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# Planning the Future in the 2000s and Lessons from Turkish Urban Planning Experience in the 1930s

**Theme 3: Maintaining Harmony – Traditional and Modern**

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Market-led "economic conjuncture" point of view reduces the social context of urban planning to the *estimation* of the economic trends. However, the idea of planning, by definition, is pertaining to the long-term arrangements towards production of public goods. Market-led policies based on the "economic conjuncture" point of view, result in acceleration of the urban growth around bigger agglomerations. This contradicts with policies towards even and balanced distribution and use of social and natural resources and towards protecting the natural and historical and cultural assets and urban and regional policies integrated with rural development programs, concomitantly. Under the limitations of the uneven development, planning the cities, can not go beyond, *estimation* and then arrangement of the regionally uncontrollable migration and urban growth structured according to the rules of the economies of agglomeration. This leads to a certain kind of *social alienation* in terms of controlling and determining urban development. In this sense, the case of Turkey in 1930s provide the examples of conscious efforts toward policy-oriented and integrated urban and regional development.

## 1.0. TURKISH URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING EXPERIENCE IN THE 1930S

In the 1930s, in Turkey, under the policies towards regulation of regional development within national boundaries, the urban planning approach was *policy-oriented. Political calculation* and *will* preceded the *economic efficiency* and *rationalization* point of view. Rather than the "economic conjuncture" point of view, the policy of developing Anatolia and freeing rural people from their feudal ties and industrialization of the whole country were given priority. Under the basic principles of Kemalist ideology, urban planning experience was based on the essential social and economic policies of *statism* and *populism*.

Even though the policy of creating new development centers had faced certain obstacles due to recapitalization and capitalist integration policies in the following periods (1950s, 1980s and 1990s), we should be finding the roots of the creation of new development poles as opposed to the economic policies of the single large city and growth focus in Istanbul, in the strong regional development and populist policies of Early Republican Period. Briefly, related to the city and regional planning practices in Turkey in the 1930s, we could derive the following basic principles characterizing the period:

Establishment of the national economy: National unity and organization on the basis of economic independence, national integration and integration among and within the units of productive sectors – including agricultural complexes.

Urbanization via rural-urban integration and liberation of the rural labor: technological development and industry-agriculture integration. Establishment of state farms system.

Inter-regional integration: including Ankara, creation of new development regions besides Istanbul and the creation of *industrial cities;* determination of industry and agricultural development zones, establishment of especially rail based transportation system with functional relationships between different modes of transportation.

Industrialization and industry-urban integration: transformation from urban development based on agricultural production and commerce to industry-agriculture integrated urban modes and establishment of *industrial cities*.

The establishment of public spaces of the republican citizen: creation and development of publicness in the urban space, the break up from the feudal culture of the Ottoman Empire and establishment of the institutions and the creation of spaces of the Republic (e.g. public buildings, Republican Parks, factories, *Halkevleri* (i.e. People's Houses, Community Centers)) as the spaces of modern culture; activities and spaces for cultural and social development of the work force.

From the first attempts toward the establishment of the national economy to the arrangement of the space of nation-state, the most important *spatial strategy* as regards the foundation of the Republic was the selection of Ankara as the capital. Development of Anatolia and the most rational distribution of public services had enabled the idea of another place for capital other than Istanbul. The policy of creating new development centers were contrasted to the economic policies of the single large city and growth focus in Istanbul, being the major point of capitalist integration in the beginning of the 19th century. Furthermore, creation of *new capital* and the establishment of *industrial cities* were important regional development strategies in dealing with regional underdevelopment. This policy of regional development via creating a new capital is unique within the world planning context. [1]

On the other hand, the railroads, already built solely for the imperialist-capitalist needs, that is, extraction of the raw materials of the country and to transfer them in the shortest way to the ports, were nationalized. Creation of an Ankara-based railway network with additional railways together with the ones that were nationalized was an important strategic decision. Keeping the integrity of national markets and the *economic rationalization* of newly established factories has been through these railway lines. In this way, economic reasoning was to be created by establishing relationships between production units for the sake of economic and political independence. The establishment of rail network and industrialization has enabled the development of new *regional centers*. [2]

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The selection of Ankara as a capital has been the first and the utmost phase of fair and equal treatment of the regional development issues within the national boundaries. These policies played a frontier role in creating regional development centers. Primarily the political attitude was towards establishment of national economy and development of Anatolia through creating a new capital. The idea of a new capital should be considered in the context of *regional integration* throughout Anatolia. This was a regional development decision, which denied the *agglomeration economies* around Istanbul as the center of the development. Even though, leaving the old capital where imperialist remnants and cosmopolitan culture prevailed, had no economic benefit and was a heavy burden to overcome, it was seen as imperative for the national integration. For this reason, the creation of the new capital should be perceived as a *political* movement after all. [3]

### 1.1. Urbanization via rural-urban integration and liberation of the rural labor

In this policy-oriented development model, urban and regional development issues were not separated from one another. A series of arrangements had been made in order to *liberate* rural labor and

1 Rivkin, on the creation of growth centers in case of Turkey, emphasizes two major regional development alternatives. These are "dispersion" and "selective concentration". According to Rivkin, Turkey practiced both policy approaches in the course of her attempts to encourage new growth regions. For further information:

M. Rivkin, Creation of Growth Regions: Some Experience from Turkey. Ekistics 18:106 (1964), 146-151.

2 Until 1940, 77 cities were planned. 31 of of these were the provincial centers. Most of these, in terms of the creation of the rail road network and harbour facilities were prioritized centers that were closely related with the regional development proposed by industrial plans. For further information: İ. Tekeli, Türkiye'de Kent Planlamasının Tarihsel Kökleri, in T. Gök (ed), Türkiye'de İmar Planlaması, Ankara: Publication of Faculty of Architecture, Middle East Technical University, 1980, 8-112.

3 G. Tankut, Bir Başkentin İmarı: Ankara (1923-1939), Ankara: Publication of Faculty of Architecture, Middle East Technical University, 1990, 17.

liquidate feudal relationships there within. Tithe [Aşar] (the tax on agricultural products) was dismantled. Measures for the mechanization of agriculture, together with improvements in agriculture and livestock had been taken. Village Law on the administration of the villages and Agricultural Union Law were passed and Agriculture Institute was established. Rural development was not conceived merely as an economic issue but as a part of a comprehensive liberation project. In this period 64 villages were planned as model villages. *Agricultural centers*, *state farms*, *agricultural banking*, *cooperatives*, *land provision* and *collective production* and *organization* were the basic concepts of the republican perspective on the countryside. Also the "Village Institutes" (Village Teachers' Training Schools [Köy Enstitüleri]) that were established in later periods were the most important component of the *rural development* and liberation policy.

### 1.2. Industrialization and inter-regional integration

As a regional development strategy, the development of Anatolia was shaped and strengthened by industrial development plans. The First (1933) and the Second Industrial (1936) Plans were based on the hypothesis on what would be the development instead of projecting and estimating the possible development in the future. The problem of regulation and arrangement of the growth and the development at regional scale in the 1920s and 1930s was not that of "forecasting the future" but rather based on a consciously and voluntarily organized planning activity. In these plans, the location selection of industrial estates rather than the economic criteria at firm level (i.e. economies of scale) were based on national development perspective, which perceived it as a *social policy* and regional development problem. The spatial dimensions and the development objectives of these plans were comprehensive and formulated around the idea of industrial development. In these plans, the creation of free labor was targeted. Both plans had comprehensive objectives on rural development and had assumptions for increasing the positive effects of industry over agriculture.

By means of statist policies it became possible to implement an equitable and fair development model both at regional and urban scales, within national boundaries. All production units had been integrated with each other around the goals and objectives of national economy. In this respect, the *economic rationality* is merely a matter of rationality within the inter-related system of production units.

In this planning period, with Law No: 2521, the ports and the harbors were integrated with the national transportation system and the production units according to the necessities of the national economy and the industrialization programs. Etibank, specialized in the public operations in mining and electric power (1935), General Directorate of Mineral Research and Exploration (1935), Turkish Iron and Steel Industries (1937), State Timber Factory (1937) were the major institutions established by the industrial plans. Regional development policies that were enabled with the industrial plans provided a possibility for implementation via a series of revolutionary acts, such as laws for liquidation of feudal ownership, land provision to landless farmers (expropriations made by the Law 3115), dismantling of the sultan's tax, removal of the reign of the empire, banning dervish lodges (i.e. 'tekkes' and 'zaviyes') and expropriation of their properties, etc.

These, legal frameworks prepared to liquidate feudal serf-like relationships, provided a ground for equal citizens in terms of the use of the public services and for the liberation of the rural population and the creation of the urban workforce. Undoubtedly, there could be no possibility for the implementation of a plan that was framed with general economic and societal benefit through liberation of production and service units or through single enterprises that work with market's *profit criteria*. For this reason, the intervention of central state was inevitable. Industrial plans had been the most basic elements of the central intervention.

### 1.3. Integration of industry-city and the definition of public service

State factories contributed to development of cities and their environments in terms of providing urban services. In these factories, in addition to production and research facilities, cultural, sports, recreation, health facilities, housing for workers, single resident homes (for both males and females), schools,

groceries, kindergarten, children's playgrounds, baths, workers' clubhouse, barber, butcher, cantina and bakery were to be found. Social and cultural activities and facilities were open to public; the cultural life of the city was enriched by these factories.

The *economic rationalism* in both First and Second Industrial Plans was based on the principle of integrating the newly established production units with settlements and diffusion centers through a comprehensive planning framework. Rather than pure economic efficiency point of view departing from short-term rational calculations, implementations were made after taking into consideration the geographical and environmental conditions in the selection of locations. Then there follows an economic rationalization plans with comprehensive investment and management decisions. Thus, economic rationality was not the primary principle of development but a principle to be followed in the production process. Here, the most basic tools of economic rationalization were the creation of railroad network, energy production plants and state subsidized cheap freight rates, etc.

### 1.4. Creation of the public spaces of the Republic

In this period city planning is based on creation and development of the public spaces in an environment that was to be shaped with the modern life style of the idealized Republican Citizen. Transforming people to a modern society, creating *publicness* and *socialness* in spaces is one of the top most objectives of city planning. Public buildings and spaces become the most important elements defining the cities. City parks and Community Centers [Halkevleri] [4] become the major centers of *socialization*. Named as Youth Park, Culture park, People's Garden, Nation's Garden etc., [Gençlik Parkı, Kültürpark, Halk Bahçesi, Millet Bahçesi] these places became important places for social and cultural activities besides entertainment, rest and sporting activities. Contrary to the historical gardens of the Empire that were based on the separation of sex and social strata, Republican Parks were the places where *socialization* and *recreation* occurred together. These places were not located arbitrarily, but placed at the most central locations adjacent to city squares.

## 2.0. PLANNING THE FUTURE IN THE 2000S

From the lessons from Turkish urban planning experiences in the mid-1930s, we propose two essential and related component of the problematique of the planning the future. As a political strategy, the context of urban planning should be structured around two basic ideas. The first is, in the light of the environmental problems witnessing the World, the idea of planned management of the development potentials and ensuring the balances between use and protection of the natural resources. The other is, structuring all planning practices around the idea of equity and social justice, at all scales that is regional and urban, etc. This refers to the necessary social objectives of urban planning. Thus social and economic objectives should be integrated with spatial planning objectives. Rather than the alternatives that are delimiting the physical and social accessibility and resulting in social polarization and fragmentation, the equity and social justice point of view should be located at the center of all spatial arrangements. And any seperation between physical and social should be rejected.

In contrast to culturalist views which affected the urban planning literature in the past decade, there is a need to reshape the problematique of the city and regional planning on two basic concepts of social equity and social justice.

It is well known that the global strategies towards the privatization of national economies and dismantling the political and spatial barriers to international capital imposed heavy economic burdens on and had destructive effects on the national economies of the underdevloped countries. Increasing social polarization and poverty is not peculiar to Turkey. Privatization of public economic enterprises and state property and public services, redefinition of the content of public service and public benefit according to the marketability and profitability criterion, thwarted and challenged the content and the

4 Halkevleri were the centers established by the state for public instruction and social interaction.

instutional structure of planning. Privatization of state enterprises and the factories, in favour of their lands and built-up area, increasing movement of capital into real estate sector/secondary circuit activity resulted in *deindustrialization* of the cities on the one hand and provided a suitable ground for the planning approaches that are oriented towards short term rationalities and private interests and towards appropriation/extraction of exchange values.

In contrast to liberal thinking which assumes that all individuals act according to the given eternal economic laws of the market , the idea of planning is based on the idea that all human kind and societies at the last instance, would dominate over the economy and the social conditions of production and redetermine these conditions. Because the planning as an instrument pertains to the collective activity of the societies, and thus requires utilization of certain instruments of political mechanism and the existence of some public authority.

We may assert that, in capitalist/market societies the contradiction between incresing socialization of production process and the individualistic nature of private property delimit the content of planning. However, in contrast to market based liberal thinking, planning is closely related to the public sphere. On one side, there stands a planning perspective emphasizing the long run rationalities and public benefit, on the other, anti-planning strategy based on private interests and profitability. However conroversy in between is the problem of all market economies.

In case of Turkey, during the long periods of capitalist integration and recapitilization, in contrast to even and just distribution and mobilization of all social resources and protection of natural and historical values on the one hand and the urban and regional policies integrated with rural development programs on the other, there created a model of agglomerations around the larger cities as the major points of capitalist integration. Thus, the resulting settlement pattern has been characterised with bigger agglomerations around the larger cities. Under the limitations of this uneven and anarchical development by nature, the content of planning has been delimited too. Regional planning is no more an instrument of regulation and intervention. And, urban planning is at best is nothing more than the arrangements based on the estimation of an uncontrolled development at regional scale. This uncontrolled regional development strategy is favoured and directed because of the capital circulating and embedded in the real estate sector, especially in the larger cities. In this perspective, the problem of mobilizing the developmental capacities and potentials is not approached as problem of planning.The problem of societal development seems to be reduced to estimations departing from the economic conjuncture point of view. Therefore, urban planning at best can not go beyond the arrangement of urban growth resulting from the uncontrolled agglomerations around the larger cities. Thus our problematique of planning the future, should be policy-oriented rather than economic conjuncture point of view.

Thus, on this objective basis, we may assert that our problematique of planning the cities in the 2000s strategically should be structured around two basic ideas: The first is, given the environmental problems that the World is witnessing, the planned utilization and management of development potentials and the planned balance of use-protection in utilization of the resources and sustainable welfare of the societies, and the other is, reformulating the planning theory and practice according to the principles of social equity and social justice .

Planned mobilization of development potentials, establishment of sustainable balances between use and protection: Unless the planned regulation of resource mobilization, development enjoys an uneven character.

Equity and social justice objectives: The second emphasis of our problematique is related to the social objectives that planning in theory and in practice should comprise. Here we mean that all arrangements related to use of social and phsical resources and historical and cultural and the natural assets etc., should be integrated with equity and social justice objectives. For us, in all spatial arrangements, alternatives delimitting the possibilities of social integration and leading to social polarizations and social disintegration and segragation should be eliminated. Thus, protection of all use values and

public benefit and ensurring the equal distribution of benefits, and equal access to public services are to be evaluated in this context.

## 3.0. CONCLUSİON

While making assertions on what should define our problematique of planning in the future, certainly we are not able to contain all social determinants. There is no magical formula, preventing planning process from creating inequalities in the cociety, ceteris paripus. Thus, our idea of social justice is necessarily limitted with distributional justice. At the last instance real solution is concealed in the transformation of social relations of production. However, all transformative capacities of the societies towards radical solutions, can not develop unless they spent and diversify all the alternatives within the limitations of the given social formation.