

CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE OTTOMAN PERIOD PALACE LANDSCAPE IN ISTANBUL

OSMANLI DÖNEMİ SARAY PEYZAJLARINDAKİ KÜLTÜREL DÖNÜŞÜM

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ABSTRACT

Physical environments that are set up within natural environment bear the traces of the periods in which they existed and the traces of societies which lived in these periods by shaping historical structures and positions of structures to one another, the use of gardens and interior/exterior places, the utilized materials, construction techniques, etc., and they put forward the identities of societies. Cities develop and change in accord with the society's living needs. Today, historical gardens are damaged due to problems including rapid urbanization, population increase and unplanned structuring, etc. Making roads or enlarging the existing roads especially damages the borders and texture of historical palace gardens both visually and physically. Palace gardens in Istanbul have been subject to these problems and their unique borders have been changed or special quality structural components of palace gardens have been demolished because of the new road works carried out or as a result of structuring. The Ottoman period historical palace gardens turned out to be the structures which functioned as the living areas of state administration and the Sultans and reflected the art and architectural cognizance of the period with their unique structures. These palaces, consisting of structural groups, have been the areas where the western influence has been observed since the 19th century conspicuously and as a result, they have been the areas where special designs and compositions were created. In this research, historical development of Çırağan Palace, design features, change and transformation in historical process are examined.

Keywords: Historical gardens, palace landscape, Ottoman Era

ÖZET

Doğal çevre içerisinde yer alan tarihi yapılar, yapıların birbirlerine göre konumları, mekan organizasyonları, avluları, bahçeleri, iç / dış mekân kullanımları, kullanılan yapısal malzemeler ve yapım teknikleri vb. biçimlendirmeler ilgili dönemlerin ve bu dönemlerde yaşayan insanların izlerini taşımakta olup, toplumların kimliklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Kentler toplumun yaşam gereksinimleri doğrultusunda gelişim ve değişim göstermektedir. Bugün hızlı kentleşme, nüfus artışı ve plansız yapılaşma vb. sorunlar nedeni ile tarihi bahçeler zarar görmektedirler. Özellikle yeni yolların açılması ya da mevcut yolların genişletilmesi tarihi saray bahçelerin sınırları ve dokusuna hem görsel hem de fiziksel açıdan zarar vermektedir. İstanbul'da yer alan saray bahçeleri bu sorunlara maruz kalarak, yapılmış olan yeni yol çalışmaları veya yapılaşma sonucu özgün sınırları değiştirilmiş veya saray bahçelerine ait özgün nitelikli yapısal öğeler yapılaşma nedeni ile yıktırılmıştır. Osmanlı dönemi tarihi saray bahçeleri, devlet yönetimi ve sultanların yaşam alanı olarak işlev gören, kendine özgü yapıları ile dönemin sanat ve mimarlık anlayışını en iyi şekilde yansıtan eserler olmuşlardır. Yapılar topluluğundan oluşan bu sarayları, 19.yy'dan itibaren batı etkilerinin belirgin bir şekilde görüldüğü ve bunun sonucu olarak özgün tasarımlar ve kompozisyonların yaratıldığı alanlar olmuşlardır. Bu çalışmanın amacı; Osmanlı Dönemi saray bahçe anlayışının ortaya konması sıra kültürel peyzaj niteliğini taşıyan ancak kentleşme sonucu fiziki yapısı ve kültürel değerini yitiren ve günümüze farklı bir doku, işlev ve özellik ile ulaşan Çırağan Sarayı Bahçelerinin irdelenmesi, özgün niteliği, bahçe düzeni ve mekan organizasyonunun ortaya konmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: tarihi bahçeler, saray peyzajı, Osmanlı dönemi

1. INTRODUCTION

Word "Çırağan" is derived from "Çeragan" and it's a Persian originated word. Word "Çerag" means "light, luminous" Mentioned in Sultan's Land and also known as "Kazancıoğlu Gardens", this area served as a place of moonlit night entertainments full of lights and flowers. Due to the

demonstrations performed since the old times, palace was named “Çırağan”. Old Çırağan Palace with the beauties of the gardens of the Çırağan Palace, located between Beşiktaş and Ortaköy in the Bosphorus and at every period became the focus of kings, sultans and grand viziers. At the beginning of 18th century, the first structure belonging to sultanate in this place called “Kazancıoğlu Garden” was the mansion of Kaya Sultan, daughter of Murad IV. After the death of Kaya Sultan (1659), until the reign of Ahmed III there’s no information about this structure. In this process sultans, especially Mehmed IV and Mustafa II, preferred Edirne as their place of residence. Because of that, in that specified process summer palaces and mansions located in Istanbul was vandalized as a result of negligence. During the reign of Sultan Ahmed III, Grand Vizier Damat İbrahim Pasha ordered a new structure to be made for his wife Fatma Sultan and marble stones used in the construction of this structure and garden was brought from Marmara Island in 1719. After its construction was completed, due to occasional feast with the participation of Sultan Ahmed III, entertainments and “Çırağan Festivities” organized in nights, its name became Çırağan Mansion (Aliasghari Khabbazi, 2016).

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The main material of the research is the Çırağan Palace and the reports prepared by the National Palace Department of the Grand National Assembly on the issue, archive documents belonging to the palace and written and visual materials related to the subject. By analysing the sources available in the direction of this data, the development and current situation of Çırağan Palace in the historical process has been revealed. Systematically, research data were examined, evaluated and synthesized. The aim of this study was to set forth the Ottoman Period palace garden cognizance as well as to investigate Çırağan Palace Gardens, which have the quality of cultural landscape yet have lost their cultural value and reached today with a different texture, function, and feature, and to put forward their special quality, garden design, and spatial organization.

3. DISCUSSION

Çırağan Festivities, after which the palace was named, lightened by oil bougies and was organized particularly in full moon of April. During these festivities, jars filled with tulips were lined and colourful glass spheres were put between them, cages with nightingales in it were placed to the top line and all of these displayed a colourful and sparkling sight. Hence, wooden or metal lanterns were hanged to specific places of garden, festivities called “Donanma” were performed (Figure 1). These festivities reached to its climax during the reign of Sultan Ahmet III, entertainments with bougies and lanterns have continued until the second half of 19th century (Eldem, 1976).

Çırağan Coast Palace changed hands several times during the 60-70 year period continued until the first quarter of 18th century, Grand Viziers of that period used this place to do the honors and banquets. After that, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) Çırağan was used more frequently and earned its full palace status in that period. Being the first sultan to take residence outside of Topkapi Palace, along with the removal of guild of janissaries he made new arrangements in palace organization. Being the first accommodated palace of Reform period, Çırağan Palace became a palace bringing appropriate solutions not only in terms of architectural design and constructural editing but also in qualities and settling of Ottoman palace organization. Mr. Abdülhalim, head of Hassa Architecture, began the construction of old Çırağan Palace in 1834, the last years of Murad II’s reign, and completed it in 1841, after sultan’s death. Old Çırağan Palace, like the other palaces, is separated by a high wall from copse to ensure security and privacy on land side, while on sea side it is separated by a marble pier and a barred wall rising in front of it. Palace has six broad doors in total: two in land side, four in sea side (Mutlu, 2006).



Figure 1. Ceremonies During the II. Ahmet Period (Aliasghari Khabbazi, 2016)

Along with the successively lined Feriye Palaces, Çırağan Palace takes up a 1500 metre long coast line. At the beginning of 20th century, a comprehensive restoration was required for Çırağan Palace and thus, French Dersaadet Legation foreman Antoine Perpinyani submitted a comprehensive scouting report for palace's restoration in 1321/1905 in Mohammedan Calendar. In this scouting report, aside from the great Saray-ı Hümayun; seraglio, ağalar building, tiled pavilion, conservation wall, pier, ağalar building's harbor at Beşiktaş side, pools in the garden, the gates of sultanate at Tramway Street were gathered under 10 headlines. Additionally in Perpinyani's report, Çırağan Palace was designed as 1/1000 scale layout plan whereas seraglio and ağalar buildings were designed as 1/500 scale (figure 2) (Seçkin, 2000).

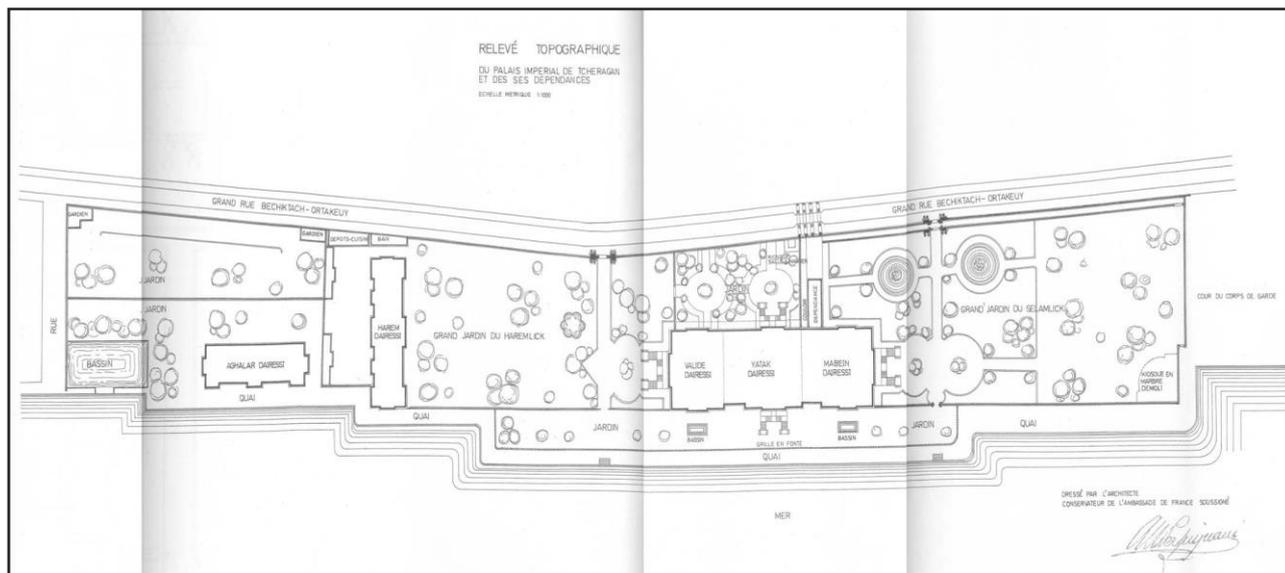


Figure 2. The settlement plan prepared by Antuan Perpinyani in 1905 (Niğdeli, 2015)

The great Saray-ı Hümayun involves an area of 9850 m² consisting of three floors including a cellar. Every floor's settlement and planning scheme was designed differently from each other but three central sofas whose sizes are close to each other also took part in this planning. Every floor has eyvans (vaulted or domed space recessed from a central hall or court) on their sea and land side. Sections in the building were merged with each other with double corridors placed at the both sides of stairs, rooms were placed neatly to the four corners of every sofa. In facade planning, in order to save 120 meter long middle section from collapsed look, an optical regulation was utilized and by raising the middle section it was made to seem like it's slightly sloped to both sides. Consisting of a

single mass, facade has a eurhythmy order with the same placement and sizes of its windows (Eldem, 1976). In terms of decoration, Çırağan Palace has a very rich view. Inside the palace geometric decorations are used heavily. In principle, palace has a design which is in harmony with all aspects. Furniture, doors, windows, columns, carpets and ceilings of the palace was decorated within a understanding of conscious decoration.

In the year of 1859 palace structure was demolished by the order of Sultan Abdülmecid to build a stone structure instead of a wooden palace. However, construction wasn't able to be continued after its demolition. In 1863, by the request of Sultan Abdülaziz, the palace was built by architect Sarkis Balyan with its intended purpose. Çırağan Palace has an enormous and ordinate garden design. Located at the back of shore, copse serves as the natural garden of the buildings. In the old Çırağan Palace which was made during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II, this copse was used as the mabeyn garden of the palace. In this garden fruit trees, formally ordained parterres, small saucupans and pergolas were present. At the top section of the copse Sultan Abdülmecid had a mansion built for his mother Bezmialem Valide Sultan. Due to the fact that the mansion visually had a Istanbul scenery, it was named Yıldız. While the new Çırağan Palace was being made, this copse was closed because of the bridge construction on the road located between Beşiktaş and Ortaköy. The new Çırağan Palace's construction started on January 2, 1863 during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz (1861-1876) and finished on 27 September, 1871. Because of its intended purpose as a summer palace, its scale is smaller than the old one. In the area in which the palace's main structure is located, in relation with western influence new garden regulations were made. In accordance with that lots of pools, five of which are large, were built in palace's garden. As a result of Sultan Abdülaziz's interest in animals, especially in lions and tigers, an "arslanhane"(lion house) was built in palace's garden. Along with that Sultan's mentioned passion caused marbles from Italy, Carrara to be brought in order to create lion and tiger statues. These statues were placed at many spots of the garden but unfortunately after a fire broke out in 1910, two lion were sent to Dolmabahçe Palace. (Can, 1997).

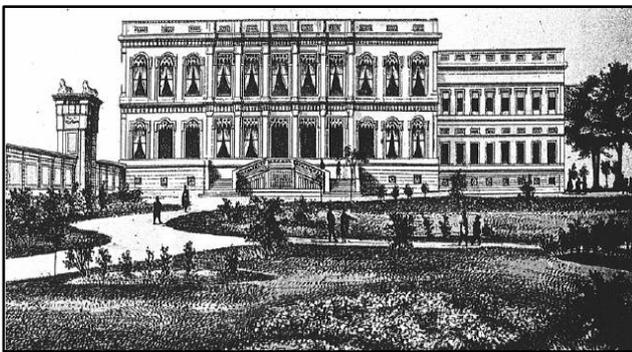


Figure 3. New Çırağan Palace (Can, 1997)

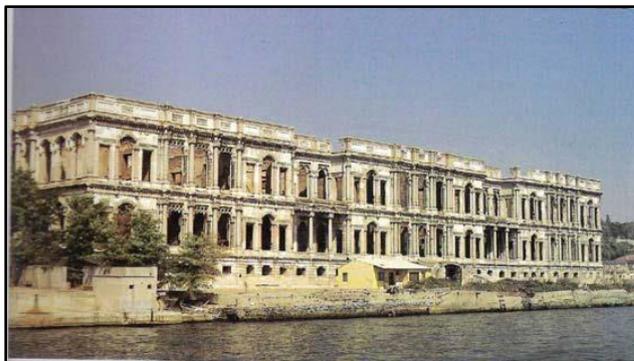


Figure 4. Aftermath of the fire, Çırağan Palace's view from the sea before its transformation into a hotel (Mutlu, 2006)

In 1987, an international tender were initiated for the long forgotten palace and its garden. Renovated to be transformed into a hotel as a consequence of the tender, the structure was reopened in 1992 and today it still serves as a hotel. On 19 January 1910, the palace became history with fire and was taken into restoration in 1986 under the responsibility of Yüksel Building Company. During the restoration process, the palace brick walls with a floor area of 43x123 m were completely demolished and the 22 m. high walls were reinforced by the "shotcrete" method. Outside of the facade restoration, the four marble reign stairs and the palace's Hünkâr Hamamı (sovereign hammam) have been restored with partial repairs. The damaged dome of the hammam was removed and 63 skylights and 2 dome were built as reinforced concrete. The stone parts of the bridge connecting the palace and the Yıldız Park were repaired and the polluted parts were cleaned. The "Reign", "Harem" and "Sofa" doors made of Marmara marble were cleaned and the missing

parts were imbued with marble and the casting doors were restored by sandblasting. The interior of the palace was rebuilt with reinforced concrete core and steel construction in the direction of the projects approved by the Monuments and Ancient Works Authority. The hotel is connected to the Çırağan Palace by a service block and has a total construction area of 35,000 m². The hotel consists of 7 floor with ground floor and basement floors. The hotel block, built on 5-star hotel standards, is a reinforced concrete structure that rests on a pile foundation. The hotel has 320 rooms in total and has 1 king room and 23 suites. There is a restaurant on the ground floor, two tea rooms, meeting rooms, help desk, 17 shops. This floor also has a health club with sauna, jacuzzi and indoor swimming pool. There are two outdoor swimming pools on the 750 m coastline that runs parallel to the Bosphorus. Çırağan Hotel combines extraordinary natural beauties, historical culture of Istanbul and modern hotel comfort (figure 5, 6) (Yüksel İnşaat, 2018).

Today, when looking at the reconsidered landscape design of Çırağan Palace's garden along with the hotel construction, it can be seen that there's no longer a commitment to palace's once had historical features and also with both vegetal arrangement and choice of urban furniture's, contemporary applications and objects are totally replaced its ancestors.



Figure5. New Çırağan Palace Hotel
(Original, 2017)



Figure 6. New Çırağan Palace Hotel
(Original, 2017)

4. CONCLUSION

Cities develop and change in line with the living needs of society. Today, rapid urbanization, population growth and unplanned construction and so on. the historical gardens are damaged due to problems. In particular, the opening of new roads or the expansion of existing roads are both physically and visual damaging to the boundaries and texture of historic palace gardens. The palace gardens in Istanbul have been exposed to these problems and have been destroyed by new road works and the original boundaries of the restoration have been altered and restored to the construction of unique quality structural elements belonging to the palace gardens.

The Çırağan Palace gardens examined in the scope of the research are of great importance in terms of being a cultural heritage and in terms of future generations. The Çırağan Palace and its gardens, which are aimed to be opened as a hotel, have been started in the new hotel building in the garden unfortunately with the restoration and restoration work initiated in 1986. In the direction of this study, the main building of the Çırağan palace was opened for use in the hotel concept, and additional hotel buildings, swimming pools, restaurants, etc. are located within the garden boundaries. the buildings have no historical texture. The Çırağan Palace gardens, which have been opened as a hotel since 1992, have completely lost their original character and identity today. As a result; historical gardens are of great importance for today's users and future generations. For this reason, it is necessary to carry out repair and maintenance work in such a way as to not lose its original quality, while preserving the situation at the time of the construction of the historical gardens.

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