



An Analysis of the Architectural Properties of Eyüp Çeribaşı Masjid: Conservation Problems and Proposals

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Abstract

Here we investigate the protection problems of Çeribaşı Masjid, which has largely lost its spatial and visual identity and determine the available preservation approaches to the structure and its surroundings. Çeribaşı Masjid, which was built in the sixteenth century in Eyüp, İstanbul, consists of a closed prayer hall, a cemetery, and an ablution place. Çeribaşı Masjid remained in ruins for nearly two centuries and was repaired in 1996 by the Directorate General of Foundations. Over time, the rise of the roadway, inappropriate interventions, and unqualified additions made it difficult to perceive the masjid and damaged its relationship with its surroundings. Within the scope of this study, in the historical process, the changes that occurred in the Çeribaşı Masjid were examined together with archival documents, historical photos, and maps; the current situation of the masjid and its near surroundings were defined by the data obtained from measured drawings and on-site examinations; and the incorrect interventions were identified. As a result, a holistic protection approach (physical and cultural) was established that aims to transfer to future generations the structure and its surroundings, with their original identity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Eyüp has a rich historical environment including its urban landscape and examples of monumental and civil architecture [2]. Settlement in the district began with the Eyüp Sultan Complex, which was built after the conquest of İstanbul by the Ottomans, and the masjid-centered neighborhoods developed around it [4,19]. In this process, many monumental structures have been constructed, and the architectural character of Eyüp begun to take shape. Çeribaşı Masjid was built at the Cami-i Kebir Masjid Neighborhood that is one of eight neighborhoods that constituted the Eyüp in the late Fatih period. According to Ayvansarayi, the masjid, which does not have an inscription, was built in 1545 and remained ruined and abandoned for about 200 years after 1792 [15]. The deterioration of the structure, which was used of a different function for part of this period, increased rapidly and the masjid became ruined in the last quarter of the century. With the extensive interventions carried out in 1996 for the re-use of the masjid, and the additions made in the last period, the masjid has taken its present form. The conservation of cultural assets is a universal and popular issue. International organizations in the field of conservation carry out activities around the world. In Turkey, although legal arrangements (including historical environmental conservation to single structure scale conservation) have been made and regulations and treaties have been signed, there are occasional problems in adapting to these principles [2]. Unconscious and untrained practitioners are a major threat to the conservation area. Repairs made unconsciously have caused the Çeribaşı Masjid to move away from its architectural character in general. Its entrance façade lost its original identity because of unqualified additions made without adherence to conservation principles, especially in the recent period, and the relationship between the periphery and the structure was damaged.

In this study, the data obtained from measured drawings and on-site examinations of the building have been evaluated together with archival documents, historical photos, and maps. Thus, the changes that took place in Çeribaşı Masjid were investigated. In addition to the comprehensive identification of the Çeribaşı Masjid, a holistic protection approach covering the structure and its near surroundings has been proposed. Also, suggestions have been made to ensure that the structure is appropriately transferred to future generations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of its rich historical environment, Eyüp has attracted many researchers' attention and has been the subject of many different disciplines. There have been many publications that deal with the monumental or civil architecture of Eyüp's settlement in general [13,17,20,22,1,9] or on a single building scale [3,8,11,14]. The change of the settlement texture of Eyüp in the historical process of about 500 years has been the subject of many researchers. However, it has seen that Çeribaşı Masjid was not examined in detail in the literature review. Hadikatül Cevami [15] is the oldest source containing the brief information about the structure and its patron's (*bani*) identity. In the majority of the publications [13,17,21,22] containing information about the masjid are based on Ayvansarayı [15]. In addition to these, there is brief information about the situation and architectural characteristics of the building in a limited number of publications [13,22]. Sıcakyüz (1986) also states that the structure was buried about 1.00 m to the ground. Haskan (1996) states that there is a gas station opposite the mosque with no roof and that there is a fountain on the entrance façade and besides these, the restoration started in 1993. Also, the name resemblance with the Demirciler Masjid that located in the vicinity of the Fatih Mosque has caused these two structures to mix in some publications [3].

Besides the comprehensive literature search, in this study, architectural surveying of the masjid, the Archives of the Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Directorate General of Foundations, No. I Istanbul Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection High Council, Eyüp Municipality, and Eyüp Sultan Research Center (EYSAM); Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality aerial photographs, and the old maps of Istanbul have used. The boundaries of the masjid and/or its graveyard can be seen clearly in the map of German Blue (1913-1914) with Ottoman copy of it at scale 1/1000, the map of the Plan General De La Ville De Constantinople (1922), the map of Jacques Pervititch at 1/750 scale, and the map of İstanbul Keşfiyat (1920-23). In addition to the maps, the change of the masjid and its environment has seen in Eyüp Conservation Zoning Plans at 1/500 scale, that was approved by the Conservation Board dated 09.13.1979, and Eyüp Mosque and Centre Vicinity Conservation Development Plan at 1/500 scale that was approved by the Conservation Board dated 06.20.1997.

3. HISTORY OF ÇERİBAŞI MASJID

Although the masjids built in the later period of the conquest differed in size, they were usually masonry and had rectangular or square plans that were covered with a slanting wooden roof. They have a minaret that is generally at the northwest corner and has a single gallery [6,23,12]. Their entrances are usually on the street, and some of them have a cemetery. Çeribaşı Masjid, which is also known as Demirciler, Çiviciler or Gypsy Masjid with similar plan scheme, has been built on Feshane Street in Eyüp for blacksmith gypsies who are working within the charity works [15] (Fig. 1). According to Ayvansarayı (2001), Zehra Bint-i Abdullah Hatun, who is the constructive (*bani*) of Çeribaşı Masjid, was buried in the masjid's cemetery and date of its waqfiyya is 952 (1545) [15]. However, in the research conducted in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives, no documents were found about the building or its construction.

From the last quarter of the eighteenth century until the restoration in 1996, because only images of the main walls were found, data about its first construction could not be obtained from visual documents or maps. This is probably because it has been ruined for a long time, and only its cemetery has been shown in some of the maps (the maps of Plan General De La Ville De Constantinople, dated 1922, and İstanbul Keşfiyat, dated 1920–23). Among these maps, only the map of German Blue (1913–14) gives information about the location and outer boundaries of the cemetery, including the north wall boundary of the masjid. In addition, in the Ottoman copy of the German Blue, the parcels (which are not available in the original map) have been drawn on with pencil and a red pen (Figure. 2). Turkish definitions for some constructions

have been added to the map. For example on the masjid plan "devastated" he writes. Also, there was added a different wall mark not available today with a red pen in the mosque's cemetery was added (Figure. 2).



Figure 1. The map of Eyüp, İstanbul and Çeribaşı Masjed [28]

The archival photos dated 1956–1959 are the earliest visual information about the structure (Figure. 3). These photos show that there is no covering of the masjid; only the main walls are standing. Its minaret has also been demolished to the level of the base (kaide) (Figure. 3c). Although it is not known for what reason the masjid was damaged, it seems likely that this has been the result of earthquakes and fires, as is the case for many buildings in Istanbul. The abandoned structure must have entered a period of rapid deterioration following the demolition of the roof. In this process, elements such as the doors and windows have disappeared, the interior space was filled with rubble, and the building has become a ruin (Figure. 3a,b).

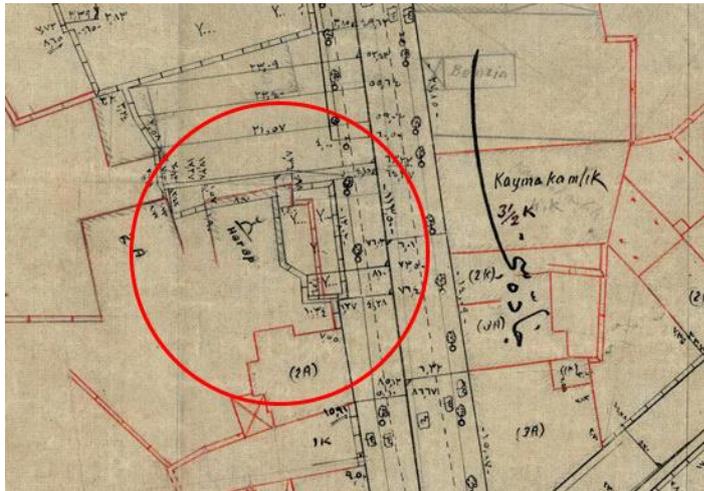


Figure 2. The map of Ottoman copy of The German Blue, 1914, scale 1/500, sheet L13/1 [26]



Figure 2. Çeribaşı Masjed; a, b) interior façades, the end of 1980's [27] c) the exterior western façade, 1956-59 [27]

As shown in Figure 3, the walls of the building were made of rubble stone from the inside and ashlar stone from the outside. The windows are tangent arches with brick on the inside and limestone on the outside (Figure. 3). The mihrab niche's arch was also made using brick. On the outside, the covered space that was next to the cemetery and surrounded by the iron joinery is today used as the ablution place. The cemetery boundaries were covered with the stone tracery (Figure. 3c).

With the decision of the Real Estate Antiquities and Monuments Supreme Council (GEEAYK) No. 9591 of 15.01.1977, the boundaries of Eyüp's first urban site have been determined; the historical monuments in this border have been identified and registered (on this date, a total of 1304 cultural assets, including fountains, aqueducts, water scales, wells, cemeteries, shops, and trees, besides civil and monumental architectural heritages, have been registered [27]). The Çeribaşı Masjidi, which was in ruins at that time, and its cemetery were also registered at this stage, and thus the legal protection process of the masjidi was initiated. From the Eyüp Protection Development Plan at 1/500 scale, dated 09.13.1979, which was prepared after the registration, it is possible to see the boundaries of the area covered by the ruined masjidi and its cemetery. Also, according to the plan, the area that is used today for the open parking lot was planned as a tourism facility area as well as a parking lot (Figure. 4a).



Figure 3. The Eyüp Conservation Zoning Plans at 1/500 scale that was approved by the Conservation Board; a) dated 09.13.1979 [27] b) dated 06.20.1997 [27]

The repair process of the masjidi began with the application dated 12.16.1986, addressing the group identification request of the owner of the wooden building that is next to the masjidi. Upon making the request, in the meeting of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage Istanbul Regional Board, No. 3904 of 28.08.1987, it was decided that the preparation of the architectural survey and restoration project of the masjidi should begin as soon as possible. Also, because a petrol station was located adjacent to a concentration of wooden buildings, it was decided that this petrol station would be moved to another place in the municipality. The surveillance report and exploration photos dated 02.22.1993, which were prepared about 6 years after this decision, contain detailed information about the situation of the masjidi on that date. In this report, it is stated that the entrances of the minaret and the masjidi have been buried by about 1.20–1.40 m below ground level and become unusable because of the elevation of the roadway. At that time, while the masjidi was used as a storage place for the gas station, an entrance was made by removing parts such as jambs, lintels, and fences of one of the lower windows. The two-tiered windows and mihrab niches were brick arches, and the top windows arches had been repaired with bricks of different size and shape, all of the wooden beams have disappeared, and half of the west wall was destroyed (Figure. 5). Also, the report states that there are spaces similar to the cupboard niches on the western wall and the upper parts of the walls; pots can be seen in some places (Figure. 5a). Since no records of the construction of the building have been found, by examining similar period structures and expert opinions, it is considered that the roof was likely a hipped roof with an interior dome ceiling, and the restoration project has been planned in accordance with this.

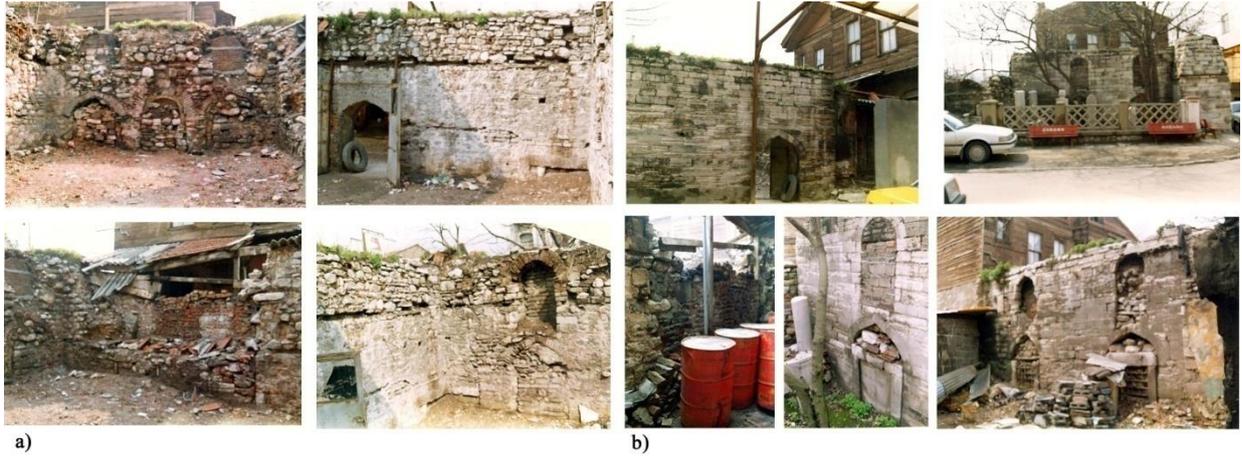


Figure 4. The photos attached to the survey report dated 1993; a) interior photos b) exterior photos [27, 29]

In the restoration report of the same date, it is stated that the filler soil at the inside and outside needed to be removed to reveal the original flooring level and material, so that the main door and minaret entrance of the building could be used. The ruined western wall should be completed and – except for the extremely damaged lintel, masonry, arch stones, and façade covering – façades should not be touched (Figures. 5a,b).



Figure 5. In the historical process, the change of the Çeribaşı Masjid entrance façade; (the photo in 1963 [27,29]; the photo in 1970's [29]; the photo in 2006 Ali İhsan Gülcü Archive [27]; the photos in 2015-2016 [27])

In the photos of an architectural survey made in 1993, the windows and mihrab niches are closed with rubble and brick fillings, unlike the condition in 1956–59 (Figure. 5). These fillings were likely added during the period that it was used as a storage facility by the gas station. The process of restoration begun with the approval of the restoration project by the No.I Istanbul Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection High Council with No. 9591 of 01.15.1977. Two years later, it was concluded with the No. 7072 of 04.21.1993 decision of the No.I Istanbul Immovable Cultural and Natural Heritage Protection High Council that the measurements of stone cornice and minaret were appropriate. However, it was decided to return the drawings of the lower parts of the balcony to the council, after re-examined according to the same period samples. In addition to the restoration project, the 1/50 scale eastern façade view of the masjid and

1/2 scale patterned stone cornice proposals were prepared and presented to the Regional Committee on 03.31.1995. Except for this revision drawing, there are no projects, photographs or documents in the files of the Foundations İstanbul First Regional Directorate. Information about the post-restoration situation and the relationship with the neighboring parcels of the masjid and cemetery can be obtained from photographs and maps dating from 1997 and later. One of these maps is the Eyüp Mosque and Centre Vicinity Conservation Development Plan at the 1/500 scale, approved on 06.20.1997. At that time, the size of the structure used as a petrol station on the neighboring parcel has differentiated, and new structures have been added to the adjoining parcels (Fig. 4b).

Figure 6 shows the changes to the Çeribaşı Masjîd throughout the historical process. The steps that reach two different entrances must have been added during the restoration phase. The metal-framed fringe, attached to the North façade, was added before 2015 and was renovated in 2017. In the same year, the plastic joinery part adjacent to the entrance wall was added (Fig. 6).

4. CURRENT STATUS AND ARCHITECTURAL PROPERTIES OF THE MASJID

The masjîd is located on the corner parcel that is limited to the wooden structures in the west and south, dead-end street in the north, and Feshane Street in the east. On the other side of the blind alley, in what is now a box office in the parking lot (Figures. 7,8). There are examples of civil architecture which consists mostly of wooden structures in the immediate environment of the masjîd. They are usually in contiguous order and, their entrances are on the street (Figure. 7). Today, the building consists of a masjîd, a cemetery, and an ablution place. The minaret at the unusually northeast corner has a single gallery (Figures. 7,8,9).



Figure 6. Satellite view of the Çeribaşı Masjîd [28] and the views of the Feshane Street

The building is located in an area of approximately 175 m² on the north-west corner of the parcel. It has a rectangular plan. Its outer dimensions are 8.60 m x 7.65 m. The masjid entrance made from a brown plastic part that is adjacent to the north façade on the dead-end street. The plastic part is farther than the entrance façade and extends out of the building in the west direction. Thus the gap, between the historic wall and the street in the west of the mosque, has been closed (Figures. 8,9a,10a). The narrow corridor-shaped additional part is 1.00 m wide, and there are two separate entrances for men and women. Women entrance, in the western side of the additional part of the mosque, is located 0.78 m below the road level, while men access in the south is 1.30 m below the road level (Figures. 8,9,10a).

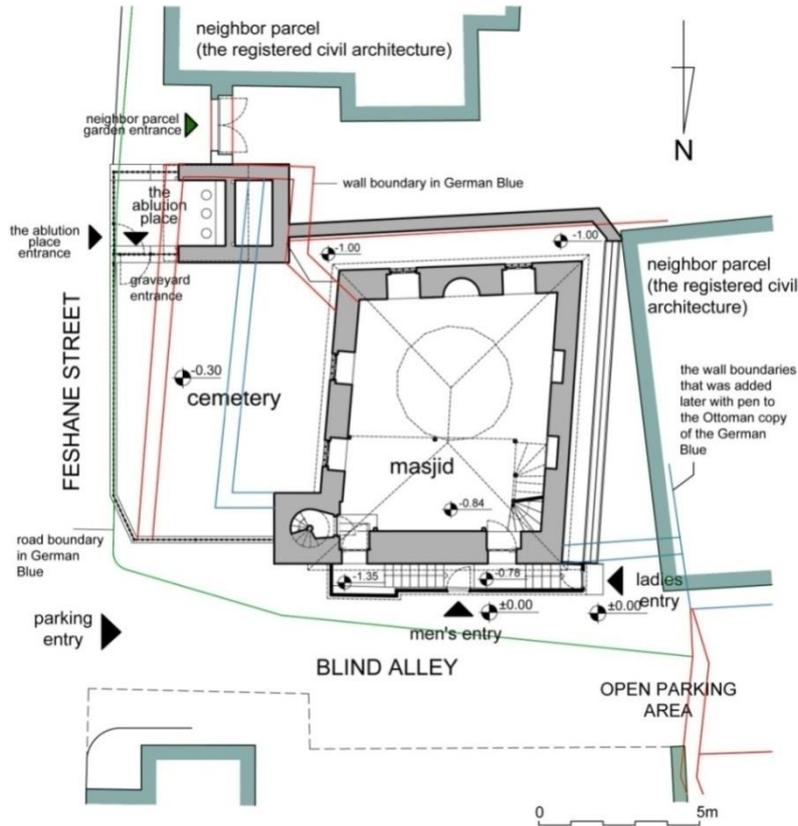


Figure 7. Çeribaşı Masjid plan

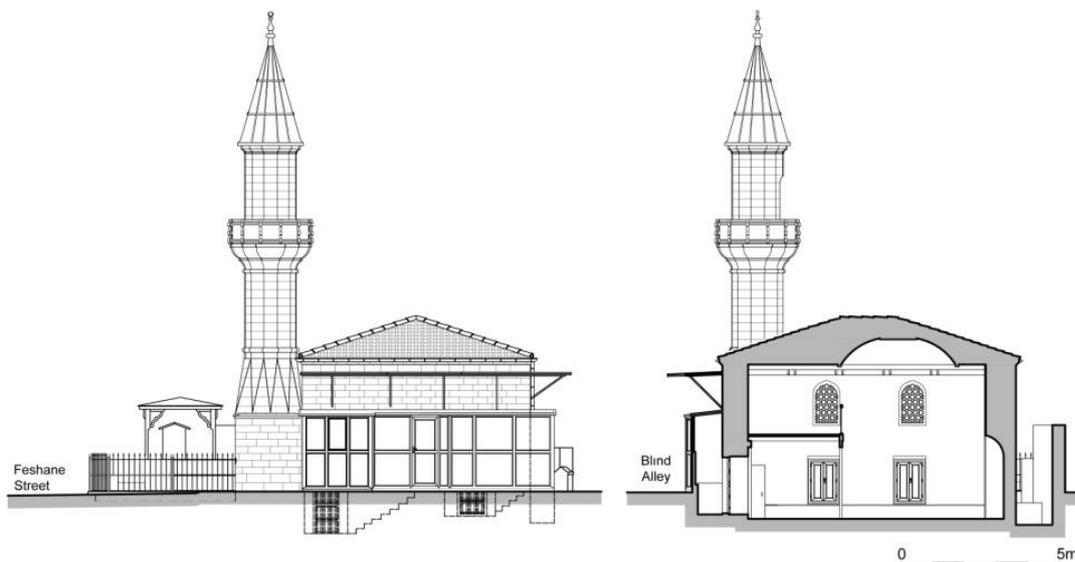


Figure 8. Çeribaşı Masjid; a) North (entrance) façade b) North-South section

The door has used by women is the original entry of the masjid. The door has used by men has been transformed from the wall fountain. Two entrances have separated from each other by cupboards (Figure. 10g). Inside the prayer hall, on the right side of the women's entrance, there is a staircase, which is adjacent to the wall and goes out to the wooden women's gathering place, measuring 3.00 m in width (Figures. 18,10f). From the men's access, is reached to the interior space of the masjid with three stairs. The entrance of the minaret is on the left side of these steps. Its main wall has built a row of brick and a row of stone masonry inside, and its door has made of chipboard (Figure. 10h). The width of the masjid's walls is not equal. Its south and north walls are 0.95 m, and its east and west walls are 0.70 m wide. The ceiling of the building was made wood and has a dome-like recess in the middle (Figures. 8,10i). All the walls are plastered and painted.



Figure 9. The interior and exterior photos of the Çeribaşı Masjid

Its land is limited to the walls that are parallel to the masjid with a thickness of 0.45 m in the west and south directions. The west wall is 0.70 m, the south wall 1.20 m away from the building (Figures. 10b, j). The cemetery that is surrounded by fences in the east and north directions and is 0.30 m below the road level is the southside of the masjid. The ablution place entrance located on the south of the cemetery is on Feshane Street. This place covered with a wooden roof that is rise by wooden pillars after restoration. The cemetery accessed through a door that opens from the ablution place (Figure. 8).

4.1 The Formation of the Façades

The northern and eastern façades are exclusively in the appearance of the ashlar masonry, the western façade is the rubble masonry. The southern façade was built with the rubble masonry up to the level of the arches, while the upper part is in the appearance of the ashlar masonry (Figures. 10a,b). It has seen that during the repairs the original stone walls are covered with incompatible plaster about 2 cm thick and the joint marks are drawn on it (Figures. 10d). Also, the mortar between the rubble stones has been repaired with the cement mixture incompatible with the original material (Figures. 10a,e).

There are two-tiered windows on the south and east walls of the masjid and on the west wall, windows are only on the top row. There is not any window on the northern wall. The upper windows made with circular flat glass instead of "crown glass" [5] inside and outside. The outer upper windows were made of the cementitious material, while the inner windows made with plaster (Figures. 10c,e). The arches of the lower windows on the east wall were covered with cement based plaster, and stone joints were made on them as in the wall surfaces. The arches on the other façades are brick. On the west side, the pipe connections of the air conditioner have been put into the interior by breaking the top windows (Figure. 10e). Bite bars have fixed to a frame and connected to the jambs of the windows with two points. Also, mosquito nets with metal

frame have been added behind the bite bars in the last period. Above the additional plastic part, there is still a metal construction fringe although it is not functional nowadays (Figure. 10a).

As a result of the rise of the roadway, the level between the road elevation and the eaves high has also decreased which has affected the appearance negatively because it has changed the proportions of the façade. Depending on the unqualified additions, the relationship with the environment of the masjid has broken and substantially lost the symbolic value of its entrance façade. The rain gutters surrounding the eaves and the downpipes are the other factors that negatively affect the appearance of the façades (Fig. 10a,c).

5. CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Çeribaşı Masjidi, which is one of the significant cultural assets of Eyüp, is a typical sixteenth-century masjid with its plan schema and architectural character. The building has been neglected for a long time and underwent intense destruction. In this process, it has been used for various alternative functions. Due to the rise of the roadway in the surrounding area, the entrance of the masjid is below ground level. The entrance was repaired and regained its original function in the last quarter of the twentieth century. However, the inappropriate interventions made in the historical process and the additions made without following conservation principles made it difficult to perceive the original parts of the structure. The structure has substantially lost its authenticity. Also, the use of the street containing the entrance of the masjid as a car park entrance has damaged the relationship between the building and its surroundings. An aim of maintaining cultural heritage is to ensure sustainability of their original historical characters, as well as their general appearance [2]. The Çeribaşı Masjidi, which symbolizes its period, is one of the significant cultural assets of the Eyüp district. The street, where the masjid located, is also rich in examples of monumental and civil architecture (Figure. 7). Therefore, it is important to set up the connections of the building with the environment, both physically and socially.

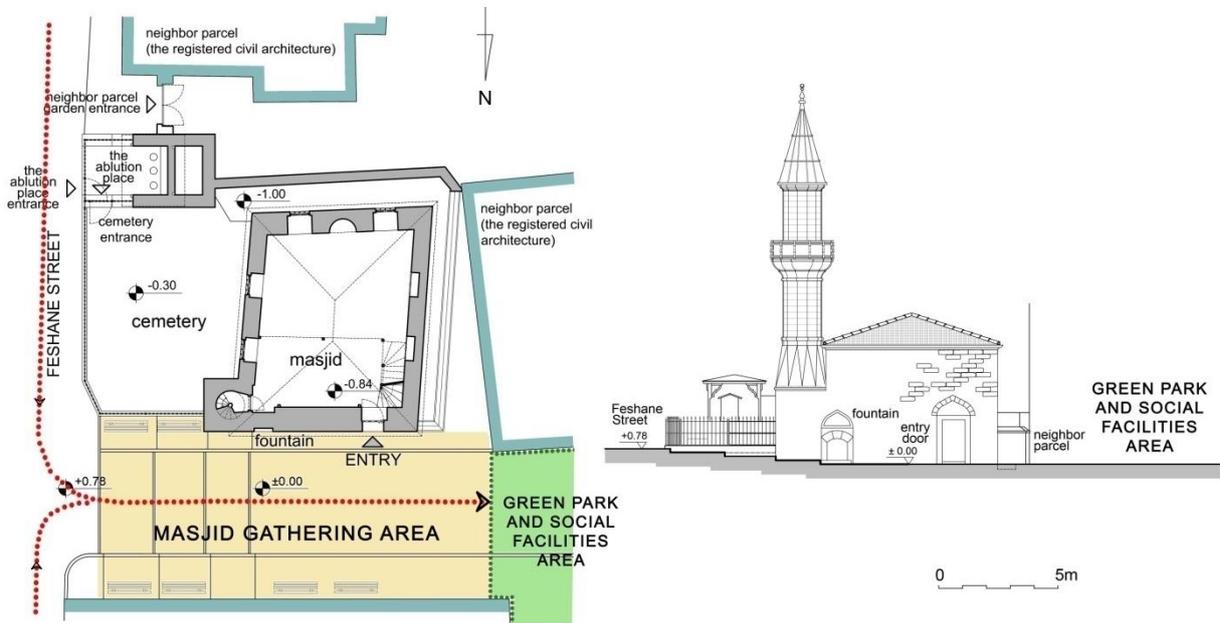


Figure 10. Proposed restoration plan and the North view of Çeribaşı Masjidi

As a result of the studies carried out within the scope of the study, various approaches to conservation of the structure have been developed. The priorities are summarized below:

- Removing unqualified elements that were added to the masjid later, such as a plastic entrance part and metal construction eaves. Raising public awareness, starting with school-age children, to prevent the construction of such unqualified additions, which are thought to have emerged as a result of daily necessities without conservation principles, is a matter that needs to be strongly emphasized [16].

- The materials that are not properly made, such as the plastic joineries, doors, bite bars, and concrete windows should be renovated with similar period samples characteristics.
- Closing the door that has been used as the men's entrance and renovating it as a fountain, as it was originally.
- Removing the mortars that have been used for façade cladding and the joint filler that is incompatible with the authentic materials, and should be renovated with the original mortar (Figure. 11).

During the repair process, it is also extremely important to adopt approaches that will allow a suitable relationship between the structure and the environment. The main entrance of the building is approximately 80 cm below ground level. This problem, which is caused by the sub-structure and is seen in many of the surrounding buildings, creates physical and visual disadvantages for the structure. Although the roadway around the building is elevated due to the urban infrastructure, there is no urban infrastructure that continues along the dead-end street to the entrance of the masjid [27]. Thus, by removing the stepped descent that is adjacent to masjid entrance façade and cascading the dead-end street, it will be possible to bring the masjid entrance to the same level as the roadway (Figure. 11). In this way, the proportional integrity of the structure can be ensured and physical problems, such as the rainwater problem, which can occur because the entrance is located in the lower level, can be avoided. In this case, it will be necessary for the municipality to move the parking lot to a different nearby place [16]. Thus, we created a space where the community can socialize before or after worship, such as in the great mosques (the yellow area shown in Figure 11). In the Eyüp Conservation Zoning Plans, it is suggested that this large parcel of land should be converted into a green area open to local residents and tourists, similar to the "tourist facility area" (Figures. 4a and 11). This area, which will be shaped by landscape design, also has the potential to be transformed into a public space, which could be used for social activities, such as workshops and exhibitions. It is thought that beyond the conservation of monumental structures on a single building scale, the adoption of approaches considering conservation use balance will contribute to raising awareness of the heritage values of buildings and their surroundings.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

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