

URBAN FISSURE: THE SPATIAL MANIFESTATION OF THE ISTANBUL LAND WALLS AND MURAL ZONE (1)

Funda BAŞ BÜTÜNER*

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1. This paper is based on the author's PhD dissertation entitled "Urban Fissure: Reconceptualization of the Land Walls within the Urban Milieu of İstanbul" completed in 2010 at METU City and Regional Planning (Supervisor Prof. Dr. Baykan Günay and Co-supervisor Prof. Dr. Namık Erkal).

2. Since the term "defense wall" mostly implies a military purpose of the walls, the author prefers to use the term "city wall" which has a broader connotation, referring also to the civilian history of the walls: physical, economic, symbolic, cultural, political and historical.

3. The term "spatiality" basically refers to properties or occupancies – in diverse qualities and scales – of a space. In this article, the term is used in an extended meaning to cover certain processes that shape and characterize the space: social, cultural and temporal. This broad definition allows us to discuss the Land Walls through their integrated and diversified spaces and occupancies as a mural zone, rather than a solitary monument. The term provides a firm ground to argue on the spatial manifestation of the walls.

4. The term "mural" originates from "muraille" in French and "muralia" in Latin that all refer to "wall" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2017). In this article, it is used as an adjective that means "of, relating to, or resembling a wall" (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2017).

* Department of Architecture, METU, Ankara, TURKEY

INTRODUCTION

In the expanding and fluctuating milieu of current cities, the designation of a fresh nomenclature on urban space has become one of the motivations in urban literature. Notably, hybrid spaces that cannot be easily identified through traditional urban typologies have gained increasing attention. Such sites necessitate a critical review and an integrated mind-set – including architecture, urbanism and landscape – to make the cityscape legible for future urban strategies.

Thus, city walls (2), having been the material manifestation of the edge for territorial defense and control over the centuries, now emerge as sublime urban components that require further conception in the civilian urban context. Today, rather than identifying the edge, city walls with their history and architecture stand as monuments in cities. Considering their changing spatiality (3) and position in reference to the city, a new concept is required to identify city walls, the former edges of traditional cities. Differing from other architectural heritages, the immense size and multi-layered spatiality of walls present them as urbanscapes that might be also termed as a mural (4) zone. The term mural zone implies a spatial thickness and width that has been molded by spaces and occupancies generated/accumulated along the walls over time and that currently operates as an urban fissure.

To elucidate the argument, this article concentrates on the Istanbul Land Walls, which have emerged as a unique example of city walls, standing for more than 15 centuries as untouchable objects and an urban space in a metropolitan city like Istanbul. Since their construction in the 5th century, the Land Walls, coming under various forms of attack – sieges, earthquakes, partial demolitions, urban violence, planning attempts and implementations – have remained a part of the urban fabric and have archived various reminiscences. Along with their architecture and their impacts on political, economic, symbolic and urban life, the walls have

5. *Bostan* is a Turkish word which means truck garden. Since *bostan* is a particular type of garden in Ottoman cities and has a specific emphasis in Ottoman literature, the author prefers to use the original word instead of an English translation.

6. The Land Walls fall under the control of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (İBB), while the mural zone lies within the boundaries of four different municipalities: Zeytinburnu, Bayrampaşa, Eyüp and Fatih.

also become distinctive through their spatial manifestations. Because they cover an area approximately seven kilometers in length, the Land Walls have marked a huge trace presented in various states throughout history: defense walls of Constantinople, derelict defense architecture in Ottoman Istanbul, a ruined edgescape of the 19th century, an urban wilderness of the 1950s, an urban interstice after the 1980s, and today, a “beautified” green strip. This diversity has also multiplied the scenario for the walls and actors along the walls: a battleground, a scene for undocumented activities, a shelter for various social territories, an architectural heritage, an urban void for new projects, or just an architectural/archeological ruin in the city.

This layered spatial history has introduced a mural zone that has been molded by edge spaces, practices, occupancies and landscapes generated by the Land Walls: cemeteries, *bostans* (5), spontaneous landscape, sacred spaces and industry. The zone became more visible within the urban fabric of Istanbul with the expansion of the city on the west side of the walls after the mid-20th century. During this period, the mural zone experienced many (in)formal occupancies and implementations that sometimes contributed to, but mostly challenged, its characteristic spatiality and landscape. After the 1980s, the spatial conflicts caused by (inter)national regulations, planning attempts, informal occupancies and spatial removals/injections have highly manipulated the mural zone. Especially, the recently increased number of spatial interventions that cause fragmentation, over-programming and loss in the characteristic fabric of the mural zone provides an urgent motivation for the reconceptualization of the Land Walls.

Fragmentation, basically caused by the construction of large-scale transportation infrastructure and introverted land uses (hospitals, governmental structures, and educational institutions) in the mural zone, has been cemented via municipalities’ administrative boundaries that govern different parts of the mural zone (6). Besides the municipal governance, the walls and the mural zone are monitored by various (inter)national institutions. The multiplicity of (inter)national efforts concerning the Land Walls and the implementations to reclaim and secure the immediate surroundings of the walls cause over-programming that weakens the attributes of the walls and the mural zone. The majority of the programming and designing efforts have introduced a new/beautified landscape, rather than respecting the existing landscape patterns and reminiscences.

Hence, this article intends to decode the spatial history of the mural zone as an urban fissure, a term that better narrates the multi-scaled and multi-layered spatiality and landscape of the zone. It is structured through an integrated historical and conceptual discussion that will reveal the deficiency of the term “edge” to identify the Land Walls in the current urban fabric. This critical evaluation will present the emergence of the mural zone as an urban fissure, and will expose the spatial (dis)continuities that will remind us the value of the endangered spatial reminiscences. In doing so, it is intended that the Land Walls and the mural zone will be liberated from over-programmed urban scenarios and fragmented cosmetic landscape implementations.

CONCEPTUAL REFLECTION: EDGE OR FISSURE?

"What has a wall around it, that we call a city." (Stated for 14th century cities in Tracy, 2000, 1)

"Any town that remains defined by its wall in the 21st century is an anomaly." (Bruce and Creighton, 2006, 234)

Two Opposing Milieus and The City Wall

Concepts that refer to "city wall" derive basically from the opposition between the city and its outer lands, which has been indicated as one of the characteristics of a city (Kostof, 1991). To demarcate a city's territory and to control the relationship between the inner city and the outer world, the line between these two opposite milieus was marked by defense wall. In this setting, a city emerges as a milieu, an interior milieu that is interrelated with an exterior milieu; and a wall emerges as a material line that delimits the inside from the boundless outside, and that mostly acts as a component of the inside; "... the interior milieu is the zone of residence (the home, shelter, or abode), the exterior milieu of the territory is its domain; the intermediary milieu is composed by the (usually mobile) limits or membranes separating the territory from others (constituting the border or boundary)..." (Bonta and Protevi, 2004, 158). In this case, the exterior milieu remains outside the city boundary, "known and available, but not (yet) captured" (Bonta and Protevi, 2004, 84).

Considering the binary thinking on cities – inside-outside, center-periphery, urban-rural, daily-spiritual – a set of concepts that identify the wall in reference to a delimited inner milieu might be listed (**Figure 1a**). Herein, "edge" appears as one of the concepts frequently used to refer to the term "wall". As it defines the end line of an urban surface, the edge has emerged as a critical space that remains away from the inner-city and where the traditional solid-void morphology of the city dissolves and non-conforming communities and activities usually settle. However, being a "border vacuum" (Jacobs, 2011), the edge operates as an active ground, having impacts – mostly negative – on its immediate environment. Transportation infrastructure, post-industrial waterfronts and city walls have all emerged as urban edges that have been mostly pronounced as physically deteriorated urban areas in need of reclamation. Lost, residual, leftover, loose spaces, dead zones, and terrain vague are some of the terms that identify the problematic condition of the urban edge (Groth and Corijn, 2005; Cupers and Miessen 2002; Trancik, 1986; Franck and Stevens, 2007; Doron, 2007). Emphasizing the deteriorated environment of the edge, most of these terms imply only the existing scene without considering the changing positionality of the edge. However, due to the expanded urban surface, former urban edges no longer act as "edges". They mostly appear as a zone within the city – as an internal component – rather than marking a peripheral line. Therefore, considering their new position, a fresh concept is required to identify such linear structures within current cities.

Apart from indicating the end line of a milieu, the term "edge" also implies the beginning line of another milieu. The delimited surface no longer functions as a solitary setting, but rather attempts to interact with larger-scale surfaces (Read, 2006). Being "counterpoints in a dynamic process" (Cupers and Miessen, 2002) rather than acting in total opposition, there is always a continuous interaction between the interior and exterior milieus. Nijenhuis (1994) claims that, "The form of the city distinguishes itself from its excluded surroundings (through the history of the wall), but it

7. For an in-depth discussion on “interface” see Namık Erkal, 2001.

8. “The edge was not only the domain of the sick and the aberrant ... but was also one of often highly profitable dirty industries, irregular relations and intrigue, and was one of the passing of money, goods and favors between the town and the rest of the world. The edge certainly often became a frontier, but a productive frontier rather than a barrier ...” (Read, 2006, 78).

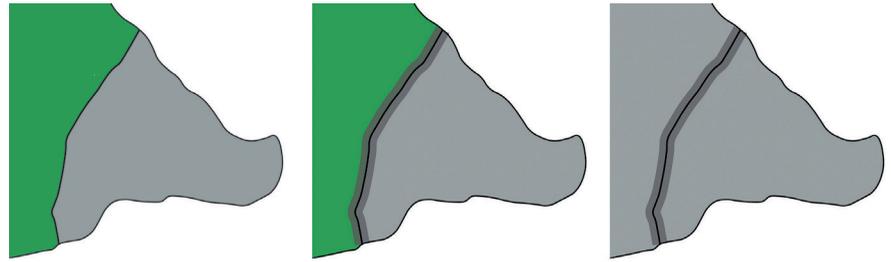
also has a deep affinity for the excluded, since without this excluded it would not exist” (Nijenhuis, 1994, 47). Thus, operating as edge, the city wall and its immediate surroundings become a line of communication, an “interface” (7) and a “productive frontier” (8); not a strict barrier or passive edge. Nijenhuis (1994), based on Deleuze and Guattari, identifies the city frontier as a part of the “machinic arrangement” formed by interrelated elements that function through a system of relations between people, tools and things (Nijenhuis, 1994). In this respect, the subspaces of the city wall – ramparts, ditches, gates and towers – might be argued to be elements of this machinic arrangement which encourage the generation of new activities and patterns along the wall. Considering this argument, another set of concepts that highlight the zone along the wall – not only the line formed by its architectural structure – can be defined (**Figure 1b**). “Mural zone” is one such term, implying an area that appears along the wall and that is molded by the characteristic spaces and landscapes generated by the wall.

The origin of the term “mural zone” may be grounded in some historical references as well. Ashworth (1991) defines the area along the wall as a “defense zone” that was needed for defensive purposes. For him, the size of the defense zone varied depending on military requirements: it could be formed only by the immediately adjacent space, or could cover an area that extended kilometers away from the city. Furthermore, Goodman (2007), referring to the Roman city, defines this area as an ambiguous zone “neither fully urban nor fully rural” (Goodman, 2007, 2). According to her, the urban periphery was always marked by a defense wall or by other visible markers, and provided a setting for artisans, traders, wealthy elite housing and monumental public buildings. Moreover, the definition of the extra-mural zone by Erkal (2001) also argues on the spatial thickness along the walls:

“The extra-mural zone was the front of the city, in the sense that it was the foremost part of the city, its terminus. The extra-mural zone was the front of the city with specific functions: the military, economic and cultural front. It was a line of defense for the time of war and a space of controlled and selective passage in times of peace. Specifically, the extra-mural zone was the front of the fortifications, a threshold for the selective passage for imports and exports, included and excluded, the citizens and the marginal.” (Erkal, 2001, 16).

Either implying a line or a zone, all the terms discussed so far denote the existence of two opposing milieus. However, today the city is no longer demarcated by a wall and no longer defined by oppositions. As stated by Virilio (1991), improvements in transportation and communication technologies have highly affected the shape of the city and erased the intramural-extramural opposition. However, this process has been more than simply a matter of metric growth. It has also introduced a new urban assemblage with new spatial relations. The “close fabric” of the city, which comprised a system among its elements and a controlled relation with the outside world, has totally changed. The city became an “open, fragmented, peri-urban fabric” (Levy, 1999) where the traditional reference points became redundant (Virilio, 1991). Read (2006) discusses this process through the “second urban revolution,” when the newly emerged metropolitan grid introduced a different spatial organization (inserted expressways, large scale spatial removals and injections) to that of the 19th century super grid. In this case, the city wall remained in the city as a challenging monument between urban and urban, rather than between

Figure 1. Towards “Urban Fissure”: (a) The “Edge” Between Two Opposing Milieus; (b) The “Margin/Mural Zone” Between Two Opposing Milieus; (c) The “Urban Fissure” in the Extended Urban Milieu



urban and rural (Figure 1c). However, the peculiar architecture of the wall obscured the designation of a new scenario for its refuncting. By being neither a single historical structure nor a historical urban fabric, the wall has confused traditional spatial codes in the city. It neither controls the territory of the city nor serves as its urban edge. In this respect, the commonly referred-to vocabulary has become inadequate to reflect the changing spatiality and positionality of the wall within the current urban milieu. The wall remains in the urban milieu, in certain cases, with a complementary mural zone that cannot simply be defined as edge or margin.

Extended Urban Milieu and City Wall: Towards Urban Fissure

The term “fissure”, which belongs to various fields such as geography and geology, can be adapted to decode urban fabric as well (Figures 2, 3). The etymology of the term, “fissura” in Latin (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2017), meaning “a long narrow opening” or “a long narrow depression in a surface”, motivates its reinvention in the urban field. The utilization of the term in the identification of a crack in a continuous surface gives rise to its relevance as a lens to decode the former edges that currently form an interstice on the urban surface (Figure 3).

Based on the basic connotation of the term, “long opening on a surface”, linearity can be specified as the major characteristic of the urban fissure. Thus, urban components that demarcate strong linearity – city walls,

Figure 2. (a) Earth Fissures (Dreamstime, 2017); (b) An Ice Fissure (Nasa, 2017)

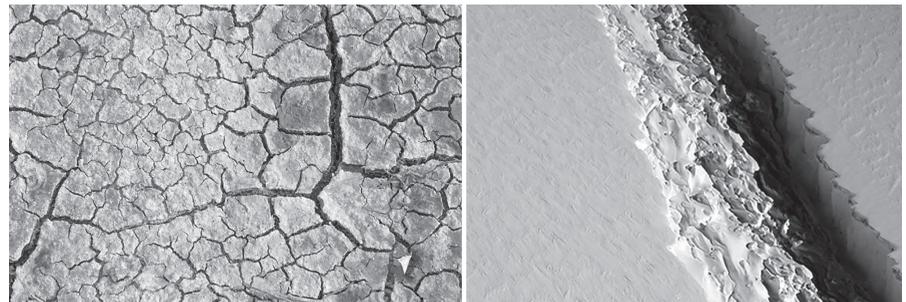


Figure 3. Reinvention of the “Fissure” in the City:

- (a) River in the City, Paris (Yann Arthus Bertrand, 2017)
- (b) Transportation Infrastructure, Los Angeles (Yann Arthus Bertrand, 2017)
- (c) City Walls and Mural Zone, Istanbul (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 2011)



9. *Terra Nullius* comes from Latin and means “land belonging to no one” (Oxford Reference, 2017). For further discussion see (Jorgensen and Tylecote, 2017, 452).

10. For Jorgensen and Tylecote (2017), urban interstices – river corridors, abandoned allotments and post-industrial sites – are suitable grounds for the spontaneous growth of vegetation. Such spontaneous landscape, which might also be recognized as urban wilderness, has been mostly considered negative, and intended to be replaced by “cleaner, safer, greener” landscapes (Jorgensen and Tylecote, 2017, 443).

rivers, railways, valleys, or large scale transportation infrastructure – can be referred to in the search for urban fissures. The strong linearity generally interrupts the continuity of the urban surface while providing a longitudinal continuity that generates alternative spaces in the city (**Figure 4a**).

Indeed, the basic connotations of the term are not all-inclusive for exploring it in the urban field. A profound discussion on the fissure’s spatiality is required to understand its recurrence in the city. An urban fissure is basically formed by a core structure that operates as its generator (**Figure 4b**). The core structure, either a wall, river or transportation infrastructure, manipulates spatial organization within the fissure: a river lined up with a waterfront, an elevated railway aligned with subspaces that shelter various occupancies, or a city wall offering multifarious spaces. This makes a fissure a space, not a two-dimensional opening or a *terra nullius* (9) as generally shown on city plans (Doron, 2007; Jorgensen and Tylecote, 2017). However, the loose spatiality of the urban fissure becomes a favorable ground for spatial invasions and informal occupancies that make it a critical social and temporal territory (**Figure 4c**). As argued by Bekkering, “The spaces most sensitive to change, the temporal peripheral fragments of the city, often follow the veins of the city, the river flow, the highways ... The veins are bordered by strips with a variety of temporal coincidences, the marginal areas” (1994, 39).

Undoubtedly, this territory is not homogenous in spatial, social and temporal terms. The strong linearity of the fissure has fostered the construction of transportation infrastructures that predominantly introduce a flowscape (Nijhuis and Jauslin, 2015) containing numerous major arteries: coastal roads along waterfronts, ringstrasse on the traces of city walls, or avenues along the walls. Besides the transportation arteries that run along the fissure, there are also several arteries that perpendicularly overpass the fissure: bridges across rivers, or roads and streets passing through the gates of the walls (**Figure 4d**). When considered as a flowscape, the urban fissure becomes part of a larger network that can be represented in the form of a “fissure pattern” (**Figure 2a**). This makes the urban fissure an easily accessible area in the city. However, by opposing continuity in the urban scale, the existence of transportation arteries fragments the spatiality of the fissure and makes it an ambiguous territory difficult to identify and reclaim. Post-industrial waterfronts, the near environs of transportation infrastructure, and mural zones generally appear as vague grounds away from “ordinary” city life. Therefore, the urban fissure appears as a “depression surface”, suitable for appropriation by informal or spontaneous occupancies that have mostly been considered as negative in the urban routine, as the landscape of the fissure (10).

Such overlapping spatiality, where formal and informal, well-defined and spontaneous exist together (Doron, 2007), indicates a temporal dimension that has been produced by the stratification of spaces and practices throughout history (**Figure 4e**). This forms the depth of the fissure, which is hard to concretize. The spatial stratification of the fissure is not a simple process of masking the former spaces; it is not the total disappearance of the former one and the introduction of a totally new one. The urban fissure, archiving the traces of various spaces and patterns, is the space of oppositions and superimpositions in the city. Hence, released from negative connotations, “urban fissure” might promisingly present the spatial, social and temporal processes of the former urban edges.

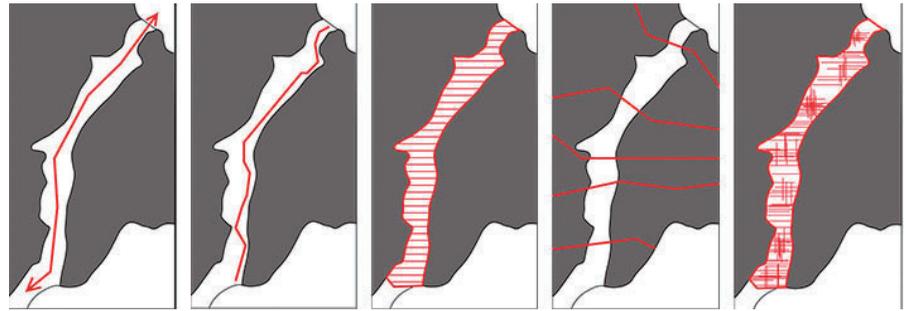


Figure 4. Identifying an “Urban Fissure”:
 (a) A Long Narrow Opening With Strong Linearity, (b) Formed by a Core Structure, (c) Forming a Territory, (d) A Flowscape With Perpendicular Cuts, (e) With Overlapping Spaces and Occupancies

Following this conceptual reflection, to extend the argument, the subsequent parts of the article discuss the Istanbul Land Walls through the lens of the urban fissure. Today, the Land Walls, marking a line approximately seven kilometers in length, do not demarcate a border between two opposing milieus, they do not identify a strict territory, and they cannot be argued only through their architectural qualities. Instead, the walls and the mural zone mark a fissure that archive peculiar spaces and reminiscences.

THE SPATIAL HISTORY OF THE ISTANBUL LAND WALLS

Istanbul, as the former capital of three empires – Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman – and the largest city in the Turkish Republic, is the only metropolis where defense walls have remained in the city. The Land Walls have witnessed the all events and changes that the city has experienced for 15 centuries: wars, conquests, earthquakes, great destructions and renovations. From the time of their construction in the 5th century until the Ottoman Conquest in 1453, as a part of the major defense system they marked the land border of Istanbul (Van Millingen, 2005; Eyice, 2006). Identifying the border, they were integrated into “a network of trade, exchange, and agricultural productivity” (White et al., 2016, 9). However, after the conquest, the Land Walls lost their defense purpose, and became involved with civilian life. From that time until the mid-20th century, they loosely marked the western edge of the city. After that time, with the expansion of the city on the west side of the Historic Peninsula, the walls have remained within the city and have shaped, sheltered and produced spaces and practices along them.

At that point, the spatiality of the Land Walls became critical. The Land Walls, with their unique triple defense architecture, form a complex system, composed of open and enclosed spaces; inner wall, outer wall, moat, terraces, towers and gates (**Figure 5**) (Van Millingen, 2005). Apart from their architecture, the Land Walls have triggered the generation of spaces on and around them, such as those adjoining the architectural structure of the walls, including gates, Byzantine Imperial Palaces, the Yedikule Fortress and *bostans*, and those formed around them including cemeteries, industrial sites, circulation infrastructures, recreational areas and neighborhoods (**Figures 6, 7**). Most of these spaces, either adjoining the walls or located around the walls, might be argued as being typical edgescapes that were excluded from the walled Istanbul. The coexistence of these two types has formed a mural zone that has been molded and characterized by spatial removals/impositions, practices, symbols and memories throughout history (**11**). In this respect, regarding the conceptual reflection of the article, the historical survey in this part will proceed based

11. For further discussion on communities, occupancies and social territories along the Land Walls see Sevgi Ortaç (2010), Pelin Tan (2010) and Frank Dorso (2001 and 2003).

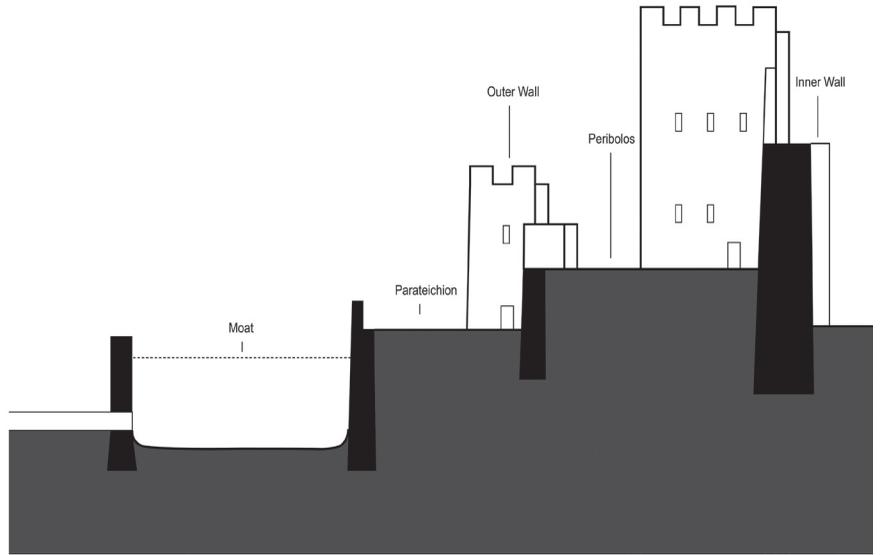


Figure 5. The Triple Defense System of the Theodosian Walls (schematic cross-section). This might be argued to be the origin of the current urban fissure (redrawn based on Turnbull 2004, 11).

mainly on two integrated grounds: the expansion of the urban surface to the outer lands and the changing spatiality of the mural zone.

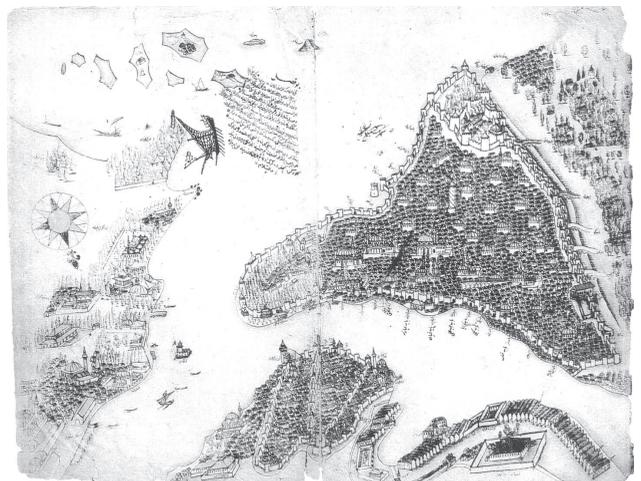
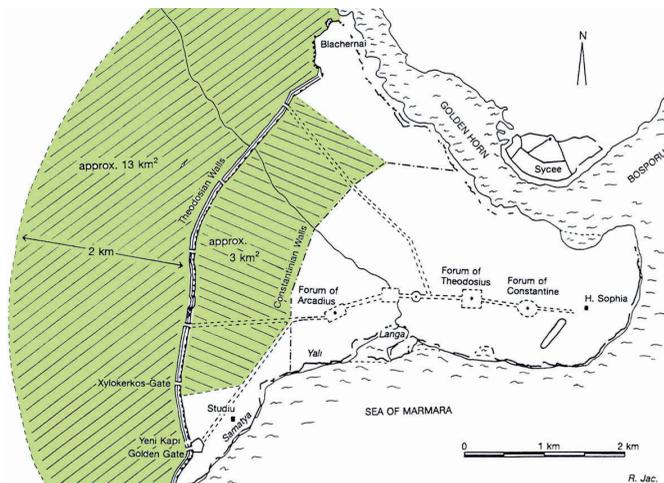
Ruined Edgescape: 19th and Early 20th Centuries

“Istanbul does not go much beyond those wonderful walls left over from Byzantium; it seems to take pleasure from being squashed into such a cramped space.” (Le Corbusier, cited in Kubilay Yetişkin 2009, 198)

In the 19th century, the outlines of Istanbul began to change with the expansion of the city along its coastlines and the shores of the Bosphorus and towards the Nişantaşı-Şişli districts. However, the expansion was restricted to the west of Historic Peninsula; only districts such as Kazlıçeşme (slaughter house, tanneries), Ayvansaray (pottery kilns) and Eyüp (a holy place) (Tekeli, 1994) demarcated the extramural lands. The remote setting of the extramural lands offered a favorable milieu for the excluded ones that could not exist within the walled Istanbul, such as the *Tekkes* of the Mevlana dervishes, located at MevlevihaneKapı and the gypsies living near Topkapı (Dallaway, 1804; Amicis, 1896).

Figure 6. Edgescape: The Horticultural Zones of Constantinople Along the Theodosian Walls around the 12th–13th Centuries (Koder, 1995, 52).

Figure 7. Edgescape: The Piri Reis Map Impressively Represents the Spatial Organization of the Extramural Lands; The Cypress Trees Identify Cemeteries (Kayra, 1990, 74).



12. As stated by Ashworth (1991), after the 19th century, city walls experienced two different courses of action: demolition and preservation. In the case of demolition, the complex spatiality of defense walls, comprising ditches, ramparts, towers and terraces, delineated an extensive land at the periphery of cities, and emerged as a valuable urban ground for new construction. In many cities like Paris, Vienna and Thessalonica, walls were replaced by public spaces such as boulevards, esplanades and public parks. İstanbul experienced both processes –demolition and preservation- on the two sides of the Golden Horn –Historic Peninsula Land Walls and Galata Walls (see Baş Bütüner, 2008).

13. To organize the demolition of İstanbul's defense walls, both in Galata and the Historic Peninsula, a commission called *Kule-i Zemin* was founded in 1859. For details see (Erkal, 2001, 215).

The sparsely inhabited extramural land is presented in the maps of the period as well, showing the railway line penetrating the Land Walls at Yedikule, and two hospitals to the north of Kazlıçeşme – the Armenian Hospital and the Greek Hospital (Kuban, 2007). In this setting, the Land Walls loosely marked the western border of the city, from the Golden Horn to the Marmara shores. As narrated in the written and visual documents of the time, unlike during their prominent military history, the walls were in a state of ruin, partially diffused into the landscape, without exposing their characteristic triple defense architecture.

In the late 19th century, similar to many other European cities (12), the dismantling of the Land Walls came into the agenda, implying that the walls would be destroyed and the materials would be sold for the public interest (13) (Zanotti, 1911). However, this intention was condemned by various archeologists and historians, who emphasized the uniqueness of İstanbul, and termed the demolition as an act of vandalism (Zanotti, 1911). Finally, despite the partial destruction of the Marmara and Golden Horn Sea Walls, the Land Walls were neither destroyed nor conserved; they were just left to stand at the periphery of the city as obsolete, but still picturesque, monuments. The picturesque scene of the Land Walls made the mural zone a popular destination for foreign visitors. Grandville Baker, James Dallaway and Edmondo de Amicis were among those who poetically



Figure 8. *Bostans* and Cemeteries Along the Land Walls; İstanbul Ciheti (1:5000) by Necib Bey, 1918 (SALT Research, Map Archive, Turgut Kut Collection)

14. "Each portion of walls between any two towers comprises in itself a complete and wonderful example of ruins and of vegetation, full of power and majesty, wild, colossal, forbidding, and adorned with a melancholy and imposing beauty which impels a feeling of reverence. ... Constantinople of the to-day disappears, and before us rises the city of the Constantines; we breathe the air of the fifteenth century" (Amicis, 1896 vol.II, 108).

portrayed the wild landscape and ambiguous territory of the mural zone in their journals (Amicis, 1896; Dallaway, 1804; Baker, 1975) (14).

As shown on maps by Necib Bey (1918) and Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, the spatiality of the mural zone was mostly formed by a characteristic landscape – *bostans* and cemeteries (Figures 8, 9, 10). Necib Bey's map clearly represents *bostans* in the ditches abutting the Land Walls and along the mural zone. Likewise, as indicated in Ayverdi's map, the intramural zone was also covered by *bostans*, especially in the area stretching from Edirnekapı to Yedikule. Accompanied by *bostans*, cemeteries also formed an extensive (green) ground that characterized the mural zone. Semayi Eyice (2006) states that, in Istanbul, cemeteries were built in an unplanned way and were scattered across the landscape. Therefore, it is difficult to mark a definite outline of the cemeteries, especially along the walls (Figure 11) between Eğrikapı and Edirnekapı; Mevlevihanekapı and

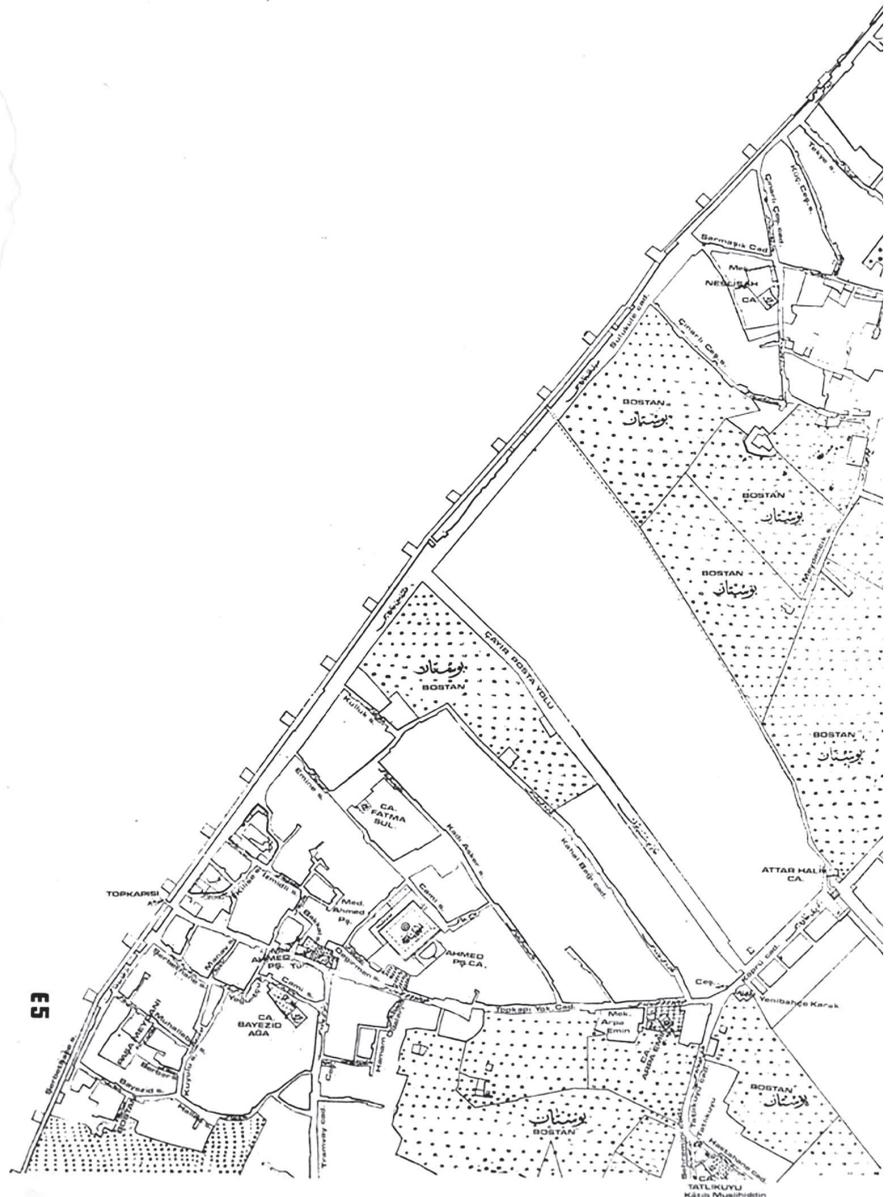


Figure 9. *Bostans* in the Intramural Zone (From the South of Edirnekapı to Topkapı), Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi Map, 19th Century (SALT Research, Map Archive, Ülgen Family Collection)

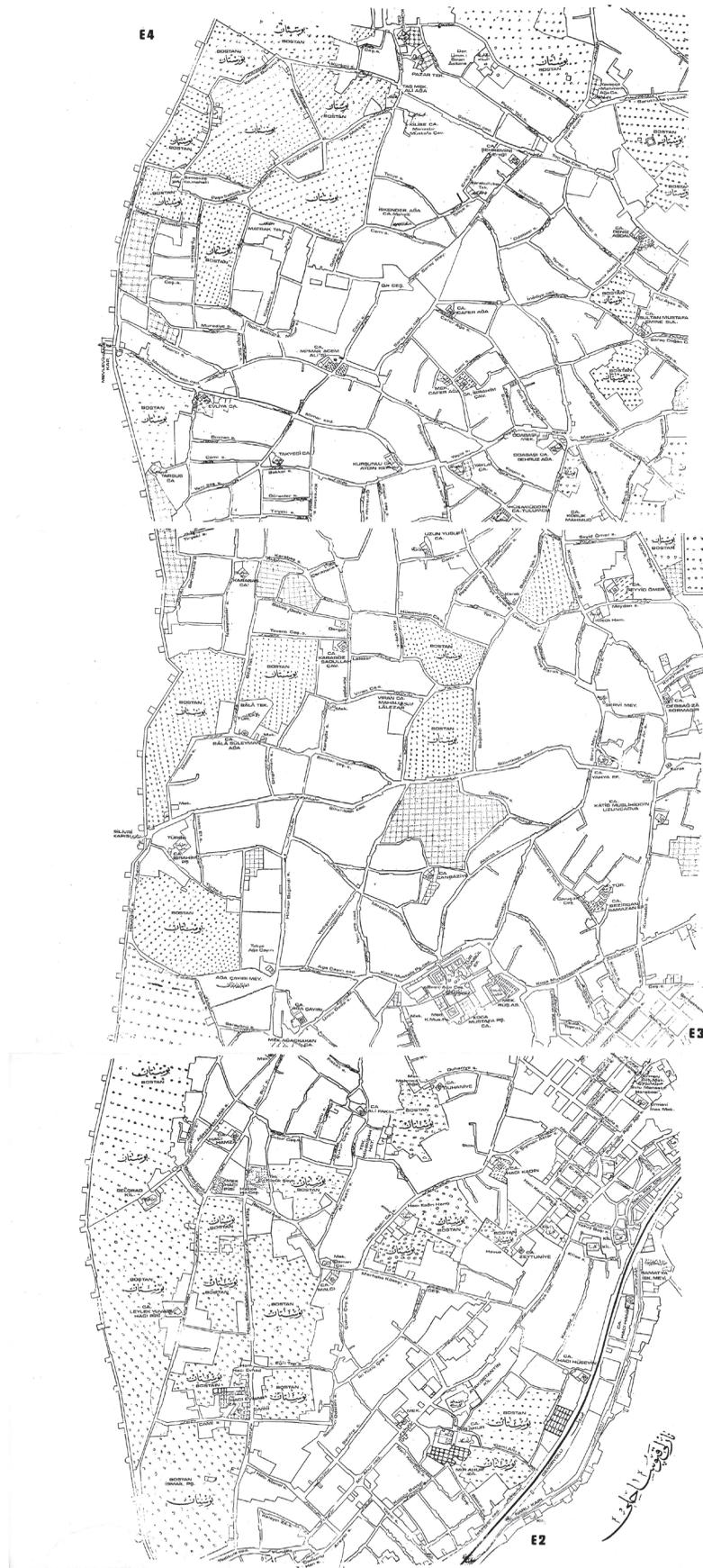


Figure 10. *Bostans* in the Intramural Zone
(From the North of the Mevlevihane to Yedikule), Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi Map,
19th Century [SALT Research, Map Archive,
Courtesy of the Institut Français d'Etudes
Anatoliennes (IFEA)]



Figure 11. Loose Landscape in the Mural Zone: (a) Cemeteries near Ayvansaray (1890), Photographed by Abdullah Biraderler (Tanman and Ögel 2007, 125); (b) Cemeteries near Edirnekapi in the early 20th Century, Photographed by K.A.C. Creswell (Archnet, 2017)

Topkapı, Mevlevihanekapı, between Silivrikapı and Yedikule, and between Edirnekapı and Topkapı (Eyice, 2006; Amicis, 1896).

In harmony with the loose landscape, the architectural ruins of Yedikule Fortress, Tekfur Palace and the Anemas Dungeon also contributed to the dramatic scene of the mural zone. During his voyage in 1806, Chateaubriand recorded the ruined presence of the Yedikule Fortress (Sayar, 1964, 1), while Robert de Flers, in 1913, depicted the impressive scene of the fortress with its huge structure surrounded by vegetation (Sayar, 1964, 84).

Operating as an intermediary milieu between the walled city and the outer lands, the mural zone was marked by gates that served as communication/exchange nodes. The spectacular life – trade and a crowded landscape – at the gates were often recorded by travelers (15) (Dallaway, 1804; Baker, 1975).

In summary, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Land Walls displayed conflicting traits. They remained in the city, but did not serve for defense; they were not destroyed, but also were not preserved; they were derelict, but impressive; they were vague, but were also involved with edgescapes. At that time, the walls, aligned with the mural zone, may be referred to as the margin of the Historic Peninsula: characterized by a loose landscape and occupied by industry and sacred spaces that were excluded from – but not unrelated to – the city.

The Insignificant Mural Zone: 1930-1950

In the period between 1930 and 1950, the Land Walls still loosely delineated the western edge of the city as ruined, but also awe-inspiring, monuments (Ogan, 1941). Meanwhile, the mural zone offered a vague terrain occupied by industry, *bostans* and cemeteries, as clearly represented in the Pervitch Maps dated 1929 and 1939; *bostans*, cemeteries and vague areas outside Eğrikapı and Edirnekapı; the landscape fabric of the extramural zone in Ayvansaray; and the industrial ground in Kazlıçeşme and factories situated close to the Land Walls. As shown in the 1939 map, the Land Walls traced the line between intramural *bostans* and extramural industry, and the north side of the industrial area was bordered by the railway line that pierced the walls (Figure 12).

Concerning the mural zone, the period introduced two conflicting processes: the urban planning approaches of the period and spatial

15. Following his visit to Istanbul in 1795, Dallaway published a paper describing his excursion along the Land Walls. He left us with a brief description and history of seven gates: Eghri-capou, Edrineh-kapouffy, Topkapouffy, Mevlaneh-hany-yeni-kapouffy, Selivree-kapouffy, Kapaneu-kapouffy, Porta Aurea.

16. For further discussion on the urban planning attempts concerning the Land Walls see Agache (1934), Duranay, Gürsel & Ural (2007).

implementations. In the post-1930 period, the urban planning of Istanbul emerged as a priority. Leading planning attempts of the time designated the Land Walls and the mural zone for edge activities and spaces, such as industry, green belts, transportation (16). Henri Prost, a French city planner who directed the planning process of Istanbul between 1936 and 1951, developed a plan for the Historic Peninsula, covering the mural zone as well. The plan revealed the Land Walls as an architectural asset that had to be conserved, not only as solitary monuments, but as a conservation zone measuring 500 meters in width (Figure 13). He defined some regulations for the conservation zone, in which the construction of new buildings would be restricted, while several recreational and sport facilities were proposed (Prost, 1938, 24). Prost suggested a “*Parc Educatif*” that included a zoo and various theme parks, and an Olympic stadium in the mural zone (Prost, 1938, 110-114). Considering the conservation, recreation and transportation principles, it can be argued that the plan was the first attempt that officially introduced a zone alongside the Land Walls.

Apart from the urban planning attempts, the period also witnessed various implementations that changed the spatiality of the mural zone. Lütfi Kırdar, the mayor of Istanbul between 1938 and 1949, urged a number of urban implementations covering the renovation of some arteries, such as the renovation of the Ayvansaray–Yedikule connection, parallel to the outer line of the Land Walls (İstanbul Belediyesi Neşriyat ve İstatistik Müdürlüğü, 1949, 32). Another critical intervention that changed the spatiality of the mural zone was the partial removal of the *bostans*: between 1933 and 1948, several sport fields were constructed in their place (İstanbul Belediyesi Neşriyat ve İstatistik Müdürlüğü, 1949, 99).

Figure 12. Kazlıçeşme in the Pervitch Map, dated 1939 (Dağdelen 2001, 200-201); the Land Walls, Industry, *Bostans*, Cemeteries and Vague Areas.



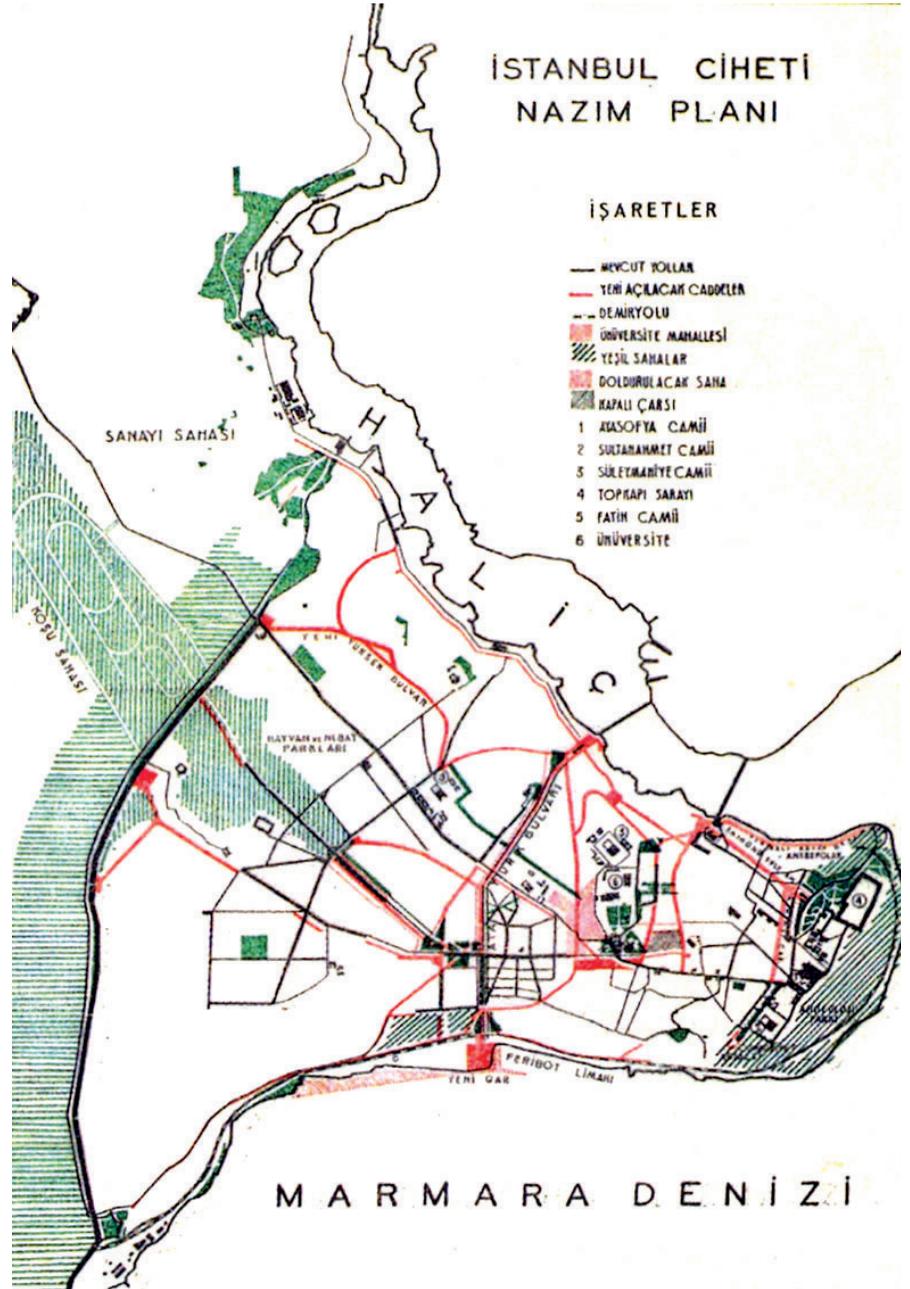


Figure 13. The Proposed Green Zone Along the Walls in the Prost Plan (Özler, 2007, 86).

Following these implementations conducted by the municipality, the mural zone started to house informal dwellings towards the end of the period. The landscape of the mural zone started to alter with the rise of squatter housing in Kazlıçeşme (Tekeli, 1994). After that time, a new intermediary milieu, occupied by informal dwellings, began to emerge along the walls.

The Invaded Mural Zone and the Urban Wilderness: 1950s-1970s

“Ottoman ruins were added to the ruins of Byzantium, and on top of this, other remains were loaded which would be named afterwards.” (translated from Altan and Güler, 1999, 32)

During this period, the mural zone underwent deep-seated changes. The increasing population and rapid industrial development triggered the

generation of unplanned neighborhoods in Istanbul, and extramural lands that had remained uninhabited for many decades began to be settled. Kuban (1998) defines the 1950s as a period during which people who had migrated to the city formed a new and an alternative Istanbul (Kuban, 1998), and the mural zone became one of the places that represented this alternative Istanbul. Even though the extended fabric was not a planned one, the expansion of the built fabric towards the west side of the walls triggered the disappearance of the inside-outside opposition in a way that would drastically change the positionality of the Walls in the city. After that time, the Land Walls and the mural zone emerged as a milieu within the city, rather than on its edge.

The period introduced two critical issues that manipulated the spatiality of the mural zone: the construction of new arteries and the development of informal occupancies. Being an intermediary milieu and acting as flowscape, the mural zone started to house new arteries. The Menderes Operations that directed the urbanization of the time proposed intense infrastructural implementations. Four major arteries, Vatan and Millet Avenues, and two coastal roads that facilitated the link between the inner Historic Peninsula and outer districts, were constructed perpendicular to the walls. By easing access in the east-west direction, these links also triggered the urban expansion to the west of the Land Walls. With their inclusive sections, including multiple lanes and wide sidewalks, both Vatan and Millet Avenues introduced a new scale and speed that interrupted the traditional urban fabric of the Historic Peninsula and also the mural zone. During the construction of these arteries, certain historical and archeological assets, including some segments of the Land Walls, were destroyed. Furthermore, the bold line of these avenues harshly fragmented the loose territory of the mural zone by engendering indeterminate grounds open to informal occupancies.

Another considerable infrastructural implementation of the time was the construction of the Topkapı intercity bus terminal that compelled partial appropriation of the Topkapı Cemetery. Since the lack of a formal terminal on the European side was creating chaos in the inner Historic Peninsula circulation, in 1971 two adjacent bus terminals outside the Topkapı gate – Anadolu and Trakya – were constructed. These terminals soon became very crowded, attracting open markets and street vendors to the area behind and in-between the Land Walls (**Figure 14**).

Apart from the large-scale infrastructural constructions, the spatiality of the mural zone was also shaped by informal occupancies. Together with squatter housing developments generated on the extramural lands, informal housing was also sited on and into the walls. The complex architecture of the Land Walls and the ruined architecture of the Yedikule Fortress and Tekfur Palace also became potential shelters for informal and undocumented housing and business, accompanied by rural life (Pialat, 1964). As narrated by Ara Güler and Çetin Altan (1999), the dissolved architecture, landscape and informal occupancies of the mural zone generated a wilderness in the urban milieu (**Figure 15**): “Workshops in the holes and on the sides of the shacks erupt out of the top of the walls. In front of the shacks, vegetable gardens have been planted in the trenches and on the mounds. There are people smoking hashish on the mounds and endless piles of smelly rubbish” (translated from Altan and Güler, 1999, 19). Being a neglected part of the city, the area lacked many basic urban services and infrastructure and was isolated from urban life. Although the



Figure 14. The Intercity Bus Terminal and Open Market Area at Topkapı (Kalfagil, 2008, 184).



Figure 15. The Dissolved Architecture and Landscape of the Mural Zone: (a) Informal Workplaces Within the Subspaces of the Walls (Altan and Güler 1999, 20); (b) A Lack of Urban Services in the Mural Zone (Altan and Güler 1999, 14).

extramural zone began to be resided in by a settled population after that time, the newly formed settlement pattern occurred as a deteriorated rural setting within the city rather than a planned urban fabric.

During that period, small scale interventions also molded the landscape of the mural zone. The ditches, *bostans* and cemeteries that had predominantly covered much of the mural zone for centuries began to disappear with the designation of new land uses: sport fields, gas station, roads, etc. (Eyice, 2006).

In summary, the mural zone, which was proposed as a green belt in the Prost Plan and remained unpopulated until the mid-20th century, was invaded by large-scale transportation infrastructure, illegal housing and informal occupancies (Cansever, 1998). The mural zone, being in a state of physical, functional and semantic deterioration, and also lacking

comprehensive urban strategies, was considered a void for spontaneous urban development with total disregard for its historical value and landscape reminiscences.

THE MURAL ZONE AS AN URBAN FISSURE: AFTER THE 1980s

The formation of squatter neighborhoods outside the walls took another form after the 1980. Apartment buildings started to replace squatter houses, triggering the enlargement of the city over the western lands. This changed the positionality of the walls, and the mural zone remained in the expanded urban milieu. A further attempt that highlighted the walls in Istanbul was their designation as a “conservation zone”. Following the addition of the Land Walls to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985, a conservation zone was defined by UNESCO. This introduced a new era, both for the walls and mural zone, and since that time, the Land Walls have been subject to periodic monitoring by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee (17). The underlined significance of the walls triggered new research, projects and implementations on international, national and local levels that sometimes caused over-interest and conflict. In 1987, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage Istanbul District Board made a decision, numbered 4076, and accepted the proposals of TAÇ for the conservation of the mural zone. Afterwards, a 1:1000 scaled conservation development plan, which defined a boundary along the eastern side of the walls, was prepared. The conservation zone determined in this plan became a guide for further plans, and was highly referred to in the 2005 Historic Peninsula Conservation Master Plan. In 2011, a new conservation boundary, the “Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Conservation Zone”, was defined in the “Istanbul Historic Peninsula Site Management Plan”, and the conservation zone was later revised in 2015 (Figure 16).

Apart from being designated as conservation zone, the Land Walls have been entitled with various other area-based classifications as well. The district between the Marmara Sea and the D-100 highway (Topkapı junction), which was appointed as a “first degree conservation area” in 1981, was later defined as a “wall isolation strip” (*sur tecrit bandı*) based on Law No: 2523 in 1991. In 2005, through a decision of the Zeytinburnu Municipality Council based on law No: 5366 regarding the renewal for the conservation and use of the deteriorated natural and cultural immovable heritage, the lands to the west of the walls within the Zeytinburnu District were designated as a “renewal area” (İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Planlama ve İmar Daire Başkanlığı, 2003). This multifarious conservation agenda has multiplied institutional and regulatory territories along the mural zone that have sometimes generated a complex process involved with diverse institutions, plans, projects, objections and implementations. However, increasing concern over formulating an area-based conservation approach along the walls – “conservation zone”, “renewal area” or “wall isolation strip” – highlighted the walls as a concern of the urban planning and design fields as well as restoration and conservation (18).

Challenging conservation policy, large-scale spatial removals and injections started to clean up and endanger the characteristic – spatial, social and landscape – fabric of the mural zone, as seen in the case of the *bostans*. Even though the *bostans* have undoubtedly been designated as conservation areas in all plans and regulations, they have been extensively destroyed by new construction. Having been a characteristic component of the mural

17. In the reports, published in different years, the committee expressed its concerns and criticized on-going restoration works and the lack of an integrated conservation program for the walls (UNESCO World Heritage Committee Mission Report from 2003-2017).

18. Multi-institutional and multi-authored agendas of the Land Walls have also multiplied the conservation terminology, policies, and planning attempts that undoubtedly cause a challenging conservation-implementation agenda. Thus, regarding the archeological, architectural, spatial and social values of the mural zone, an in-depth discussion on the urban conservation policies and ongoing renewal/transformation projects along the Land Walls should be considered as a critical topic to be studied.



Figure 16. Schematic Representation of the "Conservation Zones" defined at Different Times (Redrawn based on the Original Maps): (a) The Conservation Zone defined by UNESCO in 1985 (IFEA Archive); (b) The Inner Conservation Zone defined by the 1:1000 scale, Conservation Development Plan based on law 4076 dated 25.9.1987 (Istanbul Cultural Heritage Protection Board 1 Archive); (c) The Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site Boundary, October 2011 (İstanbul Tarihi Alanları Alan Başkanlığı, 2011) (d) The Istanbul Land Walls World Heritage Site (Revised) Boundary, 2015 (İstanbul Tarihi Alanları Alan Başkanlığı, 2018).

19. For a detailed discussion see Franck Dorso (2001 and 2003).

Figure 17. *Bostans* along the Walls: (a) 2009 (Personal Archive); (b) 2010 (Sevgi Ortaç Archive).

zone for centuries, the *bostans* have represented more than a landscape fabric. Along with their particular spatiality, *bostans*, being places where centuries-long traditional agricultural methods and knowledge (partially) persist and operate today, have also emerged as intangible cultural heritage (White et al., 2016) (Figure 17). However, with increasing spatial removal and injections, especially after the 2000s, a considerable number of *bostans* have been replaced by new housing projects or parks.

Apart from the *bostans*, indeterminate spaces and informal/temporary occupancies have also identified the characteristic spontaneous landscape of the mural zone. The subspaces of the walls and uncertain grounds along the mural zone have harbored diverse social territories and become a shelter for people, animals and sometimes goods; examples are gypsies and Ramadan drummers who pitched their tents in the ditches, traders in sacrificial sheep, and other illegal traders who lived and worked within the subspaces of the walls (19) (Figure 18). Besides these informal land uses, there have been also several temporary occupancies (Figure 19b): *Edirnekapı Kuş Pazarı*, held every weekend on the Altınay Sport Field, or events in Kazlıçeşme mass rally area.



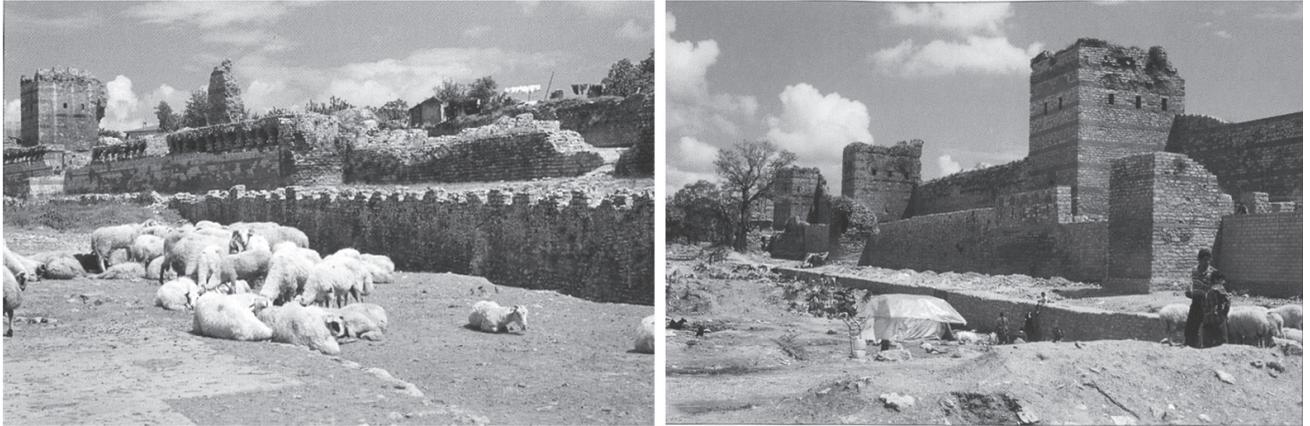


Figure 18. Informal Occupancies in the Subspaces, 1996 (Turnbull, 2004, 62).

Unfortunately, all of these spaces and occupancies have challenged the desire to create a new cultural and recreational ground in Istanbul along the Land Walls. The mural zone, which marked the edge of the city until the mid-20th century, and which presented a sublime landscape until the last decade, now appeared as a potential void in the city. The removal of the leather industry from Zeytinburnu and the relocation of the intercity bus terminal away from Topkapı radically changed the landscape of the mural zone. An urban park project, Topkapı Culture Park, which was declared as the “cultural terminal of Istanbul” was developed at the former site of the bus terminal. Furthermore, land obtained from the shift of Kazlıçeşme’s industry was mostly designated for new residential blocks; only some parts remained vague (Özler, 2007) as multipurpose areas for mass rallies and public events.

Likewise, several urban renewal projects have been also developed for the old neighborhoods – Ayvansaray and Sulukule – adjoining the walls. These neighborhoods were declared as urban renewal districts by Fatih Municipality in 2005, and it was decided that they should be developed by TOKİ (The Mass Housing Development Administration of Turkey). The common aim of these projects is to generate a “modern” neighborhood with improved infrastructure and services, which would free up the walls from all “inappropriate” and informal occupancies, and thus would provide an accessible and “appropriate” mural zone (Fatih Municipality, 2010). However, as discussed by Kiyak İngin and İslam (2015) for the

Figure 19. (a) The Land Walls as Background for Ceremonies, 2016 (Personal Archive); (b) A Flea Market within the Walls, 2010 (Sevgi Ortaç Archive).

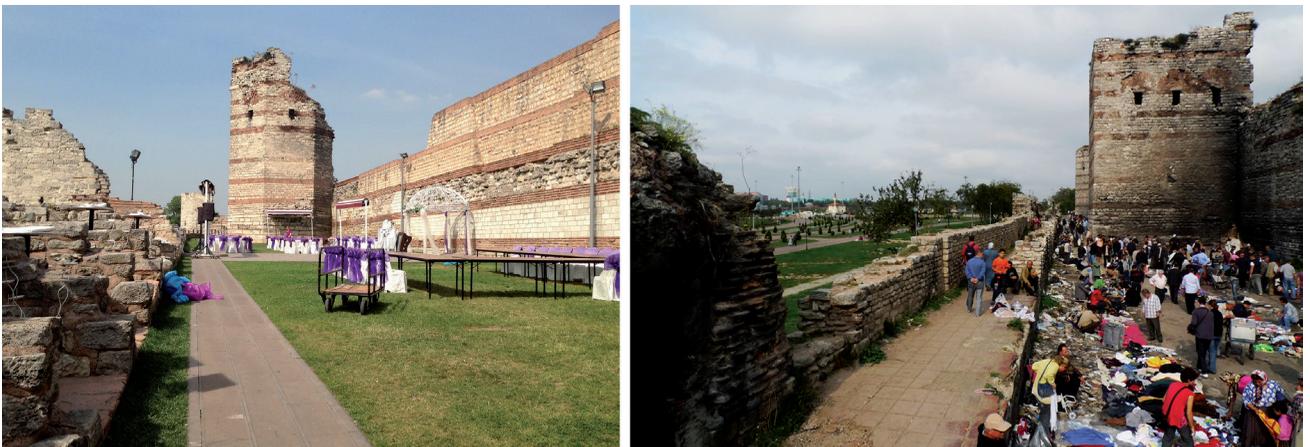




Figure 20. The Tamed Landscape of the Mural Zone: (a) Topkapı Park, 2010 (Sevgi Ortaç Archive) (b) "Uluslararası Barış" Park, 2016 (Personal Archive).

Sulukule case, the authorities' desire to transform "informal" to "formal" was indicative of an extreme unawareness of the characteristic spatial typology – narrow streets with courtyard housing units – of Sulukule (Kıyak İngin and İslam, 2015, 170).

Such reclamation attempts, by introducing a domesticated landscape (Figure 20), also challenged the multifarious territories of the mural zone. However, not only the mural zone, but also the Land Walls have been tamed by the construction of fences that prevent access into the subspaces, and by the designation of certain parts of the mural land at Topkapı as the Fatih Municipality social facility area, which converted the walls into a background for ceremonies (Figures 19a). All these spatial interventions have also destroyed communities and their spaces along the walls (20). This new scape has highly interrupted the depth – multifarious spatial and social territories – along the fissure, and exposed a generic landscape that can be found in any other part of the city.

Furthermore, the changing scale and speed of transportation infrastructure have also solidified the fragmented fabric and depression surface quality of the mural zone (Figure 21). The recent construction of the Marmaray Project has altered the mural zone – in the south – at Yedikule and Kazlıçeşme. Apart from the transportation infrastructure, a further reason for fragmentation might be argued to be the existence of introverted spaces and land uses: a number of governmental institutions, hospitals and educational facilities having their own strict boundaries which interrupt the continuity in the zone.

20. For further discussion see Sevgi Ortaç (2010) and Pelin Tan (2010).



Figure 21. Leveled Roads: From Topkapı Park toward the South, 2009 (Personal Archive)

The coexistence, and in certain parts, the superimposition of all these spaces motivated the invention of mural zone as an urban fissure in Istanbul. The Land Walls, being the core structure of the fissure, have (ex) (im)posed a strong linearity that has molded the mural zone. It was not just the triple defense system of the Land Walls which formed the fissure, but cemeteries, *bostans*, flowscapes, and uncertain spaces have all shaped its spatial territory. Likewise, diverse social territories which have been mostly assessed as informal also molded the spatiality of the fissure, and articulated a temporal ground along it. In this respect, the mural zone, which seems to disturb the continuity in the urban fabric as an urban fissure, has also emerged as an operative ground and an opening – not a *terra nullius* – that stocks infrastructure, landscapes, architectural and archeological assets, knowledge and informal occupancies.

The dramatic transformation of the mural zone discussed so far conversely enhanced values of the currently existing remains and reminiscences in the mural zone. While there have been considerable changes in the landscape of the mural zone, there has been also a noteworthy continuation in several land use patterns. Cemeteries, sacred sites, *bostans* and gates that have characterized the mural zone over centuries have remained significant, not only due to their spatial assets, but also by transmitting certain practices, rituals and knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The article has exposed Land Walls as a mural zone and decoded its spatial manifestation as an urban fissure that “molds, influences and controls” (21) spaces, occupancies and practices along its line. The Land Walls, being part of the defense system, strictly defined the western edge of Constantinople for many centuries. After the Ottoman Conquest in the 15th century, along with their major *raison d’être* – defense – the Land Walls also lost their historical context, but continued to exist as a line of control, accompanied by a mural zone, in the civilian life of the city. Offering a ground where the walls and landscape dissolved into one another, the mural zone was involved with cemeteries, sacred sites, sparsely situated houses, industry, small-scale commerce close to certain gates, *bostans* and vast tracts of vacant lands. This scene had remained almost unchanged until the mid-20th century, when squatter houses, which would dominate the landscape of the extramural zone for decades, began to flourish to the west of the walls. After that time, in a state of physical, functional and semantic emptiness, the mural zone emerged as a potential land for informal occupancies and practices, without any urban strategy. However, in the post-1980 period, a new era in the history of the mural zone emerged. Unlike in the previous period, the mural zone stood between two densely settled urban milieus and emerged as an urban fissure which covered all produced and (super) imposed spaces, occupancies and practices in time. However, remaining in the city, no more at the edge, the mural zone has emerged as a valuable

21. These three terms are used by Sack to argue on territoriality (Sack, 1986).

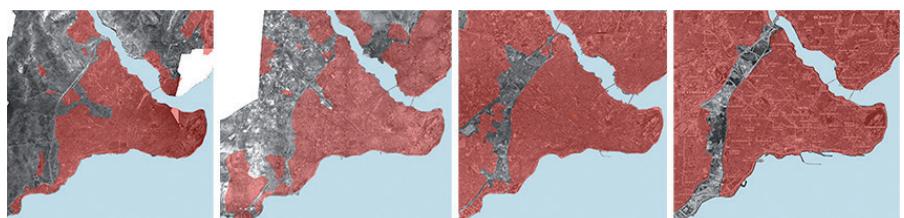


Figure 22. Expansion of the City and Formation of the Fissure along the Land Walls (schematic representation); 1940s, 1960s, 1980s, 2000s (Developed based on the 1946, 1966, 1982 and 2011 Aerial Photos, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality)

urban void for the new construction and urban strategies (**Figure 22**). Challenging the developed conservation plan and policies of the period, the fate of the mural zone ended up with large-scale spatial clearances and insertions that totally razed the characteristic spatiality of the Land Walls; and introduced a generic landscape and improved (infra)structure, in complete contrast to the wilderness of the past.

In this respect, “fissure”, as a lens to decode former urban edges, allows us to explore the Land Walls in an integrated – spatial and temporal – framework. For centuries, the Land Walls have stood and sometimes blocked, while shaping, sheltering and producing spaces, uses, occupancies, practices, knowledges and legends. Since the Land Walls have been the core structure of the mural zone, the majority of spaces, uses, traditions and events have been formed by the edge disposition of the walls, and might be argued as anchored spatial occupancies that still keep their traces in the mural zone (Bütüner, 2015).

Hence, the term “urban fissure” also motivates discovery of the temporal dimension of the mural zone: layered spatiality and landscape reminiscences. The triple defense system of the Land Walls, the continuing land use patterns (*bostans*, cemeteries, sacred spaces), spatial removals/injections, informal/spontaneous occupancies and temporal spaces for specific events have all formed a heterogeneous milieu with diverse territories, but at the same time, imply one territory dominated by the walls – the mural zone. Taking into account the historical alteration of the mural zone’s spatiality, it would be fair to say that the mural zone has been formed by superimpositions of spaces, patterns, practices and reminiscences. Each historical period has introduced a new state to the mural zone, where the newly introduced one concealed or sometimes highlighted the existing one (Baş Bütüner, 2010a). In this respect, the reconceptualization of the Land Walls will undoubtedly clarify the merged spatial, social and temporal assets of the Land Walls, and will expose certain values and potentials which for years have been viewed as problems.

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Anahtar Sözcükler: Kara surları; kentsel yarık; kentsel kenar; kent surları; İstanbul.

KENTSEL YARIK: İSTANBUL KARA SURLARI VE DUVAR BÖLGESİNİN MEKANSAL TEZAHÜRÜ

Bu makale, sınırları yok olan ve yayılan kentlerde “kentsel kenarın” değişen mekânsallığını ve konumunu “kentsel yarık” kavramı üzerinden sorgulamaktadır. İki karşıt ortam arasındaki sona erme durumunu vurgulayan “kenar” kavramı, yayılan kent dokusunda asıl anlamını yitirerek, yeni bir kavram üzerinden eleştirel bir okumayı gerektirmektedir. Birbirinden farklı iki ortam arasında iletişim/etkileşim hattını tarifleyen “kenar” (kentlin yayılmasıyla “yarık” olarak okunabilecek) “üretken bir sınır” olarak kendine özgü peyzajı oluşturur. Bu noktada, çok katmanlı mekânsallığı ile İstanbul Kara Surları “kentsel yarık” kavramının tartışılmasında özgün bir alan olarak ortaya çıkar. Kara Surları’nın sahip olduğu üçlü savunma sistemi (iç duvar, dış duvar, hendek, teraslar, kuleler ve kapılar) karmaşık bir mimari sunar. Mimarının yanı sıra, Kara Surları yakın çevresinde “kenara” özgü bir alanın oluşmasına da olanak tanır; sur kapıları, Bizans İmparatorluk Sarayları, Yedikule, bostanlar, mezarlıklar, kutsal mekânlar, sanayi alanları, ulaşım hatları, rekreasyon alanları ve mahalleler. Sözü edilen mekânsal biraradalık, tarihsel süreçte gelişen mekânsal müdahalelerle şekillenen bir “duvar bölgesi” yaratır. Bu bağlamda, “duvar bölgesi”, farklı zamanlarda farklı temsillere sahip bir alan olarak da tanımlanabilir; yüzyıllar boyunca kentin sınırlarını koruyan bir savunma hattı; Osmanlı Dönemi İstanbul’unda işlevini yitirmiş savunma yapısı; 19. yüzyılda harap “kentsel kenar”; 1950’lerde kentteki “yaban”; 1980’lerde kentsel boşluk/aralık. Özellikle 1980’lerden sonra artan ulusal, uluslararası ve yerel politikalar, planlama girişimleri ve mekânsal müdahaleler, duvar bölgesinde parçalanma, aşırı programlanmışlık ve karakteristik peyzajın yok olmasına sebep olan sorunlu bir durum ortaya çıkartır. Bu amaçla, bu makale, duvar bölgesinin

çoklu ölçek ve katmanlarda var olan ve “kentsel yarık” olarak okunabilecek mekânsallığını bütünleşik bir tarihsel ve kavramsal okumayla tartışmaya açmaktadır. Makalede geliştirilen tartışma, bugün (büyük ölçüde) tehdit altında olan duvar bölgesine özgü mekânları, değerleri ve bilgiyi bir kez daha hatırlatarak; bölgeyi aşırı programlanmış kentsel senaryolardan ve peyzaj uygulamalarından koruyacaktır.

URBAN FISSURE: THE SPATIAL MANIFESTATION OF THE ISTANBUL LAND WALLS AND MURAL ZONE

This article intends to question changing spatiality and position of the “urban edge” in expanding cities, and argues its spatial manifestation as an “urban fissure”. The term “edge”, which basically refers to the end line between two opposing milieus, became redundant in the expanded urban surface; and necessitates a critical review through a new concept. Edge, demarcating the communication/interaction line between two milieus, acts also as a “productive frontier” and generates an edgescape that subsequently appears as urban fissure in the expanded city. The Istanbul Land Walls, with their immense size and multi-layered spatiality, present a unique case in the search for urban fissure. The triple defense architecture of the Land Walls forms a complex system, composed of open and enclosed spaces: inner wall, outer wall, moat, terraces between the walls, towers and gates. Besides their architecture, the Land Walls have also triggered the generation of edge spaces on and around them: gates, Byzantine Imperial Palaces, Yedikule Fortress, *bostans*, cemeteries, sacred spaces, industrial sites, circulation infrastructure, recreational areas and neighborhoods. The coexistence of these spaces has formed a mural zone that has been molded by spatial removals, impositions or superimpositions throughout the course of the history. In this respect, the mural zone might be identified as a challenging ground, having diverse representations in different times: the material expression of the territorial defense for centuries, derelict defense architecture in Ottoman Istanbul, a ruined edgescape in the 19th century; an urban wilderness in the 1950s, and an urban interstice by 1980s. Especially after the 1980s, an increased number of (inter)national efforts/regulations/planning attempts, informal occupancies and spatial removals/injections, have highly influenced the spatiality of the mural zone that ended up with spatial fragmentation, over-programming, and razed characteristic landscape fabric. To this purpose, this article discusses the multi-scaled and multi-layered spatiality and landscape of the mural zone through an integrated historical and conceptual reading that will present the mural zone as an urban fissure. Such analysis will reveal currently endangered spaces and landscape memories in the mural zone, and will liberate mural zone from over-programmed urban and landscape scenarios.

FUNDA BAŞ BÜTÜNER; B.Laud, M.Sc., PhD.

Received her bachelor's degree from Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Design at Bilkent University. Earned her M.Sc. in urban design in 2003 and PhD degree in city planning from Middle East Technical University in 2010. Currently a postdoctoral research fellow at Bauhaus University (Weimar) in Germany. Major research interests include urban design, landscape design, urban landscape, landscape urbanism, landscape infrastructure, post-infrastructure and post-industrial landscapes, urban nature and urban wilderness. fbutuner@metu.edu.tr

