

HOW TO SHAPE UP CONSERVATION-LED REGENERATION INITIATIVES REGARDING COMMUNITY NEEDS?

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades, historic housing areas with problems of social exclusion and urban deprivation have become one of the major concerns in urban regeneration, housing renovation and conservation projects. While the urban regeneration and conservation policies in the 1980s and 1990s were primarily based on the idea of property-led regeneration and mainly addressed economic and physical decline, the debate on urban regeneration and conservation policies has moved to social and community-related issues in the urban renewal process since the late-1990s (Healey et al., 1992; Turok, 1992; Imrie and Thomas, 1993; Cameron and Doling, 1994; Berry and McGreal, 1995; Jones and Watkins, 1996; Hill, 2000; Pagonis and Thornley, 2000; Roberts and Sykes, 2000; Audit Commission, 2001; Nelson, 2001; Vicari, 2001; Birch, 2002; European Union, 2002; Adair et al., 2003; Imrie and Raco, 2003; Madanipour et al., 1998). Despite the shift in the emphasis of the policies towards social and community-related issues, it is still questionable how far the recent regeneration efforts in historic housing areas address the community needs and integrate the aspirations, preferences and values of local residents living in or adjacent to these project areas.

This paper addresses this question regarding economically depressed and physically deprived historic neighborhoods in İstanbul, of which the urbanscape has been changing more rapidly than ever before, along with the rising interest of global, multi-national capital (Keyder and Öncü, 1993; Dökmeci and Berköz, 1994; Öncü, 1999; Uzun, 2001; Keyder, 2005). While new, luxurious, distinctive and exclusive urban sites have been developed in the core and periphery of the city, and have remarkably exacerbated urban segregation and fragmentation, and social exclusion, the historic heritage sites, once again, have become the main concerns of key decision-makers due to their potentials of being used for city-marketing strategies to attract global investors and capital to İstanbul (Dinçer, 2009a). Under

the pressure of conservation-led regeneration strategies aiming to create exclusive and distinctive places for tourists, visitors, potential residents and service sector office workers, communities living in the deprived historic neighborhoods where poverty, unemployment and crime rates are very high, and where living conditions, education and health services are very poor have been forced to move out of these sites without being addressed their problems. Nevertheless, there are also cases shown as exceptional from these recent strategies, such as Fener and Balat (F&B), a historic housing quarter inhabited by poor immigrants and located in the historical peninsula of İstanbul some parts of which were inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985.

This paper examines the recent European Union (EU)-funded conservation-led regeneration initiative to assess how far the scheme has met the needs, aspirations and values of the local community. The paper initially defines the concept of 'community needs', identifies the key issues of community needs in deprived historic neighborhoods and then, briefly mentions urban conservation and community-related policies in Turkey. Later, focusing on F&B, it introduces the case study area, defines the community needs in the mid-1990s, and then assesses the effectiveness or success of the recent regeneration project in serving the community needs. Finally, debating on the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme, the paper tries to highlight the necessary requirements to shape up conservation-led regeneration initiatives regarding community needs in deprived historic districts of Turkey.

The case study of this research is based on the qualitative and quantitative data that were gathered from reports, newspaper cuttings, academic articles and researchers, census data of 1990, 1997 and 2000, in-depth interviews and direct observations. In-depth and focused interviews were conducted in 2006 with the key actors of the F&B regeneration initiative and other major stakeholders involved in the scheme. The interviews with the key actors of the project were carried out with the local authority officers (the Fatih Municipality officer responsible for the regeneration project and an officer from the Public Education Directorate of the Fatih District), the officers from the technical team of the project (the local coordinator, the director of the restoration projects, the project coordinator of the social centre), the consultants of the project (the local consultant and co-director of the feasibility study undertaken by Fatih Municipality, the EU, UNESCO and the French Institute for Anatolian Studies in 1997-1998). A voluntary group working in the area (the general secretary of the Balat Beautification Association), teachers (the Principal of Tarık Us Primary School and a teacher voluntarily working in the Yusuf Şücaaddin Mosque study hall), ten local tradesmen and ten local residents were other informants representing the major stakeholders involved in the project (1). Additionally, the study particularly uses two researches as secondary data, since both studies were the only latest resources about F&B before the regeneration initiative was launched. The first one was conducted by Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (FSWW) in 2004 to determine the problems, priorities, and needs of the case study area. The research is based on the results of 300 questionnaires with local women and those of 211 interviews with mukthars (headmen), the Balat Beautification Association, the Fener Volunteers Association, school principals and local people. The other research used as secondary data, was conducted by Fatih Municipality, UNESCO, the EU and the French Anatolian Research Institute in 1998 to pinpoint the problems, needs and solutions for the

1. The data obtained from the interviewees is shown and referenced throughout the article within brackets, such as (the local coordinator, the director of the restoration projects, the project coordinator of the social centre).

case study area. This study was mainly based on a research conducted by Narlı (1997) on 236 households in the case study area in 1997, and a further study carried out in order to establish the ownership pattern of the area, including data from around 2,578 houses.

DEFINING 'COMMUNITY NEEDS' AND THE KEY ISSUES FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS IN DEPRIVED HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

Community, an old concept which comes from a Latin term '*communis*', signifies "common, general, joint" (Online Dictionary). Due to its elusive nature, it has been debated for so long that there are now probably well over a hundred discrete definitions of community (Blackman, 1995; Mayo, 1994; Shaw, 2007). In recent literature, "the most conventional approach relates to people sharing a geographical area (typically a neighborhood), an idea captured in references to local communities" (Crow, 2007), as also called 'place-bound or territorial communities' by Blackman (1995) or 'community of locality' by Shaw (2007). 'Non place-bound' or 'non-territorial' communities however are based on shared identities, behaviors, interests and experiences which are not necessarily place-bound, and which can be related to racial, social, cultural, religious and class differences (Hedges and Kelly, 1992; Coombes et al., 1992; Blackman, 1995; CTB, 2005; Crow, 2007; Shaw, 2007). Blackman (1995) defines such groups as "local populations identifiable from their wider society by a more intense sharing of concerns (a community of interest) or by increased levels of interaction (an attachment community)". Non place-bound communities have recently been emerging with the growing fragmentation of society. Hence, cities have become places where many communities have overlapped. Nevertheless, place-bound communities have continued to be important in the lives of many people, particularly women and children, older people, the unemployed and people without cars, who are often priority groups for urban policy and public services generally.

As for 'need', which is a term for "essential human requirements" and "necessities for subsistence", it has been defined in relation to society and community since the Ancient Greek period by Plato and Aristotle, Enlightenment thinkers, Hegel and Marx, and in the 20th century, by sociologists, epidemiologists, health economists, educational theorists, town planners, social workers and civil servants (Springborg, 2002; Billings and Cowley, 1995). With the imaginative work of Ignatieff (1984), theorists have once more focused on the problem of needs for the 'have-nots' such as the poor and the homeless, whose needs are desperate. 'Community need', mainly initiated from the idea of 'have-nots', can be defined as "necessities that specifically relate to a particular group or community". It is usually neither a universal need, such as the need for food or affection, nor an individual need, such as need for a vacation (CTB, 2005). It is thus the concern of a particular community or group, and is perceived by a group as community issue or problem. Community needs may take many different forms, ranging from garbage on the streets to vandalism, or from stores moving out of the community to ethnic or racial conflict.

For the conservation and regeneration of deprived neighborhoods of historic sites, one way of identifying the key issues of community needs is to discover the problems of local communities. Although the problems and needs of communities vary from one locality to another, it is possible to identify common issues related to the community needs, since many neighborhoods become stuck in a spiral decline as a result of a number

2. There are extensive studies on the causes of deprivation and decline in urban areas (Power, 1996; Taylor, 1998; Costa Pinho, 2000; Gibb et al., 1999; Morrison, 1999; Lee & Murie, 1999; Power and Tunstall, 1995; Hall, 1997; Morrison, 2003).

of factors (2). The move of inhabitants and economic activities out of these neighborhoods, the deterioration of quality of urban space and life, as well as the decline in the provision of public services can bring about a trend of neighborhood decline. The deterioration of listed buildings, and the difficulties in restoring these buildings due to disagreement among shareholders, complexities of legal conservation procedures, high costs of restoration, and other factors exacerbate the neighborhood decline in heritage sites. All these changes generally result in an increase in the number of derelict properties and a decline in property values and rents. These neighborhoods in general become attractive for either low income groups like poor immigrants or homeless people. This worsens neighborhood decline, as low-income dwellers cannot afford the renewal or restoration costs of houses in which they live. Equally, social cohesion does not appear to emerge or develop due to a rapid turnover of inhabitants of such neighborhoods (Power and Tunstall, 1995). As people move out, the high turnover and the number of empty homes create more opportunities for crime, vandalism and drug dealing (Wallace, 2001). Such neighborhoods in heritage sites are characterized by high unemployment among residents, unqualified labor power, poor education, higher than average health problems and a continuous increase in crime rates.

Equally, the recently developed urban policy gives clues into the possible key issues in terms of community needs. Conserving and protecting historic heritage, maintaining civil peace, raising standards in education, giving people access to reasonable housing, ensuring cooperative working between health and social services, strengthening sustainable development and improving the environment quality have become the key issues of the 1990s' urban policy to regenerate deprived neighborhoods in historic housing sites (Hill, 2000; Cullingworth and Nadin, 2006). Housing, employment, health, education, crime and environmental quality, along with the conservation of historic environment, thus appear to be the major issues while examining community needs in deprived neighborhoods (Akkar Ercan, 2009). As Wallace (2001) points out, neighborhood decline is not only an outcome of local dynamics, but also of government policies which are not sufficient for the tackling of decline problems. Prior to the presentation of the case study, therefore, it will be useful to overview the government policies over the Republican period to understand how far the policy agenda of urban conservation has addressed the community-related issues in Turkey.

URBAN CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY-RELATED POLICIES IN TURKEY

Despite a remarkable wealth of historic buildings in Turkey, several factors, such as the cost of maintenance, the lack of fundings from public institutions to private owners of historic buildings, the rapid urbanization, have threatened buildings and sites which are of architectural and historic interest. As such, the understanding of 'what historic is', or 'what is worthy of conservation', and 'how it should be conserved' has played a considerable role in shaping urban conservation policies. From the early-1920s to the 1970s, the widespread understanding of urban conservation was based on the idea of preserving historic assets individually (Akçura, 1972; Gülersoy, et al, 2000; BİB, 2009). Just after The Amsterdam Declaration (1975), in 1976, statutory recognition of the 'area' concept was introduced by the Law No. 1710 (The Law of Immovable Assets

and Historical Art); the conservation areas were classified as historic, archaeological and natural; and the term of 'urban conservation site' was introduced into the conservation agenda of the country (Gülersoy et al., 2000; Altunbaş, 2009). In 1983, the Law No. 2863 enforced local authorities to develop conservation plans for historic sites (BIB, 2009). In the late-1970s, following The Amsterdam Declaration (1975) and the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the safeguarding and contemporary role of historic areas (1976), the 'integrated conservation' approach, based on the idea of considering the historic, archaeological, architectural dimensions, along with social and economic aspects of revitalizing the urban areas worthy of conservation, began to be seen as a necessary approach to historic sites; and the idea took its place even in the 4th Five Year Development Plan, covering the period of 1979-1983 (Gülersoy et al., 2000; Şahin Güçhan and Kurul, 2009). Also influenced by the trends in Europe, the conservation plans for some historic places, accompanied by restricting buildings codes, were prepared (Gülersoy et al, 2000). These efforts however had not become common practices.

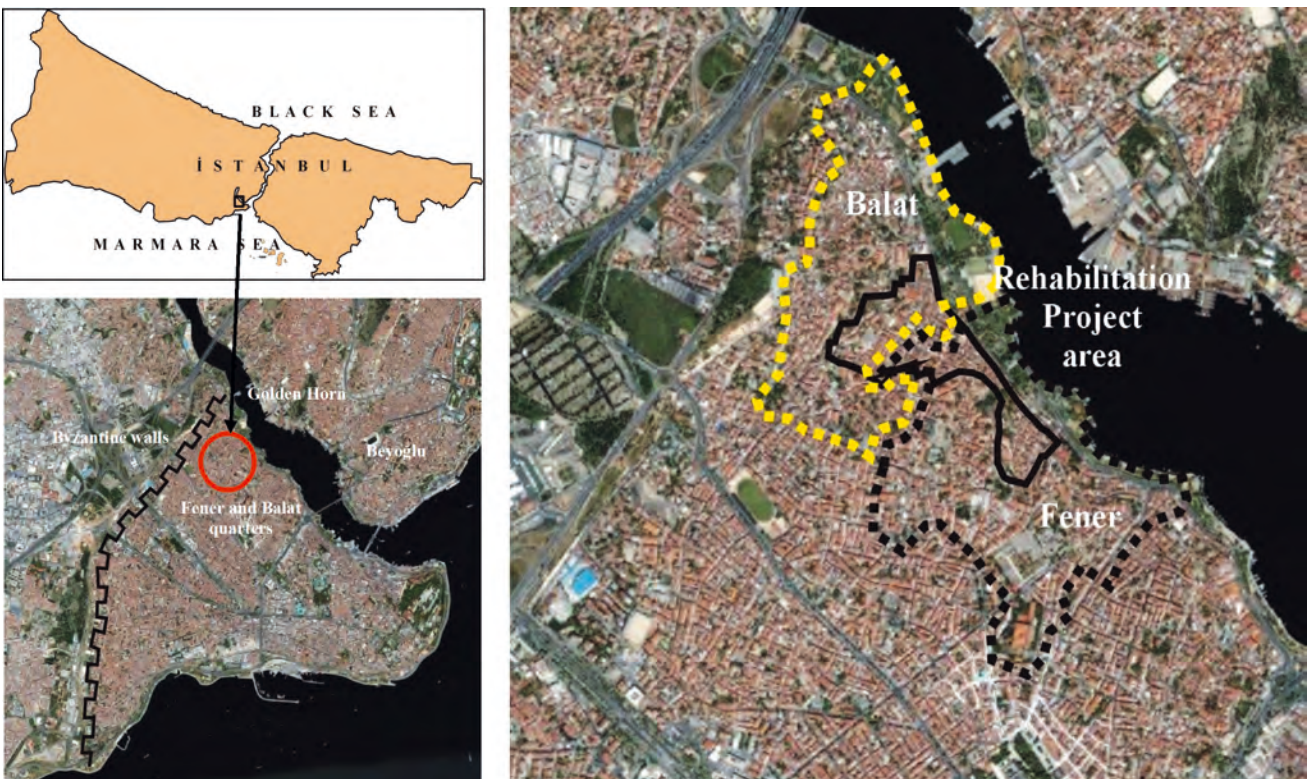
Off the recent legislations, The Law No. 5226 (The Law of Protecting Cultural and Natural Assets) that came into force in July 2004 was revolutionary in terms of approaching urban conservation sites. The Law broadened the content of 'conservation plans', making extensive studies on conservation sites compulsory, prior to plan preparation (Dinçer, 2009a). These studies were to regard conservation sites not only their archeological, historic, natural, architectural and demographic dimensions, but also their cultural, social and economic dimensions (Dinçer, 2009a). The expected outcomes of such studies therefore were to be conservation plans integrating multi-dimensional problems of localities; i.e. plans addressing not only the problems of conservation of physical environments, but also responding to the needs of communities living and working, and providing collaborative planning models, financial, organization and management models for the planning process (Dinçer, 2009a). The Law also introduced new financial devices for private owners, as well as the new concepts, such as 'management area', and 'management plan', into the conservation agenda of the country (Dinçer, 2009b). Additionally, it established new specialist offices called Conservation Implementation and Control Bureau (KUDEB) at metropolitan and district municipalities, and provincial government offices. KUDEBs, employing experts in the areas of art history, architecture, city planning, archaeology and engineering sciences, were to be responsible for managing and controlling the implementation of conservation plans (Dinçer, 2009b).

The Law No. 5366 (The Law of Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalization of Deteriorated Immovable Historical and Cultural Properties), enacted in July 2005, brought this progressive understanding back to the old state. It has enabled the Council of Ministers to designate 'urban renewal sites', while giving local authorities a great deal of authority on these areas by making them responsible for preparing renewal plans outside the conventional planning system without looking for any reference to vision or strategy plans of cities (Dinçer, 2009a). The Law has failed in providing financial support to private owners to repair their houses. Yet, aiming to accelerate the process of protecting cultural and historic heritage, it has eased the process of expropriation and bureaucratic issues at the expense of jeopardizing property rights of private owners (Dinçer, 2009a). In case private owners were not able to afford the restoration costs of their properties, the Law enabled local

authorities to expropriate the historic buildings, and even to sell them to the third parties. In this sense, it has brought about not only a high risk of violation of property rights for the owners of historic buildings, but also the rise of gentrification (Dinçer, 2009a). Finally, the conservation of the historic environment has been the major motivation of the Law that has not included any article about social and economic dimensions of designated renewal sites. All in all, except considerable progress in the 1970s understanding of urban conservation in Turkey, and the Law No. 5226, the community-related policies have never come to a priority issue in the policy agenda of urban conservation, whilst protecting and conserving historic urbanscape has been the major concern.

The F&B Quarter is one such historic site where the conservation of historic urbanscape has been kept in priority by the regeneration initiatives to enhance the historic and cultural image of İstanbul, to improve the attractiveness of the site to inward investment, the affluent, and tourists to the area, thereby bolstering economic and urban regeneration, and raising the city's competitive position in global urban markets. Hence, in many senses, F&B may be perceived as 'textbook' examples of conservation of historic urbanscape, to become place-marketing tools and catalysts of urban regeneration. But equally, several aspects of the Quarter's recent experience stand out as distinctive, not least the fact that the recent EU-funded regeneration initiative has been shown as an exemplary to implement further community-based regeneration projects in deprived historic districts of Turkey by UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS (2008). F&B are also good examples in terms of assessing the effectiveness or success of the regeneration initiative in accordance with community needs due to the availability of the extensive data and researches on the

Figure 1. The location of the Fener and Balat Quarter in İstanbul (left above) and in historical peninsula (left below), and the boundary of the recent EU-funded regeneration project (right).



local residents' problems, priorities and needs before the recent scheme was launched. The following section introduces the F&B Quarter, and examines the community needs and aspirations in the mid-1990s, prior to the launch of the recent regeneration initiative.

THE FENER AND BALAT QUARTER

Surrounded by Byzantine walls from the 5th century AD to the west and the Golden Horn to the north, F&B are located on the historic peninsula of İstanbul (Figure 1). The history of the Quarter goes back to the Byzantine period. Fener, being the home of the Greek Patriarchate and the centre of the Orthodox Church, was known to be predominantly an upper-class Greek neighborhood from the Ottoman period to the 1960s (Belge, 2003; Özbilge, 2005). Balat, mostly inhabited by Jews, with some Armenian, Greek and Muslim dwellers was a vibrant hub for fishery and port management before the 19th century (Belge 2003; Özbilge 2005). The move of the wealthy inhabitants of the Quarter in the 1960s and their replacement with poor immigrants, along with the contamination and pollution of the Golden Horn, led to the dilapidation of F&B (Özbilge 2005). Between 1984 and 1987, the coastal area was cleared with large-scale demolition, and a park and a road were built along the shore of the Golden Horn (Özbilge 2005). Despite the clearing of the coastline, the Quarter kept deteriorating. Today, F&B, surrounded by and comprising a number of monumental buildings, such as churches, mosques and synagogues, and distinctive with their 19th-century grid-iron plan and hewn-stone 'row houses' with bay

Figure 2. The land-use map of the Fener and Balat Quarter in 2005.

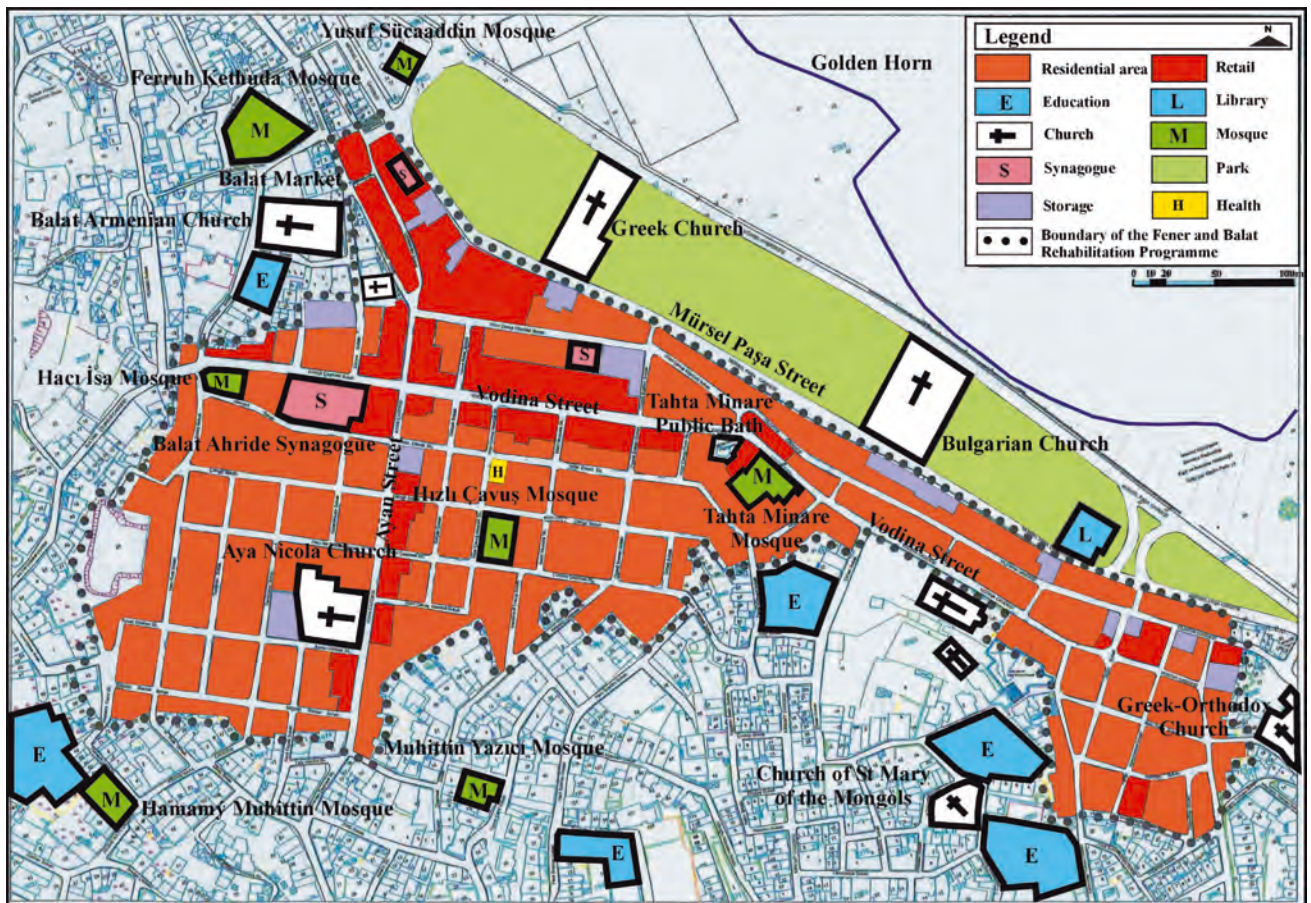




Figure 3. Row houses with bay windows as one of the major characteristics of Fener and Balat (M. Akkar Ercan).

windows and richly ornamented facades, are under grave threat of decline (**Figure 2-4**). This residential quarter accommodates 12 listed monuments and 508 listed buildings comprising almost 40% of the total building stock in the area (Fatih Municipality et al, 1998). Another important historic heritage is the 16th-century Balat Market, which is located on the west of the site, specializes in glass and shoe manufacturers, hardware shops and other kinds of crafts, giving the area the appearance of a bazaar. Close to the Balat Market, there are banks, restaurants and shops selling electrical appliances and furniture. Also, hotels and souvenir shops for tourists have recently been mushrooming in the area around the Greek Patriarchate.

Figure 4. Examples from the buildings in ruins in the Fener and Balat Quarter in 2006 (S. Duzcu).

The Quarter is densely populated. In 2000, the total population living in F&B was 36,158, 39% of which constituted children and teenagers (TSl, 2000 Census Data). The community included immigrants dominantly from



the Black Sea Region (Fatih Municipality et al. 1998; FSWW 2004). Family ties and kinship were found to be very strong. The majority of families (62%) were made up of four or five people with the father-mother-children family unit being the most widespread family type, while a significant number of the families shared their houses with parents or relatives (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998; FSWW 2004). Most inhabitants are economically poor. While the poverty line for a family of four was €261.59 per month in Turkey in 2004, 46% of the families of F&B earned less than €243.90 monthly (FSWW, 2004). Most families spent almost all of their income on domestic needs (food, rent, heating and health expenditure), whereas some were unable to afford the cost of heating, rent, education or food (FSWW, 2004). The majority of the residents were tenants. Despite the presence of high ratio of tenants (60%), allegiance to the neighborhood was found to be high among the residents. According to a survey held in the late-1990s, 75% of the inhabitants expressed their desire to continue living in the area if a regeneration project was launched, and if their living conditions and economic levels were improved (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998). Low rents, proximity to the city centre and the presence of neighbors or countrymen were the key reasons given for this preference (FSWW, 2004). To the same study, the majority of the inhabitants complained about the low quality of life in the Quarter, and ranked nine issues that should be addressed, from the most to the least urgent as: 1) restoration of the buildings and improvement in living conditions; 2) provision of natural gas into the district; 3) improvement of streets and the removal of traffic problems; 4) construction of parks and green spaces; 5) provision of regular street cleaning and garbage collection services; 6) improvement in the drainage system in order to prevent flooding in winter; 7) demolition of the highly dilapidated buildings for health and safety reasons and the reconstruction of new ones; 8) robust solution to remedy the environmental pollution (especially air pollution caused by the burning of low-quality coal in stoves); 9) solutions to clean the Golden Horn (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998). The local community was in poor health due to numerous factors related to the environmental and physical conditions of the area. The prominent ones were the side-by-side toilets and bathrooms in the houses, the accumulation of garbage in the streets, flooding in winter due to the inadequacy of the drainage system, heat insulation problems in the houses and unclean drinking water (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998; FSWW, 2004). High unemployment among residents, unqualified labor power, poor education and health services, high crime rates, security and safety problems were other prominent community-related issues to be tackled for the regeneration of F&B (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998, FSWW, 2004) (Table 1).

ASSESSMENT OF THE RECENT REGENERATION INITIATIVE

The recent conservation-led regeneration scheme, namely 'The Rehabilitation of F&B Districts Program', aiming to address the areas' problems, grew out of the UN Habitat Conference, held in 1996 in İstanbul (UNESCO and ICOMOS, 2008)(3). Following a grant of €7 million that was obtained with the facilitation of UNESCO, a financial agreement was signed between the European Commission, Fatih Municipality and the Secretariat of the Treasury of the Turkish Republic (RFBDP, 2005). The scheme that was launched in January 2003 and completed in July 2008, was run by an international consortium. The designated area for the project, covering an area of 16.2 ha and including 1401 lots and 1267 buildings, was

Starting from the 19th century to today, various urban transformation interventions have appeared in order to solve the problems of urban deprivation and decline in both Western and Turkish cities (Akkar, 2006). Urban renewal, urban reconstruction, urban development and redevelopment, urban improvement, urban rehabilitation, urban preservation, urban conservation, infill development, urban refurbishment, urban (re)strengthening and urban relocation are some of these urban transformation interventions emerged within the last two centuries (Akkar, 2006). This article considers The Rehabilitation of F&B Districts Program as a 'conservation-led regeneration' project and assesses its capacity of responding to community needs, values and aspirations accordingly. The term of 'rehabilitation' was chosen deliberately for the EU-funded scheme to provide an alternative way of regenerating of a historic residential site by conserving both the historic and cultural values and local community, instead of turning such sites into restored tourist attractions (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998). This idea behind the F&B rehabilitation program, in general, coincides with the essence of 'conservation-led regeneration projects' that seek to link conservation with wider social and economic benefits; in particular regeneration, but also, for example, issues of sustainability and excellence in new architectural design (Pendlebury, 2002; Cullingworth & Nadin, 2006). Equally important to note for the F&B Rehabilitation Program is that the scheme was prepared and launched before the Laws No. 5226 and 5366; ie. a period of time there was no strong legal basis for such urban rehabilitation projects in Turkey.

only one-sixth of the whole Quarter (RFBDP, 2005)(**Figure 1**). The scheme constituted four main components; i.e., the restoration of buildings, the foundation of two social centers, the renovation of the Balat Market and the development of a waste management strategy (RFBDP, 2005). Within the project budget, €3.85 million was allocated for building restoration, €1 million for the social centers, €150,000 for the Balat Market, €100,000 for the solid-waste management strategy and €1.9 million for the technical assistance team (RFBDP, 2005). The scheme was seen an exemplary by international organizations in terms of its efforts of accommodating community needs and aspirations through a participatory method.

The Rehabilitation of F&B Districts Program has become a turning point for the regeneration of the Quarter. Through press coverage and publications, this long-neglected deprived area has once again captured public attention. The regeneration initiative has shown that conservation projects in such heritage sites should be area-based, so that the investments focusing on a smaller designation area can act as a trigger in attracting more investment and economic benefits into the localities. Also, it has indicated that, contrary to the conventional conservation policy in Turkey, the multi-dimensional problems of the urban deprivation cannot be addressed through the upgrading of physical conditions alone. Overall looking at the efforts of the regeneration initiative, however, the scheme was partially successful in responding to community needs.

Regarding the restoration of the buildings and improvement in living conditions, the local community identified the priority areas as: the re-design of the interior layout of the buildings in order to create larger rooms, separation of the bathroom and toilet, construction of a separate kitchen, repair to the stairs, roofs, interior and exterior walls, ceilings and floors, strengthening of the buildings and connection to the natural gas system (Fatih Municipality et al. 1998; FSWW, 2004). According to a survey carried out in 1998, off the total building stock within the designated project site, 157 buildings required extensive repairs (renovations for strengthening building columns), while 376 buildings required basic repairs (repairs to the roofs, and the friezes and plaster on the external walls of the buildings), and 365 buildings were in need of medium level of repairs (repairs to the roofs of the buildings; double-glazing of the windows; re-plastering of the building walls) (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998). Another research, carried out in 2003 on the seismic vulnerability of the building stock, strongly recommended to take urgent measures to make the historic buildings earthquake resistant (D'Ayala, 2003). The scope of the recent conservation strategy however was limited to the partial improvement of the physical and living conditions of only 14% of the total historic buildings in the Quarter. In the early stage of the project, 200 buildings, comprising 167 residential and 33 commercial buildings, were targeted for restoration based on the assumption that, for every one building restored by the project, seven buildings would be restored independently (The director of the restoration projects). Thus, it was anticipated that most buildings within the scope of the initiative would be restored upon completion of the project. In this stage, buildings to be restored were selected in groups to create a continuity among the restored buildings, thereby generating a visual impact of a regenerated district image that would not only increase the support of the local people, the local authority, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to the regeneration project, but also to attract inward investment to the site, and therefore achieve the target of the trigger effect (The director of the restoration projects, the coordinator of the feasibility



Figure 5. The only street with building groups restored within the framework of the Rehabilitation Programme (M. Akkar Ercan, 2007).

study, RFBDP, 2005). As the project progressed, the target figures reduced to 123 buildings, 26 of which received basic repairs, while the rest received extensive repairs (RFBDP, 2005). For the buildings which underwent basic repairs, only the facades and roofs were fixed (RFBDP, 2005). Hence, the problems related to the interior layout of the buildings, such as the creation of larger rooms, the separation of bathrooms and toilets, and the construction of separate kitchen, could not be resolved. For those that received extensive restoration, however, the facades, roofs, doors and ceilings were repaired; toilets, bathrooms and kitchens were renovated according to standards; and the electricity systems of the buildings were renewed to prevent serious accidents (RFBDP, 2005). Thus, a considerable improvement of these buildings was achieved, except the drainage problem and the connection to the natural gas system. Yet, aside from one street, the objective of restoring building groups to generate a visual impact of regeneration, and thus to achieve the trigger effect, was not accomplished. Also, the number of restored buildings by the regeneration initiative still lagged far behind the number of historic buildings in need of restoration (**Figure 5**).

Similarly, the regeneration initiative was partially effective in responding to some social needs of local women, youngsters and children. The poor community however was in need of a comprehensive and long-term program that would address their problems, needs and values related to health care, education and child development. Most parents, for example, expressed their desire for a centre serving students who did not have suitable conditions for studying at home, and another centre that could develop their children's vocational skills to enable them to find a job after graduation. Under the regeneration initiative, two vacant buildings were restored to operate as a multi-purpose social centre that would serve mainly children, teenagers and women of the Quarter (RFBDP 2005). Since August 2005, the centre has been operated by three NGOs, and approximately 350 people have used the centre on a regular basis (The project coordinator). In the centre, a nursery has been run

with a capacity of 15 children between the ages of four and five, and an after-school training facility has been provided for teenagers to improve their skills in subjects such as mathematics, English and IT. Also, a psychologist has worked to offer consultation services to teenagers (The project coordinator). The seminars and training courses on literacy and handicrafts (such as wood-painting, jewelry-making), and education on personal hygiene, family planning, birth control and child development has been given to local women (The project coordinator). The centre has also carried out activities in two primary schools in the Quarter to help and support school-family unions. Additionally, over the weekends, local walking tours in F&B have been organized for young children to develop their awareness of the historic and cultural environment (The project coordinator). All in all, the social centre has served the interests of a small group from the local community. Yet, it will either be closed or taken over by the Fatih Municipality when the contract of the NGOs is over (The project coordinator). More importantly, the local community still needs a comprehensive, integrated and long-term strategy of improving education, public health and child development (including new permanent social centers that could provide new study halls for youngsters, operate courses for adult education, vocational courses, and supplementary courses at schools to prepare students for the exams that determine students' suitability for high school education).

According to the studies carried out in the late-1990s, the poor families in F&B were in need of urgent actions towards the permanent job creation, provision of poverty aid, organization of courses in accounting, mathematics and marketing, and the organization of the provision of small business start-up credits. The employment strategy of the regeneration initiative was too narrow in its scope. Apart from the vocational courses for women run in the social centre, under the supervision of the staff working at the social centre, the regeneration project supported the small business initiative of four women who started to prepare home-made foods such as pasta or cookies and sell them to a hotel. For the local men, the regeneration project brought the Turkish Contractors Union, the Balat Beautification Association, the Fener Volunteers Association, and the Association of Conservation and Restoration Firms together for the organization of courses to raise workers and craftsmen for the restoration works (The general secretary). Around 50 people were trained, 10 of whom worked on the restoration works of the buildings in the Quarter (The director of the restoration projects). Despite these supports, the lack of a comprehensive employment strategy is one of the major shortcomings of the regeneration initiative (Fatih Municipality et al., 1998; FWWS, 2004). As such, aside from some educational courses for local women, the scheme did not include any strategy of improving education, public health, or spatial and social safety either.

The regeneration scheme satisfactorily addressed the problem of garbage accumulation on the streets. In collaboration with the Greater Municipality of İstanbul and the Fatih Municipality, cleaning services in the public spaces and waste collection services were improved. In parallel, a waste management strategy, mainly focusing on the recovery and recycling of solid waste, and the idea of sharing the responsibility with the local community was developed (RFBDP 2005). The waste management strategy, although never part of the local demands, appeared to be inappropriate for the poor inhabitants of F&B who did not produce much solid waste, and who used to use solid waste for different purposes, such as newspapers

	Community needs before the regeneration initiative	Actions taken by the regeneration initiative
Building		
o Restoration:		
▪ basic repairs	376 buildings	26 buildings (6.9%)
▪ extensive repairs (level-1)	365 buildings	97 buildings (26.5%)
▪ extensive repairs (level-2)	157 buildings	×
o Re-designing the interior layout:		
▪ creating larger rooms	✓	×
▪ separating bathrooms and toilets	✓	for 97 buildings
▪ constructing separate kitchens	✓	for 97 buildings
▪ improving heating systems	✓	for 97 buildings
o Improving insulation system (repairs of roofs, windows, ceilings)	✓	for 97 buildings
o Strengthening buildings against earthquake	✓	×
o Improving the electricity system	×	for 97 buildings
o Connecting buildings to the city's natural gas system	✓	×
Employment		
o Job creation:		
▪ permanent	✓	×
▪ temporary	✓	14 jobs
o Organizing the provision of poverty aid for very poor families	✓	×
o Providing vocational courses for men and women (adults)	✓	✓
o Providing courses on accounting, calculation and marketing	✓	×
o Organizing the provision of small business start-up grants/credits for locals	✓	×
o Providing inexpensive child-care centers to increase the number of working women	✓	✓
Health		
o Improving nearby health services in the Balat Jewish Hospital and the Red Crescent Dispensary	✓	×
o Building new health centers in or close to the quarters	✓	×
o Organizing the provision of alternative health services for those with no social security	✓	×
o Organizing the provision of educational courses and seminars on women health, psychological problems, first aid, etc.	✓	✓
Education		
o Opening courses to improve the education levels of adults	✓	×
o Increasing the number of supplementary courses at the schools to prepare students for high school entry exams	✓	×
o Improving the physical conditions of primary schools in the quarters (repairing buildings and heating systems, and providing necessary equipment)	✓	×
o Improving counselling services and school-family unions	✓	✓
o Constructing new study halls for youngsters	✓	×
o Providing vocational courses for youngsters	✓	×
o Providing courses on Mathematics, English, Turkish, IT by NGOs	✓	✓
o Increasing awareness of locals toward the importance of education for their children	✓	×
o Increasing the awareness of living in historical heritage site	×	✓
o Opening a museum (Dimitrie Kandemir)	×	✓
Spatial and social safety		
o Slowing down vehicular traffic circulation within the quarters	✓	×
o Increasing street lighting	✓	only in the Balat Market area
o Improving policing services (establishing a police station in the area or regular patrolling within the quarters by police officers)	✓	×
o Taking precautions to remove homeless children, vagrants, muggers, etc. from the area	✓	×
Quality of environment		
o Increasing total area of open space (playgrounds, parks)	✓	a park
o Providing alternative car-parks around the Balat Market and other parts of the quarters	✓	×
o Encouraging the F&B inhabitants to use the park along the Golden Horn by re-organizing according to their needs	✓	×
o Prohibiting the use of alternative heating systems aside from natural gas	✓	×
o Improving the drainage system	✓	×
o Improving the garbage collection system	✓	✓
o Improving clean water infrastructure system	✓	×
o Issuing penalties to locals that pollute the environment	✓	×
o Developing a waste management strategy	×	✓

Table 1. Comparison of the community needs before the regeneration initiative with the action taken by the regeneration initiative.

being burnt as fuel in stoves, tin boxes used as plant pots, plastic or glass bottles used as water containers (The director of the restoration projects). Likewise, it was found after a while that the plastic boxes that had been distributed for the collection of domestic waste by the district municipality were being used for other purposes, such as for the carrying of fruit and vegetables or as laundry boxes (The local co-director). Hence, the waste management strategy of the regeneration initiative became a failure, as it was congruent with neither the local community's life style, nor their needs and values.

Under the regeneration initiative, a number of open spaces had been earmarked for development of open public space. The derelict warehouses near the Dimitrie Kandemir Museum were demolished and the area was turned into a park, including a playground and a café (The director of the restoration projects). A further four or five empty corner lots were planned to be turned into temporary parks. Yet they still remain untouched, and the open spaces in the quarters are still below standard. All in all, the scheme failed to respond to the community needs related to improvement of environmental quality. Still traffic congestion, car-parking, environmental pollution, inadequate drainage and clean water systems, and lack of a natural gas system remain as the predominant problems of F&B.

Overall looking at the efforts of the regeneration initiative, the scheme should be considered partially sufficient and effective in addressing the community needs. It sought to fulfill these needs by improving the community's quality of life through the restoration of a limited number of historic buildings, establishing a temporary multi-functional social center seeking to respond to some social problems of the locality, improving street cleaning and garbage collection services, and providing a few employment opportunities for the poor local inhabitants. Equally, the initiative is noteworthy regarding its intention to protecting both tenants and private owners, and thus discouraging the gentrification of the Quarter for a short period of time. Under the initiatives, private owners were not required to pay for the restoration of the buildings. Likewise, through the restoration contracts, the regeneration initiative enforced private owners of historic buildings not to sell their houses or not to increase the rents over inflation rate during a period of five years after they handed their houses (The coordinator of the feasibility, the director of restoration projects).

Despite the presence of these exemplary efforts and intentions, the scheme was too small in its coverage area, too narrow in its scope, and too limited in terms of time. The scope of the scheme fell short in terms of responding the multi-faceted needs and problems of the local community. The project therefore failed to respond to the community needs related to maintaining civil peace, raising standards in education, giving all people in F&B in need of reasonable housing, ensuring cooperative working between health and social services, providing permanent employment opportunities, strengthening sustainable regeneration and environmental quality. The objective of gaining the support of the community, local authority and NGOs, and anticipated trigger effect of the scheme were not achieved either within the time period foreseen by the initiative.

Also, the regeneration initiative brought about a tension between the community needs and conservation policies. Within the conservation-led regeneration scheme, beside the restoration of the historic houses and shops, in Fener, a museum was opened in the former house of Dimitrie Kantemir, a well-known Romanian resident and writer from the late-17th

century (RFBDP 2005). Although never part of the residents' demands, the opening of the museum has been seen an important step towards the conservation of the cultural and historic image of Fener. Equally, both the restored museum and other buildings have become considerable catalysts for the promotion of the historic image of Fener, and therefore, important tools for attracting inward investment, tourists and visitors into the Quarter. While the preservation of the historic heritage and character of the area has inevitably served in the public interest, the recent improvement in the urbanscape of the Quarter has not only attracted the attention of middle and upper-middle class, national and international investors and real estate companies, but it has also inevitably pushed up house prices and rents (Kutay, 2008). Despite the short-term measures taken by the regeneration initiatives, gentrification will inevitably occur in response to the increasing historic appeal of the area, while developing a pressure on the local poor inhabitants towards moving out of F&B.

The EU-funded regeneration scheme was completed in July 2008. Yet, the story of F&B does not seem to end. Based on the Law No. 5366, F&B had already been designated as an 'urban renewal site' in May 24, 2006 by the Council of Ministries (Çavdar, 2009). Even before July 2008 when the Fener-Balat regeneration initiative was taken over by the district municipality, a new project, namely 'The Renewal Project of Fener, Balat and Ayvansaray', was launched in collaboration with the district municipality and a large-scale construction company without financial support of the state agencies, as also happened in other historic districts of İstanbul, such as Tarlabası and Sulukule (Kireçci, 2007; Dinçer, 2009b). Anticipating a future for Fener, Balat and Ayvansaray as a part of the Culture Valley Project (a recreational and cultural centre along the Valley of Golden Horn), the new project does not appear to adopt a community-based regeneration approach either (Altınsay Özgüner, 2009; Kireçci, 2009). It rather seeks to restore the historic urbanscape as fast as possible, at the expense of gentrifying the area and removing the present residents in need with their problems to another part of the city.

CONCLUSION

This paper has tried to offer some clear insights into the community needs of F&B in İstanbul and to assess how far the recent regeneration initiative has effectively and satisfactorily fulfilled these needs. The paper has come to a conclusion that, in spite of its initial intentions and endeavours associated with 'good will hunting', the recent initiative has failed in addressing community needs, while creating new tensions and challenges for the local inhabitants, particularly following the improvement in the historic urbanscape.

The study of the recent experience of F&B in İstanbul therefore reveals at least seven necessary requirements to shape up conservation-led regeneration initiatives regarding community needs in deprived historic districts. One of them is to develop wide-scope regeneration initiatives to address the complicated and multi-dimensional deprivation problems of such areas. The second requirement is to provide long-term sustainable initiatives; more specifically, to ensure the continuity of a robust regeneration strategy and program with long, medium and short-term objectives, in accordance with a sustainable organizational, management and financial structure. The third is to ensure the continuity of the commitment of political authorities to regeneration projects.

Political authorities, particularly local governments, opt to see the tangible outcomes of regeneration initiatives within a limited time as the indicator of their political success, whilst community-based regeneration is nurtured by a long-term commitment of local authorities. Beside, getting a wide range of stakeholders from public, private, voluntary and community sectors into regeneration projects, and ensuring the continuity of their support as the project progresses is another indispensable requirement for such projects. As such, it is important to take the effect of government actions and regulations into account. As this study reveals, the government's approach to urban conservation and measures they take set the stage for what is worthy of conservation and how it is to be conserved. The presence of a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable conservation strategy and regulations ensuring the preservation of both the historic physical stock and its social life, therefore, is the sixth requirement for community-based regeneration initiatives. Finally, as in other economically depressed and physically dilapidated historic neighborhoods of İstanbul, the recent F&B regeneration experience reveals the inevitable tension between the community needs and conservation policies. The conservation of historic urbanscape, as irreplaceable sources of life and inspirations that belong to all the people of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located, is a universal responsibility of governments to pass on to future generations. The positive impact of many conservation-led regeneration schemes is thus to preserve and renew these historic areas that, at the same time, become increasingly attractive as residential sites, especially for middle and upper middle income groups, and for national and international developers and investors who surely sense the incipient demand (Uzun, 2001). The examples, such as Cihangir, Galata, Asmalımescit, and Çukurcuma, showed that historic neighborhoods started to refurbish the housing stock as soon as the influx began, thereby reinforcing the areas' appeal, along with the rise of rents and real estate prices (Uzun, 2001). This is also exacerbated by the government's designation of such areas as 'urban regeneration sites'. In this way, such sites are bestowed with a certain prestige, thereby perceived to be special neighborhoods, the historic character of which deserves to be protected (Uzun, 2001). Gentrification inevitably occurs in response to the increasing demand, while removing the communities in need to another part of the city with their problems. The challenge for local authorities, planners, architects and other regeneration initiatives in İstanbul, and across Turkey then is to achieve and sustain a delicate balance between the community and conservation policies, and not allow conservation of historic built stock and its consequences, such as gentrification, to dominate. Despite all the difficulties, the long-term, multi-dimensional regeneration strategies, which are based on partnership and participatory approach, and which can ensure the creation of 'sustainable communities' in historic neighborhoods are likely the solutions for achieving the balance between everyday society's needs and interests and the wider functions of historic heritage.

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Anahtar Sözcükler: topluluk ihtiyaçları; tarihi konut alanları; koruma öncelikli kentsel canlandırma; Fener; Balat; İstanbul.

KORUMA ÖNCELİKLİ KENTSEL CANLANDIRMA PROJELERİ TOPLULUK İHTİYAÇLARINA GÖRE NASIL BİÇİMLENDİRİLEBİLİR?

1990'ların sonlarından itibaren kentsel koruma ve canlandırma konularındaki tartışmalar, toplumsal ve topluluk odaklı konulara kaymaya başlamasına rağmen, kentsel koruma ve canlandırma projelerinin ne kadar topluluk ihtiyaçlarına, değerlerine ve önceliklerine göre şekillendirildiği araştırılması gereken önemli bir soru olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu makale, 1980'lerin başından günümüze bir taraftan küresel ve uluslararası sermayenin odağı haline gelen, diğer taraftan yoksulluk, toplumsal dışlanma, kutuplaşma ve parçalanma sorunlarının hızla arttığı, tarihi konut alanlarının soylulaştığı ve bu alanlarda yaşayan yoksul kesimlerin sorunlarıyla birlikte kentin başka bölgelerine taşınmaya zorlandığı bir kent olan İstanbul'daki tarihi konut alanlarına odaklanmaktadır; bu alanlardaki koruma amaçlı projelerin ne kadar yerel toplulukların ihtiyaçlarına, sorunlarına ve değerlerine cevap verecek biçimde şekillendirildiğini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, Tarihi Yarımada'da Fener ve Balat (F-B) bölgesinde yaşayan yoksul grupları, sorun ve ihtiyaçlarını, ve bu alanın korunması ve canlandırılması için Avrupa Birliği (AB) tarafından finansmanı sağlanan ve uluslararası bir ortaklık aracılığıyla 2003-2008 yılları arasında yürütülen proje incelenmektedir. F-B koruma ve canlandırma projesinin güçlü ve zayıf yanlarının değerlendirilmesi yapılarak, Türkiye'de tarihi konut alanlarında yürütülecek koruma ve canlandırma projelerinin topluluk ihtiyaçlarına göre biçimlenmesi yönünde bazı temel ilkelere dikkat çekilmektedir.

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