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Conservation and Sustainability of Haydarpasa's Urban Heritage Values Through Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Approach

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ABSTRACT

Haydarpasa represents a distinctive focal point within the historical urban landscape of Istanbul, shaping the city's cultural identity and offering significant potential to balance urban conservation with sustainable development. The area's designation as an urban conservation zone, along with zoning amendments and large-scale infrastructure projects, has raised complex challenges regarding the continuity of its transportation function, adaptive reuse of idle structures, and the long-term sustainability of heritage values amidst ongoing privatization and speculative redevelopment pressures. In this context, UNESCO's 2011 Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Recommendation offers a comprehensive framework for urban heritage conservation by integrating sociocultural, environmental, and spatial dimensions. This study aims to examine the urban heritage values of Haydarpasa and evaluate sustainable conservation possibilities by proposing implementation steps and tools in line with the HUL approach. Adopting a qualitative research design, the study is supported by literature review, analysis of historical maps and documents, field observations, and institutional visits. The data were thematically analyzed according to the HUL steps, and existing problems and deficiencies in the area's conservation were categorized and assessed. Implementation steps were prioritized based on the site's vulnerability, planning context, and stakeholder involvement; subsequently, HUL-based tools were developed, and the strengths and limitations of the approach were discussed. The findings reveal that the conservation of Haydarpasa should not be limited to its physical structures but must also encompass its transportation function, collective memory, and urban identity. The HUL approach provides a strategic framework that enables the systematic identification of the site's challenges and potentials, while facilitating the development of governance tools aligned with sustainable urban development.

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1. Introduction

Today, population growth, economic restructuring, and developments in infrastructure, and production networks are

driving rapid transformations in cities, particularly in historic urban areas. In addition, the destructive impacts of climate change, natural disasters, and urban renewal and development projects have further intensified these transformation processes.

Considering all these factors, the preservation and continuity of historic urban environments has become a central concern both globally and in the context of Turkey, due to the pressing need to balance rapid urbanization dynamics with conservation and development objectives.

The core problem under these pressures is that preserving only the physical components of historic urban areas, despite their integrated nature, is not sufficient. It is equally necessary to ensure sustainable protection of their social, cultural, and natural components. In response to the threats and pressures of change facing cities, the concept of landscape (natural landscape, cultural landscape, urban landscape, and historic urban landscape), has been increasingly questioned since the 2000s and remains a subject of ongoing debate today. In this context, the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Recommendation, adopted by UNESCO in 2011, provides an integrated framework for the identification, assessment, and management of historical urban landscapes within the scope of sustainable development. The HUL approach addresses not only the physical components of heritage but also the social, cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions that shape urban identity (UNESCO, 2011). By incorporating both tangible and intangible values, the framework offers contextsensitive and adaptable strategies for dynamic heritage areas (Bandarin & Oers, 2012; Sonkoly, 2012).

The focus of this study is the conservation and sustainability of Haydarpasa Station and its immediate surroundings through a Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. Located in the Kadıkoy district of Istanbul, the area has functioned as an important military, transportation and trade centre since the late Ottoman period. With the opening of Haydarpasa Station in 1908, the region became a key connection point linking the two sides of Istanbul by integrating railway, sea and land transport and contributed to the economic development of the city. With its architectural character and strategic location, the station has become a symbolic element of Istanbul's historical fabric; together with port facilities, silos, administrative buildings and surrounding neighbourhoods, it has formed a multi-layered historical urban landscape.

Since the 2000s, the area has been subjected to increasing pressure due to fires, restoration works, privatisation processes and urban transformation projects. These developments have raised concerns about the physical integrity and future use of Haydarpasa Station, which is at the center of the study area. Commercial and tourism-orientated policies, planning and speculative developments have created tensions between development and heritage conservation, increasing the fragility of the site despite its protected area status. This highlights the limitations of traditional heritage approaches in managing Haydarpasa's complex and layered identity.

Although the legal framework for the protection of natural and cultural heritage in Turkey provides various tools, these tools and regulations are often inadequate in practice when addressing the evolving nature of multi-layered historic urban areas such as Haydarpasa. In the face of rapid urbanisation, infrastructural development, cultural tourism and the loss of public spaces, urban heritage should be seen not only as a static asset to be preserved,

but as a source of urban development and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2013; Veldpaus, 2015). This points to the necessity of holistic frameworks such as the HUL approach, which aims to integrate heritage into contemporary planning processes.

This study aims to investigate the urban heritage values of Haydarpasa and its immediate surroundings, to identify gaps and challenges in existing conservation approaches, and to assess the applicability of the Historic Urban Landscape Approach to the site. It establishes a holistic and sustainable perspective for the management of the site and proposes tools and strategies for integrating the approach into conservation and development efforts.

2. Literature Review

To better understand the conceptual background of this study, it is first necessary to define the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach and to examine its emergence and position within the heritage conservation literature. Accordingly, the first part of the literature review explains the definition and conceptual foundations of the HUL approach, while the following section focuses on its key principles and the tools proposed for its implementation in different urban heritage contexts.

2.1 Definition of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Approach

The Historic Urban Landscape approach, as a landscape-based perspective, has been used as one of the important theories in heritage conservation since the early 2000s. As Dincer (2013) also stated, all agreements and documents made until 2005 are insufficient to solve the fundamental problems in cities (transportation, tourism, infrastructure and structures that are incompatible with the texture), therefore the perspective on all these issues needs to evolve into a holistic approach. This need for a more comprehensive approach is addressed by the concept of 'historic urban landscape', first defined in the 2005 Vienna Memorandum, which transcends traditional conservation terms by encompassing a wider regional and landscape context. This concept aims to preserve not only the physical fabric of urban environments but also their integration with social expressions and spatial developments. According to the memorandum, the historic urban landscape seeks to maintain the integrity and value of human settlements within their natural and ecological contexts, including archaeological and paleontological sites (UNESCO, 2005).

In the same period, the Faro Convention, which considered cultural heritage not only as physical remains but also as a shared value and meaning among societies, and the Xi'an Declaration, which emphasized the importance of developing appropriate planning tools and strategies in protecting and managing the holistic structure of heritage areas, were important steps in the development of the HUL Approach. These developments caused a comprehensive transformation in the field of urban protection and its practices, and the documents were widely adopted in many countries. Based on a comprehensive review of HUL-related

literature and key UNESCO documents, the authors created Figure 1 to illustrate the conceptual evolution of the approach.

UNESCO's 'Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation' of November 10, 2011, defined by the HUL approach, is the holistic management of cultural heritage in dynamic and ever-changing environments. This approach focuses on the recognition, preservation and development of the natural and cultural, tangible and intangible values of historic cities. Considering the complexity of historic urban centers, HUL aims to reintegrate "historic urban center" has been expanded to include urban renewal processes supported by tourism, trade and integrate historic areas with the rest of the city (Sonkoly, 2012).

The HUL approach, developed in accordance with the conservation needs of the 21st century, adopts a comprehensive, holistic, and integrated perspective that emphasizes the relationships between all components and values of an area, unlike previous object-oriented approaches. Understanding urban heritage as a dynamic entity with historical layers not only contributes to the understanding of urban identity but also plays a critical role in addressing contemporary urban challenges such as rapid urbanization and globalization. These challenges erode the social and cultural fabric of historic urban landscapes along with their physical components, jeopardizing their integrity and local identity, underlining the vital role of the HUL approach in mitigating such risks (García-Hernández et al., 2017).

Developed for the conservation needs of the 21st century, the HUL approach is proposed as a comprehensive, holistic and integrated strategy for heritage conservation, emphasizing the interrelationships between all components and values of historic urban areas. Seeing the city as a dynamic, living landscape, rather than dividing the city into conservation areas, will ensure a balance between urban heritage conservation, economic development, functional integrity and livability (UNESCO, 2011). Therefore, the implementation of this approach, which includes processes such as identification, protection and management of heritage, is also important in terms of promoting sustainable development and increasing urban development. This approach encourages the inclusion of environmental, social, and cultural factors in the planning, design, and execution of urban development.

Bandarin & Oers (2012) describe the historic urban landscape as a dynamic and evolving system that reflects the ongoing relationship between people and their environment. They argue that conservation must be holistic, perceptive, and participatory, recognizing the cultural depth, historical layering, and the need to manage change through inclusive decision-making. In line with the broader literature, Table 1 outlines the key features of the HUL approach discussed across various academic and UNESCO sources. While this table does not directly derive from theoretical models, it compiles core perspectives drawn from researchers and institutions that have contributed to the interpretation and implementation of the HUL approach.

Table 1 Features of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Approach (Created by the authors)

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES	
Landscape-Based, Holistic	The HUL approach offers a landscape-based, holistic framework to overcome conflicts between conservation and development.	UNESCO, 2011; Ginzarly et al., 2018; Taylor, 2018	
Multidimensional, Value-Oriented	It integrates natural-cultural and tangible-intangible values, linking the physical environment with social dynamics.	UNESCO, 2011; Veldpaus, 2015; Ginzarly et al., 2018	
Inter-Layer Connectivity	It emphasizes the interaction among historical layers, environmental qualities, and social contexts.	Sonkoly, 2012; Taylor, 2018; Akyuz, 2022	
Spatial Meaning- Making	Space is approached with sensory, symbolic, and cultural meanings, closely related to the concept of genius loci.	Bandarin & Oers, 2012; Taylor, 2018	
Contemporary Urban Perspective	The city is viewed not only as a settlement but also as a space of production, creativity, and transformation where risks and opportunities coexist.	UNESCO, 2011; UN- Habitat, 2017	
Heritage As a Driver of Development	Heritage is seen not only as an element to be preserved but as a catalyst for social cohesion, cultural diversity, and sustainable development.	UNESCO, 2011; UNESCO, 2013; Veldpaus, 2015; Taylor, 2018	
Strategic Planning Tool	It supports a flexible, context-sensitive, and multi-scalar planning approach that guides culture-led development.	WHITRAP, 2016; Akyuz, 2022	
Integrated Governance			
Theoretical & Practical	It is not only conceptual but also operational, offering tools for analysis, evaluation, and intervention.	UNESCO, 2011; WHITRAP, 2016	
Adaptable		UNESCO, 2011; WHITRAP, 2016	

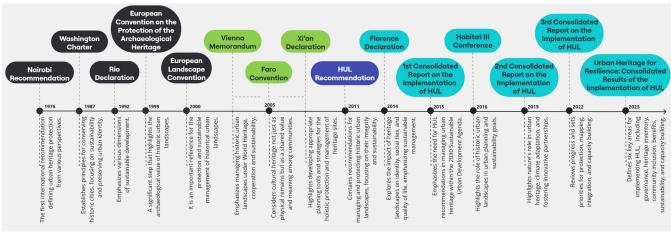


Figure 1 Evolution of the HUL Approach, Significance of Key Documents (Created by the authors)

2.2 Principles and Tools of the HUL Approach

The HUL approach proposes six steps and four tools to enhance the city's creativity, resilience, sustainability, and manage complex urban systems. These steps are: 1) mapping cultural and natural resources, 2) consulting stakeholders, including communities on which values and attributes to protect, 3) assessing vulnerability, 4) integrating heritage elements into spatial planning, 5) prioritizing policies and actions for preservation, and 6) developing partnerships to implement the projects. The fact that these six steps are not defined as steps that need to be carried out sequentially and that they are included in the process according to their own deficiencies during the implementation phase shows that the HUL approach has a simple and understandable structure (Akyuz, 2022).

The HUL toolkit (Figure 2) includes 1) knowledge and planning, 2) community engagement, 3) regulatory systems, and 4) financial tools. For HUL implementation to succeed, UNESCO et al. (2016) noted that the HUL toolkit can include any number of existing, redesigned, and/or new tools, and that these tools can be continually adapted and applied as the city changes and evolves over time. It is important that these steps and tools have a structure that addresses different local conditions and management structures to understand the adaptations and integrative aspect of the approach.

The intergovernmental nature of the recommendation requires strong commitment from decision-makers at the national level, and the New Urban Agenda (UN, 2017) emphasizes the HUL approach's importance for regional development without providing an explicit methodology, thus allowing for the development of policies aligned with the 2030 Agenda through integrated urban management. In line with this, the consolidated reports on the implementation of the HUL (2015, 2019, 2023) highlight its global applicability to urban heritage areas, noting progress in key concepts while stressing the need for stronger connections between decision-makers at various levels, the integration of cultural heritage with urban development, and alignment with the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015) for sustainable and resilient cities.

The 2023 UNESCO report on the implementation of the HUL Recommendation redefines six priority action areas for the sustainable and inclusive protection of cultural heritage, offering an important update to the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. These six thematic actions represent expanded and more operationalized versions of the original HUL action steps, framing the implementation of the approach around key areas such as governance mechanisms and planning; understanding and inventorying urban heritage; inclusion of communities and different disciplines; inclusive economic benefits; sustainable development and climate resilience; and knowledge and capacity development (UNESCO, 2023).

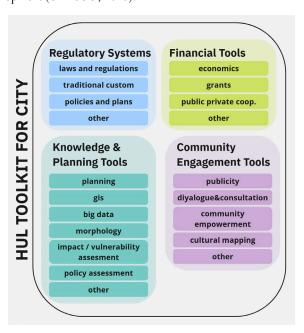


Figure 2 HUL Toolkit (Adapted from WHITRAP, 2016)

3. Methodology

This section presents the methodological framework (Figure 4) of the study, explaining how the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach was applied to evaluate the cultural heritage values of Haydarpasa.

3.1 Description of Study Area

Haydarpasa is located on the Bosphorus Strait, an important waterway connecting the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara, within the borders of the Kadikoy district. Located on the shores of the Sea of Marmara, the area has historically been of great importance as a strategic port and railway center. The area has contributed to the economic and cultural development of the city by connecting different transportation lines (train, bus, ferry and metro), and has also played a central role in Istanbul's transportation network.

In addition to its functional role, the station building establishes a strong symbolic relationship with the Bosphorus as a physical and perceptual transition point between land and sea. For many people travelling from Anatolia, the pier in front of the station offers access to the European side, reinforcing Haydarpasa's role as a symbolic threshold between continents. This symbolism reinforces the cultural significance of the area in Istanbul's collective memory and everyday urban life. In addition, the station and its immediate surroundings function as an urban node connecting different neighborhoods, each adding historical and spatial layers to the wider urban fabric.

Haydarpasa was selected as a case study in accordance with the principles of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Proposal due to its layered historical development, coexistence of tangible and intangible heritage, symbolic importance, diverse cultural functions and ongoing pressures. Reflecting historical continuity, cultural memory and spatial identity, the area is strategically located at the intersection of coastal and infrastructure systems and is shaped by overlapping planning strategies and governance structures. These characteristics make the area a dynamic and complex urban landscape and provide an appropriate context for the application of the HUL approach. The study area extends beyond the station building and is defined in accordance with the holistic vision of the HUL approach, which emphasizes the interaction between built form, cultural and social dynamics. Spatial boundaries were defined based on natural thresholds (coastline), infrastructure systems (railway lines and motorways) and property divisions (Figure 3).

3.2 Data Collection

This research is based on multiple qualitative data sources due to their scope and multifaceted nature. The study first focused on the conceptual framework of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach through a literature review. The research was conducted through digital databases such as Scopus and Google Scholar using keywords such as 'historic urban landscape' and 'HUL'. In this context, main academic publications were discussed, UNESCO documents and legal frameworks were analyzed.

The review of the landscape components of the study area was conducted after defining the boundaries of the site. This process involved analyzing relevant literature alongside historical documents (e.g., site registration records), maps (such as Stolpe-1882, Goad-1906, Janin-1975), planning reports (e.g., Kadikoy Strategy Document, Kadikoy 2030), newspapers (such as Arkitera

and Gazete Kadikoy), and aerial photographs from 1950 to 2024. The identified components were categorized under the headings of natural, cultural, and change-related elements, as defined in the HUL framework. In particular, this section focused on changes observed in the area's conservation, planning, and management processes.

Field observations were conducted at different time intervals between 2023 and 2024. The archaeological areas within the station site, the restoration condition of the station building, and the spatial relationship between the surrounding neighborhoods and the station area were observed and documented through photographs and field notes.

Additionally, institutional visits were conducted to collect supplementary data. Informal interviews were held with representatives from relevant institutions, including the TCDD under the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, the Istanbul Archaeological Museums under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's City Planning Department. During these visits, supportive information and documents were collected regarding excavation, restoration, and project development processes.

Finally, the legal framework in Turkey was evaluated in relation to the principles outlined in the HUL definition, particularly focusing on holistic approach, integration with planning, participatory mechanisms, and sustainability.

3.3 Data Analysis

To create a method for comprehensively examining the study area, the cultural heritage values in the area were examined based on literature research. The issues in the Haydarpasa area were identified. Each issue was categorized and interpreted under six thematic action areas aligned with the HUL approach, as outlined in the 2023 report: governance mechanisms and planning, understanding and inventorying urban heritage, inclusion of communities and different disciplines, inclusive economic benefits, sustainable development and climate resilience, and knowledge and capacity development. Based on this categorization, application steps were prioritized and evaluated through three criteria:

- (1) vulnerability: the site's exposure to physical, functional, and socio-cultural threats.
- (2) heritage potential: the site's potential value and contribution, based on its multi-layered history, cultural identity, and both tangible and intangible heritage assets.
- **(3) implementation capacity:** the level of inter-institutional coordination, adequacy of legal and planning frameworks, and the potential for stakeholder participation.

These criteria do not imply a strict chronological order but rather indicate the contextual factors that informed the relevance and urgency of each step within the Haydarpasa case. Following prioritization, HUL tools were proposed, and their applicability was assessed within context-specific conditions. As a result, the strengths of the approach were evaluated.



Figure 3 Study area (Created by the authors)

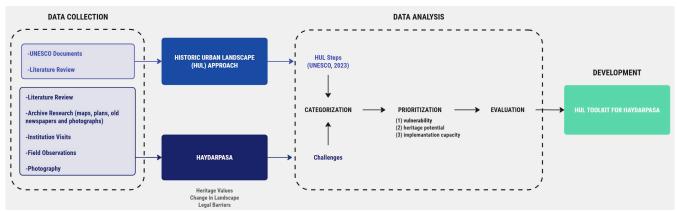


Figure 4 Methodology (Created by the authors)

4. Findings

This section analyzes Haydarpasa's urban heritage values across natural, physical, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions, emphasizing its ecological, historical, and architectural significance, while also examining the challenges and strategies in preserving and managing its heritage amidst urban transformation.

4.1 Urban Heritage Values of Haydarpasa

Haydarpasa is one of the significant locations in Istanbul in terms of its morphological, geological, and ecological characteristics. The Bosphorus exhibits a dynamic morphological structure, characterized by valleys, hills, promontories, and coves, confined by a narrow coastal strip. Haydarpsa particularly highlights this dynamism through its high-altitude areas, lowlying lands near the coast, and watercourses. When examining its geological structure, it is observed that certain parts of Station and its hinterland, as well as sections of the Haydarpasa Port and the Kadikoy coastline, are built on artificial fill, while the remaining flat areas consist of alluvial deposits.

The Sea of Marmara, located along the coast of Haydarpasa, is the most significant water source for the region. Its strategic importance in maritime trade and transportation has enhanced Haydarpasa economic and military significance. Additionally, the Haydarpasa Stream played a vital role in the region's development during the Khalkedon period, contributing to agriculture and daily life. Due to its natural structure, sea connection, and preserved characteristics, the area supports rich biodiversity. Exhibiting Mediterranean climate features, it has diverse flora influenced by temperature, water availability, and topography. Karaca et al. (2023) highlights the port area's biodiversity, particularly its support for aquatic and urban bird species. However, some species have left due to a lack of green spaces. Apart from the English and Karacaahmet Cemeteries, there are no significant green spaces near Haydarpasa (Figure 5).

The natural characteristics of Haydarpasa, including its geological structure, biodiversity, and proximity to major water sources, are essential to the HUL approach, shaping its historical identity and providing a framework for sustainable conservation strategies that combine ecological and cultural heritage management. Building upon the natural and ecological context that shapes Haydarpasa's historical identity, the area's cultural and architectural significance is further reinforced by its legal and protective status, which ensures its preservation and integration within the broader urban landscape.

Haydarpasa Train Station was registered as a 1st Group Cultural Asset in Need of Protection with the decision numbered 4542 and dated 21.08.1997 of the Istanbul II Numbered Cultural and Natural Assets Protection Board (Kosebay Erkan & Ahunbay, 2009). In 2006, Haydarpasa Train Station and its surroundings were declared as a "Historical and Urban Protected Area" with the decision numbered 85 of the Istanbul 5 Numbered Cultural and Natural Assets Regional Protection Board (Muhcu, 2021). The area is also surrounded by Kadikoy Square and Surrounding

Urban Protected Area, Rasimpasa Urban Protected Area and Ibrahimaga Urban Protected Areas. Behind the point where Rıhtım Street connects Kadikoy Square, there is the Kadikoy Traditional Bazaar and Moda Urban and III. Degree Archaeological Site, which affects the area in social, cultural, commercial and historical terms. Rihtim Street, where the stops are located, and the coastline parallel to it, where the piers are located, is an axis used intensively by pedestrians. This axis is connected to the hospital area with the Tibbiye Bridge within the study area, and to the Station Building with Haydarpasa Station Street. There are many registered structures and archaeological remains within the area, including the Station Building. In addition, there are a total of 4 bridges in the area, including the Tibbiye Bridge. The boundaries of the protected area in the study area, registered structures, important buildings (Figure 9) in the surrounding area and roads are plotted on the map in Figure 6. Beyond those mapped, other notable yet unmarked heritage elements include historic cemeteries, fountains, educational institutions, and residential buildings such as the English Cemetery, Ayrilik Fountain and Cemetery, the Paris Neighborhood (Ayrilikcesmesi Street), Osmangazi Primary School (formerly the German School), Ankara Han (Sunget Apartment), Valpreda Italian Apartment.



Figure 5 Natural Landscape Values (Created by the authors using data from the Merkez Kadikoy Spatial Strategic Plan, Copernicus Land Monitoring Service, and Mapelse Istanbul Geology Map)

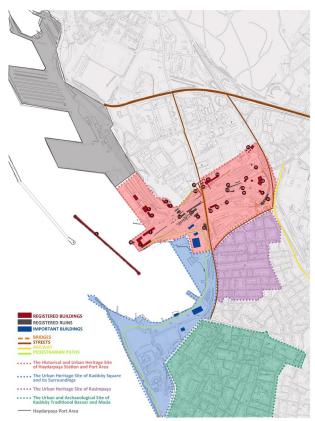


Figure 6 Cultural Landscape Values

(Created by the authors based on site area decisions, registration documents, data from the Istanbul Archaeological Museums and TCDD, as well as personal observations)



Figure 7 General view of Haydarpasa area (Salt Research)



Figure 8 Haydarpasa Train Station 2024 (Taken by the authors)



Figure 9 Registered Buildings

(Created by the authors using Istanbul Archaeological Museums–TCDD data, and personal observations)

Located at the heart of the area, Haydarpasa Train Station (Figures 7 and 8), the terminus of the Baghdad Railway, emerged as a critical hub connecting Istanbul to Anatolia and the broader Middle Eastern region, serving as a gateway between the East and the West. Constructed between 1906 and 1908 by German architects Otto Ritter and Helmut Cuno, the building was designed in the neo-classical style, symbolizing the modernization efforts of the late Ottoman Empire. With its location to the southeast of Bosphorus and its prominent staircase in its architecture, it draws passengers' attention to the panoramic views of historical and cultural regions that define the city, such as the Historical Peninsula, the Golden Horn and Galata, and provides an uninterrupted flow from inside to outside. It is also an iconic urban symbol that can be seen from many points of the city. This visibility strengthens Haydarpasa's importance in the urban landscape, making it a focal point.

The Haydarpasa Breakwater, constructed in 1889, played a key role in the port's transportation activities, although it is now only utilized by seabirds. Originally accompanied by columns and lighthouses in memory of Abdulhamid II, these breakwaters, over time, became part of the area's spatial memory, associated with beaches and fishing (Atılgan, 2021). The Haydarpasa Silos, built between 1902 and 1907, were essential in storing agricultural products, making them an important center for agricultural exports and port efficiency during the Ottoman period. Reflecting the industrial architecture of the time, the

silos included storage facilities, administrative offices, and loading areas. They remained in operation during the Republican period and contributed to regional food security when managed by the Soil Products Office (TMO) in the mid-20th century. However, they are no longer in use today. The Haydarpasa Power Plant, built in 1904 to meet the energy needs of the port, is another industrial structure with notable architectural features. The Military Station Building, constructed in 1903, was designed for customs, police, and port operations, and although it has undergone modifications and lost some original features, it has survived. The Migrant Guesthouse, designed by Architect Kemaleddin between 1903 and 1908 as a significant example of the First National Architecture Movement (Atılgan, 2021; Kosebay Erkan, 2022), was later repurposed for various functions, including as a sewing house, but is currently idle. The Meat and Fish Institution, established near the station area in 1952 to promote animal husbandry and provide meat products to consumers, was completed in 1956. It provided sales services to the public as Cold Storage and Ice Factory. However, the facility was closed in 2003 and abandoned over time.



Figure 10 Ancient Coastal Wall (white) and Ottoman Road Ruins (yellow) (Aerial Photo Source: Arkeoteknik, 2022)

During the excavations carried out in the region, structures thought to be a coastal wall, and an ancient port breakwater were unearthed. While traces of the area filled during the construction of the Haydarpasa Train Station are seen in front of the coastal wall, the continuation of the coastal walls was found in the north, where the ferries docked. In addition, a 180-meter long and 6-meter-wide Ottoman Road was found, starting from the point where the coastal wall and the breakwater intersect, extending in an east-west direction (Figure 10). It was revealed that this road was called Haydarpasa Street in archive records and that trade continued inland. In addition, a structure with opus sectile flooring, ruins of a bathhouse, a pool, waterways and channels were discovered. The building thought to be the Church of St. Bassa has been found. These findings underscore Haydarpasa's long-standing importance as a site of commerce and cultural interaction.

Since its opening in 1908, Haydarpasa Train Station has served as an important transportation hub, connecting Anatolia and Europe, and symbolizing modernization in the late Ottoman and early Republican periods. Its historical role as a gateway has made it a symbol of migration, trade, and cultural exchange. In addition to its transportation function, Haydarpasa has historically been a meeting point for various communities and has encouraged social interactions. It represented both the personal and collective travel and transit experiences of the local people and visitors. Also, it has taken its place in the memory of Istanbul residents as a symbol of nostalgia. Its image is deeply embedded in literature, cinema and art, contributing to the cultural narrative of Istanbul (Ozguc; Inci,2017) (Figures 11-12). As Mungan (2008-2009) and Kayhan Tunalı & Demirarslan, (2021) states, Haydarpasa acts as a symbolic gateway for Anatolian arrivals in Turkish cinema. Manap (2019) states that Haydarpasa is often linked with feelings of sorrow and separation, which is reflected in its nostalgic depictions in art.

The immediate vicinity of the site has been a vibrant center for commerce, entertainment and cultural activities, including the Kadikoy coast and harbor area. It represents the multicultural character of Istanbul, reflecting the changing socio-cultural structure of the region throughout history. Rasimpasa and Caferaga neighborhoods are the two central areas that make significant contributions to the cultural and artistic life of the region. Both areas bring together historical and modern elements and function as important parts of Kadikoy's dynamic and constantly evolving cultural structure. Rasimpasa has attracted great interest from young artists and creative entrepreneurs in recent years, and the neighborhood has turned into an open-air gallery with its historical buildings and street art. The neighborhood has become an attractive destination for art lovers with its art galleries, design shops and cafes. In addition to commerce, the bazaar has become a vibrant cultural center hosting art gallery, street art and music performances.

Haydarpasa's proximity to central points makes it a strategic hub for business and trade, particularly in the tourism, retail, and service sectors. The hotels, restaurants, cafes and shopping malls in the area contribute significantly to the local economy. In addition to large enterprises, small tradesmen and local shops operate in the commercial areas of the region. Boutique stores and shopping streets where the fashion sector operate, as well as technology companies are some of them. Rasimpasa is experiencing a gentrification process due to the influence of short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb; this situation causes rental prices to increase and local tradesmen to leave the area due to economic difficulties (Uzgoren & Turkun, 2018). However, it is stated that the socio-economic vulnerability level of Rasimpasa, Acıbadem Neighborhoods is high (Kadikoy Municipality, 2023).

In recent years, efforts to protect Haydarpasa from privatization and inappropriate redevelopment have made it a symbol of resistance and cultural heritage preservation. It represents the broader struggle to preserve urban identity amidst rapid urban transformation. Haydarpasa Solidarity, founded in 2004, continues to organize various protests, petitions, events and seminars against threats such as the privatization of the station and its surroundings and the transformation of its historical structures.

Figure 11 Haydarpasa in movies (Created by the authors using selected scenes from various films)



Figure 12 Haydarpasa in paintings and illustrations (Compiled by the authors)

4.2 Developments in the Preservation, Planning, and Management of Urban Heritage in Haydarpasa

According to ancient sources, Khalkedon (Kadikoy) had two harbors: one to the east (Kalamis Bay) and the other to the west (Haydarpasa Bay). Dionysios Byzantios notes that the Aphrodite temenos was next to the Himeros Stream, with Khalkedon on the adjacent plain (as cited in Lordoglu, 2019). This plain is thought to be Haydarpasa Meadow, used by the Khalkedonians for horse racing. During the Ottoman period, Haydarpasa Meadow and the adjacent plain served as a military gathering site and a retreat for officials, while also being used as an agricultural production area. Haydarpasa Train Station, opened in 1908, was crucial for commerce and military purposes, marking the start of the Baghdad Railway. During World War I, it became a military encampment (Eyice, 1998). From the late 19th century, railway and port activities dominated, and with the Republic's proclamation, the station and port became key components of Turkey's railway and maritime infrastructure.

In 1917, a fire, believed to be caused by sabotage by a British spy, severely damaged Haydarpasa Station, threatening its historical fabric and structure. In 1979, the explosion of a Romanian fuel tanker, "Independenta," caused further damage

to the building's windows and stained glass. Following these incidents, a restoration process was completed by 1983, repairing the four facades and two towers (Alkis, 2013). Thereupon, on August 21, 1997, the Istanbul II Regional Board for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets designated Haydarpasa Station as a First Group Cultural Property to be preserved (Kosebay Erkan and Ahunbay, 2009).

Since 2004, with the advancement of the YHT Marmaray Project, the area has been targeted by urban redevelopment projects. TCDD Board decided to transfer the Privatization Administration (OIB) to a large area around the station for income-generating projects. On May 13, 2005, "Haydarpasa Solidarity for Society, City, and Environment" was established, aiming to resist the commercialization of the station and its surroundings. In 2006, the Regional Board for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets declared Haydarpasa Station and its surroundings a "Historical and Urban Site."

The major fire at Haydarpasa Station in 2010 caused significant damage to the structure, accelerating the restoration process. Certain interventions during the restoration have adversely affected the historical fabric of the building, leading to widespread public debate. Although the restoration was planned

to be completed within 500 days in 2016, it remains ongoing to this day. Following the fire, Haydarpasa Train Station was tried to be put at the disposal of national and international real estate, tourism etc. capital. Over the years, discourses and urban transformation projects were put forward to make Haydarpasa a hotel, trade center, cultural center, cruise port and Olympic village.

In May 2018, rescue excavations began at Haydarpasa Station under the Istanbul Archaeological Museums' supervision and the Regional Board's decision as part of the Marmaray Project. While archaeological findings illuminated the region's history, they sparked debates about creating an archaeological park or converting the station into a museum. The secrecy of the process and the area's closure to the public have raised concerns about its future.

In 2022, the Ministery of Transport and Infrastructure stated that they developed the "Haydarpasa Train Station and Archaeology, Industrial, Historical Heritage Park" concept project and that they would receive approval from the Protection Board (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, 2024). Today, with the protocol made, the Haydarpasa Area has been temporarily transferred to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Arkitera, 2024). After that, in the project shared by Ministry of Culture and Tourism in August 2024, it is seen that the train stations are preserved, but the rails originating from the archaeological site are partially placed and will not function completely. It is read that the Haydarpasa Guesthouse and the Protocol Mosque were demolished, and the Khalkedon Archaeological Museum was built in its place, and an archaepark design was made. In addition, it is seen that the bus stops were removed, the public area between the Kadikov Rihtim and the area was improved, and the Meat and Fish Institution was converted into a Performing Arts Center. It is understood that other buildings in the area will be evaluated as restoration, library, the thematic museum, exhibition halls, art and design workshops (T24, 2023).

Haydarpasa Solidarity emphasized that the project sidelines the station's primary transportation function and that it should serve the public in all capacities. It highlighted Haydarpasa, along with Sirkeci Station, as a unique "living industrial heritage" recognized by national and international protection authorities for connecting two continents by rail (Chamber of Architects, 2024). Same year, the "Kadikoy Strategy Document" published by Istanbul Municipality, highlights issues arising from fragmented projects, such as the failure to protect historical areas and the functional and physical disconnections between Haydarpasa and Kadikoy Rıhtım (IMM, 2024). In addition, it also states that they have determined the steps for the Kadikoy Center based on the Vision 2050 strategies for Istanbul and that they will carry out a holistic and solution-oriented planning process with these. On the other hand, Kadikov Municipality introduces participatory platforms such as "Anlat Kadikoy" for inclusive planning and management and "Iklim Kadikoy" to struggle with climate change.

4.3 Legal Regulations in Turkey

The primary regulation for cultural heritage protection in Turkey is the Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection Law (No. 2863). While it addresses the protection of immovable cultural assets, it lacks provisions for the integrated preservation of historic urban fabric and cultural landscapes. The Archaeological Sites Protection Law (No. 5226) presents measures for preserving archaeological sites but overlooks social contexts and environmental sustainability. The Zoning Law (No. 3194), Art. 6, regulates planning processes but prioritizes modern construction, without a direct approach to the protection of historic buildings and their surroundings. The Tourism Promotion Law (No. 2634) includes cultural heritage protection measures to promote tourism but fails to offer a comprehensive approach to urban heritage preservation without damaging social structures. The Law on the Transformation of Areas under Disaster Risk (No. 6306) introduced significant regulations for urban renewal projects in disaster-prone areas; however, these focus primarily on improving the disaster safety of existing structures and do not provide a holistic approach to the preservation of historic areas or specific provisions for natural and cultural heritage. The Local Government Laws grant local authorities the power to create regulations for cultural heritage preservation within their boundaries, but these regulations are limited to a local scale and fail to support a participatory and sustainable governance approach.

5. Evaluation and Discussion

This section first identifies the challenges in the preservation and sustainability of Haydarpasa, then evaluates the applicability of the HUL approach and proposes various tools and strategies to address these challenges, thereby providing a comprehensive assessment for the sustainable conservation of the area.

5.1 Key Challenges

Haydarpasa railway station and its immediate surroundings face many challenges in preserving its historical and cultural heritage. Urban regeneration practices in Turkey generally prioritize physical reconstruction while ignoring social and cultural dimensions (Genç, 2008). In the case of Haydarpasa, this shows that conservation should be approached not only by preserving the physical structure, but also by considering historical continuity and collective memory. To effectively address these challenges within the framework of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach, it is crucial to contextualize and thematically cluster the key deficiencies and risks of the site in relation to the six HUL steps. This method provides a more structured understanding of the specific needs of the area and facilitates the prioritization of strategic actions based on local realities. These challenges are categorized and summarized in Figure 13. This comprehensive clustering underlines the need to apply the HUL framework in a holistic and simultaneous manner, rather than in a selective or step-by-step approach, especially in complex heritage settings such as Haydarpasa.

Building on this classification, the findings of the study reveal that the key issues hindering sustainable heritage management in Haydarpasa persist in a combined and multi-layered form. As thematically categorized in Figure 13, these issues include: topdown decision-making processes dominated by central authorities; the insufficient involvement of local stakeholders; unclear institutional responsibilities stemming from repeated transfers of authority over time; the inadequacy of heritage inventories; the absence of a shared understanding of what needs to be preserved; planning decisions that disregard heritage values; and the erosion of environmental relationships, including the coastal zone and spatial connections with adjacent neighborhoods. These conditions have limited conservation efforts to a predominantly physical focus, resulting in the loss of functional continuity and the weakening of Haydarpasa's connection to its historical, cultural, and social context. Therefore, evaluating the effectiveness of conservation must go beyond restoration work to also encompass transparent decision-making, the preservation of spatial integrity, and the safeguarding of intangible heritage values.

While these challenges call for the comprehensive application of the HUL framework, a comparative look at international pilot cities offers valuable insight. Although pilot cities such as Ballarat and Suzhou applied all six steps of the HUL approach in a complete way, other cases emphasized only selected steps depending on their local context (WHITRAP, 2016). In contrast, the Haydarpasa case, with its complex history, symbolic value, development pressures, and fragmented governance, requires the integrated use of all six steps to ensure a sustainable heritage management process.

5.2 HUL-Based Strategic Actions for Haydarpasa

Building upon the thematic clustering of challenges outlined in the previous section, this part prioritizes the six key steps of the HUL approach based on three criteria, as shown in Table 2. While the HUL steps are presented in a sequenced order, their implementation should be understood as part of a flexible and dynamic process. In practice, actions under one step may lead to new insights or stakeholder demands that require revisiting and refining previous steps. This iterative nature is essential for ensuring adaptive and long-term heritage management.

Pilot cities such as Ballarat and Suzhou applied all six steps of the HUL approach in a structured and complete way. In other examples, only certain steps were emphasized more strongly depending on the local context. Haydarpasa, with its complex history, symbolic value, ongoing development pressures, and fragmented governance, requires the integrated use of all six steps to ensure a well-balanced and sustainable heritage management process.

Each step is then addressed in detail, pairing the identified problems with relevant strategy and tool suggestions tailored to the area's conditions. These strategies aim to operationalize the HUL framework in a systematic and actionable manner. The interrelationship between the prioritized steps, proposed tools, and strategic actions is illustrated through a model presented in

Figure 13, offering a holistic roadmap for the sustainable management of Haydarpasa's urban heritage.

- Knowledge & Capacity Development: To provide the implementation of the HUL approach in Turkey, it is essential to build local capacity and promote contextual understanding among planners, decision-makers, and heritage professionals. In this context, tools such as the evaluation of international documents, pilot study analysis, and awareness seminars with local governments and planning authorities should be actively utilized. Reference including global policy documents, frameworks, implementation reports, and thematic guidelines by organizations such as UNESCO and ICOMOS, support the dissemination of HUL principles. These efforts, when combined with participatory and interdisciplinary learning methods, ensure that the HUL approach is practically embedded in local urban heritage management processes.
- 2. Governance Mechanisms & Planning: As discussed in Section 4.3, the fragmented and monument-centric structure of Turkey's conservation framework poses challenges for HUL integration. To address these, the establishment of an independent "Area Management Unit", acting as a coordination and planning body that links local and central actors. Developing a Haydarpasa specific "Conservation-Oriented Zoning Plan" and "Area Management Plan", aligning legal tools with the HUL framework would strengthen multi-level governance and improve decision-making efficiency.
- **Inclusion of Communities & Different Disciplines:** The effective implementation of the HUL approach in Haydarpasa requires the coordination of diverse actors with varying levels of influence and expertise. While Figure 13 presents a comprehensive overview of engagement tools, emphasis must be placed on establishing an "inclusive platform" that enables structured collaboration across sectors. In addition, categorizing stakeholders according to their functional roles, such as regulatory (e.g., Istanbul 5th Regional Board, TCDD), planning and knowledge-based (e.g., Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, universities, Istanbul Archaeological Museums), community-oriented (e.g., Haydarpasa Solidarity, local associations, BTS), and financial (e.g., Ministry of Treasury and Finance, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, local entrepreneurs), creates a foundation for a more strategic and efficient engagement process. This classification supports the design of targeted communication methods, decision-making roles, and capacity-building tools for each group.
- 4. Understanding & Inventorying Urban Heritage: The lack of updated, comprehensive inventory and heritage mapping tools is a key barrier to contextual planning in Haydarpasa. Instead of a conventional listing of structures, a multi-layered inventory that combines physical, social, and ecological values is necessary. "Prioritizing participatory cultural mapping and value assessment" (especially for memory spaces and everyday landscapes)

will guide decision-making with greater sensitivity to the area's identity.

- Inclusive Economic Benefits: A sustainable heritage economy in Haydarpasa depends on expanding funding sources and linking conservation with cultural entrepreneurship. Beyond restoration budgets, it is critical to establish long-term heritage finance mechanisms. In this context, the proposed "Haydarpasa Conservation & Development Fund" could serve as a central financial instrument to coordinate public, private, and international resources. This fund invests in awareness programs, inclusive tourism strategies, and adaptive reuse projects in line with the HUL approach. Additionally, encouraging public-private partnerships and activating entrepreneurship through heritage-linked programs can help bridge the gap between economic development and cultural continuity.
- 6. Sustainable Development & Climate Resilience: Environmental sustainability and resilience must be integral to all conservation strategies in Haydarpasa. While Figure 13 outlines the broader toolset, the key priority lies in implementing a "Sustainable Mobility Plan" and a "Green Corridor Framework". Alongside these, a participatory "Tourism Management Model" should be developed to prevent over-tourism and balance heritage protection with economic vitality. Cultural events and heritage-based creative production can reinforce this connection between place, memory, and sustainability.

Instead of repeating the complete toolset already visualized in the model, these concise analytical sections highlight key components that are particularly relevant to the area's context.

5.3 Strengths and Limitations of HUL Approach and Haydarpasa Area of the Study

This study contributes to the growing discourse on heritage-based sustainable urban development by applying the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach to Haydarpasa, a culturally and historically significant area undergoing transformation. One of the key strengths of this research lies in its ability to integrate local characteristics with the global principles of the HUL framework. It offers a systematic analysis of Haydarpasa urban heritage values and contextual challenges while proposing strategic tools.

The implementation of the approach faces challenges due to a lack of understanding among practitioners about its requirements and potential, which can lead to misinterpretation and poor management of Haydarpasa. Uncertainties in the process further complicate balancing heritage protection with urban development. Advanced methodologies are needed to assess the historical character and conservation potential of landscape units. In Haydarpasa, ongoing restoration and archaeological work involve lengthy legal permit processes, and secrecy around the work limits access to information. Improved communication, capacity building, and more transparent administrative procedures are needed. These challenges can be addressed by conducting longitudinal studies to monitor the effects of conservation decisions and develop sustainable solutions for changes in the area's physical and social structure.

Table 2 Prioritization of HUL steps by (1) vulnerability, (2) heritage potential, and (3) implementation capacity (Created by the authors)

	PRIORITIZED ACTION	CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
1	Knowledge &	(1), (2), (3)	To enable effective participation and planning, a shared understanding of the HUL
	Capacity Development	(), (), ()	approach must first be established among institutions and stakeholders.
2	Governance Mechanisms &	(1), (3)	Inconsistencies and gaps between planning, legal frameworks, and implementation
	Planning		processes increase the site's vulnerability. Therefore, the legal framework should be
	1 familing		reassessed before taking action.
3	Inclusion Of Communities &	(2), (3)	Since full stakeholder participation has not yet been achieved, it is important to first
	Different Disciplines		define the conceptual and legal foundations. Moreover, stakeholder consultations are
	Different Disciplines		crucial for identifying heritage values, making this step a prerequisite to mapping.
	Understanding %	(1), (2)	Mapping is essential for revealing heritage potential and understanding the relationships
	Understanding & Inventorying Urban Heritage		between historical layers. Due to intense development pressures in the area, a
	inventorying Cirban Heritage		vulnerability assessment should be conducted without delay.
5 I		(1), (2), (3)	Financial tools are needed to address identified vulnerabilities, which means they must be
	Inclusive Economic Benefits		clearly defined first. Likewise, investment strategies can only be developed once the
	inclusive Economic Benefits		heritage potential is understood. Without a stable institutional base, financial planning
			would not be realistic.
6	Sustainable Development & (1), (2), (3)		Sustainable development strategies require a solid foundation built in the earlier steps.
			Without this, proposed strategies cannot be adaptive, innovative, or sustainable.

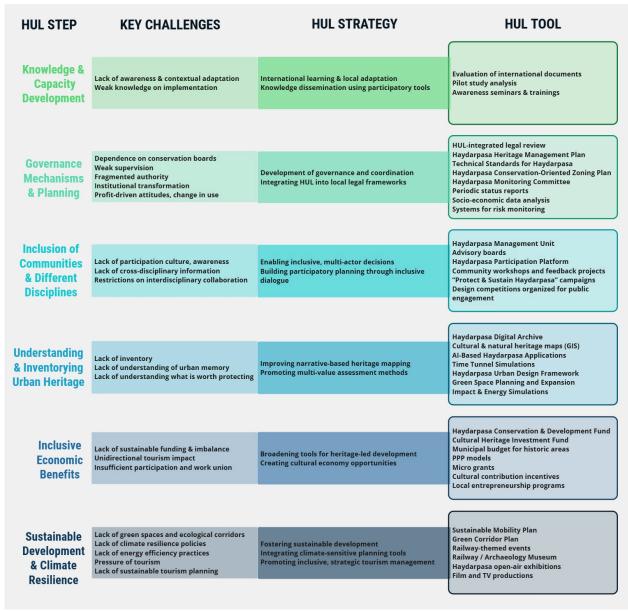


Figure 13 Application of HUL Approach to Haydarpasa (Created by the authors)

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the contextual applicability of the HUL approach for the holistic assessment and management of Haydarpasa and its surroundings. It contributes to the field by not only examining the cultural and spatial values of the area but also by critically analyzing the institutional and legal deficiencies that hinder integrated heritage planning in Turkey. One of the main original contributions is the development of a tailored HUL implementation framework for Haydarpasa, including the clustering of thematic challenges, the prioritization of steps, and a dynamic toolkit aligned with local needs (see Figure 13).

In addition, a roadmap for establishing an area management unit, long-term financial mechanisms such as the Haydarpasa Conservation and Development Fund, and a stakeholder classification model are proposed to enable strategic

participation. The proposed stakeholder classification model emphasizes the need for coordination among actors with varying levels of authority and expertise for the effective implementation of the HUL approach. Categorizing stakeholders according to their functional roles in relation to HUL tools provides a solid foundation for a more strategic and efficient engagement process. This classification supports the design of tailored communication methods, decision-making roles, and capacity-building tools for each group. The proposed elements offer both a theoretical and operational framework that can be adapted to other urban heritage areas under rapid transformation pressure.

The proposed HUL-based tools can support planners and decision-makers at multiple levels: local governments can use stakeholder mapping and thematic clustering to guide

participatory planning; conservation boards can assess projects through a lens that is more sensitive to both tangible and intangible heritage; and central institutions can develop long-term funding models to support not only restoration but also integrated area management. Moreover, it is essential that central authorities adopt a more inclusive and sensitive approach to the site, one that actively involves other stakeholders in decision-making processes and avoids tourism-oriented projects that overlook or diminish the site's cultural significance and historical identity. Instead, planning should be guided by strategies that foreground the unique characteristics and heritage values of Haydarpasa.

The enduring challenge remains the lack of coordinated and visionary governance over time. The findings underline the importance of preserving not only the physical structure of Haydarpasa but also its living identity, as a train station, a public space, and a symbol of urban resilience. The study highlights that a sustainable future for Haydarpasa requires an integrated, inclusive, and adaptive management strategy that balances its cultural value with contemporary needs. As cited in Section 5.1, a fully structured application of the HUL approach would ensure that heritage conservation and development are pursued in balance, preventing further fragmentation in the area. Future research should expand on these models through participatory studies and impact assessments to refine the proposed tools and strategies.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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