

# The Kynegion District and Its Harbour in Late Byzantine and Ottoman Times

Late Byzantine sources mention a district on the Golden Horn called Kynegion or Kynegoi («Hunters»), which was associated with the living quarters of the imperial hunters<sup>1</sup>. In addition, there were properties<sup>2</sup> belonging to the Lips Monastery, the estates of wealthy citizens, markets<sup>3</sup>, as well as a harbour or landing stage here. A city gate on the Keras side led into this quarter, whose exact extent is unknown. However, the approximate location of the gate and the landing stage are mentioned in some reports, which will be briefly presented below<sup>4</sup>. Georgios Pachymeres informs us about a disastrous inferno in September 1305: the fire spread ἀπὸ τῆς πύλης τῶν Κυνηγῶν λεγομένης μέχρι καὶ τοῦ Ὠπαινῆς ἱεροῦ, arising between the fifth and sixth hills, and destroying numerous buildings<sup>5</sup>. The fire did not, as A. M. Schneider assumed<sup>6</sup>, hit the Monastery of St John Prodromos tes Petras. This was only attacked by the fire of 1291, which broke out in a market at a βασιλικὴ πύλη<sup>7</sup>. But in both cases, the facilities between the fifth and sixth hills were affected<sup>8</sup>, it is therefore conceivable that either two neighbouring gates are mentioned here or that the same gate has been given two different names<sup>9</sup>. The monastery and the Kynegion Gate or harbour are also recorded in the report by the Spanish envoy Ruy Gonzáles de Clavijo. Coming from Pera in 1403/1404, Clavijo landed at the Kynegion Gate («Quinico») and went with courtiers to the Church of Blachernae and the Monastery of Johannes Prodromos tes Petras<sup>10</sup>. The Prodromos Monastery was north of the Aetios Cistern, where the Kasım Ağa Camii stands today, and was accessible through the valley between

the fifth and sixth hills<sup>11</sup>. Clavijo presumably used the street marked on some Buondelmonti *vedute* (e. g., Venice, **fig. 1**<sup>12</sup>, Rome<sup>13</sup>), that runs from a city gate of the Golden Horn Walls towards the church building labelled *S. Io[annes] de petra*.

The landing site in the Kynegion was also utilised by Emperor John VIII Palaiologos (1425-1448) in 1438 when he started his journey to Venice. In this regard, Sylvester Syropoulos wrote<sup>14</sup>: Τῆ δ' ἐφεξῆς πάλιν προσωρμίσθησαν τὰ κάτεργα εἰς τὸν Κυνηγόν, καὶ περὶ τετάρτην ὥραν εἰσῆλθε καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸ ἴδιον κάτεργον («The next day the boats were brought to anchor again at Kynegos, and at around the fourth hour the emperor embarked on his own boat») <sup>15</sup>. As already discussed elsewhere, Tekfur Sarayı served as the Imperial Palace from the second half of the fourteenth century onward, at the latest, if only temporarily<sup>16</sup>. The connection between the above-mentioned gate and Tekfur Sarayı can also be clearly seen on the Venetian Buondelmonti *veduta* (**fig. 1**). Two streets start from the gate: one going straight to Prodromos Monastery, the other to Tekfur Sarayı; another branches off the straight road just before the Prodromos Monastery, which in turn extends to Tekfur Sarayı. The emperor must have used one of these routes when he went to the Kynegion harbour.

The area and the harbour are particularly mentioned in the reports regarding the events of 1453. According to Nicolò Barbaro, the Venetian captain Alvise Diedo sailed with his galleys several times to the Kynegion to assist Emperor Constantine XI Palaiologos Dragazes (1449-1453) with the

1 van Millingen, Walls 204-205. – Schneider, Mauern und Tore 69. – Janin, Constantinople 377 (on the eponymous Kynegion on the Seraglio Point 376).

2 Delehay, Deux typica 131, 26-28: τὰ τοῦ Βατραχωνίτου δηλαδὴ περὶ τὴν τοποθεσίαν τῶν Κυνηγῶν σὺν τοῖς τοῦ Γαβρᾶ, τὸ πλησίον τῆς πύλης τῶν Κυνηγῶν ἐργαστήριον. English translation in Talbot, Τυπικόν § 45, 1279: »In addition, the buildings inside Constantinople which I acquired by purchase, that is, the houses of Batrachonites and Gabras in the Kynegoi quarter, the workshop near the gate of Kynegoi [...]«.

3 Kidonopoulos, Bauten 45-46. 48. 179-181. 192. 204. 208. 220. 232 deals with the relevant sources.

4 Only the sources relevant to my argument are considered.

5 Georgios Pachymeres, Relationes historicae XIII 10 (IV 637, 30-639, 19 Failler). – Failler, Incendie 160. 166-167.

6 Schneider, Brände 388 (also with date 1308).

7 Georgios Pachymeres, Relationes historicae VIII 25 (III 198, 9-12 Failler). – The text variants of XIII, 10, in which the Prodromos Monastery is mentioned, see Failler, Incendie 158. – Kidonopoulos, Bauten 45.

8 Kidonopoulos, Bauten 45-49.

9 As in the case of Mevlevihanekapi on the Theodosian Land Walls, which was also called »Rhesion«, »Myriandriion« or »Polyandriion« and »Koiliandriion« during the Byzantine era, see Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 110.

10 Clavijo, Embajada 133-135: »E por quanto era ya la noche cerca, quedó que otro día, miércoles, que los dichos embajadores pasasen en Costantinopla, a

la puerta que es llamada Quinico, e que alli fallarian al dicho micer Ilario e a los otros de la casa del Emperador que con ellos andavan, e cavallos en que cavalgasen, e que irían más ver de la ciudad«. For an English translation, see Markham, Court of Timour 29-30.

11 Most recently, Asutay-Effenberger, Kloster. – Schneider, Mauern und Tore 69 talks of a Church of St John on the bank. – Kidonopoulos, Bauten 180 n. 362 corrected that.

12 For the revised map, see Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer fig. 28 (my **fig. 1**).

13 On the Buondelmonti *vedute* in Rome (Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer fig. 44) the gate from which the road leads towards Tekfur Sarayı is entered as the second entrance (seen from the west). The area of today's Balat is no doubt meant here. On the Buondelmonti view in Venice (**fig. 1**) there is only one gate in the same place is visible, which is mistakenly labeled as *porta vlacherna*. However, its location further east of the Blachernae Church and west of the Pantepoptes Monastery (for its identification see Effenberger, Pictorial Sources 22, in this volume) suggests that Balat is also meant here; for the condition around 1815-1817 cf. n. 90.

14 Sylvester Syropoulos, Mémoires 196 (197 French translation).

15 English translation in Kondyli, Sylvester Syropoulos 186.

16 See Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 134-142. – Philippides/Hanak, Siege and Fall 281 contradicts my thesis without concrete arguments. For a critical review of this book, see Angold, URL: [www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1101](http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/review/1101).



**Fig. 1** The Venetian *veduta* of Buondelmonti, edited to highlight the street network. – (From Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer fig. 28).

planned trench work around the fortification of Blachernae<sup>17</sup>. Another chronicler from 1453, Ubertino Puscolo, placed the Kynegion Gate, defended by Gabriel Trevisan, between *Xylini Porta* and *Porta del Faro*<sup>18</sup>, between today's Ayvansaray and Fener<sup>19</sup>, districts, i.e., in the environment

of modern Balat district (figs 2-3). Similar statements were made by Leonard of Chios, among others, who witnessed the events<sup>20</sup>. The Kynegion Gate and the landing stage or harbour are looked for by modern scholars<sup>21</sup> mainly in the Balat area, in the immediate vicinity of the later Balatkapi<sup>22</sup>

17 These passages cannot be found at Pertusi, *Caduta di Costantinopoli* because the entire source is not reproduced, see Nicolò Barbaro, *Diario* 10 and 13. I used the Internet resource here URL: [badwila.net/costantinopoli/giornale.pdf](http://badwila.net/costantinopoli/giornale.pdf).

18 Pertusi, *Caduta di Costantinopoli* I, 208, 181-183.

19 For a list of gates on the Golden Horn based on written sources, see Effenberger, *Illustrationen* 76 pl. III.

20 Pertusi, *Caduta di Costantinopoli* I, 151 § 25.

21 See van Millingen, *Walls* 120. – Schneider, *Mauern und Tore* 67. – Vgl. Janin, *Constantinople* 288.

22 Balatkapi was located between the districts of Fener and Ayvansaray and was destroyed by a huge earthquake in 1894. The remnants were removed in 1930 due to the expansion of the road, see Akin, *Balat*. – On the location of the gates, see Schneider, *Mauern und Tore* plan I (my fig. 2). – Dirimtekin, *Haliç Surları*, 2. Kroki (drawing).



(fig. 2)<sup>23</sup>. Without doubt, this place was the main target of Ottoman attacks, not only because it is located on one of the narrowest points of the Golden Horn, but also due to its harbour, gate and the associated streets leading to the city and especially to the imperial palace<sup>24</sup>.

## The Expansion of the Kynegion District

As mentioned above, the extent of the Kynegion district is unknown. Only Niccolò Barbaro, in connection with the positioning of the Ottoman army in 1453, reported: *A di 7 pur de questo, el signor si se redusse cun gran parte de quela zente, zerca uno quarto de mio luntan pur delle ditte mure, e steva el campo a la fila quanto che durava la faza de la mura de tera, che jera mià che sun de la Cresca per fina al Chinigo*<sup>25</sup> («On the seventh of this month [April] the lord reduced a large part of these people and let his army move a quarter of a mile to the walls mentioned. And the army stretched about 6 miles from Crescea to the Kynegion»). In his report, Barbaro placed the Kynegion Gate on the Golden Horn<sup>27</sup>. However, he apparently does not speak of the gate in the passage quoted, but of an area that must have extended further to the southwest. His starting point is the »Porta Cresca«, i. e., the Golden Gate or its surroundings. As discussed earlier in another place, his mile is approximately 680 m<sup>28</sup>. The length of the whole fortification at the west of the city, including the Blachernae Wall, is approximately 6.5 km<sup>29</sup>. Thus, Barbaro located the Kynegion district, at least its southwestern border, roughly in the vicinity of Tekfur Sarayı where the Blachernae Wall begins (fig. 3). As far as I know, there is no other Byzantine source from the time before the Ottoman conquest that provides direct or indirect information about the expansion of the Kynegion, which is why Ottoman evidence must be considered here.

In the area of Balat or Tekfur Sarayı, several neighborhoods (*Mahalle*) were established soon after the conquest<sup>30</sup>. The names of two *Mahalle* in particular immediately recall the

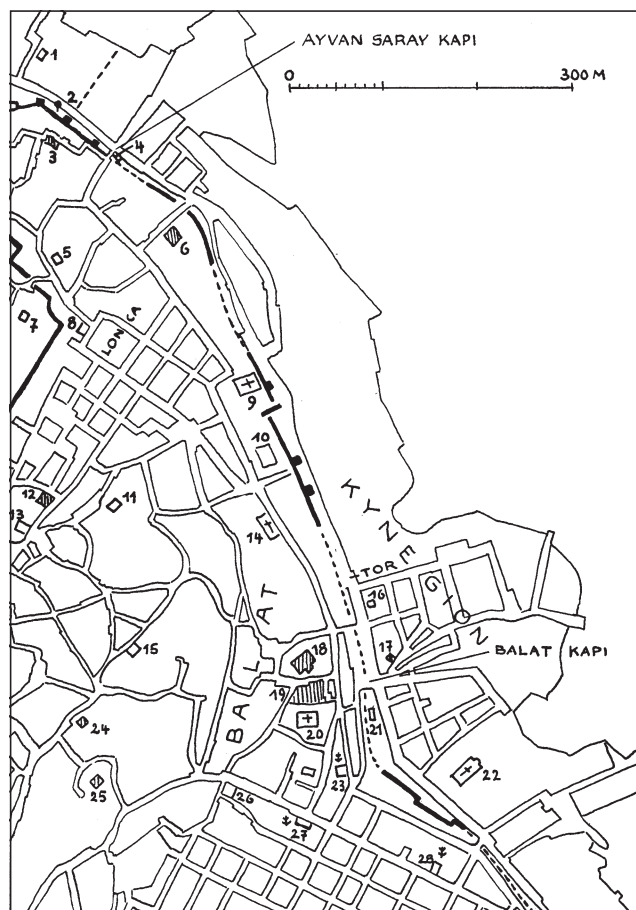


Fig. 2 Balatkapı, area map. – (From Schneider, Mauern und Tore plan I).

word Kynegion. The first was called »Küngöz Mahallesi«<sup>31</sup> near Balatkapı<sup>32</sup>. »Küngöz« is a corruption of the Greek term Kynegion<sup>33</sup>. Like the Byzantine sources, the Ottoman accounts place accommodations, shops, a market (*Çarşı* or *Suk*) and a city gate (*Kapı*) here. Schneider located the Ottoman Küngöz outside the wall and only referred to the urban area behind the entrance as Balat (fig. 2)<sup>34</sup>. However, we

23 Niketas Choniates, *Historia* 545,36-37 (van Dieten) mentions a clash between Byzantines and Latins on 17 July 1203, which occurred in the vicinity of an imperial landing stage (ἀποβάθρα βασιλικῆς) on the Golden Horn. German translation: Grabler, *Kreuzfahrer* 119. However, the exact position of this site is not clear from the report. – Mordtmann, *Esquisse* 40 connected this statement with Konstantinos VII Porphyrogenetos, *De cerim.* II 9 (542,8-11 Reiske) and placed this landing stage on Balatkapı. – van Millingen, *Walls* 195-196, quoted a passage from Geoffroy de Villehardouin (§ 171. 126 Dufornet), who talks about an earlier outer wall. According to van Millingen, this can only mean the outer wall of Leon, which is why he accepts it: »But Balat Kapisi and the Wall of Leo are too far apart for the former to indicate the site of the latter. On the other hand, the Wall of Leo and Aivan Serai Iskelessi are very near each other«. – See also Janin, *Constantinople* 287. – Schneider, *Mauern und Tore* 92-93. – Georgios Pachymeres, *Relationes historicae* V 10 (I, 469,15 Failler) talks of τὸ ἐν Βλαχέρναις νεώριον. The placement of this harbour finds no consensus in research. While van Millingen, *Walls* 196, Schneider, *Mauern und Tore* 68 and Schneider, *Blachernen* 92-93 looked for it in Ayvansaray, Müller-Wiener, *Häfen* 7 expresses his doubts: »It is questionable whether another complex on the Golden Horn in the vicinity of the Blachernae Palace, which was built much later, can be expected in the early days, which Pachymeres called to *en Blachernais neōrion*« (translation of the German original). According to him, this could also be associated with Balat.

24 On a movable Ottoman bridge, see Nicolò Barbaro, *Diario* 26-27: URL: badwila.net/costantinopoli/giornale.pdf.

25 van Millingen, *Walls* 202: »The Quarter of Kynegion thus comprised the modern quarters of Balata and Aivan Serai«. – Janin, *Constantinople* 288: »En tout cas les Kynégioi était un quartier voisin des Blachernes«.

26 Pertusi, *Caduta di Costantinopoli* I, 14, 183-187.

27 See n. 22. – Barbaro placed the Kynegion Gate in the vicinity of today's Eğri-kapı, see Pertusi I, 23. 488-489. – Discussion in Asutay-Effenberger, *Landmauer* 214 n. 614.

28 Asutay-Effenberger, *Landmauer* 214 n. 810.

29 Asutay-Effenberger, *Landmauer* 1.

30 Siehe Ayverdi, *Istanbul Mahalleleri* 13 no. 13; 14 no. 19; 21 no. 53; 22 no. 58-59; 28 no. 83; 38 no. 118; 49 no. 166.

31 Also written »Kingöz«, »Kinkoz« or »Künfoz«, see n. 32, 35 and 37.

32 Barkan/Ayverdi, *Istanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri* 304 no. 1788: »Mahalle-i Kingöz be nezd-i Bâb-ı Balat« (»The Quarter Kingöz by Balatkapı«). – See also Canatar, *Istanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri* 477 no. 2124.

33 Öz, *Zwei Stiftungsurkunden* XI.

34 Schneider, *Mauern und Tore* plan I.



Fig. 3 Tekfur Sarayı, area map. – (From Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 302 fig. 344).

learn from Ottoman sources that, among others, there were some shops for horse accessories in Küngöz<sup>35</sup>, for which two fixed points are mentioned: the market of Balat (Çarşû-yı Balat or Suk-u Balat) and the Ferruh Kethüdâ Camii<sup>36</sup>, whose location is known (fig. 2 no. 18, fig. 3). The sources also reveal that several facilities in Küngöz were adjacent to Molla Aşkî<sup>37</sup>. Molla Aşkî Mescidi<sup>38</sup> (fig. 2, no. 15) is situated not far from Ferruh Kethüdâ Camii<sup>39</sup> and Balat Hamamı<sup>40</sup> (fig. 2 no. 19, fig. 3). The Küngöz quarter must have been, therefore, clearly within the walls and cannot be distinguished from Balat<sup>41</sup>.

The second location is the »Avcı Bey Mahallesi«, translated as »Quarter of the Hunter Bey« or »Quarter of the Master Hunter«<sup>42</sup>. According to Ottoman tradition, this *Mahalle* goes back to the master hunter of Sultan Mehmed II (1444-1445 and 1451-1481), Avcı Mehmed Bey. The Eğrikapı Mescidi donated by him, which was between Tekfur Sarayı and Eğrikapı according to the Hadikat ül Cevâmi of Ayvansarâyî Hüseyin Efendi<sup>43</sup>, formed the core of the *Mahalle* (fig. 3)<sup>44</sup>. Although the mosque has now disappeared from the cityscape, the tomb of Avcı Mehmed Bey has been preserved. It is located on former Şişehane Caddesi (now renamed Şişhane Caddesi) – from Tekfur Sarayı on the right side of the street – in a small garden enclosed by a railing (fig. 4). Ayvansarâyî Hüseyin Efendi in his other work, Mecmuâ-i Tevârih, also included Hançerli Sultan Sarayı from the beginning of the sixteenth century, which is in the neighbourhood of the Church of Blachernae, in the Avcı Bey district<sup>45</sup>. While we cannot say more about the person of Avcı Mehmet Bey, it cannot be a coincidence that this hunter of the time of Mehmed II lived, donated and was buried in an area, which (at least part of it) was designated as *kyneqion* by Nicolò Barbaro. The name of this Ottoman *Mahalle* confirms the connection, still described as »probablement« by R. Janin<sup>46</sup>, between the quarters and the hunters who lived here in the Byzantine period and indicates continuity. The area extended from Tekfur Sarayı or Eğrikapı<sup>47</sup> via Blachernae to Balat and included the streets leading to the palace, the palace itself and the imperial harbour (fig. 3).



Fig. 4 The Tomb of Avcı Mehmet Bey. – (Photograph Arman Maşoğlu).

### The Ostensible Harbour Entrance and the Gates

We still do not know where the harbour was in Balat, neither what it looked like, nor which entrance of the Golden Horn Walls was actually called the Kyneqion Gate. There is no archaeological trace left of the shore around Balat (fig. 2), which is why arguments of the scholars are based solely on written accounts that were compiled after the conquest. Around the middle of the sixteenth century, Petrus Gyllius observed three openings west of the former Balatkapı, which he interpreted as a harbour entrance: *Est porta Palatina, sive Cyneqion appellata, vbi Platani extra porta. Prope portam extant intra murum tres arcus magni, nunc substructi, olim patentes, per quos ingrediebantur triremes in portum manufactum intra muros clasum ad commoditatem proponqui Palatij, nunc obrutum, & conuersum in horti culturam. Cyneqion celebre est scriptis recetium, vt etiam Suydas non alienum*<sup>48</sup> (»On the east-facing fence of the sixth hill is Porta Palatina or the gate called the Cyneqion. There are plane trees outside the

35 Barkan/Ayverdi, İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri 422 no. 2467 (of May/June 1483): »Mahalle-i Kinkoz [Küngöz] [...] der mukâbile-i dekâkin-i Sarâcin« (»The Quarter Kinkoz [...] opposite the horse accessories shops«). – See also Canatar, İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri 692 no. 3167.

36 Canatar, İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri 678 no. 3105: »Dükkân-ı na'lbend der çârşû-yı Balat [...] Halen Ferruh Kethüdâ'nun câmi'i kurbında bir demürçi dükkânına tebdil olunmuş« (»A horseshoe shop at the Balat market, which has been converted into a blacksmith shop near the Ferruh Kethüda Camii«).

37 Ergin, Fatih İmareti Vakfiyesi 223 § 145 »üç büyü-tü suflıye ... yine mahalle-i mezburde, Kümföz Kapısı kurbündedir. Fahrül'ulema Mevlâna Aşkî milkine mutasıldır« (»Also three low houses in the named neighborhood, near the Kümföz gate next to the property of the great scholar Mevlana Aşkî«).

38 On the Molla Aşkî Mescidi, see Naza, Molla Aşkî Mescidi.

39 On the mosque, see Tanman, Ferruh Kethüda Camii.

40 On the Hamam, see Eyce, Balat Hamamı.

41 Already in the 16<sup>th</sup> c., Balat was no longer a *Mahalle* (neighborhood), but a *semte* (city district) with several neighborhoods. The centre of the district is where the Ferruh Ketküda Camii was situated. If Balat is referred to as *Mahalle* in some foundation deeds, it is to be understood that it is the core of the district around

Ferruh Ketküda Camii or Balatkapı. – See Barkan/Ayverdi, İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri 383 n. 2.

42 Schneider, Blachernen 119 mentions this *Mahalle* without comment. As far as I know, this name has not received attention in topographical investigations.

43 Hadikatü'l Cevâmi' 78 (Eğrikapı Mescidi).

44 Ayverdi, İstanbul Mahalleleri 13 no. 13.

45 Ayvansarâyî, Mecmuâ-i Tevârih 357. The palace no longer exists, only the associated *hamam* – used as a bread factory – still stands on the substructures of the Blachernae Palace behind the Blachernae Church in Mahkeme Külhanı Sokak. According to sources, this area must have belonged to the İyulahirna neighborhood (certainly Aya Valcherna) in Ottoman times, even though Ayverdi, İstanbul Mahalleleri 28 İyulahirna is located near the Tekfur Sarayı.

46 Janin, Constantinople 377.

47 Eğrikapı most likely corresponds to the Kaligaria Gate (Shoemaker Gate) mentioned in Western accounts regarding the events of 1453, see Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 142-143. Cf. n. 24 and 27.

48 Petrus Gyllius, De Topographia IV 4, 202, French translation in Gréolis, Gilles 429. In the following lines, Gyllius mistakenly linked the »Kyneqion« to the execution site, see n. 1 (Janin).



gate. There are three large arches in the wall, which are now bricked up and previously open, through which the galleys lead into an artificially created harbour, which was enclosed in the wall for the convenience of the high palace but is now abandoned and used as a garden»<sup>49</sup>. In *De Bosphoro Thracio*, Gyllius adds that these three arches stand 120 *passus* (approximately 75 m) west of the Porta Palatina<sup>50</sup>. For him, the Porta Palatina (Balatkapı) is identical to the Kynegion Gate and the supposed harbour was further west behind the wall, but the distance is not given<sup>51</sup>. The relationship of the three blocked arches to each other and their weights are also not noted. His statement regarding the vegetable garden is confirmed by an Ottoman foundation deed from 1531 indicating that a garden lay on the city side of the wall<sup>52</sup>.

Shortly afterwards, the two Germans, Stephan Gerlach<sup>53</sup> and Johannes Löwenklau<sup>54</sup>, who lived in Istanbul for a while, mentioned a single entrance between Fener and Ayvansaray and called it *kynegion*, although according to their descriptions, they must have meant Balatkapı. Both are silent about further arches. Joseph de Tournefort wrote in his travel account in the seventeenth century, without giving a gate name, that the Balat quarter is called »park« or »hunter« in popular Greek – he did not refer to arches<sup>55</sup>. In 1665, Paul Tafferner mentioned the same section of the wall: »On the hillside against an arm of the past-flowing Euxini, we saw a wide walled gate before our eyes, it is said that it was the entrance to the court of the Emperor Constantine, on the right side of the gate stands, out of beautiful white marble hewn, an angel like a man in size, to the left the statue of the Most Holy Virgin, in same proportion to the angel, how they welcome with English greetings, is a strange, and because of certain antiquity very useful memorial to refute the saint-defilers, which was preserved even in the very terrible persecution of the true faith, before the downfall«<sup>56</sup>. In contrast to Gyllius, Tafferner must have seen only one opening here, which he called a gate. Since this was bricked-up, Balatkapı cannot have been meant. Tafferner also gives no dimensions for the arch and only claims that it was once the entrance to the imperial palace and was adorned with two reliefs, which he considered to be a representation of the Annunciation. The

image on the right side of the opening, as is suggested in the literature, is the Nike relief, which is kept in the Istanbul Archaeological Museums since 1894<sup>57</sup>.

In the eighteenth century, the Istanbul-Armenian scholar P. Ğugas Inciciyan wrote solely that the ancient name of the Balatkapı was Kynegion Gate, without mentioning the arches, the supposed harbour entrance or the two reliefs<sup>58</sup>. Since then and until the end of the nineteenth century, there is no information – as far as I know the literature – about the assumed harbour, the three openings and the two reliefs. It was not until 1890 that the teacher Edwin Augustus Grosvenor, who lived in Istanbul, mentioned a »Hunter's Gate« (surely Kynegion) and said that it was »the largest and most imposing of those the Golden Horn«: »it consists of a single spacious arch, which was solidly walled-up immediately after the Conquest. On the left side, in bas-relief, is the colossal figure of the Archangel Michael holding a palm-leaf; on the right a Jewish house, which has been built close against the wall, completely conceals a corresponding bas-relief of Holy Virgin«<sup>59</sup>. Here, too, there is only information about a single blocked arch, and one also learns that it was »the largest«<sup>60</sup>. Two years later, Andreas Mordtmann also noted a walled-up arch here, which he called »la porta Cynagon«<sup>61</sup>.

On the other hand, Alexander van Millingen saw three bricked-up arches again at the end of the nineteenth century and wrote in his book published in 1899: »Soon after leaving the Church of St Demetrios, and before reaching the gate now styled Balat Kapoussi, the city wall was pierced by three large archways, 45 to 55 paces apart, and alternating with three towers. Balat Kapoussi being only 55 paces [c. 82 m] beyond the easternmost archway, here stood four entrances into the city, in most unusual proximity to one another. The first, or westernmost archway was, at one time, adorned with a bas-relief on either side«<sup>62</sup>. It is important that van Millingen has entered all three arches on his drawing each on a curtain wall fortified with towers (fig. 5)<sup>63</sup>. For him, too, the most western arch is identical to the Kynegion Gate<sup>64</sup>. Some later, in 1902/1903, Ahmet Muhtar Paşa observed only one blocked arch west of Balatkapı, which he considered as Kynegion Gate<sup>65</sup>.

49 Translation: Müller-Wiener, Häfen 8 n. 12.

50 Petrus Gyllius, *De Bosphoro Thracio* II 2, 57: *Ultra portam Palatinam progressus circiter centum viginti passus, animaduerti tres magnos arcus astructos vrbis muro.* – Grélois, Gilles 105. However, Gyllius, *De Topographia* I 18, 51 himself warns the reader with regard to his steps, since these would be influenced by different circumstances and do not necessarily correspond to the Roman passage: *vt intelligere oportet in omnibus ante scriptis passibus, quos in passus Romanos redigere ausus non sum ob flexiones viarum, & varietatem passuum, qui inter se differunt in ascensu & descensu infatigato, atq; integro, adde interpellatos insolentis nationis occursu proteruiori taurorum incursu.* – Grélois, Gilles 303. – Schneider, Blachernen 90 wrote in error that Gyllius counted 150 steps, which was repeated by Müller-Wiener, Häfen 7.

51 Discussion in van Millingen, Walls 199.

52 Canatar, *İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri* 288 no. 1256: *Bağçe der Nezdi.....und Bâb-ı Balat mahdûd sûr-ı kal 'a ve Kosta Mülkü ve tarîk-ı 'âm ile* (»Garden near Balatkapı, delimited by the city wall, Kosta's house and the public street«).

53 Gerlach, *Tagebuch* 454.

54 Johannes Leunclavius, *Annales* 411 no. 10 places the gate at Fener.

55 Tournefort, *Relation* 202 (Lettre XI): »Nous traversâmes ensuite le quartier de Balat pour descendre au port qui est une des merveilles de la ville. Les Empe-reurs Grecs se divertissoient autrefois à chasser à Balat. C'est pour cela qu'on l'appelle encore en Grec vulgaire *le Parc* ou *le Chasseur*«. URL: <http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/tournefort1717bd2>.

56 Tafferner, *Keiserliche Botschafft* 140-141.

57 For a recent examination of the reliefs, see Effenberger, *Viktorien* 168-169.

58 Inciciyan, 18. *Asırda İstanbul* 14.

59 Grosvenor, *Constantinople* 581-582.

60 In contrast to Tafferner, Grosvenor claims to have seen the alleged angel »on the left side«.

61 Mordtmann, *Esquisse* 39-40.

62 van Millingen, *Walls* 198. – The relevant map section in Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon* 302 fig. 344.

63 van Millingen, *Walls* between 18 and 19.

64 van Millingen, *Walls* 204.

65 Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Feth-i Cefil-i Kostantiniyye* 98.

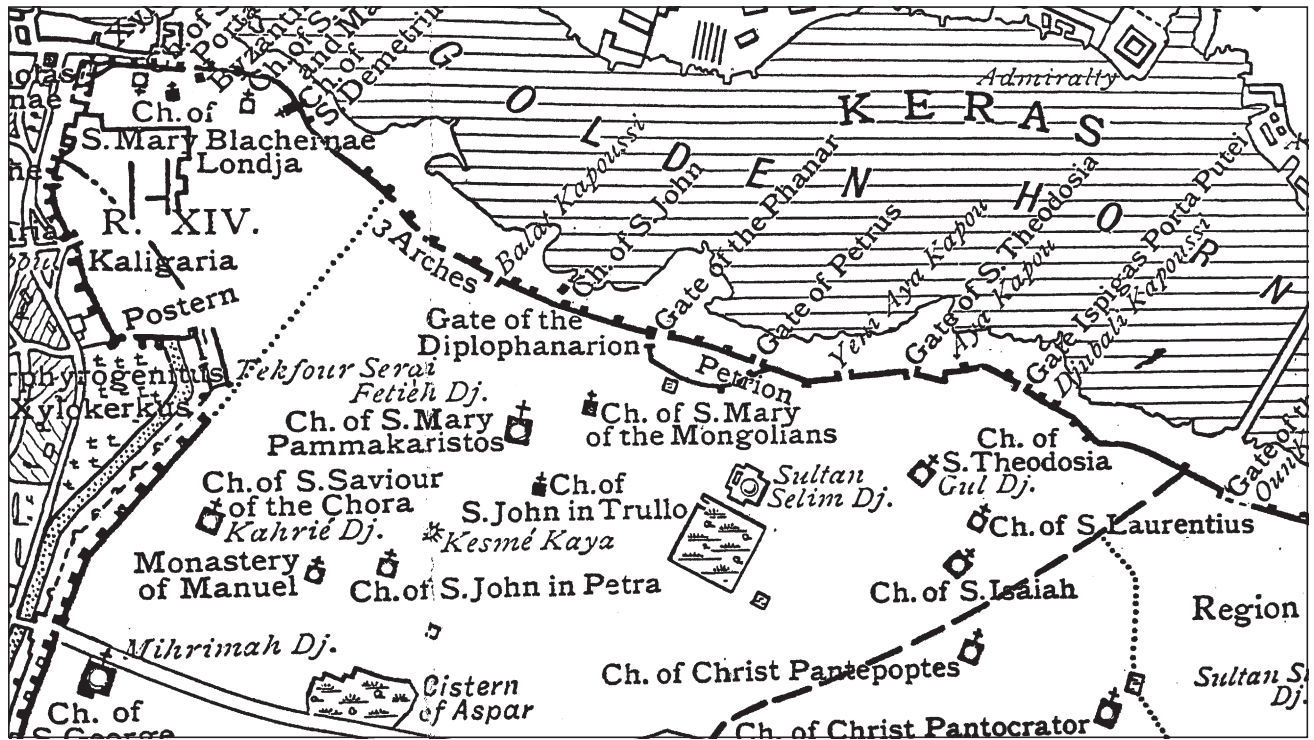


Fig. 5 Location of the three arches north of Balatkapi. – (From van Millingen, Walls, sheet between p. 18 and 19).

What is striking about these reports is that from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the nineteenth centuries either only one or three bricked-up arches were registered. The visual evidence, such as that of Matrakçı Nasuh<sup>66</sup> or Melchior Lorichs<sup>67</sup>, does not add any openings here and shows that the coastline in this area was already densely built up in the sixteenth century. This fact is also confirmed by the Ottoman written sources, according to which several warehouses were erected here<sup>68</sup> and private individuals, including several Jewish families, had houses built against the wall, as can be seen from the lines of Grosvenor. There were also numerous facilities established between the wall and the bank<sup>70</sup>. However, due to the recurring fire disasters<sup>71</sup>, sections of the wall must have been temporarily cleared of buildings in front of it, which would explain the different reports regarding the number of arches.

Due to building density, Petrus Gyllius must only have seen the bricked-up arches from the city side, where there was a vegetable garden. This explains why he did not notice the two reliefs. He only registered a continuous curtain wall with three blocked openings that were spaced apart in a certain

rhythm<sup>72</sup>. The three arches and the vegetable garden probably gave him the idea that it had to be a harbour entrance<sup>73</sup>. He may have been influenced by the Harbour of Theodosius integrated into the Marmara Sea Walls, which in his time served as a vegetable garden (Langa Bostani). The towers of the Sea Walls are around 15m high, which means that the height of the curtain walls is less than 15m. No matter how wide the arches may have been, their height must have been well below 15m. This is out of the question for the passage of larger ships. According to the contour lines, there was no space for a larger pool behind the three arches anyway, because the terrain massively increases here. It is crucial, however, that the seaside area in front of Balatkapi and the three openings already protruded a little into the Golden Horn in Byzantine times, and the Pul Yasan Synagogue mentioned in 1480 (fig. 2, no. 16), which goes back to the Byzantine period, stands directly on the flight of the first arch<sup>74</sup>. It can, therefore, be assumed that the three arches were only posterns or secondary openings.

The question whether one of the three arches was called Kynegion Gate must be asked again. Although all travellers

66 Yurdaydın, Matrakçı Nasuh, fol. 8b.

67 See n. 70. – Oberhummer, Konstantinopel 15 pl. XVI.

68 A decree (*hüküm*) from 1748 regulates the storage of goods in these areas and clearly says that the coal should be stored directly in the depots located at the jetties, see Istanbul Ahkâm Defterleri 44-47.

69 See also Kömürçüyan, İstanbul Tarihi 19.

70 See Barkan/Ayverdi, İstanbul Vakıfları Tahrir Defteri 416 no. 2434 (foundation deed from April/May 1512). – See also n. 82.

71 Balat was affected by fires in the years 1510, 1639, 1692, 1721, 1729, 1746, 1782, 1812, 1825, 1866, 1867, 1874, 1877, 1890, 1892, 1896, 1911 and 1912. For a detailed list, see Deleon, Balat ve Çevresi 62-64.

72 According to van Millingen, Walls, the three arches were between towers. We do not know whether Gyllius saw tower entrances between the arches on the city side.

73 Schneider, Mauern und Tore 67, with approval: »Gyllius rightly sees this as an old harbour entrance«.

74 Galante, Documents 166. – On the location, see Schneider, Mauern und Tore plan I.



**Fig. 6** Postern east of the Church of St Demetrios. – (Photograph Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger).

considered the Kynegion Gate to be the same as Balatkapı until the nineteenth century, some modern topographers tended to associate the Kynegion Gate with one of the openings mentioned by Gyllius. In the research literature, the Turkish Balatkapı is linked to the Byzantine βασιλική πύλη or the Gate of St John Prodromos<sup>75</sup>. Schneider identified the westernmost of the openings mentioned by Gyllius or van Millingen with the Kynegion Gate, whereby he based his suggestion primarily on a foundation deed of Mehmed II issued by Tahsin Öz<sup>76</sup>. Here are mentioned a Balatkapı (i. e., βασιλική πύλη) and a Küngözkapı (Kynegion Gate) indeed, giving the impression that these were two different entrances<sup>77</sup>. However, it should not be overlooked that the Ottomans occasionally and sometimes in the same document, used two different names for the same location<sup>78</sup>. Apart from that, they normally did not give a name to a bricked-up and therefore no longer used gate, as far as I know<sup>79</sup>.

Another foundation deed from 1472 helps to clarify the problem. Information is given regarding the location of some endowed institutions: *Yirmi yedi hânût, bitişik ve karşılıklı, kal'anın içinde Balât Pazarı denilen Küngöz Kapısı yakınında*<sup>80</sup> («Twenty-seven shops, side by side and opposite each other,

within the wall near the Küngözkapı, which is called the Balat market»). While it was already pointed out from the above-mentioned sources<sup>81</sup> that Balat and Küngöz are not easy to tell apart, this source clearly shows that Küngözkapı was directly connected to the core of Balat, that is, to its market. But the crucial statement is: *On dört beyit, bitişik, ayrı ayrı ve karşılıklı, kal'anın dışında, Darü'l Feht Kostantiniyye'nin kapılarından, Küngöz veya Balat kapısı denilen kapının yakınında*<sup>82</sup> («Fourteen houses, side by side, separated or facing each other, are located near a gate of Kostantiniyye, which is called Küngözkapı or Balatkapı»). It is clear from this that the names Balatkapı and Küngözkapı actually denote the same entrance, at least in the Ottoman period, and there is no solid argument to suggest that they were two different gates in the Byzantine period. In Byzantine times, Balatkapı was most likely called Kynegion Gate in addition to βασιλική πύλη and the Gate of St John Prodromos. Here once stood the harbour or the main landing stage on Balatkapı, where Balat İskele Camii was built as early as the fifteenth century (fig. 2, no. 17)<sup>83</sup>.

In addition, during the Byzantine period there could have been other small moorings on this section of the wall, which

75 For a compilation of the relevant literature, see Kidonopoulos, Bauten 48 n. 561; 192 n. 479.

76 Schneider, Mauern und Tore 68-69.

77 Quoted by Schneider, Mauern und Tore 69. – See Öz, Zwei Stiftungsurkunden 61,4 and 23,7, where Küngözkapı and Balatkapı are mentioned as two separate gates. I thank Dr Feray Coşkun for her help in dealing with the source. – For a designation as Avcılar Kapısı («Hunter's Gate»), see Ayverdi, İstanbul Mahalleleri 21 no. 53.

78 Ahmet Refik 109 no. 13: Meyve İskelesi and Yemiş İskelesi for the landing stage at Zindankapı.

79 For a long time it was accepted that Belgrad Kapı was bricked up in the Ottoman period without taking into account the Ottoman bridge built before it. However, my investigation has shown that Belgrad Kapı was open a long time

after the conquest, which is why it received a Turkish name. See Asutay-Effenberger, Kitâb-ı Bahriye Berlin 213-226. – See also Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 216-223. – On the other hand, the Romanos Gate, which was closed after the conquest, remained without a Turkish designation, see Asutay-Effenberger, Landmauer 87-94.

80 Vakfiyye 1472, 176, 166-168 (Ottoman text 113).

81 See n. 35-37.

82 Vakfiyye 1472, 175, 155-157 (Ottoman text 112).

83 The Ottomans built a mosque at almost every large jetty. Schneider, Mauern und Tore 71 no. 17 dates the mosque to 1766, but the predecessor of this building dates from the time of Mehmed II. Its founder, Yusuf Şücauddin, was a scholar at the court of Mehmed. – On the mosque, see Dişören, Yusuf Şücauddin Camii.





Fig. 7 Balatkapi, area map, detail. – (After Çeçen, *Halkalı Suları*, Harita no. 7).

corresponded to the posterns of the wall<sup>84</sup>. The Armenian scholar Eremya Çelebi Kömürçüyan (1637-1695) mentioned a large jetty in Balat<sup>85</sup>. Sarkis Sarraf Hovhannesyan (1740-1805) added<sup>86</sup>: »At the Balat Gate there is a large jetty where the ships with wine, wood, coal, onions and other goods are anchored. At this location there are still three small moorings, one of which is aligned with Tersane Bahçesi or Aynalıkavak Kasrı«. The location of Aynalıkavak Kasrı on the opposite side of the Golden Horn is known. Accordingly, in Ottoman times there were three smaller landing stages somewhat west of Balatkapi. These could have been the successors of Byzantine jetties, even if the posterns had long

been walled up. Indeed, archaeological evidence confirms that the three arches were not the only posterns in this portion of the wall west of Balatkapi. This section in particular is very heavily overgrown. Recent cleaning in this area revealed the brick arch of an opening (fig. 6)<sup>87</sup>. The width of the arch is 2.50m and thus corresponds to the dimensions of several posterns both on the Marmara Sea Wall and on the Sea Walls of the Golden Horn<sup>88</sup>. Including Balatkapi, the three no longer existing arches and this opening show that the line between Balatkapi and the Church of St Demetrios was an area rich in posterns and jetties. In front of Balatkapi or the Kynegion Gate was the Kynegion harbour, which laid in

84 Almost all gates on the Golden Horn possessed landing stages for the loading of goods as well as for passenger transport in the Ottoman period. Even tax matters were regulated here by imperial decrees, see a decree of 1588 in Ahmet Refik 75-76 no. 15. – See also Orhonlu, *Kayıklık*.

85 Kömürçüyan, *İstanbul Tarihi* 9.

86 Hovhannesyan, *İstanbul* 24.

87 Also on the plan of Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon* 302 fig. 344 (my fig. 3) an opening is entered here. Dirimtekin, *Haliç* 33 locates a tower (tower no. 13) in this section of the walls due to a remnant of an arch, which he interpreted as a tower entrance. However, on the wall segment, where our arch stands, there are no traces of a former tower. I am not sure if he speaks about the same arch.

88 For a postern on the sea wall, see Asutay-Effenberger, *Landmauer* fig. 184.

a protected bay until the second half of the nineteenth century. Akın noted this: »The open sewers of Balat flowed into this harbour until 1890. At the time the sewage system was covered, piles were rammed into the harbour and earth was deposited in it. Immediately after the earthquake of 1894,

the rubble of the destroyed buildings was also deposited here, after which the bank of the Balat completely deviated from its former appearance«<sup>89</sup>. A water supply plan from around 1815/1817 shows the state of the harbour before this change (fig. 7)<sup>90</sup>.

## Summary / Zusammenfassung

### The Kynegion Quarter and Its Harbour in the Late Byzantine and Ottoman Periods

The Late Byzantine sources inform us about a quarter called Kynegion (»Hunter«) on the Golden Horn, in which there was a gate and a harbour of the same name. Neither the precise extent of the quarter nor the exact location of the gate and harbour are known. Only based on a note from Petrus Gyllius it is assumed that the harbour was placed somewhat west of Balatkapı behind the sea wall and should have been accessible through three arches. Later travellers also mentioned the western arch and the relief decoration. All three arches were last seen by Alexander van Millingen. Research has often associated the western arch with the gate known as the Kynegion Gate in Byzantine sources and the Küngözkapı in Ottoman accounts. Ottoman sources indicate that the name of the district of Kynegion or Küngöz can be traced back to the hunters' quarters in both the Byzantine and Ottoman periods. The quarter may have stretched from Ottoman Balatkapı to Tekfur Sarayı. The height of the curtain walls, geographical characteristic of the site and the synagogue, already built in the Byzantine era on the projecting bank, argue against the three arches mentioned by Gyllius having been an entrance to the harbour. The Ottoman reports clearly indicate that Küngözkapı and Balatkapı were the same entrance, and that Balatkapı was also called the Kynegion Gate in the Byzantine period. The three arches were posterns that may have been connected to landing stages. An exposed opening east of the Church of St Demetrios shows that this section of the wall was provided with several posterns and piers. The Kynegion Harbour was in front of Balatkapı and had completely lost its appearance in the second half of the nineteenth century.

### Zum Stadtteil Kynegion und seinem Hafen in spätbyzantinischer und osmanischer Zeit

Die spätbyzantinischen Quellen informieren uns über ein Viertel mit Namen Kynegion (»Jäger«) am Goldenen Horn, in dem sich ein gleichnamiges Tor und ein Hafen befanden. Weder die exakte Ausdehnung des Quartiers noch die genauere Lage des Tores und des Hafens sind bekannt. Nur aufgrund einer Mitteilung von Petrus Gyllius wird angenommen, dass der Hafen sich etwas westlich von Balatkapı hinter der Seemauer befunden habe und durch drei Bögen zugänglich gewesen sein soll. Den westlichen Bogen und die Reliefdecoration registrierten auch spätere Reisende. Alle drei Bögen wurden zum letzten Mal von Alexander van Millingen wahrgenommen. Der westliche Bogen wurde in der Forschung öfter mit dem in byzantinischen Quellen als Kynegion-Tor und in osmanischen Quellen als Küngözkapı bezeichneten Tor in Verbindung gebracht. Osmanische Quellen erlauben die Feststellung, dass der Name des Stadtteils Kynegion bzw. Küngöz sowohl in byzantinischer als auch in osmanischer Zeit auf die hier befindlichen Wohnungen der Jäger zurückgeführt werden kann. Das Viertel erstreckte sich möglicherweise vom osmanischen Balatkapı bis Tekfur Sarayı. Die Höhe der Kurtine, geographische Eigenschaften des Areals und die bereits in byzantinischer Zeit auf der vorgeschobenen Uferzone errichtete Synagoge sprechen dagegen, dass die drei von Gyllius erwähnten Bögen eine Hafendurchfahrt gewesen sein können. Die osmanischen Berichte weisen eindeutig darauf hin, dass Küngözkapı und Balatkapı dasselbe Tor war und Balatkapı in der byzantinischen Zeit u. a. auch Kynegion-Tor hieß. Die drei Bögen waren Poternen, die möglicherweise mit Landungsstegen in Verbindung standen. Ein freigelegter Durchgang östlich der Demetrios-Kirche zeigt, dass dieser Abschnitt der Mauer mit mehreren Poternen und Stegen versehen war. Der Kynegion-Hafen lag vor Balatkapı und hatte sein Aussehen in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts völlig verloren.

89 Akın, Balat.

90 Çeçen, Halkalı Suları, Harita (map) no. 7. The area between Balatkapı and Tekfur Sarayı is also clearly visible here.