

SUMMARY OF THE SPACEPOL ANKARA EVENT "BEING OR BECOMING A CAPITAL CITY", ANKARA, 26 AND 27 APRIL 2023

The SpacePol Ankara event titled "Being or Becoming a Capital City" took place at Institut Français Ankara and the Ankara Citizens' Council on the 26th and 27th of April 2023. The importance of promoting Ankara's international visibility and discussing its development was emphasized. The event focused on the history and growth of Ankara as a capital city, highlighting the contributions of leaders and institutions. Topics discussed included the cost and significance of city branding, the establishment of museums and architectural debates, and the concept of collective memory in urban museums. This event took place within the framework of the commemoration of the centenary of Ankara becoming the Turkish capital and was supported by the French Embassy in Turkey, Institut Français in Ankara (IFT), the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the Anatolian Studies Research Institute (IFEA), CITERES (Cities, Territories, Environment and Societies), the French Research Agency (ANR) and Ankara Metropolitan Municipality.

26 APRIL 2023

Institut Français Ankara

WELCOME AND OPENING SPEECHES

Prof. Dr. Gülçin Erdi, PI of ANR SPACEPOL



Prof. Gülçin Erdi opened the conference, expressing gratitude to the participants and the audience. She highlighted the significance of celebrating the centenary of the Turkish republic and Ankara's establishment as its capital throughout the conference. Despite being away from Ankara, her research has focused

on urban spaces and their role in symbolic, social, and economic struggles. In 2019, after many discussions with Professor Şahin she started the SpacePol project, which aims to compare the capital cities of Ankara, Cairo, Abu Dhabi, Moscow, Tehran and Astana, in terms of urban spatial production. The project involves multiple research centres and a team of 24 academics from various locations. The project will contribute valuable data to the literature by examining the relevant actors, political relations, conflicts, and networks among these capital cities. The conference served as one of the first activities resulting from the SpacePol project and is part of the celebrations for Ankara's 100th anniversary as a capital city. It explored Republican spaces in Turkish history and provide insights into urban policies. The conference anticipated engaging presentations, with a special focus on Professor İlhan Tekeli's contribution.

Prof. Dr. Savaş Zafer Şahin, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

Professor Şahin passed a message on from Ankara mayor Mansur Yavaş who due to the busy election agenda couldn't make it. He emphasized three points: capital cities are difficult cities, a complex whole with all the weight of the state and the dynamics of the city. Understanding them and drawing from them to create a city run in a sustainable way is very important. Ankara is not an ordinary city: sometimes it can even be more difficult than Istanbul. Among academics Ankara is sometimes called the city without a locality, such is the weight of the state on it, we can forget about Ankara's local issues. The second point was how to overcome all these? We can do our best participating through the City Council. The City Council works towards the issue of participation, an important channel that needs to be developed.

M. Halil İbrahim Yılmaz, President of the Turkish Union of Citizen Assemblies

The President of The Turkish Union of Citizen Assemblies highlighted how Ankara City Council aims to take responsibility for branding the city of Ankara and has established a network which includes over 1,700 institutions and organizations, making it Turkey's most inclusive and comprehensive legal entity. The city council was formed after a call by the Mayor, Mansur Yavaş, who sought the participation and



contribution of the community to increase comfort and development in Ankara. Ankara has a rich historical background, having hosted various civilizations and being the headquarters of the national struggle led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The council commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and organized events at the Sakarya Martyrs' Cemetery, highlighting the city's role in the struggle for democracy and freedom. Ankara City Council aims to be a pioneer in various fields and has worked with other city councils in Turkey to promote the rebranding of Ankara and represent the hope and progress of oppressed nations.



M. Hervé Magro, French Ambassador

Monsieur Hervé Magro the French Ambassador to Turkey expressed his pride and honour to be in Ankara, considering it a special place. He welcomed everyone to the French Cultural Centre in Ankara and expressed happiness in opening a timely and important conference about Ankara. He highlighted the significance

of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey and Ankara becoming the capital, emphasizing the city's historical and dynamic relationship with political authorities and other cities. Through his own personal experience, he recalled the disappearing collective spaces of the city. He acknowledged the lack of awareness about Ankara and aimed to introduce and discover more about the city through the seminar and upcoming cultural events. He invited attendees to a photo exhibition showcasing disappearing professions and craftsmen in Ankara, scheduled for October 3, 2023.

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

Professor Tekeli, one of the most eminent researchers on Turkey's urban studies, was invited as keynote speaker. He referred to the two books he has written on the 100 years of history of Ankara as a capital city, emphasizing the city's infrastructure and societal development. He pondered the challenge of writing the history of a city over a century "The 100-Year Story of the Formation and Development of the Capital Ankara." Professor Tekeli also highlighted the importance of considering Ankara's planning history and questioning its role in city formation. He divided Ankara's history into different periods, such as radical modernity, populism, and postmodernity. He also identified a research gap regarding Ankara's history during the Melih Gökçek period. He further discussed Ankara's strategic position, its transition to the capital, and the challenges of housing the growing population.



Panel 1 Symbolic and Political Meaning of Space: (Re)Producing and Transforming a capital city

Dr Arda Güçler, NYU Abu Dhabi

"Symbolizing the Nation: The Victory Monument in Ankara"

Dr Güçler presented different Atatürk Monuments erected during the founding years of the



Turkish nation and discussed the significance of the Victory Monument in Ankara in relation to other Atatürk monuments. He identified the Sarayburnu monument, sculpted by Heinrich Krippel in 1926, as the first Atatürk monument for the new nation. Its foreignness as a representational form and the idea of a superior leader could potentially create mistrust and discomfort among the local population. The Victory Monument in Ankara, erected in

1927 and also designed by Krippel, depicted Atatürk in a military uniform on a horse, accompanied by statues of Turkish soldiers and a peasant woman. He mentioned how after the construction of the Atatürk mausoleum (Anıtkabir) in 1954, other monuments in the nation's capital lost their spatial priority.

The effectiveness of these monuments in constructing a national identity can be attributed to their novelty, ease of reproduction, ability to convey a narrative, and their embodiment of the leader and the founding ideology. They provided a visual script for the illiterate masses to align with the national narrative and became a privileged symbolic form for the founders.

Prof. Dr. Bülent Batuman, Bilkent University

"Tradition, Modern and the Islamic: Architecture as a Field of Political Contestation in Ankara"

Professor Batuman discussed the architecture of four mosques in Ankara, including three real ones and an imaginary mosque, exploring the tension between tradition and modernity. He put forward the argument that the notion of tradition in architecture is dynamic and adaptable rather than a fixed reference point, existing between static and dynamic elements.

Mosques in the early Republican period served as national symbols, but currently, there is a demand for small-scale mosques instead of state mosques. The Kocatepe Mosque project by Vedat Dalokay and Nejat Tekelioglu was a modernist attempt that faced conservative backlash and eventually got replaced by the current Kocatepe Mosque.

The dominance of the Ottoman mosque style reflected nostalgia, an expression of nationalist conservative ideology, and the production of a new government reference during the Cold War era. However, a discussion emerged in the 2000s on how to create an architectural language combining continuity and contemporary forms.

Prof. Dr. Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, Director of VEKAM, Koç University

"Ankara Museums as Spaces of Memory"

Professor Yenişehirlioğlu explained how Ankara is considered a living museum with numerous museums established over different time periods. The definition of a museum according to ICOM highlights its role in researching, collecting, conserving, interpreting, and exhibiting tangible and intangible heritage. Museums in Ankara aim to provide a semantic and thematic integrity for

visitors, allowing them to connect with their own experiences and make sense of the exhibited objects. Memory plays a significant role in museums, with artworks serving as objects of memory that reflect society and culture.

Ankara museums cover various topics such as Anatolian civilizations, ethnography, the National Struggle and Foundation of the Republic, military history education, history, communication, and republic institutions.

PANEL 2

URBAN MEMORY AND CHANGING SPACES IN THE CAPITAL CITY

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Tuncer, Çankaya University

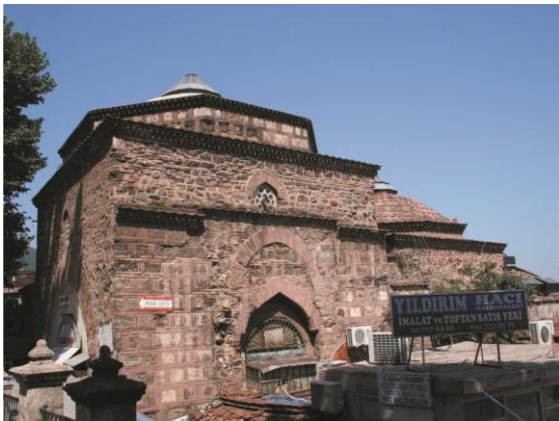
"Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and Augustus Temple in the context of Ulus' transformation: Ankara as the Cradle of Civilisations"

Professor Tuncer took us back to the Roman Empire. He explained how the Roman Empire was divided into Eastern Rome and Western Rome in 395, and Ankara became an important city in Eastern Rome (Byzantine). Ankara, known as Ankyra in ancient Rome, was a significant Roman city in Anatolia and had a large population, estimated to be around 80,000 to 100,000 people. The Ankara Monument, known as Monumentum Ancyranum, contains inscriptions in both Latin and Greek, divided into four parts, providing valuable historical information. Ankara has a rich architectural heritage from the Roman period, including the Ankara Castle, which was restored and rebuilt during the 7th-8th centuries. The Hacı Bayram Mosque and the Temple of Augustus in Ankara represent a multicultural and multireligious historical site, showcasing the coexistence of different cultural and religious communities. However, recent renovations have caused the loss of historical identity in the area. Professor Tuncer reminded us of the importance of the protection of heritage in the midst of far-reaching urban transformation processes.

Prof. Dr. Funda Şenol Cantek, Ankara University

"Ankara's Forgotten Minorities and Neighbourhoods"

Professor Şenol explained how the mobility of different populations in Ankara during the 19th



Prof. Dr. Funda Şenol Cantek's personal archives

century saw significant changes in religious sects, with Armenians converting to Catholicism through French missionaries, leading to the establishment of Catholic churches. Inter-communal tensions existed, and the Patriarchate intervened to resolve conflicts, resulting in occasional exiles of Catholics and priests. Catholic empowerment was influenced by France and Austria, leading to the signing of the Edirne Agreement. The Greek population in Ankara grew with immigrants from various regions, and they played a significant role in trade, especially in exporting Ankara mohair to England. They

lived in the area up to Işıklar Street on the left of the Çıkırıkcılar Slope. The Jewish population of Ankara considered themselves the earliest inhabitants of Anatolia and thrived with the establishment of schools and the arrival of the railway. However, World War II and subsequent

migration led to their decline in numbers. The Armenian population in Ankara dates back centuries, and their presence increased significantly when Armenian masses fled from Cilicia in the 15th century. Armenian churches from the 7th and 8th centuries provide historical evidence of their presence. Armenians also lived in surrounding regions like Haymana, Mürted, and İstanosz.



Source: TARIHI ANKARA FOTOĞRAFLARI TAF <https://www.facebook.com/groups/3218498508243671>

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



Dr Ülkenli introduced the ideas of utopian thought and planning that can be traced back to Sir Thomas Moore. He mentioned how the concept of utopia as a 3D and socio-spatial idea. The industrial revolution played a crucial role in urban planning, with factors such as migration to cities, hygiene, agricultural lands, and the development of transport systems like railways and roads being

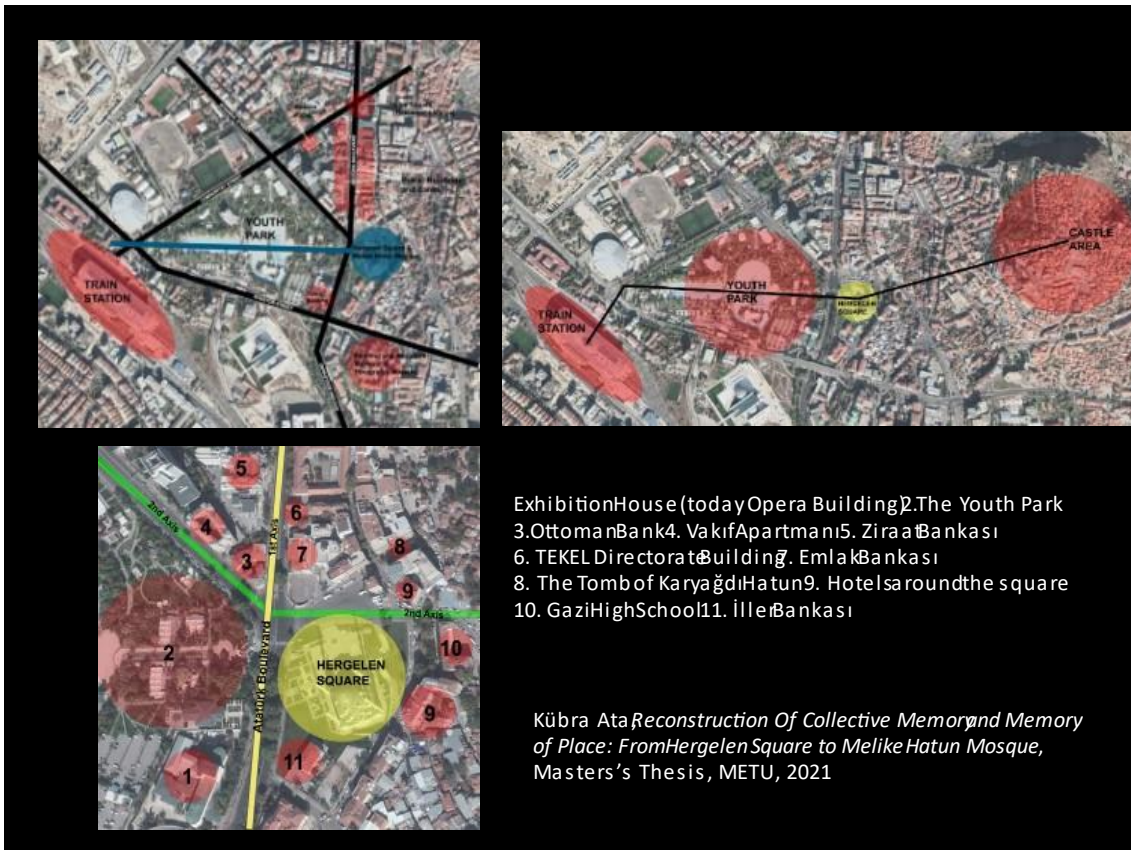
important considerations. Utopists face challenges in reaching the military cadre due to their different perspectives and languages, but they draw inspiration from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

He explained how the establishment of the Republic of Turkey marked a significant period of rapid change, with the abolition of the dynasty, the declaration of Ankara as the capital, and the focus on building a modern society that emphasized women's rights and showcased the nation's

power. Through his own family history, he explained how Ankara was becoming the capital after being declared the capital, and how building the city was an opportunity to show the power of the nation.

Prof. Dr. Candaş Bilisel, Middle East Technical University “Architecture and Public Open Spaces of the Capital City: Changing Social-spatial Practices and Collective Memory”

Professor Bilisel drew from the historical development and planning of Ankara throughout the years to demonstrate the significant changes to public open spaces in the city. The first assembly building where the national assembly met during the War of Independence played a crucial role in Ankara's early history. The planning of Ankara involved the creation of public spaces, including a park with a swimming pool and the garden of the Ministry of Culture. An international planning competition 1928 brought different architects to Ankara, resulting in two distinct visions for the city's development, Léon Jaussely's and Hermann Jansen's Plan Proposals. Having gone through the historical development of public spaces, professor Bilisel denounced the impact of aggressive urban transformation processes in the historical urban fabric that make up public open spaces in Ankara today.



27 April 2023

Ankara Citizens Assembly

Panel 3



PRODUCTION, SPACE, CULTURE AND INNOVATION

Prof. Dr. Çiğdem Varol, Gazi University, “The Transformation Story of Kızılay, the Square of the Capital City”

Professor Varol shared the work on the story of Kızılay Square as part of a study conducted by four colleagues from Gazi University's Department of Urban and Regional Planning. The study examines the spatial, social, and economic changes in Kızılay Square and its surroundings from the past to the present, focusing on different periods, including the modernization era, the transformation into a central business area, and the chaotic transformation in recent years. The study aims to provide an oral history of Kızılay, exploring how perceptions, uses, and experiences have evolved over time, particularly in the context of Ankara's development as the capital city. The research heavily relied on various sources, including documents, previous studies, archival research, maps, photographs, and interviews with experts, shop owners, and users of Kızılay. The study highlights the importance of filling the research gap in the post-1980s period and hopes for future academic and stakeholder involvement to complete the missing part.

Prof. Dr. Bülent Gülçubuk, Ankara University, “Rural Development in Ankara”

Professor Gülçubuk explained how Ankara has had a historical connection to agriculture and rural development, being established as the capital of agriculture when it became the capital of the Republic. The Ankara Experimental Farm, established in the late 19th century, played a significant role in agricultural development, and was later transformed into the Ankara Agricultural School. The Ankara Agricultural Institute, founded in 1933, marked the beginning of agricultural education in Ankara, with various research stations and institutions established to support agricultural and rural development. He highlighted the lack of comprehensive data on rural settlements and subjects in Ankara, which hinders effective planning and development efforts. Importantly, he mentioned how the future of rural development in Ankara lies in revitalizing agriculture, particularly focusing on small-scale farmers who play a crucial role in food production and have potential for social and tourism development. The comprehensive approach should also address non-agricultural industries and rural tourism.

Özgür Ceren Can, Director of Ankara Rahmi Koç Museum, “The juxtaposition of cultural heritage and contemporary public art in the Anafartalar Bazaar”



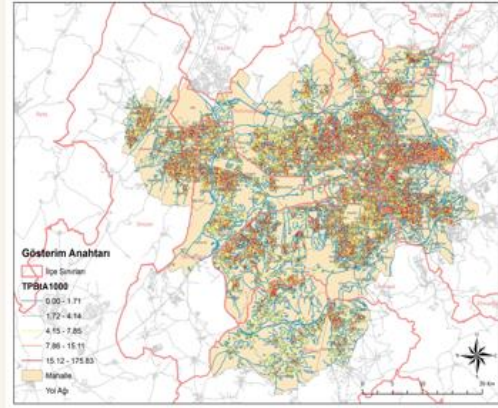
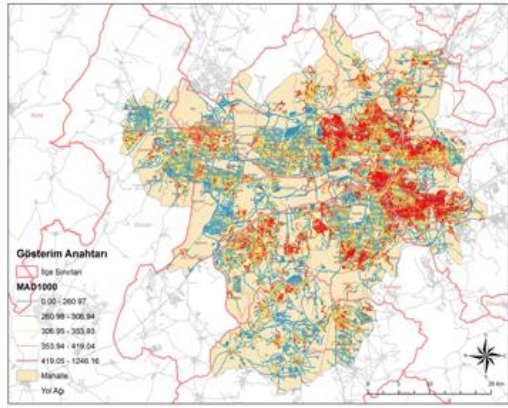
The Director of Ankara Rahmi Koç Museum, Ms Ceren Can, explained how public art played a significant role in the historical city center of Anafartalar, Ulus, coexisting with cultural heritage and contemporary art. The understanding of public art has evolved, moving beyond monumental works to smaller, horizontal pieces and focusing on the process of art itself. European influence, including the Bauhaus school and the

Paris Academy of Fine Arts, has shaped the art of ceramics in Turkey and its integration with architecture. Public art in Turkey has been a part of the cultural reconstruction and modernization efforts of the Republic, featuring modern art pieces in public spaces and buildings. She identified a recent shift towards economic development, but the influence of bureaucrats has continued to commission artworks from artists, resulting in their inclusion in public spaces. However, the preservation of cultural heritage should not solely rely on the discretion of shopkeepers and passers-by.

Prof. Dr. Burcu Özüdüdü, Gazi University “The Relationship of Shopping Malls and Consumption Culture with the City in Ankara”

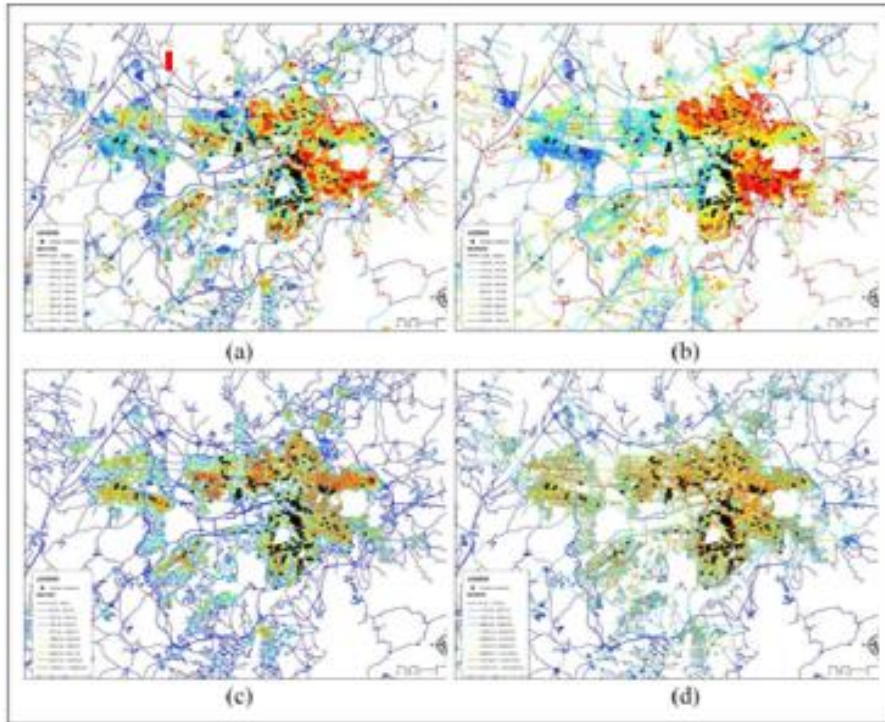
Professor Özüdüdü’s contribution highlighted how shopping malls have rapidly evolved and changed the face of cities, particularly Ankara, since the mid-90s. The emergence of digital shopping platforms has brought about a new period that requires further research and data collection. Shopping malls have contributed to increasing urban sprawl, transforming Ankara into a multi-centered city. The impact of shopping malls on cities can be examined under three main headings: urban sprawl, city centers, and accessibility problems. These issues require reconsideration and planning interventions for sustainable development.

ERİŞİLEBİLİRLİK ÖZELLİKLERİ (sDNA+)



2068

Urban Studies 58(10)



Ozuduru, B.H., Webster, C.J., Chiaradia, A.J.F., Yucesoy, E. (2021) "Associating street-network centrality with spontaneous and planned subcentres", Urban Studies, 58(10); 2059-2078.

Panel 4

YOUNG RESEARCHERS PANEL



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

Ms Fautras presented her research which was conducted in September 2022, specifically looking at informal settlements, urban renewal policies, and the role of the district municipality. The Altındağ district in Ankara has experienced several urban transformation projects since the early 2000s, leading to the displacement of the poor population due to high housing prices and density in the region. Other districts, such as Çankaya, Yeni Mahalle, Mamak, are affected by urban transformation policies, leading to varying levels of inequality and displacement. She identified how private companies are hesitant to engage in these projects due to lack of profitability, and how the responsibility often falls on the Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKİ). The TOKİ project in Feridun Çelik Neighborhood involved the municipality and its various departments acquiring land, demolishing buildings, and transferring the land to TOKİ for redevelopment. She mentioned how further research is needed to examine the impact of these projects, including the real users, prices, social classes targeted, and satisfaction of residents.

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

Phd candidate Ms Akyıldız explained that the presentation is based on preliminary findings of a study conducted within the Ayaner Project. The focus of the study is the transformation of Ankara, particularly the Atatürk Forest Farm, which has undergone changes due to political and economic pressures. She discussed the impact of political systems on Atatürk Forest Farm and its significance as a symbol of the young Republic. Her presentation examined the transformation of Atatürk Forest Farm as a physical space and as a memory space, highlighting the differences between the two. She included personal interviews with individuals, such as shopkeepers, who shared their experiences and connections to the Atatürk Forest Farm as a memory space. They emphasized its importance and call for its preservation.

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

PhD candidate on anthropology, Mr Emirođlu’s work explores the measurement of authoritarianism in Turkey, specifically in Ankara. He emphasized the importance of understanding the lives of people in the present, as well as the historical context of violence and trauma experienced in Ankara over the past few decades. Conducting ethnography in the urban space presents challenges, but he uses methods such as note-taking, photography, and drawing to capture the multitude of data, including sounds, gestures, architectural positioning, and more. He highlighted the significance of the interaction between a child and a statue in Ulus Square, aiming to uncover stories and experiences through this interaction. He also introduced the concept of ruins and how they can reveal stories and experiences related to the state and the regime, providing examples of interactions with individuals and their stories tied to specific places in Ankara.

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



Dr Aykaç introduced her presentation highlighting how urban transformation laws and their authoritarian nature, particularly since 2012, have radically altered cities in Turkey. She is part of a generation of young researchers and has been involved in initiatives to engage with the city and understand its dynamics. Her research focused on a neighborhood called Çinçin in Altındađ, Ankara, and its urban transformation over the past 20 years. Dr Aykaç highlighted the importance of understanding the historical and topographic context of Çinçin and its significance in Ankara's urbanization process. She also employed a specifically feminist methodology in order to understand the reproduction of daily life in the neighbourhood.

CONCLUDING ROUND TABLE

Doç. Dr. Faik Gür (Özyeğin University), Prof. Dr. Savaş Zafer Şahin (Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi), Dr Zeki Kamil Ülkenli (TED University) and Prof. Dr. Gülçin Erdi (Fransa Bilimsel Arastirmalar Merkezi, IFEA Istanbul, CNRS)



The discussants of all the panels gathered to come up with the concluding remarks after the fruitful conference. The following points were underlined:

- Mega projects have always been favoured by right-wing ideologies and hold significant importance.
- There is a phenomenon referred to as "urban cultural Alzheimer's, the importance of place memory cannot be underestimated.
- The proposal to turn Atatürk Forest Farm into an international political institute was suggested.
- Neoliberalism was heavily discussed throughout the panels, but its explanatory power was questioned.
- Access to data and information about the city was identified as a significant problem that needs to be addressed.
- The need for a pressure group to advocate for the development of a special sensitivity towards the capital was highlighted.
- The suggestion for a Capital Law to politically debate the uniqueness and significance of Ankara was proposed.

Then, Prof. Erdi made the closing remarks. She emphasized that many people perceive Ankara as a boring and unattractive city. However, she argued that through the two-day presentations, the hidden beauties of Ankara had been revealed. She highlighted the artistic value demonstrated by Özgür Ceren Can's work, which brought attention to forgotten aspects of Ankara, giving them new life.

Professor Erdi also then reflected on the broader significance of the workshop. She noted a recurring theme throughout the presentations: the perspective of the environment and environmental issues. She discussed how Ankara's urbanization process ignored the city's surroundings and led to the disappearance of streams and green spaces. She also criticized the trend of creating green spaces for ideological purposes rather than for the well-being of the city's inhabitants.

Another point touched upon was the perception of squatter settlements as ugly and in need of rectification. She argued that this perception is not unique to Ankara but exists in other cities as well, stemming from the adoption of external urbanization models without considering the unique dynamics of society.

Professor Erdi advocated for a shift in mindset away from a colonial approach and towards a perspective from the Global South. She believed that cities in the Global South have the potential to develop new urban theories and challenge the notion of a universal urbanization trend.

The importance of considering gender in urban development was also emphasized. Professor Erdi highlighted how women's experiences in the city can differ significantly from men's due to safety concerns and restrictions on movement. She identified the need to incorporate a gender perspective in urban planning and cite the "Women's Right to the City" event in Barcelona as an example.

Lastly, Professor Erdi reflected on the need to rethink the approach to Ankara's urbanization. She suggested freezing the current urbanization process, addressing existing problems, and then reorganizing the city with a fresh master plan. She envisioned a transformed Ankara with restored terraces, vibrant squares, and a pleasant atmosphere. She also expressed her love for Ankara and hoped that her work and similar projects can contribute to making the city more liveable and appreciated by its residents.

