

CITY WALLS: A HERITAGE TO BE VALORIZED WITHIN ITS ENVIRONMENT

Fezvi Pasa Caddesi- Topkapi

RONDEL Nathalie

OUI/Fransiz Anadolu Arastirmalari Enstitusu
Nuru Ziya sok, 22, PK 54
80072 Beyoğlu/IS
Tél : (0212) 244 17 17



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CITY WALLS OF ISTANBUL: A HERITAGE TO BE VALORIZED WITHIN ITS ENVIRONMENT

The city walls of Byzantine's era are surely one of the most important historical constructions of Istanbul. It belongs to the UNESCO World heritage since 1985. The Istanbul municipality (IBB) is responsible for restoring and maintaining this sample of the heritage of Constantinople. Nowadays Istanbul is applying to become the 2010 European City and Capital of Culture. Therefore, a real valorisation of the historical heritage of the city needs to be implemented, this including the ruinous walls of Theodosius: to transform this derelict area into a lively and revitalized space. To valorise a heritage involves not only to do it for esthetical or architectural reasons but also to transmit this heritage to the next generations. Furthermore it involves integrate the historical monument into its local area. To give its architectural, historical, cultural features back to the walls, we should also focus on the local and human capital surrounded the walls.

Emperor Theodosius II ordered the construction of these land walls in 413 that were then followed by the building of sea walls around Marmara Sea Istanbul coastline and the Golden Horn in order to defend Constantinople from invaders. If the walls have protected Constantinople from attacks during centuries, Ottoman Empire has managed to take the city in 1453, as some billboard reminds us in Edirnekapi. The walls can be seen as a magnificent testimony of Byzantine military architecture that has to be maintained and as a way to understand the History of Istanbul through centuries. That is the reason why restoration of the walls should include the valorisation of this history. Restoration is of course prevalent to make the wall a tourist place of interest but other aspects than technical ones should be considered as well. Indeed this historical building should not be renovated only for physical neither for architectural, "unescoist" or beauty aspects because the area offers a real opportunity to make people access to this rich-valued building. The city walls are a great testimony of Istanbul history as they were constructed since the 5th century and have gone through civilizations as the Ottomans to the new Istanbul within which urbanization keeps growing and growing. Protections, conservation, knowledge of the building start to have a meaning when most of the people can access and understand this heritage. Promoting the heritage makes it stronger. Therefore the city walls of Istanbul need to be something else than a nice and gentle well repaired stonewalls! It should be a genuine opportunity to explain History to the world.

Beside the historical valorisation of the walls, we can find new uses or purposes to the walls. City walls used to draw a borderline between the city from other villages and places but nowadays the walls are just like a separation between the Old Istanbul and the growing city. Therefore, new uses should be found concerning the perception of the walls. It cannot be just a separation of two faces of Istanbul. The challenge is to emphasize the walls to make visitors understand History while allowing them to see all Istanbul from those walls. Walls should appear as a link between the past and the future around which the challenge is to renovate and valorise the walls without making the building just a closed building stuck in the past. There is also a real need to make this world heritage fit into its local area in order to restore the importance to the walls. Indeed, the valorisation of the walls cannot be made without taking

the environment into account. Visitors of this historical area surely do not want to see just some walls. Primarily, the visit can also be a reason to see the present day Istanbul, i.e. the surrounding monuments and to “fit into” neighbourhood. Yet, there is a big challenge that every arrangement of historical place has to manage: not to dismiss the current residents of the close historical environment. Taking into account the neighbourhood is also the role of the city planning. Moreover those residents are a great resource for the valorisation of the walls as they are the ones that can prevent the walls to become just another stuck historical monument as I previously discussed. These residents are a part of Istanbul that visitors cannot deny while trying to understand the city’s history thanks to the walls and they are the one who day by day participate in respecting the walls. Only by taking into account the residents and by working on the local environment, a truly renovation and valorisation can be implemented.

Linking past and future can be a great answer for the walls but still, we should pay much attention not to disfigure the historical area by arranging the place only for tourist mass consumption (even if it is a normal thing for the national economy). Therefore I will try to present some proposals that would enable us to respect this worldwide historical building and the current environment. In order to emphasize the resource of the walls, we should think over a global arrangement of the walls but I decided to focus just on the 1230 meters part between Topakapi and Edirnekapi as a sample of what could be achieved. This section of the walls reflects an important part of Istanbul’s History as the Ottomans mainly focused their forces to this area in 1453.

Before thinking about some concrete proposals for the valorisation of the walls, we should identify what kind of tourist resources can be offered by the walls (I). Henceforth the actual conditions of the walls (II) prove primarily how a real accessibility should be done before proposing some concrete arrangements. (III)

I/ Tourist potential

A/The city walls: an embodiment of the history of Constantinople

a) Great example of the Byzantine genius and historical summary

Photos: (p.6) + section of the walls (p.5)

Three different walls were constructed by Septimus Severus, Constantine and finally by Theodosius in accordance with the development of the city. In 413 Theodosius complemented the city walls by building new walls on the western part of Constantinople few kilometres away from Constantine's walls. Nevertheless, this extension of the boundaries was not made simply to suit the convenience of a large population. Its purpose was also the need of new bulwarks. Constantinople called for more security in a context of barbarians 'attacks' that were becoming more and more threatening all over the world. Their construction required city's participation from rich citizens paying taxes to factions of hippodrome and of course thousands of bricklayers etc. Under the construction of prefect Anthemius, the walls consisted only of a single section of walls with 95 towers from sea to sea. Then in 447 a devastating earthquake implied great renovations. It was an opportunity to build an outside wall which was lower and composed of 82 towers, all surrounded by a large and deep moat.

The Theodosian walls are the walls that we can now enjoy from the Marmara Sea to the Golden Horn. They are currently in a ruinous aspect (see II) but are still a great scheme of the Byzantine's genius. It is behind these defensive walls that splendours and troubles occurred for thousands of years.

The city walls are a great example of roman architecture: white stones alternated with red bricks. Its military function was greatly efficient. Indeed, it represented a complete defence system:

- The inner wall was the main bulwark of the capital: it was 13 meters high and 3 or 4 meters large; ninety-six watch towers were displayed to guard this wall every 55 meters approximately; a tower was usually divided by wooden or vaulted floors into two chambers
- The inner embankment or terrace between the two walls was named the Peribolos. It accommodated the troops that defend the outer wall.
- The outer wall that used to offer arches permitted the construction of a battlement and moreover formed chambers where troops could be quartered. Little posterns were the only way to reach the embankment from the outer wall.
- The embankment between the outer wall and the moat: its chief function was to widen the distance between the besiegers and the besieged while affording room for the action of troops.
- The moat

Ten gates (military or civil ones) allow people to pass through the walls. Some little posterns can also have been used.

Finally the whole structure was more than 70 meter large.

Protected by the walls, Constantinople could have enjoyed its splendours and poverties during centuries. The capital of the Eastern Roma Empire (324-1453) developed its civilized rich court behind these defensive walls. The walls show us how the development was important because we can understand how large the city was even if fields surrounded the walls. The

world city was a strategic location: it was a cross roads and water roads for the human (pilgrims people) and trade movements that were so important during the Middle Age. Therefore the core function of city walls used to be extremely important. As far as Constantinople was a desired place, the walls protected the city from numerous attacks. For instance, Edirne and Topkapi suffered a lot from the threats on the city by the Avars during the fifth century, the siege of the city by Murat the Second etc.

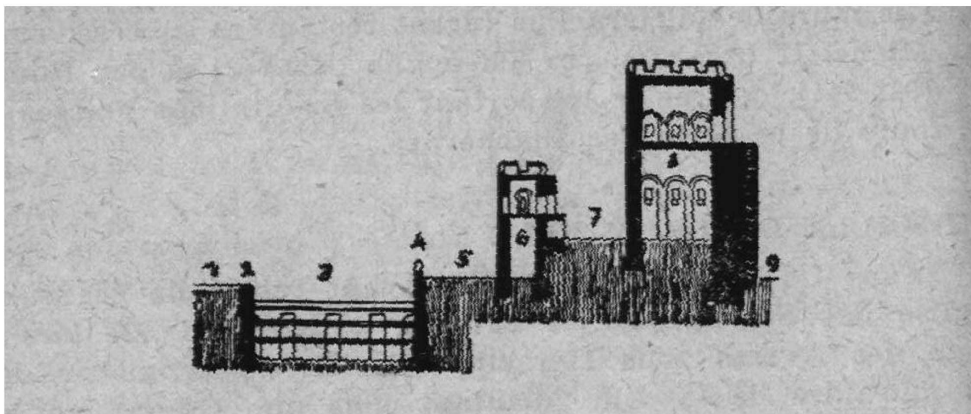
Basically, the city walls testify amazingly of the Byzantine heritage that tourists could grasp by seeing this huge historical building. Constantinople was the capital of eastern Roman Empire and later on it was chosen by Mehmed the Conqueror to become the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed if the Byzantine walls protected the city for 1000 years, it didn't resist the attack of Mehmed the Second in 1453.

b) Capital of Ottoman Empire

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the religious divided city of Constantinople was less powerful. We can think about the only siege the walls didn't resist in 1204 when the Latins managed to conquer the city. Even with the help of the Catholic, the cornerstone of Emperor Constantine's Empire did not survive the siege of the city. Mehmed entered the city on 29 May of 1453 by the Edirnekapi (*called Charisiou porta*)

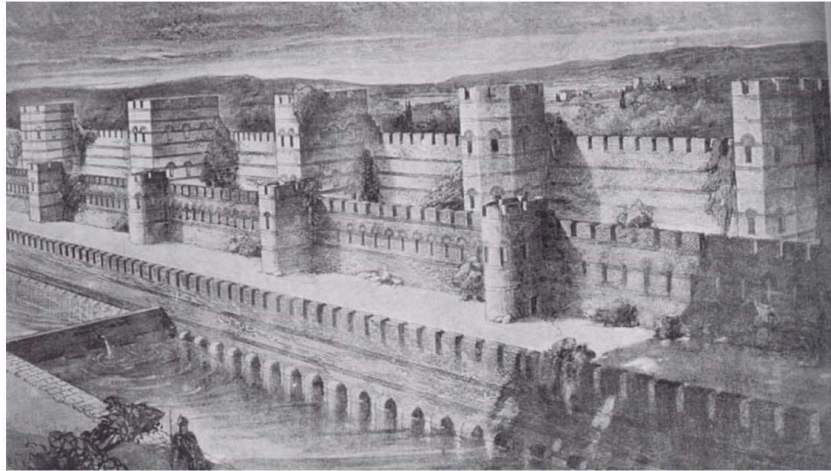
The section of the wall between Topkapi and Edirnekapi is the part that suffered the most from janissaries' attacks. (This part, usually called Murus Bacchatereus, was known as the more fragile one.) It is even said that Constantine died next to Topkapi (Roma porta).

Therefore these walls are as well a symbol of the beginning of the construction Turkish nation. It is a really great world heritage where people can become aware of the History and about the different civilizations that make Istanbul a rich cultural city.

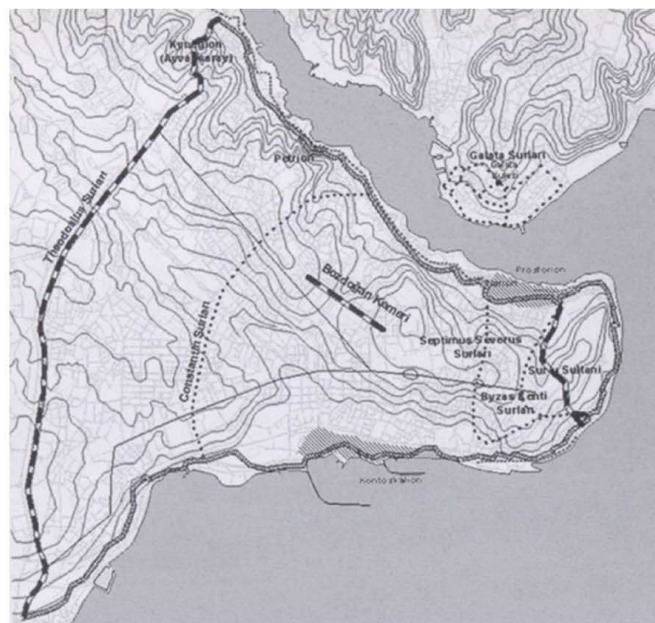


1. outside level
2. counter scrap -with aqueduct-
3. moat
4. scrap walls -with crenels
5. second Peribolos
6. outer wall (447)
7. Peribolos
8. inner wall (413)
9. ground level

SECTION OF THE WALLS



The theodosian land walls completed in 413 (Gurlitt, 1912)



The land walls of Septimus Severus. Constantine and Theodosius

B/ surroundings

If this short reminder of the world importance of the walls shows how it can be a great cultural attraction, we should not forget what could be the new functions the walls nowadays. No doubt that it has not a military defence purpose anymore for the city but it is still part of the landscape of Istanbul. For the tourists the walls are a cultural reminder of the History as well as they can represent an opportunity to get an overview of the big Istanbul city nowadays. .

First, the walls offer a chance for the visitors to grasp of the immensity of the Istanbul metropolis while understanding its structure by walking on the tower's circuit and getting introduced to the life taking place in the close surrounding of the walls (Fatih district's neighbourhoods).

Furthermore while wandering in the neighbourhood, people visiting the walls are enabled to link past and future, in other words to link the historical function of the walls and the people living next to it. Indeed the walls are nowadays seen as a border on the local level/by residents, a real separation between the Old and the new Istanbul and not as an historical building. (see II)

a) View landscape

Photos: (p.9)

- Actor/spectator

By walking next to the walls, the visitor can imagine the city walls as it used to be. The visitor becomes his/her own guide and can walk wherever he/she wants. Eventually the tower's circuit offers a *great opportunity* to admire the landscape. Just in front of Sinan mosque, some stairs lead to the top of the highest tower of the walls (77 meters): Edirnekapi's tower. From there, we can be aware of the immensity of Istanbul as we get a panoramic view from the Golden Horn to Marmara. We can see the sixth (from Edirnekapi to Chorus monastery) and the seventh hills (Mokios' water tank, Arcadius's forum) of Istanbul

-Growing Istanbul

We can have some sightseeing of Istanbul by walking on the tower's circuit. People can have a wide overview of the city and understand it through the landscape. Indeed from the tower we can see how the city has grown. The walls used to be the border of Constantinople for centuries and were surrounded by fields and cemeteries outside the walls (after the Topkapi Edirnekapi Caddesi). But nowadays we are not able to even see the end of the city from the tower. Since the 1950ies and mainly since the 1970ies the surroundings of the walls have changed so much (roads, houses, manufactures etc) that the walls can be seen as a separation between the Old part of Istanbul and the new one: in one hand, presence of factories, *otogar*, after the outer wall and in the other hand, little streets so typical of old Istanbul inside the walls.

b) Neighbourhoods

-Historical monuments

Visiting the walls may also be an opportunity to travel around the surrounding neighbourhood. Between Topkapi and Edirnekapi there is no reason to miss the Sinan's

mosque or the old cemeteries of Istanbul. There are also two Christian churches next to Topkapi; plus two orthodox churches next to Hacı Muhittin. In the neighbourhood the hiker can discover some old wooden houses. And further than Topkapi-Edirnekapi we can enjoy the St Chorus monastery for instance.

-A lively and frantic neighbourhood thanks to its inhabitants.

In addition to the landscape supply, the close environment of the walls can be another reason to stop there. Most of all, the neighbourhood offers the opportunity to avoid to immobilize the walls in the past. Private houses will make the surroundings of the walls a lively place. It is the charm of a city: fitting history into modernity. In Istanbul, large avenues lead to one important part of Istanbul to another, separate neighbourhoods which look like villages: there are these quiet streets in which people are living without taking care of the noise and agitation of cars on the next-door *bulvarlar*. Here urban local diversity is a great stake to give the city back its greatness, which means to mix heritage and local population against segregation; inhabitants represent a resource for the walls area in order not to make it a museum and the walls represent an opportunity for locals to be integrated into Istanbul through tourism. (See III d))

Thus arrangement of the walls can be a mean/way to give new functions to the urban picture of the close environment of the walls. Walls represent a great historical attraction. In order to take advantage of it, we should first valorise it. The second part presents the main points of the actual conditions of the walls that mainly should be improved.



Sightseeings from the 87th tower



II/ Current conditions

Obviously, the city walls have lost their military purpose but new uses of the walls have been found by the people living next to it. Irregular occupation and uses of the area around the walls have prevented them to be seen as a historical monument that deserves to be maintained and therefore, they have become a derelict place which prevents them from becoming a tourist place: they are seen as a dirty and dangerous place despite of renovations made by the IBB. Tourists hear about it only when they pass next to it on the road. Even for Istanbul people is not an area deserving a visit. It is important to understand how the walls are integrated into their surroundings to know how can be improved the actual perception of the walls. I will briefly study the conditions of the walls following 4 major points: the access, the renovation/restoration, the green spaces and how the walls are used.

a) Access

Photos: (p.12) (p.13) + section of the walls (p.30)

The walls can be seen from various sightseeing points of Istanbul like for example the Galata tower, Eyup, Davutpasa Tramway's station; etc. Indeed it represents an extraordinary and a special monument as far as it has a special place in the urban landscape of city. Its structure gives the walls its function of point of orientation known as the border of the Old Istanbul. Unfortunately, the best way to see the city walls is to take the urban highway Topkapi-Edirne Caddesi that borders it. It has been constructed in the 1950ies as well as the main openings on the walls such as the six-lane Vatan caddesi or the Milliyet Caddesi. Those roads cut the linearity of the walls: to reach one point of the walls to another is very hazardous and the safer way to cross Vatan Caddesi is to use the underground tunnel of the subway. On the local level, the walls have so many different types of entrances to reach the Old part of Istanbul: official gates like Edirnekapi Sulukulekapi and Topkapi (formerly named Charsiou Porta, Pempti Porta and Roma Porta) or there are also some breakthroughs on the wall like the one in Kaleboyu Caddesi. There is only one small road to reach the neighbourhoods developed behind the walls: it is the two lanes roads joining Topkapi-Edirne Caddesi to Kaleboyu Caddesi. For the residents those openings are so important as far as they allow them to pick up some convenient means of transport such as the dolmuş or the buses that stop on Topkapi-Edirne Caddesi.

Furthermore, so many parts of the walls are falling down that it can be dangerous to reach it:

The inner wall which is not newly renovated is in really ruinous aspect, mainly in Kaleboyu Caddesi it is vanishing and there is one big breakthrough in the wall; between Vatan and Topkapi, it is falling down.

Between the two lanes road and Sulukulekapi the outer wall exists but is in ruinous form. After Emin Molla sokak the outer wall appears all along the very pavement of Topkapi-Edirne caddesi and is being renovated.

The area between Fezvi Paşa Caddesi and Topkapı used to have 25 towers. Today it is hard to count them. From Fezvi Pasa caddesi to Edirnekapi the inner wall is composed of 3 towers and only one has not been renovated: tower 89 has been renovated in 2000'ies and the 87 one must have been renovated a long time ago because it is yet in ruinous form. From Edirnekapi we can climb up on Edirnekapi's tower but it cannot provide security to the visitor. Then there

are 3 towers and we can see the basis of a fourth one. Between the two lines road and Sulukulekapi it is impossible to count the towers as the wall is nearly entirely destroyed but they used to be 5 towers (one has been destroyed to build the two lines road). After Sulukulekapi there are 4 towers but one has totally vanished. To build Vatan Caddesi two towers have been destroyed. After Vatan Caddesi the tower 71 is in ruinous aspect but the 70 (in front of Koltukçu Sokak) is renovated and until Topkapi there are four others towers. The last one (66) is of course renovated as it is in the entrance of Topkapi.

The tower cannot be climbed on this part. Still sometimes we can enter them thanks to their posterns. But nowadays some are locked up: it is illegally occupied.

So the walls are generally only seen as a point of localization. Only residents approach it because the walls separate their housings from transportations nets. It is just a quite ruinous border to cross in their daily life.



Localisation



Vatan caddesi

Pedestrian paths through the walls



Topkapisi



Breakthrough at Kaleboyu Caddesi



Sulukulekapisi



Edirnekapisi

b) Renovation/restoration

Photos: (p.15)

During History, the walls have indeed suffered a lot from sands of times as well as from the earthquakes until very recently. Between Edirnekapi and Topkapi they have also suffered from the janissaries attacks. Therefore, throughout the History, different emperors such as Mehmet in 1453 have renovated them quite frequently.

Since they are not anymore used as fortifications, restorations of the walls were launched very seriously since 1985 following the listed operation as a world heritage of UNESCO. Surely the whole walls are not restored entirely. The restorations took place on very defined points, for example, the highly visible part of the walls or the ones that needed to be secured from the street Fezvi Paşa Caddesi or the highly crossed gate of Topkapi¹. Between 1992 and 1993, some parts of the fortifications have been renovated between Millet Caddesi and Edirnekapi; and in 1993 between Edirnekapi and Eğrikapi. In 2000-2002, the 89th tower (the one next to Fezvi Paşa Caddesi) has been renovated. Nowadays, a large-scale renovation is taking place between Vatan caddesi and Topkapi where the outer wall is being rebuilt.

Yet the restorations appear not to be basically in accordance with the authentic walls. When a restoration is achieved, we can guess it and patina can give the stones a realistic colour. However, between Topkapi and Edirnekapi the different restorations make not the walls a whole structure. The whole monument looks like more a wide patchwork of stones from various origins. Just as an example, we can think about the two towers that we see on both sides of Fezvi Paşa caddesi. Moreover, concerning the stones used, these are not the same as the original ones. It seems to be some grout mixed with some sand. The base of the tower is made of big pieces of strong stone. Gates seem to be holding thanks to quick renovations such as the big pieces of stones in Sulukule caddesi. Towers have been sometimes repaired with bricks.

Consequently the restorations made the walls looking like a new modern building without respecting the authenticity of the fortifications. Occasionally workers put some stones between two bricks of the walls they found on the ground even if it has nothing to do with the Byzantine walls. None of the esthetical and historical features of the walls are respected: old inscriptions above the gates are vanishing. They are covered in dust although they are great symbols of the different civilizations of Istanbul.

Likewise the materials used, seem to be fragile as renovated parts are already crumbling. Primarily the vegetation is destroying the walls. There is even some weed between the new stones although it is such a destructive feature for monuments. Former uses of the walls that have let some marks are not yet cleaned. For example, we can see electric wires on the gates or traces of roofing tiles on the walls next to Edirne's gate.

We deal with an historical monument, therefore when we talk about restoration, in other words to keep emphasizing the historical and esthetical values of the monument; it must not be just a reconstruction. Undeniably the walls are a heritage to preserve: their historical characteristics should be respected in order the monument to catch the attention of visitors. The works on the walls have been and still are a renovation and not a restoration. It means that it seems that historical preservation, readability and reversibility of the works are not taken into account although they are the main things to take care of while the restoration of an historical monument.

¹ see Belbim's file (surları)



Different renovations...



A feeling of a brand new building

Renovation



The non respect of the original aspect



A fragile renovation



Growing vegetation

c) Green spaces

Photos: (p.17)

Henri Prost, in the 1930ies, made a proposal according which an unoccupied space devoted to green spaces must be respected: 500 meters on the west and 80 meters on the east of the walls. It is a normal thing to do than to allow people to see the walls. Nonetheless, if a green space is very enjoyable, it is not a good idea to let too much space unoccupied. Green spaces are pieces of fresh air in this immense city and could become a resting area. However, if it is a too large space, there would be a risk that it would become a marginalized and consequently a derelict place as it is currently the case.

Without a doubt, the ruinous inner and outer walls offer some place for people to be hidden from the outside. Actually, we can sometimes, less frequently, see people roaming between the walls. There is even shelters made at the bottom of the walls and the access is even locked up: people consider them as their home. It is undeniably that the green spaces next to the walls are a derelict place. Alongside the wild vegetation, the ground is a garbage dump nourishing unbearable smells. After walking through the inner and outer walls, currently being renovated, before Topkapı we can reach the porch of the doors thanks to an accumulation of rubbish.

Yet beyond Topkapı, the green spaces are well maintained. Between Edirnekapi and Topkapı the only green area that is maintained, is the one between Edirnekapi and two lanes road. There are some paths that have been built but they are currently in a ruinous aspect. In addition, there is even a little square and a pavement stone where some vegetation pools are maintained. Otherwise the weed is just mowed between the Topkapı-Edirne Caddesi and the walls; nevertheless the place remains very dirty mainly between the outer and the inner wall, a location that used to be occupied or where children are playing. After this two lanes road we can see the remainder of the aqueduct that use to cross the moat. After Sulukulekapi the green space between the walls and the pavement is getting smaller and smaller: after Vatan caddesi and until Topkapı the outer wall is directly next to the pavement.



A paving stone next to Fezvi Pasa caddesi



Between Edirnekapisi and the two lanes road



The pavement between Vatan Caddesi and Topkapi



The green area between the two lanes road and Vatan caddesi

Green spaces



Topkapi

d) Uses of the walls

Photos: (p.20)

The neighbourhood surely does not perceive the walls as an historical monument. In the quarter Sulukule, next to Kaleboyu Caddesi, the population is mainly composed of Gypsies living in unhealthy shelters and where the infrastructures remain poor. Sometimes some seasonal Gypsies camp on some empty ground used as a garbage dump.

This neighbourhood used to be a swamp (*bostan*), therefore its structure remains an exceptional one. Indeed, small parcels full of small size houses characterize it. There are also some nice wooden houses.

All along Kaleboyu Caddesi, the houses are very poor ones and there are 5 workshops. On both sides of Vatan Caddesi there are public buildings (sport complex, Igdaş and a student dormitory) and in Sulukule caddesi the houses are *normal* ones and bigger ones than in Kaleboyu Caddesi.

Still, any of the residents seems to respect the historical area as they integrate the walls into their daily life by using them according to their needs.

- the walls as a border to cross

The walls separate the Old Istanbul, the former Constantinople, from the “new Istanbul” composed of factories and where the secular cemeteries are located. Indeed the biggest cemeteries of Istanbul, dating from Constantinople, are located on the other side of Topkapi-Edirne Caddesi from the outer wall. On this part of the city a lot of bus or *dolmuş* stops have been arranged. Consequently the residents cross the walls to reach such stations. To cross the fortifications, they take the numerous gates or break-through of the walls. As a result we can see some pedestrian paths on the green space linking Sulukule caddesi, the gates and Topkapi-Edirne Caddesi. The most crowded gate remains Topkapi.

By studying some parts of the walls, we can imagine that it has been a long time that the walls are considered as a border to cross in order to reach the other part of the city. On Edirnekapi there is some used telephone wires: the walls have been used as a communication relay.

- the walls as a storage location

At the beginning of Kaleboyu caddesi there are some workshops that makes that workers used the walls as a storage location. For example just next to Edirnekapi there is some marble lying on the ground.

From Fezvi Pasa caddesi, we can see that people have used the renovated 89th tower as a board to post some advertisements.

In their daily life the residents use the walls as a storage location as well. Women use the destroyed part of the walls as a drying place for their laundry or their carpet.

It is also a car park: before the Vatan Caddesi the renovated inner wall, in front of the public administration office, offers a perfect place to park a car as well as in front of Edirnekapi. The wall also holds a fountain that residents often used.

Mainly the walls are a storage location as there is plenty of garbage because it is a daily path for residents or even a place where people gather or enjoy as a place to roam.

- a place of socialization

Socialization processes can be observed next to the walls; it is a place of meeting for residents of the surrounded neighbourhoods. It is true that people rarely use the green area as a resting area where sometimes we can see some families having barbecues. We can also see some

stones used as sitting banks on the green area. On the Kaleboyu Caddesi, the shadow of the walls protects people chatting on the pavements. Subsequently there are quite often people talking next to Sulukulekapi or to the close niches.

Mainly the little market created next to the strategic (because of the close *dolmuş* and bus stops) Topkapi causes the settlement of little buffet where people gather. Consequently the walls remain a place of exchanges which should not be forgotten while thinking about attracting people there.

Yet this gathering function explains why there is so many garbage in the area.

-the walls to be hidden

There are less and less roaming people along the walls but there are nonetheless still a few. Seated on some historical stones they are just waiting/doing nothing. It explains why the place is so dirty as homeless people (newly immigrants) use it as a shelter. Some real shelters have been built in the tower. Therefore, while renovation in progress, some entrances of the towers have been blocked up/walled up.

During the night the surroundings of the walls are not illuminated: just the sides of the Topkapi Edirne caddesi and some parts of Kaleboyu Caddesi are. Consequently the green spaces surrounding the walls and the embankment between the walls remain easy places where to hide (to sleep, to consume drugs, to deal...). All along the night, the walls are a really dangerous place.

Indisputably the walls are important in the urban picture but for residents they just appear as a barrier to cross making it a derelict and dirty place.

A few uses of the walls



The city walls: a dryer



Crossing Topkapi



A car park



The city walls: a board



Some stalls at Topkapi

III/ To give visibility to the walls

If walls would become accessible to public, which means if they are not anymore viewed as an insecure place, illegal occupants would leave it. Indeed if the walls become visible from outside and that people are not afraid of visiting it, illegal occupants will not anymore feel secured to be hidden there and will probably leave. Therefore by planning some arrangements to the walls and its environment, the area will become decreasingly a derelict place. Where to start making the walls an accessible place? Actually, never mind the kind of arrangements we are thinking about, we should not forget to work with the inhabitants. Indeed when having in mind a planning, the question of the environment primarily appears in the first place. Concerning the walls, a sustainable development is only possible if the close residents of the fortifications respect the area. It involves making the residents to feel the importance of the walls through a kind of pedagogical training. Therefore, while the restoration of the walls, residents should participate to the transformation of the territory into a tourist area that will change their daily life in order that they would be able to benefit from it. Beside this transparency collaboration, it seems logical to begin with the restoration of the walls so that people could see the walls as they are: an important world heritage for citizens. Next it is important to landscape the environment by creating a pleasant green space and some cultural walks along the walls.

A/ work with the dwellers

a) Change the way that residents perceive the walls

Currently, inhabitants do not see the walls between Topkapi and Edirnekapi as an historical heritage. On the contrary there is no respect of it as the different uses of the walls show.

- To respect the walls

The walls are part of the World heritage of UNESCO. That is tremendous element! Therefore people should be informed of the walls' value and should see it as a great heritage to be respected and to be transmitted to the future generations and the collective memory. For the moment the walls are listed but it does not mean that residents are aware of why this 'building' is an important one. Consequently we should sensitise people to the value of those walls in order they would respect it. Inhabitants' participation would prevent undesirable and unexpected uses. Since it is obvious that the planned project can be subject to change by a misinterpretation of what IBB wants to do about it: it can involve keeping the perception of the walls as a derelict place.

Here it deals with implementing a local work to regenerate the perception that people have of the walls. Concrete actions should be realized by cooperating with the neighbourhood and could be lead by the local municipality of Fatih.

A great and easy thing to do is to inform residents of the changes that will be made to their living environment and why the municipality is doing so because of the greatness of the monument. More specifically, the municipality of Fatih could organize some excursions with pupils of Fatih's schools. It can be a great opportunity for these pupils to understand the symbols, values and History that the Byzantine's walls embodied in order they understand the need to take care of the walls and not consider them as easy garbage dump.

By doing so, inhabitants will understand why attention is paid to these walls and in that way the renovation will not be wasted, as it is somehow the case nowadays. People can better

respect arrangements if they know about it and do agree with it, especially as far as it could change their daily life maybe for the best.

- End of border

Dialogue between authorities and local community is highly important because the residents are the ones that can give back the richness of the surroundings by making a pleasant neighbourhood.

Taking into account the inhabitants will be the answer to link between the old and new Istanbul. Certainly nowadays the walls are seen as a border between the old centre of Istanbul and the part of the city that was developed after the 1960ies with its manufactures, *otogar* and so on. The historical city is just a small part of the metropolis that makes its inhabitants not to pay much attention or care about. This can involve a loss of identity of the Old Istanbul - where the walls represent the end of it- although there are so many resources (mosques; churches etc). The residents should understand that they are living next to a heritage that has to be maintained in order to keep the old Istanbul alive and that they are not living just at a border that they have to cross to reach some *otogar*.

Breaking down the role of the walls as a border can be done if the place becomes a lively one –and not just a residential area- by emphasising the identity of the old Istanbul. In the future it could be the case if the inhabitants would open some restaurants in the streets surrounding the Kaleboyu caddesi. It is quite normal that residents benefit from the impact of tourism. Moreover it would be a good thing to improve this miserable neighbourhood.

Nowadays it is obviously not the case as the surroundings are just filled with poor housings between Edirnekapi and Vatan Caddesi. Consequently if the walls become an attractive tourist place, the inhabitants could benefit from it. It could therefore lead to an economical revitalization through tourism.

b) Benefit for inhabitants

Photos: (p.24)

- Improve the neighbourhood

Restoration of listed buildings always contributes to neighbourhood regeneration.

Cultural tourism could be a good way to give the city its functions back in this neighbourhood. Indeed one function of the city is to gather people, to mix its inhabitants against segregated neighbourhoods. In this way it is a matter of solidarity that tourism could resolve. If the helped inhabitants would create some nice place, tourism would obviously bring money. Inversely, if the walls would become a tourist place, the inhabitants could benefit from it and improve their living conditions by themselves or with the help of the municipality. It is all about maintaining a form of urban diversity.

However, currently such arrangements can only be done if only the municipality is willing to do so.

As the surroundings of the walls should be lively, perhaps some programs could be lead to houses restoration.

- Arrangement of the houses

Certainly some houses between Edirnekapi and Vatan Caddesi are currently just 'houses'/ shelters made of sheet metal, salvage materials and so on, and disposed to fall down

As stressed previously, the neighbourhood of the walls has some potential to become a real tourist hotspot. Indeed the structure of the streets provides the charm of this neighbourhood:

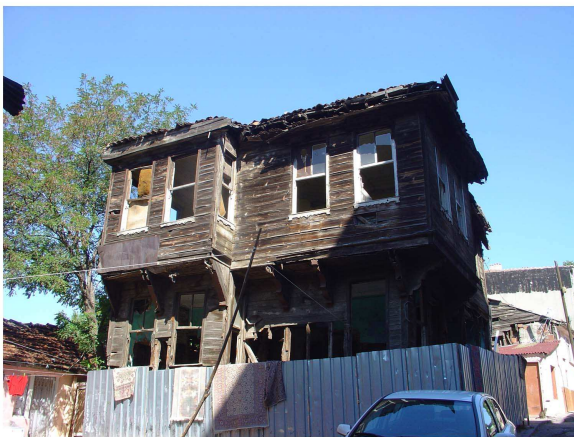
they are small streets that must have been built in order to follow the structure of the swamps. Furthermore there are some nice wooden houses that deserve to be maintained. Therefore the municipality could take the charge of normalizing the living conditions of some houses. Without doubt some need to be totally rebuilt but perhaps some are valuable. Essentially the historical structure of this neighbourhood developed in swamp (*bostan*) has to be maintained. The small streets and the small houses represent a charm for the hiker. For the moment the walls are just a resource that can be used; the future and the future arrangement of the area will make the walls a real valuable heritage to visit. We cannot be sure about what will become of it: there are always some changes in city planning while doing so but the point is to involve the inhabitants to make the place attractive and to make the walls a great element of the urban landscape of Istanbul. To do so, the thing that should not be forgotten, is that the surroundings of the walls are important because of the presence of the walls! Consequently the surroundings need to be a quiet area and not a big area of leisure in order not to false and endanger this world heritage.



Sulukule neighbourhood



Little streets



A house which could be valuable

B/ what to do/ little experiences

a) access/restoration

Cleaning and providing security to the walls
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To access the walls, the first thing to do is to clean it. The entire weed in the niches, towers, gates and other buildings should be plucked up.

Then the walls must provide safety, which can be mainly done through the renovation. Indeed the walls could become a tourist place only if every people can access it; nowadays it is so hazardous for elder people to climb on the tower's circuit.

Every part of the walls can definitely not be renovated for pecuniary reason and most probably it does not need to be entirely renovated. If some parts of the walls have vanished so much, the reason could be the repeated attacks the walls endured throughout History. Yet today it is a renovation and not a restoration, which means that there is no search for the Byzantine authenticity although it is the kind of visit tourists could expect from an Istanbul historical monument: to be more or less as it used to be.

The thing to do is to think about a solid restoration as far as earthquakes could easily affect the walls: due to renovation people should be able to climb safely on some towers or to walk on the tower's circuit.

Searching for the authenticity of the monument and transmitting it
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Besides, search for authenticity of the historical monument involves studying the walls before acting on it. The orthodox cross that appears on the walls should be maintained and not just replaced by some new stones. Maybe an international collaboration could be established in order that scientists, archaeologists and other scholars could work together with Turkish craftsmen and restorers in order to maintain this world heritage as it used to be.

Nowadays Urban Observatory of Istanbul (Observatoire Urbain d'Istanbul) and the Region of Brussels (Région de Bruxelles-Capitale) and soon IBB are working together on the set up of an inter regional cooperation project for the restoration and valorisation of the city walls, based on the model of Interreg III. The aim is to experience and share the fortified heritage by organizing some seminars about the walls. It is an opportunity for Istanbul to learn from the valorisation of city walls achieved in Belgium, Netherlands and northern France.²

Moreover the restoration works could be an opportunity to explain people the reason for such restoration works and presents the scientific aspects of History. The popularisation of the researches lead on the walls for the restoration purposes, represents an opportunity *to* explain the past to the people as well as sensitise people to the maintain of an Heritage thanks to technological means and techniques used to dig and restore this historical area.

The strengthening of the walls will allow people to climb on the circuits' tower and to enjoy the view and the past. To let the visitors walk on the wall would have the advantage of facilitating the maintenance of the stones.

² www.espace-environnement.be/missions/septentrion

Finally the restoration of the walls is indeed the best way to understand the walls and their history but it can also be a way to open scientific knowledge to the public.

b) Green space to maintain

Preserving green area to discover the walls

A green area in a city represents some fresh air and a quiet area where to rest. In the surroundings of the walls, it is truly a place to maintain to allow people to see the walls as a whole. No construction or arrangements have to be done on the walls. They should be kept as “pure” as possible.

Concerning the space that exists between the road and the walls, it also should remain empty but well maintained. The paved paths between Edirnekapi and the two lines road can be used as a walking paths; it already exists some very little basins where plants could be bred to colour the green space.

Nevertheless the green area could become marginalized if it represents an over empty space as it is currently the case. Therefore it needs to be organised while not giving it the aspect of a wide leisure area. It does not need to be a children playground but just a pleasant place well maintained where to sit easily. To emphasize the great features of the walls, the green space should represent an opportunity to walk all along the walls and between the walls. For instance, just after the two lanes road it is possible to walk between the inner and the outer walls. In order to do so, the vegetation should be maintained and managed. Afterwards the green space will be a way to discover and enjoy the walls by passing through the gates, walking between the both walls or just looking at them from the outside. The green space allows the visitor to discover the place as he wishes by seeing the walls as a whole, or by passing trough it or alongside it.

c) Light

Enlightening the monument

Lighting effects can emphasize the immensity of the building and make it even more visible into the urban landscape. It is a way to focus on peculiar parts of the walls as, for example, on one gate or one tower. Usually the public lights cannot only be a security device or tool but also a visual attraction by focusing the eyes on a special part of the walls. Thanks to technological means, the walls can even come back “to life” by communicating the original dimensions of the monument.

In addition it can be a common experience that people could share in this space that we have inherited.

d) Cultural attraction

Photos: (p.29)

There are plenty of things on the walls that can be exploited in order to allow people to understand the walls while discovering them by using the green area or the streets that border the walls.

Fixing historical information boards

The events which took place on the walls can be related by putting some signs in specific parts of the wall, for instance like in Edirnekapi where a sign retells the entry of Mehmet II in Constantinople in 1453.

The former name of the gates could be explained such as for instance Sulukulekapi that used to be called Pempti Porta. Above the gates, some inscriptions deserve to be highlighted by protecting them thanks to some glass panels: on Sulukulekapi there is a Latin inscription of Pusaesus.

More commonly some historical billboards could explain what the life of the guards was during the Byzantine era.

Using the towers and the niches

The niches in the walls could be arranged in order that some exhibitions could take place inside. For instance, a reconstitution of a Byzantine knight could stand up on the tallest niches between Ali Pasa Sokak and Vatan Caddesi. A niche could contain some mock-up of how the walls were before. Cannonballs that were used during Constantinople's siege could be shown in some niches.

All of these arrangements could contribute to a better understanding of the past.

It will create a real cultural journey along the walls where everyone would be able to map out her/his own path to discover the richness of the fortifications.

Creating some exhibitions about the walls in the surroundings

While passing by this tremendous Vatan Caddesi that cannot obviously attract people, it could be an interesting idea to set up an exhibition -with some photos and explanations- in the subway about the walls history. It could be also possible in Davutpasa tramway's station.

There definitely are so many things about the walls that could be explained: their construction, their different renovations, their uses (from the protection of the city to a witness of the growth of Istanbul). We could go further and create a Byzantine museum dedicated to the walls.

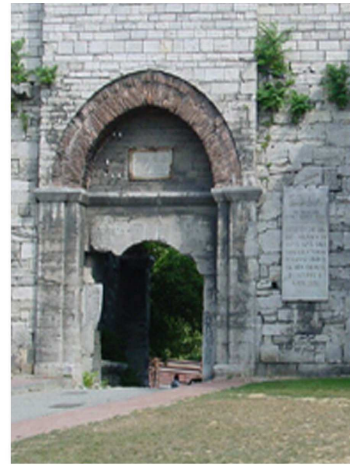
In the end, festivals could be organised, for instance to recount of how the knights were dressed up and how they fought through the organisation some kind of theatre performances.

Therefore some arrangements on the walls or next to the walls would be an opportunity to explain their history and what their purposes were. A great thing that could be done would be to valorise this cultural heritage while preserving the neighbourhood next to the walls. It would create two ways to discover the walls: either by walking on the grass or either by enjoying an inhabited living neighbourhood.

Elements to be valorised



An inscription (Edirnekapisi) to be enlightened



An example of touristical information panel to to be followed

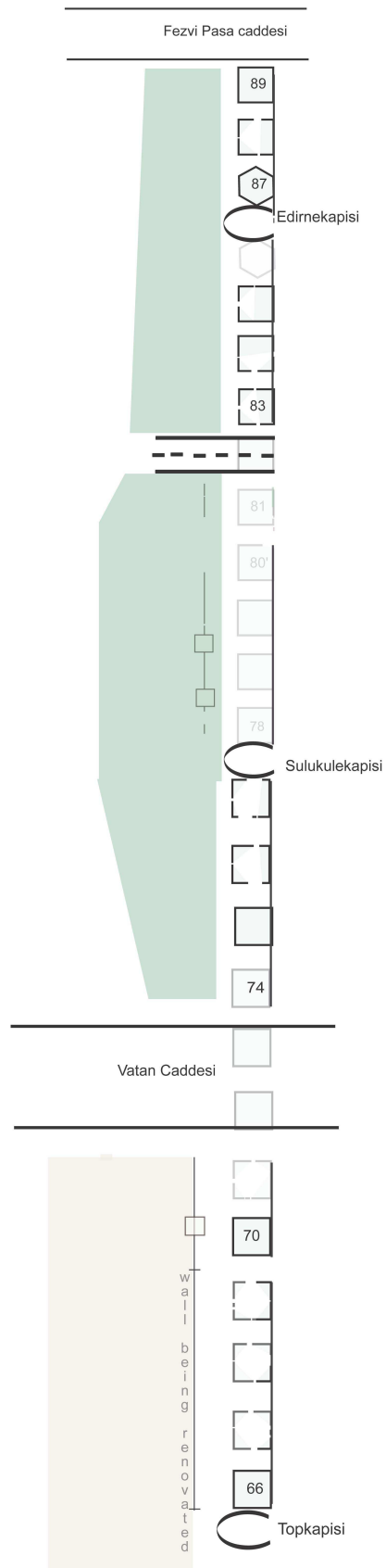


A potential 'miniature' exhibition hall



A canonball from the siege of Constantinople in 1453

SECTION OF THE WALLS



SOME RECOMMENDATIONS TO VALORIZE THE WALLS

	MEANS	AIMS
During all the process of restoration, working with the dwellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping giving them information about the works on the walls and in the surroundings • Making them aware of the historical heritage they are living with 	<p>For them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect and value the walls and its surroundings • To benefit from tourism <p>And</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To link the old part of Istanbul and the ‘newer’ one/ to integrate the walls into the surroundings • To make the place a pleasant one
1. Searching for the authenticity of the city walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By an expert and skilled restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect the History • To explain the walls to the people
2. Providing access and security to the walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By plucking all the weed and cleaning the space from garbage and stones • By restoring and strengthening the walls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make the place attractive • To allow every people to enjoy the walls and its tower’s circuit
3. Highlighting the historical characteristics of the city walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By using lighting effects • By using tourist information boards • By creating some exhibitions about the walls using the towers, the niches and the tunnels of transportation nets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By especially emphasizing interesting parts of the walls like gates, inscriptions, cannonballs etc • By creating a cultural walk around the walk

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INTERVIEWS

- on the 9th of August, at Bimtas -Taksim, meeting with Prof. Dr. Aykut KARAMAN, Chairman of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, city and regional planning department/ member of the committee of Istanbul, European Cultural Capital

- on the 17th of August, at Belbim –Uskudar, interview of Adnan SAHIN, general manager of Belbim, a data processing enterprise who made a project about the city walls for the IBB

- on the 19th of August, at the IBB -Sarachane, interview of Omer TURK, advicer of the manager of Igatas working for IBB/ formelly he was President of Belbim where he was responsible for the project about the city walls/ European Cultural Capital executive board member