

ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL

**MEDIA PLAZA:
AN EXAMPLE OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE MODEST
NEWSPAPER BUILDINGS INTO LARGE MEDIA CENTRES**



M.Sc. THESIS

Mine YESİRALIOĞLU

Department of Architecture

Architectural History Programme

JUNE 2022

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İSTANBUL TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ ★ LİSANSÜSTÜ EĞİTİM ENSTİTÜSÜ

**MEDYA PLAZA:
MÜTEVAZİ GAZETE BİNALARININ BÜYÜK MEDYA MERKEZLERİNE
DÖNÜŞÜMÜNE DAİR BİR ÖRNEK**

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To my great family,



FOREWORD

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June 2022

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SUMMARY

Within the scope of the study, the Media Plaza Building, which was designed by Mehmet Konuralp, is discussed in the context of transforming media in Turkey. As a result of the neo-liberal economic policies implemented in the 1980s and the technological advances in the communication sector, Turkey underwent a radical change in its political, economic, and social spheres. In line with these developments the press also lost its traditional structure and turned into media businesses, which were shaped by free-market principles in the 1990s. While newspapers were previously managed by journalists in the historic core of Istanbul, large media groups took over the press and relocated them to the outskirts of the city.

The transformation of the press into media echoed on its architecture. Traditional, modest printing houses in the historic city, had been replaced by flamboyant media centers in İkitelli district towards the end of the 20th century. Located in a strategically important quarter of Istanbul, Babiali had been the heart of the Turkish press since the 1870s. Especially with the rise of computer technology and improved printing facilities, existing newspaper houses in the historical core of Istanbul could no longer meet the increasing demand. The new role of the media in the rapidly changing political and economic conditions also required prestigious buildings representing the power of media in the 1980s and 1990s. Under the influence of neoliberal political tendencies, the entire printing sector began to be considered an industrial establishment and moved to an organized industrial zone in İkitelli on the western fringes of the city. Sabah was the first newspaper moved to its headquarters to İkitelli. Constructed between 1987 and 1990 the Media Plaza exemplified newly emerging media buildings around the periphery of the city both symbolically and architecturally.

Undoubtedly, this change was not unique to Turkey. In line with the liberalization of economies in the 1980s, communication technologies developed rapidly in the world. Moreover, as the 1980s saw the shift from state-sponsored developmentalism to a free market economy in many countries, and the media became one of the fastest-growing businesses in the global arena. Particularly, countries like the United States of America (USA) and United Kingdom (UK) remained at the forefront of modern journalism and communication technologies in this era, and the transition from press to media has become obvious in the architectural expression of the new media buildings. Both in New York and London the newspapers left their modest buildings in the traditional districts of cities and moved to lavish buildings, mostly located in the newly established industrial zones. The old newspaper printing houses in Park Row in Manhattan and Fleet Street in London, for example, were abandoned and the new media companies moved to high-tech media buildings in their new locations.

Considering the transition in media industry as outlined above, and based on a detailed reading on the existing literature and conducted interviews of the key players of this

transformation, this thesis investigates how this change occurred in Turkey and whether it is possible to read the impacts of the changes in the press on the architectural expressions of the new media buildings. The aim of the thesis, therefore, is to understand the underlying factors for the emergence of new media buildings in the 1990s in the peripheries of Istanbul. By tracing the design of the Media Plaza Building, and changes that occurred in the newspaper industry, the relationship between politics, economy, and architecture is examined. Understanding of the press owners' motivation to abandon the city center, and the influences of neoliberal policies on city planning provide an opportunity to better comprehend the transformation of media and



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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Sabah Gazetesi Basım ve Yönetim Tesisi olarak Mehmet Konuralp tarafından 1987-1990 yılları arasında tasarlanan Medya Plaza Binasını konu edinmektedir. 1980'lerde Türkiye'de ve dünyada neo-liberal döneme geçişin beraberinde getirdiği politik, ekonomik ve sosyal koşullar altında basının medyaya dönüşüm süreci başlamıştır. Yaşanan bu değişim sürecinin, mimarideki yansımalarını ortaya koymayı hedefleyen bu çalışmada, 1990'larda mimarlık dünyasında öne çıkan yapı tiplerinden olan medya merkezlerinin oluşumu, *Sabah* gazetesine ev sahipliği yapan Medya Plaza Binası üzerinden ele alınmıştır. Modern gazetecilik benimsemesi sebebiyle dönem içerisinde 'yeni medyanın yüzü ve yükselen yıldızı' konuma gelen *Sabah*, basının medyaya dönüşümünde büyük rol oynamıştır. Medya Plaza Binası ise gerek mimari gerekse kentsel açıdan dönem içerisindeki bu değişimi güçlü biçimde yansıtan bir örnek olmuştur. Aynı zamanda, gazetecilik ve medya yönünden taşıdığı sembolik anlamının yanı sıra high-tech mimarinin Türkiye'deki ilk örneklerinden olması sebebiyle yapısal anlamda da oldukça değerlidir.

1980'lerden itibaren Türkiye'de ve dünyada uygulanan küreselleşme stratejileri, serbest pazara dayalı ekonomik sistem politikaları ve iletişim sektöründe yaşanan teknolojik gelişmeler; liberalizmi benimseyen toplumlarda büyük bir kırılma noktası yaratmıştır. Bu dönemde küresel düzene uyum sağlamaya çalışan birçok ülkede, ulaşım, altyapı, hizmet ve medya sektörlerine yatırıma öncelik verilmiş ve bu yüzden de kentlerde yer alan üretim mekanlarının dağılımında da büyük bir farklılaşma yaşanmıştır. Serbest ekonomiye geçiş, bir yandan özel sektördeki yatırımcıların rolünün artmasına neden olurken diğer yandan kentsel planlama kararlarında da piyasa temelli bir yaklaşımın benimsenmesine neden olmuştur. Bu yaklaşımdan hareketle; özel sektör yatırımcılarına arazi temini hususunda güçlü teşvikler sağlanmış, altyapı hizmetleri geliştirilmiş ve görece şehir merkezine uzak alanlar bu dönemde imara açılmıştır. Türkiye'de 24 Ocak 1980 tarihinde açıklanan neo-liberal program kapsamında dünya ekonomik düzenine entegrasyon süreci başlamıştır. Liberal politikaların her alanda uygulanmaya başlandığı bu dönemde İstanbul'un mekansal yapısı küreselleşmenin artırdığı sermaye akışkanlığına bağlı olarak şekillenmiştir. Artan kitle iletişim olanaklarının fiziki mesafeyi ortadan kaldırması, Anadolu'dan göç hareketinin hızlanması ve sermayenin bahsedilen medya-iletişim gibi sektörlerde yoğunlaşması sonucunda, İstanbul hızlı bir desantralizasyon sürecine girmiştir. İstanbul'un hedeflenen 'küresel kent' imajına kavuşması için Tarihi Yarımada ve Haliç bölgelerinde büyük bir dönüşüm başlatılmış ve kent çekirdeğine yakın şekilde konumlanan sanayi yapıları kent dışında belirlenen organize sanayi bölgelerine taşınmıştır.

Basın ise, hem siyasi hem de ekonomik dünyayla olan girift ilişkisinden dolayı büyük bir dönüşüme uğramış, 'gazeteci patronlar'ın yerini birçok sektöre yatırım yapan iş

insanları almıştır. ‘Babıali gazeteciliği’ olarak adlandırılan dönemi sona ermiş, televizyonun yükselişi ve yüksek hızda baskı yapan offset sisteme geçişle birlikte ‘Plaza Basını’ olarak adlandırılan dönem başlamıştır. Yaşanan bu dramatik dönüşüm, kentsel ölçekte gazete binalarının konumlanması üzerinden okunmaktadır. İstanbul’da Tarihi Yarımada’da konumlanan ve Türk basının merkezi olarak kabul edilen Babıali, kentin desantralizasyon sürecinde büyük bir dönüşüme uğramıştır. 1980 yılında İstanbul Metropolitan Alan Nazım Planı’nda tüm basım sektörünün sanayi kuruluşları olarak değerlendirilmesiyle basın kurumlarının, organize sanayi bölgesi olarak tasarlanan İkitelli’ye taşınması kararlaştırılmıştır. Özellikle bilgisayar teknolojisinin ve matbaa imkanlarının yükselişi ile İstanbul’un tarihi merkezindeki bu gazete binaları, gazete üretim ve dağıtım kapasitesi konusunda yetersiz kalması sebebiyle terk edilmiştir. Bu nedenle Cağaloğlu yokuşundaki daracık sokaklarda bulunan mütevazı gazete binalarının yerini 1990’larda şehirden uzak biçimde ve geniş bir arazi üzerinde konumlanan modern medya merkezleri almıştır. Yeni medya yapıları baskıda gerekli teknolojik imkanları bünyesinde barındırabilecek ve televizyon kanallarına ait stüdyolar, açık ofisler gibi birçok farklı fonksiyonu içerecek şekilde tasarlanmıştır. Aynı zamanda, birbirleriyle güçlü bir rekabet içinde bulunan medya şirketlerinin güç göstergeleri haline gelmiştir. Medya Plaza ise bu taşınmada oynadığı öncü rol sayesinde ‘İkitelli Basını’ veya ‘Plaza Basını’ olarak adlandırılan bu döneme geçişin güçlü bir sembolü olmuştur.

Yapılan literatür taramaları sonucunda, 1980 ve sonrasını konu alan çalışmalarda ağırlıklı olarak İstanbul’un; küresel kent imajı, postmodern mimari yapıları ve tarihi bölgelerinde yaşanan yıkımların ele alındığı göze çarpmaktadır. İkitelli bölgesiyle ilgili yapılan çalışmalarda ise çoğunlukla endüstri ve kentin gelişimi gibi temalar ele alınmıştır. Gazete ve medya binalarının buldukları dönem dinamikleriyle beraber değerlendiren çalışmaların ise oldukça az olduğu saptanmıştır. Sosyal bilimler çerçevesinde iletişim tarihi alanında yapılan çalışmalar incelendiğinde ise daha çok teknolojinin, haberleşmeye yapılan yatırımların, basına uygulanan sansürlerin gazetecilik mesleğinin pratiklerini nasıl dönüştürdüğü üzerine yoğunlaşmıştır. Bu noktada tez, 1980’leri medya yapılarını içinde bulunduğu dönemin sosyal, ekonomik ve politik koşullarla birlikte değerlendirerek her iki alanın kesiştiği bir küme oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmada, Türk basını ve medya ile ilgili yapılan araştırmalarda gazete haberlerinden, gazetecilerin anı kitaplarından, iletişim tarihi hakkındaki makale ve kitaplardan yararlanılmıştır. Bunu takiben, Babıali’de çalışmış ve basının medyalaşma sürecine tanık olmuş gazetecilerle görüşülmüştür. Diğer ülkelerdeki Fleet Street ve Park Row gibi basın merkezlerinin mimari gelişim sürecini anlayabilmek amacıyla dijital arşiv koleksiyonları incelenmiştir. Aynı zamanda bu bölgeleri konu alan kitap ve tezlerden yararlanılmıştır. Böylelikle tez, farklı ülkelere seçilen medya yapı örneklerini de barındırarak gelecekteki karşılaştırmalı araştırmalar için bir kapı açmayı amaçlamıştır.

Türkiye’de 1980’lerde basın alanında yaşadığı dönüşümün benzer bir örneği olabilir mi sorusundan hareketle, dünyada iletişim ve medya tarihi alanında yapılan çalışmalar incelenmiştir. 1850’lerden itibaren basın alanındaki teknolojik ilerlemeleri gerçekleştirmeleri ve böylece modern gazeteciliğin oluşumuna öncülük etmeleri sebebiyle Amerika Birleşik Devletleri’nin ve İngiltere’nin medya dünyasının liderleri olarak ön plana çıktığı saptanmıştır. Bu ülkelerdeki gazeteciliğin tarihsel süreçleri ve gazete binalarının gelişimi incelenmiştir. İstanbul’un basın merkezi Babıali’ye benzer biçimde Londra’da Fleet Street, Manhattan’da Park Row veya Newspaper Row, 19. yüzyılda gazete binalarının kümelenildiği sokaklar olarak geliştiği bilgisine

ulaşmıştır. 20. yüzyıl ortalarından itibaren ise benzer biçimde eski gazete binaları terk edilerek modern medya merkezleri inşa edilmeye başlanmıştır. Böylelikle, 1980’lerde ABD ve İngiltere ile benzer ekonomik ve politik yaklaşımlar benimseyen Türkiye’de basından medyaya geçiş dönemi; küreselleşen mimari ve medya çatısı altında daha geniş bir biçimde değerlendirilme imkanı bulmuştur.

Bu çalışma, dünyada neoliberal politikaların uygulandığı ülkelerde basının medyaya dönüşümünün medya yapılarının inşa süreci üzerinden okumanın mümkün olup olmadığını sorgular. Medyadaki bu dönüşümün yaşandığı diğer ülkelerde de benzer biçimde gazete binalarının farklı noktalara taşınıp taşınmadığını, taşındıysa bu yeni medya merkezlerinin mimari özelliklerinin bu dönüşümün izlerini taşıyıp taşımadığını araştırır. Bu sorulardan hareketle, yeni medyanın öncüleri olarak kabul edilen ABD’de ve İngiltere’de gazete üretimi ve baskılarının yapıldığı binaların kent içinde nasıl konumlandığı da incelenmiştir. Bahsi geçen ülkelere kıyasla gazeteciliğin, Türkiye’de görece daha geç başlamasına rağmen 1980’lerde medyada yaşanan dönüşümün bu ülkelerle eş zamanlı hissedilmesi bu değerlendirmeyi mümkün kılmıştır. Medyanın yaşadığı dönüşümün uluslararası boyutta incelenmesi ve böylece değişen politik ve ekonomik ortamların mimariye olan etkilerinin altında yatan temelin daha geniş bir perspektifte kavranması hedeflenmiştir. Bu kapsamda, gazete binalarının basımevlerinden medya yapılarına evrilme süreci, Medya Plaza Binası örneği üzerinden dünyada yaşanan gelişmeler çerçevesinde değerlendirilmiştir. Mimarlığın iktisat ve siyaset gibi disiplinlerle kurduğu yakın ilişkiler göz önünde tutularak yapı, hem kentsel konumu hem de mimari özellikleri açısından incelenmiştir. Böylelikle, Türkiye’de 1990’larda yeni yeni ortaya çıkan medya yapılarının mimarisi hakkında daha bütünsel bir bakış açısının oluşması hedeflenmiştir.

Çalışma üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Tezin birinci bölümünde Babıali gazeteciliğinin doğuşu ve gelişim süreci Türk basın tarihindeki kırılma noktaları üzerinden ele alınmıştır. Babıali’de bulunan gazete binalarının ve basımevlerinin; baskı teknolojisinde yaşanan gelişmeler ve siyasi değişimler neticesinde nasıl bir dönüşüm yaşadığı anlatılmıştır. Hürriyet, Milliyet ve Cumhuriyet gibi önde gelen gazetelerin Babıali’deki ilk binaları incelenmiştir. Zamanla medyanın yükselişiyle, gazeteciliğin/basının merkezi olan Babıali’deki dönüşümün başlangıcının anlatıldığı bu bölümde ayrıca Batı’da basının en eski merkezleri sayılan Fleet Street ve Park Row bölgeleri de ele alınmıştır. Böylelikle, geleneksel basın merkezlerinden modern medya merkezlerine taşınan gazete binaları geniş bir perspektifte sunulmuştur.

İkinci Bölüm, 1980 ve sonrasında Türkiye’nin serbest ekonomiye geçişiyle birlikte başlayan yeni dönemine odaklanmaktadır. Babıali’den İkitelli’ye taşınma sürecinin anlatıldığı bölümde, ‘Plaza Basını’ kavramının doğuşu ve gelişimi, neoliberal döneme ait kentsel planlama kararlarıyla birlikte değerlendirilmiştir. Basın hayatına Babıali dışında başlamasına rağmen Babıali’den İkitelli’ye geçişin simgesi haline gelen *Sabah* gazetesinin gelişimi de yine bu bölümde anlatılmıştır.

Çalışmanın üçüncü bölümü; *Sabah*’ın doğuşunu ve bir gazete üretim tesisi olarak Medya Plaza Binasının yapısal özelliklerini ve kavramsal temalarını içermektedir. Yapının mimarı Mehmet Konuralp’in mimarlık anlayışını ve farklı tasarım projeleri bu bölümde ele alınmıştır. Medya Plaza Binasının yapımında benimsenen tasarım kararları ve projenin inşa sürecine etki eden etmenlerin kavranması amacıyla yapının mimari Mehmet Konuralp ile kişisel bir röportaj yapılmıştır. Yapının okunmasında, Konuralp mimarlığını mercek altına alan mimarların Medya Plaza hakkındaki

söylemlerine yer verilmiş ve böylelikle yapının Türkiye mimarlığı bağlamında yarattığı farklı algılar ortaya konmuştur.

Tez kapsamında incelenmek üzere *Sabah* gazetesine ait Medya Plaza Tesisleri'nin seçilmesinde iki önemli faktör ön plana çıkmaktadır. Bunlardan ilki *Sabah*'ın ; 'Babıali gazeteciliği'nden 'İkitelli Basını'na geçişin ve gazete üretiminde benimsediği yeni teknolojilerle de gazetecilikte yaşanan modernleşmenin sembolü haline gelmiş olmasıdır. Böylece dönemin ruhunun ve dinamiklerinin güçlü bir şekilde kavranmasını sağlamaktadır. Bir diğeri ise yaşanan bu dönüşümün; Medya Plaza Tesislerinin gerek yapısal özellikleriyle gerek mekansal kurgusuyla, yukarıda bahsi geçen dönüşümün mimari üretime olan etkilerini görünür kılmasıdır. Mehmet Konuralp tarafından tasarlanan yapı, içinde bulunduğu dönemin yapı teknolojilerine ve üretimine dair hem teorik hem de pratik anlamda farklı bir bakış açısı sunması sebebiyle oldukça değerlidir. Medya Plaza Binası, mimari özellikleri ve sembolik anlamlarıyla birlikte incelenmiş olup genel anlamda bu bölümde, küresel ekonomiye geçişle büyük ölçüde değişen basın, mimarlık vasıtasıyla nasıl bir temsil dili oluşturduğu sorusu üzerinde durulmuştur.

Sonuç bölümünde ise İstanbul'da 1980'lerde ortaya çıkan medya yapılarının oluşumuna etki eden faktörler üzerinde durulmuş ve böylelikle basımevlerinden medya yapılarına evrilen gazete binalarının, mimarlık tarihi alanında sağlıklı bir çerçeveye yerleştirilmesi hedeflenmiştir. Medya Plaza Binası mimarisinin basından medyaya dönüşüm sürecini nasıl yansıttığı konusunda görüşler sunulmuştur.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the architect tries to convey certain values via the establishment of a spatial form (Harvey, 2019), “every architectural work can be regarded as a sign of power, wealth, idealism” (Braunfels, 1988, p.3). According to Stevens (1998), “buildings of power, buildings of state, buildings of worship, buildings to awe and impress” form an environment in which “dominant classes use it to justify their domination of the social order” (p.88). Particularly during the 1980s, with the emergence of neoliberalism, the dominant powers in politics and economics were substantially changed. The adoption of free-market policies in the Western world and Turkey brought globalization. It became an upward trend in the 1980s owing to the “creation of an international economic order” (Hirst, 2005, p. 38). Unlike the former economic order, power is shared among several players, like private and public agencies functioning in international arenas (Hirst, 2005). Within this context, the media industry amplified its power and increased its influence on the politics and social life of the societies. This influence is visible in new media centers, where the representation power of architecture has been used by giant media companies.

In a similar way to many places in the Western world, those critical shifts in political, economic, social, and cultural life had an impact on architectural practices in Turkey. The advances in building technology, namely new construction materials, improved transportation facilities in the cities, have transformed architecture globally in the 1980s. Turkey was not an exception and as Kuban (1986) states, in the 1980s, improved communication systems, technological advances, social dynamism, and expanding interaction with the world caused significant changes in architecture of Turkey. As the largest and the most significant city of Turkey, Istanbul was the epicenter of this post-1980s transformation. During the 1980s and 1990s entertainment and recreation spaces, luxurious shopping malls, and extravagant gated residential compounds were built in many places of the city.

Media industry was one of the major sectors where the role of architecture can be vividly seen in this transitional period. The shift from the press to the media and the

changing economic policies dramatically affected the evolution of new media buildings. With the rise of the new media, the process of moving from Babiali, the traditional center of journalism and press in Istanbul, to the İkitelli Organized Industrial Zone (İkitelli Organize Sanayi Bölgesi), had begun. In contrast to modest newspaper buildings in the city center, the splendid media buildings now began to be seen in the urban fringes of Istanbul. The 'İkitelli Press' (İkitelli Basını), also known as 'Plaza Press' (Plaza Basını), had risen and their power became more visible with the construction of new media centers such as Media Plaza Building, Hürriyet Media Towers, and Doğan Media Center all located along the Basın Ekspres Street (Basın Ekspres Yolu).

Thanks to the improvements in communication technologies, the new media industry had now taken the place of the conventional press across the world. In the 1980s Turkey, as television became more popular, the newspapers had to struggle with the changing dynamics of the society. The transition to offset printing and the rise of computer technology also turned the old newspaper buildings redundant as they became incapable of meeting the high volume of newspaper production and distribution. The role of media also expedited this radical transformation. All major newspapers and TV stations had been purchased by large companies whose main business was not always journalism. The newspapers and TVs became very effective tools to promote their commercial interests of their owners, and in many instances, to influence political affairs in the country. In the light of those changes the new media centers were designed to incorporate the essential technological features for both printing and broadcasting and to embody their corporate power.

With these factors in mind, this study attempts to understand how new media architecture was reshaped and regulated in the 1980s' economic, political, social, and cultural atmosphere in Turkey. On this basis, the newspaper *Sabah*, and its new center, Media Plaza Building, is chosen as an example to understand how traditional 'Babiali journalism' was transformed into 'Plaza Press'.

The Media Plaza Building was designed by Mehmet Konuralp and constructed between 1987 and 1990. *Sabah*'s transformation from a modest press company into a large media corporation was mirrored in its new media center. As a central example of high-tech architecture, Media Plaza became a model of the new media architecture in Turkey. The building not only expresses the modernization of the press in the 1980s

but also symbolizes the rising power of the media through its advanced design. It also shows the impacts of the new urban politics, free-market policies and globalization strategies of Turkey in the 1980s.

The transformation of the press in Turkey followed the global trends. In particular, the USA and the UK come to the forefront in media history. Developing new printing technologies, establishing the first media corporations, and creating a global media culture are the primary reasons for their reputation.¹ Together with the radio in the 1920s, television in the 1950s, and computer and information processing technologies in the 1970s (Crowley & Heyer, 2015), “journalism had become identifiably big business in the West” (Keeble, 2005, p. 15). Accordingly, the architectural expression of media was affected by this shift. By the 20th century, the small-scaled printing houses were replaced by specially designed newspaper buildings that served as joint-stock companies (Murdock & Golding, 1997).

This shift can be observed in the two prominent press centers, which are Fleet Street in London and Park Row in Manhattan, New York City. This thesis examines these places, which are the oldest centers of journalism in the West. Aurora Wallace, in her book ‘*Media Capital: Architecture and Communications in New York City*’, seeks an answer to why New York’s largest newspapers are mostly clustered in Park Row.² Drawing attention to the striking parallelism between the goals of newspapers and the design strategies of the buildings, Wallace reveals how architecture accommodated the power of the press. According to Wallace (2012), the spatial concentration of newspaper buildings along this ‘high-profile location’ is a way of expressing the strength and durability of news institutions as business firms. Similarly, Jean Chalaby,³ tracing back to the history of journalism in Britain, correlates the move from Fleet Street with the emergence of ‘press barons’ in the mid-1980s. Although Fleet Street has functioned as a news hub since the 17th century, with changing types of ownership, inspiring media complexes were constructed in several locations throughout London.

¹ In the West, newspapers emerged in the 17th century. They grew rapidly in the 19th century (Conboy, 2002) owing to technological innovations like mechanization of paper-production, the steam-printing press, linotype machines (Murdock & Golding, 1997).

² Wallace, A. (2012). *Media Capital: Architecture and Communications in New York City*. University of Illinois Press.

³ Chalaby, J. (1998). *The invention of journalism*. Springer.

In line with the above summary, it is considered that a detailed examination of the transformation of press and its new architecture would contribute to the existing literature about the architectural developments in Turkey in the 1980s and 1990s. Both the media and its architecture were influenced by the economic, social, and political changes that occurred in this period. Based on a detailed reading of the existing literature and interviews conducted with the key players of this transformation, this thesis questions which parameters exerted an influence over the design of new media buildings. By looking into design strategies followed in the Media Plaza Building in conjunction with the large-scale transformations occurred in the media, this thesis explores the relationship between politics, economy and architecture.



2. FROM PRESS TO MEDIA

2.1 Babiali, The Center of Newspaper Publishing

The Turkish press identifies with Babiali in various aspects. Babiali, located in Cağaloğlu, has been a symbol of journalism since the 19th century (Gürel, 2009). This place, where printing houses clustered, was also the administrative center of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. The word Babiali, also known as Sublime Porte in the West, means “high or exalted gateway” (Findley, 2012, p.6) and refers to the Ottoman government since the mid-19th century (Koçu, 1960a) (Figure 2.1). Originally, it was a name for a building where the grand vizier of the Ottoman Empire both resided and carried out his official affairs in the 18th and 19th centuries (Toker, 1978). With the emergence of the new bureaucratic structure during the Tanzimat Period (1839–1878), Babiali gradually increased its importance in the state affairs and turned into an administrative center of the old Empire (Figure 2.2).



Figure 2.1: The entrance of the Babiali Building (Url-1).



Figure 2.2: The part of the Babiali Building complex towards Cağaloğlu Slope and Babiali Street (Url-2).

From the beginning of the 17th century, in particular in the Tanzimat Period, and under the influence of the West, a series of reforms carried by the Ottoman government. In order to “create a modern state, facilitate economic progress, and guarantee freedom” (Berkes, 1998, p.137), the Ottoman government built up a legal system during the 19th century. The power of the press improved as a result of these reforms. Koloğlu (1985) argues that newspapers, as an indication of the Western culture, had been adopted by the Ottoman government. The press’ establishment in Babiali was not coincidental. Since this part of the city was the center of state administration, it has been the source of news. As Koloğlu (2010) states, the district became “heart of the Turkish press since the 1870s” (p. 195). This considerable news hub was described by journalist Nail Güreli as follows:

Just as the media was an environment where news circulated, Babiali was also an environment where journalists circulated. In its historical development, Babiali was the name of a legend that became integrated with the press and became the name of the journalistic lifestyle. When Babiali is mentioned, the press and journalists come to mind (Güreli, 2009, p.15).

In addition to its political and cultural importance, this region is also vital in terms of its geographical position. Babıali Street⁴ is located in the Historic Peninsula on a transition route on the Sultanahmet, Beyazıt, and Sirkeci-Eminönü axis (Figure 2.3). Koçu (1960b) states that, especially since the 1880s, more and more people wanted to open a printing house in the Babıali axis, or that they wanted to move their existing printing houses to this region (Figure 2.3, Figure 2.4). Calling Babıali Street ‘the cradle of the press’, Koçu remarks on the critical role of Babıali:

It is the route of scholars, thinkers, authors, writers, and artists. Istanbul's large natural bookstores, the largest stationery stores, bookbinders, cliché workshops, advertisement offices and companies, newspaper and magazine dealers, and a few large printing houses, newspapers, and magazine administrations are lined up along both sides of this street (Koçu, 1960b, p. 862).

The significance of Babıali in terms of journalism can be understood by looking at the history of the Turkish press. The first Ottoman newspapers, *Takvîm-i Vekâyi*, *Ceride-i Havadis*, and *Tercüman-ı Ahval* dominated the Turkish press until the 1920s were located in this part of the Ottoman capital.⁵ Although there are various views about the milestones of the press, many journalists agree that they were mostly concerned with the fluctuating politics in Babıali. Topuz (2003) sees the period from 1878 to 1908 as ‘the duskiest moments of the Turkish press in its whole history’ because of Sultan Abdülhamid II’s authoritative rule. Also Turgay Olcayto, the president of Turkish Journalists Association, agrees with this point of view. “Because, before that, the press censorship was applied immensely and there were very few newspapers” (T. Olcayto, personal interview, 6 October 2021).⁶ Following those troublous years, as Koloğlu states (2020), ‘press madness’ began with the declaration of the Second Constitution (İkinci Meşrutiyet) on 24 July 1908. Especially with the 1909 Press Law (Basın Kanunu), censorship was prohibited and the press gained more freedom. The

⁴ For a detailed depiction of Babıali Street; Ortaç, Y., Z. (1966). *Bizim Yokuş*, İstanbul: Akbaba Yayınları; Tokgöz, A. İ., & Kabacalı, A. (1993). *Matbuat hatıralarım*. İletişim Yayıncılık.

⁵ *Takvîm-i Vekâyi* was the first official newspaper of the Ottoman Empire, which started its publication life in November 1831 (İnuğur, 1982). *Ceride-i Havadis* was the first semi-official newspaper to be published in 1840 (İnuğur, 1982). The first Turkish private newspaper, *Tercüman-Ahval*, which was published in 1860, was also notable for pioneering opinion newspapers (İnuğur, 1982).

⁶ According to Olcayto, there are two breaking points in the Turkish press. The first one is caused by the Second Constitution in 1908 and the second one is caused by the military coup of 1960 (personal interview, 6 October 2021).

establishment of the first domestic news agency, Ottoman Telegraph, in 1911, revitalized the press life in Ottoman Turkey.

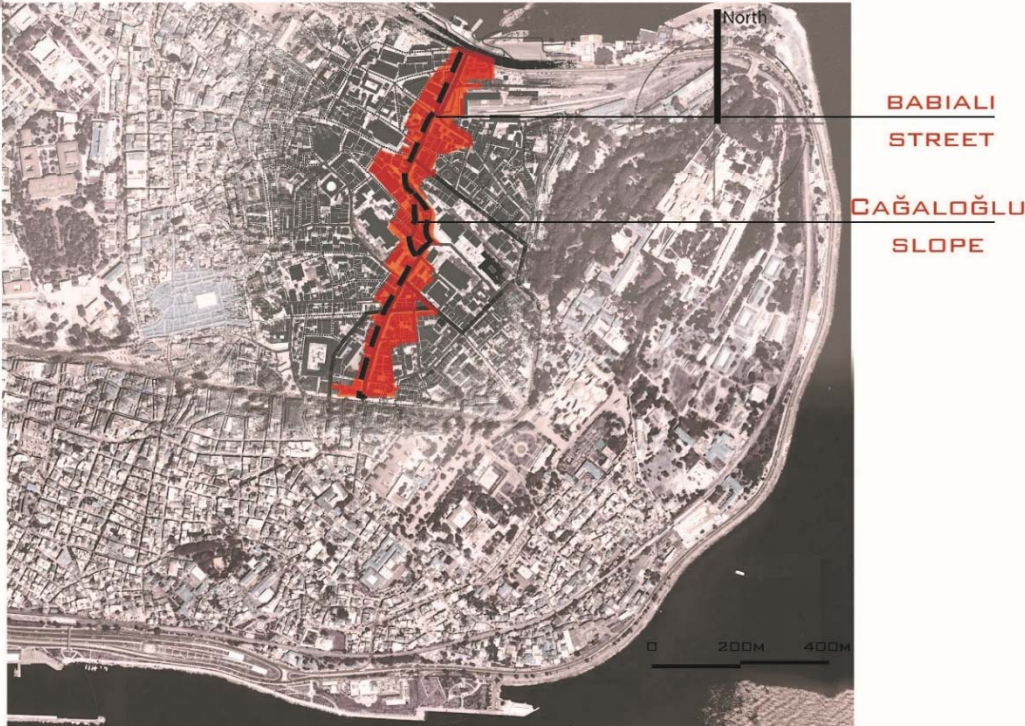
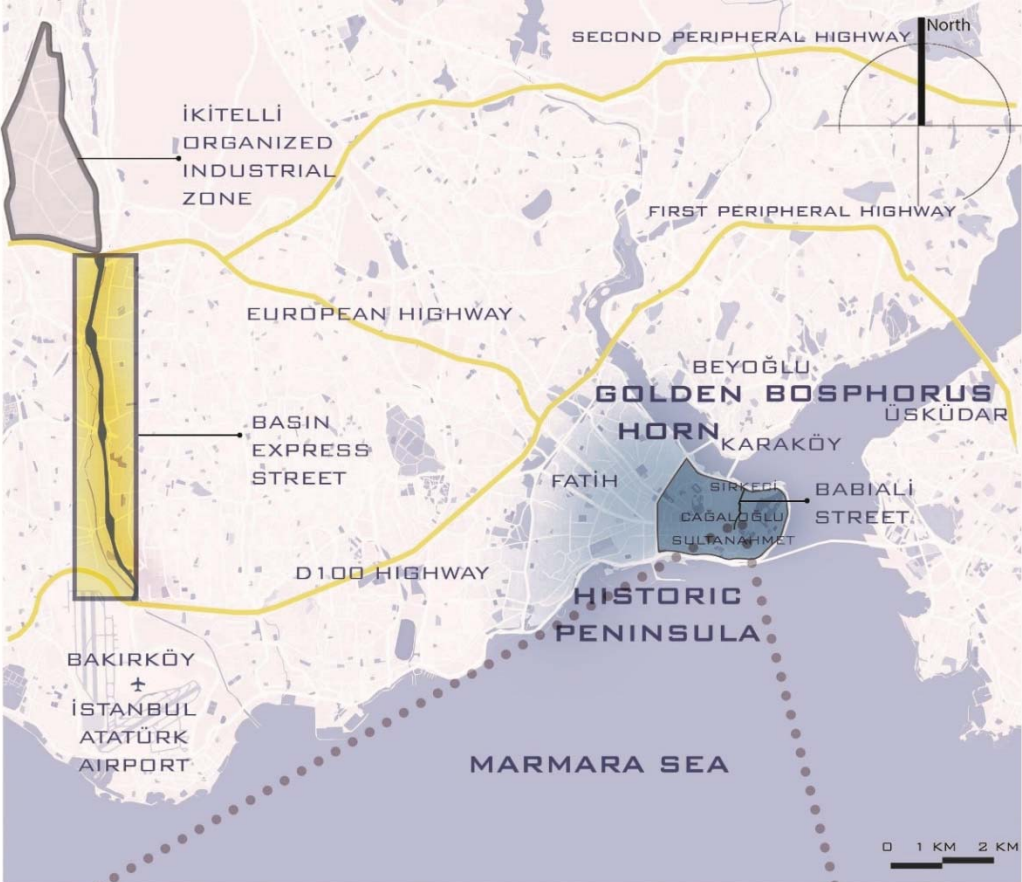


Figure 2.3: The location of Babiali Street (by the Author, 2022).

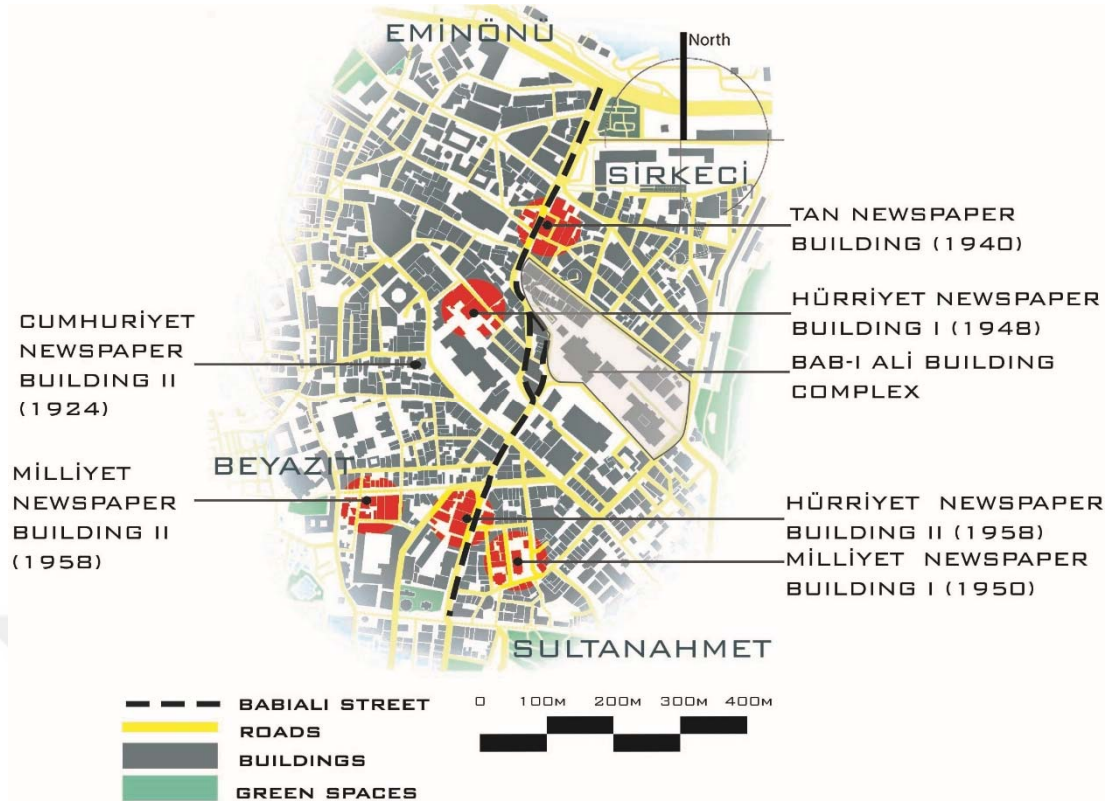


Figure 2.4: Koloğlu (1998) remarks some of first printing houses in Babiali (by the Author, 2022).

During the First World War, the press was subject to mandatory control, and many newspapers were forced to close due to martial law and paper shortages (Koloğlu, 1985). In this period, newspapers mostly operated within the scope of their political and military purposes. Following the war newspapers such as *İleri*, *Yeni Gün*, *Akşam*, and *Vakit* supported the National Struggle, which was led by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), who was the founder of modern Turkey.

After a successful military campaign against the invading armies, the new Turkish Republic was established from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. With the abolition of the sultanate on 1 November 1922, and the foundation of the Republic of Turkey on 29 October 1923, Istanbul lost its capital city status as Ankara became the administrative center of modern Turkey. As a result of those political developments Babiali lost its political status in the new state, but retained its key role in Turkish press.

In the Republican Era, some fundamental changes have been made to modernize the state and society. The political, economic, and social systems have been reorganized according to Western culture. The abolition of religious schools, the caliphate (1924),

the Hat Law (1925) and, the adoption of the Gregorian calendar (1925), are the key reforms of the modernization program led by the Republican elite. In particular, the use of the Latin alphabet instead of the Arabic scripts in 1928 significantly affected the press and some newspapers were closed. Thousands of old books in stocked at the warehouses had suddenly become unusable, and unsellable (İşli, 2006). Many publishing houses in Babiali could not adapt to this change and therefore ceased to operate. While the alphabet reform initially caused a decrease in the circulation of newspapers, in the following years, in line with the increasing literacy rate, the number of newspapers circulated also amplified (Koloğlu, 2020). The first Press Law of the Republican Era was passed in 1931, and the newspapers promoted the Ottoman Sultanate were closed (Koloğlu, 2020). *Cumhuriyet*, *Akşam*, *Tan*, and *Son Posta* became the most popular newspapers between 1931 and 1938 in Turkey.

Following the early years of the young Republic, Turkey entered into another difficult phase in the late 1930s. Atatürk's death in 1938 and the broke of the World War II in the following year adversely affected Turkey. Although Turkey could stay out of the World War II, it was affected by all devastating impacts of the war. The nation has gone through a difficult economic time as a result of a number of factors, including the exceptional rise in military budget, the difficulty to import and the decline in crop production. The media struggled to survive under the severe controls of the government. Under the single-party rule, and extraordinary war-time measures taken by the government, press freedom was substantially restricted, and various laws were passed to control the press between 1938 and 1945 (Koloğlu, 2020). In this period, newspapers supporting different political ideologies could be closed down by the Council of Ministers without any convincing reason.

The post-World War II conjuncture has influenced Turkey as well as the vast majority of the world's countries. The new world order has been determined by two opposing ideologies: Western democracy and communism. The first steps toward a multi-party system and, thus, embryonic seeds of democracy in Turkey came in 1945. İsmet İnönü, the president of the ruling Republican Peoples Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi) made a sharp shift in politics and declared that Turkey, in line with Western countries, could no longer continue on the single-party political system. The very same year also saw one of the darkest incidents in Turkish press history. In line with the increasing American influence in Turkish politics after the World War II, communism became

one of the most disliked concepts in Turkish politics. The ruling elites therefore conducted a very strict anti-communism campaign in Turkey. Known as Tan Raid (Tan Baskını) on 4 December 1945, the printing house of the newspaper *Tan* was brutally attacked by mobs who charged the newspaper with making communist propaganda (Sertel, 2001) (Figure 2.5, Figure 2.6). This infamous attack showed its impacts and many left-oriented newspapers and magazines were closed by the government in the following periods (Topuz, 1973).



Figure 2.5: Tan Newspaper Building in Cağaloğlu (Url-3). It also housed the *Milliyet* newspaper.

As one of the founding members of this newspaper, journalist Zekeriya Sertel mentions this attack in his memoir with these words: “The printing house was attacked with the axes... They broke the printing machines with sledgehammers... The paper rolls were split on the roads from Ankara Street towards Sirkeci” (Sertel, 2001, p.231). Despite the attack and the close of the *Tan* many newspapers, magazines and books continued to be published by Tan Printing House, including *Istanbul Ekspres* newspaper and *Istanbul Encyclopedia* (Civelekoğlu, 2014). However, a massive blast called Sirkeci Explosion (Sirkeci İnfilakı), occurred on 6 January 1959 on a nearby building ruined the Tan Printing House (Figure 2.7).



Figure 2.6: During the attack on Tan Raid (Url-4).



Figure 2.7: Sirkeci Explosion destroyed many buildings including Tan Printing House (Url-5).

In the 1950s, with the transition to a multi-party system, the press made major progress for many causes. With the proclamation of the first Democrat Party (DP) government on 22 May 1950, a tendency to liberalism was seen in Turkey (Gül, 2018). The government implemented “economically open-minded and integrated policies with world capitalism” (Gevgilili, 1983, p.221). Firstly, with the shift to liberalism in political and economic life, diversified newspapers came into sight. The government’s permission and license to publish newspapers were abolished according to the new Press Law on 21 July 1950. Under this new system newspapers became dependent primarily on advertising and circulation revenues rather than government’s support. Secondly, the introduction of linotype machines accelerated newspaper production. Modern printing and journalism methods began to enter the press, and the daily circulation rose to 70 to 80 thousands for the first time in Turkish press history (Gevgilili, 1983). Thirdly, the number of newspapers with rich content has grown. As more news and photographs were included, a great increase in newspaper print was observed. The two newspapers with wide circulations, *Hürriyet* in 1948 and *Milliyet* in 1950, were founded in Babiali by using modern printing techniques (Gevgilili, 1983). Especially *Hürriyet* became the symbol of “the transition from elite journalism to mass journalism with its large and striking photographs, large sports pages, short articles, and interesting news for large groups of people” (Özgentürk, 2003, p.22).

According to Olcayto, the second breaking point in the history of the press was the May 27th, 1960 Military Coup D’état. Although the DP created a liberal environment, and economic improvements in Turkey, particularly in the early 1950s, the political tension between the ruling Democrats and opposition intensified after 1958. Under this cloudy political atmosphere, the government gradually implemented strict rules that affected many segments of the society. The press was one of the sectors adversely affected in this period. The DP rule was cut by a military coup in May 1960 and the Prime Minister and two members of the cabinet were sentenced to death by the military junta.⁷

The post DP period Turkey saw fundamental changes in its political structure, and the restrictions put on the press were taken off in the 1960s. Many books and newspapers

⁷ For further reading; Zürcher, E. (1993). Turkey: A Modern History (pp. 221-278). London: IB Tauris & Co Ltd.

were published during this period (T. Olcayto, personal interview, 6 October 2021). Kolođlu (2020) argues that two major factors pave the way for the press to become media. Firstly, the 1961 Constitution,⁸ which brought richness to newspaper content and therefore appealed to large masses, Secondly, the establishment of private distribution companies like “Gameda” and “Hür-Dađıtm” facilitated newspaper transportation. Moreover, the Turkish Journalists’ Association (Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti) was established on 10 June 1964.⁹

Towards the end of the 1960s, newspapers switched to offset printing and began to be published with colored and illustrated pages. This led to a substantial rise in newspaper circulation and tabloid journalism development (İnuđur, 1982). Additionally, some newspapers, such as *Tercüman*, *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Günaydın*, and *Cumhuriyet* established printing houses abroad for their specific editions in Turkish diaspora in European countries (Kolođlu, 1993). On the other hand, television as a new media tool spread all over Anatolia in a short period of time in 1970s. It has gradually begun to take the place of the newspapers and magazines.

Another major change occurred in those years was the type of ownership of newspapers. While the Turkish press was changing shells between 1950 and 1970, the newspapers were still owned by journalists. During the 1970s, when newspapers needed to be supplied by new technologies, this situation changed. Due to the heavy cost of printing machines, business people started to manage newspapers. This trend accelerated in the following following years, and in the 1980s, small and medium-sized enterprises in the press transformed into media companies. In those years Babıali started to lose its standing as the center of journalism.

2.2 The Early Examples of Newspaper Buildings in Babıali, Fleet Street, and Park Row

For many years, newspapers in Babıali have been published in buildings that were not specially designed for them. Newspaper owners usually rented some floors of existing houses and mansions in the region and used them as offices. Different newspapers

⁸ Owing to this constitution, the closure of newspapers and magazines, and publication bans began to be regulated by laws.

⁹ Its purpose is to protect the profession of journalism, the traditions and moral principles, and to ensure freedom of communication and thought (Turkish Journalists’ Association).

have been located on different floors of the same building, and they preferred to use the basement as a common printing room. As newspapers operated with limited financial resources, the old printing machines were used jointly by several newspapers. They have been placed on the lower floors of buildings because they are bulky and noisy (Figure 2.8). On the other hand, the distribution of newspapers was also an important issue because it was provided by trucks that were driven out on the narrow slope of Cağaloğlu. Sertel (2001) mentions that the newspapers published until the 1950s were technically weak and therefore had low circulations. The following expression draws an overall view of ‘Babiali journalism’:

The headquarters, printing houses, and warehouses of all the major newspapers broadcasting throughout the country were located within a radius of 500 meters. Dozens of publishing houses and hundreds of small printing houses were operating. There were paper makers, printing material dealers, bookbinders, paper porters, restaurants, and coffee shops that fed them. It was possible to come across an author whose book you read on the street every day (Anar et. al., 2020, p. 233).



Figure 2.8: An old newspaper printing machine (by the Author, 2022). In Press Museum, Babiali.

The *Cumhuriyet*,¹⁰ one of the most influential newspapers, has been published in a three-storey wooden mansion in Cağaloğlu (Figure 2.9). It was also known as the Red or Pink Mansion (Pembe Köşk) due to the color of the wood. It housed the *Cumhuriyet*

¹⁰ It was established on 8 May 1924 by Yunus Nadi, Zekeriya Sertel and Nebizade Hamdi to promote Republican regime.

from 1924 to 1974 (Bayer, 2018). Prior to *Cumhuriyet*, the building served as the headquarters (Merkezi Umûmî) of the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki Partisi) between 1908 and 1918 (Arpacık, 2019). The first and second floors were used for newspaper production, while the third floor was used as Yunus Nadi's private house. In 1974, the newspaper was moved to the building next to the mansion, and the old building began to be used as storage space (Bayer, 2005). Until 2004, the newspaper operated in new buildings built on the same land. In 2005, the building was abandoned, and *Cumhuriyet* moved to its new house in Şişli (Bayer, 2005).



Figure 2.9: Red Mansion, located on Türk Ocağı Street (Url- 6).

Olcayto attaches particular importance to the *Milliyet* and *Hürriyet* newspaper buildings, which became early examples of newspaper buildings in Babıali (T. Olcayto, personal interview, 6 October 2021). Both of them have been specifically designed to meet the needs of newspaper production. *Milliyet* Newspaper¹¹ was firstly established in Çatalçeşme Street in Cağaloğlu (Topuz, 2003). “After becoming a brand there, this building started to become small and moved to its new building on Nuruosmaniye Street. Both printing house and offices are intertwined in this new building” (Güçlü, 2012). The first printing house in Cağaloğlu was built for the

¹¹ It was founded in 1950 by journalist Ali Naci Karacan.

Milliyet in 1964 by Maruf Önal (Önal, 2006) (Figure 2.10, Figure 2.11). The newspaper building draws attention with its modern and rationalist design in the 1960s. As *Milliyet* leaves Babiali in the 1990s, its old building saw a radical remodeling and was turned into a restaurant (Kardüz, 2011) (Figure 2.12).

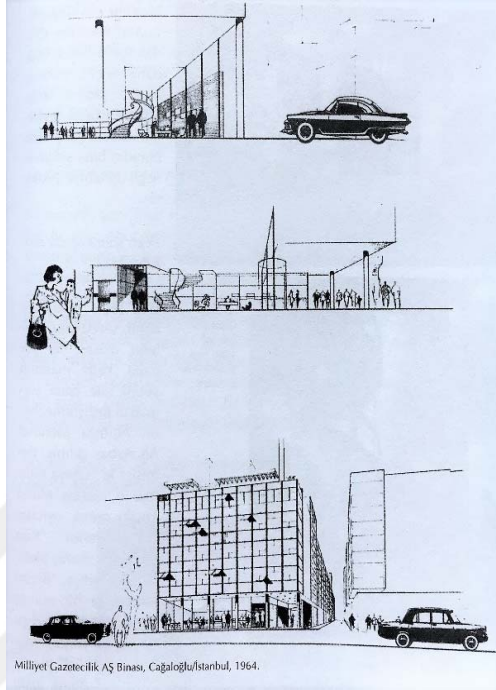


Figure 2.10: The sketches of *Milliyet* Newspaper Headquarters by Maruf Önal in 1964. (Maruf Önal, TMMOB İstanbul Metropolitan Branch archives).



Figure 2.11: The entrance hall and spiral stairs of *Milliyet* Newspaper Building. (Maruf Önal, TMMOB İstanbul Metropolitan Branch archives).



Figure 2.12: The remodelled exterior of the building (Url-7).

The newspaper building of *Hürriyet*¹² presents another representative sample of modern architecture during the 1950s. As the newspaper grows rapidly, Sedat Simavi, the founding owner, decided to have a specifically designed building for the *Hürriyet* on Babiali Street (Gökman, 1970). Since “*Hürriyet* could no longer fit into cramped and run-down apartments” (Gökman, 1970, p. 16) in 1958, it moved to this modern building (Figure 2.13). Located on Cemal Nadir Street in Cağaloğlu, it was also used as the administrative office by the *Yedigün* magazine (Koloğlu, 2020). In the following years, it housed several newspapers like *Akşam*, *Tercüman*, and *Dünya* (Durbaş, 2017). The old building has now been transformed into a carpet and a jewelry store.

Since the press and politics have always been intertwined, the newspaper buildings positioned themselves close to the administrative center. Babiali bookstores, publishing houses, and newspapers were clustered together in the side streets of Cağaloğlu. This situation is not specific to the Turkish press. The streets in the historic cores have always become the most dynamic sites for obtaining the news and dispersing newspapers in many cities. In the West, the newspaper buildings were also

¹² *Hürriyet* was founded on 1 May 1948 by journalist Sedat Simavi.

lined up along the narrow streets, like the Fleet Street¹³ in London and the Park Row¹⁴ in New York. Both locations have earned a reputation for being the traditional hearts of newspapers (Harris, 2013). These two centers are mostly accepted as the earliest press centers in the Western world (Cressman, 2009).



Figure 2.13: *Hürriyet* Newspaper Building in Cağaloğlu (Özyıldırım, 2018).

Hallin and Mancini's '*Comparing Media Systems*' (2004) provides a detailed analysis of media systems.¹⁵ They group the media systems in the world under three categories: the Liberal Model, the Democratic Corporatist Model, and the Polarized Pluralist

¹³ Fleet Street has been identified with the British press since 17th century (Brooke, 2012). Beginning with Britain's first newspaper, the most influential newspapers of London were founded in Fleet Street (Brooke, 2012). Until the late 20th century, it became a home for journalists. For further reading; Collier, P. (2016). *Modernism on Fleet Street*. Routledge.

¹⁴ Located in Lower Manhattan, Park Row has evolved as "the newspaper mecca of America" since the early 1830s (Turner, 1999, p.14). It was an important hub with regard to commercial, industrial, and residential buildings. Newspapers such as the New York Herald and the New York World were founded on this street. For further reading; Wallace, A. (2012). *Media Capital: Architecture and Communications in New York City*. University of Illinois Press.

¹⁵ Hallin, D. and Mancini, P. (2004). *Comparing Media Systems. Three Models of Media and Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Model. The UK and USA are accepted as examples of the Liberal Model. This group “involves an increasing role of commercial media; informational, politically non-aligned, dramatized professional conventions; and shifts in political communication toward more personalized, marketing-oriented forms of political communication” (Hallin, & Manchini, 2011, p. 8). Since the transformation of the media in Turkey in the 1980s showed similar characteristics, these two examples were particularly emphasized in this study.

Fleet Street, known as “British journalism’s spiritual home” (Haria, 2015), was not the hub of journalism only but also the center of policy, economy, and public life, since the 17th century (Brooke, 2012). With its “bookshops, reading rooms, news rooms, printers’ offices and newspaper publishers” (Hobbs, 2018, p. 73) it was the news core of English newspapers (Figure 2.14). Chalaby (1998), accepts the beginning of journalism in the British press “when the taxes on knowledge were repealed between 1855 and 1861” (p. 32). “Thus, news became an instrument of competition and with competitive pressure forcing press-owners newspapers turned into news organizations since information became a commodity in the trade” (Chalaby, 2008, p. 35) and newspapers developed much more as a powerful business by business people in Fleet Street (Keeble, 2005).



Figure 2.14: Fleet Street in 1906 (Url- 8). It is located in the historic core of London (Schalck, 1964).

Similarly, the Park Row in lower Manhattan was the birthplace of the American press (Figure 2.15). According to Marzolf (1984), by mixing “the elite political newspapers and literary/essay journals with the popular penny or boulevard newspapers, police gazettes, and story papers” (p.529), America led the ‘new journalism’ in the 1830s, which later on became a model for the modern daily newspaper in the Western world. Park Row was well-known for witnessing political and social activities. Famous newspapers, such as the *Tribune*, the *Times*, and the *World*, have their newspaper offices gathered in this area. It is also called Newspaper Row because it's having 950 offices (Churchill, 1958). Again, Park Row was by the side of the political center (City Hall), financial hub (Wall Street), and trading port (East River Ports) (Turner, 1999).



Figure 2.15: The highest newspaper buildings on Park/Newspaper Row at the end of the 19th century. (Url-9). From left to right, the World Building (1890), the Tribune Building (1875), and the New York Times Building (1889).

The *New York Times* was the first newspaper to move to a specifically designed newspaper building on this block. The position and design of the building were chosen intentionally. It was “a declaration that the newspaper regarded itself as a powerful institution in civic life because no politician standing on the broad steps of City Hall could fail to note the newspaper's presence” (Url-9). The Newspaper Row housed news agencies and the first newspapers in New York until the late twentieth century. Most newspapers preferred to move to the new extensive industrial headquarters located in distant places (Wallace, 2012).

A remarkable point about linking between the representation power of architecture and newspaper buildings is marked by Jason M. Barr (Figure 2.16). In his book, Barr (2016) draws attention to the concurrence of the early skyscrapers and newspaper buildings. He asserts that “newspaper publishers became the first developers in the city to use height as a ‘strategic weapon’” (2016, p. 150). The Newspaper Row was not only the place where early newspaper buildings clustered but also the location of the tallest buildings in their lifetime. For this reason, the symbolic role of architecture had been utilized by the print and media industries all along. To demonstrate their permanence and prove their identity, the newspaper companies have built visually striking buildings.

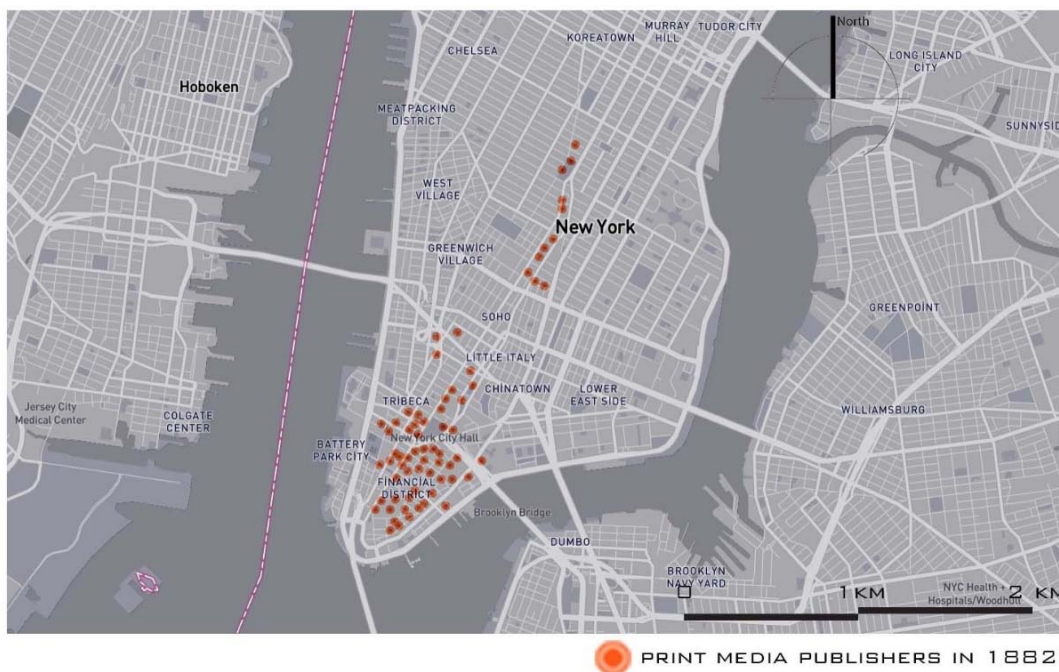


Figure 2.16: Barr (2016, p.150) remarks the density of the printing media industry in Lower Manhattan (by the Author, 2022).

About the architecture of newspaper buildings, Mosley (2013) states that “printing offices were generally normal houses, like the workplaces of weavers, joiners, and other tradesmen. The printer, with his family, occupied some of its rooms, and the presses occupied others” (p. 135). Until the late 19th century, due to technical incompetence, the circulation of newspapers was very small. Hence, newspapers did not need to be published in bigger buildings. During this period, there were no newspaper buildings that were built on purpose. Instead, the existing buildings were used as printing houses.

In these examples, the old newspaper houses agglomerated in the historic centers of cities. They lined up on the streets close to the political and economic headquarters. According to the expressions of journalists, these streets share some common grounds. The press centers' having a home-like atmosphere, journalists getting news on-site and socializing with each other, and newspapers integrating with the public count among these common threads. For instance, according to Fleet Street journalists, it was not only valuable for its position in the city but also "famous for its many bars and pubs, constantly occupied by journalists both socializing and seeking stories" (Cacciottolo, 2016). With regards to Babiali, Güreli points out the value of street culture for the Turkish press by mentioning journalists' stamping grounds such as İstanbul, and Sirkeci Garı Lokantası (Güreli, 2009). As "members of the same community, no matter which newspaper they worked" (Güreli, 2009, p. 137), journalists had long discussions about the daily news. Due to these reasons, Fleet Street which is "Babiali of England" in Atuk's (2009, p.81) words, and Babiali had a significant place in journalism.

2.3 The First Steps Towards a New Media

The newspaper *Tercüman*¹⁶ initiated a transformation of traditional 'Babiali journalism' by moving its headquarters out of the Historic Peninsula. Ünal Sakman, director of the *Tercüman*, describes the parallelism between the rise of the newspaper and the move to the new building as follows:

There was Gediz Han in Cağaloğlu. There were different shops in it. The *Tercüman* Newspaper had only a few rooms. Then, gradually, other rooms and floors began to be taken by *Tercüman* newspaper. Finally, the building was completely used by the newspaper (Url-10).

With the rapid increase in the circulation of the *Tercüman*, its building in Babiali remained incapable of meeting print circulation, and transportation. For this reason, they moved to the "biggest and most modern" press building in 1976, which was built on a very large area outside the city walls in Topkapı (Kaymak, 2019, p.20). This newspaper building, with its unusual and strong architectural form, marks a critical point for both the Turkish press and architecture (Figure 2.17). Since it was the first step of moving off Babiali, the newly built structure became a symbol of

¹⁶ In 1955, under the name of *Hadiselere Tercüman*, it started to be published in its facility in Beşiktaş (Kaymak, 2019).

transformation in the press. Its unprecedented, bold architectural form and the extraordinary load-bearing system, remark an important place in the 20th century Turkish architecture. The building program consists of three different groups separated vertically. The printing house is positioned on the lowest floors, with the vehicle entrances. The three floors are separated for editorial offices, internal management, and social facilities (Kaymak, 2019).



Figure 2.17: *Tercüman* Newspaper Building. It was designed by Günay Çilingiroğlu ve Muhlis Tunca in 1974. Salt Research, Gültekin Çizgen Archives (Url-11).

Although *Tercüman* was the first newspaper moved out of the old city, *Sabah* started the period of the ‘Plaza Press’ in Turkey by establishing its headquarters to İkitelli. *Sabah* newspaper witnessed the conglomeration and monopolization processes in the media as one of the powerful capital groups in Turkey, especially in the 1990s. The *Sabah* Group, which has grown with different investments such as radio and TV broadcasting, banking, and finance in addition to the print media, has become a holding rather than a newspaper company. For this reason, *Sabah* and its building provide valuable information on the transformation from press to media in many ways.

3. THE 1980s, A NEW ERA IN THE MEDIA

3.1 Relocation of Media During the Neoliberal Era

In 1980 Turkey saw its second military intervention in its history. After the coup, the all political parties were closed and Turkey entered into a new phase with new political structure and economic model. In 1983 the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi) came into power and Turgut Özal, who developed the new economic model based on neo-liberalism, became the prime minister.¹⁷ In the 1980s, under the influence of the political, economic, and social conditions shaped by the neoliberal policies both in Turkey and in some other countries, a grand renewal in the media industry began. Due to free-market principles, globalization strategies, and technological developments in the communication sector, the press moved away from its traditional structure and evolved into a media business, especially in the 1990s. The press turned from small-scale production to a large-scaled industry, known as the media. The new media companies became powerful commercial institutions and started to play significant roles in political affairs. The new position of media became evident on both architectural and urban scales. Modest newspaper printing houses have been abandoned for modern ‘newspaper factories’. In this process the İkitelli Organized Industrial Zone (İkitelli Organize Sanayi Bölgesi) became the new media industry hub. It is projected to host 25,000 businesses from Istanbul’s old districts of Fatih, Beyoğlu, and Eminönü (Aksoy & Robins, 1995, p.225).

The industrial sectors moving out of the city are not special to Turkey. With the increasing global economy in the 1970s, large cities in the West, like London and New York, underwent a major change.¹⁸ Those cities saw accelerating automobile transport, immigration, rapid urbanization, and technological advances. As ‘city marketing and image creation’ (Robins & Aksoy, 1995, p. 224) became significant in the

¹⁷ For further reading; Zürcher, E. (1993). Turkey: A Modern History (pp. 278-337). London: IB Tauris & Co Ltd.

¹⁸ Beginning from 1970s, industrial cities transformed into service-based cities (Brenner, Keil, 2013).

globalization process, those cities witnessed modernization in the urban structure. The designation of large-scale urban projects and decentralization programs in city planning led to the displacement of the printing industry. Accordingly, historical news centers were left because of high land values and a limited transportation system. They moved to “less congested and lower-cost areas than central cities” (Sassen, 2000, p.1). All in all, newspaper buildings transformed “from rented space into low buildings to purpose-built signature buildings with press agents and various firms as tenants” (Wallace, 2012, p.10).

Another major point that should be noted is that the the computer and internet technology that gained great momentum in the 1990s. The arrival of computers in journalism resulted in the pre-press process becoming shorter and newspapers being published better quality. The transition from the older Linotype machines¹⁹ to the offset printing technique played a crucial role in this transformation. Most newspaper owners adopted this new technology in their offices due to its low plate costs and high printing speed (Cole & Harcup, 2010). At the end of the 20th century, as the production capacity of the newspaper industry increased, the printing houses transformed into large-scale commercial companies (Hirst, Thompson & Bromley, 2009). In other words, “the old newspaper office set-up changed as radically as the printing processes themselves” and “old smells and old noises in newspaper buildings” disappeared (Briggs & Burke, 2020, p. 241).

One of the most significant step was taken by Rupert Murdoch, the world's most powerful media mogul, as he moved his headquarters from Fleet Street (Kirkland, 2007). By building a new, high-technology printing plant at Wapping, he started the ‘Wapping Revolution’ (Wintour, 1986). This rigid and voluminous news production facility for News Corporation affected traditional ‘Fleet Street journalism’ adversely (Figure 3.1). In the words of a Fleet Street journalist: “By 1988, most national newspapers had moved away from Fleet Street to other parts of London, adopting new, cheaper computerized printing technology; swapping the merciless screeching of hot metal print for the gossipy whispers of keyboards” (Cacciottolo, 2016). Rupert

¹⁹ In the 1970s and 1980s, the older Linotype and similar hot metal typesetting machines were replaced by phototyping equipment and later by computerized typesetting and page composition systems.

Murdoch, in his speech with the headline ‘*The War on Technology*’, expresses the critical role of this media building with these words:

For the British publishing industry, the computer revolution began in 1986, when we at News Corporation moved our operations out of Fleet Street to a new high-tech plant at Wapping in London’s Docklands... The immediate result of our victory was greater freedom and flexibility, and higher profits, for News Corporation (Murdoch, 1990, Url- 12).



Figure 3.1: The headquarters of News Corporation is named ‘Wapping Village’ (Pitcher, 2012).

Since neoliberal urban policies and globalization strategies have changed city structure, “a wide range of media outlets have proliferated throughout most of the western world” (Schultz, 1998, p.111). Media, as a rapidly evolving sector, has been placed in central business districts which are designated by these plans. As Edwards (1992) remarks, “the revolution in information technology during this period led to a range of new building types and a tendency towards urban decentralization” (p.11). London witnessed a great urban transformation project with the London Docklands Project whose phase three was developed in 1990s (London Docklands Corporation) (Figure 3.2). It aims to shift industrial facilities from the historical city center to “a vital extension of London” (Edwards, 2013) and to transform old docklands into mild-industrial and business districts. After the ‘Wapping Revolution’ in 1986, new media

centers moved to the designated Enterprise Zones²⁰ like Canary Wharf and the The Isle of Dogs. Fleet Street, with its “old pressrooms mixed with the residues of truck fumes, newsprint, and decades of grime” (Chenoweth, 2002, p. 29) fell from favor, and those enterprise zones became the new centers of media firms in the 1990s.



Figure 3.2: A view from London Docklands Project (Url- 13).

3.2 The Move from Babiali to İkitelli

In Turkey the situation was the same. In “the post-1980 period when globalization and liberalization dominated the Turkish economy” (Boratav, Yeldan & Köse, 2000, p.23), the media expanded in all respects as a rising sector. Within the scope of the neo-liberal program²¹ drafted by Özal and announced on 24 January 1980, the process of integration into the world economic order began (Boratav et al., 2000). Sönmez (2003) states that Özal attached particular importance to the media to find social support for the economic, political, and cultural transformation in the country. Because of mergers and profitable revenue growth, the media has become a highly sought-after investment. As a consequence of Turkey’s liberalization policies, the subvention for paper has been removed by the government (Koloğlu, 1993). Therefore, the press became a proponent

²⁰ Enterprise Zones provide incentives for new industrial and commercial developments (Church, 1988, p. 190).

²¹ Meaning minimal government intervention and regulation, neoliberal programs hinged on ‘24th January Decisions’ which were supported by the IMF and the World Bank (Boratav, 2006).

of a free-market economy. Several newspapers could not afford the high prices, and closed down. Yet the promotions, advertisements and sweepstakes provided a great opportunity for new newspapers to be sold in large quantities. During this period, powerful media establishments like Hürriyet Group, Media Holding (*Sabah*), and Doğan Group (*Milliyet*) dominated the media industry.

During this period, urban space has become one of the founding elements of the neoliberal globalization project to attract capital flows, finance, and transnational investment (Keyder, 2010, p.186). Derived from discourses like ‘global city’ and ‘world city’, Istanbul “witnessed the second largest redevelopment program in its modern history” (Gül, 2017, p. 159). The decentralization of heavy industry outside the city and the transformation of the areas abandoned by the industry into business centers, hotels, luxury residences, and shopping centers marked this period (Keyder & Öncü, 1993). Bedrettin Dalan, the mayor of Istanbul between 1984 and 1989, took the lead in this change. Keyder (2010) expresses Dalan’s Istanbul with these words:

He cut through the old fabric of the city with his new boulevards, tore down the old manufacturing districts around the Golden Horn, built new parks and waterfront spaces, and created incentives for industry to move out of the city to the periphery beyond the urban area. After Dalan's rebuilding, Istanbul became ready for the next stage of spatial transformation, much more in line with the requirements of the new global era (Keyder, 2010, p.181).

Istanbul’s urban fabric changed dramatically with major urban projects during this period.²² While Istanbul had a monocentric urban structure until the 1950s, under the influence of population growth, advanced telecommunication, construction of bridges, and peripheral highways, the city began to have a polycentric structure in the 1980s (Dökmeci, Berköz, 1994). The aim was to “enhance the image of the city and to brand it in international markets for tourism, business, and international organizations” (Enlil, 2011, p.15). The city expanded outwards and new subcenters gained importance. “The centerpiece of Dalan’s redevelopment” (Gül, 2017, p. 159) was the Revitalization of the Golden Horn (Haliç) by decentralizing industry.²³ Babıali lost its

²² The construction of Tarlabası Boulevard in Beyoğlu, road enlargements on the European shores of the Bosphorus, a coastal road connecting Üsküdar to Harem, and the construction of the second suspended bridge over the Bosphorus have become leading projects during the Dalan Era (Gül, 2017).

²³ The press has been accepted as an industry which needs to be developed in the region of organized industrial complexes in The Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1985-1989) and Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (1990-1994).

significance in the press sector towards the end of the 1980s, and İkitelli became the new center of various industries particularly the media industry (Figure 3.3).

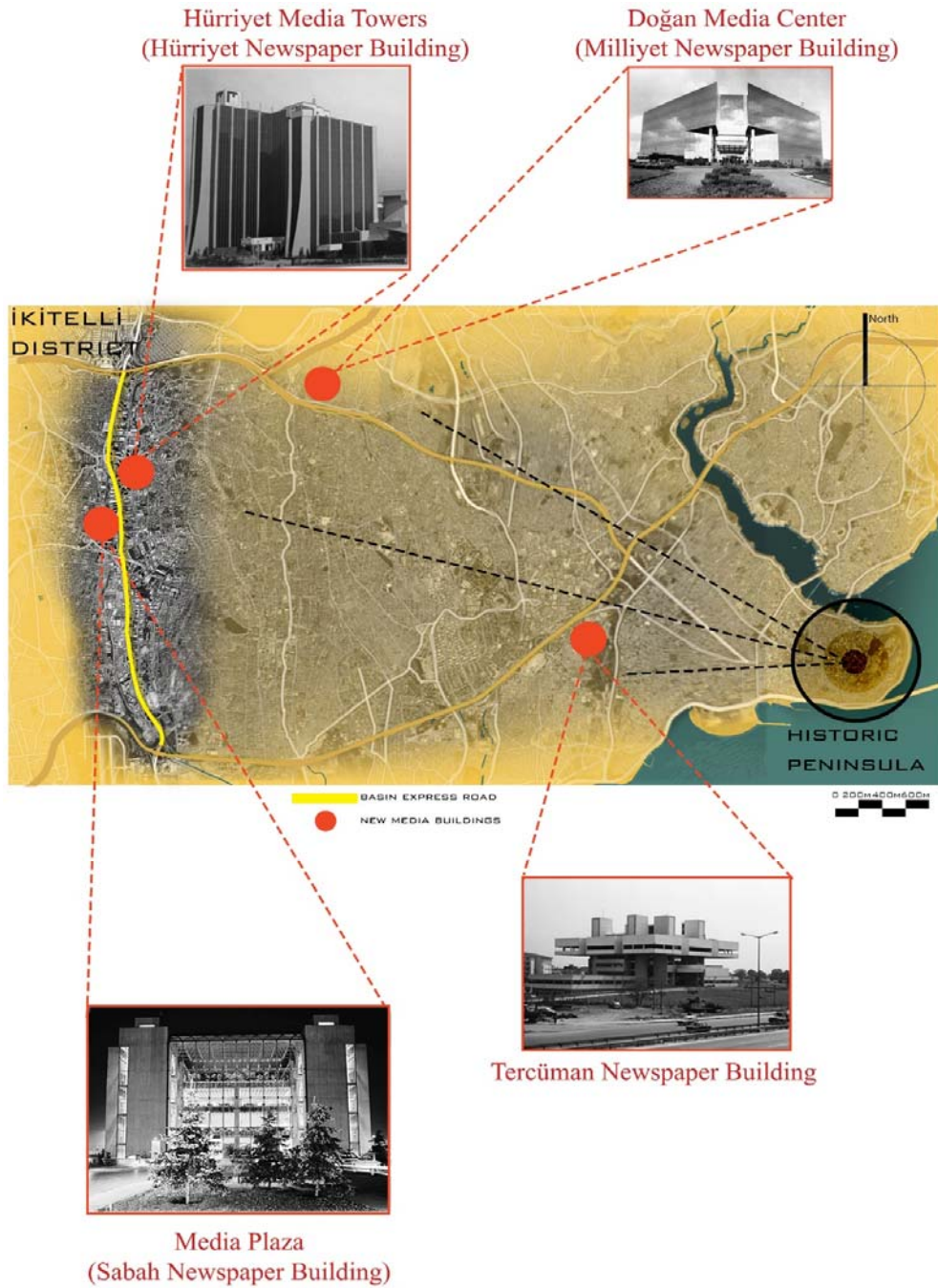


Figure 3.3: New media centers around İkitelli district (by the Author, 2022).

There are several reasons behind this move. First, as noted above, old newspaper buildings could not be rigged with new printing machines because they were too small and not suitable for new media companies' requirements. Journalist Nezhir Demirkent, argues that keeping up with the times has become a necessity for all newspapers. "In the 1980s, when mass communication had turned into an industrial field, the only way

was to modernize newspapers both ideologically and technologically” (2003, p.84) (Figure 3.4). Journalist Haluk Şahin, who witnessed the press shift from Babiali to İkitelli, believes one of the reasons for this shift was Cağaloğlu's failure to meet the paper delivery:

When paper trucks came to the Cağaloğlu, because of its quite narrow street, the problem of traffic congestion came up, which decelerated the delivery and distribution of newspapers. Therefore, the idea of moving outside of the city to a quiet, non-congested area close to the airport was born (Özgentürk, 2008, p.219).

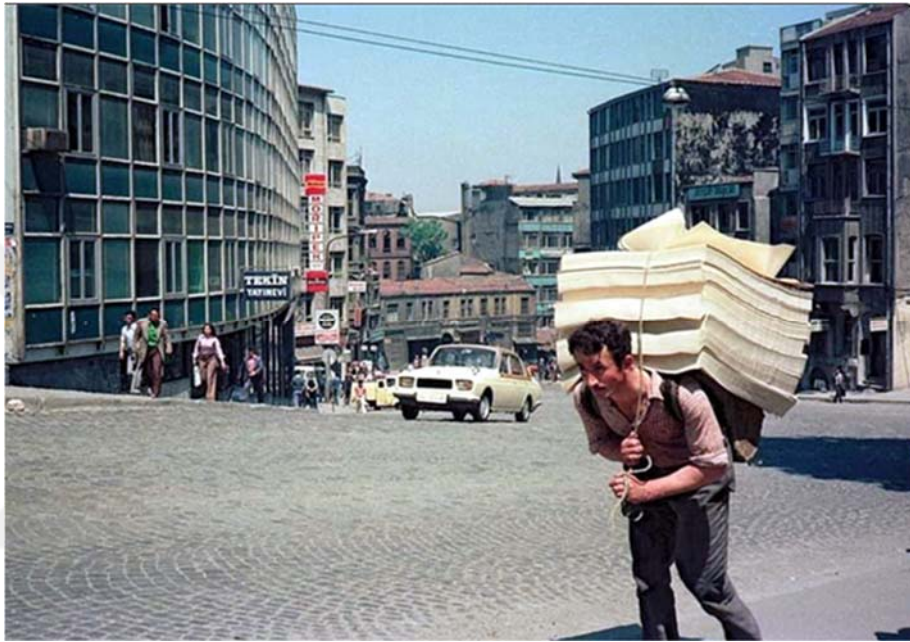


Figure 3.4: Cağaloğlu in 1976. Since ‘Babiali journalism’ had a much more labor-intensive system, for printing, papers were carried either by paper carriers or by trucks to the nearby printing houses (Url-15).

Second, for the newspaper companies, it was important to be close to an airport because the papers were distributed to the remote parts of Anatolia by air. Güneşli, İkitelli and Bakırköy were preferred because they were close to the airport and had no traffic congestion (Özgentürk, 2008, p.219). Third, in the mid-1980s, thanks to advances in computer technology, offices and printing houses were no longer to be located together. In other words, “you could now prepare your newspaper in a central location and send it to the printing house with a single click by pressing a few buttons” (Özgentürk, 2008, p. 219). The offices no longer have to be in the city center. In addition to this, the vast lands outside the city were cheaper and suitable for establishing large facilities. Investments in organized industrial zones was encouraged by the state. Hence as a result of increased sales and distribution of newspapers,

transition to offset machines and media monopoly, “the break with Babiali had begun” (T. Olcayto, personal interview, 6 October 2021). Media proprietors built their modern structures equipped with the new technology in this remote place. Gül, (2017) draws attention to the fact that this move initiated a new period in the Turkish press with the following expression:

As part of this transformation, the modest headquarters of Turkish newspapers in the old city were replaced by lavish plazas in their remote new location near Atatürk Airport and, therefore, the new era of Turkish media became known as ‘Plaza press’ or ‘İkitelli press’ (Gül, 2017, p.201).

The Basın Ekspres Street has emerged as a premier business and service attraction. The road connects the D100 and Trans European Motorways (TEM, now E80) in the area close to the Atatürk Airport. The opening of these roads leads off to new settlements and media centers. Besides media centers lining up on these roads, many large-scale projects, such as the first shopping malls, private universities, and hospitals, were carried out around this area in the 1990s. Small industrial sites, business centers, and residences sprawled around this area with the rapid development of transportation opportunities, industrialization, and export marketing. “With the attraction of capital flows, finance, and transnational investment, the city was physically re-structured” (Keyder, 2010, p.186). The İkitelli and Güneşli districts have turned into major subcenters with modern office buildings. Because of its advantages in transportation and infrastructure, business people have made excessive investments in this area.

The owner of the *Sabah*, journalist Dinç Bilgin, took the first step and constructed his new Media Plaza Building on the Basın Ekspres Street in İkitelli. The transition from ‘craftsmanship to professionalism in journalism’ (Adaklı, 2006, p.136) became concrete in modern and stylish-looking ‘media factories’ established far from the city center. After *Sabah*, *Milliyet* moved to Doğan Media Center (Milliyet Gazetesi Tesisleri) in Mahmutbey in 1994 (Figure 3.5). The building was designed by Hayati and Murat Tabanlıoğlu for *Milliyet* (Yapı, 1994). Located on 40,000 square meters of land on the TEM, this media center brought industrial functions, offices, and administration rooms together under the name of Doğan Media Group. The open office system was preferred inside of it. An inner garden is located on the main entrance axis. It is covered with a transparent eave of radial steel construction, which directs all the

information gathered from the outside inwards and symbolizes the function of the building (Yapı, 1994). The printing hall, packaging, and shipping departments have been placed on the ground floor. The upper floors have been reserved for the pre-press units. For this construction, journalist Abbas Güçlü uses these words:

Our new building was magnificent. Just like an oasis in the desert. It was not easy to transit from the building in the heart of Istanbul's thousands-year-old heritage to this building in Bağcılar, which was mostly deserted at the time (Güçlü, 2012).



Figure 3.5: Doğan Media Center (Url-15).

After *Hürriyet* was purchased by Doğan Yayın Holding in 1994, the newspaper moved to its new center named Hürriyet Media Towers in İkitelli (Figure 3.6). It was designed by the architect and columnist Aydın Boysan in 1993 (Yapı, 1994) (Figure 3.7, Figure 3.8). Boysan mentions that while “İkitelli was not a good location for the newspaper, in time it became the right location for the newspaper” (Url- 16). It was built on a total area of 60,000 square meters. The facility has been designed to provide modern offices, social areas, parking, and printing houses. With its design in the form of twin business towers, it becomes a significant architectural sample of the 1990s. Leaving Babiali created strong emotional feelings amongst the journalists. Güreli, for example, describes the move from Babiali with these words:

Let's say Babiali was a pole star. The day came, the pole star broke apart and scattered hundreds of stars out of Babiali, for example, to İkitelli, Bağcılar, that is, to the spaces of ‘elite’ districts. They were no longer the celebrities of the Babiali, but the celebrities of the media. Because there was no longer a Babiali (Güreli, 2010, p.146).



Figure 3.6: In the 1990s, while *Hürriyet* was moving away from Babıali (Koloğlu, 1998, p.115).



Figure 3.7: Opening day of Hürriyet Media Towers (Özgentürk, 2008, p.155).



Figure 3.8: An exterior view of Hürriyet Media Towers (Yapı, 1994).

In this period, news production and access to the news have become more practical and faster owing to computer systems. The introduction of new technologies ushered in a new way of working in journalism, which was mirrored in the interior design of media buildings. In the newspaper buildings in Babiali, the lower floors were used as printing and storage areas, while the upper floors were used for offices. Contrary to Babiali buildings, where most journalists work together, with the emergence of a stronger hierarchical structure among journalists, a more fragmented and discrete spatial order has been preferred in new buildings. Employee lifestyles and professional practices in journalism have changed in tandem with the spatial transformation. Barlas (2012) remarks on the importance of the position of Babiali by stating that “In Cağaloğlu, the province, municipality, courthouse, hospitals, restaurants, they were all within walking distance. But İkitelli was a place isolated from the city on a highway” (p.59). Duran states that “Their lifestyles, neighborhoods, vehicles, places of living, and entertainment have changed. Today's journalists live in the ‘Villa-Plazza-Laila’ triangle” (Duran, 2002). This situation is interpreted by a journalist as follows:

I have seen depressed people working in İkitelli’s buildings... They were looking at distant roads unhappily. They wanted to return to the city as soon as possible. Feeling stuck at the top of the mountain, insolubility, fear... I saw the desperation in the size of the building, its unpleasantness, in those mechanical environments in the glass spaces. I saw the good food, elegant lighting, and poor souls in expensive places (Otan, 1995, pp. 140-141).

The business people as new media owners demonstrated their power owing to the modern media centers. Again, this change in the structure of newspaper buildings did not exclusive to the media centers in Istanbul. As mentioned earlier, Park Row was the center of American journalism where late 19th century newspaper office towers agglomerated. Advances in information technology required new and smart newspaper office buildings by the mid-1990s. Because cities became more iconic as a result of globalization, the design of media buildings evolved in this direction (Sklair, 2010). The Hearst Tower can be evaluated as the most visible example of the relationship between architecture and changes in the newspaper industry (Figure 3.9). The strong contrast between the old newspaper building and the high-tech media structure remarks. While the base of the building—the six lowest stories—was built in the Art Deco style in 1928 for the *Hearst* magazine, the new glass tower addition was designed by Norman Foster in 2006 for the media giant, Hearst Communications (Url-17). As the first green commercial building in New York City, Hearst Tower earned LEED Gold in 2012 for its low energy consumption and environmentally friendly construction materials.



Figure 3.9: The Hearst Tower in Manhattan (Url- 17).

4. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION of NEW MEDIA: MEDIA PLAZA

A The manifesto of 'Plaza Press' displayed itself in the architectural design of Media Plaza Building. It was designed by Mehmet Konuralp for the *Sabah* between the years 1987 and 1990. This newspaper initiated changes in the modernization of newspapers. "The Sabah Group was the first to start the 'Bab-1 Telli' days by ending the Babıali period. The smart Sabah-ATV building, which was built on the İkitelli Basın Ekspres Street, is a technological marvel of the period" (Url-18). Although the *Sabah* started its life outside Babıali, its preference to move its headquarters to İkitelli can be considered as the beginning of 'Plaza Press'. It became a role model for others by establishing its building outside the historic context. After *Sabah*, as noted above, other major newspapers such as *Hürriyet* and *Milliyet* moved to their new headquarters in this region. Media giants competed with each other through monumental buildings. "*Milliyet's* headquarters were built to rival *Sabah's* media factory. Its postmodern glass-skinned center was against *Sabah's* modern-looking factory. Both *Milliyet's* Center in Bağcılar and *Hürriyet's* Center in Güneşli became increasingly confrontational with the *Sabah's* media factory" (Seymen & Ataklı, 2001, p. 243).

Gül (2017) states that Media Plaza Building symbolized the new status of Turkish media through its 'simple but elegant design'. The founder of the *Sabah*, Dinç Bilgin²⁴, played an important role in making *Sabah* the 'new print media locomotive of new life' (Seymen & Ataklı, 2001). Media Plaza Building became the visual expression of this reputation. Journalist Ruşen Çakır mentions the *Sabah* as follows:

By the end of the 1980s, the eyes of all newspapers, newspaper managers, and bosses were on *Sabah*. All the newspapers were trying to resemble it or adapt to the new mentality it had created. For this reason, *Sabah* executives called themselves 'the flagship of the media' (Seymen & Ataklı, 2001, p. 98).

²⁴ Dinç Bilgin began his career as an ordinary clerk at İzmir's *Yeni Asır* newspaper. After launching the *Sabah* newspaper in 1985, he started to invest in different sectors such as banking and finance. In 1999, he became the owner of Etibank and Sabah Media group (Yalçın, 2007).

The *Sabah* was launched on April 22, 1985, with its infrastructure based entirely on advanced technology (Url-18). The newspaper was first prepared in a four-story building located in Mecidiyeköy. The newspapers have been prepared electronically and delivered by a page fax system. “As the circulation of the paper increased, it seemed narrow to Dinç Bilgin who considered the *Sabah* as a big project” (Url-18). When the press was about to leave Babıali, Bilgin decided to enlarge the facilities. Since the *Sabah* was a ‘rising star’ in the Turkish press, it needed to be published in a ‘modern building’ (Yalçın, 2007). “In the early years in Mecidiyeköy, *Sabah* was the name of a newspaper. When it moved to the plaza in İkitelli, it became the name of a giant group with its newspapers, magazines, television channels, and radio stations” (Seymen & Ataklı, 2001, p.8). As Atlas (1999) states, Media Plaza became a ‘media factory’ (Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.1: *Sabah* Newspaper Facilities (Media Plaza Building) in İkitelli (Url- 19).

In the 1990s, both media giants, Doğan Holding of Aydın Doğan and Media Holding of Dinç Bilgin, dominated the media industry by controlling many newspapers, magazines, and television channels. The television station ATV, which began

broadcasting on 9 September 1993, was established by Dinç Bilgin (Url-20). Sabah newspaper company has become “Merkez Medya Grubu” with many newspapers, magazines, and ATV. A building called ATV 2000 was built just next to Media Plaza Building, where *Sabah* is located, as a center for information and dissemination (Url-20).

The new complex was in use until 2000 by Media Group. In 2000, to get close to news sources, the Sabah-ATV media group decided to go back to the city. In the *Sabah*, this decision is explained by saying that “ATV News Center is now going to spread literally through life. It will be located in the heart of the city with special design in Teşvikiye Caddesi” (*Sabah*, 2000, September 10). A new office, ATV 2000 Building, once again designed by Mehmet Konuralp in Nişantaşı (Figure 4.2). It became the new *Sabah* newspaper center. According to Konuralp, the reason for this was that media functions surpassed in the 2000s, and therefore could not be carried out in the same building (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). As a journalist, Yüksel Aytuğ expresses the Sabah-ATV media group's return to the city as follows:

I have witnessed how a newspaper and a television station, which have a printing press, studios, news centers, and a cafeteria altogether, create strong synergy. Then we have ripped apart. The printer went to Samandıra, the newspaper in Nişantaşı, then to Balmumcu, and the television set up in İhlamur (Aytuğ, 2020).

Konuralp explains why *Sabah* left the Media Plaza Building: “The facility we created in 1990 progressively transformed into a ‘self-contained’ transatlantic, sailing the seas somewhat laboriously and highly expensive. As a result, organs are deconstructed and each unit is deployed as efficiently and cost-effectively as feasible” (Gönen, 2007, p. 221). On this relocation, Konuralp stated that “in the 2000s, the two functions, which are newspaper preparation and production, have thrived on so much that they could not be together in the same building any more” (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). An editorial writer for *Sabah* Newspaper says: “When we learned of this transfer, we were excited because it would put us in the middle of the action and the story” (Url- 21). Despite the fact that Media Plaza Building was designed to respond the changing needs of journalism, it could not keep up with the new media technology. In contrast to the high-tech structure of the Media Plaza Building, an existing building in Nişantaşı was transformed into the *Sabah*'s new media building through adaptive reuse of architecture.



Figure 4.2: Functions such as the press and editorial offices, administrative departments, and the TV studios is placed inside the building (Url- 22).

Konuralp designed the rhythmic facade of 19th century houses in a modern style, emphasizing that he was influenced by the existing pattern in Teşvikiye Street (Konuralp, 2010). All floors and interiors of the building are arranged for the *Sabah* and television channel Atv (Figure 4.3, Figure 4.4, Figure 4.5). The building appeared to be a 19th century house from the outside, but from the inside, it appears to be a media spaceport. Konuralp uses the phrase “dominates the central hall and symbolizes the spirit of the media world, thanks to a cosmic map” for the conical ventilation element covered with a dome on the seventh floor (Gönen, 2007, p.223). While the building's facade is inspired by historical landscapes, the interior spaces were designed to meet the recent technical requirements of new media like TV studios, broadcasting rooms. As Akın and Batur point out:

In contrast to the static layout of the street facade, which integrates with the district's traditional order, the plan that includes the administration, television, and newspaper-broadcast functions exhibits all of the high technology required by the new and modern use for a media group, as well as the attention to detail that integrates with it (Url-22).



Figure 4.3: Entrance of the Atv 2000 Building (Url-22).



Figure 4.4: The cosmic map and pendulum on the conical ventilation placed on the terrace floor; “acts as the cosmic sky with fiber optic lighting that animates stars” (Gönen, 2007, p.223) (Url-22).



Figure 4.5: In the elevator shaft walls, 20th century documentary exhibits (Url-22).

4.1 Mehmet Konuralp

Mehmet Konuralp was born in Istanbul in 1939 and studied architecture at the Architectural Society School of Architecture (AA) in London between 1960 and 1965 (Konuralp 2012). Batur (2012) underlines that Konuralp's training in an 'elite educational institution like the AA' and the experience of architectural discourses in their context influenced the diversity of Konuralp's design. In this period, new Brutalism and British regionalism were born. "Principles such as the clarity and readability of the function of the design, the honest handling of the material, space, and structural construction were adopted in the world of architecture" (Batur, 2012, p. 48). Brutalism, which is "a modern architectural style, emphasizing heavy, monumental, austere forms and rough surfaces" (Harris, 2005, p. 144) has been effective in Konuralp architecture. Functionalist design, massive structures, large scales, and the display of structural materials such as concrete and steel are the basic principles of brutalist architecture.²⁵ Banham (2011) defines the main principles of brutalism as "memorability as an image, clear exhibition of structure, and valuation of material 'as found'" (p.354). These features stand out in many of Konuralp's design projects. Because Konuralp was educated in London at the place and time where brutal architecture was born.

After finishing his studies in Urbanism at Leverhulme Department of Planning and Urban Design of the same school in 1966 on the subject of 'Urbanism and architecture in underdeveloped countries', Konuralp returned to Turkey (Konuralp, 1990). He began his professional life in 1968 under the name Mehmet Konuralp Architecture and Engineering Office and in 1982 Konuralp A.Ş. was established in Istanbul. Bilgin notes that the architectural environment in Istanbul was completely different from London in the 1960s. Konuralp (2012a) explains his return to the country by stating that "-In the 1940s and 1950s, Turkey had adopted a completely inward-looking policy but it changed. Old assumptions questioned, and with new questions, exciting future paradigms experienced in the 1960s" (Konuralp, 2012a, pp. 148-149).

²⁵ Brutalism is derived from a French expression - beton brut - meaning rough or raw concrete. After WWII, brutalism became a rising trend in architecture. It puts an emphasis on materials, construction and expressive forms. Alison and Peter Smithson led British Brutalism in the 1950s and 1960s. For further reading; Henley, S. (2019). Redefining Brutalism. Routledge.

In the mid-1980s, Özal's neoliberal policies enabled architecture to have a wide variety. Previously, modernism had predominated in architecture, but since the 1980s pluralism and postmodernism have come to the forefront (Hasol, 2017). Liberal policies, new building materials, major global movements of thought, and information technology have swept the country. In this environment, because of his valuable intellectual training, Konuralp has become one of the main names of the practice of high technology architecture in Turkey. Media Plaza Building became a prime example of that kind of practice. Konuralp also contributed to both the theory and practice of architectural design. Besides his projects, he lectured in universities and wrote articles on architecture and urbanism. In 2010, he was awarded the 'Mimar Sinan Büyük Ödülü' by Chamber of Architects of Turkey (Mimarlar Odası) for his contribution to Turkish architecture (Url- 23).

4.2 Mehmet Konuralp's Design Approach and Works

His architecture is characterized by modernism, technology, and brutalism. In his speech, Konuralp describes architecture as “far from a monotonous character and open to the richness and different ideas” (Konuralp, 2012b, p.126). He defines ‘per sona’ as the various masks worn by theater actors and ‘per sonare’ as the character speaking through a mask (Konuralp, 2010, p. 126). Konuralp (2010) claims that:

In architecture, per sonare refers to the masks we wear for the play. Masks, on the other hand, include a variety of roles such as academic economist, and businessman. The architect's personality can be seen as the integration of various environments and personal abilities. In this context, the architect's per sonare talent shines through. With their various colors and shapes, masks reflect a specific personality trait. However, masks are opaque, do not move, and provide their essential value per sonare. It is also proportional to the actor's ability (Konuralp, 2010, pp. 126-127).

In terms of design principles, Konuralp states that his interests in travel, photography, and helicopter piloting inspire him. Konuralp compares his architecture to flying. “Because all of the tools we call cross control like architecture, must be controlled at the same time. While I'm thinking about the plumbing pipe, I'm also thinking about the color of the room” (Url-24). He gets ideas for his diverse designs by reading books on anatomy and scientific journals like *Scientific American* and *National Geographic*. “To be able to bring together things from zoomorphology or other disciplines and apply them to architecture is a very colorful source of inspiration” he says (Url-24).

Konuralp had been influenced by the “neo-brutalist movement... the utopian experiences of the Archigram group in the 1970s and 1980s” (Konuralp, 1990, p. 72) on the one hand, and the lessons about architectural vocabulary's connection with history in the AA on the other. According to Kuban (2012), he grew up during a period when modern architecture preserved fundamental principles such as functional fiction and structural intelligibility. Similarly, Bilgin (2012) defines the foundation of Konuralp architecture as three basic principles. These are Louis Kahn's brutalism, a neo-rationalism originating in Italy and Central Europe, and a technology incidental to British culture. Konuralp, recalling the analogy explains his perspective on function and aesthetics in design as follows:

Are we debating the aesthetics of an airplane right now? Naturally, the shape of an airplane reflects whatever is required of it, whatever its function is. Currently, there is no such approach in buildings. Instead of performing its function, its beauty and ugliness are discussed first. This is the wrong approach. Whatever the building's function, it should be reflected (Konuralp, 2012a, p.230).

Konuralp acknowledges that Louis Kahn is the source of his brutalist mindset. The ability to distinguish between outside and inner space, as well as to see the volumes separately, is one of Kahn's talents that Konuralp admires (Konuralp, 2003). The architect Konuralp describes his design philosophy as follows: “More than following any architectural trend or historical approach, I believed that things should be done more organically, without fleeing the style, simplified, whether tried or not” (Konuralp, 1991, p.94).

According to him, a building is created by combining the two movements, brutalism, and functionalism. He defines brutalism as a form strategy and thus an aesthetic tool, and functionalism as the ideology that is used to produce that shape. “A work becomes universal and timeless if specific functions are the source of aesthetics and if those functions produce aesthetics” he states (Url-24). Konuralp emphasizes that simply adhering to one particular architectural style is insufficient, and contends that a structure can stand the test of time if its design helps people solve their daily concerns. Hence, Konuralp prioritizes geometry because it offers various options on the design layout. “The selection of certain geometric forms of human behavior is the same everywhere in the world” he says (Konuralp, 2012c, p. 224).

Konuralp's special importance to the relationship between building function and geometry is visible in the project The Directorate of Highways in Zincirlikuyu (Karayolları 17. Bölge Müdürlüğü) (Figure 4.6). The complex includes administrative, technical, and social functions, as well as lodging buildings. The mass of the main high-rise building was designed by the existing internal and external road network, as well as the functional requirements of an administration center. Kuban describes the structure as follows: “This office building on the ring road, with its currently fashionable dark glass-dominated mass, is an instant draw in the Istanbul urban landscape thanks to subtle mass movements, consistency of proportions, meticulous craftsmanship, and lovely and well-thought-out details” (Url- 26). It was listed as a cultural asset in 2004 under the Committee on Conservation of Number 3 Cultural Assets in Turkey (3 No’lu Kültür Varlıkları Koruma Kurulu).²⁶



Figure 4.6: The Karayolları Building, Istanbul's first multi-story business center, was completed in 1980 (Url-25).

²⁶ The choice was made for a number of reasons, including the building's awareness in the use of high-rise structures on the Zincirlikuyu-Levent axis, its distinction as Turkey's first structure with a suspended facade, and its significance as a case study in the use of innovative building techniques and materials in Turkey (Url-25).

According to Kuban (2012), Konuralp adopted the basic principles of the modernist style: “All of the characteristics such as geometric approach, modular plan, axuality, simplicity, or the lines that guide the design defined by Le Corbusier can be found in his projects” (Kuban, 2012, pp. 36-37). The prominent examples of Konuralp’s projects are Göztepe Apartmanları I, II, III; TC Karayolları 17. Bölge Müdürlük ve İdari Binası; Maçka Sanat Galerisi; Sağra Evi ve Misafirhanesi; Sabah Gazetesi İdari ve Matbaa Tesisleri, 1989-1990, ATT Tekstil Sanayi Tesisi ATV Stüdyoları ve Sabah Gazetesi Merkez Binası in 1999-2000, İş Bankası Şube ve Hizmet Binası, Cam Kule in 2006 (Konuralp, 2012).

Konuralp has diversified design projects. He designs a house for two families in Ordu by taking into consideration of traditional customs (Figure 4.7). The privacy issue is solved by raising living quarters from ground level and some visual limitations (Konuralp, 1991). Residence and guest house were planned as separate masses.



Figure 4.7: Sağra Home and Guesthouse (Sağra Evi ve Misafirhanesi) (Url-27).

The ATK Textile Factory in Çerkezköy, built-in 1993-1995, is an example of an industrial complex. Konuralp used zoomorphology in this design (Figures 4.8, Figure 4.9). To create a large machine hall that is completely free of partitions he designs a ‘zoomorphological beam’ (Konuralp, 2010, p.45).

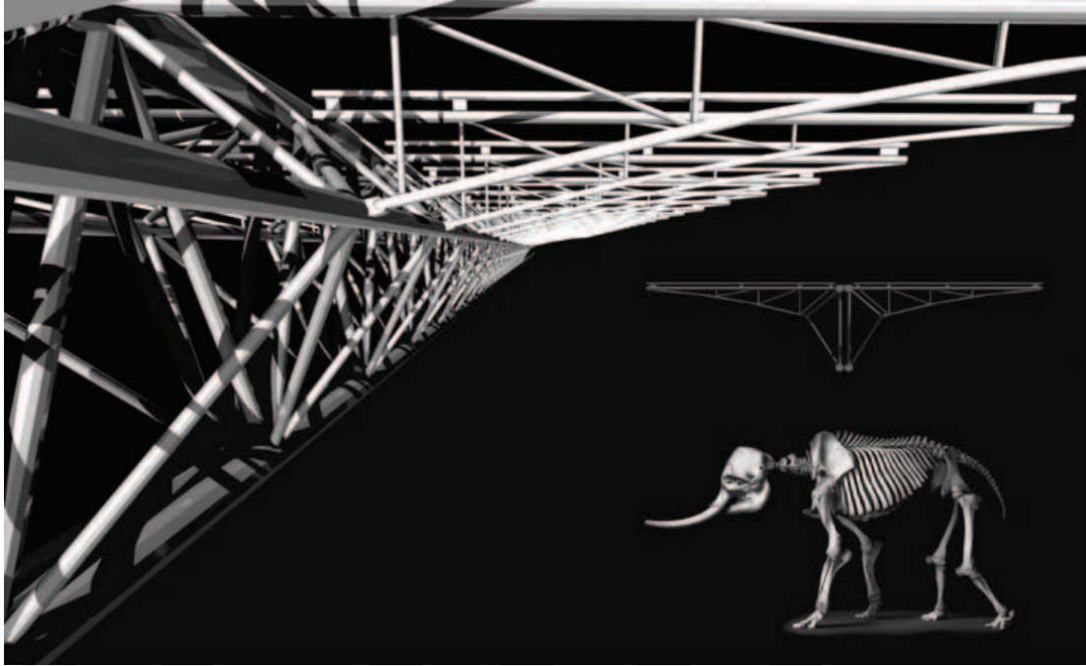


Figure 4.8: The steel carrier system was inspired by an animal vertebra. Konuralp explains his design by saying “Everything is hidden in nature as long as you see” (Betonart, p. 63).



Figure 4.9: In this factory, 50-meter-wide skeleton system was based on animal spines (Url- 28).

4.3 The Architectural Characteristics of Media Plaza Building

Sabah Newspaper Printing and Management Facilities (Sabah Gazetesi Baskı ve İşletme Tesisi) was completed in 1990. The following is how journalist Uluç describes this building:

That was the world's most perfect newspaper building. It was designed as a newspaper office. Our workplaces were very nice, but that wasn't the main point. There were recreational areas that brought us together. Dining rooms... Yes, the corridors... Immaculate, gleaming... Beyti's fragrant meals. More than half of the newspaper was born at those dining tables because they allow people to interact with one another. During those dinner discussions, headlines and columnist topics were almost written. Gym, indoor pool, bar, the cafe... These were always places to meet, to form friendships, friendships, and intimacy. Beautiful garden and benches (Uluç, 2020).

With the words “Let's bring computers, develop enormous buildings, and migrate to electronic media”, Dinç Bilgin, who was described as “a very innovative and agile man”, relocated the *Sabah* newspaper to the Media Plaza Building (Ataklı & Seymen, 2001, p. 26). For the first time, high-end printing equipment including the Goss 70 printing machines and the Crosfield and Scitex color separation technologies have been placed at Sabah facilities (Eraslan, 1994).²⁷ This four-story rectangular box “vividly portrayed the changing status of the Turkish media business” according to Gül (2017, p.201). Journalist Yüksel Aytuğ describes his initial thoughts about this building by stating, “When I first entered *Sabah's* building, I understood what it meant to have a center created just for a newspaper. Printing house, studios, news centers, cafeteria, created a high synergy” (Aytuğ, 2020). As is understood from journalists’ discourses, the building with its elaborate design exerted an influence over employees.

The building is an example of high-tech architecture²⁸ that signifies notions about industrial production. The foundation of this movement, which flourished in the United Kingdom during the 1970s, is modern technology. The movement's preeminent leaders are British architects Norman Foster, Richard Rogers, Michael Hopkins, and Nicholas Grimshaw. Davies (2011) states that they “thought of their buildings as assemblages of lightweight factory-made components—kits of parts—rather than as

²⁷ Goss 70 is a printing machine with high quality press and Scitex is a computerized color prepress system. used in newspaper production.

²⁸ For further reading; Gannon, T. (2017). *Reyner Banham and the paradoxes of high tech*. Getty Publications.

heavy, solid structures built on firm foundations from the bottom up” (p.83). In this style, architecture must participate in and utilize technology, which includes industry, transportation, communication, flight, and space travel. When Konuralp's hobbies, such as piloting, or passions, such as vessels and technology, are considered, it is apparent that the features of this movement influenced his architectural style. In the example of the Media Plaza Building, his thoughts and the elements of high-tech architecture come together. He approaches it as an industrial machine and works to find solutions rather than adding arbitrary features. “I did not design a building but developed a ‘system’ for the changing needs of journalism practices. How can all functions in preparing and producing newspapers be banded together so that the system can work efficiently from beginning to end was the question” says Konuralp (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). The building is located on Basın Ekspres Street, adjacent to Atatürk Airport, allowing for easy newspaper transportation (Figure 4.10, Figure 4.11).

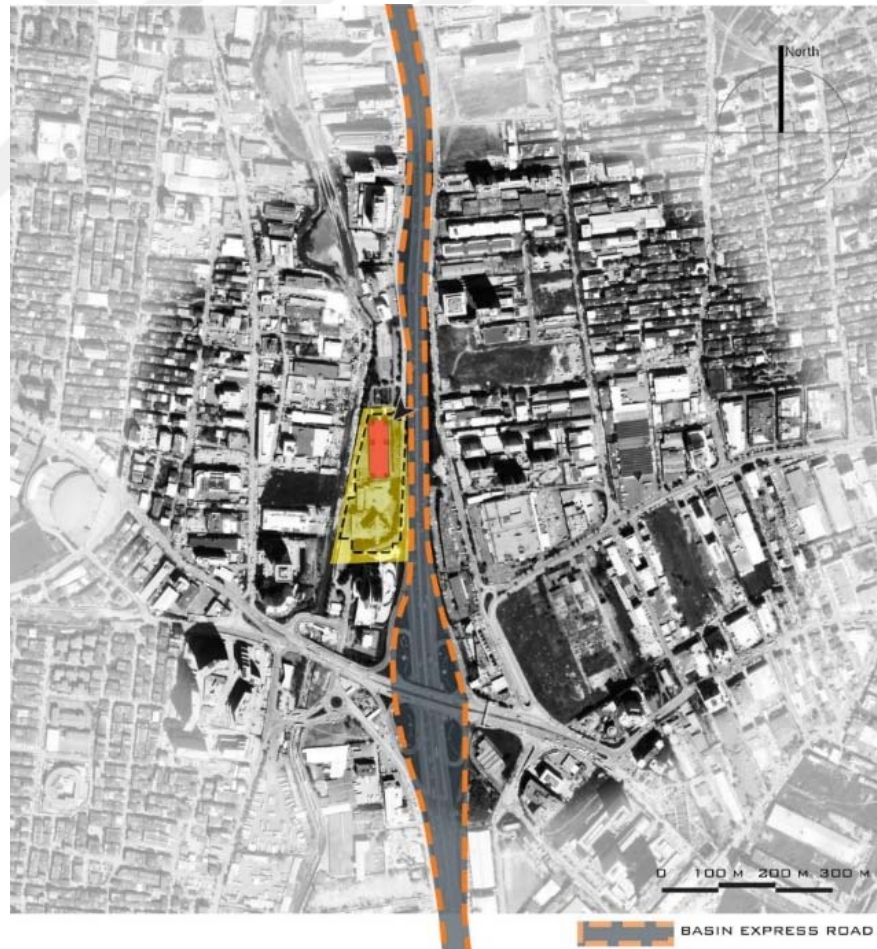


Figure 4.10: Media Plaza on the Basın Ekspres Street close to the Atatürk Airport (by the Author, 2022).

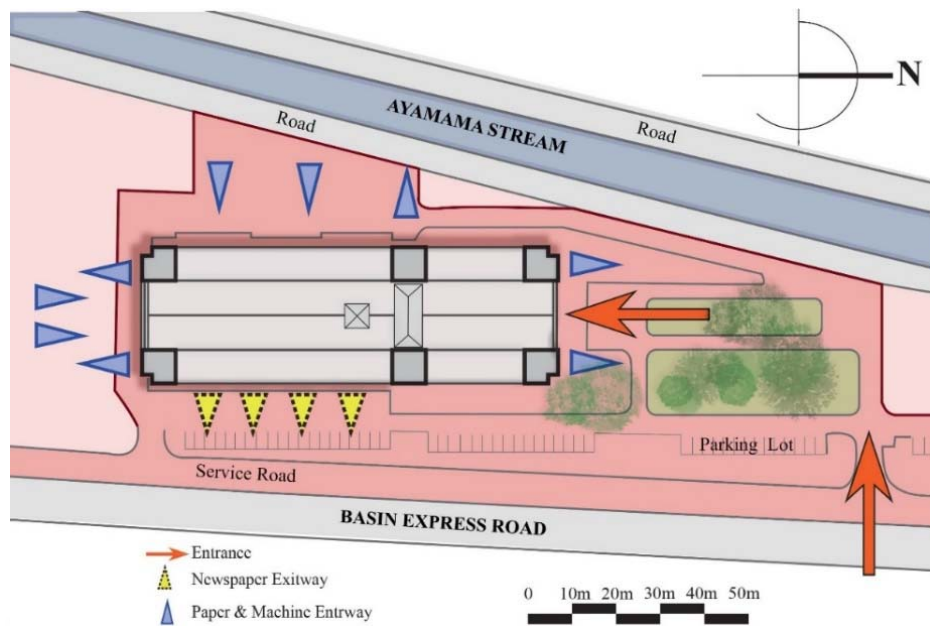


Figure 4.11: Konuralp (1992) designs the site plan of Media Plaza to make newspaper transportation easier (by the Author, 2022).

However, access to the building by employees is just as crucial as the distribution of the newspapers. In those days, İkitelli was a commuting town, so journalists took the shuttle to reach there. Previously, journalists got news from their colleagues on the way to work because all newspaper offices were clustered on Babiali's streets. With the transition to the İkitelli, this routine was destroyed, and journalists began to have more individualized life style.

Batur (2012) asserts that in Konuralp's architecture, “behind the visible in the design, there is an inner program, a core of meaning, which often aligns itself with a metaphor” (p.48). Konuralp (2016) believes that every architectural project is a scenario, and every situation has some conditions and variables. Based on the personal interview with Konuralp, it could be argued that the concept behind Media Plaza Building was to completely establish a new life that exhibits the new type of media. “The design's basic purpose was to transform the energy of printing machinery and communication technology to visual values by detaching the grandeur of newspaper creation from a closed area with all of its functions” (Konuralp, 1992, p. 57). Konuralp, in his own words, “realized the splendor of production” and “the relevance of visual expression” and as a result, transformed it into a design concept (Konuralp, 2004) (Figure 4.12, Figure 4.13, Figure 4.14). Newspaper production was made possible by integrating traditional journalism with modern spatial experience. Konuralp explains the design story of Media Plaza as follows:

With a few exceptions, in Babiali's newspaper buildings, neither the planning nor the production of the newspaper took place in the same structure. There were various buildings holding the printing presses and offices all around Babiali. Articles for the newspaper were being written in one place, but they were also being published in other places. They never worked together. My main goal was to bring all of these elements together under one roof. To put it another way, I started by asking how a task (the planning and production of a newspaper) might be carried out in one place from start to finish before being exported to the outside. I arranged the parts of the construction so that all the operations necessary to manufacture a newspaper in the same container could be carried out successfully (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022).

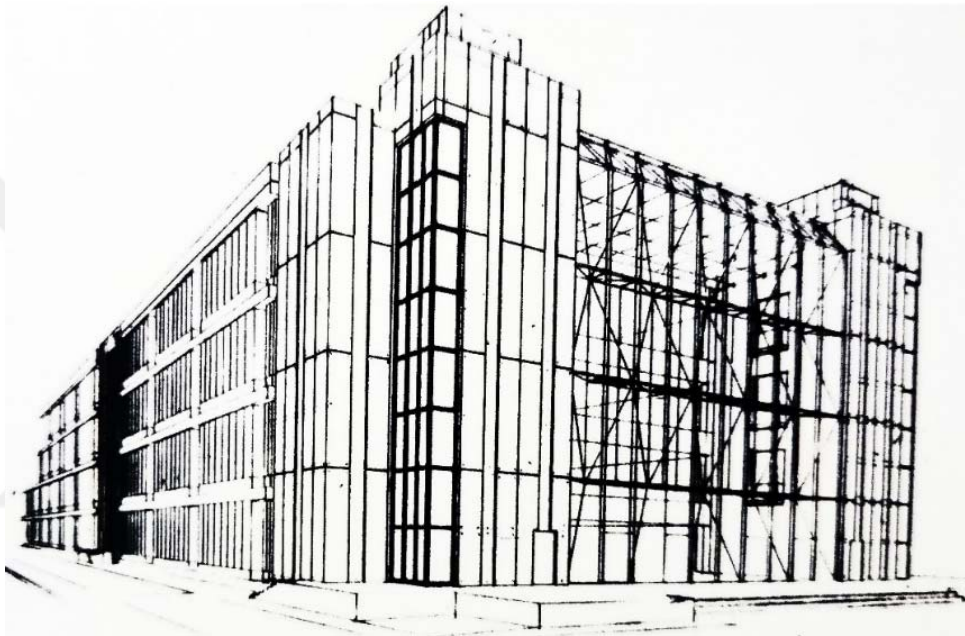


Figure 4.12: Perspective drawing of Media Plaza (Konuralp, 2010, p.69).

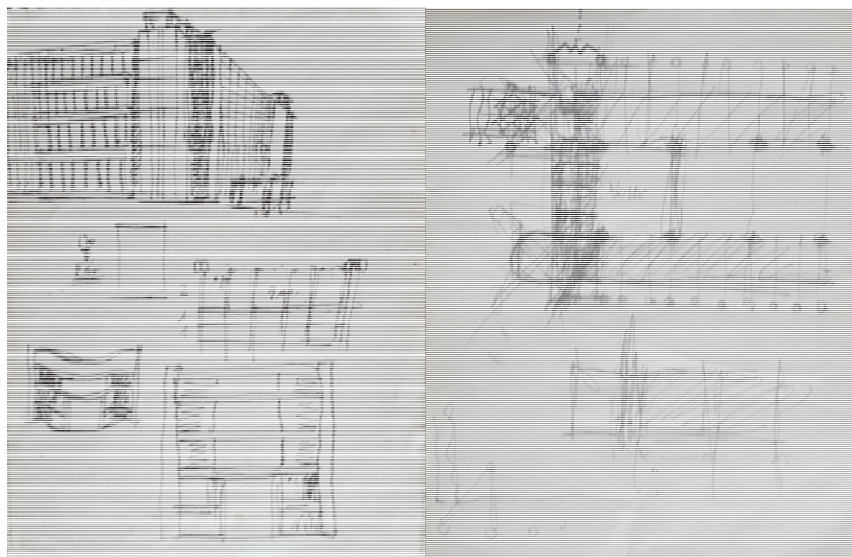


Figure 4.13: Konuralp's free-hand drawings. Media Plaza Building sketches in the left, and modular plan drawings in the right (M. Konuralp, personal archive).

However, in the 1980s, the digitization of information caused dramatic changes in journalism practices. The media turned to be a service-based industry rather than a mass-production system. But the building is designed to solve much more the manufacturing industry's problems. Small factory intertwines with modern offices. Newspaper production defines the fundamental point of this design rather than technological innovations made in the media. The Media Plaza Building dramatizes the technical function of the architectural's components thanks to its machine-like look, but it is unable to accommodate the spirit of new media due to its simplification of the building program into a few common parts. It is unnecessary to have a large number of newspaper production capacity because online journalism has become more popular during the 2000s. Web sites took the role of newspaper pages.

Nevertheless, there is a balance between engineering and architecture in this building. A variety of factors influence Konuralp's design decisions. Mies van der Rohe's steel roof cover for Berlin's Potsdamer Platz, the Einstein Potemkin Battleship ship in Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times and Buckminster Fuller's tape system are just a few examples (Konuralp, 2010). Giovanni Battista Piranesi's fictional prison drawings are also one of them (Figure 14). Konuralp mentions them as follows:

“Although it is a large container, the spaces inside have light structures and the ability to shift at any moment. However, the inside fixtures are separate from the container and do not in any way obstruct the void. Getting lost in empty spaces and ghostly locations” (Konuralp, 2010, p.78)

In high-tech architecture, buildings are thought of and developed in the same like machinery. Konuralp emphasizes that Media Plaza is a ‘container not a building’ by saying that “This container has a system that allows it to be used for more than just newspaper production. It also pioneered the use of multiple pieces in a single container” (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). In this regard, Media Plaza Building was made to have a large space in order to meet the ever-changing professional requirements of the media industry. The building was actually a machine for newspaper production. He discusses the following basic design decisions:

The initial decision was to incorporate the most recent technologies into the building design in order to suit the modern and complex program needs of a newspaper building. The second was to realize the drama inherent in the vast press halls, as well as all the dynamics of the printing business and new communication technology (Konuralp, 1994, p. 23).



Figure 4.14: Piranesi imaginary prison scenes (Konuralp, 2010, p.78).

Konuralp's initial concept for this layout was to situate the rotary machines in the atrium and then see people watching them from the open offices around them (Konuralp, 2010). “The glorification of printing presses by releasing them from enclosed spaces and to introduce them to visual appreciation as the spring to life” says Konuralp (1994, p.23). The glorification of technology is the reference point of high-tech architecture. The printing hall is located in a space of 18m by 72m and four floors high; so that the printing function could be monitored by employees who make them. As was already mentioned, due to their size and noise, the heavy and large printing machines in Babiali's printing houses were kept hidden or set up on the lower floors of the basements. Conversely, Konuralp prefers the machines to be placed in the press hall at Media Plaza, as evidenced by his words: “The machines are operational, and journalists, work within the translucent partitions. This is great. Because the news you wrote in the afternoon, flows like a waterfall in the evening, producing what you write” (Konuralp, 2010, p. 69). Upon being questioned about this choice, Konuralp responds as follows:

I believe the machines had to leave the cramped areas where they had been put inadvertently. And once more, this was a specific component of a system, one that wasn't supposed to be unique from the others. In other words, the location, known as the press and machine hall, was a component of the same system. Since the beginning of the project, I have made it a goal to keep all functions in one location and make sure that they are completed simultaneously in the same container (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022).

Numerous essential components of high-tech architecture may be found in the Media Plaza Building. One of them is the creative use of metal materials to enable flexible spatial utilization. Konuralp created a steel framework for Media Plaza that would house large interior space. Pointing out that journalism has a very flexible working structure, Konuralp says that “Firstly, I started by planning all the functions. I thought about which module or what kind of a whole could work for the newspaper system better. Because it's very uncertain, something can change in journalism at any moment” (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). A sort of integrated system that accommodates sudden changes in newspaper output was aimed. “Sometimes one job is done in a little space, other times half of the building is devoted to it. That is why I emphasize flexibility” says Konuralp (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). Hence, he develops a modular structural system with open offices, a press room, and social functions that were rationally and intersectionally arranged to allow this dynamism. The modular layout of the plan is remarkable. “I used a single 9m by 9m module throughout the entire construction process. Using a single module throughout the entire structure, I created a system that can respond to a variety of functions”, says Konuralp (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). The layout of the structure is composed of a mass that is 36 meters broad and 108 meters long (Url-29) (Figure 4.15, Figure 4.16).

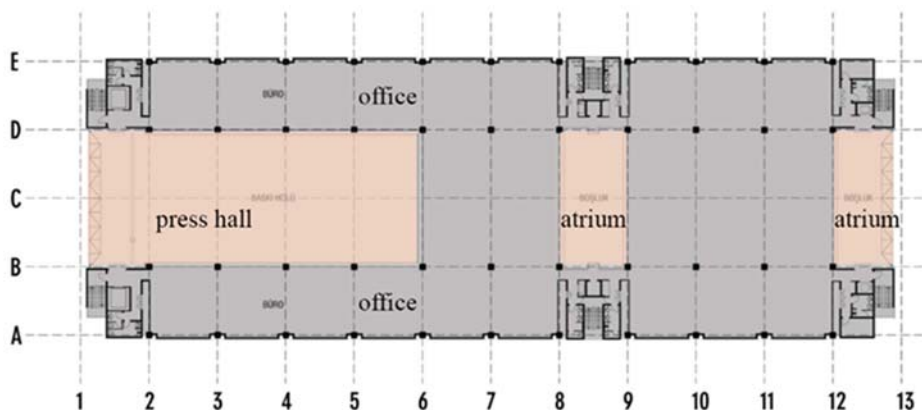


Figure 4.15: The offices and the press or machine hall (Url-29).

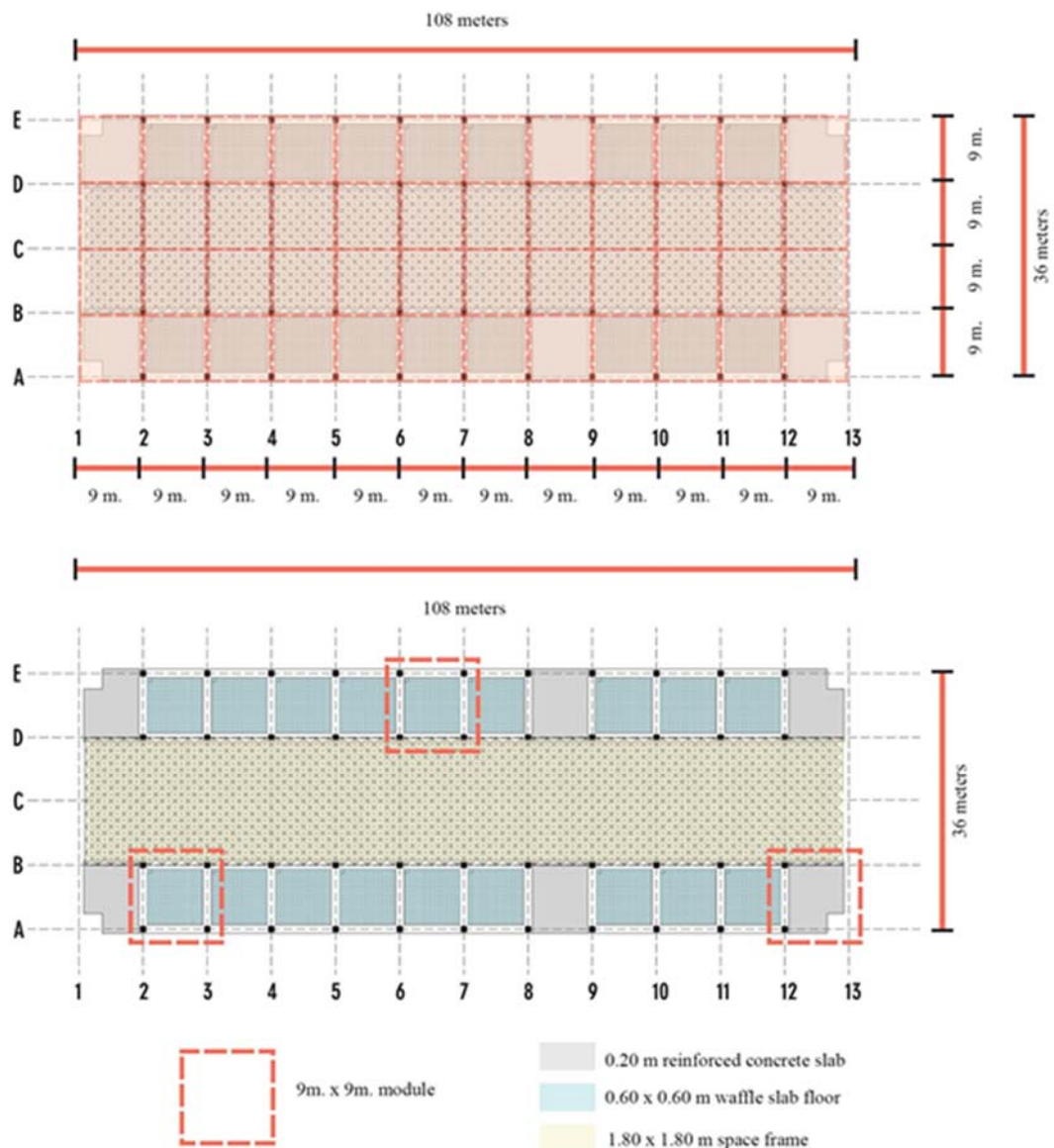


Figure 4.16: Modular structure of Media Plaza (by the Author, 2022).

High-tech buildings allow flexibility to create internal service zones. In the Media Plaza Building, Konuralp attaches importance to simple access to infrastructure services such as floor ventilation and ceiling lighting. The modular floor panels, which are 60 cm by 60 cm in size, are divided into 9-meter axes in both directions. Because they can all be quickly removed when necessary, these panels were chosen for the floor and the ceiling. To remove the requirement for suspended ceilings, lower level ceiling lighting, fire detectors, and other similar elements are installed in the 40mm by 40 mm cassette holes (Figure 4.17, Figure 4.18). When developing the building's static equation, Konuralp takes the following points into account: The space beam was

determined by the 18-meter span which is required for the machine hall. The column axes have been determined using the modular optimization and severability of open office spaces. All floor, facade, and material measurements and standards were taken into consideration while choosing the cassette floor slabs (Figure 4.19). Therefore, the fundamental goal of the design process, well-tempered and flexible environmental design, has been fulfilled (Url-19). Besides, throughout the entire structure, there are three shafts on the east and west side axes, respectively. In these shaft groups, all technical services, vertical circulation, WC groups, machines, trash cans, etc. are settled. Along with fire exits and personnel entrances, the shafts have a ground-floor connection to the outdoors. The solutions are founded on the practical and effective use of space, just like in the high-tech architectural design philosophy. Modern building techniques and lightweight materials were chosen for this facility to accommodate the technology.

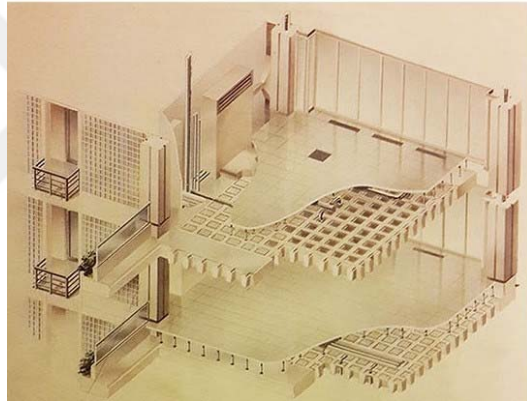


Figure 4.17: Instead of a central ventilation station the air condition units were placed in the plenum of 50 cm under the slab (Konuralp, 1994, p.54).

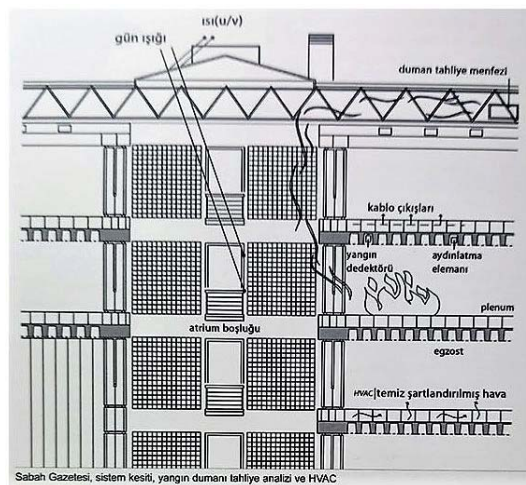


Figure 4.18: An adaptable climatization is provided by using sunlight and raised floor (Url-29).



Figure 4.19: The load-bearing coffered slab with the raised floor tile system (Url-29).

The building program is composed of nine basic elements which are press hall, reel store, mail room; progress and paging departments; CAD-CAM offices (equipped with computers), editorials for various magazines and newspapers; administration, finance, and account; commercial and advertisement departments; reception and public relations; recreational and social facilities; supporting services, stores, maintenance workshops; mechanical, power and air-conditioning plants (Url-29) (Figure 4.20). The printing hall is made to be 18 meters wide and 72 meters long to accommodate the placement of two printing machines side by side (Url-19). On the one hand, it aims to provide the printing rooms with paper reels, and on the other, it aims to combine printed newspapers with post-press procedures. Konuralp reports that newspaper printing activity had already started in 1989, prior to the building's completion. Later, additional operations were gradually incorporated, and in 1990, the *Sabah* fully occupied the building (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022).

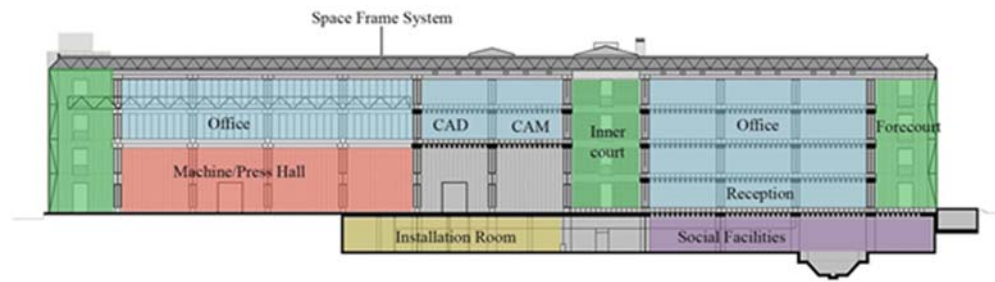


Figure 4.20: The East and West flanks which are 9 meters deep contain various offices, while the 18 meters wide central spine houses the press hall, computer center, open office spaces, meeting rooms, atriums, and roof lights (by the Author, 2022).

In this respect, Media Plaza Building can be seen as an attempt to create an example of new media architecture. The simplicity of plan and technological, functional solutions in the interior architecture bring ‘Plaza Press’ into mind. Babiali culture is lost due to the sophisticated interiors. High-tech approach in both construction of building and materials dominate over traditional journalism practices. Bringing printing machines into view as an icon distinguishes this high-tech media center from the Babiali buildings. As Davies (2011) states, the examples of high-tech buildings “honestly express the nature of their construction in their architecture. The doctrine of honesty was taken to extremes. Structure had to be clearly visible, preferably on the outside, and every column, strut, and tension rod had to have a real structural function” (Davies, 2011, pp.83- 85). In the Media Plaza Building, high-tech architecture's machine aesthetic is expressed through the building materials, steel constructions, and exposition of production (Figure 4.21).



Figure 4.21: The printing hall in Media Plaza Building (Ur1-29)

“When I identify an issue I treat it as a major industrial design problem, putting in a lot of work to address it. If you don't recognize the issue, you can't practice architecture” says Konuralp (2010, p. 69). At this point, the issue with the old newspaper buildings in Babiali transforms into a design strategy in the Media Plaza Building. The rotary machines' deafening noise “comfortably close to a Boeing, that is, 120 dB noise” (Konuralp, 2010, p. 69) was the issue. Konuralp places them in the printing hall, and silently opens the printing processes by surrounding them with transparent inner walls (Figure 4.22). The laminated panels isolate the noise by preventing vibration transmission. A special joinery detail was developed to prevent noise pollution (Figure 4.23). In addition, the major roof is covered with sound-absorbing, perforated Alu-sandwich panels. Coexistence of silent workplaces and noisy machines resulted in the traditional journalism associating with modern spatial perception. According to Konuralp, it became “a real pleasure to watch them away from the distracting sounds” (Konuralp, 2010, p.69). Both mechanical systems and spatial structure prioritize flexibility. To take advantage of the facility's lengthy area, a space frame with a span of 18 meters covers the entire structure (Konuralp, 2010). Along with them, workplaces are modularly connected with infrastructure systems to produce a highly dynamic workspace and to enable replacing parts as necessary.



Figure 4.22: The printing machine (Url-29).

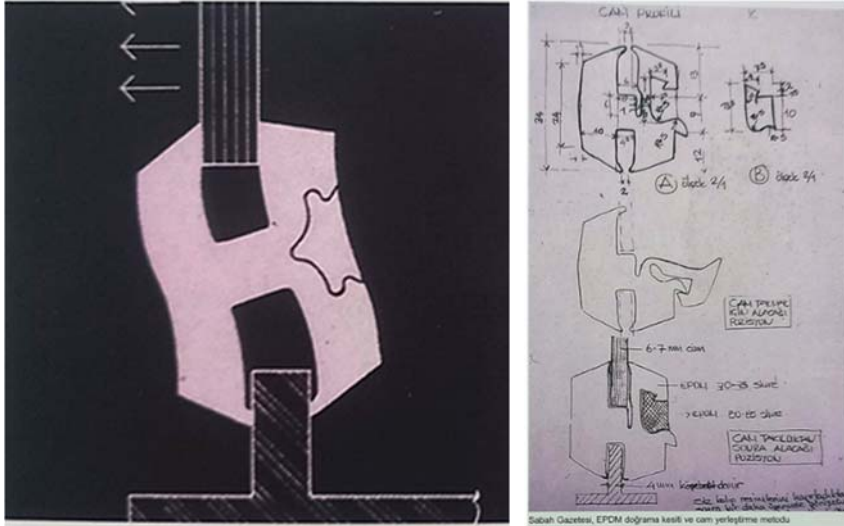


Figure 4.23: Sound vibration behavior detail drawing on the left, and EPDM joinery and glass placement method detail drawing on the right (Konuralp, 2010, p. 77).

One of the main characteristics of high-tech architecture is improving energy efficiency. The open concept with atriums is preferred to utilize daylight as much as possible (Figure 4.24). The translucent shafts were created for the south and north facades. Creating an ideal environment for users is also important in high-tech architecture. Konuralp prioritizes sociality and interconnectedness, two crucial aspects of journalism, in the design of this building (Figure 4.25). He emphasizes that İkitelli was a remote, hard-to-reach place from 1989–1990. Therefore, he creates areas that allow a journalist to interact with others, drawing influence from traditional ‘Babiali journalism’. “A little Babiali and a little Beyoğlu Çiçek Pasajı can be found in journalism” (Konuralp, 2010, p. 69) (Figure 4.26).



Figure 4.24: The use of daylight allows the daylight to reach office spaces (Url-29).



Figure 4.25: Open office system makes it possible to work together (Url-29).

Although the building had several gathering spots, there were not enough people to support a vibrant social atmosphere. Also, the journalists were unable to access news sources as the building was too far away from the city center.



Figure 4.26: In Konuralp's words, these “chat, gossip bays” created the vital “social atmosphere” in journalism (Konuralp, 2010, p. 66) (Url- 29).

Konuralp describes Media Plaza Building as ‘a journey in the transatlantic’ and uses these phrases to describe the ambiance of the structure: “You are gathering at the Northshield Bar or in the pool. On the *Sabah* transatlantic, employees could take their lunch break, enjoy an afternoon beverage, and access the ship’s patisserie, medical center, and Beyti restaurants” (Konuralp, 2010, p.69) (Figure 4.27). In this building, a brand-new way of life for journalists was developed. Modernism in journalism was going to be introduced by the *Sabah*, and the building's design helped bring it about. Even though the offices provide flexibility and the social areas represent a new way of life, Babiali journalists had some difficulties adapting to these changes.



Figure 4.27: The pool in the basement (Url-29).

Media Plaza Building is one of the most prominent samples of high-tech architecture in Turkey. In order to construct Media Plaza, Konuralp brought in a variety of imported materials and technologies (Figure 4.28) (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). Some of these include glass bricks from America, Landi chairs, Bellini armateurs, dark light reflectors from Germany, and glass joinery on lengthy facades from London (Konuralp, 2010). Because of the shift to neoliberalism during this time, “more and more imported building materials and equipment began to be observed in the Turkish building sector” (Gül, 2017, p.156). Media Plaza can also be regarded as Turkey's ‘first global structure’ in the 1980s because Konuralp pioneered many new ideas there, including smart construction technologies and imported materials. “After 2000, a lot of building materials started to be produced here as well,”

says Konuralp (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022). The Media Plaza Building received a Building Construction Award (Yapı Dalı Ödülü) at the 4th National Architecture Exhibition and Awards (IV. Ulusal Mimarlık Sergisi ve Ödülleri) in 1994 for pioneering high-tech design in Turkey.

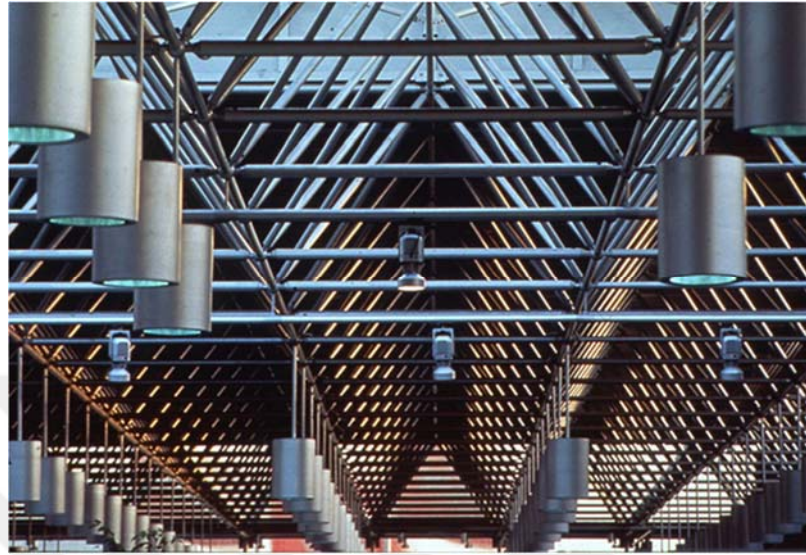


Figure 4.28: Bellini armatures all along space beam (Url-29).

On the one hand, showing the printing machinery in detail can be interpreted as a throwback to more conventional journalism. On the other hand, the solid construction, which is held up by exposed concrete towers and steel trusses, conveys a modernist statement and power of a media company (Figure 4.29).



Figure 4.29: New media characteristics like transparency and power is exhibited on building's clean glass panels and rigid concrete towers (Url-29).

After *Sabah* left the building it was occupied by İş Bankası in 2002. The building, which was initially planned as a newspaper facility, began to be used as a bank building in 2004.²⁹ The building's structural elements have not been altered; only the printing hall, which houses the printing machines, has been converted into a working space. To fill this space with new working offices, Konuralp created a ‘babylon tower’ (Konuralp, 2010, p.79). A new steel building in the printing hall is being built for the IT department of İş Bankası (Figure 4.30, Figure 4.31, Figure 4.32). The alteration of this printing hall and its reuse for a different purpose bring to mind the two qualities of Konuralp’s architecture noted above: functionality and flexibility. Konuralp comments on this reusing:

Even though the functions have changed, this time the space served an entirely new purpose for the bank since I designed a system (a job is completed from beginning to end in the same spot), not a building. The information technology center of İş Bankası is situated in a space that was formerly utilized as a working machine/press hall (M. Konuralp, personal interview, 14 February 2022).

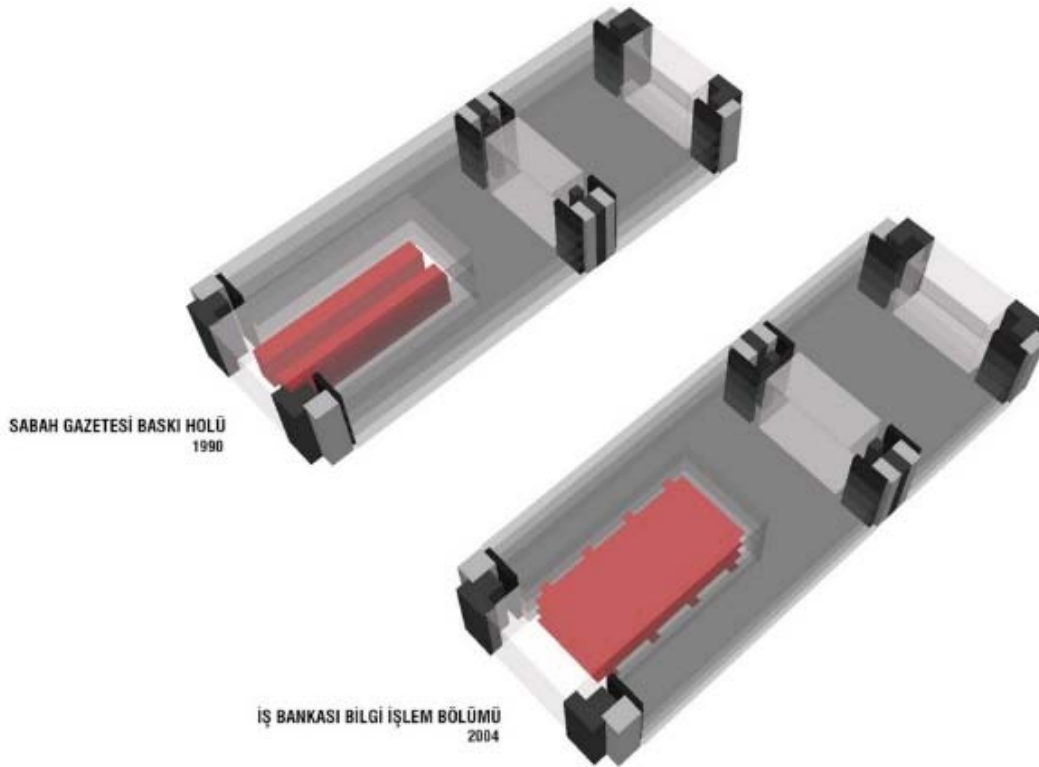
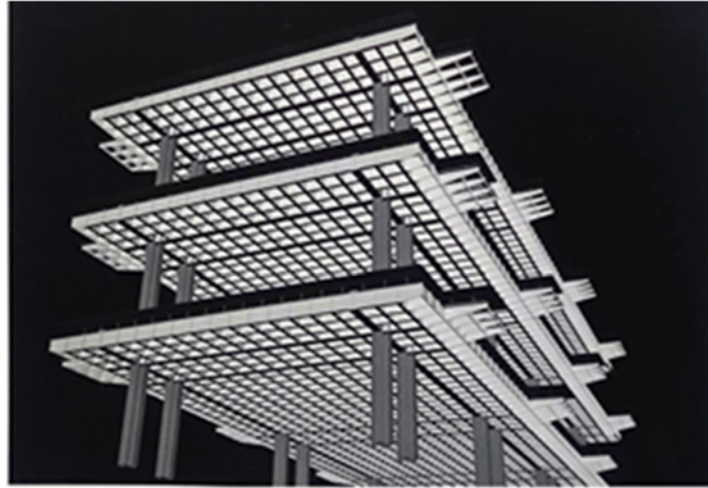


Figure 4.30: The void in the printing hall is replaced by working units (Url-29).

²⁹ Since 2017, this building has been used by Turkish Airlines Technology company (Url-30).



İy Bankası, steel structure for IT Department

Figure 4.31: The new steel structure (Konuralp, 2010, p. 69).



Figure 4.32: The connection between the new working space and the structure (Konuralp, 2010, p.80)



5. CONCLUSION

A detailed analysis of the examples contained in this study shows that the transformation of the media industry is reflected in architecture. Developments in the newspaper industry, such as changes in media ownership and the use of computer technology, resulted in the emergence of large media corporations. The neoliberal policies conducted in many countries in the 1980s and 1990s had played a vital role in this transformation. In Turkey, neoliberal planning perspectives and the increasing use of imported construction materials led to the majority of media centers being constructed by new media owners in industrial areas with high-tech characteristics. In this period not only Istanbul, but also major international cities like London and New York saw the relocation of industrial establishments, including the printing industry, to the remote-urban centers. Powerful media organizations left their traditional headquarters and preferred to construct ‘media factories’ in isolated business areas. As is customary in high-tech buildings, the construction materials and their visual expression were prioritized in these structures.

In addition to popular buildings such as shopping centers, hotels, and luxury housing complexes, large media centers arose in the İkitelli neighborhood in the late 20th century. Building lavish centers by media tycoons gave them a chance to display their power in the society and, to a substantial extent, influence political affairs in the 1990s. The Media Plaza Building, with its state-of-the-art technological aspects, became the ‘İkitelli or Plaza Press’s’ avant-garde representative. In contrast to the traditional Babiali newspaper buildings in the old city, it offered a new concept for the media business. In this ‘media container’ Konuralp built an embedded system for all stages of newspaper from manufacturing to delivery. Thanks to its innovative design and vision, *Sabah*, was the ‘rising star’ of the new media emerged in the 1990s. The technological advancements applied in the building, organization of newspaper offices according to contemporary business principles and attachment of modern recreational spaces such as cafes, restaurants and socializing corners, all demonstrated vividly how architecture could express the transformation of press to media. In addition to its

cutting-edge technological features, the organizational layout drafted by Konuralp offered a new lifestyle in journalism practices. All those glistening aspects made the Sabah Group as one of the most powerful media conglomerates established in Turkey in early 1990s.

Despite all those promising targets, the Media Plaza Building could only serve as the headquarters of *Sabah* for barely ten years. The newspaper decided to ‘return to the city’ in the early 2000s. This time, Nişantaşı, a historic city district, was chosen as the new home for the Sabah-ATV media company. Even though Konuralp, in his Media Plaza Building, unified all functions under one roof, this arrangement did not bring the intended outcome. When *Sabah* moved to the city center, departments were once again separated from each other. TV broadcasting was located at Balmumcu, printing facilities moved to Samandıra on the Asian side of Istanbul, and editorial rooms were accommodated in Nişantaşı. The new setup indicated that combining all functions in a ‘container’, as envisaged in the 1980s, does not satisfy the media industry's needs. In fact, Konuralp, employed similar design principles in one of his later projects for the ATK textile factory. Steel structural systems, lofty interior spaces and machine aesthetics all played a leading role in both projects. Although both of these buildings, the Media Plaza and ATK, can be classified as ‘production’ or ‘manufacturing’ places, the media sector is significantly different than an industrial facility as the former is heavily concerned with social interactions among the different segments of the society. Moreover, the media industry, by its very nature, can grow swiftly. Because of the rapid growth of internet journalism in the 2000s, massive facilities like those in the Media Plaza were not necessary. Journalists were no longer required to work in ever-larger spaces. Newspaper circulations dropped as the digital media industry replaced print media. First television broadcasting superseded the press and then online multimedia news became the most popular method of public. While the Media Plaza Building has been used by the *Sabah*, a new center was constructed next to it for the Sabah Group's television channel, ATV. Broadcasting rooms and television studios have been included in this new building. Konuralp’s ‘system’ in the Media Plaza Building, could not prevent separation between architecture and evolving technology. In addition, mechanization of the working environment created serious problems. The Media Plaza, in accordance with its metaphorical ‘transatlantic journey’ concept, dictated a new style of journalism, and almost every activity that employees might

undertake was preplanned in the Media Plaza Building. Even some social areas such as ‘gossip bays’ and ‘Beyti restaurants’ embedded in the building layout were unable to provide the essential flow of information among journalists, as it was the case in Babiali offices. In other words, the Babiali culture could not have been experienced in the Media Plaza Building. As a result, after only 10 years, the building was abandoned by its intended user and began to be used as a banking facility.

Despite all those disappointing outcomes, the Media Plaza Building still presents a significant example of high-tech architecture in Turkey in the 1990s. The steel structure, column-free spacious interiors and other new technologies applied in the building presented a refined industrial facility. Those aspects bring to mind Konuralp's concern about flexibility and versatility. After *Sabah* left the building, the interior spaces on a regular grid are arranged in line with new functions, and the core aspects of the building's high-tech architecture, particularly the extended space frame system, remained the same.

The media has changed far too much in less than 30 years. However, looking at the media Plaza and other international examples, it can be argued that their representation in terms of architecture shares one aspect in common: the use of advanced technologies in architecture. Even if the relationship between technology and media altered significantly, high-tech architecture became the process' most obvious manifestation. Particularly now, when media changes rapidly, its architectural depiction will change for entirely different causes. In this regard, it is hoped that the analyses made in this thesis will serve as a source for future studies in the fields of architectural history and media.



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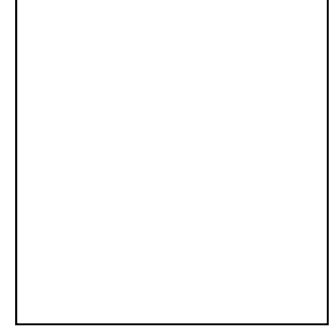
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