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308-319 **ÖZLEM BALCI ÖZTÜRK  
BURAK ÖZTÜRK**

ABIDE SITESI AS INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO BUILD-AND-SELL  
HOUSING PRODUCTION IN POST-WORLD WAR II ISTANBUL

SCIENTIFIC SUBJECT REVIEW  
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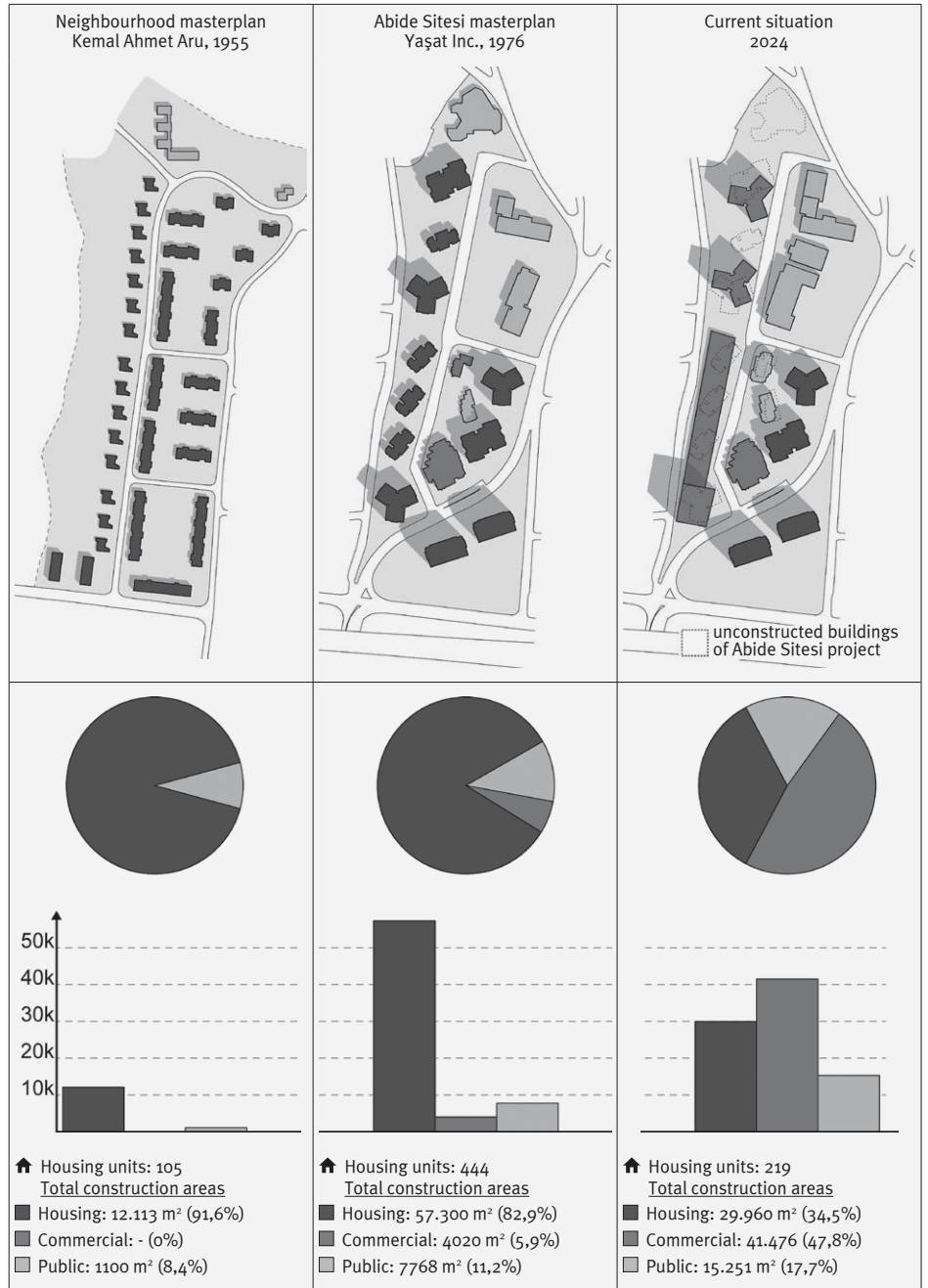



FIG. 1 COMPARATIVE TOTAL CONSTRUCTION AREA ANALYSIS OF ABIDE SITESI




# ÖZLEM BALCI ÖZTÜRK<sup>1</sup>, BURAK ÖZTÜRK<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>KOCAELI UNIVERSITY, FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN, DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, 41100 KOCAELI, TURKEY

 [HTTPS://ORCID.ORG/0000-0002-7489-0216](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7489-0216)

<sup>2</sup>ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, 34467 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

 [HTTPS://ORCID.ORG/0009-0002-6160-6279](https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6160-6279)

ozlem.balci@kocaeli.edu.tr  
burozt@gmail.com

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## ABIDE SITESI AS INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO BUILD-AND-SELL HOUSING PRODUCTION IN POST-WORLD WAR II ISTANBUL

ABIDE SITESI  
BUILD-AND-SELL  
HOUSING IN ISTANBUL  
HOUSING PRODUCTION  
MASS HOUSING

*Yapsatçılık*, meaning build-and-sell, is a capital-free model based on apartment sharing between landholders and developers that became widespread among the post-war housing production methods in Turkey. The Abide Sitesi settlement in Istanbul's Mecidiyeköy district is the focus of this study, as it is the first large-scale initiative of the build-and-sell method and, contrary to all criticism, proves that the method could produce successful practices. Prior to this, Kemal Ahmet Aru prepared a garden-city master plan for the same land in 1955, but this plan was never realized. After various legal

regulations made it possible to open this land for settlement, in 1975, Yaşat Inc. started the Abide Sitesi project. This study examines the transformation effects of urban development dynamics on the built environment through the Abide Sitesi case. In this context, Abide Sitesi offers an in-depth analysis of project-to-construction processes, housing sale policies, and architectural characteristics. The study benefits from municipal and newspaper archives, and the theoretical framework is supported by site analysis and photographic documentation.

## INTRODUCTION

Turkey was not involved in World War II, but due to its intercontinental location, it was affected by post-war economic changes. With the approach of the mid-century, individuals facing financial challenges in rural areas started to move to urban centres. As a result, Istanbul's population increased, but there was not enough housing stock. Immigrants sought solutions with their means, and slums emerged all over the city (Sey, 1984). According to Özdemir Sarı (2019), the construction of slums was a response to the urgent housing demand, which increased the risk of unplanned urbanization.

The housing challenges faced by post-war developing countries, such as Turkey, have also become the focus of international technical and financial assistance initiatives. The United States provided comprehensive aid through the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, suggesting various housing production methods and financial support. The initial beneficiaries were two neighbouring countries, Greece and Turkey. Kalfa (2021) noted that Greece had received extensive funding to repair the damage caused by the war and to support housing production. Furthermore, Karataş (2022) stated that the Marshall Plan promoted housing production in Turkey, and housing experts<sup>1</sup> from the United States visited Turkey and prepared reports under the Plan. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill<sup>2</sup> drafted the initial report, reveal-

ing the threats of unplanned growth and health problems faced by those living in infrastructure-deficient environments (Skidmore et al., 1951). Realizing the housing problem through these reports, the government started initiatives to struggle against it. The first productions began following the legal regulations that made housing construction possible and the results of practical studies. The most prevalent method of housing production, build-and-sell, caused the rapid urbanization of Istanbul.

This study, focusing on the first large-scale build-and-sell production method, sheds light on the dynamics of urban development in Istanbul through the case of Abide Sitesi (Fig. 2). Contrary to all the criticism against build-and-sell, Abide Sitesi is crucial as it proves that good-quality production is possible. Within the scope of this study, the changing land utilization patterns due to rapid urbanization, the factors affecting such changes, and their effects on the housing-user axis are examined. The rapid urbanization of metropolitan Istanbul and "build-and-sell" as a production method at the critical point of the faster housing production that serves it are discussed through Abide Sitesi. This study illuminates how Abide Sitesi provides an optimal solution to the dilemma of urban rent and user-centred design.

As a study method, research in municipal archives provided concrete data on the production process of Abide Sitesi. The Abide Sitesi project obtained from the district municipality archives enabled the identification of actors involved in the production process, such as landholders, developers, and architects. A master plan designed by Kemal Ahmet Aru and provided by the municipal archives revealed yet another neighbourhood project proposed for the same land before Abide Sitesi, which has never been realized. This study draws upon various sources, including promotional booklets, brochures, and newspaper advertisements in the author's archive, to identify clues about the architecture, construction process, and sales strategies. In addition, an analysis of the current situation obtained through on-site observations at Abide Sitesi has contributed to this research.

<sup>1</sup> According to Karataş (2022), Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM) in 1951, Donald Monson in 1953, Charles Abrams in 1954, and Bernard Wagner in 1956, traveled to Turkey with the objective of exchanging expertise on a transnational scale.

<sup>2</sup> SOM is an international architectural firm. Erdim (2020) indicated that the Istanbul Hilton Hotel was one of SOM's numerous projects worldwide, and during their visits to the construction of the hotel, they also reviewed Turkey's housing policies to prepare a

## BUILD-AND-SELL AS A POST-WAR HOUSING PRODUCTION METHOD IN TURKEY

The housing crisis in cities became evident, and the government started to struggle against it in the post-war period. The first step was the establishment of the Türkiye Emlak Kredi Bank<sup>3</sup> in 1946. Another legal regulation was organizing workers' housing cooperatives<sup>4</sup> in 1953. Both the Bank and cooperatives developed neighbourhoods with detached or row houses. By the 1960s, these typologies were abandoned, and all housing production turned into apartment blocks as a consequence of the enactment of the Condominium Law<sup>5</sup> (*Kat Mülkiyeti Kanunu*) in 1965. Tapan (1996) argued that economic policies required conditions for the free market in the housing industry, and subsidized housing, such as that produced by the Bank or workers' housing cooperatives, became obsolete over time. A new legal arrangement enacted in 1964, the Public Housing Standards (*Halk Konutları Standartları*), set limits on housing projects that could receive long-term, low-interest loans. This arrangement aimed to make a more efficient use of state budget allocations and to restrict luxury housing construction. The maximum dimensions of the rooms and the house were determined by the family size. In addition to guiding the architectural projects of the houses, it also included details on the preferred building materials, electrical wiring, and sanitary systems ('Halk Konutları Standartları', 1964). A new housing production method became popular after the enactment of the Condominium Law in 1965. This method, known as build-and-sell, has rapidly spread in housing production because of its economic advantages. With this method, developers agree with landholders and construct multi-storey buildings on the land, providing landholders with several apartments. This results in a mutualistic atmosphere where the landholder owns

detailed report on optimal housing and construction sector structuring. This report was among one of the initial studies addressing Istanbul's housing problem.

**3** Türkiye Emlak Kredi Bank was a public institution and joint stock company. This hybrid institution was responsible for both financing housing production and construction. Indeed, the Bank developed Istanbul's inaugural planned neighbourhoods, such as Levent and Koşuyolu, within the period's urban peripheries.

**4** The government enacted Law No. 6188 in 1953, and workers' housing cooperatives commenced production. Municipalities allocated planned state-owned land under Law No. 6188, while the Bank facilitated financing for these cooperatives.

**5** Prior to the enactment of Condominium Law (*Kat Mülkiyeti Kanunu*), it was not permissible for each unit on disparate levels of a multi-storey edifice to be registered under separate proprietors. However, with the advent of the Condominium Law, the issue acquired a legal basis, and each unit belongs to different users.

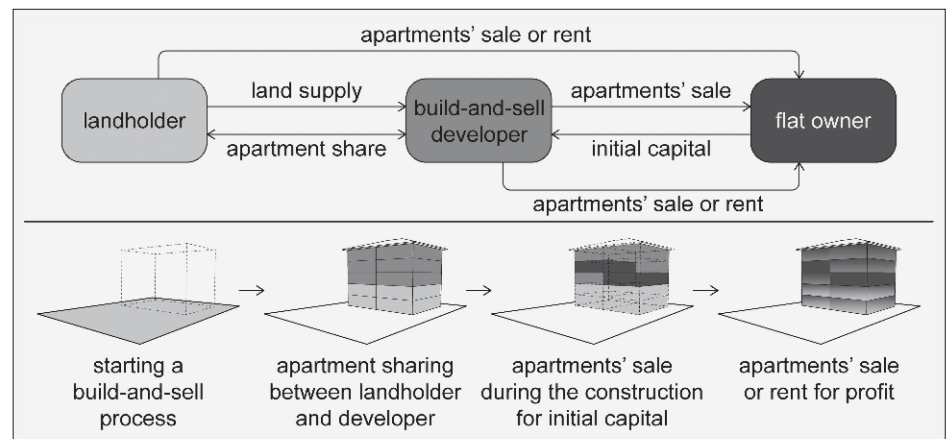


FIG. 2 AERIAL PHOTO OF ABIDE SITESI AND ITS LOCATION IN ISTANBUL

apartments without assuming any financial risk and the developer obtains construction land without requiring a direct purchase.

Build-and-sell is a worldwide housing production method. Shing et al. (2012) stated that this method was common even in developed countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia, where housing demand and supply have been more in equilibrium. Furthermore, Greece, another developing country that received assistance through the Marshall Plan, adopted a comparable production approach in the post-war era. Kalfa and Theodosios (2022) described the practice, called *antiparochi* in Greek, as a system in which landholders transferred their property to contractors in exchange for an agreed-upon number of apartments or shops in a multi-storey building constructed on that land. As the description indicates, the Greek *antiparochi* was not at all different from the Turkish *yapsatçılık*. Moreover, in both countries, individuals lacking technical training or capital but with entrepreneurial spirit could become active figures in housing production through this method. The prospect of housing sales before construction creates an op-

FIG. 3 FLOWCHART OF THE BUILD-AND-SELL PROCESS OF HOUSING



portunity environment in Turkey. In this way, entrepreneurs without capital could procure the necessary funds for the construction project through early sales after reaching an agreement with the landholder. The sale of the remaining apartments after the completion of the construction phase was solely to generate profit (Fig. 3). Ruhi Sipahioğlu (2020) argued that pre-sales can cover the entire construction cost and that this financial strategy distinguishes build-and-sell entrepreneurs from other housing developers. Indeed, Türkiye Emlak Kredi Bank sold houses in multi-year instalments while workers made payments over the years, thus enabling the cooperative to accumulate capital. Tekeli (2012) asserted that build-and-sell developers who finance construction costs through pre-sales tend to generate higher profits by increasing sale prices of apartments in later stages and after construction.

The Condominium Law enabled the construction of multi-storey buildings, thereby reducing housing costs as the number of constructed units on urban land increased. The high profits of build-and-sell developers facilitated the rapid dissemination of this method. Furthermore, the planning initiatives of the period promoted practices rather than regulating them. Kuban (1996) asserted that these plans lacked quantitative data and qualitative observations. One such example was the 1964 Istanbul Floor Master Plan (*Istanbul Kat Nizamları Planı*), which was limited in scope and aimed at addressing quotidian issues. Erbaş (2018) posited that the Istanbul Floor Master Plan, which increased the permitted height of buildings in designated areas of Istanbul, reflected the desires of build-and-sell production. Işık (1995) defined build-and-sell in Turkey as an alliance of different social groups in urban development partnership. Among these groups, landholders could transform their property into housing without incurring any financial obligations, developers could generate profits without utilizing capital, and residents could procure affordable housing. Although this collaboration appeared beneficial for Istanbul, which experienced a housing crisis, unplanned practices damaged the city over time. Işık (1995) criticized the build-and-sell system for creating pressures for level increases in the zoned part of the city. Similar perspectives are prevalent in the urbanization-housing literature on the period. The reasons for this criticism are the implementation of the build-and-sell method by unqualified actors and the spread of low-quality productions. Tekeli (1978; 1994) noted out this method for creating an environment with low-use value and monotonous, high-density urban areas with poor in-

frastructure and social services. Toydemir (1970) provided a distinct critique of the issue from a structural perspective, highlighting that the methods used to promote economic efficiency in construction activities may lead to stability problems. The common thread among the criticism was the dearth of design services in build-and-sell practices. According to Tekin and Akpınar (2014), the architect's limited role in the build-to-sell process is to provide a maximum construction area permitted by regulations.

Güzer (1995) stated that contrary to this criticism, developers always had ingenious ideas to solve the housing problem, but they were unfairly treated. This method enabled landholders who lacked sufficient financial resources or access to credit to become property owners, thereby facilitating the participation of limited capital in housing production (Işık, 1991). If this production method, which emerged within the actual needs of the period and the existing possibilities, could have been adapted with modern methods, much more qualified examples could have been revealed in urban and housing sectors. The few quality examples produced by visionary developers in large cities such as Ankara and Istanbul prove this prediction.<sup>6</sup> The Abide Sitesi project is an initiative with design qualities and comprehensive mass housing in the build-and-sell production method. This demonstrates that contrary to all criticism, successful products can be produced when professionals perform the build-and-sell method.

## EVOLUTION OF LAND USE APPROACHES IN ABIDE SİTESİ

Abide Sitesi is a settlement constructed in the Mecidiyeköy district of Istanbul in the late 1970s. To understand the relevance between the production process and the build-and-sell method, it is essential to investigate the historical background. The related land belonged to Milli Re.<sup>7</sup> In the early 1950s, Milli Re purchased land in Mecidiyeköy to address the housing needs of its employees (Kıralık çiftlik ve, 1953). Archival documents indicate that Milli Re Land Master Plan (*Reasürans Arazisi İfraz Planı*) was prepared for the land. Kemal Ahmet Aru, the designer of the Levent and Koşuyolu neighbourhoods<sup>8</sup>, proposed a similar project for the Milli Re land in 1955 (Fig. 4). He described this 161-unit project as follows: The land belonging to Milli Re has a gentle downward slope toward the north. Detached and row houses are placed according to the land's slope, considering its architectural composition (Aru, 1955).

Aru's proposal for this project, which covers an area of 10 hectares, was never construct-

<sup>6</sup> The Rer-1 apartment block, designed by architect Nejat Erşin in 1964, is a high-quality example (Resuloğlu, 2018). In addition, Mesa and Soyak Construction companies have qualified housing implementations (Eryıldız, 1995). For instance, the Göztepe Soyak Housing Development, designed by Behruz Çiniçi in 1988, is a significant example of mass housing (Ekinciöğlü, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Milli Re (*Milli Reasürans*) is a joint stock company that was established in 1929 by İşbank to obtain exclusivity in the reinsurance field.

<sup>8</sup> Türkiye Emlak Kredi Bank developed these two neighbourhoods. Construction of Levent on the European side commenced in the late 1940s, while Koşuyolu on the Anatolian side began in the early 1950s. Designed by architect Rebii Gorbon and Kemal Ahmet Aru, Levent (Aru & Gorbon, 1952), and Koşuyolu (Salman, 2019), neighbourhoods were completed in the mid-1950s.

<sup>9</sup> Yaşat Inc. was established as an Istanbul-based company in 1974. The company's CEO, Yaşat Manav, is an architect who graduated from Istanbul Technical University in 1960. Before Istanbul venture, he pursued a career as a build-and-sell developer in Mersin between 1963 and 1972. During this period, he constructed three significant apartment blocks: Bulvar in 1967, Fuar in 1968, and Palmiye in 1969. Additionally, he developed Mersin's first complex commercial building, the Yaşat İşhanı, in 1972. The company realized two critical projects in Istanbul: The Abide Sitesi and the Korukent project in Ortaköy between 1975 and 1983. In 1997, Manav established a real estate development company named "Yaşat USA, Inc." in Florida, USA, and it has been in operation for five years (Ekimci, 2000).

ed. The reason for the non-construction remains unknown. It can only be interpreted within the legal framework of the period. Since municipalism was not sufficiently organized, developers had to build infrastructure, roads, and housing units on neighbourhood-scale projects. This significantly increased construction costs. For high-budget constructions, the Bank provided financing support to workers' housing cooperatives. However, since Milli Re employees were high-income, they could not benefit from this support and must have experienced financing problems.

The Greater Istanbul Master Plan Bureau was established in 1966 to conduct practical urban planning studies for Istanbul following the principle of modern urban planning. Despite the ongoing efforts of various individuals and groups to develop the master plan, the lack of comprehensive primary research and the rapid pace of population growth in the area have hindered the preparation of a holistic urban plan. The Istanbul Metropolitan Area Master Plan (*Istanbul Metropolitan Alan Nazım Planı*) was initially approved in 1980. Prior to this date, development activities had continued only through regional plans. Therefore, these regional plans made the construction of the Abide Sitesi possible. The Mecidiyeköy district, where Abide Sitesi is located, was a rural area outside the city until the mid-century. It was first defined as a planned urban area in the 1953 Beyoğlu Side Master Plan (*Beyoğlu Ciheti Nazım Planı*). Bilsel (2015) indicated that the Mecidiyeköy, Levent, and Etiler districts were incorporated into the Beyoğlu Side Master Plan as settlements. This plan proposed constructing a residential development comprising two-storey houses with a garden. As a result of the expansion of Beyoğlu's boundaries, Mecidiyeköy and its environs were constituted as a distinct administrative area in 1954, designated as Şişli. A series of urban developments since the mid-1960s initiated transformations in the Mecidiyeköy area, where Milli Re land is located. In 1968, Istanbul Municipality developed the Mecidiyeköy-Gayrettepe-Yıldız Posta Avenue Plan (*Mecidiyeköy-Gayrettepe-Yıldız Posta Caddesi Planı*), which proposed 3, 4, and 5 storey apartment blocks instead of two-storey houses with garden. However, a revised version of this plan was submitted to the City Council, proposing buildings of 5, 8, and 12 storeys, and they approved. Tekeli (2012) stated that apartment blocks increased in the area following the implementation of the new plan, and there were several mass housing initiatives; the most notable was Abide Sitesi. Bilsel (2015) indicated that Mecidiyeköy-Gayrettepe-Yıldız Posta Avenue Plan transformed the area's

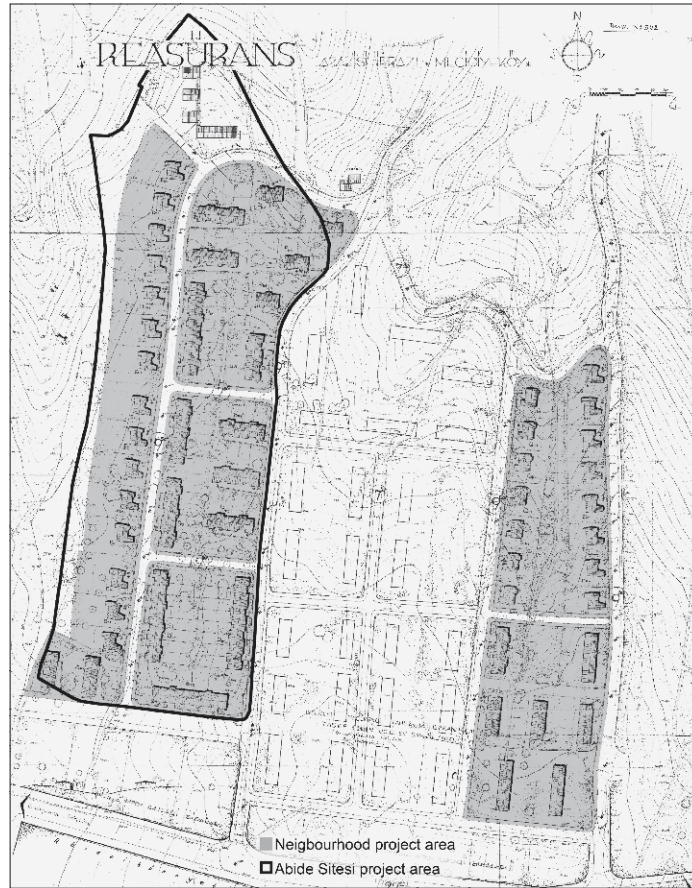


FIG. 4 MİLLİ RE LAND MASTER PLAN DESIGNED BY KEMAL AHMET ARU, 1955

character, with the existing structure density increasing by two to three. Construction of the Bosphorus Bridge was another critical development that transformed Mecidiyeköy. It was opened in 1973, and the bridge access road passed Milli Re land. Tapan (1998) stated that the bridge changed the city's time-distance matrix and determined the metropolitan area's development dynamics. The Milli Re land was affected by these transformations and became accessible from everywhere. In the 20 years since the Aru's neighbourhood project, a novel method of housing production, build-and-sell, has gained prominence, accompanied by a notable appreciation in land value. Construction company, Yaşat Inc., that had recently relocated its headquarters to Istanbul, took advantage of this opportunity.

Yaşat Inc. constructed two cooperative blocks with 108 units for Milli Re, the landholder, as a contractor and received about 5 hectares of land in this area in exchange. Until then, small land with a capacity of only one or two apartment blocks was preferred in conventional build-and-sell projects, and the landholder used to receive several apartment units from this agreement. The numerical

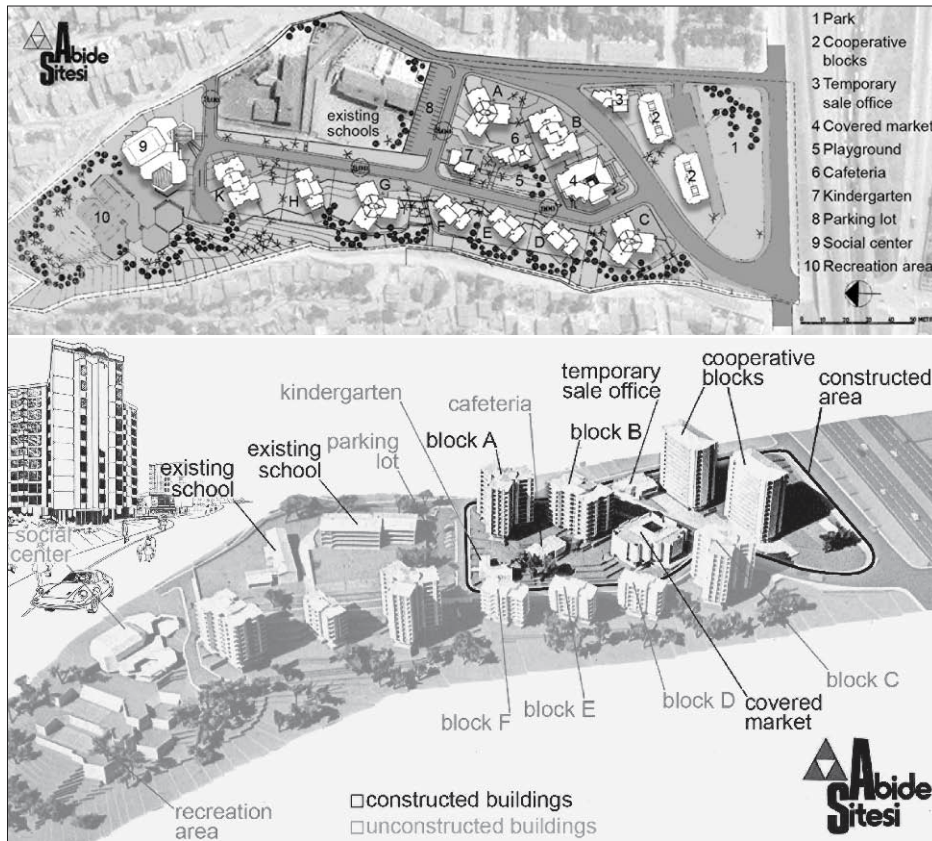


FIG. 5 MASTER PLAN (UP) AND MODEL (DOWN) OF ABIDE SITESİ DESIGNED BY YAŞAT INC., 1975

data proves that the Abide Sitesi initiative of Yaşat Inc. is a large-scale project in terms of build-and-sell. In this regard, Yaşat Inc. prepared the most comprehensive housing project ever developed in Istanbul by using a larger land area than standard build-and-sell production in 1975 and brought an innovative approach to the build-and-sell production method. Although the area became accessible, it was still on the periphery, and developers needed to offer numerous benefits to market the housing units. The company designed the Abide Sitesi project along these lines, planning buildings for the everyday necessities of the people (Fig. 5 up). The project includes commercial buildings such as a covered market, a cafeteria, and public buildings such as a kindergarten and social centre. Furthermore, the landscape design incorporated parking lots, a playground, and recreation areas. While planning the Abide Sitesi, Yaşat Inc. incorporated two previously constructed schools<sup>10</sup> on the project site into its design by proposing green areas and parking lots around them.

Abide Sitesi was a comprehensive project that responded to the needs of the time. However, Istanbul's rapid urbanization invalidated predictions of the city's future. The

suburban areas suddenly transformed into active commercial centres. According to Yıldızgördü and Yorgancıoğlu (2021), with the construction of the Bosphorus Bridge, the around Abide Sitesi was transformed into a business centre, and even the existing residential buildings were reused for commercial purposes. Commercial pressure in the environment affected the construction of Abide Sitesi, which commenced in 1975 and continued for only five years. During this period, two cooperative blocks for Milli Re employees, two apartment blocks, and a covered market were built. Following this limited production, the Abide Sitesi project ended in 1980 (Fig. 5), and the company started selling the remaining parcels. They sold the southern part in 1981 and the northern part in 1985 (Arman, 1985). Simultaneously with the conclusion of the Abide Sitesi project, the build-and-sell method declined in popularity in Istanbul. Tekeli (2012) dates the practical limits of this production method to 1980, citing the absolute profit values in the city as the reason why the developer's share to landholder increased. The reduction in production led to a rise in house prices and, indirectly, to a decline in sales. It can be argued that this stagnation in the housing market also led to the end of the project. In a relatively brief period, the environment of Abide Sitesi underwent a significant transformation, evolving from a suburban area into a commercial district. To analyse this transformation through land use, it is beneficial to compare two proposed projects and the current situation of the same piece of land, which is 5 hectares (Fig. 1).

The opening of the Milli Re land for settlement came up in 1955 with a neighbourhood garden-city plan designed by Aru. Milli Re Land Master Plan, consisting of 105 units and two public buildings, had a high proportion of green space and low-density construction. Over the following two decades, the "centre" status of the area increased, and the Abide Sitesi, planned in 1975, consisted of multi-storey apartment blocks with 444 units. Compared to Aru's plan, the design of Abide Sitesi reduced green areas but included various commercial and public buildings to accommodate the daily needs of the envisioned population. The fast-changing dynamics of the city and economic conditions precluded the full implementation of the Abide Sitesi. Commercial buildings were not included in Aru's plan, whereas in Abide Sitesi, they served the needs of the housing area. Today, as the area's commercial potential has increased, high-rise trade centres occupy a large part of the land.

<sup>10</sup> As the population of Mecidiyeköy grew over time, the necessity for constructing certain public edifices became apparent. The government expropriated part of the Milli Re project land and built a primary school in 1966 and a high school in 1970.



**CHARACTERISTICS OF ABIDE SITESİ: FROM CONCEPT TO REALIZATION**

The Abide Sitesi project is Istanbul's first large-scale build-and-sell initiative. The project, which includes a unique approach, from the design concept to the construction process and housing sales strategies, started in 1975. Kuban (1968) stated that architecture should not be limited to a single building scale but should be organized according to the urban planning discipline, considering environmental data. Following this criterion, Abide Sitesi provides a sustainable built environment in harmony with environmental data and high-use value within the planning principles.

**“ADVERTISEMENT” AS A SALES STRATEGY**

Using slogans in marketing mass housing projects is a widespread strategy in Turkey. Şahin and Şener (2021) noted that apartments to be marketed have increased as the “build-and-sell” production method spread. This situation led company owners to start advertising, and the number of advertisements in which slogans were often used began to grow. Many slogans used to sell mass housing built in Izmir in recent years had the subject of research’s Kuru and Ek (2021). The dominant slogans in this study are status, experience, and location, with fewer emphasizing architectural and financial dynamics.

As a sales strategy for Abide Sitesi, the developer advertised the project in daily newspapers with slogans such as close to everywhere, sound investment, and modern (Fig. 6). Like the İzmir case, status and location were at the forefront of the slogans. In addition, unlike this case, finance, social facilities and architecture were also prominent. For example, “modern architecture” was a specific sales slogan during the 1970s, when Abide Sitesi was realized, as it was perceived as an image of prestige; however, today, changing perceptions of prestige focus slogans on status and life experience rather than architecture. Likewise, while financial mottos were common in Abide Sitesi slogans, they appear less in recent years, in parallel with changing economic conditions and new investment trends.

**CONSTRUCTION PROCESS**

Construction of the project started in 1975 with the approval of the plan for two apart-

<p>Milliyet A January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1976</p>	<p>Milliyet B January 18<sup>th</sup>, 1976</p>	<p>Milliyet C January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1976</p>	<p>Milliyet D January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1976</p>
<p>Slogan: Close to everywhere Focus: Location</p>	<p>Slogan: Self-integrated mass housing Focus: Social facilities</p>	<p>Slogan: Biggest bazaar in Beyoğlu Focus: Social facilities</p>	<p>Slogan: Sound investment Focus: Finance</p>
<p>Milliyet E July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1977</p>	<p>Milliyet F June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1979</p>	<p>Milliyet G November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1979</p>	<p>Milliyet H August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1986</p>
<p>Slogan: Not dream but reality, modern Focus: Status and Architecture</p>	<p>Slogan: Real assurance Focus: Finance</p>	<p>Slogan: 20% discount on currency sale Focus: Finance</p>	<p>Slogan: The center of Istanbul, for sale! Focus: Location and Finance</p>



FIG. 6 ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE MİLLİYET NEWSPAPER  
FIG. 7 PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE ABIDE SITESİ CONSTRUCTION: (A) 1976, (B) 1977, (C) 1976, (D) 1977

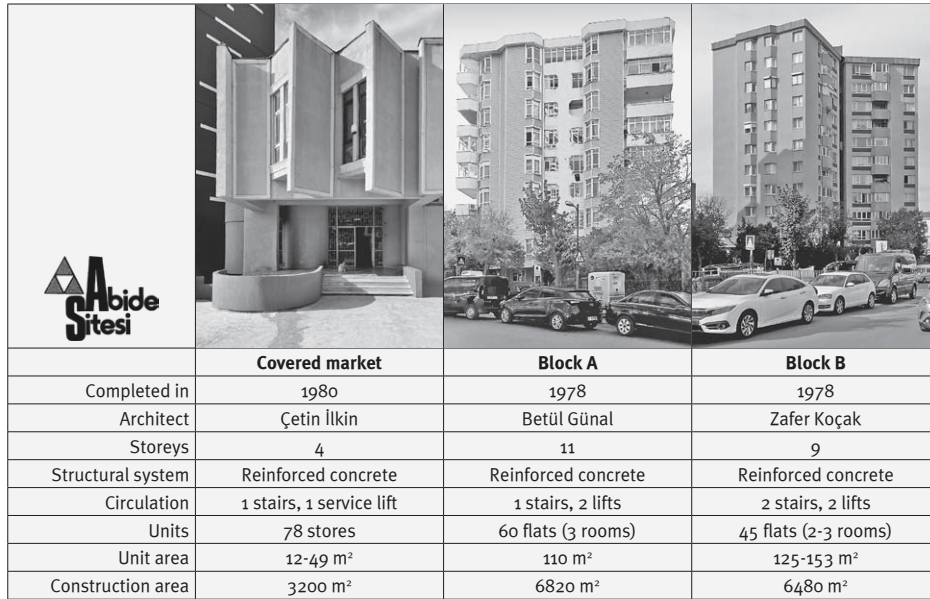


FIG. 8 THE COMPLETED BUILDINGS OF THE ABIDE SITESİ

ment blocks. Blocks A and B were completed in 1978, and the covered market was constructed between 1977 and 1980 (Fig. 7). To supply the concrete needed for the construction of Abide Sitesi, a concrete plant was established on the site, a relatively rare practice in the build-and-sell sites of that time (Yaşat Inc., 1976a). The construction system of the covered market and apartment blocks is reinforced concrete (Fig. 8).

Perforated bricks are used for exterior and partition walls. The ribbed slabs conceal the beam details of the reinforced concrete frame. The total construction area is 3200 m<sup>2</sup> for the covered market, 6820 m<sup>2</sup> for Block A, and 6480 m<sup>2</sup> for Block B (Yaşat Inc., 1976b).

Developing international relations, a booming economy, and increasing production capacity allowed new materials and technologies to enter the architectural market in the 1970s (Hasol, 2017). The blocks of Abide Sitesi were equipped with sound and thermal insulation, central heating, hot and cold-water systems, generators, television aerials, and telephone lines for each apartment, which were in line with the technological conditions of the time. The interior floors of the apartments were parquet in the lounge, stained glass in the entryway, vinyl floor covering in the bedrooms, marble in the kitchen, and tile in the bathrooms (Yaşat Inc., 1977).

#### ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTERISTIC

The Abide Sitesi covered market and apartment blocks, which commenced construction in the 1970s, accurately reflecting the spirit of the period of pluralism through its design ap-

proach. A rationalist attitude characterizes the apartment blocks completed in 1978. The architectural design of the market, completed in 1980, represents an authentic case of independent searching in form, offering a new interpretation of traditional values.

Abide Covered Market was designed by architect Çetin İlkin<sup>11</sup> (Fig. 8). In conjunction with the cafeteria, kindergarten, and playground, the covered market configuration creates a small square and focal point in the middle of the cluster of apartment blocks. The 4-storey covered market has 78 stores with areas ranging from 12 m<sup>2</sup> to 49 m<sup>2</sup>, and a 2-storey parking garage with a capacity of 200 cars is located underground. The covered market plan consists of a series of stores arranged around a courtyard (Fig. 10). Based on a courtyard, this design concept reinterprets and modernizes traditional values.<sup>12</sup> Inspired by the traditional conception of the bazaar, where all the traders are together, the courtyard creates a common area of interaction where traders and customers meet. An important parameter defining this courtyard is the use of controlled light. Floor halls facing the courtyard refer to the common area with small balconies (Fig. 9).

Yücel (2005) stated that a pluralist approach to architecture existed in the 1960-1980. The covered market reflects this approach with the unique form design. Some store units contribute to the form aesthetics of the building with a cylindrical or right-angled cantilever on the facade. The same goes for floor service lifts and halls form cylindrical cantilevers<sup>13</sup> on the facade. Abide Sitesi was a unique case of covered market typology in which experimentation with diverse architectural forms prevailed.

The Abide Sitesi master plan includes nine housing blocks. These housing blocks are categorized into three types. Type 1 (A, C, G) has the shape of a three-sided star. Type 2 (B, K) are twin blocks. Type 3 (D, E, F, H) has a low rise compared with the other types (Fig. 5 up). Designed by architect Betül Günel<sup>14</sup>, Block A consists of 11 levels above ground (Fig. 8). The building comprises 60 flats with three rooms of 110 m<sup>2</sup> (Yaşat Inc., 1976b). The three-sided star form of Block A provides a vista from all directions. There are six flats on each floor. Three separate units formed by grouping these flats into two constitute the primary form of the apartment block (Fig. 11). In the floor plan, the bedrooms and balconies are cantilevered to the outside, creating a dynamic effect. Prismatic forms with bevelled corners define balconies. The ground floor is set back to give the block a more expressive appearance.

<sup>11</sup> Çetin İlkin graduated from the Istanbul Academy of Fine Arts in 1961. He practiced his profession in major cities such as Istanbul and Ankara and lived in France for some time. He won various awards in urban planning competitions: Erzurum's Master Plan Competition, 1966, 1<sup>st</sup> Honourable Mention (Erzurum İmar Planı, 1966), and Adana's Master Plan Competition, 1966, 2<sup>nd</sup> Honourable Mention (İller Bankası Genel, 1966).

<sup>12</sup> Similar cases of this plan form, reflecting the introversion of traditional design, can be seen (Balci Öztürk, 2022) in the plan schemes of the Turkish History Association (Tanyeli & Yücel, 2007) and the Turkish Language Institute (Kortan, 1997).

<sup>13</sup> Cylindrical cantilevers on the exterior are visible in other contemporary samples from Turkey, such as the METU library (Çinici A. and Çinici, B., 1975) and the Zincirlikuyu Highways Facilities (Vanlı, 2006).

<sup>14</sup> Betül Günel graduated from the Istanbul Academy of Fine Arts in 1971. Throughout her professional career, she worked in the planning and technical office of Yaşat Inc. and participated in the Abide Sitesi and Korukent projects as well as other works in the United States.

<sup>15</sup> Zafer Koçak graduated from Istanbul Technical University in 1958. Koçak was the owner and member of the editorial board of Mimarlık Journal from 1963 to 1964 (Güngör, 1984). He won awards in many project competitions: Ege University Urban Planning Competition, 1958, 1<sup>st</sup> prize (Ege Üniversitesi Şehircilik, 1959), and Basmane Tourism and Trade Centre Competition, 1984, 1<sup>st</sup> prize (Basmane Turizm ve, 1984).

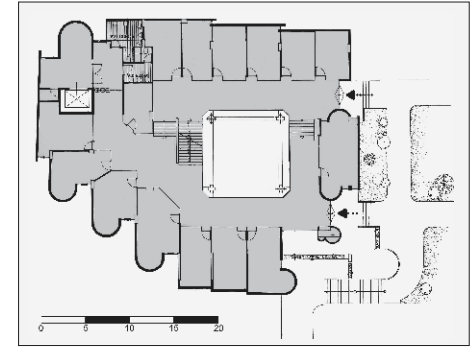


FIG. 9 FACADE AND INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS OF COVERED MARKET

FIG. 10 GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF COVERED MARKET

Designed by architect Zafer Koçak<sup>15</sup>, Block B consists of 9 levels above the ground (Fig. 8). The building is a twin block with two entrances. The first entrance provides access to two flats on each floor, and the second one provides access to three. Each apartment has a different layout, ranging from 125 m<sup>2</sup> to 154 m<sup>2</sup> (Yaşat Inc., 1976b). There are five flats on each floor, four with three bedrooms and one with two bedrooms (Fig. 11).

The lounge plan's angled shape and the balconies' triangular form add dynamism to the façade. In the facade layout, a prismatic shape with bevelled corners is repeated in the details, parallel to the design of Block A. There is an octagonal form on the glass surfaces; the balcony railing details.

## CONCLUSION

Build-and-sell is the housing production method that was effective in Turkey from the mid-1960s until 1980. Participatory planning manifests itself in the process; landholders, developers, and flat owners are all part of it. However, the widespread monopolization of the production method by micro-entrepreneurs and the realization of design processes that are far from professionals' guidance have resulted in low-quality construction.

Nevertheless, albeit few, the quality examples created by the initiatives of broad-visioned developers show that if this production method's adaptation with modern methods had been done successfully, more prosperous examples could have been achieved. Contrary to typical build-and-sell practices in Abide Sitesi, the developer, Yaşat Manav was an architect, and qualified architects played an active role in every phase. The construction management, processes, and actual products of Abide Sitesi are presented in this study as valuable evidence.

The rapidly evolving urban dynamics in metropolises such as Istanbul significantly impact urbanization. These dynamics have transformed the environment around Abide

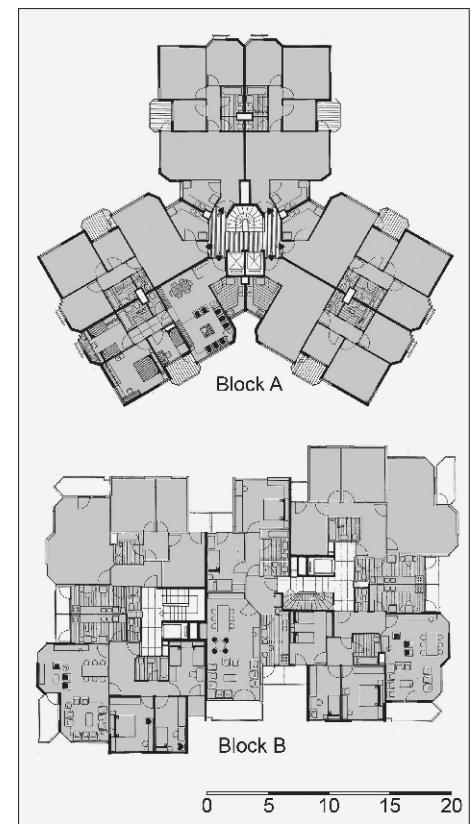
Sitesi from a suburb in the mid-1950s into a dense commercial district today.

During the period under study (1955-2024), the housing area decreased as the environment became a centre, and the commercial area increased with a reverse acceleration. Today, the environment has transformed into a chaotic area with high-rise trade centres, a few apartment blocks without social facilities, and almost no green areas. Through the analysis of the area, it is possible to say that as urban rent increases, "user-centred" design principles change to "profit-oriented", and the use value and quality of the built environment decrease.

The process of the Abide Sitesi project, which can be considered an optimal solution, is crucial in this context. The top-level decisions of the authorities in urban development areas should prioritize achieving the optimal balance between user-oriented design and urban rent. In this manner, both subsidized housing and production methods that are part of the private sector, such as the build-and-sell method, can be responsible for maintaining this balance.

Today, the build-and-sell method is still actively used in construction processes but is mostly continued by micro-entrepreneurs and is of low quality. In this respect, Abide Sitesi is still worth examining and prototyping as it was the first qualified and large-scale initiative. The project, integrated with social facilities and user-centred buildings, has high usage value and architectural quality. This case demonstrates that the build-and-sell production method can successfully contribute to urban development when managed by professional developers. In addition to their importance in urban planning, the apartment blocks and covered market of Abide Sitesi also shed light on Turkey's housing sale policies and construction processes during the 1970s. Moreover, these buildings are unique examples of the pluralist approach in Turkish architecture between 1960 and 1980.

FIG. 11 PLANS OF APARTMENT BLOCKS



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### SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- FIGS. 1, Authors, 2024  
3, 6, 8
- FIG. 2 Map data ©2024 Google
- FIG. 4 İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality Archives, visualized by authors
- FIGS. 5,  
10, 11 Yaşat Inc., 1976a, visualized by authors
- FIG. 7 A: Yaşat Inc., 1976a; B, C: Salt Research, Ali Mukbil Gökdoğan Archives, D: Yaşat Inc., 1977
- FIG. 9 Authors, 2022

**ÖZLEM BALCI ÖZTÜRK**, M.Arch. is an academician of Architecture at Kocaeli University. She is presently working on her Ph.D. dissertation. Area of scientific interest: Post-war Architecture and New Brutalism. <https://avesis.kocaeli.edu.tr/ozlem.balci>

**BURAK ÖZTÜRK** received his MSc degree in restoration in 2017 and is now a Ph.D. candidate. He continues to study 20<sup>th</sup>-century social housing. He is a lecturer at Ozyegin University. He is also a member of Docomomo International.

Conceptualization: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö.; methodology: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö; validation: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö; formal analysis: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö.; investigation: Ö.B.Ö.; resources: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö.; writing – original draft preparation: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö.; writing – review and editing: Ö.B.Ö and B.Ö.; visualization: B.Ö.; supervision: Ö.B.Ö.; project administration: Ö.B.Ö.

Both authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

