

FORM V

Date 5 Nov. 1979
 Doc. J.K.
 Checked

This project has
 received two (2)
 nominations.

PROJECT SUMMARY

TURKISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 Ankara, Turkey

021.
 TUR.A54.
 318.

A library and cultural centre for Ottoman studies, the highly
 crafted building sits at the edge of Ankara University.

completed: 29 October 1966

I. OBJECTIVES

- . Reacting to the eclecticism in post-war Turkish construction, the architect has attempted to establish a design approach based on human scale, historical Muslim architecture, and local materials and current technology.
- . The project seeks to develop a methodology in architecture that will contribute to the effort for a deeper understanding and implementation of the tenets of Islam.
- . The project should stand as an example and inspiration for younger, Muslim architects.

II. DESCRIPTION

The site is a small, corner plot of land in Ankara's cultural centre. It is bordered by the campus of Ankara University, an urban college characterized by tall, rather anonymous, educational facilities. The serenity of the interior architecture is extended to the exterior by well-conceived landscaping, a welcome relief to the congestion typical of the heavily trafficked neighbourhood.

The major spaces are organized around a skylighted central court that runs the full height of the three-storey building. The conference hall and library stacks are located on the ground floor; the main reading room and additional stacks are on the second floor, and the third floor holds a large lecture hall and administrative offices.

Printing facilities and book storage are housed in an adjoining building that constituted an earlier phase (1951) of the project. It is joined to the library and cultural spaces by an annex hall,

built concurrent with major construction in 1962.

III. DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND USE

- . Reacting against the rash of International Style buildings that have characterized Ankara since the 1920's, the architect has tried to develop a spatial concept based on (1) the principles of Islamic thought and (2) historical Ottoman architecture.
- . The central "oasis" courtyard around which the major functions are grouped is based on the formal organization of central courts of Madresses. This space is seen as a continuation of the surrounding urban space, but well protected from exterior events, heat, and sun. The defensive character of a "ribat", and imagery of a "Castle of Learning" enforce the inward orientation characteristic of traditional architecture.
- . The Islamic principle of unity is used as an ordering device in determining the proportions of the parts to the whole. Individual spaces are given individual expression within the composition through structure and contrasting materials.
- . The juxtaposition of modern materials and forms with traditional ones permits "objective rationalism to combine with a proud sense of regionalism." Thus, poured in-place, painted concrete is contrasted with roughly hewn Ankara stone and polished Mamora marble, or wooden kafes (grilles) with aluminium windows.

Materials (primarily local)

- . Reinforced concrete skeleton, poured in place with highly crafted formwork.
- . Red Ankara stonework.
- . White Mamora marble.
- . Some concrete block infill.
- . Copper roofing.

Construction

- . Intermediate technology.
- . High quality craftsmanship and detailing.
- . Domestic labour force; 60% unskilled.

IV. CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE AND COST

Project Definition	1951 - 1960
Design	1960 - 1961
Construction	1962 - 1966
Occupancy	1966
Cost	(8,000,000. T.L.)

Use

The print shop has been relocated, the space used for additional book stacks.

V. PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

- . High level of construction quality rare for Turkish building of the time.
- . Successful and continued use of the centre (since 1966).
- . Cooperation between client and architect through all stages of design and construction.

VI. TECHNICAL REVIEWER COMMENTS

A. Materials

The reinforced concrete skeleton is highly executed. The good moulding gave the opportunity to avoid the usual plaster finishing used with concrete frames.

The Ankara stone, and especially the marble blocks, are executed at a virtuoso level. Concrete blocks used as infill as well as the brick, aluminum, cement, and marble were all locally produced.

Sanitary, electrical and heating installation materials were purchased in Turkey. The wood work was designed by the architect and made in Ankara or Istanbul.

Intermediate technology but high quality of craftsmanship have been used.

B. Lighting

The contrast of lighting between the central hall and the surrounding spaces has emphasized the public quality of the first and the more intimate quality of the second, while they all open onto each other. A satisfactory sound control makes this one common space very quiet.

The central hall is flanked on one side by a painted concrete wall behind which is the library; to the other side is a transparent wall of balustrades and shades on which the direct sunlight coming from above is reflected. The sunrays never reach the level of a person standing in the central space.

C. Schedule

Studies on the project began in 1951 on the demand of Turkish Historical Society. The first draft developed in that year, and only the annex block which consists of a printing shop was built.

The development of design was achieved between 1960 and 1962. The main building's construction started in 1962 and was completed in 1966. The building was immediately occupied.

Total cost in material and labor was 8.000.000 TL., in 1966. This included the profession fees which was 560.000 TL. The project was funded % 100 by private sources.

D. Maintenance

The building is highly well maintained. About 150.000 TL. is yearly spent for maintenance which is considered to be a modest sum for a public building.

The users high appreciation of the building is the dominant factor in the good maintenance.

E. Replicability

In 1960', when Turkish architects were still looking for an appropriate interpretation of Modern Architecture (and such is the state of most Ankara buildings of the period), the Turkish Historical Society building brought radically new attitude to the architecture in the country. The exploration of history as a source of form and design concepts based on it in search of an architectural vocabulary.

Where as the Modernist attitude towards history was a recuperation of additional elements to be brought to the perennial rationalist architecture, Cancever's approach is to use Islamic architecture and values as a basis for design:

Inwardness - centrality - predominance of one major space and a light control which emphasizes such intentions - an almost cultural way of treating the material (each single piece of marble is selected appropriately).

All these intentions which are explicitly expressed in the Turkish Historical Society building have carried with themselves a new consciousness among the younger architects.

Regionalism expressed in this building has not resulted in a provincial formalism. Instead, it offers an example of what can be learned from traditions in a deep sense and brought into the present time.

This building is also a witness to high execution without any preciousness or useless luxury. Marble is a local material. Concrete structures are currently used in Turkey. The way in which design brings these together in this building is striking.

It is a common agreement among younger Turkish architects that the Historical Society Building constitutes a turning point in their contemporary architecture and opens possibilities which still have to be developed both in the realm of an independant architectural language and in the realm of building technology.

F. Users' Reaction

The director of the Historical Society describes the building as a virtuoso contemporary monument.

Since the very beginning of the project, they have been in complete agreement with the architect in both the uses and design solutions. Faculty, staff, librarians and researchers using the building find it a very peaceful place in which to work.

VII PROJECT PERSONNEL

Architect: Turgut Cancever

Architect Assistant: E. Yener (major involvement in the execution)

Static Engineer: Rasin Etinan

Lighting/Electrical Engineer: Salim Berkmen

Sanitary Installation/Heating: Hacik Eram

Contractors: Ahmet Bakircioglu

Adnan Golar

Tokar

Profilo