



# BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

ISSUES OF HOUSING,  
PLANNING, AND  
RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT OF  
THE TERRITORY

**Towards Euro-Mediterranean  
Perspectives**

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# **Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory Towards Euro-Mediterranean Perspectives**

## **Conference Theme and Rationale**

Albania, along with other Western Balkan countries, has undergone significant economic, social, and political changes in recent years. As a result, housing, planning, and the resilient management of territorial development have emerged as critical issues. This is because these regions face significant challenges in providing affordable housing, addressing the impact of urbanization on the environment, fostering evidence-based decision-making on the territory, and bringing forth the commitments towards climate neutrality.

The organizers use the term “multi-modality” to define complex situations (in matters of territorial planning, management, architecture, housing, public space, technology, etc.) that have historically encompassed Western Balkans and Mediterranean cities in a logic of coexistence and value co-creation. A combination of knowledge and heritage that throughout time and history have given life to civilization in this region of Europe. The active involvement of Albania in the existing network of the Mediterranean Basin and the EU, through a joint action plan with UN / UNECE, and the Albanian and regional authorities, including reputable scientific bodies such as the Academy of Sciences of Albania, makes this conference even more intriguing to explore fascinating areas of research. The conclusions, to be considered as a stage for open innovation, will include recommendations for further scientific and applied research, projects, and events.

The geographical focus of the conference covers three dimensions: i) Albania; ii) the Western Balkans; iii) Euro-Mediterranean countries. POLIS University aims to focus on the above-mentioned research areas that are of common interest to both Western Balkans and Mediterranean cities, including, but not limited to: housing policies, urban history and architecture typology, innovation and digitalization in urbanism, energy efficiency, resilience and environmental sustainability, governance and smart technologies for city management, education and gender aspects in urban planning research.

In this regard the main aim of this international conference is to bring together scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners to examine the pressing issues of housing, planning, and land development in these regions, in a context of transition fatigue, climate challenges and post-pandemic realities.

# **Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory Towards Euro-Mediterranean Perspectives**

## **Conference Aim**

The main aim of this international conference is to bring together researchers, policy makers and practitioners to examine the urgent issues of housing, planning and land development in these regions, in a context of transition, climate challenges and post-pandemic realities.

## **Objective**

- Consolidation of the cooperation network between Albanian and non-Albanian researchers, lecturers, managers, with the aim of participating in joint research projects at the regional and international level;
- Support of local authorities with contemporary data, on the state of housing issues, planning and sustainable urban and environmental management, as well as representatives of public and private institutions operating in this field.

The conference is organized by POLIS University (U\_POLIS) in cooperation with the Academy of Science of Albania, and supported by other local and international partners.

In the framework of resilience, the main conference theme is devoted to Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory from a Euro-Mediterranean Perspective, including Albania, Western Balkans and the Mediterranean Basin. This event aims to bring together academics, policymakers, researchers, experts, practitioners, and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to discuss and address critical challenges related to housing, urban planning, and the development of resilient territories.

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# **CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENTS OF PLANNED CAPITALS; "TIRANA SPINE" AND "ANKARA ATATURK BOULEVARD"**

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## **Abstract**

The subject of this study is the "plan of Tirana", the capital of Albania since 1920, in particular the "main boulevard" in the city center, and the "Atatürk Boulevard" in the "planning story of Ankara", which was declared the capital in 1922, even before the end of the war of independence.

Both capitals are intended to prove the beliefs and endeavors of these new countries to their citizens and to the modern world.

The new Albanian government needed urgent government buildings such as ministries, the palace, and a strong form which would monumentally connect all these facilities; therefore, the main boulevard, which functions as the "spine" of Tirana's central business district, was designed as an idea by Italian architects in 1925. This "spine" circulation system was mainly inspired by the urban movements of the time, such as the linear city and as in the planning of Ankara; the beautiful city movement.

Ankara, too, had to demonstrate the strength and credibility of the young Turkish Republic, first to its own citizens and then to the entire western world. Therefore, with the choice of the new capital, ties with the Ottoman Empire were severed and Hermann Jansen, a world-renowned planner, was commissioned to prepare a plan for Ankara. In this plan, it was necessary for the positioning of new government buildings, mainly around the designed boulevard, like Tirana.

Tirana and Ankara are studied in the light of the historical development of capital city functions and the main titles of their planning stories: the spine and Atatürk Boulevard.

## **Keywords**

Tirana Spine, Ankara Ataturk Boulevard, Planned Capital Cities

## Introduction

Planned capitals, that is, cities planned from scratch or on the texture of an existing city to assume the function of capital, are primarily symbols of pride and the endeavour of nation-building. (Bozdoğan 2012, p.83) It is essential to show this to both citizens and the whole world. Therefore, they can't take their image and character from an existing city (Tankut 1990). The city is an abstract, always assumed as a geometric utopia identified with modernism (Figure.1).

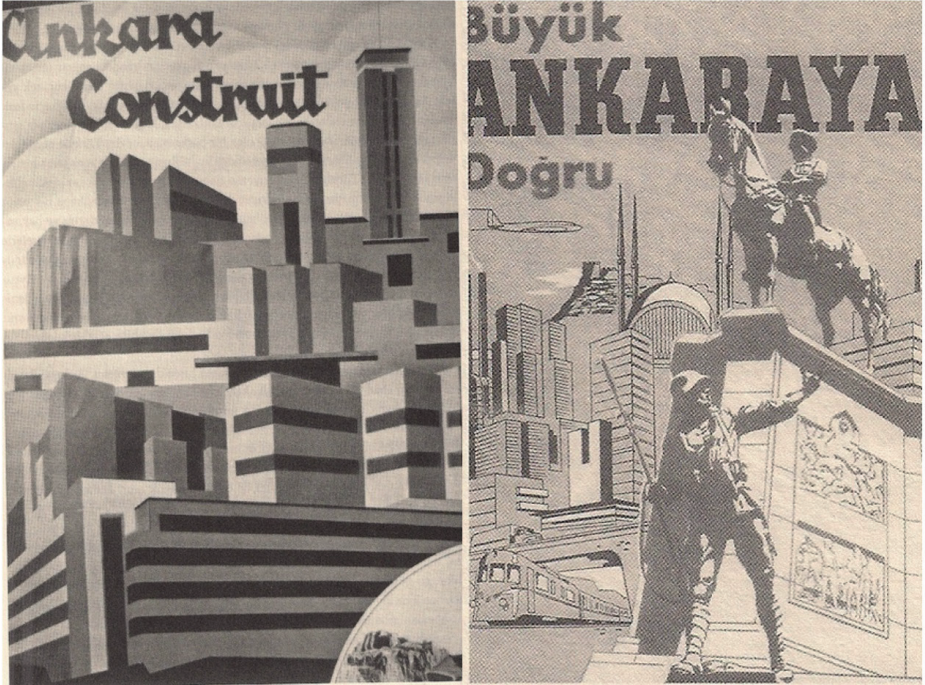


Fig. 1 & 2 *La Turquie Kemalist* April 1935 and a book cover "to the greater Ankara" 1957

Ankara's past is insignificant, which makes Ankara a tabula rasa where big dreams for the young republic can be realised. (Bozdoğan 2012) (Figure 3) Citing an article in the magazine "Resimli Ay" (Month with Figures magazine) in 1924, just one year after the proclamation of the Republic, Bozdoğan emphasises that the presentation of the unfamiliar forms of the first popular images of industry and advanced technology in an awe-inspiring way, almost as if they were works of science fiction, was, in fact, a future that was aimed to be reached "in the name of a universal human future independent of particularities such as place and country", and this is exactly the path the young republic wanted to walk. (Pics. 3 and 4).

<sup>1</sup>Tabula rasa or tabula rosa refers to the "blank slate" proposition put forward by John Locke. According to Hume, an empiricist, there is no innate idea in our minds. However, Hume also opposes causality. The temporal and spatial relations we establish between things are related to our experiential habits, not to their properties in themselves. (The concept of "experiential" here is not a consciously conducted stage, but mere testimony.) We cannot know the relations between phenomena by our own methods, we can only refer to them. Nature does not operate by rules, it has no formalisations. In order to perceive nature or phenomena, human beings construct systems, formulae, priority-succession relations. ([https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabula\\_rasa](https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabula_rasa))



*In Figure 3 & 4; "The poster used in the article "Our small and modest capital is being built in Ankara" (Muhit magazine, 1929, no.10) (The image below is from the 1928 Berlin Alexanderplatz competition, but not specified.)" Source: Bozdoğan 2012, p.134.*

Tirana, founded by Sulejman Pasha in 1614, gained significant importance over three centuries later in 1920 when the Congress of Lushnja proclaimed it as the nation's capital. This declaration elevated Tirana to the status of a European "modern" capital, prompting the need for reconstruction, starting with the administrative and civic center. The new government had to commence its work in this transformed city. In 1899, Sami Frasheri in his book "Albania - Her Past, Present, and Future," proposed the capital of Albania should be situated in one of the cities located in the heart of the country where the Albanian language is spoken. He even suggested the idea of establishing a new city in a healthy and Picturesque location at the center of Albania. This envisioned city, which he referred to as Skenderbegas, would be meticulously planned with wide and straight streets, charming houses, and inviting squares. He foresaw that the city would rapidly expand as the country's elite and scholars would gather there to build their homes (Frasheri, 1988:71-72). On January 20, 1920, the Congress of Lushnja officially proclaimed Tirana as the provisional capital city of Albania. As Sami Frasheri had described 21 years earlier, Tirana fulfilled all the necessary geographical and social criteria to be an ideal capital.



Situated in the heart of Albania, close to both the sea and mountains, it boasted a favorable climate and fertile lands. Additionally, Tirana experienced rapid economic growth and flourishing trade. Given Frasher's vision of an ideal capital city, Tirana required a well-designed urban development plan that would include a robust political and administrative center. Tirana, the capital city, began to undergo rapid expansion as it emerged as an appealing new political and social hub of Albania.



*In Figure 5; The Ethem Beu Mosque. Minaret with missing roof (1913)*

<sup>2</sup>In May 1913 a French banker and philanthropist Albert Khan financed a trip of his photographers to the Balkans in order to capture human cultures of the whole world in black-and-white and color photographs as well as in moving Figure films for his planned "Achieve of the Planet"

## **CITIES PLANNED TO BE CAPITALS; TALE OF TWO CITIES**

### **Tirana; a new capital for Albania**

After being declared the capital city in 1920, Tirana underwent a period of political instability that lasted for five years until 1925. During this time, the government underwent multiple changes due to fierce political struggles between opposing parties and conflicts involving ex-feudal landowners and liberal democrats. Finally, in January 1925, the Constitutional Assembly put an end to the political turmoil by approving the new status of Albania as the Albanian Republic, with Ahmet Zog proclaimed as the first chairman of the Presidential Republic. At this point, Tirana's status changed from a temporary capital to a permanent one. Despite being a democratic regime, Ahmet Zog wielded his power against opposition parties, leading to the erosion of civil liberties. Opponents of the regime faced dire consequences, including murder, while the press suffered from strict censorship. Nevertheless, in October 1928, Ahmet Zog declared Albania a Constitutional Monarchy, proclaiming himself as the country's king (Raymond, 2008).

After a turbulent political phase and the ascent of Ahmet Zog's government to power, the prevailing authorities of the era directed their nation's policies towards Italy, which, at that specific juncture, stood as the most influential and advanced neighboring nation. In the face of severe financial constraints, the government sought economic assistance from Italy to support the geodesic surveying of Albanian towns and the development of their regulatory plans (Aliaj 2003:429). Mussolini's Italy viewed this reconciliation as a perfect occasion to advance its ambitions for potential expansion into the Balkans. Capitalizing on the financial support provided by Italy via the National Bank of Albania, Italy established the "Society for the Economic Advancement of Albania."

### **Ankara; The Utopia of the Republic**

Ankara is not only a spatial planning/engineering project but, also one of the comprehensive social engineering utopian projects of the early Turkish Republic. So, if Ankara is characterised as a utopia, from which point or points can it be addressed?

Conceptually, the creation of a capital city out of nothing with an urban noble population, in other words, planned capitals, come into play here. On 13 October 1923, Ankara was declared the capital a dramatic and historical decision was taken to distance the new regime from the Ottoman past. (Bozdoğan, 2012, p.82) The selection and zoning of Ankara, which had been under serious opposition until 1927, as a modern capital, regardless of the debates, is a national epic that feeds the republican "imagination". (Bozdoğan, 2012, p.83)

It is noteworthy that Ankara received the title of the capital city (13 October 1923) even before the Republic was proclaimed (29 October 1923).

Ankara was a Utopia that the Young Republic had to realise. Firstly, the Republic had to be able to realise short and long-term projects within its borders, especially in daily life, for the society that was also intended to be transformed; it had to be able to explain this; it had to be able to prove the same thing concretely to other countries. (Figure 6)





*In Figure 6; Zeki Faik İzer, İnkılapYolunda, 1933 (A typical and famous example of early Republic posters)  
Source: İzer, 1933.*

Ankara of 1922, on which utopia will be built, is described as follows ;

“What is Ankara? It is an old and truly eastern city of 50,000 inhabitants, centred on a hill with the ruins of a magnificent castle from ancient times. Only the locals can find their way around the twisting streets of Ankara, and only they know how to get from one end of the city to the other without having to go around the whole city, passing old cemeteries - as we did in the first fourteen days. Only there (at the old cemeteries) is it possible not to see the labyrinth where part of the city was burnt down years ago. And like all eastern cities, Ankara is very dirty, very dry, full of dust and all kinds of vermin. It is very difficult for a European to find air to breathe. On the other hand, there are plenty of germs everywhere; especially malaria is widespread among both natives and Europeans.” (Leonid- Friedrich, 1985, pp.43-44)

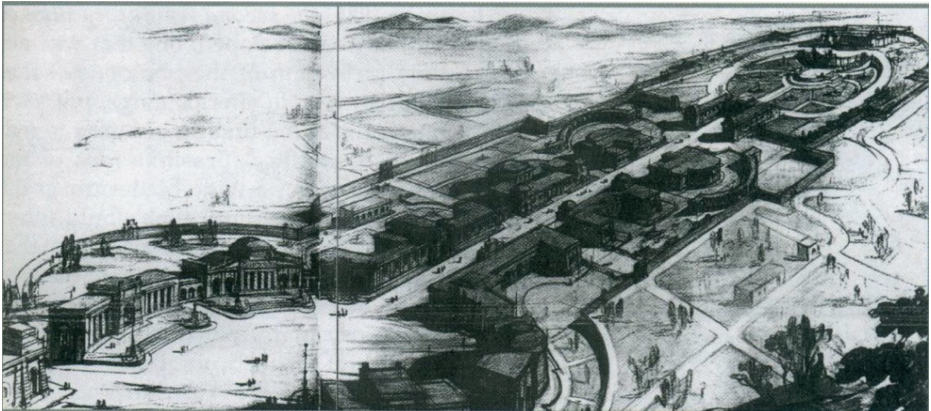
According to the authors, the Ankara of tomorrow is the symbol of Kemalist Turkey. A new Turkey is rising on the ruins of the old empire destroyed by the world war and this is a source of pride. “Some time ago, at the far end of the Golden Horn, on the shore of the “Sweet Waters of Europe”, I was listening to the whining of countless gramophones on the boats splitting the waters. And I realised that Abdul Hamid was dead, the Young Turks were in power, the signs in the Bazaar were beginning to change and the West was triumphing. And here we are today, Ankara and the monument of Mustafa Kemal! Events are unfolding rapidly. The dice have been rolled: Another centuries-old civilisation is being destroyed”. (original: Le Corbusier, *L'art decoratif d'aujourd'hui*, 1925) (Bozdoğan, 2012, p.15)

## Tirana; The Planning Process

The era of King Zog marked the second significant phase in the transformation of Tirana's urban and architectural landscape. In 1925, the Albanian government extended invitations to renowned Italian architects, including Brasini and Floristano Di Fausto, to contribute to the city's development. Fausto was responsible for crafting the initial master plan to reorganize the new center of Tirana. This plan comprised a group of six buildings designated for ministries and a centrally-located eclectic boulevard. Although the plan underwent some modifications, its essence was later translated into more pragmatic forms.

On the other hand, Brasini envisioned creating a Roman-style island within the city, distinct from the predominant Oriental character that marked the rest of the area. The purpose of this island was to serve as a connecting link between the old town and the envisioned modern city of the future. His project involved the development of a wide boulevard in a north-south direction, dividing the existing city from its periphery. This boulevard was proposed as a monumental and governmental center for a new autonomous city, disregarding the Oriental heritage of the old town. The primary objective of this axis as an urban mechanism was not to regulate the transportation network but to serve as a bridge connecting the old city center with the new modern city. This clever urban planning technique has been employed by planners in various cities at different points in time.

In 1926, the second regulatory plan for Tirana was devised by three engineers: Eshref Frasherri, Castellani, and Weiss. This plan not only revised the previous one created by Austrian architects but also brought to life the concept of constructing a broad north-south boulevard, as initially proposed by Italian architect Brasini.



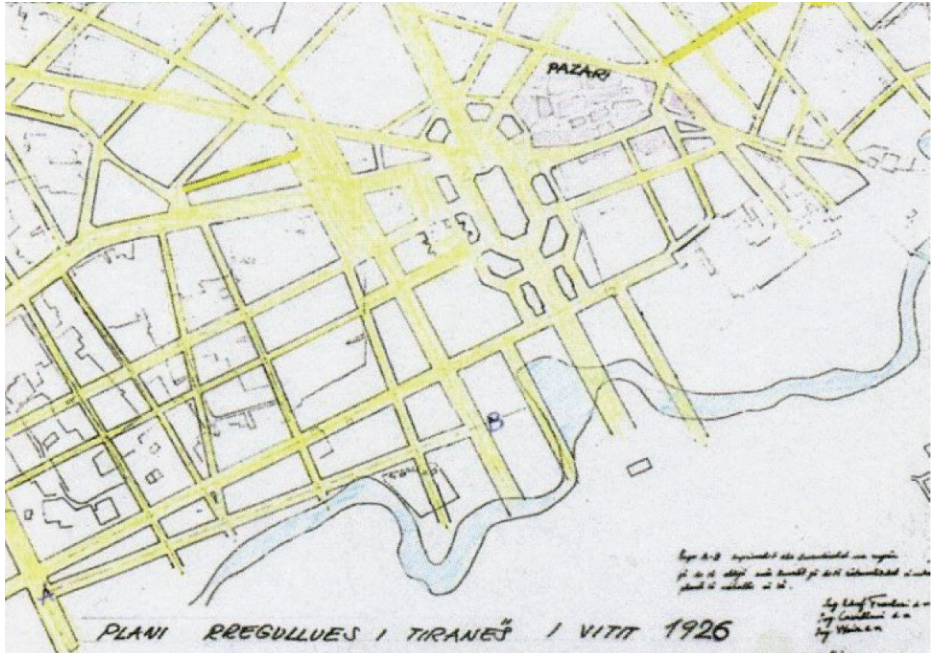
*In Figure 7; The first draft of North-south "Spine" launched by Italian architect Brasini*

In 1928, the third regulatory plan for Tirana was formulated, and it became the first one after the regime had transitioned into a kingdom. The new plan was crafted by Austrian architect Kohler. In the process of implementing this plan, a significant portion of Tirana's courtyards and gardens was sacrificed to create space for the redesigned streets. Remarkably, these new streets adhered to the original lines due to urban economic considerations. The Austrian approach for transforming old Tirana mirrored the techniques employed in Europe during the 19th century to restructure medieval quarters. A similar method was famously used by Baron Haussmann in Paris and later

<sup>9</sup>From the administrative point of view, when it became the capital of the country, Tirana was still a sub-prefecture of the Durres prefecture. It became an independent prefecture in 1922.

by the Austrians themselves in Vienna.

The New Tirana area had been designed as an area of an extensive development, which is an area of mansions, which would be generally built in rectangular courts and would form quadratic quarters matching the road net-work, or would be placed by several concentric circles. In the regulatory plan of the New Tirana the area of private plots was observed. These plots ranged from 1,000 to 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> and allowed abundant spaces for gardens, and Italian architects that revised this regulatory plan would later call this area “Garden City” (Aliaj, 2003:32-33).



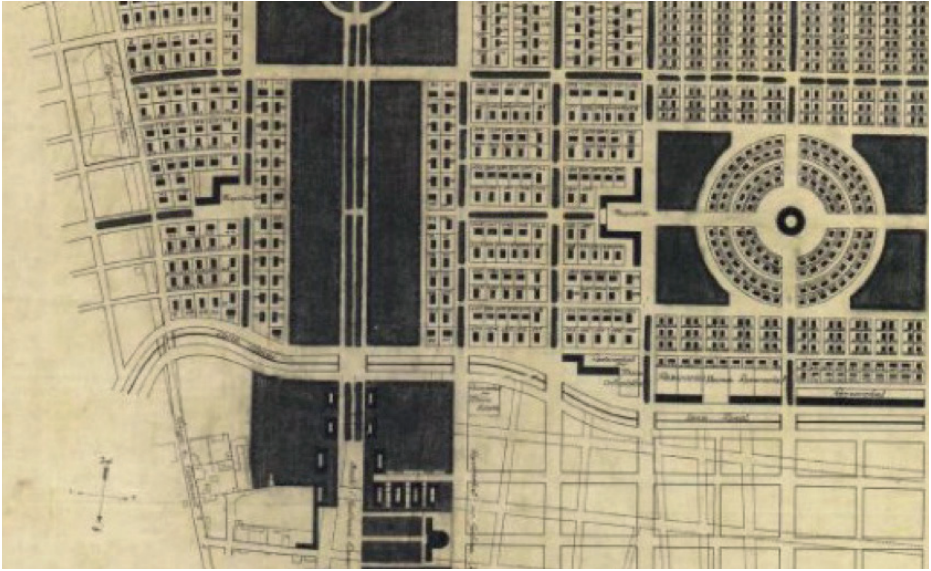
In Figure 8; The part of Tirana Urban Plan 1926

In that regulatory plan, another crucial aspect was the precise delineation of the north-south Boulevard, running parallel to the administrative center. It started from the bazaar and extended all the way to the southern foothills, culminating at the Royal Palace. In the year following 1929, the fourth regulatory plan was promptly devised. The plan envisioned the boulevard stretching not only from the bazaar but also from the future stadium of the city, intended to be constructed on the site of the present-day railway station, all the way to the Royal Palace.

The remarkable National Bank of Albania building, a masterpiece by Italian architect Vittorio Morpurgo, was unveiled in 1938. It was strategically situated at the commencement of Mussolini Road, now known as Kavaja Road. Constructed using reinforced concrete, the building was adorned with ceramic bricks and stone slates imported from Italy. The National Bank of Albania building, along with the other ministries' structures, came to symbolize power and sturdiness, embodying the essence of strength and stability (Aliaj, 2003:40).

<sup>7</sup>This area later used by the “polit bureau” government of Enver Hoxha, which is so called dictator of communist regime, as the residential villas and the residence of the dictator itself.

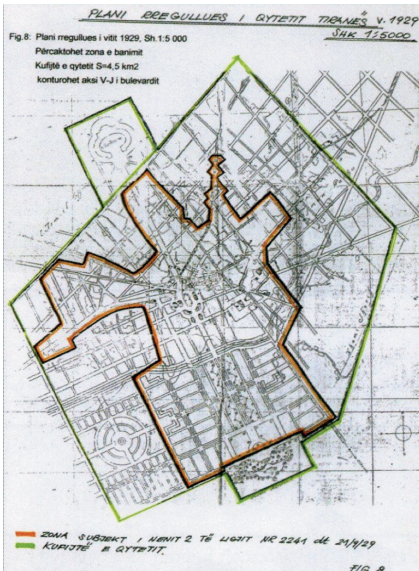




*In Figure 9; 1928 Urban Plan, New Tirana Area Grid-iron Plan*

After Italy's official occupation of Albania on April 7, 1939, and its declaration as part of the Italian Kingdom, a new regulatory plan for Tirana was introduced. The implementation of this plan took place between 1939 and 1942. The primary aim of this plan was to establish a well-developed urban center that would be settled by Italian colonists. The preparation of this plan involved a collaborative effort of Italian and Albanian specialists, with the Florentine architect Gherardo Bossio and engineer Ferdinando Poggi leading the mixed working group (Aliaj, 2003:42). The master plan encompasses an area of 2,800 hectares, which includes the military sections, the airport, the connecting infrastructure, and industrial sections, totaling 1,700 hectares. A significant aspect of this regulatory plan is that it clearly defines the city's municipal borders, encompassing a total area of 7,300 hectares, including the surrounding communes.

The plan allocates specific spaces for various purposes, with 132 hectares designated for landscaped areas, primarily located to the north and south of the city. Additionally, 33 hectares are dedicated to the sports section to the east, 22 hectares for the park behind the Fascio House (the University) in the hilly area, and 660 hectares for residential areas. To accommodate the city's growth, it is envisioned to expand northward beyond the Lana River, creating a satellite zone called CITTA GIARDINO (garden city), which will consist of elegantly landscaped mansions. The industrial section will expand in the northwest and southwest directions, while a worker's neighborhood will be established in between these two sections. Strategic facilities have their designated areas, such as the railway station in the southwest, linking Tirana with Durres and the eastern region of Albania. A track spur will link the industrial section, and the hospital and cemetery areas will be located northeast of the city. The fair's section will be built northwest of the city, and the airport will be situated to the west, enclosed by the outer ring road of the city, which comprises the roads of Durres and Kavaja.



In Figure 9; 1928 Urban Plan, New Tirana Area  
Grid-iron Plan

The regulatory plan envisions Tirana as an extensively landscaped city-park with predominantly low-rise buildings. The central area is designed to be bustling and dynamic, although its implementation has faced significant challenges due to the strong attachment of the inhabitants to their private properties. To minimize disruptions, the plan has made every effort to limit expropriations, preserve existing buildings, and enhance their value, all while ensuring that the city retains its Turkish influence.

The dense and vibrant section comprises the boulevard with government buildings, the avenues of Durres and Kavaja, the Old Bazaar Street, and the surrounding area, accommodating up to 5-story buildings intended for offices, shops, banks, and various amenities to serve the citizens.

This comprehensive regulatory plan includes detailed schemes for street traffic, the development of the downtown area, urban conditions for the entire city, the zoning map, plans for connecting the city with Dajti Mountain via a lift, and the layout of the

graveyard, among other aspects. The urban and architectural developments in Tirana came to a halt with the fall of Mussolini in September 1943 and the subsequent entry of Nazi armies into Albania. The escalating resistance against the Nazi forces led to a series of battles that caused extensive damage to the city's cultural and historical monuments.

The conclusion of World War II ushered in a communist government in Albania, signaling the end of the Italian Fascist period's influence on Tirana's town planning. Under the dictatorial communist regime, the focus shifted towards centralization, and urban operations were carried out without consideration for private ownership. Architects and town planners were granted significant authority to revolutionize and transform the city, subject to the constraints and political instructions set forth by the routine Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania. In 1957, a new regulatory plan for Tirana was developed. The communist authorities were inclined to reject any connections with the past, particularly with monarchy and Fascism. As per their perspective, the history of Tirana began only after 1945.

The heart of Tirana was envisioned as a grandiose space representing the "strength and revitalization" of Albania. To achieve this vision, the Old Bazaar of Tirana, City Hall, Orthodox Cathedral, a collection of traditional houses, shops, hotels, and bars were demolished under the pretext of being "dilapidated and insignificant." These structures were replaced with significant landmarks such as the Palace of Culture, Hotel Tirana, the National History Museum, the "Scanderbeg" Square, and new residential buildings. Few historical buildings like the Mosque of Ethem Beu, the Clock Tower, the complex of ministries, and some characteristic Tirana houses were preserved and protected.

## Ankara; The Planning Process

Prof. Dr Hermann Jansen, who won the planning competition opened in 1927 for the capital Ankara, is one of the well-known planners of the period. (Figure 11) In the period starting with Jansen, many scientists and architects who escaped from the Nazis came to Ankara and produced important works that shaped Ankara and formed the outlines of its architecture. The construction of Ankara was an important issue in itself, and when the arrangements began to be physically realised, they were proudly announced in the press.

“For the first time in the four thousand years of variable Turkish history, the houses are not squeezed around the Castle as if seeking protection; on the contrary, Ankara is spreading downwards, down to the plains, and according to a broad construction and reconstruction plan drawn up, it is becoming a solid residence and a quiet workplace. Construction has been going on for seven years and Professor Jansen has been in charge of Ankara’s construction for seven years.” (Haftalık Yeni Hayat 26 (15 August 1936): 8)



In Figure 10; Competition’s Jury Members

“Ankara is a city of the future. Istanbul is a city of the past. In the latter the visitor thinks in terms of Ottoman rulers, mosques, and history books [...] and concentrate(s) exclusively on the relics of a past now intentionally forgotten by the average Turk who looks ahead to better days. What we who really want to know the Turkey of today and tomorrow should do is to take the first train for Ankara [...] to find the magnificent city of eternal youth [...] It gleams with cleanliness like the freshly scrubbed face of a youngster on his first day in school [...] On the way to our hotel we are surprised at the width of the paved streets [...] and the decidedly modern lines of the buildings [...] “Well, of course, its all terribly new. We’ve only been building the city for fifteen years and there’s a lot more for us to do” the taxi driver apologises, but not without pride. “You know we started practically from scratch.” (Akcan, 2009, p. 42)

<sup>8</sup>The selection committee appointed by Ankara Şehremaneti had travelled to Berlin to propose the project to Prof. Ludwig Hoffman. Hoffman stated that he did not want to make long journeys due to his age and could not take the project, and recommended Hermann Jansen and Joseph Brix instead. The committee decided to open a competition with the participation of Léon Jaussely, the chief architect of the French government (Tankut 1990, p.46).

Tankut states that “Turkish Urbanism” begins with Ankara. (Tankut 1984, 303) With the construction of this city, the building tradition of the Turkish nation is renewed and a new generation is raised in the consciousness of building. The Jansen Plan directed the urban development of Ankara from the 1930s until the end of the 1950s.

“In the period when the Republic was proclaimed, starting from 1924 until 1932, when the Jansen Plan came into force, the applications were shaped by the Plan prepared by Lörcher. With these planning studies and the subsequent Uybadin - Yücel Plan, the core area of Ankara was formed.” (Günay 2005, p.61)

Meanwhile, the document taken as a basis for the implementations is the plan made by the Berlin architect Carl Christoph Lörcher, which was not fully implemented. This plan is the basis of the texture that will form the centre functions in Ulus and Kızılay. (Figure 12)



*In Figure 12; Lörcher Plan with Ankara City Boundary in 1924 (Cengizkan 2004, Old Ankara Boundary drawn by Günay)*

“The plan proposes a dense and collective form. The efforts to make the station periphery the centre, to adapt the Ulus centre to this structure and to integrate it with the central functions radiating from the central station, and to develop Dışkapı will remain as the model of a Western city; the station will be isolated from the city with the Jansen Plan. The plan also proposed the renovation of a large part of the existing city; İstasyon Street and Talat Paşa Boulevard between İstasyon and Cebeci were determined by this plan. In the south, the Yenişehir texture has been created. Along Atatürk Boulevard, Sıhhiye Square, and Zafer Square, the entrance to Tuna and İzmir Streets are shaped according to this plan.” (Cengizkan 2004 and Günay 2005, p.67)

Günay also makes the following definitions; the grid type arrangements in the east and west of Atatürk Boulevard are stuck to the boulevard at an angle; the real grid plan seen in Western cities is not formed. Atatürk Boulevard is the only spine between Ulus and Kızılay and the lack of an

<sup>9</sup>(La Turquie Kemaliste, “Ankara-Istanbul”, no. 48 (December 1947), pp. 38 - 43) translated from Acan, E. 2009, p. 42

alternative has created a problem that continues to exist today. The plan also lacks predictions and strategies for the growth of the city, since the priority at the time of the plan was the urgent construction of the city and the selection of locations for public buildings. The villa type of construction proposed in Kızılay and Yenışehir, and the road texture and densities will be insufficient as Kızılay gains the character of a central business area; the demolish-build process will begin. (Günay 2005, p. 69)

In 1932, some of the planning decisions in the Jansen plan were given to him, and some of these decisions also influenced Jansen's main planning principles. (Figure 13)

Although Lörcher's project was not accepted, some of his ideas were put into practice and used as data in the zoning plan competition organised in 1927. "Lörcher later sued Hermann Jansen, the winner of this competition, for copyrights, but could not get any results." (Akcan 2009, p.43) "Jansen is very disturbed by these decisions. Jansen wants to develop the city on the Etlik ridges rather than the Yenışehir section. Thus, both the division of the city by railway would be prevented and a city more suitable for climatic conditions would be born." (Yavuz 1981, p.26)

Therefore, the Jansen plan, like the Lörcher plan, developed the city in the north-south direction. This position resulted in compression into the geomorphological bowl, which would later cause pollution and transport problems. Since the central structure was not designed as dominant, it could not develop strongly, and only 10 years after its implementation, the physical recommendations of the plan started to be insufficient. The most effective part is the spine designed together with the Ministries area. (Günay 2005, p.80 and 115) Jansen defines himself as a Stædtarkitekt (city architect) within the discipline of Stædtbauen (city building, urbanism) (Cengizkan 2005, p.29 and Tankut 1990).

Again, Tankut draws attention to the following points in the essence of the plan. The Plan; "An urban environment that exhibits urban aesthetics, in other words, an image of the city that creates intense emotions in its inhabitants, such that these intense emotions range from pleasure to pride, and that urban dwellers identify with the urban environment and claim it as their own." (Cengizkan 2005, p.52)

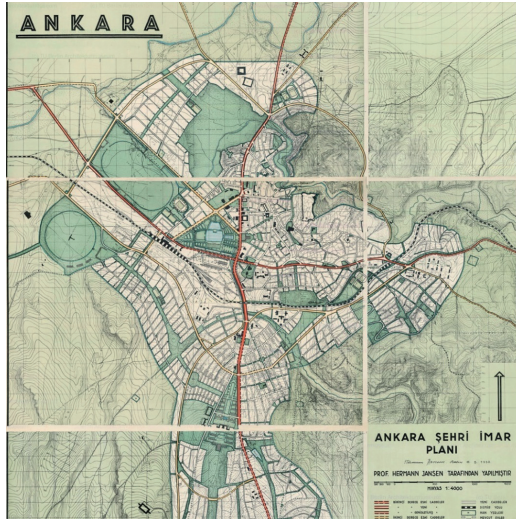
In the end, the modernisation process, which Atatürk summarised as a "new homeland, new society, new state" in the 4th assembly of the Republican People's Party, started with Ankara. (C.H.P. 4th Grand Assembly Report, 1935, p.15)

"One of the important structural features of urban planning that will serve the purpose of creating a new way of life in the capital city where the modernisation process was initiated is the square (space) fiction where the society will come together and spend time in cities that will bear the traces of modernity." (Türkyılmaz, 2015, p.105)

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## **Constructive Elements**

### ***The Spine; Tirana***

When Sulejman Pasha founded a new city in the middle of nowhere in 1614, most probably did not imagine this little town would be the modern capital city of an independent Albanian country. The city grew rapidly and spontaneously without plan until 1923. The declaration as the temporary capital city of Albania in 1920 and permanently in 1925 resulted the need of regulatory plans for the new modern face of Albania.

Tirana, unlikely from most of the European cities, has a short history which is neither dated to ancient nor medieval times. The nucleus of the city center was not very big and spread. Although the historical structure of the city was not very rich, the governments after the independence from Ottomans raced to “modernize” the city by demolishing the old houses, mosques, bazaar etc. The existing streets were extended and new wide and straight streets were built by bulldozers of power holders. The new capital needs a powerful constructive element of urban regulations, to create a diversification between old and new, conservative and modern, spontaneous and planned i.e. a diversification between a city built by citizens and one that built by authorities.

Tirana built this line by the combination of the “Boulevard of Zogu I”, the “Scanderbeg Square” and the “Boulevard of Martyrs of Nation”; the “spine” of the city which is straight without considering existing structure, property ownership and/or personal interests. While examining the construction stages of the spine of Tirana it may be seen obviously that totalitarian regimes’ power helped to create: An architect of fascist Italy, Brasini designed, a man who declared himself as the king while he was elected as the president of presidential republic of Albania, Ahmet Zogu applied and a dictator who desired to rule the world by conquering and colonizing the other countries, Mussolini financed this spinal boulevard.

On February 1929, according to an article in a newspaper called “Bashkimi” Tirana Municipality would apply urban regulatory plan especially on main boulevards: (Mehilli, 2012:49)

“From Et’hem Beu Mosque until hills of Pasha works begin for Boulevard Zog I. Mr. Mehmet Fortuzi with his friends has taken place in opening ceremony of construction of Kavaja Street. This year the boulevard will be constructed only 500 meters long i.e. till Romanian Embassy, because of the low budget of municipality. Width of the street will be 30 meters. Both sides will have sidewalks, which are 4 meters width. In fact, 3 meters will be cement tiles and 1 meter will be trees and flowers. Boulevard will have two roads which are 8 meters wide each, and between them, will be a sidewalk 6 meters wide. Both two sides of this sidewalk will plant trees and flowers 2 meters wide each. Royal Road will be widening. The plan for expansion of Diber Street ends today. The houses on the Hoxha Tahsin Street that the regulatory plan has finished will be evaluated in these days and the expropriation of the lands will be made. The systemization of Skenderbeg Square began.”

The fourth regulatory plan without losing time was designed the following year 1929. The whole boulevard was designed not only from bazaar but from the future stadium of the city that would be built in the place of the present-day railway station to the Royal Palace. According to the plan the Royal Government took a decision of law No: 2241 at 21.09.1929 for this regulatory plan and

this date was also marked as the beginning of the works for construction of “Zogu I” Boulevard that represented only the northern half of the boulevard. During that period, Tirana was basking in a golden age of urban prosperity and splendor, which found its ultimate expression in the inauguration of the new city boulevard. A visiting French architect was so amazed by what he witnessed that he exclaimed in astonishment, “I saw a boulevard without a city!” (Aliaj, 2003:36). The north-south boulevard extended for a distance of 2 kilometers and had a minimum width of 35 meters. This thoroughfare was a dual carriageway, featuring four lanes in each direction for vehicular traffic. It was surfaced with slates and bordered by expansive sidewalks paved with small mosaic-shaped pumice stones. Additionally, it was embellished with four rows of trees and privets along its edges. The extension of the “Vittorio Emanuele” boulevard, formerly known as the “Zogu I” boulevard, southward from the “Scanderbeg” Square according to Brasini’s plan was unquestionably the most pivotal step in the city’s urban development. This expansion had been meticulously outlined in a comprehensive regulatory plan that encompassed both the city center and the “Impero” boulevard. To truly justify the grandeur of this boulevard, it was deemed necessary to adorn both sides with structures intended for offices, banks, as well as social and commercial activities. These buildings were envisioned to be uniform in their volume, strategically spaced to fulfill their intended purpose, and architecturally pleasing to match the avenue’s width, magnificence, and significance (Aliaj, 2003).

This boulevard, without a doubt the city’s most prominent, traversed it right through its heart. Furthermore, the “Viale del Impero” boulevard would serve as a connecting link between the established city center, which was evolving around the “Scanderbeg” Square, and the emerging political and sports center to be developed at the southernmost terminus of this boulevard. Consequently, the architectural style of the 1930s and early 1940s, influenced by neo-fascism, found expression in expansive ceremonial boulevards and plazas designed to host grand parades. These spaces featured porticos and walls adorned with natural stones, imposing colonnades, spa-



*In Figure 14; The Boulevard of Zog I*

cious monumental staircases, and embellishments adorned with Latin inscriptions and reliefs.



*In Figure 15; Durres Street, Kavaja Street and the Municipality Building*

To set this emerging architectural style apart from Renaissance influences, its proponents embraced a distinct approach. This included the adoption of different design elements, schematics, and simplifications inspired by ancient aesthetics, such as the omission of capitals and frontals, as well as the substitution of pitched roofs with flat ones. The boulevard symbolizes the authority's might, possessing a potency equivalent to that of the government itself. It stands as a monument, reflecting the unwavering strength of this authority. It isn't merely an ordinary boulevard or a broad street conceived to address urban issues within the city; rather, it's conceived as the central axis, akin to the backbone of a living organism, crucial to maintaining its form. Its design is nearly immutable, making it a defining feature. (Kera, 2004:2)

Aerial View of the Spine, 1940. The boulevards and the square were constructed in the heart of the old structure as it was planned and drawn on the blue prints. The north side of the spine was designed as a boulevard with trees in the middle. Scanderbeg Square was finished with buildings of ministries and the green park at the center. The park was dug in order to give effect of hugeness to the ministries which are not more than 3 storey. From the west, coming Durres Street and connects to the square. At the intersection stands City Hall which was demolished later and in the Centralized Economy Period the National History Museum had been constructed. The boulevard from the time of design till today has been changed several times in function, in contents, in the shapes and sizes of the squares and buildings, but the main role remains constant as the "spine" of the city. It has always a beginning and an end although the functions of them have been changed. It has always been monumental and represents the modern side of Tirana and Albania. The urban structure of Tirana faced its most significant challenge during the transitional period following the collapse of the Communist Regime.





*In Figure 16; The Blue prints of 1929 Urban Plan of Tirana*

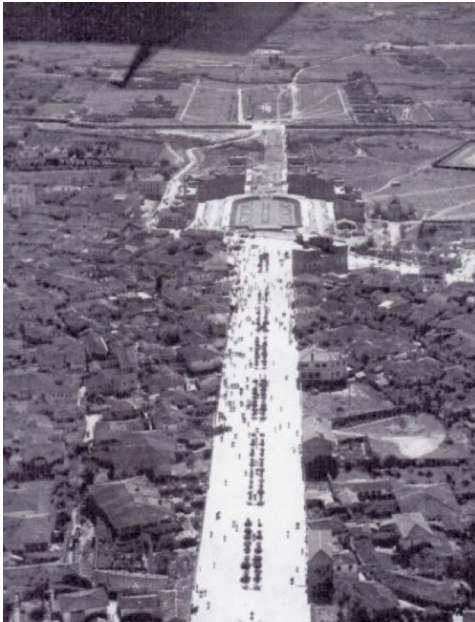


*In Figure 17; View from today's University "Casa del Fascio" 1940. Spine had begun to construct. The formation of the spine helped the formation of the new Tirana while developing.*

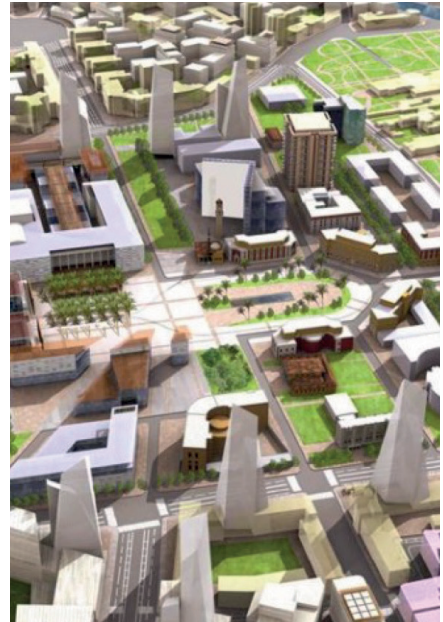
This era marked a time of urban upheaval, akin to what was witnessed in numerous former communist countries across Europe. As the capital city, Tirana experienced a substantial influx of migrants from other regions, leading to confusion in land ownership. The newly established government grappled with addressing property disputes involving multiple legal owners. Inexperienced and financially constrained, both the central and local administrations struggled to navigate the demands and pressures of a capitalist and liberal market. Moreover, the central business district faced a shortage of shops and offices. Entrepreneurs initially erected informal small kiosks, which were subsequently granted annual usage permits by the municipality. This practice led to an encroachment on parks, the banks of the Lana River, and public squares—essentially, all available open spaces. Even the garden surrounding the Parliament building fell victim to this proliferation of kiosks. Over time, these kiosks transformed into more substantial two or three-story structures made of reinforced concrete (Aliaj, 2003).

Up until the year 2000, these makeshift constructions lacking proper permits persisted within the Municipality of Tirana. Remarkably, even amid this tumultuous phase, the essential and commanding structure of the “spinal” boulevard remained intact. During 2018, Tirana became the focal point of numerous urban regulatory plans, attracting the attention of both domestic and international architects and urban planners who envisioned the city’s future. A plethora of options emerged, encompassing ideas for new neighborhoods, sub-centers, road networks, industrial zones, and more, all intricately mapped out across Tirana. A unifying element among these plans was the enduring presence of the spinal boulevard. None of these proposals could disregard

or contemplate altering its trajectory. The boulevard's unwavering significance is not only a formidable obstacle to change, but it also stands as a catalyst for the progressive development of Tirana's urban landscape. The urban landscape of Tirana, along with its prominent spinal boulevard, serves as a testament to the potential outcomes stemming from the deliberate shaping of an urban space by city developers. Whether referred to as a path, a network for movement, an axial thoroughfare, a shaft, a guiding force, or indeed a spinal boulevard, such forms possess an inherent strength and aesthetic appeal. They stand as a manifestation of authority's influence, effectively binding and demarcating the city's older and newer architectural elements. Today Tirana is the subject of several urban regulatory plans. The future of Tirana is projected



*In Figure 18; Aerial View of the Spine, 1940.*

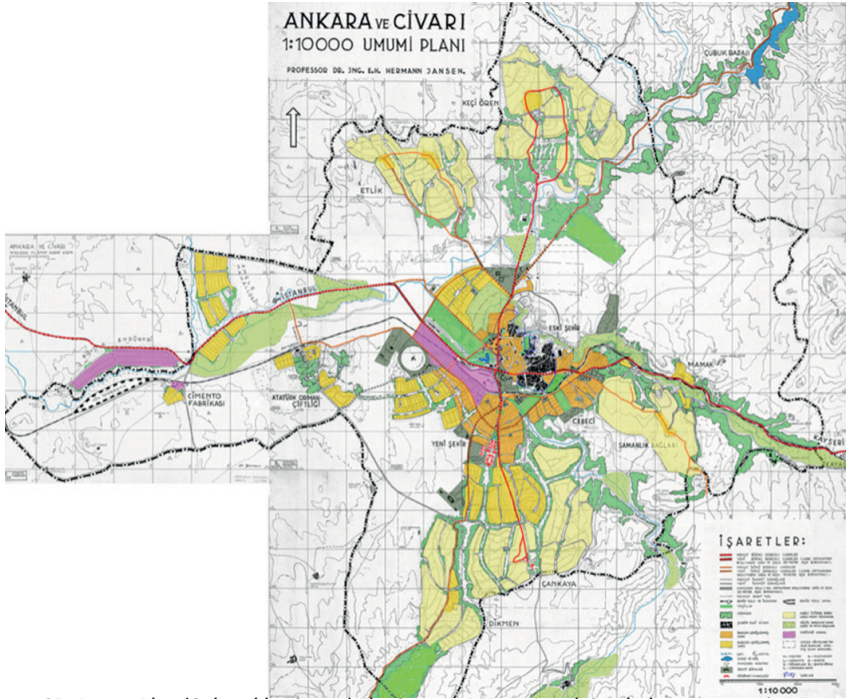


*In Figure 19; Winner Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Architecture Studio" France. Scanderbeg Square*

by many Albanian and foreigner architects and urban planners. The variants are numerous. New neighborhoods, sub centers, road networks, industrial zones, etc. take places on the maps of Tirana. The common point of them is their spinal boulevard. None of them can neglect it or dare to change. The boulevard is not only too strong to change but also too constructive for the new development plans of Tirana city.

### **ATATURK Boulevard**

Atatürk Boulevard as the main component of the Jansen Plan constituted the spine of the city. Atatürk Boulevard began from Ulus - old city and first National Assembly and extended to the south toward the new residential area – Yenişehir (New Town) and end up with the Presidenti Palace in Çankaya (Figures 21 & 22).(Gülkök, 2013, p. 53)



In Figure 21; Jansen Plan (Colored by Günay) The Spine is RED on North-South directions





- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Old Assembly (TBMM) Building      | 7. Sıhhiye (Lozan) Square          |
| 2. Hakimiyet i Milliye (Ulus) Square | 8. Zafer Square                    |
| 3. Second Assembly (TBMM) Building   | 9. Kızılay Square                  |
| 4. İtfaiye Square                    | 10. Havuşbaşı Square, Güvenpark    |
| 5. Gençlik Park                      | 11. Administration District        |
| 6. Gar (Railway Sitation)            | 12. İnönü Square                   |
| 7. Opera Building                    | 13. Third Assembly (TBMM) Building |

In Figure 21; Jansen Plan Ankara Core / The Spine is RED on North-South directions (Gülkök, 2013 and Keskinok 2009)

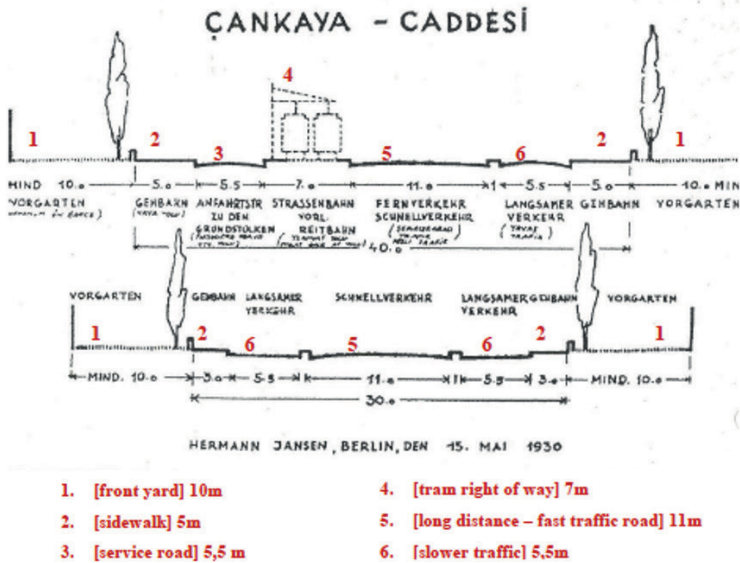
Conceptually, Jansen designed the city in terms of functional neighbourhoods. Ulus is the traditional center of Ankara and, also the political center of the Republic where Anafartalar Avenue and the Ankara Castle would signify the traditional character of Ankara while Ankara Palace signify a new life style, interacted in together (Figure 23). (also stated in Gülkök, 2013).

As Gülkök points, Sıhhiye neighbourhood was planned as public health project in early Republican Period (“Sıhhiye” in Arabic means “health”). Jansen primarily emphasized to the importance of creating a “healthy” environment for a healthy nation (Jansen Plan Report, 1932) . The health



theme is also popular especially in Europe at that period. On the other hand, cultural, educational and other public buildings had located here, such as State Opera House, State Theater, Exhibition Center; Faculty of Letters, Radio House and Ethnographic Museum. Architectural style of these buildings was characterized by the 'Modern Architectural Movement' symbolizing the new nation state's secular identity (Koçak, 2008: p.88).

After the 1940s, political and social life shifted from Ulus - Traditional Center trough Yenışehir where Grand National Assembly and new administrative district built together with villas of bureaucrats. In result, significance of Ulus as a city center had decreased. (Gülkök, 2013)



In Figure 23; Jansen Plan Ankara Boulevard Detail (Gülkök, 2013)

In the 1940s, the depression of the capitalist world economy had affected the economy of Turkey as well. In this period, Turkey's economy had become closed to world economy and began to experience national industrialization, in the frame of protective and etatist policies. During the period dominated by Etatism, in 1930s, according to Keskinok, the nation state conducted the most comprehensive program for the construction of its own space by the principles of Populism (2009).

As Gülkök states;

“In the frame of etatist economic policies, construction of Ankara accelerated by the investments made on such areas of education, health, transportation, housing and administrative buildings. In the years between 1930 -1940, Austrian, French, German and Italian Embassies built along the Boulevard. On the other hand, administrative building of the new regime, such as Presidential Palace, Residence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Residence of the Prime Minister has been designedly situated on the Boulevard, to make the institutions of the Republic visible, and to assembly the state and public on the background consisting the spatial indicators of the democracy.”

At that time, the only means of public transport was a commuter train that ran through Ankara from east to west. In the 1930s, urban transport needs were met by getaway vans, small buses operated by small entrepreneurs, which ran from the centre of Ulus - Cebeci - Yenışehir (Tekeli, 1987). The Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Bus Administration (EGO; Electricity, Gas and Buses) was established in 1935 and buses started operating in those years. Due to the increasing population and the expansion of the city, the municipality introduced new means of transport such as buses, minibuses and electric trolley buses (1947-1981) on Atatürk Boulevard. On the other hand, the 1930s were the years when the automobile was introduced into city life. In the 1940s, the use of cars became more widespread. (Gülkök, 2013)

As the most important element of the unique formation of the boulevard, the concept of the sidewalk at the case of the Atatürk Boulevard had been produced to legitimize the space of the Republic and its ideals. With the decision of Ankara as the capital of Turkey, the founding committees of the Republic had tried to build a brand new city. In the early planning period of Ankara, the decisions of the professionals who focused on the development of urban space and institutions were fundamentally shaped by the ideal of producing a brand new 'modern' society imposed by the founding cadres of the Republic. This new capital would represent the ideals and the will of the young nation as a 'representation of space' and would also be the 'lived space' of the new way of life and the new polity. The idea was that the concepts of the republic, modernity and public space would be integrated into a new reality and spatial platform through the construction of the new capital.



In Figure 24; Ankara 1948 The Spine is Red on North-South directions

The Spine is RED on North-South directions In the early Republican era, the sidewalks of Atatürk Boulevard were the space where social life (as 'lived', 'perceived space') and ideological intentions (as 'conceived', 'representation of space') overlapped.

There is a political/ideological nature to the approach of planning and state authorities to public space. Modernisation and public space were seen as a system in which these two concepts worked together while being consistent with each other in the early Republican period. According to Keskinok, the new regime gave priority to the creation of spaces necessary for the new administrative structure and modern lifestyle. The public spaces, defined by Batuman as "the political legitimization platform of the modern individual" (2002: 44), can be conceptualised in different ways. Moreover, the platform on which one class has hegemony over the other social groups (Gramsci) is the public space as a site of transformation of bourgeois identity. In this perspective, it is common that public space can be described as a space where different identities, activities and discourses meet, interact and collide. (Gülkök, 2013)

The approach of planning and state authorities to public space is political/ideological in nature. Modernisation and public space were seen in the early republican period as a system in which these two concepts worked together and were consistent with each other. According to Keskinok, the new regime gave priority to the creation of spaces necessary for the new administrative structure and modern lifestyle (2009). The public spaces, defined by Batuman (2002: 44) as 'the political legitimization platform of the modern individual', can be conceptualised in different ways. Moreover, the platform on which one class has hegemony over the other social groups (Gramsci) is the public space as a site of transformation of bourgeois identity (Gülkök, 2013). From this point of view, public spaces are often described as places where different identities, activities and discourses converge, interact and clash.



In Figure 26; In Gülkök 2013 (Source: *Ankara Kentinin Planlaması ve Atatürk Bulvarının Oluşumu*, ed. Keskinok, Ç., Ankara 2009)

In this framework, the boulevard, as distinct from the traditional gathering places of the Ottoman urban texture such as mosque courtyards, marketplaces, recreational areas and near fountains, was an important component and indicator of the modern community and the lifestyle associated with it. The Atatürk Boulevard had been designated as the spatial - operational, social - progressive and ideologically representative backbone of Ankara. For Jansen, Atatürk Boulevard was characterised as connecting the different districts and functional zones of the city, but also as a connecting space for different groups of people, as the main interactive backbone. As Keskinok explains, 'it is the story of the foundation, process and development of the Republic' (2009; 37). The avenue was assigned the task of installing a new - modern urban culture in the citizens of Ankara. As such, the boulevard marks the essential characteristic of the modern capital as 'the representation of space', constitutes the built environment as 'designed space', generates modern urban practice as 'spatial practice', and is the site of social and cultural practice as 'living space'.

In the 1950s, as a result of political and economic developments, the focus of planning decisions shifted to efforts to manage and regulate urban growth, rather than to concerns about the transformation of urban space and society. Having been declared the Capital, Ankara began to grow at a rapid pace. By 1957, Ankara's population growth rate was about twice as high as Jansen's estimates, and the rapid growth of Ankara's population put pressure on the city's space. The second Ankara Master Plan, adopted in 1957, was designed by Nihat Yücel-Raşit Uybadin to address the urban problems caused by unplanned and illegal development, intensive migration and overpopulation. In the 1960s, Kızılay became a bustling business and commercial center and the new city center of Ankara, catering to upper and middle income classes. Commercial shops, cafes under shopping arcades and new office blocks expanded in the 1960s.



*In Figure 27; Sidewalk shop Cold Beer 1933 In Güllök, 2013 (Source: Archives National Geographic (Photography by Kurt and Margot Lubinski)*



“As the consequence of the Flat Ownership Law was enacted in 1968, allowing to “9-10 storey buildings along the Boulevard also on the roads connecting to the Boulevard, and 6 storeys for near regions”; most of the apartments on the Atatürk Boulevard had been demolished and replaced by new higher buildings, up to 1970s. By the demolition, rationality behind the Jansen construction disappeared as front setback distances and gardens of the buildings occupied by the masses of the buildings.” (Gülkök, 2013)

Ankara first suffered from urban traffic and air pollution in the 60s. As a result, the functional character of the avenue, which served as a means of public transport, tended towards the ideological and political motivations of the new modern metropolis.

Nonetheless, Ankara and Atatürk Boulevard were bustling social hubs until the 1970s. Despite the fact that Atatürk Boulevard was a structure designed by the ideological power of a state, it turned into a promenade where people liked to spend their time, share, observe, use and experience. It was both a recreational and a public space. But during the 1970s, under the influence of political events and conflicts, the spatial organization and the social and cultural dimension of the avenue had a negative impact on life. In the mid-1970s, however, traffic congestion in the inner city led to an increase in pedestrian/vehicle collisions. Under the influence of the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, the physical structure of the Boulevard was reshaped.

Since the 1980s, decentralizing strategies have led to unequal urban development, with peripheral areas attracting more investment than central areas. Between 1977 and 1994, Kızılay began to lose its importance and attractiveness, and through the processes of following and innovating, the area of activity in the Boulevard changed over time. Later, in the 1950s and 1960s, Kızılay became the most popular place and after the 1970s, Kavaklıdere became the most popular place.

“The second half of 1990’s is also a breaking point in terms of the meaning and practices of Ankara urban space. The incoming economic and political interests that produced urban spaces brought different urban experiences for Ankara citizens. Secured, gated, dissociated and homogenous life spaces followed by the spatial and social fragmentation.” (Gülkök, 2013)

## **CONCLUSION**

Creating a spinal boulevard, akin to the one present in Tirana, represents a remarkably intricate endeavor. This complexity might well account for the challenge in altering or dismantling such a city structure. The spinal form’s emergence is evident in newly established cities like Brasilia, Stalingrad, and Washington D.C., as well as in urban landscapes under dictatorial regimes, such as Napoleon III’s Paris, Mussolini’s Rome, Hitler’s Berlin, and King Frederik V’s Copenhagen. The process of constructing a spinal boulevard, as illustrated by the framework, can generally be categorized into three primary factors: political motivations, functional considerations, and design aesthetics. Irrespective of its origin under dictatorial regimes or not, the spinal form stood as a potent embodiment of urban design. Many designers harnessed its fundamental attributes: facilitating movement, ensuring equilibrium, maintaining an upright stance, offering shelter, and absorbing impact.

In the context of Tirana, which has been under study, these five attributes prominently define the characteristics of the spinal form:

1. Movement: The spine has remained the central axis of Tirana's transportation network since its inception. Serving as the main thoroughfare for various modes of transport, the spine comprises two boulevards and a square that serve as a pivotal junction in the city's road network. The train station located at the northern terminus of the spine, despite its diminished functionality today, reinforces the significance of the movement-oriented nature of the spine. Moreover, all roads leading from surrounding regions converge at the spine, establishing it as the cornerstone of Tirana's overall movement system.

2. Balance: The presence of the spine in Tirana has instilled a sense of equilibrium in the city's development. Prior to the construction of the spine, the city experienced spontaneous growth around multiple nuclei, lacking a comprehensive plan for new development. As Tirana's population surged due to its newfound status as the capital, the construction of the spine served as a crucial tool for instilling order and equilibrium in the city's expansion. Additionally, the spine symbolizes a balance between the old and the new, bridging the modern and the conservative elements within Tirana. This equilibrium-inducing role of the spine endures even after many years.

3. Upright Posture: When Tirana was designated as the new capital of Albania, the first order of business was designing a boulevard and a civic center that would project the modern, independent identity of the nation. Aligned with Frasheri's vision of an ideal capital city, Tirana required an urban development plan that centered around a robust political and administrative core. This center, embodied by the spine, provides Tirana and the nation with an upright, resolute posture.

4. Protection: The spine of Tirana possesses a protective quality, steadfastly maintaining its unaltered form amidst various periods of political upheaval. Despite the tumultuous events in its relatively brief history—such as the era of communism, World War II, and the post-socialist transition that permitted encroachments on urban spaces—the spine has safeguarded the city's overall urban layout. Tirana, particularly following the cessation of communism, underwent development without a comprehensive urban plan. Construction flourished, often without adhering to any regulatory guidelines. Nevertheless, the spine acted as a guardian, shielding the city's fundamental urban structure.

5. Shock Absorption: Tirana has experienced a series of seismic shocks throughout its relatively short history. However, the spine, much like a resilient foundation, absorbs these waves while steadfastly maintaining its unaltered form. While the vertical profile of the spine may have undergone natural shifts over time, its core essence remains unscathed, safeguarding both its function and form to this day.

In Ankara, the nature of socialisation in the context of shopping activities has been changed by the new places of consumption produced by the new accumulation process. Shopping malls are new (representations of) public spaces. The consumption of socialisation is the way of urban public life; it is practised in its own consumed public spaces. Under the influence of this process, the upscale shops on the boulevard could only survive until 2000, when they found new spaces in the shopping malls. As a result, the Boulevard lost its last attraction for the middle and upper classes. Atatürk Boulevard is no longer the heart of the city, but has become a transitional area and a representation of the city centre, as it no longer attracts all urban groups. For this reason, the construction of the Boulevard and its sidewalks was carried out before the construction of the Republic.

Another important point is that although there was little vehicular traffic in the early Republican period, sidewalks were an important planned urban element. As a result, the pavements had a high value that went beyond the basic function of ensuring safe circulation by separating the pedestrian street from the vehicular street. Along the boulevard, we can see that the reality, which contradicts the value given to the pavement, brings to light the ideals and the urban discourse of the time. In this way, the plan for the new city of Ankara was not based on the projections and tendencies of the existing urban context, but was shaped by the political and social intentions and ideals.

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<sup>15</sup>The city was designated as Albania’s capital in 1920. Subsequently, in October 1928, Ahmet Zog proclaimed Albania a constitutional monarchy with himself as king. On April 7, 1939, Italy’s occupation of Albania and its integration into the Italian Kingdom marked a significant turning point. The conclusion of World War II ushered in a communist regime in Albania, characterized by centralized authority that often-imposed urban initiatives disregarding private ownership. Architects and urban planners, following directives from the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania, transformed the urban landscape according to political dictates. An especially impactful episode occurred during the transitional period following the collapse of the Communist Regime in 1991, which posed a severe challenge to Tirana’s urban structure. The urban structure of the city has been profoundly affected by these successive political shifts, resembling shock waves.

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