

# **TURQUERIE IN THE WEST-EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE GARDENS IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> AND IN THE EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

## **18. YÜZYIL VE ERKEN 19. YÜZYIL BATI-AVRUPA BAHÇELERİNDE *TURQUERIE***

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18<sup>th</sup> century, 19<sup>th</sup> century, Europe, garden, *Turquerie*

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### **ABSTRACT**

*“Turkish” tents and other Turkish inspired buildings were time and again set up at visually important points in the West-European landscape gardens in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. They reflected the general interest for Turkey felt among the more enlightened Europeans that manifested itself also in many other ways, e.g. Turkish music and Turkish masquerades.*

*Tents were probably chosen as references for Turkey, because the tents of the Turkish army were renowned for their high quality. Yet, the tents made of fabric have - for obvious reasons - not survived as well as other garden buildings of the era. Therefore little research has so far been done on their role in the landscape gardens. In some gardens there were, however, also other “Turkish” buildings, for instance kiosks, “mosques” and pavilions that survived for a longer time, still exist or have occasionally been reconstructed.*

*There can also have been further, ideological reasons for the “Turkish” buildings. They may sometimes have been erected to remind the garden visitors of the lofty principle that all people are brothers and equals – ideas first formulated by the freemasons and Rosicrucians.*

*The members of these societies also believed that much of the ancient wisdom, especially mathematics, had been developed by the peoples living in the East Mediterranean area.*

### **ÖZET**

*Türk çadırları ve Türk etkili yapıların görsel etkisi, 18. yüzyıl ve erken 19. yüzyıl Batı-Avrupa bahçeleri için önemli bir unsurdur. Aydınlanmış Avrupalıların Türkiye'ye genel ilgisi Türk müziği ve maskeleri örneklerinde olduğu gibi başka birçok şekilde kendini göstermektedir.*

*Çadırlar muhtemelen Türk ordusu kaliteli çadırları ile ünlü olduğundan Türkiye için bir referans olarak seçilmiş olmalıdır. Ancak kumaştan yapılan çadırlar – bilinen nedenlerden dolayı- diğer bahçe yapıları gibi günümüze gelememiştir. Buna karşın, ayakta kalabilmiş veya yeniden inşa edilmiş olan “Türk” binaları, örneğin köşkler, “camiler” ve pavyonlar bulunmaktadır.*

*“Türk” tarzı yapılar ayrıca ideolojik nedenlerle de tercih edilmiştir. Bu yapıların bahçeyi ziyarete gelenlere ilk olarak masonlar ve Rosicrucians örgütü tarafından (Gül-Haç Örgütü) ortaya konan insanların eşit ve kardeş olduğu şeklindeki büyük öğretiyi hatırlatmak için tercih edildiği de olmuştur. Bu oluşumların üyeleri antik erdem, özellikle de matematiğin Doğu Akdeniz havzasında yaşayan insanlar tarafından geliştirildiğine inanmaktaydı.*

The interest for and a tentative appreciation of foreign architectural styles becomes evident among the cultivated West-Europeans during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The history of *Chinoiserie* has been dealt with in a number of studies, that of *Turquerie* has remained less well known. After the Ambassador of Turkey, Suleiman Agha, let serve coffee to his guests in Paris in 1669-1670 this beverage became all the rage there. Turkish masquerades were organized at the princely courts, and they remained fashionable all through the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Porcelain figurines in Turkish costumes were manufactured, and well-known intellectuals like Alexander Pope and Madame de Staël were portrayed wearing turbans. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart composed the opera “The Abduction from the Seraglio” in 1782 just to mention a few expressions of *Turquerie* in the varied cultural connections of the era. - To the garden lovers Turkey was also known as the home of fabulous plants, viz. crown imperials, hyacinths, lilacs and narcissi, not to speak of the tulips.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Turkey was a huge empire that stretched from Tunis in the West to the Caspian Sea in the East and from the Gulf of Persia to Budapest and even further north. Some ideas about Turkish architecture had certainly been conveyed to West-Europeans by people who had lived in Turkey and by the occasional travel writers, but on the whole this did not amount to much. In the popular imagination “tents” were something that people identified with Turkey. The Sieges of Vienna and the other wars had contributed to people’s knowledge about the excellent quality of the Turkish tents, and their size and opulence was praised by the people who had had the opportunity to see them in Turkey. This is how Lady Mary Wortley Montagu described her impressions in 1718:

*From this place I went in my Turkish coach to the camp, which is to move in a few days to the frontiers. The Sultan is already gone to his tents, and all his court. The appearance of them is indeed very magnificent. Those of the great men are rather like palaces than tents, taking up a great compass of ground and being divided into a vast number of apartments (Montagu 2003: 93-94).*

The mood against the “stiffness” of the ornate Baroque gardens had begun to change in England during the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The reasons were varied: partly patriotic, partly artistic, and sometimes even financial. The change had its roots also in the growing appreciation of landscape paintings of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The works of Claude Lorraine, Nicolas Poussin, J. van Ruysdael and Salvator Rosa had taught many a discerning Englishman to see beauty in the wide, open views of their country with the groups of leafy trees and natural looking water features – ponds, streams, and lakes. Models for the pavilions to be erected in their new - or redesigned - gardens were also found in those paintings, and the various buildings in Grecian and Roman styles, as well as the mock ruins of Mediaeval castles, monasteries or chapels began to symbolize the ideas of democracy and liberty. The general background of the rise of the English landscape garden movement is, however, well-known and it need not be discussed here more extensively.

### **TURKISH TENTS IN ENGLISH GARDENS**

A Turkish tent was erected in Vauxhall Gardens in London in 1741-1742. Vauxhall Gardens was a very popular venue, much frequented by fashionable Londoners for promenading, dining and listening to the concerts organized there. The Turkish tent is

believed to have been erected as an undercover dining area (Coke and Borg 2011: 64-65). However, it did not look like a tent at all (Fig. 1), but the fact that it was called so implies that it was a reference that the visitors to the gardens understood, and that they also appreciated this allusion to Turkey. The contemporary interest in that country manifested itself also in the founding the Turkey Club, later renamed the Divan Club, in London in 1744 by the Earl of Sandwich, Sir Francis Dashwood and some other Englishmen who had visited the Ottoman Empire (Finnegan 2006:19-23).

Sir Francis Dashwood let remodel the grounds of his family seat, West Wycombe Park in Buckinghamshire, in the landscape garden style, and a large tent can be seen on an island in the pictures painted by William Hannan in 1752. The tent is assumed to have been a Turkish one (Collier and Wrightson 1993: 57-58). The very splendid Turkish tent built in the well known landscape garden Painshill, in Surrey, before 1760 stood at a visually important place. The visitors had good views of the grounds from there, and it attracted a lot of positive comments from them (Kitz and Kitz 1984: 46-66, 90, 91, 108). The white, elaborately draped tent with decorative additions in blue and gold has now been reconstructed.

There was a fairly large Turkish tent at Stourhead, in one of the best known landscape gardens of England. It stood on a prominent site on the hillside overlooking the lake. It was erected at an unknown date, but as the inside of the tent was renovated in 1776 (Woodbridge 1770: 67). This seems to imply that it had already been in existence for some time before. According to the sightline of a map drawn in 1779 the tent was to be seen from the so called Temple of Hercules (now "Pantheon") that stands on the other side of the lake. The tent was oval in form and it seems to have been fastened to the ground with eight poles. One visitor to Stourhead in 1776 commented the Turkish tent saying that she had found the it "very pretty, 'tis of painted canvas, so remains up the whole year" and that the interior was painted blue and white in a mosaic pattern (Jones 1979: 48).

There was a Turkish tent in the garden of Hestercombe, in Somerset in 1761, but it is not known

when it was erected. The owner of the garden was Coplestone Warren Bampfylde, an amateur artist and a gifted landscape designer. There were further Turkish tents, to which old records refer, but there is little research on them (Jones 1979: 114, 129).

### **TURKISH TENTS IN THE GARDENS OF OTHER COUNTRIES**

There seems to have been quite a number of Turkish tents in the Netherlandish gardens already in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century (Hopper 1981: 128-132; de Jong and Dominicus-van Soest 1996: 177, 182). However, more studies are necessary to gain detailed information about them. There are mentions of Turkish tents in German, Irish, and Italian landscape gardens from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the relevant sources could not be looked into in this connection.

The garden of Monceau in Paris was designed by Louis Carrogis, called Carmontelle, for the Duc de Chartres, the cousin of King Louis XVI, in 1773-1778. Two Turkish tents were erected as extensions to the main building, which was a pavilion for short sejours and not a house for permanent habitation. It is possible that the idea derived from the travellers' descriptions of the interlinked tents used by high ranking Turks. A Turkish tent seems also to have been projected for the Duc de Penthièvre for the garden of his castle at Armainvilliers, as well as for the Marquis de Marigny at Ménars. Some further ones may have been planned or built, too (DeLorme 1996: 152). It is, however, questionable whether the tent in the well known landscape garden Désert de Retz, near Paris, was meant to be Turkish, as some scholars have assumed.

There was a Turkish tent in the garden of Godegård Manor to the southwest of Stockholm. The landscape garden and presumably the tent, too, had been designed by Fredrik Magnus Piper in the 1780s (Conner 1979: 75). Piper also designed "tents" - according to some sources "Turkish tents" - for the public park called Kungsträdgården in Stockholm in the 1790s, but this project was not carried out. The interest for Turkish tents is illustrated by the unusual project of Peter Maximilian Adlerfelt (1735-1808) for a bee garden of Christineholm Manor, to the south of Stockholm in 1782. It was planned to look like a military camp with tents for the Sultan, the

Grand Vizier, the Aga of the Janissaries, the Colonel of the Janissaries and so forth to the more modest tents for the lower officers, all painted on wood and in great detail (Flinck 1994: 55-57).

Baron L.H.von Nicolay (1738-1820) let build a Turkish tent on a small island in the landscape garden of Monrepos, in Wiburg, Finland, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Fig.2). It had a wooden core over which a horizontally striped canvas was draped over. The canvas was probably taken away for the winter months because of the heavy snows. The tent was about four metres high and ten metres in diameter, and slightly oval in form. It stood directly at the Gulf of Finland with the awning opening towards the sea. The tent was well maintained by the Baron's descendants, and it survived until 1944, when Finland was obliged to cede the area to the Soviet Union. The Baron had also let build a couple of houses for his retainers in the "Turkish style", to the east of the landscape garden, probably to give a picturesque atmosphere to that area, too. The tent is well documented in the historic sources, but there seem to be no pictures of the retainers' houses (Ruoff 1993: 123).

A number of tents, for instance those in the gardens of Drottningholm and Haga in Sweden have mistakenly been called "Turkish" in some recent publications, though they never had any such connotations. Careful checking of the original sources is, indeed, necessary, for in addition to the Turkish tents some Chinese and Tartar tents were also projected for the landscape gardens in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **OTHER TURKISH BUILDINGS IN THE LANDSCAPE GARDENS**

In addition to the tents also other types of Turkish inspired buildings were erected in the landscape gardens. However, there seem to be no publications that would convey even a general idea of their types or their number. The following pieces of information consist of notes made in connection with research done primarily on other subjects. A more detailed survey can only be made after more research has been undertaken.

When King Stanislas Leszczyński of Poland (1677-1766) resided in Zweibrücken, Germany, in 1715, he

let build a residence of wooden houses in Turkish style there. He also gave it the Turkish sounding name "Tschifflik" [çiftlik] (Muratori-Philip 2000: 56-57). Later he let Turkish influenced buildings, "kiosks", be erected at the gardens of the castles of Lunéville and Commercy in France (Chapotot 1999:11, 13, 39, 109; Muratori-Philip 2000: 192-193). In these cases the personal involvement of the garden owner was decisive. King Stanislas had firsthand knowledge about Turkish architecture, for in 1713 he had been a - voluntary - prisoner in Bender where he had been very well treated by the Turkish authorities and he retained pleasant memories of the country.

A "mosque with a minaret" was to be built on an island in the above mentioned landscape garden Stourhead according to a diary notice from the year 1754, i.e. at the time when the two lakes were being redesigned (Pococke 1889: 43). The project was, however, not carried out possibly because of problems connected with the damming of the River Stour.

Probably the first English garden to have a "mosque" was Kew. Whether the decision had already been made by Frederick, the Prince of Wales (1707-1751), the owner of the garden, before his death, is not known, but it is possible. He had namely commissioned John Henry Muntz to design the pavilion in "Old Moorish Taste" for Kew in 1750 (Rowan 1968: 36-37). It was, however, built only after the Prince's death by William Chambers, and the Prince's widow, Princess Augusta, wanted to have the garden laid out after a "plan" which had probably been determined by her late consort. The "mosque" itself was designed by Chambers. In his book on Kew Chambers explained that he had "endeavoured to collect the principal particularities of the Turkish Architecture" in the design of the minarets "as well as in the whole exterior decoration of the building itself", but in regard to the interior decoration he had "not so scrupulously adhered to their style of building" (Chambers 1966).

There were two Turkish structures, a parasol and a kiosk, in the park of Friedrich Eugen, the Prince of Montbéliard, in Alsace, which was probably created in the 1770s. According to J.C.Krafft the kiosk was of "simple style", and he added that "the mixture of layers of black stones and bricks is very pleasing",



and that the building had “one minaret, one tower and a pyramid roof, all with crescent moons in different sizes” (Krafft 1993: 75, 82, 121, 128-129). In fact the building looked more like a mosque than a kiosk. The use of these terms remained inconsistent, vague and contradictory all through the 18<sup>th</sup> century and still in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, as Krafft’s text shows. The Prince of Montbéliard’s elder brother, Carl Eugen, the reigning Duke of Württemberg, was also very interested in landscape gardening and he had let plan “English gardens” - *Englische Anlagen* - at Hohenheim, near Stuttgart, with a large number of monuments and pavilions. There was a mosque with two minarets the building of which was completed in the year 1778 (Nau 1978: 33). In 1796 Sophie Dorothee, Duchess of Württemberg, let design the grounds of the hunting lodge Fasanenhof in English style, and a mosque was built on one of the islands (Berger-Fix and Merten 1981: 92).

A very splendid mosque was designed by Nicolas de Pigage in connection of the remodelling of the extensive Baroque grounds of the castle of Schwetzingen, near Mannheim, about 1779. The building was ready in 1795 (Wagner 2011). Friedrich Ludwig Sckell had projected a “Turkish Garden” for the respective area in 1773, but no detailed plans of it seem to have survived. The mosque was very much admired by the contemporaries: “The magnificence of this monument is such that Europe cannot offer the like. The richness of the architecture composing its decoration is beyond human conception” (Krafft 1993: 191). There was a Turkish mosque at Weissenstein (now Wilhelmshöhe) in Cassel that was contemporaneous with that in Schwetzingen, and there were mosques also in other German landscape gardens, e.g. in Steinfurter Bagno, Hanau and Hohenzieritz, but it could not now be ascertained of if they all were considered Turkish or just generally “oriental”. Only the mosque at Schwetzingen survives today.

King Gustav III of Sweden was very much interested in landscape gardening, and he had visited for instance the gardens of Monceau and Désert de Retz in France. He wished to have a Turkish kiosk at first at Drottningholm and then at Haga, the new landscape garden to be created at Haga in Stockholm (Fig. 3). The above mentioned architect F.M.Piper designed the kiosk, but his original plans was much modified, and there is, in fact, little that

reminds one of Turkish architecture. The reference to Turkey was, however, underlined in connection of the inauguration of the building on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1788, on the name-day of the King’s brother, Duke Charles. It was celebrated with “janissary” music in the kiosk, and on the same evening a Turkish feast took place in the Royal Palace. The inauguration probably took place on that very day in remembrance of King Charles XII who had fought Russia with the help of Turkey some eighty years earlier, and whose name-day the 28<sup>th</sup> had also been (Charles XII had stayed in Bender for eight years). King Gustav used the pavilion for government meetings where he - among other things - planned the war against Russia, that he started on the first of July (Olausson 1993: 467-475). There were further Turkish inspired pavilions in the Swedish landscape gardens that were probably built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, e.g. a kiosk at Hellfors Manor, but the information could not now be definitely ascertained of.

There was a Turkish pavilion in the landscape garden created - from the 1770’s onwards - for Empress Catharine II at Tsarskoje Selo, near St. Petersburg. This pavilion is said to have been similar to the one in the Sultan’s garden in Constantinople, and to have been built after the plans sent to the Empress by the Russian ambassador to the Sublime Porte. There was also a so-called “Turkish” or “Red” Cascade in the same garden, and possibly also a further elements associated with Turkey (Hayden 2005: 92-93; Floryan 1996: 115).

Turkish inspired buildings existed also in several further great European landscape gardens in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, viz. a Turkish House in the garden of Lazienki Palace in Warsaw (Kwiatkowski 1995: 20, 21), a pavilion fashioned like a mosque at Laxenburg, near Vienna. At Lednice the building of a minaret like “Turkish tower” was started after the designs of Joseph Hardtmuth at the very end of the century (Fig. 4, Hanzl-Wachter 2006: 170, 171). Further projects and buildings are known to have existed in Ireland, Italy, and Hungary (Zádor 1974: 84, 88, 90, Fig IV, 9). A Turkish temple called “Crescent Moon” in the garden of Wotton House, Buckinghamshire, and probably also the kiosk and the “Turkish temple” in a park near London date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Krafft 1993: 11-13, 20, 21; Jones 1974: 295). Jean-Augustin Renard (1744-1807) planned a Turk-

ish pavilion for the garden of the Armainvilliers castle and Turkish kiosks for the picturesque garden of the well-known statesman C.M.de Talleyrand at Valençay in France (Krafft 1993: 24, 31; DeLorme 1996: 278).

## CONCLUSIONS

The pieces of information gathered here suggest that there was originally such a number of Turkish inspired buildings that their study would merit more extensive research (Fig. 5). This would certainly contribute towards a better understanding of the ideas on the basis of which of the landscape gardens of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were created. However, few of the original structures have survived until today. The tents made of fabric and the wooden kiosks needed very careful upkeep, and they were easily damaged and lost, if their upkeep was neglected. This may be one of the reasons why practically no studies have been dedicated to this theme.

The role and meaning of the Turkish gardens buildings may have varied from garden to garden. It is often assumed that the exotic looking pavilions were built in order to create visual variety in the gardens. This may, indeed, have been one of the reasons for erecting them. However, the frequency with which the "Grecian" and "Roman", temple like pavilions as well as "Mediaeval" ruins occurred in a garden after a garden suggests the

very opposite. In fact, there was not much variety at all, and it is generally agreed that these buildings had, primarily, symbolic connotations for their original owners as well as for their visitors. It might therefore be assumed that the Turkish and Chinese elements had similar meanings. They may, for instance, have symbolized the ideas put forward by the freemasons about the equality and fraternity of all peoples. They advocated this in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, though they are nowadays generally associated only with the French Revolution, and very many owners of the great landscape gardens are known to have been freemasons. The Rosicrucians were a more secret society, but it was much supported in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They thought partly on similar lines, as the freemasons and connected The Ottoman Empire with the Templars as well as their founder who had stayed in Damascus. On the advice of the Turks he gave up his idea of going to Jerusalem and travelled instead to Damcar where he learnt mathematics and physics.

The Turkish elements may also have contributed to the idea of the garden as a microcosmos, as Krafft reflected on Stowe:

*"Enfin, l'on peut dire que ce jardin, par l'architecture des différens peuples du globe, comme par l'immense quantité d'arbres étrangers et précieux qui y sont plantés, représente le monde entier (Krafft 1993: 65-66).*

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Fig. 1.  
The Grand Walk of Vauxhall Gardens in London. The Turkish tent is the building on the right. The pavilion in the middle was the "Organ" – with an organ inside – and the one on the left was the "Orchestra" where the musicians played. The copper plate was based on a picture painted by G.A. Canal, better known as Il Canaletto, about 1751. Private Collection (photo of the author)

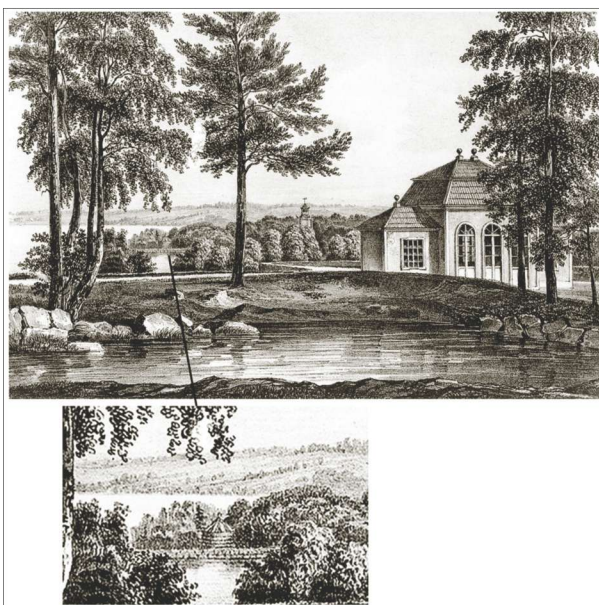


Fig. 2. A view of the landscape garden Monrepos in Wiburg. The Turkish tent can be seen between the trees on an island to the left, cf. the enlargement. The lithograph was probably based on a water-colour made by Danish artist C.F.Christensen. Library of Helsinki University



Fig.3. The Turkish kiosk at Haga, in Stockholm. It was designed by Fredrik Magnus Piper in 1785, and the original design was more intricate and oriental looking. It was the first pavilion that was built in the new landscape garden of King Gustav III. The roof is crowned with a gilded, crescent moon (photo of the author)



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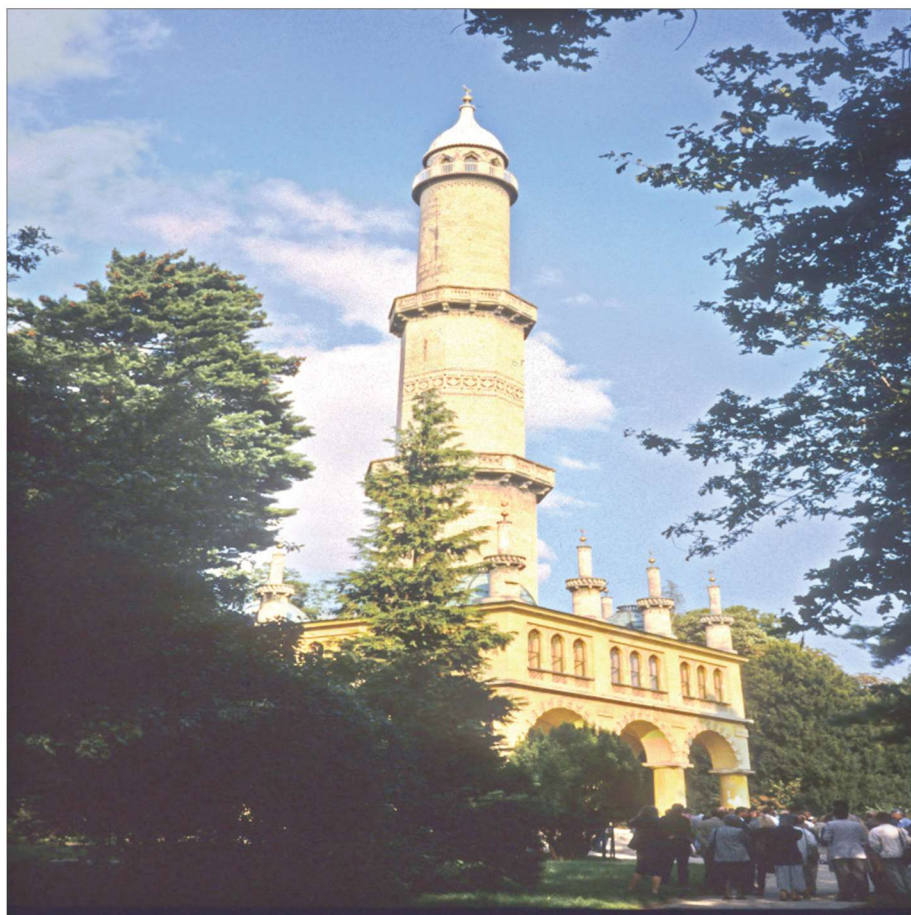


Fig. 4.  
The Turkish "Tower" [minaret] at Lednice, CZ, was built in 1798-1804 after the plans of Joseph Hardtmuth. The interior decorations were also carried out in a Turkish influenced style. The tower offers magnificent views of the landscape park that is now on the World Heritage List of UNESCO (photo of the author)

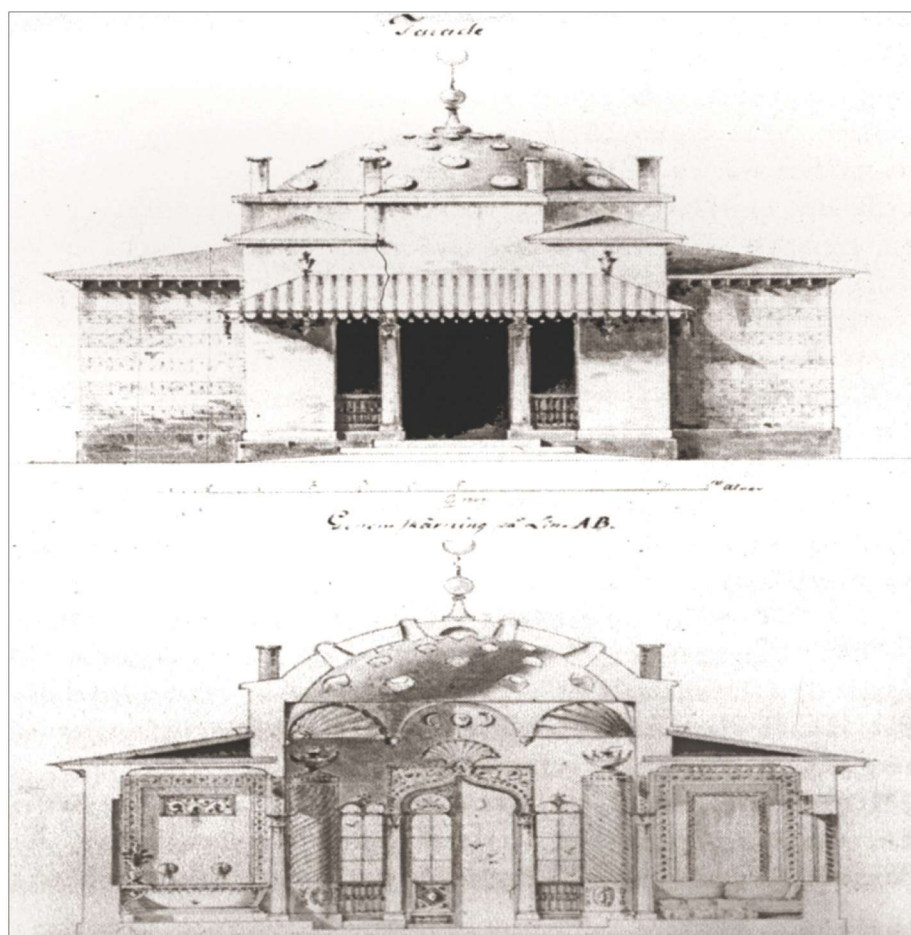


Fig. 5.  
The Turkish Bath for Joensuu Park at Halikko FI. It was designed by Carl Christoffel Gjørwell in 1809. He had visited Alger in 1794, and he designed Turkish influenced buildings for other gardens, too. Private Collection. Photo Ritva Bäckman, National Board of Antiquities, Helsinki FI