

## A MEDITERRANEAN HISTORY: THE RESTORATION OF SHEIK SOULEIAM MESCIDE IN ISTANBUL

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### ABSTRACT

Few cities around the world can boast a glorious past as Istanbul did. At the same time crossroad of conflicts and bridge of different cultures, it hosts now a new symbol of cooperation, which melts the Italian and Turkish approach. Part of a Monastic complex in the Roman times, the octagonal Byzantine baptistry had been transformed into the actual Sheik Suleyman Masjid during the XV Century. Nowadays part of a residential neighbourhood in the Fathy District, it is completely absorbed by the urban context and used as Mosque for the local community.

Part of the restoration programme of the VGM, General Directorate of Foundations T.R. Prime Ministry, the restoration had been the climax of a relationship raised with Assorestauro, based on the MedArt Project, granted by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development, MISE, and the Region Emilia Romagna.

A debate between two different approaches had been opened: the Italian one, based on a deep process of analyses aimed at conserving the authenticity of the building, the Turkish one directed at restoring its stylistic asset. From its surfaces, the debate had been extended: the structural asset and the mitigation of the seismic risk, the energetic analyses and the hi-efficiency and a sustainable approach, based on the newest technologies and hi-level expertise of the Italian market.

The final goal aimed at avoiding re-creating a temporal asset based on the Ottoman or Byzantine style, or, worse still, to create a hybrid between the two, but enhancing any visible phase of the history of the building, to allow the users to appreciate their differences and peculiar characteristics.

### Key-words:

Ottoman building, Mosque, Restoration, Baptistry, seismic consolidation, training