Interpretative Planning for a Neglected Historic Site in Istanbul, Turkey

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INTERPRETATIVE PLANNING FOR A NEGLECTED HISTORIC SITE IN ISTANBUL, TURKEY

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Landscape Architecture in

The Department of Landscape Architecture

by

Ulvi Erhan Erol
B.S. University of Istanbul School of Forestry, 1992
May, 1999
MANUSCRIPT THESES

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, Kemal and Asyel Erol, who gave me not only my life, but also through their generous support, both emotional and financial, my education and future career.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis committee members, Professors Max Conrad, Sadik C. Artunc, Van Cox, and Assistant Dean of Design Professor Susan Turner. I would like to extend a special thanks to my committee chairman Max Conrad for his encouragement and enthusiasm, and to Sadik Artunc for welcoming and orienting me into this country, and for his great advice and encouragement throughout my studies. Also, I would like to thank Emeritus Professor Dr. Robert Reich (Doc) for his great wisdom and endless knowledge—I consider myself lucky to have known and spent time with him.

One source of invaluable assistance was my editor, Leonard Martin. He helped me, again and again, to express ideas originally conceived visually or in my native language, Turkish, in English. Another source of invaluable assistance was Laure Capouya. She spent many hours with me, editing and correcting my English.

My special thanks go to my typist and best friend Michelle Mistretta who has been with me since the beginning of this project and has seen it through till the end. Also, her family's kindness, support, and good cooking were a terrific help. I would like to thank a fellow classmate, Frank Brown III, for his friendship and help, and his great knowledge of history.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my parents, sister, brother, niece, and nephews, for their love and patience from across the world.
The purpose of this project is to create a meaningful design for an outdoor space at a presently-underutilized site adjoining the great fifth century, A.D. church of Hagia Sophia, in Istanbul, Turkey. This adaptive use will answer today's and tomorrow's needs for access to and understanding of a world-famous historic structure and its environs. The designer faced multiple constraints, due to the unusually dense historic fabric of the site, where historic structures of different degrees of antiquity are often literally superimposed on top of one another. In fact, the subterranean remains of a previously-unknown structure, an ancient palace from the age of Constantine, have recently been found abutting the site.

The designer's principal objective was to maintain and augment connections among all of the archeological remains and structures abutting the site, and at the same time to envision a plan for managing the site as the major pedestrian traffic mode of the area which will no doubt continue, as it does today, to receive an unusually high number of visitors per day. The design site, which, until recently, had functioned as a pedestrian and ceremonial use area for thousands of years, can, if restructured as described in this thesis, again provide space for thousand of visitors to be able not only to circulate among, but also to see and understand the surrounding monuments more clearly, and to do so in a safe and secure atmosphere, with plenty of public facilities and transportation.

The concept, in addition, involved updating the site in light of a recent major archeological discovery within and surrounding it, in order that the increased number of
visitors that that discovery will draw to Istanbul in the future will be able to visit the monuments in a more coherent and convenient fashion, and that visitors will gain more from this unified experience.

The designer decided, finally, to approach this adaptive re-design in an active way, with an eye towards increasing visitors' understanding of the surrounding attractions, rather than just treating the site merely as another mute part of Turkey's great Greco-Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and modern history. The goal here was, by means of historical re-enactment's to be performed on the site, to finally place the monuments that surround it on every side in their world historic context.

To achieve all of these goals required the objective ideas of modern American landscape architects, in order to coordinate six different museums, two churches, one mosque, one fountain, one subterranean palace, and multiple gates, walls, and parks—all of which have coexisted for hundreds or thousands of years. The idea of enriching the site with historical reenactments of its past usage's flowed naturally from these American ideas.
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ABSTRACT

In the 20th Century, war and other misfortunes have taught us to protect our historic and archeological past, in terms of both buildings and landscapes. While the world has already lost much of the past, much remains to be discovered, protected and interpreted.

In the small pocket of urban open space located in Istanbul, Turkey that is the subject of this study, for example, the past usage's have been obliterated by contemporary employment of the site for automobile parking. This study presents an alternative way to use the site that takes better advantage of its central location among world-famous antiquities. It envisions a usage that is modern, practical, and yet still in keeping with the ancient usage's of the site, which have always been inseparable from the built historic fabric that surrounded it.

Over the nearly twenty centuries surveyed in the this study, the site has been a simple open space, an outdoor ceremonial area for the abutting Great Palace of Byzantium, a parade ground, a processional area for embassies to the ruler of the successor Ottoman Empire, a place for humbler visitors to gather and enjoy shade and cool water, and a small formal garden after the French style. By taking steps to once more integrate the site into the surrounding pedestrian traffic flow, and by providing for the re-enactment of some of these past activities with historic accuracy, we can bring the modern spectator to a better understanding of the succession of very different cultures and peoples that have inhabited this world historical city.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Challenge

Standing at the junction of two continents and two seas, Constantinople—now Istanbul, Turkey—was the greatest city in the world for many centuries.

It was the bridge between two cultures that of medieval Europe and the much older culture of the Middle East. The Byzantine Empire, ruled from this city, preserved the learning of the ancient Asiatic world and passed it on to the modern era. The great church of Hagia Sophia, built by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian in 537 A.D. was the jewel that crowned this setting. Its immense dome, was a feat of engineering that remained unrivaled for almost a thousand years. See Figure 1.1. Istanbul remains a unique mixture of both the ancient and modern East and West. (Antonion, Jim 1997,26) See Figure 1.2.

A focal point of world politics throughout its history, Istanbul was the seat of six Roman emperors, eighty-six Byzantine emperors, six Roman kings, and thirty Ottoman sultans. Over the past two thousand years, Istanbul has been known by the one hundred and thirty-five different names and cognates, most of the latter adjectives referring to the city's eminence, beauty, or status as a capital. In the modern era, Istanbul was the capital of the Ottoman Empire until 1922. (Armony Web Site, 1998) In the modern era, this magnificent city was the capital of the Ottoman Empire until 1922.

1.2. Problem Statement

Today five thousand people visit the site and its aversions daily, and after the discovery of the Great Palace on July 21st, 1998, tourism can only increase.
Figure 1.1. View of Hagia Sophia and historic fabric, Istanbul, Turkey.
Figure 1.2. The Design site and historic environs.
During the last thirty years, the site was used as a formal garden, then as a parking area, which was created from what once the ancient procession area for royalty during the Byzantine and Ottoman empires.

The first problem of the site is that it is not being used to its full potential. The second set of problems is that the site is not "visitor friendly." It has poor sidewalk conditions, is void of sitting/resting areas and pedestrian crossings, lacks handicapped access, and has an inadequate number of restrooms, telephones, and water fountains. In fact, one of the few things it has in its favor is an already-existing system of public transportation to the site, in the form of mini buses and tour buses.

1.3. Objective

The central objective of this project is to determine, and provide a design for, the best use of the site being sympathetic to its historic surrounds and future, as well as current needs. In light of its central position among historic monuments, a meaningful and "visitor friendly" place for tourist use seems called for.

1.4. Methodology

This study originally envisioned rehabilitation of the site, with "rehabilitation" being defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repairs, alterations, and possibly additions, while preserving those portions and features which convey its historical, cultural, and architectural values. However, once the remains of the Great Palace were discovered in 1998, the nature of the project changed to one of adaptive use.

The research-designer then turned to the document, "Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes for the U.S. National Parks Service" for guidance. Under those guidelines, the site in question is unmistakably an historical site. The definition
of a historic site as stated by the U.S. National Parks Service Guidelines is: "A landscape significant for its association with an historic event, activity or person."

The U.S. Guidelines include professional techniques for identifying, documenting, and treating cultural landscapes. They have been continually refined over the past twenty-five years. Under the Guidelines, the preservation planning process for a cultural landscape should involve: historical research; an inventory and documentation of existing conditions; a site analysis and an evaluation of the site's integrity and significance; the development of a cultural landscape preservation approach; the development of a cultural landscape management plan and philosophy; the development of a strategy for on-going maintenance; and the preparation of a record of treatment and future research recommendations. (United States National Park Services Historic Preservation Services Web Site, 1997)

The research began with a comprehensive historical investigation. The history of the site from the Greek-Roman period through the Byzantine, the Ottoman, and the present eras are included. The historic investigation was aimed at better understanding past functions of the site, especially the past it has played in the social life of Istanbul, throughout its history.

Until July of 1998, no information existed about the chief archeological future of the site. It was during Prof. Sadik C. Artunc's visit to Istanbul during the summer of 1998 that the Great Palace was discovered, and he brought this exciting new aspect of the project to the researcher-designer's attention. The Great Palace is located beneath the other historic sites, and is 120,000 square feet in area! The 1998 excavation was very close to the site of the adjacent Four Seasons Hotel's courtyard, within the design area, and 27' down.
After this discovery, my investigation included the Byzantine Great Palace as a key subject. It was this change of focus that necessitated the change in treatment technique from a rehabilitation treatment to one of adaptive use, in order to take advantage of the newly-discovered and wonderful historic archeological find.
2.1. Inventory And Analysis Physical Parameters

2.1.1. Land Use

Istanbul comprises 6.6 square miles of land on both sides of the Golden Horn. See Figure 2.1. Today the population of the city is reaching 13 million, and the accepted relationship of man and soil, and its usage, has changed. The historic districts (See Figure 2.2.) are experiencing an increase in number of visitors, while the residential population remains the same high number. In the area of the site, many old historic houses have been restored as hotels for overnight guests. The owners of those historic landmarks have moved away from the area, held on to their properties, and are renting them to hotels and businesses for international and domestic tourism. The Four Seasons Hotel is an example of such a business, where the developer successfully rented and restored historic buildings that were formally a prison, bordering our research site on Bab-i Humayun.

2.1.2. Topography: A City of Hills

The northwestern portion of Istanbul spans the whole peninsula, which contains seven hills. The first city site in 332 B.C. was located on the first hill, like Rome. The city that the Roman Emperor Constantine laid out, however, was hardly a copy of Rome. Apart from the peninsular site, which gave Constantinople an entirely different topography from land-locked Rome, the fabric of the city had a different feel. (Morsel 1995, 21)

The research site is located on the first hill. See Figure 2.2. It extends from Imperial Palace is partially situated on the top of this hill. See Figure 2.3.
Figure 2.1. View of Istanbul's historic peninsula.
the southeast to the southwest and has an entrance thirty paces wide. The Byzantine Imperial Palace is partially situated on the top of this hill. See Figure 2.3.

2.1.3. Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian circulation is one important aspect of the site and its immediate environs because the area receives 5,000 visitors a day. Sultan Ahmet Park and Hagia Sophia Square both are high-density pedestrian areas. Tourists move in four different directions from these two squares: 1) to the Hagia Sophia Museum; 2) to the Hippodrome area; 3) to the Sultan Ahmet Mosque (Blue Mosque); and 4) through the site area and around the Sultan Ahmet III Fountain to the Imperial Gate and Topkapi Palace. See Figure 2.4.

Visitors prefer to walk because they like to experience the historic setting, not just the Historic Museums but also the old houses, streets, walls and mosaic pavements. Everything is interesting to see and to photograph.

It is necessary to pass southeast of Hagia Sophia along Bab-i Humayun Street, across from the site—in order to go through the Imperial Gate to get to the St. Irena Church and Topkapi Palace. Visitors walk by the site without looking at it because presently there is nothing important to see or to visit there.

Visitors have no guidance to cross the street that separates them from the site (Bab-i Humayun Street), because they don't see any signs, colors, or different textures, to suggest that they do so, in order to visit the recently-unearthed Great Palace.

2.1.4. Vehicular Circulation

Bab-I-Humayun Street, which runs between the design site Hagia Sophia, has Long been one of the most important vehicular access routes to the Blue Mosque, and is the most important route to Hagia Sophia and, via the Imperial Gate, to the Topkapi Palace compound. This creates heavy traffic circulation around the monuments. This
Figure 2.2. Land Use of historic peninsula.
Figure 2.3. Site Area close-up.
Figure 2.4. Pedestrian Circulation in the Immediate Area of site.
heavy vehicular traffic has two concentration points. See Figure 2.5. The first of these is the paved area between Sultan Ahmet Park and Hagia Sophia, called "Hagia Sophia Square," where tour buses presently drop off visitors to Hagia Sophia and its environs. The second concentration point is at the entrance to the Imperial Gate, which is located at the south corner of the site of Hagia Sophia and Ahmet III Fountain.

There is a clear need to reduce congestion in these concentration areas. In addition, if the design site is to be upgraded in functionality as contemplated in this thesis, there will also be a need to slow traffic on Bab-i-Humayun Street, in order to permit pedestrians to freely circulate between the design site and the adjoining monuments. The relieving of congestion in front of Hagia Sophia will be accomplished by moving tour bus parking to the new parking structure within the Topkapi Palace compound.

2.1.5. Transportation

Transportation is an important issue for visitors. They like to know "how to get there"—preferably an inexpensive, fast, and simple way. The cheapest, but relatively slow, means of transport is the bus. On the western, European side of the city, the main bus lines start from Taksim Square Eminonu (near the Galata Bridge), Beyazit Mosque (near the Covered Bazaar) and the Sultan Ahmet area (Sultan Ahmet Park, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, and the site area). On the Asia side of the city there are departures from Uskudar and Kadikoy neighborhoods. The Dolmus, or city bus, is a practical and cheap means of transport, especially when compared to the taxi. The main Dolmus stations are Taksim, Eminonu, Sirkeci, Besiktas, Aksaray, Uskudar, and Kadikoy; so the site is easily accessible by this means.

The main road to the site is from the Aksaray area through the Beyazit Mosque area and then to the Sultan Ahmet Park. This road used to be the main road to the site
Figure 2.5. Vehicular Circulation surrounding the site area.
during the Byzantine and Ottoman epochs. There is also another important road, from Eminonu neighborhood to the Sultan Ahmet Park. The Aksaray area is mostly a hotel area. Beyazit is a main shopping area, which includes the Kapali Carsi (covered bazaar). The Sultan Ahmet area is known as a monument, museum, and historic hotel area.

Thus, the site may be reached by four different options: tour and city buses, taxis and cars, dolmus, and on foot. Tourists take buses from the hotels and are dropped at Hagia Sophia Square. Some tour buses park there for several hours while the tourists visit Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, and the Hippodrome. Other tour buses drop off the tourists at the lot of the Imperial Gate of Topkapi Palace. Most of the tourists who arrive by taxi or car prefer to get out near the Sultan Ahmet Square or the Hagia Sophia Square and then visit the area on foot. Public transportation to the site is inexpensive, regular, and reliable. There is a bus stop and a streetcar stop near the site on Bab-i Humayun Street across from Hagia Sophia. Refer to Figure 2.3.

The last option is to walk to the area. The approximate walking time from Eminonu is 35 minutes, from Beyazit 10 minutes, and from Aksaray about 90 minutes. Sometimes walking is faster than taxis or buses because of slow moving traffic.

2.1.6. Parking

Parking at this large and busy Historic District is available but not well-situated. The design site is presently used for parking, (See Figures 2.6.) which is a usage that does not relate to the site's history. The parking lot entrance, on Bab-i Humayun Street, near Hagia Sophia, intrudes on views of the Imperial Gate, the historic City Walls, and the Sultan Ahmed III Fountain. The parking area needs to be moved and improved for necessary emergency vehicles, and handicapped and service access to the monuments. The site needs to be rehabilitated and some of it redesigned
Figure 2.6. Parking on the design site.
because of missing and deteriorated materials, along with projected future needs. Hagia Sophia Square is the short-term parking area for tour buses and taxis. One of the largest parking areas in the area is located beyond the Imperial gate, on the southeast side close to the Topkapi Palace. This parking area does not have any public facilities such as toilets or phones, so it is not "visitor friendly." It looks like it was not planned, and in fact, people park their cars wherever they find an empty spot in the landscape within this area (as they presently do in the design site as well.)

None of the parking lots around the Hagia Sophia provide any handicapped access.

2.1.7. Archeology

Due to the unique historic circumstances, the research area consists of two thousand years of overlapping palaces and monuments. See Figure 2.7. As such, this area is historically invaluable, and deserves enhancement in a comprehensive plan.

This past July 1998, a new palace, The Byzantine Imperial Palace, was discovered twenty-seven feet below the surface of the surrounding monuments, directly under the Sultan Ahmet Park. Located between Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome, the Palace occupies an area of 120,000 square feet. This discovery makes the design extremely important because the main gate to the Palace, the Chalke Gate, is located here, and is still extant. This discovery leaves half of the site available for a new adaptive plan, as it is possible to add public facilities to the part without doing any damage to priceless antiquities. While the entire excavation of the Palace will probably never be completed, due to the other monuments which are situated above half of the Palace, yet enough will be excavated to demonstrate and show all who visit the splendors of that time and this palace.
Figure 2.7. Sketch of Archeological area. (Adapted from W. Muller-Wiener)
2.2. Inventory and Analysis of Social Parameter

2.2.1. Brief History Of Istanbul

**GEOGRAPHICAL**

The World Historical City of Byzantium, originally named Constantinople after Constantine the Great. Its Imperial founder, also called "New Rome", was inaugurated as capital of the Roman Empire in 330. As Palmes explains:

It stood at the junction of the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmara, where Europe and Asia are divided by only a narrow strip of water. This gave it a commanding and central position for the government of the eastern and most valuable part of the Roman Empire. It stood also between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and the trade route between Europe and Asia; and thus it controlled the corn trade from the northern shores of the Euxine. The natural harbor of the Golden Horn possesses unusual advantages for commerce; for it is four miles in length, unaffected by tides, and of sufficient depth to render its quays accessible to ships of deep draught. (Palmes, J.C., *A History of Architecture*, 1975, 371)

**MATERIAL**

Constantinople had no good building stone; so local materials such as clay for bricks and rubble for concrete were used in its construction. Other materials more monumental in character had to be imported. Marble was brought from the quarries in the islands and along the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean to Constantinople, which became the chief marble-working center that supplied all parts of the Roman Empire. Byzantine architecture came to be considerably influenced by the multitude of monolithic columns of such sizes as were obtainable from the different quarries. These were even introduced into the underground cisterns for the water storages of this Imperial City. (Palmes, J.C. 1975, 371)

**HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL**

Byzantium was originally founded as a Greek colony in c. 660 B.C., and in A.D. 330 it became the capital of the Roman Empire. In that year, the Emperor
Constantine abandoned the attempt that his predecessor Diocletian (284-305) had initiated to provide adequate civil government and military protection through the widespread Roman Empire, and showed his statesmanship in his manner of dealing with this political problem, just as he did in securing support for himself from the growing power of Christianity by establishing it as the state religion. Diocletian's attempt to solve the difficulty of managing the Eastern Empire from the west of Italy by instituting three seats of government, in addition to that of Rome, had proved ineffectual and open to abuse, and therefore when Constantine in his turn was confronted with the same difficulty, he decided to transplant his capital from Rome to Byzantium because he recognized the political value of that city's central position in the most vital part of the Empire.

On the death of the Emperor Theodosius I (395), the Empire was finally divided, and Byzantium continued to be the capital of the Eastern Empire, and throughout the Middle Ages was the bulwark of Christianity against the attacks of Slav barbarians on the west, and of Moslems on the east. Ottoman Turks finally captured it in 1453. Nevertheless, the spirit of the Byzantine Empire persisted even after the Empire had fallen, especially in Russia and in the Balkans. Constantinople has continued up to the present day as the seat of a Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox Church. (Palmes, J.C. 1975, 371)

Byzantium was originally an old Greek city, and Greek craftsmen executed the new Imperial buildings in Greek style. Within the fortifications executed by Constantine, however, the layout of the new city was along Roman lines, so far as the hills and site allowed. There was the central divided street running through a succession of six forums, of which the original Augusteum was adjoined by the church
of Saint Sophia, the greatest glory of early Christendom; the Byzantine Imperial palace; the Senate House; and the Law Courts.

The Forum of Constantine, with its great porphyry column, was the center of commercial life, while, in the nearby Hippodrome, chariot races took place as in Old Rome. The Hippodrome held the same position in the social life of this New Rome as the Coliseum had held Old Rome, and was indeed used for all purposes and on all occasions—for the election of emperors, the burning of martyrs, the execution of criminals, and triumphal processions. (Palmes, J.C. 1975, 375)

The emperors paid the same attention to the water supply of their new as their old capital, for water was brought by aqueducts and stored in enormous underground cisterns with roofs upheld by many hundreds of columns. As time went on and the population increased, the city of Constantine was extended, and the Great Wall, with its famous military gates and many towers, was built by Theodosius II (413) to set a circle of land and water fortifications against the attacks of Huns and Goths. (Ibid.)

After Theodosius, the next prominent emperor was Justinian (527-65), who codified the Roman laws, was a great patron of architecture, and was responsible for the rebuilding of Saint Sophia. During the Macedonian dynasty (867-1057) and the Comnenian dynasty (1081-1185) there were great outburst of building activity.

In spite of its greatness and prosperity, however, the Byzantine Empire's increasingly isolated situation as a bulwark of Christian civilization, and its exposure to attacks by barbarians from the north and Moslems from the east, led in the end to its destruction. Decay from within facilitated this defeat. The final crash came when the Ottoman Turks conquered the city in 1453. (Ibid.)
2.2.2. The Site and Environs

AN ILLUSTRATED TIMELINE OF THE DESIGN SITE: 600 B.C. UNTIL 1998

The illustrated time line is based upon pictures, poems, visitors' accounts, illustrations, and miniatures from four main historic and cultural periods: The Greco-Roman period of c. 660 B.C.-330 A.D.; the Byzantine Period of 330-1453 A.D.; the Ottoman period of 1453 through 1920; and, lastly, the years of the Republic of Turkey, 1920 until 1998. See Figure 2.8.

In the earliest period Byzantium was as a Greek colony, B.C. but in A.D. 330 it became the capital of The Roman Empire. (Palmes, J.C. 1975, 375) The Emperor Constantine built up the great city he called "Constantinople" from 306 to 337 A.D. He was trying to create another Rome—an important world center. Under his rule, the Hagia Sophia Church was built. It was later rebuilt many times, until the Justinian era, 537 A.D., because the structures suffered repeated damage from fires and earthquakes. After the completion of his version of Hagia Sophia in 537 A.D., Justinian began the construction of a Great Palace for himself underground. At that point in time, he renamed himself "Justinian The Great." Simultaneously, the city of Constantinople became the center of the Christian Orthodox world, and a commercial and trading center as well, due to its strategic location on the Bosphorous between Asia and Europe. The city flourished partly due to the silk and spice trade, along with trade in many other valuable commodities of the area.

By the year 700 A.D., the Great Palace had finally been completed, both above and below ground, while imitating Roman architecture and providing security. At that time, also, Constantinople became the tenth largest city in the world.
Figure 2.8. Illustrated Time line.
In that period, around 700 A.D., the design site area was used as an open-air reception area, outdoor banquet hall, "dance hall," and "Imperial Walk" for royalty. In short, it was used in many ways as an enormous outdoor room for the Imperial Palace. (Runciman 1975, 122) This was because of the main entry to the Great Palace, called the Chalke Gate, was located in the study area.

Jumping to the 1400's the Huns, Turks, Persians, and Russians began attempting to capture the city because of its strategic location, influence, and wealth. In fact, the Byzantine population began to decrease during that period due to these attacks, and in 1400 a fire destroyed most of the Great Palace.

Eventually, in 1453, the Ottoman Turks took over the city, and turned Hagia Sophia into a mosque. This spelled the end of the Byzantine Empire.

The Hagia Sophia area remained the center of the city, however. The Turks added the Topkapi Palace (1460), and Blue Mosque, one on each side of Hagia Sophia to create an axis with these buildings and to link them to each other.

The design site became the most important transition area between Hagia Sophia and the Topkapi Palace, because of the Imperial Gate located at the site. From 1462, research reveals, the design was used to receive travelers and official visitors to the Royal court. The Sultan Ahmet III Fountain was built in 1729. The reason for this fountain was to create a place for visitors to find refreshment. The Ahmet III Fountain served visitors for many years. A famous poem about this fountain explains how important it was for visitors. (See page: 40-42)

During the Ottoman Empire the site was an open space that served as a parade ground, ceremonial area, and open-air concert hall, especially for military bands. The illustrations from 1570 in the time line depict ceremonies for visitors there. One of the illustrations shows an Austrian embassy visiting the Sultan. (See Figure 2.9.)
Figure 2.9. Ceremonial activities at the site.
Constantinople's population became 742,000 in 1840. It was the third biggest city in the world, after London and Paris. (Branch, Melville 1997, 11)

In 1910, a prison was erected on a corner of the site. By 1920 the Ottoman rule had ended, and the New Turkish Republic was founded.

A decade later, in 1930, the city's official name became Istanbul. Five years later, the Hagia Sophia Mosque became a museum.

In the 1960's the study area was redesigned as a formal French garden, like the Sultan Ahmet Park.

In the 1970's parking became a problem around Hagia Sophia, so the study area became an informal parking lot.

In 1994, the former prison became the famous Four Seasons Hotel, after restoration. Then, in 1997, the site became the parking area for that Hotel.

Perhaps most startling of all, in July 1998, The Byzantine Great Palace was rediscovered, buried twenty-seven feet beneath in the study area. Excavation is currently under way.

2.2.3. Historic Buildings and Monuments

HAGIA SOPHIA

Hagia Sophia is one of the world's most magnificent monuments, a landmark of human creation that has also been identified with one of the greatest epochs in the history of humanity.

Although there are no artifacts confirming it, it is said that Hagia Sophia was built on the site of an ancient pagan temple. Hagia Sophia underwent two phases of construction before attaining its present state. Documents indicate that the first Hagia Sophia was built by the Roman Emperor Constantius, and was opened for services in 360 A.D. Although very little is known about that church, it is assumed that it was a
Figure 2.10. View of the Hagia Sophia Church.
basilica-type structure with a rectangular floor plan, circular apse, and timbered roof. It was similar to St. Studios, a basilica in Istanbul, the ruins of which still exist. Ancient sources emphasize that the eastern wall was circular. (Focus on Turkey Web Page. 1997, 5) The original church was destroyed in 404 A.D. by mobs, during the riots that occurred when Emperor Arcadius sent the Patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, into exile for his open criticism of the Empress.

Emperor Theodosius II built a new church, which was completed in 415 A.D. The architect of this second church was Ruffinos. The edifice was constructed in basilica-style, and had five novas. Common with other basilicas of that age, it also had a domed roof. The remains of this church, excavated in 1935, show that a staircase of five steps led to a columned propylaeum in front of the entrance of the building. Including the Imperial entrance, there were three doorways in the façade. The results of excavations indicate Hagia Sophia was 60 meter (180 feet) wide. The length is unknown, since further excavations inside the present-day edifice are not permitted.

During the rebellion of the Monophysites in 532, this church was destroyed along with many other important buildings, among which were the Church of St. Eirene, the Zorzip Bath, and Samsun Hospital.

When the Emperor Justinian sought an architect to build the present Hagia Sophia, he chose a leading geometrician, Anthemius of Tralles, and, to assist him, another geometrician, Isidore of Miletus, (Runciman 1975, 50). Those men were entrusted with the construction of the building. They supervised one hundred master builders and ten thousand laborers. (Ibid.)

The finest and rarest materials from the four corners of the Eastern Roman Empire (The western Empire had fallen to Germanic barbarians in 476 A.D.) were
Figure 2.11. View of the Hagia Sophia Mosque.
brought to Constantinople to be used in the construction of Hagia Sophia. Porphyry columns previously taken to Rome from an Egyptian temple in Heliopolis, and ivory and gold icons and ornament from ancient temples in Ephesus, Kizikos and Baalbe were among them. The construction was completed in a very short time. It took five years, ten months and four days, from February 23rd, 532 to December 27th, 537 A.D. (Ibid.) The result was a magnificent example of what later came to be called Byzantine art. See Figure 2.10.

The Hagia Sophia, that Justinian, Anthemius, and Isidore created illustrates what came to be recognized as the basic elements of Byzantine Art:

1) Symmetry;
2) A feeling of movement; and
3) Beauty as symmetry irradiated by life.

The Byzantines made great use of light, and of shade. They used light, from the position of the sun during construction, to make every mosaic, even every bas-relief, shimmer with movement. (Runciman 1975, 59)

Later, Hagia Sophia was damaged many times by earthquakes and fires, and had to be repeatedly repaired and reinforced. When the Turks conquered Constantinople in 1453, the church was converted into a mosque with minarets placed around Hagia Sophia and used as a place of Islamic worship. See Figure 2.11.

In 1926, the government of the new Republic of Turkey appointed a technical commission to thoroughly investigate the architectural and static state of the building. According to the commission's report, the foundation of the structure rested solidly on bedrock. Following President Kemal Ataturk's orders, Hagia Sophia was converted into a museum on February 1st, 1935 (Ibid.), which it remains today. See Figure 2.12.
Figure 2.12. View of the Hagia Sophia Museum.
THE HIPPODROME

The ancient Hippodrome, the scene of chariot races and the center of Byzantine civic life, stood in what is now open space just to the north of where the Blue Mosque now stands, in an area now called Sultanahmet. The construction of the Hippodrome allegedly began in the time of the Roman Emperor Septimius Severus, after 196 A.D. It was finished by Constantine the Great and probably inaugurated, together with the city, in 330 A.D. The Hippodrome was rebuilt several times and remained in great part intact until the fire of 1204 A.D. It served for horse races, various other games, and public meetings in the presence of the Emperor. He had his seat in the so-called Kathisma, a monumental elevated platform that could be accessed directly from the Imperial Palace.

Of the monuments which once decorated the Hippodrome, only three remain—the Obelisk of Theodosius, the bronze serpentine Column, and the Column of Constantine. Remains from the curved section of the Hippodrome's wall can be seen on the south side of these three monuments. See Figure 2.13

Today the Sultan Ahmet Square forms the center of Istanbul’s historical, cultural, and tourist activities. Visitors should take particular note of the surrounding wooden houses, particularly the Eighteenth Century ones on Sogukcesme Street. Delightfully restored, they have new life as small hotels; one houses a fascinating library of books on Istanbul.

THE TOPKAPI PALACE AND THE IMPERIAL GATE

On the hill at the top of the Bab-i-Humayun Street, overlooking the meeting of the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn, and the Sea of Marmara, stands a monument to over 400 years of Ottoman rule, the Topkapi Palace. Built by Sultan Mehmet II the
Figure 2.13. View of the Hippodrome.
Conqueror in 1453, and once the nerve center of the entire Ottoman Empire, Topkapi is a sprawling pastiche of differing architectural styles, elaborated on by each new sultan. Four major fires have destroyed much of what architectural unity might have existed. The only original buildings left from the time of Mehmet II are the Treasury building (his original palace), and the outer and inner walls of the Tiled Pavilion, now a museum for Turkish porcelains. See Figure 2.14.

Topkapi means "Cannon Gate", and probably came to designate the palace because of two cannons that guarded its most important water gates. Before that the Europeans called it the "Grand Seraglio" and the Turks simply "saray", meaning palace. All who dwelt within these walls lived to serve their lord, the Ottoman Sultan.

The palace is actually a group of buildings and courtyards connected by gates. There are three distinct areas, the Outer Palace, the Inner Palace, and the Harem. Anywhere from several hundred to several thousand people worked and lived on the palace grounds, a veritable city within a city. Various craftsmen, gardeners, and guards all had their own dorms and wore distinctively color-coded garb for ease of identification. It was no doubt a busy and colorful place at its most prosperous.

Topkapi even had its own zoo, replete with elephants, lions, and bears.

When Sultan Mehmet II made his ceremonial entry into the newly conquered city of Constantinople in 1453, one of the first places he visited was the Great Cathedral of Hagia Sophia. It filled him with awe. He then wandered through the nearby Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors. (Necipoglu 1991, 3). The Fifteenth century Byzantine historian Doukas tells us that when Mehmet II entered the City, he measured off an area in the center of approximately one mile and gave instructions for a courtyard to be marked out and for palaces to be constructed within. When the enclosure
Figure 2.14. View of the Topkapi Palace.
Figure 2.15. View of the Imperial Gate.
was completed, it was roofed over with lead tiles which had been removed from the monasteries, which were left desolate. (Ibid. p. 3)

The Conqueror ordered new buildings and a palace. Soon after this palace was finished, Mehmet II decided to build another one, also located in the Topkapi compound. This is the one called the "New Imperial Palace" (Saray-I cedid-I amire or Yeni Saray), or simply the "New Palace." In Ottoman sources up to the nineteenth century, the area as a whole was called the "ancient acropolis", and is known as simply "Topkapi" today. The 592,000 square meter site Mehmet II chose for this new palace is popularly called the zeytunluk or olive grove." (Ibid. p. 4)

Sultan Mehmet II selected the site after a consultation with the leading engineers of the age. The new, main Palace was built on the uppermost terrace on the brow of the hill. The inner core of the palace, along the spine of the hill, was surrounded by gardens studded with pavilions. From the hilltop, vineyards and gardens with kiosks cascaded down the slope to the seashore.

After the buildings and gardens had been finished, an outer wall and the monumental main Imperial Gate on Bab-i Humayun Street were added. (Necipoglu 1991, 6). See Figure 2.15. The city's processional thoroughfare began across from Hagia Sophia at the Imperial Gate (Bab-i Humayun), which was the main entrance to the first court of Topkapi Palace. (Ibid. p. 31) The Imperial Gate repeated the pervasive theme of power in its gilt Arabic inscription, signed by the calligrapher Ali bin Yahya al-Sufi. (Ibid. p. 34)

By the grace of God and by His approval, the foundations of this auspicious castle were laid, and its parts were solidly joined together to strengthen peace and tranquillity, by the command of the Sultan of the two Continents and the Emperor of the two Seas, the Shadow of God in this world and the next, the Favorite of the God on Two horizons [i.e., East and West], the Monarch of the Terraqueous Orb, the Conqueror of the Castle of Constantinople, the Father of Conquest, Sultan Mehmed Khan, son of Sultan Murad Khan son the Sultan
Mehmed Khan, my God make eternal his empire, and place his residence above the most lucid stars of the firmament—in the blessed month of Ramadan of the year 883 [November and December, 1478 A.D.] (Ibid. p. 34)

The Koranic quotation above implies a connection between the Imperial Gate and the gates of paradise, as well as between the royal palace and the Garden of Eden, a comparison frequently encountered in other texts, e.g:

But the God-fearing shall be amidst gardens and fountains: "Enter you then, in peace and security!" We shall strip away all rancor that is in their breasts; as brothers they shall be upon couches set face to face; no fatigue there shall smite them, neither shall they ever be driven forth from here. (Ibid. p. 36)

These references to peace and tranquillity argue against any notion of the Imperial Fortress as defensive in purpose. Weapons such as swords, guns, bows and arrows, hanging on the walls of the Imperial Gate's domed vestibule, though adding to its castellike appearance, were there only to remind visitors that soldiers went unarmed inside the peaceful palace. (Necipoglu 1991, 37)

The rectangular facade of the remaining white-marble ground floor of the Chalke Gate has niches on either side of the arched entrance, and resembles a triumphal arch appropriate to the Gate's function as the main ceremonial entrance to the palace. When Turks were building the Imperial Gate, they appear to have been concerned about the positions of Hagia Sophia and the remains of the Byzantine Great Palace. To accommodate Hagia Sophia, the Imperial Gate had to be built off-center in relation to the first interior courtyard of the Topkapi compound. It was meaningfully positioned on the same axis with the ruins of the gatehouse of the neighboring Byzantine Great Palace, the Chalke Gate, known as "The Brazen House" because of the gilded-bronze tiles on its dome. The latter was a rectangular, two-story structure,
with a central dome flanked by vaulted chambers, attached to the domed Church of the Savior, part of the Great Palace. (Ibid. p. 37)

The Byzantine author Cedrinus writes that the beautiful structure of the Chalke Gate was built by a certain Aetherius, a famous architect, at the command of the wife Emperors Anastasius, as appears from a Greek Inscription on it that reads like this:

I am the palace of famed Anastasiu
The scourge of tyrants; none surpasses me,
In beauty, and in wonderful contrivance.
When the surveyors viewed my mighty bulk,
My height, my length, and my extensive breadth,
I was thought beyond the reach of human power
To roof at top my widely gaping walls.
But young Aetherius, ancient in his art,
This building finished, and an offering made
To our good Emperor.
No Italy, with all its glory, shows
A structure so magnificent and great;
Not the proud Capital of ancient Rome
With all its gilded roofs can rival me.
The costly galleries of Pergamus,
Ruffinus walks, and stately porticos
Crowded with art, and marbled images
Submit to my superior workmanship.
Not the famed temple, which at Cyzico,
By Adrial built, stars on a lofty rock,
Nor Egypt's costly pyramids, nor at Rhodes
The mighty Colosses, equals me in greatness.
When my good Emperor, in hostile manner,
Quelled the Isaurian faction, thus he raised me
In honor of Aurora, and the winds. (Gilles 1998, 103)

The position of the Imperial Gate with relation to the Chalke Gate and the looming presence of Hagia Sophia, now converted into a mosque, complete with minarets, proudly announced the and a glorious imperial epoch end the beginning of new one. (Necipoglu 1991, 37).

Today visitors still walk through the Imperial Gate to the Topkapi Palace. Although the grounds are considerably smaller than they were during the OttomanEmpire's apex, it still takes at least a full day to explore Topkapi completely
Figure 2.16. View of the Ahmet III Fountain.
and to appreciate even a selection of the treasures of the Ottoman age that can be found there.

Every summer during the Istanbul Festival, Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* is performed at Topkapi's Gate of Felicity, the entrance to the Inner Palace.

**THE AHMET III FOUNTAIN**

The Ahmet III Fountain, built in 1729, marks the front and right of the Imperial Gate. See Figure 2.16. Deep overhanging eaves shade waterspouts where the parched could stop for a cup of refreshing water. The highly ornate, freestanding fountain is a superb example of the late Ottoman style. See Figure 2.16. (Focus. multimedia 1997, 1)

The Ahmet III Fountain was one of the unifying elements of the area comprising Hagia Sophia, the design site and the Imperial Gate. Water was important for visitors to the Topkapi Palace. According to the Ottoman Miniatures, visitors and guests of the Sultan waited in that area to be welcomed. People are shown sitting, drinking water, and cooling off their horses. The Gate and Fountain served as welcoming elements for visitors, representing peace. Today the Gate reminds visitors about the history of the site.

This following verses of dedication for the Sultan Ahmet III Fountain come from Seyyid Vehbi's *Chronogrammatic Kaside (Ottoman poetry explaining events)* (1773), taken from E.J.W. Gibb *History of Ottoman Poetry*. This Kaside, translated by J.R. Walsh, describes activities at the site:

Fount of justice, wondrous done;
The East whence rises sainthood's sun;
The wings of soaring bliss, each one
Is panel to his palace door.
His person high in kings' esteem;
His sword to triumph's glades a stream;
The garden of the realm, would seem,
Is watered by his pen's outpour.
This structure, of all such the best,
Rose at his Grand Vezir's behest;
The Sultan's kin by marriage blest
Whose name the Prophet's forebear bore.
That minister of goodly fame
The credit for this work may claim.
And blest will be the Sultan's name
By those he built this fountain for.
The Sultan, lavish of largesse,
Spent sums that one can hardly guess
To found this spring of kindliness.
May God reward him well therefore!
He carefully improved the site
And set thereon this new delight,
Outpouring waters pure and bright.
How must the soul of Huseyn soar!
O pure of heart, stretch forth your hand
Unto this heavenly fountain; and
It's every drop of water bland
Will like a spa good health restore.
It waters all that "pure" implies;
Its dome ascending to the skies;
No other structure wrought this wise
You'll find, though you the earth explore.
Its gilded basins coruscate;
Its water's life regenerate.
All day and night outside your gate
It's gleaming draughts of silver pour
You set it in the Palace square
And bid the thirsting hurry there.
Would seem you built a mansion fair
With heaven's stream outside its door.
Like water did you lavish gold,
And lo! This fountain we behold.
May God reward you manifold
The good you have provided for.
(Kelley, 1987, 218)

THE SULTAN AHMET MOSQUE (THE BLUE MOSQUE) AND
SULTAN AHMET SQUARE

Facing Hagia Sophia, at a distance of about 100 feet, stand the supremely
elegant six minarets of the Sultan Ahmet Mosque. See Figure 2.17. Built between
Figure 2.18. View of the Sultan Ahmet Park.
1609 A.D. and 1616 A.D. by the architect Mehmet, the building is more familiarly known as the Blue Mosque because its interior gleams with a magnificent paneling of blue and white Iznik tiles. During the tourist season, an evening light and sound show both entertains and informs. (Focus on Turkey Web Page, 1997)

Ahmet I, one of the youngest sultans to rule the Ottoman Empire, inaugurated the Mosque in 1616 A.D. (He ascended to the throne at age 12 and reigned for 15 years.) The mosque's architect, Mehmet Aga, was a student of the famous Sinan, the Ottoman architect responsible for the magnificent Suleymaniye, in Istanbul. The construction of the Blue Mosque began in 1609, and was completed in 1616. Memmet Aga finished the construction in a very short time, seven years, perhaps the Aga's way of showing the world he could outdo not only his master but also the Byzantine architects who had designed the renowned cathedral Hagia Sophia, which Aga's mosque resembles in many ways. Interestingly, the two face one another across Sultanahmet Square. (Turkish Tourism Office Web Page, 1997), (Focus on Turkey Web Page, 1997) See Figure 2.18.

This area, Sultanahmet Square, and its vicinity was the site of Istanbul's first urban settlements. This is where, according to legend, Byzas of Megara established a colony in 657 B.C. The hill is now occupied by the Topkapi palace, but then served as the city's acropolis. Throughout its long history, Istanbul has never been an ordinary city. When it became the capital of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire and was renamed Constantinople, a marble shaft called the Million was erected to mark that spot as the center of the world—the world's "ground zero", as it were, the point from which all roads radiated and all distances were measured. Although the world's center has long since shifted, the remains of the Million still stand on a corner opposite the
Hagia Sophia Museum—on Divanyolu Street, a thoroughfare that follows the same route as the Romans' former Mese Street. (Turkish Tourism Office Web Page, 1997)

During Byzantine times, the Sultanahmet district was where all the city's most important structures were built; the imperial palaces were located here; so was the Hippodrome, the center of Byzantine social life, and of course Hagia Sophia, the Byzantine Empire's greatest church. The Sultan Ahmet Mosque and park area continue that tradition today, providing a beautiful French formal garden and a central fountain between the two great monuments, Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque. (Turkish Tourism Office Web Page, 1997)

AN HISTORIC HOTEL (THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL)

The Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul, located at the west corner of the design site, was created from a century-old Turkish prison, and is now designated an historical treasure. Once a place where famous writers, artists, and thinkers were incarcerated during the days of oppression, it is now a jewel that celebrates artistic endeavor. The prison exterior of Turkish neoclassic architecture has been maintained, while contemporary glass additions connect the series of buildings that frame an open courtyard. (Four Seasons Hotel Web Site, 1998)

2.2.4. Archeological Elements at the Site

THE BYZANTINE GREAT PALACE

From the early Byzantine times a great palace has been known to have stood between the Hippodrome and the coast of the Sea of Marmara, surrounding Hagia Sophia. (See Figure 2.19.) The stateliness and magnificence of that edifice, the reader may easily guess from the description that Janin gives the vestibulum, or entrance house, to it:
Figure 2.19. Sketch of Great Palace and site area.
This vestibulum is called the Chalke, which is constructed in this manner: There are four straight walls carried up to great height in a quadrangular form, from each angle of which there projects a stone building curiously finished, which rises with the wall from top to bottom, in no way interrupting the beautiful view before you, but seeming rather to add to its pleasure, and raised eight arches supporting the roof, creatures which rises in a high dome most beautifully adorned. Its roof is not furnished with fine paintings but shines with mosaic work of all sorts of colors, with various figurehumans and other kings.

That Chalke was the main gate to the Great Palace, (See Figure 2.20.) which has long been lost to history, since no portion of it has survived above ground. One historian explained that: "The Chalke, forming one of the chief entrances to the Imperial Palace, was a substantial roofed structure." (Janin, CB, p. 100-101) The Chalke was one of the most conspicuous features of the ceremonial heart of the capital, and was adorned with many statues, mosaics, and a famous icon of Christ. The Chalke icon was one of the major religious symbols of Constantinople. In 726 A.D., King Leo III sent his imperial guards to remove the large painting of Christ that hung over the gateway of the Chalke. This was the most prominent religious painting in the city, and Leo thought that its removal would be an appropriate beginning for his campaign to destroy all of the icons in the empire, for he believed that veneration of these was a form of idolatry. (Freely, John 1996, 101)

In the summer of 1998 an archeological excavation conducted by Dr. Alpay Pasinli discovered part of the underground portion of that palace. At the time of this writing, we still have only limited information about the Imperial Palace. David Rice, author and historian, has said that it will only be possible to determine details as to the history of this part of the Great Palace after very much more excavation has been undertaken over a far wider area. Nevertheless, it is clear that, nearly a thousand years after it was lost to history, Turkish archaeologists have apparently found ruins of the
Figure 2.20. Scenes from the Great Palace Excavation.
Great Palace from which Byzantine emperors ruled much of the known world. (Yeni Yüzyıl Newspaper, July 21, 1998) See Figure 2.21.

The following quotation from BBC News Online for July 31, 1998 summarizes what was found:

Lost Byzantine Palace Uncovered. Archeologists in Istanbul believe they have discovered part of a Byzantine palace that had been lost for centuries. The new findings are believed to date back to the fifth Century A.D., and form part of the Great Palace of the Byzantine Empire. The archaeologist who first discovered the hall believed it to be from the later Ottoman era. But a passage at the back of the hall led to a much older area that archaeologists believe formed part of the known-to-be-lost Great Palace. On the wall were brightly-colored frescos, still perfectly preserved after a thousand years. [Please See Figure 2.18.] The Director of Istanbul's Archaeology Museum, Alpay Pasinli, said the discovery was the result of seven months of careful excavations. "As an archaeologist, of course, we feel very great satisfaction for this discovery. We may understand after some study some of the functions of the Great Palace," he said.

"It is wonderful, one of the most important finds in many years," said Erendiz Ozbayoglu, a professor of classical languages at Istanbul University. "We knew the palace existed, and we have hundreds of books and manuscripts describing it. Now, after all this time, we are actually going to be able to see it. It's very, very exciting."

The archaeologists involved in the excavation are not certain what part of the sprawling palace complex they have uncovered, but believe that one room they found may have served as a library or archive. It has arching wall that is decorated with floral and geometric patterns. A thousand years have not dimmed the vivid green, yellow and red pigment.

Pasinli said that, "When we reached the room with the fresco, we stared at it for a long time. To see something that no one has laid eyes on for so many centuries is quite an emotional experience."

A dozen stone steps lead down to the excavation. The corridor leading to the newly-discovered rooms is about 4 feet wide and 100 feet long. Halfway down its length, delicate red bricks typical of the Ottoman period give way to the large blocks and swirling masonry patterns associated with the earlier Byzantine architecture.

This city, the capital of the Roman Empire in 330 A.D., and work on the Great Palace continued intermittently for eight centuries. The Palace was home to more than 50 Byzantine emperors and the stage for countless intrigues, some of which decided the fate of nations. It was filled with wondrous furnishings, among them a tree of gilded bronze and matching gilded lions equipped with machines that enabled them to roar and beat the ground with their tails. "The throne itself was so contrived that at one moment it stood low on the ground and the next moment it would suddenly
be raised high in the air," an Italian ambassador reported in 949 A.D.

The Great Palace was exceptional in that, besides being a residence of the ruling family, it was also the seat of government. It included the throne room, reception rooms for managing the affairs of state and receiving foreign ambassadors, the treasury (and mint), barracks for the imperial guard, and a harbor. Liutprond of Cremona, (c. 920-72), then Germany's ambassador to Byzantium, tells how the Magnoura (previous name surrounding and including the site) was outfitted for Constantine VII's reception of the delegation from Umayyah, Spain:

In front of the emperor's throne was a step up to a tree of gilded bronze, its branches filled with birds likewise made of bronze gilded over, and these emitted cries appropriate to their different species. Now the emperors throne was made in such a cunning manner that at one moment it was down on the ground, while at another it raised higher and was seen to be up in the air. This throne was of immense size and was, as it were, guarded by lions, made either of bronze or wood covered with gold, which struck the ground with their tails and roared with open mouth and quivering tongue. (Mathevus 1998, 74)

Matthews gives more description of the sacred Palace:

Mechanical inventions, called gutamata, including animal fountains, some of which spouted wine, startled and entertained the visitor. A profusion of gold overwhelmed him. The Great Palace was a house of marvels. (Ibid.)

Byzantine artists adorned the Imperial Palace with rich architecture and artwork for their God and Emperor. The basic notion of the Empire held by its people never changed. It was the Kingdom of God on earth, the pale reflection of the Kingdom of God in Heaven, earthbound because of man's sins, but always with heaven as an ideal that it should try to imitate. Byzantine art was part of that pattern.

The works of art were to supplement the doctrine of the incarnation, to show the divine in forms that human sensibility could comprehend. (Runciman 1975, 9)

The Great Palace seems to have partaken of this religious version:
It was the Sacred Palace, and many of its halls were used for ceremonies that were almost as any in the churches. In such halls, God and the saints would be present in their images, as well as the holy Emperors of the past. In the halls intended for secular use there were probably mosaics representing the triumphs of the Emperor and his ancestors. In the twelfth century the Emperor Manuel I had such scenes set up in his palace. (Runciman 1975, 115)

Other sources, also mention the life of the Imperial Court, as does Runciman. In the Imperial Court, apparently, life, or at least the ceremonial life of the court, was lived a sort of ballet. One of Constantine's most remarkable chapters describes the actual dances, —or rather rituals and movements, rather than dances in the modern idiom—that were performed at the banquet held by the Emperor on the Empress' name day. " The dinner " he says, (Ibid. 122-123)

2.2.5. Other Places of Interest

Istanbul, with her natural beauties and rich history, is a city with high levels of local and international tourism, and from this viewpoint is in fact one of the most attractive cities of the world. The trio of the Topkapi Palace, The Hagia Sophia Museum, and the Kariye Museum located near the Blue Mosque attract the most interest of foreign tourists. In 1997, 870,000 people visited the Topkapi Palace. The number of people visiting the Hagia Sophia Museum during the same period was 650,000. (Discovery Channel Online Web Page, 1998) According to Alpay Pasinli, manager of Archeology Museum, visitor numbers are increasing in 1998, and 5,000 visitors a day visit Hagia Sophia now.

There are other museums in the city that take their place among the most famous museums of the world. Artifacts of civilization found in Anatolia and Mesopotamia over a period of thousands of years, starting in prehistorical ages, can be seen in these museums. The following is a list of the other museums of interest:
1. The Classic Archeologic Museum
2. The Ancient Oriental Works Museum
3. The Mosaics Museum
4. The Military Museum
5. The Asiyan Museum
6. The Ataturk Museum
7. The Hagia Irene Museum
8. The Municipality Museum
9. The Tiled Kiosk
10. The Naval Museum
11. The Museum of Classic Turkish Literature
12. The Fire Brigade Museum
13. The Paintings and Sculpture Museum
14. The Rumeli Hisary Museum
15. The Health Museum
16. The Tanzimat Museum
17. The Turkish and Islamic Works Museum
18. The Yedikule Museum
19. The Yerebatan Palace
20. The Dolmabahce Palace

(Turkish Tourism Information Web Page, 1997)

2.2.6. A Possibility for Enrichment

Because of its incredible density of tourism, and despite its many tourism resources, Istanbul still needs places to make its rich past real to visitors in a human
way. Sometimes the tourist longs to see what the *people*, as well as the places, of the past looked like. The design site, centrally located in the region of heaviest tourist traffic, seems a good place to give visitors such an opportunity.
CHAPTER 3
DESIGN CONCEPT AND GUIDELINES

3.1. Design Concept

The basis of my design concept is to break down the barriers that keep the site underused and to open the site up as a place where visitors can: (1) transit conveniently between the surrounding monuments, and (2) while doing so, experience dynamic history. This concept is responsive to the site's historical usage, which, as has been shown (See Chapter 2) has always been an open area where pedestrians could congregate and (often) engage in or prepare for ceremonial functions. The site's separation from its surroundings by means of walls, tree barriers, and informal parking usage, is a recent historical anomaly. See Figures 3.1. and 3.2. for a contrast between the present and proposed patterns of usage.

3.2. Program Analysis

There are four fundamental functions that must be served by the design of this centrally-located site, all of which are keyed to the movements of tourists and other visitors:

(1) parking (expanded, convenient, and attractively designed),

(2) tourist service (e.g., food and drink stops),

(3) entry (to attract visitors from surrounding monuments); and

(4) evocation of the rich history of the site and its environs (This last function is the fundamental purpose of the design. The effort will be to evoke the high points of that history through historical re-enactments).

The diagram in Figure 3.3. translates these interdependent functions into a Diagrammatic form. It display how major units and their relationship will
Figure 3.1. Present visitor circulation patterns exclude site.
Figure 3.2. Design encourages circulation within site.
ENTRY (ORIENTATION TO THE UNDERGROUND PALACE)

HISTORIC MONUMENTS

HISTORIC OPEN SPACE

TOURIST SERVICE FACILITIES (FOOD, DRINK SHOPS, TOILETS, PHONE, POSTCARD SHOPS)

EVOCATION OF HISTORY (LIVING HISTORY) PARADE GROUND

VISITORS

PARKING (GARAGE WITHIN OTTOMAN PALACE AREA)

Figure 3.3. Program Analysis.
work together in plan and how circulation might be facilitated between them. Neither scale nor site information is communicated at this point of the design process. The concentration is solely upon function relationships and lines of travel. The diagram clearly shows that the historic open space is the heart of the design. Although this open space is created by the enclosure of surrounding historic monuments and structures, once the design is implemented it will be the unifying central element that brings tourists and visitors from different points. It will function as a central area from which tourists and visitors will be able to walk to see the Topkapi Museum, the St. Sophia Museum, and the Blue Mosque, thus experiencing the whole historic setting.

Although the parking and tourist services elements provide only support functions, they are very critical for the success of the site design. The major goal of the support functions are to facilitate ease of access to the site and to maximize efficient and comfortable use of leisure time for tourists and visitors.

Parking and parking services will be located off the site. It is proposed that a multi-level parking structure be erected on land that is currently serving a surface parking for tour buses. This area is within five minutes, walking distance from the project site. It is so located as to provide access first to the Topkapi Palace and its associated museums, then, after a short walk northwest through the Imperial Gate, to the design site, St. Sophia, and finally, at a slightly greater distance, the Blue Mosque. The parking area is currently surface, accommodating approximately one hundred tour buses. The proposed multi-level parking structure could serve up to two hundred buses and five hundred cars. The land designated for this parking structure has three terraces separated by approximately five-meter-high retaining walls. These terraces are surrounded by tall mature evergreen and deciduous trees that will buffer a parking
structure up to three levels on each terrace. The exterior architecture of the parking structure should be designed to fit to its historical context. The edges of the top level of each terrace should have planters that accommodate shrubs and small trees for additional buffer and screening. This parking structure will eliminate most of the tour buses and cars that now routinely park in front of the Blue Mosque, St. Sophia, and other adjacent historical open spaces, thus improving visual quality and allowing better aesthetic appreciation of the historical structures. The parking structure should also provide additional tourist services such as valet parking, orientation and information booths, shops, telephones and toilets.

Because of its central location and purpose, there will also be tourist service facilities on the design site. These should provide food and drink, toilets, telephones, and shops that provide film, cards, books, and other souvenirs. The physical structure of these services may be combined with the entry and orientation structure to the underground palace. The design of this architecture must respect the historical character and intended use of the project site, and must accomplish efficient and comfortable use of the site and its facilities.

The entry to the underground palace must be designed as a low-key structure, yet it must be both visually and physically accessible. The visual accessibility will serve the key function of attracting tourists and visitors from surrounding historical areas and monuments. Physical access should consider barrier-free access principles while preserving the historical character. The entry should be in the area of the design site where visual axes from the St. Sophia Square and the Topkapi Main Gate intersect, thus maximizing its visibility.

The historic open space will be designed to provide a setting for living history demonstrations, historical band performances, and other appropriate public events.
This function is the fundamental purpose of the design. The design of the open space should be unpretentious, simple yet elegant, and functional, in order to facilitate vicarious participation of tourists and visitors in the demonstrations and performances.

3.3. Design Guidelines and Site Functional Areas

The design is based on protecting and highlighting the historical elements at and around the site. No building or structure will be placed within the archeological area of the site. See Figure 3.4.

In the site design seven different areas will serve the visitors:

1. Entry and Orientation Area (Visitor Center);
2. Public Facilities;
3. Great Palace Entry;
4. Parade Ground Entry;
5. Parade Ground (Interpretive Activities Area);
6. Panoramic Viewing Area; and
7. Buffer Zone.

1. Entry and Orientation Area:

This center, which will serve above all to attract Hagia Sophia's tourists across busy Bab-i-Humayun street, will have an information desk with orientation materials to the Great Palace and the design site as a whole along with visual and verbal information about the many activities at the site and waiting area.

2. Public Facilities:

The public facilities will serve a large number of visitors with toilets; a small café; drinks; vendors of local "fast foods"; telephone services; and a shelter for bad weather conditions. All public facilities will be located underground beneath the open

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Figure 3.4. Site functional areas and master plan.
space where the Great Palace archeological find will not be disturbed. The site was continually open space in the past, and this should not be changed.

3. Great Palace Entry:

The formal entry to the Great Byzantine Palace was called the Chalke Gate. The new main palace entry will also be called the Chalke Gate. Palace visitation will be limited to small tours, while other groups will wait in the Palace's orientation area.

4. Parade Ground Entry:

Entry to the parade ground will be provided by a wide sidewalk promenade. Creating an attractive view with a low unobtrusive planting design that will help bring people to the site from the sidewalk and the street crossing.

5. Parade Ground (Interpretive Activities Area):

This open space is the focus of the design. Living history will be interpreted in this open space. Referring back to the time line (Figure 2.8.), we saw the site was used over the centuries. One of its most interesting uses was as a place for military music and marches. Today there are some historically recreate musical activities occurring at uncoordinated locations in Istanbul. We are going to take these activities to the parade ground area, and add others. These activities will bring history alive with music, costumes, and marches (See Figure 3.5.)

The Ottoman Empire was the first state in Europe to have a permanent military music organization. A Mehterhane unit consisted of "folds", each normally with a drum, kettle drums, clarinet, trumpet and cymbals. The Sultan's own band had nine such folds, the Yeniceri Agasi's (commander in the Ottoman army) seven, and every regiment or garrison had a smaller band. A Mehterhane usually stood in a crescent formation; only the kettle-drummer sat. Large Kos, or war-drums, were often played on camel-back, and a Mehterhane could also be entirely mounted. The instruments
Figure 3.5. Ottoman Military Band.
were made and maintained by 150-200 specialists, mostly Greeks or Armenians based near the Topkapi Palace. (*Cergani* singers, who are still a major tourist attraction in Istanbul, were not added to the *Mehterhane* until the late 18th century.) The *Mehterhane* played *tunes of Afrasiyab* (Persian military marches), and, according to the somewhat fanciful Turkish traveller, Evliya Celebi, in 1638:

> Five hundred trumpeters raised such a sound that the planet Venus began to dance and the skies reverberated.... All these players of the drum, kettle-drum and cymbals marched past together beating their different kinds of instruments in rhythmic unison as if Chma-Pur's army [the traditional foe of Alexander the Great] was marching by. (Nicolle, David, Hook, Christa. 1995, 31,32)

Not only does this design envision regular traditional Turkish military band performances on the design site, it also calls for actors/extras in costume to represent the audiences that might have enjoyed these performances in centuries past.

Ottoman costume was based on Persian rather than Arab tradition and remained remarkably unchanged from the 15th to the early 19th century. Each social class and ethnic, religious, civil or military group had a distinctive way of dressing. Headgear was particularly important in denoting rank. An observant early 15th century visitor, the Burgundian squire Bertrandon de la Broquiere, described early Ottoman costume as consisting of:

two or three thin, ankle-length cotton robes over the other. For a coat they were a felt robe called a capinat (Turk: Kapanice). It is light and very water-proof.... They wear knee-high boots and wide breeches...into which they stuff all their robes that they will not get in the way when they are fighting or travelling or busy. (Ibid.)

Many such costumes will be represented among the historical "audience," and tourists can mingle with these "people of the past" in their own distinctive garbs. Perhaps some of these visitors will reflect on the fact that they represent one of the
Figure 3.6. Ottoman Military Band.
many groups that have visited this site over the centuries, to watch similar colorful events.

Other historical events/activities could also be enacted on the site over the years. Their choice will be up to the organization having jurisdiction over the site.

To accommodate these historically-evocative activities, the Parade Ground will be a totally open grassy field. (See Figure 3.4.) Visitors will be free to sit on the grass or to stand at the site because no permanent seating facilities are recommended for this area. Thus, visitors will be encouraged to interact with the interpretive activities creating truly living history. (See Figure 3.6.)

6. Panoramic Viewing Area:

This area was selected for the best view of Hagia Sophia from the site. It is located in the Parade Ground area, close to the entry. Visitors will be able to get the best photographs of Hagia Sophia from this spot. They will be able to use telescopes to look at details of Hagia Sophia's structure and, due to the site's elevation, to enjoy a panoramic view of the historic fabric of Istanbul as well.

7. Buffer Zone:

A buffer zone area will filter the view from the street behind the Parade Ground area to the nearby wall.

3.4. Circulation

The perimeter of the site on the Hagia Sophia side will serve as a promenade. It will greatly improve the circulation near Hagia Sophia. Visitors will prefer to walk on the sidewalk across the street from Hagia Sophia, and on this new, continuous Parade Ground entry area as well, because it will be attractive, safe, and convenient. They will have easy access from it to public facilities as well as a place to take a rest.
Sidewalks, crosswalks, handicapped access areas, and lighting will all create a comfortable and safe environment. Secure and accessible circulation patterns for pedestrians will invite people to the site. Traffic signs will help pedestrians cross to the site on crosswalks. Approaching these crosswalks, vehicle will be slowed by speed "bumps" and traffic barriers.

3.5. View Improvements

The tall trees that now line the perimeter of the design site will be remove. The walls and fences that function as physical barriers will also be removed. The view will be opened to Hagia Sophia from the Imperial Gate and, more importantly, from within the design site. It will become easier to recognize monuments and to orient oneself within this central tourist area.

Sidewalks within the design site area will be improved, and a panoramic view of Hagia Sophia that will become available from them will tempt visitors to linger.

After the parking lots have been removed from the design site around Hagia Sophia, the vehicles will no longer be creating a bad view and will no longer be in the pictures and memories of the visitors.

3.6. New Parking Garage

Parking at around the site will be eliminated. Only handicapped parking will be possible near Hagia Sophia. A new parking area is proposed nearby.

The new parking area will be a multi-level rooftop parking garage, which will be constructed on three elevated terrace areas near the Topkapi Palace. See Figure 3.2. Its new location is very convenient, as the distance between the design site and the new parking garage is approximately 5-6 minutes of walking time.

The proposed parking site was an olive grove during the Byzantine era. It is a natural terrace because the topography of the peninsula is naturally rather steeply
Figure 3.7. Section view of the proposed parking garage.
sloped. After the Ottoman period, the site was controlled by the military and was left undeveloped.

This area is a parking area now, but it will accommodate a vastly larger number of vehicles in a parking garage. It will be a safe and modern facility conveniently located for visiting the design site and its surrounding monuments.

The parking garage will be on three levels, each with two stories of parking. See Figure 3.6. The middle level will be the largest one, which will serve tour buses. The highest level will be the same level as the top of the existing tallest trees. The structure and the vehicles parked within it will not be visible, and so will not ruin the larger view of nearby monuments and of the Bosphorus.
CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSION

This study shows, above all, that the best design for a site rich in history is one that respects that history unconditionally. This means that the old usage of a landscape should be respected, the more so when that usage is centuries old. As Landscape Architects, we should have the courage to say that some historically open spaces are as untouchable as any historic building or landmark. The openness of this design site was not a mere emptiness; it was an integral part of the lives of the people in the past. Many memorable activities happened on the site over the centuries. Literature and history prove this. Historians who truly explain past times connect them to significant places. Such places can, in turn, provide the public with valuable historical information.

We landscape architects should especially consider these evocative and educative possibilities. We must not view such a site as just an empty spot, with which we can do anything that we want. We should not look at such a site as an opportunity to build a parking lot or other purely functional facility. We have to protect as much as we can of the historic past of the site, and these features, be they landmarks, pathways, or just a field of grass.

At the site that is the subject of this thesis there is a need for adapting to today's needs—entry and orientation to the underground palace and public facilities. In doing so, the design principle stated above calls for limiting any artificial landscape or construction elements including even benches and plant materials. The recommended solution is to place as many visitor facilities as possible underground, and connect them to the underground Byzantine palace that future visitors will want to explore.
We cannot, of course, evoke the rich history of the site with more grass and empty space, however inviting they may be in this ancient city's congested core. The solution found was to propose this place as a place to see living history, a place to walk not only above the secret Byzantine palace, but also to view historical reenactments of certain past usages of the site, producing, hopefully, an educational and unforgettable experience for visitors from all over the world.


Runciman, Steven. 1975. *Byzantine Civilization.* Fletcher and Son Ltd.: Norwich, Great Britain


Internet Sites

Armory Web Site: http://www.armory.com/~ssahin/ottoman_cities/istanbul

BBC Online Web Page:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/newsid_151000/151554.stm

Discovery Channel Online Web Page:
http://www.planetexplorer.com/ref/landmark/landtop.html

Focus on Turkey Web Page:

Four Seasons Hotel Web Site:
http://www.protectila.com./istanbul/hotels/fseasons.html

Patriarchate of Constantinople Web Page:
http://www.patriarchate.org/hagia_sophia

Turkish Tourism Information Web Page:
http://www.turizm.net/istanbul/istanbulo2.html

Turkish Tourism Office Web Page:

United States National Park Service Historic Preservation Services Web Site:
http://www.2cr.nps.gov/hli/introqvid.htm
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