



## Studio Public Realm Ankara

### “UtopiAnkara”

Utopia has peculiar associations and connotations alive in time spanning from Platon’s Republic through Thomas Moore’s projection. It’s been a recurrent theme in spatial design vis-à-vis social and political organization of communities. From Ebenezer Howard’s “Garden City” to Frank Lloyd Wright’s “Broadacres City”, Superstudio’s “Continuous Monument” or Constant’s “New Babylon”, the notion of an ideal has been almost a temperament for designers, both as an aspiration for paragons and also serving as a radical critique of the human condition as a dystopian fiction at its limits. It can be said that last century has also been prominent for various spatial visions which converged multi-variate imageries of space, politics and technology and translated them into reality in different geographies of the world. From the visionary Ville Radieuse of Le Corbusier after WWI’s Europe, the notion of utopia has come into existence in the image of capital cities in several examples as such in Brasilia in South America, Canberra in Australia and Ankara in Anatolia. The convergence of different ambitions translated into the organization of human environment especially requires a new outlook when even the humblest contemporary metropolis exceeded the limits of those “bold” design gestures remarkable with their aging Modernism. Within this framework, one of the early examples of Modern utopian capital of early 20th Century and its indispensable role in building the nation of Republic of Turkey is a potential case. Being one of the early incentives of the state, it’s been envisioned as a large city of 600,000 people in the middle of Anatolia, which now holds more inhabitants than 4 million and reached an immense size not only the founding fathers but also initial designers did not anticipate. The gross attitude of the planning schemes’ visionary incentive at every level of realization caused a generic character probably as early precedents of contemporary urban condition.

Having been the centre for the republican revolution against Ottoman Empire centred in Istanbul, Ankara became the capital city of the new nation state in 1923 just two weeks before the declaration of the republic. The first quarter of the republic portrayed its ambition for modernization by building its capital inviting many foreign architects, planners, designers and sculptors. Although foreign designers had been invited to prepare schemes and alternatives for Istanbul in the period of Ottoman Empire, none of those former initiatives reflect the ambition of the young republic in 1930’s. Carl Christopher Lörcher’s (1884-1966) plan in 1924-1925 laid the foundation of the city plan in 1932 by Herman Jansen (1869 Aachen – 1945 Berlin), which gave the city its core layout first in the north-south and then east-west axes. The basis laid out by Lörcher’s plan was stabilized by Jansen’s proposed scheme. Meanwhile, the political figures of the republic lead by the first president M. Kemal Atatürk were in search/endeavour to draw the frame of the modern identity for the new nation. Many Austrian, German and Swiss architects like Bruno Taut, Clemens Holzmeister, Ernst Egli were part in the projection and construction of that ideal image of the new capital.

This is as much a pragmatic as an ideological decision; the case of Ankara allows us to contemplate on the capability of the disciplines of architecture and urbanism to frame and/or mediate the contemporary issues of the city and its emergent desires.

The failure of another “utopia” in Ankara provokes radical thinking and by focusing on its contemporary condition with all the failures and potentials we aim to focus on a debate about the potential roles of architecture not only as a delicate instrument in the production of urban environment but also as a cultivator and catalyst for design strategies. This studio will focus on the skills and tools of the architect.

Through plans, sections, perspectives, but also through details, materializations or other specific evocations the architect should be able to convey his/her true intentions.

### Practical info

→ Program code	AR3Ap130-1 / AR4Ap100
→ Capacity	18 students
→ Credits	15 ECTS / 20 ECTS
→ Period	Week 1.1 - 4.10
→ Tutors	Prof. ir. Michiel Riedijk ir. Niklaas Deb Apler Alkan
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