

**THE MANIFESTATION OF NATIONALISM IN THE CINEMA:
READING THE TURKISH NATION BUILDING PROCESS THROUGH
THE *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* MOVIE (1934)**

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Abstract. *Cinema is not only a space in which directors act with the aim of making art, but they also reflect their own testimonies and political perspectives; this study, which claims to be related to representation strategies that contain various interests and desires; It is of the opinion that different ideological approaches are reflected on the screen by political and cultural elites in line with the construction, legitimacy and movement of identities and images. In this study, which examines the *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* movie, which was shot in the intense socio-political atmosphere of the 1930s and was shot to tell Turkey's nationalization process and modernization experience through the capital Ankara; the manifestation of the Turkish nation-building process in cinema is discussed through the relationship between nationalism and cinema.*

Key words: *Nationalism, Turkish Political Life, Turkish nation-building process, Political Cinema, relations between USSR and Turkey*

1. Introduction

The national narrative, which is being reproduced in national history, literature, cinema, media and popular culture, is addressed to the relevant nation; It provides a series of stories, images, scenarios, historical events, symbols, and rituals that represent collective experiences, suffering, triumphs, and disasters that give meaning. Thus, members of the "imaginary community" find themselves sharing the common narrative, the national allegory (Hall 1992: 293). Therefore, cinema; It is difficult to think independently of the social space in which it is produced, national identity, culture, literature, collective pain and joy experienced, ideological discourses, daily life practices, dominant narratives, hierarchies and asymmetries that perpetuate the boundaries of the social. Cinema, which shapes the collective memory, desires and concerns, and contains the images of the nation, is associated with value judgments, political tendencies and ideologies (Birincioğlu 2017: 99–100). Stating that the beginning of cinema coincided with the rise of nationalism, Stam (2014: 28) points out that cinema has become a strategic tool that reflects national fantasies and should be evaluated in line with the development of nationalism (Gültekin 2006: 35). Cinema, which is seen as the producer and transmitter of cultural products, creates modern myths on the one hand, and allows the reproduction of certain dominant values by reconstructing reality on the other hand. Cinema, which reproduces reality, reproduces things through the filter of ideology as an expression of the dominant ideology (Comolli and Narboni 1976: 25). As a result of the domination of the dominant power/ideology over the field of cinema, cinema, like other tools in practice, is a device used by the dominant power to spread its ideology (Lebel 1974: 35–36).

Cinema (Güney 2006: 226) has frequently transformed into an ideological apparatus of the state in the Althusserian sense due to its persuasive power, consent production methods, and emotional mobilization. It is at least as effective as the ideological apparatus of the state in rebuilding the nationalist ideology and spreading the nationalist discourse. One of the most significant symbolic violence domains of the state and nationalist ideology in the Bourdiean sense is cinema, which plays a significant role in demonstrating and propagating the strength and holiness of the state and nationalist ideology to the society (Zengin 2016). In addition to indoctrinating nationalist ideology, creating, transferring, and legitimizing national values, cinema, which confronts us as a space where nationalist discourse is built, modern national myths are created, and the image of nation is reproduced, also offers the audience a nationalist perspective through visual, auditory, and symbolic elements suggests (Ryan and Kellner 2010: 17–18). One cannot, however, generalize that all films produced in the sphere of cinema reflect a nationalist viewpoint. Thus, films reflect different meanings, ideologies, and worldviews to the big screen according to their form and content. However, it cannot be said that all films released in the field of cinema reflect a nationalist point of view. In other words, cinema, which contains interrogative, explanatory, interpretive and guiding elements, is a space where different ideological tendencies and narrative styles are in competition with each other, and different values and meanings are produced (Yılmaz 2008: 66).

Starting from Wollen (2013: 87), who draws attention to the fact that the meanings produced in the field of cinema can only be explained in relation to other meanings, this study aims to understand how nationalism and nation building manifest in the field of cinema.

Combining the narrative with the visual, cinema has developed a narrative that idealizes attempts to establish cultural and political hegemony, modernization and nation-building processes while speaking (Stam 2014: 29) on behalf of the “winners” of history. In this study, which looks for the traces of this narrative form through the *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* movie, it will be tried to find answers to the questions of what the relationship between nationalism and cinema is, how nationalism is handled in the field of cinema, how the subject summoned by Turkishness works, and what the basic dynamics of the Turkish nation-building process are. Analyzing how Turkishness is imagined and represented and how the Turkish ethos is established in the *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* movie will give us important clues about how the dominant perception was shaped in the Early Republican Period. Starting from Nairn (2015: 121–123), who likens nationalism to the old Roman God Janus, who has two faces, this study looks at the face of nationalism in cinema through the *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* movie.

2. Reflection of nationalism on the screen: the relationship between cinema and nationalism

The emergence of the nation as a form of political and social organization, the development of nationalism and the increasing prevalence of the nation-state form had important consequences. One of the most important of these results reflected in the cultural field is that the nationalist understanding has become dominant in artistic and cultural products. The developments in science and technique allowed the emergence of photography and then cinema, and cinema and the ruling power had an important device to establish their hegemony (Yılmaz 2008: 71). The dominant power, using the cinema as an effective tool, has developed a narrative style that makes the nationalist ideology real, unchanging, and naturalizing itself and its institutions, arguing that the nation is a natural phenomenon. How an ideal and acceptable citizen should be, and the determination of social hierarchy and asymmetries were among the other narrative styles that we encounter in the field of cinema as reflections of this trend. Although it emerged as a bourgeois ideology, nationalism, which turned into a popular movement with phenomena such as symbols, discourses, myths, and legends, gained a visible momentum with the power it received from cinema.

It can be said that cinema has an important function as a concrete and material practice that creates the political, economic, and social values that hold the society together by centering the worldview or ideology of a certain class (Yılmaz 2008: 63). In this area, where new subjectivities and identities are constructed, people with class differences and generally opposed to each other are stereotyped and a call is made to stay together as a national community. The films, which carry out the construction of identity and the fiction of subjectivity through technological tools,

also create a certain perception of history, time and space through the images and narratives shown on the big screen (İri 2011: 287-289). When the movement of political and social power in the field of emotions is followed through cinema, it also provides an opportunity to see how the images, values and norms of the nations are represented in the cinema. Cinema also creates “us” and “other” through commitment to common sounds and images, and influences the formation of national identity by producing national laughter, national tears and national hysteria (Arslan 2021: 11–13). When considered in this context, cinema has developed in relation to nationalism from the very beginning, and has played an important role in spreading nationalism to large masses and creating an imaginary community that Anderson calls “imagined community” in the universe of emotions. The audience, who identifies with those represented on the silver screen, can also find the opportunity to imagine the members of the nation who have the same feelings and desires as themselves and a space where they can position/construct their national identity through cinema (Birincioğlu 2017: 106).

While literacy is a requirement for the creation of national culture in the field of literature, this requirement is not present in the field of cinema. This situation demonstrates that mainstream cinema feeds nationalism and that the cinema is more effective in helping people who speak the same language quickly acquire shared values, norms, and emotions (Parlayandemir 2015: 117). The cinema (Ferro 2002: 278) played a significant role in the spread of nationalist ideology, taking the place of newspapers and novels. Films that deal with nationalist issues and emphasize the national narrative style have a significant place in the field of national cinema when we examine the history of cinema. The national cinema and film industry, the cinematic product of a particular country, is often supported by governments to create a national character, govern citizens within the country, and export ideology abroad (Butler 2011: 133). National cinema, which has certain characteristics of a country and reflects the national identity, presents the narrative image of a country in the international arena (Elsaesser 1989: 6). Thus, it is clear that national cinema is related to nationalism.

Films, as opposed to other industrial products, have a greater emotional and moral impact on audiences (Kolker 2008: 97). Nationalist narrative films not only cause a thinning of national sentiments but also convey moral messages about what is right and wrong. In the world of cinema, there are a lot of movies that amplify nationalist effects and depict propagandist viewpoints entirely through emotional means. In actuality, these movies can be found in both the fiction and documentary categories. All authoritarian and totalitarian regimes use cinema for purposes like immortalizing the leaders and teachings of the society in line with their own ideologies, according to Sontag (2008: 212-217), who claims that what is seen in some documentary films presented as a record of reality is actually the fictionalization of reality to serve the image. This unquestionably holds true for “democratic” governments supported by liberal or neoliberal waves, whose wins were heralded as the “end of ideologies” or the “end of history” for a certain time period.

Nationalist tendencies began to grow throughout the world in the 20th century, and as they did, they also spread to the mainstream of cinema, making it inevitable to manipulate, imply, and direct emotions. In addition to manipulating emotions, nationalism's representation on screen plays a significant role in establishing meanings and reflecting political and aesthetic goals. Consequently, the film is typically filmed to construct a cogent narrative and to produce meaning, as it is born from the confluence of technique and meaning(s). By connecting metaphors, structures, characters, and motifs with a feeling or notion, the film's meanings are revealed (Ryan and Lenos 2012: 1–161). The patriotic meanings developed in the world of cinema and the desired ideas of national identity and belonging create, preserve, and perpetuate a national identity. Contrary to the strong and active manifestations of nationalism, we now see nationalist images more regularly on movie screens, where they have vanished into the background and become commonplace. Thus, the construction of national identity, national narratives and representations infiltrate into daily life practices and become banal; it can be said that this situation allows the reproduction of nationalism (Billig 2002: 16–17). Routine and banalized nationalism have enabled it to become so pervasive in society that it now affects every aspect of life, from music to theater to the movies, and daily rituals. Thus, every area of artistic and social life has become a space where nationalism, nation-state and national identity reproduce themselves. In this context, “What kind of relationship is there between Turkish nationalism and cinema in the Early Republican Period?” In order to find an answer to the question, it is necessary to first understand the universe of Turkish nationalism, and then to understand how Turkish nationalism is reflected on the screen, what discourses it produces, what pleasures and desires it carries.

3. The intersection of the field of cinema with the field of Turkish nationalism

The social realities of the time and the political philosophy that dominated public discourse can both be understood by seeing films that reflect the era in which they were made. In Turkey, nationalism is the dominant topic of conversation. It has a wide range of effects, including defining collective identities, influencing daily interactions, attitudes, and behaviors, and being reflected in the arts. Turkish cinema has a significant role for the discourses, attitudes, and actions that make up Turkish nationalism. A discussion of nationalism that extends outside the realm of film is necessary in order to comprehend the nationalist images floating on the surface of cinema, how Turkish nationalism is mirrored on the screen, and how Turkish nationalism has evolved through time.

Nationalism, which makes up the modern age's collective consciousness, is not a phenomenon that only occurs occasionally and in areas of conflict (Özkırımlı 2016: 14). Nationalism is a phenomenon that is crafted differently according to time and geography, forms the foundation of the state structure that has left its mark on the last two centuries, and constantly reshapes history. It arose in many geographies and historical eras (Calhoun 2012: 7–8).

Nationalism has numerous facets because it is connected to both ancient and contemporary themes, imaginations, and ideologies. The phenomena of nationalism, which is a political philosophy, social movement, and a form of culture, first appeared towards the end of the 18th century (Smith 2017: 118). The Ottoman Empire underwent an unstoppable phase of unrest during the nationalistic era (Gellner 2018), when political and cultural boundaries were altered.

Under the direction of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding elites of the Republic redefined Turkish nationalism. They are the heirs of both the Ottoman modernization process and the political and ideological contradictions that this process has created in the transition from the empire to the nation-state (Göktürk 2008: 103–104). The experiences of delayed modernity and nationalism have produced spiritual, cultural, and political tensions that have also resulted in the creation of a nationalism understanding that ruthlessly suppresses ethnic and religious distinctions. The ideological foundation of nationalism was largely dictated by the Young Turk ideology (Köker 2007: 132), which Kemalism replaced with the Republic. The positivist and Jacobin ideas that dominated the political and scientific world of the time had a variety of effects on the elites of the Republic. Under the influence of these thoughts, they turned to the design of a society to be organized with reason, science, and technique, instead of different linguistic, ethnic, religious communities and communities that were thought to belong to the past. The elites, who tried to transform traditional and old structures and practices in a Jacobin style, based their legitimacy on a positivist and secular thought that took its source from enlightened philosophy (Şen 2019: 59).

The nationalist understanding, which is at the base of Kemalist principles, tried to homogenize the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious heterogeneous structure of the Ottoman Empire with the transition to the nation-state, and built a monist structure based on Turkish national identity. The homogeneous nation-state, which is seen as a condition of being Western and modern, played an important role in the imagination of the Turkish nation by the soldiers, bureaucrats, and intellectual cadres of the Republic. The Kemalist interpretation of nationalism, however, did not want to forge a political connection with and unify with the Turks residing outside of Turkey, in contrast to the Turanist and pan-Turkist nationalisms. Kemalist nationalism pursued a national strategy centered on Anatolia, rejecting the pan-Turkist homeland ideal of Unionist politics during the 1920s (Kaya 2022). The founding will, acting in line with this policy, has turned to a modernist, cultural Westernization-oriented nationalism phenomenon that ignores class and ethnic differences. Undoubtedly, at this point, Ziya Gökalp's nationalism design has been an important factor. Gökalp, one of the important figures of Turkish nationalism, emphasized the importance of nationality in morality and decency, in his work titled "The Principles of Turkism." According to Gökalp, the country consists of people who have received similar education in terms of language, religion, morals, and culture. It is not a racial, tribal, geographical, political, or volitional group (Gökalp 1973: 22). It is possible to see traces of this emphasis on cultural nationalism in Gökalp's foundational principles. A nation is defined as "people who have a rich memory heritage, who have a shared desire and sincerity

to live together, who have a common will to conserve the heritage, and who continue together,” according to the founding concept in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's book *Civil Information for the Citizen*. It is a society created via their union (İnan 1931: 17). Additionally, it is claimed that the nation is made up of its shared culture, history, and joys. The creation of a shared history and awareness relies heavily on art, which has almost acted as a building block for nation states. The desire, ideas, feelings, and tales that are expressed in the films are also heavily influenced by the adventure of modernization and Westernization, which is shaped by being articulated with the processes of forging national identity.

A relatively short period following the advent of cinema, Turkish directors started producing films and the language also started to be heard on movie screens. This method also set the groundwork for the development of a cinematic genre that can be referred to as Turkish cinema. Since the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, when cinema first arose, there has been a pattern of political authorities using film as an ideological tool and propaganda tool in the context of nationalism. The World War I participants aspired to take advantage of cinema's influence. As a result, Enver Pasha's order to establish the Central Army Cinema Department (MOSD), which was directly connected to the army and oriented toward military goals, brought cinema under the control of the state, the army, and nationalism (Zengin 2016). This intersection of the cinema field with Turkish nationalism and the continuation of unity after it continued in the Republican period. When considered in the context of a new nation-state building process, it is not strange to see the reflection of Turkish modernization and Turkish nationalism's vision of the state, nation, and society on the screen with varied discourses, practices, images, and representations. The “*Desire to be Modern but National*” (Arslan 2021: 32) of Turkishness has given the cinema screen a place where it can gain visibility and be content. In actuality, the national self, which appears incomplete and insufficient to the West, has discovered, due to the cinematic screen, a place where it may make up for its absence and tardiness and establish itself as a Western and national subjectivity (Şen 2019: 56–57). In other words, Turkish film may be understood as a means of articulating the struggle of the Turkish nation-building process and the aspiration of Turkishness to be modern and national. It is necessary to look at how Atatürk approached the field of cinema in the context of his relationship with Turkish nationalism in order to understand the discourses, representations and ideology in the *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* movie, which will facilitate the understanding of the Turkishness fictionalized on the cinema screen.

Although Atatürk was aware of the function of cinema in the process of national identity and its social reproduction, it is difficult to say that cinema was sufficiently supported in the Early Republican Period compared to other art fields. Due to the lack of industrialization of cinema, the censorship mechanism of the state, changing cultural policies, and economic and technical limitations, cinema could not be used as an effective propaganda tool in the dissemination of official ideology (Erkılıç 2014: 82). The writers and journalists of the Early Republican Period decried this cold attitude toward cinema. On March 14, 1927,

Falih R. Atay published an article in the newspaper *Hakimiyet-i Milliye* in which he claimed that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had diverted a sizable amount of economic resources to this field and that cinema could be a useful propaganda tool in nations where books and newspapers are uncommon (Özuyar 2021: 13). Similar criticism was made by Yunus Nadi in his January 14, 1935, column in the *Cumhuriyet* newspaper. He claimed that cinema was not given the necessary importance and that the government's approach to it consisted of censorship and taxation, despite the fact that the USSR had greatly benefited from cinema (Nadi 1935). The mission that Nusret Kemal set for Turkish cinema in an article he wrote in *Ülkü* magazine in 1933 is important in terms of understanding the approach of the Republican elites to cinema. One of the purposes of the cinema, in Kemal's words, is

... to spread the revolution in the country, to be an agent in the establishment and development of the national culture according to new ideas, to give the people especially the moral entertainment that develops the physical pleasures, and to introduce the Turkish country, the Turkish people, and the Turkish culture. (Kemal 1933: 351)

It is debatable to what extent the Republican elites used movies to provide emotional mobilization and promote the rules and principles of the system. As Arslan also noted (2011: 41), films were in reality "reluctantly" screened to propagate republican changes through Community Centers; however, this was not the situation in the Soviet Union, where there were significant state-supported incentives. Although it is said that cinema was not directly an ideological apparatus of the state and was not adequately supported financially in this period, educational films were prepared especially through the People's Houses, which were under the control of the regime, at the point of nation-state building and national identity creation, the censorship of some scenes in foreign films, the prohibition of old writing after the alphabet reform, the language used. It is possible to say that cinema plays an important role in the establishment of the regime's values and ideology through music and music (Lüleci 2018: 233–234). In addition, although the founding cadres of the Republic did not give the necessary importance to cinema as an ideological and propaganda tool, Turkish cinema, which was heavily fed by Kemalist ideology, adopted a social vision narrative based on Kemalist ideas in films (Maktav 2013: 146). Because both in the Early Republican Period and afterwards, Kemalist thought has turned into a kind of habitus that determines the feelings, thoughts and beliefs of the actors in the cultural and intellectual field. The construction of the national Turkish identity, which was articulated with the concepts and categories on which Kemalist thought was based, was not limited to military and political dominance, but gradually reached a hegemonic level in the cultural and intellectual field (Şen 2019: 92).

Atatürk wanted to leverage the power of cinema in the establishment of hegemony by the Republican regime, the adoption of the reforms by the public, and the socio-cultural modernization of society. He was aware that cinema is an effective propaganda tool in the construction of national identity, creation of national memory, and on the masses. In order to carry out

the resolution made at the İzmir Economics Congress to screen films that he felt useful concerning agriculture, industry, geography, economy, and health, Atatürk established a cinema unit within the CHP, albeit with limited opportunities. He also began importing instructional films (İnan 1989: 22). The political regime, which turned to building a modern national identity in the Early Republican Period, viewed the advancement in the field of art as an indicator of culture and civilization and wanted to benefit from it (Özuyar 2021: 13-15). As a result, it ensured that the possibilities of the cinema were utilized in the People's Houses, which were opened for reasons such as the establishment of the republican regime and creating a homogenous society. Atatürk's statement "ideas and revolutions spread through art" (Egeli 1954: 73) reveals that cinema and art as a wider field were seen as a propaganda tool in the construction of the imaginary community called the nation in this period.

Atatürk's approach to cinema was not limited to spreading the ideas and reforms of the regime. As a cinephile, Atatürk enjoyed watching fictional and journal-type movies. He had one of the rooms of Çankaya Mansion converted into a movie theater, and enjoyed watching movies during his country tours. Atatürk's interest in cinema was not limited to watching movies, this interest went so far as to have him write screenplays and appear in front of the camera. As a matter of fact, Atatürk, who gave Münir Hayri Egeli the task of writing the script of a film about the Turkish Revolution, sent Egeli to Germany to study cinema abroad and did not hesitate to take part in documentaries or fictional films about the National Struggle (Özuyar 2021. 20–119). The Republican People's Party shared this interest, which goes beyond Atatürk and his endeavors (CHP). The line "*We shall make it a business to make cinema helpful to the nation*" (C.H.P. Programı 1935: 44) is from the 1935 CHP party program. Is significant for comprehending the goals intended for Turkish cinema. In this context, it was established in the report written by the CHP in the 1930s that the advancements linked to cinema were insufficient, and specific recommendations were made in order to exploit the cinema successfully in the regime's favor. In other CHP meetings, the notion that cinema should be exploited more efficiently was also raised, and decisions were made in this direction (Tekerek 2020: 190–191). The Republican regime, which wanted to benefit from the cinema more effectively in line with the decisions taken, saw the propaganda power of the cinema and banned the contents that it deems harmful to itself with its censorship policies (Lüleci 2018: 243).

Cinema, which entered the Ottoman Empire very soon after Western countries, coincided with a period when Turkish nationalism was on the rise. The beginning of the first examples of motion pictures in the army shows that there is a developing field of cinema in line with nationalism and propaganda. The films, which are shaped in line with the policies of the political power in this field, have adopted a nationalist representation and narrative style, although they center different themes. In other words, the processes of nationalization and modernization, which constitute the conditions for the emergence of Turkish cinema, have significantly affected the narratives and contents of the films. When we consider the films of the period as an important indicator of the desire to build the Turkish national identity and to be modern, it is possible to see that this desire has

a decisive effect on the films in terms of form, content, representation, and aesthetics. The cinema, which was instrumentalized for multiple functions in line with the policies of the republican regime, reflected the desire of Turkishness to express, show and position itself. This situation led Turkish cinema, which emerged in a nationalist context, to a didactic narrative style on the one hand, and to adopt a narrative style that made aesthetic concerns secondary or unimportant on the other. Turkish cinema, which was surrounded by nationalism in the Late Ottoman and Early Republican Periods, could not be effective enough due to reasons such as lack of knowledge and experience, economic and technical inadequacy. For this reason, cooperation has been made with many countries that are competent in the field of cinema, especially the USSR, in the production of films in the Early Republican Period. The military, economic, and political ties between the USSR and the Ankara Government that began during the National Struggle Period took on a new dimension with the foundation of the Republic. The USSR, which was innovative in terms of technique, knowledge, and experience, collaborated with Turkey in order to help it propagate the republican regime's propaganda through cinema (Lüleci 2014: 40).

4. Cinema in Turkey and USSR Relations

The regime, which gave importance to activities in the fields of cinema, literature, theatre, music, painting and broadcasting as much as political relations in the Turkish foreign policy of the Early Republican Period, benefited from artistic and cultural activities to improve bilateral relations and solve some diplomatic problems (Özuyar 2019: 15). Diplomatic relations, which started with the USSR in the National Struggle Period, expanded to include the artistic and cultural field with the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. There has been an important cooperation in the field of art, especially in the 1930s, between the USSR, which inherited an important artistic legacy from Tsarist Russia and used this legacy in line with socialist propaganda, and Turkey, which tried to benefit from the power of art in order to modernize, build national identity and make the people adopt Atatürk's principles and reforms. An important pillar of this cooperation was the cinema. *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara*, shot by Soviet filmmakers invited to Turkey for the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Republic, was the most important product of this collaboration (Lüleci 2014: 40). The ambition of the founding staff to promote Ankara and the new Republic, among many other initiatives, led to the shooting of the film in question, especially for the tenth anniversary of the Republic (Adadağ 2017: 161).

The Soviet government began producing propaganda and educational films in the early years of the Bolshevik Revolution. With its cinema theories, literary adaptations, and new films during this time, Soviet cinema, which made a significant advancement in the 1920s, gained a significant position in the sphere of world cinema. The cinema was viewed as a crucial tool for the revolution's propaganda because it served a social purpose and allowed the revolution to reach large audiences; however, it also developed into a significant artistic medium where the struggle of the individual to change himself and his environment as well as

social issues were vigorously debated. Vertov, Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Dovchenko are a few of the most well-known and successful directors in realistic film. The Soviet Union monopolized the film industry in order to maintain control over all forms of cinema activity because it recognized the importance of cinema in the establishment of institutions and the system. Therefore, government took over the work of the producers and established State Cinema Committees in St. Petersburg. Lenin, the founder of the Bolshevik Revolution, considered film an essential instrument for propaganda and envisioned using it to advance Soviet ideology. When the revolution was institutionalized and the official ideology predominated during the Stalin era, the censorship mechanism developed into a significant pressure point on the art world. Films of this time pushed unrealistic and idealized characters to the forefront as the state's influence over the filmmaking industry grew. The proliferation of movies telling tales of national heroism and Russian nationalism has also been a significant sign that Marxism is increasingly losing its global aspect. Although the Kremlin viewed film as a propaganda instrument, the Soviet directors of this era created a unique cinematic perspective within the context of world cinema, preserving the significance of Soviet cinema. Their most distinguishing trait was the way they created fiction as a theory in and of itself. These directors, who attach importance to visuality, have been the pioneers of many innovations in the art of cinema (Oylum 2011: 14–19; Özuyar 2019: 29).

In this period, Turkey, which wanted to benefit from the cinema experience of the USSR, which was ruled by a single-party government like itself, sent Turkish directors to the USSR in order to benefit from the knowledge and experience of Soviet directors. Muhsin Ertuğrul, the most important Turkish director of the Early Republican Period and the direct representative and carrier of the official ideology of the newly established Republic, met with important Soviet directors such as Eisenstein and observed the work of the USSR in the field of cinema. One of the most concrete indicators of this cooperation is that Turkey imported educational films from the USSR in various fields (Lüleci 2014: 47). The films shot by Soviet filmmakers in the 1930s have an important function in understanding Turkey's nation-building process, its relationship with its past, and the dynamics through which it builds the future. The first of these films is *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* movie, prepared by directors Sergey Yutkevich and Lev Arnstam in 1933 and assisted by Reşat Nuri (Güntekin) and Fikret Adil. However, this movie was made in place of the movie "The Man Who Didn't Kill," which the Ministry of Education started co-production with the USSR and gave up at the last moment. Although the Ministry of Education gave up the production of "The Man Who Didn't Kill," it was determined to make a joint film with the USSR.

5. *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara* in the context of nation-building

The fact that Soviet cinema is at a higher level than Turkish cinema in terms of technique, aesthetics, and economics is truly tied to the historical circumstance that allowed for Soviet cinema to turn its camera to Turkey and transform that area into a cinematic object.

To demonstrate how the reforms raised the nation to level of modern nations, Turkey sought to produce a joint film with the Soviets. When a deal was achieved during negotiations in Ankara, the Soviet film crew began production in accordance with this request. In order to explain Turkey's nation-building process, modernization experience, and the growth of its capital, Sergey Yutkevich and Lev Arnstam, who later joined the team, wrote the screenplay for the film titled *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara*. The ancient situation involving Anatolia and Ankara is detailed in the first of the scenario's six parts. The contacts and attention that the Soviet delegation in Ankara, which was led by General Voroshilov and was in Turkey for the Republic's tenth anniversary festivities, got were covered in the second section. In the third section, two fictional individuals serve as an explanation for Turkey's development, nation-building process, and achievements. The situation in Ankara at the time is covered in the fourth section. Atatürk's tenth anniversary address is covered in the fifth section. The grand official procession and Ankara's lighting with electric lamps for the republic festivities are covered in the sixth and final section (Özuyar 2019: 70–71).

Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, one of the key figures on the founding team of the Republic, speaks in the opening sequence of the film. In his address, İnönü says how, compared to the years before the Republic, the Turkish nation has become ten times stronger as a result of the reforms. This speech aims to create a modern society founded on reason, science, technique, and art that simultaneously desires to be national and treats the concept of "Turk" as a given and natural category. Thus, an intense and conscious effort has been made to create the Turkish nation during this decade in which the Turkish state was built. Considering that the military, bureaucrat, and intellectual cadres of the Republic were greatly influenced by the positivist and Jacobin ideas that dominated the scientific and political environment of the period, different linguistic, ethnic, religious communities and traditions, which are thought to belong to the past for İnönü, will be replaced by a place to be organized with reason, science and technique should be left to society. Emphasis on the past as the place of pre-modern ruins brought together thinking of Turkishness and Turkey within the framework of Western civilization, together with the Republican period. Aiming to reach the political and cultural values of Western countries, the Republican elites tried to separate themselves sharply from the old monarchy regime. Making radical changes in the political, economic, and social life in Turkey within a ten-year period is important in terms of showing why İnönü compared the past and the Republic of Turkey in the opening speech of the movie. Because the founding elite consciously distanced themselves from the Ottoman-Islamic tradition and tried to replace it with a secular and nationalist culture. This situation, that is, the distance between the political elites and Islam and the imperial past, is related to both the imagination of a homogeneous nation and the desire to distance itself from the expansionist ideas such as Ottomanism, Islamism and Turanism, which were put forward to save the empire in the last period of the Ottoman Empire. As a matter of fact, İnönü continued his speech; It can be said that the fact that he praises the friendship with the Soviet Union in foreign policy is related to Turkey's efforts to establish a balance policy in the international system and to move away from expansionist ideas.

Because the Republican elites, who established their sovereignty in Turkey in a ten-year period, tended to seek pragmatic regional alliances by acting in a controlled manner in foreign policy in order to implement domestic policies centered on nationalism, Westernization and secularism (Kılınç 2016: 74).

After İnönü's speech, the film continues with images of an old shepherd and steppe. How Anatolia and Ankara were "escaped" from the "darkness" they used to be in, together with the Republic, is discussed in the film through the comparison of old and new. The narrative of the old period, which constitutes the first part of the film, is highlighted in the film as an important representation in order to provide a basis for the narrative of the new period in the following parts and to provide comparison. This comparison is about the effort of the modern Republic, which "enlightens" the people with education, "healing" with health, "improving" with soldiers, to make the people living in Anatolia Turkish-modern-secular-citizen, to be reflected on the cinema screen. After the images of the old man who set out from his village to Ankara with his donkey to attend the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Republic; the film continues with images of people of different classes from different regions of Turkey traveling to Ankara to participate in the celebrations, with trains and oxcarts.

The contrast between the two journeys and the two Ankaras, visualized in the first two parts of the film, symbolically reflects the transition of a people from the old to the new, from the traditional to the modern. The final destination, the new Ankara, embodied the victory of the Kemalist Revolution and the achievements of the Republican era, as it was a modern city created after the conversion of an abandoned small town (Adadağ 2017: 166). It can be said that the demonstration of the crowded masses coming to Ankara is related to the desire to reflect the vision of a society in which there is unity, harmony and harmony among the citizens. Thus, when we take into account that the solidarist corporatism that we can find in Gökalp's philosophy is an idea adopted by the political elites of the Republic, we can see that the "classless, unprivileged, cohesive mass" nation design, as well as a society model that overlaps with Kemalism's understanding of populism, are prominently featured in the film with a cinematic representation. The prominence is not surprising. The common denominator shaped around Turkishness creates a common line that cuts different class positions in the social sphere, different ideological and political groups (Şen 2019: 39). Because, incorporating different class, religious and ethnic groups into the imaginary national community in line with building a homogeneous, disciplined and efficient nation is the official ideology of the state.

After the second part of the film, in which the contacts of the Soviet delegation in Ankara, which came to Turkey to participate in the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Republic, and the interest they received were discussed in detail, the story in the third part, which is the main subject of the film, was passed. This part, which uses two fictional characters to discuss Ankara's evolution and the Republic's accomplishments; An old man from the nearby village travels to Ankara to attend

the republic's tenth anniversary celebrations. While there, he meets a young girl scout and learns about the accomplishments of the Republican administration as well as the work the young girl has done for the old man in Ankara in just ten short years. Giving has been thought about (Özuyar 2021: 34). These accomplishments may be seen in the categories that the founding members of the Republic added to the formation of Turkish identity, such as modern, secular, and civic. The film, which reflects the pre-Republic in a frozen way behind and outside of history, presented the Republic as a government that accelerated the flow of time by enlightening the ignorant and dark people of Anatolia. However, the negative representation of the old Ankara is limited to the recent past. The film touches upon the importance of the city in the history of civilizations, as Ankara is represented not only as the land of the modern, but also of ancient civilizations. As Ankara is portrayed as both the land of ancient and modern civilizations, the movie touches on the significance of the city in the history of humankind. In the movie, it is mentioned that Ankara "protects monuments of high civilization," such as ruins from the ancient worlds of Greece, Rome, and Byzantium. Thus, the movie has built a narrative in line with Kemalist historiography and tried to show that Turks have a founding role in history by preserving a distance from the Islamic and Ottoman past by emphasizing that Ankara is an ancient city (Adadağ 2017: 166).

The movie underlines that modern nation states and buildings based on modern urban planning have sprung from the ruins of the past simultaneously, indicating that the "narrow, gloomy, uneven streets" of old Ankara are in the past. The history of modern nation states marks the beginning of the process of classifying, designating, and governing space by splitting it into distinct areas (Kaya 2022). In modern nation states, capitals, which are the living space of the modern/rational individual, are based on the concepts of modern city planning, functionality and order. Therefore, for modern capitals, crooked streets and buildings that contradict the dominant architectural understanding are undesirable elements for modern city planning. Stating that the modern city plan determined by axes, axes and centers constitutes the physical aspect of the discursive construction of the modern nation state, Cantek (2003: 21–21) says that the capital of the nation state functions as a kind of laboratory for the construction of the people/nation.

Ankara has an important function in its desire to approach the West and in its effort to create a national identity. In the film, the modern buildings built in the capital Ankara, the landscaped Ulus Square and the Atatürk statue, the regular street, street clocks, the National Assembly and the reflection of the automobiles one after the other, are an effort to reveal Turkey's capacity to be equal with the West in Western terms visible. Because, as can be understood from the name of the film, Ankara, which is seen as the heart of Turkey, is reflected in the film as a symbolic city representing the entire national geography. When the spatial meaning map of the capital Ankara, whose physical and discursive construction was carried out by the founding elites of the Republic, is viewed through the film, it is seen what the new regime wants to be and what goals it is acting towards. The nation-state, which has to make its power visible and effective on space, wants the capital that will symbolize itself to be under its rule in every respect.

The choice of Ankara as the capital city instead of Istanbul, which is an alternative to the power of the nation-state, too “past-laden” to be redefined by the codes of the young Republic, and too sociologically cosmopolitan to be a symbol of national unity, is Ankara’s decision both at the point of being under the rule of the regime and at the point of ensuring national unity. It is related to the fact that Istanbul is a more suitable place than Istanbul (Cantek 2003: 69). In this context, the construction of a new capital has an important symbolic meaning as a product of the manifestation of power and the search for legitimacy (Vale 2008: 47–48). The Republican regime, which aims at nationalization, modernization and Westernization, has built a national identity that will represent the Republic of Turkey in line with its desire to be articulated with Western civilization by moving away from the space, language, religious rituals, history and folklore that bear the traces of the Ottoman identity, which it sees as the “other.” A common language, a common geographical space and a common language will strengthen the unity of this built nation (Cantek 2003: 26–27).

After the images of soldiers and cars standing guard in front of the Parliament building where the Republic was proclaimed, the logo of the Republican People’s Party stands out in the movie. Under the logo, there is the inscription “we are republican, nationalist, populist, statist, secular, revolutionary.” The text seen under the CHP logo can be seen as an action slogan of the political and cultural elites who have undertaken the function of building the Turkish nation. This slogan of action, which significantly determines the way the nationalist elites imagine the Turkish nation, the way of perceiving the ethnically and linguistically diverse society inherited from the Ottoman Empire, their power practices and their claim to hegemony, glorifies the homogeneous nation-state in terms of being modern and Western. Because, on the one hand, the Republican regime, which instrumentalized all its institutions in order to make the Turkish identity hegemonic, on the other hand, tried to present itself as a republican, nationalist, populist, statist, secular and revolutionary in order to prove that it is as modern and civilized as the Westerners. As a matter of fact, the imaginary eye of the West played a founding role in Kemalism’s self-definition, imagining the Turkish nation, and reflecting power practices (Şen 2019: 61).

The fourth segment of the film continues with the current state of Ankara, everyday activities, and a display of public structures after the opening text, “The city is booming, new state buildings are rising.” Building institutions (hospital, school, industry, barracks) that would both create and reproduce the nation and discipline the nation was necessary in order to accommodate the new social organization and different understanding of power that evolved with the founding of the Republic of Turkey. Because these institutions portrayed in the film are the geographical plane where the power will function perfectly. The old man and the little girl admire the nation-capital, state’s Ankara, which is now a place where both men and women pursue science, the arts, and athletics in contemporary institutions. This area serves as a testing ground for the ideal nation under the circumstances established by the founding elites.

Because Republican elites, who comprehend bio-power and act accordingly, have adopted a nation-building strategy that will control the body and restrict its motions and capacities. The ideal nation profile, which displays a mental evolution consistent with the republican regime's ideological framework, goes about daily life and engages in spatial practices in accordance with a habit that was created by taking into account the persistence of the nation state and the regime, as depicted in the movie. The scientists, instructors, and engineers who were the committed representatives of the Turkish country and the Kemalist Republic were actually shown as "civilized" and "modern" due to the fictionalization of the past or the locations that the Republic could not reach in the movie. The shared goal of these representatives, who serve as both the creators and the carriers of the official ideology of the Turkish nation state, is to use the state's coercive and ideological tools to both make the Anatolians who live there into modern, secular Turks and to make them fit for the new order, institutions, place, and ideology.

After declaring, "This is our current status, our new life," the young girl who played the scout in the earlier scenes of the film states, "Tomorrow I will visit my Commander-in-Chief, Gazi," alluding to Atatürk, and the fifth chapter begins. Atatürk's departure from the Turkish Grand National Assembly with his entourage and his entrance to the ceremony area via car are shown after the horsemen and spectators lined up in the ceremony area are mirrored on the screen. While the National Anthem is playing in the background, Atatürk gets out of the car and foreign guest soldiers greet him. After the screening of the two cameras, the film continues with Atatürk's reading of the 10th Anniversary Speech he wrote for the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Republic. In the speech in question, Atatürk, who both evaluated the past and explained the current situation and his view on the future, treated the concept of "Turk" as a given and natural category, just like İnönü in the opening speech of the movie. In his speech, Atatürk, who said, "My fellow citizens, we have done many and great things in a short time," continues in his speech and says: "The biggest of these works is the Republic of Turkey, whose foundation is Turkish heroism and high Turkish culture" and within the political, economic and military landscapes of Ankara, continues to talk with the images included in the frame of the film. Considering that Atatürk needed a unifying and integrating national culture in his goal of creating an ideal nation, it would be more understandable if he emphasized the "high Turkish culture" discourse in his speech. This speech, which is a true tribute to Turkish culture and Turks, highlights the successes of the regime and reveals what future projects and policies will be (Adadağ 2017: 166).

While the national identity and institutional organization built with the transition from the empire to the nation-state, where different ethnic groups and many religious structures coexist, are praised in the speech, it is a question of ignoring or ignoring everything that represents the so-called "ancient regime." Because, constructing Turkishness as a form of sovereignty has been possible by defining, not recognizing, destroying or ignoring other peoples. Therefore, in the speech, the Turkish nation, built through nationalist discourse; while it is imagined as a nation with a "hero," "brave," "decisive" and a high culture,

there is a question of ignoring other peoples living in Turkey. However, neither the ignorance of other peoples nor the Turkish nation-building process can be considered as a purely ethnic issue; because the Turkish nation-building process takes place in a complex history that includes radical transformations such as modernization, centralization, Westernization, and nationalization. In the process of Turkishness, modernization, centralization, Westernization, and nationalization, he tried to both define and construct the “others” that he thought hindered him, while trying to destroy, make invisible, or assimilate them with physical and symbolic forms of violence (Şen 2019: 37–55).

Demonstrating the desire of Turkishness to be modern but national, Atatürk said:

We will raise our country to the level of the most prosperous and civilized countries in the world. We will make our nation possess the largest wealth, means and resources. We will raise our national culture above the contemporary level of civilization. For this reason, in our opinion, the measure of time should not be considered according to the relaxing mentality of the past centuries, but according to the notion of speed and movement of our century.

The desire and dream of Turkishness to be Western, modern and civilized was undoubtedly partially satisfied through Ankara, which was built. Looking at himself through the imaginary eyes of the West, which he calls “contemporary civilization,” Atatürk said:

We will work harder, in less time, compared to the past time, in order to eliminate the cultural-spiritual contradiction caused by the East-West opposition and the experience of delayed modernity, and to build Turkishness as a modern Western subjectivity. We will accomplish greater things.

After Atatürk’s speech, the film continues with the applause and enthusiasm of the people, accompanied by the 10th Anniversary March, and finally, it reflects a military and civilian parade and the sparkling night view of Ankara into the frame. The film ends with the departure of the Soviet delegation from Ankara by train and the enthusiastic greetings of the people who fill the train station.

6. Conclusion

The Turkish national identity can be described as a social and political force that is built through various ideological practices, institutions, ideas, discourses, emotions, symbols, and images and is in motion over them. It is produced in the axis of certain historical, social, and political processes. Political and cultural elites intended to take use of cinema, which can form an imagined community in the world of emotions and is a powerful tool in the creation of national memory, during the construction and restoration of Turkishness the Republican regime did not permit the shooting of any film with different ideological discourses or that could pose a threat to the regime in the Early Republican Period, while films that produced and contained nationalist discourses have been supported.

The Republican regime made use of cinema in the construction and reproduction of Turkish identity and the creation of images, values, and norms regarding the Turkish nation. While the Republican government and Kemalist ideology were exalted in the movies made during this time, the structures, institutions, and ideologies that were considered to be archaic were frequently portrayed in a negative light. *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara*, which contains and produces discourses on Turkish nationalism, is among the prominent films of the period in terms of understanding the Turkish nation-building process.

Camera techniques and formal features also lend support to Westernist, modernist concepts and goals, which are expressed with the nationalist thought underlying the film's plot. In other words, there are points where the ideological and discursive axes through which the movie communicates converge with the visual world established and reflected by *Türkiye'nin Kalbi Ankara*. The ways in which the reforms could not reach, the narrative of the past, the scenes in which the new capital Ankara is shown as the symbol of the Turkish nation and modernity, support the film's discourse of those living in Anatolia who are in need of being modernized and nationalized. As a spot in the movie, the importance given by the founding elites of the Republic to a new spatial arrangement in the process of nationalization and modernization is seen in choosing Ankara as the capital city and the symbol of the nation-state. As a matter of fact, in line with the rejection of the Ottoman past, Istanbul, which symbolizes and reminds of the empire, was not seen as the right choice for the Republican elites as they were claiming a new socio-political order. As a central plot in the visual narrative of the movie, the founding elites of the Republic saw the construction of cities, towns, institutions, roads, and houses, where daily life practices can be experienced, in line with western norms and values to equalize the Turkish nation with other modern nations. As a matter of fact, the newly built spatial structures, such as the Yüksek Ziraat Enstitüsü (Higher Agricultural Institute), Halkevi (People's House), Numune Hastanesi (Numune Hospital), Ulus Meydanı (Nation Square), İsmet Paşa Kız Enstitüsü (Ismet Pasha Girls Institute), Konservatuar (Conservatory) are framed in the film as the symbols of modernity of the Turkish nation. In the movie, the capital Ankara, which is shown as the birthplace of the modern Turkish nation and shaped according to the tastes of the founding elites, is also described as an ancient city that hosted different civilizations by quoting the Britannica Encyclopedia's related article about Ankara. In this context, it is striking that the search for a "glorious past / history" of nationalism, which is the dominant ideology of the nation-state process, is handled through the ancientness of Ankara.

The efforts of Republican elites to overcome and change Ottoman culture, institutions, and socio-political structures, are reflected as a tradition vs modernity conquest in the film. In fact, it is possible to see this contrast between the ways in which Istanbul and the Anatolian countryside, which reflect the traditional, are framed in the first part of the film, and the visualization of the new capital Ankara, which represents the modern, is reflected in the second part of the film.

The new capital, Ankara, which is designed according to the Western urban culture and modern lifestyle, not only reflects the urbanization policy of the Turkish nation-state but also creates the longitudinal plan on which the acceptable or ideal Turkish citizen identity can be built. It is possible to see the traditional-modern contrast reflected in the film through the distinction between the old and new Ankara, and between the scout girl and the old man. In fact, while the scout girl reflects the modern, the good, the acceptable citizen of the regime and the symbol of the ideal nationalist nation, the old man is presented in a way that represents the old and the traditional and needs to be transformed to the standard.

While presenting the Republican regime as a new phase in the effort to change the bad fate of the Turks, the film also reflects its policies towards nationalization, modernization, centralization and Westernization with an affirmative representation. There is an implicit violence in the universe that the film framed and visualized. Thus, the dominant view that establishes the practices visualized by the film, while constructing a modern, Western-style Turkish identity at the expense of the public invisibility of the "other" and the destruction of the old religious, political, social, and national institutions belonging to the Ottoman Empire, at the same time transforming Turkishness as a natural category, a reality presented. The Turkish nation-building process, which proceeds by reducing or eliminating the public activity of different ethnic and religious groups, is based on a more idealized, monist understanding of Turkish identity, as can be understood from the images, ideas, and representations in the film. In addition, the dominant ethos of Turkishness against "others" is made visible in the Turkish image constructed by the film.

There are also hints of accepted nationalist thinking about foreign policy in the film. Undoubtedly, this thinking is a non-expansionist nationalism. İnönü's speech in the opening scene and Atatürk's speech towards the end of the movie are important as they show that the Kemalist regime is trying to establish a policy of balance in the international system and is trying to move away from an expansionist Turkish nationalism. It can be said that this understanding of nationalism reflects the discourse of "peace at home, peace in the world".

In the 1930s, when the power and domination processes of the republican regime worked, took root, in short, turned into hegemony, the Kemalist sovereign view established Turkishness as a modern, Western and civilized subjectivity in the film, and pointed to the pre-Republican period as the political and social space of all aspects of uncivilization and backwardness. Although the republican regime could not spread national unity and reforms throughout the country on the level of material reality, it was tried to be fulfilled thanks to the dream screen of the cinema in the said ideal and target film. Considering all these analyses, it can be said that the movie Turkey's Heart Ankara was created with a nationalist tone for the Turkish nation-building process.

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