

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF HIGH-RISE HOUSING BLOCKS:
THE CASE OF SOUTH-WESTERN ANKARA

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THE CASE OF SOUTH-WESTERN ANKARA**

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ABSTRACT

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF HIGH-RISE HOUSING BLOCKS: THE CASE OF SOUTH-WESTERN ANKARA

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Due to the rising population and developing technology, the number of high-rise buildings is growing worldwide. These buildings, with mixed-use, office, or residential functions, are the symbols of so-called power and prestige at the same time. In this trend of high-rise buildings, residential ones are significant with their profound social and architectural impacts. In Turkey, high-security luxury buildings above a certain height that serve their residents with the logic of a hotel are called "residence/rezidans." Do these residences, designed to be introverted and disconnected by nature, meet the conditions of being a "place"? This question presents a situation that needs to be examined in terms of the philosophy of architecture. Since high-rise residential buildings are built with economic concerns rather than architectural ones, their effects on the city and their relations with the city are not the priority in their design; hence, they turn into commodities of consumption. The privileged life these residences promise triggers social stratification and segregation; thus, some sociological problems arise. Also, these buildings significantly impact the city with their large scale and population density. Ankara is one of the cities in Turkey where these "residences" are increasing rapidly and has its distinctive dynamics in developing high-rise buildings. This study aims to theoretically analyze the concepts of life in high-rise buildings and "residences"

with their philosophical, sociological, and urban characteristics and examine some of the residences in South-Western Ankara with this theoretical framework.

Keywords: High-Rise Buildings, Residences, Sense of Place, Social Stratification, Commodity Culture.

ÖZ

YÜKSEK KONUT BLOKLARININ ELEŞTİREL BİR ANALİZİ: GÜNEYBATI ANKARA ÖRNEĞİ

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Artan nüfus ve gelişen teknoloji ile birlikte dünya çapında yüksek katlı bina sayısı artmaktadır. Karma kullanım, ofis ya da konut işlevine sahip bu yapılar, aynı zamanda sözde gücün ve prestijin simgesi haline gelmişlerdir. Bu yüksek katlı bina trendinde, sosyal ve mimari açıdan derin etkileri olan konutlar önemli bir yere sahiptir. Türkiye'de otel mantığıyla sakinlerine hizmet veren, yüksek güvenli, belli bir yüksekliğin üzerindeki lüks yapılar "rezidans/residence" olarak isimlendirilmektedir. Doğası gereği içe dönük ve kentsel çevreden kopuk olarak tasarlanan bu yapılar, "yer" olma özelliği taşıyor mu? Bu soru mimarlık felsefesi açısından incelenmesi gereken bir durum oluşturmaktadır. Yüksek katlı konut yapıları mimari kaygıdan çok ekonomik kaygılarla inşa edildikleri için, tasarım süreçlerinde kent üzerindeki etkileri ve kentle kurulan ilişkiler öncelikli değildir; dolayısıyla tüketim metalarına dönüşmektedirler. Bu yapıların vaat ettiği ayrıcalıklı yaşam toplumsal tabakalaşmayı ve ayrışmayı tetiklemekte; bu nedenle bazı sosyolojik sorunları beraberinde getirmektedir. Ayrıca bu yapılar, büyük ölçekleri ve nüfus yoğunlukları ile kent üzerinde önemli etkilere sahiptir. Ankara, Türkiye'de "rezidans" projelerinin hızla arttığı ve yüksek yapı gelişiminde kendine özgü dinamikleri olan şehirlerden biridir. Bu çalışma, yüksek yapılarda yaşam ve "rezidans" kavramlarını felsefi, sosyolojik ve kentsel özelliklerini kapsayan teorik

bir çerçeve ile analiz etmeyi ve Güneybatı Ankara'da bulunan projeleri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yüksek Binalar, Rezidans, Mekan Duygusu, Toplumsal Tabakalaşma, Tüketim Kültürü

To my family.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

CTBUH	Council of Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat
VGC	Vertical Gated Community

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition of The Problematic

Throughout history, high, imposing structures have been built for different reasons, such as power, protection, or religious beliefs. In the recent history of humanity, especially after the industrial revolution, the production of high-rise buildings has moved to a different dimension. Since then, high-rise buildings have started appearing in city centers, addressing the differentiated lifestyle. With the increasing population and developing technology, the number of high-rise buildings has increased rapidly and continues to increase worldwide. Vertical growth is inevitable for cities to meet the rising population's needs since it is impossible to grow only in a horizontal direction in terms of sustainable urban development. At the same time, the developing technology encourages the production of different architectural solutions apart from the traditional ones and paves the way for iconic high-rise structures. In the report of the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH) in 2018, it is noted that the number of high-rise buildings with a total height of over 200 meters increased by 464% since 2000.¹ In this trend of high-rise buildings, residential ones are highly significant regarding their profound psychological, societal, and urban impacts.

¹ "Tall Buildings in Numbers" *CTBUH Journal*, no.1 (2019): 48.

Since the concept of high-rise buildings became widespread in cities, it has always been a controversial subject in terms of architecture. They are criticized as much as they are defended in the architectural community. High-rise buildings, which started to spread especially after 1980 in Turkey, have been exposed to various criticisms since these dates. Architect Cengiz Bektaş, who designed the 52-floor Mertim Tower, in Mersin, in 1983, which is one of the first skyscrapers in Turkey and has the status of being the tallest building in Turkey until 2014, states that "Skyscrapers can be built, but only one thing cannot be built in a skyscraper, and that is *housing*. However, the thing that would bring money is the house because you can sell it very quickly, and everyone considers living on the 25th floor as an ingenuity like an upstart, but it's not."² This quotation summarizes the prevailing situation in Turkey today; high-rise residential projects dominate the housing sector. Especially in the big cities, these buildings have been spreading rapidly and uncontrollably in recent years. Many people see it as a symbol of prestige to live in secure, luxurious, high-rise residences that they are exposed to their advertisements and promotions everywhere. These structures, rapidly produced in many places, in a similar way, gradually move away from meeting the concept of "home," which has a significant role in people's lives and turn into consumption objects. As a result of such productization and mass production, these structures are moving away from producing meaningful places both in themselves, their immediate surroundings, and the city. Therefore, this study mainly focuses on contemporary residential high-rise buildings, which are popular in Turkey and named as "residence." In English, the dictionary definition of "residence" is "the place where someone lives, or the condition of living somewhere."³ On the other hand, in Turkey, this word is usually

² Cengiz Bektaş, *Cengiz Bektaş ile Mimari Üretimleri Üzerine Söyleşi*, interview by Tuğçe Kaplan, edited by Kübra Yeter, (İstanbul: SALT/Garanti Kültür A.Ş., 2020), 60, <https://saltonline.org/tr/2252/cengiz-bektas-ile-mimari-uretimleri-uzerine-soylesi>. (Translated to English from Turkish by the author.)

³ Cambridge Dictionary Online, s.v. "residence," accessed January 1, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/residence>.

used to describe luxurious high-rise apartments which provide its residents services like reception, security, dry cleaning, housekeeping, fitness center, swimming pool, childcare, pet sitting, etc.; and promise their residents a privileged luxury life.

When it comes to high-rise buildings, the concept of the sense of place can be brought into the discussion because today's modern high-rise buildings, which have been built with economic concerns at the center, seem to be neglecting some philosophical perspectives such as "identity of place" and "spirit of place." Besides these sensational deficiencies, consumerism and commodity culture are the issues discussed with today's luxurious high-rise housing projects. These projects, seen as consumer products, also fuel social stratification with the privileged life and prestige they offer. Ankara, one of Turkey's largest cities, hosts these luxury high-rise housing projects. These buildings, located in different parts of the city, draw attention with their flamboyant architectural designs and large scale. In foreign countries, high-rise buildings are generally found in city centers with limited land; on the other hand, in Ankara, high-rise residences are primarily in the suburbs with no land problem. Factors that promote the construction of high-rise buildings in other countries and Turkey are different. The spread of tall buildings has occurred in Turkey and other countries under different conditions and processes. In this respect, the spread of such buildings in Ankara draws a picture worth examining.

1.2 Aims, Research Questions, and Methodology

This study aims to examine the "luxurious high-rise housing" concept through a set of *philosophical*, *sociological*, and *urban* perspectives. Together with their historical development, **what factors cause high-rise buildings to become widespread in Turkey and Ankara? What are the origins and effects of these structures from a philosophical and sociological point of view?** To explain how the architectural language of high-rise residential buildings in Ankara and what kind of relations they establish with their surroundings are other objectives. **How do these structures, which significantly affect the silhouette and morphology of the city, establish a**

relationship with the city, or do they aim to develop a relationship? This study attempts to answer these questions, examine the effects of high-rise buildings in detail, and contribute to the awareness of the importance of conscious design in this field.

In the first phase of the study, the development of the concept of high-rise buildings in the historical process and the evolution of the “residence” typology in Turkey are presented by scanning the relevant literature. In the second phase, the typology of luxury high-rise housing is examined under three main headings as philosophical, sociological, and urban perspectives to make a versatile theoretical analysis. In this theoretical review section, under the title of philosophical perspective, the typology of residence is examined within the framework of the concepts of character, identity, and loss of place, based on the ideas of Christian Norberg-Schulz and Edward Relph about the concept of place. Within the context of the sociological perspective, the aspect of residence buildings as a means of consumption and the structure that triggers social segregation are discussed with reference to Jean Baudrillard's book on consumer society. Under the title of urban perspective, the location of residences in the context of the city is examined through the ideas of Jane Jacobs, Jahn Gehl, and Roger Trancik on the scale problem in modern cities and the necessities of livable cities. After creating a framework on the effects of residence buildings with the theoretical research based on these three main titles, a case study of four residence projects in Southwest Ankara was included in the fourth chapter. In this chapter, first, Ankara’s historical and social development was examined through city plans and the urban development process, which resulted in the spread to the city periphery and the increase in the residence projects in these regions, was examined. In this process, the southwest axis, which has witnessed intense urban growth in recent years, was taken as the context. Four residence projects with similar structural and functional characteristics were included as case studies. In the examination of the projects, field research was carried out, the author took photographs, satellite images were utilized, and personal observations were used. In addition, the projects’ websites, advertisements, promotional videos, and real estate websites were also examined.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

In the present study, first, the formation process of high-rise residential buildings and the motivations behind them are examined, and then these factors are discussed in the context of Ankara. Related to this, the second chapter gives general information about high-rise buildings and historical and statistical data related to high-rise buildings. Firstly, the definition of the high-rise building is investigated, then the tall buildings from ancient times to the present are examined. In this process, the emergence of high-rise mixed-use structures is discussed. After that, the beginning of high-rise construction in the context of Turkey is reviewed, and the typology of the luxury high-rise housing, namely residences, which has recently become widespread, especially in big cities, is examined.

In the third chapter, the *residence* typology, widely discussed in Turkey, is examined from a broad perspective. In this context, an integrated theoretical framework of philosophy, sociology, and urban design is utilized. In the light of this trilogy, the residence typology is analyzed. In the context of philosophy, regarding the investigation of residences and place theory, the ideas of Heidegger, Christian Norberg-Schulz, and Edward Relph are the standpoints of the study. As to the context of sociology, the concept of commodified housing and social segregation associated with the residence typology are discussed. In this area, Jean Baudrillard's ideas about consumer society provide the basis. From the urban perspective, a study of the residence typology is carried out on the urban fabric and the livable city concept. In this context, it is discussed that residence structures, produced with the motivation of economic gain, affect the urban fabric by causing parcel-based, uncontrolled growth and damage the city silhouette by creating scale confusion. In addition, it is discussed that these introverted structures cause adverse effects on street life by separating people from the street, reducing walkability in cities, and creating negative results that are contrary to the concept of a livable city.

In the fourth chapter, the planning adventure of Ankara since becoming the capital city and the change in the urban texture, and the process of residences becoming the

dominant housing typology of today are explained. Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, reveals a distinctive dynamic of high-rise development. Then, the examples from the southwest region, which is preferred by the people with high economic and educational levels and where luxury residence projects are spreading rapidly, are examined more closely in the light of the theoretical framework formed by philosophy, sociology, and urban triology.

Finally, the conclusion chapter summarizes the former chapters' findings. It presents ideas to support a more conscious housing production mechanism against the damaging effects that may arise, based on the multi-dimensional analysis of the residence typology that increases uncontrollably in the city.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY OF HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS

2.1 Definition of High-Rise Building

There is no universal consensus on the definition of high-rise buildings since height is a relative quality. The high-rise building definition can change from country to country or in different cities and contexts. According to one of the definitions, “A ‘tall building ’is a multi-story structure in which most occupants depend on elevators to reach their destinations.”⁴ Emporis, a real estate data mining company founded mainly to collect data on high-rise buildings and skyscrapers, defines a high-rise building as “A multi-story structure between 35-100 meters tall, or a building of unknown height from 12-39 floors.”⁵ Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat designates, “There is no absolute definition of what constitutes a “tall building;” the definition is subjective, considered against one or more of the following categories: height relative to context, proportion, embracing technologies relevant to tall buildings.”⁶ CTBUH also makes classifications for taller buildings as supertall and megatall; "a 'supertall' is a tall building 300 meters or taller, and a 'megatall' is a tall building 600 meters or taller." According to CTBUH, the tall building height is determined by three main methods: height to the architectural top, height to the

⁴ Dennis Challenger. “From the Ground Up: Security for Tall Buildings” CRISP Report, (ASIS Foundation: Alexandria, 2008)

⁵ “High-Rise Building,” Emporis, accessed December 24, 2021, <https://www.emporis.com/building/standard/3/high-rise>

⁶ CTBUH Height Criteria for Measuring & Defining Tall Buildings, skyscrapercenter.com | ctbuh.org

highest occupied floor, and height to the tip. Among these measurement methods, height to the architectural top is the most widely utilized.⁷

2.2 History of Tall Buildings and The Birth of High-Rise Residential Blocks

2.2.1 Antiquity and the Middle Ages

Since ancient times, people have had the desire to build tall buildings. Ever since the tower of Babel, there have been traces of human desire to reach higher. The Tower of Babel, mentioned in Bible, is seen as the world's first skyscraper. It was dedicated to the God Marduk, which was the God of the ancient city of Babylon, and it is thought that the building was approximately 100 meters. "Herodotus, the Father of History, described this symbol of Babylon as a wonder of the world."⁸ Pyramids are another example of ancient tall structures. Pyramid of Cheops (2600 BC), one of the oldest structures in history, that the Egyptians built from stone to bury their king Cheops and hide his treasure, is one of the first high structures with a height of 146 meters.⁹

The world's first tallest buildings have always been religious buildings, until the Middle Ages. The town of San Gimignano in the Tuscany region, Italy is named the "Manhattan of the Middle Ages." (Figure 2.1) This medieval town was an important transition point for pilgrims traveling to or from Rome on the Via Francigena. San

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Travel back in history to discover the monumental structure of the Tower of Babel in the ancient city of Babylon," Britannica, accessed January 8, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/video/180010/Overview-Tower-of-Babel>.

⁹ Zeynep Yeşim İlerisoy and Merve Başgöl, "Yapılarda Yükselme ve Başkent Ankara Örnekleri Üzerinden Tarihsel İncelenmesi," *Online Journal of Art and Design* 7, no. 2 (April 2019): 125-140. ResearchGate.

Gimignano is famous for its tower houses built in the 12th and 13th centuries. These tower houses, some of which reach 50-meter height, were built by the patrician families as symbols of their wealth and power. Although 14 of 72 towers have reached today, the city has protected the feudal ambiance with its unique architecture.¹⁰



Figure 2.1. The Towers at San Gimignano, Italy.
Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/San-Gimignano#/media/1/521209/146372>

2.2.2 After Industrial Revolution

In more recent history, the concept of high-rise building undergone a radical change with the Industrial Revolution. After the middle of the 19th century, high-rise buildings have been mostly constructed to commercial aims. With the use of the steel frame system and the developing technology, higher structures began to be built rapidly. Home Insurance Building built in Chicago in 1885 is considered the first example of skyscrapers as we know them today. It is a 10-story steel-framed structure. (Figure 2.2)

¹⁰ UNESCO, World Heritage List, “Historic Centre of San Gimignano,” accessed January 8, 2022, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/550>.

As in the Home Insurance Building, in the first examples of skyscrapers, the height to floor area ratio was low. With the development of materials, both the heights of the buildings and the difference between the height and the floor area (slenderness) began to increase in later examples. ¹¹



Figure 2.2. Home Insurance Building, Chicago.

Source: Photo by Corbis, <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/apr/02/worlds-first-skyscraper-chicago-home-insurance-building-history>

2.2.3 20th Century

With the developed technology, in the early 1900s, the criterion for being the highest became a symbol of prestige. The Empire State Building (1931), which is known as the first structure to exceed 100 floors and with a height of 381 meters, completed this century by holding the record to be the tallest building for the longest.¹² (Figure 2.3)

¹¹ İlerisoy and Başgöl, “Yapılarda Yükselme,” 128.

¹² Ibid., 129.



Figure 2.3. Empire State Building, New York, 14.02.1931.
350 Fifth Avenue - West 34th Street, Photographer: Wurts Bros.¹³

In the first half of the 20th century, tall buildings were mostly steel-framed structures, reinforced concrete structures were rare. However, with the advancing time and experience, pressure-resistant reinforced concrete has begun to be used more widely in high-rise designs.¹⁴ In the post-World War II period, high-rise housing blocks began to become widespread with the increasing need for housing and practical technology. In addition, with modernism, city centers in the USA and Europe became commercial and business centers and residential settlements were moved out of the city. People used to come to work during the day and return to their homes in the evening. This situation caused the city centers to be quite lively and dynamic during the day and completely empty at night. To prevent this situation and to keep the cities alive day and night, housing production started to increase in the center, high-rise buildings offered a good solution to provide housing on limited

¹³ Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History and Genealogy, The New York Public Library. "350 Fifth Avenue - West 34th Street" New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed January 17, 2022. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47e2-eeed-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

¹⁴ İlerisoy and Başgöl, "Yapılarda Yükselme," 128.

lands in the city centers. For this reason, especially since the second half of the century, high-rise residential buildings and mixed-use buildings began to increase in city centers.

High-rise residential buildings in city centers also offered a new lifestyle and prevented people from spending their time on the road in a short time after the busy work schedule. One of the first buildings built for this purpose is the Lake Shore Drive apartments in Chicago, whose construction began in 1949 and was completed in 1951. (Figure 2.4) These buildings, designed by Mies van der Rohe, are designed with the principle of "less is more" and are called "Glass House" apartments. These structures with steel frames and floor-to-ceiling glass facades are examples of the modernism movement of the period with their simple designs. These 26-story towers are also important because they are the first examples of high-rise housing projects that we are discussing today.

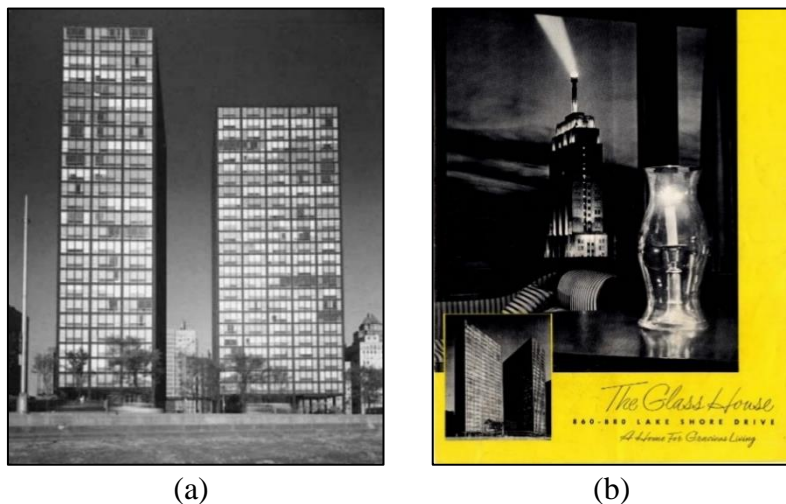


Figure 2.4. (a) The Lake Shore Drive Apartments, Chicago, 1955, (b) The Lake Shore Drive Apartment Advertisement, "The Glass House"¹⁵

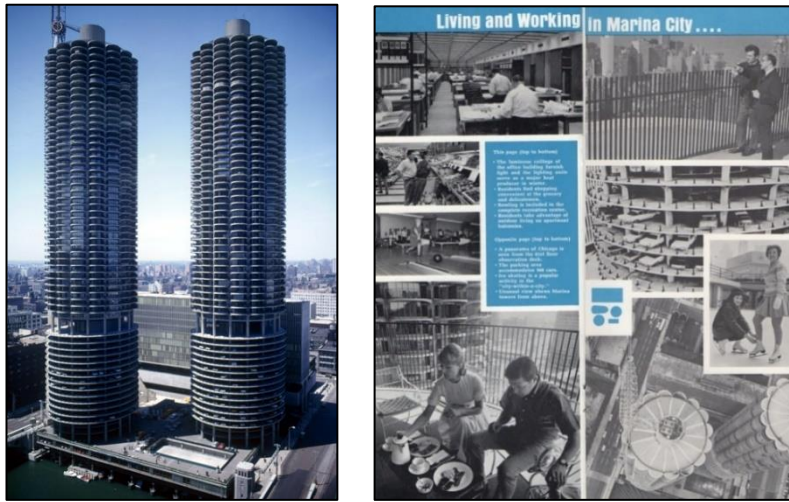
¹⁵ (a) Source: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Lake-Shore-Drive-Apartments#/media/1/328208/33672>, (b) Source: The Glass House Brochure (1957), <http://860880lakeshoredrive.com/1957-brochure/>

The Marina City project, completed in 1967 in Chicago, can be considered the first example of the “residence typology”; it was designed by the architect Bertrand Goldberg as two identical residential towers in a circular form with 179 meters in height and 60 floors each.¹⁶(Figure 2.5) After the 1960s, the search for new forms with the influence of post-modernism and the departure from cubic forms are also striking in high-rise building designs; Marina City is an example of this movement. It is a mix-used project; the bottom 19 floors are designated for indoor parking, the 20th floor serves as a laundry room and gym, and the upper floors contain apartments. There is also a theater, swimming pool, ice rink, bowling alley, stores, restaurants, and a marina in the complex. It was one of the projects that aimed to revitalize the city center at that period, for this purpose, it offered many attractive services to persuade people to live in the city again. Marina City can be considered an urban experiment; it was designed by “cities within cities concept”, and it turned into a landmark for Chicago.

“Downtown Chicago (sometimes referred to as the Loop) is now one of the fastest growing residential neighborhoods in the Chicagoland area. But downtown living hasn’t always been so trendy. When architect Bertrand Goldberg envisioned Marina City, it was an urban experiment designed to draw middle-class Chicagoans back to the city after more than a decade of suburban migration.”¹⁷ From the first day that high-rise structures emerged until the end of the 20th century, the United States of America continued to have the highest buildings in the world. At the end of the 20th century, buildings from outside the continent started to participate in this race, also.

¹⁶ Sahar Mohammadpour Naiem, “2000 Yılı Sonrası İnşa Edilen Lüks Konutların (Rezidans) Görsel Etkileri Üzerine Bir İnceleme”, Master’s Thesis, Yıldız Technical University, 2015.

¹⁷ “Marina City”, Chicago Architecture Center, accessed January 10, 2022, <https://www.architecture.org/learn/resources/buildings-of-chicago/building/marina-city/>



(a)

(b)

Figure 2.5. (a) Marina City from Unitrin Building. Photo by Mike Kobluk (August 1965)¹⁸, (b) Marina City Brochure (1966)¹⁹

2.2.4 21st Century

After 2000, tall buildings started to increase all over the world and with the developing technology, much higher buildings are being built day by day. Today, the tallest buildings are in Asian countries and the Middle East. These buildings, which are symbols of financial power and prestige for countries and even cities, have very different forms and remarkable designs. Today, with the Burj Khalifa Building (828m) completed in 2010, the United Arab Emirates has the tallest building of the world.²⁰ It is a mix-used skyscraper designed by the Chicago-based architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. (Figure 2.6)

¹⁸Source:
<https://www.marinacity.org/history/image.htm>,<https://www.marinacity.org/history/mobi/brochure.htm>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ İlerisoy and Başgöl, “Yapılarda Yükselme,” 130.



Figure 2.6. Burj Khalifa, Dubai. The tallest building in the World.
Source: <https://www.skyscrapercenter.com/building/burj-khalifa/3>

2.3 Development of Tall Buildings and Residences in Turkey

If we look at the high-rise development in Turkey, because of the country's location in the first-degree earthquake zone and the inadequacy of economic opportunities, high-rise buildings have emerged later than in The USA and Europe in Turkey. Although slender structures such as towers and minarets have a long history, modern high-rise buildings, where people live and carry out various activities on each floor, came to the fore only after World War II. These structures did not exceed ten floors until the 1960s.²¹

Kızılay Emek İşhanı (Figure 2.7) is the first high-rise building in Turkey, which was named "skyscraper" at the time; it was designed by Enver Tokay, has 24 floors and

²¹ İlerisoy and Başgöl, "Yapılarda Yükselme," 130.

was completed in 1965.²² Ankara is important for the development of tall buildings in Turkey. Between the 1950s and mid-1970s, high-rise construction developed slowly in Turkey; in this period, high-rise buildings mostly had commercial and business functions, and İstanbul and Ankara hosted this development.



Figure 2.7. Kızılay Emek İşhanı

Source: <https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/101289>

With Turkey's transition to the free-market economy in 1980, investments in building trade increased, and as a result, the construction of high-rise buildings gained speed. Apart from the slowdown because of the economic crisis in 2001, the rise in the construction sector has continued in the period from the 1980s to the present. After the 2000s, unlike the previous periods in the housing area, the high-rise buildings with luxury housings started to compete in terms of height. As of 2022, the tallest building completed in Turkey is Skyland Residential Tower with 284 meters in height and 64 floors above ground.²³ (Figure 2.8)

²² Derya Başyılmaz, “Metropollerde Yeni Konut Eğilimleri, Yüksek Konut Blokları: Ankara’dan Örnekler.” Master’s Thesis, Gazi University, 2014.

²³ “Skyland Office Tower,” Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, accessed January 10, 2022, <https://www.skyscrapercenter.com/building/skyland-office-tower/15988>

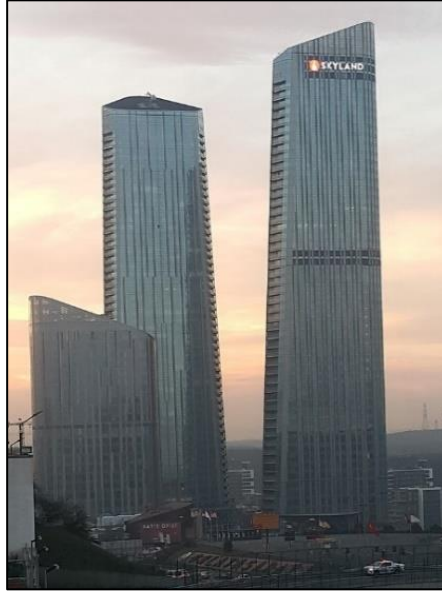


Figure 2.8. Skyland İstanbul, 2019
Source: https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skyland_%C4%B0stanbul

2.4 Typology of Luxurious High-Rise Residential Building: “Residence/Rezidans” in Turkey

The concept of "residence" discussed in this study is a high-rise, luxury structure that provides services like a hotel to its residents beyond the traditional house phenomenon. In essence, the concept of the residence, as in the Marina City project, aims to be ostentatious structures that appeal to the upper and middle-income group of the society by providing services facilitating today's fast lifestyle in limited plots close to the city centers. As mentioned before, high-rise, mix-used residential projects emerged in the USA and Europe, especially after the 1960s, to draw white collars to the city centers again. Depending on the different development and economic dynamics in Turkey, the period of revitalizing the city centers was experienced later than in Europe and the USA. In addition, in the birth of the

residences, it was not only aimed to solve the problems of the city centers, but rather the profit of the capital.

In Turkey, the concept of "residence" differs, and its meaning is unique to the country. If we look at the definition of "residence" in Turkey today, "Architect Emre Arolat says that since the concept of residence has a meaning beyond its dictionary meaning, it is used to describe the residences of the high-income class rather than the 'houses' of the low-income class, and the word even creates a definition of a social class on its own from time to time. The concept of residence defines the type of building in the city center or very close to the center, usually higher than 15 floors, in which there are some common social areas apart from the residential areas."²⁴ In the Planned Areas Zoning Regulation (2017), prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, "Rezidans" described as high-quality housing and the definition is as follows: Residential buildings containing more than one independent section where the reception, security, and daily cleaning service spaces are located, where services such as health services, dry cleaning, laundry, transportation, food, and shopping services, gymnasium and swimming pool can be provided.²⁵

In Istanbul and Ankara, which pioneered the residence projects in Turkey, these processes were experienced in different ways and times. The first residence examples in Istanbul are Akmerkez, opened in 1993 and Elit Residence, completed in 2000.²⁶ In Ankara, Park Oran Residential Blocks, completed in 2010, is one of the first examples of high-rise residential buildings; and Portakal Çiçeği Residence,

²⁴ Uygur Yüksel and M. Tolga Akbulut. "The New Products of Consumption-Oriented Architecture in Recent Years: Residences.", *Megaron* 4, no.2 (2009):110-118

²⁵ "2017 Planlı Alanlar İmar Yönetmeliği, Birinci Bölüm, Amaç, Kapsam, Dayanak ve Tanımlar," T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Mevzuat Bilgi Sistemi, accessed January 18, 2022, <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=24656&MevzuatTur=7&MevzuatTertip=5>

²⁶ Jean-François Pérouse, "Gated Vertical Communities and the Conditional Return of Upper Classes to the Urban Center: A Critical Evaluation," *idealkent* 6, no.3 (May 2012): 84-95

completed in 2011, is the first residence. Today, the concept of residence has evolved to a very different point in Turkey, especially in big cities. In cities such as Istanbul and Ankara, the number of high-rise luxury residences is increasing rapidly both in city centers and in the peripheries. This typology, which dominates the housing sector, is heavily marketed and creates a striking texture in the newly developing parts of cities.

CHAPTER 3

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK TO ANALYZE THE HIGH-RISE LUXURY RESIDENTIALS

Architectural reflections occur in cities with the changing lifestyle, the increasing speed of daily life, and the economic dynamics becoming more complicated day by day. High-rise luxury residential buildings are one of these architectural reflections. Especially the "residence/rezidans" typology discussed in this study are one of the most controversial formations in the context of Turkey. These buildings offering services that make the busy life reasonably practical reveal a different concept of life beyond classical houses. It seems quite challenging to follow the impact of this project-based development in cities, on people's sense of place and urban identity, its consequences in terms of the sustainability of cities, and the social transformation that occurs with the lifestyle imposed on people and society, at the same pace as their spread.

Today, while the high-rise residential settlements, which have increased significantly in big cities in Turkey, create striking urban formations, they also bring some *philosophical* problems in the world of architecture. These structures also bring up some *sociological* discourses regarding the conditions in which they emerge and the social consequences they create. In addition, these structures require a physical examination in *urban and architectural* aspects, with their large scales being closed to the outside and self-contained. This part of the study focuses on the theoretical analysis of luxury high-rise apartments (residences) in Turkey through the interrelations of architecture with the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, and urban design.

3.1 Philosophical Perspective

Architecture is concerned not only with the abstract, scientific features of spaces but also their meaning and spiritual dimensions, and the importance of places for people to make sense of their own existence is an important subject of philosophy. The objective of architecture goes beyond the definition made by early functionalism, since environment affects people deeply.²⁷ According to Christian Norberg-Schulz, architecture presents a tool to offer people an "existential foothold".²⁸ This existential foothold notion is associated with the "dwelling" concept by Martin Heidegger. Norberg-Schulz asserts that "'Existential foothold' and 'dwelling' are synonyms, and 'dwelling' in an existential sense, is the purpose of architecture."²⁹ Here, the word dwelling indicates the total human-place relationship.³⁰

Besides the physical functions of the places, the "human" dimension should not be ignored. This human dimension has been studied by many scholars, and a phenomenological perspective has been developed regarding these intangible values. Especially the changing social dynamics that started with the era of modernism brought the concept of "place" to the agenda because factors such as the standardization and mechanization of living spaces resulted in the loss of the concept of place. Numerous scholars have studied the characteristics that make somewhere "a place" and discussed the concern of losing these qualities with various expressions: Christian Norberg Schulz, "*loss of place*", Edward Relph, "*placelessness*", Marc Augé, "*non-place*".

²⁷ Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980), 5.

²⁸ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 5.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

Considering the concept of place, “home” comes forward, especially, with its existential meanings and traits. Many thinkers and philosophers have reviewed the “home” beyond its being a space.

Home is the foundation of our identity as individuals and as members of a community, the dwelling place of being. Home is not just the house you happen to live in, it is not something that can be anywhere, that can be exchanged, but an irreplaceable centre of significance. This may seem very philosophical and obscure, but in fact it can be a common, everyday element of experience.³¹

Today's modern, highly preferred “residence” house conception is exposed to noteworthy criticisms respecting the intangible qualities that a home should have besides its daily functions. Whether the ever-increasing number of high-rise residential buildings in our country meet the conditions of being a “place” or whether they even have such a concern is an issue open to discussion. In this section recent high-rise residence typology is examined regarding the qualities of the concept of *place*.

3.1.1 High-Rise Housing in the Light of Place Theory with the Concepts: “Identity” and “Character”

Phenomenology of Architecture

First of all, related to the phenomenology of architecture, Norberg-Schulz specifies that in his well-known book *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology Architecture* (1979), he aims to explore the psychic side of architecture, that is, its hidden meanings, rather than the practical, which are the aspects have an absolute

³¹ Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Limited, 1976), 39.

interrelationship with each other.³² Norberg Schulz defines this study as a first step towards architectural phenomenology, which is the theory that understands architecture in concrete, existential terms; fostering the existential dimension is the principal objective of this book.³³

After a long-standing abstract, and scientific theory, a qualitative, phenomenological understanding is crucially required; as long as this understanding is missing, solving practical problems is of little use. Approaching architecture analytically causes the concrete environmental character to be missed, in contrast, the concrete environmental character is the primary feature that is the object of human identification and can give an existential foothold to humans.³⁴ “Being qualitative totalities of a complex nature, places cannot be described by means of analytic, “scientific” concepts. As a matter of principle science “abstracts” from the given to arrive at neutral, “objective” knowledge.”³⁵ At this point, the everyday life-world, which concerns all people, especially planners and architects, is abandoned; on the other side, phenomenology provides to elude this condition.³⁶ However, phenomenologists have so far been more interested in ontology, psychology, ethics, and to a particular extent, aesthetics, whereas they have paid less attention to the daily environment; and, although there are some important works, in general, they do not directly refer to architecture. Hence, a phenomenology of architecture is imperatively required.³⁷

³² Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 5.

³³ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 5.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 8.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

With respect to the role of architecture, Norberg-Schulz draws on Heidegger's concept of *dwelling*, and conveys that *existential foothold* and *dwelling* are synonymous, and, in an existential understanding, dwelling is the aim of architecture.³⁸ People dwell when they can *orient* themselves within an environment and *identify* with it, in brief, when they experience the environment as meaningful; hence, dwelling means more than a shelter.³⁹ Architecture means to visualize the "genius loci," or "spirit of place," which was accepted by people as the concrete reality they have had to face and collaborate with in daily life since ancient times. And the architects' mission is to create meaningful places to help people to dwell.⁴⁰ "The place represents architecture's share in truth.", it is the concrete manifestation of the people's dwelling, and their identity hinges on their belonging to places.⁴¹ Norberg-Schulz focuses on the concepts such as *character*, *identity*, and *loss of place* in the book *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. Identity and character are the prior conditions of being a place.

Character

According to Norberg-Schulz, the structure of place should be defined with regards to "landscape" and "settlement" and analyzed by means of the categories "space" and "character". While "space" refers to the three-dimensional configuration of the elements that constitute a place, "character" refers to the general "atmosphere", which is the most comprehensive feature of any place.⁴² Different activities require places with different characters, just as a house should be protective, an office should

³⁸ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 11.

be practical.⁴³ Character is both more general and concrete concept than space. By signifying the general “atmosphere”, character is determined by the formal and material formation of a place, that is, how it is built.⁴⁴ To illustrate, when we are in a foreign city, its specific character impresses us, it is an essential part of the experience.⁴⁵

The character of a human-made place is determined by "enclosure", which is a distinctive quality.⁴⁶ What first determines the character of an architectural work is the type of construction used, that is, whether it is skeletal, open, and transparent, or massive and enclosed; and the second factor that determines the character is making such as joining, binding, erecting etc.⁴⁷ “These processes express how the meaning of the work becomes a ‘thing’.”⁴⁸ Character is related to how a place exists. To examine a building regarding character it should be considered how it rests on the ground, and how it rises toward the sky.⁴⁹ Norberg-Schulz notes that it is necessary to pay special attention to lateral boundaries, or walls, of buildings since they contribute significantly to the character of the urban environment⁵⁰; in terms of it, he supports Robert Venturi’s definition of architecture as “the wall between the inside and the outside”.⁵¹ However, apart from Venturi's intuitions, the problem of

⁴³ Ibid., 14.

⁴⁴ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 14.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 58.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid, 15.

character has not been taken into account much in current architectural theory, hence, the theory has largely lost its connection with the concrete life-world.⁵² Regarding the environmental character Norberg-Schulz states that:

The man-made parts of the environment are first of all settlements of different scale, from houses and farms to villages and towns, and secondly “paths” which connect these settlements, as well as various elements which transform nature into a “cultural landscape”. If the settlements are organically related to their environment, it implies that they serve as foci where the environmental character is condensed and “explained”.⁵³

Since residence settlements are intrinsically unconnected with environmental conditions, it can be said that they are not organically related to their environment; this loss of organic relationship prevents them from serving as *foci* for their environment, and in this sense, causes damages in environmental character. Although some of these projects aim to connect with the environment, it is debatable to what extent this object can be achieved or whether it only stays in the design phase and does not work in practice. Even though there are projects that consider the physical and social bonds established with the environment, these structures inevitably break away from the environment because, in essence, they promise a high level of security and privilege.

Another existential question about high-rises is, besides environmental character, building’s own character. One of the reasons that high-rise buildings are famous is that they provide different functions for the comfort of their inhabitants, and this variety of functions allows them to create an image that fits the dynamism of modern life. Most residences offer different functions like offices, houses, and commercial areas in their body; these different functions are mostly accommodated in the

⁵² Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 15.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 10.

different flats of the structure, which may have almost the same spatial conditions, same architectural plans, same forms with minor arrangements. In this situation, some doubts about the characters of these areas can arise. According to Norberg-Schulz, character indicates a general overall atmosphere, at the same time, a concrete form and existence of the space-defining elements; and, he adds that different actions demand places with a different character.⁵⁴

Identity

Identity of a place is comprised of a one-of-a-kind blend of fundamental qualities that distinguish it, it is determined by location, general spatial configuration, and characterizing articulation.⁵⁵ The general identity of places depends on the structural relationship between the location and morphology of settlements, which is an underestimated fact in today's settlements. All layouts offer different variations of the figure-ground theme. The figure here does not mean a foreign element in a neutral ground, it is the realization of potentially existing foci.⁵⁶ A meaningful correspondence between site, settlement and architectural detail is the prerequisite of a strong place, human-made place must know "what it wants to be" relative to the natural environment.⁵⁷

Whereas landscapes are distinguished by a varied, but basically continuous extension, settlements are enclosed entities. Settlement and landscape therefore have a *figure-ground* relationship. In general any enclosure becomes manifest as a figure in relation to the extended ground of the landscape. A settlement loses its identity if this relationship is corrupted, just as much as the landscape loses its identity as comprehensive extension.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 175.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 180.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 12.

Norberg-Schulz asserts, "Human identity presupposes the identity of place."⁵⁹ He defines human identity as a function of places and things. Identification is the critical factor for people's sense of belonging. When people dwell, they are at the same time located in a space and are exposed to a particular environmental character. Related to that, "orientation" and "identification" are two psychological functions. To gain an existential foothold, people need to orientate themselves, that is, to know where they are; also, they need to identify themselves with the environment, which means knowing how they are in a particular place.⁶⁰ Identification and orientation are the main components of a human's being in the world as identification is the essence of people's sense of belonging, and orientation is the function that allows them to be that *Homo Viator*, which is part of their nature.⁶¹ However, modern society has concentrated on the practical function of orientation, and identification has been disregarded. It brings *alienation* psychologically, instead of true dwelling.⁶² Identification infers becoming friends with a certain environment, namely, experiencing the environment as "meaningful."⁶³ On the other hand, people can connect to "character" of things, they cannot be friends with scientific data, but only with *qualities*.⁶⁴ In the light of these, the identity of a place and identification of people with the place are essential concepts.

Discussing the identity of a place brings up the issues of stability and change, and the question of how new settlements can be implemented without disturbing the spirit

⁵⁹ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 22.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 168.

of the place becomes more of an issue.⁶⁵ In this regard, Norberg-Schulz cites Chicago, which is an example of a modern city, and states that although today there are few places where architects are conscious of the need to adapt to the environment in there, the first phase of development here proceeded within a certain rule by respecting the genius loci. The place in Chicago demands a neat grid, and early pioneers understood the genius loci and acted accordingly in the famous "Chicago Construction" introduced by Jenney in the 1880s.⁶⁶ A spatial system that concretizes an open and dynamic world of opportunities was suitable for Chicago does not mean it is applicable in every city. To illustrate, in Boston a similar model was implemented but the new buildings created a crushing effect due to their inhuman scale and lack of architectural character. While Chicago has the potential to absorb high-rise buildings, Boston is not, and with the construction of foreign buildings there, people have been deprived of one of their most important needs, a meaningful environment. These examples show that economic, social, political, and cultural intentions should be embodied in accordance with the genius loci.⁶⁷ On the other hand, "To respect genius loci does not mean to copy old models, it means to determine the identity of the place and interpret it in ever new ways."; in this way, a living tradition that makes change meaningful by associating it with locally established parameters can be spoken off.⁶⁸

"Cities have to be treated as individual places rather than abstract spaces where the 'blind' forces of economy and politics may have free play."⁶⁹ This perspective is essential for today's cities and high-rise housing production. Architects and

⁶⁵ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 182.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 182.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 182.

employers should not see the city as an abstract space but should consider the identity of the place while realizing high-rise housing projects.

According to Heidegger, spaces do not receive their being from “space”, they receive it from locations.⁷⁰ When we examine today's living conditions from this deep-rooted idea, it is seen that this existential quest is almost neglected. High-rise “residence” structures are built mostly independent from their environment and the location. Whether they are in the city center or suburbs, they all promise their residents a vertical world isolated from the environment and independent of location. This negligence inevitably has adverse effects on the identity of the city. Apart from the identity of the city, it is necessary to think about the identity of the building itself.

3.1.2 Residences and “Loss of Place”

Norberg-Schulz remarks that especially after the second world war, many places were exposed to profound changes, and the features that make human settlements distinctive were damaged or irreparably lost. New settlements are no longer confined and dense, but often consist of freely placed buildings in park-like areas.⁷¹ Streets and squares in the traditional sense have disappeared, replaced by a dispersed ensemble of units. He notes that this obvious figure-ground relationship is no longer there, the continuity of the landscape is disrupted, and the buildings do not form clusters or groups, and the sense of place is lost.⁷² He expresses this situation regarding the city as follows, “The urban tissue is “opened up”, the continuity of the urban “walls” is interrupted, and the coherence of the urban spaces damaged. As a consequence, nodes, paths and districts lose their identity, and the town as whole its

⁷⁰ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 12.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

imageability.”⁷³ With the disappearance of the traditional urban structure, the landscape lost its meaning as an inclusive extension and turned into what remains outside the complex network of human-made elements.⁷⁴

Norberg-Schulz claims that the character of today's environment consists of monotony.⁷⁵ The presence of new buildings is usually quite weak, “Very often “curtain-walls” are used which have an unsubstantial and abstract character, or rather a lack of character.”⁷⁶ All of these generally point to a loss of place. The settlement as a place in nature, urban foci as common living spaces, the building as a meaningful sub-place, where people experience individuality and belonging, have disappeared.⁷⁷ Norberg-Schulz claims that “Most modern buildings exist in 'nowhere'; they are not related to a landscape and not to a coherent, urban whole; they live their abstract life in a kind of mathematical-technological space which hardly distinguishes between up and down. The same feeling of “nowhere” is also encountered in the interiors of dwellings. A neutral, flat surface has substituted the articulate ceilings of the past, and the window is reduced to a standard device which lets in a measurable quantity of air and light.”⁷⁸ In this case, an "environmental crisis" can be mentioned with the loss of all features. Norberg-Schulz also draws attention to the fact that human identity develops depending on being brought up in a characteristic environment, so the "environmental crisis" is actually a "human crisis" at the same time.⁷⁹

⁷³ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 189.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 190.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 190.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 191.

Norberg-Schulz attributes the origin of the situation that caused this environmental crisis and the humanitarian crisis to the modernism movement. (Figure 3.1) In a self-contradictory way, in fact, modernism was born with the aim of creating a better environment for people, the open, “green city” was presented in response to the inhumane conditions in industrial European cities of the 19th century.⁸⁰ At the root of modernism is the goal of giving the alienated modern human a true and meaningful existence and returning to things.⁸¹ However, in the first phase of the modernism movement, the place concept was not well understood, and the result was not as desired due to the International Style in the 1920s.⁸²

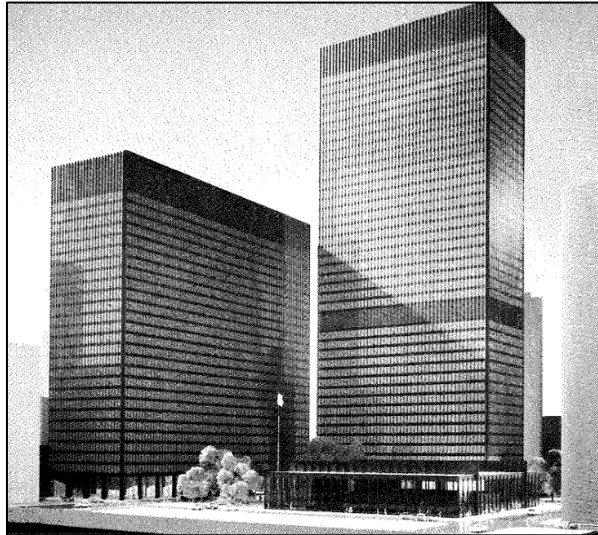


Figure 3.1. Federal Center, Chicago, by Mies van der Rohe, Example to monotonous, introverted structures of the movement of modernism.
Source: Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980), 190.

⁸⁰ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 191.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

In the second phase of modernism, some designs were made for the purpose of recovery of place, providing individuality to buildings and places in terms of space and character was the main goal. The church of Ronchamp (1953-55), designed by Le Corbusier during this period, was an important turning point by emphasizing the psychological aspect of architecture.⁸³ Third generation modern architects followed the recovery of place goal of their predecessors. While some recent constructions hold promise for developing an overarching understanding of ground recovery, risks still exist.⁸⁴ (Figure 3.2)

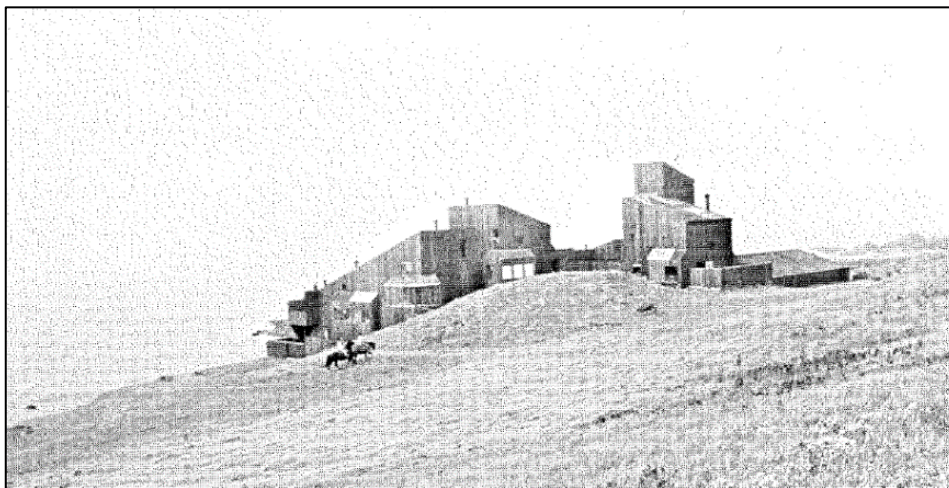


Figure 3.2. Sea Ranch, Gualala, California by MLTW.
Norberg Schulz's example to local adaptation.

Source: Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980), 201.

⁸³ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*, 196.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 198.

Norberg-Schulz supports that people must be able to orient themselves, must know where they are to gain an existential foothold.⁸⁵ From this perspective, it is essential for people to understand where they are in the space and position themselves. On the other hand, when people are in an ordinary 'residence', most of the time, it is tough for them to recognize on which floor they are. Similarities between different floors and lack of distinctive spatial qualities may lead to people feeling lost. Norberg-Schulz claims that most modern buildings exist in 'nowhere'; they are not related to a landscape and not to a coherent, urban whole; they live their abstract life in a kind of mathematical-technological space which hardly distinguishes between up and down.⁸⁶ Contemporary residences are the most severe examples of these conditions that Norberg-Schulz complained and these symptoms in residences may indicate loss of place.

Placelessness

Geographer Edward Relph scrutinizes the concept of place in his book "Place and Placelessness" dated 1976. Relph introduces that "There are at least two experienced geographies: there is a *geography of places*, characterised by *variety* and *meaning*, and there is a *placeless geography*, a *labyrinth of endless similarities*."⁸⁷ Variety and meaning are the factors that make somewhere a "place". On the other hand, excessive similarities bring "placelessness". In detail, Edward Relph represents his ideas on placelessness:

As an unselfconscious attitude placelessness is particularly associated with mass culture - the adoption of fashions and ideas about landscape and places that are coined by a few 'experts' and disseminated to the people through the mass media. The products of these two attitudes are combined in uniform,

⁸⁵ Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci*.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁸⁷ Edward Relph, "Prospects for Places" from *Place and Placelessness* (1976) *The Urban Design Reader*, 119.

sterile, other-directed and kitschy places - places which have few significances or symbols, only more or less gaudy signs and things performing functions with greater or lesser efficiency. The overall result is undermining the importance of place for both individuals and cultures, and the casual replacement of the diverse and significant places of the world with anonymous spaces and exchangeable environments.⁸⁸

Fashions and trends imposed by mass media form the environment, which consists of uniform, kitschy places. These places can be easily exchanged, transformed, or demolished since they are not meaningful, real places. They are the products of mass culture that can lose their value by the idealization of a different kind of product. This situation threatens the concept of place and deemphasizes the importance of being a place for people and cultures.

Along with the process, some movements have also developed that are sensitive to the loss of place resulting from modernization and reveal the possible adverse consequences and risks of the current situation. A perspective closely related to the concept of *genius loci* comes from the theory of “Critical Regionalism”. Environmental phenomenology lays the theoretical groundwork for contextualism and a design approach that revisits materiality, texture, sensory experience, and the poetry of design. Norberg-Schulz's emphasis on the concept of place in design plays a central role in the development of Critical Regionalism, and place-making strategies, also it influences the works of many designers all over the world.⁸⁹ Kenneth Frampton, one of the pioneers of this approach with his writings in the 1980s, took a stance against globalization, mass culture, and consumer society and defended architecture based on place, topography, climate, and culture.

⁸⁸ Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Limited, 1976), 143.

⁸⁹ Editors' Introduction “‘The Phenomenon of Place’ From Architectural Association Quarterly (1976)”, in *The Urban Design Reader*, ed. Michael Larice and Elizabeth McDonald (London: Routledge, 2007), 125.

Tall buildings are an indispensable part of today's modern cities. Conversely, Critical regionalism, that resists *placelessness* and *lack of identity* in the International Style, focuses on mid-rise or low-rise solutions instead of direct high-rise resolutions.⁹⁰ In their article titled “Rethinking of Critical Regionalism in High-Rise Buildings”, which aims to provide “rethinking of critical regionalism by focusing on the pathology of high-rise buildings in the issues pertaining to *place and identity*”, Zahiri, Dezhdar, and Foroutan claim that contemporary tall buildings prevent the reflection of cultural diversity and homogenize cities.⁹¹ According to the critical regionalism approach homogenization stems from the International Style has decreased profoundly the *sense, meaning* and *identity* of the place.⁹² The meaning of place is transformed in high-rise buildings, with these structures, people tend to own a piece of the sky instead of owning a piece of land, so the concept of place on the surface of the topography shifts to space. While a piece of land on earth is quite distinctive around it, a piece of sky does not have the same meaning.⁹³ Most modern buildings today have a concept of eliminating load-bearing walls and instead using large windows to maximize the amount of light entering the interior. In this way, the boundaries of the units are defined by glass curtain walls and the exterior plot becomes part of the interior of the house.⁹⁴ Tall buildings technically overpass topography and strive to define their own vertical topography in the sky.⁹⁵

Similarly, today's residence projects are also produced with the concept of maximizing the light entering by expanding the windows. This design approach,

⁹⁰ Nima Zahiri, Omid Dezhdar, and Manouchehr Foroutan, “Rethinking of Critical Regionalism in High-Rise Buildings,” *Buildings* 7, no. 4 (2017) doi:10.3390/buildings7010004

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

which is considered a symbol of modernity and high technology, has become a part of residence typology regardless of location and variable requirements. Residence structures, whose ground floor areas are relatively low compared to their height, do not have a strong relationship with the topography, they are usually built on a flattened landscape with standardized floor plans that are similar to each other.

To conclude, as Christian Norberg-Schulz reveals, "dwelling" means more than a shelter. People need to orient themselves within an environment and identify with it to dwell, in other words, they need to experience the environment as meaningful. On the other hand, contemporary residence projects do not serve as *foci* owing to their low connection with the environment, and it damages the environmental character. In addition to this, projects that are standardized and the unique features of how they exist are eroded are moving away from having a character of their own. The lack of unique character of the buildings, and the loss of environmental character bring the problem of loss of identity. Since there is no interaction between the natural environment and the built environment in such a way as to realize the potentially existing *foci* causes both the settlement and the landscape to lose their identity. Loss of character and identity consequently leads to loss of sense of place. This problem, which started to arise in most cities with modernization in the second half of the 20th century, is getting bigger with the residence projects today. Mass-produced structures similar to each other lead to placelessness, as Edward Relph indicates. According to the Critical Regionalism movement, which stands against the placelessness and loss of identity brought by International Style, today's tall buildings prevent the reflection of cultural diversity and increase homogenization in cities. Moreover, the identity of people depends on the identity of the place. People who dwell in a place are exposed to a certain environmental character, and their identity is formed by their connection with this character. For this reason, the loss of place resulting from the loss of character, identity, and meaning is not only an environmental crisis but also a human crisis. This humanitarian crisis has the potential to affect and transform both individuals and societies in general.

3.2 Sociological Perspective

High-rise buildings, as well as on an individual level, have critical effects on social structure in society. As revealed in the previous chapter, high-rise buildings in the way they built today can lead to loss of character and identity in cities and alienation of people from the environment they live in. This is a human and social problem as well as an environmental problem. The literature on high-rise housing related to the impacts on an individual scale presents also that high-rise housings lead decrease in prosocial behaviors, increase the anonymity of individuals, and they may induce atomization of people in society. These structures, which affect individuals' life profoundly, have also the potential to change the dynamics of the general social structure.

When residences are examined in terms of their social dimensions, two main issues come to the fore. These are the consumption culture that residence structures encourage and at the same time they are a part of, and the social segregation they provoke. Within the scope of mixed-use projects, residences are usually offered together with shopping malls. With these features, they encourage and facilitate shopping activities. Although this may seem like comfort initially, the situation is different intrinsically. In the advertisements and promotions of these projects, shopping areas stand out as an element of socialization and the heart of the project. They convey the message that shopping, and consumption are the only elements of socialization and living a meaningful life. In addition to providing spaces for consumption with the services they offer, residences are brand-name projects and have the feature of being consumption meta. Almost all residence projects have symbols and signs emphasizing their brand values. Also, apart from being a product, residences sometimes symbolize the power of their investors with their heights and become a part of economic competition.

In parallel with the consumption dimension, residences increase societal segregation and stratification. It is because they appeal to the high-income group, and concepts such as exclusivity, prestige, and privilege are emphasized as a sales policy. In

addition to these concepts, high-level security also stands out as a distinctive feature of residence projects. Services such as physical security measures, cameras, and security personnel enhance separation from the rest of society. In other words, there is both physical and social separation from society.

The new lifestyle of today's society is influential in the design of high-rise luxury buildings; and at the same time, skyscrapers play a key role in transforming society's lifestyle. That is to say, contemporary lifestyle and luxury high-rise buildings mutually support each other's formation. Related to this, Leyla Alkan notes that “Residence formation triggers the fast life forced by the consumer society, supports the lifestyle where every activity is perceived as a duty and is consumed quickly, and increases closed social relations.”⁹⁶ Within this framework, this chapter scrutinizes the relationship between the new generation residence typology and consumption culture and social segregation in more detail.

3.2.1 Mix-Used Highrise Residential Projects and Consumer Society

The humans of the age of affluence are surrounded by objects more than other human beings, in contrast to previous periods.⁹⁷ People's daily dealings are more with the reception and manipulation of goods and products than with their fellows.⁹⁸ Within the consumption culture, which became dominant and apparent in the second half of the 20th century and gradually increasing its momentum, architecture first and foremost represents a wide consumption environment, it is directed and shaped by

⁹⁶ Leyla, Alkan, “Ankara’da Değişen Konut Örüntüsünün Yeni Yüzü: Rezidanslar.” 5. Kentsel ve Bölgesel Araştırmalar Ağı Sempozyumu, Ankara, Turkey, 16-17 October 2014, 321-332.

⁹⁷ Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society, Myths and Structures* (Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Sage Publications, 1998), 25.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

that culture.⁹⁹ In this day and age, “consumption” and “residences” are handled in close relation, since these structures are products of consumption-oriented architecture and objects of consumption. In this study, the relationship between high-rise luxury housing (residences) and consumption is investigated with three aspects: residences being symbols of economic power, commodities themselves, and stimulants of consumption.

Residences As Symbol of Economic Power

A part of the society think that skyscrapers are signs of power, they indicate a powerful economy and high technology; therefore, they are prestige symbols for a place. About this issue, Mir M. Ali and Kheir Al-Kodmany states “...human ego has a role in building tall. The skyscraper offers pride to citizens and politicians, as well as to those involved in the design and construction of a structure—the tallest, biggest, strongest, and most beautiful, etc.”¹⁰⁰

The ego race that exists among investors also takes place between cities and countries. In the globalizing world, especially to stand out economically, skyscrapers are being built in city centers to create attraction centers for consumption. Unfortunately, investors do not care about the social impact of these projects, which are made to gain profit. In 2004, Seoul Conference of Council of Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), Alfred B. Hwangbo remarks that profitability is a key issue now instead of culture and humanism, monetary exploration is a prominent concern when it comes to tall buildings.¹⁰¹ High-rise residence projects in Turkey also carry these characteristics, which are generally attributed to tall buildings. Perouse

⁹⁹ Celal Abdi Güzer, “Batının Batısı Doğu, Doğunun Doğusu Batıdır,” in *Modernite ve Mimari*, ed. Doç. Dr. Ebru Erdönmez, (İstanbul: Esenler Şehir Düşünce Merkezi, 2012), 20.

¹⁰⁰ Mir M. Ali and Kheir Al-Kodmany. “Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat of the 21st Century: A Global Perspective,” *Buildings* 2, (2012): 396. doi:10.3390/buildings2040384.

¹⁰¹ Alfred B. Hwangbo, “High-flown Architecture and Ascendancy of the Building,” (Paper presented at the CTBUH 2004 Seoul Conference, Seoul, Korea, October 10-13, 2004), <http://global.ctbuh.org/paper/1163>.

discusses “residences as a symbol of primitive power”.¹⁰² While *Residences* are a striking indicator of the symbolic rivalry between investors in the context of capital's reemergence in the big-city scenes, within the framework of the search for a brand, they can be used as a kind of landmark that strives to highlight the strength and differences of companies.¹⁰³

Residences As Commodities and Advertising

One of the most critical points that present residences as consumption objects today is their advertisements. The advertisements state that owning these houses will add prestige to people and give them a particular character. In fact, the most popular phenomenon promised to people in consumption today is to provide a personality. Regarding this, in the 1950s, Riesman states:

Though material abundance becomes technologically possible, people continue to work—and do make-work—at a pace more in keeping with the earlier era of transitional growth: drives for mobility are still imbedded in their character. But the product now in demand is neither a staple nor a machine; it is a personality.¹⁰⁴

As with many other consumer products, residence advertisements target the consumer's desires for self and character with their messages. To illustrate, "If you own this luxury residence, you will have the elite life you deserve, and you will be happy.". This is a prophetic language that sells hope and Baudrillard describes it:

Advertising is prophetic language, in so far as it promotes not learning or understanding, but hope. What it says presupposes no anterior truth (that of the object's use-value), but an ulterior confirmation by the reality of the prophetic sign it sends out. This is how it achieves its end. It turns the object

¹⁰² Perouse, “Kapalı Dikey Rezidanslar ve Üst Sınıfların Merkeze Koşullu Dönüş Eğilimi: Eleştirel Bir Değerlendirme,” 2012

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ David Riesman, Nathan Glazer, and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1989) 46.

into a pseudo-event, which will become the real event of daily life through the consumer's endorsing its discourse.¹⁰⁵

It is not just advertisements that point to the commodification of residences, but also brand values that are mentioned proudly, logos, and gigantic signboards.

Residences As Stimulants of Consumption

Residences, which are usually mixed-use, create the atmosphere that capitalism needs to sustain itself, and these areas, where many services are provided together, become the center of consumption-oriented activities. Apart from hosting many services, the residences are mainly located together with a shopping mall. Shopping areas are highlighted as an attractive factor in project sales. In project advertisements, shopping areas are associated with the dynamism of life and presented as the basis of social life. In other words, while providing physical proximity to shopping areas, shopping is encouraged psychologically.

3.2.2 Luxurious High-Rise Apartments and Social Segregation

Essentially, the issues of social segregation and consumption are linked. One can say that the consumer society model underlies today's social stratification and segregation.

Consumption patterns are the most basic mechanism that determines the status level in today's societies. What, how and how much a person consumes is considered as an expression of his social position. Especially for upper income groups, how it is spent rather than the level of wealth is considered a sign of wealth.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*, 127.

¹⁰⁶ Jean-François Pérouse and A. Didem Daniş, "Zenginliğin mekânda yeni yansımaları: İstanbul'da güvenli siteleri," *Toplum ve Bilim* 104, (2005):104.

Privilege: Social Stratification

The luxury residence projects targeting the upper and middle class by promising them a privileged life increase social stratification. Residence projects that emphasize the privileged luxury life concept even in their advertisements, differentiate people according to their income and further trigger the polarization in the society. Luxury residence projects are marketed to the group, which is said to deserve to be privileged, with promises such as calmness, clean air, being in touch with nature, and scenery. In respect to this, Baudrillard remarks:

“The ascendancy of the urban and industrial milieu is producing new examples of shortage: shortages of space and time, fresh air, greenery, water, silence. Certain goods, which were once free and abundantly available, are becoming luxuries accessible only to the privileged, while manufactured goods or services are offered on a mass scale.”¹⁰⁷

Today, habitat is one of the most segregating consumables, and the residence projects are one of the most remarkable manifestations of this fact. (Figure 3.3)

Segregation by place of residence is not new, but, being increasingly linked to a consciously induced shortage and chronic speculation, it is tending to become decisive, in terms of both geographical segregation (town centres and outskirts, residential zones, rich ghettos, dormitory suburbs, etc.) and habitable space (the inside and outside of the dwelling, the addition of a 'second home', etc.). Objects are less important today than space and the social marking of space. Habitat thus perhaps has an opposite function to that of other consumables. The latter have a homogenizing function, the former a differentiating function in terms of space and location.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society*, 57.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.



Figure 3.3. Commercial of Trump Tower in India.

Source: <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-many-trump-towers-are-there-2019-1#apartments-at-trump-tower-in-kolkata-set-to-be-completed-in-2020-are-billed-as-luxurious-yet-reasonably-priced-7>

Exclusivity: Isolation and Atomization

Providing the forementioned privileged life literally with the closed doors, and high security systems creates a perception that the outside is dangerous and prevents social integration. Regarding this issue, Al-Kodmany liken skyscrapers to vertical closed gated communities (VGC), saying that, as in horizontal gated communities, these structures internalize its residents' social activities, which would otherwise have potential to enliven street life and public spaces.¹⁰⁹ Residences offer their residents many services that they may need in daily life under one roof; this is a factor that makes life faster but lessens the relationship of residents with the city. As a result, people with the same socio-economic level meet their daily needs together, and interaction with people from different socio-economic levels is further reduced.

¹⁰⁹ Kheir Al-Kodmany, "The Sustainability of Tall Building Developments: A Conceptual Framework," *Buildings* 8, no.1 (January 2018) <https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings8010007>.

Related to this situation Leyla Alkan asserts that:

Residences, which solve many activities from reception to security, from plumber to hairdresser, from gym to cinema, from childcare to health unit in one building, trigger segregation by hosting these activities that partially allow the integration of different identities within the city. Apart from work or school, residences that minimize dependence on the city also trigger the disappearance of urban spaces that bring together different identities.¹¹⁰

Reducing the spontaneous coming together of people from different sociocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds through daily activities can increase social polarization. In cities where people from all walks of society have to live together, this difference can be valuable; the introversion offered by the residence typology also damages the consciousness of being a society and the perception of unity and togetherness.

To summarize, in today's consumer society, architecture constitutes the scene of consumption culture and is shaped by this culture. Residence projects, the number of which has increased rapidly in recent years and spread widely in cities, are also a remarkable product of this consumption culture. Luxury high-rise projects are becoming a symbol of power for their investors with their height and high technology. In addition to serving the competition between the investors with their physical qualities, they are marketed to society as products and investment tools, apart from the traditional house concept. They have become today's most advertised high-profit commodities. Residences promise prestige and status to their buyers, not only a product but also an idealized way of life is marketed to consumers. In addition to being a product in themselves, residences often contain shopping areas that are indispensable for the ideal lifestyle and the so-called dynamism offered. Luxury housing projects target high-income groups due to their high costs, and their sales

¹¹⁰ Translated from Turkish by the author. Leyla Alkan, "Ankara'da Değişen Konut Örüntüsünün Yeni Yüzü: Rezidanslar," 325.

strategies are aimed at emphasizing wealth, privilege, and prestige. Catchwords such as being at the top and having the life deserved cause discrimination based on location. In addition, these structures, which are based on individuality with their designs, contribute to the atomization of individuals. Many services offered in the building reduce the common use of the city and weaken social cohesion. High-security measures, on the other hand, strengthen social segregation. In other words, these increasingly popular structures have crucial societal effects.

3.3 Urban Design Perspective

High-rise buildings have a wide area of influence in cities, both in terms of the space they occupy with their physical features and the high number of people they serve. In addition to the philosophical dimension and sociological impacts of the situation created by high-rise buildings that are rapidly produced in today's cities, their effects on the functioning of cities are also striking. Increasingly spreading high-rise housing projects in Turkey are creating profound impacts in the urban area. Residence projects implemented often create scale problems in the cities. Projects are financed by the private sector and designed based on parcels. They adopt the principle of being separate from the context they are in and being "privileged" with their luxurious physical structures that appeal to the high-income group and the services they offer indoors. As a by-product of this mission of being privileged and separate, it can be said that the visual and functional bond established with the environment is weak. This situation causes the rapidly increasing number of residence projects in big cities to have unpredictable and sometimes undesirable effects on the city skyline. These high-rise buildings, built by different investors without any regulation in terms of design and interaction with the city, may damage the urban identity by occupying the silhouette of the city uncontrollably. These projects, implemented uncontrollably without evaluating the existing urban fabric and analyzing the historical and symbolic values of the city, can strike a blow to the image of the city.

The residence typology, which emerged to meet the housing-office needs in limited and valuable lands in the city center, is rapidly increasing in the areas far from the center in big cities. Branded luxury residence projects are an important market area for the private sector. Considering the income and expenditure balances, it is quite profitable to implement this popular luxury housing typology in cheap lands far from the city center; this situation paves the way for land speculation and an increase in rent-oriented constructions. These fragmented growths spreading towards the urban periphery lead to decentralization of the city.

The parcel-based unplanned development and decentralization in cities is not only arises from the widespread use of automobiles, but also increases the dependence on automobiles. Housing projects scattered randomly around the city make the use of personal cars mandatory. As the distances increase with reference to the automobile and the scale gets larger, the walkability decreases. However, walkability is a must for a livable city. For a living city, it is necessary to provide a high level of comfort for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users. This is essential both for people's equal access to the city and for living streets and vivid urban areas.

3.3.1 Urban Texture

Tall Buildings as Isolated Objects in the City

In parallel with the developed technology and growing spaces, the construction sector has also grown, and the pace of construction has accelerated. All this acceleration and growth have striking reflections on the urban form. Contrary to the urban form that developed with the addition of new buildings along public spaces in the past city, "new urban areas are often collections of random, spectacular stand-alone buildings between parking lots and large roads."¹¹¹ The fact that today's settlements develop with stand-alone buildings between the parking lots and large roads is a widely debated issue with undesirable consequences in the city. The origin of this situation is based on the modernism movement that became widespread in the first half of the 20th century. According to Gehl, modernists rejected the city and urban space and turned their focus to individual buildings. This ideology and its principles, which were dominant until 1960, continue to influence the planning of new urban areas today. However, if a group of planners were asked to radically

¹¹¹ Jan Gehl, *Cities for People* (Washington: Island Press, 2010, 56.

reduce life between buildings, they could not find a more effective way than using modernist planning principles.¹¹²

In his book "Finding Lost Space", published in 1986, focusing on modern American cities, Roger Transic asserts that the Modernism Movement, which was established based on abstract ideals for the design of freestanding buildings, overlooked or refused the significance of street space, urban squares and gardens, and other important urban rooms.¹¹³ He claims that the modernism movement, which peaked between 1930 and 1960, contributed to the "lost spaces". *Lost space* is defined as "the leftover unstructured landscape at the base of high-rise towers or the unused sunken plaza away from the flow of pedestrian activity in the city." in the book.¹¹⁴



Figure 3.4. Le Corbusier's design Ville Radieuse (Radiant City)

Source: <https://www.arkitektuel.com/ville-radieuse/>

¹¹² Gehl, *Cities for People*, 4.

¹¹³ Roger Transic, *Finding Lost Space* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1986), 8.

¹¹⁴ Transic, *Finding Lost Space*, 3.

Transic complains that designers face difficulties in creating outdoor environments that are collective, unifying frameworks for new development. According to him, the contribution of designers to areas that were initially *ill-shaped* and *ill-planned* for public use is limited to subsequent cosmetic interventions. The usual process of urban development treats buildings as isolated objects embedded in the landscape, not as part of wider streets, squares, and livable open spaces.¹¹⁵ Without considering the three-dimensional relationship between buildings and spaces and human behavior, decisions on growth patterns are made through two-dimensional land-use plans. *Antispaces* appear in many environmental settings, since urban space is rarely envisioned as an exterior volume that has shape, scale, and relationship to other spaces.¹¹⁶

Roger Trancik remarks that also glorifying private enterprise contributes to creating lost space in urban centers. While economic health strengthened the downtown, it made a huge demand for floor space in the center and supported vertical urbanization. As a by-product of this, public spaces changed the place with the expression of the private sector, and every space has been seen as a potential place for image buildings, which are a corporate flagship. The modest idea of adapting to the collective city goes against corporate aspirations and the "chest-beating individuality of the American style." In this way, the city of collective spaces has turned into a city of private icons. Ill-placed buildings disrupt the continuity of streets, height regulations are frequently violated, and various materials and façade

¹¹⁵ Transic, *Finding Lost Space*, 1.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

styles compete irritatingly for attention. As a result, the city has almost become a showground for the private ego at the expense of the public sphere.¹¹⁷

City Silhouette

Tall buildings have a substantial impact on the silhouettes of cities. High-rise projects built without a holistic approach to the city can negatively affect the character and silhouette of the city. In this respect, the rapidly increasing high-rise residential and office projects in Istanbul and Ankara in recent years lead to silhouette discussions. (Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6)



Figure 3.5. Silhouette of İstanbul.

Source: <https://www.cnnturk.com/turkiye/deprem-sonrasi-kacacak-yer-kalmadi-istanbulu-bekleyen-tehlike?page=11>

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 17.



Figure 3.6. A View from Ankara

Source: <https://www.haberturk.com/ankara-da-da-siluet-tartismasi-yaratacak-goruntu-1728435>

3.3.2 Livable Cities

High-Rise Building Scale and Human Scale

The city is the most concrete example of human civilization and development, and cities serve human life, that is, they exist for people. But today, as advanced technology allows us to equip our cities with larger and higher structures, a rapid break with the human scale takes place. High-rise residence projects proudly display the latest technology that humanity has reached and become buildings that are proud of being higher and bigger. However, at this point, while reaching higher day by day within the possibilities of technology, the physical capacity, and limits of human beings, and therefore their relationship with the growing scale, is an issue that needs attention.

In his book *Cities for People*, Jan Gehl, an architect who works on designing livable cities for people, emphasizes that basing human scale and biological capacity is

essential for creating healthy, sustainable, and livable cities. Gehl claims the way to design cities for people is possible by using human mobility and human senses, which form the biological basis of activity, behavior, and communication in the urban, as the base.¹¹⁸ In this context, he refers to the subject of "the social field of vision." He underlines that in the context of urban planning when the relations between the senses, communication, and measures are examined, the social field of vision is mentioned. The upper limit of this area in horizontal is 100 meters, which is the last distance we can see people in motion, and 25 meters is an essential limit as the farthest distance we can perceive emotions and facial expressions.¹¹⁹ These two distances are key measures considered in physical environments designed to watch people like stadiums, theatres.¹²⁰ As a result of human evolutionary development, sight when people look up and down is also limited and differs. People can see up to 70-80 degrees below the horizon when they look down, where where they step is important for detecting danger, while the viewing angle above the horizon line is limited to 50-55 degrees.¹²¹

These sensory boundaries also support that the contact between the building and the street is possible from the bottom five floors, above the fifth floor the contact with the city begins to disappear rapidly, the contact area with the landscape, clouds and planes begins. Gehl unfolds communication between tall buildings and their surroundings is best on the bottom two floors, while it is accomplishable from the third, fourth, and fifth floors. From these floors, we can watch and follow city life, perceive talks, shouts, and arm movements; so, we can really be a part of city life. Above five floors the situation starts to change dramatically, details become

¹¹⁸ Jan Gehl, *Cities for People* (Washington: Island Press, 2010), 33.

¹¹⁹ Jan Gehl, *Cities for People*, 35.

¹²⁰ Gehl, *Cities for People*, 35.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

invisible, it is not possible to notice and communicate with people on the ground.¹²² (Figure 3.7) Regarding this, Gehl notes: “Above the fifth-floor offices and housing should logically be the province of the air traffic authorities. At any rate, they no longer belong to the city.”¹²³

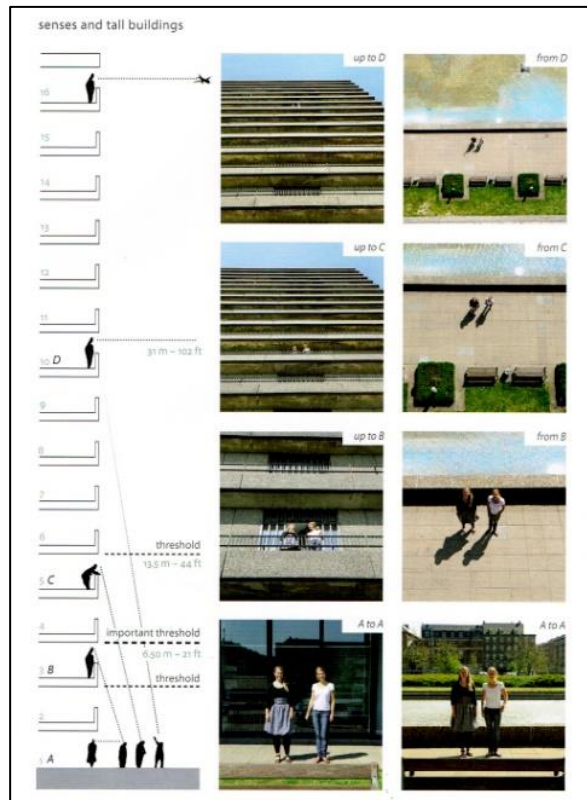


Figure 3.7. Senses and tall buildings, Jan Gehl's drawing.
Source: *Cities for People*, 40.

Whereas tall buildings are fascinating to many people, it does not seem like that from an urban life perspective, since what makes a city alive and sustainable is the network

¹²² Ibid., 42.

¹²³ Ibid., 42.

of relationships on the ground, interactions that take place on a human scale. While the growing scale and increasing height of buildings disconnect people from urban life, they also prevent the creation of *meaningful* and *warm* physical environments. Gehl asserts that small scale means adventurous, intense, and warm cities. In narrow streets and small spaces, it is possible to see buildings, details, and people in a dose of diversity. Things to absorb, buildings and activities abound, and we can experience them with great intensity. Therefore, we perceive this environment as warm, personal, and intimate.¹²⁴

On the other hand, experiencing cities and urban complexes where distances, urban areas and buildings are huge, residential areas are dispersed over large areas, details are lacking, and few people are present is quite a contrast to abovementioned small-scale areas. This type of urban situation often creates an impersonal, cold, and formal perception. Where the built environment is large-scale and dispersed, there is often not much to experience, especially nothing for the senses associated with strong intense feelings.¹²⁵

Sustainable City and "Green Mobility"

The sustainable city concept can gain strength if most of the transportation takes place as "green mobility," which is travel by walking, cycling, and public transport. These forms of transport benefit the economy and the environment, lower resource consumption, limit emissions, and decrease noise levels. Public transport systems are more attractive if people feel comfortable and safe while walking, biking, or using public transport.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Gehl, *Cities for People*, 53.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

The growth of scale in the city, especially the neglect of human scale at eye level, reduces walkability and cycling in the city. Gehl notes that today's urban planning decisions are made on a drawing board, and the time between decision and implementation is getting shorter and shorter. The speed of new modes of transport and very large-scale building projects pose new challenges. Traditional knowledge of human scale and proportions is gradually disappearing, resulting in new urban areas far beyond the scale people would find comfortable and meaningful. To support pedestrian and bicycle traffic and to realize the dream of livable, safe, sustainable, and healthy cities, it is necessary to start with a meticulous awareness of the human scale.¹²⁷ Principles of human scale should be a natural part of the urban fabric to invite people to walk and cycle.¹²⁸

The scale growth in cities prevents the creation of meaningful and comfortable spaces that encourage walking, cycling, and using public transport, increasing the use of personal cars. On the other hand, the use of automobiles also contributes to the growth of scale and the separation of urban spaces and neighborhoods from each other. In other words, that large-scale and automobile-based transportation feed each other in mutual interaction. Regarding the damage of automobile-based transportation to the city, Roger Trancik states that due to the dependence on the automobile, neighborhoods, and districts no longer interact, but became isolated and homogeneous enclaves; he adds in the end, the desire for order and mobility destroyed the diversity and richness of urban life.¹²⁹

Some details emerge when the interplay between large-scale and automobile-based transportation is examined in more detail. With the increase in the use of cars, the city can be experienced quickly; in fact, it cannot be experienced fully. Reason for

¹²⁷ Gehl, *Cities for People*, 55.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹²⁹ Trancik, *Finding Lost Space*, 7.

that is people's sensory equipment and systems that work to interpret sensory impressions are suitable for walking speed. When people walk at the average human speed of 4-5 km/h, they can find time to see what is going on in front of them, cyclists and runners likewise can establish good sensory communication with the environment and people around them.¹³⁰ When they drive at 50, 80, or 100 km/h, they miss the opportunity to catch the details and see the people around them.¹³¹

Gehl refers to Venice and Dubai as examples of *5km/h architecture* and *100km/h architecture*, respectively.¹³² (Figure 3.8) While Venice is a slow and livable city with its scale more suitable for human scale and a form that supports walking, Dubai is a bad example of being a livable city with fast architecture, with its monumental buildings, vast distances, and its structure that increases the use of automobiles.



(a)



(b)

Figure 3.8. (a) Dubai 100 km/h architecture and, (b) Venice 5 km/h architecture

Source: (a) Google Earth Street View, (b)

<https://www.venicebyvenetians.com/venetian-students-life/>

¹³⁰ Gehl, *Cities for People*, 43.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 45.

In conclusion, the theme of isolated buildings in parking lots, which emerged with modernism, has become the dominant texture in contemporary cities due to market demands and economic policies in today's conditions. Residences in Turkey, the number of which has increased since the 2010s, are being constructed by different investors on a parcel-based strategy without considering making them a part of a holistic urban texture. Thus, the concept of lost space, which emerged with modernism, is strikingly manifest in today's cities. When the buildings are produced as isolated objects, the urban area disappears. Buildings constructed without considering their three-dimensional relationship with the city damage the functionality of the city, and lead to the losing its character by creating disharmony in the silhouette. In addition to the impacts on the urban fabric, high-rise buildings can also have devastating effects on the livability of the cities. Human-centered design is fundamental for creating healthy, sustainable, and livable cities. Designing settlements without considering human mobility and sensational limits makes cities far from being lively places that encourage social life. Moreover, people living in high-rise buildings can no longer be a part of the city, and structures that move away from the human scale reduce the walkability of settlements. However, walkability, green mobility, and an efficient public transportation system are essential for healthy and sustainable cities. In today's situation, the extremely commercialized housing sector implements profit-oriented residence projects in distant areas of the city in a dispersed and uncontrolled manner. Transportation to these regions, which have inadequate infrastructural connections with the city, is mostly based on personal cars. There is no efficient public transportation system, and walkability and green mobility are not considered significant. Automobile-based transportation prevents people from experiencing the city in real terms. Breaking from the human scale and the lack of designs to support the social sphere of the city are severe obstacles to building livable cities.

CHAPTER 4

HIGH-RISE RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS IN ANKARA

As a capital city, Ankara has always been a significant city for the Republic of Turkey in terms of both infrastructure and social aspects. The urban and architectural structure of the city is also affected by political and social developments effectively and rapidly. Residence projects are being built rapidly in many parts of the city, especially in new residential areas and areas under development. It is seen that these projects are sometimes built next to smaller detached housing estates, and sometimes they are built alone on empty land. Regions where high, luxury residence projects come together are introduced as elite and privileged areas with high profits.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, high-rise buildings themselves and high-rise housing in the city are already issues that need to be addressed comprehensively. The wide distribution of these projects in Ankara by emphasizing the features such as exclusivity, privilege, and high-level security can have critical effects on the city and society. Possible effects need to be comprehensively considered. In this chapter, brief information is given about the history of Ankara and its urban identity to create an intellectual basis to deal with the philosophical aspect of high-rise, luxury and security residence projects, as examined in the previous chapters. The situation in terms of the rapidly increasing number of residence housing typology in Ankara is presented, and some projects with similar characteristics in the southwest region of the city are examined more closely.

4.1 The Capital City of Turkey: Ankara

Geographically, Ankara has the advantage of being located between the Marmara and Central Anatolian regions, and, on a larger scale, it is the first stop on the Central Anatolian Plateau of the route connecting Europe to the Middle East after departure from Marmara.¹³³ The region that Ankara exists has a quite long history. Since the 20th century BC, the city has been inhabited consistently. It was home to many civilizations, such as the Hittites, Phrygians, Lydians, Persians, Roman Empire, and Byzantium, then came under Turkish rule with the Seljuks in the 11th century and became an Ottoman city in the 14th century.¹³⁴ The center of the Ottoman Empire was Istanbul, and development and investments were concentrated in there. Hence, during the Ottoman period, Ankara remained as a small Anatolian city that developed the production and processing of mohair and angora.¹³⁵ After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire owing to the First World War, and with the process started of the national independence movement, crucial developments have occurred that shaped the urban identity of Ankara.

During the War of Independence at the beginning of the 20th century, Ankara, thanks to its strategic location, became the center of national resistance movement. After the War of Independence ended, the new regime looked for a capital city. Ankara, the center of the resistance movement and a new ideology that sought to reject the symbolic semi-colonial center of the Ottoman Empire, became the capital. The decision to choose Ankara was based on the need for the new society to break with the semi-colonial Ottoman Empire. The aim was to push economic development to the heart of Anatolia and to build an exemplary city as a symbol of contemporary

¹³³ Baykan Günay, "Ankara Spatial History," *Associations of European Schools of Planning* (2012).

¹³⁴ Günay, "Ankara Spatial History."

¹³⁵ Günay, "Ankara Spatial History."

living environment.¹³⁶ However, at that time, Ankara had a very poor physical appearance as it inherited a desolate Ottoman urban structure – “the streets were dusty in summer and muddy in winter”.¹³⁷ The fact that Ankara became the capital of the newly established republic and that it was designed with the mission of being a city that would set an example for all of Anatolia is critical in terms of the history and identity of the city.

Lörcher Plan

The first planning attempts for Ankara started with the plans prepared by the Berlin architect Carl C. Lörcher in 1924 for the old Ankara, that is, the castle and its surroundings, and for the New City (Yenişehir) in 1925. The plan prepared for the old city was not implemented, but the the New City (Yenişehir) Plan, which includes today's Sıhhiye area, was put into practice.¹³⁸ Lörcher Plan proposed a new center around the central station, and the foundation of the New City was laid. It primarily arranged the land for new public buildings needed by the government, and, in this process, public buildings were designed by some famous western and Turkish architects.¹³⁹ As a key feature, Lörcher plan brought the New City (Yenişehir) proposal, which spread the city to the south and shaped the Kızılay center and its surroundings, that form the heart of the city today; it made the basic decisions that created the road and the infrastructure of the zoning island that gave life to the present Kızılay district. It can be said that a significant step has been taken in terms of

¹³⁶ Günay, “Ankara Spatial History.”

¹³⁷ Günay, “Ankara Spatial History.”

¹³⁸ *2023 Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu: Etüdler & Müdahale Bicimleri* (Ankara: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2006).

¹³⁹ Günay, “Ankara Spatial History.”

shaping the city into a macroform and oriented to the south with Lörcher Plan.¹⁴⁰ (Figure 4.1)

The New City plan was accepted due to the increasing need for housing. The plan proposes a single or maximum two-storey texture with a garden, homogeneously distributed over the grid road system. Although the plan was implemented, by the end of 1927, the city began to spread to Çankaya and Keçiören regions. For example, in Cebeci, which is located on a high plateau, a scattered and irregular illegal settlement began.¹⁴¹

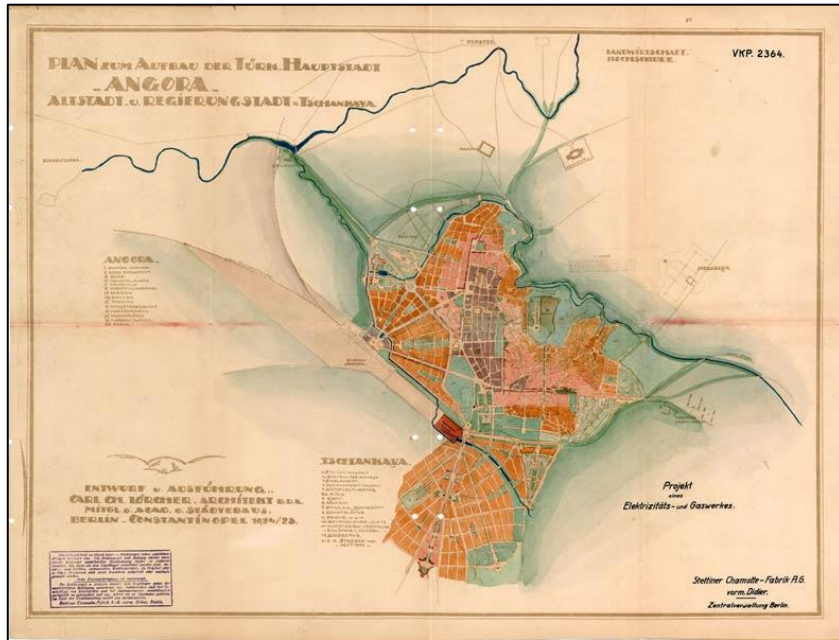


Figure 4.1. Lörcher Plan for Ankara, 1925

Source: <https://www.goethe.de/ins/tr/ank/prj/urs/geb/sta/loe/trindex.htm>

¹⁴⁰ 2023 Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

Jansen Plan

Increasing immigration and rapid growth arose the need for a more comprehensive plan for Ankara. It was decided to prepare a master plan for Ankara, which is the center of the works carried out by the republican administration to build a new society and develop a city model in accordance with the modernism. In 1928, a competition was held for this plan and three European city planners were asked to prepare proposals for envisioning a 50-year period, an estimated population of 300,000, and German planner Herman Jansen won the competition in 1929.¹⁴² (Figure 4.2)

Jansen Plan was put into practice in 1932 with a definitive plan for implementation and is one of the studies that makes the most important decisions for the development of the city. It has largely accepted the development and implementation option envisaged by the Lörcher Plan for Yenışehir. The Jansen Plan envisaged the widening of the North-South-oriented Atatürk Boulevard, which connects the Old City to Çankaya. The plan, which foresees a housing development for the civil servants on the Yenışehir-Kavaklıdere axis without intervening too much in the old Ankara, designed the Tandoğan, Bahçelievler axis and Cebeci surroundings, which it defined as the east and west ends, as workers' quarters.¹⁴³ Jansen proposed a low-density, low-rise urban texture typology with an Ebenezer Howardian garden-city understanding and a detached house type in the city center.¹⁴⁴ Although the plan could be implemented in the first years, it could not be accomplished in the following years due to rapid growth and land speculation.

¹⁴² Günay, "Ankara Spatial History."

¹⁴³ 2023 *Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu*.

¹⁴⁴ Olgu Çalışkan, "Planlama ve Tasarım Denetimi Bağlamında Ankara'da Konut Dokusu Morfolojisi," (article presented at the Konut Paneli, Ankara, February 21-22, 2015), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287811204_Planlama_ve_Tasarim_Denetimi_Baglaminda_Ankara'da_Konut_Dokusu_Morfolojisi.

Baykan Günay notes that with Jansen Plan, “The city reflected the modesty of Republican regime, in that there was no monumentality, but offered impressions of *a culturalist modest city*.” The plan created a western-style city as desired, but the compact and finished city form of the plan could not cope with the natural changes that followed. By 1955, Ankara's population had reached 450,000 and it was predicted to reach 750,000 by 2000. For this reason, a competition was held for a new master plan in 1955.¹⁴⁵

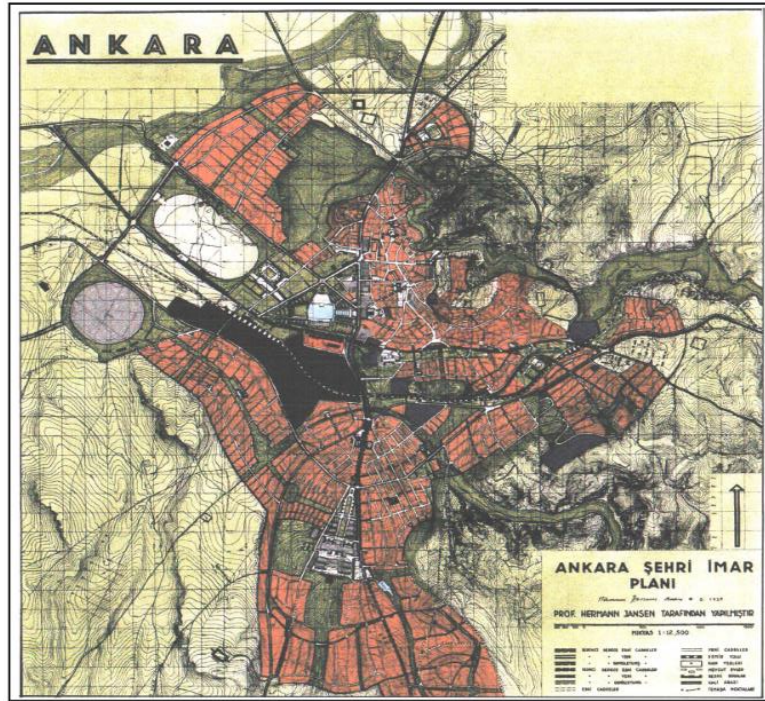


Figure 4.2. Herman Jansen Plan.

Source: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi İmar ve Şehircilik Dairesi Başkanlığı (ABBISDB), 2023 Baskent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu: Etudler ve Mudahale Bicimleri (Ankara: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2006)

¹⁴⁵ Günay, “Ankara Spatial History.”

Uybadin - Yücel Plan

After the World War II, the modernization of agricultural production with Marshall Plan caused large numbers of people to leave the rural workforce and migrate to the big cities to find work. Like other major Turkish cities, the capital Ankara has been directly affected by the massive migration from the east, the least developed part of the country.¹⁴⁶ Ankara's population grew rapidly, and an international competition was announced to prepare a development plan to respond to this change in 1955. The competition resulted in the selection of the plan proposal of Turkish architects Nihat Yücel and Raşit Uybadin.¹⁴⁷ (Figure 4.3)

Yucel-Uybadin Plan tried to produce an integrated macroform that aimed to control the spreading to the peripheries for the development of the city in this period when the rate of urban development was at its highest and a population explosion was experienced.¹⁴⁸ According to Günay, this third plan pursued to maintain the culturalist city of the first plan, it aimed to prevent further growth and density. Since it ignored the natural forces of the society, eventually it faced the destruction of the city. Dual structure of the society shaped the urban form, the apartment blocks and low-rise low-density squatter housing became the texture of the city reflecting the socio-economic status of society. Thereby, “the garden city transformed into an apartment city, and the green belts into a squatter city, launching a process of planned versus spontaneous development.” The process led to a replacement of the urban fabric, model contemporary city lost its values, a chaotic order emerged.

¹⁴⁶ Olgu Çalışkan, “Forming a Capital: Changing Perspectives on the Planning of Ankara (1924-2007) and Lessons for a New Master-Planning Approach to Developing Cities,” *Footprint: Delft Architecture Theory Journal*, no. 5 (Autumn 2009) <https://doi.org/10.7480/footprint.3.2.708>

¹⁴⁷ Çalışkan, “Forming a Capital: Changing Perspectives on the Planning of Ankara (1924-2007) and Lessons for a New Master-Planning Approach to Developing Cities.”

¹⁴⁸ 2023 *Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu*.

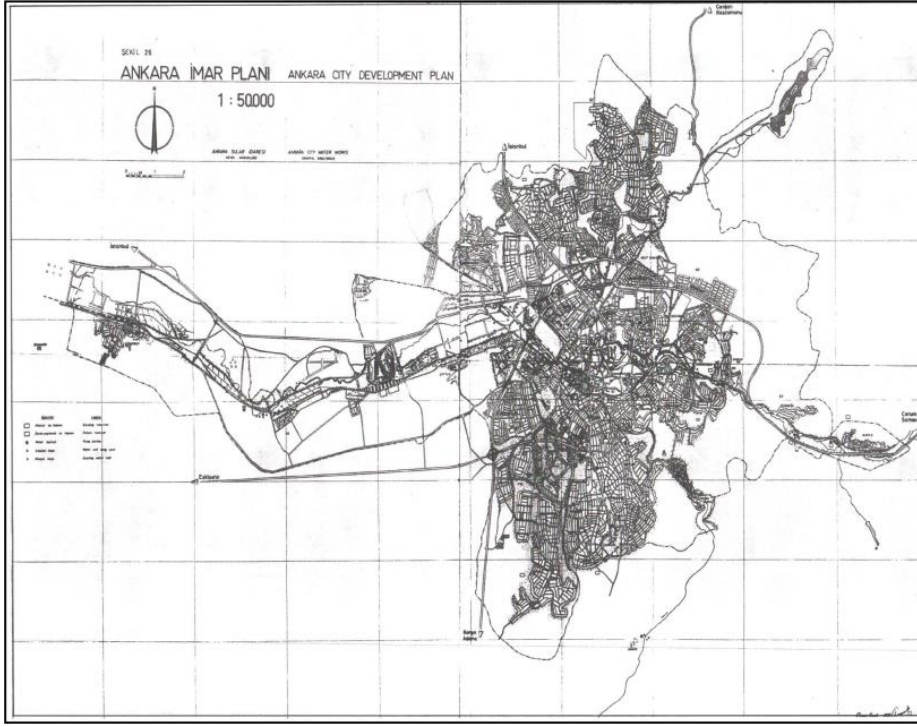


Figure 4.3. Uybadin Yücel Plan

Source: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi İmar ve Şehircilik Dairesi Başkanlığı (ABBISDB), 2023 Baskent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu: Etudler ve Mudahale Bicimleri (Ankara: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2006)

Ankara 1990 Plan (1975)

By the 1970s, it was determined that the population and settlement projections of the Yücel-Uybadin plan had already been exceeded, and that the approved plan was insufficient in solving the complex problems of a city that had begun to gain a metropolitan character.¹⁴⁹ In 1969, the Ankara Metropolitan Area Master Plan Bureau (Ankara Metropolitan Alan Nazım Plan Bürosu - AMANPB) was established, and planning work began on a metropolitan scale for the first time in the country. The bureau developed a master plan scheme by working between 1970 -

¹⁴⁹ 2023 Baskent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu.

1975. This scheme came into effect in 1982 as the "Ankara 1990 Master Plan". It has a framework that can be called a structural plan rather than a master plan.¹⁵⁰

1990 Plan, which foresees the development of the city of Ankara "along the western corridor" with a structural plan understanding, is an influential study that integrates with comprehensive analyzes and a management approach that directs the city while applying it with a holistic approach. Important centers such as Mass Housing Areas Batıkent, Eryaman, Sincan, and the Sincan Organized Industrial Zone were opened to development under the name of the "west corridor" and the city was oriented predominantly to the axis of the Istanbul Road.¹⁵¹ (Figure 4.4)

Regarding its definition of center and acceptance of the squatter areas, fourth plan can be seen as a success. The Plan prepared by the Metropolitan Office, by balancing employment and residential development hoped to serve the middle- and lower-income groups.¹⁵² Olgu Çalışkan indicates that, with 1990 plan for the first time, a master plan for Ankara intended to integrate land use and transportation, which is still indispensable for a sustainable urban development strategy.¹⁵³

Çalışkan also points out that some of the housing estates built with the initiative of the Ankara 1990 Plan, although they have a high-rise and high-density formation, do not represent a modernist conception of centrism. This is because some mass-housing examples built by cooperatives were the products of the intention of high-rise, high-density development rather than creating more open spaces, as in modernism. In this way, the inner city's high-density urban pattern was reproduced on the urban fringe as additional extensions; it caused a duality in the fringe areas of

¹⁵⁰2023 *Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu.*

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Günay, "Ankara Spatial History."

¹⁵³ Çalışkan, "Forming a Capital: Changing Perspectives on the Planning of Ankara (1924-2007) and Lessons for a New Master-Planning Approach to Developing Cities."

Ankara in the shape of squatters' low-rise, medium-to-high-density urban pattern and mass housing's high-rise, high-density urban pattern. According to Çalışkan, this reality reveals that in developing countries shift from individual housing production to collective housing production might not be realized in the same form as in Western capitalist countries it progressed earlier.¹⁵⁴

Concerning the 1990 Plan, Günay marks that “It was a mono-directional plan and in this respect fell into the same trap as the previous plan, in that it was not flexible.”¹⁵⁵ Batuman assert that the establishment of Metropolitan Municipalities with the 1984 Metropolitan Law has been effective in the transformation of urban development. In this process, Master Plan Offices were closed, and planning duties passed to metropolitan municipalities. After that, in the 1980s, the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality allowed the local development of settlements in the western and southern fringes of the city. This situation brought the end of the controlled urban expansion targeted by the 1990 Plan and was the beginning of the uncontrolled sprawl led by the housing investors.¹⁵⁶ In fact, while individual housing projects led this expansion in the 1990s, partial plan revisions covering larger areas in the 2000s led to growth.¹⁵⁷ The scale of uncontrolled urban growth continued to increase with the process when metropolitan municipalities start to take planning decisions.

¹⁵⁴ Çalışkan, “Forming a Capital: Changing Perspectives on the Planning of Ankara (1924-2007) and Lessons for a New Master-Planning Approach to Developing Cities.”

¹⁵⁵ Günay, “Ankara Spatial History.”

¹⁵⁶ Bülent Batuman, “City Profile: Ankara,” *Cities* 31, (April 2013) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2012.05.016>

¹⁵⁷ Batuman, “City Profile: Ankara.”

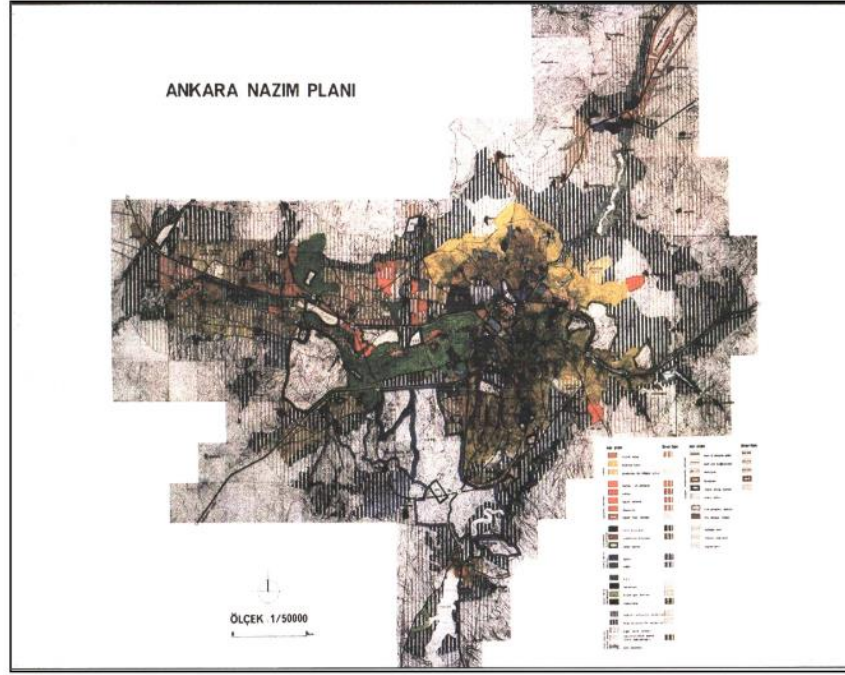


Figure 4.4. Ankara 1990 Master Plan

Source: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi İmar ve Şehircilik Dairesi Başkanlığı (ABBISDB), 2023 Baskent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu: Etudler ve Muda-hale Bicimleri (Ankara: Ankara Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2006)

After the 1990 Plan, the two plans prepared in the period until 2006 were not officially approved, but it can be said that they had impacts on creating a general framework for urban development. These plans are the 2015 Structure Plan in 1986 and the 2025 Plan in 1997.

2015 Structure Plan

In 1986, a 1/100 000 scale structural plan targeting 2015 was prepared by a research group formed in the Middle East Technical University, City and Regional Planning Department. In this plan, a radial development model with ventilation corridors by green wedges between the radial corridors were envisaged. (Figure 4.5) In this way, it was aimed to save the city from its ink-blot form and to prevent air pollution. 2015 Structure Plan preserved the 1990 Ankara Master Plan decisions in principle; however, it also envisaged a decentralized construction in the North, Southeast and

2015 Structure Plan lost its function with the implementation of another ring road route that did not comply with the proposed ring road in the plan which would support the aims of the plan. Although this plan was accepted as the main framework by the authorities, it could not guide the sub-scale implementations and plans as it was not officially approved. The public authorities, who accepted this plan as the framework, came to the fore with the approvals of independent plans, and the conflicts of authority among them especially in the Southwest axis. For this reason, instead of a controlled decentralization and focus formation in this corridor, a rapid urban expansion process has begun.¹⁶⁰

Ankara 2025 Plan

Although the "Ankara 2025 Plan Scheme" dated 1997 has not been officially approved, it is an upper-scale planning study that represents the new understanding that has prevailed since the mid-1990s.¹⁶¹ The Metropolitan Municipality started planning studies for 2025, yet there were lawsuits between the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement and the Metropolitan Municipality over the contiguous areas and fragmented environmental plans, and a framework that could control the development of the metropolitan city could not be established.¹⁶²

Çalışkan maintains that 2025 Plan did not have a holistic foresight toward the urban structure, it had an approach that spread and dissolved the urban form. Against the idea of corridorization envisaged by the 2015 Plan, it paved the way for a period that disperses the western corridor spatially and deconstructs it fragmentarily with the so-called metropolitan zoning plan schemes. In this period, the settlement islands, which are not related to the immediate environment in an entirely isolated form, became the dominant typology. (Figure 4.6)

¹⁶⁰ 2023 Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu.

¹⁶¹ Çalışkan, "Planlama ve Tasarım Denetimi Bağlamında Ankara'da Konut Dokusu Morfolojisi."

¹⁶² 2023 Başkent Ankara Nazım İmar Planı - Plan Açıklama Raporu.

2023 Capital Ankara Master Plan

In 2006, the Municipal Council accepted the Ankara 2023 Master Plan that envisages 7 or 8 million people; 2023 is a meaningful date for Turkey by being the 100th anniversary of the Republic.¹⁶⁵ The plan reveals the tendency to define a holistic structure throughout the city and aims to control and direct the period's uncontrolled rapid and fragmentary development dynamic. It aims to revise the zoning plans having excessive housing development decisions in many parts of the planning area and intends to create an upper form with specific boundaries to develop in certain axes when required -especially in the direction of Temelli.¹⁶⁶ (Figure 4.7)

Çalışkan notes that although the plan has a distinctive stance on the upper scale, it does not have an instrumentality that can direct the construction in the lower parts of the urban form. Thus, results that were not compatible with the strategic predictions of the plan were produced in the urban parts. There is a period in which housing typologies that have been sociologically falsified and discontinued in contemporary Western countries are widely reproduced in Ankara, as in many other cities in Turkey.¹⁶⁷

Baykan remarks that 2023 Master Plan suggests almost limitless growth along the southwestern corridor and causes serious land speculation at the fringe that entails the decline of the CBD, thus, planners consider the problem.

¹⁶⁵ Günay, "Ankara Spatial History."

¹⁶⁶ Çalışkan, "Planlama ve Tasarım Denetimi Bağlamında Ankara'da Konut Dokusu Morfolojisi."

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

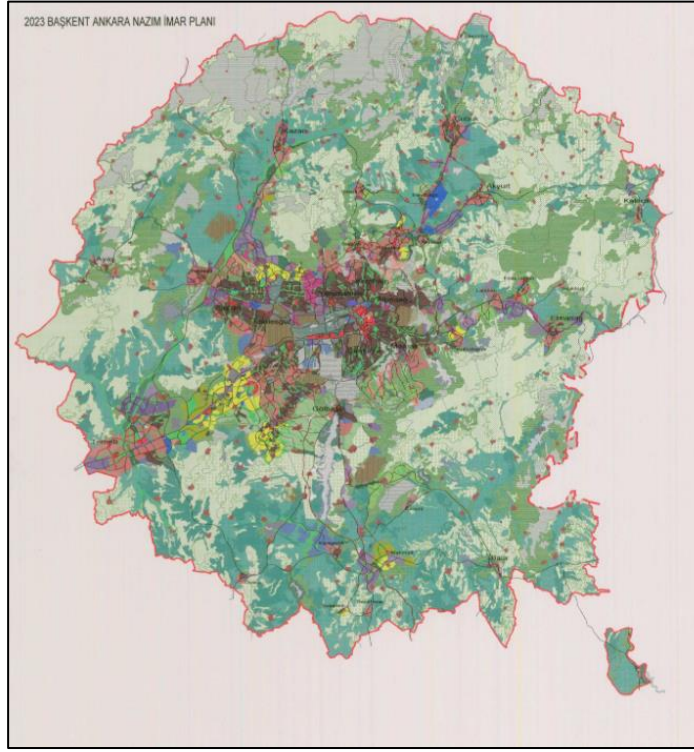


Figure 4.7. Capital Ankara 2023 Master Plan

Source: Ankara Buyuksehir Belediyesi Imar ve Sehircilik Dairesi Baskanligi (ABBISDB), 2023 Baskent Ankara Nazim Imar Planı - Plan Aciklama Raporu: Etudler ve Muda-hale Bicimleri (Ankara: Ankara Buyuksehir Belediyesi, 2006)

Briefly, as to urban development process, Ankara has experienced significant development and change since it became the capital city in 1923. During the 100-year period in which it transformed from a small Anatolian town into a metropolis, the face of the city changed from time to time with different urban policies. From the 1920s to the 1950s, the city's first planning studies, Lörcher and Jansen, developed by the garden city model, one of the Western trends, and with the modest style of the republic, but the continuous migration to the capital made these plans inadequate. In the period from 1950 to 1980, with the increasing immigration, the planned urban texture started to leave its place to a more irregular structure. From the 1980s on, a critical transformation began in the city's structure, with the encouragement of the free market economy, the closing of the Master Plan Bureaus,

and the Greater Municipalities taking over the city planning task. In the next period, expansion to the peripheries and fragmentary growths were observed in the city, and together with the adopted neoliberal policies, rent-oriented formations increased.

When it comes to today, the irregular spread towards the city periphery and the rent-oriented development continues at an incredible pace. The city is expanding in different directions, and arguably irregular settlements are seen in growth areas in almost every direction. However, especially the southwest of Ankara is a region that appeals to the high-income group and is claimed to be prestigious. Although the luxury high-rise housing projects mentioned in this study are being built rapidly in many parts of the city, especially in the southwest region, the density of these structures and ambitious projects are more prominent.

4.2 High-Rise Luxury Residential Projects in Ankara

In Turkey, since the 1980s, the increase in population with rural to urban immigration, the rise in crime rates, air pollution; increase of noise pollution with private car ownership; parking problems due to the lack of infrastructure caused the city centers to lose their popularity and, middle and upper classes move to suburban. The main feature of this period in terms of residential areas is that the upper-middle classes fleeing from the metropolises tend to live in more isolated spaces than in the past, only with those like them. In the following years, residences were offered as secured and comfortable living solutions in the city centers for working middle-high classes who did not want to stay away from city centers.¹⁶⁸ The lack of large parcels in the city centers has led to the design of these buildings as high-rise, mix used complexes.

¹⁶⁸ Uygur Yüksel and M. Tolga Akbulut. "The New Products of Consumption-Oriented Architecture in Recent Years: Residences," *Megaron* 4, no. 2 (2009): 112.

With the effect of this situation, while the high-rise buildings built in Ankara in the early times had office and commercial functions, high-luxury housing formations have increased, especially since the 2000s. As a particular case of Ankara, mixed-use high-rise buildings have increased not only in the city center where the land area is limited but also in the city peripheries where there is no shortage of land. The purpose of obtaining economic rent and the perception of height as a symbol of power and prestige played a role in the formation of this picture. As a result of the reasons mentioned, today, high-rise luxury residential settlements are located in very different locations in Ankara, including the center and the peripheries. Especially after the 2010s, high and luxurious buildings, which are marketed as "residences" and offer various services to their residents, have become almost a fashion, and their growth has accelerated. Today, high-rise luxury residential settlements that meet the definition of "residence" in Ankara are mostly in the western fringe of the city: Eskişehir road axis, Beytepe, Ümitköy, Çayyolu, İncek, Yaşamkent; and in the Oran region on the south axis. In terms of the services they offer and their physical structures, the high-rise residential settlements in other parts of the city have the feature of being closed sites rather than "residences". High-rise housing formations in peripheral regions such as Eryaman and Batıkent are mostly satellite cities.

There are numerous high-rise housing projects rising in areas far from the city center in Ankara. In the middle of the steppe, these structures, which are independent of the environment, are tried to be made attractive with the high-quality materials and the social facilities offered within the building.

Residence projects located in vast plains, especially in regions such as Beytepe, İncek, and Yaşamkent, stand out. Satellite photographs are beneficial in observing the effects of these settlements on the urban fabric. For this purpose, when zooming in on some areas in Eskişehir Yolu, Beytepe and Yaşamkent, an interesting pattern emerges. (Figure 4.8, Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10) These photographs reveal that these structures, which arise due to the investors' aim of making a profit by constructing ostentatious buildings on cheap lands far from the center, are far from producing urban space and establishing organic ties with the city.



Figure 4.8. Konutkent, Eskişehir Highway Region Urban Texture
(Produced by the author on Google Earth Satellite Photo dated 02.10.21)

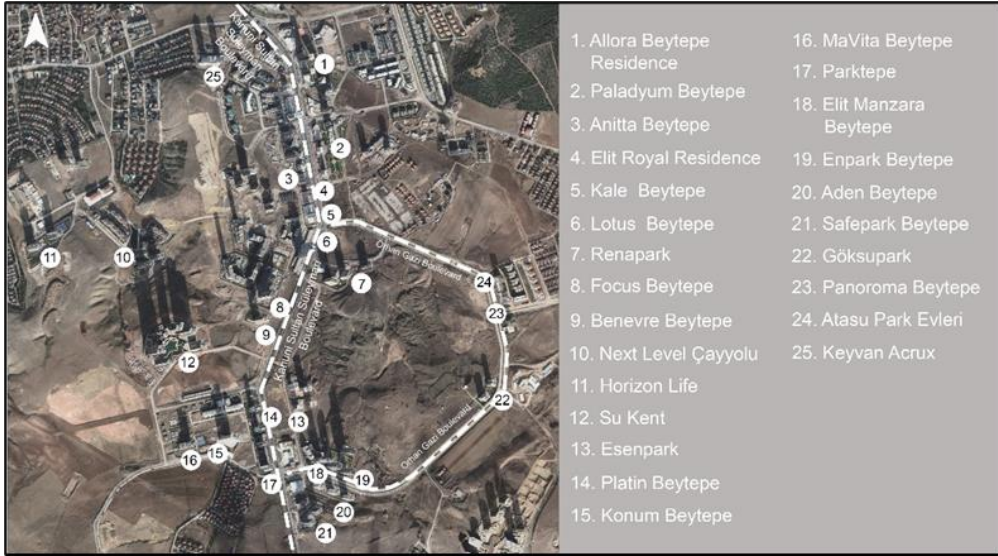


Figure 4.9. Beytepe Region Urban Texture.
(Produced by the author on Google Earth Satellite Photo dated 24.10.21)



Figure 4.10. Yaşamkent Region Urban Texture
(Produced by the author on Google Earth Satellite Photo dated 02.10.21)

Some residence projects, especially in areas away from the center, are built without considering the scale of the surrounding settlement. As a result, these structures, which dwarf the buildings and people in their immediate surroundings, create an unstable appearance in the city skyline. (Figure 4.11)



Figure 4.11. Icon, Incek
Edited by the author on Google Earth Street Views dated 7.2019.

Excessive scale differences and being unconnected to the context create identity problems in the development areas. (Figure 4.12 and Figure 4.13) The urban plan decisions taken in advance are often changed to realize high-luxury housing projects, which hinders the healthy development of the city. These projects induce a remarkable transformation by ignoring the ongoing characteristics and spirit of the areas in which they are built.



Figure 4.12. İncek Arte Kent and Small-Scale Housing Estate
Source: Google Earth Street Views dated 7.2019.



Figure 4.13. Teona Ümitköy and Small-Scale Settlement.
Source: <http://teona.com.tr/galeri#tab-1-2>

Although high-rise luxury housing projects are criticized for causing a loss of identity, they are promoted with the promise of adding value to the area and bringing innovation to that environment. These projects, which usually emphasize providing privileged life and prestige in their advertisements, trigger social segregation and polarization as well as physical separation. Figure 4.14 represents the advertisements of some luxury residence projects in Ankara. Advertisement slogans of the projects, from top to bottom:

the first visual belongs to Elya Center Mall & Royal Tower, its advertising slogan is:

“With its magnificent architecture, everything you need is at the top,”

the second is Elit Manzara Beytepe, the slogan is:

“Welcome to an exclusive living space,”

the third is Elmar Towers with the slogan of:

“It makes your life a brand,”

the fourth is AnkaLife Prestij with the slogan of:

“It is time to add prestige to your life,”

and the last is Kuzu Effect with the slogan of:

“It is not only the most special mixed project of Ankara, but also a center of attraction for those who are distinguished, different and love to live in the moment.”

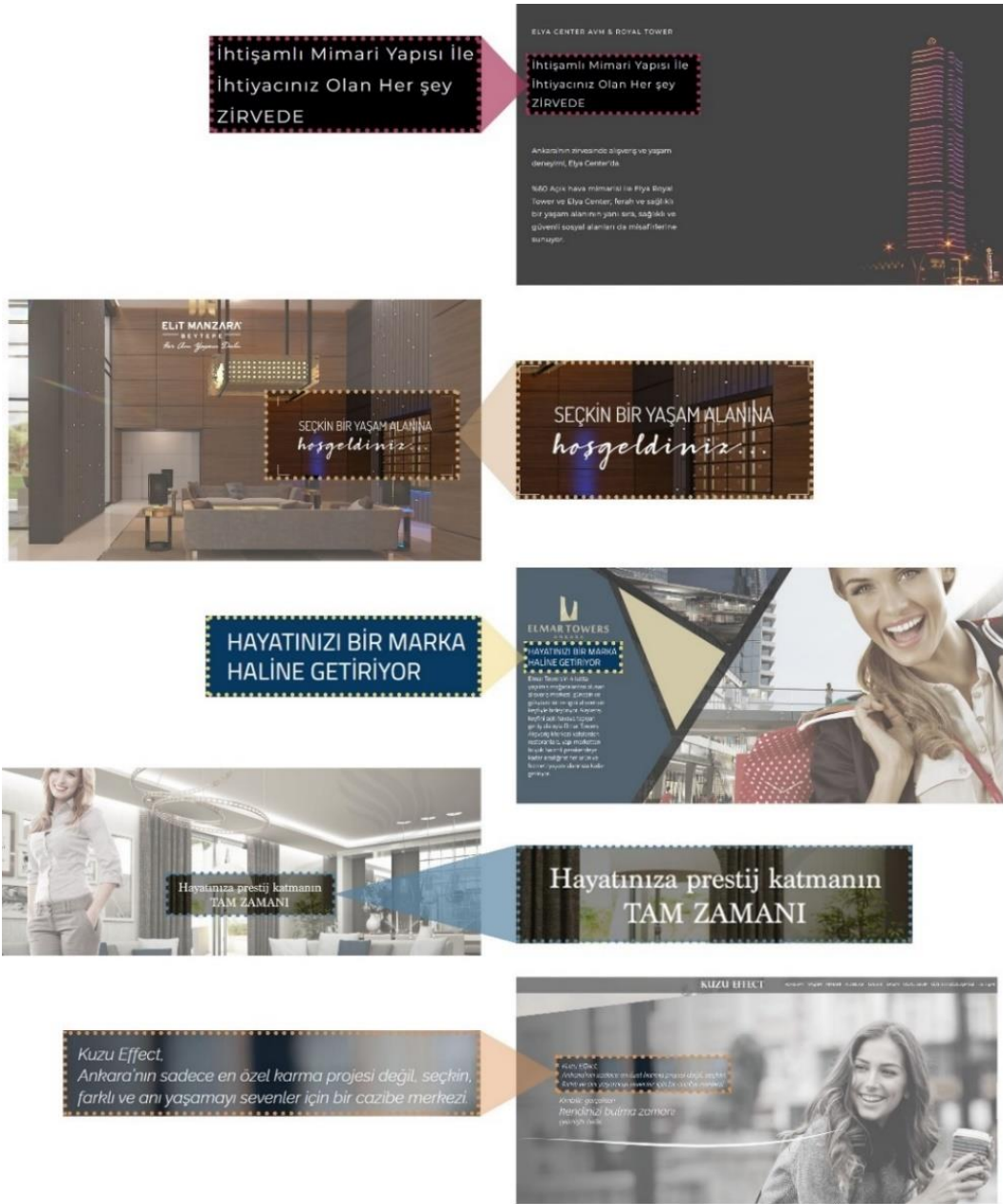


Figure 4.14. Advertisement Slogans of Residence Projects.
Created by the author by using screenshots from the websites from the residence projects.

4.3 Cases From South-Western Ankara

This study focuses on the developing axis along the Eskişehir Highway, Konutkent, Yaşamkent, and Beytepe districts, where high-rise luxury residence projects are concentrated. (Figure 4.15) Konutkent (Figure 4.16) is the neighborhood that forms the face of Eskişehir Highway and where the West Gate of the city is located, and there are high-rise buildings, especially along the highway. Yaşamkent (Figure 4.17) is a region connected with Konutkent and where project-based sprawl is extensive. Beytepe (Figure 4.18) is a relatively new residential area with rapidly building high-rise luxury housing projects. These regions developed with the effect of the Eskişehir Highway and where proximity to the highway is presented as an attraction.

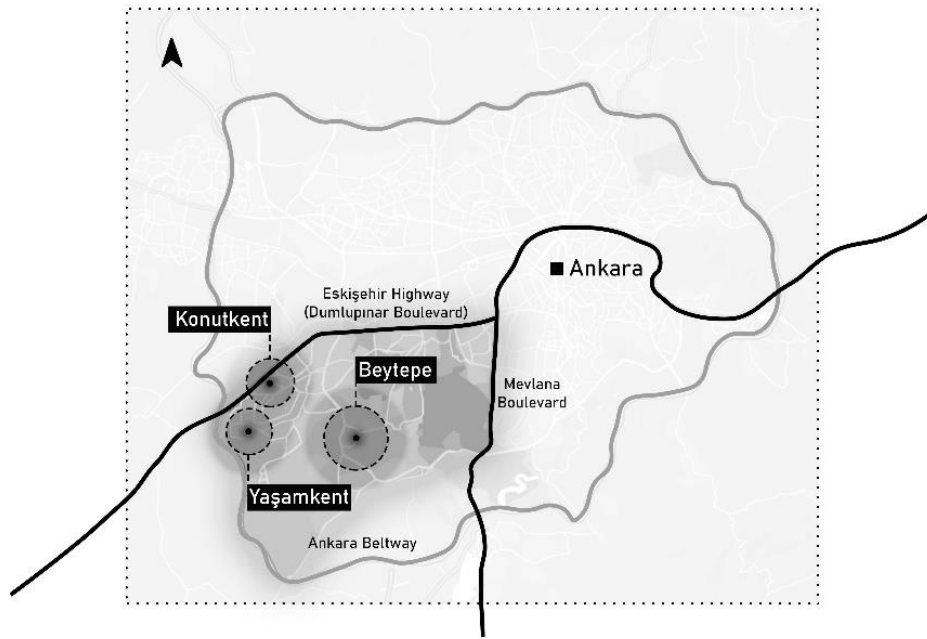


Figure 4.15. Region of the Selected Residence Projects
Drawn by the author.



Figure 4.16. A View from Konutkent
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kl5j0IeYhYI>.



Figure 4.17 High-Rise Settlement in Beytepe
Source: Google Earth Street View.



Figure 4.18. A View from Yaşamkent
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZZYjLQniXs>.

This section of the study examines four projects selected from Konutkent, Yaşamkent and Beytepe regions as cases. (Figure 4.19) Analyzing this quartet of projects is aimed to support revealing the effects of residence projects, which have increased in number in Ankara in recent years, within the scope of philosophical, sociological, and urban issues. For this reason, West Gate Residence and Sisa Tower projects in the Konutkent region were discussed. West Gate Residence is located next to the Ankara West Gate, from which it got its name. This project, which has a direct connection to the highway, dominates the city entrance with its large scale and has encouraged the construction of other high-rise residence projects in its immediate vicinity. Sisa Tower, an ongoing project forming the face of Eskişehir Road, represents the building form trending in recent years. In the Yaşamkent region, Beker Plaza is a new project that draws attention with its height, consisting of a commercial area and a residential tower. In Beytepe, Lotus Beytepe Sky is one of the latest projects that stand out with its height with the theme of retail space and residential tower.

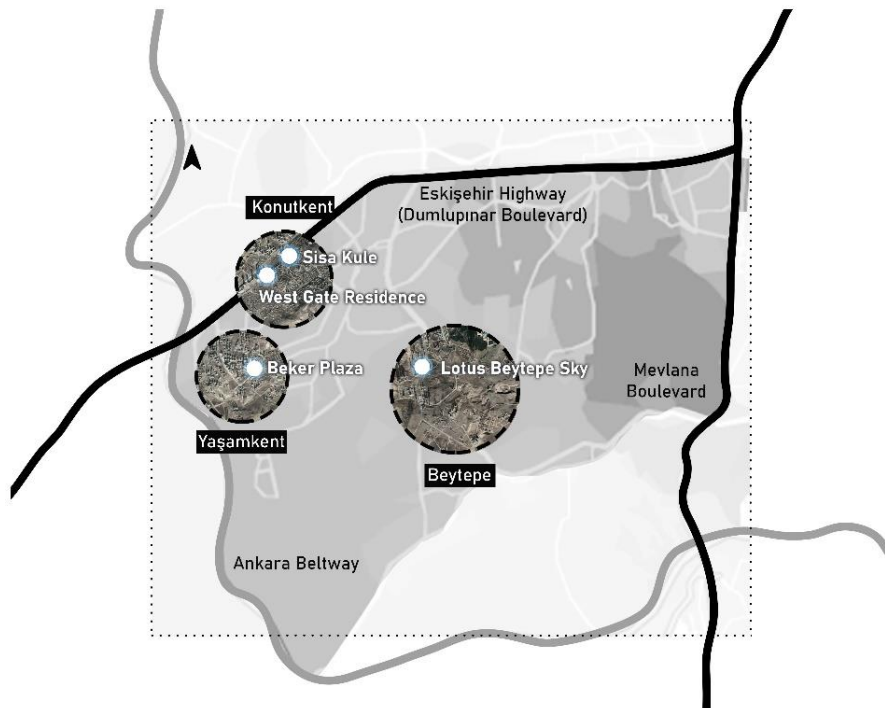


Figure 4.19. Selected Residence Projects
Drawn by the author.

4.3.1 West Gate Residence

West Gate is one of the prominent high-rise settlements on Eskişehir Road. (Figure 4.20) It is a mix-used project “composed of three residential blocks and a retail podium base underneath the blocks.”¹⁶⁹ The project’s contractor is West Gate Construction, and the architecture firm is MSA Architects. The main design decision of the project is the angular central courtyard surrounded by residential blocks. Towers with 33 floors were completed in 2014, the shopping mall section is still under construction. The project contains 707 residential apartments and offices.¹⁷⁰



Figure 4.20. West Gate Residence

Source: Accessed on March 24, 2022, from

http://www.msamimarlik.com.tr/projeler/karma-kullanim/west-gate_63.html

¹⁶⁹ “West Gate,” MSA Mimarlık & Architects, accessed March 25, 2022, http://www.msamimarlik.com.tr/EN/projects/mixed-use/west-gate_63.html

¹⁷⁰ Galeri, “Kat Planları,” West Gate Yönetim, accessed March 25, 2022, <https://www.westgateyonetim.com/kat-planlari>.

4.3.2 Sisa Kule

Sisa Kule is one of the towers forming the facade of Eskişehir Road. (Figure 4.21) Life has begun in the tower, but the second tower, which is the second phase of the project, is still under construction, and the commercial area on the ground has not yet been operational. The Project contractor is Sisa Group, and the designer firm is Korucuoğlu Architects. Towers above the commercial platform with 33 floors consist of 270 flats suitable for office or residential use. There are five types of 1+1 apartments and two types of 2+1 apartments.¹⁷¹



Figure 4.21. Sisa Tower

Source: Accessed on April 16, 2022, from <http://www.sisakule.com/tr/galeri-dis/D%C4%B1%C5%9F+Mekan>

¹⁷¹ Sisa Kule, accessed on April 16, 2022, <http://www.sisakule.com/tr/kunye/Proje+K%C3%BCnyesi>

4.3.3 Lotus Beytepe Sky

The project is rising in Beytepe Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Boulevard, where there are many new high-rise residential buildings, and numerous of them are under construction. The project is contracted by Özçelik and Pelit Partnership, and it was designed by Korucuoğlu Architects. There is a commercial area on the ground where “street shops” align linear parallel to the boundaries of the existing parcel. The project was completed in 2016, and it consists of 37 floors.¹⁷² (Figure 4.22)



Figure 4.22. Lotus Beytepe Sky

Source: “Lotus Beytepe Sky,” Korucuoğlu Mimarlık, Accessed on April 21, 2022, <https://www.korucuoglumimarlik.com.tr/projects/korucuoglu-mimarlik-lotus-beytepe-sky/>

¹⁷² “Lotus Beytepe Sky,” Özçelik İnşaat, accessed on April 21, 2022, <https://ozcelikinsaat.com.tr/portfolio/lotus-beytepe/>

4.3.4 Beker Plaza

Beker Plaza is one of the new projects in the Yaşamkent region, where high-rise luxury housing development is rapidly increasing. The project, which consists of shopping and cafe-restaurant areas on the horizontal and a residential tower on the vertical, is defined on its website as a “living center” integrated with the shopping mall and the tower.¹⁷³ (Figure 4.23) The project contractor is Beker Group, and the designer firm is A Design Architects. Beker plaza comprises a 35-story tower, and 37 leasable shops and entertainment areas gathered around the square.¹⁷⁴







Figure 4.23. Beker Plaza

Source: “Beker Plaza,” A Tasarım Mimarlık, accessed on May 2, 2022, <https://www.atarim.com.tr/tr/proje/beker-plaza>

¹⁷³ “Proje Konsepti,” Beker Plaza, accessed on May 2, 2022, <http://www.bekerplaza.com/beker-palza/>

¹⁷⁴ Beker Plaza Katalog, <http://www.bekerplaza.com/beker-palza/>

Table 4.1 General Information of Sample Residence Projects

Project	Location	Completion Date	Number of Floors	Contractor	Architecture Firm
<p>West Gate Residence</p>  <p>1</p>	Konutkent, Ankara	2014	33	West Gate Construction	MSA Architects
<p>Sisa Kule</p>  <p>2</p>	Konutkent, Ankara	Continues	33	Sisa Group	Korucuoğlu Architects
<p>Lotus Beytepe Sky</p>  <p>3</p>	Beytepe, Ankara	2016	37	Özçelik and Pelit Partnership	Korucuoğlu Architects
<p>Beker Plaza</p>  <p>4</p>	Yaşamkent, Ankara	Continues	35	Beker Group	A Design Architects

4.3.5 Analysis of the Residence Projects

In the previous chapters, it was emphasized that today's residence typology is inadequate in terms of the identity and character traits that are the prerequisites of being a place, and therefore may cause the loss of place. In addition, it was explained that this typology, becoming more widespread, has severe social effects such as social separation and supporting the consumer society. On the other hand, these buildings, with great height and strong visual effects, can be built unplanned in the city, causing scale and silhouette problems and a fragmented city structure due to their introverted structures. In this section residence projects are examined these qualities under the subtitles of identity, consumption culture, social segregation, urban fabric.

4.3.5.1 Philosophical Perspective Through the concepts of “Character”, “Identity”, and “Loss of Place”

Character

The character of a constructed settlement expresses the general atmosphere by being determined by how the structure is, how it is located on the ground, how it extends to the sky, its lateral borders, and closure, as well as the materials used and the type of building. This atmosphere differentiates and creates suitable environments for the realization of different activities. The existence of a distinctive character is necessary for the realization of the human-space relationship. From this point of view, when standardized and mechanized spaces move away from characteristic differences and turn into places where every function can be adapted, the relationship of space with activity and people is reduced.

Spatial organization is one of the critical factors that compose the *character*. Plan drawings present the character features of places by revealing the space organization and enclosure. For this reason, in this section, the plans of the units in the residence projects were examined.

There are nine types of flats in West Gate Residence: 1+0 with and without terrace, 1+1 with and without terrace, 2+1 with and without terrace, 3+1 with and without terrace, and 4+1 duplex. Flat areas vary from 32.42 m² to 260.18 m².¹⁷⁵ All apartments have an open kitchen concept. (Figure 4.24)



Figure 4.24. West Gate Residence Apartment Plans
 Source: <https://www.westgateyonetim.com/kat-planlari>

¹⁷⁵ “Kat Planları,” West Gate Yonetim, accessed February 5, 2023, <https://www.westgateyonetim.com/kat-planlari>.

Sisa Kule has two types of 2+1 flats and five types of 1+1 flats, in total, seven types of flats. Apartment plans vary between 70 m², and 139 m² and all the types have open kitchen plans.¹⁷⁶ (Figure 4.25)

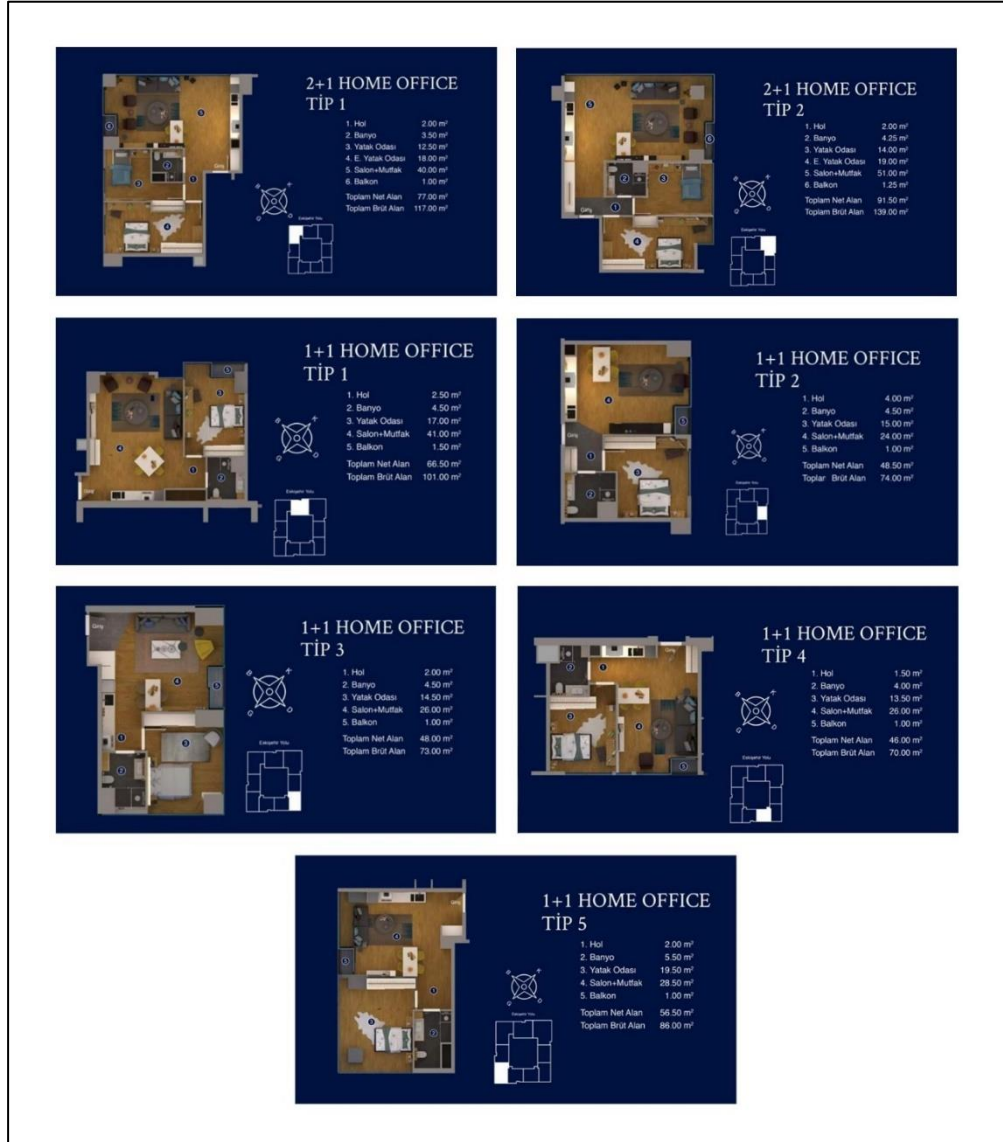


Figure 4.25. Sisa Kule Apartment Plans

Source: <https://www.guncelprojebilgileri.com/ankara-konut-projeleri/sisa-kule>

¹⁷⁶ “Sisa Kule,” Güncel Proje Bilgileri, accessed February 5, 20123, <https://www.guncelprojebilgileri.com/ankara-konut-projeleri/sisa-kule>.

In Lotus Beytepe Sky, although the residential tower rises as a single mass, it consists of two adjacent blocks with the same floor plan. (Figure 4.26) All apartments in the project have the same 4+1 plan, which covers 164 m².¹⁷⁷ (Figure 4.27)

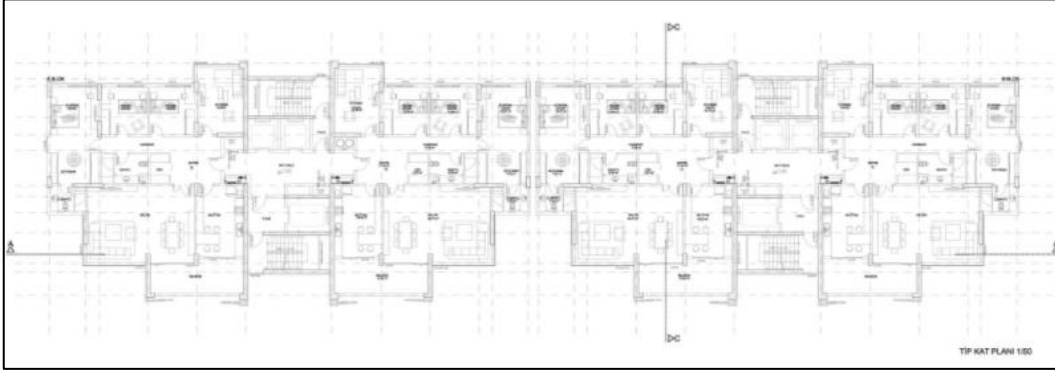


Figure 4.26. Lotus Beytepe Sky Floor Plan

Source: <https://www.arkiv.com.tr/proje/lotus-beytepe-sky/8926>



Figure 4.27. Lotus Beytepe Sky Apartment Plan

Source: <https://www.guncelprojebilgileri.com/ankara-konut-projeleri/lotus-beytepe>

¹⁷⁷ "Lotus Beytepe Sky," Güncel Proje Bilgileri, accessed February 5, 2023, <https://www.guncelprojebilgileri.com/ankara-konut-projeleri/lotus-beytepe>.

The residential tower of Beker Plaza has different types of apartments with 4+1, 3+1, and 2+1 plans, with areas ranging from 113.81 m² to 215.96 m².¹⁷⁸ All of the units have balconies. (Figure 4.28)

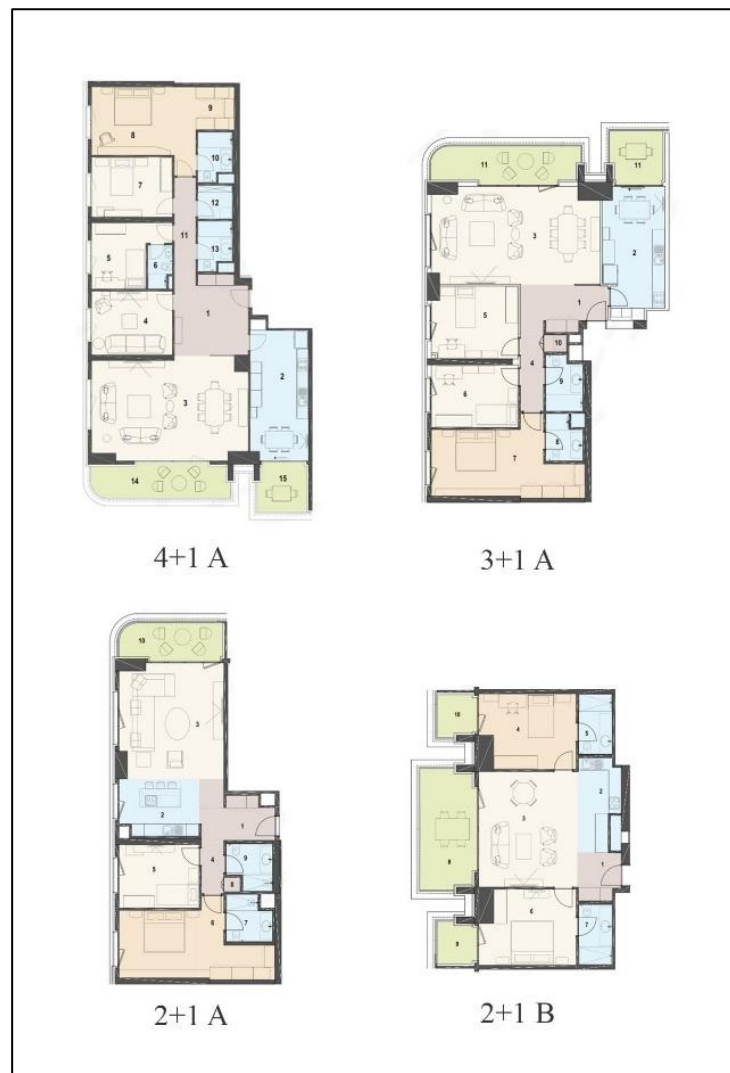


Figure 4.28. Beker Plaza Apartment Plans
Source: Beker Plaza Catalog.

¹⁷⁸ Beker Plaza Catalog, <https://www.bekerplaza.com/>.

There are options such as 1+1 and 1+0 with relatively small square meters in West Gate Residence and Sisa Kule, and these types are marketed as suitable for residential and office functions. While there are also large units with 3+1 and 4+1 plans in West Gate Residence, there are mostly 1+1 types in Sisa Kule. In both projects, all units have an open kitchen plan. In these buildings, a compact layout suitable for the residence culture that appeals to today's fast lifestyle is seen rather than the traditional housing configuration. The apartments are not designed to be suitable for large families but for couples without children and individuals living alone. Lotus Beytepe Sky and Beker Plaza offer large square meters of apartments with more rooms and a separate kitchen area. In these projects, the units are designed for the residential function.

Although it is a necessity of the dynamism of the age that spaces are suitable for flexible usage functions and bring many advantages, reducing the relationship between space and activity, and the characteristic features of space so much may be negative in terms of strengthening one's existence with the meaning that people give to place. In the residence projects, generally, apartment units with the same architectural plan are offered for residential or commercial uses. The same plan can serve as an office or house with minor interior arrangements. West Gate Residence, Sisa Tower, and Beker Plaza are examples of this usage. (Figure 4.29)



(a)



(b)

Figure 4.29. (a) Residential Unit, (b) Home Office Unit of Sisa Tower
Source: <http://www.sisakule.com/tr/galeri/Galeri>

The lateral boundaries of a building are essential in terms of defining the internal form, as well as affecting the urban character in terms of the relationship it establishes with the environment. In other words, it is influential in the formation of the general atmosphere of the environment. In addition, the settlements' organic relationship with the environment allows them to serve as foci, and in this way, the environmental character is strengthened. In this sense, it is seen that exemplary residence projects follow an individual style visually in terms of the relationship they establish with their surroundings, and they are differentiated in terms of association due to their inherently closed structure.

Identity

Identity is one of the priorities of being a place. Material selection and genuine form in conformity with the function are the factors generating the architectural identity of the building. On the other hand, luxurious high-rise residentials, with their forms and façade designs, look quite similar, although their advertisements emphasize their unique design. The sample projects, West Gate Residence, Sisa Tower, Lotus Beytepe Sky, and Beker Plaza, all have similar geometric forms and facade designs with minimal variations. (Figure 4.30)

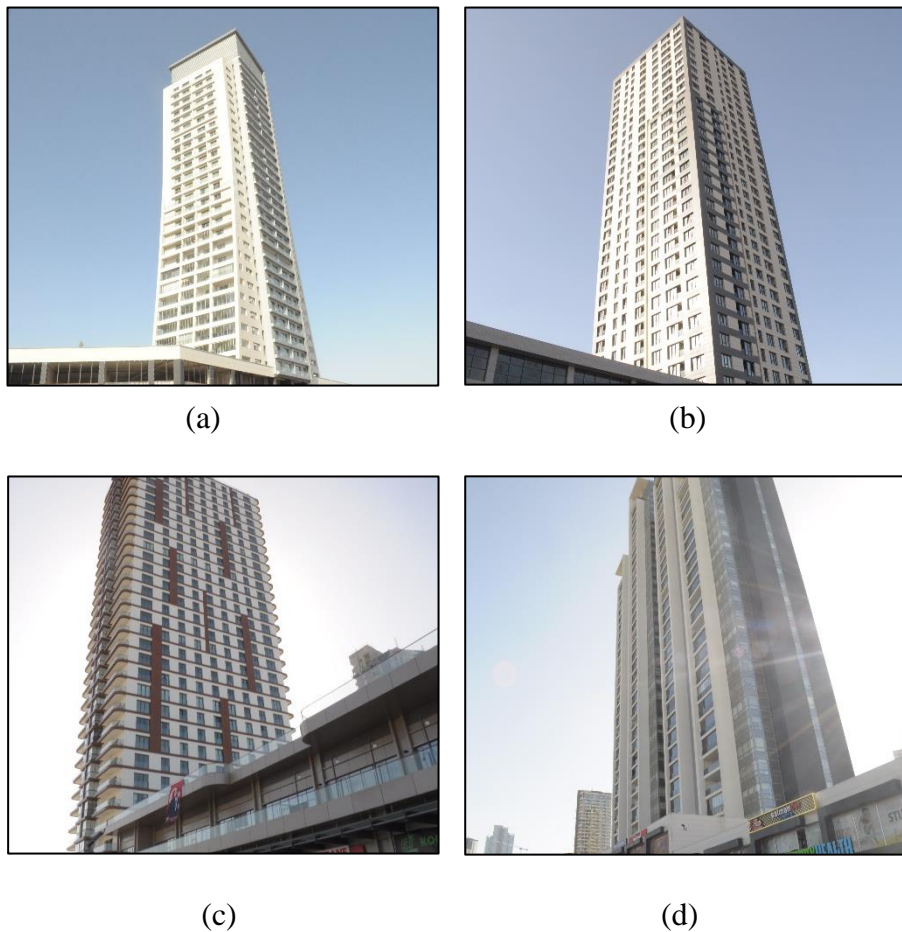


Figure 4.30. Facades of the Residences: (a) West Gate Residence, (b) Sisa Kule, (c) Beker Plaza, (d) Lotus Beytepe Sky
Source: Photographs taken by the author.

Although it is claimed that the designs of the residences are very authentic and site-specific, they may have similar designs to buildings with different functions. For instance, on the architecture firm’s webpage, related to the form of West Gate, it is stated that “The rhythm between the blocks and the narrowing effect on their façades as they rise create a powerful visual image for the entrance of the city of Ankara.”¹⁷⁹ On the other hand, another project designed by the same firm, in a different context and with a different function, is quite similar to West Gate Residence in terms of its form and façade design. (Figure 4.31)



Figure 4.31. (a) West Gate Residence Blocks, (b) Incek Health and Living Center
Sources: http://www.msamimarlik.com.tr/projeler/karma-kullanim/west-gate_63.html and http://www.msamimarlik.com.tr/projeler/otel-ve-saglik/incek-saglik-ve-yasam-merkezi_91.html

¹⁷⁹ MSA Mimarlık & Architects, “West Gate.”

Loss of Place

Residence projects that have a similar appearance and functioning all over the world are important examples of homogenized spaces that are rooted in globalization. In this respect, these structures, which are built independently of local physical features, such as topography, climate, etc., and lack distinctive character, move away from defining a holistic urban place together with the landscape, causing the landscape to lose its identity, and lose its potential to create a place with an identity since it becomes a discrete point. It gets difficult for people to position and identify themselves by relating to the space. This situation leads to the disappearance of the sense of place, a break from the place, that is, the loss of place. In these four examples, it is seen that the houses are uniform units that do not have a distinctive character. Instead of being places where people can identify themselves, houses have become areas where they will temporarily reside and leave or use as investment tools.

4.3.5.2 Sociological Perspective Through the concepts of Consumption Culture and Social Segregation

Consumption Culture

Residences are an integral part of today's consumption culture, with shopping areas below and their feature of being branded houses. As a mixed-use project, West Gate offers consumption-oriented activities with shopping and restaurant areas under the residences. (Figure 4.32) This commercial area, which is said to have been designed as a square to attract the public, almost forms the heart of the design, and living spaces are shaped around this shopping area. In this respect, it sets an example for consumption-oriented architecture with its design. Intrinsically, this architectural configuration may symbolize putting consumption at the center of life; and concretizes this understanding.



(a)



(b)

Figure 4.32. (a) West Gate Residence Project Render, (b) West Gate Shopping Mall Render

Source: <http://www.arkiv.com.tr/proje/west-gate/4800>

On the Sisa Kule webpage under the title of “The astonishing delight of dynamism”, the message that consumption-oriented activities will increase the quality of life is given with sentences such as “...everything is at your hand for a quality life”.¹⁸⁰ In the promotional film of the project, the importance of the shopping opportunity provided in the project is imposed with the slogan "Don't Miss Life...30 Stores..." (Figure 4.33)



(a)



(b)

Figure 4.33. (a) Shopping Area in the Ground, (b) “Don’t miss life...30 stores...”
Source: Screenshot from promotion video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icjQu2tAa_Y

There is a commercial area under the residential tower in Lotus Beytepe Sky. It is stated on the website of the investor company that this project, which was built as 122 luxury residences and 25 workplaces, is “the rising value of its environment” with its social and commercial life solutions.¹⁸¹ (Figure 4.34)

¹⁸⁰ “Dinamizmin Şaşırtıcı Keyfi,” Sisa Kule, accessed on April 16, 2022, <http://www.sisakule.com/tr/galeri-dis/D%C4%B1%C5%9F+Mekan>

¹⁸¹ “Lotus Beytepe Sky,” Özçelik İnşaat, accessed on April 16, 2022, <https://ozcelikinsaat.com.tr/portfolio/lotus-beytepe/>.



Figure 4.34. Lotus Beytepe Sky, Shopping Areas Below the Residential Tower.
Source: <https://ozcelikinsaat.com.tr/portfolio/lotus-beytepe/>

On the Beker Plaza’s website, the presence of prestigious stores is particularly emphasized as a value.

“Beker Plaza makes life easier with its store mix of prestigious brands suitable for every need. Beker Plaza is becoming an outstanding living and meeting point with its new generation restaurants, hypermarket, textile brands, service shops, entertainment areas on the terrace floor, and a residential tower.”¹⁸²

¹⁸² “Proje Konsepti,” Beker Plaza. Translated by author.

While the statement that being here will make a profit for the store owners is supported by the existence of the residence, the exclusive stores located here are presented as a source of convenience and peace for those who will live in the residence. In this way, the concepts of luxury housing and consumption feed the culture of consumption as inseparable elements. (Figure 4.35)



Figure 4.35. Residence-Shopping concept
Source: Beker Plaza Catalog, p.7

In addition to that the residence typology boost consumption and commercial activities; they are also commodities themselves. With their brand value and investment value, they create a separate market. (Figure 4.36)



Figure 4.36. (a) West Gate Residence Sales Office, (b) West Gate Residence Logo, (c) Sisa Kule Sales Office, (d) Sisa Kule Logo¹⁸³

¹⁸³ Sources: (a) <https://www.akisaluminium.com.tr/tr/projectDetail.php?ID=28#img2>, (b) <https://twitter.com/WestGateYonetim/photo>, (c) Screenshot from promotion video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icjQu2tAa_Y, (d) <https://www.mappimedya.com/isler/sisa-kule-18>

Social Segregation

As in all luxury residence projects, it is promised that owning a home or commercial space here will bring privilege and prestige. In the promotional film of West Gate Residence, the concepts of "life at the top" and "exclusivity" come to the fore. In addition, individuality and self-centeredness are supported by the emphasis that living here will offer you more than the gifts you expect to be presented "just to you".

Some catchwords from the promotional film:

“...Here there is the distinction of living at the top.”¹⁸⁴

“...If all your expectations from your dreams and life are comfort and quality, if it is limited to being distinguished and privileged, starting the day with joy, and spending the night in peace, you can ask for more without hesitation.”¹⁸⁵

“...There is much more in the West Gate than the gift you expect life to offer you ‘just to you’.”¹⁸⁶

Similarly in Sisa Kule, concepts such as being privileged and being prestigious are brought to the fore in the project’s presentation, expressions such as “The project opens the doors of a prestigious life to you, offering a spacious residential area with high construction quality and high ceiling interior design.”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ “West Gate Residence Tanıtım Filmi,” Toplu Konut Projeleri, April 2, 2022, 1:26 to 1:29, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALXnmW3A_MU

¹⁸⁵ “West Gate Residence Tanıtım Filmi,” 2:02 to 2:20.

¹⁸⁶ “West Gate Residence Tanıtım Filmi,” 2:26 to 2:32.

¹⁸⁷ “Lobi,” Sisa Kule, Accessed on April 16, 2022, <http://www.sisakule.com/tr/galeri/%C4%B0%C3%A7+Mekan>

Some slogans from Sisa Kule promotion film:

"Exclusive for those who chase after life... "188,

"Prestigious life welcomes you... "189,

"Privileged design that describes you..." 190 (Figure 4.37)



(a)



(b)

Figure 4.37. (a) Lobby of the Sisa Kule with the slogan of “Prestigious life welcomes you...”, (b) Interior visual of a residential unit with the slogan of “Privileged design that describes you...”

Source: Screenshots from promotion video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icjQu2tAa_Y

¹⁸⁸ “Sisakule ‘Home office’,” Özel Yapım Reklam Ajansı, May 30, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icjQu2tAa_Y

¹⁸⁹ “Sisakule ‘Home office’,” Özel Yapım Reklam Ajansı, 1:59.

¹⁹⁰ “Sisakule ‘Home office’,” Özel Yapım Reklam Ajansı, 2:16.



Figure 4.38. Lotus Beytepe Sky Residence Entrance
Source: Google Earth Street View, July 2019

4.3.5.3 Urban Design Perspective Through the Concepts of Cityscape and Scale

In the launch event and promotional film of the project, it is claimed that West Gate is a project that determines Ankara's future vision. The building, which is at a critical location, is defined as Ankara's gateway to the future. "Every city has a symbol that determines its vision for the future." (Figure 4.39)

The architect of the project states that the West Gate will be a pioneer for other projects on the developing west axis of the city and that it will "present Ankara with a very beautiful urban texture", and that for this reason, the project is significant in terms of urbanism. That a project realized for commercial gain assumes a critical mission such as determining the city's future vision seems problematic in terms of urban design.

The investor states that the project was designed for Ankara's needs with the concept of office, residence, and shopping mall and that it would be a project worthy of the capital Ankara. Project owners remark they have meticulously carried out the necessary research for this location with their teams and that the project is functionally a very correct one at this point. Although it is stated that the project was designed in line with the city's requirements, it is controversial whether the aim is to serve the city or to create a new rent zone in Ankara, which hosts many similar projects.



Figure 4.39. Launch of the West Gate Project

Source: Screenshot from the Launch Video,

<https://www.emlaktasondakika.com/proje-videolari/west-gate-ankara-projesinin-lansmani-yayinda-174718.html>

Scale Difference and Character of the Environment

It is also stated that West Gate, unlike other housing projects, is in harmony with its surroundings and has an extroverted structure. Although the project is said to be in harmony with its surroundings, it becomes clear that the small-scale structures at the back are ignored and the project turns its back on these areas. (Figure 4.40)



Figure 4.40. Scale difference of West Gate with the environment
Source: Google Earth Street View

Related to Sisa Kule, there is a serious scale difference between the building and the small-scale residential settlement in the southwest. Rather than a holistic approach, a large-scale trade structure has been created by only centering the Eskişehir Road. (Figure 4.41)



Figure 4.41. Scale difference with Sisa Kule and the existing residential settlement.
Source: Photographs taken by the author.

In respect to Lotus Beytepe Sky, the building has a quite large scale in height and width, creating visual contrast with the low-rise residential complex behind it. While the dominance of view and large scale are asserted as attractive factors for people to live here, there is no concern about the cityscape and visual order on the urban scale. (Figure 4.42)



Figure 4.42. Scale difference between Lotus Beytepe Sky and Lotus Beytepe Style
Source: Google Earth Street View dated July 2019

Another example, Beker Plaza, there are many small-scale villa sites and high-rise residences irregularly built next to them in the region. (Figure 4.43) Beker plaza has been built in a plot where there is a villa site with a completely different texture right across.



Figure 4.43. Scale Difference between Beker Plaza and Amfora Dostlar Sitesi
Source: Google Earth Street View dated July 2019

In the satellite image of 2009, it is seen that there was a villa site on the land where Beker Plaza is located. Later, the villas here and in the north -where the Tepe-Mesa Park Mozaik site is located now- were demolished and turned into high-rise residential areas. (Figure 4.44) During this transformation, the texture and scale of other structures in the surrounding area were ignored. This neglect not only destroys the urban fabric physically but also damages the character of the region from a philosophical point of view.



(a)



(b)

Figure 4.44. Transformation of urban texture (a) Texture in 2009, (b) Texture in 2021. The yellow marked area shows Beker Plaza
Source: Google Earth Satellite View edited by the author.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, a multi-dimensional analysis of high-rise luxury residential buildings, which has increased rapidly in recent years, has been made; and the effects and potential problems of these structures, which spread with city-specific changes in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, have been investigated.

In order to carry out this study, first of all, the definition and history of the high-rise structures were investigated. To determine the standard of being a high-rise building, different institutions have made different definitions and determined dimensions, but in this study, the term high-rise building is used for structures with 20 floors and above. Looking at the history of tall buildings, we see a long process from the Tower of Babel to the Burj Khalifa. People have always fascinated with tall buildings. However, the fact that high-rise buildings have become part of the urban fabric has recently occurred after the industrial revolution. Since this period, high-rise buildings have been the center of commercial activities. In the following 20th century, high-rise buildings turned into skyscrapers, and height began to become a symbol of power and prestige. After the Second World War, high-rise houses, which offered a quick solution to the housing need, started to take their place in the cities. In addition, city centers have turned into trade and business centers in America and Europe, and residential settlements have begun to shift out of the city. Housing towers, which offer attractive services, have started to be built in the limited areas in the center with the aim of revitalizing the city centers that are empty and desolate at night and shortening the time spent by employees on their way to and from work. These buildings, which also include sports, socializing and shopping areas, provided a compact living space and offered a lifestyle that supports a busy business life. For this purpose, the Lake Shore Drive Apartments and Marina City projects built in Chicago form the basis of the high-rise luxury residential projects discussed in this

study. When it comes to the 21st century, it is seen that mega-tall and super-tall, high-tech skyscrapers are in a race in many parts of the world since 2000.

In Turkey, on the other hand, the development of tall buildings took place later than in Western countries. High-rise buildings started to be built after the 1960s and the first examples were in business centers and commercial areas as in the west. The real increase in tall buildings has been realized with the transition to the free market economy since the 1980s. Especially after the 2000s, luxury housing projects started to take their place in the height race. At that, the tallest building in Turkey is the Skyland Tower, which is a residential tower. The term "Residence" is used for luxury high-rise residences in Turkey. It is aimed to create a perception of luxury and prestige in many projects by only using this name. In general, these buildings are presented together with a shopping mall. These high-rise residential buildings have reception, security, and sports areas. The first examples in Turkey started to be made in Istanbul, then it started to increase in other big cities such as Ankara and İzmir.

The first residence example in Ankara is Portakal Çiçeği Residence, which was completed in 2011. In the following 11 years, the number of luxury high-rise housing projects called "residence" has increased incredibly. This typology, which has been spreading gradually in big cities in Turkey in recent years, has powerful transformative effects on social life and urban fabric. In order to be able to see and examine these effects, in the third chapter of the study, the typology of luxury high-rise housing is discussed under the main headings of philosophy, sociology and urban design. Architecture is not only concerned with the tangible and physical features of the place; its meaning and spiritual features also are in the research field of architecture. Architecture has a concern to produce a "place" rather than a uniform, mechanical space, it is also related to the existential needs of human beings. For this reason, not only the physical functions of the place, but also the human aspect is important. The concept of home is especially important at this point, as it is of great influence in the construction of a person's identity. Notably, the mechanization brought about by modernization, rapid production, and uniform designs cause buildings to weaken in terms of creating a place. According to Christian Norberg

Schulz, the identity of place is a prerequisite for human identity. It is seen that similar-looking residence structures may be deficient in terms of identity due to factors such as not being authentic and not being peculiar to the location. This brings with it the character problem, and the end result is loss of place.

“The urban fabric of a city is a reflection of the events that took place, growth, transition and change, where buildings convey messages about the way in which they were put together in the architectural sense.”¹⁹¹ Residence projects, which reflect the city's new lifestyle, create results that affect and transform social life and are influenced by social developments. In other words, social structure and residence typology are in a reciprocal interaction. This bilateral interaction shows that the spread of residences is the result of the consumer society order that has been dominant in the last period. These projects are commodified as investment tools beyond being a home or they are promoted through advertising campaigns as a means of achieving a peaceful, privileged, or prestigious life. On the other hand, in the projects designed together with a shopping mall, the necessity of shopping and keeping up with the trends is emphasized, and the lifestyle desired by the system is imposed on people. In addition, the central theme of these projects, high-level security and being privileged, turns into a discourse that prevents social cohesion and increases polarization. Demonstration with the house brings the risk of social stratification with the sub-message of segregation and exclusion from those who do not have the opportunity to own this product. In addition, providing services that facilitate daily life within the project can reduce the use of the city, prevent spontaneous encounters, and increase individualization.

Residence projects, which have critical social impacts, also produce results in the urban area. Especially in terms of the way they are implemented in Turkey, it is seen that residence projects are very effective tools for earning rent. Through partial

¹⁹¹ Eldemery Ibrahim, “High- Rise Buildings – Needs & Impacts” CIB World Building Congress 2007, 2001

changes in the zoning plans, they can be built in many parts of the city without establishing an effective relationship with the immediate environment and the city. These structures, built without a holistic plan and do not adequately relate to the city, can cause the formation of dysfunctional areas called "lost space", which damage the city's functioning. Projects that are built separately from urban functions reduce walkability. These structures, which in some cases can create images incompatible with the surrounding buildings, are far from the scale that contributes to street life. In high-rise buildings, people are cut off from the street, and the interaction between the street and the building is reduced. There is no lively street life that encourages walking and no human-scale construction. While the relationship with the surrounding tissue is minimized, the use of personal vehicles becomes almost mandatory for those living in these residences. This creates the automobile-oriented, fast city model that prevents experiencing the city. In other words, unplanned projects without considering the characteristics of the location both damage the urban fabric and produce results that are not suitable for the livable city concept.

When we examine these high-luxury residences, also known as residence projects, which are increasing in number in Turkey, as people-oriented, society-oriented, and city-oriented, it is seen that they cause some results worth discussing. Ankara, which has an important place in the country's memory and history as the capital of Turkey, is one of the cities where these projects have increased rapidly. Even in some regions, these structures form an interesting texture by clustering. For this reason, in the fourth chapter of the study, the changing texture and residence projects in Ankara are discussed with the theoretical framework consisting of philosophical, sociological, and urban aspects revealed in the third chapter. Ankara is a city that has been inhabited since ancient times. While it was a small Anatolian city during the Ottoman period, it acquired a very critical mission during the period of national struggle and being the capital of the Republic of Turkey. It is the place where the first reflections of the newly established country and new values are seen and built. With the proclamation of the capital city, it became the scene of a holistic and

modern urban planning strategy. Planned development has been replaced by uncontrolled growth since the second half of the 20th century.

As a result of the planning adventure of Ankara, the last point reached was the source of unplanned residence production. As a result of the free-market economy policy followed today, high-rise buildings and residences appear in many parts of the city. These projects, mainly concentrated in the southwestern region of the city, constitute a texture worth examining. For this purpose, in the second part of the fourth chapter, four projects in the districts of Konutkent, Beytepe, and Yaşamkent on Eskişehir Yolu Axis were closely examined. While doing this review, the theoretical framework consisting of philosophy, sociology, and urban themes revealed in the study was taken as a basis. The findings supported the problem of identity loss and character, which were discussed in the third chapter, and confirmed the risk of consumption-oriented housing production and social segregation. Considering the factors such as their location in the city, their relationship with the immediate environment, and scale compatibility, it is concluded that the increase in similar projects may harm the urban fabric and life.

In the study, a limited number of examples in a particular region were examined to serve as conceptual examples. For more detailed studies, residence structures in different parts of the city and other contexts can be discussed.

To summarize, residence projects, which are today's most popular type of housing, should be designed considering their individual, social and urban aspects. High-rise buildings are indispensable for our age and technology; vertical growth is necessary for sustainable cities. In addition, high-rise buildings have much potential for human life and the city, however, when it comes to home, the points that need to be considered increase even more. The house has transformative effects on the lives of individuals, in the perception of identity and the functioning of society. Residence structures produced uncontrollably with a focus on gaining profit may cause undesirable results in the community. It can create adverse effects on city life and generate a picture conflicting with the urban structure that embraces everyone and is

suitable for human nature. For this reason, when proposing a house, issues such as human scale, street life, and the building's integration with the city should be considered. The mentality that sees the house only as an investment tool should not be allowed to determine the future of cities. For this purpose, this thesis aims to contribute to awareness in this area by considering the concept of residence, which is the reality of today, with its individual, societal, and urban aspects.

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