An Examination of Suleymaniye Region in the Context of UNESCO Criteria

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ABSTRACT
Süleymaniye Region, which was accepted to the world heritage list together with Istanbul's Sur'u Sultani, Zeyrek and Land Walls areas in 1985, loses its authenticity and value compared to the days when it was included in the heritage list as a result of delayed conservation decisions, inadequate and faulty practices. Revitalizing the history with the methods of 'rebuilding by demolishing', demolishing the existing buildings and placing them in the region in the form of imitation of old wooden architecture, and not consulting the local people or experts sufficiently before and during all these applications are among the problems in the region. These methods not only do not comply with the major international acceptances, but also lead to the wear and tear of the remaining values of the region. Following a brief history of the Süleymaniye Region, the text evaluates the practices in the region according to UNESCO criteria and discusses the necessary methods to provide more successful protection in the region.
Keywords: Conservation, UNESCO, world heritage list, nominated properties, operational guidelines.

1. INTRODUCTION

International mobilization to protect world heritage is an idea that emerged after World War I. After the discussion of this idea in scientific environments, some international institutions and organizations were established. Founded in 1946, UNESCO is one of these institutions. In the general conference of UNESCO, held in 1972, the 38-article Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage was prepared. Nominated monuments and sites, within the borders of more than 175 countries, that were found to comply with the World Heritage Criteria have the right to be included in the World Heritage list (Url-1).

A country that has signed the World Heritage Convention becomes a member state by undertaking to protect its cultural and natural heritage. The member country submits the list of areas, that it considers to be of international value, and how these areas are protected to the UNESCO with a detailed report and plan. At this stage, UNESCO supports the member country in presenting the nominations and preparing documents with the correct format and necessary maps. Evaluations are passed by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). Once a year, the committee decides on properties to be included in the World Heritage List. It also examines the reports about the properties under protection and takes decisions to be fulfilled for the World Heritage Convention (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

For the nominated properties to be included in the World Heritage List, it must meet at least one of the specified criteria. If these criteria are examined through the Historic Peninsula;
- 'To represent a masterpiece of human creative genius'. Monuments in the Archaeological Park, Hagia Sophia and Blue Mosque, Topkapı Palace Pantokrator Monastery Churches and Chora, complexes and mosques built by Mimar Sinan in

the 16th century and included in the World Heritage List; examples such as the Süleymaniye Mosque and the Land Walls are the products of creative human genius.

- 'To be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change'
- 'To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design' (Operational Guidelines, 2005). Byzantine Churches and Ottoman Mosques built in Istanbul, which was had been the capital of different empires, are examples of similar architectural works in other places.
- 'To be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (Operational Guidelines, 2005).
- 'To bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared'. Istanbul became the capital of three great empires.
- 'To be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history'. The traditional quarters of wooden houses in Süleymaniye, Zeyrek and Kadırga are the regional architectural examples that characterizes the 19th century of Istanbul. (Ayrancı, 2007).

2. SÜLEYMANİYE
2.1. History of Süleymaniye Region
The history of the Süleymaniye district, which is located in the historical peninsula, begins with the Ottoman Empire. Especially in the 16th century, it became one of the most important districts of Istanbul, together with the mosque and complex, that gave the district its name and characteristics, by Süleyman the Magnificent. Until the first quarter of the 17th century, Süleymaniye remained the most distinguished and important district of Istanbul, thanks to the prestige of the ulama. Even though the power of the ulama has decreased since this period, Süleymaniye has not lost its beauty and importance. Süleymaniye Madrasa has been the highest and most distinguished educational institution in Istanbul (Anonim, 1994).

In the 19th century, the reflections of the Ottoman Empire and the period began to be seen in Süleymaniye. In addition to the religious symbol of the district, the military-administrative function of the district has come to the fore with the military buildings added, such as Daire-i Umur-ı Askeriye (the Department of Military Affairs), Kışla-I Hümayun (the Imperial Barracks), the Armory, and the Süleymaniye Barracks (Çelik 1998).

In the 20th century, Süleymaniye lost its former importance. With the formation of poor settlements around it, it has ceased to be a district preferred by the elite and has become a district where people who have migrated to Istanbul from various cities or countries and whose economic conditions are not sufficient have settled (Kuban, 1994). It was able to preserve its traditional building structure until the 1950s. In the context of the urban texture, there are streets and houses that still preserve their characteristics, although most of them have been destroyed as a result of the destruction and fires that have occurred over time in Süleymaniye.

Today, the Süleymaniye district is a historical district where tourism is prioritized, together with the mosque and some structures of the social complex around it. The madrasah education, which is the traditional feature of the complex, is carried out by Istanbul University today, the Darüşşifa serves as the Suleymaniye Maternity Center, the Daruzziyafe serves as the expensive restaurants serving tourists, and the Şeyhülislamlık

serves as the Istanbul Mufti, and in a way, it continues its function in history (Tarihi Yarımada Eminönü-Fatih 1/5000 Koruma Amaçlı Nazım İmar Planı Raporu, 2003).

The commercial function of the region in the Ottoman period continues today, with the coppersmiths and casters that we come across while descending from Süleymaniye to the Golden Horn. However, the area has turned into one of the poorest districts of Istanbul with the appearance of neglected houses. Especially, renting the houses room by room to single men, students and poor families has seriously damaged the social and physical texture of the district.

The region, which draws attention as a historical district of contemporary Istanbul, cannot be fully described as a residential settlement, a touristic area, or a manufacturing and workshop area today. It only presents an abandoned image as an old and historical district of Istanbul. In this context, although the restoration of Süleymaniye with all its historical texture is constantly on the agenda, such a project has not yet reached the stage of serious implementation (Figure 1, Figure 2).

Figure 1: Süleymaniye 2010

Figure 2: Süleymaniye 1899

2.2. Criteria for Evaluating the Nominated Properties for the World Heritage List
There are 1154 natural and cultural sites from 186 countries in the World Heritage List of UNESCO, the United Nations Science, Culture and Education Organization. From Turkey, Historical Peninsula, Cappadocia, Pamukkale and Divriği Grand Mosque are included in this

list. The Historic Peninsula was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985 with 4 different regions. One of these regions is the region determined as the 'Süleymaniye Mosque and Its Environment Protection Area' (Url-2).

2.2.1. Identification of the property
The boundaries of the property being proposed shall be clearly defined. Likewise, the nominated property and any buffer zone should be unambiguously determined (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

Reviews of the Property
The boundaries of the property are not clearly defined, and there is confusion within the boundaries registered by UNESCO. The boundaries of the current Süleymaniye do not coincide with the boundaries identified by UNESCO. Buffer zones to support the area are not specified (Figure 3, Figure 4).
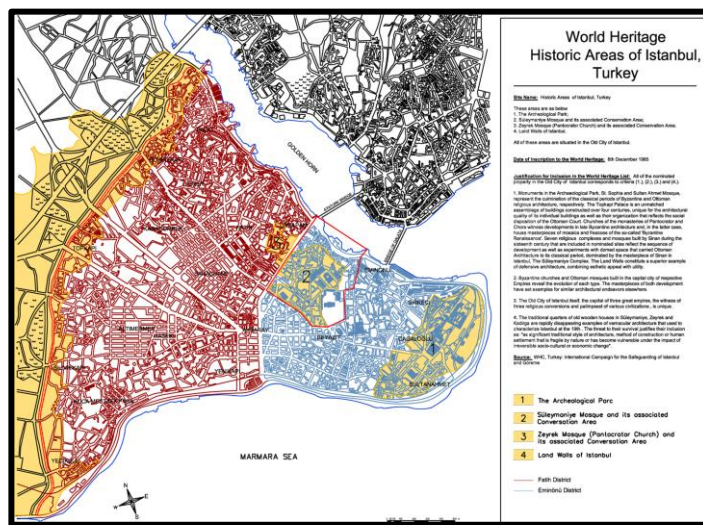

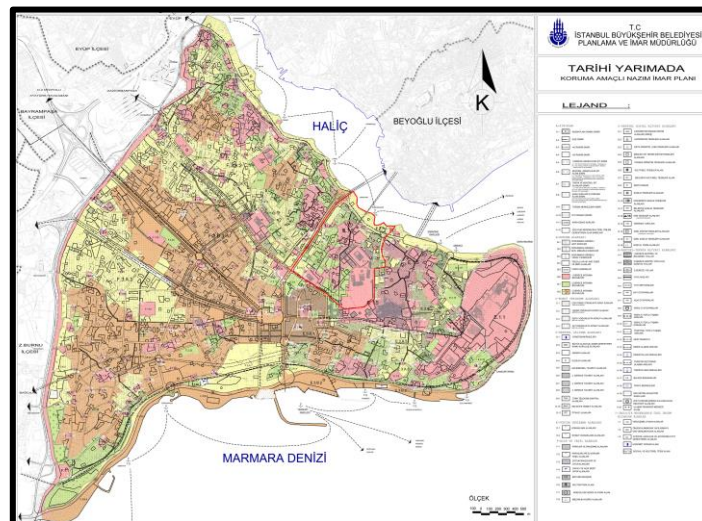**Figure 3:** Boundary of registered by UNESCO

Figure 4: Boundary of the Current Süleymaniye

2.2.2. Description of the property
To be able to enter the list of UNESCO's World Heritage it is necessary to identify the nominated property and determine its history and historical development. All component parts that are mapped shall be identified and described.

The History and Development of the property shall describe how the property has reached its present form and the significant changes that it has undergone. This information shall provide the important facts needed to support and give substance to the argument that the property meets the criteria of outstanding universal value and conditions of integrity and/or authenticity. (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

In this context, the historical process of the Süleymaniye region are described in the literature (see 2.1).

2.2.3. Justification for inscription

Based on the criteria, a proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property prepared by the State Party shall make clear why the property is considered to merit inscription on the World Heritage List. A comparative analysis of the property in relation to similar properties, whether or not on the World Heritage List, both at the national and international levels, shall also be provided. The comparative analysis shall explain the importance of the nominated property in its national and international context. Statements of integrity and/or authenticity shall be included and shall demonstrate how the property satisfies the conditions (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

Reviews of the area

The region attracts attention with the most important examples of traditional Turkish wooden architecture. However, very little effort has been made to preserve the originality and intactness of the structures in the place since the time it was registered. Problems such as the lack of a specific typology study and the absence of surveys, photographs and reports of all the buildings that will serve as documents indicate that this criterion is not applied (Figure 5, Figure 6).
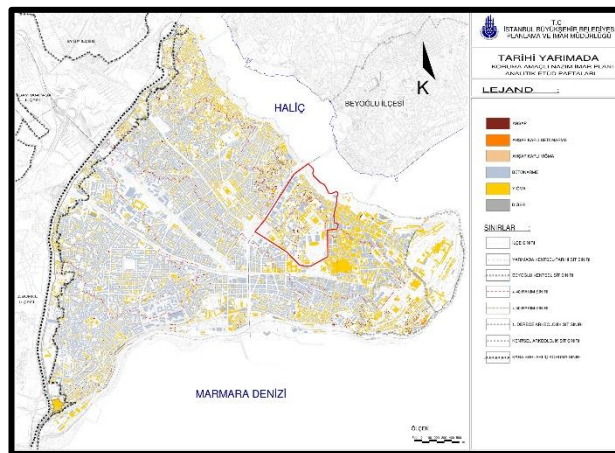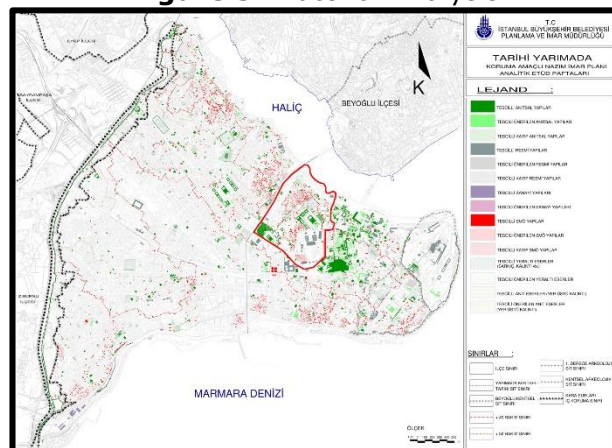

Figure 5: Material Analysis

Figure 6: Inscription Analysis

2.2.4. State of conservation and factors affecting the property

Within the scope of this criterion, the application to UNESCO should include accurate information on the present state of conservation of the property. Factors which are affecting the area should be identified. Information provided in this section constitutes the baseline data which are necessary to monitor the state of conservation of the nominated property in the future (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

Reviews of the area

The region is located between İMÇ, which undertakes the two important commercial functions of the Historic Peninsula, and the Hanlar Region. Manufacturing and storage areas are located in the historical texture of the region. Another problem of the region is that Atatürk Boulevard, which passes by, creates a significant pressure on the area with its heavy capacity (Figure 7).

There are two important projects that will affect the whole of the Historic Peninsula. Marmaray and Taksim-Yenikapı Metro routes create significant pressure on the region. Transporting systems such as the metro, which transforms the area into a crowded business and shopping area by carrying hundreds of thousands of people every day, into the peninsula poses serious problems.

In addition to the problems experienced in the urban fabric of the region, there are also problems in the social fabric. The socio-economic collapse experienced in the place negatively affects the area. The fact that the buildings are neglected day by day causes regional dilapidation.
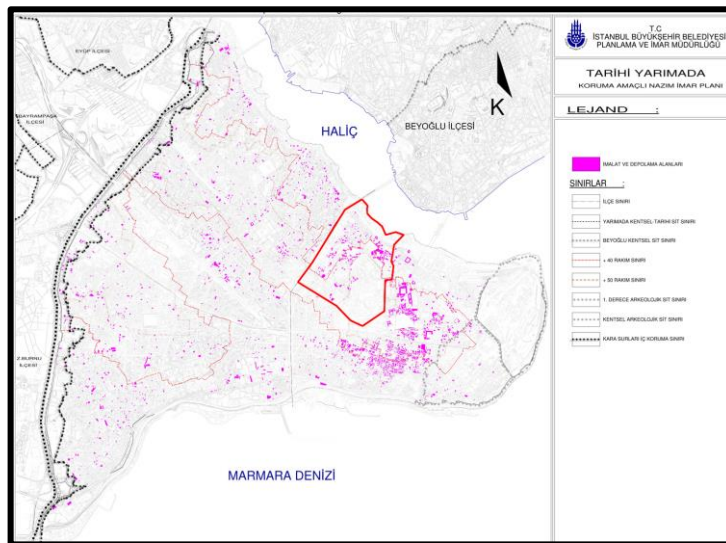

Figure 7: Manufacturing and storage areas

2.2.5. Protection and management

The criteria for the protection and management of World Heritage values; means the preservation or development of the irreplaceable universal values existing at the time of registration and the originality of these values.

All World Heritage listed values need long-term legal, regulatory and institutional protection policies. This protection should include established limits. In similar situations, governments should include appropriate conservation policies for nominated properties at the national, regional, urban and local scales.

At the same time, the determination of borders by the governments is a basic requirement for effective protection in nominated properties. Boundaries are very important for the full expression of irreplaceable universal value and originality.

The nominated property should have a management plan and a management system that documents how its irreplaceable universal value will be preserved, and whose purpose is to ensure effective conservation of the nominated property for present and future generations.

An effective management system depends on the typology of the nominated property, its needs and its cultural and natural content (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

Reviews of the area
Within the scope of this criterion, no conservation policy can be mentioned for Süleymaniye. According to the criteria, the conservation policies and management plan of the region should be prepared specifically for the region. Analyzes should be made based on the physical and cultural characteristics of each area, and a management approach should be dominant in this context. However, a management plan has not been drawn up for Süleymaniye in this context, and conservation policies are still being tried to determine within the framework of current legal regulations. There is no management plan for the region. In addition, a coordinated study is not carried out with the municipalities of Beyoğlu, Kağıthane, Eyüp and Zeytinburnu, which should be among the buffer zones of the Historic Peninsula.

2.2.6. Monitoring
States Parties shall include the key indicators proposed to measure and assess the state of conservation of the property, the factors affecting it, conservation measures at the property, the periodicity of their examination, and the identity of the responsible authorities. (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

Reviews of the area
The most important control and monitoring mechanisms of the region are the local government, the protection board, 'kudep' and non-governmental organizations. However, lack of communication and coordination problems between institutions make it impossible to monitor and control the space.

2.2.7. Documentation
All necessary documentation to substantiate the nomination shall be provided. In addition to what is indicated above, this shall include photographs, 35 mm slides, image inventory and photograph authorization form (Operational Guidelines, 2005).

Reviews of the area
All documents of the inventory at the time of registration are available. However, New registration decisions are made by considering old maps and old photographs, however, new registration decisions are not supported with all documents.

2.3. Conservation Concept in Süleymaniye
2.3.1. Integrity
In the document 'Operational guidelines for the Implementation of the World Cultural Heritage Convention' in 2005;
- ***Article 86:***
  All properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List shall satisfy the conditions of integrity
- ***Article 88:***
  Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes.

The above items should be expressed under the name of the integrity principle. For nominated properties, the physical fabric and other important features of the structure should be in good condition, and the effect of the process that degrades the structure should be controlled. Most of the elements that indicate the value of the building should

also be covered. The continuity of relations between the cultural landscape, historical sites and other structures that are important for the distinctive character of the building should be maintained (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Süleymaniye Mosque and Its Environment

The principle of integrity defines the necessity of preserving the originality values and all the characteristic features that will express the historical importance of all historical buildings, both on a single building scale and on an urban scale. If we examine the Süleymaniye region under the title of integrity principle, the examples of civil architecture in and around the Süleymaniye Mosque should be considered and preserved as a whole. Although there are partially preserved streets in the region, the texture is rapidly disintegrating and examples of unsuccessful restorations are increasing rapidly. The region needs a planning approach that deals with the principles of authenticity and integrity together. Otherwise, the region will have irreversible losses.

2.3.2. Authenticity
Three important steps can be mentioned in the evolution of the concept of authenticity into today's understanding. These are 'Venice Charter' in 1964, 'Nara Document on Authenticity' in 1994 and 'Vienna Memorandum' in 2005 acting as a reminder of these documents. Some of the important articles of the Venice Charter include;

- ***Article 6:***

The conservation of a monument implies preserving a setting which is not out of scale. Wherever the traditional setting exists, it must be kept. No new construction, demolition or modification which would alter the relations of mass and colour must be allowed.

- ***Article 9:***

The process of restoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.

- ***Article 12:***

Replacements of missing parts must integrate harmoniously with the whole, but at the same time must be distinguishable from the original so that restoration does not falsify the artistic or historic evidence.

As can be seen, a conservation approach based on strict rules was on the agenda in 1964. In addition, a transition from the protection of individual buildings to the protection of historical sites is observed. The point of avoiding the 'past imitation', which is still accepted today, was stated in this year. In the context of this regulation, when the projects made or said to be done in Süleymaniye are examined, policies that do not avoid imitation and try to revive the old as they are are followed. An article in the Milliyet newspaper dated September 17, 2007, includes some statements by Eminönü Mayor Nevzat Er, 'Old buildings in Süleymaniye, one of the historical districts of Istanbul, will rise with wood coating technique on steel construction.'. Such projects, which will make the facades of the buildings look 'old' without using the construction techniques of the past, can serve as an example of the imitation of the past, which is warned in the Venice Charter.
Some of the important articles of the Nara Declaration on Authenticity include;

- *Article 11:*

All judgements about values attributed to cultural properties as well as the credibility of related information sources may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. It is thus not possible to base judgements of values and authenticity within fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong.

- *Appendix 1 Article 2:*

Efforts to determine authenticity in a manner respectful of cultures and heritage diversity requires approaches which encourage cultures to develop analytical processes and tools specific to their nature and needs. Such approaches may have several aspects in common:
- efforts to ensure assessment of authenticity involve multidisciplinary collaboration and the appropriate utilization of all available expertise and knowledge;
- efforts to ensure attributed values are truly representative of a culture and the diversity of its interests, in particular monuments and sites;
- efforts to document clearly the particular nature of authenticity for monuments and sites as a practical guide to future treatment and monitoring;
- efforts to update authenticity assessments in light of changing values and circumstances.

In this declaration, it is emphasized that 'protection' should not be handled within the framework of strict rules, but in the context of the cultural environment of the countries, only in this way, cultures can be treated with respect and protection can be provided. There is no specific understanding of protection in Süleymaniye or even throughout the country. Conservation efforts, apart from the responsibilities and obligations brought by some international agreements, are insufficient, and the conservation values unique to our culture are not determined. The fact that a special understanding other than international requirements has not been determined in the protection of our historical heritage is a problem that needs to be resolved.

Some of the important articles of the Vienna Memorandum include;

- *Article 21:*

Taking into account the basic definition (according to Article 7 of this Memorandum), 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.

- ***Article 26:***

As a general principle, proportion and design must fit into the particular type of historic pattern and architecture, while removing the core of building stock worthy of protection (façadism) does not constitute an appropriate mean of structural intervention. Special care should be taken to ensure that the development of contemporary architecture in World Heritage cities is complementary to values of the historic urban landscape and remains within limits in order not to compromise the historic nature of the city. The above-mentioned Milliyet newspaper article also mentions that 'Buildings suitable for Ottoman architecture will be built in Süleymaniye, where 700 buildings will be demolished.' Even today, buildings that can be restored in Süleymaniye are being revived with the policies of demolishing and rebuilding. These practices contradict the reminders made in the Vienna Memorandum.

In the document 'Operational guidelines for the Implementation of the World Cultural Heritage Convention' in 2005 there are articles supporting the international decisions;
- ***Article 79:***

Properties nominated under criteria (i) to (vi) must meet the conditions of authenticity. Annex 4 which includes the Nara Document on Authenticity, provides a practical basis for examining the authenticity of such properties and is summarized below.
- ***Article 85:***

When the conditions of authenticity are considered in preparing a nomination for a property, the State Party should first identify all of the applicable significant attributes of authenticity. The statement of authenticity should assess the degree to which authenticity is present in, or expressed by, each of these significant attributes.
- ***Article 86:***

In relation to authenticity, the reconstruction of archaeological remains or historic buildings or districts is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances. Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.
- ***Article 96:***

Protection and management of World Heritage properties should ensure that the outstanding universal value, the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription are maintained or enhanced in the future.

The practices made for the 'texture' that is intended to be recreated in Süleymaniye conflict with these guidelines.

2.3.3. Participation
The following items are included in the Operational Guide;
- ***Article 123:***

Participation of local people in the nomination process is essential to enable them to have a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the property. States Parties are encouraged to prepare nominations with the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, NGOs and other interested parties.
- ***Article 15m:***

Use educational and information programs to strengthen appreciation and respect by their peoples of the cultural and natural heritage defined in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention, and to keep the public informed of the dangers threatening this heritage;
- ***Article 217:***

States Parties are encouraged to raise awareness of the need to preserve World Heritage. In particular, they should ensure that World Heritage status is adequately marked and promoted on-site.

The local administration, which directs the Süleymaniye projects, does not carry out awareness-raising activities for the local people and does not keep the works transparent, as well as Eminönü Mayor Nevzat Er; 'We are responsible for 700 of these buildings. We

have given notices to the building owners. We say, 'You can either build the building in accordance with the historical pattern or we will demolish it.' We do not listen to the excuses of 'I have no money, my means are limited'. (Milliyet, Eylül 2007) This point of view of the local government shows the level of participation processes. Süleymaniye projects do not comply with international norms in terms of participation criteria.

2.3.4. Management approach
In the document 'Operational guidelines for the Implementation of the World Cultural Heritage Convention' (Operational guidelines) in 2005;
- ***Article 107:***
Each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which should specify how the outstanding universal value of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means.
- ***Article 108:***
The purpose of a management system is to ensure the effective protection of the nominated property for present and future generations.
- ***Article 109:***
An effective management system depends on the type, characteristics and needs of the nominated property and its cultural and natural context. Management systems may vary according to different cultural perspectives, the resources available and other factors. They may incorporate traditional practices, existing urban or regional planning instruments, and other planning control mechanisms, both formal and informal.

The Operational guidelines has not determined a fixed management system for properties included in the world heritage list. It should be aimed that the nominated property have a site-specific management system for their cultural perspectives. There is no region-specific management system in both the peninsula scale and the Süleymaniye scale. The only legal regulation on the subject in Turkey is the regulation published in 2005 with the law numbered 5226 published in 2004. According to this regulation, the management system to be prepared for the peninsula should include a coordination and supervisory board, advisory board and inspection unit. However, these institutions and units do not currently have teams that meet the standards to undertake the duties defined in the regulation. Although job descriptions are determined in the regulation, there is no application suitable for the peninsula with national criteria today. When we look at the urban transformation projects carried out at the scale of Süleymaniye, the lack of a management approach on a macro scale causes the correct applications to not be made at the micro scale. There is no management approach regarding the cultural characteristics and current potentials of the region. It is inevitable that any project to be carried out within the framework of current legal regulations will fail.

3. CONCLUSION
The history of the peninsula, Süleymaniye district, which has hosted many civilizations, begins with the Ottoman Empire. Together with the Süleymaniye Mosque and its social complex, it has become one of the most important districts of Istanbul. Until the end of the 20th century, Süleymaniye preserved its distinction as the most distinguished and important district of Istanbul. In the 20th century, the Süleymaniye district lost its former importance and turned into a district where people with insufficient economic status settled. After the 1950s, the region entered its current period of decay rapidly. Süleymaniye was entitled to be included in the World Heritage List in 1985, but the lack of an effective management approach in the region after 1985 caused a rapid loss in the scale of a single structure and urban texture. In the case of Süleymaniye, many problems are encountered when the criteria required for the evaluation of the properties that are nominated for the world heritage list. Almost all of the existing criteria are not of the desired quality. Many problems are encountered such as the fact that the buffer zones are not determined, the registered structures are not documented in the desired quality, the factors that adversely affect the area are not defined and a solution proposal is not produced for these problems, there is no regional specific management approach and

coordination problems in the monitoring processes. In the document 'Operational guidelines for the implementation of the world heritage convention' (Operational Guidelines) published in 2005, the concepts related to protection at the international level became clear. When Süleymaniye is examined in the context of concepts, the region is faced with many problems in terms of the concept of management, authenticity and integrity defined by the Operational guidelines.

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