# Archaeological Heritage and Liveable Cities

## Revalorizing the Archaeology of Roman Ankara

edited by
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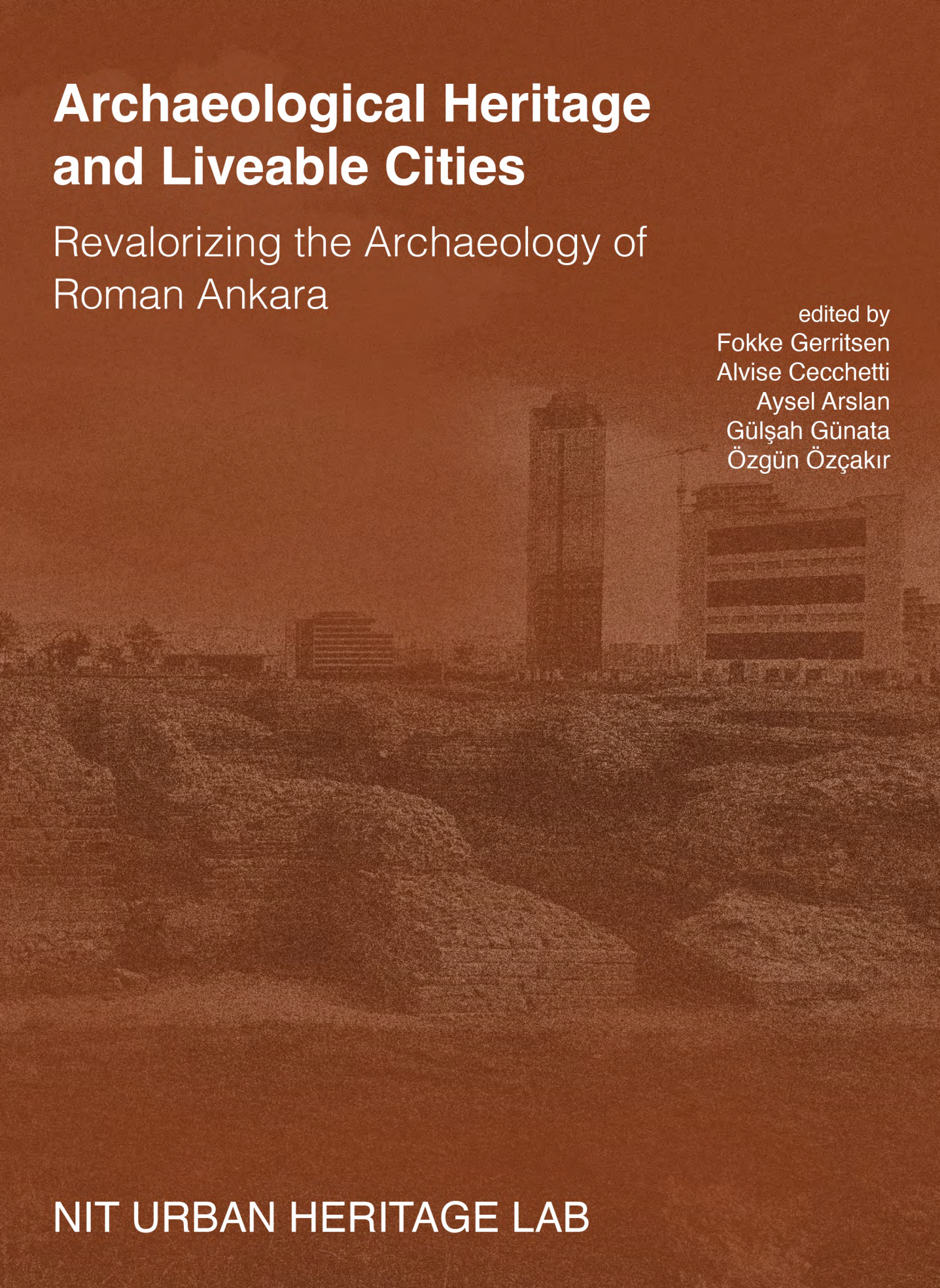

NIT URBAN HERITAGE LAB

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## Revalorizing the Archaeology of Roman Ankara

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*The Temple of Augustus and Roma and the Hacı Bayram Mosque, Ankara (Source: NIT Archive).*

# Introducing Archaeological Heritage and Liveable Cities

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This is the third publication in the NIT Urban Heritage Lab series, following *Industrial Heritage for Sustainable Cities* (2023) and *Water Heritage for Sustainable Cities* (2023). Its origin lies in the Urban Heritage Lab program *Archaeological Heritage and Liveable Cities* that took place in the autumn of 2023.

NIT Urban Heritage Lab programs have multiple aims: 1) to engage in and initiate dialogues about innovative approaches to cultural heritage in urban settings, 2) to stimulate interdisciplinary collaboration between those for whom heritage represents the contemporary remains of the past that they study, such as archaeologists or architectural historians, and those for whom heritage represents the starting point and a resource for designing for the future, such as (conservation) architects, urban planners, and designers, 3) to train new generations of heritage experts to become versed in interdisciplinary approaches, and 4) to share relevant academic insights with professionals and the public.

In 2023, the program revolved around archaeological heritage in urban settings, and asked how this particular class of heritage sites can contribute to the liveability of cities and sustainability of urban life. When defined as the material remains of older layers of human habitation preserved below the current street level, archaeological heritage presents its own challenges of research, preservation, and public engagement, different from the built heritage above ground. Excavated remains in historical city centers can bring its residents into direct contact with their local predecessors of centuries ago. They can provide information on the earliest habitation that historical archives may have little to say about and expose layers of habitation that are no longer represented in the urban fabric. They can provide glimpses of the daily life of commoners in the past in a way that monumental palaces and religious buildings cannot. Archaeological sites attract visitors and contribute to the identity of historical cities. But they are notoriously difficult and costly to preserve and to integrate in the contemporary city. Moreover, adaptive reuse is generally not an option.

This tension raises questions that archaeologists, conservation architects, planners, policy makers, and resident communities ideally should address together. How can archaeological heritage in urban settings contribute to presenting narratives of a city and its inhabitants? What are the best strategies for preservation, display, and public engagement? Given the nature and status of archaeological remains (often underfoot, fragmented, limited to small exposures, disconnected from present-day communities, obstructing rather than enabling present-day urban movement), what are the specific challenges of archaeological heritage in this respect?

Archaeology is very much part of the multilayered urban fabric of the city of Ankara, now the bustling and fast-developing capital of Türkiye, but with a deep history and with important archaeological remains from the Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman eras. Ankara was therefore chosen as the case study for the 2023 Urban Heritage Lab. The focus was on archaeological sites with Roman era remains, but within the context of the contemporary city and its inhabitants.

Following a multidisciplinary education and research program of three months, including on-site studies and a research-by-design program, proposals were developed for four archaeological sites in Ankara. The sites are the Cardo Maximus remains, the Roman Theater, the Roman Bath complex, and the Temple of Augustus and Rome. The latter is one of the most important Roman monuments in Türkiye as it bears on its walls a copy of the Res Gestae Divi Augusti inscriptions in both Latin and Greek. For this reason, the multilayered site hosting the Temple of Augustus and the Ottoman Hacı Bayram Mosque is enlisted in the World Heritage Tentative List. Nowadays, all these archaeological sites face multiple challenges, such as inadequate restoration interventions, uncontrolled urbanization, and vandalism. The four proposals present detailed ideas on how to reconnect the in situ archaeological remains with the present-day city, taking the multilayered context, as well as the nature and historical function and nature of each site into account. Summary versions of these proposals are included as chapters 7 through 10 in this publication.

NIT Urban Heritage Lab is an initiative of the

Netherlands Institute in Turkey that has benefitted greatly from long-standing collaborations with partners in the Netherlands and Türkiye. Middle East Technical University's Graduate Program in Conservation of Cultural Heritage has been a co-organizer since the inauguration of NIT Urban Heritage Lab, and in 2023, also acted as the host of the in-person part of the program. Funding has been generously provided by the Consulate-General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Istanbul. Moreover, for the 2023 edition of NIT Urban Heritage Lab, the National Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) shared its expertise in urban archaeology, other experts shared their knowledge on topics such as the Roman period in Anatolia, and Ankara's history and urban development. Archaeologists, planners, and artists presented case studies at the intersections of archaeology, planning, art, and design. Several scholars and experts have contributed chapters to this publication; everyone's contribution is very much appreciated.

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*Course participants following the presentations during the Ankara program (Source: NIT Archive).*

*Course participants visiting Ancient Roman remains in Ankara (Source: NIT Archive).*

# Multilayered Cities and Their Challenges

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> "It is clear enough space and time, however conceived, are the great framework within which we order our experience. We live in time-places."
> (Lynch, 1972, p. 241)

## Cities as Multilayered Living Heritage Places

Settlements are the products of complex and continuous interaction between humans and their physical environments, shaped by various external factors. In this interaction process, the physical environment, with its features such as location, geomorphology, climate, flora and fauna, natural resources and events, transportation, and the built environment, constitutes the specific setting, context, and conditions of the settlement. Meanwhile, humans play a significant role in shaping settlements through their traditions, culture, beliefs, lifestyles, habits, production methods, skills, tastes, and values, which are transmitted across generations. In addition to the interaction between humans and their physical environment, external factors such as economic, political, ideological, legal, and administrative contexts, along with conditions, significantly influence the formation of settlements (Bilgin Altınöz, 2023, pp. 191–192).

In addition to all these, "time" plays a crucial role in the shaping of settlements. As defined by Margaret Yourcenar (1996), "that mighty sculpture, time" reshapes everything and inevitably brings change. As time progresses, humans, the physical environment, and external forces all change. This change is reflected in both the settlement system and the tangible and intangible components of settlements, manifesting as continuity, rupture, transformation, and modification. With passing time, while some settlements are completely abandoned and disappear, historical continuity can still be observed in many others, even if their importance, status, size, uses, users, and spatial characteristics change (Figure 1). This complex and continuous interaction process is not only evident in shaping the individual settlements but also in the formation of the broader settlement system and regional transportation networks (Bilgin Altınöz, 2023, pp. 191–192).

Cities are significant components of the broader geography and settlement system. They often reflect

*Figure 1: Formation of multilayered places (revised from Bilgin Altınöz, 2023, p. 192).*

a long and complex process of historical continuity, where successive cultures and eras contribute to the physical, spatial, and cultural characteristics of the urban landscape over time. Each historical period adds its own distinct physical and cultural expressions, collectively forming various layers or strata that contribute to the cities' historical, cultural, and physical depth. The remains and traces of different periods, sometimes side by side, sometimes overlapping, constitute the historical layering of today's city, which can be defined as "multilayered cities."

## Multilayered Cities as Materialization of Time and Memory

Multilayered cities are continuously inhabited by urban landscapes where traces of different historical periods coexist (Bilgin Altınöz, 2002, p. 1). The current structure of multilayered cities is a result of the dynamic relationship between space and time. Kevin Lynch (1972, p. 173) describes the ideal environment for human development as a "collage of time," which is more than just a mix of old and new; it is the accumulation of rich traces of the past that are deliberately juxtaposed to enhance the form and meaning of each, while maintaining a coherent whole. In multilayered cities, with each epoch adding its physical elements, the city develops as a layered whole (Figure 2).

As Thomas (1996, p. 60) notes, "an object never signifies in and of itself, but through a web of relations with other things." This applies to cities as well: cities are experienced and shaped through networks of relationships. Multilayered cities are multidimensional and multilayered living places formed as a result of complex and dynamic relationships both within each period and layer and between different periods and layers (Bilgin Altınöz, 2021, p. 107). Thus, the traces of historical continuity, evident in architecture and urban form, are not simply superimposed chronologically, but are linked with dynamic interaction between physical structures, socio-cultural practices, collective memories, and urban identities throughout history.

The various layers of a multilayered city can establish different types of relationships with one another. These relationships may be purely physical, whereby "the architectural strata touch but do not inform each other" (Boyer, 1994, p. 19). In this case,

*Figure 2: Ankara Castle, as a representation of a "collage of time" incorporating components from the Roman, Byzantine, Seljukid, and Ottoman layers of the city, many of which remain in use today.*

*Figure 3: The Roman Bath in Ankara stands as an "archaeological ghetto"; a site that physically persists yet lacks any integral relationship with its surrounding context.*

components from earlier layers may contribute to the city's diversity without being integrally embedded within its overall structure. Such remnants of former periods, which lack a substantive relationship with their surrounding physical, social, or functional context, may be regarded as "archaeological ghettos" within the urban fabric (Figure 3). In other cases, components from different layers can have both physical and semantic relationships. Hence, they become integral parts of the city due to their reuse and transformation over time, reflecting historical continuity. Regardless of whether the relationship is purely physical or includes semantic connections, the various layers and their components play a significant role in shaping the contemporary structure of the multilayered city. It is the interplay of these different layers and their relationships that form the town's identity, which can be defined as both "diversity" and "specificity" in multilayered towns. Consequently, one of the town's most important values is its ability to create a continuous line connecting different historical periods while maintaining its unity in diversity and specificity (Zanchetti & Jokilehto, 1997, pp. 42–44).

The accumulation of tangible and intangible traces of different eras and cultures reflected in the architecture, urban form, spatial practices, cultural meanings, and memories shapes the complex fabric of multilayered cities. This accumulation, representing the effects of time in urban settlements, is referred to as the "patina of the city" (Zanchetti, 2006) (Figure 4).

Contrary to accumulations, the development of stratified cities can involve also disruptions and erasures, leading to losses that manifest as "lacunae," which are gaps within different strata. When there are lacunae, it becomes challenging to understand and interpret the multilayered city. Just as missing text in a manuscript can obscure meaning, lost or diminished physical elements can hinder our comprehension of history.

Multilayered cities not only represent the physical remnants of various eras and cultures, but they also embody the shared experiences, narratives, and values of the communities that have lived and interacted within them. The spatial practices

of communities, their ways of inhabiting and adapting spaces, reinforce or transform spatial patterns, further enhancing the layered character of multilayered cities. Consequently, the stratification in multilayered cities is not only physical; it is also the materialization of memories that reflect the diverse histories embedded in the urban fabric. Memory connects space with individuals and communities. While personal memory is limited by lifespan and individual experience, collective memory encompasses shared events and persists across generations, depending on the transmission of knowledge. Multi-layered cities are repositories of both personal and collective memories (Bilgin Altınöz, 2014). Pierre Nora (1989) refers to the real environments of memory, which develop naturally and spontaneously, as *milieux de mémoire*. When these real places are lost, *lieux de mémoire*, that is, "sites of memory," are formed through intentional efforts to recall and recreate material, symbolic, or functional connections to the past (Nora, 1989). Multilayered cities serve as *milieux de mémoire* where there also exist *lieux de mémoire*.

## Challenges of Managing and Intervening in Multilayered Cities

In multilayered cities, the conservation of historical stratification while development and life continue is a complex issue, raising questions about how to manage and intervene in such complex and stratified urban landscapes. Intervening in multilayered urban contexts has evolved significantly over the past several decades, shifting from narrowly focused, period-specific practices toward more integrated, participatory, and context-sensitive approaches. The complexity of stratified urban environments demands an equally complex and reflexive framework for intervention, one that recognizes the spatial and temporal depth of cities while embracing contemporary urban realities.

The earliest systematic responses to urban-layered heritage often emerged as "rescue archaeology," driven by the urgent need to salvage remains endangered by destruction and rapid urban development. These interventions, although well-intentioned, focused on individual monuments or sites, often neglecting broader urban continuity. Rescue archaeology prioritized recovery and documentation instead of integrated urban planning, which inadvertently reinforced a fragmented understanding of the urban past (Bilgin, 1996; Bilgin Altınöz, 2021).

While rescue archaeology in urban areas still remains as an urgent action, alongside this, a shift occurred toward "urban archaeology," where the richness of archaeological remains beneath modern cities necessitated a more holistic approach. Accordingly, urban archaeology, extending beyond excavations in urban contexts, considered all the layers of urban settings by integration, combining excavation, research, and public engagement in settings where archaeological layers are not removed from their urban context but interpreted as part of a multilayered city (Bilgin, 1996; Bilgin Altınöz, 2021). Thus, managing multilayered cities requires a

*Figure 4: Ankara as a living multilayered city. The patina of the city reflects the continuous transformation and accumulation of physical elements from diverse historical layers.*

*Figure 5: Roman Theater in Ankara. (Left) The existing remains of the original structure before the interventions, largely lost through the re-use of its materials in the construction of the Byzantine Citadel and later Seljukid and Ottoman structures. (Right) The "new" Roman Theater, reconstructed by the local authority to emphasize the archaeological strata of the city.*

comprehensive process of stratigraphic analysis, assessment, and interpretation, which provides understanding and representing the layers of time and memory embedded in space as a critical foundation for informed decision-making in multilayered cities. Addressing the patina, which consists of accumulated traces, and the lacunae, representing gaps from lost traces of past periods and cultures, requires a process of "revealing" and "reintegrating" these remnants. This can be achieved through comprehensive conservation, planning, and design interventions that recontextualize them within the current urban context and the ongoing life, while contributing to the formation of new strata in contemporary and future urban landscapes. These efforts emphasized in situ conservation, adaptive reuse, and presenting urban stratigraphy as a visible and intelligible narrative within the contemporary city.

As dynamic living heritage places that embody the complexity of historical continuity, the challenges of conserving and managing multilayered cities extend beyond mere archaeological, architectural, or urban aspects. Tangible and intangible traces of various historical layers that co-exist are not often valued equally. Certain periods, cultures, and histories may be considered more significant than others, based on differing narratives generated by broader societal values and power structures (Bilgin Altınöz, 2014; Özçakır, Bilgin Altınöz, & Mignosa, 2022). There may be alternative narratives, interpretations, and memories associated with different layers. Different groups interpret and connect with the past in diverse ways, bringing their own set of priorities and agendas to the table (Figure 5).

This transforms multilayered cities into terrains of negotiation between memory and forgetting, old and new, continuity and change. As a result, the conservation and management of multilayered cities becomes a multidimensional, multi-actor, multidisciplinary complex process that needs to go beyond aesthetic and technical concerns and address the deep connections between place, time, and meaning. This complexity involves interpretative and selective aspects, making decisions in and about multilayered contexts a social, cultural, and political act, due to the struggle for control over the city's narrative.

Multilayered cities, as stratified contexts, exhibit complexities arising from the juxtaposition of various strata with various personal and collective memories (Lamunière, Venturi, & Leatherbarrow, 1995). Memory is inherently selective, dynamic, and shaped by social, political, and cultural contexts. Just as people remember or forget selectively, societies alter physical traces of memory selectively. Hence, multilayered cities as *milieux de mémoire* may be intervened in and deliberately reshaped to create *lieux de mémoire*, which are imposed from the top down by authorities in power (Nora, 1989) (Figure 6).

Decisions regarding what to expose, protect, or reinterpret carry long-term implications for how cities remember, narrate, and negotiate their

histories. This leads to the demolition, reconstruction, or invention of physical markers, forming a "politics of memory" (King, 1993; Barthel, 1996; Huyssen, 2003) as well as the "economics of memory." Political and economic motives can result in the "re-invention of traditions" (Hobsbawm, 1983) and memories, through erasures, exposures, reconstructions of memory places of different past strata, that prioritize economic or political objectives over scientific considerations. Such actions can result in the loss of valuable historical evidence and the erasure of significant cultural layers, further complicating the challenging task of conserving multilayered cities (Figure 7).

Türkiye's geography, spanning Anatolia and Thrace, has been home to many civilizations since prehistoric times, due to its strategic location and diverse landscape. As a result, many cities in Türkiye display the essential characteristics of layered settlements. In the multilayered cities of Türkiye, the long history of settlement, combined with waves of cultural transformation and political change, has generated complex urban landscapes where continuity is at once visible and vulnerable.

However, identifying and interpreting the remnants of these historical periods has become increasingly challenging. This is often due to insensitive urban development, inadequate conservation practices, fragmented planning processes, and selective and sometimes manipulative decisions based on political and economic considerations. As a result, the historical layers present in the physical and semantic structures of multilayered cities are rarely recognized, managed, or conserved holistically.

## Concluding Remarks: Embracing Complexity for Integrated Conservation and Management of Multilayered Cities

Multilayered cities are the outcome of the interaction between place, people, and external factors that continuously change and are reshaped over time. They are repositories of tangible and intangible evidence of past eras and cultures, materialized as architectural and urban forms, spatial practices, memories, and identities. Multilayered cities are not passive archives; they are dynamic environments where life continues. Hence, conserving the remnants of historical stratification, while integrating them into the contemporary urban context and sustaining the city's layered character, and shaping the contemporary and even future strata of that layered urban landscape as part of the ongoing urban continuum, becomes a significant concern in these settings.

Accordingly, the conservation and management of multilayered cities become a challenging process that requires a critical and comprehensive approach, acknowledging the complexities of the stratified

*Figure 6: Sakarya Quarter in Ankara. (Left) A living traditional residential fabric as a real environment of memory, milieu de mémoire, before large-scale interventions. (Right) Transformed into a lieu de mémoire, an intentionally constructed site through extensive reconstruction efforts.*

*Figure 7: Hacı Bayram Quarter in Ankara, where Hacı Bayram Mosque and the Temple of Augustus once coexisted within an Ottoman-era residential fabric that was later partially demolished to create a public square through modern urban design and architectural interventions. (Left) The demolition of modern-period additions, also damaging underlying archaeological strata. (Right) Reconstruction of an idealized "Ottoman fabric," reinforcing the mosque's dominance, driven by political and ideological agendas.*

urban context shaped by its intricate fabric, history, memory, and identity. This calls for a scientifically grounded and thorough assessment of the tangible and intangible remnants of different historical layers within the contemporary context, while also embracing complexities, acknowledging conflicting values, and integrating diverse narratives.

Therefore, conserving, managing, and intervening in the multilayered cities cannot be purely scientific decisions; they are deeply connected to political, ideological, economic, and social factors. It is a process of dialogue between past and present, between different social groups, and between material traces and immaterial meanings. Addressing the *patina*, the accumulated traces of time, and intervening in the *lacunae*, the voids left by erasures, neglect, or destruction, requires critical and context-sensitive strategies. It is a complex process of spatial decision-making and design, influenced by many other inputs, such as contemporary functional requirements, social and political demands, economic considerations, as well as the decision makers' and designers' ambition to create a new stratum (Bilgin Altınöz, 2010; Bilgin Altınöz, 2014). As such, the conservation and management of multilayered cities is also a design act as well as a cultural and political negotiation, requiring inclusive dialogue among stakeholders, interdisciplinary collaboration, and respect for *milieux de mémoire*.

In conclusion, the future of multilayered cities depends on the ability to conserve their layers in a way that respects both their historical significance and their role in shaping the future. The conservation and management of these complex contexts require approaches that are data-driven, inclusive, and attentive to multiple meanings and memories, ensuring the continuity of their layered character. It becomes crucial to ensure that interventions are holistic, inclusive, and layered, just like the cities themselves. Through comprehensive analysis and assessments, careful interventions, inclusive dialogue, and a deep understanding of the city's layered identity, the richness of multilayered heritage can be safeguarded for generations to come.

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# Changing Perspectives. The Shifting Significance of Urban Archaeology in Society

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The third edition of the Urban Heritage Lab focuses on archaeological remains in urban contexts. The central challenge here is how archaeological remains can be integrated into the modern city. In this paper, I would like to take a closer look at urban archaeology as a discipline and at the development of urban archaeological heritage management in relation to society, concluding with a look into the future.

## The Definition of (Urban) Archaeology

The field of archaeology is concerned with the study of material evidence of past human activities. All this is less straightforward than it seems at first. In particular, urban environments comprise a range of material remains, both above-ground and underground. In parts of Northwest Europe, a distinction is made between the study of underground remains, which is called archaeology, and the study of above-ground wall work and existing buildings, which is called building history. This gives rise to difficulties in the context of historic preservation. The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta or Malta Convention) encompasses archaeological heritage. In several countries, due to the separation between underground and above-ground remains, historical buildings are not included. Consequently, it occurs that above-ground structures are demolished without investigation, after which archaeologists reconstruct what stood above ground based on the remaining foundations.

Urban archaeology is a subdiscipline of archaeology that focuses on these remains in urban contexts. This term also seems to be unambiguous; however, it is not. The terms "city" and "urban" are open to interpretation and, as a result, its precise definition remains elusive. Definitions frequently present a series of requirements that a settlement must meet in order to be classified as urban, based on the specific focus of the research in question. A novel approach to the study of cities and urbanism is to consider them as a process. This approach is concerned with the evolution of the settlement, rather than the outcome. It permits the comparison of urban settlements from disparate time periods and accommodates the lengthy evolution from pre-urban settlement to the eventual city (Roberts et al., 2024). This is in accordance with the practice of urban archaeology, which encompasses the study of the past of an existing city, even if it concerns a predecessor that consisted of a combination of several farms. Also, research into the abandoned urban settlements of the past is compatible with this approach.

## The Significance of Urban Archaeology

Urban settlements have historically been and continue to be central places (nodes) within larger networks. Such networks may be economic in nature, but they could also be political or social. The scale and location of a city determine the extent of its networks, which may be regional or global in scope. Furthermore, each settlement has an associated hinterland. The relationship with this hinterland is characterised as reciprocal. The hinterland supplies the city with labour, goods, and raw materials, and vice versa, the city in turn provides goods and services (urban facilities) to the hinterland.

It is precisely because of these central functions that urban settlements contain a great deal of information on the functioning of society in the past. Written sources constitute an important source of information, encompassing administrative data from municipal archives, historical descriptions, and personal diaries. Another often underestimated source of information is archaeology. It is important to recognise that historical sources inevitably reflect a specific perspective and serve a particular purpose. This also creates blind spots, even in the case of tax records and grants (Moreland, 2001, pp. 85, 90). These blind spots are especially relevant with regard to the everyday lives of the middle and lower social strata during the period in question. Furthermore, it can encompass conventions in building methods and craft activities that were taken for granted and not described. It can be concluded, then, that an analysis of the archaeological record is essential for an understanding of the development and functioning of these important central places.

Yet, the very nature of the urban phenomenon represents a significant threat to this same

archaeological record. In most cases, today's cities are built on the buried cities of the past. They are (highly) dynamic settlements with great pressure on space. The undertaking of new building activities in cities typically results in the degradation of archaeological remains in the subsoil, to varying degrees. However, there is one significant distinction between the cities of the past and those of the present. In contrast to past practices, modern construction methods involve the complete demolition of existing structures, including those with historic value, to make way for new buildings, sometimes with extensive underground parking facilities (Figure 1). This phenomenon is what I refer to as the "tabula rasa" effect. Prior to this, the city's archaeological record was rather a palimpsest, an accumulation of traces of past activities (Figure 2) (Bouwmeester, 2025).

This newer approach to dealing with ancient remains can be considered an act of uprooting: today's society cuts ties with the past. Historical remains are no longer an integral component of the built environment. Instead, remnants are relegated to a mere display, often somewhat concealed. A conscious glimpse may be taken of how things used to be, safely and remotely. One wonders whether this is not being far too modest, as the concept of identity and the act of bonding with one's place of residence appears to assume greater significance in

*Figure 1: The image illustrates the impact of modern construction on the archaeological record, demonstrating the "tabula rasa" effect. In close proximity to the historical buildings are the subterranean foundations of the new structure, which would destroy any archaeological remains. Consequently, an archaeological excavation was initiated prior to the commencement of construction. (Intergeneratives Zentrum (IGZ) Dülmen (Germany). Source: https://www.lwl.org/pressemitteilungen/nr_mitteilung.php?urlID=33520. (site visited on 13-12-2024). (Photo: Dietmar Rabich, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dülmen,_Baustelle_IGZ_--_2018_--_1441.jpg; https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode).*

*Figure 2: The rear of a building in central Istanbul, Türkiye, exemplifies the historical stratification (palimpsest) of the city. The structure incorporates columns from the Roman period, with subsequent additions from the Byzantine, Ottoman, and Republican eras. (Photo: Caner Cangül. Kulturenvanteri.com).*

the context of an increasingly expansive and anonymous urban society (e.g., Schönwalder et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2024; Belford, 2025). This requires dynamic engagement with the past, which must be regarded as a constituent element of the evolving history of the city. The tactility and recognizability of archaeological remains make them particularly well-suited to function as a bridge between the present and the past. As such, Urban Archaeology can provide tools for addressing a range of social challenges in today's cities (Raja & Sindbaek, 2020, p. 11). The proposals presented in this book address the challenge of connecting the present and the past in a conscious effort to create links between the residents of today and the societies of the past.

## History of Urban Archaeology and Urban Archaeological Heritage Management

The history of archaeology harks back to the interest that arose in Classical Antiquity during the Renaissance. Travelers came from distant locations, especially to Italy and specifically to cities such as Rome, to observe and admire remains of Classical Antiquity. This included, for example, the practice of painting and collecting objects. One of the earliest documented examples of urban archaeological research is that of railway engineers who recorded evidence of Oslo's medieval predecessor in the late nineteenth century. In the period preceding the Second World War, several archaeological investigations of medieval urban settlements were undertaken in for example Gdansk in Poland, Haithabu and Lübeck in Germany, and Groningen in the Netherlands (Sarfatij, 1990). One of the most renowned archaeological excavations is that of Novgorod in Russia, which proceeded from 1932 onwards (Yanin, Khoroshev & Brisbane, 2007, p. 6). During wartime, a considerable number of historical cities were subjected to extensive destruction as a result of aerial bombardment. Concurrently, this resulted in the revelation of previously covered archaeological remains. Some of these have been documented and excavated. However, the greatest threat to the archaeological heritage emerged only in the following decades.

After the end of the War, there was a notable increase in prosperity, accompanied by a rapid growth in the population. A forward-thinking approach was adopted, whereby existing (groups of) urban buildings were to be replaced with modern ones. The impact of this extensive construction programme on the archaeological record was considerable. The process of this urban renewal resulted in the creation of extensive craters within the historical urban fabric, as illustrated in Figure 3. After this, still a considerable number of the historical cities remained in a state of disrepair, and, on a smaller scale, with demolitions or alterations continuing at a rapid pace. The tabula rasa method, previously discussed, was employed in the construction of new buildings, resulting in further erosion of the urban archaeological record. This process was taking place

*Figure 3: The Noordenberg Quarter in Deventer represents a medieval district of the city. In the aftermath of the Second World War, a considerable number of the dwellings in this locality were in a state of disrepair. The initial proposal was to demolish the entire district as part of a wider urban renewal initiative. Ultimately, following protests, only a partial demolition was carried out, which nevertheless resulted in significant disruption to the historical urban fabric. The photograph depicts the demolition of a wall of houses on Molenstraat, revealing the rear of Korte Noordenbergstraat 21. (https://proxy.archieven.nl/0/10D8ED4A90C9766DE0504C91A40655FB).*

in many locations and only in a few larger cities, urban archaeologists were employed to investigate these sites. Countless other sites were destroyed without ever being documented.

The extent of this damage to the archaeological record in England was revealed by research conducted by Catherine Heighway (Heighway, 1972). This involved an inventory which described the extent of the archaeological record that had already been lost and the extent to which it was still at risk. Similar research has also been carried out in other countries such as Germany and the Netherlands (Fehring, 1996; Van Es et al., 1982). In the small Dutch town of Oldenzaal, more than a third of the archaeological record had already been lost by 1982 (Figure 4). These findings were an indication of the urgency of the situation and the need for action to be taken. On a limited scale, the research did lead to some improvements and a slight increase in the number of municipal archaeologists. Nevertheless, the situation remained critical for smaller towns in particular.

The European Convention of Valletta had a far more significant impact on preserving urban archaeological remains than the aforementioned studies. The basic premise of this treaty was that in cases where archaeological remains were in danger of being disturbed, the party responsible for the disturbance was obliged to ensure their preservation by adapting plans or by excavating the site (ex-situ conservation). This led to a significant increase in the number of urban archaeological excavations. Indeed, the scale of this growth is such that it is reasonable to hypothesise that the undocumented

*Figure 4: Map of the historical town centre of Oldenzaal (Netherlands) from 1982, indicating the locations of archaeological remains that have been lost due to soil interventions (black) and those that are currently at risk (red). At that time, a total of 36% of the archaeological record had been destroyed, and 5% was facing imminent threat (Van Es et al. 1982, 65).*

loss of archaeological remains in the decades prior to Valletta may have been substantial. To return to the example of Oldenzaal, a conservative estimate would be that the proportion of remains lost had approximately doubled by 2009.

## Urban Archaeology in the 21st Century

This brings us to the present, the 21st century. In the relatively brief time following the signing of the Valletta Convention (1992), the European Convention of Faro (2005) was also concluded. The initial treaty already asserted that archaeological research serves the public interest and that the findings should be disseminated to a wider audience. The Faro Convention takes it further. The aforementioned treaty places considerable emphasis on the relationship between society and heritage. At Valletta, the relationship between archaeologists and the general public was identified, yet a notable distance was observed between the two groups. In essence, the findings of the archaeological research conducted were conveyed to the public. In contrast, the Faro concept situates archaeological research within the context of society. This means that the public is much more involved in the research than before, including excavations (Bouwmeester & Belford, 2021).

What implications does this have for archaeological heritage management in the present and the near future, particularly in urban areas? Above I introduced the concept of an "uprooted city." The city's historical legacy has degenerated into a mere window into the past. However, it is the very past that is essential for social cohesion in the city (Jacobs, 1961). Cities are dynamic settlements in which the social problems of our time are manifested, including

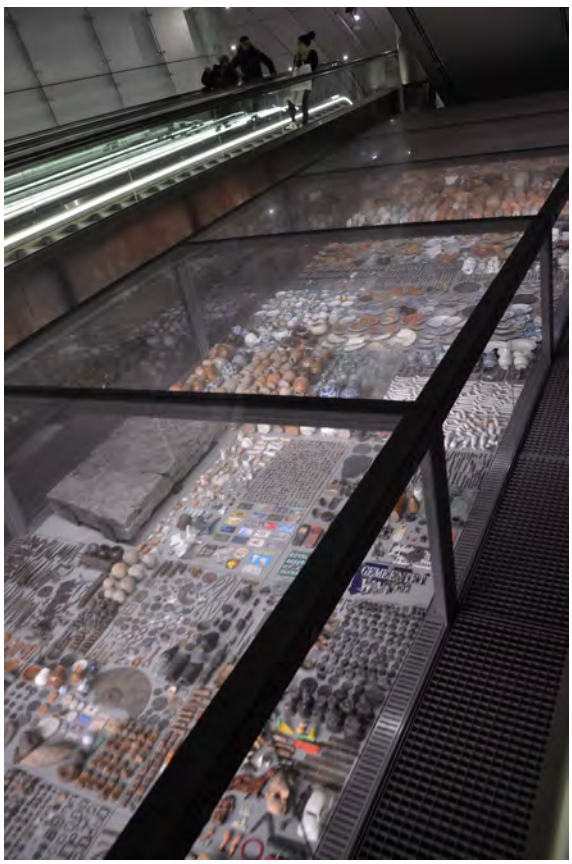

*Figure 5: Rokin Amsterdam station. Display case containing archaeological finds unearthed during the construction of the metro line and underground metro station (Steven Lek. https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Metrostation_Rokin_2018_4.jpg).*

strong population growth and multicultural diversity. It is frequently overlooked that this phenomenon has recurred throughout history. Amsterdam was a prominent global city in the 17th century, with a significant influx of prosperous merchants from Flanders, particularly Antwerp. These individuals migrated from various regions across Europe, seeking economic opportunities in the city. Studying this historical context can provide insights into contemporary developments. However, a mere historical perspective is insufficient. For the past to be integrated into the present, residents must feel that they are part of a city's history, even if they live in a modern apartment building at a certain distance from the historical core. Heritage should be directly accessible. One example is the display case along the escalator to the Amsterdam-Rokin underground metro station. Commuters descend into history and are confronted with it in a positive way every day (Figure 5).

Moreover, the link with the past is reinforced when individuals engage in research and subsequently disseminate their findings to family and friends. In Heerlen, the project "Heel Heerlen graaft" (All of Heerlen digs) was conducted (Constructing the Limes, n.d.). This involved residents themselves excavating a one-square-metre trench in their gardens or neighbourhood under the guidance and direction of archaeologists (Figure 6). The initiative was a resounding success. The people in question felt a sense of connection to their Roman past, despite the lack of a direct established ancestral link. Another example is the discovery of artefacts from shipwrecks by amateur divers near the island of Texel, including an exceptional 17th-century dress (Museum Kaap Skil, n.d.) (Figure 7). Although the finds from most wrecks were unearthed illegally, as these wrecks are part of a listed archaeological monument, it is the thrill of the unique find of the dress that dominates the news. There is a strong sense of ownership and pride from the local community, despite the circumstances in which the find was made. Professional archaeologists have to navigate between the (also public) concern for the monument on the one hand and the general public opinion regarding this illegal find on the other. This certainly created a field of tension. A documentary was produced which elucidates the perception of this group of divers, as well as how this sentiment was adopted by other societal and political entities. This example clearly demonstrates the profound emotional response that archaeological discoveries can evoke.

*Figure 6: Heerlen. In 2024, Heerlen hosted the 'Heel Heerlen Graaft' (all of Heerlen digs) event, which enabled local residents to engage in a modest excavation in their own backyard under the guidance of an archaeologist. In addition to providing the archaeologists with a wealth of valuable information, this initiative also facilitated a more profound engagement with the past among the local population (Photograph: Constructing the Limes (c-limes.nl)).*

## Outlook on the Near Future

In light of these developments, what are the future directions of urban archaeology and heritage conservation? Firstly, in light of the prevailing demographic trends, it seems probable that there will be an increase in urban development projects in

*Figure 7: The 17th-century dress from the co-called 'Palmhoutwrak' (Palmwoodwreck) near the coast of Texel. This garment was worn exclusively by the upper class at the time and was unearthed illegally by amateur divers. The dress was subsequently preserved and is now on display at Museum Kaap Skil. The find attracted considerable interest from the archaeological community, as well as from society and politics, due to a documentary that was made about it. (Photograph: Kees Zwaan. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Objecten-De_Jurk-donkere_achtergond_(c)_Provincie-Noord-Holland-Kees-Zwaan.jpg).*

the coming years, rather than a decrease. There is a growing resistance to all kinds of urban expansions, which has resulted in a shift towards considering new housing locations within the city centre (infill). This urban growth has led to a search for identity and connection in a new, increasingly anonymous environment. History and archaeology can provide these roots, but this requires more than mere visibility. For the past to be meaningful in the present, it must be palpable and have authenticity; it must belong to the place.

The preservation of archaeological sites in urban areas requires a delicate balancing act. The stakes are significant, and there is a potential for discrepancy between archaeological and various other societal interests. In numerous cases archaeologists and heritage conservationists are stakeholders already engaged in urban project development, enabling them to contribute to the conceptualisation of the new space and identify an appropriate solution for the archaeological heritage. The implementation of modifications allows for the preservation of certain remains and even their prominent display, for example at the Rinascente-store in Rome where ancient Roman remains were highlighted in the basement (Figure 8). Another example comes from Cologne (Germany) where during the construction of the metro line at the Kurt Hackenberg Platz, the remains of a section of the Roman city wall and port gate were unearthed. In order to guarantee the preservation of the remains, a temporary lifting of the remains is being undertaken to facilitate the construction of the railway tunnel. Upon completion

*Figure 8: During the construction of the Rinascente department store in Rome, the remains of an ancient Roman structure were discovered. Following modifications to the construction plan, the remains were preserved and have since become a popular attraction, featuring in a special presentation with light effects. (Photograph: Jeroen Bouwmeester).*

of the aforementioned work, the remains will be reinstated in their original position (Kölner Verkehrs-Betriebe, 2008).

This approach of integrating archaeology ensures that the aforementioned roots are not compromised but rather reinforced. In light of the above, it can be seen that the social value of heritage represents the most significant asset in the context of archaeological preservation. This added value can be quantified in monetary terms by calculating the impact on house prices and income from recreation (Ruijgrok, 2006). However, the intrinsic value of historical remains is irreplaceable due to the authenticity they have acquired over time (after Jacobs, 1961, p. 199). This brings us back to the significance of the high social value of heritage and its role in society. Ultimately, archaeology is about people.

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# Frameworks for Urban Archaeology in Türkiye: From Excavation to Negotiation: Layers of Policy, Practice, and Conflict

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## Introduction

In today's cities, *multilayeredness* refers not only to archaeological accumulation but also to the complex network of relationships established between this accumulation and contemporary urban dynamics. The coexistence of traces from different periods creates an interaction that intertwines the spatial and social memory of the past with the urban life of today. Therefore, multilayeredness should be considered not merely as the physical superposition of layers, but as a dynamic process shaped by social relations and temporal interactions.

In this context, urban archaeology goes beyond the excavation and documentation of archaeological remains in the city. It has become an interdisciplinary meeting ground that, by focusing on the spatial relationships formed through multilayeredness, can contribute to shaping contemporary cities and informing visions for their future. Consequently, with this conceptual shift, urban archaeology is increasingly transforming into a field that invites the participation not only of archaeological disciplines but also of geography, sociology, urban planning, urban design, conservation, public art, and other urban disciplines. However, despite these tendencies, urban archaeology in Türkiye remains largely confined to rescue excavations mandated by infrastructure projects and fails to integrate with planning, design, and conservation disciplines. This article aims to evaluate urban archaeology in Türkiye regarding legislation, spatial planning, archaeological excavations, and advocacy.

## Legal Aspects

In Türkiye, the spatial protection of archaeological heritage is primarily established through archaeological conservation zones (known as *sit alanı*, conservation area, site), which are categorized based on their levels of protection. First-degree archaeological sites are designated as areas where no interventions are permitted, except for scientific excavations, and must be maintained in their current state. In second-degree archaeological sites, existing structures are preserved, and repairs or enhancements may be undertaken under specific conditions. Third-degree archaeological sites allow for new interventions, provided a balance between preservation and use is maintained (MoCT, 1999).

This archaeological heritage-focused grading system refers to the areas in the city subject to urban archaeology within a legal framework. Archaeological excavations, particularly those conducted in third-degree archaeological sites within the city and mainly under the supervision of archaeology museums affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, constitute an important part of urban archaeology practices in Türkiye. Furthermore, areas that fall outside officially designated archaeological sites but are classified as urban conservation areas—such as parts of Istanbul's Historical Peninsula or the historic Haydarpaşa Train Station area—are also subject to archaeological excavations due to their considerable archaeological potential, as identified by the decisions of Regional Conservation Boards and relevant planning decisions. These areas are of substantial significance in the context of urban archaeology.

The legal definition of "urban archaeological site" has been included in the Turkish legislation since 1993. In this regard, the second principal decision No. 702, which came into effect in 2005 but is no longer in force, defines urban archaeological sites as areas where archaeological layering coexists with urban fabric that requires conservation (MoCT, 2005). Following this principal decision, the most recent and up-to-date principal decision, No. 3705, entered into force in 2025 (MoCT, 2025b). However, an important point to note here is that this definition still fundamentally considers the existence of a historical urban pattern visible on the surface as a prerequisite. With this misconception, the spatial dimension of urban archaeology is defined through areas that contain historical patterns on the surface, as well as archaeological layers underground. Still, archaeological sites that do not have historical urban patterns on the surface or are located within areas that have been urbanized over time can also be subjects of urban archaeology.

According to the relevant legislation, as of 2024, only 36 areas in Türkiye have been officially

designated as "urban archaeological sites" (*kentsel arkeolojik sit alanı*) (MoCT, 2024). Across the country, there are a total of 26.128 registered sites, including archaeological, historical, and urban conservation areas.

However, many areas within different categories of site locations can also be evaluated under the scope of urban archaeology. These areas typically appear as hybrid conservation areas where the three-tiered archaeological site categories overlap/intersect with urban or historical conservation zones and third-degree archaeological sites. In particular, third-degree archaeological sites—where construction is permitted to a limited extent—encompass many areas relevant to urban archaeology. Therefore, the current definition of "urban archaeological site" is insufficient to spatially manage and assess the true quantitative and qualitative potential of urban archaeology in Turkish cities.

According to the Principal Decision No. 3705, construction within urban archaeological sites cannot take place without prior planning; only essential public infrastructure projects can be implemented with the approval of the conservation board. Ground interventions must be carried out under the supervision of a museum or excavation directorate, while any new functions and buildings must be compatible with the existing fabric. In planning, arrangements for the display of archaeological assets are essential, and registered buildings must be restored, while unregistered but compatible ones can be documented and repaired (MoCT, 2025).

On the other hand, the former principal decision No. 702 (2005, no longer in force) and the current principal decision No. 3705 (2025), not only define urban archaeological site areas but also specify the framework for reconstruction practices in these areas. According to these decisions, if the ruins present in such areas represent a cultural heritage that requires preservation and creates a significant gap in the revival of the historical identity of the site they belong to, the reconstruction of these structures is possible, provided there is sufficient historical documentation (MoCT, 2005).

In this context, urban archaeology can conflict with approaches that focus on reviving a selected period rather than the entire historical continuity of the space, and at times, may be instrumentalized for reconstruction projects.

In summary, the definition of urban archaeological sites describes a regulation that focuses not on the archaeological layers of the cities as a whole, but rather on areas where historical urban fabrics and archaeological layers coexist. In terms of legal definitions, urban archaeology is currently considered within a narrow and limited framework as a site status, related to actions focused on excavation and documentation. From this perspective, the conceptual transformation of urban archaeology has not yet been adequately reflected in the legal framework.

Alongside the principal decisions concerning archaeological sites, Principal Decision No. 37 is among the regulations that can be discussed within the legal framework of urban archaeology in Türkiye, although its scope is limited and contested.

Depending on the pace of urbanization, it allows for the removal of small cultural assets that do not provide a legible plan and that appeared in settlement areas due to new construction, infrastructure, and natural disasters, upon the decision of the Conservation Board and the approval of the Ministry, while at the same time it permits the development of construction projects—with the approval of the Conservation Board and the Ministry—on the condition that remains possessing architectural integrity, authenticity, or potential for expansion are preserved in situ and publicly exhibited.

The implementation of this principal decision is possible for privately owned lands, primarily if expropriation is not to be carried out. According to the principal decision, the projects to be developed are subject to the conditions of "not being contrary to the conservation theory" and "making a plan amendment" (MoCT, 2012). This principal decision has special significance in terms of urban regeneration problems, which come to the agenda with reasons such as earthquakes, in areas where archaeological assets are frequently encountered and where construction is dense. However, it does not contain clear requirements that would limit

the arbitrary interpretation of these rules or define standards regarding the protection and exhibition of archaeological assets.

Among the international legal instruments signed by the Republic of Türkiye, the Valletta (Malta) Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe constitutes an important legal basis concerning urban archaeology (COE, 1992). This document ensures the integration of archaeological heritage into spatial planning processes and guarantees the implementation of archaeological research and rescue excavations to safeguard heritage from public works projects. To this end, it regulates the duties and responsibilities among stakeholders, such as urban planners, archaeologists, and construction professionals.

The Convention considers the accessibility of archaeological data not only essential for scientific research but also for raising public awareness and providing a foundation for planning processes (COE, 1992). However, in practice in Türkiye, it has been observed that these obligations set out in the Convention have not been fully implemented, particularly due to the pressures exerted by the real estate and construction sectors. There are ongoing limitations in terms of both the accessibility of urban archaeological data and its effective incorporation into urban planning processes.

## Urban Planning Aspects

Spatial definitions and statuses related to urban archaeology also raise the question of how these arrangements relate to urban planning tools. How urban archaeology will be integrated into the planning system has become an important topic of discussion.

The existing planning system in Türkiye operates within a top-down planning hierarchy, and this structure anticipates large-scale plans guiding smaller-scale plans under ordinary conditions. The fundamental components of this planning framework can be summarized as the National Development Plan under the authority of the Presidency, the Spatial Strategy Plan (National/Regional) under the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, the Regional Plan under the authority of Development Agencies, the Environmental Master Plans under the responsibility of either the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change or delegated Metropolitan Municipalities, the Zoning Plans under the authority of Metropolitan Municipalities, and the Implementation Zoning Plans under the authority of district municipalities (Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, 2014).

Although general approaches concerning cultural heritage policies have been shown in the national or regional master plans guiding the planning processes within this system, policies and strategies regarding urban archaeology are not included. Consequently, there is a gap in policies and strategies concerning potential solutions such as strengthening the legal-administrative framework that could be developed on a national scale in the context of urban archaeology, increasing capacity, and organizing coordination between local government and central government units; urban archaeology is not among the priority policy areas of cultural heritage management at the national level.

As a current example of higher-scale alternative planning tools, the Istanbul Vision 2050 Action Plan addresses this issue with a focus on Istanbul. This Action Plan, coordinated by the Istanbul Planning Agency (IPA), emphasizes and considers Istanbul as a whole heritage, focusing on the establishment of heritage-based spatial networks in Istanbul (IPA, 2025, pp. 144–145).

The Vision 2050 Action Plan has developed a comprehensive action program concerning Istanbul's archaeological heritage. This heritage is spread across spatial areas with diverse characteristics, including the natural environment, rural landscapes, and densely built urban fabric.

Therefore, under the strategic action framework of the proposed Istanbul Heritage Network, a "Metropolitan Archaeology Program" has been formulated to enable a holistic approach to archaeological layers within urban planning processes.

While the program sets out spatial and governance-oriented goals and actions related to Istanbul's urban archaeology, it also proposes a strategic

framework that links the future of urban and rural archaeological heritage at the metropolitan scale (IPA, 2024, pp. 144–145).

Urban archaeology appears more indirectly in the environmental master plans through the cultural heritage inventory and analyses and associated conservation decisions. However, these plans have the potential to develop a spatial framework that can explain the relationship between urban archaeology and urban macroform and dynamics and develop strategies.

On the other hand, it is possible to observe the physical representations of multilayeredness more directly in sub-scale plans where concrete decisions are developed, especially in planning processes for urban built environments with archaeological site areas. In this context, Conservation-oriented Development Plans (CoDP) emerge as an important tool. According to the relevant law, Conservation-oriented Development Plans may only be prepared by city planners or registered offices and companies in which such professionals are partners. The regulation also requires the involvement of multidisciplinary experts, such as archaeologists, art historians, architects, and landscape architects, depending on the nature of the site area. In this respect, the regulation offers an important institutional opportunity for an interdisciplinary working environment for CoDPs, allowing multilayered urban areas to be addressed from the perspective of urban archaeology.

However, in practice, this potential is often not adequately utilized. The interdisciplinary working environment is usually limited to a mere formal approval process; studies conducted in fields such as archaeology, history, and art history rarely establish a foundation that can effectively inform planning decisions. Within CoDPs, data from these fields is often not integrated through a spatially coherent methodology. The lack of a consolidated archaeological database and the absence of GIS-based assessment tools significantly limit the capacity to identify, evaluate, and manage urban archaeological potential in Türkiye (Tuna, 2024). As a result, planning processes frequently proceed without the detailed archaeological information and expert dialogue required by urban archaeology. Therefore, strengthening planning decisions through policies and strategic frameworks that incorporate urban archaeology

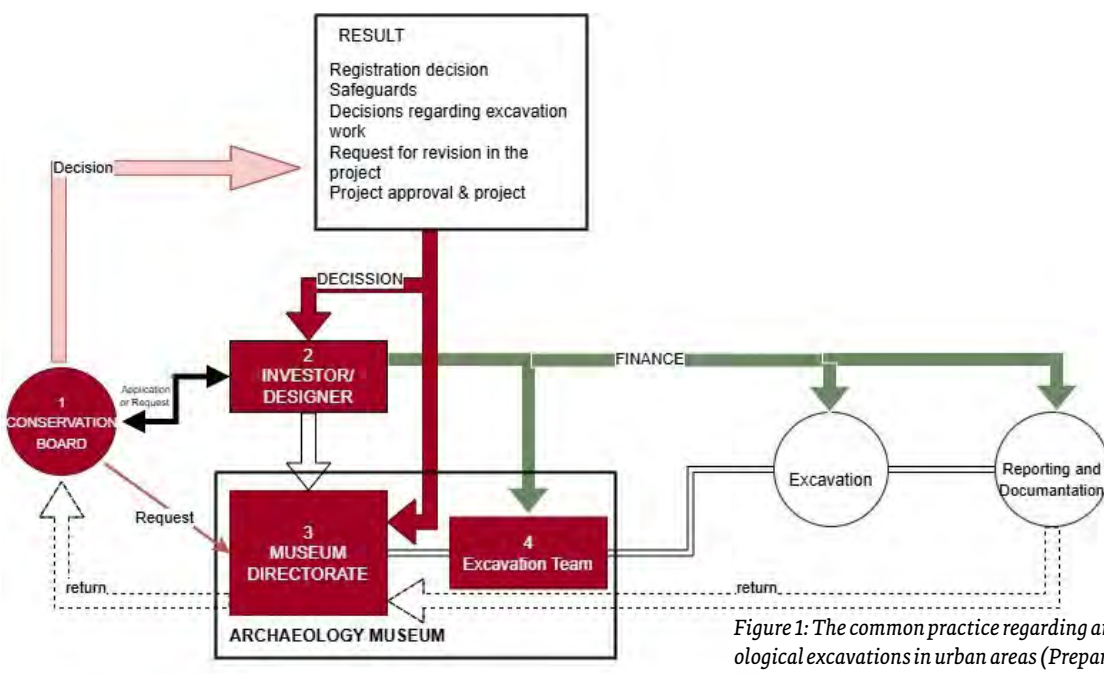


*Figure 1: The common practice regarding archaeological excavations in urban areas (Prepared by the author).*

into higher-level plans, integrate archaeological data production at all scales, and support interdisciplinary collaboration through institutional mechanisms remains a key necessity.

## Archaeological Aspects

Urban archaeology activities in Türkiye are predominantly shaped around excavations conducted under museum supervision. These studies focus on documenting the archaeological remains uncovered during construction and infrastructure projects within the city and forwarding them to the relevant Regional Conservation Board. Therefore, in this context, urban archaeology is mainly experienced as a process of oversight and documentation, along with "rescue excavations." Additionally, the structure of property ownership in urban areas and the high value of real estate complicate the proliferation of independent scientific excavation and research projects within the city, hindering the development of long-term and planned archaeological work in this field.

Excavations within cities are typically initiated by the relevant Regional Conservation Board's decision for "excavation under museum supervision" related to construction activities in protected areas. Occasionally, as an exceptional case, excavations conducted under the scientific supervision of universities take place, but the scientific and bureaucratic responsibilities for these excavations are entirely managed within the activities of archaeology museums. Excavation works are initiated through a protocol between the investor/contractor of the project, where the museum and archaeological excavation works will be carried out. The results of archaeological excavations are periodically reported to the relevant Regional Conservation Board by the museum, and the Board makes decisions regarding the future of the project area based on the cultural layers that emerge (Figure 1).

In this context, specialists from the museum's team of archaeologists are assigned to the excavations, and if necessary, additional "independent archaeologists" are hired for the relevant project. Depending on the scale of the work, this field team can also expand into a larger excavation team through assignments from other relevant experts and project-based hiring. Technically, these teams are affiliated with the museum, but the financial responsibility of the excavation and responsibilities for project-based personnel hiring are mostly taken on by the investor, contractor organization, or, in the case of public investments, by the central and local government units and stakeholders that are undertaking the project.

It is possible to evaluate the stakeholders involved in the process within the framework of existing practices in two main groups: the first being public institutions and scientific actors directly related to conservation and archaeology, constituting the archaeology and conservation group; the second consisting of investment-focused actors from public institutions not related to archaeology and conservation, or representatives from the private sector.

Within the current practices, the actors involved in the process vary according to their authority, interest, and responsibilities in the project area. However, they can essentially be classified into two main groups:

The first group, which may be referred to as the archaeology and conservation group, consists of public institutions and scientific actors directly related to heritage protection and archaeology.

The second group includes investment-oriented actors from public institutions not directly related to archaeology and conservation, as well as representatives of the private sector.

This second group may also include the contractor firms responsible for designing and implementing the project. However, the positioning of these actors may vary depending on the specific conditions of each project (Figure 2). The aforementioned investor group is responsible for the employment of temporary expert staff involved in the excavations and for managing the related financial processes.

In urban areas where land value is speculative value and profit-driven transformation prevails, this second group can operate as an investment-oriented

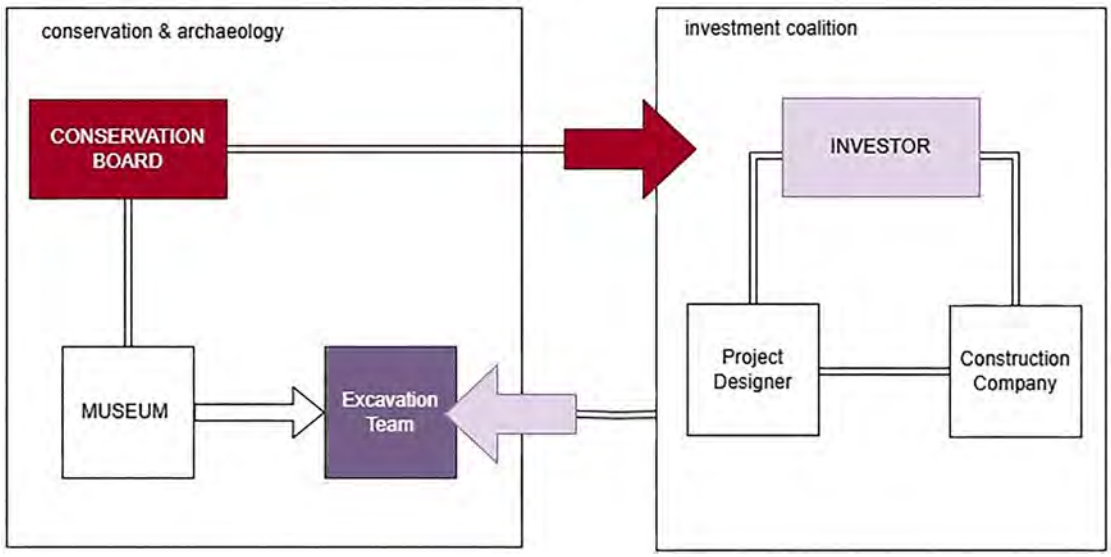


*Figure 2: Relationship between actors (Prepared by the author).*

coalition that exerts pressure on the actors of the archaeology and conservation group, particularly when archaeological excavations are involved.

Within this network of actors, the position of local governments is not always stable or consistently influential. In Türkiye, authority and decision-making power in the field of cultural heritage are concentrated mainly within the central government, while local authorities primarily act as implementers of decisions. This is also the case in urban archaeology.

In a system lacking a specialized and authorized urban archaeology unit, the relevant public institutions—namely, the museums and conservation boards—are affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Expertise and experience in this field have primarily been developed within Archaeological Museums, with a focus on excavations. However, in order to enhance local governance capacity in urban archaeology, strategic proposals have been put forward—such as the "Urban Archaeology Management Office" suggested in the case of Izmir by Tuna (2024), and the "Istanbul Metropolitan Archaeology Office" proposed in the Istanbul Vision 2050 Action Plan (Tuna, 2024; IPA, 2025).

One of the key tools that enables municipalities to make spatial decisions affecting urban archaeology is the preparation of Conservation-Oriented Development Plans within their jurisdiction. However, the nature and effectiveness of this tool depend not only on access to archaeological data that inform the planning process, but also on the municipality's approach to archaeological heritage—that is, whether archaeological layers are viewed as obstacles to development, or as a set of values to be preserved and a potential to be embraced.

Another situation in which municipalities are involved in this network of relations arises when they are the owners of projects concerning urban archaeology—such as certain transportation and infrastructure investments or urban renewal projects—or when the areas in question are under municipal ownership or use. In such cases, municipalities become part of the second group referred to as the investment coalition.

However, depending on the approach adopted by the municipality, urban archaeology may be perceived as an "obstacle" to the project or as an enriching input and a matter of public responsibility. Accordingly, the municipality's position within the actor network varies.

One of the key tools that enables municipalities to make spatial decisions affecting urban archaeology is the preparation of Conservation-Oriented Development Plans (*Koruma Amaçlı İmar Planları*) within their jurisdiction. In this context, the need for a qualified archaeological data infrastructure becomes increasingly important for the municipalities involved. Another situation in which municipalities engage with urban archaeology actors arises when they themselves are the owners of projects related to urban archaeology—such as specific transportation and infrastructure investments or urban renewal projects—or when the areas in question are under municipal ownership or use. In such cases, municipalities become part of what can be defined as the second group: the investment coalition (Figure 2).

In both cases, how the municipality engages with urban archaeology actors and utilizes the tools at its disposal is shaped by—and in turn shapes—the urban policy it adopts. In other words, it depends on whether the municipality perceives the city's archaeological layers as obstacles to development or as enriching inputs, public responsibilities, and sources of potential.

Therefore, archaeological excavations in urban areas can become a matter of multi-actor governance. In such cases, the convergence of different interest groups around a single project—especially when the investor side holds control over financial resources and, in some cases, enjoys political support—can disrupt the balance of power.

The Council of Europe's "European Code of Good Practice: Archaeology and the Urban Project" (COE, 2000) sets out important principles for clearly defining roles and safeguarding scientific autonomy in such multi-actor urban development processes. However, these principles and frameworks often fail to find practical application in Türkiye (COE, 2000). This situation leads to structural problems in terms of archaeological knowledge production, the working conditions of experts, and scientific independence.

In summary, urban archaeology is conducted through archaeological excavations as part of museum activities, focusing on documentation and reporting through coring and excavations in various project areas. However, in this system, scientific publications that would complete the processes of archaeological excavation within the city, the promotion of the field to the community, the integration of identified archaeological values into urban life and public spaces, and participatory, data-driven decision-making and design processes aimed at this purpose are often lacking (Figure 3).

The excavations carried out as part of the Marmaray Railway Project have been among the

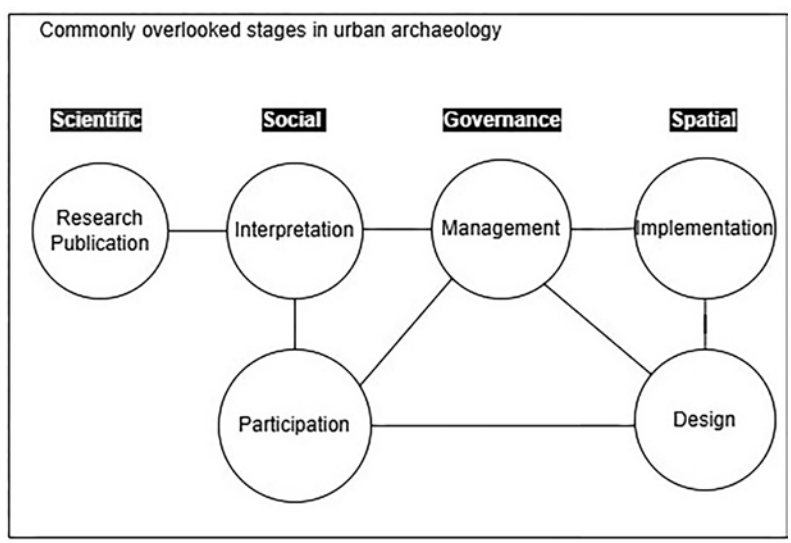


*Figure 3: Commonly overlooked stages in urban archaeology (Prepared by the author).*

most comprehensive urban archaeology studies conducted in Türkiye to date. Archaeological excavations have been conducted at Yenikapı, Sirkeci, Üsküdar, and the Golden Horn Metro Transition Bridge under the supervision of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums as part of the project, which was inaugurated in 2013. With an area of approximately 58.000 m², Yenikapı has constituted the largest site of these efforts (Kızıltan, 2015).

The excavations have identified cultural layers from the Neolithic, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods; particularly, the signs of Neolithic settlements and 35 shipwrecks from the Byzantine period are noteworthy (Kızıltan, 2015). The information gained during the nearly ten-year excavation process has been shared with the public through exhibitions and publications. However, since the onset of the Marmaray project and the conclusion of the excavations, integrating these discoveries into urban life has faced delays.

In this context, the international master plan competition opened by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM) in 2012 has not been implemented. Another competition for the area was held in 2020, and the application of the project selected for the Visitor Centre competition began in August 2023 (Konkur İstanbul).

Other excavation sites within the project's scope have not been included in similar urban design initiatives. For example, to include the Üsküdar excavations in the public space design, the layers identified in the Sirkeci excavations had to be transported and displayed in a different location at Sarayburnu.

Additionally, starting from 2019, there has been an increase in consideration for design and conservation projects focused on the integration of different archaeological values and archaeological sites, such as the Polyeuktos Basilica (Saraçhane Archaeological Park) and Boukoleon Palace, into the public space system (IMM & IPA, 2022).

## Advocacy, Urban Archaeology, and Ethics

While completing the framework regarding urban archaeology in Türkiye, it should be noted that

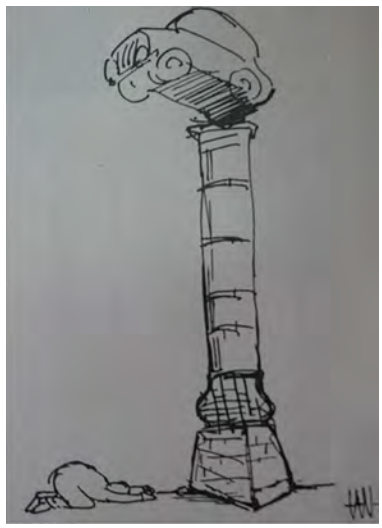

*Figure 4: A cartoon published in Cumhuriyet Newspaper about the Çemberlitaş Parking Lot (Cumhuriyet, 5 May 1993).*

the struggle to protect archaeological layers within the contemporary urban dynamics has occasionally gained a place in the urban agenda and advocacy activities. In this regard, a few cases from the Historic Peninsula of Istanbul can provide insights.

In 1990, plans were prepared for the Historic Peninsula, which had just been declared a protected area, including decisions such as the construction of multi-story parking lots and increasing traffic congestion. In this context, parking lots were planned in areas where archaeological layers were densely located; during this process, archaeological data were overlooked. One of these parking lots was planned to be constructed in the area that includes the Hellenistic period necropolis, the Roman period Forum of Constantine, and today's Çemberlitaş Square. With the start of construction in 1993, the voices of archaeologists and other experts rose in public discourse. The Archaeologists Association filed a legal complaint against the planning decision that prepared the ground for the parking lot project.

Students from the Department of Archaeology at Istanbul University held press statements at the construction site. During this process, the Ministry of Culture, led by elected representatives from various political parties, took a stance in favor of halting the project. At the same time, the district municipality insisted on continuing the car park

project. Ultimately, a court decision halted the car park project, thereby saving Çemberlitaş Square, also known as the Forum of Constantine. This cartoon, published in the Cumhuriyet newspaper, is an example of the public reflections of this struggle (Figure 4).

In another case opened by the Chamber of Architects in 1994, the Historic Peninsula Zoning Plan was deemed not to serve the function of protecting the Historic Peninsula and completely canceled on the grounds that it would destroy archaeological, historical, and cultural values with transportation and density decisions. In 1995, the Historic Peninsula was declared a conservation area, and archaeological excavation requirements were added as a precondition for new constructions (Ozar, 2017).

The Sulukule Urban Renewal Project is an important case that highlights the tensions between urban archaeology and urban transformation. Launched in 2005 in the Sulukule neighborhood of Istanbul's Fatih district, next to the historic land walls and for many years home to Roman communities, the project was carried out in collaboration with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Fatih Municipality, and the Housing Development Administration. The project aimed to demolish the existing housing structure and build 640 units on-site; however, this process resulted in significant displacement of Roman citizens of Sulukule. The project has been heavily criticized by professional chambers, civil society organizations, and urban rights advocates for ignoring local communities' socio-cultural fabric and spatial memory (Sulukule Diary).

The urban renewal process in question has been carried out around the Theodosian Walls, one of Istanbul's World Heritage Sites, leading to archaeological excavations initiated under the supervision of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums following the demolitions. However, these excavation efforts were carried out under significant time pressure imposed by the municipality and the investment group. In this context, the reassignment of the supervising archaeologist to another city in 2010—after attempting to prevent heavy machinery from

*Figure 5: A call-to-action visual from the "Let Lausos Palace Be Free!" campaign.*

entering the excavation site—revealed the extent of institutional and political pressure. This case highlights the oppressive effects of urban profit-driven transformation projects on archaeological heritage and the interdisciplinary knowledge production processes (Sulukule Diary).

The Lausos Palace incident is a striking example of the triggering role of civil society in urban archaeology. First, during the construction of the Courthouse between 1950 and 1952, the remains of the 5th-century Lausos Palace were discovered, leading to a revision of the project and the cancellation of related building blocks. However, in 2009, the visibility of the palace in the public space was lost when the Fatih Municipality constructed a stage and stands over the ruins without the Conservation Board's permission. The decisions made by the Regional Conservation Board to remove the illegal structure have not been implemented.

In 2018, the Istanbul branch of the Archaeologists Association and the Ecological Rights Center launched the #LausosPalaceBeFree campaign, aimed at removing the stage structure and making the ruins visible in public space (Archaeologists Association,

2018; Hürriyet, 2018). The campaign, supported by social media content, press releases, and written initiatives directed at relevant institutions, was renewed after the 2019 local elections and resulted in the removal of the stage and stands by the Fatih Municipality teams in 2022, following the involvement of the new Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality administration. This process demonstrates the potential of persistent civil initiatives in urban archaeology to advance conservation processes (Hürriyet, 2022).

These examples show that urban archaeology in Türkiye is not only a technical excavation activity but also part of a complex struggle related to urban rights, social memory, and cultural continuity.

## Conclusion

The current framework of urban archaeology in Türkiye has largely been shaped by archaeological excavations conducted within the context of museum activities and investment-focused processes. This approach not only limits the production of archaeological knowledge, but also hinders the integration of cultural heritage into urban planning and public life. In contrast, in recent years, there has been a growing interest in the concept of "urban archaeology" within academia, as well as its interdisciplinary dimensions related to urban planning, heritage management, and social participation. This trend indicates the emergence of an understanding that evaluates the cultural layers of cities not only through technical excavation processes, but also in conjunction with social, political, and spatial contexts. However, this development has had a limited impact on policies and practices.

One of the important conditions for effectively integrating the conceptual transformation of urban archaeology into the Turkish context is the establishment of an interdisciplinary working environment that supports and nurtures this transformation. In this regard, the "Urban Archaeology Workshop: The Contribution of Archaeology to the City and Its Inhabitants," jointly organized in 2018 by the Istanbul Branch of the Association of Archaeologists, the Istanbul Metropolitan Branch of the Chamber of Architects, and the Istanbul Branch of the City Planners Chamber, has been a significant step. Although the continuity of the workshop could not be ensured, this initiative contributed to expressing expectations regarding urban archaeology in the public discourse and to the formation of collective memory. Similarly, the edition titled "Archaeological Heritage and Liveable Cities" by the NIT Urban Heritage Lab has recorded discussions that will open dimensions of urban archaeology beyond the discipline of archaeology in Türkiye.

In practice, the contributions of disciplines, such as planning and design related to urban archaeology, remain limited. Behind this, governance-related issues between central institutions and local actors play a role; in decision-making processes, practitioner pressures, and investment priorities take precedence over scientific and participatory principles. The relationship that urban archaeology maintains with society, which could be referred to as its "other side," as well as its public visibility and interaction with urbanization processes, remains weak.

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## Endnotes

[1] The boards are composed of seven members appointed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, who are experts in archaeology, art history, law, architecture, and urban planning. Depending on the subject matter, representatives from the municipality, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, the General Directorate of Foundations, and local museums may also participate. (MoCT, 11 October 2018).

*Visit to the Ancient Roman Bath and Open Air Museum in Ankara with the course participants. Source: NIT Archive*

# Ankara Through Time: The Emergence of a Multilayered Historic Town[1]

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Başkent University

Ankara, which hosted a variety of civilizations throughout its history, is one of the important cities in Anatolian geography for cultural and physical stratification. From prehistoric periods onward, the area known as Historic Ankara has been continuously inhabited by diverse cultures and their heritage (Figure 1). Therefore, Historic Ankara is defined as a **multilayered town** with the civilizations it has witnessed over time, as well as the **spatial and social values** that have been added on top of or next to each other to shape the town's identity. To reveal the multilayered characteristics of Historic Ankara, this article will explore the emergence and transformation of each layer along with its assets, representing various historical periods and cultures of the town. Furthermore, major turning points in the history of the Republic of Türkiye and their impact on the multilayered character of Historic Ankara will be briefly discussed.

*Αγκυρα/Ancyra/Unguriye/Engürü/Angora/Ankara* is located in the center of the Central Anatolian Region called Orta Yayla, which is covered by plains. The historic town is situated on a valley floor where Hatip Stream, İncesu River, and Çubuk Stream converge. This area begins from the east with Kale Hill with an altitude of 986 m where Ankara Citadel is also located. From the citadel, the town expands on a bowl-shaped sloped topography, gradually widening in the west-southwest direction. The west-southwest border of the historic settlement area was formed by the İncesu River that flows from the northwest to the south. Due to its geographical location and varying topographic, morphological, climatic, and floral features, Historic Ankara has maintained a continuous inhabitancy either as a military camp or as a commercial town (Darkot, 1950) from ancient periods onwards.

Although archaeological finds suggest that the surroundings of Ankara have been used since prehistoric times,[2] evidence from the town center indicates that it has been intensively inhabited since **the Phrygians**. While there are no physical remains of the Citadel from the Phrygian period, the presence of Phrygian ceramics unearthed in Ulus and its vicinity suggests that the settlement area in that period was likely located in today's Ulus Square, Çankırı Road, and Hacıbayram Hill. Archaeological finds from Hacıbayram Hill and its surroundings indicate that

*Figure 1: Key examples of urban heritage representing various periods of Historic Ankara. (Source: Ayhan Koçyiğit, 2024).*

a Men-Kybele Temple was built on this hill and this area may have been the religious center during the Phrygians.

Third century BCE historian Apollonios of Aphrodisias mentions that **Galatians** came to Anatolia in 278 BCE, formed an alliance with the Pontus Kingdom, defeated the Egyptians, and as a result established the town *Αγκυρα/Ancyra*.[3] During this period, intense urbanization was not seen in Ankara which was utilized as a settlement area by the Tectosages, one of the three tribes of **Galatians**. After **the Romans** annexed the town in 25 BCE,[4] the settlement began to expand towards the base of the Kale Hill, radically like a hand-held-fan to the north-west-west-southwest directions, with monumental buildings and open areas in parallel to "the Romanization politics that gives importance to architecture for constituting collective memory" (Güven, 2001, p. 112). Subsequently, Ankara, situated at the junction of the Roman road network in Anatolia, became one of the most important centres of the peninsula representing the Empire (Akçura, 1971).

In light of the excavations, Ankara in the Roman Galatian period was a town with twelve neighborhoods, featuring monumental buildings, main axes connecting them, open spaces and streets hosting commercial, religious, and cultural facilities. The main arteries of the town were oriented along a north-south (*cardo maximus*) and an east-west (*decumanus*) direction to connect Grand Baths, Stadion, Minor Baths, Acropolis, Agora, theater, and the citadel. The Agora, corresponding to the area between today's Ulus Square and Hükümet Square, is thought to be surrounded by a Palatium (palace), a Nymphaeum (monumental fountain), Julian Column, and shops (Kadıoğlu & Görkay, 2008, p. 151). Furthermore, with the construction of the Temple of Augustus at Hacıbayram Hill, which previously hosted Men-Kybele Temple during the Phrygian period, this hill and its surrounding areas conserved its religious meaning and function for the town. Ankara expanded until the attacks of Goth and Zenobia, and to protect itself from these attacks, the settlement shrank within the fortifications that were either built or repaired in 260–271.

By the end of the Roman period, Ankara had become an important religious center of **early Christianity**[5] characterized by a number of monumental buildings such as the Church of St. Clement, two Montanist Churches, the Ankara Church, Petris Monastery, and Leontios Monastery. Apart from constructing new structures within the town, buildings of earlier periods were also utilized through alterations. Notably, the Temple of Augustus was transformed into a church and Hacıbayram Hill maintained its religious importance during this period. In 511, as a symbol of the persecutions that occurred during the Roman period, *martyriums* were constructed in certain areas of the town, including the *Campus* area where St. Platonis was buried and the *Kryptus* area where St. Clement and his fellows were buried (Jerphanion, 1928).[6]

Until the early seventh century, Ancyra was one of the important religious centers of the region. Following the Sassanid attacks in 622, Ancyra underwent a drastic transformation from a sprawling metropolis to a heavily fortified town on a hilltop (Foss, 1977). In response to these invasions, the inner fortifications of **the Byzantine** Citadel were possibly constructed around 630, and by the mid-seventh century, the settlement area had retreated completely inside the citadel.

After the Byzantine domination, Ankara constantly changed hands due to wars and attacks. From the mid-12th century, it became one of the administrative centers of Seljuks. During **the Seljuk** period, Ankara primarily served as a military-strategic centre for raiders coordinating attacks on lands beyond the Byzantine Empire (Özcan, 2006). This is why, apart from the construction of a limited number of monumental buildings—such as Alaeddin Mosque and Kızılbey Complex—strong Turkish urbanization has not started (Tanyeli, 1987) and the Byzantine walled town appearance continued for more than a century.

Ibn Battuta, who visited Ankara during the 14th century, mentioned that the town was occupied by Turkish tribes called **Ahi**[7] (Kemal, 1983). Under **Ahi** governance, a considerable increase in production and artisanship[8] could be traced in Ankara, which

concurrently facilitated a transformation in the characteristics of the town. The settlement area began to expand from the castle towards the south, along the narrow strip connecting the town to the caravan route. Religious buildings—such as Ahi Şerafettin Mosque and Tomb, Ahi Elvan Mosque, and Ahi Arap Mosque—were constructed one by one along this commercial strip, and neighborhoods developed around them accordingly.

At the beginning of **the 15th century**, parallel to the rise of **the Ottoman Empire**, *Engürü/Angora/Ankara* entered its most prosperous period, which reached to climax in **the 16th century** when the town possessed international renown for the fine mohair cloth woven called as *sof*, produced from the hair of Angora goat (Faroqhi, 1985, p. 211). As economic welfare increased—mainly due to sof production and its commerce—the population also grew, leading to an expansion of the town beyond the boundaries of the Roman period. In response to the requirements of these new neighborhoods, numerous mosques, masjids, hans, bedestens, and hamams were constructed.[9] Eventually, the town gained a double-centered (Ergenç, 1995) structure, referred to as *Yukarı Yüz*/Upper Face and *Aşağı Yüz*/Lower Face. The inner citadel, which had previously served as a residential area, from this period on started to gain an administrative character.

Ankara entered a stagnation period after the Celali Revolts in **the 17th century**, during which social and economic life regressed, leaving almost nothing from the wealthy classical period of the town (Mıhçıoğlu Bilgi, 2010). During the attacks, several commercial areas were destroyed, and the town narrowed down to its limits towards the Castle for a certain period. In 1606–1607, as a precaution against further attacks, a third circuit of the town walls was constructed with several town gates, and Ankara continued to develop within the limits defined by the wall. Even though this wall lost its function soon afterwards, as Aktüre states, it was the basic morphological element that determined the city's growth for more than three hundred years (1994, pp. 88–89). Towards the end of the 17th century, commerce in Ankara entered a stagnation period. Due to the stability of the population, the town continued to develop within the boundaries of the third circuit during **the 18th century**.[10] Many small and non-glamorous mosques, masjids, and hans were built while the monumental structures from previous periods were repaired (Aktüre, 1994).

In the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire faced the collapse of local industry and artisanry in the face of Western competition, ever-increasing foreign debts, and financial bankruptcy, precipitating a virtual loss of political independence (Timur, 1987, p. 9). In 1839, a broad programme of social and political reform was launched with the goal of renovating the administrative apparatus and adopting the political forms of Western republicanism. Until **the mid-19th century**, Ankara did not have the chance to implement these regulations. However, following its designation as the administrative center of *Ankara Vilayeti*/Ankara Province in 1882–1883, the town underwent a rapid transformation with the emergence of *Hükümet Meydanı*/Government Square in the Lower Face of the town characterised by the construction of several administrative buildings. Later, in 1892, a train station was constructed in the southwestern part of Ankara, leading to the development of Lower Face with several monumental buildings. Additionally, as a part of the trend introduced by the French idea of integrating public green spaces within urban environments, the first urban park, *Millet Bahçesi*/Nation Garden, was implemented in the Lower Face of Ankara in 1895. Furthermore, for the first time, the town was introduced to a gridiron-planned quarter called Boşnak Quarter, located outside the fortifications.

At the beginning of **the 20th century**, Ankara was in very poor condition, resembling a big village full of mediocre houses and monumental buildings. Even though the third circuit of the town walls was almost demolished, due to poverty and the lack of construction materials, the city preserved its 17th-century boundaries and continued to develop within the area defined by the fortifications. Only a few public buildings—such as Darülmuallimin, *Mekteb-i Sanayi*/The School of Industry and *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*/The Committee of Union and Progress—were constructed in this decade. Shortly thereafter, the Ottoman Empire's economic and political

struggle reached its climax due to the First World War. Meanwhile, supporters of *Kuva-yi Milliye*/National Forces began to organize gatherings throughout the country to oppose the occupation of Allied Forces. In 1920, members of the National Forces announced the opening of the National Assembly independent from Istanbul, and Ankara concurrently became the center of the War of Independence.

At the end of the Independence War, in **1923**, the government first announced Ankara as the new capital on October 13th, followed by the proclamation of **the Republic of Türkiye** on October 29th. In a short period, Ankara witnessed a significant increase in the population of civil servants and bureaucrats, which aroused the need for additional residential areas. As a result, the town began to expand beyond the historic quarters to the north (Keçiören-Etlik), east (Maltepe), and south (Yenişehir-Çankaya). The municipality therefore quickly prepared the map of Ankara and the first city plans—one for the historic town and two for new developments —were designed by Dr. Carl Christoph Lörcher in 1924. With the help of the expropriations, a vast area outside the territory of the Historic Ankara was planned. Particularly, in the lower parts of Historic Ankara (around Ulus Square), several public buildings[11] were designed in the First National Style, with references to the Seljuk and Ottoman architecture (Yalım, 2001, pp. 108–109).[12]

Starting from **the 1930s**, the new republic embraced the idea of developing a modernized image to disassociate itself from its Ottoman past. Most of the traditional aspects of buildings designed with the First National Style were replaced with modern, simplified, and functional designs of the First International Style (Aslanoğlu, 1986, p. 19). Several buildings were constructed in the same manner, and newly paved roads were implemented to create a modern city.[13] While the city was under construction, the municipality opened an invitational competition in 1927, and Herman Jansen's master plan got approval. Starting from 1932, under Jansen's guidance, the city continued to expand to the south (Çankaya) as well as to Cebeci, Bahçeli, and Tandoğan. Jansen also proposed a detailed plan to keep the Citadel area away from further construction, referencing the Citadel as the *Crown of The Town*. Although this plan aimed to promote development to the south and reduce the speculative pressure on historic districts, it failed to establish additional measures to conserve/reuse these areas.

In the following years, the Second World War (1939–1945) created new agendas for Türkiye. Despite the fact that the country decided to remain neutral during the war, Türkiye was not immune to the effects of political shifts and economic fluctuations. During **the 1940s**, economic problems, coupled with a significant increase in population, resulted in historic districts of Ankara becoming areas of ignorance surrounded by illegal construction activities. Even though Ulus Square and its close vicinity continued to function as the main center for Ankara regarding its political, administrative, commercial, and recreational value, the rest of the historic town fell into a chaotic condition. For decades, Historic Ankara was neglected and subsequently became populated with squatter areas (Türkün Erendil & Ulusoy, 2004).

Implementation of the new master plan (Yücel Uybadin Plan) in **the late 1950s**, alongside legislative changes throughout **the 1960s**, facilitated a continuous increase in building heights, and empty spaces in between buildings were filled with new constructions. This physical transformation caused a critical rise in the density of urban tissue and created its own layer with the emergence of a new building typology. The construction of high and massive buildings such as Ulus Bazaar, Anafartalar Bazaar, and 100. Yıl Bazaar at Ulus Square, along with Emek Bazaar at Kızılay Square, introduced a totally new physical and visual character to the main central squares of the city. These buildings were designed as an outcome of the new architectural trends of the country, primarily intended to collect commercial and office facilities within a single building. Both with their design, materials, and construction techniques, these buildings are considered significant interpretations of the international architectural styles seen in Türkiye. Between **the 1970s and 1990s**, several cultural assets located within Historic Ankara were registered, urban conservation site boundaries were defined, and the first conservation master plan

of Historic Ankara was developed in 1990.[14] Even though it was an important attempt at documentation, analysis, evaluation, and conservation of multilayered characteristics of Historic Ankara, it could not have the chance to be implemented fully since it was repealed in 2005.

After the repeal of the conservation master plan, **the 2000s** witnessed the acts of the municipality taking advantage of transition period regulations, which granted them unlimited authority to construct and demolish at will (street rehabilitations, fake restorations, reconstructions, and reorganization of public open areas, often at the expense of heritage from specific periods such as Byzantine and the modernization periods) within the historic fabric. In parallel to the change in physical and functional aspects identifying Historic Ankara, it is also possible to identify the loss of sociocultural values attached to the area. Additionally, the state developed a new synthetic architectural style by blending Seljuk and Ottoman features, resulting in the implementation of imitation buildings throughout the city. Despite

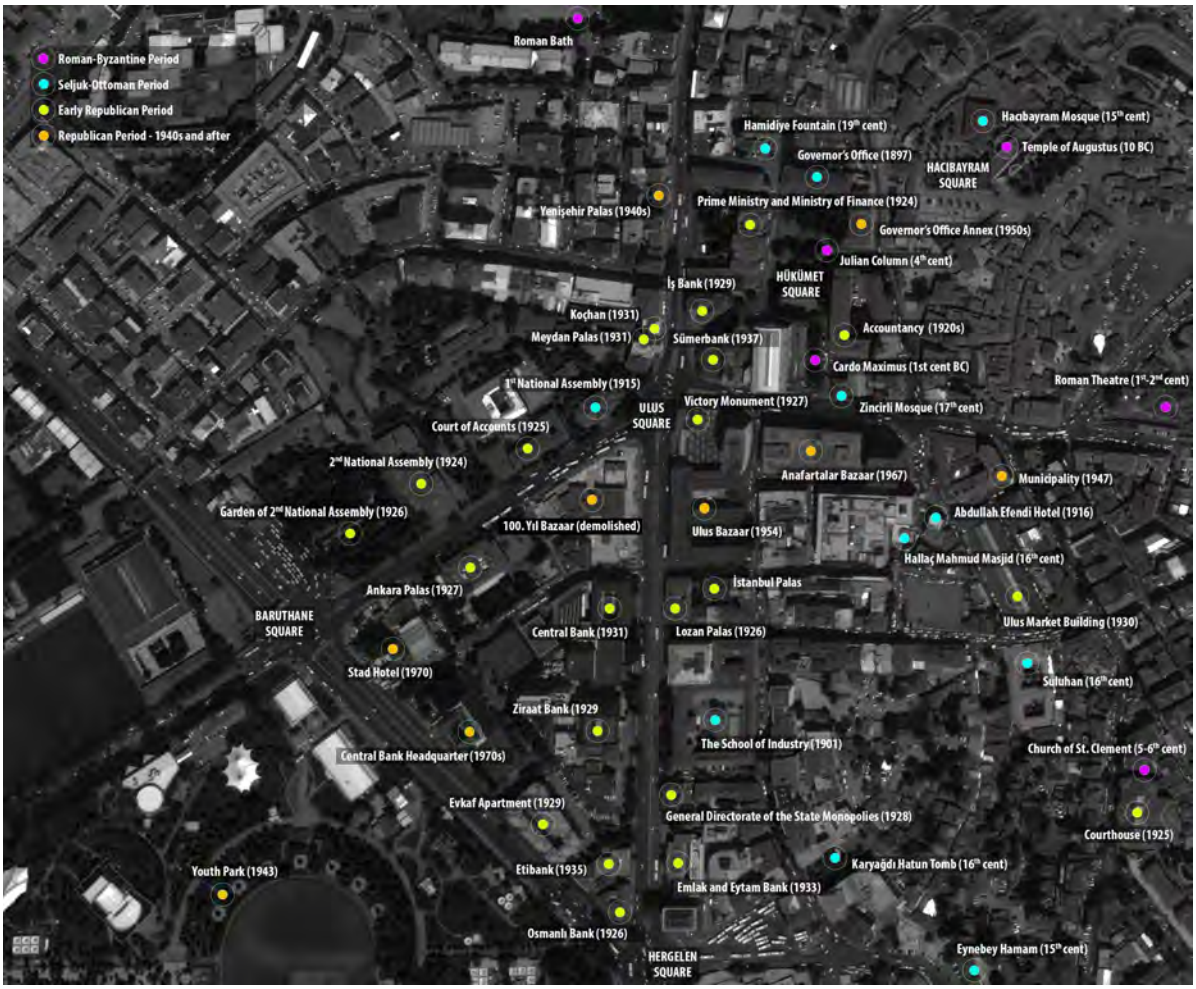


*Figure 2: Ulus Square and its close vicinity, an area in Historic Ankara representing historical stratigraphy (where different historic periods superimpose and physical evidences from different periods still exist). Source: Ayhan Koçyiğit, 2024 (prepared on the map developed by 100. Yıl Bazaar Work Group Report, 2020).*

opposition from universities, NGOs, initiatives, and scholars, the actions of state and local authorities have resulted in the partial loss of urban heritage in Historic Ankara. However, in **2019**, a new mayor was elected, and most of the projects initiated by the previous municipality were repealed to conserve the multilayered character of Historic Ankara.[15]

Historic Ankara is a multilayered town that embodies the heritage of various cultures from the Phrygian period onwards. Since the late 19th century, each administrative group, with differentiating agendas and ideologies, has implemented projects affecting the future of the town's heritage. Even though, to a certain extent, Historic Ankara was able to maintain its cultural significance over centuries, these projects developed by state and local authorities have caused changes in its urban fabric that pose a threat to authenticity and integrity. Consequently, while some assets representing different layers of the town have not survived to the present day, the coexistence of the remaining urban heritage still allows Historic Ankara to exhibit a multilayered character (Figure 2). Therefore, projects/plans developed for this area should follow a scientific approach for identifying, analyzing, and evaluating the values attributed to the area without prioritizing any particular period. This approach will not only ensure the continuity of historical stratification and the conservation of Historic Ankara, but will also allow the emergence of today's heritage, which constitutes a new layer in the town's evolving narrative.

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## Endnotes

[1] This article is based on the PhD dissertation "A Tale of Ulus Square: A Critical Assessment of Continuity, Transformation and Change in a Historic Public Open Space in Ankara" prepared under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Neriman Şahin Güçhan in the Graduate Program in Conservation of Cultural Heritage, Middle East Technical University (2018).

[2] The tumuli found within the boundaries of today's Ankara province prove that the area was inhabited by many medium and small sized tribes in 3000 BCE (Buluç, 1994, p. 21).

[3] The same word-root "ank-" is to be found in the Greek word for a ship's anchor, *ankyra*, and this was adopted as the town name in the Greek and Roman sources (Mitchell, 2011, p. 19). See Erzen for the records of *Ancyra* in Classical sources (2010, pp. 11–12).

[4] Broughton states that Galatia became a part of the Roman Empire by 25 BCE but officially became a province in 20 BCE (1938, p. 580).

[5] The church of Ankara became one of the most important in Asia Minor. It was the seat of the metropolitan bishop of Galatia, who came to rank fourth in the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church (Foss, 1977, p. 36).

[6] Jerphanion introduces this church as the prototype of Hagia Sophia in İstanbul (1928, pp. 112–143).

[7] Ahi is a cooperation and supporting organization that was established by the Turks who came to Anatolia from Asia, to overcome and to compete with the local traders and craftsmen (Çağatay, 1974, p. 59).

[8] See Aktüre for the list of Ahi activities, which includes 24 sectors of production (1978, p. 111).

[9] Mahmut Paşa Bedesten, Kurşunlu Han, Yeni Han, Zafran Han, Çukur Han, Çengel Han, Pilavlıoğlu Han, Cenabi Ahmet Paşa Hamam, Cenabi Ahmet Paşa Mosque, Hacıbayram Mosque, Yeğenbey Mosque, Haseki Mosque, Hallaç Mahmud Masjid, Tahtakale Hamam, Suluhan, Karyağdı Hatun Tomb, Şengül Hamam, and Karacabey Complex.

[10] On the other hand, the town continued to

attract travellers—such as Pitton de Tournefort (1701), Paul Lucas (1705), and Mortraye—who depicted the physical aspects and daily life of the town during the 18th century. Especially, in his painting, the Flemish artist Jean Baptist van Mour represented Ankara with three circuits of walls, numerous mosques, baths, commercial buildings, several monuments, as well as open spaces and landmarks.

[11] *Divan-ı Muhasebat*/Court of Accounts, Ankara Palas, *Posta ve Telgraf Umum Müdürlüğü (PTT)*/General Directorate of Post and Telegraph, Lozan Palas, *Tekel Baş Müdürlüğü*/General Directorate of The State Monopolies, *Osmanlı Bankası*/Ottoman Bank, *Ziraat Bankası*/Agriculture Bank, *Maliye Vekaleti*/Ministry of Finance and its terraced garden, and *İş Bankası*/Business Bank.

[12] For further information on First National Style, see Aslanoğlu (1986, pp. 16–17).

[13] Sümerbank at Ulus Square, *Merkez Bankası*/Central Bank, and Emlak ve Eytam Bank at Bankalar Road were constructed in this decade.

[14] Ankara Municipality Urban Planning and Development Directorate organised a competition in 1986 and a team from Middle East Technical University won the first prize. After a detailed analytical study, documentation and assessment process, *Ulus Tarihi Kent Merkezi Koruma Islah İmar Planı*/Ulus Historic Town Centre Conservation and Improvement Master Plan was approved and put into force in 1990.

[15] In 2019, the newly elected mayor announced that the municipality would cease the demolition of buildings representative of Ankara's modernization period such as Ulus Bazaar and Anafartalar Bazaar and would instead develop projects to re-function these buildings. However, 100. Yıl Bazaar was not included among these edifices, and despite opposition from several NGOs, it was demolished in 2023, with a new park subsequently implemented on the same site. This attempt damaged the modernization period layer of historic Ankara as well as changed the physical aspects and functional values ascribed at Ulus Square.

# The Temple of Augustus and *Roma* in Ankara: Histories, Receptions, Legacies

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In the aftermath of the Roman conquest of eastern Asia Minor, around 25 BCE, a marble temple was erected in *Ancyra*, the administrative capital of the newly established province of *Galatia* (Chiabà, 2018). The temple was most likely constructed atop an earlier sacred structure, although this remains unproven due to the lack of systematic archaeological evidence. Nevertheless, its orientation, architectural features, and stylistic elements strongly suggest continuity with earlier Hellenistic sanctuaries in Asia Minor—such as those at Magnesia on the Meander and Pergamon—underscoring the long-standing historical significance of the area now known as the Ulus district of Ankara (Sökmen Adalı, 2023). Dedicated to Augustus and the goddess *Roma* by the Galatian council (*koinon*) (OGIS 2.533 = IGR 3.157), following the emperor's death, the temple was decorated by a bilingual inscription—in Greek and Latin—engraved on the inner walls of the vestibule (*pronaos*), as for the Latin text, and on the outer walls of the inner chamber (*cella*), as for the Greek version (Güven, 1998; Roels, 2018). The inscription contained a copy—and its Greek translation—of the epigraph that the emperor himself, on behest of a clause in his will, had made engraved on two bronze pillars at the entrance of his *mausoleum* in Rome, the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (*RGDA*) (text: Scheid, 2007 and Cooley, 2009; context: Nicolet, 1991, Elsner, 1996, Kokkinia, 2021 and Mitchell, 2022).

Other copies of the *RGDA* are attested in Anatolia, in the cities of Apollonia (today known as Uluburlu; Buckler, Calder, & Guthrie, 1933), Pisidian Antioch (today known as Yalvaç; Robinson, 1926), and Sardis (today known as Sart; Buckler & Robinson, 1932). Moreover, besides the epigraphical evidences, there are brief reports of the inscription by Suetonius (*Vitae Ceasarum* 101, 4, LCL 31) and Cassius Dio (*Historiae Romanae* 56, 33.1-2, LCL 175). Although not unique, the *Monumentum Ancyranum* represents the best preserved testimony of Augustus' autobiographical political testament, funeral eulogy, and triumphal memoir. As such, it has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention and has been celebrated as a cornerstone of Roman epigraphy—*regina inscriptionum*, "the queen of inscriptions," as famously described by the father of modern epigraphy, Theodor Mommsen (Mommsen, 1873, p. 769).

In this contribution, we retrace the long history of the studies dedicated to the temple and its most famous inscription, and propose some reflections about the impact of such rich scholarly tradition on modern and contemporary receptions of the monument.

## A Long History of Transformations

Today, all that is left of the temple of Augustus and *Roma* are the *pronaos*, with its portal and architrave; the *cella*; the rear porch (*opisthodomos*); and some ruins of the perimetral colonnade (*peristasis*). Although fragmentary when confronted with the temple's original Augustan grandeur—measuring approximately 36 x 55 m and likely featuring a peristyle of 8 x 15 columns—these remains testify to the site's enduring cultural significance despite the numerous transformations (Pinna Caboni, 2018). During time, the temple endured various changes, both functional and architectural. Between the 5th and 6th centuries CE, the building was converted into a Byzantine church. By the 15th century, it had reportedly been re-used as *madrasah*—a theological school associated to the nearby mosque of Hacı Bayram-ı Veli. During this time, the structure also served as a convenient quarry for building material—as attested by the numerous fragments incorporated in the Byzantine walls of the city—and parts of the site were occupied by a cemetery. Moreover, various buildings progressively encroached the temple—most notably, the aforementioned Hacı Bayram mosque (Serin, 2018). This situation posed a major challenge for the study and documentation of the site, particularly regarding the Greek version of the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, which remained obscured for a long time behind later brick and mud constructions.

## Diplomats, Explorers, and Antiquarians

The first known documentation of the site dates to the mid-16th century and is associated with the mission of the Flemish diplomat Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq who was sent to the court of the Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent as an ambassador of the

Holy Roman emperor Ferdinand I. On the occasion of two succeeding missions (1554–1555 and 1556–1562), the diplomat managed to negotiate a sixth-months truce between the Habsburg and the Ottoman empire while also harvesting topographical, botanical, and archaeological data about the land that he visited (de Busbecq, 2012). Amid those, the "discovery" in *Ancyra* of a rotting building that was adjacent to the Hacı Bayram mosque and featured a large inscription is reported (de Busbecq, 1595, pp. 65–66). Driven by the same antiquarian interests of the diplomat, other members of de Busbecq's expedition significantly contributed to the documentation of the site: drawings of the temple were executed by the German-Hungarian merchant Hans Dernschwam (Birnbaum, 2021), and copies of the visible parts of the *RGDA* were produced by the Hungarian bishop Antun Vrančić (also known as Verantius; Lučin, 2019) and his secretary Joannes Belsius (Duggan, 2019). The first scholarly edition of the *Ancyran* inscription, however, would not appear until 1579: then, the Flemish Jesuit scholar André Schott, serendipitously rediscovered the epigraph's transcription and decided to include it in his commentary on Aurelius Victor's *Epitome de Caesaribus* (Schott, 1579). Further revised editions followed: in 1588 with two separate versions—one by the Flemish humanist Justus Lipsius and a second one by the German historian Joannes Leunclavius; in 1598, again by Lipsius; and in 1605, by the French philologist Isaac Casaubon (Nelles, 2009).

After these early efforts, further interest towards the *Monumentum Ancyranum* mounted, and the temple was finally correctly recognized as such (Lucas, 1712). In those years, multiple travelers visited *Angora*—the new name of Ancyra following its conquest by the Seljuk Turks in 1703—to document the site. Among the most notable were: the French botanist Joseph Pitton de Tournefort and the French antiquarian Paul Lucas, both commissioned by king Louis XIV (visiting in 1701 and 1705, respectively); the British anthropologist Richard Pococke (1735); the British East India Company officer John Macdonald Kinneir (1813–1814); the French archaeologist and architect Charles Texier (1839); the British diplomat, geologist, and archaeologist William Hamilton (1842); and George Perrot—one of the most distinguished students of the French School in Athens—accompanied by the architect Edmund Guillaume and the photographer Jules Delbet, dispatched by Napoleon III in 1861 (Cooley, 2009; Serin, 2018).

## The Birth of Epigraphy and Ottoman Management of the Site

With the codification of epigraphy as a formal scientific discipline in the mid-19th century, the scholarly interest in the *Ancyran* copy of the *RGDA* intensified further. In 1859, the Berlin Royal Academy commissioned to the German diplomat and geographer Andreas Mordtmann a cast in *papier-maché*—or squeeze—of the inscription. However, this expedition met with little success, and Mordtmann came back to Berlin almost empty-handed (Mordtmann, 1925). Dissatisfied, the Berlin Royal Academy, under special request of Theodor Mommsen—who meanwhile had published an edition of the *RGDA* on the basis of Perrot and Guillame's copy (Mommsen, 1965)—decided to finance a second expedition (1882), this time led by Carl Humann. German cartographer, explorer, and archaeologist, as well as a successful railroad engineer who worked directly under the Grand Vizier Fuad Pasha, Humann had acquired distinguished fame for the recent discovery of the ancient city of Pergamon. At *Angora*, thanks to his connections, Humann gained a particularly privileged permit that allowed him to dismantle all the structures hindering the reading of the Greek inscription. By virtue of this permit, with the help of the Italian plaster caster Andrea Janini, Humann finally produced a complete copy of both the Latin and Greek versions of the *Monumentum Ancyranum*. The cast, referred to as "*Ectypa Humaniana*" by Mommsen, constituted the basis on which all later scholarly editions of the inscription relied. Its matrices were handed over to the Royal Museum in Berlin where they are still housed in an external depot of the now State Museum (Auinger, 2012).

Meanwhile, the Ottoman court did not remain indifferent to the monument: in 1874, the Ottoman Grand Vizier Ahmed Cevdet Pasha appointed Giovanni Leonardi—an Armenian pharmacist

residing in Ankara—as the official superintendent of antiquities of the city, with particular responsibility for the temple of Augustus and *Roma*. In his report to the Ottoman court, Leonardi elaborated upon the state of the temple at that time and also offered the first Ottoman Turkish translation of the *RGDA* inscription, including both its Latin and Greek versions (Sökmen Adalı, 2022). Around this time, the area in front of the temple was turned into an open-air *antiquarium* for the display of monumental archaeological artifacts. These included the Hittite remains from the excavations at Boğazköy and Alacahöyük, Greek and Roman sculptures, gravestones and sarcophagi from Ankara, Kütahya, Eskişehir, and Synnada (Serin, 2018, pp. 369–370). This *antiquarium* remained in use until the 1930s. The archaeological material progressively accumulated and displayed in front of the temple formed the nucleus of the collection later displayed at the Hittite Museum (inaugurated in 1945) (Savino, 2012, pp. 260–261; Dinler, 2018).

## The Temple in Vitrine

In the context of the early-19th century scholarly international competition, multiple institutions desired to acquire copies of the *Monumentum Ancyranum*, as attested, for example, by the expedition financed by the American University of Cornell and led by the archaeologist John Robert Sterrett (1907–1908). Aiming at a broader archaeological documentation of Asia Minor and the Assyro-Babylonian Orient, the members of the Cornell expedition spent a few days in Ankara and produced new squeezes of the inscription, today preserved in the museum of the University of Cornell, and totally digitized for public use (Sterrett, 1911).

In 1909, the just founded Italian *Museo Nazionale Romano* also financed a mission in Ankara, directed by the archaeologist Roberto Paribeni—director of the museum—and conducted in situ by the two draughtsman Azeglio Berretti and Giuseppe Annarumi (Iannantuono, forthcoming). Thanks to a permit similar to those granted to Humann and later to Sterrett, and thus allowing to demolish local houses under the condition of a later repristination of the site, the mission accomplished to produce a 1:1 plaster cast reproduction of the entire temple.

The replica was created for display at the upcoming *Mostra Archeologica*, an archaeological exhibition organized at the just restored Baths of Diocletian in Rome as part of the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the national unification of Italy (Iannantuono, 2022). Within the ideological narrative driving the exhibition, the display of the replica assumed specific connotations. Deliberately stripped of its later Byzantine and Ottoman additions and placed at the very center of the Baths' courtyard—amid replicas of ancient artifacts from across the former Roman Empire—the reconstruction of an entire temple from an exotic land and dedicated to the founder of the Roman empire was staged as a physical testimony of the reach of ancient Rome's dominion over the *Mare Nostrum*. At the same time, it alluded to contemporary Italy's new role in the Mediterranean, as a scientific and technological pole of interest and, especially, as a political power. This message took on heightened urgency on the eve of the Italian-Ottoman war (1911–1912) when Italy intensified its claims upon territories under the Ottoman rule, such as Libya and the Dodecanese (Tschudi, 2018).

The ideological framing of the 1911 exhibition anticipated that of the better known *Mostra Augustea della Romanità*, organized at the height of the Fascist regime in 1937–1938 to commemorate the bimillenary of Augustus' death (Liberati, 2019). At that later display, the replica of the portal of the *Ancyran* temple—by then the best-preserved element of Beretti and Annarumi's plaster cast—was installed as the architectural focal point of the *Sala dell'Impero* and served as the backdrop for Benito Mussolini's opening and closing speeches (Liberati, 2019, pp. 90–92). This display was part of a broader program aimed at the staging of *Romanità*, the ideology that intended modern Italy as the legitimate heir of ancient Rome, and that had already for long been the mythical core of Italian national identity and colonial aspirations. The significance of the *RGDA* in such context is further exemplified by the display of further cast copies of the inscription, an Italian translation, and a scale model of the whole temple,

produced on the basis of Beretti's and Annarumi's documentation. Moreover, in the same year 1938, yet another copy of the *RGDA* was engraved on the plinth of the new pavilion hosting the reconstructed *Ara Pacis Augustae*, nearby Augustus' *mausoleum*—thus re-establishing a symbolic proximity to the original location of the emperor's testament (Kallis, 2011).

Meanwhile, in Ankara, following the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye and the city's designation as its capital in 1923, the Ulus district became the focus of an ambitious urban renewal project. Between 1926 and 1928, under the auspices of the German Archaeological Institute, the German scholars Daniel Krencker and Martin Schede inaugurated the first systematic archaeological excavations of the temple (Krencker & Schede, 1936). Subsequently, further investigations were carried out by the Turkish Historical Society, which again removed the residential structures that had grown on the site (Koşay & Akok, 1956; Koşay, 1957).

As Ankara underwent a broader process of renewal and monumentalization as new national capital, the *Monumentum Ancyranum* served as an important architectural and symbolic reference. This influence is particularly evident in the construction of several new republican buildings, such as *Anıtkabir*, the *mausoleum* of Kemal Atatürk—the founder and first president of the Republic of Türkiye, who died in 1938. Built between 1944 and 1953, *Anıtkabir* features two of Atatürk's most iconic speeches engraved on the outer walls of its *cella*: the "Address to the Youth" (1927), and the congratulatory "Speech on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary [of the Turkish Republic]" (1933). Both in content and placement, these inscriptions closely echo the *RGDA*, alluding to both the *mausoleum* of Augustus in Rome and the temple of Augustus and *Roma* in Ulus. Similarly, the building of the Turkish Ministry of Education (1962–1967) located in the northern end of the governmental district of Ankara, near Güvenpark, also features on its façade a long inscription reporting a quote from one of Atatürk's public speeches, again invoking the classical tradition of monumental political self-representation (Güven, 1998, pp. 39–40).

## The Monument Today

By the 1950s, the modern center of Ankara had begun to shift southward, toward the Kızılay district; as a result, Ulus gradually lost its central urban function, and the temple of Augustus and *Roma* was left to neglect and decay (Koçyiğit, 2019, pp. 53–59). In an effort to reverse this decline, in the 1980s, the Municipality of Ankara launched an open competition to evaluate programs aiming at integrating the old city into a more modern urban context. As part of this initiative, between 1989 and 1994, a new public square was created around the temple and the adjacent Hacı Bayram mosque. However, the more ambitious objective of the original *Ulus Project*— to integrate the temple with the nearby remains of the Roman Baths and the Roman theater into a unified archaeological area—stayed unfulfilled (Koçyiğit, 2019, pp. 59–63).

The deterioration and devaluation of the Ulus district continued into the 2000s. Despite a comprehensive plan for documentation and restoration of the temple, carried out between 1997 and 2008 by the University of Trieste in collaboration with the Middle East Technical University of Ankara (using non-invasive archaeometric methods), the monument remained largely neglected by local authorities (Botteri, 2018). In 2009–2010, an independent restoration effort introduced steel reinforcements into parts of the temple's wall, yet no conservation measures were implemented to protect the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, especially the vulnerable Greek version of the inscription (Botteri, 2018, p. 4).

In 2012, the Metropolitan Municipality of Ankara implemented a new landscape design of the Hacı Bayram square, with a new pavement, a pool with sprinklers, escalators, and new illumination (Koçyiğit, 2019, pp. 63–69). The project attracted vast critiques, especially as for a perceived lack of consideration for the historical and archaeological value of the area and for the conservation issues created by the humidity that the pool inevitably generated, and that affected the already quite worn inscription engraved on the temple's wall—especially as for the most exposed Greek version (Aytekin, 2019, pp. 1–9). As a result, today, the pool has been removed and

replaced by a less invasive garden design.

## The Impact of a Long History of Changes, Appropriations, and Studies: Some Conclusions

Due to its direct association with Rome, the temple of Augustus and *Roma* originally served as a powerful symbol of *Ancyra*'s privileged relationship with the hearth of the Roman Empire. Later on, this very same symbolic connection became crucial to the temple's reception and to the emergence of sustained interest. From imperial propaganda to diplomatic curiosity, from antiquarian fascination to nationalist and modernizing appropriations, the monument's layered history has continuously shaped its interpretation and cultural significance.

As we have seen, since the mid-16th century, numerous Western travelers have visited Ankara with the intent to document the temple—especially its most famous inscription. The challenges they faced, largely due to the site's evolving physical and urban fabric, gave rise to a persistent of Ottoman indifference and even neglect towards the monument.

In reality, at least as for the 19th century—just when in the West antiquarian interests began to coalesce into scientific disciplines—the Ottoman administration demonstrated notable concern for the temple's preservation and public value. One can cite, for example, the appointment of Giovanni Leonardi as official superintendent of antiquities, or the transformation of the site into an open-air display of artifacts, making it a foundational *lieu de mémoire* for the city. At the same time, it is undeniable that many of the ideological appropriations of the site—whether under Western colonial, Italian nationalistic and fascist, or Turkish republican narratives—have focused almost exclusively on its symbolic ties to ancient Rome. This emphasis has often overshadowed the temple's broader historical and urban significance, both in antiquity and in the evolving cityscape of modern Ankara.

Against this backdrop, renewed efforts to resignify the temple of Augustus and *Roma* as a meaningful site—one that commemorates the long and layered history of Ankara and contributes to the re-imagination of its future—are not only timely but necessary.

## Abbreviations

OGIS 2 – Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae, (Dittenberger, 1903–1905), Vol. II

IGR 3 – Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas pertinentes, Vol. III (Cagnat, 1906)

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*The Res Gestae Divi Augusti Inscription at the Temple of Augustus and Roma, Ankara (Source: NIT Archive).*

# Project Proposals

# Learning from Coexistence: The Tale of the Temple of Augustus and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque

Ahu Sönmez, Bilge Nur Bektaş, Esra Ceren Kara, Gönül Demet, Hakan Tarhan

## Conservation and Planning Background

The Augustus Temple and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque are located in the historic center of Ankara and have witnessed the city's long history. Even before the construction of the Augustus Temple, the area served as an acropolis during the Phrygian, Galatian, Lydian, Persian, and Roman periods. In the late first century BCE it was dedicated to the deities Kybele and Men (Akurgal, 1990). When Ankara became the capital of the Galatian province, in 21 BCE Emperor Augustus ordered the construction of the current temple, dedicated to the cult of Augustus and Rome (Akurgal, 1990; Kadıoğlu, et al., 2011).

Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque was built between 1427 and 1428, next to the Temple of Augustus (Özçakır, et al., 2017; Aytekin, 2020). During the Ottoman era, the area was a residential neighborhood with one- or two-story houses surrounding these two monuments. The general silhouette of the city at those times was composed of several landmarks, including the Ankara Castle, Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and Augustus Temple, Hıdırlık Hill, Mahmud Paşa Bedesten, Namazgah Hill, and İncesu River (Figure 1).

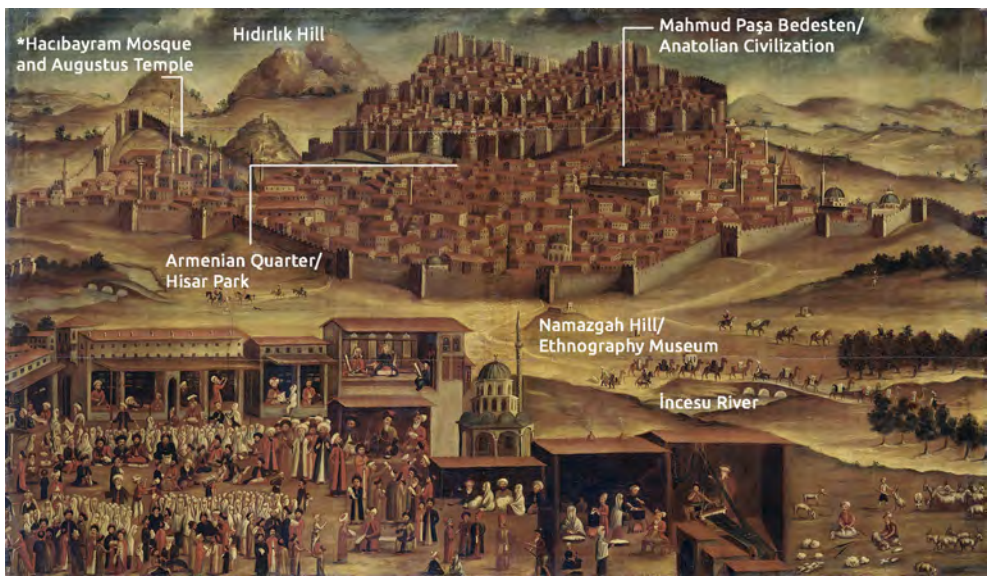



*Figure 1: Painting of Ankara (reinterpreted based on Eyice, 1972).*

During the Republican period, the expansion of commercial buildings transformed the area into a traditional hub, integrating both commercial and residential functions. After Ankara's designation as the capital of the Republic of Türkiye, significant urban planning and development efforts were undertaken. For instance, the Löcher Plan (1924–1932) established a new center in the south, known as Yenişehir (Kızılay), while also contributing to the preservation of the historic urban area of Ulus.

The Jansen Plan (1932–1957) also supported the development of Ulus and Yenişehir, determining Atatürk Boulevard as the urban spine of the city. Although the plan prospected the development of a garden city, Ankara has become increasingly densified, with natural elements such as rivers and green areas under threat due to population growth. The Yücel Uybadin Plan (1957–1970) aimed to solve the housing problem caused by immense migration from rural to urban areas. However, infrastructures became inadequate over

time, leading to the emergence of '*gecekondus*' (shanty houses) mainly in the Ulus district.

With the establishment of the Superior Council for Immovable Antiquities and Monuments (GEEAYK) in 1951, the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and the Augustus Temple were registered as monuments in 1972. In the wake of a renewed interest in the conservation of historical buildings, Ulus was declared an urban conservation area with historic urban features in 1980. The major Turkish law on conservation, the Law on the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Property No. 2863, took effect in 1983, addressing several issues regarding registration, planning, responsibilities of actors, and decision-making processes. The Ulus Historic City Center Planning Competition was then organized by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality in 1986. The winning project led to the construction of a new square in front of the monuments, along with several commercial buildings (Özçakır, et al., 2017; Aytekin, 2020). However, the demolition of certain traditional structures in the 1990s negatively affected the historic character of the area.

The Ankara Master Plan (1990) aimed to guide urban development on the western corridor but was unable to address housing issues and the decentralization of central functions. The plan designated the Augustus Temple and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque as a conservation area, recognizing their significance for the city's urban identity, tourism potential, and vibrant urban living environment. At the same time, it emphasized the need for an urban conservation plan to reintegrate the site into the active urban environment. Law No. 5366 declared Ankara Historical Urban Center Ulus as a Renewal Area. Since then, commercial activity has increased, and the Islamic-religious characteristics of the place have gained prominence, as further demonstrated by the Hacı Bayram Square Urban Design Project in 2011–2012, which over-emphasized religious values. The additional section, with a portico built in 1970 on the northern side of the building, was completely demolished, and replaced with a larger structure to expand the worship area. A fountain pool was built on the eastern side of the Augustus Temple, as well as several new buildings in fake Ottoman-style architecture. Lastly, an underground parking facility was constructed beneath the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque (Özçakır, et al., 2017).

The site is also recognized for its outstanding universal value. Due to the presence of the mosque and tomb of the Sufi poet Haji Bayram Veli, thanks to the enduring spiritual significance of the area, the site was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2016 as "Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and its Surrounding Area (the Hacı Bayram District)." In 2020, the fountains which were placed next to the Augustus Temple were transformed into a dry pool to prevent the decay of the monument. We conducted a SWOT Analysis to understand the current situation and define the values and significance of the site. Based on these, we determined the problem definition and developed proposals for re-integration of the site within the city.

## Analysis

The analyzes were conducted in multiple scales (Figure 2):

1. Ulus and Environs: Ulus urban conservation area and environs, presenting the silhouette of Roman Ankara.
2. Hacı Bayram District: The blocks close to the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and Augustus Temple.

3. Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, Augustus Temple, and Environs: The building block and close surroundings.
4. Augustus Temple: The building and environs.

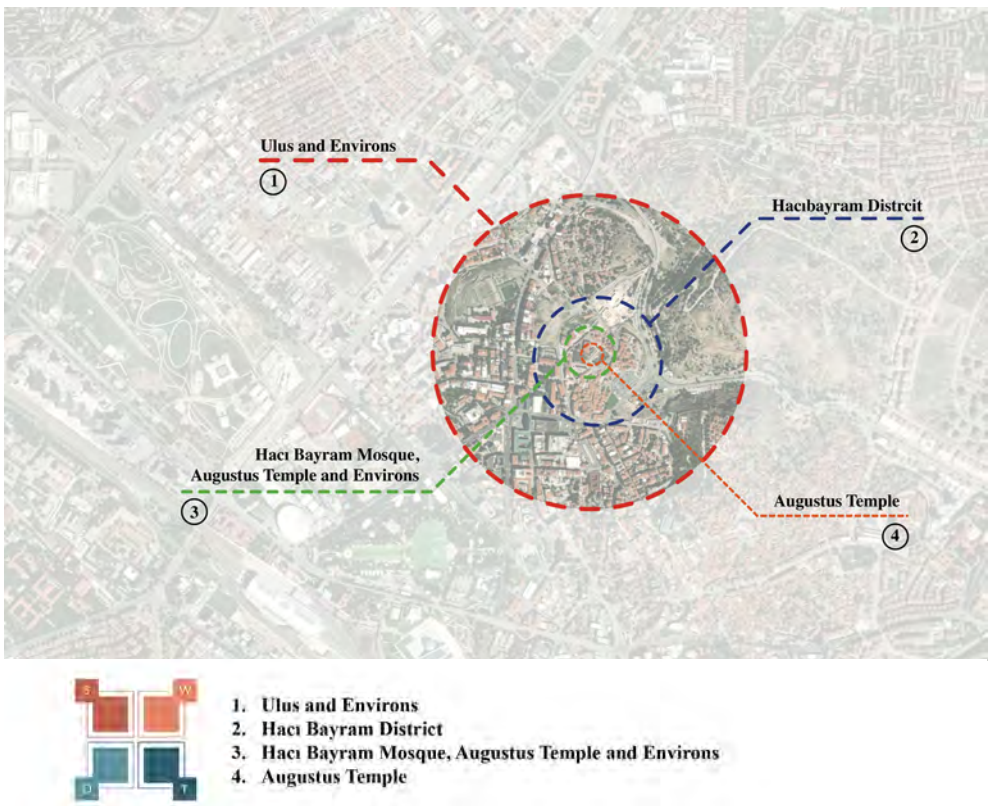



*Figure 2: Scales of Analyzes.*

Accordingly, we conducted a SWOT Analysis based on the site visit and secondary literature (Figure 3).

## Values and Significance

The Temple of Augustus and the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and its surroundings, retain multiple heritage values and significance due to their historical and contemporary context and various uses. Based on the field survey and literature review, the heritage values of the place have been categorized and mapped for a values-based conservation study (Figure 4).

- **Age/Historical Value:** The area constitutes 'Age/Historical' value due to its former use as the Acropolis Hill of Ankara, and the significant historical monuments that were built there, namely the Temple of Augustus (21 BC) and the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque (15th century).
- **Architectural/Aesthetic Value:** The monumental architecture of the temple, mosque, and tomb contributes significantly to architectural and aesthetic value.

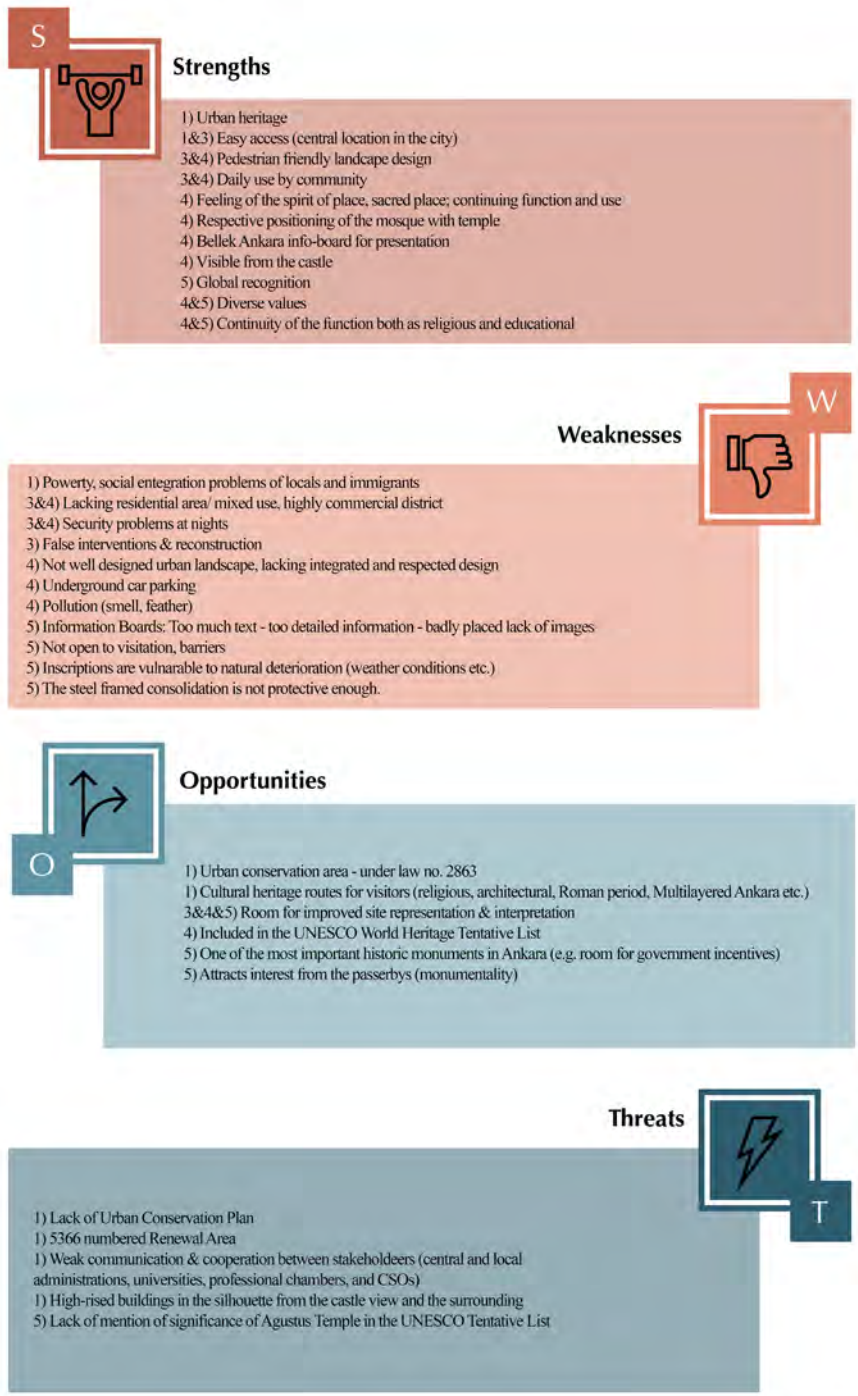



*Figure 3: SWOT Analysis.*

The decorative elements, such as inscriptions, engravings, and tiles adorning the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque and the Temple of Augustus, enhance their historical and cultural value.

- **Document/Record Value:** The text of the Res Gestae Divi Augusti, originally displayed on bronze pillars in front of Augustus' mausoleum in Rome, was written by the emperor himself to document his life and accomplishments (Güven, 1998). While the original pillars in Rome no longer exist today, the inscription on the walls of the Temple of Augustus in Ankara remains the sole surviving copy, containing nearly the complete text in both Latin and Greek.
- **Educational Value:** The bilingual Latin and Greek inscription of the Res Gestae on the Temple of Augustus also served to educate the general public about the Emperor's achievements. Later, during the Ottoman period, the monument was repurposed as a *medrese*, an educational institution.
- **Religious Value:** Throughout history, the area has retained religious importance. Initially used for the cult of Kybele, in the Roman era, it maintained this religious significance with the construction of a temple dedicated to 'Divine Augustus.' During the Ottoman era, the area evolved into a center of the Bayrami sect with the construction of the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque. Today, the religious value of the area endures as many people continue to visit the mosque and tomb.
- **Symbolic Value:** The co-existence of diverse cultural, ethnic, and religious communities in a singular space constitutes a symbolic value of harmony and peace.

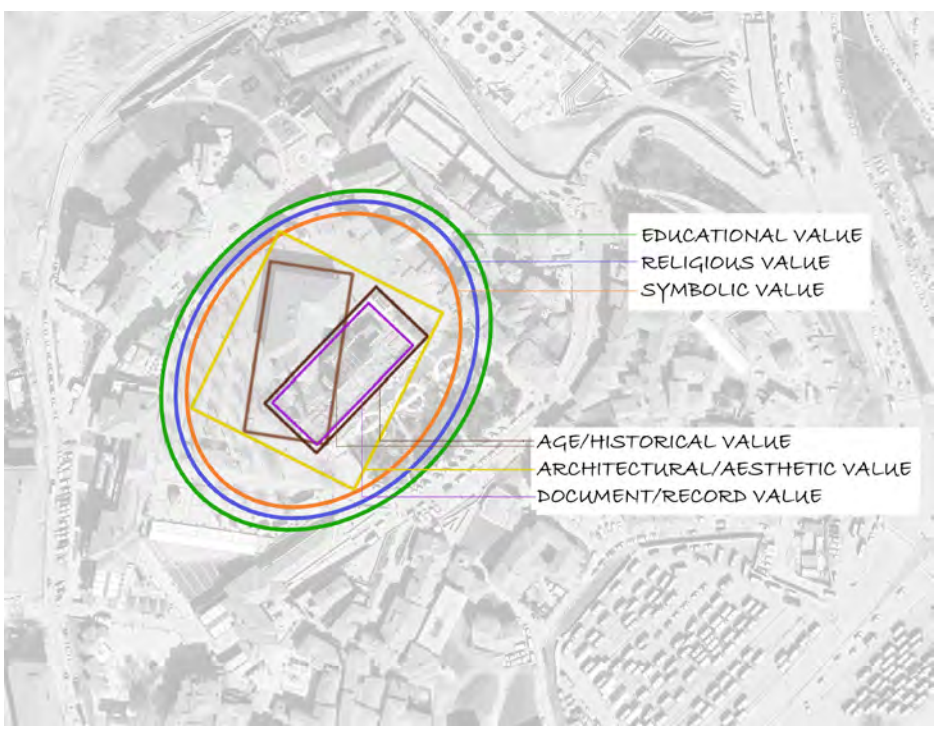



*Figure 4: Map of Values.*

In this study, the cultural significance of the place is determined:

"*The coexistence of the Temple of Augustus, the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, and the adjacent tomb exemplifies the area's multicultural and multireligious essence, reflecting its rich diversity rooted in the monuments' historical, aesthetic, educational, and religious values that have endured for centuries.*"

*Figure 5: Keywords for the Significance Analysis.*

## Problem Definition

The Temple of Augustus faces a significant challenge in successfully integrating into the contemporary heritage landscape of the area and proving its relevance to the lives of both local inhabitants and visitors. Currently, the monument's historical significance is not effectively communicated or understood by the public.

Therefore, this study aims to address the question: "How can we reintegrate the Temple of Augustus and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque into the fabric of today's urban environment, considering spatial, social, economic, and cultural dimensions?"

## Proposal for Re-Integration

We have developed a re-integration proposal based on vision and narrative, conservation practices, and intervention strategies. Accordingly, intervention strategies and actions are determined based on the scales of analyses.

### Vision and Narrative

This project aims to highlight the significance and authenticity of the Hacı Bayram district by focusing on the temple, the mosque, and their surroundings. With this objective, we propose a re-integration program, including the re-arrangement of the public spaces, physical interventions to the monuments, and a new community engagement strategy.

Through these actions, the project aims to provide new ways for diverse communities to engage with the site's heritage and embrace a deeper understanding of the multilayered values attached to this site. Accordingly, the narrative of the place is described as:

"*The tale of the Temple of Augustus & Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque is a dialectic dance, which is*

*dead and living,*

*frozen and continuing,*

*past and present,*

*underground and above the surface,*

*inscribed and implied,*

*charming and modest*."

This co-existence of contrasts gives rise to a synthesis and intactness of the sacred spirit of the place. The proposed project retells this tale by re-integrating the place into the living urban heritage, both socially and spatially. This inspiring place, with its knowns and unknowns, invites people to discoveries, and calls for the creation of further stories.

## Conservation Attitude and Intervention Principles

Among the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the goals numbered SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10, and SDG 11 align with our objectives and could be adapted to the site (Figure 6). In particular, we refer to gender equality, educational access, economic freedom, sustainable tourism, accessible cultural areas, and supporting local culture and local products.

| | |
|---|---|
| 4 QUALITY EDUCATION | By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university<br>By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development |
| 5 GENDER EQUALITY | Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decisionmaking in political, economic and public life<br>Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws<br>Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels |
| 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors<br>Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services<br>By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products |
| 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES | By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status |
| 11 | Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage<br>By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities |

*Figure 6: Compatible SDGs to be adapted.*

Embracing integrated conservation, we define the following as key intervention principles for the site:

- Making interventions according to international charters and declarations (i.e., the Quebec Declaration and the Burra Charter).
- Taking necessary measurements to eliminate the structural problems and material decay of the building and to prevent additional damage.
- Implementing only mandatory measures while minimizing harm to the structure and architectural elements.
- Preserving the original elements of the structures, the values they possess, and the spirit of the place.
- Removing later unqualified additions that harm the authentic spatial organization (e.g. fences, steel structures) of buildings around the site.
- Designing modern elements and newly added parts in a way that distinguishes them from historical features, preventing any misconceptions.
- Implementing reversible and replaceable interventions, which are differentiated from the original material's texture, detail, etc, and with minimal interference to the original tissue.
- Enabling accessibility both physically and intellectually to the monuments.
- Ensuring harmony between contrasting elements.

## Intervention Strategies and Actions

We determined intervention strategies for both the area as a whole and, in particular, for the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, the Augustus Temple, and their surroundings.

*Upper-Scale Intervention Strategies*

For Ulus and its environs:

- The previous conservation plan studies realized by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality lacked inclusivity and proactive engagement with stakeholders such as universities, professional chambers, local communities, and immigrants. Future conservation plans should involve these stakeholders by developing a strategy for stakeholder engagement and inclusive policies.
- Although Ankara possesses diverse heritage values, outsiders, newcomers, and even locals are not facilitated to interpret them. To better represent the city, we suggest the creation of diverse cultural heritage routes focusing on religious values, architectural values, the Roman period, Ankara's multi-layered characteristics, and its modern values should be determined, and necessary urban designs should be implemented.
- The underground parking facility just below Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque damages the cultural assets and is not compatible with the status of the historic center. Therefore, the parking area must be replaced outside of Ulus's urban conservation area.

For the Hacı Bayram District;

- We suggest to develop an urban design plan and design guidelines as a base for further urban elements, paths, transportation facilities, and other related aspects.
- A site interpretation plan should be prepared to present the place holistically, considering the area's multilayered past and diverse heritage values.

*Actions for Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, Augustus Temple, and Environs*

The focus of the project is on social/community engagement, and the scenario is shaped according to the themes below:

- Arts & Crafts
- Education
- Transfer
- Cultural Heritage
- Community
- Learning
- Information

In addition to the historical and aesthetic value of the engraved texts on the Temple of Augustus, the craftmanship involved in carving those words into stone is a striking element. It is possible to see similar expertise in the calligraphic style known as 'thuluth' commonly found in mosques. In both examples, the artists' talent and the beauty of the masterpieces encourage people to learn. Based on this element, which can be exemplified as "Arts and Crafts," we developed the idea of creating an art and craft-oriented center in the area. One of the strengths of the project is the idea of bringing people together in an area of world-famous cultural heritage thanks to traditional handicrafts, which are considered the common heritage of humanity.

The center aims to contribute to the transfer of arts and crafts to future generations with innovative methods, to ensure the visibility of cultural riches, and to develop and sell qualified products. The younger generation and masters will be able to learn from each other through interaction.

We aim to create a space for social engagement through the production, learning, and dissemination of arts and crafts-oriented media. This would be a platform where local artists and craftsmen can share their knowledge, offer, or participate in various training programs and workshops. These will not only target artists but also the general public, including children, youngsters, and women, possibly enabling the latter to secure employment and achieve economic independence. Through a master-apprentice relationship, the training programs aim to pass on these skills to the younger generation and revitalize professions at risk of disappearing. The artworks produced through these initiatives will be publicly exhibited.

The physical space required by these activities will be provided by repurposing registered buildings in the area. Thus, instead of remaining idle and derelict over time, these will contribute to the transmission of arts and crafts from master to apprentice with their efforts to survive from the past to the present. In this way, arts and craft centers will provide

spaces for learning, practicing, and interacting with traditional handicrafts.

These places will provide:

- Collaboration opportunities: Researchers, designers, and new generations who want to work in this field will witness traditional production methods and develop a sense of ownership of the area.
- Contribution to the combination of traditional production methods and new technologies: As a center of production, design, and experience, the sustainability of arts and crafts will be ensured.
- Joint use of different knowledge and skills: Young people and masters will come together and increase their interaction and collaboration.
- Transferring our arts and crafts that are about to disappear to future generations: It will be a center for continuous learning, research, and application.

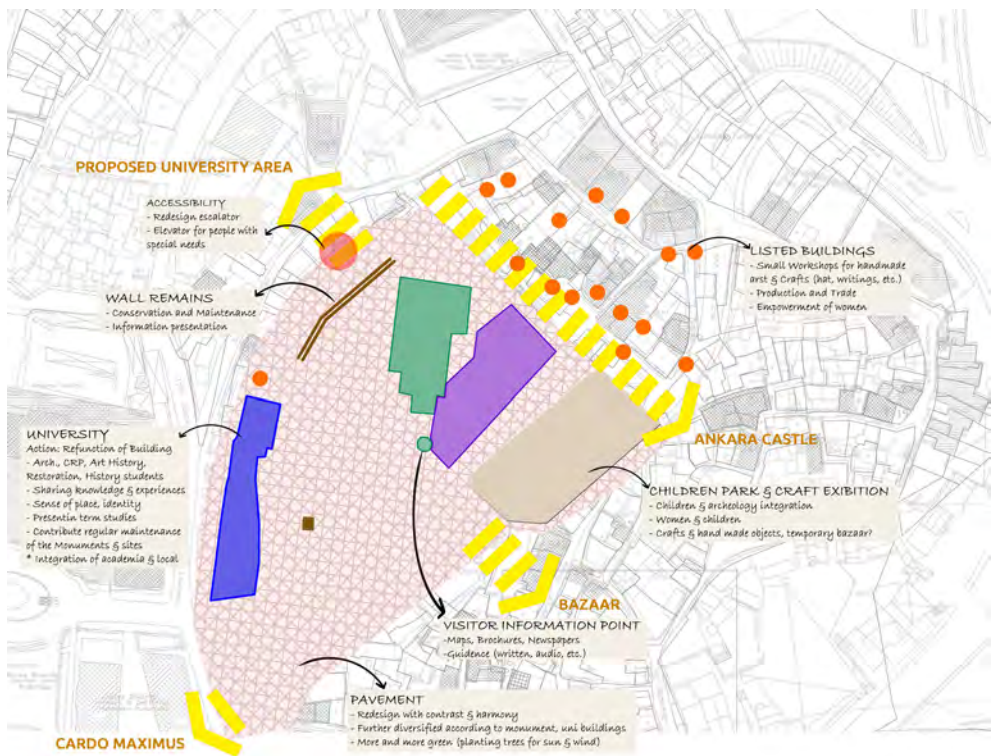


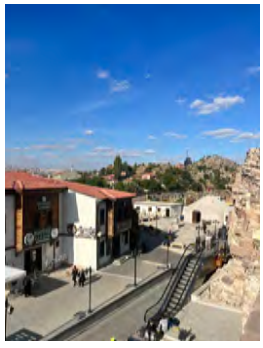

*Figure 7: Intervention Actions for Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, Augustus Temple, and Environs.*

The physical interventions on the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, Augustus Temple, and Environs will include the actions below (See also Figure 7).

1. Accessibility of the area will be increased by redesigning the escalator and constructing an elevator for people with special needs.
2. Conservation and maintenance will be undertaken to ensure the wall remains in place. This wall remains can also be used as informational and presentation panels.
3. The tomb next to the Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque will be re-purposed as a visitor

information center, providing guide maps and brochures.

4. Pavements will be re-designed following principles of contrast and harmony. A landscaping project will be implemented to create a greener environment, using tree species compatible with Ankara's climate.
5. The area in front of the Augustus Temple, currently used as a park with seating arrangements, will be re-designed as a children's park and arts and crafts exhibition area. This transformation will strengthen the integration between the temple and the public area. By playing around the historical monuments, children will develop an increased curiosity about history and cultural heritage and visitors will be able to develop more meaningful connections with the site.
6. The listed buildings will be repurposed as workshop areas for arts and crafts. Production, learning, and trading activities will take place here with the objective of empowering women.
7. The building located at the entrance of the area, accessed from the Cardo Maximus path, will be repurposed as a university building dedicated to Architecture, City and Regional Planning, Restoration, History, and Art History students and academics. Universities will be more integrated into the site and will be able to share knowledge and experience with locals and visitors.



*Escalator*

*Tomb*

*Pavements*

*Public Square and Fences*

*Listed Buildings*

*Entrance*

*Figure 8: Views from the Intervention Areas.*

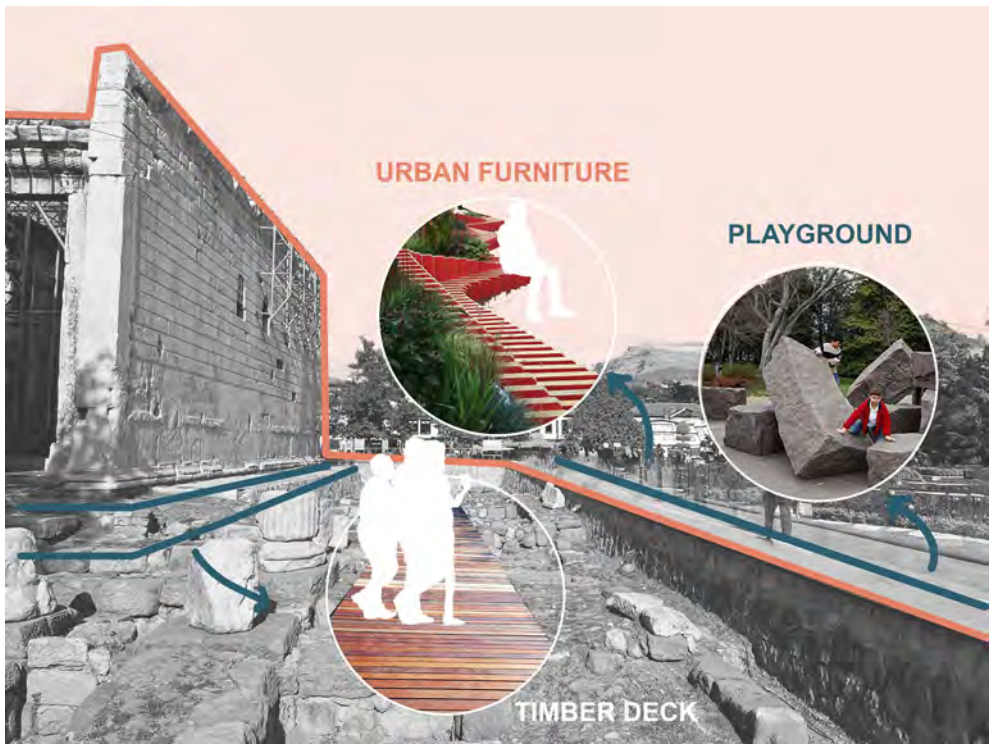



*Figure 9: Urban Furniture and Playground Design Collage.*

One of the intentions of the project is to create a boundary between the Temple of Augustus and the surrounding square without interrupting visual communication with the monument. For this reason, we envision urban furniture that allows visitors and the general public to interact with the monument while visiting or walking around without causing physical damage to the temple and its surroundings (Figure 9).

The proposed playground, to be located in the area currently used as a park, aims to bring the place and the public together. Designed as a place where children can learn while playing, the playground is intended to host various events including arts and crafts exhibitions and bazaars. In this way, we aim to create a place for people to engage with the area's cultural heritage (Figure 10).

*Actions for Augustus Temple and Environs*

Currently, the access to the Temple of Augustus is restricted, and only authorized visitors can enter the monument. We aim for the monument's physical, visual, and intellectual accessibility. Therefore, the project will implement a tourniquet system, which will allow visitors with tickets to access the site. Additionally, an urban deck made of timber will be integrated into the site, and railings will be used to restrict visitors from touching the inscriptions (Figure 11).

*Figure 10: Project Design Layout.*

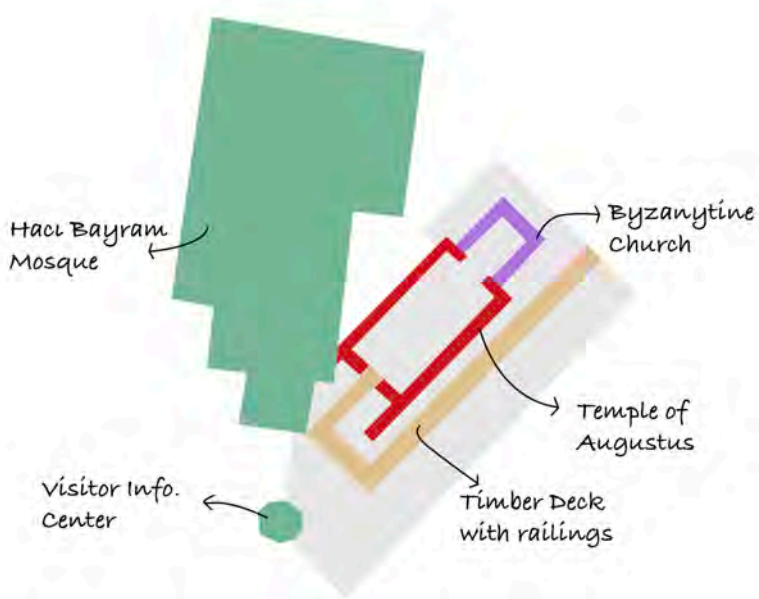



*Figure 11: Design of the Urban Deck.*

The urban deck will be constructed from lightweight and removable materials and will be slightly elevated above the structure. In places without a timber deck, visitors will be able to walk around freely and experience the site. In addition, transparent material will be used for the railings to maintain a visual connection with the structure. The existing metal structures attached to the temple walls will be removed (Figure 12).

*Figure 12: Illustration of the Urban Deck.*

The newly designed information boards and other informative elements will include not only include the translation of the Res Gestae inscription but will also provide an explanation of its history and significance (Figure 13). Additionally, the relation with the original inscription in Rome will be emphasized.

*Figure 13: Illustration of the Information Boards and Panels.*

*Conservation of the Res Gestae Inscriptions:*

In its current state, the Res Gestae inscription is affected by several conservation issues, including cracks, detachment (blistering, delamination, disintegration), material loss, discoloration, and deposit. Hence, expert conservators will oversee the monitoring and maintenance of the inscriptions and conservation studies will be conducted to determine how to mitigate the deterioration.

*Figure 14: Res Gestae Inscription.*

*Presentation of the Temple of Augustus:*

The existing informational material (information boards, online presence) related to the Temple of Augustus and its surroundings is insufficient. Firstly, the information boards placed in the area display long descriptions with technical terms, making them difficult for visitors to read and understand. Secondly, their current placement and physical orientation, obstruct the visitors' visual connection with the temple, negatively impacting the visitor's experience. Therefore, our project proposes the implementation of new information boards and panels that will use interpretive writing.

The site will be presented by using digital technologies such as AR and VR. Digital reconstructions and representations of the monuments and the surrounding area will be available for site visitors free of charge via on-site virtual stations and mobile applications for smartphones and tablets. By providing an enhanced, immersive, and interactive experience, visitors will have the opportunity to better understand the different phases of the area's history. In addition, within the scope of this project, the wall of the Temple of Augustus will serve as a projection surface for virtual representations, including the original Res Gestae inscription, as well as art installations and screenings (Figure 15).

*Figure 15: Res Gestae.*

## Conclusion

The Augustus Temple and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque are significant monuments in the heart of Ankara. Although the spirit of the area is unique, several challenges persist in conservation, interpretation, and presentation. Over time, the place became increasingly isolated, transforming into a place of monuments that were segregated from its surroundings. While the Islamic religious significance of the place was emphasized, the connection of Hacı Bayram Veli and Augustus Temple gradually faded and was increasingly neglected. This study aimed to reintegrate the Augustus Temple and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque with multi-layered Ankara by presenting proposals for Ulus and Environs and site-specific interventions.

The team behind this study recognizes the uniqueness of this site, while also acknowledging its complexity and the challenges it presents. Consequently, new recommendations have been proposed related to its utilization. To develop accurate and detailed actions, further studies should be conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the site, including both its historical background and present condition. Within the limited time and the scope of this course, we aimed to develop strategies and actions that respect the site's values

while empowering the local people. Finally, this study aims to open doors for collaborative, participatory, people-centered approaches in the conservation and planning of any value-attributed heritage site.

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*Course participants following the presentations during the Ankara program (Source: NIT Archive).*

# "Let's Meet at the Roman Bath" Tracing the Continuity Between the Absence and Presence

Ali Kaan Soysal, Evindar Çağlar, Evinç Doğan, Gülhan Kılınç Halıcı, Zeynep Buket Üstün

## Introduction

The Roman Bath in Ankara is located in the Ulus district, on a stratified mound bearing multi-layered historical remains. (Australia ICOMOS, 2013). Archaeological excavations revealed rich findings from Phrygian, Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman times. The baths functioned as central social and political forums, providing a setting for conducting business transactions, socializing, and exchanging information. Thus, the study aims to make the Ankara Roman Bath Open-Air Museum a porous and inclusive public space, fostering community engagement through urban fluidity and connectivity.

## Conceptual Background: The Absent Presence Linking Memory and Space

According to Benjamin (1999), there is a link between memory and trace, in which memory is connected to the temporal dimension of a palimpsest city built over the traces of the past, written over and over through new constructions. Derrida (1976) takes a deconstructive approach, recognizing a trace as a "mark of the absence of a presence, an always-already absent present." The paradoxical nature of traces as a "presence" that signifies an "absence" (Ricoeur, 1988) suggests the conservation of voids to maintain an "absent presence" (Harrison, 2013, p. 169). Accordingly, we embrace the concept of absent presence as a strategy to give significance and value to the multilayered urban historical landscape.

In the case of the Roman Bath, the absent presences are traceable through past images such as Tournefort's engraving of Ankara in the 18th century or Jerphanion's photograph documenting the walls of the Roman Bath before they were demolished in 1926 for the construction of a building for the Ministry of Defense (Kadıoğlu & Görkay, 2007). Güner (2021, p. 4) argues that the archaeological excavations were aimed at a nation-building campaign in search of a new identity for the Republic:

> "*In line with the early Republican ideology, which not only tried to establish its roots through a history older than the Ottoman but also promoted its strong ties with Europe through Greek and Roman findings, the Phrygian layer was found 'vulgar', whereas the Roman layer was 'proper', the Hellenistic layer was noted absent whereas the Seljuk and Ottoman layers encountered were not even commented upon.*"

Despite the construction plans causing destruction, they also led to discoveries such as the remains of a colonnaded street. Additionally, during the rescue excavations, Akok's drawings in 1968 offered a new narrative, imagining what the area was like before (Güner, 2021, p. 6).

## Historical Background: Understanding Multilayered Cultural Landscape

The Roman Bath in Ankara is a prominent archaeological site that requires a comprehensive understanding of the historical context and aesthetic integration with the surrounding area. Figure 1 depicts the location of the Roman Bath, accentuating its connection with neighboring historical structures.

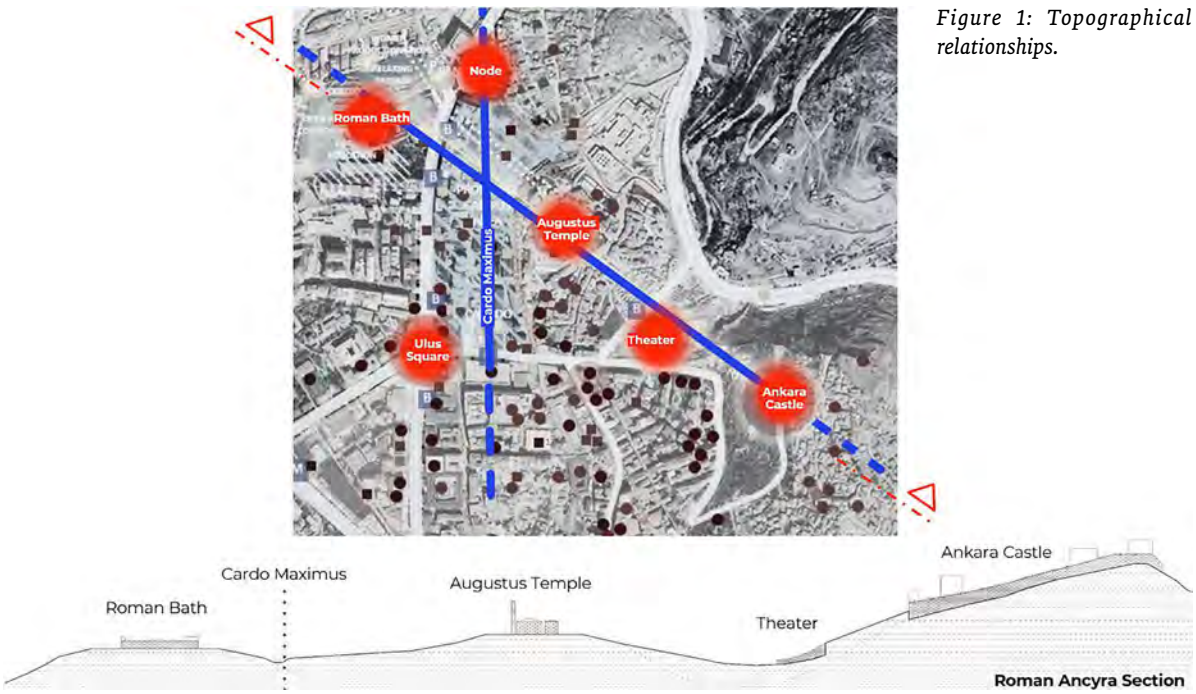


*Figure 1: Topographical relationships.*

The association of the Roman ruins with the contemporary city of Ankara is analyzed in the context of the "absent presence." In this framework, the position of the Roman Bath in the city order is visually presented through the existing remains and the traces that have disappeared over time (Figure 2). The bath complex is linked to the temple via the principal road known as Decumanus. The street network forms one of the main axes of urban life, connecting important buildings in the center. Additionally, the central road, Cardo Maximus, allows access to various historical strata. This primary artery is a significant landmark, showcasing the city's historical significance and highlighting its connections to other historical structures. Both the Roman Bath and the remains of these streets provide valuable insights into the urban layout during the Roman era and its continuation into present-day Ankara.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the Roman Bath and its surroundings has shown that its location, topography, and potential to offer a panoramic view, thanks to the wide-open space of the Roman Bath, are indisputable advantages. These features could make the Roman Bath an important center of attraction for tourism and cultural activities. On the contrary, heavy traffic flow around the site, existing high-rise buildings, and security issues represent clear weaknesses, together with platform levels, inadequate information boards, and lack of awareness. The Republican period wall and the school surrounding the Roman Bath, the internal roads and ruins within the site, and the surrounding university are external factors that provide potential opportunities for the site. However, the dense vegetation around the Roman Bath threatens the visibility and the perception of the site. This can be an issue for visitors, who may not be able to explore and properly understand all its features. Moreover, the site is also poorly promoted and

*Figure 2: The association of the Roman ruins with contemporary Ankara (adapted from Kadıoğlu & Görkay, 2007).*

protected due to the lack of proper governance framework, protective rules, and inadequate management plans.

## Reading Continuity Through Traces: Accessibility, Visibility, and Intelligibility

Our target is to make heritage more accessible, visible, and intelligible after analyzing the multilayered cultural landscape of the Roman Bath. Here again, the "absent-presence concept" contributed to the development of our approach to historical heritage. Thus, sorting the Roman Bath out of absent and present parts of itself assisted the method of the work.

The open-air museum currently displays preserved archaeological remains of the Roman Bath, but the existing pedestrian pathway and two terraces are not enough to fully appreciate the building's architecture. Providing access inside

the remains would enhance visibility and understanding for visitors. A planned route aligned with the original functions of the bath would offer deeper insights into each room (see Figure 3). Current walking routes and terraces are labeled with yellow dashed lines, while the proposed route through original functions inside the remains is labeled with red dotted lines. Elevating the existing terraces and adding more throughout the site would allow visitors to observe the remains from above and enhance their experience.

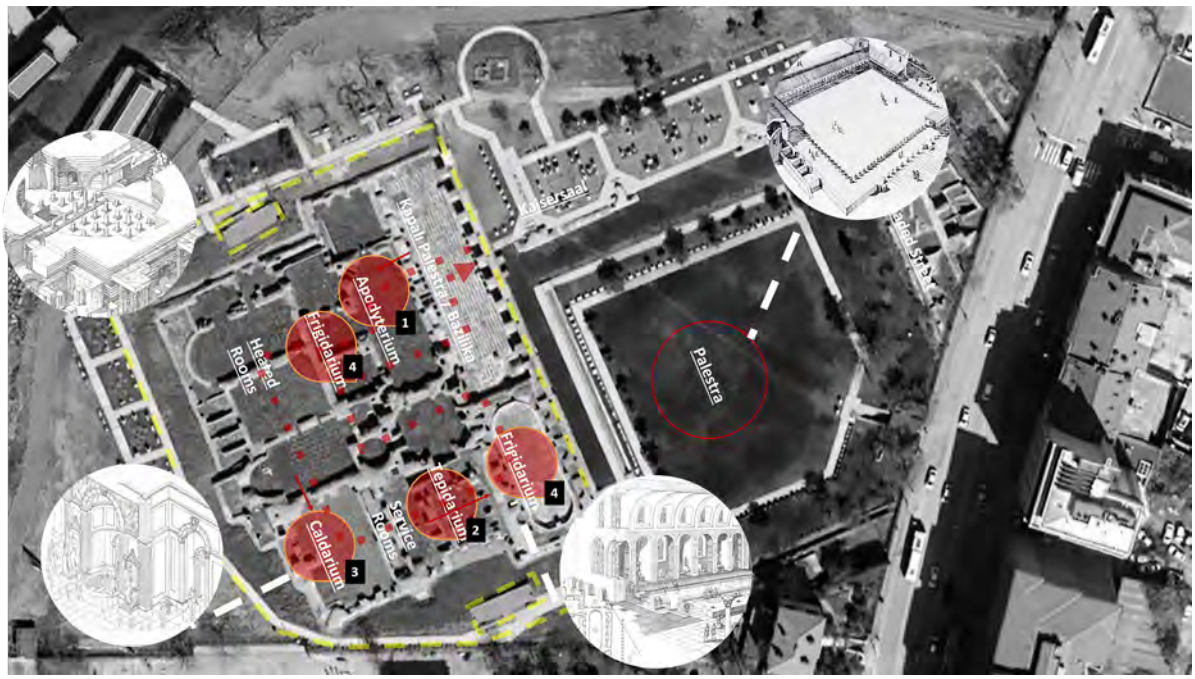


*Figure 3: Walking route.*

In the existing museum building, we propose to showcase the original state of the building through a full-scale visual reconstruction of the ancient Roman Bath, including its lost parts. This approach, together with information boards and immersive experiences, aims to raise awareness about the site. It is important to use a modifiable method that prioritizes preservation and avoids harm to the original structure. Illuminating the base of the building might be attractive for night-time and enhance the feeling of safety in the area.

The area outside the museum, which once belonged to the Roman Bath, presents an opportunity to integrate the ancient city into the public space (Figure 5). Due to excavations in the 1930s and subsequent construction developments, this part of the Roman Bath remains disconnected from the modern city. It is crucial to highlight the significance of reviving this heritage by using various textures and materials on the ground. By incorporating the bath's layout and historical city plans, we can draw attention to this site from outside the museum and enhance community involvement.

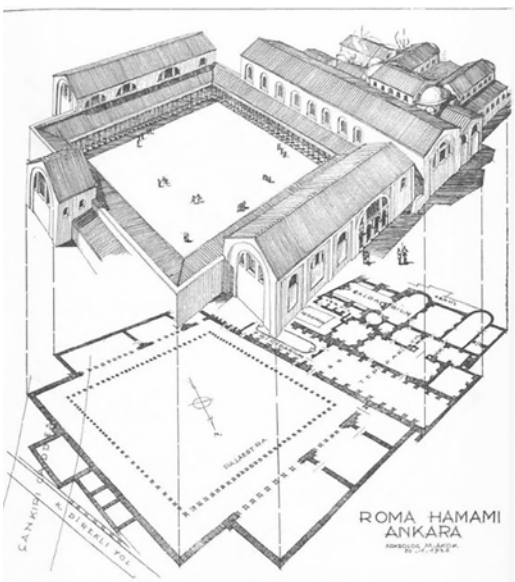


*Figure 4: 3D restitution drawing by Mahmut Akok (Akok, M., 1968).*

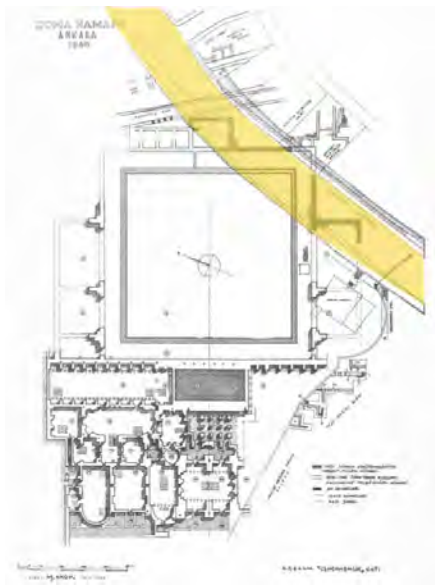

*Figure 5: Plan drawing by Mahmut Akok (Akok, M., 1968).*

## Users, Needs and Expectations

The success of any cultural site is determined by several conditions. One of them is that the local community should be familiar with the location and actively engage with it. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the stakeholders in the vicinity of the Roman Bath. Nearby, there is a secondary school, a university, a residential area, hotels, and clubs. People who utilize these facilities include children, students, residents of various ages, tourists, and predominantly male workers. It is vital for the place to serve the needs of these stakeholders, requiring a thorough understanding of their needs and expectations.

After the analysis of the current users, we examined their aims and activities within the Roman Bath. Their expectations about the place shed light on the potential future usages that could be implemented. Besides the current users, the surrounding stakeholders who do not currently visit the site were also included as new user groups (Figure 6).

## Values-Based Approach

Cultural heritage sites bear values that are fundamental in determining appropriate interventions for these locations. As such, the initial step should involve a comprehensive understanding and evaluation of these values.

According to the Valletta principles, "historical or traditional areas form part of daily human life. Their protection and integration into contemporary society are the basis for town planning and land development" (ICOMOS, 2011). Additionally, interventions in cultural heritage assets or areas should be carefully considered and aligned with their tangible and intangible heritage values. Therefore, integration methodologies should

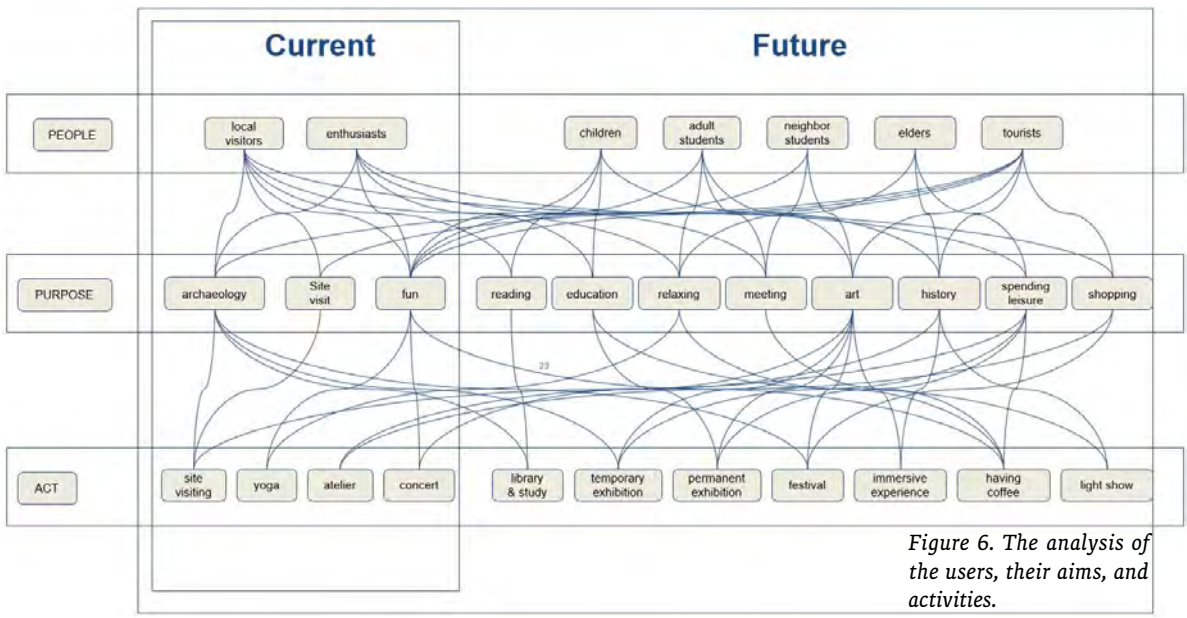


*Figure 6. The analysis of the users, their aims, and activities.*

engage with emergent issues, such as growing awareness of tangible and intangible attributes and the legitimate expectations of local communities. For this reason, these values should be identified and matched with the necessary integration aspects.

When examining the Roman Bath complex, we can still admire the archaeological remains from distinct historical periods. According to Alanyalı Aral (2017), in 1937 Phrygian archaeological findings were discovered during the first Çankırıkapı excavations, specifically in the Roman Bath area. Additionally, studies conducted by Remzi Oğuz Arık, revealed that the Bath area was in use during the Phrygian, Roman, Byzantine, and Seljuk periods (Kadıoğlu & Görkay, 2007). Thus, the area has a long history, bearing witness to different civilizations. After the Roman era, the Bath Complex remained on the periphery of the settlement as the Byzantine settlement shifted towards the castle area. However, despite remaining at the periphery, archaeological evidence indicates that the Bath complex continued to be used until the Turkish Republican era.

Besides its historical significance, the monument also holds considerable **architectural value**, as it is one of the largest buildings of Roman Ankyra. The monumental size and architecture of the Bath, although the latter cannot be fully appreciated today, are known from the reconstructions of the Bath complex drawn by Akok (1968) and hold significant **historical and cultural value**. The Roman Bath remains that exist today also hold **documentary and scientific value**, as they provide insights into the plan, construction technique, layout, and technology of that era. In addition, the remains of the Colonnaded Street in the southeastern section of the Roman Baths provide us with significant information regarding the city plan. In fact, the orientation of the colonnaded street axis leads to the Augustus Temple, adding significance to this street.

When the site was first excavated in the 1930s, it was surrounded by walls, and an

entrance building was constructed for the museum. These Early Republican-era architectural features add documentary value to the site and highlight the multilayered heritage of the area.

The Roman Bath complex played a significant role in the daily life of Romans. It was not just a place dedicated to personal hygiene, but also the ideal place to foster social relations, as citizens gathered to share ideas, thoughts, opinions, and talk about daily life. As a result, it can be clearly stated that the Roman Bath once held **functional and social values**. Nevertheless, the presence of these values in the contemporary city remains questionable.

In short, the Roman Bath open-air museum holds values related to age, history, **documentation, science, functionality**, and **social** significance. While some of these values remain perceptible, others have faded over time, and should be reassessed through appropriate interventions. As a result, the value-based approach of this study includes the following steps:

1. Discovering and visually mapping heritage values [Analysis]
2. Relating heritage values to physical structures [Analysis and Synthesis]
3. Defining heritage values and identifying opportunities for intervention to guide design decisions [Analysis and Synthesis]
4. Integrating heritage values into design proposal(s) [Synthesis]
5. According to the values mentioned above, physical, visual, and functional integration aspects could better emphasize the present values and reveal the lost ones.

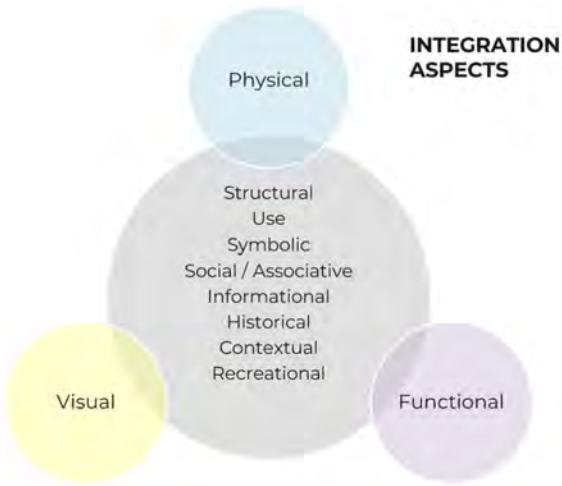


*Figure 7. The relationship of values with integration aspects.*

## Spatial Organization & Integration

We first developed a conceptual approach. Some zones were defined within the close surroundings of the bath by considering the connections of the layers, axes, and nodes. These areas were defined considering public space based on the connections. Therefore, unlike today's usage, most of the Roman Bath will be open for public use in order to engage many stakeholders. The proposed functions include Open-Air Activities, Relaxing Passage,

Cafe-Shop, Exhibition, Library, Open Air Collection, and Site Visit (Figure 8). Only the area consisting of Roman remains will require an entrance fee, while the rest of the area will be fully open to the public.

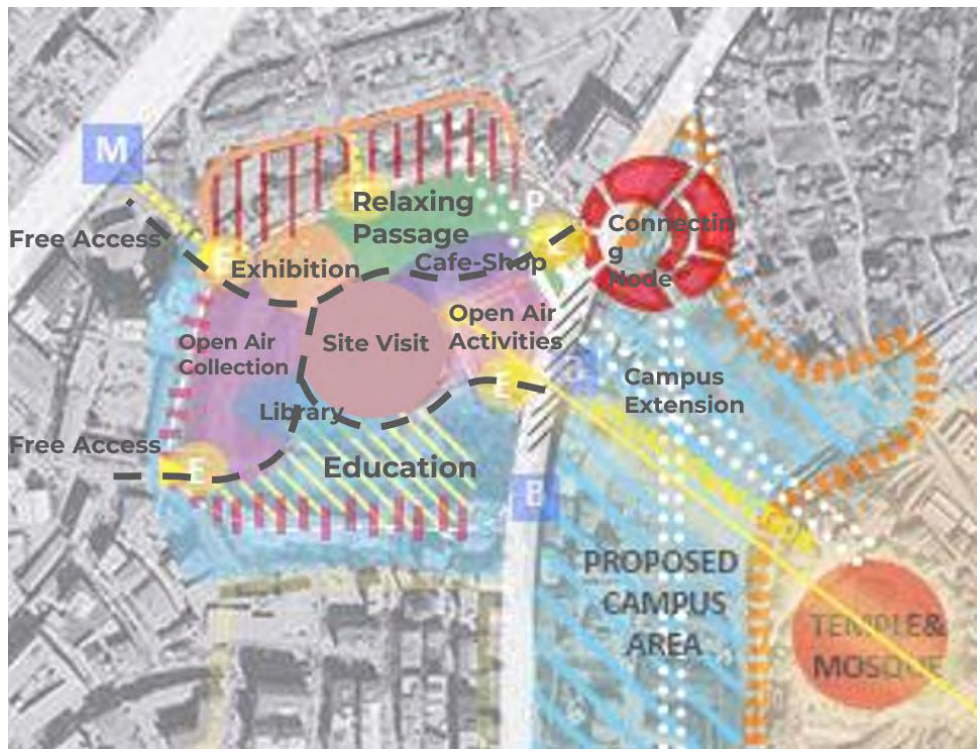


*Figure 8: Conceptual Organizations.*

After defining the conceptual spatial organization, a course of action was developed for both the site's interior and its surroundings, considering the physical, visual, and functional connection. These aspects of integration effectively reveal the inherent values of the location.

We set an interplay between absence and presence by suggesting ways to (re)present absences and traces of what has been lost. The entrance of the Bath could be connected to the ancient Cardo Maximus to revitalize the area by tapping into the potential of the young population. After attracting public attention through activities on the streets, additional entrances could be introduced to ensure that the Bath functions effectively from all sides. The entrances would connect with public transport or important intersections in order to make the area more porous. A free main circulation path, along with secondary paths, would connect different functional zones within the bath. These zones primarily include cafe-shop areas and open-air ateliers, which would host activities related to the remains in the site visit area and to the activities held in the Palestra. Additionally, the natural topography of the site would be preserved through the incorporation of a terraced open-air collection area and terraced resting area (Figure 9).

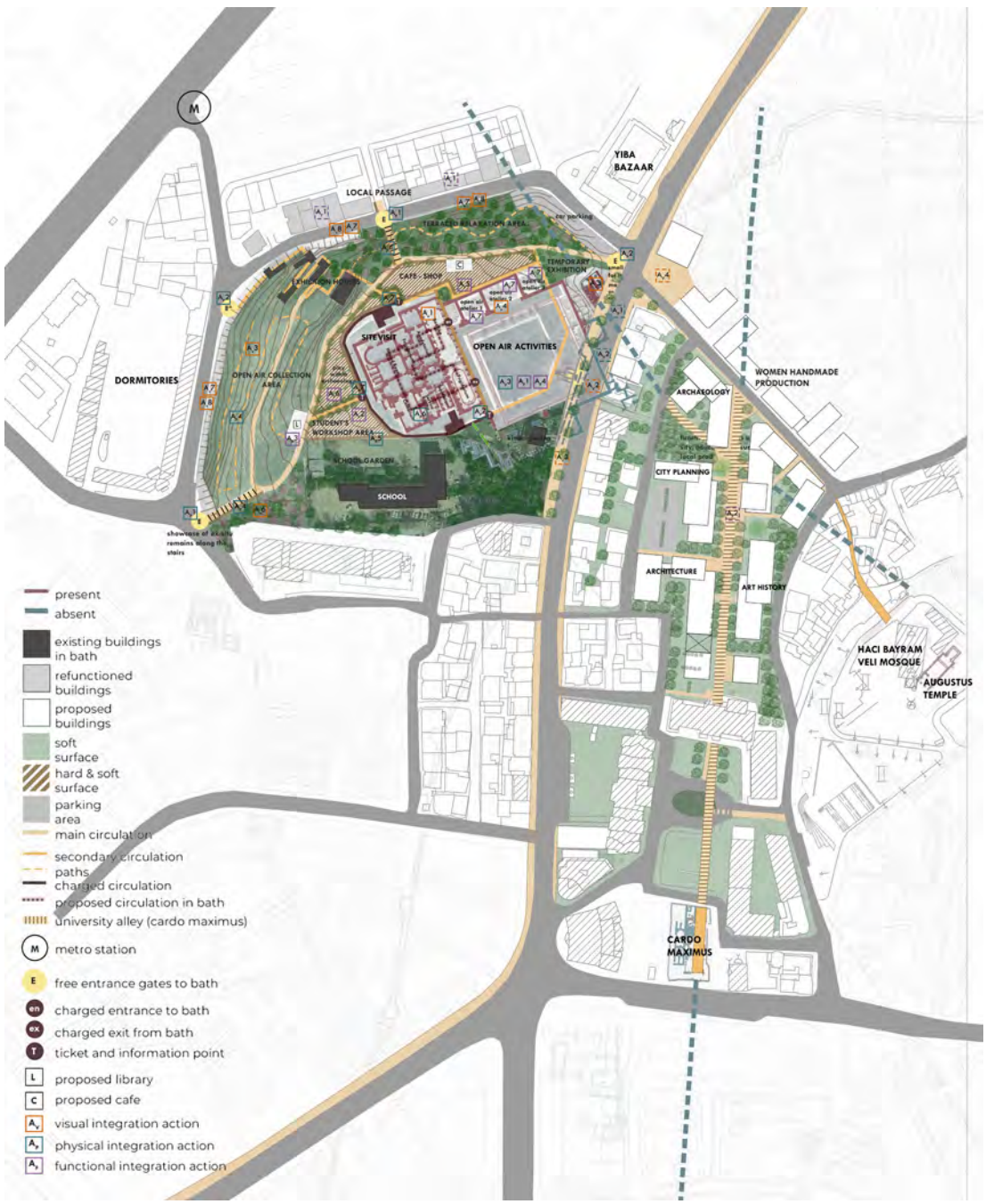


*Figure 9: Proposed Spatial Organization.*

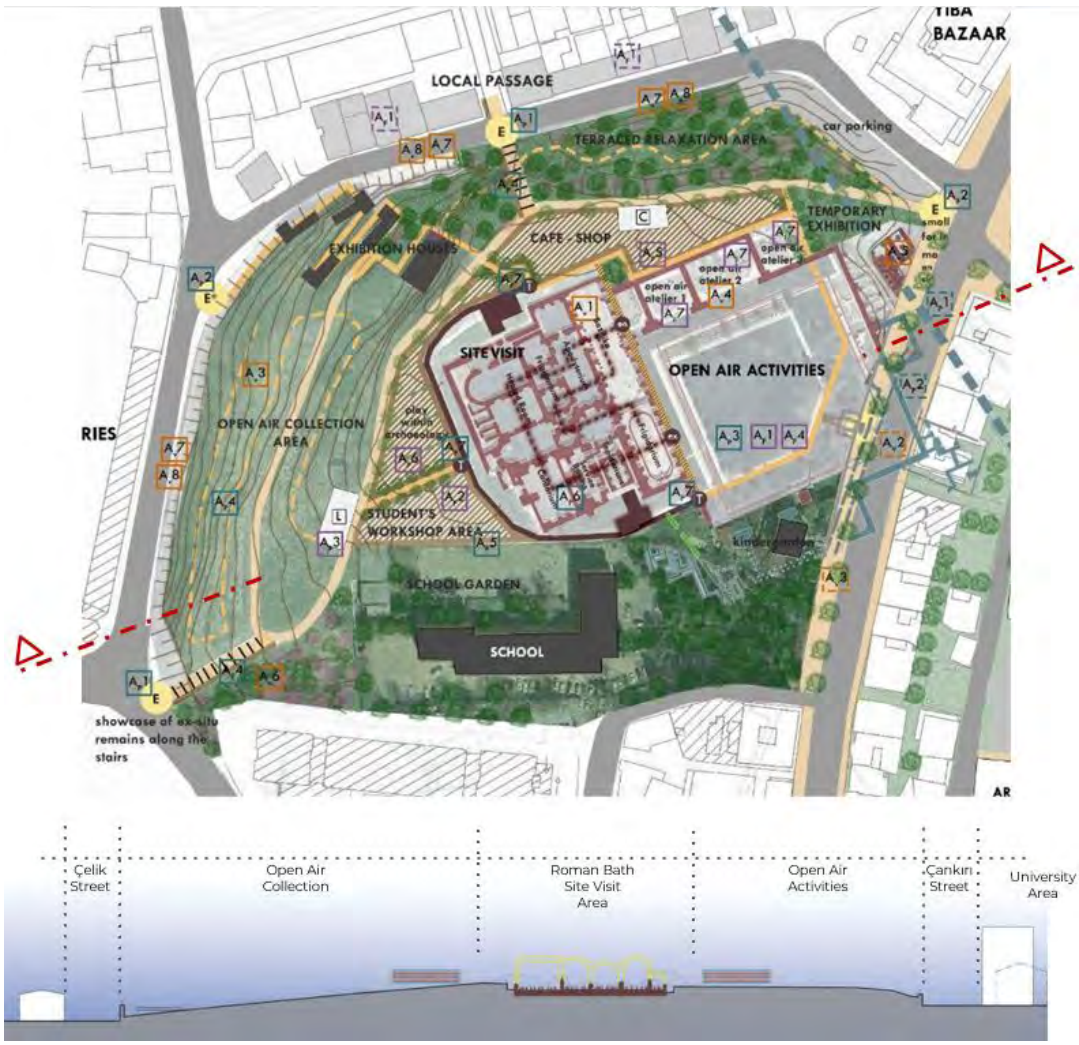


*Figure 10. Spatial Organization and Actions within Roman Bath.*

After the implementation of the actions listed in Tables 1 and 2, the Roman Bath, the extension of the University Campus with the continuation of Cardo Maximus, together with other public spaces such as streets and small squares will start complementing each other and make the area more secure, people friendly and attractive for citizens. The Roman Bath will be a meeting point for all stakeholders around and will be included to the daily use of people with new functions, relations, and connections proposed.

| | |
|---|---|
| PHYSICAL | 1-**New gates** will be installed at the southwest and north sides of the site.<br>2-The two existing gates will be reactivated. One of them will serve as **ADA access**.<br>3-The Palaestra will be accessed **free of charge**, increasing public use.<br>4-**Stairs and terraces** will be designed to use the steep area of the site.<br>5-The barrier between the school and the bath will be removed and replaced with a more transparent protection structure, providing students with a visual connection to the remains.<br>6-**Walking pathways** will be extended to increase the perception and circulation of the remains.<br>7-The Roman Bath remains area will require a ticket. However, knowledgeable guides will organize free educational tours for children and select groups. Explanatory information boards and panels will be placed next to each ticket point. |
| VISUAL | 1-Some parts will be reconstructed by using **virtual reality techniques.**<br>2-**Lighting** will be installed on the remains, without disturbing their character, in order to make the remains and layout visible at night.<br>3-The **ex-situ remains** at the west part of the site will be presented by arranging a terraced exhibition area, and pathways will be inserted into that part by **tracing the topography**.<br>4-The ex-situ remains in the northern part of the Palaestra will be relocated to the **open-air collection area** because they distort the perception of the Roman Bath itself.<br>5-The small section of the Decumanus Maximus within the site will be highlighted, and its original columns will be represented (led-lighting will present the surface, or the columns can be presented in artificial forms).<br>6-Maintenance of **overgrown vegetation** and physical condition of the site.<br>7-**Information panels** will be installed on the surrounding fence, that will be inserted into the iron parts of the fences and into the parts that do not prevent the visibility of the remains.<br>8-**Led-lighting** will be integrated into specific parts of the fences. |
| FUNCTIONAL | 1-Palaestra area will be entered **free of charge** and will be used for **sport, leisure, and recreational activities**.<br>2- Workshops will be opened to link education and archaeology.<br>3-**Library** will be designed as an open space on the base of the topography of the area. In the library, the young population will be able to **research topics** related to archaeology.<br>4-As some of the **ex-situ remains** will be relocated, the Palaestra area will be expanded and will accommodate more people and activities inside.<br>5-**Cafe and shop** areas will be designed in visual relation to the activity and remaining area.<br>6-Next to the cafe area, there will be a **playground** where children can play within some ex-situ remains. Also, a guide will accompany the children to through the remains every two hours.<br>7-Three **open-air atelier** areas will be located north of the Palaestra, where women can **produce items** and **socialize**. The stands will be **prefabricated** for festivals and concerts in order to provide additional spectator areas. |

*Table 1. Integration Actions within Roman Bath*

| | |
|---|---|
| PHYSICAL | 1-On Çankırı Street, **traffic calming** measures will be implemented, especially at the locations where the visitors enter the site.<br><br>2-**Bus stops** will be arranged close to the entrance points of the Roman Bath. |
| VISUAL | 1- Making a presentation showing the traces of the Roman period on Çankırı Street and defining the **silhouette.**<br>2-Revealing the underground section of the Roman Bath by changing the **flooring.**<br>3- Installing human-scale **lighting** on Çankırı Street.<br>4-In the **panoramic vista** point determined, a panoramic box will be located that presents the virtual reconstruction and information about the Roman Bath, Temple, castle, and other remains on Çankırı Street.<br>5-A **digital app** can be designed to narrate the stories and enrich the visitors' experience. Info points can be placed to connect the sites and guide the visitor en route.<br>6-Using the blind facades of surrounding buildings for **visual projections** (for example, light and graphic installation at night). |
| FUNCTIONAL | 1-The light industrial areas in the northern part of the area will be removed. Instead, a **production area** for women (kadın üretici pazarı) will be created linked to the **commercial activities** that will be held in the Roman Bath. The production spaces of the **local products** that will be sold or presented in the Roman Bath will be located there (handmade soap, knitting, small glass production, local products etc.).<br><br>2-The **extension of Cardo Maximus** and the proposed axis connecting to the entrance of the Roman Bath with Hacı Bayram Hill will serve for leisure, recreational, and educational functions related to the **university**. |

*Table 2. Integration Actions in Roman Bath's Surroundings*

## Project Area 1: Çankırı Street

This section explains one of the actions implemented on Çankırı Street. Since some parts of the Roman Bath remained buried under asphalt, such absence will be visualized by drawing traces on the street to raise awareness among the general public. To distinguish the street from others, we will use human-scale lighting and well-designed landscaping. Traffic calming measures will be implemented to ensure a safe entrance and movement within the site, making the area more pedestrian friendly.

Considering that the area has a panoramic view of Augustus Temple, Cardo Maximus, and the Bath, another proposal revolves redesigning the current parking lot into a special square where a panorama box will be put. By using VR technology, visitors could utilize VR glasses to see reconstructions of the remains and access information about their history. Visual reflections on the buildings will also be applied by inserting Ankara plans. Drawing Ankara's historical timeline on the asphalt is another key decision for this project area.

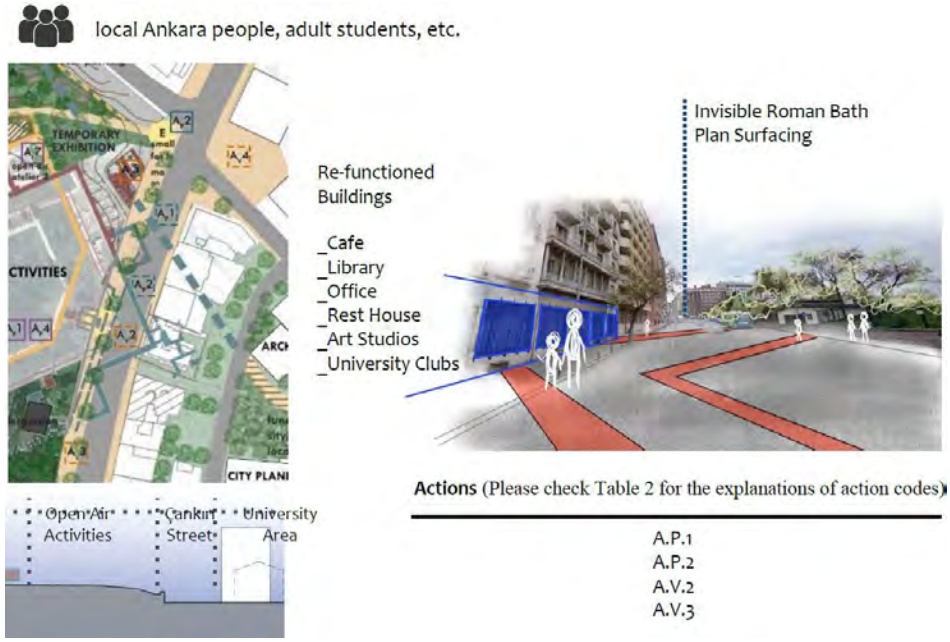


*Figure 11: Çankırı Street Proposal 1.*

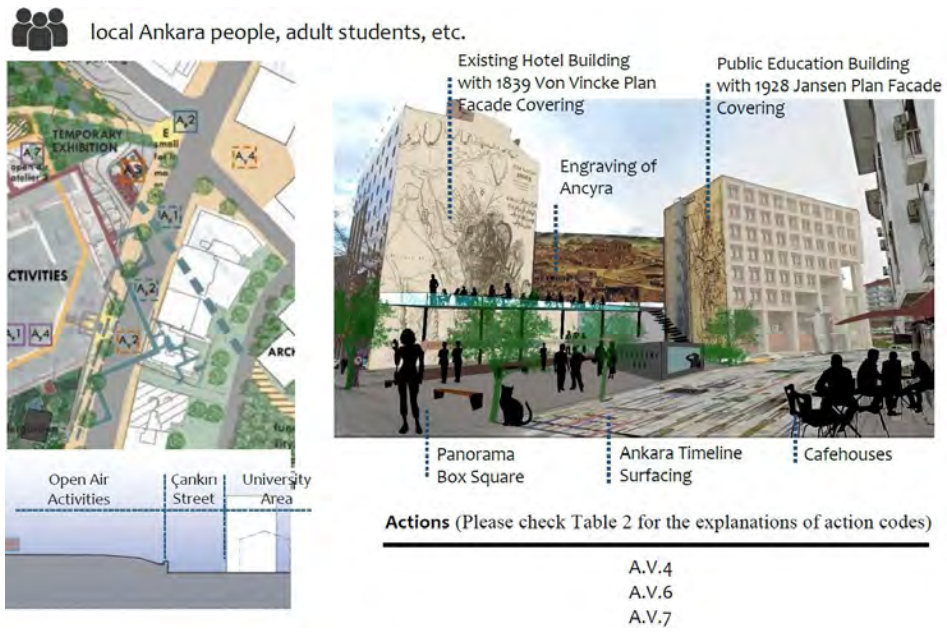


*Figure 12: Çankırı Street Proposal 2.*

## Project Area 2: Çelik Street

This street, located near the site, hosts industrial areas, including auto mechanics, which may diminish the sense of safety at all times of the day. As a solution, we propose the introduction of new commercial facilities that would serve various user groups. For example, we plan to incorporate bookstores for dormitory residents and stores that offer

cleaning products for local Ankara residents. Furthermore, the road will be resurfaced with the Roman Ancyra Plan.

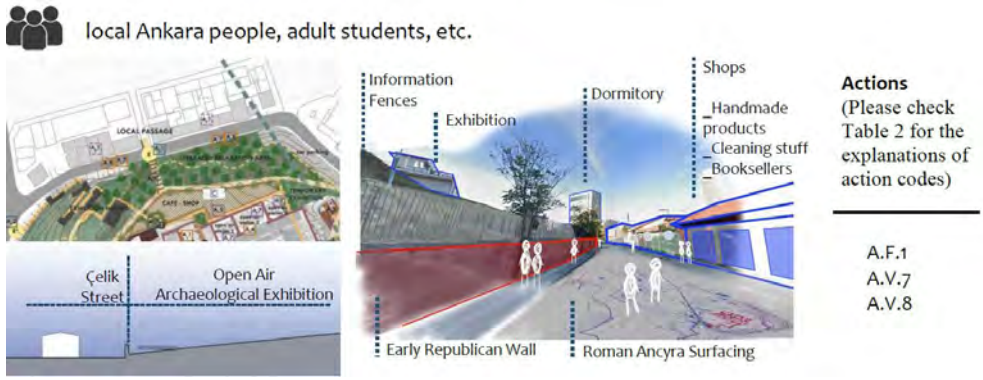


*Figure 13: Çelik Street Proposal.*

## Project Area 3: Open-Air Activities

The interventions will start from the Palestra section of the Roman Bath: the public area where open-air activities will be held, such as meetings, festivals, picnics, concerts, sports, and yoga sessions. In this way, the area will become a part of the daily life of the citizens and the social value that the Bath will be revealed again. Also, open-air ateliers will be designed on the northern side of the area, which is dedicated to women's production activities.

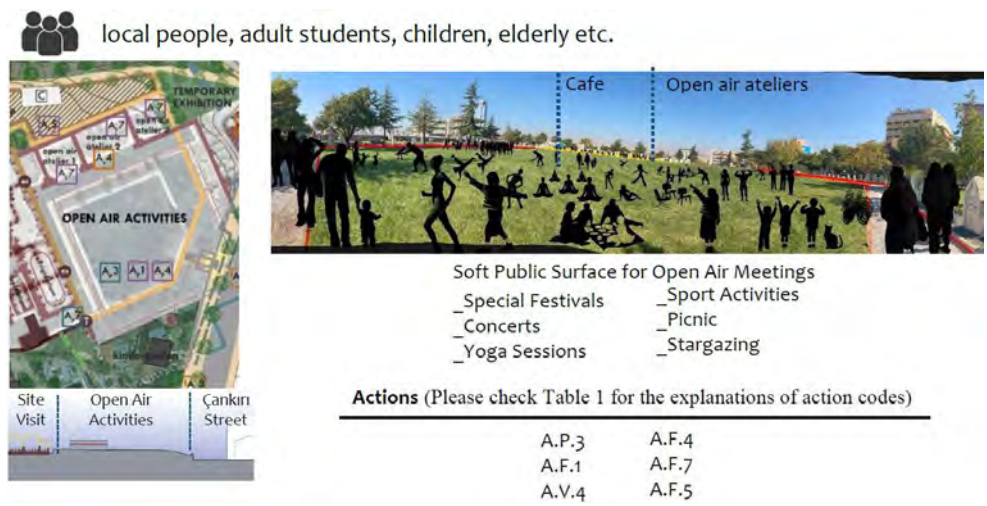


*Figure 14: Open Air Activities Proposal.*

## Project Area 4: Workshop Area

The workshop area at the school is designed as an open-air space, providing an environment for hosting public events that aim to engage and foster storytelling among the users.

*Figure 15: Workshop Proposal.*

## Project Area 5: Open-Air Archaeological Exhibition

The proposal entails relocating ex-situ remains currently situated in the open-air museum segment of the Bath to the western section of the area, within the open-air archaeological exhibition. The area's topographical characteristics are a determinant factor; therefore, the area will be surrounded by the exhibition terraces and pathways around the remains.

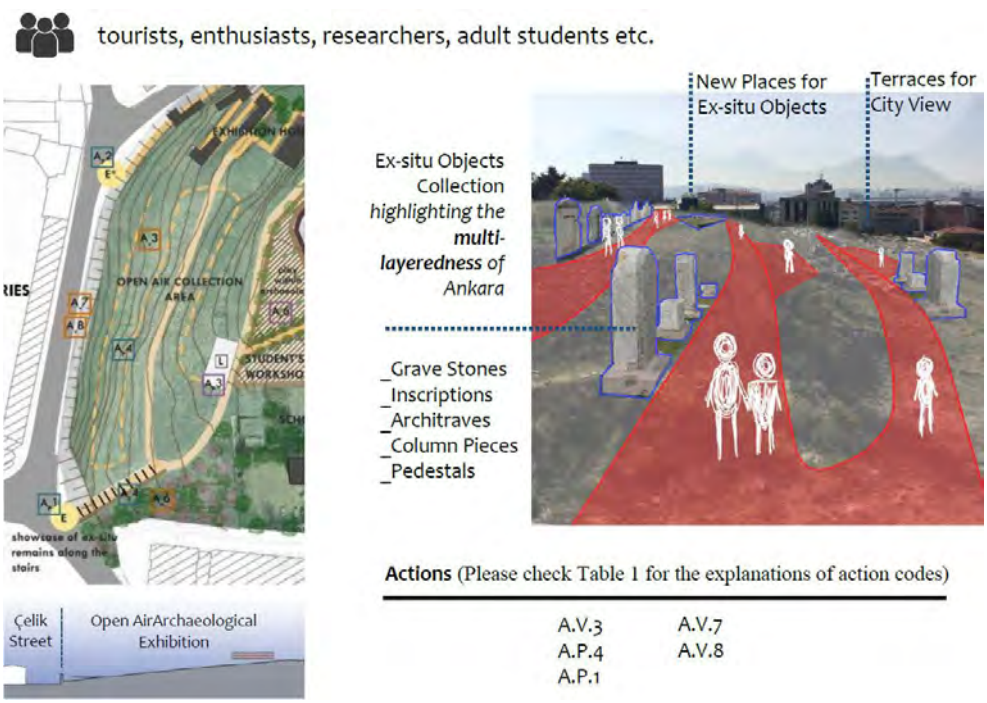


*Figure 16: Open Air Archaeological Exhibition Proposal.*

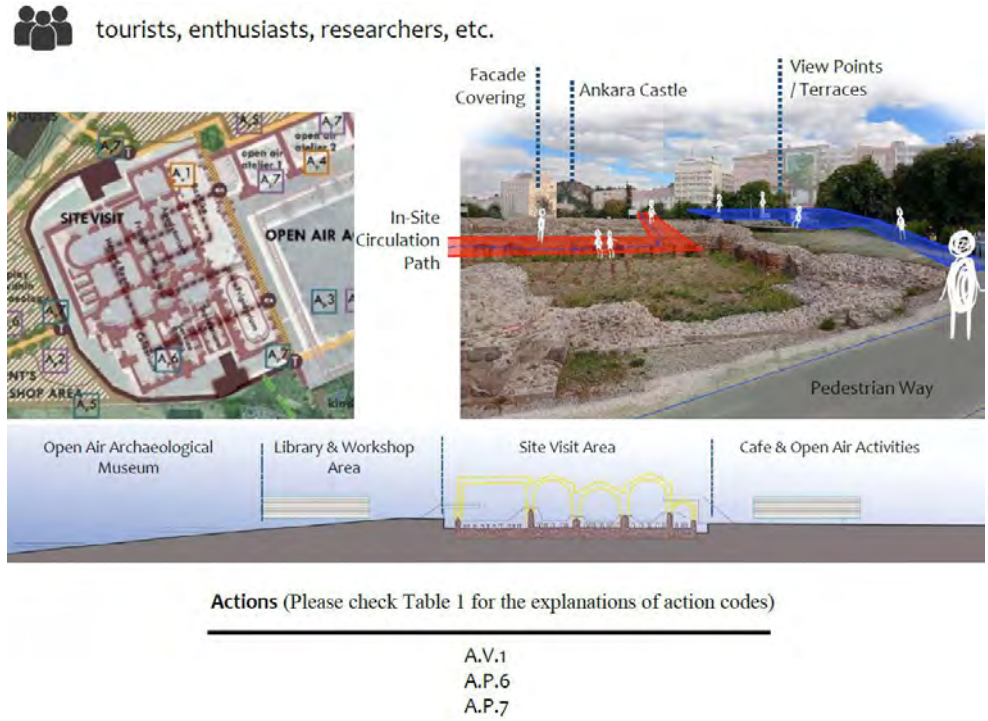


*Figure 17: Site Visit Proposal.*

## Project Area 6: Roman Bath Site Visit

The section corresponding to the rooms of the Roman Bath will be open to visitors upon payment of an entrance fee. Expanded pathways made of transparent materials will follow the original room sequence from the Roman era to enhance the visitor experience. Besides the information boards, interactive tools such as QR codes, VR technologies and animations will provide insight into both the tangible and intangible heritage. A visual reconstruction using light will be applied to allow visitors to understand the original volume and spatial divisions of the bath.

Finally, the decisions and interventions we have outlined in this proposal will inevitably improve community engagement at the Roman Bath and create porous public spaces through a holistic approach to the urban archaeology of Ankara.

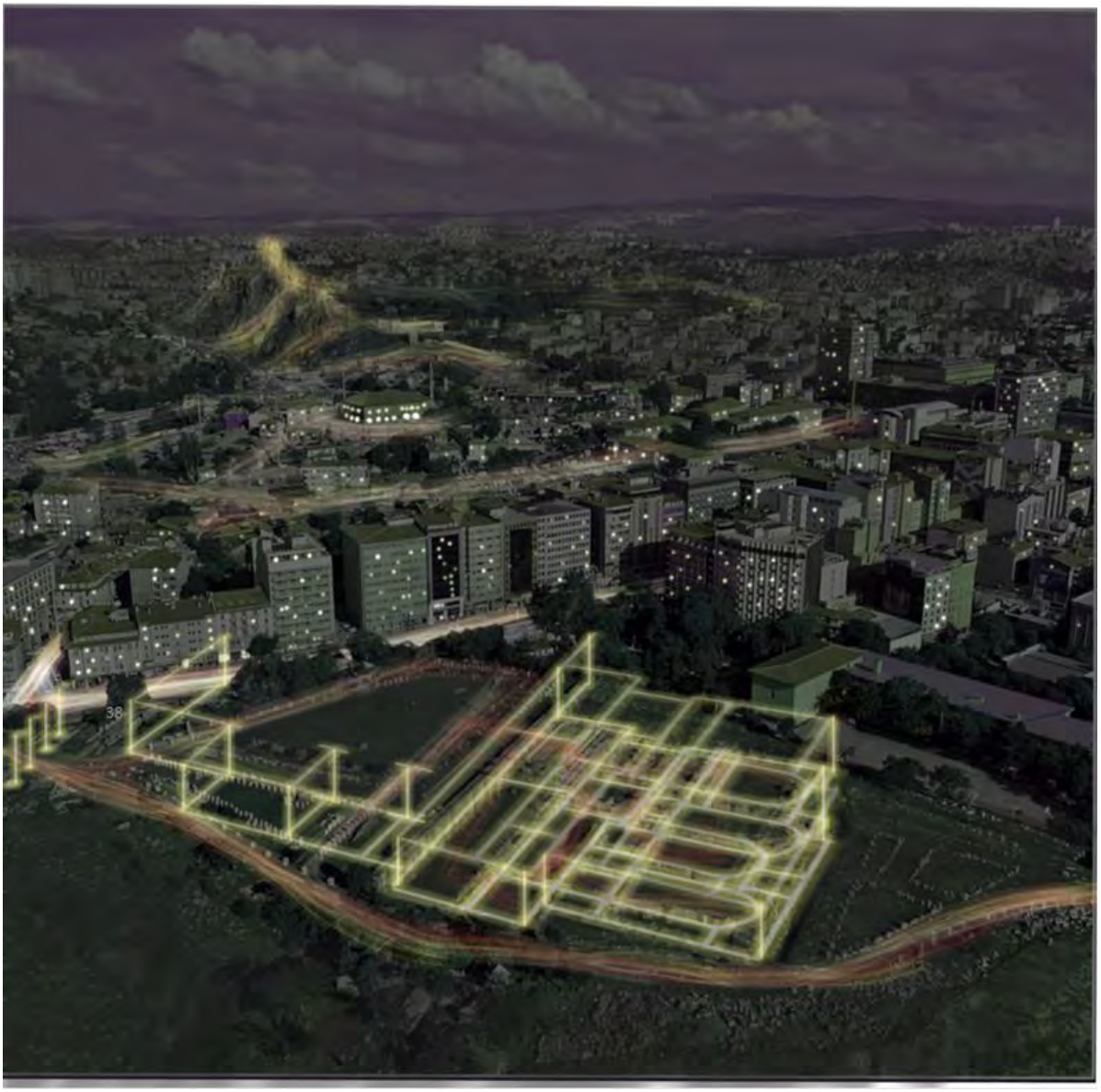

*Figure 18: Roman Bath at night.*

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# Cardo Maximus 2.0 Unveiled: Heritage Trails Weaving Past and Present, Cultivating Ankara's Cultural Node

Melda Balaban, Gökçe Kuzey Özdemir, Berna Bahar Ören, Mülkiye Kart, Gabriël Sel

## Introduction

The 1924 Lörcher Plan was the first urban development plan of Ankara as the capital of the Turkish Republic. It aimed to preserve the historical urban pattern of the old town (Ulus) and create a modern new town (Çankaya) on the south, centered around governmental structures (Güngör & Özcan, 2022). However, the old town had experienced an uncontrolled growth that led to a rapid destruction of the traditional urban pattern and its historical and cultural heritage. In order to protect the tangible heritage of Ulus, the area known as Hacı Bayram District was declared as an urban protected site. In 1995, when the construction of the Ulus City Bazaar started, the foundation excavations discovered archaeological findings of a Roman road dating back to the late first century AD. In 2006, more parts of the road, recognized as the Cardo Maximus, the main north-south oriented street with a width of 6.70m (except paving stones), was exposed when constructing a nearby parking lot for the Ankara Governors' Building. Still, the construction continued, and to this day, only small parts of the ancient Roman way are unearthed within two sites (Figure 1).

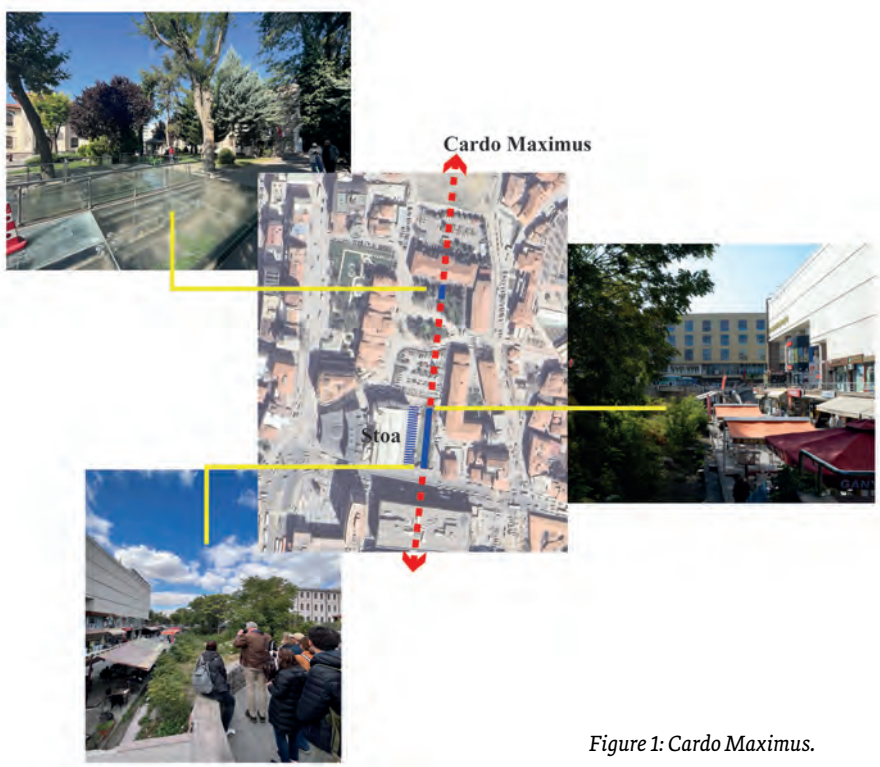



*Figure 1: Cardo Maximus.*

It is accepted that the history of Ankara started with the Hittites, (ca. 1650 BCE) who were followed by Phrygians, Greeks, Romans, Seljuks, and Ottomans. Hence, the city bears traces of this rich past, some of them visible, while many more are still undisclosed.

Tangible and intangible heritage has commonly been used as a tool to legitimize power and rule (Farrel-Blanks, 2022). When Ankara became the capital of the Republic of Türkiye, its connection with the Anatolian civilizations was stressed in order to legitimize

the change, and Hittite and Phrygian history was emphasized. Even nowadays it is possible to note a similar process aimed at highlighting Ottoman heritage in the city, a phenomenon known as neo-Ottomanism (Yavuz Hakan, 2020) This can be seen, for example, in the restoration of the Hacı Bayram Mosque (2011) and its surrounding complex (2013). Such selectiveness concerning history also leads to selectiveness regarding heritage, and which heritage people are relating to. Therefore, we are convinced about the importance to showcase in this project not just a single layer of Ankara's history, but the entire multilayered identity of the city.

In the archaeological site of Cardo Maximus, archaeologists discovered painted ceramic sherds from the Phrygian period, a piece of the foundation of a wall from the Hellenistic era, andesite stones from the Roman period, Seljuk oil lamp fragments, and Ottoman hookah pipes (Ankara Enstitüsü Vakfı, 2008).

Just like in ancient Roman cities, Cardo Maximus is currently surrounded by buildings with commercial, administrative, and religious uses. In the first category, particularly notable are Ankara's first bank, which is now used as Türkiye İş Bankası Economic Independence Museum, Anafartalar Bazaar as the first shopping center of the city, and Ulus City Bazaar. We believe it's important to show this commercial functional continuity in conserving the cultural heritage of the area (Yarrow, 2018). The old buildings of the Ministry of Finance, Governors' Building, and Sümerbank, which are all now being used as faculty buildings of Ankara Social Sciences University, represent the administrative nature of modern Ankara. Lastly, thanks to the presence of Zincirli Mosque on the east of the road, bordering the sacred area of Hacı Bayram District, it can be said that the ancient road is located at the heart of a vibrant urban area, linking the secular with the religious aspect.

In conclusion, Cardo Maximus is surrounded by Ankara's history. To be able to show this continuous multilayered identity, we have developed a proposal.

## Project Design

Cardo Maximus (CM) can foster the link between the historical, cultural, and economic values of its surroundings. Unfortunately, its potential has been dissipated, due to the illegibility, inaccessibility, and dysfunctionality of the ancient road. Therefore, we raise the question of "how can we make the Cardo Maximus more of a cultural attraction point revealing its importance as an archaeological site within the local community?". Our vision is to create a historical path from the remains of CM and increase its functionality by implementing a network of heritage trails for the community. In the current state, the remains of CM are destined to remain idle and isolated archaeological findings, hence we aim to bring the road to its full potential regarding its cultural, historical, and economic values. Our goal is to increase tourist flow, boost a sustainable local economy, and rehabilitate the social image of the related area and position CM in the middle of thriving urban activities. We can refer to the final version as "Cardo Maximus 2.0" for being more legible, more accessible, and more functional. Our proposal targets tourists, university students and academic staff, local traders, and local residents. Tourists and university students are the most important groups that will make the area more dynamic and appealing.

The project is not just limited to the ruins, but also includes interventions in its surroundings. The Cardo Maximus was the main street in ancient Ancyra and to revitalize

this connecting function, we want to place it within a network of heritage trails. Firstly, macroscale interventions are related to the network of Culture-led Heritage Trails centered along the remains of Cardo Maximus. Mesoscale interventions, on the other hand, are oriented toward the original extension of the ancient road that today remains underground and its surroundings. Finally, microscale interventions cover the architectural and urban design features regarding the archaeological site of CM.

## Problems and Potentials

We conducted a short interview with 8 locals who live and work in the surrounding area of Cardo Maximus to define the problems and potentials of the area. We concluded that six people knew something about the road, but overall, the information was often incorrect. Only two history students knew the value and function of the road. Everyone said that the route was unsafe, and the remnants were illegible. These responses were used to help identify the problems and possibilities in the area.

We identified 15 problems, which were categorized into four groups: cultural illegibility, accessibility, physical condition, and socioeconomic conditions (Figure 2).

No perception of a historical ruin (P1), no visual connection with other Roman remains (P2), and removed opus sectile and stoa shops (P3) are within cultural illegibility. Elevation difference (P4), interrupted pathways (P5), no controlled entrance (P6), and abandoned and ignored remains (P7) are within accessibility. Pollution (P8), vandalism (P9), the pressure of traffic and car parking (P10), and the invasion of vegetation, which leads to deterioration (P11), are within the physical condition. Less tourist attraction (P12), no cultural function related to the road (P13), visible exclusion (P14), and segregation and inaccessibility for people with disabilities (P15) are within social and economic conditions.

Potentials were categorized into three groups as cultural, physical, and socioeconomic potentials (Figure 3). Nine potentials were identified through field surveys and literature reviews. Significant landmarks (P1), historical continuity (P2), and the presence of Ankara's historical layers (P3) are part of the cultural potential. Possible vista points from south, north, and west (P4) and increasing accessible pedestrian ways (P5) can be defined as physical potentials. Opportunities for the local community (P6), integration of functions (P7), being a public space (P8), and integration with urban mixture and daily life (P9) can be considered as socioeconomic potentials.

## Value-Based Approach

The value-based approach, which is the appropriate management, use, and protection of significant assertions of heritage, emphasizes the cultural relevance of heritage assets and makes a substantial contribution to heritage conservation (Cutajar et al., 2016). This can only be accomplished by applying the planning process to heritage management and combining different types of information (Kanlı, 2019). The planning process in the value-based approach serves as a road map for conservation management and is defined as "the journey" that facilitates problem-solving and good decision-making (Demas, 2000).

There are many typologies of heritage value devised by various scholars and organizations, including the Burra Charter and English Heritage. In the design proposal, we consider

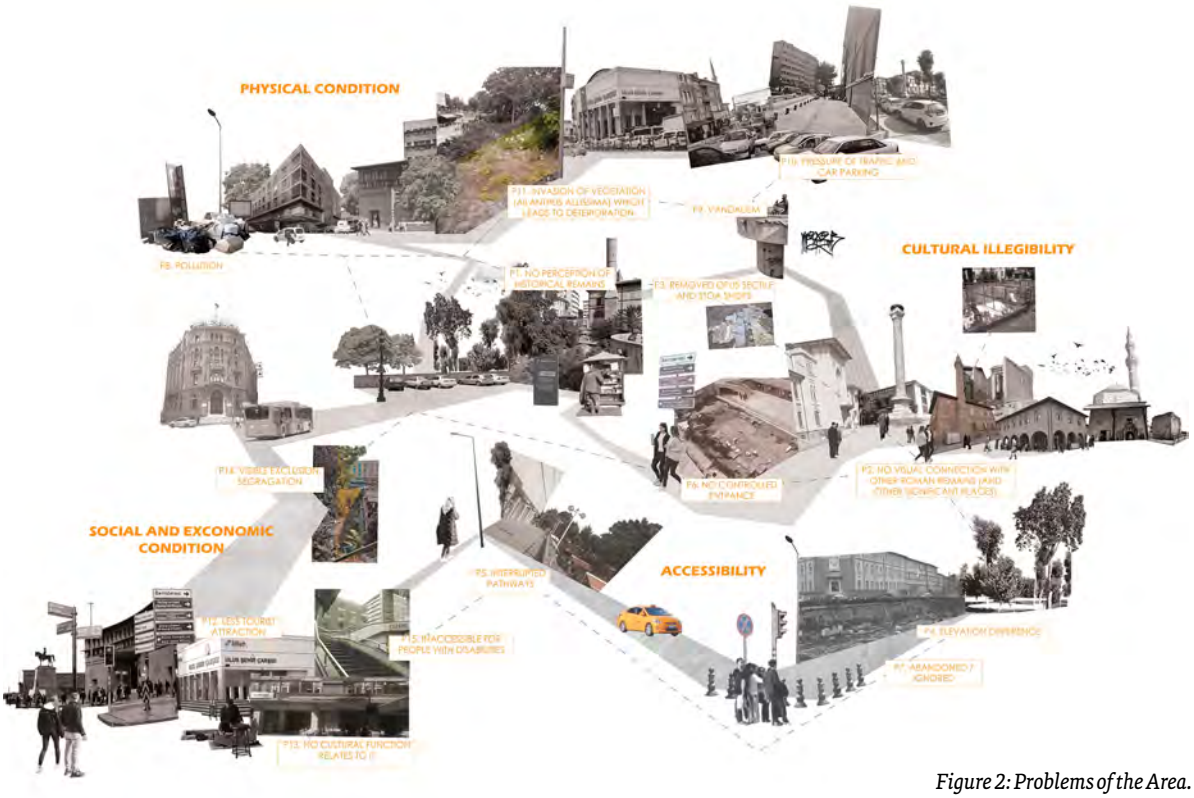



*Figure 2: Problems of the Area.*

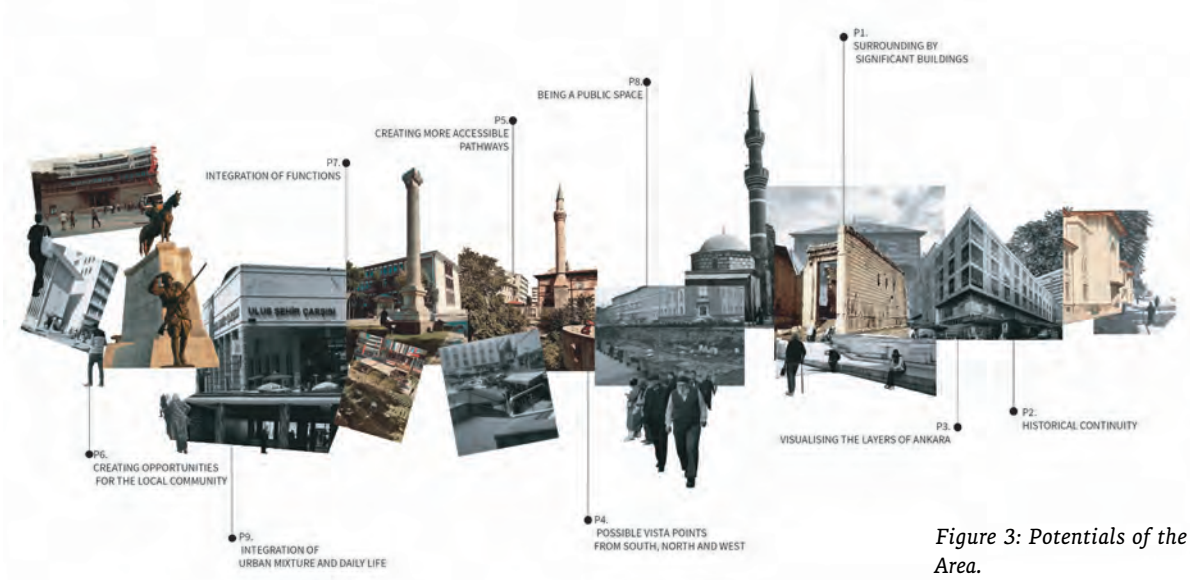



*Figure 3: Potentials of the Area.*

architectural, historical, scientific, cultural, economic, social, and archaeological values (Figure 4). Value assessment of Cardo Maximus (Figure 5) demonstrates the multifaceted significance of the Roman Road. The current CM site incorporates remains from different historical periods and cultures, creating archaeological, architectural, and historical values, as well as scientific relevance, since it reveals the Roman street pattern.

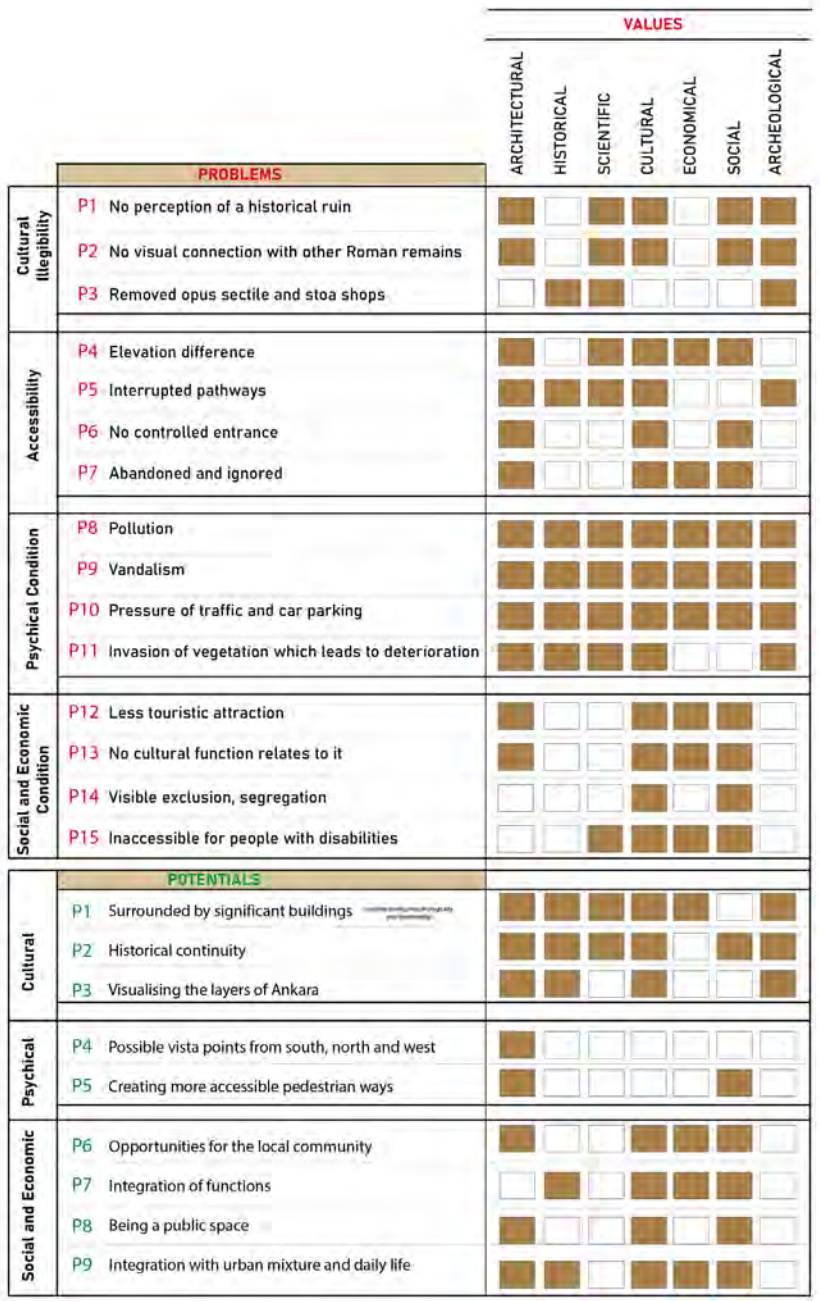



*Figure 4: Definitions of the Values.*

*Figure 5: Values of the Area.*

The Roman Road, with the nearby landmarks and landscape, combines economic and cultural values. Opus sectile of the stoa and small shops excavated from the entrance of the CM, now exhibited at the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, demonstrate the continuity of a commercial function at the same location with Ulus City Bazar. Cardo Maximus site, positioned among historical public buildings but creating an enclosed open space, has the potential to host social gatherings and community events. Thus, the road could be considered a great metaphor for the shared past, origins, but also contemporary and future of Ankara's inhabitants, as it will lead to increase the interaction among different social groups.

In order to understand which problems and potential of the site may have an impact on the identified values above, they are connected in Figure 4.

## Types of Conservation Methods

The "limited intervention" principle in heritage conservation emphasizes the least intrusive methods for preserving an asset's integrity and authenticity. The intervention options are determined by the asset's specific needs and the community's values. The goal is to preserve cultural, historical, and aesthetic values while adapting aspects of the road for modern use and enjoyment. In this process, respecting local values and involving the community is kept in mind to ensure interventions will contribute to their well-being (Archaeological Institute of America, 2008).

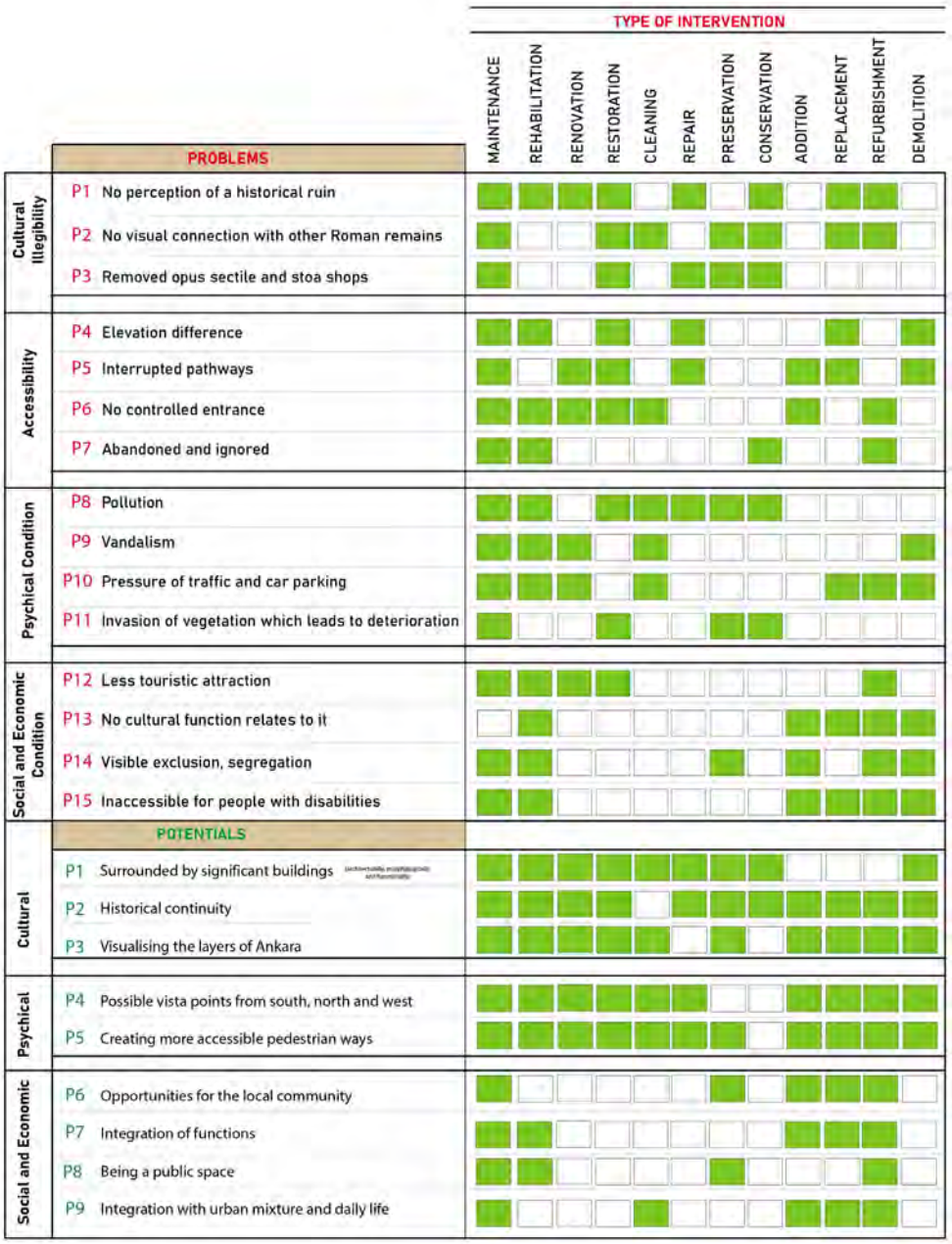



*Figure 6: Problems, Potentials, and Intervention Types Relations.*

Heritage conservation entails a variety of interventions, each tailored to a specific purpose.

In our case, we identified five main types of interventions that can be used to solve current challenges in the CM area, enhance its potential, and make the area more legible, accessible, and functional. The first is maintenance: the routine care of the most delicate

structures, followed by rehabilitation and renovation, intended as updating and reviewing the structures for new uses while preserving historical elements. Then, we identified restoration: bringing an asset to its original state by repairing it or reconstructing it (Bertolin & Loli, 2018). Finally, we intended cleaning and repairing interventions as means to preserve the functionality and aesthetics of a cultural site. In the chart (Figure 6), we have connected every problem we identified in the area with the type of intervention that can be implemented to solve them.

Additionally, the intervention types that can improve and preserve the continuity of values and potential of the area are illustrated in the chart (Figure 6). Utilizing the above-mentioned intervention types will ensure the continuity and development of the potential of the area. These interventions are planned to be used throughout the macro, meso, and microscales.

## Intervention Plan

### Macroscale Interventions

Our main macroscale intervention is represented by creating a multilayered network of culture-led heritage trails spreading across the Ulus District, encompassing CM. Our vision is that this proposed network becomes not only a physical path, but a dynamic showcase of Ankara's cultural make-up, which can lead to a deeper connection between the city, its inhabitants, and visitors. In addition, the idea of creating a network of thematic cultural routes can be considered an effective tool to highlight the cultural and social values of the environment, as well as boosting sustainable economic development by attracting visitors to the area.

The objective is to integrate Cardo Maximus into the city's narrative, establishing it as a key element in Ankara's identity, and clarifying the historical and cultural value of the Roman Road.

#### *Culture-led Heritage Trails*

The International Committee on Cultural Routes (CIIS as a part of ICOMOS), and the European Institute of Cultural Routes defined the concept of cultural routes as any type of route that is "physically delimited and is also characterized by having its own specific dynamic and historical functionality. They share common context, content, cross-cultural significance as a whole and dynamic character" (CIIC, 2008). Types of cultural routes can be classified according to their territorial and cultural scope, goal, or function, duration in time, structural configuration, or natural environment. In light of this information, we adopted the notion of cultural routes for Culture-led Heritage Trails in Ulus District based on their archaeological, religious, administrative, and commercial functions covering different layers of Roman, Seljuk, Ottoman, and Turkish history. In contrast to touristic routes, cultural routes can neither be designed nor invented, but can be discovered based on their shared historical significance within a physical environment (Martorell Carreño, 2003).

The first stage in creating the Culture-led Heritage Trails involves the analysis of Roman and colonnaded streets dating back to the late Hellenistic period, and Cardo Maximus dating to the Augustus period, which are shown in the Ankyra map (Figure 7).

*Figure 7: Ancient Street Pattern Analysis.*

The diagonal street pattern of the Hellenistic period matches the orientation of the Roman Bath, the Augustus Temple, and the Roman Theater. Kadıoğlu et al. (2011) asserted that the diagonal pattern belonged to the old and organic urban fabric, while the north-south and east-west oriented street network was planned according to the new structures of the Augustus period. However, secondary roads revealed themselves to be used as possible routes of culture-led trails as a reflection of former street patterns.

The second stage encompasses a thorough examination of key urban landmarks in Ulus, including historical buildings, fountains, and other significant features. Subsequently, a map based on these landmark findings was generated (Figure 8).

In the final stage, the ancient street pattern map overlapped with the urban landmarks, resulting in the discovery of a network of culture-led heritage trails (Figure 9). The central distributor of these trails is Cardo Maximus, serving as the main street in our historical exploration of the Ulus District.

The trail network contains four different cultural themes: a trail connecting existing ancient Roman sites, a trail linking mosques, masjids, and hammams a trail called the "Kızılbey Trail" connecting significant banks and hotels from the republican period, and a trail linking commercial and traditional activities, divided into two sections: the Tahtakale section and the Long Bazaar section.

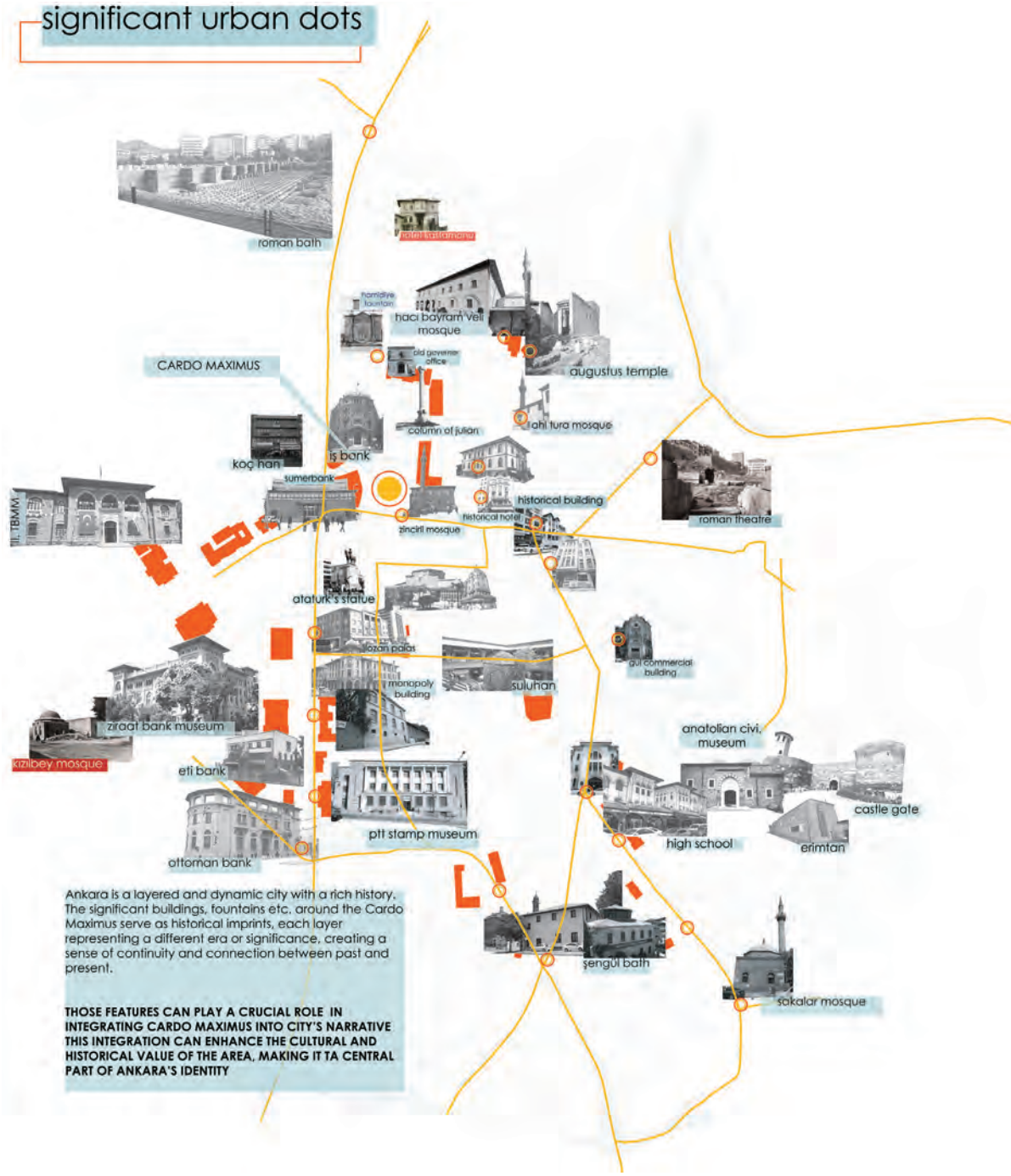



*Figure 8: Significant Urban Dots in Ulus.*

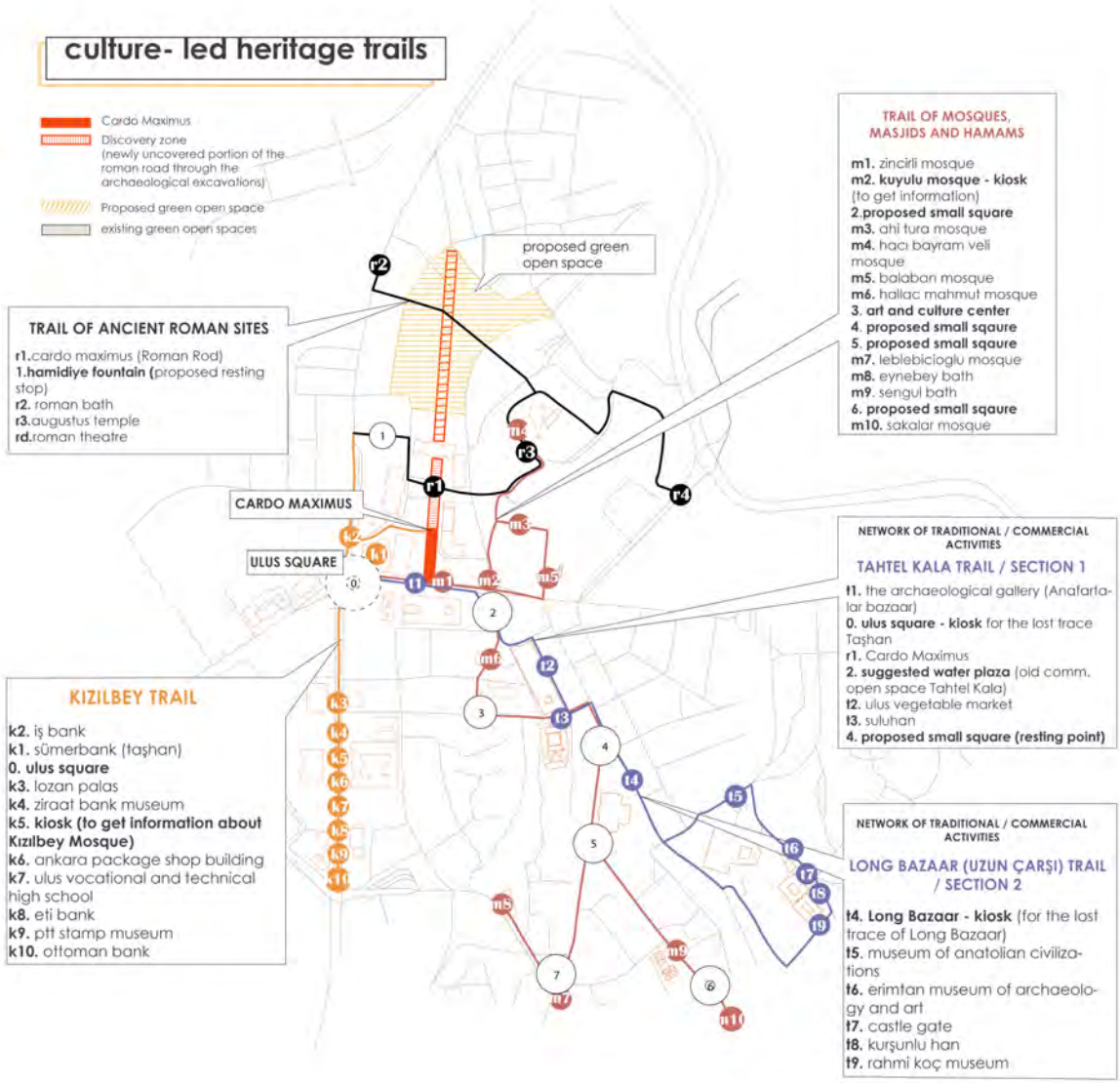



*Figure 9: Culture-led Heritage Trails.*

Trails lead to the inclusion of small squares/plazas along the route, as well as the application of pedestrian-oriented street design principles for gatherings and other activities. Another important feature is the incorporation of lost traces in the names of the trails. Lost traces refer to places no longer in use, forgotten in modern-day Ankara. For instance, the Tahtakale and Long Bazaar sections in the Trail of Commercial and Traditional Activities are named after the open commercial space called Tahtakale, and the old bazaar called Long Bazaar, both lost spaces. Additionally, each trail includes kiosks designs dedicated to lost traces (Figure 10). For example, in the Tahtakale section, a multifunctional kiosk is proposed at the small water plaza that refers to the lost ancient water line.

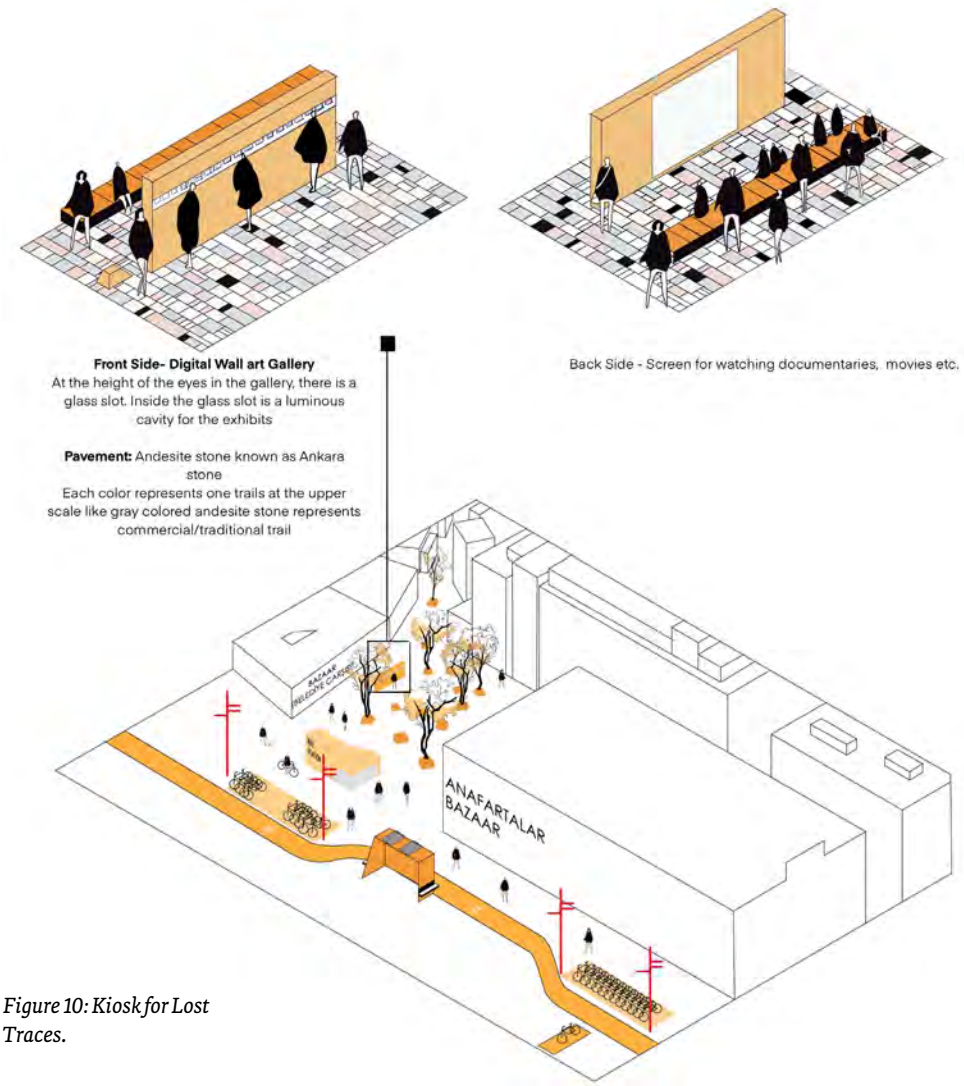



*Figure 10: Kiosk for Lost Traces.*

The proposed kiosk design features a dual-purpose structure. On its front side, it serves as a digital wall art gallery with a glass slot at eye level housing an illuminated cavity for exhibits. The backside functions as a screen for showing documentaries and movies. Moreover, the kiosk supports contemporary art exhibits by allowing citizens to submit their artworks for publication.

As a final feature of the trails, the pavement incorporates differently colored andesite stones, a local material known as Ankara stone. Each color uniquely represents one culture-led heritage trail, contributing to a visually rich and culturally significant environment.

## Mesoscale Interventions

Mesoscale interventions consist of two phases: the first involves the artificial extension of the remains of CM between Anafartalar Bazaar and the Community Park area, while the second connects two archaeological remains of the CM through a cave with a controlled entrance leading to an underground museum. One of the archaeological remains is located along Anafartalar Street, while the other, protected by a glass shield, in front of the Old Governors' Building. The first phase will connect the original remains of the ancient road with different markings and pavement materials. This will help people to perceive the archaeological remains as part of an ancient road, reminding them of its original function.

As previously said, to make CM more legible, accessible, and functional as a historical path and cultural node, there is a need to form an integrated relationship with its surroundings (Figure 11).

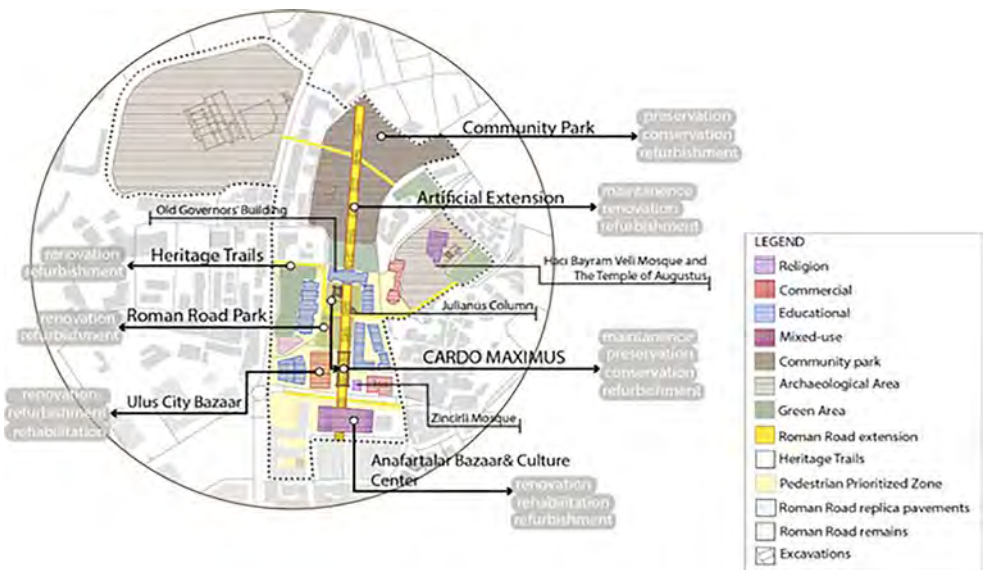



*Figure 11: Proposed Land Use Map of Cardo Maximus.*

The CM south extension will end at the backstreet of Anafartalar Bazaar, which will become a cultural center with study rooms, workshops, art exhibitions, and replicas of Roman art. The building, Ankara's first shopping mall, is hosting traditional shops on the first two floors, while the two top floors are currently empty. These will be renovated to attract university students and tourists, increasing the economic flow of vendors and providing a vista point (Figure 12). Ulus City Bazaar, on the other hand, stands on the remains of the Roman city's stoas and shops. The landscape of the CM will include amphistairs at both ends of the archaeological site and sitting areas (benches) over the eastern wall, just alongside of the road and Zincirli Mosque.

Ankara Social Sciences University's Government Square, surrounded by the Ankara Social Sciences University complex, will be transformed into a green park with suitable urban furniture and landscape design. The extended road will connect the remains of the CM, which will be turned into an underground museum, and will continue towards the old Governors' Building. The area behind this structure is empty, hosting only a mosque called Hamidiye Mosque. This area will be used for further excavations along the CM

axis to reveal Roman-era monuments and further be turned into a community park. The Community Park area will be a recreational area with playgrounds and food courts where the public can engage in community archaeological research. Community archaeology refers to archaeological research that involves the collaboration of both professionals and non-professionals in various stages of the process (Simpson and Williams, 2008). This will foster a sense of belongingness and a shared responsibility in the public, as giving partial control of these archaeological excavations to the public will help the latter in engage with its own heritage through activities such as surveys, excavations, and fieldwork, monitoring of the planning process, documentation, school projects, and archaeological tours (Marshall, 2002).

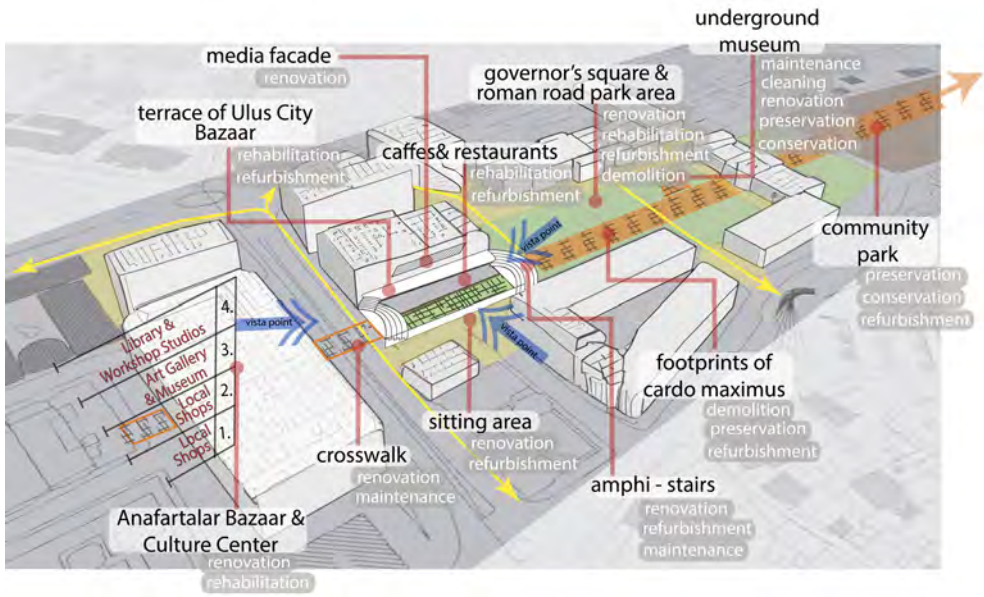
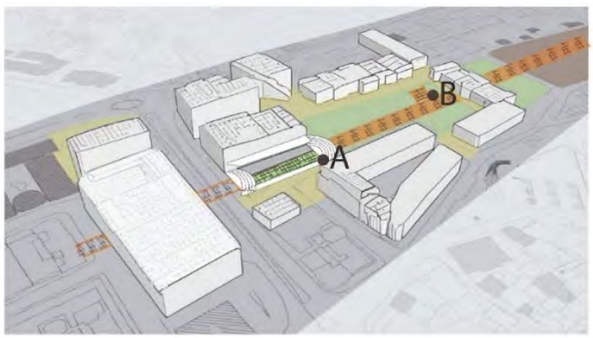



*Figure 12: Mesoscale Phase 1.*

The second phase will be characterized by the construction of an underground tunnel starting from the corner of the north amphi-stairs and ending in the underground museum of CM (Figure 13). Archaeological excavations conducted at the underground level will reveal more remains, enriching the scientific value of the area. Findings from the new excavations will be displayed within the underground tunnel for visitors. The entrance from the northern stairs will be controlled with turnstiles and visitors can only enter with a museum card. We envision two phases to offer people enough time to acknowledge the presence of Cardo Maximus and later proceed with new archaeological excavations and exhibitions. In fact, excavations will require the zone to be isolated and may last for an extended period, disrupting the daily life in the area. Hence, it would be better to allow visitors to experience the Roman Road in its current state and later present newly discovered findings.

## Microscale Interventions

The main goal of microscale interventions is to improve the experience of local



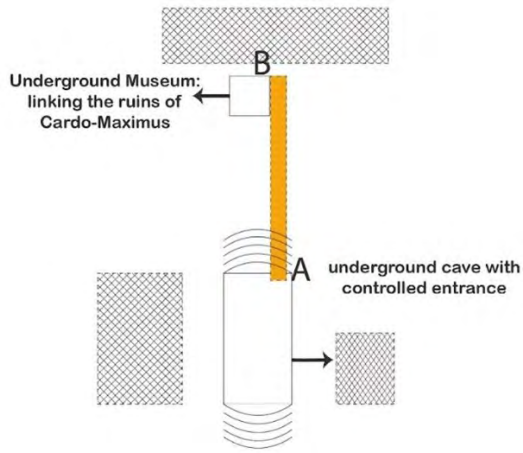




*Figure 13: Mesoscale Phase 2.*

communities and visitors and preserve cultural assets through the design of landscape and urban furniture. The area has a vibrant atmosphere: on the road, adjacent to the CM archaeological site, there are several kiosks, while inside the structure a variety of shops serves both visitors and locals. The area is intended to be a seamless blend of past and present, with history and modernity coexisting peacefully.

Amphi-stairs will remain at both ends of the Cardo Maximus (Figure 14). These stairs are not only functional, allowing people to move between levels, but they also provide places for visitors to sit and enjoy the vista points, merging with the Ulus City Bazaar's terrace at both ends. This design makes the Roman Road more accessible and invites visitors to linger and enjoy the scenery. The presence of Zincirli Mosque on the eastern side of CM encourages the use of the Roman Road, as tourists visiting the mosque are likely to discover and appreciate the Cardo Maximus archaeological ruins from the vista points.

Ulus Bazaar's frontage would become a multimedia façade (Figure 14). This feature will display Cardo Maximus-related content, making the historical site visible and engaging for visitors in the area. Cardo Maximus remains an integral exhibit component, visible and accessible to all.

Finally, to make the site more legible, information boards will be strategically placed to look like tiles on the ground, serving as informative displays on the observation balcony overlooking Cardo Maximus. Individuals and groups will enjoy exploring the area thanks to the use of virtual reality technologies. The current glass structure displaying archaeological remains on the northern side of CM will be renovated to better display the present archaeological remains (point B). Furthermore, an elevator open until 5.30 PM will allow visitors to descend to the site and tour the remains.

## Conclusions

The Cardo Maximus 2.0 project in Ankara is a comprehensive urban conservation initiative that revitalizes the ancient road by transforming it into a vital urban path of the contemporary city. The project addresses illegibility, accessibility, and functionality challenges through macro-, meso-, and microscales interventions. At the macro level, the project introduces culture-led heritage trails, showcasing Ankara's history and contributing

*Figure 14: Vista Point_ microscale interventions in Cardo Maximus, and multi-media facade of Ulus Bazaar.*

to the local economy. At the mesoscale, it extends Cardo Maximus and establishes community-centric spaces, transforming the archaeological sites of CM into a cultural hub. At the microscale, it integrates modern amenities with historical elements, providing an engaging and accessible experience for locals and tourists. The project's value-based approach ensures that each intervention is rooted in a deep understanding and respect for the site's architectural, historical, scientific, cultural, economic, social, and archaeological significance. It exemplifies how urban heritage can be revitalized while embracing the future, setting a precedent for how historical sites can be transformed into living parts of the city.

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*The Temple of Augustus and Roma, Ankara*
*(Source: NIT Archive)*

# Archaeo-Healer: Roman Theater as the Scene of the Collective Memory

Arzu Güler, Büşra Nur Gündoğdu, Fatma Kuş, Turgut Kartal, Zemzem Taşgüzen Polat

## Introduction

This project embraces a healing approach to integrate the Roman theater and its adjacent environs into the neighborhood and the city. It presently encompasses not only the architectural components of the Roman theater but also the collective memory of the region, comprising Kazıkiçi Bostans, Bentderesi, Hıdırlık Hill, and the Steppe Landscape of Central Anatolia. Consequently, the project aims to foster the integration of the historical, social, and natural past of the area by using socio-ecological and sociocultural strategies.

This approach, which focuses on archaeology as a transformative tool to improve space and neighborhoods, provides all layers of the city with a symbiotic journey between past, present, and future, thus preserving the collective memory of Ankara's residents.

To achieve this, the project follows an approach encompassing the macro, meso, and microscales. The project scrutinizes the spatial connection between traces of the Roman period within the city and the Roman theater at the macroscale, while it analyzes the Roman theater along with its surroundings at the mesoscale. Finally, a microscale examination is conducted within the boundaries of the Archaeopark, which houses the theater structure and is currently under construction. The objective is not merely the isolation of the theater structure in terms of its architectural context, but also the integration of the structure with the city in conjunction with its surroundings.

## Place and Context

The Roman theater stands at a critical location, both spatially and temporally. It lies at a crossroads among prominent artifacts from the Roman and other historical periods such as the Temple of Augustus, the Roman Bath, Cardo Maximus, the Citadel of Ankara, and the Republican era city center (Ulus).

Although disputed, it is likely that the construction of the Roman theater of Ankara discovered in the Bentderesi district was started during the reign of Augustus. The theater is dated from the first century BCE to the second century CE by different scholars (Kadıoğlu, 2004). The earliest known mention of the festival was found in a third-century inscription in Ankara (Kadıoğlu et al., 2011). It is known that monuments of the Greek and Roman past such as the theater have fallen into disrepair after Ankara was conquered by the Ottomans (Perrot, 1872).

In 1916, the great fire of Ankara destroyed most of the houses in the district and as a result of this event, a demographic change occurred in Bentderesi and its surroundings (Karay, 2017). In the early days of the Turkish Republic, the pristine and scenic Bentderesi district was an important part of Ankara's urban identity, serving as its main promenade and recreational area. According to the 1932 master plan prepared by German architect Hermann Jansen, the district would be reserved for activities such as spending time in tea gardens, swimming, and sunbathing (Jansen, 1937).

The second half of the 20th century witnessed internal mass migration from the Turkish countryside to cities, which required a new set of principles and priorities in urban planning. The first humble houses in the Bentderesi district were built on the nearby Hıdırlık Hill and the 1955 master plan for Ankara allowed new constructions on the waterways to sustain the rapid population growth and the need for modern infrastructure. The devastating flood of Ankara in 1957 merely accelerated the transformation (Cumhuriyet, 1957): the Tabakhane

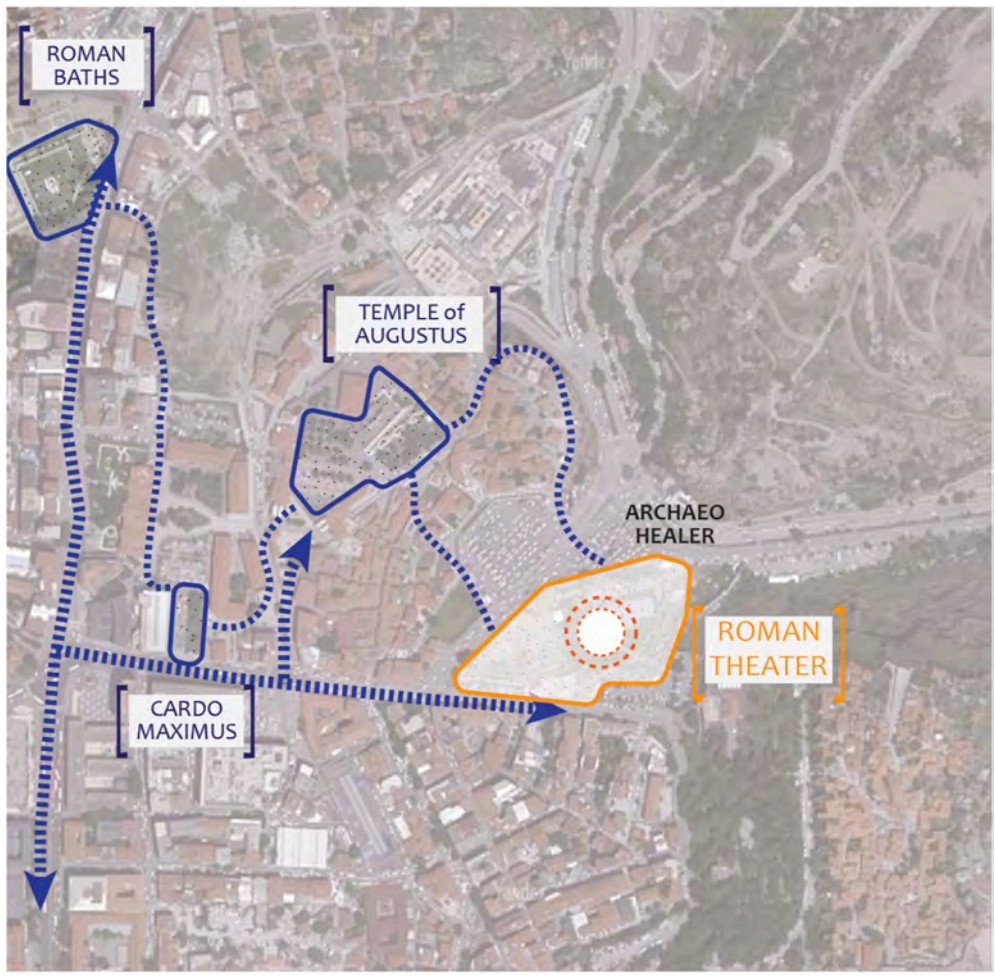


*Figure 1: Project area.*

stream was covered, connected to the city sewer system, and a highway was paved over it, causing the destruction of multiple historic infrastructure and deeply affecting the soul of Bentderesi district (Tamur, 2012). From then on, the area was defined by squatter settlements, brothels, eerie alleys, a minibus station, and chaotic traffic flowing in six lanes.

The Roman theater was discovered during the construction of a building in 1982. Subsequently, the early 2000s saw the demolition of the brothels and the nearby squatter settlements. After the demolitions, the excavated remains of the theater remained unprotected and were consequently vandalized until the theater was fenced off.

Currently, the Roman theater is being restored by Ankara Metropolitan Municipality and is planned to be revitalized to house cultural events, leisure activities, and an archaeological park where other archaeological findings will be displayed. It has the potential to become a symbol of Ankara's rich history and cultural heritage and a must-visit site for anyone interested in exploring the city's multilayered, specifically Roman, past.

## Problem Statement

This project aims to convey an answer to the question: "Can design be a healing factor in social, spatial, and temporal rifts?" by reimagining the Roman theater and its vicinity. The gradual change of inhabitants and users of the region, change of use, and gentrifying projects have produced an abyss between different social identities in the area. Although the Roman theater fell into ruins and got buried, the Bentderesi district preserved its spatio-temporal continuity up until the second half of the 20th century, when it went through a series of dramatic breaks and discontinuities. While the need for rapid transportation denatured the Tabakhane stream and its promenade, gentrification and land development affected the once densely populated traditional neighborhood. In defiance, the citadel looming on the hill, a contingent of the Roman dam and the theater lingered on. Yet, the area has lost most of its identity and today sits on the brink of becoming a non-place: a place that cannot be interpreted as relational, historical, and concerned with identity (Augé, 1995).

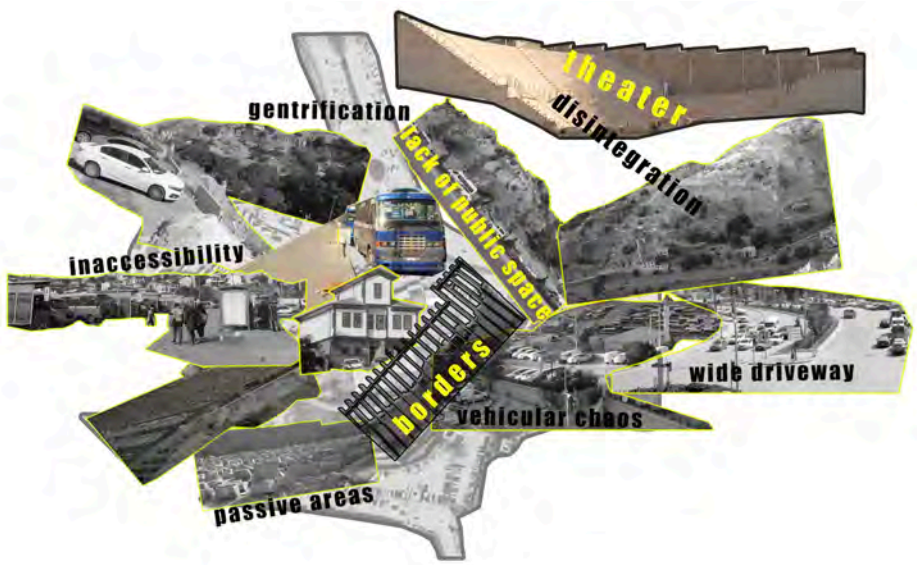


*Figure 2: Problems of the area.*

The multilane roads and the minibus station create plenty of negative stimuli such as chaotic traffic, ever-present noise, and unpleasant fuel smell. Furthermore, massive spaces are dedicated to a single use, creating a border vacuum (Jacobs, 1961), hindering the interaction between the theater, Hıdırlık Hill, and the nearby Hacıbayram neighborhood.

The theater rests on the skirts of the hill where the citadel is located forming a natural border and is separated by a combination of a wall and a high fence. Alongside generating another border, the wall and fence reduce accessibility, limiting the theater's area of influence to a semipublic turf. The clear distinction between public space and private space is obscured and the continuous use at different times of the day by diverse social identities is prevented, thus hindering the safety and success of the neighborhood (Jacobs, 1961).

The common denominator in the district's current problems is that they all create a spatial, temporal, or social rift. The absence of the theater for centuries, and the destruction of the natural features and architectural monuments detach the users of the space from any

palpable evidence of permanence and continuity. The highway, the minibus station, and the fences encircling the theater create physical borders, reducing accessibility and porosity.

*Figure 3: Context.*

## Statement of Significance

In the contemporary context, the Roman theater and its surroundings, where the archaeopark project is currently underway, require conservation and sustainability efforts. The conservation values that play a key role in guiding conservation efforts of the area are as follows:

### Historical Value

The region is imbued with historical significance thanks to the presence of the Bentderesi Stream, a pivotal watercourse in the annals of Ankara. The area bears remnants dating back to the Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Republican eras.

### Ecological Value

In the past, Bentderesi and its surroundings were characterized by a water system and natural agricultural systems. Wisteria plants, poplar trees, and steppe vegetation were common in the area.

### Social Value

The area was a crucial hub in the Roman era due to its theater and bath. It was a vivid place for artistic activities, spending leisure time, and gatherings. During the Ottoman era it became one of the main economic centers. Today, it appears as a chaotic transportation-centric nexus.

### Economic Value

Historically recognized as a hub for mohair production in Ankara, the area was characterized by a substantial population of weavers. The structures of the Mohair Association of Türkiye were also situated within this district (Gürler, 2006).

### Use Value

Throughout history, the site had diverse purposes, from cultural functions in the Roman and Byzantine periods to commercial utilization during the Ottoman era. During the Republican era, it served as a settlement for a prolonged period, consistently with its earlier role. In the 1930s, it notably became the inaugural site of a state-operated brothel, and there are currently plans to repurpose it as an archaeopark.

### Cultural Value

In the past centuries, due to its economic and recreational character, the region attracted numerous local and international visitors for sightseeing, relaxation, and shopping. However, from the 1930s on, until the recent past, it became notorious for the state-run brothel. This reputation has become dominant, prompting the local public to designate the area as a "depression zone."

### Architectural Value

A typical Roman theater with its architectural features has been reconstructed and is now exhibited in an archaeopark. In addition, the site was part of the fabric of authentic Ottoman houses in the immediate vicinity until their demolition for various reasons.

## Conceptual Approach

The approach to the project proposes the "Archaeo-Healer" concept, which aims to integrate the rich tapestry of archaeology as a transformative tool to heal the space and neighborhoods. Conceived as a symbiotic journey between the past, present, and future, this project uses the healing potential of archaeological heritage to rehabilitate the urban fabric and build in future users a sense of place belonging. In this context, the "healer" concept is approached as a "salutogenic" effect derived from Antonovsky's (1996) approach, meaning mental and physical healing for human beings. Salutogenic landscapes can be defined as places that positively affect people's physical and mental health and increase well-being (Maikov, 2016).

In this context, the place refers to a socially built space. It includes memories formed individually or collectively. Places can be created with the cultural interpretation of the attendees (Baldwin et al., 2018); however, they also have the power to create a shared culture. In the project, both approaches are used. Moreover, considering that space builds culture and culture builds space, cities and urban spaces have a mnemonic power over past common or individual memories, places, or historical events (Steiner, 2002).

By also integrating flora and fauna in the project, the elements used in the archaeological

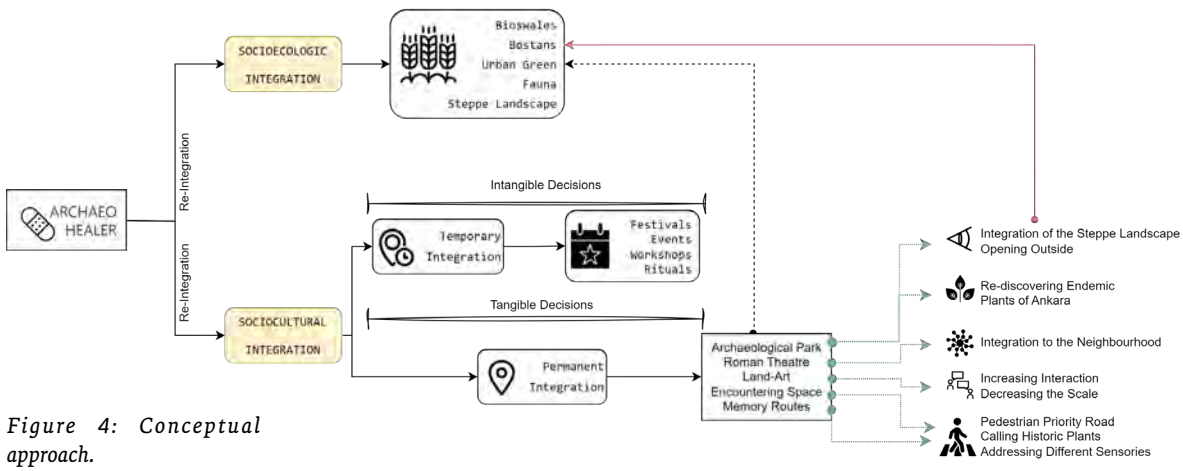


*Figure 4: Conceptual approach.*

site/park act as therapeutic agents and mnemonic devices by triggering a cathartic experience that fosters a connection between locals and their heritage. At this point, the Roman theater is integrated into the neighborhood and Ankara with two main aims: socio-ecological and sociocultural integration.

Memories of the area's natural and cultural landscape, including the Kazıkiçi Bostans, Bentderesi, and Steppe Landscape of Central Anatolia are used for the socio-ecological integration. The plant patches in the enclosure space refer to the area's past urban farming character. The aromatic and therapeutic plant species are used as a landscape design element in the network system (streets combining other landmarks with the Roman theater), activating memory by using the sense of smell. Aromatic plants used in the Ottoman period and essential oil plants used in the Roman baths constitute the project's fundamental planting concept.

For sociocultural integration, tangible and intangible spatial values are included in the project for different attendees (locals, tourists, students, researchers, etc.). The Roman theater, the land-art area in front of the theater, and the re-proposed archaeological park area are formed as a spatial layer of intangible and tangible decisions such as integration of the steppe landscape and opening the area to the outside, integration with the neighborhood, creating pedestrian priority roads, increasing interaction and decreasing the obscure scale differences, re-discovering the endemic and natural plants of Ankara and the region, calling the historical plants and addressing different sensories by using remembrance effects of the plants.

Materials that are more natural or specific to the region are preferred for the subscale design decisions. Hence, the carbon footprint of the project is aimed to be minimized. Moreover, employing water harvesting through rain gardens and bioswales in appropriate locations serves as a design strategy to evoke the stream's historical significance, raise awareness about climate change, and enhance the project's resilience. Besides, events such as festivals, seasonal or permanent activities, and workshops shape the living environment of the project. These event-based suggestions aim to increase awareness and sense of community in addition to their educational purposes.

This approach goes beyond the superficial aesthetics of traditional landscaping; it

ensures that the neighborhood not only thrives visually but also becomes a sanctuary where the community can reclaim a harmonious relationship with its roots. As the layers of history are uncovered, the Archaeo-Healer project becomes a trigger for revitalization, transforming the environment into a tangible and intangible resilient landscape.

## Actors and Organizational Structure

In the organizational structure, the "Archaeo-Healer" concept is placed at the core of our approach. It aims to establish a three-step cycle: Sharing, Integration, and Sense of Belonging. Besides its mean of exchanging information, for Sharing we envision building collective memories within a frame that exceeds individual experiences. Through shared narratives, memories, and stories, a communal medium from diverse perspectives is created. Another essential point of these efforts is the establishment of a sense of belonging, a deep-rooted emotional connection between the participants and the place, enabling them to feel attached to the place.

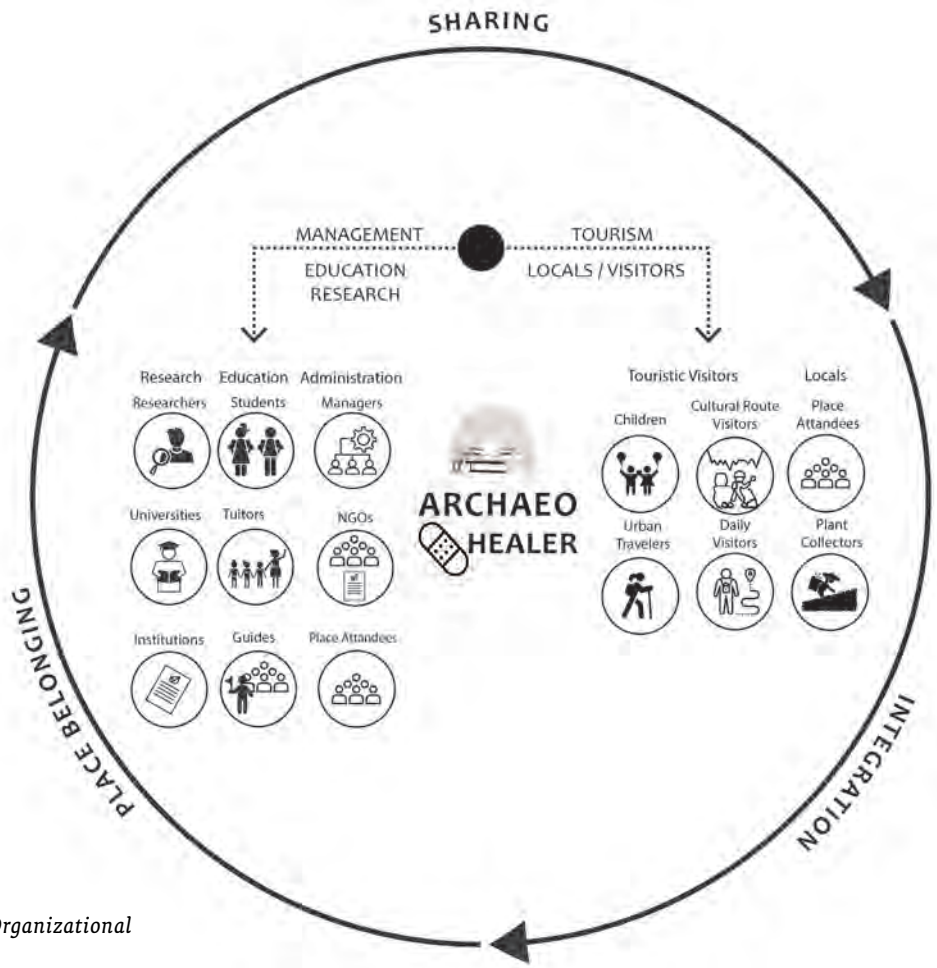


*Figure 5: Actors and Organizational Structure.*

Participants are essentially divided into two groups: local participants, including residents of the neighborhood and Ankara locals, and foreign visitors, such as daily visitors, children, urban explorers, cultural route explorers, plant experts, and guides. Notably, the residents emerge not merely as passive observers but as dynamic contributors to the area's management and sustainability. This synergy extends to academics, researchers, educators, administrators, NGOs, and students, forging a collective bond toward preserving and flourishing this shared space.

The aim is to contribute to the area's self-sustainability by turning different stakeholders into active agents, enabling individuals to embrace the area, and gain a sense of belonging.

## Enhancing the Archaeological Landscape: A Comprehensive Proposal for the Integration of Historical, Social, and Natural Elements

The proposal delineates a comprehensive plan for the transformation and enrichment of the Roman Theater Archaeological Site and the Bentderesi area, particularly focusing on a meeting point, observation terraces, sensory routes, land art, and a playground design. Activities aimed at establishing a dynamic connection between the Roman theater and its surroundings would ensure a holistic experience for residents and visitors.

*Figure 6: General view of the project area.*

The most radical proposal seeks to transform the area currently occupied by minibus stations into an "Encountering Space" where people can meet and enjoy the greenery. The project endeavors to convert the hard surface of the area into a permeable, soft, and partially shaded space. Due to the high building density, limited green spaces, and chaotic

surroundings, the project aims to restore this densely constructed and polluted area to its historical function as a promenade and recreational area. This transformation will incorporate a landscape featuring steppe vegetation, aromatic and therapeutic plants. The Encountering Space will include surfaces with edible plants, an urban meadow in a steppe image, sitting areas, kiosks, and a water element with a dry pool. Moreover, sensory memory routes originating from the Hacı Bayram neighborhood intersect with the Encountering Space, guiding individuals across the street towards the Archaeopark/Theater district.

*Figure 7: Proposal.*

Another significant decision aims to establish observation terraces to enhance visitors' understanding of the archaeological site. These would be positioned on three panoramic locations: one on Hıdırlık Hill, the second at the skirt of Ankara Citadel, and the last at the edge of the Hacı Bayram neighborhood. The terraces will feature viewing points adorned with historical photographs corresponding to the observed areas. These viewpoints are crucial in establishing thresholds that connect the morphologically divided structure of the site into three distinct parts. Moreover, these three zones are integrated with the urban green flow which contains the steppe landscape and fauna of the region.

The Encountering Space will facilitate pedestrian accessibility while respecting the socio-ecological memory of the area and empowering the sociocultural layers. It will include a dry pool and bioswales referencing the Bentderesi stream, fruit trees and aromatic bushes memorializing the past vegetation, sitting areas, and a meadow reviving the daily life and gatherings. On a broader scale, it will connect other landmarks such as Roman Bath, Cardo Maximus, Augustus Temple to the Roman Theater.

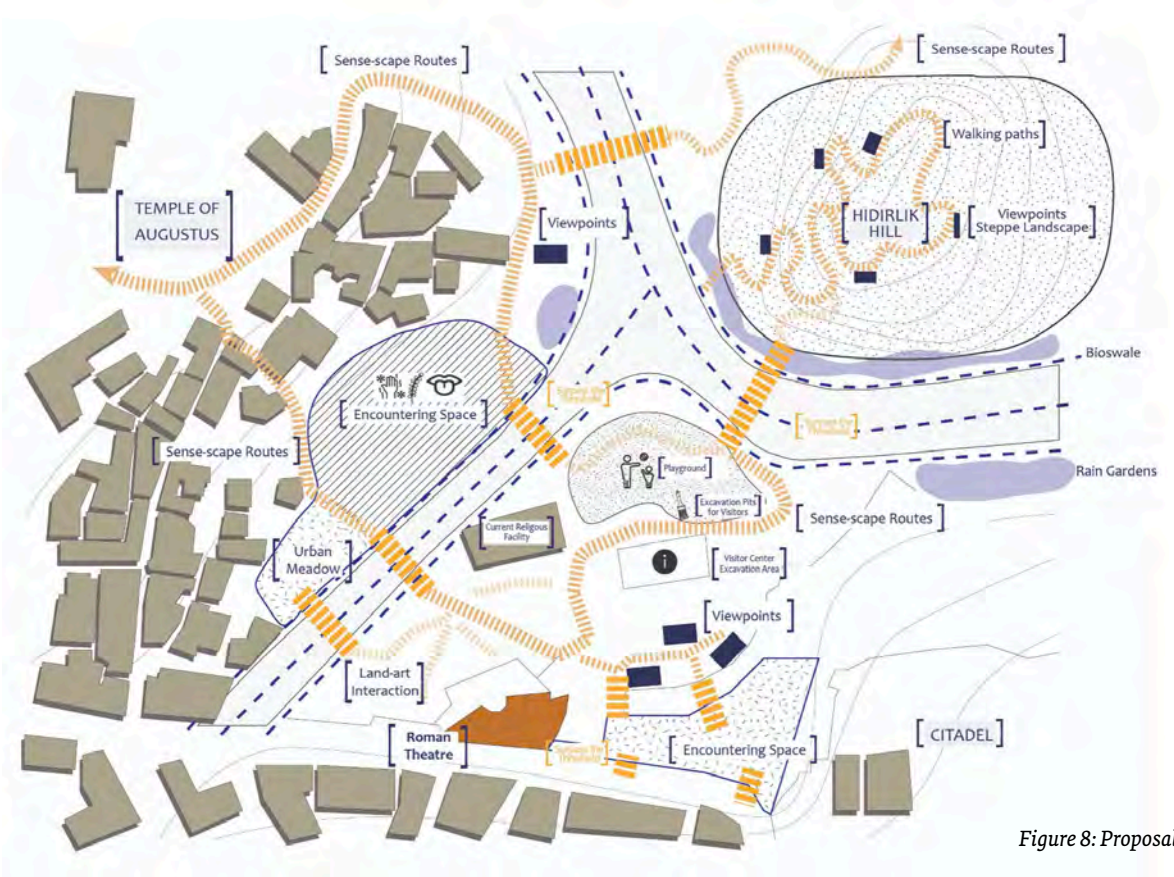


*Figure 8: Proposal.*

*Figure 9: The Encountering Space.*

*Figure 10: Viewpoint and walking paths.*

*Figure 11: Hıdırlık Hill with walking paths and bioswale in foreground.*

## Accessibility and Inclusivity

The entrances are designed to cater to diverse user groups, addressing both social and physical accessibility. The vision encompasses an archaeo-healing environment, fostering a connection between the site and visitors. To further improve accessibility, it is recommended to introduce free access to the site, excluding specific events such as concerts and other ticket-required activities. It could be possible to introduce an additional entrance from the Citadel area to enhance connectivity. (Figure 12)

*Figure 12: Pedestrian crossing connecting Hıdırlık Hill with the theater area.*

Traffic calming strategies are implemented to create pedestrian-friendly environments and safer roadways to increase accessibility. Pedestrian experience is improved by widening sidewalks, using marked crosswalks, reducing the number of lanes, and adding elevated traffic islands. The substitution of asphalt with stone in the pavement is anticipated to mitigate the speed of traffic flow and crossing distances are reduced with bulb-outs and neck downs. Shared space and pedestrian squares have been identified as other traffic calming measures.

The goal is to increase pedestrian safety, calm traffic, balance existing uses, and consider different users, incorporate sustainable landscaping practices, use easy-to-maintain and durable designs and materials, and provide a high-quality and appealing environment.

## Interactive Stone Exhibition / Integration of Land Art

The project introduces the concept of land art to add functionality to the site beyond visual appeal. To enhance the stone exhibition, an interactive experience is created by

positioning stones among organic walking paths. This integration aims to create a harmonious blend of nature and history. Some stones will serve as seats, while others will function as information boards, strengthening the connection between visitors and the archaeological site (Figure 13).

*Figure 13: Interaction and Integration.*

## Redefining the Playground

Revisions to the existing playground align its design with archaeological purposes, incorporating small excavation pits for children, a dry pool, and elements themed around a theater. This transformation not only caters to recreational needs but also contributes to the site's character. It enhances not only the identity of the place but also the visitors' connection to it. Moreover, visitors think that they pass through a time tunnel into the past in an archaeological park designed with an experimental archaeology concept (Holtorf, 2009) (Figure 14).

*Figure 14: Playground.*

## Variety in Activities

Our proposal aims to establish a connection between the Roman theater, its surroundings, and contemporary life through various activities. Dividing the proposed activities into permanent and temporary ones, it ensures that the area remains active throughout the years and engages the public.

The theater hosts the majority of the activities. Permeable surfaces are designed along natural elements to guide visitors towards the area where visitors engage in cultural activities, such as concerts and shows, all while experiencing the Roman theater.

On the other hand, the Archaeological Park represents the characteristic steppe vegetation with enriched archaeological experience spots such as excavation pits for kids, remembrance boards, and information panels, among others.

The exhibition of the stones referred to as land art, has the potential to offer people an interactive experience. Thus, the stones are positioned between the organic-feeling pathways and increase interaction with the area by using some of these stones as seating areas and some as information boards (Figure 15).

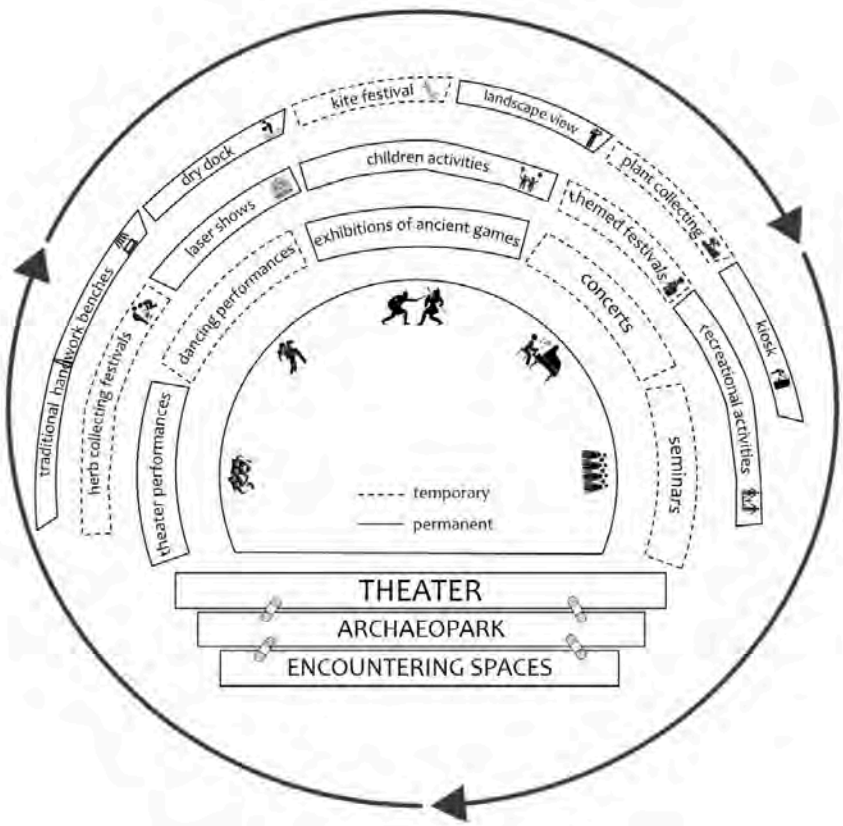


*Figure 15: Activities.*

In terms of temporary activities, the historical periods witnessed by the area are represented by proposing activities such as storytelling and cosplay. Thus, the area will regain the collective memory hosted by the Roman theater.

Additionally, the diversity and continuity of activities are supported through collaborations with theater organizations and efforts to restore local associations of Ankara, aiming to restore economic value to the region through craftsmanship, such as the Mohair Association of Türkiye. By doing so, the theater will remain active, and the functional value of the area will be maintained. In conclusion, this comprehensive proposal seeks to enrich the archaeological landscape by seamlessly integrating historical, social, and natural elements, thereby ensuring the sustained vibrancy and significance of the site.

## Conclusion

In multilayered urban contexts, archaeological heritage connects contemporary inhabitants with the lives of their predecessors. Integrating archaeological remains into the intricate tapestry of urban environments presents a unique set of challenges. Balancing the preservation of these archaeological and historical remnants with the imperative to facilitate their ability to narrate the stories of past urban life requires a delicate and thoughtful approach. The complex task involves not only unearthing and conserving artefacts, but

also seamlessly weaving them into the modern urban fabric to ensure a harmonious coexistence of past and present.

The Roman theater in Ankara is a witness of the historical richness located in the heart of the city. This ancient theater reveals layers of story, connecting today's cityscape with the vivid narratives of those who lived in the past. Located in a dynamic urban context, the Roman theater not only epitomizes the magnificence of Roman architectural skill but also bears witness to the city's multilayered history.

All in all, by considering the values that constitute the natural and cultural memory of the area, the project tries to heal spatial rifts experienced by the Bentderesi district and Roman theater area through design so that the area would be integrated into Ankara's urban life. While doing this, the project considers not only the Roman theater but also its physical setting and context, the collective memory of the region, the Bentderesi stream, and the Roman Heritage of Ankara. Centered on the concept of "healing," the project aspires to attract not only locals but also heritage enthusiasts, ultimately reintegrating the area as a significant part of Ankara.

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# Reflections on Project Proposals

# Navigating Temporal Complexity: Reflections on the Projects for the Integration of Archaeological Heritage into Contemporary Ankara

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In Türkiye, many cities have their roots in the ancient past. Inscribed in the present urban form, the physical remnants of the ancient past, which can be referred to as archaeological heritage, are subjected to a continuous process of transformation in subsequent periods with selective appropriation and rejection, following diverse trajectories (Council of Europe, 2000; Altınöz, 2002). Current scholarship adopts people-centered approaches to the conservation, interpretation, and presentation of urban archaeological sites (ICOMOS, 2008; ICCROM, 2015; ICOMOS, 2020). This is because sites or objects become heritage when people interact with them, perceive them, remember them, and even try to forget them (De Nardi, 2014). Therefore, the physical, functional and social integration of urban archaeological sites with contemporary cities—by placing its inhabitants at the center—is significant, since they contribute to the identity of the city, the collective memory of its inhabitants, and its future evolution (Feilden & Jokilehto, 1993; Rukavina et al., 2018; Çalışkan & Hamamcıoğlu-Turan, 2021).

The theme for the NIT Urban Heritage Lab in 2023 was Archaeological Heritage and Liveable Cities. The course explored how the ancient past actively participates in the city's present through the case of Ankara, which was built on the remains of Roman Ancyra. Participants selected four archaeological sites in contemporary Ankara, which are the Roman Theater, the Temple of Augustus and Rome, Cardo Maximus, and the Roman Baths. Even though all the sites are in close vicinity to each other, they have followed different trajectories from the ancient Roman period until today. Hence, they have evolved into different identities, have a wide variety of audiences, and pose different conservation, interpretation, and presentation problems. Accordingly, all four projects focused on the complex trajectories of the sites, how these sites acquired new functions and meanings over time and developed proposals by considering their current identities and related audiences.

"Archaeo-Healer: Roman Theater as the Scene of the Collective Memory" Project focuses on the Roman theater and its environs. The project successfully highlights the inhabitants' connection with the natural and ecological aspects of the city, which are lost today, and aims to revive the site as an urban ecological and recreational area, with the Roman theater serving as its metaphorical backstage. With an appealing theme of "archaeo-healer," the project connects the Roman amphitheater with the former Tabakhane region, Bent Deresi, and Hıdırlık Hill through sense-scape routes and activities along these routes targeting both locals and visitors. The proposed functions along these routes such as the urban meadow, rain gardens, bioswale, steppe landscape, and land-arts, are inspired by the former natural and ecological aspects of the city. The project revives the memory of the lost natural and cultural landscape of Ankara and integrates it into the everyday lives of the inhabitants and visitors. In this way, the 'Archaeo-Healer' uses the natural and cultural landscape and its role in the city's collective memory as a curator, which is very timely in the age of the Anthropocene (Stobiecka, 2018).

The Temple of Augustus is perhaps the most challenging site among the four sites, because it has been the main sacred site of the city throughout the ages and gained another layer of religious value after the construction of Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque at the edge of the temple during the Ottoman period. Therefore, the site has multiple meanings and attributes that are sometimes contested due to politically motivated interventions to the site accentuating its Ottoman period. "The Tale of the Temple of Augustus and Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque" project points out the co-existence of diverse communities in the same space for different motives and grounds their proposal on dualities such as dead/living, underground/aboveground, or frozen/continuing. The project mostly focuses on the on-site presentation of the Temple of Augustus through a visitor information center, walking paths, and by using the wall of the temple as an urban projector. The emphasis on the Augustus Temple is due to the fact that it is politically underrepresented and there have been attempts to diminish the temple's presence from the current use of the site as a religious site. Nevertheless, the theme of co-existence could further be elaborated since it has many potentials for integrating the site

with diverse communities.

The project titled "Cardo Maximus 2.0 Unveiled: Heritage Trails Weaving Past and Present, Cultivating Ankara's Cultural Node" focuses on the main north-south axis of Roman Ancyra, which was partially unearthed in the early 2000s. Even though an environmental design project was implemented after excavations, which proposed a viewing terrace and a promenade, over time Cardo Maximus was almost completely erased from the current urban form due to negligence. Inspired by the original meaning and function of Cardo Maximus as the heart of street network of Roman Ancyra, the project skillfully regenerates this character by proposing heritage trails that intersect at Cardo Maximus. In this way, the project not only integrates different layers of the city both horizontally and vertically through the Cardo Maximus, but also utilizess the new network of heritage trails as a means to physically, functionally, and economically revitalize the city center through culture-led interventions.

"Let's Meet at the Roman Baths" Project focuses on the Roman Baths ruins, which is officially an open-air archaeology museum. Although recent environmental design and landscaping interventions were implemented by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, they mainly focused on establishing pedestrian paths, information panels, and a visitor center. In contrast to this approach, the Roman Baths project not only adopts a holistic approach by considering managerial, historical, physical, functional, and social aspects of the site, but also envisions the open-air museum as an inclusive public space. With the theme of 'tracing the continuity between the absences and presence', the project proposes an almost professional management and interpretive plan for the Roman Baths based on detailed historical research to reveal continuities and discontinuities in the site, as well as its users, their needs, and expectations. By synthesizing different values of the site, the project proposes a spatial organization for the site and detailed actions for the physical, functional, visual, and social integration of the Roman Baths, not only with its immediate vicinity but also with its broader context.

As a conclusion, all four projects trace the remnants and memories of these archaeological sites and their aftermath in their contemporary urban context. They all evaluate archaeological heritage as a continuum by considering how these sites acquire new functions and meanings over time for the inhabitants and visitors of Ankara. In this way, they significantly contribute to the understanding of Ankara's temporal complexity and the infinite trajectory of stories from the past to the present that are accumulated within the collective memory of the city to be integrated into its contemporary urban form and everyday life.

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NIT

In the autumn of 2023, the Netherlands Institute in Turkey (NIT) offered a graduate-level course program entitled “NIT Urban Heritage Lab: Archaeological Heritage and Liveable Cities.” It revolved around archaeological heritage in urban settings, and asked how this particular class of heritage sites can contribute to the liveability of cities and sustainability of urban life. This book presents proposals that were developed by four interdisciplinary and international teams as part of the course.

**In what ways can urban archaeological heritage contribute to the liveability of cities and promote the sustainability of urban life?**

**What are the recommended strategies for preservation, presentation, and public outreach?**

**Within the NIT Urban Heritage Lab series, this book offers proposals for four distinct archaeological sites in Ankara, generated through a three-month multidisciplinary educational and research program, which incorporated on-site studies and a research-by-design methodology integrating academic and professional perspectives.**

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