Treasured Heritage
The Residence of the Turkish Ambassador in The Hague
by Manolya Doğan
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When we learned that my husband had been appointed as the Turkish Ambassador to The Hague in the summer of 2009, I knew that we were going to live in an extraordinary Residence during our tenure. Like our predecessors, we were determined to upkeep and possibly contribute as much as possible to the grandeur of this precious property. With such a unique and historical treasure at hand, my aspiration and idea was to compile a book showcasing the Residence and its diverse aspects. To achieve this, I set to work with some dedicated professionals to whom I am enormously indebted. In the following pages, you will see the result of our hard work, which I hope you will enjoy.

In the diplomatic world, an Ambassador’s Residence is customarily known to be more than just a regular dwelling place. Indeed, there are some Residences which may be likened to museums or even small palaces. These Residences distinguish themselves not only for their architectural quality, but also for their historical significance, strategic location or famous previous residents. Arguably, the Turkish Ambassador’s Residence in The Hague combines all these qualities. Architecturally, it is a masterpiece with its Baroque style façade, spacious and enchanting interior and, above all, with its marvellous ceiling and wall paintings.

Originally built in 1734, it had served as a prestigious house for the rich and famous of the time, including the Mayor of the city; it thereby acquired its historical value. It became the Turkish Government’s property in 1937 and has been the Residence of the Turkish Ambassador ever since.

The Turkish Residence and adjoining Chancellery building are wonderful monuments in the centre of the charming city of The Hague. The historical relationship between Turkey and the Netherlands has always been one of mutual respect, friendship and cooperation. In 2012, both countries celebrated the 400th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and my husband and I felt privileged to represent Turkey on many occasions during this year of festivities. The Residence itself was, of course, a central location for quite a few of these activities.

The Turkish Ambassador’s Residence, protected and cherished by all concerned, has been and will continue to be a living testimony to this exceptional relationship.

Manolya Doğan
Parliament buildings and the Binnenhof
Neighbourhood

“...a house becomes a home more easily when it is surrounded by friendly neighbours. The Residence is in the middle of a great historical town. Within a few minutes walk, we can find not only the Houses of the Dutch Parliament and the Royal Palace, but also the tranquillity of parks and the bustle of busy shopping streets.”

Prinsessegracht 29 is located at the historical edge of the city centre. Next door to the right, at number 28, we find the Chancellery building of the Turkish Embassy in The Hague. The neighbour on the left-hand-side at number 30 is the book and manuscript museum Meermanno-Westreeniaum, an old family house which still contains the extensive collection of the Westreenen family. Opposite the Prinsessegracht we can see a large green area surrounded by trees, the Malieveld, a traditional marching area, now mostly used for demonstrations, circuses and manifestations. It is a green and leafy part of the city. When we look to the right we see the new skyline of the city. Although The Hague long resisted a skyscraper skyline, over the last few years the city has demonstrated a particular zest for high-rise buildings. Some of the skyscrapers even resemble old Dutch houses, blown up to grand proportions.
Neighbourhood
Historical map of The Hague
1775

Palace
Parliament Buildings
Lange Voorhout
Turkish Residence
Malieveld

Historical map of The Hague 1775
To the south of the Residence, we can easily walk into the old city of The Hague. Along a 19th century canal, we walk towards the Lange Voorhout, the beautiful park-like environment famous for its yearly sculpture exhibition. It is also the traditional area for Embassies and the historical landmark Hotel Des Indes. Close to the Lange Voorhout, we can find the historical Houses of the Dutch Parliament called the Binnenhof. The centrepiece of the assembly of buildings is the Ridderzaal, the Knights Hall, a heavily restored Medieval hunting lodge, which was once the origin of the city. The Ridderzaal can be traced back to the 13th century, but the buildings we see today are mainly the result of restorations by the famous Dutch architect Pierre Cuypers (1827-1921), who also designed the Rijksmuseum and the Centraal Station in Amsterdam. The ancient castle still has a central role in Dutch democracy as, since 1848, it is the location where the Queen or King reads the yearly state of the union address at the combined session of both Houses of the Parliament to open the Parliamentary year. The House of Representatives and ministries are nowadays mostly housed in modern buildings and skyscrapers, but the traditional buildings still function today, notably as the Senate or the offices of the Prime Minister. A quite unique feature of the Binnenhof is that everybody can walk into the inner courtyard day and night.
The Noordeinde Palace is located just a stone’s throw away from the government buildings.

The house was presented to King Willem-Alexander’s forefathers by the Dutch government in 1609, in recognition of William of Orange’s service to the nation. William of Orange (1533 – 1584) is also known as William the Silent and is considered to be the ancestor of the Dutch monarchy.

In 1984 the Palace was thoroughly restored. It has been in use ever since for all official political and stately affairs. Closeby we find the Palace of Huis ten Bosch which is the
official residence of Princess Beatrix, the mother of King Willem-Alexander.

Around the neighbourhood, we find the cosy – the Dutch use a word which is difficult to translate, *gezellig* – streets with traditional shops, small galleries and restaurants. Within five minutes we can walk along the Lange Vijverberg and the National Theatre back to the residential area where the Turkish Residence is located, with its charming canals and 18th century houses. It is a unique part of the city with a fascinating history that goes back centuries.
Introduction

“Apart from a few obvious changes that have been introduced over the years, such as different colour schemes, new wall coverings or new decorations to the rooms, most of the house at Prinsesegracht 29 has remained unchanged.”

This is what makes the Turkish Residence a rare example of a house where the original eighteenth-century exterior is in complete harmony with its interior. Compared to many other buildings where the interior has been rigorously refurbished to suit the taste and demands of the day, it is a delicate treasure and one of the few surviving buildings where one can truly experience an 18th century atmosphere.

The purpose of this book is to share the beauty and history of this monumental house and its surroundings. A visual tour will be made through the rooms and garden to explore the history and the beauty of the house. Sometimes we will stop to enjoy a magnificent painting or a delicate object, and at other times we will just let the photographs tell their own story.
Skylight staircase
Alcove of marble with putti decorations
Etching of Prinsesegracht by Fouquet jr. 1764
The History of its Occupants

Since 1937, the handsome and harmonious patrician house on Prinsessegracht 29 has been the property of the Republic of Turkey. But the history of the house dates back to 1705. The character of The Hague has always been slightly different from other Dutch cities. While most Dutch cities originally had city walls, The Hague did not. The story goes that the reason for this was that The Hague officially was a village, not a city, and therefore did not have the right to build walls. The reality is more mundane. By the time the city wanted to build its walls, it could not afford to complete the works. When the money was available, genuine outside threats had disappeared and city walls had become obsolete. The city did however finish a circular canal around the centre in the 16th century as a first defence against attacks. Prinsessegracht is part of this defensive ring of canals.

“The house can be very quiet on an early Sunday morning. Walking down to the dining room and sitting there alone, surrounded by all these magnificent paintings of pastoral life and of the city of Venice, it's easy to imagine former inhabitants, maybe two centuries past, sitting here on a tranquil morning looking at the same paintings.”

Sketch by Vincent van Gogh made in 1882 on the corner of the Prinsessegracht. 29 is just outside the frame on the left hand side.
The Prinsessegracht, which roughly translates to Princess Canal Street, was named after Princess Amalia Van Solms (1602-1675), who was married to Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, who ruled during the time the canals were built. The very well preserved row of magnificent eighteenth century patrician mansions was originally called Nieuwe Prinsessegracht as it was built as a new extension of a street built in the 17th century.

The original building plot of the later number 29 was put up for sale on 17 February 1705 and was eventually sold on 12 November 1705 to master carpenter Johannes Swaertveger. He was one of the group of contractors that was involved in the construction of nearly all the houses on the canal. The construction of the house was completed in 1734.

Visitors approaching from the front will be struck by the fact that the houses on the Prinsessegracht show great similarity in style and structure. This harmonious appearance is partly thanks to a building code which was issued by the municipal council to erect only distinguished houses on this site. The designs were in all probability drafted by Daniël Marot (1661-1752), a French Protestant architect who fled France after the lifting of the Decree of Nantes in 1685 and took refuge in the Netherlands. The introduction of the Louis XIV-style in the Netherlands owed much to Marot.

The façade of Prinsessegracht 29 is considered to be one of the finest and richest of the row of houses and is still virtually in its original state. The middle bay, in particular, is an imposing eye-catcher. The relatively plain double entrance doors are framed by Ionic columns. The fanlight is decorated with lavish and graceful moulding, while the window above the double doors on the second floor is framed by decoratively curled scrolls.

Along with all its splendid rooms, the luxurious property also boasted a stable and a coach house situated at the rear on Jan Everstraat. The first buyer was Thomas King (1712-1779), later 5th Baron King, who at the time was a partner in a Dutch mercantile house. The 22 year-old moved into the house with his 18 year-old bride.
King immediately remodelled the property, adding, amongst other things, the decorative moulding in the dining room. King did not enjoy the house for very long and by 1740 had moved to London, having sold off all his property in The Hague.

Prinsessegracht 29 came into the possession of Mattheus Lestevenon (1715-1797). In a sense, the house became the home of a diplomat for the first time, as Lestevenon later became ambassador to France and was an important negotiator for the Treaty of Paris (1783). He was so well respected that the Italian composer Pietro Locatelli, who lived in the Netherlands at the time, dedicated six violin sonatas to him. Lestevenon did not occupy the house for very long or maybe only used it as a winter home; the records show he rented it out to several tenants who included Mr. Blokland, Mr. Van De Perre and Mr. Citters. Although Citters is listed as the last occupant in the population register, which runs until 1794, there are indications that Mattheus Lestevenon moved back in again for his final years.

After Lestevenon’s death the house was auctioned. The description provided by the auction house details the many qualities of the residence and evokes an immensely luxurious image, listing spacious rooms with decorated ceilings and wall hangings, mirrors, ample kitchens, a handsome salon facing the garden, stabling for eight horses, two coach houses and a separate dwelling for the coachman.
At the auction in 1797, Willem Jacob Dubbing Suerdfeger (1755-1824) became the new owner. At that time the large downstairs front room was decorated entirely in red. Blue was the predominant colour in the grand hall, as it was downstairs. In both rooms large Smyrna carpets covered the floor. One of the upstairs bedrooms was known as the Chinese room, perhaps on account of the special fabric covering the walls. Suerdfeger bought the house for 16,000 guilders and sold it for 20,000 guilders in January 1815 to Lodewijk Constantijn Rabo Copes van Cattenburgh (1771-1842), who lived in the house with his family, five servants and a coachman. Van Cattenburgh was later appointed as Mayor of The Hague on 23 February 1824. When he died in 1842, the house was auctioned again and passed into the hands of Albert Willem Laurens Martinus Heldewier (1792-1870). The next owner was Jules August, Count of Bylandt (1818-1873). As was the fashion of the time, the house was sometimes used as a winter residence.
In 1887, the house came into the possession of Paul Arnold Jacques, Baron De Smeth van Alphen (1857-1941), who, unlike his predecessors, resided there permanently. He and his family lived in the house on Prinsessegracht for more than thirty years. During this period he installed all kinds of modern conveniences, such as central heating, bathrooms and even a hydraulic lift. In 1921 the house was placed on the municipal list of historic buildings.

After the Baron and his wife moved to Switzerland in the 1920s, the house remained empty for several years. Finally, on 1 November 1930, it became the property of the last private owner, the Amsterdam tobacco merchant Matthias Knoops. Several years after he bought the house, however, he experienced financial difficulties and the property was subsequently put up again for public auction.

The building had by now been added to the municipal list of monuments in The Hague. At the auction, the house was acquired by ’s-Gravenhaagsche Mortgage Inc, to whom Knoops owed money. This company soon managed to sell the monumental property to the Republic of Turkey, which was looking for a new residence for its Ambassador.

The governmental decree allowing the purchase of the residence, which bears the approval signature of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the President and founder of the modern Turkish Republic, is dated 22 March 1937. The residence was purchased by the then Chargé d’Affaires, Abdullah Akşin, and the deed was received on 14 October 1937. Not long thereafter, the Emissary Ahmet Cevat Üstün took up residence on Prinsessegracht 29. Since then this stunning, historical property has remained the official residence of the Turkish diplomatic mission.
The Turkish flag hanging at half-mast at the Turkish Embassy to observe the death of the Turkish President Kemal Atatürk on 10 November 1938.

Letter concerning the purchase of the residence, signed by Kemal Atatürk

Letter concerning the purchase of the residence
On entering the house through the front door into the vestibule, visitors are greeted immediately by the handsome inner doorway designed to prevent draughts. Another striking feature is the imposing fanlight, executed with heavily and symmetrically worked moulding in Louis XIV-style. A beautiful marble floor welcomes the guests at the entrance of the house. Wherever the floor in the ornamental sitting rooms is not covered with carpets of the highest quality, the finest wood is visible, laid in a herringbone pattern.

Crowning the wooden stairwell in the central hallway is an attractive, octagonal plastered dome surrounded by windows that beautifully plays with light and shadow.

“Walking from the front door through the hallway and the dining room to the garden at the back is a truly stunning experience. It is like walking into a time machine; you are transported from a busy 21st century city to a tranquil home from the 18th century.”
To the left we find the old office of the Ambassador, still in its original state. It is a beautifully furnished room with an original desk and cabinet, mementos and photographs of the past decades, and black and white paintings above the doors.

In the hall behind the vestibule, the stairwell on the left with its broad oak steps sweeps the entire way from the basement right up to the original servants’ quarters at the top of the house.

As is customary in rich patrician dwellings, the official reception and living quarters are situated on the ground floor. We first enter the spacious reception and sitting rooms which span the whole length of the house, from the front to the garden. The space is divided in a front and back room which form a harmonious unity. The doors and the wainscoting are decorated with deftly carved, asymmetric bands with typical rococo motifs. In contrast to the other rooms, the front room has the only fireplace crafted entirely of marble. Other fireplaces in the house seem to be made of marble, but on closer inspection the sides turn out to
be painted, creating a perfect imitation. The airy and highly subtle rococo style suggests that this front-room can be dated to around 1750. One perceives a difference in style when entering the spacious late Louis XV, or rococo style, room at the rear with matching furniture.

Between the windows overlooking the garden, we encounter a wooden cupboard adorned with a painting of putti (male infants) and playing children.
We enter the dining room from the sitting room. It used to be predominantly dark green, but since the latest restoration it has been decorated in an earlier shade of ivory white. It is the painted panels by Johann Heinrich Keller (1692-1765) however that lend the room its rich and sumptuous ambiance. The opulence of the room is matched by the carved frame adorning the mirror over the fireplace, which depicts a richly filled basket of flowers and two cornucopia, or horns of plenty, spilling flowers down the sides. Situated between the two windows is another notable feature of the room in the shape of a handsome open wall cabinet, decorated by a large shell at the top and holding a small marble fountain encased at the base. This most stunning room in the Residence is situated on the ground floor, giving on the gardens at the rear. From the dining room we step out on a small modern terrace overlooking the garden, an oasis of tranquillity.

Prinsessegracht 29 is the official Residence of the Turkish Ambassador, but it is also a private home. The private rooms are located on the first floor. They virtually replicate the layout and size of the downstairs rooms, but their decorative finish is more restrained. All these rooms are executed in a fairly sparse and austere Louis XIV-style. On the second floor we find the guest quarters. These beautifully furnished rooms offer the guest a home away from home.
In every room of the house chandeliers adorn heavy moulded ceilings with central oval panels, enclosed by scrolls and ornamental foliage. The walls of most rooms are subdivided into separate panels which incorporate intricate silk wall coverings with floral patterns.

On the ceiling of the sitting room at the back of the house, is an oval shaped painting entitled “The Triumph of Venus” that is enclosed by a delicately wrought frame. The goddess of love holds a child in each arm and hovers effortlessly against a backdrop of threatening thunder clouds. This painted ceiling, which pre-dates the stuccowork, is attributed to a master painter from Rotterdam, possibly Elias van Nijmegen (1667-1755). It is surrounded by a finely crafted moulding

“Whenever you take the time to look at the house in detail, you discover new elements you did not notice before. It is an adventure to look up and down, from the magnificent ceilings to the wooden floors. The dining room is a particularly pleasant room. The large wall-covering paintings are like windows to another place and time, showing pastoral scenes that evoke the feeling that we are enjoying our meal in a peaceful Italian setting.”
with scrolls and sea shell motifs, which in turn are encircled by interwoven vines of roses. It is probably the work of master plasterer Jan Baptist Luraghi or one of his apprentices. Luraghi, born in 1675 near Como in Northern Italy, belonged to a family of stucco workers who were all highly accomplished craftsmen. As early as the start of the 17th century they began to offer their services to regions in the North of Europe. In 1710, Luraghi became a citizen of The Hague. Amongst his most important assignments were the stuccowork in the royal palace Paleis Het Loo in the east of the Netherlands, a task contracted to him by Prince William III of Orange, and work in the mansion Huis Schuylenburch in The Hague. It is uncertain whether Luraghi was personally involved in the decorating of Prinsessegracht 29, as the house was only finished in 1734 and Luraghi died in 1736. The meticulously crafted and tasteful decorations of the rooms however show the extent of 18th century craftsmanship. Prinsessegracht 29 is one of the few remaining examples of an 18th century decorated house in the Netherlands. Every artistic element of the monumental Residence was carefully selected and executed. The ornamental ceilings and the carved doors, the imposing fireplaces and the herringbone wooden floors are all of a magnificent quality, but there is one other feature which makes the house stand out: the wall paintings. Almost every room houses a large collection of wall paintings.
Reception room with ceiling painting
Stucco decorations on the ceilings
Because the dining room has such a large collection of wall paintings, one can overlook the fact that other rooms are also adorned by paintings. Above a cupboard between two large windows overlooking the garden, we see putti and children playing. It is a joyful and colourful scene which was probably made by Elias van Nijmegen (1667-1755). In the former office of the Ambassador, we discover black and white overdoor paintings with similar scenes. In one we see cupids working hard to sharpen their arrows and strengthen their bows. In the other we see women trying to steal the bows and arrows of peacefully sleeping cupids.
The fireplace in the rear living room is crowned by a mirror in a rococo frame and surmounted by an over-mantle piece picturing a farmer and a bull against the backdrop of an Italianate landscape. This work was placed later, and can possibly be dated to the seventeenth century. The paintings of the Turkish Residence are of a remarkable quality. They are not mere illustrations to entertain the guests but are instead key to the homely atmosphere of the house.
The old office of the Ambassador with beautiful black & white paintings above the doors. In one we see cupids sharpening their arrows. In the other we see women trying to steal the bows and arrows of sleeping cupids.
The Turkish Residence also houses paintings that are part of the collection of the Embassy itself. Especially the paintings by Halil Pasha (1857-1939), which adorn the walls of the residence and show seaside landscapes, are of an extraordinary tranquil beauty.

Halil Pasha studied in Paris for eight years, before returning to Istanbul to teach art at the War Academy, of which he later would become the principal. Halil Pasha’s work was frequently exhibited in the best salons of Europe.
The dining room is almost a gallery. Every wall is covered with large scale panelled paintings. The painting representing Venus and Adonis surmounting the mantelpiece is by the artist Pieter van Cuyck (1687-1765) from The Hague. It was probably relocated from another house to its present home in the early years of the 20th century. The other paintings in this room, however, as well as the wood panelling, date from 1743-1744, when the owner at the time, Mattheus Lestevenon, remodelled the dining room.

The four panels, several of which are signed by the artist and date to 1743, measure 280 cm in height. Two are 184 cm wide and two are 228 cm wide. They portray idyllic landscape scenes with ancient ruins, populated by lively figures of rustic peasants and soldiers. These so-called capriccios were an exceptionally well-loved subject executed by Italian artists in the first half of the 18th century. Keller based three of his

The painted decorations, which comprise four wall panels and four overdoor pieces, were all painted by Johann Heinrich Keller (1692-1765). Keller was born in Zurich but had settled and worked in The Hague since 1726. Keller was one of the leading artists in The Hague during the mid-18th century. In addition to landscapes and portraits, he also produced a multitude of decorative works such as wall panels and ceiling, chimney and overdoor pieces which were featured in many houses in The Hague and other cities in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland.
panels on etchings by the Venetian painter and engraver Marco Ricci (1676-1729).

The four dessus-de-portes, or overdoor paintings, show Venetian cityscapes, copied after prints by Michele Marieschi (1710-1743) from 1741. They show the basilica of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, the Rialto Bridge, the basilica of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari and the Ducal Palace. The artist compensated for the fact that it was impossible to view these paintings from eye level, but only from below, by adapting the perspective. If we stand at eye level, however, we discover all the subtle details that Keller was capable of.

Thomas King, the later 5th Baron King, who had owned the house before Lestevenon, was an admirer of Venetian painter Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697-1768) better known as Canaletto and had commissioned work by him.

Of the many Dutch interiors that were originally adorned by decorative paintings in the 18th century, only a few remain intact to this day. This group of works by Keller is the only one still in situ - in the actual place they were intended to decorate. Panels of idyllic pastoral landscapes are often seen in Dutch decorative art, but paintings above doors of Venice are unique.

The wood panelling in the dining room was originally rendered in dark green paint as can be seen in a historical photograph. The original shade used in the eighteenth century was however probably much lighter. During the restoration work conducted in 2011, the entire room was painted in a paler, ivory cream colour, in accordance with earlier paint layers discovered during restoration.
The complete collection of Keller's paintings adorning the dining room.
Major renovation work

A flood in early 2011 necessitated a major renovation of the left wing of the building. Water caused serious damage to the dining room, including to the magnificent wall paintings, and the two bedrooms on the first and second floors.

The multidisciplinary renovation project, led by architect Turgay Esin, commenced at the beginning of September 2011. The first thing to be done was to remove the wall paintings from their original positions and transport them to two different studios in The Hague where the restoration work would be carried out by specialists. While the structural restoration of the building was taking place, the paintings were completely cleaned and restored to their former glory during a process that lasted five months.

The wooden panels on the walls in the dining room and bedrooms were entirely stripped using a soft-grit, abrasive walnut shell dust until the original bare wood was revealed. This special technique of using soft-grit abrasive does not harm the original structure of the wood. Subsequently, the panels and frames were filled with chalk glue and fine sanded before being painted with a special primer. Finally, a lead free paint (alkyd paint) in a new shade was applied in consultation with the Cultural Heritage Committee of the city of The Hague.
After a detailed search amongst the fifteen underlying layers of paint, it was decided to replace the dark green (Grachten-groen) of the wooden panels with a lighter shade of Ivory. This shade had already been used as the main colour in the dining room in earlier periods. The final stage involved applying the 18 carat gold leaf before the fully restored gilded frames and paintings were returned to their places on the walls.

During the renovation, some very interesting discoveries were made that tell us more about the history of the building. For instance, a very detailed sketch of the ornaments in the dining room by the original designer was found behind the wall paintings.

The renovation was completed at the end of January 2012.

In 1966, major construction work was carried out on the building at number 15 Jan Evertstraat, which had previously been used as stables. It was pulled down and rebuilt as a building for the Embassy.

In the late 1970s, the fabric covering the walls in the guest rooms was changed. New silk fabric was ordered from Lyon in France to perfectly match the original.

At the beginning of 2000, major renovations were performed in the basement. Most of this work concentrated on the kitchen which was completely modernised. In 2005, all the bathrooms in the residence were renovated.
“Almost every small object in this house has a story to tell. Like a string of pearls these items bind memories together to create a historical link to our predecessors. Our own passions and ideas are combined with all the other treasures to form a mix of styles and colours that retain a unique harmony.”

Besides magnificent paintings and beautifully crafted furniture, the house also features a large collection of historical objects, from carpets to vases, from special gifts to personal mementos of former Ambassadors, from bronze lions that adorn the fireplaces to hearth stones with iron cast mythological figures. One could say that all these small treasures form the icing on the cake. They transform the house from a potential museum into a functioning historical home.
Although we let the photographs speak for themselves, some of these objects deserve to be highlighted. The beautiful Turkish 900-grade silver hanging mirrors for example, are traditional wedding gifts in Turkey and they symbolise the wish for a bright future for the bride. Due to an ancient superstition, mirrors were kept turned around when not in use, and since the reverse of the mirror was exposed most of the time it became customary to use this surface for decorative purposes. The embellishments and patterns were made using a pen and hammer, so the silver had to be harder than standard sterling silver, which explains why the grade is 900.

Gülabdan is an pear-shaped bottle, often made of silver or ceramics, used to pour or sprinkle rose water to welcome houseguests.
There are many different types of carpets produced in Turkey. Most Turkish carpets can be identified by their patterns, designs and colours which are typical of each production region. The finest of all hand knotted carpets are produced in Hereke, of which many beautiful examples can be found throughout the house.

The predominant colours used in “Hereke carpets” are dark blue, ivory and cinnamon, although yellow, green, red and other colours are also used. The floral designs and harmonious colours add warmth to the interior and the wooden floors. Hereke silk rugs offer an even wider selection of intricate designs. Hereke silk rugs are woven with silk from Bursa, while Hereke wool rugs are woven with fine quality wool on cotton warps and wefts. The number of knots per square centimetre is an important criterion in determining the quality and fineness of a carpet. Hereke wool carpets have a minimum standard average of $60 \times 60 = 3,600$ knots per cm². The minimum standard average for Hereke silk rugs is $10 \times 10 = 100$ knots per cm².

Apart from Hereke carpets, the Residence also has Uşak carpets. The distinctive colour palette of Uşak rugs and Uşak carpets uses shades of orange including cinnabar, coral and salmon, as well as reds, maroon and blue for the field. Colours of motifs include green, blue, ivory, brown, black and yellow. The foundation and pile are wool and a symmetrical knot is used.
One of the most striking features of the Residence at number 29 and the Chancellery building at number 28, is the combined garden at the back of the buildings. The green space between the 18th century buildings on the Prinsessegracht and what once were a coach house and stables on the Jan Evertsstraat, has undergone many changes over the years.

Tulips, which were introduced into the Netherlands from the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century, adorn the small pathways around the garden.

The Tulip, or lale in Turkish, was originally a wild flower growing in the steppes of Central Asia. It became the favourite flower of the Ottoman court and even gave its name to a historical period of the Ottoman Empire, referred to as the Tulip Era. The introduction of the tulip to Europe is usually attributed to Ogier Ghiselain de Busbecq, the Austrian Ambassador to Istanbul. Its popularity and cultivation in the Netherlands is thought to have started around 1593 after the Flemish botanist Carolus Clusius, a friend of Ambassador de Busbecq, had taken up a post at the University of Leiden and established the Hortus Academicus. Shortly thereafter the tulip began to grow in popularity. The tulip was different from every other flower known to Europe at that time, with a saturated, intense petal colour that no other plant exhibited.

Tulips today are colourful and delicate symbols of the deep-rooted friendship existing between Turkey and the Netherlands.
The Chancellery garden in the 19th century and today
On 24 September 2012, the Turkish Ambassador Mr. Uğur Doğan, Mrs. Manolya Doğan and Her Royal Highness Princess Irene of the Netherlands planted together a linden tree to mark the 400th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the Netherlands. The tree was also the 400,000th tree to be planted by the Dutch-Turkish airline company Corendon Airlines in the framework of a social responsibility program to compensate for carbon emissions.

The Princess has been active in nature protection projects for a long time. Symbolizing togetherness and friendship, the linden tree has now taken its place in the gardens of the Turkish Residence and will remind future visitors of this special occasion celebrating deep-rooted Turkish-Dutch relations.
This book would not have been possible without the contribution and help of many. Above all, I am profoundly grateful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

I would specifically like to express my gratitude to the Deputy Foreign Minister, Ambassador Ali Naci Koru for his encouragement.

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I am particularly grateful to my husband Uğur and my beloved son Murat for their invaluable and enthusiastic support in making my dream come true.

Last but not least, I want to acknowledge all our distinguished predecessors who have lived in and made contributions to this house before us.

This house has had its share of joy, but also of deep sorrow. I cannot conclude this book without mentioning the cherished memory of Ahmet Benler, the young son of Ambassador Özdemir Benler, who was assassinated by terrorists on the morning of 12 October 1979 as he was leaving the Residence to go to his university.

The house is a reflection of our hopes and dreams. Cultural heritage treasures like Prinsesgracht 29 never really belong to anyone. We are just custodians who have to make sure this house remains in the best possible condition for generations to come.