



Historic Preservation

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Preservation of Rumeli Fortress

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ABSTRACT

Rumeli Fortress has a unique place in the history of world with Its properties. This study gives information about the castle and Fatih period, explains the aspects of the castle which is thought to be important and mentions the gradually ruined or transformed parts. Essential actions to do about these parts which have become ruin and restored without being loyal to Its origins is presented. It is discussed to preserve the ruined castle originally.

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Architectural Research,
History Research Method,
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Bogazkesen,
Rumeli Fortress.

Introduction

Rumeli Fortress is a castle which was built by the order of Fatih (the conquerer) in 1452. This unique example of Ottoman military architecture has been surviving as a primary source of evidence for the history of architecture researchers. The castle is not only a strategic building which has effected Its period but also an asset having great value from the perspective of the world's history of technology. There are researchers who did extensive and detailed research on this subject, most important of them are Ayverdi, Gabriel and Dağtekin [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].

Method

Archer, Togan and Stanford's ideas on methodology is used in this paper and this study is prepared according to the methodology of interpretive architectural history view. Interpretive research is summarized in Figure 1. [6, 7, 8].

Research is defined by Archer as a systematic enquiry whose goal is communicable new knowledge or understanding. Systematic because It is pursued according to some plan. It is an enquiry due to seeking to find answers to questions. Goal directed as the objects of the enquiry are posed by task description. Knowledge or understanding directed because the finding of the enquiry must go beyond providing mere information. Communicable, because the findings must be intelligible to and located within some framework of understanding for an appropriate audience [6].

Popper argues that since not even a very large number of confirmations of a rule will ever prove It, the scientist must seek to disprove his hypothesis. One counter example will suffice to do that but the more people try to disprove a rule and yet It stands, then the greater the likelihood that It approximates to truth. On the other hand If observation does refute It then hypothesis is altered to take account of this observation so that the new hypothesis is closer to the truth. Thus hypotheses which are always mental constructs are shaped and reshaped by contact with reality to bring them nearer to the truth [8].

Togan defines three types of history; reference, pragmatic and genetic. The reference history narrates or rumors without any effort of analysis and systematization. Pragmatic history

concerns with learning a historical event and aims to end up a useful conclusion. The third one; is genetic history that deals with asking "why" and "how" questions to the happening of events, aims to clarify development steps of humanity and the reasons behind these [7].

The aim of the history is to find the truth, It is a comprehensive science concerning with identification or trials. There are certain facts that has been identified by this science and insufficient findings of materials on less known events which gives no harm on the scientific value of a study.

The vital part of the history method is "intikad", criticism. It is divided into two branches; external criticism, internal criticism. Being conscious of whether the source leads to the truth is external criticism. History research scholar reads the source and judges whether It is useful for enlightening event searched or not. This is called internal criticism [7].

Building remainings are regarded as a source in the science of history. For example a house built for shelltering or bridge for connecting two separate lands are inheritance from the past as a remaining. Old buildings, bricks, iron or steel bodies, city walls, water arcs, bathrooms, mosque, church, monasteries, lodge remainings are all important sources of history. Old civilizations are learnt from these rather than books. Moreover hand written manuscripts are considered as the remainings of their times. Remainings (If not fake) are always trustworthy. Because they are a part of the old life. However our judgement on them may be biased or wrong. They must be controlled with regard to our judgements. We see a bridge and present It as a bridge of Sinan. We make judgements on the characteristic properties of master Sinan's architecture. Later It may be understood that this building belongs to another architect. Therefore our judgements on both bridge and characteristics of the master becomes irrelevant. But bridge is still a monument of certain period [7].

On the other hand, Stanford suggests three cardinal sins to be avoided at all costs. First, subordinating history to any non-historical theory or ideology whether It be religious, economic, philosophical, socological or political. Second, neglecting breadth (ie. failing to take all considerations into account and to

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do justice to all concerned). Lastly, ignoring the suppressing evidence [8].

First step in coming to a historical conclusion is to evaluate all the views found in the references and criticising these. Some researchers hid or deleted evidence according to their world view in the process of translation. Contrarily main aim of historical research is to reveal the truth [18].

Some Findings From Source Criticism

One of the key findings extracted during this study is that analysing references or information sources from a critical point of view is a necessity. Within this understanding, reference sources aim of which is to inform are criticised and evaluated. Therefore It is concluded and shown that these are not containing absolute truths, on the contrary these are full of mistakes. On conducting historical research studies aim of which is finding the truth, It is necessary that references should not be taken as they are, these must be evaluated in a sceptical way, and varying information on certain events should be compared. References are not the information centers which contain absolute truths, contrarily they contain mistakes that can be detected by careful minds. In the process of Rumeli Fortress research, fifty two reference sources are analysed and a lot of minor and some major mistakes are detected [1].

When the reference sources are scanned, unmatching information is identified on the subjects such as physical properties of the castle, number of bastions and geometric forms of these, positioning of the structure on the land, dimensions of the castle and distance across the bosphorus. Varying dates are set for exactly same events in these sources. Moreover It is shown that varying pages of the same sources gives different date information on the same events [1].

Another point criticised about the reference sources is that events are told as if they had been watched and no evidence is given about the happenings in question. Some of the references analysed contains internally invalid text which is irrelevant to historical and scientific method. For example, Eren and Babinger mentions about the hadith which played a positive motivational role in the conquest of İstanbul, however chain of rumour to test the validity of these words is not shared. Similarly these kind of arguments without evidence drop shadow on the objectivity of these sources, furthermore these may be regarded as a sign of writing on an exactly identified purpose other than merely revealing the truth [1, 11, 16].

Some other sources suggest false arguments without showing evidence. People or events are exaggerated and told to be too bad or so much good. There are texts written in a rumouring didactic style which renders the events as myth and isolates these from truth. Some researchers presented physically impossible events by means of time and place. Others shared information without a rumour source and explained events depending on these [1].

There are references of history written in a romantic style without aiming to be objective, in some sources generalizations are made but evidences on these are not stated. Non-existing properties of Rumeli Fortress are shown as these exist, Even though name of the castle "Rumeli Hisarı or Boğazkesen" is rumored false in some cases[1].

To sum up references contain several mistakes and criticism "intikad" which is vital part of history science should be applied to these sources, otherwise coming to an unrealistic and unscientific historical conclusion may be regarded as a natural result of a study [1].

About the Castle and Fatih Period

Fatih Sultan Mehmed (Mehmed II.) is the son of Murad II. His grandfather Bayezıt I. ordered Anadolu Hisarı to be built as strategic base in 1394. Rumeli Hisarı is built on the narrowest place of the bosphorus with name of Boğazkesen in the period of Fatih. The purpose of the structure was to manage the passing ships in bosphorus, creating a military and financial control point and providing a strong fulcrum and resistance base. Fatih's accepting the policy of conquests "fütühat", aiming to conquer İstanbul and attempts through this way resulted in constructing Rumeli Hisarı. The fortress fulfilled its function of cutting the strait during 1453 [2, 9, 10, 11, 12].

Fatih became experienced on managing the government from his early childhood period on. His being the governer of Manisa, ascending the throne while his father was on a sefer to Varna, his being replaced with his father again and finally his ascending the throne after his fathers death made him experienced on governing. Moreover, he was well educated by the experts of their own category, he kept native and foreign artists and scientists near him. Urban and Bellini is the two foreign experts worked under his authority [9, 10, 13].

The method of coquering big castles is to construct small fortresses near these city civilizations and weakening the city in question. Few numbers of soldiers put in these small castles paralysed the logistic flow of the big castles therefore weakened fortress is conquered. Bursa which is the first city taken by Ottomans was conquered by this way. Osman Bey constructed a castle and put one of his relatives in command of this building with a few number of soldiers. This small castle was not enough so another fortress was built. The castle of Bursa was weakened and conquered and became the capital city of Ottomans. Serbian conquest of Avala castle was done by this method. Similarly this method is used in the process of İstanbul conquest. There were some attempts on cutting the passages feeding the castle. Strengthening the castles (Kilid'ül Bahir and Sed'dül Bahir) situated on both sides of bosphorus of Çanakkale before the conquest is within the same method [2, 15].

Rumeli Hisarı was built as a dominating base of the region and a military center to prevent the food carrying ships from black sea side to the Constantinople Castle. The fortresses was built to shorten the sources of the Castle and weaken the soldiers living inside [2, 3, 9, 19].

References provide varying information on the decision place and time of Rumeli Hisarı. According to one of these; Fatih decided to construct this structure after returning his campaign to east where he signed an agreement with Karamanoğlu İbrahim Bey when he was disturbed and attacked by enemy ships passing hardly through the bosphorus within the shot way of Anadolu Hisarı. He ordered a castle to be built right across Anadolu Hisarı [15].

Main materials used in the building are; rubble-stone, lime, brick, iron and wood. Materials and masters are gathered from the varying regions of the state. There are contradicting informations on construction time, materials used, worker and master counts and construction managers however most references state that the building was ended in a short period of time and dense working environment. In 1949 Çetintaş argued that It was impossible to construct such a building in such short period of time even too much money is spent [1, 2, 3, 10, 13, 15, 20].

After construction, Firuz Bey was assigned as a commander of few soldiers of the castle. He was given the authority to control the ships passing by the bosphorus in front of the castle. The ships would be forced to pay certain amount of tax and

unobedient ones would be sank by canons placed mostly in the front garden (hisar peçe) by the sea. In 1452 some ships managed to pass in spite of the canons, however in 1453 the bosphorus sea traffic was cut [1, 10, 19, 21]

Rumeli Hisarı is a fortress built by the order of Fatih in 1452. Although this building of Ottoman military architecture with unique properties has been damaged several times, It has been surviving as a primary evidence for the researchers of architectural history.

Why Is This Fortress Important?

The importance of the castle is stated in the following seven paragraphs. Construction time of the building, materials and craftsmanship has unique properties. Högg and Ayverdi explains Turkish contributions of the building [2, 3, 5].

The fortress and Its towers are the biggest surviving fortification structure of the world (Figure 2, 6; a, b, c). The castle was used as a testing place for developing canon technology of Its period. In fifty two years time Ottomans encountered canon technology and has developed It from state of the art to best of Its time. Today one of these canons are exhibited in London Canon Museum [5, 21].

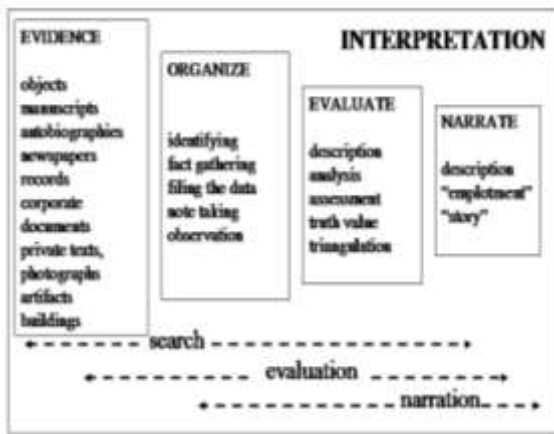


Figure 1. Interpretive Research Scheme

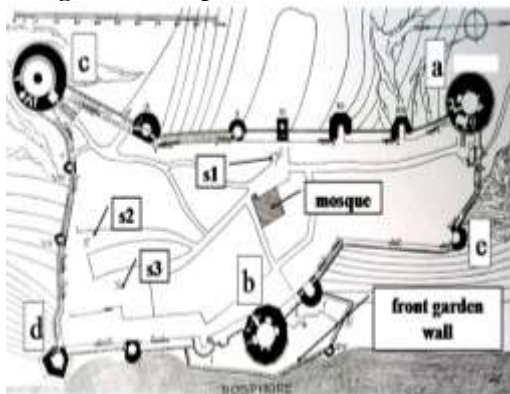


Figure 2. Plan View of Rumeli Fortress



Figure 3. Ruins of Front Garden (Hisar Peçe)



Figure 4. Recent View of the Fortress Garden-A



Figure 5. Recent View of the Fortress Garden -B

First mosque built in İstanbul is situated in the garden of the castle, Ayverdi and Gabriel informs in detail about this building. The mosque is shown by Figure 2. and 6. [2, 3, 4].

Width of the castle walls three timethe size of Constantinople which is 2.5 m, canon ball technology of the time was not sufficient to destroy such walls of 7m. thickness [2, 9, 20].

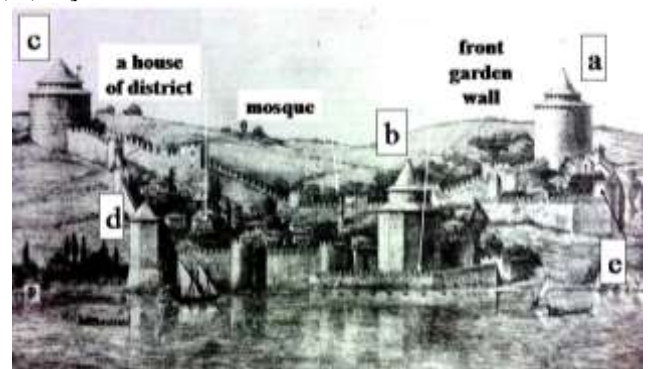


Figure 6. Realistic Rendering of Rumeli Fortress

First two Ottoman inscriptions of İstanbul is placed on Small and Big Zağanos Towers (Şekil 2.; c ve d) [2, 3].

Rumeli Hisarı is an important military building due to Its being a strategic base cutting the strait. It was used to control the bosphorus and the trade in the region. The castle is important because It was a control point in the region, a safe building for Turkish ships and a threat for enemy vehicles and the building fullfilled Its function.

It is important that the fortress has a key role in cutting the bosphorus in the process of conquest which has led to a new age ending the old one. The building was used as a base point and enabled the commander of It to realize offensive attacks. The castle had a strategic role in the Ottoman Western conquests [1].

After the conquest a district had evolved in the castle and inside is used as a habitation unit (Figure 6.). During the World War I, It is argued that the building was used as a signal processing place free from Its construction purpose [14, 15].

In this section main points on the importance of the castle is shared, the building has been an important place since It was built.

Which Parts of It Is Destroyed?

The castle has suffered from earthquakes and fire and was repaired for several times, the survival of It is due to this repairs. However; front garden wall (hisar peçe), bosphorus observation point, lead covered conical roof tops of the towers, internal furnishing of the towers, the mosque in the garden, district and springs are destroyed. Front garden wall (hisar peçe), observation point (e), towers (a, b, c, d), springs (s1, s2, s3) and mosque are shown in Figure 2. These parts are also presented in Figure 6., except springs [1].

The distance between Anadolu Hisar and Rumeli Hisar is the shortest so telegram cables were laid underwater. Part of the front garden is transformed to a telegram Office and walls of the caste are destroyed. Figure 3. shows the recent view of the front garden ruins. Moreover big houses are built around the castle by the sea. The building had suffered from earthquakes and fire all through Its history. In addition to these construction attempts during 1950's led to loose Its originality and have a different appearance other than Its origins. This attempt is irrelevant to the historical background of the castle. Contrary to the destructions, there have been preservation attempts, these caused the castle to survive up to now [1].

When the destroyed and changed parts of the castle is evaluated, first mosque of İstanbul which is a ruin now, draws attention (Figure 4., 5.). It is understood from the drawings of Melling and Gabriel that roofs of four big towers are covered with lead. These roofs are destroyed and not present right now (Figure 6.; a, b, c, d). Another element that could not survive up to now is inner furnishings of the towers. It is understood that the houses of the district evolved in the castle is removed. Front garden of the castle which is named as "hisar peçe" was destroyed and houses and telegram offices built instead, during the coastal road building part of the front garden wall is destroyed. It is obvious that the wall of front garden in which great canons are placed for the security bosphorus, is turned into ruin [4, 20]

In addition to this one of the springs (Figure 2., s1) was built by concrete and a museum management building is added during the restoration attempts in 1950's. Walls of first mosque of İstanbul is destroyed and the minaret part is left as a ruin. The mosque is replaced by a theatre scene which is irrelevant to the historical context of the building, unloyal to the origin of the castle concrete steps are placed around this scene (Figure 4.). Not only some of the parts of the castle is destroyed, but also historically irrelevant parts are added to the building. The castle has suffered from natural disasters such as fire and earthquake, furthermore some incapable people who were called as architects or architectural organizers, has turned the building to Its irrelevant appearance without being loyal to the historical context of the construction [1].

Results and Discussion, Originally Repairing the Ruins

Rumeli hisarı which has a critical historical value should be preserved loyal to Its Original form as much as possible. Main parts that must be preserved are; the first mosque of İstanbul in the center of the garden, lead covered conic roof tops of the towers, springs and front garden walls. The part that are irrelevant to the historical background of the castle must be removed.

Firstly, architectural methods should be used and technical drawings of the castle, computer aided analyses should be realized and then parts must be placed suitably to the original

structure. Studies of Gabriel, Tamer and Ayverdi on the subject may be helpful [2, 3, 4, 19].

Rumeli Hisarı may be destroyed or wrecked systematically. Things to do now is replacing these wrong applications, taking essential precautions and doing the needed repairs. A comission must be consulted otherwise mistake ratio may increase.

In his book "Tarih'te Usul" Togan mentions questioning the sources and repairing the harmed ones with a methodology, on the other hand Dobson et. al. informs about some scholars transforming the resources in line with their worldview. This researches does not mention physical objects. However repairing with a methodology condition is also valid for Rumeli Hisarı which is a physical source of evidence. The castle may be an example of transformation due to worldview. Theater buiding which is irrelevant to the castle's historical context destroy the historical value of this building. In the Institutional level there is a contradicting situation compared to UNICEF's cultural heritage protection philosophy [7, 18].

Rumeli Hisarı is one of the primary sources of history with Its survival for 560 years, according to the science of history It is a crime to harm the evidence on purpose. What's more, If sources enlighting history is deleted, these must be repaired. View point of this paper is stopping this conscious or unconscious crime, and enabling the castle's survival as a primary source of evidence for long years.

The theater built for the purpose of educating was added to the structure eclectically in contrast with the disciplines of History, Archaeology and Restoration. The minds trying to educate the public has been a wrong example for the same public.

Main actions to be taken are as follows. The organization of the garden which is said to be in line with old Turkish castle tradition must be cancelled. Construction elements which are irrelevant to the history of the castle must immediately be removed from there. The mosque of the castle must be restored, If possible the inner district should be revitalized. Related authorities make such comments on the subject [17].

In this paper, historical information on the castle is shared, suggestions about the repair of the castle is explained. It is suggested that the study should be evaluated to contribute the discussions about the castle which has a unique place in history.

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