

ANATOLIAN TURKISH GARDENS

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The Turks as nomads roamed in regions where nature was not at its most merciful, and where adapting to her required strenuous effort. With the nature that ruled severely, the then pantheist Turks developed a relationship based on awe and respect; and attributed supernatural powers to the forces of nature.

Mythology described their place of origin as an ideal hunting ground of perfect climate and abundant game. They carried and sought for this image, as they dispersed from Central Asia.

During the course of their massive movements through history and geography, they came across sedentary cultures with which they mixed to produce new cultural patterns. The idea of 'garden', which meant the use of land for leisure came only then for this people of nomadic background.

Amongst the other cultural products, the gardens thus built, bore the stamp of both the Turks' love and respect for nature, and the qualities peculiar to the particular local culture.

When a branch of the Turks entered the faith of Islam in the 10th century, a new man-nature relationship evolved: man, created in the image of God, possessed the power to rule nature.

On the other hand, Islam mysticism as the other mystic ways, believed all creatures to be a reflection of God and saw man at the same level in a harmonious relation within nature.

For both, the ideal of the 'Paradise Garden' of eastern thought became the link that elevated the attitude towards nature, to the realm of religion.

The orthodox Islam aspired to create gardens resembling the Paradise promised in the Koran; the mystic Islam praised in the garden God himself.

The gardens of pre-Islamic and Islamic Turks in Central and Western Asia have not yet been thoroughly examined. However, it is possible to assume that, having sprung from a common source and having come into contact with them, those early Turkish gardens might have had similarities to the Chinese, Indian and Persian gardens. This assumption seems to be

assured from the reconstructed gardens laid-out by the Turkish emperors in India, and from the remains of the grounds of the three 11th century Ghaznevid palaces in Afghanistan, of a 12th century palace in Uzbekistan, and of a 13th century Artukid palace in Diyarbakır of present-day Turkey. The use of courts, and the extensive use of water in the form of fountains, ponds and canals, in some cases covered with exquisite coloured, gold-glazed and glass mosaics characterize those layouts.

This background prepared for the evolution of the gardening concept of the Turks who settled in Anatolia. It is this particular development that will be discussed in this article.

SOURCES

No early purely Turkish Anatolian garden remains in its entirety in three or even in two dimensions.

Moreover, pictures or written descriptions are rare. Since the Moslem Turks did not commonly draw or paint, they have left only miniatures depicting garden scenes. Only when western influence penetrated the Ottoman Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries, were more descriptive garden pictures made by foreign artists.

Written descriptions by a few native authors, and journey records of western visitors also give some information.

Another clue comes from the sites of old palaces. Palace grounds for obvious reasons have had more chance for survival. Also having been in the public eye, more descriptions were written about them.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PALACE GARDEN

The Seljuk Turks of Anatolia, true to their nomadic tradition, built numerous palaces, each at a vicinity that enjoyed a season the best.

Those palace gardens of which nothing remains, are unanimously described as 'paradise'. Descriptions also indicate to dining, singing, holding court and government sessions in the gardens.

The Ottomans, as they got established as a power, with the capture of each more important town, moved the capitol and built new palace grounds in addition to the existing ones kept for use at certain seasons. Those early palatial gardens, though large, were divided by means of kiosks and pavillions into courts; and the whole comprised a self-sufficient complex surrounded by bosquet for hunting.

The Edirne Palace grounds, the first with a flair of magnificance, in its final form covered an area of 700.000 sq.ms. that included palaces of 119 rooms, 21 government offices, 22 bath houses, 13 mosques, 5 kitchens, and 14 summer kiosks, and adjoined a forest(Fig. 1).

The earlier Istanbul palace gardens possessed similar qualities.

The Topkapı Palace grounds, built through three centuries, from the mid 16th to the mid 19th, with the addition of each pavillion by the successive sultans, became a complex of adjoining courts(Fig.2) faced by five groups of apartments,

two groups of government offices, five schools, twelve libraries, numerous garden pavillions and summer kiosks on the shore of the Seraglio Point(Fig.3).

Outdoor activity was highly pursued in the form of banquets, processions, government sessions, horse racing, polo, wrestling, shooting and hunting(Figs. 4,5). Around the complex, there were vegetable gardens and vineyards, orchards and large extents of bosquet where 921 gardeners laboured at the end of the 16th century. The products were used for the palace, and the surplus sold to the public. In the 17th century İstanbul, 17 flower-shops are known to have sold flowers from the Topkapı gardens.

By the end of the 17th century, when the Ottoman Empire had reached its largest boundaries and had halted in its growth, luxury had set as a way of life. Six successive centuries in Anatolia and a victorious past had softened the camp-like ways of living and encouraged luxury. The Sultan, holding court under a tree or a tent outdoors was now a thing of the past(Fig.6).

An envoy sent to the Versailles brought back new ideas of how the court should conduct outdoor living. A version of Marly-le-Roi, the summer resort of the French royalty, was built at Kağıthane at the tip of the Golden Horn. Here, 170 summer kiosks belonging to high government officials were built around the Sultan's own summer palace.

A craze for luxurious garden banquets began. The tulip became the symbol of the age, and gave its name to the first half of the 18th century. Stories relate that a single tulip bulb would be exchanged for a slave or for several gold pieces. A directory was appointed for the propagation of this precious flower, which is reported to have had 800 kinds each bearing a poetic name, at that time in İstanbul. There are records of night banquets at tulip gardens in the light of candles stuck on turtles that moved amongst tulip beds, where hundreds of nightingales sang in cages hung from trees.

This new mode of outdoor living naturally brought a new interpretation to garden design. New palaces and gardens were built particularly on the shores of the Bosphorus by foreign architects and landscapers. Thus especially in İstanbul, the capitol and a common place of visit of westerners, both the formal, and the natural, picturesque gardening styles of the western world gradually began to make their influences felt.

QUALITIES OF THE PURELY TURKISH ANATOLIAN GARDENS

Before the penetration of the western influence, the Turkish garden was characterized by the simplicity of its layout, its being lived-in, and its functionality.

Outdoor living was held to be so important that, often the garden came before the building. The Sultan for instance, would see a well situated piece of land, and order that a garden immediately be built there; a building might or might not follow. As a matter of fact, many of the earlier palaces were called gardens, rather than palaces.

The site of the garden would be chosen for the beauty of its terrain, view, air, water, or hunting possibilities; then

the house might be built for protection.

Consequently, the lines of the garden were not dictated by the architectural edifice, this resulting in a non-axial and non-architectural layout and lack of an architectural climax.

Because of the non-axial development, and the fact that the garden was to be lived-in rather than being a show-piece, instead of perception through one or a few overpowering axes numerous perception angles were created.

Lack of axially prevented the development of extreme formality of design. Nevertheless, the garden was formal on a modest scale; control of man's hand was apparent in each element, while nature was given her due. The straight line was more often used than not, for the reason that it was the simplest way of joining two points. Its use was always on a small scale though, that of flower beds, on an alley (Figs. 7,8).

Non-axial relationship with the building, to a degree prevented the integration of outdoors with indoors. Nevertheless, this important aspect of landscaping was achieved through the element of a sitting and dining area, which was sometimes an outdoor extension of the building, or else was independent and was in the form of a kiosk or pavillion.

Often, in relation to the sitting area or even indoors, there would be water in the form of ponds, fountains small jets and canals. The use of water, though extensive, was never on elaborate dimensions(Figs. 9,10).

The sitting area, or a few alleys might be paved with patterned stone or pebbles.

Flowers were much enjoyed in the garden, especially near the sitting area and around the pond. In dealing with flowers, color combinations or fanciful parterre designs were not sought. It was not seldom that only one type of flower should be planted on a terrace, or in the whole garden. In the latter case, the garden would be called after the flower, such as a rose garden 'gülistan', or a tulip garden 'lalezar'.

Trees of fruit or others, were planted for shade and seclusion. To a superficial observer, trees in a Turkish garden might look randomly scattered; but close examination would reveal shrewd calculation as to the location of each tree.

Where natural slope dictated, there would be terracing, but level differences were usually kept at modest dimensions.

Often, a vegetable garden or a vine-yard, or an orchard, or a bosquet was attached to the garden proper, thus combining leisure with functionality.

All of these qualities were true of Turkish gardens, whether on palatial or on modest scale.

These qualities were inherent also in the courtyard which was another means of outdoor extension of the building(Fig.11).

Love for the outdoors on another scale created public grounds chosen at particularly favourable spots of wooded land with water, where people flocked for picnic and play. Each such grounds, had a particular day of the week when it might be visited. The royalty and the wealthy for charity

would have fountains, prayer places 'namazgâh', and shooting targets 'nişangâh' built on those grounds. Such partially organised grounds were thus the early public parks (Figs.12,13).

THE WESTERN INFLUENCE

With the penetration of the western influence, modesty and simplicity of outdoor layouts, at least in the larger towns greatly disappeared.

The western formal garden influence resulted in :

- o living in the garden decreasing to leave it mainly to be watched;
- o axiality becoming a design goal(Fig.14);
- o terraces increasing in level differences(Fig.15);
- o use of water changing form to become stiller and larger in surface(Fig.16);
- o simplicity of flower beds giving way to more complicated parterre designs(Fig.17);
- o trees getting out of flower beds, topiary entering (Fig.18);
- o garden furniture becoming numerous, complex and westernized(Fig.19).

Under the western picturesque natural garden influence several park-gardens were laid out(Figs.20,21). As one goes away from the formal layouts before the buildings, the influence of this style becomes apparent in the use of the terrain as hilly slopes(Fig.22), picturesque tree groupings(Fig.23), the use of water(Fig.24), and garden furniture(Fig.25). There were attempts also at smaller scale gardens for layouts boasting the famous S beauty curve of the English School of natural landscapers(Fig.26).

DEVELOPMENT INTO TODAY

Apart from especially palace and estate grounds in the few larger towns, western influence was not deeply felt. Where it penetrated, formal garden influence dominated. Obviously the formal layout on a modest scale was more suitable to the climate, and close to the Turks' idea of garden, than the picturesque style which made a pretence of looking natural and required a great deal of effort to keep up looking so.

Outside of a few late palace grounds laid-out mainly to be watched from the building, formality of design was softened to better adapt to the Turkish way of outdoor living.

Axiality not over emphasized(Fig.27), terracing on a modest scale(Fig.28), trees within parterres, parterres of simple design were some aspects of this adaptation.

In present day Turkey, garden design is an adaptation of either the western formal or the natural garden layouts, to the Turkish way of outdoor living; and retains as criteria the sense of privacy, being lived in, and simplicity of design and execution.

Rapid urbanization is diminishing both the number and the size of the gardens, but even though the uses of outdoor spaces are radically changing, they are so much a part of life that the values have to be somehow kept alive. This requires a new interpretation and reorganization of outdoor spaces, out of which task may come out a totally new pattern

that is far more in keeping with today's values and possibilities.

In this task, the basic values of the purely Turkish gardens would be the safest guide.

ANADOLU TÜRK BAHÇELERİ

ÖZET

Göçebe geçmişi olan Türklerde bahçe kavramı, toprağa bağlanmanın yanısıra, toprağın salt doyurucu yarar değil zevk için de işlenebileceği anlayışının gelişmesiyle, oldukça geç geldi. Kaynağında ilişkiler kurduğu doğu uygarlıklarının, örneğin Çin, Hind ve İran'ın bahçe sanatlarının payı vardır. Doğu yörelerin 'Cennet Bahçesi' ideali özellikle İslâm inancına varmalarıyla Türklerde de yerleşmiştir.

Bahçe hızla değişen ve kaybolabilen bir yapı türüdür. Orijinal çizgilerini taşıyan eski bahçelere rastlamak hemen hemen olanaksızdır. Eski Türk bahçelerinin yapısı hakkında bilgi kaynağı minyatürlerle, yerli ve yabancı birkaç gezginin tarifleri, bir de daha iyi korunma olanağı bulmuş bazı saray bahçeleridir.

Salt Türk bahçesi şu özelliklere sahiptir :

- o Bahçe çoğunlukla yerinin üstün nitelikleri nedeniyle orada seçilip düzenlenir, konut sonra gelirdi. İnşaatta böylesine sıralama, bahçeyle konut yapısı arasında aksiyal ilişki kurulmasına olanak vermezdi.
- o Aksiyalitenin olmayışı, algılama olayının tek veya birkaç önemli akstan değil, içinde yaşanırılık da nedeniyle, pek çok açıdan yapılmasına yol açardı.
- o Aksiyalitenin olmayışı tasarımda aşırı formaliteyi önlemişti; ancak doğaya hakkı veriliyorsa da, insan denetimi de açıktı.
- o Yapı-bahçe aksiyal ilişkisi olmayışı bir yönden iç-dış mekan bağıntısını engelliyorsa da, bahçe köşk ve pavyonları bu önemli dış mekân tasarım ögesini sağlıyordu.
- o Su kullanışı alçak gönüllü ölçekte ama sıkı.
- o Ağaçlar gölge ve öznellik için yerleri dikkatle seçilerek yetiştirilirdi.
- o Çiçek tarhları yalındı; çoğu kez tek çiçek türü ile yetinilirdi.
- o Sedleme varsa, yükseklik farkları azdı.
- o Çiçek bahçesinin yanısıra sebze tarhları, meyva ağaçları, bağ gibi fonksiyonel bahçelerin yer alması olağandı.

Bu özelliklerin çoğuna avlu ve mesireler gibi öbür dış mekân türlerinde de rastlanırdı.

18 ve 19 uncu yüzyıllarda batı etkilerinin bahçe tasarımına da sokulmasıyla, 'formel' ve 'doğal, pitoresk' bahçe düzenleme uygulamalarına girişildi. Bu tür uygulamalar genellikle büyük kentlerde görüldü. Ancak ikinci elden de olsa, yurdun çoğunluk yörelerinde batı etkileri, Türklerin dış mekânda

yaşama biçimine belli bir adaptasyon geçirmiş olarak görülebilir.

Hızlı kentleşme dış mekan kullanım şekillerini ve alışkanlıklarını değiştirmektedir. Halkın kullanımlarını ve gereksinmelerini gözleyerek yeni dış mekan örgüsünü ortaya çıkarmak yalnızca bahçe tasarımcılarının değil, tüm ölçeklerde çalışan çevre tasarımcılarının görevi olmaktadır.

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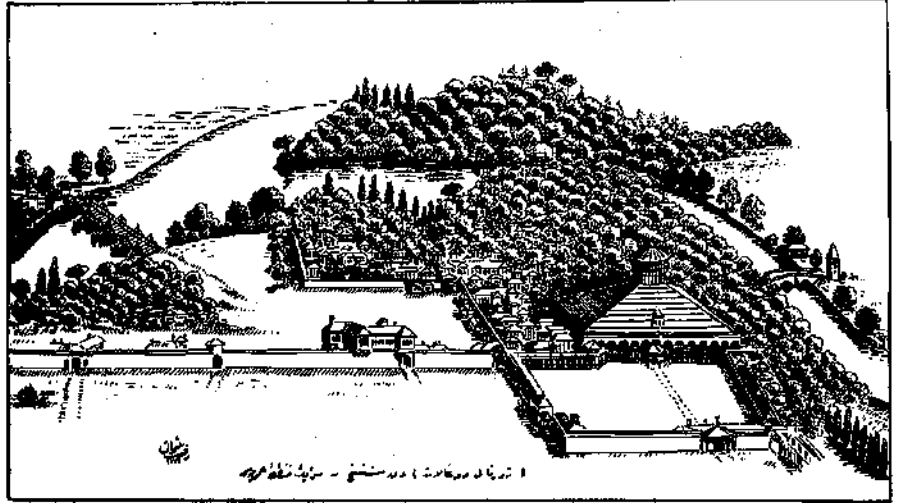


Fig. 1 Edirne Palace Grounds.
Source: Antoine Galland

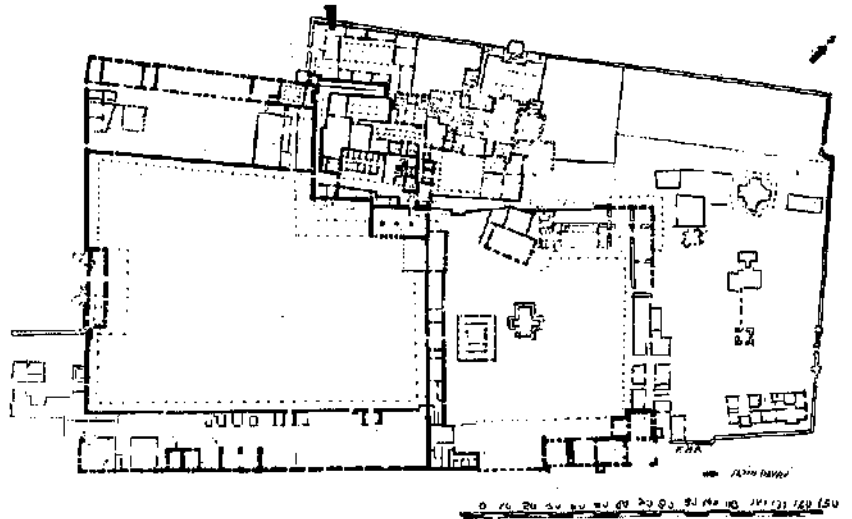


Fig. 2 Topkapı Palace Grounds



Fig. 3 Shore-Palaces along the Seraglio Point
Source : Türk Sanatı Tarihi,
no date.

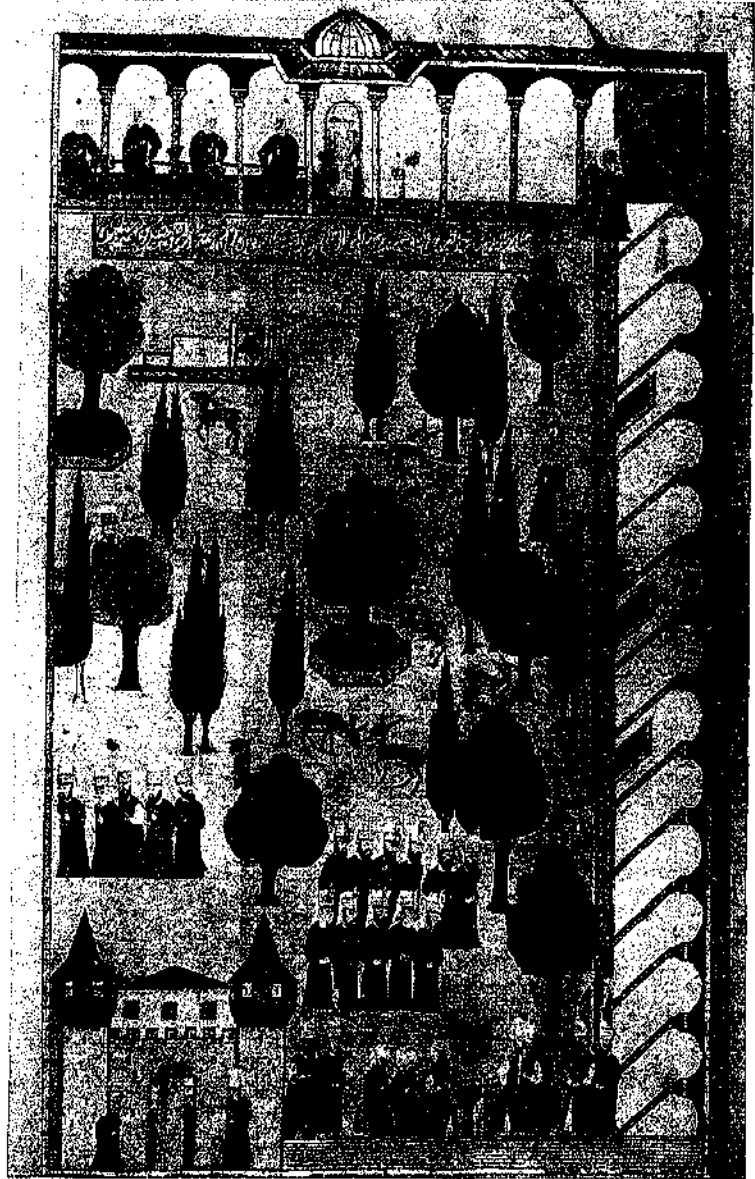


Fig. 4 Outdoor activities at Topkapı
Palace Courts
Source : Hünername

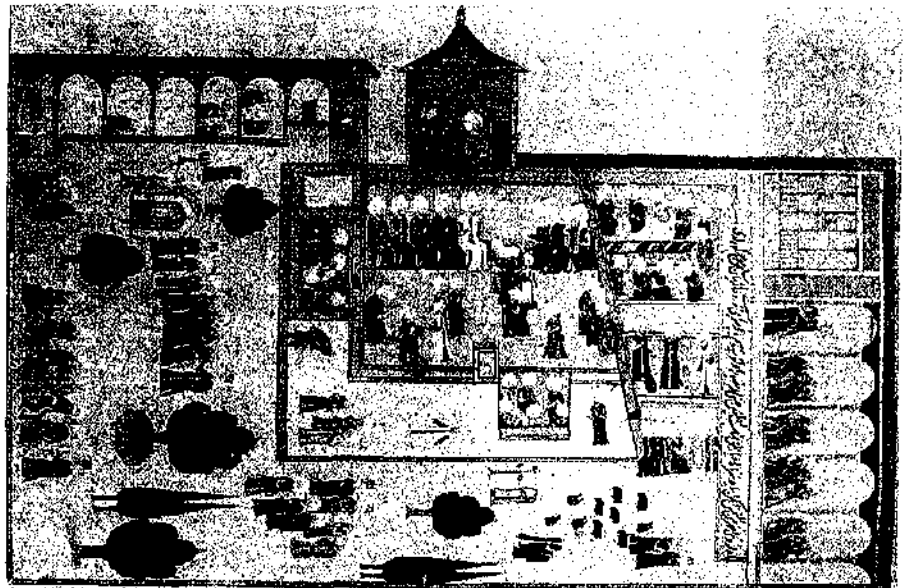


Fig. 5 Outdoor activities at Topkapı
Palace Courts
Source : Hünername

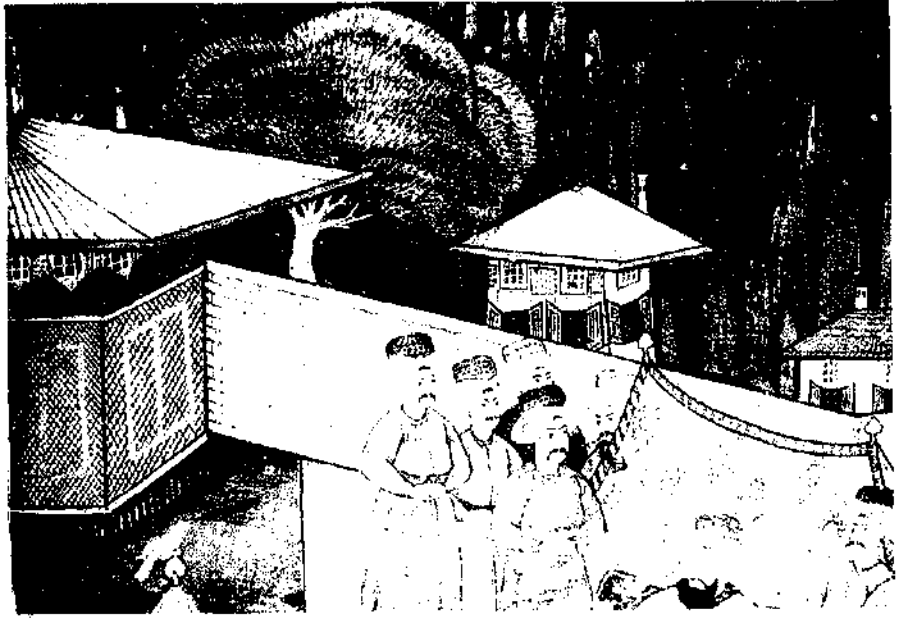


Fig. 6 Sultan holding court under a tent in a garden
Source : S.H. Eldem, 1968.

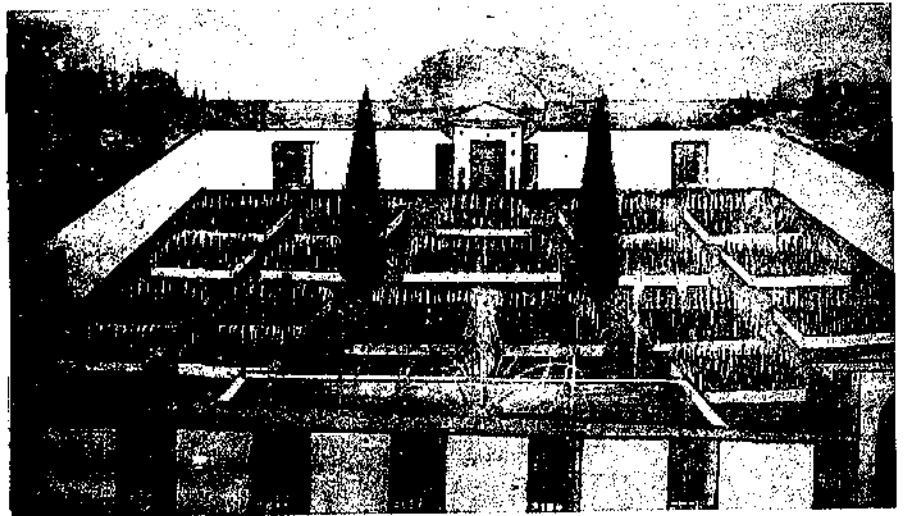


Fig. 7 Modest flower beds of straight lines in a simple Turkish Garden
Source : A. Ali Paşa

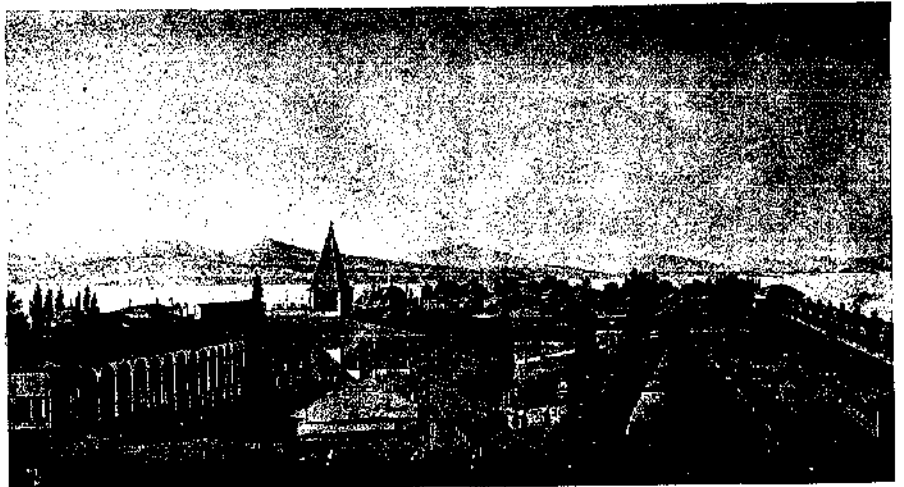


Fig. 8 Alleys of straight lines, at the Second Court at Topkapı Palace.
Etching by Mellinger

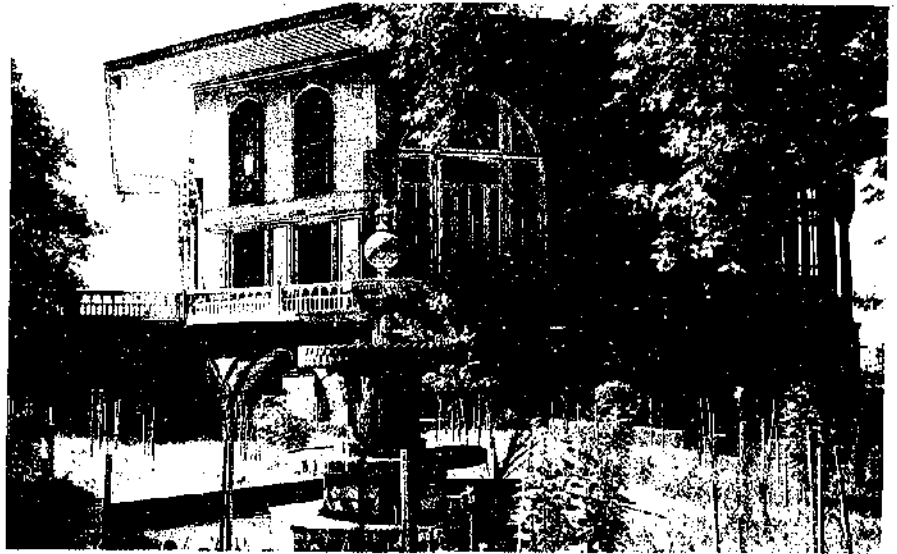


Fig. 9 A Fountain, At the LÂLİ garden at Topkapı Palace.



Fig. 10 An interior pool, Under the Princes' Apartment at Topkapı Palace.

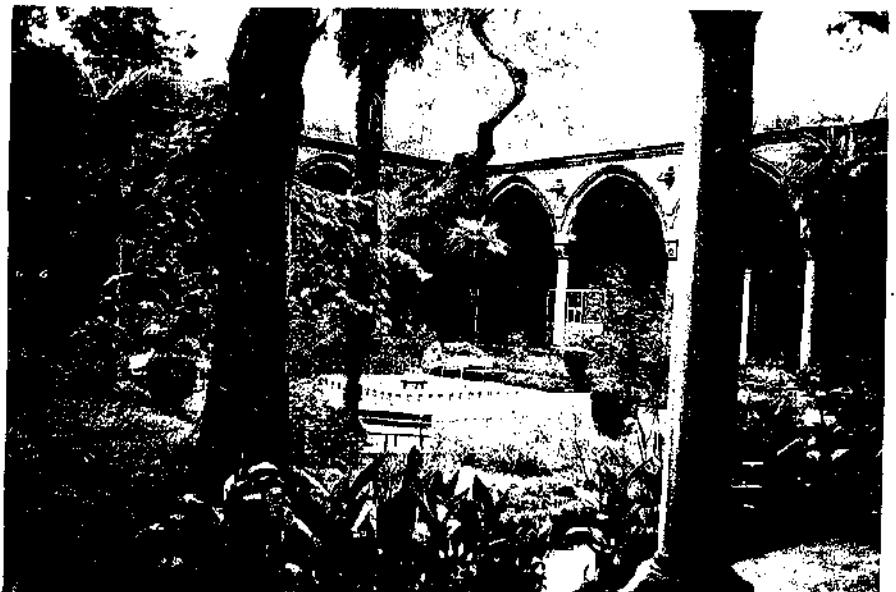


Fig. 11 A Courtyard, within the Süleymaniye complex that retains Sinan's original layout.

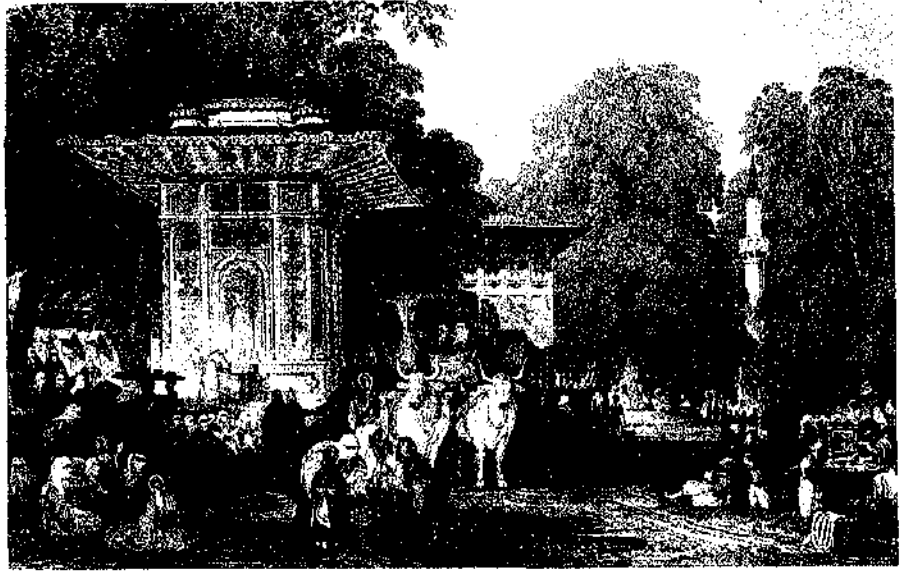


Fig. 12 ÇEKİSU
Source : R. Wolsh, no date.



Fig. 13 Kâğıthane
Source : R. Wolsh, no date



Fig. 14 Axiality, Doimabahçe Palace
Gardens,

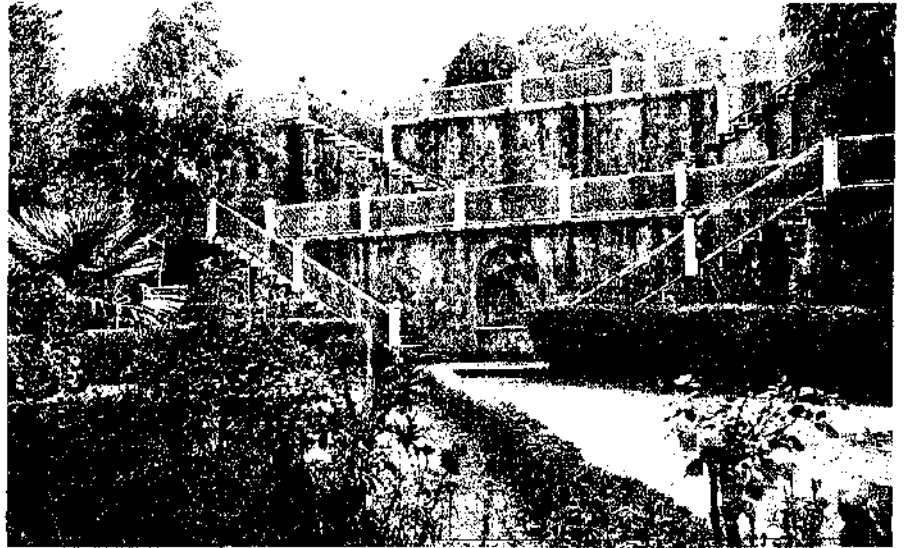


Fig. 15 Terraces, Beylerbeyi Palace Gardens.



Fig. 16 Water, still and larger K3githane Gardens
Source : Miss Pardee, 1855.

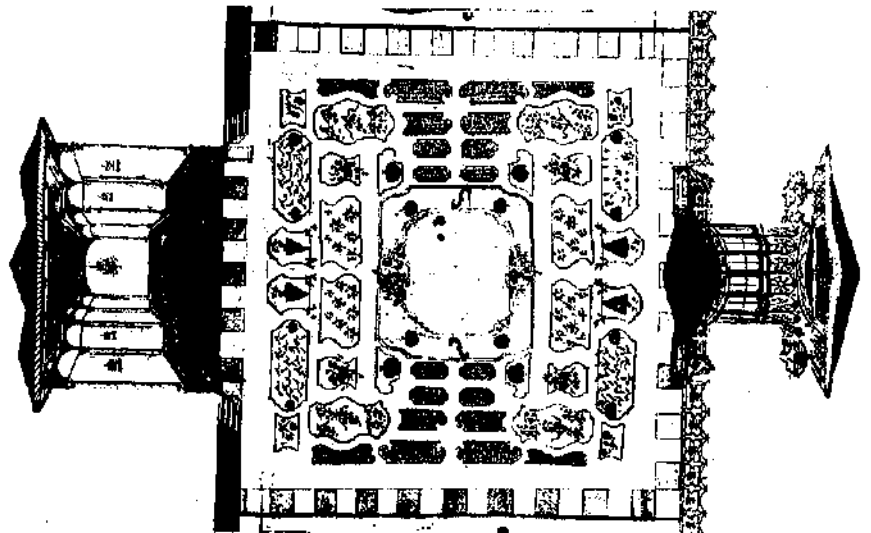


Fig. 17 Departure from simplicity in parterre layout.
Source : B. Unsal, 1963.

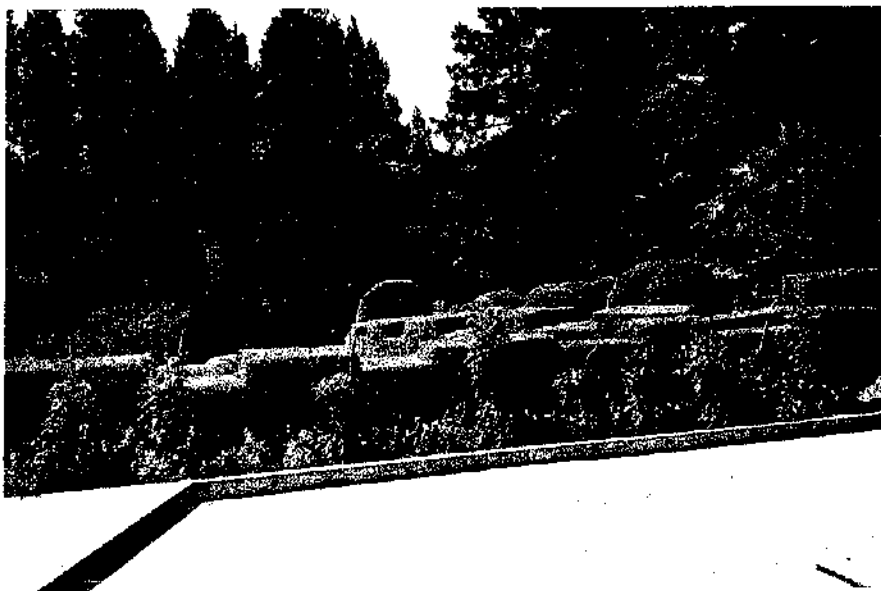


Fig. 18 Topiary, hedges cut into distinct shapes, Yıldız Palace Gardens.

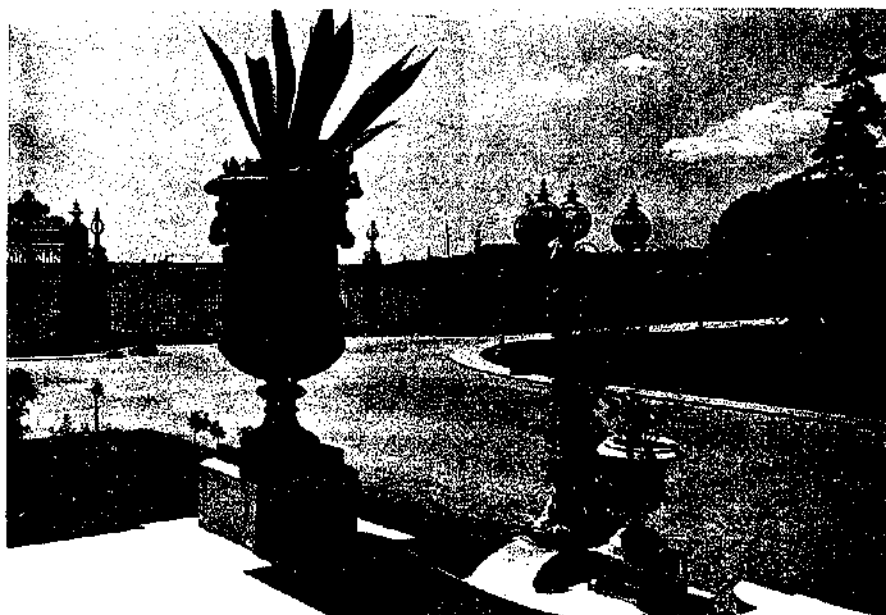


Fig. 19 Western influenced garden kuick-knack, Dolmabahçe Palace Gardens.

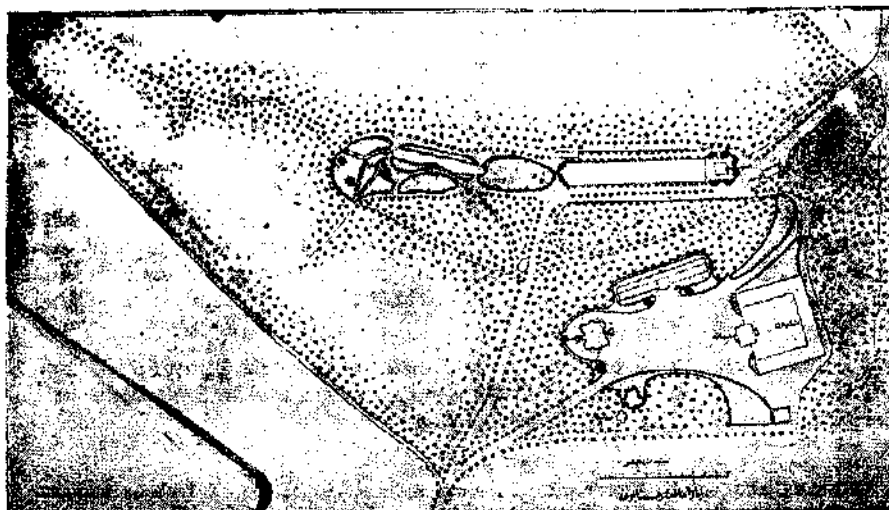


Fig. 20 Ayas Ağa grounds
Source : B. Unsal, 1963.

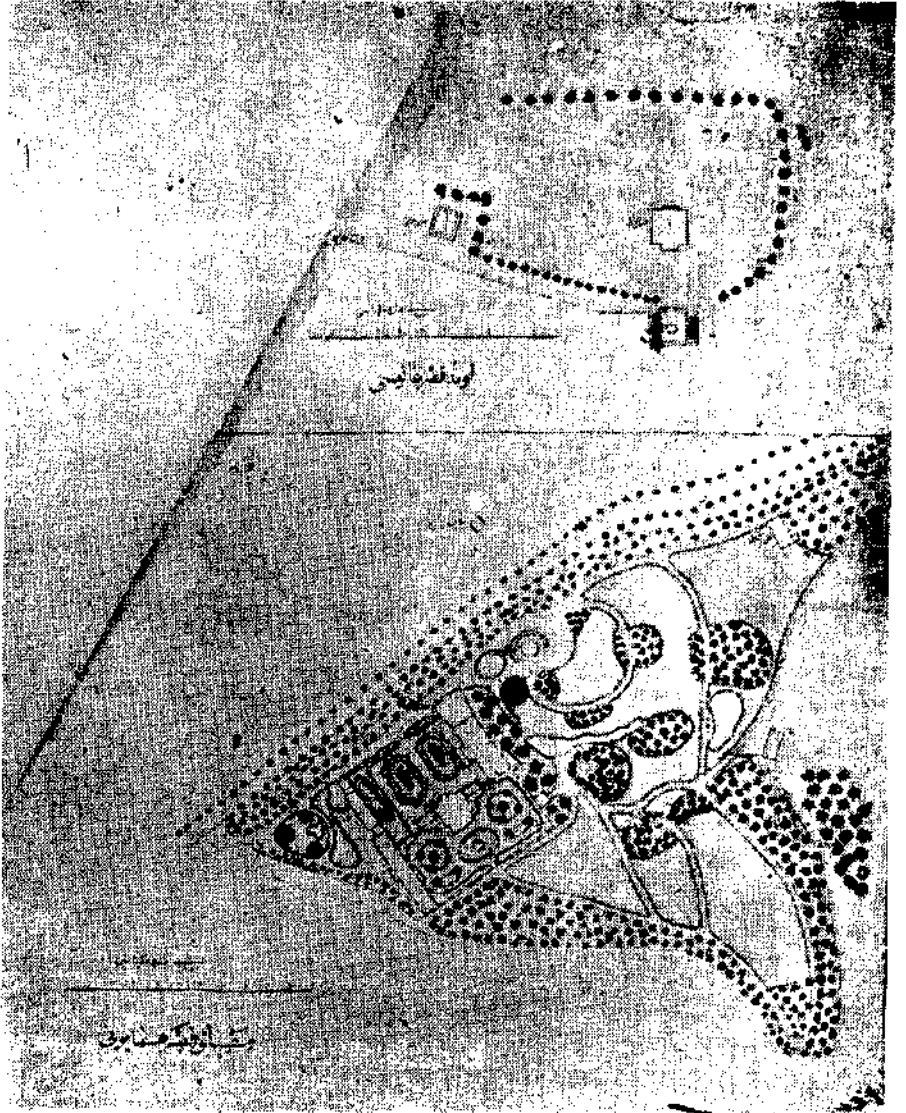


Fig. 21 Masiak and Levend grounds
Source : B. Unsal, 1963.



Fig. 22 Hillcky slopes, Emirgân grounds.

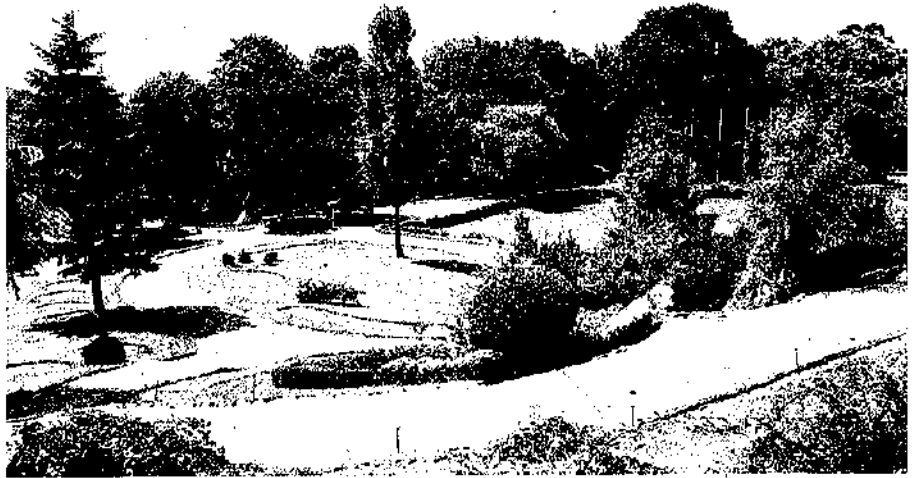


Fig. 23 Picturesque tree groupings,
Emirgân grounds.



Fig. 24 Grotts, an elian water element
in the Turkish garden, Emirgân
grounds.



Fig. 25 Meandering brook and bridge,
Yıldız Grounds.

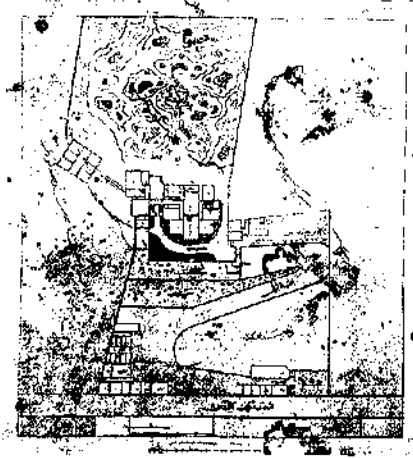


Fig. 26 Natural landscaping influence in a small garden - gardens of Harice Sultan, shore-house at Ortaköy.

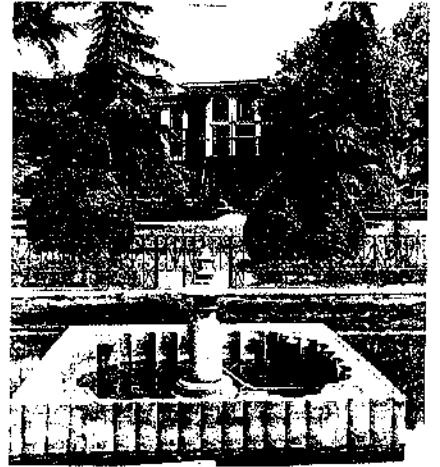


Fig. 27 Axiality softened, Aynalıkavak gardens.



Fig. 28 Terraces on a modest scale, Aynalıkavak gardens.

