

**O 36. THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVATION AND THE RESTORATION OF
HISTORICAL GARDENS AS SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Pembe Duran^{1*}, Aslı Güneş Gölbeç¹

¹*İzmir Demokrasi University, Architecture Faculty, Landscape Architecture Department*

E-mail: *duranpembe@gmail.com, asli.gunes@idu.edu.tr*

ABSTRACT: The concept of cultural heritage can be explained as a set of concrete or abstract works that enable the events that have occurred throughout human history to be transferred to subsequent generations. When these works, which contain different living styles, values, beliefs, and cultures of different periods, are evaluated from an architectural perspective, they generally focus on the constructional buildings and dwellings where that period prevailed. However, many dwellings that contain the lifestyle of the period are surrounded by the environment or gardens that have the lifestyle of the period. These gardens, where a part of the social life of the period continued, bear the traces of the period and are shaped according to the socio-cultural structure. These historical buildings surrounded by gardens are aging over time, their functions are changing, and they need restoration and renovation works in order to survive. At this point, the architectural structure and its surroundings are separated, and while many structures are restored and returned to their former state, unfortunately, the same sensitivity is not shown for the gardens. This situation causes damage, especially for gardens containing living material, and in some cases, even completely changing their function and using them for other purposes. In this study, in addition to the structures considered cultural heritage, the importance of the protection and restoration of their environments, namely their gardens, and their transfer as cultural heritage are discussed through various examples.

Keywords: Historical Gardens, Garden Restoration, Conservation, Landscape Architecture, Cultural Heritage

4. INTRODUCTION

Cultural landscapes are actualities derived from a protracted and intricate history of human interaction with the natural world. Humans have impacted the environment through their activities, and geography and natural resources have shaped the history and way of life of human cultures. The gardens are one of these sculpted, historically, and culturally rich areas; they are among the most exquisite, yet fragile, examples of cultural and landscape heritage. Both the aesthetic ideals and the spirit of the era in which they were constructed are preserved in them. This is particularly true with historical gardens, which are important to comprehend and protect due to the significance of what they symbolise (Silva & Carvalho, 2022).

They can add to our knowledge of other pillars of society as well as disciplines like science, anthropology, technology, history, and literature by shedding light on the interactions that have developed throughout time between cultures and the natural environment. According to this viewpoint, landscapes can be considered cultural heritage as long as they are passed down to future generations as inherited, utilised, and constantly changing goods. The landscape has many of the natural and cultural expressions recognised by the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural Heritage because of this interaction, which has resulted in an inseparable combination of natural and cultural components. The historical garden is a creation of societies, a window into their past and many cultures; it captures historical events as well as the interaction between humans and the natural world. It is a "living monument" because of the intricate architecture that combines life with immobility. (Silva & Carvalho, 2022).

2. THE HISTORICAL GARDEN CONCEPT

A historical garden is defined as an architectural garden composition that is historically or artistically significant, attesting to a culture, a specific culture, and an original vision of the artist, as stated in the Statute of Historic Gardens of Florence (1981). A historic garden is made to be observed and enjoyed, but entry is restricted to prevent the loss of the garden's natural features, history, and culture

Proceeding Book of ISESER 2023

(Fig 1). Historical gardens are also intricate systems with significant ecological, financial, artistic, cultural, and historical significance (Carrari et al., 2022). The historical garden is an architectural composition with a large number of biodegradables, plant-based elements. As a result, they depict the continual harmony between nature's development and decay, the seasons' changing look, and the efforts of artists and craftspeople to preserve it forever (Salwa, 2014). A historical garden is an area established with a specific goal in mind. Historical gardens are frequently designed to capture the history and culture of a certain location or era. Historical gardens are significant for lots of reasons. One of the primary reasons for this is their capacity to provide us with an understanding of the past and to inspire gardening now, particularly in the area of landscape design (Copeland, 2016).



Figure 1. Hevsel Gardens, Diyarbakır, Turkey (Anonim, 2023a).

2.1. Historical Gardens as Cultural Heritage

Historical gardens are defined as works that encompass a variety of garden types, such as formal or informal, classical or baroque, romantic or cultural landscapes, and are considered part of the cultural heritage. These unique works of art carry a certain cultural value. A historical garden is defined by its character and historical significance, by what it represents in terms of monumentality, identity, and culture, by the value it adds to the locations and monuments it may be associated with, and by the things it awakens today. Historical gardens are not defined by their age, structure, or size (Silva & Carvalho, 2022).

The latter half of the 20th century witnessed the broadening of the notion of heritage to encompass more aspects, such as architectural landmarks. A growing fascination with various landscapes, natural landmarks, and locations—including parks and gardens—was the driving force behind this shift. Gardens have emerged as significant cultural and historical artefacts that transcend various civilizations and societies. They serve as crucial means for preserving and enhancing the cultural memory and collective identity of a society. Consequently, gardens are regarded as highly valuable and delicate manifestations of cultural and landscape heritage (Salwa, 2014).



Figure 2. Dolmabahçe Palace Garden - 1958 (Anonym, 2023b)

For all these reasons, it is felt that it is necessary and urgent to know, preserve, cultivate, protect, and value this heritage. In the context of sustainability, historical gardens provide ecosystem services such as:

- carbon storage,
- thermal island reduction,
- air pollution alleviation
- flow control.

Also, ecosystem-supporting services,

- providing habitats for a range of plant and animal species

And powerful cultural services,

- artistic,
- aesthetic,
- entertainment
- spiritual/emotional.

They can also be economically attractive due to their tourist attractions and capacity to create jobs. (Carrari et al., 2022).

2.2. The Conservation and Restoration of Historical Gardens as a Sustainable Cultural Heritage

The issue of conservation of historical garden complexes was dealt with in the Florence Statute, adopted on 21 May 1981 by the ICOMOS-IFLA International Committee and the International Committee of Historic Gardens (Salwa, 2014).

Understanding and effectively managing historical gardens, which are considered cultural landscapes, play a crucial role in promoting sustainability. There is growing concern about sustainability and the big effect that changes in climate, population, society, and ideology have on cultural landscapes. This calls for a close look at how to understand, manage, and value historical gardens, as well as the importance of inventories in this situation (Silva & Carvalho, 2022).

Proceeding Book of ISESER 2023

Historical gardens possess significant value as both natural and cultural heritage areas, offering several socio-cultural, environmental, and economic advantages. In order to maintain their survival, living entities necessitate consistent, high-quality, and enduring protection (Funsten et al., 2020). Preservation of the original form of a historical garden is essential for maintaining its inherent historical significance, so ensuring its integrity is upheld to a satisfactory extent. Alternatively, the garden cannot be regarded as anthropomorphic but rather as an outcome of natural phenomena.

According to Salwa (2014), the purpose of a historic garden is to facilitate visitation and observation. However, it is imperative to restrict access to these gardens in order to save their cultural, historical, and natural significance from the threat of disappearance. The use of historical gardens for recreational and entertainment purposes should be limited to extraordinary situations. The inclusion of extraordinary types of physical pleasure and amusement within these spaces ought to enhance the garden's worth rather than diminish it. It is widely acknowledged that legacy holds significance not only from a historical and cultural standpoint but also plays a crucial role in fostering sustainable development and prosperity. The preservation of heritage holds significant policy significance, as seen by its inclusion in international texts like Goal 11.4 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This goal specifically emphasises the need to enhance endeavours aimed at safeguarding both the cultural and natural heritage of the globe (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Sustainable Development Goals. (Unitar, 2023)

According to its definition of landscape management, the European Landscape Convention places a high priority on sustainability. According to this convention, landscape management involves taking actions to ensure the ongoing upkeep of landscapes from a sustainable development standpoint. The objective is to effectively guide and harmonise the modifications resulting from social, economic, and environmental processes (Funsten et al., 2020).

When undertaking the restoration of historical gardens, it is imperative to consider the preservation of these cultural legacies, recognising their unique nature as significant entities that provide specific challenges. These issues stem from the inherent reliance of all human-made creations on the natural world, regardless of their quantity. According to Funsten et al. (2020), a garden can be perceived as a mostly cultural construct, where its natural elements are deemed essential but merely constitute a fundamental aspect of the garden. The restoration process involves utilising nature as a tool, starting at the level of plants as a collective entity and extending to the garden as a whole. Similar to the constituent bricks in a structural edifice or the pigments employed in a visual artwork, historical gardens have the capacity to undergo alterations as required while preserving the inherent authenticity of the garden.

Gardens exhibit a lack of stability due to their perpetual transformation over time and throughout the seasons, driven by the cyclical patterns of biological growth and deterioration. Consequently, determining the garden's original form is a challenge. The gardens exhibit exceptional magnitude in relation to several circumstances, including light, temperature, and weather. The aforementioned elements hold significant importance in the context of gardens, and the incorporation of these criteria into the restoration process can lead to the attainment of sustainable outcomes (Funsten et al., 2020).



Figure 4. Çağlayan Kasrı, late 19th century (Atasoy, 2015)

Historical gardens can be observed across several dimensions, ranging from the humble domestic garden to the meticulously designed and expansive parkland. A historic garden encompasses more than a mere assemblage of plant life. The environment includes various physical components such as soil, water, rocks, plants, bushes, trees, and man-made structures such as buildings, shelters, or sculptures (Figure 4). The object is expected to undergo visual transformations and may fulfil varying purposes as time progresses. The phenomenon under consideration can be interpreted as the assimilation and contemplation of intangible attributes derived from its immediate environment. It is sometimes denoted as the *genius loci*, which signifies the essence or character of a particular geographic location. Similar to all gardens, historical gardens undergo seasonal variations in their form, hue, and fragrance. In addition to these and analogous natural phenomena, it is imperative to consider the anthropogenic alterations that have transpired throughout the course of time (Clerk, 2015).

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the significance of restoring heritage gardens. The gardens in question encompass both community and private gardens, which can be regarded as cultural or social assets. Some of these gardens require restoration and meticulous attention to accurately preserve their historical relevance. The historical gardens encompass a multitude of venerable trees, antiquated plant species, scarce specimens, paved areas, boundaries, and ecological niches. The development of these resources is not an immediate process; it may require a significant amount of time for them to reach maturity and fully embody the designer's original concept. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the significance of restoring heritage gardens. The gardens in question encompass both community and private gardens, which can be regarded as cultural or social assets. Some of these gardens require restoration and meticulous attention to accurately preserve their historical relevance. The historical gardens encompass a multitude of venerable trees,

Proceeding Book of ISESER 2023

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3. SOME SAMPLES OF HISTORICAL GARDENS AS CULTURAL HERITAGE

3.1. Yıldız Palace Gardens, Istanbul, Turkey

The palace garden, containing some villages and caves, was constructed unplanned, as opposed to the other palaces' gardens. Although many European gardeners are brought and operated, the roads inside the garden, vegetable and fruit gardens, and flowers reflect the character of the Turkish garden, not being too interfered with by nature and being shaped accordingly (Atasoy, 2015).



Figure 5. Yıldız Palace Preservation and other sections (Anonym, 2023c).

3.2. Ihlamur Kasri, Istanbul, Turkey

Ihlamur Kasri, Istanbul A boundary house has been built for Hacı Hussein's bonds, which is known to be used by the patriarchs for recreation and sports. III. In Selim, swimming pools and sofas were built here in 1791, and in Sultan Abdulmecid, a new landscape arrangement was made for German gardeners. In this rose-filled garden, the lion pool between the two storms was removed, repaired, and reused during restoration in 1978–1985. The little pebble pool on the set was rescued in the same way. (Atasoy, 2015).

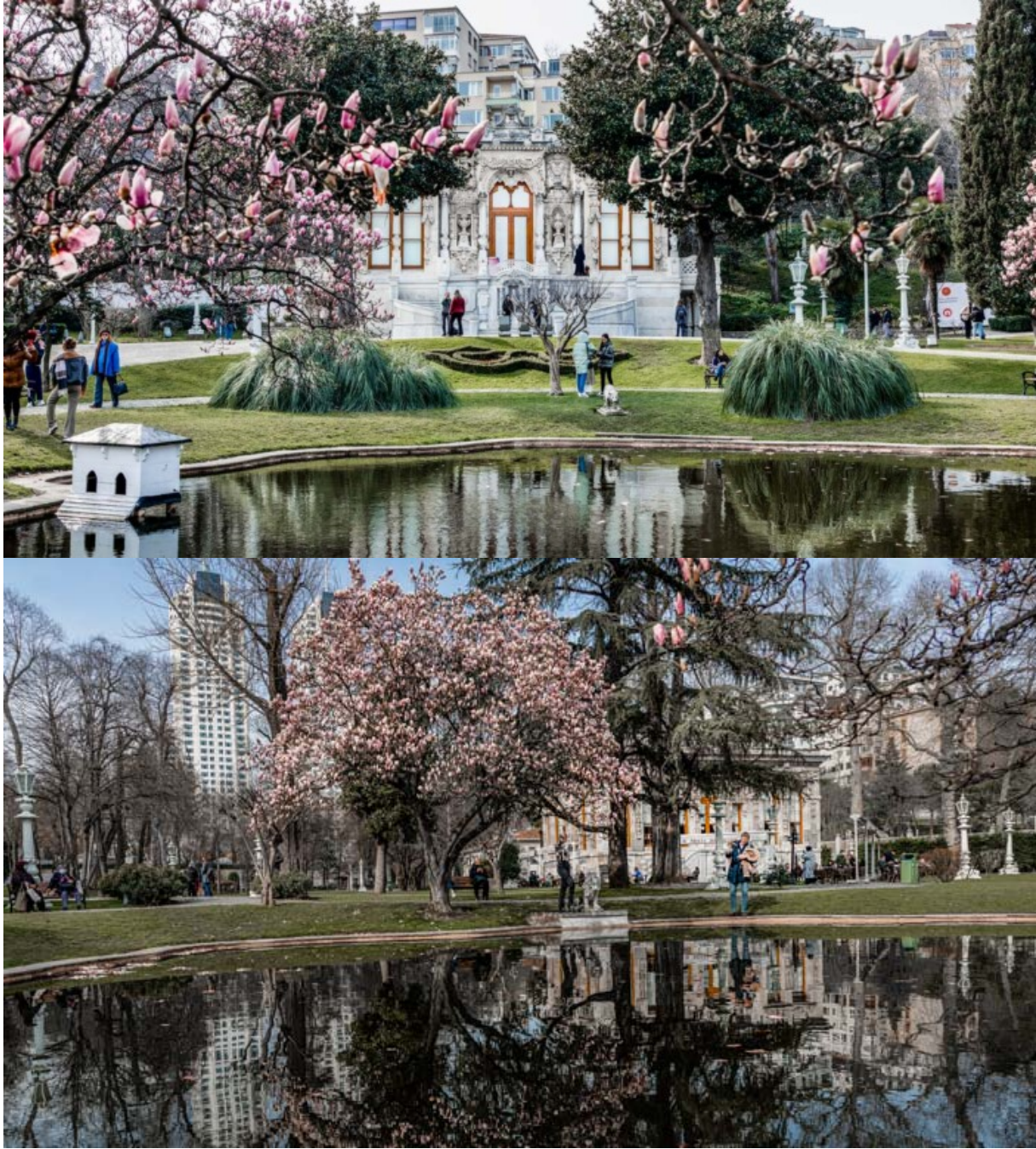


Figure 6. Ihlamur Kasrı (Anonym, 2023d)

3.3. Beylerbeyi Palace Garden, Istanbul, Turkey

Today, when you look over the Boaziçi Bridge, you can see how Salamlk and Harem are a wall separating the garden of the Palace of the Beylerbeyi. It is decorated with gardens, flower parks, and animal sculptures, where the views of the Boğaz can be seen in distinct beauty. The top set has a large swimming pool at a depth of 3 metres. Since Sultan Abdülaziz arranged the garden of the new Beylerbeyi Palace for foreign gardeners, which he rebuilt in place of the old Beylerbeyi Palace, this garden appears to be a completely formal garden. The details show the characteristics of Turkish gardens (Atasoy, 2015).



Figure 7. Beylerbeyi Palace Garden views (Anonym, 2023e)

3.4. Hevsel Gardens, Diyarbakır, Turkey

With an 8,000-year-old history and continuous agriculture, the Hevsel Gardens are both a stored grain storehouse and a recreational area for the area to be used as needed. It is also an important heritage as a crossroads for cultures because it takes place on the Silk Road route, and the caravans cross the Ten Eyes Bridge and rest in the Hevsel Gardens. (Anonim, 2023d).



Figure 8. Hevsel Gardens, (Anonym 2023f)

4. CONCLUSION

The preservation and upkeep of historic gardens hold significant global importance. Gardens hold significant historical value and serve as a portal to the past. Once lost, the opportunity to recreate them is irrevocably lost. In order to ensure the preservation of this heritage connection, it is imperative to allocate the requisite resources for the purposes of maintenance, repair, or rebuilding, as well as to enhance the acquisition of skills and knowledge. These locations hold significant social value within a progressively urbanised setting. In the event that these historically significant gardens of cultural heritage are subjected to neglect, there is a significant risk of their rapid deterioration and subsequent irreparable loss, rendering their recreation nearly unattainable.

As a result,

- Historical gardens offer different services for the city and the area in which they are located, as well as cultural values.
- To enable them to maintain their long-term sustainability, together with structural restoration or a separate landscape restoration work, a programme could be established for each historic garden or park, taking into account the rules of conservation, regulating access to them, and allowing them to develop as a tourist area.
- Therefore, for the restoration and conservation of historical gardens, which are cultural heritage, as well as other structural architectural heritages, legal and administrative protection decisions must be taken.
- The heritage garden repair, preservation, and restoration plans should be made and must be loyal to the previous things, from the choice of material to the selection of plants, trying to stay true to the original fabric.
- The use of space and its interaction from a sociological point of view should be monitored.
- It has to be documented and archived for future generations.

By taking the simple precautions and applications suggested, the sustainability of historical gardens, which are an important cultural heritage, can be ensured.

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