REPORT ON THE

JOINT UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/ICOMOS ADVISORY MISSION TO THE
WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

HISTORIC AREAS OF ISTANBUL (356)

TURKEY

15-16 APRIL 2019
Cover: Interior of Zeyrek mosque, south building, looking east
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The conservation work which the mission saw completed (the Zeyrek Mosque), in progress (the Chora Museum) and proposed (the Bucoleon Palace, the Land Walls) is generally in accord with the accepted international standards. In the case of the walls, temporary works to prevent further erosion of the integrity and authenticity of the fabric prior to full conservation works are being put in place.

The current conservation project for the Chora Museum has been meticulously planned, based on extensive analysis. Fabric repairs have been comprehensive but conservative (exemplified by the careful repair of the timber dome). Conservation of the surviving decorative schemes is intended to clean and to stabilise rather than in any way to restore. Some decisions remain but the mission was confident that they will be taken with the exemplary care that has characterised the project so far.

During the second half of the 20th century, the Molla Zeyrek Mosque was the subject of numerous partial repair campaigns interspersed with periods of neglect. By contrast, the recent works have been comprehensive, from structural reinforcement to internal decoration, based on detailed investigation and research. Given the accumulated problems of the building, and failure of piecemeal interventions to achieve a sustainable state of sound repair and active use, in principle this approach was both justified and necessary.

The building is the second-largest surviving Byzantine church in Istanbul, but unlike the Chora Museum, it remains in its historically significant use as a mosque and is now resuming its social role as the centre of the Zeyrek community. The conservation project has generally succeeded in reconciling the cultural value and visibility of its Byzantine phase while recovering the architectural quality and coherence of a mosque last extensively reworked after 1766. The inherent tension, and the legacy of the ‘restoration’ of some architectural elements in isolation, inevitably presented the professional team with difficult decisions. The mission’s first recommendation is not intended to detract from its appreciation of the overall achievement which the project represents, while the second reflects the aspirations of all those involved.

Recommendation 01
Zeyrek Mosque: Subject to full and detailed research, consideration should be given in the future to:
- unblocking the high-level windows in the exonarthex, blocked and visually obliterated in the 1960s ‘restoration’, unless the blocking was the result of structural necessity;
- revisiting the potential to strengthen and reinstate the Porphyry column to the north narthex gallery window, and if that is possible, to replace its twin in a stone of similar tone.

Recommendation 02
Priority should continue to be given to the repair of civic architecture buildings at risk of loss in the Zeyrek component of the property, particularly those contributing to the immediate setting of the mosque; and to the reinstatement of the registered building at 33 Ibadethane Street, dismantled during the course of the mosque conservation project.

The authorities are to be congratulated for the authenticity of the reconstruction of the Hagia Sophia Madrasa, specifying materials and techniques to match the original work throughout the structure,
whether visible or not; and the contractors for the quality of work so far. Work had progressed far enough to confirm that it will fit comfortably within the location for which it was historically designed. The accommodation that it will provide in support of the museum will replace not only the temporary structures which occupied its site, but also those which still fill the yard to the east.

The proposals for the consolidation and valorisation of the surviving remains of the **Bucoleon Palace** are very welcome. The minimum intervention approach is entirely appropriate to the primary objective of safeguarding the future of these structures, whose scale is still impressive despite 19th century losses. However, the civil architecture buildings above the ruins should be repaired in parallel, both to contribute to its historic story and its visual qualities.

**Recommendation 03**

*In parallel with the conservation and presentation of the ruins of the Bucoleon Palace, efforts should be made to secure the repair of the civil architecture buildings above the ruins, particularly 23 Kapiağası Hisari Street, and the improvement of the appearance of the Bucoleon Terrace Hotel.*

In relation to the **Land Walls**, the survey work and the analysis flowing from it are very thorough, indeed exemplary. The ‘General Principles’ established for the conservation of the land walls are central to the ultimate success of the project. Provided that the design of the works adheres to these principles, and the technical standard of execution of the works is high, then the works should achieve internationally-accepted standards for the conservation of masonry monuments.

**Recommendation 04**

*In further developing and implementing proposals for the conservation of the land walls:*

- the ‘general principles’ established so far (Annexe 6.6) should be followed;
- ‘partial completion’ should be limited to work necessary to ensure long term stability and to avoid the wall heads trapping water;
- implementation should take place at a rate which it is within the capacity of available professional resources to manage, and which allows experience gained in early stages to inform subsequent ones.

After the mission, its members took part in a workshop on Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA), organised following the adoption of the 2018 Management Plan for the property. In the use of the Plan and CHIA, emphasis needs to be placed on the use of CHIA as a process for assessing and mitigating potential negative impacts of a project at every stage from conception to detailed design; a tool to influence and shape outcomes, rather than simply to measure the impact of a final design or completed intervention.
1 BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

The Historic Areas of Istanbul, comprising four separate component sites within the historic peninsula, was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985 on the basis of criteria (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv).

Since its inscription, significant threats to the property have been identified, including but not limited to:

- the loss of Ottoman-period timber houses;
- the poor quality of repairs and excessive reconstruction of the Roman and Byzantine walls;
- the negative effects of large-scale infrastructure projects on the historic peninsula, including the Haliç metro bridge, the Eurasia Tunnel approach road, and the Yenikapi reclamation project.

Concerns have continued to be expressed over the legislative arrangements, renewal area plans under law 5366, and the effectiveness of organisational and coordination relationships between decision-making bodies responsible for the safeguarding of World Heritage.

These issues have resulted in yearly World Heritage Committee Decisions between its 27th (2003) and its 42nd (2018) sessions, and requests for progress reports from the State Party in order for the Committee to review a potential inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. In its 2018 decision (42 COM 7B.31), the World Heritage Committee:

10. Encourages the State Party to invite an ICCROM/ICOMOS Advisory mission to review the restoration and conservation projects such as the Chora Museum and the Zeyrek Mosque in line with the recommendations of the 2016 Reactive Monitoring Mission report;

The complete Decision is set out in Appendix 6.2.

Accordingly, the Turkish authorities invited an ICOMOS/ICCROM advisory mission to examine and assess the “restoration work in sites such as the Chora Museum and the Zeyrek Mosque.” The complete terms of reference are set out in Appendix 6.1. The mission took place on 15-16 April 2019, with representatives from ICOMOS and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre; ICCROM were unfortunately unable to participate. The mission’s terms of reference also included the study of conservation activities in progress and completed projects for the Boukoleon Palace, the Istanbul Land Walls and Hagia Sophia Madrassah, in accordance with the mission programme subsequently proposed by the Turkish authorities (see Appendix 6.1).

The mission was followed by a Heritage Impact Assessment workshop in Istanbul on 17-18 April, in which the UNESCO and ICOMOS representatives participated.
2 NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

2.1 Legal and institutional framework

Turkey became a State Party to the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1982, and has ratified the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 1985), the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised; Valetta, 1992) and the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000). According to the Turkish constitution, international conventions which have been properly ratified have statutory effect.

All activities related to identification, management and conservation of cultural and natural heritage are implemented under the legislation for the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Guiding Principles of the Superior and Regional Conservation Councils. The principal legislation is Law 2683 (1983), amended by Laws 3386 (1987) and 5226 (2004). The Ministry of Culture and Tourism (acting in collaboration with any other government institutions concerned) is responsible for the implementation of this legislation, including taking measures to protect immovable cultural and natural property to be conserved, regardless of the ownership, providing funds, and supervising those measures or having other public institutions supervise them. There is no law or regulation requiring public/civil society participation in planning or conservation decisions.

There is no specific planning legislation to protect World Heritage properties. Individual monumental and civil cultural sites within them are registered, and the value of the ensemble recognised through registration as Conservation Areas (areas that have to be conserved for the protection and preservation of immovable cultural and natural property within their historical context). The Historic Peninsula as a whole was declared an historic urban conservation zone in 1995, and under Law 5226 a Management Plan is required for the whole area. The first was adopted in 2011; work began on revision in 2015, and the result, in effect a completely new document, was adopted in 2018 (see below).

Within the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the General Directorate for Cultural Heritage and Museums carries out planning and implementation of the conservation measures, acting through The Superior Council of Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage and 31 Regional Conservation Councils operating within the Superior Council’s guiding principles, supported by professional and technical staff. Practical responsibility for conservation of state-owned properties within the World Heritage property lies with Istanbul Directorate of Survey and Monuments and the Directorate of Istanbul National Museums. Law 5226 was intended to provide ‘more efficient technical and administrative tools in the field of conservation with the aim of enhancing public participation and state support for the conservation of the historical assets’. Under Article 10, Conservation Implementation and Control Bureaux (KUDEB) have been established within municipalities including both Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) and Fatih Municipality, the district municipality responsible for the whole Historic

1 Information on Turkish heritage legislation is based on the summary in the report on the 2016 joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, updated by reference to the 2018 Management Plan, Section 1.2.2, p25, and recent State of Conservation reports.
Peninsula.\(^2\) Employing specialists in art history, archaeology, architecture, urban planning and engineering, these bureaux are in charge of controlling the implementation of the conservation plans and projects approved by the Regional Conservation Councils, and are empowered to approve minor repairs to historic buildings. Within IMM, a Cultural Properties Department has been established, embracing the Cultural Properties Projects Directorate, KUDEB, and the Cultural Heritage Conservation Directorate.

The General Directorate of Pious Foundations is legally responsible for protecting and evaluating cultural and natural property under the ownership of foundations administered by the General Directorate, and properties such as mosques, tombs, caravanserais, madrasas, inns, public baths, convents, Mevlevi lodges and fountains under private or public ownership. However, all conservation and restoration projects are subject to the prior approval of the Regional Conservation Councils, regardless of the contracting authority (including the General Directorate and all municipal authorities) or ownership.

Built heritage conservation, particularly historic area conservation, takes place within the spatial planning system, the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning at national level, the Urban Planning and Planning Directorates within the IMM Public Works and Urbanisation Department at Municipal level, and a Directorate of Housing and Urban Development at Fatih Municipality level. Use and construction are regulated under the Spatial Planning Law (3194). Conservation development plans have been prepared by the Directorate for the whole Management Plan area at 1:5000 and 1:1000. The Ministry is also directly responsible for planning the coast, filling areas, and all public lands subject to privatisation.

The Tourism Encouragement Law (2634) authorises the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to make plans in every scale and ‘to single-handedly’ approve those plans in areas declared by the Council of Ministers. The ‘Archaeological Park’ Tourism and Culture Area Plan was declared in 2000 for the site of the Byzantine Palace in Sultanahmet. The Ataköy Tourism Centre, on the Marmara coast at Zeytinburnu (declared 1989; revised plan 2018) extending east to the Land Walls, proposes marina development, but with buildings limited to 20% of the site, up to 2 floors (6.5m) nearest the land walls, and three floors on the west.\(^3\)

A recent amendment (Law 7143) to the Zoning Law 3194 introduced a provisional Article 16 which granted a general amnesty to the use of illegal constructions, the 'Zoning Peace'. There is uncertainty whether this relates only to the legality of the use of a structure, rather than also over-riding other laws relating to the conservation of cultural heritage assets, including the World Heritage property. The Site Management Directorate is clearly aware that the latter could have serious consequences, particularly in appearing to weaken commitment to cultural heritage protection.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) Areas outside the Land Walls but within the World Heritage property remain the responsibility of Zeytinburnu and Eyüp municipalities.


\(^4\) *Historic Areas of Istanbul State of Conservation Report 2019*, pp 104-6; concern was also expressed to the mission by ICOMOS Turkey on this issue.
2.2 Funding

Existing and potential future sources of public funding for the conservation of cultural heritage are summarised in Section 5.3.3 of the 2018 Management Plan. Within the Istanbul Special Provincial Administration, 10% of the real estate tax is allocated as ‘the contribution share for the conservation of immovable cultural property’ in accordance with the law on real estate tax (Law 1319), in order to be used for the conservation and evaluation of the cultural entities within the boundaries of municipalities. Law 5225 on Encouraging Cultural Investments and Law 5228 (revising the Act of Taxation) encourage the sponsorship of cultural heritage conservation through tax concessions. Financial aid for conservation projects is exempt from income tax, cultural property is exempt from inheritance and succession tax, and approved works to registered properties (including professional fees) are exempt from VAT and municipal taxes.

The introduction in 2015 of ‘Regulations on the Contribution Fee for the Conservation of Immovable Cultural Properties’ enabled grants to be given from public funds for the sustainable conservation of registered civil architecture buildings through simple maintenance and repair works. The need for this was emphasised in the report on the 2012 joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, and its introduction is particularly welcome.

2.3 Regeneration and Disaster Planning

Law 5366 for the ‘Preservation by Renovation and Utilization by Revitalizing of Deteriorated Immovable Historical and Cultural Properties’ enables local authorities to prepare regeneration proposals for degraded historic areas. Areas are proposed by local authorities for designation by the Council of Ministers. The emphasis is on renewal and the operation of the conservation plan and remit of the Regional Board are suspended. The Istanbul Urban Renewal Areas Regional Conservation Board for Cultural and Natural Heritage has been created to approve projects presented by local authorities within the framework of the law. The whole of the Süleymaniye component site, much of the Land Walls, and part of the Sultanahmet component areas have been designated. The 2018 Management Plan acknowledges criticism of the effect on cultural heritage of past management of the renewal process under law 5366.

Law 6306 on the Transformation of Sites under Earthquake Risk (2012) provides for buildings that are at risk from disaster, particularly earthquakes, to be strengthened or demolished and rebuilt. This is in effect a renewal law, and the Management Plan notes (in 2018 as in 2011) that it ‘should be reformed according to the law numbered 2863’s purpose and goals’, with the implication that it could conflict with the law on heritage conservation (for which see above).

2.4 The 2018 Management Plan

The final version of the revised Istanbul Historic Peninsula Management Plan, superseding the 2011 Plan, was formally approved in May-June 2018, after extensive consultation and reflection (Sections 1,
4). It takes account of the minor boundary modifications of the four components adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2017,9 and sets them in the context of the development of the whole historic peninsula with which the Plan is concerned. The Historic Peninsula Conservation Master Plan and its Implementation Plan, adopted in 2011-12, now provide the detailed spatial planning framework for the Peninsula and the relevant decisions are summarised in the revised Management Plan (Section 3.3), following an analysis of the characteristics of each component of the World Heritage property in the context of the peninsula as a whole. Further work is in hand on defining the attributes of the property that carry its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). 10 The need for future work in the renewal areas to be in accordance with the Conservation Master Plan is acknowledged (5.2.2, 5.2.3).

Section 5 comprises the core of the Management Plan comprising 7 objectives, embracing 17 strategies under which 65 actions are defined, along with the (multiple) institutions associated with them. The first objective is, rightly, to ensure the effective implementation of the plan by strengthening the legal status and remit of the Site Management Directorate. This is clearly set out and covers the scope of management action necessary to sustain the OUV of the property. For each action a timescale (short, medium, long, ongoing) is stated and an ‘indicator’ of progress is identified. These indicators are also tabulated in Section 5.3.4. Action 20, for example, has as an indicator 'number of structures scheduled for restoration'. But the Plan does not go on to set quantitative performance targets, in this case, for example, for how many structures per year over the plan period. This is understandable in a high-level document, and for actions that are yet to become established; but where appropriate, alongside the Plan the Directorate should develop management tools, particularly quantitative performance targets against which progress can be measured and compared from year to year.

The need for Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments (CHIA) in accordance with the ICOMOS Guidelines is highlighted and a list of projects already identified as needing CHIA is at 5.3.2.2.11 This is welcome, but in the use of the Plan and CHIA, emphasis needs to be placed on the use of CHIA as a process for assessing and mitigating potential negative impacts of a project at every stage from conception to detailed design; a tool to influence and shape outcomes, rather than simply to measure the impact of a final design or completed intervention. This is implicit in Action 25 in relation to transport decisions,12 but it should be made explicit in developing the practical application of CHIA following the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Workshop in April 2019, and in due course, in the next revision of the Management Plan.

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9 41 COM 8B.48.
12 Management Plan p277
3 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES

The remit of the 2019 mission was advisory, specifically to examine and assess conservation work to the Chora Museum, Zeyrek Mosque and other monuments. The mission team did not review the general state of conservation of the World Heritage property; but offer some introductory remarks to put the specific works into context.

The large-scale infrastructure works that have concerned previous missions (particularly the Haliç Bridge, Eurasia Tunnel approach road, and Yenikapi Meeting Ground) are essentially complete. We visited the southern end of the Land Walls, where the re-routing of the widened coast road outside the Marble Tower (as suggested by the 2012 mission) has improved its setting and visual connection with the land walls. The role of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment as a tool to guide decisions rather than retrospectively to try to justify them was enthusiastically embraced in a lively two-day workshop following the mission, organised under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and which gathered site managers and representatives of all World Heritage properties in Turkey.

3.1 Specific projects

3.1.1 The Chora Museum

Background
The Church of the Holy Saviour in the Country is said to have originated in the early 4th century, its name being linked to its location outside the Constantinian land wall. The site lies just within the early 5th century Theodosian land wall, and the remains of 6th and 9th century buildings have been found underlying the extant structure. Originally the focus of a monastery, the church was comprehensively rebuilt c. 1077-81 and again after a partial collapse following an earthquake early in the 12th century. The naos and narthex of this building form the core of the extant building, despite damage and neglect during the Latin occupation in the following century (1204-61). The glory of the Chora church, however, derives from its reworking in 1315-21 under the patronage of Theodore Metocrites, who built a two storey addition on the north side, an outer narthex on the west, and to the south a parecclesion to be used as a single-nave burial chapel. The whole building was enriched with a decorative programme of fine mosaics and frescos. These were covered when, in 1508-11, Atik Ali Paşa had the building converted to a mosque, replacing the bell tower with a minaret (rebuilt 1860, 1896). The dome over the naos was rebuilt in timber following another earthquake in 1766. The mosaics were exposed by the beginning of the 20th century, but only after the building became a museum in 1948 was the surviving painted decoration of the parecclesion fully revealed and conserved under the auspices of the Byzantine Institute of America. The museum opened to the public in 1958.

The present programme of conservation, under the direction of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, began with thorough historical research, detailed survey and analysis, which were undertaken in 2009-11. In order to keep the museum open, the conservation work to the interior was phased, beginning with the naos and northern annexe, moving on to the inner narthex, and ending with the outer narthex

14 General Directorate of Restorations and Monuments, Istanbul Directorate of Surveying and Monuments.
and parecclesion. A temporary roof (still present) was erected in 2013. At the time of the mission visit, work to the external envelope was well advanced, and internal conservation was in progress on the third phase.\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{Structural repair}

Investigation revealed a cracking axis or fault line running through the building from south-east to north-west, manifested both visually (despite historic filling, cracks 3-10 cm wide) and through ground penetrating radar investigation (Fig 1). This axis crosses the dome of the naos diagonally, which helps to explain its collapse in the 1766 earthquake. Investigation showed that the ground water level was particularly high, and excavation revealed voids under the south wall related to earlier activity on the site, including burials. Earlier in the project, drainage had been improved and the voids filled with new masonry in lime mortar. Above ground, the walls have been repaired and repointed in traditional materials, replacing the cement mortar introduced in the 1948-58 conservation campaign. The vaults were largely exposed from above, to allow repair of the cracks and external plasterwork to match the original materials. The infilling around these, under the lead roof covering and mud plaster base,

\textsuperscript{15} This account is based largely on the detailed presentation given to the Mission by Dr Olcay Aydemir, and observations on site fleetingly in 2016 and more extensively in 2019.
incorporated a large number of amphorae to reduce the weight; most of these were retained in situ or reinstated. Decisions about introducing further ties into the structure will be made this year.

Works to the naos dome

The timber naos dome of c. 1768 was stripped of 1950s cement-based internal plaster and external lead covering. The timber structure was repaired and reinforced using traditional carpentry methods, the rotted sole plate replaced, and the internal lathing and external boarding repaired or replaced to match the historic materials. A stainless steel band around the masonry skirt of the dome – the bottom of the lost masonry structure – now ties this structure together. Externally, the lead covering was replaced on mud plaster in the traditional way, and the masonry drum and windows below re-plastered as necessary in Khorosan plaster after the removal of modern cementitious patches. Internally the dome was plastered in traditional materials.

The 1950s reinforced concrete windows in the building, failing as the reinforcement rusted, were replaced with new ones of 60mm marble (Fig 2). The 1950s windows replaced assorted windows, including timber windows in the naos apse visible in early 20th century photographs, and were also installed in restored window openings that had been largely or wholly blocked in the Ottoman period, unifying the appearance of all the windows. This presumably stemmed from the decision to privilege the Byzantine period and its outstanding artworks in the conversion of the building to a museum. The implied, pragmatic, decision in the recent restoration was to accept the 1950s choice in terms of the form of the windows but replace them in a durable material (albeit one which in the context of so much ancient marble, might seem to visitors more 'authentic'). In terms of conservation philosophy, the museum conversion was taken to be the latest significant phase in the building's history; the current project has essentially addressed long-standing structural problems and technical shortcomings in the 1950s work. Given the extent of change in the 1950s, the mission considered this approach to be justified.

![Fig 2 Decaying 1950s reinforced concrete windows removed from the Chora Museum.](image)

Conservation of interior finishes

In the naos the only surviving decoration above the cornice comprises areas of mosaic on the reveals of the windows of the west and south facades below the drum (Fig 3). It is applied, as usual, to thick plaster over the brick walls, and is prone to becoming detached. Conservation involved ensuring its adhesion to the wall using micro-injection, supplemented where most vulnerable by discreet chrome nickel steel L-anchors. The marble cladding below cornice level, and marble paving on the floor, were cleaned with pure water and joints refilled as necessary with lime-based fillers tinted to tone with the marble. Mosaics were conserved by stabilising the adherence of the bed plaster to the wall surfaces (through injection), by stabilising as necessary the adherence of the tesserae to the bed and recovering where necessary the integrity of the bonding of the gold and silver leaf tesserae themselves. Conservation proceeded from the naos (phase 1; Fig 4) to the inner narthex and at the time of the mission was in progress on the final phase, addressing the outer narthex and parecclesion, where adhesion of the plaster carrying both mosaics and frescos are a particular concern (Fig 5).
Assessment
The conservation work of 1948-58 was certainly well-intentioned, but like most work of its time the restorers were confident in using Portland cement-based rather than lime-based mortars and plasters, without realising the long-term effects on the performance of the building fabric. Nor were modern
techniques of remote sensing and analysis available to understand the nature of the historic structure and the issues affecting its stability. By contrast, the current conservation project for the Chora Museum has been meticulously planned, based on extensive analysis. Cementitious plasters and pointing introduced in the previous work have been replaced, allowing the fabric to ‘breathe’ again, and fabric repairs have been comprehensive but conservative (exemplified by the careful repair of the timber dome). Conservation of the surviving decorative schemes is based on cleaning (the marble with pure water) and consolidation, to stabilise rather than in any way to restore. The mission was impressed by the skill and patience of the team of conservators on site in 2019. Some decisions remain, particularly about further structural reinforcement (which could only be undertaken after the consolidation of the plasterwork carrying the decorative schemes), but the mission was confident that they will be taken with the exemplary care that has characterised the project so far.
3.1.2 The Molla Zeyrek Mosque

Background

The Molla Zeyrek mosque (Zeyrek Kilise camii) and its surrounding area is one of the four components of the World Heritage property. The building originated as a cluster of three churches of the monastery of Christ Pantocrator (Almighty), founded by the Empress Irene of Hungary in 1118, who commissioned the southern (monastic) church. After her death in 1124, her husband Emperor John II Komnenos built the northern (lay) church (dedicated to St Mary the Merciful), and by 1136 a chapel to St Michael (as the imperial mausoleum) had been added between them, followed by the exonarthex and southern courtyard (Figs 7, 8). However, after the initial completion of the south church, this amounted to a continuous building programme, with the upper parts of the middle and north churches taken up together, and additions involving significant intervention in preceding phases. During the Latin occupation, the Venetian clergy were based here.

Fig 7 Molla Zeyrek Mosque/ Pantocrator church, plan

After 1453, the building was converted to a madrassah, although in 1471 the students moved to the newly completed Fatih complex. The mosque and the district around it took its name from a scholar who taught at the madrassah, Molla Zeyrek. A major renovation took place during the reign of Sultan Mustafa III (r.1757-73), after the earthquake of 1766; the details of the minbar, sultan’s gallery and contemporary painted decoration on the walls and domes owe a great deal to the central European rococo style. Simple painted schemes followed in the 19th century.

Some repair and restoration to the building (owned by the General Directorate of Pious Foundations) was carried out in the 1950s and 60s, when the opus sectile floor of the south building was fully revealed. Works to the north building were undertaken in 1964-7, including, unfortunately, the use of modern cementitious plaster, and of the same material moulded to imitate lead on the gallery roof (over the narthex). More works were carried out in 1995-8, but by 2000 Zeyrek was listed by the World Monuments Fund among its 100 sites in peril. Works to the roof and east façade were undertaken in 2001-06 (with UNESCO support), but the need for a comprehensive scheme was clear. This took place from 2009 until 2018, when the building was subject to a major restoration project commissioned by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. It was briefly visited by the previous joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission in December 2016, as part of a visit to the Zeyrek component of the World Heritage property; a short note appeared in the mission report. By the time of the mission in April 2019, the building was back in use as the neighbourhood mosque, in advance of its formal reopening.

![Fig 8 Molla Zeyrek Mosque/ Pantocrator church, east elevation.](image)

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20 2016 Mission Report, Section 3.6.1, its conclusions corrected here.
The works in summary

Following geotechnical investigation, tie rods were installed and the damaged column in the north building elegantly strapped with stainless steel bands. The roofs were stripped, and cementitious additions to the domes removed; they were then repaired with Khorosan plaster and re-covered with lead on clay plaster. Amphorae used in the vault filling were repaired where necessary and reinstated. The south building was finished with Khorosan plaster, following exposure of the primary finish on the north vault wall, preserved where St Michael’s chapel had been built very close to it. The evidence was perfectly clear. The minaret was stripped of Portland Cement-based render and restored to its original finish, with the balcony cleared of added paving and a solid balustrade reinstated. Around the building, ground levels were lowered (through archaeological excavation) generally to match historic levels, revealing some historic paving of the lane on the east side, enabling the external door thresholds to be returned to their original levels and the north door reopened. On the west façade of the exonarthex, the wall head was brought level to a cornice, and other details reinstated, as had existed before the 1960s.

![Fig 9 The east end of the south building, showing original limewashed plaster surviving in blind arches. Note water staining to left; some adjustment of the lead verge is required to prevent this.](image)

The remains of the wall enclosing a courtyard to the south-west (Fig 7, lot 3) were uncovered and repaired, and the gaps built up from the surviving foundations to the highest level of surviving work on the south. Within this space, the 18th century arched substructure carrying the stair (originally, ramp) to the gallery above the narthex remained, but the enclosure of the stair and Sultan's pavilion had been replaced with makeshift structures and the opening into the gallery (formed through a Byzantine window) had been roughly infilled. All of this was replaced in timber-framed construction similar to that illustrated in historic photographs. The chase for the covering of the stair roof was revealed on the removal of the makeshift structures.

Internally, little survived of the Christian finishes other than some marble sheathing of the dados and skirtings of some walls in the south church, together with fragments of fresco and mosaic in the
window reveals of the exonarthex and middle church respectively. The principal survivor is the opus sectile floor fully revealed in 1953, when the missing panels were infilled with plaster in which the geometry was scored. This was cleaned and left as found, cleaned, and covered by a glass panel floor carried on a light demountable steel frame bearing on (mostly the modern infill) via rubber-based pads. The floor can be viewed by rolling back the mosque carpet.

Fig 10 The north elevation as restored, with the central door re-opened.

Fig 11 The north end of the west wall, showing exposed foundations built off the levelled remains of earlier structures on a slightly different alignment.

21 Ousterhout et al 2009, op cit, figs 17-18. Conserved in 2005-6; the mission did not note whether they were still exposed in 2019.

22 These appear to have been deliberately removed in the distant past, presumably for reuse.
The cementitious internal plasters applied during the post-war conservation project (especially in the north building) were removed. Surviving historic plaster was reinforced and re-attached as necessary, and damage to faux marble painted dados, keyed for later plaster, repaired. A previously unknown vault, discovered under the north building, was archaeologically emptied and ventilated.

The Sultan’s maqsurah, opening off the gallery, was restored primarily by removing secondary paint layers to reveal its original colour and detail, and reinstating the shutters. The mihrab was similarly treated (with the head replaced with the aid of late 19th century photographs), as was the pulpit, and the contemporary timber windows restored above them. Both were part of the essentially rococo decoration of the south building and Sultan’s gallery, the decorative paint scheme partially uncovered and used as a basis for repainting. On the Sultan's pavilion dome, segments showing two later schemes have been left exposed, along with a small area of surviving Christian wall painting and other Christian traces, behind opaque glass (demountable) panels set away from the wall faces.

Assessment
During the second half of the 20th century, the building was the subject of numerous partial repair campaigns, interspersed with periods of neglect. In hindsight, it is evident that through introducing concrete slabs and Portland cement-based mortars and plasters (in accordance with then-current practice), long standing problems were exacerbated particularly by preventing the fabric from 'breathing', and historic surface finishes destroyed. By contrast, the recent works have been comprehensive, from structural reinforcement to internal decoration, based on detailed investigation and research. Traditional materials and techniques have generally been used, to match those of the historic fabric, judiciously supplemented by modern technology, particularly in structural strengthening. Given the accumulated problems of the building, and failure of piecemeal interventions
to achieve a sustainable state of sound repair and active use, in principle this approach was both justified and necessary.

The significance of the building is multi-faceted and complex. It is the second-largest surviving Byzantine church in Istanbul, the burial place of emperors, an important and well-known example of middle Byzantine architecture, with consequent high architectural and historic values, despite retaining only a few elements of its original internal decoration and the almost complete loss of its associated monastic buildings. Historic value also derives from the fact that after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 the building was converted to a mosque. This project has revealed the architectural and artistic value of, particularly, the post-1766 refitting and redecoration of the south building and Sultan's gathering place, which probably included the reinforcement of the naos columns with the stone cladding visible today. The building remains in its historically significant use as a mosque, and post-project, it is resuming its social role at the centre of the Zeyrek community.

As a building in use rather than a museum or monument like the Chora or Hagia Sophia, the conservation project had to reconcile the cultural value and visibility of historical fragments like the opus sectile floor and the academic interest in leaving evidence of the building's evolution visible, including traces of multiple decorative schemes, with sustaining, indeed recovering, the architectural quality and coherence of the building as a whole in its use as a mosque. The cultural sensitivities of visible traces of overtly Christian symbolism had to be addressed. The elaborate 18th century rococo prevails in the interior of the south building and Sultan's seat (gallery), with structural losses (the top of the mihrab, timber galleries) reinstated from late 19th century photographs. The painted wall and dome decoration here and in the middle and north buildings was either exposed and conserved or reproduced from elements carefully exposed. This was the latest historic phase of carefully considered, expensive intervention to the interior, and the decision to privilege it in presenting the interior is justified by the outcome.

Fig 13 The cresting over the sultan’s maqsurah, cleaned of overpainting and (right) surviving painted decoration in the gallery revealed, protected under glass, and continued on replacement plaster.

23 The original capitals were seen and photographed at the column heads during the works.
As completed, internally the Byzantine structure and its Ottoman overlay combine to form coherent, impressive and functional architectural spaces. The degree of survival, and the evidence of both the fabric and of 19th century photographs to supply details of missing elements, avoided recourse to speculative reconstruction. Elements of the later, simplified decorative scheme have been left exposed and conserved in less conspicuous locations, for example in part of the gallery dome (Fig 14). In the Sultan's gallery the opportunity is also taken to display evidence of the evolution of the structure of the narthex, while Christian traces are behind obscured glass which can be removed when inspection is needed. Similarly, the opus sectile floor of the south building can be seen by rolling back the carpet. While (as with any conservation project) others might have made different choices, the story of the building can be read within the dominant architectural coherence. The overall balance seems right.

Lowering the soil built up around the building to historic levels helps reduce damp penetration of the walls and improve appreciation of the original external proportions of the building (particularly on the east elevation, where the earlier street surface was revealed). But the ground level at the north-west corner was historically higher, and here lowering to the same level has exposed the foundations (including spolia), built over the base of a wall of an earlier building on a different alignment; whether monastic or predating the foundation of the church in 1118 is not clear. This lower ground level will not harm the building and provides an opportunity for interpretation but brings the risk of deterioration of the consolidated exposed foundations and loss of the evidence they represent. In line with the policy adopted elsewhere of returning external levels closer to those intended when the structures were built, the option remains open to re-cover them in the future.

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24 Which continues that of structures partially exposed to the north. It also appears that at foundation level, the south bay of the north narthex is of a different build from the rest, but above ground level all is homogenous.
Externally, restoration decisions were evidently more complicated. The exterior had suffered centuries of weathering and some areas (especially the parecclesion) were almost ruinous. Some past repairs were expedient rather than carefully considered, technically or visually, and repair during the 20th century included some localised restoration of seemingly important features in isolation without a coherent overall strategy grounded in detailed research across the building as a whole.

The changing appearance of the south-west facade, to the exonarthex and extending southwards to the courtyard, provides an illustration. Late in the 12th century building campaign, in adding the exonarthex it was decided to change from an initial intention to form a lean-to timber roof to adding the extant vaulted structure. This required raising the front wall, the building break being where the pilasters become narrower on the west elevation. The courtyard wall bays continue this raised façade southwards. The earliest view of this elevation is a drawing made after a fire in December 1834. It shows the exonarthex roofed on the crowns of the vaults, without a parapet, in characteristic Byzantine fashion. In the head of each blind arch is a window with a segmental head. Whether these openings were late Byzantine interventions, or as late as the post-1766 restoration, is unclear, but their purpose is clear: to light the rather gloomy outer narthex at high level. Even in a reproduction of a printed monochrome photograph of 1912, the effect of the side light they provided into each cross-groined vault bay, reflected off the soffit, is clear. They are a consistent feature of all views of this elevation from 1835 until the 1960s restoration, when they were blocked.

The alterations in this area after 1835 are well-documented in early 20th century photographs. The level parapet with a dog-tooth brick cornice over the courtyard bays was extended across the whole elevation, the external section of the post-1766 ramp was left open, the covering of the section beyond the wall was rebuilt in timber framing, entered by a doorway with a hood rather than an open arch, and a similar hood installed over the door to the outer narthex. All of these were present by 1912, and thus it remained until after 1938, indeed until the 1960s restoration project. At that point, the whole parapet was taken down and dog-tooth cornices formed on the edges of the vaults; and the high-level windows below the vaults were blocked, producing a form of the elevation that had never previously existed.

In the recent conservation project, the strategy was, logically, to return the elevation to the latest documented phase in the evolution of the building, presumably in the mid-19th century, before losses to neglect and decay. The level parapet, door hoods, and covering over the Sultan’s stair were reinstated. This was a step forward from the 1960s incongruity, but the result remains incongruous in one important aspect: the windows below the vaults remain blocked. They were significant architectural components of the elevation in the state to which it has otherwise been restored. Subject of course to full and detailed research, and unless the blocking was the result of structural necessity, consideration should be given to the potential to unblock them in the future.

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26 R Krautheimer, Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture (Penguin, 1965), pl 140B.
27 The much later (early 14th century) outer narthex of St Mary Panachrantos (Fenari isa Čami) is also lit at two levels: Van Millingen 1912, figs 44-46, pl XXXIV; Krautheimer 1965, 261-3.
28 Van Millingen 1912, pl LX.
29 Presentation, slide 78.
The west window of the gallery to the north building presented a particular problem, its mullions being two columns of Imperial Porphyry (Fig 16), themselves presumably recycled into the 12th century building (like much of its building material). One had long been replaced in concrete, the other was shattered, strapped together with rusting iron bands, and was no longer secure. Both were renewed.
in Mamara marble, to match columns elsewhere in the building, the original material not being available (Fig 15). The consequent loss of an architectural distinction in the original structure is unfortunate, especially given the status connotations of Porphyry. With hindsight, a replacement marble closer to the original would have been preferable. Setting up the shattered column as an exhibit below the window demonstrates the change but may not be sustainable in conservation terms for the long term. Given that the vault acts as a relieving arch above the window, limiting the load on the mullions, is it really not possible to make the column functional again? For example, using stainless steel rods set in epoxy resin concealed in the core? And given its apparent tendency to laminate near the head, if necessary with an elegant collar or two externally?

The Pantocrator church was unusual in that the south building apse (at least) had some painted glass windows in the western European manner, the glass held in lead came fixed to iron saddle bars. These did not survive conversion to a mosque, and the windows extant at the start of the project were a miscellaneous and mostly modern collection, the 1960s work using the then-common cast concrete grid in imitation of marble, which has proved susceptible to the rusting of the reinforcement, and the 2004-5 marble grids. Overall, unless window forms were specific to the character of the restored interiors, or necessary for ventilation, external lights were replaced by cast plaster to a reticulated design, following excavated fragments and consistent with 18th century usage. This probably brings a degree of unity that historically the building rarely if ever had, but as a pragmatic, aesthetic decision it is effective.

The restoration of the courtyard walls (other than the west elevation, related to the exonarthex) was also somewhat problematic. The footprint was found in excavation, and parts of the arches survived, albeit altered by later interventions of which only fragments survived. It is a reasonable assumption that the walls were originally all at least of this height. Finishing them with a flat top with a lead capping rather than any form of cornice signals the uncertainty of the restoration, but only on a close examination, justified perhaps by the need to enclose the space with some degree of architectural resolution, given its location in the streetscape.

Overall, the result in 2019 is a building that inevitably looks startlingly 'new', clean and crisp, although already beginning to tone down through natural weathering, as traditional building materials do. If there is one certainty about a major conservation project, it is that others coming later will be critical of some of the difficult decisions made by their predecessors. The fact that the mission has criticised a few such difficult decisions does not detract from its appreciation of the overall achievement which the project represents.

**The context**

With the completion of the conservation of the Zeyrek mosque, attention should now focus on its context, particularly the registered civil architecture buildings in its immediate vicinity. Until the mid-20th century the building was closely integrated into a townscape of vernacular timber houses. A

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30 Much was found dumped in structural vaults under the sanctuary, and evidence of the fixings in the mullions: Megaw 1963, op. cit, esp fig F. More glass fragments were found in the recent project.
31 For a response on first sight see the 2016 Mission Report, p31.
project for minor maintenance to 40 buildings has already been initiated. A group that is or was particularly important to the setting of Zeyrek mosque is that to the south, on either side of Ibadethane Street. One building opposite, Block 2426, Lot 33, was repaired by the time of the 2016 mission; its neighbours should follow as soon as possible. The building which prior to the conservation project stood immediately to the south west, on the corner of the block, is particularly important, and should be reinstated (Fig 16). A sponsor was awaited.

**Fig 17 (2016 Mission report fig 28) Left: The site of the demolished house at 33 Ibadethane Sk, ringed in red, to the south-west of the Zeyrek Mosque, at the south-east corner of Block 2421 (Extract from cadastral plan of the Zeyrek component of the World Heritage Site; Registered buildings shown in yellow); Right: The house in 2012 (2012 Mission Report Fig 53).**

**Recommendations**

**R01**

Zeyrek Mosque: Subject to full and detailed research, consideration should be given in the future to:

- unblocking the high-level windows in the exonarthex, blocked and visually obliterated in the 1960s ‘restoration’, unless the blocking was the result of structural necessity;
- revisiting the potential to strengthen and reinstate the Porphyry column to the north narthex gallery window, and if that is possible, to replace its twin in a stone of similar tone.

**R02**

Priority should continue to be given to the repair of civic architecture buildings at risk of loss in the Zeyrek component of the property, particularly those contributing to the immediate setting of the mosque; and to the reinstatement of the registered building at 33 Ibadethane Street, dismantled during the course of the mosque conservation project.

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33 *Historic Areas of Istanbul Progress Report 2019, p139*
3.1.3 Hagia Sophia Madrasa

Background
In 2009, a project was formally initiated to reconstruct the Hagia Sophia madrasa, built in 1873-4 as part of the reorganisation of the setting of Hagia Sophia which required the demolition of its predecessor, and which was itself demolished in 1936 (Fig 17). The building combined a double galleried courtyard plan in the Ottoman tradition with a principal elevation derived from the European classical styles. The location was seen by the 2016 mission, and a revised HIA was submitted by the State Party at the end of July 2018. On that basis, the ICOMOS April 2019 Technical Review of the proposal, attached as Annexe 6.5, concluded that there was sufficient information to build a facsimile of the 1873-4 madrasa, part of the social complex of Hagia Sophia as a mosque. Overall, the reconstruction could have a beneficial impact on Hagia Sophia and its setting, in terms of the way it is appreciated and understood and thus on the overall Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The 2019 mission provided an opportunity to review work in progress, and to appreciate at first hand the contribution of the emerging building to the setting of the monument at first hand.

The works in progress
The building is being constructed off the substantial 1873 masonry foundations, verified by and exposed in archaeological excavations beginning in 1985 and consolidated at the start of the project (for a plan see Annexe 6.5).34 Apart from the recovery of information about the building itself, further investigation is necessarily confined in plan to the interstices between its foundations, and in depth to not destabilising them. Apart from a major drainage culvert running north-west down the slope, the

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34 This account draws on the detailed presentation by Ms Sonay Şakar, April 2019.
work has revealed fragments (narrow walls, drains, wells) of Ottoman and Byzantine subsidiary structures and at the lowest level reached (well above the Theodosius II courtyard levels displayed further south) a small area of marble paving.

Fig 19 A, Surviving stone facing of the principal elevation, against Soğuk Çeşme Street; B, View south-west along the passage behind the madrasa, towards the entry to the vestibule leading to the inner narthex of Hagia Sophia.

Fig 20 The building in progress, from the courtyard looking east towards Soğuk Çeşme Street.
At the time of the 2019 mission, construction of the larger courtyard had reached (at its highest) the tops of the upper window arches, just below wall plate level; that of the small courtyard had yet to start, with archaeological excavations concluding. The reconstruction is being carried out almost entirely emulating the historic materials and techniques. The walls are of hand-made brick set in lime mortar, incorporating bond timbers (plus steel tensioning bars and rods concealed in the core), with stone door and window surrounds to the courtyard and secondary outer elevations. Stripping away the post-1934 render from the surviving wall against Soğuk Çeşme Street showed that the west facade had been clad with thin stone panels rather than stucco work like the other elevations (Fig 18A); this will be reproduced in the reconstruction.
Assessment
The authorities are to be congratulated for the authenticity of the reconstruction, specifying materials and techniques to match the original work throughout the structure, whether visible or not; and the contractors for the quality of work so far (Figs 19-20). The drawings provided in the presentation confirm that this approach will be followed throughout, which bodes well for the outcome of the project. While the envelope of the building was far from complete, work had progressed far enough to confirm that it will fit comfortably within the location for which it was originally designed (Fig 21). The accommodation that it will provide in support of the museum will replace not only the temporary structures which occupied its site, but also those which still fill the yard to the east.

3.1.4 The Bucoleon Palace and the sea walls

Background
The Marmara Sea frontage of the Bucoleon Palace, of which part still stands, was probably built by the Byzantine emperor Theophilos (r. 829-42) to the south of the Great Palace, above the Imperial harbour. The building was terminated eastwards by the Pharos (lighthouse) tower and incorporated a monumental stair to the palace where the western section of the elevation breaks forward. The palace was gradually abandoned after the Byzantine reconquest of the city in 1261. After the Ottoman conquest in 1453, residential development of the area, earthquakes and a series of fires (the latest in 1912) destroyed most of the palace. The standing remains of the sea frontage (and the sea wall extending westwards) were severely damaged by the construction of the railway to the Sirkeci terminus in 1871-2 (doubled 1910). In 1956, what survived was separated from the sea by the shore road, Kennedy Cadessi. The existing situation is shown in Figs 22-3.

Fig 23 The remains of the Bucoleon Palace as they currently exist (from Presentation)
The 2016 Mission noted that ‘several surviving sections of wall are now in urgent need of careful consolidation, including the Bucoleon Palace itself, a tower of which seemed to be inhabited by squatters. Particularly on the sea-facing side, mortar joints in the remaining sections of wall are in some areas deeply eroded, leading to stones becoming detached, and woody plants and creepers are taking hold. Above the Bucoleon Palace, Ottoman timber houses which once added to the historic multi-layered character and fortuitous aesthetic values of the place are collapsing, while an incongruous modern sea view balcony impacts strongly on the historic architecture (Figs 9, 10). The mission urged ‘the State Party to consult with the WHC at an early stage in the development of proposals for the valorisation of the Bucoleon Palace, in accordance with par. 172 of the Operational Guidelines’. The proposal current in 2016, to close permanently the surface level railway and use the track as a (here) elevated pedestrian route, has since been abandoned in favour of retaining and upgrading the line.36

Proposals
Under the direction of Fatih municipality, starting in January 2017 the vegetation was cleared and detailed survey work undertaken, using 3D laser scanning. Material samples were taken for analysis to inform the conservation work. Using the survey data, reconstruction drawings have been prepared bringing together the archaeological evidence of the fabric with historic graphic sources, as a research project to help understand and interpret the surviving remains. Three principles were then defined for the conservation work: minimum intervention, consolidation, protection and rehabilitation; no completion of missing elements is proposed. The surrounding area, currently either unmanaged or with municipal landscaping, will be ‘reorganised as an open-air museum’, with walkways constructed above (but not intervening in) the surviving structure to access the higher levels. A skeletal turret will be added to the stump of the historic Pharos turret to indicate its historic form and use. There is an

35 2016 Mission Report, Section 3.3.2 and figs 9, 10
36 Istanbul Historic Peninsula Management Plan, May 2018, 100-103
existing parking area to the east, in front of the sea wall (see Figs 24-5). The project was approved in September 2018.  

*Fig 25 Aerial visualisation of proposals for the valorisation of the Bucoleon Palace, from the south-west (Presentation)*

*Fig 26 Visualisation of proposed landscape setting*

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37 Information taken from presentation by Fatih Municipality, Directorate of Planning and Projects.
Assessment
The proposals for the consolidation and valorisation of the surviving remains of the Bucoleon Palace are very welcome. The minimum intervention approach is entirely appropriate to the primary objective of safeguarding the future of these structures, whose scale is still impressive despite 19th century losses.

The backdrop to the ruins, however, is the houses on the land above the walls. Their predecessors are visible in 19th century engravings. Three of them are registered civil architecture buildings, and part of the roof of one of them, 23 Kapiağası Hisari Street, has fallen in. The building is of particular interest for its Art Nouveau detailing (Fig 26). It (and the others) presumably just post-date the 1912 fire. As noted in 2016, and particularly in the context of the proposals for the palace remains, the repair of these buildings, and particularly of no 23, should be a priority, in parallel with the Bucoleon Palace project. At the east end of the site the balustrade of the rooftop terrace of the Bucoleon Terrace Hotel is particularly intrusive; perhaps some negotiation with the owners might be possible to adjust its form to something less strident and eye-catching?

Recommendation

R03
In parallel with the conservation and presentation of the ruins of the Bucoleon Palace, efforts should be made to secure the repair of the civil architecture buildings above the ruins, particularly 23 Kapiağası Hisari Street, and the improvement of the appearance of the Bucoleon Terrace Hotel.

38 One is reproduced in slide 6 of the presentation.
The Marmara sea walls
A long running project to repair the walls of the Topkapi Palace has now reached the south-west corner. However, as previous missions have noted, much of the southern sea wall is in need of conservation, including that surrounding the palace. The mission commended the temporary works, using timber to stabilise areas where courses of facing stones are missing, and removing unsightly modern constructions erected against the wall, alongside survey work and archaeological excavation. This is an economical short-medium term measure, which, unlike most temporary works, is visually harmonious.39

3.1.5 The Land Walls

Background
The land walls (5.7km long), comprising an inner wall with towers, outer wall, and walled moat, were first constructed on the orders of Emperor Theodosius in the early 5th century. In the following centuries they were extensively repaired and partly rebuilt after attacks and earthquakes, and in some areas modified, but were maintained essentially complete until damaged by an earthquake in 1894. Repairs began in the 1950s, and a major campaign initiated in 1987, unfortunately (as was usual at the time) executed in Portland cement rather than Khorosan mortar. Work on the wall between bastions T55-T60 was undertaken around 2000-2006, involving extensive reconstruction and re-facing, contrary to internationally-accepted standards for the conservation of masonry monuments.40 The 2016 mission noted that there were ‘significant sections of the walls which are now in poor condition and whose conservation is urgent, in conjunction with improving their landscape setting and making them more accessible to visitors.’

Current proposals
In the light of negative responses to the work of 2000-06, an international symposium was held on appropriate approaches and methods, and in 2015 a focus group meeting to discuss not only the approach to restoration of the walls themselves, but also harmonising their conservation with large scale spatial plans and the use of the wall zone in conjunction with surrounding areas (for which 4 topic-based master plans were produced in 2016-18),41 promoting the walls as part of the city’s cultural heritage offer, and ensuring that their conservation is sustainable as an ongoing activity. As noted in

41 The 2016 Mission report commented on the particular issue of sustaining the truck gardens at Yedicule.
the 2016 mission report, detailed survey and investigation was instituted in four packages. By March 2019, project approval rates were 89% for surveying and restitution (conservation) proposals and 3% for ‘restoration’ drawings based on collating surviving photographic records and analysing the archaeological evidence of their original form and subsequent evolution. This is an important part of understanding and interpreting the monument, but as with the Bucoleon Palace, the temptation physically to implement the conclusions, whether in whole or part, should be resisted. The timetable for implementation of permanent conservation works is as yet unclear.

Temporary works are being implemented to address concerns about safety and stability that have been revealed through the survey work. These include use of a stainless steel mesh grid on insecure wall faces, metal gates to prevent unauthorised access to bastions, and temporary steel shoring to walls at risk of collapse.

Assessment
Based on the examples presented to the Mission, the survey work and the analysis flowing from it are very thorough, indeed exemplary. Included in the presentation were ‘General Principles’ for the conservation of the land walls, which are so central to the ultimate success of the project that they are reproduced here at Annexe 6.6. Provided that the design of the works adheres to these principles, and the technical standard of execution of the works is high, then the works should achieve internationally accepted standards for the conservation of masonry monuments. In particular, it will be vital to limit ‘partial completion’ to work necessary to ensure long term stability and to avoid the wall heads trapping water. As the 2016 mission noted, ‘While the need for this work is clear, undertaking work almost simultaneously to 5.6 km of the Land Walls will require a considerable concentration of resources, including appropriately skilled and experienced professional and technical staff and craftspeople, as well as supervision by the authorities.’ Having undertaken urgent temporary works, implementation should take place at a rate which is within the capacity of available expert professional resources to manage, and which allows experience gained in early stages to inform subsequent ones.
Recommendation

R04

In further developing and implementing proposals for the conservation of the Land Walls:

- the ‘general principles’ established so far (Annexe 6.6) should be followed;
- ‘partial completion’ should be limited to work necessary to ensure long term stability and to avoid the wall heads trapping water;
- implementation should take place at a rate which it is within the capacity of available professional resources to manage, and which allows experience gained in early stages to inform subsequent ones.
The specific terms of reference for this advisory mission and its short duration did not provide the opportunity to make a systematic assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property. However, the major new transport infrastructure developments and land reclamation, with which previous missions have been concerned, appear to be complete. Most of the projects which are recommended in the 2018 Management Plan (5.3.2.2) as requiring Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment appear to be of a lesser scale, with more localised potential impacts. Of future infrastructure projects, the construction of the Yenikapi-Sefaköy metro line will involve a new station at Silivrikapi, just inside the land walls component of the World Heritage property. The station will be in the tunnel, but the station pedestrian concourses will be constructed on a ‘cut and cover’ basis with above-ground entrance structures. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment has been requested by the Site Management Directorate.

The conservation of the major monuments which were specifically the subject of the mission has either been completed, is progressing, or is being planned to internationally appropriate standards. The works will sustain and better reveal their attributes which contribute to the outstanding universal value of the property. Their integrity will be sustained, or particularly in the case of Zeyrek Mosque partly recovered, for example through the replacement particularly of inappropriate cementitious past interventions with materials to match the historic ones, and through the reversal of ill-considered local ‘restoration’. The scale of conservation works being planned, and necessary, to conserve the land (and sea) walls is daunting; but with urgent stabilising measures in place, the works can be implemented carefully over time.

Since the 2016 Mission, the authorities have put in place measures to document the condition of existing traditional timber and masonry vernacular architecture examples, specifically to identify those which could be saved by minor repair and maintenance, and those which can be saved by major interventions. Funds were made available to the Municipality of Fatih, initially to initiate minor maintenance works to 20 buildings, divided equally between Zeyrek and Süleymaniye.

The mission saw an impressive reconstruction of the timber-framed Turşucuzade Ahmet Muhtar Efendi Mansion, near the Basilica Cistern, replacing a modern masonry simulacrum, and the repair in progress of its adjacent ‘stone room’, later the Sibyak School. One member also saw the complete reconstruction in progress of buildings in Kupacilar Street, illustrated in their then-derelict state in the 2013 mission report at fig 65. Both, but especially ongoing repair projects, reflect the success of the revival of traditional craft skills and ongoing training programmes.

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42 For a map see Historic Areas of Istanbul Progress Report 2019, p24
43 Historic Areas of Istanbul Progress Report 2019, 112-17
44 Historic Areas of Istanbul Progress Report 2019
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conservation work which the mission saw complete (the Zeykek Mosque), in progress (the Chora Museum) and proposed (the Bucoleon Palace, the Land Walls) is generally in accord with the accepted international standards. In the case of the Land Walls, temporary works to prevent further erosion of the integrity and authenticity of the fabric prior to full conservation works are being put in place.

The current conservation project for the Chora Museum has been meticulously planned, based on extensive analysis. Fabric repairs have been comprehensive but conservative (exemplified by the careful repair of the timber dome). Conservation of the surviving decorative schemes is based on cleaning (the marble with pure water) and consolidation, to stabilise rather than in any way to restore. The mission was impressed by the skill and patience of the team of conservators on site in 2019. Some decisions remain, particularly about further structural reinforcement but the mission was confident that they will be taken with the exemplary care that has characterised the project so far.

During the second half of the 20th century, the Molla Zeyrek Mosque was the subject of numerous partial repair campaigns (the early ones typically involving the introduction of concrete and cement mortar), interspersed with periods of neglect. By contrast, the recent works have been comprehensive, from structural reinforcement to internal decoration, based on detailed investigation and research. Traditional materials and techniques have generally been used, to match those of the historic fabric, judiciously supplemented by modern technology, particularly in structural strengthening. Given the accumulated problems of the building, and failure of piecemeal interventions to achieve a sustainable state of sound repair and active use, in principle this approach was both justified and necessary.

The building is the second-largest surviving Byzantine church in Istanbul, an important and well-known example of middle Byzantine architecture. But unlike the Chora Museum, it remains in its historically significant use as a mosque, and post-project, it is resuming its social role as the centre of the Zeyrek community. The conservation project has generally succeeded in reconciling the cultural value and visibility of its Byzantine phase while recovering the architectural quality and coherence of a mosque last extensively reworked after 1766. The inherent tension, and the legacy of the ‘restoration’ of some architectural elements in isolation, inevitably presented the professional team with difficult decisions. If there is one certainty about a major conservation project, it is that others coming later will be critical of some of the decisions made by their predecessors. The fact that the mission has criticised a couple of such difficult decisions does not detract from its appreciation of the overall achievement which the project represents. The mission’s recommendations should be seen in that light:

Recommendation 01

Zeyrek Mosque: Subject to full and detailed research, consideration should be given in the future to:

- unblocking the high-level windows in the exonarthex, blocked and visually obliterated in the 1960s ‘restoration’, unless the blocking was the result of structural necessity;
- revisiting the potential to strengthen and reinstate the Porphyry column to the north narthex gallery window, and if that is possible, to replace its twin in a stone of similar tone.
The mission’s second recommendation reiterates those of earlier missions, and, as the team was informed, reflects the hopes of those concerned with the project:

**Recommendation 02**

*Priority should continue to be given to the repair of civic architecture buildings at risk of loss in the Zeyrek component of the property, particularly those contributing to the immediate setting of the mosque; and to the reinstatement of the registered building at 33 Ibadethane Street, dismantled during the course of the mosque conservation project.*

The authorities are to be congratulated for the authenticity of the reconstruction of the **Hagia Sophia Madrasa**, specifying materials and techniques to match the original work throughout the structure, whether visible or not; and the contractors for the quality of work so far. While the envelope of the building was far from complete at the time of the mission, work had progressed far enough to confirm that it will fit comfortably within the location for which it was historically designed. The accommodation that it will provide in support of the museum will replace not only the temporary structures which occupied its site, but also those which still fill the yard to the east.

The proposals for the consolidation and valorisation of the surviving remains of the **Bucoleon Palace** are very welcome. The minimum intervention approach is entirely appropriate to the primary objective of safeguarding the future of these structures, whose scale is still impressive despite 19th century losses. However, the civil architecture buildings above the ruins should be repaired in parallel, both to contribute to its historic story and its visual qualities. The recommendation reflects that of an earlier mission:

**Recommendation 03**

*In parallel with the conservation and presentation of the ruins of the Bucoleon Palace, efforts should be made to secure the repair of the civil architecture buildings above the ruins, particularly 23 Kapıağaşı Hisari Street, and the improvement of the appearance of the Bucoleon Terrace Hotel.*

In relation to the **Land Walls**, the survey work and the analysis flowing from it are very thorough, indeed exemplary. Included in the presentation were ‘General Principles’ for the conservation of the land walls, which are central to the ultimate success of the project. Provided that the design of the works adheres to these principles, and the technical standard of execution of the works is high, then the works should achieve internationally accepted standards for the conservation of masonry monuments. The mission therefore recommends that:

**Recommendation 04**

*In further developing and implementing proposals for the conservation of the land walls:*

- the ‘general principles’ established so far (Annexe 6.6) should be followed;
- ‘partial completion’ should be limited to work necessary to ensure long term stability and to avoid the wall heads trapping water;
- implementation should take place at a rate which it is within the capacity of available professional resources to manage, and which allows experience gained in early stages to inform subsequent ones.
6 ANNEXES

6.1 Terms of reference of UNESCO World Heritage Centre-ICOMOS Advisory Mission to the World Heritage Property of the Historic Areas of Istanbul

Concerning the Advisory Mission of the ICOMOS and the World Heritage Center for Criteria (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) for the World Heritage Property “Historic Areas of Istanbul” (Turkey-C356)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The “Historic Areas of Istanbul” were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1985 based on Criteria (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv). The conservation status of the Historic Areas of Istanbul will be discussed in the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee in 2020.

Paragraph 10 of the World Heritage Committee Bahrain-Manama 42 COM 7B.31 decision states the following: “It also encourages the State Party to invite an ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission to review the restoration and conservation projects such as the Chora Museum and the Zeyrek Mosque in line with the recommendations of the 2016 Reactive Monitoring Mission report.”

In response to the World Heritage Committee Bahrain-Manama 42 COM 7B.31 decision and in line with the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention, the Advisory Mission is going to examine and assess the “restoration work in sites such as the Chora Museum and the Zeyrek Mosque.”

The Advisory Mission visit is planned to take place in mid-April 2019. In line with the above-mentioned Committee decision, the experts in the Mission will:

- review all existing documents, board decisions and the work done to date submitted by the State Party with respect to the restoration work performed on sites such as the Chora Museum and the Zeyrek Mosque;
- review the works carried out in the context of the Zeyrek area;
- study conservation activities in progress and completed projects for the Palace of Boukoleon, Istanbul Land Walls and Hagia Sophia Madrasah;
- meet representatives of the State Party, the Historic Areas of Istanbul Site Management Directorate, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and ICOMOS Turkey and hold consultative discussions;
- pay visits to the areas and places deemed necessary by the Mission for examination purposes accompanied by the representatives of the State Party central and local government.

The report to be drawn up by the Advisory Mission on the recommendations for the State Party will be submitted to the World Heritage Center by ICOMOS and ICCROM. It will be forwarded by the World Heritage Center to the State Party by the end of October 2019.
6.2 Decision 42 COM 7B.31 of the World Heritage Committee adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018) on the Historic Areas of Istanbul (Turkey) (356)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/18/42.COM/7B.Add,

2. Recalling Decision 41 COM 7B.52, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017),

3. Also recalling the long-standing concerns of the Committee on the property,

4. Welcomes the efforts made by the State Party of Turkey to streamline the reporting on the numerous projects in a coherent approach and for being engaged in a close dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;

5. Also welcomes the initiation of a project to document Ottoman timber and stone houses and the associated planned stabilization work, requests the State Party to provide further details on the implementation of the project and how this relates to the long-term strategy requested by the Committee;

6. Deeply regrets that, in the past, details and information on development/conservation projects have been submitted after work has been completed and without Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA); consequently, further welcomes the inclusion of a cultural HIA process in the revised Management Plan;

7. Reiterates its request to the State Party to define the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property in the Management Plan as a matter of priority and before the Plan is finalized and approved;

8. Notes the work proposed for the reconstruction of the Hagia Sophia medrese for which an HIA had been prepared, and the work undertaken on the Land Walls, the Bucoleon Palace, the Chora museum and the Molla Zeyrek mosque;

9. Also notes the large number of proposed infrastructure and other projects, and recommends that the State Party develop a progress report on these, together with a road-map including short- and long-term strategies covering all types of projects (development/renovation/renewal) which may have an impact on the OUV of the property, and determine all required details and steps in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are taken; and submit this road map to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2019;

10. Encourages the State Party to invite an ICCROM/ICOMOS Advisory mission to review the restoration and conservation projects such as the Chora Museum and the Zeyrek Mosque in line with the recommendations of the 2016 Reactive Monitoring Mission report;
11. **Also requests** the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2019, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.
6.3 Composition of the mission team

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6.4 Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, as retrospectively adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2011

Brief synthesis

Strategically located on the Bosphorus peninsula between the Balkans and Anatolia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, Istanbul was successively the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire and has been associated with major events in political history, religious history and art history for more than 2,000 years. The city is situated on a peninsula which is surrounded by the Golden Horn (Haliç), a natural harbour on the north, the Bosphorus on the east and the Marmara Sea on the south. The Historic Peninsula, on which the former Byzantium and Constantinople developed, was surrounded by ancient walls, built initially by Theodosius in the early fifth century.

The Outstanding Universal Value of Istanbul resides in its unique integration of architectural masterpieces that reflect the meeting of Europe and Asia over many centuries, and in its incomparable skyline formed by the creative genius of Byzantine and Ottoman architects.

The distinctive and characteristic skyline of Istanbul was built up over many centuries and encompasses the Hagia Sophia whose vast dome reflects the architectural and decorative expertise of the 6th century, the 15th century Fatih complex and Topkapi Palace - that was continually extended until the 19th century, the Süleymaniye Mosque complex and Sehzade Mosque complex, works of the chief architect Sinan, reflecting the climax of Ottoman architecture in the 16th century, the 17th century Blue Mosque and the slender minarets of the New Mosque near the port completed in 1664.

The four areas of the property are the Archaeological Park, at the tip of the Historic peninsula; the Süleymaniye quarter with Süleymaniye Mosque complex, bazaars and vernacular settlement around it; the Zeyrek area of settlement around the Zeyrek Mosque (the former church of the Pantokrator), and the area along both sides of the Theodosian land walls including remains of the former Blachernae Palace. These areas display architectural achievements of successive imperial periods also including the 17th century Blue Mosque, the Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque, the 16th century Şehzade Mosque complex, the 15th century Topkapi Palace, the hippodrome of Constantine, the aqueduct of Valens, the Justinian churches of Hagia Sophia, St. Irene, Küçük Ayasofya Mosque (the former church of the Sts Sergius and Bacchus), the Pantocrator Monastery founded under John II Comnene by Empress Irene; the former Church of the Holy Saviour of Chora with its mosaics and paintings dating from the 14th and 15th centuries; and many other exceptional examples of various building types including baths, cisterns, and tombs.

Criterion (i): The Historic Areas of Istanbul include monuments recognised as unique architectural masterpieces of Byzantine and Ottoman periods such as Hagia Sophia, which was designed by Anthemios of Tralles and Isidoros of Miletus in 532-537 and the Süleymaniye Mosque complex designed by architect Sinan in 1550-1557.

Criterion (ii): Throughout history the monuments in Istanbul have exerted considerable influence on the development of architecture, monumental arts and the organization of space, both in Europe and the Near East. Thus, the 6,650 meter terrestrial wall of Theodosius II with its second line of defence,
created in 447, was one of the leading references for military architecture; Hagia Sophia became a model for an entire family of churches and later mosques, and the mosaics of the palaces and churches of Constantinople influenced both Eastern and Western art.

**Criterion (iii):** Istanbul bears unique testimony to the Byzantine and Ottoman civilizations through its large number of high quality examples of a great range of building types, some with associated artworks. They include fortifications, churches and palaces with mosaics and frescos, monumental cisterns, tombs, mosques, religious schools and bath buildings. The vernacular housing around major religious monuments in the Süleymaniye and Zeyrek quarters provide exceptional evidence of the late Ottoman urban pattern.

**Criterion (iv):** The city is an outstanding set of monuments, architectural and technical ensembles that illustrate very distinguished phases of human history. In particular, the Palace of Topkapi and the Süleymaniye Mosque complex with its caravanserai, madrasa, medical school, library, bath building, hospice and imperial tombs, provide supreme examples of ensembles of palaces and religious complexes of the Ottoman period.

**Integrity (2011)**

The Historic Areas of Istanbul include the key attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value of Istanbul as the parts of the city that had escaped major changes and deterioration in the 19th and 20th centuries and were already protected by national legislation at the time of inscription.

Vernacular timber housing in the Süleymaniye and Zeyrek quarters, was recognized as vulnerable at the time of inscription. Despite the threat of pressure for change, many efforts have been executed in order to conserve and strengthen the timber structures within the site since then. Changes in the social structure within the area have also affected the use of those structures. The urban fabric is threatened by lack of maintenance and pressure for change. The Metropolitan Municipality is attempting to rehabilitate the area to revive its degraded parts. The revival of the Süleymaniye and Zeyrek quarters is a long project which demands a long and careful process of cleaning, conservation and restoration. The Süleymaniye Complex has retained its structural and architectural integrity, except some minor changes in the commercial part of the compound. Zeyrek Mosque, originally the Church of Pantocrator, has suffered from several earthquakes.

The integrity of the major monuments and archaeological remains within the four Historic Areas are largely intact but they are vulnerable due to the lack of a management plan. With the management plan, which is under approval process by related authority, it is aimed to address all the issues and solve the problems within the site gradually.

The setting of the Historic Areas of Istanbul and the outstanding silhouette of the city are vulnerable to development.
Authenticity (2011)

The ability of the monuments and vernacular housing to express truthfully the Outstanding Universal Value of the Historic Areas of Istanbul has been compromised to some extent since inscription in terms of their design and materials. The conservation and restoration works in the setting of the Historic Peninsula are being led and followed by the central and local authorities as well as newly established institutions with the financial funds provided by the legal amendments.

The setting and distinctive skyline of the Historic Peninsula continues to express the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. However the ongoing ability of the wider maritime setting to do this depends on ensuring that development does not compromise views of the skyline.

Protection and management requirements (2011)

The Historic Areas of Istanbul is legally protected through national conservation legislation. There is no specific planning legislation to protect World Heritage sites. The management structure for the protection and conservation of the properties includes the shared responsibilities of national government (The Ministry of Culture and Tourism General Directorate of Cultural Assets and Museums, General Directorate of Pious Foundation) local administration and several state institutions. The approval of the Conservation Council has to be obtained for physical interventions and functional changes in registered buildings and conservation sites.

The Site Management Directorate for Cultural and Natural Sites of Istanbul was established within the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in 2006 to coordinate management planning processes for World Heritage Sites of Istanbul. The work of the directorate is supported by an Advisory Board and a Coordination and Supervising Board. A site manager has also been appointed. A department was also structured under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism to coordinate the management issues of the World Heritage Sites in Turkey and to collaborate with relevant authorities for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the Operational Guidelines.

The first conservation plans for Zeyrek, Süleymaniye and the Land Walls were prepared and approved in 1979 and 1981. A new conservation plan including World Heritage sites was endorsed by the Council of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and submitted to the Conservation Council for approval. The impressive skyline of the Historic Peninsula with the Topkapı Palace, Hagia Sophia and Süleymaniye is preserved by planning measures. The legal protection and the management structures are adequate for ensuring the proper conservation of the properties. The national government has allocated a large amount of funding for restoration and conservation projects within the site as part of the European Capital of Culture campaign, in addition to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism’s, the Istanbul Special Provincial Administration’s, General Directorate of Pious Foundation’s and the local administration’s annual budgets.

Finding a balance between change and preservation is a delicate issue in the Historic Areas. The Management Plan, which is currently being prepared in collaboration with all stakeholders in conformity with the related legislation, will address this issue. It will address the traffic and transport plan for the city, the urban regeneration strategy and tourism management, and will provide a proper framework to ensure that construction and infrastructure projects respect the Outstanding Universal
Value of the property. It will also include policies for conservation, standards for restoration and rehabilitation, management responsibilities, accessibility, visitor management, policies for increasing the perception of the site, increasing the quality of daily life, risk management, awareness raising and training.
The Heritage Impact Assessment for the project to reconstruct the Hagia Sophia madrasa was submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre and passed to ICOMOS for review on 30 January 2018. No project details were provided, so ICOMOS was unable to review the proposal at that time. The World Heritage Centre requested the State Party to provide the project details in a letter dated 21 February 2018, after indications were received that works had already begun (as included in the State Party’s report on the state of conservation of the property, submitted on 31 January 2018).

On 30 July 2018, the State Party submitted a revised Heritage Impact Assessment, including the project details. ICOMOS provides its comments on the reconstruction project below.

Information supplied

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) includes technical annexes 1-6 and annexe 7, showing the madrasa superimposed on the western silhouette of the Hagia Sophia Museum. The HIA lacks the phased plan the key of which can be found on p 43. There are no drawings 'as proposed' other than the western silhouette, and some small-scale extracts included incidentally in the HIA and technical annexes. However, the form of the proposed building in context is clearly illustrated by photographs taken prior to its demolition shown on pp18-23 in the HIA.

Background and context

The Turkish authorities have for some years (certainly since 2003: HIA, p23) envisaged the reconstruction of the madrasa, originally built in 1873-4 and demolished in 1936, which stood adjacent to Hagia Sophia. The need for a Heritage Impact Assessment for the project, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2017), was among the recommendations of the December 2016 joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission.45

The madrasa formerly stood in part of what was, at the time of both the 2012 joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission and the 2016 mission, an inconspicuous open yard to the north-west of Hagia Sophia, in the angle between Cazrevey Street on the north-west and Soğuk Çeşme Street on the north-east, the latter supported by a substantial retaining wall (Figs 1-2). In recent years, the yard has housed a changing array of site cabins and huts, apparently associated with the administration and maintenance of the monument, following excavation of the foundations

of the madrasa in 1982. After further excavation in 2008, including clearing the semi-basements, the remains were registered as a cultural asset. Construction would involve repairing the foundations to carry a raft to distribute the load of the new building more evenly, so the underlying levels would be sealed rather than disturbed.

The evolution of the madrasa and its surroundings

The Heritage Impact Assessment sets out what is known of the successive madrasas which formed part of the social complex around the Hagia Sophia Mosque. In summary, there is no doubt that Sultan Mehmed II established a madrasa to the north of Hagia Sophia after the conquest of the city in 1453, that a madrasa existed somewhere in the mosque complex more or less continuously until the late nineteenth century, and that several important scholars were historically associated with it. However, it is equally clear that the building demolished in 1936 was built in 1873-4 on a site different from its immediate predecessor, demolished in 1872 when Şehremini Server Pasha reorganised the surrounding streets and cleared the buildings around Hagia Sophia to expose and display the monument. That predecessor building was presumably on the south-west side of Hagia Sophia; there is no sign of it on the north side on the mid-19th century map reproduced on p16 of the HIA. So while the replacement building continued the institution of a madrasa associated with the mosque, there was no locational or architectural continuity with the earlier Ottoman structure(s).

While the madrasa built in 1873-4 followed an Ottoman galleried courtyard plan, its principal elevation owed much to western European classical influence (Figs 3-4). It appears to have been conceived as two separate elements, each with its own courtyard, with no internal connection at ground floor level. This layout was expressed in the 12-bay main elevation, arranged 2:1:3:1:2:1:2; in other words, a composition symmetrical around a three-bay centrepiece containing the door to the main courtyard, but with its flanking bays repeated on the right-hand side. However, while the madrasa was conceived as two elements, there is nothing in its recorded details to suggest that it was built in more than one stage. The new building was sited to continue the line of the façade of the monument set by the porch projecting from the exonarthex, with its principal elevation being recessed to accommodate an existing open porch on the north-east side of the enclosed porch.

The area in front of the madrasa, historically laid out as a garden with lines of trees, is separated from the surrounding streets by cast iron railings between stone piers, on a stone plinth. This forms part of the enclosure of the open areas surrounding Hagia Sophia, which presumably followed, like the madrasa, the reorganisation of the setting of Hagia Sophia after 1869 as the focus of a civic space. The madrasa building became a municipal orphanage in 1924 and was demolished in 1936 (after Hagia Sophia was designated a museum in 1935). Subsequently the boundary wall and railings were extended over its frontage to Soğuk Çeşme Street. Demolition was undertaken apparently in the belief that this would further improve the setting of Hagia Sophia.

Assessment

It is evident from the HIA that sufficient documentation exists to define accurately the former appearance of the madrasa in plan, elevation and (externally at least) in its details. As well as the

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46 Prost Plan, 1906, HIA, p23
47 For a time, the tank and fountain in the courtyard were left “for being a memory of the first madrassahs”: HIA, p12
archaeological evidence of the surviving foundations, the building was planned and photographed before its demolition. It was essentially a single-period structure, with no obvious signs of major alteration during its 60-year life. The evidence, and the necessary stucco and carpentry skills, exists to replicate the architectural form and appearance of the building superstructure in materials essentially similar to those originally used. There is no issue of incongruity, since the area affected has not otherwise materially changed since the demolition of the madrasa in 1936, except for the garden layout. The key question is therefore whether it is appropriate to reconstruct the demolished madrasa, in terms of its impact on Hagia Sophia as a particularly important attribute of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property.

The reasons for the importance of the Hagia Sophia madrasa, as set out on pp14-15 of the HIA, relate largely to the institution it represents, not the building proposed for reconstruction. A madrasa was undoubtedly an “inseparable element of the social complex program of the city's selatin mosques”48 (p15). But in relation to this particular building, all that can be said is that “the building became a sample of madrassahs, which are traditional structures of Islamic education, by combining old and new traditions and being reinterpreted under the impact of European architecture around the tail end of 19th century” (p15).

Nonetheless the madrasa was an integral part of 1870s the functional and aesthetic redesign of the setting of Hagia Sophia, which otherwise largely remains intact today. It was set inconspicuously at the back of the new enclosure, presenting two storeys to the garden to the west, but only one to Soğuk Çeşme Street because of the rising ground. It was, in relation to Hagia Sophia, subordinate and modest in terms of location, massing and scale, fitting well into its context, with limited visibility in the cityscape. Although it blocked views from a short length of a minor street, Soğuk Çeşme Street, it provided framed views upwards from its courtyards. The outcome (from the archive photos) was architecturally satisfactory, although its relationship to the domed outer porch of the exonarthex was not well resolved, one of the latter’s open sides facing a blank wall.

Hagia Sophia (as an attribute of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property) is not physically incomplete without this comparatively late and short-lived structure, but the gap its demolition left in the late 19th century layout still lacks resolution. The reconstructed building could provide a large amount of space for museum and interpretative use directly related to Hagia Sophia. Its carefully considered siting would still allow the main views of Hagia Sophia to be maintained. Perhaps most importantly, reconstruction of the historic form of the madrasa (rather than a contemporary building here) could allow an understanding of how Hagia Sophia was for many centuries part of the social fabric of the city, rather than being somewhat isolated as a monument.

Hagia Sophia currently reflects the heritage of Christianity and Islam in the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires respectively, and its status from 1935 the ideals of the Republic. The reconstruction of the madrasa would reinforce the Ottoman Muslim character of the Hagia Sophia complex (see HIA, esp. p24, pp30-31), demonstrating one of the key historic functions of a mosque complex present in successive buildings on the wider site from the 1450s until 1924.

48 Mosques founded by Sultans, initially by those who had led a military campaign
Conclusions

On the basis of the analysis presented above, ICOMOS concludes the following:

- There is sufficient information to build a facsimile of the 1873-4 madrasa;
- The proposal is to reconstruct the building on the footprint of the 1873-4 building and replicate its form and scale;
- The key issue is how such reconstruction of the madrasa might support Hagia Sophia and its contribution to Outstanding Universal Value, rather than whether the reconstruction merely does no harm, as suggested by the HIA;
- The reconstructed building would, as the 1873-4 building did, prioritise the visibility and dominance of Hagia Sophia;
- It would provide space to be used for museum and interpretation proposes, that can help with an understanding of the history of Hagia Sophia and its associations;
- Perhaps most importantly the reconstructed building would help to portray how for many centuries Hagia Sophia was intertwined with the social fabric of the surrounding city, rather than an isolated monument.

Overall, ICOMOS considers that the reconstruction could have a beneficial impact on Hagia Sophia and its setting, in terms of the way it is appreciated and understood and thus on the overall Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

ICOMOS also considers that for any future reconstruction projects, as well as an HIA being undertaken, there is a clear need to clearly justify how a reconstruction project would be beneficial to Outstanding Universal Value.

ICOMOS remains at the disposal of the State Party for further clarification on the above or assistance as required.

ICOMOS, Charenton-le-Pont
April 2019

Annex: Images
Fig 1 View looking north-west along the wall of the demolished madrasa retaining Soğuk Çeşme Street, and the excavated foundations (to the left of the grey cabins), December 2016.

Fig 2 View from the corner of Soğuk Çeşme Street and Caferiye Street, looking south to Hagia Sophia, December 2016.
Fig 3 Plan of the Madrasa by Prost, 1906 (source: HIA, 23)

Fig 4 The madrasa (left) in the context of Hagia Sophia (source: HIA Appendix 7)
6.6  General principles for the conservation of the Land Walls

*Source: State Party Presentation, Slide 79*

It is recommended to perform repair, rehabilitation and restoration works on the walls and bastions in the light of following principles.

- The plantation and trees that have grown on walls and bastions should be removed without giving harm to structures.

- It is recommended to remove all cement-based repairs on bastions and walls. The removal process should be performed applying methods that would not cause any harm on stones and bricks. However, if it becomes clear that the removal process could give harm to existing stones and bricks, then an analysis of the cement-based mortar should be performed and the degree of the impact of the sulphate content should be determined. If it is found out that it does not cause any harm, then the cement-based mortar should not be removed.

- It has been found out that there is a high level of surface contamination due to carbonization especially in the inner parts of the bastions so it would be appropriate to perform a quality surface cleaning in these areas.

- Due to loss of internal and external city walls and bastion walls, the erosion of the core filler layer will increase in time so it is recommended to perform completion especially in the lower parts of the walls and to perform completion or capping in upper parts to prevent material loss.

- Minimum intervention principle should be the guiding principle for the repair and rehabilitation/reinforcement work to be performed on bastions and walls.

- For structural cracks, if the width of the microcrack is up to 1 cm or if the mid-size crack is up to 4 cm, then they should be repaired by injection, under low pressure (1-2 bars), of mortar the characteristics of which are similar to that of the original mortar of the structure. If the crack width is larger than 4 cm, then the surrounding parts should be decayed to repair the structure using the stitch-walling technique using stones/bricks of similar characteristics.

- For the stones where there is surface deterioration, if the depth of deterioration is up to 8 cm, then it would be left as it is, if it is between 8-15 cm, then plastic repair should be performed, if it is more than 15 cm, then the existing stone should be replaced with a stone with similar physical, mechanical and petrographic characteristics. If the depth of deterioration in bricks with surface deterioration is up to 5 cm, then the stone should be left as it is, if it is between 5-10 cm, then plastic repair should be performed and if it is more than 10 cm, then it should be replaced.

It is also recommended that partial completion should be performed for those merlons with stability problems and those with loose walling problems should be fortified.

- For the bastions, depending on the restoration decisions, those whose roofs have collapsed should be left as they are or the intervention technique should be decided upon once the bastion is cleaned.

- It is recommended to take restoration decisions after a detailed examination is carried out on the bastions that cannot be entered.
· It is known that the original floorings of the bastions were wooden so it is recommended to create wooden floorings in original flooring elevations or steel crosses/tringles acting like a diaphragm are formed in order to improve the out-of-plane behaviors of walls.

It is also recommended that partial completion should be performed for those merlons with stability problems and those with loose walling problems should be fortified.

· For the bastions, depending on the restoration decisions, those whose roofs have collapsed should be left as they are or the intervention technique should be decided upon once the bastion is cleaned.

· It is recommended to take restoration decisions after a detailed examination is carried out on the bastions that cannot be entered.

· Another structural element that improves especially the out-of-plane behaviors of city walls and bastion walls is tie beams. When considered from perspective of wall construction techniques, in addition to wooden tie beams close to internal and external wall surface, there are also wooden tie beams inside the cross-section so these tie beams are connected to one another transversally so as to achieve integrity in the out-of-plane behavior of inner and outer walls.
# 6.7 Mission Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>15 April 2019 Monday - Facilitator: Dr. Halil ONUR</strong></th>
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## 6.8 List of institutions and participants

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<thead>
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<th>E-mail</th>
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