

**A REPORT OF CONCERN ON THE CONSERVATION ISSUES OF
THE ISTANBUL LAND WALLS WORLD HERITAGE SITE
With A Special Focus on the Historic Yedikule Vegetable Gardens
(Yedikule Bostanları)**

A Report Presented to

**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
World Heritage Centre**

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World Heritage Sites Office**

Istanbul Site Management Directorate

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An old photo of the Land Walls by Guillaume Berggren (circa 1880, Öger, Zeynep and Gülru Tanman (ed.s), 2007, *Sur, Kemer, Kubbe: Osmanlı Fotoğrafçılarının Gözüyle Bizans İstanbulu*, Pera Museum, Istanbul, 122-123).

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This report was written by

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based on Kivilcim Çorakbaş's research on "The Preparation of a Site Management Plan for the Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site" at Koç University's Research Center on Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC)

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The content of this report was approved by:

Archaeologists Association Istanbul Branch

Yedikule Gardens Preservation Initiative

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ABBREVIATIONS

OUV: Outstanding Universal Value

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WHS: World Heritage Site

SMP: Site Management Plan

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SUMMARY

The Land Walls of Istanbul constitute a remarkable area defining the ancient city's historical peninsula. Dating back to the reign of Theodosius II (408-450 AD), the Land Walls mark the land boundaries of the Byzantine capital. The Land Walls are considered to be amongst the greatest achievements of ancient military architecture due to their multiple defense systems consisting of a moat (taphros), outer terrace (parateichion), outer wall (mikron teichos), inner terrace (peribolos), and inner wall (mega teichos). With UNESCO's inclusion of the monument and its surroundings on the World Heritage List in 1985, the remarkable significance of the Land Walls was internationally acknowledged.

During the Byzantine period, the Land Walls had already undergone several transformations - an indicator of their dynamic relationship with the urban fabric of the city and with the larger transformations of the Byzantine state.

Furthermore, during the Ottoman conquest of the city, the Land Walls continued serving the capital as its urban limits and defenses. Construction of the Yedikule fortress, together with numerous renovation projects along the defensive circuit at the hands of the early Ottoman rulers indicate a carefully crafted urban narrative inclined to consider Byzantine monumental architecture as part of the city's pedigree.

Presence of the Land Walls contributed to the shaping of a rich and varied urban landscape both in Byzantine and Ottoman periods, with extended cemeteries on the exterior of the monument, suburban monasteries and healing shrines constructed during the Byzantine period, vegetable gardens that partially supplied the city's produce demand, processional roads and much more.

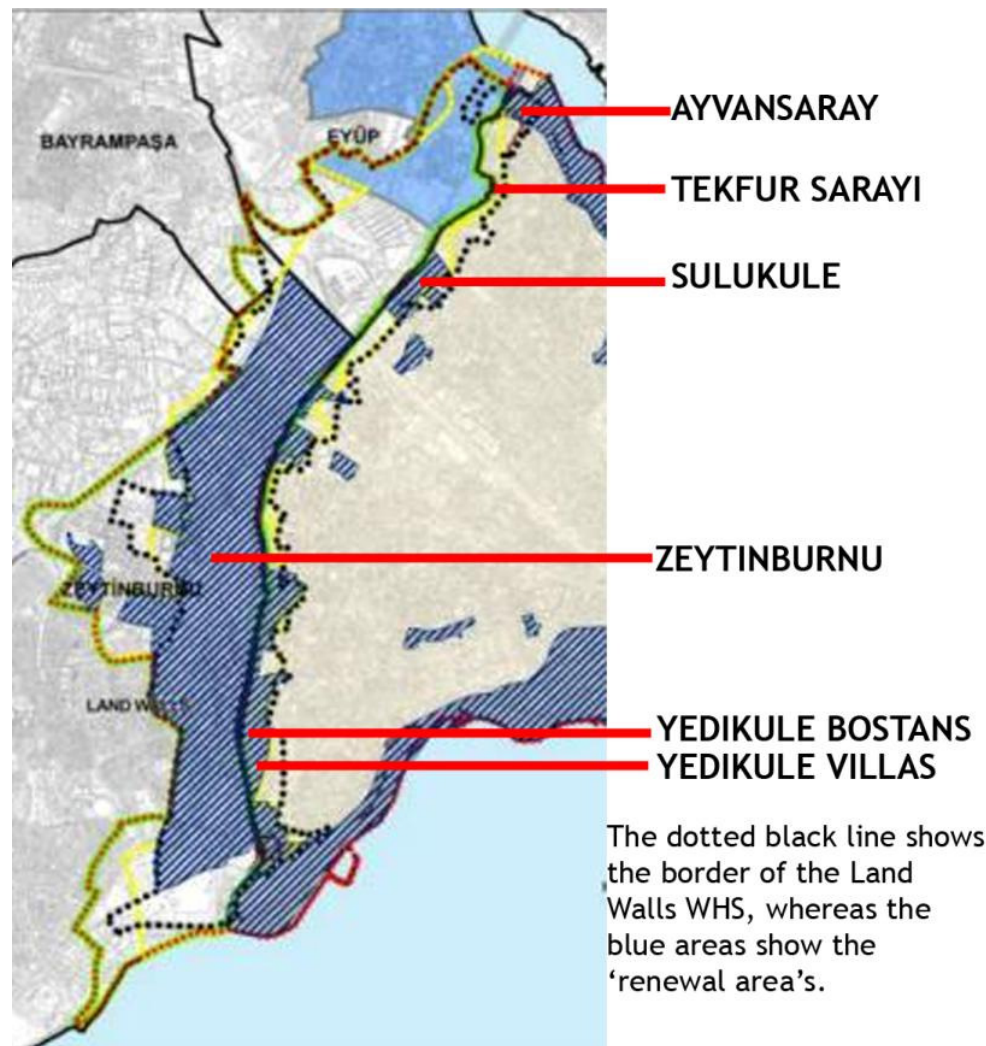
The OUV of the Land Walls WHS is under threat not only by the demolition of Yedikule Historic Vegetable Gardens, but also by the ongoing renewal projects, restoration and reconstruction works that the local municipalities have begun to implement. The implementation of the following cases and projects has created extensive conservation issues within the Land Walls WHS: (See map, page V):

- a. The Yedikule case (see Section 3.a)
- b. Unsuitable restoration and reconstruction of the land walls and Tekfur Saray (Palace of Porphyrogenitus) (see Section 3.b)
- c. The Sulukule case (see Section 3.c)
- d. The Ayvansaray case (see Section 3.d)
- e. The Zeytinburnu "Cultural Valley Project" (see Section 3.e)
- f. Incongruous high-rise buildings (see Section 3.f)

In the following report of concern, we discuss the threats to the tangible and intangible values of Istanbul Land Walls Historic Peninsula with a special focus on the significance of the Historic Vegetable Gardens (*Bostans*).

The shortcomings of the national legislative framework are discussed in Section 2, whereas some of the conservation issues are raised in Section 3. Appendix I highlights the approach of the Historic Peninsula SMP to the Land Walls WHS.

For those who are interested in the history and the sociocultural value of the Istanbul historic vegetable gardens, Appendix II provides an historic research and evaluation of these gardens and their integral relationship with the Land Walls.



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1. INTRODUCTION

UNESCO inscribed the Land Walls of Istanbul and its surroundings as a World Heritage Site (WHS) as one of the amongst four Historic Areas of Istanbul in 1985. In the statement of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), the site was described as “the area along both sides of the Theodosian land walls including remains of the former Blachernae Palace”¹. Moreover, in the OUV, it was underlined that “the 6,650 meter terrestrial wall of Theodosius II with its second line of defense, created in 447, was one of the leading references for military architecture”². The description of the Land Walls WHS emphasizes the importance of the current layout of the walls resulting from modifications performed in the 7th and 12th centuries and the presence of the quarter and the Palace of the Blacherne³.

The Land Walls of Istanbul constitute a remarkable area in the historical peninsula of Istanbul. Dating back to the reign of Theodosius II (408-450 AD), the “Land Walls” enclose the land boundaries of the Byzantine settlement. Due to their multiple defense systems consisting of a moat (taphros), outer terrace (parateichion), outer wall (mikron teichos), inner terrace (peribolos), and inner wall (mega teichos), the Land Walls are considered to be one of the greatest achievements of ancient military architecture.(Figure 1).

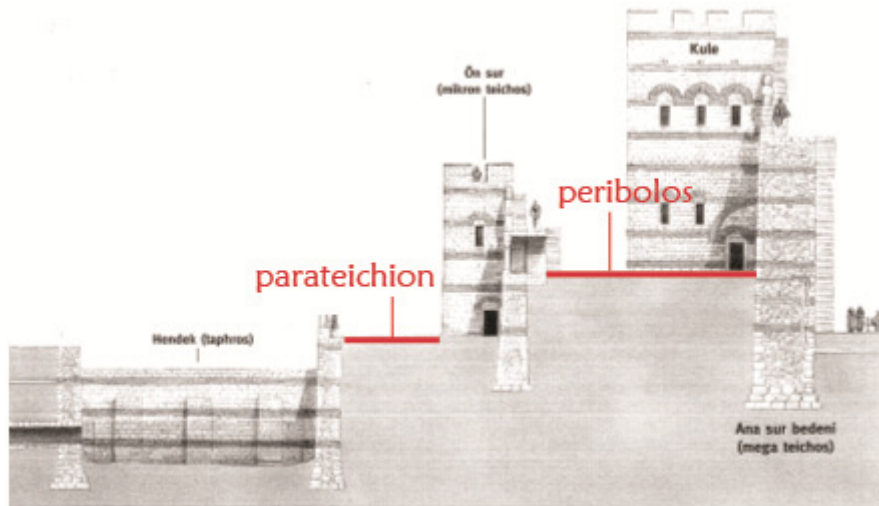


Figure 1 The plan and cross-section of the Land Walls. The moat may be seen on the left; the area between the inner wall and the outer wall is called *peribolos*, whereas the area between the outer wall and the moat is called *parateichion* (after Turnbull, S. 2004, *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*, Osprey Publishing Ltd., 11).

¹ UNESCO World Heritage List, Historic Areas of Istanbul, accessed October 1, 2013. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356>

² UNESCO World Heritage List, Historic Areas of Istanbul.

³ *Ibid.*

The Land Walls extend along the west side of the Historic Peninsula, from the Marmara Sea to the ruins of a part of the Byzantine Palace called Tekfur Sarayı. The first phase of the Theodosian Walls, that is, a single wall studded with defense towers, was completed in 4134. Due to the earthquake of 447, 57 towers were demolished and reconstructed in only 60 days, this time as a double wall and a moat⁵. According to Van Millingen⁶, the defense system that the Land Walls was equipped with was a quiet advanced one:

... [In 447] another wall, with a broad and deep moat before it, was erected in front of the Wall of Anthemius [the wall constructed in 413], to place the city behind three lines of defense. The walls were flanked by 192 towers, while the ground between the two walls, and that between the Outer Wall and the Moat; provided room for the action of large bodies of troops. These five portions rose tier above tier, and combined to form a barricade 190-201 feet thick, and over 100 feet high.⁷

The Land Walls occupy an area of 16,5 hectares, which constitute 3,5 percent of the area of whole Historic Peninsula conservation area⁸. The width of the Land Walls monument extends over 70 m, whereas their length is more than 6 km, as referred to above. The area covered by the Land Walls finds no comparison in the Ancient world; accordingly, a rich cultural landscape has emerged within the Land Walls' area through centuries. Some examples of the landscape, spatial organization and monuments that were constructed around the Land Walls are historic cemeteries, the historic vegetable gardens, and the Byzantine and Ottoman period architecture. These architectural works, such as the monasteries of Studios and Chora, the Blachernae quarters, Tekfur Sarayı and Yedikule Castle, were planned around the placement and presence of the Land Walls.

As a result, the Land Walls WHS hosts numerous monuments from the Byzantine and the Ottoman Periods, such as traditional residences, cemeteries and the historic urban vegetable gardens; all of which were formed in relation to the Land Walls monument.

In October 2011, the Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan (SMP), which includes the guidelines regarding the management of all of the four Historic Areas of Istanbul WHSs, was adopted by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, and was additionally validated by four local municipalities, Fatih, Eyüp, Zeytinburnu and Bayrampaşa, which oversee zones included in the Historic Peninsula SMP area. According to the national law⁹, "...Public institutions and

⁴ Van Millingen, Alexander, 1899, Byzantine Constantinople: The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites, John Murray, Albemarle Street, London, 46;

Sumner-Boyd, Hillary, and John Freely, 2010, 'Strolling through Istanbul', Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 337.

⁵ Ahunbay, Metin, 2007, "İstanbul Karasurları: Tarih, Yapım Tekniği ve Koruma", Karasurlarının korunması için uygun yaklaşım ve yöntemler sempozyumu, pp 28-31, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Istanbul, 28.

⁶ Van Millingen, Byzantine Constantinople, 46.

⁷ A thorough understanding of the Land Walls can be acquired by looking at previous studies. Together with the studies referred here, the following resources are important for the historiography of the Land Walls:

- Asutay-Effenberger, Neslihan, 2007, Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel-İstanbul, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York.
- Foss C.; Winfield D., 1986, Byzantine Fortifications: An Introduction, Pretoria, pp.52-70.
- Müller-Wiener, Wolfgang, 1977, Bildlexicon zur Topographie Istanbuls. Byzantion-Konstantinopels-Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts, Tübingen.
- Schneider A. M., Meyer-Plath B., 1943, Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel II, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 1943, [Denkmäler Antiker Architektur 8].
- Tsangadas, B. C. P. 1980. The Fortifications and Defense of Constantinople, Columbia University Press, New York.

⁸ Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 77.

⁹ "as stated within the article of Appendix-2a which was added to the Law on the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Properties numbered 2863 as per the Law numbered 5226."

establishments, municipalities and natural and legal persons are required to obey the management plan approved by the Coordination and Advisory Board, in order to prioritize the services under the [site management] plan and to allocate the necessary funds in their budgets accordingly”¹⁰. In other words, the SMP is the guiding document for all activity in the four WHSs composing the ‘Historic Areas of Istanbul’. However, since the plan came into effect in October 2011, no steps have been taken by the related municipalities in order to implement the projects that the SMP proposed. For further information regarding the content of the Historic Peninsula SMP, please see Appendix I.

As pointed out by Herb Stovel¹¹, “Suggesting that the adequacy of management can be verified by demonstrating the existence of a management plan, without reference to the actual impact of effectiveness of management measures within the plan is obviously misplaced”. According to Stovel, there is a “need to look beyond the mere presence of formal management instruments or controls as indicators of management effectiveness”¹². In this report of concern, one of our aims is to reveal the fact that the responsible authorities have not implemented or complied with the Historic Peninsula SMP and its conservation measures for the Land Walls WHS. Moreover, the existence of a SMP has not proven to be effective for the conservation of the parts of the Land Walls WHS. For more information on the content of the Historic Peninsula SMP and the conservation measures proposed by it, please see Appendix I.

UNESCO’s Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention¹³ highlights the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity of the World Heritage Sites. Referring to the integrity of the cultural heritage, it is stated in item 89 of the Operational Guidelines¹⁴ that:

...Relationships and dynamic functions present in cultural landscapes, historic towns or other living properties essential to their distinctive character should also be maintained.

In this report of concern, it is argued that the historic vegetable gardens (*bostans*)¹⁵, traditional residences and historic monuments with their tangible and intangible assets altogether form a cultural landscape, and that they are ‘essential to the distinctive character’

¹⁰ Cited in “Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan”, 2011, 7.

¹¹ Stovel, Herb, 2004, “Approaches to Managing Urban Transformation for Historic Cities” in: The Conservation of Urban Heritage: Macao Vision, Proceedings of the Conference held at the Macao Cultural Centre, Macao S.A.R. 10-12 Sept. 2002, pp. 103-120, Macau: Instituto Cultural do Governo da Regio Administrativa Especial de Macau, 2004), 104-105.

¹² Stovel, “Approaches to Managing Urban Transformation for Historic Cities”, 106.

¹³ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 2013, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, World Heritage Centre, items 79-95.

¹⁴ UNESCO, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, 23.

¹⁵ A detailed definition of the term of ‘bostan’ can be found in Bilgin’s article (Bilgin, Arif, 2010, “Osmanlı Dönemi İstanbul Bostanları (bir giriş denemesi)”, *Yemek ve Kültür* Vol. 20, Çiya Yayınları, İstanbul, 87): *Bahaddin Yediıldız’ın “XVIII Asır Türk Vakıflarının İktisadi Boyutu” (Vakıflar Dergisi XVIII, Ankara, 1984, s. 5-41) isimli makalesinde yazar, vakıflara ait tarım ve işletmelerini; arsa, bahçe, bostan, mezraa, tarla, çiftlik ve mukataa olarak yedi kısımda ele alır. Bunlardan birbirine benzeyen iki arazi tipi, bahçe ve bostanlardır. Yediıldız, bahçeyi, içinde meyve ağaçlarının ve süs bitkilerinin bulunduğu, boyutu bir dönümle yüz ve hatta daha fazla dönüm arasında değişebilen, etrafı genellikle duvarla çevrilmiş, bazen bir çeşit meyve ağacını barındıran, bazen de çok çeşitli ağaçların birlikte bulunduğu bir toprak tipi olarak tanımlamaktadır. Yazar bostanları ise, “hemen hemen ‘bahçe’lerle aynı genişliğe sahip, sebze ekimine tahsis edilmiş, umumiyetle taş duvarlarla çevrili ve nadiren ağaçlar, fakat özellikle ‘bahçevan’ın yani bostancının oturması için küçük bir ev, ahırlar, sundurmalar, su kuyuları, havuzlar, ve su dolapları ihtiva eden” işletme türü olarak tavsif etmektedir.*

of the Land Walls WHS: For further information on the historic vegetable gardens and their history and sociocultural value, please see Appendix II, please refer to page 33.

This report not only aims to discuss the significance of the historic vegetable gardens, but also argues that the OUV of Land Walls of Istanbul WHS is in danger due to:

- a. Changes in the national legislative framework, allowing speculative investment in housing and development within conservation areas;
- b. Unsuitable change of the function of the architectural heritage comprising the Land Walls and surrounding areas;
- c. Restoration and reconstruction of the Land Walls, the Tekfur Sarayı and other areas such as the Anemas quarters;
- d. The urban park project which foresees the demolition of the historic vegetable gardens near Yedikule;
- e. Ongoing renewal projects within the boundaries of the WHS, i.e. Sulukule Project, Ayvansaray Project and Zeytinburnu Cultural Valley Project;
- f. Incongruous new buildings and structures in the WHS, as in the case of OnaltıDokuz High-rise Residences.

Item 179 of the Operational Guidelines¹⁶ refers to some possible threats that putting a cultural property under the circumstances of danger. Danger circumstances are divided in two groups as “ascertained danger” and “possible danger”. When Istanbul Land Walls WHS is concerned; among the listed threats in the Operational Guidelines¹⁷, the following threats are present:

- Ascertained dangers:

iii) Serious deterioration of architectural or town-planning coherence;

iv) Serious deterioration of urban or rural space, or the natural environment;

v) Significant loss of historical authenticity;

vi) Important loss of cultural significance.

- And potential dangers:

ii) Lack of conservation policy;

iii) Threatening effects of regional planning projects;

iv) Threatening effects of town planning;

Moreover, in addition to the possible dangers stated by the Operational Guidelines, the following detrimental factors are also valid for the Istanbul Land Walls WHS:

- Serious deterioration of cultural landscape¹⁸;

¹⁶ UNESCO, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, 50.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Item 47 of the UNESCO Operational Guidelines defines cultural landscapes as:

Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and

- Constant increase of heavy road network built within the limits of the Land Walls buffer zone and within close visual range.

This report of concern is written in order to discuss the threats to the OUV of the Land Walls of Istanbul WHS. It argues that the process of the erasure of the tangible and intangible heritage that the Land Walls have harbored and protected for centuries is rapidly progressing.

UNESCO Missions have already commented on some of the threats against the tangible and intangible heritage, such as their criticism of the Sulukule Regeneration Project¹⁹.

In addition, as presented in the Section 3.a and Appendix II, this report of concern focuses particularly on the tangible and intangible assets of Yedikule *Bostans* - the historic urban vegetable gardens that are inserted within and adjoin the Land Walls-, as well as the risks that they face. It is emphasized that they represent a tradition of urban farming that goes back centuries with an irrigation system and the intangible know-how that are integral to it. However, recent municipal actions harmed Yedikule *Bostans* to a great extent (Please see Section 3.a).

internal. (UNESCO, "The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention", 14)

Please see Appendix II.b for the comprehension of İstanbul historic vegetable gardens as cultural landscapes.

¹⁹ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, (mission members Ahmad Junaid Sorosh-Wali and Paul Drury), 2012, "World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report".

2. NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK CAUSING THE CONSERVATION ISSUES

The legislative framework concerning Istanbul Historic Peninsula is laid out in the Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan (SMP)²⁰. According to SMP²¹, there are several legislations in effect that are applicable in the area:

- “Law on the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Properties” numbered 2863
- “Zoning Law” numbered 3194
- “Law on Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalization of Deteriorated Historical and Cultural Properties” numbered 5366
- and “Tourism Encouragement Law” numbered 2634.

Moreover, ‘secondary’ laws effective in the area are “Metropolitan Municipality Law” numbered 5216 and “Municipality Law” numbered 5393, which confirm the SMP to be in effect as the overriding law. There are also other laws, which are applicable within the SMP area under specific conditions²².

However, there are two other laws, namely Law on Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalization of Deteriorated Historical and Cultural Properties (Law No. 5366) and the Law on the Transformation of the Areas that are under Disaster Risk (Law no. 6306), which can directly change the status of a conservation area to a renewal area or disaster area, and consequently, which can affect to a high extent the status of conservation of formerly registered conservation areas.

2.a. Law No. 5366 Law on Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalization of Deteriorated Historical and Cultural Properties

As far as the Land Walls of Istanbul WHS is concerned, the allowances of “Law on Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalization of Deteriorated Historical and Cultural Properties” (Law No. 5366) threaten the safeguarding of the OUV of the Land Walls. This law, which came into effect on May 7th, 2005, “authorizes the local authorities to execute and implement ‘renewal projects’ in the renewal areas to be declared independent from the conservation plans”²³. Relying upon the competence this law has given them, the municipalities that have zones within the Land Walls of Istanbul WHS declared numerous areas as “renewal zones”, and began producing and implementing renewal projects within the zones adjacent to the Land Walls (Figure 2). As seen in the map presented as Figure 2, especially within the Land Walls WHS, most of the area surrounding the Land Walls themselves is declared as a renewal zone. Some of the projects for these renewal zones are applied or are in the application phase (i.e. Sulukule Residences, Tokuludede project and now the Yedikule Bostans), and some are in the planning phase (i.e. Zeytinburnu Cultural Valley Project).

When an historic area is declared a “renewal” area, what seems to happen is that the planning decisions of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Historic Peninsula 1/1000 Scale Conservation Plans and Plan Notes are overridden, as in the cases of both Sulukule and Ayvasaray Projects (Please see Sections 3.c and 3.d). In the case of Yedikule *Bostans*, this

²⁰ “Legal and Institutional Framework”, Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 2011, 64-67.

²¹ Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 64.

²² “Law of Foundations” numbered 5757, “Law on Privatisation Practices” numbered 4046, “Coastal Law” numbered 3621, “Law on Cultural Promotions and Initiatives” numbered 3621, “Mass Housing Law” numbered 2985 and “Environmental Law” numbered 2872.

²³ Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 65.

is very clear: The Conservation Plan states, “the Bostan areas which are marked in the historic maps until 1875 and which are still surviving shall be protected”. The Conservation Plan makes it very clear that the *Bostans* should be preserved as agricultural areas.

However, what we find out is that even though Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2²⁴ should have asked for the Municipal Plan regarding the recreation Park to be reconsidered in line with the Conservation Board decisions, this has not happened. Instead, Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2 gave the green light to the Municipal recreational park.

In 2012, UNESCO World Heritage Committee already remarked on the shortcomings of the Law 5366 in its report titled “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”²⁵, claiming that it will do “significant harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the inscribed area has already been caused by the redevelopment of Sulukule demolition in Ayvansaray”. In the report, it is stated that²⁶:

Renewal areas under Law 5366, as currently interpreted and implemented, appear to be escalating the problem rather than facilitating a solution. Urban renewal needs to be replaced by urban conservation, with work taking place in smaller packages, focused on in-situ repair of historic buildings. It needs to be accompanied by a diversity of infill buildings to a common but not over-prescriptive brief, to avoid the areas becoming dominated by a single form and style of faux-traditional new building. Significant harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the inscribed area has already been caused by the redevelopment of Sulukule and demolition in Ayvansaray. The immediate priority is for urgent ‘first aid’ works, to slow down the rate of decay and loss, and to expand grants and assistance to owners and small investors who wish to repair buildings.

Although the negative effects of “renewal zones” to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Land Walls of Istanbul WHS may be observed in the Sulukule case (see Section 3.c), new projects for other “renewal areas” in the WHS are under preparation.

In her article mainly focusing on the Law on Renewal and referring to the influence of the Renewal Law on conservation areas, Dinçer²⁷ points out that:

The state’s role in recasting urban space in Turkey entered a new phase during the last decade. The key difference compared with the past is that the inner city has now become the main source of capital accumulation. Interventions based on the rationale of clearing away obsolescent urban space to encouraging capital accumulation by private investors have led to the loss not only of local incomes but also of the cultural capital of local inhabitants. In addition, historical urban housing areas are no longer seen as ‘common public assets’ and designated renewal areas are not viewed as society’s common cultural capital.

²⁴ *Istanbul II Numaralı Yenileme Alanları Kültür Varlıklarını Koruma Bölge Kurulu Müdürlüğü*, set up by the Law 5366.

²⁵ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, (mission members Ahmad Junaid Sorosh-Wali and Paul Drury), 2012, “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”, 8.

²⁶ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”, 8.

²⁷ Dinçer, İclal, 2011, “The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Historic Urban Space: Areas of Urban Renewal in Istanbul”, *International Planning Studies Vol. 16, No. 1, 43–60, February 2011*, 43.

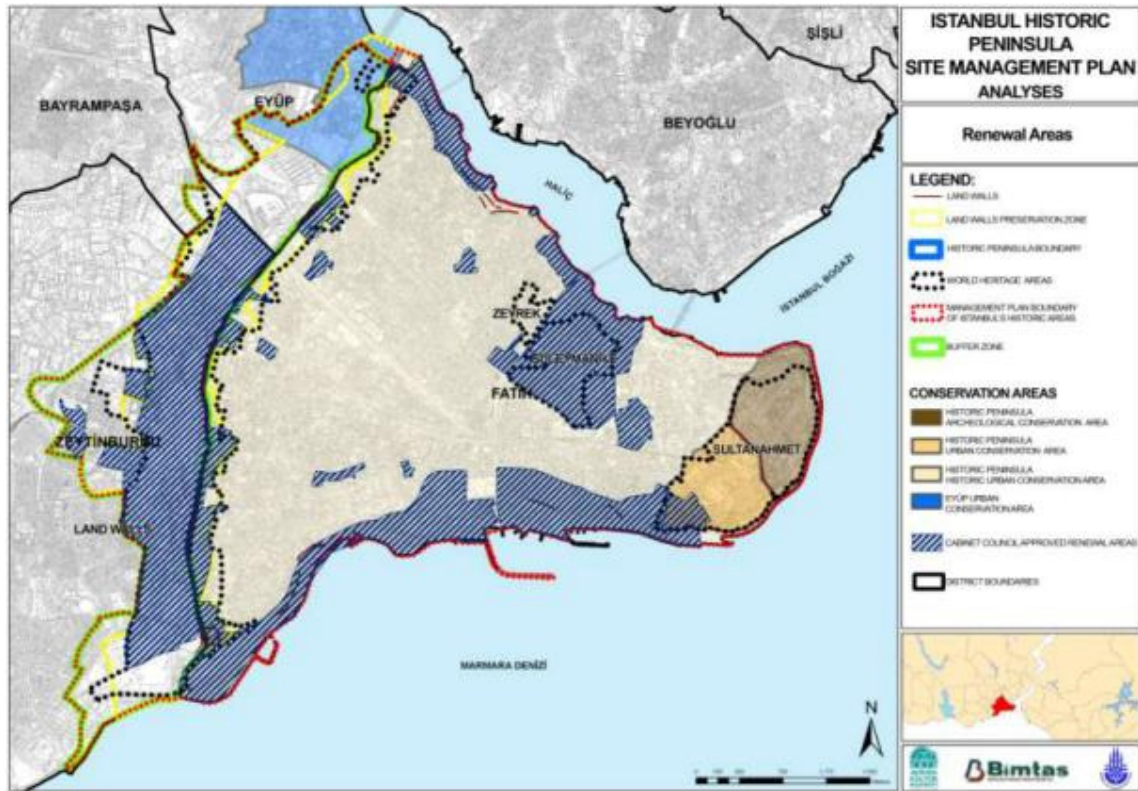


Figure 2 The map showing the renewal zones (areas hatched with dark blue lines) within the boundaries of Istanbul Historic Peninsula SMP (Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 66).

2.b. Law No. 6306: Law on the Transformation of Areas that are Under Disaster Risk

In addition to the Law on Renewal numbered 5366, the Law on the transformation of the areas under the risk of disaster, that is the Law No:6306²⁸, allows the declaration of any area as ‘an area under disaster risk’. When conservation areas are concerned, after the area is designated an area under disaster risk; it directly becomes dependent to the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, instead of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

As a result, according to the Law No: 6306, any conservation area might be regarded as an area under the risk of disaster and might be taken out of the scope of conservation legislation. Similar to the Law No: 5366, the implementation of this law also runs the risk of creating “islands” inside the conservation areas. Such islands are not classified as conservation areas, and consequently, are under the risk of the loss of the integrity and the authenticity of the historic urban landscapes.

In the Land Walls WHS, there are four areas declared as “areas under disaster risk”, which are Edirnekapı area (including Mihrimah Sultan Mosque), Tekfur Sarayı area, Chora Museum Area and Mevlevihane Gate Area (Figure 3, Figure 4). All of these areas are significant in terms of the monuments that are situated in these areas. In the proposed project for these areas, it is remarkable that the project area boundaries go beyond the disaster risk area, and the proposals ignore the existing building fabric and the historic urban landscape values.

²⁸ 6306 Sayılı Kanun: Afet riski altındaki alanların dönüştürülmesi hakkında kanun.

In conclusion, changes in the national legislative framework allowed speculative investment in housing and development within conservation areas, ignoring the tangible and intangible value of these significant sites.

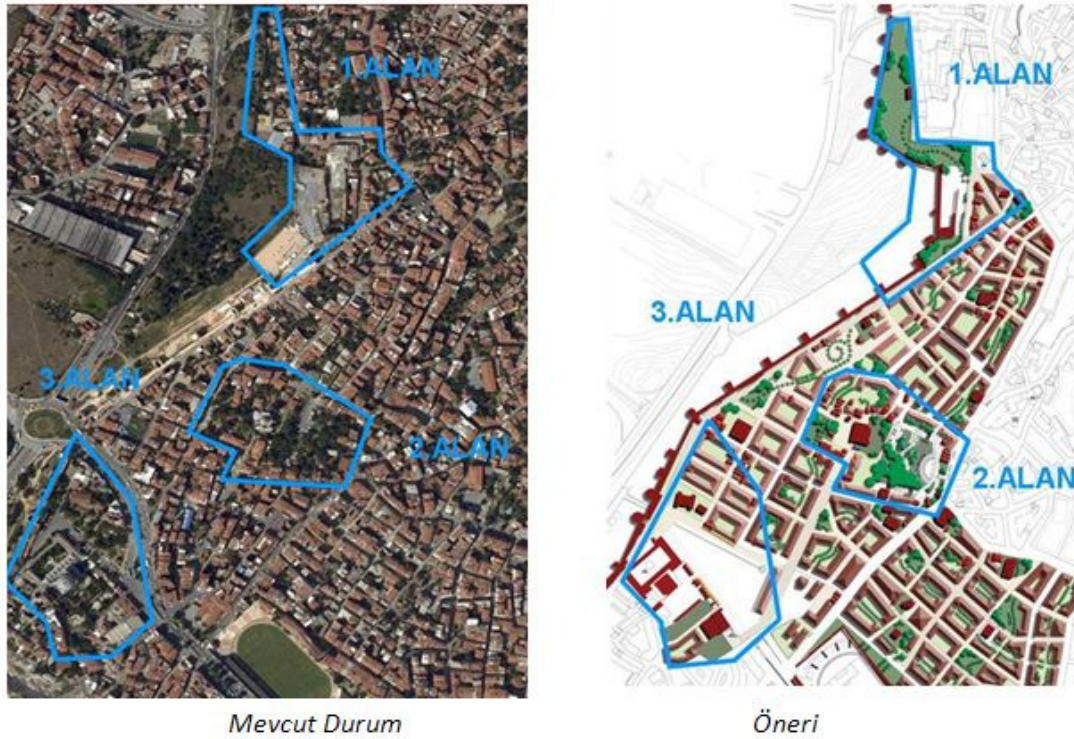


Figure 3 Images showing Edirnekapi, Chora Museum and Tekfur Sarayı areas, all of which are within the Land Walls WHS and which were declared as a “disaster risk” areas according to Law No. 6306. The aerial photo on the left is the current situation, whereas the new project is seen on the right (BİMTAŞ, Şehircilik ve Planlama Hizmetleri, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.bimtas.com.tr/sehircilik_planlama_hizmetleri/1_6_13.html).



Figure 4 Images showing Mevlevihane Gate area, which is within the Land Walls WHS and which was declared as “disaster risk” areas according to Law No. 6306 (BİMTAŞ, Şehircilik ve Planlama Hizmetleri, accessed January 3, 2014, http://www.bimtas.com.tr/sehircilik_planlama_hizmetleri/1_6_13.html).

3. CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES

3.a. THE YEDİKULE CASE

The *bostans*²⁹ near Yedikule were declared as a “renewal zone” in September 2006³⁰.

Within the same month, bulldozers formed a breach between lot 35 of building block numbered 1166 and lot 8 of building block numbered 1265. This was exactly the same area where the *bostans* were destroyed in July 2013.³¹ (Figure 5).

Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2 decided to examine the issue *in-situ* on May 13th, 2013³². The destruction of the lintels of Yedikule Gate due to the high vehicles traffic was mentioned in the same decision report. A decision was made to have the fallen pieces of the lintels taken to Istanbul Archaeological Museum by responsible units of the Metropolitan Municipality.

Moreover, on May 6th, 2013, Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2 referred to an article in *Yurt*³³ newspaper and demanded information from Istanbul Metropolitan and Fatih Municipalities on the breach. However, no further information or decisions on the issue are reported so far.

In 2010, the construction of Yedikule “Villas” (*Yedikule Konakları*) was completed; the villas were composed of new four-story residences and the project was constructed on the *bostans* which were declared renewal area in 2006.³⁴

In 2013, Fatih Municipality, which is the local authority under the jurisdiction of which most of the Historic Peninsula falls, ratified an urban park project just next to Yedikule Villas, which foresees the replacement of some sections of the Yedikule *Bostans* area with a recreational park³⁵. (Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 8).

This project is now being undertaken, which has lead in effect to the actual bulldozing of some parts of the historic vegetable gardens and the subsequent damage on the historic water irrigation system, as well as the the Land Walls themselves. With this urban regeneration project, the fact that the Historic Gardens of Yedikule *Bostans* represent the cultural landscape of both Byzantine, Ottoman and Republican period of the Historic Peninsula and that they constitute a significant component of the topography of the Historic Peninsula is being totally undermined. This report of concern is a plea to put into motion processes that may help in reversing the present situation.

²⁹ Bostan in Turkish means an urban farming plot to grow vegetables.

³⁰ Yedikule-Yenikapi I. Stage (Haci Evhattin, Imrahor Ilyasbey Neighbourhoods), Yedikule-Yenikapi II. Stage (Haci Huseyin, Sancaktar Hayrettin, Kasap Ilyas Neighbourhoods), Yedikule-Yenikapi III. Stage (Yali, Kasap Ilyas, Cakiraga, Kurkcubasi Neighbourhoods), Veleli Karabas, Cambaziye, Haci Hamza, Haci Evhattin, Imrahor Ilyasbey Neighbourhoods (Wall-2), and Kucuk Mustafa Pasha and Haracci Kara Mehmet Neighbourhoods were declared ‘renewal area’s in 13.09.2006 by decision numbered 2006/10961 13.10.2006—26318 26318 (Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 65).

³¹ Istanbul II Numaralı Yenileme Alanları Kültür Varlıklarını Koruma Bölge Kurulu Müdürlüğü (Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2), Karar Tarih ve No (Decision Date and No): 28.05.2013-279.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Yurt Gazetesi, “Tarihi surlara yol verildi”, 22.04.2013.

³⁴ Koca, Aysun, “Güncel Dosya: Bostanlar”, *Yapı* 386, 58.

³⁵ Fatih Belediyesi, Yedikule Kapı ile Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreasyon Projesi, accessed October 4, 2013, <http://www.fatih.bel.tr/icerik/4137/yedikule-kapi-ile-belgrad-kapi-arasinda-kara-surlari-koruma-rekreasyon-projesi/>

The municipal project entitled the “Recreation Implementation Project for Yedikule” involves the removal of the 85 acres of area between the gates of Yedikule and Belgrade. 60 acres of this area is presently farmed, continuing with Istanbul’s tradition of urban gardens. The municipal project has already started on the 5th of July 2013, and 27 acres of *Bostans* have been destroyed.

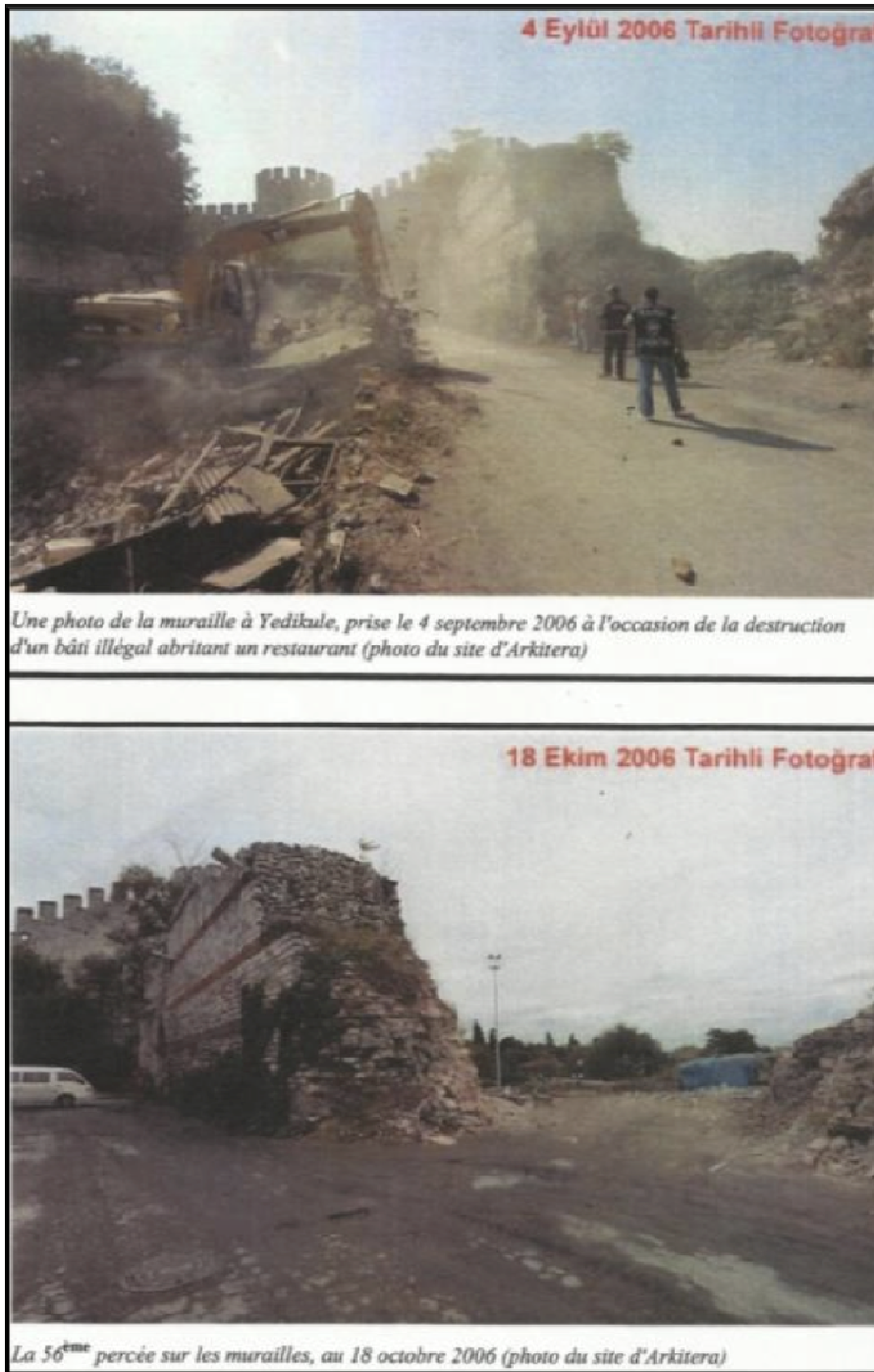


Figure 5 Photos showing the destruction of the Land Walls in 2006.

The destruction of Yedikule Bostans and their replacement with the Yedikule Recreational Park project of the Fatih Municipality is tantamount to a serious threat over the tangible and intangible assets of the Land Walls WHS. As made apparent by the municipal plans (Figure 6) the recreational park project is in no way trying to address the issue of the protection of the urban gardening heritage, which is so much an integral part of the Land Wall WHS.

The Istanbul Branch³⁶ of Archaeologists' Association has compiled a report on the issue, and has submitted it to the Directorate of Istanbul Renewal Areas Cultural Assets Conservation Regional Council No:2³⁷ (Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2). In the report, the following issues are highlighted³⁸:

- In the scope of a project entitled "Recreation and Conservation of the Land Walls between Yedikule Gate and Belgrad Gate"³⁹, bulldozers have excavated 66-100 cm into the ground at at Hacı Piri Street, which passes along the Land Walls, and at the building block numbered 1166 attached to the Land Walls. (Figure 7, Figure 8, Figure 9, Figure 10, Figure 11).
- The excavations in the referred area should be done under the supervision of an archeologist.

Subsequently, in the report, Istanbul Branch of the Archeologists' Association poses questions to the Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2, on the compatibility of the project to the site and destruction of historic water wells.

As a reply to the report, the Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2 sent a letter to the related authorities (Istanbul Metropolitan and Fatih Municipalities), and requested information on the subject⁴⁰. However, the Archeologists' Association had received no further explanation on the issue at the time in which this report was submitted.



Figure 6 The urban park project proposed by the Municipality for a renewal area near the Land Walls. The Walls are seen on the right (Fatih Belediyesi, Yedikule Kapı ile Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreatyon Projesi, accessed October 4, 2013, <http://www.fatih.bel.tr/icerik/4137/yedikule-kapi-ile-belgrad-kapi-arasinda-kara-surlari-ic-koruma-rekreasyon-projesi/>).

³⁶ Archaeologists' Association Istanbul Branch, "Yedikule- Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreatyon Projesi", a letter numbered 2013/27, dated July 17, 2013.

³⁷ Istanbul II Numaralı Yenileme Alanları Kültür Varlıklarını Koruma Bölge Kurulu Müdürlüğü.

³⁸ Archaeologists' Association Istanbul Branch, "Yedikule- Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreatyon Projesi".

³⁹ Yedikule - Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreatyon Projesi.

⁴⁰ Letter of the Renewal Areas Conservation Council No.2, dated 24.07.2013 and numbered 22033973-552.



Figure 7 Bulldozer at work in Yedikule. Yedikule Villas may be seen on the background (Photo by Ali Taptık, July 2013).



Figure 8 Destruction of the Bostans, July 2013 (Photo by Aleksandar Sopov).



Figure 9 An image showing the excavation (Istanbul Branch of Archaeologists' Association, "Yedikule- Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreasyon Projesi")



Figure 10 An image showing the difference in ground level line after the excavation (Istanbul branch of Archaeologists' Association, "Yedikule- Belgrad Kapı Arasında Kara Surları İç Koruma Rekreasyon Projesi").



Figure 11 An image showing the destruction of the inner surface of the Inner Walls of the Theodosian Walls, possibly done by bulldozers during the excavation of the bostans (Photo by Figen Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, November 2013).

3.b. UNSUITABLE RESTORATION AND RECONSTRUCTION WORKS ON THE LAND WALLS AND TEKFUR SARAYI (PALACE OF PORPHYROGENITUS)

The partial restoration works on the Land Walls of Istanbul which were realized in last 25 years can be examined in three main periods: the restoration done between the years 1986-90, 1992-94, and after the 1999 earthquake⁴¹.

The results of particularly the 1986-90 restoration works and the 1992-94 restoration works were criticized extensively, since:

1. The architectural documentation of the parts that will be restored were completed, while the analyses necessary to make proper restoration decisions were not carried out.
2. Restoration decisions made within the scope of approved projects were either changed or poorly applied.
3. Some restoration applications were undertaken without being planned properly.
4. The structural reports prepared were not taken into account while the projects were undertaken.
5. Due to the lack of detailed analysis of the monument, wrong materials were selected for restoration works.
6. The reconstruction works that were carried out were extensive and some of the information that the monument conveyed was lost (Figure 12).



Figure 12 An image showing extensive reconstruction of Belgradkapı Gate (Photo by Figen Kivılcım Çorakbaşı 2013).

It should be noted here that the extensive reconstruction of the parts of the Land Walls also resulted in security problems, due to the heightening of walls and the creation of new, uncontrolled disclosures⁴².

⁴¹ **Tanyeli, G.** 2007. "İstanbul karasurlarında 1986-90 yılları arasında yapılan onarımlar", *Karasurlarının korunması için uygun yaklaşım ve yöntemler sempozyumu*, pp 32-36, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, İstanbul.

Blacherne Palace is one of the most important monuments of Byzantine Civil Architecture. Its significance and OUV were mentioned in the nomination statement of the Land Walls WHS. It is the last remaining part of the Byzantine court palace, where the Byzantine Emperors resided from 11th to 15th century, specifically until 1453.

However, the documentary value of the remains of one part of the palace (*Tekfur Sarayı*) was diminished due to extensive reconstruction works going on (Figure 13). As pointed out by Korhan Gümüř⁴³, the traces of later periods are being removed from the monument, and a ‘fictitious’ reconstruction is being realized. As Barıř Altan⁴⁴ pointed out, the ongoing work can hardly be declared as a restoration. Rather, it is the reconstruction of a Byzantine Palace, which is an improper intervention according to the contemporary conservation principles.

As referred above in the restoration works on the Land Walls section, in 2006, the ICOMOS and UNESCO Joint Mission⁴⁵ had recommended that the restoration and reconstruction of the Blachernes Palace (Tekfur Sarayı), which were going on at the time that the Mission visited the site, had to be halted immediately.

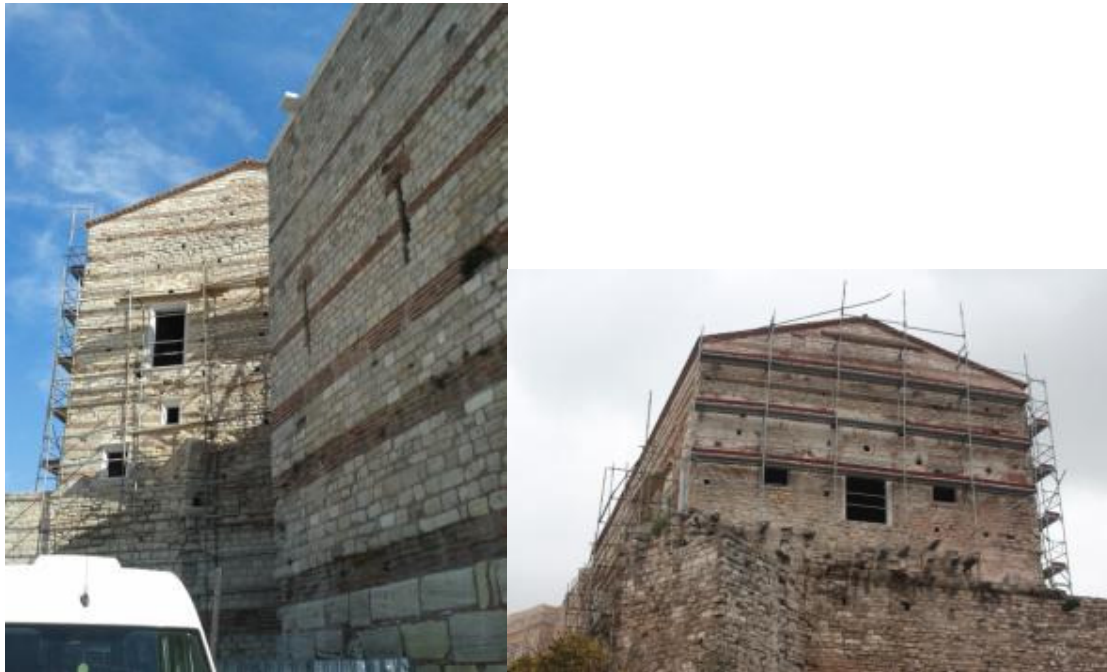


Figure 13 A part of Blacherne Palace (*Tekfur Sarayı*) and its partly reconstructed back facade (Photo by Figen Kıvılcım Çorakbař, October 2013).

3.c. THE SULUKULE CASE

Nesliřah and Hatice Sultan Neighbourhoods are generally called “Sulukule” by the public. Situated just next to the walls in the Historic Peninsula, the area was well-known for its historic residences and for the Roma community living there. It is considered that the Roma

⁴² Please see the interviews with the residents of the area in:

Ortaç, Sevgi: 2010, The monument upside down, Dutch Art Institute.

⁴³ Gümüř, Korhan, “Tekfur Sarayı İlginizi Bekliyor”, *Açık Gazete*, accessed October 31, 2013, <http://www.acikgazete.com/yazarlar/korhan-gumus/2005/07/14/tefur-sarayi-ilginizi-bekliyor.htm?aid=373>.

⁴⁴ Altan, Barıř , “Eski Saraylar İtinayla Tamamlanır”, *Yapı Dergisi*, August 2013.

⁴⁵ UNESCO and ICOMOS, 2006, “Report of the Joint Icomos/Unesco Expert Review Mission To The Historic Areas Of Istanbul World Heritage Site”, 5.

community settled down in Sulukule immediately after the conquest of Istanbul by Fatih Sultan Mehmet, that is, right after 1453⁴⁶. Since then, the area was characterized by the habitat of this specific culture, and numerous entertainment events, venues and festivals took place there.

When Sulukule was declared as a “renewal zone”⁴⁷ in 2006, a new residential complex project, which was incompatible to the tangible and the intangible assets of the Land Walls WHS was planned (Figure 14, Figure 15). Nearly all of the traditional residences were destroyed (Figure 14), and the *Roma* inhabitants were displaced resulting in the complete loss of their unique subculture.

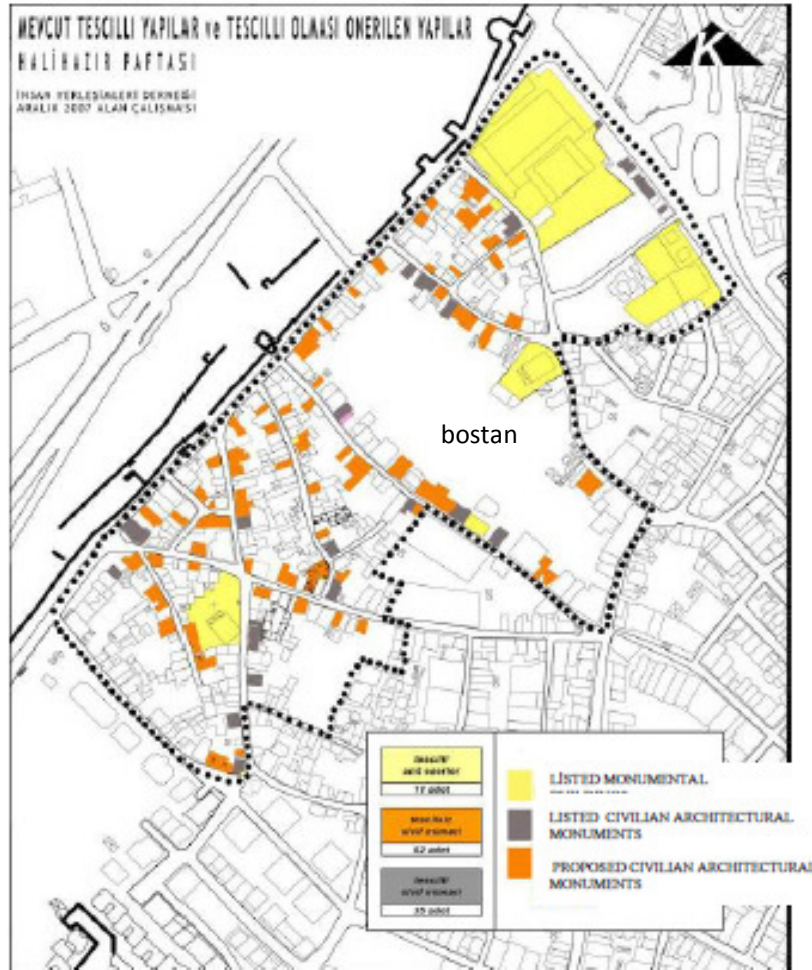


Figure 14 Drawing after HSA Architectural Office, showing the registered traditional residences (in gray), registered monumental buildings (in yellow), and the traditional residences which were proposed to be registered as cultural heritage and to be conserved. The bostan in the middle of a building block is also seen (Sulukule

⁴⁶ Oral, Evren, 2009, “Tarihi Kentsel Çevrelerin Korunmasında Yasal Düzenlemelerin Kent Kimliğine Etkileri, Sulukule Örneği” (**The legal arrangements’ effects on urban identity during conservation of the historical urban environments: Sulukule sample**), unpublished Master Thesis, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul, 101.

⁴⁷ Approval date and decision number of Council of Ministers: 03.04.2006--2006/10299 and 13.09.2006--2006/10961. Number and Issue Date of Official Gazette: 22.04.2006—26147 and 13.10.2006—26318 (Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 65). The project was approved on the November 2, 2007 by the Istanbul Renewal Areas Cultural and Natural Assets Conservation Regional Council with the decision numbered 20.

Platform, 2008, “Sulukule UNESCO Report 2008”, accessed October 4, 2013, <http://inuraistanbul2009.files.wordpress.com/2009/06/sulukule-unesco-report-xx.pdf>).



Figure 15 The drawing showing the project for Sulukule Renewal Area. On the upper part of the drawing, the Land Walls are seen (Oral, “Tarihi Kentsel Çevrelerin Korunmasında Yasal Düzenlemelerin Kent Kimliğine Etkileri, Sulukule Örneği”, 117).

Despite the extensive public opposition by not only the inhabitants and the owners of the properties in the area, but also NGOs, artists and scholars; the project was implemented. (Figure 16)

Among the initiatives that opposed the implementation of the new residential project to Sulukule area was Sulukule Platform, which presented a report⁴⁸ to UNESCO World Heritage Center to convey the two facts - the declaration of the area as an “urban renewal zone” and the implementation of the new project - have resulted in the complete loss of the intangible heritage that was associated to Sulukule since the 15th century. According to the report⁴⁹:

The WHC-ICOMOS Reactive Mission Report dated May 8-13, 2008, characterised the Sulukule Renewal Project as a gentrification project and recommended “that a balance must be found between conservation, social needs and identity of the community.” Unfortunately the developments over the past year show that this advice has not been taken into consideration. Sulukule, famous for its distinct Roma musical heritage, as well as for its particular urban fabric and culture, constitutes a good example of intangible heritage that the UNESCO Mission was referring to. Sulukule is at the heart of Roma music and culture in Turkey, however, as the area lies in ruins today, the culture is scattered. It is clear that intangible heritage cannot be protected when the built heritage is destroyed, when the community members are scattered and displaced from their neighbourhood. Sulukule would have been a perfect example of conserving and rehabilitating an urban area with distinctive built and intangible

⁴⁸ Sulukule Platform, 2009, “Report on the Impact of Sulukule Urban Renewal Project”, accessed October 4, 2013, <http://inuraistanbul2009.files.wordpress.com/2009/06/unesco-sulukule-2009.pdf>

⁴⁹ Sulukule Platform, “Report on the Impact of Sulukule Urban Renewal Project”.

heritage. With the Sulukule issue, the Municipality had the chance to develop a programme of work that addressed the combined issues of built and intangible cultural heritage, and to start a collaborative and participative process between the stakeholders with a clear objective of neighbourhood rehabilitation in line with the UNESCO recommendations.



Figure 16 Photograph showing a new house constructed just next to the Land Walls as a part of Sulukule Renewal Area Project (Photo taken from outside the Land Walls, in 2013).



Figure 17 A photo showing the new luxury houses built right next to the Land Walls and Mihrimah Sultan Camii near Edirnekapı (Photo by Sevgi Ortaç).

One of the first projects implemented in an urban conservation area under the Law 5366, Sulukule Renewal Area Project has clearly shown that ‘renewal areas’ are potential threats to the authenticity and the integrity of the WHSs.

In 2012, UNESCO World Heritage Committee prepared a report titled “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”⁵⁰, in which it was pointed out that “significant harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the inscribed area has already been caused by the redevelopment of Sulukule”. In the report, it is stated that⁵¹:

Renewal areas under Law 5366, as currently interpreted and implemented, appear to be escalating the problem rather than facilitating a solution. Urban renewal needs to be replaced by urban conservation, with work taking place in smaller packages, focussed on in-situ repair of historic buildings. It needs to be accompanied by a diversity of infill buildings to a common but not over-prescriptive brief, to avoid the areas becoming dominated by a single form and style of faux-traditional new building. Significant harm to the Outstanding Universal Value of the inscribed area has already been caused by the redevelopment of Sulukule and demolition in Ayyansaray. The immediate priority is for urgent ‘first aid’ works, to slow down the rate of decay and loss, and to expand grants and assistance to owners and small investors who wish to repair buildings.

⁵⁰ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, (mission members Ahmad Junaid Sorosh-Wali and Paul Drury), 2012, “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”, 8.

⁵¹ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”, 8.

Despite the fact that the negative effects of “renewal areas” to the Outstanding Universal Value of the Land Walls of Istanbul WHS may be observed in the Sulukule case, new projects are being prepared for other ‘renewal area’s in the WHS:

3.d. THE AYVANSARAY CASE

Another area that is declared a renewal zone within the scope of the Law 5366 is the Fener, Balat, Ayvansaray area⁵². The north of said area, Ayvansaray district, remains within the borders of the Istanbul Land Walls WHS.

A legal procedure was initiated against some of the new projects proposed for the Fener, Balat, Ayvansaray area, by the Chamber of Architects Istanbul Metropolitan Branch in March 2010⁵³. The reason that Chamber of Architects opposed the new projects was the fact that they foresaw the destruction of the existing traditional urban fabric, and they proposed the reconstruction of the imitation of the registered buildings together with the construction of new buildings.

Again in March 2010, the Solidarity Association of the Defense of the Rights of Owners and Renters of the Properties in Fener, Balat, and Ayvansaray Districts⁵⁴ was established to object to the projects proposed by Fatih Municipality.

In August 2011, the Mayor of Fatih Municipality, Mustafa Demir, announced the Ayvansaray Toklu Dede Urban Transformation Project, which, similar to other renovation projects of the Municipality, approached the historic urban site as a distress area and aimed at rehabilitation of it by the destruction of the existing fabric and construction of the houses “with the same architectural principles”⁵⁵ (Figure 18, Figure 19, Figure 20, Figure 21, Figure 22).

In spite of the opposition of the inhabitants of the district and the related associations and bodies, Ayvansaray Tokludedede Urban Transformation Project was realized and it has been nearly completed by December 2013.

⁵² Mimarlar Odası İstanbul Büyükkent Şubesi (Chamber of Architects Istanbul Metropolitan Branch), “Fener Balat Ayvansaray Yenileme Alanı”, accessed December 10, 2013, <http://www.mimarist.org/application/uploads/assets/files/fenerbalatayvansaray.pdf>.

Decision by Council of Ministers was published in Official Gazette in April 2006 (Number and Issue Date of Official Gazette: 22.04.2006—26147 and 23.10.2006—26318).

⁵³ Mimarlar Odası İstanbul Büyükkent Şubesi (Chamber of Architects Istanbul Metropolitan Branch), “Fener Balat Ayvansaray Yenileme Alanı”.

⁵⁴ Fener Balat Ayvansaray Mülk Sahiplerinin ve Kiracıların Haklarını Koruma ve Sosyal Yardımlaşma Derneği.

⁵⁵ Radikal Gazetesi, “Ayvansaray Dönüşüme Geçiyor”, published August 30, 2011, accessed December 10, 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/yasam/ayvansaray_donusume_geciyor-1061820.



Figure 18 A photo showing the old houses at the Ayvansaray-Toklu Dede District (Radikal Gazetesi, “Ayvansaray Dönüşüme Geçiyor”). The density of the traditional fabric is remarkable.



Figure 19 Images showing the new buildings proposed instead of the authentic traditional fabric. The density of the original fabric is not followed in the new design. The city walls are shown on the background.



Figure 20 Site plan showing the Ayvansaray Renovation Project. Existing traditional residential urban fabric is completely destroyed and a totally new layout with mainly temporary accommodation and commercial use was employed.



Figure 21 A view of the construction site. Komnenos Walls may be seen on the left.



Figure 22 Another view of the construction site. A part of the Komnenos Walls may be seen on the left.

3.e. ZEYTINBURNU “CULTURAL VALLEY PROJECT”

In accordance with the “Law on Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalization of Deteriorated Historical and Cultural Properties” numbered 5366, Zeytinburnu Municipality declared an area of 240 hectares as a “renewal zone”; dated 07.10.2005 and numbered 2005/70⁵⁶.

Although the project has not been presented to the public yet, the huge dimensions of the project area and its focus on tangible assets while disregarding intangible ones, raise doubts about the compatibility of the project with the integrity and the authenticity of the Land Walls World Heritage Site.

Once again, as highlighted in Sulukule case, it is important to underline UNESCO World Heritage Committee’s⁵⁷ comment on the urban renewal projects:

Renewal areas under Law 5366, as currently interpreted and implemented, appear to be escalating the problem rather than facilitating a solution. Urban renewal needs to be replaced by urban conservation, with work taking place in smaller packages, focused on in-situ repair of historic buildings. ... The immediate priority is for urgent ‘first aid’ works, to slow down the rate of decay and loss, and to expand grants and assistance to owners and small investors who wish to repair buildings.

⁵⁶ Zeytinburnu Belediyesi, Kültür Vadisi Projesi, accessed October 7, 2013, <http://www.zeytinburnu.bel.tr/Sayfa/97/projeler/kultur-vadisi-projesi.aspx>.

⁵⁷ UNESCO World Heritage Committee, “World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report”, 8.

Zeytinburnu Cultural Valley Project should be reconsidered with regards to:

1. The interests of the stakeholders
2. The tangible and intangible value of the site
3. The integrity and the authenticity of the Land Walls WHS
4. The conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS
5. The contemporary theory of conservation and site management.

3.f. INCONGRUOUS NEW BUILDINGS

Within the boundaries of Historic Peninsula Isolation Area, three high-rise buildings, namely “OnaltıDokuz Residences” were built (Figure 23, Figure 24). In 2013, Istanbul’s 4th Administrative Court verdict fortunately proclaimed that the high-rise residences dominated the silhouette of the Historic Peninsula. The verdict came in response to a lawsuit filed by a citizen and affirmed that the 1/1000 scale application plan and 1/5000 scale urban plans which had allowed the construction of the said high-rise buildings should be cancelled. However, the decision did not directly meant the destruction of the high-rise buildings, rather it might act as a first step to lead to the total or partial destruction of the buildings⁵⁸.

OnaltıDokuz High-rise Residences Case revealed that the improper permits provided by municipalities by means of urban plans lead to complex cases that threaten the authenticity of the significant characteristics –such as silhouette- of the Land Walls, as well as the whole Historic Peninsula.



Figure 23 Views of OnaltıDokuz High-rise Residences which are situated within the Historic Peninsula Isolation Area (Arkitera, “OnaltıDokuz İstanbul’un Kuleleri Gündeme Oturdu”, accessed November 5, 2013, <http://www.arkitera.com/haber/index/detay/onaltidokuz-istanbulun-kuleleri-gundeme-oturdu/3105>).

⁵⁸ Radikal Gazetesi, “Onaltıdokuz’un Kaderi Belirsiz”, accessed November 4th, 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/onaltidokuzun_kaderi_belirsiz-1134962. Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, “Silüeti kurtaracak rapor..”, accessed November 4, 2013, <http://www.chp.org.tr/?p=111711>. Radikal Gazetesi, “Zeytinburnu’ndaki gökdelenler hakkında yıkım kararı”, accessed November 4, 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/onalti_dokuza_yikim_karari-1134859.



Figure 24 A photo showing the Historic Peninsula silhouette together with the OnaltıDokuz Residences (Habertürk, "İstanbul'un silüetini bozan kulelere dava", accessed on 5th November, 2013, <http://www.haberturk.com/tv/haber/837194-istanbulun-siluetini-bozan-kulelere-dava/0>).

4. ISSUES TO BE EVALUATED BY UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE, THE TURKISH MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM, AND ISTANBUL SITE MANAGEMENT DIRECTORATE

This report is written to invite the related authorities - UNESCO World Heritage Committee, the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and İstanbul Site Management Directorate - to consider employing necessary measures to overcome the conservation issues to which the Land Walls WHS has been subjected. As mentioned in the introduction, the OUV of the Land Walls are considered to be:

- In ascertained danger:

iii) Serious deterioration of architectural or town-planning coherence;

iv) Serious deterioration of urban or rural space, or the natural environment;

v) Significant loss of historical authenticity;

vi) Important loss of cultural significance.

And in potential danger:

ii) Lack of conservation policy;

iii) Threatening effects of regional planning projects;

iv) Threatening effects of town planning;

When expressed with the phrases in the Operational Guidelines⁵⁹.

We would like to request that a committee made up from the related committees from UNESCO and Ministry of Culture and Tourism undertake an evaluation mission in the area of the Land Walls and, particularly, the Yedikule *Bostans*, Sulukule, Ayvansaray, Tekfur Sarayı and Zeytinburnu areas, in order to assess the validity of the concerns presented in this report.

We would like to summarize in succinct points what we see as the main issues that need to be addressed in the evaluation, and when acting upon the threat on the OUV of the İstanbul Land Walls WHS:

1. The necessary measures should be taken to ensure the conservation of the integrity and the authenticity of the Land Walls WHS should be taken immediately,
2. UNESCO and the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism should take the necessary steps to include the tangible and the intangible assets of the Yedikule Historic Vegetable Gardens outlined in the statement of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Land Walls WHS,
3. It should be ensured that the conservation projects in accordance with the 2011 İstanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan (SMP) are prepared and implemented properly,
4. The projects foreseeing the demolition of the *bostans* should be halted,

⁵⁹ UNESCO, "The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention", 50.

5. The restoration, reconstruction and urban transformation projects threatening the values of the Land Walls WHS should be reconsidered and altered according to the contemporary conservation principles set by the Istanbul Historic SMP,
6. The mechanisms appropriate for the realization of balanced conservation and development projects should be achieved and developed by the involvement of the all of the stakeholders, that is, by participation, as proposed by the SMP.
7. To achieve the goal stated in item 6, the national and international missions should consult an ample pool of stakeholders, experts etc.

APPENDIX I: HISTORIC PENINSULA SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ITS APPROACH TO THE LAND WALLS WHS

According to the Historic Peninsula SMP⁶⁰, the Management Area consists of two zones: the zone inside the Land Walls (*Suriçi* zone), the green belt which is the external conservation belt of the Land Walls and the Buffer Zone (Figure 25).

The Land Walls are stated as being “one of the important symbols of the Historic Peninsula have existed among the basic spatial elements of the city throughout history; in addition to providing its primary function of defense, it also determined the size and development of the city”⁶¹. The SMP’s emphasis on the protection of “other structural elements of the city such as the ports and infrastructure systems for provision of water” which were “established in the Byzantine era and developed and extended due to engineering implementations particularly in the Roman and Ottoman eras”⁶² can be applied to the water supply systems integrated to the Land Walls and the historic vegetable gardens adjacent to them⁶³.

According to the SMP, there are totally 750 cultural properties within the Land Walls WHS, 399 of which are monuments and 351 of which are traditional residences⁶⁴.

The SMP refers to the national conservation plans in order to point out the values that will be safeguarded in the Land Walls WHS. Among the issues highlighted there are:

- *Lost parts of the Golden Horn, Marmara, Istanbul Land Walls and water moats will not be completely restructured, but be repaired partially according to evaluation of findings.*
- *Partial archeological excavations can be conducted in the water moats of Istanbul Land Walls. Landscape design will take place in the water moats which will be protected with the Land Walls as a whole. Vegetable garden areas in lots adjacent to the Land Walls that have appeared in maps dating as far back as 1875 will also be protected.*⁶⁵

By referring to the Conservation Plan decision that necessitates the protection of “vegetable garden areas present in lots adjacent to the Land Walls that have appeared in maps dating as far back as 1875”, the SMP acknowledges the significance of the historic vegetable gardens for the integrity and authenticity of the Land Walls WHS.

It is mentioned that the Survey, Restitution, Restoration, Ground Survey, Engineering, Landscape Design Implementation Project of Istanbul Land Walls (between the T55 –T40 Towers) are among the projects scheduled for completion⁶⁶.

The SMP points out that the area the Land Walls monument and moats occupy is 16,5 hectares, which constitutes 3,5 percent of the area of the whole SMP⁶⁷.

⁶⁰ “Istanbul Historic Peninsula SMP”, 18.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Crow, James; Bardill, Jonathan and Richard Bayliss, 2008, The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, Journal of Roman Studies, Monograph No. II, London.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 115.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

One of the main problems the WHS is facing is stated as being the dense traffic along the Land Walls and through the gates:

The Heritage Area is under a dense traffic weight due to main transportation connections that provide access to the centre of the Historic Peninsula and at the same time is used for transit access. Furthermore, the historic gates face the threat of serious damage due to the fact that the gates of the Land Walls (Mermerkule Gate, Altin Gate, Yedikule Gate, Belgrade Gate, Silivri Gate, Mevlana Gate, Topkapi and Edirnekapi) are heavily used by vehicles as access points into the city.⁶⁸

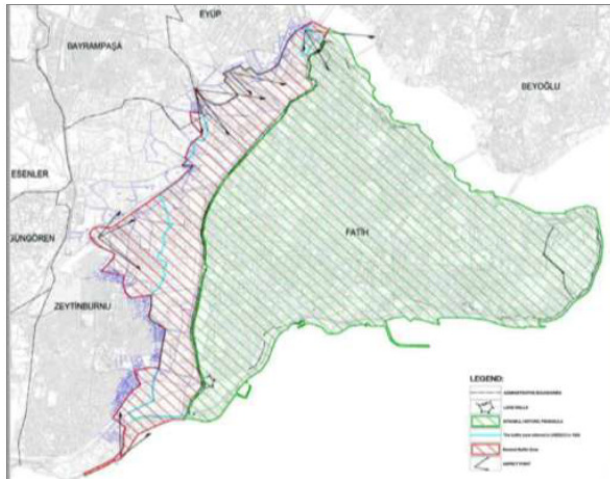


Figure 25 The boundaries of the Historic Peninsula SMP as approved by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on the 21st April 2009 (“Istanbul Historic Peninsula SMP”, 19).

Other problems to be handled by the related authorities are “lack of documentation of archeological assets in the area, lack of prioritisation of their conservation, and difficulties in restoration efforts caused by periodical differences due to many previous restoration works throughout history”⁶⁹.

Other problems pointed the SMP has pointed out with regard to the Planning and Conservation dimensions are:

- *The fact that more than one institution within the body of authority creates plans and projects in the Site, that projects lack integrity, and that they are performed independently from each other;*
- *Inconsistency between land use planning, transportation planning and tourism projects;*
- *The presence of functions that do not conform with the conservation of the identity and the cultural properties of the Site, the lack of a sustainable social and economical conservation and improvement approach that is in synchronization with conservation of cultural properties;*
- *Lack of importance given to keeping the cultural properties alive and for improving sociocultural characteristics within the Site;*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 134.

- *The fact that during the planning and project design studies, insufficient attention is paid to the conservation of the archeological assets.*⁷⁰

On the other hand, the problems regarding the conservation and the restoration of the cultural properties in the Historic Peninsula Site Management Area are:

- *Inability to reach the expected quality in the conservation and restoration implementations;*
- *The fact that tenders for the restoration projects are carried out without making any research or specifying standards beforehand;*
- *Insufficiencies and problems faced during the tender stage of the restoration projects such as establishing, using and implementation of resources;*
- *Scientific and technical mistakes made during restoration works;*
- *Lack of financial resources for the effective conservation of all the cultural properties in the Site and ineffective use of existing resources;*
- *Lack of effective policies or implementations for the conservation of the traditional hand crafts or the small-scaled manufacturing tradition in the Historic Peninsula;*
- *The fact that a clear definition of intangible cultural heritage was not given according to UNESCO convention. Thus materials to be classified cannot be determined;*
- *Lack of an inventory of intangible heritage;*
- *The fact that existing studies could not be collated within one main centre (such as information-document centre, library, Internet medium etc.);*
- *Lack of an approach that will specify how to protect intangible cultural heritage and how to exhibit it.*⁷¹

Although all of these problems address the entire site management area, they are especially valid for Land Walls WHS. After listing the problems, Historic Peninsula SMP goes on to discuss the objectives that should be accomplished in order to solve the problems discussed.

At the Land Walls WHS, the lack of proper and sustainable public accessibility to the monument and site, as well as the lack of monitoring systems and policies are important problems that should be addressed immediately.

Among all the objectives set by the SMP, only some of the objectives which are directly related to the Land Walls WHS are as follows:

- *Objective IIH1: Providing coordination between the Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan and other related planning and project operations and establishing integrity in plans.*
- *Objective IIH4: Adopting approaches which are based on preserving the archeological values in the Site in the planning and project operations.*
- *Objective IIH5: Strengthening and preserving the cultural properties in the Historic Peninsula which include monuments and civil architectural buildings through restoration projects and implementations to be performed in accordance with international criteria.*
- *Objective IIH8: Determining and conserving the intangible cultural heritage and passing it on to future generations.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 148.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

- *Objective IIIH9: Upholding the balance between conservation/preservation/living during the services offered in planning and conservation activities in the area.*⁷²
- *Objective IIIH2: Reducing the pressure of the transportation investments on the Historic Peninsula and integrating different modes of transport.*⁷³
- *Objective IIIH6: Providing accessibility for disadvantaged groups.*⁷⁴
- *Objective IVH1: Redeveloping the visual integrity of the Historic Peninsula, preserving, improving and promoting its historic character.*⁷⁵
- *Objective IVH2: Recognising, conserving and developing the authenticity, image, character, distinctiveness and aesthetic quality of the Site.*⁷⁶
- *Objective VH3: Reviving the traditional manufacturing as an intangible heritage in the Historic Peninsula.*
- *Objective VH4: Providing sustainable and efficient participation of stakeholders to conservation, planning and implementation processes in an equal and transparent way.*
- *Objective VH5: Providing efficient participation of all stakeholders related to the Management Area in order to successfully implement the Site Management Plan.*
- *Objective VH6: Establishing a system related to measuring and evaluating the participation.*⁷⁷
- *Objective VIIH3: Reinforcing and conserving the cultural heritage against earthquakes.*⁷⁸

In addition to the objectives highlighted by the SMP, we would like to raise some others which we think are significant for the conservation of the Land Walls WHS:

- A good plan for public access; .
- Good and in-depth monitoring of the damages by earthquakes, followed by reversible interventions;
- redevelopment of the historical/natural landscape in areas around the Land Walls that have been damaged.

All of the objectives presented above provide a general framework, which seem to open way to the proper conservation, development and management of the Land Walls WHS: Apart from the general objectives regarding the whole management area, the SMP also sets objectives specifically for the Land Walls WHS:, which are:

- *Objective KS-H1. Ensuring that the cultural properties in Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site are conserved and sustained in accordance with contemporary principles and standards*
- *Objective KS-H2. Highlighting the cultural properties within the Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site in terms of conservation-use balance, providing them for public use and reviving them with the functional usages and design practices in compliance with its identity*

⁷² *Ibid.*, 148-153.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 162.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 163.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 166.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 167.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 170-171.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 183.

- *Objective KS-H3. Ensuring the promotion of Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site*⁷⁹ Finally, Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan mentions and briefly explains three projects related to the Land Walls WHS, which are:
- *Ks-pp17: Project for conservation implementations of land walls world heritage site.*
- *Ks-pp18: Project for the promotion of land walls world heritage site.*
- *Ks-pp19: Project to develop resources for land walls world heritage site.*⁸⁰

Although Historic Peninsula SMP's approach seems to include a thorough analysis of problems of not only the management area as a whole but also the Land Walls WHS in particular, it is hardly adequate in addressing possible ways and methods to solve the problems outlined. Rather, Historic Peninsula SMP remains a general framework and needs to be accompanied by additional management plans or other management systems prepared for each WHS.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 205-207.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 361.

APPENDIX II: THE HISTORY AND SOCIOCULTURAL VALUE OF THE ISTANBUL URBAN VEGETABLE GARDENS (*BOSTANS*)

There are numerous historic documents mentioning the existence and the importance of the *bostans* in Byzantine and Ottoman periods (Figure 26).

In the scope of this report, only some of the historic documents are mentioned with the aim of discussing the values of the *bostans* located within the Land Walls WHS. Nevertheless, the presentation of the *bostans* in the following contexts may help in framing their cultural and urban value:

- Istanbul *bostans* as part of water supply system of Istanbul Historic Peninsula,
- *Bostans* as cultural landscape,
- *Bostans* as part of civic and monastic practices in the Byzantine Period,
- *Bostans* as part of the pious foundations system in the Ottoman Period,
- *Bostans* as a part of urban farming activities in Historic Peninsula in the Republican Period,
- *Bostans* as part the Land Walls as a system that constitutes the boundaries of the city in the Byzantine and the Ottoman Periods,
- *Bostans* as a databank of historic and stratigraphic data on the seeds and agricultural practices on the past
- *Bostans* as the embodiment of intangible values, that is, the historical continuity of agricultural practices in Istanbul Historic Peninsula,
- *Bostans* as “an important opportunity to maintain sustainable urban landscape and viability of urban society”⁸¹.



Figure 26 A part of the photo by Artamonoff dated 1937, which shows the project area of Fatih Municipality in Figure 6, the *bostans* and Land Walls, as seen from Yedikule Castle (Nicholas V. Artamonoff Collection, “Near Yedikule”, accessed October 4, 2013, <http://icfa.doaks.org/collections/artamonoff/items/show/280>)

a. *Bostans* as a part of water supply system of Constantinople and Historic Istanbul

Agricultural practices are closely related to water supply and hydraulic systems developed to distribute water to the fields. The existence of water wells, pools and other similar structures

⁸¹ Başer, Bahar and Hayriye Eşbah Tunçay, “Understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul”, *ITU A|Z Vol.7*, 106-120.

in and near the *bostans* provides a concrete basis for the examination of Ottoman-era water distribution systems⁸².

Similarly, the overlapping of water supply map of Constantinople and the historic *bostans* will lead to new results on the network of relationships between the *bostans*, the Land Walls and their topography. The moat was situated outside the Land Walls as a part of the military structure and was believed to contain water in some of its sections at least during certain historical periods, which supports the argument that *bostans* are an integral part of the Land Walls and water supply systems, especially in times of peace (Figure 1, Figure 27).

Aetius cistern, Aspar cistern and Mokios cistern, which are open-air cisterns in Byzantine period, were used as *bostans* after the 15th century⁸³. As a result, their names were changed to *Karagümrük Çukurbostanı* (Aetius), *Çarşamba Çukurbostanı* (Aspar) and *Altımermer Çukurbostanı* (Mokios), referring to their topographical form as a basin (*çukur*), and their use as *bostans* in the Ottoman Period and the Republican Period. The use of *Karagümrük Çukurbostanı* for agricultural purposes ended in the year 1940 by the transformation of *bostans* into a soccer field⁸⁴. Similarly, it is known that the *bostans* in *Çarşamba Çukurbostanı* were destroyed beginning from 1985, when a cement pavement was constructed for a market place⁸⁵. Finally, *Altımermer Çukurbostanı* has been transformed into a social complex and urban park by Fatih Municipality; today, the area does not reveal any traces of old *bostans*⁸⁶.

As a result, although the *Çukurbostans* constituted significant components of the urban vegetable garden and watering systems of the historic city, they were not considered as a part of the cultural heritage and thus were destroyed and transformed into soccer fields, market places or parks.

Orhan Okay⁸⁷, a professor of Turkish literature as well as an old inhabitant of Istanbul Historic Peninsula, confirms that in *Karagümrük Çukurbostanı*, agricultural activity continued until 1940s, and he states that there was a “*bostan dolabı*” - a system to take water out of the well with buckets on a rotating wheel that was being pulled by a horse. Okay points out that in *Çarşamba Çukurbostanı*, poultry farming as well as agricultural activity was present; there was also a small neighborhood composed of traditional houses.

The relationship between the Aetius, Aspar and Mokios open-air cisterns, the topography, and the water supply of Constantinople is clearly seen in Figure 27 (Open-air cisterns are marked as pink rectangles near the lines representing water resources).

Despite the lack of scholarly studies focusing on the network of relationships between Byzantine and Ottoman water supply systems, open-air cisterns, *bostans* and the Land Walls, the studies on Istanbul’s Historic Peninsula reveal numerous clues about the historic value of the *bostans* as a part of water supply system of Constantinople and Ottoman Istanbul, as well as the *bostans*’ possible relationship with the Land Walls as an integral part of the built and agricultural landscape of the city boundaries.

⁸² Shopov, Aleksandar and Ayhan Han, “Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Kent İçi Tarımsal Toprak Kullanımı ve Dönüşümleri-: Yedikule Bostanları”, *Toplumsal Tarih* 236, August 2013, 34 – 38.

⁸³ Magdalino Paul, *Ortaçağda İstanbul*, Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul.

⁸⁴ “İstanbul’un Çukurbostanları”, accessed October 5, 2013, <http://wowturkey.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=83042>.

⁸⁵ Bir İstanbul Hayali, “Ah, şu çukurun bir dili olsa da konuşsa: Çukurbostan’ın hikayesi”, accessed October 5, 2013, <http://www.biristanbulhayali.com/ah-su-cukurun-bir-dili-olsada-konusa>.

⁸⁶ “İstanbul’un Çukurbostanları”, accessed October 5, 2013, <http://wowturkey.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=83042>.

⁸⁷ Okay, Orhan, “İstanbul’un Bostanları”, *Zaman Gazetesi*, accessed October 6, 2013, <http://arsiv.zaman.com.tr/2002/05/05/yazarlar/orhanokay.htm>.

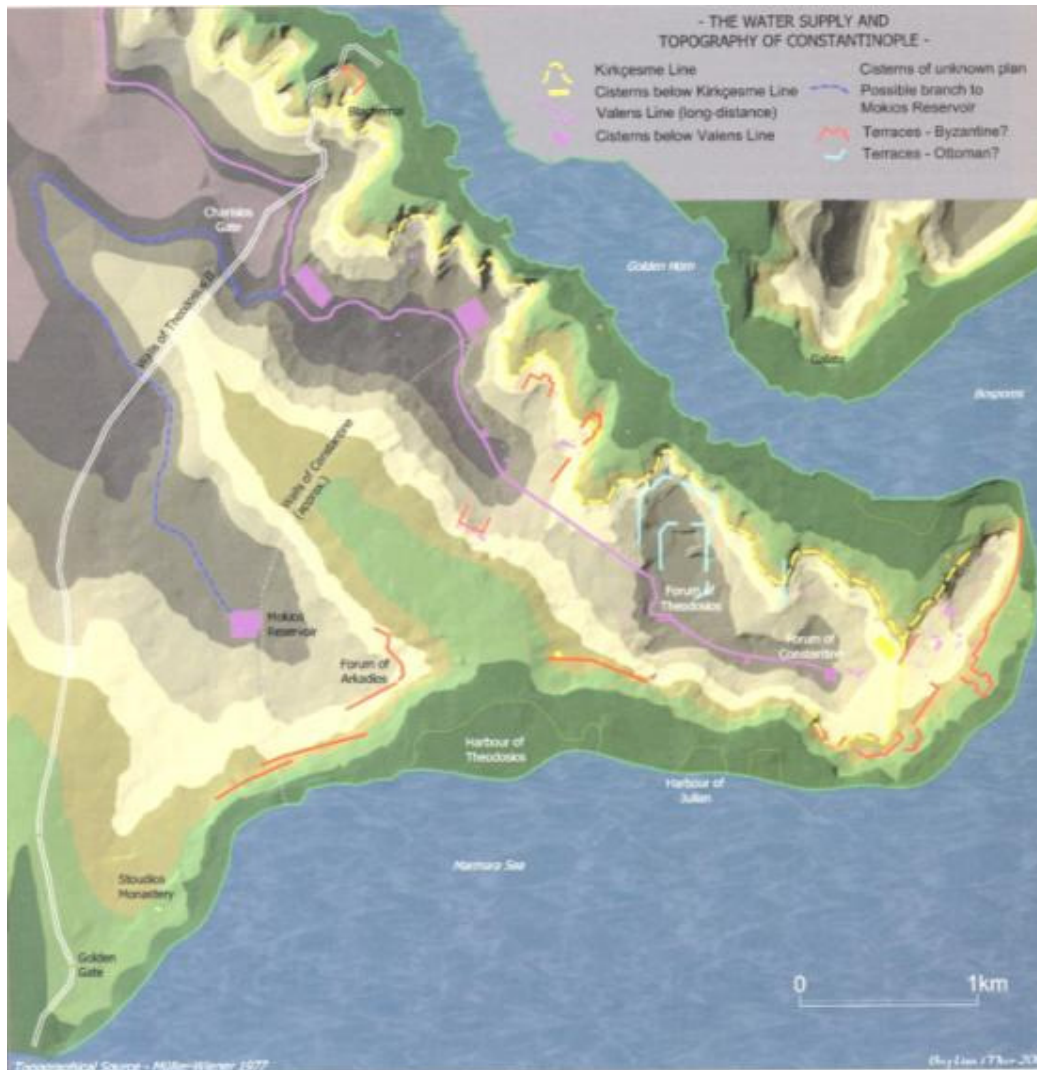


Figure 27 The map showing “the water supply and topography of Constantinople” (Crow, James; Bardill, Jonathan and Richard Bayliss, 2008, *The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople*, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, Journal of Roman Studies, Monograph No. II, London, 12).

b. *Bostans* as cultural landscape

The Land Walls, together with historic vegetable gardens around the Walls, compose an urban agricultural heritage site. Enabling the comprehension of the topography of the Historic Peninsula, the Land Walls provide spectacular views to both the new and the old city (Figure 28).

Among the registered sites in the World Heritage List (WHL), there is Stari Grad Plain, which “has remained in continuous use, with the same initial crops being produced, for 2400 years”⁸⁸. This is mentioned as one of the few criteria leading to the inscription of the property on the WHL in 2008. The significance of the site is referred as:

Stari Grad Plain on the Adriatic island of Hvar is a cultural landscape that has remained practically intact since it was first colonized by Ionian Greeks from Paros in the 4th century BC. The original agricultural activity of this fertile plain, mainly centring

⁸⁸ UNESCO, “Stari Grad Plain”, accessed November 22th, 2013, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1240>.

on grapes and olives, has been maintained since Greek times to the present. The site is also a natural reserve. The landscape features ancient stone walls and trims, or small stone shelters, and bears testimony to the ancient geometrical system of land division used by the ancient Greeks, the chora which has remained virtually intact over 24 centuries.

Land Walls WHS should be approached as a cultural landscape, and its inherent agricultural urban landscape should be evaluated properly. As it is emphasized in the case of Stari Grad Plain, the Land Walls WHS might be a natural reserve of crops and of antique watering equipment.



Figure 28 A view from the terrace on the walls from a point near Topkapı Gate, towards Edirnekapı Gate. The lowest point marks the valley of Bayrampaşa (Lykos) Stream, whereas Mihrimah Sultan Mosque is situated on one of the highest points of the Historic Peninsula. Recently constructed Sulukule Residences may be seen around the mosque (Photo by Figen Kivılcım Çorakbaşı, November 2013).

c. The historic gardens (*bostans*) as a part of civic and monastic practices in Byzantine Period

Themistius, describing the phases through which Constantinople passed from the reign of Constantinus to that of Theodosius the Great (the second half of 4th century AD), reports:

No longer is the vacant ground in the city extensive than that occupied by buildings; nor are we cultivating more territory within our walls than we inhabit; the beauty of the city is not, as heretofore, scattered over it in patches, but covers its whole area like a robe woven to the very fringe.⁸⁹

Although the Land Walls of Theodosius II were not built then, we can understand from this definition that agricultural areas in the walled area of the city of Constantinople existed even before the 5th century AD.

⁸⁹ Cited by Van Millingen, Byzantine Constantinople, 42.

Henry Maguire⁹⁰, in his article entitled 'Gardens and Parks in Constantinople', points out the suburban Philopation and Aretai parks, as the two Byzantine Period parks situated outside the Land Walls. Although the exact locations of the referred parks are not known, written primary resources makes it clear that "the plains above the Philopation were visible from the Blachernai Palace"⁹¹. According to Maguire, the earliest record of Philopation dates back to the 9th century⁹².

On the other hand, Aretai is described as being "near the city" of Constantinople⁹³. By referring to several written resources from the Byzantine Period (particularly 10th century), Maguire concludes that Aretai might "lie near the southern end of the land walls, near Tower 1, and within sight of it"⁹⁴.

In the interpretation of a Byzantine Monastic Foundation Document (*typikon*) of Studios Monastery in Constantinople⁹⁵, dated 826, Thomas and Constantinides state that the monks were involved in agricultural labor:

Though there is no direct testimony, it would appear that the monastery itself was supported by the income from a landed endowment [4], cf. [21], worked evidently, by free labor, since both agricultural and personal slaves are explicitly forbidden. Nothing is said about any manual labor engaged in by the monks, though we know from other sources that monks were engaged in agricultural labor at the Studite monasteries outside Constantinople, though not at Studios itself.

The relationship between monastic life and agricultural activity in the 9th century is verified and illustrated in the text. Moreover, it may be observed that the Land Walls have created a close relationship between the Studios Monastery and the cultural landscape. During the 9th and the 10th centuries, the areas around the Studios and Chora Monasteries were comparatively less urbanized and the referred monasteries were in a close visual and functional relationship with the Land Walls and the vegetable gardens around them.

Similarly, in the map made by Christoforo Buondelmonti in 1422, the area between Studios Monastery and the Land Walls is marked with trees, probably pointing out a park or an agricultural land in the area⁹⁶ (Figure 30).

Alessandra Ricci⁹⁷, in her article titled "Intangible Cultural Heritage in Istanbul: the Case of the Land Wall's Byzantine Orchards", points out the relationship between the Land Walls and the vegetable gardens⁹⁸:

Despite these features, the Land Walls, did in my opinion display a perceptible link with the city's daily life and needs. An edict in the Theodosian Code dating to 422 C.E. (Book VII.8.13), hence a few years after completion of the monument, informs us

⁹⁰ Maguire, Henry, 2000, "Gardens and Parks in Constantinople", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers No. 54*, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection Washington, D.C.

⁹¹ Maguire, "Gardens and Parks in Constantinople", 253.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 252.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 254.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 256.

⁹⁵ "Theodore Studites: "Testament of Theodore the Studite for the Monastery of St. John Studios in Constantinople", *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, edited by John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero with the assistance of Giles Constable, translated by Timothy Miller, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁶ Kayra, Cahit, 1990, *Istanbul Haritaları / Maps of Istanbul*, Türkiye Sınai Kalkınma Bankası, 60-61.

⁹⁷ Ricci, Alessandra, 2008, "Intangible Cultural Heritage in Istanbul: the Case of the Land Wall's Byzantine Orchards", 3. *Uluslararası Tarih Yarımada Sempozyumu*, İstanbul, 66-67.

⁹⁸ Ricci preferred to use the term 'orchard' for bostans.

about the relationship between the Land Walls and its surrounding landscape. In fact, the edict allows for private usage of the towers` lower floors in the inner wall. More specifically, these floors were meant to be used by nearby landowners who could store in them agricultural tools and produce. The military, therefore, had no access to the towers` lower floor. Lands around the defensive system must have functioned as agricultural territories feeding produce to the city.

In the text, Ricci clearly illustrates the integrity of the Land Walls and the vegetable gardens around them. Similarly, Turnbull⁹⁹ elaborates on the fact that the lower floors were used as storerooms or guardhouses in the following passage (Figure 29):

... The lower chamber was entered from the city by a large archway. This entrance provided most of the light and air for the room, because defensive considerations id not permit large windows. This chamber had little to do with the defense of the city, but served as a storeroom or guardhouse. In some cases, a narrow postern gate in the angle of the wall allowed access to the walkway between the two sets of walls (to peribolos – the authors). Further security considerations also meant that, as a general rule, the lower room had no means of communications with the room above. This was instead entered only from the battlement level by an arched doorway.

Sumner-Boyd and Freely¹⁰⁰ state that the terrace between the inner and outer walls is called *peribolos*, whereas the terrace between the outer walls and the moat is called *parateichion* (Figure 1). As discussed above, it is quite probable that *peribolos* and *parateichion* functioned as historic vegetable gardens in the Byzantine period, and gardeners used parts of the ground floors of the towers as storage spaces. The fact that the *peribolos*, the *parateichion*, and ground floor spaces of the towers of the inner walls were constructed as parts of the Land Walls strengthens the idea that vegetable gardens have been an integral part of the boundary system since the Byzantine period up until present day.

In terms of the dimensions of the vegetable gardens, Ricci¹⁰¹ writes:

According to a study by Koder and carried out on the text of the Geoponika such orchards developed on the interior of the Land Walls for some 2 or 3 square kilometers with a range of 2 square kilometers on the exterior of the same, totaling and average of 13 square kilometers. The Land Walls therefore must have been surrounded by active and extended orchards and palaces` parks. It is worth reminding that when the city of Constantinople was taken over by the Latins in the Fourth Crusade of 1204, its population count must have been around 100.000 units. The orchards along the Land Walls must have in part fed the city`s population.

Although the locations of the gardens and parks of Constantinople aren't precisely known, it is certain that they existed both inside and outside the Land Walls during the Byzantine Period. They were also an integral part of the socio-economic life and daily practices. Archaeobotanical and stratigraphic studies on the material composition of the gardens are required in order to fully study the history of each of the historic urban *vegetable gardens*, as

⁹⁹ Turnbull, S., 2004, *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*, Osprey Publishing Ltd., 12.

¹⁰⁰ Sumner-Boyd, Hillary, and John Freely, 2010, "Strolling through Istanbul", Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 338.

¹⁰¹ Ricci, "Intangible Cultural Heritage in Istanbul: the Case of the Land Wall`s Byzantine Orchards", 66-67.

suggested by archaeobotanist Chantel White during her workshop at Yedikule Bostanları on August 14, 2013¹⁰².

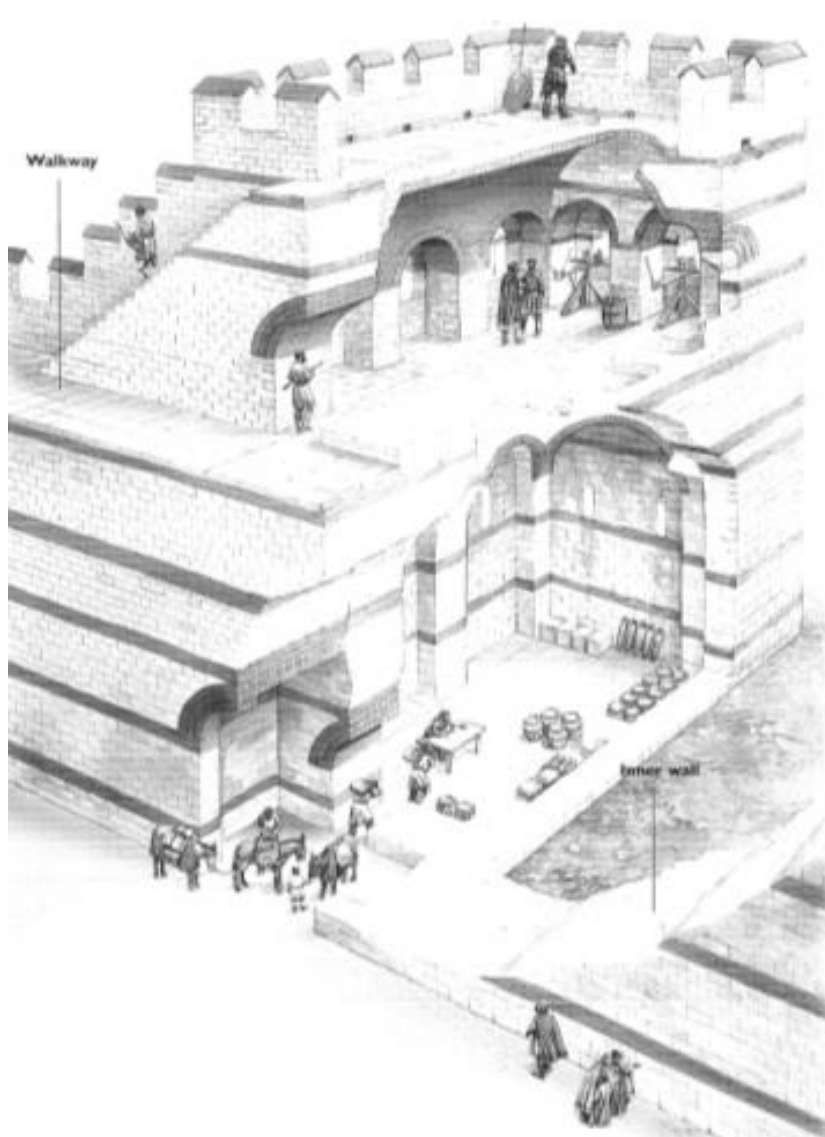


Figure 29 The lower floors of the towers were used from the ground level of the city, whereas the upper levels were only accessible for the military use. There was no connection between the lower and upper floors of the towers (after Turnbull, S. 2004, *The Walls of Constantinople AD 324-1453*, Osprey Publishing Ltd., 14).

d. *Bostans* as a part of the pious foundations system in the Ottoman Period

Official registers belonging to pious foundations included some of the *bostans* during the Ottoman Period.¹⁰³ In their article on the use and transformation of urban agricultural lands in Ottoman Istanbul, Shopov and Han refer to the significance of *bostans* in Ottoman Period by mentioning:

¹⁰² Cornucopia, "Yedikule Gardens Archaeobotany Workshop with Chantel White, PhD" accessed October 6, 2013, <http://www.cornucopia.net/events/archaeobotany-workshop-with-chantel-white-phd>.

¹⁰³ Shopov and Han, "Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Kent İçi Tarımsal Toprak Kullanımı ve Dönüşümleri: Yedikule Bostanları", 35.

- the number of *bostans* (344) and the number of *bostan*-keepers (1301) inside the Land Walls in year 1735;
- a decision on the safeguarding of 18 *bostans* situated within the *Langa Bostanları* area belonging to the Süleymaniye Pious Foundation, against any interventions, circa 1585.

These two facts documented in primary written sources of Ottoman Period also reveal that the *bostans*, as urban agricultural areas, were under the pressure of the built landscape and needed to be preserved against the interventions of construction.

Unlike the case of Byzantine gardens and parks, the locations of most of the Ottoman Period *bostans* are identified in not only written but also visual documents. Moreover, information on the names, uses, managers and equipment of some of the *bostans* are also known¹⁰⁴.



Figure 30 Map by Christoforo Buondelmonti dated 1422, showing trees near Studios Monastery (Kayra, Maps of Istanbul, 61).

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 34-38.

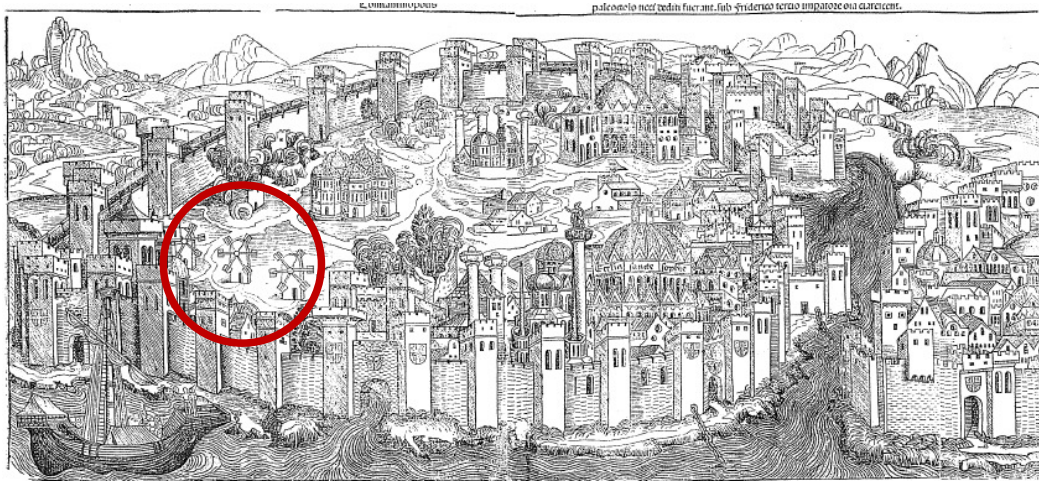


Figure 31 On the 'Ancient Plan of Istanbul' (1493) by Hartman Schedel, "bostan dolapları" (watermills) near Yedikule are seen (Kayra, Maps of Istanbul, 65).



Figure 32 A part of the "City of Istanbul" by J. B. Homann from 1730: Some structures and divided land may be found outside the Land Walls (Kayra, Maps of Istanbul, 82).

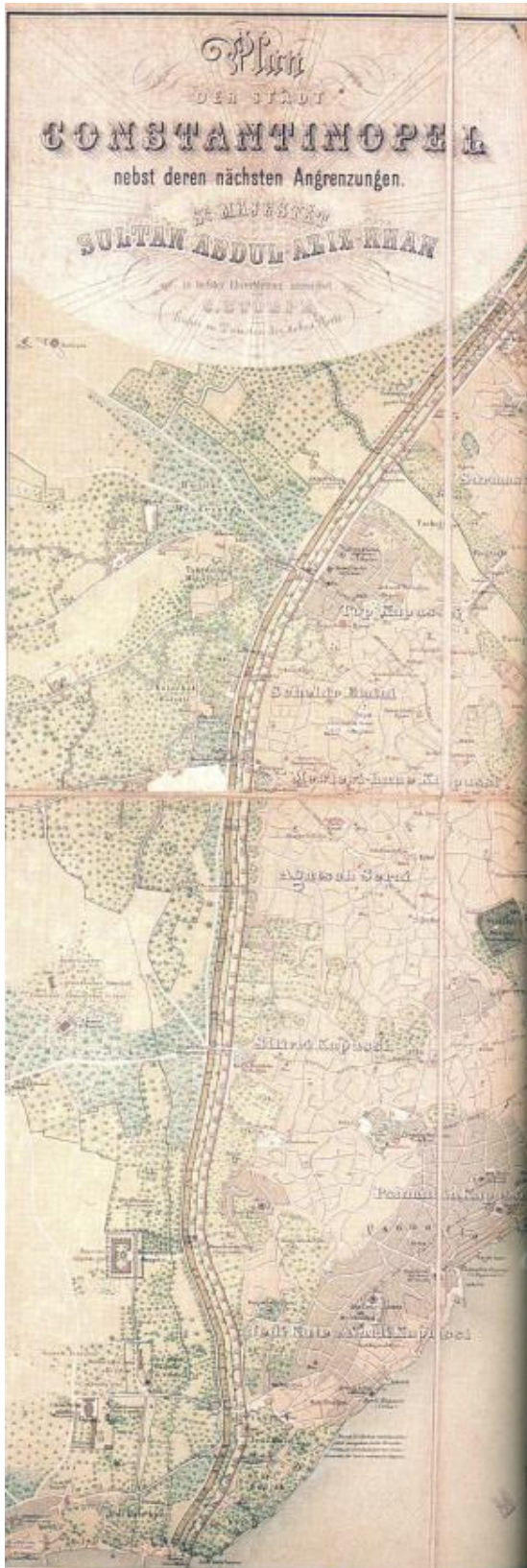


Figure 33 A part of the “Plan of the city and its environs, dedicated with the greatest respect to H. M. The Emperor Sultan Abdülaziz Han” by C. Stolpe (1863). Bostans inside and outside the Land Walls may be observed (Kayra, Maps of Istanbul, 116).

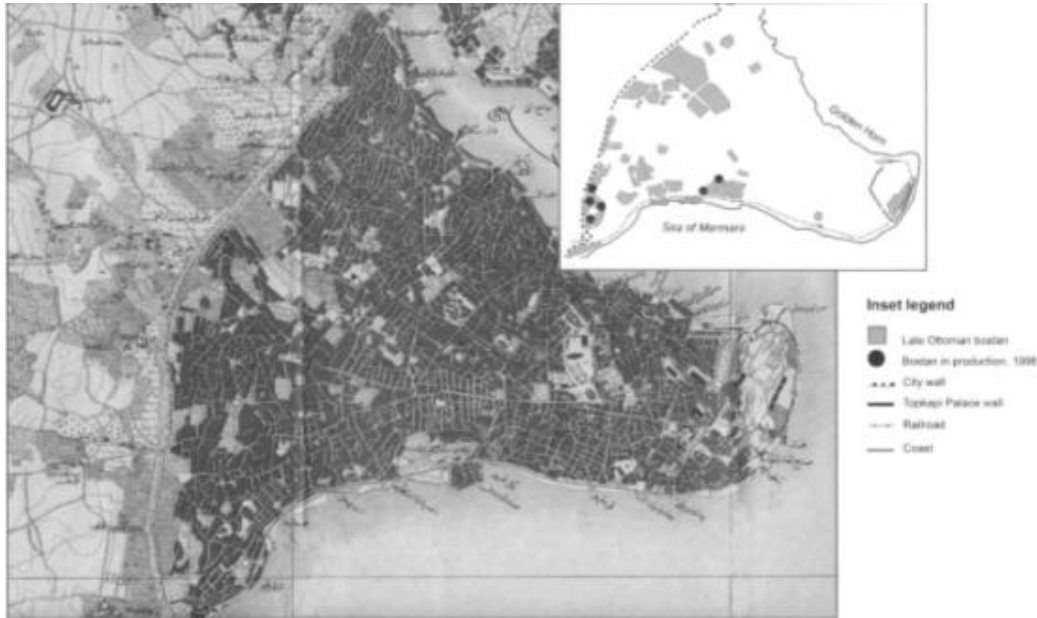


Figure 34 Map of “Istanbul’s Market Gardens” (*bostans*) by Paul J. Kaldjian. Bostans are shown in the upper right corner with gray and the ones still in use by 1998 are marked with a black dot (Kaldjian, Paul J., “Istanbul’s Bostans: A Millennium of Market Gardens”, 289).

Among numerous historic maps showing either the *bostans* themselves or agricultural landscape presentations, there are: 1493 map of Hartman Schedel (Figure 31), 1521 map of Piri Reis, 1730 map of J.B. Homann (Figure 32), 1807 map of F. Kauffer and I. B. Lechavelier, and 1863 map of C. Stolpe (Figure 33).

Regarding the conservation of the Land Walls World Heritage Site, Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan¹⁰⁵, refers to the Fatih District Urban Conservation Site 1/5000 Scale Conservation Plan and states the following:

Partial archeological excavations can be conducted in water moats of Istanbul Land Walls. Landscape design will take place in the water moats which will be protected as a whole with the Land Walls. Vegetable garden areas¹⁰⁶ present in lots adjacent to the Land Walls that have appeared in maps dating as far back as 1875 will also be protected.

Thus, as per Istanbul Historic Peninsula SMP, the *bostans* inside and outside the Land Walls should be conserved.

A map showing Istanbul *bostans* inside the Land Walls was prepared by Paul Kaldjian¹⁰⁷ based on a map from 1950s (Figure 34). It can be concluded from the map that the *bostans* are situated near the Land Walls and the Sea Walls.

This relates the fact that *bostans* existed not only inside the Land Walls but also outside the Land Walls of historic Istanbul. They constituted an integral part of the historic built

¹⁰⁵ Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan, 115.

¹⁰⁶ In Turkish version of the Site Management Plan, the term ‘bostan’ is used for vegetable garden areas.

¹⁰⁷ Kaldjian, Paul J., 2004, “Istanbul’s Bostans: A Millennium of Market Gardens”, *Geographical Review*, Vol. 94, No. 3, People, Places, & Gardens (Jul., 2004), 284-304.

landscape as urban agricultural landscapes and formed the boundaries of the historic city along with the Land Walls system.

e. *Bostans* as a part of urban farming activities in the Historic Peninsula in the Republican Period

In their article entitled “Understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul”, Başer and Eşbah Tunçay¹⁰⁸ point out that “vegetable production in and around Istanbul changed little from the end of the Ottoman Empire until the 1970s. The conversion of *Çukurbostans*, which are situated within the Byzantine Aetius, Mokios and Aspar open-air cisterns; into parks, market places or sport fields between 1940s and 1970s constitute a remarkable example to this fact. Similarly, *bostans* between the Marble Tower and Yedikule Castle were removed between 1966 and 1982 (Figure 35).

Başer and Eşbah Tunçay¹⁰⁹ note, “Istanbul’s *bostans* become truly endangered in the 1980s, when massive population growth combined with political corruption and speculative investment in housing and development to make the real estate the highest profit sector in Istanbul”.

It may be said that the *bostans* around the Land Walls have been mostly endangered by the projects implemented after 2000s, such as Yedikule Konakları Project, the Yedikule Urban Park Project, Sulukule Project etc.



Figure 35 The images illustrating the existence of the *bostans* between the Marble Tower and Yedikule Castle at least until 1966 (Başer and Eşbah Tunçay, “Understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul”, 113).

¹⁰⁸ Cited by Başer and Eşbah Tunçay, “Understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul”, 112; from Keyder, Çağlar, 1999, Istanbul: Between the Global and the Local, Rowman and Littlefield; and Kaldjian, “Istanbul’s *Bostans*: A Millennium of Market Gardens”.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

f. *Bostans* as a databank of historic and stratigraphic data on the seeds and agricultural practices of the past

The documents and studies on *bostans* should be considered as a preliminary attempt to reveal the history and significance of the Land Walls. The future archaeobotanical and archaeological studies on the *bostans* will bring to light further information on the history and significance of the urban agricultural landscape of the Istanbul Historic Peninsula.

In order to establish a firm knowledge on the issue, scientific studies on the *strata* of the agricultural areas should be carried out.

g. *Bostans* as the embodiment of intangible values

Arif Bilgin¹¹⁰, in his article on Istanbul *bostans* in Ottoman Period, illuminates a ‘bostancılık’ (gardening) culture in Ottoman Istanbul by referring to primary written documents from the era. According to him¹¹¹, the registers of water wells, water mills (*bostan/su dolabı*) and, less frequently, pools reflect the everyday gardening activities that took place in *bostans* (Figure 36). Pools were probably used for the cleaning of the vegetables produced. As opposed to pools, water wells can be encountered very frequently in written records, although it is known that a few *bostans* without wells also existed¹¹².

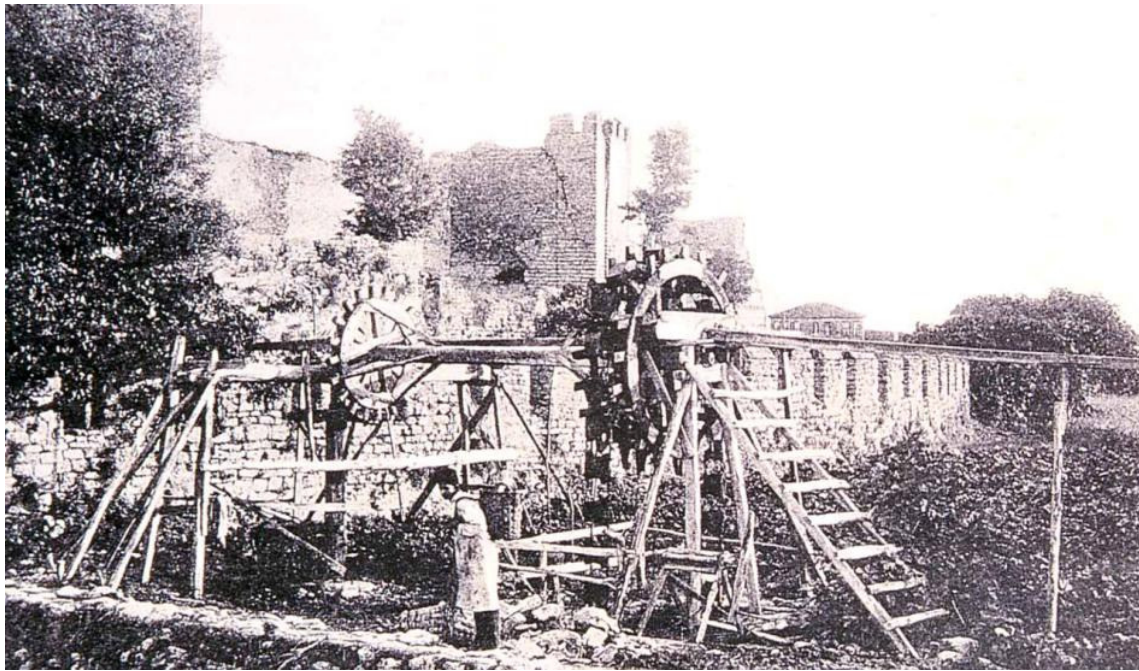


Figure 36 An old photo showing *bostans* inside the moat of the Land Walls (Ortaylı, İlber, 2003, “Tarihsel Perspektiften Sur Dışı”, in *Surların Öte Yanı Zeytinburnu*, edited by Burçak Evren, Zeytinburnu Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 154-163).

¹¹⁰ Bilgin, Arif, 2010, “Osmanlı Dönemi İstanbul Bostanları (bir giriş denemesi)”, *Yemek ve Kültür* Vol. 20, Çiya Yayınları, İstanbul, 86-97.

¹¹¹ Bilgin, “Osmanlı Dönemi İstanbul Bostanları (bir giriş denemesi)”, 89.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

Similarly, the registers mention the existence of service buildings for yoghurt production in *bostans*, accompanied by the registers of big jars for yoghurt production (“*yoğurt güğümü*”), yoghurt buckets and stewpots¹¹³. Thus, it can be argued that the *bostans* played an important role in yoghurt production for the city.

Bilgin goes on to discuss the management, naming, number and location of *bostans*, which ultimately refer to an integral ‘*bostancılık*’ (vegetable gardening) culture that took place in Ottoman Istanbul. When it is considered that some of the *bostans* have kept on being cultivated from the Ottoman Period (or even before) until today, it may be said that ongoing *bostancılık* activities constitute an intangible cultural heritage to be conserved. *Bostans* and the related equipment like water wells and pools are tangible reflections of the intangible heritage.

h. *Bostans* as an important opportunity to maintain sustainable urban landscape

As urban agricultural landscapes, *bostans* might be considered as a means of establishing a sustainable urban landscape. In the scope of their article titled “understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul”, Başer and Eşbah Tunçay¹¹⁴ write:

Istanbul has considerable cultural, social and environmental potential for implementing urban agriculture programs. Due to its geographical location, water and soil resources, and heterogeneous landscape characteristics, Istanbul enables production of various agricultural products, hence facilitating diversity in urban agriculture.

The potential of the Land Walls and *bostans* also impressed Prof. Dr. Frank Lohrberg¹¹⁵ and his students, who, in the summer of 2012, carried out a workshop on “the Theodosian Land Walls of Istanbul: Cultural Heritage and Urban Potential for a Metropolis of the 21st Century”. They pointed out the integrity of the Theodosian Walls with the open-air spaces surrounding them, and the potentials emerged by the existence of a horticultural tradition in these open-air spaces¹¹⁶:

*...When we visited Istanbul and its Theodosian wall in 2011, we were deeply impressed by its monumental character. But we were also enlightened by discovering the wall’s accompanying open spaces, especially the *bostans* with their horticultural tradition that has lasted for centuries. Standing upon the walls, we enjoyed a panoramic view and recognized the strong linkages between fortification and settlement.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Başer and Eşbah Tunçay, “Understanding the spatial and historical characteristics of agricultural landscapes in Istanbul”, 117.

¹¹⁵ Lohrberg, Frank, “the Theodosian Land Walls of Istanbul: cultural heritage and urban potential for a metropolis of the 21st century”, draft report of the workshop carried out by Chair of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, RWTH Aachen University.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Similarly, Di Xia and Yao Dong¹¹⁷ proposed a project to the Harvard University Graduate School of Design that focused on *bostans* as “Agricultural Generators for Istanbul’s Urbanization”. In state in their proposal that:

Firstly, Bostans as an urban agriculture can foster dense urban settlements and also urban activities by providing resources for living, working, playing and learning. Secondly, bostans also play an important part in Istanbul’s green system, connection, historic conservation, tourism, domestic markets and economy. Thirdly, compared to a previous bostan site in the central part of the city which now becomes construction field and parking area due to Istanbul’s development, urban agriculture challenge Istanbul’s undergoing urbanization, forces us to retrospect our traditional urbanization model. As a result, we should look into both potential and challenge of this kind of agriculture urbanism in order to preserve and develop it.

The potential of *bostans* in forming a sustainable urban landscape should be studied together with its value as a historic urban agricultural landscape.

In conclusion, the history of *Bostans* and their significance with reference to the Land Walls World Heritage Site is discussed in this report. To summarize, both the tangible and intangible heritage of the *bostans* of Istanbul should be conserved, since they have historic, economic, cultural, agricultural, and intangible values:

- Istanbul *bostans* as part of water supply system of Istanbul Historic Peninsula,
- *Bostans* as cultural landscape,
- *Bostans* as part of the lifestyle and monastic practices in the Byzantine Period,
- *Bostans* as part of the pious foundations system in the Ottoman Period,
- *Bostans* as a part of urban farming in Historic Peninsula in the Republican Period,
- *Bostans* as part the Land Walls as a system that constitutes the boundaries of the city in the Byzantine and the Ottoman Periods;
- *Bostans* as a databank of historic and stratigraphic data on the seeds and agricultural practices on the past;
- *Bostans* as the embodiment of intangible values, that is, the historical continuity of agricultural practices in Istanbul Historic Peninsula;
- *Bostans* as an important opportunity to maintain sustainable urban landscape.

Finally, *bostans* provide an important conservation mechanism for the Land Walls and the architectural heritage they pivot around. The conservation of the Land Walls necessitates the conservation of the historic vegetable gardens surrounding them.

¹¹⁷ Xia, Di and Yao Dong, “Bostans: Agricultural Generators for Istanbul’s Urbanization”, Harvard University, Graduate School of Design, accessed November 26, 2013, <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k94076&pageid=icb.page577191>.

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