Re-Assessing Hagia Sophia and Istanbul Land Walls through the Lens of Cultural Landscape Concept

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Abstract

Istanbul Historic Peninsula hosts diverse cultural heritage values that represent overlapping cultural layers lasting from the Ancient Greek city of Byzantion to the present city. This study examines the contribution of cultural landscape and historic urban landscape approaches to the conservation of heritage values in the Istanbul Historic Peninsula. Two of four UNESCO World Heritage sites, Hagia Sophia and Istanbul Land Walls are selected as case studies that are the architectural and urban scale components of the city's image. This study aims to attribute to the world heritage sites of Hagia Sophia and Land Walls, which face the risk of loss of authenticity, integrity and outstanding universal value, the concept of cultural landscape, which enables the holistic and sustainable protection of the values and components of these sites. This study reveals the changing and continuing values of which are overlapped on a monument and a site.

Keywords: *Cultural landscape, historic urban landscape, risks, integrity, Istanbul World Heritage Sites.*

Ayasofya ve İstanbul Kara Surlarının Kültürel Peyzaj Kavramı Merceğinden Yeniden Değerlendirilmesi

Öz

İstanbul Tarihi Yarımada, Antik Yunan kenti Byzantion'dan günümüze uzanan ve birbiriyle örtüşen kültürel katmanları temsil eden farklı kültürel miras değerlerine ev sahipliği yapmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, kültürel peyzaj ve tarihi kentsel peyzaj yaklaşımları dikkate alınarak, İstanbul Tarihi Yarımada'daki miras değerlerinin korunmasına sağlayacağı katkılar irdelenmektedir. UNESCO Dünya Mirası alanı ve kent imgesinin mimari ve kentsel ölçekteki bileşenleri olan Ayasofya ve İstanbul Kara Surları makalenin örnek çalışması olarak seçilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, özgünlük, bütünlük ve üstün evrensel değer kaybı riski ile karşı karşıya olan Ayasofya ve Karasurları dünya miras alanlarına, bu alanların değerlerini ve bileşenlerini bütüncül ve sürdürülebilir şekilde korumayı sağlayan kültürel peyzaj kavramının atfedilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu çalışma, bir anıt ve bir alanın üst üste çakışan değerlerinin değişen ve devam eden yönlerini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Kültürel peyzaj, tarihi kentsel peyzaj, riskler, bütünlük, İstanbul Dünya Miras Alanları.*

1. Introduction

The awareness of 'heritage' emerged in Europe within the avantgarde movements in the 19th century, followed by the theories and practice of conservation as restoration of architectural monuments from 19th century to the mid-20th century. Beginning from the half of the 20th century, after the destructive effects of World War II on cities and growing awareness of losing identity and the memory of places, the context of heritage was first enlarged with the Venice Charter in 1964 by including ordinary buildings and historic areas. The following charters marked the evolution of the concept of heritage from a single 'monument' to a 'site' and 'place' (Alici, 2021). The expansion of the meaning of cultural heritage and greater recognition of the concept of the built environment provides the basis for a new common language which develops and encourages as a collective resource and responsibility (Assi, 2000).

The context of heritage also gets a deeper meaning from the beginning of the 21st century through contemporary approaches such as cultural landscape. In 1925, Carl Sauer emphasized cultural landscape (Figure 1) as a geographical area and human influences in that area and how culture shapes geography (Sauer, 1925 & Leighley, 1963 in Tuna Yüncü, 2015; Fowler, 2003). After the 1970s, the concept of cultural landscape was recognised as a process that takes place over time through of human activities rather than a physical and historical product (Taylor, 2009; Kap Yücel & Salt, 2018). Similarly, the concept of heritage is considered as process that constitutes a process in several topics such as experience, identity, intangibility, memory and remembering, heritage as performance, place and dissonance (Smith, 2006).
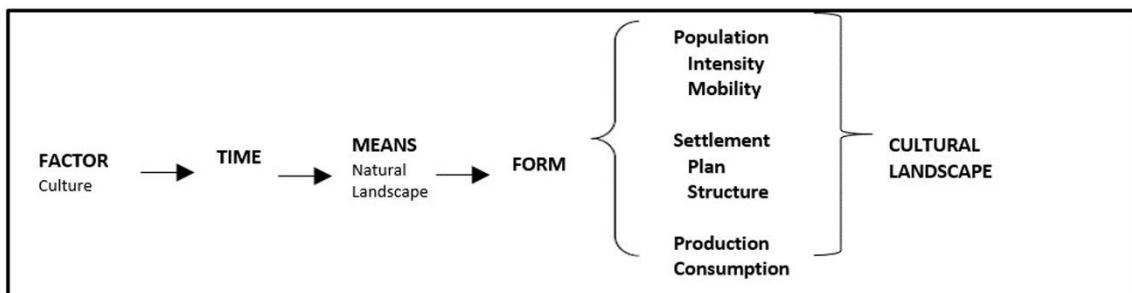

Figure 1. Sauer's chart showing the components of the cultural landscape (Buckle, 2002)

One of the earliest documents using the term 'landscape' is "Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding of the Beauty and Character of Landscapes and Sites" adopted in the 12th General Assembly of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] in 1962. This document intends to take measures for the protection of nature. According to this document, safeguarding mean the preservation and restoration of both natural and man-made natural, rural and urban landscapes (UNESCO, 1962). European Landscape Convention defined a landscape as "an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors" (Council of Europe, 2000).

World Heritage Convention is the first international document that defines cultural landscapes as a cultural property category. The term 'cultural landscape' is defined as "combined works of nature and of man" in Article 1 of World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 1972). Following the Convention, the definition and three categories of World Heritage cultural landscapes were adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 1992 and included in Operational Guidelines in 2002. According to Operational Guidelines, cultural landscape is defined as the 'interaction between humankind and its natural environment' (UNESCO-WHC, 2002) which remained the same in 2005 and 2008 revisions of Operational Guidelines (Mitchell et al., 2007). Thus, cultural landscapes became one of the cultural property categories in the World Heritage Convention after the 1990s (Aplin, 2007).

The Recommendation on the Integrative Conservation of Cultural Landscape Areas, published by the Council of Europe in 1995, emphasises that the continuity of the cultural landscape areas defined as pieces of land that were formed by artificial and natural factors, that witnessed the evolution of human society and the temporal and spatial character of social settlement, that introduced the past land use

and activities, social skills and traditions, that bore the physical traces witnessing the historical events, and that were identified with different social values in the historical process should be provided with appropriate and effective tools (Plachter et al., 1995).

Cultural landscape is the trace left by human activity in the environment and a direct reflection of the way of life, social and cultural activities of a society. Cultural landscapes also contain memory places that reflect the cultural identity and memory of societies. Places of memory are one of the most important components of the cultural landscape in terms of function and formation process. Cultural landscapes are the reflection of people's social development, creativity and way of life, and thus are a determining factor in urban identity (Günaçan & Erdoğan, 2018).

At this point, the concept of cultural landscapes reminds the world-famous playwright William Shakespeare's words "All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players." Assuming a cultural landscape or heritage landscape as a theatrical play, we can say that the stage is the place, the theatre is the whole landscape, the players, audience, and workers backstage are part of the stakeholders, and the play is the cultural process that creates the heritage. A theatre is the mirror of life. From this point of view, cities and all human settlements are magical mirrors of life reflecting past and present at the same time on one screen.

To understand and study a place in terms of the cultural landscape approach, we need to understand what the interaction is and how it happens. Both cultural and natural heritage with intangible associations contribute to the creation of identity and thus to collective memory. Therefore, documenting and managing heritage places requires community participation to recognise the cultural significance of a place. At this point, the cultural landscape approach is a way of understanding a cultural heritage component with its all associations which contribute to the creation of it from past to present, from tangible to intangible, from natural to artificial. In this paper, the concept of cultural landscape is examined with a holistic and inclusive perspective, and it is explained that conservation can be achieved with an understanding as a part of the natural continuity.

While the term "cultural landscape" was first used in heritage studies as a category of heritage sites in the World Heritage Convention, it was consumed as an approach and adopted to urban sites. The other key concept concerning the cultural landscape approach and implements it to historic cities is the 'historic urban landscape (HUL)' which is defined as "the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of 'historic centre' or 'ensemble' to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting" (UNESCO, 2011). Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) is not a new type of heritage, but an innovative method in urban heritage conservation and it provides an opportunity to rethink the values and characteristics and identify the heritage components of a site in a new perspective for sustainable conservation of them (Yan, 2018). According to Jukka Jokilehto, "HUL means an approach to the identification and recognition of specified qualities, characteristics and significant relationships in the built and natural territory, resulting from processes over time and being associated with multiple layers of significance" (Jokilehto, 2010). Ken Taylor raises a few questions in his article about cities as cultural landscapes. He asks how the cultural landscape concept relates to the historic urban environment, what is the importance of landscape as a repository of social history and human values, and what are the plural identities, beliefs and traditions of a city (Taylor, 2015). The HUL approach emphasises the historical layers of a city. Furthermore, Dennis Rodwell argues that the concept of layering has the same meaning with the separate layers which are overlayed by superimposition, so, layering does not manifest the term harmonious co-existence (Rodwell, 2018).

Istanbul, a world city, has been the subject of many research activities due to its local, regional and international importance in terms of world and national history throughout history. The Historic Areas of Istanbul, representing the cultural layers of its history, are one of the earliest UNESCO World Heritage sites in Türkiye. Since the inscription into the World Heritage List in 1985, the concept and context of heritage have continued to develop from urban sites to cultural landscapes and historic urban landscapes. At present, they face several problems such as loss of authenticity, integrity and outstanding universal value that require to study of historic sites in this new concept.

There are various studies that have previously examined the renovation areas in Istanbul with the HUL approach (Dinçer, 2013). Several studies considered the Land Walls not only as a monument but also the surrounding landscape (Durusoy & Cihanger, 2016; Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, 2021; Kıvılcım Çorakbaş & Kunt, 2023) and intangible cultural qualities (Aksoy & Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, 2021) of the territory. Although there are many studies on World Heritage Sites in Istanbul, this paper is one of the few academic studies that examine and discuss the area with cultural landscape and HUL approaches.

The aim of this paper is to apply these new heritage concepts to the Istanbul Historic Peninsula and the World Heritage Sites. This paper investigates and re-interprets the Istanbul Historic Peninsula by referring to 'cultural landscape' and 'historic urban landscape' approaches to deeply understand the cultural significance of the city. Firstly, the history of the area has been briefly mentioned and the relationship of the city with its immediate surroundings and hinterland that explained from macro scale to urban scale. At the architectural scale, the Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area focusing on Hagia Sophia is discussed to understand a monument and its immediate surroundings by explaining the conservation theory and practice during periods of the Ottoman Empire and Republic of Türkiye as well as the continuing and changing functions of heritage places by exemplifying the Hagia Sophia. Then, at the urban scale, Istanbul Land Walls is discussed to understand the use of place, intangible values of its territory, integrity of setting and re-interpret the area as a changing and living landscape. Additionally, this study considers the risks faced by heritage values today, when it is desired to produce solutions to these risky situations, answers to the questions of what is conceptually necessary to ensure the protection and sustainability of heritage without losing its authenticity and cultural significance have been sought.

Consuming a city as a living entity, they are like the nucleus and wall of a cell. From this point of view, Hagia Sophia and Land Walls cannot be seen as two separate monuments of the city. The gates and streets constitute a network which reaches Hagia Sophia, the core of the city. From this point of view, Hagia Sophia and Istanbul Land Walls, the two of four World Heritage Sites in Istanbul that represent two symbolic monuments at urban and architectural scales are selected to identify the rich historical layers of Istanbul as a living heritage today. This study discusses how to apply these approaches to two different scales and different typed of heritage sites. It reveals the changing and continuing values of which are overlapped in the two cases.

2. Material and Method

The development of the context and the new concepts of contemporary conservation theory such as cultural landscape and historic urban landscape approaches requires to re-assess the historical environment and world heritage sites. The material of this paper is the two of the four World Heritage Sites in Istanbul Historic Peninsula. These cases are the Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area, focusing Hagia Sophia and the other one is Istanbul Land Walls. Thus, this paper focuses on the different cases at the urban and architectural scales. These heritage places have been selected for their changing and living cultural landscape characteristics.

2.1. A Brief History of Istanbul and the Two World Heritage Sites

The Istanbul Historic Peninsula, the old city center, is strategically located on the Bosphorus between the Balkans and Anatolia and the Black Sea and the Mediterranean (Figure 2, Figure 3) and has been associated with major events in political history, religious history and art history for more than 2,000 years (UNESCO-WHC, 2020).

Figure 2. Bosphorus and Golden Horn, a view from Beyazıt Tower (The photo is taken by the first author in 2014)

Figure 3. Panaromic view of the Istanbul Historic Peninsula and Bosphorus, a view, from Beyazıt Tower (The photo is taken by the first author in 2014)

Even though several settlements were discovered in Istanbul and its hinterland dated back to the Prehistoric, Neolithic and Chalcolithic eras, there was no settlement on the Istanbul Historic Peninsula because of the insufficient water resources (Özdoğan, 2020). The very first settlement on the Historic Peninsula, named Byzantion, was an Ancient Greek city founded in 7th century BCE by a Megarion colony that migrated from Greece (Kuban, 2002).

Byzantion was a typical colonial trade city with urban components such as temples, amphitheater, agora, stadium, tetras toon, baths and residential area (Kubat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2014). The city came under the domination of Roman Empire in the 2nd century BCE named Byzantium, and then became the capital city of the Eastern Roman Empire in 4th century BCE named Constantinople. The city expanded by constructing or renewing the walls in different periods of the emperors. Besides the Land Walls and Sea Walls, the Forums, Hippodrome, Harbors, Aqueducts, the main street (Mese) which was a part of Via Egniata, as well as basilicas and churches such as Hagia Sophia and Hagia Eirene were the urban elements that represented the development of Roman city image (Kuban, 2002; Müller-Wiener, 2016; Aktüre, 2018).

The advantage of the location of peninsula (Figure 4) was not only the geostrategic one but also the fertile agricultural lands, water resources, forests and marble quarry in the hinterland (Sakarya, Bursa ans Thrakia plains) that contributed to the development of capital city (Aktüre, 2018). The topography was the decisive factor for the development of the city to the west. The hills were especially chosen to construct symbolic buildings such as Hagia Sophia (Kubat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2014).

Figure 4. Istanbul and its hinterland (Reproduced from Google Earth image by Authors)

The urban pattern and the location of the forums and monuments demonstrated the adaptation of urban structure to the topography. Despite the change and loss of many current elements, the beauty of the city is hidden in its relationship with water and the use of topography. These are examples of how to understand the city image from a cultural landscape perspective in a wider context. The location of the first settlement on the peninsula, the urban pattern as a result of its physical and visual interaction with the water sources, and urban heritage as a multicultural composition created in time are the basic aspects of the cultural landscape perspective for Istanbul.

The Ottoman Emperor Sultan Mehmet II took control of the city in 1453 and the city, named *Konstantiniyye* (refers to Constantinople) and later *Dersaadet* (means gate of happiness), became the third and last capital city of the Ottoman Empire. Beginning from the mid-15th century, the city's image started to change and took an Islamic character too. For example, while most of the churches protected their function, some of them were converted to mosques such as Hagia Sophia. The industrialization and modernization movement started in the mid-19th century and the industrial facilities took place around the Land Walls and Golden Horn (Çelik, 2019).

Istanbul was one of the important centers of cultural wealth of the Ottoman Empire from 1453 to 1922 and the city protects its significance at present (Bilsel, 2016). the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 and the following political periods were the other key events that changed and effected the urban area (Kubat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2014).

The Istanbul Historic Peninsula hosts diverse cultural heritage values that represent overlapping cultural layers throughout history beginning from the Ancient Greek city to the modern era today. The four historical areas in Istanbul (1) were inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1985. The outstanding universal value of Istanbul lies in the unique composition of the architectural masterpieces that reflect both the European and Asian cultures that constitute a beautiful skyline in relation with the Bosphorus (Figure 5).
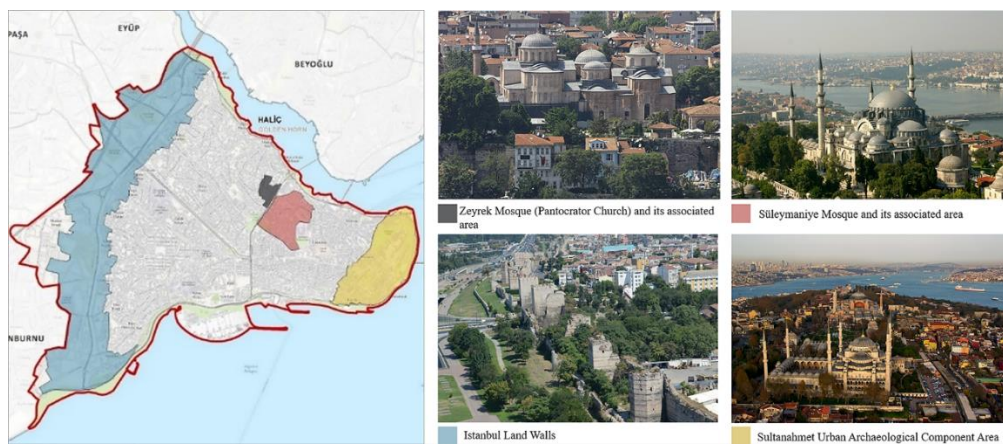

Figure 5. The UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Historic Peninsula, boundary map and photos (Istanbul Site Management Unit, 2020)

At present, the city and the World Heritage Sites are threatened by the population pressure, industrial pollution and uncontrolled urbanization (UNESCO-WHC, 2020).

2.2. Method

UNESCO is an intergovernmental group which also covers the experts on conservation of cultural heritage. Likewise, ICOMOS is member of advisory body. Türkiye is members of both institutions and has a national committee. The experts in these institutions work in cooperation with conservation experts from many different countries that publishes international declarations and guidelines on current issues, problems, and processes of disruption conservation of cultural heritage. One of these international charters is the 'Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)' published by UNESCO in 2011. The universal principles established by this approach compile local values within the framework of a universal concept. The method of the paper is based on the HUL approach (UNESCO, 2011) which is also based on former international charters such as the Washington Charter (ICOMOS, 1987), and Burra Charter process (ICOMOS-Australia, 2013) that are related to the conservation of historic areas. The basis of conservation is to understand the place and assess its cultural significance (ICOMOS-Australia, 2013), so, the HUL approach and its context constitute a basic for this paper's method. The main structure of the research method is designed in four steps as shown in Figure 6.
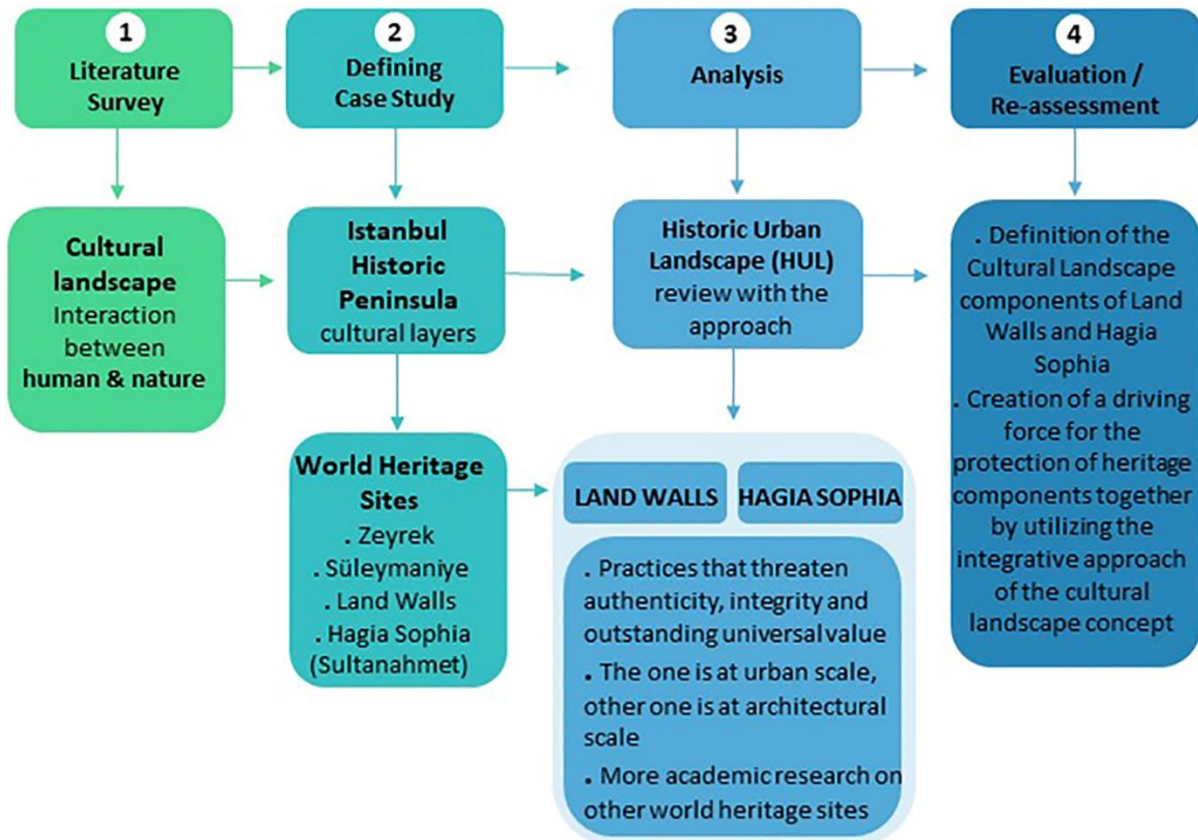

Figure 6. The four-step method scheme (Prepared by the authors)

According to Figure 6, in the first stage of the study, the concept of heritage, its scope, development and cultural heritage conservation approach were searched through the national and international literature. The concepts of cultural landscape and historic urban landscape, their scope, utilisation and what they bring in the context of heritage conservation were questioned. In the second stage, the study area is chosen and defined at three levels: Istanbul Historic Peninsula, World Heritage Sites and two of them as cases. The third stage is based on the cultural landscape concept and historic urban landscape approach which was also developed from the cultural landscape concept. The context and content of the "historic urban landscape (HUL)" approach, in which UNESCO puts the concept of cultural landscape at its centre, is applied to the Istanbul Historic Peninsula. Then, the selected two

UNESCO World Heritage sites, Hagia Sophia and Istanbul Land Walls which are the architectural and urban scale components of the city's image. At the final stage, cultural landscape components and values are defined and the changing and continuing values which are overlapped on a monument and a site are revealed.

Based on the second stage of the method, before explaining the two case studies, the urban character and heritage values of Istanbul Historic Peninsula need to be reconsidered with HUL approach This approach provide better understanding of the urban are within its natural and historical context, the significance of heritage sites and the relation between them. According to the related Recommendation by UNESCO, the context of HUL approach is defined considering the interaction between human and nature which is also the definition of cultural landscape (UNESCO, 2011; Dinçer, 2013). The Table 1, organised according to the context of the HUL approach, shows the diverse heritage elements in the Istanbul Historic Peninsula.

Table 1. The context of HUL approach (UNESCO, 2011) and its implementation to the Istanbul Historic Peninsula (The table is prepared by the authors)

Definition	Historic Layers	Components of the Istanbul Historic Peninsula
	Natural	Sea, Boshporus, forests, coastline, topograhpy,
	Cultural	Ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, Republic of Turkey (urban pattern and architectural heritage)
	Context	
	Topography	City is located on a hill in Historic Peninsula Coastline defines the borders of city (changing during time)
	Hydrology	Marmara Sea Haliç (Golden Horn) Bayrampaşa Stream (Lykos) Büyükçekmece Lake
	Natural features	Bayrampaşa Stream (Lykos) Monumental trees Water resources
	Built environment (historic and contemporary)	The settlements in Prehistoric time Archaeological remains Historic layers of different periods (especially, with the legacy of Architect Sinan) (monuments, civil architecture, Turkish baths, fountains etc.)
	Infrastructure (above and below ground)	Archaeological remains (above and below) The Milion Stone, Via Egnatia Basilica cistern Historic Aquaducts Water Gauge (supplement systems) Taksim tunnel (Funicular railway, 19th century) Modern highways and subways (20th century)
	Open spaces and gardens	Squares (old Roman forums-Ayasofya-Çemberlitaş, Beyazıt) Sultanahmet Square (Hippodrome) Gülhane Park (archaeological site) Haliç-Marmara Sea (as open space)
	Land use patterns and spatial organization	Various building types Mese / Divanyolu (main street) Ottoman kulliyes (social and religious complex) Churches and monastries Fatih Complex, madrasah, the first university Topkapı Palace Industrial heritage (19th and 20th century)

	Perceptions and visual relationships, urban structure	Silhouette of Bosphorus peninsula and Maiden Tower (*Kızkulesi*) Vista points
	Social and cultural practices and values	Ahırkapı Hıdırellez festivals (celebration of coming spring) Yedikule (Seven Towers) Lettuce festivals Yedikule (Seven Towers) Dungeon as concert hall Fener Greek Patriarch, Churches etc.
	Economic processes	Trade city, port city, industrial city, productive city in history Agricultural areas inside and outside the city walls, Vegetable gardens (*Bostan* in Turkish)
	Intangible dimensions of heritage (related to diversity and identity)	Contributions of foreign architects Multi-Cultural society of the city Multi-Religious society of the city İstanbul as an inspiration in literature (Pera Palas, Orient Express, the city itself etc.) Books and memories of travelers (Amicis, Le Corbusier etc.) Spirit of place and memory of citizens Names of Street and roads
	Urbanization and globalization	Opening new streets (Ottoman-Republic) Planning against city fires Demolish of city walls during 1950s Development Plan of Henri Prost (French city planner and architect) Gentrification projects (Sulukule) Skyscapers along the Boshporus, changing silhouette. Yenikapı meeting area (landfill area) Yenikapı *Marmaray* Subway Project process and archaeological excavations
	Development	Tourism (World heritage, cultural, congress, economy etc.)
	Environment	Natural disasters Earthquake (monitoring systems for few monuments) Climate risks on heritage buildings and sites

Historic layers are analysed according to the following headings as stated in HUL Recommendation (UNESCO, 2011): "natural, cultural, context, topography, geomorphology, hydrology, natural features, built environment, infrastructure, open spaces and gardens, land use patterns and spatial organisation, perceptions and visual relationships, urban structure, social and cultural practices and values, economic processes, intangible dimensions of heritage, urbanisation and globalisation, development and environment."

The heritage elements listed in the Table 1 are compiled from the literature (Kuban, 2002; Kubat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2014; Ahunbay et al., 2015; Bilsel, 2016; Müller-Wiener, 2016). Then they are reinterpreted according to cultural landscape and HUL approaches, then placed under the related heading. In the Table 1 above, which was created specifically for the Istanbul Historical Peninsula, the historic layers are exemplified through the cultural landscape components of the Istanbul Historic Peninsula. According to the interpretation of Istanbul's urban heritage by HUL approach the natural layers are sea, Bosphorus, forests, coastline, topography; the cultural layers: Ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, Republic of Turkey; topography layers: city is located on hill in historic peninsula, coastline defines the borders of city (changing during time); geomorphology layers: stone quarry, marble quarry; hydrology layers: Marmara Sea, Golden Horn, Bayrampaşa Stream (Lykos), Büyükçekmece Lake; natural features layers: Bayrampaşa Stream (Lykos), monumental trees, water resources; etc.

When Table 1, which was created in the context of Istanbul according to the HUL approach, is analysed, it is seen that the concepts of layering and harmonious coexistence, which are the tasks undertaken by the historic urban landscape, as mentioned by Dennis Rodwell (2018), are exemplified in this study

area. Since the foundation of the city, the city has continued its multi-ethnic and multi-religious character by hosting diverse cultures. This cultural diversity and heritage diversity exemplifies the harmonious co-existence and overlapping separate layers.

Based on the third stage of the method, to understand and define cultural landscape components, different models in the literature are examined to propose a new model is for two case studies in this paper. The cultural landscape components are categorized as natural-physical (built environment)-social (Kevseroğlu & Ayataç, 2019; Kevseroğlu, 2022; Acar Bilgin & Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, 2023) or natural-cultural/social-perceptional (Swanwick, 2002; Tudor, 2014) or natural-cultural/social (Tuna Yüncü, 2015) or natural-cultural-intangible (Güler, 2018). The proposed model categorizes the cultural landscape components as natural-physical (built environment)-social (intangible dimensions and values) and also refers to the context of HUL Recommendation on Table 1. The analysis model designed for case studies in the third stage is shown in Figure 7.
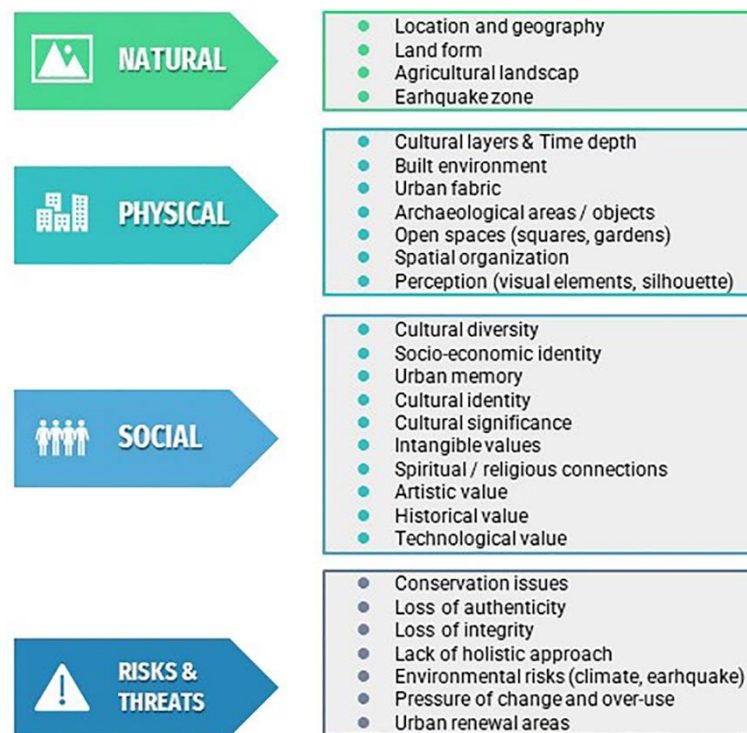

NATURAL
- Location and geography
- Land form
- Agricultural landscap
- Earhquake zone

PHYSICAL
- Cultural layers & Time depth
- Built environment
- Urban fabric
- Archaeological areas / objects
- Open spaces (squares, gardens)
- Spatial organization
- Perception (visual elements, silhouette)

SOCIAL
- Cultural diversity
- Socio-economic identity
- Urban memory
- Cultural identity
- Cultural significance
- Intangible values
- Spiritual / religious connections
- Artistic value
- Historical value
- Technological value

RISKS & THREATS
- Conservation issues
- Loss of authenticity
- Loss of integrity
- Lack of holistic approach
- Environmental risks (climate, earthquake)
- Pressure of change and over-use
- Urban renewal areas

Figure 7. The four-step the model proposal for case studies for defining cultural landscape components of case studies (Prepared by the authors)

According to this model in Figure 7, the model includes not only cultural landscape components but also the risks and threats because cultural landscape and HUL approaches require to consider conservation problems and risks for the sustainable conservation of heritage sites. Two case studies are in detaily explained, and their cultural landscape components and their values are defined and discussed in the following section.

3. Findings

Hagia Sophia and Land Walls in Istanbul Historic Peninsula were inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List with the criteria i, ii, iii, iv in 1985 (UNESCO-WHC, 2020). What these criteria have in common is that they exemplify tangible architectural and urban values. However, when these two areas are analyzed with a cultural landscape approach, it is understood that there is a coexistence of tangible values as well as intangible values and cultural and natural values. Therefore, attributing the concept of cultural landscape to these areas will ensure that all of these values are first documented and protected from a holistic perspective. In this point of view, the model shown in Figure 7 is implemented to the two cases in Table 2.

Table 2. The cultural landscape components of Hagia Sophia and Land Walls (The table is prepared by the authors)

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE / Selection Criteria		NATURAL				PHYSICAL (Built Environment)							SOCIAL (Intangible Dimensions and Values)									
		Location and geography	Land form	Agricultural landscape	Earthquake zone	Cultural layers & Time depth	Built environment	Urban fabric	Archaeological areas / objects	Open spaces (squares, gardens)	Spatial organization	Perception (visual elements,)	Cultural diverstiy	Socio-economic identity	Urban memory	Cultural identity	Cultural significance	Intangible values	Spiritual / religious connections	Artistic value	Historical value	Technological value
HAGIA SOPHIA	i, ii, iii, iv	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
LAND WALLS	i, ii, iii, iv	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Although these sites are included in the world heritage list by emphasizing their tangible values, they also offer heritage diversity and cultural wealth in terms of intangible values as seen in Table 2.

3.1. Hagia Sophia in Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area

Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area of the World Heritage Site consists of two zones. The first part is the Sur-i Sultani (Ottoman imperial walls) Zone in which Topkapı Palace is located as well as the acropolis of Byzantion city. The second one is the Sultanahmet Zone which is a registered archaeological-urban site (Ahunbay, 2011).

The Augustaion Forum and Hippodrome have managed to protect their character as open spaces throughout the part times; this area is presently called the Sultanahmet Square. Similarly, Mese Street is still the main axis of the city. Hagia Sophia (built in the 6th century) and the Sultanahmet Mosque (built in the 17th century) are the significant monuments of the silhouette (Kubat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2014). The functional continuity of monuments and open spaces inherited from different historical periods is still legible in the Sultanahmet Zone. These heritage places such as monuments and voids can be seen almost on all the old maps and gravures from the 15th century to the 19th century and even present photos (Figure 8).
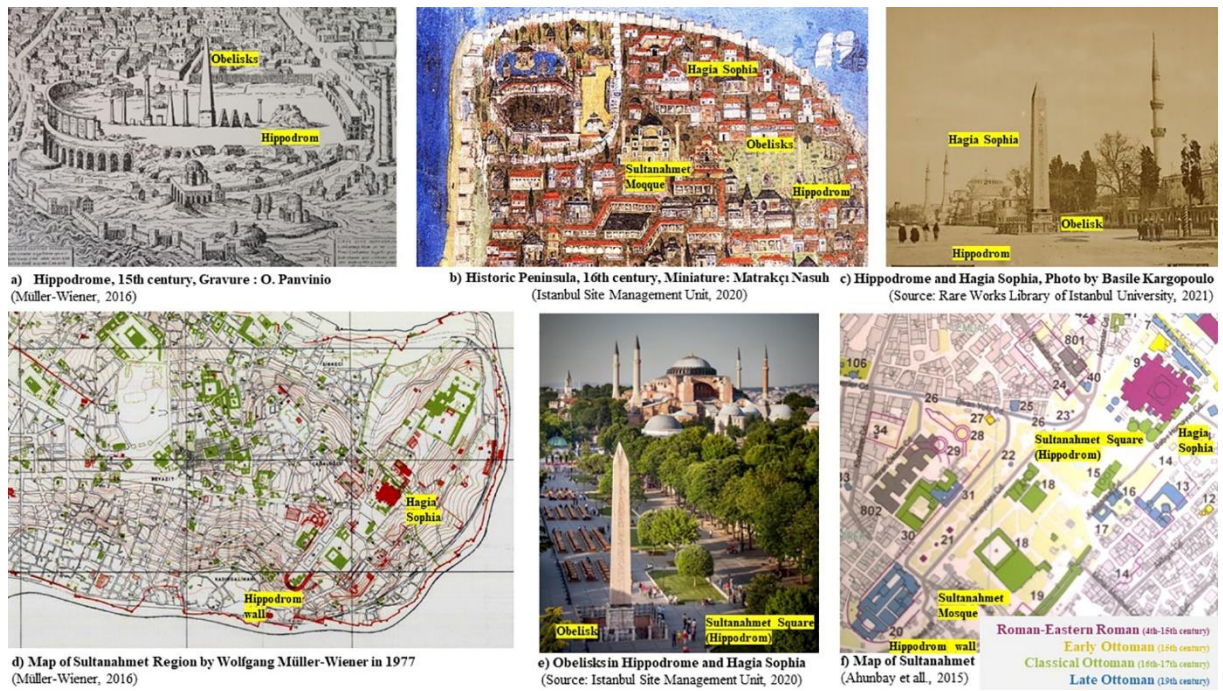
Figure 8. Images of Sultanahmet Area and Hippodrome showing the historical layers through time

The historic layers are also legible on the monuments as well as urban patterns. After Sultan Mehmet II took control of the city, this church was converted to an imperial mosque (2) and became a religious complex between the 15th and 19th centuries (Figure 9). Since the painting of human figures was forbidden in the Islamic culture, the mosaics and figures in the interior of the church were plastered and covered but never destroyed. A waqf (foundation) was established for conserving and repairing the monument. During the Ottoman era, several buildings with new functions and different architectural styles were added to Hagia Sophia in different periods. The interior of Hagia Sophia also underwent some changes by the addition of some elements for Islamic worship such as the mihrab, minbar, emperor's lodge and imam's lodge which were also the examples of different architectural styles. Refunctioning of Hagia Sophia as a mosque was an example of the conservation of monuments for practical need in the Ottoman era. Hagia Sophia was used as a mosque until 1935 (Aykaç, 2019a).
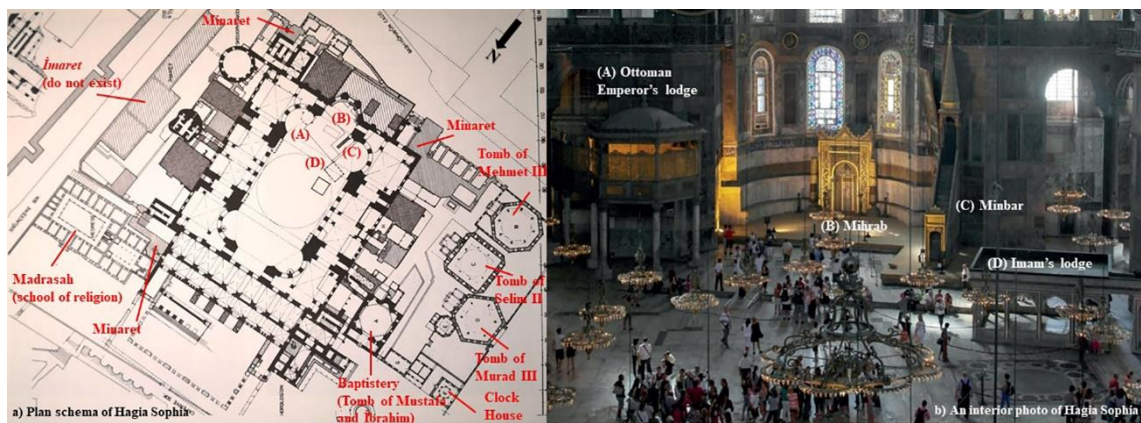

Figure 9. Plan schema (Müller-Wiener, 2016) and an interior photo of Hagia Sophia (Istanbul Site Management Unit, 2020)

The conservation history of Hagia Sophia reflects the conservation practice of both Ottoman State and Republic of Turkey. For instance, Sinan the Architect added the outer walls to strengthen and support the structure in 16th century. The waqf (foundation) system ensured the maintenance and repair of monuments in the Ottoman era. The first legislations on built environment in the Ottoman era were made in the second half of 19th century, containing some regulations against the city fires, enlarging roads, building restrictions near the monuments, demolishing wooden structures close to monuments

for fire prevention etc. (Madran, 2009). As a consequence of this legislation, all the traditional wooden houses near Hagia Sophia were demolished in mid-19th century (Çelik, 2019).

In the second half of 19th century, there were a great deal of interaction between Europe and Ottoman Empire; foreign experts in many fields were invited to Istanbul. Gaspare Trajano Fossati and his brother Guiseppe Fossati restored between 1847-1858 Hagia Sophia with the request of Sultan Abdulmecid. Akdoğmuş (2020) evaluates those comprehensive and transformative repairment as radical interventions. They restored the mosaics and ornaments. They removed the plaster on the pandantives of dome; then the faces of four angels came to light. They plastered the outer walls and painted them in stone-brick lines imitation. Similarly, Gaspare Fossati designed the Imperial lodge. After the earthquake in 1894, Raimondo D'Aranco, the Italian architect repaired the Hagia Sophia (Akdoğmuş, 2020).

In Republican era, the General Directorate of Foundations (3), the new owner of the building, repaired Hagia Sophia in 1926. The American Byzantine Research Institute made research on the mosaics and art works in 1930s. Cahide Tamer, the first female conservation architect in Türkiye, repaired several parts of interior and exterior in 1950s. After the historical areas of Istanbul was inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List, a scientific committee (4) was organised for the maintenance and restoration works of the building.

3.1.1. Changing function of Hagia Sophia

After the foundation Turkish Republic in 1923, the city of Ankara, located in the central Anatolia region, became the capital city of new the Republic of Turkey. Istanbul but lost its importance as a governmental city and Sultanahmet District and its components remained the legacy of Ottoman authority.

Musealization approach of the new secular Republic regime was adopted as "a strategy for neutralizing the imperial and Islamic past and their associations of historic monuments" such as Topkapı Palace and Hagia Eirene. Based on this point of view, the Council of Ministers declared Hagia Sophia as a museum in 1934, then, it was opened to visitors in 1935 after repairs. As mentioned in the act, Hagia Sophia became a new scientific institution for humanity. Consequently, the Hagia Sophia Museum became a symbol of secularism and neutralization of contested religions (Aykaç, 2019b; 2019c). The decision taken in 1934 by Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, and his cabinet reflected the worldview of the Republic of Türkiye and its interpretation of common cultural heritage (ICOMOS Turkey, 2020). Refunctioning of Hagia Sophia as a museum is an example of conserving monuments with their cultural values.

Günaçan & Erdoğan (2018) stated that Hagia Sophia is a multi-layered place of memory that keeps the traces of the memories and events of different religions in the same space by being functioned as a church for 916 years and a mosque for 481 years. Additionally, the building served as a museum for 85 years until 2020 and kept its role of being a memory place at international level.

The debate on refunctioning of Hagia Sophia as a mosque and legal process began in 2005. Some part of the museum structure started to be used for worshipping in 2016. There started a fresh debate in mid-2020 once again. The government intended to change its museum function and convert it back to a mosque again. While many experts from diverse fields of science and arts, and most people in the community in the country supported this idea, many conservation experts, and national and international institutions, on the other hand, defended the idea of continuing its museum function, focusing on cultural values and transmitting them to future safely (Ahunbay, 2020; Eldem, 2021; UNESCO, 2020; KORDER, 2020; AISB, 2020). Moreover, representatives of some Christian minority groups said that Hagia Sophia was large enough to be used and shared by the Muslims and Christians together; it can be a place of peace. Eventually, the legal status of Hagia Sophia changed again on the 10th of July, 2020 and was re-opened as a mosque on 24th of July, 2020.

ICOMOS Turkey Board made an announcement on 10th of July 2020 on this debate named "Call for Hagia Sophia" which stated that the museum function should continue because it would strengthen the perception of the multi-layered character of Hagia Sophia in due course. The announcement also

stated that "The Hagia Sophia's presentation, intact with all its layers, should not be obstructed, so this magnificent monument of world architectural history can keep inspiring us all as a symbol of interfaith brotherhood and world peace" (ICOMOS Turkey, 2020).

The requirements of the new mosque function, on the other hand, are arranged inside and outside the building. The spatial changes according to the mosque function can be followed as:

- While the entrance of the building was on the north side, it was later moved to the east side. The people can reach to the nave passing through the eastern side aisle (Figure 10a, 10b)
- Wooden racks with glass covers are arranged inside the eastern aisle to keep shoes safe and odour-free (Figure 10c). This arrangement is because of wearing shoes is not allowed inside the prayer hall according to the Islamic rules. In connection with this rule, the floor of the nave was covered with carpets to keep the body warm during prayer. Even if these carpets protect the stone surface against deterioration, it conceals to see the artwork on the floor. It must be told that the carpets were used where they were needed, such as the floor of nave and some parts of aisles are covered with carpets. (Figure 10d).
- The dome above the mihrab (the apse) is partly covered by curtains inside to conceal the figure of St. Mary and St. Jesus (Figure 10e). This is also because of the human figures and pictures are also forbidden in Islamic culture, too. Concealing the work of art can result in covering the universal value of the historical construction. The changes should not threat the authenticity of building.
- Another example of adapting new function is arranging moveable wooden panels are used to give women private spaces during prayer (Figure 10f).
- Lastly, movable metal separators to interrupt the access to some spaces by all people. (Figure 10g). Similarly, accessing to the aisles upstairs is also restricted. This kind of arrangements might be necessary to protect building against the negative effects of mass tourism.
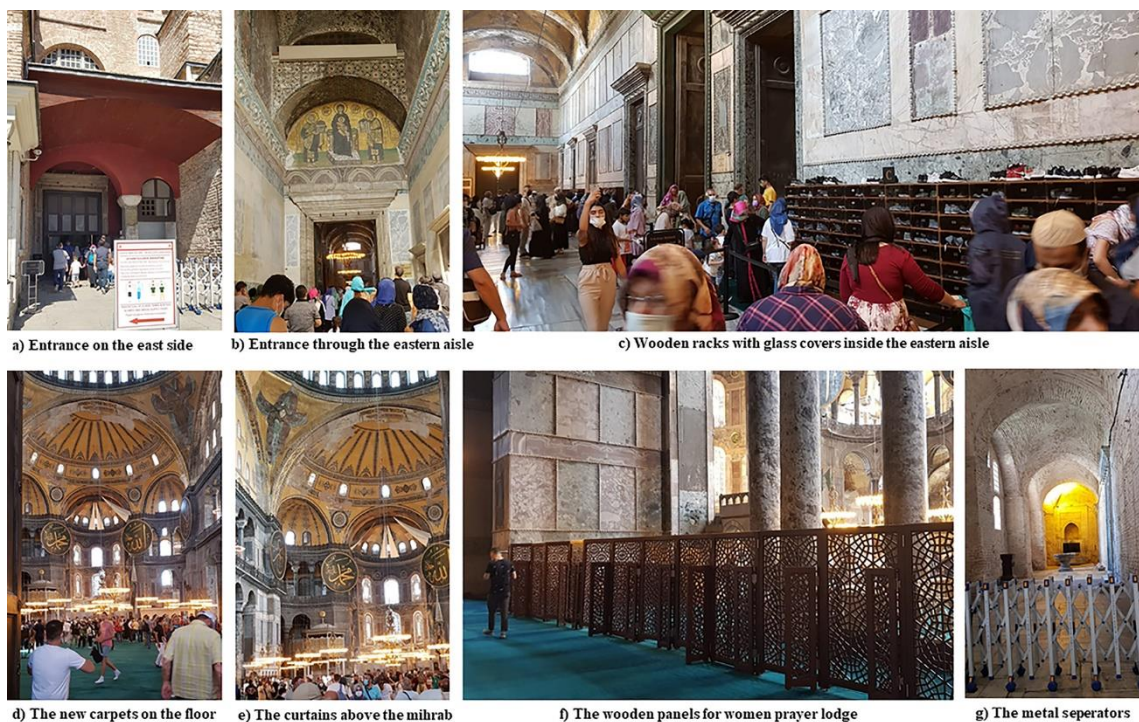

a) Entrance on the east side b) Entrance through the eastern aisle c) Wooden racks with glass covers inside the eastern aisle

d) The new carpets on the floor e) The curtains above the mihrab f) The wooden panels for women prayer lodge g) The metal seperators

Figure 10. New arrangements inside Hagia Sophia after being a mosque (The authors, 2021).

Hagia Sophia is the urban component that generates the urban identity, collective and individual memories associated with heritage values. Countless people have worked for it over centuries and kept working to protect and transmit it to the future generations. As quoted from Jokilehto (2010) and

Rodwell (2018) before, Hagia Sophia is a result of processes over time, and it has multiple layers of significance which represent a harmonious co-existence.

Hagia Sophia, in addition to being an architectural masterpiece, has a symbolic meaning for different religions and cultural significance for many people from all over the world. Furthermore, it constitutes a lesson and source of historic knowledge for experts from all over the world such as architecture, structure engineering, art history etc. Hagia Sophia is a symbol of cultural diversity and plurality of Istanbul for centuries. The concept of cultural landscape requires to consider all physical, social and cultural layers and to respect to all intangible values of each layer.

3.2. Istanbul Land Walls

Historic Peninsula has been fortified since first settlement in 7th BC to protect the city against attacks from the sea and land (Semiz, 2017). The city expanded from east to west in due course; each time, new walls were built by the names of Byzantium (Wall of Byzantium), Septimus Severus (Septimius Severus Walls), Constantine (Wall of Constantine) and Theodosius (Theodosius II Land Walls) beginning from 7th BC to 5th BCE. At the beginning of the IV century, the Emperor Constantinus (324-337) designated the city of Byzantion as the eastern administrative center of the Roman Empire with the name Constantinople/Nea Rome and the land walls were built. The Komnenos Walls located in the north of Theodosian Walls has been built in medieval period (Kayra, 1990; Semiz, 2014; Ahunbay et al., 2015; Başaran & Kızıltan, 2016) (Figure 11).
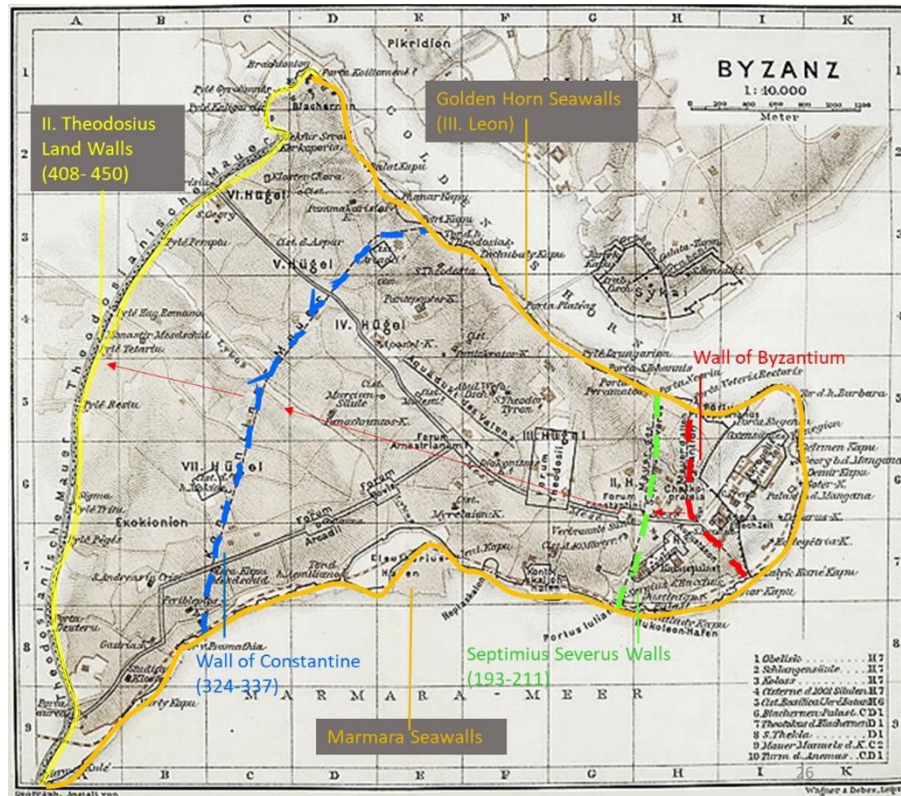

Figure 11. The location of settlements and walls of Istanbul Historic Peninsula that expanded from east to west over time (Reproduced by authors from the old map of ancient Byzantium drawn by Wagner & Debes in 1914 and published in Yetişkin Kubilay, 2010)

There are seven gates and many passageways on the Land Walls. While only the Porta Aurea/Golden Gate is for the imperial gate on the walls, others were used by public (Semiz, 2014; Ahunbay et al., 2015). The valley system, water reserve areas, rugged (mountainous) areas and topography of the city determined the locations of the walls. The land walls consist of a triple defense system consisting of the main wall, the front wall and the ditch, located on natural topographic curves (Figure 12, Figure 13). The arched stone bridges built to cross the large ditch in front of the gates are the oldest bridges in the city. The network of roads connects the historical city center to the Land Walls where the city opens out with magnificent gates.
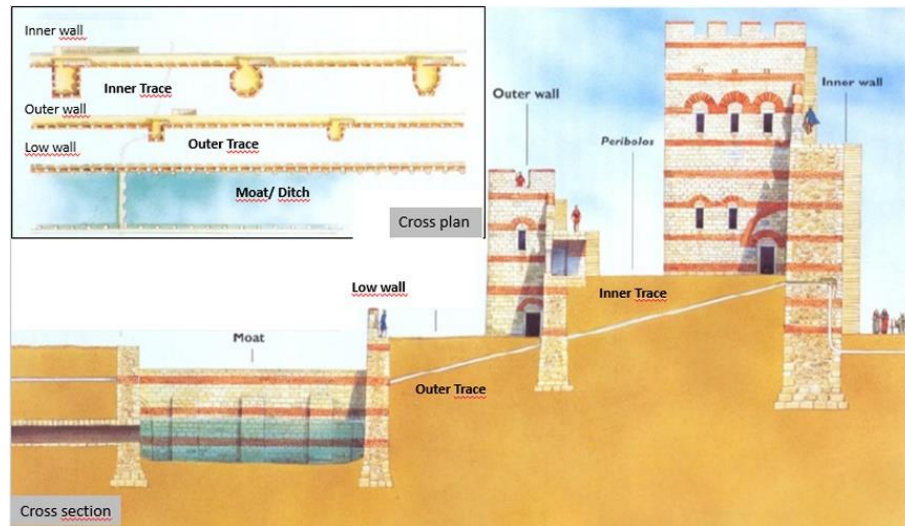
Figure 12. The schema of triple defense system of the Theodosian Walls (Turnbull, 2004)

Figure 13. The photo of triple defense system of the Theodosian Walls (Istanbul Site Management Unit, 2020)

The Land Walls and gates which are the first city images encountered by those who come to the city for the first time have always been perceived as the monuments symbolizing the power of the state. The architectural structure and spatial characteristics of the Land Walls and its relationship with the historical context of the city demonstrates the cultural significance of it.

Istanbul city walls have become the main focus of many scientific studies in the fields of archeology, architecture and urban history, as well as literary depictions. Over the centuries, the land walls in Istanbul have been depicted by many travellers and explorers. As clearly seen in the Historic Peninsula maps and engravings drawn by local and foreign artists since the first depiction drawings made by Buondelmonte (5) (Yetişkin Kubilay, 2010), the city walls are the significant element that defines the boundary of the city. Also, they are the most prominent symbol in the engravings and miniatures of different centuries (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Istanbul Land Walls in maps and gravures (The source of the images a, b, c, e is Kayra 1990; The source of the images d, f is Yetişkin Kubilay, 2010)

Currently, even though the settlement areas of the city have been developing towards the west, it is still the city walls that define the west border of the Historic Peninsula. The location of the city walls, representing the cultural landscape character of the city, contributes to the extraordinary silhouette of the Historic Peninsula.

3.2.1. Conservation history and state of conservation

The city walls, primarily the gates were repaired many times throughout history during the periods of Byzantine, the Ottoman and the Republic of Turkey. On the contrary, city walls were damaged or demolished because of strong earthquakes such as happened in 447, 741, 1766, 1894. After the 1894 earthquake, the 'Ministry of Internal Affairs' underlined the historical importance of the city walls and decided to restore the ruined parts (Ahunbay et al., 2015; Bilsel, 2016; Sarımeşe, 2018). Additionally, the city walls also partly demolished during the urbanisation works and the construction of the railway in the 19th century (Çelik, 2019; Acar Bilgin & Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, 2023). The Yedikule Fortress, which was entrusted to the Directorate of Imperial Museum (Müze-i Hümayun) in 1895.

The scope of the first legislation regarding the protection of ancient monuments called Antiquities Regulation, issued in 1869 (updated in 1874) was only the conservation of the archaeological assets and excavations. While the third Antiquities Regulation, issued in 1884, were declaring 'fortifications" as ancient monuments (Asar-ı Atika in Ottoman) for the first time, the fourth Antiquities Regulation, issued in 1906 clearly defined the city walls as ancient monuments to be protected (Madran, 2002; 2009; Acar Bilgin & Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, 2023).

Land Walls were declared as a "conservation area" in the Old City Master Plan approved by European city planner Henri Prost in 1939. This decision was made sure that the aesthetic value of the walls was revealed as a whole. Within the framework of the first city development plan prepared for Istanbul in 1939, the Land Walls and its surroundings were registered as "archeological site" came under legal protection. This city development (master) plan envisaged the creation of a wide green belt surrounding the Historic Peninsula from the west. The sea walls were destroyed during the period when the coastal roads were enlarged in the 20th century (Aydemir, 2008; Bilsel, 2011; 2016).

Compared to the Land Walls, the Golden Horn and Marmara walls were destructed more considerably high. Even the Land Walls has partly damaged or demolished, it noticeably stands out and protects its integrity and continuity at present. The Figure 15 shows the conservation state of city walls at urban scale.

Figure 15. Istanbul Historic Peninsula, the red lines show the remains of city walls at present (Semiz, 2014, 489-491; Semiz, 2020)

The Municipal Zoning Directorate prepared the 1/5000 scale Historic Peninsula and Eyüp Region conservation plan in 1964 under the management of architect Turgut Cansever. The areas surrounding the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque and the Land Walls and its immediate surroundings were marked as two special conservation areas (Bilsel, 2016).

The Istanbul Land Walls were taken under protection in 1981 as a conservation area within the scope of national legislation. The Land Walls were included in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List in 1985 and the Municipality initiated a protection project for this specific area. The restoration of the land walls and gates started in the 1940s. Some of the land walls were restored between 1987 and 1991 (Ahunbay et al., 2015; Bilsel, 2016). The fact that the methodology and technique used during the intervention and the excessive intervention imposed on the walls and the use of inappropriate materials raises the question of integrity.

In 1995, within the scope of the Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets (Law No. 2863, 1983), the Historic Peninsula was declared as a site, partly "archaeological", partly "urban archaeological" and partly "historical and urban" and was taken under protection as a whole. The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality adopted the First Site Management Plan in October 2011 (Bilsel, 2016).

3.2.2. The Land Walls as a cultural landscape and its diverse values

The concepts of cultural landscape, memory, and identity are inextricably linked to and interacted with heritage, and the heritage, which has intangible connections with human values, is now focused on the significance of places (Taylor, 2015; Taylor & Xu, 2019).

Cultural landscape is a complex phenomenon with a tangible and intangible identity. Moreover, the cultural landscape is the diversity shaped by the interactions between the human beings and their natural environment and it is the mirror of the cultures that have created it.

The Istanbul Land Walls is interpreted according to the proposed model in Figure 6 and Figure 7 and the cultural landscape components are defined. From the past to the present, the physical form of the Land Walls, its immediate surroundings, the identity of the people living in the neighbourhoods, the migration movements there, the settlements of local population, the network of relations between the productions here can be considered as the cultural landscape components of the area.

In the course of time, the significance of user experience and heritage interaction has emerged in the discussions on authenticity in the conservation of cultural assets. Furthermore, the collective memory of cultural landscape value is another factor that ensures and sustains the authenticity. In this context, the Historic Peninsula of Istanbul has a multi-layered cultural landscape.

The Theodosian Walls were built by the individual efforts of the local fellow citizens of the city. According to the Codex of Theodosius dated 422, there was no single citizen who did not contribute to the construction of the walls. It was stated in the relevant sources that the expenses related to the construction of walls were met by the citizens (Kuban, 2002).

The physical environment of the people living in the neighbourhoods around the Land Walls had significant impact over their social lives at (Yılmaz et al., 2019). In this context, a research project (6) conducted in cooperation with academics from Turkey and England, oral interviews with the residents of the neighbourhood were recorded, the relationship established with the Land Walls was examined (Aksoy & Kıvılcım Çorakbaş, 2021; Kıvılcım Çorakbaş & Kunt, 2023).

Ever since the city walls were built, the existence of visual and written sources documents the agricultural use of the green areas with the walls, the existence of the market gardening (bostan) culture and the traditions of market gardening, the continuity and integrity of the gardens and walls. In fact, the ditches outside the walls were filled with soil and have been used as a vegetable garden for centuries (Kıran, 2019).

According to the Codex of Theodosius dated 422, the interior parts of the towers of the Land Walls were allocated for the storage of agricultural equipment and vegetables and fruits, and that the farmers would be responsible for the protection of these walls in return for using these areas (Ricci, 2008; Kıvılcım Çorakbaş et al., 2017).

The market gardening techniques, passed down from generation to generation, reveal that the orchards are the cultural assets that should be preserved as tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Today, market gardening is carried on in some orchards inside and outside the city walls using traditional methods.

It was stated in the Land Walls World Heritage Site Monitoring Report by UNESCO that the market gardens around the walls should be evaluated as cultural landscapes with an integrated approach. The market gardens are an authentic example of the landscape character and the use of heritage sites associated with the Land Walls. Nevertheless, as part of the Land Walls, the market gardens are not legally protected. Conversely, tangible and intangible values need an integrated conservation approach in order to protect the spirit of the place.

The transformation projects which are prepared after the declaration of the area as a "renovation area" in 2006, were implemented in 2013. These park and recreation projects eliminate the existence and threaten continuity of the market gardens (Kıran, 2019).

Physical indicators of intangible cultural qualities may be the past land use with different meanings for different cultures, monuments, places or buildings with spiritual or religious connections, depictions in literary or artistic works, the places where historical events took place, and physical remains that reveal a road or a route (Kıvılcım Çorakbaş & Çabuk, 2017).

The previous studies show that intangible values are the main factor in ensuring the sustainability of the tangible values of the Land Walls. These living values of Land Walls have indirectly encouraged the local people to maintenance and preserve the walls for centuries.

For the city dweller, the city walls together with civil and military gates, towers, ditches and bridges, ports, docks and piers, the cultivated areas near the walls, the monasteries and traditional houses within the walls, the memories of enemy attacks or the emperors' return from victory, or the repairs that the people carried out in a kind of collaboration were an integral part of the Constantinople life (Kuban, 2002).

The multicultural and multi-ethnic society of the territory have lived together for a long time. There are various heritage elements such as mosques, churches, cemeteries of different religious groups, monumental remains, archaeological remains and industrial heritage buildings in and around the Land Walls (Figure 16).
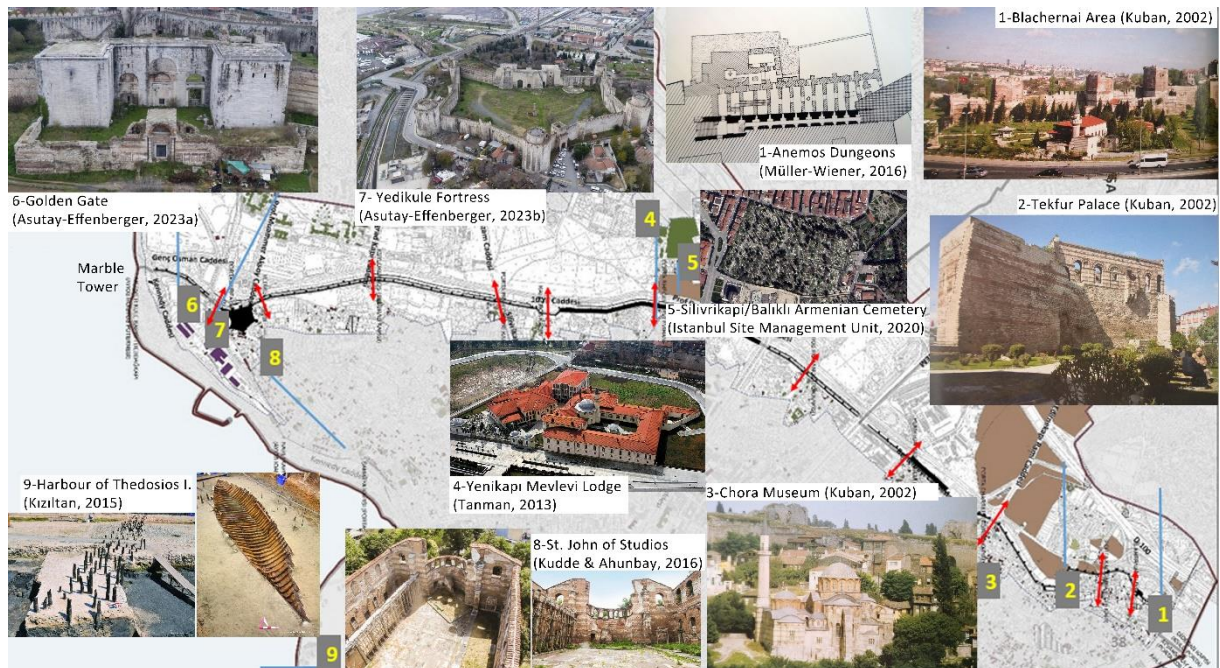

Figure 16. The photos and locations of landmarks in the territory at present (The base map is reproduced by authors that taken from map the Istanbul Site Management Unit, 2020)

3.3. Discussion

The World Heritage justification focuses on the tangible heritage of the city. In addition to tangible values, the city needed to be reinterpreted and evaluated according to cultural landscape approach which includes the intangible values in comparison to tangible ones. Also, it is necessary to define and manage the risks on these values that contribute to the formation of the cultural landscape character of the area.

In the 30th Session of the 2006 Mission Report of the WHC in Istanbul, it was stated that the boundaries of the renovation areas were expected to be changed considering that the intersection of the world heritage sites (Sultanahmet, Süleymaniye, Zeyrek and Theodosius Walls) posed a risk. The World Heritage Sites have faced the risk of breaking the unity of tangible and intangible values and the connection of local people with place because of the renovation areas around, especially for the last two decades (UNESCO-WHC, 2006).

How should these sites be approached in order to take measures against the risky situations on the World Heritage sites in Istanbul and to ensure their sustainability? Firstly, an answer to this question has been sought. In the research on heritage conservation, in the context of current conservation concepts, the vast majority of world heritage sites are evaluated with the concept of cultural landscape.

The historic layers that have developed and accumulated from the hinderland of Istanbul and its immediate surroundings to the present day reveal the strong cultural landscape of the area. The power/impulse that brings forth to the concept of historic urban landscape is that it is unifying and integrative. The landscape serves as an inclusive framework that prioritises the integrity of the tangible and intangible values of the region and the unity of the user and the space and contributes to the solution of cultural and environmental problems.

The cultural tourism based on this kind of heritage buildings economically benefit the society and institutions in the host cities. Visitors coming from all over the world to visit and appreciate the Hagia

Sophia Museum. The mosque function allowed the building to be used not only for cultural and scientific research purposes but also for worship and just for visiting. While this function gives the advantage of use of the building by a wide range visitor, the nonrestricted use increases the number of daily visitors and causes over-use of the building. Also, the new mosque function which provides free of charge entry, may minimise income which comes from cultural tourism. Aykaç (2019a) emphasised that this change might have negative impact and consequences on the museum functions such the other three Hagia Sophias in different cities in Turkey. It is necessary to keep track of and monitor what will change in it after the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul has been converted back to mosque again.

The cultural landscape approach can be considered while studying sites and/or buildings by own. The case of Hagia Sophia exemplifies how a building can be interpreted by analysing with cultural landscape approach. This approach requires the consideration of both physical and social contributions of different periods as well as associated values of them. The location of the monument on a hill, the view around, its contribution to the silhouette of Historic Peninsula, to city's image and to identity and its place in the collective memory, create the cultural significance of it.

Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach (UNESCO, 2011) aims to take into account the city's past, safeguard and transfer it to the future. It requires a deep understanding of the history and cultural significance of heritage sites, as well as the identification of threats and risks to these sites. The Land Walls faces several risks such as the changes ignoring the cultural landscape values, development and zoning pressure around them, demolition of heritage buildings associated with the region. The urban renewal projects around Land Walls such as building luxury residences in place of the abandoned industrial areas caused the immigration of local users around the Land Walls to other districts. Also, the market gardens which are in a fragmented state, have different ownerships. These situations cause the loss of urban memory, local identity, discontinuation of the market garden's which are not legally protected and threatened with destruction and conversion. Changing the function of some of the market gardens to hobby gardens, arranging parking spaces in some places of them, ignoring the multi-layered character of the city walls gradually. This kind of changes damage the harmony of space and the spirit of place, loss of collective and individual memory.

Another risk that the heritage areas face is the lack of cultural landscape concept in the conservation legislation in Turkey. The conservation of cultural heritage in Turkey is mainly based on the Law on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets (Law No. 2863, 1983), with recent updates. The definition of cultural landscape should be included into the content of related current national legislation on protection of cultural properties. There is a need to re-assess and try to understand the Istanbul Historic Peninsula with cultural landscape approach and develop specific conservation measures.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

Hagia Sophia and city walls as monuments that constitutes a place of memory. But, re-assessing these heritage sites with cultural landscape approach, it can be revealed that beyond being a single monument, their cultural significance comes from their own social and physical environment which they effected and also were affected by.

Similar to the Sultanahmet Area and Hagia Sophia, the Land Walls and its immediate surroundings have been decisive in the formation of Istanbul's historical center and silhouette. Instead of transforming the market garden areas, which are an integral component of the Land Walls and its surroundings should be evaluated as a whole. In order to protect the tangible and intangible heritage together and prevent the loss of the spirit of the place, primarily it is necessary to examine the existing risks on heritage elements and values in detail.

This paper re-assessed the two World Heritage sites considering not only the cultural layers and intrinsic values of them separately but also integrated parts of the whole historic urban landscape of Istanbul Historic Peninsula. The cultural landscape approach has the most effective set of concepts for the protection of heritage sites with all their components. It includes the concepts of heritage as a human value, common heritage, social contribution, cultural diversity and protection of cultural

pluralism. In this context, the concept of cultural landscape is attributed to the Land Walls and Hagia Sophia World Heritage Sites in this study. Thus, the cultural landscape approach will constitute the most comprehensive conservation framework in generating solutions to the risks that these sites face today.

As far as integrated conversation of our cultural heritage is concerned, recognition of values and public awareness at all levels of the society seems to be a prerequisite. Therefore, at this point, it must be emphasized that the primary responsibility of the conservation professionals is being one of actors in education of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage education should be included in the education of young people as a lesson at all levels of the education system. Active conservation and research, developing sustainable heritage management methods should be made a part of everyday life. In order to achieve an ethical and spiritually internalized heritage experience, the international conservation context should be discussed locally, and a specific way/method of heritage management should be sought in local context.

Acknowledgements and Information Note

(1) The four world heritage sites in Istanbul are Sultanahmet Urban Archaeological Component Area, Süleymaniye Mosque and its associated area, Zeyrek Mosque (Pantocrator Church) and its associated area, the Istanbul Land Walls (UNESCO-WHC 2020).

(2) Mehmet II ordered the protection of the Hagia Sophia and never allowed it to be destroyed. Mehmet II was a well-educated intellectual person. He was aware of the artwork and significance of Hagia Sophia for the society.

(3) A new institution of the state that follows-up the waqf (foundation) system in Ottoman period.

(4) Zeynep Ahunbay, another female conservation architect who made many contributions to the process.

(5) Cristoforo Buondelmonte prepared a guidebook titled "Liber Insularum Archipelagi" for the travels in the Mediterranean Basin.

(6) The web site of the research project, "Plural Heritages of Istanbul", Accessed: August 25, 2020). The project titled "Plural Heritages of Istanbul: The Case of Land Walls" was prepared under the coordination of Prof. Dr. Asu Aksoy and Assoc. Dr. Figen Kıvılcım Çorakbaş with the support of TÜBİTAK in Türkiye, in cooperation with the University of Newcastle with the support of the Newton Fund in England. "This project develops new valorisations of the Istanbul Land (Theodosian) Walls, working with communities to co-produce both situated and web-based, public-facing digital heritage interpretation resources that reflect non-official, hitherto unauthorised understandings of the Walls and their environs. The project also builts capacity, in line with the aims of the Newton Fund, through modelling heritage management/interpretation practice, digital technologies and community engagement within the heritage sector". Accessed July 3, 2022. https://pluralheritages.ncl.ac.uk/#/about).

Author Contribution and Conflict of Interest Declaration Information

All authors contributed equally to the article. There is no conflict of interest.

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