

CULTURAL HERITAGE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT ON SUR, DIYARBAKIR



AFTERMATH of the ARMED CONFLICT



Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality

30th of March, 2016

World Cultural Heritage in Sur

Since it is located in a transition area between Eastern Anatolia and Mesopotamia plains, Diyarbakır has been the heart of caravan routes since ancient times up until today. Diyarbakır Fortress and the city are rare examples that could survive until 21st century, at the same time, symbolize development of the urban history as well as all phases of historical heritage. The first settlement in the city took place at Amida mounds in İçkale (*Inner Castle*) during 5000 BC. Topographical characteristics of this district have engendered an effective self-defence environment for the people that resulted in more and more settlements and higher population density across time. The first structure functioning as a fortress was built around 3000 BC by Hurrians domineering the region in that era.

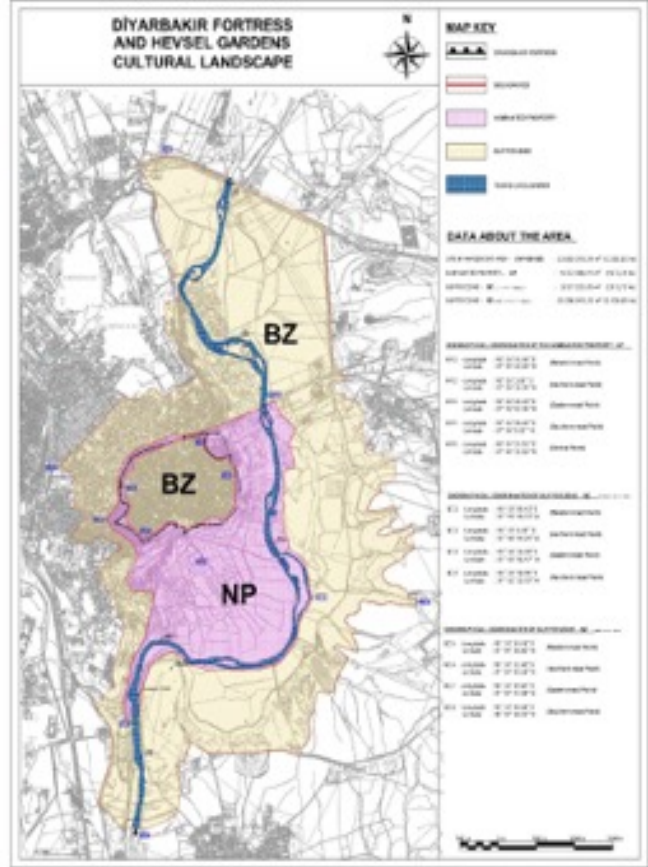


Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens landscape managed to preserve its historical value for thousands of years thanks to its geo-strategical location that is the intersection area of the west and the east. The city not only preserved different cultures but also inscribed them as its identity. Since its geo-political significance, the city that has been considered by various civilisations and states as a regional capital as it is evident in the history of Persian, Roman, Sassanid, Byzantine and Islamic empires. Thus the city is a world heritage with its' multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-layered characteristics. Within the archaeological site, genuine examples of civilian architecture, mosques, churches as well as inns, hammams (public baths) can be seen all together as cultural assets of Sur. In total, there are **595** registered historical buildings of which **147** can be categorized as memorial and **448** civil architecture examples.

Suriçi district as a whole, including İçkale was registered as “Diyarbakır Urban Archeological Site” in 1988. Since the first master plan to protect this area could not be functional, a new draft of the master plan was prepared and put into action in 2012. Following adoption of the new master plan, Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality started to work for recognition of Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens as world heritage by the UNESCO as of 2012. In parallel to this, “Site Management Plan” was prepared with participation of related institutions, NGOS, scholars and mukhtars.

Site Management Plan was conveyed to World Heritage Center in August 2014. During 39th meeting that took place in 4th of July, 2014, World Heritage Center approved Diyarbakır

Fortress and Hevsel Gardens as a cultural landscape that is the world heritage. Diyarbakır Fortress, İçkale, Anzele Water Body and Hevsel Gardens are considered as the *heritage zone* while Suriçi and Tigris Valley area were registered as the *buffer area*. Since that date, in addition to national laws in Turkey, international agreements signed by Turkey as well accepted the responsibility of protecting the Suriçi buffer area.



Management site is under protection of a series international laws as well as by Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection Act no. 2863 in Turkish constitution. These international agreements signed by Turkey as well are: UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), The Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris, 2003), Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris, 1972), Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954), Venice Charter (1964) and The Declaration of Amsterdam (1975).

Any damage in Suriçi would mean losing prestige on international arena, but more importantly, that means losing a world heritage bestowed by different civilisations and any devastation in Sur is irreversible.

Armed Conflict in Sur

Including Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens (registered as cultural heritage areas) and Sur district (registered as buffer area), Governor's Office declared curfew in this zone for 6 times in 6 neighbourhoods (Cevat Paşa, Dabanoğlu, Fatih Paşa, Hasırlı, Cemal Yılmaz and Savaş neighbourhoods) on following dates: 06.09.2015, 13.09.2015, 10.10.2015 - 13.10.2015, 28.11.2015 - 29.11.2015, 02.12.2015 - 10.12.2015 and 11.12.2015. The last one still continues as of today. Another curfew declaration covered 5 more neighbourhoods (Ziya Gökalp, Süleyman Nazif, Abdaldede, Lalebey ve Alipaşa) in Sur district that went into action during 27.01.2016 – 03.02.2016 period. During curfew process, due to armed clashes and the use of heavy weaponry in those above mentioned neighbourhoods, we diagnosed serious level of devastation in genuine urban texture of Sur district and in registered historical buildings located in the urban archeological site.

Experts from *Monitoring and Investigation Unit of Site Management Directorate* visited Cevat Paşa, Dabanoğlu, Fatih Paşa, Hasırlı, Cemal Yılmaz ve Savaş neighbourhoods in listed dates (15.09.2016 - 16.09.2015, 15.10.2016-20.10.2015, 11.12.2015) and prepared reports after examinations of damage on the ground. During curfews which still continues for more than 3 months since 11.12.2015, *Monitoring and Investigation Unit* archived photos and footages released by national media and official authorities which evidence the extent of damage in those above-mentioned neighbourhoods. All related reports prepared by the unit were presented to the attention of Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry, Turkish National Commission For UNESCO, Turkish National Commission For ICOMOS, Turkish National Commission For ICORP with the demand for inclusion of Directorate of Site Management in all assessment, rehabilitation and adjustment processes.

Findings of Reports:

Kurşunlu Mosque, which is a registered intangible cultural heritage located in Fatihpaşa neighbourhood, was damaged irrevocably in northern front walls as well as its' stoop pillars located within the mosque. A fire outbreak took place within the sanctuary and distortions in walls, decorations and ornaments happened as a result of the fire. Moreover, the fountain of the mosque that was reconstructed later on is now totally destroyed (Photos 1 & 2).

Sheikh Muhattar Mosque, that is quite well-known with its Minaret on the Four-Pillars is among cultural assets damaged during armed clashes. Two of four carrier pillars of the minaret were targeted by heavy weaponry and carrier lintels of the minaret were also damaged as it is evident in photos (Photo 3). Moreover, visual evidence also shows that walls of the mosque were partially destructed to facilitate entrance of armoured vehicles into the street (Photo 4). With the same pretext, registered historical shops were destructed which are located at Yeni Kapı Street which adjoin the biggest Armenian church in the Middle East, Saint Giragos and Chaldean Church next to it and thus historical texture of the street was also destroyed too (Photo 4).

One of 7 public baths/hamams in Suriçi which could survive up until today, Pasha Hamam, firstly damaged in the early days of armed clashes. Then photos released afterwards showed that cooling section of the hamam was totally destructed as a result of a fire outbreak. (Photo 5).

Another registered historical building, an example of traditional civil architecture, turned into Mehmed Uzun Museum House by Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality was partially destructed, according to photos taken from sky. Amongst the part destructed, there is also *kabaltı (street veil)* section, which represents one of rare examples of traditional street texture of Diyarbakir which enabling pedestrians to walk under the physical structure. Furthermore, it is also detected that a series of other historical civil architecture examples were partially or totally destructed. As a result of devastations, the area characterised as “Urban Archeological Site” has lost its’ unique street and physical structure fabric in a way that cannot be restored (Photo 6).

Armed clashes which emerged after curfews and blockades have caused serious damages in Suriçi Urban Archeological Site in all respects. Besides the damage on architecturally valuable structures, it has also caused rupture of social and authentic life cycle in this district. Curfews causing forced migration of people living in the area also resulted in disruption of handicraft production and related commercial activities, which is a tradition that has survived for thousands of years (App. 1- Photo 7). According to assessment reports by the *Monitoring and Investigation Unit*, as a result of devastation and destructions, large volumes of ruins were piled up within the urban archaeological site and those ruins also include physical parts of registered historical buildings.

In order to not to lose architectural elements and materials which came out from demolitions, an examination on the field must be conducted that should be followed by further works to preserve unique construction materials on their original locations. All future endeavours must have a participatory program and perspective of related projects must be aware of the fact that a thousands-year-old world heritage city is at stake. Nevertheless, *Directorate of Cultural Landscape Site Management* and related municipal bodies are not included into the process of rehabilitation by the central government. Nonetheless, Directorate of Environmental Protection (Diyarbakir Metropolitan Municipality) officially reported that the Culture and Tourism Ministry formed a commission with local institutions and extracts ruins without any examination of demolitions and those extractions are removed to an area that is not officially a dump site (App. 2). Since Suriçi region is registered as a buffer area of World Heritage Site, according to all related national and international laws, any works carried out in the area must collaborate with *Directorate of Diyarbakir Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape Site Management* for the sake of coordination.

Decree on Expropriation of Sur

After armed conflicts ended, Council of Ministers decided to expropriate 6292 of 7714 parcels available in Suriçi with relying on Expropriation Law no. 2942 on 21st of March, 2016 (App. 3). According to this decree, 82 percent of all parcels available in Sur will be expropriated. Remaining 18 percent of parcels in Sur either belong to TOKİ (Housing Development Administration of Turkey) or already owned by State Treasury. Overall, at the end of this process, every parcel in Suriçi will be turned into public property (App. 4).

Sur is one of rare cities in which human history is embedded in. Traditional manufacture and commerce, neighbourhood culture that relies on solidarity and spirit of sharing along with its' multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious structure make Sur a unique historical living space. In order to develop Suriçi in a way considering the balance of protection and utilisation, a series of projects aiming at developing tourism were put forth and many of historical buildings were restored with collaboration of municipalities, civil entrepreneurs and public enterprises. For instance: *Cemil Paşa Mansion* was renovated then turned into a museum for passing urban historical culture to next generations, a group of historical buildings in İçkale were restored and turned into Archeology Museum, Hasan Pasha Inn, Sülüklü Inn and some other civil architecture buildings were revitalised as cafes and restaurants, Saint Gragos Church was restored then opened for worship and visits. With all these news developments, traditional architectural fabric of the historical city invigorated along with commercial, social and cultural life in Sur.

Nevertheless, collective memory of Sur formed within thousands of years will face a rupture due to changes in property ownership and demographic structure if expropriation decision taken after the end of armed conflicts will be implemented.

Those registered historical buildings damaged seriously during armed conflicts must be restored in compliance with historical urban fabric and with relying on scientific principles as well as in a participatory manner including all parties in the city. nevertheless, without any assessment and reporting, efforts for extracting ruins from Suriçi still continues as of today. Without any diagnosis and reportage of demolitions emerged during the armed conflict, efforts now continuing in urban archeological site to remove ruins show the extent of devastation that is irreversible (Photos 8-9).

30th of March, 2016

PHOTO 1 - KURŞUNLU MOSQUE



PHOTO 2 - COURTYARD OF KURŞUNLU MOSQUE



PHOTO 3- The MINARET ON FOUR PILLARS (ON THE LEFT)



PHOTO 4- THE STREET OF 'THE MINARET ON FOUR PILLARS'



PHOTO 5- HISTORICAL PASHA HAMAM



PHOTO 6- HASIRLI NEIGHBORHOOD- YIKIKKAYA STREET



PHOTO 7- SARAYKAPI -DİREKHANE STREET



PHOTO 8- DESCTRUTION IN SUR



PHOTO 9- DESCTRUTION IN SUR



PHOTO 10- DESCTRUTION IN SUR



PHOTO 11- ARMENIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - BEFORE/AFTER



PHOTO 12- DEVASTATION OF STREET TEXTURE



PHOTO 13- DEVASTATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS



PHOTO 14- DEVASTATION OF SUR



PHOTO 15- DEVASTATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS



PHOTO 16- CONCRETES PLACED ON DIYARBAKIR FORTRESS BY SECURITY FORCES



PHOTO 17- CEMIL PASHA MANSION IN SUR RENOVATED AND TURNED INTO CITY MUSEUM BY DIYARBAKIR METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY



PHOTO 18 - SÜLÜKLÜ INN, BEFORE/AFTER



Appendix 1- Information of Displaced People in Sur District and the Support Provided by Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality



DIYARBAKIR BÜYÜKŞEHİR BELEDİYESİ
DIYARBAKIR METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY



Information on forcibly displaced People as a result of the curfew in the Sur district of the Diyarbakır province

Status 01.03.2016 – Curfews have started in end of August 2015, since then six times a curfew has been declared, the ongoing curfew is valid since 1st of December 2016

The Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality (DBB) has created a coordination with the district municipalities Yenişehir, Bağlar, Kayapınar and Sur, the Rojava Aid and Solidarity Association and several NGO's in order to organize aid for the displaced people from the Sur district.

Number of supported displaced families: 4758

Number of supported families in the Yenişehir district: 1208

Number of supported families in the Bağlar district: 1390

Number of supported families in the Kayapınar district: 860

Number of supported families in the Sur district: 1300

(some of the displaced people changed their location from the eastern parts, which are mainly affected by the curfew and clashes, to the western parts of the Sur district)

Number of total supported people: 30.000

Estimated total number of displaced people from the Sur district: 45.000

- Around 15.000 people have not yet applied to the DBB and the four district municipalities or live in villages around the city or in other districts of the Diyarbakır province.
- The DBB registers digitally all families which get regularly aid.
- 95 % of the population in the Sur district is poor

It is estimated that **two third** of the displaced people (mostly two-three families together) **have rented new apartments** in the other parts of the city.

One third of the displaced people live in apartments of relatives or friends, hereby mostly a family is distributed in several apartments.

It is supposed that around **70 % of the buildings** in the eastern part of the old city (six neighborhoods under curfew) have been **destroyed** fully or partly by the operation of the police and military.

The **organized aid consist of:** Dry Food, Blanket and Quilts, Kitchen equipment, Cleaning supplies, Health supplies, Children food and health supplies.

Additionally in compliance with the DBB private persons support families with cash in order to pay the rent.

The aid packages are prepared for the need of a family for the period of a month.

Appendix 3- Official Decree on Expropriation of Sur by Turkish State

Karar Sayısı : 2016/8659

Diyarbakır İli, Sur İlçesinde ilan edilen riskli alan sınırları içerisinde bulunan ve ekli listede buldukları yer ile ada ve parsel numaraları belirtilen taşınmazların Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı tarafından acele kamulaştırılması; adı geçen Bakanlığın 16/3/2016 tarihli ve 2988 sayılı yazısı üzerine, 2942 sayılı Kamulaştırma Kanununun 27 nci maddesine göre, Bakanlar Kurulu'nca 21/3/2016 tarihinde kararlaştırılmıştır.

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B. ALBAYRAK
Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanı

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Gençlik ve Spor Bakanı

F. ÇELİK
Gıda, Tarım ve Hayvancılık Bakanı

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İ. YILMAZ
Millî Savunma Bakanı

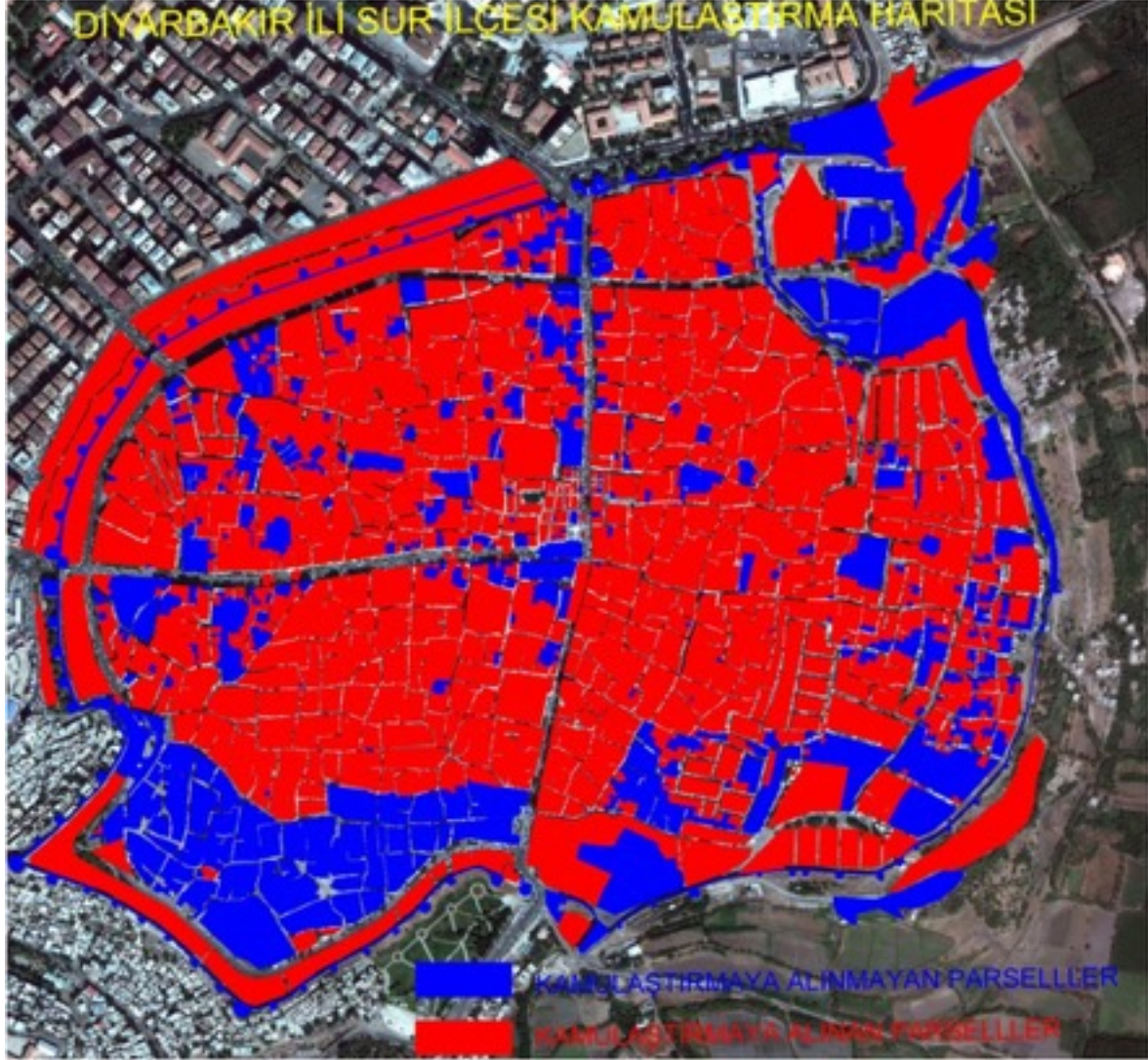
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Appendix 4- Expropriation Map of Sur

(Red: Recently Expropriated / Blue: Already Owned by State Treasury)



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