

NEW INCLINATIONS IN THE MUSEUMIFICATION PROCESS OF
PRIVATE MUSEUMS IN TURKEY AFTER 2010

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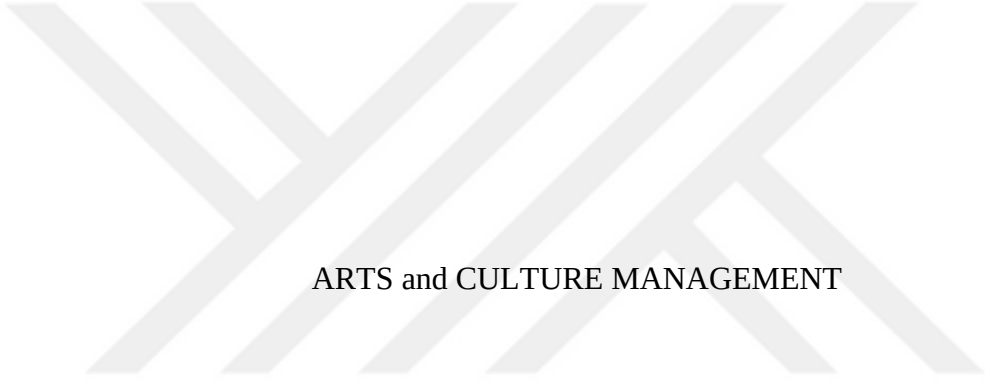
İLKAY SALAR

JUNE, 2022

NEW INCLINATIONS IN THE MUSEUMIFICATION PROCESS OF PRIVATE
MUSEUMS IN TURKEY AFTER 2010

İLKAY SALAR

MASTER'S THESIS



ARTS and CULTURE MANAGEMENT

SUPERVISOR

PROF. DR. MARCUS GRAF

YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY

JUNE, 2022

PLAGIARISM

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ÖZET

“Türkiye’de Özel Sanat Koleksiyonlarının Müzeleşme Sürecinde 2010 Yılı Sonrası Yeni Oluşumlar” başlıklı yüksek lisans tez çalışması, koleksiyon olgusu üzerinden, batı dünyasıyla karşılaştırmalı olarak, Türkiye’deki sanat koleksiyonerliğinin gelişimini, 2000’li yıllarda bu sanat koleksiyonlarının özel müzelere dönüşümünü ve 2010 yılı sonrasında özel müzelerin yer seçimlerinde görülen yeni oluşumları kapsamaktadır. Tarih öncesi çağlardan beri var olma ve sahip olma dürtüsüyle toplayan, biriktiren ve bu birikimleriyle koleksiyonlar oluşturan insanoğlu, yüzyıllar içerisinde bunu bir bilinç ve tutarlılıkla harmanladığı vakit koleksiyoner olmuş; rasyonel bir örgütlenme ve kurumsallaşma ile seküler hale dönüştürdüğü vakit ise müzeler kurmuştur. Ticaretle zenginleşen Avrupa’da 15. yüzyılda Rönesans itibariyle gelişen bir koleksiyonerlikten, 17. yüzyılda halka açılan koleksiyonlardan ve 18. yüzyıldan itibaren başlayan modern müzeleşme sürecinden söz edilebilirken ve batıda koleksiyonerlik olgusunun köklerinde burjuvazi var iken; Rönesans’ı yaşamayan, padişah ve ailesi dışında asilzade sayılacak bir sınıfı olmayan ve üst tabaka adledilen kesimin de hiçbir zaman batıdaki kadar ayrıcalıklı ve baskın olamadığı, ekonomik ve toplumsal çöküşler geçiren Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda, saray hazineleri, toplanma sistemi ve mantığı bakımından Avrupa’yla benzerlik göstermiş olsa dahi, koleksiyoner bir kitlenin gelişimi gecikmeli olmuş, müzeleşme de yaklaşık iki yüzyıl geriden takip ederek 19. yüzyıl sonrasına kalmıştır. Sanat koleksiyonerliğinin temellerini sanatın özerkleşerek bir ‘değer’ olarak pazarını yaratması oluşturduğu için, sanat koleksiyonerliği ile sanat piyasası birbiriyle eşgüdümlü ilerlemektedir. Atatürk’ün kurucusu olduğu Cumhuriyet Türkiye’sinde,

erken dönemde milli kültür politikaları çerçevesinde sanatın hâmisi devlet olmuş iken; 1980 sonrası başlayan liberal ekonomi politikalarıyla sanat, devletten özel sermayeye tasnif edilmiş, sanat yapıtının ve koleksiyonerliğin yükseldiği bir dönemin kapıları aralanmıştır. 1990'lı yıllarla başlayan küreselleşme politikalarıyla dünyaya entegre olmaya çalışan, özel sermayenin egemenliğindeki Türk sanat piyasasında, 2000'li yıllar, sayıları hayli artmış olan sanat koleksiyonerlerinin İstanbul'da açtıkları özel müzeler vasıtasıyla görünür hale geldikleri çok dinamik bir dönemi içermektedir. Bu dönemde kültür sanat faaliyetlerinde başlayan merkez dışı, periferi oluşumlarını, 2010 yılı itibariyle, doğdukları topraklara koleksiyonerlik hikâyelerini taşımak isteyen, ülkelerinde merkez dışında bir var oluşu da göstermeyi hayal eden sanat koleksiyonerlerinin Anadolu'da kurdukları özel müzeler takip etmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında; koleksiyonerliğin köklerinden başlayarak, Avrupa'dan Amerika'ya batı dünyasındaki sanat koleksiyonlarının müzelere tahavvülüne uzanan ve oradan Osmanlı'yı da kapsayarak Türkiye'deki siyasi, iktisadi ve toplumsal zemin üzerinden, sanat piyasası ve koleksiyonerliğin gelişimini ve nihayetinde bu özel koleksiyonların müzeleşmesini içeren yaklaşık iki bin beş yüz yıllık bir yolculuğa çıkılmakla kalmayıp; 2010 yılı sonrasında Anadolu'da kurularak, kentle bağ kuran, kentle bölgeyi çekim merkezi haline getiren, yenileri için ilham kaynağı olan ve sanat tarihi içerisinde kendilerine yer açan özel müzelere de dikkat çekilerek, bundan sonraki çalışmalara katkı sağlamak amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Koleksiyon, Koleksiyonerlik, Sanat Piyasası, Özel Müzeler

ABSTRACT

This Master's dissertation, titled “New Inclinations in the Museumification Process of Private Museums in Turkey After 2010” comprises the development of art collectorship in Turkey through the concept of collections and in comparison with the Western world, the transformation of these art collections into private museums in the 2000s, and the new inclinations regarding the location choices of private museums after 2010. Ever since the prehistoric period, at times to meet their biological needs and at times to satiate their religious instincts, humans have researched, discovered, and collected, evolving over the centuries to do it consciously and consistently, becoming collectors, and later, with rational categorization and institutionalization, secularizing their collections, thus establishing museums. Becoming wealthier through commerce, While collectorship developed in Europe starting with the Renaissance in the 15th century, leading to collections becoming public in the 17th century and the start of modern museumification in the century that followed, it was the bourgeoisie that birthed European collectorship. The absence of a noble class outside the Sultan and his family that could correspond to the bourgeoisie which birthed European collectorship, the upper-classes lacking the same amount of privilege and influence as their western counterparts, as well as the Empire’s somewhat frequent financial and societal crises delayed the emergence of collectors in the Ottoman Empire by about 2 centuries, even though there were similarities to European collections regarding the aggregation methods and logic. Museumification was similarly delayed by two centuries, emerging after the 19th century. The foundations of art collectorship lay with the autonomy and the commodification of art, which created its own market.

Thus, art collectorship and the art market always progress simultaneously. In the Republic of Turkey, founded by Atatürk, the early period national culture policies made the state the primary patron of arts. However, liberal economic policies starting in the 1980s allowed private capital to take over from the state, launching a period where artworks and collectorship increased. Attempting to integrate itself with the world as a result of the globalization policies of the 1990s, the 2000s for the Turkish art market, dominated by private capital, coincide with a highly dynamic period when the recently growing population of art collectors founded private museums in Istanbul by which they could receive exposure and recognition. This period saw the emergence of culture and arts events and activities in the periphery. After 2010 this was followed by collectors who wished to bring their collections to the lands where they were born and dreamt about showing revealing the existence of a culture outside the center, who then established museums towards that goal. As part of the research, we began with the roots of collectorship, working toward the museumification of Western art collections from Europe to the US. Here, we pivot to the Ottoman Empire, making our way through to the Republic of Turkey with its political, financial, and social background, over which we not only take a two thousand five hundred year long journey through the development of the art market and collectorship, but also examine private museums founded after 2010 in Anatolia to create bonds and connections with their cities in addition to making these into popular cultural stops, thus inspiring new ones to launch, therefore occupying an important spot in art history. We aim to contribute to future research with this examination.

Keywords: Collection, Collecting, Collectorship, Art Market, Private Museums



Kızlarım İrem ve Beren'e...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel deeply indebted to my thesis advisor and head of the Arts and Culture Management Department, Prof. Dr. Marcus Graf, for his guidance, encouragement, and leadership since day one. I view it as my great fortune to have been taught by the professor not only and the scope of this study but throughout my graduate education with his immense knowledge, discipline, and spectacular teaching methods, which we as students have benefited from greatly.

I would also like to thank jury members and professors Prof. Dr. Aylin Seçkin and Assoc. Prof. Burcu Ayan Ergen for their ideas and suggestions which have greatly improved this thesis.

I am grateful to my husband Murat Salar, for his extensive support, especially for the information he relayed to me as an economist, concerning the sections of this thesis that encompassed financial processes.

I would like to express my endless respect and gratitude to all the authors, academics, graduate and doctorate thesis authors, online sources, and all other guiding figures I have referenced in this paper who have formed the backbone of my thesis and shed light on my research. Having experienced the great amount of labor and sacrifice which goes into the rightful completion of a thesis paper, I feel indebted to each and every person who has directly or indirectly helped, supported, motivated me, or eased and opened the way for me throughout this process, whether it's my family, my friends, my employees, or anyone with whom I crossed paths.

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PREFACE

Human has been accumulating objects since Prehistory. Turning these accumulations into collections, humans have put them into a systematic and scientific order, delivering them to today's modern life. Museums, where the past is protected and conserved, are places where knowledge is brought to life through objects.

This dissertation study covers the development of art collectorship in Turkey in comparison with the Western world, through the concept of collectorship, as well as the transformation of these collections into private art museums in the 2000s, and the new trends in site selection for private art museums after 2010.

In order to understand the development of art collectorship in Turkey and the emergence and transformation of private museums that followed, we first need to know its historical origins in the West: We will build up towards the development of private art collectorship and museology in the Western World starting from the ground up with humans' basic drive to collect. The progress of art collectorship and private museums in Turkey from the Ottoman Empire through the current day, as well as the emergence of new trends after 2010 will be approached through this lens, taking the political, financial, and societal developments into account, with a wide perspective.

For the literature review, we will utilize books, periodicals, articles, master's and doctoral dissertations, as well as internet resources will be studied. This study will use the takeaways from these materials as a guide. Additionally, we will interview certain private museum collectors to support the study's content.

The first section will examine the concept of collectorship, as well as collectorship's transformation from Antiquity to the 16th century in the Western world. We will touch on curio cabinets, which inspired modern museology, and how the Renaissance affected the 15th century to become a milestone for conscious and systematic collecting that would completely transform the traditional approach to collecting into a new form. We will also examine the House of Medici, the greatest collectors and art patrons of the period, as well as the founder of the Uffizi Gallery, the first ancestor of the modern museum, in 1581.

The 2nd section will examine the museumization process in the Western world from the 17th century to the current day: The secularization of collections with the Enlightenment, their transformation into modern museums, with curio cabinets forming their core, in the 19th century Europe—a period known as the The Museum Age. Afterwards, we will touch on the USA, which had declared itself the new center of global culture and arts in the 20th century, and how it became a global power with museums established by American collectors—modern art patrons of their period—before examining how the neoliberal policies and the globalization of the late 20th century led to the commodification of art, and how the 21st century became the golden age of contemporary art museums.

The 3rd section will examine the development of art collectorship from the Ottoman period to the year 2000. We will look at the Ottoman period's palace-focused and private approach to collectorship, and its transformation into the Imperial Museum as the first museum institute of Turkey as part of the westernization

movement that began in the 18th century. We will also touch on the early Republican Period's national culture policies starting in 1923 with government's attempts at creating a state-backed collection, and these policies being superseded by the liberal economic policies in the 1980s that would lead to private capital supplanting the state as the main patron of arts, leading to a boom in the arts, and intensify the collectorship trend among businesspeople. Ultimately, we will mention the foundation in 1980 of the first of many private art museums that would rapidly multiply in the 2000s.

The 4th section will examine the period from 2000 until 2010, corresponding to the transformation of art collectorship into private art museums in Turkey. We will look at the increasing globalization policies and state's tax incentives, which dynamized the art market, as well as the articulation of peripheral art activities outside Istanbul, and, finally, private art collectors seeking recognition through establishing museums in Istanbul, making the early 21st century a golden age for private museums in Turkey.

The 5th section will take a look at private art museums in Turkey from 2010 to 2022, the new initiatives in Anatolia after 2010, the various transformations of the Turkish art market in a rapidly digitalizing world experiencing a global pandemic, and art collectors' inclination towards sharing their collections with the public through museums in the 2000, and the same trend transitioning to the periphery in the 2010s to witness collectors establishing museums in their hometowns, as well as the cultural heritage mission they thereby shouldered.

This dissertation will:

Study the origins of collectorship and the Western world's journey from collectorship to museumification through its historical background before moving on to the development and the transformations of the art market and collectorship in Turkey in parallel to the country's political and financial circumstances, also touching on collectors' desire for recognition and public exhibition as a result of prevalent globalization policies leading to private art museums in Istanbul, as well as scrutinizing the foundational background dynamics of peripheral private art museums outside Istanbul and their site selection..

The dissertation aims to find answers to:

- “Why” humans collect,
- “When” it was that arbitrary collections transitioned into secular collections,
- “How” collectorship evolved in Turkey from the Republican period to the current day,
- “What” caused the museumization trend for Turkish collectors,
- “Where” and “why” private museums outside Istanbul are established, and by “whom”, through literature review, compilation, and inferences.

The dissertation aims to:

Utilize its limited subject of “new initiatives after 2010” to draw attention to these new and indubitably important trends in regard to the development of Turkish

art collectors, cultural memory, the art market, and art collections, from a unique perspective that may contribute to future studies.



1. THE ACT OF COLLECTING, AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF PRIVATE COLLECTION IN THE WESTERN WORLD (FROM ANTIQUITY THROUGH THE 16TH CENTURY)

1.1 Collection and Collectorship as a Concept, Their Origins, Definitions

“The collection is the unique bastion against the deluge of time. And Noah, perhaps alone of all collectors, achieved the complete set.”

(Artun, 2006, p. 18)

John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, the authors of “Cultures of Collecting”, argue that Noah was the first collector in history, adding: “Adam had given names to the animals, but it fell to Noah to collect them.” (Artun, 2006). This event denotes that collectorship as an idea, though for a different purpose it may be, first blossomed with a divine past in the East and that the desire to collect goes as far back as Noah (Yağcı, 2014, p. 8) . Ever since its first ages, at times to meet their biological needs and at times to satiate their religious instincts, humans have researched, discovered, and collected (Aydın, 2020, p. 83). With primitive humans, we encounter rocks, bone fragments, antlers, horns, plant and tree roots, etc. collected instinctively to ward off predators, though these are more functional—not yet emotional—acts of collecting. (Konukcu, 2007, p. 5). Thus, the culture of collecting during the ancient times, which varied depending on the cultural and economic structures of these primitive societies, developed on a religious, economic, and political basis. We could view these acts of accumulating objects as the earliest examples of collectorship (Serpil, 2006, p. 6). As humanity’s desire to collect and discover increasingly developed, reasons like an interest in what is old, as well as religious or economic reasons, fear or respect, or artistic value have pushed all civilizations to develop behaviors toward old artifacts,

whether movable or immovable (Türkseven, 2010, p. 1).

Humankind's accumulation-based culture of collecting later evolved into collections, and then into systematically organizing these collections. There are many underlying reasons for collectorship; not only intangible reasons like curiosity, pleasure, religion, aesthetics, ownership, protection but also tangible ones such as sedentism, proof of existence, upward mobility, power, and again, protection (Atagök, 2014). According to the Turkish Language Association dictionary, the word "koleksiyon" [collection] means: "A body of objects gathered in one place for the purpose of learning, benefiting, or enjoyment, and divided into categories based on their attributes." (www.etimolojiturkce.com)

According to the Turkish Language Association dictionary, the word "koleksiyon" [collection] means: "A body of objects gathered in one place for the purpose of learning, benefiting, or enjoyment, and divided into categories based on their attributes." (Türk Dil Kurumu). This definition references collections providing knowledge and benefit as well as enjoyment.

Museologist Burçak Madran (2008); in reference to Krzysztof Pomian, a historian of collections and Madran's professor, writes that "*a collection is a body of natural or artificial objects that have been put under special protection, and seasonally or permanently removed from the realm of economic activity*" and gives her own definition of collecting: "*the act of bringing together or relating objects around a theme or with a motive (which may be faith, power, or material)*". The act of gathering and accumulating, which at first begin as a personal and intellectual process,

become collections with dedicated spaces as the amounts increase and the scope widens over time (Madran 2009, 65). Gathering and accumulating is the first and the most elementary function of collecting, and later, the genesis of museums. Prof. Tomur Atagök (2007), argues that acclaim, enjoyment, protection, and conservation are the primary motives for collecting, stating: “Once we settle down, we begin collecting.” (Atagök 2009, 39). Humans who became sedentary and who had previously learned to accumulate and conserve their food, clothes, and defensive tools in anticipation of their future needs, now collected valuable objects such as weaponry, armor, silk fabric, gold, and jewels in order to achieve a better career or class status within the society as its culture progressed. The safekeeping of these objects inside special places or well-guarded treasuries, and their occasional repair, could be considered the first instances of collectorship (Yaraş 1994, 19).

But why do people collect? According to Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis and an ambitious and passionate collector, collecting is an anal stage issue. As the child forms toilet habits, they are traumatized by this object leaving their body and disappearing. They have lost a part of themselves. Gathering and accumulating, therefore, is rooted in the desire to put back what was lost (Kahraman 2017). To touch on humankind’s ancient relationship with objects, famed literary critic Walter Benjamin, himself an avid collector, defined collectors as “revolutionaries who free objects commodified by contemporary life from this context and build another life for the purpose of ensuring their transfiguration.” (Ayyıldız, 2015, p. 40). German artist Walter Grasskamp argues that collectorship is also a means of self-expression, stating that there is more to a collector picking a specific object than simply coincidence and

that over time many collections have become a symbolic expression of its collector's attempts at self-realization and is therefore open to deciphering through the collector. Questions whose answers are previously unknown are another crucial part of the collectorship ritual. In addition to variety-derived enjoyment and an assurance against boredom, the issue of "putting coincidences in order" provides the collector a place in society and an identity (Grasskamp 2019, 82-85) Ethan Wagner and Thea Westreich, the authors of "Collecting Art for Love, Money and More" define art collecting as *"...a matrix that is known for emotional stimuli, intellectual satisfaction, opportunity for self-expression, life-affirming relationships, interesting journeys, financial gain and disappointment; a matrix defined by personal instincts, likes, dislikes, strategy, financial intelligence and knowledge of art history, and which contains the almost infinite possibilities of works of art."* (Wagner and Wagner 2013, 5-8). The tendency to build a collection, when combined with a cultural foundation and awareness, creates something that can present a portion of the story of humankind's history, even immortalizing the person who built the collection (Erten, 2017, p. 19). Collecting also requires passion and gusto as well as cultural depth and social responsibility, thus positioning the art collector as a protector and safekeeper that undertakes the handing down of artworks to the future generations (Dostal, 2017, p. 229).

The collection, conservation, and public presentation of artwork has also paved the way from collectorship to museums. Ultimately the treasures on display in museums are some of the first examples of collections. In history, Medieval churches had been the first "collectors", and then left this role to the nobility (Aydın, 2020, p. 82).

1.2 The Advancement of Collectorship in the Western World

1.2.1 Antiquity, The Middle Ages, and Church-based Collections – Before the 15. Century

In the prehistorical period, the act of collecting was done with humankind's basic instincts for survival, such as self-preservation and satisfying biological needs. The first instances of accumulations of natural objects and works of art were found in Paleolithic burial sites (100.000-40.000 B.C.) (Yücel, 1999, p. 19). In Antiquity, sovereignties had their own collections meant to display the wealth of their people. Consisting of artifacts produced for religious, financial, or political reasons, in addition to war trophies and plunder; these collections were kept in temples, shrines, special underground chambers, tombs, and palaces (Serpil, 2006, p. 6). For example, Egyptian pharaohs were buried with their collections so that they could be brought to their eternal afterlife with them (Levi, 1997, p. 11). Likewise, ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian (3500-30 B.C.) people were known to exhibit valuable objects in shrines, tombs, holy sites, or palaces for religious reasons or to display the power and wealth of their rulers. Archaeological digs have often unearthed sites which, though primitive, functioned as a museum or a library that belonged to the ruler. Nebuchadnezzar II's (the Mesopotamian ruler who ordered the construction of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon) museum site, which contained many artifacts, and Assurbanipal's library, which held many documents and tablets pertaining to the fields of medicine, astronomy, literature, etc. in the 7th century B.C. are two prime examples for this (Uçar, 2019, p. 29). Perhaps the most famous among these library and

museum sites (and a pioneering effort in museumization) is the Musaeum at Alexandria, which was brought to life in the 4th century B.C. and modeled itself after the Classical period philosopher Plato and his pupil Aristotle's Academy. (See Figure 1).

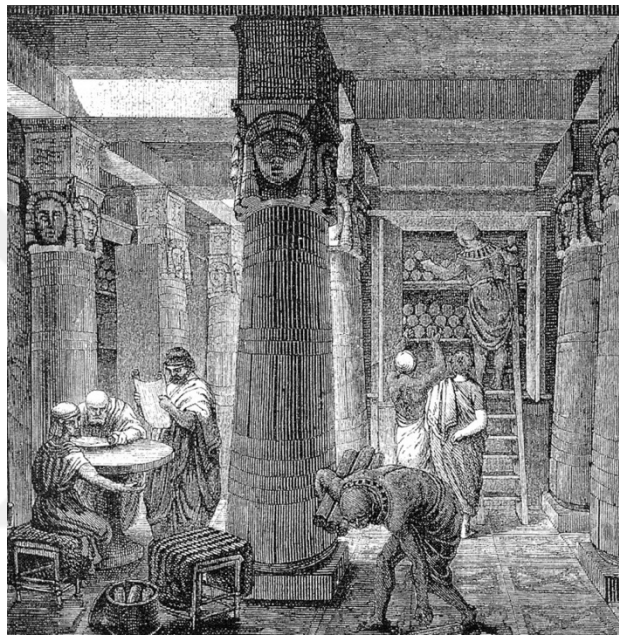


Figure 1. Artistic Rendering of the Library at the Musaeum at Alexandria, Egypt, 4th century B.C.

Note. (Wikipedia)

Turning the Egyptian port city Alexandria into a city of science, this museum and library site was home to the largest “compilation” in Antiquity. In fact, this grand complex held millions of handwritten papyrus scrolls within its library, and animal and plant specimens from each country in the known world of the era, attracting important scientists (e.g. Euclid, Archimedes, Ptolemy) and playing a crucial role in

creating the first sparks of the Hellenistic culture that would later arise. Additionally, its attempts at forming a collection are the roots of today's systematic collectorship and museology.

The collection of objects with a larger artistic emphasis is first witnessed in Ancient Greece. The artworks were made and preserved as gifts for gods and goddesses. These collections were mostly meant to be offerings, and were regional, faith-based rituals, and should not be interpreted to have been gathered or preserved with modern values or perspectives (Dostal, 2017, p. 44).

For example, Greek temples tend to contain gold, silver, or bronze objects, offerings, statues and statuettes, paintings, and even ingots meant to be smelted in case of emergencies. Their painting collections were displayed in rooms they called "pinakotheke", which means "painting gallery" (Yağcı, 2014, p. 7). The most famous of these early Greek temple collections that were meant as offerings for gods is the Heraion, or the Temple of Hera in Olympia. Their influence is the reason for later museums utilizing architecture fashioned after Greek temples (Artun, 2006, p. 19). The collection of objects only increased during the Hellenistic era (Yücel, 1999, p. 19). The foundations of the aristocratic class also took place during this period. The emphasis on academic education and the increased interest in science and fine arts paved the way to the creation of art houses called "mouseion" (named after the mythological Muses) where intellectuals gathered, and artworks were exhibited.

Although the Romans, with their agriculturally minded and conquest-focused warrior nation outlook, were indifferent to the arts for a long period, a tendency for

collecting historic objects and copying works of art, which developed during the middle period of the Hellenistic era, later became an irreplaceable part of their culture—so much so that after a while, Romans considered it an honor to own a pinakothekē (gallery) that consisted of Greek statues. In this sense, it could be argued that collectorship in its aspects that are the most typical and the most similar to the contemporary era first came into being in Rome (İsmayilov 2007, 5, Yaraş 1994, 20).

The Romans, along with non-art objects, also collected any works of art they pillaged from Greek temples. Initially, in traditionally Hellenistic fashion, they offered the loot they acquired to various temples. In time, as army commanders shed these traditions, they began to keep certain items among the loot for themselves, creating the first instances of private collections. For example, it is said that Roman commander Marcus Fulvius Nobilior created his own private collection in 180 B.C. which consisted of 285 bronze and 239 marble statues as well as 60 kilograms of golden ornaments that he brought to Rome. As time goes by, wealthy households all have a library, and a painting and sculpture gallery. This development eventually leads to art becoming a tool for social status and investment, and thus the formation of an art market and a class of art traders (Artun, 2006, p. 20). Although the Middle Ages saw a deviation from Antiquity's scientific and systematic methods of collecting, they arguably developed somewhat more discerning tastes compared to previous periods. Medieval approach to art was largely based in Christianity. Because the church held the largest position of power, it also established the boundaries of what art was. Pillaged treasure from the Crusades and objects brought over from missionary activities comprised most collections of this period. These were initially collected in

churches and palaces (Erden, 2021). Church collections were expected, above all, to glorify Christianity. Paintings, sculptures, and all ornaments must depict the miracles of the Lord, Jesus, and the saints—and act as a replacement for the Bible for the illiterate (Artun, 2006, p. 23). The most important collections of the church and its monasteries consisted of the holy remains of saints, sculptures and paintings which depicted religious teachings, ritual objects, and gifts offered to the church by the public. With sculptures, icons and murals commissioned from artists, churches functioned as museums (Baraz, 2010, p. 14). Thus, the spoils of war, which were a symbol of wealth and power, held great influence in Medieval Europe. These treasures also functioned as a bank for their owners and could be smelted to pay for the costs of war when needed (Artun, 2006, p. 22). The collectorship sensibilities of the period therefore developed along these lines.

1.2.2 The Renaissance, The House of Medici as Collectors– the 15th-16th Centuries

A crucial point in the progress of art history, the Renaissance was also an important turning point regarding the development of painting collections.

Born out of the loss of faith in the Medieval notions about the world and the universe, the Renaissance symbolized a rebirth centered on humanism. This rebirth also led to a revived admiration for ancient Greek and Roman cultures in all fields. As Humanism symbolized a period of increased emphasis on the discovery of new countries, history, and knowledge; notions about object collection and collectorship were also freed from church influences and took on new forms (Uçar, 2019, p. 33).

The interest in collecting old artworks quickly increased during the Renaissance due to the era's rekindled passion for Classical texts and art. This period, starting in the 14th century but mostly gaining speed with the discovery of the New World (a term used for the American continent, and which excludes the African and Eurasian continents) (Wikipedia, Yeni Dünya 2021) during the tail end of the 15th century, saw collections—with the influx of all manner of objects from distant lands—turn from Medieval palace and church collections and into a wholly different and even magical medium that went beyond displays of wealth and power or religious iconography. This medium was a new form of collection named “Cabinets of Curiosities”, or “wonder-rooms”. Collectorship found its true essence with the emergence of these curio cabinets (Artun, 2006, p. 25). These private wonder-rooms largely differ from both ancient and contemporary museums. These collections consisted of objects that were chosen based on earthly interest, which formed the backbone of modern science. They referred more to global diversity and less to local history. Their methods of categorization were up to their collector's discretion, and they were only available to the collector or, at times, their close associates (Shaw, 2020, p. 9). Curio cabinets are a precursor to modern museums that were built on the idea that the world could fit into a single room or a cabinet. Their collections were exhibited in multi-sectioned cabinets and glass displays, in a manner that may awaken curiosity and creative thought inside the spectator. Created with a deep faith in the connection between nature and art, they are special and even divine places (Putnam, 2019, p. 12). There are no limitations for curio cabinets. The important thing is that it contains what is extraordinary and rare

and thus, all manner of plants, insects, and animals as well as various ores found during geographical discoveries were featured in these collections (See Figure 2)



Figure 2. Engraving from Apothecary Ferrante Imperato's *Dell'Historia Naturale*, a wonder-room with nearly 35000 plant, animal, and mineral specimens, Naples, Italy, 1599.

Note. Taken from (Wikipedia).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferrante_Imperato#/media/File:RitrattoMuseoFerranteImperato.jpg

This medium, wherein anything could be a part of a collection, emphasized extraordinariness, weirdness, and strangeness, and these collections were categorized based on their type of content. For example, *naturalia* signified natural objects, *artificialia* signified artworks and artifacts (paintings, sculptures, coins, medals,

jewelry, weaponry, receptacles, etc.), *scientifica* signified scientific tools (clocks, compasses, globes, telescopes, etc.), *exotica* signified objects from distant lands, *mirabilia* signified what was then considered to be strange (three-headed lambs; two-toed, hermaphroditic creatures, “freaks”, dwarves, etc.), and *bibliotheca* signified books, texts, maps and schematics. The Cabinets were called *studioli* in Italy, *kunstammer* (art chamber) or *wunderkammer* (wonder-chamber) in Germany (Artun, 2006, pp. 26-30). The transition from Medieval treasures to Cabinets of Curiosities starts in the 14th century, specifically in France, and by the 17th century they were counted in hundreds all over Europe and existed well into the mid-18th century. They became a symbol of prestige, and thus, nearly every notable house came to own their own Cabinet.

Members of both the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie possessed these collections, chief among them being emperors, in addition to apothecaries, lawyers, doctors, poets, artists, academics, etc. (See Figure 3).

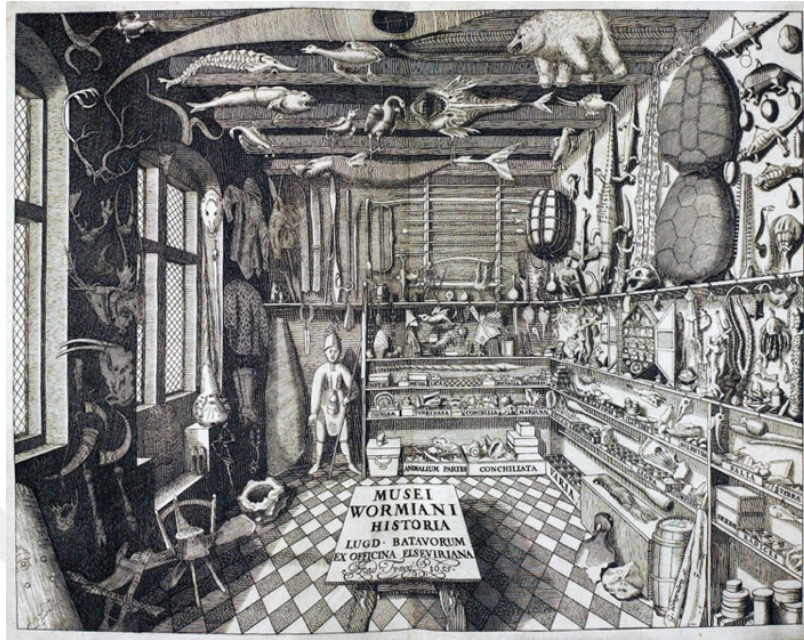


Figure 3. Illustration depicting doctor and collector Ole Worm's Cabinet of Curiosities, "Museum Wormianum", Copenhagen, Denmark, 1655

Note. (Wikipedia)

https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dosya:Musei_Wormiani_Historia.jpg

A notable example is Tsar Peter the Great of Russia, an avid collector of monstrosities, who, with Francis I of France and Frederick III of Denmark, bought a collection of nearly two thousand plants, skeletons, fetuses, freaks, etc. from Dutch doctor Fredrik Ruysch. He would go on to establish the Hermitage Museum. However, the most unique and famous collector among them was Rudolf II of the Holy Roman Empire. He aimed to create a microcosm that could represent the whole world, creating a peerless, legendary collection with objects he collected not only from the Americas, but also from China, India, and even the Ottoman Empire. In

charge of his curio cabinets, Rudolf II put his favorite painter, Arcimboldo, who also painted a portrait of the emperor where he is depicted entirely out of fruits and flowers. (See Figure 4) This collector's museum, which Rudolf II called the *Theatrum Mundi*, meaning the *Great Theater of the World*, also became a fascinating academy which was frequented by many select artists and scholars (Artun, 2006, pp. 34-42).



Figure 4. The Portrait of Rudolf II, painted by Arcimboldo, 1590

Note. (Wikipedia).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_II,_Holy_Roman_Emperor#/media/File:Vertumnus_%3%A5rstidernas_gud_m%C3%A5lad_av_Giuseppe_Arcimboldo_1591_-_Skoklosters_slott_-_91503.tiff

Although curio cabinets lack taxonomy or any categorization or sorting order vis-à-vis form, date, geography, artist, school, etc., and although they were exhibited

only to the collector and their close associates, they are still considered to be a pioneering form of systematic collecting and an inspiration for modern museology. Thanks to new discoveries, alluring objects from the New World and other distant lands found their way to Europe, reinforcing the power of the collectors who made these objects part of their own world (Artun, 2006, pp. 30-37). In Florence and Venice in Italy, which was the heart of the Renaissance, the quickly developing trade and banking activities allowed for a new class of capital owner; thus emerged the Bourgeoisie. This class of the newly wealthy completely changed the notion of collectorship, which theretofore had been under the church and crown's thumb. While they built themselves a new identity economically through trade and administratively through participation in politics, they built it culturally by taking an interest in the fine arts and forming their own private collections on a patronage basis (Serpil, 2006, p. 8). With bourgeois patronage, artists became more commonly known figures. Up until then, artists worked in guilds and were considered craftsmen, forbidden from leaving any signatures or personal marks as they completed orders for churches and palaces. During the Renaissance, artists overcame anonymity and gained their own identity and name.

The most influential and important patrons of the Renaissance were without a doubt the House of Medici, who ruled Italy for 300 years between 1434-1737. The Medici family, who for many generations closely supported the arts and sciences and ensured the creation of some of the most unique artworks of the Renaissance, are the most important collectors of the period. Among the artists they supported were

pioneering artists such as Fra Angelico, Botticelli, Donatello, Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, and Raphael.

The Medici family was not of aristocratic or noble origin but was formed out of the union between two families. They were among the peasant families who migrated from the Cafaggiolo village in Tuscany to Florence in the 12th century for commerce. Descendants of the old Cosimo line, Averardo de Medici established the most influential branch of the Medici family, and his son, Giovanni Di Bicci de Medici, became one of the first great bankers in Italy despite his poor roots by developing cost-saving and business management methods. Additionally, his close friendship with then-Pope John XIII provided him with religious influence, helping his sons Cosimo and Lorenzo de Medici to cement the family's powerful position. Moving from the province to Florence and making their fortune in banking and commerce, the Medici family, because of their lack of any storied grand figures or glorious military victories in the family's past, as the author of *The Story of Art* Ernst Gombrich put it, utilized the arts a crucial factor in their rise to power (Artun, 2006, p. 60).

The Medici family produced four Popes, two Queens of France, and many members of various royal families (Baraz, 2010, p. 36). The first of these Queens played a role in The Louvre (1793) becoming a museum, and the other in the founding of Musée de Luxembourg (1750) , which is considered the first contemporary art museum in the world (Artun, 2018, p. 9). Bicci's son Cosimo de Medici is the figure who laid the foundation for the family's political influence. He managed the financial

affairs of the Papacy while also managing the family's own banking businesses.

Cosimo was aware of the artistic potential overflowing from Italy and provided patronage to many artistic geniuses of his time, helped produce some of the most unforgettable works of art in both his own private collection, and his country.

Cosimo's grandson Lorenzo, on the other hand, was known as Lorenzo the Magnificent because of his many deeds throughout his life, and in addition to being an outstanding statesman, was also one of the greatest conservators of art of his time. In the sculpting school which he held in his palace courtyard, he discovered Michelangelo, one of many geniuses of the Renaissance whose talents he noticed (Baraz, 2010, pp. 36-37). Medicilerin Rönesans'a koleksiyonerlik alanında en büyük katkıları mesenliği kurumsallaştırarak yaygın hale getirmeleri olmuştur. Sanat mesenliği hem zenginliğin hem prestijin sembolü haline gelerek birçok zengin aileyi bu yola sevk etmiştir. İtalya'da mesenlik yapan diğer büyük aileler arasında Rucellia, Strozzi, Gongazaga, Quarates, Montefeltor, Albizzi, Este, Viscontis ve Pozzi'ler yer almaktadır (Serpil, 2006, p. 9). The regime of collections who prioritized contemporary art over antique works also began under the Medici family. Thus, a modern "art market" emerged. The market would go on to spread widely especially in the Netherlands in the 17th century and later lead to the formation of the first art galleries in the 19th century, breaking the crown and church's hold over art and paving the way for art to achieve autonomy (Artun, 2009, p. 21) Involving art with their powerful financial network, the Medici family used their banks in Florence, Venice, Milan, Rome, Bruges and London as platforms through which to collect information about artistic activities and provide mobility for their collections, managing art and

money within the same network. (Artun, 2018, p. 11). Built in the 1440s, the Palazzo Medici is considered the precursor to modern European museums (See Figure 5).



Figure 5. Palazzo Medici (The Medici Palace), The Medici family home, considered the first museum in Europe, Florence, Italy, ~1440

Note. (Wikipedia).

https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dosya:Palazzo_medici_riccardi_33.JPG

This is where the modernization of museums began, with advances like the secularization and autonomization of art, the culture of exhibition, the construction of a historical and aesthetic canon. These are all traces of a museum paradigm that's very different from Cabinet collections (Artun, 2006, p. 56).

Because the largest collection of the 15th century Italian and Dutch art was formed within the Palazzo Medici, it's been referred to by historians as “the home of

the Renaissance”.

With the Medici family collections moved into the Uffizi—which means “offices” after the fact that they were initially meant to be an administrative building for the family—in the 16th century, we see the first instance of a gallery style exhibition layout in a museum. (See Figure 6).

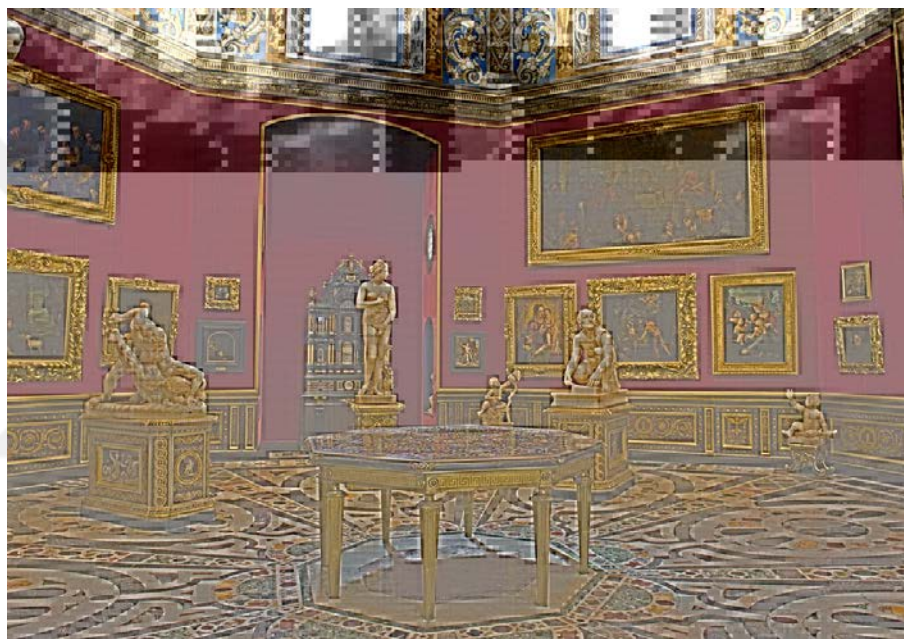


Figure 6. A gallery in the Uffizi Museum, Florence, Italy, 1581

Note. (www.uffizi.it)

<https://www.uffizi.it/en/artworks/the-tribune>

With the gallery model, which was designed to facilitate supervision and allow visitors to roam comfortably, and which uses an exhibition layout that also takes into account the effects of light in how the pieces are perceived, we came a step closer to a modern museum. (Karadeniz, 2020).

The architect of the Galleria degli Uffizi's is architect, painter, historian and writer Giorgio Vasari, a key figure in the Medici family's rise to power who, with his famous work *The Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (wherein he argues that Medici retinue members Michelangelo, Raphael and Leonardo are the greatest artists of history), is considered the father of art history (Artun, 2018, p. 9) (See Figure 7).



Figure 7. A view of the Uffizi Museum courtyard, placed between its two wings, Florence, Italy, 1581.

Note. (Wikipedia)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uffizi#/media/File:Florence, Italy Uffizi Museum - panoramio \(5\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uffizi#/media/File:Florence,_Italy_Uffizi_Museum_-_panoramio_(5).jpg)

Vasari was also a pioneer in art education's transition from guilds to academies. The first recorded art academy, the Accademia dell'Arte del Disegno, was established in 1563 under the Medici then-Prince Cosimo I, Michelangelo, and Vasari's supervision (Artun, 2018, p. 10). Throughout the Renaissance, the rise of artistic identity and the popularization of oil painting on canvas increased the number of wealthy collectors commissioning artworks, leading to art trade through art traders, even leading to some early instances of art exhibitions with catalogs for European families' private collections. These developments, although small in scale, would form the core of the art world (Serpil 2006, 14, Üstünipek 1998, 10).

Conclusion

Despite the many concepts that changed and transformed through the millennia-long historical journey from the primitive human to the modern human, humankind's basic instincts to *exist* and *possess* run even within the genes of collectorship.

From the moment the hunter-gatherer primitive human transitioned to a sedentary lifestyle, we begin to witness the objects they collected and accumulated at first—with this same instinct to exist—in order to protect themselves from wildlife transform from “arbitrary” gatherings of objects into more consciously created collections and ultimately museums over the course of history, as motivations like influence, distinction, prestige, passion, and investment arise.

Although the concept of Collections have many etymological origins, with just as many explanations as to why people collect—from Freud’s psychoanalytical trauma theories to Benjamin’s objectivism to fetishistic interpretations to a need for self-expression, only when we blend a system with consciousness and consistency do we arrive at the phenomenon we call collectorship.

Because the foundations of art collection were established through the autonomization of art and the emergence of its own market based on its “worth”, art collectorship and art markets have progressed coordinately. This development took place in the 15th century, a period of reorganization and institutionalization in Europe called the Renaissance, wherein a reborn art that’s detached from industry and artisanship assumed a new definition as fine arts within a new rational system of information (Artun, 2015, p. 13). Prior to the 15th century, whether we examine the Prehistorical period, Antiquity, or the Middle Ages, we can only find some accumulations and collections in a certain sense but cannot speak of any conscious and systematic attempts at collectorship.

The Prehistoric period saw the gathering of artifacts or natural objects going back to Paleolithic burial sites, but instances of object collections are first found in the Ancient Greece. Collected in honor of the mythological Muses, the nine goddesses of inspiration and the personalization of the fields of art and science, these objects were offered in buildings called the *Museum*, which were the earliest precursors to today’s museums (Arnold, 2019, p. 68). Object collections became more common during the Hellenistic period with the emergence of the Aristocracy, and objects produced for

religious or political purposes, as well as war spoils were preserved in palaces, underground or in temples and shrines closed to the public as court collections meant to display the power of its ruler or the wealth of its people (Serpil, 2006, p. 6). The notion of collecting during this era was more faith-based, lacking principles, and differing greatly from our concept of collectorship (Konukcu, 2007, p. 7). Private collections as a concept that is closest to ours today first emerged in the Ancient Rome. Roman commanders and emperors paid special attention to old artworks and sculptures they pillaged in Greek lands, displaying them in their private collections in their villas, libraries, hallways, and occasionally even public places as a symbol of their superior social status (Çantay, 2019). In the Middle Ages, churches and monasteries functioned as both collectors and museums. Spoils of the Crusades, as well as objects brought back from missionary activities were collected in churches and palaces, and sculptures, icons and murals commissioned from artists to spread and glorify Christianity and to best spread the teachings of God held an important place in these collections (Baraz, 2010, p. 14). A milestone for conscious and systematic collectorship, the 15th century saw the emergence of the bourgeoisie spurred on by the innovations of the Renaissance era. This new social class completely uprooted the preceding eras' traditionalist notions of collectorship. As trust in the Medieval theological values and perceptions about the universe and the world waned, the Renaissance followed with a spirit of humanism, and it led to increased exploration of new lands and increased emphasis on history and knowledge. Thus, this period saw notions about object collection and collectorship evade church dominance and take on a new form (Uçar, 2019, p. 33). This new form is *Cabinets of Curiosities*, which allow

collecting to find its true meaning (Artun, 2006, p. 25). These curio cabinets are considered the first type of systematic collections and an inspiration for modern museology. The only requirements for a curio cabinet were unusuality and rarity, and therefore they featured a great variety of exotic plants, insects, animals, as well as artworks and artifacts from around the globe. They were comparatively common: Members of both the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie—emperors, apothecaries, priests, lawyers, doctors, poets, artists, academic scholars, etc.—formed their own curio cabinets. They were meant as a smaller copy of a chaotic world a microcosm (Yılmaz, 2020, p. 106). In Italy, which was the heart of the Renaissance, the middle-class became wealthier through banking and commerce, and they utilized the influence of art along with trade and politics for upward mobility. These families competed to improve their social status and immortalize their family names, and the most notable among them was the House of Medici, who provided patronage to iconic artists of the Renaissance like Botticelli, Donatello, Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, and Raphael, and was both a contributor to and a collector of some of the most unique art during their nearly three century long reign. It was the rekindled interest in the Antiquity, which started a trend of collecting old works, coupled with wealthy conservator families like the Medici purchasing the contemporary art of the era that birthed a modern art market during the Renaissance. Built in the 1440s, the Medici Palace held a place between curio cabinets and the modern museum paradigm regarding exhibition and aesthetics, but their later attempt with the Uffizi Gallery (1581), into which the collection was moved in the 16th century, came closer to modern galleries with its special placement and exhibition layout. The next period in

this timeline, known as *The Museum Age*; wherein art collectorship became more conscious, the foundations of museumization were laid, and a core form of the art market emerged, starts in the 17th century, and continues to the current day—and will be examined in the next chapter.



2. THE MUSEUMIZATION OF PRIVATE COLLECTIONS IN THE WESTERN WORLD (FROM THE 17TH CENTURY TO THE CURRENT DAY)

“Museums are vital to the foundation and the preservation of the modern world.”

Donald Preziosi

(Artun, 2006, p. 101)

2.1 Opening Collections to the Public – The 17th Century

Europe entered the 17th century with the reform movements which began in the previous century. This period held much change and transformation for the continent. With the disintegration of sectarian unity in Europe, the church parted from its wealth and the public's trust while cultural and scientific advancements accelerated in parallel. With the onset of the Enlightenment and the advances in scientific thought as well as the need for systematic and practical solutions, collectorship became divorced from its religious context and took on a more systematic and scientific form (Karayılanoğlu, 2020, p. 13).

As the middle-class started to become more robust, a society of collectors who collected not for social prestige or investment purposes but for their own tastes started to emerge (Çantay, 2019). In this context, collections that were created out of curiosity and a desire to learn (instead of displays of glory) stopped simply being an arbitrary gathering of objects that the collector enjoyed, and which lacked a throughline (Karabıyık, 2007). Curio cabinets, which were once considered a symbol of thrills and excitement, lacked hierarchy, order, age, or appraisal and fell out of favor with the

upper crust—even becoming a sign of vulgarity and impropriety (Artun, 2006, p. 140).

One of the most important innovations of this period regarding collectorship was public museums, which came into existence following discussions about the ownership of collections, their use, and their bequeathal to future generations (Uçar, 2019, p. 35). Private collections in London, Paris, Munich, Venice, and Rome were opened to the public in Europe (Serpil, 2006, p. 18). In 1565, Samuel von Quicheberg published *Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi*, the first treatise about artwork exhibition, in which he describes a concept for an ideal museum (Aydın, 2020, p. 84). One of the oldest public art collections is housed in the *Kunstmuseum Basel*. Lawyer and professor Basilius Amerbach of the Swiss Amerbach Family, who was a collector and an important art patron of the period, expanded the 350 year old *Kunstammer*, the *Amerbach Cabinet* he inherited from his father Boniface Amerbach with new artworks, antiques and coins, which formed the core of the museum which opened in (see Figure 8), (Wikipedia n.d., Baraz 2010, 43).



Figure 8. A view of the Basel Kunstmuseum, Basel, Switzerland, 1671

Note: (www.basel.com). <https://www.basel.com/en/attractions/kunstmuseum-basel-hauptbau-4fe6fa1ae5>

Some private collections were donated to universities during this period. For example, naturalist and physician Ulisse Aldrovandi, commonly considered to be the father of natural history studies, posthumously donated his collection to the University of Bologna in 1605.

In the 1680s, antiquary and politician Elias Ashmole donated his extensive collection which largely consisted of natural history to the University of Oxford. With this donation the Ashmolean Museum (see Figure 9), which is known as the “the first public museum” was established in the University of Oxford and was opened to the publictır (Uçar, 2019, p. 35)



Figure 9. The front façade of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England, 1683

Note: (Wikiwand).

https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Ashmolean_Museum

Although these collections were largely exclusively available to the ruling class with special permits and only occasionally publicly displayed, the establishment of these museums is important in that they represent the first instances of a modern museum and allowed for the formation of an independent space for art. Thus, artworks were no longer considered artisanal, instead becoming works to be publicly exhibited

Absolute monarchies ruled over the 17th century Europe, and the two most prominent powers of this period were England and France. Spurred on by geographical discoveries England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal competed for colonies, a period during which France became the country with the largest population in Europe, gaining immense influence over European culture,

politics, and economy. French became the *lingua franca* of the period which it remained for a long time. The Enlightenment also largely took place within the French intellectual circles. With the completion of the Palace of Versailles in 1634, France replaced Italy as the center of the art world (Yazıcı).

The Netherlands, meanwhile, took a different direction for various political, religious, and social reasons. The Dutch bourgeoisie became increasingly active—although the papacy and the crown still largely dominated the art market elsewhere in Europe, in the Netherlands where the Protestant church had little interest in painting and the ruling class consisted of successful businessmen, art became of unprecedented value, which created a more free and active art world. In this context, the Netherlands' pioneering role in the art world's liberation from certain subjects and the dominance of the nobility, as well as its popularization and its quick advancement in the following centuries is palpable (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 11-15).

2.2 Secularized Collections, The Louvre Museum – The 18th Century

The 18th century is a period of deep changes in both social structures and regarding collectorship, whose foundations were largely laid during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. In France, which was the primary force in how the period took shape, art remained under the supervision of the crown as part of Louis XIV's absolutist rule. Meanwhile, avoiding the oppressive rule, the French aristocracy retreated to a carefree life in their provincial palaces and chateaux. In the aftermath of the king's death, however, the art market became free of the crown's rule and became the center of attention for an increasingly larger population. In this context, Paris

stands out with its *Salons*, spaces where anything could be discussed, which was frequented by artists, writers, philosophers, and an increasing number of conscious art collectors the of the period (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 16-18). It would be correct to say that bourgeois tastes regarding art collecting in the proper sense emerged in this period (Serpil, 2006, p. 17). It was even said that “European statesmen competed with each other with their collections” regarding this period (Özşen, 2016).

The period between the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th is an important one for museological progress. This period saw the notion of *museumification* come to life as royal and private collections were converted into modern museums. Curio cabinets of the previous period constitute the nucleus of these museums (Artun, 2006, p. 101). In 1743, Anna Maria Luisa, the last lineal descendant of the House of Medici, donated the complete collection of the dynasty to the Florentine public. As per her will, none of the artworks would ever leave Florence, to be conserved forever “by ornament of the State, for the benefit of the public” (Artun, 2009, p. 22). In the second quarter of the 18th century, the discovery of the ancient Roman city of Pompeii in the south of Naples in Italy triggered an increase in archaeological digs. This, in turn, led to great progress in museology especially in the 19th century (Karabıyık, 2007).

Their foundations laid in the previous century; public collection museums wholly emerged during this period. A public museum was first conceived in 1746 with the idea of publicly exhibiting the collection of historical pieces at the royal palace.

These efforts to publicly display a royal private collection led to the establishment of the *Musée du Luxembourg* in Paris in 1750. (See Figure 10).



Figure 10. Facade of the Musée du Luxembourg, Paris, France, 1750

Note: (Wikipedia).

In addition to being the first museum to publicly display royal collections, the Musée du Luxembourg is also considered the first contemporary art museum as it also featured art from living artists of its period.

Following this event, in 1776, after the death of King Franz I of Austria, his wife the Queen Maria Theresa along with their son King Joseph II moved to open their royal private collection to the public and did so at the *imperial Picture Gallery* in the *Upper Belvedere* garden palace. (Wikipedia). British Museum, established a

century before the museum boom in the 19th century Europe and America, is also of great importance. (See Figure 11)

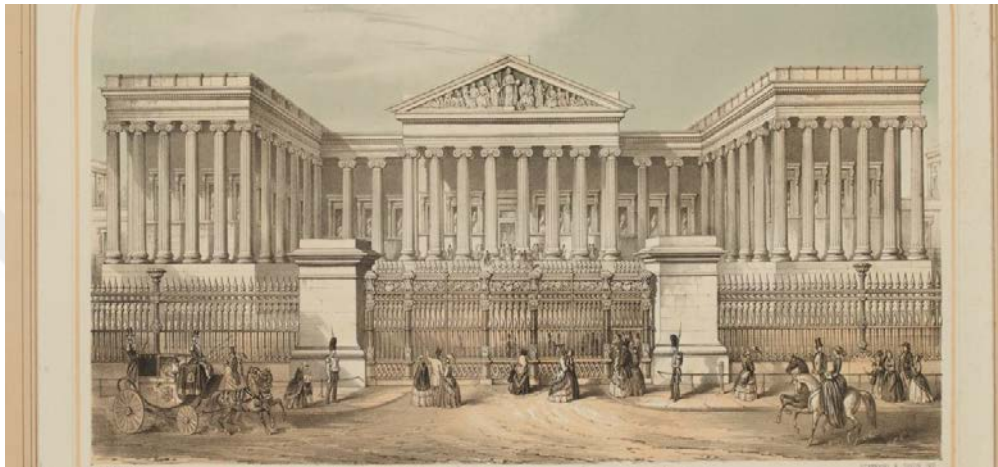


Figure 11. British Museum, London, England, 1753

Note: (TheBritishMuseum 2022). <https://www.britishmuseum.org/about-us/british-museum-story>

In 1753, Sir Hans Sloane, a significant English collector, donated his art collection and extensive library of nearly seventy thousand items, and thus the foundation of the British Museum were laid. With the later addition of the Royal Society collection, the museum was a source of great excitement, becoming a means for people of all classes who wanted to see the museum and talked about its collections to partake in and focus on art (Baraz, 2010, p. 47).

The British Museum can be considered a direct ancestor of modern museums. It also heavily alluded to Hellenistic period ideals in the Mouseion in Alexandria—which is much imitated in the West due to its universal appeal—which, as a museum-

library with a universal scope, aimed to collect, conserve, categorize, and display not only all knowledge available to Alexandrian people but also their aesthetic and cultural values. In this sense, the British Museum was established with an eye toward public service; it aimed to educate not only people of science but the public as well. The museum and the library shared the same roof until their separation was decided in 1973, and they began to serve as two discrete institutions in 1998 (Yağcı, 2014, p. 13).

With the upsurge of positivism and archaeological efforts in the 18th century led to the development of systematic categorization and taxonomy in collections, an important progressive milestone on the road to modern collectorship and museology. For example, in 1771, the Medici family's collection of scientific tools and natural science specimens in the Uffizi Gallery (See Figure 12) was set apart from the works of art and exhibited separately (İsmayılov, 2007, p. 7).



Figure 12. Uffizi Gallery, a portion of the Vasari hallway where sculptures are exhibited, Florence, Italy, 1771

Note. (www.uffizi.it). <https://www.uffizi.it/en/artworks/i-corridoi-di-galleria>

While this occurrence isn't the beginning of the science/art museum divide, it's still important with regard to the conceptual development of public museums (Karabiyik, 2007, p. 9). The secularization and systematization of collections, the first traces of which were seen with the Medici collection, properly occur in France with the Louvre. The first true transition from the mysticism of the curio cabinets of the Renaissance to rationalist museology also took place at the Louvre (Bulduk, 2018, p. 167).

The public opinion changing against social stratification led to the oppressed public at the edge of starvation revolting against the crown who lived luxurious, extravagant, and wasteful lives. This uprising, the 1789 French Revolution, caused

massive changes in France and especially western Europe, societal as well as some regarding the art world and collectorship. The collections of the French royalty and noble families close to the crown were confiscated after the revolution and these formed the backbone of many museums including the Louvre Museum which was established in 1793. It is also significant that the Louvre Palace was turned into an art museum during the revolution. (See Figure 13).



Figure 13. The Louvre Palace opening to the public as a museum, Paris, France, August 10th, 1793

Note. (ARTnews 2017). <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/a-timeline-of-attempts-to-fix-the-art-world-7472/>

The Louvre is a first in having become a museum as part of a state ideology. It is the first “national” museum in Europe. It also formed an example for other, later national museums for the matters of organization and presentation. The palace becoming a museum is important not only as it became public property, but also in

respect to the institutionalization of art (Serpil, 2006, p. 19). The Louvre Museum is indebted for its authority to both being the result of a revolution and the rich collection it featured as well as to Paris itself. The city would make its mark especially on the succeeding century as the center of all things modern and artistic, and to a greater extent, the center of the universe. Notions of a modern state, modern citizenry, modern knowledge, modern art, and modern museums came to life at the Louvre, and the resulting momentum led to the opening of even more public museums in France within the next decade—four in Paris alone, and twenty-two in other province (Artun, 2006, p. 108).

This sudden transformation brought on by the revolution caused the middle-class to seize power, and as the pre-revolutionary aristocracy mostly emigrated or lost influence, leading to a void in the art market which the bourgeoisie filled over time. The Parisian salon exhibitions continued to attract increasingly larger audiences after the revolution as well, and the art market expanded with the government's interest in art and the increased number of collectors.

In the 18th century England – especially with the Sotheby's (1744) and Christie's (1766) Auction Houses- an art scene outside the crown's purview finally existed. As the country advanced economically, socially, and politically, its wealthy class showed more interest in art, some of whom became the most famous collectors of the period. This period saw London begin to hold large influence over the European art market with its auction houses, art traders and private collection catalogues. Collectorship in Central and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, largely occurred

around the aristocracy, with no notable bourgeois activity unlike France and England. As a result, the bourgeois growth that began in Italy continues at a significant pace in the Netherlands and lingers in France and England. As Hauser puts it, “In the 18th century the one and only reigning art in Europe would be bourgeois art.” (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 20-23).

2.3 The Museum Age, The Arts’ Transition from Europe to America, Globalized Collectorship – The 19th Century to the Current Day

The 19th century represents a very important breaking point for both Europe and the world in general with the French and Industrial Revolutions, which resulted in deeply consequential and radical changes to life in social, commercial, and economic contexts.

The Industrial Revolution, which began as electric and fuel-powered machinery started to increasingly replace the steam power, brought with it an explosion in scientific and technical advancements, as well as an urban population boom the results of which created a new working class and laid the foundations for the colonial activities which would eventually cause world wars in the next century.

The bourgeoisie, who acquired increased funds capitalizing on the system brought on by the Industrial Revolution, brought capitalism to the economy, liberalism to politics, and urbanization to social life; essentially ensuring the downfall of the traditional life form and paving the way for modernism. Collecting remained a symbol of social prestige and a discerning taste in art just as it did in the preceding

century. Meanwhile, the emergence of avantgarde art movements one after the other, as well as the birth of new artistic media that came with technological developments such as photography and film offered the art world a large amount of variety. This, in turn, along with the rise of capitalism and the bourgeoisie led to more eclectic collections, and an uptick in art prices (Serpil, 2006, pp. 20-21). A fast increase in private/national museums occurred as collectors established their own museums or donated their collections to the state, which started what is sometimes called The Museum Age. This period saw advancements in archaeology, which aimed to raise awareness in the West regarding global artistic and cultural heritage. Historical artifacts unearthed in digs in Greece, Egypt and Asia Minor were transported to European museums (Baraz, 2010, p. 15).

The second half of the 19th century saw sociocultural and economic changes as well as changes in the art world, which led to changes in collectorship as well, enabling wealthy American collectors such as Carnegie, Morgan, Vanderbilt, Mellon, Whitney, Frick, Rockefeller, and Guggenheim to join the European art market. The USA., hot on the heels of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, has global aspirations and to this end will begin a ruthless competition with Europe. As the US has no artistic heritage, nor any dynastic or museological amassment, wealthy American collectors' basic impulse was to buy European history and start America's own Museum Age through the conservatorship system they developed through large investments in private museums to generate "American cultural capital". In this context, following example of the Louvre which was the standard-bearer and role

model for the age of modern museums, began an age of museums as a symbol of civilization that pervaded the US (Artun, 2006, pp. 118-163).

The Rijksmuseum was established in 1815 and was built upon the Royal Museum which was established by Napoleon Bonaparte during the Flanders Campaign. In 1818, the National Museum in Prague was established after the reorganization of the royal cabinets, followed by the Museo del Prado in 1819 with private collections belonging to Spanish kings and the Habsburg and Bourbon dynasties. In 1828, the Altes Museum was established with the Prussian (currently German) royal art collection, after which the Victoria and Albert Museum was founded in 1852 and featured the British royal collection. These were followed by the Tate Gallery in 1897 the foundations for which were laid by English sugar magnate Henry Tate who donated his collection. The Altes, designed as an exemplary modern museum by architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, established back-to-back with the Neue Museum in 1856, the Nationalgalerie in 1862, and the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in 1904, comprises an area called the Museum Island. Munich, Dresden, and Düsseldorf followed Berlin's example in the 19th century (Artun, 2006, pp. 102-163).

Three prominent museums in the US, the New York Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston were established in 1870, followed by the Art Institute of Chicago in 1879 (See Figure 14).



Figure 14. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The USA, 1893

Note: (ArtNet 2019). <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/secrets-of-the-metropolitan-museum-1645864>

These were followed by museums and universities established one after another in New Haven, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Kansas City and elsewhere in the US. Though some of them were private and some public, these institutions were always run like a private enterprise (Artun, 2006, p. 120).

The Metropolitan Museum (also known as the Met) was proposed at a meeting in Paris in 1866 by American lawyer John Jay who suggested that it was “time for the American people to lay the foundations of a National Institution and Gallery of Art,” which quickly found broad support. The board of the museum included collectors like William B. Astor, Samuel P. Avery, Hamilton Fish, H.O. Havemeyer, George A. Hearn, and John S. Kennedy, who, well aware of the added value of establishing a

universal museum that could compete with the Louvre and other European great museums, greatly contributed to its completion and created its collection. The museum was founded in 1869, only a handful of years after the American Civil War and near the onset of a large-scale recession, and therefore both politically and socially a complicated and rough period for the US. Still, the Met served as an example to the many American art museums that were established one after another between 1870 and 1890 after an intense preparatory period, emboldened by the news of a great museum opening in New York (Baraz, 2010, pp. 294-295).

Entering the 20th century, we witness a large scale economic, social, political, and cultural decline in Europe as it suffers two consecutive world wars. Beginning in the interwar period of the 1930s, the mass exodus of European artists to the US only hastened with the outbreak of the Second World War (Serpil, 2006, p. 31).

Occupied by the German forces in 1940, Paris changed from the center of the art world into a ghost city for about five years, a void that—in what was considered opportune for the US—New York could fill. Looking at the prospect that the 20th century would be for the US what the 19th was for England and France, the notion reestablishing an ideology similar to but distinct from that of Paris became increasingly popular.

Additionally, as the European borders had closed, American collectors and art connoisseurs had to return to the US, leading to a period between 1940-1943 wherein a New York art scene emerged that was completely independent from Paris. From this period on, significant activity starts in the American art market: numbered in the 40s

at the beginning of the war, the total of New York art galleries jumped to 150 by 1946, with private gallery sales going from 40% to 300%. As it was considered “patriotic” this period to support American artists, new, upper-middle-class collectors aged under 45 embraced painting which hitherto had been a favorite of the wealthy. Wealthy buyers, on the other hand, wanting to distance themselves from the middle-class, began to lean toward expressionist, abstract, and energetic forms of art. The Marshall Plan, an American initiative to provide foreign aid to Europe effective between 1948 and 1952, was a project that both dictated American external policy for a decade and served to lay the foundation for American social, cultural, and economic hegemony by ensuring European dependence. Meanwhile, in 1948, New York, through its spokesman Clement Greenberg, declared that it had at last achieved international status as a cultural center and even replaced Paris as the cultural symbol of the Western world (Guilbaut, 2016, pp. 13-239). Thus, five centuries after Florence and one after Paris, New York was had become the heart of modern art (Artun, 2006, p. 129).

The United States, as a country that had at least physically been distant from the negative developments in Europe and only minorly affected by the war—although it did enter the war in the end—became the preferred destination with its active collector scene, and its private and well-funded galleries and museums, for many a modern artist fleeing Fascist pressures in Europe (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 33).

While it served as host to European artists, the US also began building its own modern art. Two movements to come out of this period, Abstract Expressionism and

Pop Art, were the first American artistic movements in art history and provided crucial feedback regarding the country's cultural policies (Serpil, 2006, p. 31). The concept of "freedom" vigorously promoted by the American establishment and the movement of Abstract Expressionism so well and consistently overlapped with the new liberalism of the Cold War period, or rather, the purposes and expectations of this new superpower in the global arena, that Jackson Pollock, as one of its pioneering representatives, was transformed into a symbol (Guilbaut, 2016, pp. 279-280).

Wealthy collectors in the US supported the constantly increasing number of galleries and private museums that opened all over in places like Washington, Philadelphia, Chicago, Brooklyn, Detroit, St. Louis, Cincinnati, San Francisco, and Pittsburgh and served on their boards of trustees (Levi, 1997, p. 19).

Seeking to free itself from European culture and find its own visual-cultural identity, America was supported by the US government with its emphasis on cultural recognition over the military or political (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 43). In this regard, the law known as the Kennedy bill provided tax benefits to Americans who bought artworks, nearly making these purchases tax-exempt, greatly facilitated this process. Therefore, paintings would be sold for exorbitant prices, increasing the qualitative and quantitative value of the collections in which they were featured. While Impressionists attracted high prices from collectors at first, they were later joined by Abstract Expressionists who would compete to get a foothold in the art market. For example, Muriel Kallis Steinberg Newman, a collector of the period, supported the movement

by purchasing about 70 abstract expressionistic paintings between 1950 and 1954 (Serpil, 2006, p. 32).

The root of the American museum boom was an art market comprising greatly wealthy domestic collectors and gallery owners overseas. These gallery owners were especially influential in the increased demand for modern art over classical. Goupil and Durant-Ruel, two gallery owners who came to New York from Paris spearheaded this trend (Yılmaz, 2020, p. 124). Wealthy collectors like Henry Walters, J. P. Morgan, Henry Clay Frick, Joseph E. Widener Andrew Mellon, Samuel H. Kress, John G. Johnson Benjamin Altman, Peggy Guggenheim, Solomon R. Guggenheim, Paul Getty, and Abby Rockefeller helped the US become a leading world figure with its museums through the art galleries and private museums they established while also gaining prestige for themselves by acting as modern patrons for artists to expand their collections. This was *the New World*, as the latecomer United States was known, attempting to counter Europe's grand public museums which were built on a long-established cultural heritage, with its collectors and private museums. In fact, a new museum was established every 10.5 days in the United States between 1940-1949, and every 3.3 days between 1960 and 1963. This process also birthed historical museums in both small towns and large cities. American museums, which had attracted a total audience of around fifty million before the Second World War suddenly saw this figure increase to the ballpark of 200-300 million by the year 1969 (Cook, 2019, p. 21). Isabella Stewart Gardner's eponymous private museum which she established in Boston in 1903 was followed by private collector museums such as the Phillips Collection in 1921, the Barnes Foundation Museum in 1925, the Walker Art Center in

1927, the Whitney in 1930, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1929, the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 1933, the Frick Collection and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1935, the National Gallery and the Art of This Century gallery in 1942, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 1959, the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Hirshhorn Museum in 1974, and the Menil Collection in 1987.

Largely spearheaded by Abby Rockefeller and established in 1929, the arrival of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York almost declared both the 20th century as the American century, the century of modernism, and New York the center of this new art. For the museum's first director and founder of its intellectual background, art historian Alfred H. Barr, who with his revolutionary ventures left a significant mark on this period, the main inspiration for the museum was the Bauhaus school which prioritized function and industrial production over content and aesthetics, which the US believed to be the "superior" model (Artun, 2006, p. 256).

MoMA, like many other American museums, was founded by wealthy, charitable collectors, and its board of trustees is still picked from among the American upper crust. It creates the impression of a large-scale store, as it was influenced by the period's architectural developments (Grunenberg, 2017, pp. 92-94) (See Figure 15).



Figure 15. MOMA, New York, The USA, 1929

Note: (www.moma.org). <https://www.moma.org/about/who-we-are/moma-history>.

Meanwhile, Peggy Guggenheim, another famous American art collector, amassed a sizable art collection in Paris where she had lived since 1920, and in 1939 was in the process of establishing a museum in London with her art consultant Marcel Duchamp when the outbreak of war forced her to return to New York to realize her dream with the Art of this Century museum-gallery in 1942. Peggy Guggenheim's uncle, the industry giant Solomon R. Guggenheim, had previously established his own private museum in 1939 by converting a private property that used to be a car dealership, which he then transported into the famous building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1959 to establish the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (See Figure 16), (Artun, 2006, pp. 263-265).

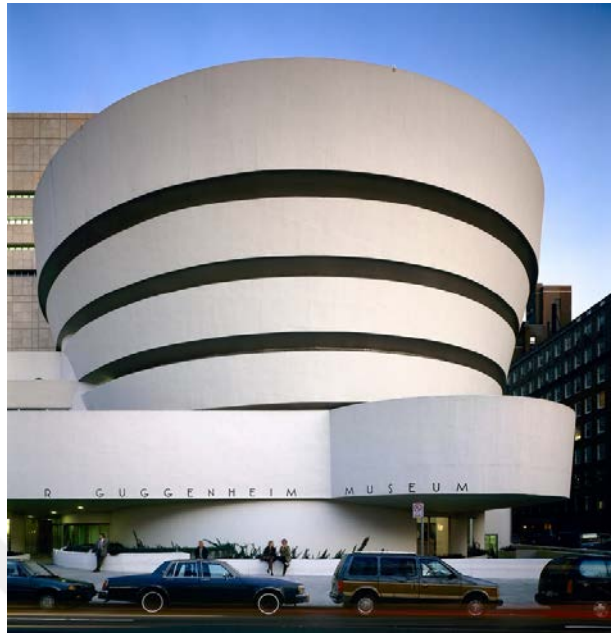


Figure 16. The Guggenheim, Manhattan, The USA, 1959

Note: (www.guggenheim.org). <https://www.guggenheim.org/the-frank-lloyd-wright-building/timeline>

The American approach to museums as educational institutions, their collaborations with universities, the presence of private foundations within their administrations, the public providing considerable financial contributions to establish new museums are factors that allowed museums in the United States to achieve greater advances than those around the world (Uçar, 2019, p. 38). These museums are as notable for their contemporary architecture as they are for their collections. Establishing a new world order and increasingly amassing wealth, the US also purchased a large number of European artworks; featuring them in personal or corporate collections as well as private museums whose numbers rapidly multiplied.

Meanwhile in post-war Europe, the private museums of the 20th century joined public museums which had developed in the previous century.

The Benaki Museum which was founded in Athens in 1930 by Greek collector Antonis Benakis, the Fondation Maeght which was established in 1936 by French collectors Marguerite and Aimé Maeght in the Southern France, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art which was founded in Copenhagen in 1958 by Danish collector, the Ludwig which was established in Cologne in 1960 by German collector Peter Ludwig, the The Calouste Gulbenkian Museum which was founded by its namesake, a collector of Turkish origin, in Lisbon, Portugal (due to a lack of Turkish interest in establishing a museum) in 1969, the Lyudmila Zhivkova International Foundation Art Gallery which was established in 1985 by Bulgarian collector Lyudmila Zhivkova in Sofia, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, which was established in 1992 in Madrid by Spanish collector Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, the Fondation Beyeler Museum established in 1997 in Basel by Swiss collector Ernst Beyeler, the Essl Museum which was established by Austrian collectors Agnes and Karlheinz Essel in Vienna in 1999 are only some of many museums founded in this period (See Figure 17), (Baraz, 2010, pp. 184-362).



Figure 17. Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon

Note: (Wikipedia).

https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ficheiro:Museo_Calouste_Gulbenkian.jpg

The capitalist social structure evolved into a global one in the 1980s. These circumstances, which largely upset the balance of the art market as well, were greatly shaped by the government policies of the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the US President Ronald Reagan. These two leaders' privatization policies which expanded the private sector's presence in the economy not only redefined the government's role in social and economic life in the US and the UK, but also deeply affected the cultures and the art worlds of both countries (Akdede, 2014, p. 157). Though the privatization of culture was as a policy of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations, it also became part of other countries' cultural policies because of globalization (Serpil, 2006, p. 34). Reagan's depiction of collector businessmen as

enlightened art patrons before the public eye, his emphasis at special White House dinners on the “charitability” of supporting the arts, his tax exemptions and deductions for donations to art, and his creation of the award and title of the National Medal of Arts ran parallel with the business world’s full-throated efforts to enter the world of arts and culture. With globalization, art collectorship—especially in the US and the UK—started to become monopolized by multinational corporations and much like privatized companies the inclusion of art pieces into private corporate collections slowly became a competition for prestige. These circumstances affected not just the US and the UK but also other countries like France despite their reluctance towards cultural privatization and their seriously significant public funding of the arts. Ultimately artworks, art products, and art services began to turn into commodities (Wu 2019, 19-467).

This period’s notion of contemporary art also influenced the period’s art collectorship into a more pluralistic, eclectic, heterogenous, popular, hybridized, dynamic, and materialist direction. This in turn caused a transformation in how museums operated. Museums in the 20th century transformed from an object/collection focused medium into a people/society focused medium. As they transitioned into the 21st century, these museums had to treat museum audiences as customers in order to ensure their sustainability as a result of globalization and technological advances and thus resorted to marketing activities in both their exhibition methods and their entertainment and free-time activities (Uçar, 2019, pp. 41-47). It wouldn’t be wrong to say that this notion of contemporary and global collectorship undoubtably carries in its DNA certain constructs that were the result of

dynamics ranging from the libraries of Antiquity to the curio cabinets of the Renaissance to the Revolutions to the Second World War.

Conclusion

The 17th century was a period wherein the reform movements of the preceding century began a decrease in church influence over the European society, against which the church commissioned religious art from many artists as counter-reform propaganda. Meanwhile, absolutist monarchies began to reign in countries like France, England, and Spain. Geographical discoveries led to colonialism in Europe, through which France became the predominant economic, political, and cultural force in continental Europe, also replacing Italy as the center of the art world. At the same time, the Dutch church's lack of interest in the arts set the Netherlands apart from other European countries where the aristocracy and the ruling classes ruled the art market. This, along with the expansion of the Dutch bourgeoisie, put the Netherlands into a pioneering role regarding the emergence of a more active art market that shed the nobility's influence and appealed to a larger population (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 11-15). In this context, a huge step towards modern collectorship and museology vis-à-vis the autonomy of art was achieved with the emergence of private collections that, though not completely public, were opened to the public on certain occasions.

The 18th century was a period of changes whose seeds were planted during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. These changes concerned both social structure and collectorship and would have far-reaching consequences. A bourgeois taste for art collection arguably developed during this period (Serpil, 2006, p. 17). As private and

royal collections which first appeared in the previous periods as curio cabinets turned into modern museums the notion of “museumification” was realized with the first ever example of a public and contemporary (to the period) museum in the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris in 1750, followed by the British Museum in 1753 (Artun, 2006, p. 101). However, the paradigm shift for the arts and collectorship in Western Europe especially was the French Revolution in 1789, wherein the deteriorating public opinion against social stratification caused the borderline-starved masses revolted against the crown who led luxurious, extravagant, and wasteful lives. The royal collection and the collections of the aristocrats closely associated with the crown were confiscated and these formed the foundation for many museums, the chief among which is the Louvre Museum established in 1793. Thus, the process of the secularization and categorization of collections whose hints we saw in the Medici collection came to life in France with the Louvre, wherein we witness the first true transition from the mysticism of the curio cabinets of the Renaissance to rationalist museology (Bulduk, 2018, p. 167).

Bolstered by the Revolution, the middle-class rapidly produced increasingly numerous collectors especially in Western Europe, also expanding the art market. Thus, the bourgeois expansion that began in Italy and became notable in the Netherlands continued in France and England, while advances in the Central and Eastern European markets somewhat lagged as the region remained under aristocratic influence.

The 19th century symbolized a breaking point in both Europe and the world in general. The scientific and technological advances, increasing urban populations, the emergence of a new working class, and the capitalist world view, all stemming from the Industrial Revolution, also transformed the notion of collectorship for the expanding bourgeoisie. The foundations were thus laid for modernism, and the resulting emergence in numerous avantgarde movements added variety to the art market, causing soaring artwork prices and giving the collections of the period an eclectic nature (Serpil, 2006, pp. 20-21). Later, the European art market attracting wealthy collectors from America resulted in the newly independent country's ruthless cultural competition with Europe as part of its global aspirations. This century was named the Museum Age due to the very rapid increase in the number of public/private institutions as wealthy collectors began donating their collections to the state or founding their own museums (Baraz, 2010, p. 15).

In Europe, the Rijksmuseum in the Netherlands (1815), the Prado in Spain, the Altes in Germany (1828), The Victoria and Albert Museum (1852) and The Tate (1897) in England, as well as The Met (1893), the Boston Museum of Arts, (1870) and the Chicago Institute of Art (1879) in the United States are a few examples of this phenomenon. With the emergence of museums, art transitioned from depicting the lives of saints and rulers to the history of humankind and civilization. Universality/nationality/individuality/publicness/historicity/scientificity concretized in these museums (Artun, 2006, p. 155).

The 20th century began with a period of universal decline stemming from the two world wars in Europe. Sensing an opportunity in the near half-decade long Nazi occupation of Paris, the United States, as a country that was relatively minimally affected by the war—which it later entered—became the preferred destination of many a modern artist who were fleeing Fascist pressure in Europe, thanks to its active collectors, and private and well-funded galleries and museums (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 33). Thus, after the war, five centuries after Florence and one after Paris, New York was declared the center of modern art (Artun, 2006, p. 129). Building its own culture from the ground up, the US tried to counter Europe's long-established heritage of great public museums with its collectors and private museums. Notable American collectors such as Peggy Guggenheim, Solomon R. Guggenheim, Paul Getty, Abby Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, and Henry Clay Frick made use of the US government's tax benefits and became modern patrons for artists and put the US on the map with regards to museum influence with the private museums they established. In fact, between the years of 1940-1949 there was a new museum established every 10.5 days, and one every 3.3 days between 1960 and 1963. Meanwhile gallery sales increased from 40% to 300% (Cook, 2019, p. 21). Among these private institutions were the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) (est. 1929), the Whitney (est. 1930), the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art (est. 1933), the Frick Collection and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (est. 1935), the National Gallery and the Art of This Century gallery (est. 1942), The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (est. 1959), the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Hirshhorn Museum (est. 1974), and the Menil Collection (est.

1987). Europe also saw an increase in private museum sales in the aftermath of the war.

Near the end of the 20th century, as we approached the 1980s, the capitalist social structure evolved into a global one, also changing the balance in the art market. The biggest reason for these circumstances were the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the US President Ronald Reagan and their administrative policies. The two leaders' neo-liberal privatization policies aiming to expand the private sector's presence in the economy affected many dynamics both in and outside the art world, at a global scale (Akdede, 2014, p. 157). The globalization turned art collectorship into a competitive struggle for prestige, ultimately turning artworks, and art products and services into commodities (Wu 2019, 19-467). This period's notion of contemporary art gave art collectorship pluralist, eclectic, heterogenous, popular, hybridized, dynamic, and materialistic qualities. As we transitioned into the 21st century, the effects of globalization and technological advances caused museums to also take on the role of an institution that not only collects, and conserves and keeps these collections in public consciousness but one that also researches, educates, and entertains (Graf 2012, 173) while also causing the museum audiences to be treated as customers. Just as the 19th century had been the Museum Age, this century deservedly became the "golden age" of museums of contemporary art that distinguished itself with a break from diachronic distribution, an age where art was no longer exclusive to big cities and became perfectly common in localities of any size (Lorente, 2016, p. 248).

In order to understand the development of art collectorship in Turkey and the emergence and transformation of private museums that followed, we needed to know its historical origins in the West. Until this point, we've built up towards the development of private art collectorship and museology in the Western World starting from the ground up with the basic historical fact of collecting. The progress of art collectorship and private museums in Turkey from the Ottoman Empire through the current day will be examined in the following chapters.



3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ART COLLECTORSHIP IN TURKEY (FROM THE OTTOMAN TO THE 2000's)

“Ideas and Revolutions spread through art.”

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

3.1 A Brief History of Private Art Collectorship in the Ottoman Period (Before 1923)

Collectorship in Turkey during the Ottoman era differed in quality and content from Europe, which existed since the Roman Empire and became commonplace during the Renaissance. The reason was the Islamic prohibition of depictions of any living beings and thus most collecting was unsystematic and geared towards the tastes and interests of the Sultan (Levi, 1997, pp. 20-21). At the start of the 17th century the cultural dialogue between Europe and the Ottoman Empire broadened, and during the height of the Enlightenment after the French and the Industrial Revolutions, the *Occidentalization* movement that began in the Ottoman Empire and the lifting of the depiction ban led to artistic, material cultural, and institutional advancements. The 19th century is a period where Ottoman relations with the West were officialized as a result of the *Imperial Edict of Reorganization* (1839) and the *Imperial Reform Edict* (1856); an era of change for the political atmosphere of the palace as well as the cultural/artistic scene (Sülün, 2019, pp. 18-28).

Sultans like Abdülaziz and Abdülhamid II displayed favorable attitudes towards the arts, and thus foreign artists established their workshops, art academies were founded, and artwork purchases continued at numerous exhibitions. *Müze-i Hümayun*, or the *Imperial Museum* was established in 1869, and is commonly

considered the first museum institute of Turkey. In 1882, Osman Hamdi Bey was appointed as its director to achieve a more systematic means of collection management. This period's collectors comprised statesmen, high-income families, and non-Muslims (Özkan, 2004 , p. 65).

3.1.1 The Imperial Age and Palace-Centered Collectorship (The 15th-18th Centuries)

Establishing numerous states over a wide geography stretching from Northern Siberia to Asia Minor, the Turks possess a long-established and rich cultural history, and have produced artworks of immeasurable quality and variety throughout their reign, contributing aspects of their own artistic culture to the Chinese and Indian cultures in the pre-Islamic period, and to Arabic and Persian cultures after. Although these artworks existed in all walks and styles of life from tents to palaces, their nomadic lifestyle prevented the development of collectorship until the transition to a sedentary lifestyle (Üstünipek 1998, 56, Levi 1997, 19). The earliest examples of Turkish traditions of collection stretch back to the Seljuks in the 13th century. Their placement of Hellenistic period remains, statues, and engravings among the stones while they built their walls is in a sense an attempt at museology (Yücel, 1999, p. 30). Turkish culture contributed to the Islamic civilization accomplished works in the fields of architecture, painting, music, and poetry. Turkish architecture adhered to national traditions from the Seljuk dynasty through the Ottoman Empire (Kasalı, 2010, p. 50).

Somewhat related to the *devşirme* (collecting or gathering) system, which functioned as a representation of the Ottoman Empire's power and sovereignty, the reuse of war spoils and architectural constructions taken from a demolished building, their aggregation and maintenance create a protomuseological display which points to historical roots for Turkish museology that go as far back as the conquest of Istanbul (Shaw, 2020, pp. 20-21). Collectorship as it emerged in the Ottoman Empire did not occur in a systematic western manner, instead developing as an act of aggregation based on the tastes and special interests of the Sultan (Levi, 1997, p. 20).

The Sultans were raised from childhood with lessons to develop their senses of art and aesthetics to have a command of fields of art like poetry, prose, calligraphy, etc. This allowed them to act both as state rulers and patrons of art (Sülün, 2019, p. 1). Collectorship in the Ottoman Empire remained under state monopsony. The collections were considered Sultan's personal property and thus never opened to the public (Konukcu, 2007, p. 31).

While collectorship developed in Europe starting with the Renaissance in the 15th century, leading to collections becoming public in the 17th century and the start of modern museumification in the century that followed, the emergence of collectors in the Ottoman Empire, untouched by the Renaissance, was delayed, causing the museumification process to lag two centuries behind and occur after the 19th century. Many different reasons—social, economic, or intellectual—could have arguably resulted in this lack of widespread collectorship in the Ottoman period. For example; the Islamic prohibition of visual depictions or figures, the predominant beliefs in

Muslim societies about the impermanence of earthly possessions, the lack of a noble class outside the Sultan and his family that could correspond to the bourgeoisie which birthed European collectorship, the upper-classes lacking the same amount of privilege and influence as their western counterparts, the timber based construction methods in Istanbul which lead to the loss of collections in frequent fires and earthquakes, as well as the Ottoman Empire's financial and societal depressions which at times led to invaluable artifacts being smelted at the Imperial Mint for ore are feasible reasons for this condition (Konukcu 2007, 31-32, Karabıyık 2007, 13, Erten 2017, 27). The ban on the visual depiction of living beings which was effective from the 10th century on, had a large impact on the art of painting, leading instead to advances in the art of *miniature* (Ersoy, 1998, p. 11). Meanwhile, important artists in fields like Arabic calligraphy, ornament, and *hat*, who produced accomplished works of art. The rise of the Ottoman Empire beginning with the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 also led in parallel to increased support for artists and the arts from both the Sultan and other figures of palace authority like the grand vizier, viziers, *haseki* and *valide sultans*, provincial governors, bookkeepers, and *aghas* (Kasalı, 2010, p. 50). The Ottoman palace treasuries which completely catered to the Sultan's tastes and comprised a rich collection of spoils and diplomatic gifts displayed systematic and logical similarities in aggregation to European collections (Konukcu, 2007, p. 30). Notable Sultans of the period, such as Mehmed II (1451-1481), Bayezid II (1481-1512), Selim I (1512-1520), Suleiman I (1520-1566) and his Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha, as well as Murad III were known to collect.

Mehmed II (1451-1481) was a pioneering figure among these Sultans, who, though different from the notion of collectorship of the current day, aggregated collections in many fields such as prayer beads, calligraphy, medallions, albums of miniature art, in addition to his interest in the art of painting in a western sense (Erten, 2017, p. 27).

After Istanbul, he also collected books in the Greek language, and commissioned books written in Greek, indicating that the Sultan who himself was fluent in Greek approached collecting in a more conscious manner (Konukcu, 2007, p. 30). Meanwhile, taking advantage of Istanbul's geographical position, history, cultural wealth, etc., Mehmed II's cultural policies included turning the city into a center for art and education. He imported books of geography, religion, history, and philosophy written in various languages and with them formed the first palace library in the Topkapı Palace Library. He also showed keen interest in the advancements that had begun in the 15th century Europe, becoming the first Ottoman sultan to underline relations with the western culture and acting on it (Sülün, 2019, p. 1). For example, in 1479, Venetian painter Gentile Bellini was brought to Istanbul by the Republic of Venice to improve diplomatic relations, after which he was commissioned by Mehmed II to paint portraits of him (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 26). During Mehmed II's reign, the Byzantine Hagia Irene church in the outer courtyard of the Topkapı Palace was renamed *Cebehane* (arsenal) and held weaponry and war equipment taken by the Turkish troops in wars (Ata, 2002, p. 48). Aggregated in the Second Courtyard of the Topkapı Palace, the Byzantine period tombs, the columns and column heads at the

Hippodrome, in addition to other Byzantine pieces could be considered a collection attempt (Erol, 2019, p. 12).

Bayezid II (1481-1512), one of Mehmed II's descendants, provided patronage and support for many artists such as Sheik Hamdullah, an icon of Islamic art (Konukcu, 2007, p. 33). As part of the foundation of the Ottoman patronage system, the Sultan developed close relations with Lorenzo the Magnificent of the House of Medici, who were some of the most important art patrons in Europe. Afterwards, the education and training of scholars and artists was supported through the craftsmen's organization named *Ehl-i Hiref*. In the 16th century, at the near peak of the empire's power, the organization was reported to have around 600-900 members, with some sources stating it to be 2000 (Artun, 2019, p. 25).

Selim I (1512-1520) collected books and porcelain, with which he was quite interested. He built a library out of the books he acquired during his conquests (Konukcu, 2007, p. 35). Meanwhile, the treasury of the court, named *Enderûn* failed to fit within the treasury and the harem chambers, and thus some of it had to be moved to the dungeons of Yedikule (Ata, 2002, p. 48).

Suleiman I (1520-1566) was another ruler known for his fondness for porcelain and books, which he collected. Continuing previous Sultans' tradition, he also had libraries built in mosques and madrasas (Konukcu, 2007, p. 33). The Chinese porcelain collection, which was started in the 15th century, was expanded greatly in the 16th century, and with the addition of exquisite Japanese porcelain in the 17th century it became a complete and sizable collection of rare breadth. These porcelain

pieces made up an important part of the Topkapı Palace Collection, comprising over ten thousand Chinese and Japanese porcelain pieces which are currently displayed in the Topkapı Palace Museum (Sülün, 2018, p. 3).

Serving as the Grand Vizier under Suleiman I for fourteen years between 1523 and 1536, **İbrahim Paşa** holds an important place in the Turkish political history. He was also noted in art history as a visionary collector of art. Having become interested in sculpture while away for the Battle of Mohács, İbrahim Paşa is noted for his sculpture collection which is on display in the courtyard of his palace, which currently serves as the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts (Erten, 2017, p. 29).

Another Sultan known for his love of books **Murad III** (1574-1595) increased the number of court painters to aid in the production of many rare books of artisanal quality, (Konukcu, 2007, p. 33) in addition to ordering the collection pieces moved to Yedikule during the Selim I period to be moved back into the Topkapı Palace, forming the core of the museum that would be established in the future (Ata, 2002, p. 48). At the height of the Ottoman Empire's power during the 16th and 17th centuries, the court and their associates were the most prominent patrons of art. A portion of these artworks were transferred to the Sultan's private collection while another portion was donated to charitable court institutions known as Waqfs, which is arguably an extension of collectorship (Konukcu, 2007, p. 34).

From the 16th century onwards the possessions, weapons, and clothes belonging to caliphs, as well as war spoils like antiques, miniature art, manuscripts, etc. were preserved and kept in the Palace (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 26).

Topkapı treasures which belonged to the Ottoman dynasty held equal value and importance to the most exquisite imperial collections and European Renaissance museums and exhibited parallels with Europe with regard to its cognitive structure and the curios they featured as well as their function and patronage structure. The Renaissance period classification of curio closets (e.g., *naturalia*, *artificialia*, *scientifica*, *mirabilia* and *bibliotheca*) also existed in the Topkapı Palace collections. The Topkapı Palace collections rivalled the splendor of the legendary collections belonging to the Ottoman dynasty's most prominent opponent, the Habsburgs of the Holy Roman Empire, and similar to European curio cabinets, the Topkapı Palace collections served as a display of the rulers' power, a microcosm that reflected their sovereignty on Earth, and similarly exclusive and closed to the public (Artun, 2019, pp. 17-22).

With their conquest of Egypt in the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire brought back important Islamic artifacts and holy relics, such as Mohammad's Holy Mantle, adding them to the Topkapı Palace collection (Konukcu, 2007, p. 37).

Art market activity began between Ottoman ministers and upper classes in the 16th century's second half. An important historian of the era, Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali (1541-1599) was a contemporary of the architect and painter Vasari (1511-1574)—the custodian of the Medici patronage network and the father of art history—, and similarly wrote about Ottoman artists, thus ushering in Turkish art history (Artun, 2019, pp. 25-26). Mustafa Ali wrote of artworks that sold for remarkably, even

exorbitantly high prices—pointing to an art market developing between artists and collectors.

In the late 16th and early 17th century period saw relations between the Ottoman Empire and Europe expand, with European envoys being frequently sent to Istanbul and accelerating trade relations. The rest of the 17th century, however, largely saw Ottoman envoys as the channel of political and cultural dialogue (Sülün, 2018, pp. 4-5). Western artists accompanying European delegations were both commissioned to paint the Sultans and therefore featured in the court collection and featured in European court and palace collections with the paintings depicting the Ottoman Empire that they produced during their time here. In fact, the fear and curiosity surrounding the Turks led to wide popularity of this genre of artwork, playing a big role in the spread of Orientalism and *Turquerie* (Konukcu, 2007, p. 36).

Signed at the end of the 17th century, in 1699, the Treaty of Karlowitz was the result of Ottoman defeat and loss of land, and the first indication that it was entering a period of decline (Kasalı, 2010, p. 52). As the West achieved great advancements in commerce, science, technology, art, and architecture with the Renaissance and the subsequent geographical discoveries and entered a period of enlightenment. This was noticeable to the Ottoman Empire who with the onset of the 18th century entered a period where it would be increasingly influenced by Western thought both militarily and artistically, culturally, educationally, and institutionally.

3.1.2. The Period of Westernization, The First Museum, and New Collectors (The 18th-20th Centuries)

The 18th century was a period of loss of influence due to military losses and land losses which started a process of dissolution for its economic structure. Its ministers were then moved to reexamine Ottoman institutions (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 56). The phenomenon called *Ottoman Westernization* wherein its scientific, technical, architectural, social, and cultural structures were reoriented westward began the process of occidentalization.

However, modernization in the Ottoman Empire context is different from modernization in a Western context. European modernization stretches back to the 16th century with the transformation from the feudal society. Modernity in Europe is primarily about capitalism and the bourgeoisie, and it is built upon concepts like civilization, freedom, democracy, equality, and human rights, which entered circulation in Europe in the 18th century after the French Revolution as they globalized. Meanwhile, Turkish modernization as it stands is an *eclectic* movement and thus did not occur as the result of a specific historical, social, or capitalistic process. This led to orientalism which argues that the East and the West are fundamentally different, about which commented writer Montesquieu that Eastern societies are static, and Western societies constantly change, progress, and are dynamic. Philosopher Karl Marx, however, argues that while Europe has a history wherein the means of production are interarticulated—thus creating a dynamic timeline that goes through primitive communal societies to slaver societies of the

Antiquity, then to feudalism and the bourgeoisie; whereas Eastern societies lack a similar transformation and thus are static (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, pp. 27-39).

With the Enlightenment which followed the French and the Industrial Revolutions, the 18th century saw the laying of the foundations for a secularizing, modern world that prioritized the mind and emphasized observation, knowledge, and experimentation. This also led to a new profile of bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, in the Ottoman Empire, the *Tulip Period* which took place between 1718-1730 was an era in which the palace lost power while private capital took over, influencing the social structure and creating a bourgeois camp within society (Sülün, 2018, p. 6). The Tulip Period represents a contradictory era during the rule of **Ahmed III** (1703-1730) where despite an ongoing depression, new mansions and gardens were built, and entertainment and luxury was of primary focus (Kasalı, 2010, p. 52). The relative lack of conflict during this period was also used as an opportunity to accelerate modernization efforts (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 26).

With mutual interest emerging between the West and the East, this period saw the first instances of cultural, economic, and political curiosity and interaction between the two sides, leading to increased advances in the fields of history, archaeology, and though indirectly, collectorship (Sülün, 2018, p. 6). Ottoman Statesman Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi Efendi became the first ever foreign representative of a permanent nature for the Ottoman Empire as the ambassador to Paris between 1720-1722, to learn more about France, examine its science and arts, and improve relations (Kasalı, 2010, p. 52). This, along with an increased influx of

Christian traders, explorers, and ambassadors in the Ottoman Empire, as well as the Enlightenment thought pervading in the Empire after the first printing press in 1727 which printed in Ottoman Turkish, were indicative of the changing social climate in the Ottoman Empire (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 57). European painters remained close to the Ottoman top brass, and the palace continued commissioning portraits. Originally frowned upon in Islamic art, portraiture was initially done in Ottoman miniature art. With western artists, however, the techniques changed, and the portraits became larger. Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, who lived in Istanbul for thirty-eight years, and his depiction of Ahmed III with realistic facial features shows that closer relations with Europe also affected the Ottoman collection (Konukcu, 2007, p. 36). A wealthy class made up of high-ranking statesmen—who chose to live on the Bosphorus shore in Istanbul—also became heavily invested in the many artists who worked under Ahmed III and his great vizier Damat Ibrahim Paşa’s patronage, and their artworks (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 58).

Selim III (1789-1807), aiming to solve the string of Ottoman military failures, carried out the *Nizam-ı Cedid* (lit. “new order”) military reforms in addition to establishing technical schools as part of the reform movement. Selim III was the first sultan since Mehmet II to commission an oil portrait (Erten, 2017, p. 33). Along with his own portrait, he also commissioned a portrait of each and every Ottoman Sultan, forming the first painting collection of the palace (Serpil, 2006, p. 2). These portraits, made by painters like Rafael Manas, and Konstantin Kapıdağlı make up the backbone of the collection. Kapıdağlı’s commissioned depiction of twenty-eight Ottoman Sultans standing in medallions began a new school of Sultan portraiture. In this sense,

Selim III was the Sultan who had had his portraits done the most times—and shared these portraits with foreign rulers (Erten, 2017, p. 33). Seeing through the propaganda purposes behind European rulers gifting their own portraits to other rulers, Selim III did the same toward his westernization goals (Konukcu, 2007, p. 36). In 1793, *Mühendishane-i Berr-i Hümayun* (The Imperial School of Military Engineering) began teaching the first lessons in Ottoman History about Western painting. The broadening interest for European painters and Western painting wasn't limited to the palace and spread to the palace-adjacent upper crust and minorities as well. However, the Revolt of 1807 which led to Selim III's dethronement, and the following coups led to the change of this upper crust (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 59).

Mahmud II's (1808- 1839) reign also saw policies parallel to the westernization movement. Mahmud II commissioned many artists with his portraits and followed the European example of having his portraits displayed in government offices. Although he was at times called the “Infidel Sultan”, he also introduced Western painting to the public (Erten, 2017, p. 35). He used portraits in the palace less as a collection and more as propaganda tools and prestige symbols. Students were sent (approximately one hundred and fifty Muslim students, the first four of them being Hüseyin, Abdüllâtif, Ahmed and Edhem) to Europe during this period and their cultural engagement in Europe led to the emergence of a coterie of intellectuals who were connoisseurs of art and culture (Ünar, 2019, p. 69).

The reign of **Abdülmeçid** (1839-1861) saw the issuance of the Edict of Gülhane, or Imperial Edict of Reorganization, in 1839 and the Imperial Reform Edict

in 1856, opening an Ottoman Empire in the process of westernization to both political and cultural-artistic advancements (Sülün, 2018, p. 11). The Edict of Gülhane, a turning point in Ottoman history, officialized the westernization process that was already underway in a militaristic and technological sense by politicalizing it. Abdülmecid, a *Tanzimat* (“reorganization”) era sultan, above all worked towards turning the Ottoman Empire into a “state of law” (Ortaylı, 2014, pp. 49-52). The modernization reforms that began during Mahmud II’s reign continued during the Abdülmecid period as government institutions and the state internal affairs became subject to principals of western administrative law with the Edict of Gülhane. These were later legally implemented with The Imperial Rescript of Gülhane, which guaranteed universal public equality before the law. In education, too, western rules and methods were adopted. Activities like recruiting foreign teachers and sending students abroad, as well as the first Ottoman newspaper began during this period (Kasalı, 2010, pp. 58-59). Interested in the fine arts like his father Mahmud II, Abdülmecid’s reign saw the palace collection attain a more consciously structured core. Leading a more Western lifestyle, Abdülmecid also began the construction of the Dolmabahçe Palace, ending a four-century long tradition of ruling the empire across three continents from the Topkapı Palace. Until the completion of the new palace, he lived in the Çırağan Palace, whose architecture followed a more Western example. Although the Çırağan was only open to the Sultan and the palace officials and personnel, it was also home to first known painting exhibition in Turkey in 1845, in which Austrian painter Oreker’s landscapes were displayed. In 1856 the move into the Dolmabahçe Palace followed the addition of new paintings to the collection, with

English painter Sir David Wilkie painting Abdülmecid's portrait, and paintings of artists who had visited Istanbul from Europe such as Adolphe Yvon, Fabius Brest, Edward Lear and Ivan Aivazovsky, Felix Ziem, J. Schranz, Preziosi and Gaspare Fossati were also featured (Erten, 2017, p. 39), (Kasalı, 2010, p. 60). Importantly, Abdülmecid's reign also saw the first archaeological digs in Asia Minor, which was initiated by the *Maârif Nezareti*, or The Ministry of Public Education, and the unearthed pieces were displayed in Hagia Irene, achieving the first step in Turkish museology (Sülün, 2018, p. 11). Ahmet Fethi Pasha, who was the marshal of *Tophane-i Amire* (the Imperial Armory) of the period and married to Abdülmecid's sister, personally worked to establish a museum for antiquities, corresponding with various provinces to have antiquities sent to Istanbul (Ünar, 2019, pp. 69-70). Thus, the first museum was established in 1846, under the names *Mecma-ı Esliha-ı Atika* (the Antique Arms Collection) and *Mecma-ı Âsâr-ı Atika* (the Collection of Antiquities) in Hagia Irene (Ata, 2002, p. 50). Although not yet open to the public and only allowing certain special visitors, as well as lacking systematic and adequate exhibition and conservation conditions, these collections (which were considered the Sultan's personal property) are important with regard to museumization and institutionalization efforts (Konukcu, 2007, p. 2007). . 1849 saw the second ever painting exhibition, presenting paintings from students of the Ottoman Military Academy—and publicly, unlike the first exhibition in 1845. Sixteen of the paintings exhibited were then offered to the Sultan. Thus, having patronized classical Turkish-Islamic art for centuries, the palace had now become the primary patron of the burgeoning Western painting. The Western lifestyle which emerged in the upper

classes during second half of the 19th century spread to the public, bringing radical changes in Istanbul, the imperial capital. The Galata, Pera, and Beyoğlu neighborhoods became popular, and the sales of European imported goods boomed as free trade policies were adopted. Novels were written, theater halls opened, newspapers published which helped form public opinion. These commercial and cultural developments resulted in the emergence of an intellectual class (Bölüktaş, 2017). Although the interest in painting increased in the second half of the 19th century, it was still limited to the crown, top-level bureaucrats, minorities, and foreign nationals (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 61). Following the Imperial Reform Edict of 1856, commercial and cultural developments in Ottoman cities resulted in non-Muslims receiving equal rights, earning a more prominent voice in the society, and thus broadening the profile of non-Muslim collectors.

The **Abdülaziz** (1861-1876) period holds an important place in the development of Ottoman painting and sculpture. The 19th century as a period that featured Sultans who valued art and maintained close relationships with artists (Sülün, 2018, p. 12) and Abdülaziz was one such example. Known for his fondness and talent for painting, the Sultan was trained in painting in his youth and displayed his interest in Western art by becoming the first Ottoman Sultan to commission a sculpture (Bölüktaş, 2017). He was also the first Sultan to travel to foreign countries, visiting Paris as well as cities like London and Venice, and tried to integrate his European vision into the Ottoman Empire.

The first official sculpture of the Ottoman Empire was commissioned in 1872 from English sculptor Fuller by Abdülaziz who had seen sculptures of European rulers during his travels. Educational reforms took place in this period aimed to separate religion from science and establish public schools to replace madrasas. The Galatasaray Lycée was established in Istanbul as a Western school, in addition to universities as well as vocational, language, teacher training, engineering, and art schools. Abdülaziz taking on the role of the patron of arts, the idea for an oil painting collection the core of which Abdülmecid had formed during his reign was realized in the Dolmabahçe Palace. Commissioning paintings in bulk for the first time, the works of European—largely French—painters like Gerome, Boulanger, and Schreyer were added to the collection. Painters Pierre-Désiré Guillemet, Stanisław Chlebowski, and Aivazovsky were commissioned by the palace to paint the Sultan's portrait (Kasalı, 2010, pp. 60-61). Closely following the artistic and cultural developments happening in Europe, Abdülaziz sent talented painters from the military academy to Paris to improve their artistic skills. He also expanded his collection through Parisian art dealer Adolphe Goupil, contacting him through painter and bureaucrat Şeker Ahmet Pasha, whom the Sultan had assigned to Paris after a visit to Europe. Organized by Şeker Ahmet Pasha, three painting exhibitions taking place in 1873, 1875, and 1878, respectively, brought the art of painting to the public, creating public interest in the medium and increasing the public's existing admiration. Thus, Ottoman collectors' transition from collections largely made up of manuscripts, ornaments, *çeşm-i bülbül* [lit. the nightingale's eye, a type of ottoman glass art], and porcelain pieces to painting collections—examples nearly none of which existed previously—occurred during

Abdülaziz's reign (Sülün, 2018, pp. 13-14). Established in 1846 at the Hagia Irene during the Abdülmecid period and heretofore referred to by travelers as the "Museum of St. Irene" was then renamed in 1869 as the *Müze-i Hümayûn* (The Imperial Museum).

In 1871, a 58-page collection catalogue featuring its pieces' cities of origin as well as the images of certain pieces was made, displaying a scientific approach more in line with museological principles (Konukcu, 2007, p. 39). Pieces from all over the Empire were sent to the museum and Englishman Edward Goold, a Galatasaray Lycée teacher, was appointed the museum director. These initial years of Ottoman museology also saw Western archaeologists conducting digs in Anatolia and taking their finds to their countries without difficulty (Yücel, 1999, p. 34). A large portion of Ancient Greek and Hellenistic period artworks which emphasized European might was found within Ottoman territory, leading European powers vying to acquire these artifacts to stake a claim on these lands. Compared to European museums which started in the Renaissance and went through centuries of progress, Ottoman museums were sprung up suddenly, causing a divide as to the subject of collectorship (Shaw, 2020, pp. 30-38). These conditions brought the subject of "conservatorship", another duty of the museum, into question.

Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), became the Sultan at the start of the highly critical last quarter of the Ottoman Empire's longest century and was the Sultan during the longest and the most unique period of the last 150 years long stretch of Ottoman history (Ortaylı, 2016, p. 119). Abdülhamid II maintained the previous Sultans'

policies, in addition to the promulgation of the *Kanûn-i Esâsî*, [lit. Basic Law] a.k.a. the Constitution of 1876 and thus the start of the *I. Meşrutiyet* [First Constitutional Era] period (1876-1878) wherein the Sultan's authority was limited by the publicly elected Ottoman Parliament (Kasalı, 2010, p. 63).

Holding an important place in the Ottoman history of modernization, this period saw important changes and transitions especially in political, social, economic, and cultural fields. Abdülhamid II, a master artisan, greatly supported artists and art institutions in the name of patronage. In fact, the foundations of many fields such as theater, cinema, sculpture, museology, and archaeology, which became institutionalized during the Republican Period, were laid thanks to state policies of this period and Abdülhamid II's conservationist attitude. The Sultan's appreciation of high art played an important role in the common use of art in the dissemination of government ideology and public education.

Himself a master woodworker and a painter, Abdülhamid II regarded the art of painting highly; starting initiatives to support the schooling and support of artists and expanding the palace painting collections. At the *Yıldız Palace* which during this period functioned rather like an *academy of fine arts*, artists, receiving financial and moral support, competed to produce important works. Abdülhamid II himself worked with the master craftsmen in the palace's carpentry workshop, contributing greatly to the wooden furniture and crafts produced there. The Sultan was an important collector of furniture, and the largest portion of the furniture section of the National Palaces Collection consists of his collection. As artists were provided workspaces wherein

they could comfortably create their works, many galleries, and music, photography and theater halls opened around Pera, Galata, and Beyoğlu, bringing the Sultan into close contact with artists and art connoisseurs. Fausto Zonaro, the long-time portrait-painter for the Sultan was commissioned by Abdülhamid II to create paintings in the Ottoman-historical vein, even copying Bellini's portrait of Mehmed II. Thus, the pre-existing palace painting collection gained an identity and expanded and enriched in line with the Sultan's tastes. Additionally, coins, currency, medallions, and watches aggregated with a collector's approach were featured among Abdülhamid's collections in the Yıldız Palace. An important early collection of the then-burgeoning photography was also formed and featured in the Yıldız Palace under the title of the *Albums of Abdülhamid*, which, according to the IRCICA (Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture) consists of 962 photograph albums. Although Abdülhamid never privately commissioned sculptures, animal figures were featured at the palace courtyard, which itself was a contributing factor to the institutionalization of art, considering the state of sculpture in the Ottoman Empire.

Another important act from this period was the *Âsâr-ı Atika Nizamnamesi* or the Antiquities Regulation, which concerned archaeological digs and artifacts unearthed therein, and declared these finds Ottoman property. The regulation would be valid for ninety years. With the beginning of the process of cultural and artistic conservatorship, these finds were shown to be under protection, effectively stopping the foreign raids of artifacts. These finds unearthed in Ottoman lands were therefore transported to the museum. In this sense, it was Abdülmecid II who gave the Müze-i Hümayûn its identity as a true museum and never spared any resources necessary for

its development. Because of space constraints in Hagia Irene, the imperial collection was moved to the *Çinili Köşk* (Tiled Kiosk) in 1880, and the increasing number of archaeological finds necessitated a new museum building (Utkuluer, 2017).

The museum's first director, Edward Goold, was succeeded by German Dr. Philipp Anton Dethier, who made great contributions to Ottoman museology. After his passing in 1881, Osman Hamdi Bey, a pioneering figure in Turkish museological and archaeological history, would take his place. As the first Turkish museum director, Osman Hamdi Bey successfully held his position for three decades and transformed the Müze-i Hümayûn into one of the most important museums in the world (Ünar, 2019, p. 71). And important figure of the society of the period, Osman Hamdi Bey was a painter, archaeologist, and museologist. Because of his education in France as well as his and his father's bureaucratic appointments, Osman Hamdi Bey was an influential figure who was close to French bureaucracy, the famous French art dealer Adolphe Goupil along with his son Albert, as well as the important families who made up the Ottoman bourgeoisie, and he aimed to create awareness regarding museology and collectorship within the Ottoman Empire (Sülün, 2018, p. 15). His first act as the director was an attempt to emend the Tiled Kiosk collection, asking the Interior Minister Ethem Pasha to collect and transport all artifacts from Ottoman provinces to Istanbul. Osman Hamdi Bey then had the museum's first catalogue published in 1882, followed by a third Antiquities Regulation, the first two of which were prepared by Goold in 1869 and by Dethier in 1874, respectively. With the influx of historical artifacts from various Ottoman provinces and the new finds from Osman Hamdi Bey's digs to Istanbul, the Tiled Kiosk was deemed insufficient in capacity and

thus a new building was designed, which opened in 1891 under the name *Âsâr-ı Atika Müzesi* or the Museum of Antiquities, which is currently the Istanbul Archaeology Museum (See Figure 18).



Figure 18. Opened on 13 June 1891, today's Archeology Museum.

Note: (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı 2022). <https://kvmgm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-44095/Istanbul-arkeoloji-muzeleri-mudurlugu.html>

This was a rare example of a building being designed and used exclusively as a museum (Cengiz, 2010, pp. 280-281). The new building was comparable to European museums in size and style, thus bringing both Osman Hamdi Bey and the Müze-i Hümayûn respectability and legitimacy (Uçar, 2019, p. 97).

After Osman Hamdi Bey's death in 1910, he was succeeded by his European-educated brother Halil Edhem Bey who remained the museum director for two

decades during both the Ottoman and Republican periods. Aiming to ensure the transition from an imperial museum to a national museum, Halil Edhem Bey, despite the ongoing First World War, brought the first contemporary artworks to the Müze-i Hümayûn which had heretofore been a museum of arms and antiquities, forming the first collection of Turkish painters and laying the foundations for the future State Art and Sculpture Museum. This was his attempt at providing the museum with an identity as a modern museum of Istanbul (Utkuluer, 2017). Under Halil Edhem Bey's direction, the Museum of Antiquities was divided into three sections, consisting of the Ancient Orient, Greek-Roman-Byzantine, and Turkish Islamic sections, bringing its display methods up to date (Ünar, 2019, p. 72). In addition to improving existing museums, he also desired to establish a decision-making body regarding the conservation of immovable assets (Payaşlı, 2018, p. 251). In 1882, Osman Hamdi Bey contributed to the founding of the *Sanayi-i Nefise Mektebi* or the School of Fine Arts, Turkey's first institution of higher education, which now is the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. Modeling the academy after the Louvre and the École des Beaux-Arts, Osman Hamdi Bey was also its first director. The school's first graduating class of civilian painters became involved with artistic activities, creating a new art scene in Istanbul (Sülün, 2018, p. 16). The increasing number of artists' studios and exhibitions as well as palace artists like Fausto Zonaro turned the Pera area into a *center of fine arts*, introducing Ottoman scholars, bureaucrats, and, albeit limited, a portion of the public to painting as an art form, thus accelerating the creation of collections and the popular growth of the art form (Rastgeldi 2019, 28, Sülün 2018, 17).

The Abdülhamid II period saw numerous exhibitions with the goal of creating the perception of the Ottoman Empire as a country in the process of modernization and which produces works of art, taking special care to participating in universal expositions, known currently as world's fairs, which were an important resource for propaganda and prestige vis-à-vis the economic, social, and political conditions of the period (Yüksel, 2017, pp. 264-285). Some of these expositions were the 1878 Paris World's Fair, the 1888 Cologne Exposition, the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition, the 1892 Plovdiv Exposition, the 1893 The World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the 1900 Paris Universal Exposition, the 1902 Turin Modern Arts and Liège Expositions. (Sülün, 2018, p. 15). The Ottoman State represented itself in these world's fairs with carpets, traditional clothing, photographs, fine china, furniture, arms, and replicas of traditional architecture. The first Istanbul Salon exhibition was held in 1901 and featured in numerous domestic and foreign newspapers. Although the second one was importantly visited by 2796 people within its first week, the Salon exhibitions ended after the third in 1903 due to low participation figures (Rastgeldi, 2019, pp. 32-35).

The final Islamic caliph of the Ottoman dynasty, **Abdülmecid II** was a painter of the period and the sole painter in the dynasty. He became the heir when Vahdettin, Abdülmecid's cousin and the last Ottoman Sultan, ascended to the throne. He carried the title of the caliph until 1924 when the caliphate was abolished (Wikipedia n.d.). He shared the modern and enlightened ideology of his father, Abdülaziz, becoming an important figure for the Empire's Enlightenment period. In 1908, Abdülmecid became the honorary head of the Society of Ottoman Painters established in Istanbul. He also greatly supported the Şişli Studio and the Galatasaray Exhibitions which was

organized in 1916 by the affiliation of artists who had returned home because of the World War after having gone to Paris in the 1910s for an art education. The works created in the Studio were displayed in cities like Berlin and Vienna, with those who remained being returned to Istanbul after the war to be added to the *Elvah-ı Nakşîye Koleksiyonu*, which means the Collection of Paintings. This renewal movement which began during Caliph Abdülmecid II's period thus became, until the founding of the Republic, the most important source of societal revitalization, which influenced artistic inclination.

The Ottoman socio-economic structure did not allow for widespread capitalist accumulation until the 18th century. The accumulation of wealth developed slowly in the Ottoman Empire, which only had a superficial relationship with the Western capitalist market that had been developing since the 16th century. Only in the 17th and 18th centuries did the non-Muslim trader and moneylender class expand. This transformation was greatly influenced by the *Hass*, which was revenue bringing estates given to the Sultan, members of the dynasty, top officials of the government, etc. being subject to *İltizâm*, a system of taxation, starting with the 16th century (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 57).

In the 19th century, the bureaucrats, high-income families, and non-Muslims became influential within the Ottoman societal structure and its art scene, and therefore created most of this period's collections (Sülün, 2018, p. 23).

As there exist no surviving pieces from Ottoman period collections and only limited information therefrom, it is generally thought that collectors of all types of

artifacts and artworks during this period were largely non-Muslims, specifically Jewish families. Muslim collectors consisted of members of the dynasty and their associates, important figures of the period, and traders. These collections largely comprised Turkish-Islamic artifacts such as manuscripts, calligraphy and ornamentation, coins, prayer beads, seals, arms, etc. Apart from the local populations of Muslims and non-Muslims, Levantines of foreign origin who lived in coastal cities like Istanbul, Izmir, and Mersin, as well as foreign dignitaries staying in Turkey make up another cadre of collectors. Some notable collectors of the period were Ottoman-Armenian Calouste Gulbenkian, famous Ottoman-Jewish banker Camondo, and Ottoman diplomat Halil Şerif Paşa (Bali, 2021, p. 39). Born in 1869 in Üsküdar, Calouste Gulbenkian, who lived in Istanbul for 20 years before emigrating to Europe is among the most well-known collectors of his time. He formed an eclectic collection with the artworks he collected throughout his life, and his entire fortune and art collection was transferred to the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum through the foundation in his name in Portugal after his passing (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 29).

Abraham Salomon Camondo of the Camondo family, known for their trade relationships, art collections, and patronage, helped Galata become a modern financial center with his banking activities, but moved to Paris due to the lack of cooperation from the Ottoman government. The Camondo family collection is considered among the most important collections in Paris and was made up of pieces from painters like Degas and Monet. The collection was later donated to the Louvre, and the family also founded the Camondo Museum (Sülün, 2018, p. 30). A notable Ottoman diplomat, Halil Şerif Pasha became the first known Muslim collector in Europe with his

collection consisting entirely of foreign painters which he formed during his time in Paris. The piece that shot the collection to fame was French artist Gustave Courbet's 1866 painting *L'Origine du Monde* (The Origin of the World), featured alongside pieces from painters like Delacroix, Gérôme, and Ingres. The collection was sold off in an auction in 1868 due to Halil Şerif Pasha's debts. Notable collectors on Ottoman lands, although not as notable as the aforementioned figures, also existed. Şeker Ahmet Pasha, a soldier and painter of the Abdülaziz period, worked in Gérôme and Boulanger's studios during when stationed in Paris. He was also known as a collector, having bought the works of İbrahim Pasha—the first Ottoman oil painter—after the artist's death (Serpil, 2006, pp. 40-41).

Hüseyin Rıza Pasha, a late period Ottoman governor and minister who, despite the loss of his painting collection in a fire at his mansion, was counted among the collectors of this period and was known for his intellectual personality and artistic inclinations. Another important figure, Reşad Pasha, who was a finance officer during the Abdülhamid II period, had a collection composed of paintings from important painters such as Hoca Ali Rıza, Aivazovsky, and Mısırlı Hidayet. Ragıp Pasha, one of the figures most influential and closest to Abdülhamid II as his grand vizier, hosted important painters like Zonaro at his mansion. Their comments regarding the Pasha's passion for painting convey important information regarding the period government's outlook on painting. In addition to Ottoman bureaucrats, master tradesmen like Pier Sakalerides, dentist Sami Günzberg, and Lawyer Talat Gönensoy are known collectors of this period (Erten, 2017, pp. 40-47).

In 1910, the Ottoman Parliament decided to create the *Elvah-ı Nakşiye Koleksiyonu* or the Collection of Paintings. Some of the pieces featured in the collection were commissioned copies of Western painters, and a part of the budget was used to purchase original works of Turkish painters from exhibitions in Istanbul. Thus, 85 of this 137-piece collection consisted of Turkish painters and the collection itself formed the core of the painting museum that would be established during the Republican period (Serpil, 2006, p. 42). The Ottoman Empire's defeat in the World War resulted in the Western occupation of Istanbul, and the city as well as large parts of Ottoman territory was partitioned between the occupying forces with the Treaty of Sèvres.

The initial market activities taking shape starting with the second half of the 19th century created a cadre of collectors outside the palace consisting of the high-bourgeois, foreign, and minority residents of Istanbul. Like everything else, the World War deeply affected the art scene and collectorship. However, the Turkish public, led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in the War of Independence, triumphed (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 68).

Its foundations laid during the Ottoman period, the history of collectorship and museology in Turkey reached a modern and contemporary level with Atatürk.

3.2 Private Art Collectorship During the Republican Period in Turkey (1923-2000)

3.2.1 The Policy of National Culture and State Patronage of the Arts (1923-1950)

The Turkish people, triumphing after a long struggle for independence over the Western occupying forces with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's leadership, both achieved its independence and officially declared the establishment of the Republic of Turkey on October 29th, 1923 (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 69). The Ottoman Empire's failure to remain self-sufficient during its final years, coupled with a decade of wars and a four-year long *National Struggle* had completely depleted the country's resources, ultimately leading to a difficult period after the declaration of the republic wherein the state was expected to provide everything for the people (Lüleci, 2015, p. 144). The transition from a multi-national imperial administration to a republican "nation-state" necessitated many large-scale changes. Its cultural and artistic policies were therefore devised to benefit the largest section of the people, in this context (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 37). While the developments between 1923-1930 largely involve policies aiming for the rapid dissolution of Ottoman period institutions, the policies largely involved long term plans for the institutionalization of the Republican regime (Güzel, 2006, p. 4). Art would be the locomotive to carry the country into a modern future, and thus had a crucial role in shaping Turkish national identity (Graf, 2012, pp. 176-177). The concept of *national art* was used to help the people adopt national values and the art of painting was specifically emphasized within this context (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 13). Atatürk's cultural policy goal to elevate Turkey to the level of contemporary

civilization also shaped the approach to the arts. Frequently sharing his thoughts about art and artists, and keeping up with art activities, Atatürk became a role model in this regard. In 1923, while visiting Adana, he said (Lüleci, 2015, p. 166):

“There are certain foundations necessary to sustain a nation, and as you know, among the most important of these foundations is art. A nation deprived of art and artist can never lead a complete life. Such a nation would be crippled, one-armed, disabled, and diseased. Even these words are not sufficient to convey my meaning. A nation without art would have one of its vital veins ruptured.”

Starting with the founding of the Republic in 1923, the void left by the Ottoman elite with their now diminished political and social influence was filled by the state. Art activities were unbound from their limited scope of the Ottoman era palace circles and reprogrammed as a state policy which aimed to encompass a larger population including Anatolia (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 38). As the state assumed patronage of the arts which it pointed in a public direction, collectorship was also encouraged (Konukcu, 2007, p. 42). However, even though a period of recovery had started as part of this secular system, the number of people who could buy works of art or become collectors was very limited, which hindered the formation of an art market (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 71). After Ankara became the new capital in 1923, activities limited to Istanbul and organized with palace support started taking place in Ankara, and public institutions and the wealthier population were encouraged by the state to purchase art works from art activities and institutions such as community centers, the Galatasaray Exhibitions, the Union of Fine Arts, the Country Tours, and

State Exhibitions of Painting and Sculpture (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 38). For this reason, the period between 1923-1950 was an era laden with many new social ventures that laid the foundations for future periods' market activities. The revival of academies, new exhibitions, the establishment of community centers aiming to raise public artistic awareness, young artists being sent abroad for art education, supporting artists through commissioned work or by buying exhibition pieces could be considered among these ventures. Upon close inspection, the main struggle of the early Republican period becomes clearer to see:

In an *institutional* context:

The foundation of the Republic, the *Türk Ocakları* (Turkish Hearths), an important nationalist institution of the Ottoman era that were founded in 1912, were dissolved as they could no longer complete their duties. Replacing them were the *Halkevleri* (community centers, lit. "people's houses") which were established in 1932 as a public cultural organization. In his speeches, the Minister of National Education Reşit Galip stated the main goal of the community centers to be "making up for the lost time in the race for civilization", and by the then-Prime Minister İsmet İnönü as "to ensure that the arts are as popularized in the society as the sciences", and thus their two goals were determined. The first would be the internalization of the Republican ideology through the adoption of social reforms. The second was to undertake the cultural and artistic activities that would facilitate modernization. In this context nine sections were established within the community center program, including *Fine Arts* and *History and Museums*, the activities of which greatly facilitated Turkish

museological efforts. As the community centers became an important platform for cultural and artistic activities, its larger branches annually held regular painting exhibitions. In fact, the 23 exhibitions held in 1935 were visited by 34 thousand people, and the community centers had held approximately 1500 exhibitions by their tenth anniversary in 1942. Despite being numbered in the 478s by 1950, the rising tensions caused by the political changes that took place after 1946 brought the community centers to the brink of closure. Until their disbandment in 1951, the community centers held a very important place in the execution of Republican era cultural policies by spreading the enlightenment movement to the countryside.

In 1940, *Köy Enstitüleri* (lit. Village Institutes) were established in 11 regions aiming to combat the rural populace falling short of modern life standards and to train teachers and other professionals through cultural and technical courses. Museological efforts fell within the purview of the Institutes which also undertook efforts to organize exhibitions at schools, help repair historical works in and around villages, informing people about activities and institutions like exhibitions, expositions, and museums (Güzel, 2006, pp. 11-16).

In a *exhibitions* context:

Despite support from the state, the exhibitions that took place in the early years of the republic failed to attract much of an audience or make sales due to a lack of artists, resources, and venues suited for exhibitions. Because of this, these were group exhibitions instead of solo shows. Established in 1916, before the declaration of the republic, and largely consisting of artists of the 1914 generation, the Union of Fine

Arts continued the annual tradition of *Galatasaray Exhibitions*, and after 1924, resolved to hold annual exhibitions in Ankara. These were held annually until 1951, the fifth of which took place in Istanbul in 1923 and was the first exhibition of the Republican era. On opening day, Mustafa Kemal requested the purchase of three pieces to be selected by the exhibition's curatorial panel and their selection of paintings by İbrahim Çallı, Sami Yetik, and Namık İsmail were purchased and donated to the state collection. Founded in 1924 by a group of painters who wished to move beyond the Galatasaray Exhibitions, the *Yeni Resim Cemiyeti* (lit. The Society of New Painting) only held one exhibition before disbanding due to most of its members going abroad on scholarships. A group returning from Europe then organized in 1929 under the name of the *Müstakil Ressamlar ve Heykeltıraşlar Birliği* (lit. The Union of Independent Painters and Sculptors), (Its members are Refik Fazıl, Cevat Hamit, Şeref Kâmil, Mahmut Fehmi, Nurullah Cemal, Hale Asaf, Ali Avni, Ahmet Zeki, Muhittin Sebati, Ratip Aşır ve Fahrettin Arkunlar) and remained active holding exhibitions in cities like Zolguldak, Bursa, Samsun, Balıkesir, and İzmit in addition to Istanbul and Ankara, until becoming the *Ressamlar Derneği* (lit. the Painters' Association).

Another group of artists came together in 1933 to establish the “*d*” Group (Its members are Zeki Faik İzer, Nurullah Berk, Elif Naci, Cemal Tollu, Abidin Dino ve Zühtü Müridoğlu), which organized fifteen exhibitions, most of which took place in Istanbul, before disbanding in 1947. An example of the state contributing to the art scene were the *İnkılap Sergileri* (lit. Reform Exhibitions) which took place between 1933-1936 under state direction and largely featured artists' depictions of the Atatürk

Reforms. In 1937, the former *Sanay-i Nefise Mektebi*, rechristened the *Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi* (lit. The Academy of Fine Arts) in 1929, held the *50 Senelik Türk Resim ve Heykel Sergisi* (lit. 50 Years of Turkish Painting and Sculpture Exhibition) wherein pre and post-Republican artworks were put on display, also revealing the necessity of a museum of painting and sculpture (Kasalı, 2010, p. 102). In 1937 and 1938, three influential artists' unions of the period came together to organize the *Birleşik Resim ve Heykel Sergisi* (lit. The United Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture) which brought together artists of different generations and perspectives in addition to rejuvenating their relationships with the state. As a leader, Atatürk, aiming for a Modern Turkey, placed great importance on art and was influential in the state's approach to art. After his passing in 1938, his successor İsmet İnönü and the Minister of National Education, Hasan Ali Yücel gave greatly prioritized the maintenance of artistic progress and continued their support in the arts despite the onset of the Second World War in 1939 where many artists were conscripted or couldn't find materials to keep producing. In this context, the *Yurt Gezileri* (lit. Country Tours) endeavor, which began in 1938 as an attempt to popularize the national art spirit, continued until 1944, and involved artists such as Feyhaman Duran, İbrahim Çallı, Avni Arbaş, Cemal Tollu, and Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu who toured the country to produce new works in Anatolia and meet the people, after which their works were collected from all over the country and exhibited at the end of the year. Again in 1939, *Devlet Resim ve Heykel Sergileri* (lit. State Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions) was a series of exhibitions organized by the state wherein artists were given awards, the artworks were bought by state institutions, and the opening events of which were visited by statesmen. These found a large public

audience and were important for the art scene of the World War II period. They lasted until after 1950. 1941 saw artists like Nuri İyem, Selim Turan, Avni Arbaş, Ferruh Başağa, and Mümtaz Yener question their predecessors and form the *Yeniler Grubu* (The Newcomers Group) and hold exhibitions until 1946.

Artists' personal outings began to attract more attention during the post war period, leading to a notable increase in solo exhibitions. In this context, the *İsmail Hakkı Oygar Gallery*, one of the first examples of private art galleries in Turkey, hosted many solo exhibitions from the Yeniler and the d Group as well as artists like Cemal Tollu, Zeki Faik İşler, and Hamit Görele between 1945-1947 (Mülayim 1999, 76-203, Üstünipek 1999, 47-48). Between 1946 and 1947, all of the pieces exhibited in the *Halk İçin Resim Sergisi* (lit. Painting Exhibition for Public's Sake) at the Ankara University Faculty of Language and History – Geography with İsmet İnönü's support were purchased (Sülün, 2018, p. 36).

In a *Museological* context:

One of the first endeavors of the Republic of Turkey during its foundational period was archaeology and museology. Before the declaration of the Republic, in 1920, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey administration formed a *Department of Culture* within its Ministry of Education, assigning it only museological and archaeological duties. The first museum of this foundational period is the *Hittite Museum*, currently known as the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, which was established in 1921. Following it were the *Ethnographical Museum of Ankara*, the first museum building of the Republic, established in 1927, and the *Ethnographical*

Museum of Istanbul, established in 1934 (Artun, 2019, pp. 55-62). City museums opened one after the other all over Anatolia, numbering in the 37s by the year 1939. The reason behind the emphasis on museums and archaeological digs was thought to be museums' effectiveness in creating a cultural memory, thus supporting the Republican ideology of having national values and a national identity, as well as using the archaeological finds to underline how Anatolia developed before the West (Konukcu, 2007, p. 43). Ultimately in 1937, after tens of archaeological and ethnographical museums, the *Istanbul State Painting and Sculpture Museum* was founded to raise public awareness regarding a modern and universal approach to history. Its administration was handled by the Academy of Fine Arts (See Figure 19), (Artun, 2019, pp. 55-62)



Figure 19. Istanbul State Painting and Sculpture Museum, Istanbul

Note: (www.nenerede.com). <https://www.nenerede.com.tr/ilan/Istanbul-resim-ve-heykel-muzesi-5/>

The museum's core consisted of the Ottoman era *Elvah-ı Nakşiye* (Collection of Paintings), in addition to a selection of artworks on display in Military Museums, National Palaces and state institutions.

In the context of *galleries*:

Early Republican period's first gallery venture was in 1939 with the *Taksim Daimî Resim ve Heykel Galerisi* (lit. the Taksim Permanent Painting and Sculpture Gallery) in Istanbul, which had to shutter shortly thereafter due to the construction of Taksim Square (Sülün, 2018, p. 35). The gallery was established with state support and largely exhibited works in line with the Republican ideology. Afterwards, the first private gallery was established in 1945 when painter İsmail Hakkı Oygar converted his studio into a gallery space. However, as it only aimed to provide an exhibition space for artists, it had no impact of the art market and closed after eight exhibitions in 1947 (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 14). This event raised the issue of the period's art scene's need for galleries.

In the context of *Collectorship*:

The biggest and most influential collector and art patron was *the state*. The lack of an encouraging art scene in early years of the republic created a void which was filled by the state with the exhibitions it regularly spearheaded, and the purchase of the artworks displayed in these exhibitions which ensured that artists were able to

continue creating in addition to expanding the Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum collection. Additionally, it not only encouraged the wealthy to collect, but also ensured that art reach the public and used the aesthetic language of art in its cultural and social reforms in order to expand the populace that demanded art. In this context, sculpture was frequently used as a medium that can be included in daily life, that depicts triumphs to feed into citizen awareness, and is visually pleasing. With monuments erected in city squares which largely depicted Atatürk, the goal was to minimize any negative reactions towards sculpture from the Turkish culture, to which the medium had been heretofore foreign. Thus, sculpture began to develop with the declaration of the Republic (Kasalı, 2010, p. 74). The early Republican state's encouraging attitude towards collectorship, which it displayed through its exhibitions and published materials, also paved the way for *bank collections*, which would undertake a large role in the future development of the art market. Ziraat Bank in 1926, the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey (CBRT) in the 1930s, and İşbank in the 1940s started forming their own collections. For example, after an initial purchase of three paintings in 1940, İşbank added twenty more paintings to its collection in the 1940s. This early period institutional collectorship is the reason why certain banks in Turkey have richer collections than museums (Konukcu 2007, 46, Rastgeldi 2019, 44). The two most important leaders of the Republican period, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and İsmet İnönü, as well as the largely bureaucratic administrative class with whom the leaders closely associated, became exemplary figures for the public with their supportive attitude towards art and artists (Lüleci, 2015, p. 190). More than just a collector, **Atatürk** was a visionary art conservator who steered the public. Laying the

foundations for state collections, which were sorely needed for the field of art, he finally realized the plans for a national museum with the Istanbul State Painting and Sculpture Museum. He additionally encouraged art patrons and paved the way for new collectors to emerge. His first public art towards this goal was his purchase of three paintings from the 5th annual Galatasaray Exhibition in 1923. Many portraits of Atatürk were painted by numerous painters in order to create a public image of Atatürk in Anatolia (Erten, 2017, p. 48). However, was known to have only posed for three painters during his life: for Hungarian painter William Karausz during the Gallipoli campaign, and for Nazmi Ziya and İbrahim Çallı during the early Republican period (Lüleci, 2015, p. 191). Atatürk's presidential successor and a prominent commander in the Turkish War of Independence, *İsmet İnönü* was closely interested in classical Western music, as well as painting. Participating in exhibition openings throughout his administrative years, he set an example for the public by buying artworks from exhibitions, in addition to protecting and encouraging artists, and instilling his passion for art to his associates. Like Atatürk, *İsmet İnönü* also had his portraits painted by artists like Feyhaman Duran and İbrahim Çallı, adding some of these pieces to his collection, which also featured artists like Hikmet Onat, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, Eren Eyüboğlu, Şevket Dağ, Refik Epikman, Şeref Akdik, Arif Kaptan, Vecih Bereketoğlu, Mehmet Ali Laga, and Ayetullah Sümer (Erten, 2017, pp. 51-53). The period's Minister of National Education, *Hasan Ali Yücel* served his country greatly in the cultural field, leading to the second brightest period for culture and arts after Atatürk between 1938 and 1946, during his tenure (Kasalı, 2010, p. 107). Hasan Ali Yücel personally went to great lengths for the development of the art

scene, buying numerous artworks personally in addition to encouraging his associates to do so as well (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 44). When asked about the buyers at his auctions, Aret Portakal, a prominent auctioneer of this period would reply: “They are mostly Jewish, as well as Armenians and Turks, and there were even more Turks after 1942,” citing Turkish collector Hacı Ömer Sabancı as an example (Sülün, 2018, p. 34). One reason for the increased number of Turkish buyers after 1942 was the introduction of the Capital Tax Law, which impacted the non-Muslim bourgeoisie greatly. Losing wealth as part of this law, wealthy non-Muslims were replaced by the rising Muslim Turkish bourgeoisie, forming the new coterie of collectors in the coming years (Bali, 2021, pp. 40-41). We cannot speak of a large bourgeois class in the early Republican period, which is necessary for the development of the art market. As Ottoman era palace elites and the capital owning minorities faced a recession after the establishment of the Republic, (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 43) they were largely replaced by soldier/civil bureaucrats who had been educated in modern schools in the late Ottoman period and who now made up the administrative class. Thus, the limited number of art buyers and collectors largely consisted of these bureaucrats, in addition to writers, journalists, the administrative elite, as well as painters and other professions (Lüleci, 2015, p. 170). Figures such as merchant Satvet Lütü Tozan, consul Behçet Türkmen, diplomat Naci Âli Moralı, politician Samet Ağaoğlu, Interior Minister Cemil Uygur, veterinary Ord. Prof. Salih Berker, physician Ord. Prof. Tevfik Remzi Kazancıgil, engineer Cemil Arıdur, businessman İhsan İpekci, merchant Ahmet Çanakçı, art writer Fikret Adil, artist İhsan Devrim, politician Salah Cimcoz, industrialist Hacı Ömer Sabancı (Erten, 2017, pp. 53-71) and Vehbi Koç’s

spouse Sadberk Koç are some examples of early Republican era collectors. Thus, collectorship in the early Republican period began with support from the state and its institutions and built onto this foundation for a more advanced art scene, preparing a process that would lead to private collectorship (Sülün, 2018, p. 36).

3.2.2 The Art Scene Growing Independent, Banks, and Collectorship Gaining Momentum (1950-80)

The 1950s was a decade of deep social, financial, and cultural changes for Turkey. While Europe remained under the effects of the post-war period in the 1940s, the United States came into prominence with its economic growth, and by culturally becoming the new global center of art with the influx of migrant artists and collectors fleeing European oppression (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 44). Turkey entering the Western political and economic circle of influence, especially that of the US, accelerated with the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan in 1947, as well as its NATO membership in 1952. Thus began a period of restructuring. 1950 saw the end of the single party rule of the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (lit. the Republican People's Party, or CHP), starting a multi-party process that began with the Demokratik Parti (lit. Democrat Party) administration. Activities which before 1950 were attempted using national resources were replaced by an externally dependent economy after 1950. The first half of this period saw the emergence of an agricultural bourgeoisie with agricultural growth, after which the industrial bourgeoisie prospered during the latter half (Güzel, 2006, pp. 36-38). The creation of new job fields accelerated rural flight (rural depopulation and urban migration), leading to widespread emergence of shanty towns,

which brought on sociological structural changes. The early Republican period's culture and art focused state policies changed during the multi-party period, replaced with liberal state policies that prioritized agricultural and industrial acts. Thus, slowly starting a period where non-state institutions and establishments began to form relationships with the art scene (Sülün, 2018, p. 43). If we examine government programs executed between 1923 and 1960, cultural activities were clearly prioritized the least between 1950-1960 (Rastgeldi, 2019). Having become excluded from cultural movements, artists resorted to creating their own markets, leading to increased personal and private ventures.

The 1950s were a period wherein the Democratic Party put an end to the early Republican period's nationalist and liberationist cultural activities, and either dissolved or rendered useless the cultural institutions working to instill a national culture (Güzel, 2006, p. 92). The first instance of this would be the closure of community centers in 1951, followed by the Village Institutes in 1954.

In the context of *Exhibition Spaces and Galleries*:

The most notable aspect of the period is the increased number of private galleries, solo exhibitions, and exhibition halls. As the state stopped any direct support of the arts beyond Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions, private institutions and corporations rushed to fulfill this role for the art scene. For example, the Academy of Fine Arts, the French Consulate, the United States Information Service, the Maya Gallery, the Technical Institute Gallery, the Kuyucu Murat Pasha Madrasa, the Gamsız Gallery, the Galatasaray Lycée Foyer, the Theater Association, the

Association of Friends of Art, Casa d'Italia, the Sports and Exhibition Center, the City Gallery, the Environment and Art Association, and the Philharmonic Association in Istanbul, as well as the Association of Friends of Art and the Helikon Art Association in Ankara were among the many private spaces that held exhibitions (Güzel, 2006, p. 42). One important development regarding the art market is the founding of the Maya Art Gallery in 1950 by translator and author. The gallery held its first exhibition in 1951 and tried to support both academy tutors and young artists but had to shutter in 1955 because of the lack of a sufficient market. During the Maya Gallery's period of activity galleries such as painter Fethi Karakaş's *Küçük Galeri* (lit. the Little Gallery) in 1952, artist Zerrin Bölükbaşı's Beyoğlu City Gallery in 1954, and architect İrfan Ertem's Ertem Gallery in 1956 in Istanbul, as well as the Helikon Art Gallery, the Milar Gallery and the Doğuş Gallery in 1953 in Ankara were established. This Maya and Helikon Gallery period is also notable for several published articles underlining the need for an art market in Turkey (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, pp. 15-17).

In the context of *Banks*:

From the 1950s on, the banks remained active in the arts, with banks such as İşbank, Yapı Kredi, and Akbank continuing their efforts to support the arts. Although an art market had yet to form, and the monetary value of painting was yet publicly largely unknown, this was still an important period vis-à-vis the emphasis on the sales factor of art works (Sülün, 2018, p. 46). Especially the bank Yapı Kredi, under the direction of its founder Kazım Taşkent who considered support for culture and arts a social duty, was a notable institution in the field of art activities (Rastgeldi, 2019, p.

45). One of these activities, a painting competition dated 1954, was the first one to be held by a private institution. It also greatly contributed to the development of the art market with the sale of the eighteen paintings that competed. Established by Akbank in the same year, the Akbank Art Gallery remained in the art market through art purchases in the following years (Sülün, 2018, p. 48).

In a *Museological* context:

Although the period's cultural activities faced setbacks and were provided insufficient resources, as experienced early Republican period museologists like Hamit Zübeyr Koşar remained in their positions and Atatürk era cultural traditions were at least maintained, and thus, new archaeological digs and city museums continued to be established. The government's lack of priority in the arts and culture in the 1950s led to the emergence of private exhibition halls and galleries. However, no such ventures to establish private museums occurred during this period. The reason was largely both a lack of funds and the fact that establishing a private museum was, at the time, legally more difficult than establishing a gallery or art association. This period brought Turkey's membership to organizations like UNESCO and its branch UCIM, which was an important step regarding the conception of contemporary museology in Turkey—despite a lack of systematic and focused cooperation—and the beginning of interrelations with the Western world through artistic activities (Güzel, 2006, pp. 48-96).

In the context of *Collectorship*:

The 1950s saw the ascent of great businesspeople as a result of governmental national economic policies, thus rejuvenating the Turkish bourgeoisie and expanding the population of art buyers. It was therefore a decade of activity, albeit weak, regarding Turkish collectorship. Raffi Portakal, the son of prominent auctioneer Aret Portakal once commented: “After 1955 I started staying at the shop with my father and going to home auctions. The buyers back then were engineers, doctors, and high-ranking civil servants. I couldn’t call this group collectors, yet. Calling them “buyers” would be more fitting.” Counted among these period collectors were doctors Ali Esat Birol, Alaaddin Vardar, and Kazım İsmail Gürkan, as well as foreign affairs official Bedii Arber, businesspeople Mehmet Kavala, Falih Rıfkı Atay, and Selçuk Yaşar, and bankl director Mithat Güldü (Erten, 2017, p. 72).

In the 1960s and 1970s: This was a period wherein liberal democracies and power balances in Europe and the US came into question, and anti-authoritarian counter-cultural movements gained huge momentum, especially after 1968 (Sülün, 2018, p. 38). Starting with France and spreading to other European countries and the US, the university students’ revolt also pervaded Turkey, where it had a comparatively longer effective period than other countries, causing social polarization (Akşin, Türkiye'nin Yakın Tarihi 2004, 247). Turkey in the period between 1960-1971 was subjected to coalition governments, opposition to the US, junta coups, and incidents involving students and workers. This was followed by the 1971-1980 period which was mired in ideological struggle embroiled with slogans of “*tek yol devrim*” (lit. the

revolution is the only way) (Apuhan, 2008, p. 254). The Democratic Party was abolished during the military intervention in 1960, replaced by the *Milli Birlik Komitesi* (lit. the National Unity Committee) who seized power and executed the previous administration which included the then-Prime Minister Adnan Menderes. The general election in 1961 brought the *Adalet Partisi* (lit. The Justice Party) and the Demirel administration to power and remained the single majority party until the elections in 1973. The 1973-1979 period saw a return to coalition governments, and the Demirel administration's failure to solve the country's major issues resulted in a coup of the Armed Forces in 1980. This political unrest, in addition to the US embargo after the Turkish occupation of Cyprus, as well as the devaluation of the Lira and the global petrol crisis had shocking effects on the economy (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 51) which led to three instances of five-year Development Plans between 1963 and 1977 wherein industrialization was heavily prioritized. Thus, certain societal groups such as the Koç and Sabancı families who prospered off industry and commerce began a process of conglomeration (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 140). As such, a high-enough-income coterie of capital owners who would go on to find their place in the future art market began to coalesce. This was a Turkey headed towards becoming a consumer society where banks multiplied in number, the rural exodus greatly accelerated, the *arabesk* culture became pervasive, public television habits and mass communication offerings increased. The period's conflicting political and sociological rhetoric (Sülün, 2018, p. 39) and a series of traumatic events had an impact on the art scene, too. The 1960s was an early preparatory period where notable efforts and organizations emerged increasingly despite the lack of a complete art market,

followed by the 1970s which, with added enthusiasm about the previous period's developments, served as an entry point to an art market which would only completely mature in the 1980s. (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 141-160).

In the context of Exhibition Spaces and Galleries:

The Five-Year Development plans deployed between 1963-1977 involved cultural and art related policies as well. However, the unstable political environment and bureaucratic obstacles stemming especially from the coalition governments of the period prevented implementation of these policies. Although the annual State Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions which had begun in 1939 still continued, they fell short of their past activity. Meanwhile, bereft of nearly any state support, artists still produced uninterruptedly and displayed a desire to publicly exhibit their works. At the same time, various private artistic ventures began to emerge. Additionally, associations and unions which artists formed to be able to continue existing within these limited circumstances, such as the Union of Fine Arts, The Association of Contemporary Painters of Turkey, The Association of United Painters and Sculptors, The Association of Turkish Plastic Artists, The Association of Turkish Ceramic Artists, and The Association of Turkish Master Sculptors, organized group and prize exhibitions, encouraging state institutions as well as private collectors to buy art works, thus bringing dynamism to the art scene. Another notable development of the period was the increase in the number of exhibitions held in art centers like New York and Paris by migrant Turkish artists as well as exhibitions from foreign artists arriving to Turkey from abroad. Foreign cultural institutions such as the Turkish-German

Culture Association and the United States Information Service, both established in 1959, were significant actors in this period's exhibition activities in Istanbul.

Additionally, the French Consulate, which had been hosting exhibitions since the 1950s, continued its activities, although at a reduced capacity. A contribution to the art scene from the private sector attempting to make up for the lack of state support was providing exhibition spaces. One example for this is the Vakko building becoming available for exhibitions in 1962 (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 143-153). Established in the same year, the *Gen-Ar Club and Gallery* held group exhibitions, and Gallery 1 joined along in 1968. Turkish art galleries achieved their true rise in the 1970s, bringing potential art buyers together with artworks, filling an important role regarding the development of the art market and collectorship in Turkey. For example, the Modern Gallery, the Er Art Gallery, and the Melda Kaptana Art Gallery established in 1972, and the Cumalı Art Gallery in 1973 in Istanbul, as well as the Artisan Art Gallery in Ankara also established in 1973, in addition to Gallery Baraz, a significant and still active name among Turkish art galleries, which was founded by prominent art dealer Yahşi Baraz in 1975—with newspaper headlines declaring “the largest private art gallery in Istanbul open. Forming close relationships with the Turkish bourgeoisie, Baraz advised them to become art collectors, thus creating a bridge between the art scene and capital, therefore contributing greatly to the foundation of a new Turkish collector class (Okutur, 2011, pp. 25-33). Established in 1976, the Maçka Art Gallery featured a modern lighting and display layout, pointing to the existence of a certain demographic of art buyers near the end of the 1970s (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 180). The gallery featured both Academy tutors and foreign artists as well as pioneering artists

like Altan Gürman, (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 25) adopting a less sales-focused and more idealistic approach. The Bedri Rahmi Art Gallery was established in 1977, followed by the Galata Art Gallery (Okutur, 2011, pp. 25-33) and the Hobi Art Gallery in 1978. Afterwards, in 1979, in addition to the Ümit Yaşar Gallery, galleries like the Tıglat, the Künmat, and the Ertem Art Galleries and the Gallery Antiquaire made up a portion of the galleries to be established in Istanbul during this period, numbering in the 20s. These were followed by galleries in Ankara and İzmir (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 181).

In the context of *Banks*:

Becoming more active with the 1950s, banks played an important role in the development of collectorship in Turkey with their contributions to the art scene. They became institutions which not only bought artworks but also foresaw the prestige that comes with engaging in cultural activities, and so began participating in the art scene by holding exhibitions, opening exhibition spaces, and producing art publications. Thus, starting in the 1960s, bank galleries became a part of the art scene. The Akbank Art Gallery in Ankara and the Halkbank Şişli Branch Art Gallery in Istanbul were founded and Türk Ticaret Bankası (lit. Turkish Commerce Bank) and the Yapı Kredi Bank made their buildings in Galatasaray available as exhibition spaces (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 149).

In a *Museological* context:

One important museological development of the period was the conversion of the İzmir Painting and Sculpture Gallery, established in 1952, into a museum in 1973,

and was then moved to a new building. This brought up the necessity for a “painting and sculpture” museum in Ankara. Additionally, the Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum, established in 1937 in the Heir’s Room at the Dolmabahçe Palace but shuttered between 1938-1950, increasingly physically deteriorating, was once again closed in 1976 due to fire hazard. This event, along with the lack of a museum in Ankara, was much criticized in the art scene. The Ministry of Culture, established in 1971, decided to lend support, converting the Turkish Hearths building in Ankara into a museum, the first exhibition of which was held in 1976 with a selection of pieces from the Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum. The museum wouldn’t be completed until 1980, after a long period of screening warehouses, award winning art works, and the Ziraat Bank collection for eligible pieces which were then donated by these institutions to create the museum’s collection (Sülün, 2018, p. 57).

In the context of *Collectorship*:

Although the 1960s and 1970s were a period of political and economic upheaval for Turkey, it also was a period where the country became increasingly progressive and open to foreign relations, thus beginning to take part in international platforms and keep up with global trends. The multiplying number of exhibitions and galleries, the ever-increasing art publications, and Turkish artists’ achieving international success were important steps with regard to the development of the art market in Turkey. Established by a group of businessmen led by Nejat Eczacıbaşı in 1973, the *Istanbul Kültür Sanat Vakfı* (İKSV, the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts) is a major non-state actor that organizes globally influential art activities and

festivals (e.g., the Istanbul Festival) which are international in scope, which not only provided great support for artists but also brought much needed dynamism to the art scene. Maintaining a strong relationship with the state and various art institutions, the İKSV became a symbol for cultural and artistic activities' transition from the public sector to the private sector in Turkey (Rastgeldi, 2019, pp. 55-56). As such, the interest in art and culture was broadened, further developing collectorship. The bureaucrats who had been supporting the arts since the early Republican period with a traditional attitude, as well as intellectuals of middle-class income, such as university members, writers, and members of the press, who made up the core of the coterie of collectors were joined in the 1960s by the private sector, spearheaded by the banks. Thus, the increase in the value of art and the economic developments of the 1970s initiated the distancing between collectorship and the group of middle-class intellectual art buyers, bringing it closer to the wealthy upper classes. Businessmen who began to travel abroad began to realize that an art collection is considered an important means of investment and generating a good image and thus began forming their own collections in addition to using their companies to contribute to the art scene. For example, painting award competitions were organized, one 1967 by DYO, and another in 1970 by the Mobil Oil Türk A.Ş. The public exhibition of famed writer and art critic Fikret Adil's collection in the Darüşşafaka Art Gallery in 1969, followed by painter Jale Yasan's collection in 1970, the İşbank collection in 1976, and businessman Kemal Erhan's collection in 1977 in the same venue was an important event for both making collectors visible and encouraging art connoisseurs to become collectors themselves. The Milliyet Art Magazine, a prominent art publication, wrote

in a 1978 issue that conscious collectors numbered in the fifties, while people who randomly bought paintings numbered in the five-thousands (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 141-178).

The 1960s was a period wherein the Ottoman aristocracy was replaced by the Turkish bourgeoisie, and pashas were forced to auction off their collections as their households financially collapsed. Among the collectors of this decade were the Treasury Minister Hasip Pasha, businessmen Kemal Erhan, Salih Tatlıcı, and Hüseyin Kocabaş, lawyer Mesut Hakgüden, bank director Saim Aybar, orchestra chief conductor Ahmet Andiçen, poet Sabahattin Ergi, bureaucrat Ahmet Erteğün, parliament member Celalettin Çelebi, iron magnate Mehmet Çolakoğlu, and lawyer Ziya Sofu. The 1970s, on the other hand, was a period where art buyers such as doctors and engineers were replaced by wealthy businesspeople. An important gallery owner of the 1960s and the 1970s, Melda Kaptana once stated that the boom in painting sales began in 1974, specifying the Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu exhibition in particular as the exhibition where the pieces were very quickly sold for high price, all on the first day, breaking sales records.

Among the collectors of the decade were tourism magnate Vasıf Korur, İhsan Oral—the son of the ex-Minister of Agriculture Ali Cavit Oral, businesspeople Nejat Eczacıbaşı, Vitali Hakko, Albert Hakko, Erol Lodrik, Nazar Büyüm, Fazıl Seyhanlı, Süreyya Çolak, Alişan Dobra, Necati Akçağlılar, Rengin Önen, lawyer Vural Arıkan, public administrator Mübin Başar, engineer Hayri Bingöl, banker Doğan Aka, and photographer İzzet Keribar (Erten, 2017, pp. 74-98).

3.2.3. The Commodification of the Art Market, The First Private Museum, and Collectorship (1980-2000)

The 1980s contained numerous social and economic turning points for both Turkey and the world. Writer Derya Bengi spoke about the 80s with these words:

“The definitive break from the past was unique to Turkey. While the West transitioned from the 70s to the 80s on a bridge, Turkey threw away all bridges. ... Two pages on the calendar, [The Stabilization Decisions of] January 24th and [the Coup of] September 12th came arm in arm, marching in lockstep into the economical reckless abandon of neoliberalism and get-rich-quick attitude with a military political regime. From now on, the people would only remain silent. ... The sea of prohibitions was as wide as it was deep.” (Bengi, 2019, p. 8).

For the Western world, this was a period where the first space shuttle launched (1981), the first personal computers were released (1981), the Berlin Wall fell (1989) (Wikipedia) a relief period where many European countries abolished capital punishment, and gave workers new rights (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 28). The free market economy, spearheaded by the UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the US President Ronald Reagan and their neoliberal policies aimed at privatization skyrocketed the capitalist market. Turkey in this period encountered ever growing economic problems with the Demirel administration which came to power with the 1979 elections. This led to an agreement with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) which entered Turkey into a process directed towards international economic policies, constituting a turning point in its transition into liberal economy (Sülün, 2018, p. 40).

Prepared by Turgut Özal and known historically as the *Stabilization Decisions of January 24th*, the agreement began a period where the exchange rates were determined through market supply and demand, and devaluation was sought in order to increase exports (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 58). The resulting economic recession only increased violent protests, and ideological and class clashes led to military intervention. With the military coup d'état of September 12th, 1980, the army dissolved the parliament and the administration and declared country-wide martial law. During these years the military regime's liberal policies only worked for the benefit of the wealthy, leading to mass social unrest, followed by the 1983 elections, where *ANAP* (Anavatan Partisi, lit. the Motherland Party) emerged the majority party, thus kicking off the Turgut Özal administration (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 155-157). This period's globalization and transition to liberalism, meant that the rigid state economic policies were replaced by the foreign economic expansion of the Turkish economy. The liberal state ideology was effective in attracting foreign companies to invest in Turkey, allowing the national capital to be articulated in the global market, leading to a new period where global capitalism determined government decisions (Artan, 2014). Economist Selim Somçağ argued that neoliberal fiscal recipes forced by Western capital onto developing countries through institutions like the IMF and the World Bank as a "necessity of contemporary economy" are a risky method of investment, commenting: "... *The neoliberal fiscal recipe marketed under the name of economic globalization is not a necessity of our times. ... It is a risky method of investment. ... It represents retrogression, not progression. ... Nearly every single problem facing the Turkish*

economy today stem from the implementation of this neoliberal recipe.” (Somçağ, 2006, pp. 22-23).

The Özal administration’s liberal approach that dominated the 1980s prioritized exports, investments incentivized by the state to be made on the industry were redirected to the service sectors like finance, tourism, transportation, contracting, etc. and capital owners were given support. This resulted in a new bourgeois class. As product variety increased, luxury foreign brands began to be sold next to domestic brands. The television sector, with the increasing number of television channels, the emergence of private channels, and media advertisements, caused a consumerist public frenzy, incentivizing popular cultural elements like the entertainment sector and the paparazzi press. On the other hand, the rural flight increased, causing an urban cultural *arabesk* boom. The wealthy upper-crust who could take advantage of the industrial and commercial state incentives became even wealthier, leading to the disappearance of the Turkish middle class, replaced by “the poor”, “the rich” and “the very rich” (Sülün, 2018, pp. 41-42). Thus, the 1980s came to represent a period of extreme tensions between two polar opposites, the oppression of the first half of the decade where “*the public voice was suppressed*”, and the relative freedom of the latter half that came with economic liberalization where “*the public voice exploded*” (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 37).

The state becoming less and less active in cultural and artistic fields in the 1950s, followed by the emergence of private institutions in the 1970s became even more pronounced in the 1980s. The period's banks and holdings invested greatly in the

culture and arts, with a larger number of projects, private galleries, and exhibition spaces, with which the art market gained momentum. As a result, a new type of artist emerged that was supported by the private sector (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 60).

In the context of *Galleries, Exhibitions, and Biennials*:

Contemporary Artists Exhibitions, the first of which was held at the Istanbul State Painting and Sculpture Museum in 1980, came about during a dormancy period for the State Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions. The exhibition sponsored by the İKSV began as part of the Istanbul Festival, which it remained until 1988. Starting in 1977 and lasting a decade, the annual *Exhibitions of New Trends in Art* brought about a period of increased interdisciplinary exhibition, with conceptual experiments, and the use of different materials and techniques. For example, the *Galleries 83* exhibition, organized by Mimar Sinan University and held at the Atatürk Cultural Center, brought galleries together as part of their opening celebrations (Yılmaz, 2014, p. 151). The exhibition *A Cross Section of Avantgarde Turkish Art*, held in 1984 as part of the Istanbul Festival is another example. This period saw the first examples of curated exhibitions with figures like Vasıf Kortun and Beral Madra.

Increasing in number after the 1970s, private galleries largely emerged in metropolises like Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir, especially in and around locations with a high-income population or a dense, active social life such as Nişantaşı, İstiklal Avenue, and Bebek. Numbered in the 20s until the 1980s, private galleries had multiplied to over a hundred before 1990. Some of the galleries that were established during this period were Gallery Lebriz (1980), Urart Art Gallery (1981), Sevimce Art

Gallery (1982), Mi-Ge Art Gallery (1982), Sanat Yapım Plastic Arts Studio and Gallery (1982), İstasyon Art House (1982), Garanti Bank Art Gallery (1983), Destek Reassurance Art Gallery (1983), Emlak Bank Art Gallery (1983), Gallery BM (1984), Doku Art Gallery (1984), Gallery Selvin (1985), Teşvikiye Art Gallery (1985), Ramko Art Gallery (1986), Tem Art Gallery (1986), Mine Art Gallery (1986), Armoni Art Gallery (1988), Fethi Kayaalp Art Gallery (1988), Gallery Artist (1989), Bilim Art Gallery (1989), as well as Gallery Siyah Beyaz (1984) and Gallery Nev (1984) in Ankara—some of which remain or remained active for a long period (Üstünipek 1998, 210, Gün 2022, 215, Okutur 2011, 33-39).

Cumalı, Artisan, Kile and Hobi Art Galleries and Gallery Baraz celebrated their tenth anniversaries in the 1980s, remaining active as galleries of the previous era (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 210). Starting with the mid-1980s, artists returning from Europe began to appear in exhibitions themed around them. Tem Art Gallery's "Turkish Artists in Paris" in 1985, Kayaalp Art Gallery's "Painters Awarded Abroad" in 1989, Levent Almelek Art Gallery's "Those Abroad" in 1990 are some of these (Serpil, 2006, p. 81). Themed exhibitions such as "Still Lives in Turkish Painting" (1980), "Nudes in Turkish Painting" (1981), "Landscapes in Turkish Painting" (1981), "Figures and Portraiture in Turkish Painting" (1982), and "Modernization in Turkish Painting" (1987), organized by Yahşi Baraz, was another contribution to the art scene, enriching the public approach to works of art (Sülün, 2018, pp. 58-59); Gallery Baraz'a was joined by Galata Art Gallery with "1820-1920 Istanbul in Painting" (1982), Pangaltı Fine Arts Gallery with "Nature in Turkish Painting" (1983) and Teşvikiye Art Gallery with "Ship Paintings" and "Nights in Painting" (Serpil, 2006, p.

81). As posthumous artwork sales increased in price, private galleries also began holding solo exhibitions of painters like İbrahim Çallı, Namık İsmail, and Avni Lifi. Banks continued to increasingly influence the art scene. Starting not only collections but also art galleries, especially Yapı Kredi Bank's Kazım Taşkent Art Gallery in Galatasaray, gained prominence through their art activities in the 1980s, attracting artists with factors like better physical conditions, not receiving cuts from artwork sales, and publishing exhibition catalogues (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 213).

Exhibitions done by collectors during this era were also notable, adding momentum to the developing art market and the concept of collectorship. Institutions continued to hold painting Competitions as they did in the past (such as the Turkish Petroleum Corporation, Esbank, Yunus Emre, and Atatürk painting Competitions), while associations like the Vehbi Koç Foundation, and Sedat Simavi Foundation held numerous scientific, artistic, and literary activities, which affected the art scene. (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 62). The *Istanbul Biennial* was indubitably a milestone with regards to the development, vision, and dynamism of the contemporary art scene of the 1980s. The first biennial in Turkey was organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism between 1986-1992 named the Asia-Europe Art Biennial. Part of the state's foreign expansion policy, these biennials, which were only held four times at the Ankara State Painting and Sculpture Museum, (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 65) global art trends and select artworks were brought to Turkey, aiming to create an international space. After the state biennial, the first private biennial was the 1987 Istanbul Biennial organized by the İKSV. In addition to being the first ever large-scale art activity, it also helped bring new concepts like display methods and forms, and sponsorship to

the art market (Sülün, 2018, pp. 64-65). Also bringing curatorship into the art scene lexicon, the Istanbul Biennial was organized under Beral Madra's direction for its first two years. As the largest-scale international art exhibition in and around Turkey, the event played an important role regarding the formation of relations with the international art world, creating a diverse art scene, and the institutionalization of art (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 66). Prominent collector Halil Bezmen contributed to the art market by both crucially sponsoring the Istanbul Biennials and organizing *the Grand Exhibition* in 1989, which state representatives participated. Realized with collector support, this exhibition was viewed by seven hundred people a day, with twenty-five thousand visitors in a month. After the exhibition, Halil Bezmen publicly announced his plans to establish a private art museum (Sülün, 2018, pp. 59-61). Thus, in addition to private galleries, bank galleries, biennials, and all other private ventures assumed the role of supporting the arts throughout the 1980s, filling the vacuum left by the state (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 40).

In the context of *Auctions*:

Starting with the 1980s, auctions became a lot more visible within the art scene. Auction houses had existed for a long time, and sometimes called antiquaries, carrying antiques and old artworks. As old artworks began to fetch high prices, they began to compete with private galleries. In 1988 the first auction of contemporary artworks occurred, bringing a new concept to the art work market, and as the criteria for the values of pieces became a point of discussion, auction houses spearheaded the formation of the art work market and the future development of a more professional

structure (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 210-211). At this first auction, which took place on 14th December 1988 at the Antiques Auction House, 124 paintings—including painter Mahmut Cüda's *Natürmort* (lit. Still life) which sold for the highest price—were put on the auction block, selling 117 of them (Yılmaz, 2014, p. 161). Portakal Auction House and the Antique Auction House, founded in 1914 and 1981, respectively, became and remain two long-established auction houses in Turkey.

In a *Museological* context:

Planned in 1971, the Ankara State Painting and Sculpture Museum opened in 1980 (See Figure 20).



Figure 20. Ankara Painting and Sculpture Museum, 1980, Ankara.

Note: (Wikipedia). <https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dosya:AnkaraDRHM.jpg>

Initially forming its core collection out of pieces from the Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum, it became more of a regional art museum after its administration decided to feature pieces from Ankara artists (Levi, 1997, p. 22). The largest museological venture of this era was the *Sadberk Hanım Museum*, established by the Koç family on October 14th, 1980, as part of the last will and testament of Sadberk Koç, the wife of Vehbi Koç, one of the biggest industrialists in Turkey. With it, Turkish museology finally had a private museum in definition and function (See Figure 21), (Artan, 2014).



Figure 21. Sadberk Hanım Museum, 1980, Istanbul.

Note: (www.vkv.org.tr). <https://ansiklopedi.vkv.org.tr/Kategoriler/Kurumlar/Vehbi-Koc-Kurumlari-Vakfi/Sadberk-Hanim-Muzesi>

Sadberk Koç's collection comprised traditional clothing culture, as well as silver and porcelain pieces. When the collection of Hüseyin Kocabaş, who passed away in 1981, which consisted largely of coins and archaeological finds in addition to

a broad variety of artifacts from Anatolian civilizations, was bought and added to the museum's collection, it gained more influence. Notable for being the *first museum* in Turkey to be established by private capital, the Sadberk Hanım Museum was a pioneer and an example for the many private museum ventures which would increase in number especially in the 2000s (Sülün, 2018, p. 58).

In the context of *collectorship*:

The 1980s was a period wherein as a result of private galleries' attempts to arouse interest in painting, gallery owners began to form their own collections and the number of collectors in the Turkish art market increased drastically (Konukcu, 2007, p. 50). In parallel to the expansion of industrial and the service sectors, the 1980s also saw a more crowded art market. People scrutinized art, and its issues and their solutions became a point of discussion for both collectors and other parties of the art scene (Sağbaş, 2013, pp. 139-140). This period saw an ever-widening wage gap, as the middle class eroded, creating a larger group of low-income population. The middle class also lost their position as art buyers because of the raising artwork prices and were replaced by the quickly multiplying high-income population (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 190). The 1982 *Banker's Crisis*, one of many financial crises in Turkish history, directed capital owners to investments other than the risky hot money. Painting became one of these alternative investments (Serpil, 2006, p. 82). The liberalization process replaced the state economy with free market economy, and the founding of the Istanbul Stock Exchange (ISE), which coincided with the 1984 privatization laws and the freedom to carry foreign exchange launched the Turkish global economic policy.

This, in turn, encouraged entrepreneurs and investors to engage in new ventures, providing momentum for commerce and conglomeration (Sülün, 2018, p. 61). The ISE created the *borsacılar* (lit. stockbrokers), and this new group of investors, along with the multiplying capital owners began to expand their collections and play a role in the revitalized art market of the period by collecting artworks, participating in art activities, or providing sponsorships. The stockbrokers approached the art market like a stock market, buying low and selling high to make a profit (Serpil, 2006, p. 82).

According to a study by art economics professors Aylin Seçkin and Dr. Erdal Atukeren, investing in artworks was shown to protect collectors against inflation (Seçkin ve Atukeren 2006, 11). The commodification of art also came under scrutiny during this time, as the investment value of artworks had become noticeable, and sensational auctions and high value painting sales were brought into public consciousness backed by the press and the television news media. Being a *sanatsever* (art connoisseurship, lit. art-lover) became an important prerequisite for capital owners who wished to emphasize their identity as high-bourgeois urbanites and sought the privileges that came with the label (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 189-191). As Turkish art market evolved from modernism to contemporaneity, the 1980s earned the moniker of “the era of gallery owners”. The period saw collectors begin to buy contemporary artworks after classical artworks had reached a point of depletion since collectors had bought the majority of these pieces in the 1970s. Some of this period’s notable collectors were businesspeople Ali Koçman, Mustafa Taviloğlu, Feyyaz Berker, Aykut Hamzagil, Erol Aksoy, Mustafa Taviloğlu, Halil Bezmen, Barbaros Çağa, Şakir Eczacıbaşı, Nejat Eczacıbaşı, Atilla Akbaş, Can Has, Halit Cıngıllıoğlu,

Ender Mermerci, Nurettin Koçak, Beno Kohen, Ekrem Topçu, Moris Hazbay, Kemal Bilginsoy, Can-Sevda Elgiz, Erdal-Sevinç İnönü, Nahit Kabakçı, Doğan Paksoy, Rasih Nuri İleri, Naci Terzi, Keçeci Kardeşler, and Kemal Erhan (Erten 2017, 99-101, Serpil 2006, 89-114, A. N. Yılmaz 2014, 163). Among them, Halil Bezmen, Mustafa Taviloğlu, Erol Aksoy and Nejat Eczacıbaşı often stated the need for private museums in Turkey and their wish to establish a modern museum in various publications, meetings, and panels during this time (Sülün, 2018, p. 63). The **1990s** was a period where multiculturalism and alternative media began to rise globally, where internet started to become commonplace, capital mass market expansion continued through neoliberalism, and global economic and political powers realigned to form the “new world order” (Wikipedia n.d.). The political downfall of communism arrived on the heels of the fall of the Berlin Wall at the end of the last decade in 1989, and 1991 saw the former Soviet Republics finally gaining independence at the end of a long struggle after the official dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), thus ending the US-spearheaded Cold War between the Eastern and Western Blocs, as well as the need for these blocs, and starting the monolithic new process of *globalization*, wherein the creation of a global arrangement without borders that functioned on a basis of dialogue and multiculturalism was sought. In this context, Western European countries which had long dreamt of a united Europe mobilized to establish the (after the European Economic Community established in 1957) European Union in 1993, followed by the introduction of the single currency of Euro to its member states in 1999. On the post-communism economic stage, free circulation of capital, goods, and investments under “free market conditions” was adopted, aiming for the pervasion of

capitalist economy at a global scale with this new environment of “freedoms” called neoliberalism. The 1990s saw the spread of financial prosperity at a global scale, which triggered widespread individual consumerism and luxury life standards, and it was tried to further spread these conditions through the implementation of neoliberal policies. Unprepared for these developments, the countries of the “third world” experienced the greatest level of income inequality and injustice in history (Pınarbaş, 2017, pp. 123-125). The global market expansion of the Turkish economy began with the 1980-1983 transitional period and became complete in 1989-1990. The free-market policies achieved a completely open Turkish economy as of the 1990s (Yanar, 2002, p. 109). The Gulf War, starting in 1990 with the US offensive against Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait caused a crisis that led to the reshaping of global front lines along international political tensions. The United Nations’ (UN) decision to embargo Iraq, to which Turkey acquiesced, the deployment of Turkish forces to the Persian Gulf and the garrisoning of foreign forces in Turkey became a complicated process that led to resignations and early elections. The 1991 elections resulted in an ideologically clashing and uneasy coalition between Süleyman Demirel and Erdal İnönü, followed by the death of President Turgut Özal, who was succeeded by Süleyman Demirel, leaving Tansu Çiller to form the new administration. Çiller continued the EU membership application process which Turgut Özal had started, but the high amount of foreign expansion in the risk-laden Turkish money market led to instabilities in foreign commerce. The resulting structural measures of the *April 5th stabilization decisions* then culminated in the 1994 financial crisis. The crisis bankrupted many capital owners and led to mass layoffs and the wealthy fleeing

abroad, as well as another round of early elections in 1995, resulting in a new coalition government between the *Refah Partisi* (RP, lit. The Welfare Party) leader Necmettin Erbakan and *Doğru Yol Partisi* (DYP, lit. the True Path Party) leader Tansu Çiller. In 1996, Turkey was accepted into the EU customs union, a step closer to EU membership. The continuing political tensions led to the 1999 general elections, resulting in yet another coalition government led by Bülent Ecevit.

Thus, the Turkey of the 1990s was on one hand a period of constantly changing administrations, coalitions, early elections, and political instabilities, as well as societal and economic trauma with the 1994 financial crisis. On the other hand, it was also a period of proliferation of computer and internet use, an expanding private television and radio sector, and the popularization of certain lifestyles with the public's ability to follow global events more closely. As with previous decades, the state activity in the field of art took a backseat during the 1990s. While a 0.7% of the Ministry of Culture's 1992 budget was allotted to the arts, the amount dropped to 0.3% in 1998. Meanwhile, 5% of corporations' investments in the arts and culture were declared tax-free as a part of the state's free market incentivization policies (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 70). This incentive led to the growing private sector entering the art sector to gain prestige and respectability, and after increasing their contributions to the field, near-completely dominated the art market (Sülün, 2018, pp. 67-76). As previously mentioned, the Özal administration's implementation of neoliberal policies in the period following the 1980 coup and the related regulations to integrate with global capitalism created a new and prevalent portion of capital owners. The 1990s was a period where the ventures and institutionalization attempts of the previous

decades regarding the contemporary art market began to bear fruit, resulting in a dynamic, outwardly open art scene (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 67).

In the context of *Fairs*:

The first art fair in Turkey took place in the 1990s, playing a propulsive role in the development of the art market, the enrichment of its topics and agenda, and the increase in collectorship. Founded in 1990 by the *International Association of Plastic Arts* (UPSD)—which has made great efforts regarding the autonomization of art—under its director, painter Hüsamettin Koçan’s leadership, the *TÜYAP Art Fair* first opened in 1991. It allowed visitors to view art galleries and artworks all in one place, and encouraged capital owners to buy artworks, in addition to making possible the discovery of talented young artists as well as providing exposure to artists and galleries in the international art scene and brought a corporate face to the art scene, and a new dimension to the artist-buyer-collector relationship. Aiming to become international, the fair had galleries from countries like Sweden, the Balkan Republics, and Italy participate beginning in 1994. It remains an active and long-established organization to this day (Sülün, 2018, pp. 83-88).

In the context of *Galleries, Exhibitions, and Biennials*:

A survey conducted by academician Begüm Kösemen between 1990-1997 showed that companies that invest in the arts and culture see an increase from 28% to 62% in their business confidence index. The 1990s, which brought what writer Can Külahlıoğlu called the “hegemony of galleries”, saw the private sector take an active

part in the arts and culture despite the political and economic instabilities of the period in order to generate a good image, prompt good relations with the public, and to invest, which was heavily and frequently featured in the press and the media (Sülün, 2018, pp. 77-78).

The 1990s saw previous decades' private galleries like Baraz, Maçka, Hobi, Kile, Artisan and Cumali remain active and celebrate their twentieth or twenty-fifth anniversaries. Meanwhile, new galleries such as the Kare Art Gallery (1991), Evin Art Gallery (1996), and Binyıl Art Galleries (1999) were established (Gün, 2022, p. 216) while others had to shutter or relegate to simply act as mediators due to the recession and the increasing number of auction houses (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 218-219).

The state became largely inactive in cultural and artistic activities, continuing the annual State Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions, also finalizing the Asia-Europe Art Biennials, Turkey's first biennial, which began in 1986 and ended in 1992. The Istanbul Biennial, a source of added value for the national art scene which also helps connect Turkey to the international art world, has been organized by the İKSV since 1987, and was held biannually between 1992 and 1999. The 4th biennial in 1995 was a particularly large-scale outing with regard to international participation, with 118 artists from 52 countries participating (Graf, 2015, pp. 111-113). The biennial grew global in the 1990s, and continued to exist as an influential platform, which motivated its potential sponsors in the private sector. Finding sponsorships from collectors like Halil Bezmen for the 1st and Asil Nadir for its 2nd outing, the Istanbul Biennial increasingly grew in scope over time, necessitating more than a single sponsor, and

was then sponsored by important corporations (Sülün, 2018, pp. 90-94). With the highly active art scene of the 1990s, wherein TÜYAP launched fairs and the Istanbul Biennial continued to grow and improve, we witness increased interdisciplinarity, with conceptual and curated exhibitions multiplying influenced by the biennials. Exhibitions curated by Beral Madra, Vasıf Kortun, and Ali Akay, who could be considered the first three curators in Turkey, became very prominent. Beral Madra's exhibitions, "Concrete Visions" (1993), "Xample: Interdisciplinary Art" (1995); Vasıf Kortun's "Memory/Recollection" (1991), and "Number 50: Memory/Recollection II" (1993); Ali Akay's "A Deconstruction of Marcel Duchamp's Urinal" (1994), and "Globalization: State, Misery, Violence" (1995) were important among the curated exhibitions of the 1990s. Starting in 1989 with "10 Artists 10 Works: A", the A, B, C, D exhibitions continued with "10 Artists 10 Works: B" (1990), "10 Artists 10 Works: C" (1992) and "10 Artists 10 Works: D" (1993) in the 1990s. Another important exhibition series was the *Youth Action* exhibitions starting in 1995 and organized by the International Association of Plastic Arts (Gençel, 2014, pp. 28-31). A pioneering gallery that was founded in 1975, Gallery Baraz's *15th Year* exhibition that celebrated its 15th anniversary provided additional momentum to the already active art scene of the period. Another development of this period was the exhibition organized by collectors. Halil Bezmen's *Great Exhibition I* in 1989 in Ankara, in which he exhibited pieces from his personal collection, was followed by *Great Exhibition II* in 1990 which was held in Istanbul Mimar Sinan University Painting and Sculpture Museum's Upper Hall. This was a notable event as it was the first exhibition to be planned as a collaboration between the collector, the artist, the critic, and the art

historian. Afterwards, Halil Bezmen once again stated his desire to turn his collection into a museum. With its international exhibitions and the “Contemporary Turkish Painting Competition”, the *Ramko Art Gallery*, founded in 1990 by collector and businessperson Nahit Kabakcı, grabbed notice by providing young artists access to a global field while also helping revitalize the art scene. The private capital’s support of the art scene, which it provided through competition exhibitions continued and increased. In addition to the *DYO Painting Competitions* which had been taking place since the 1960s, the “Esbank Art Competitions” (1984-1998), “TPAO Painting Competitions” (1981-1991) and the “Tekel Painting Competitions” held between 1987-2003, as well as the “Adana Cement Industry Painting Competition”, and the “Sedat Simavi Visual Arts Competition” were activities that brought innovation to the art scene while also encouraging collectorship. Additionally, investment groups such as Toprak Ceramics, Çanakkale Ceramics, Sandoz, Emar, Den ta Form, and Borusan, as well as hotels such as the Sheraton, The Marmara, the Hilton, and the Çırağan Palace benefited from the developing art scene by opening galleries of various sizes and scopes (Sülün, 2018, pp. 91-108).

In the context of *Banks*:

Supporting artists and the art scene since the 1960s with exhibitions and publications, banks became increasingly more visible and active during the 1990s. As art works became financially valuable assets, banks continued to support artists by holding exhibitions in gallery spaces with better conditions, foregoing their cuts of the artwork sales, and preparing special catalogues for artists in each exhibition, while

also increasing their circle of influence by publishing their collections into books and sharing them with the general public, increasing their value compared to private galleries and becoming tough competitors in the art market (Sülün, 2018, pp. 101-103). Akbank's Aksanat, Yapı Kredi Bank's Kazım Taşkent Art Gallery, İşbank's Parmakkapı Art Gallery and the Emlak Bank Art Gallery held regular and distinguished exhibitions (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 222), and although they shuttered during the 2001 financial crisis, banks like Dışbank, Egebank, Es Bank, Etibank, Eximbank, Körfezbank, Toprakbank, Töbank, Türkbank, and Yaşar Bank all organized notable exhibitions at their own art galleries throughout the 1990s. "A Cross Section of the Akbank Painting Collection" in 1991, as well as the "Ziraat Bank Painting Collection", İşbank's "Contemporary Turkish Painting of the Republican Period I and II, and the "Yapı Kredi Painting Collection" in 1992, the "Republic of Turkey Central Bank Contemporary Turkish Art Collection" in 1994, and the "İşbank Art Collection" in 1998 were some of these exhibitions. In 1997, Vakıfbank published its complete collection in the "Art Notebook", followed by Yapı Kredi Bank publishing its series of panels titled "Art Struggling Between Its Past and Future – Contemporaneity Issues" as books, and İşbank collecting their exhibitions into a book as well (Sülün, 2018, pp. 101-107).

In the context of *Auctions*:

Becoming increasingly visible and active in the 1990s, auctions garnered attention in the art market thanks to extensive media coverage. Turgay Artam's Antik A.Ş., Raffi Portakal's Portakal Art and Culture House, and Ahmet Utku's Maçka

Auction House were leading auction houses during this period where auction houses preferred to carry contemporary artworks over antiques. Held in 1990 at the Maçka Auction House, shipowner Saim Birkök's auction of the 220 pieces of art in his collection was viewed by 2000 people (Sülün, 2018, pp. 114-128). Another example for these sensational auctions was the auction of the collection of Halil Bezmen, the owner of Mensucat Santral A.Ş. which went bankrupt in 1994 (Üstünipek, 1998, pp. 217-218). The auction, organized by Portakal Art House owner Raffi Portakal, sold 34 billion 25 million liras worth of artworks, after which businessmen's art collections—The Bezmen collection, which was able to pay off its debt to the bank thanks to this auction, being chief among them—became a topic of heated discussion, with many commenting that Bezmen, who for years had been talking about starting a museum, simply did not have a collection worthy of establishing museum on. The Turkish market in 1990 with its high potential garnered attention from auction houses abroad like Sotheby's and Christie's, culminating in a Sotheby's auction in Turkey titled "Contemporaray Turkish Painters" (Sülün, 2018, pp. 115-125).

In a *Museological* context:

Art director and writer Mehmet Ergüven wrote in a 1994 publication named *Art in Turkey*: "*Let us be frank. In a residential area without museums, how permanent any art activities achieved by galleries can be, no matter how high in number they may be, will always be debatable*" (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 225). The İKSV and Nejat Eczacıbaşı's attempts to create a "Contemporary Art Museum" in 1989 and 1990 failed due to bureaucratic red tape. After these failed attempts at founding

museums the topic of a lack of museums became subject to frequent debate, often pointing out possible museum projects in Turkey, even leading to the emergence of publications that only cover museology. For example, art critic Kaya Özsezgin noted that during the 30-year period between 1950-1980 in the USA, 2500 new museums had been established. Aydın Gün, the general director of the İKSV, pointed out that between 1960-1990 two hundred new museums were founded in Japan, adding that the number was 300 in ten years in West Germany. Thus, bereft of state support, the lack of a Contemporary Art Museum which was often expressed by artists, academics and writers resulted in the private collection museums that would open in the 2000s. (Sülün, 2018, pp. 92-132).

In the context of Collectorship:

Affected by the liberal economy and the developing age of communication, the 1990s became a period where the power of art and culture was discovered, and with financial incentives from the state, the number of institutions and collectors who invested in and sponsored art to refresh their image and vision increased with great exposure. In this dynamic art scene full of galleries, exhibitions, fairs, biennials, competitions and auctions, art historians, critics and curators became more active, art publications and translations became more commonplace, and artists adopted a core tenet of contemporary art in using different disciplines to create pluralist and eclectic art works (Sağbaş, 2013, p. 140). The consumerist frenzy and the commodification tendencies dominated the 1990s, which also influenced its culture, thus the arts were similarly commodified and functioned as a branch of the capitalist system. Global

issues affected the Turkish market and art world as well, causing instability. Encountering big losses after the 1990 Gulf Crisis, investors refrained from buying until the effects of these events which changed the global economic balance and caused large-scale stagnation in the art market ended. The art market then became a high-risk field wherein investing took financial courage. Additionally in Turkey, the Stabilization Decisions of April 5th, 1994, and the resulting financial crisis led to the closure of certain galleries, causing some businesspeople to bankrupt and collectors to liquidate their collections. The population of art buyers now wanting to sell became a turning point for the art market. Collections found exposure during their sales, creating the impression of artworks as a financial investment, rendering them valuable as commodities, causing a steep rise in artwork prices. Thus, the 1990s saw an increase in collectorship, as well as institutions, banks, and the private sector taking a more active role in the art market and their collections expanded despite the country's economic and political instabilities and the widening income gap.

The collectors of this period include businesspeople Sakıp Sabancı, Erdoğan Demirören, Muhsin Bilge, the Eczacıbaşı Family, Feyyaz Berker, Halil Bezmen, Erol Aksoy, Mustafa Taviloğlu, Kemal Erhan, Can Elgiz, Nurettin Koçak, Jale Yasan, Sema and Barbaros Çağa. In 1995, Sakıp Sabancı published a selection of pieces from his collection in the “Sakıp Sabancı Collection” catalogue, and in 1997, Mustafa Taviloğlu published his complete collection in a book called “Taviloğlu Collection Turkish Painting” (Sülün, 2018, pp. 77-114).

Conclusion

Founding various states in different periods in history over a wide geography, the Turks, with their long-established and rich cultural past, did not begin collecting until their transition to a sedentary lifestyle. Collectorship in Turkey during the Ottoman era differed in quality and content from Europe, which existed since the Roman Empire and became commonplace during the Renaissance, due to the Islamic prohibition of depictions of any living beings, instead developing as an act of aggregation based on the tastes and special interests of the Sultan (Levi, 1997, pp. 20-21). The Sultans were raised from childhood with lessons to develop their senses of art and aesthetics to have a command of fields of art, allowing them to act both as state rulers and patrons of art. Collectorship in the Ottoman Empire remained under state monopsony. The collections were considered Sultan's personal property and thus never opened to the public.

In this context, the historical roots for Turkish museology that go as far back as the **15th century**, with the conquest of Istanbul in 1453, which also led to increased support for artists and the arts from both the Sultan and other figures of palace authority (Shaw, 2020, p. 20). Assuming a pioneering role, Mehmed II who, though different from the notion of collectorship of the current day, became the first collector with his interest in the art of painting in a western sense, commissioning the Venetian painter Gentile Bellini to paint his portraits (Erten, 2017, p. 27). Other Sultans also formed collections along their own interests like books, manuscripts, porcelain, Arabic calligraphy, and miniature. Increasingly growing with the addition of Sultans'

objects of interest, as well as diplomatic gifts, the Ottoman dynasty's "Topkapı Palace Collection" was rich and extensive enough to compete with the most glorious European imperial museums and was similarly a symbol of the ruler's power (Artun, 2019, p. 21).

The **16th and 17th centuries** were the peak of the Empire's power, a period of intensifying cultural and commercial dialogue with Europe through ambassadors and envoys. Avrupa ile, karşılıklı elçiler vasıtasıyla, kültürel ve ticari diyalogların yoğunlaştığı, Western artists accompanying European delegations were commissioned to paint the Sultans and therefore featured in the palace collection. Their biggest customer was the palace and other top officials and associates.

The 18th century was a period of Enlightenment for Europe after the French and the Industrial Revolutions, while the Ottoman Empire lost influence due to military losses and land losses. The resulting Occidentalization movement and the lifting of the depiction ban aimed to achieve artistic, material cultural, and institutional advancements. European painters remained close to the Ottoman top brass, and the palace continued commissioning portraits. The Tulip Period of 1718-1730 witnessed the palace lose power while private capital took over, influencing the social structure and creating a bourgeois camp within society (Sülün, 2018, p. 6) leading to a stronger non-Muslim trader class.

The 19th century is a period where Ottoman relations with the West were officialized as a result of the Imperial Edict of Reorganization (1839) and the Imperial Reform Edict (1856); an era of change for the political atmosphere of the palace as

well as the cultural/artistic scene (Sülün, 2018, p. 18). Sultans displayed favorable attitudes towards the arts, and Abdülmecid's reign saw the palace collection attain a more consciously structured core. With Abdülaziz and Abdülhamid II, foreign artists established workshops in the Empire, art academies were founded, and artwork purchases continued at numerous exhibitions. Commonly considered the first museum institute of Turkey, the Müze-i Hümayûn or the Imperial Museum was established in 1869. In 1882, Osman Hamdi Bey was appointed as its director to achieve a more systematic means of collection management. This period's collectors comprised statesmen, high-income families, and non-Muslims (Özkan, 2004 , p. 71).

In 1923 the Republic of Turkey was declared under Atatürk's leadership, and the realization of its ideals regarding the creation of a modern and national social culture became its most important duty (Sülün, 2019, p. 46). Cultural policies were formed within this framework, making the state the greatest supporter of culture and art. An important factor in the Western art market, the bourgeoisie was not present in the early Republican period. The void left by the Ottoman elite with their now diminished political and social influence was filled by the state between 1923-1950 with regular art purchases from exhibitions, and by compelling public institutions to buy artworks (Serpil, 2006, p. 46).

Community centers, first established in 1932, became the first cultural centers that brought the Republican reforms to the people through exhibitions, courses, and conferences, functioning like a public university with their multifaceted and purposeful educational activities, thus helping art develop. In 1937, the Istanbul State

Painting and Sculpture Museum was founded, allowing the state to protect the arts officially and institutionally in addition to its existing support. With no art market to speak of yet, the biggest patron of painting was the state, and the small number of collectors that existed consisted of bureaucrats, as well as intellectuals of middle-class income, such as university members, writers, and members of the press, etc.

The 1950s saw Turkey enter the multi-party period, and economic growth took the place of cultural growth. Though Turkey did not take part in the Second World War, it was still affected by the process of recession. The new process that began with the US's Marshall Plan resulted in rural flight, as well as the emergence of new job fields and a new camp of capital owners (Sülün, 2019, p. 57). The near complete dissolution of the state's support for the arts and artists, and the development of the private sector which turned Turkish businessmen into great business magnates and started the first sparks of collectorship in Turkey did not begin until after the 1950s (Erten, 2017, p. 72). Not many private collections existed during this decade, and as the state pulled back, banks began to play an important role as buyers in the art market (Serpil, 2006, p. 64). The initial gallery ventures of this era, such as the Maya Art Gallery (1950) and the Helikon Art Gallery (1953) and their exhibitions were not long-lasting, nor sufficient. Without the presence of an art market, collectors collected not as an investment but more along their artistic tastes. The collectors of this period of rejuvenation for the Turkish bourgeoisie consisted of engineers, doctors, and high-ranking civil servants.

The 1960's in Turkey were marked by development plans. However, the state began to play a less and less active role in cultural-artistic activities. It was an early preparatory period where notable efforts and organizations emerged increasingly and the first steps towards widespread collectorship were taken despite the lack of a complete art market (Erten, 2017, p. 73). Businesspeople began to travel abroad, collecting art and supporting artistic endeavors (Sülün, 2019, p. 71) The period's collectors consisted of lawyers, bank managers, and other private professions, as well as bureaucrats and some businesspeople.

The 1970s remained in the shadow of the “1968 Events”, resulting in political and social tensions (Serpil, 2006, p. 73). Dominated by a coup, recessions, restrictions on rights and freedoms, protests, and student events, a complete art market still did not yet exist. However, the launch of galleries like Gallery Baraz (1975), and the Maçka Art Gallery (1976), as well as the founding of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts in 1973 by Nejat Eczacıbaşı caused an increase in artistic sponsorships and entrepreneurial activities, paving the way for the future of the market. The late 1970s saw an increase in private galleries, expanding bank collections, and a notable population of capital-owning collectors (Sülün, 2019, p. 82). The collectors of this decade comprised largely of businesspeople.

The 1980s saw the capitalist system skyrocket in parallel with the rest of the world as a result of the Prime Minister Turgut Özal's free market economy and privatization focused neoliberal policies. The 1970s arabesk culture was replaced by popular culture, and the bourgeoisie which prospered in this liberal environment

became the largest source of demand for the art market (Serpil, 2006, pp. 74-76). The free-market economy led to the first high-priced sales of paintings, and the increasing number of collectors caused a boom in the number of private art galleries. This earned the 1980s the moniker of “The Age of Galleries” (Erten, 2017, p. 99). Antik Auction House, a prominent auction house still active to this day, opened during this period (1981). The post-Özal wealthy and the banks formed expansive collections with paintings from Turkish artists. Large scale exhibitions were sponsored by the private sector, and extensive catalogues for exhibitions were published (Altındere, 2015, p. 35). Artworks started to become commodified, turning into a means of prestige and investment for their collectors. This period saw an ever-widening wage gap, as the middle class eroded and lost their position as art buyers to the quickly multiplying high-income population (Üstünipek, 1998, p. 190). In this context, the collectors of the decade consist almost exclusively of businesspeople.

The Sadberk Hanım Museum established by the Koç Family in 1980 was the first museum in Turkey to be established by private capital, becoming a pioneering institution for the future private museum ventures to come in the 2000s.

The 1990s brought the Gulf War (1990), which triggered financial crises, and the end of the Cold War (1991), which launched the monolithic new process of globalization, pointing to a “new world order”. For Turkey, it was a period of constantly changing coalitions, early elections, and political instabilities, as well as a period of proliferation of the internet and of private television channels, and luxury consumerism. The Stabilization Decisions of April 5th, under the Tansu Çiller

administration, led to a recession, which caused some businesspeople to resort to auctioning off their collections, thus featuring artworks of living and contemporary artists in these auctions. The 1990s saw increased collaboration between the state and the capital owners, who then dominated the art market and made efforts to remain visible through their cultural and artistic activities in order to maintain close ties with global capital (Sülün, 2019, p. 107). The TÜYAP Art Fair, established in 1991, was the first art fair in Turkey. It supported art sales and helped popularize collectorship. This led to a trend towards contemporary art, with collectors like Sakıp Sabancı and Mustafa Taviloğlu publishing their collectors in books for additional exposure. Despite the country's economic and political instabilities and the widening income gap, the 1990s saw an increase in collectorship, as well as institutions, banks, and the private sector taking a more active role in the art market. Artworks were now valued as a commodity, causing a steep rise in artwork prices.

In the art world, the topic of a lack of museums and the need for contemporary art museums was frequently stated and debated. These debates, which paved the way for the private museum efforts of the 2000s, will be examined in the next section.

4. ART COLLECTORSHIP'S TRANSFORMATION INTO PRIVATE MUSEUMS IN TURKEY (2000-2010)

*“According to Proust,
an artwork can only find life through
its own death in a museum.”*

Theodor W. Adorno

4.1 The Development of Private Art Collectorship During the 2000-2010 Period

4.1.1 The Political and Financial Landscape of the Period

The first decade of the 21st century, starting in 2000, was a period where the globalization process which began in the 1990s after the Cold War truly gained momentum with the prevalence of the internet. China and India economically greatly advanced to become global players. Meanwhile, the attack on the World Trade Center in the US on September 11th, 2001, would be the deadliest terror attack in history, directly resulting in the wars in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003); while in Europe, the single currency of the European Union, the Euro, officially entered circulation in 2002. The EU expanded with new members in 2004 and 2007. This decade-long process continued more-or-less normally until its culmination with the 2008 financial crisis, considered to be the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression in 1929, which began in the US but quickly spread to Europe (Wikipedia). Turkey was also heavily affected by the 2008 global crisis as yet another part of the efforts to establish a new world order through the rhetoric of globalization. The financial high of the pre-2008 period in Turkey and Worldwide gave way to a much more unstable and tumultuous period (Doğruel and Doğruel 2011, 177-197). The 1990s in Turkey was a decade of political unease and constant economic crises which led to early general

elections in 1999 as a result of which the *Demokratik Sol Parti* (DSP, lit. the Democratic Left Party) led by Bülent Ecevit had to form a coalition government with Devlet Bahçeli's *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (MHP, lit. the Nationalist Movement Party) and Mesut Yılmaz's *Anavatan Partisi* (ANAP, lit. the Motherland Party) (Akşin 2020, 177-179). As the President Süleyman Demirel's seven-year term expired, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the head of the Constitutional Court of Turkey, was elected his successor by the Grand Assembly upon Ecevit's suggestion. Primarily known as a member of the judiciary, Sezer's pushback on the privatization of three public banks as part of the ongoing privatization policies of the period, as well as his rejections of law proposals caused much tension with the Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit (Sülün, 2018, pp. 133-134). . The greatest financial blow, however, came on the heels of the National Security Council meeting on February 19th, 2001, where at the end of a heated argument between Sezer and Ecevit, Sezer threw the constitutional code book at Ecevit, which the latter later publicly complained was a "state crisis". The crisis caused the stock market to drop by 29.3%, devaluing the Turkish lira by 130%, increasing the inflation rate to 90%. 1.5 million people became unemployed, 20 banks shuttered, and 40 thousand bankers lost their jobs (Akşin, 2020, p. 180). Thus, Turkey entered the 21st century with the greatest recession it had ever faced except for the periods of war (Savran, 2004, p. 35). During the transition to the year 2002, its economy had shrunk by over 11%, and the government, failing to pay its employees, requested assistance from the IMF (Sülün, 2018, p. 135).

Aiming to stop this bad state of affairs, the then Vice-President of the World Bank, Kemal Derviş, was appointed by Ecevit to the position of the Minister of State

for Economic Affairs to seek solutions. Kemal Derviş, supported by the IMF, announced the *Güçlü Ekonomiye Geçiş Programı* (lit. the Transition to A Strong Economy Program). Implemented immediately after the 2001 crisis, the program involved difficult but disciplined policies regarding economic administration, resulting in the economic recession in 2001 giving way to a growth of 6.4% in 2002, causing positive expectations towards the coming years. Two important developments in 2001 then became indicators for the coming period. The first was the ban of the *Fazilet Partisi* (lit. the Virtue Party), itself a replacement for the Refah Party which had been banned in 1997, causing its members to divide into two offshoots: the “traditionalist” *Saadet Partisi* (lit. The Felicity Party), and the “reformist” *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP, lit. the Justice and Development Party) (Özsoylu and Metin 2019). The second was the September 11th terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and “the War on Terror” that the US President Bush started immediately afterwards, which increased Turkey’s strategic and geographical importance. With its own history of terror attacks, Turkey immediately supported the War on Terror, accepting the deployment of Turkish forces in Afghanistan, and opening its airspace to American military aircraft. In return, Turkey was provided financial support and additional loans. The uncertainty stemming from Prime Minister Ecevit’s health problems in 2002, causing resignations from DSP, which led to early elections (Özsoylu and Metin 2019, 10-17). The early general elections held on November 3rd, 2002 resulted with a 34.28% share of the votes for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s AKP, who came into power as the ruling majority party, and still remains there as of 2021 when this thesis was written. The first Prime Minister of the ruling

party in 2002 would be Abdullah Gül as a result of the Erdoğan's temporal ban from politics which lasted until March 2003 after which he became the leader. As soon as the government was formed, an "Emergency Action Plan" which included 205 activities categorized under four main political titles--"Public Administration", "Economic Transformation", "Democratization and the Law" and "Social Policies" (Özsoylu and Metin 2019, 20). . Put into effect in 2001, the Transition to A Strong Economy Program continued in this following term as well, leading to positive developments in financial indicators until the global financial crisis. In this regard, it's possible to divide Turkey's financial performance into three periods: Before the global crisis (2002-2007), the global crisis (2008-2010), and after the global crisis (2011-2017) (Çiçen, 2018, p. 74).

The AKP administration, spurred on by the loss of public confidence stemming from the lack of results in the previous administrations' EU membership efforts, prioritized the EU membership process. In December 2004, the decision to start negotiations with Turkey came out of the EU Summit in Brussels, ultimately culminating in the start of negotiations with Turkey as a candidate for nomination in October 2005. This new process continued until the end of 2008, allowing the administration to take many radical actions as a result of the EU support it was getting as part of the Harmonization Process. With media support, the public visibility of the EU negotiations and the plans to expand the state privatization policies helped establish a conservative camp compatible with the neoliberal policies of the new government. The EU Harmonization Process also started a revitalization period in the culture and arts, as the government received support from private capital owners and

provided tax incentives towards this area in return, thus opening the door to a completely new period for the Turkish art scene (Sülün, 2018, pp. 137-139). The period of positive recovery between 2002-2007 completely reversed in 2007 and after. In addition to apparent weaknesses in the US economy, the AKP announcing Abdullah Gül as their candidate for Presidency to replace Ahmet Necdet Sezer at the end of the latter's term caused additional political tension. The early elections taking place in the same year resulted in the 47% of the votes going to the AKP which remained the administration party and elected Abdullah Gül the President. The year 2007 was marked by the *Ergenekon* lawsuits, as a result of which many academics, journalists, rectors, prosecutors, and army officers were arrested for being part of an alleged plot and subjected to years of litigation. The political tensions in Turkey in 2007, coupled with the elections and the administration's decision to start a referendum process regarding the election of the Turkish president by popular vote caused a loss of momentum and the postponement of necessary economic decisions. Turkey was then excluded from the EU membership process due to cultural/religious reasons, causing a loss of support from within and without, on top of which the instability starting in the US real estate market spread to its financial sector, thereby causing a global recession, which also deeply affected developing countries like Turkey after 2008. Thus, the procession of events that started in 2007 due to internal factors and continued until late 2009 due to external factors, had been a bleak period for Turkey and its economy (Özsoylu and Metin 2019, 25-44).

4.1.2. The Art Market of the Period and Its Effects on Collectorship

The economic measures taken after the 2000s financial crisis both brought high amounts of foreign capital to Turkey and broadened capital owners' the volume of international commerce. Realizing the economic benefits of owning artworks, coupled with the financial incentive laws of the era (see section 4.1.2.5) , the capital owners began to invest heavily in the art market. Thus, the 2000s became a period wherein private collections expanded, private art galleries multiplied, and exhibitions, festivals, sponsorships, and auctions added dynamism to the market, leading the private sector to become a power that steered cultural/artistic activities. Eventually, private collectors apparently assumed a role of public service by opening private museums (Sülün, 2018, pp. 143-155).

4.1.2.1. In the context of Galleries and Exhibitions

The privatization policies of the 1980s and the 1990s revitalized the market, as a result of which new collectors emerged, art galleries and exhibition spaces multiplied, and the concept of curation finally entered the art market. While curators like Ali Akay, Vasıf Kortun, and Beral Madra in the 1990s focused on subjects like identity and politics in their exhibitions, late 1990s and the 2000s saw curators like Marcus Graf, Levent Çalikoğlu, Başak Şenova, Derya Yücel, Ahu Antmen, Hasan Bülent Kahraman, Zeynep Yasa Yaman, Necmi Sönmez, Başak Şenova, Fulya Erdemci, Ferhat Özgür, Halil Altındere, Haşim nur Gürel, and Borga Kantürk (Ötkünç, 2017, p. 99) take on issues like deterritorialization, globalization, and media criticism. The private sector supported the arts, with museums and galleries of this

period undertaking a large variety of projects, helping Istanbul join other cultural centers like New York, Tokyo, and London which stretch beyond national geographies in the globalized world. The public space, meanwhile, grew beyond just a physical space and transformed into exhibition spaces as “spaces of unrestricted expression”. Additionally, initiatives like Hafriyat—which was established in 1996 and established an exhibition space between 2007-2009—as well as Oda Projesi, and Apartman Projesi brought together the public and the arts. Launched in 1980, the Contemporary Artists Istanbul Exhibitions was held annually until 2011, with 30 outings in total, the 21st of which was held in 2001 and curated by Beral Madra (Gençel, 2014, pp. 18-41).

In parallel to the rise of contemporary art since the 1990s, the 2000s brought to the art scene new gallery spaces where contemporary art was frequently traded, and young artists were supported. Some prominent examples of these spaces are “PiArtworks” which was established in 1998 by Yeşim Turanlı in Ortaköy and then moved to Tophane in 2008, “Karşı Sanat”, a critical and experimental collective entity founded in Beyoğlu in 2000, “Galerist”, which was established in 2001 by Murat Pilevneli in Teşvikiye and has since moved to the Mısır Apartment building in Beyoğlu, “Dirimart” which was established in 2002 by Hacer Özil in Nişantaşı, “Galeri X-İst”, established in 2004 Kerimcan Güleriyüz and Daryo Beskinazi in Nişantaşı, “C.A.M Galerisi”, established in 1992 but was restructured in 2002 by Sevil Binat and has since 2006 been active in Nişantaşı and Beyoğlu, “Piramid Sanat”, established in 2006 by artist Bedri Baykam in Beyoğlu, “Galeri Splendid”, founded in 2008 by Leyla Gediz and Derya Demir in Beyoğlu açılan, and “Zilberman Galerisi”

established in 2008 by Moiz Zilberman in the Beyoğlu Mısır Apartment building (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 431). Additionally, the Teksin Art Gallery established in 2001 by painter Teksin Özgüz on the Anatolian Side of Istanbul, the Nurol Art Gallery founded in 2002 in Ankara as part of the Nurol Education, Culture And Sports Foundation, the Maltepe Art Gallery established in 2004 by Mustafa Bakkalbaşı in the Anatolian Side of Istanbul, Galeri Sev-Art, established in 2007 by Sevgi Algül in Istanbul, the Art Point Gallery, founded in 2007 by Onur Soysalan in Istanbul, and Gama Galeri, established in 2009 in Istanbul are further examples (Okutur, 2011, pp. 43-45).

Although the financial crisis in the early 2000s caused several bank art galleries to shutter, some of the increasing number of private galleries of the 2000s were galleries that belonged to institutions and banks that survived the recession. With the financial incentives they were provided since the early 1990s, banks were very active in the Turkish art market, presenting their collections institutionally through exhibitions, but also garnering attention with more varied activities. One of these activities, although it didn't ensure its continuity in the following periods, was the "Art Investment Consultancy" service which banks such as Akbank, Garanti Bank, İşbank, and Yapı Kredi provided for their clients regarding fields like forming and expanding an art collection, art investment, art theory training, etc. As the first bank to start a collection, İşbank published the book, "the İşbank Art Collection" in 2000, which featured 1922 art works from 661 artists added to the collection between 1960-1970. Additionally, Yapı Kredi Bank's exhibition which was held between December 2000 and February 2001 at the Kâzım Taşkent Art Gallery, titled "Their Favorites:

Turkish Art of Painting in the Light of 50 Collectors' Choices", was a seminal exhibition regarding collectorship. The exhibition was coordinated by the Yapı Kredi General Director of Culture and Arts, Veysel Uğurlu, who stated that after the exhibition, various collectors asked him to take part in a new exhibition. In 2002, once again organized by Yapı Kredi, "Selections from The Bank Collections" was an exhibition to which the Central Bank of Turkey, Akbank, Şekerbank, Dışbank, Ziraat Bank, Garanti Bank, İşbank, the Development Investment Bank of Turkey, and Yapı Kredi each contributed five art pieces from their own collections. The exhibition allowed these banks to convey their approach to capital in the global age, as well as presenting their cultural and artistic mission to their audience. In 2004, as part of the 60th anniversary of Yapı Kredi, as well as the 40th of the Kazım Taşkent Art Gallery, an exhibition titled "Yapı Kredi Painting Collection: The Contemporaries" was held in the Kazım Taşkent Art Gallery and presented to the audience. In addition to banks' exhibition activities, in 2002, a selection of portraits of fifty collectors selected by Yahşi Baraz, the owner of the long-established Gallery Baraz which has been active since 1975, were displayed in an exhibition. The collectors were photographed by Baraz, which were then painted by painter Gazi Şensoy, thus providing exposure for collector families, bringing dynamism and a literature to collectorship. In the press, the exhibition was interpreted as a "collection of collectors". The same year, collector Nahit Kabakcı came into prominence with his exhibition at the Naval Museum Art Gallery. The following year, in 2003, he held a second exhibition at the Atatürk Cultural Center, displaying a selection from between 1944-1996 of artworks from his collection. The 2000s was a period where collections met the audiences through

private museums (see section 4.2) and art institutions—a milestone for museology and a sign of the transition into a new period (Sülün, 2018, pp. 155-166). Exhibitions in this new period were held in new institutions and museums, too. These will be touched upon in the following sections.

4.1.2.2. In the context of auctions

Finding an institutionalized structure in the 1980s and the 1990s, antiquarianism and auctioning had pioneering, prominent figures Yervent Portakal, succeeded by his son Aret and grandson Raffi Portakal (Portakal Auction), who gave way to figures such as Turgay Artam (Antik Auction), Can Has (Artı Auction/2004), Can Önen (Atika Auction/2008), Duran Tantekin (Tantekin Auction), Dikran Masis (Eskidji Auction/1997), Erdem Ersoy (Nika Auciton/2004), Hakan Bali (Bali Auction/2002), Rüştü Sungur (Artium Auction/1992), Yalçın Denizyılmaz (De Auction/2000), Maksut Varol (Maksut Varol Auction/1980's), Ahmet Keskiner (Alif Art Auction/2004), Ahmet Utku (Maçka Auction/1990) (Baraz, 2013, p. 184). Aziz Karadeniz (Beyaz Auction/2006) who have maintained the market to the current day. The proliferation of art auctions in Turkey became accelerated and sensationalized with the *Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey* (TMSF) confiscating collections after the many bankruptcies following the 2001 recession (Sülün, 2018, p. 183). According to art historian Ali Artun, the first sign of speculative auctioning that would become pervasive with the TMSF sales was the bankruptcy of famous businessman and collector Halil Bezmen in early 1995, and the bankruptcy auction that followed. Artun writes (Artun, 2014);

“The proliferation of art auctions in Turkey emerged from the wreck of a speculative financial disaster. Collecting money from small savings owners—‘hoovering’, as the press called it—bankers like Erol Aksoy, the Uzan family, Murat Demirel, and Ali Balkaner took a bath on their investments, and the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey (TMSF) confiscated their paintings along with their other assets and started auctioning them in 2004. Because these paintings belonged to financiers who were known as the biggest ‘wolves’ and gamblers of the market only made speculators hungrier for them. The speculative sector had become aware of the arts. Repossessed artworks leaving bank vaults begin to sell for record prices at auctions, and according to some, ‘the value of these famous paintings quadruple the stocks.’”

One of the most debated sales of the art market in 2004 was Osman Hamdi Bey’s *The Tortoise Trainer*, which was bought in 1990 by Erol Aksoy, the owner of the İktisat Bank, for a sum of 1 billion 750 million Turkish liras, and following Aksoy’s bankruptcy, the painting was sold by the TMSF in an auction to the Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation to the tune of 5 trillion Turkish liras. During the bidding war between the Eczacıbaşı Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and the Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation, the price of the painting was raised 42 times, multiplying its value by 2085 compared to its 1990 price, and by 5.5 on a US Dollar basis. The bid was won by the Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation and became an important indicator regarding the private sector’s investments in the arts (Sülün, 2018, pp. 140-141). Another high-priced auction was painter Burhan Doğançay’s “Blue Symphony”, which was sold in 2009 at Turgay Artam’s Antik A.Ş. auction house for a sum of ₺2,770,000, breaking

both the artist's own price record and the world record for the highest price for a living Turkish artist. The same year, Fahrel Nissa Zeid's "London" was sold for ₺1,350,000, breaking the record for the artist's highest sale price in a Turkish auction (www.artam.com n.d.).

Hosting more and more high-priced artwork sales, contemporary art quickly replaced antiques at these auction houses, which became the primary measure of value for the art market. The effects of these auction sales and the increasing dynamism of the art market attracted Sotheby's and Christie's, two of the most important auction houses in the world, both founded in England in the 18th century, to the Turkish art scene. Christie's organized the "Jerusalem During the Ottoman Empire" exhibition in 2004 at the Istanbul Harbiye Military Museum, and featured Turkish artists like Abidin Dino, Erol Akyavaş, Adnan Çoker, Bubi, Devrim Erbil, Burhan Doğançay, Canan Tolon, İnci Eviner, Haluk Akakçe, Ömer Uluç, Ferruh Başağa, Nejad Melih Devrim and Mubin Orhon at auctions at their Dubai branch in 2008 and 2009. Meanwhile Sotheby's noted that, because of the dynamic nature of collectorship and especially the sales made in the 2000s in Turkey, Turkish art and artists garnered the attention of foreign collectors in search of alternatives in the international art market, establishing an agency in Istanbul in 2009, and hosting four auctions between 2009-2011, annual "Turkish Contemporary Art" auctions in London. At the auction in 2009, seventy-three artworks from artists Fahrelnisa Zeyid, Burhan Doğançay, Mejad Melih Devrim, Mübin Orhon, Taner Ceylan, Abidin Elderoğlu, Mehmet Güleriyüz, Hale Tenger, Kezban Arca Batıbeki, Semiha Berksoy, Nazif Topçuoğlu, Gülsün Karamustafa, and Hüseyin Alptekin were auctioned, fifty-three of which were sold for

a total of £2.4 million. Although these drew criticism, citing that the artists representing Turkish contemporary art were selected not chronologically but based on selling power, or that the buyers were not foreign but still Turks, or that these were not auctions meant to provide exposure for Turkish artists in the international art scene but to increase the market values of the auctioned pieces, Christie's and Sotheby's activities were important anecdotes regarding the development of Turkish art market and collectorship (Sülün, 2018, pp. 183-185).

4.1.2.3. In context of Biennials and Fairs

The festivals and activities organized by the İKSV starting in the 1980s were given permanence with the name “the International Istanbul Biennials” in 1987 and were pioneering events regarding the transformation of the art market and its trends. Held biannually with six outings until the year 2000, the Istanbul Biennial's seventh outing in 2001 was curated for the first time by an Asian curator, Japanese artist Yugo Hasegawa. The ninth biennial in 2005 opted for the first time for two co-curators, taking place with Charles Esche and Vasıf Kortun's partnership. In the 2000s, biennials helped achieve progress in providing the art market with a contemporary and conceptual perspective and were therefore effective in directing collector trends toward contemporary art, the recognition of the thought process hidden under the form, and the comprehension that “meaning” over “aesthetic coherence” is to be prioritized (See Table 1).

Table 1. A summary of the Biennials between 2000-2010

Year	Curator	Theme	Venue	Artist Count
2001	Yugo Hasegawa	“Egofugal - Fugue from Ego for the Next Emergence”	Hagia Irene Museum, The Imperial Mint, the Basilica Cistern, and the Beylerbeyi Palace, Platform Garanti Center for Contemporary Arts, the Maiden's Tower, the Bosphorus Bridge, Çemberlitaş Bath, Atlı Karınca Preschool, TÜYAP Fair front yard, Billboards	63
2003	Dan Cameron	““Poetic Justice”	Antrepo No. 4, The Imperial Mint, the Hagia Sophia Museum, the Basilica Cistern, Platform Garanti Center for Contemporary Arts, Public Space Projects	85
2005	Vasıf Kortun, Charles Esche	“Istanbul”	The Deniz Palas Apartment Building, the Garanti Building, Antrepo No:5, the Tobacco Warehouse, the Bilsar Building, Platform Garanti Center for Contemporary Arts, the Garibaldi Building	53
2007	Hou Hanru	“Not Only Possible, But Also Necessary: Optimism in the Age of Global War”	AKM, İMÇ, Antrepo No: 3, Santral Istanbul, KAHAM	86

2009	Ivet Ćurlin, Ana Dević, Nataša Ilić, SabinaSabolović	“What Keeps Mankind Alive?”	Antrepo No: 3, Feriköy Roman School, the Tobacco Warehouse	72

Note: (Sağbaş, 2013, pp. 19-34)

Another unusual development of the 2000s was the “peripheral” art activities. While Istanbul, as the subject of most exhibitions, and the city where most artists lived and worked, in addition to being the center of art activities and the art market, had a crushing superiority over other cities, the 2000s broke the mold with the Sinop biennial called the “Sinopale” in 2006, notable as the first of these peripheral biennials in Anatolia (Madra, 2015, p. 135). It was followed by the Antakya Biennial in 2007 and the Çanakkale Biennial in 2008.

An important example as the first new alternative peripheral activity, the Sinopale achieved a different approach by bringing artists and the people closer and involving the locals in its operations, thereby attempting to encourage participation, collective thought creation, and collective action through contemporary art (Beldan, 2017, pp. 126-127).

Launching on August 15th, 2006, with the theme of “Şey – Thing”, the 1st International Sinop Biennial, was held in Sinop: one of the oldest cities on the coast of the Black Sea and home to many cultures. After its identity as a trace city was taken away, its historical shipyard was turned into a prison, turning Sinop into a prison colony. Right at this point, as its natural and cultural riches stood in the middle of the city like a treasure, completely ignored by the state authorities who had no interest to

do anything with it, “şey”, a word that describes a state of not knowing, emerged like a sort of counter-attitude, forming the conceptual framework of the first biennial. Thus, The Sinopale I was put together with a team consisting of T. Melih Görgün, Beral Madra, and Dr. Vittorio Urbani as curators, as well as 60 artists, organization crew, and 29 thousand residents of Sinop. The Sinopale II in 2008, added new curators to its roster, and was a crowded affair that met its audience in spaces that spread throughout the city with the theme of “Şeylerin Yeni Düzeni” (The New Order of Things) (www.sinopale.org n.d.). Another Anatolian biennial was the 1st International Antakya Biennial in 2007, realized with the efforts of the Antakya Academy Association. Its theme was “A Journey in Time”, and it featured Turkish and Bulgarian artists, aiming to expose the great heritage of Antakya, a metropolis with an ages-long cultural and artistic history, to the world. Starting in 2008 with the conceptual framework of “Transparent Illusions,” the 1st International Çanakkale Biennail aimed to make Çanakkale, a city with an important geographical position as the next bridge between Asia and Europe after Istanbul, as well as a rich cultural history, known in the international arts and culture scene and form interactions and intercommunication between it and the city’s inhabitants (Bunulday 2021, 72-75). In the context of fairs, although their history isn’t very long, considering the first contemporary art fair took place in Cologne, Germany in 1967, and that the first fair in Turkey was the “Istanbul Art Fair” organized by the International Plastic Arts Association in 1991, we see a twenty-five year delay compared to the Western art world (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 447). Until the 2000s, Istanbul and Ankara’s higher number of art galleries and investors helped better develop the art scene in these two

cities. After the 2000s, the art fairs that opened in these cities gave these art scenes more dynamism. Artists and collectors were brought together at these new fairs, helping gallery owners to make contact with more artists. Founded in Ankara, ÇAĞSAV (Çağdaş Sanatlar Vakfı, lit. Contemporary Arts Foundation) organized an art fair titled “Galleries and Artists 2001” which featured 46 galleries and institutions a full decade after the “1st Istanbul Art Fair” in 1991, despite the financial recession. In Istanbul, the International Plastic Arts Association’s 8th fair in 1998 became a collaboration with TÜYAP as part of an agreement. In 2002, however, TÜYAP’s move to Beylikdüzü led to an art and book fair named “Artist”, meanwhile the Art Gallery Owners Association’s agreement with İKON Expositions led to the “Art Istanbul International Contemporary Arts Meet” at the Lütü Kırda Conference and Exhibition Hall. Revitalizing the art market despite the financial crisis, the “Art Istanbul” fair, with its international exhibition methods, high amount of gallery participation, and satisfactory sales figures, was called the beginning of a new period. In 2006, the Art Gallery Owners Association, with a company named Dream Design Factory (DDF) established the “Art Istanbul International Contemporary Arts Meet”, And İKON Expositions launched the “Contemporary Istanbul Contemporary Arts Fair”. Contemporary Istanbul (CI) with its fair grounds, exhibition methods, and artist selections, as well as the presence of international galleries in their events, was an important step in bringing new collectors to the art scene and helping collectors open up to the world (Sülün, 2018, pp. 150-154). As the first contemporary art fair in Turkey, CI, with participation from both domestic and international art galleries, its important foreign sponsorships, and its prioritizing of publicity in foreign media,

carried the label of an international art fair, increasing in recognition and visitor numbers every year (See Tablo 2). Second only to the biennials, CI was a pioneering organization that brought momentum to the art market, bringing Istanbul to a level competitive with other important art fairs from around the world, and undoubtedly played a huge role in filling the absence of contemporary art fairs in Turkey.

Table 2. Contemporary Istanbul Art Fair, Summary of 2006-2010

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of Galleries	49	73	56	73	80
# of Foreign Galleries	9	34	14	22	37
# of Turkish Galleries	40	39	42	51	43
Artworks Sold	%74	%61	%56	%68	%83
Total Value of Exhibited Pieces (in Million TL)	12,5	9,22	19	20	50
Total Number of Visitors	37.500	42.000	48.000	52.000	53.000

Note: (Sağbaş, 2013, pp. 44-49).

Additionally, active between 2006-2010 and organized by the Beşiktaş Municipality, “Artshow” became the first contemporary art festival to be organized by a municipality. Also active during this period, between 2007-2013, the “Art Bosphorus Contemporary Art Fair” was organized by Ariyel Expositions. These two events, although short lived, brought activity to the art scene and helped the development of collectorship (Sağbaş, 2013, pp. 50-51).

4.1.2.4. Collectors, Institutions

The 2000s was a period in the Turkish art market where, influenced by globalization, contemporary art trends became more prevalent and galleries, auctions and collections took shape accordingly. Traditional methods in art gave way to new methods of expression that went outside the canvas and included technology and new creations and even interactive applications were introduced. Contemporary art galleries, new art centers, and private art museums therefore multiplied, ultimately helping art collectorship evolve and grow (See Table 3),(Sağbaş, 2013, pp. 141-142).

Table 3. Number of Collectors in Istanbul (2004-2009)

Year	# of Collectors	# of Artworks
2004	413	72 913
2005	456	75 057
2006	448	77 716
2007	426	77 789
2008	418	78 437
2009	437	80 942

Note: (Sağbaş, 2013, s.101).

The proliferation of art fairs and their featuring international galleries as well as the many conferences and interviews put Turkish collectors together with more artists and artworks, broadening their horizons and beginning to make more conscious purchases. According to an article written by Dr. Erdal Atukeren and Prof. Aylin Seçkin in 2007, Only around 28% of all artworks purchased were bought for psychic (liking, entertainment, prestige, etc.) reasons, while the remaining 70% were bought

for financial reasons (Seçkin ve Atukeren 2007, 9). As developments in Turkey took place in parallel to the global art scene, auctions resulting in rising art prices and high sales figures attracted capital owners and motivated them to become art collectors, leading them to largely believe that paintings are a means of risk-free and profitable investment that provides economic advantages like the stock market. According to a study by Dr. Erdal Atukeren and Prof. Aylin Seçkin which encompasses the years between 1990 and 2005, the global painting markets index put together by Artprice shows that the prices of 1030 artworks by 13 Turkish painters over a long period in the Turkish painting market remained directly proportionate to the global market prices (Atukeren ve Seçkin 2009, 1705).

Thus, the art market of the 2000s was one where economic factors were emphasized, the market was scrutinized by economists, and art became commodified and developed in relation to the international market. As capital owners became aware of the economic benefits of an artwork and were incentivized by the tax laws (see page 163) put into effect in 2004, private art institutions completely usurped the state, making the 2000s the period of the highest amount of investment made in the arts and culture by corporations. According to a study by Begüm Kösemen in 2012 regarding institutions' cultural and artistic activities, the research shows that 58.8% of corporations invested in the arts to gain institutional-social prestige, 33.3% for brand awareness and corporate image, and 8.3% because they were inspired by other corporations' similar activities. 91.6% of them reported a better reputation after these investments, 81.1% reported both higher reputation and a more positive brand/corporate image (Kösemen 2012, 155-158). Active in parallel to private

museums (which we will examine in the next section), corporate art centers such as the Yapı Kredi Culture and Art Center (1988), Akbank Arts (1993/2003), Platform Garanti Center for Contemporary Art/Salt (2001-2011), Santral Istanbul (2007), the Haunted Mansion/Borusan Contemporary Art Collection (2007) became an important force that steered culture and arts activities in Turkey. Among these, SantralIstanbul, is part of the Istanbul Bilgi University, and was established in 1996 by the Bilgi Education and Culture Foundation, which itself was spearheaded by businessman Oğuz Özerden in 1994. As the Silahtarağa Museum is also part of the land allocated to the Bilgi University for a period of 50 years, the SantralIstanbul project promoted itself as a museum even though it was not. The Silahtarağa Power Plant was the first city-scale power plant in the Ottoman Empire, and generated power for the city at its position in Haliç from 1914 to 1983. After a period of heavy renovation in 2004-2007, the building was reopened as a museum, recreational center, and educational facility. SantralIstanbul, opened in July 2007, with a preview gala attended by the then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, like Istanbul Modern. Its official public opening date was September 8th, 2007. Parallel to the opening ceremony, it hosted the “Modern and Beyond” exhibition on September 9th, 2007, with a selection of over 500 pieces from over 100 artists from across the 50-year period between 1950-2000, followed by Yüksel Arslan’s 500-piece retrospective exhibition. The university was sold in 2006 to an American-based higher-education management company called Laureate, and its founder Oğuz Özerden later left, resulting in fewer exhibitions, and the use of exhibition areas as classrooms, and despite harsh reactions, its collection was put on auction. A large portion of the university’s permanent collection was sold at an

auction on February 17th, 2013, organized at Maçka Auction House. Although SantralIstanbul still features the pieces that weren't sold during the auction, the art activities at the museum were reduced to almost nothing. Choosing not to keep a collection and to continue as an experimental art institute, SantralIstanbul continued its activities until June 15th, 2008. It is currently open to public as the Energy Museum (Santralistanbul; Rastgeldi, 2019, pp. 87-89).

Another important institution regarding collectorship and corporate ventures is the Borusan Contemporary Art Collection. Established on February 19, 2007 at the *Perili Köşk* (lit. Haunted Mansion) by the Borusan Kocabiyyık Foundation (established in 1992 by Borusan Holding founder Asım Kocabiyyık) as a means to institutionalize their near 20-year collection, it achieved a first by functioning both as an office space and an art institution at the same time. The mansion itself belonged to Yusuf Ziya Pasha, the aide to Abbas Hilmi Paşa, the Head Vizier of Egypt. As the construction could not be completed because of the First World War, its incomplete floors gave the building the moniker of "The Haunted Mansion". It was later renovated and leased to the Borusan Holding for a period of 30 years. The institution supports young artists, especially featuring video art, new media art, and installations in its collection beginning with the 2000s. As such, the foundation owns one of the most important collections of new media, neon/LED, and video art collections (Sülün, 2018, pp. 172-175). Private institutions, corporations, and holdings benefited from the tax incentive laws of the EU Harmonization process by establishing art institutions, foundations, and organizing or sponsoring art fairs, thereby steering artistic trends. Law No: 5225, titled the *Law on the Encouragement of Cultural Investments and Initiatives* was

issued in July 2004 and ensured that any aid, expenses, or donations related to activities deemed eligible by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism would be tax deductible (İKSV).

Thus, the influence of these EU policies and the 2004 tax law, banks and holdings allotted more of their budgets to culture and arts activities, becoming more present in the art market. For example, in 2004, the Yapı Kredi Bank reportedly allotted 10% of its budget to culture and arts; Metro Grup, Aygaz and Goldaş allotted 15%, Mavi Jeans and İpana allotted 7%, Ak Emeklilik allotted 5%. In 2005, Pınar announced that they allotted a budget of \$4 million for these activities (Sülün, 2018, pp. 144-145). The trend of “peripheral” art activities that began in the 2000s with peripheral biennials, also featured art institutions. The “K2 Center for Contemporary Arts”, founded and managed by artists, was founded in 2002 in İzmir, followed by the “Diyarbakır Center of Arts” (DSM) founded in 2003 by Anadolu Kültür (Paynter, 2015, p. 226). Having been home to various symposiums and exhibitions by SANART, as well as the UPSD’s Youth Art Exhibitions, METU Art Festivals, and exhibitions in galleries like Gallery Nev and Siyah Beyaz since the 1990s, Ankara did not see much activity regarding contemporary art in the 2000s except for Hangar +/-, Küf, and Yaygara Contemporary Arts Initiative, despite being the capital of Turkey. It wasn’t until relatively late, in 2010, that the Cer Modern Center for Contemporary Arts (CerModern) was established, revitalizing the capital’s art scene as a pioneering cultural center (Türkyılmaz, 2019, p. 125). . Thus, the 2000s was a period where the art market took shape independent of the state. It saw an increase in the number of market actors like galleries, auction houses, and artists, as well as young, innovative,

and contemporaneity-minded collectors who inclined more towards contemporary arts than the modern, cared about artistic thought, were aware of its financial benefits, and followed the international art scene. Meanwhile private art institutions, taking notice of the financial benefits and advantages of investing in the arts, became prominently present in the market, providing the art scene with a new dynamism. The foundations laid by these events and circumstances caused, as Levent Çalıkoğlu put it, “the Turkey of the 2000s to experience a total boom in the field of museology.” (Çalıkoğlu, 2009, p. 15).

According to a list prepared in 2005 by Yahşi Baraz, the institutions and collectors who dominated the period were: (Baraz, 2005, pp. 34-35); “İşbank, Sabancı, Akbank, Turkish Economy Bank, Yapı Kredi Bank, Eczacıbaşı, İktisat Bank, The Central Bank with their corporate painting collections, as well as Kemal Erhan, Ali Koçman, Nejat Eczacıbaşı, Şakir Eczacıbaşı, Oya-Bülent Eczacıbaşı, Duygu-Vural Akışık, Sevgi-Doğan Gönül, Suna-İnan Kırar, Erdoğan Demirören, Ersin Börtecene, Yunus Büyükkuşoğlu, Kemal

Bilginsoy, Ajda-Tanju Köseoğlu, Hüseyin Birol, Mehmet Şahin, Banu-Oktay Kırış, Şeci Edin, Cavit Armağan, Meral-Vural Gökçaylı, Semra-Gürbüz Tümay, Vitali Hakko, Geri Benardete, Mustafa Taviloğlu, Aykut Hamzagil, Nurettin Koçak, Çiğdem Simavi, Ekrem Topçu, Gülin-Akın Öngör, Feyyaz Berker, Erol Aksoy, Sakıp Sabancı, Güler Sabancı, Suzan Sabancı, Süreyya Çolak, Yasemin-Aydın Tanbay, Acar Tunçbilek, Radi Dikici, Salih Tatlıcı, Sevinç-Erdal İnönü, Ayşen-Hüsnü Özyeğin, Suat Nazif Baydur, Halil Bezmen, Can Has, Suna-Erdoğan Tanaltay, Necati

Akçağlılar, Sema-Barbaros Çağa, Cengiz Aslan, Vural Akışık, Turgut Yılmaz, Çetin Nuhoğlu, Arzuhan-Mehmet Ali Yalçındağ, Daryo Beskinazi, Nezih Çavuşoğlu, Karin-İhsan Oral, Nil-Oktay Duran, Orhan Elkorek, Aziz Karadeniz, Sevdâ-Can Elgiz, Öner Kocabeyoğlu, Zeyno-Muhsin Bilge, Levent Tanıt, İzi Hekimoğlu, Huma Kabakçı, and Banu-Hakan Çarmıklı.”

4.2. From Private Collections to Private Museums

The first private museums in Turkey that were active in the field of contemporary art were founded in the 2000s when the process of globalization was finalized through neoliberal economic policies and an internationally oriented growth model (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 72). In the absence of a bourgeois class similar to European bourgeoisie delayed the proliferation of collectorship in Turkey compared to the West. These circumstances also indirectly delayed the emergence of private museums. As mentioned in the previous sections, collectorship’s early emergence and the donation of collections led to a great increase in private museums after the 16th century in Europe. In Turkey where private museums did not emerge until the 21st century, however, the absence of a tradition of donation similar to Europe where it was considered a cultural duty, museums were initially largely composed of archaeological finds and art works collected from foundations, while museums that displayed Turkish painting remained very limited as the medium was near exclusively under collectors’ and/or corporations’ control (Konukcu, 2007, pp. 78-80). . In an article from 2010, painter and academic Prof. Tomur Atagök, emphasized that art history is written in museums, and stated that his dream was that all the time and money spent on private

art museums be combined to create a more powerful partnership, adding that museums should aim to achieve goals like contributing to the preservation of universal values, creating an artistic cultural memory, raising awareness in individuals both interested and disinterested in art regarding the vital necessity of art, spreading the understanding of fine arts and a sense of aesthetics to the public, ensuring communication between mediums, and bringing dynamism to the city's cultural life (Atagök, 2010, pp. 31-32). Thus, the 2000s witnessed the collectors meet the public, starting a golden age of private museums in Turkey. It was during this period that collectors, by then an important power within the art market, transformed their collections into private museums, bringing a unique dynamism to the culture and arts scene, as well as shouldering a new responsibility regarding steering the public artistic trends and becoming a presence in the narrative of art history (Sülün, 2018, p. 174). According to data published in March 2022 by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the number of private museums that belonged to institutions, foundations, and individuals was determined to be 331 (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı 2022). However, due to the subject matter of this thesis, we will examine private museums established by individuals who collected art. The first personal collection to become a museum was, as stated in the previous sections, the Sadberk Hanım Museum founded in 1980. A long period of over two decades passed before other private museums followed. In this context, the list of private art museums established between 2000-2010 by art collectors is as follows:

- 2001 **Elgiz Museum** (Istanbul) – The Elgiz Family Collection

- 2002 **Sakıp Sabancı Museum** (Istanbul) – The Sakıp Sabancı Collection / Sabancı University
- 2004 **Istanbul Modern** (Istanbul) – The Eczacıbaşı Family Collection / The Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts
- 2005 **Pera Museum** (Istanbul) – The Koç Family Collection / The Suna İnan Kıraç Foundation

Additionally, in parallel to the efforts of art collectors, some private art museums were established by painters and were contributively present in the Turkish art scene in the 2000s. The first of these was artist Burhan Doğançay's Doğançay Museum established in 2004 in Istanbul. Another was the Museum of Graphic Arts (İMOGA) established in the same year by artist Süleyman Saim Tekcan in Istanbul. It becomes apparent here that among the pioneers who established museums with their private collections, the most prominent were the Koç, Sabancı, and Eczacıbaşı families, who held sway over the Turkish economy. As they competed in the business world, these families tried to prove their differences through art. It was them, as well as the efforts of other collectors and artists, and the effects of globalization that led to great advances in the 2000s, begetting a contemporary identity for the Turkish art scene that attempted to catch up with the standards of museums abroad (Konukcu, 2007, pp. 79-80).

As examined in detail in the previous chapter, Santral Istanbul, founded in 2007, was not included in the list of private museums founded by art collectors as it has lost its function as an art museum. Another such museum, again founded in 2007,

is the Rezan Has Museum. The story of its founding began when, during the construction process which aimed to turn the historical Cibali Tobacco Factory (1884) in Istanbul's Haliç into the Kadir Has University, Byzantine period cisterns were discovered to have been laying underneath. This disqualifies the institution from being a private museum founded by an art collector. The Rezan Has Museum held its first exhibition, titled "Timeless Simplicity", in 2007, which featured 43 ethnographical materials including objects and archival documents from the historical tobacco factory, as well as old Ottoman and Byzantine structures. Its collection was later expanded when collector Haluk Perk's collection comprising 2500 archaeological artifacts was donated to the museum (www.rhm.org.tr).

4.2.1. The Elgiz Museum

Founded in 2001, the Elgiz Museum can be examined under two periods: "2001-2004" and "after 2005". GİZ Development & Construction's Chairman of the Board and a collector, Can Elgiz was an alumnus of the Istanbul Technical University Faculty of Architecture, wherein he had completed a doctorate and taught for a period, who, along with his wife, Sevda Elgiz, a Doctor of Political Science, founded the Elgiz Museum (Sülün, 2018, p. 234). The museum was directed by Vasıf Kortun, and from 2001 until 2004 was named "Proje 4L Istanbul Museum of Contemporary Art". Built on a 2000 square meter area in Istanbul's 4 Levent neighborhood, the museum was a non-profit organization that aimed to support contemporary art and artists. It was notable as the first private art museum that was open to public and had an international identity and provided an opportunity for young contemporary artists who

hadn't otherwise had opportunities for exposure or recognition (See Figure 22), (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 79).



Figure 22. An image from the Elgiz Museum entrance, Istanbul.

Note: (Artkolik, 2021). <https://www.artkolik.net/sergiler/elgiz-muzesi-13-teras-sergisiyle-heykelleri-bulusturuyor-9996>

The vision it adopted upon opening was an approach where “there will not be art sales, nor a permanent collection, but collection exhibitions will be a priority” (Sülün, 2018, p. 241). Proje 4L Istanbul Museum of Contemporary Art’s establishment was, then, an important step regarding both artists, who could use it to realize their potential and articulate themselves within the international art scene, and for the Turkish art scene where the absence of a contemporary art museum had long been a topic of debate. It held the exhibition “Becoming a Place”, curated by Vasıf Kortun in 2001, followed by “Look Again”, again curated by Vasıf Kortun, Kutluğ Ataman’s “Women Who Wear Wigs”, as well as “Stop for a Moment: Painting As Narrative” which was the first exhibition featuring an international collaboration,

curated by Mikla Hannula and Kari Immonen, and Haldun Dostoglu's "Günyüzü" in 2002 (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, pp. 394-396). Günyüzü brought the painting collection of Barbaros and Sema Çağa, who had started collecting in the late 1970s and had been collecting for 30 years, to the museum's audience. The exhibition featured a selection of 285 pieces, dating back to the early Republican period but largely from after 1950, created by 79 doyens of Turkish painting (Sülün, 2018, pp. 161-162). The then hosted, in 2003, Vasıf Kortun's "Under the Beach: The Pavement", Ali Akay's "Entre", Halil Altındere's "I'm too sad to kill you!", and Fulya Erdemci's "Organized Conflict". In 2004, it hosted "Loud and Clear", a collaboration with the Netherlands, with the Bifrons Foundation, which had been bringing contemporary art with contemporary music in Amsterdam since 1998, as well as Proje 4L's final exhibition that focused on contemporary art, "Hüseyin Çağlayan" (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, pp. 396-399).

The Proje 4L Istanbul Museum of Contemporary Art maneuvered into the art scene in the early 2000s, back when there were not enough "modern" art museums, let alone "contemporary" art museums. It filled an important absence in the art market with its national and international exhibitions. In 2005, restructured to more closely resemble the definition of a "museum" (İsmayılov, 2007, p. 62), it was renamed the "Proje 4L Elgiz Contemporary Art Museum", and transitioned into a private collection museum. Can Elgiz said about this transition (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 399):

"As of this period, we are completely focusing on our own collection. (...)

Although I believe that what we originally did in the 2001-2004 period was very beneficial, I am of the mind that collections should also be shared with the public and

art connoisseurs. (...) If the State Painting and Sculpture Museum could fulfill its duties, we would have been able to track every artist's every artwork. This failed, so it would be good if us private collectors should do it instead. Naturally, it's not possible for everyone to start a place, but exhibiting these collections occasionally in various ways allows certain things to surface. (...) The real purpose here is that art isn't kept somewhere private, under a pillow or in a warehouse, etc. This is, in a way, a cultural heritage (...) The real goal is to share and continue sharing. Speaking on our own behalf, we aim to achieve and maintain that." Though the Elgiz family refrained from using the family name and did not prioritize the family collection until late 2004, they prioritized their collectorship as of this new period, stating that their new vision was to support the exhibition of different collections, including their own, the Sevda-Can Elgiz Collection, which featured international contemporary artists (Sülün, 2018, p. 244). Consisting of prominent Turkish and international artists from the 1980s to the present day and created through subjective tastes, the Elgiz Collection featured famous international artists such as Tracey Emin, Gilbert & George, Jan Fabre, Rebecca Horn, Sol LeWitt, Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman, Jonathan Meese, Andy Warhol, Peter Halley, Paul McCarthy, Eric Fischl, David Salle, and Robert Rauschenberg, as well as Turkish masters like Nejad Devrim, Erol Akyavaş, Ömer Uluç, Mehmet Güleriyüz, Fahrelnissa Zeid, Mehmet Gün, Güngör Taner, Bedri Baykam, Kezban Arca Batıbeki, Adnan Çoker, Alaattin Paksoy, and Abdurrahman Öztoprak (İsmayilov 2007, 62, Dede 2012, 55, Sülün 2018, 237). In addition to this permanent collection, following its move to the Maslak Beybi Giz Plaza in Levent in 2009, curated activities involving young contemporary artists were once again held in

the project rooms that the institution featured at its new venue (Sülün, 2018, p. 247). Called the “Artvarium” and featuring the artworks of artists selected by the museum board, these project rooms mainly aimed to maintain a smaller version of Elgiz Contemporary Art Museum’s mission from its previous era: supporting artists with a space where they can create without commercial concern (Karabıyık, 2007, pp. 131-132). Additionally, the museum also hosted talks and interviews with Turkish and international collectors to talk about their experiences collecting and sharing contemporary art. In its promotional material, the Elgiz Museum underlines that it was *“the first contemporary art museum to be established in Turkey during a period where modern and contemporary state museums did not exist”*. The museum was awarded the “2013 International Collecting Award” by ARCO Madrid, one of the most important contemporary art fairs in the world (Rastgeldi, 2019, pp. 80-81).

4.2.2. Sabancı Museum

Founded in 2002 as part of the Sabancı University, the Sabancı Museum was established as a result of businessman Sakıp Sabancı’s donation of his family collection to the university for the purpose of establishing a museum (Konukcu, 2007, p. 91). The museum, built across 3500 m² of space, was established in the historical *Atlı Köşk* (lit. the “Equestrian Mansion”) in Emirgan, Istanbul, where the family had resided for many years. The mansion was expanded and renovated to create a museum environment that would reach international standards (İsmayılov, 2007, p. 60). Located on the hill that ties the Emirgan woods with the Bosphorus, the mansion changed hands many times before entering the possession of the Khedive of Egypt,

İsmail Pasha, in 1925, and then had rebuilt by his grandson, Prince Mehmed Ali Hasan. It became the Sabancı Family's property when, in 1951, it was purchased by Sakıp Sabancı's father, Hacı Ömer Sabancı, who had come across the mansion while looking for a summer home in Istanbul in 1949 (Karabıyık, 2007, p. 127).

Buying the mansion with the antique items inside, Hacı Ömer Sabancı, thus developed an interest in antiques. Frequenting famous antiquaries of Istanbul in the 1950s, Sabancı also kept a close eye on auctions and turned collecting antiques into a passion. It was at one of these auctions that he bought the bronze horse statue which had been cast in 1864 in Paris, placing it in the mansion's front yard, after which Emirgan Mansion became known as "the Equestrian Mansion" (Sülün, 2018, p. 251). After Hacı Ömer Sabancı's passing in 1966, the mansion sporadically became Sakıp Sabancı and his family's residence between 1969-1999 (Karabıyık, 2007, p. 127). Following Sabancı Holding's headquarters' move to Istanbul in 1974, Sakıp Sabancı crossed paths with auctioneer Raffi Portakal, which started a process regarding the management and improvement of the collection with Portakal's consultation. Expanding greatly through bulk artwork purchases, the "Sakıp Sabancı Collection" had its important moments: in 1999, upon the purchase of 101 paintings from the auction of the collection of prominent collector Ali Koçman, who had passed away that year, as well as the purchase of several art works from the Halil Bezmen auction in 2009. It was also further enriched with the artwork of important calligraphers in Turkey. This rich calligraphy collection found great success being exhibited between 1998-2000 in important cities like Moscow, New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Paris, Berlin, and Frankfurt, which convinced Sakıp Sabancı to turn the collection into a

museum. Having been started in the 1940s by Hacı Ömer Sabancı and expanded by Sakıp Sabancı as of the 1970s, the collection developed until 2002 under Raffi Portakal's consultation, featuring the works of important Turkish painters such as Şeker Ahmet Paşa, Osman Hamdi Bey, Süleyman Seyyit, Halife Abdülmecid, İbrahim Çallı, Hikmet Onat, and Hüseyin Avni Lifij, in addition to religious texts, calligraphy, statuettes, metal figures, porcelain, objects, furniture, vases, etc. and becoming ready to become a museum before being donated to the Sabancı University, a subsidiary of the Sabancı Foundation. Following an application to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in 1998, the "Sakıp Sabancı Collection", the Equestrian Mansion, and the mansion's grounds were designated a private museum and appointed to the Sabancı University for use. It was finally opened to public under the name of "Sakıp Sabancı Museum" in June 2002 (See Figure 23), (Sülün 2018, 252-262, İsmayılov 2007, 60).



Figure 23. A view of the Sabancı Museum's front façade, Istanbul.

Note: (www.ktb.gov.tr).

<https://Istanbul.ktb.gov.tr/yazdir?97DAFFB722381E977C9E36C9B51103C1>

The Museum collection consists of four subcategories: The “Furniture and Decorative Arts Collection” features the furniture the family used while residing in the mansion, in addition to accessories and artworks from the 19th century, preserved as is in the three rooms on the mansion’s ground floor. The first floor features the “Arts of the Book and Calligraphy Collection” consisting of approximately 400 pieces. The mansion’s grounds feature the “Archaeological and Masonry Collection” which consists of various masonry pieces from the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods. Finally, the “Painting Collection” which offers important glimpses into Turkish painting history. The museum’s first director was Emin Mahir Balcıoğlu, who was succeeded in 2004 by Nazan Ölçer who, while maintaining the museum’s existing strategy of displaying, preserving, and expanding the permanent collection, developed the additional strategy of importing prestigious, large-scale exhibitions from abroad. (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, pp. 402-404). Expanding the museum with new galleries, the pioneering exhibition “Picasso in Istanbul” held between November 2005-March 2006 was visited by 115 thousand people in two months, making a big splash (Doğan, 2013, p. 154). Following Picasso, the Sabancı Museum continued organizing internationally sourced large-scale exhibitions such as “Monet’s Garden”, “Cobra. 1000 Days of Free Art”, “Where Darkness Meets Light... Rembrandt and His Contemporaries - The Golden Age of Dutch Art”, “Salvador Dalí: A Surrealist in Istanbul”, and “Master Sculptor Rodin in Istanbul”. With conferences, concerts, workshops for

children/adults, and movie screenings (Rastgeldi, 2019, p. 81). The Sabancı Museum was a residence that was turned into a museum to form a new identity, and with its new units added over time, as well as its meritorious foundations and noteworthy exhibitions, became a campus for art that aimed to exist among prominent contemporary museums of the world. With its unique nature, and its location along the Bosphorus, it has become a museum that contributes both to the beauty of the city and to the country's art scene (Akçaova, 2016, p. 34).

4.2.3. Istanbul Modern

It's roots stretching back to the 1960s when Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı, the founder of the İKSV, decided to create a painting collection, and to 1987 when, once again organized by the İKSV, the 1st Istanbul Biennial, made waves in the art scene, leading to the idea and efforts to establish a permanent modern art museum, the Istanbul Modern Art Museum opened on December 11th, 2004, at the Entrepôt (a transshipment center for commercial goods) No. 4 that's affiliated with the Turkish Maritime Organization in Tophane, Istanbul. It was the first museum in Turkey to focus on modern and contemporary art and was founded by the İKSV, an affiliate of Eczacıbaşı Holding (İsmayilov 2007, 59, Pelvanoğlu 2009, 404, Sülün 2018, 269). The Eczacıbaşı family's idea to found a museum originally goes back to the early 1990. In 1991, the Feshane, an industrial building from the 19th century located on the Haliç was restructured to turn into a contemporary art museum, and then hosted the 3rd International Istanbul Biennial in 1993 (İsmayilov, 2007, p. 59).

However, despite a contract, the museum project fell through due to conflicts with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. Eczacıbaşı's search for a museum building then continued. Meanwhile in 1999, before Istanbul Modern was established, the Foundation established the Eczacıbaşı Virtual Museum and began to exhibit the collection in this virtual platform. Finally, the museum project began to take shape during yet another biennial (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 405), (Kalyoncuoğlu 2019, 47). Following the 8th Istanbul Biennial in 2003, the efforts began to transform the 8000 square meter Entrepôt building that is located downtown, near Galata, next to the Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts, into a museum (İsmayilov, 2007, p. 59). The plan was announced in the press in September 2004. However, the EU Negotiations for Turkey that would take place on December 17, 2004, caused the museum to open at an earlier date, hastening the project. Doubtlessly no coincidence, the opening ceremony took place only 6 days before the negotiations. The then-Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attended the event and opened the museum personally. Garnering acclaim from European heads of state, culture ministers, and ambassadors to Turkey, and featuring extensively in the media, the event aimed to revitalize the cultural and artistic image of Turkey, emphasizing the arts as a priority for Turkey. Thus, on December 11th, 2004, after 32 years of great contributions to the Turkish art and culture scene, the Eczacıbaşı Group, as its founders, provided the necessary financial investment and the core of its collection to the museum, thereby garnering both corporate and public support under the İKSV umbrella, and opened the doors of the Istanbul Modern Art Museum (See Figure 24),(Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 405).



Figure 24. A view of the Istanbul Modern Art Museum, Istanbul.

Note: (www.istanbulmodern.org).

https://www.Istanbulmodern.org/tr/muze/hakkinda_3.html

Istanbul Modern brought modern art to the heart of the city, rejuvenating the art scene by articulating a modern art museum in the historical peninsula. The museum stated that they didn't simply want to hold exhibitions but function as a "living museum" with its restaurant, cinema, conference rooms, and gift shop, and draw people even outside the exhibitions (Doğan, 2013, pp. 157-158). In an interview in 2019 for the museum's 15th anniversary, the museum chairperson, Oya Eczacıbaşı, stated: *"In 15 years we've hosted over 8 million visitors. We've done 67 collections and temporary exhibitions, 38 photography exhibitions, 13 video exhibitions, and 17 international exhibitions. We've featured over a thousand artists in our exhibitions. 810 thousand children and young people took part in our educational programs to be introduced to the arts. At the Istanbul Modern Cinema, we've organized 327 film programs, and held over 4 thousand screenings. Since its foundation, Istanbul Modern's visitors have been approximately 40 percent foreign."* (Ergu, 2019).

Following the museum's opening, 1000 artworks belonging to the Nejat Eczacıbaşı Foundation, 2500 pieces from the İşbank Collection, and 20 pieces from the Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum Collection were loaned to the museum to be displayed in its exhibitions. This way, the museum's core collection was organized to have an organic connection to the art collections belonging to Nejat Eczacıbaşı and Oya-Bülent Eczacıbaşı (Sülün, 2018, p. 275). Thus, the museum consisted of three sections: the painting collection where the permanent fixtured were featured, the section allotted for photography / video exhibitions, and the section that featured the short-term exhibitions (Doğan, 2013, p. 162). While the selection, layout, and the theme of the pieces for the permanent collection exhibition is changed annually, short-term exhibitions last only for three months (Karabıyık, 2007, p. 124). Istanbul Modern's first exhibition was in 2004, titled "Observation-Interpretation-Multiplicity" and curated by Levent Çalıkoğlu, Ali Akay and Haşim Nur Gürel (Akar, 2020, p. 18).

. It featured artworks from across a century of Turkish painting history, displayed without a chronological order but curatorially grouped under various concepts. Expanding it through donations and new purchases, the museum presented its collection to the public through its exhibitions. In this context, the exhibition "New Acquisitions" took place between January 15th, 2005 and March 29th, 2009, once again curated by Levent Çalıkoğlu, Ali Akay and Haşim Nur Gürel. After 2010, the exhibitions "Past and Future" and "Artists in their Time", curated by the museum's head curator Levent Çalıkoğlu, added video, installations, and photography to the collection in addition to paintings and sculpture, veering closer to contemporary art with its collection. In 2018, Istanbul Modern had to move out of the Entrepôt No. 4 in

Karaköy due to the Galataport Project, and temporarily settled in the Union Française building in Beyoğlu, which was built in 1896 by prominent Turkish Levantine architect Alexandre Vallaury. The new museum building, which is planned to be completed as of 2022 (when this dissertation was written), was designed by Pritzker Architecture Prize (a prestigious award in architecture) winning architect Renzo Piano, aiming to become one of the most important museum buildings in the world (Sülün, 2018, pp. 277-281). Although Istanbul Modern's risky decision to feature the word "Modern" in its title resulted in various criticisms regarding how modern it is or whether its collection is Turkish modern or Western modern, it has, since its foundation, remained an international-scale museum that successfully completes the duties of modern museology with its consistent exhibitions and activities. The museum's goal has always been to fulfill, as stated by Oya Eczacıbaşı, the mission of being "not a museum that collects western painters' artworks, but a museum that exhibits and conserves Turkish Contemporary and Modern art" (Dede, 2012, p. 45).

4.2.4. The Pera Museum

Another important museum from Turkey's Age of Private Museums is the Pera Museum, founded in 2005 as a means to realize the Suna and İnan Kıraç family's desire to publicly share their collection. At the foundation of Suna Kıraç's passion for collecting lies the passion of her parents, Sadberk and Vehbi Koç, for art. As previously detailed in this dissertation, Sadberk Koç was the founder of the Sadberk Hanım Museum, established in 1980, which was the first private Museum in Turkey. Thus, born in 1941 and grown up with an interest in antiques due to her family's

influence, Suna Kır   became a committed collector and began buying pieces in the 1960s. After her marriage to İnan Kır  , she motivated her husband to collect as well, after which, in the 1970s, she continued her collectorship journey in tandem with him. Suna Kır  's collection focused on Orientalism, and it even was the largest collection of Orientalist painting in Turkey. Meanwhile, her husband İnan Kır   opted to collect "Anatolian Weights", and "K  tahya China and Ceramic Ware", these three collections ultimately forming the backbone of the Pera Museum. Before its founding in 2005, the museum's seeds were planted when, in 1991, İnan Kır   bought the run-down Hagia Yorgi Church in Antalya to establish a museum as a present for his wife's 50th birthday. After this first step on the road to institutionalization, they decided to establish a museum in Istanbul, founding the "Suna-İnan Kır   Foundation" in October 2003, and donating their collections in full to the foundation (S  l  n, 2018, pp. 283-286). Built in 1893 by architect Achille Manousoss in Beyo  lu Tepebaşı, a historically important Istanbul neighborhood, the building that once served as the Bristol Hotel was then reworked by architect Sinan Genim who renovated it to suit the needs and sensibilities of museology (See Figure 25), (Dede, 2012, p. 49).



Figure 25. A view of the Pera Museum's entrance, Istanbul.

Note: (www.vkv.org.tr).

<https://ansiklopedi.vkv.org.tr/Kategoriler/Kurumlar/Koc-Ailesi-Vakiflari/Pera-Muzesi>

The first floor of the museum features the Suna and İnanç Foundation's "Orientalist Painting", "Anatolian Weights and Measures" and "Kütahya China and Ceramic Wares" collections. The second floor houses another Orientalist Painting collection that consisted of 245 pieces and belonged to Vehbi and Sadberk Koç's other daughter, Sevgi Gönül and her husband Erdoğan Gönül (Sülün, 2018, p. 286) who donated the collection to the foundation, and is thus named the Sevgi and

Erdoğan Gönül Gallery. The 3rd, 4th, and 5th floors are composed of multi-purpose exhibition halls (İsmayilov, 2007, p. 61). The museum adopted a varied approach that both supports young creatives and features Byzantine, Ottoman, and Turkish painting as well as Western masters of the 20th century art at its temporary exhibitions (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 411). However, the most impressive painting of the permanent collection is, without a doubt, *The Tortoise Trainer* by Osman Hamdi Bey. The thing that makes the painting the center of such attraction is the aggressive auction that took place in the Antik A.Ş. auction house on December 12th, 2004—during the opening preparations for the museum. Purchased in 1990 by the İktisat Bank owner Erol Aksoy for 1 billion and 750 million liras, the painting reposessed by the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund of Turkey (TMSF) following Aksoy's bankruptcy in the 2001 financial crisis. It was then put on auction in 2004 by the TMSF for a sum of 1 trillion 950 thousand liras, with the Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation and the Eczacıbaşı family raising their bids 42 times in a contentious competition to outbid each other. It was ultimately sold to the Suna-İnan Kıraç Foundation for 5 trillion liras, becoming part of their Orientalist Painting Collection (Sülün, 2018, p. 286). The auction made waves in the press, as well as the art world. In an interview after the event, İnan Kıraç commented: “...*the painting was donated to the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation, and the Tortoise Trainer now belongs to the public,*” stating his satisfaction about the painting being available for all Turkish and foreign audiences to see, instead of only displayed to a limited audience (Konukcu, 2007, p. 96). Thus, impactfully entering the zeitgeist, the Pera Museum hosted one hundred thousand visitors in the ten months following its opening. The artwork that garnered all this interest, the *Tortoise Trainer*,

was not kept apart, instead being displayed on the same platform as the other pieces of the collection, adopting a non-preferential attitude. The General Director of the Suna and İnan Kırac Foundation Culture and Arts Enterprises, Özalp Birol, explained this attitude: *“The Pera Museum is a museum that became known for the Tortoise Trainer but is not a museum that depends on the Tortoise Trainer. ... Our Orientalist Painting Collection features many other invaluable pieces. The Tortoise Trainer is among the most important of these but that does not mean the museum consists of the Tortoise Trainer alone,”* emphasizing the balance they wished to create between the institution and the artwork. The first exhibition the museum held after its opening was the “Portraits from the Empire” which took place on June 3rd, 2005 and featured a selection of 60 pieces from the Orientalist Painting Collection. It was followed by the exhibition “Women, Painting, Stories: Transformation of the Image of “Woman” in Turkish Painting in the Modernization Era” in 2006, and afterwards, in July 15th, 2008, the exhibition “Istanbul: The City of Dreams”, wherein European artists inspired by the Ottoman Empire depicted Istanbul in their works (Sülün, 2018, pp. 289-291). As of 2007, the museum has been collaborating with prominent international museums, foundations, and collections such as the Tate Britain Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, St. Petersburg Russian State Museum, JP Morgan Chase Collection, New York School of Visual Arts, and the Maeght Foundation, bringing the works of master artists such as “Rembrandt”, “Joan Miro”, “Marc Chagall”, “Pablo Picasso”, “Fernando Botero”, “Frida Kahlo”, “Goya” and exhibiting them in Turkey (Becan, 2015, p. 61). Also taking care to organize exhibitions to support young artists, the museum’s first outing with this purpose was “Young Expansion”, their

collaboration in 2005 with the International Plastic Arts Association (UPSD) and organized by artist Mehmet Güleriyüz which featured 61 artists under the age of 35. Following that, was “EL/LE” in 2006, “Working Space” in 2007, and “Owl's Frames” in 2008 (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 411). The Pera region where the museum is located was an area where, in the late Ottoman period, orientalist artists visiting Istanbul would frequent, create their paintings, and develop the genre of orientalist painting. In this sense, the museum's collection suits the historical identity of the region. The institution itself not only held collection exhibitions but also functioned as a museum that hosts domestic and international exhibitions that support young artists (Sülün, 2018, p. 292).

4.2.5. Other Private Museums

In addition to this period's private museums that were founded by collectors, 2004 saw the emergence of the Doğançay Museum, which is considered the first artist-founded museum in Turkey, followed by another artist-founded museum with İMOGA, also in 2004.

Artist Burhan Doğançay's anxieties about “*What will happen to my work after I'm gone*”, and “*Where will the future generations be able to see my work*” determined the founding goal of the Doğançay Museum, and it was established in 2004 with the reworking of the 150 year old, 5 story building the artist bought in Beyoğlu into a condition that suits museological standards (Konukcu, 2007, pp. 98-99). Considered one of the first contemporary museums of Turkey, the Doğançay Museum displays a series of retrospectives that present Burhan Doğançay artistic

development of 50 years, as well as artworks of his father, Adil Doğançay. Additionally, the “Doğançay Museum Painting Competitions” that have been organized since 2005 helps support the younger generations that want an art education (DoğançayMüzesi n.d.)

Founded in 2004 by painter and etching artist Süleyman Saim Tekcan in Istanbul, the Istanbul Museum of Graphic Arts (İMOGA) found life when the artist transformed the 30 years of collecting at his private workshops into one of the few printmaking museums in the world. Initially founded by Süleyman Saim Tekcan in the 1970s in Kadıköy to work on his own etchings and screen prints, the workshop expanded over time with the articulation of more than 60 artists, such as Nurullah Berk, Neşet Günel, Ferruh Başağa, Erol Akyavaş, Devrim Erbil, and Mehmet Güleriyüz, eventually producing a colossal print archive of over 500 artworks (www.imoga.org n.d.). The İMOGA, later notably donated 300 prints to the 2022 exhibition “Together”, curated by Marcus Graf and held at the *Müze Gazhane* (lit. the Gasworks Museum), which was established by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in 2021 to serve as a cultural space in Kadıköy.

Conclusion

Following the 1990s, wherein—as examined in the previous section— the globalization process that pervaded the world after the financial crises that the Gulf War (1990) triggered, as well as the end of the Cold War (1991), began pointing to a new world order. Immediately afterwards, the first decade of the 21st century, starting in 2000, was a period where the prevalence of the internet allowed globalization to

truly gain momentum. This great technological leap, which was the main propulsive force behind globalization, irresistibly turned the whole world into a single market (Kongar, 2018, p. 684). However, the terror attacks on September 11th, 2001, on the United States of America—the de facto ruler of this global market, symbolized as an undefeatable power—greatly wounded the country, dragging the world into another period where new balances would be created (Ulutaş, 2006, p. 102). Until 2008, the world economy maintained a more-or-less normal course. However, starting in the US real estate market and spreading to its financial sector before quickly affecting Europe and plunging the world into a very unstable and tumultuous period, the 2008 financial crisis was the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression in 1929 (Doğruel and Doğruel 2011, 177-197). Meanwhile, Turkey entered the 21st century with the greatest recession it had ever faced except for the periods of war (Savran, 2004, p. 35). Elected in the early general elections in 1999, following a decade of political unease and constant economic crises through the 1990s, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's disagreements with the President Ahmet Necdet Sezer culminated in February 2001 with the latter throwing the constitutional code book at Ecevit, which triggered massive financial devastation in Turkey. Parallel to the administration getting assistance from the IMF and appointing the Vice-President of the World Bank, Kemal Derviş, to the position of the Minister of State for Economic Affairs, the "Transition to A Strong Economy Program" and its disciplined policies resulted in the economic recession in 2001 giving way to growth in 2002, causing positive expectations towards the coming years. In the same year, the uncertainty surrounding Ecevit's health led to early elections, culminating in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's AKP getting

34.28% of the votes to become the majority party (Özsoylu and Metin 2019, 20) starting a whole new period in Turkey. The AKP administration initially prioritized the EU membership process, which had lacked results during the previous administrations, and launched the EU negotiations as a candidate for nomination in 2005. Until 2008, the EU the Harmonization Process allowed the administration to take many radical actions, providing tax incentives for private capital owners which would open the door to a completely new period for the Turkish art (Sülün, 2018, pp. 137-139). Thus, before the global crisis, the 2002-2007 period was one of general positive recovery that in the aftermath gave way to a much more politically unstable and tumultuous period with the global recession that broke between 2008-2010 (Özsoylu and Metin 2019, 25-44). Generally, the economic measures taken after the 2000s financial crisis both brought high amounts of foreign capital to Turkey and broadened capital owners' the volume of international commerce. The common realization of the economic benefits of owning artworks (see page 122) , coupled with the era's tax incentives, led to a swift upswing for the art market during this period. With that, private collections expanded, private art galleries, exhibitions, festivals, sponsorships, and auctions multiplied, the private sector became a force that directed cultural/artistic trends, and finally private collectors brought their collections to the public by opening private museums (Sülün, 2018, pp. 143-155).

Thus, the 2000s and the Turkish contemporary art, which had been on the rise since the 1990s, brought new collectors, new spaces, and new concepts to the revitalized art market.

With regard to galleries and exhibitions, the emergence of new gallery spaces that supported young contemporary artists such as C.A.M Gallery, PiArtworks, Galerist, Gallery X-İst, and Gallery Splendid (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 431) and new curators led to concepts like deterritorialization, globalization, and media criticism being examined in the art scene. The private sector supported the arts, with museums and galleries of this period undertaking a large variety of projects. The public space, meanwhile, grew beyond just a physical space and transformed into exhibition spaces as “spaces of unrestricted expression. Banks had been very active in the Turkish art market for a long time, and in the 2000s, they used exhibitions to convey their approach to capital in the global age, as well as presenting their cultural and artistic mission to their audience. Additionally, they provided their clients with “Art Investment Consultancy”, a service regarding fields like forming and expanding an art collection, art investment, art theory training, etc.

Auctions proliferated in the 2000s, with contemporary art pieces with their ever-increasing prices rapidly replacing antiques at the auction houses, which played a serious role regarding the value lever of the art market. The financial crisis in 2001 caused widespread bankruptcy, which led to many art collections getting repossessed and auctioned off, culminating in some hotly debated auctions. These bankruptcy auctions, the first example of which was the result of famous businessman and collector Halil Bezmen’s bankruptcy, resurfaced in 2004. The İktisat Bank owner Erol Aksoy’s bankruptcy led to the TMSF auctioning his collection, including Osman Hamdi Bey’s *The Tortoise Trainer*, which Aksoy had bought in 1990 for 1 billion 750 million Turkish liras, which was then auctioned off, 14 years later, to the Suna-İnan

Kıraç Foundation for a sum of 5 trillion Turkish liras (Sülün, 2018, pp. 140-141).

Other high-priced auctions were painter Burhan Doğançay's "Blue Symphony", which was sold in 2009 at Turgay Artam's Antik A.Ş. auction house for a sum of

□2,770,000, and Fahrel Nissa Zeid's "London", which was sold for □1,350,000

(www.artam.com n.d.). The increasing dynamism of the art market caused by these events attracted two important, three century old auction houses to Turkey. Christie's in 2004 and Sotheby's in 2009 opened branches in Turkey, and engaged with the Turkish art market, in addition to organizing activities. These were important anecdotes regarding the development of Turkish art market and collectorship (Sülün, 2018, pp. 183-185).

Biennals and fairs remained pioneering entities regarding the transformation of the art market and its trends in the 2000s. The festivals and activities organized by the İKSV starting in the 1980s achieved permanence with the name of "the International Istanbul Biennials" in 1987, the seventh outing of which was held in 2001. In the 2000s, biennials helped achieve progress in providing the art market with a contemporary and conceptual perspective, directing collector trends toward contemporary art, and revealing the thought process hidden under the form, showing that "meaning" over "aesthetic coherence" is to be prioritized (Sağbaşı, 2013, pp. 19-34). Another unusual development of the 2000s was the "peripheral" art activities. While Istanbul, as the subject of most exhibitions, and the city where most artists lived and worked, in addition to being the center of art activities and the art market, had a crushing superiority over other cities, the 2000s broke the mold with the Sinop biennial called the "Sinopale" in 2006, notable as the first of these peripheral biennials

in Anatolia (Madra, 2015, p. 135); It was followed by the Antakya Biennial in 2007 and the Çanakkale Biennial in 2008.

Emerging with a twenty-five year delay compared to the Western art world, art fairs in Turkey started with the “Istanbul Art Fair” in 1991, and gained greater dynamism as newer fairs and festivals emerged, especially in Istanbul and Ankara. Artists and collectors were brought together at these new fairs, helping gallery owners to make contact with more artists. Meanwhile, founded in Ankara in 2001, ÇAĞSAV (the Contemporary Arts Foundation) organized art fairs despite the ongoing financial crisis, while TÜYAP organized an art and book fair named “Artist” in 2002, in addition to the Art Gallery Owners Association’s collaboration with İKON Expositions, the “Art Istanbul International Contemporary Arts Meet”. Art Istanbul, with its international exhibition methods, high amount of gallery participation, and satisfactory sales figures, brought new dynamism to the art market. In the meantime, İKON Expositions’ launch of the “Contemporary Istanbul Contemporary Arts Fair” (CI) in 2006 opened the door to the initial instances of contemporary art fairs in Turkey. CI was international by nature and brought Istanbul to a competitive level with other important art fairs from around the world, spearheading the start of a new period for the Turkish art market

For collectors and institutions, in light of the events mentioned above, the 2000s would be a period of transformation for galleries, auctions and collections. Traditional methods in art gave way to new methods of expression that went outside the canvas and included technology and new creations and even interactive

applications were introduced. Meanwhile, this triggered a period of growth and evolution for art collectorship as contemporary art galleries, new art centers, and private art museums, which multiplied (Sağbaş, 2013, pp. 141-142). The increasingly enriched and dynamic Turkish art market brought Turkish collectors together with more artists and artworks, broadening their horizons and allowing them to make more conscious purchases. Art became commodified and the art market developed in relation to the international market, and the prices skyrocketed. These high-value auctions made economists approach artworks as investment tools and motivated capital owners to collect. Further incentivized by the tax breaks put into effect in 2004, private art institutions completely usurped the state, making the 2000s the period of the highest amount of investment made in the arts and culture by corporations. Institutions such as Akbank Sanat (1993/2003), Platform Garanti Center for Contemporary Arts/Salt (2001/2011), SantralIstanbul (2007), The Haunted Mansion – Borusan Contemporary (2007), and ARTER (2010) were prominent art centers of the period and thus shouldered an important role in directing the culture and arts activities in Turkey (Sülün, 2018, pp. 172-175).

Private museums emerged right at this moment in the 2000s as collectors had become an important force in the art market and provided additional momentum to the culture and arts scene by bringing their collections to the public.

Collectorship first emerged in the 16th century in Europe and the bourgeois class's donation of collections led to a great increase in private museums. In Turkey, however, although private museums did not emerge until the 21st century, the 2000

signify the start of a new golden age of private museums and a turning point for museology in Turkey (Konukcu, 2007, pp. 78-80). The first personal collection to become a museum was the Sadberk Hanım Museum founded in 1980. It wouldn't be until approximately two decades later that any other private art museum would open. These private art museums that opened during this ten-year period between 2000-2010 are, in order of establishment: The Elgiz family's Elgiz Museum (2001/Istanbul), the Sabancı Family's Sabancı Museum (2002/Istanbul), the Eczacıbaşı family's Istanbul Modern (2004/Istanbul), the Koç family's Pera Museum (2005/Istanbul). Additionally, though they were not collectors, artists Burhan Doğançay and Süleyman Saim Tekcan founded the private art museums Doğançay Museum (2004/Istanbul), and İMOGA (2004/Istanbul), respectively. Şirin Mutlutürk's dissertation from 2010 makes references to Aylin Seçkin and Erdal Atukeren's study which examined data from 4700 auctions between 1995 and 2008, and states that starting from 2002 and 2004—when the Sabancı and the Istanbul Modern museums opened, respectively—the artworks featured in these collections saw increases in price in 2002, 2003 and 2006—indicating that the acquisition and disposal policies of private museums can affect the art market in the long run (Şan 2010, 87-88).

As apparent from the list above, the private art museums that opened in the first decade of the 2000s are all located in Istanbul. After 2010, however, collectors seeking to establish their own museums would trend towards locations outside Istanbul. In the next section, we will examine this new inclination towards Anatolia, and the private art museums that have thus opened in Anatolia through a reading of

Turkey's political, financial, and social background in the period between 2010 and 2020.



5. PRIVATE MUSEUMS IN TURKEY, AND NEW ESTABLISHMENTS BASED IN ANATOLIA AFTER 2010 (2010-2022)

*“What is now proven was once only dreamed about.
William Blake”
(Erten Ö. İ., 2022)*

5.1. Private Art Collectorship from 2010 to the Current Day

5.1.1. The Political, Financial, and Social Landscape After 2010

Starting with the year 2000, the first decade of the 21st century maintained a steady course until the 2008 global financial crisis, which is considered the greatest recession since the great depression in 1929. The same could not be said for the second decade, starting in 2010, however, as the decade was heavily affected by the recession. Starting the decade with the greatest turbulence ever experienced by this generation, a global struggle to recover from these circumstances began. Meanwhile, a portion of the 16 member states of the Eurozone, such as Greece, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal were on the brink of bankruptcy (Arcega 2010). The global crisis affected each country differently: unlike the Great Depression, the USA, where the crisis started, became the country to recover the fastest, with less damage and large-scale devastation compared to other developed, industrial countries (TOBB 2010, 10); 1929 even if their economy was still far from ideal with instabilities, high unemployment, and a stagnant real estate market (Çolak, 2019, p. 393).

Following these developments, seeking to protect the global economic system, security nets were widened. Lawmakers in various countries increased the precautions

against another market crash, and international institutions resorted to increase resources (Kalkınma Bakanlığı 2012, 3-4). As the West began to give way to Asia as the financial center of the world, global power balances started to change. Representing approximately 80% of global GDP at the start of the 2000s, the developed countries had receded to 60% near the end of the decade (AllianzTrade 2021). Additionally, other important post-recession events (which this paper will cover more extensively below) both increased global risk and led to the world's economies replace their free-market focused liberal policies with a period of return to more conservative tendencies in the aftermath of 2008. Thus, global trade policies changed, paving the way for the trade wars that would take place on a stage that stretches from the USA to China (Şanlı and Ateş 2020, 75-82).

The 2010s were a period where the conditions for a return to the “cold war” began to slowly rear. The societal incidents, technological advancements, and political turbulence of this period triggered pains of transformation, and enough milestone events to shape the coming years. In December 2010, the Tunisian police confiscated a hand cart that belonged to a young man for vending without a license, after which the young man self-immolated in protest. This sparked a wave of uprisings throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa, in response to poverty and oppressive regimes in the Arab world. Starting in Tunisia and spreading to Bahrain, Yemen, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, and was called the “Arab Spring” or the “Arab Awakening”. The rebellions in Libya, Yemen, and Syria would later give way to years of bloody civil wars, ushering in the “Arab Winter”. The protests that started in March 2011 in Syria quickly evolved into armed conflict, plunging the country into a chaos that would

continue for years to come, making it one of the bloodiest stops of the wave of uprisings in the Arab world. The Syrian civil war would grow as the US, Russia, Turkey, Iran, the UK, France, Saudi Arabia, and Israel began to participate, leading to the deaths of 600 thousand people, the forced relocation of 6.1 million Syrian people within the country, and 5.7 million Syrians abandoning the country entirely, causing a huge immigration wave (Kaygusuz, 2019).

The 2010s was a period where global terrorism pervaded from Asian to Africa to the Middle East to Europe, becoming an international concern. Some of these sub-state groups, such as the ISIL/Daesh, became almost more powerful than countries like Iraq and Syria, with their economies, the extent of damage they caused, and the regions they occupied. One of these groups was Al-Qaeda, whose leader Osama Bin Laden was killed in 2011, followed by the founder and leader of ISIL, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi in 2019. However, the period is still remembered for the terror attacks that took place in cities like Boston (2013), San Bernardino (2015) and Orlando (2016) in the USA, Paris (2015) and Nice (2016) in France, Berlin (2016) in Germany, Brussels (2016) in Belgium, and Istanbul (2016), Ankara (2016), and Diyarbakır (2016) in Turkey (NTV 2019).

The relocation of approximately 60 million people, from Syria to Europe, from Myanmar to Asia, and from Latin America to the US, became the largest wave of migration since the WWII, triggering a migrant crisis and especially affecting European politics. Some European states began building barbed wire border barriers, while the US, a country of immigrants, chose to build a wall—which became one of

President Donald Trump's main platforms during his election campaign in 2016 to succeed Barack Obama. In the five-year period between 2014-2019 alone, 33 thousand 686 refugees lost their lives, including children, with more than half of these deaths happening on the Mediterranean Sea refugee route (Kaygusuz, 2019). The instability, and the sociological and economic problems that the influx of migrants caused in the countries they reached triggered a wave of ultranationalism, creating animosity towards refugees, foreigners, and Islam, leading to political polarization (NTV 2019).

The second decade of the 21st century was a period where discriminatory politicians, populists, chauvinists, and authoritarian leaders rose to prominence by taking advantage of the polarized and nationalist atmosphere of the era (NTV 2019). Winning the 2016 presidential elections in November of that year, Donald Trump caused a stir globally. During his four-year term in office, he caused controversy with his unpredictable outbursts, his constant power struggle with the US political establishment, and his stance against "political correctness". He also pulled the US from many international agreements and scrutinized the relationship between NATO, Europe, and the USA, causing important changes in American foreign policy (Kaygusuz, 2019).

Though positive economic figures and a decrease in unemployment during his term looked good for his presidency, the global pandemic, which started in early 2020 and affected the whole world, plunged the US economy into a recession. This, coupled with Trump's failure to sufficiently address the pandemic resulted in his defeat against

Joe Biden, who had proven a more moderate and reassuring figure during the 2020 election cycle.

Another notable political development of the decade was, without a doubt, the UK's decision to leave the EU. During the UK EU membership referendum process in 2016, the politicians and the NGOs coined the word "Brexit", a portmanteau of the first two letters of "Britain" and the word "exit". The referendum surprisingly resulted in the British electorate voting to leave the EU. The vote thrust the UK into deep political chaos, leading to the resignations of David Cameron, as well as his successor, Theresa May, as Prime Minister. This led to a period of speculation in the global press regarding whether the EU would completely disband or if Brexit would cause back-to-back independence referendums across Europe (Kaygusuz, 2019).

The issue of climate change initially emerged in the late 1980s, and later became a major issue that left its mark on the 2010s and after. The melting ice caps, coupled deaths caused by floods and record temperatures all around the world, caused the term "climate change" to give way to the "climate crisis". Signed in 2016 by a group of countries that included Turkey, the Paris Climate Accords established global targets to combat the climate crisis. Although the US withdrew from the agreement during the Trump administration, it later rejoined immediately after Joe Biden's election with an apology (Kaygusuz, 2019).

The 2010s saw the unstoppable rise of technology in all fields, from health to education, and from politics to economics. This led to many rapid changes simultaneously entering people's daily lives. Popular social media platforms that were

founded in the 2000s, such as Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005), Twitter (2006), and WhatsApp (2009) were joined in the 2010s by newer platforms like Instagram (2010), Snapchat (2011), WeChat (2011), Tumblr (2013), and TikTok (2016) (Keskin, 2018). This allowed information and thoughts to begin circulating of these platforms with unprecedented rapidity. Although this provided some advantages with their increasingly varied functionalities, it also put user data in the crosshairs of commercial and political interest groups, bringing concepts like “post-truth” and “fake news” into our lives which these platforms dominated, ushering in a world where people began to easily believe untrue information, and establishing the universal truth and distinguishing facts from fiction became difficult. After 2010, the emergence or development of concepts like “artificial intelligence”, “augmented reality (AR)”, “robotics”, “the Internet of Things (IoT)”, “the blockchain”, and “metaverse” opened new doors for a digitized world that was rapidly turning into an empire of data. Money was also affected by these developments with the creation of “cryptocurrencies”, the first transaction of which happened in 2010 with the payment for a pizza made with Bitcoin, the most known cryptocurrency. Multiplying day by day, these entities are thought by some experts to be permanently changing the way we understand and interact with money. Other experts, however, argue that speculative assets not yet accepted by any states will inevitably lead to a dangerous bubble, and that their value is only temporary (www.euronews.com.tr 2021).

At the end of the 2010s, the world entered 2020 with a wholly unexpected “black swan” that turned all analysis, positive expectations, and plans completely meaningless. The world was bucking its commercially conservative inclinations

thanks to developments regarding the relations between the US and China, and the Brexit process had begun to find clarity. While the world had thought itself free of these two risk factors, this black swan event destroyed all priorities (KPMG 2020). Breaking out in December 2019 in the Chinese city of Wuhan, the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) quickly spread to the whole world as of January 2020, and was declared on March 11th, 2020, by the World Health Organization (WHO) a pandemic. COVID-19 caused political, economic, social, and psychological effects at a global scale, and still continues to do so.

According to the World Health Organization's data, the disease has caused 6,015,703 deaths globally, as of March 5th, 2022 (Wikipedia 2020).

Whether industrialized or developing, all countries ended up having to take preventive measures to combat the pandemic. Many countries closed their borders, transitioned to remote schooling, imposed curfews and lockdowns, restricted touristic activities, paused sports and artistic events, issued social distancing rules, and started quarantines. These were serious measures, from shuttering businesses to social isolation, lockdowns, and travel bans. The circumstances affected sectors like medical supply manufacturing and e-commerce relatively positively, while the service sector branches like tourism, food/drinks, and transportation took the brunt of the pandemic, in addition to many interrelated sectors like finance/banking, industry, health, airlines, oil, agriculture, energy, and commerce, which were negatively affected and faced important problems (Öner, 2021, pp. 43-45).

Numerous sectors stopped production, factories shut down, private sector services could not be provided, and a large population who worked in these sectors were fired. This brought both the production and consumption fields of the economy to the brink of depletion (Bedir, 2021, p. 15). Another problem brought on by COVID-19 that governments had to shoulder was financial. Public expenditure rose, especially health expenditure, leading governments to overspend their budgets treating the afflicted and bailing out companies. This increased public deficit, causing countries to resort to monetary policies (Khair, 2021, p. 47).

While countries less economically fragile could bring things under control easier, countries that were already fragile before the pandemic had a harder time or even failed keeping things under control (Algan, 2022, p. 6). The discovery of the vaccine and its proliferation achieved great lengths with regard to ending the pandemic. Still, 2020 saw a 3.5% financial contraction in the US, and 6.6% in the Eurozone. In Europe, the countries that were affected the most by the pandemic were Spain, followed by England, where the service sector was the backbone of its economy, of which it comprised 80%. Counting among developing countries, South Africa in 2020 experienced its sharpest financial contraction in a century. India and Russia also experienced contraction, while Turkey and China were notable for their economic growth (Öner, 2021, pp. 57-58). Considering that, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), between 5-25 million people would lose their jobs globally (ILO, 2020), and, according to UNESCO, 1.5 billion students would have to pause their education (UNESCO, 2020),(Küçüköğlu, 2021, p. 1272) the

pandemic has clearly been devastating, not only at the governmental, commercial, and institutional level, but at the individual level as well (Yaşar, 2021, pp. 8-9).

After 2021, though economies have appeared to be shedding the deep influence of the pandemic, the experts have stated that this global recession has been the greatest depression since the World Wars, and, according to economists, has surpassed the 2008 financial crisis in scope and effect, and its effects will probably last for a very long time (Friedman, 2020, pp. 69-70).

Adding to the already heavy losses of the pandemic, the first months of 2022 shocked the world with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The invasion launched with a military operation on February 24th, 2022, with Russian president Vladimir Putin's stated goal of "*the demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine*". Missile attacks on certain locations in Ukraine, including some near its capital Kiev, followed soon after. Although the invasion was internationally widely condemned, resulting in heavy sanctions on Russia from the West—chiefly from the US and the EU—involving its financial market, and its sectors like energy, transportation, technology, and sports (www.dw.com.tr 2022) there have not yet been any results. Reports state that this is the largest conventional war operation since the Second World War (Wikipedia 2022). Shaking the international establishment and causing the forced relocation of over 2 million civilians from Ukraine, because this war is still ongoing as of the writing of this dissertation, its ultimate results and effects could not be featured here.

While the world experienced the 2010s intensely, and entered the 2020s under such severe circumstances, **Turkey**, within the global conjuncture, managed to

recover from the 2001 financial crisis by 2010 and even displayed growth figures that were comparative to China. However, the 2010s, especially the latter half, would be a tumultuous period, especially economically (SözcüGazetesi 2019). The financial ease caused by the copious liquidity that went into developing countries after 2010 affected Turkey as well (Çiçen, 2018, p. 80); with investments moving to sectors with low productivity, replacing the industrial sector with others like construction, commerce, and transportation. This led to large increases in these sectors' added values, creating a lively economy which continued through the first half of the 2010s (Çolak, 2019, p. 23).

In **2010**, the construction sector saw 24% annual growth, in addition to a real economic growth of 9.2%, in addition to the national income rising by \$2354 in a single year (SözcüGazetesi 2019), Istanbul became a “European Capital of Culture”. As part of this program which started in 1985, certain cities are designated European Capitals of Culture each year by the EU wherein they organize a series of cultural events. It has also provided financial support since the year 2000. Istanbul shared the designation in 2010 with Essen in Germany, and Pécs in Hungary (Cengizkan, 2009).

On May 22nd, during the 2010 CHP Ordinary Convention, the party's Istanbul MP Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, was elected the party chairman as the only candidate (Özalp, 2018, p. 95).

In the **2011** general elections, the Recep Tayyip Erdoğan-led AKP was reelected with a very high, 49.9% share of the votes, once again forming a single-party government, followed by CHP who received the 25.9% of the votes

(www.haberler.com 2011). Because of the civil war that broke out in Syria in March 2011, Turkey began to apply an “open door policy” for Syrian refugees, starting in April. Despite Turkey having initially only agreed to accepting 100 thousand Syrian migrants, the actual figure ended up being more than 30 times higher. According to the data provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the figure had reached approximately 3.6 million refugees as of November 2021, after which Turkey was declared by the EU to be the country that has accepted the highest number of immigrants in the world (Eğilmez, 2021, p. 213). Elsewhere, the 604 people who lost their lives in the 7.1 magnitude earthquake in Van on October 23rd shook the country to its core. Closing out 2011 with a growth rate of 8.8% as the country with the second most rapid growth after China and rising to the 17th place on a ranking of the largest economies in the world (Çulak, 2021, pp. 23-24) Turkey began considering megaprojects.

In **2012**, despite breaking a Republican-period record in exports, Turkey entered financial contraction, ending the year at a 2.2% growth rate. Behind this loss of momentum was the country distancing itself from its EU objectives, as well as a slowdown in institutional reforms, and the increase in political tensions (Kılıç, 2021, p. 43). Beginning with the 2010s, megaprojects began to occupy a larger part of the public consciousness, with some of these projects starting their activities. The Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, the Istanbul-İzmir Motorway, the Channel Istanbul Project, the 3rd Istanbul Airport, the Marmaray, the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, and the Eurasia Tunnel are some of these megaprojects (TRT 2015).

The year **2013** was tainted by the killing of 53 people as a result of the explosion of two bomb-carrying vehicles in the Reyhanlı district in Hatay on May 11th. Later, starting on May 27th in Istanbul and later spreading across the country, the “Gezi Park Protests” caused great chaos, causing important economic losses. Located in Beyoğlu and allocated to the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, the AKP government’s plans to rebuild the Ottoman-era Taksim Military Barracks and turn the Gezi Park into a mall without a development permit as part of the “Taksim Pedestrianization Project” was widely protested. Initially meant to stop the construction efforts, these quickly turned into anti-government protests. The then-Prime Minister Erdoğan’s insistent declarations about the construction led to the protests quickly spreading to Ankara, followed by other cities and provinces like İzmir, particularly spurred on through social media (Wikipedia 2013). The protests lasted approximately 20 days and were attended by nearly 4 million people. 8 people, one of whom was a police officer, lost their lives; over 10 thousand were injured, many people arrested, hundreds of public structures, vehicles and businesses were destroyed to the point of becoming unusable. Making a mark on Turkey’s recent history, the Gezi Park protests (BBC 2021) ‘coincided with the American Federal Reserve System’s (FED) decision on May 22nd to end the period of quantitative easing to counter the effects of the 2008 financial crisis. Coupled with this decision’s negative effects on the financial markets, the Gezi Park protests’ direct cost to the country, while impossible to pinpoint exactly, has been stated by economists to be billions of dollars (Eğilmez, 2013). Ranging between $\square$ 1.70-1.80 at the start of the year, the exchange rate for a dollar peaked on August 23rd with $\square$ 2, which Recep

Tayyip Erdoğan associated with the Gezi Park protests, asserting that the protests were started by the “interest rate lobby” that is targeting the Turkish economy (Kızılkaya & Bakiler, 2021). Having had dropped to 6.13% before the protests, the inflation figures jumped to 8.88% in the following three months, while the unemployment figures, which had previously remained at 9%, jumped to double figures within a year. This influenced foreign investors as well; during the one-month period when the protests took place, the country saw \$8 billion in foreign capital outflow (Meran, 2021, pp. 124-125). . The final month of the year witnessed a corruption scandal. During what became known as the “17-25 December Corruption and Bribery Operation”, sons of ministers within the AKP government (the Ministers of the Interior, the Minister of Economy, and the Minister of Environment and Urban Planning), as well as bureaucrats, and businesspeople with ties to the party were subjected to the investigation, which lead to a massive reshuffle and restructuring within the cabinet, as well as the police and the judiciary. The AKP administration argued that the operation had been launched by prosecutors and police officers who are members of the Fethullah Gülen movement and was a coup attempt against the administration. This only deepened the conflict between AKP and Gülen (www.sway.office.com 2010).

Entering **2014** still under the effects of the 17-25 December Operation, the country then witnessed another scandal. Known as the “MIT Trucks Scandal”, it involved several trucks that were determined to have belonged to the *Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı* (MIT, lit. the National Intelligence Organization) and carried munitions to Syria being stopped on January 19th in Hatay by the police under orders from the

prosecutor's office. While it was argued that the trucks carried munitions for illegal Jihadist organizations in Syria, the administration denied these arguments, stating that the trucks were simply transporting aid material to Turkmen population in Syria. The Prime Minister Erdoğan once again blamed the Fetullah Gülen movement, which he called the "parallel state structure" (BBC 2015). In the elections held on March 30th, AKP received the 43.16% of the votes, followed by CHP with 26.61%. The Presidential elections on August 10th, 2014 were the first public presidential elections in the political history of the Republic of Turkey, and the result of the 2007 constitutional referendum. With 51.79% of the votes, AKP leader and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became the 12th president of Turkey (Wikipedia 2014). His successor as the AKP leader and Prime Minister was the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu. A year after the 17-25 December events, on December 14th, 2014, a number of operations took place targeting media organizations that were allegedly part of the Gülen movement. Many people were arrested, which drew the ire of both the opposition parties and the US and the EU. All this political turbulence in 2013-2014 had harsh consequences for the markets the exchange rate for the USD climbing to ₺2.37 on December 17th, 2014 (SözcüGazetesi 2019). Marking 2014 as a year where the economy began raising red flags, with initial disturbances regarding the country's credit score (Kızılkaya & Bakiler, 2021).

2015 began on a demoralizing note with the suicide bomber attack at a police station in Sultanahmet, Istanbul on January 6th. The president Erdoğan, speaking during his trip to Gaziantep on March 7th, mentioned transitioning Turkey's parliamentary system into a presidential system, stating a need for a new constitution

(Özalp, 2018, p. 100). The increasing political tensions before and after the general elections on June 7th, 2015, negatively affected the markets. Impacted by the bomb attack in Diyarbakır in June 5th, the elections that took place two days later cost AKP their majority in the parliament for the first time since 2002, opening the subject of the formation of the first coalition government in Turkey in many years. However, the failure to form a coalition with any of the parties, the President Erdoğan decided to hold early elections on November 1st, 2015. During the five-month period between the two elections, terror attacks taking place in Şanlıurfa/Suruç (July 20th), Şanlıurfa/Ceylanpınar'da (July 22th), Hakkari/Dağlica (September 6th) and Ankara (October 10th) shook the country, with the resulting market uncertainty and security concerns causing the USD exchange rate to reach 3 for the first time in August 2015 (Kızılkaya & Bakiler, 2021). The do-over elections on November 1st resulted in AKP receiving 49.5% of the votes, which allowed them to form a single-party government once again, followed by CHP with 25.32% (Özalp, 2018, p. 101). Days before the 64th Parliament of Turkey would receive a vote of confidence at the Grand Assembly, on November 24th, the Turkish Air Force (THK) shot down a plane belonging to the Russian Air Force for violating the Turkish borders, causing the Russian President Vladimir Putin to state that they were “stabbed in the back”. The formerly close relationship between Turkey and Russia gave way to a months-long crisis. Russia stated that they’ and cut all military communications with Turkey and mobilized to implement sanctions such as prohibiting the export of certain foods, restrictions on Turkish companies, stopping Turkish tourism, cancelling certain flights, the end of visa-free travel from Turkey to Russia, and more restrictive conditions by the customs

authorities for trucks and ships from Turkey. The tensions began to ease about 7 months after an apology letter from Turkey and a promise to help the families of the dead pilots, starting a normalization process between Turkey and Russia (BBC 2015).

2016 was marred by even more terror events, the most notable among which was a coup attempt. The suicide attack on the Sultanahmet Square on January 12th was followed by back-to-back terror attacks, in Ankara (February 17th and March 13th), Beyoğlu, Istanbul (March 19th), Gaziantep (May 1st), Diyarbakır (May 12th), Hakkari (May 13th), Van (May 24th), Vezneciler, Istanbul (June 7th), and the Atatürk Airport in Istanbul (June 28th) cost hundreds of lives, followed by the coup attempt on July 15th, which was a major turning point for Turkey. Taking place at 22:00 on the night of July 15th, the attempt started when a group of Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) soldiers affiliated with the Fethullah Gülen Movement blocked the Bosphorus Bridge with tanks. At 00:26, July 16th, the president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's speech through social media broadcast on a television channel rallying the people to public squares ended up being effective, with people congregating on bridges, streets, and squares to block the passage of tanks, and armed vehicles. The public, along with soldiers who opposed the coup, crucially resisted the coup attempt, neutralizing the plotters in the early hours of the morning (Hearst, 2016, p. 265). Following this painful event, in which 251 people were killed, on July 20th, 2016, a State of Emergency (Olağanüstü Hal, or OHAL) was declared, which would be extended by three-month periods a total of seven times, before ending on July 19th, 2018. After the coup attempt, comprehensive operations involving the media took place as part of the FETÖ investigations, leading to the arrests of many members of the press. Additionally, over

130 thousand civil servants were fired, numerous broadcasting, publishing, educational organizations, as well as foundations and associations were shut down, and legal proceedings were started on over 400 thousand people (Özalp, 2018, pp. 103-104). Meanwhile more terror attacks occurred in Gaziantep (August 20th), Şırnak (August 26th), Beşiktaş, Istanbul (December 10th), Kayseri (17th December), taking many lives, followed by the Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov's murder during an exhibition gala in Ankara on December 19th. Turkey occupied Syria to establish border security with a military operation named Operation Euphrates Shield. Launching on August 24th, the operation took 7 months. Meanwhile on December 9th, American priest Andrew Brunson was arrested on charges of espionage as part of the July 15th investigations. This would plant the seeds of the diplomatic crisis that would soon start between the two countries. 2016 was a hard year for Turkey, and its economy also suffered—political hazards like the terror attacks, the coup attempt, and the OHAL period caused sharp increases in exchange rates, economic contraction, a decreasing credit score, the withdrawal of foreign capital, and the rise of unemployment. As the exchange rates rose, the USD ended 2016 at a value of $\square 3.5$, while Turkish economy's growth figure remained 2.9 (KPMG 2017).

The first day of **2017** came with the shocking news of a terror attack on a night club in Istanbul, resulting in thirty-nine dead and seventy-one injured. On April 16th, the referendum to change the Turkish constitution took place. The proposed 18 amendments to the Turkish constitution included abolishing the parliamentary system and the office of the Prime Minister and transitioning to a presidential system, increasing the number of Parliament members from 550 to 600, and structural changes

to the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSYK), were accepted with 51.4% of the electorate voting “Yes”, while “No” remained at 48.6%. Thus, supported by the AKP and MHP, the transition into the Executive Presidential System would swiftly begin. After the referendum, concerns were raised about the possible loss of the culture of social compromise, due to the referendum having very close results and the government ignoring the “No” votes even on a when it’s regarding a sensitive subject like constitutional changes (Eğilmez, 2021, p. 206). During the Trump-Erdoğan meeting in Washington DC on May 16th, the US request to release Father Brunson who had been arrested in the December of the previous year, was a major topic. On June 15th, the CHP chairman Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu began his “March for Justice” to protest the arrest of CHP MP Enis Berberoğlu as part of the MIT trucks investigation. The March started in Ankara and ended at Maltepe, Istanbul, where Berberoğlu was imprisoned. The 25-day march ended on July 9th with a rally in Maltepe (BBC 2020).

Leaving MHP in 2016, MP Meral Akşener established the “İYİ Parti” on October 25th, 2017. Although the growth figures were somewhat higher in 2017 at 7.4%, the ongoing loss of momentum that started in 2012 continued. Consistently effective and co-supporting until 2017, the government’s fiscal and monetary policies began to lose their grip—the fiscal policy aimed to grow the economy, while the monetary policy aimed to fight inflation, and the resulting contradictory policies led to higher figures in both economic growth and the inflation, causing unemployment remain at double digits (Eğilmez, 2021, p. 210).

On 20 January **2018**, the Armed Forces went back into Syria, for the second time after 2016, as part of Operation Olive Branch. The then Prime Minister Binali Yıldırım stated that Turkey's objective was to establish a buffer zone that stretches 30 km into the Syrian border. The operation ended in March 24 (BBC 2019).

Transitioning from the parliamentary system to a presidential one after the 2017 referendum, Turkey held the Presidential and General Elections on June 24, 2018. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected the 13th President of Turkey with 52.5% of the votes, making him the first leader of the “executive presidential system”. Erdoğan's biggest competitor, CHP's presidential candidate Muharrem İnce received 30.6% of the votes. In the parliamentary elections, the *Cumhur İttifakı* (lit. the People's Alliance), consisting of AKP and MHP, won the majority vote with 53.6%, followed by the *Millet İttifakı* (lit. the Nation Alliance), which comprises CHP, İYİ Parti, and Saadet Partisi, with 34% of the votes (BBC 2018).

After the transition to the presidential system, Berat Albayrak, who has been married to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's daughter Esra since 2004 and had served as the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources between 2015-2018, was appointed the new Minister of Treasury and Finance. The decision was met by experts with concern about the health of the Turkish economy, and the independence of the Central Bank, and criticized by foreign investors and experts (BBC 2020). Turkey's requests for the US to extradite Fetullah Gülen, who had become the lead suspect in the July 15 coup attempt, would be left unanswered, resulting in tensions between the two countries, which would only increase with the USA's strong response to the arrest of and the

espionage charges against American priest Andrew Brunson in December 2016 in İzmir, culminating in a crisis that put its stamp on the year 2018. The US stated that Turkey would face sanctions unless Brunson were released. The domestic political developments, adding to the diplomatic tensions with the US, and the uncertainty regarding the war in the Middle East paved the way for severe economic conditions in Turkey, with the Turkish lira experiencing one of the largest devaluations in its history. The USD exchange rate, valued at ₺5 at the start of August, spiked to ₺6.5 in a single week. 2018. The inflation rose from 10.35% in January to 25.52% in October, and unemployment reached its highest in the last 15 years (Kılıç, 2021, p. 44). Brunson's release in October 2018 and a return to rational economic policies lowered the USD exchange rate back to the ₺5 marker, and it ended 2018 at ₺5.28. However, the economic growth remained at 2.6%.

In **2019**, the general elections on March 31 caused surprising developments. Though AKP's People's Alliance with MHP once again won the majority vote with 51.6%, the Party's municipal election results saw a decline, with the number of AKP mayors dropping from 48 to 40, marking the biggest mayoral loss for the party. CHP and İYİ Parti's Nation Alliance saw an increase in their share of votes at 37.6, in addition to defeating the AKP incumbents in the mayoral elections in metropolitan areas including the Turkish capital Ankara, and Istanbul—the largest city, as well as İzmir, Adana, Antalya and Mersin. In Istanbul, where the alliances clashed, a close competition between AKP's Binali Yıldırım and CHP's Ekrem İmamoğlu. When it was announced that İmamoğlu had won, AKP and MHP's objections led to the cancellation of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality mayoral elections, with a

repeat election on June 23. The repeat election resulted in Ekrem İmamoğlu coming in first once again, this time with 54.21% of the vote, followed by Binali Yıldırım at 44.99% (Sayın, 2019), (Wikipedia 2019). . The local elections and the do-over in Istanbul reflected in the markets as well: already feeling the tangible effects of the global trade wars, the Turkish lira became sharply devalued against the US Dollar, with the exchange rate reaching ₺6.24 on May 9, later closing the year below the ₺6 marker and with a growth rate of 0.9%.

2020, as the first year of the new decade, turned out to be an unexpected “black swan”, trumping all expectations and predictions and putting the world face-to-face with a new global crisis. First breaking out in the Chinese city of Wuhan before spreading to the whole world, the COVID-19 pandemic first spread to Turkey in March, with the first case announced by the Ministry of Health on March 11, immediately followed by the transition to remote learning in schools on March 12. The pandemic caused many businesses, especially ones in the service sector, to shutter—such as restaurants, malls, museums, hotels, sports venues, etc.—on top of lockdowns and curfews, travel restrictions, and event cancellations. The resulting simultaneous decline in both supply and demand, as well as the loss of production brought economic activity to a near complete halt (Elyan, 2021, pp. 31-32).

Severely effecting the world, the pandemic also caused a great loss of momentum for Turkish economy. The loss of momentum had actually begun in 2019. Built upon 2018’s bad legacy, as well as geopolitical tensions, and changes in Global Risks Perception (KPMG 2020) 2019 brought simultaneous high inflation, and

financial contraction to Turkey, leading to slumpflation. Though there was some recovery during the first quarter of 2020, another wave of slumpflation that followed the pandemic proved devastating (Eğilmez, 2021). The preventative measures against the spread of the pandemic also brought economic problems, creating a domino effect, and creating a global atmosphere of uncertainty. Countries that direct the global economy, including Turkey, resorted to interest rate cuts, and monetary expansion policies to provide liquidity support for the markets. In this context, Turkey introduced the “Economic Stability Shield Program”, encompassing stimulus packages that added up to 500 billion liras, announced on March 17, March 31, and April 17, to limit the COVID-19 pandemic’s economic and financial impact (Küçükoğlu, 2021). On November 6, the US Dollar reached ₺8.58, after which Berat Albayrak, the Minister of Treasury and Finance, resigned from his position on November 8, followed by the Governor of the Turkish Central Bank, who was sacked on November 30. The Turkish economy entered 2021 with low economic growth but high unemployment, risk premiums and exchange rates (Eğilmez, 2021). President Erdoğan’s emphasis on a “new era in economy” lowered the USD/TL exchange rate to below ₺7.5 at the end of 2020, and the economic growth rate was 1.8%.

Following 2020, where all expectations came undone like a jigsaw puzzle, the year **2021**, despite improving expectations on the heels of the news about a vaccine against the virus, brought permanent paradigm shifts. So much so that The Economist Group’s Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), in their 35th issue from 2021, titled “The World in 2021”, stated that according to their comprehensive analysis of countries, none of the world’s great economic powers would rank among the top 10 countries

with the most economic growth. Turkey also had a turbulent 2020, caused by the pandemic as well as changes in its geopolitical and domestic equilibria. Its credit growth policy, however, made it the only country other than China to end the year with economic growth (KPMG 2021). While expectations improved in parallel with the rapid advancements in the vaccination process, the Central Bank's governor being replaced four times in the last 20 months caused the markets to respond harshly, causing the USD to rise above ₺8. Although Turkey maintained its monetary tightening policy until September, the Central Bank's decision to cut credit rates triggered a historical spike in the USD exchange rates, skyrocketing from ₺8 to ₺18 in three months between September and December. New policies were enacted accordingly in late December, attempting to balance the exchange rates around ₺13.5-14.

5.1.2. Developments in the Art Market and The Current State of Collectorship

The second decade of the 21st century came with groundbreaking events, and new concepts and sensibilities, which intrinsically affected the art market and its actors. Having recovered from the 2001 financial crisis and experienced the 2008 global recession, Turkey in the 2010s greatly affected its art market which could not isolate itself from the country's political, financial, and social developments. Although the market had a fairly positive spell, especially between 2010-2013, the changes in Turkey's political atmosphere, the numerous terror attacks, security concerns, the Gezi protests, and the coup attempt in addition to the currently ongoing global

pandemic had certain negative repercussions, and the resulting financial contraction and the devaluation of the Lira triggered a period of stagnation in the art market. After being designated a European Capital of Culture in 2010, Istanbul's art scene became especially dynamized. Its expansion towards contemporary art that began in the 2000s gained more momentum in the 2010s, increasing the number of young artists and galleries. Biennials took the center stage in the contemporary art platform, and curators' role became increasingly important. The energy that biennials brought to the scene invigorated the art fairs, and the inevitable influence of technology over the arts created new media, as well as experimental and multidisciplinary styles. New rhetoric, new realities, and new norms became part of the discourse, and collectors, young collectors in particular, who could keep up with the global art market, followed the international developments in arts, open to different platforms and mediums, and were highly educated, aware of their wants, more conscious, and more cautious, understood the importance of having a valuable collection and applied their vision onto their collections as well. The 2000s were a period where private collection owners found exposure by establishing their own museums and thus shouldered a public duty. This important period is considered to be the Golden Age of Private Museum. After 2010, however, we witness notable inclinations in the choices of location for private museums. The peripheral activities that emerged in the 2000s began to include private museums in the 2010s, thus launching a new trend of private art museums appearing all over the Anatolian geography.

5.1.2.1. Galleries, Exhibitions, and Institutions

In the 2000s, in addition to the rise of contemporary art, and the rapidly increasing number of new gallery spaces that supported contemporary art and young artists, the emergence of private museums created an effect where galleries and art institutions became an important part of society's developing cultural structure. In 2010, Istanbul was declared a European Capital of Culture along with Essen in Germany, and Pécs in Hungary. As the city's deep historical identity and rich cultural heritage became part of the international discourse, Istanbul became the host for numerous important cultural activities led by NGOs and local governments (Baycar, 2010, p. 725). Through these cultural activities, conferences, street events, and exhibitions with international participation, the public encountered culture and arts more frequently, broadening their interest in exhibitions, art galleries, artists, and museums, as well as advancing artistic dynamics (Sülün, 2018, pp. 147-148).

Initially clustering along the Nişantaşı-Beyoğlu line, after the terror attacks that took place in Beyoğlu in the 2010s, art galleries in Istanbul began to look for safer areas, settling in boroughs like Karaköy, Dolapdere, and Piyalepaşa. The galleries that moved into these areas turned them into new art stops. Increasing in number since the 2000s, new contemporary art galleries continued opening in the 2010s, rejuvenating the Turkish art market. The chief examples among these new additions are Merkür (2010), Soda Gallery (2010), Daire Sanat (2010), Arton (2011), Sanatorium (2011), Gallery Miz (2011), Gallery Pilot (2011), Mixer (2012), Gallery 77 (2012), Türker Art (2012), Muse Contemporary (2013), Versus Art Project (2015), Krank (2015), Sevil

Dolmacı Art Gallery (2015), The Pill (2016), Merdiven Art Space (2017), Pilevneli Dolapdere (2017), Labirent Sanat (2018), Gallery Muaf (2018), Ambidexter (2018), Martch Art Project (2018), Labirent Sanat (2018), Vision Art Platform (2019), Ferda Art Platform (2019), One Arc Gallery (2019), and Gallery Bosfor (2022), in addition to M1886 (2012) in Ankara'da and Folkart Gallery (2015) in İzmir. Contributing to the art scene since the 1990s, curatorship as a profession institutionalized at a global scale. So, in the 2010s, what could be called the second generation of curators including such figures as Ferhat Özgür, and Fırat Arapoğlu emerged, who were for the most part educated abroad and internationally active. Additionally, academics and art historians such as Levent Çalikoğlu, Marcus Graf, Fulya Erdemci, Ahu Antmen, Burcu Pelvanoğlu, Zeynep Yasa Yaman, Zeynep İnankur, and Semra Germener continued to do exhibitions as curators. As exhibition methods evolved over time to be more collective, based on collaboration, transparent, and flexible, curators began to adopt a model of interaction that included collective creation from interdisciplinary team with architects, sociologists, educators, and artists often joining in for the design process of exhibitions, public space projects, collection exhibitions, and museums (D. Yücel 2015, 216-217). While Marcus Graf's "Under Construction", and Fulya Erdemci's "İstanbul Pedestrian Exhibitions", both taking place in Istanbul in 2005-2007, and 2002-2005, respectively, were curated public space exhibitions, these public space activities continued in the 2010s with once again Fulya Erdemci's "Cappadox" in 2015-2019, in the Nevşehir/Cappadocia region, and "Red Bull Art Around", which had a series of curator teams, in 2015-2018 (Bayık, 2019, pp. 101-131). Impacted by the developments around the world as well as in their own countries, artists continued

to develop alternative means of expression and new rhetoric to reflect the period in which they live. In 2014, especially, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report stating that life would get increasingly harder in the future, with mass extinctions of many species, and great threats to public health, exhibitions and art projects that focused on ecology began to emerge (Demos, 2022, pp. 20-21). The subject of ecological struggle became a widely broached topic in Turkey, too, with many creations and exhibitions tackling concepts like the climate, sustainability, ecology, the nature-human relationship, the third nature, and the Anthropocene. The period saw numerous collective exhibitions, and as the public space became places of political experience that generate participation and interaction, exhibitions that criticize subjects like militarism, hierarchy, power, borders, and societal gender politics began to take place. Various artists' initiatives which had been forming since the 1990's, usually for a few consecutive exhibitions, became more systematic and lasting after 2000, and were actively present in the art scene. As part of the 2010 Istanbul Capital of Culture program, curator Beral Madra organized the "1st International Artists Initiatives Istanbul Meeting", bringing together 34 art initiatives such as Oda Project, Hafriyat, 5533, Apartman Project, Artık Mekan, Atıl Kunst, Daralan, Kurye, Masa Project, PİST, Nomad, Xurban Collective, BAS, Altı Aylık, and Galata Perform, all of which comprised artists who created political art, who displayed their recent creations (Saray, 2019, pp. 49-51). However, as Hafriyat disbanded in 2010, the Apartman Project left Istanbul in 2012 to continue their work in Berlin, and PİST took a break from their activities in 2013. With these developments, initiatives began to take a backseat in the art scene after 2015 (Erden,

2015, p. 241). Another development that put its stamp on this period was the emergence of “new media art”. Art’s experimentation with photography and television in the 1960s, followed by video and computers in the 1980s, and technology and internet in the 1990s gave way to new media which includes concepts like “internet art”, “virtual reality”, “robot technology”, “digital art”, “multimedia art”, and “algorithmic art” in the 2000s, bringing art and technology together (Çetin, 2018, pp. 17-24). With its multi-component hybrid nature, new media art was transformative for artists, leading to new masterpieces that used new technological potentials (Belgen, 2019, p. 209). The physical innovations brought on by the digital allowed artists to display their work on platforms like social media, virtual art galleries, and virtual museums—being able to reach a wide audience in the border-free exhibition spaces of these digital platforms (Keleş, 2021, pp. 41-59).

The world’s first virtual reality painting exhibition was titled the “World’s First Virtual Reality Painting Exhibition” and opened in 2015 in San Francisco. In 2018, Turkish new media artist Refik Anadol’s “WDCH Dreams (A Science Fiction Story About a Building That Can Memorize and Dream)” opened at the Los Angeles Walt Disney Concert Hall, exhibiting a data-based work built with the use of artificial intelligence algorithms (Filiz, 2019, pp. 63-65). Launching in 2011, Google’s massive art library, “Google Arts and Culture”, was an comprehensive digital venture for the arts, allowing free access to information about artists, artworks, and museums, as well as the possibility to digitally visit exhibitions in 3D. In this regard, digitalization, in a way, contributes to the democratization of arts by bringing new and effective methods for the production, and consumption of art, as well as art education (Aydoğan, 2021,

p. 103). Following COVID-19's worldwide spread in March 2020, the resulting lockdowns created shockwaves in the art market. Many galleries cancelled exhibitions, some shuttered, and some resorted to online sales. According to a study by the Comité Professionnel des Galeries d'Art, a committee that has represented art galleries in France for seventy-five years, 178 out of its 279 members envisaged having to shutter by the end of 2020, with a large portion of the galleries under the risk of closure being young galleries with insufficient finances to endure the pandemic. The French government and the National Contemporary Art Fund has pledged to allocate additional financial support for these galleries. (Seçkin, 2021)

According to data from Art Basel and the UBS Market Report, worldwide gallery sales dropped by 40% in the first half of 2020. As people spent more time at home because of the pandemic, their desire to beautify their homes and feel better directed them to artworks, leading to online art sales at an expanding volume (Seçkin 2021, 48). After the initial shock of the pandemic, galleries and institutions rapidly began to take action to reach art buyers via digital platforms. Thus, digitalization, advancing technologies, and the pandemic began to change the way artworks met their audience, as well as their audiences' purchasing habits. According to Art Basel's "The Art Market 2021" report, despite the decrease in general sales figures in the art world in 2020, online sales doubled, reaching a new record at \$12.4 billion—making it the first time that e-commerce would have a higher market share than conventional sales in the art market. As such, online artwork sales platforms such as Artnivo, Art50.net, Pave X Art, and Shopigo ART joined brick and mortar galleries to garner popularity in Turkey (Dimili, 2022, p. 26).

The rapidly digitalizing world of the 2010s also greeted the emergence of crypto art, which emerged following the development of blockchains like Bitcoin and Ethereum in 2014 (Wikipedia 2021). Swiftly spreading during the global pandemic, it brought with it record-breaking sales and million-dollar sales of “NFTs” (non-fungible tokens) into the art world which had been in a transformational and transitional period for a while (Dimili, 2021).

The most ground-breaking aspect of NFTs, which has been ostentatiously called a “Digital Renaissance” by some, was its introduction of “authentic ownership” which digital artworks lacked. It made keeping of unchangeable and unalterable records concerning the number of original editions of an artwork and those editions ownership possible by utilizing the blockchain of how many original copies of an artwork exist and who owns those copies possible. This new player in the art market ensured proprietary rights and proof of originality thanks to its permanent record in on the blockchain as well as by virtue of being a token that’s non-fungible, unlike cryptocurrencies (Özatay, 2021, pp. 20-21). As a decentralized movement that might affect the usual artist-gallery-collector dynamics, another important aspect of NFTs is the “Smart Contracts” that ensure that a certain portion (generally around 10%) of each secondary purchase of each artwork minted by an artist is automatically sent to the artist’s wallet, creating “copyright”. On a global scale, the crypto art market in the first half of 2021 only had a minor, \$2 million share in the \$66 billion art market. By September 2021, however, it had become a large industry with \$22 billion of sales. Turkish artist Refik Anadol’s piece titled *Machine Hallucinations - Nature Dreams AI Data Sculpture 2021 1/1*” was sold on the NFT platform OpenSea through Berlin

König Gallery to a collector nicknamed “mabu” for a sum of 300.69420 ETH, which at the time was worth roughly \$1.2 million. Afterwards, in January 2022, “Carny”, the first curated NFT platform in Turkey, organized an exhibition titled “*The Future Begins Today: Carny Genesis NFT Collection*” featuring NFTs from both galleries (Artsümer, with artist Onur Gülfidan, Pilevneli: with artists Ali Elmacı, and Mehmet Kazım, Sanatorium with Seren Şehitoğlu, Pilot Gallery with İrem Tok, M.K. Perker, Azra Tüzünoğlu, and Halil Altındere) and independent artists supported by Carny, such as Ayşegül Altınay, and Özgür Saçan (Kaprol, 2022, pp. 20-21).

As an important and contributive fixture of the Turkish art market, bank galleries maintained their presence in the contemporary art scene during this period as well. Vakıfbank, Akbank Sanat and Yapı Kredi Sanat, maintained their galleries, while Ziraat Bank’s Tünel (1999) and Kuşulu (2002) Art Galleries were joined by the “Çukurambar Art Gallery” in 2019. İşbank’s İş Sanat (2000) and Kibele Sanat (2001) Galleries were joined by the “Ankara Art Gallery” in 2019, meanwhile Garanti Bank’s Platform Garanti Contemporary Art Gallery (2001) was joined by the “SALT” exhibition and cultural institution in 2011 (Arslan, 2019, pp. 35-57). Again, in the 2010s, in parallel to an increased desire to be part of the contemporary art scene, rising awareness, and the expansion of the commercial art market (Paynter, 2015, p. 227) certain associations, independent entities, and art project platforms emerged. One of these, “SPOT Projects”, established in 2011, provides art connoisseurs who wish to closely follow the world of culture and arts with current programs involving tours of galleries, museums, and exhibitions, in addition to organizing seminars. The revenue they generate from their memberships then go into support for art activities

(www.spot-project.com n.d.). Founded on the same year, the “SAHA Association” aims to support the production and development environments of artists, curators and writers working in the visual arts field, in addition to increasing their interactions with international art institutions and networks (Saha, n.d.) Active since 2012, the ‘Mamut Art Project’, with its motto of “*accessible art*”, brings artists who are just starting out their careers together with collectors, curators, galleries, culture and art institutions, and art connoisseurs at the exhibitions they organize (Mamut Art Project n.d.).

“BASE” was established in 2017 with the expressed purpose of helping young talents be discovered by featuring new graduates of Fine Arts Faculties from around Turkey in their exhibitions, bringing them together with the public, the art market, the creative industries, and the media (www.base.ist 2022). Additionally, some non-profit institutions and entities, which label themselves as “institutions/centers for art” or “art spaces”—despite some of them being part of a larger art museum, have contributed to the enrichment of the art scene of this period. One of these entities is “Borusan Contemporary”. Founded in 2011 as a response to the articulation of new media in the art scene after 2000, Borusan Contemporary shares a building with the Borusan Contemporary Art Collection, with both located in the Haunted Mansion, an important and historical building in Rumelihisarı from the 1910s, which has also been the headquarters of Borusan Holding since 2007. The biggest identifying aspect of Borusan Contemporary is its focus on new media art, which features video, audio, light, software, and data technologies, and the artists who create using this medium, holding exhibitions and opening them to art connoisseurs on the weekends (www.borusancontemporary.com n.d.). Another is the “Bozlu Art Project”, founded in

2013 by Bozlu Holding, which is active in the fields of health and technology. The Bozlu Art Project aims to bring a new rhetoric to all elements of art, and to bring, through their exhibitions, a different, unusual interpretation to existing perspectives both artistically and regarding exhibition practices. The Bozlu Art Project works out of the Mongeri Building, a mansion built in the 1920s by Italian architect Giulio Mongeri. The exhibitions that are part of the project feature both important names from Turkish modern and contemporary art, and promising up and coming artists, thus presenting a wide historical perspective (Bozlu Art Project n.d.). A part of the Vehbi Koç Foundation, “ARTER”, brought thirty-five exhibitions at their initial location in İstiklal Avenue in Beyoğlu between 2010-2018. In 2019, it moved to a new, 18000 square meter ultra-modern building designed by the English firm Grimshaw Architecture, located in Dolapdere, Beyoğlu, which has become the new arts and cultural center of Istanbul. As a life and culture platform that largely features periodical exhibitions as well as various performances and activities, ARTER has amassed a collection of over 1300 pieces from about 400 artists, which it also features with non-collection pieces in different contexts, in addition to organizing solo and group exhibitions that are completely independent from the collection (www.arter.org n.d.). The Meymenet/Meymaret Han building from the 1910s, located on the İstiklal Avenue, which ARTER vacated in 2019, was replaced within the same year by another Vehbi Koç Foundation art space called “Meşher”, which means exhibition space in Ottoman Turkish. Meşher organizes comprehensive and multidisciplinary exhibitions, largely in-house, with content created in collaboration with both local and foreign institutions. As such, it aims to contribute to any such needs of the culture and

arts scene (www.mesher.org n.d.). Another non-profit exhibition space in Dolapdere is “Evliyagil Dolapdere”, which is one of the private museums this dissertation will closely examine in the coming sections. The space, founded in 2019, belongs to collector Sarp Evliyagil, who also founded the Müze Evliyagil in 2016 in Ankara. The exhibition and project space comprises 130 square meters across two floors across. The institution aims to host solo and group exhibitions, featuring artists equally without distinction of whether they are senior or young or local or foreign, exhibiting their creations which may vary from painting, sculpture, photography, installation, to performance, or new media art (www.kolekta.com n.d.). With the 2000s, “peripheral” art activities, starting with biennials and art institutions, were joined in the 2010s by new art institutions and biennials. The most prominent institution among these is “CerModern”, which has been an important center for the Ankara art market since the day it was founded in 2010, with its open embrace of contemporary arts, a first in Ankara. The city had been trying for years to maintain its culture and arts activities through Republican era institutions, but the absence of any large capital groups that want to bring art to people like in Istanbul, as well as Ankara’s population of largely students and civil servants, as well as bureaucratic obstacles and insufficient budgets allotted to art institutions has left it in Istanbul’s shadow as a center of art. CerModern was conceived by the Foundation for Contemporary Arts (ÇAĞSAV): At a dinner organized in 1999 by the then-Assistant Governor for the Turkish Central Bank, Aydın Esen—a figure of great influence over the Central Bank’s contributions to the arts over the years—and which hosted academics, artists, businessmen, and collectors, it was unanimously decided that a “contemporary arts museum” be established.

Founded in 2000, the foundation spoke to the then-President Süleyman Demirel about restoring and transforming the Ankara *Cer Workshops* into a center for arts. In parallel to the long construction period, after negative responses from large private sector entities in Ankara, the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB) was somewhat forced to shoulder the administration of the institution, assuming the workshop buildings from the Ministry of Culture for 25 years under a cultural facility status (Rastgeldi, 2019, pp. 85-86). . Founded in 1926, the Cer Workshops was a railyard where wagons and locomotives would be brought for maintenance and service, in addition to being a switchyard and transfer yard. It was one of the most important industrial sites of Ankara, along with the Natural Gas and Electric plants, during the initial years of the Republic. Serving the railroad industry until 1995 as Cer Workshops, the building reopened as CerModern in 2010 after a long period of renovation to used it as a center for contemporary arts. It is home to a photography gallery, a museum store, a conference and multi-purpose hall, an art library, artist residences, a cafeteria, sculpture parking space, and a 4500 square meter single-piece exhibition space, the largest in Turkey, opening doors to its visitors across 11500 square meters of space (Eyce, 2011, pp. 83-85). With its exhibitions and activities, CerModern, aims to be a “living cultural center” by using contemporary resources for education and communication, bringing artworks to the masses, and motivating them to open room for art in their daily lives (www.cermodern.org n.d.).

After Ankara, İzmir assigned the historical French Consulate building for culture and arts related use for 20 years to Arkas Holding. Founded in 2011, the Arkas Center of Arts is a cultural institution that contributes to İzmir with thematic

exhibitions with selectinos from the Arkas Collection, as well as twice-annual collaborations with important museums and institutions worldwide. Additionally, it is the first center of arts where international artists' works have been exhibited (Arkas Sanat Merkezi n.d.), (Karahan, 2020). The coming sections of this dissertation will examine the three art institutions contributed to İzmir by Arkas Holding's third generation chairman Lucien Arkas, as part of the private museum ventures in Anatolia, in addition to reexamining the Arkas Center of Arts.

5.1.2.2. Biennials and Fairs

Founded in 1987 by İKSV, the Istanbul Biennial was held eleven times until the 2010s, bringing new trends in contemporary arts together once every two years and helping create an international cultural network between local and international art scenes, critics, curators, artists, and art connoisseurs. The 12th outing of the biennial was held in 2011. Having previously used the word "International" in its title, the Istanbul Biennial dropped it, having proved its adequacy regarding visibility and recognition (Bayık, 2019, p. 67). The globalization rhetoric that began in the 1990s brought variety to international art activities, exhibitions, festivals, and biennials, while institutions prepared to support this variety multiplied, the city turning into a consumer commodity in activities focusing on contemporary art, and the activities becoming a sales or marketing tool for this commodity. From the first generation of curators, and the general coordinator of the 1st and 2nd Istanbul Biennials, Beral Madra once stated that "culture tends to be used by politicians as an intermediary, by the private sector as a billboard, and by media as material for sensations." Himself a

biennial artist, Utku Varlık likened the biennial system to “a light board for the capitalist system”, underlining the instrumentalization of culture, and the transformation of the contemporary city space into artwork (Yardımcı, 2021, pp. 46-47).

Biennials were a finger on the world’s pulse, and coinciding with the War on Terror in the 2000s, both phenomena chaotically manifested themselves at the biennials, which then became a reflection of the fragmenting globalization (Stallabrass, 2021, p. 159). . In this context, Turkey also saw a decrease in public support for the arts, with narrower windows of discussion for public spaces. The biennials of the 2010s featured the themes of urban renewal and gentrification, struggle for the right to the city, vicinity, identity, societal conundrums, and immigration, merging art with aesthetic political acts, attempting to establish sensibilities that suggest a different perspective on globalization, scrutinize the relationships between art and capital, and art and politics, and underline the deformative effects of a globalized economy and neoliberal policies on nature, the city, and public spaces (Korkut, 2019, pp. 106-108). Known as the most political Istanbul Biennial to date, the 11th Istanbul Biennial in 2009 set the stage for the next one: the 12th Istanbul Biennial in 2011 used the preceding outing as an example for its organization chart and conceptual inclinations. “Untitled (the 12th Istanbul Biennial), 2011”, with its conceptual framework, did not mince its words politically. Conceptually inspired by Cuban artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres’s 5 different artworks from between 1988-1992, *Untitled (Abstraction)*, *Untitled (Ross)*, *Untitled (Passport)*, *Untitled (History)*, and *Untitled (Death by Gun)*, five discrete untitled exhibitions

were held (Özalp, 2018, p. 121). The biennial's venue was Beyoğlu Entrepôt No. 3 and 5, and its curators were Adriano Pedrosa and Jess Hofmann. The biennial utilized a museum-like approach to exhibition, aiming to direct the visitors to artworks featured within many white cubes, disconnecting itself from Istanbul's urban context.

Featuring 126 artists from 37 countries, it was one of the most crowded exhibitions of the biennial's history, also establishing a new record with 110,000 visitors. The 13th Istanbul Biennial, "Mom, Am I Barbarian?" chose Beyoğlu Entrepôt No. 3, the Galata Private Roman Elementary School, 5533—an art initiative in Unkapanı/İMÇ—, as well as SALT Beyoğlu and ARTER as its venues. It took place in 2013 and was curated by Fulya Erdemci, who approached the tension between arts and politics in the context of public art and public space, featuring not only envelope-pushing social and political titles but also issues regarding urban planning and urban architectural issues (Graf, 2015, p. 116). In a period impacted heavily by the social tension created by the Gezi protests and other events in May-June 2013, whether the Biennial had anything new to add to the public discourse became an issue of concern (Özalp, 2018, p. 124) and its cancellation of all its urban projects caused extensive debates in the field. Its new venues after the cancellation could be organized in a short period, despite this, the 13th Istanbul Biennial featured 98 artists and groups from 34 countries and broke its previous record with 337,429 visitors (Graf, 2015, p. 116). The conceptual framework for the 14th Biennial in 2015 was "SALTWATER: A Theory of Thought Forms" and was drafted by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev. It was based in the historical peninsula, in addition to peripheral venues like Rumelifeneri, the Riva Beach, and Büyükkada, making it the Biennial that stretched the widest across Istanbul (Özalp, 2018, p. 124),

It displayed a collective structure, featuring oceanographers, storytellers, mathematicians, and neuroscientists along with artists (Graf, 2015, p. 117). Biennial aimed to merge appearances with all natural lifeforms and call attention to its simultaneously nurturing and destructive nature, much the salt in its title (Özalp, 2018, p. 124). With over 80 participants and 1500 artworks, the Biennial once again broke its own record with 545,000 visitors (İKSV 2015). The 15th Istanbul Biennial was titled “A Good Neighbor”, and took place in 2017. It was held at the Galata Roman School, Istanbul Modern, the Pera Museum, Beyoğlu ARK Culture, as well as a Turkish bath, a workshop, and outdoor venues. It was curated by Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset. It examined different lifestyles in private space through the concept of neighborhood, asking questions and seeking answers about what constitutes a good neighbor, and hanging these at the city’s periphery on posters (Özalp, 2018, p. 126). . The 15th Istanbul Biennial had an audience of 440,000 viewing 150 artworks of 56 artists from 32 countries (YurtGazetesi 2017). The 16th Istanbul Biennial in 2019 was curated by Nicolas Bourriaud, with the theme of the “Seventh Continent”. It was held at the MSGÜ Istanbul Painting and Sculpture Museum, the Pera Museum, and five discrete places in Büyükdada. It exhibited contemporary artworks that tackled one of the most urgent matters of the current day, ecology, examining the natural and cultural waste caused by humankind through the lens of anthropology and archaeology. Named after the 3.4 million square meter wide island of human waste that weighs 7 tons, large enough to constitute a new continent in the middle of the ocean, nicknamed the Seventh Continent in popular science, the Biennial scrutinized the current state of the arts in the face of ecological disaster, with artists, anthropologists, thinkers, and

environmentalists. The Biennial displayed 220 pieces by 56 artists from 25 countries and was attended by 451,387 visitors (İKSV 2019). Although normally held bi-annually, hence the name biennial, the COVID-19 pandemic that broke out in 2020 caused the 17th Istanbul Biennial to be postponed for the first time in its history, from its original date of 2021 to the current planned date of September 2022. As of the writing of this dissertation, the biennial's conceptual framework has not yet been announced, though it was announced that it would be curated by Germany born Ute Meta Bauer, India born Aman Kanwar, and Australia born David The, and that a series of projects within the biennial's framework would be held until the biennial proper. The first statement from the curatorial team after the postponement was:

“Rather than being a great tree, laden with sweet, ripe fruit, this biennial seeks to learn from the birds' flight, from the once teeming seas, from the earth's slow chemistry of renewal and nourishment. There may be no great gathering, no orchestrated coming together in one time and place; instead, it might be a dispersal, an invisible fermentation. Its threads will be drawn together, but they will multiply and diverge, at different paces, crossing here and there but with no noisy culmination, no final knot” (İKSV 2021).

As we examined in the preceding sections of this dissertation, the 2000s saw the emergence of peripheral activities, activities outside Istanbul as the center of the art scene and artistic production. These were the Diyarbakır Center of Arts in 2002, the İzmir K2 Center for Contemporary Arts in 2003, the International Sinop Biennial / Sinopale in 2006 and 2008, and the Antakya Biennial in 2007 (Saray, 2019, p. 49). In

the 2010s, the Anatolian Biennials, the Biennale of Sinop and the Biennale of Çanakkale, continued, joined in 2010 by the Mardin Biennial

Done for the first time in 2006, the Sinopale was an important activity as the first alternative peripheral activity. The inclusion of the local population in the running of the activity and its approach that brought artists and the people closer, the Sinopale had a unique sensibility, and attempted to incentivize participation, collective thought, and collective action through contemporary art (Beldan, 2017, pp. 126-127). The third Sinopale took place in 2010, and the 8th in 2021. It boasts a wide operational team consisting of Turkish curators like Beral Madra and T. Melih Görgün as well as, Hande Sağlam, Işıl Önel, Aslı Çetinkaya, Rana Öztürk, Aslı Serbest and Mürteza Fidan, in addition to many foreign curators. The conceptual frameworks of the Biennale were “Hidden Memories, Lost Traces” (the 3rd Sinopale in 2010), “Wisdom of Shadow: Art in the Era of Corrupted Information” (the 4th Sinopale in 2012), “Clusters and Crystals: Observing at Point Zero” (the 5th Sinopale in 2014), “Transposition / Aktarım” (the 6th Sinopale in 2017), and “Here and Where - A Politics of Location” (the 7th Sinopale in 2019) (www.sinopale.org n.d.), (Bayık, 2019, pp. 68-83) The 8th Sinopale is expected to start on December 8, 2021 and run until June 2022. Differing greatly from the usual exhibition techniques of a biennial, the 8th Sinopale aims to bring artworks in its archive to its audience through “online” activities to reevaluate and reinterpret them through the lens of the current day circumstances as part of its conceptual framework of “Upcycling”. It aims to rebuild “the new normal” caused by the pandemic by getting to know the local through the global and vice versa, avoiding the current that objectifies ideas and consumes

artworks, and using part creations and experiences (Demirtaş, 2022, p. 10). Another Anatoliam biennial is the 1st International Antakya Biennial, the first of which was held in 2007 as a result of the Antakya Academy Association's efforts. Its theme was "Journey Through Time", and featured artists from Turkey and Bulgaria. The biennial aimed to show the world Antakya's invaluable heritage as an ages-old metropolis of cultural and artistic importance. The 2nd International Antakya Biennial titled "Thank You For Your Understanding" hosted over 40 Turkish and foreign artists in 2010, followed by the 3rd International Antakya Biennial in 2012 with over 25 Turkish and foreign artists. Its framework was "A Lone Human in A Multicultural World". However, the lack of local attendance, as well as the Syrian war and the increasing number of terror attacks in Turkey led to its discontinuation (Özalp, 2018, p. 130). Starting in 2008, the 1st International Çanakkale Biennial / "Transparent Illusions", aimed to make Çanakkale, a city with an important geographical position as the next bridge between Asia and Europe after Istanbul, as well as a rich cultural history, known in the international arts and culture scene and form interactions and intercommunication between it and the city's inhabitants (Bunulday 2021).

In 2010 the 2nd Çanakkale Biennial, "Fictional Realities, Transformations" was followed by the 3rd International Çanakkale Biennial "Fictions and Dissentions" in 2012, the 4th International Çanakkale Biennial "'Only the Dead Have Seen the End of War' – Plato" in 2014. The 5th International Çanakkale Biennial, "Anavatan- Homeland, Heimat, الوطن, الأم, Patria..." was planned to take place in 2016, examining the countless refugees trying to reach the four corners of the world because of the Syrian War under the theme of "migration". However, shortly before its opening, one

of the Biennial's curators, Beral Madra, was called a "coup supporter" by AKP Group Deputy Chairman and Çanakkale MP Bülent Turan, causing Beral Madra to resign from her position (Özalp, 2018, p. 130). The Çanakkale Biennial Initiative then announced that *"...In these circumstances where art is eclipsed by the developments that exclude it... we have lost our ability and enthusiasm to carry out the Biennale..."*, cancelling the event (www.canakkalebienali.com 2016). Afterwards, the 6th International Çanakkale Biennial opened with the theme "Before the Past - After the Future", and the 7th International Çanakkale Biennial took place in 2020-2021 with the title of "Constellation" (Güney, 2021, pp. 38-41).

. In 2010, the art scene had become revitalized by the announcement of Istanbul as a European Capital of Culture, while the Anatolian Biennials were joined by Mardin, despite its distance from the periphery, under the shadow of years of war. A center of cultural diversity with its centuries of historical accumulation and location on historical trade routes, Mardin is a prominent central city of the Southeastern Turkey. Aiming to energize its geography through art with artists, academics, students, and various cultural groups, to create new spaces for sharing, to bring new dimensions to the established definition of the "center", and to put Mardin in the front seat with a series of respected exhibitions (www.mardinbienali.org 2022) the 1st International Mardin Biennial was put together in 2010, titled "Abbaracadabra". The goal was to create a biennial that would find recognition in the international stage, relating to Mardin's simultaneously modern and historical texture through the form of "abbara", an architectural feature that's native to Mardin, found under houses and which allows for passage between streets (Bunulday 2021, 77). It was followed by the

2nd International Mardin Biennial “Double Take” in 2012, the 3rd International Mardin Biennial “Mythologies” in 2015, and the 4th International Mardin Biennial “Beyond Words” in 2018. The 5th International Mardin Biennial, originally planned to take place in 2020 was postponed on account of the COVID-19 global pandemic, first to 2021, and then, finally, to May 20, 2022. The Biennial’s Indian curator Adwait Singh stated: “...*Just like grass that returns with spring, we will resurface more vibrant and energized than ever. For now, this biennial is on a slow simmer*” (www.kulturservisi.com 2020). In addition to all of these, art fairs began to become a global phenomenon and an increasingly important platform for the art market. According to ARTnews, the oldest art magazine in the world, established in 1902; in 2014, the top 20 art fairs in the world, including prominent fairs like Art Basel, Frieze New York, and Arco Madrid, had a total attendance of over 1 million visitors (Demirel, 2017, p. 1181). Meanwhile, in Turkey, the Istanbul Art Fair was first launched in 1991, later being renamed “ARTİST”, and is organized by TÜYAP to run simultaneously with the Book Fair. The fair remains active to this day. In 2010, ARTİST-Istanbul Art Fair opened its doors for the 20th time in Beylikdüzü, featuring 108 galleries and art institutions, so far having been organized every year without fail. Breaking the streak was Istanbul Art Fair, ARTİST-30 in 2020 which was cancelled on the grounds of the pandemic (www.fuarlist.com 2020). Notable for being the oldest art fair in Turkey, ARTİST/Istanbul Art Fair has failed to be as effective as Contemporary Istanbul (CI), as it is organized simultaneously with the TÜYAP Book Fair every year and is evaluated with the book fair as a single organization. Thus, its visitor numbers cannot be accurately determined (Özalp, 2018, p. 137). Organized

annually by IKON Expositions and having opened each year without fail since its launch in 2006, Contemporary Istanbul (CI) is considered the most influential contemporary art fair in Turkey. In its fifth outing, held in 2010, Contemporary Istanbul featured a total of 80 galleries—37 Turkish, and 43 from 15 different countries), 420 artists, 2000 artworks and 53,000 visitors, selling half of the artworks on display on the first two days, and 83% of them in total, setting its record for best sales, even leading to domestic galleries having to bring in new artworks for extra sales due to high demand. In 2011, the 6th Contemporary Istanbul featured 90 galleries—48 Turkish, 42 from abroad—from 22 countries, with participation from 11 institutions, including Istanbul Modern, İKSV, Doğançay Museum, Sabancı Museum and Akbank Sanat. Famed English auction house Sotheby's organized three-day contemporary art courses and fair tours to coincide with the fair. The 7th Contemporary Istanbul was held in 2012 with 55 foreign and 45 domestic galleries, making up a total of 100 galleries, 600 artists, and 68,000 visitors, in addition to 10 artist initiatives both domestic and foreign, 14 art institutions, and 16 important art journals. The 8th Contemporary Istanbul Fuarı in 2013 featured 22 countries and 95 art galleries, hosting over 3000 artworks from 748 artists, with 70,000 visitors in total. One innovation in this outing of the fair was the "Plugin Istanbul New Media Fair", which specifically featured new media artworks in the mediums of video and digital art. Organized for the 9th time in 2014, that year's CI was curated by Prof. Marcus Graf, who had also curated the "Gezegenler" video project for the 10th Istanbul Biennial. Just like the previous year, the Plugin New Media section continued to display examples from various fields of digital art and design. The innovation this

time was CI's completely new platform for production, distribution, and communication: "CI Editions". The 9th CI almost doubled in proportion compared to the previous years, featuring 104 galleries and 520 artists with 3000 artworks in a 18,000 square meter indoor space, hosting over 75,000 visitors. The 10th Contemporary Istanbul Fair in 2015 featured 102 galleries from 24 countries with over 700 artworks. One notable development in the fair that touched on the day's news of that year was the reconstruction of historical artifacts destroyed by ISIL by means of technological materials. The 11th Contemporary Istanbul in 2016 was held at both the Lütfi Kırdar Conference and Exhibition Hall and at the Istanbul Congress Center. Featuring 70 galleries from 20 countries, with 520 artists and over 1500 artworks, CI's novelty this year was the "Collector's Stories" project (Döven, 2020, pp. 41-48). Curated by Marc-Oliver Wahler, and coordinated by Prof. Marcus Graf, a selection of artworks belonging to 60 collectors of contemporary art from Turkey were exhibited in a 1500 square meter area within the fair venue, displaying the collectors' personal aesthetic sensibilities as well as revealing the changes collectorship in Turkey has experienced, and their buying tendencies, motivations, and strategies: drawing a road map for art market actors and next generation collectors (Wahler, 2016).

The 12th edition of Contemporary Istanbul in 2017 featured 73 galleries, 42 of which were foreign, and over 1500 artworks. A feature of CI fairs since 2008, the "CI Dialogues" program, which underlines the importance of global communication in arts, took place this year as well. This year's novelty was the "Fifth Element" open air sculpture exhibition organized in collaboration with the Municipality of Şişli, which was held in the area that connects the adjacent Sanatçılar Park to the Maçka Park. The

13th Contemporary Istanbul in 2018 featured 54 foreign galleries and 83 galleries in total, followed by the 14th Contemporary Istanbul in 2019 with 75 contemporary art galleries from 22 countries, 510 artists and over 1400 artworks. Through all of it, Contemporary Istanbul aimed to be a fair that combines the local and global contemporary art in the same pot, and able to adapt to the times and the rapidly changing world, with its ever-evolving technologies (Döven, 2020, pp. 49-56). The COVID-19 pandemic which left its mark on 2020 also affected art fairs as traditional methods lost their validity. Many fairs, such as Frieze and Art Basel held online fairs, and waived their gallery fees to support galleries, which had seen a 30-40% contraction in the first half of 2020, with 2% of them even shutting down (Yıldırım, 2021, p. 397). . Art Basel announced simplified participation conditions for the first time in its history. Under normal circumstances, a gallery would need to meet a requirement of at least 3 years of activity with a historically strong professional pedigree, in addition to other special and strict criteria. To facilitate applications in 2020, the minimum activity limit, as well as the requirement to have a permanent space or a minimum number of events per year were removed. After many event cancellations in 2020, the art world schedule hit obstacles again in the first half of 2021, postponing fairs indefinitely. Online sales for galleries increased in comparison to fairs and live events, with most online sales being done in OVRs (Online Viewing Rooms) in these art fairs (Kaprol, 2021). In this context, Contemporary Istanbul's 15th outing in 2020 took place as a virtual fair named Virtual Contemporary Istanbul, featuring 37 galleries, 550 artists, 1500 artworks, and 13 initiatives. In a press speech, Contemporary Istanbul Chairman Ali Güreli stated: "...*The world is going through an*

unprecedented period ...We have decided to move our physical event to the bright, lively, and hopeful days of spring... We happily believe that our virtual fair will reflect all the joy, enthusiasm, and activity on display for our physical events.”

(Contemporaryİstanbul 2020). The physical version of the 15th fair took place in May, under strict pandemic measures, featuring 26 contemporary art galleries and art institutions, almost 500 contemporary artworks, and receiving 8336 visitors, in an attempt at bringing some long-awaited momentum to the art world (Çetinel, 2020). The 16th Contemporary Istanbul in 2021 took place at Tersane Istanbul, a 600-year-old historical Ottoman shipyard on Haliç. The venue’s 9500 square meters of indoor and 10000 square meters of outdoor space was home to 47 galleries, 11 institutions, and 436 artists with 1246 artworks. 40,480 people visited the fair in 6 days (NTV 2021). From the 2010s on, the art market witnessed alternatives to Contemporary Istanbul emerge. These are ‘Artinternational Istanbul’ in 2013, ARTANKARA in 2015, “ArtWeeks Akaretler” in 2018, ‘Step Istanbul’ in 2019, the ‘Istanbul Art and Antiques Fair (IAAF)’ and ‘ArtContact’ in 2020. ARTANKARA is notable for being the only fair not held in Istanbul, while the ‘Istanbul Art and Antiques Fair (IAAF)’ is notable for the inclusion of antiques in addition to the exhibition and sale of contemporary artworks, while the other fairs are notable for their boutique nature (Döven, 2020, p. 60).

5.1.2.3. Auctions

From the 2010s on, the slowing economic growth rate and the continuing uncertainty in the global economy began to be felt in 2012 in the art market as well.

According to the research done by the European Fine Art Foundation (TEFAF), the financial contraction specifically in the Chinese market caused a downturn in the global art market sales, dropping from €46 billion in 2011 to €43 billion in 2012. After 2008, China, with its domestic market sales and their buyers' strengthening position in the international arena, became the fastest growing market in the world. With auctions—the growth engine of the art market—that make up 70% of the global market share, the sector's sales growth figures rising for more than 350% from 2009 to 2011, making China a leader in the global market.

In 2012, a global reshuffling of the deck in the global art market cost China, who had recently surpassed France and England in market shares in 2011, their leadership position with a 30% loss of value. The US had taken back the lead position, however, China still ranked above England, who ranked 3rd. Among developing markets, Brazil became notable with a rapidly growing population of wealthy art connoisseurs and collectors, making up almost 1% of the art market with \$455 million.

New York and London remained in possession of a very large share in the global art market, though their trading volume in 2012 was 4% down compared to the previous year, and down by 30% compared to 2007, when the market had a sales boom. While things continued more stable in England, which is the largest art market in Europe, other large-scale European markets like France, Germany, and Italy saw a 12% contraction. In 2012, a large portion of sales—48%, in fact—were made in auction houses, and even though their sales volume had dropped from €23.3 billion in

2011 to €20.9 billion in 2012, it was still two times as much as the 2003 figures. English auction houses Christie's and Sotheby's saw €9 billion in annual returns in 2012, gaining 36% of total sales growth, continuing to dominate the sector. They were followed by Chinese auction house “Poly International” with €732 billion (Küçük, 2013). . In 2010, the global art market saw \$57 billion in total global sales. There are 3000 auction houses, globally, 1300 of which are located in China. By 2012, the art market had art buyers from 63 countries who could spend over \$1 million in art auctions (Yılmaz K. , 2020). Though the art market saw some amount of financial contraction during this period, research had validated that art could be a very advantageous means of investment compared to other types of assets. According to a report by the French financial institution Credit Suisse, art as an investment asset was safer and more appealing than the capital market, especially during crisis periods, and performed better than the stock market in inflationist environments, making it a very important asset for diversifying one’s portfolio (Küçük, 2013).

According to a 2015 report by Art Economics, which conducts art market research and analysis, the art market had a volume of \$55 billion despite the economic stagnation, 48% of which was dominated by the US, followed by China and England with 22% each. Taking auctions that took place in 2014 as a basis, the 48% of the global art market was made up of “post-war and contemporary art” pieces from artists born after 1910, followed by “modern art” pieces with a 28% share. On a country basis, “post-war and contemporary art” sales in America lead with a 46% share, followed by “modern art” sales in Chinese and English auctions with 30% (Iz, 2015). In 2001, the annual sale rate of contemporary artworks in auction houses was

determined to be \$87 million. This figure had increased to a \$1.26 billion in sales volume in 2011, displaying great momentum over the course of a decade (Küçük, 2013). Art market information website Artprice.com's 2019-2020 report states that contemporary art makes up 15% of all global auction returns, indicating a 2100% increase over 20 years. Additionally, while in 2000 a total of 2400 artists and 12,000 artworks were put on auction, these figures increased to 32000 artists and 123000 artworks by 2020 with the broadening market, with the number of countries that hold art auctions rising from 39 to 64 (Graf, 2020). Since March 2020, the effects of the COVID-19's pandemic have resulted in a slump in all markets, including the art market. As a result, it went through a necessary but very rapid transformation. Auction houses transitioned from physical auctions to online auctions, while prominent auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's prioritized private sales. The Christie's auction that consisted of impressionist, modern, post-war, and contemporary artworks, which ran for three days in October 2020, was viewed by 280 thousand art connoisseurs from all around the world, with a notably high portion being under 40 years old (Seçkin, 2020). Christie's originally held only seven online-exclusive auctions in 2012. In 2013, this number had increased to 49, pointing to the transition to online auctions being a pre-pandemic trend. However, the pandemic made online auctions the first and only option for the first time in history (Iz, 2015). Thus, after a decade of financial contraction, the art market once again gained momentum caused by the behavioral changes and mass-adoption of technology brought on by the pandemic, allowing for a more agile and innovative market.

According to 7th issue of the Arts&Finance report published by the prominent global consulting company Deloitte, the global art market volume, recorded at \$57.1 billion in 2010, contracted by 12% over the course of the last decade, closing out 2019 at \$64.1 billion but dropping to \$50.1 billion in 2020. However, this downturn would reverse in 2020, with a 230% auction sales boom in the first half of the year, surpassing all 2019 figures. Despite all the turbulence, auction houses made important sales in 2021: while only 2 out of the first 10 lots in 2020 were valued above \$50 million, in 2021, the best 10 lots all sold above \$50 million. According to the Art Market 2020 report by Art Economics, the first half of the year saw a 50% decrease in auction house sales, while the second half saw a 900% increase in their online sales (Kaprol, 2021). According to the Hiscox Online Art Trade Report from November 2021, however, online art sales displayed a 72% increase in the first six months of 2021 when compared to the first six months of 2020, while the average online auction prices increased from \$8600 in 2019 to \$26200 in the first half of 2021 (Yağcı S. , 2022). This dramatic inclination towards online art purchases, a result of the purchasing behavioral changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, turned digitalization and technology into common language for art institutions, while they made 43% of their total sales online, making auctions the second most common channel for art buyers after art fair OVRs. Another prominent subject in 2021 was crypto art. Nicknamed “Beeple”, digital artist Mike Winkelmann’s \$69 million NFT sale in March 2021 dropped like a bombshell into the news cycle, pulling NFTs artworks up into *blue-chip* (top-tier in price categorization) artwork price range (Kaprol, 2021). . Thus, the auction houses, which more effectively utilized their

lockdown period online auction strategies in 2021 to break sales records, began featuring artworks generated for NFTs. In a press conference in December 2021, Christie's stated that earning \$7 billion and thus witnessing an increase of 54% compared to the previous year, all records from the last 5 years had been broken, citing not only old masters like Picasso but also NFT sales as the reason for their success. Christie's also became the first auction house to accept payment in a cryptocurrency by accepting the payment for \$69 million sale of the piece "Everydays: The First 5000 Days" by digital artist Mike Winkelmann, nicknamed "Beeple", in cryptocurrency. Sotheby's, in the meantime, announced their sales figures which surpassed \$7 billion 300 million in 2021, reaching their highest sales figure in their 277-year long history (Gazi, 2022).

Meanwhile, having recovered from the 2001 financial crisis and experienced the 2008 global recession, The Turkish art market had a good run between 2010 and 2013, even reaching its peak between 2010 and 2011 (with an average auction revenue of \$90 million in these two years), and by 2013 (average auction revenue \$66 million) the market volume of the Turkish art market had reached \$130 million (as auction revenues multiplied by two gives us the market volume) (See Table 4), (Seçkin 2021, 48).

Table 4. Sales made in auction houses in Turkey between 2005 and 2020

Year	Number of Auctions	Number of Artists whose Works are Sold	Total Sold of Lots	Turnover TL	Turnover USD
2005	26	486	2255	26.244.944	19.550.399
2006	31	705	3298	33.855.906	23.936.245
2007	40	807	4152	65.134.230	51.494.048
2008	47	824	4263	61.744.050	45.995.516
2009	39	887	3897	80.018.500	52.176.001
2010	45	1116	5857	140.755.540	92.811.738
2011	47	1221	5264	143.847.100	87.284.785
2012	47	1240	4674	106.334.175	59.495.895
2013	52	1212	4748	123.996.480	66.143.379
2014	49	1332	4576	102.029.020	46.636.230
2015	49	1505	5465	119.070.945	45.068.286
2016	37	1131	4500	92.243.670	30.492.751
2017	30	1001	4463	88.682.975	24.008.225
2018	37	1186	5001	112.988.565	25.287.279
2019	31	986	3224	58.801.301	10.631.064
2020	5	243	509	6.277.200	1.058.358

Note: (Seçkin 2021, 48).

This bright period between 2008-2012 was followed by the Gezi Park protests in 2013, with the resulting tension causing both Turkish art buyers and foreign investors to act cautiously towards Turkey. This lack of confidence only became more intense with the Syrian War in 2011, the clashes in Eastern Anatolia between 2015-2016, and political unease in the region, ultimately culminating in the coup attempt in

2016, causing massive devaluation for the Turkish Lira against the US Dollar, which triggered a financial contraction in the art market (Bayrak, 2019). 2011 marked the end of the positive USD exchange rate trend. The year coincided with the moment that the financial crisis in certain EU member countries, Greece being the chief among them, turned into a global crisis, but it was also an important breaking point for both the Turkish economy and the Turkish art market, which had experienced a 400% increase in financial returns and the number of auctions during the 6-year period between 2005-2011. The biggest reasons for this increase were the broadening interest in the arts, in addition to the financial data. This was a period where Turkey saw financial growth, while the central banks of industrialized countries started pumping trillions of dollars into the markets. This led to an increase in foreign investment in Turkey, as well as increasing domestic consumer loans, both of which naturally affected the art market directly. After 2011, the US Central Bank announced that it would seek an interest rate hike, while also slowly cutting the funds with which the Central Bank had been supplying the markets. In June 2013, the building tension turned the markets in developing countries upside down, which also affected Turkey, with factors such as domestic political tensions, as well as the building pressure regarding Syria, and the two general elections that took place back to back all negatively affecting the capital markets as well as the art market, causing a 33% decrease in total returns between 2011-2016, as well as a 6% decrease in auction numbers (Bayındır, 2017, p. 62).

Despite the turbulence, 2016 also witnessed a record sale for the Turkish art market. Painter Osman Hamdi Bey's 1882 piece "In Front of the Green Mosque" was

put on the block for ₺10 million during an auction organized by Antik A.Ş. and was consequently sold for ₺13.5 million including tax and other fees (Demirel, 2017).

After 2010, some auction houses shuttered while new ones such as Sancak Auctions, Pingudu Auctions, Rumeli Auctions, Pera Auctions, and Vera Auctions took their place. However, founded in 1981, the Artam Antik A.Ş. Auction House has been active in the Turkish art market for over 40 years, making it one of the longest-established auction houses. This period saw the exponential increase of contemporary art, which also affected auctions: In 2000, 68% of sales consisted of classical artworks, followed by modern artworks with 25%, and contemporary artworks with 1%. By 2010, however, the classical pieces had dropped to 15%, while moderns rose to 33%, and contemporary pieces increased to 13 times their previous value. Turkish artists' works began showing up in prominent international auction houses like Sotheby's and Christie's in 2005, with Christie's organizing series of auctions between 2005-2012 titled "*International Modern and Contemporary Art*" and "*Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art*", while Sotheby's organized auctions titled "*Contemporary Art Turkish*" between 2009-2012, in London (Aydemir, 2016, p. 15). Sotheby's mostly auctioned pieces from modern Turkish artists such as Mübin Orhon, Erol Akyavaş, Fahrelnissa Zeid, Burhan Doğançay, and Seyhun Topuz, while also featuring pieces from contemporary artists like Taner Ceylan, Hale Tenger, Haluk Akakçe, Hüseyin Alptekin, Bülent Şangar, and Şükran Moral, with sales figures like £1 million 307 thousand in the auction in 2009, £2 million 436 thousand in 2010, and £2 million 332 thousand in 2011 (Bayrak, 2019). At an auction organized in 2016 by Artam Antik A.Ş., Osman Hamdi Bey's "In Front of the Green Mosque" set the

record for the painting sold for the highest price in Turkish history with ₺13.5 million. Additionally, in the 2010s, Artam Antik A.Ş. reached sale figures like Erol Akyavaş's 'Kuşatma' in 2010 for ₺2.6 Million, 'VAV' in 2011 for ₺2 Million, 'KABE' in 2013 for ₺2.9 Million, and 'Kartaca' in 2018 for ₺2 Million TL. Additionally, a Fahrelnissa Zeid sold for ₺1.1 Million in 2010, followed by a Mübin Orhon in 2010 for ₺1.3 Million, taxes included. Starting with the global pandemic in 2020, the lockdowns forced auction houses to rapidly organize and adapt to the new situation and transition to an online infrastructure, as they could no longer hold *English auctions* where people congregate indoors. Auction houses that already had set up and used this infrastructure gained an advantage, and most auction houses held more frequent online auctions than they did regular auctions before the pandemic. The number of institutions that held auctions in 2018 was approximately 30, with 38 auctions taking place. However, after the pandemic, the number of online auction entities increased to "hundreds", with pre-pandemic annual numbers of auctions being less than the monthly number of online auctions taking place during the lockdown. Pioneering auction house Artam Antik A.Ş. held online auctions where they sold pieces for prices in the millions, selling Osman Hamdi Bey's "An Ottoman Butcher" for ₺4.9 Million, Neşet Günel's "Wall V" and "Girl with Water Jug" for ₺6 Million and ₺1.7 Million, respectively, Mehmet Gülerüz's "Red Forest" for ₺2 Million, Burhan Doğançay's work for ₺1.1 Million, and Ömer Uluç's "A Chair, a Bird, Grand Nude, Red Figure, a Monster" selling for ₺7.8 Million. They followed this up with a new online art trade platform called "Buy Now", allowing for 7/24 art trade, finally changing the final aspect of art as investment that distinguished it from stocks, bonds,

and exchange markets: its volatility (Seçkin, 2020). . The crypto art market made its mark on the year 2020, with the first Turkish person to make a high amount of money off NFTs became Murat Pak, a digital artist who keeps his real identity unknown, earning around \$1 Million from his sales. According to data supplied by the Turkey Informatics Foundation (TBV) as well as data from crypto artist and art tracking platform CryptoArt, Pak's sales of his 268 artworks on various platforms have been sold for a total of \$1.079.382 (1.881 ETH). Another notable Turkish artist who has sold NFTs is Tarık Tolunay, with his piece "Fractal Istanbul – Pandemi", the only copy signed on the Blockchain of which was sold for 20 Ethereum, and its original, physical copy was sold for \$36,000 (Yıldırım, 2021).

5.1.2.4. Collectorship

A century-old American newspaper, the Wall Street Journal, stated in one of its May 2008 editions that "The new generation of collectors, art dealers, and investors, approach the arts as a very complex financial tool: It is marketable, respectable worldwide, and its monetizability is recognized globally." (Demirel, 2017). International Consultancy firm Deloitte stated in February 2022, in the 7th edition of its Art&Finance report, which is biannual and based on the data from the last 10 years, that wealthy people have redirected a total of \$1.44 trillion of their collective wealth into artworks and collections, observing a strong growth in all collection categories. Prominent international auction houses Sotheby's, Christie's, and Phillips's total income in 2020 from their online auctions was over \$1 billion, while in 2021, 71% of all art auction sales were of paintings and sculptures, more than

one half of which being “post-war“and “contemporary art” pieces. Because Asian buyers composed the group that spent the most money, 30% the participants of the research were of the opinion that the city of Hong Kong, having surpassed London to achieve second place in the market in 2020, would become the next big center of the art market after the USA, England, and Europe (Yağcı S. , 2022). As the global art market grew and reached serious figures, the primary motivation for buying art began to change from the emotional satisfaction of having bought a work of art to artworks’ usefulness as a means of investment. In this context, the 2016 Deloitte Art&Finance report stated that opinions of the financial shareholders of the art market, consisting of American, European, Middle Eastern, Latin American, and Asian art professionals (galleries, auction houses, art consultants), collectors, and private banks, regarding art having a serious role and importance in asset management had seen a steep climb in the last 6 years, with 47% of collectors stating in 2014 that investment income was a big part of their motivation to buy art, with this number rising to 64% by the end of 2016 (Demirel, 2017). As the number of young collectors increased, their interest in artists from their own generation brought photography collecting under the spotlight in the last 20 years. The number of photographs sold globally increased from 1300 lots to 5000 in 2019 (Graf, 2020). Digital technologies, which will no doubt influence our lives even more deeply and have a larger effect on the art ecosystem in the near future, attract a large section of greatly interested young collectors under the age of 35. 86% of these collectors were recorded to have an increased interest in art products and investments during 2020 under the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Stating, as part of the research, that their primary factor for collecting was the “emotional value”

of the pieces they've collected while 64% of this demographic also stated a strong interest towards NFTs (Yağcı S. , 2022). . London based auction house Sotheby's, with 80 branches across the world, reported that in 2021, they reached the highest sales figures in their 277 years of history, citing the tech-savvy generation of young collectors as the biggest reason for reaching those figures. Increasing by 187% in 2021, this new demographic of buyers is as interested in NFTs as they are in luxury goods like bags, wine, jewelry, etc. which Sotheby's also actively trades in (Gazi, 2022).

The Generation Z (born between 1997-2012) appear to be the group most interested in NFTs, which still occupy a very minor part of the collections of *high-net-worth* (HNW) individuals. It is expected that as digital artworks, and media like film and video begin to have a larger presence in collections, crypto art will generate new creations and sales records. Although online art sales, which became dramatically more prevalent with the pandemic, had been in use since the mid-2000s, congregating physically with the audience as part of a social activity has always been the first preference for most (Kapol, 2021). In that regard, international insurance group Hiscox, and ArtTactic, known for their art market analysis work, state in the 2013 edition of their report titled "The Online Art Trade", in which they closely examined the art market's perception of e-commerce, that, according to the responses they collected from 130 collectors, 101 buyers, and 58 galleries, that 71% of collectors buy the art work by only looking at its digital image, without having seen the actual piece (Iz, 2015).

With the motivation to “feel better about oneself” that was aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, people’s need to own more art works also increased: According to the research regarding the first half of 2020, conducted by the Swiss art fair Art Basel and one of their largest banks, UBS, 59% of the interviewees reported that the pandemic increased their desire to collect, and 31% reported that they’d bought an artwork. In a survey of 360 HNW collectors, however, 92% of the interviewees stated having bought an artwork in 2020, with 50% of them having spent \$100,000 on art in the last six months (Seçkin, 2020). Meanwhile, in Turkey, a more active contemporary art market began to emerge in the late 1990s, with the first decade of the 2000s being a period of revitalization for the market, as a new generation emerged, contemporary art museums opened back-to-back, auctions became increasingly dynamic, and the Istanbul Biennial earned a respected reputation among the important biennials of the world. In parallel, universities began establishing contemporary arts departments and programs, while private sector corporations started organizing contemporary art exhibitions at the art centers they founded. These were also the years where the rapidly increasing number of collectors made considerable art purchases, conscious or otherwise. The 2010-2011 period wherein the art market peaked saw increasing momentum for the market, followed by economic, political, and social turbulence, resulting in a devalued Turkish lira and the art market in a slump. The changing balances of this period became a source of experience for collectors, who learned from the past to become more conscious buyers, developing inclinations towards playing a more active role in the art scene, opening their own exhibitions, establishing museums, showing interest in photography, video, as well as new media artworks and

the artists who work in those fields. The political landscape of the recent years saw increased censorship, which caused auto-censorship, with the market trending more towards aesthetic concerns than the current issues. Despite this, especially following the Gezi protests, political issues began coming to the forefront, as artists attempted to steer and unite the societal conscience through their art. Political and economic turbulences effectively caused the emergence of a collective spirit, and an increase in social activity, additionally revitalizing collective production and collaboration in arts, causing more technically brave, experimental, and multidisciplinary tendencies to arise. The addition of new collectors as a new actor in the art market would effect the emergence and increase of collectors who were highly educated, kept up with international biennials and fairs, were more informed about the need for more learning institutions, aware of their wants, who asked more questions, could contribute to the artist not just through the artwork but with its creation process, and had a more universal perception of art (Bayrak, 2019).

Following the pandemic in 2020 and the resulting global economic contraction, the unstoppable decline of the Lira, as well as the economic instability affected the art market as well. However, according to comparisons between Sotheby's Mei Moses Art Indices and American credit rating agency Standard & Poor's S&P500 stock market index, while demand for financial products dropped during times of crisis, the loss of confidence in financial assets causes the demand for artwork to rise, increasing artworks in value (Firat 2020). In this context, art professor Marcus Graf stated: *"In spite of the crises and the irregularities in the market, and the welfare levels of the countries that the art market directly ties into, the contemporary art*

market is still developing and expanding. The buying characteristics of Turkish collectors changed from single large purchases to many small purchases, while keeping the financial returns at the same level as the previous years. In short, the pandemic only caused the art market to slow down.” (Graf, 2020); Meanwhile, art economy professor Aylin Seçkin commented “For real collectors, and good collectors, this is the best time to buy artworks from artists who have achieved a good footing within Turkish art history,” regarding this period (Yağcı S. , 2022).

Some notable collectors of this period are: Murat Ülker, Nesrin Esirtgen, Geri Benardete, Leon Kandiyoti, Ahmet Merey, İzi Hekimoğlu, Serap and Yılmaz Ulusoy, Kemal Bilginsoy, Şükrü Bozluoğlu, Ahu and Can Has, Hüseyin Hulki Birol, Erol Makzume, Nezih Barut, Şirin and Eren İnönü, Sema-Barbaros Çağa, Çiğdem and Ahmet Can Aslanbek, Oya-Bülent Eczacıbaşı, Nezih Çavuşoğlu, Borusan Çağdaş Sanat Collection, Rasim Özkanca, Sevda and Can Elgiz, Huma Kabakcı, Hasan Yelmen, Emin Hitay, Suzan Sabancı Dinçer, Max Maçoro, Hayati Gürel, Mete Bora, Mehmet Armağan, Çakmak Turgay, Erhan Kamışlı, Banu and Oktay Kırış, Ömer Koç, Zeyno and Muhsin Bilge, Ayşegül and Doğan Karadeniz, Emel and Orhan Karadoğan, Cengiz Argat, Gülin-Emre Dökmeci, Sarp Evliyagil, Ayşe Öztuna Bozoklar and Ali Tamer Bozoklar, Ali Selçuk, Ata Volkan Alp, Ahmet Faik Bitlis, Levent Tanıt, İzi Morhayim, Erol Tabanca, Cem Altınel, Cengiz Çetindoğan, Öner Kocabeyoğlu, Ayşe and Saruhan Doğan, Murat Araz, Mehmet Baz, Tayyar Tosun, Ayşegül and Ömer Özyürek, Begüm and Ahmet Faraylı, Baha Toygar, Lucien Arkas, Asım Kibar, Ender Mermerci, Erdal Aksoy, Erdoğan Demirören, Erol Bilecik, Halil İbrahim İper, Rahmi Koç, Suna-İnan Kıraç, Süreyya Bektaş, the Tatlıcı Family, Ünal

Göğüş, Yunus Büyükkuşoğlu, Ahmet Şahin, Ebru Özdemir, Esra and Alp Güreşçioğlu, Gülin-Emre Dökmeci, İbrahim Demirel, Murat Balkan, Nurdan-Yüksel Erimtan, Selin and Yaman Tunaoglu, Serkan Aydın, Sezer and Ali Ak, Leyla Alaton, Ahmet Aral, Mine and Cem Bahadır, Mehmet Ali Bakanay, Berrak & Nezih Barut, Rezzan Benardete, Hanzade and Osman Boyner, Dr. Şükrü Bozluolçay, Büyükkuşoğlu Family Collection, Bilge and Haro Cümbüşyan, Banu and Hakan Çarmıklı, Demet and Cengiz Çetindoğan, Suzan Sabancı Dinçer, Ayşe and Saruhan Doğan, Gülin and Emre Dökmeci, Elif Dürüst, Oya and Bülent Eczacıbaşı, Tansa Mermerci Ekşioğlu, Sevda and Can Elgiz, Nesrin Esirtgen, Özlem & Naim Gençoğlu, Zeynep & Fırat Gönenç, Emine & Selim Gülçelik, Asuman and Hüsnü Güreli, Cem Hakko, Can Has, Emin Hitay, Hüma Kabakcı, Ayşegül and Doğan Karadeniz, Hatice and Ferit Meriçten, Ari Meşulam, Naim Nihmet, Fazlı Özcan, Önder Öztarhan and Kaan Boyner, Murat Özyeğin, Ayşegül and Ömer Özyürek, Leyla Pekin, Arzu and Ömer Sabancı, Sevil Sabancı, Vuslat and Ali Sabancı, Melis and Hakan Salargil, Ali Selçuk, Erol Tabanca, Türkan and Ziya Tacir, Lucette and Mustafa Taviloğlu, Banu Vargı Tümay – Büyük Efes Art Collection, Agah Uğur, Ayşe Umur, Freda and İzak Uziyel, Şebnem and Mahmut Ünlü, Ergin Varlıbaş, Erdinç Varlıbaş, Selim Varol, Tony Ventura, Şirin and Neşet Yalçın, Arzuhan and Mehmet Ali Yalçındağ, Zafer Yıldırım, and Cem Yılmaz (Erten 2017, 515-517, Cirik 2010, 109, Seyhan 2021, 10, Şengözer 2017, 39).

5.2. A New Development: Collector Museums in Anatolia

German artist Hans Hackee defines museums as *managers of consciousness*. They have immense transformative power, turning what used to be a symbol of material wealth and social status into symbols of immaterial wealth (Zeytinoğlu, 2010, p. 88). They themselves also had to change to adapt to the necessities of our time. In order to keep up and integrate with the digital world of the 2000s, prominent museums of the world, such as the Louvre, The National Gallery of Art, The British Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Musée d'Orsay, and The Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History took their exhibition spaces into digital platforms that are viewable in 360 degrees (Keleş, 2021, p. 55).

The global pandemic affected museums just as much as it affected all other actors of the art market: A report presented by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in June 2021 states that museums, having locked down until the spring of 2021, were having a more difficult time compared to the months of September-October in 2020, while data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) indicate that private museum visitor numbers in 2020 dropped to 4 million 514 thousand 571, a decrease of 72.2% compared to the 2019 figures, while 2021 witnessed a five-fold increase as a result of the vaccination efforts and the less strict pandemic mandates. Quickly adapting to the pandemic, museums shared their exhibitions digitally during the lockdown, putting museums that had prior digital exhibition experience and infrastructure at an advantage over those that didn't (Parlak, 2021, p. 16).

Turkey in the 2000s was experiencing a golden age of private museums established by art collectors. Though these were based in Istanbul, “peripheral” art activities such as biennials, fairs, art institutions, and art events would be joined in the 2010s by private museums established in the periphery, from Ankara to İzmir, Eskişehir, and even Bayburt. The Evliyagil and Erimtan Museums in Ankara, the Arkas Urla Museum in İzmir, and the Odunpazarı Modern Museum in Eskişehir were included in this dissertation, as they were founded by collectors from their respective regions. The Baksı Museum in Bayburt wasn’t founded by a collector but rather with great efforts by artists and volunteers. Thus, it was thought that not including and examining it as product of such intensive labor would be a disservice to the museum.

5.2.1. Baksı Museum - Bayburt

Although the Baksı wasn’t founded by a collector, but through the intense efforts and labor of a group of artists and volunteers. It is therefore included in this dissertation as a private museum founded in Anatolia. The Baksı Museum was established in 2010 by artist and academic Prof. Hüsamettin Koçan, built on the land where he was born and raised. In his words, “*The Baksı Museum is my suitcase coming home*”. The museum was erected on a hill overlooking the Çoruh Valley, in the village of Bayraktar, located 45 kilometers from the city of Bayburt in the Eastern Black Sea Region. Upon leaving the Bayburt city center to go to the Baksı, entering an ordinary Anatolian country road that still feels somewhat deserted before losing sight of any domicile or connecting road after the village passes by—a sense of curiosity, or even disquiet, about *what is one might expect to find at the other end* stirs within,

perhaps even requiring a certain amount of bravery to reach the museum. In this regard, the Baksı sets itself apart from all other museums (Özdemir, 2019, pp. 34-35).

The museum is named after the Bayraktar village's previous name, which, according to legend, goes back to its founders pointing at the village's abundant water supply, saying "bak su" ["look, water"], which over time turned into "Baksı". The village history stretches back to the 1100s. Once home to many artisans, masterfully producing carpets, rugs, wickerwork, ehram (a type of outerwear from the region), pottery, and masonry, these crafts faced complete oblivion, with the village inhabitants beginning to move to larger cities, bringing the village culture to the brink of vanishing. Aiming to stop this from happening, as well as to revive the positive values that had been dying away, bring traditional arts with contemporary arts, and to bring art out of the metropolitan centers and to the periphery and the rural regions (Çelik, 2012, pp. 35-39).

The plans for the museum started in 2000, led by Hüsametdin Koçan. Two years later, the Baksı Museum was publicly announced at the Bilgi University's art venue, Workshop 111. Between 2002-2003, two exhibitions titled "Charmed Hands" that featured Hüsametdin Koçan and 19 volunteering artists. The proceeds from the sale of the 41 sets of unique art prints made by the artists were directly transferred to the museum funds. In 2004, the number of volunteering artists had reached 123, and an exhibition was held at Project 4L named "Shaman's Diary" that featured these artists, the proceeds of which once again went directly into the museum (Sergiler, 2020). Afterwards, the Baksı Culture and Art Foundation was established by

Hüsamettin Koçan on January 2, 2005, followed by the Baksı Museum Folk Art Research and Implementation Center, the first section of the museum, in the summer of the same year (Çelik, 2012, pp. 35-39). The Folk Art Center's first workshop were the ehram and kilim workshops in 2005, which aimed to support manufacturing activities for women, thereby both creating employment opportunities and reviving these crafts (Özdemir, 2019, p. 35). Finally, in 2010, at the end of an arduous process, the Baksı Museum building was completed without any financial support from the state. It was promoted in an event in June 2010 in Istanbul Modern, and then opened in July 2010 (See Figure 26).



Figure 26. A view of the the Baksı Museum, Bayburt.

Note: (Wikipedia). https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baks%C4%B1_M%C3%BCzesi.

Built on a 4-hectare land, with 4000 square meters of indoor space, the museum's main building features permanent and periodical exhibition spaces, a conference hall, and a library. Surrounding the main building are workshops for contemporary and regional arts, a kitchen, a guesthouse, and lastly, the Warehouse Museum Exhibition Hall, built in 2012. The museum was designed by Hüsamettin Koçan's brother, architect Metin Koçan, with additional suggestions from architect Sinan Genim, and Hüsamettin Koçan. Its exterior architecture was meant to accompany the surrounding mountain silhouettes in a nature-friendly approach, creating a unique architectural design. The light source incorporates a design tradition of local origin named *goggoloc*, using holes in the wall surfaces to let in natural light and increase exhibition possibilities (Razi, 2017, pp. 33-35).

Baksı Museum features a noteworthy contemporary arts collection consisting of pieces from prominent artists, as well as original and unique examples that reflect the local hand crafts (Çelik, 2012, p. 44). The 1500 square meter main exhibition hall has two sections for Contemporary Art and Design exhibitions, respectively, bringing an interdisciplinary approach. Meanwhile, the 1000 square meter Warehouse Museum features examples of current day art, as well as the folk painting collection, the reverse glass painting and embroidery collection, "writing-paintings", healing stones, finials, lithographs, pottery and ceramics, and ehram (www.baksi.org n.d.).

Museum's exhibitions are divided in two—permanent and periodical—featuring traditional arts in the permanent exhibition area while the periodical exhibition features artworks produced by the 20 artists hosted at the museum each

year. These artists create their work by conveying their impressions about the region and its culture. These pieces are also sometimes donated to the museum to expand its collection. In addition to being the founder of the museum, artist, and academic Prof. Hüsamettin Koçan is also a founding member of the International Plastic Arts Association, as well as a founding member of the 1991 Istanbul Art Fair. On top of his numerous solo and group exhibitions, he also collects reverse glass paintings and folk paintings in his personal collection. Through the museum, he shares his artistic repertoire, accumulated over a lifetime, with the local people and art connoisseurs (Çelik, 2012, pp. 38-49).

The museum's first contemporary exhibition, titled 'Tradition and Art' took place in the Main Building in 2010. It was organized by Ahu Antmen, and although it concerned itself with the concept of "tradition", it was a contemporary exhibition that featured paintings, sculptures, as well as video and installation art. While referring to the museum's location through the concept of tradition, contemporary art was juxtaposed against tradition in the Baksı village to indicate that the two are not distant concepts. At this point, the circulatory direction of the exhibition reversed. Thus, each "peripheral" exhibition became not about the center but about the "liminal" and the "journey" (Zeytinoğlu, 2020, pp. 117-122). The exhibition featured artworks from Ali Kazma, Alp Sime, Aslımay Altay, Ayşen Urfalıoğlu, Aziz Sarıyer, Beril Anılanmert, Burak Bedenlier, Esmâ Paçal Turam, Gülay Semercioğlu, Güler Güngör, Hüsamettin Koçan, Kurucu Koçanoğlu, Murat Morova, Mürteza Fidan, Nermin Er, Ramazan Bayrakoğlu, Suzi Hug Levi, Şakir Gökçebağ, Tuğrul Selçuk, and Zafer Mintaş, while the works of Özlem Süer—a fashion designer at the Asma Kat Gallery—clothing

designed from ehram fabric were exhibited under the title "Associations 9" adı altında sergilenmiştir (Sergiler, 2020).

Hüsamettin Koçan brings the traditional and the contemporary together under the same roof with a rare museum that was built “in the middle of nowhere”, creating a living memory for the lands where he was born. Thus, he has gained a place in art history, not only with his artworks, but also as a museum founder. The Baksı Museum neither belongs only to the villagers, nor to the urbanites, it is simply the museum for those who “*embark on a journey*” towards it, and those who “*passed by*”(Zeytinoğlu, 2020, p. 253). Below are some artists who joined Koçan in his enthusiasm to contribute to the museum (Baksı 2020):

Adem Genç, Ahmet Abayrak, Ahmet Aydın Atmaca, Ahmet Doğu İpek, Ahmet Özel, Alev Ermiş Mavitan, Ali İbrahim Öcal, Ali Candaş, Ali İsmail Türemen, Ali Teoman Germaner, Alp Sime, Alp Tamer Ulukılıç, Altan Çelem, Altan Gürman, Arzu Başaran, Asıl İşler, Aslımay Altay, Aydan Murtezaoğlu, Aydın Ayan, Ayşegül İzer, Ayşen Urfalıoğlu, Aziz Sarıyer, Bahar Kocaman, Barış Sarıbaş, Baybora Temel, Bedri Baykam, Beril Anılanmert, Berna Türemen, Bihrat Mavitan, Bilge Alkor, Borga Kantürk, Bubi, Burak Bedenlier, Bülent Şangar, Bünyamin Özgültekin, Can Göknıl, Canan Beykal, Candegir Furtun, Cemil Ergün, Cengiz Savaş, Cevat Demir, Çağrı Saray, Cihat Aral, Devabil Kara, Devrim Erbil, Doğan Paksoy, Ekrem Kahraman, Elif Süssler, Elif Ayiter, Elif Çelebi, Elif Tunak, Elvan Alpay, Emin Koç, Emre Okçuer, Emre Zeytinoğlu, Erdağ Aksel, Erdal Duman, Erdoğan Zümrütoğlu, Ergin İnan, Erkan Özdilek, Erman Özbaşaran, Ertuğrul Ateş, Esma Paçal Turam, Fatma Tülin, Fatoş

Beykal, Ferhat Özgür, Ferit Özşen, Ferruh Başağa, Feti İzan, Fevzi Karakoç, Filiz
 Başaran, Fuat Acaroğlu, Füsün Onur, Genco Gülan, Gökçe Oflu, Gülay Semercioğlu,
 Güler Güngör, Gülseren Südor, Gülsün Karamustafa, Gülveli Kaya, Güngör Taner,
 Günnur Özsoy, Günsel Kato, Gürbüz Doğan Ekşioğlu, Gürol Sözen, Habip Aydoğdu,
 Hakan Onur, Hale Tenger, Halil Akdeniz, Hanefi Yeter, Hasan Pekmezci, Haşim Nur
 Gürel, Hayati Misman, Hüsamettin Koçan, Hüseyin Çağlayan, İbrahim Koç, İbrahim
 Çiftçioğlu, İnci Eviner, İpek Duben, İrfan Okan, İrfan Önürmen, İsmail Acar, Jale
 Erzen, Kemal Gürbüz, Kerim Kılıçarslan, Kezban Arca Batıbeki, Komet, Koray Arış,
 Kurucu Koçanoğlu, Lütfi Özden, Mehmet Kavukçu, Mehmet Özer, Melih Görgün,
 Meriç Hızal, Mike Berg, Murat Morova, Murat Sezer, Mustafa Altıntaş, Mustafa Ata,
 Mustafa Ayaz, Mustafa Horasan,, Mustafa Karyağdı, Mustafa Pilevneli, Mürteza
 Fidan, Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz, Müşerref Zeytinoğlu, Nancy Atakan, Nazan Erkmén,
 Nermin Er, Nevhiz Tanyeli, Nur Gökbulut, Oktay Anılanmert, Ömer Ali Kazma,
 Özcan Uskur, Özge Usluca, Özlem Şimşek, Ragıp Basmazölmez, Rahmi Aksungur,
 Ramazan Bayrakoğlu, Remzi Savaş, Resul Aytemur, Rüçhan Şahinoğlu, Sabrina
 Fresko, Seçkin Pirim, Selahattin Yıldırım, Selda Asal, Selim Birsél, Selma Gürbüz,
 Sema İlğaz Temel, Semih Zeki, Sena Arcak, Serhat Kiraz, Server Demirtaş, Sevil
 Saygı, Sevil Tunaboşlu, Seyhun Topuz, Sinan Demirtaş, Suzy Hug Levy, Süleyman
 Saim Tekcan, Şahin Paksoy, Şakir Gökçebağ, Şenay Kazalova, Şenol Yoroşlu, Şeyda
 Cesur, Tamer Akakıncı, Tangül Akakıncı, Tanju Demirci, Tansel Çeber, Tayfun
 Erdoğmuş, Teoman Südor, Tomur Atagök, Tuğrul Selçuk, Tunca Subaşı, Turan Erol
 Tülay Tura Börtecene, Tülin Onat, Yalçın Gökçebağ, Yunus Tonkuş, Yusuf Aygen,
 Yusuf Taktak, Z.Başak Doğan Kademoğlu, Zafer Mintaş, Zehra Aral, Zekai Ormancı.

The founders of these museums in Anatolia bring the art of our current day to the lands where they were born, refusing to submit to global standards in their own country, and creating an entity that exists outside the center. The stories of these collectors, who were born in the same city as their museums, who then left for the wider world, and returned to bring what they accumulated to their native land, as well as their location choices, their connection to the city, and their transforming the city and the area into gravitational fields, places them within cultural history as humanistic, creative, diverse, and inspiring institutions, inspiring new projects at the same time (Koçan, 2019, p. 6).

Acting as the living memory of a people who aim to integrate themselves into the global world of arts and culture, as well as the safest and most proper means of cultural heritage, these museums and their ventures eschew traditional museological definitions, reflecting the sacrifice, energy, and sensibility of their collector founders with awareness of the power and the healing nature of art (Madra, 2019, p. 4). These museums, powered by art and its qualities that make people question, think, and unite, bring people and the Anatolian cities where they were established together with modern art, while bringing a new voice and perspective to art in Turkey with their architecture, artworks, exhibitions, and dynamic projects, guiding their visitors, and making a name for themselves in the world (Erkara, 2019, p. 8).

5.2.2. Museum Evliyagil – Ankara

Museum Evliyagil was conceived in 2008. Its construction completed around 2014-2015, after which it opened in 2016. 20 kilometers from the city center, it is

meant to be a “center away from the center”. It is the first and, as of this paper’s writing in 2022, the only modern and contemporary arts museum in Ankara.

Many artworks, after a short purchasing process, are spirited away into private spaces and rendered, in a way, “invisible”. Founded by collector Sarp Evliyagil, the museum’s goal is to open his collection, allowing everyone to see these invisible works, thus museumizing them.

Born in 1970, Sarp Evliyagil is the executive board chairman for Ajans Türk, a pioneering print and publishing company that was founded by his father Necdet and uncle Şevket Evliyagil in 1951. The story of the museum goes back to Sarp Evliyagil growing up in a house where art and literature were often topics of discussion, where his mother Sevgi Evliyagil took painting classes, and his father Necdet Evliyagil wrote poetry. It goes back to posing in front of the large Hikmet Onat painting in their home on special days, to the dialogue established with painter Neşet Günel to get him to repair a fresco he had previously done for a property they owned, to getting together with painter Haluk Akakçe to commission graphic work for an entertainment venue he had opened, to the network he had formed with artists and galleries through the family’s business Ajans Türk handling prints for numerous exhibitions, to the inner questioning that came after a dinner in 2008 where one of the guests said “*Sarp is starting a museum*”, and finally, to Gallery M1886 in Ankara in 2013, where his collection exhibition “Menzil” found an audience, finally giving him enough courage and momentum to make a go of it. Developing a love for collecting and accumulating, as a child and building a model automobile collection, Sarp Evliyagil also collected

postal stamps on account of the family business. His family and business relationships led to frequent run ins with the art scene, increasing his interest in arts, finally resulting in his purchase of a small Nuri Abaç painting with his own earnings at age 23. He started buying art more intensely in his 30s. Once the collection grew large enough to close a part of the Ajans Türk building as a warehouse, the idea appeared to open these artworks to public. During the 2008 Istanbul Contemporary Art Fair, at a dinner with figures from the art market, one of his friends' remarking "*Sarp is starting a Museum in Ankara, he's started the construction*", although untrue on that night, caused the collector to start imagining such a project. After 3-4 years of planning, aided by his artist and gallery owner friends, he finally felt ready in 2013, launching the project in the summer of 2015. Building a "white cube" in the İncek region of Ankara, designed by architect Nejat Sert, the museum, upon completion, comprised 750 square meters of exhibition space spread across three floors, as well as a sculpture garden, a movie hall, and a library, bringing original print series, large scale sculptures, and a selection of hundreds of artworks from the collection to the people of Ankara (See Figure 27), (Artun D. , 2019, pp. 12-13).



Figure 27. A view of the Museum Evliyagil Gallery space, Ankara

Note: (Okvuran 2017). <https://www.arttv.com.tr/yazi/muze-evliyagil-ankarann-ilk-ve-tek-cagdas-sanat-muzesi-yazan-pelin-okvuran>.

As the first contemporary museum on Ankara, the Museum Evliyagil's mission is to be an example for and encourage other collectors. Hosting exhibitions with certain themes in certain time periods, it brings art to the art connoisseurs of Ankara. The exhibition space located at the entrance and opens through the gallery to the upper and lower floors, setting the visitors on a journey. Meanwhile the ArtOda section is set apart from the main space for shorter, periodical exhibitions and projects. The boutique movie hall named *Müze Sinema* holds screenings of films and videos from successful Turkish directors that were not widely distributed but were featured in various festivals, as well as discussion events that bring artists, directors,

and art connoisseurs together (Kalyoncuoğlu 2019, 90-93). The museum also holds concert events featuring many local and foreign musicians that are free of charge. The museum's first exhibition in 2016 after its opening, titled "Mainland" was curated by Deniz Artun and featured a selection of comprising 20% of the collection. Afterwards, the exhibition "Home", a neighbor event for the 15th Istanbul Biennial, took place in September 9, 2017, curated by Derya Yücel, featuring artworks from 38 artists.

With artists from different generations and artistic practices reinterpreting the concept of a "home" through their work, the exhibition was organized within Museum Evliyagil's dynamic approach that permits its collection to be alterable and open to both possibilities as well as multiple syntheses as it brought external artworks together with the collection. The exhibition featured pieces from the collection, from artists Eşref Üren, Yüksel Arslan, Komet, Can Akgümüş, Canan Tolon, Necla Rüzgar, Gözde İlkin, Fırat Engin and Yuşa Yalçıntaş, as well as non-collection artworks from Ahmet Doğu İpek, Ahmet Duru, Berat Işık, Berkay Yahya, Can İncekara, Cemre Yeşil, Cengiz Tekin, Çağrı Saray, Deniz Gül, Erdağ Aksel, Erdal Duman, Erinç Seymen, Erol Eskici, Ferhat Özgür, Hale Tenger, Hakan Gürsoytrak, Hera Büyüктаşçıyan, İpek Duben, İnci Furni, İrfan Önürmen, Leyla Gediz, Nezaket Ekici, Nil Yalter, Nuri Kuzucan, Romina Meriç, Şifa Girinci, Onur Ceritoğlu, Yaşam Şaşmazer and Yunus Emre Erdoğan (2018).

Following Museum Evliyagil, in 2019, Sarp Evliyagil founded a multifunctional non-profit exhibition space, named Evliyagil Dolapdere, in Istanbul's new arts and culture center of Dolapdere, creating a connection between the museum

and Istanbul. The actual purpose of this space was to create venue where artists, art critics, visitors from various fields, and collectors could create and discuss contemporary art. Since its opening, it has hosted numerous solo and group exhibitions featuring local and foreign artists and their works in a variety of mediums like painting, sculpture, photography, installation, performance, and new media art (Evliyagil Dolapdere, 2019).

Conducting its exhibitions and projects within its first season with Beral Madra's curatorship, Evliyagil Dolapdere opened with the exhibition "Complex Questions, Fascinating Responses", featuring artists Aikaterini Gegisian, Aret Gıdır, Bengisu Bayrak, Ferhat Özgür, Fulya Çetin, Hakan Kırdar, Hera Büyüктаşçıyan, İlhan Sayın, Jakob Gautel, Murat Balcı, Ömer Faruk Şimşek, Reysi Kamhi and Temür Köran (Evliyagil Dolapdere, 2019).

5.2.3. Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum – Ankara

Situated adjacent to the Ankara Castle, one of Ankara's historical and oldest settlement areas, Erimtan was built transforming three old Ankara houses into an archaeological and arts museum after years of architectural and museological research. The museum opened in 2015 with the goal of bringing the past with the contemporary, and archaeology with arts. It has two neighboring museums: the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, and the Koç Museum (Erimtan Arkeoloji ve Sanat Müzesi 2020). Founded by businessperson and collector Yüksel Erimtan, the museum exhibits his collection of two-thousand pieces almost completely. The museum was also designed as an educational and cultural institution, aiming to cater to people of all

ages with its educational programs. The museum features a library as well (Demirci, 2020). Born in 1928, Yüksel Erimtan, a Civil Engineer MSc, was interested in archaeology. In the 1960s, he began to collect Roman ring stones while working near Tarsus. Over the years, receiving advice from archaeologists, he expanded his collection, starting with Roman seal rings and stones, and later focusing on specific groups of artifacts (www.kulturportali.gov.tr 2020). Erimtan's personal passion, which would be dedicated to the public, first culminated in his establishing the Cultural Heritage Collectors Association in 1996 in order to prevent the smuggling of historical artifacts and Anatolian cultural heritage, and to open private collection pieces to the public. Later, with similar concerns, he established the Yüksel Erimtan Culture and Arts Foundation in 2009, to raise awareness for culture and arts, and to introduce the cultural heritage of Turkey both domestically and abroad (Erimtan Arkeoloji ve Sanat Müzesi 2020). The Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum was founded under the Erimtan Foundation umbrella in 2015, aiming to share his collection of approximately two thousand pieces with the public (See Figure 28).



Figure 28. A view of the Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum entrance, Ankara.

Note: (www.erimtanmuseum.org). <https://erimtanmuseum.org/tr/muze>.

The collection is composed of pieces going back to the early Bronze Age in 3000s B.C., and the Hittites, stretching to the late Roman and Byzantine periods, comprising bowls, pitchers, drinking cups, measuring cups, rings, glassware, perfume bottles, signet stones, tweezers, golden crowns, strigils, accessories, mirrors, glass stirring rods, as well as golden, silver, and bronze coins from various civilizations like the Hittites, Assyrians, Urartians, Achaemenids, and the Byzantine Empire. After the masonry exterior made of andesite native to Ankara, the entrance greets the visitors with a copper laden door, designed with an embossing (Subaşı, 2019, p. 78). The artifacts inside meet the viewer as a reflection of the artisanship and aesthetic sensibilities of their respective periods. The Museum Collection puts the spotlight on the Anatolian cultural heritage, while also helping visitors relate the past and the current day with a specific chronology. The collection is grouped under the pieces'

exhibition themes: ceramics, glassware, bronzeware, signet rings, coins, and accessories (Şentürk, 2021, pp. 18-19).

Shaped with a contemporary museological approach, the Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum aims to function as a living museum with its cutting-edge exhibition methods, as well as its workshops, concerts, and group activities, also featuring a multipurpose exhibition space outside the collection exhibition that is meant to host periodical exhibitions (Subaşı, 2019). The museum's ground floor greets the visitors with an introductory selection ranging from Kültepe tablets to Urartian arches, from Roman glass to Byzantine ritual artifacts. Meanwhile, the main exhibition hall displays quotidian slices of Roman life, such as commerce, social life, cosmetics, eating habits, and festivals. This is meant to allow the visitors to relate to these objects with their own lives (Erimtan Arkeoloji ve Sanat Müzesi 2020). Additionally, *Fayum mummy portraits*, which are naturalistic portraits painted on boards that were attached to upper-class mummies, and a part of the afterlife beliefs in Antiquity, are featured in the main exhibition hall (Wikipedia 2017). The museum's background features a facsimile of a fresco that depicts a banquet table in the city of Pompeii from the Roman period. The parts of the fresco that overlap with the glassware in the collection and the parts that depict the banquet table were removed and then filled out with digital screens, forming a "Triclinium", or a dining room from Antiquity. Modern communication tools help visitors sit at these tables and experience the Roman eating/drinking culture, thus bringing the ancient atmosphere to life (Ertürk, 2021, p. 76). The collection of coins, largely comprising items from the Roman and Hellenistic periods, shed light on their periods' political, cultural, and religious aspects with the

imperial, animal, and object symbols they carry. Additionally, carved onto semi-precious stones are mythological scenes, symbols, plants, and animals, composing signet rings that take the visitor on a journey through the Roman and Greek periods, and make up the rest of the collection (Erimtan Arkeoloji ve Sanat Müzesi 2020). The Erimtan Archaeology and Art Museum's opening exhibition, held between March 14 and June 07, featured Alev Ebüzziya, an important ceramics master of the 20th century. 22 artworks the artist made between 1985-2015, were exhibited next to Anatolian pottery from the Antiquity in the museum collection. The exhibition was named after German mathematician and astronomer Johannes Kepler's 1619 book "Harmonices Mundi", which means the Harmony of the World, and examines the congruence and musical harmony between heavenly bodies. The exhibition, which features the history-spanning dialogue between the artist's ceramics and the museum's collection, allows the visitors to evaluate the antique and contemporary forms simultaneously, and invites them to explore the countless formal, intellectual, historical, or geographical comparisons born out of this liminality (Varol, 2015). Linking the past to the current day, the museum presents the direct relationship between humankind, art, science, social life, and archaeology, blending modernity with archaeology and art, thus displaying a multifunctional structure with its educational conferences and exhibitions while taking us on a journey that stretches back thousands of years with its collection (Ertürk, 2021, pp. 75-78).

5.2.4. Odunpazarı Modern Museum (OMM) - Eskişehir

Known as a university town, Eskişehir has a largely young population and a dynamic structure. The Odunpazarı Modern Museum (OMM), located in Odunpazarı, Eskişehir, which is on the Tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, has been recognized for its location, architectural language, artwork presentation, as well as its events and the awards it has received. It constitutes an important example regarding modern museology for both the city and Turkey in general. Opening in September 2019, it hosted 130000 visitors in its first 8 months. The construction for OMM had begun in 2018 at “Odunpazarı” (lit. lumber market), which, as one of the oldest settlement areas of the city, was named during the Ottoman period for its lumber trade and is a protected landmark. With its narrow alleyways, and historical buildings, squares, and fountains, the area has largely maintained its 19th century traditional texture (Kuyrukçu and Elitok 2021, 183-195). In addition to conserving, exhibiting, and expanding its collection, the OMM also aims to provide a platform where different points of view can be freely expressed. With the contemporary artworks from local and international artists which it features in its exhibitions, as well as the institutions and organizations it collaborates with from the world over, the OMM attempts to bring cultural value to Eskişehir by bringing it together with art, as well as to introduce Turkish art to the world through its architecture and artworks. Founded by Eskişehir-born architect and collector Erol Tabanca, the museum was conceived with Tabanca’s motto of “*Places are beautiful with people in them*”, as a fruit of his sharing spirit. In the 2000s, Tabanca envisioned contributing his 1200 artworks to the city where he had been born and raised (Erkara, 2019, pp. 8-10).

Born in 1957, Erol Tabanca graduated from the Eskişehir Art Institute, followed by the Ankara State Engineering and Architecture Academy's department of Architecture. Throughout his career he served in administrative positions for prominent architecture and construction firms. 3 years after moving to Türkmenistan, which he describes as a turning point in his life, in 1995, he founded Polimeks, which was a company working in the construction and tourism fields. Tabanca's interest in art started during his architecture education. After forming close ties to Haldun Dostoğlu, who founded Gallery Nev, Tabanca's interest began to turn into a passion (Dimili, n.d.).

Particularly fond of labor-intensive artworks and artworks where the artist captures their own projection, Tabanca built his collection around Turkish art, featuring artworks varying from painting to sculpture, new media, and photography spanning from the 1950s to the current day. The Odunpazarı Modern Museum, where the collection is exhibited, is also widely known for its tantalizing design which manages to affect the visitors before even setting foot inside. The design has a plainly created rhythm, while its timber constructure takes after traditional Odunpazarı houses, its architecture, spread over three floors and lets in copious natural light, creates a link between art and historical texture, and as a community center, the OMM greatly contributes to the promotion of Eskişehir, having become one of its focal points (Polat, 2020, p. 178).

The 4500 square meter museum building was designed by the world-famous Japanese architecture agency Kengo Kuma and Associates (KKAA), who are known

for their use of natural materials such timber, paper, and stone, and who are the winners of Architectural Institute of Japan Natural Wood Award, and the International Masonry Architecture Award, among other prestigious awards. Its founder Kengo Kuma's designs that prioritize the nature, believes in nature's power, and remain in harmony with nature carries the influence of the native Japanese religious belief of Shinto, which deeply respects nature. The most important rules for Kuma, who combines natural materials with minimalism, have always been the use of local materials and designing buildings that melt into nature instead of standing against it. In this context, the museum's façade was covered with Siberian pinewood structures that run parallel to one another and can easily allow air and light through. The Japanese method of "Tsugite", which is method of jointing pieces of lumber without the use of nails, like puzzle pieces, also influenced the OMM's look and design (Kaya, 2020, p. 65). The effect of the exterior lumber shell is in harmony with the wooden materials of the interior, with the empty space in the middle of the structure equally distributing the natural light across the whole building. (See Figure 29).



Figure 29. A view of the Odunpazarı Modern Museum, Eskişehir.

Note: (www.tripadvisor.com). [https://www.tripadvisor.com.tr/Attraction_Review-g319806-d19042677-Reviews-OMM Odunpazari Modern Museum-Eskisehir Eskisehir Province.html](https://www.tripadvisor.com.tr/Attraction_Review-g319806-d19042677-Reviews-OMM_Odunpazari_Modern_Museum-Eskisehir_Eskisehir_Province.html)

The structure rises in stages by pulling masses back, thus avoiding the formation of an oppressive clearance, as well as fitting the scale of the surrounding buildings (Kuyrukçu & Elitok, 2021, pp. 198-199). The museum's collection focuses on modern and contemporary art from 1950 and after, featuring artists such as Mübin Orhon, Ferruh Başağa, Nuri İyem, Abdurrahman Öztoprak, Burhan Doğançay, Erol Akyavaş, Mehmet Gülerüz, Neş'e Erdok, Güngör Taner, Mustafa Ata, Julian Opie, and Seon Ghi Bahk. A selection of collection pieces that features Turkish artists more heavily is then exhibited through a dynamic and pluralist point of view, with each

collection exhibition being done by a different curator or curatorial team. In addition to the collection exhibitions, contemporary artists from various disciplines also display their work with the museum's periodical exhibitions (Erkara, 2019, p. 84).

One of the most eye-catching pieces in the collection is the Japanese bamboo artist Tanabe Chikuunsai IV's location specific installation piece for the OMM, which reaches to the ceiling in the main hall with its tangled form. Built in 12 days by the artist and his four-person team using a technique of only tangling and weaving without any extensions, the 8 meter tall installation was the result of a large amount of labor that aims to remind humankind about its place, importance, and responsibilities in nature (www.subaru.com.tr n.d.). According to Chikuunsai, who comes from a line of famed bamboo artists, the artwork, which reaches up to the sky with 5 branches made out of tiger bamboo, symbolizes the four elements—fire, water, earth, and air—with four of its branches, while the fifth branch symbolizes humankind, namely the people of Eskişehir. These five branches reach up to the universe, weaved together (Kaya, 2020, p. 67).

Odunpazarı Modern Museum's opening exhibition which took place between September 8, 2019 - September 6, 2020, named 'The Union' brought together artworks from groundbreaking master artists of Turkish art history with recent period work from young contemporary artists. Curated by Haldun Dostoglu, 'The Union', as the name implies, is concerned with *convergence*, as Eskişehir finally comes together with its museum, the collector with his dream, and the artworks with their audience. The exhibition presented a selection of artworks from Erol Tabanca's collection,

which he'd been building since the early 2000s. Some of its featured artists were: Ferruh Başağa, Nuri İyem, Nejad Melih Devrim, Adnan Çoker, Erol Akyavaş, Mehmet Güleryüz, Neş'e Erdok, Komet, Seyhun Topuz, Koray Ariş, Hüsamettin Koçan, Gülsün Karamustafa, Osman Dinç, Azade Köker, Ken Matsubara, Erdağ Aksel, Robert Longo, Kemal Önsoy, Serhat Kiraz, Canan Tolon, Rahmi Aksungur, Jaume Plensa, İnci Eviner, Peter Zimmermann, Ahmet Oran, İrfan Önürmen, Tayfun Erdoğan, Ahmet Elhan, Kemal Seyhan, Daron Mouradian, Mehmet Uygün, Marc Quinn, Stephan Kaluza, Sinan Demirtaş, Ramazan Bayrakoğlu, Sarah Morris, Sabire Susuz, Taner Ceylan, Gülay Semercioğlu, Elvan Alpay, SeungMo Park, Hans Op De Beeck, Erdil Yaşaroğlu, Elif Uras, Aron Demetz, Tanabe Chikuunsai IV, Ayça Telgeren, Assa Kauppi, Seçkin Pirim, Ansen, Burcu Perçin, Erinç Seymen, Guido Casaretto, Gözde İlkin, Özge Enginöz, Aras Seddigh, Emin Mete Erdoğan, Bora Akıncıtürk, Tunca, Ahmet Doğu İpek, Erdal İnci, Erol Eskici, Yağız Özgen, Alpin Arda Bağcık, and Gizem Akkoyunoğlu (www.omm.art 2020).

Instead of a fixed museum, OMM functions as a multifaceted platform that both benefits the people of its city and embraces different disciplines. With its education programs and workshops that cater to all ages, its seminar programs, artist meets, and guest artist program, as well as its design store, hotel, café, and restaurant, OMM exists as a dynamic base for culture and arts, bringing not only a breath of fresh air to Eskişehir, but also not just country-wide but global recognition, putting the city on art connoisseurs' radars everywhere (www.subaru.com.tr n.d.). Odunpazarı Modern Museum was awarded the *Special Award* in 2019 by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The award has existed since 1979 in recognition of contributions to Turkish cultural heritage and art world as an

expression of appreciation and gratitude. Additionally, OMM was awarded the *Special Commendation* in 2021 by The European Museum Forum's at their European Museum of the Year Awards held in England, followed by a feature in the prestigious ARTnews' ranking of the *25 best museum buildings of the last 100 years* in 2022 (Açık, 2022).

5.2.5. Arkas Art Urla – İzmir

Underlining his fondness for sharing with the words “*That which doesn't become beauty will leave no trace*”, İzmir-born businessperson and collector Lucien Arkas, who has provided business and employment to his city through Arkas Holding, also has a passion for social and cultural contribution, and has thus given İzmir not one, but three art institutions. Its roots going back to 1902, Arkas Holding is a global conglomerate that is active primarily in the transportation sector, in addition to a variety of sectors from ship refueling to automotive, from insurance services to information services, and tourism. The holding company has 59 offices in 23 countries, 19 of which are located in Turkey, and owns 66 companies in those countries, providing employment for 7300 people (www.arkas.com.tr 2022).

The company's third-generation chairman Lucien Arkas was born in 1945. Growing up in a family that prioritized the arts drew him to the arts at a young age. Inspired by his father's interest in carpets and books, he would start collecting books and expanding his own carpet collection at a young age. At the end of a near 30-year long journey, the Arkas Collection was finalized featuring four main groups of artwork: painting, tapestry, glass objects, and sculpture, with nearly 2000 paintings and 3000 books (Dimili, n.d.). Consisting of over a thousand artworks, the Arkas

Painting Collection, was originally divided into two: “Turkish Painters” and “Foreign Painters”. The Turkish Painters branch featured artists spanning from the late 19th century Soldier Painters to Contemporary Turkish Painting, including artists such as Hoca Ali Rıza, İsmail Hakkı, Nazmi Ziya Güran and Sami Yetik, while the Foreign Painters branch featured artists, –a large portion of which are from the post-impressionism era—who lived in the 19th and 20th centuries, such as Alfred Sisley, Georges Braque, Maurice de Vlaminck, Henri Marchin, Louis Anquetin, William Adolphe Bouguereau, John William Godward, Pierre Bonnard, Henry Moret, Francis Pcabia, Pierre Auguste Renoir, Paul Signac, Suzanne Valadon, and Kees Van Dongen (Şahin 2012, A. Güney 2018). The Tapestry portion of the collection consists of valuable tapestry pieces left to Lucien Arkas by his family, as well as the antique tapestry works he’s been buying since the early 1990s to expand the collection. Spanning from the 16th century to the 20th, the collection features early period Uşak carpets as well as important examples of Anatolian tapestry like Silk Kumkapı, Silk Feshane, Imperial Hereke, and Sivas carpets and comprises approximately 350 carpets (Arkas Sanat Merkezi n.d.). The Glass Objects and Sculpture sections feature 400 pieces from important European glass artists such as Emile Gallée, Daum, and Lalique, and late 19th, early 20th sculpture works from important European sculptors such as Auguste Rodin, Aristide Maillol, and Camille Claudel, consisting of marble, terra cotta, and bronze pieces. Additionally, he turned sailing, an activity he had to take part in as part of his work, into a passion by collecting ship models, with a 600-piece ship collection featuring ship models, maritime antiques, sea or ship themed paintings, and sailing materials (Dimili, n.d.).

His desire to share his rich, widely varied collection with the masses led Lucien Arkas to establish three art institutions, all of which he founded in İzmir. The first one was the Arkas Center of Arts, which was established in 2011 in the French Consulate building—an iconic building with its white marble architecture, counted amongst the beloved century old buildings along İzmir Kordon. The building was allotted to the French government in 1875 and damaged in the İzmir earthquake in 1904. However, it survived the Great Fire of İzmir in 1922 without any damage. The building's sea-facing side was allocated to Arkas Holding for a 20-year period for use in cultural and artistic activities. After a year-long restoration process, the Arkas Center of Arts opened its doors to the public (www.izmirdegisi.com 2011). With 9 exhibition halls and 1 workshop, the historical two-story building was transformed into a well-equipped, contemporary center for the arts. In addition to the thematic exhibitions that were built out of selections from the Arkas Collection, the center also collaborated with important international museums and institutions within themes that draw from the collection to organize two exhibitions at world standards. The collaborating museums and institutions include the Louvre Museum, the British Museum, Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, and La Bibliotheque Nationale de France. This makes the Arkas Center of Arts not only a culture and arts institution that benefits İzmir, but also the first center of arts to exhibit artworks from international artists (www.arkas.com.tr 2022, Karahan 2021).

Located in a 19th century building, the institution's first exhibition was titled 'Post-Impressionism in the Arkas Collection' which presented the post-impressionist period between late 19th century and early 20th century in parallel with the building's

history, through 78 important artworks from 31 artists, some of whom were Maxime Maufra, Louis Anquetin, Emile Bernard, Maurice Denis, Maurice Vlaminck, Edouard Vuillard, and Louis Valtat, taking the audience on a historical journey (Arkas Sanat Merkezi n.d.). The second art institution is the Arkas Maritime History Center, established in 2012 in Bornova, featuring pieces from the Arkas Ship Collection. The center was established with the goal of introducing maritime history and the progress in the maritime sector to the public. Its venue, a historical 19th century building where Lucien Arkas also lived with his family for a period, is now open to public and displays a portion of his 600-piece ship collection which he'd been collecting for over 30 years and which features ship models, maritime antiques, and paintings (Arkas Deniz Tarihi Merkezi n.d.).

The Arkas Maritime History Center, with its 89 ship models, 126 pieces of maritime antiques, and 67 paintings, sheds light on a long stretch of time, spanning from 1000 B.C. to the 20th century. The three-floor building that makes up the center greets its visitors with a statue of a bow, and a rudder wheel with a large standard compass. Turkish ships and ancient ships are located on this floor. The second floor features ship models from the 17th to 20th centuries, presenting the visitors with a wide breadth of maritime history. The ground floor houses a special section that holds maritime antiques, special-purpose ships, and warships. In addition to models of historically important ships, paintings that depict important events in global maritime history are spread to every floor. Additionally, sailing and maritime objects like a fog whistle, headlamp, telegram, telescope, porthole, signal flare, bell, snatch block, and sextant are available to see at the Arkas Maritime History Center three days a week

(Arkas Deniz Tarihi Merkezi n.d.). The third art venue, Arkas Sanat Urla is a collection museum solely consisting of a compilation of pieces from the Arkas Collection. Located in the Kekliktepe region, 4 kilometers from the Urla township of İzmir, Arkas Sanat Urla was established in 2020. Originally planned to open in March but postponed to open in September on account of the pandemic, Arkas Sanat Urla has a simple and impressive architecture built across 4500 square meters, that uses natural stone cladding across the whole structure. It was awarded an Honorable Mention at the Turgut Cansever International Architecture Awards.

The building stands in strong relation with nature, featuring half-covered exhibition areas, and is surrounded by a colonnade, (www.arkiv.com.tr n.d.) It features a rectangular floor plan that stretches back, and a multi-stage entrance that resembles an Ancient Greek temple, alluding to İzmir's rich archaeological heritage with Ephesus, Bergama, and Agora simultaneously. The glass covered courtyard on the colonnaded platform contributes to the venue's dynamism with the transparency it creates (See Figure 30), (Karahan, 2020).



Figure 30. A view of Arkas Sanat Urla, İzmir/Urla

Note: (www.arkassanaturla.com). <https://arkassanaturla.com/fotograf-galerisi/>.

Arkas Sanat Urla exhibits 125 pieces from the Arkas Painting Collection, which boasts approximately two-thousand paintings. The venue is spread across two floors, the ground floor features artworks from one of the most innovative and dynamic periods of art history: the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with pioneers of modern art congregating in and around Paris. They are represented in the collection with pieces important examples from names like Edouard Vuillard, Louis Anquetin, Henri Marchin, Georges Braque, Charles Camoin, Maurice de Vlaminck, Maurice Utrillo, Henri Edmond Cross, Francis Picabia, and André Lhote representing the period's painting, and figures like Auguste Rodin, Alfred Boucher, Camille Claudel and Aristide Maillol representing sculpture of the period. The second floor features a

collection of armor, helmets, and arms that belonged to 16th - 17th century dynasties., as well as Renaissance era tapestry and classical period Anatolian carpets. One of the most notable pieces of the collection is the Venetian ceremonial shield made for the personal guards of Wolf Dietrich von Raitenau, Prince-Archbishop of the Salzburg, which features Ottoman motifs, reflecting the impact of Ottoman art in Europe. In the same exhibition space, we see a 6-piece series of Flemish tapestry from Flanders, which had become an important tapestry center after the 16th century with their detailed work, large sizes, and masterful compositions. The tapestries depict 6 different scenes from the life of the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar. Featured in the exhibition space, the most eye-catching pieces among the Gobelins from the 1550s are the Gobelin of Cleopatra bowing before Caesar, and the Gobelin symbolizing Caesar and Cleopatra's rise to the throne. Accompanying the Gobelins are the Uşak carpets from the 1600s with classical compositions, which have displayed world over in great exhibitions. These are particularly notable for their great condition despite their old age. Meanwhile, in the Glass Objects gallery, a selection of marble replicas of Antiquity period temples and marble busts of Roman Emperors is presented to the audience (Saruhan 2020, Karahan 2020). Notable for establishing an art-focused entity surrounded by nature, Arkas Sanat Urla provides a special and unusual spatial experience (www.arkiv.com.tr n.d.) while presenting a “holistic” perspective on the Arkas Collection with its mission to share it with the masses. Arkas Sanat Urla is open to visitors three days a week.

Conclusion

The second decade of the 21st century started with the greatest turbulence ever experienced by this generation, as the world tried to recover, the West began to give way to Asia as the financial center of the world, and global power balances started to change, leading to the world's economies replacing their free-market focused liberal policies with more conservative tendencies in the aftermath of 2008. Thus, global trade policies changed, paving the way for *trade wars* (Şanlı & Ateş, 2020, pp. 75-82). The 2010s were a period where the conditions for a return to the “cold war” began to slowly rear. The societal incidents, technological advancements, and political turbulence of this period triggered milestones that would shape the coming years. The *Arab Spring*, a wave of uprisings throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa in response to poverty and oppression later gave way to years of bloody civil wars in Libya, Yemen, and Syria, which was one of the bloodiest stops of the uprisings in particular, and causing a huge immigration wave (Kaygusuz, 2019). *The Migrant Crisis* was the largest of wave of migration since the WWII, with the relocation of approximately 60 million people, which especially affected European politics, triggering a wave of ultranationalism and political polarization (NTV 2019). The 2010s was a period where *global terrorism* pervaded from Asia to Africa to the Middle East to Europe, becoming an international concern. Another shocking development of this period was the *Presidential Elections in the US*, with Donald Trump's election in 2016, leading to important changes in American foreign policy, before the more moderate and reassuring Joe Biden's election in the 2020 elections. Yet another notable political development was the UK's decision to leave the EU as

part of the *Brexit* process. The 2010s, were marked by *the climate crisis* on one front, while on the other front, the unstoppable *rise of technology* in all fields, from health to education, and from politics to economics brought new concepts like “artificial intelligence”, “augmented reality (AR)”, “robotics”, “the Internet of Things (IoT)”, “the blockchain”, and “metaverse”, as well as “post-truth” and “fake news” into our lives, making establishing the universal truth difficult as the world rapidly digitized, turning into an empire of data. Money was also affected by these developments with the creation of “cryptocurrencies”. As the 2010s ended, the world encountered the *global pandemic* which broke out in 2019 in the Chinese city of Wuhan before quickly spreading to the whole world as of January 2020. The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) was a “black swan” that made all expectations and plans completely meaningless. Causing political, economic, social, and psychological effects at a global scale, the pandemic caused the greatest depression since the World Wars that has also surpassed the 2008 financial crisis in scope and effect, and its effects are expected to last for a very long time (Friedman, 2020, pp. 69-70). Adding to the already heavy losses of the pandemic, the first months of 2022 shocked the world with *Russia’s invasion of Ukraine*, which is still ongoing, with reports stating that this is the largest conventional war operation since the Second World War.

Turkey, within the global conjuncture, managed to recover from the 2001 financial crisis by 2010 and even displayed growth figures that were comparative to China. However, the 2010s, especially the latter half, would be a tumultuous period, especially economically. In **2010** Istanbul became a “European Capital of Culture”. In **2011**, Turkey rose to the 17th place on a ranking of the largest economies in the world

and began considering megaprojects. In **2012**, Republican-period export records were broken. However, country distancing itself from its EU objectives, as well as a slowdown in institutional reforms, and the increase in political tensions sent Turkey on a course of economic contraction and loss of momentum (Kılıç, 2021, p. 43). **2013**, the “Gezi Park Protests” started in Istanbul before spreading across the country, causing great chaos and leading to important economic losses. **2014** saw Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, whose party had been in power since 2002, get elected the 12th president of Turkey. This became a year where the economy began raising red flags, with initial disturbances regarding the country’s credit score. In **2015**, the Turkish Air Force (THK) shot down a plane belonging to the Russian Air Force, leading to a months-long crisis, **2016** was marred by even more terror events, the most notable among which was a coup attempt. The July 15 coup attempt was a turning point for the Republic of Turkey, A State of Emergency (OHAL) was declared and then extended by three-month periods for a total of seven times. After terror attacks, the coup attempt, and the OHAL periods, caused sharp increases in exchange rates, economic contraction, a decreasing credit score, the withdrawal of foreign capital, and the rise of unemployment (KPMG 2017). **2017** became the year where the transition from the Parliamentary system into the Executive Presidential System took place, while **2018** saw the first elections of this system, where Erdoğan was elected the 13th President of Turkey with 52.5% of the votes. Arrested on espionage charges in December 2016 in İzmir, tensions regarding the American priest Andrew Brunson situation culminated in a diplomatic crisis after The US stated that Turkey would face sanctions unless Brunson were released. On top of this, domestic political

developments, and the uncertainty regarding the war in the Middle East paved the way for severe economic conditions in Turkey, with the Turkish lira experiencing one of the largest devaluations in its history. **2019** was an election campaign period, and the country's activity and the repeat of the Istanbul mayoral elections caused a period of optimism for the global markets. As we entered a new decade with the **2020s** the "black swan" destroyed all financial predictions. After the first case of COVID-19 appeared, the lockdown measures brought simultaneous contraction in both supply and demand, bringing all economic activities to a stall, causing a loss of momentum in the economy (Elyan, 2021, pp. 31-32). **2021**, despite improving expectations on the heels of the news about a vaccine against the virus, the Central Bank's governor being replaced four times in the last 20 months caused the markets to respond harshly, causing the USD to rise from ₺8 to ₺18 in three months, coupled with the Central Bank's decision to cut down on interest rates caused a historical rise from 8 lira to ₺18, heralding the tough days to come.

The art market also became affected by these political, financial, and social developments. Although the market had a fairly positive spell, especially between 2010-2013, the changes in Turkey's political atmosphere, the numerous terror attacks, security concerns, the Gezi protests, and the coup attempt in addition to the currently ongoing global pandemic had certain negative repercussions, and the resulting financial contraction and the devaluation of the Lira triggered a period of stagnation in the art market. In addition to the rise of contemporary art in the 2000s, and the rapidly increasing number of new gallery spaces that supported contemporary art and young artist turned the neighborhoods of Karaköy, Dolapdere, and Piyalepaşa into new art

stops. Istanbul getting declared a European Capital of Culture in 2010 increased the interest in the arts and changed its dynamics (Sülün, 2018, pp. 147-148). While collective creation and interdisciplinarity became sought in exhibition methods, exhibitions that tackle concepts like the climate, sustainability, ecology, the nature-human relationship, the third nature, and the Anthropocene or criticize subjects like militarism, hierarchy, power, borders, and societal gender politics became commonplace. New media art was transformative for artists, leading to new masterpieces that used new technological potentials (Belgen, 2019, p. 209); allowing artists to display their work on platforms like social media, virtual art galleries, and virtual museums—being able to reach a wide audience in the border-free exhibition spaces of these digital platforms (Keleş, 2021, pp. 41-59).

Following COVID-19's worldwide spread in March 2020, the resulting lockdowns created shockwaves in the art market. Galleries and institutions rapidly began to take action to reach art buyers via digital platforms. As technology, and the pandemic began to change the way artworks met their audience, as well as their audiences' purchasing methods, crypto art, a niche artistic medium borne out of the blockchains which have been active since 2014, rapidly spread with the global pandemic, leading to record sales of NFTs (non-fungible tokens). This new player in the art market ensured proprietary rights and proof of originality thanks to its permanent record in on the blockchain as well as by virtue of being a token that's non-fungible, unlike cryptocurrencies. Additionally providing artists with "copyright" on works they minted through "Smart Contracts" (Özatay, 2021, pp. 20-21). In the 2010s, in parallel to an increased desire to be part of the contemporary art scene, rising

awareness, and the expansion of the commercial art market (Paynter, 2015, p. 227); led to the emergence of associations, independent entities, and art project platforms like Spot Projects, Saha Association, Mamut Art Project, and BASE. Additionally, some non-profit institutions and entities such as Borusan Contemporary, Bozlu Art Project, ARTER, Meşher, and Evliyagil Dolapdere multiplied in numbers.

2010s biennials witnessed a decrease in public support for the arts, with narrower windows of discussion for public spaces. These biennials featured the themes of urban renewal and gentrification, struggle for the right to the city, vicinity, identity, societal conundrums, and immigration, merging art with aesthetic political acts, attempting to establish sensibilities that suggest a different perspective on globalization, scrutinize the relationships between art and capital, and art and politics, and underline the deformative effects of a globalized economy and neoliberal policies on nature, the city, and public spaces (Korkut, 2019, pp. 106-108). The Istanbul Biennial had its 12th outing in 2011, and the 16th in 2019. Although originally meant to be done in 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic that broke out in 2020 caused the 17th Istanbul Biennial to be postponed for the first time in its history, from its original date of 2021 to the current planned date of September 2022. Having begun in the 2000s, “peripheral” art activities continued in the 2010s, with Anatolian Biennials, the Biennale of Sinop and the Biennale of Çanakkale, continued, being joined in 2010 by the Mardin Biennial. These biennials brought new dimensions to the established definition of the “center” Art fairs, a locomotive for the art market, continued as normal in the 2010s as well. However, The COVID-19 pandemic which left its mark on 2020 also affected art fairs as traditional methods lost their validity, with many

fairs switching to an OVR (online Viewing Room) for sales instead (Kaprol 2021). In Starting in 1991, ARTİST-Istanbul Art Fair's 20th anniversary took place in 2010 with participation from 108 art institutions and galleries, in Istanbul Beylikdüzü. However, the 30th edition of the ARTİST-Istanbul Art Fair was postponed due to the pandemic. Since 2006 on Contemporary Istanbul (CI) has been one of the most powerful contemporary art fairs in Turkey. It opened its doors to its visitors for the 5th time in 2010. The 15th outing took place online through the 'Virtual Contemporary Istanbul' which featured 37 galleries, 550 artists, 1500 works and 13 initiatives. Since the 2010's alternatives to CI have been emerging with fairs like 'Artinternational Istanbul' (2013), ARTANKARA (2015), 'ArtWeeks Akaretler' (2018), 'Step Istanbul' (2019), 'Istanbul Arts and Antiques Fair (IAAF)' (2020) (Döven, 2020, p. 60).

Starting with the 2010s, although the art market saw some amount of financial contraction because of the slowing economic growth and the uncertainties in the global economy, a report by the French financial institution Credit Suisse art as an investment asset was safer and more appealing than the capital market, especially during crisis periods, and performed better than the stock market in inflationist environments, making it a very important asset for diversifying one's portfolio (Küçük, 2013). Despite a decade of contraction, the art market regained momentum with the pandemic, with auction houses having to transition from physical auctions to online auctions. This dramatic inclination towards online art purchases, a result of the purchasing behavioral changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, turned digitalization and technology into common language for art institutions. In online

sales, auction houses followed art fairs (Kaprol 2021). Although Turkey had a good period between 2010-2013 with regard to its art market, which even reached its peak in 2010-2011. However, with the Gezi Park protests in 2013 creating tension caused both Turkish art buyers and foreign investors to act cautiously towards Turkey. This lack of confidence only became more intense with the Syrian War in 2011, the clashes in Eastern Anatolia between 2015-2016, and political unease in the region, ultimately culminating in the coup attempt in 2016, causing massive devaluation for the Turkish Lira against the US Dollar, which triggered a financial contraction in the art (Bayrak, 2019). After 2010, some auction houses shuttered while new ones took their place. However, founded in 1981, the Artam Antik A.Ş. Auction House has been active in the Turkish art market for over 40 years, making it one of Turkish art's locomotives. The number of institutions that held auctions in 2018 was approximately 30, with 38 auctions taking place. However, after the pandemic, the number of online auction entities increased to "hundreds", with pre-pandemic annual numbers of auctions being less than the monthly number of online auctions taking place during the lockdown. Growing exponentially since the 2000s, contemporary art finally saw higher sales in auctions: according to the Art market information website Artprice.com's 2019-2020 report, contemporary art makes up 15% of all global auction returns, indicating a 2100% increase over 20 years. The number of countries that hold art auctions (Graf, 2020). In 2016, Osman Hamdi Bey's 1882 piece "In Front of the Green Mosque" sold for a record breaking 13.5 million liras. And while in the 2010s, artists like Erol Akyavaş, Fahrelnissa Zeid and Mübin Orhon went for high prices at auction houses. A report about post-2020 online auction sales states that artists like Osman Hamdi Bey,

Neşet Günal, Mehmet Güleriyüz, Burhan Doğançay and Ömer Uluç have all sold for amounts higher than a million. Meanwhile, in the crypto art scene, NFTs broke sales records in Turkey as well as globally. Research shows that all demand for assets drops during crisis periods while a loss of confidence in financial assets increases the demand for artworks and increases their value (Fırat 2020).

The addition of new collectors as a new actor in the art market would effect the emergence and increase of collectors who were highly educated, kept up with international biennials and fairs, were more informed about the need for more learning institutions, aware of their wants, who asked more questions, could contribute to the artist not just through the artwork but with its creation process, and had a more universal perception of art (Bayrak, 2019). Collectors hope to share their collections with the public by displaying them in an exhibition or by founding art spaces and museums.

Thus, Turkey in the 2000s was experiencing a golden age of private museums established by art collectors. Though these were based in Istanbul, “peripheral” art activities such as biennials, fairs, art institutions, and art events would be joined in the 2010s by private museums established in the 2010s. Ankara-born collectors Sarp Evliyagil and Yüksel Erimtan founded Müze Evliyagil (2016) and the Erimtan Arkeoloji and Sanat Museum (2015). In İzmir, İzmir-born Lucien Arkas founded the Arkas Urla Museum (2020). In Eskişehir, Eskişehir born collector Erol Tabanca established the Odunpazarı Modern Museum (2019). Additionally, the Baksı Museum

was founded by Hüsamettin Koçan, an artist and academic who was born and raised in Bayburt.

The founders of these museums in Anatolia bring the art of our current day to the lands where they were born, refusing to submit to global standards in their own country, and creating an entity that exists outside the center. Museums are the reflection of a collector's self-sacrifice, energy, and intuition (Madra, 2019, p. 4).

Their location choices, their connection to the city, and their transforming the city and the area into gravitational fields, places them within cultural history as humanistic, creative, diverse, and inspiring institutions, inspiring new projects at the same time (Koçan, 2019, p. 6). Interviews with collectors and businesspeople Sarp Evliyagil and Erol Tabanca about their Anatolian-based museums, as well as a complete evaluation of the thesis can be found in the coming sections.

CONCLUSION

Despite the many concepts that changed and transformed through the millennia-long historical journey from the primitive human to the modern human, humankind's basic instincts to exist and possess run even within the genes of collectorship. From the moment the hunter-gatherer primitive human transitioned to a sedentary lifestyle, we begin to witness the objects they collected and accumulated at first—with this same instinct to exist—in order to protect themselves from wildlife transform from “arbitrary” gatherings of objects into more consciously created collections and ultimately museums over the course of history, as motivations like influence, distinction, prestige, passion, and investment arise.

This dissertation initially examined the origins of collectorship and the Western world's journey from collectorship to museumification through its historical background before moving on to the development and the transformations of the art market and collectorship in Turkey in parallel to the country's political and financial circumstances, also touching on collectors' desire for recognition and public exhibition as a result of prevalent globalization policies leading to private art museums in Istanbul, as well as scrutinizing peripheral private art museums outside Istanbul and their site selection reasons, approaching the subject through the dynamics behind these choices, the roles the museums shouldered, and the added value they provide.

The process, which ultimately goes collection → collectorship → art market → museumification → new trends and inclinations in museumification, was examined from a wide, two-thousand-five-hundred-year perspective.

The first section examined examine the concept of collectorship, as well as collectorship's transformation from Antiquity to the 16th century in the Western world. The first instances of accumulations of natural objects and works of art were found in the Paleolithic period, while the collection of objects with a larger artistic emphasis was first witnessed in Ancient Greece. The collection of objects only increased during the Hellenistic era: War spoils or objects created for political reasons meant to display the power of its ruler or the wealth of its people and were preserved as court collections that were closed to the public. The notion of collecting during this era was more faith-based, lacking principles, and differing greatly from our concept of collectorship. Private collections as a concept that is closest to ours today first emerged in the Ancient Rome, as Roman commanders and emperors paid special attention to old artworks and sculptures they pillaged in Greek lands, displaying them in their private collections. Prior to the 15th century, whether we examine the Prehistorical period, Antiquity, or the Middle Ages, we can only find some accumulations and collections in a certain sense but cannot speak of any conscious and systematic attempts at collectorship. The 15th century was a milestone for conscious and systematic collectorship, as the innovations of the Renaissance led to the autonomization of art and the emergence of its own market based on its "worth", and the emergence of the bourgeoisie who completely uprooted the preceding eras' traditionalist notions of collectorship. Thus, this period saw notions about object

collection and collectorship freed from church dominance and take on a new form in “curio cabinets” which allowed collecting to find its true meaning. These cabinets were meant as a smaller copy of the world, a microcosm. The next attempt at a serious museum was spearheaded by the Medici family, who became wealthier through banking and commerce in Italy, the heart of the Renaissance, and utilized the influence of art along with trade and politics to improve their social status and immortalize their family name. The family, during their nearly three-century long reign provided patronage to iconic artists of the era and frequently bought the contemporary art of the era, which birthed a modern art market during the Renaissance. The family also displayed their collection at the Uffizi Gallery (1581), which is considered an ancestor to modern galleries with its special placement and exhibition layout.

The second section examined the museumization process in the Western world from the 17th century to the current day. As the influence of the church over the European public waned and absolute monarchies began to rule. France became the center of the art world, superseding Italy, and collections began to be occasionally publicly displayed. A bourgeois taste for art collection in proper arguably developed during this period, as royal collections and private collections began transforming into museums. However, the paradigm shift for the arts and collectorship in Western Europe especially was the French Revolution in 1789, followed by the Louvre Museum being established in 1793.

Thus, the process of the secularization and categorization of collections whose hints we saw in the Medici collection came to life in France with the Louvre, wherein we witness the first true transition from the mysticism of the curio cabinets of the Renaissance to rationalist museology. The 19th century represents rise of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, as well as the first sparks of modernism, where the emergence of avantgarde art movements led to more eclectic collections, and an uptick in art prices. Attempting to generate “American cultural capital” through its wealthy collectors, the US began a ruthless competition with Europe. This resulted in a fast increase in the number of private/national museums as collectors established their own museums or donated their collections to the state, starting what is sometimes called The Museum Age. Entering the 20th century, we witness widespread decline in Europe as it suffered two consecutive world wars. America saw this as an opportunity, thus, following Florence and Paris, New York declared itself the heart of modern art. Providing patronage for many modern artists fleeing Fascist pressures in Europe, America became a global cultural power with its private museums. Arriving at the 1980s, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the US President Ronald Reagan’s neo-liberal neoliberal policies pushed the capitalist social structure to evolve into globalization, which changed the equilibrium of the art market, turning art collectorship into a competitive struggle for prestige, and ultimately turning artworks, and art products and services into commodities. The 21st century saw the effects of its technological advances and of globalization turn museums from static to dynamic, and museum audiences into customers. It was also a “golden age” of museums of contemporary art.

The third section examined the development of art collectorship from the Ottoman period to the year 2000. Establishing numerous states over a wide geography and possessing a long-established and rich cultural history, the Turks' history of collectorship didn't begin until the transition to a sedentary lifestyle. The Islamic prohibition of visual depictions of figures in painting and sculpture caused collectorship in the Ottoman Empire to differ in quality and content from Europe, with collections remaining under state monopsony, as they were considered Sultan's personal property and thus never opened to the public. The historical roots for Turkish museology go as far back as the 15th century, where the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 also led to increased support for artists and the arts from both the Sultan and other figures of palace authority, with Mehmed II assuming a pioneering role as the first collector. The Topkapı Palace Collection, which expanded and enriched in line with the Sultan's tastes, was rich and extensive enough to compete with the most glorious European imperial museums and was similarly a symbol of the ruler's power. The 18th century was a period of Enlightenment for Europe after the French and the Industrial Revolutions, while the Ottoman Empire lost influence due to military losses and land losses. The lifting of the Islamic depiction ban triggered an occidentalization movement called the Ottoman Modernization, with which it was aimed to achieve artistic, material cultural, and institutional advancements. The changes in Ottoman social structure and created a bourgeois class and led to a stronger non-Muslim trader class. The 19th century was an era of change for the political atmosphere of the palace as well as the cultural/artistic scene. The Sultans displayed favorable attitudes towards the arts, and the first museum institute of Turkey, the Müze-i Hümayûn or the

Imperial Museum was established in 1869. Osman Hamdi Bey was appointed as its director in 1882 to achieve a more systematic means of collection management. The collectors of this final period of the Ottoman Empire comprised statesmen, high-income families, and non-Muslims. In 1923 the Republic of Turkey was declared under Atatürk's leadership, and the creation of a modern and national social culture became its most important duty. A must-have for the development of the art market, the bourgeoisie was not present in the early Republican period. The Ottoman elite with their now diminished political and social influence had caused an absence that was thus filled by the state as the primary patron of art. In 1937, the Istanbul State Painting and Sculpture Museum was founded, allowing the state to protect the arts officially and institutionally in addition to its existing support. The 1950s saw the culture and art focused state policies change, replaced with liberal state policies that prioritized economic growth. As the state diminished its support for the arts until it became borderline nonexistent, it also supported growth in the private sector, turning Turkish businesspeople into business magnates and rejuvenating collectorship. There weren't many private collections during this period, and as the state withdrew its support, banks rose to prominence within the art market. Although an art market still didn't truly exist in the 1970s, Nejat Eczacıbaşı establishing the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSİV) in 1973, led to the launch of the Istanbul Biennial in 1987 greatly dynamized the art scene and helped increase sponsorships and art ventures, supporting the fledgling art market. The 1980s was a period where neoliberal policies aimed at privatization caused a boom in the capitalist market. Developing in this liberal environment, the bourgeoisie became the primary buyers of the art market in

Turkey just as they were elsewhere. Earning the moniker of “The Age of Galleries”, these years saw the first high-priced sales of paintings and the number of collectors greatly increased. Artworks started to become commodified, turning into a means of prestige and investment for their collectors. This period saw an ever-widening wage gap, as the middle class eroded and lost their position as art buyers to the quickly multiplying high-income population. The Sadberk Hanım Museum established by the Koç Family in 1980 was the first museum in Turkey to be established by private capital, becoming a pioneering institution for the future private museum ventures to come in the 2000s. The 1990s pointed to a “new world order” while the capital owners, who then dominated the art market, made efforts to remain visible through their cultural and artistic activities to maintain close ties with global capital. The TÜYAP Art Fair, established in 1991, was the first art fair in Turkey. It supported art sales and helped popularize collectorship.

The fourth section examined the period from 2000 until 2010, corresponding to the transformation of art collectorship into private art museums in Turkey. The great technological leap in the electronics and communication fields irresistibly turned the whole world into a single market. As part of the EU Harmonization Process, the government introduced tax incentive laws, leading the private sector to become a power that steered cultural/artistic activities, while private collections expanded, and private art galleries, exhibitions, festivals, sponsorships, and auction houses multiplied. Another unusual development of the 2000s was the “peripheral” art activities, with the 2006 Sinop Biennial, or “Sinopale”, which was the first peripheral biennial in Anatolia, followed by the Antakya Biennial in 2007 and the Çanakkale

Biennial in 2008. The history of art fairs in Turkey start in 1991, however, with the launch of Contemporary Istanbul Contemporary Arts Fair (CI) in 2006 opened the doors of contemporary art fairs for Turkey. With its international nature, CI was a pioneering organization that brought momentum to the art market, bringing Istanbul to a level competitive with other important art fairs from around the world. Getting wealthier and more dynamized, Turkish collectors came together with more artists and artworks, broadening their horizons and beginning to make more conscious purchases. As art became commodified and began to develop in relation to the international market, the rising art prices and auctions with high sales figures attracted capital owners and motivated them to become art collectors, leading them to largely believe that paintings are a means of risk-free and profitable investment that provides economic advantages. The 2000s was a period where capital owners replaced state institutions in the culture and arts arena, with corporations looking to gain recognition beginning to invest heavily in the field. As capital owners became aware of the economic benefits of art, private collections became wealthier, with private collection owners ultimately opening exhibitions or founding museums to garner attention and recognition.

20 years after the first personal collection to become a museum, the Sadberk Hanım Museum, the first decade of the 2000s saw Elgiz Museum (2001/Istanbul), Sabancı Museum (2002/Istanbul), Istanbul Modern (2004/Istanbul) and the Pera Museum (2005/Istanbul) open their doors to the public. Collectorship's early emergence and the donation of collections led to a great increase in private museums after the 16th century in Europe, while Turkish private museums did not emerge until

the 21st century. Despite this, the 2000s represented a milestone for museology and a sign of the transition into a new period where private museums would have their own golden age.

The fifth section *examined private art museums in Turkey from 2010 to 2022, and the new initiatives in Anatolia after 2010.* The free-market focused liberal policies gave way to more conservative tendencies in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, paving the way for the trade wars and spelling out a new cold war atmosphere. The 2010s, with its societal incidents, technological advancements, and political turbulence, witnessed milestone events that would shape the coming years. After the 2010s, with its wars in the Middle Eastern, global terror, migrant crisis, and climate crisis, the world entered the 2020s with an unexpected black swan in the COVID-19 pandemic, after which the world was once again shocked with Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with reports stating that this is the largest conventional war operation since the Second World War. Still ongoing as of the writing of this thesis, the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine War eliminated all expectations and plans, causing a global financial contraction. Meanwhile, the unstoppable rise of technology in all fields, from health to education, and from politics to economics, the 2010s introduced groundbreaking concepts like "artificial intelligence", "augmented reality (AR)", "robotics", "the Internet of Things (IoT)", "the blockchain", and "metaverse", as well as terms like "post-truth" and "fake news", which ushered in a world where establishing the universal truth and distinguishing facts from fiction became difficult. Meanwhile, the world began to rapidly turn into an empire of data, by which money was also affected, resulting in the emergence of "cryptocurrencies". Meanwhile,

Turkey in the 2010-2013 period broke export records, planned megaprojects, and Istanbul became a “European Capital of Culture”, constituting a positive period for both the country and the art market. After 2013, however, numerous terror attacks, the Gezi protests, the coup attempt, and the State of Emergency and political tensions that followed resulted in the devaluation of the Lira, all of which affected the art market.

In parallel with the rise of contemporary art in the 2000s, the number of new gallery spaces that supported contemporary art and young artists increased, utilizing collective production and interdisciplinarity in their exhibition methods. New media art’s emergence transformative for artists, who used technological resources to bring their work to a wide audience in the border-free exhibition spaces of these digital platforms. Following COVID-19’s worldwide spread in March 2020, the resulting lockdowns created shockwaves in the art market. Galleries and institutions rapidly began to take action to reach art buyers via digital platforms. At the same time, crypto art rapidly spread with the global pandemic, introducing a new player to the art market in NFTs (non-fungible tokens), leading to record sales. The 2010s was a decade where, in parallel to an increased desire to be part of the contemporary art scene; an increased awareness and the expansion of the commercial art market led to the emergence of associations, independent entities, and art project platforms, as well as non-profit culture and arts organizations, and art spaces.

Founded in 1987 by İKSV, the Istanbul Biennial has taken place consistently and without fail until 2021, where it had to be postponed for the first time in its history because of the pandemic. It is planned to take place in to 2022. Starting in the 2000s

and aiming to garner attention outside the art center of Istanbul, the “peripheral” Anatolian Biennials continued in the 2010s, with the Mardin Biennial joining the Sinop and Çanakkale Biennials. These biennials in the periphery brought new dimensions to the established definition of the “center”. Auctions and art fairs, locomotives of the art market, ran their usual course in the 2010s. However, the COVID-19 pandemic forced them to switch to OVRs (Online Viewing Room) and online auctions. As demands for other financial assets took a downturn, the loss of confidence in financial assets causes the demand for artwork to rise, increasing the value of artworks. Growing exponentially since the 2000s, contemporary art finally saw desired results, with sales amounting to millions taking place. The addition of young collectors as a new actor in the art market effected the emergence and increase of collectors who were highly educated, kept up with international biennials and fairs, and had a more universal perception of art, with collectors hoping to share their collections with the public by displaying them in exhibitions or by founding art spaces and museums. Right at this juncture, backed by the propulsive force created by the peripheral art activities that launched in the 2000s, the private museums founded in Istanbul thus far were joined by the private museums founded after 2010 in Anatolia. Thus, collectors from Ankara Yüksel Erimtan and Sarp Evliyagil founded the Erimtan Archaeology and Arts Museum (2015) and Museum Evliyagil (2016), respectively. Eskişehir-born collector Erol Tabanca founded the Odunpazarı Modern Museum (2019), and İzmir-born collector Lucien Arkas founded Arkas Sanat Urla (2020). The founders of these museums bring contemporary art to the lands where they were born,

while defying global standards to achieve an existence outside the center in their country.

As a last word,

A sanctuary for the muses from time immemorial, “museum” has historically been a name given to places that collect, save, protect, places that are divine and conservatory. As culture became privatized, museums evolved into hybrid, experiential spaces where dazzling events, striking spectacles, entertainment, and consumerism found their place next to education. Harboring an essential dialectical nature per this paradigm shift, museums reconstitute past discourse into a form that fits within points of interests of the current day—perhaps proving Andy Warhol right when he said, *“all department stores will become museums, and all museums will become department stores.”*

The focal point of this dissertation, private museums established by art collectors, embody a reflection of their collectors’ desire to show people their microcosms, or rather, their curio cabinets. Meanwhile, emerging in the periphery with a statement, the private museums founded in Anatolia became important symbols of courage, devotion, and intuition, even if their founders were born in those places. These museums are not simply a sign of their founders’ constancy to their cities: They are irresistible destinations both within and without the context of their cities, that also shoulder the duty of cultural heritage; bringing added value to their region, to the art market, and to the literature of art history while simultaneously acting as silent guides

for different fields and disciplines (economic, social, educational, architectural). They will undoubtedly become a source of inspiration for new private museums to follow.

Presenting private collections to the public through donations to museums or turning them into museums helps the public benefit from human creativity, in addition to broadening the public's horizons—in addition to immortalizing the collectors who helped achieve these goals. As collecting and private museums developed in Turkey in parallel with the rest of the world as of the 2000s (despite its delayed history compared to the West concerning these fields), considering the stagnated state of contemporary art history literature within its painting and sculpture museums, the responsibilities that fall on collector's shoulders regarding this topic thus grow immensely. It is imperative that the handful of private museums, which we have examined in this paper, scattered across Anatolia like so many pearl drops, increase in numbers—and they must catch up with contemporary trends which use the unstoppable power of technology, where audiences use their avatars to explore museums in the metaverse.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Interview with Sarp Evliyagil about Museum Evliyagil - March 31, 2022

Dear Sarp Evliyagil.

Instead of asking you about how your interest in the arts started or what your first purchase was, or your journey leading to you founding an art museum, as we've already touched on that in the dissertation. Instead, I'd like to ask you about your museum in the context of Anatolian inclinations in private museums.

1) When does a collection start the process of becoming a museum? At what point did Sarp Evliyagil say 'my collection can finally become a museum', and why Ankara?

The process works different for every collection. For example, there's a museum in Rome that only features a single historical artwork. So, there isn't a rule that says a collection can only become a museum once it reaches a certain number or volume. A museum, just like a library, is a place where objects of artistic, scientific, or historical importance are classified, conserved, and displayed. Every museum has its own structure and dynamics, and so do all collections—art or otherwise.

For our collection specifically, my feeling ready to share my collection with people only developed in relation to the number of pieces. Once the pieces I bought counted higher than 350-400, even I began to not be able to see them. Each one would be packaged and then shipped off to the factory warehouses, abandoned to their dark fate. As a result, buying more for my collection, only to put them away into a

warehouse became meaningless to me. Right then I remembered walking through the İşbank warehouses and criticizing their management. I realized I was kind of on a similar road. After realizing that, I turned my budget and focus away from buying more pieces and into the construction of a physical space and sharing the collection with people.

2) Nowadays, contemporary art museums cannot just be stable. There's a requirement to be a flexible, fun, and educational entity. How does Evliyagil fare in this context?

Evliyagil is exactly like what you've mentioned: a flexible, fun, and educative exhibition space. If you want to see a stable museum, you can visit the Ankara State Painting and Sculpture Museum. You can visit it once every 30 years, everything will be right where you left them, as if time has stopped. Every month, Evliyagil holds concerts, artist talks, painting courses for the elementary and middle schools in the area, university visits—a numerous and wide spectrum of events.

3) Does Museum Evliyagil loan pieces from other museums, institutions, or collectors for its exhibitions, or does it only exhibit its own collection?

We loan many artworks from collections belonging to other museums, institutions, and people. With exhibitions coming from abroad, we sometimes don't exhibit any pieces from our own collection.

4) What are the short-term goals of the museum? Are there any fields you'd like to change or leave?

Our short-term goals include completing and launching our cultural center. It's going to consist of 4 buildings, located next to Arter and right across from our Dolapdere gallery in Istanbul. We had to delay the construction for a year due to the pandemic and because the eviction of the current tenants is taking a while.

5) Private museums' contributions to the Turkish art scene are countless. So, why is it so difficult to establish a museum when there are so many collectors? And what are your thoughts regarding other private museum initiatives in Anatolia?

Our collectors aren't so many compared to Europe and the US, especially considering the population figures. And establishing a museum is a really difficult task. We spent about a year trying to get through to the Ministry of Culture to receive our private museum status. The building costs and the operating costs are seriously high. This is not something you want to do if you don't love it and aren't dedicated to it.

6) Are there any museums in the world that you would say is exemplary, for you personally or for your institution?

When we first opened, I studied Sammlung Goetz in Munich. Along the way, though, we got lucky enough to put together a more dynamic structure than that. I believe it was very effective to pick my colleagues from the younger generation, and from the art scene. I enjoy Charles Saatchi gallery in London vis-à-vis its operation and exhibitions.

7) In Istanbul, you also have Evliyagil Dolapdere. You travel between Ankara and Istanbul on account of your business and private lives as well as your art institutions. Can you compare the two cities with regard to their art dynamics?

Istanbul, as an art center and a city, has the potential to rank in the top 15 or 20, globally. Ankara, on the other hand, is the capital and has a lot of universities, so it stands out with its foreign mission and education quality. The fact that most of the people who steer Istanbul's cultural and artistic direction have studied in Ankara and have a background there underlines how Ankara is a "factory that produces and exports proper people".

8) Have there been any innovations or novelties that the pandemic introduced to how the Museum Evliyagil is operated? What changed, and are the changes permanent?

During the 2-month lockdown early on in the pandemic, we had a lot of dilemmas concerning whether to transition our events to the digital space. I, personally, think that you watch a video work in a digital format, but a three-dimensional sculpture or an oil painting cannot be viewed to the same effect. Though we are very active on social media, we did not digitalize our museum and waited for the pandemic to pass to open our doors.

9) How do you feel about second generation members continue the family collections? What do you think about the future of your collection after you?

I would like them to. I've been taking my kids with me to exhibitions, openings, and concerts since they were little, so they can warm up to the art scene. My plan for what's ahead is the "Şevket and Necdet Evliyagil Ajans-Türk Foundation". It was established in 1986 and aims to support education, and to provide patronage for culture and arts. The foundation built a high school with a 1200 student capacity in Ankara and opened it in 1999. In the future, I might consider further institutionalizing the museum through the foundation.

I would like to add some collector questions.

10) What makes a collection good?

Every collection is good as long as it's the result of an aggregation of objects or works that are defined and categorized in the process and contains important and seminal pieces along the lines of its taxonomy. This definition does not necessarily only apply to art collections. It's valid for thousands of collection types—car collections, stamps, toys or books, magazines...

11) When adding a new piece to your collection, are there certain schools, trends, platforms, or locations you follow regarding your purchasing policy?

In a broad definition, I try to stick with Turkish Modern and Contemporary Art from between 1950 and the current day as much as possible.

12) What is your approach to new media art? Have you purchased any NFT art or are you planning to buy any?

Regarding new media art, we do have video artworks in our collection. I have not bought any NFTs.

13) What do you think is the biggest issue with your collection?

That time and the budget is finite.

14) Is there anyone that you keep up with as a collector? Anyone whom you admire for their choices?

The Turkish School of Paris section in Öner Kocabeyoğlu's collection, with the foreign works filtered out, is the best collection in Turkey.

I'd like to end our interview with this question.

15) What is Sarp Evliyagil's biggest dream regarding Museum Evliyagil?

First, I'd like to launch a more comprehensive center in Istanbul, and I'd like to operate it in a way that fills the absence of a cultural center that the city truly needs. Then, I'd like to be able to exhibit our collection in London and New York, with borrowed pieces from other collections that we like.

Thank you...

APPENDIX B - Interview with Erol Tabanca about Odunpazarı Modern Museum

- April 15, 2022

Dear Erol Tabanca.

Instead of asking you about how your interest in the arts started or what your first purchase was, or your journey leading to you founding an art museum, as we've already touched on that in the dissertation. Instead, I'd like to ask you about your museum in the context of Anatolian inclinations in private museums.

1) When does a collection start the process of becoming a museum? At what point did Erol Tabanca say 'my collection can finally become a museum', and why Eskişehir?

These pieces are our cultural heritage, they must be exhibited and shared with the public, and conserved and stored in the correct conditions. These requirements are part of the museum process. When a museum shares its pieces, they are also recorded vis-à-vis art history. You do not contribute anything to this process if you do keep a collection to yourself and not exhibit it. But that is one of the primary duties of a museum. Presenting these collections to the public through publications and exhibitions. Additionally, displaying these works in a museum environment is an important duty in terms of bringing visitors and art professionals together, keeping records of these creations through publications and archives for art history's sake, and contributing to the sustainability of art and artists. These all factor into our

museumization process. Once the collection reached a certain point, I saw the need for sharing the collection with more people.

As for the why, the need for museums and cultural platforms outside of the big cities is clear. We have institutions that fulfill this need in big cities like Istanbul, but Anatolia is weaker in that respect. Museums, both as a cultural asset and as an important contributor at various points for their host city, are important institutions. In Eskişehir, we have the opportunity to present our efforts to visitors from many cities thanks to the city's location. In such a rich city with 3 universities, being able to contribute to young people who are studying or interested in this field, so they can meet experts at OMM during their education—supporting the culture and arts, and these future professionals of our field; this is important to me. Being able to direct tourism to the city and seeing more people visit other cultural platforms, thereby contributing to their development shows how important these efforts can be.

2) Nowadays, contemporary art museums cannot just be stable. There's a requirement to be a flexible, fun, and educational entity. How does OMM fare in this context?

Since the day it opened, we have avoided OMM being static. We aimed to create a community center that is inviting, that connects to its surroundings, and is a part of its life. On top of our exhibitions, educational programs and events organized with an innovative, dynamic, and participatory approach. Our workshops, seminars and artist meets are set up to cater all interests and age groups, 4 and up. The issue of sustainability is very important to us, and we organize film screenings about it in

parallel. Eskişehir is a college town, it has a young population, so it's very important that the museum can provide them perspectives. To that end, we bring industry professionals and young people together at OMM.

In that regard, my daughter İdil Tabanca, who is the OMM Chairman, brings a lot to the table with her fresh vision. İdil and the OMM team find it very important that the museum has a contemporary and unique vision, and that's what they work toward.

3) Does OMM loan pieces from other museums, institutions, or collectors for its exhibitions, or does it only exhibit its own collection?

Our opening exhibition, The Unity, was curated by Haldun Dostoglu and was composed entirely of pieces from the Erol Tabanca Collection. For the exhibitions that followed, we exhibited loaned pieces together with pieces from the Erol Tabanca and İdil Tabanca Collections. In the future, we will continue to exhibit both our collections and works on loan at the OMM.

4) What are the short-term goals of the museum? Are there any fields you'd like to change or leave?

One of our biggest recent focal points is sustainability. I believe it to be an issue that should be prioritized and acted on globally. We are looking for ways to reduce our carbon footprint and taking necessary action.

Apart from that, we have so far established a good bond with our city. We want to further diversify our education programs and activities so we can become a part of more people's lives.

5) Private museums' contributions to the Turkish art scene are countless. So, why is it so difficult to establish a museum when there are so many collectors? And what are your thoughts regarding other private museum initiatives in Anatolia?

I think all culture and art initiatives are important for our country. Any step taken in this respect is extremely valuable. I think that there are things we can all do to contribute to the cultural heritage for future generations. We did not set out with a dream to start a museum. The important part is being able to share. You don't need to establish a museum to do this. You can exhibit these pieces you are trusted with on different platforms and bring them together with art connoisseurs through these institutions. This is what many of our collector friends are doing today. The museum comes with many responsibilities, and not just economic ones. What we earnestly desire is that the number of state museums increases alongside private museums. These initiatives in Anatolia are an indication that culture and art should no longer be confined to metropolitan cities. The globalized world does not have borders, you can access many things from your seat. However, experiencing art in person is a completely different feeling. It is also a necessity with regard to the different ways of seeing that it contributes to people. That is a stimulating and restorative power. Every region needs its own culture and art platforms, museums, and art centers that feed off

their own story and carry that energy into the international arena. The benefit of this to our people as well as the region would certainly be great.

6) Are there any museums in the world that you would say are exemplary, for you personally or for your institution?

When we first had the idea for the OMM, we wanted the museum's architecture to attract as much attention as its exhibitions and programs, and to become iconic for the city, and even the country. In that respect, the Guggenheim in Bilbao has a similar story. It was designed by the famous architect Frank Gehry, and it was transformative for the city. We aimed for the OMM to have that impact. We follow museums around the world closely. They are inspirational for us with their different approaches.

7) You frequently travel between Eskişehir and Istanbul on account of your business and private lives as well as your art institutions. Can you compare the two cities with regard to their art dynamics?

Though Eskişehir isn't as fast a city as Istanbul, it has a very active culture and arts scene. Eskişehir has prioritized music, theatre, cinema and even sports for years. The university's film festival is a long-running organization that is known country-wide. Woodworking, masonry, and ceramics symposiums continue to be organized by the municipalities. Anadolu University's Contemporary Arts Museum is open to visitors with its own collection. The recent International Eskişehir Festival is fresh in our memories. This is an enlightened, future-facing city. Being a college town makes

it dynamic, and always full of life and art. Naturally, the OMM opened another door bringing contemporary art to the city. There isn't much to say about Istanbul. It is where all the dynamics of art are the most present. However, we can now feel that same presence in other cities, too and it's significant and wonderful that our cities can form mutual dialogue through these new platforms.

8) Have there been any innovations or novelties that the pandemic introduced to how the OMM is operated? What changed, and are the changes permanent?

The pandemic caused us to connect with our audience more through online platforms. We've organized online trainings and interviews. Some of those are now permanent. For example, we've kept the program we call the OMM In My Classroom, where the OMM visits primary school classes online to talk about museology and the museum itself. We've also entered a rapid digitalization process. We now produce fewer printed materials. Instead of printing the brochure for our current exhibition, "Don't Look Back, Deep is the Past", we offer a digital brochure that you can reach with a QR code.

9) How do you feel about second-generation members continuing the family collections? What do you think about the future of your collection after you?

My daughter İdil Tabanca also has her own collection. I see that she brings a new depth and liveliness to the accumulation we have made after the Erol Tabanca

Collection. I am glad that Idil is also quite enthusiastic about this path, so I think that the future holds increased momentum for both the collection and the museum for us.

I would like to add some collector questions.

10) What makes a collection good?

I don't think we can define a collection as "good" or "bad". Collectorship, as a process, reflects your tastes, preferences, and values. Thus, it is very personal, and I don't believe that the personal can be generalized with qualifiers like good, bad, beautiful, or ugly. I believe that a collection should reflect the perspective and tastes of the parties building it. Your focus can be a period or a theme, but collections created for material concerns don't seem very sincere to me.

11) When adding a new piece to your collection, are there certain schools, trends, platforms, or locations you follow regarding your purchasing policy?

In the early days I would follow what other people liked, instead of a framework. It was later that I began to think that it should have one. So, with Art Historian Defne Casaretto, we started to take it in a more systematic and conscious direction. The collection features a wide variety from 1950 to the current day, but it does heavily slant towards the post-2000 period and Turkish art with a few different focal points. When I look at what has influenced me recently, I see that they center on the problems of our day.

12) What is your approach to new media art? Have you purchased any NFT art or are you planning to buy any?

It's too early for any of us for NFTs. Personally, I have not bought any just yet. Frankly, I'm currently keeping an eye on them. I can tell you they are part of a process of very fast and massive production. More new platforms emerging in this era of digitalization is an inevitable fact, of course

13) What do you think is the biggest issue in collectorship?

Collecting is a process that involves research, reading, and a lot of watching. It is highly possible to encounter misleading factors along the way. One of these factors anyone who is just starting out might encounter is going for or being directed at what's popular. That must be avoided. The continuity of the artist's production process, the correct of pricing policies, having a follow-up mechanism are all important matters. Developing sustainable policies is very important for the collector-artist-gallery relationship. Following the artist's process and gaining in-depth information is a necessity in these circumstances where you are a stakeholder.

Digital platforms are important and powerful elements, but their visual impact can be misleading. For that reason, I am of the mind that the misleading power of popular platforms such as social media can be avoided with correct information.

14) Is there anyone that you keep up with as a collector? Anyone whom you admire for their choices?

Naturally, there are personal collections whose exhibitions I follow both in Turkey and abroad, or collectors whose journeys start personal and lead to a museum. Of course, I am not well-versed with all of them, but there are times that I see pieces from different collections and like them very much.

I would like to end our interview with this question.

15) The museum has obviously received awards. What is Erol Tabanca's biggest dream regarding the OMM?

My dream today is the same dream I had when I established the museum; to bring more people together with art. My biggest dream has always been for thousands of people of all ages to meet with art, gain new perspectives, and add different dimensions to their feelings and thoughts at the OMM, and it has been my great pleasure to see this dream come true repeatedly every day.

Nowadays, museums are educational spaces as much as they are platforms that offer diverse, multi-cultural, and fresh new perspectives by featuring artists tackling different subjects with their work, in their exhibitions. This is the reason why I want projects that address social issues and raise awareness to be featured in the museum forever.

Thank you...