

Araştırma-İnceleme

PERIODIC LANDSCAPE APPROACHES OVER
LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTIONS: OTTOMAN PERIOD
MINIATURES

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Abstract: Visual arts are the everlasting witnesses of different societies, different cultures, different belief systems and the time itself, and have accompanied all these elements and made it possible for them to be reflected to the present time. The Ottoman Miniatures are works of art that reflect the point of view on the daily life of a great civilization, its administrative, religious, socio-cultural ceremonies and situations, wars, natural and artificial elements and events, in other words, the life itself in that great civilization as well as being a treasure for the archives. These works of art, whose artistic value and importance are never denied, on one hand reflect the glory of their times when they were produced; and on the other hand, reflect the social life and the perception of the sceneries in the minds of their artists. The purpose of this study is to set forth the perception of the concept of landscape in those times and the change in this perception as well as the perception studies with a different viewpoint. It has been observed that the depiction of the miniatures has gone beyond a specific point of view and have presented the events and objects in a divine and imaginary world. The poetic atmosphere created within the presentation has mostly been provided by using natural elements and figures. Plants have easily been the complementary parts of any composition with their aesthetical properties. Plants have been indispensable elements of this world with their forms, calligraphic structures, flowers and colors.

Keywords: Perception, Landscape Perception, Miniature, Ottoman Depiction Arts.

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PEYZAJ TASVİRLERİ ÜZERİNDEN DÖNEMSEL PEYZAJ YAKLAŞIMLARI İNCELEMESİ: OSMANLI DÖNEMİ MİNYATÜRLERİ

Öz: Farklı toplumların, farklı kültürlerin, farklı inançların ve zamanın adeta bir tanığı görsel sanatlar, bunların hepsinin dönüşümüne ve değişimine eşlik etmiş, günümüze kadar yansıtılmasına zemin hazırlamıştır. Aynı zamanda arşivsel doküman özelliđi taşıyan Osmanlı dönemi minyatürleri ise, bir medeniyetin günlük hayata, idari, dini, sosyokültürel seramoni ve durumlara, savařlara, dođal ve yapay unsurlara ve olaylara, yani hayatın kendisine bakış açısını yansıtan eserlerdir. Sanatsal deđerleri yadsınamaz derecede önemli olan bu eserler, bir yandan üretildikleri dönemin řařaasını yansıtırken, diđer yandan toplumsal hayatı ve sanatçının gördüđü manzaranın zihninde oluşturduđu algıyı aksettirmiştir. Algı çalışmalarında önemli bir yer tutan peyzaj algısı, çok sayıda faktörün yanında toplumsal yapının da etkisiyle şekillenmektedir. Aynı toplum içinde yařayan bireyler, benzer bilişsel ve algılar süreçlerden geçmekte, benzer tepkiler sergilemektedir. Dolayısıyla sanatçıların eserlerine aktardığı peyzaj tasvirlerinin yapısı, aynı zamanda dönemin toplumsal yaklaşımlarını da aynasıdır. Bu çalışmanın amacı; minyatür eserlerde tasvir edilen peyzajlar yoluyla, Osmanlı dönemi üzerinden peyzaj algısının ve deđişiminin ortaya konması ve algı çalışmalarına farklı bir açıdan bakılmasına imkan sađlamaktır. Görülmüştür ki; minyatürlerin sahip olduđu anlatım, belli bir bakış açısının ötesine geçmiş, olayları ve nesnelere ulvi ve hayali bir dünya içerisinde sunmuştur. Sunum içerisinde yaratılan şiirsel ortamı, çođunlukla dođal öğeleri ve figürleri kullanarak gerçekleřtirmişlerdir. Bitkiler, estetik özellikleri ile kolaylıkla her tür kompozisyonun bir parçası ve çođunlukla tamamlayıcısı olmuştur. Kullanılan bitkiler; formları, kaligrafik yapıları, çiçekleri ve renkleri ile bu dünyanın vazgeçilmezi olmuşlardır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Algı, Peyzaj Algısı, Minyatür, Osmanlı Tasvir Sanatları.

Introduction

Landscape panoramas and figures have been the most important part of man's figurative portrayals from past to present. Humans have depicted the images and parts on mural pictures, rugs and carpets, fabrics and handiworks, tiles, wood carvings and glass around his surroundings, which they see and put forward. It has been possible to observe this kind of reflections in all the societies imbedded in history and some parts of them have come until today. In this context, Ottoman miniatures are the examples of Ottoman art which leaves important traces in the history of art.

In this study; miniature, which is one of the Ottoman arts of description, is discussed in terms of landscape parts and their portrayals of items which have an important part in most works of art. Traditionally, miniatures are works that are practiced on a wide range of themes. However, as it is discussed ,in this study, in terms of the elements of landscape, the emphasis has been put on the

works having this type of elements. We have benefitted from And (2004) in the procurement of the works subjected to evaluation.

Ottoman Miniature consists of six phase. Indubitably, like most branches of art, miniature has also undergone changes and transformation during these phases technically and aesthetically. However, considering this study also required specialization, the issue is not handled in this respect.

1. The Miniatures of Ottoman Period

The term miniature derives from 'minium'- a red paint - used to emphasize the initials of the beginnings of the parts in handwritten books of medieval Europe and describes the ornamentations in question. Later, deriving from the Latin word 'miniare', it became 'miniatura' and passed on to French as 'miniature' The term is used to describe the illustrations on handwritten books in process of time and walked into Turkish from Western languages. However, It is seen that 'tasvir - portrayal' or 'nakış - vignette' are used in Ottoman sources instead of the term 'miniature' (Mahir, 2005, p. 15; Yener, 2012, p. 171).

The reason why the arts involving 'miniature' are described as portrayal not as painting is not only due to the fact that it is practised solely on paper but also it has a figurative meaning rather than carrying the elusiveness of painting. There is an art of emulation over a model especially in the portrayals of living beings, nature and buildings (And, 2004, p. 13).

In Turkey, three different types of art have developed depending on the various social environments; villagers' art in rural areas, the art in provinces and the art in cities and metropolis which are the capitals of Ottoman Empire, with miniatures in. The city art developing in Istanbul, Bursa and Edirne comes into existence in two different settings as; the paintings of court muralists and those of the bazaar artists. The information on pre-Ottoman portrayal art is rather insufficient (And, 2004, p. 13).

Ottoman painting and miniature developed after the conquest of Istanbul. A great number of works which are made between the period of Sultan Mehmet, the conqueror and 19th century, have reached the present day (Karakaş and Rukancı, 2008, p. 4).

1.1. Landscape in Ottoman Miniature

The development of Ottoman miniature art occurred in six stages (Atıl, 1980, p. 139; And, 2004, p. 33).

1. Formation Stage; The period of Mehmet II, Bayezid II and Selim I (1451-1520)
2. Transition Stage; The period of Suleyman I and Selim II (1520-1574)
3. Classical Stage; the period of Murat III and Mehmed III (1574-1603)
4. Late classical and stagnation stage; 17th Century (1603-1700)
5. Second classical stage or Neo-classical stage; The period of Ahmet III and first half of the 18th century (1700-1750)

6. The ending of Ottoman miniature; until the end of 19th century (1750-1900). As well as the development in art centres in the states, Istanbul -the capital of the empire- is also witnessing intensive activities. Sultan Mehmet, the conqueror had artists brought from Italy including Gentile Bellini. The large-minded, military genius is also into science and art to a great extent. He had Bellini make his oil-paint portrait, and Contanza da Ferrara make the medallions on which there are his bust and portrait on horse. Most of these works produced by these artists in Istanbul Palace have disappeared. But we know about the works of the Turkish muralists who are their apprentices. The trace left behind by these artists, who introduced the Western painting art to Istanbul workshops, is the first step to form the Oriental tradition along with the style of miniature art in the early Ottoman period (Atasoy, 2000).

Here are some of the prominent examples of the miniatures reaching the present day (And, 2004);

Ahmedi- İskendername

Nizami-Hamse

Dilsuzname

Külliyat-ı Katibi

Cerrahiyetü'l-Haniyye

Kelile ve Dimne

Emir Hüsrev-i Dehlevi'nin Hamse, Heşt Bihişt

Hatifi- Şirin ü Hüsrev Mesnevi

Yusuf Sinaneddin-Hüsrev ü Şirin Mesnevi

Hamdullah Hamdi'nin Leyla ve Mecnun Mesnevi

Feridü'd-din Attar Mantıkü't-Tayr

Firdevsi-i Tavail'in Süleymanname

İran şairi Feridü'd -din Attar'ın Mantıkü't-Tayr

Ahmedi-İskendername

Firdevsi -Şehname

Ali Şir Nevai-Hamse

Ali Şir Nevai-Divan

Divan-ı Selimi

Musa Abdi Camasbname

Fuzuli Hadikatü's Süeda

Surname-i Hümayun

Seyyid Lokman-Şehname-i Selim Han & Zübdetü't Tevarih

Mustafa Ali-Nusretname

Hamdi-Yusuf u Züleyha Mesnevi

Metaliü'l Saade

Kazvi'nin, Acaibü'l Mahlukat & Garaibü'l Mevcudat

Çerkez Yusuf Paşa-Sefername

Humayunname

Ahval-i Kıyamet

Falname

Mecmua

Şehname-i Nadiri

Divan-ı Nadiri

Paşaname

Levni'nin, Surname-i Vehbi

Nev'i-zade Atayi-Hamse

Mecmua-i Gazzeliyat

Enderuni Fazıl-Hubanname ve Zenanname

Silsilename-i Al-i Osman

Tesavira-i Hükümdaran-ı Osmaniye

Divan-İlhami

Prior to the evaluation of the landscape portrayals in all these miniatures, it is important to define "landscape" as a concept in order to embrace the topic in the right manner.

According to Forman (1995, p. 4), landscape is a mosaic consisting of the blend of local ecosystems and land utilization repeated similarly within an area of one kilometre. Landscape is separated into two as natural and cultural landscape according to status of natural and cultural elements that create it. Natural landscape is the view of areas unmodified or modified to a small extent by man and which can preserve their own natural order. Cultural landscape is the one which emerged as a result of people's utilization of nature for different aims (Koc and Sahin 1999, pp. 13-15).

Cultural landscape scenes such as various activities concerning life, ceremonies, important days and legends along with trees, shrubs and groundcover are portrayed in miniatures. From time to time, animal figures are also used in these miniatures whose actors are people. While depicting the battle with a dragon, a figure of a tree with a round crown is also included in Iskendername. The elements of natural landscape are the elements that combine the lyrical depiction with the real world (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The battle of a warrior with a dragon (Iskendername)

In most of the miniatures, plants are used in the background to decorate the image. In *Kulliyat-i Katibi* depicting the merriment of Sultan, two trees takes place with pink and white flowers in the background (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Sultan's merriment with his community

In the miniatures of the black, red and white mansions portrayed in 'Hest Bihist' masnavi from 'Hamse' of Emir Husrev-i Dehlevi; vegetation is used both as a groundcover on the floor and represented supporting the third dimension with ordinary or pyramid shaped trees which are deciduous and evergreen (possibly cypress) (Figure 3). In this poetical depiction seeming to be beyond reality, the basic elements of this idyllic work are the natural landscape elements surrounding it (trees, flowers, birds etc.).



Figure 3. Four of the seven mansions, in the masnavi of 'Hest Bihist' in 'Hamse' of Emir Husrev-i Dehlevi

In the environment shaped by the artist's imagination at Mantiku't-Tayr, the ground is decorated with traditional motifs, and blooming and pyramid-shaped trees take place in the background. These pyramid trees - likely to be cypress (*Cupressus* sp.), represents supremacy in Islamic faith and art (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Envious ruler busting his son with a beautiful princess at night time (Mantiku't-Tayr)

A plain figure of nature appears in a miniature in 'Nizami, Hamse'. A rural landscape appears in this depiction, with many natural landscape elements. A mountainous topography, a spring coming from beneath stones and meeting with a stream, pyramid-shaped, blossomed, trees with fallen leaves and even a dried-up log and birds singing on top of trees are depicted (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Plain view of nature (Nizami, Hamse)

In the miniature of Ali Sir Nevai expressing the visit of Şirin to Ferhat, the mountain landscape is described in a complex and colourful composition. The view around a curled stream includes many various elements as in previous miniatures. Especially in this miniature, when compared with human size, it is seen that natural elements are portrayed quite minimally, and that the elements such as trees, bushes and stream seem to be far beyond their real sizes. It is

probably because of the attempt to describe many elements in the picture, to better reflect the scenery and to have a lyrical narration (Figure 6).

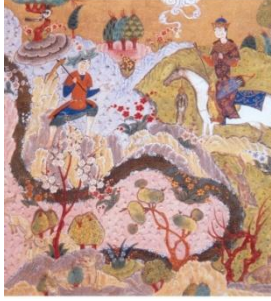


Figure 6. Sirin's visit to Ferhat on Mount Bisutun (Ali Sir Nevai, Hamse)

Miniature art is used in Kanuni period as a means of documentation to record the official history of the state. So, this makes the Turkish miniature in classical period gain its main character and creates a school distinguished from others, in the miniature art growing in Islamic countries (Atasoy, 2000).

Also in the miniatures portraying the highlights in history and important places; the wide landscape in the image is described suitably with its quality. For instance; in the miniature that depicts the siege of Szigetvár Castle, the battle field is shown with cannons, tents and trees. Even the roughness on the topography of the land is drawn. The expressing also carries a cartographical quality. The miniature with a top view of Szigetvár Castle and the detailed description of the battle field is made in the style of "picture map" (Atasoy, 2000) (Figure 7).

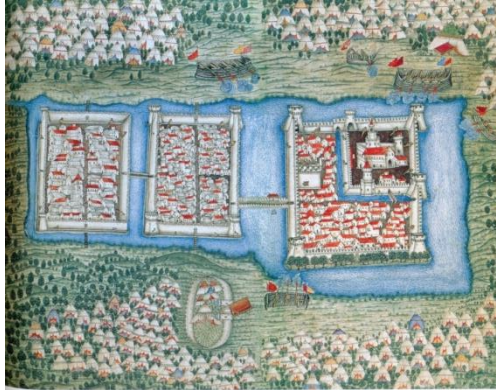


Figure 7. Triple castle of Szigetvár (Nuzhet (el-esrar) el ahbar de sefer-i Sigetvar)

In another example (Lokman, Sehname-i Selim Han), while depicting the fishermen catching fish with their nets around Buyukcekmece Lake, the houses are portrayed similarly, with gardens and trees. Trees are portrayed sometimes inside the gardens and sometimes behind the buildings. This miniature has more

of a descriptive quality and documents the periodical features of the city (Figure 8).

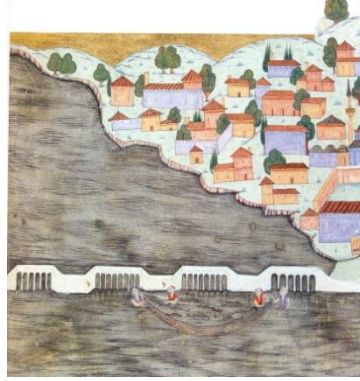


Figure 8. Fishing around Buyukcekmece Bridge (Lokman, Sehname-i Selim Han)

Hunername II. Kanuni is depicted in a mansion by the sea in a miniature on the cover. However, the fact that he is by the sea can only be understood with the existence of a raft and the rowers on, depicted in the picture. Mansion's being by the sea does not become prominent and the natural elements still exist in the background. It is possible to talk about the dominance of the plants in pyramid form (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Residence of Kanuni in a mansion in Uskudar Palace (Hunkarname, 2nd Volume)

The miniature of the circumcision feasts in 'Sehinsehnamesi' depicts the festival area with all the elements of it. In the area dominated by an instrumentalist, show animals, a blacksmith, a weaver; the padishah watches the pageant of

these elements in the background on his window. There is only one natural landscape element, which is a massive tree (likely to be a plane) in this dynamic and colourful image. And it is just like a cultural demonstration (Figure 10).

Miniatures are used as a means of expressing the superiority and strength of the empire and the highlights such as battles, conquests, ceremonies and legends are presented as detailed as possible. While all the splendour takes places around padishah in miniatures, padishah is mostly in the spectating position.

Beside their unique scientific value, miniatures, produced in the rising period of the Ottoman Empire, made many scientific and literary works more meaningful and important in terms of artistic perspective (Karakas and Rukanci, 2008, p. 14).

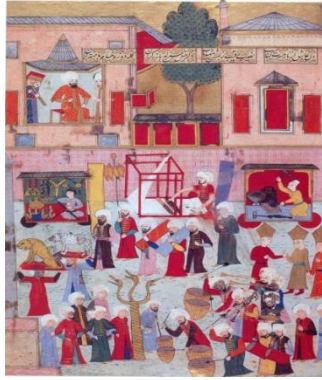


Figure 10. The circumcision feasts of Murat III's son (Sehinsehnamesi)

Mecmua is different from those preceding it, no human figure is used inside and, it focuses on natural elements (And, 2004, p. 73). These natural landscapes are altered and imaginary places are set with its lines and compositions. The plants are far from unity, they are effectively gathered in a calligraphically way, as the phrase goes, no room is left (Figure 11).

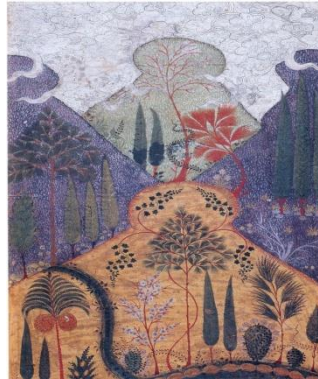




Figure 11. Plain nature scene (Mecmua)

At a musical amusement activity depicted in the album of Ahmed I, are a fountain, an important element in Ottoman landscape and people around it. Nature, still in the background, is represented by pyramid-formed trees and branches with pink blossoms on these trees. This background is just like a wall board, it achieves its usual function (Figure 12).



Figure 12. A musical amusement from the album of Ahmed I's

It is possible to observe that miniature is at a standstill after 1750, in the last period of Ottoman miniatures (And, 2004, p. 100) however; the works come down to earth more, transforming into the reality of painting. Images are more realistic and have a perspectival point of view. For instance, a miniature depicting a women's amusement in Kagithane, tree figures are depicted more realistically and also the area is represented giving more depth into the image. All the natural and cultural elements are cared to be included (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Women's amusement in Kagithane (Zenaname)

Cities, in larger scale, are also depicted on miniature. Matrakci Nasuh is the possessor of this technique. Cities are generally portrayed along with the walls surrounding them. Outside these walls, natural landscape elements are used, the inner side of the walls are enriched mostly with the architectural elements of the period. Elements of natural landscape are utilized for ornamentation (Figure 14).

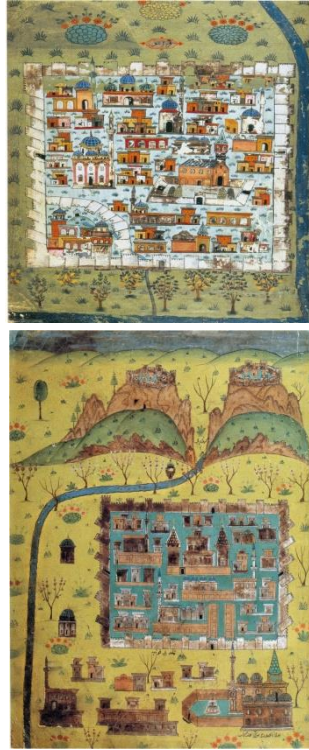


Figure 14. Diyarbakir on the left, Konya on the right (Matrakci Nasuh, *Beyan-ı Menazil-i Sefer-i Irakeyn*)

Matrakci Nasuh is the creator of a new style called 'topographic image' in Ottoman miniature. Nasuh, without figures, develops this new schematic scenery style by combining images from different viewing angles (Atasoy and Cagman, 1974, p. 20; Karakas and Rukanci, 2008, p. 7). These miniatures are good examples in terms of wide landscape perception. We can see how the artist looks at cities and how he interprets each city. As an example, he puts forward Seljukian works in Konya, integrates the landscape with colours suitable with this. In Diyarbakir, he takes advantage of light colours in accordance with the climatic features of the region and stresses the architectural characteristics of Mesopotamia.

In Nasuh's depictions, city is an area created in an endless space; it is imprinted into the space. And this shows how big the universe is and a manmade city

covers a small area in this endlessness. This is a way of thinking that does not place human in the centre of the universe. Cities that people build constitute a small part of the main vignette. Space is multidimensional; it is not created from one point of view only. For instance, the houses in the cities are depicted from different points of view. Even though the cities are portrayed from top view, the objects in cities are depicted not only from top view, but also sometimes en face, sometimes from behind, from the front or from one side (Ozgul, 2012).

2. Discussion and Conclusion

The Holy Koran, the main source of Turkish-Islamic notion, says the universe is created in an arrangement. We know that human being is close, in creation, to intuition and judgement over the verses of Koran. "Certainly, we created you in the best way." (Tegabun, 2) addresses Allah. With this verse He stresses the point that human beings should realize the beauty in their own creation (Yakit, 2002, p. 110; Tas, 2012, p. 121).

As Suut Kemal Yetkin remarks, in Islamic notion "this world is no more than an imagination, the aim is to get prepared for hereafter." That's why the muralist does not want to spoil the enjoyment with elements that reminds us the deadly world such as shadow, depth and volume. He keeps these elements away from the hairs of his brush; depth as it is an imagination, shadow as it darkens colours, and volume as it pushes people toward materialism. Turan Koc asserts that "the aim of the art that is based on oneness and exoneration" is first to make feel the real existence, the muralist of these vignettes appealing to eyes, that is, the genuine creator as much as possible. Living beings are presented quite differently than their real appearance in depictions. It is possible to see this both in the shapes and colours of the figures. Figures are not drawn proportionally with each other. Principles of proportion and perspective are not valid (Özgul, 2012, pp. 181-182).

An image designed to make the beholder see him/herself as the subject position is based on an ideology of perspective. Perspective is a product of a certain way of thinking and of a certain point of view for the Earth, time, space and human being. The word portrayal (tasvir) meaning "depiction, duplication" derives from the same root with the word "envisagement (tasavvur)" meaning depicting by oneself and rejuvenation in mind; the word includes thinking and designing and contrary to perspective, which stresses single point of view in this sense, it gains importance in the sense that it brings thought into the forefront (Ozgul, 2012, pp. 172-176-179).

Miniature artists, who are the most faithful practitioners of the doctrines of Islamic art philosophy up to this period, annihilates the illusions, on book pages, that perspective brings with it, by setting all the creatures in the universe free from all the remoteness. Thus, they do not need to display light and shadow by removing volume, either. The reason they wish to do all these things is in the name of utilizing colours in their pure forms (Ayvazoglu, 1982, p. 93; Tas, 2012, p. 123).

To sum up, here are the prominent assessments on miniatures and the landscapes they depict;

- Ottoman miniatures have archival qualifications including administrative, religious, socio-cultural, natural-artificial themes and elements, primarily trying to reflect all the dimensions of a civilization.
- Moreover, the miniatures with depictions of cities, battlefields, and castles also are regarded as important documents in terms of the cartographic features they have.
- In Ottoman period, painting art is not found favourable together with the teaching of Islamic perception, miniature is accepted rather a long time later. For this reason, miniature is made to pass through Islamic strainer, "depiction" is approached with the existence of the true creator.
- In these works, humans and animals cannot go beyond being a means with their shapes and proportions and colours.
- The parts in depiction are deformed proportionally and formally, what the beholder thinks depends on his/her imagination.
- The expression that miniatures have thanks to both its technique and language goes beyond a certain point of view and presents incidents and objects in a divine and imaginary world. Natural elements play an important role in all these works created with a religious approach.
- In this presentation, it materializes such a lyrical atmosphere mostly by using natural elements and figures.
- In this majorly misshapen world, natural elements become ideal materials for artists. * With its bent, curved and flexible lines, it becomes a part and mostly a complement of every type of composition easily.
- The plants used in them are indispensable for this world with their forms, calligraphic structures, flowers and colours. They make their presence felt on the ground, background or on the whole of the composition. These thin silhouetted, miniature plants show similarities with the ornamentations used in Turkish-Islamic arts.
- Except for its last period, techniques such as light, shadow and perspective are not used, the beholder's commentary and point of view becomes the second stage providing the completion of the work.

Visual arts closely witness different societies, cultures, beliefs and time, accompany the transformation and alteration of them all and carry them to the present day. It reflects space and time with its own language and technique. Ottoman portrayal arts surface as a phase of such an alteration. After Turks accept Islam, the technique used in miniatures takes form with a motive in this direction.

With the final products, a world dominated by a civilization, as the phrase goes, a "private" world is depicted. On these works, created mostly upon the request of the padishahs of the period, all the living and non-living elements are, more

or less, deformed and their existence is trivialized in the axis of religious beliefs aforementioned.

However, at the same time, these utopic places are ornamented with figures of plants and animals in the meantime. Plants are, somehow, integrated to the scene, even at an unreal situation, they are involved somewhere in the picture. This situation gives life to each picture, and has been the only connection of this limited technique with the real world. Using natural elements ,as much as possible, in today's landscape projections and depictions , in a world that the artist does not use perspective, light and colour and leaves it open for the beholder's imagination, he only depicts nature and natural elements from his own point of view. It is possible to see this especially in natural landscape miniatures. It is a lucid, clear and lyrical expressing of landscape. Looking at these pictures, not perplexing and tiring the beholder, is more like reading o novel. These natural elements also increase the quality of perception in the miniatures that tells important cultural and historical events. Today's perception studies reveal that landscapes with dominant naturalness are sensed positively.

Today's landscape concept and projections, formed after the second half of 20th century, are shaped with the impact of modernity, and impressions of technology. And, modern movements are seen in designs. As a matter of course, alteration is quintessentially inevitable. However, it should not be forgotten that these designs have an effect on the sociological structures of societies. Environment and behaviours are connected with each other. By means of perception, "cognitive processes" of humans are shaped, his/her point of view is formed for his/her surroundings, nature and what's presented to him, and thus, this turns into behaviours. Therefore; Projecting and presenting the natural elements and forms will enable humans to look into his surroundings more healthily and will increase environmental sensitivities.

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