GENTRIFYING 'ROMA RIGHTS':
UNRAVELING THE DYNAMICS OF LOCAL MOBILIZATION AND TRANSNATIONAL COALITION IN THE CASE OF *SULUKULE*

By
Serkan Yolacan

Submitted to
Central European University
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology

In partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts

Supervisor: Balázs Vedres

Budapest, Hungary
2008

Abstract

This paper looks at the contentious interaction between local mobilization and transnational coalition in the case of *Sulukule*, a historical neighborhood simultaneously marked as Roma and undergoing state-led gentrification and privatization. The strategic importance of the case lies in its being at the intersection of two simultaneous processes taking effect in Turkey over the last couple of years. These are intensified urban restructuring of metropolises on the one hand, and institutionalization of "Roma rights" discourse on the other. Against this background, the paper delineates the mechanisms at work in the Sulukule case that generate and sustain a very broad, dynamic and effective public opposition on the transnational level while remaining ineffective in mobilizing the local residents. Combining framing and network perspectives, it locates the problem, first, in the gap between transnational framing and local identities/interests; and explains the persistency of this gap in the uneven relation between local mobilization and transnational institutional collaboration. It argues that social movement frames whose potential appeal are conditioned by the international political culture exploit and expand globally structured network of institutions and actors; these networks, in turn, stabilize and fortify the frames by channeling in resources and structuring the relation/interaction between locals and the supra-locals.

Acknowledgements

This master thesis is the final product of a research project, which has started during the last year of my BA. In this respect, I am most grateful to Leyla Neyzi, who has made this project possible. Her genuine support has gone much beyond the project, giving me a lot of courage and inspiration to *go on.* I am also grateful to Balazs Vedres, my first supervisor, for not only introducing network analysis to me and helping me a great deal in applying it for my project but also for his feedbacks, which have been important in the final shaping of the thesis. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Don Kalb, my second supervisor, for directing me to the relevant literature and inspiring me with his enthusiasm. My dearest thanks is to Cristina Onica, who has made the writing process much easier and much more fun than it could have been otherwise. I also thank the faculty, the staff and my colleagues in the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department of CEU for the challenging and friendly atmosphere they have created throughout the year. My warm thanks goes also to the people of *Sultan Mahalle* and *Sulukule as* well as to the members of the Sulukule Platform for their genuine cooperation. My final thanks is to my family, who have always been there and to whom I dedicate this thesis.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1 - Reconciling Framing and Network Perspectives in Understanding Social Mobilization as Contentious Politics 6

1.1 Framing Perspective *7*

1.2 Network Perspective *10*

Chapter 2- Methodology 16

Chapter 3- Unraveling the Dynamics of Local Mobilization and Transnational Coalition: The Case of Sulukule 19

3.1 Frame gap *20*

3.1.1 Gypsy/Roma identity contested.....20

3.1.2 'Entertainment tradition': Amplifying an internal conflict.....23

3.2 Claim to power, power to claim: Frames and networks in transnational coalition *30*

3.2.1 Institutionalization of Roma rights 30

3.2.2 Playing by the rules of the field: 'Heritage protection' and Istanbul 2010.....33

3.2.3 Multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and Europeanness: Mobilizing the secular middle class 39

3.3 Structuring the relation between locals and supra-locals *43*

Conclusion 51

Appendices 53

Reference List 56

List of Figures

FIGURE 1. 37

FIGURE 2A 44

FIGURE 2B 44

Introduction

On April 4, 2008, US Helsinki Commission[1] "troubled by treatment of Sulukule Roma in Istanbul" sends a letter to the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan urging him to intervene in the demolition of a "centuries-old neighborhood and allow the Roma there to remain together as a community[:]"

> We write to express our concern about the Sulukule urban transformation project developed by the Fatih and Greater Istanbul municipalities. It is our understanding that six districts in Istanbul including Sulukule, have been chosen to undergo urban transformation as part of the 2010 European Capital of Culture. While we understand the need to preserve many historical landmarks in Istanbul, we are deeply troubled that Sulukule, home to a Roma community since 1054 and one of the oldest Romani settlements in Europe, is on the brink of total demolition and will be replaced with new villa style homes.

Stressing the role of the state in the plight of Sulukule Roma prior to the urban renewal project, the commission draws attention to the closure by the municipality in 1992 of "the music and entertainment venues that had been the lifeblood of the community and a major tourist attraction."[2]

On the same day the commission sends the letter, an entry is posted on an Internet blog propagating the viewpoint of the association established in the neighborhood in question following another one that contests the municipality's renewal project. The entry explains why this new association, unlike the first one, supports the municipality's urban renewal plan:

[1]"An independent agency of the United States Government charged with monitoring and encouraging compliance with the Helsinki Final Act and other commitments of the 55 countries participating in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)."
http://www.csce.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Home.Home&CFID=18849146&CFTOKEN=53

[2]For the press release announcing the letter, see
http://www.csce.gov/index.cfm?Fuseaction=ContentRecords.ViewDetail&ContentRecord_id=649&Region_id=0&Issue_id=0&ContentType=P&ContentRecordType=P&CFID=18849146&CFTOKEN=53

> [This association] strongly emphasizes that all the activities conducted here in the past and named as entertainment were in fact illegal affairs, which do not accord with Turkish ways and customs; that many generations have been wasted here; that the "Turk Neighborhood" project intended to reverse this process constitutes a unique opportunity for us; that the ones who are impeding the implementation of this project are not real locals but only latecomers to the neighborhood.[3] [My translation]

Publicized on the same day, these are two different accounts of the same story; betraying the discrepancy between the local and the transnational representations of an internally differentiated, conflict-ridden neighborhood subject to urban renewal. The place in question is a historical city neighborhood of Istanbul popularly known as Sulukule associated with Turkish Gypsies/Roma. Consisting of the administrative districts of Neslişah Sultan and Hatice Sultan located along the historical city walls, the neighborhood was declared to be renewal area by the local municipality in 2005. Covering a land of approximately 90.000m^2 and affecting 620 households (around a population of 3500) out of which 434 are tenants,[4] the municipality's renewal project "proposes to replace most of the existing urban fabric with 480 new 'ottoman' style houses, an office building, a cultural centre, a hotel and basement car parking." (UCL/DPU, 2007, p. 5)

Soon after the declaration of this project whose prospects for the local residents are uneven and dubious,[5] a self-claimed civil platform -namely the Sulukule Platform, composed

[3] http://yenisulukule.blogcu.com/12628201/

[4] From the website of Fatih Municipality http://www.fatih.bel.tr/kate_detay.asp?id=46&tur=387

[5] "The municipality proposes to pay 500 Turkish lira per square meter to each property owner who sells off land to it. With regard to remaining in the neighbourhood residents' options are: [1)] to remain in the neighbourhood, if they are able to afford the purchase of the new units [whose prices range in-between 75.000-125.000 Turkish Lira] or can pay the difference over a 15 year period, [2)] to accept allocations on a TOKI (Turkey's national mass housing scheme) estate with 15 years to pay back the loans. It also proposes that residents who have to be temporarily relocated while the area is being redeveloped will be provided with temporary accommodation and compensation of 300 Turkish Lira/month." (UCL/DPU, 2007, p. 25) However, the actual prospects of this arrangement for the residents are highly limited, for various reasons. First, many in the neighborhood have no regular jobs, which makes it difficult for them to undertake any long-term loans; nor can they easily afford apartments outside of the neighborhood where multiple household occupancy is a rule rather than an exception. Besides, some of what the

mainly of two Istanbul-based NGOs and various activists, have mobilized against the municipality's plan. Contesting the municipality's dual discourse of 'rehabilitating a decaying area' and 'reviving the historical heritage,' the Platform has reframed the issue as 'a case of gentrification victimizing an historical Roma community' and gradually mobilized a transnational network of actors and institutions around the issue. In the meantime, and particularly because of this transnational publicity, the neighborhood has been highly mediatized to the extent of becoming the showcase of the contestation of the recently intensified urban restructuring in Turkey.

This transnational mobilization while culminating in a an effective public opposition against the municipality's plan, however, has not generated its counterpart in the neighborhood except for the establishment of a local association whose appeal has been limited only to a small number of residents. As a matter of fact, a second local association, not more appealing though than the first one, has eventually been established to contest the transnational representation of the issue in favor of the municipality's renewal project.

This paper attempts to identify the mechanisms at work in the Sulukule case that hold together a very broad, dynamic and effective public opposition on the transnational level while remaining ineffective in mobilizing the local residents to the degree of engendering a counter local mobilization.

In doing so, it looks at the contentious relation between local mobilization and transnational collaboration in the context of a case that lies at the intersection of two simultaneous processes taking effect in Turkey over the last couple of years. These are

municipality promises on the paper are not actualized on the ground; bureaucratic obstacles are immense for many in the neighborhood.

intensified urban transformation of metropolises on the one hand, and institutionalization of "Roma rights" discourse on the other.

The recent restructuring of urban space in Istanbul has already been an exhausted topic, but mainly from the vantage point of urban renewal or gentrification. (Uzun, 2003; Ergun, 2004; Behar & Islam, 2006) Social and political mobilizations incited by these more often state-led processes have not yet been subject to serious sociological inquiry in the context of Turkey. Likewise, the Romani political movement -another topical issue of our times- has been analyzed mainly in the context of Central and Eastern Europe. (Jenne, 2000; Guy, 2001; Zoltan, 2002; Vermeersch, 2006) Turkey as a non-post-communist national context has become a relevant geography for the Romani movement only recently and has not yet been scrutinized as such. The present study based on ethnographic data comprising in-depth interviews, participant observation and media analysis extended over a period of more than a year attempts to cast some light on these understudied dimensions.

On a theoretical level, the paper synthesizes frame analysis -usually labeled as culturalist approach- and network analysis – social structuralism being the usual designation - for neither of these approaches seems to provide in itself an adequate framework to capture the dynamics of social movements. Drawing on the work of Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994), it favors an approach that focuses on the ways in which frames and networks reinforce or transform one another in a certain historical trajectory, throughout which events and individuals act upon in as much as they are shaped by social and cultural structures.

Within this theoretical framework, I argue that the gap between the local mobilization and the transnational coalition in the case of Sulukule has to do with the way the civil platform frames the issue: 'authentic Gypsy/Roma settlement popular for its tradition of dance and music

endangered by urban renewal.' Findings of my ethnographic research suggest that this particular framing does not resonate with the interests and self-identifications of the majority of locals except for local musicians who have a stake in the entertainment business. I locate the persistency of this frame gap in the in the marginality of local mobilization vis-à-vis the preponderance of transnational collaboration. In doing so, I show how the Platform's frame, whose potential transnational appeal is conditioned by the international political field, exploits and expands globally structured networks of institutions and actors; and how these networks, in turn, buttress and stabilize the frame by channeling in resources; and finally, how this mutual reinforcement between the frame and the networks structures the relation between the locals and the Platform as well as the transnational network in a way that fortifies the frame against local counter-frames while creating a highly limited local mobilization.

I start with explaining my theoretical approach that synthesizes network and framing perspectives in analyzing the dynamics of social mobilization as contentious politics. The next chapter delineates the methodology I have followed in analyzing the case of Sulukule. The final chapter presents the analysis itself followed by a concluding discussion.

Chapter 1 - Reconciling Framing and Network Perspectives in Understanding Social Mobilization as Contentious Politics

In cases like Sulukule where the conflict goes beyond the immediate parties and becomes a symbolic battleground for a much broader range of actors and institutions, social mobilization becomes contentious politics *par excellence*. As defined by McAdam, et al. (2001), contentious politics is "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants." (p. 5) Uncovering the dynamics of social mobilization thus requires to explore the relations among claims, claim-makers and their interests within a certain spatiotemporal trajectory. Essential questions here are:

> [H]ow to identify actors in contentious politics, their claims, the objects of those claims, and responses to claim making. Of the many names in which people sometimes make claims, why do only a few typically prevail as public bases of contentious interaction in any given time and place? What governs the course and outcome of that interaction? Why and how do people move collectively between action and inaction? (ibid., p. 10-11)

In so far as the focus is on the dialogic relation between local and transnational mobilization, answering these questions is not a straightforward matter. It requires a multi-scale analysis alternating between the negotiation of identities and interests partly shaped by local histories on the one hand and global political processes setting the stage for, and redefining the parameters of such negotiation on the other. Other intermediary scales can also be relevant. What is important to bear in mind here is the following: to explain the dynamics of social mobilization, the methodological focus should be on the interplay between the global and the local rather than the locals and the local setting as such. For, as Cowan et al. (2001) put it, "in the process of

seeking access to social goods (ranging from land, work and education to freedom of belief and recognition of a distinctive group identity) through a language of rights, claimants are increasingly becoming involved in legal and political processes and transcend nation-state boundaries." (p. 1)

Providing two alternative ways of coming to grips with this methodological challenge, framing and network theories provide some useful analytical tools. Below, I briefly review these two perspectives highlighting their bearing on the dynamics of social mobilization recruitment processes; and argue for a synthesis of the two in explaining the contentious relation between local and transnational mobilization.

1.1 Framing Perspective

The concept of framing goes back to Goffman's book *Frame Analysis* (1974), where he argues that individuals operate through certain "schematic of interpretation" which enable them to organize their world and themselves in ways that are meaningful to them. (p. 30) According to this perspective, individuals and groups act both *with* and *within* certain frames, and because of this, their social actions are neither a simple function of their objective conditions nor the outcome of their rational decisions. Thus negotiation over interpretative frameworks as versions of reality is rather indispensable than incidental to any social interaction:

> [T]here is no way in theory to bring everyone involved into the same frame. Under these circumstances one can expect that the parties with opposing versions of events may openly dispute with each other over how to define what has been or is happening. A frame dispute results. (ibid., p. 322)

Building on this conceptual and theoretical framework, Snow and his associates (1986) have produced one of the most central works of framing theory. Favoring a processual approach,

the authors operationalize Goffman's frame analysis in understanding the dynamics of micromobilization and movement participation. From their vantage point, Goffman's emphasis on interpretative frameworks in understanding social action has an immediate implication: participation in social mobilization can not be treated as static process where actors make rational decisions based on their 'actual' grievances; instead, it is a dynamic process where potential and/or actual adherents negotiate 'reality' on the basis of which collective action is to be shaped. (p. 465-467)

Following this premise, the authors focus on the creation of ideational elements by social movement organizations (SMOs) or social movement activists for the mobilization of potential adherents as well as for sustaining and orienting the collective action throughout. In doing so, they identify four "frame alignment" processes through which individual and SMO interpretative orientations can be linked towards collective action. Their categorization is worth recapturing as it outlines some basic concepts useful in analyzing framing processes.

Frame bridging, as the first of these categories, stands for the "linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames[.]" (p. 467) In such cases, the gap between the frames regarding a particular issue is social than cultural and the solution to the problem usually lies in the effective use of information and communication technologies to reach the potential constituents of the movement. (ibid., p.468) *Frame amplification*, which Snow et al, divide further into two in terms of values and beliefs, refers to the "the clarification and invigoration of an interpretative frame" in an attempt to counteract the effects of indifference, uncertainty or deception on the side of prospective constituents. (ibid, p. 469) This process might involve "identification, idealization, and elevation of one or more values presumed basic to prospective constituents" and/or elaboration of beliefs potential adherents hold with respect to

the causes of the problem, positionalities of the actors involved, prospects of mobilization, etc. (ibid., p. 469-470) *Frame extension, on the other hand,* concerns the situations when "an SMO may have to extend the boundaries of its primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objectives but of considerable salience to potential adherents." (ibid., p. 472) The most difficult and thus the least occurring of these processes is *frame transformation*. It refers to a more fundamental change in either the global or the domain-specific interpretative frames. This could take place in cases where the instrumentality of the frame and the actual target of the SMOs converge, and frame becomes the ultimate target of social mobilization. (ibid., p. 473-475)

These analytical categories are certainly helpful in analyzing the mechanisms at work in various types and cases of social mobilization. Yet the limitations of framing perspective as it has been put into practice have also been anchored by many. Most relevant here is Steinberg's (1999) critique that frame analysis formulates framing process as a matter of "representational contest between actors," and frames as "relatively stable referential modes of representations." (p. 739) He argues that framing perspective reduces the framing process to the strategic actions of social movement activists or social movement organizations (SMOs), and ignores the limitations of the discursive field itself. Instead, he proposes a more dialogic approach that treats collective action as a joint product of group dynamics and the internal dynamics of discourse. (ibid., p. 737) Unlike the framing literature, which conceptualizes "communication as the sending and receiving of messages whose meanings are evident and unproblematic," dialogism -based on Bakhtin's social semiotic view of discourse-, for Steinberg, offers an alternative model of discourse "as a dynamic, conflict-ridden cultural terrain" (ibid., p. 748):

> [T]he development of collective action discourses is both facilitated and limited by the ways in which claims and alternative visions can be represented within a larger discursive field. A social

> semiotic perspective focuses our attention on the inherent ambiguities in the representation of an issue and its resolution and the communication of such concerns between participants in contention. (ibid., p. 740)

Steinberg also notes that this interplay between the social and the semiotic might be minimized as "powerholders can attempt hegemony through ongoing efforts to limit the way meaning can be structured within particular discursive terms, forms, and styles, as well as enforcing silence among the less powerful." (ibid., p. 746) In such situations, the hegemony of commonsense limits the possibilities of communication and friction among different actors involved in the contention.

By drawing our attention to the relation between the dynamics of discourse and power, Steinberg certainly refines the classical framing perspective that is restricted to "the presence or absence of a potent innovative master frame and/or the differential ability of SMOs to successfully exploit and elaborate the anchoring frame to its fullest." (Snow et al., 1986, p. 477) Problematizing the agency of SMOs and social movement activists taken for granted by the framing theory, Steinberg suggests that the success or failure of the framing processes lie as much in the interplay between broader field of societal and discursive tensions as in the immediate interaction among the actors:

> Which discourses are available to articulate injustice and its resolution, how they can be used in relations to other ways of talking about the world, and the degree to which powerholders and challengers can exert control over their meanings determine their experiential and empirical efficacy. (ibid., p. 746)

1.2 Network Perspective

Alternative to the framing approach to social mobilization dynamics is the network approach, which favors a more social-structuralist perspective vis-à-vis the centrality of culture in framing theory. Not only does network perspective provide a different critical angle on

framing perspective than the one proposed by Steinberg, but it also illuminates the "social" part of Steinberg's social semiotic approach overshadowed by his vehement emphasis on the discursive field.

The common scholarly wisdom traces the concept of network to Simmel (1955), who is the first one to focus on ties in understanding the reciprocal relation between individuals and groups. His most important insight from the vantage point of network analysis is that while the power and influence of an individual actor is determined by his/her group affiliations, the characteristics and power of a group is determined by the ties its members have among themselves and to others. (p. 162-163)

Despite his emphasis on ties, however, Simmel does not deal with networks as such. Among the first systematic undertakings to theorize about network analysis is Wellman's (1983). In an attempt to introduce network analysis as a distinct intellectual approach, Wellman identifies some basic principles, all culminating into one important feature that, according to him, distinguishes network analysis from others: the anti-categorical imperative. Categorical analysis, for Wellman, depicts "social behavior as the result of individuals' common possession of attributes and norms rather than as the result of their involvement in structured social relations." (ibid., p. 165) Network analysis, on the other hand

> concentrate[s] on studying how the pattern of ties in a network provides significant opportunities and constraints because it affects the access of people and institutions to such resources as information, wealth and power. Thus network analysis treat social systems as networks of dependency relationships resulting from the differential possession of scarce resources at the nodes and the structured allocation of these resources at the ties. (ibid., 157)

From the perspective of social mobilization dynamics, this approach shifts our focus from the interaction between the meta-frames and interpretative orientations of potential constituents to the actual ties that structurally locate the individual in patterned relationships. Participation in

the social movement, in this perspective, is primarily constrained or enabled by the actor's structural location that precedes and usually cross-cuts norms and attributes as well as the assumed boundaries of certain groups.

> Network analysts try not to impose prior assumptions about the "groupiness" of the world. They suspect that few social structures are, in fact sociometrically bounded. Hence they avoid treating discrete groups and categories as the fundamental building blocks of large-scale social systems. Instead they see the social system as a network of networks, overlapping and interacting in various ways. (ibid., p. 168)

This is a vital point, especially for analyzing social mobilization processes in the context of place-based and/or identity-based political movements. In such contexts, one has to be on guard against the social, cultural or historical boundaries strongly associated with the identity or the place in question; for these boundaries are usually more apparent than real and less explanatory then they seem to be.

As far as the representations of Roma is concerned, such boundaries are forcefully reproduced both in the Human Rights arena through the US imported talk of "racial discrimination," and in the academia through –again largely US-imported- concept of "underclass." (Stewart, 2002) In the same vein, the recent blossoming of the Romani political movement mainly in the context of post-socialist states is usually seen as the politicization of a uniform and uncontested ethnic identity entrapped in continuous marginality for centuries.[6] As Stewart (2002) rightly asserts, however, "[t]he main danger in exaggerating the 'difference' of the most deprived is that it blinds us to the contingent features of their position." (p. 139) Not only does this taken-for-granted marginality deemphasize the role of political and economic environment in repositioning the socially disadvantaged, it also conceals the stakes certain actors might have in creating or clinging to such 'differences.' Thus, any attempt to disclose what is at

[6] For example, see Jenne (2000).

stake in creating the image of an ethnically and culturally discrete community in a world, where people and spaces are much more interconnected and interdependent than ever, has to start with denaturalizing the 'cultural difference' itself. (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997, p. 34)

In doing so, network perspective gives us some direction. From the viewpoint of social mobilization dynamics, some of the points Wellman (1983) puts forth with respect to network analysis are worth recapitulating here.

The first point concerns the network clusters. Such clusters might have paradoxical implications for social mobilization for the same cluster while a dense network of strong and weak ties at the individual level might be a disconnected island as far as the total system is concerned. Thus, the chances for a mobilization within the cluster to evolve into broader coalitions are highly limited. (ibid., p. 175)

Another implication of such network patterns is that the few actors linking two network clusters are structurally advantaged. In times when there is flow of resources and information between the clusters, the influence and power of the brokers dramatically increase, and this "unequal access to scarce resources may in turn increase the asymmetry of ties" within the clusters. (ibid., p. 176)

Last but not least, networks structure the collaboration and competition among different interest groups, whose boundedness depends more often than not on the prospects offered by the possibility of clustering "collaborative and complementary ties…into more or less bounded factions and coalitions" in the first place. (ibid., p. 178) The significance of this point for analyzing the dialogic relation between local and transnational mobilization is the following: the contentions involved in the mobilization process do not necessarily derive from the already existing relations within and beyond the local setting; they may also arise as by-products of the

mobilization process itself as the latter might reconfigure the access paths to limited resources, not only within a certain network but also in the broader social field as network of networks.

All these points accentuate the importance of structural constraints and opportunities in shaping the power-differentiated course of a social movement. What they fail to explain, however, are the formation, reproduction and transformation of such social structures. What is needed, in this context, is an approach that goes beyond static descriptions of structures (whether social or cultural) and shows how these structures are acted upon by the very historical processes they set off in the first place. Moreover, neither social nor culture should be the exclusive focus of our analysis; instead, we have to explore the dialogic relation between the two within a certain temporal trajectory. Focusing on the complex relation between frames and networks (and for that matter framing and networking as their processual counterparts) would enable us to see how certain frames can revalorize and revitalize certain networks while de-emphasizing others; and how these re- or de-activations coupled with the pre-established asymmetric ties can, in return, strengthen, challenge or transform those frames.

The most relevant work accomplished in this line is by Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994). Acknowledging the potential of network perspective for a relational sociology of historical phenomena, the authors argue that network analysis as it has been applied have not truly recognized "the (potentially) autonomous causal significance of cultural or political discourses in shaping the complex event sequences that it examines." (p. 1436) Instead, they claim that "all historical processes are structured at least in part by cultural and political discourse, as well as by networks of social interaction." (p. 1444)

In this respect, Emirbayer and Goodwin call for an analytical distinction between cultural and social structural formations as, for them, each can have its distinct logic of patterning the

social action (p. 1440); yet they also suggest that "it is precisely through empirical social action – multiply determined, and undertaken by concretely situated historical actors- that these various analytical environments relate to one another." (p. 1444) The authors identify two major points deriving from this perspective:

> One is the notion that historical actors' very identities, goals, and aspirations are themselves fundamentally constructed phenomena….There is simply no such thing as a prestructured individual identity; both individuals and societies are the products and the contents- but not the starting points- of interaction…Of course, if cultural and societal (network structures) shape actors, then it is equally true that actors shape these structures in turn…Hence the *second* implication…namely, that for a more comprehensive understanding of processes of change, it is necessary to devote more attention not only to the structural levels of causation, but also to those more ephemeral dynamics of historical "events[.]"

It is this interplay between structures and historical events mediated by the agency of historically situated actors that this thesis tries to capture in the context of the Sulukule case. Unraveling the dynamics of local mobilization and transnational coalition in this highly spectacular case of urban contestation means explaining the ways in which broader social and cultural structures unfolding in various scales are reinforced or transformed within the particular spatio-temporal trajectory of an "eventful" movement.

Chapter 2- Methodology

In explaining the dialogic yet uneven relation between transnational collaboration and local mobilization in the case of Sulukule, my methodology has consisted in a multi-scale analysis that focuses on the interaction between global political processes and the local history resulting in a complex actuality that unfolds through historical events set off by the renewal plan of the local municipality. To keep the balance between the historically contingent features of the process and the broader global dynamics, I have used several complimentary methods including participant observation, in-depth interviews, extensive media frame analysis as well as some journalistic methods, all of which have also provided the data for my network analysis.

All in all, I have done 10 weeks of fieldwork over a span of 15 months, during which I have followed the case through several media channels as well as the Internet blogs and e-mail groups created by the Platform. I have conducted in-depth interviews with 7 persons from the neighborhood and 5 from the transnational coalition, mainly from the Sulukule Platform as the main SMO of the case. The backbone of my fieldwork, however, has been participant observations and informal focus group discussions, which are not restricted to the local setting.

My research started with an intensive seven-weeks-long fieldwork most of which took place in the neighborhood. Fortunately, this fieldwork coincided with the main public campaign of the Platform, namely "40 Days 40 Nights Sulukule;" which has been the benchmark of the process that has made Sulukule a worldwide popular case of urban contestation. My research thus has followed the case as it has evolved in the actual time; giving me the chance to observe many important events as they happened.

From very early onwards, I have been able to establish good relations with the residents at a time when many of them were highly suspicious of the visitors. Despite the high polarization

within the neighborhood, I have been able to be friends with people from both sides; which has provided me with significant insights into the history and actuality of the local relations as well as the way these have interacted with the advanced attention of a growing network of outsiders ranging from journalists to academics, artists to university students, members of the Parliament to the representatives of international organizations.

As for my relation to the Platform, of which the local Sulukule association is a part, it has been very empathetic. Their openness for discussion and sharing information have made this research much easier than it could have been otherwise. The friendly relations I have had with the Platform members have also taught me a great deal about the relations –not always in good terms- within and among NGOs in Istanbul. For various reasons, however, only a small portion of these insights are actually in my analysis. Nevertheless, they had been highly significant in structuring my interview questions as well as finding the key persons to talk to.

I conducted the first round of interviews mainly with the local residents. Beside these in-depth interviews that came towards the end of my first fieldwork, I made several unplanned informal focus group discussions mainly with men in the coffeehouses and rarely with women in their own houses. However, most of my contacts with the young local women were later cut off by their male relatives. The only female residents I could do in-depth interviews with have happened to be two aged women.

My second fieldwork in May 2008 came one year after the first one and lasted around three weeks. This time my focus was on the Platform and the transnational network although I also conducted interviews in the neighborhood. During this period, my extensive media analysis accompanied the first fieldwork gave way to journalistic methods in an attempt to map out the

transnational network formed around the Sulukule case. In a way, my interest in frames during the first fieldwork has been balanced during the second one with my interest in networks.

These two fieldworks have provided the main data for my network analysis as well. Given the extensive scope of the actors (both organizational and individual) involved in the case, this data is bounded to be highly partial, so are the networks illustrated in the text. Despite this limitation, however, they suffice to convey without any consequential gap the complex network in the case of Sulukule.

To capture this complexity I have first defined various ties among organizations; then I have done the same thing for persons; and finally I have merged the organizational network with the personal one based on the organizational affiliations of the persons. For the categories of ties I have defined, see Appendix 1; and for the full and abbreviated names of organizations and persons, I have used in my analysis, see Appendix 2.

The network perspective I have employed in this thesis is not limited to software-based network illustrations, though. Its essential core resides in the ethnographic descriptions of the ways in which the networks have been formed in the first place. In this sense the methodological thrust of this study is its ethnographic approach to the analysis of the interaction between frames and networks in social mobilization processes; after all it is through my extensive fieldwork in the first place that I have observed the largely failed local mobilization in the Sulukule case, a fact otherwise indiscernible from the spectacular agitation in the media.

Chapter 3- Unraveling the Dynamics of Local Mobilization and Transnational Coalition: The Case of Sulukule

The conflict around Sulukule has been the showcase of the contestation around the recently intensified urban restructuring in Turkey, and especially in the great metropolis of Istanbul declared to be 2010 European Capital of Culture. Although the case has turned into a frontline between a broad transnational coalition coupled by a strong public opposition and the local municipality working in tandem with the Central Government, there has been no significant mobilization in the neighborhood. In this chapter, I explain the mechanisms at work behind this intriguing contradiction.

In doing so, I locate the problem in the dissonance between the way the Sulukule Platform as the social movement organization (SMO) of this case frames the issue and the local interests/identities as they are shaped in the matrix of local and national histories as well as the current process. I then explain the persistency of this frame gap through the uneven relation between local mobilization and transnational coalition. To this end, I describe the ways in which the international political field invests the Platform's frame with an unprecedented power that enables the Platform to exploit and expand globally structured networks of organizations and actors as well as to mobilize the middle class public on a national scale; all of which strengthen and stabilize the frame by channeling in immense resources. Finally, I show how this mutual reinforcement between the frame and the networks structures the relation between the locals and the Platform as well as the transnational network in a way that fortifies the frame against local counter-frames, decreasing the chances for a successful local mobilization.

3.1 Frame gap

Soon after the municipality's renewal project regarding Sulukule appeared in the press, a group of activists, later to be named as Sulukule Platform, have mobilized to contest the municipality's plan, which, they claim, is but "a project to erase an identity," as one of my informants from the Platform puts it. In the public debates incited by this contestation, the municipality mayor along with other state officials has defended the project in the framework of 'rehabilitating a socially decaying area while reviving the historical heritage of the place.' In doing so, he and his associates have played on the negative image of the neighborhood as a 'criminal place home of prostitution and drug-dealing' and argued for the restoration of the historical heritage by replacing the existing urban fabric with "Ottoman style architecture."

Opposing the municipality's discourse, the Sulukule Platform have played upon another public image of Sulukule as 'an old Roma settlement famous for its entertainment tradition' and reframed the issue as the 'endangering of an authentic Gypsy/Roma community famous for its traditional culture of music and dance.' This reframing, however, has not resonated in the neighborhood except for a small group of residents largely composed of musicians assembled around the local association. My fieldwork in the neighborhood has disclosed two main constituents of this frame dissonance. While Gypsy/Roma is highly contested among the great majority of the local residents, the focus of the Platform on the entertainment tradition as the marker of an authentic cultural heritage has amplified an internal conflict in the neighborhood.

3.1.1 Gypsy/Roma identity contested

"We use 'Gypsy' for persons who do not know how to behave in society, how to speak or eat properly," says Kadir Hallaç, one of my informants whose sandwich shop was a 'stop-by' place during my first fieldwork. He is one among many in the neighborhood, for whom the

Gypsy/Roma identity is at odds with the Islamic and Turkish identity. During the conversations with residents, "Praise to God, we are Muslims and Turks" was a common and rather furious response to any small hint at the Gypsy/Roma identity associated with the neighborhood. The tension around this naming especially during my first fieldwork was high enough to result in such scenes where a group of local women chased the university students who had come to the neighborhood to find out whether the locals identify themselves as Roma or Gypsy. Although the level of hostility towards outsiders inattentive to the local circumstances cooled down in time with the innumerable visits of such strangers, the tension has always been there, especially among the ones who have a prevailing Islamic identity, if not so much among the rest.

This contestation is also acknowledged by some of my informants from the Sulukule Platform. Among them is Hacer Foggo, a Roma activist and perhaps the most involved actor of the Platform. Referring to the certain residents in the neighborhood who expressively and fiercely reject the Roma identity, she says "all of them are actually Roma; they know this themselves but deny it." In a similar vein, Prof. Dr. Semra Somersan, an anthropologist who has been highly influential in the initial mobilization of the Sulukule Platform, conceptualizes the issue as 'disavowal of ethnic identity.' In a conference paper she presented about Sulukule,[7] she focuses on why religious identity prevails over ethnic identity and formulates the problem as "the exchanging of Roma "gypsy" for "Muslim" identity." In my interviews with them, however, neither Somersan nor Foggo put this local contestation as yet a factual problem that the Platform as the SMO here has to come to grips with towards a strong mobilization in the neighborhood.

On the other hand, the role of naming and belonging for the participation in the movement of potential local constituents has proved to be highly important during my fieldwork. It was most apparent on the day after a TV show that hosted three of the main figures of the

[7] For the full text of this paper, see http://www.ep.liu.se/ecp/025/071/ecp072571.pdf

Sulukule Platform -two of them from the neighborhood- to discuss the conflict over Sulukule. When I visited the neighborhood on the day after the show had been broadcasted live, the atmosphere was charged with tension. Many of the residents having watched the TV show the night before were recalling the "moment of embarrassment" when the anchorman had addressed the two guests from the neighborhood as "Gypsies." What was "even worse" for these residents is the fact that this "labeling" was not objected by the guests themselves, one of whom is M. Asım Hallaç, the only Islamically oriented participant of the local mobilization. Criticizing the "complicity" of his cousin in the "labeling of this area as a Gypsy neighborhood," Oktay Hallaç, later to be the founding member of the second association, complained to me on that day:

> The anchorman asks whether it is because "you are Gypsies that they are demolishing this area." What kind of a question is this? Believe me, I would beat such a guy even in a studio. How dare can he say such a word to me; one can not be humiliated more; everybody has his own circle of friends and relatives. It would be somewhat OK if it was perceived as any other like Arab, Laz, Circassian but this is used as a pejorative term in Turkey…

In fact, Oktay is right about the general mind-set in Turkey with respect to the issue of minorities in general and the way the category 'Gypsy' and -perhaps less so- 'Roma' is popularly perceived in particular. There is a strong stigmatization of Gypsy identity coupled with the perceived incompatibility of minority identities with the Turco-Islamic identity; the latter being the unofficial constituent of Turkish citizenship.[8] Given this, the aim of the Sulukule Platform can be seen as a strategic re-claiming to sensitize the public to the social exclusion of people

[8] Minority issue in Turkey is understood mainly in the oppositional framework of Muslim vs. non- Muslim while the whole Muslim population is assumed to be ethnically Turkish. (Kurban, 2004/5) Within this framework, perhaps the Gypsy category has the lowest status, if considered as minority at all. A recent comprehensive study on the parameters and degrees of social exclusion in slum areas of big cities in Turkey suffices to illustrate the popular perception about Gypsy identity. Being asked to complete the sentence "I would not let my child to be friends with the child of a person who is (a/an)..." with possible given answers, 76% of the surveyed pick "Gypsies" whereas only 23% of them say "of different ethnicity". The answer "Gypsy" comes forth after homosexual, prostitute and aids patient. (Adaman & Keyder, 2005, p. 113)

belonging to this category and to change the way this particular category of people are treated. That is to say, their target might be the "transformation of domain-specific interpretative frames," which Snow et al. (1986) associates with movements

> that seek dramatic changes in the status, treatment , or activity of a category of people…or that seek to change the relationship between two or more categories, as in the case of many ethnic and racial movements. In each case, a status pattern of relationship, or a social practice is reframed as inexcusable, immoral, or unjust. (p. 474-5)

Indeed, this is part of the story. Not only many of the activists involved in the Sulukule case have reported on cases of Roma discrimination (mainly in the context of forced evictions), but some of them have also been active in mobilizing a broader Romani political movement by assisting in the establishment of local Roma associations. As for the Sulukule case, one of the main concerns of the Platform has been to intensify the interaction between 'Sulukule Roma' and Istanbulites both on the ground and via media for improving the popular perception of the former.

Despite, however, the positive impact achieved on the general public, these endeavors have not been able to win over the local residents themselves; moreover the internal contestation has got even more intense in the process. The reason for this failure lies in the particular way the Platform have reclaimed the 'Sulukule Roma.' In so far as the Platform has brought forward 'entertainment tradition' as the marker of 'authentic cultural heritage of Sulukule Roma,' they have amplified a historical conflict in the neighborhood.

3.1.2 'Entertainment tradition': Amplifying an internal conflict

'Entertainment tradition' has been almost like a trope for the Sulukule Movement. The main plea of the Platform against the municipality's plan is the 'overlooked importance for the local community' of the entertainment business shut down by the municipality in tandem with the

police department in 1992. On every occasion, the Platform stress that the Entertainment Houses, once the main source of income for many in the neighborhood, had been the lifeblood of the local community and that their closure by the municipality is the main reason why the neighborhood has come to be associated with notorious activities. What has been overlooked by the Platform, however, is the conflictual history of this entertainment business within the neighborhood.

The conflict goes back to the 1960s, until when Sultan Mahalle and Sulukule -associated today with one another- had been two neighbor vicinities. Known as a Roma/Gypsy neighborhood, Sulukule was famous for its talented musicians, dancers and singers who were being hired for middle and upper class revelries in the city center. Equivalent of these revelries were also organized in the neighborhood, where the customers were served in Entertainment Houses run by the locals since the 19th century:

> These were small, informal, "listen-watch, eat and drink" places, where you could rent the entire house, a hall, or a room to have belly dancers and musicians perform just for you and your friends or family while being served food and alcohol. (Akçura in Somersan & Kırca-Schroder, 2007, p. 100)

These Entertainment Houses along with the whole neighborhood ceased to exist with the expropriation of Sulukule in 1958 due to a major boulevard construction that was to connect the old peninsula to the rapidly expanding suburbs. Following the demolitions, which were finalized in 1966, majority of the residents scattered throughout the city,[9] whereas a couple of families moved to the neighbor vicinity, Sultan Mahalle; a local abbreviation for the officially defined districts of Neslişah Sultan and Hatice Sultan.[10] Despite the geographical proximity between

[9] The consequences of this early expropriation have not been even for the Sulukuleans. While the well-off residents bought estates in central parts of the city, the economically disadvantaged ones were reallocated to the newly expanding outskirts. (Somersan & Kırca-Schroeder, 2007, p. 101)

Sultan Mahalle and Sulukule, these two historical city neighborhoods located on the fringes of the old peninsula used to contain two distinct life-styles distinguished mainly on the basis of occupation. While Sulukule was known for its music and dance, the chief occupation in Sultan Mahalle was petty trading.

This clear boundary separating these two different cultural and economic milieus, however, started to blur as one or two of the families who had been running Entertainment Houses in the old Sulukule reopened them in Sultan Mahalle, to where they have just moved. This initial enterprise of a few former Sulukuleans became the forerunner of a business that was to attract many others not only from Sultan Mahalle but also form outside. By the 1980s, the number of Entertainment Houses reached up to 30 to 40, reviving the fame of Sulukule in Sultan Mahalle, turning the neighborhood into a tourist attraction.

In the heyday of this entertainment business, there were two broader political developments that have patterned the relations in the neighborhood until today. One of these developments is the rise of political Islam in line with the emergence of an Islamic bourgeoisie which have came to power following the local and national elections in the early 1990s.

The winds of political Islam were blowing over the neighborhood as well, forging strong Islamic identities out of expanding religious networks.[11] Among these new Islamist circles in the neighborhood, there emerged an increasing disquiet about the Entertainment Houses, which, this

[10] The informal names of both Sulukule and Sultan Mahalle indicate boundaries defined by social and cultural practice rather than official designation. The Turkish word for neighborhood is *mahalle* as in Sultan Mahalle: "While mahalles had place identities related to their ethno-religious communities, they were not always homogeneous …Yet the mahalle had a cohesive identity fundamental to how Ottoman residents located themselves in the urban social milieu. Residents formed a collectivity through ties of mutual responsibility, in the collection of taxes, for example, and in the enforcement of social norms. The spatiality of the Mahalle was thus defined by social practice rather than a bounded, physical or a mapped, administrative geography." (Mills, 2006, p. 372)

[11] In the years 1986-87, "Cüppeli Ahmet," then a prominent religious figure became a regular visitor of the neighborhood and attracted a considerable crowd to the local mosque, which is still overcrowded on Friday prayers. As my informants remember it, hours of religious talk in coffee houses lasting till midnight were not uncommon then.

more Islamic group claim today, was much more than "just entertainment." Many of them emphasize that this entertainment business "once run in a very appropriate manner, got out of hand" as increasing number of "non-locals" came to run or work in these houses. Perceiving the life-style embodied in the entertainment business incompatible with their own values, this group even organized a petition for the closure of the houses. "We were both opposing those houses and earning our bread from them at the same time" says Kadir Hallaç who, in another occasion stresses that "what we live for is nothing but honor-" a stock-in-trade expression in the neighborhood.

The backdrop to the closure of the Entertainment Houses in-between 1992-5 was the alliance between these Islamist circles in the neighborhood and the local municipality mayor of the time together with the infamous local police chief, who were operating as a 'vice squad.'[12]

Another development taking place during the late 1980s and early 1990s was the major migration from rural areas of the eastern Turkey to the urban areas of the western part,[13] as a result of which,

> [a] mixed population of Kurds and Roma moved into Istanbul and several of these extended families, the very impoverished and unemployed, took refuge in the hollowed Entertainment Houses along the historical Byzantine city walls in Sulukule. This led to an even more negative image of the Roma in the public sphere as "lawless petty criminals" exhibiting them as culprits for the progression of illegality in the famous historical district. (Somersan & Kırca-Schroeder, 2007, p. 101)

This self-fulfilling prophecy of the stigmatization along with the actual limitations on employment opportunities following the closure of Entertainment Houses have culminated in

[12] The local Police Chief was Süleyman Ulusoy popularly known as Süleyman the Hose as he was claimed to beat with a hose those in custody.

[13] This was due to the warfare between Turkish military and the militias of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) across the eastern and southeastern regions of the country.

increasing poverty and high criminality in the neighborhood, from which many of the residents want to escape today. Although their chances to do so in the context of the municipality's plan depend on their ownership status as well as their general welfare, these residents nevertheless ascribe the 'bad fate' of the neighborhood to the entertainment business which is perceived to have degenerated mainly due to the 'debauched conducts' of the "latecomers to the neighborhood."

This negative perception regarding the entertainment business associated with the name Sulukule seems to have led many to reject the latter and reclaim the administrative names of Neslisah Sultan and Hatice Sultan. One of those residents who express this differentiation in stark terms is Cavit: "That culture is a shitty culture," he says referring to the "authentic culture of Sulukule" reclaimed by the Platform, "since 20 years, this culture has finished the neighborhood… Since 20 years, there has been no Neslişah Sultan, but only Sulukule."

During my fieldwork, I have encountered many instances where the residents were anxiously trying to prove the "great difference that the 50 meters of distance between Sulukule and *Sultan Mahalle* makes." A common gesture was to show the ID card as a short way of 'proving' the 'real' residential belonging. Thus, what is represented as an 'underclass Roma community' is in fact seen and experienced by its members as a "finely differentiated congery of micro-locals" albeit with an acute awareness of the undifferentiating consequences of spatial stigmatization. (Wacquant, 1993, p. 369)

The inattentiveness of the Platform to this internal contestation has amplified the latter instead of devitalizing it towards a wider neighborhood solidarity against the gentrification process incited by the municipality's project. The gulf in the neighborhood has been amplified by the Platform's exclusive focus on entertainment business, the revival of which, according to

Cavit, is all what the local association as the local base of the Platform is striving for. In fact, the local association

> …admits that the area should be renewed, but the project should include area people and focus on their traditional profession of music and highlight the region's potential for tourism. The project should make possible a healthy, clean and aesthetic environment without destroying the world's oldest Roma community. Instead of sports complexes and six or seven-story buildings, Sulukule wants music schools and businesses providing entertainment for visitors[14]

While the centrality of entertainment business in the discourse of the local association has resulted in the general lack of interest towards the local association among the residents who do not have a stake in the entertainment business, the Platform's insistent neglect of the internal contestation around this issue has eventually led to a small-scale counter-mobilization, materialized in a another local association established under the name of Neslisah Sultan and Hatice Sultan Solidarity and Development Association.

This new association, which came almost a year after the Platform was first mobilized, has been a product of the alliance between some of the Islamically oriented residents and the municipality, which as anchored by the Chief Consultant to the Municipality Mayor, does not recognize entertainment culture as part of the authentic historical heritage but a "corrupted way of Romani culture," (UCL/DPU, 2007, p. 56-7). Some of the founding members of this second association, whose establishment is facilitated by the municipality, were the most expressive contestants of the Platform during my first fieldwork. In this sense, the association has been the micro-institutionalization of the local counter-frame overlooked by the SMO.

When I talked to the members of the second association, some of whom were my informants during the first fieldwork, they asserted their support for the municipality's project as a "unique opportunity" to upgrade their lives and their neighborhood which has been "entrapped

[14] http://www.sundayszaman.com/sunday/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=584

in a never-ending filth." In this respect their objective as an association, they noted, is all about pushing the municipality to make the payment conditions more viable for both the tenants and the owners.

As for the entertainment business, they maintained their negative stance. Cavit, as one of the founding members of the association -now distanced to it for personal reasons-, fears that once Entertainment Houses are incorporated into the current project, then one day the value of his house will be depreciated because of the "inevitable degeneration" to be brought by this business. This strong convergence of material interest and life-style is not peculiar to Cavit only; it is present especially among the owners. It is on this ground that Cavit in a meeting with the municipality - could "warn" the municipality mayor against the possibility of incorporating the Entertainment Houses into the project: "As the representative of the second association, I said to Mustafa Demir that if he agrees to what the local association wants, he will turn the whole neighborhood against himself."

In the face of this local contestation fierce enough to hamper the local mobilization by opening up a space for the municipality to facilitate a counter-mobilization, one might expect from the Platform as the main SMO of the mobilization to develop strategies in an attempt to relate movement's discourse to the previously overlooked interests and concerns of the potential constituents; after all Cavit himself admits that he "could side with the [first] local association in everything except for the cause of Entertainment Houses." The Platform, however, has not taken any step in this direction and the frame gap has persisted.

I explain this continuous lack of concern on the side of the Platform regarding this frame gap (and its negative implications for the local mobilization) through the compelling power of

the transnational coalition which includes an advanced attention among the middle-class public at home.

3.2 Claim to power, power to claim: Frames and networks in transnational coalition

The success of the Platform in building up a transnational front that extends from European Greens to US Helsinki Commission, European Roma Rights Centre to UNESCO, lies in its ability to conflate within a single frame two broader ones that have increasingly strong appeal in the international political field. One is "discrimination against Roma" and the other is "heritage protection." The former engages the Roma rights field, and therefore the broader field of human rights, within which "'culture' as an object of rights discourses" has an increasing power. (Cowan, et al., 2001, p. 2-3) This immediate appeal accords also with the shift in the language of political struggles from one of social equality to one of group difference, that is, from "redistribution" to "recognition" (Fraser, 2000), i.e. the rise of identity politics. This apparent resonance between the Platform's frame of "victimization of Roma" and the international political culture should still be explained in more concrete terms. The relevant context here is the institutionalization of Roma rights in the context of EU enlargement process.

3.2.1 Institutionalization of Roma rights

Although the institutionalization and internationalization of a modern Romani activism goes back to the post-WWII period (Klimova-Alexander, 2007), the category Roma has made its entrance to the Western political lexicon since the first half of the 1990s, partly as a result of the strategic shift in the discourse of EU from 'Gypsies of Western Europe' to 'Roma of Eastern Europe' within the context of the enlargement process. (Simandhl, 2006) In fact, by

incorporating 'Roma rights' into the membership criteria of minority rights protection, EU enlargement has been an important impetus for the emergence of an international Romani movement. (Jenne, 2000, p. 190) This political space opened up by the EU has been enhanced by various international organizations monitoring the situation of Roma throughout the region. Deriving mainly from an interest to forestall the post-1989 immigration of Eastern European Roma to various Western countries, this international monitoring is undertaken by such organizations like the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Helsinki Watch, Romani Crisis, and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC). [15] (ibid., p. 190) It is against this background that the year 2006 has been declared to be the "Year of the Roma," crowning the undertaken efforts and inspiring others.

Having launched its EU accession negotiations in 2005, Turkey has been a relatively new context for the institutionalization of 'Roma rights' frame. Yet, its non-communist past has not made it an exception. Turkey's involvement in this European development has happened mainly through a project called "Promoting Roma Rights in Turkey" funded by the EU and co-implemented by European Roma Rights Center (ERRC) centered in Budapest, Helsinki Citizens Assembly (HCA) in Istanbul and Edirne Association for Research of Romani Culture and Solidarity (EDROM) in Edirne. Started in 2005, **"**the project, seeks to build capacity of *[sic]* Roma and other civil society actors to engage in effective advocacy for the rights of Roma and to raise awareness in Turkish society about the human rights problems facing the Romani population."[16]

[15] This international political space has been undergird by the spreading of Romani Studies in the academia. Besides, an increasing number of scholarships are being granted for Roma (for example, the Roma Access Program at Central European University) as well as for scholars working in the 'Roma Rights' field (for example, Fulbright scholarship for scholars doing anthropology of Roma Rights within the EU) .

[16] http://www.hyd.org.tr/?pid=391

In line with these objectives, the number of Roma associations in Turkey dramatically increased in the last couple of years, reaching 18 in 12 cities by as early as 2006.[17] In the meantime, two International Symposia on Roma have been organized by the Accessible Life Association (UYD), from which a team did also a country tour to investigate the situation of Roma in Turkey. This project was supported by the OSI Initiative which has also assisted the SKYGD[18] and the HCA for their projects regarding Roma rights in Turkey.[19] So by the time Sulukule came on the agenda of urban restructuring, there was an emerging network of organizations institutionalizing the 'Roma rights' frame in Turkey. Among these organizations is UYD, which was the first association, along with the Human Settlements Association (IYD), to get involved in the Sulukule case. This early involvement of UYD in the Sulukule issue has linked the local Sulukule association from its inception to the already established network of NGOs working in the emerging field of Roma rights in Turkey.

This alignment is embodied in a letter sent in September 2006 to the Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan, and along with him to the Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, the Mayor of Fatih Municipality, and the UN Special Reporter on the Right to Housing as well as the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights. Co-signed by ERRC, HCA, UYD, EDROM, and Sulukule Romani Culture and Development Association; the letter frames the municipality's Sulukule plan as yet another case of forced eviction of Roma, about which the organizations urge the Prime Minister to take corrective action.[20]

[17] http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=191601

[18] Abbreviation for Sosyal Kültürel Yaşamı Geliştirme Derneği [The Association for Developing Social and Cultural Life].

[19] These projects are the "Project for Developing Social Policies" by the SKYGD and "Promoting Roma Rights in Turkey" by the HCA. Source: http://www.osiaf.org.tr/router.php?sayfa_id=003&res=1024

[20] For the letter, see http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2717&archiv=1

Being a typical example of "externalization of contention" through the mobilization of international support to pressure the domestic government (Tarrow, 2005, p. 145), this letter marks the first historical moment, where the frame of "endangering of Sulukule Roma" has been consolidated by the lobbying power of the network it has exploited. The case of Sulukule, as well as the name of the local association established in this context, have made their way into the newly emerging Roma rights field through the involvement of the UYD, which then carried them further into the international political arena through the ERRC as one of the most central and powerful transnational organization in the Roma Rights field.

Yet the transnational coalition around the Sulukule issue is not limited to the Roma rights field. If it had been so, the issue would have been treated just like any other case of "Roma rights violation." Sulukule, on the other hand, has been by far the most mediatized one among many other cases of conflict incited by the recent urban restructuring in Turkey to the effect of becoming an international symbol of urban contestation. Its appeal has reached beyond ERRC to a much broader array of organizations such as UNESCO, US Helsinki Commission, or European Greens. This unprecedented success of the Sulukule Platform in building up this transnational front against the local municipality lies in the subtlety with which the Platform conflates the frame of "victimization of Roma" with the frame of "heritage protection."

3.2.2 Playing by the rules of the field: 'Heritage protection' and Istanbul 2010

Contesting the municipality's discourse of reviving the historical heritage of the place, the Platform argues that the "local Roma culture" should be seen as part of the historical heritage to be preserved. In doing so, they contend against the municipality within the same field of growth-oriented urban governance, which involves a vast array of international and transnational organizations.

By growth-oriented urban governance, I mean the marketing of urban landscapes as part of the inter-urban competition over global capital. As the post-Fordist reordering of the global economy and of communication technologies erodes the political and economic centrality of nation-states, cities re-emerge as the loci of tansnational capital flows, which leads to a fierce competition among the polities of these post-Fordist cities (or regions) to attract investment by utilizing strategies to market their city. Hence the packaging of 'culture,' 'heritage,' 'environment,' or 'technology' of global cities and through this process the globalization of cities. (Jewson & MacGregor, 1997, p. 3-5)

This new form of urban governance is what is behind the municipality's plan about Sulukule. Although the municipality evokes a 'welfare state' image by popularizing 'slum upgrading for modern and secure apartment living,' the very essence of this renewal enterprise is a state-led gentrification and marketing process; i.e., the realization of the potential rent that the geographic centrality and 'priceless history' of Sulukule offers in an Istanbul declared to be the 2010 European Capital of Culture. As a matter of fact, beside its aim to "preserve the historical and cultural area" and "make the area 'liveable,'" one of the concerns of the municipality in coming up with the renewal plan, is to "prepare the area to be part of the 2010 Cultural Center." (UCL/DPU, 2007, p. 24)

Contesting the municipality's plan about Sulukule, the Platform uses the same developmentalist repertoire, and frames the "local Roma culture" as part of the historical heritage to be revived in an Istanbul that will become the European Capital of Culture. So they ask: "[h]ow can Istanbul be a capital of culture unless we immediately start preserving and reinforcing the colors and the dynamics that belong to the city and its culture?" [21]

[21] http://40gun40gece-sulukule.blogspot.com/2007/10/40-days-40-nights-sulukule-summary.html

The stress on the 'European Capital of Culture' here is a significant discursive maneuver that puts the Platform on the same plane with the municipality. The Istanbul 2010 initiative with the expected total budget of 64, 9 million €[22] has been the main drive behind the recent urban restructuring of Istanbul and certainly the backdrop to the Sulukule plan of the municipality. [23] By using the Istanbul 2010 trump, therefore, the Platform becomes capable to engage the field within which the municipality operates. Appropriating the 'heritage revival' discourse with a multiculturalist and minority-protectionist nuance, the Platform gains a leverage to turn the cards against the municipality.

This confrontation-through-flirt has not remained on a figurative level only. Following the main campaign of the Platform, which has insistently played the '2010 Istanbul' trump, the office of Istanbul 2010 has become an important place where the municipality and the Platform have confronted one another.[24]

The evolving of "Istanbul 2010" from a simple trope to an actual space of negotiation has been facilitated by the already existing link between the Istanbul 2010 initiative and one of the central actors of the Sulukule movement, namely Korhan Gümüş, a prominent figure in the urban-related NGO sector in Turkey, and the president of IYD. Being among the few persons who have mobilized the public and NGO sector together with the goal of making Istanbul the

[22] The funds to be collected for Istanbul 2010 is 120.3 million Euros 10 million of which comes directly form the Turkish Government while 99,8 million Euros is to be collected through a special levy the Government collects for this meta-project. The difference between the budget needed (64,9 million Euros) and the funds to be collected (120,3 million Euros) is what makes this enterprise highly attractive for state authorities. For more information on the project and the details of the budget, see http://www.istanbul2010.org/en/akb_genel_degerlendirmesi.html

[23] In one of the electronic booklets of the Istanbul 2008, "the main contribution of the municipalities" is said to be primarily through "restoration and urban transformation projects…mostly in the years prior to 2010." The Sulukule renewal plan as part of a series of projects carried out by the Fatih municipality to revive the historical heritage should be understood in this context.

[24] The Platform held a meeting at the office of Istanbul 2010 in May 17 2007 followed by another one called 2010 meeting held in the Fatih municipality on June 7. In the meeting held in the 2010 office on the 6th of November, the municipality and the Platform have agreed on forming a multi-partnership commission; an idea that was later rejected by the municipality.

2010 European Capital of Culture, Gümüş is currently in both the executive and advisory boards of the 2010 Istanbul Initiative; which is led by various institutions of the Central Government, as well as the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality.

The mutual reinforcement between such ties and the Platform's frame has turned the Istanbul 2010 Initiative as an EU initiated project to a common ground on which the Platform could talk to the municipality while setting against the latter a broad coalition of organizational and individual actors. The *Figure 1* illustrates this confrontation-through-flirt clearly. The yellow spots show the organizations whose position with respect to the opposition between the Platform and the local municipality is not clear; they represent the sites contested by both sides of the conflict. Green and red colors, on the other hand, denote the oppositional frames, while the black squares represent persons. As it can be seen from the network picture, the EU strikes out as the critical institutional actor that connects the two clusters. This connection especially through the 2010 Istanbul Initiative discloses what I have called confrontation-through-flirt between the Platform and the local municipality in the political field opened up by the EU. In this perspective, and given the contradicting positions of the two local associations, the opposition between the state and the civil society/local community taken-for-granted by many with respect to the Sulukule case[25] dissolves into conflictual clusters complicit with the same field.

The most tangible aspect of this complicity has been an EU project prepared together by UYD, IYD and the local Sulukule association as the main constituents of the Platform. Although eventually rejected by the EU –mainly for technical reasons according to my informants from the

[25]A nice example for this is what a German journalist living in Istanbul writes about "Turkey's Romanies:" "2006 the International Year of the Roma" triggers an array of different emotions. For one thing, in 2006, Turkish Romanies are for the first time ever establishing associations, speaking out in public, and putting forward their demands. At the same time, however, frantic mayors all over Turkey are tearing down a lot of Roma quarters, stripping thousands of Roma of their homes, and justifying all this with the need for gentrification and town development." See http://migrationeducation.de/27.1.html?&rid=25&cHash=1bb2c3f87c

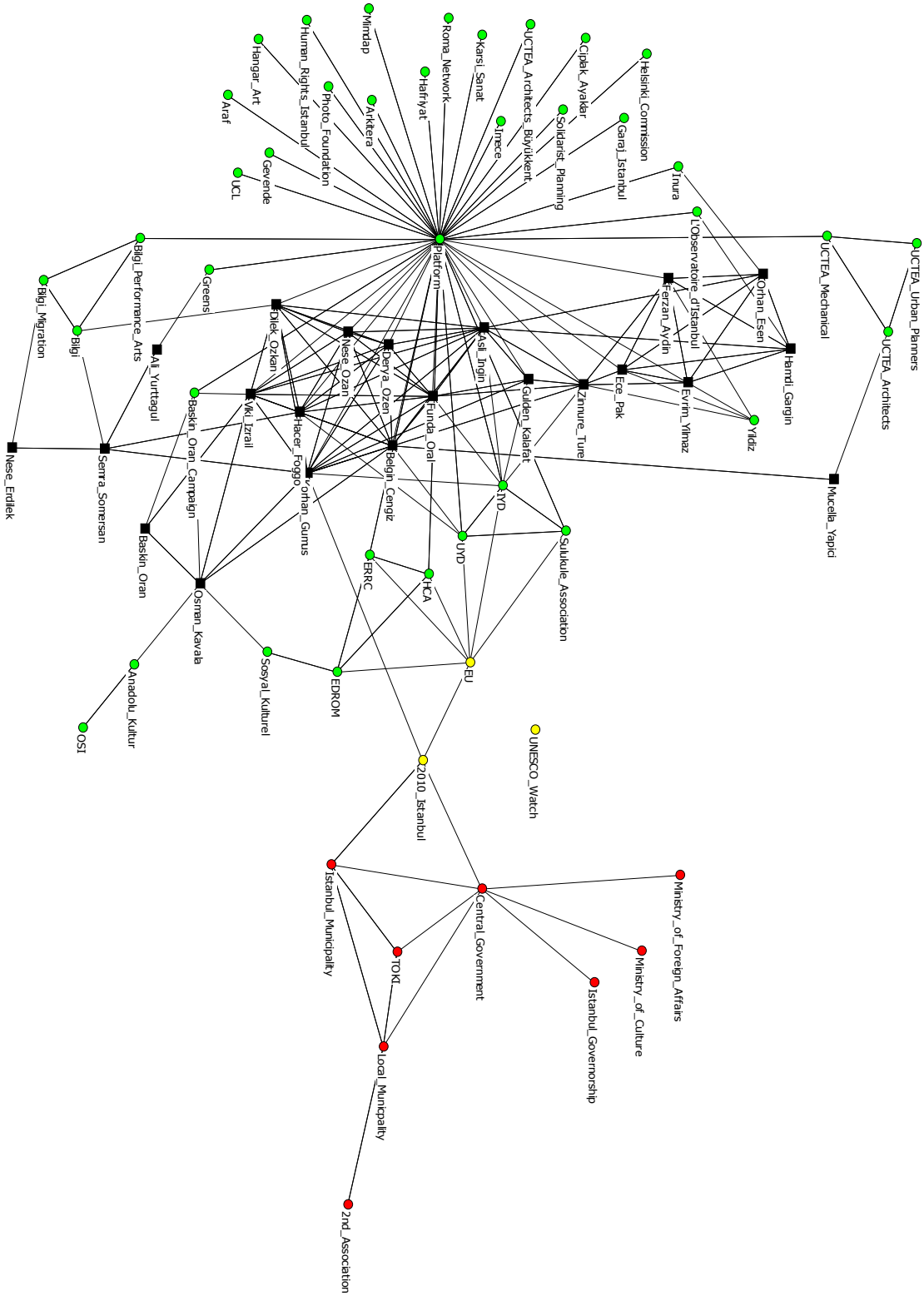


Figure 1. Joined networks of organizations and persons

Platform-, the project has been an important drive for the Sulukule movement following the "40 Days 40 Nights Sulukule" campaign, which lasted until May 2007. Announced in June 2007, this project, namely "Sulukule Neighborhood Development Project," proposes an alternative plan to be carried out by the three NGOs in partnership with the local municipality. The purpose of the project is to develop through a strong collaboration among public institutions and NGOs an "Alternative Society Plan" which would "revive the neighborhood through rehabilitating the houses and developing the community in accordance with the cultural heritage of traditional music and dance."[26]

Not only in form but also in content, this alternative project and the municipality's project constitute different sides of the same coin from the vantage point of post-Fordist urban restructuring of metropolises. Instead of a hotel, a culture center and a parking lot included in the municipality's current plan, the alternative project emphasizes the importance of Entertainment Houses that would not only revive the local economy but also contribute to Turkish tourism.[27] Given this focus on micro-enterprise geared towards touristification of the locality, it is no coincidence that the alternative project aims to "involve in the process the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Fatih Municipality; thereby to advance the inter-institutional collaboration in the context of the Istanbul 2010."

Playing on the same field with the local municipality has not only opened up a transnational space in and through which the Platform has been able to negotiate with the local municipality, it has also generated an advanced attention among the mainly middle-class public at home; an attention materialized in immense cultural production strengthening the frame even further.

[26] http://www.arkitera.com/news.php?action=displayNewsItem&ID=17866

[27] The information about this alternative project is based on my informal talks with some of the Platform members.

3.2.3 Multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and Europeanness: Mobilizing the secular middle class

> "With '40 days and 40 nights activities,' it is not only us [the Platform] who have entered the neighborhood but the entire city" [from my interview with Funda Oral, a member of Sulukule Platform]

.

The success of the Platform in building up a transnational front against the local municipality has been partly mediated to a great extent through extensive media coverage at home as well as abroad. Unlike many other cases of urban contestation whose publicity were largely restricted to alternative- and mostly leftist- media channels on the Internet, the case of Sulukule has been all over the place; on TV, on mainstream press as well as all sorts of alternative media. This unprecedented media attention in favor of the Sulukule Platform has mediated between the latter and the broader the transnational front by turning the issue to a 'matter of public concern.'

The advanced media attention as well as the elevated interest among the public has to do with the changing consumption pattern of the middle class to which the Platform's framing of the Sulukule case has perfectly fit. While the frame of "protection of Roma as part of the historical heritage" does not appeal to the mainly lower class population of the neighborhood who identify themselves as Turkish and Muslim, it attracts the middle-class secular urbanites of Istanbul whose historical longing for a European identity is taking a new form in the context of Turkey's EU accession process.

The consumption patters of the Istanbulite elites have been changing in line with the values represented by the EU. An increasing sensitivity towards minorities has been the embodiment of this transformation. 'Protecting minorities' as the marker of Ottoman legacy of cultural tolerance has become the symbolic resource for the Istanbulite elites today to construct themselves a cosmopolitan urbane identity as the new marker of their own Europeanness:

> Representations of old Istanbul, in the reproduction of old photographs –in books, on posters, and on postcards- expose previously "forgotten" scenes of the city, many of them portraying cosmopolitan urban life with minorities… These narratives are also literary, for they appear in emerging memoirs that bring to light romantic stories of cosmopolitan daily life in old Istanbul. Turkish academic journals… and semi-academic popular magazines about Istanbul… have also been devoting attention to articles on minority history…The run-down areas are becoming places for smart investment in Istanbul, and part of their value is the new status that is now inherent in their minority histories, in their being the locations of the former, true European Istanbul…So narratives of minority history and of European history are becoming resurrected in the city with images of tolerance and harmonious multiculturalism, or of historic cultural riches in the city. The historic minority neighborhoods of Istanbul are being developed with particular images that articulate a modern, progressive and European identity for the city" (Mills, 2006, p. 444-446)

In the context of this emerging sphere of nostalgia, 'preserving the Sulukule Roma' becomes for the urban elites a way of re-inscribing the European culture on the landscape of Istanbul. 'Sulukule Roma' thus becomes one of those "forgotten" minorities to be revived as the Byzantine/Ottoman heritage of the city.

All this multiculturalist imagery betrays the class dimension of the Sulukule movement. Rather than pursuing radical class politics, the Sulukule Platform engages the reformist sensitivities of the secular middle class calling for a "careful urban renewal."[28] (Holm, 2006, p. 115) In the context of Sulukule, however, the issue is much more than a matter of 'civic sensitivity;' what is at stake for secular middle class here is their 'modern' and 'progressive' life-style 'threatened' by the conservative and religious values of the Islamic bourgeoisie, of which the central Government as well as the Fatih Municipality is a part.

Sulukule, in this way, becomes a battlefield between the secular and the Islamic bourgeoisie in Turkey, each asserting its own cultural taste in the common field of 'urban restructuring for heritage revival.' The symbolic importance of Sulukule is also anchored by

[28]Characterizing the urban renewal debates in Berlin in the beginning of the 1990s, the idea of "careful urban renewal," although already a reflection of post-Fordist urban redevelopment, expresses the social democratic aspirations of the time for socially sensitive state initiatives for housing projects that allows for local participation. Although very much a product of the historical and political context of Germany, the concept captures very well the class dimension of the Sulukule case.

some of my informants from the Platform. Among them is Funda Oral, for whom "saving Sulukule is in fact saving and elevating music, dance, entertainment, open-mindedness." It is "the possibility of keeping alive these values," through which she explains her "totally voluntary" involvement in the Sulukule case. When reminded of the Islamically oriented portion of the neighborhood, her voice becomes disheartened: "I don't know how much I would be enthusiastic about a neighborhood who want their children to go to madrasa."

It was not only Funda who expresses her disappointment with the evident Islamic identity in the neighborhood; my other informants from the Platform put forth similar views. Given this strong identification with Sulukule as a symbol, the frame itself seems to be what holds together the Platform in the first place. While mobilizing a strong SMO, the frame goes further on mobilizing other groups sharing the same outlook with the Platform. Among these, art initiatives have been crucial, especially for the public campaigns of the Platform. In the Figure 1, most of the green spots clustered on the upper side of the Platform represent these art initiatives, indicating the quantitative interest in the Platform's frame. Missing from the network picture is the complex network among these art initiatives – something beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important, however, is the fact that the Platform through its frame has been able to exploit and expand these networks; which are also part of the battle over the city symbols. "Do not let Sulukule perish" reads the title of a petition organized buy a group of artists, for whom

> Sulukule means music, dance, art, entertainment, tradition, history, neighborhood, culture, life…It is Byzantine, Ottoman, Turkey, Istanbul, Anatolia. We artists insist: Sulukule should not be sold nor be destroyed. It should be protected; developed, and carried from the past to the future.[29] [My translation]

[29] See http://www.sulukuleyasasin.blogspot.com/

As far as the cultural production in Istanbul is concerned, these artists and their art initiatives are an important part of what Harvey (1993) calls the "cultural mass," a term that he uses "to refer to those working in broadcast media, films, theatre, the plastic and graphic arts, painting, universities, publishing houses, cultural institutions, advertising and communication technologies, etc." (p. 25) Art initiatives in Istanbul are part and parcel of a complex network that connects all these areas Harvey names to one another. Thus, once a collective interest emerges among these art initiatives, it can easily spread over other areas drawing in a multitude of actors in a single issue. This is more or less what has happened in the case of Sulukule although the role of the art initiatives in this process has not been exclusive.

The ease at which the Platform's frame has captivated this "cultural mass" in Istanbul can be explained by the class position of this "mass," which, according to Harvey (2003), is similar to the one of white-collar workers. (p. 26) By collaborating *for* Sulukule, this "cultural mass" explores its own class values in a place-based identity and movement. (ibid., p. 27) It is through these class-based values as well as the complex networks mediating them that a Malaysian artist makes an experimental documentary about Sulukule for the 10th Istanbul Biennial, a prestigious art festival mainly speaking to an upper-middle class audience.[30]

In the context of this strong transnational collaboration, coupled by an advance public attention at home, what is at stake in holding onto a frame that conflates minority protection with heritage revival is a broad network of organizations and actors that bring in immense resources (project grants; publicity in the mainstream media; pressure on the Government through major international organizations; assistance and aid in the organizations of several activities like

[30] "Darling Sulukule, Please Sulukule" project by Wong Hoy Cheong**.** For details, see http://www.iksv.org/bienal10/english/sanatci.asp?sid=87

panels, seminars, workshops; last but not least immense amount of items circulating on the Internet such as articles, petitions, calls, announcements, news, videos, photos[31])

The mobilization of these resources has been possible through the unending efforts of a Platform, employing a certain frame to exploit and expand various networks both at home and abroad. But the Platform itself has mobilized in the first place through the frame that they have refined in the process. This mutual reinforcement between the frame and the network has eventuated in a strong transnational coalition –for the virtue of their transnational ties, great bulk of the "cultural mass" mobilized at home can also be seen as part of this coalition- against the local municipality and along with it, the big state machinery. Figure 2a and Figure 2b illustrates a "what if" comparison of the network pictures with and without the Platform. Based on the organizational networks only, the figures together show how a certain frame mobilizing the Platform in the first place enables the latter to exploit and expand networks on a particular field that is already out there in the *Figure 2a.*

3.3 Structuring the relation between locals and supra-locals

The mutual reinforcement between the network and the frame in the case of Sulukule has structured the relation between the Platform (along with it, the wider transnational coalition) and the local residents in a way that has further stiffened the transnational frame, while reducing significantly the chances for a strong local mobilization.

This structuring goes back to the initial moment following the announcement of the municipality's Sulukule Plan when the local relations have interacted with the outsider actors for the first time in the context of the urban renewal. this particular historical moment, the agency of the outsider actors has been highly critical in the initial shaping of the path along which the

[31]Information and communication technologies (ICT) have played a crucial role in the case of Sulukule.

Figure 2a: Organizational networks *without* the Platform

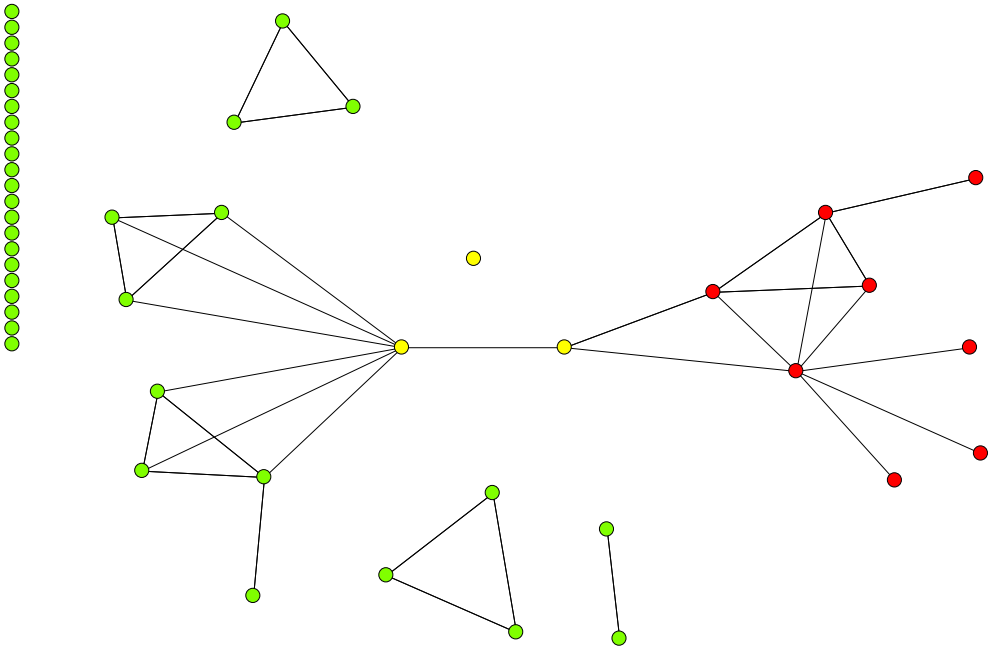
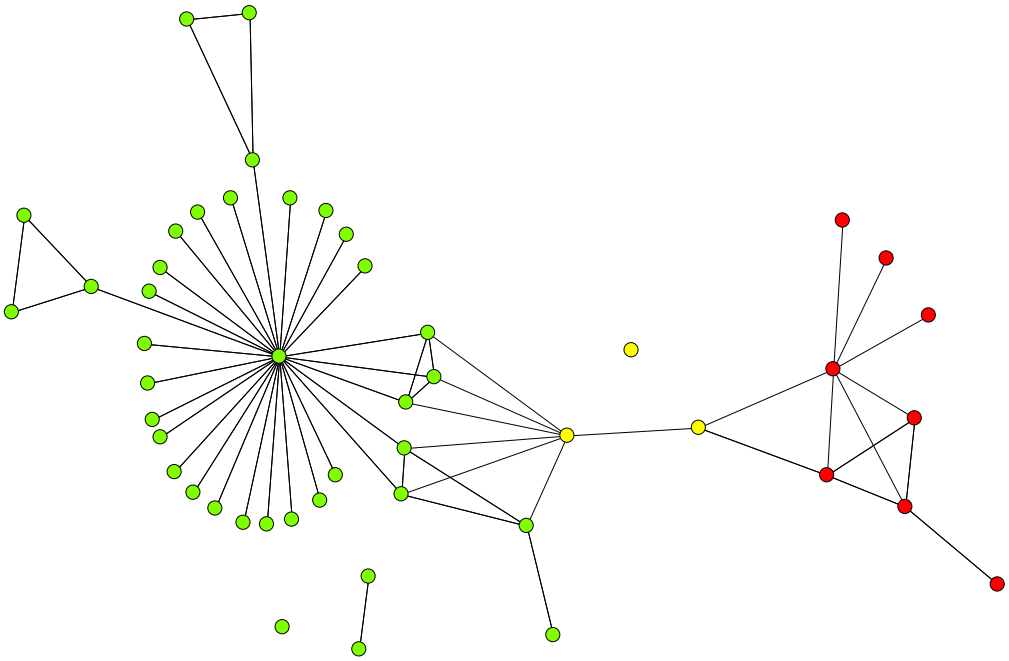


Figure 2b: Organizational networks *with* the Platform



network and the frame has reinforced one another thereafter.

Upon the announcement of the municipality's renewal plan, Semra Somersan, an anthropologist who had been doing a fieldwork in the neighborhood together with her two associates, has decided to help the locals mobilize against the municipality. As she puts it in our interview, her "disappointment with the exclusion of Roma/Gypsy identity by the more Islamically oriented group in the neighborhood" has pushed Somersan to "enhance her contact with Şükrü Pündük," a former owner of the Entertainment Houses who was one of the most "open and helpful" persons during her fieldwork. This initial preference of Somersan for Pündük over the Islamist group has been consequential for the way Sulukule movement has evolved.

As my interviews with the members of the Platform have disclosed, prior to the renewal plan of the municipality, there was already an incentive among a group of musicians (which is not limited to the local musicians only) to establish an association that would strive for the revival of entertainment business. In the newly emerged context of the municipality's renewal about the neighborhood, however, this incentive has been geared towards another one. As Somersan (2007) narrates in her article on Sulukule, "a few of the younger musicians, a former owner of one of the Entertainment Houses and his extended family got together to establish an association to resist demolition of the historical neighborhood." (p. 103) The establishment of this association has been facilitated by Hacer Foggo, by then a member of UYD and an "old friend" of Somersan from the Human rights field where both have written several journalistic pieces.

It is through this alliance between the local network of musicians and the two outsider activists[32] that the local mobilization process has been geared from its inception towards the

[32]In their article on Sulukule, Somersan and Kırca-Schroder (2007) admit that they were "somewhat instrumental in facilitating the foundation of" the local association. (p. 100)

revival of entertainment business. Moreover, while the involvement of the UYD through Foggo has stabilized the frame of "violation of Roma rights," the conflation of this frame with the "heritage revival" one has mainly been through the involvement of Korhan Gümüş (the Chair of the IYD and the executive member of the Istanbul 2010) through his contact with Somersan.

This initial clustering around and through a particular frame (later to evolve into the Platform) has conceived a process of local mobilization restricted to the local musicians, whose number, according to a local musician, is only about 50. (ibid., p. 101) This has been so not only because these musicians, most of whom have no regular jobs, have a clear stake in the entertainment business in general. They are also practically the only residents who would go along with the Roma identity for the image of "authentic Sulukule Roma culture of music and dance" opens up for these residents an ample space where they could convert the spectacular media agitation about the "Sulukule Roma" into social and economic capital.

The focus of the Platform on music and dance as the marker of authentic culture has been reinforced by the high interest of the local musicians (and some former owners of the Entertainment Houses) in the activities organized by the Platform both in the neighborhood and outside. The main local attendants, apart form children, of the "40 Days 40 Nights Sulukule"[33] campaign were these musicians, whose interests have perfectly matched with the centrality of music in the campaign program. Not only numerous popular musicians and bands have visited and played in the neighborhood in the context of this campaign, the musicians of the neighborhood have also played in trendy art places located in the cultural and commercial center of the city.[34] Many of these activities have become unique opportunities for the local musicians

[33]The name of the campaign plays upon the image of splendid –especially wedding- ceremonies characterized by limitless revelry lasting 40 days and 40 nights, thus relates to the entertainment tradition as the historical legacy of Sulukule.

to display their talents, establish contacts, and make a name for themselves in the business thereby.

Towards the end of my last fieldwork I have found out from the president of the local association that the Sulukule Romani Orchestra, as the 'official band" of the neighborhood, was expected to go to Japan for a festival. As Pündük has told me, the connection was made by a former member of garajistanbul, an art initiative which has supported the Sulukule Platform by organizing a night in its large avant-garde "garage" for the performance of Sulukule Romani Orchestra. "If everything goes all right," said Pündük, the next step following Japan is a "Balkan tour."

Pündük, himself a musician and a member of the Sulukule band, has played a significant role in mediating between the network of local musicians and the rapidly expanding network of outsider actors and organizations. As he and the local association of which he is the Chair have become the 'local face' of the movement, the aspirations and interests of these musicians has come to stand for the aspirations and interests of the whole neighborhood. Since this particular image of the local has fitted very well the Platform's frame that has already proved its transnational appeal, the selective recruitment in the neighborhood has reinforced the increasingly stabilized transnational perception of the locality.

The most tangible aspect of this mutual reinforcement between the transnational network and the local network of musicians has been the selective attention of the former on the local space. From very early on, the local association, which is at the same time the coffeehouse of Pündük, has been the locus of interaction between the residents and any kind of outsiders. While the association has become the exclusive place for the meetings of the Platform in the

[34] For the list of activities included in the campaign, see http://40gun40gece-sulukule.blogspot.com/2007/10/40-days-40-nights-sulukule-summary.html

neighborhood, the activities organized by the latter has also been limited to the immediate area around the association. This limitation was apparent in the very moment when the neighborhood was highly overcrowded by all sorts of outsiders. On the first day of "40 Days 40 Nights Sulukule" activities in the neighborhood, a group of musicians and children were dancing with Roma music in front of a number of cameramen recording the event; whereas a larger circle of residents were staying outside the area uttering once in a while some contemptuous comments regarding the scene in front of them; all of which yielding a striking picture of the internal differentiation in the neighborhood.

The selective use of the local space by the Platform, has in time structured not only the media attention but visits of any outsiders, who, once arriving to the neighborhood, are either asking for the local association or being directed by some of the residents who are already used to these routine visits. This increasing channeling of the visits, in turn, have established and secured zones of interaction between the residents and the transnational network. During my first fieldwork, which came almost a year after the establishment of the local association, I was surprised quite a few times by the response I got from residents living two blocks away from the association: "what association?"

Not only this limited interaction has put a distance between the local association and the majority of the residents, it has also made some even more furious against the visitors: "They do not consult us at all, they don't go up even a tiny step further from this association to other parts of the neighborhood," says one of my informants expressing a common outcry among the Islamically oriented circles. It is this silencing of the counter-frames, which, according to Oktay Hallaç, have motivated them to establish the second association. In this sense, the centrality of Pündük's coffeehouse to the Sulukule movement has paved the way for an alliance between the

municipality and some of the expressive Islamic residents by minimizing the encounters between different networks and contradicting frames.

Not only that. This centrality has also led to the exclusion of local women from the local mobilization in a neighborhood where coffeehouses full of idle men constitute the 'public sphere.' As coffeehouses are practically inaccessible to women whose *lebensraum* barely extends beyond their neighbors' houses, the image of "authentic Roma women" has done nothing but perpetuated the gendered local public sphere, rendering invisible the striking absence of local women in the movement, except maybe for a few aged women.

All these have culminated in a gap between the ones increasingly empowered by the selective attention of the transnational network and the ones who are either excluded from this attention, or disheartened by it. The increasing ties between the network of musicians and other 'more prestigious' networks has led to suspicion among many, who are well aware of the empowering potential of such weak ties in a place where "everybody is everybody else's relative." Because of his high popularity as well as of his multiple affiliations with immense amount of outsider actors and organizations, the president of the local association has been the most suspicious of all. Operating as a bridge between the transnational network and the neighborhood, he shares the common fate of all brokers:

> "Brokers by their very structural position, cannot be full members of any network cluster. Often their marginal nature means they are not fully trusted because no single cluster can exercise total social control over them. "(Wellman, 1983, p. 177)

In this way, the selective empowerment brought about by the highly channeled relation between the transnational network and the neighborhood has become yet another factor that has

decreased the chances for a much wider and less-hierarchical local mobilization in a neighborhood where, to repeat once again, “everybody is everybody else’s relative.”

Conclusion

By looking at a particular case of urban contestation incited by an urban renewal project, I have delineated the mechanisms behind the largely failed mobilization in a neighborhood *for* which there is a strong and striking transnational coalition. In accounting for this contradiction, I have suggested that it is only by looking at the complex interaction between networks and frames that we can capture the peculiar ways in which large-scale political developments are mediated by the historically situated actors interacting in the context of partly contingent historical events.

I have explained the largely failed local mobilization in the case of Sulukule through the marginalization of local mobilization by the preponderance of transnational collaboration. In this respect, I have demonstrated how a particular frame exploits and expands networks within a particular field. Depending on the power of the field and on the power of the frame in engaging that field, the expansion of the networks might be spectacular, as in the case of Sulukule. These expanding networks, in turn, stabilize the frame by channeling in resources circulating in the field. I have also showed how this mutual reinforcement between the frame and the networks structure the relation between locals and transnationals in a way that fortifies the frame against local counter-frames; all of which, in the case of Sulukule, perpetuates the selective recruitment of the locals to the movement and decreases significantly the possibility for wider neighborhood solidarity.

I have implied that all these mechanisms indicate the ways in which a particular field establishes and reinforces itself. In the case of Sulukule, this is the political field opened up by the Turkey's EU accession process. Both the current urban restructuring and the institutionalization of 'Roma rights' are incited by and large by the 'aspirations' for EU membership. Whether or not Turkey will one day be a member state of the EU, this question

itself is already shaping the urban and the political landscape of Istanbul. What characterizes this landscape is the fierce fight between the secular and Islamic bourgeoisies, each asserting its own cultural taste through the symbols of the city. In this respect, the story of Sulukule is a bottom-up story of the EU enlargement process. Rather than being a battle between the state and the civil society, it is the product of the complex interaction between urban restructuring geared towards making Istanbul the European Capital of Culture in 2010 and the institutionalization of 'Roma rights' in Turkey as part of the minority criteria of the accession process.

It is this context in which the largely failed local mobilization in the Sulukule case should be understood. The problem does not lie much in the perils of identity politics or NGO activism as such, but in the liquidation of their emancipatory potential by the irresistible discourses and resources of the field; i.e., in the uprooting of the grassroots and turning the victimized into political objects rather than political subjects of their own conflict.

What would be interesting to look at, in this regard, are the alternative formations on the borders of the field, where more radical leftist repertoires with their own more or less distinctive networks are challenging the institutionalized EU-oriented NGO activism in contesting the victimization of the poor by the current urban restructuring of Istanbul. Such a focus would not only be analytically fruitful as it could reveal highly complex ways in which competing frames and networks interact. It could also illuminate an important dimension of the Turkish political landscape, namely the contentious relation among various leftist circles against the background of Turkey's EU accession process.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Types of ties among organizations and persons involved in the Sulukule case

Among organizations:

- Finacial tie
- Unealized financial tie,
- Project-based tie
- Issue-based tie (strong)
- Issue-based tie (weak)
- Activity-based tie
- Intra-organizational tie

Among Persons:

- Friendship tie
- Collegual tie
- Issue-based tie (strong)
- Issue-based tie (weak)
- Activity-based tie

Appendix 2

List of organizations and persons involved in the Sulukule case

Organizations:

- *ERRC*: European Roma Rights Centre
- *HCA*: Helsinki Citizens Assembly
- *UYD*: Accessible Life Association
- *IYD*: Human Settlements Association
- *Sulukule Association*: Sulukule Romani Culture and Development Association
- *2nd Association*: Neslisah and Hatice Sultan Solidarity and Development Association
- *EDROM:* Foundation of the Romani Associations Federation
- *Greens*: European Greens
- *Helsinki Commission*: US Helsinki Commission
- *UNESCO Watch*: UNESCO Istanbul Watch Committee
- *EU:* European Union
- *UCTEA Architects:* Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects- Chamber of Architects
- *Roma Network:* Roma Virtual Network
- *2010 Istanbul*: 2010 Istanbul Initiative
- *Human Rights Istanbul*: Human Rights Association- Istanbul Branch
- *UCTEA Architects Buyukkent*: UCTEA- Chamber of Architects- Büyükkent Branch
- *Bilgi Performance Arts*: Istanbul Bilgi University- Department of Stage and Performance Arts
- *Karsi Sanat*
- *Garaj Istanbul*: garajistanbul
- *Hafriyat*
- *Photo Foundation*: Photography Foundation
- *Imece*: Urban Planning Movement of Society
- *Solidarist Planning*: Solidarist Planning Workshop
- *UCTEA Mechanical*: UCTEA- Chamber of Mechanical Engineers
- *Arkitera*
- *Platform*: Sulukule Platform
- *Mimdap*
- *Hangar Art*: Hangar Art Club
- *Ciplak Ayaklar*: Ciplak Ayaklar Kumpanyasi
- *Araf*
- *Gevende*
- *Local Municipality*
- *Istanbul Municipality*: Istanbul Metropolitan University
- *TOKI*: Housing Development Administration

- *UCL:* University Collage London-Development Planning Unit
- *Sosyal Kulturel*: Sosyal Kulturel Yasami Gelistirme Dernegi [Association for Developing Social and Cultural Life]
- *OSI*: Open Society Institute
- *Anadolu Kultur*
- *Baskin Oran Campaign*: Baskin Oran MP Candidacy Campaign
- *Inura:* International Network for Urban Research and Action
- *L'observatoire d'Istanbul*: L'observatoire Urbain d'Istanbul (French Institute for Anatolian Studies)
- *Bilgi*: Bilgi University
- *Bilgi Migration*: Center for Migration Research of Istanbul Bilgi University
- *UCTEA Urban Planners*: UCTEA- Chamber of Urban Planners
- *Yildiz*: Yildiz Technical University
- *Central Government*
- *Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*
- *Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism*
- *Istanbul Governorship*

Persons:

- Korhan Gümüş
- Hacer Foggo
- Asl Kıyak İngin
- Viki Çirput İzrail
- Mücella Yapıcı
- Semra Somersan
- Osman Kavala
- Ali Yurttagül
- Neşe Erdilek
- Funda Oral
- Belgin Cengiz
- Neşe Ozan
- Derya Nüket Özen
- Orhan Esen
- Hamdi Gargın
- Baskın Oran
- Gülden Kalafat
- Zinnure Türe
- Ferzan Aydın
- Dilek Özkan
- Ece Özden Pak
- Evrim Yılmaz

Reference List

Adaman, F. & Keyder, Ç. (2005). *Poverty and social exclusion in the slum areas of large cities in Turkey* (Prepared for the European Commission with grant no. VC/2005/0155). Retrieved on January 10, 2007, from http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_inclusion/docs/2006/study_turkey_en.pdf

Barany, Z. D. (2002). Ethnic mobilization without prerequisites: The East European Gypsies. *World Politics 54* (3), 277-307

Behar, D. & Islam, T. (Eds.). (2006). İstanbul'da soylulaştırma: Eski kentin yeni sakinleri [Gentrification in Istanbul: An old city's new residents]. Institut Francais d'Etudes Anatoliennes. Istanbul: Bilgi University Publications.

Cowan, J. K.; Dembour, M-B. & Wilson, R. A. (2001). Introduction. In Cowan et al. (Eds.), *Culture and Rights.* (p. 1-26). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

Emirbayer, M. & Goodwin, J. (1994). Network Analysis, Culture, and the Problem of Agency. *American Journal of Sociology, 99* (6), 1411-1454

Ergun, N. (2004). Gentrification in Istanbul. *Cities, 21* (5), 391-405

Fraser, N. (2000). Rethinking recognition. *New Left Review, 3,* 107-120

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis.* Harper Colophon Books

Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (1997). Beyond "culture": Space, identity, and the politics of difference. In A. Gupta & J. Ferguson (Eds.), *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology.* (p.33-50). Durham and London: Duke University Press

Guy, W. (Ed.). (2001). *Between past and future: The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Hatfield, Hertfordshire, UK : University of Hertfordshire Press

Harvey, D. (1993). From space to place and back again: Reflections on the condition of postmodernity. In J. Bird et al. (Eds.), *Mapping the cultures: Local cultures, global change* (p. 329). London and New York: Routledge

Holm, A. (2006). Urban renewal and the end of social housing: The roll out of neolibralism in East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg. *Social Justice, 33*(3), 114-128

Jenne, E. (2000). The Roma of Central and Eastern Europe: Constructing a stateless nation. In J. Stein (Ed.), *The politics of national minority participation in post-communist Europe: State-building, democracy, and ethnic mobilization* (189-???). Armonck, NY: M.E. Sharpe

Jewson, N. & MacGregor, S. (1997). Transforming cities: Social exclusion and the reinvention of partnership. In N. Jewson & S. MacGregor (Eds.), *Transfroming cities: Contested governence and new spatial divisions* (1-18). London; New York: Routledge

Klímová-Alexander, Ilona (2007) 'The Development and Institutionalization of Romani Representation and Administration. Part 3b: From National Organizations to International Umbrellas (1945-1970) - the International Level', Nationalities Papers, 35:4, 627 - 662

Kurban, D. (2004/5). Unravelling a trade-off: Reconciling minority rights and full citizenship in Turkey. *European Yearbook of Minority Issues, 4*, 341-372

McAdam, D. ; Tarrow, S. G. & Tilly, C. (2001). *Dynamics of contention.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

Mills, A. (2006). Boundaries of the nation in the space of the urban: Landscape and social memory in Istanbul. *Cultural Geographies, 13,* 367-394

Ortaylı, İ. (1995). Sulukule. In *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Vol. 7, p. 70-71). İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yayınları

Simhandl, K. (2006). 'Western gypsies and travellers'-'eastern roma': The creation of political objects by the institutions of the European Union. *Nations and Nationalism, 12*(1), 97-115

Simmel, G. (1955). *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations.* Translated by Kurt H. Wolff and Reinhard Bendix. New York: Free Press

Snow, D. A. et al. (1986). Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation. *American Sociological Review, 51*(4), 464-481

Somersan, S. & Kırca-Schroeder, S. (2007). Resisting eviction: Sulukule Roma in search of right to space and place. *Anthropology of East Europe Review, 25* (2), 96-107

Steinberg, M. W. (1999). The talk and back talk of collective action: A dialogic analysis of repertories of discourse among nineteenth-century English cotton spinners. *The American Journal of Sociology, 105* (3), 36-780

Stewart, M. (2002). Underclass, race and 'the Roma' in post-communist Eastern Europe. In C. Hann (Ed.), *Postsocialism: Ideas, Ideologies and Practices in Europe and Asia*. (p. 133-155) London: Routledge

Tarrow, S. (2005). *The New Transnational Activism.* New York: Cambridge University Press

UCL/DPU: University Collage London Development Planning Unit (2007). *Placing* Sulukule*: Towards an alternative proposal to conserve the living heritage of Romani culture*. (Report). Retrieved on February 13, 2008, from http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/final%20report%20modified%20screen%2021_June_2007%20with%20ap.pdf

Uzun, C. N. (2003). The impact of urban renewal and gentrification on urban fabric: Three cases in Turkey. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, 94* (3), 363–375

Vermeersch, P. (2006). *The Romani movement: Minority politics and ethnic mobilization in contemporary Central Europe.* New York: Berghahn Books

Wacquant, L. (1993). Urban outcasts: Stigma and division in the black American ghetto and the French urban periphery. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 17*(3), 366-383

Wellman, B. (1983). Network Analysis: Some Basic Principles. *Sociological Theory, 1*, 155-200