The conservation and management of intangible cultural qualities as the fragments of the spirit of place: The case of the Istanbul Land Walls

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ABSTRACT

The definitions, approaches, and methods required for the inclusion of intangible cultural qualities in site management processes for conservation purposes are rarely published. Within the scope of this study, a method for the evaluation of intangible cultural qualities in site management processes is developed, and this method is applied to the Land Walls Component of the Historic Areas of Istanbul World Heritage Site.

The aim of this study is to define the intangible qualities of a heritage site, to determine them according to written and visual sources, and to provide necessary means to enable the determination of intangible qualities' physical signifiers and their evaluation for conservation-focused site management. The main goal of this study is to develop a method to relate the tangible and the intangible heritage and to transform the knowledge created by this new method into an alternative site management approach. First, the intangible cultural qualities of the Land Walls are examined. Second, these qualities are integrated into the site management processes by relating the intangible qualities to the tangible ones, such as location and the traces on structures and cultural routes. Finally, these intangible cultural qualities are included in the site management processes by means of a Geographical Information Systems (GIS) database and its analysis.

Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site Component, which is taken as a case study, was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1985 as one of the four Historic Areas of Istanbul. This study is original in that it defines and documents the intangible cultural qualities and their inclusion in the site management methodology by relating them to the tangible qualities within the scope of the documentation, interpretation, and presentation of the heritage sites for conservation purposes.

Keywords

cultural heritage, intangible cultural qualities, World Heritage Site, the Istanbul Land Walls, cultural landscape, site management

Introduction

The Land Walls of Istanbul, also called the Theodosian Walls, built at the beginning of the fifth century CE, are one of the most important monuments that shaped the character of the historic city of Istanbul (Constantinople), alongside Hagia Sophia (Magdalino 2012). The architectural significance of the Land Walls structure originates from 'its superior design, the strength of its building materials and details of its construction' (Ahunbay and Ahunbay 2000, 227). Constituting an approximately 60-metre-wide defence line, the walls' structure is composed of two lines of walls and a moat. The main wall is equipped with 96 towers and numerous civil and military gates, eight of which are still in use today.[1] In a broader urban context, the Land Walls and the area surrounding the walls encapsulate a multilayered cultural landscape that bears traces of various events, situations and people throughout the 1600-year-long history of the city (Figures. 1 and 2).

However, most of the commentary about the walls concentrates on the war of 1453, portraying the walls within the context of this significant war. This commentary devotes less attention to reading the traces of different historical periods on the walls: the relationship of the walls to the water system and green spaces in the city, to the spiritual and religious stories that could be associated with the walls, the stories of the people who had lived and are living around the walls and to the recollections of the residents and travellers who have visited the walls.

The multilayered structure of the cultural landscape of the Land Walls of Istanbul, which can still be observed today, consisting of nature, walls, monuments, people, neighbourhoods, fields and cemeteries, has been represented in documents of various kinds produced over several centuries (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Aksoy and Ricci 2014). This study aims to start a debate on the Land Walls and their reflections on daily life. Written and visual documents referring to events and situations that still bear their marks on the walls and their surrounding area today have been researched for this article; additionally, sources that could be associated with specific locations



Figure 1
A view of the historic vegetable gardens near the Istanbul Land Walls (Photo by Figen Kıvılcım Çorakbaş).



Figure 2
An aerial photo dated 1946, where the northern part of the Land Walls and their surroundings are visible (Turkish Ministry of Defense Map General Directorate Archive).

were marked on a Geographical Information Systems (GIS) model to include the intangible cultural qualities in site management processes and conservation decisions.

The study examines the existence of a structure of defence – which has not seen a battle since 1453 – in urban life, not through investigating the truth of data but rather aiming to show the plurality of the memories, perspectives and representations of the site.

Past narratives as intangible cultural qualities

The intangible cultural qualities are the meanings attributed to all things by people through their interactive engagement with the world. These meanings are necessary for the transformation of 'space' to 'place' and of 'structure' to 'dwelling' (Karakul 2011). Intangible qualities are integrated components of tangible heritage that form its intrinsic value. The valorisation of intangible heritage not only provides a basis for preserving tangible heritage but also sustains senses of collective memory. As stated by Jigyasu (2015), '[h]eritage has two fundamental dimensions, for example as in the human soul and body, where the soul is intangible and the body the tangible part [...] the reality of the tangible depends upon the intangible soul'. As underlined by Jigyasu (2015), each and every example of heritage is composed of both tangible and intangible aspects and, therefore, an integrated conservation approach that recognises both the tangible and the intangible characteristics of heritage is required to preserve all values of cultural heritage (aesthetic, historical, scientific, social values, etc.) that contribute to cultural significance. As a result, understanding the plural meanings of heritage and developing methods to document, analyse, interpret and present the intangible qualities of urban heritage is of utmost importance (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018).

Urban heritage – monuments, streetscapes, historic buildings, vernacular architecture and natural elements such as trees and historic gardens – is mainly defined by and experienced through its physical characteristics, such as material, colour, texture or light. On the other hand, beyond their physical existence, what makes urban assets heritage is a matter of debate. For official bodies such as UNESCO, there are often specific criteria that are used to decide whether something counts as heritage, often connected to the status of a site as an essential expression of human culture. Nevertheless, the meanings that people attach to historic sites or practices can also be considered to qualify those sites and practices as heritage (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018). In this view, heritage is not so much an object or 'thing' as a process of valorising the past (Smith 2006; Fairclough 2009). Collecting and analysing past and present narratives about a heritage site is a way to emphasise the past and present communities' ideas and memories connected to a heritage site. Common themes emerging from past and present narratives frame the main characteristics of the spirit of a heritage site and, thus, its intangible cultural qualities. Therefore, methods that employ past and present narratives in the site management decision-making processes can lead to better decisions for conservation and can foster community engagement (Figure 3). Understanding the critical role that heritage plays in maintaining collective memory and in reflecting plural viewpoints in and across communities is essential, because it can help to build awareness and create the

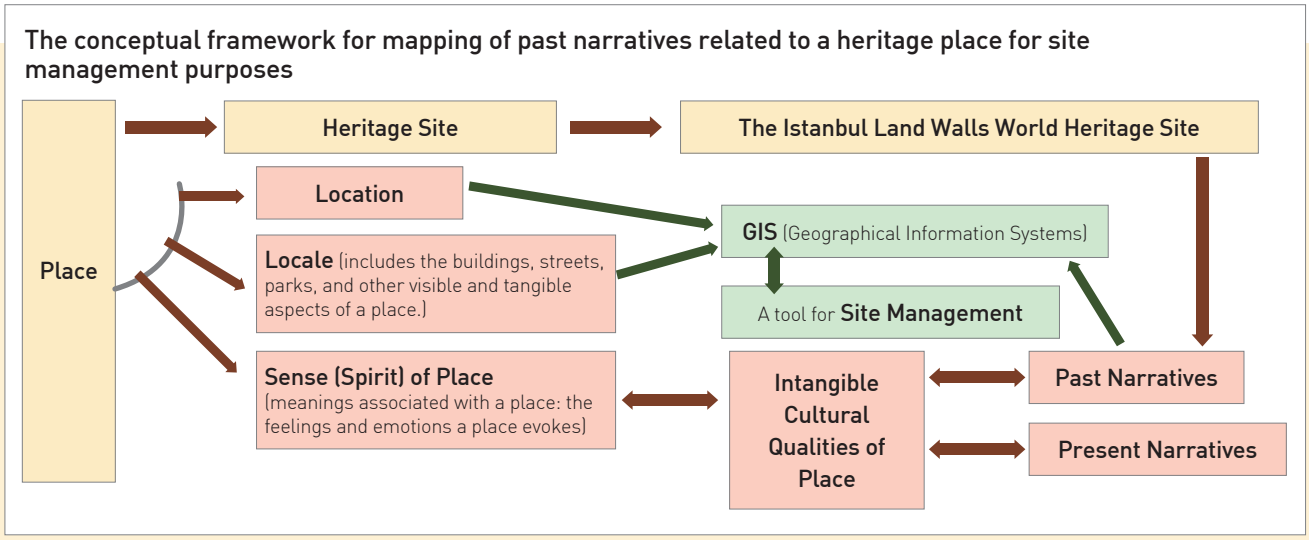


Figure 3
Scheme showing the conceptual framework of the study.

grounds for peaceful cohabitation (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018).

Especially in heritage places, communities often forge strong links with cultural heritage and attach personal meanings to it. Groups often hold and maintain collective memory[2] about the places in which they live or where they lived in the past. Additionally, individuals may attach personal meanings to such heritage sites (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018). However, it is arguable to what extent the ascription of meaning can be evaluated as intangible heritage and how the boundaries of inclusion of memories in the intangible heritage description can be determined (Akagawa and Smith 2018, 2). On the other hand, it is inevitable that such memory practices and meaning-making processes bring tangible and intangible cultural heritage (ICH) into relation, and it is essential to reflect this in processes of site management and community engagement (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018; Figure 3). Stefano, Davis and Corsane (2012, 1) claim that it is possible to suggest that 'intangible cultural heritage represents everything: the immaterial elements that influence and surround all human activity', such as knowledge, memories and meanings. Moreover, they point out that 'the human activity of the past exists only as tangible evidence', leading to the fact that 'intangible cultural heritage [...] must be tied to the present' (Stefano, Davis and Corsane 2012, 1). In this study, past narratives are analysed as traces of the spirit of place, and they are tied to the present by placing them in their exact locations on a GIS model to provide a database for site management decision-making. By mapping past narratives, an alternative reading of the cultural significance of place became possible (Figures. 4 and 5). Groupings and distributions of narratives about the place have highlighted hidden potential attraction points at the heritage site (Figures. 4 and 5).

Akagawa and Smith argue (2018, 3) that the 'ICH appeals to a broader spectrum of humanistic, aesthetic, and intellectual [community] engagement, encouraging consumers [of cultural heritage] to relate at the level of "meaning" that can apply to the full range of the intellectual and sensory receptors'. Pointing to the 'attractiveness' that the ICH creates in the interpretation and presentation of heritage sites, Akagawa and Smith (2018, 3) underline the risk that this attractiveness begets in safeguarding the authenticity of the ICH.

The hidden intangible dimensions of heritage are embodied within tangible heritage. Such hidden dimensions could be principles and rules for systems of construction, sacred proportions and rules, beliefs and technologies, units of measurement, and the social systems, functions, and ways of life of which sites have been a part. An integrated approach concerning both tangible and intangible elements can guarantee the maintenance of some elements of the condition of 'authenticity', such as 'use and function', 'traditions, techniques and management systems', 'language and other forms of

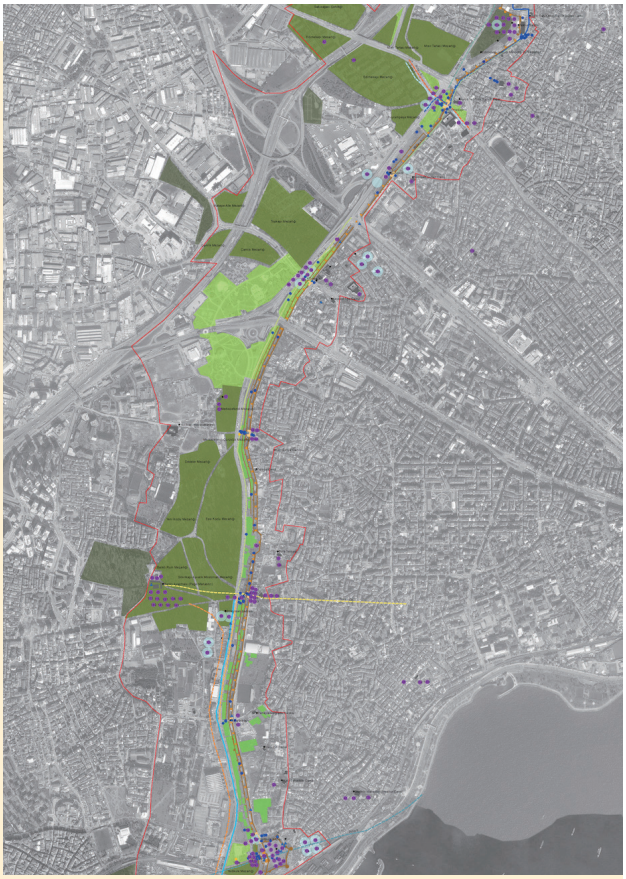


Figure 4
The GIS map showing the locations related to the past narratives about the Land Walls World Heritage Site (each piece of written or visual document is represented by a purple dot).

intangible heritage' and what is termed 'spirit and feeling' (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018).

Heritage sites are places with distinctive historic or cultural characteristics. In nearly all cases, they are multilayered cultural or historic urban or rural landscapes. They embody not only the physical components of habitats (built or natural environment) but also the traces of the past – places that were, are or will be the carriers of collective memory, as well as the scenes of happenings and stories (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, Kunt and Acar Bilgin 2018).

Geographer Tim Cresswell (2009) points out that place as a term was 'conceptualised as a particular location that has acquired a set of meanings and attachments' only in the 1970s. According to Cresswell (2009),

> Place is a meaningful site that combines location, locale, and sense of place. Location refers to an absolute point in space with a specific set of coordinates and measurable distances from other locations. Location refers to the 'where' of place. Locale refers to the material setting for social relations – the way a place looks. Locale includes the buildings, streets, parks, and other visible and tangible aspects of a place. Sense of place refers to the more nebulous meanings associated with a place: the feelings and emotions a place evokes. These meanings can be individual and based on personal biography or they can be shared. Shared senses of place are based on mediation and representation. When we write 'Calcutta' or 'Rio' or 'Manchester' for instance, even those of us who have not been to these places have some sense of them – sets of meanings produced in films, literature, advertising, and other forms of mediation.

Cresswell's definition of place refers to three layers of characteristics: the first is geographic location, the second is the physical existence and its character and the third is the meanings associated with that place. The third layer of characteristics may be subjective as well as shared by a group of people. Cresswell (2009) comments that 'in any given place we encounter a combination of materiality, meaning, and practice'.

In the area of architectural restoration and conservation, advanced methods for the preservation of the material existence of heritage sites have been developed. There are fewer studies on the analysis of immaterial components of place (meanings, stories, memories) and methods to preserve their interrelationship with the physical environment.

People – both individuals and communities – and their stories transform places through adding new meaning to spaces. To study the intangibles of place, it is important to comprehend the views and feelings of people who are in close contact with places. Past and present uses of and reflections on place by people constitute the cultural significance of place (The Burra Charter [ICOMOS 1999, but subsequently revised]).

A central question in the issue of safeguarding intangible cultural qualities of a place is how intangible heritage can be managed and sustained in an existing heritage site without freezing or losing traditional practices. Another issue at the heart of this discussion is whether

it is acceptable and necessary to revive any intangible cultural qualities that existed in the past. Because this study focuses on the analysis of the past narratives for the evaluation, conservation and management of the intangible cultural qualities of place, it is limited to researching the efficiency of past narratives in defining the spirit of place, as well as in providing a background for participative site management. Certainly, the views and memories of the present communities living around the Land Walls are as significant as those of the past communities, if not more so.[3] However, this paper focuses on the interpretation of past narratives for site management purposes. Cultural heritage management requires a dynamic perspective, not focusing on the parts but the whole, and not on the relations but the interactions (Barile and Saviano 2015, 73). In this paper's approach, a database seeking the interactions of past narratives with recent narratives, with each other and with different locations was developed as a model that can be broadened to contain present narratives. The aim is to exemplify a methodology for preparing a multi-criteria decision-making tool for site management purposes.

Written and visual documents concerning the Land Walls and their immediate surroundings were mapped by using a GIS database, and the relationships between the tangible and the intangible qualities were examined to take into account the intangible characteristics of the place in conservation and management decisions (Figures. 3, 4 and 5). From the analysis of the more than 250 quotations derived from historic resources such as travellers' accounts, memories, scientific reports and literary works, six main themes were determined: (1) imperial legacy, (2) the fringe and its people, (3) repairs after wars or earthquakes, (4) the green and the blue of the city, (5) spirituality and religion, and (6) walking along the walls. The following section outlines the historical and physical context of the Land Walls and is followed by the explanation of six themes that are derived from the analysis of the past narratives on the genius loci (the spirit of place) of the Land Walls.

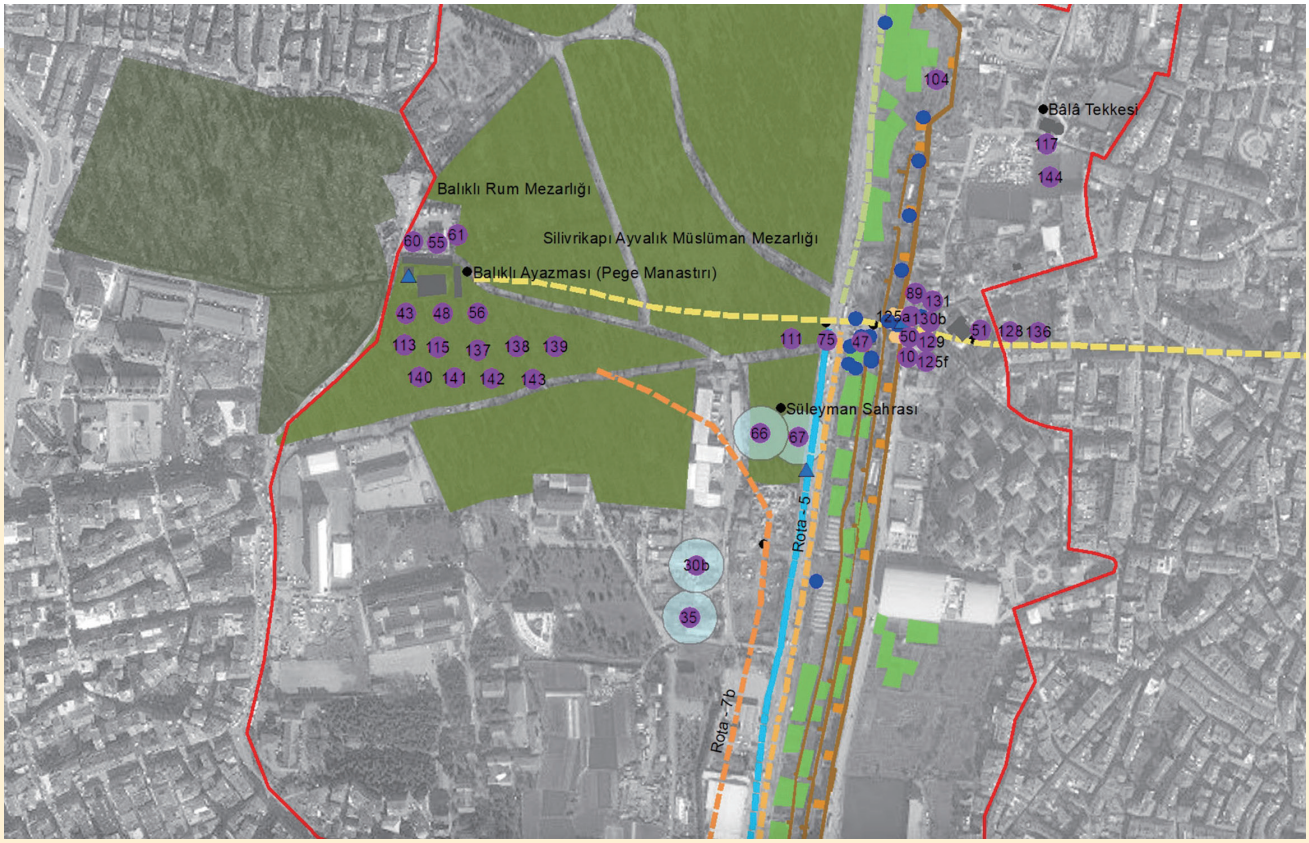


Figure 5
A detail from the GIS map.

Istanbul's land border

The city of Constantinople was naturally sheltered by the Golden Horn from the north and the Sea of Marmara from the south and east. Constantinople's western front, on the other hand, was a slightly inclined topography that was easy to approach by land and was only protected by the walls of Constantine (fourth century CE) – thought to be only a single row, which made this front of the city most open to attacks. Built in the beginning of fifth century CE – when Emperor Theodosius II had not reached the legal age of majority – by Emperor Anthemius who was ruling over the Byzantine Empire at the time, the Land Walls we call the Theodosian walls today played an important role in making Constantinople one of the most important cities of the medieval ages. By shaping the relatively flat topography of the western border of Constantinople through the use of moats, platforms and walls, the Land Walls formed a frontier that was difficult to breach (Asutay-Effenberger 2007; Ahunbay and Ahunbay 2000).

The Theodosian walls were built 2.5 km to the west of the walls of Constantine. Thus, a large expanse containing mainly rural and agricultural areas at the time was included in the city by the Theodosian walls. The fact that the new walls were erected so far away from the city was interpreted by experts as an indication of another need apart from the need to build defensive walls: the need to include agricultural areas and cisterns to provide the city with food and water during lengthy sieges.

The Theodosian walls are believed to have been built as a single wall between the years 408 and 413; they were rebuilt as two rows of walls and a moat after the collapse of more than 50 towers in the earthquake of 447.

Concurrent with the initial building of the walls, a law on the walls was enacted in 413. Under this law, the maintenance of the Theodosian walls was assigned to the owners of the land on which the walls were placed; in exchange, the owners of the land were given the right to use the towers within the boundaries of their land.

> We command that the towers of the New Wall, which has been constructed for the fortification of this most splendid city [Constantinople], shall, after the completion of the work, be assigned to the use of those persons through whose lands this wall was duly erected [...] so that said landholders and those persons to whom the title to these lands may pass shall know that each year they must provide for the repair of the towers at their own expense, that they shall acquire the use of these towers as a special favor from the public, and they shall not doubt that the care of repair and the responsibility therefor[e] belongs to them. (*Codex Theodosianus* 413 as cited by Philippides and Hanak 2011, 303–304)

When this law is interpreted in light of early Byzantine socio-economic structures, it could be concluded that the Theodosian walls were located on lands belonging to the emperor, the monasteries or aristocratic families and that these lands were used for agriculture. Likewise, it could be said that the ground floors of the towers were used by landowners for agricultural purposes.

This law is probably one of the first to regulate the management, use and maintenance of a structure on an urban scale. This law, like the other textual documents examined in the scope of this study, is a connection between the tangible and the intangible aspects of the Land Walls World Heritage Site.

In the next section, the themes that emerged from the analysis of the past narratives on the Land Walls are discussed. Some quotations from the original documents are included to exemplify the variety of resources, the richness of details and the repetition of similar themes in different historical periods by different authors.

Theme 1: Imperial legacy

From the fifth century, when they were built, to the 13th century, the Theodosian walls provided protection to the city of Constantinople against the raids of Huns, Avars, Arabs, Bulgars and Persians (Nicolle, Haldon and Turnbull 2007, 120–122).

The Latin capture of Istanbul in 1204 was the first incident when the city's walls were penetrated. On this occasion, the Latins were able to enter the city through the Marmara walls. Constantinople was recaptured from the Latins in 1261.

In 1453, Ottoman armies under the rule of Mehmed II were able to enter the city from Edirnekapı and Topkapı after intense battles. Thus, the Theodosian walls were penetrated for the first and last time in their history.

Apart from the approximately 5.7 km long section built in the fifth century CE during the era of Theodosius II, the Land Walls of Istanbul constitute the walls of the Tekfur Palace (Palace of Porphyrogenitus) on the north; the Comnenian walls and the walls of Blachernae, also called the Prison of Anemas, double walls that dated to the early ninth century CE; and the Heraclian walls.

The Land Walls bear the marks of many Byzantine and Ottoman emperors, and these marks appear in the form of repairs, towers built or rebuilt and inscriptions on the walls.

Over the centuries, Byzantine emperors had the damaged parts of the walls repaired or rebuilt after wars and earthquakes; from time to time, repair or construction activities were documented by inscriptions on the walls.

Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror also had the walls repaired after the war of 1453, and a record of the work carried out during these repairs was kept. In addition, in the following centuries, other Ottoman sultans also carried out repairs to the walls – especially after great earthquakes.

With the abolition of the Janissary Corps system in January 1826, like many fortification structures in Istanbul, the Land Walls began a process of rapid deterioration. In 1884, Abdul Hamid II issued a decree for the protection of the city walls. Despite these efforts, the walls could not be fully protected.

In 1913, the Imperial Museum in Istanbul approved the decision to register the city walls as cultural heritage.

There were also several regulations enacted during the Republic era to protect the Theodosian walls. The Land Walls and the surrounding area are one of the four areas in Istanbul that were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List under the title of 'Historic Areas of Istanbul' in 1985.

Repair, restoration and reconstruction activities on the walls started to gain pace in the second half of the 1980s. These activities were much criticised because they did not employ scientific methods or carry out detailed documentation; additionally, the approach, based mainly on rebuilding, was superseded by scientific studies of a higher standard in the 1990s. Unfortunately, these restoration practices based on scientific studies could only be implemented to a limited extent, leaving the sustainability of conservation unattained.

One of the most commonly referenced parts of the Land Walls in past narratives is Yedikule Fortress, which was built by Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror in 1457 by using four towers of the Theodosian walls and by building three towers adjoining these. For example, a traveller in 1900s, Marion-Crawford (2012, 43) pointed out:

> Nearest the sea lies the fortress he built, Yedi Kule, the Seven Towers. The vast ruin with its great court, its numerous towers and gates and ramparts, has become in the course of events the habitation of a nondescript Armenian cobbler [...] is now a mere ruin.

Concerning one of the well-known gates of the Land Walls, Edirnekapı Gate on the northern part of the walls, De Amicis (1986 [1874], 138) stated:

> Every time I passed the triumphal gate of Adrianapolis I would be haunted by this brilliant vision, and pause to gaze fixedly at the opening, as though expecting each moment to see the pasha quartermaster come forth, heralding the approach of the imperial troops.

Della Valle (quoted in Andreasyan 1988, 179) described the same gate in the 17th century:

> This was the main gate of journeys by land, and there was a very long and wide street leading from this gate to the palace of the sultan. As the street proceeded over hills, this was the most beautiful of all streets within the city. The sultan and other great men entered the city through this gate with spectacular processions.

As a result, the Land Walls as an imperial legacy is the most frequently encountered theme in the past narratives referring to the walls. This reflects the administrative significance and the monumental dimension of this urban structure.

Theme 2: The fringe and its people

A rich cultural landscape has formed around the Land Walls over the centuries – shaped by functions located at

the fringes of the city, consisting of historical cemeteries, historical *bostans* (urban vegetable gardens) and architectural structures from the Byzantine and Ottoman eras. Monuments such as the Stoudios and Khora monasteries and the Hadım Ali Pasha and Kara Ahmet Pasha Mosque complexes were located near the Land Walls, and monuments such as the Blachernae Palace and the Yedikule Fortress were built directly adjoining the walls.

When they were built, there were no buildings in the area surrounding the Land Walls apart from the Golden Gate. In the Byzantine period, the area where the wall was erected belonged to various landlords and was used for agricultural activities. In later centuries, while the agricultural activities continued, cemeteries and monasteries were added to the landscape of the Land Walls; from the fifth and sixth centuries onwards, religious buildings were built in the north-west parts of the city, and particularly from 16th century on, extensive residential and commercial areas could be seen around the walls.

At the end of the 19th century, the construction of the railway lines was an important threshold in the use of the area around the walls, and the opening of Vatan and Millet avenues by demolishing some sections of the walls in 1957 caused the westward expansion of the settlements, bypassing the walls. While this resulted in the walls and their surrounding areas being encapsulated within the expanding boundaries of the growing city, their status as a fringe zone has continued to the present day.

The spirit of the Land Walls was shaped by the walls' location at the periphery of the city, and some functions located in this area, some of the people settled there and certain events taking place there had a 'dissenting' nature that could only be situated at the fringes of the city rather than its centre. Despite being engulfed within the city centre today, the Land Walls and the area surrounding them maintain a fringe character in various places and continue to host the 'normal' as well as the 'marginal'.

Being located on the periphery has determined the urban form as well as spatial use and social structure of the Land Walls. Alongside 'normal' land uses and social groups, 'marginal' functions and people were also able to find a place around the walls. The Land Walls of Istanbul and the area surrounding them is a good example of Conzen's (1960) 'fringe belts' – described as areas within the city centre that have maintained a fringe character.

These areas contain industrial areas, vast green areas, cemeteries and sports fields, which could only exist at the fringe – that is to say, before the walls and the surrounding area became part of the city centre. Also included is an urban form consisting of large, non-repetitive plots. The Land Walls define the urban form, and, in turn, the urban form determines the profile of the people living there. The fringe affects the walls, their surroundings and the character of the people settled there. Schrader (translated from 1917, 69–70) described the spirit of the fringe:

> As one walks through the gates in the land walls of Istanbul today, with the most heavenly ecstasies in the heart, one experiences, so to speak, as if caught in the breeze of history. Because it is through these gates that the culture of Byzantium poured out to the Balkan Peninsula and as far as Eastern Russia. [...]
> But now, just like in the past, they mark the boundaries of the big city, which spreads behind them with its sea of houses – that undulates like brown waves around the islands of the great mosques. Even today the colorful life, that swarms across and beyond the borders of the city, accumulates at these old bulwarks.
> In the coffee house at the entrance sit all sorts of people in contemplation, who seem to have fled here from the turmoil of life. On the road are rural wagons coming into the city through the cemetery, or greengrocers with their donkeys strolling past, trotting with their heavy baskets laden with blessed fruits. Before the gate are 'Taligas', the frail hired vehicles of the Precincts of Istanbul that seriously rattle and shake their occupants on the rugged roads.

Concerning the neighbourhood near Yedikule Fortress, Kömürciyan (1988, 1–2) stated:

> Around and within the walls live the people called Karamanlides. Although Roum [of Greek origin] by descent they do not know Greek, and instead, speak Turkish.[4]

Many other past narratives focus on communities of various cultures and economic levels living around the Land Walls, as well as stories of immigrants placed around the walls when they arrived in the city. Additionally, land uses such as cemeteries, agricultural areas, tanneries, huge urban parks, sports and industrial areas,

in harmony with the fringe character of the Land Walls, are usually documented in the past narratives, all of which are among the intangible qualities of place that also shape the physical existence of the place.

Theme 3: Repairs after wars or earthquakes

A variety of materials and construction techniques can be traced on the Land Walls due to the repair and reconstruction activities carried out during the Ottoman, Byzantine and Republic eras. These were mainly carried out to remedy the damages caused by earthquakes or war (Foss and Winfield 1986).

The walls were continuously maintained, repaired and rebuilt throughout the Byzantine millennium. Earthquakes and wars caused serious damages over the centuries, and the imperial administration undertook the task of restoring the destroyed parts. The repairs were often commemorated and advertised with inscriptions praising the emperors for providing safety and protection for the capital city. Only a few years after the original construction, a strong earthquake destroyed part of the walls in 447, and repairs were urgently carried out, which even included rebuilding parts of the fortifications. The materials and techniques were, in principle, similar to the original structure, but involved the use of larger square blocks.

Extensive repairs were also carried out after the earthquake of 740, on the initiative of Emperor Leo III and his son Constantine V. Emperors of the Macedonian and Comnenian dynasties also repaired parts of the walls or specific towers. Damages caused during the sack of 1204 by the Crusaders and by the subsequent Latin occupation were repaired by Michael VIII Palaeologus following the Byzantine reconquest of Constantinople in 1261. Minor repairs have also been recorded in 14th-century inscriptions. The last series of repairs in the Byzantine period was due to John VIII Palaeologus in the 15th century, as part of the emperor's plan to prepare the defences of the city against the imminent attack of the Ottoman army. The 14th- and 15th-century construction generally involved the use of small blocks of masonry combined with small quantities of brick (Nicolle, Haldon and Turnbull 2007).

At the beginning of the Ottoman period, after the war of 1453, Mehmed II had the Yedikule built and the walls repaired. The walls were significantly damaged in the 1509 earthquake and were repaired by Bayezid II. Early documents show that, after the second half of the 16th century, fires and houses built adjacent to the walls caused serious damage to the walls, and a law preventing the construction of houses adjacent to the walls was put in place. Evliya Çelebi (1969 and 1982) also mentions that the walls were repaired around 1635–1636, during the reign of Murat IV. There are documents indicating that the walls at the Golden Horn and the sea walls were repaired after the 1719 earthquake, and the Yedikule walls after the 1766 earthquake. In 1912, a law declaring the walls to be works of antiquity was enacted.

During the Republic era in the 1960s, certain parts of the walls and the Yedikule Fortress were restored under the supervision of Cahide Tamer. In 1985, after the Land Walls were listed in the World Heritage List as one of the four Historic Areas of Istanbul, repair works were accelerated; however, these were criticised due to their inadequate documentation, removal of traces from different eras and their approach based on reconstruction. The repair works carried out by Metin Ahunbay and Zeynep Ahunbay (2000) in the early 1990s have become an example of the scientific approach to repair on the Land Walls.

Concerning the state of conservation of the walls in the 19th century, Müller (1897, 104), in her 'letters from Constantinople', points to a story related to a tower of the Land Walls:

> Not far from Top Kapusi is the most striking and picturesque of all the towers, the Riven Tower, which was literally split from top to bottom by one of the huge marble balls shot by the Turks. Though completely riven asunder, the two portions are still standing, or were when we saw them. I heard that this tower was overthrown in the earthquake of 1894, but our son has never found time to ride out to ascertain the truth of the report. It seems a miracle that it should have remained upright for 400 years.

As a result, the third theme, which focuses on the traces on the physical structure of the Land Walls, connects the tangible and intangible aspects of the walls: the traces portray the monument as an outcome of numerous interventions in response to events such as wars, earthquakes and fires. This is yet

another dimension in interpreting the monument as an accumulation of tangible traces of intangible cultural and historic qualities.

Theme 4: The green and blue of the city

The Land Walls, combined with the monuments and historical areas in their vicinity, are part of a rich cultural landscape. Assets of cultural heritage from a wide variety of cultural and historical periods, such as the Kariye Museum, Ilyas Bey Mosque (Stoudios Monastery), Merkez Efendi Mosque and Tomb, the Balıklı Rum Monastery, a hospital and holy spring, traditional houses, cemeteries and historic vegetable gardens are close to the Land Walls; throughout history, they were transformed parallel to the changes in the walls and the life surrounding the walls.

This cultural landscape contains important elements that make up the city's green areas. Today, as well as in the Byzantine and Ottoman periods, there were cemeteries, agricultural areas and recreational grounds located along the walls. These various green areas continue to exist along the walls today.

Under constant threat of development due to the pressures of increasing land values in the inner city of which they are now part, the *bostans* are one of the most important components that shape the character of the cultural landscape of the Land Walls. The fact that the history of agricultural activities around the walls goes back more than 1600 years highlights that these gardens are historic areas around the walls in need of protection.

Extending between the Golden Horn and the Marmara Sea, the Land Walls and the surrounding area are linked to the Bayrampaşa (Lykos) Creek and other natural bodies of water, as well as the city's historical water systems. The moat in front of the walls is believed to have been filled with water at certain times. During the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, the water coming from a reservoir established at Kırkçeşme, at the westernmost end of the Golden Horn, was collected at 'Maksem', just outside Eğrikapı, to be distributed to the city. Experts have suggested that the positioning of the walls imply an intention to incorporate the outdoor cisterns into the borders of the city.

Finally, it is also believed that the walls' structure contained a surface water drainage system.

The Land Walls and the surrounding area were transformed in conjunction with the blue of the city as much as its green. İnciciyan (translated from 1956, 11–17) defines the surrounding landscape of the walls:

> When Mehmed II. conquered Istanbul, the site of the current day Fatih Mosque was an area of graveyards, and the area surrounding Yedikule was full of vineyards and gardens.

Similarly, Hovhannesyan (translated from 1997, 26–31) stated:

> In the valley to the south of the Armenian cemetery, at a place called Bayrampaşa, the ruins of the Bayram Pasha Farm that remained until my days of childhood, have disappeared over time. Now here, one could see bostans, vegetable gardens and in some places wheat and barley fields. The person called Bayram Pasha was the grand vizier of Sultan Murad IV and died in the year of AH 1048 (1638/39 CE).
>
> Between the gates called Edirne Gate and Top Kapısı [Cannon Gate], around the Bayrampaşa valley, inside the walls is an arched gateway called Sulukule. Streams flowing from various directions converge at this point and enter the city through this same gate continuing to flow alongside Yeni Bahçe towards Aksaray, descend down to Yeni Kapı, Langa, and flow into the sea right next to the newly built bath.
>
> In the valley between the terraces of Edirne Gate and Top Kapısı, in front of Sulukule, lies Yeni Bahçe, a vast meadow divided into two parts. At this meadow where nowadays in spring horses are brought to graze, once Egyptian soldiers would set up tents and would go to war from here.

According to the great Turkish writer Tanpınar (1989, 191):

> Two trees have made a mark on the imagination and life of Turkish people: cypress and plane tree. The general landscape, especially seen from outside the city was created by cypress orchards like those in Karaca Ahmed, Edirne Gate, the old Ayaz Pasha and Tepe Başı.

To conclude, many written documents refer to the Land Walls' surroundings as recreation areas in both the Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Bringing to light a mostly lost character of this unique landscape, these past narratives describe various geographical and topographical qualities that merge with recreational functions and the landscape.

Theme 5: Spirituality and religion

The walls and the surrounding area hosted religious and spiritual functions during both Byzantine and Ottoman Empire eras. The cemeteries are one of the oldest functions that shaped the spiritual character of the walls and the area surrounding them.

During the Byzantine period, there were also monasteries around the walls. Among the monasteries of Constantinople, Stoudios (İmrahor Mosque), Chora Monastery (Kariye), Cosmidion and Pege Monasteries (St. Mary of the Spring and Balıklı Rum Holy Spring) were closest to the walls. These monasteries owned agricultural fields in and around the walls, which the monks used to cultivate these areas.

The holy springs (water sources considered to be sacred and to have healing powers), as well as monasteries, hold a significant place in the spiritual landscape of the Land Walls. In addition to the above-mentioned monasteries, the sacred spring at the Church of Blachernae (the Church of St. Mary) was one of the most important shrines for the Christians of Constantinople and Istanbul.

In the Ottoman period, Armenian, Greek, Jewish, Karamanlı and Muslim communities lived in and around the walls, and their cemeteries and religious buildings were located around the walls. This could imply that the spiritual character of the Byzantine walls was sustained in the Ottoman period. The mosque complexes that made up the core of Muslim neighbourhoods were located close to the gates of the walls.

Furthermore, the legends about the walls frequently mention spirits of soldiers who lost their lives in various battles fought on these walls, especially in the 1453 war, seen or heard around the walls.

The complex and unique spatial configurations of the walls formed by double walls, dilapidated towers and a variety of construction techniques possibly pave the way for these myths.

Koçu (1958, 2016–2019) tells the story of a Byzantine monastery and a holy spring:

> Outside Yedikule, the holy spring 200 metres from Silivrikapı gate is the most renowned spring in Istanbul (B.: Ayazma, Ayia; Ayios). It was developed and built by Byzantine Emperor Leo o Makallis I. (Leo the Murderer) in the year AD 457 (perhaps a little earlier, or a little later).
>
> There is a short story that has been told by people and is included in some texts: In his youth Leo belonged to the class of tradesmen and was extremely poor. On an extremely hot summer day, wandering outside the city walls, barefoot and ragged, he came across a blind old man, he saluted him, and the blind man said:
> 'Son... take me somewhere where there is shade, I'm parched, and fetch me some water...'
>
> Leo took the old man by the hand but could see neither shade nor a fountain around. Right at that instant he heard a heavenly voice from above: 'There is a swamp to your right, take him there, and rub the mud to his eyes, there is also a spring, wash your faces with the water from the spring, he shall start to see, and you shall be an Emperor!'
>
> It was only young Leo who heard this voice, stunned and horrified he took the blind man in that direction, and found the swamp and the spring. When the old man regained his sight, he starts having faith that he shall be emperor one day; he gave up his job, got enlisted and rose through the ranks to become a general, and one day when a military insurrection landed him onto the imperial throne, he remembered that muddy swamp and the miraculous spring, and got a splendid holy spring built at that spot and dedicated it to Panagia (Virgin Mary).
>
> Another name for this holy spring dedicated to Virgin Mary is 'Zoodochos Pege – Life-giving Spring.'

Of the same holy spring, Koçu (1958, 2016–2019) states:

> Since the conquest, the only Ottoman sultan to come

> to the Balıklı Holy Spring, to visit this renowned Spring and Church and to wash his face with the water of this spring for its healing properties was Sultan Mahmud the Second. The way Sultan Mahmud showed his respects to the church and the manner in which he complimented the priests remains as a remarkable memory. [...] Among the many people who have come and placed a votive candle to the Virgin Mary are Orthodox people who are not Roum, Christians who are not Orthodox, and last but not least, are those who are not Christian, the Muslims.

In conclusion, spirituality and religion are recurring themes among the historic written documents on the Land Walls and their surroundings. Composed of cemeteries, monasteries, mosques, churches, synagogues, tombs and holy springs, the cultural landscape around the Land Walls has always been associated with different types of religious activities such as visiting tombs, cemeteries or religious buildings. Above all, the stories of the saints and soldiers, who lived and died around the walls, have always occupied an important place in the collective memory of communities living around the walls.

Theme 6: Walking along the walls

During the Byzantine period, the Land Walls were glorious structures extending across expanses of vast greenery, cemeteries, vegetable orchards and woods; the Land Walls were 20 metres high and 60 metres wide with all the platforms, walls, towers and moats. The pink-and-white striped smooth surface of the walls, made from rows of brick and stone, created curves extending along the landscape, conforming to the undulations of the topography. Looking around from the high points of the walls, depending on the location, the landscape of the countryside and the city, accompanied by views of the Golden Horn or the Marmara Sea, could be seen.

It should have also been possible to see the stream of Bayrampaşa (Lykos) flowing along the course of the present-day Vatan Avenue to reach the Marmara Sea next to the vegetable orchards at Langa and the port of Yenikapı as well as the structures of the water system extending all the way to the Valens Aqueduct (Bozdoğan Kemeri) along the walls and from the top of the walls.

The above-mentioned cultural landscape was enriched by the addition of mosques, churches, synagogues, religious complexes and new neighbourhoods in the Ottoman period, while the dominant character of the city walls was probably still visible. Especially for travellers who visited Istanbul from the 17th century onwards, the area along the walls was an indispensable walking route. For instance, De Amicis (1986 [1874], 295) pointed out:

> I determined to make the circuit of the ancient walls of Istanbul entirely alone, and this plan I recommend to all Italians visiting Constantinople, as the sight of those majestic and beautiful ruins cannot make a profound and lasting impression upon the mind unless one is altogether intent upon receiving it and can freely follow his own train of thought.

In the 17th century, Kömürciyan (1988, 27) stated:

> But when we are near the Silivri Gate around Yedikule, we should take a break at Suleyman Sahrası [Süleyman's Heath] to rest with our horses. This is a garden belonging to one of our Turkish friends, with a beautiful view. We should go up to the upper floor to gaze at our surroundings. The sea to the south ripples in front of us. The city remains on the eastern side. To the north-west there are valleys. Fields, grasslands, woodlands and vegetable orchards extend beneath the shady trees.

Nearly two centuries later, Schrader (1917, 12) pointed out:

> On a beautiful spring day one has to walk through the narrow street at the ancient Byzantine city walls. Then spring will swing its green banner down the old stones, and sometimes a gap between the houses lets a view of the blue waves of the Golden Horn through. However, in winter, walking between the gray walls to our left and the old grouchy houses on our right makes us shiver inside. This view of the houses with their barred windows and dusty doors – to which one must descend from the road, because the pavement had risen over the centuries – is quite like an unlovable guardian of a gray, half-decomposed, defiant past that is reluctant to resurrect.

The habit of walking around the walls hardly exists today. The main reason for the loss of this activity may be the construction of highways parallel to the walls. Another

reason may be the destruction of the walls' integrity by the construction of transportation axes perpendicular to the walls. As a result, the habit of walking along the walls, probably contemplating, enjoying the green and blue landscape and spectacular views of the historical monument, remains a nostalgic memory; thus, some relations between the tangible and the intangible aspects of this cultural landscape have been broken.

Conclusion

The Land Walls and their immediate surroundings compose a rich historical and cultural landscape with diverse tangible and intangible qualities. The management and conservation decisions that determine the future of cultural heritage sites should consider the sustainability and conservation of tangible values and be concerned about the integrated conservation of tangible and intangible qualities. Therefore, new methodologies focusing on the integrated documentation, analysis, evaluation, interpretation and presentation of the tangible and intangible characteristics are required. In this study, the intangible qualities of the Land Walls World Heritage Site were examined by analysing the past narratives in the historical written documents. Six themes were formulated as the six main characteristics composing the spirit of place.

A GIS map, including the locations of the referred intangible characteristics and past narratives, was prepared. This database provides a model that enables the site's managers to visualise the intangible qualities' locations; thus, it constitutes a medium that is suitable for relating the tangible and the intangible qualities of the site. This geographical database indicates that some locations should be evaluated as culturally significant – although they may have otherwise seemed ordinary.

As a result, this study proved that a thorough understanding of the past narratives and detailed geographical mapping of both tangible and intangible qualities contribute to the integrated conservation and management of heritage sites.

Acknowledgements

I thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments. This article has emerged as a result of the research project, The Evaluation of the Intangible Cultural Qualities by means of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in the Site Management Processes, Case Study: The Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site, supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) under Grant 115K225. I am grateful to Alper Çabuk, Uğur Avdan, Serhat Sarı, Talha Aksoy and Buse Baloğlu for their support. I also thank Buket Coşkuner, Şeyda Çetin, Cemal Kafadar and Nicholas Melvani, with whom I had the chance to discuss various issues about the research.

ENDNOTES

1 The gates that still function today are Yedikule, Belgradkapı, Silivrikapı, Mevlanakapı, Topkapı, Sulukule, Edirnekapı and Eğrikapı.

2 The sociologist Maurice Halbwachs first used the term 'collective memory' in 1925 in his book *Les Cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Social Frameworks of Memory) to denote the shared knowledge, information and memories possessed by a group that are important for its cohesion. A key idea from this is that all of our personal memories are in some way shaped through social processes and 'frameworks' such as interaction within groups. Since the introduction of the concept, there has been much debate about whether it is possible for a group to 'share' memory. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that, in some groups, common stories and references exist and that group members often believe in a shared memory and identity (Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi and Levy 2011).

3 For a thorough discussion of recent communities' interaction with the Land Walls World Heritage Site, please see the website of the research project 'Plural Heritages of Istanbul: The Case of the Land Walls' (https://pluralheritages.ncl.ac.uk).

4 Translator Andreasyan's (187–190) note: 'the area between Samatya and Yedikule was formerly the neighborhood of the Karamanlides and the church of Agios Konstantinos [St. Constantine] belonged to them'.

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