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Spatial Representation of Power: Making the Urban Space of Ankara in the Early Republican Period

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ABSTRACT

The proclamation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 marks the beginning of a new era for Ankara which was proclaimed capital of the new nation-state. In parallel with the modernization efforts and nation-building strategies of the Republican government, Ankara, as the new capital, was intended to be constructed as a model city for the whole country. The aim was the creation of a modern cultural environment with new institutions, socio-cultural practices and a new physical townscape. This study argues that making the urban space of Ankara based on a town planning practice should be seen as part of the Republican modernity project. The priorities of this project were represented by a comprehensive building programme that resulted in the emergence of diverse public buildings in the urban space of Ankara from the early years of the Republic. Within this context, this chapter aims to review the state-sponsored urban planning and architectural practices, representing the power of the new regime in the capital-making of Ankara, focussing on the single-party period from 1923 to the end of the 1940s.

Cumhuriyet'in ilan edildiği 29 Ekim 1923 tarihi, Türkiye için aynı zamanda geniş kapsamlı bir modernite projesinin de başlangıcını sembolize etmektedir. Erken Cumhuriyet dönemi modernite projesi, yıkılan bir imparatorluğun ardından ulus kimliğinin inşa edilmeye çalışıldığı, sosyal, kültürel, ekonomik ve politik boyutlarıyla çok yönlü bir modernleşme sürecini tanımlamaktadır. Bu süreçte, Cumhuriyet rejimi ile birlikte değişen kurumsal yapı ile değişen sosyal ve kültürel pratiklere paralel olarak, mekânsal stratejilere de büyük önem verilmiş ve tüm ülke için bir model-kent olması amaçlanan yeni başkent Ankara, Cumhuriyet'in ilk yıllarından itibaren hızlı bir değişim geçirmiştir. Bu çalışma, erken Cumhuriyet dönemi Ankarası'nın başkent olarak imarını, cumhuriyetin ilk yıllarından 1940'ların sonuna kadar olan dönemde devlet eliyle yürütülen kentsel planlama çalışmaları ve kapsamlı yapı programına odaklanarak incelemektedir.

Ankara'nın ilk planı, Alman C.C.Lörcher tarafından 1924-25 yıllarında hazırlanmış ve Yenışehir Bölgesi'nin sonraki yıllarda kentsel biçimlenmesini büyük ölçüde belirlemiştir. Ancak, Lörcher planının, büyüyen kentin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamada yetersiz bulunması nedeniyle hükümet tarafından 1927 yılında uluslararası bir proje yarışması düzenlemiştir.

Yarışmayı kazanan Alman şehirci-mimar H.Jansen'in Ankara kenti imar planı, 1932 yılında resmen uygulamaya konmuştur. Plan, Ankara'nın tarihi kent merkezini, kentin "geleneksel" merkezi olarak korumuş ve kentin "modern" yüzünü, Yenışehir bölgesi için getirdiđi önerilerle biçimlendirmiştir. Ankara'nın başkent olarak planlanması sürecinin modernliđi, fonksiyonel olarak organize edilmiş düzenli bir kentsel strüktür getirmesinin yanı sıra, bu yapı içerisinde modern yaşamı destekleyen kentsel mekânlar önermesinden ileri gelmektedir. 1930'ların sonuna doğru Ankara geniş bulvarları, meydanları, parkları ve özelleşmiş yönetim, konut, endüstri ve rekreasyon alanları ile modern bir kent strüktürüne sahip olmuştur. Ancak bu süreç, giderek artan nüfus, paralelinde gelen düzensiz yerleşim sorunu, yetersiz teknik ve hukuki altyapı, planlama sürecine müdahale eden farklı aktörlerden kaynaklanan sorunlar gibi nedenlerle başta öngörülenden farklı gelişmeye başlamıştır. 1939'da Jansen'in sözleşmesinin feshi, Ankara'nın bu "en planlı" dönemi için bir kuruluş noktası olmuştur.

Erken Cumhuriyet dönemi Ankarası'nın Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin modern başkenti olarak planlanması süreci, devlet eliyle yürütölen geniş kapsamlı bir yapı programı ile paralel ilerlemiştir. Bu programda öncelik, yeni ulus-devletin ve yeni rejimin erkini sembolize eden yapılar ile modern bir toplum yaşamını desteklemek üzere inşa edilen yapılara verilmiştir. Bu yapıların dönemsel olarak incelenmesi 1920'lerin sonundan itibaren eğitim, sağlık, yönetim ve finans yapıları ile sosyal ve kültürel programlı yapıların yeni başkent kentsel mekânının şekillenmesinde oynadıkları önemli rolü ortaya koymakta ve yeni rejimin politik, ekonomik ve sosyal modernite projelerindeki öncelikleri hakkında fikir vermektedir. Kentsel planlama pratikleri sonucu gelişen kentin özellikle Yenışehir bölgesinde inşa edilen bu yapılar, 1930'ların sonundan itibaren Türkiye'nin başkentinin çehresini deđiştirmiş; dönemin modernist estetik anlayışı ile tasarlanarak yeni rejimin "asrileştirme" ve "medenileştirme" çabalarının araçları olarak görölmüşlerdir.

INTRODUCTION

The opening of the Grand National Assembly in 1920 and then the proclamation of the Turkish Republic on 29 October 1923 mark the beginning of a new era for Ankara as the capital city of the young Republic. In parallel with the modernization efforts and nation-building strategies of the Republican Government, Ankara, as the new capital in the making, was intended to become a model-city for the country. It was to become a modern cultural environment with new institutions, socio-cultural practices and a new physical landscape.

The relocation of the new Republican capital in Ankara symbolized not merely a transition from an Empire to a nation-state, but also marked a new era in Turkey's modernization attempts. Following the First World War and the National Independence War, the new Republican government embarked on a modernity project, to 'construct' the national identity and to create a modern socio-cultural and physical environment. Although it was inspired by Western modernity, Turkey's modernity project should be interpreted as a multi-sided national endeavour that evolved in parallel with the chang-

ing social, cultural, economic and political dimensions of the new republican regime¹. This chapter argues that making the urban space of Ankara during the early Republican period was also a comprehensive spatial modernity project, which was characterized by the state-sponsored urban planning practices and new building programmes. At that period, constructing the urban space of Ankara according to the principles of town planning was actually a modern project that proposed a systematic approach to the organization of the urban functions of the new capital. The modernity of this project lies in the expectation that a modern public realm and the ways of a modern urban life would flourish through the proper organization of public spaces. The government executed a comprehensive building programme in parallel with the implementation of urban plans from the late 1920s. In this programme, the priority was given to the construction of administrative buildings symbolizing the power of the new regime, and to the educational, financial, social and cultural buildings, which were intended to support the institutional modernization as well as a modern social life.

Focusing on the single party period from 1923 until the end of the 1940s, this chapter aims to explicate the urban planning and architectural practices during Ankara's capital-making process. After examining the planning attempts and their results on the urban fabric of the new capital, the building activities, reflecting the social, cultural, educational, administrative and economic priorities in the republican multi-sided modernity project, will be studied chronologically.

THE MAKING OF A NEW CAPITAL

It is obvious that there is a direct relationship between the building of a new state and its capital. According to Tankut, the making of a capital should be perceived as a state-sponsored political operation². What is intended while planning a new capital is to create a symbol for a new political system and to realize different political and social operations. Besides its political character, a capital should also have a particular physical image that requires a planned urban development, impressive architectural expression and a standardized environment. Many scholars writing about the politics of urban planning argues that planned capitals should be conceived, first of all, as expressions of the "pride and glory" of nation building³. This is the pride and glory of making the capital "out of nothing"⁴.

To be sure, Ankara was not a city that was created "out of nothing"; on the contrary, it had been settled since prehistoric times. Inhabited by a multi-cultural society, Ankara was an important production and commercial town of the Ottoman Empire throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, but lost its economic importance in the following century. Centred around its citadel, Ankara entered into the 20th century as a degraded, insignificant Anatolian town, which allowed republican administrators to implement their visions for a modern and contemporary capital.



Fig. 1
Ankara in the early 20th century.
Source: S. Türkoğlu Önge Archive.

PLANNING THE URBAN SPACE: TOWARDS A NEW CAPITAL

The declaration of Ankara as the new capital, and then the proclamation of a modern nation-state governed by a republic in October 1923 marked also the beginning of a

comprehensive spatial planning project for Ankara. Since it was envisioned by the republican administrators as a model-city for the whole country, planning attempts of Ankara started as a state-propelled initiative, for which the government was given by the Grand National Assembly large-scale administrative and fiscal power⁵. However, where to begin and how to execute a planning process were major questions that the republican government faced with in the early 20th century⁶.

The foundation of *Mübadele, İmâr ve İskân Vekâleti* [Ministry of Population Exchange, Development and Settlement] in October 1923 can be accepted as the initial stage for an institutionalized and planned urbanization process for Republican Turkey. Just after its foundation, the Ministry prepared a situation report and outlined the general principles and urgent needs of the city as the reorganization of the municipality, preparation of a development plan, installation of a sewage system, water system and electricity network, provision of housing, construction of roads, transportation and financial support⁷.

As stipulated in the programme, Ankara *Şehremaneti* [Municipality] was founded by law in 1924. According to *Şehremaneti* Law,

The city of Ankara constitutes a *Şehremaneti* including the vineyards, gardens, fields and pastures inside the limits that will pass through the surrounding hills. This boundary is determined and the map of the city is prepared by the Municipality. This map becomes valid after its approval by the Ministry of the Interior⁸.

This was the 1924 *Şehremaneti* Map, which showed the current situation of Ankara.

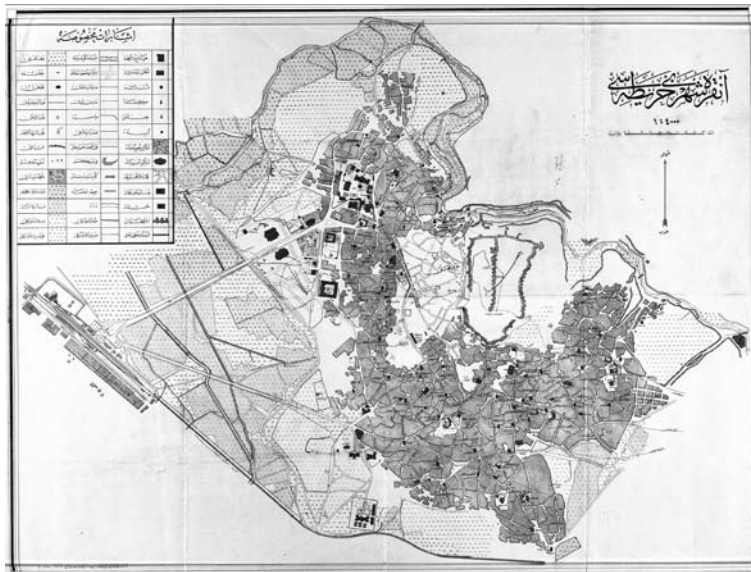


Fig. 2
Şehremaneti Map.
 Source: Archive of Turkish Grand National Assembly.

Actually, the initial attempts to prepare a development plan for Ankara started at the end of 1923. In December 1923, an Istanbul-centred enterprise with German capital, *Keşfiyat ve İnşaat Türk Anonim Şirketi* [*Société Anonyme Turque d'Études et d'Entreprises Urbaines*], was commissioned to prepare a survey report and a plan for the new capital. In May 1924, Carl Christoph Lörcher, the German architect working for this enterprise, submitted the first development plan of Ankara with a detailed report to the Municipality⁹. However, Lörcher's 1924 plan, comprising only the old part of the town, was rejected by the municipal commission because of the design ideas that it brought forward to transform the historical urban fabric¹⁰.

In 1925, the Grand National Assembly passed an important law for the expropriation of 300 hectares of land located on the south of the railway for the future extension of the city.¹¹ In the same year, Lörcher was asked to prepare a new plan for the 150 hectares of land that had just been expropriated in Yenişehir [new town] area. By this plan, Lörcher brought new ideas on the urban plot-block organizations, infrastructure, planning of streets and public squares, building heights, etc. This plan was approved by the Municipal Commission because “the housing crisis dictated that residential construction begin immediately¹².” Lörcher's 1925 plan determined the planning and construc-



Fig. 3
The Lörcher Plan.
Source: Cengizkan, 2004.

tion of the Yenışehir area to a large extent in the following years¹³. However, due to the uncontrolled growth of the city, the plan was found out to be limited in size and scope, which forced the government towards new measures.

In May 1927, Ankara *Şehremaneti* sent a technical delegation to Berlin. Under the guidance of the Turkish Ambassador and the Mayor of Berlin, the Turkish envoys firstly contacted an eminent professor of architecture and planning, Ludwig Hoffmann, who had prepared the extension plans of Athens, and asked him to prepare the development plan of Ankara. Hoffmann declined to prepare such a long-term project, but he recommended Professor Hermann Jansen and Professor Joseph Brix, from the *Berliner Technische Hochschule*, for this important task¹⁴.

On their return to Ankara, the delegation decided to organize a project competition with a limited number of participants. Since an international competition would require larger funds and a complex organization, the republican government preferred to obtain the plans by way of a competition by invitation. In addition to the two German planners, they also invited a French architect-planner, Léon Jaussey, to prepare the plan for Ankara¹⁵. In July 1927, the three contestants were called to conduct field surveys in Ankara and they were given the necessary instructions and specifications about the scope of the project and three base maps of Ankara¹⁶. Six months after the submission of the projects, in May 1929, the competition jury declared the proposal prepared by Professor Hermann Jansen the winner¹⁷. Upon winning the competition, Jansen was charged by the government with preparing detailed development plans for the capital, which was executed by approval of the Council of Ministers in 1932.

During the ongoing process of the competition, *Ankara İmar Müdürlüğü* [Directorate of Development of Ankara] was founded as a governmental institution affiliated to the Ministry of the Interior, the major responsibility of which was the successful application of the development plan of Ankara. According to its foundation law, the main executive board of this directorate was *İmar İdare Heyeti* [Commission of Development Management] that would be the major body responsible for the development of Ankara in the following decades¹⁸.

The division of the town into functionally specialized zones, which was new to the Turkish urban landscape, was one of the most outstanding aspects of Jansen's planning proposal for Ankara. Around a main axis from north to south, these zones for administrative, residential, industrial, educational and recreational uses were separated by wide green belts and interconnected by a regular street network¹⁹. Jansen's conservative approach was another principle in his plan, in which he defined Ankara's citadel and its immediate environment as a separate zone, representing the "traditional" pre-modern past of Ankara. The "modern", on the other hand, would be symbolized by the new town. Jansen envisioned the *Regierungs-Viertel* [government quarter] of the new Turkish Republic as a symbolic and spatial counterpoint to the citadel. Besides *Vekâletler Kartiyesi* [Ministries quarter] as the centre of the new town with modern governmental buildings, Jansen's *Siedlung* [settlement] approach for middle-and low density residen-

roles during this process. The republican government, representing the administrative power, was the leading actor in Ankara's first planning period. The members of the Parliament, who made laws and regulations, controlled financial sources and gave political decisions on the city at macro and micro levels, were also influential figures. Ankara İmar Müdürlüğü and its decision mechanism, İmar İdare Heyeti, whose mission was to prepare the plans and control their application, had the principal responsibility in this process. Until its commitment to the Municipality in 1937, the directorate had been the most active and autonomous actor in Ankara's planning period and took many critical decisions on buildings, building lots, expropriation or local plan applications. The major role of the Municipality during this period was to develop and apply projects for the basic urban services. The planner, Hermann Jansen, in contact with *İmar İdare Heyeti*, several pressure and interest groups, and the citizens were other actors in this planning process²².

Actually, the application of Ankara's Development Plan was a problematic process for several reasons. One of these was the lack of urban laws and regulations or the deficiencies of the existing ones²³. Between the years 1932 and 1939, the Law of Building and Roads had been the only law in force. Though a few regulations had been enacted defining the principles of building and road construction and urban plot-block arrangements, they were not sufficiently effective for the implementation of Jansen's plan. The technical problems arose from the absence or defective implementation of plans or cadastral maps; fiscal problems and the communication problems between the planner and decision mechanisms of the government were other issues during this process.

The end of the 1930s was a breaking point in the planning process of Ankara. In parallel with the increasing needs for housing due to unpredicted demographic growth of the capital, the urban space of Ankara was subject to a substantial transformation, which followed a different path than was proposed and predicted by Jansen. Parallel to uncontrolled demographic growth from the 1930s, illegally developed settlement areas, i.e. squatter areas, began to emerge in different parts of the city. Moreover, as a result of increasing speculations on the urban fabric, which were particularly focussed on the new areas around Yenışehir and Çankaya, Ankara began to expand beyond the limits of the Jansen plan. In September 1938, the government decided to enlarge the boundaries of Ankara's development plan from 1500 ha to 16,000 ha. According to Yavuz, this was the greatest achievement of the speculators, most of whom were members of parliament, bureaucrats and wealthy residents of Ankara²⁴. Following the decision on the enlargement of the boundaries of the city, the Municipal Commission cancelled Jansen's contract in December 1938. Being in a critical political and economic conjuncture on the eve of the oncoming World War, this marked the beginning of a new era for the Republic, and the end of the "most planned period" of Ankara.

CONSTRUCTING THE CAPITAL: THE NEW BUILDING PROGRAMME OF THE REPUBLIC

It should be pointed out that planning the new capital of the Republic according to the principles of an urban plan was actually a modern project at that period. The modernity of this project lies in its systematic approach to the organization of a functional urban structure. Within this structure, a public realm and modern ways of life were expected to flourish by the creation of public spaces such as large boulevards, squares, recreation areas, and the organization of specialized administrative, residential and industrial areas. As a result of these planning activities, Ankara began to reflect a modern city image from the 1930s²⁵.

In parallel with the planning practices of the new capital, the Republican state executed a comprehensive building programme that should be seen as the tools of the social, cultural, administrative and economic modernization attempts of the new regime. What was intended in this programme is to disseminate modern ways of life to the nation, as well as to construct the model city for the new Republic. The building programme of the early republican period focused on the construction of social, educational, financial, governmental and cultural buildings, which had been emerged in the public space of Ankara as the symbols of the new regime from the early 1920s²⁶. Within this context, examining these architectural practices in a chronological order so as to see to which building groups were given priorities through the ongoing social, administrative and economic modernization attempts of the Republic may be useful.

Around the years following its declaration as the new administrative centre of the new Republican State, Ankara was still confined within the limits of the old city around the citadel. Therefore, the architectural practices meeting the urgent needs of a changing order in the early years of the Republic took place in and around these spatial limits. The first buildings constructed in the new capital in the 1920s were the administrative ones that were the first National Assembly (1924), *Maliye Vekâleti* [Ministry of Finance] (1925), *Adliye Sarayı* [Hall of Justice] (1925-26) and *Hariciye Vekâleti* [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] (1927). Following the opening of new development areas by the 1925 Lörcher plans on the south, a new street, *Bankalar Caddesi* [Avenue of Banks], was opened between Taşhan Square and the southern edge of the city, on which the first bank buildings, *Osmanlı Bankası* [Ottoman Bank] (1926), *Ziraat Bankası* [Bank of Agriculture] (1926-29) and *İş Bankası* [Bank of Business] (1926), were constructed as the earliest financial buildings of the capital²⁷.

The institutional and architectural modernization attempts for educating the nation had a priority in the Republican nation-building strategies, among which the acceptance of *Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu* [The Law for the Unification of Education] for a secular national education system – instead of a religious based system – and the acceptance of the Latin alphabet were the first acts. Within this ideological agenda, a special importance was given to the construction of new school buildings, *Halkevleri* [People's Houses] and other centres, housing educational, social and cultural activities. The Ethnography Museum (1925-27) and People's House (first built as *Türkocağı*)



Fig. 5
Ankara in the 1930s. Kızılay Square and Atatürk Boulevard (above); Istasyon Street towards the old city centre (below).
Source: Sözen-Tapan, 1973.



Fig. 6
Bankalar Street.
Source: Sözen-Tapan, 1973.

(1927-30), located on the southern edge of old Ankara, were two early examples of buildings representing the priority of education in Republican social modernization plans²⁸.

Following the invitation of Hermann Jansen to prepare the plan of Ankara in 1927, the government invited many foreign architects and planners to Turkey in order to formulate the new building programme of the Republic along the principles of European modernist architecture of that period²⁹. These architects, most of which were from German-speaking countries, not only designed most of the state-sponsored buildings in the capital, but also taught architecture and urban planning in the Academy of Fine Arts and, then, in Istanbul Technical University, until the 1950s³⁰. According to Bozdoğan, these foreigners became the true 'architects' of Republican Turkey, as they played key roles in the development of architectural education in the universities and generated the architectural culture of the period in Turkey³¹.

Parallel to the development of Yenışehir area first along Lörcher's and then Jansen's plan from the end of 1920s, many education buildings, most of which were designed by these foreign architects, began to emerge in the urban scene of Ankara, particularly around these new developing areas. In terms of their architectural characteristics and specialized programmes, these buildings became the physical symbols of both the spatial and social modernity projects of the Republic. The first and most outstanding education buildings of Ankara were designed by a Swiss architect, Ernst Egli, who was

appointed as the consultant of the Ministry of Education and became the head of the Department of Architecture of the Academy of Fine Arts in 1930. Besides his mission at the Academy, Egli designed *Musiki Muallim Mektebi* [State Conservatory of Music] (1927-29), *Ticaret Lisesi* [High School of Commerce] (1928-30), *Yüksek Ziraat ve Baytar Enstitüsü* [Higher Agricultural and Veterinary Institute] (1928-33), *İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü* [İsmet Paşa Girls' Institute] (1930), *Mülkiye Mektebi* [Faculty of Political Sciences] (1935-36) and *Türkkuşu Sivil Havacılık Okulu* [Türkkuşu School of Civil Aviation] (1937-38) as the early examples of the Modernist [Modern Style] architecture in the new capital³². *Hıfzısıhha Okulu* [School of Hygiene] (1928-32) by Robert Oerley, *Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi* [Faculty of Humanities] (1937-39) by Bruno Taut, Cebeci and Atatürk High Schools (1938) by Bruno Taut and Franz Hillinger and the Faculty of Law (1938-40) by a Turkish architect, Recep Akçay, were other important educational buildings that were erected in Ankara in the early Republican Period³³.

The construction of health buildings in Ankara from the 1920s onwards should also be related to the priorities of the Republican modernization programme, in which the qualities of "health" and "youth" were idealized as the symbols of the new modern nation-state³⁴. *Sıhhat ve İçtimai Muavenet Vekâleti* [Ministry of Health and Social Aid] (1926-27), designed by a foreign architect, Theodor Jost, was the first governmental building that was constructed in the new part of the city, Sıhhiye. In this area, the initial planning criteria of which was determined by 1925 Lörcher plan, two more health buildings were constructed just after the construction of the Ministry. These are *Refik Saydam Hıfzısıhha Enstitüsü ve Okulu* [Refik Saydam Hygiene Institute and School] (1928-32), and Numune Hospital (1933) that were designed by Theodor Jost and Robert Oerley as early Modernist examples in the Republican building programme³⁵. In the years after the 1950s, Sıhhiye region became a specialized area where many hospitals were erected as indispensable facilities of a modern urban life.

Parallel to the continuing institutional reforms for the new administrative order of the Republican regime, the state-propelled building programme proceeded with the construction of governmental buildings. From the early 1930s, the triangular urban block that was proposed by Jansen as *Vekâletler Kartiyesi* [Government Complex] on the southernmost end of Yenişehir area was to become the administrative centre of the new state. The government commissioned the projects of almost the entire Government Complex to an Austrian architect, Clemens Holzmeister. He designed his first governmental buildings, the *Milli Müdafaa Vekâleti* [Ministry of National Defence] (built in 1928-31) and *Erkân-ı Harbiye Reisliği Dairesi* [General Staff Headquarters] (built in 1929-30) in 1927, at his office in Vienna. However, since the development plan of Ankara was not definite at that time, these two buildings were constructed on a vacant site in the countryside, next to which the triangular urban block of *Vekâletler Kartiyesi* would later be planned³⁶. After the approval of the Jansen plan in 1932, Holzmeister designed the administrative buildings of the Government Complex, which were the *Dabîliye Vekâleti* [Ministry of the Interior] (1932-34), *Nafia Vekâleti* [Ministry of Public Works] (1933-34), *İktisat ve Ziraat Vekâleti* [Ministry of Economy and Agriculture]

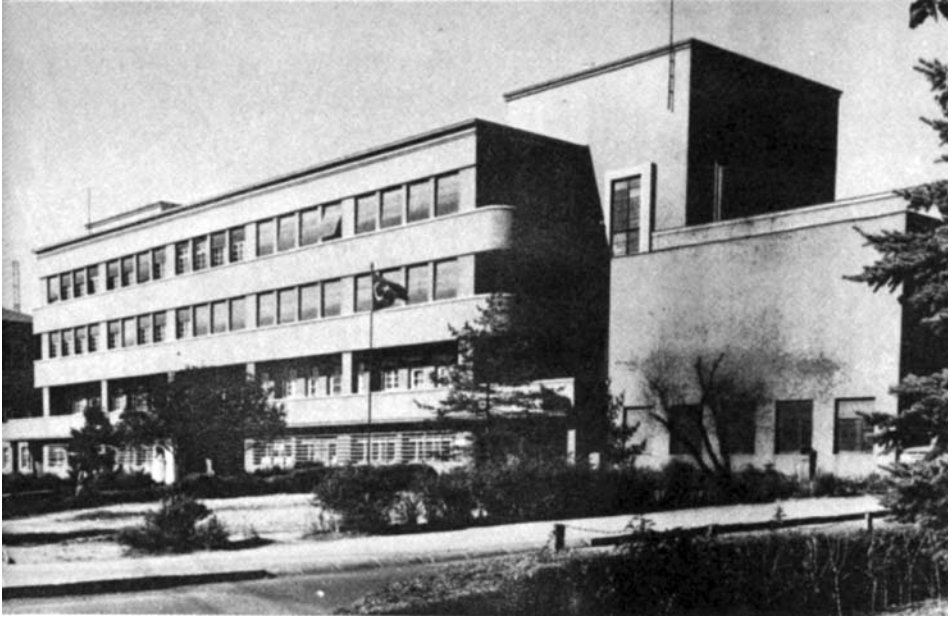


Fig. 7
New education buildings of Ankara. Ismet Pařa Girls' Institute (above); Faculty of Humanities (below).
Source: Sözen-Tapan, 1973.

(1934-35) and *Yargıtay* [Court of Appeal] (1930)³⁷. Nevertheless, Holzmeister's most important building in Ankara is *Büyük Millet Meclisi – Kamutay* [Grand National Assembly]. The project was selected as one of the three first prize winners of the international competition held in 1937. Of the three first prize-winning projects, all of which presented an imposing and monumental official aspect, the government decided to implement Holzmeister's project as the new Grand National Assembly Building of the Turkish Republic. The construction process started in 1938; however, since it was interrupted during the years of the Second World War, the building could only be completed in 1960³⁸.



Fig. 8
Jansen's *Regierungs-Viertel* (left); Holzmeister's Grand National Assembly Building Project (right).

Sources: Cengizkan, 2004, and "Arkitekt", no. 4, 1938.

Within the ideological agenda of the republican revolutions, economical and industrial development was seen as one of the major driving force behind the social modernity project. Therefore, in order to meet the requirements of developing building and industrial sectors and to encourage the investments in these sectors, the state established several public banks from the early 1930s, which resulted in the emergence of new finance buildings in the urban fabric of the capital³⁹. What was interesting is that although the governmental quarter was developed in the Yenışehir area, these buildings were all constructed in the old part of Ankara, as the commercial centre of the city was located there. Concomitant with other bank and finance buildings, being constructed in the 1920s, the construction of the buildings of *Divan-ı Muhasebat* [Court of Public Accounts] (1930) designed by Ernst Egli, the Central Bank (1931-33) and *Emlak ve Eytam Bankası* [Bank of Estate] (1933-34) by Clemens Holzmeister, *Etibank* (1935-36) by Sami Arsev, *Belediyeler Bankası* [Bank of Municipalities] by Seyfi Arkan and

Sümerbank (1937-38) by Martin Elsaesser transformed this part of the city into the financial centre of Ankara⁴⁰.

The Republican government placed special importance on the construction of social and cultural gathering places that were meant to support a modern urban life and to play a significant role in nation building. *Sergi Evi* [The Exhibition Hall] that was designed by Şevki Balmumcu was the most prominent of these buildings. From its completion in 1934, *Sergi Evi* became the symbol of Republican modernization attempts in the public space of the capital⁴¹. From the mid 1930s, a number of sports buildings and open public recreation areas were built in Ankara. The 19 Mayıs Stadium (1934-1936), designed by an Italian architect, Paolo Vietti-Violi, *Gençlik Parkı* [Youth Park] (1936-37) and Çubuk Dam Recreation Area and Casino (1937-38) planned by a French architect, Théo Leveau, and *Atatürk Orman Çiftliği* [The model farm and forest of Atatürk] were the most significant recreation areas in Ankara at that period⁴². According to Bozdoğan, these spaces, introduced within the socio-cultural context of the early republican period, became truly popular and were where people of all ages came “to stroll, to see, and to be seen”⁴³.



Fig. 9
The Exhibition Hall (*Sergi Evi*).
Source: S. Türkoğlu Önge Archive.

By the 1930s, communication and transportation played a significant role in the agenda of the Republican state, where the construction of railways and station buildings became one of the major enterprises. Within this context, the Central Railway Station and *Gar Gazinosu* [Station Casino] buildings, which were designed by Şekip Akalın and constructed between the years 1935 and 1937, formed an “impressive” entrance gate to the new capital⁴⁴.

The death of Atatürk on 10 November 1938 and the cancellation of Jansen’s contract one month later was a breaking point for the planning process of Ankara and for the comprehensive building programme of the Republican Government. During the 1940s, the construction of public buildings was decelerated due to the economic difficulties of the War period. On the other hand, parallel to the unpredicted demographic growth of the capital, the building activities in Ankara tended towards housing construction, which was widely directed by the private sector. Besides the continuing construction of the Grand National Assembly, the most important investment in the building programme of the Republican government during the 1940s was the building of the mausoleum of Atatürk, *Anıtkabir* [Monument-Tomb]. In 1942, an international project competition was held for *Anıtkabir*. The first prize-winning project, which was designed by two Turkish architects, Orhan Arda and Emin Onat, was built and completed in 1955. From its completion, *Anıtkabir* was identified with Ankara and has since been the symbolic monument-building of the capital of the Turkish Republic⁴⁵.

The building programme of the Republican government represents the priority given to the educational, social and cultural domains for the formation of a modern society. In this context, architecture was perceived as the most significant medium to symbolize the modernity of the new Republican regime. Within the architectural agenda of the early republican period, the public buildings were mostly described as the symbols of the power of state. As Sedad Hakkı Eldem stressed in one of his articles, “the Revolution should have the power to express its own character and should have a style compatible with its importance”⁴⁶. In most cases, it was a Modernist architectural style that was used in the public buildings to represent the power of the state and its social and spatial modernization attempts.

The architectural tendencies in the very early years of the Republican period reflected a national style, which is also seen as the continuation of Ottoman neo-classicism in Turkish architectural historiography. However, this revivalist nationalist approach became obsolete and lost its importance from the end of the 1920s, parallel with the invitation of European architects to design the public buildings of the new capital. According to Bozdoğan, what these architects brought to the Turkish architectural agenda in that period was an “austere, heavy and official-looking modernism”⁴⁷. At one side of this modernism, the impacts of the “Viennese” school, using the aesthetic features of neo-classical architecture, were dominant. Particularly, most of the governmental buildings – such as Holzmeister’s Grand National Assembly, General Staff Headquarters or ministerial buildings in *Vekâletler Kartiyesi* – or some of the school buildings are typical of this architectural style⁴⁸. With their crushing monumental masses, these buildings

were erected as the symbols of Republican power in the public space of Ankara from the early 1930s. In other cases, the “modernism” of the Republican architecture at that period referred to the aesthetic features of the “Modern Movement” or “International Style” that was pioneered by the Bauhaus and the CIAM [International Congress of Modern Architecture] in Europe. This style, entailing a functional-rational planning approach by means of using pure vertical and horizontal architectural forms, was identified as *kübik* [cubic], *yeni* [new] or *asrî* [modern] within Turkish architectural discourse from the 1930s⁴⁹. In this context, Ernst Egli was the first European architect to introduce “new architecture” into Turkey. His school buildings were praised as early modernist examples in the public space of Ankara. His appointment at the head of the Department of Architecture of the Academy of Fine Arts also resulted in a modernist transformation of the architectural curricula of the Academy, which also influenced the first-generation architects of the Republic. In the following years, the buildings of these architects – such as the *Sergi Evi*, Station Casino or Bank of the Municipalities – emerged as the modernist contributions to the new capital by young Turkish architects. From the end of the 1930s, however, the search for a “modern Turkish style” by means of using more “national” or “regionalist” forms began to dominate the architectural discourse⁵⁰. This attempt at “Nationalizing the Modern”, which was adopted by many of the Turkish architects during the 1940s, is identified by Bernd Nicolai as an “International National Style”⁵¹.

CONCLUSION

The making of the urban space of Ankara according to the principles of an urban plan was actually a modern process that was supported by a comprehensive building programme in the early Republican period. What makes this process modern was its systematic approach towards a functionally organized urban space, in which the public spaces – such as the large boulevards, squares or recreation areas – were planned to supply the needs of a modern social life and enhance a public realm. Parallel to these planning practices, the building programme of the government, as part of the republican spatial modernity project, began to change the public space of Ankara, from the 1930s. Examining the emergence of these buildings from a historical perspective, it can be seen that from the 1920s, the architectural practices in the capital were focused on the construction of educational, governmental, financial and cultural buildings in parallel with the priorities of republican social, administrative and economic modernization attempts. Symbolizing the new regime and imposing – or at least suggesting – modern ways of life to the society, these buildings were used as the tools of the republican project of modernity.

Obviously, it was a courageous attempt if the lack of experience of the administrators and poor economic conditions and deficiencies in legal, technical and administrative mechanisms of the early republican period are considered. Looking back to this period from today, the spatial modernity project that was conducted parallel to social modernization attempts can be identified as a successful project while creating a model city

for the country, in parallel with the revolutionary ideology of the new regime. However, from the 1940s, the urban space of Ankara began to develop in a different way from what was initially intended. As a result of uncontrolled demographic growth, illegal squatter areas began to emerge outside the proposed limits of the city. Moreover, the rising speculative demands, which were mostly coming from the bureaucratic elites and wealthy residents of the capital, resulted in an unplanned urbanization from north to south, particularly around Yenışehir and Çankaya. In this period, the building programme shifted from the public buildings towards the construction of housing in different parts of the city. After the 1950s, the urban fabric of Ankara was transformed far more than it had been by the early republican interventions. Though the main lines of the modern capital of Turkey were drawn by these early interventions, Ankara, with its over 4 million residents, has a more complex urban structure today.

NOTES

- ¹ This was epitomized as “to be Western in spite of the West” in the discourses of the era as an expression of the modernism of the *Kemalist* ideology. İ. Tekeli, *Modernite Aşılırken Kent Planlaması*, İstanbul 2001, p. 23.
- ² By comparing Ankara, Canberra, Brasilia and Islamabad, which were four newly established planned capitals in the 20th century, Tankut analyzes physical, social and political components of a capital-making process. G. Tankut, *Bir Başkentin İmarı: Ankara 1929-1939*, İstanbul 1993, pp. 21-38.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 45; L. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, New Haven 1992, pp. 56-162.
- ⁴ S. Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building, Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic*, Seattle - London 2001, p. 68.
- ⁵ “As established by our Constitution, Ankara is the administrative centre of the Republic of Turkey. To build in Ankara a government seat worthy of an advanced state, by outfitting it with the necessary infrastructure, sanitary and scientific dwellings, and other essentials of civilization is one of the most vital duties of our government as authorized and sanctioned by the Grand National Assembly.” This text was translated by Zeynep Kezer from the Assembly Record [Zabıt Ceridesi] dated 25 February 1341/1925. Z. Kezer, *The Making of a National Capital, Ideology and Socio-Spatial Practices in Early Republican Ankara*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley 1992, p. 42.
- ⁶ The urban modernization project was introduced into the Ottoman Empire from the second half of the 19th century, in parallel to the developments in the West. In the second half of the 19th century, a few building regulations [*ebniye nizamnamesi*] were executed to solve the problems of the Ottoman cities. However, the planning attempts developing around these regulations mostly remained as local solutions, such as the re-planning of the conflagration areas, widening of the roads or planning of the immigrant quarters. In any case, the lack of organized institutions, the economic deficiencies, as well as the existing habits were the major constraints that made these planning attempts incremental. For a detailed evaluation of the urban planning practices in the late 19th and early 20th centuries European and Ottoman cities, see İ. Tekeli, *Türkiye’de Kent Planlamasının Tarihsel Kökleri* [Historical Roots of Urban Planning in Turkey], in T. Gök (ed.), *Türkiye’de İmar Planlaması* [Urban Planning in Turkey], Ankara 1980, pp. 8-112.
- ⁷ A. Cengizkan, *Ankara’nın İlk Planı, 1924-25 Lörcher Planı*, Ankara 2004, pp. 17-18, 158-159.
- ⁸ “[...] Ankara şehri kendisine tabi olan bağ, bahçe, tarla ve otlakları içeride üzere tepelerden geçirecek hududuyla bir şebremaneti teşkil eder. Bu hudut Cemiyet-i Umumiye-i Belediye tarafından tespit ve

- haritası tanzim edilir. Bu harita Dâhiliye Vekâletince tasdik olunduktan sonra kesinleşir [...]*" M. Sarıoğlu, *Ankara-Bir Modernleşme Öyküsü*, Ankara 2001, p. 35.
- ⁹ Cengizkan, *Ankara'nın İlk Planı* cit., pp. 35-36, 158-159.
- ¹⁰ Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., p. 54.
- ¹¹ F. Yavuz, *Ankara'nın İmarı ve Şebirciliğimiz*, Ankara 1952, pp. 18-24. For further information on this large-scale expropriation, see also: Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., pp. 53-54; Tekeli, *Türkiye'de Kent* cit., p. 55.
- ¹² T.C. Ankara Şehremaneti, *Ankara Şehrinin Profesör M. Jausseley, Jansen ve Brix Tarafından Yapılan Plan ve Projelerine Ait İzahnameler*, Ankara 1929, p. 3.
- ¹³ For a comprehensive study on Lörcher and his plans for Ankara, see Cengizkan, *Ankara'nın İlk Planı* cit.
- ¹⁴ Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., p. 66; Yavuz, *Ankara'nın İmarı* cit., p. 24; T.C. Ankara Şehremaneti, *Ankara Şehrinin* cit., p. 3.
- ¹⁵ Yavuz, *Ankara'nın İmarı* cit., pp. 25-26.
- ¹⁶ These were the 1924 Şehremaneti plan in 1/4000 scale and the 1924 and 1925 Lörcher plans in 1/2000 and 1/1000 scales, respectively. For further information, see: Cengizkan, *Ankara'nın İlk Planı* cit., pp. 105, 211; Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., p. 67; T.C. Ankara Şehremaneti, *Ankara Şehrinin* cit., pp. 4-6.
- ¹⁷ According to Gönül Tankut, the projects were evaluated in three stages. The preliminary evaluation was made by a jury constituted by three persons, who were most probably the members of *İmar İdare Heyeti*. The jury in the second stage had 26 members from different occupations such as parliamentarians, architects and engineers. In the last stage, the projects were evaluated by a six-member commission and the winner was declared on 16 May 1929. Having heard from one of the jury members, Fehmi Yavuz suggested that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was personally involved with the evaluation of the projects and approved the Jansen plan as the winner. In his memoirs, Falih Rıfkı Atay, who was a jury member in all three stages as the director of *İmar İdare Heyeti*, also stated that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk personally examined all the plan proposals and declared the first place of Prof. Jansen's plan. F.R. Atay, *Çankaya: Atatürk Devri Hatıraları*, Ankara 1958, p.380; Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., pp. 75-77; Yavuz, *Ankara'nın İmarı* cit., p. 37.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-42.
- ¹⁹ The western parts of this artery were planned as an industrial zone [*Industrie-Viertel*], while the eastern parts would be the education zone [*Hochschul-Viertel*]. The government quarter [*Regierungs-Viertel*] was positioned to the south of the citadel, between the educational and industrial zones. The residential areas in Jansen's plan were dispersed around the town in a way that the new officials of republican government would be located around the administrative quarter, while the workers would live to the northwest. H. Jansen, *Ankara İli İmar Planı*, İstanbul 1937, pp. 6-7.
- ²⁰ The total area of these residential quarters in Jansen plan was foreseen as 1475 hectares for 271.000 inhabitants. Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., pp. 79-82.
- ²¹ G. Tankut, *Ankara İmar Planı Uygulamasının 1929-1939 Arasındaki Dikkat Çeken Verileri* [The Significant Remarks during the implementation of Ankara's Development Plan between 1929-1939], in Y. Yavuz (ed.), *Tarih İçinde Ankara II*, Ankara 2001, p. 10.
- ²² Tankut, *Bir Başkent'in İmarı* cit., Ch. 3 analyzes these actors in detail.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-161.
- ²⁴ Yavuz, *Ankara'nın İmarı* cit., p. 65. For further information about the speculations on urban space, see: T. Şenyapılı, *Baraka'dan Gecekonduya. Ankara'da Kentsel Mekanın Dönüşümü: 1923-1960*, 2004, p. 111; S. Aydın, K. Emiroğlu, E.D. Özsoy, Ö. Türkoğlu (eds.), *Küçük Asya'nın Bin Yüzü: Ankara 2005*, pp. 393-396.

- ²⁵ About the urban planning ideology in the early republican period, see also F.C. Bilsel, *Ideology and urbanism during the early republican period: two master plans for Izmir and scenarios of modernization*, in "METU Journal of Faculty of Architecture", 1997, 16, 1-2, pp. 13-30.
- ²⁶ For the relationship between the nation building strategies of the Republican government and architectural discourse of the period, see Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit.; E.A. Ergut, *Making a National Architecture: Architecture and the Nation-State in Early Republican Turkey*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1999.
- ²⁷ İ. Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı 1923-1938*, Ankara 2001, pp. 30-39, 115-137, 240-262; M.Sözen, M.Tapan, *50 Yılım Türk Mimarisi*, Istanbul 1973, pp. 99-165.
- ²⁸ Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., pp. 194-196, 200-201; Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., pp. 87-97.
- ²⁹ *Teşvik-i Sanayi Yasası* [Law for the Encouragement of Industry], which was passed in 1927, also gave the foreign architects and planners opportunity to work in Turkey. Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., p. 55.
- ³⁰ According to Bozdoğan, there were more than 200 German, Austrian and Swiss academics who occupied important positions in the universities in Ankara and Istanbul. Some 40 of them were architects and planners who worked in Turkey as instructors, consultants, administrators and planners and played key roles in the making of Ankara and the construction of public buildings. Most of these architects and planners were refugees who opposed the National Socialist Regime in Germany and left their countries due to the oncoming World War. For further studies on these German-speaking architects and planners, see: Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., p. 71; E. Hirsch, *Anularım: Kayzer Dönemi Weimar Cumhuriyeti Atatürk Ülkesi*, trans. F. Suphi, Ankara 2000; F. Neumark, *Boğaziçine Sığınanlar. Türkiye'ye İltica Eden Alman İlim, Siyaset ve Sanat Adamları, 1933-1953*, trans. Ş.A. Bahadır, Istanbul 1982; B. Nicolai, *Moderne und Exil: Deutschsprachige Architekten in der Türkei, 1925-1955*, Berlin 1998.
- ³¹ Bozdoğan identifies the architecture of the period as the *İnkılâp Mimarisi* [Architecture of Revolution] and gives a particular attention to the binary oppositions such as old/new, traditional/modern or progressive/reactionary while construing the period. Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., ch. 2.
- ³² İ. Aslanoğlu, *Ernst A. Egli: Mimar, Eğitici, Kent Plancısı*, in "Mimarlık", 1984, pp. 11-12, 15-19.
- ³³ B. Taut, *Mimari Bilgisi*, Istanbul 1938; Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., pp. 184-191.
- ³⁴ Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., p. 75.
- ³⁵ Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., pp. 122, 209-213; Y. Yavuz, *Ankara'da Mimari Biçim Endişeleri* [The Concerns of Architectural Form in Ankara], in "Mimarlık", 1973, 11-12, p. 29.
- ³⁶ Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., pp. 126-127, 153-154.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 128-136.
- ³⁸ In the competition, the projects of the Austrian architect Clemens Holzmeister, the French Albert Laprade and the Hungarian Alois Mezara were given the first prize of the 14 projects. The implementation of Holzmeister's project as the new Grand National Assembly Building was decided by Atatürk himself. *Kamutay Müsabakası Programı Hülâsası (1.Ödül: Clemens Holzmeister)* [The Summary of the Programme of Grand National Assembly Competition (1st Prize: Clemens Holzmeister)], in "Arkitekt", 1938, 4, pp. 99-132; *Yeni Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Binası* [New Turkish Grand National Assembly Building], in "Arkitekt", 1948, 4, pp. 38-39.
- ³⁹ Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., pp. 47-54, makes a general evaluation of Turkey's economic conditions between the years 1932 and 1938.
- ⁴⁰ Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet* cit., pp. 251-262.
- ⁴¹ E.A. Ergut, *Building to Exhibit (for) the Nation: The Exhibition Building in Ankara*, in M.Ghandour, et al. (eds.), "Sites of Recovery, Architecture's (Inter)disciplinary Role. Proceedings. 4th International Other Connections Conference", Beirut, 25-28 October 1999, pp. 115-124.
- ⁴² P. Vietti-Violi, *Les installations sportives d'Ankara*, in "La Turquie Kémaliste", 1936, 13, p. 12; *Ankara Gençlik Parkı*, in "Nafia İşleri Mecmuası", 1935, 3, pp. 35-37.

- ⁴³ Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., p. 79.
- ⁴⁴ E. Şevket, *Avrupa'nın En Modern İstasyonu Ankara Garı* [Ankara Station: The Most Modern Station of Europe], in "Yedigün", 1939, 325, p. 15.
- ⁴⁵ Sözen, Tapan, *50 Yıllık Türk Mimarisi* cit., pp. 246-47 makes a general evaluation and lists the articles on the *Anıtkabir* Project competition.
- ⁴⁶ S.H. Eldem, *Milli Mimari Meselesi*, in "Arkitekt", 1939, 9-10, pp. 220-221.
- ⁴⁷ Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., p. 72.
- ⁴⁸ From the second half of the 1930s, neo-classical architecture became the official style in some western countries, particularly in Germany, and it was used to express the political ideology of their regimes. According to Albert Speer, neo-classicism, a style particular to that period, is not a characteristic style for totalitarian regimes. However, it cannot be denied that from the end of the 1930s, neoclassicism was the most favoured style for the design of public buildings, which were seen by these regimes as the propaganda media and symbols of their powers. A. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, New York 1970, p. 130.
- ⁴⁹ The architectural tendencies and discussions during the early years of Republic were propagated by several periodicals, among which "Arkitekt" (1935-1945), "Mimar" [Architect], (1931-1934), "Mimarlık" [Architecture], (1948-1974), "La Turquie Kémaliste" (1930s) and the official newspaper of the state, "Hakimiyet-i Milliye" [National Sovereignty] were prominent ones. For some of the articles that had an impact on the Turkish architectural agenda during 1930s, see: *Yeni Mimari: Mimarlık Aleminde Yeni Bir Esas*, in "Hakimiyet-i Milliye", 2 January 1930; Mimar Behçet ve Bedrettin, *Türk İnkılap Mimarisi*, in "Mimar", 1933, 9-10, pp. 265-266; Mimar Behçet ve Bedrettin, *Yeni ve Eski Mimarlık*, in "Mimar", 1934, 6, p. 175; B.Ünsal, *Zamanımız Mimarlığının Morfolojik Analizi*, in "Arkitekt", 1937, 7, p. 204.
- ⁵⁰ İ. Aslanoğlu, *1928-1946 Döneminde Ankara'da Yapılan Resmi Yapıların Mimarisinin Değerlendirilmesi* [Architectural Evaluation of the Official Buildings Built in Ankara in the Period 1928-1948], in A.T. Yavuz (ed.), in *Tarih İçinde Ankara* [Ankara in History], Ankara 2000, pp. 275-277; E.A. Ergut, *Searching for a National Architecture: The Architectural Discourse in Early Republican Turkey*, in "Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Working Paper Series", 2000-2001, 130, pp. 101-126. See also Eldem, *Milli Mimari* cit., pp. 220-221. S.H. Eldem, *Yerli Mimariye Doğru*, in "Arkitekt", 1940, 3, pp. 69-74; A. Mortaş, *Modern Türk Mimarisi*, in "Arkitekt", 1941, pp. 5-6, 116.
- ⁵¹ Bozdoğan, *Modernism* cit., chapter 6 identifies the architectural attempts of this period as "Nationalizing the Modern". For "International National Style", see Nicolai, *Moderne und Exil* cit., pp. 161-196.

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