

# READING THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF KONYA CULTURE PARK AS AN URBAN SPACE

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By  
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READING THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF KONYA CULTURE  
PARK AS AN URBAN SPACE

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We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate,  
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## ABSTRACT

# READING THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF KONYA CULTURE PARK AS AN URBAN SPACE

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Culture parks, built as recreational green urban spaces with entertainment facilities, were one of the most important modernization projects of the early Republican era. Capturing national ideals and the Republican worldview, culture parks introduced new forms of leisure practices while serving as a medium to educate and enlighten the public in contemporary ways of living. As such they symbolized the notion of modernity in Turkey. The idea of culture parks as a reflection of modernity maintained its validity long after its first initiation in the 1930s. This study examines Konya Culture Park, as a later example of culture parks, to trace its conception and association with politics in the Turkish context. The study first examines the historical and spatial development of the grounds Konya Culture Park sits on, from a religious garden belonging to the Mevlevi sect to a civic park in the early Republican era. Next, the study analyzes the social, mental and physical properties of the culture park in the 1970s through Lefebvrian spatial theories and their correlations compared against earlier examples. The main contribution of this research is to read the transformation of Konya Culture Park within its socio-cultural context, examined through the lenses of politically directed representations of space, representational space and the practices of users effective in its transformation. This study contributes to history of architecture and urban studies by focusing on the spatial production of Konya Culture Park, as associated with the development of culture parks in Turkey.

*Keywords:* Konya Culture Park, Modernization, Recreation, Entertainment, Spatial Production.

## ÖZET

# BİR KENT MEKANİ OLARAK KONYA KÜLTÜRPAK'IN DEĞİŞİMLERİNİ OKUMAK

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Eğlence tesisleri ile kentsel yeşil mekanlar olarak inşa edilen kültürparklar, Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nin en önemli modernizasyon projelerinden biri olmuştur. Ulusal idealleri ve cumhuriyetçi dünya görüşünü ele alan kültürparklar, çağdaş yaşam şekillerinde halkı eğitmek ve aydınlatmak için bir araç olarak hizmet etmiş ve eğlence pratiklerinin yeni formlarını ortaya koymuştur. Bu şekilde kültürparklar Türkiye'de modernite kavramının sembolü olmuştur. Modernitenin bir yansıması olarak kültürpark fikri 1930'ların başlangıcından itibaren varlığını sürdürmüştür. Bu çalışma, Konya Kültürpark'ı ileri dönem kültürparklarının bir örneği olarak Türkiye'deki siyasi anlayış ve fikirler üzerinden inceler. Çalışma ilk olarak Cumhuriyet Dönemi'nin başlarında Mevlevi tarikatına ait bir dini bahçeden, kentsel bir park alanına kadar Konya Kültürpark'ın yer aldığı temellerin, tarihsel ve mekansal gelişimini incelemektedir. Daha sonrasında ise çalışma, Lefebvre'nin mekansal teorileri ve bağıntıları ile; 1970'lerdeki kültürparkın sosyal, zihinsel ve fiziksel özelliklerini, daha önceki örneklerle karşılaştırarak analiz etmektedir. Bu araştırmanın temel katkısı, Konya Kültürpark'ın sosyo-kültürel bağlamında dönüşümünü okumak ve parkın dönüşümünü politik açıdan yönlendirilmiş mekan temsilleri, temsil mekanları ve kullanıcıların pratikleri üzerinden incelemektir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki kültürparkların gelişimi ile bağlantılı olarak Konya Kültürpark'ın mekansal üretimine odaklanarak mimarlık tarihi ve kentsel çalışmalara katkı sağlamaktadır.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* Konya Kültürpark, Modernizasyon, Rekreasyon, Eğlence, Mekansal Üretim.

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Problem Statement . . . . .	2
1.2	Aim and Scope . . . . .	3
1.3	Method and Sources . . . . .	4
1.4	Theoretical Framework and Structure . . . . .	6
<b>2</b>	<b>Cultural Parks as Public Spaces after the Foundation of the Republic of Turkey</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1	Parks as Public Spaces . . . . .	11
2.2	Development of Public Parks in Turkey . . . . .	12
2.3	Concept of the Culture Park . . . . .	13
2.3.1	Precedents for Konya Culture Park . . . . .	14
2.3.1.1	Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure . . . . .	15
2.3.1.2	Izmir Culture Park and International Fair . . . . .	18

2.3.1.3	Ankara Youth Park . . . . .	24
2.3.1.4	Gezi Park . . . . .	32
2.3.1.5	Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park . . . . .	36
<b>3</b>	<b>Development of the Konya Culture Park Area until 1970</b>	<b>43</b>
3.1	Before the Foundation of the Republic of Turkey . . . . .	44
3.1.1	Historical Development . . . . .	44
3.1.2	Spatial Development . . . . .	49
3.2	From 1920s until the Establishment of the Konya Culture Park in 1970 . . . . .	51
3.2.1	Transformation of <i>Dede Bahçesi</i> 's Spaces and Practices . .	51
3.2.2	Urban Development of Konya . . . . .	62
3.2.2.1	1946 Master Development Plan . . . . .	62
3.2.2.2	1954 Master Development Plan . . . . .	64
3.2.2.3	First Competition for the New Development Plan of Konya in 1965 . . . . .	65
<b>4</b>	<b>Konya Culture Park (1970-2008)</b>	<b>70</b>
4.1	Building Konya Culture Park in 1970 . . . . .	71
4.2	Spaces of the Konya Culture Park between 1970-2008 . . . . .	75
4.2.1	The Fair . . . . .	86

*CONTENTS*

viii

4.3 Destruction of the Konya Culture Park as a Public Space . . . . . 93

**5 Discussion and Conclusion 98**



# List of Figures

1.1	Representation of Lefebvre’s spatial triad in a diagram . . . . .	7
2.1	Central Part of Moscow and the location of Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure . . . . .	15
2.2	Gorky Park recreational areas in 1928 . . . . .	16
2.3	Alleys and Pools . . . . .	16
2.4	The crowds show the attraction of people towards Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure in the 1930s . . . . .	17
2.5	Aerial Photograph of Izmir Culture Park in 1936 . . . . .	19
2.6	Artificial lake, islands and pool in Izmir Culture Park in the late 1930s . . . . .	20
2.7	Left, Izmir Culture Park <i>9 Eylül Gate</i> , Right, <i>Lozan Gate</i> . . . . .	20
2.8	Parachute tower Izmir Culture Park, 1938 . . . . .	21
2.9	Izmir Culture Park Site Plan, 1939 . . . . .	22

2.10	1936 Izmir International Fair shows the public interest: lines to enter from the <i>Lozan</i> Gate, pools and fountains impressing the crowd . . . . .	23
2.11	1934 Jansen Plan shows the location of Youth Park in Ankara . . .	25
2.12	1936 Leveau's Plan of Youth Park in Ankara . . . . .	26
2.13	Parachute Tower in Youth Park shows its location nearby the train station seen along the right side of the image . . . . .	26
2.14	The bigger pool and fountains of Youth Park in Ankara . . . . .	28
2.15	Bridge over the pool and boating as a leisure time activity . . . . .	29
2.16	Sailing in Youth Park, Ankara, 1940 . . . . .	29
2.17	Tea and coffeehouses in Youth Park, Ankara, 1960s . . . . .	30
2.18	Gezi Park plan and section by Henri Prost, November 17, 1938 . . .	33
2.19	Gezi Park and Taksim <i>Gazinosu</i> by Rukneddin Güney in 1939 . . .	34
2.20	Photos by Henri Prost from Gezi Park on 12 November 1944 . . . . .	35
2.21	Mayor Reşat Oyal in front of Bursa Culture Park's entrance . . . . .	37
2.22	Bursa Culture Park in 1973 . . . . .	38
2.23	Boating on the artificial lake in the 1960s . . . . .	38
2.24	Archeology Museum in Bursa Culture Park in 1972 . . . . .	39
2.25	Architect Yavuz Taşçı's plan for Bursa Fair in 1958 . . . . .	40
2.26	Fashion and Textile Fair in 1987 . . . . .	40

2.27	Bursa Culture Park in 2015 . . . . .	41
3.1	Left, <i>Tac-ül Vezir</i> Tomb before part of it was demolished (unknown date), Right, the remaining tomb after restoration, 2018 . . . . .	44
3.2	1923 Konya City Map, showing the surrounding of Alaeddin Hill . . . . .	46
3.3	<i>Dede Bahçesi</i> 's location to the northwest of Alaeddin Hill . . . . .	47
3.4	<i>Dede Bahçesi</i> Mansion and garden . . . . .	48
3.5	<i>Tac-ül Vezir Tomb</i> (637/1239) and its drawing . . . . .	50
3.6	Left, Ottoman writings in the front facade before the closure of zawayahs, Right, painted mansion after 1927 . . . . .	51
3.7	Maintenance and construction of the waterfall on site . . . . .	53
3.8	Mix-gender activities in front of the mansion . . . . .	53
3.9	<i>Dede Bahçesi</i> Mansion, sitting places, the pool, rocks, the waterfall, the pergola and the small pigeon house . . . . .	54
3.10	Tennis Courts, where women and men could play tennis together. In the background the <i>Tac-ül Vezir</i> Tomb is observed. Ottoman writings can be seen on the entrance descriptions . . . . .	55
3.11	People playing tennis and <i>Dede Bahçesi</i> Mansion after 1927 . . . . .	56
3.12	Tennis Courts, nursery gardens, pergolas and sitting places . . . . .	56
3.13	Sitting areas across the mansion in front of the pool and a man who is boating . . . . .	57
3.14	Children boating and swimming in the pool . . . . .	58

3.15	Left, newspaper advertisements of <i>Dede Aile Gazinosu</i> presented the rose competitions and their entertainment program, Right, Eyüp Mutlutürk (Last host and renter of <i>Dede Bahçesi</i> in 1944) compliments <i>Dede Bahçesi</i> as home . . . . .	59
3.16	Civelekoğlu with his family and friends in the spring under the pergolas, 1955 . . . . .	60
3.17	1946 Konya Development Plan and urban land use scheme . . . . .	63
3.18	<i>Dede Bahçesi</i> in 1945 . . . . .	63
3.19	1954 Baydar Plan <i>Dede Bahçesi</i> was conceived as playground, zoo and botanical garden . . . . .	65
3.20	Winners of the National Competition by Iller Bank . . . . .	66
3.21	Konya master plan competition 1965 . . . . .	67
3.22	Konya master plan competition plan and land use scheme . . . . .	68
4.1	Site Plan of the Culture Park. This was the result of architect's initial planning, but it was not a final design . . . . .	72
4.2	Implementation plan of Konya Culture Park . . . . .	73
4.3	Yavuz Taşçı's model of Konya Culture Park which was built, the model was done by balsa wood . . . . .	75
4.4	Design Description about the culture park project by the architect Taşçı . . . . .	76
4.5	Culture park and fair construction before the opening; exhibition center was not completed yet . . . . .	76
4.6	Aerial view of Konya Culture Park, 1973 . . . . .	77

4.7	Pools with sculptural waterfalls called mushroom shaped columns	78
4.8	Artificial islands on the lake and boating activity with the view of the city . . . . .	78
4.9	A bridge over the artificial lake . . . . .	79
4.10	Open-air theatre for cultural activities for 500 people . . . . .	80
4.11	Amusement Park in the culture park and motor rides in the amusement park . . . . .	80
4.12	Left, playground, Right, coffehouse . . . . .	81
4.13	<i>Fuar Gazinosu</i> in 1972, designed by architect Yavuz Taşçı . . . . .	82
4.14	The Movie “ <i>Aşkların En Güzeli</i> ” 1972. Beerhouse ( <i>Tekel</i> ) and <i>Fuar Gazinosu</i> can be seen in the background . . . . .	83
4.15	Commonalities of the Konya Culture Park with other culture parks studied in Chapter 2 . . . . .	85
4.16	Exhibition Hall of the Fair and the aerial view of the Fair 1972 . . . . .	87
4.17	Fair Products: matches (1972) and cigarettes (1978). Duration of the fair (5 August and 5 September) was written on their packages . . . . .	88
4.18	Old entrance door . . . . .	90
4.19	New entrance door (1984) designed by architect Faruk Koçak . . . . .	90
4.20	Fair Exhibition Center in 1989 . . . . .	91
4.21	Altınbaşak Culture and Art Festival in 1997 . . . . .	92
4.22	The tram line next to the amusement park . . . . .	93

4.23	Entrances and pools no longer in use . . . . .	95
4.24	New additions around the park the mosque behind the pools and demolished walls . . . . .	95
4.25	Vacant <i>Fuar Gazinosu</i> and unused pool in the front of the <i>gazzino</i>	96
4.26	Destruction of Konya Culture Park in 2008 . . . . .	97
5.1	<i>Dede Bahçesi</i> in 1958 . . . . .	99
5.2	Konya Culture Park in 1975 . . . . .	100
5.3	Konya Culture Park in 2013 . . . . .	100
5.4	Police Station and a bridge connecting the new culture park . . .	101
5.5	Collonade passing toward the amphitheatre and a cafeteria . . . .	102
5.6	Amphitheatre and a new library . . . . .	102
5.7	<i>Dede Bahçesi</i> Mansion and the pool was rebuilt in 2008 . . . . .	103

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

## 1.1 Problem Statement

Culture parks were significant projects of modernization in the early Republican era. Designed as recreational spaces with green areas for public entertainment and education, they accommodated new experiences that captured Republican ideals. Accordingly, their design emphasized secularity and contemporary gender practices. Housing cultural events, landscaped parks, and entertainment facilities where men, women and children socialized together, they meant to modernize lifestyles and educate masses in cities [16]. As such, they embodied the notion of modernity in Turkey. The success of creating Izmir Culture Park in the 1930s had a great impact on the development of many other urban parks and helped to create new social dynamics by reproducing the proposed cultural and social practices in other cities. Such landscaped environments designed for building a modern nation in the early years of the Republic were adapted in later years to suit evolving needs, stylistic preferences, and political preferences. The grounds of Konya Culture Park offer a valuable example to examine such adaptations and the relationship between politics and the creation of public parks.

The historical and spatial development of the grounds Konya Culture Park sits on involves its transformation from a private religious garden, *Dede Bahçesi*, to a civic park. *Dede Bahçesi* belonged to a dervish order before it was converted into a civic park in the 1920s, ensuing the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. Reflecting the Republican worldview, the area was designed as a leisure park with green areas, water elements, entertainment facilities and even tennis courts. The park went through a number of changes before it was rebuilt as a culture park with a fair in 1970. This meant to provide citizens with a model of modernization and urbanization at the end of 1960s. Thereby, in 1970, Konya Culture Park and Fair was built with a similar conceptual approach to its precedents by adapting their design concepts in the context of the city's modernization. While the new design maintained the extant leisure practices, it inserted new facilities to accommodate these as well as the function of the new fair. Konya Culture Park went through a number of modifications in the following years with the changes in the local governance. Finally, in 2008, the municipality of Konya reconstructed the park



based on current political ideologies and tendencies. This thesis examines the creation and transformation of this park with respect to political changes and the relationship between the society and the physical environment of a public park for citizens. Why and how was the culture park area subjected to change over the years? What do these changes and the related physical interventions tell us? With these questions in mind, this thesis will expose the spatial production of Konya Culture Park, as associated with the development of culture parks in Turkey.

## 1.2 Aim and Scope

This thesis examines Konya Culture Park's historical and spatial development in the context of the social, cultural, and political transformations after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. By problematizing the transformation of the park from a religious garden to a civic park, the socio-cultural, historical, and political development of the Konya Culture Park can be used as a tool to measure other modern, urban spaces and their associated leisure practices.

Focusing on the 1970's, this study can inform other studies by bringing a new dimension to Konya Culture Park regarding its spatial and organizational platform by interpreting the changes of Konya Culture Park over precedents, which are other urban parks including Gorky Culture Park and Leisure, Izmir Culture Park and International Fair, Ankara Youth Park, Gezi Park, and Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park. These precedents were chosen by looking at their historical development process and their importance as modernization projects and recreational spaces from the 1920s to the 1960s. In this context, by considering the urban parks after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey as important inter-related sources of social, cultural, historical, and economic development, the study investigates the production of urban parks in Turkey as physical spaces in a socio-spatial dimension. By studying the history of the urban parks, the social and cultural meanings and ideologies developed in the changing urban environment of Konya Culture Park is examined over the production of the space based

on Lefebvrian understanding of social space.

Therefore, by looking at the Konya Culture Park, this study broadens the scope of culture parks and underlines their formation processes as being modernity platforms of the public realm, and it presents implications for other fields such as history and theory of architecture, landscape architecture, urban and regional planning, and social and cultural studies.

### 1.3 Method and Sources

The method involves a comparative study interpreting precedents, spatial analysis, archival research and personal interviews. The cases for the comparative study were determined as Izmir Culture Park (1933-1936), Ankara Youth Park (1936-1943), Gezi Park (1938-1942), Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park (1950-1955) and Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure of Moscow (1923-1928), which influenced the creation of early culture parks in Turkey. The historical and spatial developments as well as the common features of these parks were charted in examining the formation process of the Konya Culture Park within the framework of urban parks. A number of scholarly articles and advertisements related with the practices in culture parks were used to collect information about the chosen culture parks to compare with the Konya Culture Park. *Konya Ansiklopedisi*, which was published by Konya Metropolitan Municipality, was also used to gather valuable information on the historical and spatial development of the Konya Culture Park area. SALT Archive was mainly used to find pictures of Izmir Culture Park, Gezi Park, and Youth Park. Journals, such as *Mimarlık* and *Arkitekt*, were used to gather information about Izmir Culture Park and International Fair and the competition project of the Konya's city planning. In addition, local newspapers, namely, *Ekekon*, *Yeni Konya* and *Konya Haber*, were used as informative sources on the socio-cultural background of Konya as well as its public life in the culture park area. Additionally, a 1972 film called *Aşkların En Güzeli* supported the literatures by visually illustrating the park as a medium of recreational purposes in a new modern form.

The spatial analysis involved the examination of historical photographs, architectural drawings and models, urban plans and maps from different periods in order to understand architectural and urban characteristics and transformations of the area from *Dede Bahçesi* to a culture park. The built environment, in terms of building materials and architectural styles, was analyzed from aerial photographs and a number of images from different media.

The archival material examined included the Konya Metropolitan Municipality's official documents such as city maps, letters and a significant number of working and progress reports from the years 1970 through 1989. Furthermore, in Konya Metropolitan Municipality, the Directorate of Technical Works and the Department of Public Works and Engineering's site plan drawings and historical maps were examined to understand the spatial planning of the Konya Culture Park in 1970 and 2008. Lastly, Konya Chamber of Commerce's photograph albums and family albums were useful to identify the spatiality of the park and its practices.

In order to further supplement the information attained from the literature review and archival material, a number of personal interviews were conducted. The first interview, which touched on a development process of the area by giving the city maps of Konya, was with Faruk Koçak who works as an architect in the Department of Public Works in Konya Metropolitan Municipality. Second, Necip Alkan, who is currently a storekeeper of *Dede Bahçesi*, a tea and coffeehouse, described memories from his childhood in *Dede Bahçesi* and his youth in the culture park. Thirdly, Baran İdil, who is an architect and engineer, described the İller Bank competition for Konya's development plan in 1965 and told his memories about his colleague, Yavuz Taşçı who was the architect of the Konya Culture Park in 1970 and city planner of Konya (1965) and Kayseri (1975). Lastly, Yavuz Taşçı's son, architect Sinan Taşçı, shared information about his father's architectural approach and design implementation plans, statements of the architect, and pictures of the Konya Culture Park from 1970s. Several other interviews were also conducted with locals regarding their practices in the Konya Culture Park in order to analyze the park in additional detail.

## 1.4 Theoretical Framework and Structure

This thesis is based on a socio-spatial analysis of Konya Culture Park. The park's written history is reevaluated and reinterpreted in comparison to the park's precedents, namely Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure, Izmir Culture Park, Ankara Youth Park, Gezi Park, and Reşat Oyal Culture Park. The intentions behind the creation of these parks are reviewed and common design characteristics that make the urban parks are identified. These precedents are examined in terms of their spatial conceptions, perceptions and practices to understand Konya Culture Park as a social product.

Accordingly, the spatiality of the park and its changes over the physical, mental, and social layers of space through Henri Lefebvre's spatial triad. In Lefebvrian spatial theory, social reproduction processes of space involves three dialectics: representations of space as physical space (conceived), representational space as mental space (perceived) and spatial practice as social space (lived) [1]. Here, production of space depend on those three dialectically interconnected dimensions or processes (Figure 1.1). According to Lefebvre, production of space is connected with the social reality by becoming a historic process of social production and those three layers of the spatial triad combine in harmony and suggest an approach to organizational analysis that facilitates the contemplation of conceived, perceived and lived spaces to provide an integrated view of organizational space [2]. Three dimensions of the production of space have an equal value and correspond to each other in conflict or in alliance with each other as formants or moments of the production of space [3].

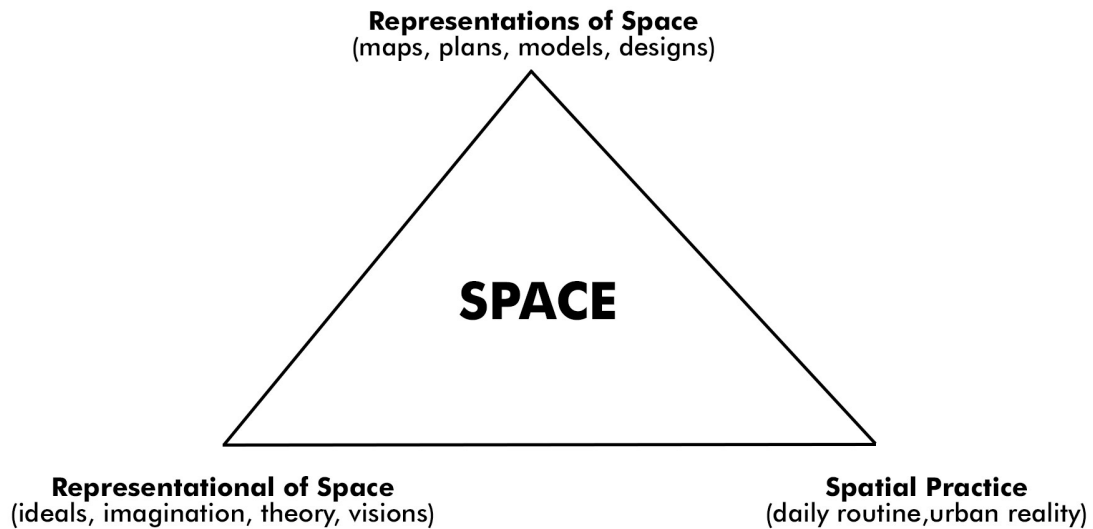


Figure 1.1: Representation of Lefebvre’s spatial triad in a diagram (Source: Drawn by the author)

Lefebvre’s suggestion for the representations of space is that, a conceptualized space is constructed out of symbols, codes, and abstract representations, which are bound with the production of such spaces in order to impose the relations in a functional environment. In defining this, Lefebvre also counts maps and plans, information in pictures, and signs among representations of space. The specialized disciplines that produces these representations are mainly architecture, planning and social sciences [1]. Referring to them as a guideline in the design process, the thought become an action moves from an imagined to a real space by creating the built environment. Therefore, it refers to a conceived space influenced by and involved in the political power. The other dimension of the triad, representational space concerns the symbolic dimension of space and creates a mental perception through recalling and imagining the proper or intended space [1]. It is the passively experienced space overlaying the physical space, where the social movements form. Thus, it tends towards making symbolic use of the objects in the space [3].

Spatial practice is the third dimension of the Lefebvre’s three-dimensional analysis of spatial production. Connected with the elements and activities, spatial practice combines the networks of interaction and communication in daily life.

Deciphering the physical and experiential space, spatial practice reveals a close connection between daily and urban reality. In other words, it is the study of natural rhythms and the modification of said rhythms in everyday life via human actions, specifically work-related actions [1]. Space is produced by the dynamic interrelationships between representations of space, representational space and spatial practices over the time.

By referring to the spatial triad, this study acknowledges the close connection among constructed space, perceptions of space and spatial practices that create an interaction within the space. That is to say, the creation of an urban park as a recreational space in this case, creating the Konya Culture Park became a medium to sustain social relations and recreational practices by providing its users multiple entertainment spaces and activities. Thereby, through the production of space by appropriating and reproducing the Konya Culture Park within its historical and spatial process, the formation and the transformations of the park can be conceived as products of the power of the park promoters as the authorities in the background, perceptions as a leisure space within the park, and users' practices in the field of socio-cultural activities.

This thesis is structured into four chapters. In the first chapter, the problem statement, aim and scope of the study, methodology and sources and theoretical framework and structure are introduced. The second chapter starts with the development of public parks after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in order to understand the concept of a culture park. After discussing the concept of culture parks, precedents for the study of Konya Culture Park; namely Moscow Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure, Izmir Culture Park, Ankara Youth Park, Gezi Park and lastly Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park are analyzed comprehensively with regard to their spatial and historical development. In the third chapter, the historical and spatial development process of the Konya Culture Park area where the historical religious garden, *Dede Bahçesi*, was located before the foundation of the Republic of Turkey is examined. Then, the changes of social life and practices in the *Dede Bahçesi* area between the 1920s and the 1970s, before the Konya Culture Park was built, is presented with a focus on the transformation of the area's spaces and practices. By referring to the urban

development plans of Konya between the years of 1946-1965, the comprehensive approach towards the city planning and design decisions of the culture park and fair is presented. Chapter four draws on the main subject of the thesis by going over the formation process and design principles of the Konya Culture Park. After that, spaces of the Konya Culture Park between the years of 1970-2008 are investigated by analyzing its history in relation to the Lefebvrian understanding of social space. The chapter continues with the reproduction of the Konya Culture Park under a new concept by the destruction of the 1970's culture park. Lastly, chapter five discusses the newly created culture park by looking over the history of the Konya Culture Park and concludes with a discussion about the changes that have happened in the culture park in a social and physical context by emphasizing the underlying concepts in the culture park design idea in reference to other former urban parks.

## Chapter 2

# Cultural Parks as Public Spaces after the Foundation of the Republic of Turkey



## 2.1 Parks as Public Spaces

Urban Parks as open public spaces play an important role in understanding the formations and representations of city life; they simultaneously reflect the intentions of the political authority and the practices of the users. Public spaces as open-green areas give an identity to the city; they are places that hold social and communal characteristics. They have the potential to host meaningful events of the period and enliven the city life.

As public spaces, urban parks serve to support social communication as a collective pastime strengthening the right of the general public to the open space [4]. Other examples include such spaces as plazas, town squares, marketplaces, public greens, piers, and special areas within convention centers or grounds, sites within public buildings, lobbies or public spaces within private buildings. Urban parks are posited as a medium of politics and power and spatialized social practices and relations, which account for its relative degree of openness and closure or ultimately inclusion and exclusion [5]. According to Deutsche “urban space is the product of conflict” and hence, public space can be envisioned as a terrain for processes and struggles that make specific spaces more or less “public” [6]. Lefebvre argues that contestation of urban space is an exercise of citizens’ “right to the city”; the right to be involved in the process of decision-making in regard to the organization of the public sphere [7]. In short, urban parks as open green areas become sites to engage with local needs, where performances and debates of democratic ideas take place.

Public parks as a genre of public space show the same characteristics and functions as public spaces in a different manner. As being a social product of relations and interactions, public parks provide opportunities for financial investment, a means of diffusing social tensions and offer a chance to improve the physical and moral condition the urban citizens as an alternative to the buildings and greenery [4]. They are usually designed with an intention to accommodate all sections of the society, as a gathering point where people from different classes can meet.

According to Edward Relph, the connection among visible landscapes, everyday life experiences, and the abstract socio-economic processes contribute to the transformation and creation of urban parks [8]. Furthermore, the political and social role of parks is reflected in the components of parks, such as landscaping, buildings, statues and activities that take place in parks, which all closely concern the park promoters and users. They are the products of modern and urbanized societies that are conceived based on ideals of integration of park components in constructed environments.

## 2.2 Development of Public Parks in Turkey

In Turkey, parks in a modern sense emerged with the process of westernization and the implementation of modern urban planning in the late Ottoman period [9]. Before that time, recreation areas for festivals were stationed outside of the big cities. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a number of modern, western-inspired urban parks were formed in Istanbul. For instance, the Gülhane Park, which was opened to the public in 1912, is regarded as the first example of a large-scale urban park [10]. After the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, parks were considered as a requirement of modern planning and new parks were planned to be built throughout the country.

The new republic emphasized the concepts of westernization, modernization and secularity. A focus on people, health and culture became significant aspects of the national identity. The names of the newly created parks such as Youth Park (*Gençlik Parkı*), Culture Park (*Kültürpark*), People's Garden (*Halk Bahçesi*), Nation's Garden (*Millet Bahçesi*) etc. reflect this focus and the Republican ideology. All of these aforementioned parks were established by multiple involvements by the government in consideration of social, cultural, historical and political values for social interactions and public education.

Development of these catered to reforming the modern life styles in modern ways. The creation and development of public sphere in the urban space, by the

establishment of the institutions of the new state, led to new formations of parks as major centers for socializing [11]. Objectives of these social and recreational centers were mainly considered as transforming people to a modern society via such social and cultivated communities. Parks were the main samples of social modernity and were established throughout the country as an embodiment of the new nation's architectural approach. Embedded in this conceptualization, the founder of the Republic, M. K. Atatürk created the impactful green revolution, which was based on two basic elements: creating parks that provide socialization and enlightening society, and generating parks for the bright future of youth [12].

## 2.3 Concept of the Culture Park

The name and concept of a culture park (*kültürpark*) was initiated after the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey. The planned public park idea was started in order to maintain the necessary qualifications to create recreational urban park, especially in metropolitan cities' development plans. As a result important areas in the city centers were reserved to construct cultural parks [13]. Culture parks, which are important public spaces and enlightened works of the Early Republican Era, are prestigious urban spaces reflecting national ideals. Culture parks are thought of as positive and constructive spaces where the performances are associated with the practices of people, overcoming of the division of nature-culture, the strengthening of social cohesion and economic development. Therefore, they are recreational, socio-cultural, open and green areas within the city produced through the architectural and landscape design and oversee the historical development of cities. They are also a part of their urban developments by playing a significant role in reflecting a city's collective effort, productive thought and views and actions of people.

Culture parks were the first attempts of planned city parks in Turkey [14]. They can be considered as the new faces of modern cities built to increase recreational awareness of citizens. Recreational activities were considered an important medium of educating and "enlightening" citizens in the early years of the

Republic. For this reason, as the name indicates, culture-themed parks and the function of “culture” is meant to inform, educate and entertain people. This mission can be clearly followed in the creation of Izmir Culture park, Dr. Behçet Uz (1893-1986), the Mayor of Izmir, envisioned and realized the park as a “public university,” modernizing lifestyles, educating the public and bringing cultural events to the masses [15].

Culture parks were conceived with cultural-themed functions and activities by directing the designer of the space to create educational and entertainment habitats within a park. Culture parks are thought of as recreational public spaces where men, women and children stroll and socialize and they were an icon of Republican modernity like other parks and municipal gardens of different scales in Turkey [16]. As a result, culture parks became one of the most important modernization projects of the early Republican period; they were economically, socially, culturally, spatially and conceptually important outdoor green areas for the public benefits of Turkish citizens.

### **2.3.1 Precedents for Konya Culture Park**

In order to understand the formations of the culture parks in Turkey, one example was chosen from Moscow as a reference point of the culture park idea, which is Gorky Central Park of Leisure and Culture (1923-1928) and five urban parks were selected from metropolitan cities in Turkey, where the idea initiated by applying the Republican ideology to a new way of leisure time and activities. These included the first example and prototype Izmir Culture Park (1933-1936); Ankara Youth Park (1936-1943); Gezi Park(1938-1942) and Bursa Culture Park (1950-1955), as precedents, they all formed a basis for creating the Konya Culture Park.

### 2.3.1.1 Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure

Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure's (Tsentralnyi Park Kul'turyi Otdykha imeni Gor'kogo) historical process followed the 1920s city planning of Moscow, which was developed as a model for garden-city. According to the city's development plans, a new park that reflected the notion of creating a green city was developed in the north-western periphery of Moscow [17]. The park's project inception took seven years starting in 1921. It was designed and built under the guidance of architect Konstantin Melnikov in the center of Moscow and was officially opened on 12 August 1928 [18] (Figure 2.1). By naming the park "Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure", the Soviet government desired to provide its citizens with not only a space for free time activities but also a cultural environment. Therefore, it is known as the first park of culture and leisure in the Soviet Union and became a role model for other parks of this type. Detailed planning and development of the park continued between the years of 1934-1936.

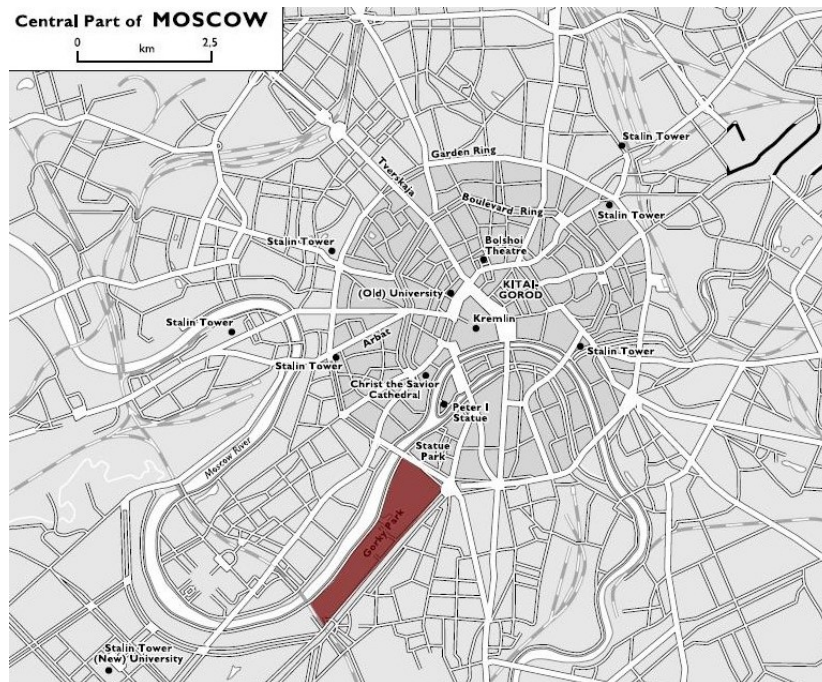


Figure 2.1: Central Part of Moscow and the location of Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure (Source: O. Gritsai and V. D. W. Herman, "Moscow and St. Petersburg, a Sequence of Capitals, a Tale of Two Cities," *GeoJournal*, vol. 51, pp. 33-45, 2000.)

Gorky Park was envisioned as a “culture combination” that integrated mass political, educational, artistic, theatrical, sporting and recreational activities [19]. Recreational activities were considered an important means of educating and enlightening the citizens of the Soviet Union. The integration of these activities through the notion of “leisure culture” and “health and fitness” was approached through the urban design of the park and was also influenced by the garden-city movement [19]. As a green space within a city, the park reflected several dominant concerns of 1920s city planning: the notion of a green city, and the role of leisure in everyday life [18] (Figure 2.2).



Figure 2.2: Gorky Park recreational areas in 1928 (Source: “W. Ryan, Gorky Park.” [Online]. Available: <https://www.william-ryan.com/korolevs-world/gorky-park/jp-carousel-1114>.)

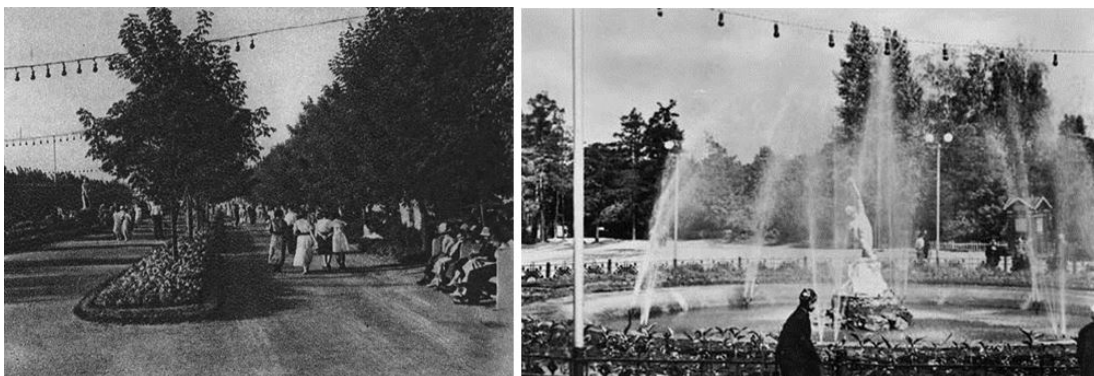


Figure 2.3: Alleys and Pools (Source: “Gorky Central Park.” [Online]. Available: <https://www.centralpark.kh.ua/istoriya-parka/>.)

In its early years, Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure was a great example of contextualizing a public space as a green and urban space with architectural and landscape components. The park was equipped with sports facilities and infrastructure for social and cultural activities. This large park on the banks of the Moscow River had amusement parks, a parachute tower, bicycle tracks, alleys, pedestrian paths, an amphitheater that hosted concerts and theater plays, tennis courts, sports clubs, horse riding areas, a zoo, restaurants, cafes, vending machines that dispense bird food, beaches and in winter, an ice-rink the whole length of the park. There were also multiple lakes, pools and various types of botanical gardens and other recreational areas (Figure 2.3, Figure 2.4) [20]. By offering such an entertainment spaces in the 1920s, Gorky Park affected a generation of urban parks as socio-cultural urban environments through its design principles and became known as a pioneer urban green space [21]. Therefore by looking at its practices in terms of social and cultural activities, it was a major attraction for the urban population and occasional tourists.



Figure 2.4: The crowds show the attraction of people towards Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure in the 1930s (Source: “W. Ryan, Gorky Park.” [Online]. Available: <https://www.william-ryan.com/korolevs-world/gorky-park/jp-carousel-1114>.)

### **2.3.1.2 Izmir Culture Park and International Fair**

Izmir Culture Park was first proposed in the Rene Danger-Prost plan of the city as a broad green space in the area destroyed by the big fire of 1922 following the War of Independence [22] [23]. During Dr. Behçet Uz's mayorship in 1931, the reconstruction of Izmir was initiated as a part of the nation-wide process of modernization. The future development of the area of Izmir Culture Park and the history and formation of culture parks throughout Turkey was influenced by Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure. Deputy mayor of Izmir Suad Yurtkoru, was very impressed by Gorky Park during his trip to Moscow in 1933. To realize the culture park idea, Yurtkoru shared his impressions of Gorky Park with Mayor Uz. As a result designing a culture park in the city center was a major step forward for the social, cultural and economic development of Izmir [15]. The proposed area for a public park of almost 60.000 square meters was enlarged by the municipality's public works, to approximately a 360.000 square meters to implement the idea of the culture park [16]. Mayor Uz envisioned the culture park as a "public university" and a modernized ideal of urban space where citizens could be educated as a result of his strong will and initiatives. Izmir Culture Park was opened on January 1, 1936 as one of the first examples of a culture park in Turkey [15] (Figure 2.5).





Figure 2.5: Aerial Photograph of Izmir Culture Park in 1936 (Source: “M. Tansu, 1936 Izmir Fuarı,” *Arkitekt*, vol. 70-71, pp. 283-284, 1936.)

The municipality used Gorky Park as a model while determining the spatial layout and physical qualities of the area. To serve users differing needs, a well-oriented public space was designed and enclosed within walls. The area became a green space and was enriched as such with additional elements, such as rose and botanical gardens. An artificial lake with an island, pools and fountains were added emphasizing water as an important element (Figure 2.6). Therefore, users were not only in interaction with greenery, but they also could feel rested and enjoy the nearby water elements. As socializing areas a larger space for five thousand people and spaces with seating elements were designed [24].

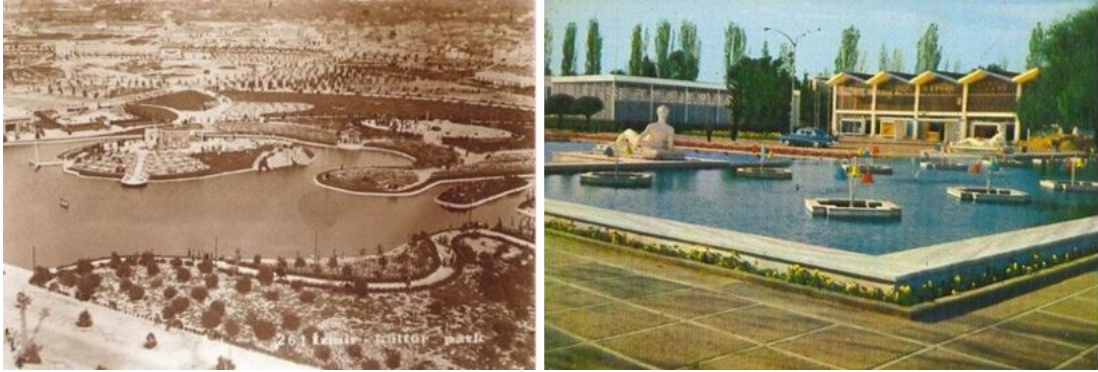


Figure 2.6: Artificial lake, islands and pool in Izmir Culture Park in the late 1930s (Source: “Izmir Enternasyonal Fuarı.” [Online]. Available: <http://v3.arkitera.com/h56154-izmir-enternasyonal-fuari.html>.)

Visitors entered the park through gates. There were a total of 5 gates namely *Lozan*, *9 Eylül*, *Montrö*, *Kahramanlar* and *26 Ağustos* Gate. These were all designed with the modernist architectural aesthetics of the time (Figure 2.7). To complete Uz’s mission to create a healthy nation, swimming pools (indoor-outdoor), tennis courts, a riding club, a soccer field and a square for sport shows were built as a part of entertainment culture. A parachute tower was included as a part of sports and health facilities, emphasizing the importance given to healthy and modern life styles in the city [25] (Figure 2.8).

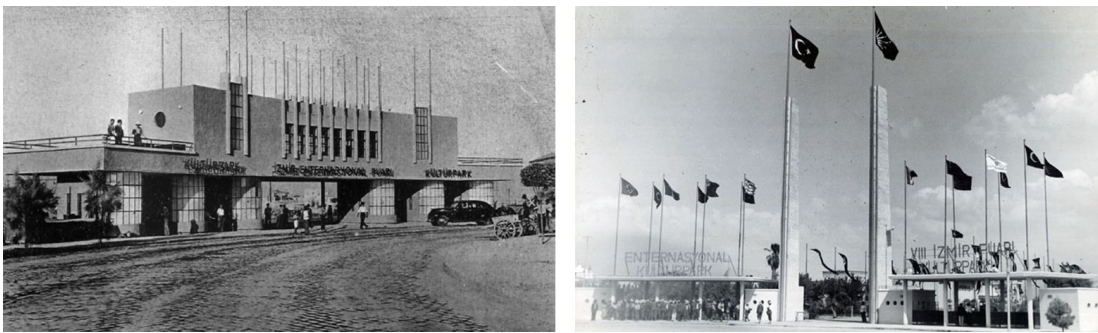


Figure 2.7: Left, Izmir Culture Park 9 Eylül Gate, Right, *Lozan Gate* (Source: F. Orel, “Izmir Beynelmillel Fuarı,” *Arkitekt*, 1939.)

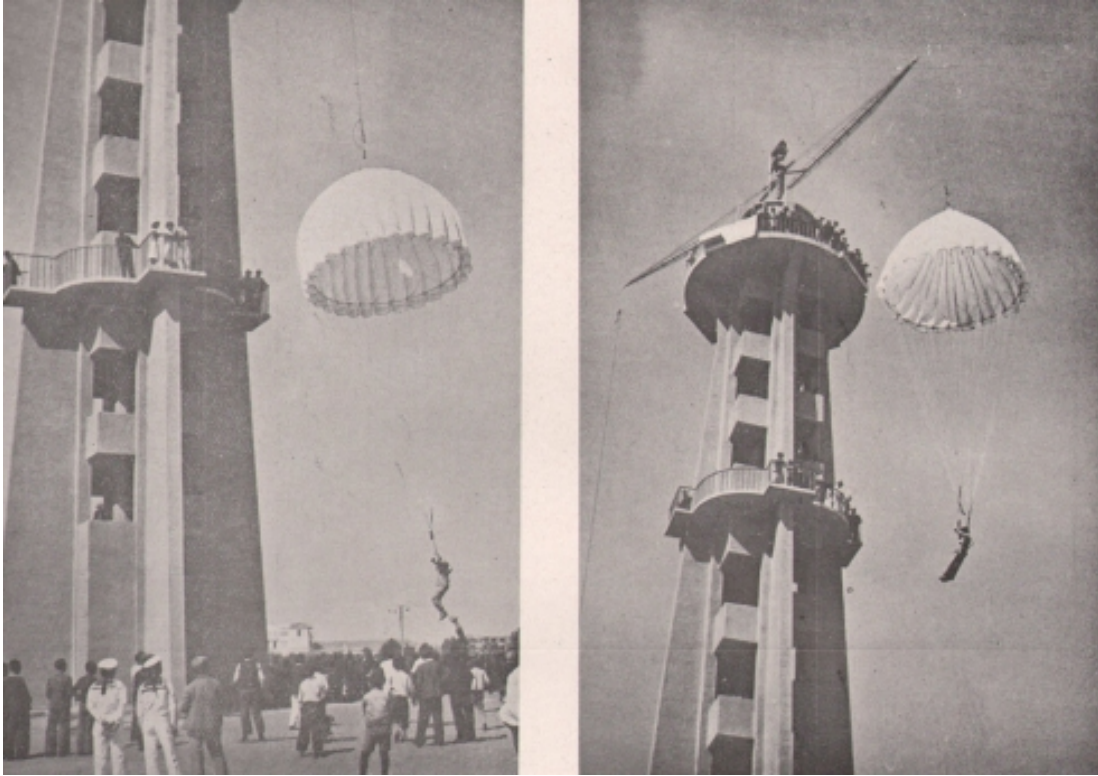


Figure 2.8: Parachute tower Izmir Culture Park, 1938 (Source: B. Tümay and M. Tansu, “Paraşüt Kulesi İzmir,” *Arkitekt*, 1938.)

The culture park project required other facilities to build including an open-air theatre, an amphitheater, *gazinós* (a cafe/restaurant with music and entertainment), a restaurant, a circus, a zoo, a child theatre and cinema, child nurseries, amusement parks and educational museums of culture, science, health, military, Atatürk’s revolution, agriculture, industry and many other related topics [26]. These facilities served to promote and support contemporary cultural practices and modern lifestyles introduced by the Republican worldview. Among them *gazinós* were significant spaces of modernity accomodating mixed-gender interaction and entertainment in public space as argued by Gürel [16]. In addition to these facilities, administrative structures were also built such as a park administration building, police and municipal offices and a firehouse. Additional spaces for other needs including kiosks, food-beverage stores, a beerhouse and car parking areas were included (Figure 2.9). A marriage agency was also a part of the municipality’s original construction plan but it was built in 1956 [27].



Figure 2.9: Izmir Culture Park Site Plan, 1939 (Source: F. Orel, “Izmir Beynelmîlel Fuarı,” *Arkitekt*, 1939.)

In addition to the establishment of Izmir Culture Park as a place where citizens could experience a modern space, a fair facility was conceived to exhibit the latest innovations and technological developments at the national and international level. The fair existed only between August 20 and September 20 in every year within the boundaries of the culture park [25]. Conducting as “9 Eylül Panayırı” a fairground in previous times, pavilions of local and foreign institutions were arranged in the destroyed area after its regulations in 1933 until the establishment of Izmir Culture Park in 1936 and was thereafter called the International Fair [27] (Figure 2.10). Through participation from domestic and foreign intermediary companies, the fair received a great deal of attention by responding to the demands of users in terms of leisure practices. As a result, the number of users coming to the culture park increased.



Figure 2.10: 1936 Izmir International Fair shows the public interest: lines to enter from the *Lozan* Gate, pools and fountains impressing the crowd (Source: “İzmir Enternasyonal Fuarı.” [Online]. Available: <https://frhyapi.com.tr/projeler/izmir-enternasyonal-fuari-yangin-yeri/>.)

The whole area was developed in the forthcoming years in order to increase the

level of modern civilization and entertainment culture. By reflecting the Republican ideals of the 1930s, Izmir Culture Park as a public space was an enlightened project to modernize the community. In the early Republican period, the park served as a tool to realize Mayor Uz and his team's goals of educating the public in modern ways. The authority achieved their mission by adapting westernized leisure activities to a large green space that served as a park and a fair [28]. In this context, men and women both experienced social, economic and cultural interactions in the park's facilities. Therefore, the creators of the park were able to extend users' visions by producing the space with various contributions with spatial and organizational planning coming from numerous fields. Izmir Culture Park and International Fair as a green field to meet the cultural needs of the public served as a case study to other urban park formations with its physical components and practices.

### **2.3.1.3 Ankara Youth Park**

The movement of constructing parks started with the construction of Izmir Culture Park and spread to other Anatolian cities. In the capital, it was inevitable to create a green area to socially and culturally serve the city. The decision to build such a park was a significant decision when considering the difficult economic, political and social conditions that the country faced after the Turkish War of Independence. While modernizing the city, implementing an urban park in Ankara would reflect the view of Atatürk, the power of the regime and the spirit of society for being the first and major park of the capital [29].

To built the Youth Park in Ankara, a large area was designated for a park in Ulus district in a 1934 plan prepared by Herman Jansen (Figure 2.11). As a buffer zone separating and linking the old city to the new city and in addition to its historical values, Youth Park was conceived as a pioneering public space in the new modern and republican city with new values and meanings [30]. The role of leading bureaucrats, intellectuals, mass media, public agency-like agencies, etc. was also important to create such a park in the capital city [28].

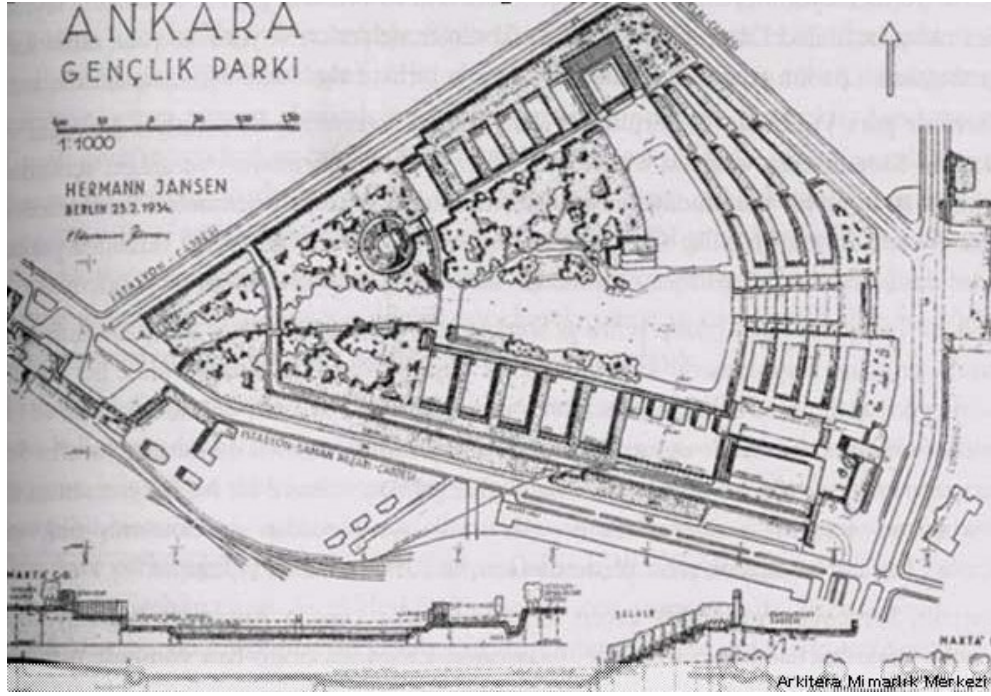


Figure 2.11: 1934 Jansen Plan shows the location of Youth Park in Ankara (Source : “1934 Jansen Plan.”[Online]. Available: <http://v2.arkiv.com.tr/p5341-genclik-parki.html>.)

The construction of the Youth Park started after the revision of Jansen’s plan in 1936 and continued into the 1940s. This was because the ministry of public works did not implement Jansen’s project, instead they preferred Theo Leveau’s proposal (Figure 2.12). In the initial design process of Youth Park, green areas, pathways, a bigger pool with fountains, bridges, islands, *gazinos*, tea and coffeehouses, theatres, playgrounds, parachute tower and amusement parks were foreseen as way to transform a wetland into an urban park in a 28 hectare area [28] (Figure 2.13). With the suggested spaces, the design intention was a creation of a recreational area by offering a nice, quiet and healthy environment.

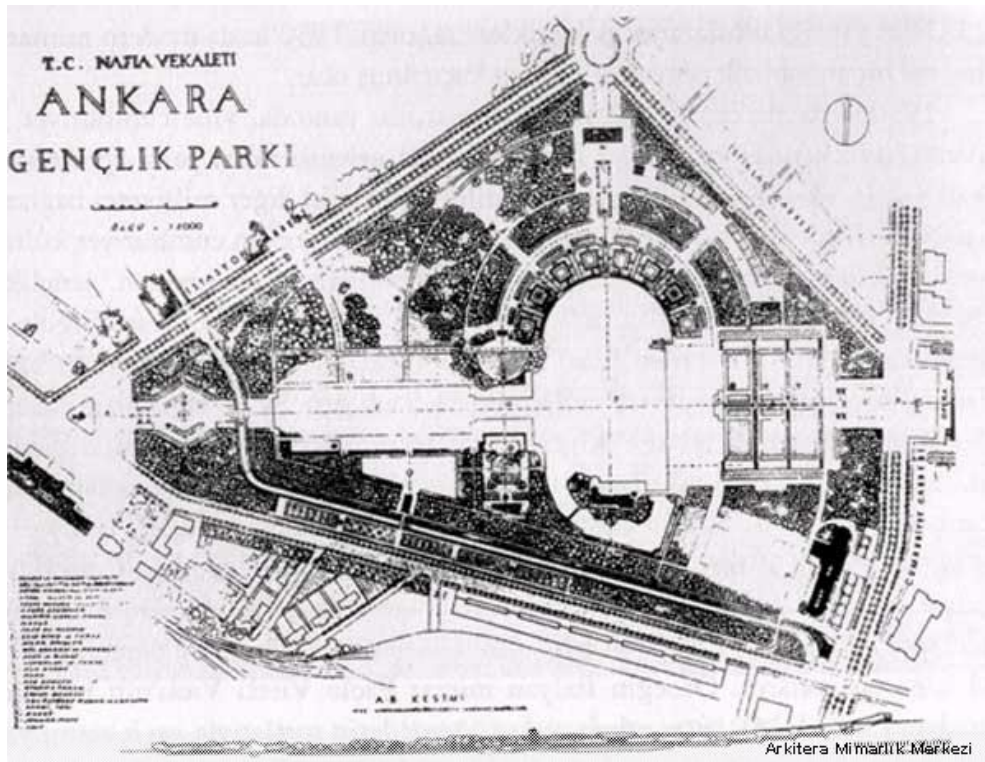


Figure 2.12: 1936 Leveau’s Plan of Youth Park in Ankara (Source: “Gençlik Parkı 1936 Leveau Plan.” [Online]. Available: <http://v2.arkiv.com.tr/p5341-genclik-parki.html>.)



Figure 2.13: Parachute Tower in Youth Park shows its location nearby the train station seen along the right side of the image (Source: “1953 Paraşüt Kulesi ve Gençlik Parkı.” [Online]. Available: <http://v2.arkiv.com.tr/>.)



Due to economic problems caused by construction material procurement during World War II, construction of the park progressed rather slowly from 1938 until the spring of 1943 [30]. News about the Youth Park was consistently on the first pages of local newspapers starting from the early 1940s and was described as a gift from the government with its proposed functions. For instance, in *Ulus* Newspaper in 1942, Kemal Zeki Gencosman detailed the Youth Park with its outer walls as a culture park with a landscaped design, ornamental pool with imposing fountain, and many other spatial regulations [29] (Figure 2.14). As a recreational area with a combination of greenery and water, the park came to be considered a symbol of the Republican modernity. Youth Park was a long-awaited space in the capital, especially considering the hot and arid climate of Ankara [29]. In this context, the establishment of Youth Park was a significant attempt to realize the ideals of the park's promoters. It meant to meet the needs of recreation by initiating an urban landscape in a modernized capital city. Therefore, it was developed as a representational space to reflect the Republic's city life. Intentionally, the official opening of the park was scheduled on 19 May 1943, which is the Commemoration of Atatürk Youth and Sports Day [31].



Figure 2.14: The bigger pool and fountains of Youth Park in Ankara (Source: The Youth Park SALT Archive [Online]. Available: <http://saltresearch.org>.)

In the early years of Youth Park, the green space spread all around the park and the large pool, which was visually dominant with its great size and location [31]. However, the park was not only a place with integrated landscape elements, but it was also an urban area that utilized these elements to hold social activities. Public very much appreciated the pools and water design elements. Two islands were connected with a bridge over the pool (Figure 2.15). The bigger pool was approximately 44.000 squaremeters in size and it became treated as a small sea because of its beach and how it hosted water sports, including swimming, boating, rowing and sailing (Figure 2.16). Sporting competitions for younger generations were organized and encouraged by the Republican leaders in its early years as a representation of the ideals of the new regime. In winter, young people ice skated on the pool and large crowds came to watch them or rest in the park, even in the cold weather conditions [31].



Figure 2.15: Bridge over the pool and boating as a leisure time activity (Source: “Botla Gezinti.” [Online]. Available: <http://ebulten.library.atilim.edu.tr/sayilar/2009-06/ankara.html>.)

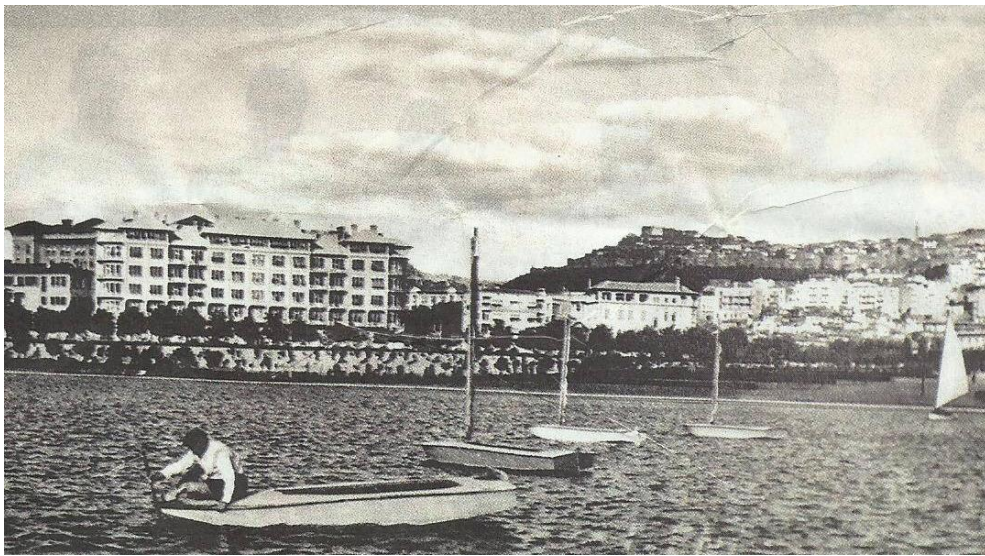


Figure 2.16: Sailing in Youth Park, Ankara, 1940 (Source: 1940 Yelkenli. [Online]. Available: <http://ebulten.library.atilim.edu.tr/sayilar/2009-06/ankara.html>.)

As part of entertainment culture, an amusement park was built. The Youth Park *Gazino* was also a venue for this purpose, where western-style musical entertainment activities, such as jazz music, were performed, similar to Izmir Culture Park. Later on, additional *gazinos* were built and one of them was used as a marriage office. Besides these, tea and coffee houses on the edges of the pool were hot spots for relaxing, chatting, and watching the surrounding (Figure 2.17). In the forthcoming years, to meet the entertainment needs of the increasing population coming to the park, an open air theater, flower gardens, a golf club, stores, a library and a museum were built as part of the “Ankara Exhibition” organized in the park [31].



Figure 2.17: Tea and coffeehouses in Youth Park, Ankara, 1960s (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.mimdap.org/?p=28423>.)

The Youth Park was the most important green area in the city center of Ankara between the old and the new city in the 1930s. Considering Ankara on an urban scale starting from its early years with the increasing number of recreational activities, Youth Park became a dynamic and active green space in the same way that Izmir Culture Park did. It affected daily activities of the users by increasing the social interaction among them and creating a new routine by bringing men and women together in a new state's capital with the practices offered by the Republican leaders. As a result, these activities were the embodiment to create modern life-style based on culture parks in Ankara and all around Turkey.

#### 2.3.1.4 Gezi Park

French architect, Henri Prost, worked in Turkey between the years 1935-1951 and prepared a master plan for Istanbul. Prost thought of open public spaces in the planning stage as excursion parks, promenades, landscape terraces, squares, and boulevards as well as sports fields. One of the most important areas of application of this idea was an excursion park in Taksim and its surrounding areas. Gezi Park was designed in the place of a ruined and evacuated buildings from war era of the 1920s and 1930s called *Taksim Kışlası* (Artillery barracks) [32]. Conceiving an urban park in the center of the city was an important step towards the realization of the intended social modernization project. In 1938 during İsmet İnönü’s presidency and Lütfi Kırdar’s term as mayor, the master plan prepared by Prost was approved and the construction works of Gezi Park began. The building process was shortened with the increase of workers on the construction on the request of Mayor Kırdar and the park was opened on 30 August 1942, which corresponded to Victory Day. In its early years, to show appreciation for and compliment President İnönü, Gezi Park was called as “İnönü Esplanade” [33].

Prost organized the large outdoor area of *Taksim Kışlası* as a terrace to Taksim Square, and created an esplanade by proposing a green line throughout the area. A marble staircase was built as a monumental entrance to the park from Taksim Square. A large terrace, which was raised over the steps of the staircase, was designed for watching official ceremonies held in Taksim Square. Since Prost envisioned Gezi Park as a large exhibition area that people could easily reach and that was also suitable for circulation, he designed an esplanade as a geometrically arranged excursion area. Taksim Garden was located at the end of the excursion area, as a green space. It was designed to be free-standing, with curved roads, in contrast with the geometric order of the excursion area [33] (Figure 2.18). Therefore, Gezi Park was not surrounded by the walls. Instead with architectural elements like a terrace and stairs borders were more naturally created and the relationship with the surrounding area was maintained. The construction of the buildings on both sides of the park could not be completed due to economic

reasons during World War II. This also led to creation of an extensive green space and esplanade terraces rather than buildings' construction. Since Prost, prioritized the esplanade area, water was not a main concern in the park. Therefore, he placed a small pond in the park for a visual impression. Furthermore, the park was connected to other parks in Prost plan, and a theater building and playground were built nearby [33].

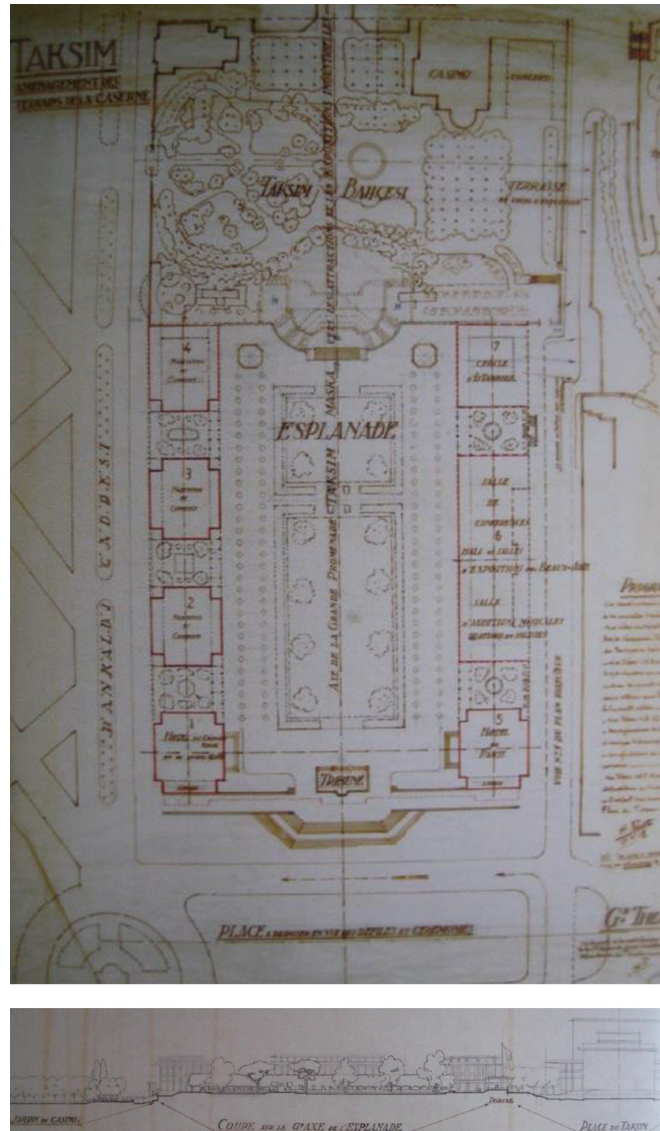


Figure 2.18: Gezi Park plan and section by Henri Prost, November 17, 1938 (Source: F. C. Bilsel, *İmparatorluk Başkentinden Cumhuriyet'in Modern Kentine: Henri Prost'un İstanbul Planlaması*, 1936-1951.)

On the northern side, at the other end of the park *Taksim Gazinosu*, designed by Rükneddin Güney in 1939, complemented the geometrical regularity of the park. Even though the architectural style of the *gazino* differed from Gezi Park, the *gazino* and park's close proximity to each other, meant that recreational activities were conducted in harmony (Figure 2.19). Besides the official ceremonies, the *gazino* was used as an exclusive place for weddings, meetings and Republican ballrooms [34].

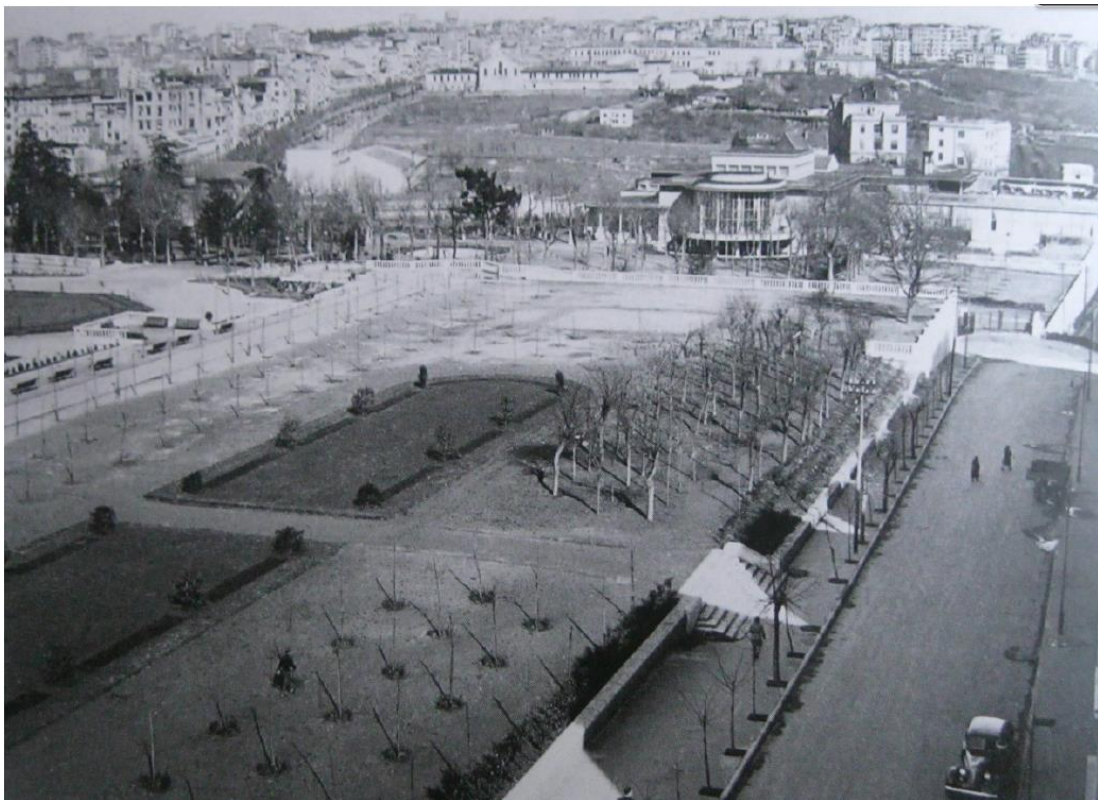


Figure 2.19: Gezi Park and Taksim *Gazinosu* by Rukneddin Güney in 1939 (Source: Académie d'architecture/ Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine/ Archives d'architecture du XXe siècle.)





Figure 2.20: Photos by Henri Prost from Gezi Park on 12 November 1944 (Source: Académie d'architecture/ Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine/ Archives d'architecture du XXe siècle.)

Gezi Park was formed as a result of the efforts of the Republican leaders. With its architectural and landscape design, it was designed as a national square serving as a ceremonial space for both authorities and citizens. It became an important urban park for Istanbul acting as a green area in the city center. Although it did not include many architectural elements and spaces like in Izmir Culture Park and Youth Park, building such a regulated park was an important step towards the realization of one of the modernization projects of the Republic. By offering mix-gendered activities that bring the users into an excursion area and providing green spaces in the middle of the building blocks, the Republican leaders showed that they valued public health and modern urban practices (Figure 2.20). As a result, the park was referred to and publicized in the newspapers as the “lungs of Istanbul” [34].

### 2.3.1.5 Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park

People living in Bursa were in contact with open and green spaces as recreational areas. These green spaces were open to the public, and naturally existed in the considerably rich natural environment of Bursa. *Yaycılar Pınarı* was one of such areas and also constituted the core of Bursa Culture Park. In the 1950s, after many configurations due to political issues, an urban plan of Bursa was prepared by Italian planner, Luigi Piccinato. During the preparation of the city plan of Bursa, Piccinato was also asked to design a new park in *Yaycılar Pınarı*. Instead, to build the park, a national project contest was held as suggested by Piccinato. The expropriation of the land started between the years of 1945 to 1950 by the municipality. Therefore, 26 acres of green area was opened to use as an urban park [35].

Developed cities in Turkey were mainly under the influence of the culture park trend after the foundation of the Republic and that ideal continued to spread all over the country later on. Bursa was one of the cities to adopt this ideal. Izmir Culture Park as well as the International Fair attracted considerable attention of the Municipality of Bursa. The governor, İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil (1954-1960), and the mayor, Reşat Oyal (1954-1960), were present at the opening of the Izmir International Fair in 1936 and they were highly impressed by Izmir Culture Park, they wanted to build a similar culture park and a fair in Bursa that could compete with Izmir's. Governor Çağlayangil and Mayor Oyal thought that a similar architectural program should be implemented in the construction of Bursa Culture Park (Figure 2.21). Following Izmir Culture Park as a case study, they invited the manager of *Göl Gazinosu* in Izmir Culture Park, who also managed the Ankara Youth Park *gazinos*, to Bursa [35]. 33 acres of land was expropriated bringing the total park area to 39.3 hectare [13].



Figure 2.21: Mayor Reşat Oyal in front of Bursa Culture Park's entrance (Source: "Culture Park for 50 Thousand," Olay Gazetesi, 21 June 1998.)

As a second park carrying the name of "culture" after Izmir Culture Park, Bursa Culture Park was opened on 6<sup>th</sup> of July, 1955. Like Izmir Culture Park the park had boundary walls and offered entrance doors to access the park. As the number of facilities in the park increased, the number of gates also increased to seven [36]. Within the boundaries, Bursa Culture Park offered public an extensive green space. Greenery and water usage reflected the characteristic of Bursa, which is known for its greenness. The general appearance of the park was achieved by planting many trees and building an artificial lake in the park [37] (Figure 2.22). Bridges and fountain jets were used to enrich the artificial lake. Boating was one of the important entertainment means as a leisure time activity (Figure 2.23). In addition to the artificial lake, walking areas around it, provided users an opportunity to be in contact with the designed landscape.

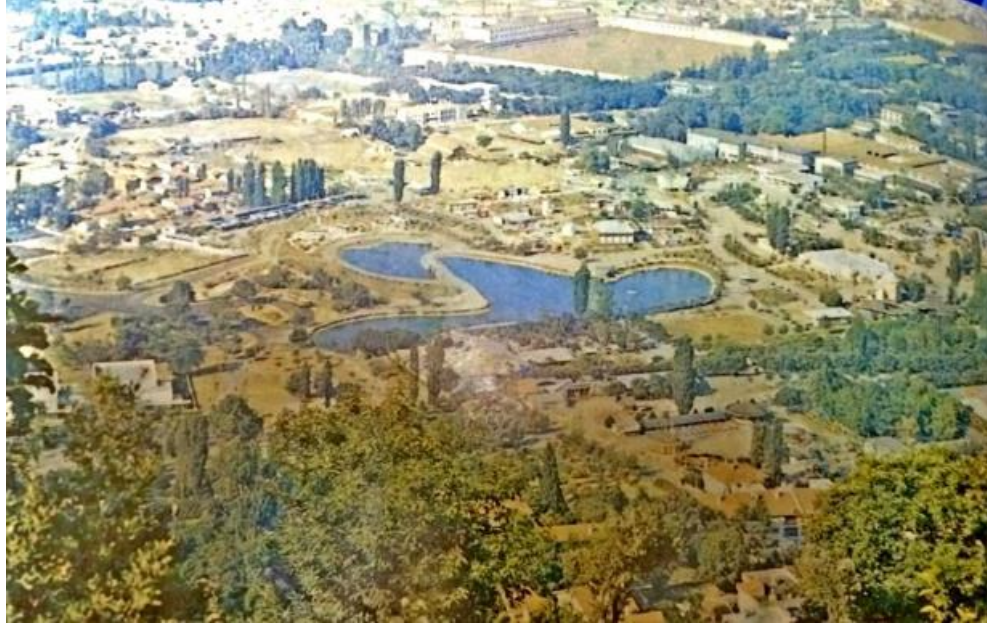


Figure 2.22: Bursa Culture Park in 1973 (Source: K. Kolukısa and M. Yörük, “Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılında Bursa İl Yıllığı 1973” Bursa: Türk Matbaacılık Sanayi.)



Figure 2.23: Boating on the artificial lake in the 1960s (Source: “Fuar 1960-70.” [Online]. Available: <https://www.nadirkitap.com/bursa-mimari-1960-70-kartpostal-fuargolden-bir-gorunus-efemera10439879.html>.)

Bursa Culture Park was the first urban park of Bursa with the existence of different facilities accessible to users. It accommodated local and modern life styles, and came to be an important venue of social life in the city. Like other culture parks, Bursa Culture Park was also envisioned as a venue where people socialized. Tea and coffeehouses, restaurants and *gazinors* were offered nearby the artificial lake and provided musical entertainment while people dined [13]. Like in Izmir Culture Park, an archeology museum was constructed in 1972. The building had a modern architectural style of the 1960s [38] (Figure 2.24). An open-air theater for 5000 person capacity was built to host cultural events and shows in 1980. Sporting facilities for football, ice skating and other sporting activities were also established to continue the idea of the “healthy nation” in the 1960s.



Figure 2.24: Archeology Museum in Bursa Culture Park in 1972 (Source: Bursa Governorate Archive.)

Bursa Culture Park hosted the “Bursa Festival”, organized for the first time in 1963. The and the Bursa Festival led to the idea of opening a national fair which was targeted to be second to Izmir International Fair [39]. The fair project was designed by the architect Yavuz Taşçı who coincidentally was the city planner of Konya [40] (Figure 2.25).



Bursa Fuar ve Kültür  
Parkı Yarışması,  
Bursa Valiliği - 1958  
1. Ödül  
Yavuz Taşçı, Öztürk  
Başarı ile

Figure 2.25: Architect Yavuz Taşçı's plan for Bursa Fair in 1958 (Source: B.Idil, "Planlama Geleneği olan Kentten Planlama Tartışmasını Unutan Kente," *Serbest Mimar*, 2011.)



Figure 2.26: Fashion and Textile Fair in 1987 (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.skb.gov.tr/wpcontent/uploads/2014/12/7.Egemen-KAYMAZ-.pdf>.)

Bursa Culture Park have undergone many changes over the years similar to other parks. In 1986 a marriage office and zoo were built. In the years following, the size of the artificial lake and green areas were increased [36]. Additionally, various specialized fairs were organized before 1997 (Figure 2.26). This is because fair buildings lost their function as a result of the opening of a new Bursa Fair. Bursa Culture Park was renamed after the mayor in 1999 as Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park by the decision of Bursa municipal council.

The analysis of Bursa Culture Park show that this park was not only another example of the culture park idea but also a case referencing Izmir Culture Park as a tool to start other variations of urban parks such as Bursa and Konya. Even if it was not realized in the early Republican times, like Izmir Culture Park, Youth Park and Gezi Park it found common ground with nature and the city by building a modern image in their respective urban fabric (Figure 2.27).



Figure 2.27: Bursa Culture Park in 2015 (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.skb.gov.tr/wpcontent/uploads/2014/12/7.Egemen-KAYMAZ-.pdf>.)

Finally, by analyzing these precedents within the concept of the culture park, green areas, water surfaces, pedestrian paths, restaurants, coffeehouses, an amphitheater, a parachute tower, a zoo, botanical gardens and sporting facilities were taken as samples for creating the first type of culture park in Izmir and

were a product of a more westernized and modernized community after the years following the formation of the Republic. Since the implementation of the model was successful in Izmir as reflected in the increasing numbers of users, to meet the demands of leisure time activities and spread the concept of entertainment culture, Izmir Culture Park was taken up as an example in the design of several urban parks in Turkey. In developed cities, it had a big impact on laying out the foundation of Ankara Youth Park, Istanbul Gezi Park, and Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park as a consequence of the design conceptions, spatial features and activities practiced by the users. By looking into the common aspects and characteristics of such leisure time activity spaces, it is clear that the idea of surrounding the parks with walls and points of entries, using water and fountains as a visual source for entertainment, pathways and most importantly, green areas were not unique to Izmir Culture Park, they were also in Ankara Youth Park, Gezi Park and Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park. These common spaces are evidence of how the design of these parks were influenced by Izmir Culture Park. After leaving an impression on Ankara, Istanbul and Bursa, the culture park idea was affected and aroused interest in developing cities. Therefore, the movement of constructing culture parks after Izmir also contributed to the formation of Konya Culture Park throughout its development process.



## Chapter 3

# Development of the Konya Culture Park Area until 1970

## 3.1 Before the Foundation of the Republic of Turkey

### 3.1.1 Historical Development

The history of Konya Culture Park area goes back to 13<sup>th</sup> century. The area is located in the north west part of Alaeddin Hill, used by Anatolian Seljukids and belonged to Part of the *Tac-ül Vezir* Islamic-social complex, which existed in 1239 and was built in the Seljukid period [41]. The name of the complex “*Tac-ül Vezir*” came from its builder, Tacettin Mehmed Bey, who was the vizier of II.Giyaseddin Keyhüsrev [42]. The Islamic complex, which consisted of a madrasah, a zawiya and a masjid, was built one kilometer away from the north-west side of the fortress of Alaeddin Hill, and the southern part of the complex was used as a cultivation [43]. Today, only the *Tac-ül Vezir* Tomb remains on the borders of Konya Culture Park. Also called *Hacı Veziri Türbesi*, it includes Vizier Taceddin Mehmed Bey and his grandchildren’s graves [44] (Figure 3.1).

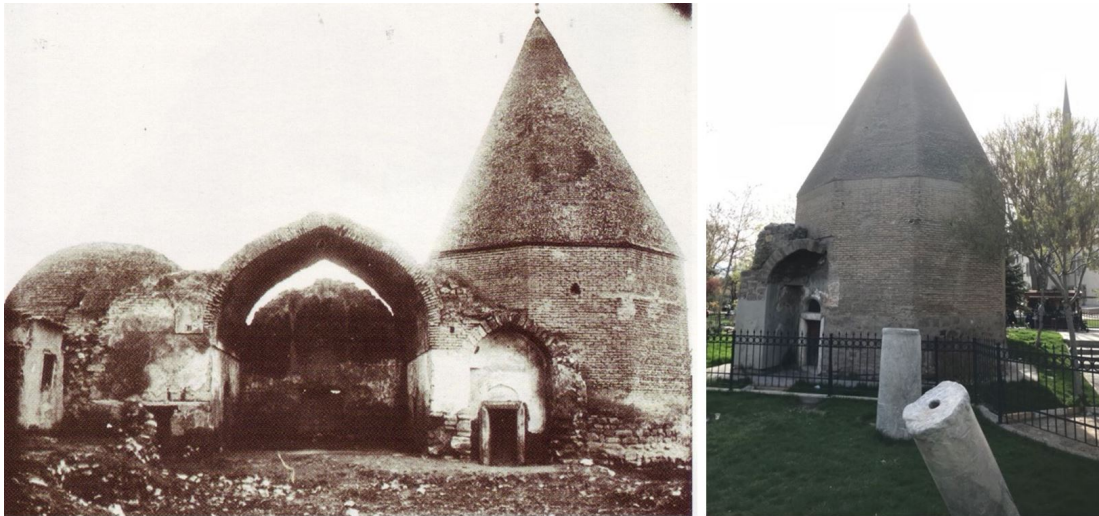


Figure 3.1: Left, *Tac-ül Vezir* Tomb before part of it was demolished (unknown date), Right, the remaining tomb after restoration, 2018 (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.anadoluselcuklumimarisi.com/asyep/veritabani>.)

The empty field (cultivation area) that belonged to the Anatolian Seljukid Empire was turned into a historical garden, which was located next to the remains of the *Tac-ül Vezir* Complex, dating back to the Ottoman era [43]. This transformation occurred in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Sheikh Hasan Efendi, one of the wealthiest people of Konya, purchased the garden. He surrounded the cultivation area with a wall to create a garden where he planted many types of trees, including valonia oak trees. Hasan Efendi also constructed a large pool in the garden. After the landscaping was finished, he gave the well-cared garden as a gift to his friend II.Bostan Çelebi (1644-1700), who was the sheikh of Mevlevi's Dervish Lodge [45]. Bostan Çelebi wanted this garden to belong to the dervish lodge of Mevlevî's for use as a summer place for their rituals. The lodge also earned income from vegetable gardening. Since the garden belonged to dervishes and the gardening was done by them, it came with reference to its owners to be called *Dede Bahçesi* [46] because “*dede*” is a title given to dervishes who have reached a certain degree of respect in their lodges in Mevleviyeh and Bektashism. That is to say, after joining a lodge, a dervish who completed his suffering (*çile*) of 1001 days was accepted as *dede* in their sects [47]. After that, the garden became a place for wandering and breathing fresh air of the Mevlevi dervishes. The historic dervish garden named *Dede Bahçesi* had an essential role in Konya's social life. According to Sheikh Hasan Efendi, the location of *Dede Bahçesi* was in the Binari district of Konya, where the southern part belonged to him as a property, eastern part was a vegetable garden and Ağazade Ibrahim and Kemal Beşe's wife's property, northern part was Hocacihanlı's sons' property, Hacı Nurullah's garden and *Tac-ül Vezir* Madrasah and the western part was surrounded by main road [46] (Figures 3.2, 3.3) According to Sabri Doğan's directions, walking straight through the street to the right of the Ince Minare Madrasah, turning right then turning left, and passing through other narrow street, from a two winged door in the middle of a dead end street, you would see *Dede Bahçesi* [48].

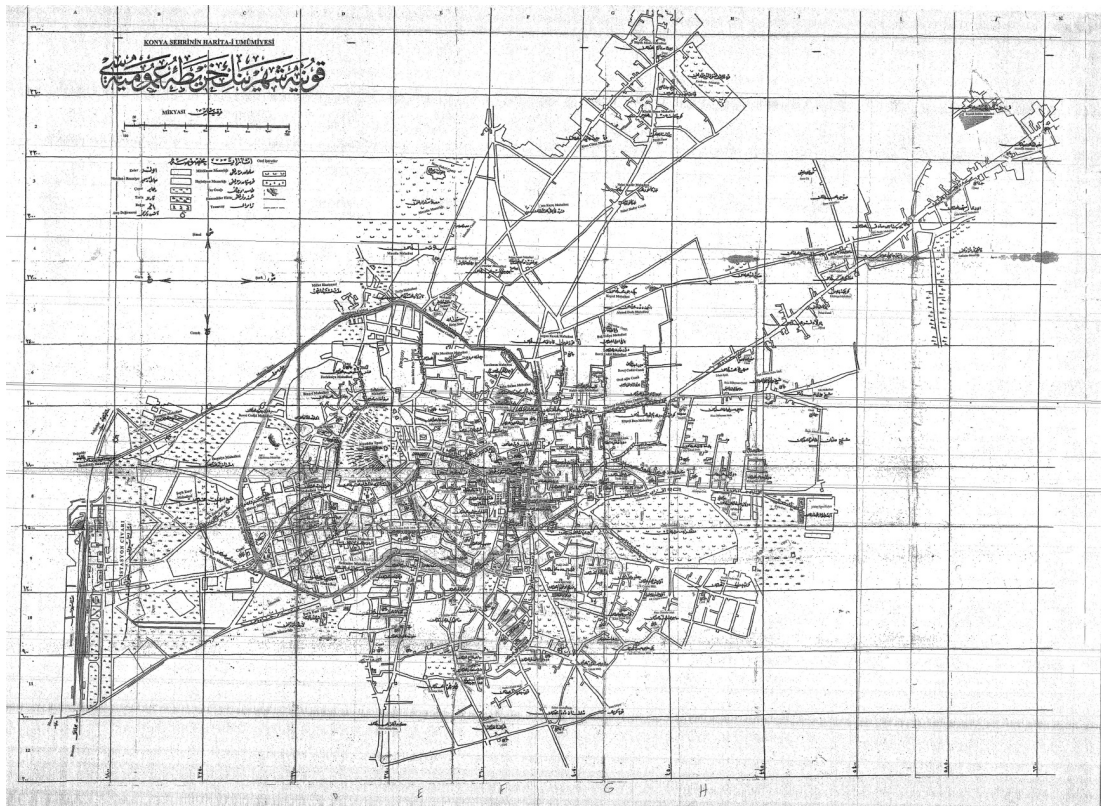


Figure 3.2: 1923 Konya City Map, showing the surrounding of Alaeddin Hill. *Dede Bahçesi* is in the northwestern side of the hill (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work's Archive.)



Figure 3.3: *Dede Bahçesi*'s location to the northwest of Alaeddin Hill according to Sheikh Hasan Efendi's statements, 1923 City Map (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work's Archive.)

Three and a half centuries later, Abdülvahit Çelebi (1858-1907) took the lead of *Dede Bahçesi* and started the construction of a two storey small mansion that was nearby the pool. During Çelebi's ruling, Mevlevis organized music councils, and they arranged whirling semah ceremonies under the trees in the summer time. Çelebi spent his time in this recreational place especially in *Dede Bahçesi* Mansion, where he set up a table to have a feast in the summer. Many foreign visitors who had come to Konya were also hosted in this garden [45] (Figure3.4).



Figure 3.4: *Dede Bahçesi* Mansion and garden (Source: A. S. Odabaşı, *20. Yüzyıl Başlarında Konya'nın Görünümü*. T.C Konya Valiliği İl Kültür Müdürlüğü, 1998.)

Before World War I, the garden was only available for men and open to lodge members. During this time, it was a place where important meetings were conducted. However, to give morale and relieve the public of the depression caused by World War I's outcome, Chairman Abdülhalim Çelebi Efendi opened *Dede Bahçesi* to the public. A well-known group started playing saz in the mid-afternoons until closing time of the park in the evening because there was no electricity in those times. Meanwhile, the vegetable and fruits, which were grown in the field, were sold to the visitors for low prices as a source of income. On Friday afternoons, some officers and statesmen' families would come to listen to music and drink coffee and tea in a private section, divided with a curtain. Here,

alcoholic drinks were strictly prohibited [46]. *Dede Bahçesi*, with its mansion, pool, many trees and cultivation field, had gained a reputation as an excursion, amusement and entertainment place for the citizens of Konya at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It transformed from a religious environment of dervishes into a leisurely place for serving the public and such new practices could be interpreted as a modern social change. This change, in practice, was the first step in the reformation of the area and its users.

### 3.1.2 Spatial Development

Before the foundation of the Republic, two different buildings could be observed in the *Dede Bahçesi* area. One of these was a building from the Anatolian Seljukid era. The *Tac-ül Vezir* Complex, which was built in 1239, is partially standing today. The top of the octagonal ground tomb with its unequal sides is covered with pyramidal roof. A small dome with a radius of 5.6 meter is located under this pyramidal roof. To enter inside, there is a tiny door in the south-eastern part of the tomb. The flooring and the top of the tomb is covered with brick and the octagonal ground is covered with rubble stone (Figure 3.5). In the inner side there are 3 graves [44].

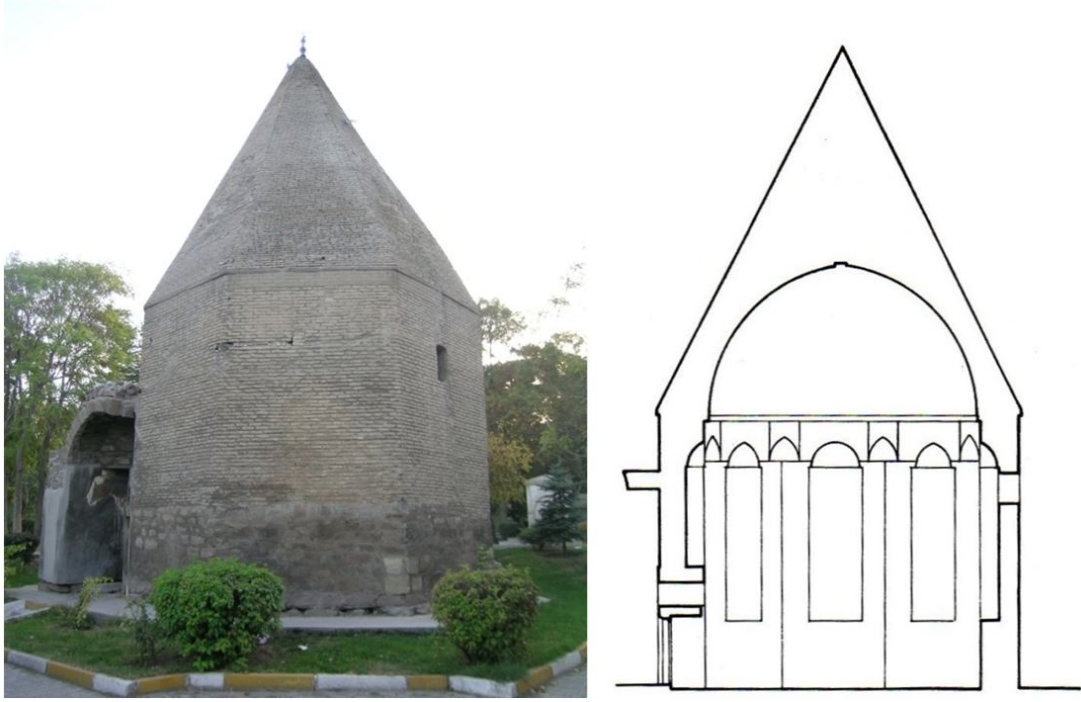


Figure 3.5: *Tac-ül Vezir Tomb* (637/1239) and its drawing (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.anadoluselcuklumimarisi.com/asyep/veritabani.>)

*Dede Bahçesi* with its large pool, tea gardens, historic atmosphere, calmness, abundance of trees and green grass, was like a shelter where people could find peace and silence in the Ottoman period. Under the direction of Abdülvahit Çelebi, a two-story square plan mansion was built with mud-brick. On the ground floor, there were two rooms. On the first floor, there was a room located above the ground floor and surrounded by a balcony. Wooden doors and windows provided air circulation and light. Twelve wooden square based columns carried the tiled roof. In addition to the mansion, landscape elements were added to this historic environment. Almost three meters away from the northern part of the mansion, a pool, which was one of the largest pools in Konya district was constructed with local materials such as ken (sille) stone and khorasan mortar [43]. In order to shade the area for semah, valonia oak trees were planted. Spaces of the garden such as the mansion as a shelter, pool for a view and a shaded area for semah were provided in order to meet the practical needs of the religious sect.



## 3.2 From 1920s until the Establishment of the Konya Culture Park in 1970

### 3.2.1 Transformation of *Dede Bahçesi*'s Spaces and Practices

Konya began to become a modern city following Atatürk's reforms, which were introduced to westernize and modernize the country. One of the reforms was the closure of dervish lodges and zawiya's on 30 November 1925 within the context of secularism. Following the enactment of the law, the municipality of Konya purchased the area from the government and landowners at a low price in March 1926 [49]. After buying the land, intensive construction started, such as planting seedlings next to the 200-250 year old monumental trees and repairing the ruined walls of the garden. After the closure of the zawiya's and tombs, there was a need to provide maintenance and repair to the garden as a whole without changing its original form. The old mansion in the southern part of the yard was restored and painted. The Ottoman manuscripts written on the front facade of the mansion were erased as a result of the distemping process (Figure 3.6). The main body of the building, consisting of mud-walls, was distemped as seen in the pictures. Windows and doors were replaced by the new wooden ones. Although there were no significant changes in the appearance, these alterations created a new atmosphere by leaving behind the Ottoman signs in the garden.



Figure 3.6: Left, Ottoman writings in the front facade before the closure of zawiya's, Right, painted mansion after 1927 (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work's Archive.)

Construction works continued with the cementation of the pool and opening the unused well to supply water with plumbing. Besides these constructions in the southwestern and southeastern parts of the pool four latticed pergolas with tile roofing were constructed. In the spring of 1927, a tunnel was created in the rocks and a waterfall was put on top of the rocks [46] (Figure 3.7). Landscape design with the waterfall and sprinklers in front of the pool increased the attraction of the space. This design and the development of the garden reflect the founding principles of the Republic of Turkey as a laic-secular state.

The new practices of the garden also reflect the Republican ideology. *Dede Bahçesi* was no longer a place solely for men (dervishes in the past). Rather, it transformed into a place of leisure, an entertainment garden where women, men and children could come and socialize together (Figure 3.8). In this recreational area, couples and families could spend time with each other. As such, Konya's *Dede Bahçesi* served as a spatial tool for socio-cultural transformation according to the new nation's worldview and intended lifestyles. In order to increase the number of visitors coming to the garden and attract more attention, the municipality added a dancing floor under the valonia oak trees in the place where whirling ceremonies had been organized in the past. This transformation of spatial use is a manifestation of the politics of space; how space serves for proposed socio-cultural changes according to the new state's ideology. Dancing was used as an instrument to transform and reflect the reformist ideologies in the place, which was used for semah. This was a really significant change to further develop the public garden as a Republican park by using dancing as a modern form of entertainment.

Another space in the garden was a small zoo in the southeastern entrance with a small number of animals. Among them were peacocks, gazelles, wolves, foxes and different species of pigeons [43] (Figure 3.9). Such an area with animals was a typical characteristic of early Republican parks of the same nature. They were intended to be both educational and leisure spaces. Pigeon and rose competitions were organized as a means of entertaining the public.



Figure 3.7: Maintenance and construction of waterfall on site (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work's Archive.)



Figure 3.8: Mix-gender activities in front of the mansion (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.konya.bel.tr/sayfadetay.php?sayfaID=247>.)



Figure 3.9: *Dede Bahçesi* Mansion, sitting places, the pool, rocks, the waterfall, the pergola and the small pigeon house (Source: A. Işık, *Konya Fuarı* in *Konya Ansiklopedisi*, vol.3, 2010.)

*Dede Bahçesi* quickly gained a positive reputation and became a well-known place in those times [46]. The changes in social life and ways of using public space created new activities and spatial needs for them. For example, modern tennis courts were constructed in a space between the pool and the small zoo to accommodate playing tennis as a leisure activity [46]. After constructing the courts, Konya Municipality required an entrance fee to *Dede Bahçesi*, because new additions to the garden became an attraction for people in an urban context. As seen in the pictures, there were two tennis courts next to each other (Figures 3.10, 3.11). In the early republican period, the alphabet reform of 1928 was a key step on the cultural side of Atatürk's Reforms to use Latin-script alphabet instead of Ottoman script. This showed its influence late in speaking and literature in cities outside of metropolitan ones. Since Konya was not a metropolitan city in that term, there were still Ottoman writings instead of Latin alphabet on the entrance doors of the two modern tennis courts. The manuscripts (see Figure 3.10) posted on the doors of "Tennis Court Number 1" and "Tennis Court Number 2" stated, "Do not enter the field during the play" in order to clarify the game rules. The tennis courts consisted of the flooring on a soft ground suitable for sporting activities and the four sides of the courts were surrounded with hexagonal steel

wire fences carried by posts. Tennis courts, like the dance floor, were mixed-gendered spaces bringing men and women together in a leisurely activity in a public space and thus, emphasizing male-female equity. Therefore, they catered to an attitude towards gender equality and transparency in the public sphere as an important aspect of the Republican modernity (Figure 3.12).

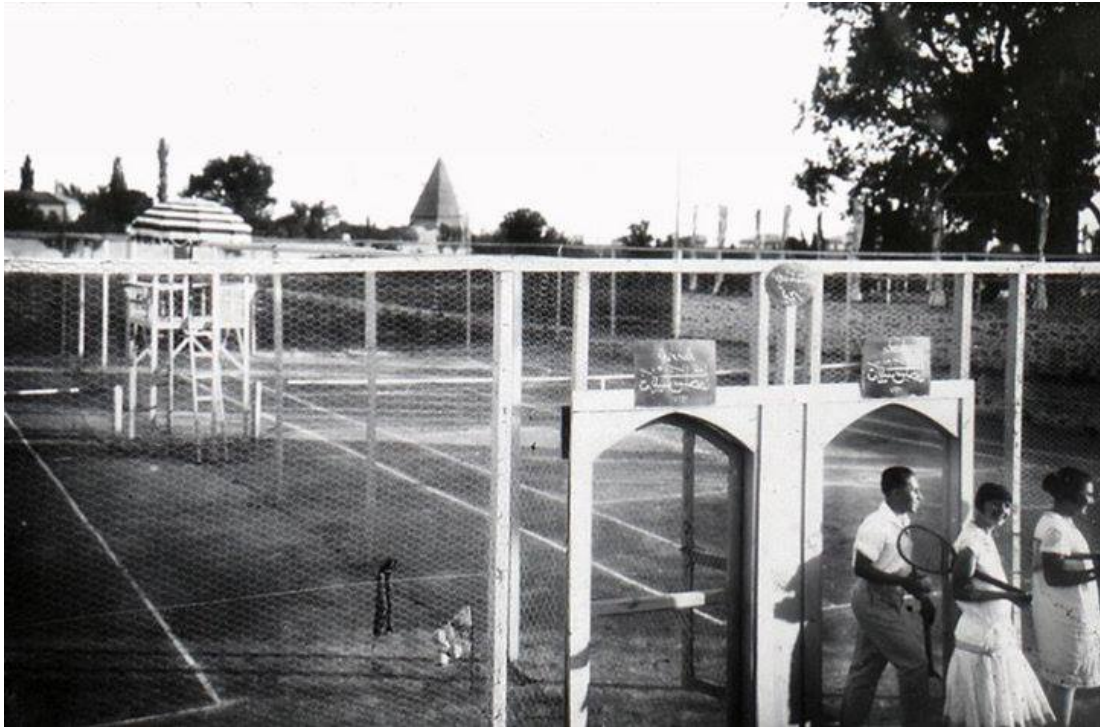


Figure 3.10: Tennis Courts, where women and men could play tennis together. In the background the *Tac-ül Vezir* Tomb is observed. Ottoman writings can be seen on the entrance descriptions (Source: “*Dede Bahçesi*.” Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work’s Archive.)

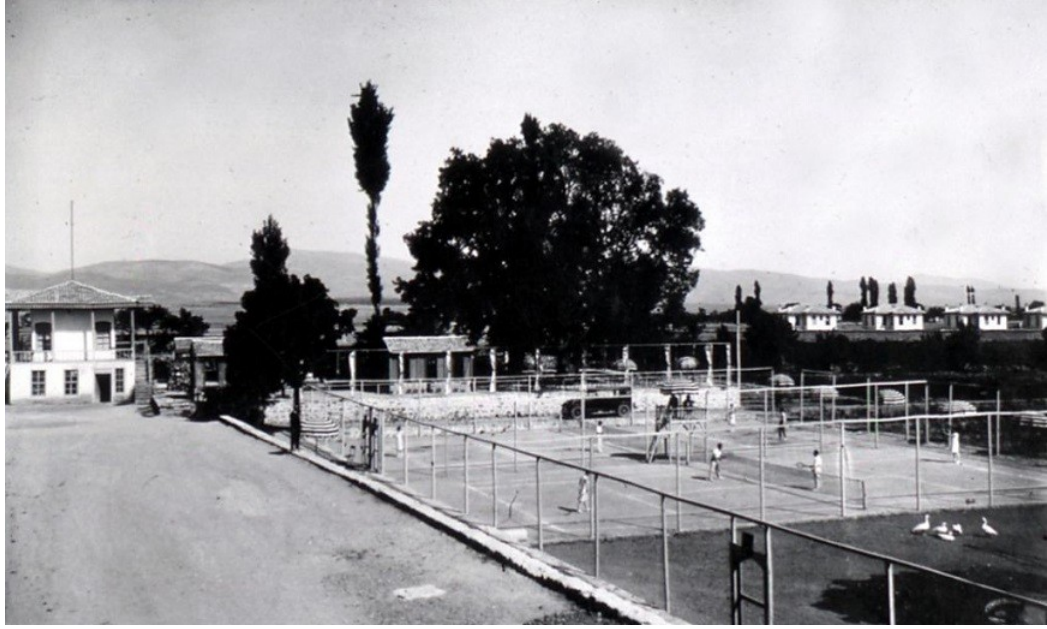


Figure 3.11: People playing tennis and *Dede Bahçesi* Mansion after 1927 (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work's Archive.)



Figure 3.12: Tennis Courts, nursery gardens, pergolas and sitting places (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work's Archive.)

In addition to the courts, the pool in front of the mansion was enriched with a boat in order to accommodate leisure activities for the visitors of the garden. During that time the entrance fee of the garden was 10 *kuruş*; using tennis courts was 50 *kuruş* per hour, boating in the pool was 25 *kuruş* per hour [46] (Figure 3.13). Besides boating, children escaping from the heat of the sun were swimming in order to cool themselves since the weather was hot in summer times (Figure 3.14). Such practices along with social transformations regulated the garden as a forerunner of modernity.



Figure 3.13: Sitting areas across the mansion in front of the pool and a man who is boating (Source: [Online]. Available: [http://www.konya.bel.tr/sayfadetay.php?sayfaID=247.](http://www.konya.bel.tr/sayfadetay.php?sayfaID=247))



Figure 3.14: Children boating and swimming in the pool (Source:[Online]. Available: <https://www.modamuzayede.com/urun/332980/fotokart-konya-dede-b.>)

In 1935, the municipality closed the garden for a while, but it was temporarily re-opened to the public that summer. It was re-opened permanently by *Halkevi* (a community center for Turkish state-sponsored enlightenment projects to raise awareness about the secularist practices of the republic) to be used by families. A nice and rich open buffet was also added as a service for customers [50]. On summer days, *Dede Bahçesi* was in need of a social remedy. After a while, the municipality removed the tennis courts and small zoo and modified the garden by planting flowers and trees. Modern tennis courts were replaced with the nursery gardens as a different kind of landscape elements because they were not used widely. While these changes were happening, the mansion, the pool and the dance floor under the trees were rented out. Thereafter, the wooden mansion became a *Dede Aile Gazinosu* during summer times. As Gürel pointed out, “A casino (*gazino*) was not related to gambling; the term usually suggested a restaurant, a cafe or a place that accommodated live music, dancing or shows and varied temporally in their function and in the style of music or performances they housed.” Casinos were very popular and stood out for bringing in performers and for organizing garden parties. They resonated with the city’s entertainment



culture [16]. In summer times, not only were the musicians from Konya but also well-known singers, even jazz (referring to Western orchestral music) singers from Istanbul performed in this *gazino* (Figure 3.16). Customers accompanied the singer and the music in a harmony while enjoying themselves with families and friends. These practices reflected the new nation, which was beginning to be “conceived as a modern and Western state, distant from the Islamic Monarchy of the preceding Ottoman Empire. A series of reforms, ranging from the abolition of the Caliphate and Islamic law (1924) to the adoption of the Swiss Civil Code (1926), radically changed the social, political, cultural and economic structures of the country, in urban contexts, Western aesthetic forms-clothing, music and ballroom dancing in particular-were among the many manifestations of the radical changes in society as Gürel pointed out [16]. Within such aesthetic forms, *Dede Aile Gazinosu*, brought men and women together and attracting families by promoting the space while they were joining activities such as sitting, eating, chatting, celebrating and even dancing as a reflection of Republican modernity. *Dede Bahçesi* imposed Western aesthetics, cultural norms and social behaviors in such a public core (Figure 3.15).

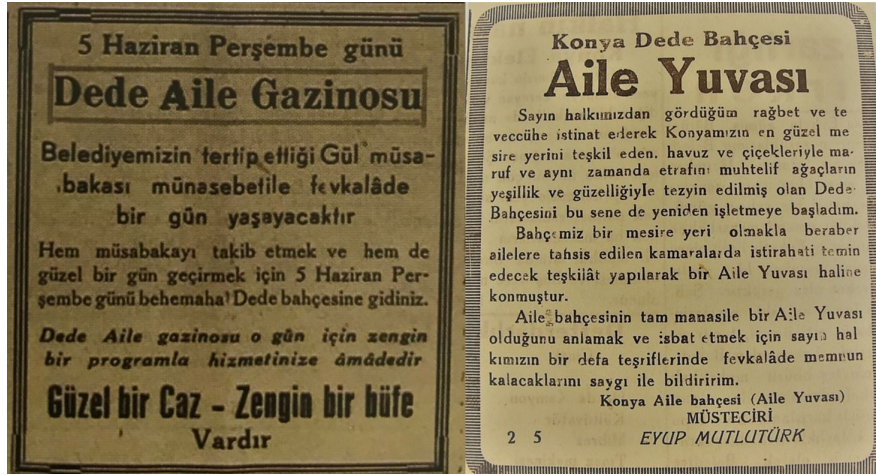


Figure 3.15: Left, newspaper advertisements of *Dede Aile Gazinosu* presented the rose competitions and their entertainment program, Right, Eyüp Mutlutürk (Last host and renter of *Dede Bahçesi* in 1944) compliments *Dede Bahçesi* as home (Source: A. Işık, *Konya Fuarı* in *Konya Ansiklopedisi*, vol.3, 2010.)

One of the visitors to the garden Levent Civelekoğlu mentioned in his personal blog, “In the summer evenings, families had tea and coffee breaks accompanied by live music in the garden where they could even dance. I and my family used to listen to live music by Yaşar playing tangos with accordion, Konya’s local singer named Kör (blind) Ahmet, and Ahmet Özdemir playing Turkish music with saz in *Dede Bahçesi*” [51]. Since he was just a young child in the spring of 1955, he remembered more or less those days while spending time and having fun with his family under the pergolas (Figure 3.16). Additionally, many entertainment activities were organized for families in the garden in 1960s like weddings and circumcision ceremonies. During summer, this place was green and very crowded; people from all ages came to the garden, especially on holidays [48]. Although the garden was subjected to many alterations and had new owners in the following decades, it existed till the end of 1960s when Konya Culture Park was conceived as an alternative recreational area.

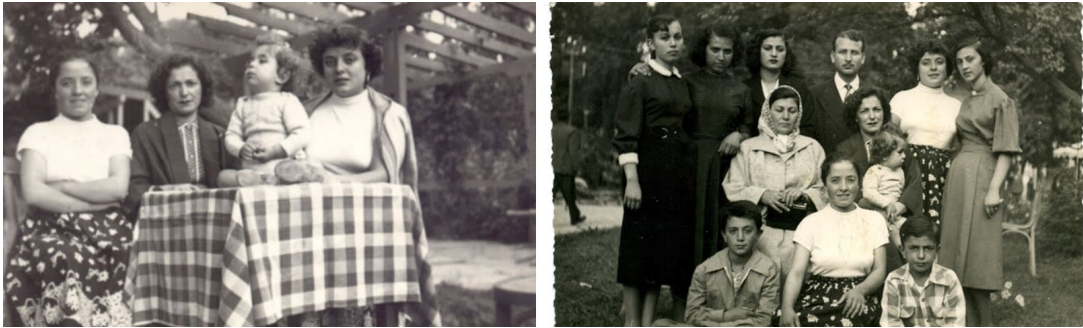


Figure 3.16: Civelekoğlu with his family and friends in the spring under the pergolas, 1955 (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://lcivelekoğlu.blogspot.com.tr/2017/03/62-yl-sonra-bellegimdekalanlarla-konya.html>.)

*Dede Bahçesi* area’s historical and spatial development reveal that, there was a clash between the social lives of Konya before and after the foundation of the Republic. Firstly, during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the garden was institutionalized by the Mevlevi sect and opened only to be used by them. Religious values originating from the political power had a big impact on the conception of space. The garden was adjusted according to religious elements and themes with detailed rules and characteristics of the Mevlevi lodge. *Dede Bahçesi*’s representation by organizing the space around Mevlevi culture was properly transmitted.

By conforming to the rule of decency and compromising with the understanding of space, the conceived space as representations of space is the space of planners, organizers, architects and urbanists whose system of localization assigns an exact spot to each activity [1]. Therefore, authority's dominance (religious power of Mevlevi Sect) over the garden was shaped by the facilities like gathering space (mansion) and shaded space (empty field under the trees) for whirling and performing religious ceremonies by giving a service to its users (dervishes). After the foundation of the republic, the garden, which belonged to male members of the lodge, became a space where women and men could socialize together. That is to say, the private property for only lodge members became public property; it was considerably important in those years in order to see the effects of the representations of space. The mansion, dancing floor, modern courts and sitting areas around the pool was conceived for recreational use. Women and men were encouraged to do shared activities: playing tennis together, boating, listening to music and enjoying family activities such as gathering and drinking tea or coffee under the pergolas. These activities became a routine for the user of these spaces. It is significant to acknowledge that these practices transformed and formed new practices for the use of *Dede Bahçesi*, as a kind of entertainment space, with its quality, location and materials.

Nevertheless, transformation of the religious garden into a mixed gender recreational area was a significant change for the users of the space. According to Lefebvre's spatial triad, the perceived space represents "the practical basis of the perception of the outside world" [1]. "Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degrees of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of competence and a specific level of performance" [1]. The garden was perceived as an activity space through its practices. Participating in westernized leisure activities like playing tennis, listening to music and dancing promoted social interactions among the citizens in using the space. The whole area with its spatial practices became a representational space that regulated social and cultural acquisitions in daily life of Konya's citizens. For this reason, the garden turned into a representational space through the users' integration and implementation

of these entertainment spaces into their daily practices by using and adapting them.

## **3.2.2 Urban Development of Konya**

### **3.2.2.1 1946 Master Development Plan**

The first comprehensive and holistic city plan prepared for the city of Konya was the 1/2.000 scale Konya Construction Plan by Asım Kömürcüoğlu in 1946 based on creating a “model city” approach (Figure 3.17). The planning area covered approximately 816 hectares. Its primary objectives were to control the urban layout formed in an uncontrolled and unsupervised way, to regulate the urban gaps and to eliminate the deficiencies of the socio-technical infrastructure by cleaning and restructuring the old city and its neighborhoods. The basic principle of the 1946 Konya development plan was directing the development of the city towards western and southwestern regions for housing and industrial areas. In this plan, it is possible to see the traces of the City Beautiful Movement of North American architecture and urban planning that flourished during the 1890s and 1900s with the intent of introducing beautification and monumental grandeur in cities [52]. Its philosophy can be summarized as the creation of wide boulevards, which were common in the United States and European cities, with their prominence of monumental works, symmetry and formality [53]. One of the significant decisions of the development plan was creation of open-green areas. Almost 39.9 hectare area was reserved for the use of open and green areas. The most important open-green areas of the city were Alaeddin Hill and historic *Dede Bahçesi* [54]. The garden was preserved in the Kömürcüoğlu’s construction plan. From the archive of the Konya Municipality, the 1945 city map of the area shows that from the northwest side next to the *Dede Bahçesi* was conceived as a culture park and fair (Figure 3.18).

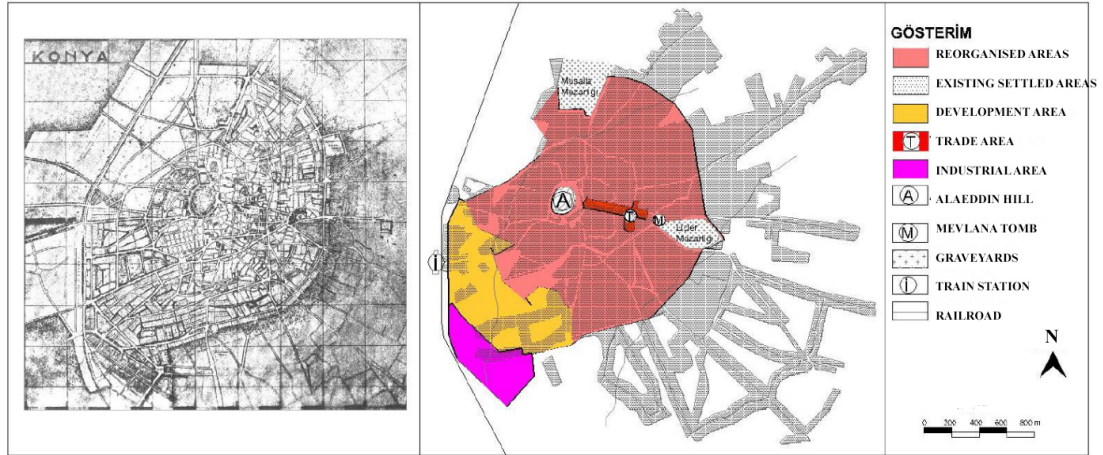


Figure 3.17: 1946 Konya Development Plan and urban land use scheme (Source: M. Yenice, “Konya Kentinin Planlama Tarihi ve Mekansal Gelişimi,” Erciyes Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü Dergisi, vol. 28(04), 2012.)

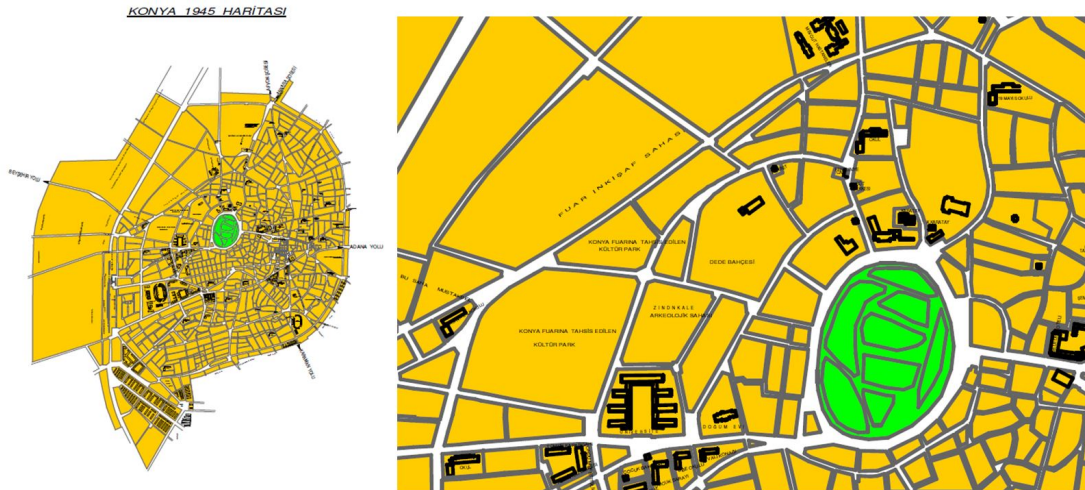


Figure 3.18: *Dede Bahçesi* in 1945 (Source: “Konya 1945 Şehir Haritası.” Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work’s Archive.)

### 3.2.2.2 1954 Master Development Plan

The 1946 reconstruction plan targeting the year of 1965 needed to be revised because of the proceeding spatial and demographic development goals in ten years time. As a matter of fact, the population of Konya was estimated as 75,000 for 1965, but in 1950, the city's population reached to 64,000. In order to prevent unplanned developments and to provide the additional housing requirements, a city plan covering approximately 912 hectare area was prepared by Ferzan and Leyla Baydar in 1954 [54]. According to the 1954 plan, the general land use decisions were compared with the 1946 zoning plan. It was found that, in relation to the usage of urban areas for residential and commercial areas, the total urban land use was increasing, while the urban open-green areas and urban social-technical infrastructure areas were decreasing proportionally. This finding indicated that a considerable part of the city's need for housing was met by converting the socio-technical infrastructure into residential areas. It can be said that the unexpected increase of the urban population, which was based on the national policies adopted at that time, were effective to make these decisions [54]. In 1954 the Baydar Plan presented the idea that the greater part of the *Dede Bahçesi* area could become a playground and the rest of the area could be spared for a zoo and botanical garden as it already hosted those functions [55] (Figure 3.19).

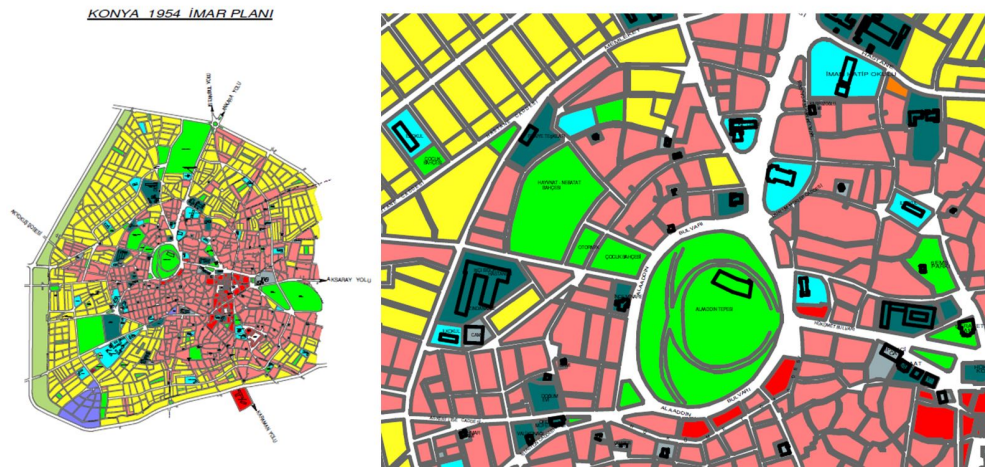


Figure 3.19: 1954 Baydar Plan *Dede Bahçesi* was conceived as playground, zoo and botanical garden (Source: “Konya 1954 Şehir Haritası.” Konya Metropolitan Municipality Public Work’s Archive.)

### 3.2.2.3 First Competition for the New Development Plan of Konya in 1965

Rapid migration, as a result of the economic recovery of the country caused by national economic policies, affected the city of Konya in the form of a population increase from 64,000 to 119,481 between 1950 and 1960 [54]. Indeed, statistical data from Turkey’s population growth rate in that period showed that Konya was the fourth highest populated city after Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir [56]. As a result of the unexpected population increase, the preparation of a new urban plan was required for the spatial needs. A new development plan was significantly important because it was the first plan that resulted from a national competition organized by İller Bank, which was established in 1933, originally called Bank of Municipalities, which meets local administrations’ need for funding. [54]. Winners of the first prize were two young architects Yavuz Taşçı and Haluk Berksan (Figure 3.20). Consequently, a development plan was prepared by Taşçı and Berksan in 1965 (Figure 3.21). In the analytical study reports prepared before the competition, targeting the year of 1985, the population of the city was estimated around 300,000-350,000, and if the State Planning Organization’s investments were to be completed, the population could reach 480,000 [57].

İller Bankası'na müsabakaya çıkarılan Konya İmar Planı yarışması sonuçlanmıştır. Ödül ve Mansiyon alan yarışmanlar şunlardır.		
1. Ödül	Yavuz Taşçı Haluk Berkson	Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Mimar
2. Ödül	Melihat Topaloğlu Bülent Berkson Mehmet Ali Topaloğlu	Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Mimar Y. Mimar
3. Ödül	Haluk Alatan Remin Biler	Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Müh. Mimar
1. Mansiyon	Behçet Baykut Vedat Onomay Fahri Yetman	Y. Mimar Y. Mimar Y. Mimar
2. Mansiyon	Prof. Kemal Ahmet Arü Prof. Gündüz Özdeş Dr. Ahmet Keskin Saim Beygo Orhan Göçer	Y. Mimar Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Müh. Mimar
3. Mansiyon	Raşit Uybadın	Y. Mimar
4. Mansiyon	Cihat Fındıkoğlu Ergun Gürel Erol Fındıkoğlu Yardımcısı Jacob Schulze-Rohr	Y. Mimar Y. Müh. Mimar Y. Mimar
5. Mansiyon	Erol Türkgenç Yardımcısı Çetin Biraniş	Y. Müh. Mimar
Kazanmıştır.		

(Bauw 5616 - A - 3273)

Figure 3.20: Winners of the National Competition by İller Bank (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://dergi.mo.org.tr/dergiler/4/317/4518.pdf>.)

The primary objectives of the 1965 Konya city reconstruction plan covering approximately 2,380 hectares of planning area could be summarized into three objectives. The first was the reduction of urban pressures on rural agricultural areas in the southern part of the city. The second was to prevent illegal construction by eliminating the lack of socio-technical infrastructure in the boundary areas of the city. The third objective was to meet the need for an open-green space of Konya. In terms of spatial development, the west and northwest of the city were given the main priority [54].





Figure 3.21: Konya master plan competition 1965 (Source: A. Erdoğan, *Gez Dünyayı Gör Konya'ya*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002.)

The most important change of the 1965 reconstruction plan was the desire to build a new city center. This is because the historic city center was restricted for future spatial development. In this context, a new city center has been formed with a center of cultural, commercial and management units in the north west sector of the old city center, which was defined as the Metropolitan Municipality and its immediate surroundings [54]. In addition to this decision, there was an intention to integrate the new city center with the old city center by a green corridor that would include the Alaeddin Hill and Konya Culture Park area (Figure 3.22). Although this decision was not realized, the *Dede Bahçesi* area, which constitutes the core of the culture park, was considerably important in terms of being located in northwestern part nearby the old city center where architect Yavuz Taşçı had foreseen the development of Konya. After the competition, fragmented additional development plans through the year 2020 were prepared by architect Taşçı under the supervision of Konya Metropolitan Municipality. The 1965 Konya zoning plan and the fragmented plans made between 1967 and 1983 were also carried out by Taşçı.

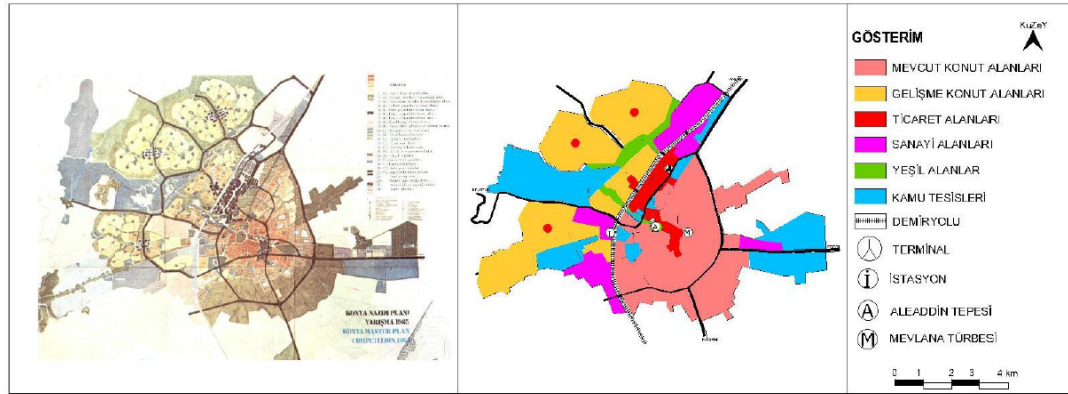


Figure 3.22: Konya master plan competition plan and land use scheme (Source: M. Yenice, “Konya Kentinin Planlama Tarihi ve Mekansal Gelişimi,” Erciyes Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü Dergisi, vol. 28(04), 2012.)

The 1965 Konya Development Plans were realized under the leadership of Mayor Ahmet Hilmi Nalçacı (1963-1969), who was a very important and influential figure in the development process of Konya [58]. With the contribution of Nalçacı's personal efforts, the Taşçı-Berksan plan was implemented successfully in 1966. His policies and implementation of urban renewal and modernization of Konya make him an exemplary executer. These acts include asphaltting roads, creating wide boulevards and preventing squatter settlements by offering new settlements in the newly developed areas [59]. After the center of the city was shifted to the north, the old city was kept in its own place in the south. The planning decisions, which emphasized open-green areas as vital sources of the city, constituted the city's present macroform. As a result, the *Dede Bahçesi* area was preserved and developed as a green public space by repurposing the area as a cultural core and naming it Konya Culture Park and Fair. While refunctioning the historic green area into a new formation of the culture park and increasing its scale, the existing entertainment practices was sustained. Consequently, Konya obtained an urban park integrated with culture, just like Izmir, Ankara, Istanbul and Bursa had.

## Chapter 4

# Konya Culture Park (1970-2008)

Examining the master plans of Konya demonstrates that the city was planned to develop towards the north rather than the south where the old city existed. The most important green areas of the city in the late 1960s were *Dede Bahçesi* and Alaeddin Hill. The *Dede Bahçesi* area constituted the core of the culture park, which was located nearby the old city at the northwestern part of Alaeddin Hill. At the intersection of the old and new city center, *Dede Bahçesi* provided an area for both continuation and transformation of the entertainment culture. Constructing cultural parks had become a widespread idea in Turkey by that time, and as a result, there was a need for a new cultural medium for developing Konya. In 1961, the municipality of Konya requested the plans of Ankara Youth Park as a reference in the construction of the Konya Culture Park. As a result, on 3 November, 1961, the Director of the Planning Council of Ankara Municipality, Orhan Deniz, sent one copy of site plan to Konya Municipality [31]. Coincidentally, Taşçı was an architect from Izmir who took Izmir Culture Park as a precedent to design a culture park in Konya. As a continuation of the idea of early Republican culture parks and a symbol of modernization, Konya Culture Park was thought of as a reflection of the city's lively entertainment culture in the late 1960s. Just like its precedents, by offering an urban park in Konya could serve as a medium of modernity, providing people a green space for leisure practices and buildings of entertainment.

## 4.1 Building Konya Culture Park in 1970

In 1967, the municipality of Konya laid the foundation of Konya Culture Park and started to construct the components of leisure spaces in the area of *Dede Bahçesi*, which had contained entertainment spaces such as tennis courts, a *gazino*, a pool, a dancing floor, a zoo and recreational areas built after the foundation of the Republic [60]. The design and construction initiator was architect and city planner Mehmet Yavuz Taşçı, one of the winners of the competition “New Development Plan of Konya in 1965”. Taşçı together with Mayor Nalçacı took an active role in Konya’s and culture park’s development. Mayor Nalçacı was also one of the mentors of the culture park idea and started its implementation in Konya with a role similar to that of Mayor Uz with Izmir Culture Park. Since the architect not only prepared city development plans of Konya but also Kayseri and worked in Iller Bank’s urban planning department, the municipality of Konya, especially the mayor, wanted to work with him to contribute to the development of the city [61]. Nalçacı thought Taşçı as an avant-garde architect from Izmir who could help him to design a culture park in Konya. They had the same vision to modernize the city, and as a result, they collaboratively started to work on the culture park design. To facilitate the construction of the culture park project in *Dede Bahçesi* and its surroundings in the borders of the Ferhuniye district, Nalçacı closed the usage of the land. Furthermore, he gave the development rights to Konya Culture Park in order to prevent other types of construction [62]. *Dede Bahçesi* area was the most preferable lively public space under the old trees and was accessible from other cultural developments. The garden was enlarged in the first phase as a Konya’s Culture Park to an almost 45.000 meter square area. The plan of the park followed the spatial organization of Izmir Culture Park. Taking it as a role model, the plan contained an artificial lake, pools with sculptural water falls of Brutalist aesthetics, an open-air theatre, a cafeteria, a *gazino*, tea and coffeehouses, an amusement park, a museum of nature, an aquarium, spaces for recreation as well as a building complex for the fair [40] (Figure 4.1).

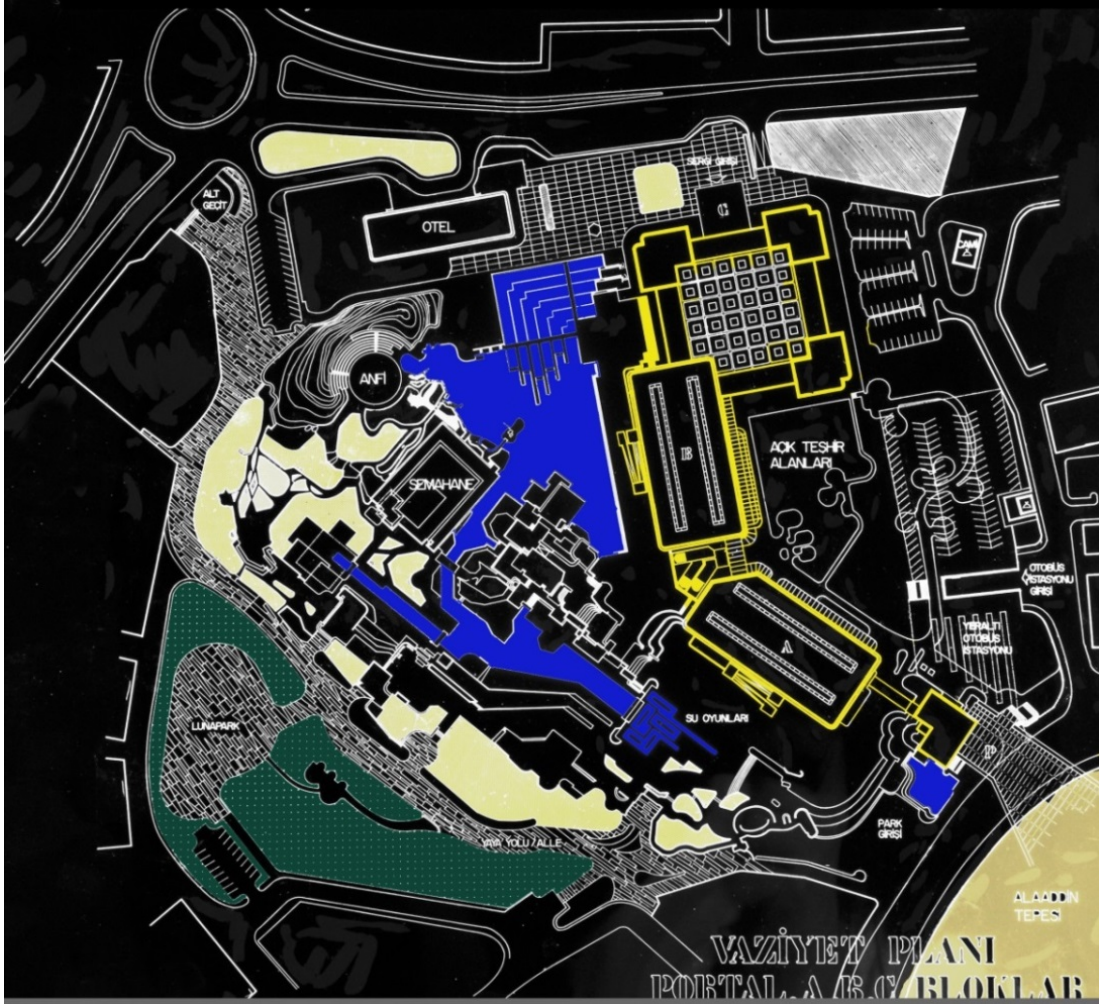


Figure 4.1: Site Plan of the Culture Park. This was the result of architect’s initial planning, but it was not a final design (Source: M.Yavuz Taşçı Archive.)

Regarding the production of space, Lefebvre focused on three dimensions of space, which are representations of space, representational space and spatial practice. Based upon these, Lefebvre offered a useful scheme to understand how space is socially produced. According to him, “representations of space is a conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent; all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived” [1]. In other words, it is the space of the ones who determined what is designed and experienced. Representations of space have a practical impact; they intervene in and modify spatial textures, which are informed by effective knowledge and ideology

[1]. Conceived space gets at the heart of the history of ideology within a space. In Lefebvrian understanding, the conceived space and representational space are tied to the relations of production and to the “order” which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to “frontal” relations [1]. The motivation behind establishing a culture park in Konya in order to decide the future of the area through applying these relations that Lefebvre mentioned was dependent on the municipality and designer of the park’s direction who gave the orders to its users. Therefore, representations of space have a substantial influence in the production of space, while conceiving the park through its formation in relation to its history and this influence was seen as a materialization of Konya Culture Park.

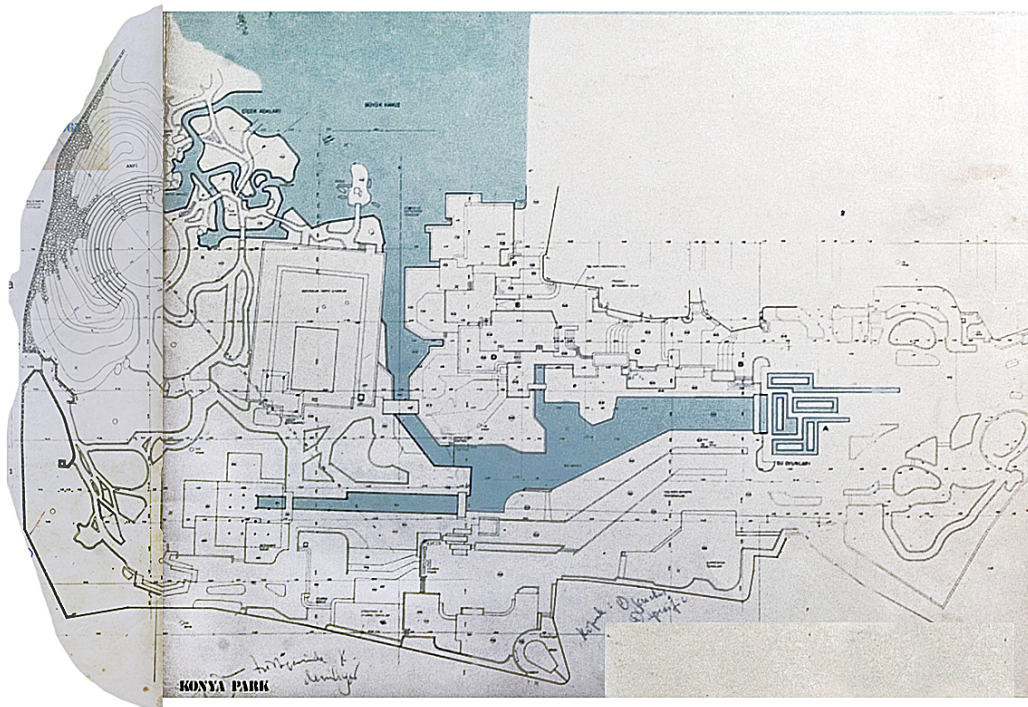


Figure 4.2: Implementation plan of Konya Culture Park (Source: M.Yavuz Taşçı Archive.)

Bringing together elements such as pools, green areas, recreational areas and entertainment spaces to form a culture park that, as a whole, space is presumed as an act of thought that is linked to the production of knowledge by the park’s

promoters (Figure 4.2). Representations of space are certainly abstract, but play an important role in social and political practice by conjoining them: established relations between objects and people in represented space are subordinate to logic, which will sooner or later break them up because of their lack of consistency [3]. Therefore, political power has an important effect on the representations of the space through the actions of authorities (governments, municipalities, administrators etc.) or professionals (architects, designers, urban planners etc.). According to Lefebvre, this power's intervention occurs by the way of construction in architectural language, conceived of not as the building of a particular structure, palace or monument, but rather as a project that is embedded in a spatial context and a texture, which call for "representations" that will not vanish into the symbolic or imaginary realms [1]. The design of such a park in Konya, conceived as a vision of modernization and the means of educating the public as Uz intended in 1930s in the creation of Izmir Culture Park as a public university, are similar. The underlying ideas behind the culture park as a modernization project in Konya depended on the architect Taşçı and Mayor Nalçacı's conceptions of the space (Figure 4.3).



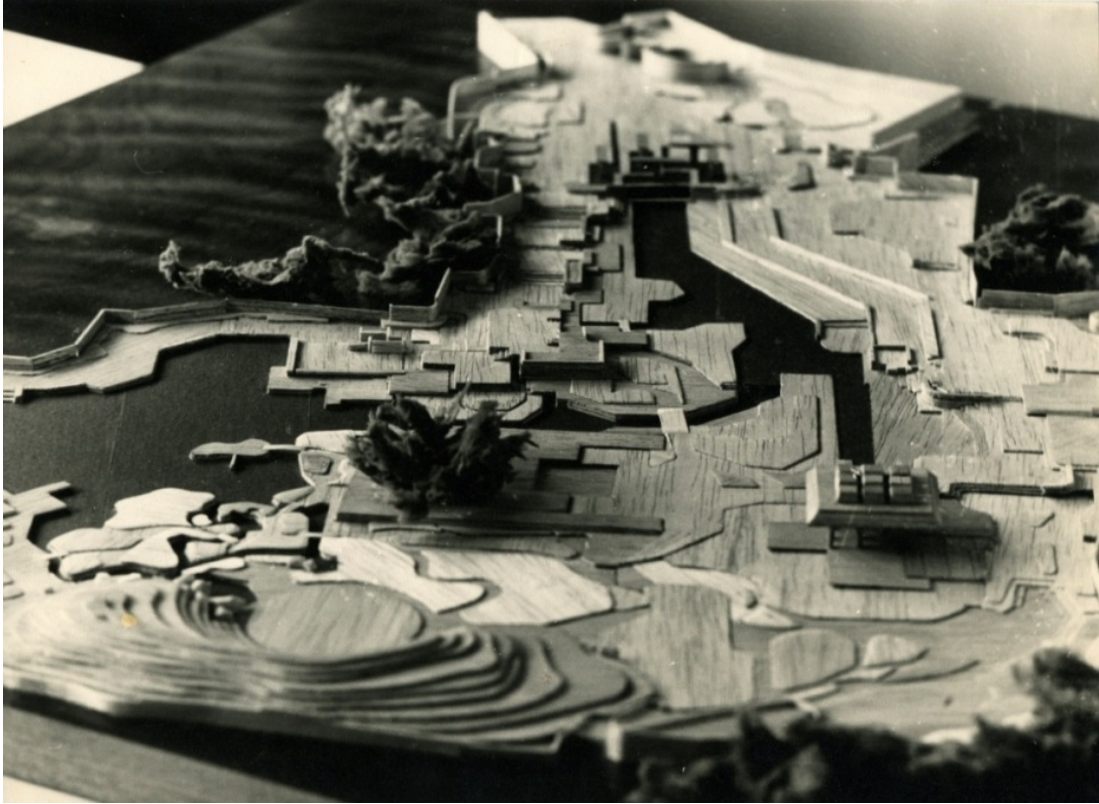


Figure 4.3: Yavuz Taşçı's model of Konya Culture Park which was built, the model was done by balsa wood (Source: M.Yavuz Taşçı Archive.)

## 4.2 Spaces of the Konya Culture Park between 1970-2008

The implementation plans of Konya Culture Park proposed facilities that catered to the needs for entertainment. During the design process, the architect foresaw the culture park as a two staged project “park and civic center”. In the first stage, designed in 1966, about three hectares of the park consisted of plazas with large water surfaces and an amphitheater. The second stage of the development phase in 1968 was a continuation of the culture park. A building complex called a civic center, which contained a shopping mall, a multipurpose exhibition hall and a business hotel was proposed during this stage (Figure 4.4).

Konya Culture Park was set to open in September of 1968. However, since the construction works could not be finished on time, the opening of the park was postponed to a later date (Figure 4.5). As Taşçı explained, only the park's boundary walls, artificial lake, pools with sculptural water falls, and amphitheater could be completed by July 1968 [40]. Konya Culture Park was opened on 30th August, 1970 during the Victory Day (Figure 4.6). The scheduling of the opening on a national holiday reminded the openings of earlier culture parks [63]. Even though the construction works continued after its opening, the park remained open until the winter of 1970. Culture Park Directorate was also founded in 1970 to follow up and control the development process of the park [64].

**PARK AND CIVIC CENTER IN KONYA 1966. A two stage project**  
 Architectural development of the transition zone from existing central area to proposed new central business district, is a significant contribution to urban design concept. Proposed CBD realised and at the moment operating as the main central area of the town.  
 First stage development: A three hectares park, plazas with large water surfaces, and the amphitheatre completed in 1968.  
 Second stage development: Proposes the enlargement of the site up to 9.6 hectares and integration of a building complex, consisting civic centre, covered shopping mall, a large multi purpose hall and a business hotel. Preliminary design of stage 2, (45.000 m<sup>2</sup> floor area) completed in 1/100 scale for civic center, shopping mall and meeting exhibition hall. The work is being carried out.

Figure 4.4: Design Description about the culture park project by the architect Taşçı (Source: M.Yavuz Taşçı Archive.)



Figure 4.5: Culture park and fair construction before the opening; exhibition center was not completed yet (Source: Konya Ticaret Odası, *Geçmişten Günümüze Konya Fotoğraf Albümü*, Anadolu Ofset, 2018.)



Figure 4.6: Aerial view of Konya Culture Park, 1973 (Source: T.C. Konya Valiliği, *Cumhuriyetin 50. Yılında Konya İl Yıllığı*, 1973, Konya.)

After the design process was finished (1966-1968), three entrance doors were planned and built. Access to the culture park was through these gates and people had to pay an affordable fee in order to enter the park. Two entrances were from the fair place and amusement park. The main entrance was near the playground on the northwestern part of Alaeddin Hill where the pools with sculptural waterfalls called mushroom shaped columns were located. These pools were designed with large reinforced concrete piers which functioned as waterfalls. Located next to each other, they provided spectators an enjoyable view of splashing water from their top (Figure 4.7). In fact, water was an important design element in the park as it was in the case of other culture parks like the Youth Park in Ankara. By using water in the design, Taşçı thought that the park could be cooled as the weather is hot and arid in summer in Konya. An artificial lake was constructed in a 4.200 square meter area that had three ponds and three islands (Figure 4.8). The first pond was a decorative pool, with a depth of 45 centimeters. The second

pond was 70 centimeters deep and had boats, which people were able to get on boats there. The third pool was a pond of lilies, which was designed to add aesthetic quality to the environment. Over these three ponds, there were six bridges [40] (Figure 4.9).



Figure 4.7: Pools with sculptural waterfalls called mushroom shaped columns (Source: “Kültürpark Mantar Kolonlar.” M.Yavuz Taşçı Archive.)

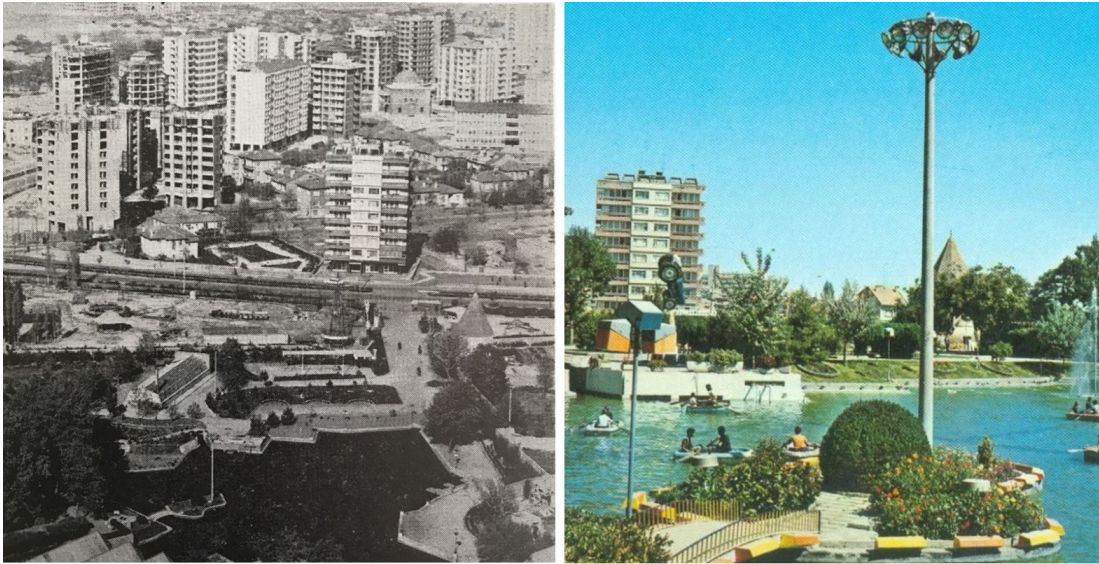


Figure 4.8: Artificial islands on the lake and boating activity with the view of the city (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu 1970*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)



Figure 4.9: A bridge over the artificial lake (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu 1970*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)

The open air theatre, which was usually used for concerts and folk dancing, had a capacity of 500 people. The semicircular plan of the theatre was designed to complement its circular stage. The theatre covered an area of 1500 square meters [40] (Figure 4.10). According to the working reports of the Konya Municipality in 1970, a storehouse, a beerhouse, stores, gift shops and ticket offices were built [64]. In addition to the construction of these components of the park, entrance pavements, the coffeehouse's and the *gazino*'s floorings, ashlar sitting units, floorings of the buildings, entrance door inscriptions, concrete stairway floorings, electrical wirings, the playground and amusement parks' equipment, stone parapets around the pools and the mosaic floorings of the *Dede Bahçesi*'s old pool were completed before the opening at a cost of 809.729.63 TL [65] (Figures 4.11, 4.12).



Figure 4.10: Open-air theatre for cultural activities for 500 people (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu 1970*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)

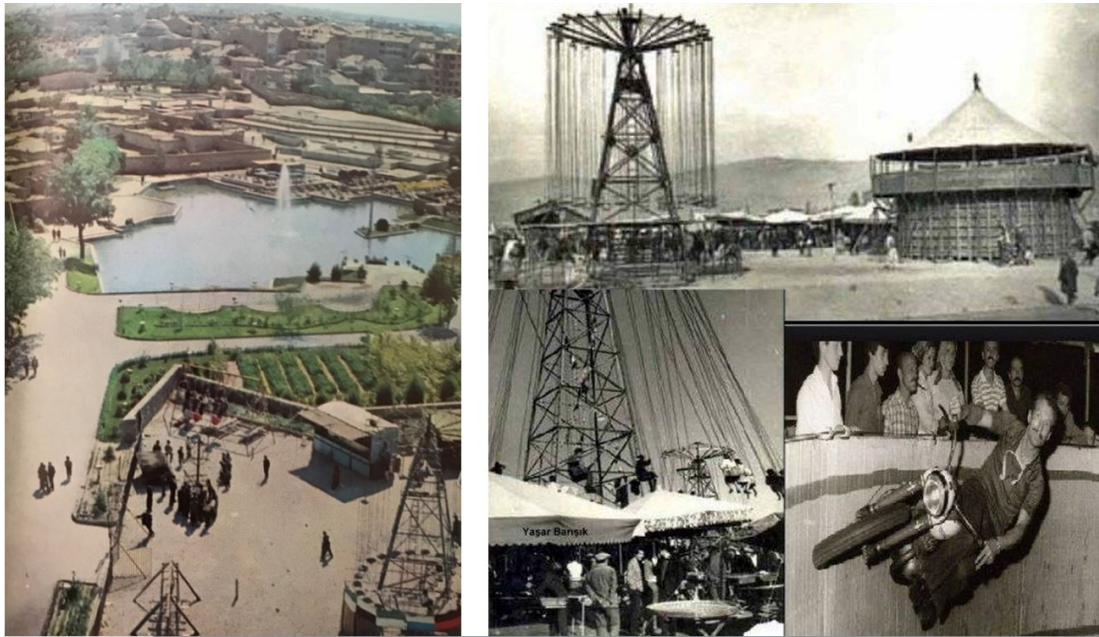


Figure 4.11: Amusement Park in the culture park and motor rides in the amusement park (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu-Başkan Yılmaz Kulluk 1970-1977*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)



Figure 4.12: Left, playground, Right, coffehouse (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu 1970*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)

In 1972, a *gazino* under construction named *Fuar Gazinosu* finished with its inside and outside areas. Its architectural design with untreated concrete surfaces and unadorned aesthetics reflected the stylistic inclinations of 1970s architectural culture. Working as a restaurant and housing music and other performances, the *gazino* was in harmony with the modern concept of culture park and the lively entertainment culture that these parks had historically provided in the cities that they existed. At the end of the 1960s, Konya's *gazinolar*, such as the *Dede Aile Gazinosu* and the *Fuar Gazinosu* embodied such entertainment culture with the performers such as Kör Ahmet and Bedia Akartürk and those performances also continued in the *Fuar Gazinosu* [66] (Figure 4.13). As Gürel mentioned, *gazinolar*' popularity can be connected to the city's entertainment culture, as much as a wish to take part in contemporary practices [16]. They are representational spaces, not only with the performances of the local artists but also with the modern way of entertainment style for the joy of their users. In the 1970s, Konya's citizens were open to change and new ways of entertainment styles. They were willing to build

*gazin*os to enrich their social life and public practices.



Figure 4.13: *Fuar Gazinosu* in 1972, designed by architect Yavuz Taşçı (Source: T.C. Konya Valiliği, *Cumhuriyetin 50.Yılında Konya İl Yıllığı*, 1973, Konya.)

In December 1972, the movie “*Aşkların En Güzeli*”, starring famous actor and actress of Turkish cinema Tarık Akan and Deniz Gökçer, was filmed in well-known sites of Konya, including Alaeddin Hill, Mevlana Square and Konya Culture Park [67]. The film featured the park as an important point of attraction and a site of modernity in the city. Its portrayal is significant for providing the spectators with a sign to perceive it as a symbol of idealization of the modern (Figure 4.14).





Figure 4.14: The Movie “*Aşkların En Güzeli*” 1972. Beerhouse (*Tekel*) and *Fuar Gazinosu* can be seen in the background (Source: Screenshots from “*Aşkların En Güzeli*”).

The analysis of Konya Culture Park in this chapter showed that, the park was an important recreational area in the center of the city starting from 1970s. Its many spaces, seating areas, pools, *gazino*, tea gardens, amphitheater, playgrounds, amusement parks, cultural center, walking paths and active and passive green areas accommodated the needs for resting, entertainment and cultural activities for people. Located at the intersection of the old center and the new center, it recalled its precedents embodying the concepts of modernization, early Republican modernity and contemporary lifestyles (Figure 4.15). Moreover the park’s spaces, architectural elements, design language as well as practices overlapped with these precedents, namely Izmir Culture Park, Ankara Youth Park, Gezi Park and Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park. Practices in the park show that many of the characteristics of the 1930s Izmir Culture Park were replicated in the 1970s Konya Culture Park throughout its development period. That is to say, the authorities tried to adopt the model of the Izmir Culture Park in Konya by creating similar spaces at a much smaller scale. The fact that the idea of the fair was a major component of the Konya Culture Park further shows the influence

of Izmir Culture Park as a role model for the creation of this park. Just as Izmir Culture Park with its fair reflected the worldview and modernization project of Mayor Uz and the project team, Konya Culture Park echoed Mayor Nalçacı's and architect Taşçı's aims in enlivening Konya's commercial and cultural life as much as modernizing the city. Both were conceived by the authorities and shared a similar wider world view of cultural reflection in the same manner. Therefore, the influence of the movement to construct cultural parks, which started in Izmir in the 1930s, continued and was further embraced in developed cities like Ankara and Istanbul in the 1940s, Bursa in the 1950s and thereafter Konya, in the 1970s by taking the culture park idea as a medium of representational urban space.

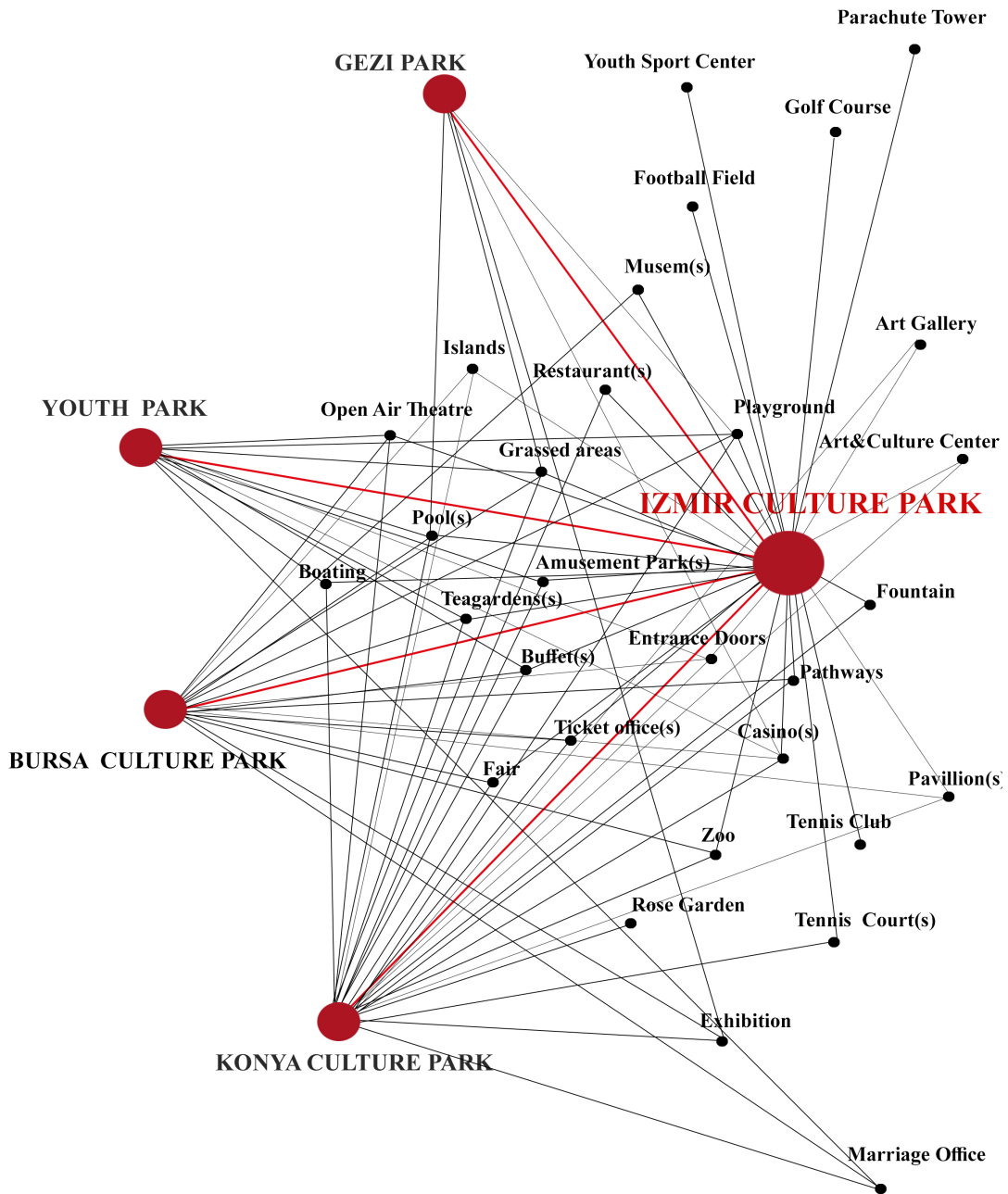


Figure 4.15: Commonalities of the Konya Culture Park with other culture parks studied in Chapter 2 (Source: Graphic illustration was drawn by the author.)

### 4.2.1 The Fair

A fair is a field of activities that is conceived as a staging platform for the industrial and economic ambitions of countries by serving political, economic and educational purposes. By creating an educational space where the public could be in an interaction with modern technology, lifestyles, the fair is represented as a platform that the industrial and economic progress of the country could be compared in an international level [68]. The idea of coalescence of a culture park and fair was first initiated in Izmir Culture Park in 1936. After that, the public park called as Izmir Culture Park and International Fair. By following Izmir example, in Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park, the national fair was designed by the architect Taşçı. This shows that he had a comprehensive knowledge about the design of both culture park and fair. As a result, the cohesive idea of a culture park and fair was also generated in Konya Culture Park.

The first ideas for establishing a fair in Konya date back to 1945 development plans of Konya. At that time, it was the aimed to be the Central Anatolia Fair of the future. After discussing the idea over the years, executives of the municipality took a concrete step to design the Konya Fair by including it in the 1965 city development plans initiated by the governance of Mayor Nalçacı. In order to create a modern and socio-economically developed city, Nalçacı aimed to establish not only a culture park that followed the founders' principles of earlier examples as discussed in this thesis, but also a fair facility for commerce a means of modernization in a newly established exhibition space for entertainment purposes. After the sudden death of Mayor Nalçacı the new mayor, Yılmaz Kulluk continued the project with a similar enthusiasm in collaboration with the architect Taşçı [40]. Konya Fair's construction as a part of the culture park was not finished by 1970. Therefore, the fair buildings opened for business the next year on 5 August 1971 [40]. The fair was open for one month between 5 August and 5 September. Yet the exhibition halls and some of the buildings of this complex were not finished until the opening date and the participation of institutions and organizations was not sufficient. However, when it was finally opened, the public showed great interest in the fair and it was widely attended. As a result,

Konya Culture Park with its fair carried significant meanings not only for its producers but, to a great extent, for its users. Although the construction of the fair buildings was still not completed, in its opening, 12.350 people visited and 28 firms participated to the fair. 750.000 people visited the fair in one month from August 5 until its closing time, 5 September 1971 [64]. Some writers and journalists such as Celalettin Kışmir who was a journalist for the local newspapers of *Ekekon* and *Yeni Konya* and a contributor of the Konya yearbooks, suggested enclosing some spaces of the open fair areas in order to use them in winter [69]. About 150 firms participated in the second Konya Fair in its first year [40] (Figure 4.16).



Figure 4.16: Exhibition Hall of the Fair and the aerial view of the Fair 1972 (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu-Başkan Yılmaz Kulluk 1970-1977*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)

As Lefebvre contends, the experience in the perceived space will be mediated through the conceived space expectations and how they are manifested into the lived space [1]. That is to say, the park was perceived as a national unification space and it was desired to be a public park by creating a cultural habitat in a modernized way. As a result of opening the fair, the number of participants who visited the park was increased. This is because, with the fair buildings, the park as a whole became a multi-functional space used as a center of attraction. Therefore, the fair caused confusion in the naming of the park. Although it was designed as a culture park by the authorities and the fair was a part of this project after the opening of the fair, users started to call this place simply a fair. This perception resulted to associate Konya Culture Park as Konya Fair. For instance, *Konya Fuarı*, rather than Konya Culture Park was written at the

entrances. Additionally, the commercial products for advertisement of the fair caused the remembrance of this place not as culture park but as a fair (Figure 4.17). Fair dominated the culture park. Therefore, it was perceived as the fair and this was also the case in Izmir Culture Park.



Figure 4.17: Fair Products: matches (1972) and cigarettes (1978). Duration of the fair (5 August and 5 September) was written on their packages (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Archive.)

By building up a close connection within the perceived space, there is an exploration of spatial practice by the societies between daily routine and urban reality and this paradoxically splits up the places and links them [1]. As Lefebvre states, in the analytical thinking, the spatial practice of the society is revealed through the deciphering of its space. The spatial practice of a society is in a dialectical interaction with the society's space, it propounds, presupposes and produces it slowly and masters and appropriates it [1]. There is a cohesion and continuity in the spatial practice. Users integrate and adopt the space through reproducing it with their practices. Production of space overlaps with the daily routine and the actual routes and networks organize this daily routine [1]. In

this line of thought, the conceived and perceived park reproduced a daily reality of social interaction in Konya Culture Park. Within the perceived environment, daily practices raised the demand for entertainment spaces.

In 1978, the size of the culture park area and fair increased to 58.000 square meters. In the following year, with the new extensions about 33.000 square meters, the total area became 84.445 square meters. This growth met the demands of participating stakeholders. In its 9<sup>th</sup> year cycle, 22 official agencies and 92 private companies attended the fair [40]. There was a large increase in the number of visitors in 1979 and because of that, the municipality formed a jury to evaluate the fair due to the increase in demand number of visitors. As a result some firms were rewarded because of their quality of products and materials [70]. In the same year, in addition to various sports performances, Turkish folk dances and festivals were held to entertain the participants. In the open-air theatre, wrestling matches were organized as a new activity. In 1979, the fair was a success in terms of entertainment and leisure activities and these all enlivened the city life.

In 1983, the culture park area was increased to 96.000 square meters. One year later, additional structures were built in the area, so the total area reached 100.000 square meters [71]. These included new exhibition units for the fair, additional sales stands, extensions of the recreational areas and walk ways, a new fair entrance door to replace the old one and a greenhouse for selling ornamental plants (Figure 4.18). The design of the new elements displayed the attention given to aesthetics. For example, in 1984, the new monumental entrance door designed by Faruk Koçak, who is the architect and unit head of the Public Works of the municipality, was a statement piece displaying the importance of the fair and the aesthetic inclinations of the 1980s by using steel [72] (Figure 4.19).



Figure 4.18: Old entrance door (Source: Konya Belediyesi, *Başkanlık Çalışma Raporu 1984*. Konya Belediyesi Yayınları.)

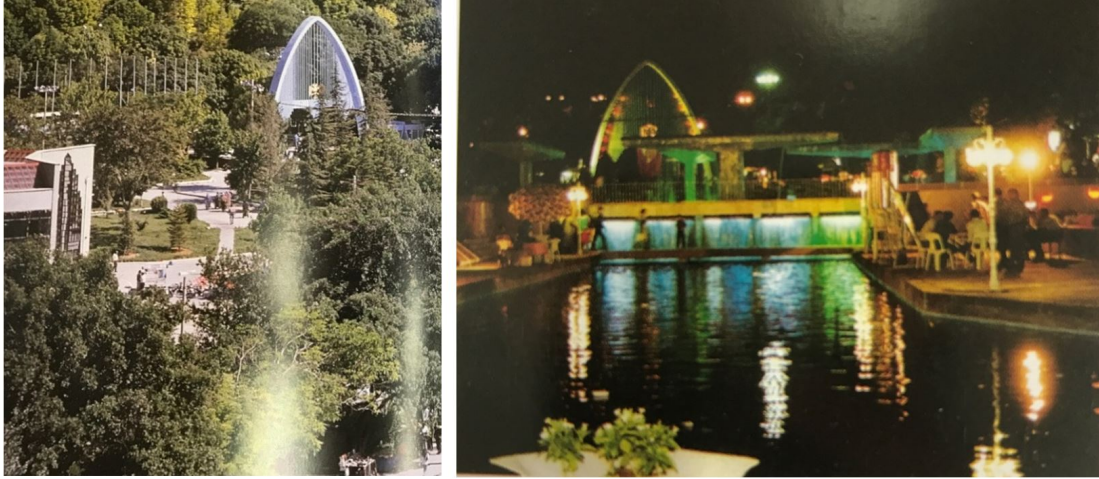


Figure 4.19: New entrance door (1984) designed by architect Faruk Koçak (Source: T.C Konya Valiliği, *Cumhuriyetin 75.Yılında Konya*. Konya: Yeni Kitap Basımevi, 1998.)

The culture park continued to grow until 1986. In that year, the fair was visited by 754.000 visitors paying a total of 3.180.000 *lira* to enter [73]. In 1989, a 1.800 square meters Fair Exhibition Center for a specialized fair was designed to serve activities such as conferences, social activities, panel discussions, and meetings (Figure 4.20). Later on, this building served as the Fair Cultural Center. Besides hosting artistic and cultural events, the building was also used for engagement and wedding ceremonies [40]. In 1995, Konya National Fair's opening time interval was changed to 20 July and 15 August. In the 25th cycle of the fair, exhibitions, cinemas, theatres, concerts and whirling ceremonies were organized within the scope of "Altınbaşak Culture and Art Festival" [71]. These activities continued



until 1997 (Figure 4.21).

The fair worked as a cultural instrument through the performances that it accommodated. These performances helped users to reproduce social relations by gathering socio-cultural activities such as conferences, discussions, cultural events and meetings. All of these organizations contributed to the economy of Konya. Konya Fair was opened annually until 2002.

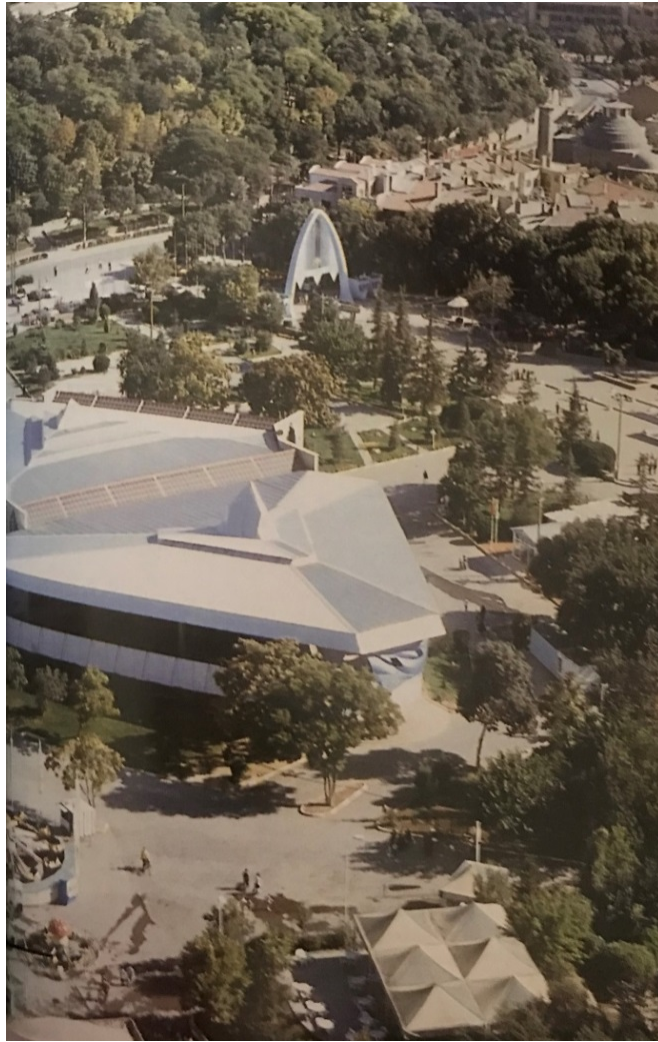


Figure 4.20: Fair Exhibition Center in 1989 (Source: A. N. Güler, *1989'dan 2000'lere Bir Başarı Öyküsü KONYA*. Konya Büyükşehir Belediyesi.)



Figure 4.21: Altınbaşak Culture and Art Festival in 1997 (Source: A. N. Güler, *1989'dan 2000'lere Bir Başarı Öyküsü Konya*. Konya Büyükşehir Belediyesi.)

### 4.3 Destruction of the Konya Culture Park as a Public Space

By the end of the 1980s, a railway system was built in the eastern part of the park. It created a border between the city and the park, hence, preventing the development of the fair grounds towards the east [55]. Because the rails of the tram passed through the site, the surface area of the park decreased about 10.000 square meters (Figure 4.22). In 1992, after the railway was opened, 34 structures of the fair were demolished. The remaining 86 permanent stands and 28 mobile stands were constructed by the participant firms. In addition to those, official agencies and institutions had 16 permanent stands and private companies had 40 permanent stands that year [40].



Figure 4.22: The tram line next to the amusement park (Source: A. Köseoğlu, İhsan Toy, *Gönüllerin Başkenti Konya*. Konya: Konya Büyükşehir Belediyesi.)

Resulting from the increase in specialized fairs and the changing concept of the fair idea, a new fair was designed and constructed on Aksaray Road. Consequently, the fair was terminated in 2003; however, Konya Culture Park continued its presence without the fair activity until 2008 [40]. The removal of the fair from the park along with the changes in local governance of the municipality had consequences. Interest in the culture park diminished because the visitors perceived the fair in a harmony with the culture park and it attracted intensive attention during the summer times when the fair was active. That was no longer the case once the fair disappeared.

Located in the city center, the park worked to bring people together in a lively environment where they could share similar experiences, perform in similar ways and build an entertaining culture together. As such, this space started to lose its meaning and importance first for the authorities and then for the users. As time passed, Konya Culture Park started to lose its socio-cultural impact. Its planner, architect Taşçı also ended his career in Konya towards the end of 1980s because his ideas conflicted with the new local government, changing from AP (Justice Party) to RP (Welfare Party) [74]. He clarified this by saying that, “when conservatives came to power, I was fed up and decided to leave 8-10 years later I was called to correct the mistakes that the local municipality did in the city planning of Konya” [74]. New additions to the park such as the cultural center with its curtain wall reflected changes in stylistic preferences and differed from the architect’s original designs. Existing buildings and green areas were replaced by parking lots, new walkways and new structures. A mosque and commercial buildings was built in place of hotel in Taşçı’s plan. Such changes in building typology already indicates the shift in politics of space. These buildings and their architectural language differed from Taşçı’s designs in 1970, which arguably followed the concept of a culture park characterized by geometrically-shaped pools with fountains and regularized landscape design and served to build a secular, young and healthy notion in 1930s [75]. The design and appearance of the park deteriorated. Thus, it was replaced by a new one reflecting the political changes. The entrances of the culture park, boundary walls and pools were not maintained

by the municipality, and they became useless. The pools were unclean and in unhealthy condition (Figure 4.23). Unadorned concrete surfaces of the mushroom shaped columns from which water fall in the pools were painted green. This change disconnected them from the original design (Figure 4.24). With the deteriorations, the buildings inside the park lost their aesthetic merits as well as function [30]. Not only the fair buildings, but the *Fuar Gazinosu* ended its operation as a result of political changes and the society's perception at the end of the 1990s. Consequently, Konya Culture Park became an abandoned place and closed. The relationship between the recreation areas and socio-cultural buildings desolved (Figure 4.25).



Figure 4.23: Entrances and pools no longer in use (Source: A. Özkır, “Kent Parkları Yönetim Modelinin Geliştirilmesi”. PhD Thesis, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Peyzaj Mimarlığı Anabilim Dalı, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2007.)



Figure 4.24: New additions around the park the mosque behind the pools and demolished walls (Source: A. Özkır, “Kent Parkları Yönetim Modelinin Geliştirilmesi”. PhD Thesis, Peyzaj Mimarlığı Anabilim Dalı, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2007.)



Figure 4.25: Vacant *Fuar Gazinosu* and unused pool in the front of the *gazino* (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.konyaaktuel.com/2017/02/konya-eski-fuar-alanindan-nostaljik-fotograflar.html>.)

The transformation of the park into an unused space at the end of 1990s shows mismanagement and neglect. This state contrasts to the motivations of the 1970s creators who built the park as a site of modernization. In the spatial practice, these changes show the interaction between the authority and the users of the park. From one to another, the practices of the users in Konya Culture Park as a result of the perception of the space, as an abandoned, destructed and neglected area, reflected their attitudes in a negative way. After spaces lost their intended functions, and the park was no longer a recreational area it faced vandalism and turned into a dangerous place to be at certain time of the day. In fact, a 20 year old man who was stabbed to death on March 30, 2007 by a mugger in park. The shopowners in the surrounding area of the park reported an increase in crime rates. These developments become disturbing not only for the neighborhood, but also for the visitors [76]. Consequently, the park was no longer considered as a

culture park rather it was became a dangerous park and remembered as such.

The socio-cultural life and historic links disappeared and the connection between the past and the present was broken. As a result, the culture park failed as a public park and was demolished in 2008 (Figure 4.26). Arguably, the triad of the perceived, conceived and lived space, interconnected and reconciled in a synthesis while producing the park was dissolved in itself. In December 2008, the area was redesigned as a new culture park and only the *Dede Bahçesi* area was kept. Reconstructions of the new park erased the conceptions, perceptions and practices of the 1970 Konya Culture Park.



Figure 4.26: Destruction of Konya Culture Park in 2008 (Source: [Online]. Available: <http://www.konyaaktuel.com/2017/02/konya-eski-fuar-alanindan-nostaljik-fotograflar.html>.)

## Chapter 5

# Discussion and Conclusion

This thesis suggested that Izmir Culture Park dating from 1936 set a precedent for Ankara Youth Park (1936-1943), Gezi Park (1938-1942), Bursa Reşat Oyal Culture Park (1950-1955), and the main subject of this study, Konya Culture Park, built in 1970. The development of the grounds Konya Culture Park sits on was chronologically evaluated by analyzing the social, mental and physical properties of the space and their correlations with the earlier examples. Starting from the 1920s to the 1970s, the Konya Culture Park area displayed a similar approach to its precedents in the way of spatial planning, architectural approach and practices. When the area was converted from a religious garden into a public park in the 1920s, it incorporated new recreational areas with entertainment and leisure facilities such as a *gazino* with a dancing floor, tennis courts, and a zoo. These spaces accommodating mixed-gender activities reflected the Republican ideals and constituted a fundamental change at the time in Konya. During the 1950s-1960s, the culture park idea spread systematically throughout *Dede Bahçesi*, which hosted musical entertainment and functioned as a gathering space (Figure 5.1). To meet the increasing demands for entertainment, the area was further developed and Konya Culture Park was built with the addition of the fair function in 1970 (Figure 5.2). Although constructed at a much smaller scale, the park with its miniature fairgrounds recalled the much larger Izmir Culture Park with its Fair. The rebuilding of the park in the leadership of Mayor Nalçacı



and architect Taşçı reflected the political modernization efforts of the 1960s-1970s as much as the continuity in the national ideals of the local governance at the time. This park was demolished and a new culture park was built in its place by the Konya Metropolitan Municipality in 2008 (Figure 5.3). This thesis concludes that the difference between the two culture parks of 1970 and 2008 in terms of the building program, building types, architectural designs and spatial manipulation speak for the changes in political ideology and society at large. Hence, it displays the politics of space.



Figure 5.1: *Dede Bahçesi* in 1958 (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Archive.)



Figure 5.2: Konya Culture Park in 1975 (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Archive.)



Figure 5.3: Konya Culture Park in 2013 (Source: Konya Metropolitan Municipality Archive.)

The current park was conceived as a different style of culture park, adopted to 2000s. Built with a different design approach, it offered the citizens of Konya new facilities and landscaped grounds replacing the previous ones, which came to be considered unsafe by then because of poor maintenance. The new park contained a police station, a library, a new amphitheater, new pools, pedestrian paths, bus stops, green areas, fountains, a cafeteria, hobby spaces, playgrounds, sitting areas and a tea/coffeehouse located in the *Dede Bahçesi* Mansion [77] (Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6). The mansion with its pool was reconstructed to preserve the authenticity of the garden [40] (Figure 5.7). To further establish a link to the Ottoman heritage, the municipality constructed a sculpture of a lute (an important musical instrument for the semah ceremony) in the middle of the pool to remind the Mevlevi dervishes' practices in the garden. While emphasizing the Ottoman heritage of the garden, the reconstruction of the mansion and its landscape elements did not take into consideration its Republican heritage. As a result, the tennis courts, the dancing floor, the zoo and the *gazino*, which were significant additions from the early Republican era, are long forgotten.

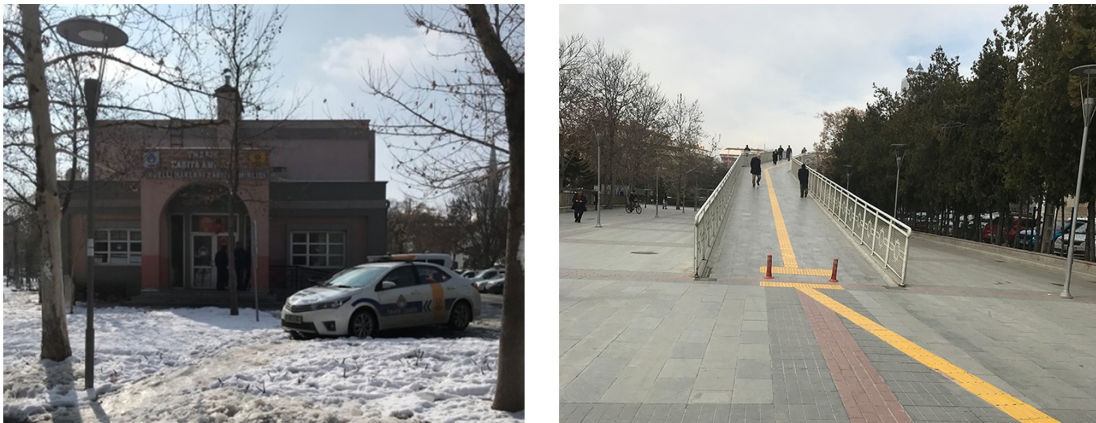


Figure 5.4: Police Station and a bridge connecting the new culture parks (Source: Photograph by the author, 2018)



Figure 5.5: Collonade passing toward the amphitheatre and a cafeteria (Source: Photograph by the author, 2018)



Figure 5.6: Amphitheatre and a new library (Source: Photograph by the author, 2018)



Figure 5.7: *Dede Bahçesi* Mansion and the pool was rebuilt in 2008 (Source: Photograph by the author, 2018.)

The design of the new park's buildings also attempted to echo Seljuk and Ottoman motives in their historicist approach. The decorative approach used in the façade treatments set a strong contrast to Taşçı's unadorned design approach and the use of Brutalist concrete surfaces in the 1970s. The sharp difference in the aesthetic preferences of the authorities and builders, as the creators of the parks, arguably, indicates the changes in political stance and ideology over time. The former conception embraces a modern and clean approach with no historical references while the latter urges to depart from the earlier model through historical eclecticism. However, the use of forms and ornaments on contemporary concrete structures intends to refer to Seljuk and Ottoman architecture only at a decorative level.

A major difference of the new culture park from the previous one is the removal of the boundary walls and gates at the periphery. This meant to open up the entire area and tie the park to the surrounding environment. Accordingly, the park became a transit point in the city center and was connected to public transport. Opening up the park is considered to have created a safer place, accessible to

everyone. It also enabled to increase the area to about 150.000 square meters, where new buildings such as the library, the cafeteria and service buildings (police station, kiosks, etc.) could be constructed [40]. The conception of the new park has had a big impact on the perception of space and the new generation of practices, such as, having a picnic on the grassy areas, studying and reading in the library, doing handicrafts in the hobby spaces and performance activities in the amphitheater on special days.

The differences and similarities charted in this study demonstrated how politics of space worked in the transformation of the Konya Culture Park. It showed how authorities conceived the park area in different periods with respect to the changes in the local governance. Notably, there were no holistic studies that examined Konya Culture Park's history from its beginnings to the present. The existing research generally focused on pre-Republican period of the *Dede Bahçesi* area. The main contribution of this study is to expose the forgotten, hidden or unknown past of the park by discovering and bringing together sources from different periods and reconstructing the park's historical and spatial development through the use of socio-spatial theories.

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