SURVIVING RUINS AND STORIES OF SMYRNA/İZMİR: CENTENNIAL MEMORIES OF THE GREAT FIRE OF 1922

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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: memory, memorialization, silencing, nationalism, counter-memory works, surviving ruins, the Great Fire of Smyrna/İzmir of 1922

This thesis analyzes the stories and narratives of İzmir-based counter-memory works regarding the Great Fire of Smyrna/İzmir in the two decades leading to its centennial in 2022. Following its near absence in the official historiography as well as its silencing in social memory within the context of the nation building process in Turkey, I argue that these recent counter-memory works constitute a collective effort for challenging the multiple layers of silencing. While doing so, these memorializations contribute to a common ground for coming to terms with the violent past of the city and seeking potentials of a collective mourning for the unmourned loss of Smyrna -with the catastrophic destruction of its multicultural population. As the activists, artists, and locals make use of the surviving ruins within the former fire zone (the former Greek, Armenian, and Frenk quarters of the city) and seek surviving stories where pre-1922 traces are now-defunct as reference points for their counter-memory works, I analyze their interactions with these survivors and with each other.

ÖZET

SMYRNA/İZMİR'İN HAYATTA KALAN HARABELERİ VE HİKAYELERİ: YÜZÜNCÜ YILINDA 1922 BÜYÜK YANGININ HAFIZALAŞTIRILMA BİÇİMLERİ

EGE MEHMET AKMAN

KÜLTÜREL ÇALIŞMALAR YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, TEMMUZ 2024

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Anahtar Kelimeler: hafıza, hafızalaştırma, sessizleştirme, milliyetçilik, karşı-hafıza çalışmaları, hayatta kalan harabeler, toplumsal hafıza, 1922 Büyük Smyrna/İzmir Yangını

Bu tez, Büyük Smyrna/İzmir Yangını'na ilişkin İzmir merkezli ve yangının yüzüncü yıldönümüne giden son yirmi yılda gerçekleşmiş olan karşı-hafıza çalışmalarının hikayelerini ve anlatılarını incelemeyi amaçlanmaktadır. Bunu yaparken, Büyük Yangın'ın Türkiye'deki ulus inşası süreci bağlamında resmi tarih yazımında yer bulamayışını ve toplumsal hafızada da sessizleştirilmiş oluşunu takiben son dönemdeki bu karşı-hafıza çalışmalarının bu çok katmanlı sessizleştirmelere meydan okumaya yönelik kolektif bir çaba oluşturduğunu ileri sürüyorum. Bu hafızalaştırmaları, kentin çokkültürlü yapısının yitirilmesiyle sonuçlanan şiddetli dönüşümle yüzleşmek ve Smyrna'nın kaybının İzmir'de tutulamamış kolektif yasını tutmak adına ortak bir zemin oluşturma yolunda fırsatlar olarak değerlendiriyorum. Bu ortak zemini kuran aktivistler, sanatçılar ve hemşerilerin bunu yaparken özellikle kentin eski yangın alanı ve çevresinde (yangın öncesi Rum, Ermeni ve Frenk mahalleleri) hayatta kalmış olan harabeler ve/ya hikayelerden referans noktaları olarak yararlandıklarını gösterip karşıt-hafıza işlerini üreten bu kişilerin birbirleriyle ve hayatta kalanlarla kurdukları ilişkileri analiz ediyorum.

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Σαν τησ σμύρνησ το γιαγκίνι
Στο ντουνιά δεν έχει γίνει
Κάηκε κι έγινε στάχτη
Κι έβγαλε ο κεμάλ το άχτι
Κάηκε το σταυροδρόμι
Κι ο μπουγιούκ ντερέσ ακόμη
Σμύρνη φτωχομάνα σμύρνη
Που ΄ναι η ομορφιά σου εκείνη
Κάηκε κι ένα σχολείο
Που ΄ταν παρθεναγωγείο
Κάηκε και μια δασκάλα
Που ΄ταν άσπρη άσπρη σαν το γάλα

Nothing like the Smyrna yangını (fire)
Has happened in the dünya (world)
It burned down to ashes
And Kemal took out to the shore
The crossroads burned
And the *büyük dere* (large stream) too
Smyrna, poor mother Smyrna
Where is that beauty of yours
A school was also burned
Which was a girls' school
A teacher was also burned
Who was white, white as milk
An anonymous Greek lamentation to Smyrna
(words used in Turkish in italic):

Dedicated to the anonymized singers of the lamentations
in the memory of their lost cities and burnt villages

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

I was born and raised in İzmir. Its central neighborhoods around the Alsancak quarter, which I've been calling home up to this day eventually turned out to be the focal point and my field for this thesis, as a result of an ever-growing curiosity that stems from the built (and ruined) environment surrounding me in my daily life, starting from my earliest encounters with the cityscape of İzmir as a child. Despite this curiosity, it took me years to finally grasp that these neighborhoods as well as the iconic urban park (Kültürpark, or as locals call it *Fuar*) encircled by them spatially correspond to the fire zone (yangınlık alanı or shortly, yangınlık) of the Great Fire of Smyrna/İzmir in 1922 (Figure 1.1). That is roughly a century-old denomination that not so many locals would be able to recall today. What else is not remembered regarding yangınlık and the city's past prior to 1922 by its current residents, including the younger me, constitutes the departure point of this thesis. The official history of the 1922 İzmir Fire, which I was intensely exposed to and convinced by as a schoolchild, was quite simple and consistent, leaving not much room for further inquiry: "The enemy burned down the city while escaping and we built it from scratch after we poured them out into the sea." Seemingly uncontestable at the time, the violent transformation and the spatiotemporal rupture that established İzmir out of Smyrna[1] was rendered in this shuddery explanation that we were expected to proudly memorize at school.

Despite my wholehearted embrace of that explanation that was not visibly challenged within the overwhelmingly secular, Kemalist, middle-class, and vocally Turkish environment of my childhood, I still remember carrying with me a sense of dissatisfactiont. This dissatisfaction would eventually make me feel lost and express

[1] Accepting 1922 as the rupture, I will be using the name İzmir while referring to the city in the post-1922 context, and for pre-1922, I will use Smyrna. When the context is not temporally specific, I will prefer using them simultaneously.

itself as a literal stomach-ache "Who exactly was the enemy to escape, to set the city on fire, to be driven into the sea?" was the first question that creeped up in me. The answer was mostly Yunanlar (used typically for the Greeks of Greece). This answer invited a second set of questions: "What about Rumlar (used typically for Greeks of Anatolia)? "Who were they and what were they doing in our hometown? How come these names (Yunan and Rum) were being used interchangeably?" I later realized that my confusion was simultaneously embedded in the repetitive statements that I heard from my maternal grandmother Güler during our occasional visits to Urla (a coastal rural town 40 kilometers away from the center of İzmir), where her whole lineage is said to be from: "Who knows which Rum planted these olive trees, built these stone walls back in the time? Once upon a time..." I used to think that she must be referring to antiquity, the times when numerous ruins of Ionian Greek city-states dotting the Aegean landscape had been built. There stepped in another confusion that I carried regarding the hegemonic narrative: Rum Evi, the Greek House. These characteristically two-storeyed, high ceiling, stone buildings most of which are recognizable at first sight with their iconic cumba balconies, karosiman tile stones, and embroidered ferforje gates mostly escalating from the street level with a few marble stairs were to be found in numerous places in and around İzmir. Even though many of the Rum Evi that I came across were at least partly in ruins and seemingly inhabited, they could not be ancient or vacant for hundreds of years, could they? The answer became even more apparent to me when in another family visit to Urla, my mother pointed out one of the decadent Greek houses located on the main street of the town center and told us that this was the house into which she had been born. "How is this possible? Why was she born in a house like this? Why did my grandparents live in a Greek house?" How did my great-grandparents learn how to speak Greek?" were among the questions that stayed with me from this encounter with the house where my mother was born. This distant memory too belongs to the times when I was not yet introduced to or grasped the migration past of my family, a part of whom had been forcefully displaced from Thessaloniki based on the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations around a century ago, while another part had been simultaneously expelled from Kavala as a result of the same Mübadele convention; including the nuclear family of my maternal grandfather who ended up moving into the above mentioned Greek house. Based on the figures carved on the stone façade of the house, together with the date 1875, this house was probably built in 1875 by someone whose family initials were Σ.Χ.Ε. (S, Kh, E). Who were they?

Back to the fire zone, while during a brief stroll through its neighborhoods, it is almost inescapable to encounter some components of the cityscape including a con-

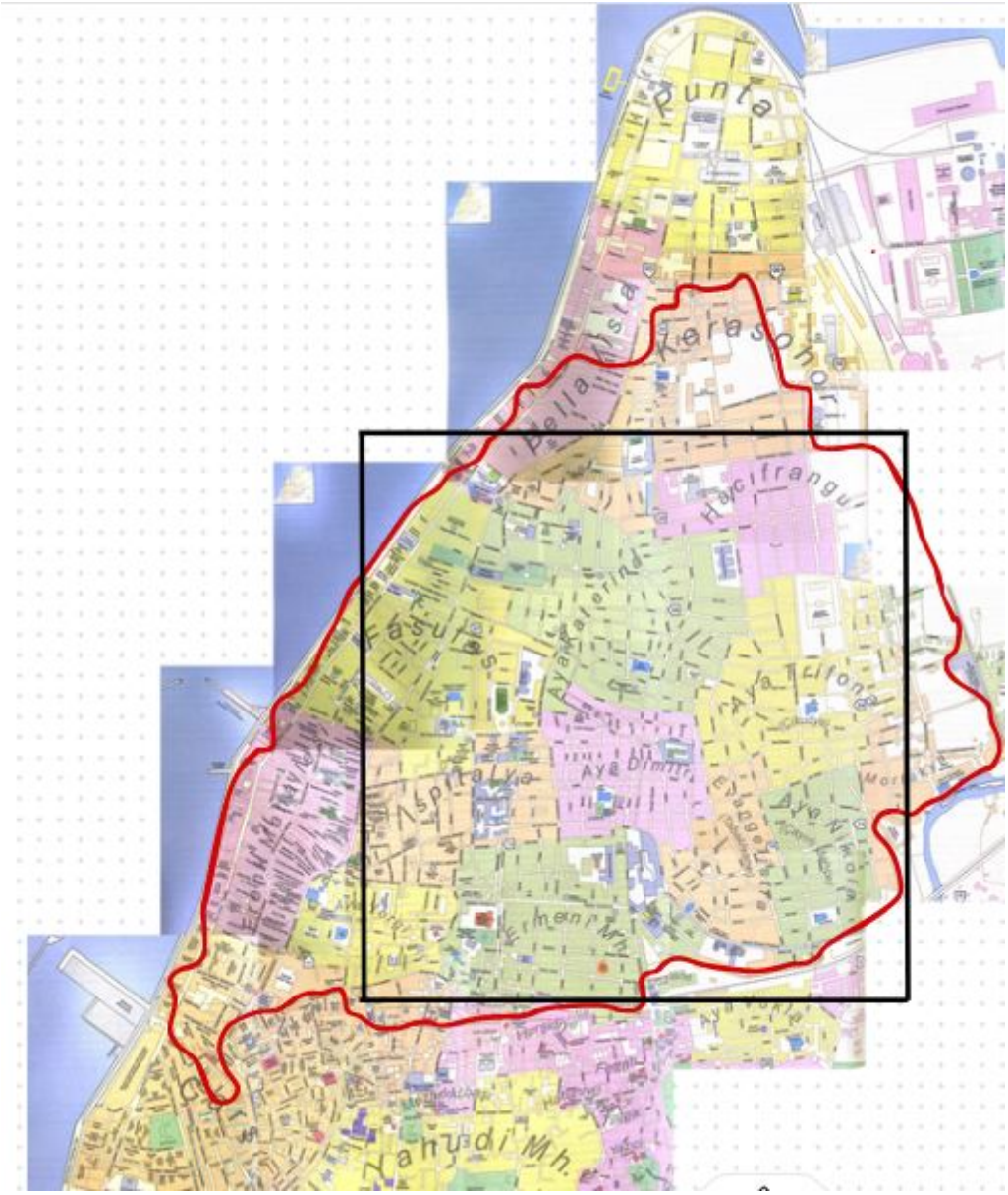
siderable number of Greek houses that have been standing wherever they are for more than a century now, unlike their interiors and surroundings. It means that they have witnessed the city before 1922 and survived until today, whether somehow intact or in ruins. These historical buildings and their seemingly accidental presence across the streets of Alsancak create a stark contrast with adjacent apartment blocks and vivid boulevards. They stand as silent witnesses and survivors of a silenced past. This study takes their witnessing as a starting point to as ask such questions as: "Who built these buildings, all dated prior to 1922, and live in them? What was the neighborhood like before the Great Fire? What exactly happened during and after the fire? And why is it so difficult to learn about the fire and the city before the fire?" Before elaborating on these questions, I should first present my acquaintance and engagement with two of the historical buildings where layers of memory and haunting questions intertwine with my life journey, as well as my academic journey that led to this research. Both high schools today, they are named after the prominent ideologue of Turkish nationalism and the founder of the Turkish Republic respectively: Namık Kemal High School and İzmir Atatürk High School. Accepting them as "surviving ruins", I will delve into their surviving stories in the following chapter (Figure 1.2 and Figure 1.3).

1.2 Literature Review and Theoretical Reflections

Since this thesis aims to look into the same city from different time periods while accepting the Great Fire of 1922 as the most dramatic rupture of its modern timeline, a threefold literature review was needed. The reason for that was to understand the city within its historical and socio-political contexts towards 1922 firstly, and in the aftermath of 1922 secondly, with an exclusive emphasis on September 1922 thirdly, the epicenter of the violent transformation of the city.

Towards its abrupt destruction by the Great Fire in 1922, Smyrna had become a significant cultural and mercantile intersection point especially from the turn of the 17th century onwards, as a cosmopolitan port city in the heart of the Eastern Mediterranean, connecting the hinterland of the Ottoman Anatolia with the sea, and the ports of the Levant with the rest of the Mare Nostrum, and beyond. Smyrna's rise as a port city rather than a city with a port (Kolluoğlu 2002) towards becoming a Mediterranean metropol (Bilsel 2008) have attracted a considerable body of scholarship in last two decades (Eldem, Goffman, and Masters 2017; Kasaba 2002; Kolluoğlu and Toksöz 2015; Smyrnelis 2008; Zandi-Sayek 2024; İnal 2015). In addition,

Figure 1.1 : George Poulimenos' Map of Smyrna in 1922, displaying the neighborhoods around the fire zone. Edited and highlighted by the author. The red line stands for the borders of the Great Fire of Smyrna/İzmir in 1922 and the black line shows the detail section in Figure 1.2 and 1.3. Source: George Poulimenos.



the distructive end of that city was discussed in great detail in the reference books written by Mliton's (2008) Paradise Lost. Smyrna, 1922 and Georgelin's (2008) The End of Smyrna: From Cosmopolitanism to Nationalism. The ethnic/religious communities of the city have also been subjects for a number of recent academic works. Among these illuminating works were Kechriotis (2009a; 2009b; 2011a; 2011b) on the Greek Orthodox community, Mildanoğlu (2017a) and Hovanissian (2018) on the Armenian community, Danon (2020) and Bora (2021) on the Jewish community, and Turgut (2023) on the Levantine communities of the city. Other significant recent

Figure 1.2 :The heart of the fire zone and its scale adjusted comparison with Kültürpark's borders. Numbers in Figure 3 represent two surviving ruins (1=Central Girls' School/İzmir Atatürk High School, 2=Evangelical School/Namık Kemal High School) and the location of my family house (3). Edited by the author. Source: George Poulimenos.

works that shed light on the pre-1922 city include a dictionary of the city's lingua franca Smyrneika (Baltazzi et al. 2012) and a unique "travel guide" to the city in 1922 (Poulimenos 2022) with rigorous maps that display the urban layout right before its destruction in great detail.

The Great Fire's memory[2] and the spatial and symbolic reconstruction of the city in

[2]In this thesis, I deliberately refrained from directly engaging with one central question that almost constitutes the core of the body of literature mentioning the Great Fire, especially in Turkish: "Who set the fire?". That question followed me throughout my entire fieldwork too. In other words, the absence of the memory of the Great Fire, I argue, excludes its repetitive mention in numerous academic and non-academic works that somehow confidently points to the ethnicity/nationality of the perpetrators in spite of the abundance of contradictory historical accounts. To summarize, most resources in Turkish claim that it was Greeks and Armenians whereas in non-Turkish resources the claim for Turkish responsibility almost seems to be a consensus. I believe it is my share of responsibility as an İzmiran researcher and resident with Turkish background who is still partly settled on the fire zone, to underline the Turkish responsibil-

Figure 1.3 : The Fire Zone and Kültürpark

its aftermath have found their places in the works' of some scholars - mainly in the last decades. Kolluoğlu's (2002; 2005; 2007) and Neyzi's (2008a; 2008b) pioneering works on how forgetting and remembering the Great Fire worked within İzmir's and Turkey's memoryscape constitute the departure points of this thesis (as well as constituting some of the remarkable personal and political departure points for me, growing away from my nationalist background). At the same time, they were the most referred works throughout my field work, inspiring some of my informants directly towards their involvement in their counter-memory works in İzmir. Gönlügör and Sezer's (2020) work stands as another significant reference for this thesis, with its fruitful discussion on the therapeutic forgetting and agnostic remembrance with a great emphasis on the memory of the Great Fire, benefitting from the transformation of Kültürpark as well as the interventions of artists and activists to Turkey's

ity in the outbreak of the Great Fire and more importantly, the responsibility for the catastrophe in the aftermath. Thus, "Who did not extinguish the fire?" became the question I rather focused on. Largely excluding this central debate could be seen as a shortcoming of this thesis but at the same time I believe it could also be seen as a humble interruption to rechannel the focus to the potentials of remembering and mourning the Great Fire in our day and in the future.

late memory turn. Çıldır and Yılmaz (2020) and Yılmaz (2020) concentrates on the ideological re/construction of the urban memory as well as the urban space, parallel to the construction of "the contract of Turkishness" (Ünlü 2018). Meanwhile, Cana (1996), Bozdoğan (2001), and Çetin (2005) delve into the reconstruction of the city around the fire zone through the lens of urban planning and design employed by the modernization and nation building projects. Furthermore, Kaymak and Suman (2023) discusses the ruptures and shifts in the memories of the participants of their memory walk that "chases the ghost of Smyrna" in contemporary İzmir. Following Janson's (2023) earlier fieldwork, together with Torsten Janson and Biray Kolluoğlu, our manuscript submitted for publication in early 2024 analyzes the recent İzmir-based exhibitions in which the memory of the Great Fire was revisited alongside the centennial commemorations of the milestones in the official Turkish historiography -including the "Liberation" of İzmir four days before the Great Fire.

In addition, the violent reconstruction/Turkification of the city after the Great Fire was studied in relation with "expropriating the dead" (Morack 2021) of the lost Christian communities as the city's "phantom pain" (Morack 2022) ; looting of the city and the fire zone (Kurt 2022) and its legitimization as ganimet/trophy (Ulusoy 2023) ; and later complementary policies and official collaborations to homogenize the city including the infamous "Citizen Speak Turkish" campaign's violent resonance in İzmir in 1934 (Lamprou 2022) and the pogrom of September 6-7 in 1955 bringing violence back to the fire zone (Vardar and Ulusoy 2023). Besides, the images and visual archives of the Great Fire being used by different national narratives (Amygdalou 2019) and different temporal contexts (Varlas 2020) were revisited recently. Lastly, Hür's (2022) and Yılmaz's (2022) pieces are worth mentioning for breaking the silence exactly on the centennial of the Great Fire by reminding the loss and displacement of a great number of predominantly Greek and Armenian civilians during and after the fire as well as the responsibility of the Turkish authority.

Apart from the İzmir/Smyrna studies literature I discuss here, theoretical discussions on social memory studies, and, in particular, the memory of space in different forms, constitute the theoretical background of this thesis. To start, Halbwacks (1992) explains memory as a collective, social phenomenon rather than an individual one, so much so that there are as many memories as groups. Lowenthal (2015) points to memory as a selective and active process constructed in the present based on what is needed to recall from the past, that "foreign country." This active process might lead to horizontal and vertical shifts of memory, Portelli (1991) adds, in a sense that chronologies and significance of particular moments from the past could be manipulated in the present. Emphasizing the selectiveness of memory, Sturken (1997) suggests that remembering is in itself a form of forgetting, especially when

it comes to the "tangled" memories of traumatic events that lead to conflicts on what to remember and what to forget. Such conflicts go hand in hand with silences at crucial moments of the historical production through power relations, Trouillot (1995) argues, during the making of sources, archives, narratives, and history. Resisting the history produced through silences as knowledge, history transforms into a different form through "counter-memory" that challenges the moments of silences and the power relations enabling them (Foucault 1980). Meanwhile, through his conceptualization of "multidirectional memory", Rothberg (2009) emphasizes the interconnectedness of different memories -of the Holocaust and colonialism to start with- and potentials of dialogue and solidarity that would reinforce each other's causes rather than competing with one another through a hierarchy of significance.

Both for silencing the memories and countering these silences, spatiality stands for a significant aspect. Connerton (1989), for instance, argues that destruction of spaces and displacement of people lead to collective, structural forgetting since memory is closely linked to the bodily performances, rituals, and habits centering the space. Weizman (2017) elaborates how the violent destruction and reconstruction of spaces through architecture and urban planning are employed to erase memories whereas Mahlke (2014) explains how state terror uses its capacity to disrupt the sense of spatio-temporality as a "modern warfare" that shapes the memory. That includes the struggles over the "sites of memory" through which collective memory is manifested, even though Nora's (1989) term does not necessarily refer to physical spaces. When these sites and spaces are completely destroyed or left in ruins, and deprived of their communities and contexts, "ghosts" from their pasts might still "haunt" them, Gordon (2008) insists. She adds that these haunting memories as "spectral evidences" have the potential for making the silenced or invisible narratives visible and for coming to terms with the violent past. Similarly, regarding the spaces of forced dispossessions, Tan (2021) suggests that these spaces cannot be truly reconstructed after the dispossessions since "the past will always haunt such ruins between real and labyrinthine time and space". Through the ruins still visible in the former fire zone in İzmir where was also the center of looting and appropriation for years if not decades to come, I also consider them to be the "affective spaces and melancholic objects" (Navaro 2009) through which contemporary İzmirians engage with the haunting legacy of the mass violence and displacement during and in the aftermath of the Great Fire. To clarify, by calling them ruins, I include both the reminiscents of the pre-1922 spaces left in ruins by the Great Fire and/or later throughout the century as well as the "afterlives" of the surviving spaces within and around the fire zone for being parts of former ruins even if their current conditions are intact. By including the "afterlives" of the ruins and other affective spaces and

melancholic objects from the pre-1922 city, Suni's discussion of "palimpsests of violence" regarding the ruins and their "afterlives" (in Anatolia in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide) constitute my reference point when thinking about the engagements of contemporary İzmirians -including myself- with these afterlives. Thus, by approaching ruins and stories as survivors and witnesses of the silenced pasts through that stream of thought, conceptualization of "surviving ruins and stories" appeared as forms of counter-memory that I have been tracing throughout the fieldwork and the entire thesis.

1.3 Methodology and Thesis Outline

The following chapter starts with the official Turkish histories of two public high schools in İzmir before delving into their silenced pasts, emphasizing their presence as surviving ruins and telling their surviving stories. Apart from introducing insights from my personal engagement with these schools and how silencing and forgetting their pasts have been reproduced, I also present some traces around these schools through which their pre-1922 pasts were eventually unearthed. Following these traces, I bring together the silenced and forgotten pasts of these schools with their former places. Benefitting from the representation of their pre-1922 memory in a memoir as well as archival sources about two schools in Athens which claim to be the the successors of the same two schools in Smyrna. Following the cases of these schools, I concentrate on some commemorative events aligning with the official historiography in İzmir towards the centennial of 1922 to discuss how the pre-1922 memories and the Great Fire itself were (not) revisited.

The third chapter provides detailed descriptions of what I call the "counter-memory" works in Foucault's (1980) terms, that were created, organized, or ended up in İzmir roughly in last two decades to memorialize and commemorate - directly or indirectly - the Great Fire of 1922. They include memory walks, commemorative meetings and public commemorations, exhibitions and other art works, counter-monuments and counter-archives that one way or another distance themselves from the official narrative regarding the Great Fire, hence my depiction of them as counter-memory works. Through the fieldwork of the study (See Appendix), my aim was to document and bring together the stories and narratives of these works mainly by conducting interviews with activists and/or artists who enabled them. As part of the field study that was approved by Sabancı University Research Ethics Council (SUREC) with Protocol Number FASS-2024-35, I conducted eight recorded interviews with nine

informants. Since all of them wanted their real names to be used in this study, I will introduce them in the subchapters where I discuss their works. The interviews were semi-structured, letting the interviewee choose what they share with reference to their backgrounds, motivations, and experiences regarding the memorialization and commemorations of the Great Fire. In addition, I had a chance to participate in some of the counter-works during my field work including some memory walks, commemorative meetings, exhibitions, and efforts towards counter-monument and counter-archives introduced throughout this thesis. Regarding the ones dating back before my field work, I benefited from published interviews, reports, and mainly local news concerning the relevant counter-memory work.

2. SILENCING AND FORGETTING

2.1 Surviving Stories of Two Surviving Ruins

Namık Kemal High School is located in an unexpectedly large garden between Kültürpark and the residential areas near the August 26th Gate, one of the five monumental entrances to the park[3]. Its colossal building used to catch my eyes daily through the mulberry and pine trees bordering its garden and the street of my house. Apart from its huge windows, ionic columns pinning its entrances, pilasters decorating the outer walls, and exceptional, tower-like top floor, one other feature has always caught my attention. It was nothing but its "skewed" layout in terms of its almost diagonal orientation towards its surroundings including the grid street plan. (Figure 2.1) "How come it had been built this incompatible with the streets around it?", I used to ask myself. Again, it was still years before I managed to comprehend that it was a good question, but when asked the other way around. Regarding my other question "What is/was this building?", the answer kept changing depending on whom I asked. Its nameplate said it was Namık Kemal High School, my parents said it was originally İnönü High School, my paternal grandfather who had attended high school there said it was originally İzmir Second High School for Boys, the caption for the famous picture of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk[4] captured as he was leaving the building with a crowd of students said it was originally İzmir High School for Girls, and finally, when I was old enough to step into the building myself and had a chance to ask one of the long-serving teachers the same question, he said that it was originally a Greek School but he was not able to recall the name

[3]The names given to five entrances to the park signify some symbolical names and dates in relation to the Turkish "National Struggle": Lausanne and Montreux, respectively, referring to the peace treaty in 1923 and a substantial convention in 1936 with identical names, and Republic, referring to the new regime; August 26th and September 9th, respectively indicates the first and the final days of the last phase of the Greco-Turkish War in 1922, the Turkish "Great Offensive", the final day of which was also declared the "Liberation" of İzmir.

[4]The founder and the first president of the Turkish Republic whom I will call as such while referring to him within a context before 1934 when he was given the surname Atatürk. I will be using this name for references after 1934.

of the school other than its first letter that should have been "E". That was thanks to a group of visitors from Greece[5], he told me, whose ancestors were not only from Smyrna but were also among the people who were affiliated with the school and the construction of the very building back in the day. Narrating what he has learned from meeting these unexpected visitors who "came from far away only to see our school with all those documents and maps with them", the teacher told me that the ancestors of the visitors had cared about the school so much that they had paid attention to every detail at the time of the construction of its new building, including the "E" shape of its footprint dedicated to the name of the school. In addition, he implied that the school principal and himself were not willing to talk much more with the visitors out of the anxiety that the visitors might want to "take back" the school since they had brought "many documents in Greek" with them. Needless to say, this conversation has left me with even more confusion about the past as a fresh high school student who was yet again reminded of the abovementioned anxiety along with some crumbs of information regarding the past of the city and the story of the Evangeliki/Evangelical School.

Fast forward a decade, it has become much more than a giant "E" in the satellite images and maps of my neighborhood as I finally have some more satisfying answers through which I appreciate that it was the pivotal Greek educational institution for boys in Smyrna since as early as 1733 (Protypo Gymnasio Evangelikis Scholis Smyrnis n.d.). Meanwhile, the building turned out to be an ambitious project for the Greek Evangelical School for Boys to move in, in a Greek revivalist architectural-style building to include an archeological museum, an extensive natural science collection, and a library with more than forty thousand books and hundreds of rare manuscripts (Arhontakis and Vartholomaiou 2022) Its groundbreaking ceremony took place in 1909 with the attendance of the leading figures of the Greek Orthodox community of Smyrna, and it was completed in August 1922 (Amygdalou 2015). That was only days before the fire.

When it comes to the latter school, İzmir Atatürk High School, here comes another similar story but with a much more intensive personal background, since I studied there between 2011 and 2015 while at the same time I worked as the voluntary tour guide of the school and of the school museum that was opened in 2013 in the Greek House that is located in the front yard of the school. This school as well is adjacent to the Kültürpark and its campus stretches out from Lausanne Square to Montreux Square both of which open up into the park beneath monumental entrances bearing

[5]Presumably, Takis Tcakiris was among these visitors. On May 21, 2013, Yüzleşme Workshop invited him to İzmir for a talk entitled "Do You Recognize This Building? Here and There: Memories from the Evangelical School in İzmir and in Nea Smyrni. My encounter with the teacher who has met the visitors was around that time.

Figure 2.1 :The “skewed” orientation and the haunting “E” as surviving ruins. The building of Namık Kemal High School and its surroundings. Source: OpenStreetMap.

the same names as their respective square. Despite the historical main building of the school being placed in the middle of a large area partly covered with woods and hence far from the streets circulating it; it stands out with its massive three-story neoclassical structure painted in a distinctive yellow, monumental main entrance with a propylaeum composed of four ionic columns carrying a triangular pediment, impressive double-winged wood gates adorned with yellow crystal glasses, and a group of illuminated signs on top of its roof. The latter used to consist of separate signs for three numbers and three letters (of the word yıl, year in Turkish) indicating the current age of the school which are now accompanied by three more illuminated signs with pictures of Atatürk, the Turkish flag, and the school logo on them. These signs and especially the numeric part that is being switched every summer for one greater number constitute my earliest memory about the school, leaving me with the question “How come this school had been named after Atatürk when he was only 7 years old?” since the logo manifests the year 1888 as its foundation year - and the birth year of Atatürk was 1881 as one of the first pieces of knowledge I have ever memorized. As soon as I got older enough to realize that this did not make any sense, I started asking a familiar question “What is/was this building?”. However, this time, the answers were seemingly consistent regarding the name of the school.

Following the years of watching the numbers on the roof switch while dreaming of becoming a student there one day, the first day at school proved my ambition right as we were immediately introduced to the short history of the school during the school tour. Its history was proudly enmeshed with the history of the Turk-

ish nation, the independence of the country, the "liberation" of the city, and the foundation of the modern nation-state as a secular republic: Its nameless students who were around our age had been martyred after attending the military voluntarily during the Battle of Gallipoli, the school has applied to be granted with an İstiklal/Independence Medal that were typically reserved for individuals who had contributed to the Turkish "National Struggle", and furthermore, among its former students and teachers were well-known "big guns" including fellow fighters of Mustafa Kemal, generals, early prime ministers and numerous ministers, mayors, industrialists, authors, scientists alongside other familiar figures from the history books. They were all men and the school was a high school for boys only anyway, for more than a century until the late 90's. Besides, Mustafa Kemal, the "Headteacher" himself, had visited the school twice. On his second visit in 1931, he had also paid a surprise visit to a classroom during a geometry class and he was photographed while standing on the teacher's platform, examining one of the students writing on the blackboard. Perhaps since as soon as this iconic picture started circulating, the school has been identifying and promoting itself with that very moment, as being "the school where even Atatürk taught a class." Through such a militarized, masculinized, and nationalized narrative, our responsibility was clarified as students of this vocally "symbolical stronghold" of secularism and Kemalism: to behave as proper bearers of this legacy. Having already been familiar with such narratives through my compatible privileged social location and background, I was committed and confident to do so. Therefore, when we were introduced and assigned to memorize the school anthem for our first music class, my only questioning reaction had to do with a rather technical detail. We were told that the anthem was composed by the famous musician Ahmed Adnan Saygun in 1933 when he was one of the music teachers at the school, and the second stanza of its lyrics was the following: "High school gives life to our enlightened ideals / Science is our love, Turkishness is our glory / Our Gazi shows us the way to go / Long live the Turkish Nation, long live our homeland / The free voice of a free homeland gives us faith /May it live forever İzmir Atatürk High School". The detail is about the year again. Since Mustafa Kemal was given his surname Atatürk in 1934, it made sense that in the lyrics he was referred to as Gazi (meaning war veteran, perhaps his most prevalent epithet before 1934) unlike the name of the school bearing his not-yet-existing surname. That was how I developed an obsession with "correcting" the short history of the school to make sure that it would circulate as much as possible with all its splendor.

Visiting the city archive (Ahmet Piriştina İzmir City Archive and Museum) other than every public library and old book store that I could access at the time in search of references regarding the past of the school, it was not that challenging to

Figure 2.2 :The picture displaying the front façade and (soon-to-be demolished) the street entrance of the former Greek Central Girls' School and then İzmir High School for Boys (today's İzmir Atatürk High School) that had moved in recently at the time. Although this has been among the most recognizable and circulating old pictures of the school during my time there, I realize that we have never noticed how apparent it is that the signboard (that reads High School for Boys) had been placed on top of the original structure. The date of the picture should be between 1923 when the name on display became official and 1925-26 when the front yard was enlarged towards the fire zone at the expense of the former street footprint. Source: The Museum of İzmir Atatürk High School.

update the story by bringing together the following brief timeline: It was founded as İzmir Mekteb-i İdasisi (as the city's first modern Ottoman public high school for boys based on the Maarif-i Umümiyye Nizamnamesi, General Education Regulation, of 1869) in 1886 (not in 1888 as the school logo suggests) in a dedicated building that was immediately adjacent to Konak, the Government House (Tınal 1999, 13-14) , overlooking the pivotal public square pinned by the later unrivaled symbolic landmark of the cityscape, the clock tower. In 1910, it was renamed İzmir Mekteb-i Sultanisi (an upgraded and extended organization for the Ottoman public high school institution) and functioned as such until 1920 when the Greek authority (1919-1922) dissolved it and transformed its building as the court of justice (Ürük 2008). After the Kemalist authority took control of the city in 1922, the court of justice was not relocated, but instead, another vacant but rather intact building in the heart of the fire zone[6] left by Greeks was appropriated for the school to move in

[6]"Our school, together with the church, was resembling an island amidst yanıklık (the fire zone)." wrote

with its new name: İzmir High School for Boys (Tınal 1999, 70). (Figure 2.2) It was said to have been used by Greeks as a hospital during the war and as a nursery school before that. In 1936, its branch was opened to meet the increasing demand in the nearby (Figure 2.5) building that is now familiar to us: the former Evangeliki School, then İzmir High School for Girls, and soon-to-be İzmir Second High School for Boys when the branch was declared a separate entity in 1939, leading to another renaming for the first one to be, as expected, İzmir First High School for Boys (75-76). Finally in 1942, the first was renamed Atatürk by then-president İsmet İnönü's instruction during his visit to the school, and therefore, the second was automatically renamed İnönü (101). Meanwhile, the lyrics of the school anthem needed only a tiny touch with the replacement of the word erkek (for boys) to Atatürk...

Figure 2.3 :A look from one surviving ruin to its counterpart: from the building of the Greek Central Girls' School (today's İzmir Atatürk High School) to the building of the Evangelical Greek School for Boys (today's Namık Kemal High School). Following a decade-long familiarity with the picture above, it was only during the field study that I came across the approximate reverse angle below (Notice the main entrance in the bottom right). This angle allows us to see into some parts of the ruins of the Greek neighborhoods. From the same angle today, the spectator would not be able to see the other building since the area between is covered by the great trees of Kültürpark, and later by apartment blocks including the ones I lived in. The date of the picture should be between 1922 and 1925-26, after the fire and before the enlargement of the front yard. Source: Nejat Yentürk Collection.

Especially between 2012 and 2015, I have told the extended version of this story cou-

Samim Kocagöz who was studying there at the time: "Even in the 1930s, in the middle of İzmir fire's ruins as far as the eye can see, stood this school left by Greek, with the church adjacent to it. Its outer walls were made of rubbles that were carried from the ruins (...) a little away from the outer entrance was fire ruins like a mountain." (Kocagöz 1989, 55-56, quoted in, Tınal 1999, 76)

Figure 2.4 :A look from one surviving ruin to its counterpart but from the opposite direction and roughly a century later. The roof of the Central Girls' School/İzmir Atatürk High School from which the earlier picture was taken is barely visible through the trees today. Picture taken by the author from the roof of the Evangelical School/Namık Kemal High School.

pled with its highly celebrated militarized, masculinized, and nationalized narrative tirelessly as the voluntary tour guide of the school and the school museum. The audience for this walking tour which typically lasted for up to an hour was mostly crowded groups of middle school senior year students who wish to get accepted to the school, their teachers and families, groups of alumni, and groups of students at the time. Thus, more than 5 thousand visitors took the walking tour with me in more than 150 separate tours. I was also frequently called by the school principal to repeat the story when he had official visitors and local press members who were eager to make news, particularly about the 125th-year celebrations of the school in 2013 which included the restoration and opening of the school museum (reopened in 2017 as İzmir City Museum for the History of Education despite the collection remained limited to the limited history of the school). In short, the story consisted of the Turkified story of the school and the buildings, combining the pre-1920 story of the school in Konak with the post-1922 story of its current campus while slurring over the pre-1922 memory, except for three moments throughout the tour: The mo-

ment in the beginning of the tour when I wrongfully claim that the ionic columns we pass by were spolias excavated from Agora, the nearby archeological site of the ancient Greek city; the moment we gather in the "columned hall" underneath the "broken bell" hung on the wall, the only pre-1922 object remained in the building other than several taş ayna (stone mirror, the name of mirrors produced with a distinguished artistic style) and two ruined pianos, when I tell the "ghost stories" passed down by the boarding students referring to the "ghosts" of the school who was responsible for the breaking of that uncanny bell, tacitly referring to the ghosts of the Greeks who had died in the building during its so-called hospital days and still wander around the tunnels underneath the building that were once functioned as the mortuary according to legend; and the moment we are about to enter the museum when I state the obvious and tell that the building is a Greek house that was partly in ruins for the last couple of decades before its restoration and its earlier function as the residence of the school principle, it belonged to a Greek family. (Figure 2.5)

Then, the ghosts were unearthed as the tours were going on, twice, through a picture and a "stone". These "discoveries" led the memory of the Greek school to spill over its repressed and ambiguous presence within the narrative of the story of the school. Beyond the above mentioned moments, now the presence of the Greek past had a name: Kentrikon Parthenagogeion/Central Girls' School. Firstly, the picture (Figure 2.6) was shared on one of many social media accounts formed by different cohorts and alumni groups via another acclaimed social media account dedicated to the old pictures of İzmir. I clearly remember the confusion I felt, among other commenters, when I saw the circulating picture for the first time: "What are these girls doing in our school?", "Were they allowed in schools before Atatürk anyway?", "What about the more-than-a-century history of the legendary high school for boys?", "What alphabet was used to write that handwritten note anyway?", "It must have been taken in another look-alike building, or perhaps another country, right?"... Then came the stone. (Figure 2.7) As the restoration of the Greek house was about to be completed, a monumental stone hidden in the storage of the school became a current issue. I remember our history teacher talking about that big old stone, actually an inscription she was shown in the storage. "It sheds light on the history of our school and it is covered with people's names, written in Greek", she told us. I was confused again. "How could it have something to do with the history of our school if it was in Greek?". We guessed that we would learn more about it when we had a chance to see it ourselves in the school museum that was about to be opened at the time. "After all, it should be removed from its decaying place in the storage and find its way to the museum, right?". Soon, I received my answer thanks to a tour I

Figure 2.5 :Three surviving ruins together: The school building together with the Greek house (today's school museum) across its left wing, and the Roman Catholic St. John's Cathedral (the "Dom" Church as non-Christian locals call it today) partly visible on the very left. These three were said to have survived the fire thanks to the large yards of the school and the church preventing the flames from engulfing the buildings. The other dome visible near the seafront belongs to the Italian School for Girls (soon to be demolished). The building fully visible on the top right, then the French Consulate and today's Arkas Art Center, constitutes another exception in terms of remaining up to this day as one of the seven surviving ruins (among over two hundred) located on the famous Smyrna Quay, Kordon or Kordonboyu, either intact or partly in ruins. The date of the picture should be between 1935 when the construction of the Parachute Tower from where the picture was taken started to be built, and 1936, when the Kültürpark was inaugurated and its distinguished outer walls visible on the bottom right were completed. Notice that it was 14 years after the fire and despite the greater part of the fire zone having been cleared to pave the way for Kültürpark that year, some other parts remained in debris for years to come. Behind the school in the picture for instance, approximately where the famous Fasula Square once stood, one of these not-yet cleared parts is visible. (Poulimenos 2022)

attended with my family. It was a tour dedicated to the remaining churches of the city and we were heading towards the above mentioned Dom Church adjacent to the school. Our guide, a renowned archeologist and tour guide[7] , made us stop by the school and told us about its pre-1922 story. I was left speechless, with a mixture of confusion and shame, both because I was not able to find almost any of these details

[7]I refrain from referring to this beloved person since I was not able to contact him to confirm what exactly happened to the stone since he sadly passed away in 2015 and this tour was the last time I saw him. I had a chance to participate in some of his tours as a child and I am deeply grateful to him for introducing me to what we were not taught at school, the multicultural layers of memory embedded in the city, and eventually, to my school

myself to add them on my tours, and simultaneously because I felt like I was not sure whether I would have wished to learn about them in the first place, since they pose a considerable challenge to the militarized, masculinized, and nationalized narratives I had born into, found myself through, and reproduced daily. For this reason, when I asked the guide whether he knew about that very stone and he told me that it had "unfortunately disappeared within the knowledge of the school principal", I was both shocked and disappointed while at the same time, I could not help myself from asking myself questions to legitimize the situation: "Why would they do such thing, could it have been for good?". I finally got a grasp of what was going on when the disappearance of this monument was soon followed by the appearance of another monument in the school's backyard with the personal initiative of the same principal, who was a vocal Turkish ultranationalist. It was nothing but a brand new Atatürk monument. Although the school already had three of them built in different decades[8], one in the front yard, one in the columned hall, and one in the backyard; the latter one with a sole bust on top of a tall and blank pedestal was removed and the new statue now defining a secondary ceremonial ground with its layout was erected and attached by an expanded inscription of a quote by Atatürk: "How happy is the one who says 'I am a Turk'".

Fast forward a decade once again, the hegemonic narrative I have tried to describe in detail so far, upon which my hometown and my school were built has completely collapsed for me, gradually and painfully at first, and dramatically but still painfully later on. Following the invitations by the surviving ruins around me, from the stone walls passing through the olive groves in Urla to Greek houses all around, from Evangeliki to Kentrikon in the fire zone, from the "haunting" broken bell to the broken monument, the breaches of the narrative kept expanding and paved the way for a transforming (self) confrontation and coming to terms with the past. This thesis primarily stands for an attempt towards politicizing and making a more creative sense out of this transformation while hopefully functioning as a journal that brings together other stories of transformation, perhaps going hand in hand with the stories of other (or perhaps common) surviving ruins of Smyrna/İzmir. Lastly, before delving into the literature and theory, I should complete this extended personal introduction by fulfilling a self-assigned responsibility by introducing an alternative version of the story of my high school, to challenge and unlearn the earlier version that I used to commit to.

As Vasso and Maria (2007) present, founded by the Greek Orthodox community of Smyrna in 1830/1834, Kentrikon Parthenagogeion/Central Girls' School was the first

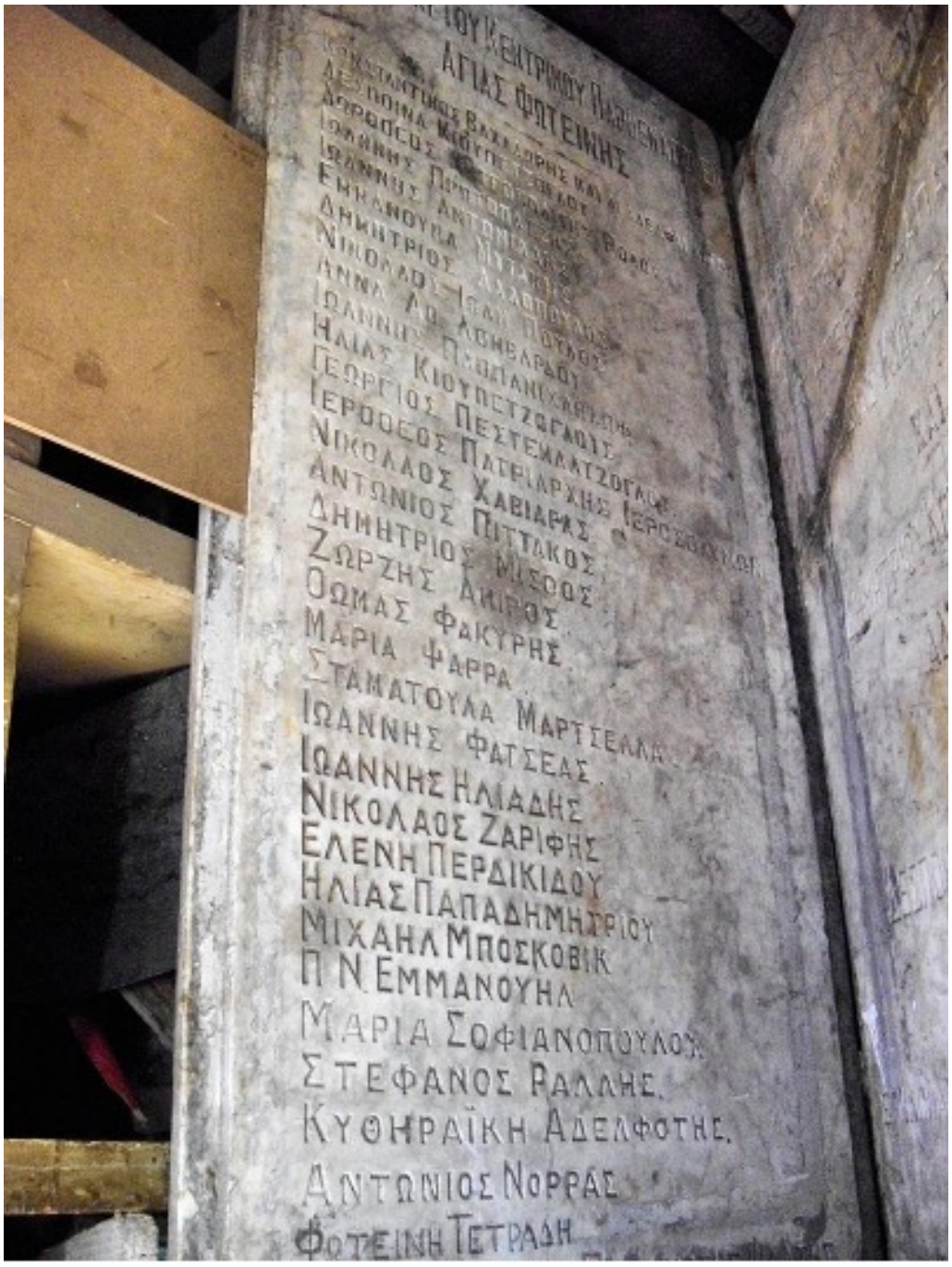
[8]For an illuminating further discussion on periodizations of Atatürk monuments and their detailed political and artistic analysis, see Tekiner 2010)

Figure 2.6 : The "confusing" picture circulating on social media groups affiliated with students, teachers, and alumni of İzmir Atatürk High School: A group of students and teachers posing in front of the monumental entrance of the Central Girls' School of Smyrna. Date unknown. The hand-written text above reads "Οί δίπλωματούχοι τού διδασκαλείου Κεντρικον Παρθεναγωγείου Σμύρνης μετά τών καθηγητών τωγ" (The diploma holders of the Central Girls' School of Smyrna in front of the teachers). The date of the picture should be between 1912, when the building was inaugurated, and 1922. Translated by the author.
Source: İzmir Atatürk High School Alumni Association

girls' school in the city (alongside the nearby Armenian Hripsimyants Girls' School which was founded by Hripsime Gostantyan, a pioneer of women movement, in 1830's (Kosyan 1899, cited in, Hrant Dink Foundation n.d.)). Initially located in one of the rooms of the pivotal Greek hospital in the city, established in 1723 and later known as the Agios Charalambos Hospital (Dardalis 2005), the school was moved to the precinct of the Agia Fotini Cathedral, the seat of the Orthodox Metropolis of Smyrna, in 1840 and operated there until 1878. This period was marked by the long term of Sappho Leontias, a renowned educator and feminist[9], as the headmaster, who led the school's upgrade to a full gymnasium (high school). It was referred to as

[9]Apart from her terms in Kentrikon in 1863-77 and 1887-91, she served in other Greek girls' schools in Smyrna, Samos, and Constantinople. In her former term in the school, among her students was Polyxeni Loizias, who became a pioneer of education and feminism in Cyprus and published the first women's journal of the island Kypriaki Kypseli between 1912 and 1920. REF Cpr. She wrote in the women's journal Eurydice which was edited and published by her sister Emilia Ktena Leontias. The 76-volume journal published between 1870-73 in Constantinople was the second Greek women's journal of the Ottoman Empire, (Dalakoura 2012), only after Kypsel", a 6-volume monthly journal published by Eufrosyne Samartzidou. (Women's Museum İstanbul 2012).

Figure 2.7 : The surviving picture of the unsettling discovery of the then-surviving monument displaying the names of the people who contributed to the construction of the new building of the Central Girls' School. Above the list of people's names, the legible part of the title reads: *"...ΤΟΥ ΚΕΝΤΡΙΚΟΥ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΑΓΩΓΕΙΟΥ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΦΩΤΕΙΝΗΣ"* (...of the Agia Fotini Kentrikon Parthenagogeion/Central Girls' School). Translated by the author. The picture was taken around 2013. Courtesy of Ümit Eser.



Agia Fotini Central Girls' School even after it temporarily moved to a larger building in (now defunct) Rodon Street and finally relocated to its first dedicated building in (now defunct but corresponds to the current location) Meimaroglou Street in 1886

with its 1100 students. In 1900, by the Greek Ministry of Education, the school's education was recognized as equal to the Arsakeion Girls' School in Athens, the pioneering educational institution for girls in Greece. Finally, given the need for a higher capacity as well as the competition with other girls' schools in the city, a much larger building was decided to be built upon the former one, and the Athenian architect Karathanasopoulos was invited to Smyrna in 1908 to build the current Greek revivalist architectural-style building between 1909 and 1912. The names of the Greek Orthodox community at the time who contributed to the building were inscribed on a monumental stone (Figure 1.6). With the inauguration of the new building, the school had sections dedicated to a kindergarten, a six-year primary school, a four-year high school, and subsections for commerce, teaching, and nursery education. It also consisted of "branches" in surrounding Greek neighborhoods, with the following (all now defunct) seven primary schools for girls being under its supervision: Tou Agiou Pnevmatos (in the district of Agios Dimitrios), Kiupetzoglio School (in the district with the identical name), Agia Aikaterini (in the district and adjacent to the church with the identical name), Kolettio School (in the district of Agios Georgios), Metamorfosis (adjacent to the church with the identical name in the district of Mortaikia), Akasoglio School (in the district of Evangelistria), and Agios Tryphonos (in the district and adjacent to the church with the identical name). At its peak, during its only decade in function as such towards 1922, Central Girls' School had 3000 students, together with its branches.

Among them was Olga Vatiodu, a Smyrniot Greek woman who had a chance to pay a visit to İzmir in 1952, thirty years after 1922 when she was forced to leave her hometown, and her school, at the age of 17. She was an exceptional student who was already writing for literature journals published in Smyrna as early as 1921 (Baydar and Eser 2020). Thankfully, she also wrote a memoir Thirty Years of Longing[10] covering her exceptional visit, through which she narrates her mourn over the "death" of a city:

> "I am stubbornly searching for the broken marbles to see if I, too, can perhaps find a familiar inscription or a sign that would write down our returnless journey in history. But I cannot find anything. My lands only speak to me of a painful history. A white feeling rising from the ashes gives a powerful and cruel response to my thoughts (...) Wherever I give my mind in this sweet paradise, I look everywhere, from this

[10]Its single edition Ste Smyrne to Proto Proskynema/The First Visit to İzmir was published in Greek right after the visit, fortunately, it was edited and translated into Turkish almost seven decades later in 2020, by Ayça Baydar and Ümit Eser.

> newly created place to the ashes hidden under all this ground, and I get entangled in the chain of legends." (Vatidou 1952, in Baydar and Eser 2020, 73)

Her search for familiarity brings her also to her school where she reunites with the columned ceremonial hall "still untouched, perfectly intact, makes you think it waits for something", the school's chapel "whose alter was emptied" (The school chapel corresponds to the main teacher's lounge today.), the "twisted" school bell "hung in the middle, still inviting one to the class, still the same" (There appears the "broken bell"!), the house of Benakis, the doctor, standing adjacent to the right wing of the building "survived completely" (ibid, 79-81)... (There comes the previously nameless Greek house that corresponds to the school museum!) As she wanders around the building, she describes what she calls "the pain of the stone that eats its own tears": "A heartbreaking scream, a painful harmony brought about by the magnificence of the building, echoes from its ceilings. This hits my soul deeply and causes irreparable pain (...) Of all the black ruins, this whole white building makes me cry the most." (ibid, 80). She finishes her school tour on its rooftop with her eyes "catching the whole city of İzmir": "No, this is not Izmir. This is just the green wreath on his grave. The park that covered this poor corpse. Above this, a ghost disguised as an angel is floating in the sky. The ghost of friendship. It has large blue and red wings and it proudly spreads them over human suffering" (ibid, 81). As she leaves the city with a final cry, she greets its ghosts once again: "Lost hometowns are not lost! The sleepless lamps in the fallen temples have not yet gone out. As long as ghosts still exist in their invisible depths, nothing is lost. As long as there is faith, love, memory." (ibid, 81).

Today, in the Nea Smyrni (New Smyrna) district of Athens where many Smyrniot Greeks were settled after 1922, stands two high schools: Nea Evangeliki and Kentrikon, since 1934 and 1978 respectively (Belitsos et al. 2013) dedicated to the "faith, love, and memories" of the two schools that stand still in the heart(s) of Smyrna/İzmir. (Figure 2.8)

Figure 2.8 : The cover page of the school magazine Anoixi/Spring's issue (The English translation of the subtitle would read: "Bulletin of the Central 2nd High School for Girls of N(ew) Smyrna") from 1978 when the school was renamed Kentrikon after the one in the cover picture, welcoming students and greeting its new counterpart 56 years later.
Source: Digitized Collections of the Greek Literary and Historical Archive (ELIA).

ΑΝΟΙΞΗ

Δελτίο τοῦ Κεντρικοῦ Β' Λυκείου Θηλέων Ν. Σμύρνης

ΕΤΟΣ Α' ΣΕΠΤΕΜΒΡΙΟΣ 1978 ΑΡΙΘ. 1

ΑΦΙΕΡΩΜΑ

Τὸ Κεντρικὸν Παθεναγωγεῖον Σμύρνης

ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ

3. THE CENTENNIAL, COUNTERING, AND REMEMBERING

3.1 The Silent Centennial?

As the centennial of the Republic of Turkey was approaching towards 2023, one centennial was followed by another, marking the passing of exactly hundred years of certain key dates of the official Turkish historiography, including September 9 and September 13 in 2022, standing for the centennial of the "Liberation of İzmir" and the outbreak of the Great Fire, respectively. These centennials led to local and national governmental authorities, with their collaborating partners, to organize a number of commemorations and celebrations in İzmir, mostly in the form dedicated exhibitions, particular installations in brand new museums, and public ceremonies.[11] Before delving into the alternative commemorations or counter-memory works on the memory of the Great Fire later in this chapter, I will first discuss some examples of the Great Fire of 1922 being publicly revisited - or visited for the first time. These examples include a full-scale exhibition under the auspices of a district municipality in September 2022 (entitled Ateş Çemberinde İzmir/İzmir Encircled by the Fire), a much smaller photography exhibition by the metropolitan municipality in September 2022 (entitled Büyük İzmir Yangını 1922/The Great Fire of İzmir 1922), and a dedicated room to the memory of the Great Fire with an unprecedented representation of it in the 100.Yıl Anı Evi/Centennial Memorial House opened by the metropolitan municipality in September 2022. On the other hand, with two other examples, I will display how the silencing of the memory of the Great Fire was reproduced in its centennial and how the re/visits to it simply remained absent in these two overreaching incidents that marked the cityscape with their own spectacularities. The first one is the centennial public celebration organized by the

[11] For further discussion and detailed analysis of some of the materials and narratives involved in these commemorations and celebrations, see Janson (2023). Furthermore, co-written by Janson, myself, and Biray Kolluoğlu, our upcoming article (expected to be published in early 2025) entitled "Stirring up the Ashes: Exhibiting the Great Fire of Smyrna in the Context of Turkish Memory-Politics" also aims to broaden the discussion.

metropolitan municipality on September 9 that attracted hundreds of thousands of people to İzmir's Kordon and the second one is Ahmet Güneştekin's popular exhibition entitled Gavur Mahallesi/Infidel Quarter opened in November 2022 in the metropolitan municipality's venue Atlas Pavilion located in the heart of Kültürpark, also attracting hundreds of thousands of peoples.

Curated by Aybala and Nejat Yentürk from their unrivaled personal collections of photography and postcards related to İzmir, the exhibition Ateş Çemberinde İzmir/İzmir Encircled by the Fire was opened on September 11, ironically right in between the two abovementioned centennial events. The opening also marked the inauguration of its venue named Çatı Bostanlı by the Karşıyaka municipality which is noteworthy because the curators were not able to convince the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality to host the exhibition and when they brought the idea to Cemil Tugay (the mayor of Karşıyaka then and the mayor of metropolitan municipality as of 2023), he enabled this exhibition to be the opening exhibition of this brand new municipal venue.[12] The exhibition stands as the most extensive exhibition in İzmir to this date that centers the Great Fire and deserves attention for directly and openly revisiting the memory of the fire and for doing so publicly in collaboration with the local authorities. However, the threefold layout of the exhibition that is composed of respective parts dedicated to the official Turkish timeline of the "National Struggle," to the fires of the Western Anatolia towards the end of the Greco-Turkish War, and the Great Fire in 1922 reveal that the focal point of the exhibition is the Western Anatolian fires encircling İzmir, rather than the Great Fire that literally encircled it. Thus, the exhibition points to the question "Who set the fire?" again by underlining the responsibility of the Greek army for the Western Anatolian fires with the emphasized objective of rechanneling the focus away from the almost trivialized Great Fire. Interestingly, while doing so, the exhibition still reserves a large section for the pictures of the latter with a large-scale installation that depicts the fire zone (Figure 3.1). Besides, the narrative refrains from openly answering the question "Who set the fire?" and aligning itself with the official Turkish answer to this question, even though the official historiography dominates the rest of the exhibition. Yet, in another part of the exhibition where Western Anatolia is mapped, İzmir is marked as one of "the cities burnt down by the Greeks" which contradicts with the reluctance to address this question in the narration of the Great Fire itself.

[12]Nejat Yentürk, interview by the author, İzmir, September 16, 2023.

Figure 3.1 : The Fire Zone in the exhibition *Ateş Çemberinde İzmir*/İzmir Encircled by the Fire. Photograph by the author.

The second exhibition was opened exactly on the centennial day in its rather humble but central venue located in Kültürpark, named İzmir Sanat, that is owned by the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality. Büyük İzmir Yangını 1922/The Great Fire of İzmir 1922 was a 3-weeks-long photography exhibition that was also a rare example of remembering the Great Fire as well as marking its anniversary, especially in collaboration with the local government. Even though the narrative of this tiny exhibition did not strictly repeat the official Turkish narrative firstly by underlining the significance of the fire rather than trivializing it, and also by not directly relying on the Turkish claims of responsibility for the fire, it reproduced the silencing of the memory of the space. In other words, the venue of the exhibition stood on the fire zone and the pictures on display mostly showed the Greek and Armenian neighborhoods before, during, and after the fire. However, these memories were silenced through the narrative by the simplified description that identified them as "some buildings and neighborhoods of historical significance" without providing further details, let alone reminding the visitors that the exhibition venue itself stands on these grounds (Kültür Sanat İBB 2022).

The 100.Yıl Anı Evi/Centennial Memorial House was opened in the same week, on September 16, 2022. It was a project of the İzmir Metropolitan Municipality with the restoration of a historical building known as Yemişçizade Mansion located in today's Kestelli neighborhood, one of the predominantly Muslim "upper class neighborhoods" that was outside the fire zone. To bring together the collection of the memorial house, the municipality announced a public call for donations of the

items that are related to the city's past, specifically from 1914 to 1930. Besides, the donated items should have been about one of the following themes "World War I, the Occupation of İzmir, the National Struggle, the Liberation of İzmir, İzmir Economic Congress, the proclamation of the Republic, the revolutions of Atatürk, Efeler, etc." (İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi 2022). Obviously, the Great Fire of 1922 was not one of the themes that was included in this call. Interestingly, however, a sizeable room on the upper floor was devoted to its memory. Despite the lack of textual narration in the room (even the name of the room is "What is Seen from the Window" and has no direct or indirect reference to the fire), the visual representation of the Great Fire is unprecedented for any other museum in İzmir, for two reasons. Firstly, the installation that gives the room its name invites the visitors to a window that opens up to a smaller room where a moment capturing the city's waterfront at the time of the Great Fire is depicted in great detail (Figure 3.2). Secondly, on the right side of the window, a screen is reserved for a repetitive slide show for the pictures taken during and after the Great Fire. A long list of the significant buildings that were burnt down during the fire is attached to the slide show, through which the silencing of the fire zone's and the city's pre-1922 memory seem to be interrupted for a moment since the list reveals the names of numerous now-defunct buildings in the Greek, Armenian, and Levantine neighborhoods.

Figure 3.2 : "What is Seen by the Window" in the Centennial Memory House. Photograph by the author.

Unlike these examples that somehow revisit and bring attention to the memory of the Great Fire on its very centennial, providing slight shifts from the official Turkish historiography in which the memory of the Great Fire is almost absent, the exhibition Gavur Mahallesi/Infidel Quarter and the centennial public celebration effectively reproduced that absence. Ahmet Güneştekin's exhibition was opened in November

2022, in Kültürpark's central Atlas Pavillon, another venue of the Metropolitan Municipality. The extensive exhibition focused on cultural diversity and the memories of migration, with an emphasis on the memory of Mübadele, and attracted more than one and half million visitors in 6 months (İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi 2023). However, the record-breaking exhibition with its number of visitors, only comparable to the annual International Fair also in Kültürpark, did not include any textual or visual reference to or even mention of the infidel quarters and thus, the fire zone and the fire itself. Such absence becomes even more striking, I argue, especially given that the venue of the exhibition sits on the grounds of the infidel quarters, and its duration almost corresponds to the centennial of their destruction by the Great Fire.

A similar absence marked another record-breaking incident on September 9, 2022. On that evening, hundreds of thousands of people gathered in the city's famous waterfront, Kordon (the western and natural border of the fire zone) to celebrate the centennial of "the Liberation of İzmir" and witness "the most magnificent celebration in the history of the Republic" as Tunç Soyer, then mayor of İzmir, called it in front of "the largest production ever in the country's history" in terms of the size of the stage and the screens (İzmir Büyükşehir Belediyesi 2022). The celebration was composed of various events throughout the day, ranging from military helicopters playing zeybek in the air to a torchlight procession, from a theatrical performance with a huge stage show to the megastar Tarkan's concert in the final. A narration accompanied the events throughout the day until the concert part arrived. As expected, the theatrical performance that replicated moments of historical significance mainly from the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922 concluded with the representation of September 9, through the scene where the Turkish flag symbolizing the "Liberation of İzmir" was raised on the famous balcony of the Government House in Konak. When the scene ended and the screens on the stage entirely turned red with separate Turkish flags on each of them, there were enough reasons to believe that it was the end of the show following such a climax. Yet, for about thirty seconds, the screens gradually turned gray and black with footages of smoke and flames over the city's silhouette. The narration was in utter silence at that moment and there was no other reference to the Fire on the stage. With this brief transition, the show continued with a group of dancers simultaneously rushing to the stage with the narration announcing that now "the year is 1923." Those thirty seconds stayed with me ever since as a powerful symbolic moment that reveals by itself the ambivalence of how absent or present the memory of the Great Fire could become in today's İzmir. The Great Fire was right there in front of the eyes of hundreds of thousands of İzmirians who were standing right on the fire zone where tens of thousands of İzmirians

were perished by the fire a century ago -without the presence of any attempt to remember, connect with or mourn them.

3.2 Surviving Ruins and Stories: Tracing Smyrna in İzmir

As briefly discussed in the earlier subchapter, the centennial of the Great Fire in İzmir was largely overshadowed by other centennials and the reproduction of the official Turkish historiography by official actors, although with some tiny shifts or cracks within that narrative. In this subchapter, I present the counter-memory works regarding the memory of the Great Fire by the non-official and mostly local actors who have been pushing for the abovementioned shifts and cracks through their own creative actions to commemorate the Great Fire and the city before it. I argue that these actions collectively and gradually reclaim and unsilence, in Trouillot's terms (1995), the sources, archives, narratives, and eventually, history, both the history of Smyrna/İzmir as well as the history of the Republic. . While doing so, the collection of these counter-memory works in the form of commonly interconnected memory walks, public gatherings, workshops, exhibitions, art works, counter-monuments, counter-archives etc. present valuable insights about how unsilencing the past, as a spectrum, is made possible in the case of the memory activism related to the Great Fire. In what follows, I discuss the stories of these counter-memory works, as well as of the people and initiatives that actualized them, in terms of the ways in which the invitations of the surviving ruins and their surviving stories intersect with each other and in terms of the workings "multidirectional memory" (Rothberg 2009).

3.2.1 The Second Traditional Militurizm Festival (2005)

Even though it was not mainly motivated by or dedicated to the memories of the pre-1922 city and the Great Fire, I consider the Second Traditional Militurizm Festival in 2005 to mark the earliest attempt among the counter-memory works that constitute the field study of this thesis, the rest of which dating between 2012 and 2023. Militurizm Festival, in short, stands for a pivotal example of publicly challenging and coming to terms with the militarized, masculinized, and nationalized narrative and its spatial manifestation in the cityscape through a series of creative and joyful practices of antimilitarist public protests and commemorations. Named after the combination of the words 'militarism' and 'tourism' (militarizm and turizm in Turkish), its "first traditional" (a deliberate irony) counterpart was organized in

İstanbul in 2004. In 2005, İzmir hosted the second traditional Militurizm, and in 2016, Ankara became the host for the third time (and the last to this day). The dates of these consecutive festivals were fixed within the week of May 15th, marking International Conscientious Objection Day, "a day to celebrate those who have, and those who continue, to resist war, especially by refusing to be part of military structures" (War Resisters' International 2024). Unsurprisingly, the organization committee consisted of a group of conscientious objectors, total objectors, antimilitarists, and war resisters. Among them were two of my interviewees, Ferda Ülker and Coşkun Üsterci. According to them[13], when conscientious objector Uğur Yorulmaz brought forward the idea for Militurizm with his comrades, "their aim was genuinely to mock around" while simultaneously exposing the militarist culture permeated to the city. After attending the İstanbul festival, Ülker and Üsterci, alongside their İzmir-based fellows, took the initiative to bring the festival to İzmir.

The festival in İstanbul was held on May 15th, 2004. It started with a street theatre at Haydarpaşa Train Station, where a ceremony of "welcoming conscientious objectors" was performed to contrast the tradition of "sending off soldiers" regularly taking place at the very location. A city tour consisting of visits to some militarist symbols of the city followed. The first stop was Gülhane Military Medical Academy, for functioning as a "quality control center for humans" concerning the exemption from military service reports issued there for cis-heterosexual, able-bodied, Turkish citizen men who are otherwise subjected to compulsory military service, colloquially known as çürük raporu (rot report) in general and pembe tezkere (pink bill) in particular to the exemption reports based upon proofs of homosexuality and transsexuality. Other stops included Selimiye Barracks for being "one of the most glorious monuments of militarism", Nurol Holding for investing heavily in the war industry, Oyakbank for constituting a branch of OYAK (Military Solidarity Institution), Military Academies Command for obvious reasons, Beşiktaş Pier Square "under the auspices of military epaulets" where the concert part of the festival was organized, and lastly, Tepebaşı TÜYAP (now defunct exposition venue). In front of the final place, conscientious objector read their declarations, and another ceremony was performed: tüfek çatırdatma (crackling rifles) as opposed to the command and practice of tüfek çatma (stacking rifles). The festival ended with a "live exhibition of conchies," a session devoted to exchanging experiences (Üstündağ 2004). Similarly, the festival in Ankara took place on May 13-14, 2006, but with fewer participants and more police intervention. The venue for the ceremony of "welcoming conscientious objector" was Ankara Train Station, where the first press statement of the day was read in Militurizm style, accompanied by a joyful performance of breaking

[13]Coşkun Üsterci and Ferda Ülker, interview by the author, İzmir, March 23, 2023.

toy guns and playing tambourine, accordion, and darbuka. The first stop of the tour was the nearby memorial to the "Korean Martyrs" (Turkish soldiers who died during the Korean War). Antimilatist slogans were literally embodied throughout the tour, instantly written on the activists' clothes with dyes as the police tried to restrain chantings and banners. After tying black ribbons around the memorial, the group visited Machinery and Chemical Industry Corporation and Tandoğan Army House for another press statement. When the police blocked their way to the other planned stops, the infamous Mamak Military Prison, OYAK, and ASAL (Military Recruitment Agency), the group set forward to the Human Rights Monument at the intersections of Konur and Yüksel streets, where more toy guns were broken beside a Red Kit model attached to a banner: "You took his cigarette but forgot his gun." The festival's first day ended with music and dance performances, and the declarations of conscientious objection were left to the second day to merge with the panel discussion on "revolutions, soldiers, freedom" (Göker 2006).

Back in İzmir, the festival was organized on May 14th, 2005. It was not a coincidence that Ülker and Üsterci were involved, not only because of their experience from the previous year but also because they shared the memory of a series of similar demonstrations and commemorations organized throughout the previous decade. It was similar to İzmir's Militurizm both in terms of their creative and joyful forms and their content nourished by antimilitarism in tandem with a rather more visible emphasis on the city's rather distant past, including the memories of the pre-1922 city and the Great Fire, compared to the other two festivals. These included street theaters and performative demonstrations led by Ülker, for example, on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25th, "A-Bomb Day" on August 6th, commemorating the people from Hiroshima and Nagasaki who were massacred by the United States' nuclear attack, and as a part of protests dedicated to the victims of state violence in Turkey, within the context of "unidentified losses and murders."Another inspiring step towards İzmir's Militurizm has its roots in antimilitarist and anti-racist city tours led by Üsterci since as early as 1993, when the "alternative meeting" of ICOM (International Conscientious Objectors' Meeting) was hosted by İzmir-based Anti-war Association. The association organized the alternative tour several times by Üsterci, who was accompanied by conscientious objector Osman Murat Ülke. One of the stops was the September 9th Gate of Kültürpark in Basmane, near the central train station. There, Üsterci introduces the city's multicultural past with reference to Haynots (now defunct Armenian quarter), which corresponds to where they gathered at that point. He also points to the approximate location where the Great Fire was thought to be set within Haynots,

and commemorates the city's destruction as a part of the tour[14]. Arguably, this reclaimed memory of Basmane later became the reason why the commemorations of the Armenian Genocide were publicly organized in this unusual venue preference for such public demonstrations, the September 9th (colloquially, Basmane) Gate.

Militurizm also started at Basmane Train Station, again with the ceremony of "welcoming conscientious objectors" and the following statement: " We do not want this train station to be remembered as a place that split people from each other forever and sent them to kill and die.". After a remark on the area and its relationship with the Great Fire, the group headed to Kadifekale for a "bird's-eye view of the multicultural past" of İzmir enmeshed with its contemporary multiculturalism. Historically known as "Mount Pagos", this ancient acropolis and its foothills comprised the Muslim and Jewish neighborhoods or the "upper neighborhoods" of Smyrna at the time of the Great Fire that destroyed the "lower neighborhoods". Contemporarily, the area is known as "Mount Mardin" because the majority of its inhabitants are Kurdish migrants who were forcefully expelled from their villages in and around Mardin as a result of the systematic evacuation and destruction of the villages by the Turkish Army (Özar 2015; Jondergen 2010). At Kadifekale, the anti-war sentiments of the group met those of the neighborhood's inhabitants with a spontaneous parade. There, Üsterci declared the end of the 6-months-long "coming to terms campaign" regarding their call to confront the war within the country between the guerilla forces of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Turkish army. Meanwhile, the banners carried by the group included the following slogans: "Long live the sisterhood of peoples" (Bijî biratîya gelan, in Kurdish), "Freedom begins in disobedience" (Özgürlük itaatsizlikte başlar, in Turkish), and "NATO head, NATO marble (NATO kafa NATO mermer, in Turkish)[15]. The latter was rather dedicated to the next stop because the group then took the road to Buca, to NATO's stronghold headquarters in İzmir. The group demanded that headquarters be demolished to replace it partly with a women's shelter and partly with a vetch field. After the

[14] During our interview, Üsterci noted that as an İzmir-born child, he remembers his parents referring to Basmane and Kültürpark as yangınlık (the fire zone). Combining this reference with the "nationalist propaganda from the primary school onwards" as a schoolchild, he concluded that the fire zone was where "Greeks set to fire when running away" but also where "we thankfully liberated." He realized that "İzmir had another story and the Great Fire was another thing." when he came across books written by Stefanos Yerasimos at the prison library, as a convicted revolutionary at İzmir's infamous military prison in Buca. Through these books, he had the urge to confront the narrative of the Great Fire simultaneously with the official denialist narrative of the Armenian Genocide. He was also heavily inspired by another semi-autobiographical book repeatedly mentioned during my interviews, Forty Years of the Lost City, written by a Smyrna-born author, Kozmas Politis (1994), who depicts daily life in "the lost city" in great detail.

[15] Although the latter is a widely known proverb in Turkish that means "having a thick head" allegedly with an ambiguous reference to NATO as in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, this attribution appears to be a coincidence. The proverb is the adaptation of the Greek proverb with the same meaning: "Here's the head, here's the marble" (να το κεφάλι, να το μερμερι/na to kefali, na to mermeri, in Greek) (Ulusoy 2023). Thus, the group's intention concerning the appreciation of the city's multicultural past and present came into existence also through this unintentional meeting of the city's most spoken (alongside Turkish) languages a century apart, Greek and Kurdish.

press statement, they even prefiguratively planted the field by throwing the seeds toward the headquarters and the armed forces protecting it. The following stop came with another creative choice of item to protest with: two jars of tomato paste. In the food store (TUKAŞ) owned by the military (OYAK) facing the city's central Konak Square, a toy gun was installed in an empty tomato paste jar to reveal the relationship between the profit from that food store and military investment. The second jar was called "mom's tomato paste" and it was spontaneously distributed with slices of bread to passersby. The "first bullet monument" was waiting in the opposite part of the square. Given that İzmir was the city where the Greco-Turkish War both started and ended in Turkish historiography, respectively with the "first bullet" of the "War of Independence" was said to have been shot by Hasan Tahsin to the Greek troop and the "enemy driven to the sea", the monument carries another heavy militaristic baggage. For this reason, it was another daring reclaim of the memory of the monument and the square when a call for "a world without bullets" was voiced there together by fellow antimilitarist guests from Greece. Meanwhile, the borders between the nation-states were symbolically abolished by removing the border-shaped tapes from a large world map. Towards the end of the tour, the group made their way to the waterfront. Their slogan coalesced into the sea: "The Aegean Sea belongs to the fish!" When they saw the warships moored alongside the mall Konak Pier (the former customs port), they spontaneously protested their presence in such a central location in the city. There, the memory of the Great Fire popped up once again. Where they were staring at the warships was where the people running away from the Great Fire took shelter. It was reminded that they were not the "enemy driven to the sea" but the people who were squeezed between the fire and the sea, many of whom ended up in the sea hoping to be rescued by departing boats and ships. After this unplanned moment to commemorate the victims of the Great Fire, their deliberately "unserious parade" took the group to their final stop: the popular Kıbrıs Şehitleri (Cyprus Martyrs) Avenue in Alsancak. Some participants declared their conscientious objection on this street that was renamed after martyrs. Among them were women objectors, including Ülker, with the following remarks: "The militarist thought constructs a militarist world. Within this construct, women are degraded and ignored. Even if I, as a woman, am not related to militarism through compulsory military service, it appears in every sphere of my life". Accompanied by music and dance, these declarations and their celebrations marked the end of İzmir's Militurizm (Belit and Alper 2011; Vicdani Ret Derneği 2017).

3.2.2 The Yüzleşme Workshop (Yüzleşme Atölyesi) (2008 -)

Several years after this alternative, experimental ways to engage with the city's past, an unprecedented civil initiative for İzmir was established in 2008 with the primary objective of coming to terms (yüzleşme in Turkish) with the city's past, as its name implies. It was around a time when the contested memory of the Great Fire became the topic for several Turkey-based columnists calling for a public discussion and an official reconsideration towards coming to terms with the Turkish part of the responsibility for the Great Fire and its catastrophic aftermath. The founder-coordinator of the initiative, Talat Ulusoy, was among them through columns and leading an organized call. The initiative stands for the first of many steps towards his role as a true "memory militant" in Göral's (2023) terms, concerning the memories of Smyrna and the Great Fire. In other words, The Yüzleşme Workshop is not the only reason I asked him for an interview. It was also because of his direct involvement in almost half of the counter-memory works commemorating the Great Fire that I could enlist. "Paving the way to generate a culture of remembering almost from scratch " was their motivation, Ulusoy says[16], "by recalling the memories from the past step by step". Their manifesto states, "Today we're experiencing the labour pain before the birth of 'the culture of remembering.' We're aware that no birth is easy, but we're also aware that life awaits afterward". Inspired by the "vigorous efforts" in Latin American and Western European agendas concerning confronting and coming to terms with the past, the manifesto declares its raison d'être as follows: " Don't be afraid, remember, confront! Let go of the taught fears, question the taught history to the point, get rid of the yoke of heroes, and pursue the hundred years of memory, including those of who were thought of as traitors and enemies." (Yüzleşme Atölyesi 2012). The Yüzleşme Workshop truly took the stage from 2012 onwards. The public events it initiated or participated in included public commemorations, memory walks, commemorative meetings, exhibitions, screenings, and talks. The themes of these events were not limited to confronting the Great Fire in particular and the past of Smyrna/İzmir in general. Coming to terms with the Armenian Genocide, the Assyrian Genocide, the Population Exchange, the pogrom of September 6-7th, and the exile of the Greeks in 1964, among others, were on the agenda. For our concerns, I will mainly focus on three of the events, counter-memory works, associated with The Yüzleşme Workshop: the public commemoration of the Great Fire in 2012 and the week-long commemorative programs in 2014 and 2015 under the umbrella title İzmir Remembers (İzmir Hatırlıyor).

[16]Talat Ulusoy, interview by the author via Zoom, May 9, 2023.

First Public Commemoration

On September 13th, 2012, the 90th anniversary of the Great Fire's outbreak, a miniature boat was shoved off to the Gulf of İzmir near Konak Pier. (Its departure point was almost where the Militurizm group protested the warships' presence eight years before. Images from that day eight years later indicate that the warships in question were actually removed from there.) On its upper deck, a black and white picture was attached. Another boat was put to the sea from the same location on the same day but 90 years ago was captured in the picture. It was full of people, far beyond its capacity. The boat was sent off by around 20 people, some of whom were lighting tiny candles onshore while others were throwing flowers to the sea or putting them near two identical banners they had with them. Between ten pictures depicting the city during and shortly before and after the Great Fire, the banners read: "13-18 September 1922 İzmir Fire, Don't Let It Happen Again!". (Figure 3.3) Meanwhile, a press statement was delivered by Ulusoy, who commemorated "a hundred thousand hemşehri from İzmir" who lost their lives during and in the aftermath of the Great Fire. "They spoke various languages and believed in various religions. They were the colorful people of colorful İzmir." Ulusoy stated. He also touched upon their motivation regarding their responsibility for their own "healing" through confronting the past: "We want to get rid of this heavy burden that hurts our consciences." The statement concluded with a (not-yet realized) demand from the municipality to install a small commemorative inscription dedicated to the victims of the Great Fire somewhere on the seashore. This gathering and ceremony marked the first-ever public commemoration of the Great Fire in the city where it happened. It took ninety years. It was also the first public call for what could have been the first contemporary "counter-monument" of the city referring to the Great Fire, in Young's (1992) sense. The small number of participants mainly included people with close ties with the Yüzleşme Workshop. Some of them were organized leftists in various organizations, but they were not present as representatives of their organizations. This was partly a result of The Yüzleşme Workshop's tendency to consider the coming to terms process as a call to the memories of people from every ideology and belief rather than a project of a particular political group. This tendency represented their understanding of "socializing the coming the terms and building up a democratic society" (Ulusoy 2016).

Figure 3.3 : The first-ever public commemoration of the Great Fire in İzmir on its 90th anniversary in 2012: "13-18 September 1922 İzmir Fire, Don't Let It Happen Again!" Courtesy of Yüzleşme Atölyesi.

The Great Fire as a Meeting Agenda

Regarding the demand voiced by the Yüzleşme Workshop for a monument, another experimental instance where it was voiced is noteworthy to grasp the political environment of the time concerning the discussions around confronting the past. On October 5th, less than a month after this public commemoration, the İzmir branch of the Little National Assembly of Turkey (TkMM, short for Türkiye Küçük Millet Meclisi) met for the first meeting of their second term with the local agenda being "1922 İzmir Fire". TkMM was a civil initiative that was established in 2008 as a pilot project in 5 cities before paving the way for a platform for the civil society to actually engage in legislative processes through its branches in 32 cities at its peak. Its monthly meetings were open to the public with the motto "No prejudices are allowed in!" and frequented by representatives of civil society as well as public officials and politicians from contesting political parties, including the members of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM). Apart from up to 780 non-governmental organizations represented monthly, including the Yüzleşme Workshop (That number gradually declined to 150-200, especially after 2013 as the civil society was shrinking hand in hand with state of emergency policies (Özden 2018), but the initiative was still active until 2019.) politicians from Justice and Development Party (AKP),

People's Republican Party (CHP), Democratic Society Party (DTP) and its successor following the closure of the former, Peace and Democratic Party (BDP) and its successor People's Democratic Party (HDP) , actually voluntarily met in numerous occasions in line with the first-hand and face-to-face dialogue principle of TkMM. The meeting session devoted to the question "What happened in the 1922 İzmir Fire?" was also attended by the members of these parties alongside others.[17] "Who had set the fire?" was among the questions voiced eventually, however, the agreed tendency was to move beyond this popular question since historical accounts fail to arrive at a conclusion or rather arrive at multiple conclusions regarding the responsibility of the outbreak(s) of the fire(s) on that day. Three historian speakers present, Pelin Böke, Erkan Serçe, and Oktay Gökdemir, seemingly agreed, various accounts were putting the responsibility on Turkish, Greek, and Armenian parties. The meeting proceedings indicate, however, that the tones, while wishing to move beyond this answerless question, differed. Some participants, including Gökdemir, the director of the city archive (APİKAM) at the time, argued that "it was meaningless to warm up the issue again and again in the 21st century". He also criticized those who claim to criticize the official historiography by resignifying the Great Fire because it was not in the official historiography in the first place. I found this approach particularly interesting since he, as the practicing head of the archive, acknowledges the non-existence of the Great Fire within the official historiography but refrains from pointing to this absence. Instead, he criticizes those who underline this absence and calls what they oppose the official historiography. Meanwhile, other participants, including the Yüzleşme Workshop's Ulusoy, insisted that moving beyond would be closely tied to the coming to terms. "Before pursuing the answer to this question, it causes pangs of conscience when I think about the İzmirians who have died", he added. Thus, the ground was at least opened to newer questions, such as "Can İzmir confront this incident?" A commemoration was organized recently. What else could be done?" How about a monument?" (Türkiye küçük Millet Meclisi 2012a).

An Earlier Commemoration

Back to the streets, although I considered the above-mentioned public meeting the first-ever public commemoration in İzmir regarding the Great Fire, another commemoration earlier in 2012 should also be mentioned. On April 24th, the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, The Yüzleşme Workshop, in cooperation with Stop

[17] The Great Fire was initially brought on the agenda by Ulusoy at one of the previous meetings of TkMM, earlier in 2012. The agenda for that meeting was "What happened in 1915?" There, he brought up the fire in discussion by telling "İzmir did not witness the deportation, that's why it witnessed the fire." (Türkiye küçük Millet Meclisi 2012b).

Racism and Nationalism Platform (Irkçıığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur De Platformu), issued a public invitation for a commemorative meeting at Tepekule, a congress and exhibition center. The invitation was for anyone who wishes to get to know İzmir with its past and commemorate their hemşehris "who are not here with us for 90 years" (Yüzleşme Atölyesi and Irkçılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur De Platformu 2012). The following day, a broader public commemoration was organized in Alsancak to commemorate the Armenian Genocide under the banner "What Happened on 24 September 1915?" which was exactly 97 years ago. If so, why did the earlier invitation point 90 years ago? Zakarya Mildanoğlu, one of the two speakers alongside Mehmet Arif Koçer at the meeting, explains: "The exile was not intense in İzmir compared to the other Anatolian cities. I can say that it was the only city where Armenians densely stayed and took shelter (after 1915). In short, İzmir was Turkified a bit later. That was what the fire (of 1922) meant." Mildanoğlu 2017b). The public invitation continued:

> "Were there really Armenians living in İzmir? Were there places called 'Armenian neighborhoods' in İzmir? (...) The deportations of Armenians in 1915, that 'Great Catastrophe' ('Büyük Felaket' in Turkish referring to Մեծ եղեռն / The Great Enormity, the Armenian Genocide in Armenian) had not taken place in İzmir. However, the 'Great Fire' Catastrophe occurred in İzmir on 13-18 September 1922. When the flames were silenced, the Armenian neighborhoods and hemşehris of İzmir were gone.On the 97th year of 1915 and the 90th year of 1922, peace befits İzmir. Loving its languages, religions, and colors befits İzmir. Remembering and commemorating its past befits İzmir." (Yüzleşme Atölyesi and Irkçılığa ve Milliyetçiliğe Dur De Platformu 2012)

The following year, these two initial questions were re-addressed with their answers on April 24th, 2013. On that year's Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day commemoration in İzmir. The first question, "Were there really Armenians living in İzmir?" was directly answered through the banner reading: "Once upon a time there were Armenians living in İzmir "[18].(Figure 3.4) It was one of the two large banners carried by the group, the other one reading: "Do not forget the April 24th, 1915, Genocide Confront!". Dozens of smaller banners were also visible. Several of them had the sentence "We apologize" on them with reference to the campaign 2009-launched petition campaign "I apologize" to which more than thirty thousand

[18]The slogan was perhaps inspired by Osman Köker's one of its kind exhibition "Once upon a time in İzmir" which was opened in İstanbul the year before and also in İzmir in the coming year.

people participated in this statement: “My conscience does not accept the insensitivity showed to and the denial of the Great Catastrophe that the Ottoman Armenians were subjected to in 1915. I reject this injustice, and for my share, I empathize with the feelings and pain of my Armenian brothers and sisters. I apologize to them.” (“Özür Diliyorum” 2008). Others were carrying the pictures of Sevag Balıkçı and Hrant Dink, alongside the Armenian intellectuals who had been arrested and deported from Constantinople/İstanbul on April 24th, 1915[19]. That location answers the second question: “Were there places called ‘Armenian neighborhoods’ in İzmir?” The choice of the location of the commemoration was the answer by itself. The square in front of the September 9th Gate of Kültürpark, which opens up to the car-dominated Basmane Square with its busy crossroads, was not considered suitable for public demonstrations in other contexts, as mentioned earlier. Yet, corresponding to the heart of Haynots before the Great Fire, the meeting at that very point became a part of commemorating both the Armenian Genocide and the Great Fire. It was embraced by the group both to expose and to collectively experience the complete absence of the Armenian neighborhoods of Smyrna. They had two points of reference in sight. Firstly, the banner had a picture Surp Istepannos Armenian Church[20]. Secondly, they faced the “Basmane Pit” or “The Pit of Shame”, a massive construction pit untouched for three and a half decades. These denominations refer to the lasting disputes that left that huge piece of land at the very heart of the city in void. Furthermore, the emptiness of the pit has been functioning as such a metaphor for the absence of any surviving ruins from the Armenian nighborhoods. Because, it almost perfectly corresponds to the area where Surp Krikor Lusarovic Armenian Hospital stood between stood between 1801 and the Great Fire in 1922: A monumental building that experienced a double absence with its destruction coupled with the destruction of the land it once stood.

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[19] Among these more than two hundred Armenian intellectuals, the only woman was Zabel Yesayan, whose picture was absent in the commemoration. It took another decade for her name to find its place all around the square where the commemoration took place that day, as the BGST’s (Boğaziçi Performing Arts Community) theater play “Zabel” after her name was to be staged on a theater located in Kültürpark, very close to where the Armenian neighborhood stood before the Great Fire. Yesayan herself was in the neighborhood in June 1909, stopped by on her way to Giligya/Adana shortly after the 1909 Massacre. She wrote in her diary: “When I heard about the incidents in Adana for the first time, I had the urge to be there, and I immediately took the road with a young Armenian woman, who had been orphaned in the incidents of 95” (Yeseyan 2014,) Their “first interaction with the victims” was in Smyrna, when they visited the now-defunct German Deaconesses School, which would have been almost adjacent to today’s Basmane Pit. The school was also functioning as an orphanage with 26 children who had recently taken refuge there from Giligya. That visit stands for the first of many meetings of the victims of three catastrophes. Yesayan, who would be a victim of the Genocide in 1915, accompanied by her assistant, who was a victim of the 1894-96 Massacres, meeting victims of the 1909 Massacre...

[20] Standing approximately on the land in the middle of today’s Gazi and Fevzi Paşa avenues opening up to the Basmane Square, the church would have been visible until 1922 to the viewer from the exact location where the banner was held. The church and its bell tower had been among the dominant monuments of the cityscape. It had been destroyed and rebuilt after the earthquake of 1687 and the fire of 1845. The Great Fire, during which around eight thousand civilians took refuge in the church, ended up being its last destruction. Its symbolical significance was further marked by its connection with two leading educational institutions of the Armenian community of the city: Mesrobyan Boys School, dating back to 1799, and Surp Hripsimyants Girls School, dating back to 1830 (Hovanisian 2018).

Figure 3.4 : The public commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on April 24th, 2013. The group with the banner saying "Once upon a time, there were Armenians in İzmir" stood in the Basmane Square, adjacent to the "Basmane Pit". The image on the banner belongs to Surp Istepannos Armenian Church, which used to stand close by for centuries until its destruction in the Great Fire. Courtesy of Yüzleşme Atölyesi.

İzmir Remembers

In 2014 and 2015, İzmir witnessed a week-long series of events on and around the anniversary of the Great Fire. With the Yüzleşme Workshop' contributions, these commemorative meetings, within a detailed schedule under the umbrella name "İzmir Remembers", attracted remarkable attention and participation. On September 13th, 2014, the 92nd anniversary of the Great Fire, participants gathered in front of Basmane Train Station. The choice for this location was not coincidental either: The railway line behind the train station combined with the avenue in front of it in the same direction constitutes the southern border of the fire zone. Thus, when the group stood there, they were at one of the edges of the fire zone. It was extending on their right side and it was an eligible point to start their planned walking tour of the fire zone. However, they started walking the opposite way. The reason for that was first to visit the nearby Ayavukla (Agia Voukolos) Church, the only surviving Greek Orthodox Church in central İzmir to this day[21]. In the frontyard

[21] The survival of this 1866-built church was not solely thanks to its location, which was kept away from the flames by the railway line. Its exceptional state possibly stems from its refunctioning as the archeological museum in 1924 and recent restoration in 2010. After all, there were other Greek Orthodox churches

of the church, the group had their banner reading "We remember our hemşehris we lost during the Great Fire of İzmir, on September 13-18, 1922". (Figure 3.5) Then, they proceeded to their memory walk towards Punta/Alsancak. Their route followed the footprints of the former Greek and Armenian neighborhoods before arriving at the former Frenk neighborhood. The walk was called "the tour of the fire zone." Throughout the way, participants exchanged stories about the lost places in tandem with their estimations about their now-defunct locations and surroundings. They also walked and stopped by some surviving ruins of the Great Fire, only remaining references to the fire zone. When they stopped at the entrance to the Kıbrıs Şehitleri Avenue, they performed a "silent stop". Together with the gathering in Agia Voukolos Church earlier that day, that was the second public commemoration of the Great Fire organized in İzmir, after the one in 2012. Following the silence, they invited their hemşehris to join them for the rest of the with the aim of "commemorating tens of thousands of people died because of the Great Fire of İzmir and raising awareness by challenging the official narratives about the fire and pursuing the truth" (Mısırlıoğlu 2014a). The next meeting of İzmir Remembers was two days later. On September 15th, an exhibition, "İzmir with Postcards from Orlando Carlo Calumeno Collection" curated by Osman Köker, was opened at İzmir Chamber of Architects' Center of Architecture, a former warehouse and another surviving ruin, a witness to the Great Fire, in Punta/Alsancak. The rest of the events were hosted by French Cultural Center, also within the fire zone. On September 17th, a panel, entitled "Did you set the fire or did I set the fire?", was organized by two İzmir-based historians Pelin Böke and Erkan Serçe who discussed that answerless question. (Both were also the speakers at the TkMM meeting on the Great Fire). On September 18th and 19th, there were documentary screenings followed by forums. The former "Hello Anatolia" (a reference to Dido Sotriyu's "Farewell Anatolia") was an autobiographic documentary by Chrysovalantis Stamelos. As a Greek-American descendant of Smyrniot Greek mübails from Çeşme, he tells the story of his decision to "return" to İzmir where he actually moved in in 2010. It is noteworthy that the first scene of the film takes place in Agia Voukolos, the first stop of İzmir Remembers. Meanwhile, the latter documentary "From Purgatory to Inferno İzmir Remembers" was an amateur documentary picturing the city during

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survived by the railways, such as Agios Ioannis sten Alygaria Paraxysmou in Mortakia/Tenekeli or Murtake colloquially (notice the very rare transmission of the pre-fire name), or Agios Konstantinos Eleni in Chiotika/Tepecik. The former is still a surviving ruin with its intact walls whereas the latter was demolished in 1961 despite its intact condition (Simes 2012). Also, there were other Greek Orthodox churches survived within the fire zone as well. Among at least ten of them within the fire zone, Evangelismos Theotokou in Haynots/Kültürpark was intact until its demolishment in 1940 and Genethlia Theotokou in Fassoula/Kültür was still visible in the areal pictures from late 1920's (Simes 2012). In short, the pattern was getting rid of the Greek Orthodox churches, as well as at least four Armenian Orthodox and Catholic churches, in the aftermath of the Great Fire, regardless of their condition. In contrast, the majority of Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant churches within the fire zone, belonging to the Levantine and European communities, were restored and survived to this day.

and immediately after the Great Fire. It was an attempt to present "antithesis concerning the past, contrary official history thesis". The week came to an end by a talk on "What remains in Greek social memory from Gavur (Infidel) İzmir", delivered by historian Vangelis Kechriotis (Mısırlıoğlu 2014b).

Figure 3.5 : The first stop of "İzmir Remembers"
Courtesy of Yüzleşme Atölyesi.

Next year on Semptember 13th, the 93th anniversary of the Greak Fire, the second (and the last to this day) İzmir Remembers commenced in Basmane, once again. Consequently, the group headed to Agios Voukolos for the public commemoration for the victims of the fire. There, they also took a moment to commemorate Vangelis Kechriotis to whom the week was dedicated. One of the architects of İzmir Remembers, he sadly passed away days before the gathering. The subsequent meeting on September 15th consisted of a musical performance of "the songs of other İzmir" and a talk by historian Ayşe Hür on "other İzmir". The event took place in İsmet İnönü Art Center. (The building is located within Kültürpark's northwestern quarter, which corresponds to one of the pre-1922 Greek neighborhoods, Agia Aikaterini.) The unfortunate highlight of the meeting was a racist backlash towards the end of the talk. Right after one of the participants (who was an İzmir-based Armenian Genocide denialist historian known for assigning their students at the history department to present "proofs" of the non-existence of the Armenian Genocide) took the floor to invite the audience to the Turkish official historiography that denies any

responsibility concerning the Great Fire, a supporting group of ultranationalists with grey wolf signs started chanting "Turkey is Turkish and will remain Turkish" (Marksist.org 2015). The remaining events were hosted by a smaller venue, Gençlik Theatre, also within Kültürpark. (Placed in the northeastern quarter of the park, this one corresponds to another pre-1922 Greek neighborhood, Hadjifrangou.) Exceptionally, concerning the counter-memory works listed in this work, both venues used in this case were places run by İzmir municipality. On September 18th, Devrim Sezer and Ömer Turan gave speeches, respectively on "Collective memory, national identity, and İzmir Fire" and "İzmir Fire as a way station of Turkification practices from the Committee of Union and Progress to the Republic". On September 19th, the speakers were Efe Moral who elaborated on "the Lausanne Treaty, İzmir, and migrants" and Foti Benlisoy who focused on "the Greek soldiers and antimilitarism during the 1919-1922 War". The last event was the screening of "İzmir Blues", an amateur documentary produced by the Yüzleşme Workshop, on the "other" past of the city (Yüzleşme Atölyesi 2015). Although the Yüzleşme Workshop did not cease to exist as a non-official civil initiative, the closure of second İzmir Remembers marked the end of its public organizations at such scale. As will be discussed in the following subchapter, rising authoritarianism coupled with an overwhelming emphasis on nationalist security narrative played a massive role for the diminishing means available for the civil society. Thus, when the next anniversary of the Great Fire came in September 2016, a nationwide state of emergency, that was historically and systematically implied on Kurdistan by the Turkish authority, had already arrived to İzmir as well. When the 24-months-long nationwide state of emergency following the failed coup attempt in July 2016 was halted, streets and squares were further criminalized. That is to say that, another eight anniverrsaries of the Great Fire so far have passed without any organized public commemorations in İzmir despite several attempts. Instead, some alternative commemorations were organized anyways, as will be presented in the coming pages of this chapter. The members of the Yüzleşme Workshop kept contributing and participating in many of them. As Ulusoy put: "A community was formed out of this (commemorations), like a large group of friends". He concluded that "What we have been doing is not enough, we are triggering an awareness but such mourning practices and commemorations are not enough (...) Even though we would like to have them, sensitizing the memory does not necessarily stem from these walks, public meetings and commemorations but also from creating other means such as writing, picturing, singing and other ways to captıre the hearts. (...) With this sensitivity and grief become collectivized and socialized, a collective mourning would perhaps follow."[22]

[22]Talat Ulusoy, interview by the author via Zoom, May 9, 2023.

3.2.3 The Exhibitions

Fire Chronicles

When contemporary artist Sibel Horada opened her first solo exhibition, "Fire Chronicles" (Yangın Günlükleri) in 2012, she was the first in Turkey to create an exhibition out of the silenced memory of the Great Fire "whose traces are pretty much non-existent" (Aydın 2012). The exhibition initially consisted of two processes exhibited in the İstanbul-based Daire Art Gallery. The latter, "Fire Chronicles, was a cumulative result of the interactions and materials produced in the former, "Fire Zone" (Yangın Mahalli), which was held between June 7-30. These interactions included conversations about the Great Fire and inspired by Roland Barthes' "Mourning Diary", these were typed in an inkless typewriter by the artist. The absence of ink while documenting the collective mourning was used as a metaphor for the absence of what was destroyed by fire, including the absent traces of the Great Fire (Maya 2012). As "an attempt at questioning one's national identity and mourning through objects, recollections, and inkless notes", the exhibition approaches fire as "a moment of radical transformation" (Horada n.d.). Among the mentioned objects, what Gönlügür and Sezer (2020) describes as "charred wooden crates" (which were gradually burnt entirely by the artist) dominated the gallery space as "loose references to city's once vibrant trade life". They did so not only through their pitch-black color and large aggregate volume but also through "giving off a lingering burnt smell immersing visitors in a sensory experience that conjures up the faded memory of the fire" (ibid, 408). Strikingly, when she started working on the exhibition, her departure point was another city, İstanbul, and its past enmeshed with fires and migrations. She was, in fact, not even aware of the Great Fire until coming across photographs of it on a random bookstore visit in Amsterdam during the process. In her interview with Horada, Aydın (2012) resonates with this encounter: "I barely remember hearing something vaguely about İzmir Fire because I grew up there, but the rest is absent". That absence, again, was exactly what affected and inspired Horada. Similarly, Bora, who wrote on the exhibition, points that the inscription on the photographs read SMIRNE 13-14 Settembre 1922, ore 9 del 14 Settembre 1922, ore 18 del 14 Settembre 1922 (Smyrna September 13-14th, 1922, 9 a.m on September 14th, 1922, 6 p.m. on September 14th, 1922 in Italian). That is to say that they picture the city on the second day of the Great Fire, which makes Bora (2012) ask: "How come have we not seen these photographs before, even if every one of us who has gone through the Turkish education system knows the chronology of the event that took place in and around 1922?" The evolving parts of the installation were later exhibited on separate occasions in Wien and Hannover

in 2013. In spring 2014, it came together with its symbolic origin for a final public display. As a part of "It's Enough!" themed PORTIZMIR3 (İzmir-based International Contemporary Art Triennale, the fourth and last of which was organized in 2017-18 (PORTİZMİR n.d.), Horada's works were brought together in the now-defunct building of Austrian-Turkish Tobacco Warehouse, which was built within the fire zone, in Maltezika/Akdeniz neighborhood. While searching for the traces of the Great Fire around the fire zone, the installation itself was transformed into its traces (Figure 3.6). Therefore, the burnt remains of the installation functioned as a means to mourn the city, literally on top of the nonexisting burnt remains of the city. As Gönlügür and Sezer (2020, 408) cites from Horada: "There may be a sense of potent vitality inherent in building anew from scratch, rising from the ashes. But mourning needs to come first".

Figure 3.6 : Burnt traces to mourn over. Fire Chronicles (2012)
Source: Sibel Horada's Portfolio Website.

Once Upon a Time in İzmir

"Once Upon a Time in İzmir" was based on a book project which was based on a postcard collection. The book "Armenians in Turkey 100 Years Ago with Postcards from the Orlando Carlo Calumeno Collection" was published by Birzamanlar (once upon a time in Turkish) Press in 2005 as the very first book of the publishing house. Its editor, Osman Köker was also the founder of the publishing house, which has been active for two decades with its motto "cultural mosaic of our past" (Birzamanlar Yayıncılık n.d.). The book entirely consisted of selections from a specific postcard collection, as the name implies, and the selection of around 800 postcards was made based on the direct or indirect relationship of the postcard with the Armenian communities in every single Ottoman city (vilayet) within contemporary Turkish borders. Most of the postcards were in the early 20th century and before the Armenian Genocide. They either had pictures of Armenian neighborhoods, churches, monasteries, schools, orphanages, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.or the photographer or writer/receiver of the postcard was Armenian (Köker 2008) In 2009, an extended version of the İzmir subsection with 123 postcards, enriched with the translation of

Cuinet's (1893, in Köker 2009) detailed description of the city, was published as a separate book entitled "Once upon a Time in İzmir". Again, the exhibition with the identical name was curated out of this selection by Osman Köker. For a duration of 17 days, it was opened on October 12th in "the 90th year of the end of the cultural diversity", a month after the first public commemoration of the Great Fire in İzmir. However, its location was not yet in İzmir, but it was hosted by a private venue, Cezayir Exhibition Hall, in İstanbul.The exhibited postcards depicting the Armenian landmarks not only in the centrum but also in outer districts of Smyrna, such as Odemisio/Ödemiş and Bergama were accompanied by two talks throughout the exhibition. Zakarya Mildanoğlu's talk "The 90th Year of the İzmir Fire, İzmir Armenians" focused on the city's cosmopolitanism while pointing to the Great Fire as the rather late end of Armenian communities' presence in the city. Similarly, Ari Çokona's talk "İzmir, the Pearl of Ionia" introduced the city's multicultural past through a detailed description of the city's Greek institutions and landmarks. As mentioned earlier, the second (and the last to this day) public display of the same curation was made possible in İzmir as a part of İzmir Remembers in 2014. It was the first of its kind for İzmir in terms of introducing a detailed visual narration of the city solely before the Great Fire. In other words, pre-1922 visuals were not immediately followed by a dominant post-1922 narrative in this case, unlike other similar themed exhibitions sponsored by the local or central governments. The location of this second public display within another surviving ruin and a witness to the Great Fire is also the first of its kind. Through its location near the fire zone, the postcards have brought together the visuals from the now-defunct neighborhoods within the fire zone with the people inhabiting or frequenting these places, perhaps without any familiarity regarding them lying underneath the familiar cityscape. To Ulusoy, even before seeing the exhibition, the location itself was an invitation towards such familiarity through Greek letters K, A, Γ carved on a stone next to its entrance[23].

Memorial Forest

Not long after Sibel Horada, another contemporary artist, Hakan Kırdar, created an exhibition inspired mainly by the layers of memory inscribed on the fire zone and Kütürpark before and after the Great Fire. The exhibition's name, "Memorial Forest" itself is a metaphor for the park, which was transformed into an urban forest as a republican modernization project on top of the ruins of the Armenian neighborhood "Haynots" left in ruins by the Great Fire (Sanatorium 2016) In spring

[23]Talat Ulusoy, interview by the author via Zoom, May 9, 2023.

2014, “Memorial Forest” met its audience for the first time in İzmir as a part of “It’s Enough!” PORTİZMİR3 Art Triennale, which was centered around “the city and the ecology of İzmir” (Kırdar 2014). That is to say that it was simultaneously on display with Horada’s “Fire Chronicles” within the same building located on the southwestern edge of the fire zone, and therefore, very close to the “memorial forest”. In the absence of any traces, monuments, or memorials dedicated to the previous history of the Great Fire within Kültürpark[24], Kırdan points to trees of the park as memorials, even though none of them are witnesses themselves, of the Great Fire and before. While attempting to “emphatically bond with” the forgotten destruction and grief caused by the Great Fire, he assigns an “intention towards healing” to these trees (Sanatorium 2016). Highlighting this intention, some of his works on display were composed of representations (through frottage from their bodies and voice recordings around them) and parts (leaves, barks, and branches) of these trees. Furthermore, he calls his hemşehris to learn from these traumatic experiences as well as from remembering the shared experiences of living together, practiced by their former hemşehris. “Memorial Forest” was opened once again in the beginning of January 2016 with a duration of a month. This time, it was a solo exhibition at a private art gallery, Sanatorium, in İstanbul. The works and their layout throughout two gallery floors lead to an “excavation into the past and an invitation to remember past wrongs” Gönlügür and Sezer (2020, 411) suggests. Five name plates made of ash and coal as explicit references to the five monumental gates of Kültürpark (August 26, Lausanne, Montreux, September 9, Republic) were placed hung on the walls to welcome its visitors into the depth of the “memorial forest”. (Figure 3.7) The works in the upper level signaled the post-1922 memory of the park “as a source of civic pride and a boost to national confidence” (ibid, 410). That includes two photographs from 1922 placed on the wall, displaying the city in flames and ruins in the aftermath of the Great Fire, next to many others following their cleansing. However, the works in the basement floor strikingly expose what lies under. Denoting this basement, Sezer and Gönlügür concludes that “It was as if it contained what was suppressed in the public consciousness.” (ibid, 411). These matchless works included “Hav” (a reproduction of the Ghazir Orphans’ Rug, woven by the orphans of the Armenian Genocide in Ghazir, with ready-made and found objects and ash), “Yangın Mahali” (Fire Zone, an ambigious street map made of coal), “Bayrak” (Flag, an unrecgonizable waving flag made of coal) “Payandalar” (Buttresses, architectural elements that carry the iconic cumbas on top of them made of ash and coal), and “Haynots” (the name of the Armenian neighborhood

[24] As I argue in the subchapter Counter-monuments, Şadi Çalık’s “Laborer Horses Monument” would be an implicit exception for that absence. Besides, Kırdan has a black and white picture of this monument in his exhibition, alongside the pictures capturing some other statues and monuments, all of which date after 1936, when the park was inaugurated.

written on the floor with coal), (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7 : The basement of the "Memorial Forest". Welcomed by "Lozan", visitors find their ways into the lost neighborhood. There, they come across symbolic surviving ruins, burnt "Buttresses" without their cumbas and buildings, the symbolic maps of the "Fire Zone", and the name of the Armenian neighborhood "Haynots" on the ground.
Source: Sanatorium.

The Sites of Memory of Smyrna/İzmir

After a postcard exhibition and two consecutive contemporary art exhibitions, the memory of the Great Fire played a central role in another exhibition in İzmir in 2018. "The Sites of Memory of Smyrna/İzmir" was a miniature exhibition curated by Filiz Adıgüzel. It was a group exhibition with the participation of eleven voluntary artists apart from Adıgüzel, who was not only their curator but also their professor at the time of the exhibition or before.[25] Their common ground was the Faculty of Arts at Dokuz Eylül University[26]. Composed of nearly fifty miniatures made of various materials and techniques and a video art projection, the exhibition took place in

[25]Filiz Adıgüzel, interview by the author, March 4, 2024.

[26]Founded with a decree law under the military junta rule in July 1982 (T.C. Resmi Gazete 1982), the chosen name for the city's second university being September 9, was no surprise by no means. As a footnote within this footnote, one could argue that it was, in fact, not the second university of the city, and Ege University, founded in 1955, was, in fact, not the first. For further discussion, see the Ionian University of Smyrna, which was officially founded in December 1920 and scheduled to be partly opened in late 1922, which was apparently never realized (Solomonidis 1997).

the university's Nafi Güral Art Gallery between May 10 to June 29 (Adıgüzel et al. 2018). In her text in the exhibition catalog, Yaşayanlar suggests that "It is possible to traverse the urban space depicted in each miniature, to question existing contradiction or reality, and to pursue indurable traces exposed to time". She considers the exhibition as an accumulation of "suggestions about the gap in how we conceive of Smyrna and how this gap will be filled in the future" while "updating our memory registers" of the city[27]. Nevertheless, pursuing these perishable traces still seems to be bounded by the gap she mentions as the composition of the sites of memory[28]. In fact, this observation does not contradict the primary purpose of the exhibition since it was not a political criticism about the silenced or "secret past of the city," but it was rather to acknowledge the "politically undermined" miniature art, as Adıgüzel tells. Nevertheless, she adds that although she was not familiar with the historical background around the fire in detail, as a critical person herself who acknowledges the sorrowful humanitarian loss, she would have wished to contribute to an exhibition with similar content but a different subtext that explicitly points to the silenced memory of the fire. Still, the exhibition includes "a few symbolical sites" that they wanted to make remember because "we could never see them since they have not survived". Furthermore, three works were devoted to depicting the Great Fire itself. Firstly, Hasan Avni Koçak's "Flutter" (Çırpınış), made of casting clay with glaze and tile paint, had ten landmarks embroidered on it with some smoke motives attached to several of these buildings' roofs. Strikingly, none of these buildings were actually within the fire zone and directly affected by the flames as depicted. Equally striking, the fire was not openly mentioned in the description of the work but rather it was referred to as "one of city's sorrowful and painful times" (Adıgüzel et al. 2018, 38). Secondly, Adıgüzel's "Smyrna" was actually a sketch that demonstrates the imaginative cityscape during the Great Fire. An angel figure, a signature motive of the artist, dominates the scene while struggling to drive the smoke away. It was as an intervention to imagine "as if there was still a hope for extinguishing the fire", she explains[29]. Finally, in the monumental composition "Fire" (Figure 3.8), Adıgüzel and Akdaş picture Smyrna in flames from Darağaç (to the northeast of the fire zone) all the way to Karataş/Melantia (a few kilometres

[27] Filiz Adıgüzel, interview by the author, March 4, 2024.

[28] Neither the exhibition catalog nor the interview with the curator included any reference to Nora's "site of memory", contrary to what I would have expected.) in the exhibition suggests on its own. In other words, even though an overwhelming majority of the selected sites of memory date back before the Great Fire, only a few miniature engage with the fire zone that essentially corresponds to the gap. Out of at least twenty-four sites of memory (excluding numerous houses depicted) in thirty miniatures, as far as I could recognize, only one of them (Agia Fotini Bell Tower in three separate works) was located in the fire zone and did not survive. In addition, four surviving ruins at the edges of the fire zone were depicted (Basmane Train Station and the French Consulate three times, Agia Voukolos Church and Passport Office/today's Passport Pier once.

[29] Filiz Adıgüzel, interview by the author, March 4, 2024.

away from the fire zone to the south). Similar to “Flutter”, the burnt part of the city is largely represented through the parts of the city to which the flames did not reach at all. In other words, within this three metres wide depiction, the actual fire zone represented by the images of the lost Agia Fotini Bell Tower[30] and still surviving French Consulate covers only about half a meter. Yaşayanlar comments that these depictions indicate that the city becomes a place “that has internalized the traumas form its past and reconstructs itself by folding over itself” while the same time “coming to terms with the sources of its own memory” (ibid, 16). Meanwhile, Sağlam interprets them as an expression of the city that still experiences that very fire (ibid, 12).

Figure 3.8 : “Fire” (Yangın) by Filiz Adıgüzel and Fatma Akdaş. Made of watercolor, acrylic ink, and gold. The longer pieces are 110 x 22 cm, while the one in the middle is 80 x 22 cm.
Courtesy of Filiz Adıgüzel.

[30] As a striking example of a play of memory, when Adıgüzel mentioned Agia Fotini Bell Tower, she told that it was destroyed by an earthquake as far as she remembers. The fire espaces the scene here even for an artist who actually the drew the very building and the flames that destroyed it.

3.2.4 Counter-Monuments

The Rubbled Area

As Young (1992) conceptualizes "counter-monuments" fulfill their duty to remember while at the same time disrupting hegemonic narratives and traditional monumental forms by resisting the hierarchical relationship between itself and its audience. Strikingly, as of today, the former fire zone or elsewhere in İzmir does not have any counter-monuments dedicated to the Great Fire that claimed tens of thousands of its human residents. However, in Kültürpark's northeastern part/Aya Trifonas, there stands a very exceptional monument for some of its non-human residents: its laborer horses (Figure 3.9). Consisting of three horse heads under a large horseshoe that connects to the drinking basin, the monument has the following statement inscribed on the horseshoe: "For the horses who labored for the Kültürpark's opening - 1936". Even though the monument does not refer to the Great Fire or the fire zone explicitly, its dedication to the hundred and sixty eight horses (Oto 2024) stands for a reminder of the catastrophic scale of the Great Fire. In other words, fourteen years after the fire, these hundred and sixty eight horses who were killed by the overwork they were subjected to during the removal of the rubbles of the former Greek and Armenian neighborhoods to pave the way for the park's grounds. As a side note, Şadi Çalık who built the monument in 1940 was a high school student several years before that around the opening of the park in 1936. Since he was studying in the building of Central Girls' School/İzmir Atatürk High School located adjacent to the fire zone's rubbles around the time of their removal, he was most probably witnessing to the labors of these horses. In 2021, the monument was chosen as the meeting point for an intersectional protest organized by animal's rights' activists. While the activists were crying out for the right to live freely for the horses and calling the monument "an apology rather than an appreciation", they also did not forget to commemorate the Greek and Armenian neighborhoods destroyed by the Great Fire in their statement (Evrensel 2021).

Figure 3.9 : The Laborer Horses/Emekçi Atlar Heykeli (1940) by Şadi Çalık. Located in Kültürpark's northeast/Aya Trifonas near the Republic Entrance. Photographed by the author.

In another rubbled area, a counter-monument attempt regarding the Great Fire's memory occurred in the Kemeraltı neighborhood in July 2023 as a part of the final exhibition of a visiting school. The twelve-day program entitled "In Other Latitudes" was organized in collaboration with the London-based Architectural Association, and its scope was mainly to examine the "in-between spaces" within historical and contemporary urban politics of the city through the lens of its migration and displacement memories ("In Other Latitudes" 2023). The participants, including myself, were introduced to the multicultural past of the city and the silenced memory of its destruction through lectures given by Biray Kolluoğlu and Pelin Tan. Then came the archive visits and field trips in search of the traces of Smyrna and the Great Fire. Lost neighborhoods and buildings were imagined and remembered collectively,

and their traces were visited, collected, and even produced by the participants in the form of drawings, collages, clay, etc. The final exhibition comprised these collections and productions, installed in an occupied space in Kemeraltı neighborhood, located in the central historical bazaar area and the Muslim and Jewish neighborhoods that survived the Great Fire. In fact, this space that is called the "rubbled area" (molozlu alan) by its neighbors, some of whom were among the organizers of the visiting school, was not occupied solely for the exhibition. It has already been claimed as a public/community space and declared as an "art space for all" by a group of migrants and activists residing in the neighborhood, after a school building on its place was moved and demolished several years ago[31]. Adjacent to the urban garden that was planted by its neighbors directly on the rubbles left on the area after the demolishment, the exhibition was also set not only on the rubbles but with the rubbles too. Parallel to the "in-betweenness" of the space, the one-day-long exhibition was deliberately left in its place afterwards, to be transformed into rubbles itself. A collective map of central İzmir was the center of the installation. (Figure 3.10) It was a large figure-ground map that exclusively showed the footprints of the buildings, and therefore streets, without any marking or labeling. The exhibition was set off as the fire zone was marked and the date of the Great Fire was written on the blank map. In fact, it was already apparent since a large part of the fire zone consisting of the Park and the Pit has not many building and streets on it, and other parts has distinctively planned grids and boulevards compared to the parts of the city that has survived the fire. Then, other objects and works were literally attachted to the map by threads that pinned their locations of origin or inspiration. Among them were labeled bricks, roof tiles, pipes, broken tiles, and various rubbles some of which predated the Great Fire. Accompanying these found surviving ruins in their own ways, several works were created exclusively to commemorate the Great Fire. In three separate clay tablets, the former common languages of the neighborhood and the city, Greek, Armenian, and Ladino, met their contemporary counterparts, Kurdish and Arabic, by the participants who speak them. "Do not forget Smyrna", "September 13, 1922", "We were here even if you tried to erase it", "Love your neighbor as yourself" were their statements. In addition, twenty candles were lit on the ground above the map, dedicated to the memories of the twenty neighnorhoods of Smyrna that were partly or entirely destroyed by the Great Fire. Meanwhile, the names of the neighborhoods were contiguously written on a long pipe in the rubbles. Surrounding this counter-monument attempt, the participants were called to take a moment to remember Smyrna and commemorate the Great Fire's victims. Several days later, we visited the rubbled area again. The exhibition

[31] Aylin Gürel and Ömer Selvi, personal communication by the author, June 28, 2023.

was already coalesced into the rubbles -out of which other counter-monuments will come into existence following the next visiting school in July 2024.

Figure 3.10 : The Rubbled Area on the day of exhibition, July 6, 2023.
Photographed by the author.

The Window and the Street Signs

On December 2023, two counter-monuments commemorating the Great Fire and the city before it were installed on the grounds of Kültürpark for a day. They were designed to be the end products of a week-long workshop named "Kültürpark Neighborhood" coordinated by Emre Yıldız and Ziyacan Bayar. The workshop was planned as a part of the "reconciliation" themed Good Design_8 (İyi Tasarım_8) İzmir, a series of events that are centered around design and organized by İzmir Mediterranean Academy, a platform associated with the Metropolitan Municipality (İyi Tasarım İzmir 2023a). Site The workshop aimed to build a "platform of reconciliation between the two layers of the city" by focusing on the multicultural urban fabric replaced by the park as a result of the Great Fire and by making the pre-1922 layer's "cultural footprint" visible on top of the absence of any material footprints on the upper layer (İyi Tasarım İzmir 2023b). In other words, it was a "cultural archeology" project to unearth the fire zone's layers that have been "alienated to each other even though physically sharing the very same places" (ibid). The work-

shop was attended by two coordinators and six participants, all with design-related backgrounds, which helped them employ methods such as digital mapping, data visualization, and augmented reality not only to design the installations but also to put them precisely in their invisible locations. The first counter-monument, or installation, was a kiosk with a transparent window on top of it. The window had the sketch of Agia Katerina Church drawn out of an actual photograph of the church before its destruction in the Great Fire (Figure 3.11). The window was placed on its spot near the Lausanne Gate in such an orientation that it enabled the passersby to look at the image and the absence of the church simultaneously, from the very point of view of the photographer standing in the hearth of the neighborhood named after its church. Another similar window was planned for another Greek Orthodox church underneath Kültürpark, Evangelistria, but it could not be realized due to logistical issues, Yıldız adds[32]. Meanwhile, the second counter-monument was composed of four street signs stuck together on the ground, also near Lausanne Gate, where the intersection opening to these four streets exactly stood before the Great Fire. Thus, Lambri, Çikudya, Ayakaterina, and Kasaba streets were recalled with the neighborhoods and the entire street grid they were integrated to before their complete destruction a century ago. Although both of them were actualized in the workshop, Yıldız reminds us that the ideas for them had roughly a decade-long background. A collaboration to build the window installation was actually proposed by Yıldız to Yüzleşme Atölyesi in 2013 but could not be realized at the time, whereas the efforts to mark the former street grid in such a way was something that has been on Yıldız's agenda, especially with the influence of Suman's The Silence of Scheherazade and the book walks they have been organizing together. With Good Design_8 approaching, Yıldız and Bayar decided to revisit these ideas by asking "Would it be possible, after slightly more than a century now, to make the fire and its traces in the city visible and discussable through some urban design interventions?". Even if it became possible for a day in this case, they accept this experiment as a prototype for future collaborations and permanent installations "such as the stolpersteine"[33] were placed within the fire zone[34].

[32]Emre Yıldız, interview by the author via Zoom, March 7, 2024.

[33]Initiated by the artist Gunter Demnig in 1992, the stolpersteine/stumbling stone project has become perhaps the most influential counter-monument project in Europe, with tens of thousands of them across the continent to have been installed in public spaces including in front of the houses of those who were killed or disappeared in the Holocaust. They typically had an inscription that starts with "Here lived" and provided names and birthdays of the victims alongside the date and place of their deportation and death to personalize and mark the uniqueness of the memories of the Holocaust victims (Krzyżanowska, 2015).

[34]Emre Yıldız, interview by the author via Zoom, March 7, 2024.

Figure 3.11 : The window that connects the Agia Katerina neighborhood with the "Kültürpark neighborhood".
Source: Good Design İzmir.

3.2.5 Other Art Works

Ash

"Kül" (2018) is a 6-minute short documentary that was produced as one of the two end products of a 3-day workshop organized by İstanbul-based SEHAK (Civil and Ecological Rights Association) in cooperation with a coalition of NGOs, including Amsterdam-based Anne Frank House. As a part of the broader European Union-funded project named "Teaching Fundamental Rights and Democratic Values through the Life Story of Anne Frank", the workshop stemmed from memory walk as a method through which "multi-perspective and critical thinking as a step in the struggle against nationalism, prejudices, discrimination, marginalization, and etc. are encouraged" (Demirel and Dönmez 2018). İzmir branch of the workshop took place on December 7-9, 2018[35]. Coordinated by a group of social scientists (includ-

[35]İzmir was one of the seven chosen cities in Turkey to host the series of identical workshops, alongside Çanakkale, Diyarbakır, Edirne, İstanbul, Mersin, and Van. However, the processes of negotiations for official permission to shoot the films differed significantly. As a result, the workshop could not be actualized in Van and Diyarbakır since "there will be cameras in public". Meanwhile, the group experienced "incredible hospitality" in Çanakkale from the local municipality, and in İzmir, the local municipality provided logistic

ing anthropologist Işıl Demirel who is one my interviewees), filmmakers, and local advisors (Talat Ulusoy in this field) and participated by a group mostly consisting of university students, the first day of the workshop was devoted to a theoretical section on memory, space, and the memory of the space followed by a technical section on the processes of interviewing and shooting in public. On the second day, the group split into two for their fields, which were decided by the coordinators in advance. The editing of the films, however, was entirely left to the collective decisions of the participants[36]. Işıl The first group spent the day around Sinagogs Street[37] in the former Jewish neighborhood to study the Jewish cultural heritage, whereas the second group strolled around the fire zone in search of the memory of the Great Fire of İzmir. The route of the second group crossed Kültürpark, Basmane Square, and Agia Voukolos Church. Along the route, the participants conducted street interviews that seeks answers about the interviewees' engagement with the fire zone and its past. Besides, some questions directly referred to the Great Fire to record how the interviewees narrate the fire, if they remember it at all. "As soon as the person accepts to talk to our microphone" says Demirel, "They become a part of the remembering and they become aware of it, even if they give undesirable answers for us including racist and fascist comments"[38]. Each interviewee and later the audience were left in a dynamic and possibly shifting condition towards an emphatatic narration. That became the case, Demirel suggests, especially since the conversation between the participants and the interviewee focused on the stories of the victims of the Great Fire, rather than the question of guilt and responsibility. As expected, these interactions did not necessarily tirgger an immediate emphatatic shift in the narration. One of the interviewees, for instance, left the interview waving their finger and stating that they were after "wrong purposes". The group studying the Great Fire was also subjected to verbal abuse and hate speech several times by the people who were familiar with Talat Ulusoy and what he tells concerning the Great Fire. Apart from cuts from the interviews, one of the scenes in the documentary pictures Ulusoy sharing his stories. There, he concludes with the following question: "It is difficult but necessary to invite the truth to our memories. Let's remember a hundred thousand İzmirlis whom we lost with the fire. This will help us a lot, right? What will it make us lose?" (Sivil ve Ekolojik Haklar Derneği 2018).

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support, Demirel tells.

[36]F. Işıl Demirel, interview by the author, April 3, 2023.

[37]Even if the names of the streets that were narrower than 20 metres were officially replaced by numbers based on the City Council's decision in 1937 (Ulusoy 2022) as a part of broader Turkification policies, Sinagogs Street (Havra Sokağı) managed the survive as one of the exceptions. It was also renamed Turkish Bazaar Street (Türk Pazarı Sokak) before, but this central street of the First Juderia, the former Jewish neighborhood Bora (2021), keeps its name up to this day.

[38]F. Işıl Demirel, interview by the author, April 3, 2023.

Smyrna's Pit

"Smyrna's Pit" (2020) is a 13-minute short documentary directed by Begüm Aksoy. Unfolding the layers of the memory of a particular site within the fire zone, it attempts to bring together how this contested and overly visible parcel is haunted by invisible stories. As the title implies, that place is the infamous Basmane Pit, also colloquially called "The Pit of Shame". Adjacent to Kültürpark and Basmane Square, the over visibility of the pit stems from the inability to actualize any construction projects on it despite numerous attempts since the city's main bus station was moved from there in 1975 (Mangır 2021). The film opens up with aerial views of the pit during a silent sunset. In fact, the pit itself was not that visible at the time because it was almost completely filled with rainwater that nourishes a whole ecosystem that has flourished in the pit (Figure 3.12) There begins the narration of an Armenian woman describing what Surp Krikor Lusaroviç Hospital looked like in the absence of even the land it once stood on. "This place is invisible now just like me" tells the narrator, "It burned down to ashes and perished. Nothing has left except this shameful pit. Only stories..." Another story steps in as the narration of a Greek woman who is "one of the lost of Smyrna" starts wandering the narrow and dead-end streets a century later. She encounters some surviving ruins at the streets around the fire zone. She gets closer to these buildings and waits on their doorsteps "that were used to be looked after and cleaned all over every morning by Muslim, Greek, and Armenian women". The subsequent scenes include interviews with a historian on the Armenian hospital and with urban planers and activists on the fate of the pit. Simultaneously, the invisible Greek woman keeps strolling around the old houses and other lives accompanying them. Although most of them are being used as storage with their doors and windows tightly closed now, and others almost completely destroyed, she still waits "in case she may encounter another lost spirit" near the pit and the fire zone, Aksoy narrates[39].

[39]Begüm Aksoy, personal communication with the author, June 10, 2024.

Figure 3.12 : The Basmane Pit in 2022, a century after Surp Krikor Lusaroviç Armenian Hospital was burnt to the ground. Basmane Square is in the bottom left corner, and Kültürpark starts at the bottom. After decades, the construction pit was suddenly filled with soil in early 2024 as a temporary solution, destroying the life at its place once again.
Source: Smyrna's Pit, drone footage was taken by Adem Giliz and Deya Ar.

Park

"Park" (2022) is an 18-minute short film "compiled" by Emre Yeksan. It is a compilation of openly accessed, preexisting footage of Kültürpark and numerous narratives on Kültürpark and the Great Fire. Its first public screenings were planned shortly after the centennial of the Great Fire, on October 29, at İzmir Urban Institute, and on November 5, at Istos Office in İstanbul. Thus, both screenings, which started with presentations by the director and Talat Ulusoy and were followed by forum discussions, were at the same time purposed as the centennial commemoration of the Great Fire, in the absence of any earlier public commemoration for the centennial. As "an İzmirian who has lots of troubles about İzmir indispensably", Yeksan merges his early memories of Kültürpark with "the lack of information to question concerning the fire that no one seems to know and talk about" into the film[40]. Out of this combination of personal memories and with the denial and silence he deals with, a stark contrast dominates the film. Throughout the film, the audience watches daily scenes from around Kültürpark during its most vivid and populated

[40]Emre Yeksan, interview by the author via Zoom, May 7, 2023.

times, the annual İzmir International Fair[41]. Visitors of all ages walk through the stands and pavilions en masse, enjoying the famous amusement park and the iconic Parachute Tower, riding pedalos on the artificial lake, exploring the (now defunct!) zoo, attending concerts, and dancing in gazinos... The visual narrative gets dramatically interrupted when it comes to what the audience listens to. Initially, the narration reads passages from Milliyet's "special newspaper supplement on the Fair " in 1971. Describing the park with technical and statistical details; it also mentions how the fire zone was chosen to be transformed into the "darling of İzmirians right in the center of the city" and how quickly the cleansing of the fire zone was accomplished "thanks to the efforts put by the people who have heard the rumors saying there might still be some gold left in the houses within the fire zone". The narration continues with interpretations of either the construction of Kültürpark or the Great Fire, if not both. These include witness accounts of some of the lowest and highest-ranking officials of the Turkish army at the time (including Mustafa Kemal and İsmet Pashas who were witnesses of the fire themselves). To quote one that provides a summary in a way, Olgaç describes his feelings about the transformation of the fire zone that "extends from the hillside (of Kadıfekale) to the sea; lacks any road to pass through the piles of stone, rubble, and ruined walls of the houses; stands as a black stain in the very heart of the city with its cellar holes and cave holes; and makes everyone think about what to do with this ruin whose fate remains unknown":

> "I feel relieved. As I walked step by step, something new appeared in every step and nothing old was left. One is not looking for them anyway. There stood a place called Poseidon, then, over there was Kramer, and there, Klonaridi. Many intricate buildings, gazinos, and ferhanes whose names have left my memory were here (...) Now, in their place, stands the statue of our eternal Ata on his rampant horse. This artifact is enough by itself to explain that those old buildings were like nothing but hovels." (Olgaç 1939, in Yeksan 2022)

The observation rightfully tells that nothing within the grounds of Kültürpark precedes its construction. (Footnore: Later, in his words, which were not included

[41] Annually organized uninterruptedly (other than 1942) from the inauguration of the park in 1936, this event has been intertwined with its venue so much so that locals basically prefer to call it Fair (Fuar) over Kültürpark. Its dates are historically set to late August and early September so that it also coincides with the anniversaries of three consecutive key dates of the Turkish "Great Offensive" that concluded the Greco-Turkish War in 1922: August 26, August 30 (a national holiday celebrated as the "Victory Day"), and September 9. To repeat, August 26 and September 9 also became the names of two of the monumental gates of the park, the former on top of the former Greek neighborhoods and the latter on top of the former Armenian Neighborhood.

in the narration of the film, Olgaç also makes an apology, as Kolluoğlu (2005, 40) delivers: "I want to apologize to you, the charming people of this beautiful city, that I made you remember these bitter memories.") Yeksan, however, claims otherwise: "Whenever I visit Fair, I come across something that reminds me of the fire because that absence and that emptiness themselves make me remember the fire. It is engraved there, in its resemblance to a pit..."[42].

The Silence of Scheherazade

When Defne Suman's novel "The Silence of Scheherazade" was published in 2016 (initially in Turkish, as Emanet Zaman), it was one of the very few literary works in Turkish to center around Smyrna/İzmir with a significant role attached to the Great Fire itself[43]. As a non-İzmirian coming across the story of the Great Fire for the first time in a chapter from Jeffrey Eugenides' novel Middlesex (2002), Suman was deeply affected by the "unmourned" loss of Smyrna, "a mourn for anyone who misses a cosmopolitan Turkey"[44]. In the book, the protagonists Desdemona and Lefty are displaced from their hometown Prussa/Bursa, and on their run all the way to Detroit passes through Smyrna when they become witnesses of the Great Fire (Eugenides 2015). Contemplating what the novel would have looked like if the protagonists were not forced to leave and the story of Smyrna was kept being told, Suman decides to write a novel on Smyrna. The first article she read to remember Smyrna and prepare for the novel was Kolluğlu's (2005) article, Suman tells, "which concludes with an invitation to think about how come there has been almost nothing about the memory of the Great Fire in Turkish, whether as films, books, or songs". Then, in 2014, she visited İzmir on the anniversary of the Great Fire to attend the "tour of the fire zone" led by Talat Ulusoy as a part of İzmir Remembers. That helped her get to know the city in its current shape by finding out "what was replaced by what, if not by the void" throughout the century following the Great Fire. Nurtured by this background, The Silence of Scheherazade "reveals a city, and culture, now lost to time" and brings together the stories of three Smyrniot women, Edith, Panayota,

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[42]Emre Yeksan, interview by the author via Zoom, May 7, 2023.

[43]For other contemporary literary works in Turkish explicitly mentioning the Great Fire, see Dumantepe's (2017) article discussing three novels by three İzmir-based authors: "Dido: Bir İzmir Romanı" (Dido: An İzmir Novel) written by Efe Moral (2014), "İzmir: 13 Eylül 1922" (İzmir: September 13, 1922) by Mehmet Coral (2003), and "Eleni'nin Kızı Halime - Düşlerde Kalan İzmir" (Eleni's Daughter Halime - İzmir in Dreams) by Ferda Bozoklar Ardalı (2011). I limited myself to Suman's book in the scope of this thesis to keep my primary focus on non-textual memory works. Besides, both the novel and its author, in this case, have attracted my attention for becoming parts of various on-site memory works such as memory walks and commemorative gatherings.

[44]Defne Suman, interview by the author via Zoom, March 24, 2023.

and Scheherazade "told through the intertwining fates of a Levantine, a Greek, a Turkish and an Armenian family" (Suman, 2016). Their stories are also being told on-site and remembered collectively through another memory walk or the "book walk" through which Suman meets her readers and trace the surviving ruins and stories of Smyrna on their route within the fire zone and beyond. Initiated in 2018 when two İzmir-based readers of the book, Emre Yıldız and Çiçek Ş.Tezer from the local creative platform Nomadmind, asked Suman if she would be interested in walking the places in the book together; the walk has been organized five times so far -the last of which also corresponds to my field work was on October 30, 2023[45]. The walks have also been functioning as commemorating meetings for the Great Fire. At the beginning of the day, a two-layered city map (Figure 3.13) designed by Yıldız is handed out to the participants. The walk starts from the Basmane Train Station and ends in the Quay/Kordon, following many stops, each marked by the reading out of a passage from the book. As they step into Kültürpark, the group is reminded that they they are "moving into the lost lands from now onwards" (Kaymak and Suman n.d.). One stop within Kültürpark is devoted to commemorating the lives and the city lost in the Great Fire, and the group is invited to take a moment to mourn there. Their mourning is accompanied by the following passage from the book, narrated by its main character, who was a Greek girl named Panayota until the day when the Great Fire started, and was "reborn" as Scheherazade forty days and forty nights after:

> "They attempted to rebuild the city in a rush. Agia Katerina, Agios Dimitrios, Agios Trifonas, our neighborhood, Frenk Street, and the joyful world of the Quay have all been burnt down. They crushed our houses, bakeries, and tiny squares into small pieces to build vast streets and boulevards over them. There is no one left who calls it Smyrna. Hundreds of thousands of people who have been living there for centuries disappeared into nothing overnight. Forty days and forty nights later, no one remembered them anymore. The church bells were silent forever. It is only the ghosts wandering the ruins to remember the past, and myself" (Suman 2016, 427-428)

[45]Emre Yıldız, interview by the author via Zoom, March 7, 2024.

Figure 3.13 : The map of İzmir/Smyrna. On top of the contemporary satellite image roughly of the city center, another map is attached on a transparent layer. Other than displaying the fire zone visible in the image with the color blue, this layer also includes the former street map while highlighting some streets and places mentioned in the book. Furthermore, these places are categorized as the buildings destroyed by the Great Fire and the buildings that survived it. Hence, this map is remarkable also as an attempt to bring together the surviving ruins of Smyrna/İzmir. Seven surviving ruins mentioned in the book were marked on the transparent level: Punta/Alsancak and Basmane train stations, a house near Basmane, the French Hospital (Alsancak Nevvar Salih İşgören State Hospital) and Consulate (Arkas Art Center), the English Hospital (Alsancak Nevvar Salih İşgören Vocational High School), and right in the middle of the map with a distance to the remaining surviving ruins, Central Girls' School (İzmir Atatürk High School).
Courtesy of Nomadmind.

3.2.6 Counter-Archives

KarDes

Since Hrant Dink Foundation was formed in his memory in 2007, it has constituted a cornerstone in emerging counter-archives regarding the past of Smyrna/İzmir and of entire landscapes across Turkey and beyond. Working on histories devoid of nationalism and racism, recognizing cultural diversity as richness, and acknowledging differences, the foundation has enabled extensive counter-memory works and projects (Hrant Dink Vakfı n.d.) Three of them are particularly remarkable for Smyrna/İzmir studies. In 2014, Turkey Cultural Heritage Map was launched to make Armenian, Greek, Syriac, and Jewish cultural heritage visible and to revive their memories "subjected to be lost" by pinning the surviving or destroyed places used by these

communities, such as schools, churches, hospitals, cemeteries, etc. With more than a hundred pinned sites of memory (most of which are now defunct) around the fire zone, the map provides a detailed inventory of Smyrna/İzmir's pre-1922 cityscape (Hrant Dink Foundation Bolis Institute 2014). In 2017, a conference entitled "İzmir and the Region: Hundred Years of Social, Economic, and Cultural Change, 1850-1950" was organized in İzmir, standing for an unprecedented collection of critical works on the city's past -to be presented there. The Great Fire and its aftermath as well as its memory in Turkey and Greece, were covered in numerous talks. Besides, one of its eight sessions was devoted to "Fire and Trauma" (Polatel and Kosukoğlu 2021). Finally, in 2023, KarDes Multicultural Memory Tour Guide was extended to include six new routes from Smyrna/İzmir. Named after քարտեզ/kartez (meaning map in Armenian) and kardeş (meaning sibling in Turkish), KarDes was designed as a mobile application in 2020 to bring together multicultural and multilayered routes to "make visible the urban and social memory which has been on the verge of extinction" through alternative history narratives (Estukyan et al. 2020). (Initially, twenty-three routes in İstanbul and five in Ankara were launched. Currently, the preparations of Diyarbakır routes are ongoing.) İzmir routes consist of Punta, Quay, Armenian Quarter, Frank Quarter, Kemeraltı, and Karataş tours. That is to say that apart from the latter, each route crosses the fire zone and revives the memories of the lost neighborhoods as well as the surviving ruins. To name some of these surviving ruins that stand still with different names and/or functions or are in ruins today: Ispartalian Mansion (Atatürk Museum), Guiffray House (under restoration), Madame Marta Amati's House (visible in ruins), Saint Andre School and Chapel (Saint Joseph High School), Punta Station (Alsancak Station), Panionios Stadium (Alsancak Stadium) are among the stops in Punta; French Consulate (Arkas Art Center) in Quay; Melis Cinema (a textile shop) in Armenian Quarter; and Çakaloğlu Inn in Kemeraltı (Figure 3.14). Furthermore, a stop in the Armenian Quarter is devoted to the Great Fire, with its memory being highlighted in many other stops. On November 21-22, 2023, KarDes team organized a gathering in İzmir to celebrate the launch of the new routes. Followed by a panel discussion on the multicultural past of the city, Frank Quarter route was walked collectively. In addition to the original route, traces of the Great Fire and the city preceding it were visited, and surviving stories were exchanged by the group throughout the days.

Figure 3.14 : Standing on the southwest edge of the fire zone, Çakaloğlu Inn has survived the Great Fire and the coming century despite the flames entering from entering from one of its two main doors and coming out from the other on the second day of the fire, September 14, 1922. It carries traces that makes it a unique site of memory and surviving ruin. Inside the inn, the black soot stains are still visible in patches on the walls and along the whole length of the ceiling. Reportedly, these are the only surviving remains of the fire after a century. As of April, 2023, restoration of the inn is on the agenda of its inheritors (From the text written by the author as a part of KarDes Kemeraltı Tour Workshop on April 4, 2023.). Picture taken by the author.

Smyrna Post

Smyrna Post was another counter-archive attempt in the form of a podcast series/radio program on İstanbul-based independent radio station Açık Radyo. Hosted by Umay Vardar and Talat Ulusoy, Smyrna Post was aired from November 2022 to October 2023, with news and stories from "the city that was forgotten" (Vardar and Ulusoy 2022). Their motivation was to "take a stance against the learned intellectual, aesthetic, and epistemic reflections" that go hand in hand with silencing the city's pre-1922 memory, Vardar (2022) tells. Conceived as a stop or a crack where the fragments of the past would be brought together with a collective effort, Smyrna Post recalls the memories of the city, a century after the liberation of İzmir through the destruction of Smyrna, she emphasizes. In the first episode, aired shortly after its centennial, the Great Fire was declared one of the key topics to delve into throughout the program. It was introduced as a collective trauma, after which those who had been displaced from the city could speak about it, unlike those who stayed there. "Why could not we speak? Could it be because of the silencing, feelings of guilt, and responsibility?" asked Vardar, while highlighting the need for asking questions other than the one that has been immediately asked when the Great Fire is mentioned: "Who did it, who, who, who?" (ibid). Three types of answers are possible in Turkey, Ulusoy (2022) suggests: The nationalist ready-made answer that puts the blame on the Greeks or the Armenians depending on the political agenda at the time; the judiciary answer which has never been the case since the Turkish authority did not carry out the legal proceedings with such particular accusations; and finally, the conscientious answer through which one would incline to come to terms with their share of responsibility not for the outbreak of the fire per se, but for the inability to extinguish it both physically at the time and metaphorically for the century to come. After reminding Falih Rıfkı Atay's passage entitled "Why were we burning İzmir?", Vardar suggests furthering the discussion beyond the detective work on the fire itself, which restrains us from hearing and thinking about other questions and answers: Since it is not about the fire as an incident, but also about the very place of the fire and the past of that place, "talking about Smyrna before 1922 stands for talking about the Great Fire" (Vardar, 2022). In keeping with their invitation, the program was used to talk about both in every episode. Towards constituting a counter-archive, the hosts were accompanied by their guests, who talked about their counter-memory works. Among them were Defne Suman, particularly on The Silence of Scheherazade, Adom Şaşkal and Damla Barın on KarDes, and Aylin Gürel, Ömer Selvi, and myself on the visiting school. It has also become a platform for me to publicly share the surviving ruins and stories from Central Girls' High School/İzmir Atatürk High School.

4. CONCLUSORY REMARKS

In this thesis, I aimed to document and analyze how the Great Fire of Smyrna/İzmir has been memorialized and commemorated in contemporary İzmir in the two decades leading to its centennial in 2022. Analyzing the silencing of the Great Fire's and the pre-1922 memories of the city in the reconstruction of İzmir and the identity of Turkishness itself (Ünlü 2018), I sought for traces that challenge the different moments of silencing during the making of sources, archives, narratives, and history (Trouillot 1995). I suggested that these traces are to be found in what I refer to as "the surviving ruins and stories." The "counter-memory works" that I discuss in this thesis are commonly intertwined with these ruins and stories. Before starting my fieldwork in search of the traces of Smyrna in İzmir, I was already engaged with some of the surviving ruins and stories mentioned in this thesis, particularly of the two schools I discuss in the second chapter. However, I was not familiar with the majority of the counter-memory works presented in the third chapter, and none of the "memory militants" (Göral 2023) who have strived to remember the predominantly Greek and Armenian communities of Smyrna, and its surruoundings, killed or displaced during and in the aftermath of the Great Fire.

In the second chapter, accepting the "haunting" invitation of the "ghosts" wandering (Gordon 2008) my childhood neighborhoods that were built on top of the fire zone and the ruins of the former Greek, Armenian, and Frank quarters; I told the surviving stories of two surviving ruins as well as their "afterlives" (Suni 2022) in İzmir and in Athens. Then, in the third chapter, I detailed the İzmir-based counter-memory works consisting of memory walks, commemorative meetings and public commemorations, exhibitions and other art works, counter-monuments and counter-archives. Through my interviews with the enablers and creators of these works and my own participation in some of them, I tracked the personal encounters, political motivations, and collaborations -among activists, artists, academics, and locals- through which the memory of the Great Fire was revisited.

While doing so, I aimed to discuss what memory activism at large could learn

from the case of the mainly local struggles for unsilencing the memory of the Great Fire, which appears to be a contribution of this thesis to the literature -with its apparent shortcomings and, simultaneously, potentials for future research, hopefully. Among its shortcomings, a dedicated theoretical discussion around the practices and potentials of collective mourning as an essential part of memory activism and the struggles centering around truth, justice, and memory stand out immediately. Moreover, further analyses of the outputs of the interviews might have brought about a more nuanced discussion by delving into the political identities as well as personal histories of the interviewed memory activists, particularly those who shared their memories and "post-memories" (Hirsch 2008) of migration and displacement in connection with their motivations to get involved with memory activism. I aim to delve deeper into this analysis in my future research and writing. Furthermore, unlike the memories of particular spaces playing the lead in the second chapter, the third chapter seems to lack the emphasis on the agency of spaces and the surviving ruins in inviting memory activism. A space based categorization of the counter-memory works rather than the current ranking based on their forms might have led to a more fruitful discussion. When it comes to the further research topics this thesis might trigger, the first one stands out to be multi-site analysis of the ways in which the Great Fire and Smyrna have been commemorated and memorialized in other places and communities, particularly in Greece and Armenia, where the grandchildren of Smyrniots and the survivors of the Great Fire took refuge and/or currently reside. Another attempt might focus on the promising potentials of art while unsilencing sources, archives, narratives, and history in relation to the memory of the Great Fire and more generally.

To conclude, benefitting from Rothberg's (2009) discussion on "multidirectional memory," I argue that the counter-memory works on the Great Fire constitute a collective effort for challenging the different layers of silencing, establishing connections between different sites, communities, political struggles and imaginaries, as well as exploring the transformative and co-creative potentials of these interactions. As I show in this thesis, the (marked and unmarked) ruins of the Great Fire become witnesses to a wide range of struggles from antimilitarism and conscientious-objection to the Armenian Genocide and minority rights at large. In the case of the monument marking the Laborer Horses used in the construction of Kültürpark after the Great Fire, these memorializations introduce multi-species solidarity and expand the notion of labour to more-than-human realms.

As they bring these multiple struggles and political visions together, the memorializations I analyze in this thesis open up new and creative paths for "unsilencing" and coming to terms with the violent past of the city and for exploring the potentials

of collective mourning for the unmourned loss of Smyrna - with the catastrophic destruction of its multicultural population. While doing so, these creative potentials developed close ties with the fire zone by reclaiming the silenced memories of pre-1922 spaces, including the surviving ruins. Even when spatial traces are destroyed - during the Great Fire or throughout the following century - the silenced memories have still been reclaimed thanks to the surviving stories from Smyrna and the creative will to remember and converse with them in the present moment.

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APPENDIX A

List of Primary Questions Asked in the Interviews

1. How are you related to İzmir (and the fire zone)?
2. Do you remember when you first heard about the Great Fire of Smyrna/İzmir in 1922? What does the earliest narrative you remember about the fire look like?
3. What other narratives have you come across? (If you have) How these other narratives differ from each other? How did you come across these other narratives? How did you respond to them?
4. What points about the Great Fire particularly intrigued you that you decided to create/contribute to/participate in a commemorative event/space/artwork about the fire? What was your aim/motivation while doing so?
5. While realizing/experiencing the commemorative organization/artifact, did you think of collaborating with other individuals or institutions? If yes, with whom and why? Which, if any, ideas of collaboration worked for you?
6. What kind of reactions or responses did you receive before/during/after your engagement with the commemoration of the fire?
7. What were the challenges, if any, that you faced throughout your engagement with the commemoration of the fire? If this is the case, how did you manage to cope with them?
8. What would a commemorative event/space/artwork about the fire look like in the future that is hypothetically free of the above mentioned challenges?
9. Are you familiar with any other commemorative efforts -in İzmir, Turkey or elsewhere- about the Great Fire, particularly in 2022 that marked its centenary?
10. Can you think of any spatial component of the contemporary cityscape/landscape of İzmir -either intact or in ruins- such as a building, a public space, a tree etc. that were within or around the fire zone and survived?
11. Can you remember and name any other spatial component that reminds you of the city prior to the fire, but could not survive the fire?

12. Do you feel like the counter-memory works you were engaged with created potentials for (collective) mourning regarding the Great Fire, its victims, and the city preceding the fire?
13. In another section of this research, as a case study, I make use of the surviving stories of two particular buildings that survived the fire to this day with their monumental architecture and institutional significance. (İzmir Atatürk High School and Namık Kemal High School) Are you familiar with these buildings/institutions and do you know anything about the pasts of these buildings prior to the fire?

List of Interviews (Recorded & Transcripted)

23.03.23: Interview with Coşkun Üsterci and Ferda Ülker, TİHV İzmir Branch
24.03.23: Interview with Defne Suman, Zoom
03.04, 08.04.23 : Interview with Işıl Demirel, Zoom & SEHAK
07.05.23: Interview with Emre Yeksan, Zoom
09.05.23: Interview with Talat Ulusoy, Zoom
16.09.23: Interview with Nejat Yentürk, Zoom
04.03.24: Interview with Filiz Adıgüzel, Zoom
07.03.24: Interview with Emre Yıldız, Zoom

Timeline of the Field Study

Trips to İzmir: 22.02-29.03, 20.04-23.04, 13.05-14.05,28.05- 28.05, 28.06-10.07, 14.07-17.07,13.08-31.08, 09.09-13.09, 28.10-30.10, 21.11-22.11, 30.12-01.01, 04.02-11.02
22.03.23: Interview/Meeting Atom Şaşkal and Damla Barın, HDV, İstanbul
23.03.23: Interview with Coşkun Üsterci and Ferda Ülker, TİHV, İzmir
23.03.23: Visiting the Exhibition “Ateş Çemberinde İzmir”, Çatı Bostanlı, İzmir
24.03.23: Interview/Meeting Gözde Yılmaz, APİKAM City Archive, İzmir
24.03.23: Interview with Defne Suman, Zoom
27.03.23: Proposal Defense, Zoom

03.04, 08.04.23: Interview with Işıl Demirel, Zoom & SEHAK, İstanbul

04.04, 18.04.23: Participating in the KarDes workshop on Kemeraltı route, Zoom

07.05.23: Interview with Emre Yeksan, Zoom

09.05.23: Interview with Talat Ulusoy, Zoom

21.05.23: Interview/Meeting Umay Vardar, Kohen Kitabevi, İstanbul

28.06-09.07.23: Participating the AAVS Field Trips & the Exhibition, İzmir

30.06.23: Visiting İzmir Sanat Factory Museum

17.07.23: Revisiting the AAVS Exhibition

11.08, 25.08.23: Recording the episodes #18,19 of "Smyrna Postası" with Umay Vardar, Talat Ulusoy, Aylin Gürel and Ömer Selvi, Açık Radyo

13.08-19.08.23: Presenting in Arkhe Social Memory Summer School

23.08.23: Visiting the İzmir Ticaret Tarihi Müzesi & Meeting with Ayşegül Selçuki Uysal

12.09.23: Visiting the Centennial Memory House, İzmir

13.09.23: Solo walk on the 101th Anniversary, İzmir

16.09.23: Interview with Nejat Yentürk, Zoom

06.10.23: Recording the episode #21 of "Symrna Postası" with Umay Vardar and Talat Ulusoy, Açık Radyo

29.10.23: Participating in the centennial celebrations at İAL, visiting Çatı

30.10.23: Participating in the Memory Walk on Emanet Zaman, BAYETAV, İzmir

21.11.23: Participating in the Memory Walk of the Frenk Neighborhood, İzmir

21.11.23: Meeting with Çınar Atay and Mert Kaya, İzmir

22.11.23: Meeting with Ümit Eser, FKM İzmir

22.11.23: Participating in the Launch of KarDes İzmir Memory Tours, FKM, İzmir

04.03.24 Interview with Filiz Adıgüzel, Zoom

07.03.24 Interview with Emre Yıldız, Zoom

List of the Recent Revisits to the memory of the Great Fire towards the Silent Centennial

1. APİKAM City Archive (2004)
2. The exhibition "İzmir Encircled by the Fire", (Ateş Çemberinde İzmir) (2022-23)

3. The Centennial Memorial House (100.Yıl Anı Evi) and the installation room “A View from the Window”, (Pencereden Görünenler) (2022 -)
4. The exhibition “The Great Fire of İzmir of 1922”, (Büyük İzmir Yangını 1922), İzmir Sanat Exhibition Hall (2022)
5. The installation regarding the fire, İzmir Factory of Culture and Art (2023)
6. The exhibition by Ahmet Güneştekin “Infidel Quarter”, (Gavur Mahallesi), Atlas Pavillon (2022-23)
7. The exhibition “The Liberation Exhibition at İzmirde”, (İstiklal Sergisi İzmir’de), Atlas Pavillon (2021-22)
8. The public celebrations on the centennial day (2022)

List of the Counter-memory Works Mentioning the Great Fire

1. MiliTurizm Festival, commemoration, memory walks with Coşkun Üsterci (2005 -)
2. The *Yüzleşme* Workshop (Yüzleşme Atölyesi) (2012 -)
3. The public commermoration on the anniversary (2012)
4. The session dedicated to the Great Fire, İzmir KMM (2012)
5. The exhibition “Once Upon a Time in İzmir” (Bir Zamanlar İzmir’de), İstanbul (2012)
6. The exhibition by Sibel Horada “Fire Chronicles” (Yangın Günlükleri) (2012-14)
7. The symposium and commemoration İzmir Remembers (İzmir Hatırlıyor) (2014, 2015)
8. The conference by Hrant Dink Foundation “İzmir and the Region: A Century of Social, Economic and Cultural Change” (2016)
9. The exhibition by Hakan Kırdan “Memory Forest” (Anıt Ormanı), İstanbul (2016)
10. The memory walk workshop by SEHAK and the short documentary “Ash” (Kül) (2018)
11. The exhibition by Filiz Adıgüzel “The Sites of Memory of Smyrna/İzmir” (İzmir/Smyrna Hafıza Mekanları) (2018)

12. The novel by Defne Suman “The Silence of Scheherazade” (Emanet Zaman) (2016) and the book walks by NomadMind (2018 -)
13. The short film by Begüm Aksoy “Smyrna’s Pit” (Smyrna’nın Çukuru) (2020)
14. The short film by Emre Yeksan “Park” and commemorative screenings (2022)
15. The radio program on Açık Radyo “Smyrna Post” (Smyrna Postası) (2022 -23)
16. The centennial commemoration by Darağaç Art Collective (2022) and the İssigonis installation (2019)
17. The digital mapping and memory walks by HDV KarDes (2020- 23)
18. The field trips and the exhibition by AAVS: In other latitudes (2023)
19. The installations by İyi Tasarım workshop as counter monuments (2023)