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YALOVA ATATÜRK PAVILIONS



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YALOVA ATATÜRK PAVILIONS

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FOREWORD

From the days of the Byzantine emperors to the Ottoman sultans, the thermal springs of Yalova have attracted not only the sick in search of cures, but those wanting a change of scene in the lovely green surroundings of the town. After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk had a country house or köşk built here in 1929.

Today the Yalova Atatürk Köşk is a museum open to the public under the administration of the TGNA Department of National Palaces. The two order buildings in the grounds, the General Secretariat Building and the Yaverlik Köşk house offices and public amenities for visitors to the museum. The architecture of Atatürk Köşk reflects the Art Deco style of the period, and the house is furnished with 19 th century antiques from Dolmabahçe Palace.

The earliest settlement in Yalova on the southern shore of the Marmara Sea dates from antiquity, and grew into a small town noted for its thermal springs. Extensive research is necessary to bring to light further detail about the long history of Yalova. This publication summarises what is known about the spa, as well as giving an account of the architecture of the köşk. No doubt much more remains to be discovered, and this small book will provide a starting point for further research into a beautiful and fascinating area which attracts as many visitors today as it has done over the past two millennia.

TÜRKÂN İNCE

Director of the TBMM National Palaces Administration

History of Yalova

Yalova is in the area known in ancient times as Bythinia, on the southeast coast of the Marmara Sea, north of the Samanlı mountains¹. The earliest inhabitants of the region are thought to be the Hittites and a tribe of related ethnic origin².

According to early sources there was a small village known as Drepane, Drapana, Drepanon or Drepanum here. Constantine the Great renamed the settlement Helenopolis, to immortalise the name of his mother Helena³. C. Texier noted the following about Yalova: *"In the direction of Iznik and to the west is a town named Yalovaç. Yalovaç was founded on the site of Drepanum, and later took the name Helenopolis. The baths of Princess Helena are supposed to have been here. During the cherry season the people of Istanbul came to these baths and stayed for 15 days. According to Procopius, there was a hospital and palace here, built by Helena and Constantine the Great."*⁴

Yalova became a

celebrated spa, with mineral baths and related buildings, during the reign of Constantine the Great. The hospital, church and baths of Helenopolis underwent extensive renovation during the reign of Justinian⁵.

In his Travels, the 17th century writer Evliya Çelebi gives the following account of Yalova: *"The walls and city were built by the Byzantines. Since Kara Yalvaçoğlu conquered the town on the orders of Osman Gazi (the first Ottoman sultan, who ruled 1299-1324) they call this place Kara Yalva. The inhabitants resisted, and the walls were ruined as a result. During the reign*

Yaverlik Köşk.





The balconied façade of Yaverlik Köşk.

of Yıldırım Bayezid (Ottoman sultan, ruled 1389-1402) the town became part of the sub-province of Bursa. The district is taxed at 150 akça. A janissary commander and police superintendent are posted here. There are 700 houses in the town, and seven mosques. It has one public bath, three hans, and forty to fifty shops. Situated on the seashore, the air is extremely damp, but the town is well cared for. All kinds of fruit are grown. Here we boarded carriages and travelled southwards for five hours, until we reached the hot springs of Cihannüma. The Cihannüma Mineral Springs: The road passes through thick forest and never sees the sun. At every turn are huts for travellers to perform their prayers. These are the mineral baths at Dil Iskelesi, which have already been described. They were built dur-

ing the time of Madyanoğlu Yanko.

*"The reason for building the baths was that Yanko's daughter Helena was suffering from scabies. The miserable girl was transformed into a diseased wretch, leprous and cankered. No physician could find a cure, and finally they brought her from Istanbul to these mountains for a change of air. While wandering around here one day, she came upon this mineral water and drank of it. In a few days the sores began to darken and heal. The girl realised that the water had curative properties. In forty days her body was like a white pearl. When the servants sent by her father Yanko saw her, they bore the good news to Yanko. He, too, came to this place of healing to see his daughter. When he saw her he gave thanks to God and had six domes erected over this hot spring, and many other charitable buildings constructed. Two of these domes can still be seen. In one is a pleasant, large pool. The water is very hot, and needs to be mixed with cold water. Every year people resort to these mountains in the cherry season for the sake of these springs."*⁶

As we see from these accounts, Yalova has been a spa without interruption since late Roman times. Both C. Texier and Evliya Çelebi agree that people frequented the mineral baths during the cherry season, which in this area is June to early August.

Although Yalova was known as Kara Yalva during the early Ottoman period⁷, in 18th century official documents, the area was referred to as Yalakâbâd, and was apparently part of the province of İzmit. There are several commands addressed to the kadi of Yalakâbâd, the name sometimes being written as Yalakâbâd, Yalak, or even on one occasion as Yalive. From these we learn that the town is attached to the governorship of Kocaeli⁸.

Atatürk Köşk in Yalova

Despite rapid economic and social changes during the last period of the Ottoman Empire, Yalova and its environs continued to be a popular spa and summer resort. Sultan Abdülmecid sent his mother Bezmiâlem Valide Sultan to take the springs at Yalova on the advice of court physician Mellingen, and had a house built especially for her to stay in. Known as Valide Köşk, this house is no longer extant.

During the reign of Abdülhamid II the mineral baths were repaired and new buildings constructed. Documents dated AH 1310 (AD 1893) concerning these repairs are in folders number 217 and 223 in the National Palaces Archive.

The fact that Atatürk often visited Yalova and bathed in the mineral springs gave a fresh boost to the town's popularity after the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

Construction and Design of the Köşk

Atatürk had the house built in Yalova in 1929, and a second built the same year at Yalova National

Farm. However, when this second house was completed, Atatürk decided that he did not like the site, and had it moved to its present position. This is why the house is still known locally as the "Walking Köşk"⁹.

The stone building has a rectangular plan, adjusted to the inclined site. There is a basement where the ground falls away on the incline, two main storeys and an attic floor. The corner to the right of the entrance has been cut off diagonally and this softened corner forms one side of the stairwell. The pair of narrow rectangular windows rising up two

Atatürk Köşk.





The entrance façade of the köşk, with its distinctive Art Deco style.

floors in this wall are a reflection of the Art Deco style fashionable in İstanbul architecture of this period.

The kitchens of the house are situated in the basement, and have access into the main living areas to facilitate service. The windows of the basement are in the façade opposite the main entrance.

A flight of six steps leads up to the entrance. From the antechamber off the entrance hall two doors lead into the main room where Atatürk used to hold dinner receptions. Another door in the reception room leads onto the terrace, which was used for eating lunch in fine weather. A small study has access to both the terrace and the recep-

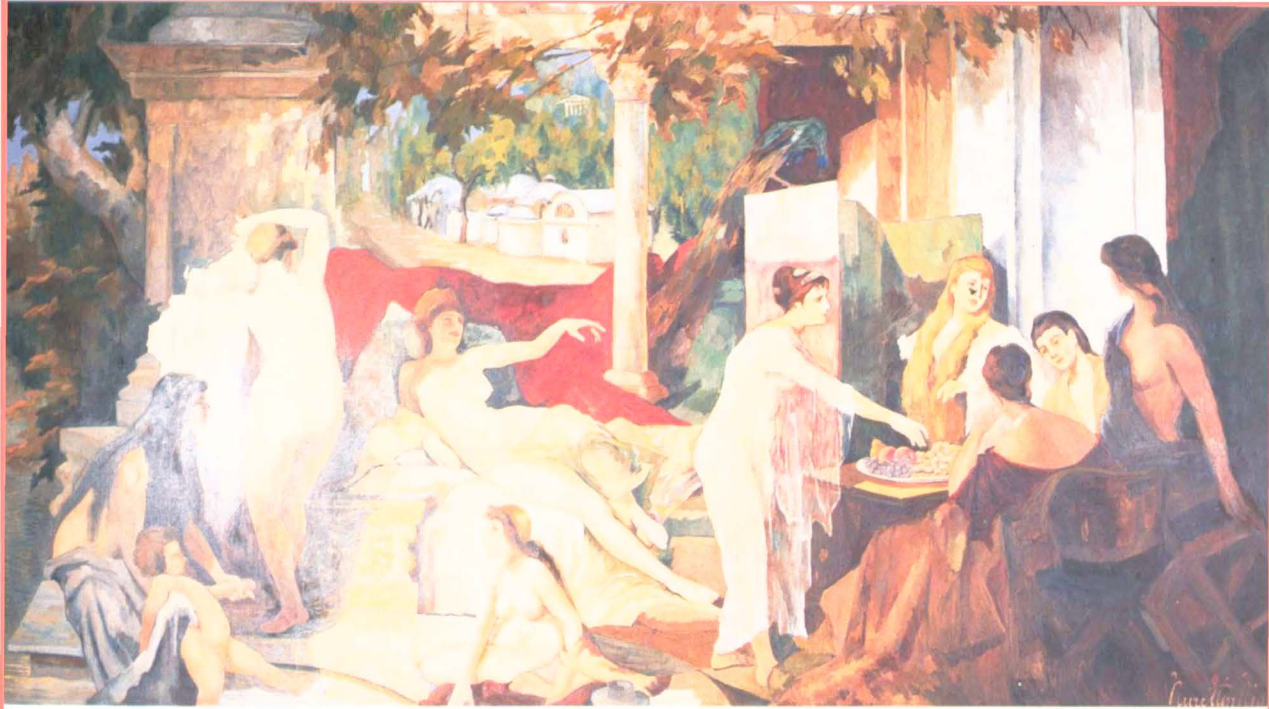


The antechamber off the hall of the köşk.

tion room.

Next to the office there is also a servant's bedroom, beside which is a lavatory and small terrace, all opening off a corridor. The staircase is situated at the diagonally cut corner of the building, and has been designed almost as an independent tower. The opens onto is an octagonal hallway, which is linked to the servants' corridor by a second corridor, off which lead a bedroom and a sitting room. This suite was used by Atatürk's sister Makbule Hanım.

Like the ground storey, the upper storey consists of rooms surrounding a central room. Today this central room is furnished with a lacquered suite of armchairs. The door over the entrance hall leads



onto the tiled balcony where breakfast used to be served. A U-shaped corridor encircles the central room. To the right of the balcony is a bathroom, with an interconnecting door to the bedroom of Afet İnan, Atatürk's adopted daughter. This bedroom also opens onto both the corridor and the balcony.

The next two interconnecting rooms were probably used by Atatürk, since the second opens onto his study, which interconnects with his bedroom. Both the study and bedroom have doors onto an L-shaped balcony. The adjoining bathroom still has the original fittings.

To the right of the central room is the accommodation for guests. The first room next to the bathroom is a guest bedroom. This room and Atatürk's bathroom open onto a recessed balcony. Of the two rooms next to each other along the corridor, that on the left was used by Atatürk's adopted daughter, Sabiha Gökçen, and that on the right belonged to Zehra Hanım. Adjoining this room is a bathroom and a servant's room. Most of the furnishings were brought here from Dolmabahçe Palace.



Opposite page, above An oil painting by Nurettin Niyazi which hangs in the antechamber. This is an allegorical depiction of Yalova in ancient times.
Opposite page, below A 19th century vase and side table supported by a centre column.

above A corner of the main reception room, whose furniture dates from the 19th century.

Yaverlik Köşk

Relatively little is known about this building, which has a rectangular plan and consists of a basement two main storeys and an attic. There are the remains of what seems to be a pool in the basement. The lower main storey is of stone, and the upper storeys of timber. There is a jettied wooden balcony on the ground floor, and on the first floor a veranda supported by timber columns, which is

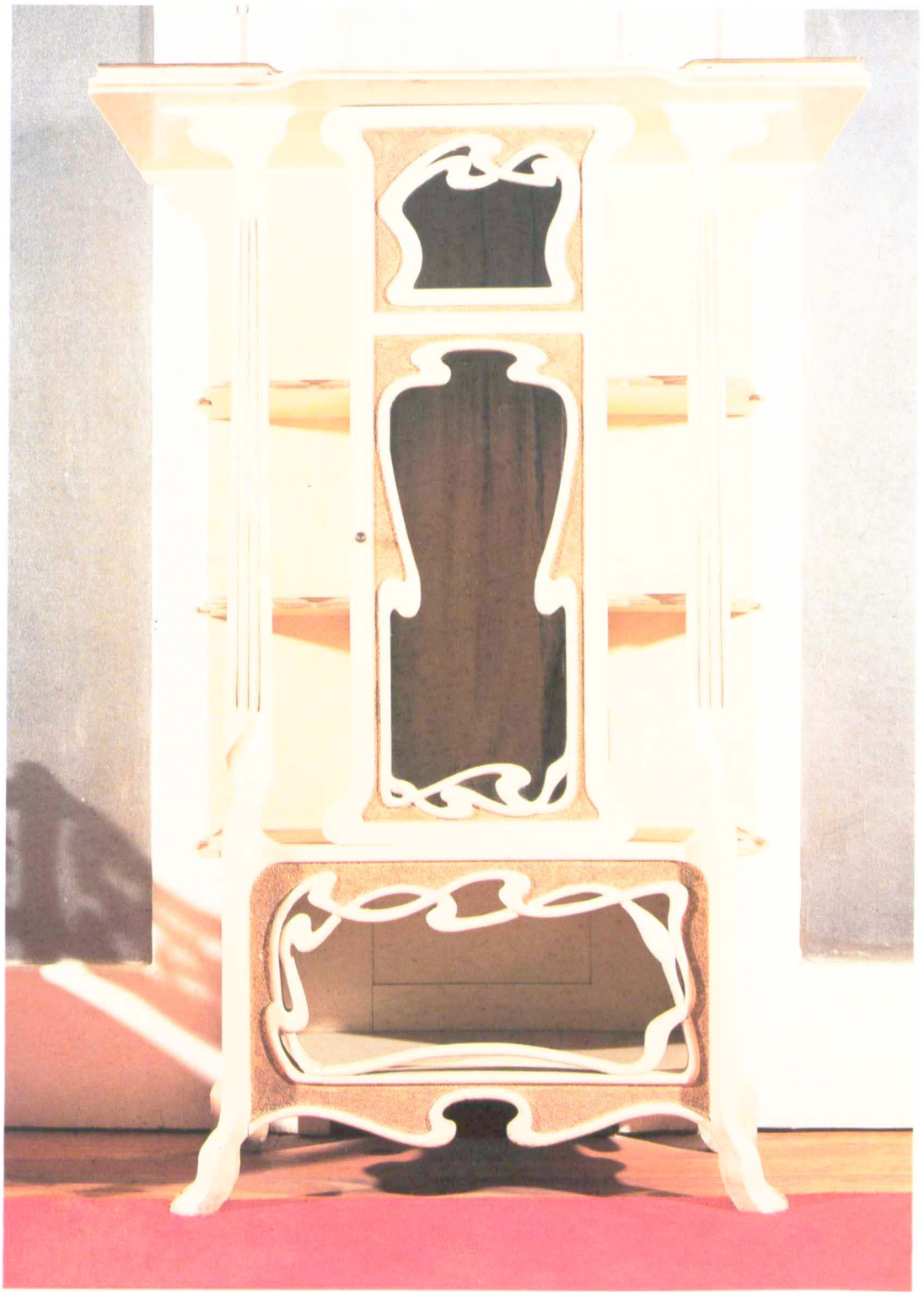


above The central room on the upper floor of the house.
opposite The Art Nouveau lacquered cabinet in the central room, late 19th century.

the dominant feature of the façade.

The plan and decoration suggests that the Yaverlik Köşk was built in the last decade of the 19th century, during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1908). This is confirmed by the fact that Sultan Abdülhamid II had repairs carried out and new buildings constructed in Yalova.

The steep broad-eaved roof, the triangular pedi-





*The lacquered suite of chairs and vase in
the central room on the upper floor,
19th century.*

ment over the dormer window, and the decoration on the upper part of the façade and on the capitals of the timber columns supporting the veranda are reminiscent of Art Nouveau. In terms of the exterior decoration, plan, and period, the Yaverlik Köşk bears a close resemblance to the houses on İstanbul Prince's Islands.



Part of the bedroom furnished with Empire-style lacquered furniture.

Following the proclamation of the Republic, Atatürk had the Yaverlik Köşk repaired, and used it until Atatürk Köşk was constructed. Thereafter, it was used to accommodate his aides-de-camp (hence the name yaverlik, literally "the position of aide-de-camp") and close friends who accompanied him to Yalova. Today the building has been repaired and houses public amenities.

General Secretariat Building

The General Secretariat Building dates from the late 1920s and is now used to house public amenities.



The Köşks Open as a Museum

Yalova has been a spa and health resort since ancient times on account of its mineral springs. The popularity of the spa continued throughout the Ottoman period, and in the 1920s and 1930s, Atatürk used to come here on holiday and to bathe in the mineral waters to improve his health. The Atatürk Köşk and other buildings became a summer resort complex.

Yalova Atatürk Köşk has today been repaired and restored and opened to the public. Combining both historical interest and a beautiful natural setting, the complex stands out from similar museums of this kind. As a pleasant green area within easy reach of İstanbul, the Yalova Köşks will become more important in future as a place where city dwellers can enjoy beautiful scenery and see historic buildings in their original setting.

opposite Atatürk's study

below The late rococo parquetry and bookcase decorated with brass, and photograph of Atatürk in the study.



NOTES

- ¹ BANOĞLU, A. N., Atatürk'ün İstanbul'daki Hayatı, vol. 1, İstanbul 1973, p. 65.
- ² MANSEL, A. M., Yalova ve Civarı, İstanbul 1963, p. 3.
- ³ Op. cit., p. 3.
- ⁴ TEXIER, C., *Asie Mineure*, Firmin Didot Frères, Fils et Cie Editeurs, Paris 1862, pp. 69-70.
- ⁵ MANSEL, A. M., op. cit. p. 4.
- ⁶ EVLIYA ÇELEBİ, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, transcribed by Zuhuri Danişman, Book 3, Vol. 3, İstanbul 1970, pp. 69-70.
- ⁷ Op. cit. p. 69.
- ⁸ TANER, N., *Her Yönüyle Yalova*, İstanbul 1984, p. 78.
- ⁹ BANOĞLU, A. N., op. cit., p. 124.

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