

ANR SPACEPOL
HYBRID WORKSHOP

BEING OR BECOMING A CAPITAL IN 100 YEARS ANKARA

26-27 April 2023

WORKSHOP PROGRAM



Ankara, the capital city of the Turkish Republic is historically known as Ancyra and Angora. The city, which became the symbol of National Struggle during the War of Independence (1919-1922), was proclaimed the capital city of the Turkish Republic on October 13, 1923.

The reasons for this choice were generally evaluated as the physical and geographical position of Ankara, also the unique historical and cultural stance of the city as it is a door opening to Anatolia and some late-Ottoman debates about the transfer of the capital city to central Anatolia after wars with Russia. For İlhan Tekeli (2011), “Istanbul was the symbol of imperialist and bourgeois relations as well as of Levantine life which was based on clientelist relations. By abandoning Istanbul in favour of Ankara, we were also abandoning these relations in order to turn towards the development and national modernization of Anatolia with Ankara at its heart” (p. 271).

The Kemalist elites wanted to create a national identity and unity within the borders of the remaining territories, and the best way to achieve this was in their eyes to choose a new capital that would symbolize it. According to Meltem Ahıska (2001), “nationalist ideas and practices were going to be written in Ankara, which was seen as a blank slate. Ankara was seen as a 'starting point' for republican elites who saw Turkish nationalism as the country's political project” (p. 52). Ankara, therefore, made it possible to make a clean sweep of the past; a new Turkish history was to be written there, distinct from the cosmopolitan Ottoman Empire. To create modern cities of the young republic, city plans were asked to be prepared by German architectures such as Carl Lörcher (1925) and then Herman Jansen (1929-38) in which the city centre was designed around the old Citadel in the Altındağ district together with a completely new residential area connected to the old city with modern boulevards and public spaces. Although Jansen’s plan was very reliable and planned a whole modern city in detail and meticulously implemented for some time, its implementation became reluctant after 1940 and then Ankara was left until the 1950s without a master plan.

Until the 2000s, although there were some attempts to make and implement masterplans, the city started to grow in a non-planned way provoking urban sprawl and the multiplication of informal settlements composed of “gecekondus” all around the city because of the absence of housing policies. After the 1980’s Ankara started to look like a metropolitan area with diverging socio-spatial features via transformative lifestyles of different social classes. After AKP’s arrival to power, a huge urban transformation program was launched provoking forced displacements, redevelopment of the majority of informal settlements into mostly luxurious apartments, implementation of mainly automobile-oriented road investments, energy and mining operations, gated communities as well as skyscrapers, the promotion of motorized mobility and finally ecological problems.

At the same time, the production of Ankara’s public spaces continued to be an issue of the struggle between antagonistic political ideology and especially between Kemalist-secular modernist ideology and Islamic neoliberal ideology, each trying to mark symbolically the urban space and to leave traces in the urban memory. In this process, the demands and the will of inhabitants were often ignored, and the production of the city followed a top-down approach leaving little place for deliberation with citizens, spatial justice and right to the city.

Our objective with this panel is to address the symbolic and political production of urban space in Ankara and its impact on the urbanisation and the morphology of the city as well as on the everyday life of inhabitants. We would like particularly to discuss two periods: the early republican era and the AKP era in terms of urbanisation models and power relations and struggle between various actors (public and private). We would like also to shed light on the current problems of the city related to the conflictual urbanisation models and to the absence of a consistent urbanisation programme. The final question to discuss will be the place and the role of inhabitants in this process. How do they deal with this chaotic scene of urbanisation? What are their survival strategies and tools to adapt and create their own perceived space in the sense of Lefebvrian theory?

26 APRIL 2023

Venue: *French Institute of Culture in Ankara*
(*Sancak Mah. Sancak, Konrad Adenauer Cd. No:30, 06550 Çankaya/Ankara*)

09:00 - Welcome and Opening Speeches

Prof. Dr. Gülçin Erdi, PI of ANR SPACEPOL
Prof. Dr. Savaş Zafer Şahin, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University
M. Halil İbrahim Yılmaz, President of the Turkish Union of Citizen Assemblies
M. Hervé Magro, French Ambassador
M. Mansur Yavaş, Mayor of Ankara

09:30 - Keynote speech

Prof. Dr. İlhan Tekeli
"Ankara's urbanisation in 20th Century"

10:30 - Panel 1

**Symbolic and Political Meaning of Space:
(Re)Producing and Transforming a capital city**

Moderator: Doç. Dr. Faik Gür, Özyeğin University

Dr Arda Güçler, NYU Abu Dhabi
"Symbolizing the Nation: The Victory Monument in Ankara"

Prof. Dr. Bülent Batuman, Bilkent University
"Tradition, Modern and the Islamic: Architecture as a Field of Political
Contestation in Ankara"

Prof. Dr. Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, Director of VEKAM, Koç University
"Ankara Museums as Spaces of Memory"

12:30-13:30 : Lunch Break

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14:00 - PANEL 2

Urban Memory and Changing Spaces in the Capital City

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Gülçin Erdi, Fransa Bilimsel Arastirmalar Merkezi,
IFEA Istanbul, CNRS

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Tuncer, Çankaya University
"Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and Augustus Temple in the context of Ulus'
transformation : Ankara as the Cradle of Civilisations"

Prof. Dr. Funda Şenol Cantek, Ankara University
"Ankara's Forgotten Minorities and Neighbourhoods"

Dr. Zeki Kamil Ülkenli, TED Üniversitesi, TED Üniversitesi
"Ankara and Atatürk Experimental (Forest) Park
as Young Republican Realized - Urban Utopias"

Prof. Dr. Cânâ Bilsel, Middle East Technical University
"Architecture and Public Open Spaces of the Capital City:
Changing Social-spatial Practices and Collective Memory"

16:00-16:30 : Coffee Break

16:30 - Film projection

"Taştaki İz" (History of Güven Park)
Documentary by Can Ertuna
& General discussion

18:00 : Cocktail

27 APRIL 2023

*Venue: Ankara Citizens Assembly Building
Kızılay, Atatürk Bulvarı No: 18, 06050 Altındağ/Ankara*

09:30 - Panel 3

Production, Space, Culture and Innovation

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Savaş Zafer Şahin, Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi

Prof. Dr. Çiğdem Varol, Gazi University

“The Transformation Story of Kızılay, the Square of the Capital City”

Prof. Dr. Bülent Gülçubuk, Ankara University

“Rural Development in Ankara”

Özgür Ceren Can, Director of Ankara Rahmi Koç Museum

“The juxtaposition of cultural heritage and contemporary public art
in the Anafartalar Bazaar”

Prof. Dr. Burcu Özöduru, Gazi University

“The Relationship of Shopping Malls and Consumption Culture
with the City in Ankara”

12:30-13:30 : Lunch Break

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13:30 - Panel 4

Young Researchers Panel

Moderator: Dr Zeki Kamil Ülkenli, TED University

Agathe Fautras, PhD Candidate, IFEA Researcher, Sorbonne University
“Ordinary and Exceptional Urban Planning in the Capital City:
The Case of Altındağ District”

Sibel Akyıldız, PhD Candidate, Yeditepe University Researcher
“The Place and Transformation of Atatürk Forest Farm
within the Ankara Political System”

Kadir Yavuz Emirođlu, PhD Candidate, University of Minnesota
“Human Lives in a Capital City: Encountering the State in Ankara”

Dr, lecturer, Gülşah Aykaç, Marmara University
“Çinçin Means Folded Surface: Altındağ's Unnamed Neighbourhood
and the Urban Transformation of the Last Twenty Years”

16:30 - Concluding Round Table

With the participation of discussants of panels

17:30 - Closing Remarks