NATIONALISM DISCOURSE IN THE EARLY REPUBLICAN TURKEY: İZMİR NATIONAL LIBRARY AND NATIONAL CINEMA AS MEMORY SPACES

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ABSTRACT

"…the library should not stay as it is today. There is a long distance have to be covered in order to deserve the name pointing out its gloriousness and the goals…" is written in the opening brochure of Izmir National Library. The date of the lines written in 1912 corresponds a comprehensive transformation period of Turkey when the socio-cultural and political condition of the country was re-established on the grounds of democratization and modernization. Accordingly, the multi-cultural Ottoman structure of monarchy was replaced by the construction of new Turkish identity in time. The nationalist manner in the Early Republican Period (ERP) of Turkey was realized through the establishment of state institutions, public buildings, urban squares and monumental artefacts as *memory spaces* where the collective memory of people converted into a new national identity spatially in the urban context.

In a parallel vein, the construction of Izmir National Library emerges as a major act in declaring and conveying ideological objectives of the ERP in the twentieth century. As the first civil library initiation, İzmir National Library was firstly established in Salepçioğlu Mansion in Beyler Street of Konak and the building was shared with the Committee of Union and Progress as the ruling party of time. A year later, the National Cinema was opened as a source of income in the courtyard of the library. After the declaration of the Republic, a new building for the National Cinema was designed in 1926 on its new site in Konak and in 1933, the contemporary building of the National Library was constructed adjacent to the National Cinema. In this way, the ideological common ground of nationalism idea continued in its new physical space in the urban context.

The co-existence of the İzmir National Library and Cinema building, stayed in use up to today with their architectural tectonics in the First National Style. They emerge as living *memory spaces* in the urban context by witnessing, propagating and conveying the transition from monarchy to democracy. Nationalist goals of the ERP indicate the conversion of collective memory into national identity in the early twentieth century. Accordingly in this study, it is searched for answers how the nationalist ideologies were concretized in İzmir National Library and National Cinema buildings in the urban context spatially by representing the new Turkish identity search with their monumental existence in the heart of the city until today.

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1. INTRODUCTION

İzmir National Library and National Cinema, as a source of income for the former, have been standing at the heart of the city today by declaring, propagating and representing the nationalist revival of the country in the beginning of the twentieth century. Corresponding to a comprehensive transformation period from being Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, the first quarter of the 1900s witnessed an extensive nation-building process from the political structure to the urban context all over the country. In order to convey the new understanding of Turkish nation and improve the civilization level up to a democratic state, fundamental steps were taken in different fields of institutionalization of the Republic, and ultimate attention was showed to construct a democratic nation which was modernized through education and literacy. Thus, establishment of the educational institutions all over the country became one of the major initiations to construct the new Turkish nation in the early twentieth century.

As an important spatial representation of changing understanding on literacy and education, İzmir National Library was established in 1912 as the first civil library initiation of the Empire by declaring the nationalist attitude in the building scale at that time in the urban context. From its first building in Salepçioğlu Hanı Ahmet Efendi Mansion in Beyler Street to the contemporary site in Konak, İzmir National Library and its source of income National Cinema (*Elhamra Cinema*) have been stayed in use up to today by converting collective memory of people in İzmir into the national identity spatially via education, literacy and their architectonic characteristics as the concrete examples of the First National Style.

From this point of view, this study aims to understand how the nationalist ideologies were concretized in İzmir National Library and National Cinema buildings as *memory spaces* in the urban context by representing the new Turkish identity. In order to find answers, a holistic point of view is proposed to elaborate the social and political transformation of the country via the architectural representations of National Library and Cinema in the urban context.

2. FROM MONARCHY TO DEMOCRACY: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF TURKEY IN THE EARLY 1900s

2.1. Social and Political Change of Turkey: Establishing a Republic

From the end of the nineteenth century to the first quarter of the twentieth, a comprehensive transformation was held in the Anatolian land where a centuries old Ottoman monarchy was evolved into the republican regime of Turkey. In spite of the strict monarchy in the late 1800s, the first steps towards a democratic system manifested themselves in minor changes in administration.

In 1876, when the First Constitutional Era (FCE) was declared in the Ottoman Empire, the new administrative system brought about its own constitiution (*Kanun-i Esasi)* and its own selected administrative group under the name of Chamber of Deputies (*Meclis-i Mebusan*) as concrete formations of a new understanding in regime to provide a link between the citizen and the rulers for the first time in the Empire (Eraslan, 2010).[3] In order to conduct

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[3] Eraslan, Cezmi. "II. Abdülhamid'in İlk Yıllarında Meclis ve Meşrutiyet Kavramları Üzerine Bazı Tespitler." In *Belgeler ve Fotoğraflarla Meclis-i Mebusan: 1877-1920.*(İstanbul: TBMM Milli Saraylar, 2010), 14.

administrative meetings, Dolmabahçe Palace and then, the Darulfunun building in the neighborhood of Hagia Sophia were used as the official buildings of the FCE.

After two years in 1878, the FCE collapsed as a result of the pressures on the sultan and the constitutional monarchy returned to the old style monarchy of the Empire up to 1908, the Second Constitutional Era (SCE) was declared by the Abdulhamid II (Eraslan, 2010).[4] On the one hand, the declaration of the SCE was officialized by the re-declaration of the constitution (*Kanun-i Esasi*), on the other hand, the selection of the ruler group was changed from Chamber of Deputies to the ruling party which was selected by people in the Empire. Thus, another important step towards democracy was paced by determining a party to represent the citizen to the administration. The elections were won by the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) and, the Chamber of Deputies were organized under the leadership of the ruling party. As the administrative buildings, Çırağan Palace and the Darulfunun were used up to the declaration of Republic (Yıldırım, 1998).[5]

In 1918, the newly ended World War I resulted in administrative crisis between the sultan and deputies. Espcially after the İstanbul occupation, the trust in administration highly decreased and a new movement was emerged with its own manifesto, the National Pact (*Misak-ı Milli*), under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Fethi Okyar, Kazım Karabekir, İsmet Bey and Refet Bele (Kahraman, 2010).[6] Advocating the idea that the ongoing administration system was insufficient and a new understanding in policy was needed, the National Pact began to be supported by the Chamber of Deputies. In time, the power and hegemony area was increased in Anatolia and thus, the administrative center of the country was moved from Istanbul to Ankara (Kahraman, 2010).[7] In 23rd April 1920, the changing administrative system of the country was officially concretized with the declaration of the Turkish Constitutional Law (*Teşkilat-ı Esasiye*) and the establishment of the first Grand National Assembly of Turkey in Ankara. Importantly, in contrast to the monarchy constitutions representing the multi-national structure of the Ottoman Empire, the "Turkish Nation" phrase was emphasized in the Turkish Constitutional Law.

2.2. National Style Debates in Architecture

While the country has been passing through a radical change in policy and administration, in a parallel vein, the newly establishing republican identity has also became a major questions of debates from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth. The representative role of architecture and its narrative character are comprehensively discussed in *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası* (*Modernism and the Nation Building,* 2012) by Bozdoğan with a special emphasis on the use of the architectural language to symbolize the new national identity search of Turkey in the beginning of the twentieth century (Bozdoğan, 2012).[8]

Accordingly, a new national identity is represented and re-produced via the modern public buildings especially in government offices, party buildings, post offices, museums, and archives as concrete symbols of the newly constructed republic, especially in Ankara. In a

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[4] Eraslan, Cezmi. "II. Abdülhamid'in İlk Yıllarında Meclis ve Meşrutiyet Kavramları Üzerine Bazı Tespitler," 14.
[5] Yavuz Yıldırım. "Birinci Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Binası." In *Birinci Meclis.* (İstanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi, ed. by Cemil Koçak, 1998), 204.
[6] Kahraman, Kemal. "Kanun-i Esasi'den Teşkilat-i Esasiye'ye Siyasi Sistemimiz." In *Belgeler ve Fotoğraflarla Meclis-i Mebusan: 1877-1920.* (İstanbul: TBMM Milli Saraylar, 2010), 55.
[7] Kahraman, Kemal. "Kanun-i Esasi'den Teşkilat-i Esasiye'ye Siyasi Sistemimiz," 55.
[8] Bozdoğan, Sibel. *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası.* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınlar, 2012), 49.

parallel vein, commemoration ceremonies, monuments and statues of successful political figures became important tools for the construction of the new republican identity and its national memory. In this way, the changing understanding of the country was concretized in public buildings and thus, architecture became a major tool in the construction of national identity upon the collective memory of people.

In a parallel vein, in her book *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938* (2001), İnci Aslanoğlu begins her argument from the proclamation of the Republic in 1923 to 1938 by handling the political, socio-cultural and economic transformation of Turkey with a special emphasis on the changing architectural manner of the country. Handling architectural products in their urban contexts by advocating the idea that "architecture is not an isolated entity in itself", Aslanoğlu evaluates architecture in Turkey as an active part of changing contexts which lead a new understanding towards Turkish nationalism (Aslanoğlu, 2001).[9]

Aslanoğlu's discussion is entitled in two main historical periods as 1920s and 1930s by pointing out different economical, socio-cultural and political contexts in Turkey. Although the circumstances were highly different from the other, both of the periods have similar underlying reasons as declaration and propagation of the new Turkish national identity. Accordingly, Aslanoğlu argues the functional and stylistic evolution of the architecture in the ERP as reflections of changing contexts from the beginning of the 1920s to the end of 1930s.[10] On the one hand, the author defines 1920s as "the years of shortage" when the destructive effects of the war were tried to be healed and Ankara was re-constructed as the new capital of the Republic, the 1930s is defined as a period when the new architectural attempts were tried in public and private constructions.[11]

In the 1920s, Aslanoğlu's first classification corresponds to the First National Style in Turkey when the "history-based" architectural manner is used to declare newly introduced nationalism attitude in the built environment.[12] In the First National Style, the Ottoman revivalism is highly used to provide a connection with the historical background of the country and at the same time, to represent the uniqueness of the democratic republican understanding in monumental scales.[13] In a parallel vein with Aslanoğlu, Bozdoğan handles this period as the first steps towards a new architectural language and construction of a new national identity in Turkey began with the Ottoman revivalism under the name of "The First National Style" or the "National Architectural Renaissance."[14] On the one hand, the architectural products of the First National Style had the characteristics of Ottoman architecture, on the other hand, new design principles and the use of new construction materials were combined in a modern way. As one of the first examples of The First National Style, Sirkeci Post Office was built by architect Vedat Tek in 1909 in Istanbul and most importantly, glass-concrete-steel roof of the building shows parallelism with Otto Wagner's Postal Savings Bank in Vienna regarding their architectural language.[15] Ornamental elements of the Ottoman style -half-domes, pointed arches and glazed tile- were combined with Western construction techniques - reinforced concrete, glass and steel- in the First National Style and public buildings such as government offices, bank buildings and office blocks.[16]

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[9] Aslanoğlu, İnci. *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* (Ankara: ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Yayınları, 2001), 8.
[10] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 7.
[11] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 8-9.
[12] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 8.
[13] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 8.
[14] Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası,* 29.
[15] Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası,* 29.
[16] Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası,* 31.

As a result of the contemporary progress in the Western countries at the end of the 1920s, counter-views on the First National Style began to emerge. The main rejection was the idea that the Ottoman revival was an outdated fashion which had to be abandoned in order to reach a modern architectural understanding based on functional and rational approach.[17] These rejections increased rapidly and in the 1930s, the First National Style was abandoned with a counter movement: the New Architecture. The Ottoman revivalism was left and the New Architecture became a symbol of contradictions such as old-new, traditional-modern or reactionist-progressivist.[18] It was intended to create a new national identity based on modern secular attitude which separated the state from religion.

Overlapping with Bozdoğan, Aslanoğlu classifies this period beginning with the International Style, to the Neo-Classical Style and finally ends with the Second National Style.[19] Accordingly, the main reason for this three-staged progress, Aslanoğlu mentions the co-working of the foreign and local architects to construct national architecture of the Republic.[20] On the one hand, the foreign architects, such as Giulio Mongeri, Ernst Egli, Bruno Taut and Martin Elsaesser preferred the monumental architectural style to propagate nationalism, the Turkish architects used western-focused rational and functional attitude in architecture.

In order to create a new understanding in architecture which represents the Turkish nation, the local architects advocated the idea that the ongoing Ottoman-revivalism has to come a halt and a new modern, functional and rational architecture is needed to propagate Turkishness on the world stage. Monumental, symmetrical and highly decorative attitudes of the First National Style was replaced by purist, simple and functional architectural manner in the International Style.[21] As Aslanoğlu stresses, the International Style was realized with concrete skeleton systems, plain roofs, cubical masses, asymmetrical volumes which were organized with the form-function relationship.[22]

Secondly, the Neo-Classical Style was another main architectural tendency in the 1930s which was used to propagate new national identity of Turkey. At that time, not only Turkey but also the other countries in the world, such as France and Germany, widely used the monumental power of the Neo-Classical style in their architectural products to declare their states' independence and freedom via the gloriousness of the built environment. Thus, the majority of the Neo-Classical buildings were the products of the foreign architects who were invited to participate the establishment of the new national architecture of Turkey.[23]

Lastly, the Second National Style emerged in the late 1930s as a common reaction to the activities of the foreign architects. According to Aslanoğlu, this last phase of the architectural search in Turkey is an escape from the foreign influences in national architecture and the will to prove the sufficiency of Turkish architects to declare new Turkish identity in their own architectural products.[24] Architects Behçet and Necati Bey, Sedat Hakkı Eldem and Emin Onat are the key figures in representing new national manner in architecture after the 1930s Turkey in a national manner.

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[17] Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası,* 33.
[18] Bozdoğan, *Modernizm ve Ulusun İnşası,* 34.
[19] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 63.
[20] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 54.
[21] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 63-64.
[22] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 64.
[23] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 66-67.
[24] Aslanoğlu, *Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Mimarlığı: 1923-1938,* 69.

2.3. İzmir National Library and National Cinema as a Memory Space

Throughout the national identity search of Turkey in the early twentieth century, Ankara became the showcase of newly establishing Republic as the capital. Yet, İzmir became another important city during the transition period from constitutional monarchy to democracy in the lands of Anatolia as the center of the Aydın Province. In order to declare, propagate and represent the new national identity of the country, the nation-building activities through the architecture were also held in İzmir. Accordingly, Izmir National Library and Cinema are amongst the important architectural witnesses of time, which become meaningful parts of the collective memory of people in İzmir until today. Their existence in the urban context reveals a correlational link between the collective memory and national identity construction in the urban context through literacy and education by spatially representing the nationalist goals and newly establishing Republican identity in the first half of the twentieth century.

Collective memory, especially after the mid-20th century, became an interdisciplinary concept in different fields of research such as sociology, anthropology, regional and cultural studies as a binding force between individuals and their common form, societies. Besides its interrelation with past and history, collective memory has been accepted as an active participant of contemporary lives with its transformative power on perceiving the present. Following that in architecture, the autonomous character of memory and its collective form has also become a much-debated issue to understand how recollection and remembering activities occur in architectural spaces. Studies on the spatial representation of collective memory has risen especially after the term "memory spaces" was introduced by the French philosopher Pierre Nora in the beginning of the 21st century. Up to that time, Maurice Halbwachs and David Lowenthal became key-figures in collective memory discourse by making certain demarcations and classifications on memory and its recollection channels individually and collectively.

Starting with Halbwachs' book *On Collective Memory* (*Les Lieux de Memoire,* 1992), the French philosopher handles collective memory as a continually changing concept depending on individuals and reads "collective memory is not a given but rather a socially constructed notion." [25] Accordingly, Halbwachs makes a distinction between autobiographical and historical memory. While autobiographical memory is produced by the individual him/herself and can be recollected by the participants of a certain event, historical memory cannot be directly recollected and can be learned from secondary sources such as commemorative rituals, statues, written documents etc.[26] But, although the historical memories are produced to signify certain historical memories, each epoch's observer creates his own viewpoint according to the current day and this is called "presentist approach" by Halbwachs.[27]

In order to explain how memories are recollected, Halbwachs refers three different channels. Firstly, memories are transferred by our family members and close friends while we are growing up. Secondly, society feeds our memories and takes part in the organization of them in our minds and thirdly, memories are recollected by the individual himself instinctively.[28] According to Halbwachs, this trio constitutes the collective framework of our memories and while each of them is correlating to another, society emerges the most powerful framework that affects memories.

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[25] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. and ed. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 22.

[26] Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 23.

[27] Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 25.

[28] Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* 38.

As Halbwachs points out, individual's inherent recollections and his/her interaction with the society have a significant role in shaping and recollecting memories from the past, in *Past is a Foreign Country* (2005), David Lowenthal asserts that past and its construction through memories in contemporary lives are highly correlated with society and everyday life flow in present contexts.[29] Accordingly Lowenthal suggests that even past is lingered in history, it has a continual effect on our contemporary lives and perceiving the present. On the one hand, our present day is shaped under the influence of our memories, on the other hand, these new understanding of today affects our way of remembering the past synchronously.[30]

Beginning his argument by asking "how do we come to know about the past?" Lowenthal mentions numerous ways for recollecting our memories such as written documents, chronicles, letters and stories or relics.[31] Although some memories are defeated by time and are permanently deleted, there are certain memories that remained from past to present and have influence on our current lives. Moreover, the recollection of memories and past knowledge are made consciously or unconsciously by individual him/herself.[32]

Accordingly Lowenthal argues that the past, which is acknowledged in present circumstances, cannot be the same as its own occurrence in its own time in the past.[33] On the other hand, since the individual has been transforming continually under the effect of society, the perception of the past changes synchronously with the individual him/herself. In this way, it becomes impossible to mention a fixed historical knowledge and thus, the reliability of memory is gradually decreases during the passing time. The more individual interacts with other individuals in society, the more his/her memories become blurred under the effect of changing time-space configurations.[34] From this point of view, the attitude which emphasizes that history is always perceived by today's eyes is also common in Halbwach's and Lowenthal approaches on memory and history.

Similarly in *The City of Collective Memory* (1994), M. Christine Boyer handles collective memory and its correlation with society and cities through different tools such as "representational images and architectural entertainments" which are used to operate commercial and political purposes in city.[35] Accordingly, Boyer asks that if the contemporary recall, re-examination and re-contextualization of memory images of the past may lead new paths to construct the future flow?[36] Moreover, Boyer emphasizes that the city is full of representational images of collective memory which are not stable but on the contrary continuously changing according to the contemporary perceptions and contexts of the city.[37] The use of these images are selected intentionally regarding their striking power on minds to provoke or declare certain purposes. Architecture is also included to these images by advocating the idea that the architectural products are active parts of the city formation which occurs collectively by the memory of society and the building environment within a specific time and space configuration of the city.[38]

In a parallel vein, collective memory, society and their representations in city through specific tools, especially through architecture, is also handled by French historian Pierre Nora in *Hafıza*

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[29] David Lowenthal, *Past is a Foreign Country,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9.

[30] Lowenthal, *Past is a Foreign Country,* 9.

[31] Lowenthal, *Past is a Foreign Country,* 185.

[32] Lowenthal, *Past is a Foreign Country,* 187.

[33] Lowenthal, *Past is a Foreign Country,* 191.

[34] Lowenthal, *Past is a Foreign Country,* 193.

[35] M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory* (London: The MIT Press, 1994), ix-x.

[36] Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory,* 29.

[37] Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory,* 69.

[38] Boyer, M.C., *The City of Collective Memory,* 181.

Mekanları (*Les Lieux de Memoire,* 2006). Accordingly, Nora asserts that memory is a convertible concept that lead to the construction of national identity via collective memory of people which originated from historical connectedness of individuals in a certain society (Nora, 2006).[39] Moreover, Nora emphasizes that construction of national identity and its collective memory base is realized by individuals and their human-made instruments (Nora, 2006).[40] Similar with Boyer's approach, architecture emerges one of the most powerful human-made instrument which is capable in transforming and transferring certain thoughts into public via architectural space according to Nora. Architectural products such as archives, museums, mausoleums, national celebrations and their spaces become *memory spaces* which provide nation-building by the participation of people collectively by representing national identity spatially (Nora, 2006).[41] Accordingly, *memory spaces* have political aspect which have power to distort or change the reality itself (Nora, 2006).[42] From this point of view, the İzmir National Library Cinema are handled as *memory spaces* in the urban context where the collective memory of the Ottoman population were converted into a national community through the architectural space. Besides the use of literacy in transformation, the architectural characteristics of these buildings have also national emphasis in the building scale.

Up to their contemporary site, the establishment of İzmir National Library and the National Cinema have passed difficult periods due to the low economic opportunities. In 1910, the establishment of the cinema was determined by the *Milli Kütüphane ve Teşvik-i Maarif Encümeni* to improve the education level in the city and to convey the new national identity search of the country through the literacy in daily flow of people. However, the ongoing circumstances and poverty disallowed the construction of a new building for the cinema. Thus, the committee made announcements in newspapers to encourage people to donate money and books for the library (Gürlek, 2012).[43] Unfortunately, there was a few back to the announcements and the small amount of donates were used to hire the Salepçioğlu Mansion in Beyler Street of Konak. As the first civil library initiation, the İzmir National Cinema shared its building with the Committee of Union and Progress as the ruling party of the time (Gürlek, 2012).[44]

Besides their physical common use, the administrative hegemony was also assigned to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in 1912 and the realm of authority of the *Milli Kütüphane ve Teşvik-i Maarif Encümeni* was determined by the CUP (Gürlek, 2012).[45] A significant priority was given to the İzmir National Library by the CUP as an important public building to convey nationalist ideology, and the establishment of a cinema was determined by the admnistration as source of income to the library. Thus in 1913, the cinema was founded in the Birinci Beyler Street in Konak under the name of *Kütüphane-i Milli Sineması* (Gürlek, 2012).[46]

In a short span of time, as a result of the growing use of library and the increasing book archive, the Salepçiopğlu Mansion remained incapable and a design project for the new library building was proposed by architect Tahsin Sermet (Gürlek, 2012).[47] Then in 1915, the construction for

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[39] Pierre Nora, *Hafıza Mekanları,* trans. Mehmet Emin Özcan (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi Yayınları, 2006), 10.
[40] Nora, *Hafıza Mekanları,* 22.
[41] Nora, *Hafıza Mekanları,* 23.
[42] Nora, *Hafıza Mekanları*, 10.
[43] Ahmet Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane.* (İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012), 59.
[44] Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane,* 61.
[45] Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane,* 75.
[46] Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane,* 68.
[47] Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane,* 76.

the İzmir National Library on its contemporary site began. In addition to the library, the new design proposal included a building for the İzmir National Cinema as the continuation of the former use in common. When the city was invaded by Greeks in 1919, the construction was stopped and importantly, the existing signboard of the library was replaced by the *Islamic Library* at the behest of the occupying state (Gürlek, 2012).[48] After the invasion and the end of the War of Independence, the construction continued and the National Library and Cinema were opened in 1933, when the tenth year of the Republic was marked by celebrations all over the country (Gürlek, 2012).[49] In this way, the ideological common ground of nationalism idea continued in its new physical space in the urban context.
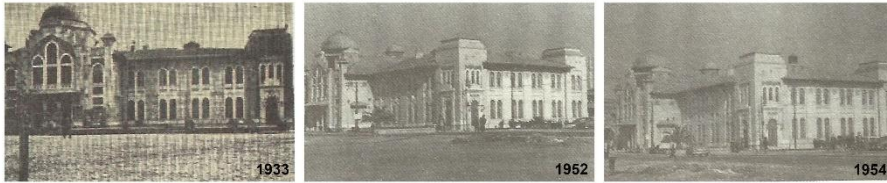

Figure 10. İzmir National Library and Cinema from its opening to the mid-20th century.(Ahmet Gürlek. 100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane. İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012, p. 196)

Not only their "national" name, but also the architectonic characteristics of the İzmir National Library and Cinema carried the ongoing identity search in the first half of the twentieth century in the building scale. As one of the oldest architectural examples of the First National Style in İzmir, National Library and Cinema stand out with their Neo-classical details which was also called as Ottoman revivalism by Aslanoğlu and Bozdoğan. In "İzmir'de Cumhuriyet Yapıları", Onat handles the transition period in İzmir during the establishment of the Republic through the examples of changing understanding in architecture from 1910 to 1930. By referencing Aslanoğlu, Onat's article includes the İzmir National Library and Cinema as important representations of the new architectural manner and Aslanoğlu emphasizes that the interior and exterior architectural language differs from each other. On the one hand, the façade and the monumental mass of the National Library and Cinema have the characteristics of the First National Style such as the Ottoman style -half-domes, pointed arches and glazed tile, on the other hand, the interior organization of the buildings do not carry any nationalist manner in detail (Onat, 1992).[50]

The entrance to the National Library is made through an octagonal hall which opens to the reading area and stairs up to the second floor. The enlightenment of the building is provided from the stained windows and the large glass ceiling upon the reading hall as important details from the First National Style. Also, the pediments upon the windows have plant figures which carry references from the Ottoman revivalist manner of the First National Style (Onat, 1992).[51]

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[48] Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane,* 83.
[49] Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane,* 153.
[50] Neslihan Onat, "İzmir'de Cumhuriyet Yapıları" in *Ege Mimarlık* (vol: 2, 1992), 64.
[51] Onat, "İzmir'de Cumhuriyet Yapıları", 64.

Figure 11. İzmir National Library entrance hall and the interior space.

In a parallel vein, the two-storied National Cinema have similar architectural characteristics on the façade with its cut-stone covering and monumental entrance hall (Onat, 1992).[52] The building is entered through a huge arch on the façade including three separate windows and the entrance opening. The foyer of the cinema which is located on the landings of two glorious stairs on the upper floor are covered with a dome referencing to the Ottoman architecture. Also, the use of *Türk Üçgeni* to place the dome on the square-plan of the National Cinema, plant figures on the arches and glazed tiles are amongst the most important references of the re-interpreted Ottoman details in the First National Style (Onat, 64).[53]

2.4. Narratives on İzmir National Library and National Cinema

On the one hand, the İzmir National Library and Cinema stand out as one of the oldest representations of the transformation period of the country in İzmir towards a democratic state with their architectural tectonics in the building scale, on the other hand, their implicit meanings for the construction of a national identity may also be traced in memories of people of the time. Handling these buildings as *memory spaces* in the urban context, İzmir National Library and Cinema give invaluable marks to understand how the national identity construction process went parallel with the socio-political transformation of the country in the early twentieth century.

In order to understand the place of the İzmir National Library and Cinema in the memories of time through the comprehensive transformation, Gürlek's chapter on "Milli Kütüphane ve Milli (Elhamra) Sineması Anıları" are studied in detail by conducting a textual analysis. In this way, it is aimed to find common points in narratives of people who actively witnessed the

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[52] Onat, "İzmir'de Cumhuriyet Yapıları", 64.
[53] Onat, "İzmir'de Cumhuriyet Yapıları", 64.

establishment process of the buildings. Amongst forty narratives of the users, workers and the founders of the library, related records are attentively read and the repetitive points are noted as keywords of the textual analysis. The selection amongst forty narratives are made according to their focus on nationalism idea of the time and the representative role of the İzmir National Library in memories. Thus, the keywords constituted the backbone of the memories in common and the successive method is used to coding, categorizing and describing these keywords as concepts. In this way, data from the written sources are intertwined with the oral narratives of people under the light of these concepts (Lawrence, 2005).[54] By making line-by-line coding, concepts are categorized according to their emphasis on a certain time, space or a condition specific to the concerned issue.

From this point of view, the memories majorly mention on the keywords of nationalism (*millilik*), financial difficulties (*borçlar, mütevazilik*), divine atmosphere of the buildings (*mabed, kutsal, hazine*), the educational benefits for researchers and students (*öğrencilik yılları, araştırma*) and meetings held especially on Thursdays per week (*perşembe konferansları*). Most importantly among these concepts, the memories show parallelism with the ongoing condition of the country regarding the socio-political transformation.

Firstly, the economic difficulties resulted from the long war years brought about a collective effort with individual and public initiations to re-build the country through a completely new understanding of nationalism. Although the financial poverty was limiting the projected aims to realize reforms in every field, people voluntarily helped and involved the nation-building process of the country. As the physical tool of reforms, architecture came to the forefront as the spatial representation of newly establishing Turkish identity. Similar with the comprehensive development of Ankara, İzmir witnessed a similar nation-building process with the newly built examples of the First National Style. In a parallel vein, as repeatedly declared in the memories of people, İzmir National Library and Cinema was built at the heart of the city in spite of these economic constraints. Thus, individual initiations and donations provided to concretize the new Turkish identity in the urban context spatially with the effort of people. As mentioned in memories, the architectural existence of these buildings also became the spatial representations of national enthusiasm of the time as *memory spaces* by the physical legitimizers of the Turkish Republic.[55]

Moreover, the concretization of the nationalism idea in the İzmir National Library and Cinema are amongst the most repeated concepts in memories. According to the narratives, these buildings were accepted as shelters for the newly establishing national identity from their architectonics to the name of the buildings carrying the term "national." Especially, the change of the name from "national" to "Islamic library" during the Greek invasion are frequently mentioned as a sad event that brought down the nationalist paces towards democracy.

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[54] Lawrence, N. *Basics of Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches.* Essex: Pearson Education. 2005.

[55] For further detail, see the memories of M.K. Dursun, T. Özertem, N. Eczacıbaşı, Ö.F. Huyugüzel, Ö. Çokgör, N. Ülker, Ş. Tüten, D. Tuna, T. Olcay, H. Menteşe in A. Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane.* İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012.

Narrators / Keywords	nationalism	economic difficulties	divinity	education	weekly conferences	treasure
M. Kamil Dursun	•	•				
Asım Kültür			•	•		•
Yaşar Aksoy	•		•	•		•
Tekin Özertem	•	•	•	•		
Nejat Eczacıbaşı	•	•		•		•
Ö. Faruk Huyugüzel	•	•	•	•	•	
Necmi Ülker		•	•	•	•	•
Engin Berber	•		•	•		•
Ömer Çokgör	•	•	•	•		•
Sabri Sürgevil			•	•	•	•
Şadan Gökovalı				•		
Şerif Tüten	•	•		•	•	
Kemal Arı			•	•	•	•
Doğan Tuna		•	•			
Mukadder Özakman	•			•		•
Tuncer Olcay	•	•		•	•	
Haluk Cansın			•	•		•
Mevlüt Kaplan			•	•	•	•
Zeki Arıkan	•			•		
Halil Menteşe		•	•			•

Figure 12. Frequently repeated keywords in memories. (For all memories, see Ahmet Gürlek. 100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane. İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012)

In memories, the library and cinema are majorly emphasized as the symbols of national identity construction in the urban context where the Turkishness was represented and taught in the library space. Also, the organization of a national meeting (*Müdafaa-i Hukuk Kongresi*) in the İzmir National Library are frequently mentioned by the narrators to emphasize the importance of the building in the nation-building process of the country in a parallelism with the political conditions of the time.[56]

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[56] For further detail, see the memories of M.K. Dursun, Y. Aksoy, T. Özertem, N. Eczacıbaşı, Ö.F. Huyugüzel, N. Ülker, E. Berber, Ö. Çokgör, Ş. Tüten, M. Özakman, T. Olcay, Z. Arıkan, N. Eczacıbaşı in A. Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane.* İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012.

Figure 13. *İzmir National Library and Cinema in contemporary location.*

In order to convey and improve the new understanding on national identity, the İzmir National Library and Cinema served as important research and learning area in İzmir at that time. Both the written archive of the library and the movies in the cinema constituted the backbone for the transformation of collective memory into national identity by their daily use by students, researchers and visitors. Especially the thursday conferences played a major role in the memories by being a public event to discuss ongoing social, cultural and political conditions and the developing professions from the firsthand in the city. Additionally, the comprehensive archive of the library are amongst the frequently used concepts in memories while the educational circumstances were highly low all over the country for that time. Therefore, narrators mention the correlational link between the nation-building process of Turkey with rapidly increasing level of education, especially in the library space via the individual readings, researches and collective meetings in the building.[57]

The memories majorly included the divine atmosphere of the İzmir National Library and Cinema which instantaneously awaken the feeling of national enthusiasm in the architectural space of the buildings. Accordingly, narrators emphasize the unique character of these buildings which become a threshold between the former understanding of the country under the hegemony of monarchy and the modern republican identity.[58]

2.5. Concluding Remarks: İzmir National Library and National Cinema as Memory Spaces

Representing the architectonic approaches of the First National Style by combining the Ottoman traces with modern details in the building scale, İzmir National Library and Cinema are located at the heart of the city by declaring, conveying and propagating the new national identity of the country through education, literacy and the public use in daily basis. Therefore,

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[57] For further detail, see the memories of A. Kültür, Y. Aksoy, T. Özertem, N. Eczacıbaşı, Ö.F. Huyugüzel, N. Ülker, E. Berber, Ö. Çokgör S. Sürgevil, K. Arı, D. Tuna, M. Özakman, Ş. Tüten, H. Cansın, M. Kaplan, H. Menteşe in A. Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane.* İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012.
[58] For further detail, see the memories of A. Kültür, Y. Aksoy, N. Eczacıbaşı, T. Özertem, Ö.F. Huyugüzel, N. Ülker, E. Berber, Ö. Çokgör, S. Sürgevil, K. Arı, D. Tuna, H. Cansın, M. Kaplan, H. Menteşe in A. Gürlek. *100. Yılında İzmir Milli Kütüphane.* İzmir: İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kent Kitaplığı, 2012.

these buildings become important *memory spaces* in the urban context by occupying an important place in the memories of users of the time.

In order to understand how these buildings became *memory spaces* for the city, textual analysis on the memories about İzmir National Library and Cinema is conducted and the frequently used keywords are determined as concepts. Accordingly, "nationalism ", "economic difficulties", "divinity", "education", "weekly conferences" and "treasure" concepts come to the fore front by emphasizing the ongoing representation of these buildings in memories long after their construction. Under the light of these concepts, the economic struggle of the country is frequently related to the construction process of the buildings which was resulted from the long-war years and the new period of the country through democratization. Although these economic difficulties, the buildings are mentioned as divine and treasure spaces in memories due to their comprehensive archive in library and active role of the cinema building in the cultural life of the city. Besides the literary sources, especially the library building is mentioned with the weekly Thursday conferences which resulted in significant participation in the social and cultural condition of İzmir by key note speakers and professionals from different fields.

Amongst these frequently repeated concepts, the nationalism emphasis comes to the fore front in the memories about İzmir National Library and Cinema. According to the narratives, these buildings become concrete *memory spaces* in the memories of people today as the long-lived witnesses of the national identity construction of Turkey from the early twentieth century up to today. Locating on the National Library Avenue from 1941, this study suggests that İzmir National Library and Cinema become an integral part of the narratives of people from their foundation principles to the architectural tectonics by representing the memories of nation building process of Turkey by witnessing the transformation of the country from Ottoman monarchy to the democracy as *memory spaces*.

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