

THE INFLUENCE OF TURKEY UPON CZECH GARDENS

ÇEK BAHÇELERİNDE TÜRKİYE ETKİSİ

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ABSTRACT

In the history of Czech Republic Turkey had influenced indirectly the life of Czech lands, Bohemia and Moravia. During the 16th century the penetration of Turkish troops in the Central Europe caused great moving of the Royal court from besieged Vienna to Prague. The town and later the whole country was enriched by invited artists, architects and scientists from all Europe of that time. Many of them were gradually seated all over Bohemia and Moravia bringing new artistic style and spirit., foreign experiences. Even gardening was enriched by good connections with Middle East namely with Turkey. The tulips were the important plants brought to our country so early. Even the private gift of Turkish Sultan to Rudolf II., famous lion, who became so favourit, lived in Prague Royal garden, Two hundred years later we get acquainted with the Turkish and islamic art in decorative pavilions located in landscape parks. The oriental style enriched even interiors of several castles in Bohemia and Moravia.

ÖZET

Çek Cumhuriyeti tarihinde Türkiye, dolaylı olarak Çek topraklarında, Bohemya ve Moravya'daki yaşamı etkileyen bir ülke olmuştur. 16. Yüzyıl boyunca Türk askeri birliklerinin Orta Avrupa'ya dek sokulmaları, kraliyet sarayının kuşatma altındaki Viyana'dan Prag'a taşınmasına yol açmıştır. Kent ve daha sonra tüm ülke, tüm Avrupa'dan davet edilen dönemin sanatçıları, mimarları ve bilim adamları ile zenginleşmiştir. Çoğu, aşamalı olarak Bohemya ve Moravya'da yerleşmeye başlamış, kendi deneyimleri ile birlikte yeni sanatsal stil ve ruhu bu topraklara taşımıştır. Bahçecilik, Orta Doğu ve Türkiye ile olan iyi ilişkiler sayesinde gelişmiştir. Bu erken dönemde laleler, Çek topraklarına taşınan önemli bitkiler olmuştur. Türk sultanının II. Rudolf'e özel hediyesi olan ve bir gözde haline gelen aslan, Prag Kraliyet Bahçesi'nde yaşamıştır. Çekler, bu dönemden iki yüzyıl sonra, Türk ve İslam sanatı ile özel peyzaj düzenlemeleri içerisinde konumlandırılmış pavyonlar aracılığı ile tanışmıştır. Oryantal stil, Bohemya ve Moravya'da yer alan bazı kalelerin iç dekorasyonunu dahi etkilemiştir.

Preparing the speech appointed to the participants of ICOMOS – IFLA Symposium in Istanbul I was lost in about connections of the two, quite far-away countries Turkey and Czech republic. Inquiring into our history I have appeared that Turkey have had indirectly influenced even our historic gardens.

During the 16th century the Turkish troops penetrated in our near neighbourhood. Several times they invaded Austria, besieged Vienna, the seat of mighty Habsburg power and the rulers of our historic countries Bohemia and Moravia, took part in several military campaigns against Turks. Our young king Ludwig of Jagellon perished in 1526 in marshes by the Hungarian Mohacz. During one unimportant battles. The new Czech king Ferdinand I came from the famous Spanish family of Habsburgs. The Princess Anna of Jagellon became his wife. In the year 1529, because of Turkish military investment near Vienna, the royal court moved to Prague castle. During the rule of Ferdinand I the large garden was founded in front of fortification of the castle. The son of the royal couple Maxmilian went to Spain to marry the Princess Mary, the daughter of Charles V. On the voyage the young Czech and Moravian noblemen accompanied him to the port of Genoa. In their three month stay in the northern Italy while waiting for the wedding vessels, they got acquainted with the new spirit of Renaissance. The unemployed Italian artists and craftsmen were invited to Czech countries. Many of them have moved to Prague and were seated in the district below the castle forming permanent independent community. The Czech lands of these times were preserving the medieval character and owing to the Italian immigrants the spirit and art of Renaissance spread all over Bohemia and Moravia.

The Turkish invasions have ceased for some time because of the Konstantinopol's [Istanbul] peace treaty between Süleyman II and Ferdinand I in the year 1562. Apparently because of this event our king received the gift from ambassador in Istanbul called Busbecq Angerius. It was in the form of special bulbs that got the Czech name "*tulipán*" originated in the Turkish word "toliban" reminding the well known head cover. The precious bulbs were carefully cultivated in the castle garden by the famous botanic and private specialist of Ferdinand I. Pietro Andrea Mattioly of Siena. The tulips multiplied within Prague royal garden started soon to be

sold to Germany and Holland. Owing to the preserved list of cultivated varieties they were of several colours white, yellow, red and striped. One of the most asked got the name of king Maxmilian's wife Mary of Spain. It might be interesting to investigate when the bulbs of tulips came to Holland, today called "the country of tulips".

The Turkish sultan Selim II and the Czech king Maxmilian II have made Adrianopol's [Edirne] peace in the year 1567. Not latter on the new war started this time with Osman Turks. Imperial court moved accordingly from Vienna to safe place of Prague once more. The successor of the throne became the son of Maxmilian and Mary, Rudolf II. He got to like Prague and the time of his rule became the "golden age" for culture and science of the whole country. The emperor Rudolf II enriched the Prague castle and Royal garden started to be well known all over Europe at that time. The foreign fruit trees and plants were cultivated in great amount. In front of the charming renaissance Summer Palace the giardinetto was founded; the so called Singing Fountain in it's middle. On the axis of richly decorated Ball Game Hall Jan Vredemann de Vries beautified the garden with maze of clipped bushes. The writer and traveller Georg Braun, the author of ample work describing the most famous places of then world has called this garden of 1594 "*Theatrum Mundi*". In western part of Royal garden Ferdinand I let to build menagerie. During the stay of Rudolf II it was enlarged and improved for breeding of beasts, mostly lions. The lion has been the symbol of Czech kings from the ancient time. In the "Lion's Court" the mighty lion, private gift of Turkish sultan to Rudolf II, had special privileges becoming favourite of the emperor. The court astrologist Tycho de Brahe observed among stars and found that Rudolf II and his lion had the same constellation of stars. It has been really remarkable that they both emperor and lion died in three days in January 1612. At the end of Rudolf II life his brother Mathyas, later ruler and king of Czech countries, restored peace with Osman Turks.

The two hundred years later until 19th century in Czech lands we got acquainted with the Turkish and Islamic art again. The castle and palace gardens mostly in the baroque style were gradually changed into the landscape parks according to the new fashion coming from England. The early parks were designed in simple way using the local trees. Later more foreign and

even exotic trees were planted in parks and enriched by the pavilions even of the oriental character. The most important park Lednice, situated in southern Moravia (listed by UNESCO) had very rich collection of trees and pavilions. The Turkish waterhouse had characteristic shape and decoration and outstanding building monumental Minaret had mosaics in colour of Turkish stones (*turquoise*) (Figs. 1, see also Ruoff, Fig. 4). In southern Bohemia in the castle garden in Lnáře they had built even the small mosque. The symbols of Turkish crescent we can see on some buildings as on the castle Humprecht in eastern Bohemia. Many Turkish pieces of art we can see in the interiors of the castles.

On the lines of Vienna the drinking of Turkish coffee came in our country during the second half of 18th century. It was very precious delicacy drank of

tiny porcelain cups beautiful in shape and even Turkish decoration. The coffee was even served in pavilions of romantic landscape parks. During the gardens celebrations or country fairs held for instant in the Prague Royal enclosure, the tents of Turkish shapes were to be seen and delicious "Turkish honey" with nuts and almonds was sold by Turk in national costume with very special hat on. It was called "fes" probably produced in Czech Strakonice till now. The nice mighty tree Turkish hasel (*Corylus colurna L.*) was very rare in our landscape parks because of cruel winter frosts. Now, owing to the warming of the planet, we are planting the Turkish hasel very often and with success.

I hope that the few sentences explaining my intention to find any influence of Turkey upon Czech gardens attracted attention¹.

NOTE

1 The text has been prepared by using several sources (Baseova 1991; Evans 1973; Hora 1994; Mencl 1957;

Neumann 1984; Pacáková-Hošťálková 1999; Palacký 1983; Preiss 1986; Vurm 1996; Wirth 1961).

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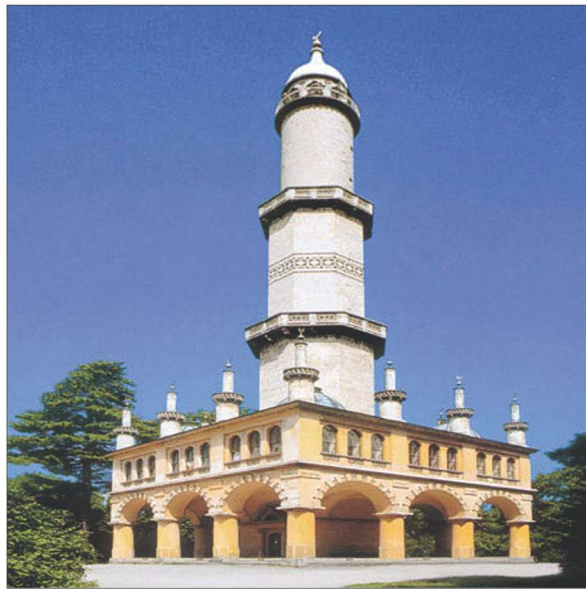


Fig. 1. Minaret in Lednice, landscape park, Southern Moravia, Czech Rep