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Ali Kemal ARKUN¹ 

¹ Ministry of Family and Social Services,
Ankara, Turkey.

* Corresponding author (Sorumlu yazar):

alikemalarkun@yahoo.com

Landscape significance and value of Ankara's first public green space: Millet Garden

Ankara'nın ilk kamusal yeşil alanı peyzaj önemi ve
değeri: Millet Bahçesi

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Some of the parliament buildings have public open and green spaces nearby. For instance, United States' Capitol Building has Capitol Grounds, Germany's Reichstag Building has Platz der Republik Park and Spreebogen Park, The Palace of Westminster of United Kingdom has Victoria Tower Gardens. These spaces originated as green public spaces associated with state. The parliament buildings are often landmarks. Their green spaces enhance the spatial quality. Green spaces make parliament buildings more attractive places to visit and work. There is no landscape architecture research on Türkiye's first parliament building's green space so called Millet Garden. The objective of this study is to identify historic features and evaluate components.

Material and Methods: The research is structured in qualitative research method and consists of four parts. The first part includes theoretical framework. The explanation of research design and the implementation of data collection method is the second part. The third part contains description of the site. The fourth part constitutes analyses the components of historic landscape in details.

Results: This study reveals the importance of the Millet Garden by evaluating it in terms of landscape architecture.

Conclusion: This study touches upon the importance and benefits of historic landscapes. Finally, the study revealed some directions for further studies.

Keywords: Historic landscape, identity,
Millet Garden, open green space, urban
heritage

Anahtar sözcükler: Tarihi peyzaj, kimlik,
Millet Bahçesi, açık yeşil alan, kentsel miras

ÖZ

Amaç: Bazı parlamento binalarının halka açık ve yeşil alanları bulunmaktadır. Bunlara örnek olarak, ABD'nin Capitol Binasının Capitol Grounds alanı, Almanya'nın Reichstag Binasının Platz der Republik Parkı ve Spreebogen Parkı, Büyük Britanya'nın The Westminster Sarayının Victoria Tower Bahçeleri verilebilir. Bu mekanlar, devletle ilişkili yeşil alanlar olarak ortaya çıkmış olup parlamento binaları genellikle sembolik yapılardır. Bu yapıların yeşil alanları mekansal kaliteyi artırmaktadır. Türkiye'nin ilk parlamento binasının Millet Bahçesi olarak adlandırılan halka açık yeşil alanı ile ilgili detaylı peyzaj mimarlığı araştırması bulunmamaktadır. Bu araştırma tarihi özellikleri belirlemeyi, analiz etmeyi ve değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Araştırma alanı Ankara Ulus Millet Bahçesi Ankara'nın ilk tasarlanmış kamu parkı olarak ele alınmıştır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmış olup dört bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm teorik çerçeveyi içermektedir. Araştırma tasarımının açıklanması ve veri toplama yönteminin uygulanması ikinci bölümde yer almaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm araştırma alanının tanımını içermektedir. Dördüncü bölümde, tarihi kentsel peyzajın bileşenlerini detaylı olarak analiz edilmektedir.

Araştırma Bulguları: Bu araştırma, Millet Bahçesi'nin peyzaj mimarlığı disiplini açısından değerlendirerek önemini ortaya koymaktadır.

Sonuç: Bu araştırma, Türkiye'deki tarihi kamusal alanların önemine ve yararlarına değinmektedir. Araştırma daha ileri çalışmalar için yönlendirme önerileriyle sonuçlanmaktadır.

INTRODUCTION

The majority of the parliament buildings have green public spaces nearby. For instance, The Capitol, which is the parliament building of United States has Capitol Grounds (designed by Frederick Law Olmsted), The Reichstag, which is the parliament building of Germany has Platz der Republik Park (Königsplatz) and Spreebogen Park, The Westminster Palace, which is the parliament building of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has Victoria Tower Gardens. These parks originated as green spaces associated with the state. The parliament buildings are often symbolically important and architecturally impressive landmarks. Their green spaces enhance the spatial quality and identity. Green spaces make parliament buildings more attractive places to visit and work.

There is some research on historical parks and other Millet Gardens in Anatolia, but there is no study on a more specific and detailed landscape research on Ankara Millet Garden. Besides transforming the park plot into a paved square is on the agenda of the Ankara metropolitan municipality. This attempt could be an opportunity to rebuild and reshape Millet Garden. Hence a study was conducted and the objective of this study was to identify historic landscape features, analyze and evaluate components of public green space, which is called Millet Garden (Millet means Nation in Turkish). The Millet Garden can also be considered as the first designed public park in Ankara, where green spaces for public recreation were lacking.

The research is structured in qualitative research method and consists of five parts. Theoretical framework is given in the first part. Secondly, research design is explained. The description of the research area is provided in the third part. The fourth part features analyses of historic urban landscape components. This study revealed some recommendations and directions for further studies. This study is of importance and benefits of historical public landscapes in Türkiye.

MATERIALS and METHOD

The literature review shows that there has been no detailed research within landscape architecture approach on Ankara Millet Garden. No research has been carried out specifically adopting an urban design and landscape approach. As a research location, Millet Garden did not attract many scientists. Besides, little attention is paid to the designed historic landscape of Ankara. Millet Garden is chosen because the general history and development of the site was not very well documented.

The objective of this study was to demonstrate the significance of the first designed public urban landscape of Ankara. This qualitative research seeks to examine how the Millet Garden was developed, how it was changed and why it disappeared. Therefore, case study method which involves the detailed examination of physical and social history was employed.

Illustrative case study method which is used to provide a detailed and descriptive account, is carried out to gain an in-depth understanding of Millet Garden. Carrying out an extensive analysis of Millet Garden is inevitable to interpret and evaluate data that contributes to its significance and integrity. It is important to identify the natural, cultural and social context for historic landscape.

The transformation process and the components of the research site are identified. Components define the archeological, landscape architectural features, values, and associations that make the landscape significant. The physical units provide an understanding of the designed landscape's evolution. The following components of historic landscape were analyzed:

1. History of the Site
2. Topography
3. Land Use and Settlement History

4. Vegetation
5. Design and Spatial Organization of the Park
6. Circulation
7. Buildings, Small Scale Features and Structures of the Park

These landscape components are determined according to National Park Service's cultural landscape studies (an agency of the United States government), Parks Canada's cultural heritage studies (the agency of the Government of Canada), ICOMOS Historic Urban Public Parks' approach and UNESCO's Historic Urban Landscape approach.

In this context, the data used to support this study were obtained from many different sources such as books, articles, drawings, old images, historic maps and plans. General Directorate of Mapping and The Vehbi Koc and Ankara Research Center's Archives were especially used for obtaining historical visual data. The analysis of qualitative data entails the exploration of all the data that is found.

Theoretical framework

The natural landscapes have been shaped from the beginning of human history. Agricultural and religious practices which began thousands of years ago, can be regarded as the first interventions on natural open landscapes. The development of agriculture created early settlements (villages) with kitchen gardens, roads and water storages. The early gardens where vegetables, grains and fruits were cultivated, were the products of the basic human need, which is food. The history of gardens overlaps with the history of agricultural lands (Turner, 2005). Gardens and parks can be regarded as the product of human effort to control, change and imitate earth and nature. They can be regarded as the connection between nature and human beings. The designed green spaces which were not defined as parks and gardens existed since the ancient times in the cities. Gardens have been created in different parts of the world with various styles for thousands of years. West Asia region not only consists of very old cities but also first garden designs with different uses. Mesopotamia civilizations (Sumerians, Akkadians, Assyrians, and Babylonians) were urban and literate from about 3,000 BCE and evidence for their gardens especially temple gardens comes from written texts, pictorial sculptures, and archaeology (Dalley, 1993). Vegetable, herb, fruit and medicinal gardens as well as temple gardens were built by Ancient Egyptians. Their gardens were usually walled and had pools and native plants (Anonymous, 2021a).

Like the Egyptians, upper-class Assyrians enjoyed gardens and they created large hunting parks but they also made pleasure gardens irrigated by water canals (Lambert, 2021). The earliest Chinese gardens (1600-1046 BC) were created as large enclosed parks where the kings and nobles hunted game, or where fruit and vegetables were grown (Yuhao, 2022). The Greeks developed public gardens, as meeting and market places protected within city walls (Anonymous, 2021b). Egyptian, Persian, and Greek gardens became a part of Roman horticulture, producing villa and palatial pleasure gardens usually in courtyards for relaxation and rejuvenation along with public parks and gardens meant for enjoyment or for exercising in (Anonymous, 2018). Roman civilization influenced garden design around Europe. Spain was influenced by the Islamic, Moroccan and Andalusian design and paradise gardens were built. The Ottomans built palaces and religious centers with gardens mostly in Istanbul and Bursa. In short, gardens were private and had symbolic and ritualistic significance.

Garden designs have evolved around the world and their area of coverage increased. The concept of 'park' came to be sometimes used synonymously with words such as garden, square, or similar expressions (ICOMOS, 2017). The first parks can be the property of the royal or wealthy families and were used leisurely for pleasure serving for activities such as horse-riding, celebrations, walking, fishing, and hunting. These parks were enclosed areas secured by a wall or fence. The size and features of the parks were also an indication of the owner's wealth and status. The first known use of the word 'park' is from the late 13th century (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Middle English: from Old French "parc", from medieval Latin

“parricus”, of Germanic origin; related to German “Pferch” ‘pen, fold’, also to paddock and it was originally a legal term designating land held by royal permission for keeping game animals: this was enclosed and therefore distinct from a forest or chase, and (also unlike a forest) had no special laws or officers. In this study, park and garden terms are used interchangeably because both refer to public urban green open spaces (Oxford, n.d.).

There are many definitions of the word park. A park is the green and open space where hard landscape or soft landscape or both designed or planned to serve various functions. Any public or private land set aside and availed for recreational, educational, leisure, cultural, scenic, or aesthetic use, or for preservation of open space with vegetation or such features is called a park (Gardenvisit.com, 2021). A park can either be considered as a necessity or as a luxury. Parks can be categorized as natural, man-made or according to their size. Parks have various types such as national parks (Yellowstone, USA), conservation parks (Birmingham Wildlife Conservation Park, UK) public gardens (Abbotsbury Garden, UK), neighborhood parks, or sports parks (Hamilton) (Turner, 2005).

City roads, junctions, some cemeteries and squares such as Greek Agoras / Roman Forums can be regard as the pioneers of the open and semi-open public spaces. The squares were functioned as formal and informal gathering spaces for various activities such as religious, commercial, political and celebratory events. The 19th century Victorian writer, John Ruskin, made the observation, "The measure of any great civilization is its cities; and the measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces — its parkland" (Hinds, 1979).

The content and definition of public space has been changing due to globalization. Parks and gardens became public after social revolutions and reforms. The concept ‘public park/garden’ rests on the principle of openness and accessibility for all people to visit and enjoy. The concept is not limited or defined by size. Public parks are typically in public ownership and represent common wealth (Sadeghian & Vardanyan, 2015). The oldest public park of a city or town could be a cemetery without trees. But cemeteries were built spaces and were not active green spaces and where not used for recreational activities. Public parks are very important subject of urban life, landscape architecture and urban design. Johann Peter Willebrand who was a German judge, historian and author, demanded in 1775 that public gardens should be created inside the town or in its immediate vicinity (Sadeghian & Vardanyan, 2015). In France, the public function of parks was pointed out, though without any substantial alterations being proposed as to their arrangement. Thus in 1774 Watelet, in his essay *Essai sur les jardins* (Essay on Gardens), wrote that in large cities the “royal parks” should be regarded as public walking grounds (Andela, 1981).

Many sources claim that the modern public park was first seen in England in the 18th century. In 1840, Derby Arboretum and public park was opened in the city of Derby and is often described as England's first public park. The land was a private garden. It was donated by the mayor of Derby and designed by a Scottish botanist and garden designer John Claudius Loudon (Kirby, 2015). The historic green landmark which was an inspiration for New York's Central Park has historic buildings, fountains, statues, ornaments and a collection of trees. The oldest public park in the United States is in Boston Common. It is located in the heart of Boston. Although the footprint of Boston Common has changed only marginally over its history, it has undergone numerous interventions that have transformed it from an open field into a landscaped park (Westerby, 2021). The park which is designated as a national historic landmark, today contains monuments, a statuary, ponds, fountains, spray pools, bandstands, a baseball field and tennis courts. The public park movement was followed by Princes Park in the Liverpool in 1842, Peel Park in the Salford in 1846, and Central Park in the New York City in 1857 (Tan & Jim, 2017).

The concept of opening urban green spaces to the public started in late 19th century and spread to the world. Furthermore, as cities expanded and urban population increased, the private gardens and parks opened to the public. They became premium for city centers because of their health, cultural,

economic, social and environmental benefits to community. Public parks improve the quality and enhance the livability of a neighborhood or a city. Public parks have great significance when it comes to protection of health, welfare and the integration of cultural diversity. Moreover, parks serve essential roles for erosion control, water storage, carbon sequestration and reducing habitat fragmentation. Public parks are inevitable components of cities that maintain the well-being of humans. Cities are living laboratories where various studies are conducted. Public parks are the subject of many disciplines.

Fundamental to the identity of historic urban parks is their composition and dependency on such elements as vegetation, architectural elements, water features, paths, or topography. These elements contribute to their character, seasonal interest, shade, and spatial and visual identity (ICOMOS, 2017).

Millet (Nation) Gardens can be regarded as the first public parks in Anatolia. The origin of the "Millet (Nation) Garden" name is unknown, though the name possibly comes from late 19th century Ottoman Government's reform efforts to unite Muslim and non-Muslim population and create only one Ottoman Nation (Sağlık et al., 2021). It is known that the 19th century passed with reforms for the Ottoman Empire due to the westernization movement. Provincial Municipality Law, which was declared in 1877 was a significant reform for establishing the city scale governmental organization, in other words, municipalities. According to this law, municipalities became responsible for landscaping (Coskun et al., 2021). Several parks and gardens of France were opened to the public in late 19th century. This development inspired the Ottoman Government to create public gardens in big cities. Therefore, the first Millet Gardens (Taksim Millet Garden, Uskudar Sarıkaya Millet Garden and Sultan Ahmet Millet Garden) which were located in Istanbul, can be regarded as an effort for transforming society and for the sake of socialization. Following Istanbul, Millet Gardens were built in the big cities of Türkiye (Sağlık et al., 2021). The main focus of the study is Ankara Millet Garden which can be considered as the first urban public green space of Ankara, capital city of Turkish Republic. This research investigates the development, the design evolution, and the significance of the Millet Garden which was laid out and linked to the Parliament Building at the time.

Ankara and Millet Garden

The Republic of Türkiye in Anatolia was established in Ankara after the fall of Ottoman Empire in 1923. At that time, Ankara which was a small historic town with an organic historic urban fabric around the historic castle, had a population of 75000 (Arkun, 2012). Ankara's 2023 population is estimated around 6 million. Ankara has a rich history. It was home to many eastern and western civilizations such as Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, Persians, Macedonians, Galatians, Romans, Byzantines, Seljuks, and Ottomans. Ankara has an archeological record of more than 4000 years of human use. The historic quarter of the city developed around Hatip River, flat arable land and old castle hill which is considered as the oldest settlement area of city center. The Ankara Castle, which is located on top of a high hill and visible from afar, was the center of the historic settlement and had dominance over the surrounding geography. The historic city core grew organically. Ankara became a walled city after a defensive wall was built in early 1600s and demolished in the late 19th century (Erdoğan et al., 2008). Historic core of the city had several different sized squares and defensive wall gates. Ten city gates were drawn on Von Vincke's 1839 Ankara Map. The Millet Garden's land lot was very close to the demolished west of the defensive wall, Istanbul Gate and it was used as a city cemetery till the beginning of the 20th century (Tunçer, 2019).

Ankara was declared as the capital of Türkiye on 13 October 1923. However, at that time new capital's urban standards were not adequate. The organic urban form of the historic core was extended with a gridiron urban layout and uneven (squatter) settlement during 20th century. The new administration center required to provide public service spaces and commercial functions. Ankara was planned to be a model city for the whole country and as the symbol of the Republic. The main reason was to develop a modernized urban settlement and a new city life for the new Republic. Republican ideals, which aimed at

radical social and cultural change, could not have been successful unless at the same time a conscious spatial change took place (Uludağ et al., 2005).

In 1892, Ankara Train Station was opened and İstasyon (Station) Avenue was built to connect the city center to the train station. Originally a narrower thoroughfare, İstasyon (Station) Avenue was widened, both sides were planted with trees and used during the 20th century. In this context, a new square which is called Ulus (Nation) was constructed at the east end of İstasyon Avenue where three other avenues from other directions meet. Ulus Square can be considered as the west end of the historic core. Ulus Square became very popular and symbolic after the first Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament) building was opened in 1920. Designed in late Ottoman style, the construction of the building as of The Committee of Union and Progress Headquarter was started in 1915. The one story building which serves as Independence War Museum, has a rectangular ground plan, built in andesite stone and houses Grand Assembly Hall, Assembly President's Room, Chambers of The Ruling Council, Committee Room, Legislative Committee Room, Administration Room, lobby and a prayer room (Anonymous, 2015).

After the republic was officially proclaimed on October 29, 1923 the Ulus Square were Millet Garden was located became the national symbol and gained significance.

FINDINGS

Millet Garden was evaluated according to the below components of historic urban landscape.

1. History of the Site, 2. Topography, 3. Land Use, 4. Vegetation, 5. Design and Spatial Organization of the Park, 6. Circulation, 7. Small Scale Features and Structures of the Park

1. History of the Site

Ankara has been settled since 1600 BC, Hittite Empire. Some of the Millet Garden's land could be originally settled during Roman Galatia period. Roman Galatia was established by the first Emperor of the Roman Empire, Augustus in 25 BC. Before the city cemetery, the defensive city wall which was built in 3th Century, was passing through the park site. There could be some structures from Roman period because there was a Palatium (palace) or Public Bath and Cardo Maximus (the main north-south road) on east and Nymphaeum (ancient Roman sanctuary consecrated to water nymphs) on north of Millet Garden. Palatium and Nymphaeum ruins were documented by Turkish Archaeologist Mahmut Akok in 1954 (Görkay & Kadioğlu, 2007).

Millet Garden was opened in the beginning of 1900s when Ankara Governor Resit Bey decided to establish an open and attractive green space (Arkun, 2012). The green space land which belonged to Kizilbey Foundation, was a city cemetery for a long time. Governor Resit Bey turned the cemetery into a park which would be accessible to the public. Millet Garden was also known as Belediye (Municipality) Garden or Concert Garden (Arkun, 2012). It was to be the first public park in Ankara, probably the frequently used park of the new capital in Ulus Historic Center. According to Memluk (2009) the park was designed by Agriculturalist Muhittin Bey who was one of the teachers of the Agricultural School.

Princess Kadria Hussein who was one of the last princesses of Hidiv descendance in Egypt, wrote a book about Ankara and Turkish Revolution in 1921. The book was called Lettres D'angora La Sainte (Letters from Angora the Holy) and it was written in French. She stated that 'The Millet Garden which is opposite the Parliament Building has relaxing feature. This is the meeting place for everyone. Because there is a building with a restaurant and a coffee house in the middle of this triangle shaped site and the site was decorated with flowers. In summer and winter there is no other drink other than cold drinks and tea' (Hussein, 1921).

Grace Ellison, who was British journalist, wrote a book called An Englishwoman in Angora in 1923. In her book she stated the following: "When I arrived in Millet Garden one afternoon, the orchestra band

started playing. I think to myself, it was a very strange way of going to the serious duty of parliament. The band kindly asked me to a wish song. I asked for the Turkish music. One of the deputies wrote an opera". (Ellison, 1923). The park was demolished in late 1950s and row shops were built on the north and west of the land. The shops were small and one story. The shops burned in early 1960s and the site was completely cleared to build an office and shopping building complex called 100.Yil Carşısı (100th Year Shopping Center). When the renewal plan for Ulus district was brought to the agenda in 2018, demolition of 100th Year Shopping Center building complex was planned. However, the demolition was stopped by a court decision. Ankara Metropolitan Municipality opened an architectural competition in May 2022 to renovate the building, claiming that it is a cultural asset and an example of modern architectural heritage. The Ankara Metropolitan Municipality conducted a survey on July 2022 to obtain opinions from the public about whether the 100th building complex should be demolished or not (Anonymous, 2022). Therefore, the demolition was decided and completed in mid 2023.

2. Topography

Old maps, plans, drawings and photographs were analyzed to understand former landscape. Topography of the park (39°56'31.0"N 32°51'15.9"E) was in the elevation range of 870-875 meters. Elevation was lower than the surrounding landscape. When the park land was used as cemetery, the topography of the park was characterized by rocks. It had rock, rough, undulating terrain and the park was not generally steep and general slope was from east to west. It could appear rather featureless. In the early 1900s, site grading work was carried out, topography was flattened to create the park area (Figure 1). Flat land which was 8000 m², created views towards the parliament building and the west side of the park.



Figure 1. Flattened Millet Garden land, its fences and Parliament Building in 1922. Source: Gadmer, 1922.

Şekil 1. Bastırılmış Millet Bahçesi arazisi, çitleri ve Meclis Binası, 1922. Kaynak: Gadmer, 1922.

In 1930s, a few narrow terraces were built on east boundary. Topography was completely changed when foundation excavation of 100.Yil Shopping Center was started in 1970s.

3. Land Use and Settlement History

Millet Garden was located at Ulus Square and both were interconnected. This important urban node was surrounded by mixed land use. The east, west and south of the park had governmental and administrative uses and north of it had commercial uses. Besides, it was very close to residential district. The main entrance of Millet Garden was from Ulus Square. After the parliament building was opened, Ulus Square became one of Ankara's most vibrant space in the historic center of the city. The square is a crossroad of four important avenues. Ulus Square hosted many official and cultural celebrations, commercial events and demonstration.

Like other squares, Ulus Square and its land use was changed over the years. Some of the historical buildings which were vanished are listed below.

1. City (Kizilbey) cemetery which existed from 19th to the 20th century
2. Tashan Hotel (Hotel d'Angora) which existed from 1895 to 1935 was situated on the northeast

3. Hariciye Vekaleti (the department of state) Building which existed from 19th century to 1935 was situated on the south
4. Kizilbey Mosque and Tomb which existed from 12th century to 1925 was situated on the south
5. Mustafa Tevfik Efendi Hani which was inside the park land, existed from 19th century to early 1920s
6. Dar'ül-Muallimîn Building (Teacher Education School later Ministry of National Education) which existed from 1895 to 1935 was situated on the east (Figure 2).
7. Two story traditional buildings which existed from 18th century to late 1950s, was situated on the east and north
8. City Shopping Center (Şehir Carşısı) which was built on the east edge of the park in 1930s, was narrowed the park land and caused the change of initial park design.



Figure 2. Dar'ül-Muallimîn Building (School for Educating Male Teachers) which existed from 1895 to 1935 and two story traditional buildings were situated on the east of site. Ankara Castle on the background, gazebos, boundary wall and fence, deciduous trees, planting beds and rocky part of the site is seen. Source: School for Educating Male Teachers, 1901.

Şekil 2. 1895-1935 yılları arasında var olan Dar'ül-Muallimîn Binası (Öğretmen Yetiştirme Mektebi) ve alanının doğusunda iki katlı geleneksel yapılar yer almaktadır. Arka planda Ankara Kalesi, çardaklar, çevre duvarı ve çitler, yaprak döken ağaçlar, dikim tarhları ve alanının kayalık kısmı görülmektedir. Kaynak: Erkek Öğretmenler Yetiştirme Okulu, 1901.

There was a one and a half story timber building inside the parkland. The building was called Mustafa Tevfik Efendi Hani. Mustafa Tevfik Efendi was the governor of Ayas district (Erdoğan et al., 2008). His building which existed from 19th century to early 1920s in the Millet Garden land was used as his residence. The west facade of the building had an entrance in the middle of the building and eight arched windows. The focal point was the two winged arched main door. Building had a basement which was probably made of local stone and used as cellar and supporting foundation. There was a porch above this basement. The porch extended across the all sides, had wooden columns, posts and railings and function as a transition space between indoor and outdoor. The porch was not a common architectural element in historic quarter of Ankara. The roof had gable on all sides. The size, style and detailing of the porch and roof define the building's historic character. After Mustafa Tevfik Efendi left the residence, building was used as an entertainment venue such as music hall, coffee shop or restaurant (Arkun, 2012). This change increased the popularity of the space (Figure 3). The building was demolished in early 1920s to build the Millet Garden. The gate of the park was directly opposite of Parliament Building's gate (Figure 4).

The east and north border of the park was demolished in late 1930s to make room for the one story commercial building which was called City Shopping Center (Şehir Carşısı). Park area was narrowed, some trees were cut down and fountain. The building, which was designed by Austrian architect Robert Oerley, had L-shaped floor plan and contained restaurant, patisserie, book stores, retail shops (Erdoğan et al., 2008). This commercial building was demolished in late 1960s. Millet Garden site's boundaries for a long time (nearly from 1930 to 1955) were Parliament Building, Ulus (Nation) Square, Zafer (Victory)

4. Vegetation

The climate of the area is cold, usually snowy in winters and hot and dry in summers. Temperature varies more from summer to winter. The park land was rocky and specific information on the vegetation of the site before the park construction is very limited. Old photographs provide an insight into composition of species in the park. One may suppose that the vegetation was not varied and was predominantly grasses and grass-like low plants.

The planting design of the park did not offer a variety of plants. The plant palette was limited. It could be understood from the old photographs (1920s-1950s) that deciduous trees and shrubs were used (Figures 4 & 5). The use of deciduous plants could be considered as climate-wise soft landscaping. Because the winters are usually harsh, sun is needed and tree canopies provided shade during hot summers. Separate lawn areas were created probably distributed (Figure 5). All plants could have been native. Trees were planted in lines next to or within the edge of walkways and north and east boundary to emphasize the rhythm of movement through the landscape. The main trees could have been Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), White Poplar (*Populus alba*), Common Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Shrubs were closely planted to form hedges. Their species were not determined. These hedges were mainly used as physical barriers and space defining element (Figure 3). Vertical planes of the park formed by these dense tree planting. The findings of this study claim that conifer species were not used in the park. The tree plantation and landform significantly affected the microclimate of the park. The 1924 Ankara Map shows the position and the components of the park in detail. Star, crescent, oval and ellipse shape planting beds and trees were mapped (Figure 3). These planting beds were character-defining elements of the park and probably lawn was planted. The bordering avenues were planted with deciduous trees in rows. Several trees and shrubs were removed from the east and south border of the park in early 1940s due to shopping center construction. However, dense deciduous tree canopies are seen in 1940s photographs (Figure 5). The trees provided shade and create a microclimate effect in hot dry summer. The vegetation had played a significant role in the definition of spaces throughout the park. Unfortunately, all planting was removed in late 1960s. It could be concluded that the vegetation created an 'urban oasis' that functions as a passive space to relax and active space for cultural events and collectively give a landscape character.



Figure 5. Deciduous trees, shrubs and lawn were seen in early 1930s. Source: Cangır, 2007.

Şekil 5. 1930'ların başında yaprak döken ağaçlar, çalılar ve çim görülmektedir. Kaynak: Cangır, 2007.

5. Design and Spatial Organization of the Park

The 1924 and 1944 Ankara Maps and old photographs are useful sources to interpret the general layout and design approach of the park (Figure 6). The initial park design was changed throughout history. The plot had five sides and was approximately 7800 m² and narrowed in late 1930s.

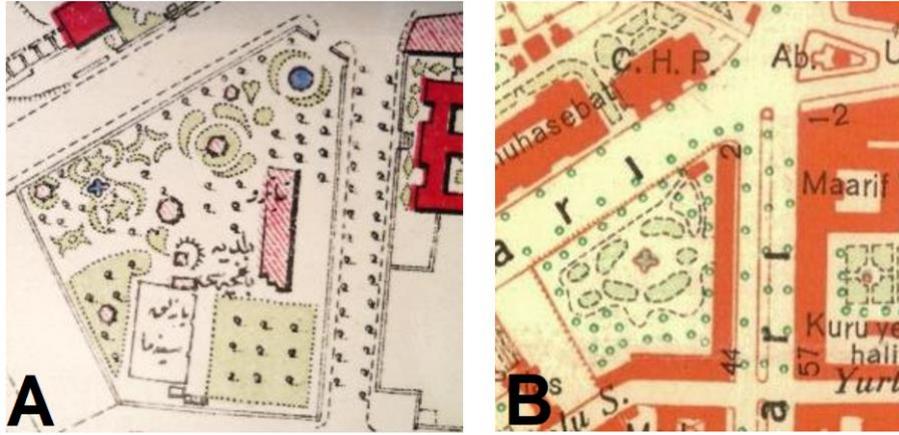


Figure 6. Millet Garden landscape design and details in 1924 Settlement Map (A.) and 1944 Ankara Map (B.) Source of A: Ankara Settlement Map, 1924. Source of B: Ankara Settlement Map, 1944.

Şekil 6. 1924 Yerleşim Haritası (A.) ve 1944 Ankara Haritası (B.) Millet Bahçesi peyzaj tasarımı ve detayları. Şekil A. Kaynak: Ankara Settlement Map, 1924. Şekil B. Kaynak: Ankara Settlement Map, 1944.

The first design of the park included both formal and naturalistic, informal shapes. According to 1924 Ankara map, formal shapes were three rectangles and served as a one story theater building, outdoor cinema area and tree planted resting area and informal shapes were star, crescent, oval and ellipse shaped planting beds or grassed area (Figure 6 A.). They could be considered as interesting ground forms. A circle fountain was designed on the entrance. The fountain and parterres laid out along the axis of the main entrance. Besides, on the 1924 Ankara map five octagonal shaped structures were seen. They were wooden gazebos in various sizes. Gazebos were freestanding, open on all sides, ornamental features and a shade place to rest. The park site was divided into spaces for theater building, open air cinema area, resting areas and two decorative circular fountains. The theater building and open air cinema area was placed parallel to east border. These cultural activity spaces increased popularity and usage of the park. The main entrance was on the corner of Ulus Square where İstasyon (Train Station) Avenue and Bankalar (Atatürk) Avenue meet (Figure 6 B.). The main entrance location was perfect because it directly connects the park with the square and parliament building. The two guardhouses were placed on both sides of the entrance and they create a welcoming arrangement. The main entrance location and design were changed through the years. After the Ulus City Shopping Center was built in late 1930s, the main entrance was in the middle of the City Shopping Center. In 1940s another entrance with a few steps was opened on north wall. This entrance was across the Parliament Building and a small, one story building was built next to it. The park had stone boundary wall with wooden railings which were not very high. It deterred access to park while allowed light and visibility. On the north of park wall was also used as a protection against accidental falls to İstasyon Avenue.

The design of the park was changed, after the City Shopping Center was built in late 1930s (Figure 5). The second design did not rely on symmetry. The curved lines and naturalistic shapes were used and more relaxed feel and softening effect on surrounding buildings were achieved. The new design approach created irregularity and softness within the space. This was associated more with nature, tree planting and asymmetrical balance. Theater and cinema spaces were removed. The decorative circle fountain was moved to center of the park to create a gathering and resting space. Benches were placed around the fountain and this space became the focal point. The visual interest was heavily weighted towards the spreading tree planting. Hermann Jansen who prepared the Ankara Master Plan in early 1930s, protected the function of the site as an open and green space. In his plan Konser Bahçesi which means "Concert Garden" was written. Occasional concerts were performed in the park. In conclusion, the geometry of the design where organic forms and meandering lines were used, was romantic in character. The park had

various character defining features and sub-spaces. The informal design style determined the main form and functionality of the park. This style values nature and visually appealing and natural-looking. This informal asymmetrical balance provided order and unity. A hierarchy of spaces was created ranging in size from intimate small-silent spaces where one can rest or read a book to larger open areas for gatherings and events. The only public green space showed its splendor and innovation with its design. On this basis, it may be inferred that a new landscape fashion was established for new republic. Not only was the standard of design high, but the social organization (with theater, cinema concerts and other events) was also up to high standard for a new capital.

6. Circulation

The circulation was one of the defining features of historic landscape. Footpaths reflected the pattern of movement. Since the early twentieth century, especially after Ankara train station and then the Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament) building were opened the pedestrian and vehicular traffic were increased in Ulus Square. The front of the entrance was used as a public transportation hub in early 1930s and the neighborhood of the park was rapidly built up with government and banks buildings. Therefore, Millet Garden became a very popular spot. According to the first design of the park, circulation network had five major features main entrance, fountain, gazebos, theater and outdoor cinema. The park design was reshaped following the opening of Şehir Shopping Center in 1930s. The landscape was developed as a series of curves; most of the curvilinear planting beds were removed. This change affected the circulation. Changes to circulation included the change of main entrance and the addition of entrance. The gate of the park was on the corner of Ulus Square where İstasyon (Train Station) Avenue and Bankalar (Atatürk) Avenue meet (Figure 2, 5). The gate location was perfect because it directly connects the park with the Ulus Square and parliament building. The circulation paths were almost in same level and they were local soil. The original gate was demolished because of the Ulus City Shopping Center construction on east boundary. The new gate was opened in the middle of Şehir Shopping Center. In late 1930s, a new entrance was opened on the north boundary by demolishing the part of boundary wall. This entrance had a door, steps and probably used by parliament members As a result, both designs were laid out with a network of curving and winding walks that constitute systems of movement which made visitors' experiences as comfortable and enjoyable as possible.

7. Small Scale Features and Structures of the Park

The historic character of the park was its physical appearance as it has evolved over time. The first design (from early 1920s to mid 1930s) of the park had unique structures: gate, theater building, gazebos, guard houses, fountains, retaining walls, fences, gate, benches and light posts (Figures 2, 3).

- **Gates and fences:** Pedestrians accessed the park only by using the Ulus Square gate. The design and location of the gate had changed over time. The perimeter fence was built on the boundary wall and attached to gate (Figures 2, 3, 5). The timber cross buck fence with evenly spaced stone posts enclosed the park. The fence was waist-high vertical and brought homey feeling to historic landscape. The fences were removed in mid 1930s and never built again. The gate was changed in mid 1920s and two stone posts with cross buck wooden door was built. Millet Garden's Cinema banner was hanged between two stone posts. In early 1930s, two guard houses were symmetrically placed on both sides of the gate.

- **Wall:** The park had boundary wall with one gate. The design of the park was changed over time. The first low wall which surrounds the park site was built from stone and had high wooden fences. (Figure 5). The boundary fence was nearly 370 meters. The south, west and east walls were served as retaining walls to stabilize ground elevation to gate. The foundation wall might have been built from the demolished buildings stones. In late 1930s, the north wall and fences was demolished to build shopping center. The unique gate was demolished to build the Şehir Shopping Center. A new gate which had arched glass porch,

- **Guard House:** Two guard house was placed on both sides of the gate. They were made from stone, had arched windows and dome like roofs. Their addition created a monumental entrance and welcoming arrangement. They were probably used to sell event tickets and as a control point.

- **Theater Building:** It was one story traditional wood-frame construction (Figure 3) near the east border. It was demolished in early 1930s.

- **Fountains:** The 1924 and 1944 Ankara maps and also old photographs show that there were two fountains in the Millet Garden. The first was one was circle shaped, was near the main entrance and demolished in early 1930s. The second was a pool surround fountain. It had quatrefoil shape. It was drawn in the west of the park in 1924 map. It was drawn in the middle of the park in the 1944 map. It was also seen in 1950s photographs. The circular basin surrounded the fountain. Classic wide benches were placed all around the fountain. The use water in the park had two main functions: aesthetic and cooling off on hot summer days. Therefore, the neoclassic style fountain with one tier in the middle became the main focal point of the park. The fountains had decorative dramatic effect. Both fountains were probably produced in natural stone. The large fountain was conveying a sense of centrality.

- **Lights:** There were a few lights illuminating the walkway in late 1930s. The lights were probably black painted cast-iron with two frosted globes.

- **Gazebos:** On the old map of Ankara from 1924 hexagon shaped five gazebos were drawn (Figure 2). They were made of wood, freestanding, semi open roofed and probably open on all sides (Figure 3). They were ornamental features in historic landscape, and provided shade. All gazebos were removed in late 1930s.

- **Seating:** Millet Garden had flexible seating areas. French Style benches were freestanding and placed in various locations (Figure 3). There were benches around the fountain which was an important gathering space. All benches were constructed of metal foot and wooden seats and backs. Flexible arrangements of folding chairs with low folding tables were also used in 1930s. The folding chairs might have been used at outdoor cinema. These benches might have been the first outdoor furniture of Ankara. Gazebos were also used as seating places until mid 1930s.

- **Pathways:** The pathway was the original and main element of the park design because it played a prominent role in shaping the park. Circular pathways were used. Surface material was porous and durable, probably gravel and sand mixture was used because of local availability (Figures 3, 5, 6).

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Public parks are very important components of urban life and land use. They are designed to provide aesthetic spaces for relaxing, resting, entertainment, sports and leisure activities and have many benefits. Most of the Parliament Buildings around the world have public gardens or parks for providing a better setting. Public Parks of government buildings play an important role in forming the visual imagery. The way public parks are designed and managed influences the magnitude of their direct and indirect impact on society. The research provides an evaluation of the historic significance and integrity of Millet Garden. Main soft and hard landscape components and features (history of the site, topography, land use, vegetation, design and spatial organization of the park, circulation, small scale features and structures of the park) that contribute to the significance, integrity and historic character were analyzed. The research documented the changing appearance of a historic public landscape over time.

The methodology of the research was structured around the consideration of significance. The significance for evaluation is associated with unique components, historic style of design, method of construction and historic events. All landscape features contributed to the historic character of the Millet Garden and Ulus Square and the alterations to the appearance of the landscape over time were analyzed.

According to Australia Victoria State's Department of Planning and Community Development landscape significance is the designation of a particular landscape as special or important arising from its cultural landscape values, including aesthetic values (both visual and non-visual) historic, environmental, scientific, and social or other values. Landscapes are significant to different people for different reasons. Levels of significance are attributed to each landscape component, and an overall significance level in relation to values is determined. The significance levels could be moderate = local significance, high = regional significance and exceptional = state significance or higher. Understanding the significance of a historic designed landscape is necessary to preserve, restore, renewal and reconstruction. This qualitative research tries to put forth why Millet Garden is significant. A landscape must be significant to be considered to be historical. The identity and character-defining features and components and of the park which contribute to significance of landscape is given below:

- With the proclamation of the Turkish Republic and the opening of the Parliament Building in Ankara, closed and open spaces were needed for public services. The Millet Garden, which was built in an area of significant historic and symbolic value in early 1920s, is considered as an open and green space of the Parliament Building. It could also have been described as a pleasure garden until mid 1930s because of its theater and cinema venues. It was an important part of urban identity and played an important role in Ankara's heritage.

- Millet Garden could be considered as the first public park of Republican period of Türkiye. It was a designed landscape at Ulus Square which increased the quality of life. Ulus square has been used as a public parade ground since 1920s. As a landscape strongly associated with the Parliament Building and nearly the same age as the Turkish Republic itself. Therefore, as the public park of the Ankara, it retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

- There was a Palatium (Roman Palace) on the north edge of the park site. It has archaeological value as well as historical features. Therefore, it has its own distinctive history. Archaeological remains can be uncovered and made visible if Ulus Square will be redesigned.

- Millet Garden offered a picturesque counterpoint to the surrounding buildings formal architecture.

- The hard and soft landscape features found throughout the green space are representations of the evolving values of design, history, culture and society. Its intrinsic beauty contributed to urban cultural identity and sense of place.

- Millet Garden was a historic designed urban landscape because it was designed by gardener in a naturalistic design style and had unique features and components. A distinctive sense of place was created because circular geometry rather than straight lines was used.

- Small scale features of the park provided diversity. It was both a symbolic and a functional site. The primary purpose was to provide green space for recreational activities. Millet Garden offered a quiet retreat from city life, right next to the parliament building.

- The findings confirm that Millet Garden was easily accessible and enjoyable. Statesmen, parliament visitors, employees, guests and citizens used the park extensively. Numerous music and theater performances have been staged in the park during 1920s to 1930s. Therefore, the park coalesced with the community over many years.

- Millet Garden was directly associated with social and cultural events. Because it was located at Ulus Square which hosted lots of different events and activities such as official celebrations, cultural events, rallies and demonstrations. It has significance in social history.

This research shows that even though Millet Garden changed over time it was a major cultural and physical asset for historic center of Ankara. It provided opportunities for recreation, education and

enjoyment. Therefore, Millet Garden is unique, with its own identity and its own distinctive character. The findings confirm that Millet Garden possesses the quality of significance and integrity in the history of Ankara, and landscape architecture of Türkiye. Moreover, Millet Garden possesses sufficient physical integrity to convey its historic significance. As a result, it has spirit of the place.

The main limitation of this research is the lack of detailed site plans, sections, elevations and drawings. There was no prior historic landscape approach on Millet Garden. It became the subject of systematic research for the first time. This research may contribute to further research on designed historic and cultural landscapes of Türkiye. This research has moved the body of scientific knowledge on historic urban landscape of Türkiye forward. This research can contribute to similar studies that aim to identify and describe the essential and distinguishing features and qualities of the historic landscape. Future studies could investigate the association between parks and social events. This research draws attention to the significance of the first public park of Ankara. If historic urban landscape was preserved, Ankara Historic City Center could be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The park had to be administratively designated a conservation area in 1950s. This case study of Millet Garden has demonstrated that as an heritage, historic designed landscapes, old public parks in Türkiye must be preserved or reconstructed in accordance with The Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments 1931, The Venice Charter 1964, UNESCO World Heritage Centre 1972, The Florence Charter (Historic Gardens) 1981, The Washington Charter 1987, The European Landscape Convention 2000, ICOMOS-IFLA Document On Historic Urban Public Parks 2017 and national law on cultural properties and heritage. The reconstructed park will not only provide new recreational opportunities, but also more importantly, provide social, health, environmental and economic benefits. The findings of this study indicate that the Millet Garden had local, high and regional level significance. The cultural resources management plan and urban design of the historic city core must also be prepared for the preservation of the historic urban landscape of Ankara. Various actors of the city can think and make decisions together to sustain the urban historic landscape of Ankara.

Data Availability

Data will be made available upon reasonable request.

Author Contributions*

Conception and design of the study: AKA; sample collection: AKA; analysis and interpretation of data: AKA; statistical analysis: AKA; visualization: AKA; writing manuscript: AKA.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Ethical Statement

I declare that there is no need for an ethics committee for this research.

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