

THE PRIVATIZATION OF CULTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF CULTURAL CENTERS IN TURKEY IN THE POST-1980s

by  
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An abstract of the thesis of Pelin Bařaran for the degree of Master of Arts degree from Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History to be taken February 2007

Title: The Privatization of Culture and The Development of Cultural Centers in the post-1980s

This thesis seeks to uncover the privatization of culture in the post-1980s in the context of social and economic transformations. To achieve this aim, it compares, what motivated rich families and corporations to make investments beside business between and after 1980s. The motivations of their philanthropic activities beyond the 1980s are explored in relation with the import substitution industrialization model of this period. The reasons for the transformation of their investments to the cultural sphere with the change of social life are put forward as the basic unit of analysis. After conceptualizing this transformation within the theoretical framework, the thesis focuses on the cultural institutions opened in the post-1980s and discusses issues such as westernization, the classed based structure of art, and the global city fantasy in the basis of the discourse analysis of the interviews made with the actors of the institutions. This thesis mainly takes culture and art institutions and the discourses of the related actors to the center.

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Başlık: Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi ve 1980 Sonrasında Türkiye'de Kültür Merkezlerinin Gelişimi

Bu tez 1980 sonrası kültürün özelleştirilmesini dönemin toplumsal ve ekonomik koşulları bağlamında açıklamayı hedeflemektedir. Bu dönüşümü göstermek için 1980 öncesi ve sonrasında şirketler ve zengin ailelerin iş dışında neye yatırım yaptıklarının karşılaştırılması yapılmaktadır. 1980 öncesinde yapmış oldukları hayırseverlik faaliyetlerinin nedenleri dönemin ithal ikameci sanayileşme modeli ile ilişkilendirilerek ortaya çıkarılmaktadır. Değişen toplumsal hayatla birlikte bu yatırımların kültür alanına dönmesinin nedenleri çalışmanın ana eksenini oluşturmaktadır. Teorik bir çerçeve oluşturulduktan sonra, 1980 sonrası Türkiye'de açılan özel kültür ve sanat kurumlarına odaklanılmakta ve bu kurumların yöneticileriyle yapılan görüşmelerin söylem analizi ile batılılaşma, sanatın sınıfsallığı, küresel kent fantazisi gibi noktalar tartışılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada kültür sanat kurumları ve ilişkili aktörlerin söylemleri inceleme noktaları olarak ele alınmıştır.

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I dedicate this thesis to my best friend, Yeliz, with whom I became myself.

## CONTENTS

### Chapter

I INTRODUCTION.....	8
II STATE IN ECONOMY, BOURGEOISIE IN PUBLIC.....	9
Import Substitution Industrialization Model and Populism.....	19
Motivations of the Philanthropic Activities of the Koç and Sabancı Families between 1960-1980.....	24
VAKSA and Vehbi Koç Foundation.....	34
III THE PRIVATIZATION OF CULTURE: Neo-liberalism As a Hegemonic Project .....	35
The Rise of Neo-liberalism.....	41
The Rise of Neo-liberalism in Turkey.....	55
The Cultural Turn in of the 1980s.....	67
Bourgeoisie “Contributing” to Culture and Arts.....	86
State in The Privatization of Culture.....	98
IV THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL CENTERS IN THE POST-1980s	
The Cultural Centers of Corporations.....	99
Civilizing or Distinguishing?.....	106
Cultural Centers as Cultural “Arbiters” .....	116
PR-ization of Culture.....	120

The Role of Culture in Global City Fantasy	128
V CONCLUSION.....	140
V BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	146

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

At the end of 2006, Istanbul was chosen to be European Capital of Culture for 2010 along with with Pecs (Hungary) and Essen (Germany). The European Capital of Culture project, which is based on the idea of the selection of Capital City from the countries that are members of the European Union each year, was first implemented in 1985 with the selection of Athens. After fifteen years, the Council decided to give this title to more than one city and included candidate countries to the European Union as well. This new decision enabled the choice of Istanbul and led to the collaboration of thirteen non-governmental organizations under the name of The Initiative Group to work for Istanbul's candidacy. As a conclusion of the efforts of this group, which became more inclusive with the participation of academics, new NGOs, members of the city's cultural and artistic communities and the support of state institutions, Istanbul was confirmed as one of the European Capital of Culture for 2010 with its project called "Istanbul: City of Four Elements." The content of the project is described as follows:

Throughout history, then, Istanbul has been home to countless societies and cultures. Yet this "beautiful harmony," which is embedded in the city's foundations and entwined in the branches of its family tree, is not just a pleasant memento from a bygone era. Istanbul retains still its rich cosmopolitan character, sometimes concealing and sometimes revealing the evidence of its unrivalled physical and cultural legacy. The city is a living example of the much sought-after meeting of civilizations - something so desperately missing in the modern world that the search for it seems almost utopian. For more than two thousand years, as if



inspired by Aristotle's theory of the four elements, the city has captivated humankind's attention.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, many cultural and artistic events and projects will be organized and implemented until the end of 2010. These projects will be grouped thematically according to the four elements.

According to the Group, the city will benefit as Cultural Capital in many ways: Istanbul will be associated with culture and arts, the urban projects will lead to urban renewal and social development, new museums will be established and historical buildings will be renovated, people will have a chance to attend an increasing number of artistic events, cultural tourism will develop, many job opportunities arise, the city will be promoted and the economic relations of Istanbul with European cities will be strengthened.<sup>2</sup> The selection of Istanbul has initiated many projects besides the ones submitted to the 2010 Committee. Institutions and people have started to question this process in many ways. For example, the Mayor of Beyoğlu Municipality called the cultural and artistic initiatives on 13 January with the aim of knowledge sharing and institutional collaborations for preparing Beyoğlu for the 2010 process. During the meeting, although the participants were critical about the project and had many questions for the Mayor about the implementations of the Municipality, they were all of one mind: the transformation of the city through culture and arts. According to most of the participants, culture had the power to improve the city and eliminate illnesses.<sup>3</sup> In other words, culture presents a platform on which all the differences can come together in a peaceful way. Also, because of this nature of culture, these differences evolve towards "beautiful harmony" and better society.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.istanbul2010.org>, 28 December 2006.

<sup>2</sup> [www.istanbul2010.org](http://www.istanbul2010.org)

□ From the notes of the meeting of "Beyoğlu 2010", held on 13 January 2007.

The objective of this thesis is to hold a debate about this generally accepted opinion and research how and in which ways this opinion came to arise. In other words, I will question and deconstruct what is already accepted as natural and true in the commonsense. However, my research will not be limited to urban politics. The transformation which led to the glorification of culture will be analyzed with a macro approach. I claim that the timing of the project of European Capital of Culture is not coincidental. Indeed, the attitude of associating the city with culture is the result of huge social transformations which led to the emergence of culture with its definitive, determining and organizer role in society after the 1980s. At the same time as the growth came an increase in the importance of culture, which was also delegated to the private hands. The thesis mainly analyzes the privatization of culture in the post-1980s. It intends to show the transition of the wealthy class' involvement in society from philanthropy to cultural entrepreneurship and its attempts to reconstruct its hegemony through its cultural investments.

The main argument of the thesis is that the reasons for the transition are rooted in the economic policies of the country in a global context. This view may seem one-dimensional, however, within the limits of a master thesis. I prefer to dig into the issue in one direction and raise some debates. Economic policies mostly, but of course not wholly, arrange the social life and determine the practices of classes. For that reason, the growth of culture and the practices of the wealthy class and corporations are best explained in a way detailing the economic transformation.

The 1980s mark a turning point in the world in this sense. With the crisis of the economic model applied after 1945 which aimed at reconstructing the world economy after the war, the welfare policies were left and a new economic model, neo-liberalism, was implemented. The major changes are the change in the content of

the development and dissolution of consensus in the society between the classes. Before the 1980s, the main pillar of development had been the economic betterment of the classes to restore the national economies and this had been reflected in the enlargement of the democratic rights of the lower classes. But this kind of development became untenable with the crisis of the welfare states. At that moment, the consensus between the classes dissolved and the conditions of the lower classes were longer considered state policies. Neo-liberal policies produced a new narrative of development to hold people together in spite of the increasing gaps between them. It was “culture” which was attributed a unifying power for the people. Also, as a related to the withering of politics and separation of it from economics in neo-liberalism, culture was put as a platform on which people could be represented and be detached from their political representations. This kind of culturalism was a way of putting distance between people and politics and creating the illusion that they were committing liberalizing practices.

Moreover, the state was minimized in accordance with neo-liberal principles and lost its control over many spheres, including culture. With the “liberalization” of culture, the wealthy class, which sought the restoration of its hegemony, started to act in the cultural sphere with its lifestyles and habits, and with its cultural investments in which economic and social capital were transformed into each other. Since the 1980s, the leading families in Turkey have opened their own museums among them the Sadberk Hanım Museum, the Rahmi Koç Museum, the Istanbul Modern, the Pera Museum, the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, and the Çengelhan Museum. They exhibit their large private collections either in their old mansions or in other historical buildings. In addition, corporations like Garanti Bank, Akbank, İşBank, Yapı Kredi Bank, Siemens, and Borusan Holding have established their own cultural centers and

galleries. I claim that the reason for the increasing number of cultural institutions underlies this major transformation.

For the analysis of the privatization of culture in the 1980s, I chose a more specialized and narrower issue as a case study. I scrutinize the cultural centers established by private banks and holdings and located in the district of Beyoğlu. Indeed, the notion of cultural center is ambiguous. The museums are regarded as cultural centers in the West. For that reason, I use this term in a flexible way. I will not specifically focus on the private museums, but I will mention their stories and historicize their opening. But on the other hand, the selection of a group of cultural centers makes possible to realize the inner organic relations between cultural centers and corporations. Additionally, I conducted eight interviews (as listed in the bibliography) with the managers of centers, top executive from a bank and an independent curator. I could have expanded the list, but this would be going beyond my intention. Through the interviews, I tried to expose the discourses used by them and relate them to the some debates about the thesis issue.

I would like to note that for this kind of analysis on Turkey, it difficult to find sufficient theoretical or empirical work. Not least because this is a sensitive issue for those involved and because the corporations are not willing to share their data or documents. For example, I wanted to access the archives of the leading families to prove their increasing investments in culture and conduct interview with the top executives in order to understand their approaches, but none of them accepted. For that reason, I was unable to support my arguments, especially in the first chapter. I know that autobiographies can not be unique literature since they reflect the filter of the narrator. My research should be deepened and developed by persuading these institutions to share their knowledge. Since even one book about the social and

cultural practices of corporations and holdings in Turkey does not exist, this thesis could not have stronger arguments. For that reason, I think that this study acts as a first step for further ones.

To be more concretely, I ask three central questions: Why does culture attract so much importance? Why did the number of cultural entrepreneurships and investments increase after the 1980s when leading families were cited with larges number of philanthropic enterprises mostly centering on social issues? In which ways do they benefit from the privatization of culture and justify their involvement? Under these three main questions, there are minor questions as well: What is the relationship between the philanthropic activities of the leading bourgeoisie families with the import substitution economic model applied in between 1960-80 in Turkey? When and in what ways did they start to get involved in culture and the arts? Is the state really minimized, or continue to function? What are the reasons for the intensification of these investments especially in Istanbul and Beyoğlu? Do these cultural institutions still continue the fantasy of Westernization? Are they really liberating practices as claimed?

In order to answer these questions, this study begins with the philanthropic activities of two leading families; Sabancı and Koç. Here, what is the aim is to underlie the increasing role of culture in development and show the change of the form and intensity of the visibility of bourgeoisie in the society in accordance with economic policies. The motivations of these families for their philanthropic activities have changed their contents and turned into the increase of cultural investments after 1980. I suppose that these motivations are grounded on the import substitution policies and populist strategies of the period. Thus, I will elaborate their practices and own histories by considering the peculiarities of the period. The reason

why I did not choose Eczacıbaşı family which is one of the leading families and the one that was the most dedicated to cultural and artistic life is that it has started to invest culture from the beginning and was associated with its involvement to culture. This situation could not expose the transition from philanthropy to cultural entrepreneurship very well. Although I left it aside, the intensity of its cultural activities after 80 proves my main arguments.

In the second chapter, I will review the rise of neo-liberalism in Turkey, as similar to England, and draw some points about the features of the social life constructed in this period. Because of, first, widespread privatization, second; the lost of state autonomy over culture, the latter was delegated to private institutions and so, new arena was created for bourgeoisie to determine. Also, with the promotion of consumption, the bourgeoisie wanted to be free in its habits and daily life as being far from any condemnation by people like seen in the previous period. All these developments resulted in the increasing recognition of bourgeoisie with its cultural involvement. Moreover, the state policies were complementary to this process. Here, I especially will give some details about the institutions established by them and the history of their involvement into the culture from the beginning in order to see the break/change in the process. While doing these, I will also question whether their involvement really implies liberalizing practices as advocated in neo-liberal theory.

In the third chapter, I will concentrate on the case study and raise some debates. I will try to interrogate the relation of cultural institutions with people, their positions in the public sphere and their hegemonic position in the society under the light of the discourses of the actors of the cultural sphere. By doing so, I aim to

prove that the cultural institutions founded/supported by corporations confirm the status quo and hierarchy in the society.

## CHAPTER II

### STATE IN ECONOMY, BOURGEOISIE IN PUBLIC

This examines the philanthropic activities of the Sabancı and Koç families between 1960-1980. My objective is to ascertain why these leading corporate families augmented their philanthropic activities under the roof of their own foundations in those years. I claim that there is a close relationship between the rise of philanthropic investments of bourgeoisie in the country and the import substitution industrialization model and populist strategies implemented in this period. To be more concrete, bourgeoisie families achieved to be more visible in the public through their philanthropic activities partly aimed to cultivate the labour force required for industrialization that was basis of the economic model and betterment of the low classes in the context of the populist strategies. The families articulated themselves to these populist policies that were the main political ideology of this period related to the principles of economic model.

This chapter will lead us to the main question of the thesis: why the investments of bourgeoisie in culture and the arts gained importance after the 1980s, as compared to the preceding years when were cited with larges number of philanthropic enterprises on social issues. Thanks to this question, it will be evident that bourgeoisie has reconstructed and legitimized its hegemony in the newly emerging possible spheres in the public related to the changed economic policies.

In doing this, I have chosen to examine the histories and strategies of the Koç and Sabancı Groups in particular since, although they originate from different



traditions, they have followed parallel stages on the issue of corporate “contribution” in the social and cultural spheres. Moreover, today, they are two of the most prestigious groups with their own cultural institutions and ongoing huge support for cultural and arts projects, as in the past when they were the leader companies in social philanthropic activities.

First, I will focus on the import substitution industrialization model and populism applied in this period in the country. Second, the motivations for their philanthropic activities in 1960-70s and their attempts to institutionalize them will be elaborated by referring to their catalogues, reports and autobiographies. In this part, in this beginning, I will describe briefly the background of the families so as to understand the features of their traditions affecting their activities and their philanthropic activities under the foundations that they established.

### Import Substitution Industrialization Model and Populism

The import substitution industrialization (ISI) model was adopted in the under developed countries including Turkey after the world crisis of 1929. Through ISI strategy, the countries aimed to establish their domestic market and produce the products previously imported. In other words, the main motivation was to provide industrial self-sufficiency in their countries. Bruton defines as:

Import substitution may be described as a development strategy that seeks to accomplish both of these objectives: to learn from, and in general gain from, the rich countries, and at the same time, to so protect the domestic economy that the society can find its own way, can create its own form of development, and can redo its economy so that it can function on equal terms in the community of nations.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Henry Bruton, “Import Substitution”, in Chenery, H. and Srinivasan, T. N. (eds.), *Handbook of Development Economics vol. II*, (Elsevier Science Publishers, 1989), 1602.

According to Hirschman, there are four motive forces behind ISI: “balance of payments difficulties, wars, gradual growth of income, and deliberate development policy.”<sup>5</sup> This strategy was implemented by the countries to overcome the crisis of economy based on the export of agricultural production and the crisis of capital accumulation process within this economy. Wars, world economic crisis and the foreign exchange shortages, related to or independent from them, prepared the conditions for the implementation of ISI in these countries. After the world crisis of 1929, the demand for agriculture products decreased in the world and the Latin American countries which exported them and imported the manufactured goods faced the balance of payment difficulties and foreign exchange shortages. Turkey had the same problem after 1950s when the extraordinary conditions that enabled the continuance of exportation of agricultural products abolished.<sup>6</sup> The Second World War was a turning point to force Latin American countries for an alternative strategy.<sup>7</sup> To overcome these problems, they left their export-oriented strategy and implemented ISI to get rid of dependency of foreign exchange by establishing their domestic market and producing products previously imported in between 1930-60. This type industrialization required the active participation of the state to the

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<sup>5</sup> Albert O. Hirschman, “The Political Economy of Import-Substituting Industrialisation in Latin America”, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 82, No. 1., (1968), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Şevket Pamuk, “İthal ikamesi, Döviz Darboğazları ve Türkiye, 1947-1979” in *Kriz, Gelir Dağılımı ve Türkiye'nin Alternatif Sorunu*, edited by Korkut Boratav, Çağlar Keyder, Şevket Pamuk (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1987), 40.

<sup>7</sup> There is an extensive literature on ISI in Latin America see C.Furtado, “The Concept of External Dependence in the Study of Underdevelopment” in *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, edited by C. Wilber (New York: Random House, 1973); P. Cammack, “Democracy and Dictatorship in Latin America, 1930-1980” in *Democratization*, edited by D.Potter, D. Goldblatt, M. Kiloh, P. Lewis (Kent: The Open University, 1997); R. Villarreal, “The Policy of Import Substitution Industrialization, 1929-1975” in *Authoritarianism in Mexico*, edited by L.L. Reyna, S. Wernest (Philadelphia: Institute for Study of Human Issues, 1977); E. Cardoso, A. Helwege, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); G. Yalman, “Gelişme Stratejileri ve Stabilizasyon Politikaları: Bazı Latin Amerika Ülkelerinin Deneyimleri Üzerine Gözlemler” in *Türkiye’de ve Dünyada Yaşanan Ekonomik Bunalım*, edited by İ. Tekeli et al. (Ankara: Yurt Yayınları, 1984).

economy in the establishment of domestic market. State intervened in three ways: the protection of domestic market against the external competition through tariffs and quotas, low interest rates accelerated the industrial investments and the allocation of foreign exchange.<sup>8</sup> However, ISI differs from a closed economy which targets to improve national bourgeoisie in the sense that it protects the industrialization process in order to develop industry sector in the country rather than allocating all sources for national bourgeoisie. In other words, this strategy does not exclude foreign capital investment. Moreover, since ISI is staged process, it requires the import of technology as well as raw materials and intermediate goods. In other words, ISI does not prevent or decrease the integration of the country to the world.<sup>9</sup> In the domestic market, not all the goods are produced. Rather, the import substitution model is highly sequential, or tightly staged in Hirschman's words:

No matter what its original impulse, ISI starts predominantly with the manufacture of finished consumer goods that were previously imported and then moves on, more or less rapidly and successfully, to the 'higher stages' of manufacture, that is, to intermediate goods and machinery, through backward linkage effects.<sup>10</sup>

The dependency to the developed countries technologically and this staged process led many problems in the model: While the state interventions increased to the economy, the consumption was liberalized as a consequence of focus on consumer goods. Also, it was difficult to pass from the first two stages which were easier relatively to the last two stages in the sense of that the high growth rate provided in the first stages could not maintain, the technological dependency to the developed countries increased, the domestic market arrived its limits because of the

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<sup>8</sup> Pamuk, p.41.

<sup>9</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993), 208.

<sup>10</sup> Hirschman, p. 6.

inadequacy of demand and the economy became more dependent to the foreign exchange. In other words, underdeveloped country which industrialized by importing consumption habits and technology became arrives its limits after the easy stages and faces the crisis of balance of payment and foreign exchange.<sup>11</sup>

Although the import substitution process was similar to Latin American countries, it was implemented in a later period in Turkey. In spite of some different opinions through theoreticians, it is generally accepted that ISI was applied in between 1960-80. But, if one takes inward-oriented capital accumulation strategies within IS type of industrialization as are “the story of the conversion of domestic merchant’s capital to an industrial bourgeoisie”<sup>12</sup>, the story is rooted in Etatist<sup>13</sup> policies applied in order to realize industrialization by the leadership of state capital. The statist policies were left in 1950 with the election of Democrat Party which gave priority to the agriculture sector and foreign trade. These policies were able to be implemented until 1954, when the difficulties in the balance of payment appeared, thanks to the extraordinary weather conditions, new lands for production and Korea War led to the increase for agricultural products. After this year, import substitution industrialization under the control of private sector became the best alternative for the capital accumulation.<sup>14</sup> However, for Boratav, the import substitution policies employed after 1962 differ in many aspects from the previous IS policies in the sense of that the former was determined by the socio-politic structure and distribution

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<sup>11</sup> Pamuk, pp.42-47.

<sup>12</sup> Fuat Ercan, “The Contradictory Continuity of the Turkish Capital Accumulation Process: A Critical Perspective on the Internationalization of the Turkish Economy” in *The Ravages of Neo-Liberalism: Economy, Society and Gender in Turkey*, edited by Neşecan Balkan and Sungur Savran (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2002), 23.

<sup>13</sup> More about *Etatism* in Turkey see H. Barkey, *The State and The Industrialization Crises in Turkey* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1990); F. Birtek, “The Rise and Fall of Etatism in Turkey, 1932-1950: The Uncertain Road in the Restructring of a Semi peripheral Economy” in *Review*, 8/3, 1985; N. Çoşar, (ed.) *Türkiye’de Devletçilik*, (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1995).

<sup>14</sup> Pamuk, p.51.

policies of this period.<sup>15</sup> Pamuk states the period in which ISI policies were applied between 1963-1997 was based on the increasing of economic growth and accumulation. In those years, the rate of increasing of industrial production exceeded 10% and GNP grew 7% in a year.<sup>16</sup>

The 1960 military coup that caused the fall of Democrat Party whose policies were not anymore adoptable to the changing requirement of capital accumulation gave a way to establish a new administrative mechanism which enabled the state regulation for actualizing the interests of industrial bourgeoisie. It was also supported by different layers in the society such as intellectuals who criticized the Democrat Party's populist policies. However, this led to the general support for the project of industrial bourgeoisie which was favorable for the short and medium term interests of working class and a specific group of bureaucracy. The distinctive characteristics of this new accumulation model can be analyzed in two categories: the allocation of scarce economic sources -exchange and credits- through political mechanisms for rapid development and the promise of re-distribution of income to create a domestic market and social compromise. The industrial production was based on the domestic market and not able to compete in the world market. As parallel with the increase of industrial products, new consumer groups were required to be included in the market activity. It was provided by the state through its regulation and distribution policies. The state represented a guarantor role in these policies which served the profit maximization of industrial bourgeoisie in the domestic market according to the logic of capitalist accumulation in a global scale. This could be seen in the newly established organization of the state: State Planning Organization (SPO). SPO was a mechanism whose approve was required for the subsidized credits and allocation of

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<sup>15</sup> Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-1985* (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1998), 95.

<sup>16</sup> Pamuk, p.52.

the scarce exchange in private investments. In this way, the rent provided from the scarce sources was directed to the industrial bourgeoisie.<sup>17</sup>

SPO prepared three five year-plans which determined the investment and long term allocation policies of public as well as private. However, for Boratav, the short term economy policies and long term targets of plans could not be harmonized in many aspects.<sup>18</sup> Regardless of these plans were successful or not, according to Yalman, the planning was a symbol of new hegemonic strategy that was anticipated to function as a new political compromise through taking role in the economic development and social justice.<sup>19</sup> However, for Yalman, it became evident in the end of 1970s that the Turkish bourgeoisie could not establish its hegemony because of prevalent class struggles and intolerance of bourgeoisie for revolutionary working class.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to the planning, the other main characteristics of import substitution industrialization period were the betterment of the salaries of workers, the implementation of social security system for them and the recognition of political rights of working class such as the right to strike and form a trade union by the 1961 constitution. For Boratav, ISI was a product of a balance between the long term interests of dominant power bloc and short term interest of mass public. For that reason, the betterment of conditions of working class was not paradoxical with the new accumulation strategy:

The process of import substitution is constructed on the growth and dynamism of national market and in this model, the wages are demand

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<sup>17</sup> Keyder, p.204.

<sup>18</sup> Boratav, pp. 94-95.

<sup>19</sup> Galip Yalman, "Türkiye'de Devlet ve Burjuvazi: Alternatif Bir Okuma Denemesi" in *Sürekli Kriz Politikaları, Türkiye'de Sınıf, İdeoloji ve Devlet*, edited by Neşecan Balkan and Sungur Savran (Istanbul: Metis Yayıncılık, 2004), 58-59.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

factor which renders for the reproduction for the capital as well as cost for individual capitalist. There is not any obligation to put on pressure on wages with political methods.<sup>21</sup>

Keyder explains the increase of the status of working class as the coincidence of the interests of bourgeoisie and bureaucracy rather than the success of working class. He suggests that working class was passive and the newly rising sectors grasped the logic of new accumulation model by allowing the working class to organize and demand to the extent providing its integration to the system.<sup>22</sup> Boratav defines these distribution policies between 1962-1976 as ‘populist model<sup>23</sup>’ and suggests that this model continued until 1977 crisis when the success of working class struggle was not anymore acceptable by the populist model.<sup>24</sup>

However, IS type of industrialization went into crisis because of oil crisis in the world in 1974 in addition to the inner contradictions of the model mentioned above.<sup>25</sup> But, what is important is that the economic crisis of model is accompanied by the political crisis in the country occurred as a result of strengthening of working class in trade unions and political organizations as well as in economic terms. At this moment, the hegemonic project of bourgeoisie claimed to be embracing the social justice with its populist policies was no more applicable because of increasing threat of working class towards bourgeoisie as Yalman states.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> “İthal ikamesi süreci iç pazarın genişliği ve canlılığı üzerine inşa edilmiştir ve bu modelde ücretler bireysel kapitalist için bir maliyet unsuru olmakla birlikte bir bütün olarak sermaye için yeniden üretim sürecini sürükleyen bir talep unsurudur. Siyasi yöntemlerle baskı altında tutmak için zorunluluk yoktur.”, Boratav, p.100.

<sup>22</sup> Keyder, p. 204. Savran strictly opposes the claim of Keyder who excludes the working class struggle. See S. Savran, “20. Yüzyılın Politik Mirası” in *Sürekli Kriz Politikaları, Türkiye’de Sınıf, İdeoloji ve Devlet*, edited by Neşecan Balkan and Sungur Savran (Istanbul: Metis Yayıncılık, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Populism will be discussed in the following.

<sup>24</sup> Boratav, p.114.

<sup>25</sup> For more details about the economic reasons for the crisis see Boratav, *Türkiye*; Keyder, *Devlet ve Sınıflar*; Pamuk, *İthal İkamesi*.

<sup>26</sup> Yalman, p.64.

So with the increase of political consciousness of bourgeoisie through political organizations and associations such as TÜSIAD (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association) and TISK (Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations), the bourgeoisie applied a new hegemonic strategy to overcome its crisis by taking the control of leftist movements. This new strategy would be 'neo-liberalism'.

Populism is the key concept of the ISI period to understand the political strategies of dominant class and state. Although there is not any consensus about the definition of the concept<sup>27</sup>, it is generally accepted that IS type of industrialization adopted in the 'underdeveloped' countries targeting the development of the country through industrialization is accompanied with the populism in the distributive policies. However, there is an extensive literature about populism indicating different implementations in the different countries such as Latin America, Eastern Europe. But here, I will only focus on the populism debates in Turkey which can be seen a reflection of the ones in Latin America.<sup>28</sup>

Populism is the key concept of the ISI period to understand the political strategies of dominant class and state and there is an important debate about its nature in Turkey. On the one hand, it is seen as a necessary and specific political form that corresponds to the ISI as an economic strategy in "underdeveloped"

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<sup>27</sup> For different approaches to *Populism* see P. Worsley, "The Concept of Populism" in *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, edited by G. Ionescu and E. Gellner (New York: Macmillan, 1969); P. Wiles, "A Syndrome, not a Doctrine: Some Elementary Theses on Populism" in *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, edited by G. Ionescu and E. Gellner (New York: Macmillan, 1969); M. Canovan, *Populism* (London: Junction Books Ltd., 1981).

<sup>28</sup> Here, Populism in Latin America will not be detailed. See P. Cammack, "The Resurgence of Populism in Latin America", *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 19, no.2, (2000); T. di Tella, "Populism and Reform in Latin America" in *Obstacles to Change in Latin America*, edited by C. Veliz (London: Oxford University Press, 1965); M.C. Corniff (ed), *Populism in Latin America* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999); E. Carodo, A. Helwege, "Populism, Profligacy and Redistribution", in *Macroeconomics of Populism in Latin America*, edited by R. Dornbusch, S. Edwards (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); C. Anglade, C. Fortin, "The State and Capital Accumulation in Latin America: A Conceptual and Historical Introduction" in *The State and Capital Accumulation in Latin America*, vol.1, edited by C. Anglade, C. Fortin (Macmillan, 1985).



countries.<sup>29</sup> This view sees populism as a symptom of undeveloped countries and restricts it to a very definite period. For instance, according to Boratav, populism should be used to describe a situation where the working class can affect the political decision mechanisms but can not organize itself to be an alternative to the political power.<sup>30</sup> Of course, the populist policies based upon wage increase and allocation in favor of working-class and peasants should always be limited according to the interests of the dominant power bloc. The ISI is based upon the expansion of the domestic market and lead to the improvement of the living conditions of the members of working class and of peasants. But this amelioration was always limited and the limit has been drawn by the classes in the power bloc. Wage increase and support policies required by the ISI policies could maintain on the condition that working class should not be a threat for this bloc. In other words, the distribution policies of populist model should be in the limits of being assimilated by the dominant classes.<sup>31</sup> For Boratav, populist policies were detrimental for the working class consciousness since these led to a kind of delusion that the interests of the working-class were in harmony with that of power bloc. They could, to a certain extent, mask their own class character and represent themselves as policies for the interests of all classes in the society.

As we can see, Boratav conceptualizes “populism” in a very pejorative way in the sense that, for him, it domesticates the transformative potentiality of the working-class. It is a *means* of the dominant classes to implement the institutional and structural changes and arrangements required by the ISI. On the other hand, for Laclau populism is not simply a means used by the dominant classes according to

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<sup>29</sup> Korkut Boratav, “Türkiye’de Popülizm: 1962-1976 Üzerine Bir Not” in *Yapıt*, no.1, (1983); Boratav, “Popülizm Üzerine Bazı Ek Notlar” in *Yapıt*, no.4, (1984); Haldun Gülalp, “Popülizm Kavramı Üzerine” in *Yapıt*, no.4, (1984).

<sup>30</sup> Boratav (1983), p.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15.

their own ends, but a *discursive strategy* whose terms can be re-articulated thanks to the political struggles. In other words, populism cannot be restricted to a definite period or seen as an essential character of a certain class. Its class character is acquired only through its articulation to a specific ideological-political formation. To put differently, any class, to be hegemonic, should articulate the non-class populist-democratic interpellations into its own discourses. Laclau puts:

...as political and ideological class struggle takes place on a terrain constituted by non-class interpellations and contradictions, this struggle can only consist of antagonistic projects for the articulation of those non-class interpellations and contradictions.<sup>32</sup>

So, for Laclau, populism cannot be defined as a means at the hand of the dominant classes, which lead to a regression in the class consciousness of the working-class. It is not essentially and intrinsically *against* working class, but can be hegemonized as against it by the dominant classes. Thus, it can also be re-articulated by the working-class in order to improve and make sharp the antagonisms in the society. According to Laclau, the common signified of the populism is “people” and classes can be hegemonic only if they can articulate the “people” in their own discourses. He says:

...classes cannot assert their hegemony without articulating the people in their discourse; and the specific form of this articulation in the case of a class which seeks to confront the power bloc as a whole, in order to assert its hegemony, will be populism.<sup>33</sup>

So, for Laclau, populism cannot simply be reduced to a specific period or economic strategy and cannot be seen as a symptom of undeveloped countries.

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<sup>32</sup> Ernesto Laclau, “Towards a Theory of Populism”, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory Capitalism* (London: NLB, 1977), 166.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.196.

(otherwise how can we understand the populist policies in the developed countries, themselves?). It is a matter of political articulations by different classes in order to establish their own hegemonies. I think that this conceptualization enables us not only to re-think the political possibilities of the working class, but also to re-conceptualize “populism” as a analytic category to understand other historical periods and economic strategies than ISI one. For example, the neo-liberal policies were based on different type of populism which encouraged the all people to consume more and made them to feel that all could be rich if they worked enough. In other words, neo-liberalism created such an illusion based on making “everything” reachable regardless of class positions. However, in import substitution model, the main concern of the populist strategies was the growth of welfare by increasing gross national product and purchasing power of the people. For that reason, I will think about the philanthropic activities in this context.

#### Motivations of the Philanthropic Activities of the Koç and Sabancı Families between 1960-1980

The basis of the Sabancı Group goes back to the 1920s when Hacı Sabancı immigrated to Adana from a small village in the province of Kayseri in order to work as a laborer in the cotton plantations. In the following years, thanks to his savings, he founded his first small enterprise to produce gin oil. After that, he established the largest companies at a time coinciding with the beginning of the Second World War: MARSA in food, AKBANK in banking and BOSSA in the textile sector. As a consequence of the growth, he moved the center of the Group from Adana to Istanbul. This growth did not last when Hacı Sabancı died in 1966. From his six sons, Sakıp Sabancı, who had preferred to work in the companies from

his childhood rather than study in school, especially made an effort to preserve the unity of the family and suggested centralization for their diversified working areas by taking Koç Holding as an example. Sabancı Holding was launched in 1967, with Sakıp Sabancı's chief<sup>34</sup>.

Until now, the Sabancı Group has formed many joint ventures with well known multinational companies, such as Toyota, Philip Morris and Carrefour, and moreover, the Group is proud of joining its brand "SA" with their names.<sup>35</sup>

The first step for the holding is the small grocery store opened by Vehbi Koç in 1917 in Ankara. After the foundation of Republic and the choice of Ankara as a capital city, the commercial activities of Koç family increased. With his moving to Istanbul, the activity branches of his corporation diversified and turned its corporation structure to the joint stock company. His corporation became the representative of foreign trade companies. After 1940s, he directed his way towards manufacturing production and established many industrial plants in where the first bulb, refrigerator, motor track, automobile were produced. After 1960, the industrialization entrepreneurship of Koç corporation enlarged and it became one of the leading ones. This process required a new organization model in the corporation. As a consequence, Koç Holding A.Ş. was founded in 1963. The chief of board is Rahmi Koç, his son, from the year of 1984.<sup>36</sup>

In the light of the stories of Koç and Sabancı Holdings, it can be suggested that they both aimed to display activity in two ways: growing rapidly by establishing their holdings and launching their own foundations to institutionalize their social endowments. Vehbi Koç states his intention as:

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<sup>34</sup> Sakıp Sabancı, *İşte Hayatım* (İstanbul: Aksoy, 1985), 98-99.

<sup>35</sup> VAKSA, *Hacı Omer Sabancı Vakfı*, 1998.

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.koc.com.tr/User/tarihce\\_kurumsal.aspx?LANGUAGE\\_CODE=TR](http://www.koc.com.tr/User/tarihce_kurumsal.aspx?LANGUAGE_CODE=TR), 24.10.2006.

While the corporations in Koç Group were developing, two main objectives in my mind matured. One of them was to rearrange our corporations, which were the output of labour of long years, to provide them to work sustainable and efficiently. To achieve this aim, we founded our Holding. My second objective was to institutionalize our social services and endowments and thus to provide their permanence after me. This was actualized when I established Vehbi Koç Foundation.<sup>37</sup>

Inspired by the activities of corporations in foreign countries, Sakıp Sabancı declares the same intention:

During the foreign travels, we also learn other things. We see that the large institutions execute two sorts of activity and contribute to their society, in which they are cultivated, by also doing something in the social area.<sup>38</sup>

However, this two-way activity of these capital groups implies much more than their intentions. It should be considered within the context of the idea of “development” and “industrialization” which were equated with each another in the import substitution industrialization accumulation strategy. The basis of the strategy was the high protection of domestic market. The protection was selective and organized by the state through tariff, exchange rates and credits. The state eliminated the obstacles for the industrial production in the domestic market and encouraged the national capitalist groups to invest through its mechanisms and public institutions. The development of the country could only be realized by making infrastructure investments for industrial production in protected domestic market. “The main

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<sup>37</sup> “Kurduğumuz Koç Grubu şirketleri elişirken, kafamda iki büyük amaç olgunlaşmıştı. Bunlardan biri uzun yıllar emeği olan şirketlerimizi süreklilik ve verimli çalışmayı saplayacak şekilde yeniden düzenlemektir. Bu amaçla holding şirketimizi kurduk. İkinci amacım da sosyal hizmet ve bağışlarımızı kurumlaştırmak ve böylece bunların benden sonra da sürekliliğini sağlamaktır. Bu ikinci amacım Vehbi Koç Vakfı’nı kurduğum zaman gerçekleşti”, Vehbi Koç, *Hayat Hikayem* (İstanbul: Apa Ofset, 1979), 1237.

<sup>38</sup> “Yurtdışında gezip gördükçe başka şeyler de öğreniyoruz. Büyük kuruluşların, firmaların, ailelerin iki kollu faaliyeti olduğunu, işinde başarı gösterenlerin sosyal alanlarda da bir şeyler yapıp, yetiştikleri topluma birşeyler vermeye çalıştıklarını anlıyoruz.”, Sakıp Sabancı, *Bıraktığım Yerden Hayatım*, 9th edition (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2004), 336.

ideology in import substitution industrialization was limited to the national-building centered development and solidarity.”<sup>39</sup> As mentioned above, populist political strategies were applied in order to provide the required domestic demand for the productions in a way of increasing purchasing power of population. To achieve this aim, these strategies did not repress the wages. It was claimed that the inward looking economic policies (ISI) would provide high quality lives for the people through the high wages and social security. This led to the prevalence of the consumption of the luxury commodities in the low and middle classes.

Thus, the accumulation strategy and populist policies were based on the “inclusion” in the post-war period. It was the new hegemonic project of bourgeoisie to restructure it. Promising to include each potential worker in the productive labour force and providing them with the ability to purchase high value commodities with high salaries were the basis of this economic model.<sup>40</sup> People were promised that they would not be excluded from the production process. In other words, for the development/industrialization of the country, high production in big factories, and for high production, a more educated labour force was required. For that reason, in this period, the state and newly strengthening capital groups attached importance to make “investment in man” or to “cultivate a man” who had the potential to be included in the labour force. What it means is that the logic of capitalism necessitated a more educated and cultivated labour force to exploit them. So, the “investment in man” was the keyword of that economic model.

I want to analyze the philanthropic activities of these two leading groups from this point of view by referring to their autobiographies. I claim that this is the main motivation of their activities. This perspective will allow us to see the relationship of

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<sup>39</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *Ulusal Kalkınmacılığın İflası*, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1993), 35.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, p.28.

these kinds of activities with the economic model and the development of dominant class.

As seen below, in the foundations of Sabancı and Koç, the “education” is the main sphere for their philanthropic activities. They have built schools, dormitories, universities and founded scholarships for many students. Today, these activities may serve different or diversified interests of the capitalist class, but it seems that the first drive of them for the institutionalization of their philanthropic enterprises was linked directly to the “production”:

If we examine the advanced countries, we find well educated people in every field; we see that these countries rise under the government of talented and qualified administrators. In our country, which has to develop rapidly, the most important mission that we have to seriously and rapidly consider and realize is to train talented young people who could work in different fields. Training of man requires time. A kid who starts primary school at the age of seven becomes productive towards the age 30, provided that he goes through normal educational stages and finishes high education and his military service. For this reason these facilities are being set up for our youth to have good education and work hard.<sup>41</sup>

This quotation proves that the main objective of the Koç foundation in their educational philanthropy is to cultivate facile worker for their industries and so, for the development of the country. According to Tanju, Sabancı was motivated to produce more and to launch big industries to provide all young unemployed people with jobs and make contribution to the welfare of the state:

They should have contributed more to the welfare and happiness of the country. They should have led everybody by the slogans of “healthy and rational production”, “more and more production” and “production enough for all”. They should have better implemented a balanced employment policy targeting modern social objectives. When in this country around half a million people were trying very hard to participate in the social and economic life by shouting and begging for a job, they couldn’t have relieved our minds by showing us the outcomes of which they are proud. Big, very big works should have been done.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Vehbi Koç, *Hayat Hikayem* (Istanbul: Apa Ofset, 1979), 118.

<sup>42</sup> “Ülkenin refahına ve mutluluğuna daha fazla katkıları olmalıydı. Sağlıklı ve akıllı üretim, daha fazla üretim, herkese yetecek kadar üretim sloganlarıyla herkesi peşlerinden sürüklemeliydiler.

To put in a nutshell, it is stated that the “investment in man”, high production and development of the country were the main items of their discourses. “Investment in man” could be actualized by their social givings in the education and health areas. They were claiming that this would inevitably afford modern life for the public:

For social services we shouldn't turn our face only to the state...Affluent citizens' help to the state by way of charity organizations and foundations would help the state be stronger and work better in other areas. As Sabancı family, we try to increase production and exports, and we try to set up institutions for cultivating better educated, morally strong, young people. Development and success is not simply about money. Educated youth for this country is what a central pillar for a tent is.<sup>43</sup>

To understand better, I will make an introduction of their foundations and list their main activities from the beginning to the present.

#### VAKSA (Hacı Ömer Sabancı Foundation) and Vehbi Koç Foundation

As the Group was institutionalized as a consequence of its growth, after the death of their father, the Sabancı brothers established their own foundation to institutionalize their social endowments that were said to be their family tradition continuing for years, and especially fulfilled during the Ramadan religious festival, in 1974 with the name of VAKSA (Hacı Ömer Sabancı Foundation). It was launched

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Çağdaş sosyal amaçlara yönelik dengeli bir istihdam politikasını daha başarılı olarak uygulamalıydılar. Ülkede her yıl yarım milyon yeni insane iş diye bağıarak ekonomik ve sosyal hayata katılma çırpınışları yaparken, varılan sonuçlarla öğünmek kimsenin için ferahlatmazdı. Büyük, daha büyük işler yapılmalıydı.”, Sadun Tanju, *Hacı Ömer* (İstanbul:Apa Ofset, 1983), 252

<sup>43</sup> “Bu ülkede sosyal hizmetleri sadece devletten beklemeyelim...İmkani olan yurttaşların hayır dernekleri, vakıflar yoluyla devlete yardımcı olmaları, devletin başka konularda daha güçlü çalışmasına yardım eder. Sabancı Ailesi olarak, daha fazla üretim ve daha fazla ihracat yapmaya, daha fazla istihdam yaratmaya çalışıyoruz. Kazancımızın bir bölümünü de, daha sağlıklı, daha iyi tahsil görmüş, manevi gücü artmış, genç insanlar yetiştirecek tesisleri kurmada kullanıyoruz. Kalkınma ve başarı sadece paraya bağlı değildir.”, Sakıp Sabancı, *Bıraktığım Yerden Hayatım*, 9th edition (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2004), 344.



owing to the efforts of Sıdıka Sabancı (the wife of Hacı Ömer) who also donated all her personal wealth to the foundation.

The aim of the foundation “is the provision of services to youth and to the public in general, and to undertake some of the responsibilities of the state in contributing to the social and cultural development of the country as a whole.” To achieve this aim, the foundation constructs schools, student hostels, residences, cultural centers, sports facilities and medical centers and contributes to successful students through scholarships and scientific supports research, artistic, cultural activities. According to the last report of the foundation, by the end of 2005 the assets raised to 609 million YTL in 31 years by means of only the contributions of the companies in the Group and the income provided from the assets. In other words, the Foundation does not accept any income or contribution from any other company that is not included in the Group.

Up to now, VAKSA has founded 121 permanent institutions whose total value amounts approximately 893 million YTL, in 51 localities throughout the country.

The list of institutions can be summarized as follows:

opportunity of education for 2,890 students in the Sabancı University, education for 38,800 students in 36 schools, accommodation for 4,713 students in 13 student residences, accommodation for 420 children in four orphanages, care and education of 700 children in five creches and nursery schools, care of the handicapped in two treatment and rehabilitation centers for spastic children, various medical services in five health centers, provision of cultural and artistic facilities for thousands of young people in 13 cultural centers, the provision of recreation and accommodation facilities for teachers in 16 teachers’ centers, one mosque for 25,000 people, social facilities for public servants in “ Police Leisure and Recreation Center, provision of reading and research facilities for students in four libraries, facilities for various activities for the general public in 11 social centers.

In addition to these endowments, the foundation grants two kinds of scholarships: the social ones, demanding a period of service in return, are awarded to

university students who are highly successful but financially disadvantaged and who meet the criteria fixed by the foundation. The unreturned scholarships which do not demand a period of service in return are awarded to primary, high school and university students in the priority cities for development. In addition, VAKSA distributes many prizes and scholarships in the fields of folk dance, theatre, education and sports.

Sabancı University founded in 1999, functioning as private university but awarding scholarships to successful students, is one of the biggest projects of the foundation in the field of education in which around 3,000 students are studying. The university is based on two main departments as engineering and natural sciences, arts and social sciences and the faculty of management.

On their web site, it is declared that the foundation has made contributions to the public in an amount of about 1,329,895,260 YTL since its foundation through building constructions, awarding scholarships and assisting associations and institutions.

As a result, VAKSA announces itself as “the largest foundation declared by any single family in Turkey”, and also, it strengthens its power by being a member of the European Foundations Center and the Council of Foundations.<sup>44</sup>

Vehbi Koç Foundation was founded in 1969 by Vehbi Koç in order to revitalize the old endowment tradition of Turkish society. The Foundation works in three areas: education, health and culture. The first institutions of the foundation was Sadberk Hanim Museum and Private Koç High School. Following to them, the foundation supported the health sector by founding American Hospital, nursing schools or creating nursing funds. In addition to its high school, Koç University was

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid. Also available on [www.vaksa.org.tr](http://www.vaksa.org.tr)

established. I could not get any detailed information or numbers, as I did for VAKSA, from any source. For that reason, I do not have any data for proving the intensified philanthropic activities of Koç. However, as stated in the web site, KOç Holding is one of the leading corporation involved in those kinds of activities.<sup>45</sup>

As seen above, the histories of the two capital groups overlap on many points. One of them is their attempts to institutionalize the management of their companies and philanthropic activities through the establishment of foundations in the same years with the similar motivations. Albeit they differ in their capital accumulation strategies and the relationship with the state, they followed similar stages and reflected to their environments. This is why I try to elaborate the relation of the philanthropic activities and cultural investments of these groups with the socio-economic and political conjuncture by taking them as case studies. Both of them justify their givings as “giving back to society/the country” or a way of “paying the debt to the country.” There exist other motivations related to the populist policies in this period.

The second motivation for the philanthropic activities is the efforts of the families to legitimize their wealth in the estimation of themselves and the public. According to Buğra, “one of the most striking aspects of the ways Turkish businessmen perceive themselves has to do with lack of confidence they have with respect to the activities they engage in for the purpose of material gain. This lack of confidence shows itself in the heartrending attempts to justify entrepreneurship by referring to its social benefits.”<sup>46</sup> Moreover, since socialist movements and idea(l)s were relatively effective in social and political life in these years, the sources of

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<sup>45</sup> <http://www.vkv.org.tr>

<sup>46</sup> “Türk işadamlarının kendilerine bakış biçimlerinin en çarpıcı yönlerinden biri, maddi kazanç amacıyla girilen faaliyetlerin meruiyetine ilişkin güvensizlikleridir. Bu güvensizlik kendini girişimciliği sosyal katkılarına atıfla savunmak için girilen canhıraş çabalarda kendini gösterir.”, Ayşe Buğra, *Devlet ve İşadamları* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 15.

richness were questioned by many people and the belief that wealth was accumulated “honestly” by rich people was very weak. They did not esteem the “success stories” of rich people as narrated in their autobiographies after the 1980s. As a consequence of these doubts and reactions, the exposure of wealth in the public space was getting harder to apply and wealth was being less and less conceived of as a means of pride for the rich. In such a situation, the rich families who were multiplying their capital year by year, tried to prove that “being rich was not shameful”<sup>47</sup> and thus, legitimize their richness in many ways. The increase in and diversification of the philanthropic activities which were already continuing at the personal level and the institutionalization of them as foundations can be seen as attempts at legitimization. They advocated that “getting rich in our culture means to be powerful and have a chance to use their power for the useful activities.” Through these activities, they sought to show that the wealth did not only serve the interests of the capital owners, but would rehabilitate/improve the living conditions of the people as well as contribute to the development of the country.<sup>48</sup> They tried to prove that “getting rich in the Anatolian culture is an economic and social fact growing out of the tradition which is a contribution to the welfare of the family and society.”<sup>49</sup> Thus they claimed that wealth was not only a personal matter, but a common interest or ideal shared by the whole society. They aimed to indicate “the modern/contemporary sensitiveness of the capital to the national issues/problems”.<sup>50</sup>

The third motivation is the attempt of the big capital groups to eliminate class based threats directed at them arising from the socialist struggle. According to Buğra, businessmen were anxious about the communist thread. They were

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.16.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.16.

<sup>49</sup> Sadun Tanju, *Hacı Ömer* (İstanbul: Apa Ofset, 1983), 37.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 255

demanding from the state to obviate the communist state and inform the public about the benefits of private entrepreneurship.<sup>51</sup> In my opinion, through their philanthropic activities, they established a kind of dialogue with the people and tried to persuade them that in fact, they already had realized a just and equal world idealized by the socialist struggle by the means of providing employment and social philanthropic activities especially in the education sphere. For that reason, these activities were a means to feel secure about themselves as a class against the threat of socialist struggle. For Koç, the businessman had some responsibilities as citizen. One of the most important tasks of the businessman was to endeavor to remove the inequalities in society as well as working for the development of the country and encouraging increased production: “that business man who loves the country and wants to live as free will work hard, create new employment opportunities, pay his taxes, deal with the problems of the country intimately, in short, he will be the major contributor in providing the social justice.”<sup>52</sup>

According to Koç and Sabancı, this kind of business man was an ideal citizen for the country since his priority was to serve the national interests. Since the development of his corporation would mean the development of the country for the businessman, he represented a good example of citizenship: “in such exciting moments, no socialist was fit to hold a candle to Sabancı. He claimed that his factory belonged to all of us with its capital, land, machines, production and rubber.”<sup>53</sup>

As seen in the quotation, in those years, there was a visible struggle against socialist ideas. The rich families were alluding that socialists were not able to

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<sup>51</sup> Ayşe Buğra, *Devlet ve İşadamları* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 201.

<sup>52</sup> Vehbi Koç, *Hayat Hikayem* (İstanbul: Apa Ofset, 1979), 183.

<sup>53</sup> “Böyle heyecanlı anlarında hiçbir sosyalist Sakıpın eline su dökemezdi.”, Sadun Tanju, *Hacı Ömer* (İstanbul: Apa Ofset, 1983), 253.

concretize their ideals about the country. The power of the socialists was not enough to serve for the benefit of the country as businessmen; they only made “politics”. This anti-leftist discourse was the main characteristic of that period. Today, it is no longer possible to consider that kind of hegemonic struggle as one of the objectives of philanthropic activities. Instead, another discourse prevails as related to the weakening of the political power threatening the capitalist class: to bridge the gap left by the state and to do what the state can not. Infact, this discourse now is the basis of the civil society institutions whose number has increased and strengthened.

The fourth motivation is to reconstruct the image of the wealthy in the estimation of the public. In other words, through philanthropic activities, they aimed to make the public feel sympathy for themselves. In those years, poverty was sanctified and coded as a virtue in this period and wealthy was identified with dishonesty and cruelty.<sup>54</sup> The rich were perceived as selfish, ones running after profit, enjoying themselves and open to all sorts of duplicity to make more profit. At that point, the philanthropic activities were a favorable means to cultivate a new image that would raise the wealthy high in the public esteem: Sakıp Sabancı wrote “The image of factory owner... being an industrialist and a large employer, living a good life with the money of which the taxes were paid became disgraceful... I endeared the real businessman to the public. I made the real industrialist sympathetic. I showed that the man does not feel embarrassed if he pays taxes.”<sup>55</sup> Anyway, a public survey about the image of Sakıp Sabancı supports his claim. According to the survey results made public in 1985, while 94% of the participants

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<sup>54</sup> T.Bora, N.Erdoğan, “ ‘Zengin’ Bir Araştırma Gündemi, ‘Yoksul’ Bir Literatür”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.104, (2005), p.9.

<sup>55</sup>“bir fabrikatör imajı... bu toz dumanın arasında, sanayici olmak, çok işçi çalıştırmak, vergisi ödenen para ile yi bir hata yaşamak utanılır hale geldi...halka gerçek işadamını sevdirdim. Gerçek sanayiciyi sevimli hale getirdim. Vergisini veren adamın zenginlikten utanmayacağını gösterdim.”, Sakıp Sabancı, *İşte Hayatım* (İstanbul: Aksoy, 1985), 321.

appreciated Sabancı due to his contribution to industrialization, the next answer was his philanthropic activities, which were appreciated by 92% of them. Also, the rest of the survey showed that Sabancı had a good image in the estimation of the public as he targeted.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, it was his success that the public was aware of his strategy of displaying two-ways activity as contributing to industrialization and doing philanthropic activities. This good image Sabancı maintained until his death. He was seen as a hero who worked for the benefit of the public. The moment that the success of Sabancı was realized by Vehbi Koç was described as: “The deceased Koç honored me with his words as ‘As Sakıp Sabancı, you became the one who endeared the business world and wealthy’, I became a model to tell to the public about the importance of the honest businessman paying his taxes and highlighting this type of businessman.”<sup>57</sup> But, Sabancı writes that they had some trouble in putting into practice their philanthropic activities. For example, when he applied to construct a dormitory for the ministry, an officer treated him brutally and questioned his personal interest in building the dormitory. One more officer had the same attitude and accused him of appropriating public land after building the dormitory. He told these short stories to indicate how people were doubtful about his activities that were of benefit of them.<sup>58</sup>

One of the motivations for the institutionalization of the philanthropic activities is to provide the sustainability of the family name. They sought to guarantee the continuation of their names for years as independent from any person by institutionalizing their companies under the holdings and philanthropic activities

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p.326.

<sup>57</sup> “Rahmetli Vehbi Koç gibi bir kişi, “Sakıp Sabancı olarak iş alemini, zengini sevdiyen adam oldun” diyerek beni onurlandırdı. Vergisini veren, namuslu işadamının önemini kamuoyuna anlatmakta ve bu tip işadamını öne çıkarmada örnek oldum.”, Sakıp Sabancı, *Bıraktığım Yerden Hayatım*, 9th edition (İstanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2004), 16.

<sup>58</sup> Sakıp Sabancı, *İşte Hayatım* (İstanbul: Aksoy, 1985), 345.

under the foundations.<sup>59</sup> In this way, their family names would survive in society even though the founders of the institutions died. Vehbi Koç examines such cases in the West: “I have learned that thousands of foundations have established and played important roles in social and cultural development in the last 200 years, as parallel to the development of industry and economy in the West. So, this traditional institution serving from the times of Anatolian Seljuqs in our culture has started to be used as a modern means of enriching life in the West.”<sup>60</sup> Put another way, wealthy families through establishing foundations have created their own traditions and thus, they provide the continuance of the visibility of their philanthropic activities in society as well as the permanence of their names.

The issue of “visibility” is the vital point of this thesis. As a last motivation, this issue deserves more analysis. The rich families attained more visibility by launching their own foundations. Before their establishment, the social endowments of the families were related to individual efforts and choices, and they were not realized by the whole society like the endowments of Hacı Ömer to the needy people during Ramadan. Since these kinds of giving were based on one- to- one relationship with the receiver, the people excluded from this relationship were unable to notice the endowments of families. But, after the establishment of the foundations, they started to give their names to the institutions built by them, such as schools or dormitories, and thus they could also inform the other people about their philanthropic activities. As understood from the autobiographies, this issue was

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<sup>59</sup> Ayşe Buğra, *Devlet ve İşadamları* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 198.

<sup>60</sup> “Son iki yüz yılda, Batı’da sanayinin ve ekonominin gelişmesine paralel olarak, küçük büyük binlerce vakıf kurulduğunu; bunların sosyal ve kültürel gelişmede önemli roller oyadıklarını öğrendim. Demek bizde Anadolu selçukluları devrinden beri hizmet gören bir geleneksel müesse, Batı’da modern hayatı zenginleştirmenin çağdaş vasıtaları olarak kullanılmaya başlamıştı.”, Vehbi Koç, *Hatıralarım, Görüşlerim, Öğütlerim (1973-1987)* (İstanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 1987), 140.



debatable in those years. Sabancı stated that it was required to give their names to the establishments to encourage the other rich people,

I remember the advice of our ambassador, Melih Esenbel, in Tokyo. “You will build a school, and overwrite as the “Sabancı School.” This writing does not only aim the ostentation...it is a kind of invitation. You will accept this. If your message reaches one million people, 70 schools can be built in a year.” I accepted this advice. I applied when I constructed Sabancı schools and hospitals with my brothers. Who does not know this may suggest I parade.<sup>61</sup>

Giving name in this period was functioning as a means of hegemonic struggle slightly different from what we see today. What we can give as a good example is the removal of a sign by the leftist students in the dormitory built by Koç in Ankara. The students removed a sign on which the message of Koç to students was written and put another sign and changed the name of dormitory to the surname of their friend who had been killed in a clash.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the visibility of capital groups as a class increased in society by giving their names to the institutions they built. This visibility has taken different forms in the post-1980 period, which will be discussed later. As Buğra suggests, the capitalist class takes courage to launch their own professional association as TÜSİAD and make politics in these foundations after the 1970s and thus they become more visible in public.<sup>63</sup> I also prefer to analyze the cultural investments that increased after the 1980s in the context of the “visibility” issue.

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<sup>61</sup> “Büyükelçimiz Melih Esenbel’in bana Tokyo’da verdiği nasihatı hatırlıyorum: “Mektep yapacaksın, üstüne yazacaksın “Sabancı Mektebi” diye. O yazı sadece gösterişi amaçlamamakta...Bir davetiye çıkarma niteliğinde. O tarafının ağır bastığını kabul edeceksin. Mesajı 70 milyon insandan, milyonda bir kişiye ulaşsa, yılda 70 okul yapılır” demişti. Ben bunu içime sindirmiştim. Sabancı okullarını, Sabancı hastanelerini, kardeşlerimle el ele verip gerçekleştirdiğimde uygulamışım. Bunu bilmeyen “propaganda, gösteriş için yapıyorsun” diyebilir.”, Sabancı, *Bıraktığım Yerden Hayat* 37.

<sup>62</sup> Vehbi Koç, *Hayat Hikayem* (Istanbul: Apa Ofset, 1979), 119.

<sup>63</sup> Ayşe Buğra, *Devlet ve İşadamları* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 25.

Today, the philanthropic activities of families continue although the previous model of development changed. But what is important is that the sphere of culture emerges for the wealthy people to implement their new fantasies of development. In the following chapter, the rise of cultural investments of families and corporations will be elaborated within this context.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PRIVATIZATION OF CULTURE

#### Neo Liberalism as a Hegemonic Project

##### The Rise of Neo-Liberalism

From the 1980s, Turkey experienced a political, economic and cultural transformation process via neo-liberal policies and a military intervention which were proposed as a solution for the hegemonic crisis of the late 1970s. Indeed, Turkey was not alone; most of the developing countries went through the similar processes as a outcome of the global crisis of capitalism that started in the 1970s which had initially seemed to be a mere petroleum crisis in the West developed countries, but later widened into a more comprehensive one that included the whole world. This “transnational neo-liberal revolution”<sup>64</sup> simply appeared as a critique of Keynesianism; the economic strategies developed specifically in Western countries after the Second World War (1945), which “made explicit in institutional form the dependence of capital upon labour, the strength of the presence of labour in-and-against capital.”<sup>65</sup> The main goal of Keynesianism was to strengthen the national market. Its main targets were full employment, economic growth, stable prices, high levels of public spending on welfare and surplus on the balance of payments. These sought to maintain the national economy in balance through state interventions.<sup>66</sup> The Keynesian economy mainly aimed at the restoration of the crisis of capitalism on the base of the welfare state. As is known, the welfare state requires the

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<sup>64</sup> Henk Overbeek and Kees van der Pijl, “Restructuring Capital and Restructuring Hegemony”, in *Restructuring Hegemony in the Global Political Economy: The Rise of Transnational Neo-Liberalism in the 1980s*, H. Overbeek (ed), (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 2.

<sup>65</sup> John Holloway, “The Abyss Opens: The Rise and Fall of Keynesianism” in *Global Capital, National State and the Politics of Money*, W.Bonefeld and J.Holloway (eds), (St.Martin’s Press, 1995), 8.

<sup>66</sup> Andrew Gamble, “The Free Economy and the Strong State: The Rise of Social Market Economy” , in *The Socialist Register*, Miliband and Savile (eds), (London: The Merlin Press, 1979), 10.

enlargement and intervention of state and it is rooted in a new kind of consensus.<sup>67</sup> However, Keynesian remedies to economic problems became insufficient and incapable of solving important economic issues such as high inflation, fiscal crises of the state and the increasing unemployment in the 1970s. In such an atmosphere, restructuring capitalism became a need and an area for the implementation of novel social and economic policies offered by the new right's programmes. In other words, these programmes gave the message that Keynesianism led to the acceleration inflation and growing state intervention.<sup>68</sup> The neo-liberal economies were based on the liberalization of the market, monetarism as a solution to inflation and the decrease of public expenditure and privatization. All these developments pointed to the collapse of the post-war consensus that had risen on the centre left, and a new consensus on the center right emerged with application of neo-liberal policies all around the world.<sup>69</sup>

The new right went beyond a mere reaction to the Keynesian economic policies. It married liberalism with conservatism by sacrificing the democratic values acquired in the times of post-war consensus. The new right governments were based on "authoritarian populism"<sup>70</sup> to organize the national-popular will. They

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<sup>67</sup> The consensus can be described as an agreement between interest groups, especially between the trade unions and capitalist class on the context of the size of government after the Second World War.

<sup>68</sup> Andrew Gamble, "Neo-liberalism", *Capital and Class*, no. 75 (2001), p.131.

<sup>69</sup> For more about from Keynesianism to Neoliberalism, see B.J. Cohen, "A Brief History of International Monetary Relations" in *International Political Economy: Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth*, J.A. Frieden and D. Lake (eds) (New York: St.Martin Press, 1995), 209-228; R.D. Germain, "Between Change and Continuity: Reconstructing Bretton Woods" in *The International Organization of Credit*, R.D. Germain (ed) (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 75-100; S. Clarke, *Keynesianism, Monetarism and the Crisis of the State* (Edward Elgar, 1988), 1-20.

<sup>70</sup> Authoritarian populism can be defined as coercive and disciplining practices of legal state apparatuses to restore and maintain the social order. There is an extensive debate on it in the context of Thatcherism. See B. Jessop, K. Bonnett and S. Bromley, "Farewell to Thatcherism? Neo-liberalism and "New Times"", *NLR*, no.179 (1990), 81-102; also their book with T. Ling, *Thatcherism: A Tale of Two Nations* (Cambridge, 1988); also their article, "Authoritarian Populism, Two Nations, and Thatcherism", *NLR*, no.147 (1984), 32-60; also "Thatcherism and the Politics of Hegemony: A Reply to Stuart Hall", *NLR*, No.153 (1985), 87-101; S. Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal* (London: Verso, 1988); also "The Great Moving Right Show", *Marxism Today* (January, 1979), 14-20; "Authoritarian Populism: A Reply to Jessop et al", *NLR*, No.151 (1985), 115-123.

aimed to include the capital groups who were ready to integrate into the globalization process and the conservatives disturbed by the radical movements in the 1960s. Moreover, these hegemonic projects enlarged their base through their stance of anti-statism, individualism and civil society to include the segments of society that were resented by the high bureaucracy and rationalist interventions of the welfare state.<sup>71</sup> Then new right discourse was a fusion of neo-liberal concepts such as individualism, economic efficiency, the market society and anti-statism and the conservative elements of family, tradition, religion, racial discrimination, social authoritarianism, hierarchy, law and order.<sup>72</sup> It articulated the idea of a “free market society” with authoritarianism, which seems contradictory at the first sight, since this new hegemonic project had to eliminate any opposition for itself through its authoritarian practices. This led to the change in the functions of the state.

Then new right proposed that the state should not take control of the economic sphere but should be active in ensuring the work of market institutions. So, the state mainly existed to guarantee freedom, which was shaped by the market mentality. The limits for the state are regulated by laws and constitutional arrangements which are basically serve for the continuity of freedom. The free economy and the strong state are complementary to each other. In other words, “if the economy is to remain free the state has to become strong.”<sup>73</sup> The state must be strong to restore the free economy, control the market order, provide free market efficiency and advocate social and political authority.<sup>74</sup> The objectives of planning industrialization, full

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<sup>71</sup> Alev Özkazanç, “Türkiye’de Yeni Sağ” in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol.15 (Istanbul:İletişim), 1218.

<sup>72</sup> Muharrem Tunay, “The Turkish New Right’s Attempt at Hegemony” in *The Political and Socioeconomic Transformation of Turkey*, A. Eralp, M. Tunay and B. Yesilada (eds) (Westport: Praeger, 1993).

<sup>73</sup> Gamble, “The Free Economy”, 15.

<sup>74</sup> Andrew Gamble, *The Free Economy and The Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism*, (London: Macmillan education, 1989), 32.

employment, and the growth of the national market and corporatist structure of the state were left in the neo-liberal state. The state was anticipated to be neutral on these subjects. Issues like unemployment were no longer considered governmental problems. According to this approach; the reason for unemployment was the failure of individuals and the inability of institutions to adapt themselves to the market tendencies.<sup>75</sup> In other words, these issues were left to the spontaneously evolving free market mechanisms.

Differently from this previous model, “neo-liberalism gives priority to capital as money rather than capital as production.” It removes all obstacles such as state subsidies and protection and allows capital to be more free and mobile in circulating.<sup>76</sup> With neo-liberalism, the power of trade unions started to become a prevailing obstacle for the application of anti-Keynesian economic measures and the profit maximization of capital. Thus, when the new right leaderships came into power, especially in England and the USA, the general attitude towards the unions had evolved into a negative one. The economic corporatist mentality of the Keynesian state on income policy was dismantled, for previously the state had taken an active role in the negotiations between trade unions and employers. In addition, one of the fundamental issues on the agenda of the neo-liberal governments was to curb the unions’ power, which was not only a crucial part of the broader campaign launched to clear away socialism from their countries, but also a consequence of the economic policies aiming to ensure the operation of the free market without interruption. According to the new right hegemonic project, society was divided into two camps, which meant the discontinuity with “one nation” of the Keynesian welfare state “presented as an attempt to integrate the poor, deprived and

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<sup>75</sup> Gamble, *The Free Economy*, 11-17.

<sup>76</sup> Gamble, “Neoliberalism”, 131.

underprivileged into membership of the community through economic growth, full employment and, increasingly, universal welfare benefits.”<sup>77</sup> However, in a two-nation society, this inclusion practice was left and the ones in the second nation composed of unions, the unemployed, the disabled, pensioners,<sup>78</sup> were accused of being irresponsible, lazy and a burden on the state, as contrary to the “winners” of the first nation, who were viewed as being hard-working and responsible.<sup>79</sup> The new rights governments struggled against trade unions because they believed that the trade unions took a greater share from whole while contributing less to the whole. In other words, these kinds of corporatist institutions were a burden on the shoulders of the wealthy part of the nation and implied an intervention into the nature of the free market society. That is why new right thinkers and politicians were agreed on the ideal of allowing the trade unions to wither away. Besides the strict neo-liberal economy policies worsening the welfare of lower classes, the power of the working class was broken through antitrade unionist laws and rising unemployment.<sup>80</sup> They both promoted the belief that there was no alternative to neo-liberalism for modern society with the slogan “There Is No Alternative.”

One of the most popular new right programs was “Thatcherism,”<sup>81</sup> introduced in Britain by Margaret Thatcher, who came to power by winning the general elections in 1979. The fundamental elements of the Thatcher government’s economic policies were as monetarism, privatization and consolidation of the free market. In order to achieve control of the money supply, the Thatcher government

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<sup>77</sup> Bob Jessop, Kevin Bonnett, Simon Bromley and Tom Ling, “*Thatcherism: A Tale of Two Nations*”, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 87.

<sup>78</sup> Tünay, “Turkish New Right”, 16.

<sup>79</sup> Alev Özkazanç, “Refah Devletinden Yeni Sağa: Siyasi İktidar Tarzında Dönüşümler”, *Mürekkap*, no.7, (1997), 34.

<sup>80</sup> Özkazanç, “Türkiye’de Yeni Sağ” 1218.

<sup>81</sup> Reaganism implied the transition to neo-liberal policies with Reagan in the USA, is also a typical one. See M. Davis, “From Fordism to Reaganism” in *The World Order: Socialist Perspectives*, R. Bush and G. Johnston Coates (eds), (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987).

attempted to decrease both the public expenditures and tax rates.<sup>82</sup> Public expenditure cuts and alternations led to a decrease in social state costs and more money was being used for security, law and order. As a result, the role of the state as a supporter in economic terms through the social security system was transformed gradually into a non-interventionist but strong state which ensured the order of society. Accordingly, on the one hand, the new tax policies caused an unfair taxation system as long as the proportional system was given up and instead of it a fixed one was applied, which disregarded the different income levels within society. On the other hand, however, the low tax policy was very effective in guaranteeing popular support by leaving more money in the pockets of the people in appearance, but in fact for most people the total burden of taxation rose rather than fell.

Such policies also necessitate holding wages at a more or less constant level, which would be certainly a disadvantage to the working class. Another aspect of Thatcherite economic policies in accordance with its privatization and free market fetishism was “the rolling back of the state” from the economic sphere, in Thatcher’s words. Privatization was launched especially after the 1983 election victory and aimed to complete the limitation of the state presence in economic life; indeed, privatization was essentially an ideological practise. According to the Thatcher government, privatization was vital for the following reasons: the public enterprises were inefficient, placing an extra burden on the budget and consequently caused an overloaded government and “the politicization of economic issues” should be prevented.

Economic measures also were reflected in the political area, especially in the workers’ rights. The strategy followed by the government to curtail the unions’

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<sup>82</sup> But these seemingly economic measures have also a political return since they complemented the wholehearted campaign against the welfare state system in general.



power was not an immediate attack but a step-by-step one through legal amendments. Finally, this tactic was successful and in the eyes of many people it gained legitimacy. The Thatcherist policy, especially during the miners' strike in 1984-5 was a good example of this gradual and non-direct attack on trade unions. In the aftermath of the strike, the government seemed to crush the union power effectively and the legitimacy of union movement was damaged. This victory also was reinforced by numerous legal amendments realized throughout the Thatcher's time in office. For instance, the government quite skillfully managed to avoid any legal confrontations with the trade unions by judging the probable violations under the jurisdiction of civil law instead of the penal code. By doing so, the government made it impossible for the unionists to become folk-heroes and "depoliticize" the legal sphere. In short, the Thatcher government was successful in applying the anti-unionist ideas of new right theoreticians like Hayek and Friedman. In rhetoric, they labeled the trade unions as "enemy within" as a counterpart of the "enemy outside". However, more importantly the "biggest obstacle" for the consolidation of free market was removed.<sup>83</sup>

#### The Rise of Neo-Liberalism in Turkey

Turkey had many common points with Britain in the transformation to, and implementation of, neo-liberal policies. In spite of these points, there was a vital difference about the type of political power actualized in the transition process. Although the nature of Thatcherism was politically oppressive, the Thatcher government seized the political power through democratic mechanisms like elections. But, not surprisingly, in Turkey like in the other less developed countries,

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<sup>83</sup> Andrew Gamble, *The Free economy and the Strong State: The Politics of Thatcherism*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 58; *Developments in British Politics 3*, edited by P. Dunleavy, An. Gamble, G. Peele, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

the transition to the neo-liberal model was actualized by military rule, which executed systematic and continuous anti-democratic policies. With 12 September 1980, Turkey passed from a period in which the ideological struggles between left and right were strong and the leftist ideals were prevalent to one in which these ideas were pacified and their advocates of them were exposed to major prohibitions and coercions with a military coup.<sup>84</sup> These authoritarian practices of military rule were justified by referring to the chaotic atmosphere of the country in the late 1970s. In the broader sense, it was a hegemonic crisis that had led to the instable political and economic conditions in the country. Since the parliamentary democracy had been of no use to propose any political solution, the mechanism of democratic representation had become ineffective. In addition to the opposition from workers and students, the extreme leftists and rightists had become involved in armed struggles which the official declared as terrorism. With the deterioration of the political order and high polarization of ideologies, the right-wing political parties became inadequate to advance the interests of the dominant class in the political arena.

These parties also were unable to propose proper economic policies to meet the interests of the dominant class. The accumulation strategy that was import substitution industrialization became ineffective when it led to high inflation, fiscal deficits, lack of foreign currency reserves and the intense conflict between capital and labour for the dominant class. As Tunay writes, “no right-wing political party could stabilize economic and political conditions; thus they failed to serve the

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<sup>84</sup> This process was very traumatic and painful for many people: the government prohibited activities of political parties, trade unions and non-governmental organizations, declared martial law, wanted to judge 700.000 with death penalty, 50 of them executed. 650 thousand were taken in custody, 230 thousands of them were judged and police opened a file on 1 million 683 people, 30.000 of people were fired from their jobs and 14.000 people were released from their Turkish nationalities. <http://www.bianet.org/2004/09/13/42965.htm>

interests of the dominant class, let alone resolve interclass conflicts.”<sup>85</sup> So, the import substitution industrialization strategy was no longer applicable on behalf of the interests of the dominant class and its abandonment was compulsory. For that reason, the transition in the accumulation strategy was supported by the leading private conglomerates, whose individual members were called the “Istanbul Bourgeoisie.” Of the Istanbul bourgeoisie, the most well-known were Koç and Sabancı.<sup>86</sup> They were in favour of the rise of neo-liberalism and benefited from this process. To achieve the reconstruction of the economy and state, they collaborated with the state and approved of its authoritarian practices.<sup>87</sup>

The collaboration started in 1980 with the 24<sup>th</sup> January Decisions, before the military intervention. This stabilization program, which targeted the transition from the import substitution development strategy, which entailed state ownership and was planning-oriented to the export-orientation led by private capital in a liberalized market was proposed by Turgut Özal, who had special connections with the World Bank and was well known by the national capitalist groups because of his experience as manager of Sabancı Holding. He became the leading figure from this date in the implementation of new economic policies.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, his policies were seen as a doctrine called Özalizm, identical to Thatcherism.

The Decisions were based on the liberalization of foreign exchange, trade liberalization, and strict control over wages, reduction of public investments and social expenditures and privatization. By putting into these programs into practice, it was targeted to increase the exports of the country, reduce the state intervention into

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<sup>85</sup> Tünay, “Turkish New Right”, 19.

<sup>86</sup> Sedat Aybar, Costas Lapavistas, “The Recent Turkish Crisis: Another Step towards Free Market Authoritarianism”, *Historical Materialism*, no.8, (2001).

<sup>87</sup> Sungur Savran, “20. Yüzyılın Politik Mirası” in *Sürekli Kriz Politikaları*, N. Balkan and S. Savran (eds) (İstanbul: Metis Yayıncılık, 2004), 29-31.

<sup>88</sup> Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-1985* (İstanbul: Gerçek Yayınevi, 1998), 121.

the economy and integrate the country to the world economy.<sup>89</sup> In addition to the support of the domestic capital and the military, the program was perceived as a phase for acquiring financial aid from foreign creditors. It was adopted from the standard stabilization program imposed by the IMF to the less developed countries in the crisis and the structural adjustment program of the World Bank.<sup>90</sup> For example, 59 countries received those credits from the World Bank and the IMF and had to re-arrange their economic policies according to the principles of these two institutions in 1980-88.<sup>91</sup> In this context, Turkey was able to obtain foreign aid after the implementations of the decisions.

The government lacked the means to implement this program systematically and continuously as opposed to labour in accordance with the interest of capital groups. For that reason, the 12 September military intervention facilitated this process and removed these obstacles. According to the program, the country was not able to export because wages remained very high. Wages had to be disciplined. In that sense, the military regime achieved the implementation of economic policies by regulating the labour force market.<sup>92</sup> It “cleaned” the political arena for “new” actors by closing the parties that had existed before 1980.<sup>93</sup> The leaders of these parties were arrested. To achieve the aim of neutralizing dissident movements, as well as many democratic organizations, the activities of DISK (The Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Workers) and many trade unions were stopped by the National Security Council, their leaders arrested and the rights of collective bargaining and right to strike were suspended.

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<sup>89</sup> Özkazanç, “Türkiye’de Yeni Sağ”, 1220.

<sup>90</sup> Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, 122.

<sup>91</sup> Fikret Şenses, “Kriz, dış yardım ve Neo-liberal Politikalar”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, v. 77 (1998), 29.

<sup>92</sup> Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, 121-122.

<sup>93</sup> Özkazanç, “Türkiye’de Yeni Sağ”, 1220.

The attacks on trade unionism during the 1980s were systematic and step-by-step in Turkey as they were in England. The sanctions on trade unionism were materialized by legal amendments. Moreover, the objective of restrictions on trade unionism was to depoliticize them and to separate politics and economics by focusing on the economic sphere. The aim was to remove any potential threat to the work of a spontaneous free market. In 1982, the new constitution re-arranged the labour power market and fixed the anti-labour regulations permanently.<sup>94</sup> On the one hand, the increase of wages and the purchasing power of the working class were restricted; on the other hand, any opposition was prevented by legal amendments such as *Trade Unions Laws* (Sendikalar Kanunu) enacted in 1983.<sup>95</sup> This authoritarian constitution replaced the previous one presented as more democratic led to the stabilization of political conditions through silencing the majority. In such a situation, the Motherland Party (MP), led by Turgut Özal, was elected in the November 1983 general election and attempted to establish its own hegemonic project which would be more inclusive by articulating four different ideologies within its discourse: liberalism, Pan-Turkist extreme right-wing elements, Islamic fundamentalism and social democracy. This new project claimed to represent the interests of all groups except the revolutionary left.

Özal declared that the “transition period” in which he applied his economy policies would provide the renovation of the Turkish economy and a return to democracy. What he demanded from society was patient, self-sacrifice, stability and consistency and the suspension of any political claims, as the aspect of his

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<sup>94</sup> Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi*, 124.

<sup>95</sup> For more information about the legal amendments see M. Sehmus Güzel, “1980 Sonrasında İşçi Haklarında Gerilemeler”, *11.tez*, No. 5 (1987).

economism.<sup>96</sup> This aspect proposed that in order to get over the crisis, economic policies should be left to their natural flows without interruption by any political demands such as income distribution and so forth. In other words, what was required for economic growth was the proper implementation of technical economic laws, which necessarily brought inequalities and the abandonment of welfare considerations. In doing so, although some interests groups suffered in the present, it would be for the good of all community in the future. However, this technical attitude also created new concepts such as *ortadirek* (a big of group of the population from the low and middle classes) rendered to purge the class character of society and new enemies to struggle for all groups within society such as “inflation.” Through the policies of “war against high inflation” the government attempted to gain the support of the *ortadirek* and construct a kind of consensus in the public.<sup>97</sup> The main target, called “degenerated populism” was to create a group of people who lacked of any class consciousness and where devoted to the ideology of the MP by the means of applications of allotment of title deeds to the *gecekondus* (shanty houses), amnesty for illegal construction etc. In this way, while the new right government strictly refused any class based economic demand, it tried to satisfy the masses by reducing them to their characteristics of being villagers, *gecekondu*, poor and consumers through its populist strategies.

The foremost economic policies of this period were the liberalization of imports through the decrease of tariff rates and the liberalization of exchange regulations and subsidies for exports. One of the most important regulations was the change in the taxation system that decreased the tax burden on the private sector by rendering it exempt from part of the corporation tax. Moreover, with the acceptance of the value

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<sup>96</sup> Tünay, “Turkish New Right”, 20-21.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

added tax income in 1985, the tax burden was transferred to wage earners and consumers.<sup>98</sup>

Another strategy of the Özal government was its campaign in favour of privatization as a reflection of its general program based on the neo-liberal stabilization measures aiming to reduce the size of the public sector, the encouragement of the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals that claimed to lead to the economic growth and the withdrawal of the state from commerce and industry.<sup>99</sup> It was claimed that the aim of privatization of the SEEs (State Economic Enterprises) was to reduce the financial and administrative burden on the government, increase the efficiency of public services and provide wider-share ownership by the public.<sup>100</sup> These claims were proposed to legitimate privatization in the eyes of the public; by hindering the deliberate policies of the neo-liberal government which had made SEEs inefficient. However, whether these claims were approved or not, the privatization was a means of a huge project which aimed to spread the logic of private property to society. In the rhetoric, the management of the SEEs would be transferred to the people through revenue-sharing certificates, as indicated in Özal's speech: “

In the model we adopt, the worker is the owner of the company; he also shares in the profits and has a say in its management... Thus, the company would operate more efficiently, and both the enterprise and the employees would benefit from it... Another disadvantage of this practice is that it would spread the ownership of capital to wide segments of society, and in the process would enhance general welfare<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Korkut Boratav, “İktisat Politikaları: 1980-1994” in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, v.15 (Istanbul:İletişim), 681.

<sup>99</sup> Selim İlkin, “Privatization of the State Economic Enterprises” in *Politics in the Third Turkish Republic*, M. Heper (ed) (Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, 1994), 79.

<sup>100</sup> Cevat Karataş, “Privatization in Turkey: Implementation, Politics of Privatization and Performance Results”, *Journal of International Development*, 13 (2001), 95.

<sup>101</sup> İlkin, “Privatization”, 80, quoted from “Başbakan Turgut Özal'ın Konuşma, Mesaj, Beyanat ve Mülakatları” Anavatan Partisi (1984), 736-773.

As a result of this widening, he claimed, the democracy in the country would be strengthened.<sup>102</sup> Here, the idea of democracy was proposed as identical to that of economic democracy; having the opportunity to be rich in a competitive situation. But, this populist strategy of the government which claimed to be representing equal opportunities to the people to improve their conditions was a way to legitimate its privatization practices and articulate different segments of the society to its ideology.

After the legal amendments in 1988, many SEEs<sup>103</sup>, such as Teletaş which was highly profitable; and so, more attractive for people,<sup>104</sup> in the communication, transportation, cement, petrol, iron steel and food sectors (Teletaş, Petrol Ofisi, Turkish Airlines, USAS, Erdemir, Gima, and so on) were totally or partially delegated to the private sector within the period.<sup>105</sup> According to the executives of the privatization of the SEEs, these state owned institutions had huge bureaucracies that prevented them from being efficient and which led to the disruption of the competitiveness of the naturally evolving market. However, what was hidden in this discourse was that the “inefficiency” of the enterprises was the output of the main objective of neo-liberalism as the “rolling back of the state” from the leading and most profitable sectors. As a consequence of this aim, the SEEs were deliberately and systematically made inefficient by decreasing the number of qualified personnel and the investments to updating technologies, which eventually rendered them

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>103</sup> More about the privatization practices see also Z. Öniş, “Evolution of Privatization in Turkey: The Institutional Context of Public Enterprise Reform”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23 (1991), 163-176; C. Karataş, “Privatization and Regulation in Turkey: An Assessment”, *Journal of International Development*, No: 4(6) (1992), 583-605.

<sup>104</sup> İlkin, “Privatization”, 84.

<sup>105</sup> Karataş, “Privatization in Turkey”, 95-96.



ineffective.<sup>106</sup> In other words, privatization was one aspect of the de-industrialization policies of the new right governments that appeared after 1980s.

In its populist discourse, the government claimed to create a national consensus among the different groups of the society by proposing that there was no alternative for all. For that reason, what had to be done was to delay the short-term interests of the disadvantaged groups and wait for the benefits in the long term. In other words, the new right government divided society into two “nations” in its hegemonic project. The first “nation” included the winners and the rich. The second “nation” was composed of laborers, government employees, unemployed, and pensioners etc. that were portrayed as a burden on the shoulders of the state. In this project, the interests of the latter were neutralized. However, the attempt of the government to construct its hegemony over all spheres and segments of the society failed towards the end of the 1980s for two reasons. From an economic perspective, there was no real increase in exports which was supposed to bring benefits to the first nation. Since the policies of Özal benefited only a limited number of enterprises, he lost the support of certain segments of the dominant class. Additionally, the government was not able to control inflation, which led to the loss of support from fixed income groups and the *ortadirek*. From political perspective, the government was unable to divide the working class according to levels of skill and productivity. Thus, the second nation grew which made the neutralization of their interests difficult. Also, the government was unable to get the support of the social democrats, some sections of the liberals and Islamic fundamentalists, which were anticipated to be harmonious in its expansive hegemony project. Consequently, the Özal government failed to unite large parts of the dominant class because the export promotion model did not

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<sup>106</sup> K. Boratav et al., “Kamu İşletmeleri ve Özelleştirme Deneyimi: Sorunlar ve Politika Seçenekleri”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, No.77 (1998), 106-108.

serve all of the dominant class or neutralize the interests of the huge subordinate classes.<sup>107</sup>

With the convertibility of Turkish Lira in 1989, the national economy was opened to the international economy. After that time, the financial capitalism fully announced its independency. Not surprisingly, the financial liberalization provoked some changes in the consumption habits and daily lives of the people. More concretely, the appeal of personal credit, car loans and consumer credit increased during the 1990s. This “consumer boom” was a product of populist strategies that targeted a new social base composed of “the *informales* and the middle classes in a context of weakened representative institutions, socio-economic stress and a minimal political the role of citizens.”<sup>108</sup> In other words, people were reduced to their economic activities and detached from their political demands. In this way, it was imposed that happiness for people could only be obtained by consuming from the market and competing for the opportunities that the “seductive power of the market”<sup>109</sup> offered. Thus, financial liberalization helped to create a base for the continuity of the neo-liberal policies and marketisation of society. It serves a great deal of the commodification of the social areas that previously had been free and constituted the reproduction of the society, like education, health and other public good or public services. Gradually, society turned into Polanyi’s “market society” at the end of this process. ““That the money is made available to almost whoever

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<sup>107</sup> Tünay, “Turkish New Right”, 24-26.

<sup>108</sup> Ü. Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Eriş Yeldan, “Politics, Society and Financial Liberalization Turkey in the 1990s”, *Development and Change*, v.31 (2000), 502-503.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

wants” eased this commodification process. This illusion of “everything is accessible in the market” has developed legitimacy for the change.”<sup>110</sup>

The transformation of the country in the post-1980s was not based merely on the changes of economic policies; rather, it was an overall project targeted at the transformation of the whole society in all spheres of life. Hereafter, the model of society of the previous period based on class contradictions/struggles was refused, instead, society was figured as consisting of individuals dreaming of better lives: being rich, disengaged from their class positions and united around the national consensus. What was first done to employ undemocratic mechanisms and practices in order to prevent any counter movement fed from class-based politics. It was passed down from a period when the ideological struggles between left and right was intense and the leftist ideals were prevalent to one in which these ideas were pasified and their advocates of them were exposed to major prohibitions and coercions with the military coup. Also, the neo-liberal project claimed to have a liberating potential in its essence in the sense of being above classes, politics and ideologies. In other words, it promised people “freedom” and to save them from the “anarchic” situation only if they abandoned their struggles for their political demands. Gürbilek identifies this period as the compromise of two different cultural strategies. The oppressive practices and forbidding discourse of the state were overlapped with the liberating civil discourse promoting the new identity politics and consumption patterns. In such situation that state provided “security” for people, the new political project promised to make politics over their identities based on ethnic, religion, and gender and encouraged to display themselves in the public sphere. However, the promotion of the new identity politics was different from

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<sup>110</sup> Duygu Türk and Yiğit Karahanoğulları, “Finance Capital and Hegemonic Attempts in the post-1980 period in Turkey”, *unpublished paper*, Ankara University, (2005).

ideological and class politics; since the identity movements were detached from their radical potentials. These movements thus were unable to represent any political demands in the public sphere.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, the neo-liberal project presented itself as emancipating individuals from the repressive welfare state regulations that limited the economic activities of individuals within the market.

“Being rich” was presented as an ideal and reachable only if people were hard-working and ambitious. If the poor wanted to be rich like those who already were, they could not wait for everything from the state; instead, they had to free themselves from their “victimized” feelings, work ambitiously, integrate into the new values of the system and as the expression goes in Turkish “turn the corner.” People from different classes articulated to the hegemony of Özalizm were invited to take their shares of the “country of opportunities.”<sup>112</sup> To acquire bigger shares, individuals had to compete with each other to realize their interests and win the game. Societal concerns were out of fashion. The key concepts of competition, success, selfishness, egoism and depoliticization, were pursued in this period by the majority of the people. However, while some achieved success, the real incomes of the lower classes decreased. Poverty was deepened. The lower classes started to lose their trust in the future. To feel secure, they spent their wages on the durable consumer goods which were perceived as having status symbols and investment value. According to the research conducted in 1991, the percentage of 97.1% people living in the gecekondu of Şişli had television sets, 97.1% had refrigerators, and 73.8% had washing machines.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Nurdan Gürbilek, *Vitrinde Yaşamak: 1980'lerin Kültürel İklimi* (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2001).

<sup>112</sup> Özkazanç, “Türkiye’de Yeni Sağ”, 1222.

<sup>113</sup> Hayri Kozanoğlu, *Yuppieler, Prenslar ve Bizim Kuşak* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993), 169.

The glorification of consumption was a means of the populist discourse of the government as well as the requirement of the new economic policies. With the “open door” economic policy and liberalization of imports, many consumption goods which hitherto had not been obtainable within the market became accessible for especially the upper and middle classes. The abundance of goods gave rise to the belief that they could be obtainable easily by all people. Thus, this opinion fed the dreams of being rich of economically disadvantaged people. But also, elitists acquired a new legitimate way to distinguishing themselves from others through over-consumption. Consumption was promoted as the main dynamic for the self definition of people in society.

Although imported consumption goods were declared to be accessible to all in the rhetoric, they became only symbols of the desire of lower classes for Western lifestyles. Moreover, people working in service sector started to take on the lifestyles of their fellows in Western countries, promoted through the media, as models. It was proof of the success of the neo-liberal project which aimed at creating consumption society; on the one hand, there were people who dreamed of to consuming but could not or imitated it; on the other hand, the more people consumed the more elitist they became. These were complementary to each other. An example from media confirms the endeavors of people from the media to create a society that resembled Western ones:

Nowadays ANAP adopts a philosophy of being a goal getter instead of defending and adequate ideology. In that case it appears that rather than an ideology they choose to bring some services. They gave more importance to the concept of individuality. It offers a consumer society. Someday the cafes in Istanbul will be just like those of Paris. Istanbulites will choose their own cafes and squares, artists will come from all around the world, Istanbul will

add modernity to her history and she will produce it. Istanbulites will be just like Parisians and they will realize that they belong to different world.<sup>114</sup>

The support of the media in promoting consumption stiffened the courage of the upper classes to make their lifestyles that were distinguished by consumption visible. After the 1980s, as a consequence of the elimination of the “uncertainty” about their class positions, the figures of the wealthy class started to become more visible in the public sphere. They were not longer “ashamed” of their wealth. So, they did not hesitate to exhibit their wealth concretized in their socio-cultural practices. The quotation below illustrates the change in the visibility of the upper class:

To become rich, the best example was the businessmen. In the 1970s, when there were left-right conflicts, the businessmen avoided being seen and exhibiting their wealth publicly. However after 1980s a new period began, marked by the well known declaration of the director of TISK Halit Narin saying, “It is our time to laugh.” Actually those businessmen did not start to laugh; moreover they showed a big hesitation to exhibit themselves to the public also. While in the days of the resistance and strikes of the 70s, the businessmen were trying to escape from any public show, after the coup-d’etat of 12 September they began to show their distilled tastes about life and especially, like in the case of Cem Boyner, they were very reluctant to tell the journalists the stories of hunting adventures at their offices.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> “Bugün ANAP bir ideolojinin savunması yerine “işbitiricilik” sloganını yerleştiriyor...Burada ideoloji yerine hizmet götürme meselesi ortaya çıkıyor. Bir ölçüde bireysel değerlere önem veriyor..Tüketim toplumunu sunuyor..Tüketerek farklılaşan insanları gündeme getiriyor..Günün birinde İstanbul’daki kahveler Paris’deki gibi olacak. İstanbullular kendi kahvelerini ve meydanlarını seçecek, dünyanın başka yerlerinden sanatçılar İstanbul’a gelecek, İstanbul tarihinin üstüne modernliği katacak ve üretecek. İstanbul’lular, Paris’liler gibi olacak ve farklı dünyaların insanı olmanın farkına varacak.”, Rıfat N.Bali , *Tarz-ı Hayattan Life Style’a: Yeni Seçkinler, Yeni Mekanlar, Yeni Yaşamlar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004),32 quoted from Canan Barlas, Güneş, 15.07. 1987.

<sup>115</sup>“Zengin olabilmek için alınacak en iyi örnek başarılı işadamlarıydı. Sağ-sol çatışmalarının egemen olduğu 1970’li yıllarda kamuoyunda görünmemek, servetlerini ve özel yaşamlarını sergilememek için azami gayret gösteren işadamları, 1980 sonrasında TİSK Başkanı sanayici Halit Narin’in tarihe mal olan “şimdi gülme sırası bize geldi” sözleriyle sadece şen şakrak kahkahalar atmakla yetinmeyecek, 1980 öncesindeki kayıplarını telafi edercesine kamuoyunda azami derecede görünmek için de ellerinden geleni yapacaklardı. Yetmişli yılların grevli ve direnişli günlerinde kendilerinden söz ettirmemeye azami dikkat sarf eden işadamları, 12 Eylül askeri darbesinden sonra süzülmiş zevklerini teşhir etmekte, Cem Boyner örneğinde olduğu gibi, makam odalarında gazetecilere avcılık serüvenlerini anlatmakta mahzur görmüyorlardı.”, Rıfat N. Bali, *Tarz-ı Hayattan Life Style’a:Yeni Seçkinler, Yeni Mekanlar, Yeni Yaşamlar*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları,2004).p. 35.

In other words, the abundance of consumption goods by liberalizing imports, the over-consumption of elitists, their appearance with their distinguished lifestyles in the public hold the answers to the question of why the wealthy class increased its cultural investments after the 1980s. However, in my opinion all these should be evaluated in the context of the global transformation; cultural turn after 1980s.

### The Cultural Turn in of the 1980s

The grounds of the growth of the importance of culture are embedded in the economic and socio-cultural practices of neo-liberalism and intensified globalization. I claim that four important motives led to the rise of art and culture in the urban economy within this development. The first motive was the de-industrialization practices of neo-liberalism which contributed to the decline of industrial cities. The second was the decrease of working class capacity and strengthening of the service class as related to the former. Culture has played an important role in meeting the demands of the newly emerging service class. As a third motive, with the sharpening of class differences and deepening of poverty in this period, culture has been put forward as a unifying power to bridge income segmentation. Lastly, following the withdrawal of the state from many social spheres, culture has become seemingly more inclusive and thus, it has emerged as a new area for hegemonic struggle.

To start with, the neo-liberal economic policies give the priority to the financial sector, rather than production, which was the primary concern of the import substitution period from 1960-1980. While the main pillar of economic development

was the traditional industrial production in factories, the neo-liberal policies directed investments to the non-industrial sectors, which led to the fall of the ratio of the traditional industrial production in the total production, as a consequence of the changed priorities. Urry and Lash define this new phase of capitalist development as "disorganized capitalism." It is "one in which the 'fixed, fast-frozen relations' of organized capitalist relations have been swept away...All that is solid about organized capitalism, class, industry, cities, collectivity, nation-state, even the word, melts into air."<sup>116</sup> They claim that through the changes in time and space, economy and culture, the capitalist societies are no more "organized." That is to say, the main features of organized capitalism such as the concentration and centralization of industrial, banking and commercial capital, the increased interconnection of banks and industry, the development of manufacturing industry around growing urban centers and the growth of collective organizations in the labour markets have gone into transformation.

In the organized capitalism, the regional or national economies were the dominant structure and the nation states which were more industrialized dominated the less and non-industrialized ones. The latter declined in disorganized capitalism. Nation states partially lost their features of being the main economic units and regulative of the market. With the increase of the scale of industrial, banking and commercial enterprises, the capital became de-concentrated in the world. Obstacles

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<sup>116</sup> John Urry and Scott Lash, *The End of Organized Capitalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 312-313.



such as state regulations in international economy which prevented the further increase of the scale of the movement of enterprises removed. The development of the world economy became the primary concern. With the de-concentration of capital, the economies were de-industrialized and finance and industry separated.<sup>117</sup>

The statistics of Turkey's fixed investment through the sectors prove the decline of the traditional manufacturing industry:

There is a spontaneous division of labor when we look to the percentage of distribution of the fixed capital investments between public and private sectors in the post-1980: while the private investments are directed towards housing sector, the public investments are intensified on energy and transporting sectors...The share of the fixed investments for manufacturing industrialization remained 30% between 1983-87, but the housing investments increased %35. With the financial liberalization (1989-93), the share of the manufacturing industry in the private investments moved backward towards 24%. While the share of the manufacturing industry of the public sector was 11,7% between 1989-1993, it was only 4,7% between the years of 1989-93.<sup>118</sup>

As indicated above, the objective of industrialization progressively lost its domination over other types. Instead, especially with the financial liberalization, finance capital has fixed its supremacy. According to Zukin, at this moment, the role of culture gains importance. She first underlies that the importance of cultural production over manufacturing for the cities which were previously industrial has

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 1-16.

<sup>118</sup> “Sabit sermaye yatırımlarının 1980-sonrası dönemde kamu ve özel kesimler arasındaki dağılımına daha yakından bakıldığında kendiliğinden oluşan bir işbölümü karşımıza çıkmaktadır: özel yatırımlar giderek konut sektörüne yönelirken, kamu yatırımları ise daha çok enerji ve ulaşım sektörlerine yoğunlaşmıştır...İmalat sanayiine yönelen sabit sermaye yatırımlarının payı, ihracata yönelim yılları olan 1893-87 arasında %30 civarında kalmışken, konut yatırımlarının payı %35'e yükselmiştir. Finansal serbestleştirmeyle (1989-93) birlikte de özel yatırımlar içinde imalat sanayiinin payı daha da gerilemiş ve %24'e inmiştir... Kamu yatırımlarının imalat sanayiine giden payı 1983-87 arasında %11.7 iken, 1989-93 arasında sadece %4.7'dir. Bu eğilimler 1994 krizi sonrasında da devam etmiş ve özel imalat sanayi yatırımlarının toplam içindeki payı %25'e, kamu yatırımlarındaki payı ise %4.1'e değin gerilemiştir.”, Erinç Yeldan, *Küreselleşme Sürecinde Türkiye Ekonomisi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 47-48.

increased since the rise of financial economy instead of manufacturing:

with the disappearance of local manufacturing industries and periodic crises in government and finance, culture is more and more the business of cities- the basis of their tourist attractions and their unique, competitive edge. The growth of cultural consumption (of art, food, fashion, music, tourism) and the industries that cater to it fuels the city's symbolic economy, its visible ability to produce both symbols and space.<sup>119</sup>

In other words, culture started to perform the role of representing the city, which had been carried out by the industrial production previously. With the decline of industry, cultural production began to determine and create the image of city. It fulfilled the absence of any concrete production representing the city after the decline of industry. It served as the symbolic economy <sup>120</sup>of the city with its production of symbols and space and its ability to attract profitable investment capitals to the city. The rise of the cities' symbolic economy is grounded in the economic decline of cities compared to suburban and non-urban spaces and the expansion of abstract financial speculation and the growth of cultural consumption and the marketing of identity politics starting from the 1970s and 1980s. <sup>121</sup> Anyway, as a consequence of the new economic regulations in which the wealth was obtained through speculative finance capital, culture that combined with entrepreneurial capital creates the city image and meets the requirements of the order in which the consumption was glorified rather than production. Kadir Topbaş, The

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<sup>119</sup> Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities*, (Cambridge, Mass.:Blackwell, 1996 reprinting c 1995).

<sup>120</sup> Symbolic economy is the togetherness of cultural symbol and entrepreneurial capital in Zukin.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

Mayor of Municipality of Istanbul, says that “Istanbul should leave its position of being industrial city with 38%, rather it should be the city in which more qualified labor exists and which approaches to the world with a different attitude...After that time, Istanbul should take the functions of being finance center, cultural center and congress center ...”<sup>122</sup> As seen, the rise of importance of culture is directly related to the debate on global city that will be discussed in the following.

As a second motive, Urry and Lash claim that the process of industrial decline and deconcentration and the spatial scattering of capital, production and social distribution has led to the significant decrease in the working class capacities with respect to its organizational and cultural resources as well as of its size. Moreover, as the importance of the industrial working class has been reduced, the service “class” has grown. It is composed of managers, professionals, educators, scientists, social workers and those whose organizational sources through the expansion of universities and professional associations and whose cultural resources through the higher education and expertise has increased. That is to say, as complementing to the de-industrialization of economies, the service sector developed as the main dynamic of this new economy.<sup>123</sup>

The development of the size of white collar employment was the outcome of the struggle and triumph of modern management. As a result of the growth of complex managerial hierarchies, there appeared a kind of third class between labour and capital after the Second World War: the service class. As a consequence of these developments, although they were realized in the European countries differently,

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<sup>122</sup> *Radikal*, 02.01.2007.

<sup>123</sup> Urry, *Organized Capitalism*, 1-16.

knowledge was attributed to the constituents of the service class instead of to those of the working class. The power of the latter was diminished since it was subordinated to the control and reproduction of the service class, the power of which was seen as legitimate because of its basis on “technical rationality”. The main criterion in such a society was to build one’s career on educational credentials.<sup>124</sup> The neo-liberal project targeted a group of the service class<sup>125</sup> called “young urban professionals” (yuppie) or “new professional strata” as a way of glorifying and promoting success, ambition and over consumption.

These strata of new professionals mostly found employment/emerged out of the sectors of/ in the marketing, foreign trade, advertising, media, insurance, finance and banking sectors, which became profitable after the 1980s. Moreover, they also assumed leading managerial positions at the most prominent family holding companies of Turkey that previously had been administrated by family members. In order to ensure international and national competitiveness holding owners re-organized their cooperations by employing managerial staff instead of family members.

From the world’s leading universities, the prominent characteristic of new professionals was their diplomas. The dream of them was to rise into a higher class and acquiring high status through their educations. This exposed their difference from people who were already rich thanks to their families’ wealth, in the sense of that the only way for them to realize their dream was to work passionately. Di Maggio calls the new professionals as “cultural manager capitalists” who were emerged from the managerial revolution. According to him, although they do not

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<sup>124</sup> Urry, *Organized Capitalism*, 161-195.

<sup>125</sup> Indeed the service class includes the working people in the restaurants as well as managerial staff. However, here I am indicating the latter.

have any family lineage, they are capitalist in the sense of having interests in the corporations' profits and their primary concern is the profit maximization of the corporations, as well as owners of them. In other words, while they are capitalist in a classical meaning, they use their corporations to raise their prestige in the society. They include their corporations to the cultural world in order to strengthen their dominant position in the corporation and social life. At that point, art which has been under the auspices of the ones with power and status functions as status symbols in the society.<sup>126</sup>

This passion of the new professionals, at the same time, was concretized in their desires of possessing and consuming all. They claimed to deserve best of everything because they worked so hard to possess it. Also, their over-consumption of expensive and elite goods enabled them to strengthen their positions in business life. Through it, they showed their generosity to spend money. Additionally, through consuming, they already lived the lifestyles of upper class of which they sought to be members in the future.<sup>127</sup>

The new professionals, who encouraged the values of individualism and competition, were opposite prototypes to the revolutionist youth who dominated the 1970s. They were the most concrete indicator of this turning point in the values of society. For that reason, the main target of the private cultural institutions was this managerial group who were favor of consuming cultural goods in addition to their participation to the board of trustees of museums or foundations. In other words, while they were increasing their status through their corporation involvement, they also constitute the consumption group of culture in the society.

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<sup>126</sup> Wu, *Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi*, 26-30.

<sup>127</sup> Hayri Kozanoğlu, *Yuppiler*, 167-168.

In general sense, although many young people lacked of the means to engage in conspicuous consumption, they still aspired to it. The lifestyles of new professionals was an expression of the dreams of wider segments of the population. For that reason, they had the power to influence a large part of society in spite of their limited numbers.<sup>128</sup> In other words, the new lifestyle based on the consumption promised status for both the yuppies and their imitators. In the cultural sphere, as seen in the Picasso exhibition, the middle and low-middle people were articulated to their lifestyles concretized their eagerness to visit the exhibition and their good feelings about contemplating the artistic objects. As we discussed before, this is not just an ideal of a yuppie lifestyle but actually people investing in/buying into ideals that are opposed to their class interests.

Third, culture has been attributed great importance along with the growing of the income gap between the poor and rich on account of the neo-liberal economic policies turned against the former. While the wages taking the 35.4% of total income in 1978, this percentage fell to 26.9 in 1987. With the income polarization and tension between classes, the new riches separated and distinguished themselves from the ones who were not like them. By rejecting any social compromise with the poor and marginalizing them, they eliminated any possibility to confront the “others” in their daily life with their fortified enclaves.<sup>129</sup> Not only income polarization, but also the increase in social segregation over identities necessitated a kind of unifying power, deemed as above the class and identity politics, to create a collective consensus in society. Culture was portrayed as naturally having supreme position to tame the differences embedded in society. In other words, cultural turn is anticipated

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<sup>128</sup> Hayri Kozanoğlu “80’lerden 90’lara Yuppiler”, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, v.13 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1996), 740-741.

<sup>129</sup> Oğuz Işık and Melih Pınarcıoğlu, *Nöbetleşe Yoksulluk: Gecekondulaşma ve Kent Yoksulları: Sultanbeyli* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 136-148.

to provide a consensus base simultaneously with the rise of conflicts in the society:

yet the cultural power to create an image, to frame a vision, of the city has become more important as publics have become more mobile and diverse, and traditional institutions-both social classes and political parties- have become less relevant mechanisms of expressing identity. Those who create images stamp a collective identity.<sup>130</sup>

That is to say, as one of the main objectives of neo-liberalism, the detachment of the public sphere from political demands and the weakening of political representative mechanisms led to the rise of culture as a new channel for expression. But for this time, culture would compromise and tame these different interests in a “peaceful” way ascribed to itself. Here, culture is purified and glorified in a way of putting a distance, with class-based politics coded as a source of anarchy in the society by neo-liberalism. A speech by Ismail Cem during the “Cultural Policies of Turkey” symposium organized by the Cultural Initiative takes this point:

There are many unifying features of culture. Nowadays the function of culture cover the diminution of the conflicts between human being that by nature are inclined to be unlike and opposed to each other. In the twenty-one century we have to be aware that culture does not create conflicts and divide people but it constructs human beings essence and discovers the beauty in the world. Therefore noticing the fact that this century offers us the most powerful dynamics and the extremist beauties, we have to prepare Turkey for a future where it will give progressive and beneficial contributions not only to its own society but also to humankind.<sup>131</sup>

In other words, the development is measured by to what extent culture is

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<sup>130</sup> Zukin, *Cities*, 2-3.

<sup>131</sup>“ Kültürün birleştirici özellikleri mevcut ve günümüzde insanların farklılaşmaya hatta zaman zaman karşılaşmaya, kendi içinde mücadeleye dönük, çatışmaya dönük özelliklerinin bir bakıma azaltılabileceği ve büyük boyutlarda, büyük hedeflerde, büyük eylemlerde ortak paydalara kavuşabilmesi öncelikle kültürün, kültür alanlarının işlevi...21. yüzyılın öncelikle kültürde insanları bölmeyen, insanları çatıştırmayan ama insanı insan yapan, güzellikleri ortaya çıkaran kültürde, önümüzdeki yüzyılın en güçlü dinamiklerinin yattığını en büyük güzelliklerin kaynaklandığını bilerek Türkiye’imizi geleceğe, bu gelecekte hem kendi toplumuna ve hem insanlığa daha ileri, daha güzel katkılara hazırlamak durumundayız”, *Türkiye’de Kültür Politikaları*, Kültür Girişimi (İstanbul: IKSÜ, 1998), 17.

articulated to the policy. This kind of approach is very different from the previous understanding of development based on the economic growth of the country and relatively betterment of low classes.

Last, the transformation to neo-liberal policies indicated fundamental changes in the state and society relations. In this process, the state became de-functionized and pacified. More concretely, it lost its arbiter role in society that had been provided previously the continuity of consensus between different interest groups. The withdrawal of the state from so many spheres led to the emergence of new positions were then filled by new actors.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, as not being detached from the market rules, culture also turned in to a competitive area for making profit. In this sense, the culture, which had been state and nation-focused in the past became more inclusive, fragmented and inclusive of the different practices of power groups. As one of these groups, the bourgeoisie wanted to take the leading role in this sphere in order to reconstruct its hegemony which had fallen with the economic crisis at the end of the 1970s. To achieve this end, the corporations that belonged to the leading bourgeoisie families especially became more involved in the arts and culture through their cultural institutions and sponsorships. It was a reasonable attempt for the bourgeoisie, who were sought to reconstruct their hegemony of reconstruction of its hegemony to the extent that cultural and economic capital became interchangeable.

The analysis of Bourdieu about the forms of capital gives us an account how the bourgeoisie strengthened its power in the cultural sphere after the 1980s. He goes beyond the unique definition of capital in economic terms and claims that capital exists in such diverse forms as:

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<sup>132</sup> Melih Pınarcıoğlu and Oğuz Işık, “1980 Sonrası Kent Yoksulları Arasında Güce Dayalı Ağ İlişkileri: Sultanbeyli Örneği”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, No.89 (2001), 34-35.



*economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility.<sup>133</sup>

More concretely, cultural capital is “a form of knowledge, an internalized code or a cognitive acquisition which equips the social agent with empathy towards, appreciation for or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artifacts.”<sup>134</sup> It exists in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body and in the form of cultural goods such as paintings, books and in the form of educational qualifications. It is not acquired inherently as claimed by the defenders of social hierarchy embedded in the society; rather through long process of education in family, school and facilitates of the affiliated social class. In any case, cultural capital grants social status and prestige to the owners. Bourdieu claims that economic capital serves as a basis of the other types of capital, although they can not be reduced to it. Moreover, they become more powerful to what extent they veil their relations with economic capital.<sup>135</sup>

At this point, the case of Phillip Morris is a good example. Philip Morris as the biggest tobacco corporation in the world has been sponsoring especially the visual arts in the USA since the 1960s. It is estimated that it contributed around 15 million dollars to art institutions in 1990. When the New York municipality started to work on a legislative proposal which aimed to outlaw smoking in the public places, the corporation used its privileged position to prevent the legislation of the law. It put

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<sup>133</sup> Pierre Bourdieu “Forms of Capital”, translated by Richard Nice, [http://www.viet-studies.org/Bourdieu\\_capital.htm](http://www.viet-studies.org/Bourdieu_capital.htm), downloaded on 02.12.2006.

<sup>134</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1993), 7.

<sup>135</sup> Bourdieu, “Forms of Capital”.

pressure on the art institutions to protest the law and declared that in the case of acceptance, Philip Morris would withdraw all its money from culture and art. According to Wu, although this law was legislated in spite of the threat of Morris, this case shows how cultural capital of the corporations can be transformed into political power in order to serve their economic interests.<sup>136</sup>

In Turkey, this kind of transformation can be seen in the example of the Sabancı Museum. The blockbuster exhibitions of the museum have increased the reputation of Sabancı Holding in the world market. The cultural activities of the museum and economic activities of the holding have been presented as the continuations of each other. This point justifies the last motivation for the increase in the importance of culture after the 1980s. With the dissolution of the state autonomy over culture, the practices of the prominent private corporations such as establishing their own museums, and exhibiting their private collections in these museums, raising cultural foundations, organizing festivals, biennales and founding their own cultural centers emerged or increased in numbers. By articulating themselves to the cultural sphere and displaying their cultural capital which was seemingly detached from economic capital, they enhanced their reputations, prestige and popularity. On the other hand, they consolidated their positions in the market by the re-transformation of cultural capital into economic capital. Moreover, they claimed that their involvement in the cultural sphere was for the good of all people. They articulated the rest of society to their interests. Consequently, they restructured their hegemony as a class by obtaining the consent of society.

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<sup>136</sup> Chin-tao Wu, *Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 216-243.

By taking departure from this point, I will analyze the involvement of bourgeoisie families like Sabancı and Koç and corporations to culture and arts firstly by summarizing how this process was realized in England and USA.

#### Bourgeoisie “Contributing” to Culture and Arts

The end of welfare state policies unsurprisingly led to a drop in public spending on art and culture with the neo-liberal turn. As a result of the spread of market logic to every sphere of society, culture and arts were transformed into the profit-making area as being delegated to private hands. It was first exercised in Britain and America under the Thatcher and Reagan new right governments. In these countries, corporate involvement into culture obviously increased. Although they had a long-established tradition in arts giving, its scope and context changed. “In the 1970s, while continuing in the generally passive role of being solicited for donations, businesses had begun to be active participants in the framing and shaping of the discourse of contemporary culture. What was new in the 1980s was that this active involvement became ubiquitous and comprehensive.”<sup>137</sup> As an example, corporate arts contributions in United States can be given. While the amount of contribution was \$161 million in 1977, it raised in 1984 to \$434 million, to \$740 in 1995 and to \$1200 in 2000.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, the involvement of corporations was not limited to sponsorships. They enhanced the production, dissemination and reception of contemporary art in the sense of making an art collections with their own curators, touring them in and out of country, including any art gallery on their premises and organizing contemporary art awards which made them cultural arbiters.<sup>139</sup> Together

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<sup>137</sup> Chin-tao Wu, “Embracing the Enterprise Culture: Art Institutions Since the 1980s”, *New Left Review*, no.230 (1998), 29.

<sup>138</sup> Volker Kirchberg, “Corporate Arts Sponsorship” in *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*, 144

<sup>139</sup> Wu, “Embracing The Enterprise Culture”, 29.

with the embracing of enterprise culture, the structures of public arts institutions started to change in Britain and America.

To be more concrete, an analysis of the change of the policies of two major public institutions, Arts Council of Great Britain and the National Endowment of the Arts in America will help us to understand the process of the privatization of culture in a better way. Both were established after the Second World War as a part of the social state policy. The founder of the Arts Council was the Council for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), which served to prevent the cultural impoverishment of the country by targeting high quality service for the more people. The Arts Council, founded in 1946 as a continuation of CEMA, organized locally and increased its budget. The motto of the Council was “Art for Everyone” and its collection was toured to especially places where no public collection existed. After 1979, the Thatcher government, which was principally against the accessibility of public service by all and in favour of spreading the enterprise culture, cut public budget subvention for art and initiated a campaign to encourage private sector art sponsorship. In the context of this campaign, the government implemented “The Business Sponsorship Incentive” project aimed at giving cash incentives to corporations that were willing for sponsorships. By using these incentives that were originally collected from taxpayers for art events, the corporations advertised their names through the public budget. Besides cash incentives, the corporations were supported by means of indirect incentives such as tax reductions.

With the finance law enacted in 1980, art contributions were made more attractive to individuals and corporations. This law enabled a decrease in the cost of endowment for the wealthy and a reduction of some amount of the endowment from the income. What was the most striking was that the Art Council was forced to

support the projects that promoted business involvement in the arts and collaborate with the business world. In order to include the Council in its hegemonic project, the Thatcher government followed a strategy of assigning its fellows to the head of the administrative board. While the Council worked for the promotion of sponsorship, sponsored by huge companies. These strategies became an example to the new right American governments. Reagan redefined the role of the state in art as gathering funds for art. Moreover, the Reagan government followed a tax reduction system similar to that of Britain to encourage the private sector contribution. On the other hand, the government introduced the budget cuts for the National Endowment of the Arts, established in 1965. It was not important whether it was successful or not but the ideological struggle of the government did not end. The collaboration with the business world was consolidated.<sup>140</sup>

It was already noted that Turkey went through a similar neo-liberal period after 1980 which mainly aimed at the marketization of society and the spread of privatization to all segments of society. In those years, new cultural institutions and events such as private galleries, cultural centers and art festivals appeared. Moreover, the state encouraged and contributed to this process, contrary to its anti-democratic policies.<sup>141</sup> Curator Erden Kosova reviews these developments as the part of an “image-cleansing campaign” aimed to veil the authoritarian nature of the post-coup government.<sup>142</sup> These new cultural practices presented as the result of the “free” and independent cultural field that had been dominated by the state before. Through these new institutions, it was claimed that the culture and art field had been ripped from the monopolistic, unifying and leveling state policies. This sphere has since embraced of

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<sup>140</sup> Wu, *Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi*.

<sup>141</sup> State policies will be elaborated in the forthcoming part.

<sup>142</sup> Banu Karaca, “Working for the Greater Good”: Istanbul’s Art World and the Making of a Metropolis” *unpublished paper*, presented in AAA conference in San Jose, 2006.

all the different and enriching cultural practices. This claim has not been outmoded in the years, since corporate art intervention began to increase; but what was striking for the 1980s is that whereas the human rights of many people were being violated systematically and the violence against them was being kept from the public, which be perceived as the other side of state domination which was seen as enemy by the dominant class in the cultural field, it openly started to expose its consumption habits and entered the “liberated” cultural field with its practices without any objection against human violations. At this moment, it is meaningful to quote the question from Gürbilek:

A Couple of years ago a friend asked a relevant question: “Is it possible to say that in the 80s festivals were used to suppress the screams coming out of prisons?” The person who asked the question replied it: “It would be wrong to say so, but it would wrong not to say it also...”<sup>143</sup>

However, the claim about the freedom of the cultural field has to be questioned since “it owes its existence to the market.”<sup>144</sup> One should take into account that the rise of cultural investments of many power groups also had political-ideological implications as well as the domination of the state in the cultural sphere. But in those years, the cultural institutions were far from questioning this point, as seen in the press bulletin prepared for 1<sup>st</sup> Istanbul Biennale in 1987:

We have to take a place in the international art world. It is obvious that this is related to the fact that the Turkish economy become international and effective in the international market. Recent improvements in the economic

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<sup>143</sup> “ Birkaç yıl önce, bir arkadaşım bir soru atmıştı ortaya:”80’lerde festivallerin, hapisneden yükselen çılgılığı bastırmaya yaradığı söylenebilir mi?” ... soruyu soran, kendi sorusunu kendisi cevapladı:”Bunu söylemek yanlış olur, ama söylememek de yanlış olur.”Nurdan Gürbilek, *Vitrinde Yaşamak:1980’lerin Kültürel İklimi*, 3rd edition (Istanbul:Metis Yayinlari,2001),14.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid. 21.

field and the progress in political relations indicate that art will become a very important media for advertisement and also an important tool to raise the respectability of Turkey in the very near future..<sup>145</sup>

It was not surprising that the Istanbul bourgeoisie that had approved the coup had a leading role in the increase of cultural practices and the togetherness of corporations and art in such a situation presented as free. They built first private museums and organized international art festivals were organized by them. While they were enhancing and diversifying their involvement, many corporations participated in this process in order to establish their own cultural centers, organizing events or sponsoring them. One of the reasons for this active involvement was the change in the nature and perception of wealth in the public.

The new wealthy that accumulated their wealth after 1980 differed from the previous ones in the source of their wealth. The wealthy had accumulated their wealth as a result of the production-based process. For that reason, their main source was industrial production which required planning and progressed stage by stage. They recognized the state as the main actor in the economy and developed organic relations with the state which was the source of their being. Moreover, they matured in such a social climate that over consumption was seen as shame and wealth was almost considered as sinful. This climate was based on a consensus which aimed a unity of the classes. Taken distance to any exclusionary practice led to their detachment from society, they did not have courage to show their wealth in public. However, the main difference of the post 1980 period was the emergence of a high salaried professional class who became the new leader in the adoption of global

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<sup>145</sup> “Uluslararası sanat olgusu içinde yerimizi almamız. Kuşkusuz, Türk ekonomisinin dışa açılması, uluslararası pazarda etkinliğini göstermesiyle ilişkilidir. Son yıllarda ekonomik alanda atılan adımlar, siyasal ilişkilerdeki yoğun gelişmeler, çok yakın bir gelecekte sanatı bu görüngünün içinde çok önemli bir tanıtım ve saygınlık öğesi olarak yerine oturtacaktır.” Beral Madra, *İki Yılda Bir Sanat: Bienal Yazıları 1987-2003* (İstanbul: Norgunk Yayıncılık, 2003), 15.

consumption behavior patterns and, with the withdrawal of the state, of new wealth accumulation forms that enabled many people to become upwardly mobile. But what was most striking was the change of the social climate in which the wealth matured. Hereafter, the consensus in society dissolved and with the widening gap between classes, the tension between them became dominant. This gap deepened with the glorification of over consumption and wealth. All of these rendered the emergence of exclusionary against those who were unable to adapt to these changes. Moreover, the profile of the rich was transformed. The newly rich refused any consensus with the rest of society and did not collaborate with them. Thus, they were not longer “ashamed” of their wealth. They gained the confidence to show their wealth in public.<sup>146</sup> As a consequence of the elimination of the “uncertainty” about their class positions, the wealthy class became more visible in the public sphere. Their values were not questioned as in previous years. For that reason, questioning the practices of these bourgeoisie families was considered out-moded and unnecessary.<sup>147</sup> Buğra summarizes this change in the attitude of the families as well:

The economic system of Turkey has become an order dominated by the private sector. That’s not the point about more or less state intervention, but the marginalization of radical projects aiming to change the order and legitimization of private right of property and the profit of the entrepreneurship. During this process, the important uncertainty that caused the businessmen to be silent and feel insecure was eliminated, they obtained confidence in themselves and their voices started to be sound loudly on every subject, maybe more than necessary.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Oğuz Işık and Melih Pınarcıoğlu, *Nöbetleşe Yoksulluk: Gecekondulaşma ve Kent Yoksulları: Sultanbeyli* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 136-142.

<sup>147</sup> T.Bora, N.Erdoğan, “ ‘Zengin’ bir araştırma gündemi, ‘yoksul’ bir literatür”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.104 (2005), p.9

□ “Bur süreç içinde, herşeydenönce, “Türkiye’nin düzeni”, ekonominin işleyişine özel sektörün hakim olduğu ve olmaya devam edeceği bir düzen olarak belirginlik kazandı. Söz konusu olan, daha az veya çok devlet müdahalesi, daha az veya daha çok korumacılık değil, özel mülkiyet haklarının ve girişimci karlarının sağlam bir meşruiyet zeminine oturması, radikal düzen değiştirme projelerinin marjinalleşmesiydi. Bu süreç içinde, işadamlarını sessiz ve güvensiz kılan en önemli belirsizlik ortadan kalktı, onlar da hızla kendilerine güven kazandılar ve sesleri her konuda belki de



In such an atmosphere, they established their own foundations to organize the leading businessmen around definite missions. In this way, the businessmen aimed to struggle for their interests and, furthermore, they became more active in the political arena by voicing their opinions. In other words, they clearly targeted becoming involved in the politics of the country. This led to the presentation and perception of businessmen as an *authority* about the issues of the country. Their self-confidence and domination was reflected in the increase in the number of museums. Up to now, many families, through their museums, such as the Sadberk Hanım Museum, the Rahmi Koç Museum, the Istanbul Modern, the Pera Museum, the Sakıp Sabancı Museum and the Çengelhan Museum, have “publicized” their large private collections either in their old mansions or other historical buildings. Parallel to the histories of families, the family holdings were institutionalized in 1960s-70s and realized their growth after the 1980s in the proper sense to be able to transfer their profits to cultural investments. Karadere states that one of the reasons of the growth “is the improvement of Turkish economy. Now we have large corporations and institutions. They can have more profit. More importantly they have developed the social consciousness to transfer profit to social projects rather than spending the whole merely on more business”<sup>149</sup>

Indeed, the leading families started to invest in arts long before the 1980s; they began to collect art objects and support cultural activities beginning in the 1950s. What is striking is that although they started to get involved in culture from the 1950s, they were not associated with their cultural involvement in the eye of public.

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lüzumundan fazla çıkmaya başladı.”, Ayşe Buğra, “İşadamları ve Toplum” *Toplum ve Bilim*, no.104 (2005), p.14.

<sup>149</sup> (kültür yatırımlarının büyümesinin sebeplerden biri) Türkiye’nin ekonomisindeki güçlenme...Artık daha büyük kurumlarımız var ve... daha çok kar edebiliyorlar. Ve bu ettikleri karı sadece kendi ana işlerinde kullanmayıp bir takım toplumsal projelere aktarma bilincine ulaştılar...”, Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadere.

Rather, as mentioned above, they were legitimated and became visible in the public through their philanthropic activities. Before the 1980s, the involvement in the arts of the members of the bourgeoisie was perceived as the taste of individuals and did not have any public meaning as philanthropic activities. The individuals were not recognized in society for their collections.

In this context, I will go into the details of the whole process from the individual involvement in culture and the arts to the corporate one of the Koç and Sabancı families from the 1950s in order to highlight the increase in the importance of culture and the changes in the public meanings of culture. To achieve this aim, first their passion for collecting art objects will be discussed by examining their autobiographies. Next, their other investments and donations such as museums, cultural centers and supports will be examined.

Sadun Tanju mentions the passion of Hacı Ömer Sabancı for collecting antique objects and works of art. Hacı Ömer was so interested in collecting European antiques that he hired art consultants who followed the antiques market for him and he did not hesitate to pay well for these objects despite his reputation as a thrifty person.<sup>150</sup> His open-handedness with money as an art collector, which was paradoxical with his general characteristic as an industrialist, astonished many people: “Muammer Bey said: ‘That’s right, I do not understand what you do. You started to use your money for something else differently. What do you like in this statue?’ Hacı Ömer laughed as a child and said: ‘Beautiful, very beautiful Muammer Agha, what more do you expect?’”<sup>151</sup> The objects he purchased are exhibited in the permanent collection of the Sabancı Museum now. It means that these objects which

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<sup>150</sup> Sadun Tanju, *Hacı Ömer* (İstanbul:Apa Ofset, 1983), 175.

<sup>151</sup> “”Doğru, ben anlamıyorum senin işlerini” dedi Muammer Bey. “Sen artık parayı başka şeylere kullanmaya başladın. Nesi var bu heykelin yahu?” Hacı Ömer çocuklar gibi güldü. “Güzel, çok güzel Muammer ağa, başka nesi olsun?” dedi.”, Ibid., p.181.

were assumed to be so unprofitable or unworthy of such prices, have gained value thanks to their exhibition in the museum collection in the Atlı Köşk (Horse Mansion), which was the residence of the family for years.

In addition to the European works of art that Hacı Ömer collected, his son, Sakıp, collected Ottoman calligraphy and paintings and protected all of them in their mansion, which could be called a “museum-house.” As Tanju says, “hereafter, in Turkey, there will be new rich people, families getting richer and all of them will create their own paradises.”<sup>152</sup> Atlı Köşk with its valuable collections, was a private paradise for the Sabancı family. Later on, the collections inside the paradise were exhibited in museums abroad and last, they became the permanent collections of their own museum. Sakıp Sabancı described his involvement in the arts: “It is impossible to raise the human life only over the material basis. Spiritual columns, fine arts are the complementary elements that mature the life.”<sup>153</sup> In autobiographies, the art is generally put against the material world. But also, the businessmen are aware of the fact that involvement in art is required for their good image and their corporations, as Sabancı mentions:

I could not understand what he was saying (the owner of a bank in Germany) since I was not bank employee. He mentioned about the painting collections of their corporation, and the scholarships awarded by them. He woke me up. Now, if I talk to a European person, who started his journey a long time ago before us about, “I produce so ...cement so...cloth” the number might seem funny for him. But, this man got confused when he saw that I, as a businessman from Turkey, was also interested in our traditional art; calligraphy, paintings, philanthropy and art.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> “Türkiyede bundan sonra hep yeni zenginler, zenginleşen aileler olacaktı ve hepsi de kendine bir özel cennet yaratacaktı”, Ibid, p.185.

<sup>153</sup> “İnsan hayatını sadece maddi temeller üzerinde yükseltmeye imkan yoktur. Manevi sütunlar, güzel sanatlar; hayatı olgunlaştıran, yücelten, tamamlayan unsurlardır.”, Sakıp Sabancı, *İşte Hayatım* (İstanbul: Aksoy, 1985), 292.

<sup>154</sup> “ (Bankanın genel müdürü bankacılıkla ilgili birşeyler) Anlatsaydı dab en bankacı olmadığımın anlamazdım. Bana tablo koleksiyonlarının zenginliğinden, hangi meşhur ressamların tablolarına sahip olduklarından, verdikleri burslardan söz etti. Benim gözümü açtı. Şimdi, ben bizden yüzlerce yıl önce

Following that, Sabancı witnessed that the foreign corporations had their own museums, created their own collections, and supported cultural and artistic activities. He thought it was necessary to follow the same path for Sabancı Holding. For that reason, he supported Turkish painters by purchasing their paintings, constructed exhibition halls inside his schools and ordered sculptures from famous Turkish artists, and thus supporting artists.<sup>155</sup> Also, he used his support of cultural activities as a public relations strategy. For example, Sabancı sent a wreath of flowers to a theatre premier. After Vehbi Koç saw the flowers, he wrote in a letter: “whoever comes to the theatre was confronted by these flowers and was reading the message on it. It also became a propaganda model. If you were required to pay for newspaper articles about you, you could have spent money equal to the worth of the factory of Sabancı Holding. But, you all do them free-of-charge. Congratulations.”<sup>156</sup>

Sabancı Holding has augmented its investments and support in the cultural sphere with the increase of corporate involvement in culture and art. Following Sadberk Hanim Museum and Rahmi Koç Museum, Sabancı decided to publicize its own paradise as a museum. According to Tanju, Sakıp Sabancı had been dreaming of this museum from the beginning:

Sakıp turned into a museum watchman living in the treasury of culture and art by aggregating the charming artistic and industrial objects from Europe that his father had collected with the objects from our traditional culture. He loved every object on his walls, but he could not escape from

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yola çıkmış Avrupalı’ya, “Şu kadar çimento, bu kadar bez üretiliyor” desem rakamlar komik gelebilir. Ama o adam çok eski öz sanatımız hat sanatımızdan, resimlerden, hayır işindan, sanattan anladığımızı görünce, Türkiye’den gelmiş bir işadammın dab u konud a ilgisini görünce şaşırıldı.”, Sakıp Sabancı, *Bıraktığım Yerden Hayatım*, 9th edition (Istanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2004), 398.

<sup>155</sup> Sakıp Sabancı, *İşte Hayatım* pp.294-296.

<sup>156</sup> “Tiyatroya gelen herkes bu çiçeği görüyor ve üzerindeki yazıyı okuyordu. Bu da bir propaganda modeli olmuş. Sizin hakkınızda gazetelerde çıkan yazılara para vermek gerekseydi, herhalde Sabancı Holding’in fabrikalarından birisinin değeri kadar harcanmış olurdu. Bunların hepsini bedava yaptırmanız. Tebrik ederim.”, *Ibid.*, p.343.

the feeling that none of them belonged to him. These valuable things could not be used for beautifying and decorating a small and private world of people. Art would actualize its real objective when it aimed at the benefit of society as any work. ...maybe this house would be turned to in a museum in the future.<sup>157</sup>

In the following years, he decided to convert the mansion into a museum. The Sakıp Sabancı Museum was established in 2002 by the Sabancı family in the residence in which they had lived between 1969 and 1999, which had been leased to Sabancı University in 1998 for a period of 49 years together with its collection: paintings, porcelains, sculptures and Ottoman calligraphy.<sup>158</sup> The museum web site explains that “the Calligraphy Section consists of 507 manuscripts dating from the 15th to the 20th centuries as well as writing tools and instruments used by calligraphers. The painting collections consist of nearly 352 paintings reflecting the development of Turkish painting; they date from the 19th to 20th centuries.”<sup>159</sup> The quality of the collection is criticized by Artun as an arbitrary assembly and “a reminder of the repertoire of the famous auctioneer who advised the family and supplied many of the artifacts than any articulate conception signifying a university.”<sup>160</sup> In the website of the museums and the related books, it is not possible to see any declaration of the mission or objectives of the museum. The only emphasis is the educative function of the museum as a part of the university. It is said that the museum has no written mission but that it can be perceived as a fine

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<sup>157</sup> “Sakıp, babasının topladığı 19’uncu yüzyıl Avrupa sanatı ve sanayiinin gözcü güzellikteki eşyası yanına, bizim öz kültürümüzle yarattığımız sanat güzelliklerini de toplayıp biraraya koyarak, kültürün ve sanatın ortak hazineleri içinde yaşayan bir müze bekişisine dönmüştü. Satın alıp evinin duvarlarına astığı herşeyi seviyor, fakat yine de bütün bunlar onun değilmiş gibi bir garip duyguyu içinden söküp atamıyordu. Bunlar onun değildi. Böyle değerler kişilerin küçük ve özel dünyalarını süslemek, güzelleştirilmek için kullanılmazlardı. San’at da herhangi bir büyük iş gibi toplumun yararına dönük olduğu zaman asıl amacına varmış sayılırdı...Günün birinde, belki ondan sonra, bu ev bir müze olurdu.”, Sadun Tanju, *Hacı Ömer*, (İstanbul: Apa Ofset, 1983), 247.

<sup>158</sup> <http://muze.sabanciuniv.edu>

<sup>159</sup> <http://www.sabanci.com>

<sup>160</sup> Ali Artun, “The Museum That Cannot Be”, presented at a seminar titled “Exposer I’art contemporain du monde arabe de Turquie, ici et la bas”, IISMM-Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2002.

arts and/or university museum, which means that the university and museum will have common policies and practices in the education sphere.

Sabancı stressed the importance of his museum, saying “during the improvement of the corporation, I have realized that the success and sustainability of any corporation can not be measured by economic values. Indeed, you are the best as you contribute to the arts, culture and education”<sup>161</sup>. Up to the writing of this thesis, the museum had hosted the following of temporary exhibitions: “The Art of the Book from East to West and Memories of the Ottoman World, Masterpieces of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon,” “Picasso in İstanbul,” “The Images of Turks in Europe in the 17th Century,” “European Porcelain at the Ottoman Palace”. “Rodin in İstanbul” and “Ganghis Khan and His Heirs-The Great Mongolian Empire”. “Masterpieces from the Calligraphy and Painting Collection” which were on display also at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Harvard University, Arthur M. Sackler Museum and the Louvre Museum in Paris between 1998-2000.<sup>162</sup>

In addition to the museum, AKBANK, a company of Sabancı holding has been making “contributions” to the culture and arts for years. Beside its active sponsorship of activities such as exhibitions and festivals, the bank has own its cultural center, called AKSANAT. The building houses an exhibition gallery, performance hall, music archive and library.

The Koç family has played a leading role in the cultural sphere as the owner of the first private/family museum, the Sadberk Hanım Museum, and the first industrial museum, the Rahmi Koç Museum . The involvement of Vehbi Koç and his wife,

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<sup>161</sup> “Tüm bu gelişmeler süresince, gördüm ki, bir kuruluşun başarısı ve kalıcılığı yalnızca ekonomik değerlerle ölçülemez. Gördüm ki aslında sanat, kültür ve eğitim alanlarına sağladığınız katkı kadar büyüyorsunuz.”, *Sabancı Üniversitesi Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi: Bir Kuruluşun Öyküsü* (İstanbul:Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 2002) p.6.

<sup>162</sup> <http://www.sabanci.com>

Sadberk Hanım, in the arts started with antique and painting collecting, in the 1950s as it did for Sabancı. In my opinion, the main difference between them is that the members of the Koç family have established more than one museum and they specialize in different areas. While the collections of the Sadberk Hanım Museum and the Pera Museum are grounded on paintings, antiques, traditional arts objects, the Rahmi Koç Museum and Çengelhan Museum are focused on industrial objects.

What is interesting is that Koç and Sabancı do not hesitate to quarrel about art objects as well as their work. Objects were made the symbols of their tension. In his book, Sakıp Sabancı describes some tension between Vehbi Koç and Hacı Ömer Sabancı during the auction of horse and deer statues. These two wealthy families competed with each other, and finally they had to pay greater sums for the statues.

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The competition between the wealthy families as holdings reflected in the sphere of culture and arts. For example, the manager of the Vehbi Koç Foundation declared that they would open a second private art museum in 2007. He said that the Sadberk Hanım Museum would move to this huge museum complex and all of the Anatolian periods will be exhibited in it.<sup>164</sup> Another example is the competition as the auction of the famous painting, “Kaplumbağa Terbiyecisi” (The Turtle Trainer) between the Eczacıbaşı and Koç families. Since the TMSF (Savings Deposit Insurance Fund) levied execution into İktisat Bank’s property, this painting was put up for sale.<sup>165</sup> At the auction, the Istanbul Modern and Pera Museum competed to purchase it. As a consequence, they sent prices up and it was sold to Pera Museum for 5 trillion lira. According to many experts, it was purchased for more than its worth.

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<sup>163</sup> Sakıp Sabancı, *Bıraktığım Yerden Hayatım*, 9th edition (Istanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık, 2004).

<sup>164</sup> *Sabah*, 17.12.2005.

<sup>165</sup> *Akşam*, 13.12.2004.

The Vehbi Koç Foundation Sadberk Hanım Museum is respected on the list of “firsts” of Koc Holding, since it was the first private museum in Turkey.<sup>166</sup> The museum building, which was known the Azeryan Yalısı before, was purchased by the Koç family in 1950 and hosted the family in the summers until 1978. In that year, the family decided to convert the building to the museum at the request of Sadberk Hanım. After two years of restoration, the museum opened its doors to the public. The first exhibition was Sadberk Hanım’s collection of handcrafts and decorative objects. Later, the foundation purchased the Huseyin Kocabaş archeological collection for the museum in 1983. For the new collection, a new building was constructed in 1988 and given the name “The Sevgi Gönül Wing” and now, it houses archeological objects of the pre-Islamic period. The Azeryan Yalısı is made up of an art history section and houses coins, objects from Islamic art, the Ottoman period, women’s and traditional costumes. The museum also is claimed to be the first in Turkey designed in accordance with the new museology understanding. The mission of the museum is stated as to “create a cultural center that is living and producing as appropriate to the new museum principles.” The museum was awarded the Europa Nostra in 1988. As the first museum of the Koç family, the Sadberk Hanım Museum marked the beginning of the tradition of the wealthy families publicizing their own private collections in museum buildings.

Sadberk Hanım requested that her collection be opened the public after her death in a museum with her own name so as “not to be forgotten.”<sup>167</sup> The Sadberk Hanım Museum and the Sakıp Sabancı Museum were converted into museums from the residences of families. For that reason, in these museums, the daily lives of the families exhibited. For example, in the Traditional Section of the Sadberk Hanım

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<sup>166</sup> Available on [www.vehbikoc.gen.tr](http://www.vehbikoc.gen.tr)

<sup>167</sup> Vehbi Koç, *Hatıralarım, Görüşlerim, Öğütlerim (1973-1987)* (İstanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 1987), 163.



Museum, the *Sunnet* (circumcision) bed of Vehbi Koc is exhibited as an object. Here, the life of family and the narrative of objects are equated with each other.

As the second private museum of the Koç family and the first major museum in Turkey to focus on the history of transport, industry and communications, the Rahmi M. Koç Museum is based on a family collection, like the Sadberk Hanım Museum. The interest of Rahmi Koç in industrial objects started in his childhood with his father's foreign travels. He describes the beginning of his passion as "when I was child, I forget how old my father, Mr.Vehbi Koç, returned from a trip to Germany and presented me with my first electric toy train. This was the start of my passion for collecting mechanical and industrial objects."<sup>168</sup> During his own travels abroad, Koç visited many industrial and technological museums such as the Deutsches Museum in Munich and the Science Museum in London, but especially the Henry Ford Museum in Detroit. He decided that Turkey was in need this kind of museum as well. He felt, however, that the time was not right because it would not be interesting to anyone except for a few industrialists. He continued to collect the items and diversify his collection. When his houses were not enough to store his collections, he started to renovate a museum building along the Golden Horn. As the first building, the Lengerhane, the former Ottoman Navy anchor foundry, was purchased in 1991, restored and opened in 1994 to the public. The museum was awarded the European Museum of the Year Award of the Council of Europe in 1996. In the same year, as a result of the growth of the collection, the foundation decided to purchase and restore a second building to house new acquisitions. The second phase, the Hasköy Dockyard just opposite the Lengerhane, was opened to the public in 2001. The collection of the museum, which "contains thousands of items

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<sup>168</sup> Available on <http://www.rmkmuseum.org.tr>

from gramophone needles to full size ships and aircraft”, is exhibited in the museum buildings, which are themselves industrial archaeology. The mission of the museum is stated as:

The Rahmi M. Koç Museum, part of Rahmi M. Koç Museum and Culture Foundation is a private non-profit making institution dedicated to the collecting, housing, researching, preserving and exhibiting of industrial and engineering objects and their documentation from all countries and periods up to the present day. The museum shall use its collections and resources to inform, inspire and delight the general public, to promote both museum-going and cultural activities in Turkey and to support research into industrial history.<sup>169</sup>

In the museum, the objects are exhibited in categories such as road and rail transport, marine, aviation, engineering, communications, scientific instruments, models and toys. The museum provides an education-pack for teachers and students aiming to teach more about the selected objects and displays. Moreover, an exhibition gallery, cafeteria and seminar room can be hired for “corporate entertainment” and organizations. With its restaurants, cafes and gift shop, the museum reflects the understanding of modern museology and new management and for that reason, it is appreciated by many people. According to Ortaylı, the museum is among the best of the world since it has some objects that can not be seen the abroad and it represents all of the branches of industrialization.<sup>170</sup>

The second private industrial museum by the Rahmi M. Koç Museum and Culture Foundation was opened in Çengelhan, Ankara, in 2005. Around 2000 objects that came from the museum in Istanbul are exhibited in the museum. The location of the museum building was not arbitrary. Çengelhan is the place where Vehbi Koç went into trade and opened his first shop. When Koç purchased the

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<sup>169</sup> Available on <http://www.rmk-museum.org.tr>.

<sup>170</sup> *Milliyet*, 11.05.2006

property, he restored it. For the Koç family, it was very meaningful to convert the place where the history of their corporation started into their museum. Inside the museum, a wax statue of Rahmi Koc is exhibited and placed so it welcomes the visitors.<sup>171</sup>

The relation of the Koç family with Ankara is not limited to this museum. Before the museum, in 1994, the Vehbi Koc and Ankara Research Center (VEKAM) was established in one of the last traditional orchard houses, in which the Koç family had lived for years. Here, the tradition of wealthy people converting their homes into cultural institutions continues.

The purpose of the center is declared as “exploring and documenting the parallels in the development of Vehbi Koç and Ankara on the one hand, and the Republic of Turkey on the other.” To achieve this purpose, the center collects any visual or written documents about Ankara and Vehbi Koc and files them in the archives categorized as the Vehbi Koç Archive, the Audio-Visual Archive, the Ankara Documents Archive, the Map and Plan Archive and the Music Archive.<sup>172</sup>

The other cultural institution of Vehbi Koç Foundation is the Suna and Inan Kırac Research Institute on Mediterranean Civilizations (AKMED), founded in 1996. The institute aims to “serve the word of history, culture and art, to encourage and support research to investigate, document, protect, and restore the historical, archaeological, ethnographical and cultural values of Antalya and its surrounding and to elucidate the region’s deep-rooted relations with the Mediterranean region.” In the context of this aim, the Kaleiçi Museum was opened to the public in 2000 with its objects of traditional Turkish folklore.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> *Milliyet*, 29.05.2005

<sup>172</sup> Available on <http://www.vekam.org.tr>

<sup>173</sup> Available on <http://www.akmed.org.tr>

Besides these institutions, the Project Support department and TOFAS/FIAT Fund have supported many projects, such as the Atatürk Library in 1973, the restoration of art-nouveau works by the Italian architect D'Aranco in Istanbul and the Archeology Films Week.<sup>174</sup>

Last, the Pera Museum, which is not an institution of the Vehbi Koç Foundation, but was founded by a member of the Koç family, is the first step of the culture investments of the Suna and Kıraç Foundation. The museum building, which originally was built in 1893 and is located in Tepebaşı, was completely renovated by the foundation and opened its doors to the public in 2005. The museum houses the three entire collections of the foundation: Anatolian Weights and Measures, Kutahya Tiles and Ceramics, and Portraits from the Empire, including the paintings of orientalist artists of the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries.<sup>175</sup> In the museum, in addition to the permanent collections, there are galleries for temporary exhibitions, a restaurant and a gift shop. As announced in the press, the museum is only the first step of the Kıraç Foundation. The other two steps will be a research institute about Istanbul and a cultural center. Kıraç declares that for the institute they have purchased a building across from the museum, but are looking for a building for the cultural center and they are willing to buy the TRT building. He announced that for the three projects the foundation will have a budget of 250,000 dollars.<sup>176</sup>

In addition to the institutions of the Vehbi Koç Foundation, Koç Holding also invests in culture and arts as sponsors. One of them is the remaking of the wax statue of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Madame Tussauds in London. The Holding decided to remake it after many Turkish visitors described it as inaccurate. Moreover, an additional copy of the statue was made and placed in Atatürk's mausoleum in

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<sup>174</sup> Available on <http://www.vaksa.org.tr>

<sup>175</sup> Available on <http://www.peramuzesi.org.tr>

<sup>176</sup> *Milliyet*, 09.06.2005.

Ankara. Other important sponsorships are the exhibition of “Turks”, opened in London, whose curator was Nazan Olçer, and “Style and Status” an exhibition inaugurated at the Washington-Smithsonian Museum in collaboration with the Turkish Ministry of Culture and the Smithsonian Foundation.

Eczacıbaşı Holding has been one of the leaders in the cultural life of Istanbul due to cultural investments from 1973. The holding established its foundation in this year called the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IFCA). The founder of the foundation, Nejat Eczacıbaşı, explained their mission as “every investment in the arts and culture directly contributes to the development of society’s wealth, to the economy and politics and to the whole fibre of society.”<sup>177</sup> Besides its leading sponsorship for the IFCA for a variety festivals such as jazz, theater, film, it became the founder of Istanbul Modern Museum<sup>178</sup> established in 2004 by providing the initial investment and project management finance. The permanent collection of the museum was on the paintings collected by Eczacıbaşı family. The museum curators arranged the exhibitions more than once over these materials which aimed at narrating Turkish modern art history. However, these exhibitions have been criticized by many people since they were items from private collections and randomly selected. The people from the art world claimed that for that reason the museum is not able to narrate the history of art from many perspectives.<sup>179</sup>

The IFCA was founded in order to organize festival of arts, similar to those in European cities, in Istanbul. It organized 1<sup>st</sup> Istanbul Festival in 1973. Until 1982, many were disciplines of art existed together in the festivals. From that time on, these disciplines separated and different festivals were organized. For example, The

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<sup>177</sup> <http://www.eczacibasi.com/channels/1.asp?id=147>

<sup>178</sup> For more information: [www.istanbulmodern.org](http://www.istanbulmodern.org)

<sup>179</sup> For more information about the contributions of the holding  
<http://www.eczacibasi.com/channels/1.asp?id=498>

International Film Festival and The International Theater Festival in 1989, the International Istanbul Jazz Festival and Music Festival in 1994, and the International Istanbul Biennial in 1989. Recently, Phonem by Miller, Minifest and Filmekimi were added to the list.<sup>180</sup>

Until 1990s, the cultural activities of leading families were the most determining ones in the sphere in addition to some exhibitions called as “Sanat Bayramları” (Art Festivals) and “Yeni Eğilimler” (New Trendies). But, the cultural activities became diversified with the involvement of corporations especially the banks after 1990s. Now, there are many corporations giving funds to the activities through sponsorships or founding their own institutions.<sup>181</sup>

However, it is not reasonable to explain the involvement of corporations and bourgeoisie into the culture only by analyzing their practices. State policies have been complementary and seditious for them. For that reason, I will focus on the state policies in this context.

### State in The Privatization of Culture

The desire of corporations to take place in the symbolic economy of the city through sponsorships complements the wish of the state for the privatization of services as far as possible to render the requirements of the market economy.<sup>182</sup> For that reason, the withdrawal of the state and the delegation of the services to the private sector are ratified by private institutions and actors. The privatization in the cultural sphere is legitimized by its advocators in many ways. One of them is that the

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<sup>180</sup> <http://www.iksv.org/english/tarihce.asp?ms=1|1>

<sup>181</sup> The sponsorships will not be included in this thesis. Only, it will be focused on the institutions of the banks and the leading families.

<sup>182</sup> Sibel Yardımcı, *Kentsel Değişim ve Festivalizm: Küresel İstanbul'da Bienal*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 105.

state dominance in the cultural sector is ineffective because of its bureaucratic structure which is also exposed to the non-objective use of scarce sources. At that point, the Deputy Secretary of Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Zeynel Koç explains the reason of the shift from public to private:

Up to now, the state policy had been to transfer money to several cultural activities confirmed by itself. But this method, as you admit, is exposed to any subjective opinions of the elites who held the power and is not embracing of wide segments of the society as well as not efficient because of some difficulties in distributing the scarce sources. Despite of this, it is available to employ but it is not sufficient. What is fundamental is not the participation of the state to cultural development directly, but to prepare the base for the people to live and enrich their own cultures.<sup>183</sup>

According to this approach, the state is not sufficient entity to distribute scarce resources in the most effective way for the whole society. Moreover, it lacks a means for enriching the cultural life of the public. Indeed, this discourse is a part of the general one: the privatization of state enterprise enterprises (SEE). The advocates of privatization claim that the enterprises are no longer effective because of their “unnecessarily large” structures similar to that of the state bureaucracy. For them, the inefficient enterprises which can not meet the required product and adapt to the international market rules are only a burden for the economy and can be rehabilitated only if they are transferred to the international private institutions which are claimed to be dynamic and productive. The state and its institutions are constructed as insufficient entities by them, for that reason it is meaningless to “wait for everything

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<sup>183</sup> “Bugüne kadar devlet politikası, devletin uygun bulduğu bir takım kültürel faaliyetlere para aktarmak yöntemi olmuştur. Oysa ki bu yöntem, zaten kıt olan kaynakların paylaşılmasındaki zorluklar nedeniyle verimli olmadığı gibi, toplumun geniş kesimlerinin yararlanmadığı, ve devleti yöneten erkin ya da gücü bulunduran erkin subjektif görüşlerine açık bir yöntem olduğunu kabul edersiniz. Bu yöntem, böyle olmasına rağmen kullanılabilir bir yöntemdir, ama yeterli bir yöntem değildir. Ama asıl olan devletin kültürel oluşum ve gelişime doğrudan bir aktör olarak katılması değil, devletin halkın kendi kültürünü yaşayıp, zenginleştirip, geliştirebileceği bir zemini hazırlayabilmesi olduğunu düşünüyorum.”, From the record of seminar by Zeynel Koç, “Cultural Management Program” organized by European Cultural Association, 2005.

from the states”. This discourse is used widely in the cultural sphere. Sabancı makes a call for the collaboration of the state and private sector:

We can not expect everthing from the state. The state and private sector must cooperate on this issue. If each fulfills its own duty it means that we also fulfill our civic duty. The government has limited facilities and so does private sector. It ha sits own schedule. However, if the state acts in a positive way helping the private sector and not being obstructive to the institutions that have the opportunity to invest in culture, briefly if the government cooperates with private sector then it will be much easier to promote our culture.<sup>184</sup>

So, this call implies separate roles for the state and private sector in developing the cultural sphere. As stated in the beginning, these roles are not contradictory; rather they constitute a whole. This is actualized in the way the private sector fulfills the gaps that the state leaves. However, this is paradoxical. This approach presents the “inefficiency” of the state as natural and filling these gaps as the duty of the private sector. But, these gaps are constructed in neo-liberal policies. The state is not withdrawn from the public issues as a result of its “natural” evolvement; rather the role of the state has changed in neo-liberal policies. What I mean is that the decreasing state budget for culture is not something “spontaneous.” Instead, it is “done” for the sake of market rules. This is the way of legitimizing privatization as seen in the systematic de-functionalization of SEEs by reducing the infrastructure investments on them. So, what is paradoxical is that the private sector suggests that it is its responsibility to meet the requirements of the public which can/are not committed by the state deregulated for the sake of the transformation of the

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<sup>184</sup> “Herşeyi devletten bekleyemeyiz. Devlet ve özel sektör bu işde elele vermeli. Her biri kendine düşen payı üstlenirse ancak o zaman biz yurttaşlık görevimizi yerine getirmiş oluruz. Devletin imkanları kısıtlıdır. Özel sektörün de öyle. Kendine göre bir programı var. Ama devlet, imkanı olanları engellemeyecek, onlara yardımcı olacak şekilde davranırsa, yani özel sektörle elele verirse o zaman kültürümüzü tanıtmak daha kolaylaşır..”, Zahir Güvemli, “Önsöz”, *Sabancı Resim Koleksiyonu: The Sabancı Collection of Paintings*, (Istanbul: Ak Yayınları: Akbank’ın Bir Kültür Hizmeti, 1984).



accumulation strategy after the 1980s. Yet this approach both veils the reasons for the insufficiency of the state to meet the requirements and how the private sector benefits from this situation in many ways mentioned in this thesis; thanks to this discourse, the private sector encodes its role as responsibility, working for public good or a missionary stance.

Hereafter, according to the advocators of privatization, culture and art should no longer be the business of the state. The role of the state is limited to the “supporter” and “incentive” to the private sector. It is no longer a main actor. The independence of culture from the state is the target of the private sector as well as state actors. Koç answers the question of what the aim of the ministry for its incentives is: “to make the cultural products marketable, to gain money from the business; consequently to establish an economic continuity and to be saved from the dependency on the government. Our object is to build a structure that produces and then markets its own values rather than to adopt a cultural policy that is continuously supported from the budget.”<sup>185</sup>

Here, it is seen that the state is very active through its incentives in the sense of making the cultural sphere “independent” from the state. For example; the Minister of Culture in 2003, Hüseyin Çelik thinks that the state theaters should be privatized; “According to my point of view the National Theatres have to be left to good hands, have to be privatized. Staging play costs 250 billion in the National Theatres. The contribution of the Ministry to private theatre is almost the same amount. It is obvious that there is a problem and distortion in this structure. The government must give its

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<sup>185</sup> “Kültürel ürünleri pazarlanabilir bir ürün haline getirip ve bu işle para kazanılabilir bir hale getirmeyi, dolayısıyla devamlılığı sağlamayı. Devlete olan bağımlılıktan kurtarmayı hedefliyoruz. Yani sürekli bütçeden pay alan, bütçeden desteklenen bir kültür politikası yerine, kendisi bir değer üreten ve bunu pazarlayabilen bir yapı hedefliyoruz.”, From the record of seminar by Zeynel Koç, “Cultural Management Program” organized by European Cultural Association, 2005.

support via the liberalization and promotion of the cultural area.”<sup>186</sup> With the withdrawal of the state from cultural sphere and rendering the culture as a profit-making area, the cultural products are transformed into marketable ones. Hereafter, the cultural sphere is regulated in accordance with the market rules.

At that point, the second way of legitimization of privatization becomes apparent. As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the “independence” of the cultural sphere from the state has been advocated since it enables the “freedom” of this sphere. However, I problematize this kind of freedom because of its subordination to the market rules. But this point has not been questioned adequately by the participants of the cultural sphere. Rather, they have fixed some categories: while private is identified with freedom, the state is seen as a totalitarian entity which levels all the differences. According to Karakaş, the state only standardizes people by imposing definite lifestyles or giving subsidies to them through its ministry. This can not be admitted in the democratic and secular order, and also it is a violation of human rights.<sup>187</sup> For that reason, Çelik states that, “The ministry of Culture has to be an institution that coordinates, encourages and supports, and not a center that dicates a specific ideology to people. The Ministry of Culture ought to be aware of the fact that it serves a country with 70 million population and of the wealth that generated from such a dense population.”<sup>188</sup>

Here, it can be seen that the rise of discourse of multiculturalism occurs at the same time with the delegation of culture to the private hands. This situation can be

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<sup>186</sup> Benim yaklaşımım Devlet Tiyatroları'nın ehil ellere teslim edilmesi, özelleşmesidir. Devlet Tiyatroları'nda bir oyun 250 milyara sahneye konuyor. Bakanlığın bütün özel tiyatrolara yaptığı yardım da bu kadar. Bu yapıda bir çarpıklık ve sorun var. Devletin kültür sanatı desteklemesi, bu alanları özgürleştirerek teşvik etmesinden geçer.”  
<http://www.yenisafak.com/arsiv/2003/subat/16/roportaj.html>

<sup>187</sup> [http://www.finansforum.com.tr/haber.aspx?HBR\\_KOD=32120](http://www.finansforum.com.tr/haber.aspx?HBR_KOD=32120)

<sup>188</sup> “Kültür Bakanlığı düzenleyen, teşvik eden ve yardımcı olan bir kuruluş olmalıdır yoksa belli bir ideolojiyi insanlara dayatan bir merkez değil. 70 milyonluk Türkiye neyse, Türkiye'deki zenginlik neyse Kültür Bakanlığı da buna hizmet etmelidir.”  
<http://www.yenisafak.com/arsiv/2003/subat/16/roportaj.html>

affirmed because alternative identities and life styles have found the opportunity to express themselves, but the transformation of multiculturalism into the marketable product defines what type of freedom it is. To speak more generally, what kind of freedom is provided by private sector? Does it carry transformative potential inside? If we take censorship, does it really decrease relatively to state dominance of culture, or transform and become invisible? What is striking is that the private sector, which claims to embody freedom conceals its compromise economy with the state by taking position against the state. For example, Bigalı, who says for the state in Turkish saying, “gölge etmesin başka ihsan eylemem” (I want state not to make a shadow)<sup>189</sup> thinks that the advantage of Aksanat is its independence from the state.<sup>190</sup> However, although they differ in the cultural practices, the state and private sector are the stakeholders of common interest. And the discourse that equates the state with the totalistic practices makes invisible the relationship between the state and private sector deeply rooted. It presents the capital as if irrelevant to the state. The fixation of capital itself with freedom, essentialize the state and put it as homogenizing power is the hegemonic struggle. According to Laclau and Mouffe, the new right (neo-liberal state) re-defines “freedom” “equality” “democracy” by questioning state interventions. It manages to articulate these democratic antagonisms to its anti-democratic discourse by assuming that these kinds of state interventions limit freedom. It defines freedom as “negative”, meaning the unlimited right of property and non-intervention of the state. The public decisions move away from political control and become an area of specialization. Moreover, the new right declares “the right to be different” as opposed to the equality=identification=totalitarianism and

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<sup>189</sup> Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.

<sup>190</sup> From the research of Bilgi University about the cultural centers, *unpublished research*, 2005.

assumes difference=inequality=freedom.<sup>191</sup> If we evaluate the cultural sphere from the point of the hegemonic articulation, the private sector is successful at hegemonizing the cultural sphere by fixing itself in society as representing “freedom”.

Moreover, the state is active by its incentives concretized in making laws. Here, only selected laws which are directly related to the relationship between state and private institutions will be discussed.

In 1973 a crucial law<sup>192</sup> was enacted that allowed private collections to be exhibited and private museums to be opened. Before that time, the laws that had been created by Osman Hamdi had been applied which had prohibited the transfer and commerce of the objects without permission of the state. Since, only the state was able to open a museum, there were no private museums or exhibitions until the enactment of the law. The condition of the law for private collections was that objects were detected by the related museums that were dependent on the General Directorate of the Museums and Monuments. According to Karaduman, this condition had two results: Objects were approved in their eligibility to be exhibited and they were recorded in the archives. The last was a kind of measure to prevent commercial activities for the objects that was forbidden by law.<sup>193</sup> The revisions and arrangements were enacted in the following years; as a consequence, this law set the ground for the opening of private museums.

According to Yılmaz, the structural change in the museum practices in the context of these legal arrangements had three results: first, by allowing private

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<sup>191</sup> Ernesto Laclau ve Chantal Mouffé, *Hegemonya ve Sosyalist Strateji*, ( İstanbul: Brikim, 1992), 215.

<sup>192</sup> Hüseyin Karaduman, “Eski Eser Yasalarında Özel Müzeler, Koleksiyonculuk, Ticaret ve Müzayedeler” in *4. Müzecilik Semineri: Bildiriler 16-18 Eylül 1998*, (İstanbul: Askeri Müze, 1998), 4-15.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

collections to be exhibited, alternative memory practices became involved in the museum space. Second, the monopoly of the state on the visualization of the national and cultural identity was broken. Last, it led to large collections of the leading bourgeoisie families to find ways to be opened to the public in their own museums which created new power politics in the museum space.<sup>194</sup> From these points, it can be concluded that this law paved the way to the opening of private museums after the 1980s. It is not possible to measure the effect of the law in those years, to what extent it encouraged the private collection holders to exhibit their collections in their museums; but the law proves the change of the role of the state in the cultural sphere. However, it should also be noted that this law has provided the recording of objects in the state offices. What I mean is that the state has strengthened state control over the collections.

Additionally, the government enacted a law in order to promote the cultural investment and enterprises in 2004.<sup>195</sup> The aim of the law:

What it satisfies is meeting cultural needs of individuals and society; protection of cultural values and of intangible cultural heritage and making them elements of sustainable culture; activation of medium of cultural communication and interaction; production of artistic and cultural values; creation and development of possibilities of access to these value; perpetuating and utilizing cultural values of our country as an unit of contribution to the economy; promoting cultural investments and enterprises aimed at construction and use of culture centers.

According to Koç, this law serves their aim of making the culture produce value and market itself. For him, culture is something abstract and the ministry also wants

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194 Seçil Yılmaz, "Visualization of Culture, History and Memory in Turkey: Museum Politics in the Post-1980", *unpublished master thesis*, Boğaziçi University, 2005.

195 "Bireyin ve toplumun kültürel gereksinimlerinin karşılanması; kültür varlıkları ile somut olmayan kültürel mirasın korunmasını ve sürdürülebilir kültürün birer ögesi haline getirilmesini; kültürel iletişim ve etkileşim ortamının etkinleştirilmesini; sanatsal ve kültürel değerlerin üretilmesi, toplumun bu değerlere ulaşım olanaklarının yaratılması ve geliştirilmesini ülkemizin kültür varlıklarının yaşatılması ve ülke ekonomisine katkı yaratan bir unsur olarak değerlendirilmesi, kullanılması ile kültür merkezlerinin yapımı ve işletilmesine yönelik kültür yatırımı ve kültür girişimlerinin teşvik edilmesini sağlamaktır.", The law of 5225 see [www.kultur.gov.tr](http://www.kultur.gov.tr).

to support buildings such as cultural centers, which are concrete.<sup>196</sup> The incentives includes the construction, rehabilitation and management of cultural centers, the construction, rehabilitation and management of spaces and centers in which cultural and artistic activities or products such as libraries, archives, museums, galleries, workshops are made, produced or exhibited, besides some arrangements about immovable cultural properties. The components of the incentives are the allocation of immovable properties for the projects, the reduction in the income tax withholding, the reduction in the insurance premiums paid by employees, discounts for the cost for water and supports for energy, the right to employ foreign experts and artists and to operate on weekends and official holidays.<sup>197</sup> For Koç, this law resembles the law of incentives for tourism enacted in the 1980s which in the first years could not be evaluated by the investors in the best way. But, later, the law worked and attracted many of them. However, he thinks, in the future, investors will notice that cultural centers will also provide huge amount of profit.<sup>198</sup>

Last, independent culture sponsorship was arranged and included in tax legislation. This arrangement defines two kinds of sponsorships, for cultural activities organized by public administrations such as ministry, municipalities, non-profit associations, the foundations that have right for tax exemption by ministry and independent research institutes, and for activities organized by private sector that requires approve by the ministry. By the means of this law, the amount of sponsorship will be wholly exempted from its corporation income tax which is 33%. For example if a corporation sponsors in the amount of 100.000 dollar, it will not pay 33.000dollar

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<sup>196</sup> From the record of seminar by Zeynel Koç, “Cultural Management Program” organized by European Cultural Association, 2005

<sup>197</sup> Here only the point of cultural centers in the law is detailed. But, the points about the immovable properties are also very important. As Koç mentions through the fund which are created by increasing in the property tax, these properties can be transferred to the institutions or individuals who can restore them. Some tax reductions are provided for these institutions or individuals.

<sup>198</sup> From the record of seminar by Koç, 2005.

(33% of total amount) as tax to the state.<sup>199</sup> Especially the last arrangement is welcomed through the interviewees I met.<sup>200</sup> They appreciate the state for its decision and demand more incentives for private sector. The tax reduction for private sector is not only confined to this law. Bigalı says that the corporations have a tax reduction in the advertisements for their cultural centers.<sup>201</sup> However, the issue of tax reduction is not declared explicitly. In my opinion, the ambiguity of tax issues indicates the political and economic implications of tax reduction in the society. State uses its sources to improve the private institutions and provide them indirect subsidies from the public budget. The state reduces its public budget by giving privilege to the private sector through tax reduction. In other words, instead of collecting taxes from private sector and using them for public good, it prefers to contribute to the development of privileged groups, which claim to be representing the public good. In this way, as Wu states that the public becomes partner for the cost of special preferences of private sector. But, what is interesting is that these private institutions sometimes claim to be public, sometimes private. They blur the borders between public and private. Because of tax reductions it becomes questionable to what extent private cultural institutions are really “private”.<sup>202</sup> For example, for Picasso exhibition, what is interesting is the silence of the museum about the amount of the expenditure on the exhibition. Ölçer answers to this question as “the budget and insurance of the exhibition can not be questioned. These are private. This exhibition is the costly one for Turkey”.<sup>203</sup> This indicates the contradiction between the discourse of the museum as serving for the good for public and its opaque practices

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Only Vasif Kortun named this law as “brutal”. He thinks that the corporations also should pay for their sponsorships. This law is the evidence of that state delegated everything to the private sector.

<sup>201</sup> From the research of Bilgi University about the cultural centers, *unpublished research*, 2005..

<sup>202</sup> Chin-tao Wu, *Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi*, (İstanbul: İletisim, 2005).page.

<sup>203</sup> *Sabah*, 12.10.2005.

about the budget. Together with the tax deductions in the expenditures of corporation, and thus the indirect subsidies of the state, the distinction between “public” and “private” becomes ambiguous. For Wu, the ambiguous position of the museums implies the hegemonic struggle in the field of culture.<sup>204</sup> The private institutions get stronger in this struggle through benefiting from public budget without committing their public responsibilities. Thus, in the tax policies, the state interferes to the privatization process actively and regulates the cultural sphere in a way of making the private sector to be advantaged group. In other words, the state and private sector compromise in order to carry out the neo-liberal policies properly.

In addition to these points, the own history of the ministry of culture gives us clues what culture implies for the state. Until, 1971, the country did not have any ministry of culture. The cultural issues were administrated from the Undersecretariat of Culture under the Ministry of Education. After the military coup in 1971, the Ministry of Culture was instituted. Six years later, in 1977, the ministries of education and culture united. Following to that, the ministry of culture separated from this union and combined with ministry of Tourism in 1982. After that time, the ministry of culture was again disassociated and executed its duties by its own between 1989 and 2003. Lastly, the ministry of culture was united with ministry of tourism under the name of “The Ministry of Culture and Tourism”.<sup>205</sup> So, it is seen that while culture was considered with education before 1982, later, it was submitted with tourism. There is a clear shift from education to tourism as partner ministry of culture. In my opinion, this shift also makes evident for what culture is instrumentalized. While culture was so important to cultivate and educate citizenship until 1980s, after that

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<sup>204</sup> Chin-tao Wu, *Kültürün Özelleştirilmesi*, (İstanbul: İletisim, 2005), 56.

<sup>205</sup> <http://kvmgm.kultur.gov.tr>



time it is suggested that culture has common objectives and visions with tourism.

Sağlar opposes this combination and asks:

The reason Ministry of Culture and Tourism was divided into two as Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Tourism in 1989 was that, because culture is a self-governing and specific field, keeping culture under the same roof with an institution dealing in tourism will be opposite to concept of culture. What has changed from 1989 till today that two is tried to be unit? Has spirit of concept of culture transformed into a commercial product? Or has Ministry of Culture, whose budget cropped whenever it is possible, begun to be seen as a burden? Making money is not in objectives and functions of Ministry of Culture. Even, it needs support of government for the things to be realized. However, main aim of the Ministry of Tourism is attracting more and more tourists, making much more tourist investments and bringing much more hard-currency income in the country. It is apparent that uniting two ministries cannot have a functional purpose.<sup>206</sup>

According to Sağlar, culture does not have any commercial aims since it is not profit making area. For that reason, ministry of culture which serves without any profit making motivation can not combine with ministry of tourism. However, as will be discussed in the following global city section the practices of ministry and municipalities show that the cultural herigate sites and properties are perceived with the touristic gaze. The cities are re-arranged; buildings are “beautified” so as to attract more tourists. The state does not make cultural investment to improve the infrastructure, but tries to transfer this job to the private hands.

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<sup>206</sup> “Kültür ve Turizm bakanlığı 1989 da Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı olarak iki ayrı bakanlığı ayrıldığında kültürün müstakil ve kendine özgü bir alan olması nedeniyle, turizm ticareti yapan bir kuruluşla özleştirilerek aynı çatı altında tutulmasının kültür kavramının ruhuna aykırı olduğu gerekçe gösterilmiştir. 1989 yılından bu güne ne değişmiştir de yeniden birleştirme yoluna gidilmektedir. Kültür kavramının ruhu değişerek ticari bir biçim mi almıştır, yoksa bütçesi her fırsatta kırılan Kültür Bakanlığı, açıkça bir yük olarak mı görülmektedir? ...Kültür bakanlığının işlevleri ve amaçları arasında para kazanmak yoktur. Hatta yapılması gerekenler için çok büyük ölçüde devletin desteğine gereksinim duyar. Turizm bakanlığı ana amacı ise, daha çok turist çekmek, daha çok turistik yatırım yapmak, yaptırmak ve ülkemize daha çok döviz kazandırmaktır. Birbiriyle alakasız iki bakanlığı birleştirmenin işlevsel bir amacı olmayacağı açıktır.”, [http://www.shp.org.tr/ajans\\_goster.asp?ID=56](http://www.shp.org.tr/ajans_goster.asp?ID=56).

In this chapter, I tried to explain the privatization of culture by answering why culture became so important after 1980s. Unsurprisingly, this question led me scrutinize the process and social and economic outcomes of the neo liberal policies in England and Turkey. I claimed that culture became the main dynamic to organize the social and political and for the development. At that point, it provided for the leading bourgeoisie families to reconstruct their hegemony in the society and gain prestige in the eye of public. To make it more explicit, I went into details of the collections of Koç and Sabancı from 1950s and subsequent cultural institutions founded by them. By doing that, I aimed to highlight the transition from philanthropic activities to cultural ones in the context of the rise of culture in the global sense. This approach also proved the cultural turn by indicating that while the families were identified with their philanthropic activities before 1980s, after that time, they were recognized and appreciated by their contribution to the cultural sphere.

In the following chapter, I will focus on the development of cultural centers for established by the leading corporations and search the answers of the question why they made cultural investments.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL CENTERS IN THE POST-1980s

The numbers of art galleries and cultural centers increased after the 1990s parallel to the growth of the financial sector; especially banking. This timing is not coincidence; rather it gives us clues about why the corporations are involved in the culture and arts. In this chapter, I will summarize the history and activities of the cultural centers and I will try to understand the significance of these cultural centers for society and the corporations themselves by analyzing the discourses of the managers of cultural centers whom I interviewed and the leading figures in the cultural sphere.

#### The Cultural Centers of Corporations

Akbank Sanat (Akbank Arts) was founded by AKBANK, which was one of the first corporations of Sabancı Holding. In 1993, in order to support culture and the arts without pursuing any commercial purpose, to contribute to artists and to introduce well-qualified art works with the audience.<sup>207</sup> The director of the center, Bigalı says that the objective of the center, that is called “six floors of art (altı kat sanat)<sup>208</sup> was to centralize the support of Akbank in culture and arts that has been continuing for a long time. The agency of the bank in Beyoğlu which is the most profit-bearing one was chosen as the building for the centre due to the position of

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<sup>207</sup> [www.akbanksanat.com](http://www.akbanksanat.com).

<sup>208</sup> The structure of the building has changed in the process of thesis writing. Now, TEKNOSA which is one of the branch of Sabancı Holding and specialized in the products of technology opened a store. I did not deliberately change what I wrote in the beginning to show the inconsistency of the discourse of the center and the relationship between art and commerce.

Beyoglu as being the heart of the cultural activities.<sup>209</sup> The building was redesigned and rehabilitated 2001-2002 by a famous designer and architect Eren Talu.

The center has two kinds of activities; “inside the center” and “out-side the center”. The former implies the activities organized on each floor as galleries, multipurpose salon for the concerts of world-class musicians, screenings, theater performances and panels, contemporary art workshop, a music room including classic and jazz music collections, a library based on contemporary art, a café, offices and the dance studio of the Zeynep Tanbay Dance Workshop funded by the bank. The first and second floors are used as galleries for contemporary art exhibitions that are organized through the advice of the advisory board which is composed of Ali Akay, Levent Çalikoğlu and Hasan Bülent Kahraman, who are the leading curators of Turkey. These galleries host six to eight exhibitions in a year and many exhibition conferences are organized as related to the exhibition content.

In the center, four different theater groups are funded and perform: Produksiyon Theatre, Yeni Kuşak Theatre, Karagöz ve Kukla Theatre, Çocuk Theatre. While Produksiyon Theatre puts on plays that have never been staged in the country, Yeni Kuşak Theatre chooses recently written plays by contemporary play wrights who are not well-known in Turkey. In addition to these newly founded groups, Karagöz ve Kukla Theatre, Çocuk Theatre were founded in 1970s by Akbank and continue as traditional activities of the bank. In addition to the galleries and performances, the contemporary art workshop, which is composed of serigraphy and lithography workshops, aims to support contemporary art.

The “outside-center” activities includes the Akbank Chamber Orchestra, Akbank Jazz Festival, Short-Film Competition, painting collection, sponsorships for

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<sup>209</sup> Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.

some activities like biennales, exhibitions etc. The orchestra was launched in 1992 and presented as the first example of the support of the private sector to music. It is conducted by Cem Mansur permanently and gives 25 concerts a year in different places. The Akbank Jazz Festival which started in 1991, is one of the most important activities of the bank since it was the first jazz festival of the country. Another important cultural activity of the bank is its painting collection, started in 1977 when the bank started to purchase works. The collection includes 1827 works of 500 Turkish painters.

In addition to these stable activities, the bank sponsors some activities. For example, it funded an exhibition in England; “Melek Yüzlü Yabancı” (Strangers with Angelic Faces) whose curator was one of the curators of the center; Levent Çalikoğlu. Later, this exhibition was opened in the center. Also, the bank is the main sponsorship of the “Rodin in Istanbul” exhibition opened in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum in 2006. For all these activities, Bigalı does not specify any target groups. She announces that “everyone older than five can come here”. For her, since the center embraces all branches of art, it is open to all who feel an interest in them. The center is located under the department of “institutional communication and strategic planning” and funded under the advertisement budget item of the bank. The activity program is prepared by the center and presented to the bank. Bigalı says that the program is approved by the bank in the percent of 99.9%.<sup>210</sup>

Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Center was founded in 2001 as an institution of Garanti Bank. Located in Beyoğlu, the center “acts as a central meeting point in the city for cultural exchange between contemporary artists, curators and critics.” It is directed by Vasif Kortun, who is also well-known as a curator, and by

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<sup>210</sup> Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.

his small team. The center contains a gallery, artist archive, research and lecture spaces and Istanbul Residency Program. The gallery, which is at street-level and visible, has hosts contemporary art exhibitions from Turkey and abroad. The artist archive, which is claimed to be unique in the world, aims to record the memory of contemporary art works that have done in the last 20 years in the country. Moreover, the center has a library consisting, 5000 international books that can not be found in any library in Turkey.<sup>211</sup> Istanbul Residency Program is open to contemporary visual artists, critics and curators of contemporary art for a period of between three and six months and funded by international arts organizations from nine countries from Europe and also from the Middle East and Eastern Europe. According to Kortun, this center has two main characteristics: it has an international program rather than a national one and focuses on the “present” and “future.” For him, the activities of the center are being imitated by the other cultural centers like Aksanat. Aksanat has started to update its “boring” conferences and exhibitions through this “correct” imitation.<sup>212</sup> As Aksanat, Platform does not have specific target group. But the reason is different. Kortun thinks that it is impossible to define a target groups because of being located on Istiklal Street. It functions as a one of the shops of the street and people can enter freely. As a result, the program of the center is determined according to the “street.” He plans to be more professional and exhibit works that will be more difficult to comprehend after moving to the building of Ottoman Bank Museum in Karaköy. Only at that time, determining the target group will be possible.<sup>213</sup> Although the center was initiated by bank, it is also funded by international networks. While the bank pays the expenditure of infrastructure such as building, electronic devices, the other costs of the residency program and exhibitions

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<sup>211</sup> Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasif Kortun.

<sup>212</sup> Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasif Kortun.

<sup>213</sup> Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasif Kortun.

are covered by these networks. Kortun claims that this kind of structure makes the center autonomous. He states that “we are one of the institutions of the bank. Every one has different professionalism. We are, also, a professional institution. This is our job. We know better than everybody working in the bank. One knows the ropes should be let. Managers and employees can not work as typical bank employees. If we have liberty, I believe that we are able to make well-arranged programs”<sup>214</sup> Garanti Bank has two more cultural institutions, Garanti Gallery and the Ottoman Bank Museum Museum and Research Center. In fact the gallery, established in 1987, was the first institution of the bank. However, its sphere of activity altered from paintings to architecture and city planning after 2003.

Different than Aksanat and Platform, Yapı Kredi Cultural Center was founded in 1964 by Yapı Kredi Bank with the establishment of Kazım Taşkent Art Gallery, which is committed to the plastic arts of Turkey. The focus of the gallery shifted from the works of Turkish folklore and amateur artists to the works of contemporary painters and thematic projects in 1992. In the same year, a museum named after Vedat Nedim Tör, who had directed all the culture and art activities of the bank until 1977, was initiated. The permanent collections of the museum are coin, which is the third biggest collection in the world, madalya, işleme, kumaş, yazma, tombak, tespih, Karagöz oyunları that belong to the bank. In addition to the gallery and museum, the Sermer Çifter Salon hosts photography exhibitions of world-famous artists like Ara Güler and Robert Capa.

The cultural center with Yapı Kredi Publishing is structured under the Yapı Kredi Culture and Art Publishing in order to “make the culture and art more

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<sup>214</sup> “Bankanın bir kurumuyuz. Bankanın teftiş grubu hepsinin farklı profesyonelliği vardır. Biz de profesyonel bir kurumuz. Bizim işimiz bu. Bankadaki herkesten daha iyi biliyoruz. İşi bilene bırakmak lazım. Yönetici ya da çalışanlar tipik banka çalışanı gibi çalışmazlar. Serbest olduğumuzda programları düzgün yapabileceğimize inanıyorum.”, Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasif Kortun.

prevalent” in 1992. In fact, the support of the bank to the culture and arts with its private collections, publishing works, festivals, exhibitions started in 1944 thanks to the personal interest of Kazım Taşkent who was the founder of the bank. For that reason, the bank calls itself “Culture and Art Bank.” From this chronology, it can be concluded that although the bank had its own gallery for years, it restructured the activities under the cultural center after 1990s. The director of the center; Veysel Uğurlu, who has been working there for 20 years claims that Yapı Kredi Cultural Center is the pioneer of the newly founded cultural institutions: “Istanbul Modern, Bilgi, (Santral Museum), Pera museum...I can say that we have initiated all. We have convinced capital that the best advertisement is culture and art. Before, it was only a hobby. We have made for it to be taken seriously.”<sup>215</sup> In 2005, Yapı Kredi Culture and Art Publishing published 200 books and five periodicals, organized 18 exhibitions, panels, film screening, performances, museum activities and festival. According to Uğurlu, the amount of visitors for these activities is high owing to that it is located in Beyoğlu.<sup>216</sup> During the thesis writing process, the bank was purchased by Koç Holding, for that reason, the cultural center was in the process of restructuring.

Another center for culture and arts in Beyoğlu was initiated by Borusan Holding called Borusan Center for the Culture and Arts. The objective of the center “is to produce and promote Turkish culture and abroad through art activities” and “centralize, coordinate and thus increase of the productivity of the support to arts extended by various companies in the Borusan Group.”<sup>217</sup> To actualize this aim, it focuses on three fields: music, exhibitions/conferences and art publication. In the

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<sup>215</sup> “Istanbul Modern, Bilgi, Pera müzesi bunları bizim başlattığımız söyleyebilirim. Biz burada sermayeyi en iyi reklamın kültür sanat olduğuna ikna ettik...eskiden sadece hobi olarak geçiyordu. Biz bunun ciddiyetini bu hale getirdik.”, Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu.

<sup>216</sup> Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu. .

<sup>217</sup> [www.borusansanat.com](http://www.borusansanat.com)



field of music, the center created the first private music library based on classical music consisting 5.000 books, over 7.000 CDs and became a member of an international network called as ISCM (International Society for Contemporary Music). Moreover, Borusan Philharmony Orchestra started to perform under the Conductor and Permanent Music director Gürer Aykal in 2004. As composed of members of this Philharmony orchestra, Borusan Chamber Orchestra gives concerts twice every month in order to contribute to the mission of the holding as “acquainting western classical music to young people and the masses.” During the thesis writing, the holding decided to close the gallery that had been appreciated by the members of artistic world because of its well-organized and high quality plastic art exhibitions so as to transfer all its financial sources to the field of music by being main sponsor for the music festival of IFCA for ten years and constructing a new building across the center including music school and concert halls. The manager of the center whom I interviewed had resigned from his position because of the decision of the holding. For that reason, he declined to go into details about the plans, probable changes in their mission and target group. The center is structured like other joint-stock corporations of the holding. The difference is that it has only expenditure budget and this budget is covered by the other corporations.

Not located in Beyoğlu, but established by Türkiye İş Bank, İş Sanat is one of the cultural institutions that funded by private corporations. Although its activities are more restricted than others, the center especially works in the field of jazz and classical music. İş Sanat seems to be unique in the city in that it is placed in the offices of a bank; İş Towers in Levent, which is known as the financial district of Istanbul.

Of course, the cultural centers are not limited to ones discussed in this thesis. These are only the leading ones founded by corporations. But, it is important to draw the similar paths in their histories to understand my arguments in the thesis. Under the light of my interviews and research about them, I want to bring up some debates and general arguments about the subject of my thesis.

### Civilizing or Distinguishing?

These newly established cultural institutions are acknowledged as *sine qua non* for the civilization of Turkey. The notion of civilization, which, in Elias' words, "sums up everything in which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or "more primitive" contemporary ones"<sup>218</sup> is identified with Westernization and was held as an ideal in Turkey for a long time. According to Ahıska, the desire of Westernization has always been accompanied by an anxiety over being "late" for "catching the train" of modern civilization. This "time lag" has been coded as backwardness of Turkey relative to the "progress" of the West. She continues saying that the "occidental<sup>219</sup> fantasy evoked a "lack" in "the people" upon which it organized the "desire" to fill it..."<sup>220</sup> This is what has shaped the positions of cultural institutions in the country. They aim to meet "lack" and declare their contribution to the westernization/civilization of Turkey as confessed by Sabancı; "today, by opening museum, we pay our debts. . . We display national wealth, calligraphies, carpets, rugs, pictures, valuable articles relics of the past which we have accumulated lifelong. We strain every nerve for

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<sup>218</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, ( Oxford [England]; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1994), 3.

<sup>219</sup> Meltem Ahıska "Occidentalism: The Historical Fantasy of the Modern" *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, vol. 102, no. 2/3 (2003).

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

clearing image in the Western thought that Turks are barbarian and for showing we have a civilization too.”<sup>221</sup>

The Picasso exhibition, as the “first major exhibition in Turkey devoted to be a Western artist” at the Sabancı Museum, was presented and perceived as a big step in the ideal of Westernization. While one asks “Is Picasso a golden key to Turkey’s acceptance of, and in, Europe?”<sup>222</sup> Guler Sabanci declares “our exhibition is evidence of Turkey’s interest in Europe and in joining the European Union. Picasso represents Modernism. We brought him to Istanbul because we believe that Turkey is part of the west and part of that modernity”<sup>223</sup>

Although many writers in the newspapers questioned the effect of the exhibition and pointed to the lack of tradition to protect the collections, heritage sites and museums of Turkey which seems a paradox with this extraordinary interest in Picasso exhibition,<sup>224</sup> the general tendency was to perceive it as a triumph to compensate for the “lack” of the country. The Prime Minister, Tayyip Erdoğan advised the citizens to be progressive, developing and adaptive to the changes in the world as Picasso did in his artistic life.<sup>225</sup> In doing so, Turkey would prove its Western identity and Istanbul as a world city would be able to arrive at its ultimate goal. According to the research I conducted during the exhibition about the popular perception of the exhibition, the most important point was the perception of the exhibition within the discourse of the ideal of civilization. Whether the visitors liked the works or not, the exhibition was perceived as a starting point to approximate the

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<sup>221</sup> “Bugün müze açarak borcumuzu yerine getiriyoruz. Ömür boyu derleyip topladığımız hazineler değerindeki milli servetimizi, güzel yazılarımızı, ecdat yadigarı halılarımızı, kilimlerimizi, resimlerimizi, değerli eşyamızı gözler önüne seriyoruz. Batıdaki Barbar Türk imajını silmek, bizim de bir medeniyetimiz olduğunu göstermek için çırpınıyoruz.”, Zahir Guvemli, *Sabancı Resim Koleksiyonu: The Sabancı Collection of Paintings*, (Istanbul: Ak Yayınları: Akbank’ın Bir Kültür Hizmeti, 1984).

<sup>222</sup> *Financial Times*, 18.11.2005.

<sup>223</sup> *Art Newspaper*, 24.01.2006.

<sup>224</sup> Gündüz Vassaf, *Radikal*, 04.12.2005; Ahu Antmen, *Radikal*, 30.11.2005.

<sup>225</sup> *Milliyet*, 22.01.2006.

ideal. Although most interviewees did not have habit of visiting the exhibitions regularly, they had visited the Picasso exhibition at least for one time because the exhibition was an extra ordinary event for them. In doing so, they became ideal citizens, and Turkey proved itself as a Western country. While the visitors were fulfilling their citizenship duty, they compensated the cultural gap of themselves and, of Turkey, and on the other hand they were happy since foreigners witnessed how much Turkish citizens were vountarily to be “cultured”.<sup>226</sup> Moreover, the Sabancı family provided for some students, from Şanlıurfa a city in the eastern part of Turkey to visit the exhibition. <sup>227</sup> In this way, the museum also afforded “contemplation” of the “great” works of civilization by economically disadvantaged students from “backward” city as relative to the western part of Turkey.

Uğurlu mentions an anecdote about the Warhol<sup>228</sup> exhibition at the Yapı Kredi Cultural Centers which shocked the foreign visitors. He said that all these cultural activities would be echoed in the West and change some prejudices of foreigners who imagine Turkey as an Arab country.<sup>229</sup> Also, according to Benaroya, the development of society is the responsibility of such kind of cultural institutions. When the cultural activities are made free and easily accessible to people who are unable to appropriate a specific culture, the quality of the population and Turkish society increase.<sup>230</sup> Thus, owing to their “awareness of responsibility”, it is claimed that Turkey has acquired cultural institutions like “those abroad which have been

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<sup>226</sup> Pelin Başaran, “ ‘Picasso in İstanbul’: Popular Reception of an Exhibiton”, *unpublished paper*, 2005.

<sup>227</sup> *Hürriyet*, 18.12.2005.

<sup>228</sup> “Andrew Warhola, better known as Andy Warhol (August 6, 1928 — February 22, 1987), was an American artist, avant-garde filmmaker, writer and celebrity. Warhol also worked as a publisher, music producer and actor. He had experience in commercial art, and was one of the founders of the Pop art movement in the United States” in [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy\\_warhol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy_warhol).

<sup>229</sup> Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu .

<sup>230</sup> Interview on 07.06.06 with Sima Benaroya.

envied and seen as “lacking” in Turkey by people who traveled to western countries.”<sup>231</sup>

In this way, it is claimed that the institutions serve both the development of society and the articulation of Turkey to the international arena. The corporations have “assumed a duty to contribute to the publicity of Turkey in the abroad”. For example, Garanti Bank supported the work of Hüseyin Çağlayan who is an artist and designer, at the Pavilion of Turkey at the International Venice Biennial in 2005. The Pavilion was realized under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and with the collaboration of Istanbul Bilgi University and Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts.<sup>232</sup> The sponsorship of Garanti Bank was a significant contribution for Karadere, since the lack of a Turkish Pavilion, at the Venice Biennial which has been an important and long-standing art event, would have been an “injury” of Turkey. Thanks to their support, many people had the opportunity to see Turkish artists.<sup>233</sup> Moreover, the bank sponsored an exhibition; “Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600”, which opened in 2005 in London with the collaboration of the Royal Academy. The exhibition, which was anticipated to “bring a new dimension to the understanding of Turk’s culture and foster a deeper appreciation of its diversity, splendor and impact over the centuries”<sup>234</sup> attracted many visitors around 360 000s.

In addition, Zeynep Hamedi, the chairman of the board of directors of the Borusan Center for Culture and Arts, describes the change Borusan Holding: to publicize Borusan Philharmony Orchestra as one of best known orchestras abroad.

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<sup>231</sup> Interviews with Nafiz Karadere and Sima Benayora.

<sup>232</sup> <http://www.garantibank.com/welcome/venicebiennial.html>

<sup>233</sup> Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadenli.

<sup>234</sup> <http://www.garantibank.com/welcome/turks.html>

Also, they aim to establish a music school with the collaboration of Julliard Music School in the USA.<sup>235</sup>

Besides the institutions, the reputation of curators from Turkey abroad has been celebrated in the Turkish media. The manager of Platform Garanti and the curator of the 9th International Istanbul Biennale (with Charles Esche) was awarded by three international organizations. He was chosen as one of the successful curators on the “Power 2005” list of Art+Auction published in New York and “Power 100” list of Art Review published in London. Additionally, he shared the Award with Curatorial Studies given by Bard College and Center for Curatorial Excellence with another curator. He accepts his success; saying, “it is not possible to behave modestly on this subject. There is a factor called Vasıf Kortun outside of Turkey.”<sup>236</sup>

The articulation of Turkey with its all actors, institutions and activities in the international arena has become a yardstick for the degree of its Westernization. At that point, contemporary art becomes a focus point. International networks are established around it because it is supposed to level all nationalist differences and deal with “today” and the “future.” It is not something that refers to the “past”. The Contemporary art is expected to pass all the borders conceptually and methodologically. International cultural activities such as biennales and festivals are regarded as providing a platform for all these artistic forms, artists and concepts. Kortun describes the mission of Platform Garanti as; “This space is interested in contemporary art. We have no national mission. Our programme is totally international. Turkish artist have no interest to exhibit their works. We have also Turkish artists, however our main mission is not to establish a national programme for such artists. The second main feature of the programme is that it covers the

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<sup>235</sup> *Radikal*, 28.06.2006.

<sup>236</sup> “Bu konuda tevazu göstermeyeceğim. Türkiye dışında Vasıf Kortun diye bir faktor var.”, *Milliyet*, 4 Şubat 2006.

present and the future. The artistic works are produced from a contemporary perspective.”

<sup>237</sup> So, contemporary art, excluding the traditional, represents “progress” and “innovative.” According to Wu, the corporations support contemporary art to create the image that they are liberal and progressive force in the society. They re-articulate the concept of innovation and thus, aim to legitimate their intervention in the arts.<sup>238</sup> Karadere answers the question of why the bank supports the contemporary art: “The Garanti Bank celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Therefore it is the one of the oldest banks of Turkey. But it has its own unique image that is progressive, innovative and dynamic and proposes most innovative and newest productions... Platform Garanti and Garanti Galeri with its innovative and progressive exhibitions and works complete the image of Garanti Bank”<sup>239</sup>

The supports of these corporations are presented as a great effort aimed at the engagement of the country in the international cultural sphere and a contribution to the civilization of the public. Here, the notion of civilization implies such a kind of unifying power. In Elias words, it “plays down the national differences between peoples; it emphasizes what is common to all human beings or-in the view of its bearers- should be.” However, the ideal of civilization assumes society is a homogenous and coherent entity and veils the inequalities and asymmetric relations embedded in it.

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<sup>237</sup> “Burası güncel sanatla ilgileniyor... Ulusal bir misyonu yok, uluslar arası bir program. Türk sanatçıların sergileme gibi bir arzusu, merakı yok...Türkiye’den sanatçıları da sergiliyor ama asıl amacı milli bir program kurmak değil... İkinci ana özelliği tamamıyla bugün ve gelecekle uğraşması. Yaptığını güncel tutumla yapması.”, Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasıf Kortun.

<sup>238</sup> Chin-tao Wu, “Embracing the Enterprise Culture: Art Institutions Since the 1980s”, *New Left Review*, vol.a, (1998), 31.

<sup>239</sup> “Garanti bankası 60. yılını kutlayan bir banka. Dolayısıyla Türkiye’nin eski bankalarından bir tanesi. Ama baktığınızda bir imajı vardır. Bu imaj genç, yenilikçi, dinamik banka imajıdır dinamik, yenilikçi banka...en innovative en yenileyici en öncü ürünleri Garanti Bankası öne sürer...Platform Garanti’ye, Garanti Galeri’ye baktığınız zaman bunlar Türkiye’nin çağdaş eserlerine ev sahipliği yapan mekanları...”, Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadere.

What kinds of different forms of domination within the ideology of civilization are grounded in the supposedly “universal” character of culture? Is culture really accessible to all as claimed?

When the museums and cultural centers announce their openness to the public, they imagine a public as if it is homogenous.<sup>240</sup> But, does that not a refusal to accept the inequalities in the society? Although the culture and art are claimed to be progressive for all people, how can we explain that the cultural activities are addressed to a small percent of people?

The sociological theory of Bourdieu is crucial in the literature in the sense of taking culture as a contested field and theorizing museum visiting on the basis of the inner relationship between culture and class. For Bourdieu, in all societies there is a struggle between groups and classes to ensure their reproduction. They engage these struggles in the fields, according to the specific logic of that field. This logic of the field is a system of social positions structured in terms of power relations, either by individuals or institutions. The location within the power relations is determined by the distribution of the capital among the actors, which is specific to the field. The individuals struggle for the distribution or the conservation of the existing composition of the capital. Positions are taken in terms of domination, subordination or equivalence to each other in accessing to these resources or capital. Bourdieu’s analysis of the field of cultural consumption is a part of his theory. Cultural field serves as a marker and a reinforcer of class relations, because it proposes a distinction between the high and the low, or the distinguished and the vulgar, in which the distinguished dispositions are a product of the relation between bourgeois habitus and the logic of the cultural field. For Bourdieu, cultural consumption or

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<sup>240</sup> Chin-tao Wu, “Embracing the Enterprise Culture: Art Institutions Since the 1980s”, *New Left Review*, Vol.a, (1998), 31



taste is directly related with material reality and has nothing to do with nature, and describing distinction as a result of an innate disposition is nothing but the major tool for legitimizing social differences. Equipped with educational and social capital, the dominant classes engage in a struggle status-this is the cultural distinction. This struggle includes every cultural practice, yet fields like music or fine arts that are the top of “hierarchy of legitimacies” are more important than the others.<sup>241</sup> So, because any cultural activity or institution is produced in the field of culture, it becomes a space in which the social structures and hierarchies of the field are reproduced and justified.

The Picasso exhibition is a good example of a cultural production. It can be considered as an example of the realization of the “democratization of museum.” In the announcement of the exhibition, it was emphasized that all the people were expected to visit the exhibition, and any target group was not specified. Thus, the museum succeeded in attracting many people owing to the promotion and advertisement for the exhibition done by the museum, the reputation of the artist and the presentation of it as mentioned above (in the context of the notion of civilization). However, when I asked the visitors whether they liked the works during my research, people gave different answers. The difference among the answers was related directly to their existing cultural capital. While less cultivated visitors gave wholehearted approval, appreciated the work when asked whether they liked the exhibition<sup>242</sup>, if they are asked which work they like, they prefer not to reply, because they thought that they did not have the means to decode the art work. In doing so, while the cultivated visitors justified and naturalized their domination,

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<sup>241</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, (Cambridge, UK:Polity Press, 1993).

<sup>242</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, Alain Darbel, and Dominique Schapper, *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and Their Public*, (Cambridge, UK:Polity Press, 1997), 48

the less cultivated ones accepted their lack of cultural capital and thus reproduced the inequality embedded in society. However, “the need to appropriate goods which, like cultural goods, only exist as such for those who have received from their family and school environment the means of appropriating them, can only exist amongst those who can satisfy it and can be satisfied as soon as it exists.”<sup>243</sup> In other words, just like the other cultural practices, people learn to consume legitimate works of art. Also, the visitors who mentioned that they did not “understand” the exhibition saw themselves as responsible for their incapacity. Some visitors belonged to the cultivated classes who had the means of appropriating the art work expressed their opinions about the exhibition freely; they cited the name or features of the work.<sup>244</sup> One of the children who was from a less cultivated class replied to my question of whether it was worth visiting the museum by referring to one of her daily life practices. She said that Picasso had dedicated his soul to his paintings like how we did while performing the *namaz*.<sup>245</sup> This is directly related to being deprived of appropriation of culture. “Those who did not receive the instruments which imply familiarity with art from their family or from their schooling are condemned to a perception of a work of art which takes its categories from the experience of everyday life and which results in the basic recognition of the object depicted”<sup>246</sup> So, the museums are not designed to embrace every member of society regardless of level education or social class. Instead, they are welcoming for those who have the means of appropriating of the works. However, this is the theory of art museum visiting. It shows how art museum visiting can not be open to all.

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid. 107.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>245</sup> Pelin Başaran, “ ‘Picasso in İstanbul’: Popular Reception of an Exhibiton”, *unpublished paper*, 2005.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 44.

There is another aspect in the field of culture which negates the unifying character of culture and affirms its differentiating character. Through their cultural centers and museums, private holders have also turned into the representatives of taste. The leading families have publicized their large private collections to strengthen their image and the cultural capital of their corporations and their positions in the new forms of power. However, the exhibition of “private” in the “public” led a shift in the identity discourse: “Private taste gets perceived as public canon and private stories of collecting gets displayed as art’s history in a society where art has not structured its public, a sphere where art is criticized and historicized.”<sup>247</sup> In other words, they hegemonize their historical narratives based on their collections in the cultural field. Also, the corporations and families through their institutions and supports legitimize particular types of arts and re-confirm the cultural hierarchy in the society. They hegemonise their taste in the cultural field and determine “the other.”

As Bourdieu states, “taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed.”<sup>248</sup> For example, the corporations and social elites support plastic arts, jazz, classical music and contemporary arts in the cultural centers. In this way, they reproduce the domination of elite taste over the others who are deprived of the means to decode the exhibition is justified. The reproduction of this inequality is maintained by the myths which make the inequality invisible. These myths claim that the elite taste in art

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<sup>247</sup> Ali Artun, “The Museum That Cannot Be”, presented at a seminar titled “*Exposer l’art contemporain du monde arabe de Turquie, ici et la bas*”, IISMM-Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2002.

<sup>248</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984), 6.

naturally and inherently exists can not be obtained by educational background. So, the exclusion of who does not have this habitus<sup>249</sup> is naturalized. As a consequence, the cultural centers and museums contribute to the continuation of the status quo based on the asymmetrical power relations. Bigalı emphasizes that the stance of Aksanat is to avoid what is popular and support spheres such as jazz and contemporary art, which resist popularity<sup>250</sup>. Caner adds that Borusan Center strictly refuses “degenerate” music in explaining the reasons for their engagement with classical western music.<sup>251</sup> What is more, they also complain about the young people who are dominated by consumption culture and popular activities.<sup>252</sup> From these perspectives, I claim that this cultural practices both civilizing and distinguishing in the sense of these are complementary to each other. To be more concrete, being civilized is something to be learned by who have already acquired necessary means to learn how to be. The criterions of civilization are put as ideal by them for the rest of society as if everyone can reach it. But, the idealization through making the underlying differences invisible affirms the distinguishing mechanism that is already there at the root of these practices.

#### Cultural Centers as Cultural “Arbiters”

It is not a chance that the activity spheres of the cultural centers rarely collide with each other. The corporations decide to support any sphere which is absent in the country. For example, Karadere says; “Platform Garanti is an institution that

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<sup>249</sup> Habitus is “necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions.” Habitus generates preference (tastes), as well as modes of acquisition and appropriation of cultural and material “goods”. Habitus is a system of cognitive and motivating structures which means that it shapes perceptions, conceptions and actions alike. In Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

<sup>250</sup> Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.

<sup>251</sup> Interview on 08.03.06 with Sami Caner.

<sup>252</sup> Interviews with Derya Bigalı ve Sami Caner.

supports contemporary art. We established a contemporary art archive. We noticed that there is a lack in terms of archiving the art works. There was also no attempt to document the Turkish contemporary artist. Therefore we decided to form a digital documentation center of local living artists and their works.”<sup>253</sup>Moreover, while Aksanat started to organize the first jazz festival of the country or became the permanent sponsor to the Zeynep Tanbay Dance Group, Borusan formed the first private music library and its own Philharmony Orchestra, Yapı Kredi Cultural Center focused on the works of Turkish artists. From the other side, Borusan Holding explains one of the reasons for closing the gallery as being unable to compete with other galleries that have appeared recently. Instead of allocating its financial sources to the gallery which did not provide as much prestige as before, they preferred to increase the amount of support for music in which field they were already an arbiter. In my opinion, there are two reasons; one is to reinforce the image of the corporations. Sharing the power in the activity sphere with other corporations would be useless in their image management. They prefer to have their brand associated with particular arts or cultural activities. Second is the “granted” role of the private sector to fulfill the spheres which state has left. Since the state and non-private agencies do not act in the field, the private institutions get a chance to be arbiters in the specific spheres. Moreover, they present their attempts to supply the deficiency as their social responsibilities to society. By way of concentrating on different branches of high art, they hold particular key positions and announce their uniqueness. Bigalı states “our object is not to compete in the same area with others. We aim to full the gaps and the needs of the art world. Moreover, every part has to

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<sup>253</sup> Platform güncel sanat destek veren bir kurumumuz. Güncel sanatın arşivini tutuyoruz. Türkiye’de böyle bir eksiklik olduğunu tespit ettik. Güncel sanatçılarımızla ilgili de bir arşiv yoktu. Onlar hayattayken yaptığı değerli eserleri dijital arşiv altında tutuyoruz...”, Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadere.

strive to do its best in this field”<sup>254</sup> They rearticulate what is already “absent” at present. They become a focus of power and *authority*. Their arbiter positions enable them to judge which objects/works/artistic products are worthy of being exhibited/performed or artists should be supported. For example, Kortun claims that if a Turkish artist wants to organize an exhibition abroad, s/he has to be in touch with Platform in some way<sup>255</sup> because Platform is part of the international networks for contemporary arts and is mostly funded by them. Moreover, the manager of the center, Vasıf Kortun is a well-known curator in the world. For that reason, when institutions want to evaluate applications from Turkey, they ask Kortun for his references. So, in this case, Platform and Kortun become filters or criteria for choosing/eliminating artists in the contemporary art scene.

In this way, the corporations which support these activities, top executives working in corporations, the curators or managers of cultural institutions - all the power groups- struggle to be hegemonic in the cultural field and compete with each other by means of art. This is obvious in the practices of the three pioneering families: the Eczacıbaşı, Sabancı and Koç families. The foundations of the Eczacıbaşı family have held the monopoly of organizing festivals of jazz, theatre, music, film and biennales for years. The museum of Sabancı family has a reputation for blockbuster exhibitions like Picasso and Rodin. The Koç family has a different position in the field for its museums with collections of technology and valuable objects. These different positions place the families and their institutions in the particular national and international networks, and in these networks they consolidate their hegemonic positions. As an example, the IFCA has been an

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<sup>254</sup> “Hedefimiz aynı alanda rekabet etmek değil, o boşlukları doldurmak ve bir şekilde herkes yaptığının en iyisini yapabilmeye çalışmalı.”, Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.

<sup>255</sup> Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasıf Kortun.

important actor in the representation of Turkey abroad and in making proposals for the national cultural policies owing to its festivals. The foundation became the initiator of the “Cultural Initiative” in collaboration with many actors “to create, planned and fruitful cultural life in the 2000s, with the corporation of government, private sectors, NGOs, universities and other educational institutions and the media”<sup>256</sup> and this initiative has organized symposiums like “Cultural Politics in Turkey” in 1998 with the participation of academics and politicians. Also, the IFCA took an active part in the organization of Istanbul’s candidacy for European Capital of Culture in 2010 by coordinating the participation of all civil society organizations. As the chairman of the executive board, Nuri M. Çolakoğlu was selected from the foundation.<sup>257</sup> The Sakıp Sabancı Museum is already known as a museum with the power and organic relations to bring the works of world-famous European artists to the country. It strengthens its position with every blockbuster exhibition. The museum and the name of family are regarded as contributors to the “Europeanization” of Turkey. Like the name of the Sabancı family with its institutions, the director of the museum, Nazan Ölçer became very famous in this process. She has been presented as the museology expert of Turkey with her close relationships with the cultural institutions abroad. Moreover, she took a part in the exhibition of “Turks” in London as curator with Filiz Çağman, who was the former director of Topkapı Museum. These exhibitions attracted many people and the popularity of them strengthened the position of Ölçer in the country and abroad.

Consequently, the cultural institutions and the founders of them have determined the taste and announced their uniqueness in their branches. In this way,

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<sup>256</sup> <http://www.iksv.org/english/detay.asp?id=29>

<sup>257</sup> <http://www.istanbul2010.org/?p=7&lang=eng>

they refreshed their economic capitals by taking leading roles in the cultural sphere. Furthermore, their involvement has become a part of their public relations strategy.

#### PR-ization of Culture<sup>258</sup>

Since the leaders of corporations accumulated enough capital in Turkey, making money ceased to be unique measure of value for them. Instead, they took their prestige into consideration more and more. Uğurlu describes this situation as, “they do not mention money in America, and they show round the museum. They knew that money was power, but they found out that the real power was art.”<sup>259</sup> Moreover, advertisements were no longer sufficient to compete in the high national and international competition climate. They had to make more familiar with their brands. In this sense, the investments in cultural and arts projects as sponsorships or corporate social responsibility projects have risen.<sup>260</sup> Bigalı states that “the corporations noticed that the investment in culture and arts is more effective than advertising.” For her, “the advertisement is temporal. People remember the cultural activity they went ten years ago rather than an advertisement... In the length of time, the corporations noticed that the contribution of their cultural activities to their images, although it was not targeted at the beginning.”<sup>261</sup> That is to say, the corporations do not hesitate to invest money in cultural and artistic activities, because they regard this kind of investment as a public relation strategy that will provide more profit for their establishments. Capital magazine reports;

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<sup>258</sup> Quoted from the headlines of the book of Wu.

<sup>259</sup> “Amerika’da paradan bahsetmiyorlar, müzeyi gezdiriyorlar. paranın bir güç olduğunu biliyorlardı, ama asıl gücün sanat olduğunu anlamışlardı.”, Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu.

<sup>260</sup> Rıfat N. Bali, *Tarz-ı Hayattan Life Style’a:Yeni Seçkinler, Yeni Mekanlar, Yeni Yaşamlar*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (Istanbul:İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 62-63.

<sup>261</sup> “Reklam geçici. İnsanlar reklamdan daha çok, 10 yıl önce katıldıkları kültür etkinliğini hatırlıyorlar...zaman içinde en başta böyle hedeflenmemiş olursa da, şirketler kültür etkinliklerinin kendi imajlarına katkısının farkına vardılar”, Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.



Within the context of social responsibility, there is a considerable increase in investment (that is) made in culture and art in recent years. Companies started transferring the amount of almost 10 % of their communication budget to culture and art. Thus, they subsidize leading art activities as sponsors or administrators. Through these art activities, they get chance to reach the public (millions of people). The other gain of the companies who make an investment in culture and art is "institutional image" that they've created. Art sponsoring sometimes leads to an effective result rather than advertising campaigns on a particular mass. Through these activities, reaching the high-income groups of companies becomes possible.<sup>262</sup>

So, making profit is no longer limited to financial operations; but the familiarization of the brand and the prestige of the corporation in the estimation of the public also make profit in indirect ways. Uğurlu describes “you know, they say that money is cold, but they warm up the money.”<sup>263</sup> But of course, the ways of “warming money” are important for the corporations. They select the projects or sphere of activities that are compatible with the culture and principles of the corporation. What it means is that they approve the projects or activities which can perfectly reflect the corporations’ images. For example, when I asked Karadere why Garanti Bank organizes jazz festivals, he answered “jazz...spontaneous, played sincerely and teamwork. The concept of the bank is to reward the success of both individuals and team work.”<sup>264</sup> Moreover, the innovative image of the bank explains the establishment of Platform and Garanti Galeri by bank. These institutions are committed to contemporary art, which is grounded on the concept of innovation. In this way, the bank rearticulates the concept to its own corporation culture and

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<sup>262</sup> “sosyal sorumluluk kapsamında son yıllarda kültür ve sanata yapılan yatırımlarda önemli bir artış var. Şirketler iletişim bütçelerinden %10lara varan miktarları kültür sanata aktarmaya başladı. Bu sayede önde gelen sanat etkinliklerine sponsor ya da düzenleyici olarak destek sağlıyorlar. Bu etkinliklerle milyonlara ulaşma şansı elde ediyorlar. Kültür ve sanata yatırım yapan şirketlerin diğer kazancı ise yarattıkları "kurumsal imaj".Sanat sponsorlukları kimi zaman belirli kitleler üzerinde reklam kampanyasından çok daha etkili sonuçlar verebiliyor. Bu etkinliklerle şirketlerin üst gelir grubuna ulaşmaları mümkün hale geliyor.”, *Capital*, 01.05.2006.

<sup>263</sup> “Paraya soguk diyorlar ya, parayı ısıtıyorlar.”, Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu.

<sup>264</sup> “caz...Spontane, içten gelerek çalınan ve ekip çalışmasıdır. Hem bireylerin başarısı hem de ekip çalışmasını ödüllendiren bir anlayış var bankada.”, Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadere.

identifies contemporary art with its image. Nevertheless, the corporations turn down cultural projects which may risk their image or prestigious, as in the example of the Ottoman Bank Archive and Research Center that is sponsored by Garanti Bank as one of the joint stock companies of Doguş Holding. Edhem Eldem, who classified the archives for the Ottoman Bank in the first years of the 1990s, tells the story: Ottoman Bank was established in 1856 and functioned as a state bank until the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic was founded in 1931. The Ottoman Bank continued to survive as a private bank with its limited capital by benefiting from its domestic and foreign status. But with the financial liberalization, the bank started to become not to reach full growth and was seen as a dead investment from Paris. For that reason, the bank was sacrificed and sold to Doĝuş Holding in 1996. Before that time, the administration of the bank did not want to open its archives for the research. The reason was the imperialistic history of the bank and the crucial role of France in it. At that point, the bank saw its own history as “risky” and did not want to damage its image. But the purchase of Doĝuş Holding was perceived as the “nationalization” of the Ottoman Bank. So, the old situation changed and the administrators interpreted the history of the bank in a different way. They accepted that the Ottoman Bank might have had an imperialistic history, but it was no longer their concern since they had purchased the bank as Turkish capital and nationalized it. In this way, they both had a chance to present the history of the bank as a nostalgic narrative and kept their distance from the unpleasant and distasteful parts of it. The risk was eliminated for the bank. The history of the bank was seen in their own eyes as exotic, nice and harmless owing to its nationalization. After that time, they decided to found the archives and research

center in 1997 and the Ottoman Bank Museum as the first private banking museum to exhibit some objects and documents originated from the archive in 2001.<sup>265</sup>

As a result, Garanti Bank strengthened its corporation image by owning the first private banking collection and museum and presented itself as a Turkish corporation which followed the principles of the Turkish Republic rejecting the Ottoman legacy because of its imperialistic implications. The “success” stories for corporations about strengthening their images do not end. Uğurlu declares that the good image of Yapı Kredi Bank has been a result of their care about exhibitions, “we designed all of the exhibitions very carefully. People come to see here with some expectations. This is result of several years’ effort. Yapı Kredi Bank’s image became the supporter of the arts and culture.”<sup>266</sup> Sami Caner also declares the success of the Borusan Center for Culture and Arts in handling its key role to reflect the image of Borusan Group to public.<sup>267</sup>

The quotations show the power of culture and arts to create and consolidate the corporations’ images. In this process, gaining the support of the media is very important for the corporations. The more the media mentions about the corporations’ investments (sponsorships, cultural centers, and cultural activities), the stronger their images become and their brands are publicize. Thus, they advertise their corporations without paying extra advertisement price. To achieve this aim, they endeavor to establish organic relations with the media actors. Wu writes that in England, the media, the BBC and some newspapers refused to cite the names of sponsors for a long time since it meant free advertisement for the sponsors. The

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<sup>265</sup> Interview on 14.03.06 with Edhem Eldem.

<sup>266</sup> “Her sergiye özen gösterdik. Burada iyi bir şey var deyip içeriye giriyor insanlar. Yıllardır verilen emeğin sonucu. Yapı Kredi Bankası kültür sanatı destekler imajına dönüştü.”, Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu.

<sup>267</sup> Interview on 08.03.06 with Sami Caner.

sponsors threatened to withdraw their support from culture and art; and as a consequence of the collaboration of sponsors, the managers of art institutions and governments for the sake of market rules, the resistance of some media actors weakened.<sup>268</sup> Uğurlu claims similar resistance in Turkey. For him, in the beginning of 1990s, the media did not give the name of any exhibition prepared by any bank to prevent free advertisement.<sup>269</sup> There is no evidence to support this claim in my thesis. However, it seems that this resistance did not continue as long as England. Today, the media does not hesitate to give the names of sponsors or the corporations' cultural institutions. Bali quotes from the column of Duygu Asena:

If I were a businessman, the owner of a big business, I would certainly provide sponsorship for art events. For example, sponsoring one of İKSV's festivals or biennale is the biggest favor for the sake of art...It is both a favor and certainly useful for business...For example, during the whole Jazz Festival, whenever I see Garanti Bank's poster, I felt love and happiness. In such enthusiasm I even thought of investing all my money there...(Of course, Yapı Kredi Festival also should be taken into account) Similarly, I embraced the music festival's sponsor Eczacıbaşı, the theatre sponsor Henkel, the film festival's sponsor Turkcell with love in every show and exhibition, and felt sympathy for them.<sup>270</sup>

The gratitude of Asena leads us to the question of whether the cultural investments really increase the profit of the corporations. At that moment, I will focus only on the cultural institutions of corporations rather than their sponsorships. Karadere says that it is not possible to measure the contribution of these investments

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<sup>268</sup> Chin-tao Wu, *Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention since the 1980s*, (London:Verso, 2003), 234-235-236.

<sup>269</sup> Interview on 24.03.06 with Veysel Uğurlu.

<sup>270</sup> "Ben bir iş insanı, büyük bir firma sahibi olsaydım mutlaka ama mutlaka sanat olaylarına sponsor olurum. Örneğin, İKSV'nin festivallerinden birisine ya da bienaline sponsor olmak sanat adına işlenecek sevapların en büyüğü...Hem sevap hem de mutlaka ticari açıdan faydalı bir şey...Örneğin ben Caz Festivali boyunca karşımda duran Garanti Bankası afişini sevgiyle izledim. O coşkuyla gidip tüm paramı ona yatırmayı bile düşündüm...(Tabii bu arada Yapı Kredi Festivali de unutulmamalı) Aynı şekilde müzik festivalinin sponsoru Eczacıbaşı'nı, tiyatro sponsoru Henkel'i, film festivali sponsoru Turkcell'i her gösteride sevgiyle kucakladım, bu şirketlere sempati duydum.", Duygu Asena, "Yaşasın sponsorlar", *Milliyet*, 18 Temmuz 1999 quoted in Rıfat N. Bali, *Tarz-ı Hayattan Life Style'a:Yeni Seçkinler, Yeni Mekanlar, Yeni Yaşamlar*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 93.

to the corporation mathematically, but he adds “After 12 Giant Men (12 Dev Adam) some clients declared that they will work with only Garanti from that time on. We feel this all the time. I think that most of the people who came to visit the exhibition feel sympathy for the bank.”<sup>271</sup> Eldem objects to making an effort to measure this contribution by corporations; “I don’t think that such activities are advertising, indeed. I don’t believe that people would go and invest their money there. This is image management and provides legitimacy in the market...Garanti creates a positive image thanks to such events, especially abroad. It is hard to measure it.”<sup>272</sup> At that point, Bigalı opposes any identification and attachment of Aksanat with Akbank by positing the “missionary stance” of the cultural center. For her, differently from sponsorship, no brochure of the bank is allowed inside the cultural center. Additionally, the ATM has been removed outside building. The first objective of the center is not to contribute to the bank’s image or target any “return” from the visitor. She claims that if the bank targeted any return, it would organize popular activities. But rather, the center only does artistic activities.<sup>273</sup> This statement is highly problematic. The center may not promote any product of the bank directly. It may remove all the objects about the “financial” function of the bank. But, here, it is suggested that this kind of camouflage also works for the benefit of the bank. This camouflage tries to hide the transformation of cultural and economic capital to each other. For that reason, it is very naïve to put forward that the bank only finances the cultural center and does not regard anything except the aesthetic values of the activities. On the contrary, through these cultural investments,

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<sup>271</sup> “12 dev adamdan sonra sadece bundan sonra garanti ile çalışıyorum diyen müşteriler oldu. Biz bunu her an hissediyoruz. Sergiyi gezen birçok insanın banka sempatisini olduğunu düşünüyorum.” Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadenli.

<sup>272</sup> “Bu tür faaliyetlerin gerçek manada reklam olduğunu düşünmüyorum...milletin gidip orada hesap açtıracağına inanmıyorum. Bu imaj managementidir. Piyasada meşruiyet kazanma şeyidir...garanti bundan özellikle yurtdışında imaj kazanımı sağlıyor. Somut bir şekilde ölçmek zor.”, Interview on 14.03.06 with Edhem Eldem.

<sup>273</sup> Interview on 09.03.06 with Derya Bigalı.

it becomes more all-encompassing and fortifies its power. In fact, the last news about Aksanat provides evidence of how Bigalı ignores the complexity of the relations with bank. One of the columnists wrote that TeknoSA, which is a joint-corporation of Sabancı Holding producing technological devices, will open its shop in the first floor of Aksanat that has been used as a gallery.<sup>274</sup> While the ATM was removed outside and this operation is presented as the “independence” of the center from bank, one floor of gallery is planned to be transformed into a shop. At first sight, the “missionary stance” that Bigalı articulated connotes “doing something for society without any economic drive.” It is claimed to be a duty rather than obligation. The corporations are said to have some responsibilities for society. By fulfilling their responsibilities, they give back what they get from society and create added value for society. In fact, the claim is a one dimension of the discourse of “corporate social responsibility.” This concept implies the re-definition of the relationship between the corporations and society; and is not limited to culture and the arts. It is defined by the World Business Council of Sustainable Development as; “Corporate social responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.”<sup>275</sup> As seen, this concept is more comprehensive than philanthropy or charity in the sense of including all the stakeholders of the corporations. The strategy that has been articulated after 1990s assumes the togetherness of the business world and society. It posits that a sustainable world can only be possible by contributing to society as well as producing high quality products such as Ford CEO’su William Clay Ford states, ““There is a difference between a good company and a perfect

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<sup>274</sup> Kemal Yılmaz, *Radikal*, 26.06.2006.

<sup>275</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporate\\_social\\_responsibility](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporate_social_responsibility)

company. A good company provides excellent products and service. A perfect company, however, tries to make world a better place in addition to providing excellent products and service.”<sup>276</sup> For example, Garanti Bank describes its “long term support” as: “the relation between quality a life and quality of products and services has been an incentive for sensitivity and contributions of Garanti Bank in culture, art, education, sports and environment”<sup>277</sup> At that point, the corporations “contributing” to the society announce themselves as corporate citizens who are loyal to their self-interest and searching for ways to align self-interest with the larger good of society.<sup>278</sup> The corporate involvement is legitimized by this discourse based on “working for the good of public”. It is evident that this strategy does not say anything “new”; just a re-formulation of the business world in the development strategy. But of course, through social responsibilities, the corporations reinforce their brands’ images, increase their sales, and power to motivate their workers, decrease operation costs and become more attractive in the eyes of investors and financial analysts.<sup>279</sup> For the executive vice president of Garanti Bank, Karadere assumes, corporate social responsibility is an indirect way of philanthropy. For him, although the support to sports or culture and arts is not regarded as philanthropy, their support indeed provides indirect and incalculable contributions to society. He gives an example of the support of the bank to the Turkish Basketball Team. When the bank supported the team in the first year, the team had great success at the championships. He claims that this success gave morale to the Turkish society in the

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<sup>276</sup> “İyi şirket ile mükemmel şirket arasında bir fark var. İyi bir şirket harika ürün ve hizmetler sunar. Mükemmel bir şirket ise harika ürün ve hizmetler sunmanın yanısıra, dünyayı daha iyi bir yer yapmaya çalışır.”, *Capital*, 1 Mart 2006

<sup>277</sup> [www.garantibank.com/welcome/community\\_relations.html](http://www.garantibank.com/welcome/community_relations.html)

<sup>278</sup> Craig Smith, The New Corporate Philanthropy, *Harvard Business Review*, May-June, (1994), 107.

<sup>279</sup> *Capital* 1 Mart 2006.

years of financial crisis of the country.<sup>280</sup> However, Kortun confessed that he never thought that Platform Garanti was one of the corporate social responsibility projects of Garanti Bank, contrary to Karadere, because of their involvement in contemporary art which is something that abstract. So for him, Platform can not be considered in the context of corporate social responsibility.<sup>281</sup>

Edhem Eldem, as one of the curators of the cultural institutions Garanti Bank reaches a similar conclusion; “If providing, offering and discussing culture is a responsibility, a mission, it may not even be the job of private sector. I do not assume that as a responsibility. It is a good thing that such firms enter this field where the state does not invest.”<sup>282</sup> Here, we can see that it is highly debatable whether “contributing” to the culture is the responsibility of the corporations. In my opinion, the discourse of “for a public good” requires to be questioned. What is public good?, and who determines it?

But it is generally accepted that their involvement (or intervention) in culture serves to consolidate the public images of corporations. As I said before, the increase in the number of cultural institutions also needs to be analyzed in the context of global city debate. I claim that one of the reasons why the corporations are included in the number of cultural and artistic activities is about their leading role in creating the city image and being the main beneficiary from this image.

### The Role of Culture in Global City Fantasy

“...Burglary, pick pocketing and assault decrease with a percentage of at least 40-50 in streets that have light. Crime hides in the dark. The attacker

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<sup>280</sup> Interview on 21.06.06 with Nafiz Karadere.

<sup>281</sup> Interview on 10.03.06 with Vasif Kortun.

<sup>282</sup> “Kültür vermek sunmak tartışılmak sorumluluksa görevse özel sektöre düşmemesi bile gerekebilir. Öyle bir sorumluluk olduğunu varsaymıyorum.devletin yatırım yapmadığı bir ortamda bu kuruluşların böyle bir şeye girişmesi iyi bir şey.”, Interview on 14.03.06 with Edhem Eldem.



could be identified in light. Istanbul needs to be illuminated seriously. Its biggest handicap is darkness. If Istanbul claims to be a world city, it has to be alive and illuminated for 24 hours.”<sup>283</sup>

These words are quoted from the interview with Kadir Topbaş, the Mayor of Istanbul Municipality. He claims that the more the city is lightened, the less crime will be committed. In other words, the (en)lightened world will be able to eliminate the crime which belongs to the darkness. Or in the world that is not dark, the crime will not survive any more. However, this assumption that equates the (en)lightment with the “betterment” or civilization of the city veils the real conditions embedded in the asymmetrical class relations important to understand the criminal acts. This approach defines the betterment of the city through the invisibility of crime rather than abolishing the reasons led to these crimes. It sees the city as a coherent and homogenous entity that is moving towards its utopian goal called “global city”. However, this is very similar to the “strategic beautification” of Paris implemented by Haussmann in the nineteenth century. The streets and buildings were re-arranged and wide boulevards, new railroads, public parks were constructed. Paris was designed as the “largest” city in the Europe. But, it was based on the illusion of social equality by promising accessibility to everyone. However, it excluded the working class to the suburbs. Also, the new urban perspective united all the fragmentations of the city and it was transformed to a coherent entity. This totalistic perspective homogenized and standardized all the different perspectives and repressed all the antagonisms in the city that might have lead to a revolutionary transformation. The new arrangement of the city prevented the making of barricades

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□ “...Aydınlatılan sokaklarda kapkaç, yankesicilik, hırsızlık, saldırı olayları en az yüzde 40-50 azalıyor. Suç karanlıklarda gizleniyor. Aydınlık olan yerde eşkal tanımlanıyor. İstanbul'un ciddi bir şekilde aydınlatılması lazım. Zaten İstanbul'un en büyük handikapı karanlık bir şehir olmasıdır. Eğer İstanbul'un dünya kenti olma iddiası varsa, 24 saat yaşayan aydınlık bir şehir olması şarttır.”, Kadir Topbaş, *Radikal*, the interview by Neşe Düzel, 02.01.2006.

by means of its wide boulevards.<sup>284</sup> As in Paris, Istanbul now is progressing towards its utopian goal; a global city with large buildings that will be constructed in the new urbanization projects. As the city becomes bigger, it is closer to its utopian goal. The lower classes are dislocated from their own places and banished towards the suburbs. The promise of happiness of the ideology of progress for everyone becomes an illusion; only the dominant classes can live in peace in “the (en)lightened city.” This illusion also is created in the cultural institutions which are claimed to be civilization agencies of the country but which are instrumentalized by the corporations and elites of the city and which serve for the interests of the privileged class.

Up to this page, although the title of my thesis claims to evaluate the development of cultural centers in Turkey within the broader social and historical context, I focused only on the centers in Istanbul. The reason is not my neglectfulness, or because of Istanbul is the city in which I live, but rather, that the “preference” of the corporations to establish their institutions in Istanbul.<sup>285</sup> So, why do they prefer Istanbul instead of many cities in where they could be unrivalled because of lacking these kinds of institutions? The key motivation behind their preferences is the global city fantasy of Istanbul imagined by the elites. For example, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality defines its vision as “A pioneering and leader municipality which made Istanbul, Turkey’s face and window to the rest of the world, a sustainable world city with a high life standard, by owning its priceless legacy,” By calling Istanbul a global city, the municipality imagines a city which "is

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284 Walter Benjamin, “Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century,” in *The Arcades Project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999).

285 This does not mean that there does not exist any cultural center in other cities in Turkey. For example, Anadolu Kültür A.Ş. which executes as a corporation established centers in Diyarbakır and Kars. For more information see [www.anadolukultur.org](http://www.anadolukultur.org) .

a regional and international center in fields of finance, culture and tourism, a bridge between the East and the West, competitive, a world leader and center."<sup>286</sup> However, here it is not stated why Istanbul should/can/has to be a global city in the country. To understand it, we have to explore the relationship between global city fantasy and globalization.

The global city<sup>287</sup> is defined as one of the spatial categories that emerged with globalization and it is assumed that the new global economy is controlled and administrated from these global cities. Further, the claim that if the cities implement the required policies, they will get the status of global city and will be able to compete with other cities<sup>288</sup> At that moment, Keyder proposes that Istanbul has an opportunity to develop its sources and increase its global status owing to the new world in which the economic development of nations are not directed by the state, but rather by the global capital that mobilizes around the world without recognizing any border. In these cities, the service and information sectors relative to the productive sector and the growth in the service sector activities such as financial institutions, banks, communication, media and advertisement institutions serve the larger regions as different from the previous period.

In this world, the cities are independent from their national economies and have their own initiatives. According to him, Istanbul should take the initiative and

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<sup>286</sup>“Türkiye'nin görünen yüzü ve dünyaya açılan penceresi olan İstanbul'u eşsiz mirasına sahip çıkararak, yaşam kalitesi yüksek, sürdürülebilir bir dünya kenti yapan öncü ve önder belediye.”, “finans, kültür, turizm alanlarında bölgesel ve uluslararası çekim merkezi, Doğu ile Batı arasında köprü oluşturan, rekabet gücü yüksek, dünya lideri ve çekim merkezi bir İstanbul.”, [www.ibb.gov.tr](http://www.ibb.gov.tr).

<sup>287</sup> For the different approaches on Global City see S. Amin, *Capitalism in The Age of Globalisation* (London:Zed Books, 1997); S. Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton University Press, 1991); M.P. Smith, “*The Global City-Whose Social Construct Is It Anyway? A Comment on White*”, *Urban Affairs Review*, 33 (4), 1998; P.Taylor, “*World Cities and Territorial States Under Conditions of Contemporary Globalisation*”, *Political Geography*, 5, 2000.

<sup>288</sup> Binnur Öktem, “Küresel Kent Söyleminin Kentsel Mekanı Dönüştürmedeki Rolü: Büyükdere-Maslak Aksı” in *Istanbul'da Kentsel Ayrışma: Mekansal Dönüşümde Farklı Boyutlar* Hatice Kurtuluş (eds), (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2005), 25-26.

integrate to the global system in order to get advantage in the long run. In the case of insisting on the nationalist policies, Istanbul will be excluded from the process and the cost of the exclusion will be paid not only by the city, but by the whole country. So, the city should make the necessary investments such as communication networks, international airports, business centers, hotels, restaurants, entertainment spaces to attract more investments to city and provide better services for high qualified employees working in these global corporations. In this way, they will meet the requirements of capital and take place in the top of the hierarchy of the global cities.<sup>289</sup> Here, Keyder proposes some strategies for Istanbul to become global city without questioning the discourse of global city. He perceives the trend of global cities as an opportunity for Istanbul for its redevelopment. What is important for this thesis is the role of culture and arts in the global city strategies and what is veiled or suppressed by this discourse. To increase the competition, the global cities apply similar political strategies: first; they guarantee foreign investors and encourage large-scale infrastructure projects second; they “sell” their city image to the whole world and potential investors.<sup>290</sup> According to Aksoy and Robbins, the images of the cities have become important as well as what they present. So, the cultural strategies that are used to create city images which are claimed to distinguish themselves from the others are also a part of global city discourse besides to the economic strategies. For that reason, the cities encourage projects like cultural centers and entertainment spaces which can be marketed in the international arena, but also are open to the effects of local culture.

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<sup>289</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *Ulusal Kalkınmacılığın İflası*, 2nd edition (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1996), 94-105.

<sup>290</sup> Binnur Öktem, “Küresel Kent Söyleminin Kentsel Mekanı Dönüştürmedeki Rolü: Büyükdere-Maslak Aksı” in *İstanbul’da Kentsel Ayrışma: Mekansal Dönüşümde Farklı Boyutlar*, Hatice Kurtuluş (ed), (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2005), 32.

In addition to the physical investments, they necessitate to make investments such as advertisements and exhibitions in order to present themselves in the international arena,<sup>291</sup> because art exhibitions, galleries and museums, fairs and festivals do attract not only tourists, but also global capital, executive classes and qualified labor power. Accordingly, the cities are required to be confirmed as places for contemporary art by cultural production networks even to constitute strong and stable economic structure. In this context, culture becomes a means to “sell” the city.<sup>292</sup> The General Manager of IFCA, Görgün Taner describes the transformation of Istanbul in the last ten years realized by “the leaders of city culture” like IFCA, Babylon, Borusan Center, Robinson Bookstore in a way of their settlement in the Pera (Beyoğlu) District. For example, for the last biennale (2005) around 5000 foreign artists and curators visited the city. For him, the reason is that Istanbul has become a “center of gravity” because of its “young, chaotic and mythical” features. Taner claims that as a consequence of this transformation, foreign artists who did not before know the location of Turkey in the world now have a great wish to come to Istanbul.<sup>293</sup> The aim of the Biennale project was “to refurbish Istanbul, which has always been mentioned with its geopolitical location, rich historical legacy and cultural diversity, by reviving its lost magnificence and market it as a world city.”<sup>294</sup> Besides the festivals and biennales, the international exhibitions also serve this aim. The Picasso exhibition was perceived as a means to strengthen the image of Istanbul. In the words of Ölçer, the manager of the museum; “This exhibition makes Turkey a

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<sup>291</sup> However, for the authors, since they follow the similar strategies, they resemble to each other as a contrary what is targeted through their image-making strategies.

<sup>292</sup> Sibel Yardımcı, *Kentsel Değişim ve Festivalizm: Küresel İstanbul'da Bienal*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 68.

<sup>293</sup> *Radikal*, 24.09.2005.

<sup>294</sup> “jeopolitik konumu, tarihsel zenginliği ve kültürel çeşitliliği devamlı dile getirilen İstanbul’u, kaybettiği ihtişamıyla yeniden donatmak ve bir dünya kenti olarak pazarlamaktır.”, Sibel Yardımcı, *Kentsel Değişim ve Festivalizm: Küresel İstanbul'da Bienal*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005), 69.

part of the world: In France, there is this exhibition; in Barcelona, there is this exhibition and in Istanbul there is Picasso!”<sup>295</sup>

As well as increasing international cultural activities, the establishment of cultural centers in Istanbul should also be considered as a part of urban transformation projects which are legitimized by the discourse of the global city. While they contribute to the image of the city with their activities, the corporations that support them benefit from the same image and they strengthen their positions in the “symbolic economy”<sup>296</sup> of the city. What is the common point for most of the cultural centers is that they are located in Beyoğlu, which is presented as “the center of gravity of Istanbul.”<sup>297</sup> The feature of Beyoğlu is that it has been witnessing huge urban transformation projects from the 1980s in order to revitalize what was the first “European” district, where the Levantine and non-Muslim population of Greek, Armenians and Jews lived in the majority, with banks, theaters, hotels, large stores, apartments in nineteenth century. However, the city lost its privilege after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the government chose Ankara as a capital city and which left Istanbul as a symbol of the degenerated Ottoman Empire and its multicultural population and since many of the city’s minorities have left the country.

In the beginning of the 1980s, Dalan, the Mayor, started “Tarlabaşı Yıkımı” (destruction of Tarlabaşı) that aimed to open Tarlabaşı Street and destroy many buildings surviving from nineteenth century. Through this cleaning, rehabilitation and destruction, he sought to solve the problem of traffic jams, prostitution and

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<sup>295</sup> *Zaman*, 23.11.2005.

<sup>296</sup> Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities*, (Cambridge, Mass.:Blackwell, 1996 reprinting c 1995).

<sup>297</sup> <http://www.beyoglu-bld.gov.tr/>

illegal drug traffic.<sup>298</sup> But, in reality, the plan was to market the city as an international arena. To achieve this aim, while the production activities were moved out of the city, the center focused on managerial activities. The city center was divided into business, shopping and cultural and historical districts.<sup>299</sup> In this way, the city was re-arranged to fulfill the requirements of a global city. For the marketing of the city, some regions were revitalized and constitute the image of the city.

Beyoğlu has become a nostalgic symbol of “nostalgia for the past, lost times and ‘Istanbul once upon a time’, which is idealized as symbol of an unattainable civilization and imagined and adorned very differently from what it really is.”<sup>300</sup> for elites because of its architecture and history. It has begun to revitalize the supposed multicultural structure of the region through various nostalgic images and many images belong to past, such as the tram, have been re-introduced. In order to revive Beyoğlu, “Beyoğlu Güzelleştirme ve Koruma Derneği” (The Association of Beautification and Conservation of Beyoğlu) was instituted in 1985 with the leadership of businessmen. More interestingly, the minorities who were displaced due to state policies were turned into figures that represented civilization and into nostalgic means for the elites who felt themselves a “minority” because of the massive immigration from rural areas. Therefore, the minority cultures who once had been suppressed with violence became a cultural commodity circulated within the market thanks to the articulation to the world-city marketing strategies. This articulation rendered the violence carried out by the state policies invisible.

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<sup>298</sup> Ayfer Bartu, “Eski Mahallelerin Sahibi Kim?: Küresel Bir Çağda Tarihi Yeniden Yazmak” in *Istanbul: Küresel ile Yerel Arasında*, Çağlar Keyder (eds), (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2000), 46-48.

<sup>299</sup> Sibel Yardımcı, *Kentsel Değişim ve Festivalizm: Küresel İstanbul’da Bienal*, (Istanbul: İletişim, 2005), 42.

<sup>300</sup> “geçmişe, yitip gitmiş zamana, erişilemeyecek bir uygarlık simgesi olarak idealize edilen” ve “gerçekte olduğundan çok daha değişik bir şekilde hayal edilen ve güzelleştirilen “bir zamanların İstanbul’u”na karşı duyulan nostalji.”, Rıfat N. Bali, *Tarz-i Hayattan Life Style’a: Yeni Seckinler, Yeni Mekanlar, Yeni Yasamlar*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 135.

The “beautification” projects of Beyoğlu have continued up to now. Beyoğlu Municipality Mayor, Ahmet Misbah Demircan mentions about “service brands” like “Güzel Beyoğlu” (Beautiful Beyoğlu), “Tertemiz Beyoğlu” (Clean Beyoğlu), “Işıl Işıl Beyoğlu” (Shining Beyoğlu) under the name of “Beautification of Beyoğlu”. He declares that their aim is “to construct cities with its modern, old and historical structure which address to tourism and in which people live happily and peacefully.” To achieve this aim, the municipality “beautified” 4000 buildings in two years in Talimhane, Gümüşsuyu, Sıra Selviler in a way of painting or washing them and repaired the streets.<sup>301</sup> Furthermore, for the district, a special law of urban restructuring was made which will be first applied in Tarlabası. According to this law, if the owners of the building do not agree with the municipality about restructuring, the municipality will have the right to expropriate the buildings.<sup>302</sup> However, this law has been criticized since the owners of the buildings who will not able to pay the required cost for the beautification will be evicted from their locations which will result in the marginalization of the economic disadvantaged class in the city. However, the possible “victims” are not just them, but also some artists will be dislocated. For example, publicized as an “alternative space”, Istanbul Sanat Merkezi (Istanbul Art Center) which has hosted artists’ workshops and theatre groups for 18 years, will be closed as a consequence of the purchase of the building and restoration will begin by a by a construction firm.<sup>303</sup>

The story of the building is interesting to show the evolution of Beyoğlu. The building was constructed as an Armenian school in 1843, but closed in 1982 because of a lack of student. After that time, the Armenian Foundation rented the building to Adnan Vurdevir, and it was transformed into the art center. With a law that allows

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<sup>301</sup> GH, 08.06.2006.

<sup>302</sup> <http://www.beyoglu-bld.gov.tr/>

<sup>303</sup> *Radikal* 13.07.2006.



minority foundations to hire their assets, the foundation decided to hire it to the firm.<sup>304</sup> It is not declared what the building would be transformed into by the firm, but it is sure that the building would be adapted to the urban transformation in Tarlabası. As many historical buildings in Beyoğlu have been transformed into another thing detached from its history through the transformation process, this building will probably be turned into something which makes a profit for the owners<sup>305</sup>. In this context, corporations can utilize the cultural heritage of the region in a nostalgic way and the consumer interests created by the urban transformation projects. So, they can be part of the target to make the city a “world-city” by becoming authorities over the future of the city. Although the corporations have defined their investments in the cultural centers, as “missionary stance,” since these centers act as appendages of the corporations, both determine and, utilize, the process of urban transformation, they internalized the capital logic of this process and became responsible for the social exclusions led by this transformation. Owing to the projects of urban transformation, the spaces have been rearranged according to this logic and these spaces render the capitalist class more distinguished and richer since the spaces become, more and more, a means for capital accumulation. Gentrification of the places such as Cihangir, Galata, Fransız Sokagi and the new business centers founded in Haydarpaşa, Kartal-Küçükçekmece are part of these

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Of course, here, oppression and pain experienced by the minorities has been rendered invisible again: the close relationship between the fact that there is no Armenian student who can attend the school and the process of homogenization of the city has been disregarded. Also, the building has been exposed to the threat of being closed several times due to the long-term repression policies of the state about the assets of minority foundations. In other words, this process can not be explained only by the displacement of an alternative artist group. The processes that enable this group to continue renting there should also be studied. This can inform us about the role of the artists in the gentrification process. Gentrification “is the process...by which poor and working-class neighborhoods in the inner city are refurbished by an influx of private capital and middle-class homebuyers and renters....a dramatic yet unpredicted reversal of what most twentieth-century urban theories had been predicting as the fate of the central and inner-city.” quoted from N. Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (1996).

projects. These projects enable the elites to get together in the spaces offered for their consumption and to reinforce their social privileges. Thus, they lead to the disappearance of any public space in which members of different classes can meet. It can be claimed that the “togetherness” of the elites- “togetherness” only for consumption- is deprived of the political characteristics of public space. The elites consume the city which aims to be a world-city – that is purified of the “negative” characteristics and homogenous- through gentrified and privilege spaces and activities. And with the districts where they are instituted and their activities addressed to very specific groups, the culture centers proposed as public spaces have become the privilege spaces of the elites. In this way, the corporations which institute these centers both advance their authorities over the public spaces of the city and reach the members of the class who are their target. Within this process, culture has been coded as universal and accessible for everyone and thus the social exclusions have been rendered invisible. And the majority of the people in the city who are exposed to many forms of violence and inequality in their daily lives have been invited to consume the “culture” which is supposedly progressive and uniting.

Put in a nutshell, the development of cultural centers also is related to the global city fantasy and urban transformation projects applied in Istanbul especially after the 1980s. It is not coincident that the culture centers select Beyoğlu which is a region aimed to revitalize. Beyoğlu has been re-constituted and branded, again, as a culture, art and entertainment center in Istanbul thanks to the urban transformation projects. While art and culture have become means for marketing the cities, the corporations that establish the culture institutions have become the leaders of this process. They also reinforce the social divisions and attain the elites who are consumers of these institutions by articulating public spaces into their own.

In this chapter, I tried to arise some debates about the attributed roles of cultural centers and the discourses of the leading figures of the cultural sphere. By doing so, I argued hat the privatization of culture can not be explained only by the discourse that the corporations serve for the public good by supporting or establishing cultural institutions and activities. It is more than this, and it has different aspects. This process is related directly to the Westernization endeavors of the country for many years, the visibility of corporations through being authority in the formation of taste, the instrumentalization of culture by the corporations and the global city fantasy. Taking all these aspects into consideration, we can understand the reasons for why the cultural turn and privatization of culture are proceed together.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

In this study, I tried to analyze the privatization of culture in Turkey after 1980 by specifying on the cultural institutions established by the pioneering bourgeoisie families and private corporations. My aim was not to make a cultural research and give a detailed analysis about the cultural and artistic world in the country. Rather, I formulated this issue in the context of macro social and economic transformations which mainly paved the way for the cultural turn in the general sense. Here, I claimed that attributing importance to culture and privatization of it are two sides of the coin, and not attached from the social changes.

This work, at the first sight, might seem as a critique towards the instrumentalization of culture by economic interests. On the contrary, I do not attribute any autonomy to the arts. The reason why the thesis work went further into a question by continuous and persistent exposing of the inner relationship of art and economy was the discourses of figures that put arts as if it was separated from economy. However, it was the strategy of the corporations to position the arts above their own interests and by doing so, to legitimize their involvement to arts. In my opinion, rejecting this relation between art and economy, as best exemplified in the words of Bigali; “missionary stance” serves for the privatization of culture.

One of my questions was that what the tools of the wealthy class were before 1980s for being more visible and legitimizing themselves as after 1980s. This question also led me to search for the class compositions to which the bourgeoisie was included and the evaluation of this composition after 80s. Indeed, these are the lines of a more general process. With the years of 1980s, culture became

determining in the discourse of developmentalism as different from the previous period in which this discourse had economical base. In this situation, the involvement of bourgeoisie to the cultural sphere strengthened its hegemony and affirmed the growth of cultural sphere. Hereafter, while bourgeoisie class started to be associated with its relation with culture, the other classes, especially middle one, was articulated to this kind of imagination of developmentalism and the civilization of the country was evaluated through their cultural practices.

My main question of why investments in culture and the arts gained importance after the 80s as compared to the preceding years unavoidably led me to elaborate the social investments of the private corporations between 1960-1980. What was the most striking was that the well-known leading corporate families like Koç and Sabancı were the leading ones in the philanthropic activities. I assumed that it was important to understand why the wealthy class in Turkey made philanthropic activities so as to diagnose the reasons for their inclination to the cultural investments. According to me, the decision for what they spend their money is related to the social conditions in which the wealth is accumulated since it reveals the position of bourgeoisie in the society as well as its requirements and the mode of its relation with society. By departing from this point, I claimed that their philanthropic activities had close relationship with the import substitution industrialization model of that period. In this period in which the developmentalism was identical with increase of production, the bourgeoisie formulated its relation with the rest of society through the populist strategies targeted to create a productive and consumer society. The wealthy class legitimated its wealth and achieved its goal of productive society by contributing to the education and health of the society in such a situation in which their wealth was not tolerated as after 1980s. Of course,

this process was not one-dimensional as I claimed. But, I think that I made clearer the transition from philanthropy to culture thanks to my emphasis on this aspect. However, I am aware of the fact that my arguments about this period are weak. These arguments can only be consolidated by analyzing the practices of bourgeoisie, especially, in the countries in where ISI was applied. Being only concentrated on Turkey without any comparison is unfair to the literature on philanthropy and leads to the ignorance of the peculiarities of the country. What is the relationship of their philanthropic activities with the approach of developmentalism and populism? If their activities continue today, what are the differences of contemporary practices from the previous period? Does similar relation exist in other countries in their industrialization period? I believe that my arguments, so thesis, will become more comprehensive and well-constructed after making a detailed analysis and persuading the corporations for sharing their knowledge and archives in order to answer these questions.

I sketched out three lines for the research of the period after 1980. While doing this, I took the transformation in the role of politics in the daily lives of people to the center. While the politics was penetrated to the people's lives in the previous period, and the wealth of bourgeoisie had political meanings for the masses and for that reason bourgeoisie was in the need of justification of its wealth, after 1980s, the political and economic were separated and the political was burdened with negative meanings. After that time, the wealth was not questioned and the wealth class made its consumption habits visible. In other words, the threats towards its wealth, life styles and habits were eliminated. Furthermore, the alternative social projects were marginalized and social problems such as poverty was reduced to the technical issue with the change of the content of developmentalism. Moreover, the non

governmental organizations (NGO) operated as the main channel for solving these problems. All these secured and fortified the position of bourgeoisie in the society as a class. Shortly, the first line is based on the development of bourgeoisie; the increasing of its increasing, visibility and the change of its relation with the rest of society.

The second line which is related to the first, but not hierarchically, is the cultural turn realized after 1980s. After that time, everything was induced to culture and it became main dynamic in economics and politics. Here, it is claimed that there are four reasons: firstly, following to the de-industrialization of cities and pushing of industrial production to the poorer countries, culture became a means for constructing image of the city and a source for the city by attracting more investments. Secondly; the rise of service class as parallel with the decline of working class and its organizational capacity. The lifestyles of the top executives of this class, new urban professionals, were idealized for the rest of society. Especially consumption was glorified by them and they acquired status through it. The consumption of cultural productions also functioned in the same way. They involved to the cultural practices to increase their own and corporation's social, cultural, and indirectly economic capital, and also they took prestige in the society. The third reason is the attributed role of culture as unifying the differences as well as concealing them together with the increasing of income gap. This view can be seen in the claim of transforming the society by the means of culture and art. Here it is explicitly seen that the developmentalist project based on economic welfare has been expired. Rather, culture and arts are on the agenda for the "betterment" of the society. Last, the articulation of bourgeoisie to the newly emerging areas in order to strengthen its hegemonic position. All these process led to rise of culture and formed

the main frame of privatization of culture. In other words, the main axis of the developmentalism projects is culture.

Of course, this process is also related to the restriction of the state functions. For that reason, I also searched for the state policies in the privatization of culture and I claimed that the growth of cultural sphere, which called as liberalization of it by the leading figures processed with the delegation of cultural sphere to the private hands. The state has accelerated this process by making some laws which give incentives for cultural entrepreneurship. The state was minimized in its functions but indeed it continues its power in indirect ways and provides the consolidation of the privatization of culture. In this way, it achieves to make the culture as profitable area. As a third line, I tried to analyze why the corporations invest on culture by elaborating the discourses of related actors and manages of cultural institutions that are perceived as liberalizing practice. What was my aim was to show the distinguishing mechanisms the cultural institutions actually have behind their liberalizing and civilizing images. They were distinguishing in the sense of that they were specialized in the high art branches of which knowledge could only be provided by a small group who had means to get it and they idealized their own knowledge and put its own knowledge as requirements for the civilization. Moreover, the corporations became cultural arbiters in the fields that they support and hegemonize them. They legitimized their involvement by claiming about their cultural institutions as civilizing and progressive agents. In this way, their cultural institutions provide high prestige and status in the society. Furthermore, the institutions they established or their any support to culture are also the public relations strategy for them. But, they try to hide their benefits by using the discourse of “serving for public good”. They call it as “corporate social responsibility”.



However, does it really more profitable than any advertisement? It is not easy to answer this question, since their benefits are not measurable. In my opinion, it is not important whether it is more profitable or not, but it is doubtless that supporting to culture and art provides a softening image for themselves. It is related to the attributed role of culture which is presented as above all contradictions and differences.

This image is also used in the city to make all the darkness of the city invisible, or as if all the differences between people in the city could be eliminated by the means of culture. The private cultural centers mostly locate in Beyoglu, Istanbul of which is imagined as global city. The cultural institutions are both the beneficiar and creators of this imagination. Through it, the institutions and their founder private institutions reach their targeted elites consumer group which is emerged as the output and aim of the global city projects. Furthermore, they consolidate their images by locating in the most sterile regions.

This thesis asks many questions to reply and has big gaps to full. But what was interesting for me that when I argued this issue in the atmosphere that many actors from cultural and artistic sphere participated; these arguments were surprise for many of them. At that moment, I understood that this debate is newly arising in Turkey. People recently started to question the involvement of corporations. For that reason, I hope that the thesis will be able to provide worthy arguments for ones who will make further researches.

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