



# Chronological Analysis of The Ontological Sequence of The Neighborhood in Urban Physical Stratification; Şükran Neighborhood-Konya

Kentsel Fiziksel Tabakalaşmada Mahallenin Ontolojik Diziliminin Kronolojik Analizi; Şükran Mahallesi-Konya

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## Öz

*Bu çalışmanın amacı, Konya'nın kentsel belleğinde geçmişten günümüze mahalle kavramı ile şekillenen Şükran mahallesinin mekânsal yapısındaki değişimi anlamaktır. Bu bağlamda tarihsel katmanlaşma ile kentsel mekândaki katmanlaşma, mahallenin ontolojik yapısı ile birlikte ortaya çıkan yapı ve yol ilişkisi, arazi bölünme biçimi ve durumunun yıllar içindeki evrimi detaylı olarak incelenmiştir. Bu anlamda Konya'nın tarihi kent merkezinde yer alan ve ağırlıklı olarak konutların inşa edildiği mahallenin kentsel dönüşüm ile gelecekte tamamen değişmesi beklenen yapısının bağlantısı sorgulanmış ve dönüşümün sistematik yapısı araştırılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, kentsel fiziksel kademelenmenin devam ettiği kentsel mekânların dönüşümünün sorgulanması, kentsel belleğin gelecek nesillere aktarılması açısından önem taşımaktadır. Bu amaçlar doğrultusunda çalışma kapsamında tarihsel süreç içerisinde gerçekleşen kentsel fiziksel katmanlaşma içerisinde mahallenin ontolojik yapısı sorgulanmış, geçmişten günümüze plansız ve planlı dönemlerde kent içerisindeki oluşumu kent yöneticilerinin aldığı kararlar ve değişen yönetmelikler çerçevesinde detaylı bir şekilde araştırılmış ve kentsel belleğin geleceğe aktarılması noktasında bir belgeleme yapılmıştır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tarihsel kronoloji, Konya, Kentsel tabakalaşma, Kentsel dönüşüm, Şükran Mahallesi.

## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this study is to understand the change in the spatial structure of Şükran district, which has been shaped by the concept of neighborhood from past to present in the urban memory of Konya. In this context, the stratification in the urban space with the historical stratification, the structure and road relationship that is revealed together with the ontological structure of the neighborhood, and the evolution of the land subdivision form and situation over the years is examined in detail. In this sense, the connection of the structure, which is expected to be completely changed in the future with the urban transformation of the neighborhood, which is located in the historical city center of Konya and where mainly dwellings are built, is questioned and the systematic structure of the transformation is investigated. As a result, questioning the transformation of urban spaces where the urban physical gradation continues is important in order to transfer urban memory to future generations. In line with these purposes, within the scope of the study, the ontological structure of the neighborhood is questioned within the urban physical stratification that took place in the historical process, its formation in the city in unplanned and planned periods from the past to the present is investigated in detail within the framework of the decisions taken by the city administrators and the changing regulations and a documentation is done at the point of transferring the urban memory to the future.*

**Keywords:** Historical chronology, Konya, Urban stratification, Urban transformation, Şükran District.

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Since the beginning of human life, human settlements have taken various forms of the primitive communities, transforming into the collective pattern of activities and living in small settlements (Elshater, 2015). Later on cities, which were established after societies settled down, continue to develop like a living organism from their existence to the present day. Along with the increasing population in the elapsed time, there is also the deterioration of this organism as well as its growth. In this sense, it is inevitable to change the natural, structural and cultural qualities that make up the urban space in the course of time. While the growth or shrinkage of the structural integrity of the cities depends on the increasing/decreasing population, cities can be deteriorated by natural disasters, irregular migration movements and unplanned urbanization. Therefore, urban scale additions, deductions or in general terms change/transformations reveal new potential situations and problems in cities. The change/transformation processes that occur in different geographies, with the effect of different urban dynamics, provide spatial diversity and constitute an important balancing factor in the preservation of spatial identity in cities. With this point of view, all urban-scale changes are an adaptation process that ensures the continuity of spatial identity. On the other hand, in the process of change, there are also breaking points where spatial qualities are lost or transformed and as a result, the continuity of spatial identity disappears. Sudden spatial interventions that occur with the effect of urban dynamics can destroy the continuity of identity. Especially in the 21st century, it is observed that the new global dynamics that threaten cities negatively affect the local qualities of spatial identity and destroy spatial diversity. In this process, factors such as the change of cities, the shift of the city center with the effect of physical growth or the creation of alternative centers, the solution of the housing problem brought by the increasing population, the situation of the industrial and commercial areas remaining in the congested urban fabric are evaluated within the scope of these potential situations and problems.

The change in cities is neither a situation where the past is completely abandoned nor can the future be completely predicted. The layers of both the past and the present accumulate and form the urban space, and in order to understand this space, it is necessary to examine these layers one by one and to understand the way they come together (Madanipour, 1996). The phenomenon of urban change/transformation may not always emerge as a series of processes that ensure the continuity of spatial and urban identity. The definition of the change process in the urban space is possible by determining the meaning that the new qualities that make up the space create over time. The transformation brought about by the change can be evaluated in two different ways in the space. In one, it maintains and develops the qualities that make up the identity of the urban space, while in the other, it re-forms with the disappearance of these qualities. Evaluating these different formations in the historical process is an important starting point for discussing comprehensive urban transformation projects. The spatial qualities determined in a certain period in the city alone are insufficient to determine the identity of that city. It is possible to say that the reason for this is the exclusion of the process itself in the spatial readings of the periods. Urban space is a collection of layers consisting of social forms and human-created environments over time. While each generation has abandoned some of its social and spatial heritage and surrendered to new trends, it has continued some of it. Thus, an urban space is formed in which different social and spatial forms, different modes of production, different daily routines, cultural habits and urban fabrics and these coexist dynamically (Madanipour, 1996). The diversity of temporal structures frees the city from the dominance of a single 'now' and the monotony of a future consisting of the repetition of a single past. It is necessary to consider the space in terms of the continuity of the past, present and future in a flowing state and to evaluate the social, economic, cultural and physical heritage and the changes that occur during this flow as a whole (Mumford, 2007).

## 1. Stratification from Historical Urban Scale to Neighborhood Sequence

As a result of insensitive modernization and urbanization, this heritage can quickly disappear because it does not demand the same sensitivity as legally protected areas. As the concept of sustainability in historic areas has become more nuanced and comprehensive, the concept of cultural heritage has been recognized as a means to serve sustainability. Based on the principle of "prevention is better than cure", it is critical to implement appropriate heritage and planning strategies to protect cultural heritage buildings and sites within the framework of a comprehensive strategy to prevent the deterioration of a historic district. In order to define action processes for the integrated management of historic cities, a number of important factors need to be included in the management plan, such as sustainable urban development plans and heritage conservation strategies. Cultural heritage conservation should investigate ways to expand and modify planning in the built environment to achieve a balance between environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects (Ragheb et al., 2022). Therefore the heritage conservation management in urban planning involves a wide range of actors, such as governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and private interests. However, the government's associations must act as supreme managers. To perform this sustainable and democratic duty, the state must set up the right strategies. They are balanced between development and conservation to induce, arrange, and execute the essential protection activities, and to protect these activities against the interests of people (Khaled, 2018).

### 1.1. Material and Method

While discussing the heritage and the identity in urban space, it is important to classify the qualities that make up the space and to examine it comparatively at the breaking points where important changes took place in the historical process. In order for these multi-layered settlements to continue to develop and to meet their future needs, their past must first be fully understood. It is necessary to work for the continuation of historical continuity by researching and documenting the data from the past of cities, evaluating them by supporting them with written and graphic documents, and producing strategies that will be referenced in designing the future of the city. In order to create a morphology with identity in cities, it is necessary to read the historical development, to build a bridge between the past and the future, to emphasize the historical images and to protect all cultural layers and structures indiscriminately. In the light of all these information/inferences, the change process within the urban physical stratification experienced in the historical process of Şükran District, which is currently being restructured within the scope of a comprehensive urban transformation project, in the neighborhood of the historical city center of Konya, which was chosen as the study area, will be discussed chronologically. For the spatial analysis to be made in this area, reading the change of the neighborhood from past to present through the literature and aerial photographs, as well as maps, engravings and plans of the past periods constitute the material of the research. With this study, it is aimed to ensure that the correct planning criteria for the sustainability of the spatial identity of the city can be determined at the design stage in new urban transformation projects.

## 2. Konya and Şükran District; Historical Projection

While the settlement in centers such as Çatalhöyük and Karahöyük around Konya goes back to 7000-9000 BC, the settlement in the center of Konya started from 1000s BC and it has been accepted that Konya has shown a rapid development since 300 BC (Baykara, 1985). In the historical process, the developments in the Roman period made Konya one of the important cities of the time. In this period, Konya was seen as one of the important cities of the Lyconia region with the name Iconium. The first settlement area of the city of Konya, which was a colonial city during the Roman civilization period, was Alaeddin Hill and the south of the hill (Tanyeli, 1987). In 395 AD, when the Roman Emperor divided the country between his two sons, the city joined the Byzantine Empire. The city came to the forefront

with its feature of being a religious and military center during the Byzantine period, and the living areas continued to develop, especially on the Alaeddin Hill and the areas to its south, as in the Roman period (Yenice, 2011). It is known that the Turks first settled on Alaeddin Hill, that is, in the center of the city, in Konya, and turned the Platon Monastery here into a mosque. The development of Konya is controversial as there is not enough information about the urban heritage inherited from Byzantium. From these discussions, it is understood that Konya was an open city until 1221 and became a walled city in that date (Akşit, 2014). The settlement pattern of the city, which reflects a typical medieval Islamic city with its physical structure, was concentrated around Alaeddin Hill in the 13th century. During the Anatolian Seljuk period, the inner castle was repaired and maintained, and the city was surrounded by a second wall. In the second half of the 13th century, the settlement areas overflowed the city walls and showed a development pattern especially towards the eastern part of the city (Baykara, 1985; Önder, 1971; Turan, 1971), and the city became an open city again. During the Karamanoğulları period, the city showed a development pattern towards the west of Alaeddin Hill. The development of the city during the Ottoman period was towards the east of Alaeddin Hill between the 15th and 18th centuries, and towards the south and southeast of the Alaeddin Hill between the 18th and 19th centuries (Konyalı, 1964; Ergenç, 1995; Aru, 1995) (Figure 1).

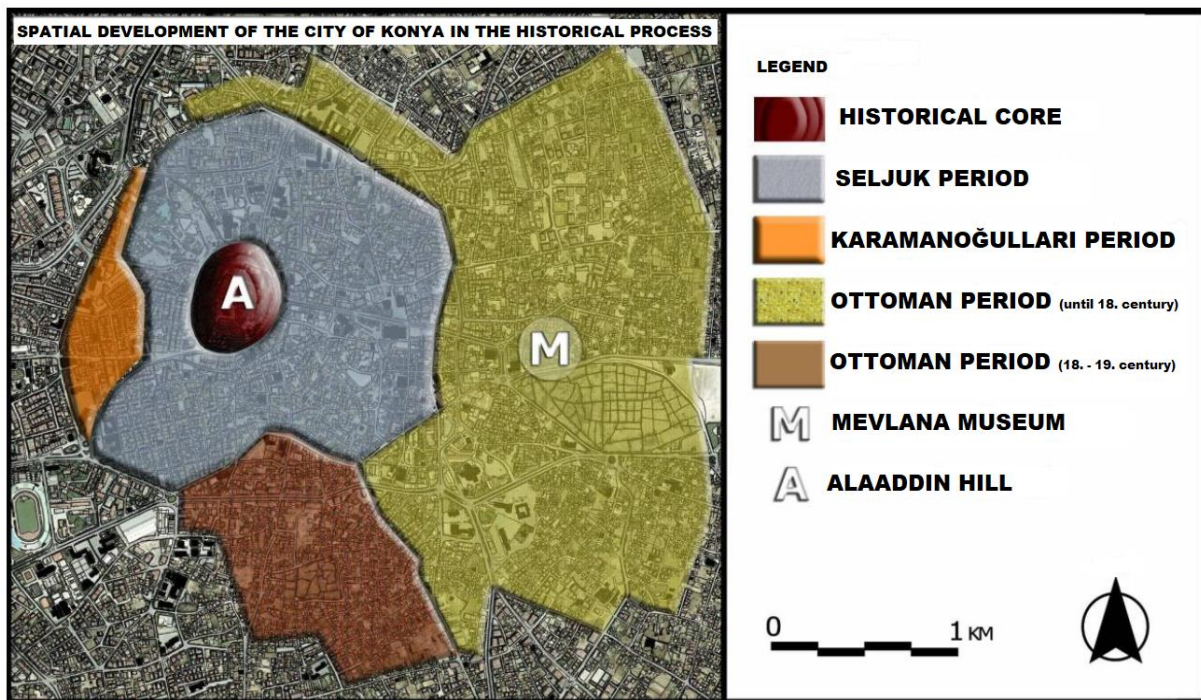


Figure 1. The spatial development of the city of Konya in the historical process (The location of Şükran District was added by the authors on the figure (Yenice, 2014))

Geographically located in the center of Anatolia, Konya has historically been a settlement with urban dynamics since it was the capital during the Anatolian Seljuks period, the state center during the Ottomans, and an important industrial center during the Republican period. It is stated that the city, which has a unique formation in both cultural, social and physical terms, developed in the form of a monocentric drop around Alaeddin Hill, which was a mound until the 1950s (Arat and Uysal, 2019). The city, whose population increased rapidly with industrialization moves and immigration after the 1950s, was shaped in a congested fabric with the development plan made on the traditional pattern located within the outer walls, whose traces and remains are still known today, and this fabric which includes Şükran District have become transitional zones especially in the last quarter of the 20th century and since the beginning of the 21st century (Figure 2).

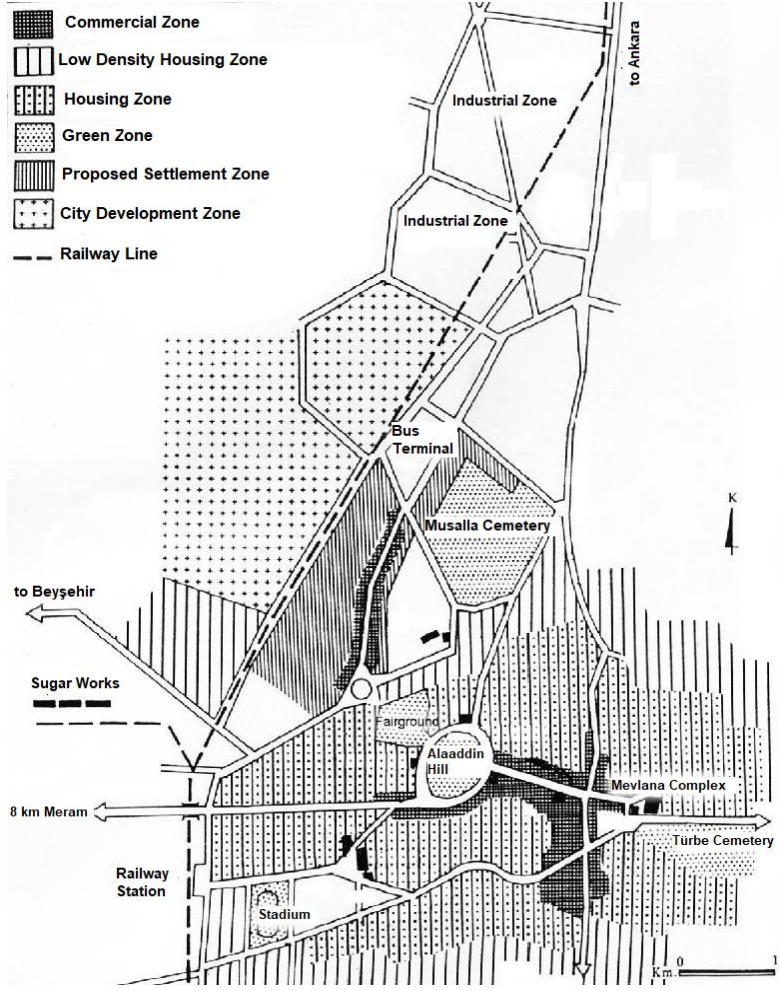
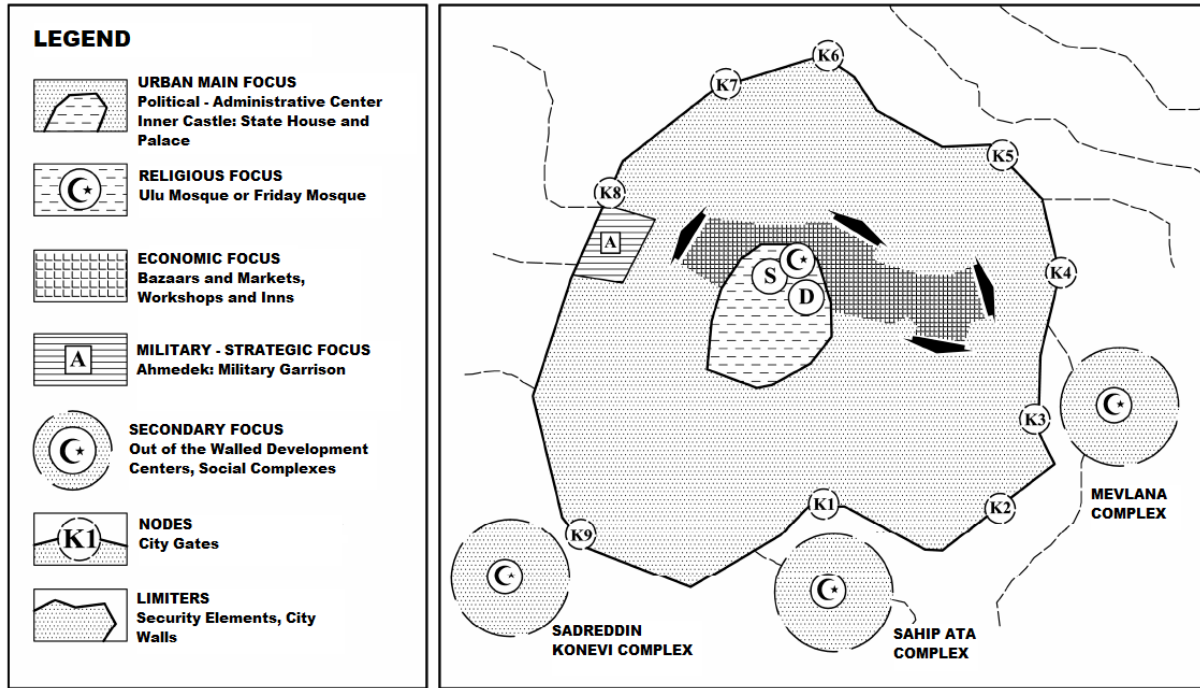
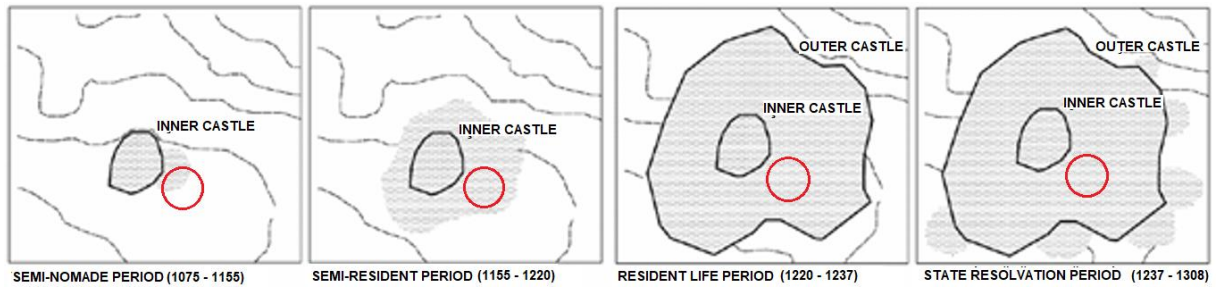


Figure 2. Konya city plan showing the city plan in the early 1980s (Anonymous, 1982).

In this historical urbanization process, Şükran District is located in the south of Alaeddin Hill in the city of Konya, in the region between the inner and outer walls, where settlement was seen during the Anatolian Seljuk period. Within the scope of the political program of the Anatolian Seljuk State; The process of spatial-functional change of the city of Konya and the stages of its urban development in the process of articulation of the Turks, also defined as the Seljuk age, to the Anatolian settlement culture is discussed in four periods;

- Semi-nomadic period: the period of early founding and struggle for existence (1075–1155),
  - Semi-settled period: the period of political unity and institutionalization (1155–1220),
  - Settlement period: the period of rise and centralization (1220–1237),
  - The disintegration period of the state system: the period of decline and collapse (1237-1308)
- (Figure 3) (Özcan, 2011).

When Figure 3 is examined, it is understood that Şükran District has developed in semi-sedentary and settled life periods. During the semi-settled period, on one hand Turks continued the tradition of seasonal relocation between summer and winter in Konya, which came from their nomadic life habits, and on the other hand they realized the first monumental-public service buildings belonged to settled life such as Alaeddin Mosque (1155) and Altun Aba Madrasa (1202).



In the settled life period, it is seen that systematic and organized development activities were carried out, the city grew demographically and spatially, and it tended to develop towards the outside of the outer wall built in this period. In this period, the spatial organization of the city of Konya, as in almost all medieval Western or Islamic cities, was shaped by three urban elements: the inner castle, the mosque, and the market or bazaar. In this order, the socio-cultural service institutions such as the Sahip Ata Imaret and the Mevlana Kulliye became the secondary development foci that direct the urban development outside the walls (Özcan, 2011) (Figure 4).

## 2.1. Şükran District

Şükran District, which has survived from the Seljuk period to the present day and is located in the neighborhood of the historical city center of Konya, is one of the rare districts in the official records of the Karamanoğlu and Fatih periods (Konyalı, 2007). Şükran District, whose name is mentioned among the 79 Konya districts determined in the census carried out in the period of Yavuz Sultan Selim in 924 H/1500 M, is one of the prominent historical walled districts of Konya (Sarıköse, 2011).

At first Alaeddin Hill, the first settlement of Konya, was surrounded by a wall known as the inner castle, the settlement grew, developed and over time, it overflowed the city walls during the Anatolian Seljuk period. Seljuk Sultan I. Alaeddin Keykubat had the outer wall built in the first quarter of 13th century

taking into account the protection of Mongolian attacks, internal threats, floods and the development of the city (Figure 1). There are 12 gates to enter the city from the walls (Figure 5). These gates are as follows; Ertaş Gate, Halkabegus Gate, Aksaray Gate, Telli Door, At Pazarı Gate, Debbaglar Gate, Ayas Gate, Larende Gate, Antalya Gate, Yeni Gate, Çeşme Gate, Sille Gate (Konyalı, 2007).

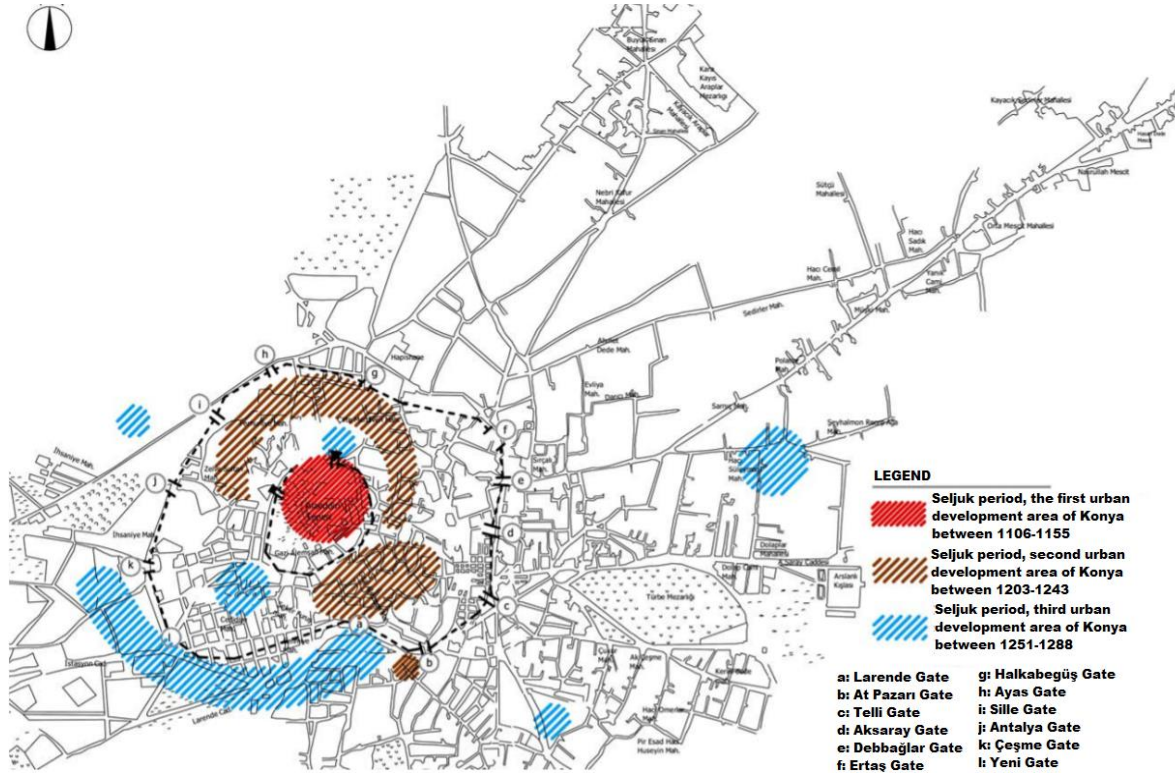


Figure 5. Urban development regions of Konya during the Seljuk period 1106-1300 (Rıfaioğlu, 2006).

Among these gates, Larende Gate and At Pazarı Gate are within the boundaries of Şükran District. The settlement, which started in the Seljuk period, became a region preferred by the high-income part of the people for settlement because it was within the walls and was a safe area at that time (Sarıköse, 2011). According to the rumor among the people, the district takes its name from the Şükran Mosque which is very close to one of the gates of the Konya Walls opening to the east. This gate is in the area where Kapu Mosque is located. Before Kapu Mosque was built, Şükran Mosque was known as the closest mosque to the door (Uz, 2016). The biggest historical feature of the neighborhood, which was the most active commercial region of Konya during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods, is that the At Pazarı Gate, the busiest gate of the Konya outer wall, is located at the southeast end of the neighborhood (Uz, 2013).

Considering that the boundaries of the district are important according to the historical ontological structuring, the boundaries of the Şükran District have also changed, expanded and increased from the past to the present. According to this, the old borders of Şükran District are defined by Alaeddin Street in the north, İstanbul Street in the east, Aşık Şemi Street and Türbe Street in the south, Kömürcüler Street in the southeast, Karahafızlar Street in the west and Altınçeşme Street in the southwest. In this case, Şükran District enters Kalecik District with its western end and Sefhavan District with its southeast end. It is surrounded by İstanbul Street in the east, Alaeddin Street in the north, the new Hacı Fettah District in the south, and Gazialeşah District in the west (Konyalı, 2007). Afterwards, the border arrangement of Şükran District was made with the decision of the Meram Municipality Council dated 8th February 2006 and numbered 30. According to this arrangement Kalecik, Kalecelp, Kürkçü, Mücellit, İhtiyarettin, Sefhavan, Muhtar, Uluğbey and Karakurt districts were included in the new Şükran District. The southern sides of Uluğbey and Karakurt districts were divided and remained within

the borders of Hacı Fettah District. Furkandede Street constitutes the border between the two districts. Thus at present, the boundaries of the Şükran District are defined as the area surrounded by Alaeddin and Mevlana Street in the north, Istanbul and Karaman Street in the east, Furkandede Street in the south, Taşcamı Uzunharmanlar Street, Sırçalı Madrasa and Ressam Sami Street in the west (Toru, 2019) (Figure 6).

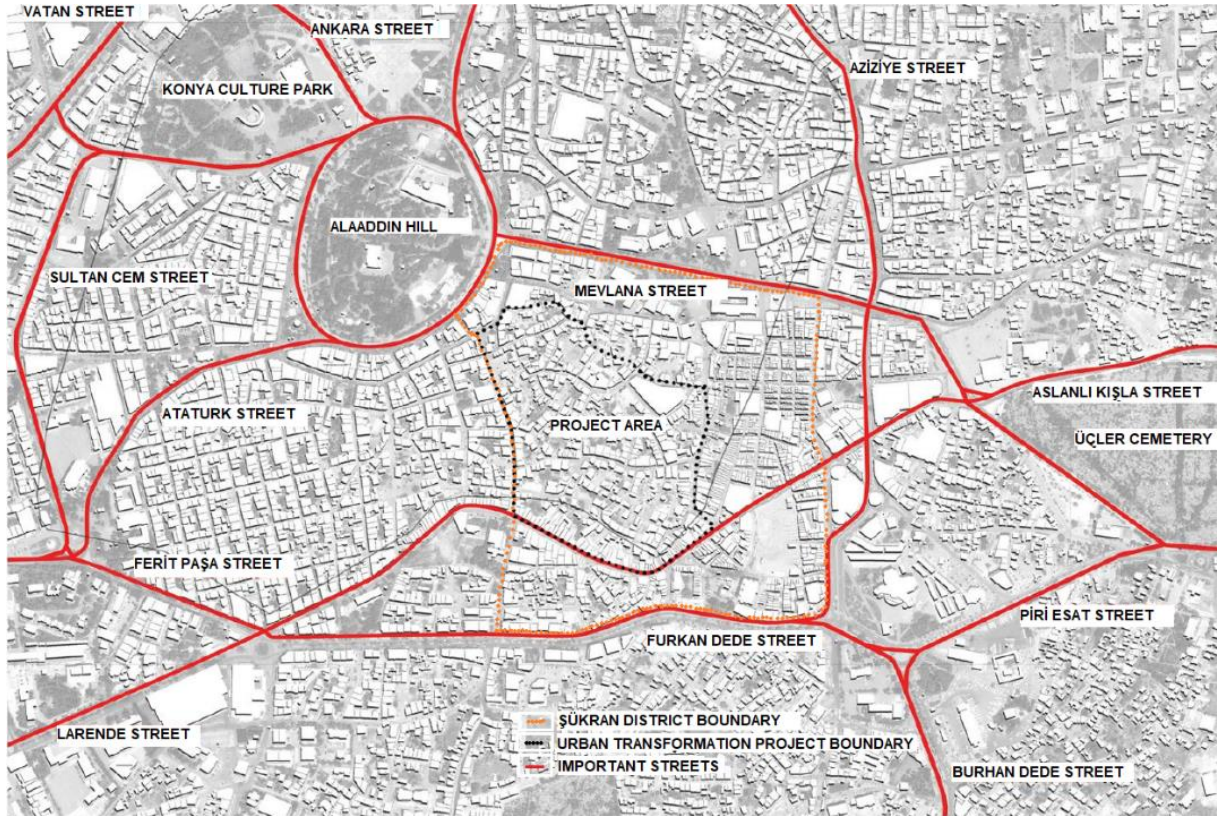


Figure 6. Today's borders of Şükran District and the urban transformation project area (the figures taken from the archive of Meram Municipality were rearranged by the authors)

## 2.2. Ontological Arrangement of Şükran District; Urban Chronological Stratification

While the settlement in centers such as Çatalhöyük and Karahöyük around Konya dated back to 7000-9000 BC years, the settlement in Konya center started from the 1000s BC and had shown a rapid development especially since the year 300 BC (Baykara, 1985). Konya as one of the oldest settlements in Anatolia was captured by Phrygians after being dominated by the Hittites until 1000-1200 BC and then respectively the city entered the administration of Lydia after the invasion of Creusos in 554 BC, was later ruled by Alexander the Great, King Atalos of Pergamon in 223 BC and it came under the rule of the Roman Empire in 133 BC (Konyalı, 1964). It has been an important center of trade, culture and politics at the crossroads of the historical caravan routes connecting Anatolian cities to each other and Asia to Europe during the First and Middle Ages, and it became a real city when it became the capital of the Anatolian Seljuks in the 13th century. The city, which reflects a typical medieval Islamic city with its physical structure, became a fortress city surrounded by walls. The Outer Castle, which was formed by the second wall built during the reign of Alaeddin Keykubat I, surrounded the bazaar and important neighborhoods. In this period, the neighborhoods that formed the settlements consisted of narrow streets, structures such as mosques, fountains and the houses around them. In the neighborhoods, the streets led to the fountain and mosque in a small square. Some neighborhoods had cul-de-sacs. The mud-brick houses with flat earthen roofs, which are the main living spaces, are separated from the street by mud brick walls and were built as one or two floors in a wide hayat-courtyard. On one side of the hayat, there are service volumes such as barn, haystack and kitchen. The main house consists of



a mabeyn (sofa) and two rooms on a subbasement. It was possible to reach the neighboring district with the streets coming out of the neighborhood, the streets through the larger streets, and the bazaar through those larger streets. In the center, there were religious and social structures such as mosques, madrasahs, covered bazaars, baths, and shops (Karpuz, 1999).

It is stated that the neighborhood where Şükran, Kalecik, Kalecelp, Mücellit and Kürkçü districts, which are among the aforementioned districts, are located was also called the "Altınçeşme Önü" district in the historical process and it is seen as a privilege to live in this district where the prominent notables of Konya reside. Narrow and dead-end street pattern, which is a characteristic of the Seljuk period, is seen in all neighborhoods in the district, and the mention of castle walls and ruins in the Şer'iye registers shows that the outer wall was completely standing at that time (Uz, 2013).

In the analyzed region, the change in the housing pattern has been observed in the historical process, and this change has also shown its effect on the street structures. It is seen that the neighborhood structure expressed here was first formed by the transformation of Konya Houses, which were observed to be shaped especially in the traditional structure. Therefore, it is thought that this transformation started with the deterioration of neighborhood structures and the abandonment of traditional houses based on the urban chronological structuring. In fact, in the first aerial photographs obtained, it is seen that the Şükran District, where the changes in the street pattern and the sharp transformations over the years can be seen in the historical process, were shaped in the classical traditional housing fabric and then evolved into 3-4 floor structures (Büyükşahin and Aydın, 2020). Because, Şükran District has been one of the important neighborhoods in the city of Konya, which came to the forefront as a city center in the Seljuk and Ottoman periods, with its structure shaped by the street pattern of the Turkish-Islamic city. It is known that the traditional houses of the city of Konya with mudbrick flat roofs, 1-2 floors, small gardens or small courtyards (Uz, 2016) were dominant in this neighborhood, especially until the 1950s (Arat, 2018). In the development plans prepared for the city of Konya in 1945, 1954 and 1967, it is seen that the street patterns in and around the neighborhood were left the same, and the floor heights were increased by 4-5 floors. The local people of Konya, living in traditional houses here, migrated to these new apartments, leaving their detached houses and taking a place in apartment buildings. As a result, this formation, which has reached from the past to the present in an orderly manner, has led to the disappearance of the spaces and roads between the housing fabric, which were 1-2 stories before, and the formation of unqualified street patterns exceeding human scale.

After the 1980s, especially in the 1990s, this fabric started to lose its local people in the growth axis of the city. The proximity of the neighborhood to the traditional covered bazaar (bedesten) of the city of Konya is no longer an important data, and the fact that the high-rise houses are in a cramped fabric has caused the region's transforming face to lose its attractiveness with the loss of the sense of neighborhood. After this point, Şükran District has turned into an unqualified urban space with the identity of an area used only for the transition to the historical fabric of the city and the covered bazaar. However, in this process, there was no cultural, social and physical rupture in this area with the renewed population due to the continuous immigration of the surrounding districts of the city of Konya.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the residences in this region began to be converted into workplaces. In the process, the use of the ground floors of the houses by turning them into commercial areas and the inadequacy of the office buildings in time caused the multi-storey residential buildings to be transformed in a holistic way. This area, which has now been revised in terms of function, has become an important trade area for Konya, while some of the houses have evolved into commercial functions, the housing functions have continued at a decreasing rate.

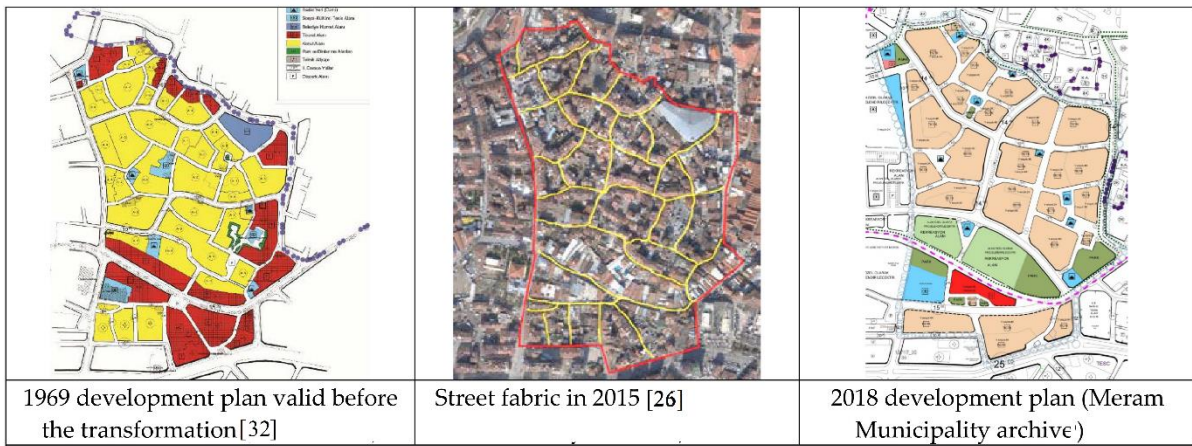


Figure 8. The change over the years based on development plans in the project area



General view of Şükran District in 2015 (Archive of Meram Municipality)



Street images of Şükran District in 2015 (Meram Municipality archive)

Figure 7. The change over the years based on development plans in the project area (top) - General view of Şükran District in 2015 (Archive of Meram Municipality) (middle) - Street images of Şükran District in 2015 (Meram Municipality archive) (bottom)

The emergence of ethnic groups in this area after the 1990s has increased the social segregation in the area. In this process, the first owners of the buildings left the region and started to move to newly built dwellings with better physical conditions, and these buildings, which had low building quality and were

not preferred by their owners, were settled by people belonging to the lower income group of the city and Syrian, Iraqi and Somali immigrants with the concept of tenancy.

In particular, the reasons such as the immigrants' lack of sense of belonging in the neighborhood, their weak economic situation and their lack of professional qualifications, poor employment opportunities, and poor social communication within the region have led to an increase in crime rates in the region over time. As a result, this area quickly became a problematic area for the other residents living in the area, the people in the neighboring areas and the whole city in the early 2000s.

This neighborhood has been the first settlement area of refugees who have come to the city since 2005, and the limited number of refugees at first revealed a situation that adapts to the city rather than a result that forces change. However, the Syrian refugee influx of around 3000-3500 people, which took place after 2013 (for about 3 years), caused the formal, economic, social and cultural transformation of the neighborhood. This transformed area was not only focused on housing but also changed with commercial areas, immigrants transformed the neighborhood in every way, and it was seen that the neighborhood was rapidly detached from the urban fabric of Konya physically and socially. For all these reasons, the urban transformation project called "Transformation Meram" was initiated in the region in 2014, and with this transformation, it was aimed to increase the quality of life for the city and its inhabitants. Within the scope of the Transformation Meram Project, planning work was carried out on an area of approximately 900 hectares, and in line with these plan decisions, Şükran District, Ulurmak District and Aymanas Districts were declared as risky areas. In the Şükran District urban transformation area, no 1/1000 scale planning work has been carried out until 2018 on the old development plan dated 09.12.1969, which was valid until 2018. According to the development plan made in 1969, there are residential, commercial, educational facilities, religious facilities and social facilities in the region. In the new Implementation Development Plan dated 2018, which was prepared with urban transformation studies, the existing fabric of the region was tried to be preserved, the construction density was reduced compared to the previous development plan, and small squares and recreation areas that could meet the needs of the region were planned (Figure 7).

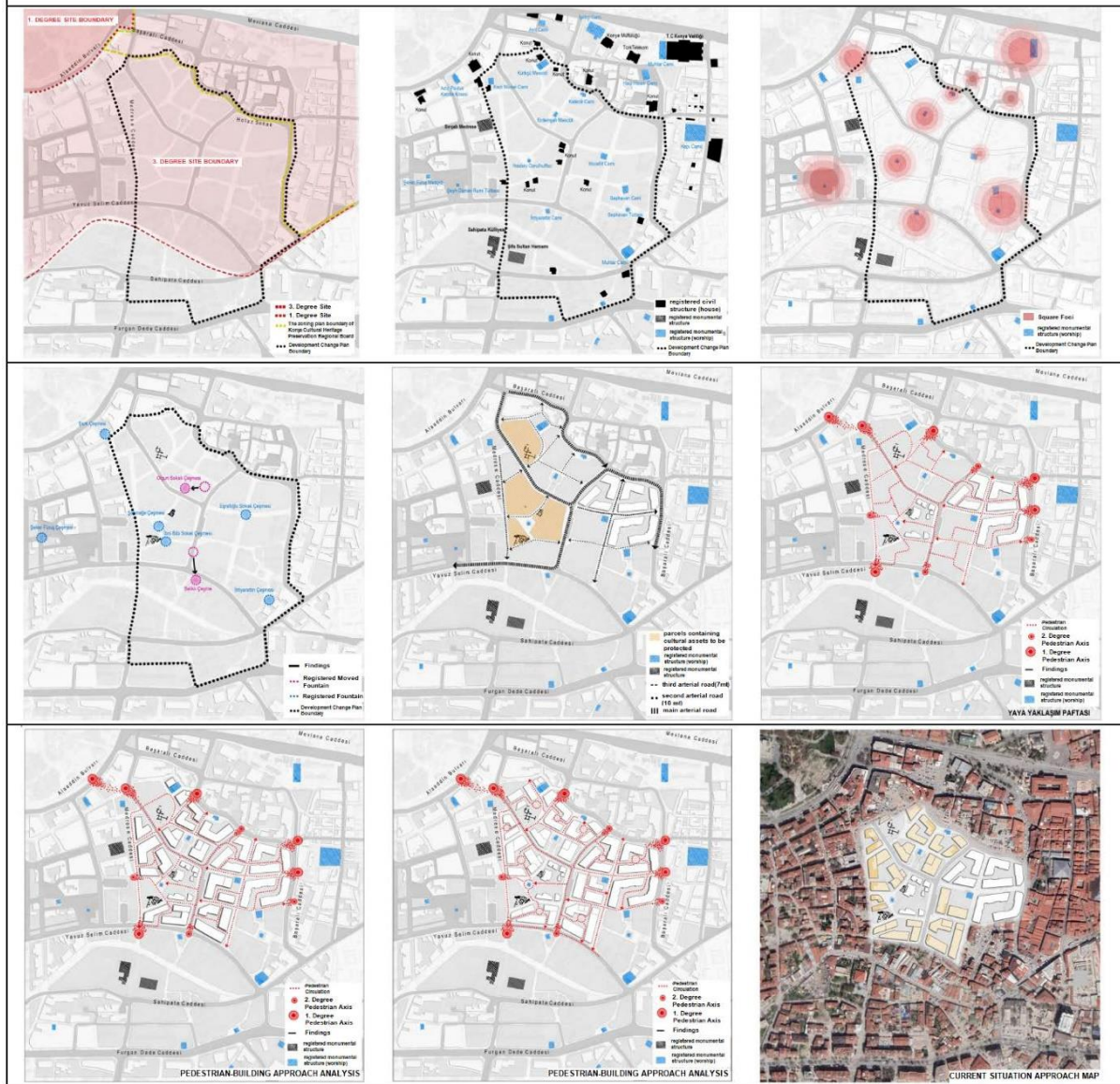
In Şükran District, which has been defined as an urban transformation area by local governments, while some of the houses were evacuated and demolished, around 3000 Syrian refugees continued to live in a small number of unqualified houses in the fabric. By the end of the 2010s, it is seen that the traditional houses that constitute the traditional formation of the neighborhood in the historical fabric and the 3-5-storey residences that symbolize the 1950-1975 period were destroyed, and the identity of the neighborhood and the street pattern were completely lost. In addition, some of the registered traditional houses in the region were restored, re-functionalized and converted into various units belonging to municipalities, and some were demolished to be rebuilt. Today, the urban transformation process continues in stages, and demolition and construction works are carried out simultaneously.

### 2.3. Urban Transformation Practices/Experiences in Şükran District; Physical Layers of the City

The city of Konya was also affected by the migration from rural to urban areas, which started in the 1950s and reached its peak in the 1980s; While the rate of migration from Konya districts to the center was 80% until the 1990s, this rate changed in the form of migration from other cities to Konya in the 2000s, and this rate reached 60% in general migration (Koyuncu, 2011; Koyuncu, 2014). Since the migration of Konya until the early 2000s was generally from the surrounding districts and cities, it did not cause cultural segregation and since it spread over a long period of time, adaptation to the city was achieved more easily. However, when the migration statistics of the city of Konya are examined, it is seen that the city faced the highest immigration numbers in a short period of time in the history of the Republic, with the Syrian refugee migration it received in the years 2014-2015 (Koyuncu, 2014).

Table I. Sample sheets of architectural planning, analysis and design process (rearranged by the authors with the images from Meram Municipality Archive)

Table 1. Sample sheets of architectural planning, analysis and design process (Meram Municipality Archive)



Şukran district, which has been functionally undergoing a transformation process at the same time and is the sampling area of this research subject, stands out as one of the important residential areas in the city in historical chronology, as it is one of the oldest districts of Konya. The local people of Konya, who live in Şukran district, have started to leave this area gradually, with the change of housing styles in the process and the new arteries opening to the city and the formation of proposed housing areas and apartments on the growth axis of the city. Thus, with the outbreak of the Syrian war, the area where the people who migrated from outside the city settled first came under the influence of refugee immigrants. The number of Syrian refugees in the neighborhood reached 3500 until the end of 2014 and the middle of 2015. On the other hand, it is stated that even if the war in Syria is over, 60% of those who have settled in the city do not intend to return. This situation shows that there is a problem that needs to be dealt with in every aspect of the city, and the effect of the increasing foreign population transforms the neighborhood completely (Koyuncu, 2014).

With the decision of Meram Municipality Council dated 08.02.2006 and numbered 30, ten historical districts, namely the Kürkcü, Kalecik, Şükran, Sefhavan, Muhtar, İhtiyaretin, Mücellit, Kalecelp districts and the northern parts of Karakurt and Uluğbey districts, were merged and border correction was made. Thus, the boundaries of Şükran District is defined as the area surrounded by Alaeddin and Mevlana Street in the north, Istanbul and Karaman Street in the east, Furkandede Street and the new Hacifettah District in the south, Taşcamı Uzunharmanlar Street, Gazi Alemşah District, Sırçalı Madrasa and Ressam Sami Street in the west (Anonymous, 2018). With the decision numbered 2015/7284 published in the Official Gazette dated March 21, 2015 and numbered 29302, 16.3 hectares in Şükran District was declared as an urban transformation area (Şükran Mahallesi kentsel dönüşüm kararı, 2015). The project area is bounded by Mimar Muzaffer Street and Hotuz Street in the north, Furkan Dede Street in the south, Sırçalı Madrasa Street and Taş Cami Uzun Harmanlar Street line in the west, and Başaralı Street, Sahibata Street and Ağrı Street line in the east. In the north of the area, there is Alaeddin Hill, which is one of the symbols of Konya, and the area known as the private teaching institutions area, Furkan Dede Street, which is an important area for city trade, in the south, Sırçalı Madrasa and Sahibata Complex, which are important structures of the city, in the west, and the historical bazaar named as Konya Bedesten in the east (Erbek, 2019). After the project approval date, the relevant municipality started expropriation works, and many buildings were expropriated and demolished, revealing empty spaces in the neighborhood. Today, this process still continues.

In fact, this process is a result of Syrian migration and includes the transformation of unqualified housing and unsafe areas in the center of the city.

It is possible to say that large-scale interventions to urban space within the scope of urban transformation projects planned in many cities of our country in the recent period, which envisage a radical change/transformation of the urban space, transform the urban fabric of the city in particular, and also change the urban memory by eroding the existing/previous layers. The formation and transformation of the neighborhood, which is an important urban element, is the story of a stack of layers in which economic developments, local government and central administration decisions, individual interventions and many other components, as well as physical changes in the historical process accumulate (Büyükşahin and Aydın, 2020).

In this sense, while the urban transformation projects of the area were being prepared by the Meram Municipality, physical environment analyzes were made, and the stages of the neighborhood in the historical process and its place in the city memory were taken into consideration in the design decisions. In the analysis studies, registered buildings were identified and classified according to their functions, cultural assets to be moved or likely to be moved were determined, pedestrian and vehicle movements were analyzed and main and secondary roads were proposed with appropriate widths, square foci were revealed, and necessary planning with appropriate floor heights to revive the old street fabric decisions were taken (Table I).

As it can be understood from the analysis charts made in detail above, the urban transformation project area is located within the 3rd Degree Archaeological Site determined with the decision of Konya Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Regional Board dated 01.06.2009 and numbered 3038 and the Urban Site Border passes through its eastern border. In this context, taking into account the registered buildings that need to be protected, a planning study has been considered to be carried out, where historical values come to the fore, allowing the fortification walls to be exhibited in possible areas, freeing them from the pressure of intense construction around, reducing the density of buildings and population throughout the area, consisting of wide pedestrian axes rather than vehicular traffic. In the general planning, it is aimed to arrange buildings suitable for the silhouette and the identity of the region, instead of the structures that damage the fabric of the surrounding historical-cultural areas. In the 3rd Degree Archaeological Site, planning decisions were determined by considering the

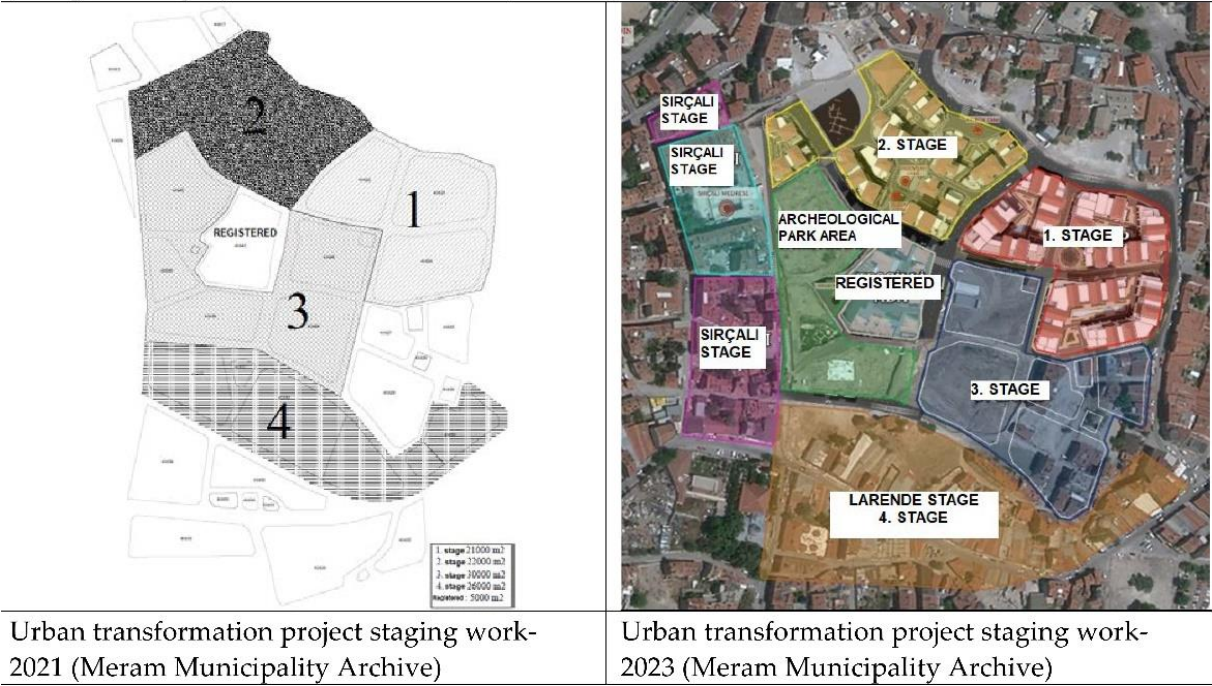
differences in underground and above-ground approaches in the construction and physical intervention criteria in accordance with the relevant legislation (Anonymous, 2018).

With the decision of urban transformation in Şükran District with its main principles, it has become necessary to determine the movable and immovable cultural assets, which are defined in accordance with the Law No. 2863 of the Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets, and to reveal the current status of these works as well as their periodical characteristics. Cultural values unearthed in archaeological sites are protected by using different consolidation and conservation techniques. In order to do this, the first step is to identify and document the current status of these remains. In this sense, upon the request of the Meram Municipality, excavation and drilling works were carried out by the Konya Museums Directorate with the official letter dated 30.11.2017 and numbered 18394, the permission certificate dated 29.01.2018 and numbered 82725 by the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums (Anonymous, 2019).

As a result of the excavations, many immovable cultural and natural assets on different islands were identified, and it was seen that the remains of the foundation walls of the unearthed structures could reach the present day (Figure 8). As marked on the aerial photograph many immovable cultural assets dated to the Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman periods (Anonymous, 2018) obtained as a result of the excavations, such as the commercial structure belonging to the Seljuk period and the church structure, which is thought to belong to the previous periods found in the area 1, the bath structures unearthed in areas 2 and 4, the crypt/funeral structure of the tomb seen in area 3 and the ceramic kiln structure in area 5, directly affected the urban transformation project design processes. Today, excavation and detection works continue in different building blocks, urban design projects are revised accordingly with each unearthed structure, and even the staging areas are changing. In the initial stage, the borders of 4 different islands and the registered island stages (Figure 8) were changed during the excavation process, Sırçalı stage including the close landscaping of Sircali Madrasa were added, the archeological park area was created by combining the islands with mostly immovable cultural assets and the excavation and design process of this area was transferred to Konya Metropolitan Municipality (Figure 8). According to its current state, Şükran District urban design project consists of 21.000 m<sup>2</sup> 1st Stage, 20.000 m<sup>2</sup> 2nd Stage, 16.000 m<sup>2</sup> Archaeological Park Area, 27.500 m<sup>2</sup> 3rd Stage, 41.200 m<sup>2</sup> 4th Stage (Larende Stage), 5.000 m<sup>2</sup> Registered Island Stage and 27.100 m<sup>2</sup> Sırçalı stage of m<sup>2</sup> (Şükran kentsel dönüşüm projesinde 2. Etapın temeli atıldı, 2023). In accordance with the urban design project, the 1st, 2nd and 3rd stages are mainly planned with commercial and office functions supported by social and green spaces. Registered island stage, in which a total of 9 buildings were collected, with the addition of 6 registered civil architectural examples demolished to be rebuilt in the project area, is referred to as Turkey's second largest registered building relocation work after Hasankeyf, and is combined with cafe, restaurant, hotel and social area functions. It plays a major role in the revitalization of the area by ensuring that the area is used at all hours of the day. According to the latest decisions taken in the urban design project updated with the excavation stages, it is stated that there will be no construction on some of the building blocks, and when the traces of the outer walls are unearthed during the Larende stage, which is the 4th stage, a large part of the Şükran District will be brought into an open-air museum appearance by combining them with the church, bath and other foundlings (Meram'da Türkiye'nin ikinci büyük tescilli binası taşınacak, 2023).



Şükran Mahallesi urban regeneration area excavation process satellite image (dated July 2021) (Google earth pro, accessed on 13.02.2023) was rearranged by the authors.)



Urban transformation project staging work-2021 (Meram Municipality Archive)







Urban transformation project staging work-2023 (Meram Municipality Archive)

Figure 8. Şükran District urban regeneration area excavation process satellite image (dated July 2021) (Google earth pro, accessed on 13.02.2023) was rearranged by the authors) (top) - Urban transformation project staging work-2021 (Meram Municipality Archive) (bottom-left) - Urban transformation project staging work-2023 (Meram Municipality Archive) (bottom-right)

Within the scope of Şükran District urban transformation project, excavation, determination and projecting stages continue in different building blocks. The immovable cultural assets unearthed as a result of the excavations directly affect the urban design project processes, and the projects are revised and updated in this sense (Table II). During the 1st phase of the urban design project, the project was changed due to the discovery of a bath and ceramic kiln structure during the excavations, the design was adapted to the new situation so that the areas where the bath and ceramic kiln are located on the basement floor, the site plan and floor plans were rearranged, and alternative section studies were prepared. The entrance to the exhibition area of the bath is provided by a geodesic domed structure designed on the ground floor, the ceramic kiln is exhibited in an area reserved for it in the underground car park, and on the ground floor a visual connection is provided by a glass floor that can be walked

on. With these new plan arrangements, the parking areas in the areas where the ceramic kiln and bath structure are located on the basement floor were canceled and the commercial functions previously planned on the ground floor were rearranged.

Table 2. Reading the changes before and after the 1st Stage excavation findings of Şükran District Urban Design Project

1 <sup>st</sup> Stage Urban design project dated 2021 (Meram Municipality Archive)	1 <sup>st</sup> Stage Urban design project dated 2022 (Meram Municipality Archive)
	
Site plan	Site plan
	
Ground floor plan	Ground floor plan
	
Basement floor plan	Basement floor plan

## SONUÇ:

The physical and spatial structure of today's modern cities has been formed as a result of the physical layers formed in the process from the transition to the first settled order to the present and the changes and transformations between them. Cities that have experienced different settlements throughout the historical process and still maintain this feature today, carry the traces of this historical process underground and above ground. The coexistence of layers belonging to different cultures in these cities enables the definition of the periods in which the city lived and the transformation that has occurred until today, and contributes to the understanding of societies and lifestyles that have not survived to the present day.

The layers belonging to different periods that make up the whole of the cities and the components of these layers relate to each other, and these relations, which vary from one city to another, create architectural diversity in cities and enrich the urban fabric, on the other hand, make the urban identity unique. However, in order to meet the spatial requirements that differ in the modern age, the urban transformation processes that cities come under the influence of, sometimes deeply injure the urban



fabric, which has formed and stratified over thousands of years, sometimes destroys some layers, in this sense, it causes the loss of the original urban identity by causing the traces of the past to be erased.

In order for these multi-layered cities to continue to develop and to meet the needs of the modern age without damaging the urban identity, first of all, their past must be fully understood. Researching and documenting the past periods of cities is important in order to maintain historical continuity in order to produce strategies that will be referenced in the planning of the future of the city. The aim here is not only to illuminate the history of the city and to create the urban structure, but also to contribute to the development of the city with its social and cultural identity. As a matter of fact, in order to create a morphology with a unique identity in cities, it is necessary to reveal the historical layers, to read these layers in spatial, social and cultural sense, so that a bridge should be built between the past and the future of the city.

In this context, reading the urban space in the process of change is possible by examining the qualities that make up that space and evaluating the meaning of the urban identity formed by these qualities together in the course of time. Because, with change, which is an inevitable process that cities go through, urban spaces can maintain their continuity by preserving and developing their identity, and they can also face the danger of alteration by losing the qualities that make up this identity. At this point, the concepts of change and continuity, which seem to be opposite concepts, appear as two basic elements in the sustainability of urban identity. As a result, within the ongoing change, the spatial identity of the city can survive by transferring the traces of the social memory through the qualities that define the space. It should be expected that the new meanings added to the spatial identity existing in the change/transformation process of a city are built on top of each other like the structural layers, while strengthening and maintaining this identity. However, despite all these acceptances, it is seen that the spatial integrity is damaged and the urban fabric is altered with the disappearance of the qualities that bear the traces of the urban memory of the society as a result of the sudden interventions that occur in the urban transformation projects implemented in real life.

The city of Konya is an important urban focus as it has undergone many changes in the historical process and is still in change. As a matter of fact, Konya, which was on important trade routes throughout the history, continued to be an important center of attraction, became the capital city in the Seljuk period and an important provincial center in the Ottoman period. In the Republican period, it continued to be an important administrative and commercial center. The city of Konya, which continues to change due to its location, has preserved its physical characteristics in the Seljuk and Ottoman periods, in the scale of street pattern and spatial organization, until the 1950s. However, after the 1950s, with the immigration to the city, it was tried to be planned for the rapidly increasing population, and a rapid change process started in the city, especially with the new development plans.

Due to the change in the growth axis of the city since 1980, especially starting from 1990, the local people living in this neighborhood started to move, and the neighborhood became an urban sub-space with the identity of the transition area. This area, which is now an important neighborhood for the city of Konya, has not experienced a social and physical break in its connection with the city due to immigration from the surrounding districts.

After the 1980s, on the axis of the growth of the city, especially in the 1990s, this fabric started to lose its locals, and now it has emerged as an unqualified urban area with its transitional area identity. However, due to the immigration from the surrounding districts of the city of Konya, there has not been a cultural, social and physical break in this area. Even though some of the houses turned into commercial functions with the change in function, the housing function continued. During the refugee influx in 2005, this neighborhood became the most attractive area of the city of Konya, and the low number of refugees this year showed harmony rather than change. Because most of the refugees

coming to the city are from Somali people and these people prefer these places as temporary residence areas to go to European countries, there has not been a significant change in the fabric. After the Somali refugees, it continued with refugees from many countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia and Ivory Coast, and then this amount of migration reached its peak in 2013 with the outbreak of the Syrian war. Syrian refugees started to come to Konya in the summer of 2013. An influx of around 3000-3500 Syrians for about three years from this year resulted in the transformation of the formal, social and cultural structure of the neighborhood. This social and formal rupture caused the Şükran District to be defined as an urban transformation area, the traditional houses that formed the neighborhood and the 3-5-storey residences symbolizing the 1950-1975 period were demolished, and the identity of the neighborhood disappeared. For a certain period of time, Syrian refugees continued to live in the unqualified housing stock in the fabric. Historical mosques, masjids, madrasahs, Darül Huffaz, which have existed from the past to the present, have had their share of this transformation, and the neighborhood has now turned into abandonment and physical deterioration. As a result of this process, the local government took a decision on this issue and declared the area as an urban transformation area, and after the project approval date, the relevant municipality started expropriation studies, and many buildings were expropriated and demolished, and empty spaces were revealed in the neighborhood. Today, this process still continues.

The process first started with the preparation of an urban design (transformation) project (2021), and then a revision of the project (2022) was made in the presence of the excavations and findings. In this sense, it has been clearly seen after the excavations that there are deep traces of history in the lower layers of the Şükran District, which has an important place in the development of the concept of neighborhood from the past to the present. Finding traces of Şükran District architectonics has a strong base that also enables changes on the project. As a matter of fact, this architectonic stratification plays a great role in the continuity of the historical memory of cities in a multifaceted way over the years. Therefore, the architectural products formed on the cities built by the societies in the cultures they belong to, have stratified and left traces in the memories of the cities in a deep and understandable way. At this point, the architectural memory of the cities continues by transforming on the layered infrastructure it creates, even though they belong to different social and belief structures, and the transforming/transformed structures maintain their vitality with an architectural/formal ontology and an existential organism. As a matter of fact, this future-oriented construction, synthesized with the stratified structuring formed by the societies, undertakes the role of a bridge that will reunite the city with the historical infrastructure, which foresees the development of the region with a main idea that will ensure the population of the city in the neighborhood of the historical axis and the Mevlana-Alaeddin axis, to the problem of connecting to the city with its functional transformation. This new proposal suggests that it will shed a historical light on the future, both in a chronological sense and in terms of realizing the building stock that will be articulated from the past to the present, as predicted by spatial stratification, with its multi-faceted formation.

**Conflict of Interest:** *The authors declare that they do not have a conflict of interest with themselves and/or other third parties and institutions, or if so, how this conflict of interest arose and will be resolved, and author contribution declaration forms are added to the article process files with wet signatures.*

**Ethics Committee Permission:** *Ethics committee permission is not required for this study, and a wet signed consent form stating that no ethics committee decision is required has been added to the article process files on the system.*

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

### Çalışmanın Amacı:

Bu çalışmanın amacı tarihsel süreç içerisinde gerçekleşen kentsel fiziksel katmanlaşma içerisinde mahallenin ontolojik yapısı sorgulanarak, geçmişten günümüze plansız ve planlı dönemlerde kent içerisindeki oluşumunu kent yöneticilerinin aldığı kararlar ve değişen yönetmelikler çerçevesinde detaylı bir şekilde araştırılmasıdır. Bu kapsamda Konya kentinde günümüzde dönüşüm çalışmaları yapılan merkez mahallelerden Şükran mahallesinin dönüşümü ele alınmıştır.

### Araştırma Soruları:

Konya'nın tarihi kent merkezinde yer alan ve ağırlıklı olarak konutların inşa edildiği mahallenin kentsel dönüşüm ile gelecekte tamamen değişmesi beklenen yapısının bağlantısı sorgulanmasının yapılması, dolayısıyla kentsel öz-dönüşümün sistematik yapısını tarihsel kronolojiye göre sorgulanması nasıl olmuştur? Sorusu temelinde başlayan bir araştırma konusu üzerine cevaplar aranmıştır.

### Literatür Araştırması:

Konya'nın tarihi kent merkezi mahallesinde, günümüzde kapsamlı bir kentsel dönüşüm projesi kapsamında yeniden yapılandırılmakta olan Şükran Mahallesi'nin tarihsel süreç içerisinde yaşadığı kentsel fiziksel katmanlaşma içerisindeki değişim süreci kronolojik olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu alanda yapılacak mekânsal analiz için geçmiş dönemlere ait harita, gravür ve planların yanı sıra literatür ve hava fotoğrafları üzerinden mahallenin geçmişten günümüze değişimini okumak araştırmanın materyalini oluşturmaktadır.

### Yöntem:

Bu çalışma ile yeni kentsel dönüşüm projelerinde tasarım aşamasında kentin mekânsal kimliğinin sürdürülebilirliği için doğru planlama kriterlerinin belirlenebilmesinin sağlanması amaçlanmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmanın yöntemi gözlem ve literatür araştırmasının ışığında kapsamlı bir kentsel katmanlaşma kademelerini ortaya çıkarmak olmuştur.

### Sonuç ve Değerlendirme:

Toplumların ait oldukları kültürlerde inşa ettikleri kentler üzerinde oluşan mimari ürünler, kentlerin belleklerinde derin ve anlaşılır bir şekilde katmanlaşarak izler bırakmıştır. Bu noktada kentlerin mimari belleği, farklı toplumsal ve inanç yapılarına ait olsalar da oluşturduğu katmanlı altyapı üzerinde dönüşerek devam etmekte, dönüşen/dönüştürülen yapılar mimari/biçimsel bir ontoloji ve varoluşsal bir organizma ile canlılığını korumaktadır. Nitekim toplumların oluşturduğu katmanlı yapılaşma ile sentezlenen bu gelecek odaklı yapılaşma, tarihi akslarda ve alanlarda yapılan uygulamaların niteliği önem kazanmaktadır. Konya kenti için önem arz eden Mevlana-Alaeddin aksı ile komşuluğunda kent nüfusunun işlevsel dönüşümü ile kente bağlanma sorununa, bölgenin gelişimini öngören bir ana fikir ile kenti tarihi altyapı ile yeniden buluşturacak bir köprü rolü üstleneceği düşünülmektedir. Bu yeni öneriyle, hem kronolojik anlamda hem de geçmişten günümüze eklemenecek yapı stokunun mekânsal katmanlaşmanın öngördüğü şekilde çok yönlü oluşumuyla gerçekleşmesi açısından geleceğe tarihsel bir ışık tutacağını öne sürmektedir.