

LIMITS OF ARCHITECTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF GENERIC CITY:
ANKARA, SÖĞÜTÖZÜ DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

LIMITS OF ARCHITECTURE IN THE CONTEXT OF GENERIC CITY: ANKARA, SÖĞÜTÖZÜ DISTRICT

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A new type of city, which is theorized by Rem Koolhaas as Generic City dominates the contemporary urbanism discourse. Under the rapid alterations with unstable conditions and complex forces of globalization, the city is exposed to a kind of spontaneous, fragmented urbanism that invalidates all the previous systems and generates unordinary planning mechanisms with a pragmatist approach. Buildings are evaluated as isolated objects and relationship between them and urban spaces is underestimated. As a result cities are becoming to accumulate unlivable spaces with low standards and quality. Architecture is one of the stakeholders that contribute to this urbanism and the aim of the study is, question limits of architecture, over the case of Ankara Söğütözü District. The district has undergone a transformation over the last three decades with the idea of becoming a new central business district (CBD) and the study argues that CBD is an outcome of “Generic City” with the aim of its nascence and its configuration and presents an undiluted layout. After presenting the urban theories of Koolhaas, focusing the area and investigating attitudes of architects whose buildings are located in the district give clues for finding new ways in order to construct more livable cities.

Keywords: Rem Koolhaas, New Urbanism, Generic City, Central Business District (CBD), Söğütözü

ÖZ

GENELGEÇER KENT BAĞLAMINDA MİMARLIĞIN SINIRLARI; ANKARA, SÖĞÜTÖZÜ BÖLGESİ

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Güncel kentleşme tartışmalarında Rem Koolhaas tarafından Genelgeçer Kent olarak kuramsallaştırılan yeni bir kent türü ön plana çıkmıştır. Hızlı değişimler, durağan olmayan koşullar ve küreselleşmenin karmaşık etkisi altında kentler, önceki tüm sistemleri geçersiz kılan, kendiliğinden, parçasal bir şehirciliğe maruz kalmakta ve faydacı bir yaklaşımla, alışılmadık bir planlama mekanizması sunmaktadır. Binalar izole nesnelere olarak ele alınmakta ve mekanla ve birbirleriyle olan ilişkileri önemsiz görülmektedir. Bunun bir sonucu olarak, şehirler, düşük kalite ve standarttaki yaşanamaz mekanları çoğaltmaktadır. Mimarlık bu şehirciliğin paydaşlarından biridir ve çalışmanın amacı mimarlığın sınırlarını Ankara Söğütözü bölgesi üzerinden sorgulamaktır. Bölge son otuz yılı aşkın bir sürede, yeni bir merkezi iş alanı olma iddiasıyla dönüşüm geçirmektedir ve çalışma, merkezi iş alanının, varoluş amacı, biçimlenişi ve konsantre bir düzen sunması ile Genelgeçer Kent'in bir ürünü olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Koolhaas'ın kent teorilerinin ardından, alana odaklanmak ve alanda binaları yer alan mimarların yaklaşımlarını irdelemek daha yaşanabilir şehirler oluşturmanın yeni yollarını bulabilmenin ipuçlarını verecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rem Koolhaas, Yeni Kentleşme, Jenerik Kent, Merkezi İş Alanı (MÍA), Söğütözü

To My Family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Now we are left with a world without urbanism, only architecture, ever more architecture.¹
Rem Koolhaas

Rem Koolhaas argues that the “20th century city is over”² under the rapid alterations with unstable conditions and complex forces of globalization and 21th century's city is confronted with “a mutant form of human coexistence”³ which is called Metropolis. “Rather than maintaining the unity, harmony, memory or identity of historical cities”⁴, Koolhaas announces a new urbanism for the Metropolis that is based on “ultimate excitement, creative forgetting, disconnection from history and unpredictability”⁵ and he defines Generic City as a reflection of unconscious working response to metropolitan condition. He emphasizes that today “cities actually grow faster than humans”⁶ and in order to supply the requirements and accommodate the global world, the city breaks all kind of connections that can be an obstacle for its development process. Therefore, Generic City invalidates all the previous systems of articulation and differentiation that have traditionally guided the design of cities and generates

¹ Rem Koolhaas, " What Ever Happened to Urbanism", *S, M, L, XL*, Monacelli Press, New York, 2nd edition, 1997, p.967.

² Nicolai Ouroussoff, “Giant New Cities Offer Promise And Challenge”, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/07/business/worldbusiness/07iht-wbshenzen.1.13492283.html?scp=4&sq=Koolhaas%20Dubai&st=cse&_r=0 (accessed on 21.06.2018)

³ Rem Koolhaas, “‘Life in the Metropolis’ or ‘The Culture of Congestion’”, *Architecture Theory Since 1968*, ed. by Michael Hays, Columbia University, New York, 1998, pp.322-330

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Chris Michael, “Lagos shows a city can recover from a deep, deep pit: Rem Koolhaas talks to Kunle Adeyemi”, <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/feb/26/lagos-rem-koolhaas-kunle-adeyemi> (accessed on 21.06.2018)

unordinary planning mechanisms that accept whatever grows in its place. It is filled with familiar building blocks that are constantly being assembled in different ways and presents a strange sense of familiarity⁷, as if you have been there before, yet you have not. It has no recognizable center, no single identity. It is sometimes hard to think of it as city at all.⁸

Koolhaas uses Generic City as a key word to emphasize the transforming nature of the 21th century's cities and he asks whether Generic City idea is founded in America⁹ due to its extreme urbanism and architecture. Manhattan is a key district to become a source of inspiration for his urban theories and he argues that it presents unique urbanistic ideology; technology and fantasy are merged with hyper-density, under the aim of "facilitating commercial interests" in the urban land. Grid plan with high-rise buildings and skyscrapers, which is an exploitation of congestion, makes it a laboratory, a mythical island where the entire city became a factory of man-made experience.¹⁰ Koolhaas calls the district with an unformulated theory; "Manhattanism" or in other words "Culture of Congestion" and it is not wrong to say that the district has become an archetype for contemporary cities.

⁷ According to Koolhaas, in an age of mass immigration, a mass similarity of cities might just be inevitable. The cities function like airports in which the same shops are always in the same places. Everything is defined by function, and nothing by history, can be liberating. Philipp Oehmke, Tobias Rapp, "Interview with Star Architect Rem Koolhaas: 'We're Building Assembly-Line Cities and Buildings'", <http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/interview-with-star-architect-rem-koolhaas-we-re-building-assembly-line-cities-and-buildings-a-803798.html>, (accessed on 21.06.2016)

⁸ "Giant New Cities Offer Promise and Challenge", op.cit.

⁹ America is the homeland of nonarchitectural programs based on grid plan, skyscraper, suburban city. Although these are not the terms of traditional city and not the concepts of European cities until the late 19th century and early 20th century, they present an urban fantasy which excites European architects after that period. See Mario Gandelsonas, "The City as the Object of Architecture" *Assemblage*, 37, 1998. 128-144.

¹⁰ Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York, A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*. New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994.



Figure 1.1. Manhattan

According to Koolhaas, congestion in a way is an asset that offers architecture to create, “Babylonian complexities” and sheer size with the support of technological innovations, makes architecture megalomaniac on a modest scale. On the other hand, existence of new urbanism brought architecture into the forefront and created a perception that architecture has a capacity for overcoming the urban issues through big scale buildings because, increase in the scale of the buildings gives a chance to architecture to propose a wider, unstable and changeable program. However, the paradox is that, “the bigger a building the less contact it has with the outside world” and it becomes an autonomous city in itself, which Koolhaas defines it “city within a city”. Roger Trancik presents the paradox as follows;

Buildings are evaluated as isolated objects sited in the landscape, not as part of the larger fabrics of streets, squares, and viable open space. Decision about growth patterns are made from two dimensional land-use plans, without considering the three dimensional relationships between buildings and spaces and without a real understandings of human behavior.¹¹

¹¹ Roger Trancik, "What is Lost Space?" *Finding Lost Space: Theories of Urban Design*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York, 1986, pp.1-20.

The new urbanism is based on disconnectedness; not only for relations between land parcels, buildings and their surroundings, but also for collaborations of the disciplines. Although dealing with the city is not a new interest for architecture, boundaries of architecture and other disciplines such as, urban planning, landscape architecture, engineering, sociology and economy which are essential for overcoming the urban issues, is blurred and collaboration of them is disrupted and architecture is left alone with an endless infrastructure in today's world. The statement of Koolhaas; "We are left with a world without urbanism, only architecture, ever more architecture"¹², summarizes the status of architecture in this new world of urbanism, however the discipline in itself is not a sufficient medium and tool for designing or organizing the development process of city neither in building nor in urban scale. As a result, contemporary cities "develop over the resilient frames and boxes for unstable urban programs" and Generic City becomes an inevitable reality for 21th century's cities with its "anonymous, authorless and neutral urban environment".

Koolhaas -unlike many contemporary writers- has whole heartedly embraced both capitalism and globalization and although it seems that as if he accepts the new urbanism at first glance, as a chance for architecture to a new beginning for refining its relationship to the city, he confesses that architecture becomes inadequate under the pressure of global consumerist society. He emphasizes that the city has nothing new to teach architects anymore; the job is simply to maintain it and continues;

The amount of building becomes obscene without a blueprint and each time you ask yourself; do you have the right to do this much work on this scale if you don't have an opinion about what the world should be like? We really feel that. But is there time for a manifesto? I don't know."¹³

¹² Rem Koolhaas, " What Ever Happened to Urbanism", *S, M, L, XL*, op.cit., p.967

¹³ "Giant New Cities Offer Promise and Challenge", op.cit.

Rather than surrendering to “Generic City” and participating to the construction of contemporary urbanism as a serving actor, the study aims to make a critical reading about the limits of architecture in order to find alternative ways for rehabilitating the 21th century’s city under the pressure of contemporary conditions. For discussing the problems of “Generic City”, Ankara, Söğütözü Central Business District (CBD) is selected as a case area. The district has undergone a transformation over the last three decades with the idea of becoming a new central business district of the city. The study argues that CBD is an outcome of “Generic City” with the aim of its nascence and its configuration and presents an undiluted layout. On the contrary to traditional city center form, CBD produces a new centrality to the cities without historical and geographical context and its extreme form that based on high capacity buildings and wide roads is a laboratory for understanding the nature of the “new urbanism”. Focusing on this particular area, questioning the quality of spaces firstly, and investigating attitudes of architects whose buildings are located in the district, give clues for finding new ways in order construct more livable cities.

CHAPTER 2

OMNIPOTENCE AND IMPOTENCE OF ARCHITECTURE

There has been a radical transformation in the character and organization of the city since the Industrial Revolution. Under the vision of realizing the "ideal city", many theories have been produced, some of which were implemented, some criticized and some stayed on the drawing boards. Historian Ian Buruma notes that "Although designing the ideal city is an ancient ambition of the utopian visionaries from Plato to Le Corbusier, visions of heaven on earth can easily end up looking like hell", and he continues that "this is why architects often are hated with a passion reserved for other professions".¹⁴ This thesis argues that this dilemma is still relevant for cities and architecture has an important role on its continuity.

The 15th century became a significant period for architecture when Leon Battista Alberti defined a modern view that saw architect as the complete designer, capable of planning cities and designing everything from palaces and churches to a humble farmhouse.¹⁵ Although architecture as a profession was already been established before Alberti, historian Spiro Kostof states that the place of architect in the society was not well defined until he provided the discipline a theory of its own and that the architect came to be seen as someone special. So only, a fraction of the built environment has ever been affected by architectural profession in centuries. Starting from the Renaissance however, the discipline gained more basis in approaching the city as the ultimate object of architecture and since then the city has become more the arena of architectural discourse. In the 16th and 17th centuries, buildings and cities

¹⁴ Ian Buruma, "The Sky The Limit", *Considering Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture*, NAI Publishers, Rotterdam, 2004, p.56

¹⁵ Spiro Kostof, *The Architect: Chapters in the History of the Profession*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1977, p.334

were conceived together according to principles of Baroque that was directly inspired by natural sequencing: “the parts of a building or a city were assembled like the branches of a tree or like the limbs of the human body”¹⁶. The structuring of urban agglomeration which produced an order at an urban scale with spacious arteries linking major buildings triggers the conception of the city as the extension of major architectural objects. Within this discourse, a spatial entity that follows the small scale to the larger scale is generated. Alberti's analogy, "the city as some large house, and the house in turn like some small city"¹⁷ created a conception and an illusion for later centuries, based on omnipotence of architecture. During the second industrial revolution- from the late 19th century to interwar period- these organic metaphors persisted alongside ‘the machine’¹⁸ metaphor and it was a time of urban utopias¹⁹ developed by architects who had faith in science and technology.²⁰ Architects, preferred to distance themselves from the forms and norms of bourgeois life, and they did so by establishing a clean slate through deliberate ahistoricism and by applying defamiliarizing and shock techniques.²¹ Seeking to be scientific in their work, they admired and emulated the engineer. The modern movement generally was a more fundamental intellectual orientation involving a reliance upon reason, science and an optimistic belief that, through rational analysis and greater scientific understanding,

¹⁶ Nan Ellin quoted from French architect Joseph Belmont in 1987. See Nan Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism*, Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996, p.37

¹⁷ Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor, The MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1988, p.23

¹⁸ Although the machine metaphor was not new it did not attain dominance until 19th century. E.P. Thompson (1967) points out that it had already appeared in the 17th century. See Nan Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism*, op.cit.

¹⁹ Urban utopias have their roots in the Enlightenment. See Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia, Design and Capitalist Development*. The MIT Press, Massachusetts, 1976, p.120. Colin Rowe's *Collage City*, examines the role for architecture in the urban project that is not comprehensively utopian. He introduces an urban collage, composed of existing fragments and new interventions. See Colin Rowe, and Fred Koetter, *Collage City*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978.

²⁰ Sometimes the machine was itself modeled after the organic. See Dana Cuff, and Roger Sherman, *Fast-forward Urbanism: Rethinking Architecture's Engagement with the City*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 2011.

²¹ Nan Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism*, op. cit., pp.268-69

humans could create a better world for themselves.²² Modernists however were accused of being too utopian and unrealistic as well as too megalomaniac and authoritarian in their desire to change the world through changing the physical landscape according to their own visions.²³ Omnipotence of architecture with the idea of giving form to the city began to lose its impact under the chaotic nature of the 20th century's city. The 1960s was the time when much criticism was directed to the modernist approach and hence a crisis²⁴ is seen in the architectural profession that led to the postmodern urban design theory. Architects questioned what had gone wrong and what could have been done for changing the situation and they began, paradoxically to accept spontaneity and diversity; to design buildings and cities which would become complex and contradictory, in identity and meaning.²⁵

Aldo Rossi criticized the modernist project as neglecting the collective memory and underestimating the permanent structure of the city.²⁶ Bernard Tschumi evaluates discontinuities and chaotic unknowns as opportunities for real innovation and prioritizes flexibility rather than stability for today's cities under the influence of simultaneous explosion of population density and invasion of new technologies. According to him working with doubt, acceptance of error and acknowledgment of necessary correction is not just a condition of the process- it is now fundamental and he emphasizes organizing the city with a connected system of inspired fragments is more useful than any master plan.²⁷ Steven Holl minds the instability with the hybrid programs that simultaneously aligned with transcultural continuity and with the poetic

²² Nigel Taylor, *Urban Planning Theory: Since 1945*, Sage Publications, London, 1998, p.164

²³ Nan Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism*, op. cit., p.290

²⁴ The Chinese word for crisis (*weiji*) is formed by two characters, the first meaning is danger and the second is opportunity, suggesting that inherent in all crisis is the potential for positive transformation. Ibid., p.255

²⁵ Ibid., p.291

²⁶ See Aldo Rossi, *Architecture of the City*, Revised American Edition. Ed. Aldo Rossi, Peter Eisenman, Trans. Diane Ghirardo, Joan Ockman. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1982.

²⁷ Bernard Tschumi, "Coda: Dilated Time", *Urbanisms: Working With Doubt*, Princeton Architectural Press, 2009, pp. 270-271

expression of individual situations and communities. According to him, working with doubt allows an acceptance of the impermanence of technological change and under this instability all places and cultures in a continuous time-place fusion.²⁸ Robert Venturi argues that architecture should adjust itself to the city by "learning from the city". He minds everyday realities of the city, popular culture and the ordinary; according to him these can constitute the formal vocabulary for architecture.²⁹

Criticism did not only come from architects. Journalist and activist Jane Jacobs protests the modernist architecture due to its obsession with order. She sees the city as a laboratory with its successes and failures and criticizes the modernists that made the city unaesthetic, irrational and unhealthy. She believes that cities are nourished by myths and not by realities.³⁰ As a professor of urban planning Dana Cuff accepted the contemporary urbanism as a reality and evaluated the cities as provisional. The architecture of sporadic urbanism is politically electrified, as is the planning, but not out of control; "The shape of discontinuity is not a postmodern cliché, but labor of the new millennium".³¹

It looks as if architecture lost its dominant role on the city following the critics towards the modernist approach for a while, yet its relation to the city was never lost. Starting from the late 20th century holistic planning in relation to a master plan has been eliminated and a kind of piecemeal or fragmented urbanism has been generated as a solution for coping with the instable, ever changing, unknowable and chaotic situations of cities.³²

²⁸ Steven Holl, "Edge of a City", *The New City: Foundations*. University of Miami School of Architecture, Fall: 132-36, 1991.

²⁹ See Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour. *Learning from Las Vegas*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1977.

³⁰ See Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, New York: Vantage, 1961.

³¹ Dana Cuff, *The Provisional City; Los Angeles Stories of Architecture and Urbanism*, The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England, 2000, p.343

³² Koolhaas states in an interview that; "As an architect, one operates in an unstable ideological environment. What is true today can be completely wrong in five years, and in 25 years it's most

Ellin emphasizes that, architecture and urban planning proceeded to develop parallel organizations, journals, and schools with little interaction between each other. The two disciplines defend their respective intellectual and professional turfs from incursion by the other and rather than engaging in productive collaborations, each discipline tended to see the other as a deterrent to its progress. According to Ellin, the antagonism between architecture and urban planning was symptomatic of the development in a capitalist society, with architects representing the interest of individual clients and of unleashed free enterprise while planners representing the usually opposing interests of the larger community and the need to check growth.³³ Although cooperation of these two disciplines should become an obligation for development of the city, constituting a compatible relation between is one of the hardest and problematical issues for the 21th century. Expressing the dissatisfaction within both the architectural and the planning disciplines and the perceived need to achieve a rapprochement the term "urban design" gained fluency in the 1960s.³⁴ Ellin emphasizes as follows:

[A]rchitects have largely been the ones to generative visions for change, while planners have tended more toward offering piecemeal band-aid solutions after the fact. This tendency of architects to constitute the vanguard and planners to rearguard may be attributed to temperament, training and the conditions of their respective professional practices. The relatively recent designation of "urban designer" usually denotes an architect who is designing a fragmented of a city (with or without the buildings) or someone with a degree in "Urban Design", a prerequisite for which is usually a degree in architecture.³⁵

The paradox that survived through the centuries is that evaluating the city as the biggest architectural production is an assertive idea which presents an incompatible relation with the nature of the city. Diana Agrest evaluates it as; "to think of the city

certainly wrong." See "Interview with Star Architect Rem Koolhaas: 'We're Building Assembly-Line Cities and Buildings'", op.cit.

³³ Nan Ellin. *Postmodern Urbanism*. op.cit., p.249

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 249-250

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 107-108

is to think of architecture" and continues with "the city is the limit of architecture".³⁶ Philosopher Jean Attali describes this relation as a circumstance that architecture goes ahead for dealing with urban issues. According to Attali, urbanism creates a possibility that architecture fulfills, but it does so by exhausting it. What is more, this limit and sense of exhaustion have the effect of placing the architect in a very special relation to chaos.³⁷ Dana Cuff argues that, within architecture, the city has always been something in a conundrum. The city, as a project has proven to be too large, or at least too comprehensive leading architects down the slippery slope of utopian thinking. Cuff asserts that the paradox of the city is that, it intrinsically demands design, yet at the same time inherently resists it and that can be viewed as the source of thought about the city in a number of architectural schools.³⁸ Le Corbusier, as a key figure of modern movement argues that social, economic and political forces of the city can take control by imposing a rational order, however architectural theorist Mario Gandelsonas evaluates the issue in a skeptic manner. According to him "Architecture is too slow or too fast, it rebuilds the past or projects an impossible future, but it can never insert itself into the contingency of the urban present".³⁹ Architecture as a profession is a stable structure, which gives form to permanent values and consolidates an urban morphology.⁴⁰ As a result, any architectural attempt to take control of the social, political and economic forces of the city by imposing a rational order becomes problematical. In the light of this opposite stance, alternative approaches are generated. Some of the architects accordingly defend the necessity of historical continuity for cities (Aldo Rossi, Leon Krier), some of them provide radical, futuristic

³⁶ Diana, Agrest, *Architecture From Without, Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991.

³⁷ Jean Attali, "In: Le Plan Et Le Detail. Une Philosophie De L' Architecture Et De La Ville, Nimes", *Considering Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture*, NAI Publishers, Rotterdam, 2004, p.51

³⁸ Dana Cuff, Roger Sherman, *Fast-forward Urbanism: Rethinking Architecture's Engagement with the City*. Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 2011, p.14

³⁹ Mario Gandelsonas, "The City as the Object of Architecture", *Assemblage 37*, 1998, p.130.

⁴⁰ Manfredo Tafuri, "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology", *Architecture Theory Since 1968*, ed. by Michael Hays, Columbia University, New York, 1998, p.14

etc. suggestions (Archigram, Archizoom), and the others such as Rem Koolhaas, Bernard Tschumi, Steven Holl defend the necessity of a flexible program which organizes the city with its unstable conditions.

Koolhaas emphasizes that architecture remains insufficient within the contemporary urbanism as “it defines, excludes, limits, separates from the “rest” – but it also consumes” and underlines the architect's limitations not only in terms of omnipotence, but also impotence as follows; “architecture is a dangerous profession because it is a poisonous mixture of impotence and omnipotence, in the sense that the architect almost invariably harbors megalomaniacal dreams that depend upon others, upon circumstances, to impose and to realize”.⁴¹ Although his statement; “We are left with a world without urbanism, only architecture, ever more architecture”⁴² can be understood as if contemporary urbanism is controlled and directed by architecture, the reality is that architecture stays as a serving actor that takes direction from investors. According to Koolhaas, the market has supplanted ideology today and architecture is subservient to it, as a result, architecture has turned into a spectacle.⁴³ He explains that, under neoliberalism, architecture lost its role as the decisive and fundamental articulation of a society and architecture has been turned into a “cherry on the cake” affair.⁴⁴ Although it seems as if he accepts neoliberalism with its destroying effect, he is never pessimist about the era. He argues that, neoliberalism has assigned architecture a new role and limited its range. Critic Manfredo Tafuri evaluates the reality as; “[I]n face of the new techniques of production and the expansion and rationalization of the market, the architect as producer of objects had indeed become an inadequate figure”⁴⁵. Tafuri continues that; “If architecture is now

⁴¹ Rem Koolhaas, *Conversation With Students*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York 1996, p.12

⁴² Rem Koolhaas, “What Ever Happened to Urbanism”, *S, M, L, XL*, op.cit., p.967

⁴³ Matthias Matussek and Joachim Kronsbein, “Interview with Dutch Architect Rem Koolhaas: “Evil Can Also Be Beautiful””, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/spiegel/spiegel-interview-with-dutch-architect-rem-koolhaas-evil-can-also-be-beautiful-a-408748.html>, (accessed on 25.06.2016)

⁴⁴“Interview with Star Architect Rem Koolhaas: ‘We’re Building Assembly-Line Cities and Buildings’”, op.cit.

⁴⁵ Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia, Design and Capitalist Development*, op.cit., p.107

synonymous with the organization of production, it is also true that, beyond production itself, distribution and consumption are the determining factors of the cycle”⁴⁶. Tafuri argues that “the architect is an organizer, not a designer of objects”⁴⁷.

Michael Dear states as follows;

It can be said that architecture can be seen as a way finding device in this new world of urbanism. Visionaries are needed who understand a nonlinear world, who will invent a hinterland aesthetic and revitalized professional practice not confined to ambitions of plutocratic spectacle. They will help recover local democracy by opening up autonomous public spaces, virtual and real, they will empower urban informality and the kind of spontaneity and connectivity..., and they will encourage street level presences. They will also understand that architectural theory and practice are not involved with aesthetics, but must be grounded within a broader theory of urban form and process if they are to understand and invent the urban future⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.125

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Michael Dear, “Cities without Centers and Edges”, *Fast-forward Urbanism: Rethinking Architecture's Engagement with the City*, op.cit., p.240

CHAPTER 3

REM KOOLHAAS ON URBANISM

Theoretical background of the study is based on the architectural-urban theories in the writings of Rem Koolhaas, which analyze the contemporary cities. His concepts such as “Metropolis”, “New Urbanism”, “Manhattanism / Culture of Congestion”, “Bigness” and “Generic City” are presented as the key words in the third chapter of the study.

Koolhaas -unlike many contemporary writers- has whole heartedly embraced both capitalism and globalization. According to him “architects allow things to take their natural course and adjust to reality”⁴⁹, so “he chooses not to resist but to go with the flow, to invent it as the inevitable substrate of the whole world and he metaphorically mentions world culture as a huge ocean wave and offer - as an architectural strategy for dealing with it- the figure of the surfer, riding the crest”⁵⁰. Koolhaas emphasizes that the force and the direction of the wave are uncontrollable, it breaks at an unpredictable point and the surfer can only, 'master' it by choosing his route.⁵¹ But Michael Sorkin sees him deeply romantic and criticizes his attitude to be contradictory.⁵² Esra Akcan states that he is receptive to reality and turns it into opportunity for his architectural practice that Koolhaas did not take sides, he could (and still can) work in any ideological context, with leaders from any mainstream or

⁴⁹ Stephan Burgdorff and Bernhard Zand, “Rem Koolhaas: 'An Obsessive Compulsion towards the Spectacular’”, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/rem-koolhaas-an-obsessive-compulsion-towards-the-spectacular-a-566655.html>, (accessed on 10.06.2016)

⁵⁰ Michael Sorkin, “Some Assembly Required”, *Considering Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture*, NAI Publishers, Rotterdam, 2004, p.40

⁵¹ Ian Buruma, “The Sky The Limit”, *op.cit.*, p.66

⁵² Michael Sorkin, “Some Assembly Required”, *op.cit.*

extreme political conviction, he could survive in any governmental structure.⁵³ However, Ian Buruma argues that if urban life will be reinvented under the contemporary conditions, surfing is not always good enough and political questions and epochs should not be underestimated. Koolhaas in Buruma's words, "is not an utopian architect with a political vision of the ideal city or society", he "has shrewd idea of the architect's limitations" and grand ideas for contemporary cities.⁵⁴ Michael Gilbert states that, Koolhaas seeks to identify and define concepts and methods through which the planner can make meaningful interventions in the urban environment that confront us today.⁵⁵ According to Gilbert, Koolhaas proposes conceiving urbanism and planning in new ways that recognize and respond to the global consumerist society.

3.1. "Metropolis"

Metropolis is one of the key words for Koolhaas, which he defines as "a mutant form of human coexistence under the effects of simultaneous explosion of modern technologies and human population on their limited territories". Koolhaas mentions that the Metropolis invalidates all the previous systems of articulation and differentiation that have traditionally guided the design of cities. According to him the Metropolis annuls the previous history of architecture. But if the Metropolis is true mutation, it can be assumed that it has also generated its own Urbanism: ... an architecture with its own theorems, laws, methods, breakthroughs and achievements that has remained largely outside the field of vision of official architecture and criticism, both unable to admit a fundamental rupture that would make their own existence precarious.⁵⁶ Rather than maintaining the unity, harmony, memory or

⁵³ Esra Akcan, "The Generic City: Retroactive Manifestos for Global Cities of the Twenty-First Century", *Perspecta*, 41, 2008, pp. 144-152. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40>

⁵⁴ Ian Buruma, "The Sky The Limit", op.cit., p.56.

⁵⁵ Michael Gilbert, "On Beyond Koolhaas: Identity, Sameness and the Crisis of City Planning", http://www.uibk.ac.at/wuv/pdf/ehem/gilbert_city.pdf

⁵⁶ Rem Koolhaas, "Life in the Metropolis' or 'The Culture of Congestion'", *Architectural Theory Since 1968*, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1998, pp.322-330

identity of historical cities, Koolhaas called for the Metropolis of ultimate excitement, creative forgetting, disconnection from history and unpredictability. According to him the true ambition of the metropolis is to create a world totally fabricated by man to live inside "fantasy". Movement in the Metropolis becomes ideological navigation between the conflicting claims and promises of "islands" of a metaphoric archipelago.

3.2. "New Urbanism"

Koolhaas claims in his manifesto, *What Ever Happened to Urbanism* that "Modernism is a failure and magic that didn't work and is finished with its ideas, aesthetics, strategies". He identifies his New Urbanism theory as follows:

If there is to be a new urbanism it will not be based on the twin fantasies of order and omnipotence; it will be the staging of uncertainty; it will no longer be concerned with the arrangement of more or less permanent objects but with the irrigation of territories with potential; it will no longer aim for stable configurations but for the creations of enabling fields that accommodate processes that refused to be crystallized in to definitive form; it will no longer be about meticulous definition, the imposition of limits, but about expanding notions, denying boundaries, not about separating and identifying entities, but about discovering unnamable hybrids, it will no longer be obsessed with the city but with manipulation of infrastructure for endless intensification and diversifications, shortcuts and redistributions – reinvention of psychological space. Since the urban is now pervasive, urbanism will never be about "new," only about the "more" and "modified."⁵⁷

This urbanism is "Lite Urbanism", in which architects and urbanists are relieved from the fantasies for control and that they "conceive new modesties, partial interventions, strategic realignments, compromised positions that might influence, redirect, succeed in limited terms, regroup, begin from scratch even, but never reestablish control." Koolhaas announces that within this new urbanism, architects and urbanists refine their relationship with the city, not as its makers but as mere subjects and its

⁵⁷ Rem Koolhaas, " What Ever Happened to Urbanism", *S, M, L, XL*, op. cit., pp.961-971

supporters; through this way, chaos and unknowns become not a crisis but a possibility which makes architecture as a 'chaotic adventure' and brings urbanism to a chance for a new beginning. Gilbert evaluates Koolhaas's theory of urbanism as follows;

While it seems at first glance to be Koolhaas's bleakest assessment of city planning, closer inspection offers much hope. How territories and processes would interact with the chaos that engulf us? For this would not be chaos where "nothing happens", it must instead be a dynamic and growing chaos, not produced by external planning, but by internal governors. As part of this dynamic, chaotic system, we can interact with it; we cannot resist or control it, but we might be able to influence and target its attractors and the patterns that it forms.⁵⁸

3.3. “Manhattanism / Culture of Congestion”

Koolhaas started to disseminate his ideas on cities as an architect with the book *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* and continues with *S, M, L, XL*. The books can be seen as keystones in terms of two cases; understanding his provocative architectural-urban theories and, drawing a critical frame for today's cities. First book focuses on Manhattan and can be seen as an exploration, which presents the faith of Koolhaas, based on "another architecture" and "another urbanism". The key words "Manhattanism / Culture of Congestion" are invented by Koolhaas in his book over the observations about Manhattan. It differentiates from European cities in terms of its developing aim and scheme; it was organized over the tabula rasa for "facilitating the commercial interests" in the 19th century. Beginning of the 20th century, the city presents an extreme urbanism that has been oriented by a grid with high-rise buildings and skyscrapers. Koolhaas defines Manhattan as "a laboratory: a mythical island where the invention and testing of a metropolitan lifestyle and its attendant architecture could be pursued as a collective experiment in

⁵⁸ Michael Gilbert, "On Beyond Koolhaas: Identity, Sameness and the Crisis of City Planning.", op. cit., p.11

which the entire city became a factory of man-made experience, where the real and the natural ceased to exist".⁵⁹ He marks its origin with Coney Island that is invented and established as an urbanism based on new technology and fantasy. Under the aim of "facilitating commercial interests" in the urban land, technology and fantasy are merged with hyper-density and a unique urbanistic ideology got emerged. Koolhaas identifies it with an unformulated theory which is called "Manhattanism" or the other words "Culture of Congestion". He emphasizes that, the theory "has fed, from its conception, on the splendors and miseries of the metropolitan condition-hyper-density- without once losing faith in it as the basis for a desirable modern culture" and defines Manhattan's architecture as a paradigm which is an exploitation of congestion. It is a remarkable point that although "Manhattan's performance and implications have been consistently ignored and even suppressed by the architectural profession", Koolhaas explores the city as a source for the idea: "another architecture, another urbanism" and the city proves the idea. Briefly, Manhattan not only presents a basis for the idea of Koolhaas, but also become an archetype for today's cities and Koolhaas names this reality with the key words "Manhattanism", "Culture of Congestion".

3.4. "Bigness"

Koolhaas is also obsessed by the notion of Bigness⁶⁰, of extra-large. Sheer size, he believes creates Babylonian complexities that no architect can hope to control, and that is precisely the beauty of it; skyscrapers and other outsized buildings contain so much human activity that they become autonomous cities in themselves.⁶¹ The bigger a building the less contact it has with the outside world.⁶² Koolhaas defined it as follows: "Beyond a certain critical mass, a building becomes a Big Building and such

⁵⁹ Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York, A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*, op.cit.

⁶⁰ According to Ingrid Böck, "the vastness of the Grand Palais in Lille (started in 1990) functions as a direct application of the theory of Bigness—though he does not explicitly refer to it as such". See Ingrid Böck, *Six canonical projects by Rem Koolhaas: Essays on the history of ideas*, Graz University of Technology, Austria, 2015

⁶¹ Ian Buruma, "The Sky The Limit", op.cit., p.54

⁶² "Rem Koolhaas: 'An Obsessive Compulsion towards the Spectacular'", op.cit.

a mass can no longer be controlled by a single architectural gesture or even by any combination of architectural gestures".⁶³ Congestion in a way is an asset that offers architecture a chance to make interventions in urban scale however, the borderline between architectural scale and urban scale is blurred. The increase in the scale creates an urban condition enveloped by the boundaries of architectural production. Koolhaas argues eloquently that the "programmatically alchemy" of bigness reinvents the collective, reclaims maximum possibility, engineers the unpredictable, creates freedom, provides serenity and excites perpetual intensity; enthusiastically, he even promises that big buildings will start a nuclear reaction in the social world.⁶⁴

3.5. "Generic City"

Koolhaas is always interested in special and unique cities.⁶⁵ After the "Delirious New York" he went on to analyse cities like Atlanta, Singapore and Lagos and his discovery is that; differences between these cities actually aren't all that interesting, so he wanted to uncover their similarities. "Generic City" is related to his observations about these kind of cities and it is detailed in his second book *S, M, L, XL*. He identifies the 21st century's cities to become "Generic" under the complex forces of globalization. The main challenge is that, today "cities actually grow faster than humans"⁶⁶ under the rapid alterations with unstable conditions and cities are shaped randomly with unordinary planning mechanisms. They are built at phenomenal speeds and have no recognizable center, no single identity. It is sometimes hard to think of them as cities at all.⁶⁷ They present a strange sense of familiarity⁶⁸, as if you've been there before, yet

⁶³ Rem Koolhaas, "Bigness: or the Problem of Large", *S, M, L, XL*, op. cit., p.499

⁶⁴ Michael Gilbert, "On Beyond Koolhaas: Identity, Sameness and the Crisis of City Planning.", op cit.

⁶⁵"Interview with Star Architect Rem Koolhaas: 'We're Building Assembly-Line Cities and Buildings'",

⁶⁶"Lagos shows a city can recover from a deep, deep pit: Rem Koolhaas talks to Kunle Adeyemi", op.cit.

⁶⁷"Giant New Cities Offer Promise and Challenge", op.cit.

⁶⁸According to Koolhaas, in an age of mass immigration, a mass similarity of cities might just be inevitable. The cities function like airports in which the same shops are always in the same places. Everything is defined by function, and nothing by history, can be liberating. "Interview with Star Architect Rem Koolhaas: 'We're Building Assembly-Line Cities and Buildings'", op.cit.

you haven't. It's all the familiar building blocks that are constantly being assembled in different ways.

Generic City portrays the contemporary city as an inevitable reality without any suggestions. It indicates the end of the architectural programming of the city. It produces an anonymous, authorless and neutral urban environment. Its properties are directly determined by cycles of space production and consumption in the city. Abandoning all methods that become functionless and accepting whatever suitable for valid requirements are the dynamics of Generic City. It develops over the resilient frames and boxes for unstable urban programs. It is an outcome of a direct and unconscious working response to metropolitan condition and it could be "applicable to any city"⁶⁹.

Koolhaas presents the Generic City under seventeen titles and some are to be introduced in order to understand the nature of the 21st century's city. One of the best definitions for Generic City is "it is nothing but a reflection of present need and present ability." In order to supply the requirements and accommodate the global world, the city breaks all kind of connections that can be an obstacle for its development process and "accept whatever grows in its place". History and identity are ignored. Identity is erased and "Tabula Rasa" is convenient; with Koolhaas words:

If there was nothing, now they are there, if there was something, they have replaced it. It is the post-city being prepared on the site of the ex-city. It is big enough for everybody. It is easy. It does not need maintenance. If it gets too small it just expands. If it gets old it just self-destructs and renews. It is equally exciting – or unexciting everywhere." It "presents final death of planning" not to be unplanned, "but its most dangerous and most exhilarating discovery is that planning makes no difference whatsoever." It is fractal with an endless repetition of the same simple structural module. Business is the dominant program and offices, shopping malls and hotels are the main typologies. Skyscrapers can exist anywhere without any connection to its natural and

⁶⁹ Ibid.

urban environment. They are evaluated as the way to supply density in isolation. Generic City develops from "horizontal to verticality". It has a relationship with a more or less authoritarian regime- local or national. Usually, the cronies of the "leader" -who ever that was- decided to develop a piece of " downtown" or the periphery, or even to start a new city in the middle of nowhere, and so triggered the boom that put in the city on the map". Infrastructure does not connect the urban functions each other, but "spin off" them. Roads are designed with the aim of "automotive efficiency" and "pedestrians are led on ride". As a result, urban land cannot be measured in dimensions; ten mile can last five minutes or forty; it can be shared with almost nobody, or with the entire population. It supports development of the Generic City efficiently, due to provide a faster application without any question based on whether architectural desires of investors are suitable or not. Buildings are constructed in an incredible speed from unbelievable variations of alternatives.⁷⁰

Koolhaas argues that "20th-century city is over"⁷¹ and the city presents a passive role to architecture with an endless infrastructure. He emphasizes that the city has nothing new to teach architects anymore; the job is simply to maintain it and continues;

The amount of building becomes obscene without a blueprint and each time you ask yourself; do you have the right to do this much work on this scale if you don't have an opinion about what the world should be like? We really feel that. But is there time for a manifesto? I don't know."⁷²

Koolhaas uses Generic City as a keyword to put attention on the nature of the 21th century's cities and he asks whether Generic City idea is founded in America⁷³ due to its unusual urbanism and architecture. Koolhaas confesses that, he is a critical spirit

⁷⁰ Rem Koolhaas, " The Generic City", *S, M, L, XL*, op. cit., pp.1248-1264

⁷¹ "Giant new cities offer promise and challenge", op.cit.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ America is the homeland of nonarchitectural programs based on grid plan, skyscraper, suburban city. Although these are not the terms of traditional city and not the concepts of European cities until the late 19th century and early 20th century, they present an urban fantasy, which excites European architects after that period. See Mario Gandelsonas, "The City as the Object of Architecture." *Assemblage*, 37, 1998, pp.128-144.

and an architect at the same time, but he does not feel obligated to constantly validate his own theories in his specific work.⁷⁴ However, his urban project in Dubai, which is called Waterfront City is an influential project for reflecting his urban theories. Waterfront City is an urban island inspired by a section of Midtown Manhattan and combined the two concepts, creating a hybrid of the generic and the fantastic.⁷⁵

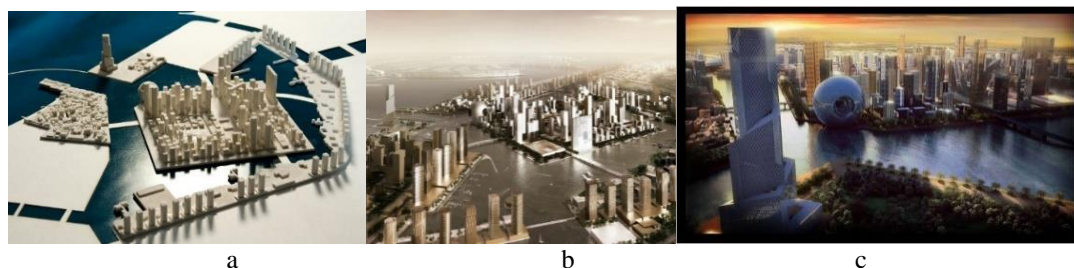


Figure 3.1. a,b,c. Waterfront City

The design linked a dense grid of conventional towers to the mainland by a system of bridges. It was designed for 1.5 million people and includes a series of stunning buildings. It seems that as if a fragment of Manhattan had been removed with a scalpel and reinserted in the Middle East.⁷⁶ Koolhaas said he hoped to infuse this entirely new development with something of the feeling of an older city, but while the outlines are intriguing, he is still coming to terms with how to create an organic whole.⁷⁷

Although his early period discourse based on sanctification of tower, he launched a campaign in his book 'Content' in 2003 which is a rebellion to the skyscraper. The book has a chapter that is titled 'Kill the Skyscraper,' and introduces disappointment

⁷⁴ "Rem Koolhaas: 'An Obsessive Compulsion towards the Spectacular'", op.cit.

⁷⁵ Nicolai Ouroussoff, "City On The Gulf: Koolhaas Lays Out A Grand Urban Experiment In Dubai", http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/03/arts/design/03kool.html?_r=0 (accessed on 21.06.2018)

⁷⁶ The scale of these undertakings recalls the early part of the last century in the United States, when it was confidently pointed toward the future. However, it would be unimaginable in an American city today, where, in the face of shrinking state and city budgets, expanding a single subway line can seem like a heroic act.

⁷⁷ "Giant new cities offer promise and challenge", op.cit.

of the skyscraper typology. He argued that “skyscrapers as a genre had been reduced to a vacuous race for height and it has not been refined, but corrupted”⁷⁸. And he presented a CBD proposal at Beijing which is an alternative typology to the skyscraper. The proposal argues that, the tower has made the Central Business District into a structure that is identical everywhere and it has minimized interaction in the age of information technology. In order to distinguish itself in a forest of towers, the CBD proposal offers a lowrise network of dispersed cores with flexible office courtyards. According to the proposal, “same amount of urban substance can be configured in many different ways from a compact tower to a dispersed network”⁷⁹. However, after a decade, he fessed up that, his declaration of war went completely unnoted, and his campaign was completely unsuccessful while he was accepting the tall building award from the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH) in Chicago.⁸⁰

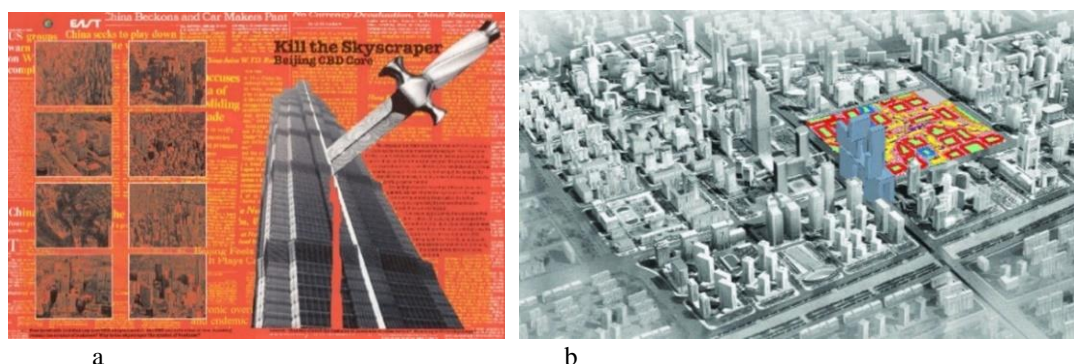


Figure 3.2. a,b. Proposal for Beijing CBD

⁷⁸ Marcus Fairs, “Rem “Kill The Skyscraper” Koolhaas Wins Tall Building Award” <https://www.dezeen.com/2013/11/08/rem-kill-the-skyscraper-koolhaas-wins-tall-building-award/>, (accessed on 21.06.2018)

⁷⁹ Beijing Central Business District, <http://oma.eu/projects/beijing-central-business-district> (accessed on 21.06.2018)

⁸⁰ “Rem “Kill the skyscraper” Koolhaas wins tall building award”, op.cit.

CHAPTER 4

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD) AS AN OUTCOME OF “GENERIC CITY”

4.1. A Transformation process from City Center to CBD

Until the 20th century, the city was formed with a coherent whole that “was organized around a center within which the social practices of politics, religion, business, and culture were exercised.”⁸¹ ‘City center’ is the focal point that “gives the city an identity and constitutes the heart and image of the city”⁸². It is a civic and cultural center, that houses multiple uses-residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional- and people come together to produce and trade goods and services, to meet, and to exchange information and ideas.⁸³ But, with the passage of time, alterations of demographic and economic conditions and technological innovations has changed organization of the densities and functions of the city and a new type of dispersion and concentration has emerged in the metropolitan area. Development of industrial construction techniques and dependency on private car accelerate the suburbanization process, and movement to periphery from the center has reduced the role of the city center in daily life and the center has faltered and declined. Beside of that, industrial zones began to be decentralized and their co-ordination functions has centralized and constituted a new urban typology which is called ‘central business district’⁸⁴ (CBD).

⁸¹ A. Loukaitou-Sideris and T. Banerjee, “Postmodern Urban Form”, *Urban Design Reader*, Edited by Matthew Carmona and Steve Tiesdell, 2007, p.43

⁸² Martin Meyerson, *The Face Of The Metropolis*, Random House, 1963

⁸³ Cy Paumier, *Creating A Vibrant City Center: Urban Design And Regeneration Principles*, Washington D.C.: ULI-The Urban Land Institute, 2004, p.9.

⁸⁴ The term is attributed to Ernest Burgess, who proposed a socio-economic model of the American city, where highest order economic activity, essentially business in the 1920s, was concentrated, surrounded by concentric rings of lower order activities and social classes.

Since the late 20th century, world economy has become more integrated and production operations have become more dispersed globally and managing the process have become increasingly complex and information intensive. International corporations, who are the main actors of the global capital, constitute a worldwide system of control over production and market expansion and centralize their management functions, where they can source the necessary skills and expertise. Therefore, they have preferred to construct separate centers for their special needs. Growing demands for large office spaces are not available or practical in the central urban fabric so, vacant nodes⁸⁵, holding the main transportation networks are chosen for locations of the CBD.

4.2. CBD Examples around the World

The first examples of CBDs are seen in American cities like New York and Chicago, as a distinctive financial district in the early 19th century and spread all over the world by turn of the century.



Figure 4.1. Manhattan (around 1950), (Abramson, pg.187)

⁸⁵ Derelict industrial lands or agricultural areas are preferred in order to supply many opportunities such as, lower cost, big building plots, effective parking lots and accessibility.

During this period CBD was functioning as a mix of governmental, commercial and financial center with a uniform urban structure and Americans use commonly the term ‘downtown’ in place of CBD. In order to revitalize their centers, Americans encircled downtowns with freeways, demolished older buildings for surface parking, and reengineered two-way street systems into one-way networks to enhance traffic flow.⁸⁶ They have planned for their downtowns within a continually changing framework of images and assumptions about the nature of central business districts.⁸⁷ From decade to decade the new model has dominated with different themes. Carl Abbott presents a brief history in his article⁸⁸, which focuses on the late 20th century’s downtown strategies of America and he divides the period into five parts and introduces variable concepts for each decade. In the first decade, (1945-1955) downtown is seen as unitary center, which “required improved access through highway improvements and downtown ring roads.” And starting from 1955, it was “understood as a failing real estate market appeared to require the land assembly and clearance associated with the urban renewal program.” The period between 1965-1975 downtown was evaluated “as a federation of subdistricts called for community conservation, historic preservation, and "human scale" planning. The decade 1975-1985, a set of individual experiences like; cultural facilities, retail markets, open space, and other amenities were seen in downtown. And after 1985, downtown has viewed as a command post in the global economy, with its expanded office districts and supporting facilities.

⁸⁶ Eugénie L. Birch, “Downtown In The ‘New American City’”, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 626, 2009, pp 134-153

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Carl Abbot, “Five Strategies for Downtown”, *Journal of Policy History* 5, 1993, pg.20



Figure 4.2. Skyline of Paris, La Defense

Paris La Defense is the early examples in the Europe, after the American CBDs. France wanted to regenerate its cities rapidly after the Second World War, by the help of new construction technologies and with the effect of consumerist culture and strong economic growth, the state decided to construct a business center in the capital Paris. It was a new typology not only for France but also for all the European countries in that time. In order to eliminate possible disasters of the CBD over the historical skyline of Paris, a vacant node which is include several shanty towns, small farms and factories was selected at the end of the west side of the historical axis. A state controlled firm EPAD was constituted for realizing and managing the process. La Defense has built a modern extension of the historical center of Paris. The urban form of La Defense consist of a large pedestrian plaza with an alignment of high rise buildings on both sides. The plaza includes the services, roads and technical infrastructure and separate traffic flows in order to promote comfort for users. Beside of that maintaining the historical axis, which is the main structuring line, and communication axis of Paris, is an important factor for its creation. Although the idea

includes considerable investment and very complex engineering process, these advantages make it viable. The CBD is one of the most intensively used transport hub in the region and firmly anchored with central Paris. Since its creation in 1958, La Defense become one of the major landmarks of the Paris and internationally reknowned.



Figure 4.3. London, Canary Wharf

London, Canary Wharf is the other leading CBD in the world, which is a regeneration project of the London Docklands.⁸⁹ After all of the major docks had closed down in the East End in the 1980s, the land became an unpleasant area that suffered from poverty and crime and in order to bring back to business and rehabilitate the area, the government constitute a corporation which is called LDDC. The corporation has coordinated and managed the redevelopment of huge swatches of derelict industrial land and created a project to build what became known as Canary Wharf development.

⁸⁹ Beside of the Canary Wharf, Central City of London is an extraordinary and contemporary example. In order to eliminate the car use and, traffic congestion, the government prefers to make historical city center more dense and promote a policy that encourages high density development at key transportation nodes. By this way, the city grows inside of itself rather than the periphery and the historical city center of London becoming more 'CBD like'. Building super tall buildings in the historical urban fabric has become the new trend. See appendix B.

The district is a former heavy industrial area located along the Thames River in East London. The CBD is supported by rapid transit systems and London City Airport also opened at the Royal Docks in 1987, in order to invigorate the connection of the CBD in the global network.



Figure 4.4. Napoli, Centro Direzionale

Napoli, Centro Direzionale is the third example that is located near the central station of the city and it is the first CBD that have been built in Italy. It was designed by Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. In order to disburden to the existing city center, government had decided to build a new center mainly for office functions from the mid-60s. After several projects, Tange's proposal was approved finally in 1982 and it completed in 1995. The proposal consists of a main pedestrian axis at the center of the CBD, separates traffic and pedestrian movement and promotes an impressive urban agglomeration with high-rise office towers. Large scale parking areas and train station is located under the main pedestrian axis and a clear separation between vehicles and pedestrians is constituted. The scale of the buildings present a panorama that symbolizes the modern face of the city and create a contrast between the existing city center and historical urban fabric.

4.3. Contextual Relation of CBD to Generic City

The study argues that CBD is an outcome of “Generic City” with its nascence and its configuration. It emerges from a necessity of commercial interest and presents an extraordinary centrality to the city with its character, form and social functions.

CBD emerged as a physical reflection to the commercial and industrial acts of globalization.⁹⁰ In order to take a bigger portion from the global network, cities competing to each other for attracting the global investors, independent from their size and location. They develop strategies in terms of economy, politics and urban systems. Planner John Zacharias and Wenhan Yang state that, cities do not troubled to express, whom they are and from where they have come, but evaluates the CBD as a tool, in order to join a select club of power centers launching on the world stage.⁹¹ Authors assert that, the CBD is not a public place and certainly not a visitor destination except for a very narrow range of high culture activities.⁹² Carl Abbott refers to landscape critic John Brinckerhoff Jackson that “the urban center has lost its role in daily life and transformed instead into an impressive symbol of remote power and unattainable wealth.”⁹³ Abbott argues that CBD as command post is dedicated to power and money and technology, not to traditional human activities or institutions.⁹⁴

CBD is shaped as a world center for commerce, and solidifies its existence according to strong customer-supplier linkages in the global arena. It becomes a concentration node of international capital and houses the main institutions of government, trade, banking, finance and industry. Beside of that, it becomes the centers of information,

⁹⁰ According to Saskia Sassen, CBD is a spatial form of globalization and symbolizes the global face of the city.see Saskia Sassen, "The Global City: Introducing a Concept and Its History", *Mutations*, Actar, 2000

⁹¹ John Zacharias & Wenhan Yang, “A short history of the Chinese Central Business District”, *Planning Perspectives*, 31:4, pg. 629, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2016.1152909>

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Carl Abbot, “Five Strategies for Downtown”, op.cit.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

technology, entertainment and commercial sectors. “It draws its business from the whole urban area and from all ethnic groups and classes of people”⁹⁵ and many national and international corporations locate their headquarters in there so, it becomes a magnet for diverse cosmopolitan workforce.

CBD creates new node in the urban macroform and constitute essentially a small city or “city within a city” that houses high rise towers and mega scale buildings and includes necessary services and infrastructures for mobility. Despite the implication of its name, CBD often is not located the urban core of the city but it is accommodated in the most accessible location which is supported with efficient transportation network. On the contrary, to traditional city center, CBD prioritizes the demands of commercial and corporate developers. So, privatization, commercialization and deregulation are key words for the new form and rather than coalescing to the city and reflecting its unique features, CBD generates almost a typical environment without any sensitivity to the historical, geographical, physical or cultural context. In order to the goals of commercial and corporate developers are similar everywhere, a franchise culture which promote same standardized environment dominates the new downtowns. This resulted with a common soulless environment that is the similar from city to city. Mega scale buildings and high-rise towers make the CBD visible from almost any point of the city. These megablocks are constructed not only for supplying the congestion in the limited territories; their powerful iconic and representational form are accepted as a landmark⁹⁶ so, the city becomes a showplace for the private ego at the expense of public realm. Concentration, accessibility, dense population, high land values make the CBD a high density urban development and cities do not to stay indifferent to this unique urban typology.

⁹⁵ Raymond E. Murphy, *The Central Business District: A Study In Urban Geography*, second edition, 2009, p.2

⁹⁶ “Downtown skylines offer visual identity to a place; high land values and the presence of employment nodes make them strong contributors to a city’s tax base and help position their metros in the global economy.” See Eugénie L. Birch, “Downtown In The ‘New American City’”, op.cit

Mobility, communication technologies and feared of the unwanted political, social and cultural intrusions reduce the values of the traditional public spaces and CBD offers a sterile, disjunctive, fortress publicity to the city. Public spaces are no more the streets, parks or squares; the traditional meaning of them are lost and they are almost replaced with enclosed and segregated places. Galleries, arcades, plazas or atriums of the megablocks are the new public gathering places and they are more contained, more controlled and ultimately less free than traditional public spaces. Access to and use of the space is only privilege, not a right and this creates a class polarization. Beside of that, citizens are subjected to pseudo public spaces without a sense of time and place. William Whyte accepted them as an extension of freeway culture and evaluated them as a wretched model for the future.

They borrow a sense of place from their surroundings; they deny it within. Where, indeed, is *here*? And when? Is it night? Or day? Is it spring? Or winter? You cannot see out. You do not know what city you are in, or if you are in a city at all. It could be on the West Coast. It could be on the East. It could be in a foreign country. The piped music gives no clue. It is the same music everywhere. It is the same place everywhere. You are in the universal controlled environment.⁹⁷

Architecture is almost always at the forefront here with all determinations of private developers and producing these places with a real sense of traditional urbanity is not cared. More than a half century ago, Jane Jacobs criticized this soulless environment and argued that creating the CBD with an atmosphere of urbanity and exuberance is not a frivolous aim. She charged with architects, planners and businessmen with being interested only with buildings and states that;

From city to city the architects' sketches conjure up the same dreary scene; here is no hint of individuality or whim or surprise, no hint that here is a city with a tradition and flavor all its own.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ William Whyte, *City; Rediscovering The Center*, op. cit., p.206

⁹⁸Jane Jacobs, "Downtown is for People", <http://fortune.com/2011/09/18/downtown-is-for-people-fortune-classic-1958/>

Briefly, CBD reveals a new model for the center of the cities and differentiates from the traditional city center form in terms of its aim and configuration model. It is organized according to economical and financial targets and rather than the traditional human activities and public spaces, buildings and their symbolic values are minded. It provides a genesis that reflects the properties of the Generic City effectively and discussing the “Generic City”, Ankara, Söğütözü Central Business District (CBD) is selected as a case area. Focusing on the area, questioning the quality of spaces first, and making interview with architects who designed the buildings in the district give clues for finding new ways in order construct more livable cities.

CHAPTER 5

READING THE “GENERIC CITY”: ANKARA, SÖĞÜTÖZÜ DISTRICT

Ankara Söğütözü District is a laboratory in terms of its development process with its big scale buildings such as office towers, hotels and shopping malls and it is believed that the case illustrates Koolhaas's urban theories effectively and presents a common discussion ground. Accordingly two properties of the district will be the focus in the study. The first is related to its ‘function’; its centralized character inherits an idea for being the new center of Ankara. Evaluating this idea in relation to the development process of the center of Ankara has potentials for understanding the nature of the Generic City. The second correlates with its ‘big scale buildings’ and relations with their environments; the capacity of the buildings exceeds the boundaries of architectural design and requires a collaboration between architecture, planning, engineering and other related disciplines.

5.1. From Urban Utopia to Generic City

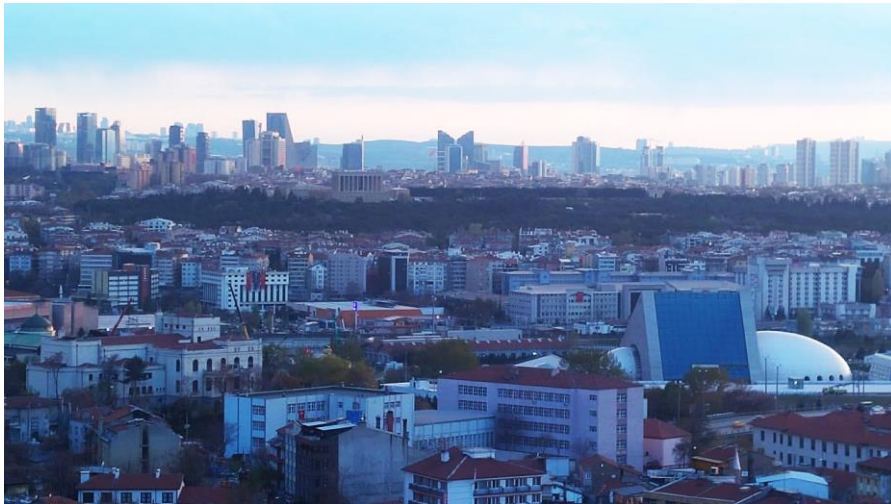


Figure 5.1. View from Ulus to Söğütözü CBD

Ankara presents an urbanization that was shaped according to the modernist ideal⁹⁹ in the past and develops with a “generic” understanding at present. It was an ordinary Anatolian town before the 1920s and its designation as the capital of the new Turkish Republic accelerates its urban development process. At the beginning of the early 20th century, planning of the urban layout of Ankara represented the symbol of the national and governmental identity. However, when rapid urbanization and demographic growth encountered the liberal economy at the end of the century a kind of spontaneous, fragmented urbanism has been adopted. The new urbanism promotes an urban environment that is developed according to the demands of private initiatives and unrelated settings and spaces began to dominate the city.



Figure 5.2. Skyline of Ankara

As a result modern urban nature of Ankara is lost and the city has become a Generic City. Zeynep Uludağ marks the 1980s as a turning point and emphasizes that;

[T]he new economic and political system accelerated the availability of new technologies, construction materials and infrastructures. Urban space constantly being restructured under the effects of liberal economy. The dense

⁹⁹ The planning approaches of Hermann Jansen and will of legal administrations were indicating modernist approaches in creation of Ankara. General planning approaches of the Jansen plan was showing parallel tendencies with ‘garden-city’ concept which is an important utopia of modernist idealism. And providence controlled motorways and accessibility principals are also displaying the features of ‘planning by road’. Also, zonings, neglecting the commercial facilities, promoting public recreational facilities and exertion of public domain on urban environment are important principals presenting the modernist approaches of Jansen Plan in creation of urban fabric. See Gönül Tankut, *Bir Başkent’in İmarı*, İstanbul: Anahtar Yayınları, 1993.

and concentrated commercial activities made the existing city center insufficient and development of the city center began to move towards to the new urban quarters. This is a conscious attempt developed as a result of decentralization policies. While center of the city was exposed to an axial dislocation, new types of buildings and urban typologies also changed the nature of the urban context. Shopping malls and central business districts are two of them which presented a different experiment for the dwellers in the urban sphere and effects the dynamics of the center of the city. An attractive consumer culture was born and the gap between the reality and representation in the urban sphere was increased.¹⁰⁰

In the next part, the study investigates this transformation in relation to the city center development of Ankara and later focuses on Söğütözü CBD which is developed as the new central business district (CBD) of the city.

5.2. A Contextual Introduction of the ‘City Center’ in Ankara

The old city centers will become unlivable, if they are not revitalized by the shock of the new. Making the old city centers peripheral, you take the load off them and allow them to breathe. At the same time new architecture should be less apologetic, more bold in its modernity, in a word more urban.¹⁰¹

Rem Koolhaas

¹⁰⁰ Zeynep Uludag, "The Evolution of Popular Culture and Transformation of The Urban Landscape of Ankara" , http://www.inst.at/trans/15Nr/01_2/uludag15.htm

¹⁰¹ Ian Buruma, "The Sky The Limit", op.cit., p.69

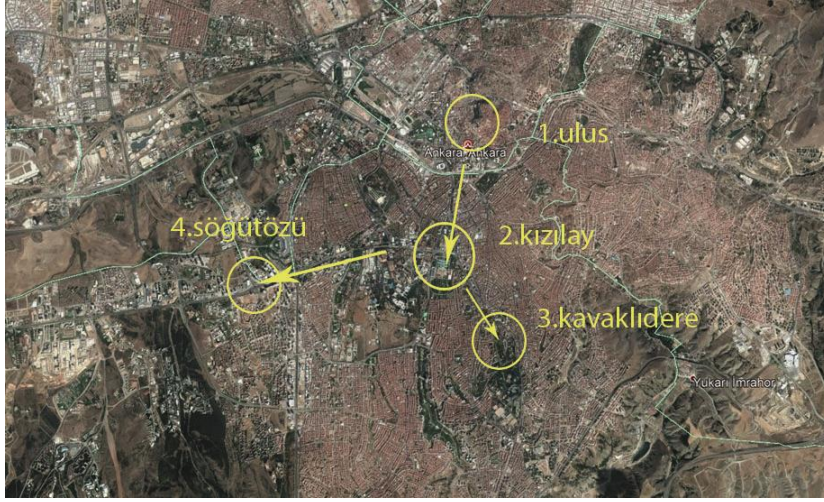


Figure 5.3. Centers of Ankara

Formation of the city center of Ankara is based on a multi-centered scheme that consists of many centers such as Ulus, Kızılay, Kavaklıdere and Söğütözü districts, as an outcome of the decentralization policies. Till the 1970s the city had a dual city center that showed the influence of modernism. The city had grown on linear axis along north-south direction according to the proposals of Jansen Plan. Atatürk Boulevard¹⁰² is the main axis that begin from the historical center Ulus. It continues toward Kızılay which is designed as a commercial and administrative center. Gönül Tankut emphasizes it as;

The city of Ankara began to develop around the traditional city center in Ulus, with the declaration as the young Turkish Republic capital in 1923 and in order to build a concrete physical environment to symbolize the image of the young republic, selection of Jansen Plan in 1928 and its approval in 1932, changed the development axis of the city through the Yenışehir to south. As a result, the city of Ankara formed along Atatürk Boulevard which is a linear route pivoted by two city centers, Ulus and Kızılay.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Atatürk Boulevard has become main artery of the city and prestigious protocol road of the state.

¹⁰³ Gönül Tankut, *Bir Başkentin İmarı*, op.cit.

With the decision of applying the Jansen Plan, Kızılay was seen as an alternative for rehabilitating the pressure over the historical center of Ulus, however providing shopping facilities and prestigious office spaces Kızılay also reached its ultimate capacity by the 1970s. This overcapacity problem was tried to be solved via two ways: increasing the building capacity in terms of demolishing and rebuilding, or opening Kavaklıdere, as a new development area, which is located at the south end of the main axis. However, under the wave of capitalist movements, suburbanization (expanding metropolis through west axis), promotion of export-based life-style and private car ownership, have triggered new space creation mechanisms and building mega-scale projects has become the new trends by the private initiatives. However, historical center of Ulus, dense development of Kızılay, even recent developments at Kavaklıdere do not offer available conditions for mega scale projects, in terms of lower cost, big building plots, effective parking lots and accessibility. Beside of these, in order to prevent the pressure of the mega scale buildings over the traffic network, private initiatives have moved away from the existing centers and totally new and independent area; Söğütözü district is came to agenda as the fourth and the newest center of Ankara. It is a new attempt for Ankara to create an alternative center, which is called central business district and presents a different urban morphology, differentiates Söğütözü CBD from other centers.

Ulus, Kızılay and Kavaklıdere exist with their own identities that are rooted in their regional context and reflect the values of traditional city center. They were shaped with a sensitive manner to the public demands and aimed to provide a lively environment with their public places, like square, street or parks which are "traditionally the home of free speech"¹⁰⁴. People can come together for both commercial and civic purposes with a sense of time and place. However, Söğütözü CBD presents a new centrality to the city with different priorities. Rather than the public demands, interest of the private initiatives shaped the configurations of the district. Glamorous megascale buildings and high-rise towers are surrounded with

¹⁰⁴ "Shopping", *Mutations*, op.cit., p.154

disorganized, neglected spaces, and the district presents a poor environment to the citizens in terms of public uses. The problem is that, the social and physical integration of the centers to each other and to the whole city are underestimated and today none of these centers are preferred by citizens more than a shopping mall. Although the city center is more richer than a typical shopping mall, in terms of social and cultural textures and has a wide range of consumer choice, some features of the mall, such as; highway accessibility, conditions of roads, parking facilities, availability of choice of goods and services in a small, secured area, draw people to the mall.

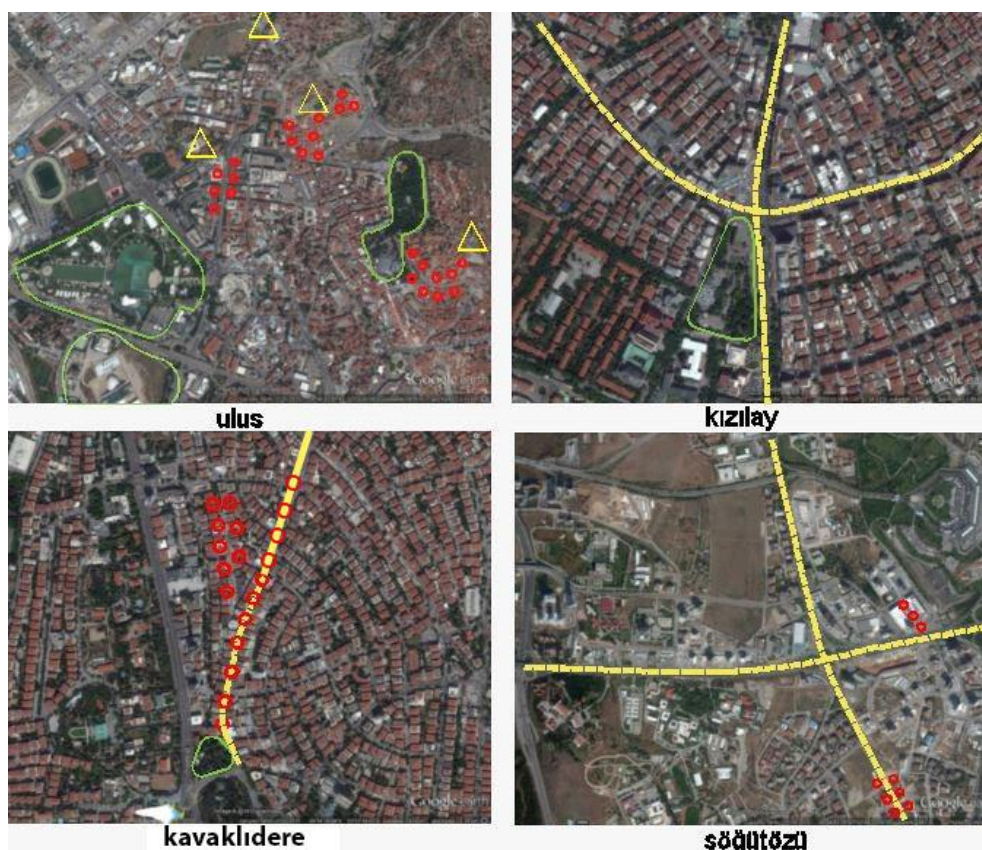


Figure 5.4. Centers of Ankara

Ulus has a historical past and hosts a choice laden variety of places for public; parks, museums, historical places impulses of traditional characteristics of city center. As for that Kızılai supports car and pedestrian movement together and it has open spaces, parks and squares. Kavaklıdere also hosts a lively green park inside and has a strong pedestrian activity with its sidewalk cafes and shops.

Sociologist William Whyte remarked the challenge of cities for their centers and stated that consuetudinary elements of the centers like streets, squares, parks are encountered a kind of elimination.¹⁰⁵ He wrote in 1988 that, “coming of age is a whole new generation of planners and architects for whom the formative experience of a center was the atrium of suburban shopping mall”.¹⁰⁶ It can be said that Whyte's prediction is observed totally in Ankara and “shopping mall is becoming an undisputed center of social life in the city; a space for the organized and surveilled mass consumption”¹⁰⁷ It is not a coincidence that shopping mall is one of the basic architectural types of the Generic City and it is unlikely to host a public sphere; with Koolhaas words “it is a caricature of a public space”¹⁰⁸

Although Ankara is predominantly characterized by educational and public functions instead of commercial facilities, and has many city centers, is the new CBD an "economic" necessity for the city? If it is a necessity, filling the area with high rise office towers at the expense of ignoring the city's social and cultural environment is an obligation? Suggesting a new area whenever faced with problems of capacity in the existing city centers or building more shopping malls instead of enhancing the unfavorable conditions in city centers are the common solutions today. The striking point is that neither architecture nor urban planning can offer a better solution for the city center and the “inhabitants is protectively encapsulated in the car or segregated in

¹⁰⁵ William Whyte, *City; Rediscovering The Center*, op. cit., p.337

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Mimarlar Odası Ankara, “The city of lost vision: A manifesto for Ankara” in Workshop: ‘Metamorphosis and the Textual City’, 2006,
<http://www.mimarlarodasiankara.org/index.php?Did=3047>

¹⁰⁸ “Rem Koolhaas: 'An Obsessive Compulsion towards the Spectacular'”, op.cit.

the mall"¹⁰⁹. As a result ‘city without qualities’ becomes an inevitable reality for Ankara as well.

5.3. Reading Söğütözü District as a "Generic" Urban Development

Today, Söğütözü District is seen as the new CBD of Ankara and in order to become the new center and new face of the city, it develops with a totally new architectural vocabulary and urbanism. Rather than the needs and desires of the public, the demands of private initiatives are prioritized and instead of a comprehensive plan, piecemeal decisions are put into operations and relations to the buildings each other and the connection between the buildings and spaces are underestimated. Megascale buildings constitute miniature cities inside of themselves and promote many activities with a closed safety environment that do not connect to the outside. Spaces are underestimated, cut off, and separated and instead of creating a unified urban texture, a fragmented, patchwork urbanism is preferred. High rise and large scale buildings; shopping malls, hotels, congress center, office towers, residences and beside of them hospitals, mosques, industrial or service buildings come together but they cannot create an urban whole and a chaotic environment becomes unavoidable in the district.

Philosopher and cultural theorist Peter Sloterdijk accepts this unconnectedness and resembles it to foam.¹¹⁰ He states that like a physical foam constituting of diverse bubbles that confine and deform each other, the notion of social foam suggests a new system of multiple chambers that, though coming into contact with one another, do not communicate and interact. According to Sloterdijk, isolation is not an unacceptable input of contemporary urbanism. Every small entity maintain a large degree of autonomy, segregation and privacy. However, this urbanism has handicaps. The public realm and collective space are no more the squares, streets or the plazas.

¹⁰⁹ Stan Allen, “Urbanism in the Plural: The Information Thread”, *Fast-forward Urbanism*, op.cit., p.38.

¹¹⁰ Ingrid Böck quotes from Peter Sloterdijk. See Ingrid Böck, *Six canonical projects by Rem Koolhaas: Essays on the history of ideas*, op.cit., p.300

Urban plane accommodates only the necessary services for mobility and its infrastructures; web of highways and roads, metro lines and stations and airports.¹¹¹



Figure 5.5. Intersection of the main roads

Michael Dear evaluates this kind of urbanism as ‘keno capitalism’ and explains its development model with a gridiron system.¹¹² According to this model, the land is divided according to a grid system and constitutes infinite urban cards. Every land parcel is evaluated independently from its surrounding. Conventions of urban agglomeration are replaced by a quasi- random collage of noncontiguous, functionally independent land parcels and constituting a relation between one parcel and the other becomes meaningless. This urban process is only tangentially related to the previously developed urban conventions. According to Dear, such a process is not illogical, it is

¹¹¹ Roger Trancik. "What is lost space?", op. cit.

¹¹² Michael Dear. "Cities without Centers and Edges", op. cit., pg.232

composed of multiple rationalities that displace or mask those earlier conventions. It is a spontaneous urbanization model that supplies the requirement of private interest rapidly without considering any connection between land parcels, between buildings and their surroundings and in addition without any collaboration between architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, engineering, sociology and economy. As a result, the inhabitants are surrounded with unqualified spaces.



Figure 5.6. Keno Capitalism, (Dear, 232)

Dear's determination and his representative graphic constitute an influential ground for understanding the nature of postmodern urbanism and they are suitable for understanding the contemporary urbanism of Söğütözü CBD.

The study argues that development model of Söğütözü CBD is a reflection of 'Generic' and focusing the district give the clues for 'limits of architecture'¹¹³. However, before that, a brief history of the district will be presented.

¹¹³ It is known that architecture is one of the stakeholders that takes part in this urbanism and it is questioned what kind of role it has and whether it is refuser or acceptor to it.

5.3.1. A Brief History for Söğütözü

Söğütözü was out of the concerns of ‘republican capital building efforts’¹¹⁴ until the 1950s, because of the distance to the Ankara and not providing a strong transportation network. Until the late 1950s, the district was not involved in the urbanization studies and no strategical decisions were taken. Therefore, Söğütözü kept a rural character and left as green or agricultural area. During the establishment of Atatürk Forest Farm (AOÇ) between the years 1925-1937, some parts of the region were given to the possession and expropriation of the state as a green belt and some parts of it were opened for public use. In the 1950s and 1960s the urban macroform developed differently than the proposal¹¹⁵ brought by the Jansen Plan and new transportation arteries; Eskişehir Road (as an alternative for east-west axis/Istanbul Road) and Konya Road (as an alternative for north-south axis/ Atatürk Boulevard) which were generated with the Uybadin-Yücel Plan (1957), increased the potentials of the Söğütözü. Agricultural character of Söğütözü changed and industrial uses and generation of public campuses along the arteries were triggered.

¹¹⁴Jansen Plan did not propose a main road to Söğütözü region. The two axis, Atatürk Boulevard (along south-north axis), and İstanbul Road (along east-west axis) were main arteries of the plan. See Yavuz Selim Barbaros, *Creation of the Commercial Node: Söğütözü, Ankara*, Unpublished Ms Thesis, Ankara, 2005

¹¹⁵ Demands of the expanding city and changing economic-political deriving systems were neglected by Uybadin Yücel Plan as a continues decision from Jansen Plan and mass institutional green belt system that consisted some part of the Söğütözü Region was protected. See *ibid.*



Figure 5.7. Söğütözü CBD

Yavuz Selim Barbaros states that rent value of Söğütözü increased exponentially since from the late 1960s and several large scale corporates and entrepreneurs selected Söğütözü region either for commercial development or personal investment. But the period between 1950-1990, the strict public land use principles hindered the rise of private sectors, so rather than the private, public initiative was strong in development process of the district. In 1970-90 Plans the lands facing Eskişehir State Road had been spared as public uses, institutions, universities and military deployments.¹¹⁶ Most of the land at backwards had been left as green area belonging to AOÇ, including recreational and educational facilities in part. However the region hadn't been regarded as urban land part until the late 1990s. But it's clear that the accumulation along the west corridor and private interest on Söğütözü had been underestimated. For that reason this scarce land holding three main junctions had become a focal point for private sector. After the 1980s private sector came to be more powerful with the effect of political and economic changes and public initiative lost its dominance. Söğütözü, has become much more attractive for private sector and speculative situation and

¹¹⁶ Middle East Technical University was built in 1956 and Maden Tetkik Arama Institute Campus in 1967 on the Eskişehir Road

concentrated commercial facilities has transformed entire characteristic of the district in a short period of time.¹¹⁷



Figure 5.8. Söğütözü CBD

The new CBD develops like an oil stain on the border of four quarter that are located in the left side of the junction of Eskişehir and Konya Road. The three of these quarters, Kızılırmak, Çukurambar and Söğütözü are within the borders of Çankaya Municipality and the fourth quarter, Beştepe is within the borders of Yenimahalle Municipality.

¹¹⁷ Many public campuses and lands are threatened by the demands of private sector.



Figure 5.9. Location of Söğütözü

Existence of strong transportation arteries, vacant, big pieces of plots¹¹⁸, western expansion along Eskişehir Road, proximity to production zones (Ostim, Teknokent, Cyberpark), university campuses (TOBB, Çankaya, ODTÜ, Bilkent. Ufuk) and several public and military offices have risen the value of the district. In addition, proximity to residential areas where high and middle income groups settled (Çukurambar, Mustafa Kemal, Bilkent, Beştepe, Emek, Bahçelievler, Balgat,) promotes a consumer hinterland¹¹⁹ and provide useful conditions for the rise of Söğütözü CBD. Before the settlement of presidential complex in Beştepe, the district

¹¹⁸ The land-use decision of the district promotes a flexible development for Söğütözü. Each of the plots has been assigned for urban service that means, there is not any limit for building typologies, and subdivision plans offer vacant, mid-scale, less restricted properties. By this way, the district gains ultimate opportunity for the commercial activities. However, MANİA Plan, that basically regulates the maximum height of the buildings according to the flight cones of the military and corporate air vehicles, limits the height of the buildings. According to the plan the maximum net building height had been allowed 115-95 meters.

¹¹⁹ Residential areas at the far end of the western corridor can be added to this hinterland, in terms of accessibility by the way of private car ownership.

has already gained a centralized character with many variable buildings; hospitals, schools, hotels, service buildings, semi public or private offices.



Figure 5.10. Boundaries of analyzing area

It can be said that intersection of the Eskişehir Road and the Söğütözü-Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu Boulevard constitutes the backbone of Söğütözü CBD and they divide the district into four parts. Although, every part has a different density in terms of building types and public-private uses, east side of the Söğütözü-Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu Boulevard is denser and includes many buildings. Therefore, they constitute a border for analyzing area in the west. The other borders of the analyzing area are determined as; Ufuk University Street in the south, Mevlana Boulevard- Nergiz Street in the east and Sakıp Sabancı Boulevard in the north.

Two categories will inform the analysis of the Söğütözü CBD; the first is based on urban scale; public infrastructure will be investigated and the second is based on building scale; connection of buildings with environment and each other will be questioned. Main aim is showing the outcomes of ‘Generic’ through analyzing the new CBD, and whether it has positive effects on the city or not is questioned, then attitude and limits of architecture will be investigated.

5.3.2. Public Infrastructure

The image of a great city stems largely from the quality of its public realm, its streets, boulevards, parks, squares, plazas and a well-designed and well-managed public realm evokes community pride and creates a strong, positive image.¹²⁰ However, mobility and communication reduce the importance of the traditional public spaces. Feared of the unwanted political, social and cultural intrusions transforms them to the private, enclosed spaces. Galleries, arcades, plazas or atriums of the megascale buildings are the new public gathering places and “access to and use of the space is only privilege, not a right”¹²¹. Architect Charles Moore’s words are more direct, “you have to pay for public life”¹²². As a result, megascale buildings¹²³ are minded more than the quality of the overall public environment and they are evaluated as the new landmarks.

The CBD is divided by a basic road infrastructure into parcels, and connection between the parcels and streets was not minded. Rather than the pedestrians, streets are used for on-street parking and they become a barrier for reaching the urban functions. Instead of any public park or square, roads are at the center of CBD and

¹²⁰ Cy Paumier, *Creating A Vibrant City Center: Urban Design And Regeneration Principles*, op.cit., pg3

¹²¹ Tridib Banarjee, “The Future of Public Space: Beyond Invented Streets and Reinvented Places”,2001, *Urban Design Reader*, op.cit., pg.156

¹²² Ibid., pg.157

¹²³According to William Whyte, megascale buildings are for people who have cars. Essentially, they are an extension of the freeway culture, and while they provide access to downtown, they also provide an almost closed circuit insulated from it. See, William Whyte, *City; Rediscovering The Center*, op. cit.

disrupt continuity of the pedestrian network. Pedestrian links between the parts are provided by footbridges or crosswalks. Although access to the district by the public transport is easy which is supplied by the bus, dolmuş and metro line, access of pedestrians to the bus stations or metro line is quite the opposite. Walking is frequently a disjointed, disorienting activity in the district and lack of a strong, continuous pedestrian transportation network is one of the weak spot of the CBD.



Figure 5.11. Map of the public infrastructure



Figure 5.12. Street views of Söğütözü

Access to the congress center or the mosque which is more related with public uses, is provided by car, rather than walking because there is not any continuity in the pedestrian access.



Figure 5.13. Footbridge

Footbridges that provide the connection of divided parts, are crude solutions and far from constituting an easy access for pedestrians.



Figure 5.14. Street views of Söğütözü

Due to having impossible pedestrian access, it can be only seen buildings, cars and few people in Söğütözü CBD.

Street, park or square are the spaces where the real life goes on and makes a city livable and memorable with a sense of time and place. Instead of constituting open/public spaces or green areas, existing areas do not use efficiently. Söğütözü Recreation Area is a major green space that cannot be observed from the main roads in the CBD. However such a lively area became idle in the last decade.



Figure 5.15. Söğütözü Recreation area



Figure 5.16. View from Mevlana Boulevard



Figure 5.17. View from Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu Boulevard

Parks and squares, which are gathering and socializing places of public, are replaced with enclosed and segregated places and green is the only land which is left on the traffic island

The lack of clear organizational structure for public uses, and pedestrian orientation in the district increase the quality of the district. However, the alley project rises the values of the district in order to become an attraction center for the citizens. Although the project had already existed in the development project since 1998, its realization become possible after more than a decade later.¹²⁴ First Street and its extension separated from the vehicular traffic and presents a lively atmosphere to the citizens with its pedestrian friendly environment. The remarkable point is that, although surrounding buildings were not constructed at the same period with the alley, integration of the buildings to the alley realized positively. Because the buildings are predominantly designed by the same architectural firm (A Tasarım) and, efforts of the firm for constituting a coherent whole with the buildings and alley transform the soulless environment of the district.

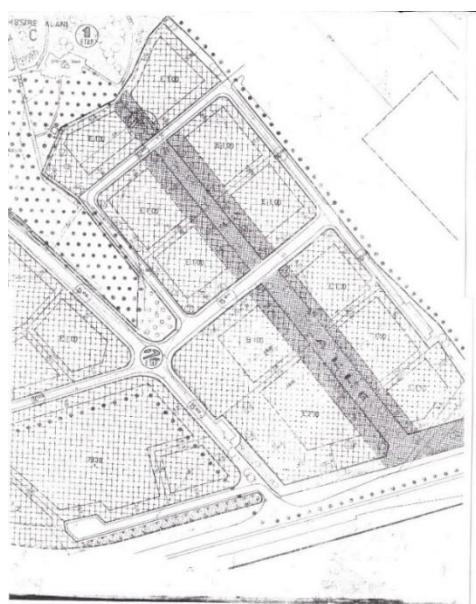


Figure 5.18. The Alley Project (A Tasarım Archive)

¹²⁴ The project was prepared with the efforts of Raci Bademli in 1998 and included an axis, which would link Eskişehir Road and public recreation area at far end. By this way, it had been goaled to offer one the most beautiful green areas to the common share. Also the alley would act as a shaft to gain commercial continuity. Raci Bademli worked as the Director of Planning and Construction at the Greater Municipality of Ankara between 1989–1995. During these years conducted “Old Ankara”, “Unified Ankara”, “New Ankara”, “Green Ankara” and “Beautiful Ankara” projects. In 1987, won first prize from “Planning of the Historical City Center of Ankara: Ulus Project Competition”.



Figure 5.19. Views of the alley



Figure 5.20. Views of the alley



Figure 5.21. Views of the alley from Armada



Figure 5.22. Views of First Street (before and after the alley project)



Figure 5.23. Social Activities on the Alley

5.3.3. Buildings with Their Environment

The architectural development and commercial activities in Söğütözü, have evolved through four phases. The changing economic circumstances have first brought proliferation in service sectors later private hospitals had been emerged on the land. The third wave has been seen in creation of mixed used complexes, offices and finally hotels has spread rapidly in the districts. The buildings are listed with reference to their construction date.

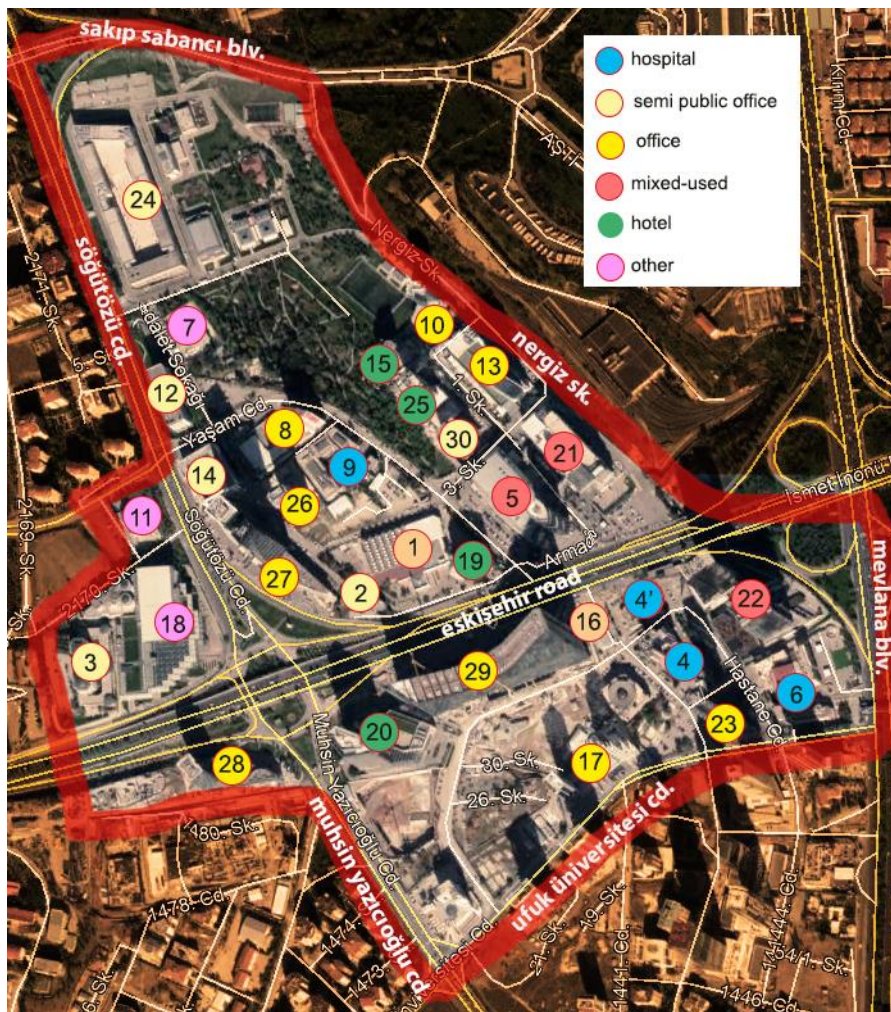


Figure 5.24. Map of the Buildings

Table 1. List of the Buildings

| construction date | project name | utilization | | | function | | | | | | configuration | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|--|-------------|---------|----------|------------|-------|----------|---------|-------|---------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|--|
| | | public | semi-public | private | office | mixed-used | hotel | hospital | service | other | mono-block | multi-block | high-rise | low-rise | courtyard | |
| 1 | 1973 | Renault Maiss | | | x | | | | | | | | | x | | |
| 2 | | Oyak | | | x | | | | | | | | | | x | |
| 3 | 1990 | Ankara Chamber of Commerce (Ato) | | | | | | | x | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 1992 | Bayındır | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | 2002 | Armada | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 2003 | Ufuk University Hospital | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 2004 | Şahhane | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | 2005 | Ak Plaza | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | Tobb-ETU (Mesa) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | Gama | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | 2007 | Başyazıcı Mosque | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | | Ak Party | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | 2008 | Via Bayraktar | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 | | Turkish Association of Notaries | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | 2009 | Wyndham | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | | Ulusoy Bus Terminal | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | | Fariya | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | 2010 | Congresium | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | 2011 | Mövenpick* [Varan(1995)] | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20 | | Jw Marriott | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | 2012 | Armada Extension | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 22 | | Next Level | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | 2014 | Next Level Loft | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | | Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 25 | | Anadolulu Hotels | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 26 | 2015 | Neorama | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 27 | | Koç Towers* [Ford-Otosan(1972)] | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 28 | | Besa | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | | YDA Center* [Söğütözü Congress and Commercial Center (2006)] | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | 2019 | Turkish Metal Workers Union * [Turkish Metal Workers Union (1994)] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

In order to construct their large scale service facilities, Ford Otosan (1972) and Renault-Maiss (1973) emerged as an early constructions in the district. The service buildings, Varan (1995), Aşti (1995) and Ulusoy have increased the value of the district and Söğütözü has become a gate of the city. Promotion of private health-care facilities have triggered the new private hospitals and Bayındır Hospital (1992), Ufuk University Hospital (2003) and Tobb-ETU Hospital (2005) locate in the district. Sophisticated office buildings have begun to appear on the land since the 1990s and contrary to the contemporary examples, early office buildings which were owned by the semi-public institutions (labor unions, chambers or confederations), constructed as a low-rise blocks. Headquarters of Oyak (1990) and Turkish Metal Workers Union (1994), Ankara Chamber of Trade (ATO-1990) are the early examples of the office buildings in the district. It is a personal observation that, type of the utilization have effected configuration of the building. Ak Party (2007), Turkish Association of Notaries (2008), Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry (2015) are the latest office buildings, possessed by semi-public institutions and they are also constructed as low-rise blocks. Although the construction of the tower is more costly than low-rise buildings and rent value of office use is less beneficial than commercial uses, high-rise towers recently dominate the district. However, the paradox is that, many office towers are not constructed with a need-based context by the private contractors and some of them lie fallow and others used by the public institutions rather than the private corporations. In order to take attention, the latest office buildings reflect the traces of corporate realm, with their scale and facade designs. Wyndham (2009), Mövenpick (2011), Jw Marriott (2011), Anadolu Hotels (2015) intensify the image value of the district as a CBD. Armada, and Next Level are mixed used buildings and they promote extensive retailing, leisure and entertainment facilities for high, middle-high income groups.

An interesting point is that, the evolution of the district as a CBD has effected some of the buildings and caused to their transformation. Turkish Metal Workers Union (1994) one of the buildings that has been regenerated recently. Ford Otosan (1972)

which was the biggest private existence in the capital city at that time is transformed to high-rise office towers after more than forty years, Varan is another building that stood in the area as a service building and sixteen years later Mövenpick Hotel was constructed on site of the building. Another interesting transformation process was occurred in the south side of the analyzing area. Before the YDA Center, there was a huge construction on site of the building that is called Söğütözü Congress and Commercial Center. It was constructed by Ankara Municipality as congress and commercial center. The construction began in 2005, but could not completed due to fund shortage. The steel construction had been stand in the area during seven years. The paradox is that, although the land houses two underground railway stations (metro, ankaray) and becomes a unique land in terms of accessibility, constructing a high-dense office block instead of a congress center is preferred. Another inconsistency is that, before the transformation process, a congress center (Congresium) was already constructed in a more unavailable area that suffered from pedestrian connection.

In order to make a comparison between buildings and relation to their environment, a table is constituted and buildings are graded from 0-5. This grading system is based on observations of the author and quality and quantity of the urban spaces are determiner of the grade. Although the grading system can be differentiated according to viewpoint of the observer, aim of the table is evaluating attention of the buildings to the near environment and drawing a general frame for totality of the urban environment. Accessibility, publicity and sensitivitiy to the near environment are three main titles of the table and they are also divided into subtitles.

Table 2. Analyses of the Buildings

| construction date | project name | architectural firm | accessibility | | publicity | | | sensitivity to the near environment | | | |
|-------------------|--------------|---|---------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | | a.pedestrian access | b.car parking | c.indoor/outdoor plaza | d.galleries / arcades | e. ground floor amenities | f.transparency | g.connection to the street | h.facade organization | i. ground floor organizations |
| 1 | 1973 | Renault Maass | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 2 | | Oyak | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 3 | 1990 | Ankara Chamber of Commerce (Ato) | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 4 | 1992 | Bayındır Hospital | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 5 | 2002 | Armada | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 6 | 2003 | Ufuk University Hospital | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 7 | 2004 | Şahhane | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 8 | 2005 | Ak Plaza | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 9 | | Tobb-ETU (Mesa) | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 10 | | Gama | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 11 | 2007 | Başyazıcı Mosque | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 12 | | Ak Party | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 13 | 2008 | Via Bayraktar | 3 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| 14 | | Turkish Association of Notaries | 2 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| 15 | 2009 | Wyndham | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 16 | | Ulusoy Bus Terminal | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 17 | 2010 | Fariya | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 18 | | Congrestium | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 19 | 2011 | Mövenpick* [Varan(1995)] | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 20 | | Jw Marriott | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 21 | 2012 | Armada Extension | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| 22 | | Next Level | 4 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 23 | 2014 | Next Level Loft | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| 24 | | Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry | 1 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| 25 | | Anadoluh Hotels | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 26 | 2015 | Neorama | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| 27 | | Koç Towers* [Ford-Otosan(1972)] | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| 28 | | Besa | 2 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 29 | | YDA Center* [Soğütözü Congress and Commercial Center (2006)] | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 30 | 2019 | Turkish Metal Workers Union* [Turkish Metal Workers Union (1994)] | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |

One of the common feature is accessibility of the buildings is provided by car and pedestrian access is not easy, if they are not located on the main roads or near the bus or metro stations. Therefore, buildings are graded in the column a according to accessibility by foot. Buildings, which are located far from the stations or main roads are graded 1-3. The other common feature is most of the buildings have parking areas for users. Except Başyacı Mosque, most of them have high grade in column b. Existence of public spaces such as plazas, galleries or arcades and ground floor usage, are determiner of the buildings publicity and they are listed in column c,d,and e. Type of the buildings effects existence or organizations of urban space in the building . For example, office towers enrich their ground floors by retail, leisure and gastronomic facilities and open them to the public uses, so they have high grade in the column e. However, semi public offices or hotels do not provide a free usage for people as a result they have low grade in terms of publicity. Sensitivity to the near environment is the third title in the table and it is evaluated under the four subtitles. The buildings show variety according to the relation to the near environment. Some of them mind transparency (YDA, Koç Towers, Armada, Congresium), some of them constitute strong relations to the street (Armada, Koç Towers). Besides, few of the buildings take attention to their neighborhoods in terms of facade design. Koç Towers, YDA have high grade in column h in terms of their facade designs. Lastly, some of the buildings come to the forefront with their ground floor organizations. For example, YDA Center, has an urban plaza at the ground floor by the way of starting the office functions to the upstairs, from this way constituting as possible as large area for public functions in the ground floor becomes possible. The other example is Koç Tower. The complex retreat from the land in order to create an outdoor plaza and a passageway is designed for connecting the streets, which are located front and backside of the complex. These efforts rises grade of these buildings in column i. Briefly, when it looked at the buildings in the analyzing area statistically, only one third of the buildings shows more or less a sensitive approach to urban environment. The problem is that most of the buildings are evaluated with a free-standing attitude in the area and few of the buildings come to the forefront with their sensitive approach to their environment and

urban texture. They read the environmental inputs carefully and use them effectively for their embodiment.



Figure 5.25. Armada Shopping Mall and Business Center

Armada shopping mall and business center is one of these buildings. The complex consists of three blocks. While the two low-rise blocks are shopping malls, the tall stands as an iconic office tower. It is one of the complexes that enhances the potential of the area and were constructed in 2002 as two blocks. The third block was built as an extension project in 2012 with a pedestrian alley. Although the alley had already

existed in the development plan¹²⁵ before the Armada Complex, it gained a chance to become real with the extension project.

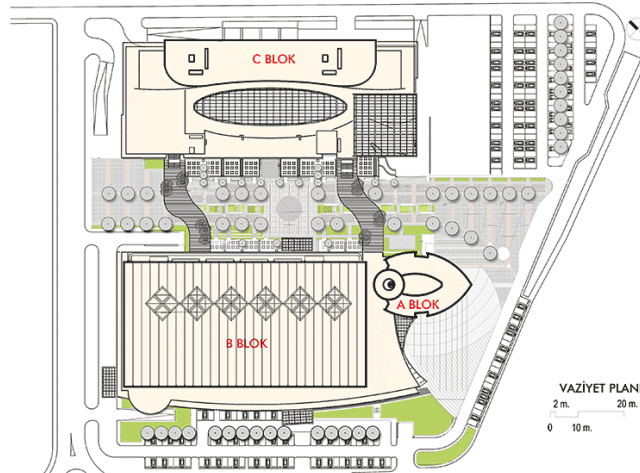


Figure 5.26. Armada Shopping Mall and Business Center Site Plan

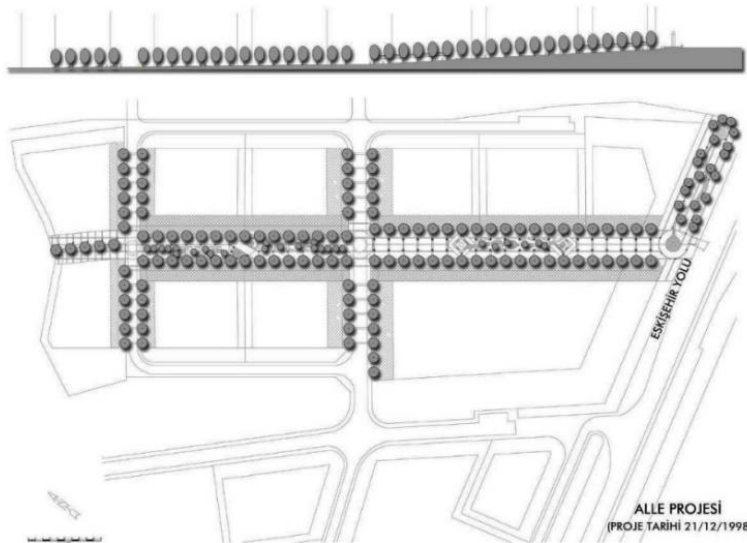


Figure 5.27. Alley Project

¹²⁵ The development plans of the concerned period included a desire to create green spaces, continuity for pedestrians and ensure transport to the university campus. Shifting pedestrian connections beneath Eskişehir Highway to continue the pedestrian flow on Mevlana Boulevard was also targeted.

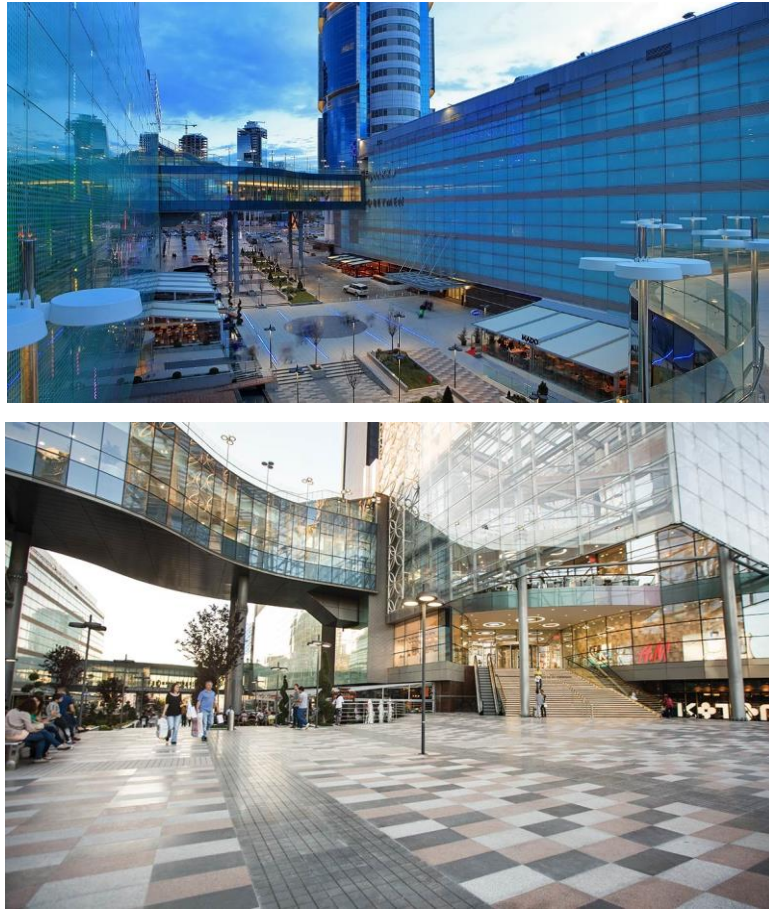


Figure 5.28. Armada Shopping Mall and Business Center
Blocks are linked to each other with both covered and open bridges.

The thing what makes the project valuable is, the effort to create a lively atmosphere in the area that houses indoor and outdoor activities together without any interruption. In order to achieve this, the alley was accepted as the focal point of the project and all design code were constituted according to it. By this way, the complex gained an extraverted character.



Figure 5.29. YDA Center



Figure 5.30. YDA Center Render View

YDA Center is the second project that is created with the efforts of reflecting not only commercial potentials of the area, but also providing public functions in itself. The idea for being a coherent part of its environment is determiner of the project and, it is aimed to achieve via two ways. One of is, creating an urban plaza at the ground floor with the way of starting the office functions to the upstairs and constituting as possible as large area for public functions in the ground floor. The other is, giving attention to neighboring buildings while forming itself. It has a distinctive form that rises according to east and west side of the neighboring buildings and slightly descends

with an urban void at the center.¹²⁶ In addition, the park with an underground parking that are located southern side of the building, are positive contributions to the area.



Figure 5.31. Urban Space in YDA Center

¹²⁶ <https://www.yazgandesign.com/yda-center>



a



b

Figure 5.32. Urban plaza in YDA Center



Figure 5.33. Koç Towers, render view

Koç Towers consist of two high-rise office towers that rise from two storey commercial block. The two aspects of the complex make it remarkable for the study. One is, in order to creating plaza for users, the complex retreat from the land. The other is a passageway divides the commercial block into two for connecting the streets, which are located front and backside of the complex. In addition to these, facade organization of the commercial block include some traces from the neighboring building. It can be said that Koç Towers present an effort with these aspects, in order to be a contributor complex in the area.



Figure 5.34. Koç Towers

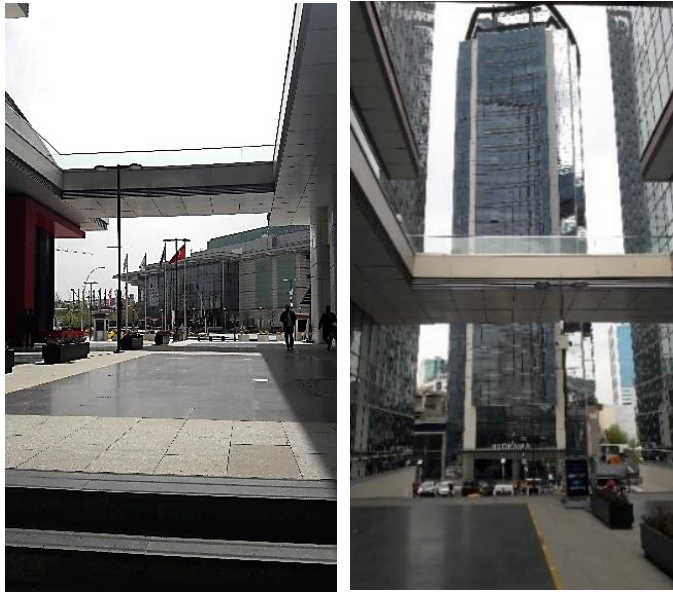


Figure 5.35. Passageway of Koç Towers

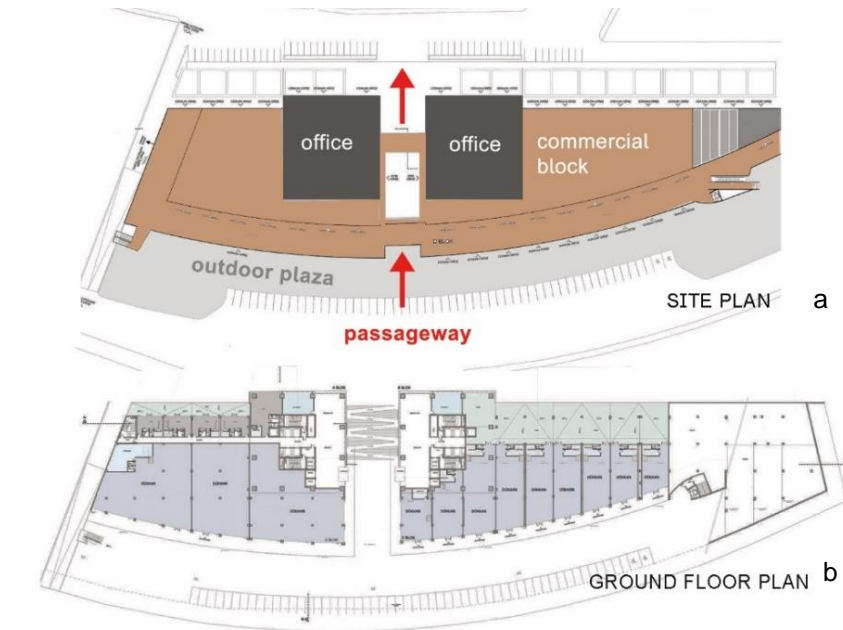


Figure 5.36. Plans of Koç Towers

Rather than connecting the urban environment directly, some of the buildings create their own urbanity inside of themselves. These buildings show variety according to the relation to the urban environment and try to constitute an urbanity inside of themselves via several ways. Some of them creating a transparent facade in order to connect outside visually. The others are arranged around a courtyard and the others enriched their ground floors by retail, leisure and gastronomic facilities and open them to the public uses.

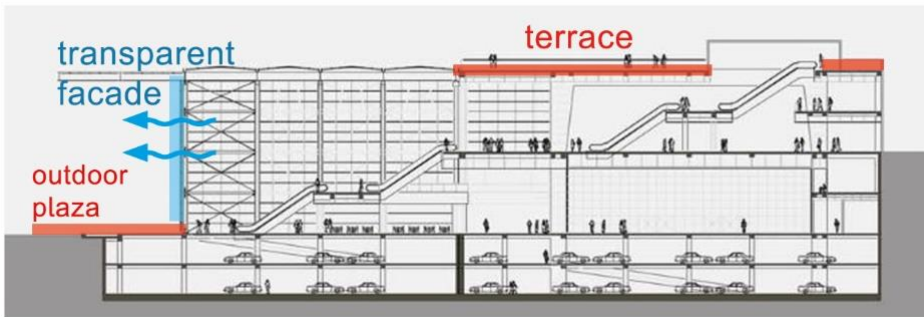


Figure 5.37. Congressium

Congresium is a public building, but it cannot constitute a strong relation to its environment. It is located at the intersection of the major roads and cannot offer a lively environment to the users outside of the building. Its transparent facade is the only feature that connect inside and outside of the building visually. An outdoor plaza in the ground floor and the terrace on the roof are the outdoor public spaces of the building.



a



b



c

Figure 5.38. Congressium, a. general view, b. section, c. outdoor plaza



Figure 5.39. Congressium, main foyer

The other way is arranging around a courtyard in order to constitute an urbanity inside of the building. Turkish Association of Notaries, Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry complexes and Tobb-ETU Hospital are this kind of buildings. They include a lively environment their inside owing to the courtyard.



Figure 5.40. Turkish Association of Notaries, general view, courtyard, site plan.



Figure 5.41. Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry, general view, courtyard, site plan, courtyard, ground floor plan



Figure 5.42. Tobb-ETU Hospital, general view, indoor, courtyard, general view

Besa and Bayraktar Towers are offices raising from a commercial basement. Ground floors of the buildings are dominated with cafes and restaurants and they can be used independently from the rest of the buildings. They also include atriums with landscape plantings in order to create a sense of liveliness, human scale and amenity.



Figure 5.43. Location of Besa and Bayraktar Tower



Figure 5.44. Bayraktar Tower



Figure 5.45. Besa Tower

5.3.4. Attitudes of the Architects

The visions and attitudes of the architects are important for the design of the buildings. Some of them focus on the demands of investors, concentrate only their parcel, and create autonomous buildings that do not connect to outside spaces of the building. The others mind urban texture beside of the building and try to find alternative ways for enriching the built environment.

A Tasarım is an architectural firm that has a chance for producing many buildings in the area with a sensitive outlook for enriching the urban texture of the district. The alley project becomes real owing to the efforts of the firm. Architect Ali Osman Öztürk, leader of the firm states that the investors, government or people can accept any suggestion, if it is beneficial, logical and favorable.¹²⁷ Armada complex, Bayraktar, Gama, Farilya, Besa Towers and Congressium are some of the buildings that were designed by the firm and most of them more or less present an effort to becoming a piece of the urban texture. Öztürk states that, they suggested many proposals not only to the investors of the buildings, but also governments in order to create more attractive and pedestrian friendly environment, but not all of them can be realized. One of them is extension of alley project. The firm wanted to maintain pedestrian axis beneath Eskişehir Road to Mevlana Boulevard in the south and stretch out the alley to the Tobb University Campus in the north, through the Söğütözü Recreation Area. However, the suggestion cannot be realized.



Figure 5.46. Extension of the Alley (A Tasarım Archive)

¹²⁷ An interview made with Ali Osman Öztürk by the author in 12.12.2017. See appendix D.

The other suggestion is, reevaluated Söğütözü Recreation Area which is not used by the people since a decade. Owner of the area, Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry (RTGDF) is a public institutions and the firm tried to connect them, however did not mind their suggestions and the area becomes idle more than a decade. The subway access from metro station to the Congressium is another unbuilt suggestion of A Tasarım. Öztürk mentioned that their insistence to the government did not avail and access of the pedestrians to the building becomes difficult.¹²⁸



Figure 5.47. Location of the blocks

Armada, YDA, Next Level are the biggest complexes in the district and although their relation to the urban texture differentiate, connection of the complexes to each other is not minded. They stand in the district glamorously and promote many activities in themselves, but reaching one building to another directly is impossible. Eskişehir

¹²⁸ From the interview 12.12.2017

Road constitute a barrier for connection of the buildings and the problem is not minded by the actors e.g., architects, designers, investors, developers, public authorities of the projects in the district. Disconnectedness of the actors, buildings and spaces unfortunately resulted with a chaotic environment.

Architect Brigitte Weber, evaluates the district as a commercial node and rather than the urban texture, she and her team concentrate on the demands of their investor and focus to their parcels. She states that architects have not any right over the investors in order to forcing them to create anything in favor of public.¹²⁹ So, Next Level Complex and Next Level Loft stand in the area with a free-standing attitude. Weber accepts the consumerist culture as a lifestyle and designs the buildings according to the requirements of this philosophy. Users or visitors come to the buildings by car, get into a closed garage or secured entrance and never emerge to the outside.

Architect Kerem Yazgan aims to create a total environment that supplies not only the demands of investor but also requirements of the public. YDA is located over the metro station and have a chance that do not need any effort for access of pedestrians. Yazgan and his team used this important feature of the land effectively, and open the ground level of the complex to the public. Except the cores of the office blocks, ground floor of the complex is designed as a huge plaza for the public. According to Yazgan, today most of the buildings are designed with a sensitive manner to the urban environment however, individual attitudes not enough for creating a total environment.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ An interview made with Brigitte Weber by the author in 1.10.2018. See appendix D.

¹³⁰ An interview made with Kerem Yazgan by the author in 10.10.2018. See appendix D.



Figure 5.48. View from Koç Towers

It can be said that Söğütözü CBD is far from producing an urban whole in itself. It develops with an urbanism that is not organized in reference to a comprehensive plan and it is evaluated as a kind of provider area for the purposes of investors. Piecemeal decisions rather than planned implementations are put into operation and each decision is taken to respond to a single purpose without considering the relations to context and also consequences. Söğütözü CBD is also not coordinated by a management authority and developed without a future vision. Beside of these, effective control mechanism is absent. As a result the region is dominated by tall and massive buildings that do not connect to their surroundings, and the district is organized with fragmented/ patchwork urbanism.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Under the effects of simultaneous explosion of modern technologies, complex forces of globalization and human population, the city has grown rapidly in its limited territory and turns into ever expanding metropolis. It is enlarged with instable, unknowable and chaotic situations and in order to cope with the conditions and supplying the demands of global consumerist society, a flexible urbanism has been adopted. The new urbanism invalidates all of the previous systems that was used before and creates freedom for the city that "accept whatever grows in its place". Unbounded space creation and consumption cycle strip the city from its own identity and variable composition of familiar building blocks and bingeable spaces transform it to an ordinary urban environment. The shift of the city, from individuality to ordinariness is defined by Rem Koolhaas as Generic. Rather than an urban future, Generic City is interested in present need and present ability and aims to promote ease and comfort. Buildings are minded more than any other things and necessary connection between buildings, spaces and infrastructure is underestimated. On the other hand, hyper-density has merged with technology and they enhance the scale of the buildings. Although, mega scale buildings contain so much activity, promote an urbanity and create miniature cities in themselves, their agglomeration cannot create a harmony and unity in the urban texture. They supply the density in the limited territory, and Koolhaas calls their agglomeration as Manhattanism or Culture of Congestion. Besides, Bigness gives chance to architecture to propose a wider, unstable and changeable program and existence of new urbanism brought architecture into the forefront with a perception that architecture has a capacity for overcoming the urban issues through big scale buildings. However, the discipline of architecture in itself is not a sufficient medium and tool for designing or organizing the development process

of city neither in building nor in urban scale. As a result, contemporary cities “develop over the resilient frames and boxes for unstable urban programs” and Generic City becomes an inevitable reality for 21th century's cities with its “anonymous, authorless and neutral urban environment”.

The study argues that development model of Ankara is a reflection of ‘Generic City’ and Söğütözü district gives the clues for ‘limits of architecture’. The district has undergone a transformation over the last three decades and considered as the new Central Business District (CBD) of Ankara. In order to create a new center and new face of the city public authorities, landowners, developers, architects focused on this area, which eventually became a laboratory of a totally new architectural vocabulary and urbanism with its big scale buildings. Thesis suggested that the case illustrates Koolhaas's urban theories effectively and presents a common discussion ground. Accordingly, the two aspects of the Söğütözü district are discussed. The first is related to its ‘function’; its centralized character inherits an idea for being the new center of Ankara. Evaluating this idea in relation to the development process of the center of Ankara has potentials for understanding the nature of the Generic City. The second discussion is about the ‘big scale buildings’ of the district and their relations with the context they are located. the capacity of the buildings exceeds the boundaries of architectural design and requires a collaboration between architecture, planning, engineering and other related disciplines.

After the proclamation of the Republic, Ankara presented a planned urbanization that was shaped according to the modernist ideals. However liberal economic model with a priority of the construction sector at the end of the century has transformed Ankara to an ever expanding metropolis. In the recent years the city consists of many centers as an outcome of the decentralization policies and two more location; Kazıkıçı Bostanları and Söğütözü districts come to the forefront to being new business centers of Ankara. New social and economic factors such as land speculation, suburbanization, consumer culture and private car ownership, have triggered new space creation mechanisms and building mega-scale projects has become the new

trends. Unlike the existing city centers (i.e Ulus, Kızılay) the two latest locations promote new opportunities in terms of lower cost, big building plots, effective parking lots and accessibility.

However there is a basic difference between Kazıkıçı Bostanları CBD and Söğütözü CBD. The first one is a new attempt for Ankara to create an alternative center, with a planned urban morphology. Kazıkıçı Bostanları is a regeneration project that aims to transform an industrial area to be developed by the collaboration of landowners and Ankara Municipality, and is designed by an architectural firm (A Tasarım). Currently except an administrative office, the project has not been realized, and the area becomes a derelict urban land. However, the Söğütözü CBD district promotes a different centrality to the city with its mega scale buildings. Rather than a centrally planned scheme, this area developed incrementally. Söğütözü area have never been as being a commercial node in the city's planning agenda, efforts of private capital make this area as a dense urban environment after the 2000s. Before the settlement of presidential complex in Beştepe, the district had already gained the character of a city center with many variable buildings and scale and type of the existing buildings gives an image that the district develops as a CBD. Existence of strong transportation arteries, vacant, big pieces of plots, western expansion along Eskişehir Road, proximity to production zones, university campuses, several public and military offices and high and middle income residential areas promotes a consumer hinterland and constitutes a gravity force for Söğütözü to gain a centralized character. However, inadequate planning mechanism caused an irregular and unplanned development. Piecemeal decisions are put into operation and relations to the buildings each other and the connection between the buildings and spaces are underestimated. Glamorous megascale buildings and high-rise towers stand as individualized, isolated buildings and they are surrounded with disorganized, neglected spaces. The buildings house miniature cities inside of themselves and promote variable activities with a closed safety environment that do not connect to the outside. Spaces are cut off, and separated and instead of creating a unified urban texture, the district has been developed with a

flexible, fragmented, patchwork urbanism and presents a chaotic environment. The highway passing through the center is also a very significant barrier for a unified urban texture.

CBD is a concentration node of international capital and emerged as a specialist area for the commercial and industrial acts of globalization. It is shaped as a world center for commerce, and solidifies its existence according to strong customer-supplier linkages in the global arena. CBD symbolizes the power of global capital. It offers a sterile, disjunctive, fortress publicity to the city. Public spaces are no more the streets, parks or squares; the traditional meaning of them are lost and they are almost replaced with enclosed and segregated places. Galleries, arcades, plazas or atriums of the buildings are the new public gathering places and they are more contained, more controlled and ultimately less free than traditional public spaces. Access to and use of the space is only privilege, not a right and this creates a class polarization. Beside of that, citizens are subjected to pseudo public spaces without a sense of time and place. The study argues that CBD is an outcome of “Generic City” with the aim of its nascence and its configuration. It emerges from a necessity of commercial interest and presents an extraordinary centrality to the city with its character, form and social functions. The reality is that CBD is an exportation from America to the world and it produces a competitive dense urban environment with mega-scale buildings. New York, as an ever-expanding metropolis, houses an early example of the CBD and Manhattan is one of the early example for the CBD typology. Grid used as an operator mechanism that divide the land in the two dimension and the tower or skyscraper defines a freedom to the building in the third dimension. From this way, a specialized type of urban typology emerged under the metropolitan condition and its attendant architecture promotes a new space experience “where the real and the natural ceased to exist”.¹³¹

¹³¹ Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York, A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*, op.cit.

When it is compared to the world cases, Söğütözü CBD presents similarity in terms of scale of the buildings, location preferences, transportation systems and relation to the city, it differentiates from the world examples in views of designing process, management authorities, implementing methods, future strategies and attention of public spaces. Existing world examples studied in the thesis such as Paris; La Defense, London; Canary Wharf, Napoli; Centro Direzionale are managed by special authorities under the government control, and designed with special planning mechanisms, also have future strategies. They accommodate strong economic activities and they are managed with strict rules. However, Ankara, the capital city of Turkey is predominantly characterized by public and educational functions, rather than the industrial or commercial facilities, and its economic power and production capacity are not comparable in magnitude to the leading global cities. Nevertheless, with the enthusiasm to attain new modes of consumption and lifestyles and gaining a better status in 'global' world, building more and big buildings become a prevalent issue. Although the city has many city centers and do not have strong economic capacity, constructing an excessive commercial center emerged as an aspiration of private capital, instead of a government project.

There will always be a degree of uncertainty in the evolution of the city, but flexibility can be harmful for the urban texture when it is organized with an uncoordinated layout. While disciplines of architecture and urban design and planning are important in contributing to the character of the built environment, politicians and investors are the other collimator groups. What kind of structure gets build, when and where, is defined by the public authorities. Although politicians have a direct role for making and controlling the regulations, investors are also determiner for development of the city. If regulations do not suit the whims of the investors, they can be reformulated by government. Investors have looked at the city from a purely economic perspective, as a result planning discipline has been absolutely eliminated from the urban scene and architecture become a tool for symbolizing the economic power of investors.

The case study shows that, few of the architects design their projects in Söğütözü area with a sensitive approach and try to find alternative ways for rising not only the quality of their building but also overall urban fabric. They try to overcome the unilateral perception that is based on market demand. Rather than the autonomous public spaces, they promote urban use independent from their project (Armada, yda) and aim to establish an urbanity apart from the buildings. In order to create more lively environment they generate many suggestions not only to their investors but also to the governments. However, their efforts mostly proved to be ineffectual, under the pressure of the contemporary conditions. Therefore, rather than struggling against the contemporary conditions, most of the architects submit to this footloose system and constitute their projects as independent entities within separate parcels. So architects prefer to maintain their professions as an inefficient actor. This position is not a coincidence because, architecture had already lost its idea for directing the society through the built environment as modernism suggested.

Söğütözü CBD creates an opportunity for reorganization of the densities and functions of the city by the way of architecture. However, solving the problems of maximum density exceed the boundaries of architecture and needs an inter-disciplinary collaboration. Besides, variety and individuality are qualities to describe cities and instead of the buildings, historical, geographical, physical or cultural context should be the signpost. In order to eliminating devastating results for the Generic City, urban area should be designed like a building and totality of the urban environment should be provided. However, this can be possible, if individual actors give up to maintain their professional separations and try to create a collaboration between each other.

This thesis studied the contemporary discussions on the capacity of architecture to create urban spaces. Arguments of architect Rem Koolhaas was studied in depth to explore and Söğütözü CBD is chosen as a case for understanding the nature of the contemporary urbanism. Buildings and their surroundings are evaluated according to personal observations of the author and the thesis includes limited interviews with

some of the architects whose buildings are located in the area. However further studies can be useful for understanding the contemporary dynamics of Söğütözü. Not only buildings or their architects, but also attitudes and opinions of other actors such as, developers, politicians, users are important. A questionnaire study can be helpful for reaching their reactions to this urban environment.

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APPENDICES

A. PLANNED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS (CBDs) AROUND THE WORLD

PARIS, LA DEFENSE

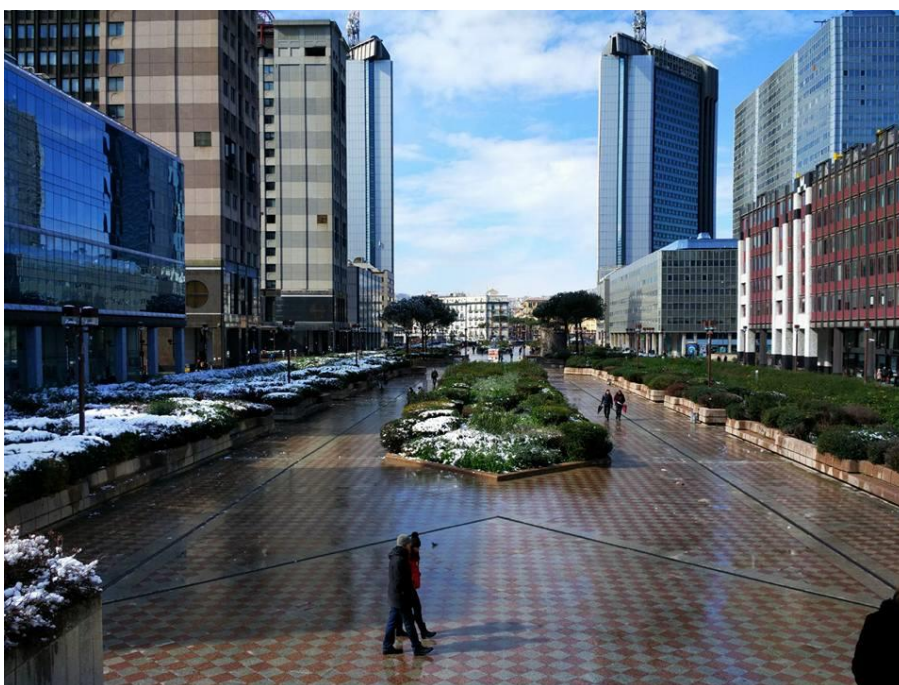


LONDON, CANARY WHARF





NAPOLI, CENTRO DIREZIONALE



B. INCREMENTAL PLANNED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS (CBDs)
AROUND THE WORLD

LONDON CITY CENTER



NEW YORK, MANHATTAN



İSTANBUL, MASLAK



C. BUILDINGS IN SÖĞÜTÖZÜ

*The buildings below are grouped according to their functions and in order to prevent inconsistency their table numbers are bracketed.

SERVICES



1

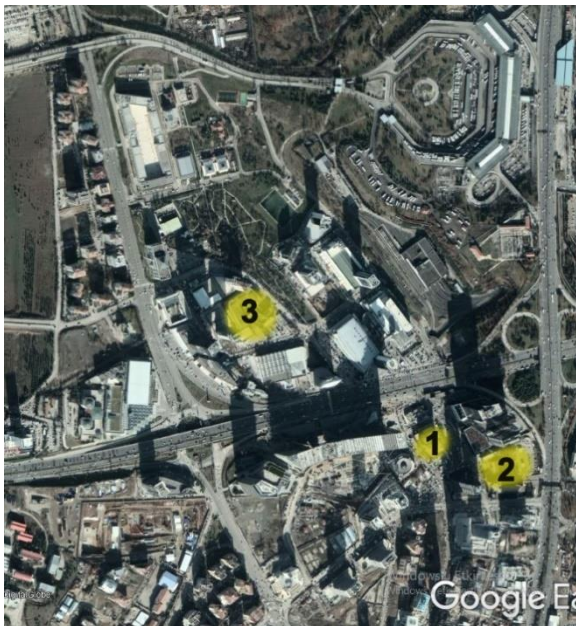


2



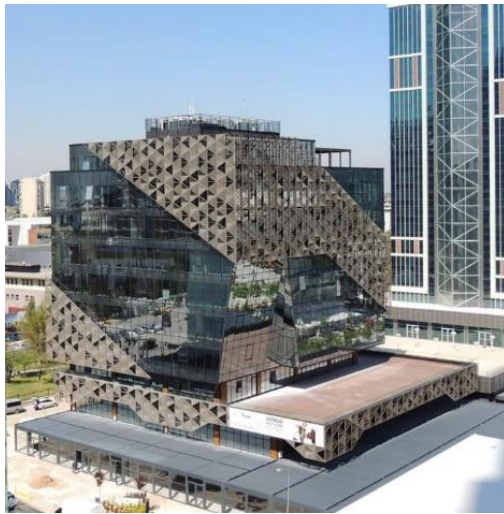
1. Renault Maiss (1)
2. Ulusoy Bus Terminal (16)

HOSPITALS



1. Bayındır (4)
2. Ufuk University (6)
3. Tobb-ETU (9)

SEMI PUBLIC OFFICES



1. Ankara Chamber of Commerce (ATO) (3)
2. Ak Party (12)
3. Turkish Association of Notaries (14)
4. Republic of Turkey General Directorate of Forestry (24)
5. Turkish Metal Workers Union (30)

OFFICE BLOCKS



1. Ak Plaza (8)
2. Gama (10)
3. Via Bayraktar (13)
4. Farilya Tower (17)



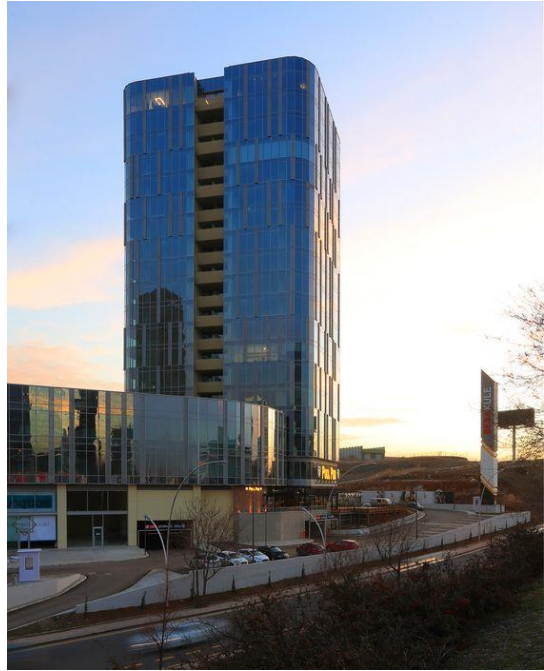
5



6

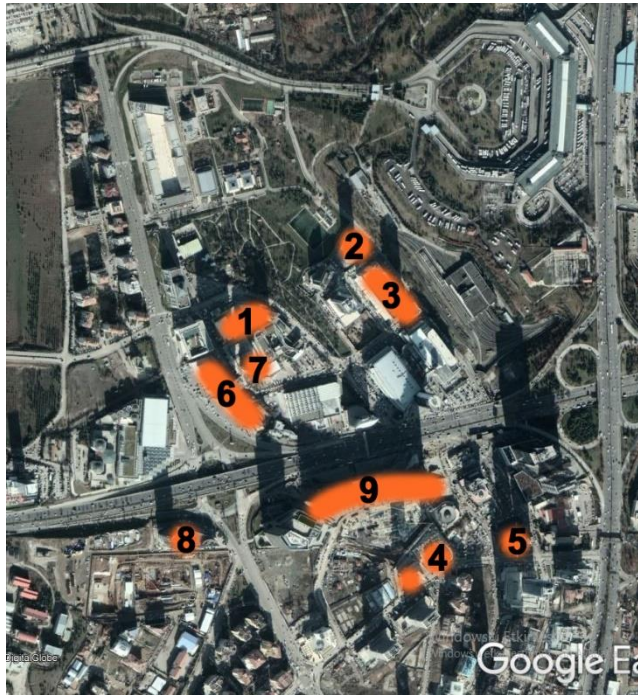


7



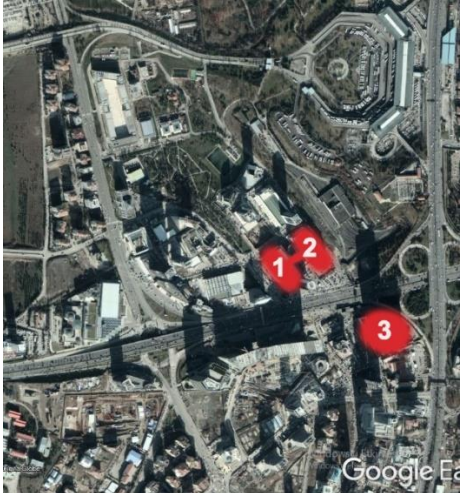
8

5. Next Level Loft (22)
6. Koç Tower (27)
7. Neorama (26)
8. Besa (28)
9. Yda Center (29)



1. Ak Plaza (8)
2. Gama (10)
3. Via Bayraktar Tower (13)
4. Farilya Tower (17)
5. Next Level Loft (22)
6. Koç Tower (27)
7. Neorama (26)
8. Besa(28)
9. Yda Center (29)

MIXED USED



- 1. Armada (5)
- 2. Armada Extension (21)
- 3. Next Level (22)

HOTELS



1



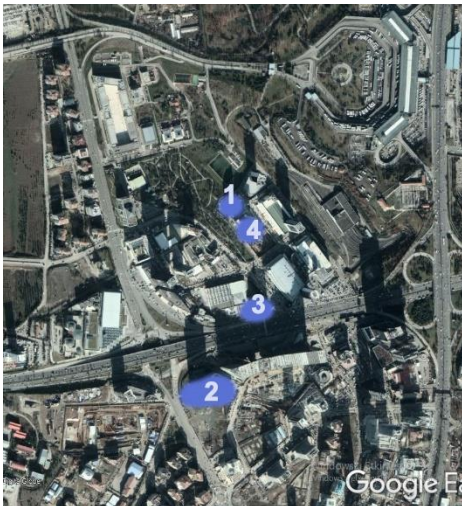
2



3

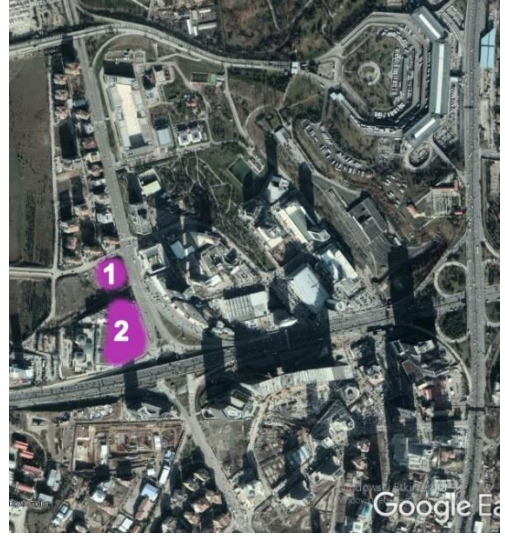


4



- 1. Wyndham (15)
- 2. Jw Marriott (20)
- 3. Mövenpick (19)
- 4. Anadolu Hotels (25)

OTHER



1. Başyazıcı Mosque (11)
2. Congressium (18)

D. INTERVIEW WITH ARCHITECTS

RÖPÖRTAJ 1: Ali Osman Öztürk, 12.12. 2017, Ankara Söğütözü

Ali Osman Öztürk : Türkiye’de imar planları sanki bir parselasyon planı gibi ele alındığı için, yani bir alanın matematiksel verilerle bölünüp, parçalanıp, listedeki fonksiyonları veya yüzdeleri tutturacak şekilde yamalı bohça gibi bitirilmesi imar planı veya şehircilik anlayışı gibi görülüyor. Belki Amerika’da da bu yaşandı. Belki diyorum çok hakim olmadığım için bir şey söyleyemiyorum veya Çin çok hızlı bir büyüme yaşadığı için, Pekin’le Şangay’ı görme fırsatım oldu, özellikle Şangay ‘boom city’ denebilecek bir şey. Şimdi Türkiye’de de maalesef çok yazık bir durumda imar planı dediğimiz, bir anlamda parselasyon planı dediğimiz şeyle insanlar burada bir yapılaşmaya gittiğinde nasıl bir sonuç çıkacak, nasıl bir kent dokusu çıkacak, nasıl bir siluet oluşacak, nasıl bir kentsel çevre oluşacak, hatta daha ilerisinde kamusal bir mekan oluşabilecek mi bu belli değil, aslında biraz belli büyük oranda oluşamayacağı belli. Burada ben her zaman mimarlardan önce şehircilerin, kent tasarımcılarının önemli bir rolü olduğunu düşünüyorum, çünkü bir takım izler bırakmak, hazırlıklar yapmak mümkün diye düşünüyorum. Şimdi şöyle düşündüğüm zaman bir tane çocukluğumdan bir örnek aklıma geliyor. Ananem İskitler diye bir mahalle vardır, Kazıkıçı Bostanlarının yanında, orda oturlardı, çok enteresan uzun uzun sokaklar vardı, araç yolları, sonra onları tam ortadan kesen bir yaya yolu vardı. Bu yaya yolu bir ucundan Kazıkıçı Bostanlarına, öbür ucundan da Samsun yoluna çıkardı. İkisini birbirine bağlardı. Özellikle Samsun Yolu dediğimiz nokta ulaşım noktasıydı, dolmuş otobüs vs. hep oradan binerdin, oradan inerdin. Ondan sonra yürümeye başlardı insanlar o yaya yolundan ve kendi sokağına gelince böyle dönüp doksan derece apartmana yönelirdi. Öbür ucunda Ulus’a, Kazıkıçı Bostanları’na giderdi. Şuraya gelmeye çalışıyorum, ben sonra öğrendim ki onu bir Alman planlamacı planlamış, böyle bir yaya yolu kültürü olan bir şey, çok basit bir şey. O yolun eni altı metre var sekiz metre yok, bu bir kayıp değil. Ama sadece o parsellerin ardında bu iz bırakılmış durumdaydı ve bütün çocukluğumda orda o kadar güzel anılarım vardı ki. Bu yaya yolunun orta noktasında aynı plancının planladığı bir çocuk bahçesi vardı ve o kadar güzeldi ki orası bir buluşma noktasıydı ve o bahçenin karşısında da doğal olarak bir pastane ve dondurmacı oluşmuştu, kasaplar bakkallar diye giden yolu size bir saat anlatabilirim. Küçük hazırlanmış bir parçanın oradaki bütün yaşantıya ne kadar pozitif bir etkisi olduğunu görebiliyoruz. Güncel bir örnek yakınımda bir pas, güzel bir hareket bu Şark Halı mağazasının arkasındaki bölge. Orada bir imar planı hazırlanmış. Otuz beş metrelik ana bir bulvar, alanın ortasına gelince yanında bir meydan oluşuyor. Meydanı planlamışlar sonra bunu dik kesen ve buna paralel başka cadde ve sokaklar var, ona bakınca bir fikir oluşuyor insanda. Bu binayı meydan doğru çevirelim, bu meydana bakan kafeler restoranlar olsun gibi, iz vermeye başlıyor ve sadece orada bırakılmış olan o iz üzerinden hayaller kurmaya başlıyorsun ve oradaki yaşantıya ait izler bırakmaya çalışıyorsun. Şimdi maalesef başka bir noktada ele aldığımız imar planında yan yana çizilmiş dikdörtgenler ve sadece yollar hiçbir

iz, hiçbir fikir heyecan vermeden, en ufak bir iz vermeden hiçbir parselin diğerinden bir farkı yok gibi adeta. Yani o ana cadde üzerindeki parsellerin büyüklük ve konumuyla onun bir arkasındaki veya bir arkasındaki parseller arasında hiçbir fark yok. Aynı tür bir yapılaşmaya iz veriyor. Bunu alıp bir yere götürmek o kadar zor bir şey değil. Özetle şehirlerle ilgili bu değişim olabilir ama basit bir parselasyon planından alıp götüremezsin onu oraya, muhakkak alt yapı ve izlerini bırakman lazım.

Söğütözü Bölgesi kendiliğinden, plansız mı gelişti?

Evet, kendiliğinden gelişti. Burası potansiyelinden dolayı bu hale geldi.

Gayrimenkul değerinden dolayı mı?

Onu konuşalım, ama ondan önce Ankara'nın çok önceden hazırlanmış 2015 planı var. Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi'nin hazırladığı Raci Bademli, Baykan Günay, İlhan Tekeli gibi hocaların katkı sağladığı bir çalışma bu. Yanılmıyorsam bu çalışma 1985'lerde yapılmış. Ankara'ya o dönem iki tane alt merkez düşünülmüş Ulus ve Kızılay'dan sonra. Biri kuzeybatı, diğeri kuzeydoğu alt merkezi. Kuzeybatı denilen yer bahsettiğim Şark Halı'nın arkası. Oradaki parsellerin sahipleri Türkiye'nin önde gelen müteahhit firmaları. Bu işleri iyi veya kötü bilen insanlar, bir araya gelmiş, bir dernek falan kurmamışlar ama, birlikte hareket ederek o planın hazırlanmasına katkı sunmuşlar. O meydanın oraya eklenmesinde katkıları olduğunu biliyorum. Ama o bölge henüz bir merkez olamadı, Söğütözü bölgesi oldu. Söğütözü neden oldu? Ankara'da üç önemli yol var, Eskişehir Yolu, İstanbul ve Konya Yolu. Buranın Konya Yolu ile Eskişehir Yolu'nun kesişiminde yer alması alanın şansını çok artırıyor. İkinci olarak Kızılay'dan bakanlıklara doğru gelişen kent merkezinin yukarıya doğru fazla tırmanamamasından dolayı Millet Meclisi'nden dönüyor, Kuvvet Komutanlıkları ile başlayıp, arkası devam ederek Eskişehir Yolu'nun önü açılıyor. O dalga bu tarafa doğru geliyor. Bu arada kavşağa Dış İşleri Bakanlığı yapıyor ve buranın önemi artıyor. Türkiye'nin o zamanlar en iyi hastanesi Bayındır Hastanesi inşa ediliyor ve buranın prestijini artırıyor. O zamanlar hava yolu taşımacılığı yaygın değilken, popüler taşımacılık şirketi Varan Otobüs İşletmesi burada, yanı sıra Türkiye'de iki üretici firma biri Koç, diğeri Renault burada. Biraz daha ileri gidince ATO geliyor. Bu yapıları sıraladığımızda bölgenin yıldızı parlıyor.

Süreyya Atalay: Baykan Hoca'nın Düş Coğrafyası diye bir sunuşu olmuştu geçen haftalarda. Orada Söğütözü'nün gelişiminin, Jansen Planı'ndan sonra çok kısa zamanda Ankara Batı Koridoru dediğimiz gelişimle başladığını ancak sorunlu başladığını söyledi. Bölgeyi sorun kelimesi üzerinden değerlendirdi. Bir de mülkiyetler dağıldıktan sonra bir araya gelmeler çok zor. Biz karşıya çalışırken kaç parsel birleşebilir, büyük parsel dönüşebilir mi, yaya eksenine nasıl bağlanabilir diye çabaladık. Bunu mimar yaparsa yapıyor, parçalanmış mülkiyet dokusu içinde işverenleri bir araya getirmek kolay olmuyor.

AOÖ: Çukurambar imar durumu çok eskidir. Armada yapılmadan öncesine dayanır. Orası konut bölgesi olarak planlanmıştır. Buralar ta Raci Hoca'nın döneminde planlanmıştır. Bu bölge de kentsel servis alanı olarak düzenlenmişti. Konut dışı tüm aktiviteleri kapsıyor. Armada'nın olduğu tarafta çok fazla parsel yok. Armada'nın yatırımcıları yer seçerken her

yere yakın, kolayca ulaşılabilecek bir yer olması ve ileriye yönelik potansiyeli nedeniyle burayı tercih etti. Çok planlı bir şey değil ama beklenenden daha iyi bir netice ortaya çıktı. Bölgedeki diğer gelişmelere de Armada öncülük yapmış oldu. Ama burada bir tek Raci Hoca'nın hazırlamış olduğu yaya aksı vardı ve burada güzel bir şey var. Yenimahalle Belediyesine gittik zamanında, belediye dedi ki siz buraya ait gelen ilk parsel olduğunuz için buranın kentsel tasarımını yapacaksınız, biz onaylayacağız ancak ondan sonra projenizi onaylayabiliriz. Keşke her belediye böyle ele alsaydı. Bence izler olmalı, mastır plan olmalı ancak esnek olmalı ve tümüyle kontrolsüz de bırakılmamalı. Bu nasıl olabilir? Kent konseyi kurulabilir, belediyenin bünyesinde. Bu yurt dışında var. Şehrin belediye binasına gidiyorsunuz. Şehrin büyük bir maketi var. Bitmiş binalar makete konulmuş, bitmemiş binalar veya parseller çıkarılabilecek şekilde düzenlenmiş. Yapmak istediğiniz binaya bakıyorlar bir fikir yürütüyorlar. Şehrin bütününe bu Şangay'da da var. Bu kadar kontrolsüz gelişen kentlerde bile bu var.

Halkın katılımı var mı?

AOÖ: Şangay'dakinde var mı bilmiyorum ama Almanya'da halk katılıyor. Belli ölçekler var, belli alan ve sınırlar var o sınırlar içinde bir şey yapılacaksa anons ediliyor, insanlar geliyor, inceliyor, o konudaki fikirlerini söylüyorlar. Bu da bir metod. O durumlarda şöyle şeyler oluyor. Böyle bir yatırımın tek taraflı avantaj sağlamaması adına o yatırımı yapanlar o çevreye nasıl bir katkı sunacağını anlatıyorlarmış, sağlıyorlarmış da. Halka faydalı bir şeye dönüştüğü için de halk daha pozitif bakıyormuş.

Mimari ölçekte Tepe Prime'da dikdörtgen bir parsel içinde bir şeyler yapmaya çalıştık, kamusal bir şeyler eklemeye çabaladık. Söğütözü'nde birkaç parseli bir araya getirerek bir şeyler yapmaya çalıştık. Ama alanı ve ölçeği büyütme lazım. Şehir bir organizma. Önce şehrin bütününe hakim olup, sonra alt ölçeğe inmek lazım. Şehir merkezi, şehrin beyni zaten. Siz güzel bir şey sunduğunuz zaman herkes bunu dikkate alır. Bunun hem kentsel mekana, hem kentlilere faydalı bir şey olduğunu gösterince akıllı bir insan bunu neden dikkate almasın.

Koolhaas'ın kent teorisine katılıyor musunuz? Kentler böyle olmak zorunda mı? Mimar olarak kendi sınırlarımız içerisinde katkı sunma imkânımız var mı?

AOÖ: Mücadele etmek lazım. Mücadele ederken de nereye varılmak istendiği de anlatıldığı sürece, ister belediye ister vatandaş hepsi anlar ve arkasında da durur. Ama önce buna kafa yormak lazım.

SA: A Tasarım'ın mimarlığı böyle bir mimarlık. Sorunları fark edip, kente dair eksik olan bir şeyi hep mimari ölçekte, o parçalanmış mülki doku içinde bir kent mimarlığı yapmaya çalışıyor. Aslında söylemi çok güçlü. Burada yapılan tüm projeler, sağıyla soluyla, biraz uzağıyla, yakın çevresiyle güçlü ilişkiler kurar. Bu hep tartışılır, eskizler yapılır. Gerçeğe dönüşenler şuan yaşıyor. Halk kabul ediyor. A Tasarım bunun farkında ve Koolhaas'ın teorisi kabul edilebilir. Bu kadar dağılmış bir mülkiyet dokusunda mimar olarak biz güçsüzüz. Ali Osman Öztürk kenti bu kadar seven, hisseden nadir mimarlardan. Hep kentteki eksik olan bir şeyi projelerine entegre etme çabasıdır A Tasarım'ın çabası.

İşveren 'in kaygısı oldu mu siz bu duyarlılığını paylaşırken?

AOÖ: İyi işten çok daha fazla kar edeceklerini biliyorlar. Yaptığı imalat, döktüğü beton, içine koyduğu demir değişmiyor. Ama siz ona bir ruh katabilirseniz ve farklı bir şey ortaya koyabilirseniz, bunun insanları çekebileceğini, ticari değerinin de artacağını biliyorlar, diğer taraftan da bunu yapan insanlar o kadar da materyalist değiller. Duyarlılar, kendi kazanırken, kente de kazandırabileceğini çoğu işverenimiz hissediyor, bu da bizi mutlu ediyor. Çünkü onun cebindeki parayla biz onu yapıyoruz ama biz yaptığımız projelerde mümkün olduğu kadar bir fayda, kamusal bir fayda çıkarmaya çalışıyoruz ama ben tekrar altını çizmek istiyorum, anlatırsanız anlıyor insanlar. Yılmamak, savaştık, çaba göstermek lazım. Başta plancıları ardından da meslektaşlarımı eleştiriyorum. Öncelikle bizler yeterince bu konuya kafa yoruyor muyuz, yeterince buna yönelik öneriler geliştiriyor muyuz, bu önerileri ilgili yerlere sunuyor muyuz? Sunuyoruz da her şeye rağmen kabul edilmiyor mu? Edilmeyebilir. Ama siz yüz tane öneri sunarsınız yetmiş sekse bile kabul edilse bu kar değil mi?

O zaman yorulmaktan, mücadele etmekten mi kaçıyoruz da düşük kalitede kentsel çevreyle baş başa kalıyoruz?

AOÖ: Yeterince mücadele verilmiyor. Sadece verilen parsel içinde kalmıyor, yalnızca o parselle meşgul olunuyorsa sorun var demektir. Yanını, arkasını, önünü, önünden geçen kaldırımını, karşı kaldırımını, bunların hepsinin farkında olmak lazım. Bizim için mesela vaziyet planı çok önemlidir. Orda en çok üzerinde durduğumuz şey yaya hareketidir. Bir yaya buraya nasıl geliyor. Avrupa'da böyle bir probleminiz yoktur. Siz yayaysanız kesintisiz yürürsünüz ve hatta yürüdüğünüzü fark etmezsiniz. Biz yayalar şehri yapmaya çalışıyoruz, taşıtlar şehri değil. Yayalar öncelikli olmalı.

Ama taşıt öncelikli bir planlama var, yaya öncelikli değil.

AOÖ: Evet. Congressium'u yaparken, bu metro istasyonundan gelenler Congressium'a nasıl ulaşacak dedik ve onun için alttan metrodan karşıya geçiş vardı planda, iptal edildi, üst geçit yapıldı. Oradan yüzeye çıktığında geniş bir yaya allesi hayal ettik, orijinalinde de alttan geçit önerdik. Binadan önce insanlar binaya nasıl gelecek, araç giriş çıkışlarını planladık. Mimarlığın cephe ağırlıklı bir tasarım olarak görülmesinden rahatsızım. Binalar önce bir fonksiyon icra etmek için var, içinde insan yaşıyor. Cephesi de güzel olsun ama, işlesin. Birde milli servet, bu kadar para yatırılıyorsa yazık değil mi? Türkiye'de binalar yapılıyor, kısa süre sonra yıkılıyor, tekrar yapılıyor tekrar yıkılıyor. Kent hafızası denen bir şey de kalmıyor o zaman, senin çocukluğunda gittiğin kültür merkezi, sinema şimdi yok. Başta çuvaldızı kendimize batırmalıyız, arkasından plancılar ve karar vericiler. Karar vericilerin önüne iyi bir şey koyduk mu? Ben çaba sarf ederek daha iyi bir kentsel çevreye ulaşabileceğimizi düşünüyorum.

Söğütözü'nün kent merkezi olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?

AOÖ: Zoraki veya doğal olarak burası kent merkezi oldu, bilerek veya planlanarak değil. Burası kent merkezi olarak planlanmadı.

Kamusallık konusunda bölgenin yeterli imkânlarla ulaştığını düşünüyor musunuz?

AOÖ: Bence değil. Neden? Eskişehir Yolu, burayı kesintiye uğrattıyor, iki taraf birbirine geçemiyor. Metro geçişleri bunun için iyi olabilirdi. Altan da geçilebilirdi, hala daha da geçilebilir. Büyük oyuncuların bir araya gelerek bir kamuoyu oluşturabileceğini ve karar mercilerine öneriler getirebileceğine inanıyorum. YDA, Next Level karşıda. Bu projelerin aktörleri deselerdi ki bu iki tarafı birbirine akıtalım, yapabilirdik. Ama işveren kendi parselinin içinde dönüp, durmayı yeğliyor. Mimarların da işvereni yönlendirmesi iyi olabilirdi ve daha sonra bir araya gelinip, karşılıklı daha fazla bu bağlantı güçlendirilebilirdi. Bu yolun altından geçmek mümkün. Otel yapılmamış daha önce, otelin mimar ve yatırımcılarına dedik ki burası yaya aksı oluyor, bunu sizde projenizde değerlendirin. Otelin girişini alle tarafına aldılar. Bu bir duyarlılık örneği. Alleye komşu diğer otelse ilgilenmedi. Sokak olduktan sonra inşa edilmesine rağmen, oluşmuş bir kamusal mekan varken ilişki kurmayı tercih etmediler. Sokak ve meydanların esprisi, girişlerin karşı karşıya bakmasıdır. İnsanların ve işlevlerin karşı karşıya bakması. Armada sağır duvarken buraya kafe restoranlar yapılacak ve bu duvarları yıkacağız dediğimde işveren önce tepki verdi sonra faydasını anlatınca tamam dedi. O nedenle bu otelin mimarını eleştiriyorum. Allenin potansiyelini görmedi.

Söğütözü Rekreasyon alanı ile ilgili bir şey var mı?

AOÖ: Biz oranın hepsi kamuya açılsın istedik, hatta burayı Kuğulu Park'la karşılaştıran bir öneri getirmiştik. Orman Bakanlığı buralara yazık etti.

Brigitte Weber'le görüşme şansınız oldu mu?

AOÖ: Hayır olmadı.

SA: Hassasiyetlerin artırılması lazım.

AOÖ: Mimarların kenti okuması lazım, izleri ve ipuçlarını okuması lazım. Buradaki her bir parçanın bir diğerine katkısı var. Herkes duvara bir tuğla koyarsa o duvar örülüyor, ama bazısı tuğla koymadığı gibi harca su katıyor. Mesela alle aşağıda tek taraftan çalışan bir sokak olarak can çekişiyor.

Yakınımı, çevresini, ait olduğu kenti doğru okuma becerisi, ihtiyaç duyduğumuz sanırım bu.

AOÖ: Mimarlar da çok şey yapabilir. Parsel bazında da bir şeyler yapılabilir, ama zor, o yüzden daha üst ölçekli ele almak lazım. O yüzden plancılar ve karar vericiler önemli. Kimse sorumluluktan kaçmamalı.

Bu bölgede kuleleşme zaruri mi?

AOÖ: Bir kısım mecburiyetten. Arsa küçük emsal fazlaysa kuleleşme kaçınılmaz oluyor. Ankara beş milyonluk bir şehir, Türkiye'nin ikinci büyük kenti. Çok fazla bina olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Daha fazlası da yapılırsa ihtiyaç var. Ama buradaki problem şu, apartman

dairelerindeki şirketler bu binalara adapte olamadılar. Apartman dairesindeki giderleri daha ekonomik geliyor ama bence bu aşılacak. Alışkanlıklarını yenemeyenler var. Zamanla yer değişimi kaçınılmaz olacaktır.

RÖPÖRTAJ 2: Brigitte Weber, 1.10.2018, İstanbul, Taksim

Next Level projenizle ilgili öncesi ve sonrasındaki deneyimlerinizi paylaşabilir misiniz?

Brigitte Weber: Ondan önce biraz Trump projesinden bahsetmek istiyorum. Biz Trump Tower'a başlarken etrafında sadece iki, üç, beş katlı binalar vardı. Önünde sekiz on katlı binalar vardı. Sizin önünüze bir arazi planı geliyor ve o planı geliştirmeniz isteniyor. Mimarın işi nasıl geliyor normalde bir plan, bir harita geliyor. Orada ne yapılacağı belki belli belki değil. Şanslıysanız öyle geliyor, sonra planlara bakıyorsunuz. Orası şuanda atıyorum birkaç katlı bir bina ve işveren geliyor ve diyorki bunu geliştirmemiz lazım. Bu bütün dünyada böyle ama belli şartları var ve onları zor değiştiriyorsunuz. Şimdi siz bir proje hazırlıyorsunuz, onu belediyeye sunuyorsunuz, belediye bunu kabul ediyor veya etmiyor. Çoğu proje böyle geliyor.

Belediyenin proje üzerinde sınırlandırıcı etkisi oluyor mu?

BW: Proje üzerinde tabii ki etkisi var. Ama bunda pazarlık var. Mesela biz transfer merkezi verdik belediyeye. Bin araçlık otopark verdik. Bu belediyeye yasal olarak yapılan bir antlaşma. Trump'ın rüzgarı nerden geliyor, bina nereye nasıl yönlüyor, hepsini maketlerle, silüetlerle, binlerce çalışmayla etüt ediyoruz. Önden çok narin olacak, sadece bir tane heykel olacak, birisi önde birisi geride olacak, birbirinin görüş alanını etkilemeyecek, binlerce araştırma, çalışma yapıyorsun, binayı kotlarıyla yerleştiriyorsun. Otuz metre kot farkı var üç yüz metrelik bir bina. Sonra bunun teknik konuları var. Rüzgâr testleri yapılıyor, maketler yapılıyor, Almanya 'ya yollanıyor. Tüm cepheler için rüzgâr türbülansları çok önemli, çok ciddi sorunları çözüyorsun. Sonra daha bu proje bitmeden yanında binlerce bina yapılıyor. Sen kendi hesabına göre bir bina yaptın, yanında üç katlı bir bina var, saygı duyarak bir şeyler yapmaya çalışıyorsun, ama sen binayı daha bitirmeden yanındaki araziler alınmış ve on katlı binalar dikilmiş. Ne senin rüzgar hesabın tutuyor, ne mimarının anlamı kalıyor, çünkü o yer senin bulduğun yerin aynısı değil artık. Sen açıyorsun kapını ve bakıyorsun, neler oluyor etrafımda? Biz Next Level'ı yaparken aynı şey vardı. Karşımızda Armada vardı. Bizim fikrimiz, fikir diyorum geliştirilmiş bir şey değil, Armada ile keşke bir bağlantı kurabilsek, metro ve Armada ile bir şekilde ilişki kurabilsek ama böyle bir şey olmadı. Biz tasarlarken etrafımızda hiçbir şey yoktu, vardı belki ama çok önemli bir yapı yoktu. Daha biz projeyi bitirmeden arkada dolu, dolu, dolu kule oldu ve önümüzde çok büyük bir proje oldu. Siz devasa bir mimari proje yapıyorsunuz, çok kısa sürede o geçersiz oluyor, gibi belki. Belki de değil. Çünkü bambaşka bir çevre var. Biz mimarlar olarak doğru yapamıyoruz.

Öngörülemez, kestirilemez bir ilerleme mi?

BW: Aynen. Biz ileriye gördüğümüz andan itibaren acaba etrafta ne olacak kaygısına kapılıyoruz. Klasik bir bina nasıl tasarlanır buna maalesef 'ad absurdum' diyorum. Çünkü tamam bugün için geçerli, sen bir şey yapıyorsun, orada bir manzara var, sonra birden bire öyle bir şey yok orada.

Bölgenin bu halini o zamanlar öngörebildiniz mi?

BW: Bu hale geleceği belliydi. Çünkü biz projeye başlarken orası önemli bir akstı ve o aksta her şey gelişecek ilerde. Tabi ki biz o işi yaparken başkaları da orada araziler aldılar, belki bizden önce aldılar bilmiyorum.

Next Level'a doğru Ali Osman Öztürk'ün bir bağlantı fikri vardı. Siz işvereninizle görüşürken karşılıklı bağlantıların kurulabilmesi adına bir öneride bulundunuz mu biz bir bağlantı sağlayabilir miyiz diye?

BW: Biz kimiz? İşler o kadar kolay değil. Okul farklı, gerçek hayat farklı. Bir mimar, bir öneri bir fikir getirebilir ama bir mimar bir proje yürütemez hiç kimse bunu istemiyorsa. Ben mimar olarak belediyeye gidip diyeceğim ki benim süper bir fikrim var hadi bana burada birkaç milyon dolarlık bir alt geçit yap. Belediye büyük ihtimalle ne diyecek, araştırıyorum benim öyle bir ihtiyacım yok, siz yapın. Trump'ta alt geçiti de metro bağlantısını da işveren yaptı. Sen bir bağlantı istiyorsan sen yapacaksın ancak belediye bu ihtiyacı tespit ediyorsa. Ama sen bir mimar olarak işvereni zorlayamazsın, Armada'ya doğru geçit yapma konusunda. Alt geçit yaparsın ama yarın bambaşka bir düzen oluşur. Mesela şimdi çok büyük bir bina geldi ve o binanın bambaşka bir ihtiyacı var. O bina ile bu bağlantıyı sağlamak çok daha doğru. Biz bir şey yapsaydık belki bugün yanlış olurdu.

Mimarın kendi parseli dışında söyleyebileceği, ya da yapabileceği bir şey yok mu?

BW: Sen her şeyi yapabilirsin, projenin tasarım aşamasında çok çeşitli fikirleri değerlendiriyoruz. Her zaman bir vizyon var. Sadece işveren değil, işveren bunu belediyeye sunuyor. Ordan da geri dönüşler alıyoruz. Ama tüm öneriler gerçekleşmeyebilir. Biz Armada ile birlikte bir strüktür üretseydik şimdi yanlış olurdu. Yanımızda, önümüzde arkamızda olanlarla, o zaman üreteceğimiz şey yeterli olmayabilirdi. Bunu tahmin edemedik.

Burayı kent merkezi olarak değerlendirebilir miyiz?

BW: Klasik anlamdaki kent merkezi farklı bir şey.

Cbd olarak nitelenebilir mi?

BW: Olabilir. Merkez ne demek? Yoğunlaşmış bir bölge. Ama şehrin özelliğini taşıyan bir merkez değil. Çünkü birkaç tane alışveriş merkezini yan yana dizerken, bunlara arabayla ulaşırken, aralarında bağlantı olmayan bir bölgeye şehir merkezi diyemeyiz. Şehir merkezi olabilmesi için içinde bambaşka şeyler olması lazım. Yaya öncelikli olmalı ve bir ruhu olmalı. Onun içinde kafeler, müzeler, kültürel yerler olmalı. Kültürel bir yoğunlaşma da olması lazım

ve insanlar oraya gelip orada bir şeyler yapıyorlar. Şimdi bu aks üzerinde böyle bir şey kuruyorsunuz. Bu bir merkez değil. Sağ ve sol var burada, aralarında bağlantı yok. Biz Next Level'dan Armada'ya giderken döne döne gidiyoruz. İlerde büyük ihtimalle bir bağlantı olacak. Burası bir merkezden ziyade bir yoğunlaşma aksı. Merkezi iş alanı demek de zor. Sen oraya gidiyorsun, işini park ettiğin yerde hallediyorsun ve arabanla oradan ayrılıyorsun. Ama bir şehir merkezi olarak görüyorsan oraya gittiğinde akşama kadar vakit geçirip nerden çıkacaksın bilmeyebilirsin. Bir şey keşfedeceksin, ama biz keşfetmeye gitmiyoruz oraya, işimizi hallediyoruz ve çıkıyoruz. Öyle bir durum var. Alışveriş merkezi orayı kent merkezi yapmaz.

Ama bugünün gerçeği bu değil mi?

BW: Evet bu ama, bu değişmez değil. Bana göre daha fazla inşa edecek alan bulamayacağız bu gidişle. Bir gün insanlar mevcut binaları değerlendirmek için fikir yürütmek zorunda kalacak. Ben iki farklı kültürde büyümüş bir insanım. Bunun avantaj ve dezavantajları var. Benim büyüdüğüm kültürde insanların arazisi varsa veya bir araziye satılık görüyorsa, param var burayı alıp değerlendireyim diye düşünmez insanlar. Genel olarak böyle bir yaklaşım yok, yasa da sınırlayıcı. Burada belediyede, yirmi, on ve hatta beş senelik ciddi planlar var ileriye yönelik. Benim bir ev ihtiyacım var veya bu bölgede konut yok, ben yapıp para kazanayım, o araziye alıp, yapayım. Bu Türkiye'ye özgü bir durum. Arazim olduğu için yapı yapıyorum. İhtiyaç olmayan şeyler yapıyoruz.

Dolmayan kuleler kamu kurumlarına kiralanıyor.

BW: Şu anda bir doyuma ulaştık. Fırsat olduğu için yapılıyor. Bodrum'da minik bir evim var. Mimar olmama rağmen orada yeni bir bina yapmak istemedim. Yüz altmış senelik tarihi bir taş ev aldım. O doğaya beton dökmem, çünkü öyle bir doğa başka yerde yok. Orada köylülerin arazilerini imara açmışlar. Şimdi ben oraya beş sene önce taşındım etrafımda her şey yeşildi. Şu anda etrafımda bir tane ağaç kalmadı ve binlerce boş bina var. Köylünün fikri arazisini değerlendirmek. Hemen bina yapıyorlar, satıp satmamasına bakılmıyor. Bu benim geçmiş mantaliteme çok aykırı. Binalar satılmıyorsa neden yapılıyor? Her büyük proje kendi içinde bir büyük satalit şehir. Her site satalit şehir. Ataşehir kendi içinde bir şehir. Alt yapıda da problem var. Şanslıysanız alt yapı sizinle beraber geliyor. Viyana'da büyük projeler var ama bize göre değil. Yeni proje yapmak için yıllarca hazırlık yapılıyor.

Türkiye'deki bu öngörülemez koşullar size mimar olarak heyecan veriyor mu?

BW: Viyana'da şu anda büyük bir satalit şehir yapılıyor içinde her şey var, okul v.s. bizim satalit şehirlerimizde okul yok. Önce boş bir metro hattı yapıyorlar ve yapımı senelerce sürüyor, işçiler çalışırken metro hattını kullansınlar diye. Burada devasa projeler var ve bu projeleri eleştirenler var. Daha o zamanlar bu projeler onlarda yok. Beş sene sonra bakıyorsun projeyi eleştirenler gökdelen yapmış. Çünkü o büyüklük senin ofisine geliyorsa heyecandan duramıyorsun tabi ki yapacaksın, bu senin hayatının fırsatı. Ama önce eleştiriyorlar çünkü onlara öyle bir proje henüz gelmemiş, anlamıyorlar. Ama senin ofisine gökdelen geliyorsa yapacaksın, hayır diyeni görmedim. Sonra Zorlu Center. Zorlu'nun yanında her şey kuş gibi

kalıyor. Next Level da büyük ama YDA'nın yanında o da kuş gibi kaldı. Türkiye'de tasarladığın proje en son nasıl bir şeye dönüşecek bilmiyorsun. Konsept proje uzun sürdü. O dönemde bizim yatırımcımızın da ilk deneyimiydi ve karma proje Ankara'da çok yoktu. Kent için belli bir lüks içeriyordu. Yatırımcıyla birlikte çalıştık.

Projenin gerçekleşmiş halinden memnun musunuz?

BW: Next Level kapasite olarak sınırdı. Ondan daha küçük avm olmamalı, bir çekim merkezi olmak zorundasın. Üst kattaki meydan ve birimler oraya canlılık kattı. Çok lüks markalar için Ankara henüz hazır değildi belki. Çok da avm var. Zaten avm'nin oturması en az iki sene sürüyor. Tenteneler ufolar dışarda olsun istemezdim. Bunlar için mahkemeye gitseniz gülerler. Türkiye'de bunu kanıksamak zorunda kalıyorsunuz.

Türkiye'de mimara verilen değer bakımından bir iyileşme görüyor musunuz?

BW: Çift yönlü yürüyor. Bazı mimarlar kendi saygınlıklarını kendileri yarattılar. Ama piyasadaki kaliteyi düşürenler de var ve bunlar prestijlilerin kalitesini de düşürüyor. Kendi yetersizliğini kabul edip gelen işi reddeden yok gibi.

RÖPÖRTAJ 3 : KEREM YAZGAN, 10. 10.2018, ANKARA, ÇANKAYA

YDA Center projenizle ilgili öncesi ve sonrasındaki deneyimlerinizi paylaşabilir misiniz?

KY: Burası Ankara'nın çok özel bir arsası. Belki de başka şimdilik böyle bir arsa yok. Şöyle yok. Hem ankaray hem metro durağının olduğu ikisinin de kesiştiği, aynı durağın aynı arsada olduğu başka bir arsa ben bilmiyorum. Birde farklı bir merkez, tüm bunlar orayı çok değerli kılıyor. İşveren tarafından baktığınız zaman, o yatırımın altına elini koyabilmesi için orada ekstra bir değer üretmesi gerekiyor. Büyüklük oradan geliyor. İşveren tarafında o büyüklüğün bir anlamı var. Ankara'daki en değerli ve en özel arsalardan biri. Olmayan bir arsadan bahsediyoruz. Bu anlamda Armada bu arsaya göre daha sıradan denebilir. Çünkü metro ve ankaray bu arsaya çıkıyor. Hatta ankaray direk çıkıyor, metro önüne çıkıyor. Şimdi mimar olarak da bu büyüklükle kendi çapımızda nasıl başa çıkabiliriz diye uğraşıyoruz, onun dışında da kente ne katabiliriz diye uğraşıyoruz. Son dönem Türkiye'deki mimarların bütünlükle ilgili arayışında bir ara yüz fikri var bence. O ara yüzden kastım cephe değil daha çok ara bir mekan. Kentle ilişki kurabilecek mekanı da bu özel projelere özel yatırımlara katmaya çalışmak. Bu Türkiye'deki bir sürü son dönem mimarlarda görülebilecek bir tavır diye düşünüyorum. Öyle bir ortaklıktan bahsetmek mümkün. Örneğin Ali Osman'ın Armada tarafında yaptığı o sokak hem ticari, hem de kente bir açık alan, serbest gezebildiğin bir yer, para ödmeden orda oturabiliyorsun, dolayısıyla toplumsal bir alan da denebilir. Şimdi biz de burada iki üç şey yaptık. Aslında bu projede işvereni de ikna ettik. Büyüklüğün bizden geldiğini düşünmüyorum. Diyorlar ki bu büyüklüğü yapmamız lazım, bu yatırım için gerekli, tamam

biz de mimarca ne yapabiliriz diye bakıyoruz konuya. Birincisi şunu yaptık. Bir plaza yarattık, ön tarafta, yüksek binayla. Aslında o yüksek bina da arsanın üçte birini kaplar. Dışardan çok büyük sanki bütün arsayı kaplıyor gibi görünüyor ama bir dikdörtgen düşünün, uzun yönde üç dilime bölün, bir dilimini metro kaplıyor, diğer dilimini ankaray kaplıyor, geriye kalan bir dilim var, o yüzden o alana mecburen binayı strüktürel olarak metronun üstüne binayı yapmamak için, yüksek bina çok zor çünkü, o yüzden orada kalan son banta aslında bu büyüklüğü sığdırmak gibi olunca yükseliyor filan, dolayısıyla parçalanamıyor. Altta metro ile ankaray var, bu dışardan bilinen, görünen bir şey değil. Ama bu orayı kendi kendine mecbur kıldırıyor. O açık alanı yaptık, bir de hemen arkasında bir park alanı var, o da yapılıyor. Yeşil bir boşluk orda var, altı otopark olarak, üstü de yeşil bir park. Orada bir kafe ve bir kreş de var.

O parsel belediyenin ön gördüğü ya da şart koştuğu bir parsel mi yoksa yatırımcının inisiyatifi mi?

KY: Yatırımcı orayı da değerlendirmek istedi. Orayı alalım hem bir nefes alma noktası olur, hem de otopark ihtiyacını karşılıyoruz. Bir kısmını belediyeye zaten devrediyoruz. Bir katı belediyeye ait olacak, metro ile ilişki kurabilecek bu sayede. Arabayı oraya park edip metroyla bir yere gidilebilecek. Dolayısıyla önde bir plaza restoranların, kafelerin , bir iki küçük sokak dükkânını olacak, arkada da bir park, arada da bu yapı var. İşvereni esas ikna ettiğimiz konu şu, Türkiye’de pek yapılmayan bir şeye ikna ettik, o da normalde binaların zemin katları çok değerlidir, biz onu kentsel bir boşluk yapabilir miyiz diye uğraştık. Onun birkaç anlamı var, hem Çukurambar bölgesine bir kapı açmak, bir açıklık yapmak, geçiş bırakmak, bina yere dümdüz bassa o binayı dolanmanız gerekecek, biz orayı sosyal olarak bir güvenlikten geçmeden insanların kullanabileceği dört tane açıklık yaptık. Üç tanesi aynı zamanda ofis bloğunun girişleri ama aynı zamanda geçiş. Aynı zamanda plazaya hava almasını sağlıyor. Bir tane de daha büyük bir tane yaptık, orası da tam ankarayın çıkış noktası aslında. Ankaray istasyonunun giriş çıkışı tam o plaza. Dolayısıyla orayı da kente kattık. Büyük boşluğuyla birlikte o boşluk yaklaşık bin metrekare. Aynı zamanda düşeyde de bir boşluk var. Bu da Panteon’dan mimarlık kültüründen beslenen bir fikir hem binanın hava almasını hem de güneşin içeri girmesini sağlıyor. Kısaca binanın alt kısmını olabildiğince kente bırakmaya işvereni ikna ettik.

İşverenle anlaşma noktasında zorlu bir süreç oldu mu sizin için?

KY: Bu fikri sevdiler. Tüm zemin kattaki değerli yerleri kiralamak dururken, işverene bunu kabul ettirmek kolay değil. Fakat bunun projeye katkı yapacağına inandılar ve kabul ettiler. Bir hareket de binanın yüksekliğinden gelen ofisleri de teraslı yapıp, ofis hayatını da dışarıya açmak. Armada veya Next Level’la kıyaslırsak, Next Level da camlar bile açılmaz, Armada ‘da da açılmıyordu sonradan açtılar. Bu projede tüm ofisler hava alıyor. Öndeki iki tane alçak olan yapı da ana yol tarafından plazaya bir tanım getirmek için var. Plaza metro çıkışının olduğu kottan yukarda. Yolla plaza arasında bir niş yaratabilmek için çift katlı iki alçak yapı var. Armada yola dik olduğu için orada sokak oluşabiliyor. Bir sokak oluşabilmesi için bir tarafı da bir çeşit yarı tanımlamak gerekiyor, o nedenle iki katlı alçak çelik yapı var. Ama bir

yandan da yapı büyük oldu. Panoramik asansörler var, bu da kenti deneyimlemeye imkân veriyor. Ulusoy'un olduğu arsaya da bir süreklilik bıraktık. Orada bir bina yapılırsa sokak istendiğinde devam ettirilebilir. Bir de karşı tarafla, Armada ile ilişki kurabilirsek.

Yatırımcı ile bununla ilgili görüştünüz mü?

KY: Görüştük tabi hala bu fikir geçerli. Üst veya alt geçit yapıp bağlamak. Çukurambar yönüne biz o bağlantının önünü açtık. İster ankaray ister metrodan çıkın, ister üst geçitten karşıya geçerek buraya gelin, Çukurambar'ın üçra noktasına kadar yürüyerek gidebilirsiniz, bunun önünü açtık, yere bassaydı bina olamayacaktı. Buradan parka geçiyorsunuz, parkın içinde de yürüyüş hattı var, oradan devam ettiğinizde Çukurambar'daki restoran ve kafelere veya evinize varabiliyorsunuz. Terside de olabiliyor. Onun dışında Armada'daki sokakla ilişki kurulmasında fayda var. Next Level'la da ilişki kurmaya çalıştık. Binanın arkasında da dar bir bant bıraktık. Marriott Otelle de ilişkilimiz. Birde biz kütleli olarak da Next Level'la Marriott'u yanyana koyduğunuzda Marriott daha alçak olan, Next Level yüksek olan bizim projenin kütleli hareketi oradan geliyor. Çevreyle kütleli olarak da ilişki kuruyoruz. Tam bire bir değil, çünkü metrekare ve emsal zorlamaları var ama baktığınız zaman aşağı yukarı buradaki silüet yüksek buradaki alçakken bizde bunu fit ediyoruz. Mesela Zaha Hadid'in Kartal'da kazandığı yarışmada gabari fikri vardı. Şöyle bir fikir benim anladığım. İki bina silüette birbirleriyle ilişkilenebilir. Bir bina üç yüz metre yanına yirmi metre bina değil de bir yükseklikten başlayıp öbürüne düşen, gerekirse tekrar yükselen, birbirleriyle dağlar gibi ilişki kurmak. Burada o fikir var. Alttan karşıya geçebilirsek, içe kapanan bir yapı fikri hiçbir zaman olmadı. İşverende aynı fikirde. Büyüklüğün dışında kente katılmaya çalışan, aslında biraz daha küçük olsa daha güzel olacaktı ama başka dinamikler devreye giriyor.

Buranın şehir merkezi olma ihtimalini anlamlı buluyor musunuz?

KY: Şehirler çok merkezli hele geliyor. Ama aslında bu telefonlarla herkes bir merkez durumu da var. Merkez kavramına bu dönemde farklı yaklaşmak şart. Kent merkezi kavramını da eski anlamıyla sürdürmek güç. Birey merkezli düşünmek daha enteresan geliyor. Ama bu bölge üzerinde söylersek çok parçacı bir durum var. Ama bu parçasallığı en iyi trafiği yerin altına almakla çözmek mümkün.

Bunu kim yapacak?

KY: Belediyeye mimarlar çalışabilir.

Belediyenin projenizi etkileyecek bir yönlendirmesi oldu mu?

KY: Trafik, rüzgar gibi analiz talepleri oldu, ama bunlar arsa bazında kalıyor. İki arsayı buluşturmak mimarın kendisine kalıyor. Üst geçit öneriyoruz mesela kim yapacak belediyemi Armada mı, yüklenicimi yapacak. Böyle olunca kitlenip kalıyor mesele. Kişisel tercihim bir şehir en iyi yürüyerek deneyimlenir. Ama arabadan da bağımsız bakamayız. Bazı projelerimizde cephe araç hızına endeksli ele alınır. Aselsan mesela. Aracı düşünmeden de şehre nostaljik bakamayız. Bence tüm Eskişehir Yolu bütüncül olarak planlanabilirdi, en büyük eksik şu an mimari taraf değil planlama tarafı. Bu uzun yıllardır böyle. Ankara

zamanında yokken bir yeşil kent olarak ütopya olarak düşünölmüş bir fırsat olarak görölmüş, tüm o zamandan gelen parklar o ütopya fikri ile ilişkilidir ve Eskişehir Yolu'da bir fırsattı, o fırsat bence kaçıyor. Bütöncöl bir planlama anlamında söylüyorum. Çok değerli arsalar ve yatırımcılar her zaman planlamanın önüne geçiyor Türkiye'de. Bu nasıl aşılır? Birlikte düşünerek aşılır ben başka bir yol göremiyorum. Onun dışında mimarlarda münferit olarak yapabildiğini yapmaya çalışıyorlar yine. Ali Osman Öztürk'ün projesi mesela, sokağı yapmak hem yatırımcıya hem kentliye, bizim buradaki plaza ve boşluklar hem yatırımcıya hem kente en azından onu yapmak sürdürmek gerekiyor. Ondan sonra şu bağı kurmak için mimarlar engel değil, o bakımdan kentsel planlamada bir şeylerin değişmesi lazım. Kentsel dönüşüm deniyorsa bu da bir kentsel dönüşüm fikri olabilir. Binaların eskisi yıkıp yenisini yapmak değil. Kenti birbirine bağlamak fikri başlı başına bir dönüşüm. Eskişehir'de biz bunu yaptık. Orada yürünemez bir sokağı dönüştürdük. Siz suyu akışına bırakın su akar. Akışına bırakmak için birlikte düşünmek lazım. Yatırımcı olacak mesela bence, mimarların olması lazım, komşuların, belediyenin olması lazım. Birlikte burayı ilişkilendirme fikri olduktan sonra, nasıl ilişkileneceğı çözölür.