

## PARTY ARCHITECTURE IN EARLY REPUBLICAN TURKEY: BUILDING PRODUCTION BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITIES

Özden Senem EROL\*, Oya ŞENYURT\*\*

Received: 28.09.2025; Final Text: 02.12.2025

**Keywords:** Party architecture; Republican People's Party (RPP); architectural profession; people's houses; architect's identity.

### INTRODUCTION

The literature on the architectural history of early Republican Turkey first articulated its discourses around architectural styles that oscillated between internationalism and historicism, framed by the dialogues between Western-imported modernism and the effort to inaugurate a national architectural heritage (Aslanoğlu, 1980; Sözen, 1984; Evin and Holod, 1984). Subsequently, architectural history studies set out to critically examine the architecture of the period within the context of cultural politics, opening new perspectives for both contemporary and later studies (Kezer, 1998; Bozdoğan, 2001). According to İmamoğlu (2010, 7), studies that focus on the social processes relevant to cultural policies of Turkish modernization, such as architectural history, habitually constructed the period through the lens of the nation building paradigm referencing Sibel Bozdoğan's *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (2001). This body of work critically investigates the state's ideological framework and analyzes the social, economic and cultural effects on architectural productions. However, İmamoğlu identified a gap in architectural historiography, spotlighting the advent of the architect as an applied professional. He examined the practices of state institutions and argued that these institutions played a significant role in shaping the architecture of that period. The earliest comprehensive study of this professionalization process in Turkey was Nalbantoğlu's dissertation (1989), *The professionalization of the Ottoman-Turkish Architect*, which investigated all layers of architectural education, professional organizations, and architectural environment and practices, as well as their later transformations up to the mid-twentieth century. Another essential contribution was Tanyeli's (1996) study, *Türk Mimarının Etik Sorumluluğu: Bir Tarihsel Değerlendirme Denemesi*, which examined the historical process of the architectural profession in depth. The study assessed professional identity against the backdrop of ethical responsibility, suggesting that it had secondary importance, with state-employed architects primarily

\* Corresponding Author; Faculty of Architecture and Design, Kocaeli University, Kocaeli, TÜRKİYE.

\*\* Faculty of Architecture and Design, Kocaeli University, Kocaeli, TÜRKİYE.

seen as civil servants. In a later book, a chapter in *Mimarlığın Aktörleri Türkiye 1900-2000* (2007), Tanyeli analyzed and documented the evolution of professional ideology and explained the emergence of the architect as a distinct professional figure in Turkey. The bureaucratic elites of the Early Republican Period, who regarded themselves as agents of social engineering, oriented their professional actions with this ideological vision (Tanyeli, 2007). In a similar vein, Bozdoğan (2001, 156) linked the architectural profession in Turkey to being agents of nation building, arguing that architects, as “technical experts thinking economically and rationally,” embraced the role of giving physical form to the Kemalist revolution. Within this framework, architects employed in public institutions legitimized their professional actions through an ethical rationale rooted in the principle of public service. Collectively, these studies on the professionalization of architectural practitioners in Early Republican Turkey clarify the relationship between professional identities, shaped by the nation-building paradigm, and other social roles and identities.

This study examines the period up to the 1950s, a time characterized by dilemmas stemming from the crystallization of professional identity contrasting with the notion of efficient public servant within the dominant bureaucracy. Its aim is to assess the position of party architecture within public architectural production. The term party architecture signifies a type of public architecture that was the dominant form of production during the single-party period. This form of public service production, bureaucratically organized and structured, stood in contrast to the market-driven organization of architecture as a commodified service. Similar to İmamoğlu’s (2018) study of public architecture, this scholarship analyzes the organizational structure and institutional formation of party architecture within its wider social and political context, rather than focusing on the architectural products themselves. Accordingly, the term party architecture serves to highlight the architectural production of the Republican People’s Party (RPP) (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP*) during the single-party period, distinguishing it from other public institutions. This study leverages the RPP’s archives, which provide crucial documentations for interpreting the characteristics of the architectural production carried out within its architectural office.

From another perspective, defining party architecture from the viewpoint of public architecture stems from an effort to understand how the unity of bureaucratic and political identity, central to the ideological character of the single-party period, influenced architects’ production. Although various building types were constructed under the auspices of the Party (RPP) (Architectural/ Architectural Consultancy) Office (*CHP Müşavir Mimarlık Bürosu*), this study focuses specifically on the production of People’s Houses (*Halkevleri*), which served as community centers in major towns or districts, because they provide a strong basis for understanding the impact of ideology on professional identity. While the single-party system of this period functioned as a bureaucratic entity integrated with the state, these People’s Houses held a distinctly political role as ideological instruments of the Party. It is for this reason essential to question whether this duality shaped the professional identities of the architects involved in their production. As such, the institutional responsibilities of Party architects and their interactions with others working for the Party’s architectural office are speculatively interpreted where necessary. Understanding the position of the Party’s architectural staff therefore spurred a discussion on the concepts of party architect and partisan architect.

1. Critique published in the journal *Arkitekt* addressing architectural production in state offices, the prevalence of type projects in public architecture, and precarious working conditions of Turkish independent architects during the period (Galip, 1931b; Mimar Şevki, 1932; Macaroğlu, 1933; Anon, 1939; T. Y. Mimarlar Birliği Reisi, 1939; Sayar, 1943a; Sayar, 1943b).

The primary goal of this study is to interrogate the organization of the Party's architectural office, its staff, workflow, and the People's Houses construction program. Within this context and by comparing it with the pre-office period, the study evaluates the production methods of the Office's design and construction processes from a professionalization perspective. The second objective is to discuss the relationships between professional and institutional identities along the axis of civil servant versus independent architect, within the Republic's nation-state tradition. Within this discussion, therefore, the study interprets the political influence of People's House production on Party architects, especially regarding the possible transformation of their civil servant identity into so called partisan architects. To deepen this academic inquiry, the Office's internal work relations, as well as its interactions with independent architects and public institutions, are analyzed through selected examples of People's House projects.

The final aim of this study is to analyze the architectural production of the Early Republican period through the critiques of public architects, rather than solely through those of free-practicing architects, as in the case with earlier studies. Architectural discourse and professional practices of the era were widely shaped by a small group of architects active in the Association of Turkish Architects, architectural journals, and the private sector (1). This may suggest that state offices produced no critical discourse on architectural practices of the period, since these were not visible in sources beyond official documents. Since these documents were not widely circulated, they most likely did not directly influence the architectural debates of the period. By dismantling the discursive processes within the Party's architectural machinery, this study aims to contribute to the literature on professional practice of Early Republican Turkey. This study is primarily grounded in an analysis of original sources from RPP documents held in the Prime Ministry Republican Archive. Because of the general lack of archival materials in national architectural historiography, the RPP archive is specially deserving of recognition for demonstrating the potential and importance of research based on archival documentations.

## **PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES UNDER THE PARTY-STATE INTEGRITY**

The so-called Early Republican period in architectural history corresponds to the single-party years in the political history of Turkey. A one-party system is defined as a regime in which a single party monopolizes government. According to Raymond Aron (1969, 45), "When a party, and one party alone, has the monopoly of political activity, the state is indissolubly linked to it." From this point of view, the RPP, as the sole party in Republican Turkey, was completely integrated with the state and maintained supremacy over the parliament and government. In 1935, following the adoption of the proposal to unify the party and the state, the Secretary-General of the RPP was appointed as the Minister of Interior, while the party's provincial heads were designated governors of their respective provinces (Ahmad, 2002, 82). Consequently, the provincial administrators held both bureaucratic and political identities.

On the other hand, the liberal economic policies of the early Republican years began to shift following the global economic crisis of 1929, ushering in a state-led investment program (Kuruç, 1998). From this point onward, the Republic's economic policy positioned the state at the center of

economic activity, leading to an authoritarian phase in which the state became the sole employer until the rise of the Democrat Party. Although economic crises and dominant nationalist ideologies have influenced certain periods in the West, professionalization there largely evolved alongside industrialization and the growth of the free market economy (Deamer, 2014; Aureli, 2008; Macdonald, 1995; Tafuri, 1988; Benevolo, 1977; Larson, 1977). In contrast to a capitalist and industrialized West, where free-market architecture has shaped the modern identity of the profession, even as its artistic dimension engendered a crisis of legitimacy within the market (Dostoğlu, 1986). Turkey, with its robust public architecture, was experiencing a pre-capitalist period. As Tanyeli (2007) observed, in such a period, the state, acting as the sole employer, considered the building production as a primal, a feature in all pre-capitalist systems. Consequently, project design was accepted as an integral part of building construction rather than a stand-alone component of architectural public service.

During this period, the state functioned not only as the main employer but also as the direct executor of construction projects. The Ministry of Public Works served as primary institution responsible for producing most public buildings and managing the production and organization of their architectural projects. Within the ministry, the Directorate of Construction Affairs, established in 1935, was tasked with the production, supervision, and approval of all public projects and construction sites. Together with the Ministry, several state institutions, including the Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, and Customs and Trade, as well as the party organization and certain municipalities, established their own architectural offices to independently design and construct their buildings (Erol, 2019). As İmamoğlu (2016) examined in his thorough comparison of public architecture and free-practicing architecture, the two fundamental components of the period's architectural culture, using *Bayındırlık İşleri Dergisi* (published by the Ministry of Public Works) and *Arkitekt*, it becomes evident that projects managed by the Ministry of Public Works disregarded professional and disciplinary definitions and identities. Architects responsible for designing buildings were routinely overlooked, thereby anonymizing state-controlled architecture and framing buildings solely as institutional productions. This anonymization indicates not only to the absence of architects' names in project attributions but also to the gradual erosion of individual design approaches within a systematic bureaucratic framework. In projects managed by the Ministry of Public Works, the identity of the architect responsible for a building's design was of little significance; instead, a production approach shaped by state-defined standards, regulations, and prototype designs reigned. Noteworthy is that, unlike in freelance architecture, the qualitative value attributed to production was justified through the principles of public service and public interest, while emphasis on public architecture was placed on quantity. Consequently, discourse on architectural production prioritized the promotion of urban infrastructure and superstructure investments, highlighting the number of completed projects and the expansion of public services extending to the most isolated locations.

However, institutions that established their own architectural offices were able to develop original production methods by operating independently of the Ministry of Public Works. For instance, the architects employed by the Ministry of Education, which founded its own architectural office to design school projects during this period, and their corresponding model school

2. Correspondence from the General Secretariat of the Party regarding People's Houses indicates that common rules and practices were applied uniformly across all provinces and districts. This is because the General Secretariat's opinion and approval was required for every intervention in Party buildings. Therefore, it is possible to generalize from various examples regarding the construction of People's Houses across the country. As a result, all the conclusions on Party architecture under this heading are therefore based on an analysis of archival documents from the General Secretariat of the RPP concerning the construction processes of People's Houses and People's Rooms. The detailed cases analyzed include the People's Houses and Rooms in İzmit, Gebze, Gölcük, Karamürsel, Kandıra, Tokat, Edremit, Kadıköy, Gelibolu, Sivas, Konya, Kayseri, Gerede, Manisa, Şehremini, Hereke, Ordu, Hendek, Sapanca, Bayındır, Derince, Akyazı, Karasu, Bahçeçik, Akmeşe, Darıca, and Tavşancıl.

projects can be traced through primary sources. Rather than focusing solely on the relationship between an individual building and its architect, this study considers the professional roles and discourses of all actors involved in the production process as pivotal to the research. Therefore, in addition to the characteristics inherent to the single-party period, access to professional and institutional dialogues on its building stock through archival documents is crucial for positioning party architecture at a crossroads. Ultimately, such data, which reveal the production organization and professional relationships of other public architectural offices, including the Ministry of Public Works, remain largely inaccessible.

### **PARTY'S ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANCY OFFICE (*MÜŞAVİR MİMARLIK BÜROSU*) AND ITS PROJECT-BUILDING PRODUCTION PROCESS (2)**

The RPP General Secretariat was responsible for constructing its own Party buildings; however, its primary workload consisted of producing the People's Houses. Bozdoğan (2001, 93) noted that the People's Houses are considered the paradigmatic Republican building type, directly serving the regime and largely designed according to modernist aesthetic canons. They constitute a major theme in the architectural culture of the 1930s. As a result, it is plausible that the production of these education and indoctrination buildings, intended for the people and symbolizing Republican ideology, also held a specific ideological position.

Before establishing its own architectural office, the Party General Secretariat (*Parti Genel Sekreterliği*) outsourced design services through organized competitions, by applying to the architectural branch of the Union (*Birlik Mimari Şubesi*), or by hiring a freelance architect through the governor, who also served as the provincial chairman of the Party (Yeşilkaya, 1997, 121). In addition, some People's House projects were designed by the Office of Construction Works of the Ministry of Public Works (Durukan, 2006, 117-118); all outsourced projects were overseen by the Ministry of Public Works.

The Party Architectural Office, founded in 1940, marks a significant turning point for both the quality of the projects and the professional practice within the institution. First, an organizational structure was established among Party architects and building production processes were systematically regulated. This structure made it possible not only to analyze the institution's organization and operations through various examples of People's Houses but also to trace professional relationships through official correspondence.

After the establishment of the Office in 1940, a team of architects was formed under the supervision of the Chief Architect and the Consultant Architect, who held the highest positions in the hierarchy. In addition to these two senior professionals, all architects within the Office were responsible for preparing both type and concept projects, reviewing designs produced by independent architects or through competitions, conducting cost estimates and feasibility studies, and supervising constructions on-site. Seyfi Sonad was appointed Chief Architect (*Baş Mimar*), while Sabri Oran assumed the role of Consultant Architect (*Müşavir Mimar*). Although direct access to information about their job descriptions is unavailable, their professional backgrounds allowed for informed inference. Sabri Oran served as a consultant for the Office's



3. For instance, during the construction of Karamürsel People's House, the Party allocated only a small amount for the land, which subsequently procured through the cooperation of the municipality and provincial administration. To complete the construction, the Party's district organization received additional financial support from various institutions and individuals (BCA, 490-01-1747-1096-1).

4. For instance, Düzce People's House, designed by the architect B. Abidin, was also proposed as a type project for the new Gebze People's House. However, the Party's Provincial organization stated that the project was unsuitable for Gebze's architectural program, and RPP architect Selim Sayar was tasked with preparing a new design (BCA, 490-01-1747-1097-1).

5. Personnel files: BCA, 490-1-0-0/392-1662-3; BCA, 490-1-0-0/393-1663-2; BCA, 490-1-0-0/387-1638-2; BCA, 490-1-0-0/384-1625-3; BCA, 490-1-0-0/386-1632-3; BCA, 490-1-0-0/387-1638-4; BCA, 490-1-0-0/387-1638-6; BCA, 490-1-0-0/390-1652-2; BCA, 490-1-0-0/386-1634-6; BCA, 30-11-1-0/365-27-5; BCA, 30-11-1-0/420-65-16; BCA, 490-1-0-0/391-1655-3; BCA, 490-1-0-0/400-1696-1; BCA, 490-1-0-0/393-1663-2; BCA, 490-1-0-0/392-1662-3; BCA, 490-1-0-0/393-1667-2.

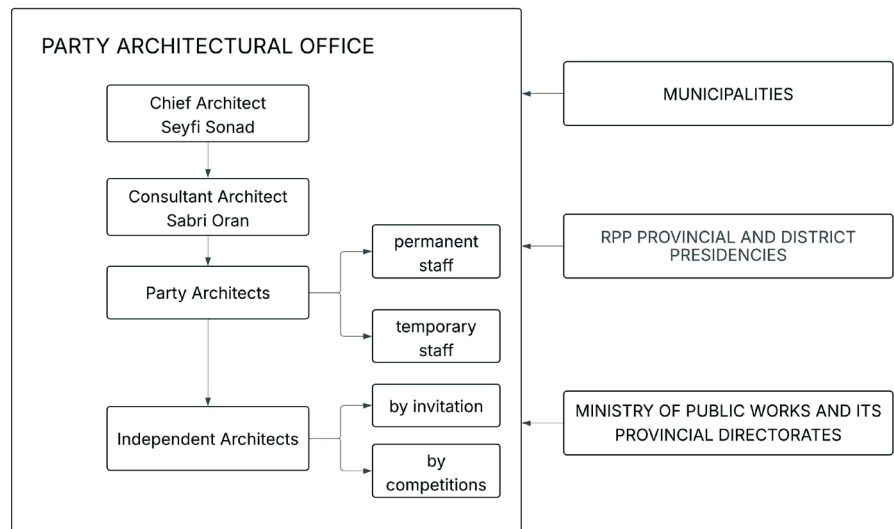
projects and building production, while simultaneously undertaking projects outside the Office and participating in architectural competitions (Arkitekt, 1944; 1945a; 1945b; 1946). In contrast, as evidenced by his personnel file and contemporary architectural journals (BCA, 490-1-0-0/394-1669-2; Mimarlık, 1983), Chief Architect Seyfi Sonad held an executive role, making key decisions exclusively related to the Office and its projects. No records indicate his involvement in other architectural work during his tenure.

With the institution of the Party Architectural Office, Sabri Oran first prepared a program of construction sites and plans for People's Houses (Oran, 1940a; 1940b; 1940c; 1940d). In this program, the three principal criteria for selecting new constructions sites were population size, the centrality of the location and the level of local community support. Many state institutions, especially the municipalities, and local residents, supported the construction of People's Houses (3). The program differentiated between city and district centers. In the city centers, standard type projects were not accepted, instead, place-specific designs were assigned to independent architects, either directly or through design competitions ('Haberler', 1943; Aşkan and Çeçen, 1944; BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1; BCA, 490.01.1749.1101.1; BCA, 490-1-0-0/1684-853-1). For district centers, type projects were selected according to population density, cultural status, and the district's economic and geographical importance. Over the years, as demand for the quantitative and qualitative development of People's Houses grew, Chief Architect Seyfi Sonad introduced and implemented a series of adjustments to the Office's architectural staff, work schedule, and construction program (BCA, 490-1-0-0/394-1669-2). These revisions ultimately made place-specific designs mandatory for district centers, except in exceptional cases, due to the incompatibility and challenges encountered during construction with type projects (4).

## PROFESSIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF PARTY ARCHITECTS

First, to ensure that architectural activity reached even the most remote areas of the nation, a well-structured and dedicated workforce was required. Chief Architect Seyfi Sonad emphasized that architects responsible for constructing these prominent buildings of the Early Republican period needed to be both highly qualified and internally cohesive (BCA, 490-1-0-0/394-1669-2). While the institution's architectural organization may appear to function as a unified and coherent structure unique to the single-party period, it is essential to acknowledge that no singular single-party architect identity existed in the production of People's Houses. Architects were only one of several actors involved in the process (Figure 1).

The Office's technical team consisted of a permanent core staff of architects. Depending on workload demands, additional architects were temporarily recruited to support project work for a limited period. This system was intended to not only maintain workflow efficiency but also serve as a selection mechanism for future permanent appointments. Regardless of their position, all architects worked under the same conditions and benefited from civil servant rights (BCA, 490-1-0-0/394-1669-2). An analysis of the personnel files of Party architects reveals key findings (5). At a time when civil servant architects enjoyed high social standing, some architects actively pursued permanent positions within the Party's core staff, often



**Figure 1.** The hierarchy of Party Office and its institutional relations during built production of People's Houses.

recommended to the administration through specific references. While some architects remained closely affiliated with the Party for years, others held brief tenure within the institution. Archival documents indicate that architects wishing to work in the Office could maintain their Party affiliation if they held memberships. Many Office architects were awarded projects through architectural competitions and concurrently held key positions in architecture faculties or occupied various roles in other state institutions, actively contributing to significant projects of the period. In line with the decision to develop original People's Houses for specific districts, the Office increasingly collaborated with independent architects. As a result, the number of Office personnel gradually reduced over time (BCA, 490-1-0-0/392-1662-3; BCA, 490-1-0-0/393-1663-2).

Architects in the Office worked under a rotational duty system, with no fixed or standardized working hours (**Figure 2**). Consequently, project continuity was often interrupted, as architects alternated between assignments. To maintain project progress, Party architects could make decisions on one another's designs, regarding cost, functional adequacy, and site selection, while the chief architect retained final authority in complex cases. For example, although RPP architect Selim Sayar designed the Sapanca People's House, other architects submitted the plans for Bayındır People's House to the district director, arguing that they were more appropriate for the location. Moreover, Cavit Tamkan, another RPP architect, assigned to the project on-site, found Bayındır's plan too large and costly for Sapanca and requested several revisions. The approved original Sapanca project was eventually delivered with errors and omissions, further complicating the process. In response, Seyfi Sonad halted construction until corrected plans were received (BCA, 490-01-1748-1098-1). To rectify such inefficiencies, Sonad inaugurated a more structured system, including standardized working hours from 08:30 to 14:00 daily, ensuring a more coordinated and efficient workflow (BCA, 490-1-0-0/394-1669-2).

### Relations between Party Architects and Independent Architects

The Party architects' primary and most frequent interventions in the work of their colleagues occurred when constructional or financial challenges

**CUMHURİYET HALK PARTİSİ**  
**GENEL SEKRETERLİĞİ**

C.H.P. Genel Sekreterlik İnşaat Bürosuna  
ait yeni Mesai Saatleri ve  
Nöbet Cetveli

Gün	Saat	Saat	Nöbet Sırası]★
11.4.1944	8 den	14 e kadar	Seyfi Sonad
Çarşamba			
12 Perşembe	" "	" "	Cavit Tamkan
13 Cuma	" "	" "	A.Kadir Asna
14 Cumartesi	" "	12 ye kadar	Şeref Sonel
16 Pazartesi	" "	14 e kadar	Ekrem Üget
17 Salı	" "	" "	Seyfi Sonad
18 Çarşamba	" "	" "	Cavit Tamkan
19 Perşembe	" "	" "	A.Kadir Asna
20 Cuma	" "	" "	Şeref Sonel
21 Cumartesi	" "	12 ye kadar	Ekrem Üget
23 Pazartesi	" "	14 e kadar	Seyfi Sonad
24 Salı	" "	" "	Cavit Tamkan
25 Çarşamba	" "	" "	A.Kadir Asna
26 Perşembe	" "	" "	Şeref Sonel
27 Cuma	" "	" "	Ekrem Üget
28 Cumartesi	" "	12 ye kadar	Seyfi Sonad
30 Pazartesi	" "	14 e kadar	Cavit Tamkan

C.H.P. Başmimeri

*[Handwritten signatures: Cavit Tamkan, Seyfi Sonad, Ekrem Üget]*

★ Nöbetçi arkadaşlar sabahları aynen saat 8 de mesaiye başlamakla beraber diğer büroların çalışma tarzına göre hareket edeceklerdir.

490 01 394/1669/2 21

Figure 2. The Office Hours of the Party Office  
(BCA., 490-1-0-0-394-1669-2).

arose. They also questioned designs that were deemed unsuitable with the character of the People's House. Sabri Oran stated that all People's Houses differ from other public buildings in terms of their foundation and organization, and therefore their architectural style should be distinct (Oran, 1940). Although no explicit written or visual definition of the desired character existed, certain inferences can be drawn from Oran's statements. While describing the construction program published in the *Bayındırlık İşleri Dergisi*, Oran (1940) criticized foreign architects and their Turkish followers, stating that Party architects intentionally avoided the cubist style in type projects. He also criticized independent architectural offices, describing changing residential building styles in their work as "temporary whims" (*geçici kapris*). This suggests an intent to establish an



original national character for the People's Houses, which Oran defined as possessing "an architectural expression imbued with nobility and dignity" (*asil ve vakur bir ifadeye malik bir mimari karakter*). An example of this approach is evident in the design of the Edremit People's House by architect Adnan Kuruyazıcı. Sabri Oran rejected the project, stating that the building's façade resembled a private villa rather than a public People's House, lacking the gravity and nobility expected of such structures (BCA, 490-1-0-0-1665-796-1). This case demonstrates that architectural forms indistinguishable from residential buildings or executed with forms lead to misinterpretations were unacceptable for such a public institution.

Another example is the tower with an abstract geometric form designed by Seyfi Arkan for the İzmit People's House, which incorporated lighting and signage elements (Mimar, 1933, 351-353). These features functioned as elements of the Party's propaganda machinery, intended for use during national holidays, especially the Republic's 10th anniversary. Bozdoğan (2001, 96) argued that constructivist buildings in the Soviet Union and similar towers in Europe inspired Turkish architects. Sabri Oran, however, criticized the İzmit's tower, describing it as "ugly" due to technical construction difficulties and its disruption of the city's silhouette, while also challenging its purpose (BCA, 490.01.1749.1101.1). Throughout the construction of the İzmit People's House project, Oran submitted numerous reports and presented elaborate critiques and suggestions regarding the building. However, Seyfi Arkan neither visited the construction site nor responded in writing to questions about his project (BCA, 490-01-1749-1101-1). Oran further argued that "the project failed to establish a genuine and serious People's House character, instead incurring excessive costs for highly misinterpreted and unnecessary sculptural effects on its exterior mass" (*gerçek ve ciddi bir halkevi karakteri taşıyan bina yaratılmayarak birçok gereksiz yere ve çok yanlış anlaşılan dış kütlenin plastik etkileri için fazla masraf yapıldığı*). The phrase "highly misinterpreted" suggests that the building incorporated international styles or typologies that were disconnected from the function and purpose of a People's House. As Bozdoğan (2001) stated, Arkan's design can be interpreted as embodying international influences, particularly as a Turkish counterpart to the Italian Casa del Fascio buildings of European origin. In addition, the tower has been subjected to various interpretations regarding its function and symbolism. Some views argue that it was a reference to industrialization, evoking factory chimneys and silos, while others suggest that its height, surpassing that of minarets, symbolized a triumph of secularism (Gürallar, 2003). Another interpretation suggests that the tower was originally designed as a lighthouse, consistent with İzmit's identity as a port city (Durukan, 2006).

Another example supporting this perspective is Oran's criticism of the site selected for the People's House in Gebze, designed by RPP architect Selim Sayar. Oran argued that the selected site was unsuitable in terms of accessibility and user density, further emphasizing that situating the building next to the Çoban Mustafa Paşa mosque and complex would show disrespect to the historical site (BCA, 490-01-1747-1097-1). Oran's comments suggest a concern that the land selection could provoke controversy or risk being misinterpreted, prompting him to emphasize the functional suitability of the site as a priority. Ultimately, the construction site selected by the Party architects for Sayar's design was found inappropriate by the Consultant Architect and subsequently revised.

Overall, Consultant Architect Sabri Oran considers forms, locations, or stylistic influences with unclear purposes, misinterpretations, or international references incompatible with the People's House character. It can also be suggested that Party architects adopted an application-oriented approach to architectural form. This tendency likely arose from the need to address technical requirements and resolve construction challenges in projects that remained at the concept design stage, as well as the imperative of ensuring cost-effectiveness for any project.

Evidence of conflicts between independent architects and party architects appeared in several documented cases. One notable instance is the dispute between Chief Architect Seyfi Sonad and architect Behçet Ünsal during the construction of the Gelibolu People's House. This case illustrated how administrative overreach could result in ethical violations while also highlighting an independent architect's struggle for professional rights. At the conclusion of the project, when Ünsal requested payment, Sonad dismissed his work as "useless" (*işe yaramaz*), ruled that he should receive no compensation, and even suggested that a "penalty" would be more appropriate (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1684-853-1). However, following a legal dispute, Ünsal eventually received payment, supported by expert reports that legitimized his work. Despite these dismissive attitudes toward his professional standing, Ünsal in his correspondence, refers to Party architects as his "elders" (*büyükleri*) and stated that he "respectfully kissed their hands in continued loyalty" (*hürmetle ellerinden öperek bağlılıklarının devam ettiğini*). This suggests that he regarded Party architects as holding a higher professional status despite having the same expertise. Meanwhile, there are no records of investigations being conducted against a Chief Architect, who occupied the highest position in the hierarchy. Thus, the fact that records favoring Ünsal were documented only after Sonad's departure appears unlikely to be coincidental, further reinforcing the originality of this example (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1684-853-1).

### **Institutional Relations in the Production Process of People's Houses**


Another key group involved in the construction process was the RPP Provincial and District Presidencies (*CHP Vilayet İl ve İlçe Başkanlıkları*), which were consulted on matters like land allocations and project designs within their jurisdictions. In certain cases, particularly in debates concerning the establishment of a People's House or a People's Room (*Halkodası*), proposals and requests were shaped by local conditions and political considerations. Nevertheless, the Party Office retained the authority to make final decisions as the competent technical body in charge of constructing People's Houses. For instance, when the RPP Kocaeli Administrative Committee (*CHP Kocaeli İdare Heyeti*) proposed establishing a People's Room in Gölcük to the General Secretariat (BCA, 490-1-0-0/958-709-1), the Gölcük District Administrative Committee (*Gölcük İlçe İdare Heyeti*) argued that the district was more suited for a People's House (BCA, 490-01-1747-1095-1). Although this request was initially rejected, the General Secretariat eventually approved it in 1944 (BCA, 490-1-0-0/958-709-1). In another case, Architect B. Abidin's design for the Düzce People's House was considered for Gebze. However, the Kocaeli Provincial Administrative Board (*Kocaeli İl Yönetim Kurulu*) decreed that the program did not meet the district's needs. As a result, RPP Architect Selim Sayar was subsequently tasked with developing a new concept design (BCA, 490-01-1747-1097-1).

During the construction of the Tokat People's House, the RPP Provincial Administrative Committee provided inputs regarding its proposed location, where the old municipal building once stood. Although this stone-clad municipal building was not considered to have "architectural value", it was still regarded as significant for the city. Consequently, the Provincial Administrative Committee Chairman requested that the People's House be constructed at an alternative location (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1787-1246-1). Oran, however, argued that the proposed location, facing Abide Square, would become one of the city's most significant public spaces once the new master development plan was implemented. He contended that an architectural form suitable to the square's prominence should be constructed following the demolition of the "stylistically undefined" (*hiçbir üslubu olmayan*) old municipal building (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1787-1246-1). This suggests that, when making final decisions, the Consultant Architect of the Office prioritized the location of People's Houses in relation to public squares (*Cumhuriyet Meydanları*), in line with the new regime's vision for city centers. As such, the demolition of older buildings lacking approved stylistic coherence was readily approved.

Another key group in the process was the municipal administration. Under the single-party government, it is worth noting that in many cities, the mayor, the provincial party Chairman, and the governor were often the same person. The municipal institution, responsible for urban land allocation and addressing building needs, maintained close coordination with the General Secretariat regarding People's Houses. For instance, in Tokat, the land of the old municipal building was allocated for the construction of the new People's House. In exchange, the Office proposed transferring the old People's House building to the Municipality. However, Mustafa Yolcu, who served as simultaneously as both the RPP provincial chairman and mayor, argued that the building would be insufficient for the municipal institution, which he described as "a part of the Party." He further suggested that the party organization provide financial assistance for the construction of a new municipal building (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1787-1246-1). This example shows that in a period when local and central administrations were integrated with the Party, it was common for these institutions to jointly present their requests and opinions to the Party Office. Likewise, the Ordu Municipality criticized the Ordu People's House for resembling "customs warehouses", and requested that a higher authority revise the project (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1). Furthermore, technical staff in directorates affiliated with the Ministry of Public Works, responsible for overseeing construction, routinely reported deficiencies and errors encountered during the building process to the Party architects.

Thus, the interactions between civil servants and independent architects, as well as public institutions, are illustrated through selected examples of People's Houses. To provide a definitive and detailed cross-section of the party architecture's production and professional practice, the Ordu People's House serves as a sample case. Ordu, with its detailed contextual and archival data, offers an architectural setting where Party architects, architect in academics, foreign architects, executive architects and many institutions interact, revealing the collaboration and tensions between public and independent architectural practices. In addition, this construction span both the period before and after the establishment of the Office, which is the most significant change for the Party's approach to architectural professionalism, enabling for the comparison of the two phases.

Bina sahibi	C. H. P.
Kira	
Binanın cinal (kâğıt, yarım kâğıt, ahşap)	Kâğıt
Binanın kıymeti	955.11, 01 hali içinde
Yapılma tarihi	1932
Tadil olunduğu tarih ve bedeli	
Kalorifer tesisi	projesinde vardır Henüz yapılmamıştır
Elektrik	Var
Sihhi	yapılabilecek
Sahne	Sahne vardır projesinde gösterilmiştir
Bahçe durumu	Bahçe 610 m. Ara 1540 m.
Ara ölçüsü m.	



Binanın bulunduğu şehir veya köy : Ordu vilâyeti

Esas Cephe

Proje sahibi Arif Hikmet Holtay

İnşa bedeli 955.11, 01 on bir bin bir kuruş

İlmi tarihi hali içinde

Ne gibi tahsisatla yapıldığı Kasımpaşa Mahallesi

No.	Mevcut Planlar
1	Vaziyet planı Mikyas 1/200
2	Zemin kat " " 1/100
3	Bodrum " " 1/100
4	1 inci " " 1/100
5	2 inci " " 1/100
6	Makta " " 1/100
7	Cebheler " " 1/100
8	proje merkezi kâğıt
9	hali içinde
10	orjinali merkezi
11	değer
12	
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15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	

Figure 3. Identification information of Ordu People's House (BCA, 490-1-0-0-1772-1191-1).

### A SAMPLE CASE: BUILDING A PEOPLE'S HOUSE IN ORDU

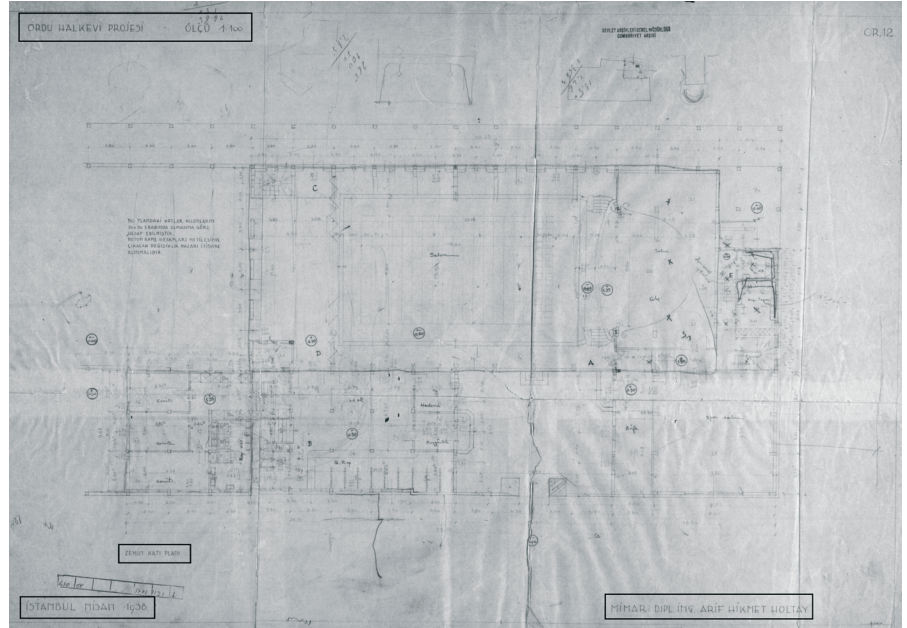
According to archival records, Arif Hikmet Holtay served as the architect of Ordu People's House (Figure 3). However, appears that the initial version of the project was started by a German company under the direction of Paul Bonatz but was discontinued due to the outbreak of World War II (Üstüntaş, 2005, 36-37). Most of the subsequent construction followed the renovation project prepared Holtay in 1938. Based on Holtay's close professional links to German architects, especially Bonatz, it is reasonable that he was tasked with the remaining work (6). Since the Ordu People's House building is not covered in the architectural history studies on Holtay or studies on People's Houses (Küreğibüyük, 2011; Durukan, 2006; Yeşilkaya, 1997), this previously unknown design by Holtay and the Party Office is brought to light for the first time in this present study.

The Ministry of Public Works oversaw the Ordu People's House project, which was designed through outsourced services by the independent architect Holtay. Ministry documents do not contain the names or positions of those who critiqued Holtay's project; all criticisms about the project were presented under the Ministry's name and signed by the Minister. The project was subsequently examined and approved by the institution's highest administrators, including the Minister, Deputy, and RPP General Secretary/Minister of the Interior, most of whom were of military backgrounds. Among them, Mithat Aydın, a Trabzon deputy with an engineering background but not an architect, approved Holtay's design, stating that it possessed "a unique beauty of its own" and that the plan was "well thought out." Thus, this case demonstrates that legitimacy of the architectural profession, central to modern professionalization, had yet to gain full authority in the review, critique, and approval of architectural projects overseen by the Ministry (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1).

Throughout this process, correspondence reveals the critiques made by Ministry personnel and the ways in which Holtay defended his design. For instance, he justified the round windows of the movie theatre, which the Ministry personnel "unnecessary" (lüzumsuz), by providing a technical and functional explanation that such window would be more effective

6. Holtay, who returned to Turkey after completing his architectural education at Stuttgart Technical School in Germany, was the first Turkish student of Paul Bonatz at this institute, and they evidently maintained a close relationship in the following years. At the Academy of Fine Arts, where he held a position, Holtay became one of the executors of the educational reform led by foreign professors. He was instrumental in establishing professional relationships with foreign architects, especially those coming from Germany (Küreğibüyük, 2011).

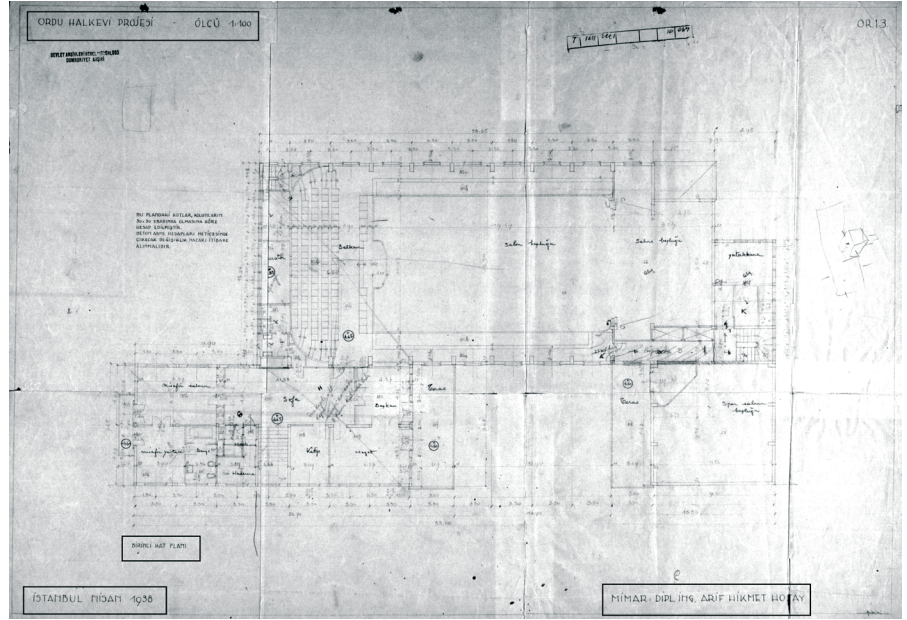




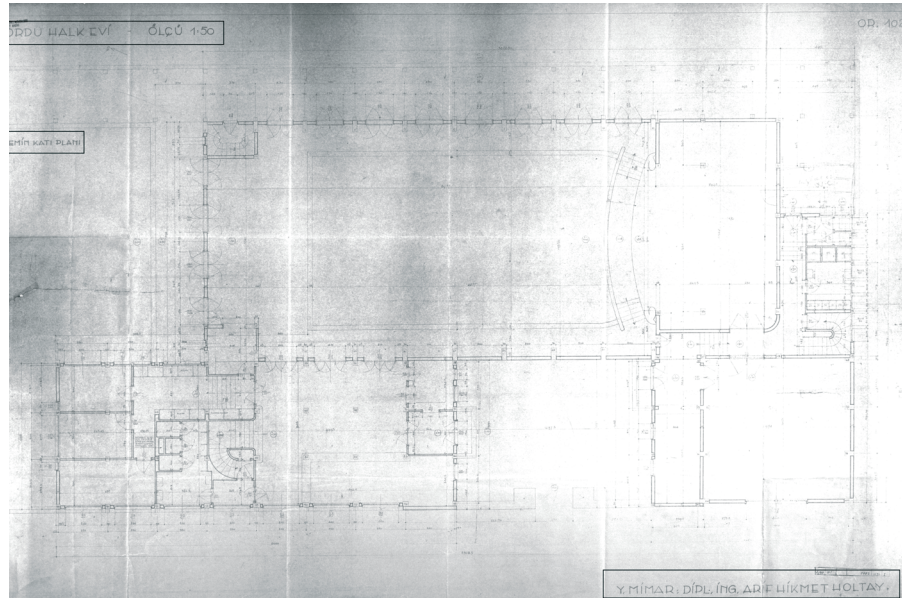
**Figure 4.** 1/100 ground floor plan drawn by Arif Hikmet Holtay in 1938 (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1).

than ventilation holes in keeping the air clean and cool (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1). Although Holtay was a leading professor of academic architecture, he refrained from using his educator identity to discuss architectural culture conceptually or to comment on formal features and facade aesthetics, which were widely adopted in public buildings of the period. Instead, he focused on providing technical and functional justifications to get approval for the construction of the project components. On another criticism of a different facade, he noted that cubic windows were now “outdated” (*demode*), which was reason enough for not using them (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1) (7). Holtay’s defense on technical grounds, while complying with these requests, indicates the public sector’s emphasis on economical and rational architectural production. Conversely, pre-Office projects reveal no indication that Ministry personnel engaged in discussions on architectural forms or made effort to establish an original national “People’s House character”. At this stage, the submitted project was still at the concept design level and there were no 1/50 scale construction drawings, layout plan was absent, and the dimensions of building components in the drawings did not match those in the project’s estimation document (*keşif hesabı*) (Figure 3, 4, 5). During this time, although it was stated that Holtay would submit 1/20, 1/10 and 1/1 detail plans together with 1/50 construction plans, archive documents reveal that only 1/50 scale drawings were sent (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1). However, these drawings were not of sufficient quality to be used for actual construction and merely represented scaled concept designs at the concept design level (Figure 6, 7). In Ministry-approved projects, the operational aspect of professional competence appears to have been limited. Ambiguity regarding professional backgrounds of Ministry personnel suggest that some may not have been trained architects, or at minimum, lacked practical construction experience. Consequently, outsourced designs remained at the concept level, with no substantial progress toward construction stage, ultimately hindering building completion.

7. For detailed discussions of the period about cubism, see: Bozdoğan, 2001.



**Figure 5.** 1/100 first floor plan for Ordu People's House (BCA, 490-1-0-0-1772-1191-1).

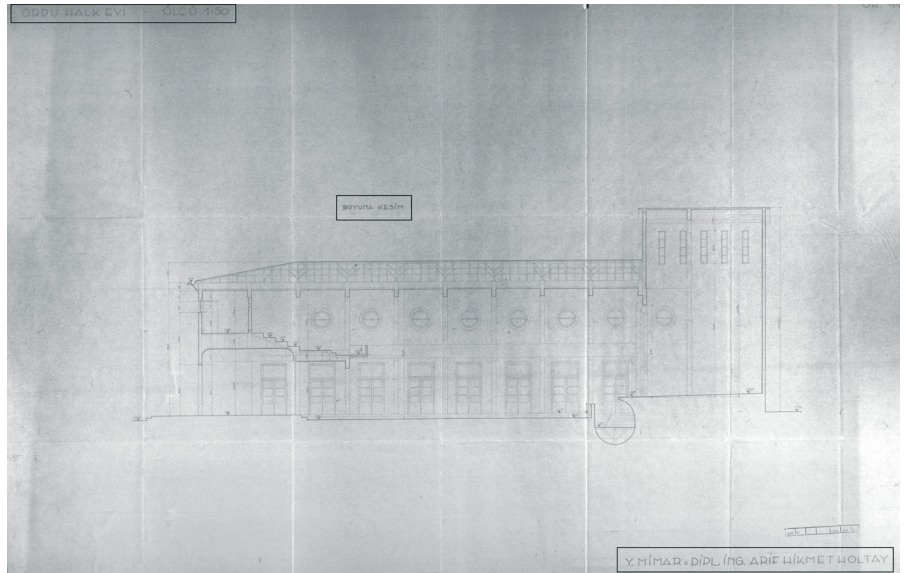


**Figure 6.** 1/50 ground floor plan sent by Arif Hikmet Holtay for the construction phase (BCA, 490-1-0-0-1772-1191-1).

### After the Foundation of the Office: Party Architects in the Building Production

At a stage when the construction of Ordu People's House stalled, Party architects took over the project and construction process with the establishment of the Party Architectural Office. Ensuring the technical adequacy of construction projects for People's Houses was essential for their quantitative and qualitative development, as stated in the construction program prepared by Consultant Architect Sabri Oran. In light of this, Party architects first reviewed the architectural project and requested that the architect revise the plans to meet construction requirements. To this end, Holtay was invited to the General Secretariat's Architectural Office, and despite oversight by the technical staff of the Public Works Directorate, Sabri Oran personally travelled to Ordu to supervise the construction site (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1).





**Figure 7.** 1/50 section drawing for Ordu People's House (BCA, 490-1-0-0-1772-1191-1).

The design setbacks of Ordu's project reflect the fragmented and unregulated architectural administration of the pre-Office period. One of the primary causes of these issues was the oversight of projects by Ministry officials, many of whom had military backgrounds and lacked professional architectural expertise. The establishment of the Party Architectural Office introduced a centralized authority in architectural production, ensuring that projects were managed more systematically and professionally. Instead of Ministry controllers, Sabri Oran's direct intervention at Ordu's construction site, along with the Party architects demonstrated proficiency in managing construction projects indicates that the Office had a skilled and competent architectural staff, with improved project management compared to the pre-Office period. Initially, a comprehensive revision of the building's form was considered to align with the formal and functional standards of the People's House character once the Office took over. However, because construction was already underway, these arrangements were not entirely achievable. Instead, Party architects prioritized the technical and economic sustainability of the ongoing construction. Despite numerous deficiencies, Holtay complied with the requested revisions and requirements, positioning himself as a cooperative independent architect. Rather than defending his architectural choices conceptually or remaining unresponsive, Holtay approached the project with a pragmatic focus on technical and functional aspects, reflecting a conscious effort to avoid conflict with public authorities.

During the building production process, the municipal organization criticized the form of the building, likening it to customs warehouses, and requested that it be "revised by a higher authority". In response, RPP Chief Architect Seyfi Sonad argued that the criticism lacked functional and aesthetic justification, thereby questioning the Municipality's professional expertise. Sonad further asserted that seeking approval beyond the Office was misguided, stressing that Holtay's project, originally derived from Bonatz designs, had already been transformed into a detailed application project through the Office's technical review (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1). By so doing, he defended both the project's designer and the Party architects. Additionally, he explicitly acknowledged Senior Architect Abdülkadir Asna, responsible for on-site construction management,



**Figure 8.** Ordu People's House in 1950s (The personal archive of Hüseyin Naim Güney).

ensuring that his individual contributions were duly recognized. Ultimately, Sonad elaborated on the challenges and efforts involved in establishing this application-driven architectural project, which was still in the process of being institutionalized within the profession.

As a result, Seyfi Sonad's assertion that the Architectural Office held the ultimate authority highlights the consolidation of the Party architects' professional and institutional positions during the period's professionalization process. Sonad upheld Holtay's role as the project architect, thereby affirming that independent architects working for the Party were integrated into a shared institutional framework alongside Party architects, reinforcing the importance of professional solidarity. Furthermore, the firm stance of the Office against the municipality, coupled with Sabri Oran's direct control of the site in Ordu despite concurrent oversight by the Public Works Directorates, illustrating the Office's growing influence over other institutions with respect to professional expertise and technical authority.

Finally, in addition to faults and deficiencies in building production within the scope of professionalization, it is essential to consider the conditions of the period in question. The national construction industry faced significant challenges, including material, high import costs, a lack of qualified craftsmen, and transportation difficulties. As a result, the construction of Ordu People's House, initiated in 1938 in this provincial city, was only completed in 1951 (BCA, 490-1-0-0/1772-1191-1). Located on the seafront in Ordu's Düz Neighborhood, the building stood adjacent to the municipal building and its park (**Figure 8**). Together with the municipal building and the nearby government house, the People's House contributed to the formation of an administrative center in the city. Its location within the municipal park also made it a focal point for the cultural, social, and artistic activities frequently held there. Today, following extensive renovations and additions, the building serves as the Atatürk Cultural Center (Güney, 2024, 430–431, 457–458).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### Architectural Professionalization through/in Party Office

By establishing its own architectural office, the RPP significantly advanced the professionalization process, breaking away from the Ministry of Public



Works' architectural office and creating its own independent organizational structure. Before the Office was established, People's House projects were either prepared by the Ministry, commissioned through architectural competitions, or designed by independent architects. Yet, final decisions regarding competitions, project approvals, and the selection of architects still rested with military-affiliated Party administrators, ministers, or members of parliament. With the Office in place, architectural practice and project management became more systematically structured around professional norms defined by architects themselves. The transfer of final decision-making authority from political and/or bureaucratic figures to the Party's technical staff, particularly the Chief Architect, marked a crucial stage in the professionalization process, ensuring the technical and architectural quality of project critiques and requests.

The establishment of the Office ensured that building production followed a more structured, hierarchical, and standardized system. Systematic measures such as maintaining architects' personnel files, regulating working hours, enforcing collective work schedules, and replacing fragmented system with a centralized decision-making mechanism stand out as tangible indicators of institutionalization and mark a significant stage in professionalization process. The designation of key roles, such as Chief Architect and Consultant Architect, along with a clear division of responsibilities among architects, supported a professional division of labor. Furthermore, rather than focusing solely on building production in the traditional state-led model, efforts were channeled towards specialization in both design and construction processes. Professional discipline also took shape through distinctions between concept and construction drawings, while also focusing on technical aspects such as cost estimation and calculations. Finally, Sabri Oran's programs and design criteria for People's Houses demonstrate that the building process was guided by technical standards.

The nature of professionalization process was not shaped by Western free-market dynamics but was rather integrated into the bureaucratic structure. While the Party Office strengthened professional identity, it simultaneously constrained it by subordinating architecture to Party control. Increasing collaboration with independent architects over time and the gradual reduction of standardized type projects compared to other public institutions might indicate a tendency toward greater professional autonomy. Yet this autonomy remained restricted within a bureaucratic mechanism. Thus, the Party Office's contribution to professionalization was largely confined to institutional regulations and bureaucratic norms, prioritizing technical standards and economic efficiency over creative originality.

This suggests that design originality therefore became restricted within strict parameters, as projects were expected to conform to the People's House character defined by Office, while pragmatic solutions were encouraged. However, this character was never explicitly defined, apart from an emphasis on a nationalist approach and rejection of undesirable attributes such as international influences and forms open to misinterpretation. Nonetheless, certain instances, such as Seyfi Arkan's İzmit People's House, showed that architects could occasionally pursue formal originality outside the prescribed framework, often by disregarding Party architects' criticisms. Such cases may be interpreted as either silent

resistance to state control mechanisms or a strategic effort to preserve professional autonomy within the constraints imposed by Party architects.

Other unique cases, such as that of Behçet Ünsal, demonstrate how architects could defend their professional rights against state bureaucracy, for instance, following the chief architect's departure. Moreover, in some cases, some architects' projects were rejected outright for not being found suitable for People's House character, and their decisions were accepted without contest. Together, these cases provide insight into the limit of independent architects' agencies and the strategies through which they contested institutional authority.

In conclusion, although direct sources or data on the organizational structures of architectural offices in other public institutions are lacking, it is likely that their operations followed a bureaucratic framework similar to that of the Party Office. The establishment of independent architectural offices within public institutions, separate from the Ministry of Public Works, thus represents a significant step toward the professionalization of Republican architecture. In this context, the Party Office itself serves as evidence of this broader institutional transformation.

#### **Party Architects or Partisan Architects? Professional Identity versus Institutional Identity**

First, regardless of whether architects were employed as permanent or temporary staff, all personnel within the Office were intended to receive civil servant rights, indicating that the Office functioned as a public institution (BCA.,490-1-0-0/394-1669-2). Subject to the regulations of the bureaucratic structure, these architects primarily perceive their work as a technical public service. From this perspective, they initially positioned themselves as officials responsible for ensuring that independent architects' designs adhered to technical standards. In addition, an examination of personnel files suggests that securing a permanent position within the Office was regarded as highly desirable. The fact that many architects actively sought to join this bureaucratic structure indicates that, compared to the precarious nature of independent practice, the Party Office offered a stable and prestigious professional environment.

On the other hand, architects in temporary positions had the opportunity to engage in independent projects outside the Party and participate in professional debates. Their connections to other architectural networks provided advantages in terms of originality and creative autonomy. However, this autonomy also came at the cost of stability associated with permanent positions. These individuals remained in a precarious status as candidate architects, awaiting potential appointments to the highly sought-after permanent staff role. The distinction between permanent and temporary staff at the Party Office highlights the extent to which professionalization provided autonomy within the bureaucratic structure. Holding a permanent position restricted involvement in architectural debates and external commissions, reinforcing professional alignment with the institution. Yet, Sabri Oran's role as Consultant Architect positioned him both as an administrator and as an architect with a degree of professional autonomy beyond that of a typical civil servant. His deliberate detachment from certain ideological or market-driven debates reflects not only a strategic choice but also a professional identity shaped by his affiliation with a public institution. As a result, the attitudes and practice of

many architects show that architectural practices were carried out within state offices under the bureaucratic authority of the period.

On the other hand, unlike their peers in other public institutions, Party architects were able to retain their Party memberships (BCA, 490-1-0-0/393-1663-2). However, they did not develop an explicit discourse on ideology, because the prevailing ideology had already been internalized within the dominant political culture of the period. These architects, who produced the ideological apparatus of the regime, functioned not as neutral actors but as technocrats who unquestioningly accepted ideology as an inherent part of the system. In this context, Party architects can be regarded as professionals who quietly implemented the architectural production of the new regime without questioning the ideological underpinning of People's House architecture.

Architects appointed as civil servants within the Party maintained an ostensibly neutral stance, refraining from explicitly presenting themselves as partisan professionals. However, beneath this formal neutrality, the state's complete alignment with a single ideological framework effectively rendered all public architects as de facto partisan actors as the Party functioned simultaneously as a political and state institution specific to this era. As such, the relationship between Party architects and the RPP must be examined not only in terms of institutional affiliation but also through the lens of ideological discourse. Their professional identity extended beyond purely technical roles, encompassing the implementation of the state's ideological architectural projects, similar to how a provincial governor concurrently served as the RPP chairman.

### **Party Architecture within Public Architecture**

The architectural office established within the framework of party architecture represents an attempt to modernize professional specialization in architectural production. Party architecture distinguishes itself from central state institutions primarily through its detailed documentation of professional organization and relationships, staff identities, and the discourse and critiques produced within the office. At the same time, architectural competitions were conducted for other public buildings during the same period, providing opportunities for independent architects to participate. However, while institutions such as the Ministry of Public Works organized these competitions and managed relations with independent architects, limited information exists regarding their internal production processes, professional relationships, and operational norms. Insights into the architectural production of the Ministry are obtained from its publication, *Bayındırlık İşleri Dergisi*. For this reason, in assessing the role of party architecture within the broader framework of public architecture, the Ministry of Public Works, the primary actor in public construction projects, serve as a reference point.

Unlike the Ministry, where buildings were presented as institutional productions, the Party's architectural office fostered a clearer professional identity for architects within its organizational structure. Although the Office's projects were not widely publicized through official media channels, it explicitly recognized both its own staff and commissioned independent architects in all formal and institutional correspondences. The number of projects by independent architects increased under the control of the Office's qualified staff, while the production of type projects was reduced. Compared to other state institutions, this greater reduction in type

projects may have provided independent architects with more professional autonomy and opportunity for originality. While the Party Office, as a form of public architecture, prioritized the quantitative expansion of buildings to remote areas within the framework of public service, its approach also extended beyond economic and functional concerns. As professionals shaping the architectural representation of the new regime, Party architects sought to establish an original People's House character. Ultimately, the professional efforts introduced by the Party's architectural office in public architecture were marked by constrained autonomy, shaped by the rationality of public interest and economic sustainability, with originality exercised only within the loosely defined boundaries of the People's House character.

Another distinguishing aspect of the Party Architectural Office was its relatively professional approach to project implementation, encompassing technical drawings, material selection, construction technologies, and interior design details. Nonetheless, the bureaucratic state tradition remained evident in the final decisions regarding building production. Although architects who provided project services from outside the Office maintained their primary identities such as academic, well-known or foreign architects, the Party identity carried sanctioning bureaucratic power, at times over-riding all other identities. Moreover, bureaucratic hierarchical structure was also observed internally, with executive architects assuming the role of final decision-makers. Within the multi-actor construction process of People's Houses, the Party institution maintained the highest decision-making authority in inter-institutional tensions. On the other hand, the predominance of relatively experienced Party architects is understandable, as it reflects their efforts to enhance the quality of construction projects. Yet, their authority relied not solely on professional expertise but also on the responsibility of shaping the spatial representation of the new nation-state's ideology. Ultimately, as the intellectual elites aligned their perspectives with the dominant state ideology, certain political conflicts over architectural form and discourse were largely absent. In some cases, however, silence or disregard may have indicated passive resistance or attempts to differentiate within the architectural representation of the existing ideology. Alternatively, such silence may have simply reflected a lack of technical counterargument.

Party architecture, as a subcategory of public architecture, operated within a production process where bureaucratic hierarchy and the legitimacy of public service merged with ideological formation under the roof of a technical architectural office. It grounded the creation of the architectural profession in institutional and bureaucratic structures, advancing it beyond the existing system, while also functioning as a regulation mechanism and, at times, constraining design originality and autonomy. In addition, the construction of People's Houses, conceived as an ideological extension of public service, positioned Party architects as state professionals tasked with materializing Party ideology across the nation. In this regard, unlike broader state architecture, the Party Architecture Office played a more explicit role in producing the spatial representation of ideological formation.

In conclusion, it is possible to construct the conflicts and interventions observed in Party Architecture of Early Republican Turkey within a more conceptual framework. The main tensions relate to how the boundaries between bureaucratic authority and professional autonomy



were defined; how the balance between standardization and design originality was negotiated; how the invisible lines between bureaucratic neutrality and ideological identity were articulated; how the distinctions between stable and precarious professionalism were manifested in the experiences of permanent and temporary staff; and finally, how the conflict between institutional hierarchy and inter-institutional structure was resolved through related mechanisms. Read through these axes, the conflicts appear not merely as individual attitudes but also as outcomes of bureaucratic mechanism and ideological framework, as well as the redefinition of professional identity. In this sense, the practice of Party Architecture emerges as a multilayered field where professionalization was institutionalized through bureaucratic rules.

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Alındı: 28.09.2025; Son Metin: 02.12.2025

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Parti mimarlığı; Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP); mimarlık mesleği; halkevleri; mesleki kimlik.

## ERKEN CUMHURİYET DÖNEMİNDE PARTİ MİMARLIĞI: MESLEKİ VE KURUMSAL KİMLİKLER ARASINDA YAPI ÜRETİMİ

Cumhuriyet'in ekonomi politikası 1932'den itibaren devlete önemli bir rol yüklemiş, Demokrat Parti'nin geldiği bir sonraki devre kadar devletin tek işveren haline geldiği otoriter bir dönem yaşanmıştır. Mimarlık tarihinde erken Cumhuriyet dönemi diye tabir edilen bu yıllar, Türkiye'nin siyasi tarihinde tek partili yıllara karşılık gelir. Bu noktadan hareketle, Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinin tek Partisi olan CHP'nin devlet ile bütünleştiğini, meclise-hükümete ve devlete hâkim konumda olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Parti mimarlığı kavramı; dönemin parti-devlet bütünlüğü görülen bu dönemde, mimarlık üretiminde en büyük paya sahip olan kamu mimarlığının bir çeşidi olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı; parti mimarlığının kamunun mimarlık üretiminde bulunduğu pozisyonu değerlendirmektir. Parti mimarlığının kamu mimarlığı içinden bir tür olarak özelleştirilmesi; ulus inşa paradigmasının tek partili döneme içkin ideolojik özellikler nedeniyle bürokrat ve siyasi kimliğe sahip olma birliğinin kamu görevlisi mimarın mimarlık üretimine etkisini anlama çabasıdır. Bu niyetle Parti ofisi bünyesinde farklı bina türleri üretilmesine rağmen halkevlerinin üretim süreçleri ele alınır çünkü bu yapıların ideolojinin mesleki kimliğe etkisini anlamada güçlü bir yanı vardır. Tek parti döneminin parti kurumu hem devletle bütün bir yapı olarak bürokratik bir geleneğe sahipken, bünyesinde üretilen halkevleri ise partinin ideolojik aygıtları olarak bir o kadar politik bir pozisyonadadır. İlk hedef, mimari ürün veya dönemin mimari yaklaşımları yerine kamunun mimarlık üretimini ve mesleği icrasını irdelemek maksadıyla parti mimarlık ofisinin organizasyonuna, iş akışına, halkevleri inşa programına odaklanmaktır. İkinci hedef, kamu- bağımsız mimar ekseninde mesleki kimliğin kurumsal kimliklerle ilişkilerini Cumhuriyet'in ulus devlet geleneğini dikkate alarak tartışmaktır. Son hedef, bugüne kadar serbest mimarlık ortamının eleştirileriyle aktarılan dönemin mimarlık üretimini bu kez kamudan bir tarafın eleştirileri ile okumaktır. Son olarak, Partinin mimarlık üretimi ve mesleğin icrası ile ilgili bütünlüklü bir kesit sunabilmek adına mimar Arif Hikmet Holtay'ın Ordu Halkevi proje ve inşası örnek bir vaka olarak ele alınmaktadır. Çalışmanın neredeyse tamamı Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet arşivindeki CHP kurumunun belgeleri analiz edilerek hazırlanmıştır. Kurumun belgelerinin kayıt altında tutulmaları ve korunmaları sayesinde konuyla ilgili özgün bir söz söyleyebilmek mümkün olabilmektedir.

## PARTY ARCHITECTURE IN EARLY REPUBLICAN TURKEY: BUILDING PRODUCTION BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITIES

The economic policy framework under the Republic gave the state a central role from 1932 onward, leading to an authoritarian period in which the state became the sole employer in many sectors until the Democrat Party came to power. The so-called Early Republican period in architectural history corresponds to the single-party years in Turkey's political history. From this point of view, the RPP, the sole party in Republican Turkey, was integrated with the state, as well as dominating the parliament-government. The term party architecture refers to a type of 'public architecture' that was the dominant form in architectural production during this single party period. The aim of this study is to assess the position of party architecture in public architectural production that



shaped the urban landscape of the cities at the period. The specification of party architecture from the viewpoint of public architecture stems from an effort to understand how the unity of bureaucratic and political identity, inherent to the ideological characteristics of the single-party period, influenced the architectural production of architects. Although various building types were constructed under the auspices of the Party (RPP) (Architectural/ Architectural Consultancy) Office (*CHP Müşavir Mimarlık Bürosu*), the production of People's Houses (*Halkevleri*), which can be thought of as a sort of community center in every major town or serving a district, is specifically examined because they provide a strong basis for understanding the impact of ideology on reflecting the professional identity of the architects involved. While the single party of this period functioned as a bureaucratic entity integrated with the state, the People's Houses held a distinctly political position as representations of ideological instruments of the Party. The primary goal is to focus on the organization of the Party's architectural office, its staff, workflow, and the People's Houses construction program. The second objective is to discuss the relationships between professional identity and institutional identities along the civil servant versus independent architect axis, considering the Republic's nation-state tradition. The final goal was to analyze architectural production of the Early Republican period through the criticisms of public architects rather than solely through the criticisms of free-practicing architects, as has been the case in earlier studies. Finally, Ordu People's House designed by Arif Hikmet Holtay is analyzed as a sample case to provide a detailed cross-section related to party architecture and professional practice of the period. The study is primarily grounded in an analysis of original sources from RPP documents housed in the Prime Ministry Republican Archive.

**ÖZDEN SENEM EROL**; B.Arch., B.A., M.Arch., PhD.

Received her first bachelor's degree in architecture from KTUN, and her second bachelor's degree in sociology from METU. Earned her master's and doctoral degrees in architectural history (2012 and 2019 respectively) from Kocaeli University. Major research interests include architectural profession, gender, participatory practices, and environmental struggles/interventions in the field of architectural history and theory.  
ozdensenem.erol@kocaeli.edu.tr

**OYA ŞENYURT**; B.Arch., M.Arch., PhD.

Received her bachelor's degree in architecture from Yıldız Technical University in 1991. Earned her master's and doctoral degrees in architectural history (2002 and 2006 respectively) from Yıldız Technical University. Major research interests include late- Ottoman architecture, early-Republican architecture. oya.senyurt@kocaeli.edu.tr

