

## GARDENING IN OTTOMAN TURKS

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**Abstract-** Within this study, the art of gardening in Ottoman Turks has been examined in four periods: 1. The period starting with the establishment of the Ottoman Empire till the conquest of the Byzantine capital of Constantinople by the Turks (1300-1453) 2. The period starting with the conquest of Istanbul till the Tulip Era (1706) 3. The Tulip Era (1703-1730) 4. The period starting with the Tulip Era (1730) till the establishment of the Republic (1923) In the first period, Ottoman Turks remained under the influence of Seljuk art and were partly in contact with the Byzantine works. When miniatures showing the palace life are examined, often the importance given to the atrium garden could be seen. A significant development in the art of gardening was experienced during the period starting with the conquest of Istanbul till the Tulip Era. The Tulip Era has been a very productive period in terms of fine art in Ottoman history. Major improvements and innovations in poetry, literature, music, civil architecture and especially in the art of gardening has emerged. Till the Tulip Era, the unique natural landscape of Istanbul was equipped with the top works of art of Ottoman Turks. The art of gardening in Ottoman Turks has entered a new period with the end of the Tulip Era in 1730. This period, has been the period in which foreign influence started to affect Ottoman gardens. The most important works of the second period; the Topkapı Palace Garden and the Yıldız Palace garden, which was mostly established in a natural layout and has been the latest example of Ottoman palace gardening, were examined within this study. The structuring of the Ottoman gardens has changed and developed during the historical process depending on various effects such as life styles of the period and the artistic-cultural structure of the period.

**Keywords:** Turkish garden, garden of Yıldız palace, garden of Topkapı palace

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Turks, economically being dependent on agriculture, have had a close relationship with their environment and continued this relationship. Also agriculture was required great effort as it was not always possible for soil to be so rich. For this reason, when Turks ended migratory period and settled in Seljuk and Ottoman Eras, they had both informal relationship with the soil and a formal link with scary respect because of the dominant character [1].

If we take the first patriot and modern step of development on creating a garden in all old and new civilizations into consideration, it comes to light that Turkish gardening had a background dating back to earlier eras. It is a fact that the abundance of Turkish and especially Ottoman specialists, grown formerly, on gardening and floriculture entirely measures swords with the other nations' [2].

#### 1.1. General Quality Of Turkish Garden

In Turkish-Ottoman gardens, there are generally alive and inanimate materials like four-cornered marble pools, shade trees and fruitful big trees, bowers with ivy and wisterias, terrace and stairs, water dispensers and jets, fountains and lion statues which water floods of their mouths, rose gardens, tulip and fenugreek garden. In the conception of Turkish – Ottoman gardens, the heaven description of Islam-as it is emphasized that heaven is a kind of garden in which there are flooding waters, big pools and waterfalls with different type of trees just like palms and vineyards-has a great role in using various kinds of alive materials besides water resistant inanimate materials like pools, jets, dispensers, fountains, statues which water floods of their mouths. In Ottomans, the desire of creating heaven in the world and wearing gardens with various alive and inanimate materials shaped Ottoman gardens. In the gardens, ornaments, as alive elements, like

platanus, fraxinus, tilia, ulmus, celtis, laurus, cercis as big trees and rose, tulip, hyacinthus, dianthus as plants can be seen [1].

In the Turkish gardens, on axles made up to connect different places of the garden to each other with using suitable flooring elements, edited roads, ramps and stairs, transport elements which are divided into two water elements as static and moving, compressed soil and tartan, created herbal materials flooring elements for aesthetics, lighting elements to increase visual impact in the dark are elements creating Turkish landscape [3].

The natural convenience in Turkish gardens represents the main source of beauty. While perception is provided with a few main axle or axles in contemporary Western gardens, in Turkish gardens, there are a lot of or softened axles, or none. Turks gave great importance to living in outer space as a relic of nomadic life. Therefore, from the smallest house to the palace, general location, slope, and view of the land were regarded [1].

Half covered ledge of the building, pergola or pavilion with small structures which are frequently used in Turkish gardens, and the fusion of interior and exterior were surely achieved. The ideal connection between the portion of the building directly over the stone garden, with stony-called semi-open spaces, garden and building [4].

Water is an important element used in Turkish garden. Even it is small, pool in an indispensable element in the garden changing according to the seasons. As plant species and use, flowers have a special place in the design of Turkish garden. Instead of creating colour patterns and composition, it can not be seen the complexity of colour and class with flowers that are used for smell and eye-pleasing appearance in Turkish garden [5].

In Turkish gardens, tree species like platanus, fraxinus, tilia, ulmus, celtis, quercus trees were used [6].

## 2. THE GARDEN OF YILDIZ PALACE

Yıldız Palace consists of corps of palaces and pavilions which are formatted according to the Turkish civil architecture. Yıldız Palace has interior and exterior gardens in various sizes. Interior garden includes Has garden, Harem garden, Prince and Sultan gardens and Şale (Chalet) palace garden. Yıldız palace, including buildings and gardens, located on a

500 000 square meter area. It consists of pools, islands designed in different sizes and forms, the greenhouse and conservatory, pavilions, flowers shaped like metal umbrellas and vase, and arbors [7].

The gardens of Yıldız Palace were planned naturally and achieved naturalistic English garden style. The main lines and major elements of plant tissue survived until today. Woods around the palace garden area have been considered as an extension of the garden. The gardens of Yıldız Palace bears increasingly the transform from formal style of garden to the natural style. The natural convention here is not in the form of transformation from formal to natural, but in the form of giving way to the formal style of garden in natural style [7].

### 2.1. Interior Garden (Has Garden and Harem Garden)

Interior gardens, especially Has garden, was made in the era of Abdulhamid II. In the same period, it is indicated that German, French, Italian garden experts was appointed, the most of ornamental seedlings were brought from abroad, native seedlings which were removed through forests in the country were used in the garden. In Has garden and other interior gardens, the greenhouses of ornament and production were built and a winter garden under the root of small Mabeyn was established. Winter garden was generally used in winter months as it had opportunity to be heated, and in hot spring and summer days, pavilions were used both in summer and winter, and summerhouses in the hot days of spring and fall in addition to summers. The integrity of the use of the gardens was created by making them utilizable in all the seasons of the year [7].

Sultan Abdülhamid II had a large and exotic looking pool with his name built in the interior garden of the palace. The mansion located on the island in the pool looks like an animal cage. Various bird species and ornamental fish were grown in this mansion. These animals creating colourful environment in Yıldız Palace, conflated with exotic cascades in well-kept gardens, swimming pools, islands and the fitted-in-nature buildings of Abdülhamid era. In the Year 1909 with the deposition of Abdulhamid II, those animals were distributed, and life lasting in those gardens

ended. Today almost all of the animal cages became extinct or fell into disuse [6].

Selamlık garden was designed in the form of romantic-picturesque style. The main motif of the garden is an artificial lake which is in the middle of the small garden. Hamid Pool, 300 m. length, 15-40 m. in width, 1.20 m. deep, constitutes the axis of Has garden. The artificial lake within Selamlık garden, resembles a river. The bridges over the lake, grotto and cascade near the end of the lake shore are like in the typical naturalistic English garden. [7].

The roads, providing circulation in the garden of Yıldız Palace, were planned in accordance with curves. Hard surface material, as well as in our other palace gardens, is a mixture of gravel and sand, Bozhane sand. Today the mixture material, in the third atrium of the garden in Şale pavillion, is covered with gravel. In the vicinity of pools and ponds, compressed soil is used. The significant exotic trees and shrubs, used in the interior landscape of Yıldız Palace, are over 100 year-old of monumental size *taxus baccata* L. *Fastigiata*, *Cephalotaxus harringonia*, *Calocedrus decurrens* and channel-shaped swimming pool stretching from the edge of the marquee tent, *Quercus ilex* whose size and habitus are great. In addition to these, Ottoman palace grass, which grew in the shadow of tall trees and succeeded in reaching today, occurs in the gardens of palace as an important species of place ground [7].

## 2.2. Exterior Garden (Yıldız Grove)

Exterior garden was also designed in the shape of pool pond. The naturalistic English garden showed its effect on the garden with used tree community, herbal compositions, meandering paths, the terrain slopes, descend. In the floral arrangement of the garden, the natural structure of wood and vegetation was not interfered too much except for the immediate vicinity of the garden and pavillions. In the 19th century, the wood which was used by only the sultan and close community, was linked Çırağan Palace to his new Yıldız Palace with a bridge, standing today and from the road nearby the sea by Abdülhamid II. During this period, the woods and parks in which some foreign gardeners and architects worked, finalized being shaped with different organization [1].

The most important feature that separates Yıldız Palace, Has garden from the other formal Western style gardens is that, in the organization of Has garden, symmetry is not included. In the design of the garden of Yıldız Palace, statues were not included as architectural elements. The pergola and other architectural elements were decayed and not available due to the maintenance problems.

## 3. THE GARDEN OF TOPKAPI PALACE

In the period from the conquest of Istanbul to the beginning of the Tulip Revolution (1976), a significant development of the Garden Art has stood out. Topkapı Palace is one of the most considerable trace of this period. Also, Topkapı Palace is one of the biggest palaces of the world. The palace has five atrium gardens.

### 3.1.Atrium I

Atrium I, as wide and tree-lined, is reached from the main entrance, Coup d'Hümâyün. Atrium I is the ceremonial place. Gateway pictures are drawn here. This atrium, which is possible for public to enter easily, is a social area. In this atrium, surrounded by buildings, the Byzantine Church of Hagia Eirene stands. Atrium I, as a gateway in between the inner and outer places of the palace, was lessened with the buildings attached later [7].

In this atrium, a functional and informal group of tree, linking important doors is dominant. The plane is preferred more in the yard. Still there are platanus trees, some of which is 400 year-old. The body of one of the platanus tree is 14 meters around in the yard, except for trees in the surrounding, along the path, which are linking two gates, landscape elements are not included [8].

### 3.2.Atrium II

Atrium II, which is called Divan Square, is smaller, but more beautiful. Fountains were decorated with shaded paths with cypress and grasses with ghazals. Atrium II is surrounded by a portico. It is paved with stone and pitched in the middle [8].

### 3.3.Atrium III

From the second atrium, it is moved to the third yard in which the private parts of the

palace occur with the gate of "Bâb-ı Saadet". It is a smaller perystil than the second yard. This yard is surrounded with the important buildings of the palace as Harem, the Treasury and Supply room. At the same time, the third yard was a university where the precious artists and scholars belonging to the palace lived, worked. It was called Enderun. The entry of Harem is from this yard [7].

In this atrium, as seen in the first and second yard, a few 100-year-old trees stand on a platform which grass and flowers are taking place on. There are some yards and stony places in Harem which is linked to the third yard. In accordance with the traditions, Harem is a withdrawn collection of buildings, containing own outer space and safa gardens. The most important ones of Harem gardens are Valide Sultan Garden, Concubine's garden and The garden of Princes. From the atrium of the Princes, the garden would be looked. There is a big pool in the garden. That pool is in the same plane with the smaller pool, under a building and in-between struts, Sultan Ibrahim used to feed fish with pearls as bait, but not united. In the garden at the bottom of the big pool, there is a building where wild animals are fed. The pavilion of Sultan Osman III and the yard which the room of Sultan Selim III opens, maintains that garden. This last atrium is made up of marble and has a pool with fountain in the middle. Also, for the flower beds, in flooring, openings are left. In addition to the slopes on the marble flooring, the water ways left for drainage are remarkable [8].

### 3.4. Atrium IV

The outside of the first three places of the palace atrium is called the fourth yard, but this space is a collection of the gardens in which there are pavilions, rather than a atrium. The fourth atrium is a natural garden which is built on four terraces. Buildings are located in this atrium in the form of very elegant pavilions. In the garden, well-formed pools take place. The fourth atrium is a place dominated on a unique landscape to the horizon of Marmara, the beauty of the Bosphorus and Golden Horn. The arrangement style of this garden completely comes from the need of life and function. Although the main residential structures are on the top of hills, on the slopes of gardens, one pavilion is linked together

with the other one and a relationship with coastal palaces is extended to the sea. the slope is damned. This part with the view of the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus and the breeze from the sea, is the most suitable space for the location of the safa gardens. The fourth atrium, as the highest degree of privacy held by the sultan and his family and harem, and the most prestigious venue, is reached with the corps away from the monumental unlike the entrance of other yards, by treasury ward and created using the stairs and ramps in the 19th century. The fourth atrium, also known as Tulip garden, Tulip garden, rather than atrium; surrounded by Baghdad Kiosk, Sofa Kiosk, Hekimbaşı tower and restricted with Mecidiye, is a kind of open nature garden overlooking the pool stony terraces among the palace pavilion, with the water lily pool seen from the terrace where figs and its lower-level garden, that Istanbul's unique skyline can be watched, in sets where the sultan's personal views of the pool pavilion [8].

It can be accepted as the focus of the fourth atrium that the most prominent landscape element of the atrium is the carefully processed marble fountain in the middle of the pool which is in stony square, in 14mX15m size. In Turkish garden, in order to strengthen the relationship between buildings and the wall and decorate and revive the wall, alcoves, as another element of the landscape, are used to bring mobility to the space. The fourth atrium, with the advantage of being in the dominant location of the Bosphorus, differing from the others, has a design of landscape with the trees like fraxinus, tilia, ulmus, celtis, quercus, laurus, cercis, such as purple and pear which composed the nature of Bosphorous, and rose, hyacinth and tulips arranged according to the prestigious venue [8].

### 3.5. Tulip Garden

From the terrace, with the stairs, tulip garden, which has a pool with fountain on one of its corners, is reached. tulip garden which is mistakenly known as Tulip Garden, is limited along with on the one hand the Treasury Department, on the other side with Mustafa Paşa Pavilion.

Şimşirlik pavilion, with the axial symmetric two pools, is went down with the ladder. Şimşirlik Pavilion has two floors, and the ground floor, which is among struts, is in the

shape of small stony place on the both sides of the stairs. The garden has a large pool in the part near the Baghdad Pavilion [8].

### **3.6.Sofa Garden (Safa Garden)**

There were mansions and palaces, which the sultans had them built as summer house, in the sofa gardens and by the sea. There were also the mansion of Sultan Mehmet III in the north of Çinili pavilion, the first element of the group of palaces, around Ağa Garden called as Kalferi, across and in the place of Archaeological Museum, there was Kum Square, in which javelin games can be watched through Kum and Çinili pavilion. Outside there is Alay pavilion next to the door opening to Soğukçeşme, known as found in the wood in the era of Sultan Murad III. Where the sultans watched the pass of the sultan's army, and holiday festivities, engagement and wedding of the sultan, to be adopted by grand vizier for the regiment of foreign ambassadors. In the gardens, at the beginning of the fourth yard, there are Baghdad and Revan Pavilions, built with inspiration at the wartime of Baghdad of Sultan Mehmed. The terrace, surrounded by Baghdad, Revan and Sünnet Pavilions, is one of the most beautiful outdoor space of the collection of the palaces. The use of marble for flooring, fountains and bars by the seaward, gives unity to the expression of the space. İncir garden and the garden under it are viewed from the terrace, including a small pavillion on the mid-edge, which is called İftariye, but the most beautiful sights of it are the sea and Istanbul, with its unique scene. The large pool next to Sünnet Pavilion, is a cold and nice corner among the staves of the structure, being behind itself [8].

That the functional gardens are next to the safa gardens can be seen in European gardens. Park and gardens, whose samples could be found in the 17th and 18th centuries, are in accordance with the collections of Turkish palaces like Topkapı. Whereas the palace structure, in European samples, can be seen as in a large land, without having relation with the land and impact to the general location, In Turkish samples, the gardens follow the structures of the palaces, that's to say, structure first comes, and garden follows it [8].

### **3.7.Sofa-I Hümâyun Gardens**

In this yard, some sultans did some sports such as javelin, wrestling and archery. This field is the part under the marble terrace and the flower garden of Sofa Pavilion, and Hisarpeçe, which in front of the sultan flat, marble terrace-as well-surrounded by walls. It is also a place where the stony-throne sultans, belonging to the period of Murat IV, in front of Hekimbaşı Tower, watch the activities. In the part of this garden, which has the view of The Marmara Sea, there were various pavilions and buildings as of the 15th century. Also, there are huge gates, providing passing to the third yard and the other big gardens of the palace from this space. Today Sofa Mosque, built in the 19th century, Mecidiye Pavilion, which was built by Sultan Abdülmecid almost in 1859 and Esvap Room, related to Mecidiye Pavilion, stand in this garden. It is known that there was a pavilion-Fatih Sultan Mehmed had it constructed-and also a construction, known as Çadır Pavillion, providing entrance to the bottom gardens [8].

### **3.8. Has Garden**

Has garden, surrounding the collections of the palaces in the north, south and east, is a park, as Gülhane Park, which is served for public. This wide part was in fact departed for hunting and sport activities, but it collected flower, fruit and vegetable gardens within itself. Has garden term is generally used for the private garden of the sultan, but there were any other buildings and shops where art and science were taught in Topkapı Has garden.

This has garden was totally a kind of academy of the art and science of its period. The architects such as Architect Sinan and Mehmed, were brought up in it. Growing flowers in Has garden was an important desire in all of the periods. Most of the sultans including Fatih, were interested in gardens and full of the love of the garden. They were also interested in the selection of the species of the flowers and, brought roses from Edirne and lilies from Halab. They wanted to see especially lilacs, carnations, tulips in their gardens. As all of us knew, the love of the tulip was so much that it named a period [8].

#### 4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Today Yıldız and Topkapı Palace Gardens, having historic worth, are spaces, lived, used and investigated with taste. Also, they have versatile, meaningful and effective functions. It is necessary that palace gardens be accepted as live cultural statues, depending on biological aspect and, relating past, now and future to the each other [9].

The gardens of the Topkapı and Yıldız Palace come into monumental value like constructions in times. For this reason, they are a part of the historical, cultural landscape and architecture of Istanbul. Palace gardens have a complex feature, functionally and aesthetically, which is coming from the design of the herbal and architectural elements, either combined or distinct. They also have a form of documentary as they reflect the concept of outdoor life of the past, and bring it so far.

The palace gardens, as heritages, bringing the cultural and natural aspects of the past so far and transforming them to the future, are needed to be protected and rated. Although most of the countries are legally saving historical gardens, any law code has not been set in our country so far. However, it is seen that European communities has started to become conscious, and interested in protecting historical gardens recently. Thus, English Garden in Munich, Herrenhausen in Hannover, Campton Court near London and Versailles palace gardens in Paris are the first sightseeing places, attracting attention of local and alien tourists, parks and gardens, with precious historical buildings, are obliged to be restored, in fact [9].

Palace gardens are precious historical ones which make Istanbul gain importance. They annex Istanbul to fame and quality. It is possible to divide the problems of arrangement and maintenance of the palace gardens into two groups [10].

The problems which are caused by the changes of the architectural elements (such as walls, steps, floor, pool, mid-morning, grotto etc.)

The problems, in the private and general character of the garden, which are caused by the decline of plant because of the lack of care and ageism, and the adding of herbal materials.

Palace gardens are taken up as an element of construction and settled. Inventory work in the

palace garden must be established by a special committee of experts, which will conduct relief and research-planning activities. The necessary maintenance and repair works must be continued in order to protect present situation until the beginning of the works of the restoration. In the palace gardens, the existing and blasted species of trees and bushes must be listed, and a special nursery for these species must be set up. In this nursery, large and mature plant species must be grown.

The planning and implementation must be made in order to brighten the concept of Turkish garden, which is just about to disappear as of the 18th century. The species of trees in the palace garden are critically important in terms of maintenance, repair and restoration. Planting a same sample in the similar size instead of a dried bush is not matter. Recreating a hash ground plant is not a hard job, as well, but putting a new one instead of a centennial tree is not really easy. If this tree is alike a kind of statue of nature, experts, mastering on maintenance and repair techniques, are needed in order to protect it for long years.

The existence of this kind of tree, reflecting a long past, must be protected from the impacts of negative conditions, created by the time and urbanization. These negative conditions will have effects on the trees in the palace gardens such as on the existence of the trees by the roads of the cities. For this reason, we confront with an important problem as making the trees, having dominant character in the gardens of palaces live long and healthy without changing their forms. This will be possible on condition that the works of maintenance and repair are done [11].

The gardens of the palaces, sustaining the general characters of Turkish and European gardens, must be inherited in good repair with all the special features. For it, the subject matter is needed to be undertaken with the methods of traditional and scientific protection.

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