

PAPER DETAILS

TITLE: THE BUILDING OF A CAPITAL CITY ANKARA 1929-1939

AUTHORS: Seçil Karal AKGÜN

PAGES: 597-599

ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/114365>

THE BUILDING OF A CAPITAL CITY ANKARA 1929-1939**

*Prof. Dr. Seçil KARAL AKGÜN**

The Changing Out-Look of Historical Research

During the last decades a new trend in historical research is apparent.

The new trend has three dimensions.

1. The increasing preference for quantitative methods and methods of rigorous thinking,
2. The growing interest in multidisciplinary problematique.
3. The extension of the research field, to embrace aspects of every days life and actual issues. *Development of Cities* is for instance one of the en vogue extensive historical reserach domains:

In the light of these observations the under lying study is very much worth reviewing.

The raison d'etre of the Study

The building of Ankara as the capital of Turkey is a multifaced endeavor realized at the cost of great efforts and fanancial investment. It is meant to be a symbol of the Republic and is taken up at the state level.

The decades between 1929 and 1939 is a period in the Republican era which is a period filled with striking events. The Building of Ankara is only one these important events. However it is impos-

* Professor of the Middle East Tedrical University, Ankara.

** A.Ü.D.T.C.F., Tarih Bölümü, Cilt XVI, Sayı: 26 Yıl: 1994.

sible to evaluate this phenomenon independently, since it is inextricably connected with the political system, national economic policies and social development of that period. This study aims to explain the various aspects of interest in this brief period revealing further depth and comprehensiveness, which in return enables the researcher to discover unexplored dimensions. Therefore the present research does not only study the development of Ankara's urban environment during 1929-1939 but all the aspects of how the capital is brought to life, as well as, how the Turkish urban society has emerged.

The Scope of the Study

The study contains an introduction and five chapters. First chapter, among introductory information, includes a comparative analysis of four planned national capitals: Canberra-Australia, Ankara-Turkey, Brasilia-Brazil. Islamabad-Pakistan.

The second chapter provides back-ground information looking to the acquisition of the first master plan for Ankara. The third chapter discusses the planning mechanism with its technical, administrative, legal, financial, political aspects next to the implementation phenomenon and the influences exercised by the various interest-groups. The fourth chapter introduces an evaluative systematique defining the evaluation criteria and constructing a model of assessment. Chapter five concludes the findings with their far reaching effects.

The Methodology of the Study

By adopting a historicist approach to a subject matter, which is at the intersection point of three disciplines, that is Political Sciences, Urban Planning and Public Administration, it becomes very crucial that the internal logic of the study is well knit.

After having formulated the interdisciplinary problematique, respective archive material has been extensively analysed. The existing literature somewhat related to the research topic, is based on very limited, first hand information; subsequently relies heavily on cross references.

The newly discovered, previously unknown data used in the research, is so rich that even a narrative history approach would have

been very informative. Still in order to avoid probable weaknesses the author inserts a well defined structure into the content, calling upon techniques of quantification. These are statistical interpretations and an evaluation model to test and assess the findings.

The Evaluation of the Study

The major contribution of the study, the *Building of Ankara 1921-1939*, is primarily to reveal the anatomy of the acting forces of political, economic and social nature and their financial, administrative and technical impacts. Secondly, to derive explanations for the problems of implementation as they relate to the intricate political conjecture, insufficient laws and regulations, technical shortcomings, financial burdens and administrative conflicts.

As a result *The Building of the Capital City* exposes the dramatic transformation of an Ottoman provincial town into a modern city, the graduation of its residents into citizens and the development of the Turkish bureaucracy from traditional into progressive modern.

Post Script Ideas

It would be most advisable to undertake new research with the same approach and methodology for the following ten years covering the 1940's, a temporal sequence full of different but equally striking events.

Furthermore it would be most desirable to translate the book "The Building of Ankara" into English, so that many other scholars can benefit from it.