Different Approaches on the Conservation of Modern Architecture: Discussion through Ankara University Faculty of Sciences and Faculty of Law Buildings

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Abstract

Following the foundation of the Republic and the declaration of Ankara as the new capital, the parliament accepted intense reforms rapidly under the presidency of Atatürk. For the Republican ruling class, education has always been an important aspect of modern Turkish society. In the scope of the modernization of the educational system, the buildings to house this new educational system were to be designed with a modern architectural language which was the case for all governmental institutions.

For Faculty of Political Sciences, established in 1859 in İstanbul with the name Mekteb-i Mülkiye-i Şahane, a new modern building was designed by Erns A. Egli, the chief architect at the Ankara branch of the Ministry of Education, in 1935; education started in this new faculty building in 1936. Faculty of Law was established in 1925. Until 1936, education continued in separate and temporary buildings. At last, it was decided to construct a modern building that could meet the requirements of the Faculty. The school moved to its new building in June 1941 and was completed in 1949.

Although designed and constructed in the same period, these two faculty buildings have different architectural languages. In this paper, the architectural designs and the transformation of these two buildings will be analyzed. In addition, some oral data collected through interviews with the members of the faculties will be put forth. With this collected data, a comparison of the different approaches to the conservation of these two buildings will be realized.

Keywords: *conservation, modern architecture, faculty of political sciences, faculty of law, comparison*

Introduction

Following the defeat in World War I, Ottoman land, including the capital city of İstanbul, was occupied by entente states. When Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his friends decided to resist this occupation and start the War of Independence, they chose Ankara as the

center of the War between 1919 and 1922. After the victory in the War, Ankara was declared the capital city of the New Republic. Batuman explains the place of this move by saying, "The foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 was a radical attempt to construct a secular nation-state with a modern national identity within an Islamic society. Accordingly, all the symbols of Islamic tradition – particularly the old Ottoman capital of İstanbul – were renounced." (2005, p. 34). As shortly described by Ahıska, “Nationalist ideas and practices would be written on Ankara, which was seen as a blank slate.” (2017, p. 349).

In the end, with the construction of the new capital of Ankara, New Republicans aimed to show, and in a way exhibit, the ideology of the modern Turkish nation. One of the main reasons for the choice of Ankara as the capital of the New Republic is put forth very basically by Zeynep Kezer: “Ankara's insignificant past has allowed Republican modernizers to perceive and describe it as a tabula rasa on which to put their big dreams into practice.” (cited by Bozdoğan, 2002, p. 83).

1. Modernization Efforts and Its Architectural Reflections

The motivation and will of the Republicans in a holistic modernization of Turkey with its citizens shaped the aspects and scope of the reforms. Modernism was seen as a project that would primarily encompass all social areas and focus on internal and external values. The program for revolutions had to address every aspect of public and private life and transform them in line with the intended goal, and, at the same time, it meant a definite break with the past - the Ottoman past. In 1926, the dress code in the Ottoman Empire was abandoned, the Alphabet Revolution was made, and the Latin alphabet was started to be used. A legal structure was created based on Swiss civil, Italian criminal, and German commercial laws. Together with that, women’s rights and the role of women in society took an important place in the reform movements: Polygamy was banned, and women were given the right to vote and be elected. Turkish women gained the freedom to pursue a career (Atalay Franck, 2015, p. 23).

The field of education was one of the most critical sections in the reforms that began to be applied after the foundation of the Republic. With the abolishment of the caliphate in 1924, the educational system was reorganized, and the Islamic educational system was discarded to design a new modern and secular educational system. In doing this, the government abolished religious lodges (tekke), shrines (türbe), and spaces of fraternities (zaviye) in 1925, and the Arabic alphabet was changed with the Latin Alphabet in 1928. The higher education system was also included in the government's agenda while restructuring the system, and in 1933, a new law was accepted to design education in universities which opened the way for the invitation of European professors, architects and urbanists.

Educational buildings were a part of these critical buildings and the ruling class of the Republic wanted educational buildings compatible with the new modern education system. So, the buildings that were going to be designed should be modern buildings to

raise modern young people bound up with the revolutions of the Republic. Additionally, these modern educational buildings would be a part of the prestigious face of the new modern capital with their modern architectural language and designs, which meet the requirements of modern educational programs embodied in.

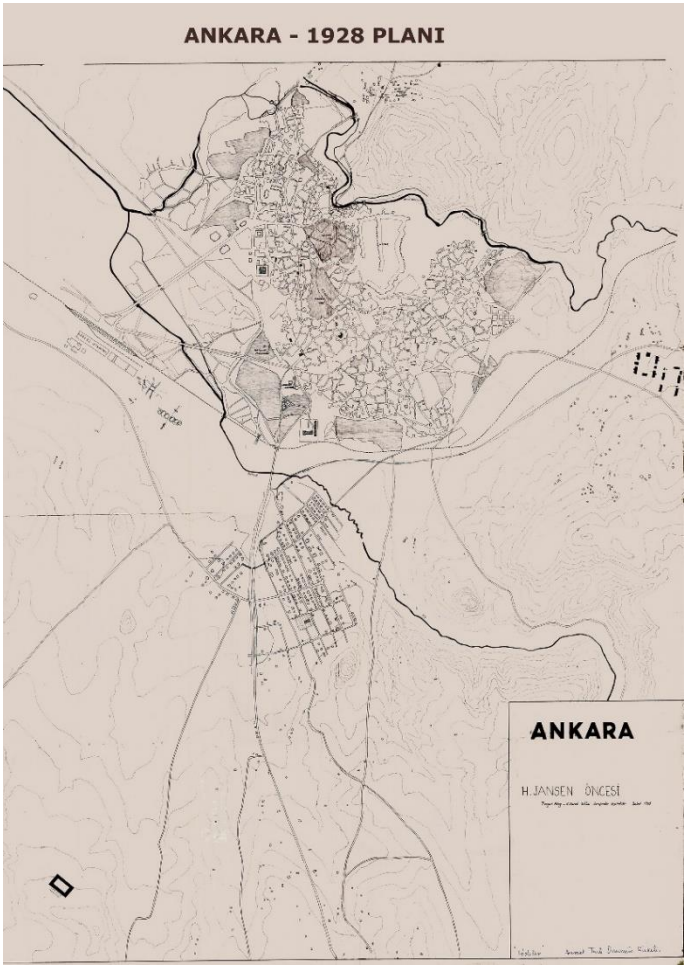


Figure 1. Lörcher Plan. METU Department of City and Regional Planning Archive.

2. New Capital Ankara and Education Zone in Cebeci

With the declaration of Ankara as the capital of the New Republic, initiatives for a city plan were begun, and the first plan of the city was prepared by the German planner Dr. Carl Cristoph Lörcher in 1924, which included the major decisions of the following planning studies also: two parts as old city and Yenişehir (Cengizkan, 2004, p. 25) (Figure 1). After that, with the decision to give a modern image to the city, in 1927, an international competition was organized for the new Ankara master plan; and Berlin-based architect Hermann Jansen's plan, based on the ideas of the Garden City Movement, won the competition (Deriu, 2013, p. 500) (Figure 2).

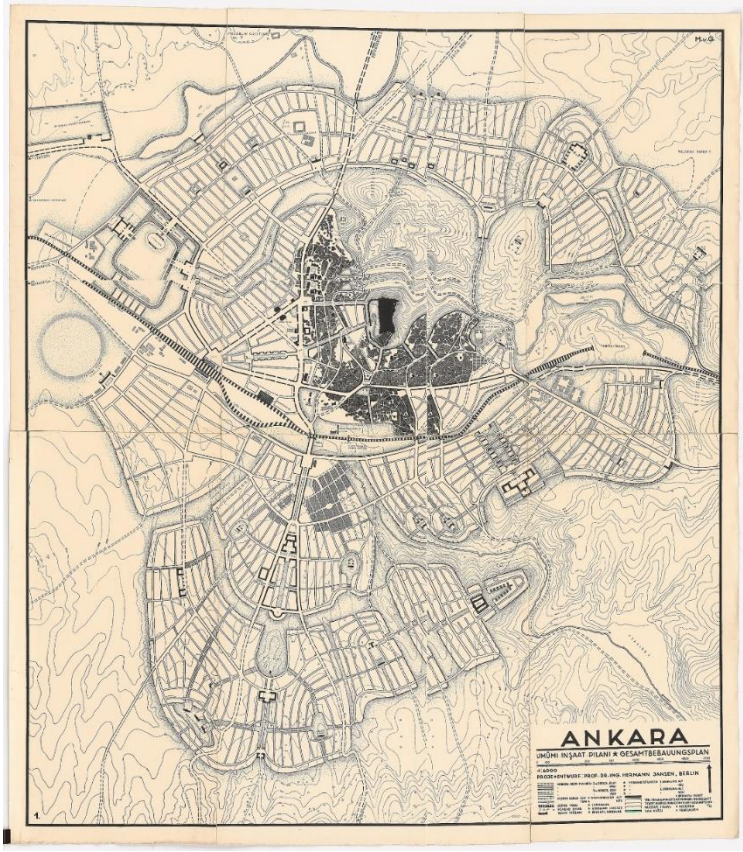


Figure 2. Jansen Plan. Architekturmuseum der TU Berlin, Inv. Nr. 22583.

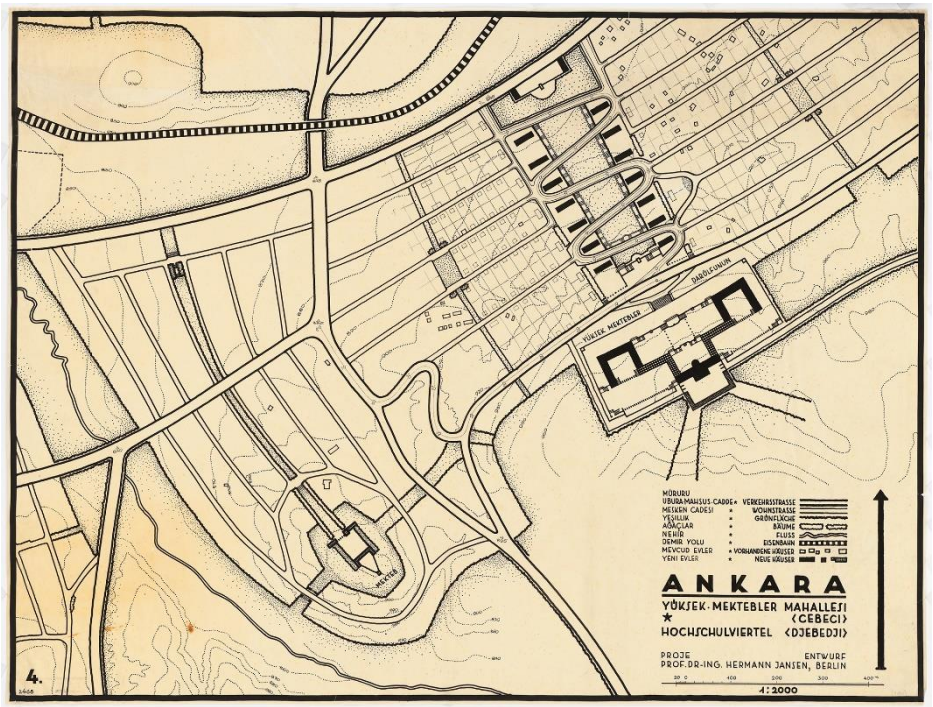


Figure 3. Higher Education District in Jansen Plan. Architekturmuseum der TU Berlin, Inv. Nr. 22586.

Jansen separated the city into zones according to their functions and presented a scheme that constituted the open space relation between the parts through freiflächen (free surfaces) in the draft plan dated 1927 (Burat 2008 in Yabacı, Yavuz and Kavurmacı, 2017, p. 477). At this point it must be stated that Jansen retained many of Lörcher's ideas, especially for the newer parts of town and the layout of major streets (Kezer, 2010, p. 44). Within the scope of the plan, Cebeci district was determined as the area for higher education (Figure 3).

3. Ankara University Cebeci Campus in the Determined Education Zone

Cebeci District was the zone reserved for higher education as mentioned above, and Faculty of Political Sciences is the first building constructed Faculty of Law was started

in 1936. The faculty was moved to its new building in 1941; however, it took eight more years to be finished completely.

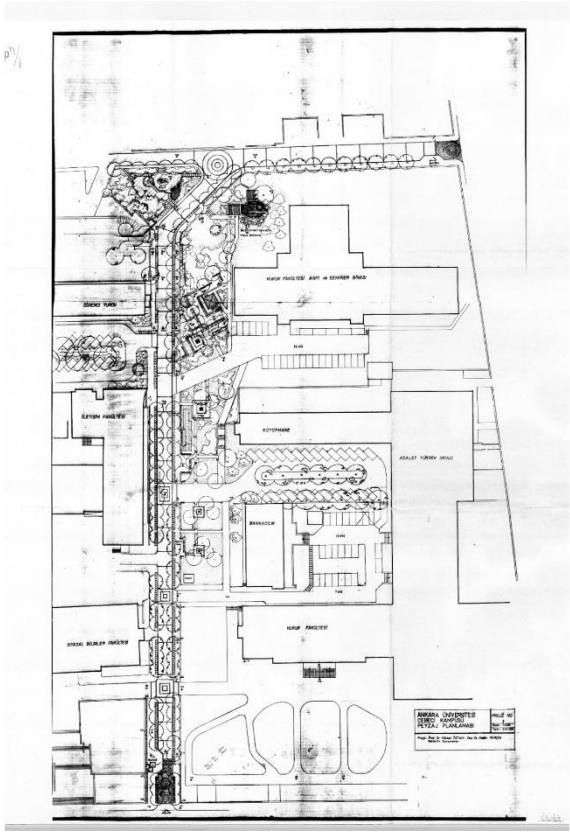


Figure 4. Landscape Planning prepared for the campus. Ankara University Directorate of Construction and Technical Works archive.

At the beginning, these two faculties were two different schools and independent in their own operations, both managerial and physical. After the foundation of Ankara University in 1946, these two faculties became part of the same university but still continued as independent schools with their additional buildings in their own parcels until 1995 with very-high walls in between (Prof. Dr. Erdal Onar- interview, March 2016). Günal Akbay, the President of the university at that time, decided to transform the existing buildings

into a campus (Figure 4). These high walls separating the faculties were lowered and functioned as seating places. So, the seating places between the faculties in the campus today are the traces of pre-campus situation of the faculties. Although transformed into a campus setting by the university administration, the strong identities of these two faculties have continued to exist and stand as the main obstacle to the belonging to the university and a unified stance.

3.1. Faculty of Political Sciences (Mülkiye)

Faculty of Political Sciences is the first building constructed in Ankara University Cebeci Campus area. The Faculty was first established with the name of Mekteb-i Mülkiye-i Şahane in 1859 in İstanbul. After the foundation of the Republic, the school was planned to move to Ankara with the wish of Atatürk. The construction of the building, projects of which prepared by Ernst A. Egli, was started in 1935 and the building began to be used in October 1936. After that the amphi, library, dormitory buildings and the Faculty of Communication building were constructed due to changing conditions and different spatial needs through time between 1957-1968. Related with these additions, the main building has gone through many functional and spatial transformations.

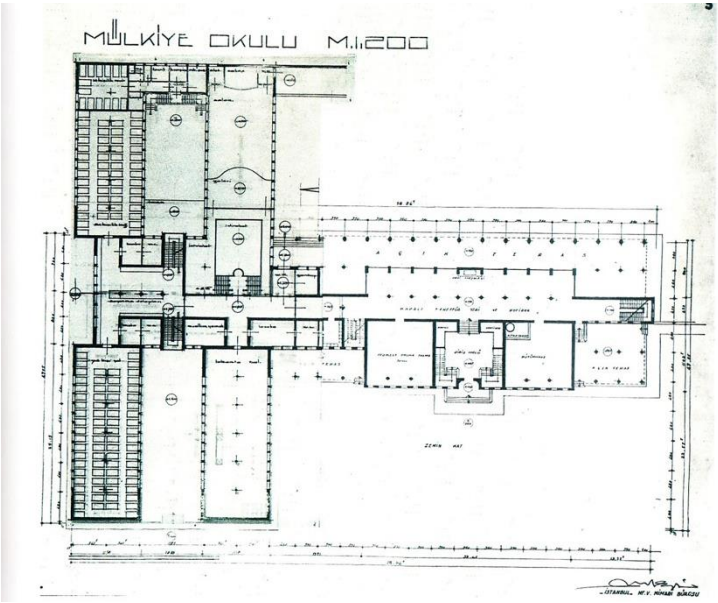


Figure 5. Faculty of Political Sciences Ground Floor Plan (Alpagut, 2012: 205).

3.1.1. Design of the Building

At the original, the building was designed with the functionalist approach and composed of two main blocks perpendicular to each other, forming a T-shape. The block perpendicular to the street involved four blocks with two-floor height, and the other block, parallel to the street, was a single horizontal block with the main entrance and one floor higher than the other block. This main block was designed to embody classes and offices, while the other block mainly involved common areas like a conference hall, dormitory, and cafeteria (Figure 5).

A small hall is reached from the main block's entrance, which is opened to a multi-purpose hall with two rows of columns. This hall has a bright and spacious effect achieved via nine large windows on the east facade, occupying most of the ground floor. Namık Kemal Güçhan talks about this hall: “We loved that hall a lot. It was a pleasure to take a walk in the hall. Especially when it rains or snows… you walk warmly and watch from the windows. Students were in the hall mostly; sat, had a chat, etc., and that gave a sense of home to you.” (Figure 6-7)



Figure 6. Multi-purpose hall on the ground floor of Faculty of Political Sciences building (Alpagut, 2010, p. 143).

As in the original plan, there are two stairs flanking both sides of the entrance hall to reach the upper floor. On this floor, two rows of offices of different sizes are on both edges of the corridor. The second floor, with classes and other offices, has the same floor plan as the first floor. The other block, adjacent to the main, embodies large spaces like a conference hall, dormitory, and cafeteria in the original plan. However, because of the different spatial needs through time, only the conference hall on the southeast corner of this block could preserve its original spatial qualities with minor changes substantially (Alpagut, 2012, p. 203). Aydemir Ceylan (2006, p. 38) mentions in the conference hall that influential scientists and politicians were often invited to conferences. Besides, they had the opportunity to meet with famous bands and artists and see these performances in the hall. Another use of the hall was the dance classes given by students who knew how to dance once per week in the foyer in front of the hall.



Figure 7. Multi-purpose hall on the ground floor of Faculty of Political Sciences building (Alpagut, 2010, p. 143).

By referring to Namık Kemal Güçhan, a student of the Faculty of Political Sciences between 1943-1947, the dormitory spaces can be explained as large enough to embody 60-100 students, with no separate rooms. The cabinets were in the corridor; students changed their clothes and entered the dormitory without turning the lights on. The space got heated well; the beds were durable and clean (Figure 8). The cafeteria provided three meals a day, and meals were clean, satisfying, and of good quality (Figure 9). Besides, there was hot water for 24 hours and service laundry for the students. Their clothes were washed, ironed, and put into their closets by referring to the signs on their clothes. It is important to mention that the school also gave students shoes and suits every year and coats every two years in addition to a certain amount of allowance. The life standard provided for students was relatively high for the period.

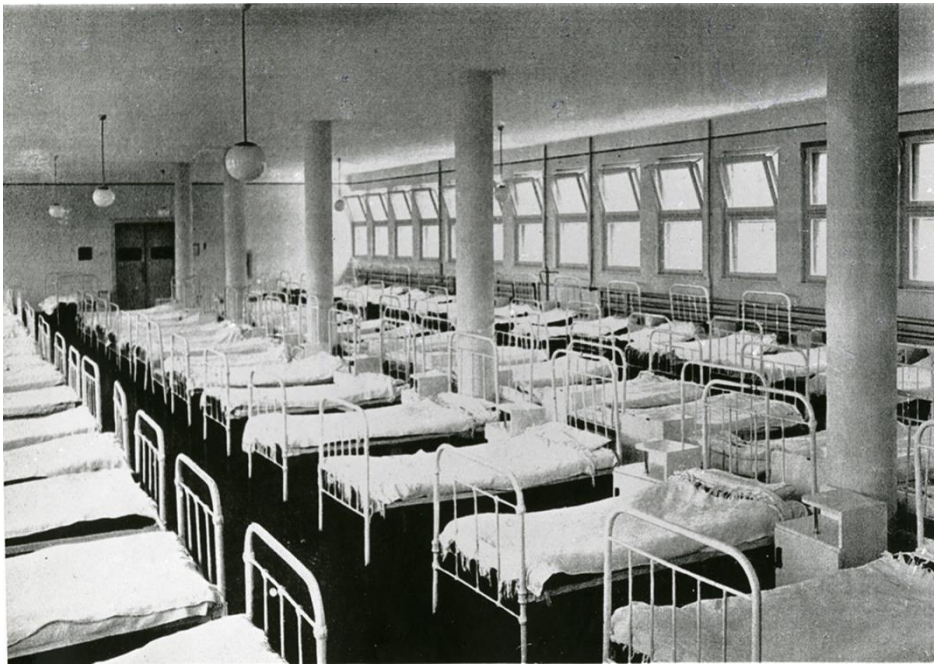


Figure 8. One of the dormitory rooms of Faculty of Political Sciences building. Bellek Mülkiye. Digital Archive of Faculty of Political Sciences: http://www.politics.ankara.edu.tr/dijital-arsiv/#iLightbox[gallery_image_1]/67

All four facades of the main blocks were designed in different manners. The one facing the street has a simple and horizontally designed façade, covered with Ankara stone till

ground floor level, and looks like the base of the building. (Alpagut, 2012, p. 204). the symmetrical arrangement of façades with a simple and plain design approach and low-pitched roofs surrounded with parapets supporting the cubic appearance of the building are the characteristics of the building, increasing it is being one of the predecessors of the Early-Republican modernism in Ankara.

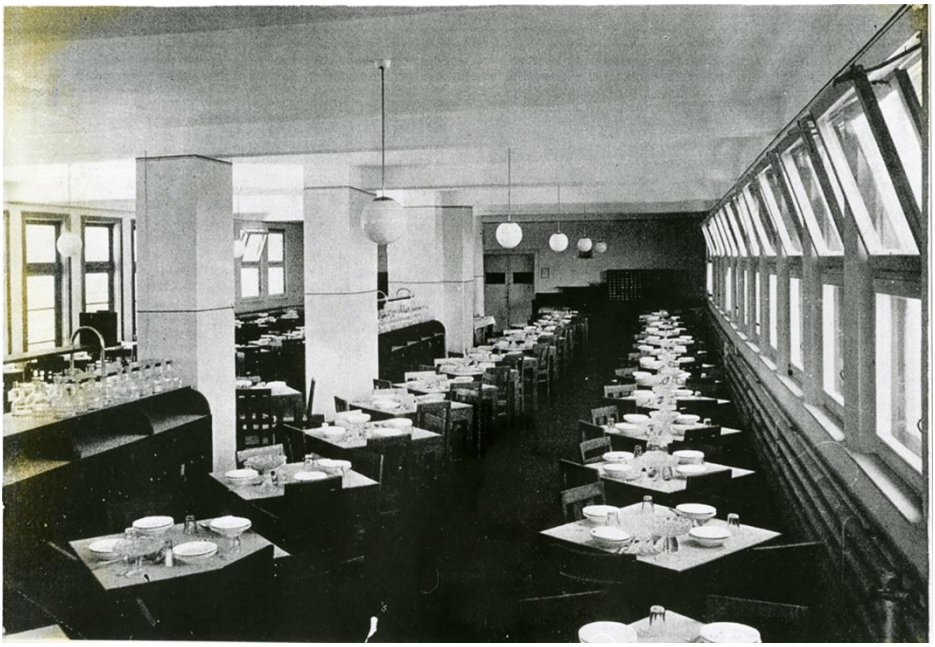


Figure 9. Cafeteria of Faculty of Political Sciences building. Bellek Mülkiye. Digital Archive of Faculty of Political Sciences: http://www.politics.ankara.edu.tr/dijital-arsiv/#iLightbox[gallery_image_1]/66

Not just the mass, plan, and façade design showing the characteristics of the modern movement, as mentioned above, the complete abandonment of decoration and simplicity were also the main principles in the design of interiors with the use of original modern details, material, and finishing of the faculty building. The lack of any decorative elements, the use of pure geometric forms in architectural elements, floor coverings, lighting elements, etc., and the simple joint details of vertical and horizontal elements prevent the user from getting lost in details and enable him/her to have a spatial experience in its pure form.

3.1.2. Changes in the Building

Related to increasing student numbers and changes in spatial needs according to developments in educational mediums, as being an eighty-year-old building, the Faculty of Political Sciences Building has gone through various changes and improvements. While some of these arrangements required severe constructional changes, some were just functional transformations with minor changes. There were few spaces where originality could be traced today.

The first and major transformation in the building took place with the construction of additional buildings. To meet this need, Ankara University announced an architectural competition for a library, a dormitory, and a conference hall with classes. Enver Tokay was the winner of the competition. He realized the implementation projects and the transformation of the existing building of the faculty with architects Ayhan Tayman and Yılmaz Sanlı. The construction period was completed in 10 years (Baskıcı 2009, p. 25).

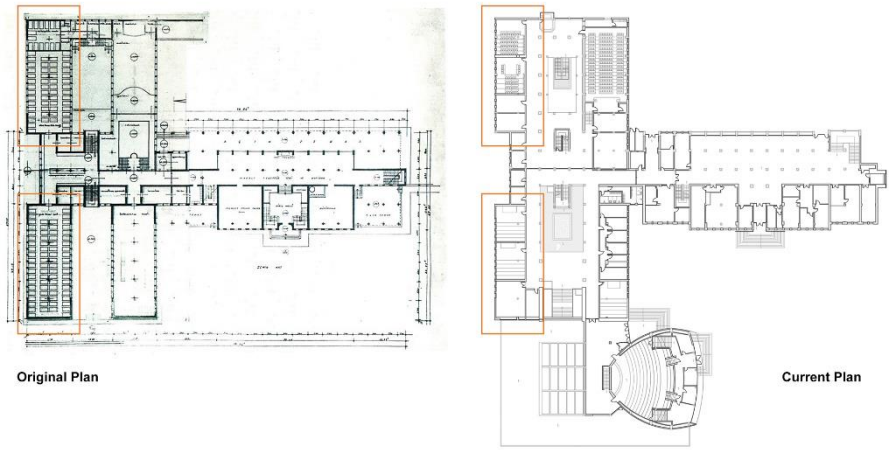


Figure 10. Comparison of the original design and the today's condition of the Faculty of Political Science building showing the transformation of dormitory spaces. Ankara University Directorate of Construction and Technical Works archive.

After the completion of new buildings and the transfer of the functions from the main building to these buildings, the space left in the main building was transformed into classrooms mostly. So, relatedly, the main building underwent a significant reorganization activity.

With the use of new buildings, the library and dorms were moved to their new places and the spaces left from dormitory rooms were transformed into classrooms (Öztürk, 2007, p. 40). There were two separate dormitory rooms for 50 students, and there was a single dormitory room for 100 students on the first floor. After the new building began to be used in 1963, these spaces were rearranged into four classrooms, meaning the dormitory room for 100 students was divided into two classrooms (Figure 10). While transforming the dormitory rooms, it can be observed from comparison of the original plan with the current plan that the corridor was widened, the location of the staircases was changed, and an inner garden was formed. Additionally, Prof. Dr. Yalçın Karatepe mentions that during this period of the transformation of spaces related to the dormitory into classrooms, the balconies – the voids on the façade of the vertical block of the main building were also closed and added to the inner space to be used as classrooms.



Figure 11. Multi-purpose hall after the transformation. Azize Elif Yabacı, 2017.

The multi-purpose hall was also reorganized in 1969; and reopened to use this year, the hundredth anniversary of the faculty (Baskıcı, 2009, p. 30-31). Although information about the time of change was lacking in written documents, it is known that the columns of the hall were cylindrical, these columns were covered with marble and reshaped in cornered form (Figure 11). Additionally, it was seen that the dining hall on the ground floor of the dormitory block was then divided and rearranged into several classrooms and offices with a corridor on the outside (Figure 12).

There are more similar spatial changes like those mentioned above; however, it is assumed that the given examples are satisfactory enough to comprehend the scope of the transformations. These significant changes are mainly dated to the period after the

expansion project for additional buildings. Following that period, there were mostly the refurbishment of the existing spaces, renewal of materials, and minor repairs. However, it must be pointed out that the removal of original materials should also be evaluated as a significant loss as a case in point is an important representative of a period in history.

It is seen that the Faculty of Political Sciences building has gone through a considerable transformation ended up with an appearance that has almost nothing referring to the original design other than the window proportions. The aim of the administrators and the users for continuity in the use of the building resulted in the loss of value and the loss of architectural identity of the building. Cengizkan defines this transformation as from the "spacious," "comfortable and airy," and even increasingly "liberating" spaces, documented in the photographs taken with the building's many first users, to the "orderly," "reduced architectural" features. The author ended his words by warning, "This depreciation, layered on top of each other with unqualified protection and guarding attitudes, is at that point that one day it may even decide on the destruction of administrative or political will." (2017, p. 92-95).

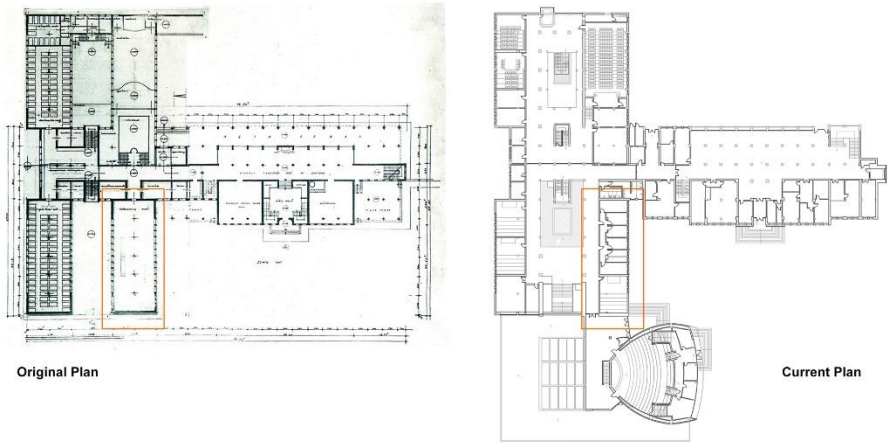


Figure 12. Comparison of the original design and the today's condition of the Faculty of Political Science building showing the transformation of cafeteria space. Ankara University Directorate of Construction and Technical Works archive.

3.2. Faculty of Law (Hukuk Fakültesi)

Faculty of Law was established in 1925 with the initiative of the Mahmut Esat Bozkurt – Minister of Justice of that time with the name of Ankara Adliye Hukuk Mektebi. Until 1936,

the education continued in separate and temporary buildings. At last, it was decided to construct a modern building that could meet the requirements of the school. In 1936, the construction began, however, it took a long time to complete the all buildings which were designed by Recai Akçay. Even so, the school moved to its new building in June 1941 while the construction was continuing. And, the buildings completed totally according to the project in 1949 (Çadırcı, Süslü, 1982, p. 112) (Mumcu, 1977, p. 167).

3.2.1. Design of the Building

The general form of Faculty of Law is composed of two blocks parallel to the street and a vertical one combining and cutting these two. The site of the faculty is sloped; the parallel blocks have basement and three floors, and the vertical blocks have basement and two floors. The main entrance is on the parallel block close to the street and have three openings. The extension of the vertical block has the second entrance with six high columns (Figure 13).

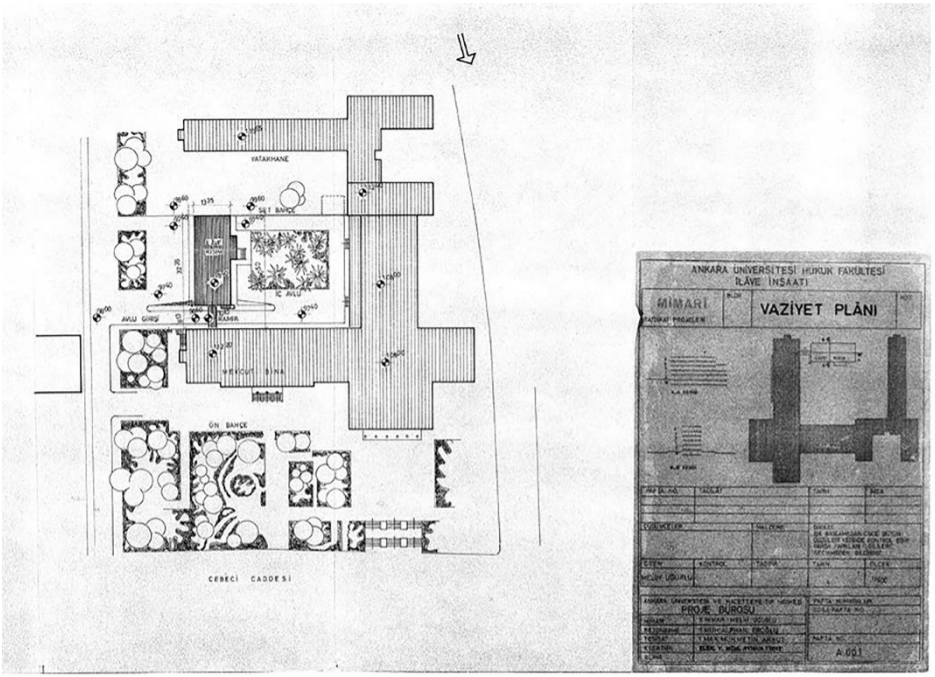


Figure 13. Site Plan of Faculty of Law. Ankara University Directorate of Construction and Technical Works archive.

The building has concrete frame structural system and the facades are covered with stone and rough rendering. Ankara stone is used in door and window frames, columns, pilaster and stairs of the entrances and on the exterior covering of the basement floor. Masses have pitched roofs covered with roof tiles (Aslanoğlu, 2010, p. 190). The entrances with stairs and colonnades, the entrance halls covered with marble and the facade organization reminds the ministry buildings of the period – like Ministry of Justice- and the building of General Directorate of State Railways. With large masses and the facades designed with neo-classical style, the building of Faculty of Law is an example of the last years of the period that German massive architecture gained power (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Faculty of Law in 1954. Ankara University Faculty of Law website: http://www.law.ankara.edu.tr/tarihce-2/

In original plan, the parallel block close to the street included administrative units, library, and classes with two entrances. In the vertical block, the school continued with classes and conference hall (Aslanoğlu, 2010, p. 190). On the south part of this block, there were lodgings of administration staff -dean, secretary etc. (Prof. Dr. Erdal Onar- interview, March 2016). This part of the block has a separate entrance from Erdem Street on the west part of the faculty; but the it is connected to the front block from the inside. On the

other block, the parallel block on the south, there was the dormitory part. Of course, within time, related with changing and/or increasing needs of space, Faculty of Law has been through many changes and got additional buildings.

3.2.2. Changes in the Building

The faculty building could be completed in 1949 and, Faculty of Law underwent the changes after 1950s, mainly.

The one main change seen in the faculty was the transformation of the lodgings to classrooms. Because in 1949, Faculty of Divinity was established under the umbrella of Ankara University; and due to the lack of faculty building, the classes rearranged in the lodgings Faculty of Law were used by Faculty of Divinity (Prof. Dr. Erdal Onar- interview, March 2016).

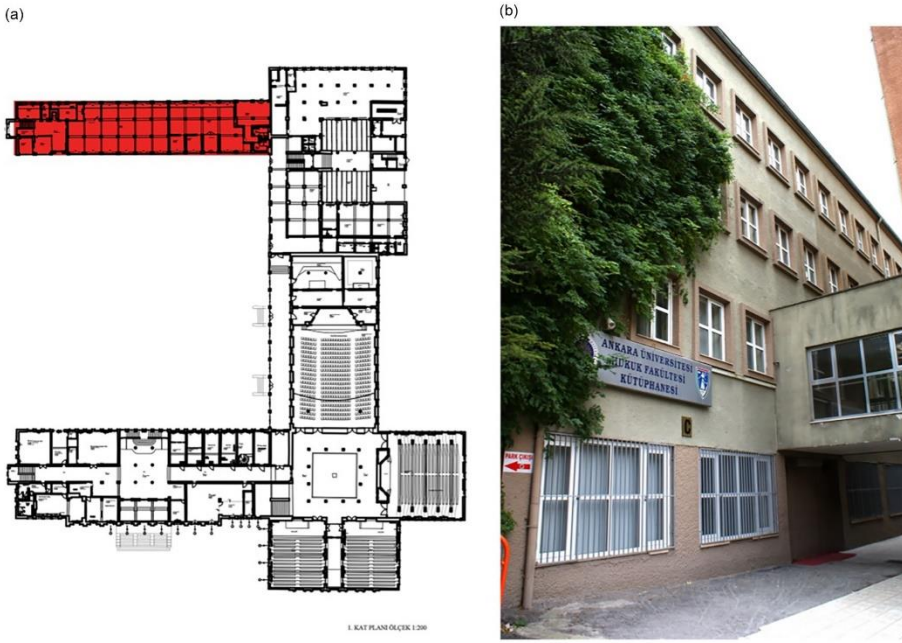


Figure 15. Location of the library in the main building (a) (Ankara University Directorate of Construction and Technical Works archive and the block today (b) (Azize Elif Yabacı, 2016)

Through the same process with Faculty of Political Sciences, Faculty of Law also has experienced a continuous growth and development occurred in the faculty buildings

related with the increasing number of students. Additional building blocks, changes related with construction of these new building blocks, functional changes according to changing spatial needs and improvements of spatial qualities of classrooms etc. were the main inputs of the development process of the faculty.

In 1966, the dormitory block of the faculty was emptied and made available for the use of the faculty. Then, the library of the faculty was moved to this block (Çadırcı, Süslü, 1982, p. 113); (Mumcu, 1977, p. 241) (Figure 15).

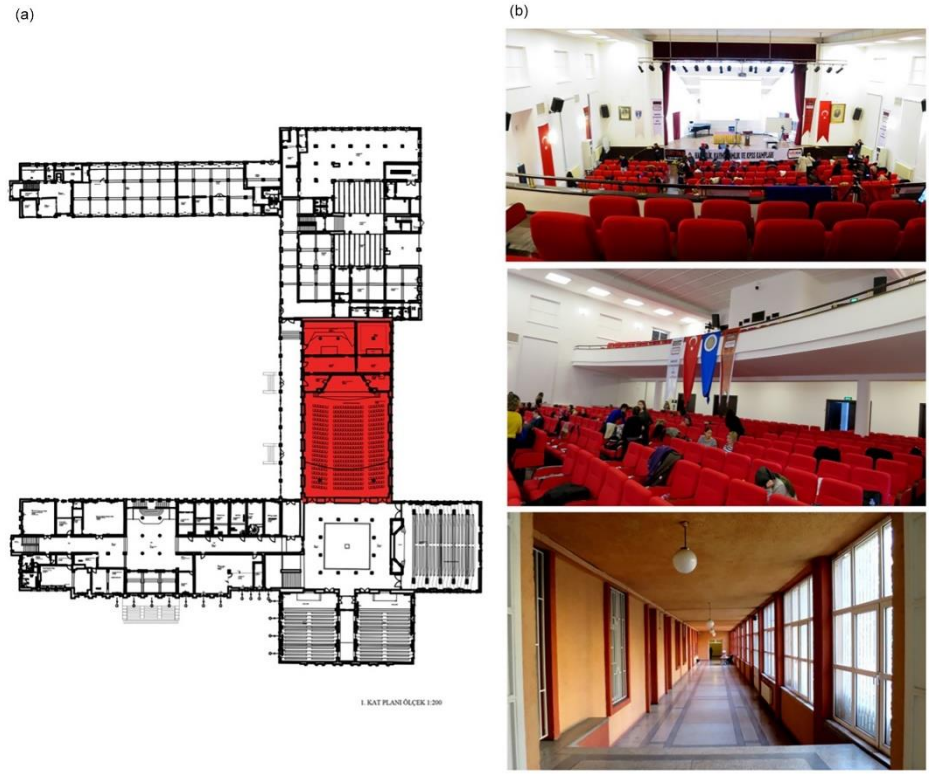


Figure 16. Location the conference hall in the main building (a) Ankara University Directorate of Construction and Technical Works archive. and Conference Hall and the corridor near the hall today (b) (Azize Elif Yabacı, 2017).

Vocational School of Justice was established in 1979 under the roof of Faculty of Law and the lodgings' part, that was used by Faculty of Divinity and some other governmental offices, became the zone of Vocational School of Justice from then on. Prof. Dr. Erdal Onar, director of the school for a period, mentions the incompatibility of the transformation of the lodgings into classrooms and offices by saying that "It became really strange when it was converted into a faculty from a lodging. Many stairs appeared when a number of dwellings and the walls between – or in between – them were cancelled. You go up and down stairs constantly, there are stairs that reaches nowhere. You climb them, after to reach a space, you go down from another stair, etc. It is a very nice building, in any case."

These two changes were the ones with major spatial transformations. Other than that, the building mostly witnessed minor spatial changes – not drastically affecting the layout – or, mainly, material-based changes and renovations. The renewal of the conference hall is one of the examples in this group. In this process of, the sitting units were replaced mainly; apart from them, the stage the floor coverings, etc. remains same (Figure 16).

When observed as a whole, Faculty of Law is certainly kept its originality – especially in spatial terms – mostly. This is related in some way with the construction of additional buildings in service of the faculty itself and load of changes in the circumstances is low in respect of Faculty of Political Sciences. However, the belongingness of the users of the faculty building is remarkably high which ended up a highly-conserved building. Refurbishment of a meeting hall even caused sorrow among the academicians due to the change of the ambiance. People feel attached to the building, to its historical atmosphere and appearance which motivates them to keep the building in its original condition in the most possible extend.

4. Comparison

Although being designed in the same period, Early Republican Period as named, and constructed through the sequence of years, these two buildings – Faculty of Political Sciences and Faculty of Law – have two different architectural language displayed side by side. Different from Egli's buildings as a representative of modern movement with general principles of pure geometric forms both in massive quality of the building and in smaller scale feature, simple detailing, no decoration, Faculty of Law building has large masses and the facades designed with neo-classical style which reflects the features of German stone architecture the ministry buildings of the period.

Based on the interviews with the users of the faculties, it is possible to say that the building of Faculty of Law appeals to people with its monumental building with its columns on the entrance façade that gives the powerful impression to them. Prof. Dr. Celal Göle, who is a graduate of Faculty of Law and became an academician and the Dean of Faculty of Political Sciences afterwards, also thinks that the building of Faculty of Law is more powerful than and holds the attraction of people. With his words, the building of Faculty of Political Sciences is like a middle school building and not stands as powerful as Faculty

of Law building. This approach may be the reason of the extensive changes realized during his management of the faculty. Another graduate of the Faculty of Law, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurkut İnan shares his first impression on the building by saying: “When I look from the outside, the building of Faculty oof Political Sciences cannot compete with our faculty. It is much better in architectural terms.”

Being on the extreme ends of conservation, the buildings of Faculty of Political Sciences and Faculty of Law are compared and the reasons of the different state and/or approach of conservation are discussed by the former deans of Faculty of Political Sciences. It is stated that, in a basic manner, Faculty of Law grew with additional blocks while Faculty of Political Sciences got smaller by losing the blocks dependent on it which ended up major transformations od the spaces at hand.

Beside this major reason behind the difference in approaching to the buildings, different architectural languages also could be effective in the intention of conservation.

Conclusion

All the data collected and obtained by the comparisons show that ‘modern architecture’ is strongly attached with the life standards, comfort and modern living habits brought together with the establishment of Republic and its reforms. Modern language in the buildings were chosen to be the representative of the modernization efforts in varying fields of the Republic including education. In case of Faculty of Political Sciences, the modern and functional building was a reflection of the modern education system, the related spaces and the modern life in it. So, the users and/or the citizens made a direct relation between the standards of the period and the architecture of the building which, in fact, forms the admiration of people among the modern architecture. From this perspective, with the change in the standards, trends, and/or admiration, it become easy to change the building also.

However, in case of Faculty of Law, the monumental appearance with its powerful stance, the building think as worth to conserve. Both are modern educational institutions with modern architecture from different perspectives; yet, the feeling of ‘strength’ and ‘power’ reflected from building of Faculty of Law is seen as the motives to conserve the building while the modest and modern building of Faculty of Political Sciences is not thought to have a value to conserve.

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