

## A Restoration Proposal for Topkapi Palace- Harem Şimşirlik Pavillion (Arslanhane-cage)

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### Abstract

Also known as Şimşirlik Pavilion (Arslanhane-cage), which was built adjacent to the high stone masonry wall between the Şimşirlik Garden and the Elephant Garden, in the direction of the Topkapi Palace Harem Department facing the Golden Horn. It is seen that it stayed on the side of the Boxwood Garden (Şimşirlik). One of the short facades of the rectangular masonry building with a flat roof and alternating walls rests on the vaulted passage connecting the Boxwood Garden (Şimşirlik) and the Elephant Garden, and the other rests on the rubble masonry stone walls that carry the pool of the Favorites Office. The ground floor, called Stone Rooms, Row Rooms, has survived from Şimşirlik Pavilion (Arslanhane-cage) to these days. The cage is the place where the princes who are likely to ascend to the throne are kept under constant observation in the Harem of the Ottoman Empire. As stated in the Fatih Law in the first years of the Ottoman Empire, the murder of the brothers, who were seen as rivals, was approved in order to maintain the existence of the sovereignty. According to this code, it has become common for the newly ascended sultan to kill his brothers who could be rivals together. Although the system of keeping possible heirs under house arrest in a cage was the guarantee for the continuation of the dynasty, this time, the deterioration of the mental health of the new rulers, their ignorance of the people and their ignorance of their state management skills caused many problems. Now, it will be written a restoration proposal for these stone rooms which carry the souls of princes kept a long period of their life.

One of the sources that cause the most damage on historical buildings is people. People, in various ways such as abuse, faulty repair, deliberate destruction, neglect, abandonment may cause deterioration in historic structures and materials. The buildings are suitable for their convenient functions. Improper use, being extended with attachments or repaired by wrong method are bad examples. New materials add many benefits to existing natural building blocks but they may cause harm. Negligence and abandonment is the destruction of the entire exterior of the structure. It to be vulnerable and vulnerable to influences. Thus, causing material deterioration precautions should be taken Atmospheric and environmental effects show their effect faster.

**Key words:** Şimşirlik, Arslanhane, cage in Topkapi Palace, stone rooms

### HISTORY

Golden Horn facade of Topkapi Palace; After the Golden Path was built, it gradually developed over the barrier gardens over time. The courtyards on this facade are built on stony stony gardens and hanging gardens, on cut stone and brick pillars. The Harem Garden is separated from Şimşirlik and the palace garden, which is today's Gülhane Park, with high walls built after the 16th century. There is a vaulted passageway adjacent to the stone rooms called Arslanhane in the Harem Garden (Fig.1). This passage is connected to the Boxwood from the Elephant Garden by a carriageway. This path shows the relationship of the Harem Chamber between the Coastal Palaces. Again, there are

traces of a three-storey building on the Elephant Garden facade of this high wall. It is understood that this building was destroyed by a fire. This courtyard, which was only a garden at first, was named the Köşkler Garden because of the pavilions built over time.

The Fourth Court is protected by a great wall. These high outer walls, drawing the security boundary of the courtyard from north to south, surrounded Has Ahur, the Harem Department, Arslanhâne, FilBahçesi, İncirlik, Şimşirlik Garden, Mecidiye Mansion and Sofa Mosque from the outside and surrounded the Fatih Mansion. This section consists of two main parts. These are the Sofa-i Hümâyûn and the Tulip Garden. Sofa-i Hümâyûn: It is the highest

place of the Fourth Courtyard. Also called Marble, this place offers a magnificent view due to its location overlooking the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. It is the most beautiful stone in the palace. On this "L" shaped terrace, the Revan Mansion, the bronze fountain where the deceased sultans were gassed, the need (prayer) window of the Cardigan-i Saadet Office; Fountain Pool in the middle, Circumcision Room on the left side of the courtyard, Iftariye Mansion ahead; In the lower part of the hall on the Gülhane side, there are gardens called İncirlik and Fil, and on the opposite corner of the sofa, there is the Baghdad Mansion. In this region, which received the breeze of Sarayburnu, windows were placed between the porticoes in the Ottoman period

and this breeze was tried to be prevented by covering the sofa with curtains. It is seen in miniatures that Sofa-i Hümayun is covered with mats and carpets. It is known that the sultans met with statesmen here, especially in the summer, and they held the Peace Lessons here during the Ramadan, which coincides with the summer. (The Peace Lessons are the discussion of the verses of the Qur'an among the scholars in the presence of the sultan during Ramadan.) İlber Ortaylı, *Life in the Ottoman Palace*, Istanbul, 2008

The tradition of sending the princes to the sanjaks in Topkapi Palace dates back to II.Mehmet. Usually the eldest sons were sent to the sanjaks, while the other brothers



Fig.1 General View of Arslanhane-cage(Sedes Architects Archive)

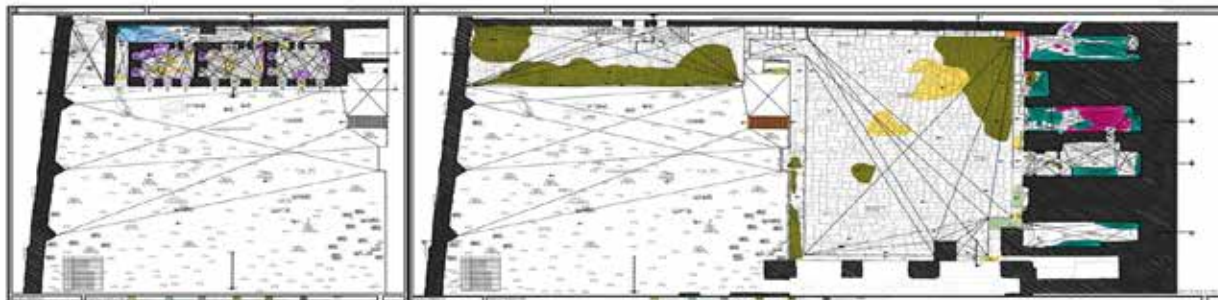


Fig.2 Plan of Arslanhane-cage and Şimşirlik Garden ,Topkapi Palace(Sedes Architects Archive)

were kept under surveillance in the Palace. Since it was not possible for the princes under these surveillances to stay in the harem of the sultan during adolescence, some apartments were needed separately from the Harem (Fig.2). Here, Şimşirlik Pavilion or Arslanhane-cage is referred to by researchers as the first prince’s suite built for this purpose at the end of the 16th century. These apartments, which were built in the Palace for the princes, were called the Cage Pavilion, the Cage Apartment, the Prince’s Apartment, the Kasr-ı Uzlet, the Department-i

Uzlet, etc. called by different names. It is the Kafes-cage Pavilion built between the Mabeyn-i Hümayun and the Harem Department in the 17th century(Fig3). The princes lived in these places either until they became Sultans or until they were drowned by their brothers who ascended the throne. The building, which is called Şimşirlik Pavilion (Boxwood Garden) referred to as Arslanhane (lions cage) in old documents. One of the reasons for this is that the Hasekis and the Valide Sultans( mostly loved wifw of the Sultan) addressed their sons as lions.



Fig.3 Plan of Arslanhane -cage (Sedes Architects Archive)

## 2. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

The ground floor structure of Arslanhane-cage consists of a corridor and three rooms opening to it. Walls were built of Ottoman bricks with horasan mortar. The building has a vaulted door from the Boxwood Garden, as well as an entrance to the narrow corridor at the back via a stone

staircase descending from the roof. Each of the three nearly square spaces has three windows with a brick arch opening to the Şimşirlik-Boxwood Garden. The jambs and windowsills of the windows are made of fine-grained Marmara marble. In the places that are completely masonry, the floors are also covered with stones. On the outer walls, two rows of bricks and one row of stones are covered using

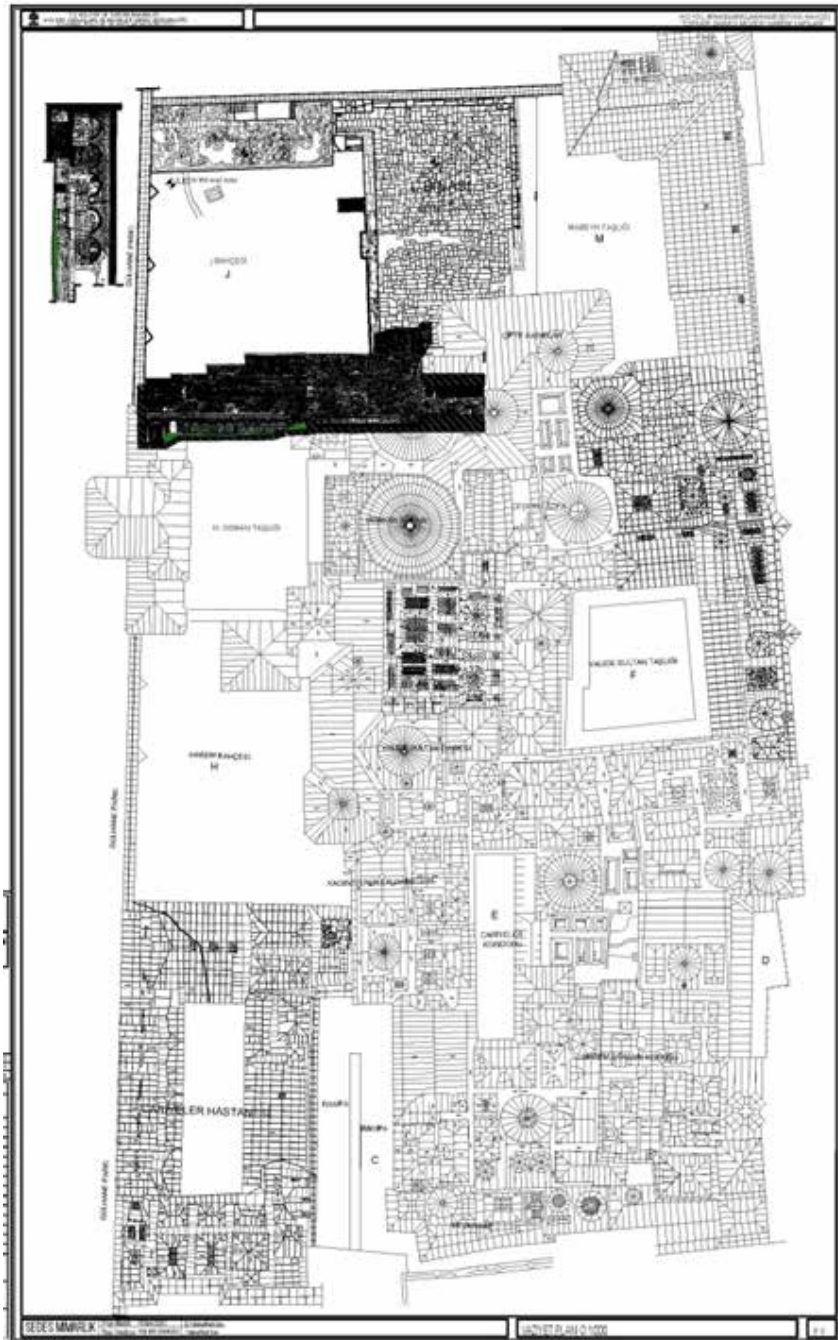


Fig.4 General plan of Harem, Topkapi Palace (Sedes Architects Archive)

an alternating masonry technique. While the alternative masonry technique is used on the walls up to a certain height from the ground in the interior, the upper parts and the plated vaults that make up the covering system are completely built of bricks. The connection of the building, which is seen as a single storey today, to the upper floor is provided by a masonry/stone staircase. The ladder leads to a flat/terrace roof. Repairs made with cement mortar can be seen in all three places as traces of late restoration. A visual source describing the upper floors of the building could not be reached (Fig 4). However, in some sources it is stated that Şimşirlik Pavilion has twelve rooms and each room is called a cage (Figs 5,6,7,8,9). Between Harem and Gulhane Park; located in the İncirlik Garden, called Şimşirlik, below the "Great Swimming Pool", and consisting of rows of rooms

which is called Arslanhane or with its dramatic name Kafes-cage,as mentioned before.Palace lions were once housed there (Figs10,11,12). The sultans deposed from Ahmet I. to the Tanzimat period and the princes waiting to ascend to the throne were subjected to compulsory residence there.

Princes could not leave the cage, could not have children. As they lived with the constant fear of execution, most of them had mental disorders. When Suleiman III. (1687-1691) was summoned to ascend the throne at the age of 45, he had been kept in a cage for 40 years and resisted, believing that he was being executed. III. Süleyman, on the other hand, remained in the cage where he was closed at the age of 4 for 51 years. He had never seen a place other than his room in the harem and a few people in his service. The sultan who came from such a life was expected to rule an empire.

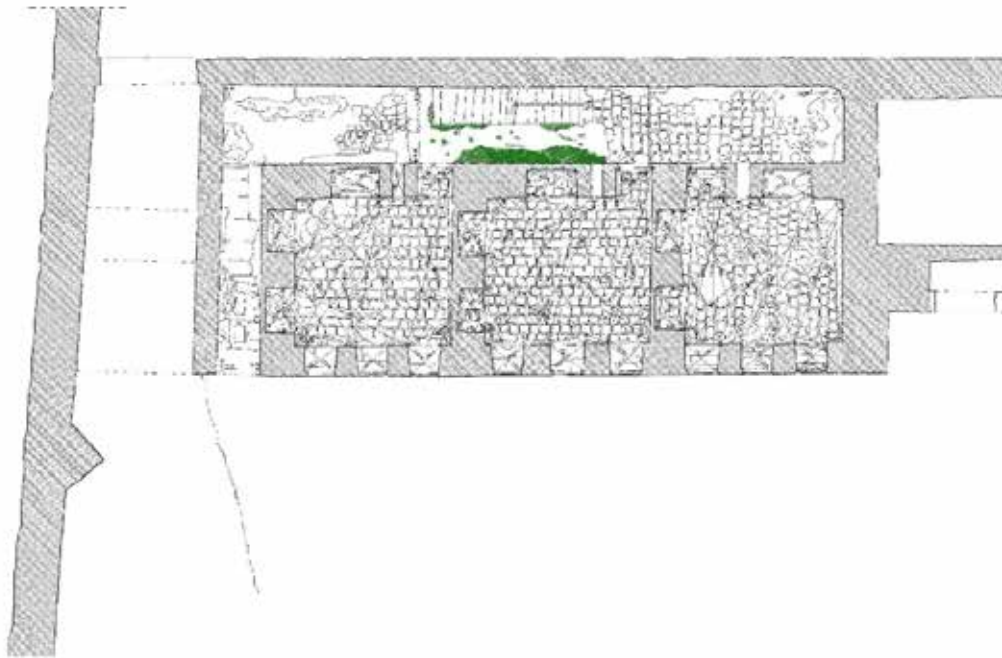


Fig.5 Plan of Arslanhane-cage Topkapi Palace (Karaca)



Fig.6 Şimşirlik Garden (Sedes Architects Archive)



Fig.7 Entrance of Arslanhane(Sedes Architects Archive)



Figs.8,9 (Sedes Architects Archive)

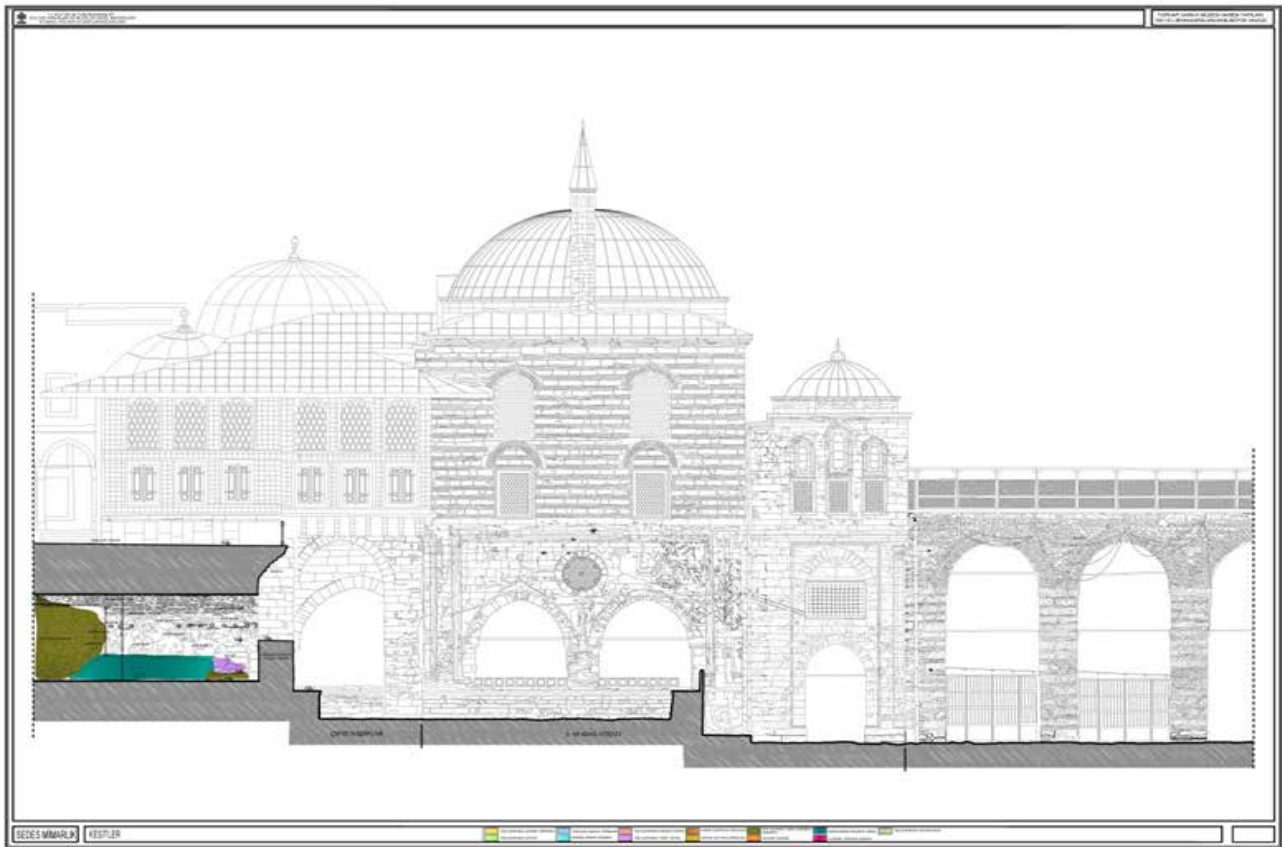


Fig.10 Topkapi Palace (Sedes Architects Archive)

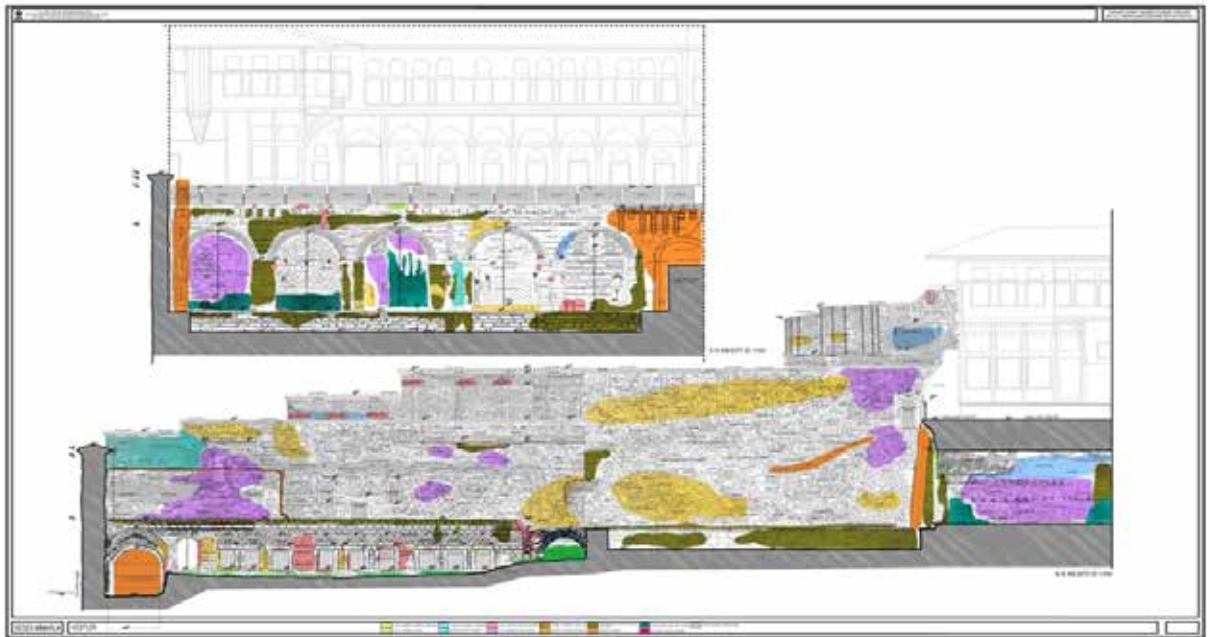


Fig.11 Topkapi Palace(Sedes Architects Archive)

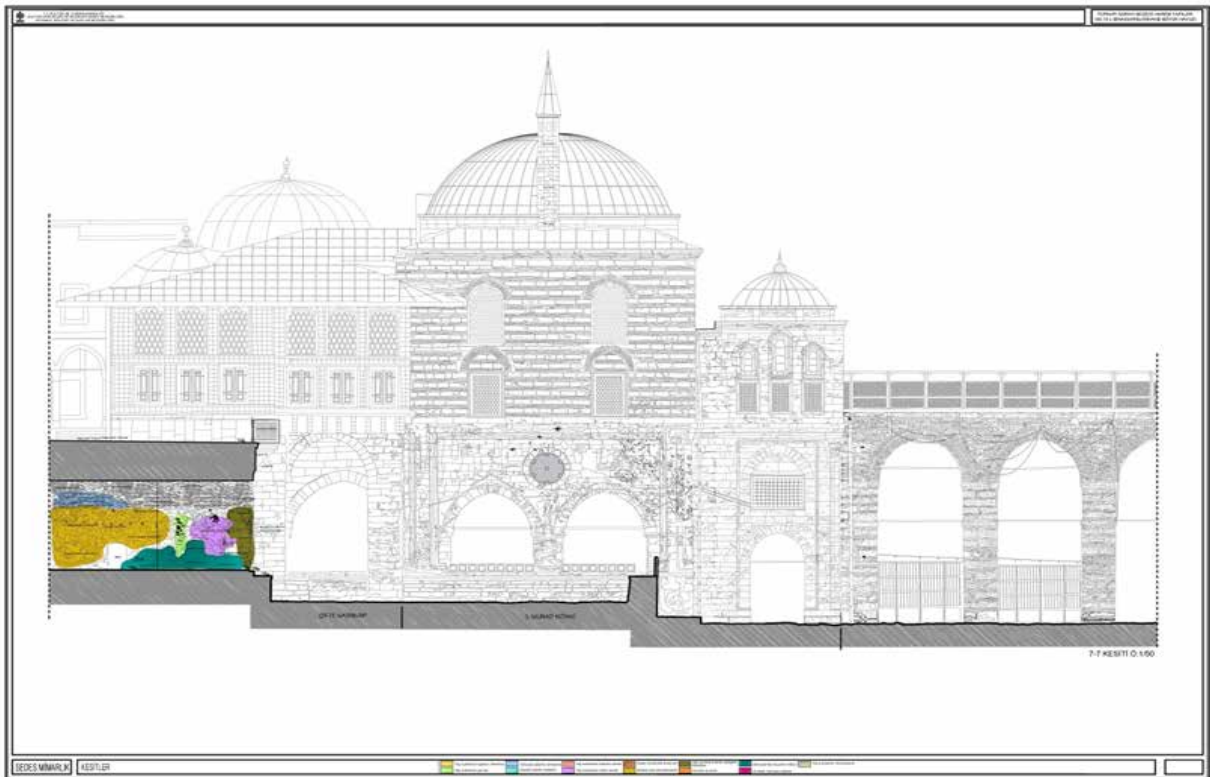


Fig.12 Topkapi Palace(Sedes Architects Archive)



## CONCLUSION

Today, continuous researches are carried out to strengthen the stones and protect them from the effects of the atmosphere, and scientific efforts continue in this regard. It is not possible to reverse the deterioration process, but to increase the strength of very important special details and to keep the original details alive for a longer period of time, reinforcement practices are used. Stone strengtheners, which are applied by spraying, brushing or vacuuming the stone, should be selected by experts dealing with preservation chemistry and applied under supervision in line with their recommendations. The consolidation method is determined by the type of stone and its deterioration. The use of materials developed by the chemical industry and put on the market saying that it works wonders are inconvenient if their durability and aging processes are unknown. Earthquakes, ground movements cause damage to the bearing systems of monuments. Throughout history, architects have supported the damages such as separation from the vertical and cracking in the walls and coverings of the monuments with buttresses, tensioners have been placed, or they have ensured the standing of the building and the continuation of its function by demolishing and rebuilding the defective parts. Techniques such as grouting, prestressing, anchoring, foundation widening and supporting with pile foundations descending to solid ground have been added to the structural strengthening techniques applied in old restorations.

Today, engineers who have experience on masonry and wooden historical structures examine the monument to be restored, determine the damages and develop suggestions for the reinforcement of the elements (foundation, wall, column, foot) that they find insufficient against earthquakes or vertical loads. Since interventions that distort or change the general appearance of the monument are not preferred, consolidation proposals that will create such inconveniences are avoided as much as possible. Unseen consolidation techniques that can be hidden inside the monument are preferred.

Impulses from curvilinear elements such as earthquakes, arches, vaults, domes, etc., on the ground, may cause them to separate from the vertical and crack. The

damaged masonry structures of the old architects and craftsmen were strengthened by placing massive or flying buttresses, especially at the corners and arch support lines. Earthquakes have also caused serious damage in our country, which is located on the earthquake belt. In many important monuments, traces of post-earthquake repairs are observed. Monuments such as the Land Walls and Hagia Sophia in Istanbul were supported by massive buttresses. The use of supports, called flying buttresses, made with half arches extending from a foot outside the wall to the main mass, without adhering to the main building, is limited. Such buttresses are more appropriate when there are special details that are not wanted to be covered on the facades. For example, flying buttresses that do not damage the window were applied on the east facade of the Kariye Mosque in Istanbul. In the Sanmitale church in Ravenna, although no openings were closed, the structure was supported by flying buttresses, perhaps because it visually closed the main structure less. Massive buttresses are the majority in Ottoman period repairs.

Since this study requires a special interdisciplinary study, it is not used in laboratories.

Analyses should be made by experts working in this field.

Mortar sample is preferably taken by experts. However, intercity travel in cases where it is necessary, sometimes the restorers in charge of the construction site take an example possible.

.Joint mortar sample; from the area thought to be original on the wall surface should be taken.

.Sufficient amount of samples for laboratory analysis should be taken.

.The location of the joint cross taken as a sample on the structure should be determined.

.The sample location should be marked on the drawing.

.The process should be photographed by giving a number during sampling.

Joint repair and new joint construction in restorations should be handled carefully.

are applications. Before the application; The original wall construction and joint construction technique is

determined. Taking a sample from the original joint mortar, the content of the mortar material is analyzed by the Restoration Laboratory. Types of binder materials that make up the joint mortar (air lime, water lime, hydraulic lime and cement) and aggregate types (sand, stone chips and dust, brick broken and dust, tuff etc.) are investigated. Conservation and Restoration Laboratory. The analyzes made are evaluated by experts in restoration and/or repair. The joint mortar composition to be used and the application technique are determined in the prepared report.

Before restoration some of the mortar samples are taken from Şal Kapısı, Meşkhane, Arslanhane, and Tiled Space next to the Milk Pool and sent to Central Laboratory of Restoration and Conservation.

**Analyzes have been made, and the relevant report is below:**

**I. CURRENT STATUS:** Such as color, texture, strength, aggregate size and distribution of the material external view (with the naked eye or with a binocular microscope) is described.

EXAMPLE A 1: Shawl Door: It is a light gray colored limestone fragment. However, it can be broken with a hammer blow. Strength : xxxxx

EXAMPLE A 2: The right wall of the ramp leading down to the shawl door: It is a piece of gray limestone. However, it can be broken with a hammer blow. Strength : xxxxx

EXAMPLE A 3 : The ramp leading down to the Meşkhane Shaw door : It has turned green due to pollution. It is a gray colored piece of stone. Hard and strong, it can be broken by hand but does not fall apart. Strength : xxx

EXAMPLE A 4 : Sample taken from Meşkhane Külhan: Two different samples came out of this package. Partly porous , soft , pink colored , with occasional lime lumps , brick dust and fracture

Textured, visible fine-aggregate mortar (4a). Hard and strong, it can be broken by hand but does not disperse.

Strength:xxx The other one is dirty yellow/light beige/cream mixture, containing less tow and less aggregate and stone dust. Lime plaster layer (4b). Its dispersion can be easily shredded with few hands. Strength :xx

EXAMPLE J 1 : Arslanhane plaster : Under the cream colored thin lime plaster layer , in pink color , partially porous , soft textured , visible , containing brick dust and fracture

fine-aggregated plaster layer containing a small amount of tow. Its dispersion can be easily shredded with few hands. Strength :xx

EXAMPLE J 2 : Arslanhane joint: Pink in color, containing locally lime lumps, brick dust and broken,

Partially porous, soft-textured, visible fine aggregate joint mortar. With very hard, hand can be severed. Strength: xxxx

EXAMPLE J 3 : Arslanhane Jamb : It is a piece of gray stone that has turned into beige due to pollution.

Since the sample is small piece; Its dispersion can be easily shredded with few hands. Strength : xx

**II. CHEMICAL ANALYSIS:** Lime (calcium carbonate) in the material, organic

These are the analyzes made to determine the amount of matter and moisture. Lime in the material

to determine the ratio; loss of glow (calcination) and acid test (loss in HCl) analyzes has been made. The values found as a result of the glow loss analysis gives the amount of substance and the amount of calcium carbonate. The acid test result is; in the material gives the amount of calcium carbonate.

Below; glow losses, acid test, sieve analysis and spot test results are given.

#### **Binder Strength Scale**

**x:** It can be easily crumbled by hand. A smooth surface is not formed with wet sandpaper.

**xx:** Low dispersion, can be easily broken by hand. If it does not contain dense sand aggregate, wet sandpaper, a certain surface can be obtained.

**xxx :** Hard and strong , can be torn by hand but will not fall apart . Smooth surface on wet sanding

can be formed, but reinforcement is required for thin sections.

**xxxx :** Very hard, can be broken by hand with difficulty. Thin sections can be made without surface reinforcement.

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