

## Chapter 5

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE LOCATIONS OF IZMIR IN THE 1950s

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#### INTRODUCTION

Local history studies provide more depth compared to that of general history on the grounds that they focus on a certain geographical section. It is possible to find a number of details in that depth, which are perceived as being insignificant or simple. Because all such details are related to humans, the local history studies also contain the time voyage of humans themselves as a part of the locale. In that respect the local history studies provide important contribution to transferring the urban culture to the next generations and development of urban consciousness. Focusing on the food and beverage places of Izmir during the 1950s, the present research aims to contribute in the urban culture as a local history study. There are a number of publications of the social spaces of Izmir. There are comprehensive studies on Izmir “*gazino*”s (taverns) (Dağtaş, 2004) and Izmir cinemas (Makal, 1999). On the other hand, there are mostly touristic publications for individual sites as regards the food and beverage places of Izmir. While the findings from the doctoral dissertation, namely “*1950-1960 Yılları Arasında İzmir’de Gündelik Yaşam*” (Daily Life in Izmir between 1950-1960) (Gölgemiz-Gedikler, 2012), constitutes the basis of this article, the subject thereof, was expanded further via new data and oral history work.

It is known that the practice of going out to commercial social spaces for the purposes of eating, drinking, having fun, and coming together with friends outside the homes does not have a longstanding past for the Turkish society. The Turks had a social life during the Ottoman Period, which was in the grips of religious and traditional patterns. While the women had homes as places of socialization, the social places for men, which may be considered comparably lucky, were limited to home, work, and houses of prayer, all in close proximity. Having been introduced into the Turkish society in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the coffee houses had been one of the first social places, where men spent time outside their homes

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The garden of the building at the coast of Karşıyaka, used as Public Education Center (*Halk Eğitim Merkezi*) was preferred by the inhabitants of Karşıyaka especially during the summer months. According to Aksoy (1998), the inhabitants of Karşıyaka also favored *Sahil Tavern* located on the area, which will subsequently be Tilla Tavern.

## **CONCLUSION**

A retrospective review would suggest that the urban opportunities in Izmir during the 1950s were not insufficient in terms of meeting various social needs. The variety of the food and beverage places of the time is an indication of that. These served to the needs of people, who had to spend time outside for such purposes as shopping, as well as people, who wanted to spend pleasurable time. In that period the food and beverage places were mainly concentrated in *Kemeraltı* and Karşıyaka Bazaar, where was a busy shopping life. Although the places for entertainment and leisure time were spread throughout the city, they were mostly located at Kordonboyu and Kültürpark.

Those places were of great importance for having pleasurable time, entertainment, and socialization in such a period, when the people had limited means of spending time at home and having fun due to the technological insufficiencies. A part of the food and beverage places of the 1950s organized music programs and thus met the entertainment needs of the people of the time. While the luxurious restaurants and clubs were preferred mostly by the higher income people, there were outdoor tea houses and taverns, where the lower income families could bring their food. Therefore, the lower income sections of the society were able to listen to live music by merely paying for the drinks.

It is an observable fact that the culture of men and women spending time together developed in a very late period in the Turkish society. Nevertheless, it is understood that men and women from different social and economic circles had the habit of going out to food and beverage places together in Izmir during the 1950s. It is an undeniable fact that the cosmopolitan culture embedded in its historical identity played a large role in the fact that Izmir had a developed and contemporary social life as regards the foregoing respect.

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