

# From Modernism to Today: Reading Urban Planning Approaches to the Turkish Capital Ankara

Od modernizmu po súčasnosť: prístupy  
k plánovaniu hlavného mesta Ankara

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Článok skúma koncepciu a rozsah urbanistického plánovania, procesy jeho (ne)implementácie, vývoj urbanizmu v Turecku a faktory, ktoré tento vývoj ovplyvnili v kontexte hlavného mesta Ankara od modernizmu až po súčasnosť. Článok sa sústreďuje na mesto Ankara, keďže práve hlavné mesto umožňuje čítať meniaci sa kontext a syntézu tureckého plánovacieho systému a architektúry od obdobia moderného chápania republiky pri založení národného štátu.

V období, keď bola Ankara 19. októbra 1923 vyhlásená za hlavné mesto, mala byť plánovaná na základe pragmatických a funkčných princípov a zásad racionality, rovnosti, spravodlivosti, istoty, homogenity a – dokonalosti. Hlavné mesto malo byť miestom, kde sa kultúra *vyučuje* a prenáša na ďalšie generácie. Z hľadiska územného plánovania bolo k naplneniu týchto cieľov nevyhnutné zabezpečiť sociálnu a priestorovú štandardizáciu s pozitivisticko-technocentrickými a progresívnymi návrhmi. Predstaviteľmi tohto zmýšľania bola racionálna, funkčná architektúra, ktorá sa nezaujíma o estetiku, ale funkčne členené zóny určené pre bývanie, prácu či dopravu. Turecko, podobne ako iné štáty, prijalo túto „univerzálnu mestskú utópiu“ riešenia problémov, ktorých mestá zažívali začiatkom 20. storočia rýchly a nekontrolovateľný rast spôsobený industrializáciou.

Územné plánovanie, ktoré bolo v dvadsiatych rokoch pri zakladaní nového tureckého štátu založené na modernom plánovacom systéme, malo byť hlavným nástrojom tvorby moderného mesta. Zámerom plánovania mesta bolo zjednotiť národné a moderné kultúry pod vedením armády a úradníckeho aparátu. Turecký štát túto myšlienku realizoval po prvýkrát práve v hlavnom meste Ankara s cieľom vytvoriť model prenositeľný aj na iné mestá – model, ktorý by reprezentoval ideológie republiky a/alebo modernizačnú revolúciu, moc a vytrvalosť, i napriek ekonomickým, technickým a ľudským problémom spojeným s hospodárskou krízou a problémami so zriadením infraštruktúry národného štátu. Ankara sa tak stala prvým príkladom národného hlavného mesta vybudovaného na hodnotách súčasného plánovania 20. storočia v spoločnosti s prevládajúcim islamským náboženstvom. Ankara sa stala laboratóriom, ktoré reflektovalo vývoj moderného systému územného plánovania a jeho aplikáciu v kontexte *ummah* (islamskej spoločnosti a/alebo komunite či farnosti v islamskom svete).

Nie náhodou bola Ankara vybraná ako hlavné mesto. Ankara, s geograficky strategickou polohou v centre Anatólie, slúžila

ako administratívne, vojenské, náboženské a obchodné centrum po viaceré storočia. Historická pamäť mesta, ktorá bola v rámci politickej modernizácie odmietaná, bola odsúdená na zánik i vo svojej priestorovej forme. Nové hlavné mesto bolo naplánované a postavené vedľa mesta starého. Osud Ankary, podobne ako iných hlavných miest (Canberra, Islamabad, Brazília, Čandígarh, Abuja, Dodoma a Nové Dillí), je príkladom typického moderného plánovania hlavného mesta danej doby. Vývoj Ankary ako mesta priekopníckeho moderného urbanizmu v 20. storočí, ovplyvnil prístup k tvorbe urbanizmu v celom Turecku.

Od založenia Ankary ako hlavného mesta až do obdobia päťdesiatych rokov 20. storočia, ktoré bolo definované ako „obdobie radikálnej moderny“ (1923 – 1950), vzniklo nové moderné mesto s centrálnym riadením verejnej moci, financovaním a spracovávaním plánov priestorového rozvoja urbanistickej štruktúry. Na verejnej nosnej tepne a prilahlých námestiach, parkoch, v administratívno-obchodnom centre a uličnej sieti obklopujúcej túto chrbticu, vznikali nové obytné zóny prispôbené na moderný spôsob života. Podobný systém bol následne použitý aj v ďalších antolských mestách.

Neplánovaný a nekontrolovaný rast miest, ku ktorému došlo v dôsledku prechodu na pluralitný demokratický systém a liberálne hospodárstvo v päťdesiatych rokoch 20. storočia, mechanizácia v poľnohospodárstve a masová migrácia z vidieka do miest rezonovali v Ankare až do osemdesiatych rokov minulého storočia. V tomto procese definovanom ako „ľudové a/alebo oslabené obdobie moderny“ stratila Ankara ducha moderného mesta. Vznikli tak neplánované transformácie verejných priestorov a urbánnej štruktúry – ako nelegálna a neregulovaná výstavba viacpodlažných budov, či dokonca celých nových ulíc a neformálnych slumov na mestských hradbách. Územný plán mesta z roku 1957 nemal na výber – nemohol poskytnúť iné riešenie ako legalizáciu tejto situácie. Revolúcia v roku 1960, ktorá bola legitimizovaná aktuálnym chaotickým prostredím a hospodárskym kolapsom, znamenala zlomový bod v politike územného plánovania a rozvoja, ako v Ankare, tak aj v iných mestách. Zákon z roku 1965 a územný plán pre oblasť Ankara z roku 1968 nevedeli prekonať nekontrolovanú výstavbu. Urbanistické plánovanie podľa populistického moderny nevedelo riešiť problémy spôsobené mestskou expanziou vrátane rýchlej urbanizácie, znečistenia ovzdušia, dopravy, infraštruktúry atď. V sedemdesiatych rokoch pod tlakom migrácie a rýchlej urbanizácie sa

v Ankare zrútil celý systém moderného plánovania. Arabská kultúra, stále prežívajúca najmä v oblasti slumov, ktoré boli na prelome šesťdesiatych rokov na okraji spoločnosti, a popová kultúra urbanizovaných obyvateľov mesta sa začali dostávať do čoraz ostrejšieho konfliktu, čo spôsobilo vlnu otvoreného násillia nielen v Ankare, ale v celom Turecku.

Podobne ako i v iných mestách, revolúcia v roku 1980, ktorá bola vyvolaná sociálnym konfliktom (pravice a ľavice) reflektovaným aj priestorovou segregáciou, utlmila mnoho modernizačných procesov vrátane plánovaného urbanizmu. „Obdobie erózie moderny“ (po roku 1980) bolo konfrontované so záberom poľnohospodárskej pôdy v mestských priestoroch a jej transformácie a so sankciami globalizácie a neoliberalnej ekonomiky z osemdesiatych rokov. Moderné plánovanie bolo ukončené legalizáciou nekontrolovaného rozvoja pomocou „Hlavného plánu rozvoja verejnej správy metropolitnej oblasti“ (1990), ktorý bol v Ankare spracovaný ako v prvom regióne v krajine. Plán stanovil územný rozvoj regiónu na základe princípov decentralizácie a rozvoja mesta-regiónu ako polycentrickej štruktúry. Avšak neskoršie strategické nástroje, a to hlavný plán rozvoja regiónu a nasledovný hlavný plán rozvoja mesta Ankara do roku 2023 (2007), či environmentálny plán Ankary do roku 2038 (2017), nedokázali vypracovať silné priestorové scenáre, ktoré

by zabránili neplánovanému rozšíreniu, a regulácie, ktoré by uspokojili verejný záujem.

V závere je možné zhodnotiť, že zmeny a zlyhania v administratívnom a hospodárskom systéme Turecka a zmeny v politike územného plánovania a rozvoja miest sa (aj časovo) prelínajú. Moderné princípy plánovania, ktoré sa pokúšali implementovať prostredníctvom centrálnych zavedených stratégií až do päťdesiatych rokov 20. storočia, je možné spájať so štátom riadenou urbanizáciou, vzniknutým pluralitným demokratickým systémom a liberálnou ekonomikou, ktorá trvala až do osemdesiatych rokov 20. storočia ako urbanizácia prácou. Artikuláciu globalizácie, upustenie od modernizmu (alebo nového modernizmu) a vznik neoliberalného hospodárstva po roku 1980 možno zase zhrnúť ako urbanizáciu kapitálu. Hoci moderné urbanistické plánovanie, abstraktná sterilita funkčného mesta a rozlíšenie mestskej utópie, ktorá popiera socio-psychologické potreby, v konečnom dôsledku vedú k opusteniu mestskej štruktúry, sú však spojené s vnútornou dynamikou krajiny a mesta. Toto plánovanie sa tak stalo synonymom pre kolaps systému rozvoja na konci 20. storočia. V súčasnosti je možné tento proces v meste Ankara opäť identifikovať, a to na príkladoch urbánnej expanzie vo všetkých smeroch a veľkých investícií do výstavby, ktoré sa až príliš často realizujú v rozpore s (legálne) platným urbanistickým plánovaním.

## Introduction

In modernism and/or modern periods, the city is the place where rationality and functionality dominate and hence should be planned as unvarying and homogeneous.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the city is a place where geographic context and local culture is denied, and modern culture is created, taught, and transferred to the successive generations through social and spatial standardization. With this content, modernism as a universal urban utopia was regularly adopted to provide a solution for the problems of many nation-states related to industrialization and agglomeration in the city.<sup>2</sup> However, the regulation of the city to match the demands of the capitalist economy brought this utopia into conflict with reality by the end of the 20th century and the creation of various urban problems (unaddressed questions of identity, belonging, etc.).<sup>3</sup>

Modernism likewise served as the tool of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, chief military commander of the War of Independence and subsequently the founding leader of the Turkish Republic, additionally the primary figure of the officer-bureaucrat group as the adopters of the republican ideology behind post-Ottoman Turkey. It was Atatürk and his associates who fictionalized the modern city as a space and a school in which republican culture and/or a uniquely Turkish modernity is created and transferred with sociospatial policies. In the Western, Euro-American context, modernity can be explained as the result of the process of urbanization defined by industrial capitalism.<sup>4</sup> However, in Turkey from the early republican period until about 1950s, modernity embodied the official state project to create a new society totally stripped of its Ottoman heritage and imagined by its elites in the form of Turkey as a secular nation-state.<sup>5</sup> Thanks to modernism, in this interpretation by Turkey's elites, the city is the field of action for enlightenment in the way of life (modern) and culture (modernity) in terms of separation from the traditional and the task of building a modern society. Despite the economic woes after the War of Independence, the state first realized this idea in Ankara with the aim of representing the republic's power and permanence, along with setting a model for other cities, and the backbone of this modern city was preserved until the 1980s.<sup>6</sup> This article focuses on the process that continued from the foundation of the Republic up to the 1980s: following the path of implementing a modern city planning system with national dynamics. Brief mention will also be made of the process starting in the 1980s of the urban development or urban sprawl, determined by the sanctions of globalization, not modernism or modern urban planning systems. In this study, the spatial development processes are explained by using the literature and local government archives and certified by on-site examinations.

## Hypothetical Background: Modern City Planning and Turkey

Modernism developed and made its presence felt in cities rapidly growing under the influence of the positivist technocentric standardization of knowledge and production, the awareness of progressive and rational planning, and the industrial revolution. The principles of modern city planning and architecture were set out in the 1933 Athens Declaration of the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM-The International Congress of Modern Architects). According to this declaration, the city is divided into four functional zones: housing, recreation, business, and transportation. In planning the ideal city, it is essential to ensure homogeneity, perfection and certainty, justice, equality, and social order. In modern architecture, detached from traditionality, the representative of this order in the urban space is not aesthetic concerns but functionality. However, the abstract sterility of the functional city and the negation of socio-psychological needs were criticized by CIAM in 1947, and in the wake of the cultural movements of the 1960s, modern city planning lost importance.<sup>7</sup>

Modernist tendencies and movements in Turkey were first launched by the royal edict of reform (Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayun) in the Ottoman Empire in 1839. These regulations, which were planned and implemented by the central government yet not interiorized by the locals, were implemented with a notable disregard to such factors as local differences in culture, religion, and lifestyle.<sup>8</sup> This western-referenced imposition, labeled as westernization or the Tanzimat reform era, is perceived as “timid modernity” in the context of modernization.<sup>9</sup> In this period, with the initial laws related to urban space, limited modern city planning practices were encountered in the fireplaces and refugee neighborhoods by a grid settlement pattern, fire-resistant building materials, and property rights.

Following the establishment of the new nation and nation-state with the declaration of the Turkish Republic on 29 October 1923, the city became the location and indicator of a modernization that combined national and modern culture. In this period, attempts were made at constructing modern cities in the form of “radical modernity” (1923 – 1950), drawing upon centralist-mandatory public authority and formalist-constructive physical zoning plans.

With the appearance of a multi-party democratic system and rapid urbanization, a period of “populist and or slackened modernity” (1950 – 1980) then followed; under the impact of globalization or neoliberal economics and project-based urban development, an “attrition of modernity” (after 1980) was experienced, as Tekeli, himself a modernist scholar, has mentioned.<sup>10</sup> In the context of urbanization, these periods can also be described successively as the urbanization of the state, the urbanization of labor, and the urbanization the capital.<sup>11</sup>

## Reading Modernism over Capital, Ankara

The capital of Turkey is one of those rare instances that highlight the appearance of modern city planning and implementation tools in Turkey as well as the dynamics through which they were abandoned. This process is described in the following sections.

### Before the Republic:

#### Public Improvements in the Westernization Period (1839 – 1923)

During the Westernization period, Ankara was devastated by the famine of 1874 and the great fires of 1881, as well as the loss of much of its workforce in the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877 – 1878. Abidin Pasha, as the governor (1884 – 1892) of the Ankara Province, which was established in 1864, tried to modernize the city through administrative reforms in the country (Photo on page 158). Drinking water was brought to the city, and the road to Istanbul was improved; other improvements included a 50-km road network, the major boulevard of Station or later Republic (İstasyon, Cumhuriyet) Street (Photo on page 158) along with the Ankara-Istanbul Railway Station opened in 1892, and many other new streets laid out. In 1881, many modern public buildings were built: post offices, hospitals, secondary schools, high schools and industrial schools, government offices, etc.<sup>12</sup> The neighborhood established for Bosnian immigrants in 1903 was the first example of a grid settlement system in the city and was an unmistakable product of modernist planning. It is possible that in these public improvements a plan was implemented similar to the land-use plans of Major von Vincke, an engineer from the German delegation who came to support the Ottoman reforms in 1838.<sup>13</sup>

At the railway junction, bazaars, shops, public houses (Taşhan), hotel (d'Angora), and bank and insurance company offices were built in the First National Architectural Style, the idiom prevalent



**A GLIMPSE OF THE OLD CITY AND THE CASTLE OF ANKARA AT THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY AND FROM TODAY**

POHLAD NA HISTORICKÉ MESTO A HRAD ANKRAY NA KONCI 19. STOROČIA AŽ PO DNEŠOK

Photo Foto: Nevin Turgut Gültekin, 2019



**KIZILAY SQUARE, GUVEN PARK AND ATATÜRK BOULEVARD IN THE 1930S**

NÁMESTIE KIZILAY, PARK GUVEN A ATATÜRKOV BULVÁR V TRIDSIATYCH ROKOCH 20. STOROČIA

Source Zdroj: BAYRAKTAR, Nuray, 2013. Concurrent testimony to history: the process of change in Ulus and Kizilay Squares. *Journal of Ankara Studies*. 1(1), p. 23

at the beginning of the 20th century (1908) displaying a combination of the sentiments of nationalism and the architectural motifs of the past. Prevalent at the end of the Ottoman period, this architectural style possesses an eclectic understanding composed of Neoclassicist, Islamic, traditional architectural symbols and even Moorish characteristics. As a result, this urban center, established in a short time (1895 – 1902), created a new (modern)/old (traditional) duality in the city. The visible prosperity and the modern lifestyle of the late-Ottoman bourgeoisie (non-Muslims, high-level bureaucrats, etc.) living in the vicinity of this center accelerated the process of social and spatial disintegration. However, the economy of the city declined and the decayed town remained confined within its 17th century borders because of the destruction of most of this center and the residential areas with the collapse of the empire and the great fires of 1913 and 1916.<sup>14</sup> Despite this situation, Mustafa Kemal decided to make Ankara the center of the Anatolian resistance when he seized control of the city in December 1919, eventually declaring it the capital of Turkey on 13 October 1923.



ANKARA ETHNOGRAPHY MUSEUM

MÚZEUM ETNOGRAFIE V ANKARE

Photo Foto: Nevin Turgut Gültekin, 2019

### **The Period of Radical Modernity: From the Foundation of the Republic to the 1950s**

Modern urban planning was an effective tool in establishing ideological and political hegemony and maintaining continuance.<sup>17</sup> One of the reasons why the modern urban planning system was preferred in the Kemalist system, from the establishment of the republic to the 1950s when the enthusiasm of modernity diminished, was this feature of social control. Urban planning approaches that adhered to radical modernism continued until the 1950s; however, because of globalization, modernity weakened and gradually began to be erased in the 1980s.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Early Republican Period: Seeking a Planner and a Plan**

The first planning experience in the capital, the Heussler Plan (1925), assumed the goal of protecting whatever built fabric existed, yet could not prevent unplanned development nor even the formation of the first shantytown, the Atif Bey neighborhood.<sup>19</sup> The second experience was comprised of two plans prepared by Carl Christoph Lörcher, one for the Old City (1924) and the other for the New City (1925). The 1924 plan proposed a compact urban core with a new center connected to the main rail station. The station-assembly-castle axis and consecutive green areas, emphasizing the past, were connected to Atatürk Boulevard, the main axis of the new city, thus generating semantic and physical coherence with the new city. Since the rapid population growth necessitated the planning of the new city before the completion of this plan, the new city (Çankaya) was designed using a garden-city approach in the city plan of 1925, while the administrative and commercial center was positioned on Atatürk Boulevard with housing areas, squares, and parks surrounding this essential backbone. Although the organic connection of this plan with the old city was not fully appreciated, land arrangements were made and construction was started on 150 hectares of the full 400 hectares expropriated in 1924 for the main backbone of the new city including the Administrative Center

(figure on page 161, photo on page 161), and Atatürk Boulevard, Kızılay Square, or Güven Park<sup>20, 21</sup> (photo on page 163). During this period, many public buildings necessary for modern life such as hospitals, sports fields, schools, public houses, museums and even a tree farm and a zoo were constructed in the city. However, the use of different housing typologies, indicative of social and economic divergence, indicates that the goals of modernism had not been achieved. The living area for the established residents of Ankara who maintained their traditional lifestyles, and for the soldiers and bureaucrats who were obliged to rent homes, was the old city. The first apartment buildings, which were rapidly built for those receiving unearned income, were occupied by the middle-upper class, representing the new bourgeoisie. The first examples of the type of villa built by the government, including public housing and the houses of the administrative staff, ambassadors and close personal associates of Atatürk, located in the vicinity of the Presidential Palace were the modern houses of the new city. Additionally, the vineyard houses in Kavaklıdere, Keçiören, Etlik, and Dikmen located on the walls of the city formed the summer residences of this group. Since the housing needs of working-class arrivals from outside Ankara were never addressed, the first informal shanty settlements started to encircle the city.<sup>22</sup>

In the architecture of the period, the goal was to produce economic solutions while creating a modern and progressive image that reflected national values; thus the representation of the Republic in public buildings and the establishment of modern patterns of life in the residential buildings was essential. With these principles supported by the administration, the First National Architectural Style emerged and remained in use until 1927. Public buildings in this style, such as the Ethnography Museum, the State Museum of Painting and Sculpture and the Public House Building, and urban spaces such as Ulus Square and the People's Garden, are defined as image architecture. Due to its incompatibility with new technology and modernism, this style remained a selective, formalistic, emotional and academic movement.<sup>23</sup>

### **The First Plan Implemented in Ankara: the Jansen Plan**

The City of Ankara Directorate of Housing, established in 1928 with the Lörcher Plans in mind and the conviction that town planning cannot be managed by the municipality alone, invited city planners Hermann Jansen, Leon Jausseley, and Josef Brix to Ankara to prepare a preliminary report for the development of the city. Jansen's plan, which won the city planning competition organized in the same year, was put into practice in 1932, remaining in force until 1938. The basis of the urban macro-form in this plan was the dualism of old Ankara vs. new Ankara envisaged by the municipality. The old city was left untouched as the area for state ceremony or protocol; here, the Ulus district was preserved as the center and its northwest Bentderesi region was divided into industrial establishments and workers' quarters. In the new city, the plan followed the standard of a garden city through the employment of green pedestrian walkways that interconnected the districts of the city.<sup>25</sup> Among the completed public buildings on Atatürk Boulevard, embassy buildings were planned and residential zones located behind the boulevard.<sup>26</sup>

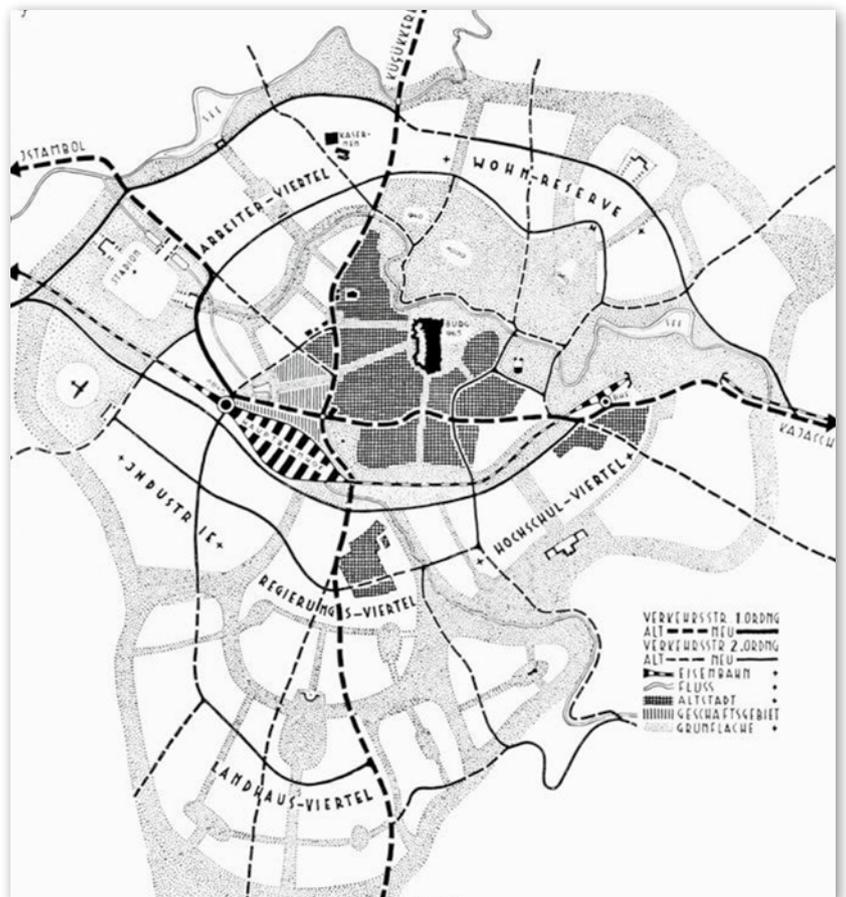
Together with the First National style, the period termed International Modernism in the work of Turkish or foreign architects defined itself as one of functionalism and rationalism until the 1940s. In this period, buildings were designed with a focus on the solutions appropriate to their functions and façades were cleared of ornamentation, thereby becoming simplified. This movement is evident through public buildings.<sup>29</sup> According to the Jansen Plan, monumentally scaled, axially planned, symmetrical, monolithic structures with neoclassical porticos were constructed; these symbols of Turkish republican identity in the 1930s were, however, designed by foreign architects using the modern architectural style of those years. With the school buildings designed by Austrian architect Bruno Taut (resident in Ankara 1936 – 1939), including the university's Faculty of Language, History, and Geography and the Atatürk High School among others; the schools, embassies and public buildings designed by Ernst Egli (resident in Ankara 1927 – 1938), including the State Conservatory, Commercial High School, the Girls' High School, the Faculty of Agriculture, the Faculty of Political Sciences, and the Swiss Embassy, etc.<sup>30, 31</sup> and public buildings including the Grand National Assembly (photo on page 162), the ministry buildings, the general staff buildings, etc. and parks, squares, and statues designed by the Austrian architect Clemens Holzmeister from 1927 between the old city and new city, the city gained the appearance and the identity of a modern national capital.<sup>32</sup> Although Turkish architects followed the style of international architects in the 1930s, such as Seyfettin Arkan's designs for the Bank of Provinces and Foreign Affairs (Hariciye)



**THE STATE MUSEUM OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE AND THE PUBLIC HOUSE BUILDING**

ŠTÁTNE MÚZEUM MALBY A SOCHÁRSTVA A BUDOVA „VEREJNÉHO DOMU“

Photo Foto: Nevin Turgut Gültekin, 2019



**THE JANSEN PLAN**

JANSENOV PLÁN

Source Zdroj: JANSEN, Hermann, 1937. Ankara Urban Planning Report. Istanbul: Alaeddin Kiral Yayınevi, p. 42



**THE FIRST BUILDING OF THE  
CENTRAL BANK OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF TURKEY**

PRVÁ BUDOVA CENTRÁLNEJ BANKY  
TURECKEJ REPUBLIKY

Photo Foto: Nevin Turgut Gültekin, 2019



**KAHRAMANLAR OFFICE TOWER  
AS THE FIRST SKYSCRAPER OF THE  
COUNTRY AND THE KIZILAY**

ADMINISTRATÍVNA BUDOVA  
KAHRAMANLAR – PRVÝ  
MRAKODRAP V KRAJINE, KIZILAY

Photo Foto: Nevin Turgut Gültekin, 2019

Saraçoğlu Neighborhood (Photo on page 162) in which traditional and national components were blended with modernism.<sup>33, 34</sup> In brief, it can be stated that both the Turkish and foreign architects shared similar architectural views and understandings, most notably in the case of Atatürk's monumental mausoleum, Anıtkabir, the most important example of this style and the symbol of the city, which was designed in 1942 by Turkish architects Emin Onat and Orhan Arda.

Although Turkey did not participate in the Second World War, the conflict caused the nation political and economic troubles. While the effects of the economic destruction of the War of Independence and the struggles of the worldwide economic crisis of the 1930s persisted, a multi-party management system was introduced in 1946 with economic austerity measures, strict censorship, and an attempt to rectify the urbanization problems created by the masses migrating from rural to urban areas after agricultural mechanization. With this system, the central planning and development model lost its importance and like other big cities (İstanbul, Bursa, İzmir, Adana, Kayseri, İzmir etc.) Ankara was abandoned to its fate within a framework of a liberalised economy and populist governmental policies.<sup>35</sup> In 1939, the Jansen Plan was also neutralized by giving the Directorate of Housing the authority to change the zoning plan. Furthermore, with the population growth that should have been foreseen in this plan,<sup>36</sup> investment in industry rather than urbanization, the rejection of the idea of cooperative housing as a solution to the housing problem (such

## ULUS SQUARE IN THE 1930S

NÁMESTIE ULUS V TRIDSIATYCH  
ROKOCH 20. STOROČIA

Source Zdroj: BAYRAKTAR, Nuray, 2013.  
Concurrent testimony to history: the  
process of change in Ulus and Kızılay  
Squares. *Journal of Ankara Studies*.  
1(1), p. 27



as 1935, Bahçelievler, Günevler), the rise of land speculation and illegal housing construction, shantytowns became inevitable. Moreover, shanty houses were legalized by amnesty laws, while these multi-story high-density neighborhoods, which the public built or made possible with cheap loans, were added to the city without any provision for adequate infrastructure.<sup>37, 38</sup> At the end of the process, the values of the modern urban model were lost: the apartment blocks in the regular residential areas and the low-rise, poor-quality slum areas in the walls became the primary avenues for conveying the socio-economic status of the city.<sup>39</sup>

### The Populist and/or Slackened Modernity Period: The Yücel-Uybadin Plan

With the transition from the statist model to the right-wing liberal economy in the early 1950s, cities became a chaotic environment in which the pace of urbanization, as opposed to modernity, took precedence over industrialization. In these years, termed the populist and/or slackened modernity period,<sup>40</sup> Ankara was like a city that had lost its modern urban spirit and developed without a plan. Although unable to cope with the new urban problems, the government was trying to regain lost prestige through major reconstruction activities (the Menderes<sup>41</sup> operations) under the Republic's first law on public improvement and creating streets opened to automotive traffic in the fabric of the old city (such as Talat Pasha Boulevard) and other transportation policies that tore apart the historic fabric. Yet along with these developments, which were extensively discussed in academic and professional platforms, local features were added to the city planning, involving comprehensive rationalist planning and the introduction of training in urban planning on the university level.<sup>42</sup> With its Universalist and Rationalist architectural style, the city of the Republic began to change with the introduction of multi-story public and commercial structures, such as the first skyscraper of the country in the Kızılay in the new city, the Kahraman Office Tower (Photo on page 165).

### 1930s<sup>43</sup> – 1928<sup>44</sup>

The economic collapse of market liberalism in the late 1950s, the repudiation of the gains of the Republic by the government, and the sanctions of the 1960 coup exacerbated by the sharpening social differentiation formed a breaking point in the management and morphology of the city. The Yücel-Uybadin Plan (YUP), the winner of the zoning plan competition that was held to control this growth, came into effect in 1957. Although this plan, as with the previous plans, imagined the placement of residential areas and industrialization on the north-south axis, it could not deliver a solution for the informal shanty settlements and attempted to overcome these problems with short-term solutions. Particularly following the Property Ownership Law of 1965 which allowed for multiple claims of ownership to the same parcel, both the planned and unplanned areas, not to mention the slums in all cities began to be transformed into high-rise buildings through the mechanism of the market, thus making the YUP invalid. With the law of the Ankara Regional Flat Order

Plan (1968), the further increase of building density placed still greater burdens on the social and physical infrastructure. Moreover, these problems could not be overcome due to the inconsistency between the Ankara Zoning Directorate and the municipality responsible for implementing the YUP. The Republic-era silhouette of Ankara, including the old city center, was entirely obliterated through new high-rise buildings<sup>45, 46</sup>.

### **The Old City Center: Ulus Square and the Atatürk Statue in the 1930s<sup>47</sup>**

In the 1970s, the pressures of migration, rapid urbanization, slums, air pollution, traffic, and limited housing, along with Ankara's topographic position squeezed into a basin, brought modern urban planning, that is to say, modern planning, to the edge of collapse. On the other hand, the traditionalist culture of the slums that had been marginalized by the 1960s and the pop culture of urbanized city-dwellers began to clash. Eventually, this conflict brought about the fragmentation of every institution and social group of the country into left and right, i.e. the ideological polarization of society which led to sharp politicizing of daily life and hence urbanization as well. The spatial manifestation of this conflict was the formation of 'liberated neighborhoods' (such as Altındağ and Tuzlucaıyır), in Ankara as in the other cities.<sup>49</sup> In response, violence and armed action justified the seizure of the control by the military. Along with the social and political demands, urban problems were submerged by the 1980 coup, and many phenomena such as modernism, modernity and urban planning were suspended by the depoliticization process.

### **Modernity after 1980: Radical Urban Transformation**

The post-1980 articulation of globalization was focused on urban competition. In Turkey, through the wave of globalization launched with the liberalization of the economy through neo-liberal policies, urban space became the most profitable investment area for the rental sector. Spatial transformation began with market mechanisms shaped by public and private partnerships, involving urban renewal and the opening of agricultural land to construction. The loosening of zoning control and the transfer of urban planning authority to local government accelerated this transformation: modernist central planning was rejected, and large investment projects were replaced by zoning plans. The change in production and consumption habits to match global trends similarly changed the urban demands. Enclosed urban spaces, gated and guarded housing complexes that offer urban services (sports, shopping, entertainment, etc.), large shopping centers, and themed parks started to spread in the main transportation corridors. Starting with the emergence in the 1980s of a post-modernist historicist approach to architecture, the matter of form and content, in particular cultural or ideological dimensions has been revived. In the context of alternative modernities, these developments can be regarded as a new interpretation of neo-modernism -- the ideology of modernization - as multiculturalist, civil societyist, and globalist.<sup>50</sup>

Consequently, as the city developed until the 1980s confined to its topographic bowl, the selection of locations outside the bowl of homogenous, sterile, and privileged living spaces of housing cooperatives and middle-upper and upper income groups was the main problem and determinant. The 1990 Ankara Metropolitan Area Master Plan (AMAMP), which is based on these spatial strategies and is the first example of the country's first metropolitan scale, was put into effect in 1982 (figure on page xx 2). With this structural plan, urban development was directed outside of the topographic bowl along the main transportation axes to the west. In this corridor, mass housing areas, industrial areas, and large public use areas were envisaged for growth at minimum cost without causing environmental harm or destroying natural landscapes. Since the AMAMP had no tools for implementation of the zoning plan, the YUP Plan simultaneously remained in force. However, the YUP was ignored and the AMAMP failed to achieve its goals, since numerous changes were made to the plan under political and speculative pressures. The expansion that started in the western corridor spread to the southwest and south through the housing demands of the middle-upper- and upper-income groups and the legalization of this expansion by means of the project implementations of the local government, a process gradually institutionalized throughout the country. In essence, this planning system in which the central and local administrations preferred to adopt an ad hoc post-modernism instead of the binding force of large-scale planning served to benefit well-positioned individuals rather than offering the wider public and social benefits envisaged by modernism. On the other hand, the agricultural areas in the west of the city (the Etimesgut, Sincan, and Yenikent regions) and the south-west (between the old Istanbul road and the Eskişehir and



**THE PROCESS OF SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ANKARA CITY**  
 PROCES PRIESTOROVÉHO ROZVOJA MESTA ANKARA

Source Zdroj: 2023 Capital Ankara Master Reconstruction Plan –The Chapter Macroform, Map. 3.1.

Konya roads) and around the airport axis in the north (the Akyurt and Çubuk plains) were opened for construction. In addition, the Ankara ring road and the housing and industrial projects on this road, which conflicted sharply with the macro-form proposal of this plan, fueled property speculation, and the southwest corridor (the Eskişehir road, Alacaatlı, İncek, Taşpınar regions) became the most expensive region of the city (Figure on page xx 2). As the AMAMP lost its effectiveness due to the absence of controls on its implementation in practice, the 2015 Ankara Structural Plan Scheme (1998), which was prepared to ensure integration between the vast number of fragmented development plans and projects, failed to be approved. In the south-west corridor, the court canceled some of the local and central government's position plans.<sup>51</sup>

The 1/25,000-scaled 2023 Capital Ankara Reconstruction Master Plan (CARMP), which came into force in 2007, defined urban development in six sub-regions (central, west, southwest, south, east, and north planning regions) in order to develop an integrated macroform.<sup>54</sup> Although this plan identifies urban sprawl as the most vulnerable aspect of the city, it has not been able to develop strong spatial scenarios that would prevent the city's unplanned and uncontrolled expansion.<sup>55</sup> The changes and revisions made to the zoning plans, and the lawsuits filed against it, made the plan almost dysfunctional, and a search was started for new plans (Figure on page xx 1).

The objective of the 1/100,000 scaled 2038 Ankara Environmental Order Plan, approved on January 13, 2017, can be interpreted as a search for a solution to non-integrated development from the ongoing growth of urbanization and industrialization along with rapidly swelling population, and to ensure planned growth in all sectors. However, the city is still expanding in all directions. Also, according to zoning regulations in Turkey, the validity of the sub-scale CAMRP, which was not prepared according to this plan before the upper-scale plan, is a matter of debate.

## Conclusion

In our evaluation of the process starting from the reconstruction of the city as a capital to the present, the following conclusions can be drawn.

The city of Ankara was the first national capital built in the 20th century drawing upon contemporary planning values, in the context of a primarily Islamic society, and applying the modernism of its era and the synthesis of Turkish architecture with modernity in addition to an understanding of modern architecture; it is a transition point between the historical past of the city and the modern nation-state.

It was not accidental that Ankara was chosen as the capital. Although political modernity tried to efface it, the city maintained its roots to the beginning of the 20th century as a capital during the periods of the Galatians and the Romans and the religious, military, postal, and trading center during the Byzantine, Seljuk, Ahi, and Ottoman periods.

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In addition, Ankara is an example of modern capital planning clearly resembling the founding of other capitals of the 20th century. Like Canberra, Islamabad, Brasilia, Chandigarh, Abuja, Dodoma, and New Delhi, Ankara is itself the capital of a state designed and created as a new city beside an old city with the purpose of creating a nation and the nation-state. As pioneers of modern urban planning in the 20th century, these capitals also influenced the urban planning tradition in their countries and in the world. Ankara stands out as the cradle of modernization for the Turkish Republic, matching the ideologies of the republic and the Atatürk revolution.

Ankara is marked by two characteristics: its historic status as an important town located at the intersection of two caravan roads and its modern and current status as a national metropolis. Historically, it played witness to the transformation of the ummah into a contemporary urban citizen and is a document and laboratory that demonstrates the dynamics through which this planning systematic changed.

**36** The city of Ankara, a small central Anatolian city with approximately 30,000 inhabitants in 1923, had a population of 74,553 in 1927, 650,067 in 1960, 2,584,594 in 1990, 3,356,877 in 2000, 4,890,893 in 2011, and 5,445,026 in 2018; and became the second largest metropolitan city in Turkey. Ankara Valiliği [Ankara Governorship]. Official Website. Population of Ankara. [online] [Accessed 30. June 2019], Available at: <http://www.ankara.gov.tr/nufus-ve-idari-durum>

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**40** In 1946, the establishment of the Democratic Party showed that the coalition between the civil-military bureaucracy, the bourgeoisie, and the major landowners was over. In opposition to the single-party administrative system, populist discourses brought political power to this new political entity. Even if this process was interrupted by the 1960 military coup, the mutually opposed socialist and nationalist movements that emerged in its wake likewise understood themselves as popular-based. In this process, to be modern or to seem modern became widespread as a fashion and a resolution to the era's social and economic problems. Urbanized citizens accepted multi-storey buildings, modern architecture and wide boulevards, even unplanned urban development as a spatial indicator of modernity, and adopted these zoning practices. Therefore, this definition is concerned more with the imposed and increasingly widespread lifestyle and consumption culture

than with the political and ideological content of the popular concept. In other words, the interpretation is one of a weakening or retreat from the ideologies or modernity of the Republic.

**41** Adnan Menderes (1899 – 1961) was the first prime minister and the president of the Democratic Party, established during the transition to a multi-party democratic system.

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