



THE IMPORTANCE OF ALLOTMENT GARDENS IN THE EUROPEAN GARDEN ART IN TERMS OF URBAN LANDSCAPE AND THE CONCEPT OF ALLOTMENT GARDENS IN TURKISH CITIES¹

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Abstract

Allotment Gardens (AG) are the lands composed of several small land plots designed together in the sizes of 200 m² to 400 m² in general and taken over by individuals or families. The history of these gardens begins in the United Kingdom. Today, function of AG is mainly to serve as not agricultural production areas but recreational and social attraction sites in many European countries especially in Germany, where best practice examples can be seen.

Turkish application examples of AGs are given in the present study, which were present several ages ago in many world countries to meet food needs of the poor and then used for recreational aims while today, can increase urban green area rate and shelter organic agricultural productions. As the result of the study, it was seen that Atatürk Forest Farm, Yedikule Bostanları (gardens) taking place in the adjacent of the preservation line involving İstanbul Kara Surları (Istanbul's Territorial Wall) listed among United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s World Heritages, Boğazköy Kuzguncuk Bostanı and Diyarbakır City Walls and Hevsel Gardens having entered in UNESCO's World Heritage List have the same function with AGs as urban agricultural lands for ages in Turkey.

Keywords

Allotment Gardens
European Gardens
Urban Landscape
Turkey

AVRUPA BAHÇE SANATI'NDA KİŞİYE TAHSİSLİ BAHÇELERİN KENTSEL PEYZAJ AÇISINDAN ÖNEMİ VE TÜRK KENTLERİNDE KİŞİYE TAHSİSLİ BAHÇE KAVRAMI

Özet

Kişiyeye Tahsisli Bahçeler, genellikle bir arada düzenlenen, bireylerin veya ailelerin devraldığı 200-400 m²'lik birkaç küçük arsa parçasının bir araya getirilmesi ile oluşmuş bahçelerdir. Bu bahçelerin tarihi Birleşik Krallıkta başlamaktadır. Günümüzde başta Almanya'da olmak üzere birçok Avrupa ülkesinde örnekleri bulunan Kişiyeye Tahsisli Bahçeler'in fonksiyonu bitki üretilen alanlar değil rekreasyon alanı ve sosyal toplanma mekanı olmaktadır.

Bu çalışmada; birçok Dünya ülkesinde asırlar önce var olan ve günümüzde de örnekleri bulunan, ilk zamanlar yoksul insanların başta sebze olmak üzere gıda ihtiyacını karşılamak amacı ile, daha sonraları rekreasyon amacıyla da kullanılan, kentlerde yeşil alan miktarını artıran, organik tarımın uygulandığı bahçelerin Türkiye'deki örnekleri araştırılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda; UNESCO Dünya Miras Alanları listesi'nde bulunan İstanbul Kara Surları koruma bandının hemen bitişiğindeki Yedikule Bostanları'nın, Boğazköy Kuzguncuk Bostanı'nın ve 2015 yılında UNESCO Dünya Miras Listesi'ne dahil olan Diyarbakır Surları ve Hevsel Bahçeleri'nin Türkiye'de asırlardır var olan kentsel tarım alanları olarak Kişiyeye Tahsisli Bahçeler ile aynı fonksiyonu yükledikleri görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Kişiyeye Tahsisli Bahçeler
Avrupa Bahçeleri
Kent Peyzajı
Türkiye

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1. INTRODUCTION

Urban agriculture is cultivation activity in close proximity of a city. The most important type of urban agriculture is composed of urban gardens. Urban gardens are practically divided into 3 categories as house gardens, social gardens, and allotment gardens (AG). AGs are the land plots allotted by governments or local authorities (municipalities) to individuals for their use as gardens to produce agricultural products (Drescher et al. 2006).

AGs are social gardens existing in several European countries even nearly 200 years ago. As a part of urban culture, AG is among urban development dynamics (Macnair 2002; Holmer et al. 2003).

However, the number of such gardens began to reduce between 1950 and 1960 since their lands were left for housing, educational facilities, roads, industrial structures and their chance of establishment decreased (Macnair 2002; Holmer et al. 2003).

AGs are the gardens composed of more than one small land parts in the size of 200 to 400 m², designed generally together and allotted to individuals or families. Today, seen mainly in Germany and other several European countries, AGs function as not only plant production area but also recreation and social meeting areas. AGs are the areas preventing the convergence of urban ecosystem and contributing to urban ecology (Barthel et al. 2010). They have many social, cultural and economic functions for the elder. Such areas can offer an occupancy to the elder in their retirement period in addition to the possibility of cheaper vegetable consumption (Tei et al. 2009).

Fruits, vegetables and cut flowers produced in AGs can be used legally for the favour of the society again by local authorities. The history of these gardens begins in the United Kingdom. As an opinion, AG was developed first in 1864 by Allotment Gardeners Association in Germany. In industrialization period in Europe, large number of families moved from villages to cities to work in factories. Such people lived then in lower

income and socioeconomic conditions as those in Philippines cities today. Gardens for The Poor or in its changed name Allotment Gardens were offered as contribution to the poor (Kasch 2001; Holmer et al. 2003).

In 1919, one year after the 1st World War, the first "Allotment Garden" was constituted in Germany. Fixed rental fare and land ownership were secured through Small Garden and Small-Rent Land Law. In 1983, this law was changed to Republic Act for Allotment Gardens (Gröning and Wolschke-Bulmann, 1995; Holmer et al. 2003).

In the present study, Turkish examples of AGs, which were present in many countries of the world ages ago to meet food need (like vegetables) of the poor at the beginning and then recreational need, can increase green area rate in cities and enable organic agriculture practices, are investigated and Yedikule Vegetable Gardens and Boğazköy Kuzguncuk Vegetable Gardens in Istanbul were determined to be good examples for AGs.

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

Main materials of the study are AG examples from the world and Turkey. Turkey's examples are Yedikule and Boğazköy Kuzguncuk Vegetable Gardens in Istanbul and Diyarbakır City Walls and Hevsel Gardens. Method of the study is composed of the evaluation of urban agricultural lands taking place in international literature reviewed in the subject of AG and the world examples especially in European countries and those in Turkey with the same functions and analysis of their past and present functions and the definition of their contributions to today's urban ecology and landscape.

3. RESULTS

3.1. AG Examples from the World

Today, there are a great number of AGs all over the world most of which are in European countries (e.g. Germany harbours 80.000 of them).

3.2. AG Examples from Turkey

Atatürk Forest Farm was thought to be an urban farm focused on cultivation by referring to its establishment aims and activities

performed in its past. Established based on the term “cultivation”, Atatürk Forest Farm provides several environmental, economic and social benefits (URL-1). With such properties, Atatürk Forest Farm is included in urban agriculture area. Açıkoz and Memlük (2004) is on the evaluation of Atatürk Forest Farm in terms of urban agriculture.

Yedikule vegetable gardens (Figure 1), which have been urban agricultural area for more than 1500 years, are defined to be the only example of urban agricultural heritage lands remaining from Byzantine and Ottoman (Anonim 2013; Koca 2014).



Figure 1. Yedikule vegetable gardens (photographed by Cem Avcı)

The area used to be garden until 1998 was then transformed into slaughter house by constructing concrete buildings. Local authorities tried to change the function of the area for security reasons and environmental pollution near the walls in July 2013 in the scope of a project called “Inner Conservation Recreation Project of Land Walls between Yedikule Kapı and Belgrad Kapı”.

Destruction of history and culture by the use of heavy construction vehicles on 06th July 2013 in Yedikule vegetable garden area adjacent to the conservation line of Istanbul Land Walls taking place in UNESCO World Heritage List was stopped after the 2nd Administrative Court made a decision on the stay of execution (URL-2).

Boğazköy Kuzguncuk vegetable garden (Figure 2), with a 700-year past in Istanbul and evaluated to be urban agriculture land for ages, has wanted to be opened for housing in every 10 years from 1990s. In 2011, a private school tried to be constructed in the area. However, people in and close proximity of the area claimed that they use the area as agricultural land, green area, meeting and sharing point, play grounds for children, recreational area for

the elder and others and a social area and rejected the private school project. After that, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization Board of Nature Conservation gave up the project planned to be constructed in the area due to the reason that such a project may harm the architectural tissue and structural characteristics of its close proximity (Koca 2014).



Figure 2. Boğazköy Kuzguncuk vegetable garden

Another important area used to be an urban agriculture land in Turkey for ages is Diyarbakır fortress and Hevsel gardens included in UNESCO World Heritage List in 2015.

Cultural landscape created by Diyarbakır City Walls and Hevsel Gardens (Figure 3) is composed of two main components; Diyarbakır City walls and Hevsel gardens. Diyarbakır fortress, walls and towers which have still survived for 7 thousand years as original and distinctive cultural values being shaped under the influence of civilisations, cultures and the needs of eras prevalent in the region and bear the characteristics of being an important universal heritage for the world history (URL-3).



Figure 3. Diyarbakır city walls and Hevsel gardens (URL-3, URL-4).

Being the themes of legends and ballads, Hevsel gardens lie extensively between Diyarbakır city walls and River Tigris. It may possibly be the oldest granary of Mesopotamia, which is the origin of agriculture. Hevsel, so-called garden of Eden, is the home of more than 180 bird species and several mammals

like otter, fox, marten, squirrel and hedgehog (URL-5).

Hevsel gardens, in a geography where horticulture is an important occupation, have been open to public use as a civilian garden throughout their history have unique values. Since Hevsel gardens have been functioning as garden area for a period as long as 8.000 years in a region carrying the trace of more than 30 civilizations, the area has unique cultural and historical place in addition to agricultural values (URL-3).

4. CONCLUSION

In several European countries, especially Germany, gardens called Allotment Gardens have been present for 200 years. Such gardens designed to meet nutrient needs of socioeconomically poor people in the past are used to be social meeting area as hobby gardens with recreational aims.

As a result, if it is required to mention about other contributions of AGs to today's European cities, then the following items can be sequenced;

- They can increase use value of urban area by preventing land misuse,
- They can cause positive effects on ecosystem through their benefits like increasing urban biodiversity, contributing to water cycle, resulting in microclimatic environs and moderating climate,
- They support urban green network,
- They can affect urban landscape and increase biodiversity in metropolitan areas, play roles in linking linear green zones with other urban areas along infrastructural facilities,
- They can mitigate the effect of urban heat island,
- They provide the opportunity of forming a social area by constituting a sociocultural link at neighborhood level,
- They offer possibilities for recreational functions,
- They can affect all urban tissues and infrastructure connections and tie other

green areas with urban areas in urban planning activities.

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