

NATURE, CULTURE, CITY DIALECTIC IN THE ANTHROPOCENE:  
READING THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOUTHEAST PERIPHERY OF  
ANKARA

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PERIPHERY OF ANKARA**

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## ABSTRACT

### **NATURE, CULTURE, CITY DIALECTIC IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: READING THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOUTHEAST PERIPHERY OF ANKARA**

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The 21st century has been the century of changing climates, epidemic diseases, forest fires and economic deadlocks that we comprehend solely as ecological rather than a political, economic and aesthetic phenomena. Urban space and increasing consumption have become the cause and result of this ever-increasing change. While the signs and representations of nature are proliferating in the age where society and nature are intertwined more than ever, technological solutions and green consumption emerged rather than critical approaches to environmental problems at different scales. From this point of view, the study claims that environmental problems of urbanization cannot be considered separately from power relations, class struggle, uneven development, and non-human actors by referencing urban political ecology literature. It problematizes the conceptions and practices that separate nature and culture, core and periphery, human and non-human, local or global, as historically produced dualities, and proposes to look at it from a relational, dialectic perspective. The study follows a threefold framework at this point: (1) It seeks traces that can change our perspective on urban and environmental problems by reframing literature through a series of re-readings: renaturing, transcending dualisms,

decentering, animating, and interrelating. (2) It examines the relations and disconnections the city has established with nature throughout history, and the material flows such as mohair, food, water and cement embedded in them. The reconstructed socio-environmental history helps to grasp the crisis of the Anthropocene, which is also the crisis of humans, and the problematic relationship established with nature. (3) Afterward, it scrutinizes discussions through İmrahor Valley by integrating mapping, visual survey, fieldwork, and archival materials to understand and document the radical transformation of the natural land.

**Keywords:** Urban Political Ecology, Socio-environmental History, Ankara, İmrahor Valley, Non-human Actors

## ÖZ

### **ANTROPOSEN'DE DOĞA, KENT VE KÜLTÜR DİYALEKTİĞİ: ANKARA GÜNEYDOĞU ÇEPERİNİN DÖNÜŞÜMÜNÜ OKUMAK**

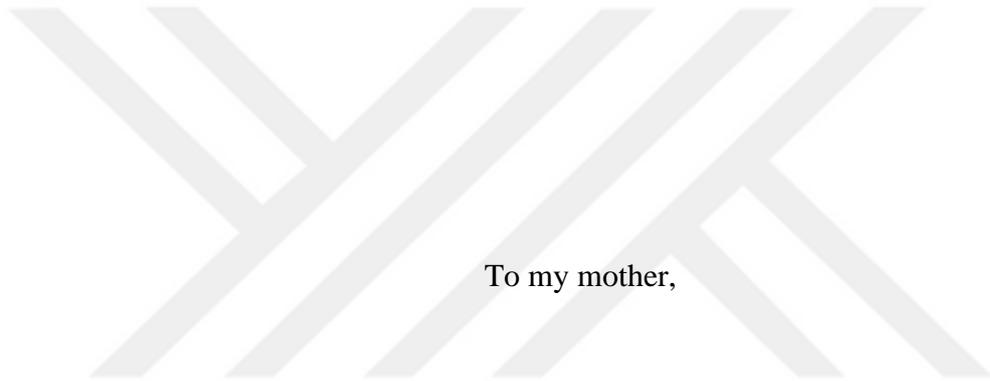
Süvari, Özge  
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21.yüzyıl değişen iklimin, epidemik hastalıkların, orman yangınlarının ve ekonomik çıkmazların yüzyılı olmuş, yalnızca ekolojik, hatta insandan azade gördüğümüz kriz çağı politik, ekonomik, estetik bir fenomen haline gelmiştir. Giderek büyüyen kent mekanı ve ardılı artan tüketim bu değişimin hem nedeni hem sonucu durumundadır. Sosyal ve çevresel birçok durumun iç içe geçtiği bu çağda doğanın göstergeleri ve temsilleri artarken çevresel sorunlara yönelik farklı ölçeklerde ve eleştirel yaklaşımlardan ziyade teknolojik çözümler ve yeşil tüketim göze çarpar. Bundan yola çıkarak çalışma 'kentsel politik ekoloji' literatürünü kullanarak kentleşmeyle oluşan çevresel sorunların sınıf mücadelesi, güç ilişkileri, eşitsiz gelişme ve insan-olmayan aktörlerden ayrı düşünülemediğini iddia eder. Doğayı ve kültürü, kenti ve çeperi, insanı ve insan olmayanı, yerel ya da global olanı ayıran anlayışları ekolojik problemlere karşı tarihsel olarak üretilmiş ikililikler olarak problematize eder ve diyalektik ilişkisellik çerçevesinden bakmayı önerir. Çalışma bu noktada üç yönlü bir katkı izler: (1) literatürü yeniden doğallaştırmak, ikililiklerin ötesine geçmek, canlandırmak, merkezsizleştirmek ve ilişki kurmak üzerinden yeniden çerçeveleyerek kentsel ve mekansal tartışmalara bakış açışımızı değiştirebilecek

ipuçları arar. (2) Ankaranın sosyo-çevresel olarak adlandırılan tarihini yeniden kurarak kentin tarih boyunca doğayla kurduğu ilişkileri ve ilişkisizlikleri irdeler ve bu ilişkileri var eden tiftik, yiyecek, su ve çimento gibi materyal akışlarını inceler. Bu yeni sosyo-çevresel tarih anlatısı Anthropocene krizini, yani doğayla kurulan problematik ilişkiyi kavramaya yardımcı olur. (3) Sonrasındaysa bu akışlar ve ilişki ağlarının günümüzde yoğunlaştığı kent çeperinde bir alan olan İmrahor Vadisi üzerinden doğal bir alanın radikal dönüşümünü anlamanın ve kaydetmenin metodolojisi haritalama, görsel araştırma, saha çalışması ve arşiv materyalleri üzerinden incelenir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kentsel Politik Ekoloji, Sosyo-çevresel Tarih, Ankara, İmrahor Vadisi, İnsan-olmayan Aktörler



To my mother,

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### ABBREVIATIONS

ÇİSAN	Türkiye Çimento Sanayi T.A.Ş.
GAP	Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
UPE	Urban Political Ecology





# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Problematic, Aim and Scope of the Thesis

One of the most critical problems of the 21st century is unarguably climate change which affects our daily lives with global warming, epidemic diseases, forest fires, increasing consumption and waste problems, and economic difficulties. Starting from the 1970s, Earth's fragility and the global environment became essential concerns. Visual description of the situation was NASA's Earthrise photography, which depicts the *blue planet* first time. The literary description was Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* advocating the silenced birds affected by the pesticides from the chemical industry. The Club of Rome's *Limits of Growth* report in 1972 warned humanity about the possible future in danger. Since the 1970s, many conferences and meetings have been held internationally for environmental problems.

The discourse on the environment is grounded in many disciplines, including Architecture and Urbanism. Although nature and the environment have been the central contradictions since the birth of architectural and urban change, notions such as sustainability, green, and smart have started to occupy the theoretical and practical agenda mainly in the past three decades. Since more than half of the population lives in urban areas, which earn and spend more, use resources, and fuel vehicles more, the growing urban population has become the driving force behind ecological problems. The scholarly responses in urbanism are so severe that the New Urbanism movement, Smart, Slow, Low Carbon Cities, Livable Cities, Digital Cities and Smart Cities Initiatives, all concentrate on those environmental problems. Yet, these concepts usually ignore the historical background and social life but rather ground on technology to solve the problems of the crisis. Therefore, the primary motivation of the study is to discuss the importance of social theory and critical thinking while

discussing urban environmental issues. In other words, rather than merely seeing the crisis ecological, this study attempts to unfold the destruction of the chemical balance, rainforests and population growth as the outcome of the social relations and public life. Therefore, the crisis of the 21st century is discussed as a political, economic, ecologic, urban, and architectural phenomenon.

Resting on the common ground between critical urban theory, urban geography and political ecology, the study aims to understand the specific socio-ecological processes and their spatial practices along with their contribution to the survival of capitalism. Capitalism is selected as an essential keyword since the problematic conception over environmental problems manifested itself in various ways and disciplines, either in the shape of commodities or buzzwords. Natural foods, recycling industries, sustainable clothes in everyday life, green/sustainable/smart city/building in architecture and urbanism witness large investments or ‘development strategies’ in the market.<sup>1</sup> Greenwashing has become one of the drivers of the same hyper-consumerist society.<sup>2</sup> In Swynhedouw’s words, “We are summoned to change things radically to make sure that nothing really has to change.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, most issues mentioned above about the 21st century is reframed as the problems of “the globalized, increasingly urbanized planet” rather than climate change and environmental problems per se.

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<sup>1</sup> Nik Heynen, Maria Kaika, and Erik Swynghedouw, *In Nature of Cities: Urban Political Ecology and Politics of Urban Metabolism*, (Routledge, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Greenwashing was first used for products and brands that produce “greener” versions, whereas the only thing that changed was the product’s color. It now applies to architecture and urbanism in the shape of concrete buildings with trees in pots. Therefore, those products and buildings only reproduce the existing hyper-consumerist habits.

Harper, P., 2021. *Outrage: greenwashing risks giving dirt a filthy name - Architectural Review*. [online] Architectural Review. Available at: <<https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/outrage/outrage-greenwashing-risks-giving-dirt-a-filthy-name>> [Accessed 21 October 2021].

<sup>3</sup> Erik Swynghedouw and Henrik Ernstson, “Interrupting the Anthro-ObScene: Immuno-Biopolitics and Depoliticizing Ontologies in the Anthropocene.”, *Theory, Culture & Society* 35, no.6, (2018a):6.

The scalar -completely urbanized planet- and social -hybridity instead of dichotomy- and material -emphasizing materials and their flows- shift in the focus of analysis is important to underline. Existing literature on environmental problems presents a dualistic conception that sees nature separate from society, the city separated from nature, the human from the non-human, and core from the periphery. To exemplify, modernist architects and planners predominantly recognized the city as separated from nature. For Maria Kaika, while Le Corbusier in Villa Contemporaine attempted to bring nature into the city, Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City brought the city back into nature. In Villa Contemporaine, nature remained as “regimented green spaces”, whereas in Broadacre city, it was in the “form of green spaces integrated with a low-density scheme”, whose existence was dependent on automobiles.<sup>4</sup> Many related examples represented the idealized versions of nature to sanitize and heal the city with well-ordered, perfect geometry. Yet, nature remained merely an aesthetic source while technology and progress would save individuals from the ills of urban life.

Since the urban world stayed as a symbol of human power and achievement for a long time, the modern transformation of the city and increasing signs and representations of nature became a vital source to discuss urban environmental problems in contemporary Ankara. In this context, the main question of the study is how does space-making contribute to the survival of power relations and uneven processes that perform an essential role in the ecological/political/economic crisis of our era? The presumption is if it does contribute significantly, what was visually severed or obscured during the ever-increasing flows and changes? Being the production of the modern city from scratch, Ankara becomes a ground for socio-ecological transformations and witnesses the capitalist urbanism process. With less than 500.000 inhabitants during the 1920s, Ankara has become 5,5 million a century later. Unexpected expansion of the city and incoming migration have caused the

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<sup>4</sup> Maria Kaika, *City of flows: Modernity, nature, and the city*, (Routledge, 2004), 19.

emergence of squatter areas and rapid transformation processes shaped by *yapsat*<sup>5</sup> activities and urban transformation projects.

For concretizing the problem, the Southeast periphery of Ankara is selected as an exemplar case. Because of the location of the squatter areas and the topography of Ankara, it was easier to expand to Western Axis, so a considerable amount of effort has been made to understand expansion towards western Ankara so far.<sup>6</sup> An extensive urbanization process has also shaped the southern part of the city with its location near both Mogan and Eymir lake basins, city landmarks, and important districts. Yet, İmrahor valley, located in the Southeast part of the city, was transformed radically with urban transformation projects and plan adjustments due to its unique location in between urban and rural land uses. Although valleys are essential ecological areas, especially in steppe climatic conditions with their microclimates, soil quality and unique geomorphological formations, they are affected negatively by speculative urban expansion processes.<sup>7</sup> Ankara's lost valleys could be exemplified as Hacıkadın, Çubuk, Kayaş, Ayrancı, Dikmen and lastly, İmrahor. On August 20th, 2002, 1/5000 scale "Master development plan for İmrahor Village"<sup>8</sup> was approved, and the area was requested to be opened for construction with a verdict numbered 446. The Chamber of City Planners filed a lawsuit for a stay of execution; the Chamber of Architects, Mamak Mass Organizations Platform and Kavaklıderem Association were also involved in the case.<sup>9</sup> Circa 2002, academicians and professionals from Ankara University, Bilkent University, Middle East Technical University, Gazi University, Chamber of Architects, Planners, Landscape Architects and Environmental Engineers organized panel discussions, workshops,

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<sup>5</sup> Private property developers solve housing necessities, mostly with land appropriated in exchange for share in construction.

<sup>6</sup> Batuman mentions that because of the location of squatter areas at the time, it was easier to expand Western axis. Bülent, Batuman, "City profile: Ankara." *Cities* 31 (2013): 578-590.

<sup>7</sup> Mimarlar Odası Ankara Şubesi. "Ankara'nın son vadisi" Accessed July 4, 2022. <http://www.mimarlarodasiankara.org/dosya/imrahor.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> *İmrahor Köyü ve Çevresine Ait Nazım Planı Değişikliği* in Turkish.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

and meetings to underline the importance of its preservation. Aside from academics, those meetings were highly supported by grassroots organizations such as the Kavaklıderem Association and Mamak Mass Organizations Platform. They emphasized the different plans developed for Ankara<sup>10</sup>, that highlighted the importance of creating wind corridors that positively affect the ecological balance and microclimate of the city. They concluded those meetings with “İmrahor Valley Explanation Report” to be prepared for the Cultural and Natural Heritage Preservation Board of the Ministry of Culture. In 2003, brochures were distributed, trips and picnics were organized in the valley.<sup>11</sup> It has been suggested to prevent the excavation of soil and wastes and to make the water flow. Although protecting İmrahor valley was the primary objective as a vital part of a green system since the Jansen Plan dated in 1932 and many professionals advised otherwise, the valley was open to construction with plan adjustments and large-scale urban transformation projects.

Despite the capitalist, mainly neoliberal urbanization dominating political life and spatial practices, the literature on the Southeast fringe concentrates more on urban transformations, planning regulations, and sustainability assessments of large-scale housing projects<sup>12</sup>. Öznur Aytekin in her thesis “Ankara İmrahor Vadisi’nin Kentsel Dönüşüm Projeleri İle Tahribi Örnek; Yeni Güneypark Kentsel Dönüşüm ve Gelişim Proje Alanı” and Fulya Sınacı in her Ph.D Dissertation investigate the similar spatial conditions from different perspectives and methodologies. Analyzing previous studies show that there has been a tremendous change since the 2000s and early struggles to protect İmrahor Valley, and recent studies concentrates more on master

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<sup>10</sup> For detailed information, see Sınacı Özfındık, Fulya. “Ankara Kent Çeperinin Önemli Bir Parçasının Değişen Karakteri: İmrahor Vadisi.” *Ankara Araştırmaları Dergisi* 7, no 2: 343-353.

<sup>11</sup> Mimarlar Odası Ankara Şubesi. “Ankara’nın son vadisi” Accessed July 4, 2022.

<http://www.mimarlarodasiankara.org/dosya/imrahor.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> See Selda Gülcan Ünal, “Ankara Sinpaş Altınoran konut projesi ve ekolojik tasarım.” *Planlama Dergisi* 24, no:2 (2014): 95-106.

The author finds that the heights of the buildings are incompatible according to the location of the land, too much excavation is taken, and that the distance to the public transportation stops encourages transportation by car is negative in terms of sustainability.

plan decisions, land uses and urban transformation projects. The promise of the study is to provide a holistic approach by using the urban political ecology perspective to understand the radical transformation of the İmrahor Valley.

## **1.2 Literature Review: Unfolding the political in ecology and the city**

Political ecology is an interdisciplinary field that emerged during the 1970s with strong influence from the political economy and cultural ecology. It mainly criticizes environmental studies' lack of understanding of social structures and institutions and argues that environmental problems are not independent of gender, class, and ethnicity. Urban political ecology was an attempt to urbanize the arguments and methodology of political ecology as well as naturalize critical theory and human geography. After its formulation by Swyngedouw in an article named "The city as a hybrid: On nature, society and cyborg urbanization" in 1996, UPE (Urban Political Ecology) has utilized the concepts and methods of historical-geographical material inquiry and the emerging field of post humanism<sup>13</sup>, as well as have strong relationship with environmental justice movements. In today's complexity and plurality, no single theory, paradigm, or metanarrative completely enlightens the process of urbanization and its associated problems; therefore, there is a necessity for eclecticism to create concepts and methods that opens questions and new horizons.<sup>14</sup> Hence, UPE scholars, in the past three decades, have researched "critically" cities and the "material" processes that reflect class struggles, social power relations and environmental problems. Among the most important of these studies are; William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis* reflecting the urban environmental history of Chicago and its strong ties to hinterlands, Erik

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<sup>13</sup> UPE scholars mostly reference to Donna Haraway and her cyborgs. Post-humanism as a field of study extends the definitions of human. They oppose some of the ideas of Hegel and Marx and accused post-modernism by mostly being post-marxism. Rosi Broidatti, in her Harvard Graduate School of Design Talk, defines the field more object-oriented, more-than-human and materialist.

<sup>14</sup> Neil Brenner et al., "Assemblage Urbanism and the Challenges of Critical Urban Theory.", *City* 15, no.2(2011):225-40.

Swyngedouw's research on water politics and its contribution to development in Spain in *Social Power and the Urbanization of Water*, Maria Kaika's historical and geographical analysis of water in modern cities such as Athens, London in *City of Flows*, Mathew Gandy's research on New York in *Concrete and Clay* and many others on food, lawn, garbage circulation, bridges, sewage systems in the city. *In the Nature of Cities: Urban Political Ecology and the Politics of Urban Metabolism*, Heynen, Kaika and Swyngedouw highlighted the main themes and directions of the field and published a manifesto in 2005. However, an essential intellectual backbone of the field comes from David Harvey's *Justice, Nature, Geography of Difference*, and Neil Smith's *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*, while the original idea of metabolism goes back to Marx. Harvey's process-based episteme turns into a reconceptualization of urbanization as a socio-natural process and city as a socio-natural hybrid.

In his progress report of the field, Roger Keil examines the literature in four clusters; empirical work concentrated on Los Angeles mostly by Keil and Mike Davis, Erik Swyngedouw and his colleagues in Oxford with their Marxist emphasis, scholars dealing with urban and regional environmental and economic policy, and lastly UPE with environmental justice.<sup>15</sup> For Keil, the political refers to socio-economic inequalities, and the analysis derived from the political economy paying serious attention to questions of nature and enlarging the political world to non-humans. Nik Heynen also published two different progress reports and highlighted the need for other tendencies on feminism, postcolonialism and racism for a growing body of research.<sup>16</sup> Beyond this, new geographies journal, and Harvard GSD (Graduate School of Design) in general, have been successful in introducing the agency of design in wider environmental problems and urban metabolism to the agenda of design professionals. Projects vary from the Metabolist group dealing with organicist

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<sup>15</sup> Roger, Keil, "Urban Political Ecology." *Urban Geography* 24, no. 8(2003a): 723–38.

<sup>16</sup> Nik, Heynen, "Urban Political Ecology I: The Urban Century." *Progress in Human Geography* 38, no.4(2014) : 598–604.

interpretation of circulation and adaptation into megastructural formations to critical understandings of human associations across geographies.<sup>17</sup> In different issues of “Grounding Metabolism, Posthuman, Island, the Mediterranean, Commons,” the journal concentrates on contemporary tendencies and intersections between geography and design disciplines.

The concept of metabolism, which was central to UPE, appeared in the early nineteenth century concerning “the material exchanges in the body with respect to respiration which later includes material exchanges between organisms and biophysical processes within living and non-living entities.”<sup>18</sup> For von Liebig and Edwin Chadwick, “unsustainability of nineteenth-century forms of urbanization” was related to the spatio-temporal organization of metabolic flows and circuits.<sup>19</sup> Swyngedouw reiterates the original German word for metabolism, *Stoffwechsel*, which means “change of matter,” implying circulation, exchange and transformation of material entities. Marxist interpretation of urban metabolism asserts that everything reproduced in life depends on nature and matter mobilized and transformed by “labor”. Therefore, Gandy highlights the difference between urban metabolism adopting the concepts from nineteenth-century developments in natural sciences and those that originate from Marx.<sup>20</sup> While functionalist approaches conceptualize the city as a self-regulatory system of inputs and outputs, dialectical conceptions emphasize commodity chains, unique qualities of local contexts and fluidity of urban form. Circulatory conduits and flows of materials fused with social relations allow the city, like the human body, to function. Via traveling to different institutions and structures, matter in the form of water, cement, timber etc.,

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<sup>17</sup> Daniel Ibañez, and Nikos Katsikis, “Grounding Metabolism Editorial. *New Geographies*.” *Grounding Metabolism* 6 (2014), 2–10.

<sup>18</sup> Erik Swyngedouw, “Metabolic urbanization: The making of cyborg cities.” *In the nature of cities* (Routledge, 2006), 22.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew Gandy “Rethinking urban metabolism: water, space and the modern city.” *City* 8, no 3 (2004): 363-379.

represents symbolic meanings; they both shape social relations and are shaped by them.

The urban political ecology perspective fits very well in the context of İstanbul, which has nearly twenty million inhabitants and a continuously growing urban fabric. Hence, there is a considerable amount of effort concerning the UPE literature. Center for Spatial Justice's journal beyond. İstanbul brought together the research on the urban political ecology of İstanbul at issue named "İstanbul Yollarında Kentsel Politik Ekoloji." It has been the topic of dissertations under the title; "This is not a Line": Critical Delineation of the Coastline in İstanbul"<sup>21</sup> and "Urban Metabolism of İstanbul: Waterfronts As Metabolized Socio-Natures Between 1839 and 2019"<sup>22</sup>. They used the UPE perspective to understand the drastic change in the waterfronts of İstanbul by using extensive archival research and methods of critical cartography. To sum up, there are two important conclusions from the literature review of the study. Firstly, urban political ecology is fundamentally an anglo-american theory in its institutional scope despite the growing empirical work in Global South, therefore; power geometries are not independent from knowledge production. Secondly, although urban political ecology is utilized to understand the waterfronts, luxury housing developments, peripheries and stray dogs in İstanbul, it has not been yet introduced in the context of Ankara.

### **1.3 Methodology and Structure of the Thesis**

Chapter 2- Reading/Transcribing: Since many scholars, including Swyngedouw, Kaika, Barma, Keil and Gandy, call for reconsidering the critical theory of the past

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<sup>21</sup> Gökçen Erkiçi, "‘This Is Not a Line’ Critical Delineation of the Coastline in İstanbul." (İstanbul Technical University, 2019).

<sup>22</sup> Esra, Sert, "Urban Metabolism of İstanbul: Waterfronts as Metabolized Socio-Natures Between 1839 And 2019" (Ankara: Middle East Technical University, 2020.)

century, each sub-section is organized around those re-readings<sup>23</sup> and re-writings. “Transcending, re-naturing, re-animating, de-centering and interrelating” are seen as a call for both intellectual effort and bodily action. Dialectic of nature, culture and the city were emphasized because two elements always prioritize oppositions and dualities, which were criticized from the beginning, as the famous triad of Lefebvre also mentions.

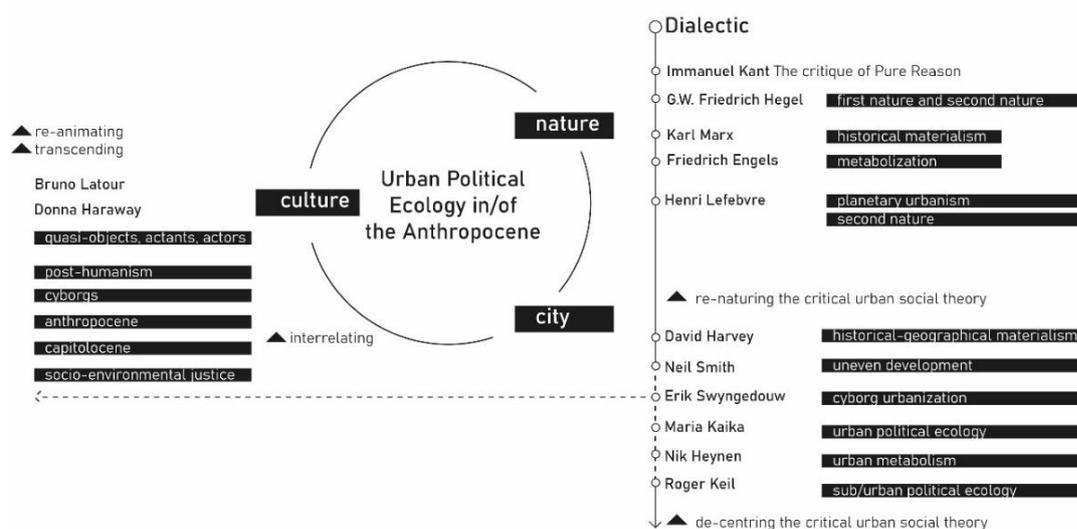


Figure 1.1. Mind map of the theoretical framework drawn by the author.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The necessity to discuss twenty-first-century crisis within the core concepts from Marxism of nineteenth century makes one suspicious so I questioned the theoretical core of the study so many times. In the end, I came to the conclusion that what makes Marxist theory so powerful is its constant re-readings, re-formulations by many other ambitious writers, scholars, and activists including Frankfurt School of Adorno, Horkheimer, Benjamin and Chicago, or respectively Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Manuel Castells and many more.

<sup>24</sup> While criticizing the dialectical method, Karl Popper also introduces the roots of dialectical thinking, from the socratic argumentative method to Kant, Hegel and Marxism. Recognizing “contradictions” whilst not confusing them with “dualisms” is the ethos of dialectical materialism with strong emphasis on social institutions, structures and how they slowly, historically developed by society. Karl, Popper "What is dialectic." Conjectures and refutations 334 (1963).

Chapter 3- Reading the Past of “the city”: Urban political ecology perspective grounded on historical-geographical materialism and critical urban and social theory implies urban space as “the outcome of historically specific relations of social power”<sup>25</sup>. Therefore, there is a necessity to discuss the socio-environmental history of Ankara that concentrates more on its hybrid character between social and natural, global and local, material and discursive. When appearance of nature placed in the historical context of Ankara, the development of this material landscape reveals itself as “the process of the production of nature”.<sup>26</sup> Since dialectical inquiry emphasizes changing state of things, flows of Ankara are seen as mohair that had played an essential role in the production and trade before the 19th century, streams and vineyards that enabled urban and rural life to flourish before the second half of the 20th century. Then, the production and consumption of cement are discussed as a material flow that affects Ankara’s urbanization process and represents an ideology, from the Ankara cement Factory to the Cement Pavilion at the İzmir International Fair. The interrelationship between cement consumption in Turkey, population growth and the Anthropocene thesis is briefly argued. Historical analysis is carried out with secondary and primary sources ranging from travelogues, history and research books, magazines, and photographs from VEKAM Archive. At the end of the chapter, a mapping of the timeline to relate the findings with the case study and the global history of capitalism is introduced, and a discussion has been made.

Chapter 4: Reading the Present/Future of the “non-city”: Considering that the main problem of the thesis is rapid urban growth and focusing on which thoughts and practices establish our relationship with nature during this radical change, the valleys surrounding the city attract attention. Ankara has valleys that provide special topography, water and green structure and microclimate such as İmrahor, Dikmen,

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Therefore, the study uses historical, relational analysis informed with environmental ethics and post-humanism. Key concepts and theoreticians are represented to show their relation to each other, as well as certain groupings and divisions between them.

<sup>25</sup> Neil, Brenner, “What Is Critical Urban Theory?” *City* 13, no.2(2009), : 198–207.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, *Uneven Development Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*.

Portakal Çiçeği, Hacıkadın, and Zir. Yet, valleys were first preferred by *geceköndü* settlers and became the topic of urban transformation projects rather than using them as critical recreational areas or agricultural purposes. Therefore, İmrahor Valley and its environment was used as a vehicle to understand dualistic conceptions that are governing our thought, socio-ecological inequalities that are obscured or visually severed in the capitalist society, ethico-environmental perspective guided by the concern of non-humans and others alike that are affected from transformations, and how these inequalities shape geography and uneven development of the land.

While understanding socio-ecological inequalities, the historical analysis provided a lens to understand power dynamics at work that concretized through the flow of human and non-human entities. Therefore, maps<sup>27</sup> helped to grasp how those inequalities shape landscapes and they became thinking and learning mechanisms rather than documents per se. Satellite images juxtaposed with the 1934 map of Dikmen helped a lot while understanding the drastic spatial and historical change. As Corner and MacLean conveys in *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape*<sup>28</sup>, aerial representations created new awareness by providing new ways of seeing the world. With a similar aim, to understand transformation of American Landscape, they conveyed that maps “make visible what is otherwise invisible”<sup>29</sup>. Seeing things from above provides an entirely new comprehension of the world around us. Similarly, “intersection of document, method, and practice” was prominent at the study, as the act of remembering inevitably results as representing it again, either virtually or verbally. Whilst photographs documents data about the observations, maps inform the reader about the location and historical change, which is not visible during in-situ observations. Moreover, series of walks in gated

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<sup>27</sup> It was also difficult to find archival materials and primary sources about the history and current condition of this peripheral space.

<sup>28</sup> The book was an important source for the visual and descriptive survey of the case study by landscape architect James Corner and photographer Alex MacLean. They survey landscapes of America through idiosyncratic maps of Corner and aerial photographs of MacLean.

<sup>29</sup> James Corner and Alex MacLean, *Taking measures across the American landscape*,(Yale University Press, 1996),68.

communities, animal shelters, along the İncesu stream provide unexpected encounters between events, maps, photographs. The book *İstanbul 2023* by Sinan Logie and Yoann Morvan, which concentrated on the uneven spatial and social dynamics of the peripheral expansion of İstanbul, guided those informal encounters.<sup>30</sup> Walking or simply being present in space provides chances to encounter the unseen actors of urbanization.

The visibility issue was deemed important for the study because many things written, observed are not visible to the human eye, or simply commodity relations obscure those social and environmental struggles. Both photographs and maps have “a constitutive power” in perceiving space and acting upon it. It is also important to underline that, because of the impossibility of representing the real object of knowledge (the city), every representation is also a misrepresentation. One should eliminate what to include in the boundaries of the narrative, both visual and textual, as a specific way of framing the world.

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<sup>30</sup> The book is the outcome of series of walks that architect Sinan Logie and anthropologist Yoann Morvan conducted in the peripheries of İstanbul. While they walk and wander through those newly altered landscapes with similar motivations to this study, they document their encounters with photographs and maps. It provides a lens to analyze the city by looking at objects and events, from ongoing constructions and new generation entertainment venues to abandoned factories and shopping malls.



## CHAPTER 2

### NATURE, CITY, CULTURE DIALECTIC IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

#### 2.1 Renaturing: socio-natural unity

The doctor's wife did not think that even a drop of this precious water would flow from the taps of the houses, this is the fallacy of civilization, we get used to the comfort of the water flowing from the taps of our house, and we mainly forget that there must be dams that work with electrical energy, computers that regulate the flow and reserve of water, and there must be eyes to see for all this.<sup>31</sup>

In his territorially unknown yet culturally well-known imaginative city, Saramago articulated the very social nature of our urban life in two specific ways. First, human beings create produced environments that are open to the crisis, fragile and dependent on natural processes, whether a plague, ecological disaster, or economic crisis. Second, what seems very “natural” as tap water at the first stance contains complex socio-spatial dynamics that cannot be detached from human relationships. In short, human beings and natural processes are inevitably bound to each other. There must be eyes to see for Central Park or Empire State building to function. As Harvey conveyed, “there is nothing unnatural about New York City.”<sup>32</sup> In the same vein, Keil argues there is nothing natural about it either.<sup>33</sup> The urban world consists

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<sup>31</sup> Jose Saramago, *Körlük*, 236. Translated by the author. I specifically used a fictional reference rather than a "scientific" one, believing that writers, directors, and artists can articulate very well the truth when the object of knowledge is a social reality like a "city."

<sup>32</sup> David, Harvey, “The Nature Of Environment: The Dialectics Of Social And Environmental Change.” *Socialist Register* 29, (1993):1-51.

<sup>33</sup> Roger, Keil, “Urban Political Ecology.” *Urban Geography* 24, no. 8(2003): 723–38.

of hybrids, that is, part natural/part social, part technical/part cultural, but with no clear boundaries, centers, or margins.<sup>34</sup>

Before mentioning the “re-naturing” of critical urban theory, I explain my central argument throughout the chapter by using the same *blindness* metaphor from Saramago, which I think is very similar to Lefebvre's *blind field*. Far from architecture and urbanism, Saramago makes society without eyes possible to our imagination and makes one question the invisible social structures and institutions. When humans free themselves from the complexity of the visual, social, and urban world, they realize these invisible structures. Lefebvre utilized blindness as focusing on new phenomena with eyes shaped by practices of the past era; therefore, one cannot see the real problems. Similarly, in one way or another, Harvey, Swyngedouw, Castree and Smith call for re-naturing of the urban theory, or greening Marxist thought and rethinking critical theory according to the current climatic crisis. For Lefebvre, nature appears as a central problem of the urbanized society in which its meanings are shrinking theoretically as opposed to the proliferating signs of nature in practice that are replacing reality.<sup>35</sup> The ideology of nature is almost invisible, just like the complex material dynamics, infrastructural systems, streams, and socio-natural hybrids beneath pavements.

“Nature” may be the most extensive philosophical question, one of the most loaded words in the entire language. It should be without any doubt protected, rescued, and deemed necessary; at the same time, it is inevitably dominated, savaged, romanticized, and controlled. Although it is loaded with ambiguities, contradictions, and complex dynamics in theory, and it has become politically and socially the concern of many environmental activists in practice, the urban theory has remained silent in nature question throughout the past century. It has been explicitly a social theory rather than a socio-ecological one except for the Chicago school urban

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<sup>34</sup> Heynen, Kaika, and Swyngedouw, “In Nature of Cities”, 1-55.

<sup>35</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 27.

ecology example. Therefore, UPE's main task is the re-entry of the ecological in urban theory and environmental politics.<sup>36</sup>

What is nature, the ideology of nature in capitalist urbanization then? When nature is metabolized through human labor, it circulates in the form of a commodity. This commodity relation hides multiple socio-ecological processes of domination, subordination, exploitation, and repression.<sup>37</sup> Again, we are in the terrain of blindness. The relation between the animal as a natural subject that is pristine, untouched and the meat (its commodity form) can be exemplified. Butchering (labor) acts as a vital force behind the production of meat that turns the living body into a valuable commodity with a specific price. The animal's dead body is the absent referent of the commodification process from the animal (living body) to its dissected parts with new names such as ribs, rumps, and breasts.<sup>38</sup> The circulation of money becomes the basis of material life, and nature is reduced to a substance, an exchangeable object. The vital force behind production and labor changes the form of matter (nature); therefore, it simultaneously affects the laborer (human). In this equilibrium, every matter, laborer, and commodity are part of nature. Thus, nature is not the antithesis of productive human activity; rather, it can be re-produced through intricate relationships. Production in this scenario is re-conceptualized as the *production of nature* for Neil Smith.<sup>39</sup>

Metabolism is the central metaphor for analyzing the internal dynamics of this production process, and laboring is the human action in which metabolic processes are mobilized and organized.<sup>40</sup> Changing the form of nature by laborers is deeply uneven, reciprocal -affecting both nature and humans- and a metabolic process that eventually changes spatiality. In other words, nature is both a raw material, an object

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<sup>36</sup> Heynen, Kaika, and Swynhedouw, In *Nature of Cities*, 1-55.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>38</sup> Carol, Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, (Routledge, 1990), 67.,

<sup>39</sup> Smith, *Uneven Development Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*. 49.

<sup>40</sup> Heynen, Kaika, and Swynhedouw, In *Nature of Cities*, 7. )

of labor in the production process, the territory upon which capitalism develops, and the laborer.<sup>41</sup> Within the current globalized, -completely- urbanized, and even wrecked world, any history and possible future of the land will inevitably shape with human engagement. Therefore, the re-naturing of critical urban theory has several tasks. There is a need to (1) understand the historically constructed nature question, (2) develop or re-evoke concepts -such as metabolism- to allow us to understand the relations of human/nature entanglements, and (3) reveal the visions and practices that obscure our field of sight.

## **2.2 Transcending: dialectical unity instead of dualisms**

Certain dualisms have been persistent in Western traditions; they have all been systemic to the logics and practices of domination of women, people of color, nature, workers, animals -in short, domination of all constituted as others, whose task is to mirror the self.<sup>42</sup>

Haraway problematizes dualisms such as self/other, mind/body, physical/non-physical, culture/nature, male/female, civilized/primitive, and agent/resource within the social and material reality of cyborgs. Cyborg is a hybrid of machine and organism, a science fiction protagonist, a machine of high-tech culture and microelectronics, as well as an organism of evolution theory.<sup>43</sup> She utilizes the “cyborg” concept to think about our hybrid condition in which the boundary between

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<sup>41</sup> Richard Walker and Jason Moore, “Value, Nature, and the Vortex of Accumulation.” In *Urban Political Ecology in the Anthro-Obscene*, ed. Henrik Ertson and Erik Swyngedouw (Routledge, 2018), 48-68.

<sup>42</sup> “A Cyborg Manifesto” was written by Donna Haraway in 1985 and it has been published many times by different publishers since then. The manifesto mainly problematizes separations between human and machine, human and animal, natural and artificial as the consequence of a “patriarchal” culture of oppression and domination. Therefore, it became the foundational text for feminist post-human theory.

Donna, Haraway, *Manifestly Haraway*, vol.37, (University of Minnesota Press, 2016),59.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* 5.

human and machine animal has become blurry.<sup>44</sup> While evolution brings the discussion of animality of humans, hybridity between machines and machine parts became revealed with the high-tech culture. From the original text dates back to 1985, the agency of machines and animals became more and more discussed, and their hybridity can no longer be overlooked in a post-pandemic and increasingly digital world.

Similarly, Harvey asserts that privileging things over processes is a common tendency and fixed things have always been an issue in history with the cartesian separations such as theory and practice, consciousness, and materiality.<sup>45</sup> Supposed opposites such as feminine and masculine, capital and labor, core and periphery are what transform and restructure the physical and social world, yet conceptual dichotomy is the prominent tendency for approaching contemporary problems. However, dualistic framings towards environmental struggles are the theoretical illusion obscuring our field of vision because there is nothing left purely peripheral or central, global, local, artificial, and natural anymore. Despite attempts to purify the world into distinct categories, changing social relations invade the territory of all the definitions, dichotomies, and categorizations. Swyngedouw argues that the cyborg concept is also valid for the urbanization thesis. The perpetual transformation between nature and society creates the city as a hybrid and coins the term “socio-nature” to explain the hybridity of social reality and materiality.<sup>46</sup>

Before socio-nature theorization, Neil Smith's argument on how nature became a sharper symbol from scientific nature to poetic and artistic is a crucial source to elaborate on the topic. For many scientists of earlier traditions, such as Bacon and Newton, the source of natural unity was religious, while it is secular for modern scientists. Even the division of things natural and social in science (natural and social

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<sup>44</sup> Heynen, Kaika, and Swyngedouw, *In Nature of Cities*, 32.

<sup>45</sup> Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, 1-480.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

science) helped the abstraction of nature from social processes; therefore, scientists abstract natural events from social processes in order to study them better. <sup>47</sup>As well as scientific nature, he also observes poetic nature from Henry David Thoreau to American landscape dreams that represent the image of the landscape, rural life, wilderness and green.<sup>48</sup> The artistic expressions of nature like birds, plants and flowers can be exemplified as such by representing the same ecological nostalgia. Haraway’s assumption of similarity between domination of women, animal and nature is also prominent for Neil Smith. Smith observes that western societies romanticized nature in the same way they romanticized women from the example of the pronoun “she” that is used for nature, to using nature with fragile, delicate features; then he adds; “romanticization is a form of control.” Therefore, Smith’s dualistic conceptions towards nature questions in continuity with the overall argument are visualized to discuss its inextricable reality.

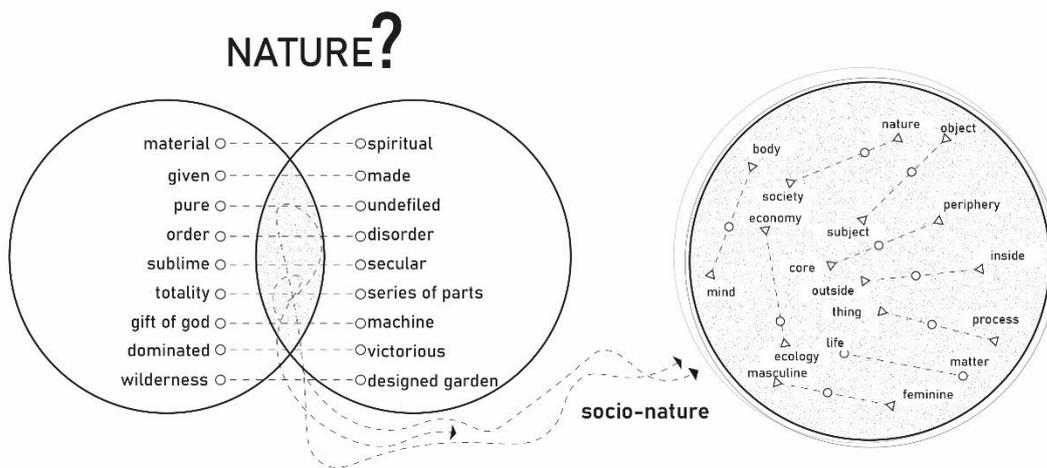


Figure 2.1. Diagram of nature question drawn by the author.

<sup>47</sup> Smith, Uneven Development Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 18

According to Smith, nature is both material and spiritual, given and made, pure and undefiled, sublime and secular, totality, and series of parts, wilderness, and designed garden.<sup>49</sup> (Figure 2.1.) Nature is above everything else since it has the power to destroy cities, villages, dams and power plants; at the same time, it is domesticated in the form of public gardens, grass-filled suburban houses and family cats.

To transcend the dualisms while recognizing their agency, we propose changing our conceptual lens from a dualistic, externalist to a relational and dialectic. In *Justice, nature, Geography of the Difference*, David Harvey argues that historical-geographical materialism with dialectical thinking is necessary for understanding space in the Era of social and environmental injustice. Even though dialectical thinking has its roots in Greek philosophy, Leibniz, Heidegger, Hegel and even Derrida, Harvey mostly tackles Marx and Engel's texts on dialecticism. Relational, dialectical understanding of the world accepts the changing, unstable and grift state of things and conceptualizes them as processes, flows, and fluxes. In Harvey's words, flows of capital -goods, money- and people give rise to, sustain, or undermine places such as factories, neighborhoods, and cities understood as things.<sup>50</sup> These transformative forces, circulations, and networks often connect distant places to the immediate local environments.<sup>51</sup> Harvey also argues that the ontological priority of fluxes, flows and processes will be limited inevitably with permanencies, organizations, institutions, and formalized structures. Therefore, we also need to understand how these formalized structures operate and restructure our social life in order to change anything. Dialectical argumentation cannot be understood without the concrete materiality, so that we need to acknowledge the permanencies and their power. Like this study, a never-ending process needs to represent itself with “fixed things” in the shape of written words.

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*.

<sup>51</sup> Heynen, Kaika, and Swynhedouw, *In Nature of Cities*, 9.

In the dialectical line of thought, things are heterogeneous and contradictory, and they are only meaningful in the processes and relations they internalize. To exemplify, understanding things such as “city, nature, tradition” also brings other categories; they are perpetually divided into other things such as neighborhoods and streets, trees, and animals. Privileging things over processes manifests itself in the urbanization thesis since we have a common tendency to privilege city (thing) over urbanization (process). In a similar vein, Erik Swyngedouw argues that all the metaphors of assemblages, rhizomes, imbroglios, and collectives refer to this same heterogeneity that modernity embodied. He utilizes metabolism and circulation as central metaphors instead of other alternatives to emphasize the change, transformation, flux, movement, and creative destruction of contemporary urban change.<sup>52</sup> These assemblages, just like commodities, are material, like nature; narrated, like discourse; and collective, like society.<sup>53</sup>

Cities are instead the “dialectical unity” of things (building blocks, shopping malls, biological ponds etc.) and networks (roads, sewage, water, gas, electricity, money, labor, people etc.). If we analyze the space within the continuity of architectural artifacts, urban structures, and fluid social, material processes, we can conclude that the Lefebvrian promise of production of space is in the continuity of *production of nature*<sup>54</sup>. They are both part and parcel of the same process that UPE scholars termed *urbanization of nature*.<sup>55</sup>

### **2.3 Decentering: suburban ecologies**

There can be no homelessness without an economic, political, and social process that produces 'the home' as a commodity; no refugees without

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.,21.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 24. Cited from Latour 1993.

<sup>54</sup> Smith, Uneven Development Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space.

<sup>55</sup> Kaika, City of flows: Modernity, nature, and the city.

practices of exile from a 'country of origin'; no margin without a centre; no periphery without a core.<sup>56</sup>

In our contemporary reality, endless consumption of materials, images, and commodities perpetually produced its ontological opposite; the city is full of ruins, and infrastructures underground, dealing with problems like deforestation, climate change and extinction of species. In other words, development at one pole has led to underdevelopment elsewhere. Kaika, in her seminal book, *City of Flows* investigates this practice of inclusion/exclusion and argues that creating “the other” was deemed necessary for the familiarity of both the modern city and modern home. Familiarity of private space depends on “excluding the undesired social (anomie, homelessness, social conflict, etc.) and natural (cold, dirt, pollution, etc.) elements”.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, the dialectic of familiarity and unfamiliarity enables the so-called autonomy of the modern home from the natural processes. Inside/outside problematic, defining the boundaries of the private space has been the essence of architecture, from the primitive hut sheltering from the rain, cold and dirt to the gated communities using wide-ranging technologies to exclude what is accepted as other. Lefebvre's metaphors of implosion and explosions have a similar relational tendency on a different scale. The former is related to the historical process of the immense concentration of urban reality -of people, activities, wealth, goods, objects, instruments, means, and thought-. The latter is the explosion, projecting numerous, disjunct fragments -peripheries, suburbs, vacation homes, satellite towns- into space. The immense growth dynamics of both urban and architectural spaces are double-sided. The more the modern home gains autonomy from social and natural processes, the more it relies on the outside with immense infrastructure networks. While the city expands and constantly changes its edges in peripheries, the center gains

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<sup>56</sup> Kaika, *City of flows: Modernity, nature, and the city*.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

economic activity and population, and vice versa.<sup>58</sup> The inside/outside problematic, defining the city's boundaries, has been a central concern since antiquity with building walls, moats, and gates.<sup>59</sup> For Roger Keil, the limit between the urban and suburban has always been set by social processes and socio-ecological metabolisms.

In their paper "Moving urban political ecology beyond the urbanization of nature", UPE Scholars address the necessity of searching for new inquiries, forms, and processes of extended urbanization.<sup>60</sup> With strong influence from Lefebvre and recent discussion on planetary urbanization, scholars criticize urban political ecology in terms of its tendency on the urban center, which Angelo and Wachsmuth termed *methodological cityism*. Methodological cityism refers to "an analytical privileging, isolation, and scholarly naturalization of the city" where the non-city is also significant.<sup>61</sup> The political ecology of the urbanization rather than the city is necessary to fulfill the Lefebvrian promise of planetary urbanization. Therefore, de-centering refers to the analysis of sub-urban, ex-urban or peri-urban spaces that are very dynamic and unstable. Because of their constantly changing character, these spaces can be analyzed as a socio-natural hybrid. Roger Keil asserts that we are not living in an urban century but rather a suburban century since most social and urban change happens in suburban areas.<sup>62</sup> Another critical argument of Keil is that suburbanism is not akin to North American style single-family homes, yet it is changing from tower-dominated badlands in China to gated communities in Turkey.

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<sup>58</sup> Roger Keil, *Suburban Planet: Making the World Urban from the Outside In*, (John Wiley & Sons.,2017), 5-6.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>60</sup> Tzaninis et al., "Moving Urban Political Ecology beyond the 'Urbanization of Nature.'" *Progress in Human Geography*, (2020).

<sup>61</sup> Hillary Angelo and David Wachsmuth, "Urbanizing Urban Political Ecology: A Critique of Methodological Cityism." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 39, no.1, (2015),16-27.

<sup>62</sup> It is important to note that Keil mentions adopting a "hybrid terminology." While some may speak of peri-urban, others speak more mixed concepts such as inbetween city regarding Tom Sieverts or post-suburbanization. So, by saying suburbanization, the book implies a residential, green periphery emerging globally in China, Turkey, India, Switzerland etc., rather than classical American suburbanism.

It is primarily a global phenomenon and has often been associated with the causes of disruption in the socio-natures of our time. Synchronically suburbanization redefines urban boundaries conceptually and physically, therefore; “peripheral development continually defines, engenders new centralities”.<sup>63</sup> This new (sub)urban political ecology will focus on urban edge conditions, including informal settlements, gated communities, tower estates, peri-urban villages, picket-fenced houses, office cities, airports, oil fields, garbage dumps and infrastructural spaces.<sup>64</sup> To sum up, “decentering” provides the lens to look at the city “from the outside in,” and the dialectical approach helps to transcend the center-periphery divide.

#### **2.4 Animating: non-human and more-than-human actors**

Being a subject does not mean acting in an autonomous fashion in relation to an objective context; rather, it means sharing agency with other subjects that have also lost their autonomy. It is because we are confronted with these subjects – or rather quasi-subjects – that we have to give up our dreams of control and stop fearing the nightmare of finding ourselves once again prisoners of nature.<sup>65</sup>

I have explained so far why it is necessary to extend our gaze towards space without the boundaries of nature and society/culture, center, and periphery. In this section, considering recent post-humanism and new materialism<sup>66</sup> discussions and the more-

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<sup>63</sup> Keil, *Suburban Planet*, 162.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*, (John Wiley&Sons, 2017), 62.

<sup>66</sup> New materialisms is an interdisciplinary field emerged during 2000s, advocating the material turn in social sciences and humanities mostly as a reaction to the post-structuralist, linguistic tendencies. Leading scholars of the field is Rosi Braidotti, and Elizabeth Grosz, Jane Bennett and Manuel De Landa. In Bennett’s Harvard GSD lecture on youtube, Micheal Hays argues that architects embraces ‘new materialisms’ more than any professional maybe because architecture always has to deal with material realities like gravity and construction. (Bennett 2021) Therefore, discussions and exhibitions

than-human geography dimension of UPE, I will discuss human and non-human as well as mind and body dualism. Animating refers to rethinking the hierarchical order from man to women, children, animals, and plants because the question of “vitality” of the matter is both a question of ontology and environmental ethics. More than anything else, the boundary between what is human and non-human is ontologically problematic in the era of technological change and ecological disaster. The idea of “human” is historically constructed in bourgeois society through the legacy of Enlightenment. Human and non-human dualism is manifested itself ideologically as white-man superior to all-natural beings, spatially as a scale of the ideal human body in design disciplines. Besides, one can ask how much of the human body count as human. It physically consisted of and depended on minerals, bacteria, oxygen, water that are non-human. Devoid of the separation between humans themselves, non-humans could be exemplified as animals, plants, earth, artifacts, and commodities. Materials as an essence of nature, backbone of commodities, matters to politics. Matter in the circulation of space has a history to interrogate. Advocators of mind and body separation simply argue that animals do not have a mind; they differ from human beings. They neither speak nor have consciousness; therefore, they are merely bodies without a mind to be mastered. Zeybek asks provoking questions about whether human activity is conscious all the time or not.<sup>67</sup> Bruno Latour demands the change in our conception of “agency” from the capacity to make predictable plans and speak a language to become matters changing the course of actions and events.<sup>68</sup> In this conception, an army does not solely consist of soldiers, but tanks, guns, horses, women, children, etc., play an essential role.

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about new materialisms in art and architecture is tremendous. Istanbul Design Biennial in 2020 under the name “Empathy Revisited: Designs for more than one” could be exemplified as such.

<sup>67</sup> Sezai Ozan Zeybek, Türkiye’nin Yakın Tarihinde Hayvanlar Sosyal Bilimleri İnsan Olmayanlara Açmak, (Nota, 2020),172.

<sup>68</sup> Bruno, Latour, Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory, (Oxford, 2007).

In his recent evaluation of the shift in agency and subjectivity in understanding urban environmental problems, Gandy gave various examples of research from slaughterhouses, mass pet abandonment, food processing, chemicals, urban atmospheres, and lawn in relationship to city.<sup>69</sup> This discussion also overlaps with the argument that the intellectual roots of UPE in both Marxism and Actor-Network Theory (ANT), and post-humanism is contradictory. Neil Smith was well aware that his “production of nature” conception was anthropogenic because it only includes the labor of humans, or man. He asserted that since human beings separated themselves from animals by beginning to produce their own means of substance, they placed themselves at the center of nature.<sup>70</sup> Growing animal activism, vegan, and vegetarian nutrition in line with rising environmentalism already proved that “to wish otherwise” is not nostalgic. Animals are both laborers and commodities, acting as a vital force in shadows of capitalism. Within the influence of these ideas, Marxist geography has started to rethink the capital, labor, and circulation concepts during the past two decades. Bruce Braun, Maan Barua, Sarah Whatmore and Noel Castree are among the notable geographers rethinking those concepts. As exemplified earlier in the production thesis example (2.1), the commodification of animals has been a significant natural force transforming both laborer (butcher) and animal capital (meat). Animal work and non-human labor enable agencies outside the human labor that have played an essential role in the historical development of capital and generation of capitalist surplus.<sup>71</sup> (Chapter 3.1. on Ankara goat) Sezai Ozan Zeybek, in his research on dogs collecting garbage and ensuring the security of neighborhoods, elephants and horses that are used in many wars, worms that bring life to the soil, shows how animal labor is vital for existing of species.

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<sup>69</sup> Matthew, Gandy, “Urban Political Ecology: A Critical Reconfiguration.” *Progress in Human Geography* 46, no.1, (SAGE Publications, 2022), 21–43.

<sup>70</sup> Smith, *Uneven Development Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*, 91.

<sup>71</sup> Maan Barua, “Animating Capital: Work, Commodities, Circulation.” *Progress in Human Geography* 43, no.4, (2019).

Along with Zeybek's empirical analysis, Barua sheds light on the concept of "animal labor" when he distinguishes it as metabolic, ecological, and affective. Metabolic labor refers to using their reproductive activity, namely, their body, as an accumulation strategy in the case of chickens, farm and industrial animals. On the other hand, ecological labor is the work of insects, bees, and pollinators that depend on organisms' quotidian rhythms and ethological propensities. Their affective labor is the showcasing of animals in circuses and zoos, or different habits such as cat cafes in Japan etc. In all the different work that they participate, labor and capital are affected by their circulation and participation, and space became an important agent in this transformation. The practice of exclusion/domination is legitimized through space primarily by displacing humans and non-humans to other regions.

This inquiry is fundamental for space-making in the era of "natural disaster" for two important reasons. Firstly, association with non-humans is inevitable since urban animals extend from "food" animals to pets and non-domesticated animals circulate in and through city spaces. In short, the functioning of the city necessities the materiality of the object and the animality of labor. Animals are "the workers in the shadows of capitalism", yet their work is mostly non-paid and invisible.<sup>72</sup> Secondly, it extends the definition of human and broadens our overly human-centered perspective. Because cities are not solely used and produced by humans, how we can change our anthropocentric perception is the concern of human geography and social science as well as architecture and urbanism. Considering non-humans could be disturbing, but it poses crucial ethical and ontological questions for the mutual well-being of species. In this line of thought, "animating" refers to including what is accepted as material other in our political world and analyzing the commodification process of things, both lively and static. It is about what characteristics they take shape and lose when they become commodities.

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

## 2.5 Interrelating: the anthropo/capitolo-cenes

The thesis of Anthropocene has attracted attention from contemporary scholars, activists, designers, and artists upon rising concerns over climate change. It is a geological epoch proposed by chemist Paul Crutzen in 2000, arguing that increased human activity became a major global force.<sup>73</sup> Definition of the Era is significant because it reveals the human impact not only in spaces of settlement but also on the scale of geologic time. Despite its popularity, Anthropocene is yet to be formalized in terms of its beginning time and its centrality of the human subject. Environmental historian Jason Moore and geographer Andreas Malm claim that it is not human but the capital which changes the course of the planet and name the era “Capitalocene”. There are also other alternative narratives to Anthropocene such as Chthulucene, Thermocene, Thanatocene, Phagocene, and Polemocene. The crisis of meaning and ambiguity caused by the disasters of our age are common to all these definitions. Many accepted the Industrial Revolution as a logical start because it was arguably the most significant transition of human enterprise by constructing a new economic order that emphasized markets striving for energy sources. Between 1800 and 2000, the population grew from one billion to six billion, so energy production and land use increased unprecedentedly.<sup>74</sup> Despite the disagreement on what defines the Era, naming makes it possible to think, argue and create.

In their edited book *Urban Political Ecology in the Anthro-po-obscene*, Ernstson and Swyngedouw discuss the highly popularized notion of Anthropocene and newly acquired geo-agency of humanity within the literature of UPE.<sup>75</sup> Anthropocene has certainly directed our attention to human and more-than-human relations since the

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<sup>73</sup> Steffen et al., “The Anthropocene: Conceptual and Historical Perspectives.” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences 369, no.1938,(2011).

<sup>74</sup> Steffen et al., “The Anthropocene: Conceptual and Historical Perspectives.”

<sup>75</sup> Erik Swyngedouw and Henrik Ernstson, *Urban Political Ecology in the Anthro-po-obscene*, (Routledge, 2018b).

inquiry on this generalized *anthropos* is necessary. Most of the time, when we are talking about ecological problems and disasters, we act like it is detached from over-consumption of online shopping, using private cars, or eating dairy products. Although, indeed, this generalized “human” subject without class, gender etc., obscures dominant power struggles, it reminds us that one way or another, we must share the same planet we collectively destroyed. Similarly, for Keil, discussing the Anthropocene is looking back at the impact of past practice; it is questioning the causes and consequences of a warming planet.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, Anthropocene helps bring the problems of climate change, complete urbanization of our planet, de-politicized sustainable development etc., into a coherent whole that is formerly detached from human relations. In the Era of Anthropocene, where human activity became a major geopolitical force and transcended the scalar limits, the boundary between nature and culture, between human and non-human, and center and margin are profoundly problematic.

Despite its rising popularity and its potential to construct a radical new imaginary<sup>77</sup>, Anthropocene is still a yet-to-be formalized and even de-politicized term. Kaika asserts that the emerging imaginary -many scholars discuss alternatives to the concept rather than human- of Anthropocene is the most political thing about it. Similarly, editors of the book suggest that new neologisms such as sustainability, smart, Anthropocene etc., will only make sure that “nothing really has to change”; they contribute to the survival of capitalism as we know it.<sup>78</sup> In Kaika’s words, “capitalism again will so soon call science and technology to save us from capitalism”. Instead of adding symbolic weight to the concept, she proposes to link the Anthropocene thesis to everyday life. The geo-agency of the utterly generalized human subject could be a

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Maria Kaika, while informing us about the number of articles about Anthropocene in Social Sciences and Humanities and constant naming and re-naming of the epoch since the 1970s, asserted that the concept could be praised for raising awareness on the present environmental disaster. Thus, our collective engagement in powerful institutions such as universities, biennials, museums shows its emerging performative potential even before its officially instituted.

<sup>78</sup> Swyngedouw and Ernstson, *Urban Political Ecology in the Anthro-Obscene*.

powerful socio-environmental imaginary only if it is turned into an intellectual work; it could be “a sharper social symbol that forces us to link everyday life.” These intellectual works will document, map, collect the small details about cities, streets, factories, dams, and relates those places to distant environmental struggles over lakes, mining sites, wastelands. What Kaika calls a “scholarship of presence” is this empirical work that has the potential to construct a new radical imaginary for socio-environmental changes, and it is what we need today more than naming and re-naming of the epoch.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, Anthropocene as a new imaginary, a signifier to problematize our age, is used for “interrelating” the fragmented narratives in Ankara from a scale of the city to residential area and its changing objects.

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<sup>79</sup> Kaika, “Reclaiming a Scholarship of Presence: Building Alternative Socio-Environmental Imaginaries.”



## CHAPTER 3

### ANKARA IN PROCESS OF SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

When we describe human activities within an ecosystem, we seem always to tell stories about them. Like all historians, we configure the events of the past into causal sequences - stories - that order and simplify those events to give them new meanings. We do so because the narrative is the chief literary form that tries to find meaning in an overwhelmingly crowded and disordered chronological reality.<sup>80</sup>

Environmental historian William Cronon, in his article “A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative”, indicates that any environmental history implies a narrative since the author or narrator chooses which details to include and form an "organic unity" out of complex and fragmented reality. There are certain similarities between Cronon's canonical work on Chicago, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, and narrating the socio-environmental change of Ankara. Like Chicago being the conduit between eastern and western railroads, Ankara has been an important trade and transportation center throughout history due to its location at the intersection of the historic trade routes.<sup>81</sup> Its geographical location and diverse cultural history have made Ankara always a contested ground and the capital of the newly born Turkish Republic. Like Chicago proved that city and country separation is contradicted with its strong dependence on the hinterland, Ankara was bound to its agriculture and production areas outside the city walls.

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<sup>80</sup> William Cronon, “A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative,” *The Journal of American History* 48, no.9 (1992).

<sup>81</sup> Among the most important them was Royal Road which passes Ankyra and Gordion. Suavi Aydın et al., *Küçük Asya'nın Bin Yüzü: Ankara*, (Ankara: Dost, 2005).

Although the title indicates a historical analysis, I do not intend to recapitulate the history of Ankara for the thesis. Since the theoretical core of the study adopts historical-materialist inquiry, an attempt has been made to understand the city from the flows of materials, entities and of people, therefore, the mode of production of nature. Even though narrative implies a linear progress, I choose to explain it with fragments, like a map, because sequential narrative induces to the reader to think historically.<sup>82</sup> Reading a map implies “geography of simultaneous relations and meanings”<sup>83</sup> that connect things spatially rather than historically. Therefore, the overall chapter became a narrative composed of written things, travelogues, maps and personal experiences. Since environmental history always stages particular actors, agents and relations, it inevitably excludes other potential performers and processes. Socio-metabolic flows of Ankara are seen as abundant flows of water, electricity and bridges, sewer systems, as well as flows of mohair, cement and of people. As sub-titles indicate, the overall story is less about nature than human relationships with nature. It is not an attempt to narrate the environmental history of Ankara but rather “socio-environmental” history that is informed by the consequences of human actions. In Cronon's words, it is all about “making sense of nature's place in the human past”.<sup>84</sup>

### **3.1 Production and trade until the twentieth century: flows of mohair**

Ankara hosted many civilizations such as Phrygians, Galatians, Romans, Seljuks and Ottomans since ancient times. It has been a city where both the different civilizations and communities from other ethnic groups such as Muslims, Jews, Armenians, and

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<sup>82</sup> Edward Soja criticizes the Western-Marxism and critical social theory in terms of its overdependency on historical analysis. He proposes to break out from temporal prisonhouse of language to the interpretive human geography.

<sup>83</sup> Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, (Verso, 1989).

<sup>84</sup> William Cronon, “A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative,” *The Journal of American History* 48, no.9 (1992):1349.

Greeks lived together for years. Among the people living in 19th century Ankara, the Muslim community mainly dealt with agriculture and animal husbandry; thus, large lands and trade in agricultural products were in the hands of Muslims. Both Muslim and Christian communities worked in shoemaking, tailoring, blacksmithing, silver and copper work.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, Ankara's location in between the commercial roads and being surrounded by the agricultural fields feeding the city contributed to the development of trade in the 19th century. It is known that mohair wool called 'Moher' or 'Angora' has been produced since antiquity and is unique to the region. Due to the mohair and the fabrics woven from it, Ankara attracted the attention of many people; for that matter, the city's prosperity depended on its production.

Mohair production and trade in the city attracted the attention of all the travelers who came to Ankara at different times. Polish Voyager Simeon, who had seen Ankara in the 16th century, said that "the city is full of mohair" and conveyed that the good mohair came out of Ankara and was sent to all over the world from here.<sup>86</sup> Mohair promoted the development of trade in Ankara and enabled for merchants to set up offices in Europe. During this period related the mohair, four business lines developed; there were mohair weavers, makers, painters, polishers, and pressers<sup>87</sup>. These business lines processed not only the mohair woven in Ankara but also those from the surrounding areas such as Tosya, Kastomonu, Çankırı, Sivrihisar and Kalecik. Because processing raw material and putting it into fabrics in various colors and patterns was only possible there, goods produced in other places were stamped and taxed in Ankara. Local merchants, especially non-Muslims, went to Europe, mainly Venice, to do business or had the opportunity to sell their mohair abroad through trade agents. A postcard from the beginning of the 20th century shows the workers processing mohair and the labor-intensive process behind its production.

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<sup>85</sup> Yurt Ansiklopedisi Cilt 1, (Ankara'da XVI. Yüzyılda Ekonomik ve Sosyal Yaşam, (Anadolu Yayıncılık,1981), 537.

<sup>86</sup> İbid., 540.

<sup>87</sup> İbid., 541-544.



Figure 3.1. People Processing Mohair from Angora Goats, 1901-1905, Postcard, Koç University Vehbi Koç Ankara Studies Research Center (VEKAM)

In the 18th century, many European producers tried to take the Angora goat to their own country and produce mohair yet failed. Afterward, within the advantages of imperialism, the suitable environment for the Angora goat to live in was found in Kap region, South Africa. Today, it can be grown in some regions in Scotland, America, and Australia. However, the production that started in South Africa caused significant weakness in the production in Ankara. Mohair production and trade decreased day by day and nearly disappeared. Mohair by itself shows the difficulties of the unindustrialized Ottoman Empire, which was already exposed to natural disasters in 1845, 1874, 1887 and 1890, drought, famine, and epidemics for almost

a century. Unfortunately, the drought was not only in Ankara but nearly the whole Anatolian region, which made the transportation of aid even harder at the time. <sup>88</sup>

Concerns over the economy because of the drought and scarcity years induced the railway project, which developed America's and India's economies beforehand. The first step of the railway project (Anatolian Railway), which will connect Istanbul to the Persian Gulf, was taken with an edict on June 4, 1871, and the project between Izmit and Istanbul was completed. The remaining part of the project was decided to be extended to Ankara due to the agreement between Deutsche Bank and the Ottoman Empire in 1888.<sup>89</sup> With the construction works in 1889, the railway reached Ankara in December 1892. It was thought that with the railway project, the trade and production of the inner Anatolia would develop, the foreign dependency would decrease, and it would strengthen the relationship between Istanbul and Anatolia. Moreover, the railway was supposed to connect the surplus production to the international market and promote export.

The arrival of the railway caused significant increases in the land and real estate prices in the city and the costs of agricultural products. Most of the exports consisted of grain; the rest mainly was angora wool, mohair, fruit, and animals; to this extent, it contributed to the growth of agricultural areas and production.<sup>90</sup> Textiles from abroad, especially from England, started to be consumed in Ankara thanks to the railway project, so it enabled the integration of the agricultural economy of Central Anatolia into the world capitalist system. However, it could not meet the goals of increasing the power of the Ottoman Empire in the provinces and generating income for the state due to the construction costs and debts. Moreover, it could not solve the problem of capital accumulation, and it caused the regression in local trade. The export of everything depended on the international market as much as the climatic

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 545-546.

<sup>90</sup> Suavi Aydın et al., *Küçük Asya'nın Bin Yüzü: Ankara*, (Ankara: Dost, 2005), 223.

conditions. Most importantly, mohair production decreased because of the exported textiles, especially from England, that was cheaper and easier to produce. However, this displacement/abandonment of local practices also erases functions and cultural elements in the city.

To sum up, mohair produced special conditions in the socio-spatiality of Ankara for three reasons.<sup>91</sup> Firstly, its production was specific to the Ankara region, so it created international trade organizations established by non-Muslim community. Secondly, due to the animal husbandry, weaving and leather trade, there was both women-labor and animal labor behind the process. Thirdly, Bent Stream became an actor of the production process as a means of transportation and providing adequate water for the washing. Ankara's historical change throughout the second half of the 19th century shows that the empire wished to adapt to the developing capitalist world by constructing railways with foreign funds and encouraging international trade. In other words, demolishing mohair culture reveals the effects of industrial capitalism that dispersed commodities worldwide with colonialism and increased mobility while erasing others elsewhere.

### **3.2 Streams and flows of water**

Water was metabolized, socially and materially re-produced, and consumed by Ankara citizens from roman canals and embankments to the streams, fountains, dams, and reservoirs. Geographically, Ankara is located at the point where the two largest rivers of Anatolia, Kızılırmak and Sakarya, come closest to each other and create many valleys and streams. Gravel, sand, and clay carried by many streams have stored the soil that covers the plain and carries yield. Waters flowing between the surrounding mountains and hills, form valleys and the floors of these valleys are

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<sup>91</sup> İlhan Tekeli, Tansı Şenyapılı, Murat Güvenç, Ankara'da Sanayi Üretiminin Tarihsel Gelişim Süreci, (Ankara: Milli Prodüktivite Merkezi Yayınları, 1991), 129.

the warmest and least windy parts of the environment. Therefore, level changes over short distances allow a microclimate and microflora to offer enormous diversity.<sup>92</sup>

The main streams in the Ankara basin are Çubuk Stream coming from the northeast, Hatıpcayı coming from the east, and İncesu Stream approaching the city from the southeast. These three rivers are with variable regimes like most of the inner Anatolian rivers; they dry up over time, they decrease and increase in different seasons; therefore, they flood and destroy their surroundings from time to time.<sup>93</sup> Hatip Stream takes the name Bentderesi as it passes through the foothills of Ankara Castle. Waterfronts of the Hatip stream played an essential role in producing mohair fabric in the primary processes such as washing and painting. Likewise, leather processing crafts such as shoemaking and saddlery were advanced, and many tanneries around the Bent Creek polluted the streams in the past. Before most of them were enclosed in concrete culverts in recent history, streams were used for the leather industry; bridges and water mills were built, and wheat was milled.<sup>94</sup> Especially in the part of İncesu Stream, in Mühye Village and İmrahor, brick factories were established by taking advantage of the soil quality. In short, streams and soil were used and utilized as means of production in various ways and in different times. Apart from these three streams, many small streams are formed by springs coming from the southern and northern slopes in the Ankara Basin. Cevizlidere, Bülbül Stream, Kavaklıdere, Hoşdere, Dikmen Stream, Kirazlıdere, Cevizlidere and Kutuğun Streams originate from the southern side and most of them flow underground today. Hacıkadin Stream and Macun Stream, on the other hand, take their source from the northside.

Ankara's history with water begins with streams feeding their immediate environment, continuing with Roman embankments and canals channeling water

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<sup>92</sup> İbid., 25.

<sup>93</sup> Erman Tamur, Suda Suretimiz Çıkıyor: Ankara Dereleri Üzerine Tarihi ve Güncel Bilgiler, (Kebikeç Yayınları, 2012) 11-12.

<sup>94</sup> İbid.

inside the city walls. During the Roman Era, the city's infrastructure services were highly developed, and water was brought to the city from Elmadağı with stone pipes, and water was distributed to the city with terracotta pipes(*künk*). During the renovation of the Cebeci train station in 1944-1945, two stone pipelines parallel to the bridge were encountered there. The pipe system was gathered from there to the southeast of the castle, and in a warehouse near the *Hisar Gate*.<sup>95</sup>These waters were reaching Çankırıkapı, where the Great Roman Bath is located, over Çıkırıçılar Yokuşu.

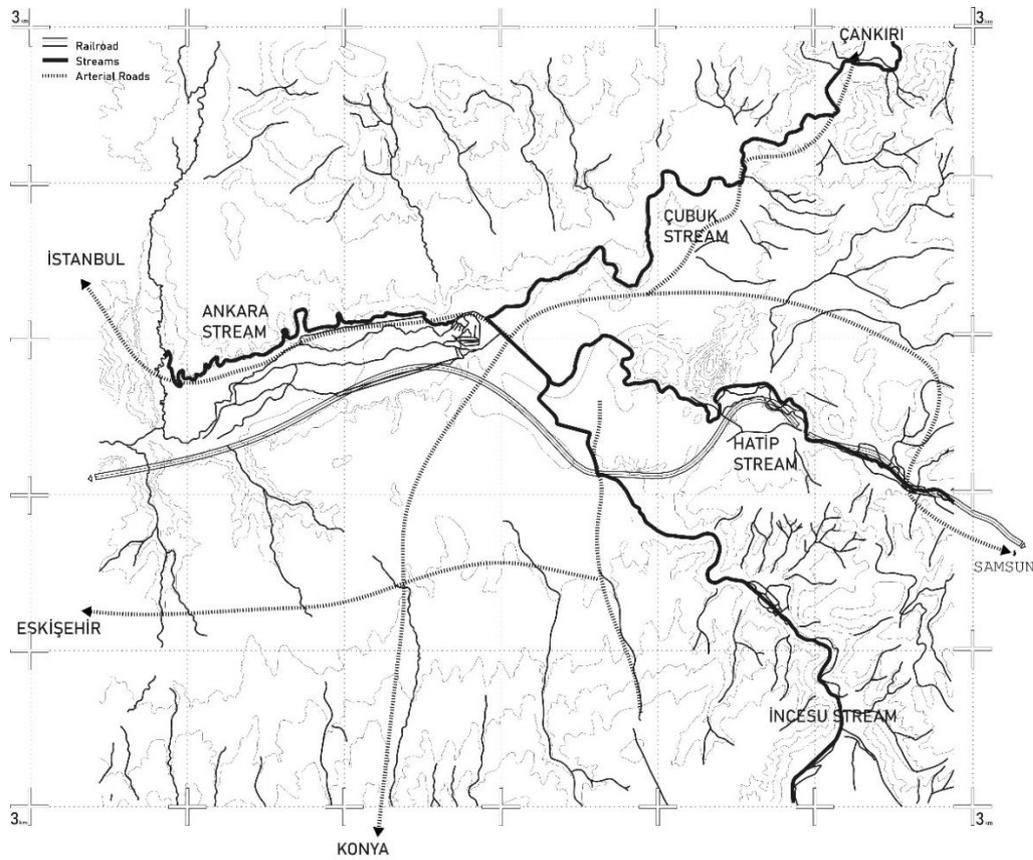


Figure 3.2. Streams of Ankara in 1934, drawn by the author.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Yurt Ansiklopedisi Cilt 1, 523.

<sup>96</sup> Required information about the streams are generated from 1934 map and base file for the map was drawn with Başak Ünsal and Nilay Karaköy at “Mapping as Design” course instructed by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ela Aral

Although streams and vineyards surrounding them were used during the Republic's first years, most streams disappeared underground, and roads passed over them in today's condition. On September 11, 1957, the flood disaster of the Hatip Stream, which overflowed because of a downpour experienced in its connections outside the city center, named Hasanođlan, Lalahan, Kayař and Mamak, had a significant role in taking the stream underground.<sup>97</sup> As a result of the disaster, houses, trees, and bridges around the Hatip Stream were destroyed and caused enormous damage in the Bentderesi, Mamak and Cebeci neighborhoods. Funda řenol Cantek, made an oral history research after the flood disaster on the effects and results and found out that many people displaced due to expropriation around *Bent Deresi*.<sup>98</sup> Despite attempts to build concrete culverts for stream beds and flood detention dams, downpours and flood disasters are growing in Ankara due to the extensive use of asphalt and concrete in ever-expanding urbanized areas.

After it became the capital of the Turkish Republic, technological networks such as water and electricity were the symbol of the modern nation-state like its European counterparts. řubuk Dam became a national symbol and secured the constant water flow in the new Republican regime. Like Marathon Dam was important for Athen's urbanity, Hoover Dam in between Arizona and Nevada and Dnieper Hydroelectric Station in Ukraine. Maria Kaika notes that securing the flows of water, food, heating, electricity etc., would allow for urbanization, industrialization, and capital investment to expand further.<sup>99</sup> At the same time, this technology-driven logic contradicts the disappearing of streams from the city in many examples of the Ilissos River in Athens, the Seine in Brussels, several tributaries of the Thames in London. In a similar discussion, Kaika problematizes modernist planning approaches such as

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<sup>97</sup> İbid.

<sup>98</sup> Funda řenol Cantek, "Sel gider, kum kalır 1957 sel felaketzedelerinin Mamak'tan Yenimahalle'ye uzanan hayat çizgiler" in Sanki Viran Ankara, (İletiřim, 2006), 43-107.

<sup>99</sup> Kaika, City of flows: Modernity, nature, and the city,19.

designing parks and lakes that can only be maintained with water networks and later will increase the pressure in those networks. Man-made parks and lakes are becoming increasingly common in Ankara during the last three decades with Göksu Park, Dikmen Valley Park, Altınpark, Kuzey Yıldızı Park as well. One can also understand the consequences of radical projects (irrigated gardens, artificial ponds, urban transformation projects and shopping malls) from the need for water. According to ÇED (Environmental Status Report) report, Ankara currently consumes the water coming from Kızılcahamam, Çamlıdere, Bala, Nallıhan, Çubuk, Ayaş and Kazan named Kurtboğazi Dam, Sarıyar Dam, Hirfanlı Dam, Kesikköprü Dam, Kavşakkaya Dam.<sup>100</sup> By using the data published by ASKİ, dams and water treatment facilities are located geographically (figure 3.2) in order to understand their relationship with each other and the city center. Considering a total of 28.26 percent of water in dams could be actively used, the occupancy rate of each Dam is included as radial charts along with numbers.<sup>101</sup> It is understood that Ankara uses the water coming from the peripheries located at the very border of its municipal boundaries even though the population concentrates on its center. Hence, immense infrastructure to sustain the growing population and consumption has been hidden underground, creating a subterranean urban underworld.

In conclusion, Ankara, like any other city, witnessed the privatization of the water sector and promotion of water as a commodity, and socio-spatial segregation of streams. While streams contributed to the formation of production areas for mohair, leather, and food, they had also turned into recreation areas with the vineyards surrounding them. Saime Kadın, Mamak and Kayaş, where the Hatip Stream passes, have been places where people of Ankara have used as recreation areas and socialized for many years. Therefore, the flow of water in Ankara is not only related

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<sup>100</sup> Ankara İli 2019 Yılı Çevre Durum Raporu, Ankara Çevre Ve Şehircilik İl Müdürlüğü, accessed January, 2021, <https://ced.csb.gov.tr/2019-yili-il-cevre-durum-raporlar-i-98681>.

<sup>101</sup> Ankara Su ve Kanalizasyon İdaresi (ASKİ) Genel Müdürlüğü, “Ankara Baraj Doluluk Oranları” June 8, 2022, <http://www.aski.gov.tr/tr/Baraj.aspx>

to streams, creeks, and dams -where it is produced- but also to artificial ponds and irrigated parks, gated communities, and factories -where it is used-.

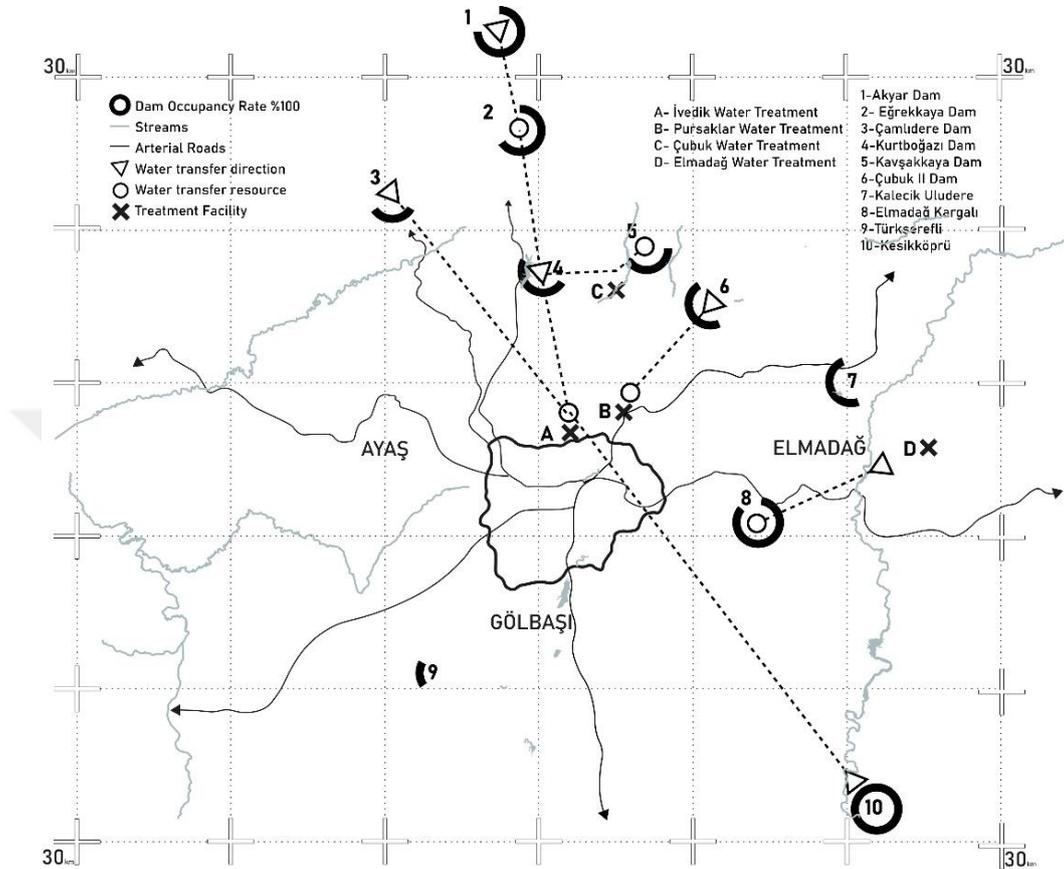


Figure 3.3. Map showing the location of dams and water treatment facilities in 2022, drawn by the author.<sup>102</sup>

### 3.3 Vineyards and orchards: flows of food

As indicated in the previous section, Ankara is rich in terms of water resources; thus, soil quality is suitable for agricultural activities because the waterways help to carry

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

adequate gravel, sand, and clay. Its bowl-shaped topography is also advantageous for vineyards because slopes are more suitable than flatlands. Therefore, vineyards and orchards were located at the hills that are open to summer winds and mainly used during summer. The fact that the slope is oriented to the east and southeast and that it has chalky sandy, clayey-sandy soils are among the features that make the region fertile for viticulture and agricultural activities.

In the north of the city, there were Kurtini, İğdelidere, Ayvalı Vineyards, where mostly Turkish community were living, and Etlik vineyards in Aşağı and Yukarı Eğlence, where Armenian merchants who shipped mohair trade had guest and vineyard houses.<sup>103</sup> Aşağı and Yukarı Eğlence was considered a suburban space of the Old Ankara. In the north of the city, apart from these, there were Keçiören Vineyards in Keçiören and İncirli districts, Aktepe, Hacıkadin, Kalaba (Karabağ) Vineyards, Mecidiye Vineyards on Çubuk Stream, and Karacakaya Vineyards on the skirts of Hüseyin Gazi Mountain. In the South of the city, from east to west, in the direction of Mamak Kayaş, there were Balakeriz Vineyards on the edge of the Hatip Stream, and Samanlık Vineyards around the current Nato Road. On the south face of the region between Kurtuluş High School and Dikimevi, there were Frenközü Vineyards, Seyranbağları, Esat Vineyards, Kavaklıdere Vineyards, Çankaya Vineyards, Ayrancı Vineyards, Dikmen Vineyards, Araplar Creek, Cevizli Creek, Övezlik, Upper and Lower Öveç Vineyards, Balgat Vineyards, Çaltaklı and Söğütözü Vineyards.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Nimet Berkok and Kamil Toygar, Ankara'da Bağcılık ve Bağ Kültürü, (Kavaklıdere Kültür Yayınları ), 45.

<sup>104</sup> İbid., 52.

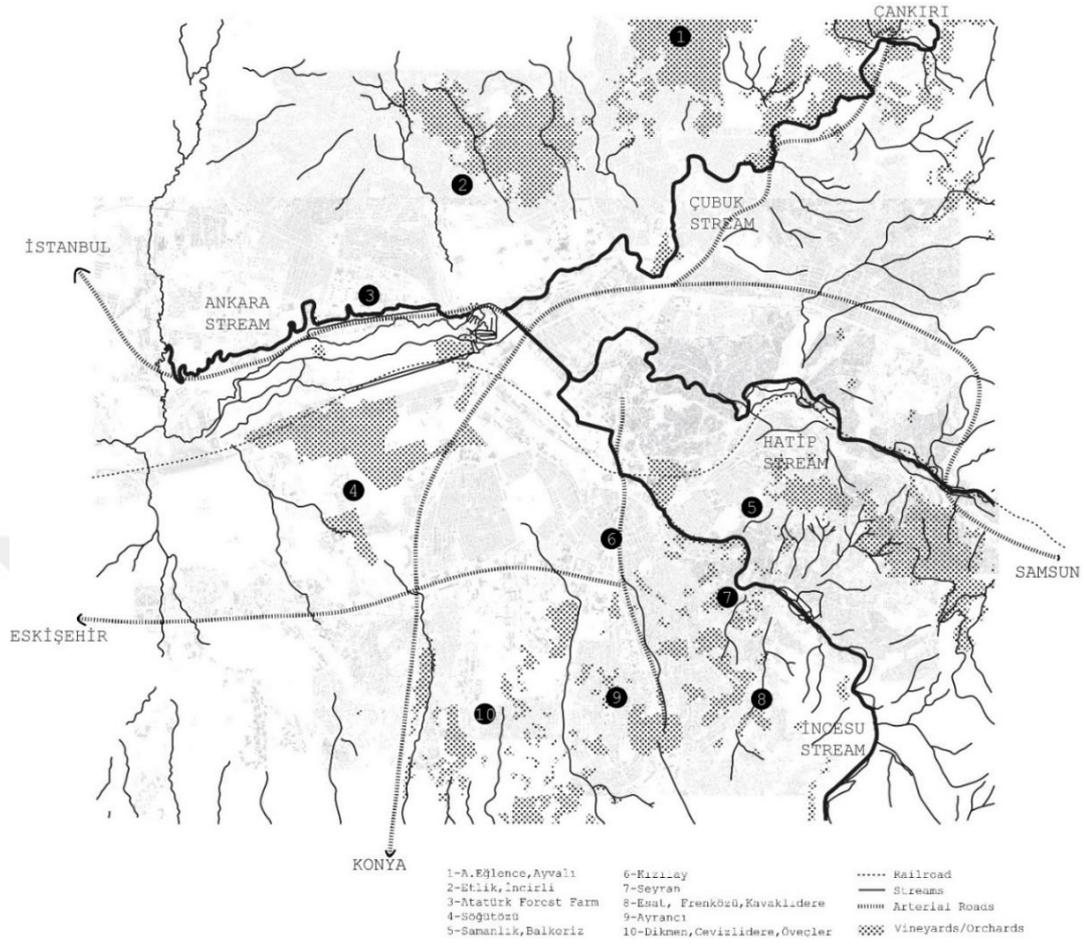


Figure 3.4. Orchards and Vineyards of Ankara according to 1934 map, drawn by the author.<sup>105</sup>

Houses inside the orchards and vineyards enabled families to spend time in a cozy and rural environment with grapes, flowers, and trees. They have different working habits in those ‘rural’ environments such as maintaining the quality of agricultural products, desiccating vegetables and fruits, conserving and preparing jams, sauces, pastas and fruit leathers for the winter. Especially after the vine harvest, hanging and storing grapes fresh and turning them into grape juice, molasses or wine were also

<sup>105</sup> Required information about the streams are generated from 1934 map and base file for the map was drawn with Başak Ünsal and Nilay Karaköy at “Mapping as Design” course instructed by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ela Aral.

important jobs for vineyard dwellers. With the arrival of the railway in the city in 1892, Ankara, which had been exporting mohair and fabric until then, started to export grain, fruit, and agricultural products abroad, so vineyard culture gained importance. It is estimated that the inclusion of horse-drawn carriages in urban transportation, especially in the 19th century, facilitated access to the vineyards located twenty or thirty minutes away from the city and increased the use of these places.<sup>106</sup>

According to Georges Perrot, who came to Ankara in 1861;

Except for the Jews, who had to give up such a fantasy because they were so poor, all Ankara residents, Muslim or Christian, own a house they call a “bağ” on one of the hills outside the city. The villas of the wealthy Greek merchants are generally located in the east of the city. Although the luxury houses of the wealthy Greeks in the north of the city do not look good, the soil is better and the fruit trees and gardens on the slopes are more fertile. However, I would prefer to live in the South of Ankara.<sup>107</sup>

In the continuation of the travelogue, Perrot talks about the beauty of the valleys and hills, poplar and willow trees, old plane trees in the Büyükesat district located in southern Ankara. According to Perrot, most of the European merchants chose Büyükesat because of these qualities. Perrot's observation is interesting since there is still *Papazın Bağı* in the same Büyükesat District as the last remaining part of the vineyards. Considering currently there are Embassies, companies involved in international trade located in this part of the city, even though rapid urbanization and growing urban population erased viniculture among many other things, foreigners and many middle-class residents still choose to live in that part of the city.

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<sup>106</sup> İbid., 55.

<sup>107</sup> Yurt Ansiklopedisi Cilt 1, Ankara'da XVI. Yüzyılda Ekonomik ve Sosyal Yaşam, (Anadolu Yayıncılık,1981), 546. Translated by the author.

As mentioned before, nearly every Ankara dweller had a house in the vineyards surrounding the city throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. They mainly moved to vineyard houses during the Spring months until the fall because of the harvest season. Perrot stated that old wines were drunk in the vineyards in October, and laughter and songs were all around.<sup>108</sup> After the foundation of the Republic, Ankara preserved the vineyard tissue surrounding the city. The grapes would have been harvested and turned into molasses and dried fruits at the end of August and September. Each vineyard house usually had a pool, a cellar, and some also produced wine. In fact, Kavaklıdere Wine Factory was in today's Kavaklıdere Hilton Hotel. Since it was a time of epidemics and malaria, the vineyard houses also attracted attention with their airy environment.

In her article titled “Ankara Vineyards and Vineyard Houses,” Gökçe Günel argues that one of the things that brought the end of viticulture was the law of property ownership<sup>109</sup> in 1954. The housing cooperatives established since 1963, namely, rapid development movements. Mehmet Sümter claims that one of the reasons for the disappearance of viticulture was phylloxera disease in grapes. For Günel, wealthier Armenian merchants' vineyard houses were on the Keçiören side in the north. These differ from the more modest traditional wooden carcass structures in the South with their Armenian stonework. In addition, Mustafa Kemal<sup>110</sup> preferred to reside in the Kasapoğlu Mansion of Bulgurlu Tefik Efendi in Çankaya, surrounded by vineyards and gardens in the South of the city. There were villages close to the city and engaged in agriculture at the Early Republican Period. These are the villages of Solfasol, Pasaklar, Bağlum, Yakupaptal, Kıbrıs, Yakacık, Yuva, Susuz, Kayaş, Nemek, Yalınca, Ludumnu, Alacaatlı, Karapürçek, Tatlar, Gicik,

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<sup>108</sup> *İbid.*, 546.

<sup>109</sup> Kat Mülkiyet Kanunu in Turkish.

<sup>110</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was a Turkish field marshal, one of the founders of the Turkish Republic and its first president.

Dudurga ve İmrahor.<sup>111</sup> Tansı Şenyapılı, in her book “Barakadan Gecekonduya,” mentions that Atatürk's choice of location in Çankaya gave the city a new axis of orientation (south axis), although there is no road to Atatürk's residence at the time. Considering Atatürk's impact and his role, her assumption can be merit. Even though it is hard for the city to extend geographically towards the southern axis, there is still a growing urban fabric today. All in all, vineyards and orchards were home to gatherings, vine harvests, molasses boiling rituals. Vineyards surrounded by streams were not a romanticized, outside material thing; instead, it was a “social entity” that fostered rituals and cultural activities and changed labor relations. However, it is hard to imagine this conception of Ankara in today's urban fabric.

### 3.4 Ankara Cement Factory and flows of cement

Concrete is the most consumed man-made material in the world after water.<sup>112</sup> On the other hand, cement has been used as the binder of concrete since the second half of the 19th century. Cement production itself is responsible for considerable Co2 emissions, with China, India, the United States, and Turkey leading the way. According to the Turkish Cement Manufacturers' Association, there are currently twenty-one grinding units and fifty-six integrated plants producing cement in Turkey.<sup>113</sup> One can read Turkey's urbanization history from buildings to the dams, highways, sewages, and Ankara's early struggle of housing crisis with the use of cement. However, there are not many references related to cement in the literature. During the study, Turkish Cement Manufacturers' magazines, the issues of *Arkitekt* magazine published between 1930-1980 and the book titled *The Story of Our First*

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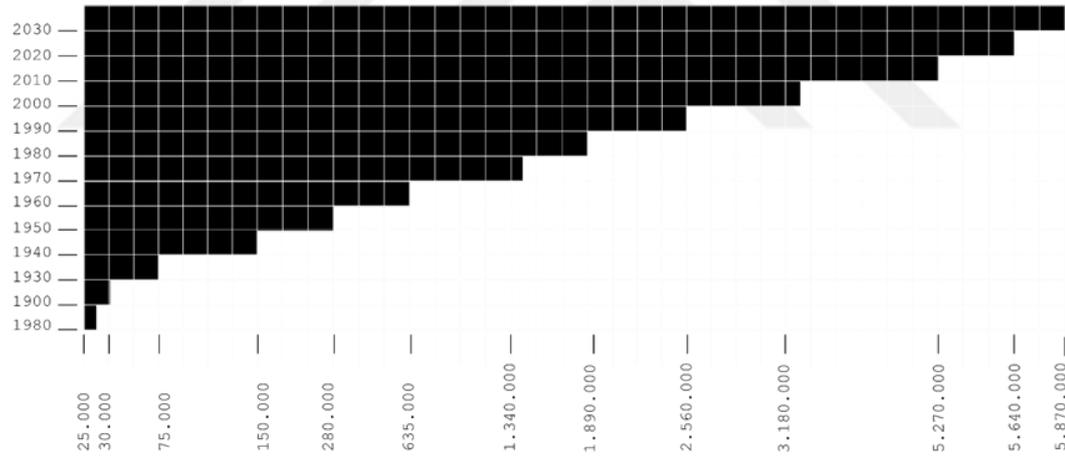
<sup>111</sup> Tansı Şenyapılı, “Baraka”dan Gecekonduya, Ankara’da Kentsel Mekanın Dönüşümü: 1923-1960”, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 29.

<sup>112</sup> Tzaninis et.al “Moving urban political ecology beyond the ‘urbanization of nature’,11.

<sup>113</sup> “Türk Çimento Hakkında”, Türkçimento, April 18, 2022, <https://www.turkcimento.org.tr/tr/hakkimizda>

Cement Factory were used.<sup>114</sup> Although seems unrelated at the first stance, Sibel Bozdoğan's *Modernism and Nation Building* helped a lot while understanding the discourse behind 'concrete' reality. I came to a conclusion at the end that the history of cement is the history of the modern city that is eager to industrialize and urbanize.

The first cement factory was opened in the Ottoman period with Darıca and Eskişehir Factories, then the production and trade were interrupted due to War and poverty. Similar to Izmir- Ankara Railway project, it was a Tanzimat era movement that tried to incorporate the international capital through commercial agreements and change the consumption habits of the empire. After the foundation of the Turkish Republic, there was a major demand for construction to build modern boulevards, factories, houses, railways, and stations, public parks and dams. The population growth rate of Ankara was %29 between 1935 and 1940, which became tripled within a decade.<sup>115</sup> Population growth also shows the need for "cement" in Ankara. (Figure 3.3.)



<sup>114</sup> The Story of Our First Cement Factory is a book of a research project conducted by Prof. Dr. Emre Dölen and Asst. Prof. Dr. Murat Koraltürk focused mainly on Arslan and Darıca Cement factories in the İstanbul Gebze region, yet gave information about Turkey's cement history between 1910 and 2004.

<sup>115</sup> Tansı Şenyapılı, ""Baraka"dan Gecekonduya, Ankara'da Kentsel Mekanın Dönüşümü:1923-1960, 11.

Figure 3.5. Diagram showing the population growth of Ankara from the information gathered in United Nation Prospects and Tansı Şenyapılı, 'Baraka'dan Gecekondu'ya', drawn by the author.

Population growth, migration to urban areas and imported products in the Turkish construction market pave the way for the necessity of Kurt Cement Factory in İstanbul and Ankara Cement Factory in Ankara within the scope of *Teşvik-i Sanayi Kanunu*.<sup>116</sup> However, it was closed in 1937 due to the second World War. According to Dölen and Koraltürk, the great depression in 1929 and the war period influenced the sector adversely and increased prices till the 1950s. The cement industry, directly related to coal, could not access the necessary raw materials due to national defense needs. According to Tansı Şenyapılı, by referencing Arif Hikmet Koyunoğlu, one of the biggest problems of constructing the new capital was the lack of craftsmanship and construction materials due to the population exchange (*mübadele*) and the departure of the Armenian community. Therefore, the use of new materials and techniques was both convenient for the 'newness' of Republic, as well as it was convenient. Zeki Sayar repeatedly wrote in *Arkitekt* journal about the cement crisis in 1937, 1947, and 1967 together with other architects. His statements reveal the use and importance of cement for the Era.

The state should maintain the prices of wheat, iron and cement since it is one of the primary materials to support the welfare of the country.<sup>117</sup>

There is a need for cement factories in Turkey; otherwise, cement remains a luxury material with these prices and transportation costs today.<sup>118</sup>

As we have stated in our numerous articles, it is not overlooked that in the cement business, which is the main material needed for the development of

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<sup>116</sup> Emre Dölen, Murat Koraltürk, *İlk Çimento Fabrikamızın Öyküsü 1910-2004*, (İstanbul:2004). Ankara cement factory with 20.000 ton capacity.

<sup>117</sup> Zeki Sayar, "Çimento", *Arkitekt* 329,(1967),147.

<sup>118</sup> Zeki Sayar, "Çimento Fiyatları Münasebeti ile", *Arkitekt* 05-06, ,(1937),172.

the country, the Ministries of Economy and Trade have only acted to protect the domestic industry until today.<sup>119</sup>

Selected statements from short articles of Zeki Sayar show that concrete, as a material thing, was related to abstract concepts such as welfare, development, and luxury. He criticized the economic programme of the Era that was investing in domestic industry. For Sibel Bozdoğan, modernism is both ideological and practical; since the new Republic lacked craftsmen, it was suitable to use new materials.<sup>120</sup> It is ideological because it suits the reformist, utopianist, and futurist ideals of the ethos of pursuing western civilization. The cement Pavillion at the İzmir International Fair shows the representation of this ideal within the public space. (Figure 3.5) However, because the new republican regime lacked accumulation of capital and the world economy was collapsing due to the great depression, it was hard to achieve radical plans. Anyhow, in the state-led industrialization era of the young Republic, the radical modernist program was exposed to concrete buildings, stations, public buildings, factories, and railways, namely, new industrial landscapes. For Sibel Bozdoğan, new Turkish Republic also developed its own conception of “civilization” and its other. Dualistic conceptions were oscillating between tradition and modernity, old and new, progress and decline, secular and conservative.

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<sup>119</sup> Zeki Sayar, “Bu tedbirlerle çimento buhranı önlenemez”, *Arkitekt* 187-188,(1947),151.

<sup>120</sup> Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası*.

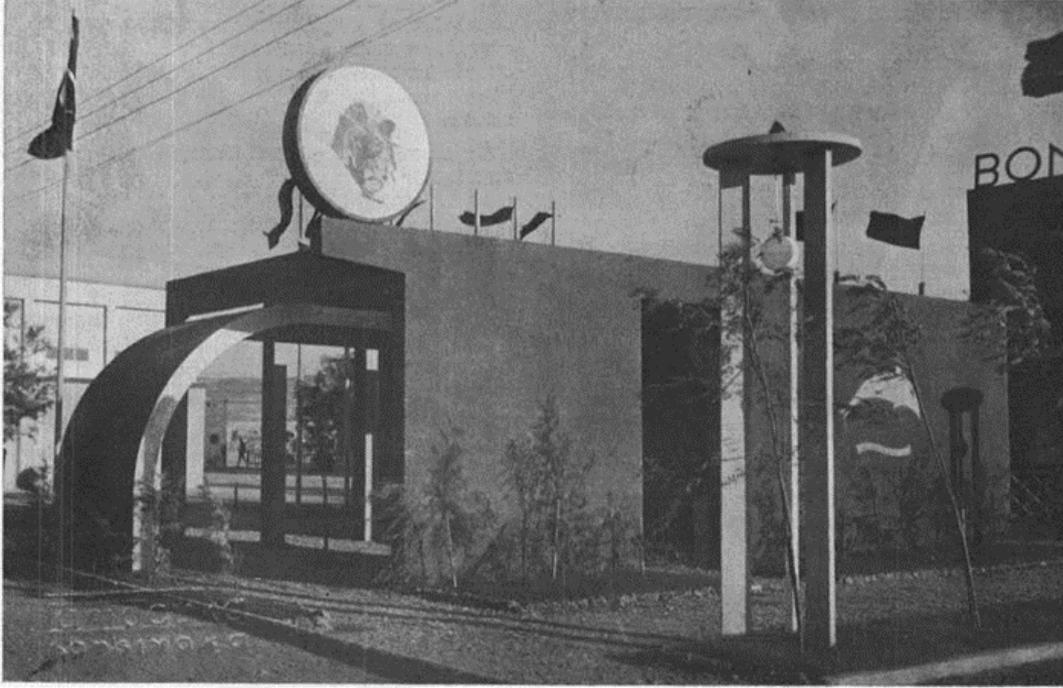


Figure 3.6. 1937 Cement Pavillion in the İzmir International Fair, Arkitekt<sup>121</sup>

After 1950, Marshall Plan and the policies toward foreign capital were reflected in the cement industry. In the same period, the membership of Turkey to IMF<sup>122</sup>, World Bank, European Economic Cooperation Organization and NATO increased migration to the city and thus urbanization. This economic and political environment has led to increased cement consumption, and the İzmir Cement Factory, Zeytinburnu, Darıca, Kartal and many others have increased their production capacities.<sup>123</sup> Demands for establishing a cement factory from all over the country led to the reopening of the cement factory in Ankara inside the Gazi Farm with the state intervention. Ankara Cement Factory started to work again with the new name

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<sup>121</sup> New technologies were introduced, and Turkey was promoted at the Izmir International Fair, which was opened for the first time in 1936. Sibel Bozdoğan specifically mentions the lighting of the fair and the promotion of industry and progress represented through pavilions. Bozdogan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası*.

<sup>122</sup> IMF: International Monetary Fund, NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

“Ankara Çimento Limited Şirketi” to ease the construction sector in 1956.<sup>124</sup> (Figure 3.6) In addition, the Turkish Cement Industry (ÇİSAN) was established, and twenty new cement plants to be realized together with foreign partners, were tendered through ÇİSAN.



Figure 3.7. Ankara Çimento Fabrikası, Lalahan, VEKAM Kütüphanesi ve Arşivi

In the 1980s, together with the GAP<sup>125</sup> project, infrastructure, and housing constructions such as dams and highways became the central dynamics of cement consumption and the sector's development. In 1980, there were twenty-five cement plants in Turkey, and in the next decade, its number increased to sixty-one cement production facilities.<sup>126</sup> Although cement had not been imported for a long time, cement imports increased rapidly due to the necessity. At the same time, new residential projects and suburbanization increased during this period. With the

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<sup>124</sup> This time the existing 20.000-ton capacity facility enlarged into 120.000 tons which became 400.000 ton in 1960s.

<sup>125</sup> Meaning Southeastern Anatolia Project, it consists of the construction of dams, hydroelectric santrals and irrigation facilities.

<sup>126</sup> Emre Dölen, Murat Koraltürk, *İlk Çimento Fabrikamızın Öyküsü 1910-2004*, (İstanbul:2004),215.

privatization efforts initiated in 1987, cement factories began to be sold, including Ankara Cement Factory<sup>127</sup>. In 1996, all the cement factories publicly owned were privatized.

As mentioned in the beginning, Turkey is now one of the leading countries in cement consumption, which can also be understood from Ankara's expansion of the municipal boundaries. Municipal boundaries of Ankara extended in 1926, 1937, 1957, 1973, 1982 and 1984 due to the growing population and urbanization rates.<sup>128</sup> After the 1960s, high income social groups moved to the Yıldız, Oran, Çukurca, Bilkent, Koru, Konutkent, İncek; middle class choosed to live in Çayyolu, Eryaman, Elvankent, Batıkent that is relatively far from the city center compared to Keçiören, Etlik, Dikmen. Subway constructions and natural gas infrastructure projects were developed to solve the air pollution problem. In 1992, a purification plant was opened due to the sewage problem of the city that reached three million people.<sup>129</sup> Portakal Çiçeği Valley and Dikmen Valley development projects also show the decentralized planning approaches as well as capitalist urbanization that constructs ever-expanding networks. To sum up, understanding Ankara through the socio-metabolic flows of cement reveals political projects, different ideologies, changing labor relations effecting urban policies, and architectural projects.

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<sup>127</sup> İbid., 217.

<sup>128</sup> Suavi Aydın, Kudret Emiroğlu, Ömer Türkoğlu, Ergi D.Özsoy, *Küçük Asya'nın Bin Yüzü: Ankara*, (Ankara: Dost, 2005), 223.

<sup>129</sup> İbid., 223.



Numerous events and consequences can be drawn from the timeline. To better make sense the relations between different scales and juxtapositions of events and consequences, İlhan Tekeli's periodization of Turkey's modernity struggle into four main themes could be used.<sup>130</sup> (1)*Shy modernity* era which Young Turks and Tanzimat reforms with foreign funds between 1850 and 1920, (2)*Radical modernity* which new Republican regime and construction of the nation-state was prominent between 1923 and 1950, (3)*Populist modernity* era with the neoliberal policy and globalization between 1950 and 1980. In populist modernity era, *dolmuş* and *yapsat* activities proved that planning of cities relinquishes to free market economy; therefore, most Turkish cities developed accordingly. (4) *Demolition*<sup>131</sup> *of modernity* from 1980 onwards where the integration into the global capitalist system and Islamist politics ruled the production of space.

Events before 1920s gradually address the foundation of the Republic and the increasing need for housing in Ankara which later went hand in glove with the need to produce cement. Cement embedded meanings of progress, development, and a symbol of modernity apart from its materiality. Timeline presents events (Marshall Plan, Population exchange, China's great leap forward, establishment of World Trade Organization, increased globalization) and laws (Law of property ownership, increasing the power of TOKI etc.) encouraging the use of cement and increasing urban population in an unexpected scale. Population exchange between Greece and Turkey and the end of the Ottoman period could be linked with the disappearance of certain rituals and cultures from urban life, and the lack of professionals and craftsmanship fostered the use of new materials. After the Marshall plan and changing political climate, a shift in labor-intensive agricultural technology caused the climax of immigration from rural to urban areas. Many interrelated socio-natural flows

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<sup>130</sup> İlhan Tekeli, Kent tarihi yazımı konusunda yeni bir Paradigma Önerisi, in Cumhuriyetin Ankarası.

<sup>131</sup> *Modernitenin aşınması* in Turkish.

emerged in processes of squatters, disappearing of streams, urbanization of vineyards, high consumption of cement and iron, and construction of Anatolian highways linking hinterlands to the cities. With Marshall plan, 'tractor' became a distant but very urban 'non-human' actor fostering migrations to urban areas and linking those areas to rural Anatolia. The flood disaster in 1957 could be associated with squatters and informal settlements settled in topologic thresholds. An ecological catastrophe concluded with burying streams and building roads exemplified the cleaning and taming of nature. In today's conditions, cement represents the destruction of the planet, the Anthropocene thesis associated with Architecture and Urbanism, with its high carbon emissions and rising consumption. Neoliberal political and economic ideals started from Turgut Özal went hand in glove with the election of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. These policies also overlap with the informal and uncontrolled expansion of urban space and large-scale projects with public and foreign funds. According to Batuman, "state-led industrialization" was prominent before the 1980s, which later turned into "new forms of locally administered neo-liberalization" by empowering municipalities and increasing the authorities of TOKI to make plan adjustments and execute urban transformation projects.<sup>132</sup> While the strategy of the Islamist party was to provide informal aid to urban poor and especially squatter residents during the 1990s, urban space became a recovering strategy from the 2001 economic crisis and "a tool for the politics of clientelism" with the new government. In contrast, a new image of cement 'as a carbon dioxide emitter' after the 1970s could be also read from the establishment of the Limits of Growth Report, UN-Habitat, Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, or Gezi Park Protests in Turkey.

One way or another, despite the changing political regimes and ideals in line with new technological advancements, Ankara experienced a massive transformation and extension by enabling specific flows such as oil, cement, water, and electricity

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<sup>132</sup> Batuman, 578-590.

whereas demolishing others such as mohair and grape. These flows are engineered with technological networks that are fragile, depended on human and non-human labor. In other words, we live in a contemporary discourse of “nature as crisis” that makes it impossible to ignore the urban basis of environmental problems. From a continuation of the enlightenment ideals of progress and human emancipation to the expanding the capital base of western economies, not only history of capital, Ankara and its southeast periphery inevitably bound to each other, but also, they create a socio-natural hybrid. In Soja's words, “what you see when you analyze geography is rigidly simultaneous”.



## CHAPTER 4

### DIALECTICAL PROCESS SHAPING THE REPRODUCTION OF SOUTHEAST PERIPHERY OF ANKARA

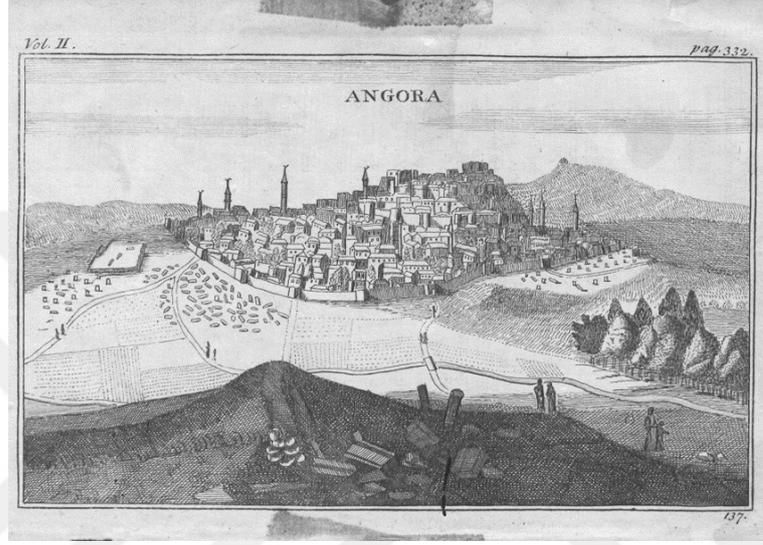


Figure 4.1. Ankara Gravürü, 1742, Ankara Fotoğraf, Kartpostal ve Gravür Koleksiyonu, VEKAM<sup>133</sup>

A materialist perspective of the history of Ankara, that is, how mohair, water, grapes, and concrete constantly reshape human-nonhuman constellations and urban space, contributes to the broader discussion of “periphery” that is continually changing and altering topographies, securing new material flows. An essential finding throughout the process was the accelerating change of the conceptual and spatial boundaries of the periphery. While for the traditional city, the periphery was what is outside the city walls, it was considered as vineyards areas around the Keçiören, Etlik, Kavaklıdere, Çankaya, and Dikmen during the first years of the Republic. When

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<sup>133</sup> The gravure of Tournefort depicts the 18th century Ankara having a rigid center inside the city walls yet depending on its hinterland in terms of agriculture, animal husbandry and commerce.

squatter residents first chose to settle in Yıldız or İmrahor, they were peripheral spaces, and topography was inadequate for development and infrastructure. In today's edgeless city, the conception of the periphery is unstable more than ever, where even the remotest corners of the world urbanized, and metropolitan boundaries of Ankara changed tremendously. Changing metropolitan boundaries as well as scope of master plans show this instability. (Figure 4.2.) Therefore, the “southeast periphery” of Ankara is instead a vague signifier to frame the focus of the analysis. It is essential to underline that there is no possible limit to the city; in the same way, there is no static image of the “Southeast periphery of Ankara.”



Figure 4.2. Valleys of Ankara and boundaries of different master plans, drawn by the author.<sup>134</sup>

Since dialectical inquiry prioritizes fluxes, processes, networks over things, institutions, analyzing them immediately and simultaneously brings other networks and processes. Sociologist Sezai Ozan Zeybek in his research on İstanbul's borders, mentions the displacement of industry from İstanbul's inner city to Trakya and its possible outcomes effecting stray dogs, chemicals, and farm industry. Revealing relations and networks, analyzing a particular story in space, ends up following many other related spaces, actors, and elements in other spaces. Similarly, this study searches for both continuities and discontinuities of the historical “development” of this edge condition in multiple scales. It searches for invisible and mostly neglected narratives, actors and flows from the scale of the city to the building. The Southeast part of the city has been a notable peripheral, peri-urban space for Ankara’s socio-environmental condition primarily because of the İmrahor Valley, which has been transformed abundantly over the past twenty years.

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<sup>134</sup> Base file of the map was generated from openstreetmap, boundaries of different plans and valleys are accessed from Ankara Kent Atlası. Map shows the location of İmrahor Valley within the valley system and current greenery in Ankara. The map shows the location of İmrahor Valley within the valley system and the current greenery in Ankara. Gonca Zeynep Tunçbilek, tarihsel arkaplan, in *Ankara kent atlası*. (TMMOB Mimarlar Odası Ankara Şubesi, 2012), 39-52.



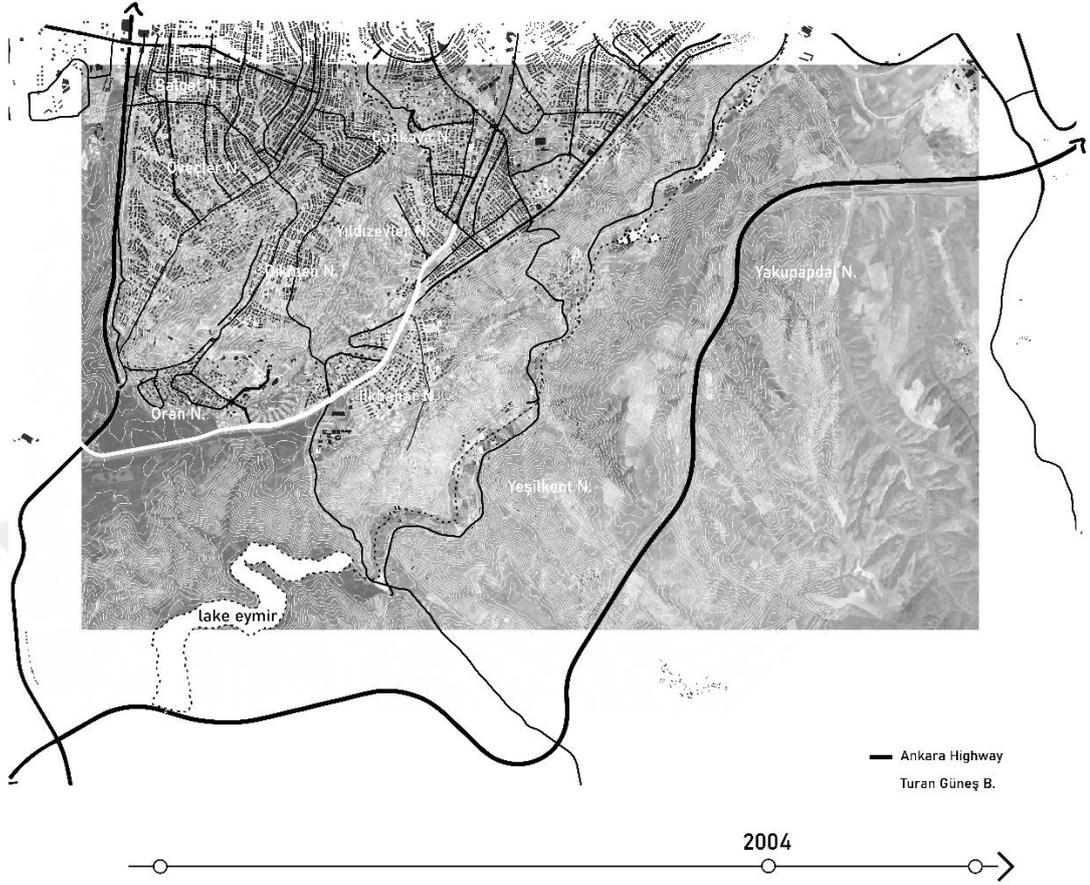


Figure 4.4. 2004 map drawn by the author.

1934 map, which is the earliest map found, shows the valley with İncesu, Eymir Lake basin and creeks, vineyards surrounding them. Although villages at the north part of the map urbanized completely today, a part of Mühye Village, Karataş and İmrahor Village is still existing. Vineyard history of Ankara shows that the Dikmen neighborhood along the Çal mountain was countryside for Ankara dwellers, especially in the first years of the Republic. Moreover, Şenyapılı conveyed that there were still barns in 1945 along the Dikmen and Küçükesat neighborhoods.<sup>136</sup> Yucel-Uybadin plan in 1953, showed first time İmrahor with brick factories and İmrahor

<sup>136</sup> Şenyapılı, *Barakadan gecekonduya*,159.

Village surrounding the factories without any residential area nearby. Although industry had stayed in zones near railway and İstanbul road, İmrahor brick factories were an exception because of the necessity of special raw material which is suitable near İmrahor creek.<sup>137</sup> Satellite images from 2004 (Figure 4,3) reveals how İmrahor Valley was once occupied with informal settlements before the transformation. As a matter of fact, 'Amele Evleri' written on the left bottom of the 1934 map can be considered an earlier form of *gecekondu*<sup>138</sup>, which were named worker's sheds at the time. *Gecekondus* had transformed the periphery of Ankara for a long time because they were mostly located in areas either topologically rough or in danger of flooding. From that conclusion, we can establish a connection between brick factories and the 'cheap labor' that squatters provide for them from the 1960s onwards to the 2000s. Although İmrahor squatter settlements were first built in 1938 with approximately 700 residents, they probably enlarged thanks to the brick factories surrounding them.<sup>139</sup> Tansı Şenyapılı has determined that Yıldız was formerly a part of Mühye Village as well. However, it has presented a different type of transformation compared to other formerly squatter neighborhoods, with *yapsat* practices rather than urban transformation projects. Transformation of Yıldız with high rent probably resulted from its proximity to Çankaya Mansion, OR-AN neighborhood parliamentary residences, and state-led decisions after 1980s such as *ıslah imar planı* which enable squatters to share the rent.<sup>140</sup>

On July 13th, 2010, New *Güneypark Urban Transformation and Renewal Project* and its boundaries are declared officially by the cabinet, with verdict numbered as 661.<sup>141</sup> This project could be considered the continuation of the *Güneytepe Urban*

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<sup>137</sup> Tekeli, Şenyapılı, and Genç, Ankara'da Sanayi Üretiminin Tarihsel Gelişim Süreci, 148.

Some of these brickyards were located near the Yenice village on the Çubuk-Esenboğa road, while the others were located in the part of the İmrahor Valley close to Eymir Lake.

<sup>138</sup> I deliberately used *gecekondu*, meaning built over night, instead of squatter or *yapsatçılık*, their Turkish version, since they are specific to the production of space in Turkey.

<sup>139</sup> Şenyapılı, *Barakadan Gecekonduya*.

<sup>140</sup> Tekeli, Şenyapılı, and Genç, Ankara'da Sanayi Üretiminin Tarihsel Gelişim Süreci, 148.

<sup>141</sup> "Bakanlar Kurulu Kararı", 2022. <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/07/20100713-6.htm>.

*Transformation Project* and *Dikmen 4-5 Stage Urban Transformation Projects*, *Portakal Çiçeği Valley Urban Transformation Projects* that were reshaping the south part of Ankara over the past three decades.<sup>142</sup> Although the earliest official verdict found about the area was in 2010, satellite images from 2009 show that it has already changed with new road constructions a year ago. In the news reached through the website of Ankara Municipality, it was understood that before the urban transformation, there were about 2100 right-holders as individuals, companies, cooperatives and nearly 600 slums.<sup>143</sup> It was also stated that “Contemporary and modern buildings will replace unhealthy living spaces”<sup>144</sup>, which shows the very idea of taming nature for the sake of cleansing and providing healthy environs. However, İmrahor was also part of a vital valley and water system ranging from Eymir Lake to Mogan, and very close to the Gölbaşı Special Environmental Protection Area. Its ecological importance and possible destruction of habitats was neglected from the side of the urban transformation project. Between 2002 to 2004, Chamber of Architects along with *Kavaklıderem Association* and *Mamak Mass Organizations Platform* organize many workshops, conferences, weekly meetings about the “Ankara's last valley, İmrahor” to underline its ecological importance. Although the Chamber of Architects, Chamber of City Planners and NGOs<sup>145</sup> advised otherwise, İmrahor Valley was zoned for housing by using squatters as an excuse. The relationship between squatter dwellers, the state and the industry were reciprocal throughout the past century because they have been used for exploiting cheap labor and for their political power. However, Güney Park Urban Transformation Project like the other urban transformation projects in Southern Ankara distributes profit to the private construction companies rather than landowners. In fact, it can be

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<sup>142</sup> Cemile Nil,Uzun,“Ankara’da Konut Alanlarının Dönüşümü: Kentsel Dönüşüm Projeleri.” In Cumhuriyetin Ankarası, edited by Tansı Şenyapılı, (ODTÜ Yayıncılık, 2006).

<sup>143</sup> "Güneypark Projesi’nde İşlem Tamam...". *Ankara.Bel.Tr*, 2022. <https://www.ankara.bel.tr/haberler/guneypark-projesi-nde-islem-tamam-1310>.

<sup>144</sup> İbid.

<sup>145</sup> Non-governmental organizations

understood from the waste reports<sup>146</sup> published by the municipality that mentions the financial burden of the rental costs of the people displaced due to these projects in the 2022 dated report. Considering Republic's early struggle to provide resources, opening lands to construction was a strategy to solve the long-standing economic crisis during the early 2000s, yet it did not contribute neither to municipality nor state in terms of monetary profit in the long run.

2022 map (Figure 4.4.) was drawn to understand the drastic spatial and social change from 1934 until now. An emphasis on the location of Turan Güneş Boulevard was deemed necessary since it is still under construction to provide more connections to newly urbanized lands, and it is the central axis to further expansion. It is also decided to fragment the analysis into four focused areas, which have inextricable relations to the growing number of shopping malls and animal shelters surrounding the area. From the map and integrated section, it is understood that the valley, even if it is a vague expression, still preserves its threshold character between urban and rural land uses. Map reveals that ideality and rationality of designated space is interrupted with valley topography, where roads could not straight and lines do not meet up.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> "Kentsel Dönüşüm Projeleri". Ankara.Bel.Tr, 2022. <https://www.ankara.bel.tr/israf-sayfasi/kentsel-donusum-projeleri/>.

<sup>147</sup> "Landscape is incredibly rich and diverse when experienced firsthand; the land, the passages of time, and the peculiarities of subsequent settlements have resisted and absorbed the ideality of the rational and repetitive scheme -a scheme that, in where lines do not quite meet up, where roads are not straight or true, where property lines take strange and irregular turns, and where the rectilinear order breaks down, it is the system that bends -albeit unwillingly and with little grace." James Corner and Alex Machehan, *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape*, 44.



## 4.2 Transcending: From squatters to gated communities

Portakal Çiçeği Valley, Dikmen Valley, Büyükesat Valley, and finally the İmrahor Valey were preferred by *gecekondu* settlers probably because they were empty lots considering their harsh valley topography and peripheral location at the time. In 1990s, they became the topic of large-scale urban transformation projects due to their proximity to prestigious districts such as Kavaklıdere, Oran, Ayrancı etc. These transformations were generally financed by luxury housing projects supported by construction companies, thus bringing along dualities between different income groups. Many scholars who carried out research on these transformation projects determined that generally the *gecekondu* owners do not live in the transformed areas due to this dual situation, and they sell or rent the apartments they obtained from the transformation.<sup>149</sup> In the example of the Güneypark transformation projects, Sinpaş Altınoran and Güneypark 1-2 housing estates have stayed entirely separated. Former *gecekondu* owners cannot access the seemingly absurd facilities provided in Sinpaş Altınoran. In other words, the class struggle does not magically disappear in modern cities; instead, it is visually obscured.

Sinpaş Altınoran, whose construction was completed in 2014, consists of 46 blocks, two towers and four residences on an area of 123.2 hectares, while Güneypark 1 is reserved for the former squatter residents and includes a total of 25<sup>150</sup> blocks and four commercial areas. Sinpaş Altınoran provides not only sport facilities, playgrounds, a shopping center, and walking trail as any other housing estate, but also biological ponds, cable car, ski-run, and a square. Similarly, Marina Ankara with 2590<sup>151</sup> flats, provides peculiar possibilities such as marina atmosphere, marina

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<sup>149</sup> Ayşe, Ünal, "Kentsel Dönüşüm ve Aidiyet: Ankara'dan Bir Örnek." *Asia Minor Studies-International Journal of Social Sciences* 6, 2018.

<sup>150</sup> Güneypark. "Güneypark 2 Site Yönetimi". *Guneypark2yonetim.Com*, 2022. <https://www.guneypark2yonetim.com/>.

<sup>151</sup> "Sinpaş Marina Ankara Konut Projesi | Sinpaş GYO". *Marinaankara.Com*, 2022. <https://www.marinaankara.com/>.

avenue, a light house that is not related to Ankara's geography. They not only imitate the geographical elements but also, entrapped urban elements such as squares, boulevards, arcades, walking paths, playgrounds, and parks into their 'secured' walls.

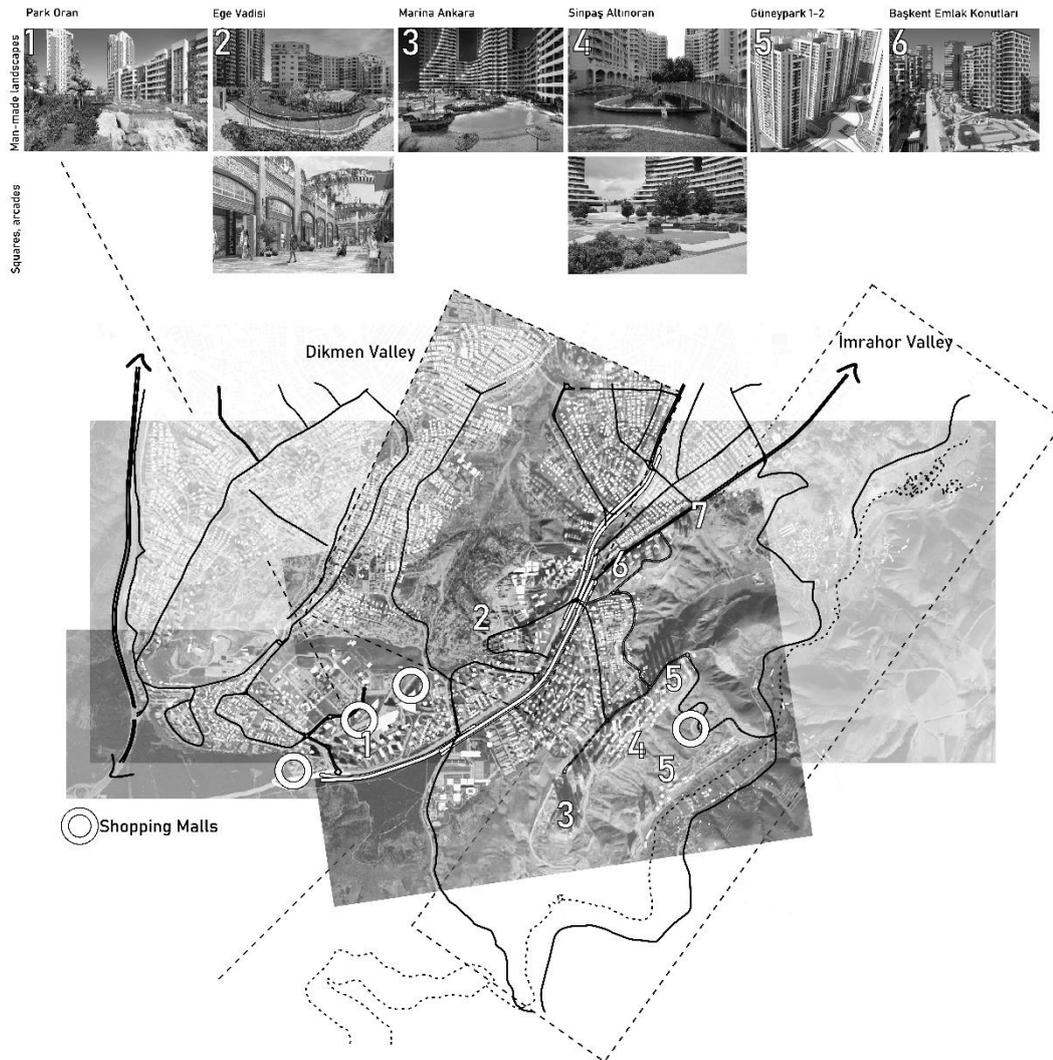


Figure 4.6. Map showing the location of gated communities around the İmrahor Valley, drawn by the author.<sup>152</sup>

<sup>152</sup> Google earth image from 25.4.2021 and images from advertisement websites of housing estates and layers used and adapted from OpenStreetMap.

What is common to each of them is that they market the natural landscape, the proximity to the natural areas relatively untouched such as the İmrahor valley, Eymir and Mogan Lake, and reproduction of domesticated and imitated forms of nature. The project *Ege Vadisi*, for example, resembles another geography and advertises itself accordingly. As the number of these gated communities is growing each day, the construction of Park Oran (2007), One Tower (2016), Sinpaş Altınoran (2015), and Kuzu Effect (2019) have been completed by different private sector companies with shopping malls to enhance consumption. On the other hand, Başkent Emlak Housing was initiated by *Emlak Konut Gayrimenkul Ortaklığı*<sup>153</sup> and Mühye Vadi Housing by TOKİ, and their construction is still ongoing.

Considering the examples of gated communities presented above (Figure 4.5.) that are using man-made ponds, beaches, irrigated gardens, and animals to heighten the profit, we can elaborate more on Neil Smith's production of nature thesis. According to Smith, production is the essential material relation between humans and nature; therefore, it inevitably leads to the production of "nature" as the raw material of all basic production processes that is constantly reworked. In gated communities surrounding İmrahor Valley, the production of nature is twofold. (1) Production of nature as raw material, that is, tremendous effort and hard work of many people who turn soil, water and cement into a commodity. It is also a constant "reworking" because these places necessitate abundant use of water and chemicals; therefore, there must be people at work if it is to survive. (2) Production of representation of nature is the other side of the coin that is either imitation or simulation of nature. Natural elements have always been used to increase the exchange value of a commodity, from the commodification of Bosphorous scenery in İstanbul to apartment blocks with Central Park views in New York. Although this process is

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<sup>153</sup> Emlak Konut was initiated in 1953 by public funds and changed its name to "Emlak Konut Real Estate Investment Trust" in 2003. It is a subsidiary of TOKİ, affiliated to the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of the Republic of Turkey. "Emlak Konut". Emlakkonut.Com.Tr, 2022. <https://www.emlakkonut.com.tr/tr-TR/hakkimizda>.

mainly non-material, it results from the labor that advertisement requires. The production of nature's representation is similar to the production of the discourse of "nature as a crisis" in the shape of sustainable foods, clothes and buildings. In short, nature was commodified both materially and discursively. It can be exemplified from the naming of different typology of buildings as shore, lake, mansion -*Yalı Kapı, Göl Evleri, Kıyı Konakları*- in Sinpaş Altınoran. In a similar vein, Akbulut and Candan shed light on the production of representation on İstanbul's housing projects, which they termed "tamed and simulated nature" regarding Maria Kaika.<sup>154</sup> Likewise, gated communities in İstanbul during the past few decades were located purposely near the "real" forests, lakes, and creeks that increase the exchange value and social status. Moreover, these building complexes simulate arcades, streets, and squares while privatizing the very same public space of the city.<sup>155</sup> They promise so-called public and ecological life within its "safe" boundaries. Simulated landscapes also establish solely a visual relationship to their user, a "function of passive observation"<sup>156</sup>, contrary to the vineyard past that requires the active participation of its owners.

From Roger Keil's *suburban planet* thesis, extensive use of nature in design and marketing is a global phenomenon regardless of the geography it imitates. In Global South, Ballard and Jones mentioned new housing estates in South Africa, Durban as eco-estates, game estates, nature estates and forest estates with golf courses, equestrian facilities, gateways, and indigenous plants.<sup>157</sup> It is no coincidence that they also produce scenes that replicate distant places -English landscape, in this case- that function to reproduce a class or status group. Extensive use of nature in design and marketing is also associated with the constant construction boom and bust

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<sup>154</sup> Bengi, Akbulut and Ayfer Bartu Candan, "Bir-İki Ağacın Ötesinde: İstanbul'a Politik Ekoloji Çerçevesinden Bakmak." In *Yeni İstanbul Çalışmaları*, (İstanbul, Metis, 2014), 288-99.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 290.

<sup>156</sup> Lefebvre, *Urban Revolution*, 27. Lefebvre mentions that parks reduce and neutralize real functions to a function of passive observation. They were once mechanisms to ease the rapid urban migration while simulated landscapes are mechanisms to remind us that urbanization did not ruin nature.

<sup>157</sup> Richard Ballard, and Gareth A Jones. "Natural Neighbors: Indigenous Landscapes and Eco-Estates in Durban, South Africa." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 101,no.1, (Routledge,2011), 48-131.

cycles, especially in the context of Turkey, where housing sales were nearly 1,5 million.<sup>158</sup> Considering the middle-class dream to escape from the city while still using the benefits of car-oriented urbanity, gated communities in the Southeast periphery of Ankara use natural elements to compete with its growing number of precedents.

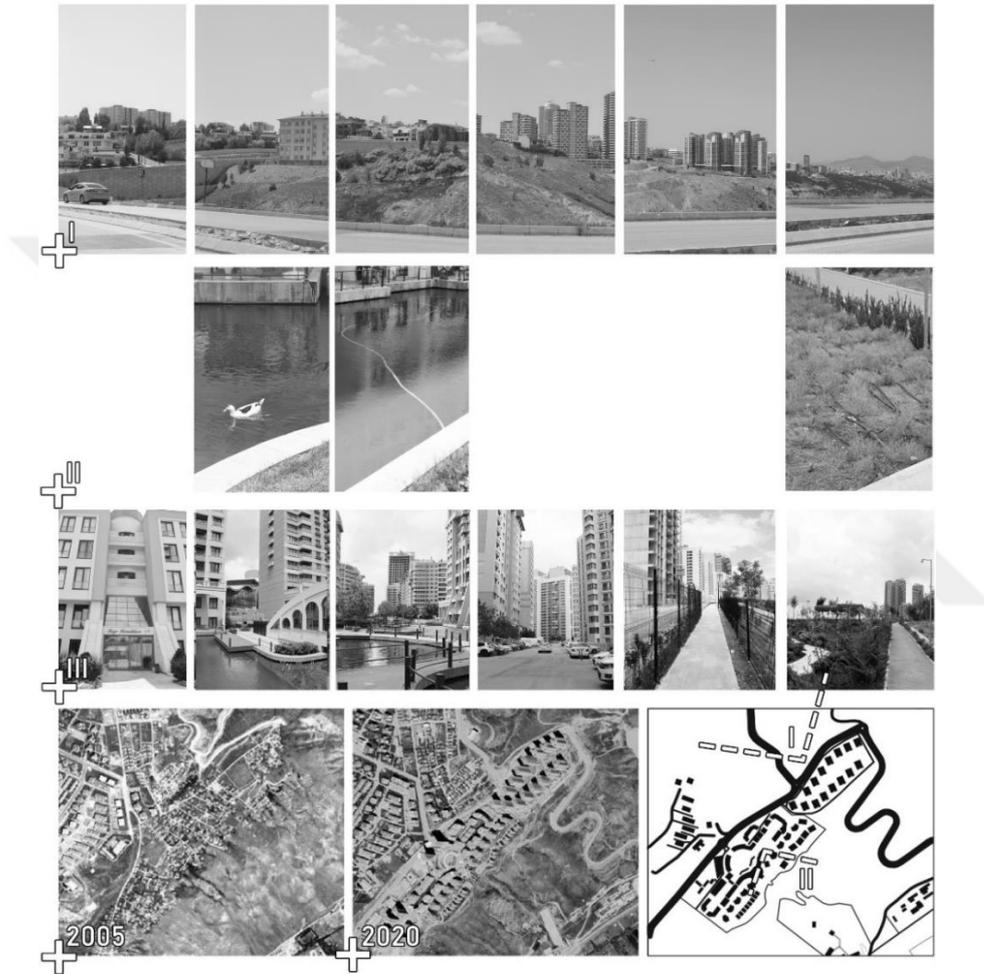


Figure 4.7. Photographs and satellite images to understand the current condition and socio-environmental change, drawn by the author.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>158</sup> "TÜİK Kurumsal". *Data.Tuik.Gov.Tr*, 2022. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p>

<sup>159</sup> While photograph set III shows ponds, walking routes and in-between spaces inside the Sinpaş Altınoran, set I shows how they are disconnected from the environment. Pipe systems to sustain imitated landscapes are photographed in set II.



Figure 4.8. Biological pond and terraces of Sinpaş Altınoran, 2021, photograph by the author.



Figure 4.9. İmrahor Valley and cable car from Sinpaş Altınoran, April 2021, photograph by the author.

### 4.3 Decentering: Landfill, villages and Garden of Nations

Within the continuation of the argument of building an urban theory from the outside in, (chapter 2.3), this chapter highlights what is left outside and underneath this transformation process. The Southeast periphery of Ankara, or more precisely the İmrahor Valley, contains a mix of suburban assemblage in its diversity. As stated before, the southeast periphery of Ankara has been used as vineyards and then by *gecekondu* dwellers until its sharp transformation in the late 1990s. *Gecekondu* is a distinct self-built settlement pattern, therefore; the land is expropriated in return for the share from Güneypark Housing Development and assurance of rent cost until the completion. This project is secured with the money from Luxury housing developments like in most urban transformation projects in southern Ankara. Luxury residences have provided “a refuge” from the city’s threats and “a partial paradise” from crime, noise, and discomfort in return for the land provided. However, this elite escapism comes with its consequences of exclusion and displacement of urban poor, urban trash, animals, and uneven mobilization of resources such as water, sand, and brick. In short, this chapter focuses on the “dark side of development contrasted with an idyllic rural past.”<sup>160</sup> Since the area displays an assemblage in its diversity, the rapid change in area is analyzed in four frames of analysis; that is, Mamak Recreation and Recycle Center and ÇEVNAK Recycle center (1), Mühye village (2), İlkbahar Neighborhood (3), along with the construction of Oran Neighborhood with the aim of satellite town and its transformation in the early 2000s (4).

Because the proximity of OR-AN and Turan Güneş Boulevard was crucial for the urbanization of the valley topography, it is important to briefly mention the strategic location of the Oran Neighborhood, which was once home to deputy residences. It was a response to the growing housing necessity of the 1970s and the air pollution problem in the city center. High rent value due to socio-economic reasons has

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<sup>160</sup> Sheppard cited by Roger Keil.

resulted from natural conditions of topography and climate. Even though residents had struggled in terms of infrastructure at the beginning, problems were solved afterward. This situation is reversed nowadays in which infrastructures come before the buildings. Ensuring capital flow is actually directly related to providing flows in urban space and crossing topographic thresholds. This situation can be exemplified with the construction of the third bridge and airport in Istanbul, or the lands opened for construction with the opening of the 1915 Çanakkale Bridge recently. Although not as large-scale as the projects exemplified, the 604-meter-long and 64-meter-high İmrahor Viaduct, the construction which began in 1992 and was completed in 1998, also contributed greatly to the re-structuring of Southeast Ankara.<sup>161</sup> The photograph that Jean-François Pérouse took in 1997 shows the valley before the transformation and that this project required change on both sides of the valley. (Figure 4.10. and 4.11.)

In the meantime, Mamak municipality opened a dumping area that started to function circa 1980s and there was a severe waste problem and public conflict with creating pollution and smell around neighborhoods.<sup>162</sup> The landfill was transformed into a rehabilitation and recycling center at the beginning of the 2000s, which further paved the way for large-scale private sector investments and an increasing number of shopping centers surrounding the Mamak Waste Rehabilitation area. Large-scale transformation projects, the Ankara Waste Management Project, and the Viaduct of İmrahor held by Ankara Municipality in the early 2000s helped augment land value in the Southeast periphery of Ankara.

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<sup>161</sup> Temat İnşaat, “Ankara Çankaya, Mamak Yolu ve İmrahor Viyadüğü”, April 18, 2022, <http://www.temat.com.tr/TR,56/ankara-cankaya---mamak-yolu-ve-imrahor-viyadugu.html>

<sup>162</sup> Gül, Tuçaltan, “Waste and Metropolitan Governance as Vehicles of Eviscerating Urbanism: A Case from Ankara.” *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* 31, no.4, (Routledge, 2020), 76-90.



Figure 4.10. Viaduct of Imrahor in Ankara, Jean-François Pérouse, 1997, SALT Research.



Figure 4.11. Yukarı Imrahor Quarter and the road going to the viaduct of Imrahor (Doğukent Street), Jean-François Pérouse, 1997, SALT Research.

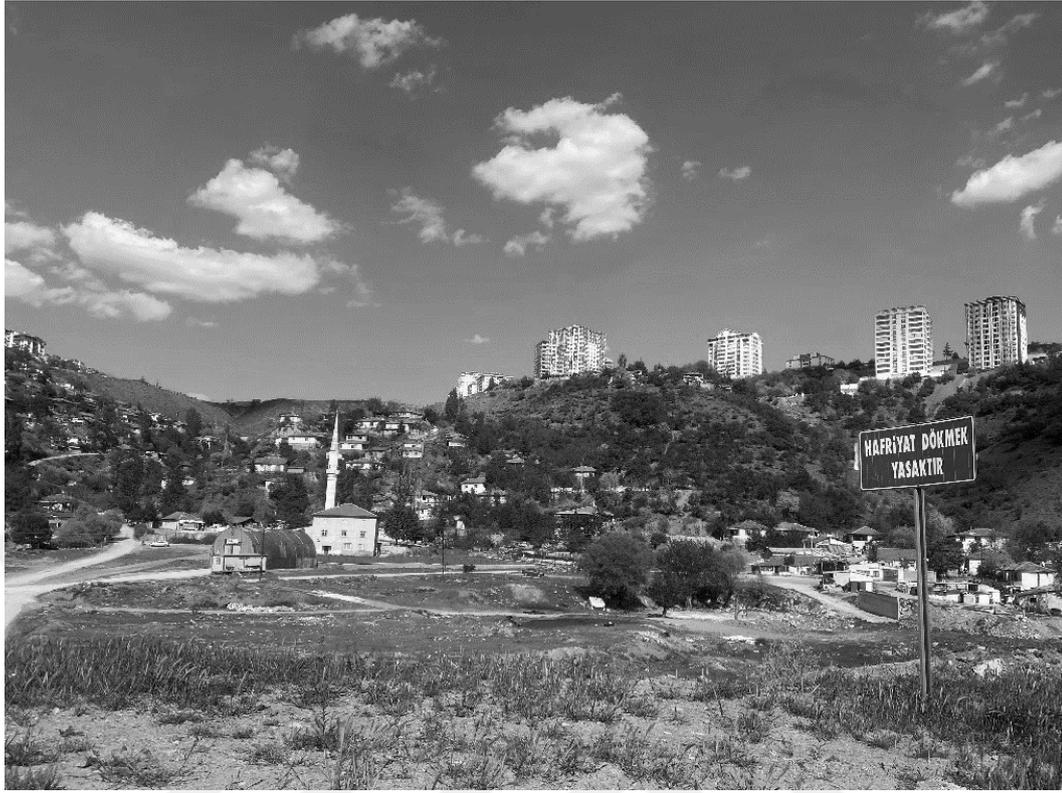


Figure 4.12. Yukarı İmrahor in May 2022 and “No excavating” sign, photographed by the author.

During the fieldwork in the villages of Mühye and İmrahor, it was noticed that there is a strong tendency for the advertisement based on land purchases and sales. It probably results from the belief that these villages will soon become urbanized so that their peripheries will become centers. Yet, these villages still preserve functions such as breeding farms and animal husbandry, which still shows a rural character. Another critical observation throughout the fieldwork is that excavation and construction debris were nearly every corner. Since peripheries lack surveillance technology, it is probably easier to get rid of the undesired elements of destruction from there. Contact information of experts to demolish buildings, named *yıkımcı* was scattered around abandoned brick factories. Therefore, the “No excavation debris” sign from İmrahor village was photographed to document the current struggles considering the risk of transforming tremendously in the near future. (Figure 4.11)

Construction debris was also present in İlkbahar Neighborhood, ironically, where many embassies and construction companies are located near less dense housing estates.

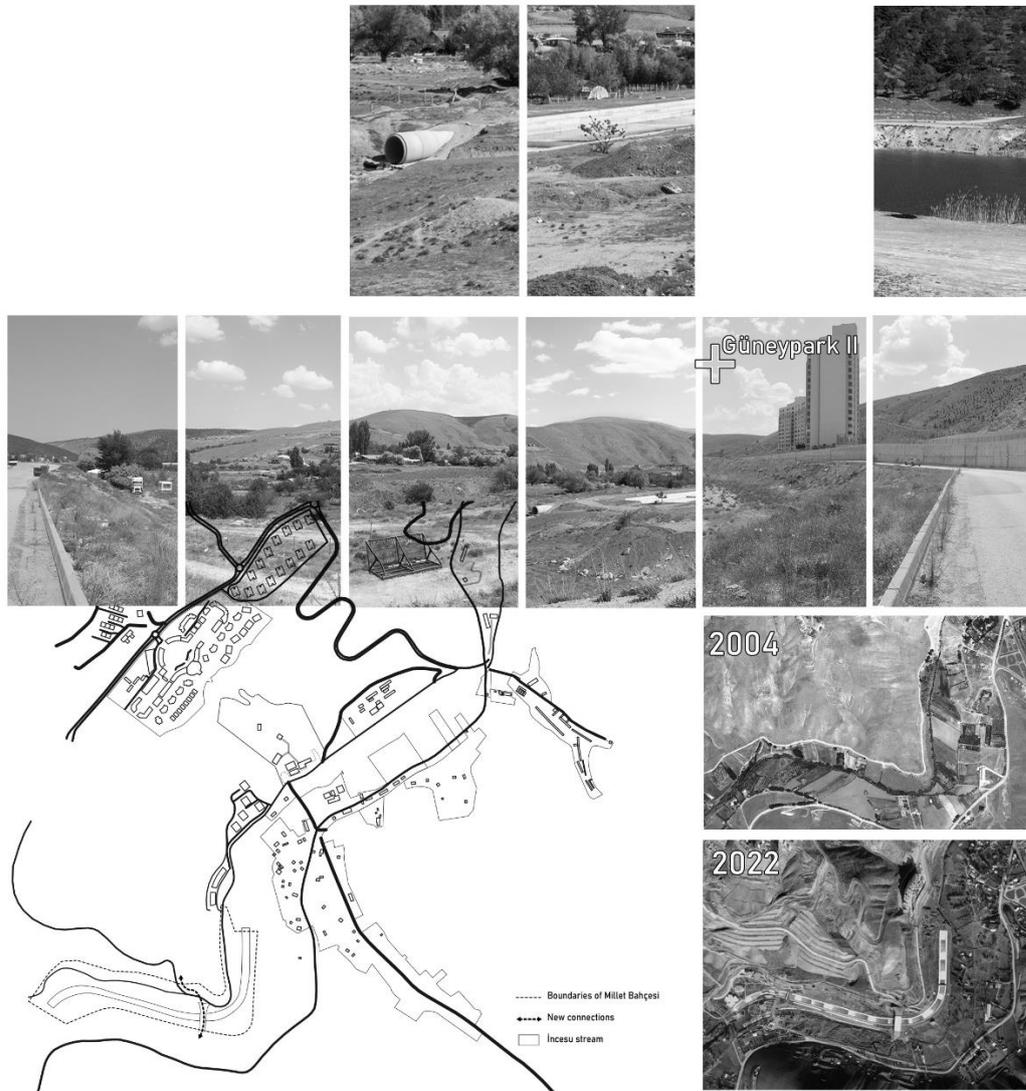


Figure 4.13. Analysis of *Millet Bahçesi* Project with satellite images and photographs, drawn by the author.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Map juxtaposed with photographs was generated from openstreetmap. Information about *Millet Bahçesi* was accessed from “Ankara İmrahor Vadisi Millet Bahçesi Projesi”, Millet Bahçeleri, April 18, 2022, <https://milletbahceleri.gov.tr/bahce/ankara-imrahor-vadisi-millet-bahcesi>

The rural atmosphere was still prominent inside the valley, and yet, İmrahor stream was worth noticing with reeds surrounding it. Because a new Nation's Garden Project (*Millet Bahçesi*) to be built in İmrahor Valley was tendered by TOKİ in February 2019, and it is under construction started from the other side of the valley, these reeds and self-sustaining rural environment will be disappeared in near future. In the implementary development plan amendments published by TOKİ, proposals that will open the area for construction, such as art workshops, places of worship, library, and exhibition area within the planned recreational area of 193,740 m<sup>2</sup>, were allowed.<sup>164</sup> Construction of concrete culverts and ponds will also attract tremendous infrastructure to satisfy the need for water and electricity as well as future housing developments and increasing land values. Photographs from the building site of *Millet Bahçesi* capture a moment in time that will soon become change into irrigated gardens, lawns, and buildings made of concrete. If one can analyze or gaze carefully at this particular place on earth, traces and remains of consumption, production, and destruction were interwoven in an ever-shifting way.

#### **4.4 Animating: shelters, stray dogs and breeding farms**

Although the transformation of İmrahor Valley has been the concern of architects, landscape designers, urbanists and environmentalists, urban animals have remained overlooked as if they do not shape the space or do not part of it. Urban animals could be the main topic of another thesis, since Turkey is a unique country where municipalities cannot deal with the 'problem' of stray dogs, and they have been used many times by political authorities. Yet, it is essential to analyze it to understand better the peculiar dynamics of peripheral spaces since they are one of the main actors. Especially in the southeast periphery of Ankara, animal shelters and breeding farms play an essential role in shaping space.

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

According to the Animal Rights Protection Law No. 5199, which entered into force in 2004, the primary responsibility for the basic management of street animals is in the hands of local governments. *Çankaya Animal Care and Rehabilitation Center* supported by Çankaya Municipality in 2009<sup>165</sup> was the consequence of the same law with the aim of both sheltering animals and displacing them from city centers. As peripheral spaces always have an intact relationship with the center, one of the main tasks of these shelters is stabilizing the number of stray dogs in “cities”. However, the number of stray dogs is growing every day despite the municipalities' attempts, so *Karataş Shelter and Animal Hospital* is under construction by the same municipality in an area of 93.000 m<sup>2</sup> in the east part of the valley.

During the fieldwork, the number of stray dogs outside these gated communities and neighborhoods was worth noticing. It was not a coincidence that *Sokakta Kalanlar Bakımevi*, which meant “shelter for the ones on the street” in Turkish and was founded by a non-profit organization, was also located at the borders of the İmrahor Valley. From Mine Yıldırım's research “Outside and beyond animal isolation: Geographies of Exile, Destruction, and Violence in Istanbul,” I had already known that peri-urban areas are where municipalities dealt with the problem of street animals. Collecting street animals with trucks during night hours and leaving them in peripheries or forests is a validated isolation practice since those spaces lack surveillance and control. These spaces away from the eyes of both humans and machines gain anonymity and become the spaces for crime, violence, and undesired elements of the city. As a volunteer there conveyed during a visit to the *Sokakta Kalanlar Derneği*, new dog teams appear every time in the İmrahor valley and the nearby forest, and they are left to starve. While İmrahor Valley provides a threshold between urban and rural land uses, Ankara Highway provides a border between forest and valley, further simplifying leaving dogs, garbage and construction debris. The richness of this complex imbroglio, suburban houses, animal shelters, breeding

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<sup>165</sup> Detected from satellite images.

farms, ski parks, go-carts, and entertainment spaces merges with floods, excavations, crime, and marginality. In fact, “the suppression of the volatile, the complex, the unpatrollable, promiscuous forces of the city” could be considered the *raison d’être* of failed attempts to plan and control it.<sup>166</sup>

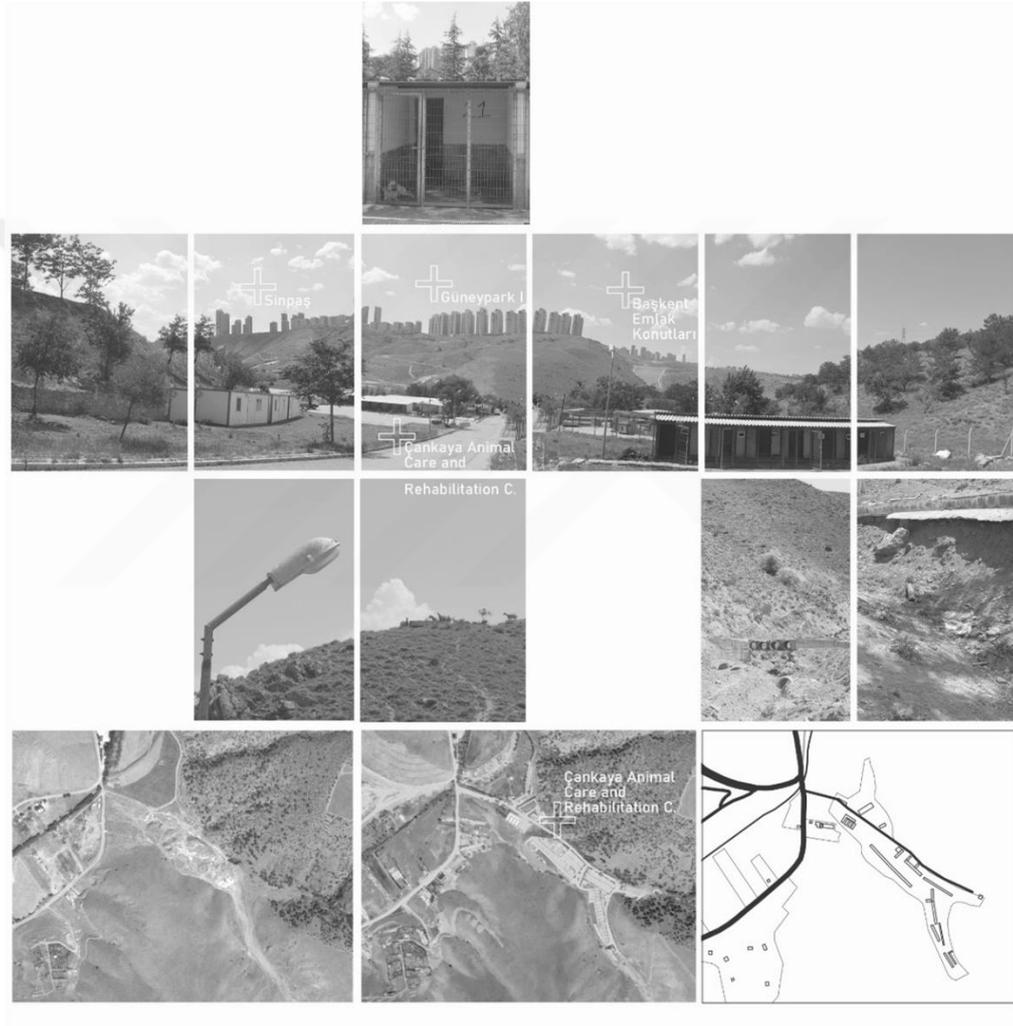


Figure 4.14. Analysis of Çankaya Animal Care and Rehabilitation Center with maps, satellite images and photographs drawn by the author.

<sup>166</sup> James Corner and Alex Meclahan, *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape*.

From a visual survey during a visit to Çankaya Animal Care and Rehabilitation Center that merged with satellite images (Figure 4.14), one can say that animals are vital actors altering urban space with their existence. Hence, the architectural expression of shelters with adjacent cells and corridors for visitors, no matter how poorly it is, became material remains of their presence in the era of Anthropos who not only reproduce the air we breathe but also other non-humans alike. In fact, the togetherness of goat herds with lighting poles (Figure 4.14) proves this human and non-human continuum.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This study started with concerns about the environment in the era of intersecting crises whose scope and meaning exceed the boundaries of ecology and society. Throughout the past three years, with epidemic diseases, forest fires, earthquakes as well as economic deadlocks in Turkey, the meanings and effects of the crisis have multiplied, enlarged and intensified. Therefore, Anthropocene, meaning the epoch in which increased human activity altered geologic layers of the earth, was chosen as a signifier to define this problematic era. The urban political ecology framework, with its ‘critical’ and radical roots in urban geography, helped to understand power dynamics and socio-natural hybrids reshaping landscapes as well as its “historical-geographical materialist” methodology. While transcending false assumptions of the city versus environment, society versus nature, human and nonhuman, urban political ecology, rather than a unified theory, provides a ‘critical lense’ to perceive and discuss those problems. It was concluded that it is necessary to renature, decentre and animate urban and architectural issues. The study conducted also showed that the consequences and effects of political and economic projects necessitate an investigation on multiple scales, from the scale of the earth (global history of capitalism), city (socio-environmental history of Ankara), building (Altınoran, Güneypark, animal shelters etc.), to object (tools, utilities buried with vineyard culture). Borrowing from Aureli, “architecture must address the city even if the city has no goal for architecture” and vice versa.<sup>167</sup> In other words, any narrative on space should interrelate those local problems and struggles to broader discussions of climate change, extinction of species or migration, gender etc. Contemporary debates

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<sup>167</sup> Pier Vittorio, Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture*, (MIT press, 2011), 46.

on post-humanism and urban geography could enlighten and expand architectural and urban knowledge.

A materialist perspective for the history of Ankara, which is reframed as “socio-environmental history” in the thesis, allows us to make sense of the importance of mohair, water, grapes, and concrete that has had inextricable relations with the denizens <sup>168</sup> of Ankara. Yet, a history focused on the environment is a task hard to achieve since it was documented and conveyed with the same human-centered perspective. This history writing contributes to the discussion of the Anthropocene by attempting to frame the historical process of human alteration in the geography of Ankara, whose transformation was not possible without the use of nature. Historically, the southeast periphery has changed conceptually and spatially from agricultural areas outside the city walls to squatter settlements, gated communities and shopping malls. Therefore, an important finding underlined at the end is the instability of the concept of the periphery. Thus, exploring these dynamic spaces also offers an insight into the upcoming city.<sup>169</sup> For humans and non-humans alike in the valley, where they live is not a periphery or border. As a matter of fact, real estate advertisements can be considered as proof that they want their place to be center as soon as possible. This topic also overlaps with dualities that have been problematized since the first chapter of the thesis. Just as which is the city and its periphery, where is west or east, depends on our positioning, how natural or social things are, and what we put outside of the human cluster, are the result of the same relational, dialectical processes.

Constructing a different narrative both textually, visually -in the case of photographs- and spatially -in the case of maps- could further illuminate our vantage point into

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<sup>168</sup> Instead of “citizen”, from the Latin *civitas*, I propose to use “denizen”. Meaning inhabitant and foreigner, new definitions, and wordings has the potential to enlarge our political world into non-humans or what is accepted as “others”.

<sup>169</sup> Originally the term is “*la ville qui vient*” by Marcel Henaff, Logie and Morvan translated it into “gelmekte olan metropol”.

new horizons. This narrative was one that is highly concerned with non-human others neglected in history writing and rather imbued with the process of earth writing that is known as *geo-graphy*. Ankara goat, as a non-human actor, which has shaped production and trade for a long time, cannot be detached from its consequences on streams and creeks, which provide necessary water and food to sustain production and urbanity. If we elaborate more on that, it could not happen in the culture that domesticated plants rather than animals. Similarly, the vital relationship between the urban transformation projects and urban animals, and therefore the change of the Imrahor Valley in the last twenty years, lies in the fact that; street animals are affected by the same uneven development of the land, and socio-environmental injustice as slum dwellers, the urban poor, or transgender individuals. Because of the lack of adequate infrastructure and security, many of these animals were domesticated in the past, both by city dwellers and by squatter owners, and their labor and work have been used. The clearance of squatters also means the disappearance of gardens that are home to animals and plants, uncontrolled yapsat activities in response to the housing crisis and urban transformation projects to provide accumulation of capital by land also means diminishing vineyard culture and streams that were once home to animals, and plants.

The questions on urban environmental problems are historically specific and mediated through power relations. For the southern part of the city, important actors of the transformation was both state and private sector either in the shape of cooperatives, yapsats or urban transformation projects. In the uneven transformation of the Southeast Ankara, state-led projects helped increase land rent, and infrastructural projects helped to overcome important topologic thresholds. Infrastructural networks supported access to new housing developments. Projects investigated during the study ranging from urban transformation to public parks and infrastructures, are as follows.

- Opening of the Turan Güneş Boulevard (1972)

- Construction of the Viaduct of İmrahor (1992- 1998)
- Mamak Waste Management Project (the 1990s-2002)
- New Güneypark Urban Transformation and Renewal Project (2010)
- Sinpaş Altınoran (2014)
- Millet Bahçesi Project tendered by TOKİ (2019)

Projects are legitimized through techno-managerialism -with practices of social hegemony and control- in the name of taming nature. Nature in the form of land, first tamed, then commodified. While immense development of infrastructures and rehabilitation of Mamak Landfill help to tame the land, urban transformation projects support capturing rent. Nature is simulated and imitated in the form of ponds, gardens, beaches, boulevards and squares and becomes a capital accumulation strategy. This particular imitation, domestication and even oppression of natural elements such as valleys, lakes, mountains is related to what Neil Smith termed “ideology of nature,” which industrial capitalism is held responsible. In this respect, there is a relationship between gated communities, illegal excavations, animals, and landfills that seemed fragmented entities at first stance. They are all socio-natural hybrids oscillating between the dialectic of inclusion and exclusion, implosion and explosion, creation and destruction, of city’s past and future. However, transformation for the sake of capturing rent and taming the land obscures relations between gated communities, infrastructures, and other non-humans alike. Former industrial land with brick factories, agriculture and animal husbandry turned into a space of consumption where immense infrastructure was built to feed the growing needs of water, cement, electricity, or gas produced elsewhere in new peripheries. Despite the economy based on the construction sector and extensive use of cement, profit is acquired by the minority and the common areas such as valleys, streams and vineyards are privatized or simply disappear to feed the ongoing process of urbanization.

All in all, the contribution of the study is twofold. Firstly, it introduces an emerging field of study to an understudied context and attempts to rewrite Ankara's urban environmental history. Secondly, the transformation of the İmrahor Valley was never examined deeply in continuity with the growing number of gated communities, animal shelters and villages. The study also paid serious attention to a methodology for understanding the area by interrelating the fieldwork, informal encounters, archival materials, mapping, and drawing. There have also been limitations to the research. Although different materials and resources are combined, laws and specific political agendas are mentioned, many interrelated tales about Imrahor Valley remain unspoken due to a lack of quantitative data and archival materials about peripheral spaces. In further studies, in-depth interviews and questionnaires could be conducted, and oral history might be more elaborated.

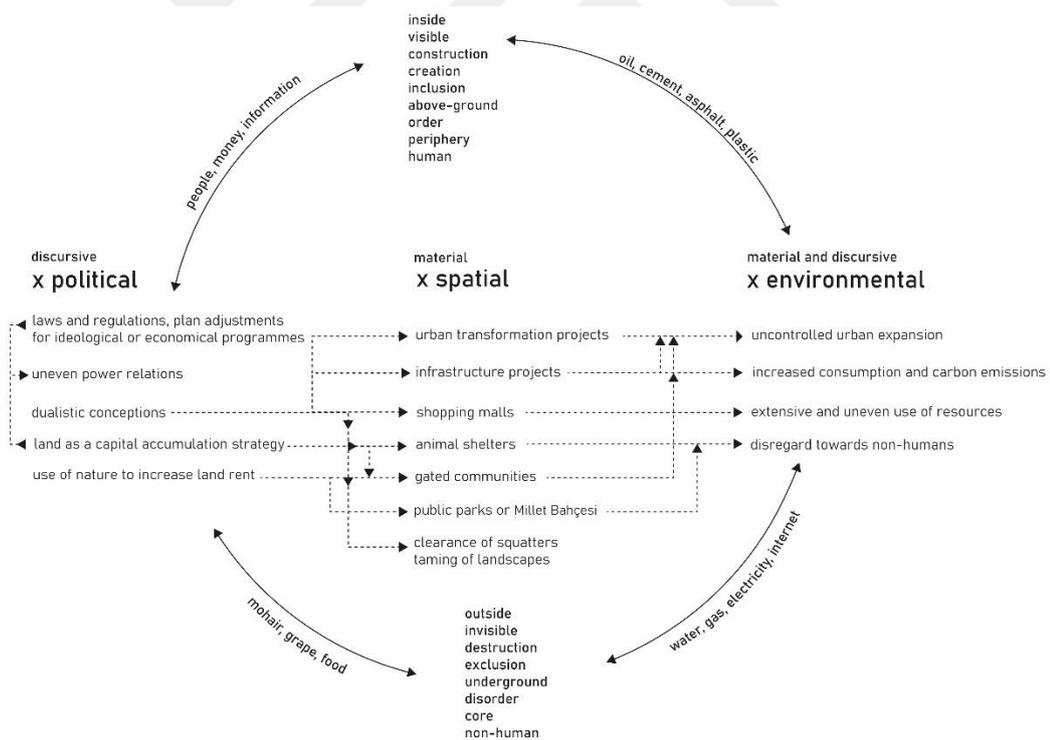


Figure 5.1. Findings, drawn by the author.

From an anthropogenic vantage point, in the modernist era, the aim was to fulfill the human necessities, to celebrate human mind by controlling and taming nature with new materials, construction of dams, and infrastructures. Using Latour's terminology, modernists asserted "emancipation from all attachments!" while they rather recreated "ever-more attachments"<sup>170</sup>. These attachments are in the form of flows; the flows of water, electricity, food, cement and money *ad infinitum*. However, in times of neoliberal demolition of modernity, the purpose has been fulfilling the necessity of profit to ensure capital accumulation so that the system works properly for small minority. Interrupted flows of Ankara also reveal how given values of nature, such as Ankara goat, rabbit, pear, streams, vineyards, valleys shaped by human labor extensively. Different political ideals concretized via space-making turned into environmental problems in the end. (Figure 5.1)

To conclude, and a reminder for further studies is to ask; what should be done then? The scholarly response will be; that imagining a world without climate change, or its associated problems are nostalgic. We cannot simply leave the problematic cities and embrace the vernacularity of the villages. In the same way, we cannot all escape to Mars with believing advanced technology will save us from the cul-de-sac of socio-ecological crises. From a Foucauldian perspective, before the enlightenment the source of unity was 'the divine, natural order', while it was 'human, rationale' during modernity. The *anthropos* was so central that many disciplines, including architecture and urbanism placed the human at the very core of their study from Le Corbusier's modular to tiny details of tables. I presume that we can overcome, or at least bypass the ecological/political/economic crisis of our era only if we place the earth and other non-humans at the very core of our study. A change in perspective, rather than believing a better environment, better technology, or political program would automatically create a better society, is necessary.

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<sup>170</sup> Bruno Latour, "Love your monsters." *Breakthrough Journal* 2.11 (2011): 21-28.

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## APPENDICES

### A. Maps and Archival Materials

Table 5.1 Table of Research Materials

<i>Title</i>	<i>Author Publisher</i>	<i>Collection Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Additional Notes</i>
Ankara Gravürü	VEKAM Library&Ar chive	Ankara Harita ve Plan Koleksiyonu Map	1742	Originally drawn by P. De Tournefort.
People Processing Mohair from Angora Goats	VEKAM Library&Ar chive	Postcard	1901- 1905	In the upper right corner of the postcard, "Angora, Travailleurs de mohair (Poils de chevre)"" is written in French.
Armenian Women Evolving Mohair	VEKAM Library&Ar chive	Photograph	1861	It is crucial in terms of discussing women and child labor behind the production of mohair.
Dikmen fiziki haritası	VEKAM Library&Ar chive	Ankara Harita ve Plan Koleksiyonu , Map	1934	

R. Uybadin - N. Yücel Ankara imar planı paftaları	VEKAM Library&Archive	Ankara Harita ve Plan Koleksiyonu, Map	1957	Shows İmrahor Valley, Dikmen before their sharp transformation.
Proceedings towards 1955 Ankara construction plan	SALT Research	Photograph	1957	View from Kazım Karabekir Street to Konya Road, shows the expansion towards South.
Kızılay Square, flood	SALT Research	Photograph	1968.06.06	It could be exemplified for many flood disasters in Ankara
Ankara Cement Factory	VEKAM Library&Archive	Photograph	-	
Viaduct of İmrahor in Ankara	SALT Research	Photograph	1997	Jean-François Pérouse



Figure 5.2. Armenian Women Evolving Mohair, 1861, Vekam Library&Archive

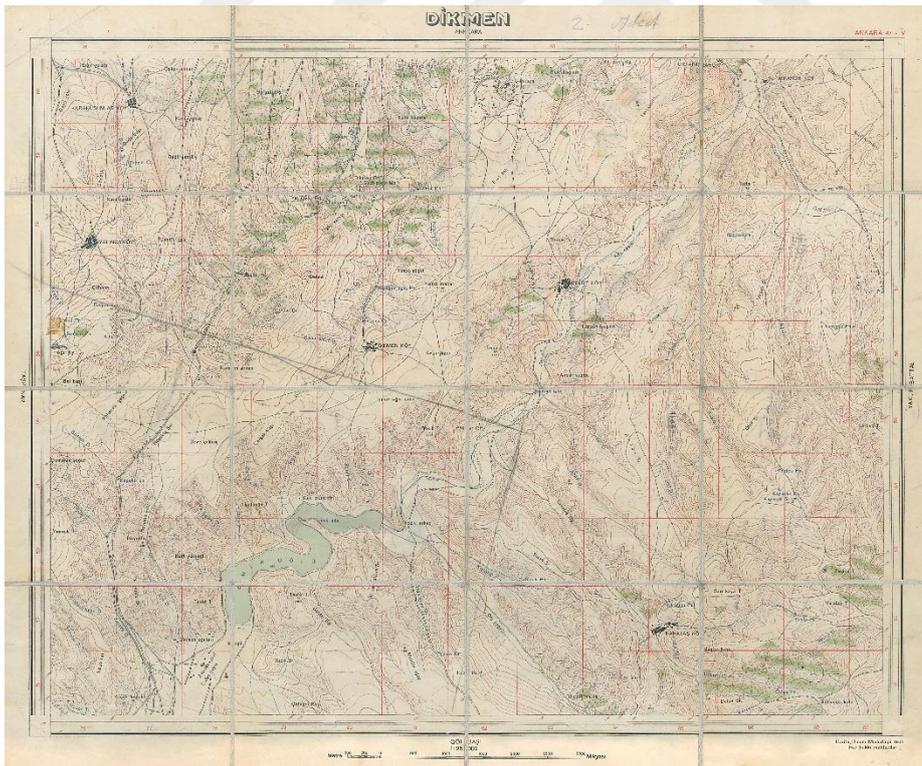


Figure 5.3. Dikmen Physical Map, 1934, Vekam Library&Archive

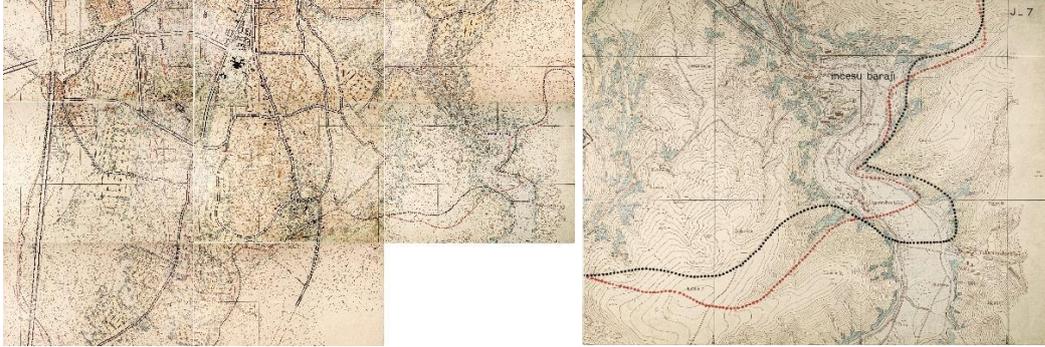


Figure 5.4. Figure 5.5. R. Uybadin - N. Yücel Ankara Master Plan Sheets 1957, Vekam Library&Archive



Figure 5.6. Proceedings towards 1955 Ankara construction plan, SALT Research



Figure 5.7. Kızılay Square, flood, SALT Researc