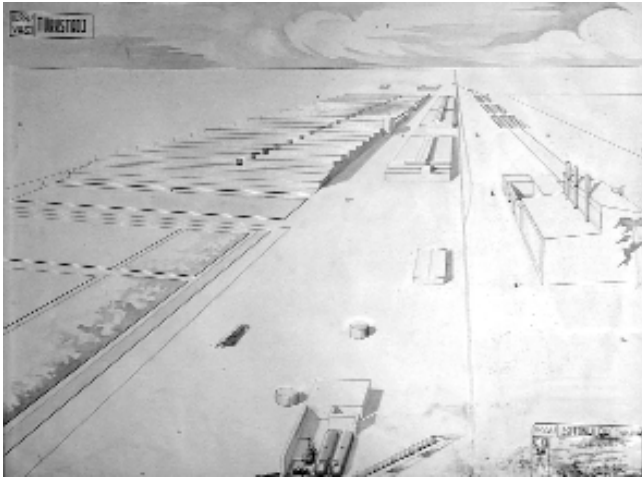


Installing 'Modern' Life Style with Architecture

A Case of Sumerbank Kayseri Settlement*

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A perspective drawing of the factory. Drawn in Moscow

1. Introduction

Spaces are the living volumes which reflect the habits and values the societies by their formal aspects. Those habits, values and social orders effect the process of the constitution of space. In other words; society creates its spatial entity by symbolizing its culture, which could be only comprehended by its own inhabitants. Therefore, spaces are the concrete mirrors of the economic, political, aesthetic and ethic features or values of societies.

Spaces, either a hut or a country, are the elements, in which the structural experience of a society are coded. For that reason, a power; authority could direct or re-manage the habits, values or rituals of its society by controlling the spatial experience. As an example of this, the modernization practice of Turkey after 1923 was an identification process of the society that was particularly based on spatial reformations. The Turkish Republic, established in 1923, aimed to reconstruct the country according to the Western "modern" identity while demolishing the Ottoman traditional values. For the sake of this process, a series of revolutions were conducted in the whole country. The modernization process of Turkey, which embodies social and economic developments, is also a process of space-based project of the society. After 1930, with the effect of the World Economic Crisis, the Turkish Government, integrated modernization and industrialization, and established various state-based organizations for this aim. All of

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them were not only industrial institutions, but also showed conceptual transformation of spaces in the idea of modern understanding.

2. Turkish Modernism, Industry Based Spatial Revolution

The 1920s were the years that the new Turkish Government re-constructed the whole country as the aim of being contemporary, like Western (European) civilizations. They sought ways of reaching and also being superior to Western social and economic conditions, and creating a nation from the communities that lived in the boundaries under the Turkish identity. All improvements for this 'modern' identification process were not confined to political progress; it had also some reformation effects on space. All Anatolian cities, leading the capital Ankara, were devised and re-built for political and cultural aspirations.

Jan Zurcher emphasized this new political, economic and cultural order that was contemplated as an "authoritarian pressure phase", which was applied as a "self modernization reform" of the single party system in power during those years. Moreover, he related the government and the aims to "Jon Turks movement". He claimed that all the political improvements for creating a new nation-state also had economical aspects. However, he recommended that the ideological side of the process was more essential than its social and economic side.

There were a lot of revolutions, which had a relationship with the positivist idea based on French Revolution, done by government for establishing their *new* nation-state based ideology in the 1920s. They aimed to rationalize the social relations of inhabitants instead of the traditional life style which they were accustomed to. Although this renovation practice was perceived as a dictatorial organization, for the effectiveness of the administration, it was assumed precisely from inhabitants, for the sake of its classifying and clarifying process of the social order and association.

Though government was the only power for the political and social revolutions, the economic side of this improvement process was to be constitute private entrepreneurs. Administrative power encouraged the entrepreneurs for industrialization and especially cultivation. The country, had been converted into a significant farming state for a decade. However, the Economic Crisis of the World had also affected the Turkish economy. The economic growth decreased; profits of inhabitants and entrepreneurs were reduced and the acceleration of economic growth that was related with private sector was inadequate for the desired development. For that reason, the government created new solutions for economic growth to support their social and political revolutions. They mentioned to control the industrialization process, which was constituted as one of the major necessities of modernization. Therefore, a state based



repair house in 1935 (photo by C. Edige)



Operationbuilding in 1935 (photo by C. Edige)

mechanism in industrialization was shaped during the years of 1931 and 1932 and it came into force in 1933. A lot of giant industry institutions were established in the 1930s. The government fixed the desire of industrialization and becoming contemporary process. All of the factories, established by the government, were not only estimated to industrial complexes; they were also ideological spaces of Turkish modernity. As a result of this, the Turkish modernization process after the 1930s could be evaluated as a spatial renovation movement based on industrial revolution.

3. An Icon of Turkish Modernity/Modernization; Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory and Residences

Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory was the first state-based industrial organization. Therefore, it could be suggested that it was a significant model for its later examples. Some assemblies were founded between Turkish and Soviet (USSR) or English authorities to set up some state-based industrial institutions like it after 1930 Soviet comity, which was especially preferred from the prime-minister Ismet Inonu, had a leading role on its establishment. The comity prepared a report for the founding of two textile factories in Kayseri and Nazilli, and a steel factory in Karabuk after their investigations on Turkey for three or four months.¹ According to this report,

1.- Inonu explained, on his own writings, this cooperation was shaped after his trip on the Soviet Russia at 1932. Inonu, I.: 1998

2.- As an example for the Sumerbank label; there were some photographs, taken at the years of 1940s or 1930s, which were reflecting the images of some the upper class women or girls of the many Anatolian families who were wearing some cloths made from the "Nazilli" cotton. Baydar, O.: 1999, p.137



Power house in 1935 (photo by C. Edige)

Turkish Government used a credit of 8.5 million Turkish Liras from the Soviet Union for establishing their first industrial organization, and laid the foundations for Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory on the 20th of May 1934. After its construction process of 16 months, the enterprise started its service on the 16th of September 1935.

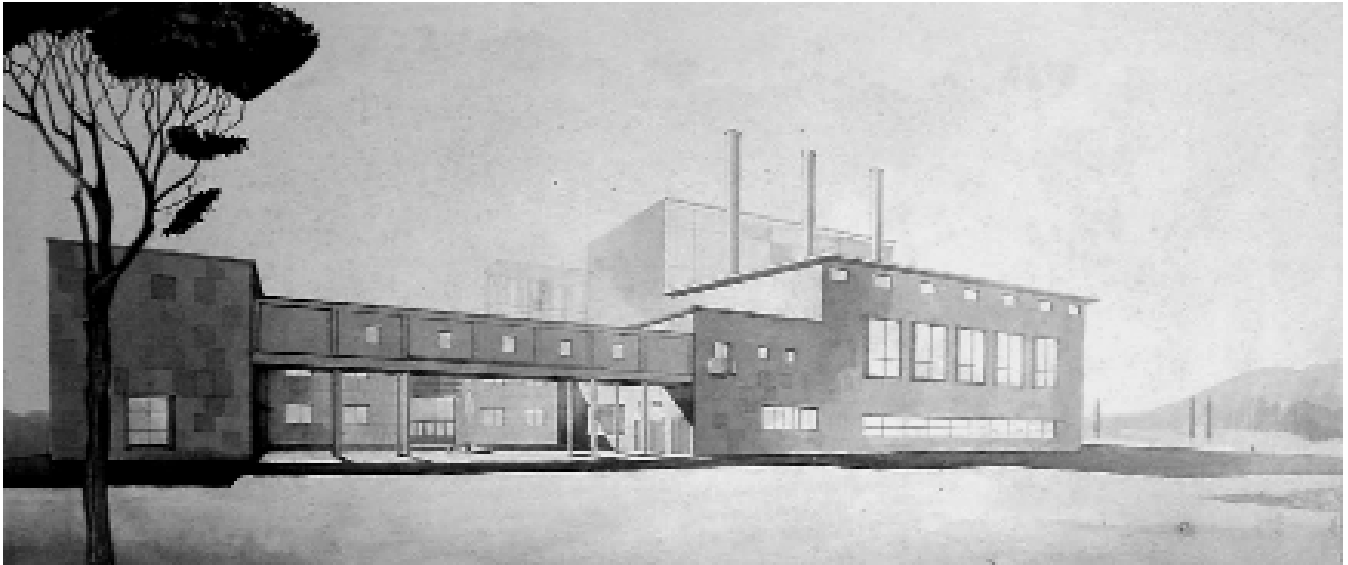
Commencement of these state-based industrial movements from the city of Kayseri was linked with its strategic location and city-culture that had a leading role on its milieu. In fact, Kayseri was an old trade city, which had a fundamental historical background which be travel through BC 800. As it was the capital of the Cappadocia before, it was selected as a capital city nominee at the foundation process of Turkey. The city was also on a railway route, which was an extremely essential approach for the Turkish Republicans on their modernization practice (the city was connected Ankara railway -west side of country- at 1927 and Sivas-Samsun railway -north and east side of the country- at 1930). It could be said that these connections increased its social and trade leading efficiency. Furthermore, the first heavy-industry establishments such as "Plane (Tayyare) Factory (1926)", "Montage and Repair Factory of Armed Military Vehicles 1926)" and "Bunyan Hydro-Electricity Powerhouse (1929)" were founded here based on the

same reasons. Even as all of these had important roles in modernizing the city, Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory called everyone's attention to this process, and nationalized the "being contemporary" ideology.

Thus, it could not be comprehended as an industrial complex. It was a social and spatial organization that re-constructed the whole city -and a country- with modern aspirations.

One of the lucid features of this progress was that it constituted a new local-market in the whole country with leading other state-based organizations by manufacturing daily and main consumption goods. Toprak evaluated this improvement as "arranging a union" between "rural and urban societies" by "unblocking the dilemmas" of the economy inside. *Native* goods, produced by all Sumerbank establishments, did not only compose a significant trade market, they also lead the trends with their suitable prices. And because of these the *Sumerbank* label, especially on textile goods, was shaped by the end of the 1930s.²

Beside this native economic effect, the Sumerbank establishment collected a great deal of laborers from both the inner city and whole country as a major industrial occupation zone. Therefore, it had social and spatial effects on the city by the rapid population growth. This was one of the desired improvements of the 'modern' Turkish Government that was linked with their city policies. Cities were founded under the 'modern' idea of social and economic aspects for achieving a contemporary outlook. Contemporary city utopias of that period had similar features with Deleuze and Guattari's 'modern' city point of view, which evaluated the city as a center; "a network or a phenomenon" that had attractive attitudes on the transportation and communication activities of it or its reactions. By this point of view, the city of Kayseri was re-identified as a center; "a network" on trade systems of the 'modern' state by founding Sumerbank establishment, which had a great role on the revitalization progress of city and state economy.



A perspective view of the power house (drawn in Moscow)

The factory, which was founded to produce cotton fabric, did not only have some effects on the *native* economy or industry, it also had spatial reflections on the construction of the modern city. Actually, all of the buildings and urban plans of Sumerbank Kayseri Settlement were shaped from plain and basic forms similar to its coexists. There were some comments on these figurative features that were formed under the effect of *importing*³ 'modern' architectural context, with its life styles process that existed after an influential struggle practice at West, Yalim defended that the *imported* ones were the "elements of the installation process" of international culture of "the new national identity". For Yalim, by assuming the 'modern' architectural context with its life styles, it was aimed to merge the individuals with their new national identity and administration. Therefore, Government did not only set up factories for industrialization, they also constructed a model of 'modern' Western cities behind them.

3.- Bozdogan suggested that the modern architectural context was imported "as a sign, and an effective tool" of the radical program "of building a nation", which was secularized and Westernized for modern aspects, separating their own Ottoman and Islamic historical context. Therefore, architectural elements of the early period of the Turkish Republic could be evaluated as "concrete reflections of the high modernist thought." Bozdogan, S.: 2002, p.18

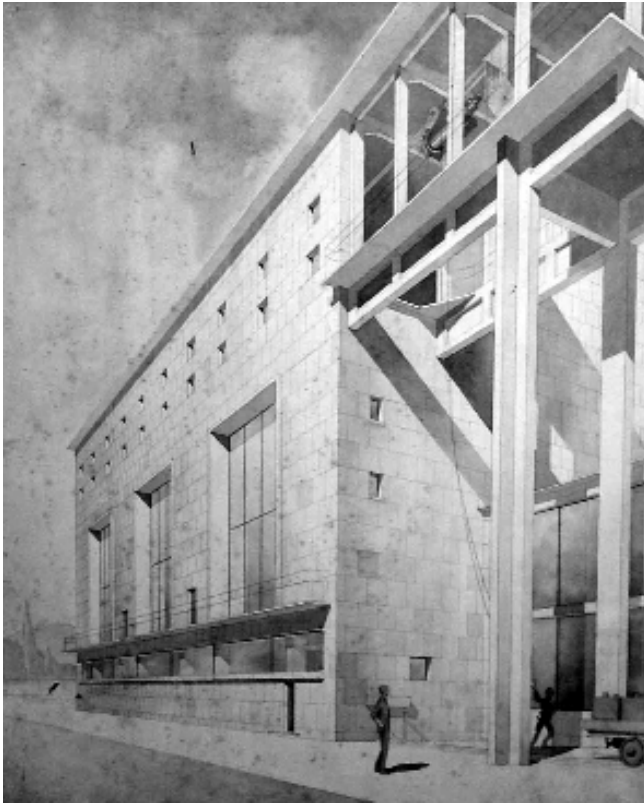
There were some public-spaces such as an infirmary, cinema, and some semi-public ones for laborers and its families such as tennis courts, swimming pools, clubs...etc. and residences for 155 officials and 2100 laborers with their families at the first years of the establishment. Many of those spaces were "new" for Kayseri. The factory and its social spaces were organized by its milieu and the city as the aim of creating a 'modern' metropolis. Therefore, Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory and Residences were easily evaluated as a unique example of the spatial revolution of the Turkish Republic. Even as the factory was comprehended with the ideology of 'modern' production and trade progress, its residences and social spaces were evaluated as a model for 'modern' city and life style.

Actually, two contradictions on Sumerbank Settlement that settled up for installing modern attitudes were remarkable. One of them was taking a support for acquiring a Western (European) outlook from the Soviet Union, which was managed in a socialist manner. It could easily read from the settlement that there was a socialist manner on both its space organizations and its management. The settlement qualified as a metropolis with its utilities consisting of managing, dwelling, entertaining or training activities that were controlled and supervised by the authority. The other contradiction was the constructivist approach of the Soviet Union at that period, which had a major role on the design process of some buildings in the settlement, for example operating building, powerhouse, main entrance, and ateliers such as the repair house. These buildings could be evaluated as significant signs of Soviet constructivism buildings, whereas their appearance had a machinery outlook, which was formed under the idea of 'modern' -Western-architectural context. This claim was easily read from the concave framework structures of the operating building: the elegant structural elements of the main entrance that bear its roof; huge transparent surfaces of the facades of

the repair house and the powerhouse, and the coal entrance of the powerhouse, which was formed as a vertical lifting way with slim columns or the shafts of the powerhouse, and had an effect of puncturing the sky.

Besides these unique statements on the operating rooms or ateliers, the residences and social spaces also had similar features. Even as there was all kinds of social spaces in the settlement, which were essential for an industrial complex, the organization of residences differed from the ideology of social manner. Residences, built in the years of 1935-1945 with the enterprise, could not only be considered as a "social house" organization, they were also reflecting the model of "Western" (European). There were some social attachments such as markets, schools, sports centers- like swimming pools, tennis courts- and cinema at its milieu. Therefore, the residences could be evaluated as the first urban settlement of Turkey, by examining all these social attachments. The existence of the residences, and their social spaces, could also be evaluated as a spatial revolution for the architectural memorial of the city of Kayseri, alike whole Turkey; Houses had only enough space for the activities of the 'modern' individual. And the organization of the residence blocks was one of the first urban design examples of the city. Besides that, places among the blocks, especially inhabited by labourers and their families, were arranged as small agricultural areas for planting. Thus, inhabitants experienced their new settlement without detaching the association between them and a 'place' that was familiar to them.

Consequently, the Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory and Residences could be evaluated as an icon for the Turkish modernization approach. It reflected the 'modern' ideology of the administrative power with its spatial features. It also had a significant role on installing 'modern' Turkish identity -an aspiration of having Western attitudes more than they did, with its social, economic and political aspects. Sumerbank Textile



Another perspective view of the power house (drawn in Moscow)

Factory, with its residences, converted the 'modernization' process into a new tradition in Kayseri and Turkey.

4. Conclusion; 'Modern' Influences on City Life

Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory was one of the significant masterpieces of the Turkish modernization process. Its social and economical roles were directly related with the ideology of the nationalization and modernization process of the Turkish Republic. Therefore, a wide-ranging evaluation, which was about 'modern' Turkey, during the first years after its foundation could be offered by the settlement. The idea that the Sumerbank establishment was a reflection of the ideology of the Republic was obvious by examining its institutional organization, which aimed to combine and classify laborers with their families with its "unique" identity.

However much of the Sumerbank settlement was constituted as an industrial complex, it was also an urban organization, which was shaped for installing the ideas and attitudes of the modernization movement. The government composed a Western 'modern' concept city which was independent from the social life of Kayseri in the 1930s. Therefore, Sumerbank Kayseri Textile Factory and residences could be evaluated as a spatial revolution that was founded by administrative power as a new urban settlement.

Conceptually, the process of being in a 'modern' attitude was related with four revolutions of "political, cultural, industrial and scientific". All of them were occurred by constituting Sumerbank settlement in Kayseri. The Settlement was a product of a political revolution, it affected the nationalization process and created a common sense on society with accepting all revolutions immanently. It was also the starting point of Turkish industrialization and constituted a new and local-market on the state economy. It converted the social order and attitudes to a contemporary context by using Western

4. - Jeanniere combined the modernization process with these four developments. For more information: Jeanniere, A: 1993, p.97

samples. The residences and social spaces classified and identified the social culture and architectural context by its spatial renovations. The establishment trained its laborers and their families and defined them with their abilities in a contemporary aspect.

Actually, it was extremely remarkable that an industrial complex and its residences re-created and defined its milieu. The Sumerbank establishment was perceived as home by its laborers and their families with its residences, social spaces and "cooperative settlements" behind it more than a working complex or an office building. Beginning from 1950, the year that the retired laborers founded some cooperatives for constructing residences at the places of the establishment behind its residences, some houses were dwelled in Kayseri, until 1970, and the districts named as Yeni, Bebek, Memur Evler, Ikiyuz Evler existed. Therefore, the Sumerbank Settlement, which was constituted as a model of a Western city by government, modified the architectural tradition of Kayseri, and it could be evaluated as a spatial "threshold" on the cultural context of the city and Turkey.

The settlement also affected the social order. The residences and the social spaces such as schools, trade centers, cinemas or sport centers converted the attitudes of its inhabitants and people in the city, and upgraded their living rituals on the ideology of 'modern' thought. By the Sumerbank establishment, a new modernizing thought was renovated with regional aspects, was defined by including other traditional Anatolian cultural context. The Sumerbank settlement, evaluated as a spatial and social revolution, transformed into a significant element of the city and national culture. Individuals accepted these 'modern' buildings, which were constituted by the aim of "othernazing" their culture, instead of refusing them. Therefore, modernization process connected with the regional thought and became as a part of

that. But, it could not be comprehended that the artificial buildings of modern thought were accepted as a part of regional context. It could be evaluated as an accepting progress of the modernization movement and the new 'modern' identity created by their government as their new *improvementtradition* from the society immanently.

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