Histories of modern Turkish architecture typically start at the moment of stylistic rupture around 1930 when the Ottoman revivalist National Style (Birinci Milli Üslup) of the previous decades was abandoned, and the educational, professional, and cultural framework of Turkish architecture was radically transformed along the precepts of an imported European modernism, the so-called New Architecture (Yeni Mimari). Canonic buildings of the early republic built after 1930 display a deliberate and conspicuous rejection of Ottoman precedents, especially the iconographic and decorative elements of the Ottoman mosque—domes, arches, and tile decoration—which were regarded as aesthetically and ideologically unsuitable to the progressive, revolutionary discourse of the new Kemalist regime.

At the same time, however, in seeming contradiction to this revolutionary impulse to break with the Ottoman/Islamic past, the early republic also displayed a new interest and pride in the country’s Ottoman heritage. Classical Ottoman mosques were now reclaimed as national treasures of modern Turkey, and their picturesque images were widely circulated as official postcards, in government issued photograph albums, and in the pages of the official propaganda publication La Turquie Kemaliste (fig. 1). More significantly, prominent early republican intellectuals, architects, and art historians produced a plethora of books, articles, and commentaries on Ottoman architecture, marking the emergence of native scholars in a field hitherto dominated by Europeans.

The starting point of my essay is this seeming paradox of early republican architectural culture—the conspicuous split between modernist architectural practice, which rejected Ottoman forms, and nationalist historiography, which celebrated them. To make matters even more interesting, the same individuals frequently did both. Sedat Çetintaş, for example, was a prominent architect trained in the Ministry of Endowments (Evkaf Nezareti) under Kemalettin Bey during the heyday of the Ottoman revivalist “National Style.” Çetintaş prepared elaborately rendered survey drawings of Ottoman monuments and wrote nationalist articles in the architectural magazine Yapı. His skilled draftsmanship attracted the personal attention of Atatürk, who appointed him to send his twelve-plate renderings of the Şehzade Mosque to the 1933 Chicago Exhibition. There followed exhibitions of his drawings in Ankara (1935) and Istanbul (1942), culminating in the publication of his two-volume Türk Mimari Anıtları (Turkish Architectural Monuments) in 1946. Yet precisely at the same time his drawings and writings contributed significantly to the nationalist appropriation of Ottoman architectural heritage during the 1930s, Çetintaş also designed new, distinctly modern
buildings totally dissociated from Ottoman precedents, such as his Republican Peoples’ Party Headquarters in Yalova (1934) (fig. 2a and b).

Behçet Sabri Ünsal, another influential architect and educator, presents a similar duality. As a historian, he wrote extensively on Ottoman and pre-Ottoman Turkish architecture (publishing them in English in 1959 as *Turkish Islamic Architecture*) and at the same time, as an architect, became a prolific advocate for the New Architecture. In addition to producing such unequivocally modernist designs as his 1934 competition entry with Bedrettin Hamdi for the Sümerbank building in Ankara, he contributed pioneering modernist essays about the virtues of rationalism, functionalism, and “cubic architecture” to the professional journal *Arkitekt.*

The most paradigmatic figure, however, is Celâl Esad Arseven, prominent art historian, critic, and professor of architectural history at the Academy of Fine Arts in Istanbul, who devoted his entire career to the nationalist historiography of Turkish art and architecture and at the same time promoted European modernism. On the one hand, with his classic *Türk Sanati* (Turkish Art), first published in 1928, Arseven established the quintessential republican nationalist view...