on both sides of the boulevard led to a reduction in family life in these districts. While the area where the boulevard was constructed was mainly a residential area, it was turned into a commercial and industrial-based transit area after the opening of the boulevard.

Many historical buildings including the Oruc Gazi Mosque, Firuz Aga Mosque, Sekbanbasi Ibrahim Aga Mosque, Hoca Teberruk Mosque, Papazoglu Mosque, Voynuk Sucaeddin Mosque, Ebul Fazl Mahmud Efendi Mosque, Payzen Yusuf Pasha Tomb, Ibrahim Pasha Bath, Azebler Mosque and the Bath, Kirk Cesme Water, Burmali Mosque Elementary School, Revani Celebi Mosque, Suleyman Subasi Kara Celebizade Mosque were demolished on the line of the boulevard (Kuban 2010). Another issue that should be discussed is to name the boulevard after the founder of the Turkish Republic in order to extenuate this sharp reconstruction process. Ataturk Boulevard is an example of the intervention of the city's natural development in a planned manner and the destruction of the existing urban texture. Today,

*Figure 7. Atatürk Boulevard between Zeyrek and Suleymaniye*  
*Source: Güzelleşen İstanbul, 1944.*



## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

the most striking building on the boulevard is the IMC with its original body and lively architectural structure.

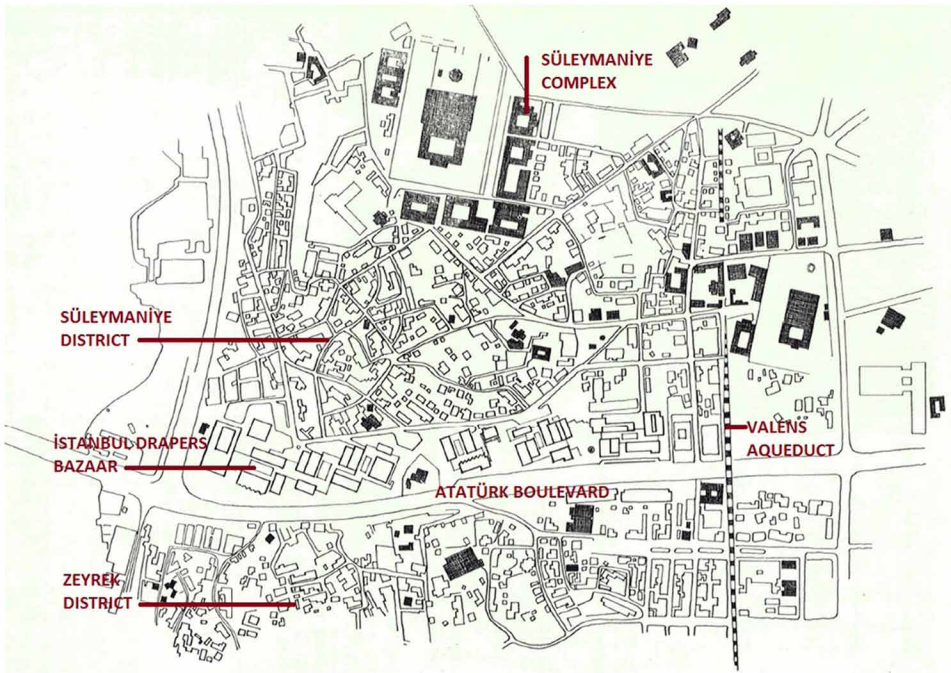
### **Istanbul Drapers Bazaar (IMC) Competition Process**

#### **Local Zoning Plan**

Wholesaler drapers and cloth traders concentrated on Sultanhamam, which is close to the Golden Horn coasts of the Historical Peninsula of Istanbul and tried to find a new market place by establishing a cooperative in 1950. A decision was made on the expropriation of the area between Süleymaniye and Zeyrek which began to be destroyed for delivering to the cooperative by the Istanbul Governor of the period. Although there are hundreds of organically formed and small parcels remaining from the Ottoman neighbourhood texture in the area, the expropriation process was largely accomplished following a nearly five-year-long study in 1959. However, when it was noticed there was no development plan of the area prior to these years, “Local Zoning Plan Competition” was organised at the end of 1958 (Figure 8).

*Figure 8. Istanbul Drapers Bazaar (IMC)*

*Source: Journal of Architecture, 2003.*





## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

The purpose of the urbanism competition organized on August 27, 1958 was to clarify the expropriation boundaries of the area and zoning status before the architectural competition and to determine the relationship of the project to be performed in one of Istanbul's liveliest historic centres, with similar structures such as Suleymaniye Mosque and Bozdogan Arch. Despite not being written in the competition regulations, one of the data verbally notified to the participants of the competition was a suggestion put forward by Adnan Menderes, the Prime Minister of the period: Menderes wanted to open another avenue perpendicular to Ataturk Boulevard, from Unkapani towards the Suleymaniye Social Complex, seventy meters wide.

Although this data was used in competition projects, it was not put into practice (Hepguler, 2001). That this data was not applied extremely accurate, because if this idea had been implemented Suleymaniye, which is one of Istanbul's oldest neighbourhoods, would have almost entirely vanished with its civil and religious structures. The jury gave the first prize, among fourteen projects sent to the competition, to the joint project of Master Architect Cihat Findikoglu, Master Architect Kamil Bayur, Master Architect Tarik Aka, Master Architect Niyazi Duranay, and Master Architect Ozdemir Akverdi (Kizilkayak, 2001). Italian Professor Luigi Piccinato, the head of the Planning Department of the Municipality, suggested some additions to the winning project in order to strengthen the relationship of the structure with the Suleymaniye Social Complex. Being developed by the contribution of Prof. Piccinato, the municipal urban planning consultant, this project was transformed into a Local Zoning Plan later.

### **IMC Competition Project and Implementation Stage**

On February 19, 1960, an architectural competition upon invitation was organized by the cooperative in order to find the best solution and make a project befitting a historic area such as Suleymaniye and suitable to the field in gigantic size. Together with the Competition Specification, the structure program required to be complied with and the data obtained by the local zoning plan were given to the participant architects. Competitors were asked to produce projects with a construction area of 160,000 square meters, including more than 1,100 shops, restaurants, kiosks, post offices, police stations, barber shops, pharmacies, stores, and both indoor and outdoor parking areas (Isikkaya, 2013). Out of 12 projects participating in the competition, the SITE Architecture, which consisted of a group of master architects DoganTekeli, Sami Sisa and Metin Hepguler, won (Tekeli, Sisa, & Hepguler, 1965).

In this challenging design process, DoganTekeli, Sami Sisa and Metin Hepguler worked together to determine the correct direction of the blocks in order to establish a strong bonding between the surrounding historical structures and the bazaar, and to resolve pedestrian circulation and vehicle traffic. They placed the blocks without

### ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

disturbing the appearances of the Sehzade complex, the Zeyrek Mosque (Pantocrator Church), the Bozdogan Arch, the Sebsafa Mosque and first and foremost, of the Suleymaniye Mosque complex. They designed landscape terraces in the bazaar from where these historical structures can be seen. It is observed that they also took advantage of the rich architectural history of Istanbul when making these designs. They developed their design by closely examining Istanbul's commercial history which forms the traditional houses of the Suleymaniye neighbourhood behind IMC, covered bazaars, inns and Grand Bazaar.

This great feature construction took seven years. Some tombstones were encountered during earthworks of the project area. As a result, the municipality required some changes in the projects. These requirements were added to the project by the architects of IMC and put into practice. At the present time, the tombs in front of the third block of IMC have been rescued. After examining the tombstones, it was understood that one of the tombstones belonged to Hizir Bey, who was the teacher of Fatih Sultan Mehmet and considered to be the first mayor of Istanbul, and the other one belonged to Katip Celebi, who made his mark in the 17th century with his works *Cihannuma* and *Kesfu'z Zunun* (Figure 9).

*Figure 9. The tombs in front of the 3rd block of IMC, at the present time*  
Source: Gulhan Benli's archive, 2016.



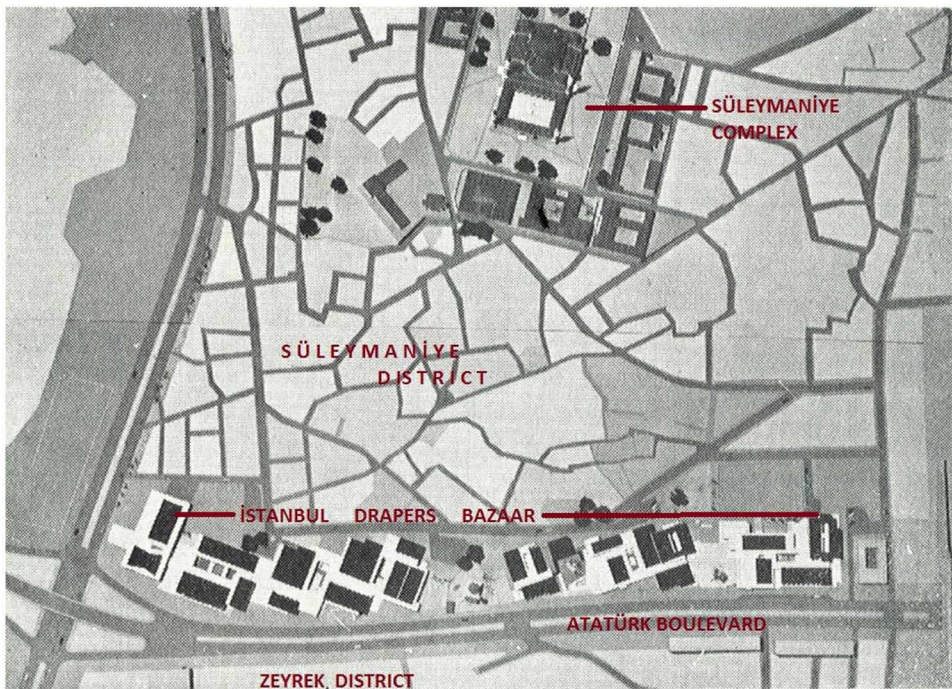
## **The Main Principles in the Project**

The most important feature of the design of IMC, which is a modern trial of Turkish-Islamic bazaar tradition, is its being “environment-friendly”, which is valid and well-accepted even today. The land which is inclined towards the Golden Horn from the Bozdoğan Arch is an area of 45,000 square meters and the front area which has a narrow form is 800 meters in length (Doğan & Emdem, 2003). In this project, the shops are placed at an angle with Atatürk Boulevard, with a view of the Süleymaniye Mosque Complex through courtyards, and the project also allows sufficient area for the pedestrians to walk comfortably (Figure 10). Courtyards where the shops are positioned are lined by being connected with the internal pedestrian paths along the Boulevard with different spatial effects. Embedded positioning of the building in the land and ventilation process by opening the rear service path to the courtyards were settled in the most dynamic way in the project.

Utilizing the slope extending the entire length of the land, entrance halls to all floors without stairs were provided. Referring to the historical features of the area, a certain standard and dynamism are observed in the construction through small

*Figure 10. Istanbul Drapers Bazaar nearby Atatürk Boulevard*

*Source: Journal of Architecture, 2003.*



## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

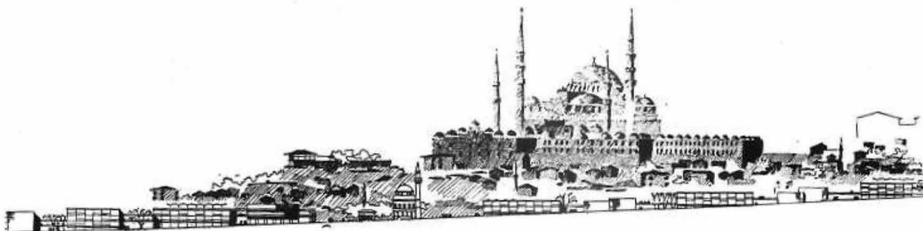
bay windows, balconies, and retreats on the upper floors. It has been possible to reflect the respect for the Suleymaniye Social Complex with low rise structure preferred in the construction like the current silhouette from the Ataturk Boulevard (Figure 11). Adaptability to the environment and durability as well as cost and ease of application were taken into consideration in the selection of the materials for exterior masonry of the building.

It is seen that the use of numerous and different materials was avoided. Although travertine coating was applied on some of the walls, horizontal bearing, balcony parapets, and some walls were left as exposed concrete (Figure 12). Special effort has been made to exhibit the examples of Turkish plastic arts belonging to the period and integrate them with the building architecture for this large complex. Representing a specific period architecturally, the bazaar was also decorated with exquisite works of plastic arts. Some of these works are as follows: ceramic panels by Fureya Koral and Sadi Diren, three mosaic panels by Eren and Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu, mosaic panel by Nedim Gunsur, natural stone relief by Ali Teoman Germaner, fountain plastic by Yavuz Gorey and the Statue of Birds by Kuzgun Acar. While the first part of the bazaar was completed in 1967, the second part was completed in 1968 (Tekeli, Sisa, & Hepgüler, 1965).

### **The IMC Building from 1967 to Present**

Suleyman Demirel, the Prime Minister of the period, performed the opening of the bazaar with the largest usage area after Grand Bazaar in Istanbul on April 22, 1967. Being unoccupied in the first years, the IMC building began to be filled by the settlement of velvet drapers in one of its blocks after 1970. After 1985, the bazaar became more crowded as another block was filled by importers of sewing machines for which the quota on customs was alleviated. It then became a favourable bazaar by business lines such as music, drapery, velvet-making, and curtain-making, and

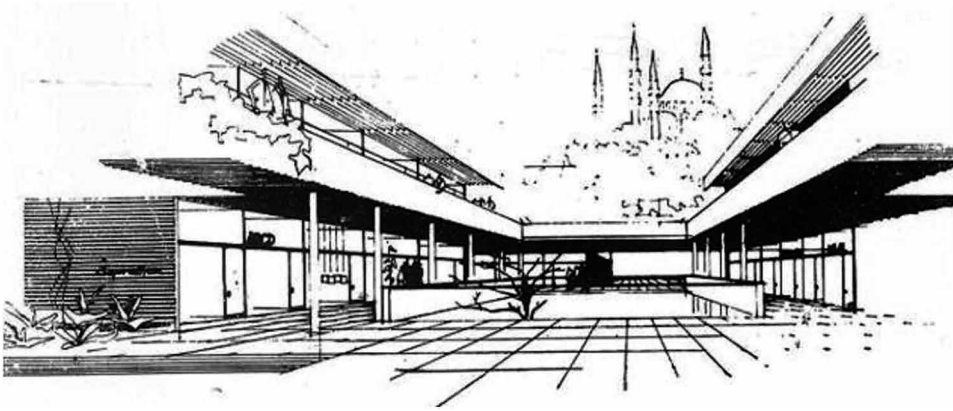
*Figure 11. The silhouette of Istanbul Drapers Bazaar with Suleymaniye Mosque*  
Source: Tekeli, Sisa & Hepgüler, 1965.



## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

*Figure 12. Sketches for the courtyard of the IMC building*

*Source: Tekeli, Sisa & Hepgüler, 1965.*



it still has the feature of being the largest bazaar of Istanbul. From the 1990s, by the opening of large-scale shopping centres in Istanbul and the rapid proliferation of such structures after the 2000s, artisans at IMC were negatively affected.

In 2005, when IMC Management applied to the municipality to make a parking lot in a vacant land next to the bazaar they owned, they saw a suspended change in the zoning plan. The area where IMC was located was shown as “prestige housing zone” in 1/1000 scale zoning plan and 1/5000 scale master plan which was approved on September 22, 2005. IMC Management objected to the suspended plan and appealed to the court for the continuation of execution. However, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality wanted to demolish the six blocks of the IMC and make “fifty prestige houses and a bazaar with characteristics of Ottoman bazaar” instead. In other words, the expropriation of the bazaar which consisted of thousands of shops was brought to agenda.

The demolition of Turkey’s largest bazaar constructed at that time which was recognized as an example of contemporary architecture after 1950 and the construction of “fifty prestige” houses instead was planned. Regarding the demolition of the bazaar and the construction of prestige houses, journalists, architects, academics, and non-governmental organizations sided with the IMC. They formed a view on the preservation of the bazaar. Even Nevzat Er, Eminonu Mayor of the period, expressed that the decision of demolition was wrong. However, as the Metropolitan Municipality abode by their decision, the decision was moved to the State Council. On November 13, 2008, the State Council, which also rejected the municipality’s appeal, stated that the demolition of the bazaar “integrated with its original architectural identity, awarded the Republic Period Structures and the cultural heritages

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

of different periods” and “the construction of villas instead” was inappropriate for the principles of urbanism, planning principles and public interest.

Since its construction, the damage of time and artisans on the structure have increased. Due to the use of careless signs and showcase expansions, the IMC’s original facade covered with terra-cotta bricks has completely vanished. Small bay window modules, by means of which the architects made references to classic architectural elements of the traditional Ottoman houses and which have been modernized, have become imperceptible as they were embedded in the shops. Similarly, the fountain structure which is located in the public domain in traditional Ottoman architecture has been transformed into buffets in time and has lost its original function.

### **Interaction of the IMC Building with the Environment in which It Is Located**

The architecture of the IMC building, unlike the structure typology of Ottoman bazaar which forms the backbone of the Ottoman bazaar culture, caravanserai, covered bazaar, inn and the Grand Bazaar, presents the commercial spatial traditions of its own period with a modern interpretation. Likewise, as a product of the biggest artisan organization in its own era, it stands in front of us today. At the same time, it also has close relations with the magnificent Suleymaniye Social Complex located in the silhouette behind it and does not suppress it with its architecture. The IMC building which establishes an open, accessible and permeable relationship with the city, with the statement of the designer team, is in position as the base of the Suleymaniye Social Complex (Tekeli, 2001).

In their design, the SITE Architecture group, the winner of the competition, aimed to produce a project which is coherent to the historical and structural character of the area, providing the visual connections of IMC with the mosque from any point, by arrangement of the courtyards opening to the Suleymaniye Mosque on the hill. It has a non-monotonic variable fiction with permeable and moving horizontal lines, trying to bring together the existing 16th-17<sup>th</sup> century urban texture scale and the boulevard which is the product of the urban development plans of the 1950s.

Indoor and outdoor courtyards, located in and between the structure blocks of the bazaar, draw attention as elements that enable the urban circulation. The location of the shops appear as organizations having a particular axial arrangement. Considering Turkey’s conditions at the time it was built, the completion of a large group of structures of this scale in six years shows that the limited possibilities in materials, technology, and labour were used at maximum efficiency. In the 1960s in Turkey, under the influence of artists and also some politicians, a regulation about placing artworks in state structures was issued. In this regard, carrying the original works

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

from the Turkish Plastic Arts, of the IMC structure as well, emerges as a difference that it brought to the bazaar structures of its own time.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

The Zeyrek Area where many historical buildings such as mosques, madrasahs, and wooden mansions from the Ottoman period as well as Pantokrator Abbey from 12th century are located, and the Suleymaniye area hosting the Suleymaniye Social Complex, a world-renowned artifact of Sinan the Architect, along with the neighbourhoods with wooden houses are both included in the World Heritage List of UNESCO because they have numerous examples of life, technology, and architecture belonging to history of the civilizations who lived in the area. Although the historic areas of Istanbul are under legal protection by national legislation, there is no specific planning legislation to protect World Heritage Sites.

Therefore, there is a need for conducting several particular works to determine the management of the areas with commercial-residential-tourism potentials, urban restructuring strategy and existing traffic and transportation plan of the Historical Peninsula to protect the universal values of both areas on top and detail scale for the near future (Vatan & Benli, 2014). In these works, the principles for the protection of both areas and for the restoration to be carried out in the area with the rehabilitation principles should be determined, the duties of the responsible authorities should be explained clearly, training for the users of the area should be provided, protection and awareness consciousness should be increased and risk management plans should be prepared.

## **CONCLUSION**

Within the scope of architectural heritages to be protected, the subject of evaluation of the modern architecture products in Turkey is being discussed in a process that began in the 2000s within a limited frame consisting of specialists. While the approaches in theory and practice are changing, the definition of cultural assets to be protected differs in terms of scale and content. Turkey has problems with legal, professional, and social perception preventing documentation and protection of the modern architectural structures.

The DOCOMOMO-Turkey Working Group, founded in 2002 to work in the field of documentation and protection of the modern architecture produced in the twentieth century, are working for many structures to be certified as “cultural assets”. Considering that most of the applications for the modern architecture products to be

### ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

certified are rejected, it is obvious that the current legal definitions are restrictive for the protection of 20th century architecture, are able to provide protection only for certain structures, and therefore need to be updated in the legal framework. The criterion for the protection of structures that were built after 1900 is not defined.

Therefore, the definition of periodic and qualitative values of the 20th century architecture and determination of the criterion for protection, by organizations such as DOCOMOMO-Turkey and academic institutions, are of great importance. In the development of the social consciousness for the protection of the 20th century architectural heritage in Turkey, establishing connections with organizations working on modern architectural examples, sharing international documents and samples, holding meetings and publishing studies on the subject are needed. Hence, also the products of the 20th century architecture deemed worthy for protection should carry a universal architectural identity as a reflection of the culture to which it belongs and must provide a quality as original and stylistic as the traces of the previous periods, to the city. Cities, not of their individual identities, are formed of multiple identities formed by the combination of historical layers, and they create a sense of belonging to that city in memory of the citizens.

The example of Ataturk Boulevard is just one of the modern urban planning examples carried out throughout Istanbul between 1940-1965. It was clearly understood that sacrificing all surrounding Ottoman artifacts for opening a boulevard in a linear direction in contrast to the organic-structure Ottoman urban fabric does not make other parts of the city meaningful and valuable. Blocks of the Istanbul Drapers Bazaar, opened in 1967, could be regarded as a kind of transition structure trying to combine and integrate Suleymaniye region with the boulevard without blocking the silhouette of unique Suleymaniye Mosque behind (Figure 13). They are among

*Figure 13. A small part of Istanbul Drapers Bazaar nearby Atatürk Boulevard*  
Source: IMM, 2006.





## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

the modern buildings of the 20th century to be protected when viewed from this aspect. It must be an essential principle of the modern protectionism understanding to transfer contemporary architectural works as one of the most outstanding examples of the period which won the competition to the next generations as heritage. In this context, the IMC building, which is the modern architectural heritage of the 20th century, must be protected and kept alive as it forms a part of the memory of our city.

## **REFERENCES**

Aydemir, I. (2008). İki Fransız Mimarı Henri Prost ve August Perret'nin İstanbul ile İlgili Çalışmaları. *Journal of Yıldız Technical University Architecture Faculty. MEGARON*, 3(1), 104–111.

Benli, G. (2015). *Continuity of Typology and Components of Traditional Housing in Suleymaniye, as the First Inhabited Region in Istanbul*[İstanbul'un İlk İskan Bölgelerinden; Suleymaniye'deki Geleneksel Konut Tipolojisi ve Bileşenlerinin Sürekliliği]. *Proceedings of Sustainable Integrated Design; Creative and Innovative Approaches; Green Age III* (pp. 351–360). İstanbul, Turkey: Mimar Sinan University Press.

Çelik, G. (1976). *A Guide to Istanbul*. İstanbul, Turkey: İstanbul Library OCLC.

Doğan, H., & Emdem, C. (2003). İstanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı, XXI Dergisi. V (11), İstanbul, Turkey: 74-77.

Eyice, S. (1986). *İstanbul'un Camiye Çevrilen Kiliseleri*. İstanbul, Turkey: TAÇ.

Eyice, S. (2006). *Tarih Boyunca İstanbul*. İstanbul, Turkey: Etkileşim Press.

Freely, J., & Çakmak, A. S. (2009). *Byzantine Monuments of Istanbul*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Goodwin, G. (1971). *A History of Ottoman Architecture*. London, England: Thames & Hudson.

Hepgüler, M. (2001). *Tanıkların Gözünden İMÇ, İmecedan İMÇ'ye*. İstanbul, Turkey: İmç Press.

Historical Areas of Istanbul. (2016). Retrieved from [whc.unesco.org/en/list/356](http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356)

Işıkkaya, D. (2013). *Türkiye'de Özgün bir Kentsel ve Mimari Yarışma Deneyim: İMÇ Blokları. Yarışmalar ve Mimarlık Sempozyumu*. İstanbul, Turkey: Scala Press.

İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İMM). (2006). Thereport of Master Plan of Eminönü-Fatih Historic Peninsula in 1/5000 scale. İstanbul, Turkey.

## ***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

Kızılkayak, G. (2001). *Dünden Bugüne İMÇ, Umut Dolu Günler, İmecedен İMÇ'ye* (pp. 55–62). Istanbul, Turkey: İmç Press.

Krautheimer, R., & Curcic, S. (1986). *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (4th ed.). Hong Kong: Yale University Press.

Kuban, D. (2010). *Ottoman Architecture*. London, England: Antique Collectors' Club.

Mathews, T. F. (1976). *The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul: A photographic Survey*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Municipality, I. M. (2011). *İMM*. Istanbul, Turkey: Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan.

Tekeli, D. (2001). *Tanıkların Gözünden İMÇ. İmecedен İMÇ'ye*. Istanbul, Turkey: İmç Press.

Tekeli, D., Sisa, S., & Hepgüler, M. (1965). *İstanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı. Mimarlık Dergisi*. Istanbul, Turkey: Mimarlar Odası Press.

Vatan, M., & Benli, G. (2014). Suleymaniye Neighborhood: Change of the Physical and Social Phase of the District throughout its History. *Proceedings of Re-Thinking Residential Environments, Environment and Design 2014 International Congress* (pp. 358-368). İstanbul, Turkey: Bahçeşehir University Press.

Wiener, G. M. (1977). *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbul: Byzantion, Konstantinopolis, Istanbul bis zum Beginn d. 17. Jh.* Germany: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.

## **KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Bay Window:** A window with a flat front and angle sides.

**Draper Bazaar:** A kind of market building with consecutive shop units specialized in particular goods.

**Historical Peninsula:** An area surrounded by the Byzantine city walls, the Golden Horn and the Marmara Sea which has harbored many civilizations throughout its thousands of years of history.

**Madrasah:** An educational institution under the provision of the Ottoman Empire.

**Organic Street Pattern:** A pattern formed by wooden houses with bay windows especially seen in sites under the provision of the Ottoman Empire.

**Ottoman Artifacts:** Famous ceramics and wall paintings of artists of the period in Istanbul.

***Two Unique Protected Sites with a Modern Heritage in Historical Peninsula in Istanbul***

**Protected Sites:** Special sites with cultural and natural heritage that are both irreplaceable sources of life which have been grouped as natural, archaeological, urban, historical and mixed, and inspiration that makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application.