

The Gentrification Process in the Historic Eminonu Peninsula in Istanbul

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ABSTRACT Over years, the historical city of Istanbul has been going through a massive gentrification process. The historical quarters of Istanbul are located in the districts of Eminonu, which are often referred as “the historical peninsula”, and Beyoglu which is the heart of modern Istanbul with nightlife and many hotels. Eminonu district is home to many historical buildings and sites constructed during Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods. However, as a result of large waves of migration and lack of planning, poorly designed and managed buildings with no historical value surround many of these historical sites. The historical buildings and monuments in the historical peninsula include castles, aqueducts, water cisterns, masonry, places of worship and bazaars. Until the 1990s, there was not a serious attempt to restore these historical rich sites. However, in the early 1990s both local and central government began to restore many buildings and opened them to public to attract tourism. Two important problems resulted from such policies. First, many of the historical sites were not restored according to their original forms. Second, many of the historical buildings have been rented out to private companies, which resulted in a change in their functions. For example, the historical houses have been transformed into hotels, guest homes and cafes or the historical manufacture stores and repair shops have been turned into the restaurants and souvenir shops.