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DEDICATION

For those who never stop fighting for their labor.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the artist organizations formed by the artists against the precarious condition in the field of contemporary art in Turkey after 2010. In the 1980s, free market economy and neoliberalism were also influential in Turkey, the state left the field of culture and art to the control of the private sector, and contemporary art and its institutions began to be supported largely through sponsors. Contemporary art and its institutions in Turkey have undergone transformations in the determination of the art market, with the effect of globalization after the 1990s. While the number of art institutions increased, the improvement in the production and working conditions of the artists did not occur to the desired extent, and the fact that private institutions were more active in the field of art led to labor debates and anti-institutional movements among the artists. The inadequacy of the legal regulations regarding the status and rights of the artists raises questions about the visibility of the artists and how much their rights are protected or by whom. Artists in the field of contemporary art, affected by the economic and political fragility of Turkey after 2010, try to find solutions to problems in artist organizations and unions against the situation of precarity. This situation shows that artists need associations that will discuss their own precarity together and offer solutions.

Within the scope of the thesis, artist-centered organizations established against the precarious conditions were examined. The common feature of the artist organizations included is that they carry out labor and rights-based efforts that support and influence artists in the field of visual arts, even though they do not have a legal status. In addition, it is aimed to create a discussion for the present through interviews with artists on the definition of being precarious, what kind of partnerships they need, and the effects of Turkey's changing political climate from the 2010s to the present in the thesis.

Key words: Precarity, Contemporary Art, Artists Organizations, Neoliberalism.

ÖZET

Bu tez, 2010 sonrasında Türkiye'de çağdaş sanat alanındaki güvencesizlik durumuna karşı, sanatçıların oluşturdukları sanatçı örgütlenmelerini ele almaktadır. 1980'li yıllarda serbest piyasa ekonomisi ve neoliberalizm Türkiye'de de etkili olmuş, devlet kültür ve sanat alanını özel sektörün kontrolüne bırakmış, çağdaş sanat ve kurumları büyük ölçüde sponsorlar aracılığıyla desteklenmeye başlanmıştır. Türkiye'de çağdaş sanat ve kurumları, sanat piyasasının belirleyiciliğinde 1990'lı yıllar sonrasında küreselleşmenin de etkisiyle dönüşümler geçirir. Sanat kurumları sayıca artarken, sanatçıların üretim ve çalışma koşullarındaki iyileşme istenilen ölçüde gerçekleşmemiş, özel kurumların sanat alanında daha etkin olması sanatçılar arasında emek tartışmalarını ve kurum karşıtı hareketleri doğurmuştur. Sanatçıların statülerine ve haklarına dair yasal düzenlemelerinin yetersizliği sanatçıların görünürlüğü ve haklarının ne kadar korunduğu veya kim tarafından korunacağı konusunda soru işaretlerini doğurmaktadır. 2010 sonrasında Türkiye'nin geçirdiği ekonomik ve politik kırılganlıktan etkilenen çağdaş sanat alanındaki sanatçılar, güvencesizlik durumuna karşı sanatçı örgütleri ve birliklerinde sorunlara çözüm üretmeye çalışırlar. Bu durum sanatçıların kendi güvencesizlik hallerini bir arada tartışacak ve çözüm önerileri getirecek birlikteliklere ihtiyaç duyduğunu göstermektedir.

Tez kapsamında güvencesizlik durumuna karşı kurulan sanatçı merkezli örgütlenmeler incelenmiştir. Yer verilen sanatçı örgütlenmelerinin ortak özelliği yasal statüleri olamasa da görsel sanatlar alanında sanatçıları destekleyecek ve etkileyecek emek ve hak temelli çalışmalar yapmalarıdır. Ayrıca tezde, 2010'lardan günümüze, görsel sanatçıların güvencesiz olma tanımı, ne tür birlikteliklere ihtiyaç duydukları ve Türkiye'nin değişen politik ikliminin etkileri üzerine sanatçılarla gerçekleştirilen görüşmelerle günümüze dair tartışma ortamı oluşturmak amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler: Güvencesizlik, Çağdaş Sanat, Sanatçı Örgütlenmeleri, Neoliberalizm.

INTRODUCTION

In the last thirty years, contemporary art has undergone significant changes. This transformation began to be seen as a contribution to the economy of developing countries including Turkey by the governments. The status and working conditions of visual artists have become one of the important issues to be discussed in the globalization area.

Factors such as changes in job descriptions, economic regulations and differentiation of lifestyles have led to the formation of new discourses. Neoliberal policies cannot be underestimated among these new discourses that also influence the art world and its actors. The logic of neoliberalism, which penetrates the understanding of competition into society at political, economic and social levels, found itself in the contemporary art, too. Although the conception of neoliberalism is directly linked to the economic terminology especially for the market and deregulation, the liberalisation of capital, restriction of public spending and its attainment reaches the daily life. The identification of neoliberalism in a different perspective has been provided by the French social theorist, Michel Foucault. The contemporary art in the circulation of neoliberalism is used as an object of stimulating the declining economy and contributing to the market. However, its boundaries do not involve merely the hegemony of economic regulation, but a reorganization by reaching out to the society of individuals.

With the intervention of neoliberalism not only in the world of politics but also in the way of life of individuals, new forms of labor inevitably have emerged. Today, most of the terms such as creativity, entrepreneurship, self-entrepreneurship, flexibility have become keywords sought in the business life and the art sector. While project-based productions, physical and mental activities related to communication skills were considered as the basic values of the art world in the past, artists have been negatively affected by the change in labor

definitions. The shift includes these paradigms in the post-Fordist working principle and finds a permanent position with oppressive neoliberal policies. These factors, which used to constitute the indispensable conditions of the art environment, are now used differently in the axis of the mentioned policies.

So, to what extent does contemporary issues give artists the right to freedom and in which direction does it allow them to use it? While neoliberalism as a management mechanism is progressing to dissolve within the society, how are artists affected depending on their status? This is the main problematized issue and is opened to discussion in the scope of the thesis.

The first step for discussing these questions is to analyze the working conditions of artists but there is difficulty in defining the input and output of the stages. Artists are in contact with different economic models through the entire process. They meet various people both in their fields like other artists, curators, art writers and outside of their fields such as carpenters, translators and production teams. Factors such as these express the artist's achievement of being homogeneous identity by intertwining heterogeneous components. Then, it seems inevitable that it interacts with capitalist models yet the production of art cannot be defined as capitalist solely. The fact that contemporary artists are in an interactive order and try to continue their lives depending on this can bring problems with it. While the concepts are interrelated in this way, how precarity is evaluated in the art world?

The subject is more inextricable in the case of Turkey because the contemporary art is intervened according to economic, political and social circumstances. There are mutual exchange of labor in the contemporary art in Turkey and actors are linked together to form solidarity. This situation produces a kind of grouping and collectivity. However, the vulnerable environment of precariousness prevents sociality and creates breaking point where survival is questioned. The concept of labor is the fragile point in Turkey's political and social atmosphere. That's why, it is necessary to evaluate the precarious situation of the artists in our country

from a different perspective because they don't have too many alternatives to choose. Therefore, the status and working conditions of the artists are always in danger of being precarious. Considering the scarcity of studies on precarity and organizational efforts to improve working conditions for Turkey's art scene, it remains an uncertain point to emphasize visual artists and their efforts.

The aim of this study is to examine how to establish a parallelism between the contemporary art and the labor of artists by highlighting Turkey's social, political, economic and cultural agendas. Though the research has a goal to comprise Turkey, it should not be forgotten that Istanbul has its own parameters. The point is not only to give theoretical and historical knowledge, but also to make a connection between Turkey's environment and artists' situation in the scope of precarity, so basically to make artists visible in Turkey's agenda. It has been intended to discuss how today's visual artists evaluate precarity under the circumstances of their working conditions and status.

What is desired to be achieved during interviews in the scope of the thesis is to evaluate the definition of precarity through Turkey in today's conditions and to enable an artist-oriented study by identifying the common problems of artists.

The control of the subjects by the free market economy along with neoliberalism has brought artists closer to the precarious situation. Art institutions as places of economic gain have changed the status of the artist. The artist, who is also deprived of legal security, has become the subject of the precarious structure with the articulation of political and economic pressure. Therefore, this thesis aims to be a comprehensive resource in which the status, self-expression and working conditions of the artists can be discussed by adopting a more artist-oriented perspective within the framework of certain questions. For that reason, the following questions are important that need to be examined in order to achieve the thesis purpose.

- What is the impact of neoliberalism on contemporary art after 1980s and the institualization of art in 2000s in Turkey?

- What does the concept of precarity mean for artists in Turkey?

- What is the reason for the emergence of artist organizations, associations and initiatives in the 2000s?

- What are the studies on artist rights and status and how has it been shaped in Turkey's political climate?

The fact that qualitative and quantitative research is very limited in this regard, the case study method has been chosen. The focus is on how the artists and their production processes are affected by the existing political and economic periods and their solution-oriented solidarity attitude. How the artists interpret the precariousness for their own working conditions and status are mentioned. For example, who decides on the works of the artists to be exhibited, does the decision-making process take place in solidarity, can the artist be fully involved in the exhibition process, what is the criterion of the success considered and how is the artist affected by it? Considering Turkey in particular, who are the subjects of the studies on artist rights? What are artists doing to protect their rights or are they aware of their rights?

In the first chapter of this thesis, the concept and the context of neoliberalism, post-Fordism and precarity are explained on contemporary art and artists. It is discussed how it embodies post-Fordist economic apparatuses based on neoliberal policies and the effects of both on the emergence of precarity. In order to examine the impact of neoliberalism on individuals, first of all, it is necessary to examine its historical process because neoliberalism quickly made a global impact, albeit at different times. Although there are many theoretical sources on neoliberal

policies, Michel Foucault's analyses based on the book named as *The Birth of Biopolitics* (Foucault & Senellart, 2008), compiled from his lectures at the College de France, as he emphasizes the impact of neoliberal policy on individuals. It is dwelled on how the working styles in the art world are affected by the policy changes. The relationship between art and labor is mentioned in the framework of related literatures. How did the neoliberal process feeding the post-Fordist labor order change the artist's statue with new ways of working? How does the concept of flexibility, one of the new forms of labor, affect the production processes of the artists and what kind of meaning does mental workforce gain in the art environment? The terms in the new labor forms are explained and the effect of precarity phenomenon on working conditions are discussed for artistic labor. Also, the historical background of artist activists and contemporary artists' activist groups are analyzed in order to discuss the definion of precarious artists in the scope of different art worlds and time periods.

The second part focuses on the status and working condition of contemporary artists in Turkey and the cultural policy on visual artists. In order to understand the position of them, the condition of cultural policy in Turkey firstly should be examined. The fact that the rights, status and working conditions of visual artists are not included in state-specific studies in detail have led this section to focus on independent studies. For this reason, the research area includes more independent civil initiatives' approach due to the lack of data in state resources and also because the status of the artist is discussed more in detail these areas. The cultural policy is attached to Turkey's landscape and this part gives some crises moments that are prone to create a precarious environment for the artists and these are in the scope of the working conditions. The events which take place as turning points are expected to focus on what they mean for Turkey's contemporary art environment. The status of artists has changed under the influence of free market economy and neoliberalism as of the 1980s. The effects of Turkey's management policies over the status of artists in time, international connections such as the Istanbul Biennial, Turkey's European Union member candidate, and Istanbul's

selection as European Capital of Culture in 2010 for the contemporary art, and the role of the increasing number of art institutions in creating the art market is discussed in this section. Additionally, the aim is to argue the hegemonic determination of politics and economy in the contemporary art and its actors. As a result of the literature analysis and interviews conducted to find the equivalent of the definition of precarity in the contemporary art in Turkey, the subtitles of being a precarious artist are determined as follows: censorship/ self-censor, working conditions, artists' rights, the role of state's institutions in artists' rights, the lack of professional organization and legal difficulties.

Chapter third will focus on the discussions about establishing artists organizations and ideas behind them. The 2010s were filled with discussions of artist organization, as art workers who were trapped in a political situation gradually got into an economic stalemate and there were no state-supported institutions that defended the rights of artists. In order to evaluate the post-2010 period, the separation of contemporary art and its artists from state support and academy should also be examined in the recent period. The purpose of this section is to explore the interconnectedness of the various organizations established and the urgency they seek to address. Aiming to explore the bridge that the events and effects of the past have built with the present, this section will take the artists to the center and evaluate the working conditions and status of today's artists from their perspectives.

According to the results of the case study, various conditions which cause precarity is included in the scope of Turkey's political and social environment are reclaimed and a connection will be established with the main literature sources that have been conducted for this thesis.

Although there are many researches in the world about the condition of visual artists to support their rights and future contributions both in goverments and independent areas, the same issue has not been discussed enough in the context of

Turkey, and it is an issue that needs to be emphasized in order to provide new solidarities in this field of contemporary art especially in times of crises when artists feel stuck in production and exhibition processes. While evaluating the results obtained in the conclusion section, the issue of what could be the solutions of the precarious status of the artists are discussed. It is planned that this thesis contribute to the literature for future studies. It is aimed that the terms from the time the discussions started in Turkey to the present are determined within the scope of the precarity of the artists, and become the main topics to consider for the next discussions.

1. NEOLIBERALISM AND PRECARITY IN CONTEMPORARY ART

1.1. THE IMPACT OF NEOLIBERALISM ON ART

David Harvey argues that neoliberalism is a theory of political-economic practices and the only desired goal can be achieved by liberating individual initiatives (Harvey, 2007). In this context, concepts such as private property rights, free markets and free trade have come into play. The state should create an institutional framework in this regard, if necessary, it should activate its power mechanisms (army, police, law). However, it should not interfere with the functioning of the market after providing the necessary conditions. These neoliberal policies, which have been implemented by various states since the 1970s, have now reached a hegemonic structure by penetrating into different fields. Media, educational institutions, global and small companies are some of them.

It may be useful to look at briefly the historical origins of neoliberalism in order to look in more detail at the functioning of the current liberal or neoliberal process when examining it in some sub-categories. Foucault divides neoliberal programs into two categories: German form which "is linked to the Weimar Republic, the crisis of 1929, the development of Nazism, the critique of Nazism, and, finally, post-war reconstruction" (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 78) and American form "defined by reference to the New Deal, the criticism of Roosevelt's policies, and which, especially after the war, is developed and organized against federal interventionism, and then against the aid and other programs of the mainly Democrat administrations of Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, etcetera" (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 78-79).

What were the reasons for the spread of neoliberalism transformation to different states around the world at different times and the factors for its hegemonic

manifestation in global capitalism? Post-war uncertainties caused economically powerful people to embrace neoliberalism in order to preserve their power. Although it did not find a place in the political scene until the 1970s, this theory was developed over time and took place in the academy as a neoliberal theory. According to Harvey (2007), it was necessary to improve the war-induced elements that threaten the capitalist order in order to ensure the economic growth of states and bring the citizens to the level of welfare after the Second World War. That's why, some sort of class compromise between capital and labor had to be constructed. Although this form of organization, which was called "embedded liberalism", provided economic growth in capitalist countries in the 1950s and 60s, it stopped working at the end of the 60s and this crises continued until the end of the 70s. In the late 1970s, neoliberal policies were put into effect. With the Bush administration, tax reforms began to gain effect, and the upper class of society embraced its wealth. For example, the concentration of income gained by the upper layers has become permanent with the gradual abolition of the property tax in the USA and the reduction of taxes on capital.

The economic freedom term plays the leading role for neoliberalism, and the whole actors that contribute to regulate the economy are released in the order, bearing the title of investor. The free market provides the legitimate power of the state by strengthening the power mechanisms. Considering the controlling nature of free market economy, the real issue is the question of how to reach the political and social apparatuses that I have mentioned as power mechanisms. The market's essence is a competition which supplies inequal conditions with sanctioning regulations. To quote Foucault's own words:

> There will thus be a sort of complete superimposition of market mechanisms, indexed to competition, and governmental policy. Government must accompany the market economy from start to finish. The market economy does not take something away from government. Rather, it

> indicates, it constitutes the general index in which one must place the rule for defining all governmental action. One must govern for the market, rather than because of the market. To that extent you can see that the relationship defined by eighteenth century liberalism is completely reversed. (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 121).

Neoliberalism was a theoretical design that awaited capitalist societies as a solution to threats, and it had applications that could easily create the conditions for capital accumulation by the economic elite. Therefore, it was actually able to adapt to the all-legitimizing environment of economic power.

However, the effects of liberalism has appeared around in the 18th century as an art of governmentality. Although liberalism can be associated with the freedom, it does not mean that the government transformed its oppressive point of view in a way of becoming "more tolerant, more lax, and more flexible" (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 62). Surely, it cannot progress without giving permissions for some freedom models to provide a cycle of market so it both organizes and consumes freedom. Hence, its method does not give a direct message to individuals for being free; instead, it creates a sense of freedom by sustaining an environment where they can feel free of their own choices in all circumstances. While doing that, it needs to protect its power above the individuals with the balance between the idea of freedom and the application of it by dictating limitations, censorship and inspection mechanisms, and new forms of working environments, etcetera. If we evaluate the management logic of liberalism and its role on individuals / societies, it creates various security and freedom areas for individuals under its own control in the environment of insecure danger created by itself. The individual deeply feels the danger of the past which shapes the current situation; the now which can effect the future life conditions by its own responsible attitudes and thoughts; and the future which has already been defined

as indeterminate space. Liberalism is the art of management that is dependent on these concerns and fed by its psychological and cultural effects; “there is no liberalism without a culture of danger” (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 67) as mentioned.

As can be seen, neoliberalism differs from eighteenth and nineteeth centuries’ liberalism. Its perspective on competition is unnatural and interventionist. It is far from the "laissez faire" principle advocated by liberalism. Also, the problem is to shape “governmental style” (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 133). The individual is allegedly free in that system; for instance, the unemployment condition and the social insurance cannot be seen as the way of responsible act of neoliberal governmentally so it avoids corrective interventions in the way of the market works, its destructive effects on society mostly. The neoliberal management approach is not only based on consumption, but also to create “the man of enterprise and production” (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 147) who have a sense of competition for turning the wheel in the system. Similarly, McGuigan (2014) identifies people according to their roles in their capitalist lives as “the successful entrepreneur, sovereign consumer and hard-working taxpayer” (p. 225). In that case, individuals take to the stage with their missions to participate in competition and become successful in a certain area. Also, this situation causes a paradoxical cycle that neoliberal politics try to solve confusions by using the same chaos or they are feeding on it.

In neoliberal economy and politics, post-Fordism has contributed to the articulation of labor power into capital by transforming it into its own economic practice. Creative expression and mental labor have been brought to the forefront within the mentioned new labor force, and communication methods have played a mediating role.

Pascal Gielen (2016) emphasizes the transition from Fordist modes of production to post-Fordist modes of production. The production of the 'material thing' has

changed to the 'production of the immaterial'. Symbolic values such as design come to the fore and emphasize the mental workforce. Post-Fordism has contributed to the articulation of labor power into capital by transforming it into its own economic practice within neoliberal economy and politics. For example, we buy something new not because we need it, but the previous one is outdated or its appearance does not match our current position. Just as neoliberal policy acts connected with market processes, post-Fordism keeps the consumption desire alive and serves it by taking part in the economic processes of this policy.

To examine it more generally, it will be useful to look at McGuigan's assessment of the transition to post-Fordism. According to him, this transition process can be defined on four basic issues: the separation of large companies, companies' attitude during the production process that procure the necessary parts from outside rather than by producing them themselves, reducing the convenience provided by public funds, and responding to the needs of the consumer faster by using technology. In line with these trends, there was a gap between the balance of power between capital and labor, and the precarious environment was created in the working life (McGuigan, 2010).

1.2. THE DEFINITION OF PRECARITY IN POST-FORDISM

The transformation to neoliberal policies reached to peak after 1980s and its method of application based on competition. Thus, countries preferred to obtain as much efficiency as possible from labor force by intervening workers' labor atmosphere, so the "new dangerous class" was born called as 'precariat' as Standing (2014, p. 1) points out. Unless the countries provided 'labor market flexibility' (p. 6), the capital would not have been gained any profit in the companies' own countries and would have been sought in other countries where production and investment costs were lower. According to Standing (2014), the concept of precarity is divided into dimensions in terms of workforce: wage flexibility, employment flexibility, job flexibility and skill flexibility, all of them

are to strengthen the dominance of the companies on the market by controlling the employees in a certain way and getting profitable efficiency from them. So flexibility is about the practice that the more insecure employees become, the higher the investment will be. This increasingly trending process has taken its place as an agreement between companies and governments, increasing the number of people exposed to unsafe forms of work. The precarity norm also includes migrant workers who do not have citizenship status; women who have to do domestic work, tourism; service and agriculture sectors which we can call seasonal and temporary; and sex workers who do not have legal employment security. As such, precarity "designated all forms of insecure, flexible, temporary, casual, intermittent, fractional or freelance work" (Gill & Pratt, 2008, p.10).

Just as the seeds of neoliberal thought began to be sown after the Second World War, Fordism began to rise in parallel with it, and it spreads among other major countries like China in the 1950s. However, when states with surplus production directed their capitals to developing countries, market research moved to the international platform and post-Fordism comes into play at this point. New forms of work and the distinction between the highly skilled worker and those who are employed insecurely for low wages have occured with the collapse of the Fordist economy. Neilson and Rossiter's article (2008) gives a new definition of precarity, as a "norm that blurs the boundaries between capitalist production and reproduction" (p. 58) that reflect contemporary thought of it. According to activist Alex Foti (2004), precarity is "the condition of being unable to predict one's fate or having some degree of predictability on which to build social relations and feelings of affection" and "being unable to plan one's time, being a worker on call where your life and time is determined by external forces". The emphasis is on precarity as an intervention that creates a new class that should take responsibilities for their choices and dealing with the consequences not only in their work lives but also private lives and social relationships like a corruption.

When neoliberalism has emerged as a complex idea and policies entirely in the period of the ‘iron lady’, Ms. Margaret Thatcher who was an UK prime minister from 1979 to 1990, as explained (1981):

> What’s irritated me about the whole direction of politics in the last 30 years is that it’s always been towards the collectivist society. People have forgotten about the personel society. And they say: do I count, do I matter? The short answer is, yes. And therefore, it isn’t that I set out on economic policies... Economics are the method; the object is to change the heart and soul.

Perhaps the political program of neoliberalism and the economic implementation of post-Fordism provides the condition for controlling the freedom or flexibility in this precarious environment. By trying to maintain their sovereignty through various mechanisms such as laws, they enter into society and affects not only politics and economy, but also lifestyles.

The idea of the company where the flow of competition is ensured should not only cover the workplaces of the people, but also become a place to shape the society by intervening individuals. At this point, individuals are considered as controllable subjects of the economy. I would like to consider them from two perspectives:

Firstly, the subjects -at the target of the mentioned company- are the population who can be controlled as desired for Foucault. So what should be the controllable feature of this population and which instruments should be applied? Considering today's economy, the intended population should be updated and shifted to today's workforce, so they are “the assisted population, which is actually assisted in a very liberal and much less bureaucratic and disciplinary way than it is by a system

focused on full employment which employs mechanisms like those of social security" (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 207). They are treated in such a way that they do not feel needy to work, so they are given a right of choice so to speak by giving them to limited financial support.

Secondly, the situation between the working person and the labor becomes changeable, as existing mechanisms can be replaced and interchanged. First of all, the worker is in the position of an active subject, and labor is not an abstract concept compressed into a time period that progresses with the logic of overtime. Moreover, labor also takes place on a platform in which various talents are shown for the worker who is in the flow of capital; that is why we cannot accept labor and salary as synonymous. Consequently, the worker who holds capital as a controlling power becomes a kind of company.

> In neo-liberalism—and it does not hide this; it proclaims it—there is also a theory of homo œconomicus, but he is not at all a partner of exchange. Homo œconomicus is an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur of him- self. This is true to the extent that, in practice, the stake in all neo- liberal analyses is the replacement every time of homo œconomicus as partner of exchange with a homo œconomicus as entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of [his] earnings. (Foucault & Senellart, 2008, p. 226)

For Foucault as pointed out above that, the individual takes the place at the center of economy and takes responsibility for economic gain in neoliberalism. The individual's attitude is not only based on an economical approach; being a homo œconomicus is a way of establishing a bond between the individual and the government. How does the management policy use the corporatization of the

individual? Dividing the individual into parts without positioning in a single company allows oneself to see social life in an integrated manner with work life. In time, the working environment becomes a home and just as the individual bears the responsibility of private life, later the responsibility of the home life in the workplace; so their social relationships transform.

The Post-Fordist way of working type was based on increasingly an intellectual restructured environment of employees at large companies. In this way, the employee was given responsibilities such as making choices and finding solutions through different alternatives. What was expected of them was to take full responsibility for the place where they work, and even to be able to be in a flow if necessary. The worker needed to become the brain of the company with the decision-making ability and devoted himself/herself there. Instead of material equivalent of labor, the gained importance was the subjectivity and the effort of the worker. Therefore, when the worker was actively involved in the workplace, he/she began to be regarded as productive.

The problem is here about how the employee, who seems to be freed in the working environment, will be controlled by the people in terms of inside hierarchy model. The conflict is arising from this uncertainty. Western societies have actually found a solution to this problem with defining themselves as subjects. Since there is no control mechanism on assignment in the existing collective process based on creative and continuous communication, the pressure is applied to the individual existence of the employee. In fact, a more oppressive way is followed by loading problems such as being in constant communication, showing his/her organizational ability, and finding practical solutions to problems. By being isolated, the subject should turn into a person who can understand everything at the end of the day and have the ability to explain himself/herself with the same professionalism.

Post-Fordist economic regulations are insufficient in determining a nation's own state policy. While factors such as market and competition between states are aimed to be provided according to economic regulations, the social functioning of the state and its effect on individuals have been alienated from the international context. As a result, the precarity norm created by the economic apparatuses of post-Fordism with variable factors among states. Precarity experience which is given within the diversity of institutional areas such as "surplus value of precarious labor, scarcity value of intellectual property rights, cultural and social values of individual and group identities, legal and governmental values of border control, etc." finds different forms of expression in itself (Neilson & Rossiter, 2008).

There are some problematic points of precarity. For instance, it is difficult to define both in academic and administrative aspects. The critical point here is about how the problems should be expressed and how they can be applied to the required areas. Evaluating the phenomenon of precarity with such components does not make it a political phenomenon that we can think of on its own and gain control over people. It emerges as a result of the existing neoliberal management style and post-Fordist modes of production and it does not have unchangeable features, so it transforms different occupational groups, working environments and periods and also gives an experience at a time. Considering the theoretical knowledge about itself and its practical life order, it is divided into variables.

> It is useful to think of the precarity movement as geographically and temporally specific. Its origination in Western Europe is significant, as is its association with the politics of 1970s Turin. As many have argued, ‘on a global scale and in its privatized and/or unpaid versions, precarity is and always has been the standard experience of work in capitalism’ (Mitropoulous, 2005: 5, emphasis added; see also Frassanito Network,

> 2006). As Neilson and Rossiter argue (this issue), it is Fordism and Keynesianism that are the exception, both spatially and temporally, thus the emergence of precarity movements in Western Europe may have their foundation in the 'relative longevity of social state models in the face of neoliberal labour reforms', which meant that conditions experienced by most people, in most places, most of the time during the history of capitalism appeared newly harsh and brutal. For the same reasons precarity politics also (arguably) has a generational specificity, centred around people in their twenties and thirties – the 'precarious generation' (Bourdieu, 1999) identi- fied by many (Beck, 2000; Sennett, 1998) as disproportionately affected by risk and insecurity compared to the previous generation, and with little expectation of work security. (Gill & Pratt, 2008, pp. 10-11)

When the concept of precarity in Turkey and the concept of an advanced European countries compared within its own administrative apparatus of the state, economic processes, market order routing formats, the precarious situation in terms of employees or the subjects of who will be referred to in Turkey is still among the issues that continue to be discussed.

1.3. ARTISTIC LABOR AND THE CHANGING STATUS OF ARTISTS

According to *The Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist* (1980), an artist is defined as:

> Any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or recreates works of art, who considers his artistic creation to be an essential part of his life,

> who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association. (p. 149)

Also, the status word is given as

> …On the one hand, the regard accorded to artists, defined as above, in a society, on the basis of the importance attributed to the part they are called upon to play therein and, on the other hand, recognition of the liberties and rights, including moral, economic and social rights, with particular reference to income and social security, which artists should enjoy. (UNESCO, 1980, p.149)

When considered definitions of the artist and the status above, one of them focuses on how the artist defines themselves whether their dependence on the government or not, the other one emphasizes their freedom and rights. Therefore, the most current research about the artist's condition is United Nations General Assembly Human Rights Council report points out the protection of artistic creation with laws and regulations. According to that report, global issues such as digitalisation, gender gap for working environment, migration crises effect the status of artist and their artistic creation negatively. For that conditions, policy regulations needs to be thought in that perspective against challenges that artists are facing with. Nevertheless, the concept of artists working conditions in the context of artistic labor and artists' status are not enough even the countries' policy regulations.

The transformation labor concepts such as immaterial labor, affective labor or mental worker can be suitable for defining the status of artists in terms of their

characteristic features. In *Empire*, autonomist Marxists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri defines immaterial labor as “labor that produces an immaterial good, such as a service, a cultural product, knowledge, or communication” (2000, p. 290). According to them, the characteristics of immaterial labor are that it parallels the operation of a computer and it is in the form of affective labor in human relations. Technological developments and the increase in the use of computers cause the transformation of labor practices so social relations are also redefined: "Interactive and cybernetic machines become a new prosthesis integrated into our bodies and minds and a lens through which to redefine our bodies and minds themselves" (p. 291). Computers in the function of accessing all activities abstract the labor power by decontextualizing the relationship between the worker and the object of production. Affective labor, on the other hand, is intangible labor in terms of “its products are intangible, a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, or passion” (p.293).

Lazzarrato (2009) separates the working population according to their technical and subjective characteristics in business life, and synthesizes the new labor process with the immaterial labor notion, too. While immaterial labor was shaped according to consumer demands by including activities that are not normally defined as work, and it primarily belonged to the bourgeoisie, the understanding of labor changed with the introduction of intellectual equipment by requiring knowledge and a mass intellectual understanding was formed in the 1970s. Not only the regulations that make up the workforce in certain sectors, but also the role and function of intellectuals in society began to transform at this point. This both responds to the demands of capitalist production and improves the way employees evaluate themselves against the job description.

As mentioned before, the precarity norm’s definition is complex especially in the art sector. The insecurity of the working conditions of the artists may initially appear to have positive effects for them and may be perceived as a preferable phenomenon that includes various promises rather than compulsory adoption like

actors in other business sectors. Italian heterodox Marxist theory of post-Fordism has contributed to the economical aspects of art and culture in the perspective of the changes in industry (Beech, 2015). In the artistic field, precarity has been analyzed not only as the transformation in the post-Fordist economy, but also as a preferred concept to refuse to work. In the 1970s, the validity of the defenses that opposed the regular work strategy and praised the flexible work order can be seen as a fleeting illusion (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005). On the grounds that the temporary solutions that capitalism created for existing conditions led to a sort of paradox and drove workers into a sort of dead end. This deceptive control mechanism gives the illusion that the workers can have the freedom to keep the creativity in their mind at all times and reveal it whenever they want, and in this way, they can feel increasingly free. The demands for flexible working conditions and the emancipation of individuals in working life were easily adopted by the art world due to the status of artists in 1970s. They have already carried the immaterial labor features that post-Fordism brought into the practice, and adopting this point of view to both the art world and society transformed the understanding of labor that artists had into a functional level.

Emphasizing that there is no empirical study on culture producers, Isabell Lorey explained their common parameters as below:

> …They are well or even very well educated, between twenty-five and forty years-old, without children, and more or less intentionally in a precarious employment situation. They pursue temporary jobs, live from projects and pursue contract work from several clients at the same time, one right after the other, usually without sick pay, paid vacations, or unemployment compensation, and without any job security, thus with no or only minimal social protection. The forty-hour week is an illusion. Working time and free time have no clearly defined borders. Work and leisure can no longer be

> separated. In the non-paid time, they accumulate a great deal of knowledge, which is not paid for extra, but is naturally called for and used in the context of paid work, etc. (Lorey, 2009, p. 197)

When contemporary visual arts are considered, it is seen that craftsmanship, called as material labor, decreases and the idea-based creativity style gains importance. In other words, the artist always has the potential to produce something and what occupies his/her mind is the pressure brought about by this production process. Considering the situation of the artist through the concept of precarity, it is inevitable to come across the same paradoxical situation because the status of artists which is naturally thought must earn their living in this way. The fact that they are released temporarily during the creativity process and they do not receive any financial support in this process. It puts them under some kind of pressure because the source they will make money depends on not exactly completing the creative process only, but producing the work of art at the end. One of the another factor in the occurence of this situation is that they don't have a certain place to go to work regularly and therefore, they don't have certain working hours functioning like shifts.

In the biopolitical governmentality, as Foucault pointed out, the normalized freedom concept is protected with the control mechanisms held by the hegemonic power so "all of those who did not comply with this norm and normalizing of a free, sovereign, bourgeois, white subject including its property relations were made precarious" (Lorey, 2009, p. 194). Therefore, subjects (artists) can be found in the art world both if they are free, and they can be easily excluded from this environment because of the same situation; that's why, they are precarious. The concept of normalized freedom ascribed to them can easily break out of the control mechanisms of hegemony by creating a state of precarization in itself and thus they become fragile subjects who can easily be exploited in the neoliberal order.

1.4. ARTIST ACTIVISTS ABOUT ARTIST RIGHTS IN THE GLOBAL CONTEMPORARY ART WORLD

The art production process can liken as a teamwork which includes artists, curators, assistants, interns and technical workers who worked during the whole step in the background of the exhibitions, fairs, biennials and artworks sold in galleries that we see as art visitors (Becker, 1982; Danto, 1998). In the context of these labor processes, various artistic practices emerge such as installations, performances, digital works, research materials or paintings. Getting these outputs can often cause financial psychological or physical harm to the artists. However, as the majority focuses on the material outcome they can consume, the work of artists in this process is forgotten or we are not sensitive enough to observe this issue in the global art world. Therefore, the problems of the artists remain unspoken both in governments and art institutions. Also, contemporary art world has transformed into a new kind of marketplace which serving mostly high culture and perceives labor as volunteer or selectional form of employment in art sector with the neoliberal regulations on management and economy. The relation between contemporary art environment and the artist are becoming blur because the relationship based on self-interest conquers the pure view on art and the artists. Organized capitalist relations, new economy and the idea of being an individual do not serve comprehensive way out for the actors. In this point of view, the classical meaning of being a worker differentiates when considered being a contemporary art worker today with orientating ideal state of exploitation, who dedicates themselves completely to their work without hesitation (Kompatsiaris, 2015).

This chapter considers the precarious artists as the exploited ones in contrast to the elites, analysing art groups which particularly focus on motivations to demand their rights. Also, it will be taken into account which artistic and political means they use according to their status in resistance movements. The key factor is to

follow here why the artists have to represent themselves in the supported global art world by governments and the private sector. For this purpose, the first examples of artist resistance in the world are examined and the problems on which today's established artist groups are based are emphasized. Thus, the similarities and differences between the concept of precarity of different art worlds and the precarity of artists in Turkey will be discussed later in the thesis.

1.4.1. The Historical Background of Artist Activists About Artist Rights Groups

As the expectations on the artists increased, but as they became isolated at the same time, they began to establish various associations among themselves. Historically, we see artist movements in the middle of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. According to Corina L. Apostol (2015), “what is also important is that these artists were not just seeking better pay, legal rights, and life securities, but also aligned them-selves with workers’ movements that challenged the dominant status quo” (p. 7).

The beginning of the resistance of artists themselves goes back to the second half of the 19th century with the Realist movement to renew artists conditions. In 1871, Gustave Courbet called on Parisian artists to move away from the patronage of Salon exhibitions, which they were founded by accumulating bourgeois capital, and invited them to take over the management of museums and art collections (Courbet, 1992). The status of the artist has changed as an art worker and resister under the leadership of the Realist movement. Parisian artists showed strength against the bourgeoisie that took over the art institutions. With the realization of the connection between the economical conditions and artistic production, artists tried to build a bridge from the political, social and economical structures to the process of artistic production by representing the exploited art groups (Wilson, 2011). For instance, the factors that created and strengthened the Dada Movement are the collapse of the industrial age and the effect of the First World War on

people, and the economic forces of modern bourgeoisie between capital and labor. Dada's strategies of production are designed to subvert, or at least challenge, the conditions of capitalist-bound labor that go a long way in limiting the category of life (Molesworth, 2003). For some of the Dada's, they are not the ones who work for capitalist order; however, they are part of the working class as art workers (Doherty, 2003). The identification of working class in political context among liberals or organised Left members' environment has caused an examination about the value of artist's role in socities. Syndicate of Technical Workers, painters and sculptors in Mexico City (1922), The Harlem Artists Guild (1928) in New York were founded with the aim of defending artists rights against the gap between the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals who don't refuse to serve on the behalf of the government and the bourgeoisie (Apostol, 2015).

After the disillusionment of the post-war destruction, it can be observed that the artists (intellectualls), workers (labor class) and students (academy) were organised to fight collectively against unfair rules in 1960s, so "it was an alliance between mass intellectual labor and the workers' refusal of industrial labor" (Berardi, 2009, p. 28).

In 1969, another artist groups formed the Art Workers' Coalition in New York which can be considered as the first steps for the contemporary art movements worldwide. Because of the Vietnam War and political interventions including violence, artists felt themselves to spread a voice in more political issues with aesthetics. They were aware of the relationship between the war process and major museums in the United States, and began to question the way the artworks were exhibited and their economic contribution. Consequently, they demanded more participatory approach in the management of museums over representations for their artworks and forced to collectors by paying acceptable payments and organizing more profitable funds for the artists (Apostol, 2015; Rasmussen, 2009). Although these activist art groups were seperated from each other over time, they inspired the contemporary artist organizations after them in the view of

the precarious existence of artist in the art environment as art workers and protestors.

1.4.2. Contemporary Artists' Activits Groups

There has been a change in the place of the artist in society up to the present. The artist's profile as the almost ubiquitous radical or anti-social outsider of the 1960s and early 1970s has recently softened (Sholette, 2011). The new, affirmative image of the artist as an entrepreneur is even taking place in business circles.

> The twenty-first century has witnessed astonishing growth in the international market for works of art. Values peaked in 2007 after several years of rapid growth, with the global art market estimated to have reached a high of over $65 billion, including both dealer and auction sales of fine and decorative art and antiques. This represented its highest ever total, and the amount had more than doubled in a period of just five years. (McAndrew, 2010, p.5)

With the expansion of the art market, gaps were formed between artists. For example, Damien Hirst has almost single-handedly reshaped the global art market in his own image and proudly holds the title of being the richest artist in the world. In 2008, Sothebey's The Hirst auction was set with 223 works and became the most expensive single-artist auction ever. At the end of the night, Hirst earned $172 million.

Auctions, galleries, biennials, fairs and banks have been forming their subjects as investment vehicles and dominate the art market. On the other hand, the number of art students, recent graduates and interns who are out of the art market is also increasing. The hierarchy difference among the art workers, who are in and out of

the circle with their increasing numbers, also affects current types of art resistance and it is seen that all kind of actions are taken depending on the working conditions. Forums, seminars and coalitions are arranged by various art collectives either national independent policies or international relations and as a result, some solution suggestions are offered via some publishing or web based documentations.

Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E) was founded in 2008 in New York as an activist organization and their mission is to analyze economic relations under the examination of art institutions and artists within the context of inequal distributions. They are trying to facilitate the remuneration of artistic labor and set a fee with payment standards by certification program by reaching working artists and creating an environment to represent them. Established in 2011, a collective platform with artists, curators, art historians and intellectuals, ArtLeaks has an international point of view and does not only cover artists, but also another professionals to share similar issues called as precarious condition of cultural workers. They are examining the art environment caught between capital order and power related to repressions through censorship, threatenings and illegal hurdles by the way of gathering reports both named or anonymous as cases. For that reason, they are calling each actors to say, “It is time to break the silence” as their motto. Another group worked in similar issues and activities to the ones that I mentioned before is Precarious Workers Brigade in England. They develop researches and organized actions to point out precarity and define themselves as the group that is open partnerships with other groups working on the same issues as a collaboration is working actively in the education and cultural sectors.

Furthermore, many activities around exploited art workers are organized. “Artist Report Back” was published by BFAMFAPhD collective group and focused on the lives of art graduates and working artists. They wanted to discover the number of precarity artists on the context of earning living in the arts. By analyzing the Census Bureau’s 2012 American Community Survey, they reached some

conclusions like they were 2 million art graduates and 10 percent among them are working artists in the United States. According to the results, they recommmended low-cost art programs in educational level, support of cultural institutions for visibility and workforce development. In Trondheim Seminar, the participants shared conclusions of the seminar which is called as “Art Production in Restriction- Possibilities of Transformative Art Production and Coalition-Building”. Both of them worked in their own fields, by collecting data and offering solutions with evaluating the dificulties of art production. Bojana Piškur and Djordje Balmazović conducted a research titled "Cultural Workers' Inquiry" based on Marx's "The Workers Inquiry" in 2012. The situation of some cultural workers in Serbia is being examined. Thus, we can access the direct testimonies of the participants about censorship, corruption and discrimination. They discussed theoretical perspective of artistic labor and shared similar experiences with local groups.

As a result, it is observed that the types of precarious working conditions differ from each other at different levels such as historical, geographical, and transformation of socio-politics. However, the effect of different precarious situations arising from the transformations of the art world on artists remains the same. We witness the struggle in the scope of the artist identity after questioning how artists were affected by the politics and their role where they resist from past to present. Their common goal is to be able to discover the reasons behind it. Also, they establish communities to create a free expression area. The most obvious reason is that the artists continue to stay out of the circle with their increasing numbers or they prefer this situation because of political and economic reasons. However, this situation should not turn into an effort of artists created by control mechanisms to exist in an order with their invisible identities.

2. THE STATUS AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

2.1. THE IMPACT OF NEOLIBERALISM IN TURKEY'S CONTEMPORARY ART SCENE

While the field of culture and art was shaped mostly by the state in Turkey until the 1970s, it transferred this mission to non-state institutions over time. Some initiatives of the private sector on contemporary art before the 1970s can be given as follows: Maya Art Gallery, which was opened in Istanbul Beyoğlu in 1950, Kemal Erhan's emergence as the first collector, the painting competition organized by Yapı Kredi Bank within the framework of its 10th founding year, the banks' opening of galleries from the 1960s, various competitions and the distribution of prizes (Özsezgin, 1986).

Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts was founded in 1973 by seventeen businessmen under the leadership of Dr. Nejat F. Eczacıbaşı as a non-profit and non-governmental organisation to organise international festivals and promote Turkey's national and cultural features. Both Ministry of Culture was established by the state after 1970, and the Istanbul Festival was organized in 1973 for the first time in terms of taking a concrete step for cultural policy. Before the Istanbul Festival was held by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, the ministry's making and implementing of cultural policies were monopolized (Ada, 2009). Although the Istanbul Festival enabled artists to interact among each other, the public and internationally, and established new connections and gained different ideas about artistic production, there is no data regarding the status of the artists.

In the 1980s, the state institutions on culture got out of the status of giving advice and had legal responsibilities after the military coup on September 12. The liberalized economy with the January 24 Decisions emphasized the support of private initiatives instead of state policies. The relation with the logic of

neoliberalism can be given as: “Since the January 24 Decisions are based on the price mechanism and defend the free market economy, they reflect a neo-liberal understanding”[1] (Öztürk & Naz & İçöz, 2008, p.17). Among the features of the September 12 period, the power of the capital holding, banker boom, the emergence of new sectors and professions, the increase in image and advertising activities, the development of the media, the humiliation of concepts related to the left, the rise of arabesque and chauvinistic nationalism have played an important role in shaping investments in the field of culture and art in the following years (Çubukçu & Esatoğlu & Sümer, 1997).

With the effect of globalization, the deficiencies of the services provided by the state as an institution began to be met by non-state institutions. Besides the first Istanbul Biennial in 1987, the local line began to move into the international arena. According to 3rd Istanbul Biennial curator, Vasıf Kortun (2018), the contemporary art should move away from dominant forces and their understandings with the sharp seperation, so transformation would be possible only in this way. However, the visibility of the artists was not aimed until the 3rd Istanbul Biennial. The purpose of the biennial, as Kortun (2014) determines that, in his words “to lead Turkish artists systematically towards the international arena” (p. 46). The unrecognition of artists from Turkey in the international arena made the Turkey based group exhibition organize impossible because they were supported neither the government nor foreign sources. The start of organizing international biennials, the European Capital of Culture projects organized with European Union funds, the branding of Istanbul and the museums opened one after another are examples of the influence of the private sector on cultural policies. The tension between the state and the artist has shifted to a different point with neoliberalism’s interest towards contemporary art. In the face of the rapidly transforming economy, art actors and cultural institutions that could not find any support from the state, handed over their current and limited power to

[1] All the texts from Turkish to English quoted in the thesis were translated by the author.

subjects who owned capital because of having difficulties in adapting to the new order.

When The Justice and Development Party (AKP) was in power by gaining the majority of votes in the elections held in 2002, this condition opened the doors of a new transformation in every field excepting the culture and arts. Large financial institutions and families have positioned the field of contemporary art in a place where they can gain the prestige for themselves. The effects of the 2001 economic crisis were tried to be overcome by encouraging the private sector to invest in the field of culture and arts under the guise of the efforts to participate the European Union. The ruling party adopted the idea of culture as the starting point for economic development. The field of culture and art has been instrumentalized with the priority of economic interests. For instance, when Recep Tayyip Erdogan became the Mayor of Istanbul in 1994 at that time, he canceled to establish a contemporary art museum in Istanbul. However, Eczacıbaşı group took action again for that issue with the same request and this time, they were met with great interest by the Prime Minister Erdoğan in 2004. He stated that he would have supported the project, provided that the opening of the museum was brought to the European Union summit. Oya Eczacıbaşı evaluated the subject as follows, "if it could contribute to the EU as much as a grain of rice, we said of course we will open it and we trained the museum by working in three shifts." (Merdim, 2005) and she approved in her favor by servicing to neoliberal globalization.

Contemporary art also got its share from the tourism industry and was used as an instrumental source of income. The merger of the Ministries of Culture and Tourism in 2003 shows that the political power has been progressing with the aim. In 2004, Istanbul as a center frequently was mentioned in the field of art within the possibility of Turkey joining the European Union incidentally into focus. In addition, it was chosen the European Capital of Culture in 2010. This situation caused Istanbul to be seen as a brand for economic gain by various stakeholders. During this process, the European Union and Turkey have

contributed funds in a manner that impact on the contemporary art scene (Karaca, 2011, pp. 3-4). On the other hand, cities couldn't be shaped by subjects who claim to be cultural rulers, and by governments aiming to progress with a particular state policy. Although it seemed positive at the beginning that the field of contemporary art was recognized by the government no matter what the reasons were and most of the cultural institutions continued to exist, at least not faced with bureaucratic obstacles and supported by funds, artists realized that nothing actually changed for them over time. Despite the large number of cultural institutions and the increased visibility of the artists, they could neither receive a reward for their labor nor benefit from free forms of expression.

Since 2005, the private sector's initiatives in culture and art have increased, and two other holdings including Eczacıbaşı in Turkey, have made attempts in the field of culture and art. Spreading the awareness of art through festivals, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts began to be represented in the field of contemporary arts with Istanbul Modern, this interest emerged in the Koç Group through Pera Museum (2005). In the Sabancı Museum (2002), on the other hand, the collection and international calligraphy exhibitions were left out, and the prominent masters of modern art and their original works began to be exhibited. The general characteristic of these entrepreneurial families are to "contribute to the culture and art, unlike their first generation ancestors, in an institutional and strategic setting instead of gratuitous benevolence" (Dervişoğlu, 2008, p. 43). With the desire to produce constantly without overtime period in the art world, the interests of capital source companies have converged and created a suitable environment for exploitation. However, creative, creativity, subjectivity etc. terms are included in art environment instead of business world's logic of capital ideology. Large-scale art institutions established with this understanding caused superficiality and tried to achieve a stability far from criticism. This tendency, which was born with the logic of commercialization, has penetrated into the environment of artists, and apart from a few artists, there has not been one who expresses own reaction to institutionalization and criticizes the created art

environment. According to Delier (2016), “an uneasy and unbelieving air prevails, which is skeptical of the politics of their own works and thinks that their own grounds are weak in institutions supported by capital” (p. 152).

In general, the 2000s can be called the period in which institutionalization took place rapidly in the field of art. In addition to the booming of museums, art institutions, galleries, and culture and art departments in private universities, there was a rapid increase in the number of professionals. During this period, art became to serve a purely specific purpose. Corporate culture has become competent in business processes and in determining the quality of labor.

2.1.1. The Status of Contemporary Artists on The Context of Cultural Policy in Turkey

Cultural policy as a new concept started to appear in discussions at first in the 2000s but it doesn’t include artist rights. According to Serhan Ada (2009; 2011), this case can be explained for two reasons: European Union had a condition to complete the steps for becoming a member and the cultural area has begun to gain enough support via private sector but it needed to regulate this area and further improved it with more investment depended on the formulation of cultural policy.

Moreover, the data on the artists involved in the visual arts sector in Turkey are quite insufficient. The inadequacy of organization and the high number of independent productions make it difficult to collect data on numbers. In the sectoral research report named as *One of the developing sectors in Istanbul's Cultural Economy: Visual Arts* (2010), there are a total of 207 artists in Istanbul, according to the number of members of Türkiye Güzel Sanat Eseri Sahipleri Meslek Birliği. This number constitutes 15.53 percent of the total members of the professional association. Uluslararası Plastik Sanatlar Derneği (Association Internationale Des Arts Plastiques International Association Of Arts) has a total of 860 registered artists in Istanbul. This ratio constitutes 61.30% of the total

registered members in Turkey. In TUIK statistics, there is no section about artists working in the visual arts sector specifically to keep any statistics. Despite the rapid developments in the field of contemporary arts in Turkey, enough research has not been done for the visual arts sector's artists. However, it is important to have the necessary data about the artists in order to determine their needs and deficiencies in the field. For instance, *The Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist* which was released at the UNESCO General Conference in Belgrade, 1980 has become an important source for member states to create awareness about artists and regulating cultural policies. *The Recommendation Concerning the Status of the Artist* demonstrates that:

> Considering that the artist plays an important role in the life and evolution of society and that he should be given the opportunity to contribute to society's development and, as any other citizen, to exercise his responsibilities therein, while preserving his creative inspiration and freedom of expression. (UNESCO, 1980)

Although UNESCO's member states for this initiative involving participants also were seen as a positive early preparation, Turkey remained in the background of these planned developments for artists. Not only artists in particular, but also the history of the republic has never been any written cultural policy of Turkey as Ada (2011) pointed out: "Our cultural policy existed by default" (p. 180).

The cultural policy issue carried out in cooperation with the Council of Europe. *Cultural Policy in Turkey National Report* (2013) was maintained by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and *Review of Cultural Policy in Turkey* (2013) was prepared by the international independent experts board. However, when the length of the program admission process and openning up access to both reports in 2013 considered, Turkey was conspicuous lack of professionals on this area.

As the main topic in this section is how artists are evaluated in cultural policies in Turkey, the relevant part in *Cultural Policy in Turkey National Report* (2013) is as follows:

> Furthermore, upon request, if found *appropriate*, support in allocation of exhibition site, printing of catalogue, banner, and invitation, and such, is provided to the artists, academicians, art groups and civil society organizations within *the limits* of contemporary availability of the budget. Additionally, artists that are invited as demonstrators to the artistic and cultural activities at international level are provided with an allowance for their transportation within *the limits* of the budget, if found *appropriate*.[2] (p. 79)

In the quote above, it is mentioned that some support can be provided to the artists, but the "limits" and "appropriate" parts of the budget considered were not clearly given. In this case, the support intended to be given may not be provided by showing some conditions or the budget can be insufficient according to internal or external conditions. The statements in *Cultural Policy in Turkey National Report* (2013) can give negative results in practice, even if they are within specific needs. Moreover, Ada (2013) examines the characteristics of this report in describing the preparation process in terms of peculiar to Turkey in his article titled, *Turkey's Cultural Policy Relook: New But The Same* (Türkiye'nin Kültür Politikasına Yeniden Bakmak: Yeni Ama Aynı). The necessary authorities in the cultural policy writing under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism were found as a result of long term discussions. This can be considered as the lack of professionalism in the field. In the next process, a report

[2] The ithalic emphasises are mine.

was prepared by compiling the data obtained before the policy writing issue was fully understood. At this point, he states that the reason for the preparation of the report was perceived as an official duty held by the state, since there were no meetings with the civil society.

The other report was constituted in collaboration with independent experts and Turkey, named as *Review of Cultural Policy in Turkey* (2013), and its "Status of the Artist" section places granted. The subject makes officials work within the needs of artists in Turkey are higlighted. In this section, it is mentioned the deficiencies in the definition and data in the national report. For instance, the number of artists working as part-time, full-time or freelance is not given separately. In addition, as a result of interviews made by independent experts with some artists and organizations, they reached the knowledge that few artists are able to get support by working in state institutions and the remaining artists have to work in another job fields to get social security payments. However, it is insufficient to state that the contemporary art environment in Istanbul has its own characteristics for the field of visual arts, even though it should not to forget that this report only undertakes the task of detecting observations and deficiencies.

After addressing the deficiencies of the two reports examined above, it is necessary to mention an important ignoring action that is valid for both reports. Not only does the state support in the field of culture create uncertainty in terms of artists' working conditions, but every actor in the arts including civil society and independent communities should have a right to say in cultural policy writing. Especially, the number of state-sponsored artists is not adequate, but nowadays there are increasing adequate efforts by independent people to exist in the field of art. Due to the fact that the extended releasing process of the reports mentioned above and other related people and alternative institutions are not included, *Turkish Cultural Policy A Civil Perspective Report* (2011) preparation started mainly by Anatolian Culture (Anadolu Kültür) initiative with representatives working in the field of culture, such as Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul

Foundation for Arts and Culture (İKSV), Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TÜSEV), Sabancı University, the History Foundation and KAGİDER in 2008 (Bianet, 2010). The underlying aim of the report is to collect various cultural workers from the common institutions or independent fields together and to create a space for discussing and evaluating the approach and proposals on Turkey's cultural policy.

The director of Istanbul Foundation for Arts and Culture and the board member of European Cultural Foundation, Görgün Taner evaluates how to look at non-governmental initiatives with this statement:

> Central and local administrations must take in and digest the civic perspective of cultural policies, and independent non-governmental initiatives must be looked upon as the leading and driving forces of society, rather than as sources of fear and suspicion. This requires a change of mindset. (Turkish Cultural Policy Report A Civil Perspective, 2011, p. 27)

This report, created within the framework of the Council of Europe's *National Cultural Policy Review Program*, includes the current problems of the artists and various suggestions in the "Conditions for Artistic Creativity" section. It mainly classifies the problems of artists such as the visibility by the state, social rights, funding, censorship in art, artistic education, lack of archive creation, criticism and publication, and the access of participation in culture. The transformation experience within artistic production in Turkey are summarized as follows:

> Artistic production in Turkey surged during the 1960s and 1970s. With the development of information technology, the inclusion of local cultural values in mainstream culture, and the rise of pop culture and global

> neoliberal cultural policies after 1980, art production and its environment underwent a huge transformation. The private sector assumed a more active role in the field of art: new venues appeared, organizations and initiatives were founded, new media and experimental techniques were explored and a more extensive dialogue with the international art community began. Central government had a limited role to play in many fields of art; from the Ministry to local governments, the national culture policy supported the production of classic or traditional art despite its restricted budget. The post-1980 global cultural transformation was also a factor in the government's incentive system. (Turkish Cultural Policy Report A Civil Perspective, 2011, p. 214)

It is explained that the role of state institutions to support art production has weakened and they continue to support traditional art rather than contemporary art with the change of art production and the art environment. Considering the support given to the artist within the framework of current conditions and improving the working condition of the artist with an innovative perspective by following the developments are the points presented to the proposal for this report.

Moreover, Creative Europe Program could be considered as an example in terms of its potential to have positive effects in terms of artist rights. It was formed with the aim of art and cultural workers to be recognized outside with a variety of projects, exhibitions, ensuring international cooperation and supporting them financially by the European Union, and Turkey was included in 2014. However, Turkey decided to exit European Union's Creative Europe Program in 2016 based on the decision was given in response to the financial support planned by the

project managers for the concert to be held to commemorate the victims of the Armenian Genocide. In fact, this project offered a chance to give financial support for artists and various projects and this sudden decision shows how cultural actors take place in a fragile point in the framework of Turkey's agenda. Moreover, it prevented possible studies on cultural policies that could be provided by artists via financial support and creating an independent art environment. The cancellation of the Creative Europe Program in Turkey did not stop the production of artists or affect the functioning of art institutions. However, a positive channel for artists' visibility or financial support was blocked for political reasons. This situation actually shows how precarious status the artists are.

2.1.2. The Change of The Perspective of The Power on Contemporary Art

The transformation of the ruling party and the way it has used management mechanisms stemming from its state of power has rapidly changed after 2011 in the field of culture and arts. The obvious reasons here are that the investments were not used properly and the capital did not make a profit in the period when Istanbul was chosen as the European Capital of Culture and the other one is that the disappointment of European Union accession process. When Erdogan won the elections for the third time as prime minister in 2011, he embraced the conservative and one-man regime against all odds. Uncertainties in the art market grew increasingly and the masses were dissatisfied with the government's political repression regime in Istanbul.

The government's targeting the field of contemporary art in its discursive practices has been realized in a way that threatens the freedom of expression of artists. The first example of this with clear expression came during Erdoğan's speech in 2011: "They put a freak next to Hasan Harakani's tomb, they planted something strange. It is unthinkable that such a thing can happen where there are all foundation works and those artistic works" and that's why he gave instructions for the statue to be demolished. Erdoğan's defining a work of art as a freak and targeting it and the

destruction of the work as a result of his instructions is a phenomenon that needs to be questioned here.

Bora (2014) evaluated the general situation by expressing that the AKP has failed in the field of culture despite its hegemonic structure and that they expressed these weaknesses with their anti- intellectualist discourse based on scorn. The suppression of the contemporary art space in this way continues to create a more precarious environment for artists who are already reluctant to state support. The accusation of former Interior Minister İdris Naim Şahin in 2011, along with artists and various subjects and institutions as supporters of terrorism, is not only a threat to the artist's freedom of expression, but also a distinctive form of expression that is open to attack and causes worsening of living conditions. Accusing the artists of making terrorist propaganda, Şahin also considered homosexuality as immoral and created an atmosphere of hatred. Therefore, it can be regarded as the beginning of the government, which has discourses on sexual identity that come to the fore frequently later. Moreover, speaking to support a kind of polarization, Şahin expressed his views as follows:

> If we read the language of their backyards, the representatives of this political structure, and even all of them in reverse, we can understand it very easily. What they say has to be turned around. That's how I found out what their intentions are, what their world is. Everything they say good is bad, if they say bad, it is good. If they say 'peace', there is war there. If they say 'democracy', there is cruelty there. If they say 'human', there is a trap for human beings. If they say 'love', there is hatred. What they say is the opposite meaning. When you read it backwards, you can understand their plain. (Radikal, 2011)

While these statements were ongoing, Mustafa İsen (2012), the Secretary General of the Presidency, said, "We are under an obligation to establish the norms and structure of 'conservative aesthetics' and 'conservative art', whatever democracy

understanding of the conservative segment ", and he also emphasized that the political understanding of the government should have a hegemonic structure in the cultural field. However, there was no cultural policy in line with the discourse of the government. On the contrary, artists with this point of view within the local and national discourse came to the fore with their closeness to the government. Strengthening their presence in the mainstream media and broadcasting sector, this segment has won the love of the majority of the public, and contemporary artists have been thrown into the background with their forgotten and destined identity.

The separation of the artists has caused a grouping of art actors who try to remain independent within institutions by networks. In this sense, art does not become liberal; it is absorbed and turns into a feudal community shaped by certain relationships.

2.2. CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS' LABOR AND PRECARITY

Due to the scarcity of studies on contemporary artists and art criticism articles in Turkey, the subject of artist labor and precarity have been tried to be examined within the scope of the thesis with the result of restrictions. In *One of the developing sectors in Istanbul's Cultural Economy: Visual Arts* (2010) report, the sectoral trend and the reason for the situation are determined as:

> It is difficult for artists, who are production actors in the visual arts sector, to hold on independently in the sector due to the lack of public support. In this sense, artists who graduated from the faculty of fine arts have to either carry out their activities depending on a gallery or change the sector. One of the main problems highlighted in many interviews held within the scope of the inventory project is the lack of sufficient investment for artists despite the rapid development of the visual arts market both in the world and in Turkey. (p. 12)

Arter, Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and SAHA Association can be given as examples among institutions that support cultural producers in Turkey. Arter Research Program made its first edition in 2019. Participants are determined by Arter Exhibitions and Learning Program members. The second edition covers the period 2020-2021. It supports the formation of various discussion environments within the group, individual mentoring and publications by advancing within the framework of a certain program. Moreover, The Istanbul Biennial Production and Research Program was started by the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts in 2018 and has been held in three terms so far. It consists of a series of consultancy, workshops and seminars for artists and researchers who want to carry out theoretical, practical, individual or collective studies in the fields of art and art. SAHA Association was established in 2011 with the initiative of nine founding members and the contributions of 31 members to support the production and development environments of artists, curators and writers working in the field of visual arts from Turkey, and to increase their interaction with international art institutions and networks. It has adopted the mission of maintaining the independent art scene with funds and various activities. In particular, the SAHA Studio program provides artists with space, curatorial support and a budget for their research during production, exhibition and presentation processes for the purpose of exhibiting their projects. The first period took place in 2019 and the works produced were exhibited in the SAHA Studio area in 2020 as part of various events. Candidates are selected by the invited selection committee invited by the SAHA executive board. Artists who can benefit from SAHA Studio programs and opportunities are selected according to their portfolios for the collaborative work environment. Its corporate backers include Borusan, Eczacıbaşı, Karadeniz Holding and Petrol Ofisi.

While these programs provide support to artists, I think there are some points that should not be ignored: not giving support to the same artists in the art circulation, not ignoring the independence status of the artists if it is foreseen to support

independent artists, changing the jury meeting for the selection of the candidates in every period and providing the suitable conditions in accordance with the working conditions of the artists. The effect of precarity phenomenon can be seen when the artists' own discourses are evaluated. Their production does not depend on their own preferences, but on external conditions. Due to the fact that artists did not receive any financial support, they carried out their works as a result of their own efforts and mostly dependent on the organization they were affiliated with.

Also, Zeyno Pekünlü, one of the directors of The Istanbul Biennial Production and Research Program, states that the number of applicants is very high without understanding what the program is, and this is due to the intention to fill in a curriculum vitae (Personal communication, January 17, 2022). The current capitalist culture puts pressure on recent graduates to have a full curriculum vitae.

Eda Yiğit's recent research (2021) was applied with the participation of 150 artists for one month during the first wave period of the COVID-19 epidemic. By analyzing the answers given by the survey method, the general situation of the artists in terms of precarity and the extraordinary situations they encountered during the pandemic period were investigated. The target audience of the survey was the artists who defined themselves as precarious. According to the results of the research,

> 43% of them are in the income group of 2000 TL and below, that is, they live below the hunger limit, 31% of them do not have social security, 58% do not own any property, 64% of them need economic support (parent, grandparent, partner, other relatives, funds, scholarships, SSI), 80% of them have to work in another job, 13% of them have to work more than 45 hours a week, 36% of them do not have an artist workshop, 83% have a gallery / company / music company or anot represented by the Publisher. (Yiğit, 2021, p.54)

As a result of the research reports examined within the scope of the thesis, it is seen that the status of the artists could not be protected in Turkey and the support provided to the artists by various institutions during the production and exhibition processes were insufficient.

The issue is actually not knowing whether being unemployed in a month, working in a payroll job or doing a freelance job. Their transitivity is very fast and at high rates. Zeyno Pekünlü talks about her own experince as well, and she doesn't know what will happen after a one-year contract (Personal communication, January 17, 2022). After overlapping freelance jobs, there may be no jobs for a while. High transitivity creates a high level of life anxiety, a sense of precarity and uncertainty. There is both a systematic problem from the government and an incomplete struggle.

The subtitles of being precarious in Turkey as a result of the interviews with the artists and the literature analysis outputs can be given as follows:

2.2.1. Censorship/ Self-Censor

> Censorship is the most common violation of artistic freedom. Artworks and artists are unduly censored due to their creative content, which is opposed by governments, political and religious groups, social media platforms, museums, or by private individuals. Artists and advocates of artistic freedom are often silenced for questioning social and religious norms or expressing political views that oppose dominant narratives. (Hencz, n.d.)

Although Siyah Bant, which works on the concept of censorship and expression in Turkish contemporary art, will be given a detailed place in the next part of the

thesis, it is stated how the concept of censorship is handled as follows. The concept of censorship is not only legal prohibition of artistic expression but also legitimation, threats, coercion, targeting, and hatred that impedes the production and circulation of works of art through its discourse or defined as the prohibition through restrictive processes for artists and arts institutions. Turkey actors involved in the suppression of creative rights such as state institutions, political groups and parties, representatives of the state, individuals, neighborhood organizations, institutions, curators, funders and sponsors associated with the art world.

For instance, an auction night was held at Istanbul Modern and the artist Bubi Hayon's work, named 'Oturak' was excluded from the auction by the curatorial team on the grounds that it was out of concept by the end of 2011. When discussions on censorship were carried out by various associations, the incident took place in the press. Signed by various artists, curators and critics, "No to the 'Conditional' of Censorship, or the 'With Commerce Friendly Nature' Censorship!" (Sansürün 'Koşullu'suna da 'Doğası Ticari Yaşama Uyanı'na da Hayır!) emphasized that some of the artists prefer to remain silent in case of intervening art works which criticize the sensitivies of the collectors formed by the conservative group and the power in both political and management provided by the market actors. Trying to change the context of an artwork for the arts institution's choices is an attack on freedom of expression. On the same day with the declaration, the artist's speech for Istanbul Modern's 'Dream and Reality' (Hayal ve Hakikat) exhibition turned into a protest action by Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz. Artists and critics as listeners also argued about Bubi's work and the attitude of the institution, and as a result, the institution was criticized within its borders. The participant artists of 'Dream and Reality' exhibition of Istanbul Modern decided to withdraw their works from the exhibition at the end. The same exhibition has been the subject of controversy within itself. Although it focused on the conceptual framework of the artistic production in Turkey on women artists, it made invisible some of the contemporary art works that can be

considered innovative for that period even the same women artists took part in the exhibition.

When examined in a broader perspective, the conflict between the artist Bubi and the curators of Istanbul Modern has caused a problem that has been going on for years to be made more visible in a single case. The concept of censorship could be discussed on a common platform among artists, and at the same time, it was understood that the representation of the existing associations in the context of artist rights was inadequate. The artists' statements regarding the situation were invalid against the power of the institution. The fact that some artists protested the institution by withdrawing their works from the exhibition, the artists have been damaged in both legal and financial paradigms at the end of the day. In other words, issues such as the rights of the artist and what can be done against the commodification of the work of art became more specific by questioning the existing power mechanisms and creating a common discussion area in the field of contemporary art. The readiness of common ailments to be brought to the agenda as a result of a single case has led to the idea of establishing of solidarity networks where the professional, financial and legal rights of the artist in the alternative field can be discussed.

Universal Periodic Review's *Cultural and Artistic Freedom of Expression Report* in 2020 evaluates that censorship mechanisms after the 2015 general elections following and triggered by the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016 have changed significantly. For instance, Işıl Eğrikavuk's video 'Time to Sing a New Song' (2016) was removed by polices on the screening of YAMA. Also, Akbank Sanat cancelled Russian curator Katya Krupennikova's exhibition titled 'Post-Peace', citing the political atmosphere in Turkey. Forces exercised under the State of Emergency have been preserved and normalized. This is especially effective in limiting artistic expression. Artists have difficulty in expressing themselves through their art in this oppressive environment (N. Polat, personal communication, November 4, 2021).

2.2.2. Working Conditions

According to the working conditions definition of International Labour Organization, working conditions cover a wide range of topics, from working time to pay, as well as the physical conditions and mental demands that exist in the workplace.

> Artists are depicted as non-contributing parasites, and even though the political consensus still officially talks about improving the working conditions of artists, very little is done at the political level to help the situation. Instead the visual arts sector gets a smaller and smaller share of the public budgets. Maybe this political lameness and disinterest might somehow be linked to the populist image of the artist as a no-good receiver of social benefits (a.k.a. working grants). Hence, improved and professionalised working conditions for exhibiting artists would not only create an economic improvement for individual artists, and free more time for focused artistic production, but also have the potential of creating a new image of the artist as a profes- sional. Not as someone who is exclusively an entrepreneur – as the new economic paradigm would suggest – but as someone who also works for the public and gets paid for it, like any number of other professional groups (teachers, academics, health care professionals, politicians, administrators, technicians, etc.). An artist would then no longer be a parasite, “free spirit” and outcast, but a regular cultural worker. (Krikortz, 2015, p.23)

Artist fee does not mean the fee paid for the support given by the artists to their production within the institution or the expenses to be provided for participation in the series of events in the exhibition. If the artist's work is exhibited within the institution, the artist has the right to be paid. In an interview with Kortun in *10* (2014), Hale Tenger describes her situation in that period as follows:

> I did my last big project in Turkey, 1993 with my own budget. Since then, in line with the decision I have taken, I did my projects only with the budgets provided by the organization that made the invitation. The reason I made this decision is that I don't have a source of income to finance large-scale projects. (pp. 214-215)

At the same time, the artist must receive the so-called goodwill fee for activities such as workshops and artist talks to be held during the exhibition. In the interviews held within the scope of the thesis, it was concluded that these rights of the artists were violated. The discussion of the goodwill in 2011 caused the issue to become widespread as a problem. Therefore, artists of the same generation do not prefer to participate in events if there is no goodwill, and they give advice to younger artists. Corporations refuse to give goodwill unless requested, and the more they are asked, the more the corporations have to make changes within themselves (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022). Giving examples from their personal experiences, they stated that some institutions even tried to get the artists to pay for the transportation of the works (N. Polat, personal communication, November 4, 2021). This issue can cause problems especially in large works and forces some artists to produce in exhibition venues or they take the risk of harming their works because exhibition venues do not insure them.

Establishing international connections and collaborations are very important for the visibility of artists. The visibility of artists abroad and the exhibitions seem to be very much linked to the political situation. There was a period that started in the 2010s, when Istanbul was very popular, and artists from Istanbul were constantly invited to international exhibitions. But there was an effect that should not be forgotten in this summoning. Istanbul has also become an airport hub for the always-on-the-go art community. For example, curators abroad would spend 1-2 days here as their plane passed through Istanbul, and new acquaintances were constantly formed. First of all, this situation was severely interrupted by the bombing period. All consulates called not to go to Turkey, then there was a coup period. It was humiliating for artists at first. Zeyno Pekünlü states that her work abroad was active during this period, but it always stemmed from her old connections (Personal communication, January 17, 2022). Therefore, if there is any foreign connection, it is due to old connections so new link is not added. The COVID-19 process also showed its effect in Turkey like other countries. With all these reasons coming together, there was a serious decrease in international exhibitions. For some artists, this reduces the quality of production because a lot of production budget from abroad has seriously decreased.

In another perspective, the foreign exchange gap prevents artists from participating in international projects, and artists can no longer take part in research abroad with their own earnings. There are also no state sponsored funds for artist research. The lack of visibility of artists' rights over the law renders the artist unidentified, and the issue of artists' visibility continues to be shaped according to the interests of the market, without being resolved.

2.2.3. Artists’ Rights

In Turkey, there are ongoing definitional complexities in the field of visual arts over laws. For example, there is the concept of work in the Law on Intellectual

and Artistic Works (Fikir ve Sanat Eserleri Kanunu), but it is quite limited. It is still unclear what kind of work the installations will cover. The moral right of the artist on the sale of the work can be proven with the experts who will protect the copyrights by creating the report. Since the contract is not preferred in individual sales, moral rights can be abused. For example, the painter who makes the first sale to a collector may request that the work is not be exhibited at the place where the works owned by the collector are exhibited. Although the collector is not harmed by this situation, museums may be harmed as they gain financial earnings by using the relation networks. Therefore, frictions may arise between the artist and the institution. In the conversation about art law (2020), Selim Bilen as a lawyer emphasizes that when artists are holding an exhibition, they should archive the press release, installation photos, consignment note, sales list, and the copy of the invoice if the sale is invoiced or the statement like 'I received/ delivered'. Thus, the artist has legal evidence before the court. There is no specific standard regarding the copyright given to the artist in the exhibitions of works that will take place without sale. According to the law, a written contract is required and it should be clearly stated between the parties that which of them will pay the installation fee, how much the commission fee will be deducted, from whom the discount rates will be deducted, and how much of the production cost will be provided by the institution. In addition to the contracts most institutions have with artists, the artist may also submit his or her own contract. Although there is no accepted legal agreement on this subject, there is an exemplary study prepared in consultation with art workers and lawyers (Appendix). It was shared by Saliha Yavuz in the personal interview with in terms of setting an example within the scope of the thesis.

The nature of the contracts between artists and institutions generally consists of standard clauses and the personal preferences of the artists are ignored. Zeyno Pekünlü's explanation of the situation is as follows:

> In terms of pricing, each gallery receives a fifty percent share from the past. However, the common denominator with the artists is that the gallery has certain responsibilities in order to get a fifty percent share. If it demands fifty percent, it has to open a personal exhibition every three years and it has to pay a certain amount for this exhibition. At the same time, it needs to represent the artist at a local and one international fair once a year. It should print a catalog for at least two exhibitions, if not for every exhibition. There used to be galleries that paid the artist's studio rent. Participating in the fair requires serious expenses for the artists, or it is necessary to spend large amounts for the production of some works. Also, some artists do not prefer to sell their work and want galleries to take over. (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022)

Therefore, percentages are something that can only be interpreted according to what artists can get in return. Fulya Erdemci, Süreyyya Evren, Zeyno Pekünlü, Ahmet Doğu İpek and Yasemin Özcan attended the roundtable meeting organized by the Susma Platform in 2017. Regarding the contracts made with the gallery, Ahmet Doğu İpek shared that although he requested a contract from the gallery he had worked at previously, he did not have a contract, and neither the gallery nor he was aware of what to do due to a problem experienced in the process of leaving the gallery.

In order to move as far away from sales- based pressure in art institutions as possible, it is necessary to raise awareness about the rights of artists and to develop a collective consciousness in this direction.

2.2.4. The Role of State's Institutions in Artists' Rights

In Hüsamettin Koçan and Zeyno Pekünlü's speech (2013), Zeyno Pekünlü talks about how to get support from the state in terms of funds and how to get involved

in the state's cultural policies, when the relations with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and state institutions are evaluated in the 2011 meetings on artists' rights. The desire of the artists to demand something from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and state institutions existed because the faith was still not broken in the period before the Gezi protests in Turkey. Today, the situation is even more different. The issue of state and Ministry of Culture and Tourism went off the radar for independent artists during this period, and everyone maintains cautious relations with Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Şişli Municipality and Kadıköy Municipality. According to her own experience, since the political power of the municipalities changed, four different units have called her to meet for ideas, but there is a communication problem between the units (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022). Knowing that similar situations have happened to others, this creates tension after a while because it is unclear whether the units are advancing in a coordinated manner. As a result, she experiences similar situations in most of these meetings where she takes part as a volunteer consultant.

In another example, Kadıköy Municipality held an artist assembly due to the abundance of artists in Kadıköy, but it did not last in consequence of systematic progress (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022). Also, Kadıköy Municipality can't establish a communication network with visual artists as they can meet with people in other fields. Here the identity of the artist is forgotten. Since there is no one in the field of art in their team, they do not have an awareness of how to communicate. Communication with artists is not appropriate as they progress with the structure of a state institution. For example, the artist is brought in contact with the purchasing department in the municipality.

After the unsuccessful attempt of the Kadıköy Municipality to create a unity where the artists could come together and talk about their problems, it would be necessary to mention the second edition of Beyoğlu Kültür Yolu Festivali, organized by the Beyoğlu Municipality in cooperation with an increasing number

of art institutions in May 2022. It provides the source of cultural tourism with the control of the government, and includes the art institutions on the Beyoğlu route together with the artists in their exhibitions. However, there is a precarious situation where some of the artists and institutions were included in the exhibition without their knowledge (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022). While some artists were criticized by the government at the opening of Atatürk Cultural Center due to the participation of the Gezi Park protests, they are commemorated with the exhibition venues where they worked in the Beyoğlu Kültür Yolu Festivali. The main issue is that when the power cannot dominate the field of culture and art, it intervenes in the existing exhibitions and reminds the power area. In this case, the issue of how much support the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and state institutions will give to the field of culture and arts creates a certain uncertainty.

Nevertheless, it has been concluded that some artists participating in Yiğit's research (2021) have expectations towards state institutions. It has been conveyed that it is essential for the state and local governments to carry out studies, and that collaborations between state institutions such as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and art institutions and local governments should be considered.

2.2.5. The Lack of Professional Organization and Legal Difficulties

Since there is no enough professional organization in the field of contemporary art and unregistered work is common, the functioning of the support mechanisms cannot be programmed. Thanks to a professional organization, first of all, art workers can be recognized and registered. Due to the fact that the artist's existence is not recorded, the needy cannot be identified correctly.

In Yiğit’s research (2021), which organizational model(s) in the field of art needed was asked to the participants:

> 57 people (14%) professional chamber, 72 people (18%) professional association, 64 people (16%) cooperatives, 56 people (14%) associations, 49 people (12%) foundation and 86 people (21%) needed a union organization model. 20 people (5%) marked the other option. (Yiğit, 2021, p.51)

Although all organizational models have their own advantages, it is still difficult for artists to establish a professional union. The reasons for this can be counted as the inability of the artists to show enough effort due to their workload, the inability to find a venue, the decrease in participation over time, and the lack of economic support. When she worked with various artists on applying the organizational model, Zeyno Pekünlü stated that establishing a professional association had positive effects as the Minister of Culture and Tourism had to call the professional association in the decision-making stages (Personal communication, January 17, 2022). However, this idea could not be realized due to the obligations mentioned and a union still cannot be established.

Artist organization cannot be only with artists. It is more effective at this point that art critics, artists and galleries can talk and demand together (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022).

Burak Delier, who has been in Berlin as a guest artist for a year recently, evaluates the position of the artist in Turkey and the position of the artist in Berlin through his own observations and experiences in the interview (Sönmez, 2020). Contrary to the situation in Turkey, the social rights of artists are guaranteed in other countries and the struggle to make it better is supported by most institutions. As a result, an environment in which people feel peaceful in their working life, no fear of being fired, and feel valued in the work environment is created with the trust placed in institutions. Despite the fact that they are seen as freelancers and are not affiliated with cultural institutions, thanks to the various funds and social support assistance provided, cultural producers can feel safe, unlike the conditions in Turkey. In this case, it can be reached that the precarious position of the artists

in Turkey is different because the artist continues to be ignored by both institutions and the state, especially in the field of visual art. With the absence of any infrastructure, the artist reminds of the existence throughout the exhibition, and then continues to be alone. In order to make a living in this process, the artist has to distance from the identity and the art environment. In other words, it is impossible to ensure continuity in the process of art production and exhibition.

The result that the second section tries to make visible is the process of the privatization in the field of art and the embrace of government to these transformations, consequently provides an environment for artists to work under more precarious conditions. The efforts of the artists against being isolated were both confined to a space with privatized art institutions and artists who did not receive state support were expected to produce in a more dominant environment.

During this chapter, it has been argued that neoliberal politics, the influence of power, social transformations embody the point of view on contemporary art and the ways of its application. In more comprehensive terms, the socio-political transformations of the world have affected the art atmosphere in Turkey and changed its nature in more precarious structure. Naturally, art actors have been affected positively/negatively or compulsively/willingly by this situation. One of the factors affecting this case is that Turkey is open to the intervention of the control mechanism and the ideological apparatuses mostly captured by the government. Whether the condition of art as a control mechanism or not is the subject of another research, so the governmental domination of power over the artist and the resistance mechanism of artists are going to be the subject of the next chapter.

3. CONTEMPORARY ART ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST PRECARITY

The examples of artist organizations in Turkey began with the establishment of the Ottoman Painters Society in 1909 and later renamed as Turkish Painters Society, Turkish Fine Arts Association, Fine Arts Association and Fine Arts Association Painting Branch. The position of the artist in the Ottoman and Republican periods was a symbol of enlightenment. After they went to public schools and they were found abroad thanks to state opportunities, they shared the European art knowledge in Turkey with the society. For this reason, the aim of the most artists organizations was to unite artists of similar tendencies, speak strongly together and make exhibitions by disseminating art.

In this way, they differ from the initiatives established after them. With the withdrawal of state support from the field of culture and arts, the three coups between the 1960s and the 1980s, and the transformation in the expert position of the artist because of neoliberal policies, the relationship between the artist and the state began to break. Feyyaz Yaman who is one of the founders of Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları evaluates the time and period of the Academy around 1980s in an interview with Levent Çalıkoğlu as follows:

> If we take it from our period, when a Çallı or Bedri Rahmi from the last generation said something about art, the publicity of art, or when he said it within the Academy, he had the power of sanction to affect the Ministry. The art environment was gradually purified from this process. (Çalıkoğlu, 2007, pp. 123-124)

Art has begun to be privatized since the 1970s with the post-Fordist practices abandoning the social state understanding on a global scale and its reflection in the field of culture and art. Culture-arts management became financialized by

advancing under the determination of the free market. Neoliberal regulations started to show their effect on art in our country in the 1980s. The state has transferred its investments and intervention in the arts to the private sector outside of academia. The privatization of culture and art was programmed together with the discourse of free market and free individual, and banks began to encourage galleries. The manipulation of the art field caused by neoliberal thought and the political entanglement brought individualization and prevented the grouping of artists and the idea of alternativeization until the end of the 1980s (Çalıkoğlu, 2007; Harvey, 2007; Wu, 2002). This period when money and capitalists gained power became a field where artists had to protect their boundaries. They started to need civic structures in which they would experience artistic practice within the areas of freedom.

While undergoing transformations in the art world and politics on the one hand, UPSD/ Uluslararası Plastik Sanatlar Derneği (Association Internationale Des Arts Plastiques International Association Of Arts) has seen that private capital has begun to be active in the field of plastic arts and was established with the aim of improving the existing conditions for artists (Baykam, 1997). When UPSD was founded, it was on the agenda that the state and state-owned institutions could not connect with visual artists according to Hüsamettin Koçan's discussion about the founding purpose of UPSD and its differences from other artist associations (SALT Online, 2013). The concept of artists' right was seen only as an artist's problem and could be discussed within civil society structures. While the aim of the associations established until this time was how to open joint exhibitions, discussions about organizing and forming a pressure group for the artists. The political environment created by the 1980's millitary coup gave rise to the issue of artists' rights based on human rights. Although not advocating for rights over the economy, they were active in freedom of expression and approached it holistically. In this sense, the end of 80s were the years when awareness about organization was formed. UPSD was established in 1989 as a result of the spread of neoliberal policies throughout the country during the Özal period, the change of

teaching staff and the fact that artists were not accepted into professional organizations (Baykam, 1997). How an artist organization should be and how it should function were among the first topics discussed. According to UPSD legislation (2015), it aims to transform the artistic environment in favor of the artist, the group was directly concerned with the concept of artist rights. It was important to leave the discussions within the artists and to protect the intervention power of the state in favor of the rights of the artists and through the state. For this reason, it was aimed to provide the funds in different forms of production for art as well. Branches were opened in Ankara and İzmir for the expansion of the organization.

Bedri Baykam, who was on the board of directors of UPSD with Alaaddin Aksoy, Mehmet Güleryüz, Bünyamin Özgültekin, Beril Anılanmert, Handan Börüteçene and Hüsamettin Koçan, explains their aims as follows:

> Consisting only of professional artists, PSD aims to ensure the formation of a national and international cooperation that does not contain aesthetic, political, cultural or any other kind of prejudice monopoly, to protect and strengthen the moral and material positions of its members, and to take the necessary initiatives for the promotion of our plastic arts at home and abroad. (Baykam, 1997, p. 176)

In order for all the savings people were invited to the artist rights panel in the field of art, and studies were started through publishing. An artist convention was held without classification. While the legal regulations, insurance right, the creation of an intermediary institution to provide sponsorship to the artists, and the health issue were discussed within the scope of artist rights; institutionalization in art, free movement of art and tax circulation of artworks were discussed over the state of contemporary art (Bezmen et all, 1991, pp. 56-57). Workers' unions and artists'

representatives joined forces to collect signatures and protests began. It was desired to create semi-independent structures. To explain the international problems of the Turkish art scene, Bedri Baykam met with Fikri Sağlar, who became the Minister of Culture in 1991, and his advisor, Hasan Bülent Kahraman. Afterwards, he presented with a report containing suggestions on the needs of the contemporary art field and how the artist's security could be provided. However, the proposals did not find a concrete response.

> At customs, artists struggled with various bureaucratic dilemmas that everyone interpreted in their own way, artists were again far from serious guarantees, a serious fund and money pool could not be created to develop contemporary art and promote Turkish culture. The Ministry of Culture could not appoint a competent staff in every aspect. (Baykam, 1997, p. 204)

In the same period, a draft law and tax immunity bill were prepared in order to create a fund-supported loan mechanism so that money flow could be ensured in the field of art. At that time, workshops and exhibitions applied for a fund-based loan, but the state canceled it because of a loss of income.

There were some movements about the budget for producing and exhibiting these works, the place for viewing, the institution for keeping them, and contacting the collectors for selling them with the departure from classical production and materials. In particular, significant efforts have been made to ensure the visibility, intelligibility, consumability, recognizability and acceptability of artists and their art. According to them, Turkey's economic outsourcing request should be supported by culture and arts and act with national and international cooperation (Baykam, 1997, p. 175). At the same time, the concept of artist rights should be considered. Aiming to make artists visible, the association provided to protect their positions on the national and international stage, and to work their financial

interests. It aimed to further develop the existing legal rights of the artist. However, while its target was questioning the decision-making mechanisms of the state, it continued to organize the artists around the periphery of private capital and an Istanbul Art Fair was established to create a market. In 1995, with the proposal of UPSD director Hüsamettin Koçan to make young artists visible, the Genç Etkinlik Sergileri started to be organized because the number of galleries was already few and they did not give place to young artists because of their lack of experiences at that time (Küpçüoğlu, 2020). In this sense, the exhibitions contributed to the democratization and civilization of the space. Although it brought empiricality to the fore, it was criticized for not not being unifying in theoretical context. The structure of this association, which was very active between 1989 and 1998, changed afterwards and organized activities according to the preferences of the boards of directors of the period (Pelvanoğlu, 2009, p. 442).

3.1. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION OF ARTISTS

With the start of privatization in the field of art in Turkey after 1980, the bourgeoisie took a dominant position in the field of art, which made the need for civil structures a necessity because the artist's freedom space has begun to be endangered. From the second half of the 90s onwards, the growing pressure around environment with the nationalist view was added to the artists being left alone by the state and institutions. AKP has proven that neoliberal policies are at the very center with the conservative perspective of the repression regime and the mobilization of the markets. According to Buğra and Savaşkan (2012), “what has changed is not only the economic policy environment, but also the political regime itself, with the business environment reshaped under the influence of these changes” (p. 31). Diminishing the secular idea has presented negative impact on private sector investment tools and intervention mechanisms. Contemporary art has become a market area, which is easily included in the network of business relations through neoliberal arrangements and intervened by people with decision-making power.

Artists were not those who fit the state's definition of citizen, and they had difficulty expressing themselves through their art in this oppressive environment (Neriman Polat, personal communication, November 4, 2021). Because of the increasing tendency of individualization in the 1990s, artists who did not want to see themselves as representatives and to create their works under the roof of any private institution have developed their own artist initiatives and a common language. Rather than creating any formal artist organizaton, they became partners for urgent reasons they needed.

Hafriyat, Apartment Project and Oda Project were evaluated within the scope of the thesis as they are the first initiatives to show that they can take place in different positions in the contemporary art environment transformed by the political atmosphere of Turkey, and that they try to exist with the artist identities of the organization members in the late of 90’s. Although Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları and Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi have the same importance, the fact that one of them is in a different geographical area as a mission and the other acts non-profit, remains important for the alternative contemporary art environment today.

Hafriyat emerged in the late 90's with the change in the art scene in Turkey and the situation where artists were stuck in self-expression through the issue of identity, and started to hold exhibitions without sponsors. In this sense, I think it is important that it is included in the thesis as it is the first artist initiative to emerge for freedom of expression despite Turkey's contradictory situation and the criticized aspects of the artists. At the same time, considering that artist initiatives were short-lived, Hafriyat group continued to work actively until 2009. Hakan Gürsoytrak, one of the founders, expressed his views for Hafriyat as follows:

> It said- stop self-censorship. It broke the taboo that an exhibition cannot be opened without approaching someone in the art market and showed what

> artists can do with common ideas by coming together. (Hafriyat Grubu, n.d.)

Acting with the awareness that alternatives can be provided for artists not in the market but also outside, the organization arranged its exhibitions with this view. Also, Gürsoytrak explains the motivation for the emergence of Hafriyat as follows:

> The modern education style of the Academy was trying to make the 'new' and we were under some kind of pressure. There was also the 80's coup and the identity problem it created. We still live in an environment where identity is a problem. You want to express yourself with identity problems; you want to express your own existence. You're trying to find your contradiction, and we knew that we could naturally do it by coming together. (Çalıkoğlu, 2007, p. 22)

Another non-profit artist initiative is the Apartment Project, founded by artist Selda Asal in Istanbul in 1999. The importance of the Apartment Project is to provide a space by allowing artists who are dealing with contemporary art, not accepted by galleries and not available for sale because of producing multimedia, sound, installation and performing art works. They have been aiming to create an international dialogue by continuing their collective work in Germany since 2012. The Oda Project, which was formed by the combination of Özge Açıkkol, Güneş Savaş and Seçil Yersel after they thought that art should not have a defined space such as a gallery or a museum and started its production in Galata in 2000, focused on the space relation and use, and developed questions about where the artists could be located in this relational cycle. Seçil Yersel, in an interview, says:

> Actually the question has once again come to the fore with this project: 'How to conceptualize the relationship between art and those socialities traditionally assumed not to follow art?' The artist is expected to be visible in a certain space; it is a very delicate line, like an unwritten agreement; attempts at infiltrating daily life always lead to question marks and debates. (Oda Projesi, Yıldız, n.d.)

They also have the options of observing the outside and incorporating different alternatives into their own experiences as well as the preferences of artists to exist in a space. At this point, their aim in their projects is to move away from the strict rules and demarcation state imposed by the institutionalization, and to develop forms of resistance with outside actors at a common point.

Moreover, the establishment of independent initiatives and collectives without being hindered by legal restrictions and the existence of initiatives have already been established in the 2000s led to the formation of other organizations on the concept of economic solidarities, creative intentions and advocacy for rights among art workers within the art atmosphere of Istanbul. I think it would be important to mention two institutions that were founded in the early 2000s and are still active: Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları and Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi.

Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları describes its establishment in 2000 as follows on its website:

> Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları has continued its existence as a critical, experimental, collective and patron-free structure independent of the rules set by the field of culture and art since 2000. It has been a haunt or home to many ideas, voices, glances over the years... While advocating

> unconditionally, it did not favor an unprincipled pluralism. Since its establishment, it has openly sided with labor and supported rights-based struggles. It has worked on establishing relations of solidarity between social movements, non-governmental organizations and professional associations and the field of art. (Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları, n.d)

Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları continues its activities with its core group members Feyyaz Yaman, Ezgi Bakçay and Melis Bektaş; it hosts contemporary art exhibitions, various conferences and seminars. Aiming to establish contact between artists and their forms of exhibition, and making it a mission to support artists who try to create their production under difficult conditions, Karşı Sanat has an important place in contemporary art with its organizational structure.

Another institution that should be emphasized within the scope of this thesis is Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi. As Istanbul becomes a center of culture and art, the support given to culture and arts in other cities is decreasing, and Anatolia is not a preferred region, even by artists and art lovers. Acting with the aim of reducing the polarization and not taking Istanbul as a single center, Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi emerged with the aim of creating a civic space in the city. The purpose of Diyarbakır's evaluation by Anadolu Kültür as a branch was that the political environment in the city had a polarizing effect on cultural and artistic activities. According to their own observations, there were social and cultural activities supported by the municipality, apart from the cultural and artistic activities supported by state institutions, but ideological pressures were dominant on both sides (Çalıkoğlu, 2007, p. 184). For this reason, the artists there could neither exhibit their works organically nor could they find support to support their production. With the existence of Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi, the relations between the city and its surroundings through art have began to develop.

3.2. AIMS OF ARTIST ORGANIZATIONS

Until this part of the thesis, important artist organizations, initiatives and groups for Turkey's contemporary art scene were discussed to show how artists tried to find solutions against precarious conditions of art system and how they established solidariy networks. In this part, prominent some contemporary art organizations established after 2010 will be examined within the scope of artists organizations founded against precarious condition. 2010 was an important year for Istanbul art scene. The transformation in terms of Istanbul, the Istanbul Capital of Culture period, the first large-scale exhibitions of private institutions, the growth of the total budget allocated for the exhibition, while the decrease in the budget share allocated to artists, the loss of transparency of the budgets, the increase in the number of freelance cultural workers started new labor discussions. The previous generation of artists made their living from academia and were well-known names in the art market. As the market expanded, the number of artists increased, and the employment rate decreased, the pressure on how to make a living began to form. The awareness created by the artists participating in the exhibitions abroad caused the term insecurity to be discussed frequently among them. The independent art scene in Turkey was not only left to itself, but also the support not given to art producers and the pressures applied during the exhibition process led to the emergence of these associations at times not too far from each other (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022).

According to my researches, the organizations founded after 2010s mostly depend on rights- based and economic solidarity. Although the artists who contributed to the formation of the organizations did not define themselves as precarious, organizations were established against the definitions of being precarious according to the second part of the thesis. The reason why separate sections are opened for them is to share what artists experienced in the concept of precarity, try to define them within their own experiences and research areas, seek solutions and often act together as the common features of these organizations.

3.2.1. Rights-based Organizations

Establishing in 2011, Kamusal Sanat Laboratuvarı aimed to produce concrete solutions against in the oppressive atmosphere applied by the government. It was a candidate group to change the habits shaped by capital, instrumentalized social relations and the destroyed human-nature relationship in daily life and the public sphere (SİYAHBANT, 2012). This is how they explain the reasons for their coming together in their manifest:

> We were brought together by the rage created by the overwhelming violence used by governments against people, nature, culture, science, art and different ways of life. We were brought together by the burning need for an organisation open to anyone who wants to create "tangible thoughts" that can change the space, time, working conditions, human relations and lifestyles that are shaped by the nightmare of capitalism. We were brought together by the desire to establish a collective, public art laboratory that will create the tools of free expression. We were brought together by the will to show that we are not prisoners to the art market that turns art into useless entertainment and the artist into a court jester. We were driven to action by the belief that there is no reason to wait any longer and that the first step is to change ourselves. (Kamusal Sanat Laboratuvarı, n.d)

Their first activity was to distribute a letter on the opening day of the 11th Istanbul Biennial and the letter consisted the supporting message written by the founder of the Biennial's main sponsor, Vehbi Koç, to Kenan Evren, who organized the 1980 military coup. The 11th Istanbul Biennial- "What Keeps

Mankind Alive?" in 2009 was curated by the "What, How & for Whom" collective group; its starting point was quite political, but at the same time contradicting the neoliberal structure of the institution. The 11th Istanbul Biennial was defined as unfortunate event by the director of Feyyaz Yaman (2009) because of the fact that Brecht and his socialist Marxist understanding of culture and art were at the heart of the conceptual framework regardless of the sponsorship relation with the Koç Group since 2007. Also, an artist member of the group showed the quote on the suitcase in a performative way with Oya Eczacıbaşı's own sentences: "There is no actual difference between art business and any other business. There are just works of art as products." (Artun, 2011, p. 125) in Istanbul Modern, 2012.

Additionally, the Gezi Park protests against building it into a shopping mall came to a head in 2013 and it drew a great reaction from the masses. When the power mechanisms of politics and art were intertwined and their effects were clearly felt in this period, Turkish contemporary art was already fragile and turned into a tool. For this reason, the motivation at the starting point of the Gezi protests and the point reached in contemporary art are located in a common place. The Gezi protests showed that sudden associations can occur against the power mechanisms. After the Gezi protests, while some discussions were held on the situation of contemporary art in Turkey and the position of artists, Özlem Günyol and Mustafa Kunt commented on the artist's position within the resistance practices as follows:

> Does artistic production have a real value in the system? If so, why do most of the artists have to struggle to survive by working here and there? When the artist has a real value in the system and the system can meet the minimum needs of the artist, only then will the power of the power centers really shake. An environment emerges, and we must not forget that the risks

> that freelance artists take for their own lives are high enough, they do not work in institutions, they do not have a fixed monthly income, in this sense their future is uncertain. Those who have first-degree relations with institutions and power centers are mostly salaried curators and critics. Therefore, more work should fall on them due to their position. (Sönmez, 2013)

It was the period when areas of resistance and solidarity were triggered due to the political climate in Turkey.

> Aren't the stuck in the political field and the stuck in the artistic field based on similar characters and cause-effect relationships? It can now be clearly seen that the vicious circle in the art environment cannot be resolved with the transitions in the gallery, fair and auction triangle. If we can talk about a system of political suppression and silencing, we can find its counterpart in the artistic environment in the "ignoring" of what is outside the triangle of galleries, fairs and auctions. (Sönmez, 2013, p.2)

Artist organizations were also developing abruptly through the concepts of need and urgency. The Anti Istanbul Biennial 2013 and Turuncu Çadır, which were formed after the Gezi Park protests, are some of the well-known examples.

The Anti Istanbul Biennial 2013 forum was established to protest the 13th Istanbul Biennial as a result of these backlogs. While the 13th Istanbul Biennial addressed the Gezi Park protests with the title "Mom, Am I Barbarian?", it caused controversy on many issues. There were many criticisms about the content and

organization of the event, such as the party that Contemporary Istanbul threw at Demirören AVM for the openning of the Biennial and the participation of the companies belonging to the event sponsors in the projects of restructuring Istanbul, the abandonment of the artworks to be exhibited within the scope of the Biennial from being exhibited in the public space as originally planned. The fact that artists have an attitude of making an art work instead of questioning is related to the compression of the political and oppressive regime. Well-known companies, while trying not to break their relations with the government at such a turbulent time, also support the holding of the Biennial. The Anti Istanbul Biennial 2013 was a developing an action against power centers as an artistic solidarity that had never been experienced before in Turkey.

Turuncu Çadır, which was established right after the Gezi Park protests, was born from the awareness of the artists to come together and to offer solutions to the problems in the field of culture and art, although it did not achieve concrete results (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022). Some of the artist organization members were Nazım Hikmet Dikbaş, Ali Taptık, Civan Özkanoğlu, Selim Süme, Merve Ertufan and Zeyno Pekünlü. It had a spontaneous structure, it did not have any financial structure, when a money was needed for the meetings, it was collected among the meeting participants, and again, the structure was not hierarchical, but there was a facilitator team to handle the organizational work. This team had the function of organizing the meeting, preparing the announcement, and reaching out to those who were experts in the subject when they needed to be invited.

At the same time, when the art institutions created pressure mechanisms between artists and the art work, the institutions were visited by the organization members, interviewed by the artists and their curators, and receiving various feedbacks were among the valuable activities suitable for the collective work done within the organization. Also, the forum prepared such a type of contract that if the gallery

put in a claim for fifty percent of art work, it must deliver on what they promised (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022).

The fact that some expectations were formed by the society after the Gezi protests, but these expectations were get no returns on people's efforts in the field of politics, then the period of bombs, the coup attempt and intervention in academia have caused the stuckness for the visual arts field and its artists.

3.2.1.1. Siyah Bant

Censorship practises were legitimized by restricting freedom of expression with excuses such as social sensitivity, national security and public order. At the same time, the ambiguity of the cases determined as censorship by the law also supports the application areas of censorship. In censorship cases, there are easy-to-use methods such as punishment, prohibition, targeting, threatening, intimidation, humiliation, obstruction, attack, illegitimacy, and marginalization. In addition to all these reasons, Siyah Bant was established as an initiative in 2011 due to ignorance of censorship cases, the lack of any archive or documentation work, and the lack of a solidarity network to share the relevant sharing of art actors. While they were preparing for the "Censorship in Contemporary Art" session, which they designed as part of the 2010 Hrant Dink Memorial Workshop, they organized a website where they report censorship cases in order to make censorship visible in art, and that censored artists are isolated, censorship cases are not widely known by the public.

The problems related to the content and method in the research process of Siyah Bant are stated by Pelin Başaran in *SİYAHBANT* (2012) book as follows:

> First, the broadening of the definition, actors, and methods of censorship, and the implicit practice of most censorship, makes it difficult to access and

verify censorship cases. Moreover, the fact that some artists do not want to be associated with the censorship, their efforts to protect their relationships, and the possibility that the announcement of the censorship may make them more obvious targets has reinforced this difficulty. This situation made itself felt especially in an environment where the competition between contemporary art institutions was getting hotter and the market pressure on artists was increasing. The fact that the artists were pushed into a position where they could not take risks in their relations with institutions and that the artists could not (can) get out of this position prevented many censorship cases from being discussed openly in the chat environment.

Another point was the difficulty of creating a solidarity network and pressure group to fight censorship. Our conclusion from the interviews we conducted with the artists who were subjected to censorship was that the artists felt left alone on this issue. This is due to the fact that censorship cases are not announced systematically, the lack of institutions that expose the censorship and its actors, support the artist, protect the freedom of expression and professional rights of the artists, as well as for various reasons – the work of art is not “good” enough, the artist does not arouse respect, the artist's relationship with institutions arousing suspicion, etc. – the deliberate lack of support also plays a role. This situation makes us think that freedom of expression in art may have some limits for us – as cultural art producers and advocates. It is necessary to think not only about the

"sensitivities" of the state and society, but also about the limits that we have internalized and how they can be pushed. (pp. 4-5)

Taking all these problems into account, Siyah Bant project strives to create a memory reservoir of the censorship practices, and aims to reveal new problematics that have developed around the subject and to create a discussion area.

Among the goals of Siyah Bant are to deal with the concept of censorship with all its resources, to combine cases in Turkey with the mapping method, to develop a communication and solidarity network by raising awareness, to ensure providing the necessary legal regulations are made to combat censorship, and to prevent obstacles that restrict the creative process of artistic production by providing circulation. It documents censorship cases not only in the field of visual arts but also in the fields of cinema, music, dance and theater on its website. The increasing state mechanisms in the reporting processes cause Siyah Bant platform to sustain permanency with active researches.

In addition to written sources, a communication network is established and various organizations can be arranged thanks to interviews with institutions, artists and non-governmental organizations. For example, methods of struggle against censorship are examined in the field of contemporary art with the participation of artists. Among Turkey and other countries, the equivalent of freedom of expression in art within the framework of the law, the rights of the artist and the legal structure of the artist's contracts are documented in meetings with lawyers and shared on the website.

Also, they published *Artistic Freedom of Expression Guide* in 2016. This guide was prepared to support the protection and promotion of the rights and focuses on the artistic expression and art institutions in Turkey. It is a reference source with

suggestions on how artists, art institutions and relevant people can seek their rights against the violation of the right to artistic freedom of expression. It offers practical informations within the existing legal system and human rights to combat censorship in art. Some of the artist rights violations which the most common encounters by artists and institutions have been turned into case studies such as:

A- If your art event is blocked or banned by a public institution (Governor, District Governorship, Municipality or University)

B- If an investigation is started due to your work of art or activity by the Prosecutor's Office

C- If criminal case open against you due to your work or the event you organize

D- If you are threatened by people you don't know because of your work...

E- If you are physically attacked because of your works or only your works...

F- If your art activity is arbitrary blocked by law enforcement (police, gendarmerie, municipal police)

G- If your art event is bloked by real or private legal entities (cultural center, gallery, etc.)

H- If your fund application is rejected for arbitrary reasons to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism or another official institution

J- If your work is removed or intervened from an exhibition, a festival organized by a private institution and designed by a curator for reasons of

concers anything other than artistic preferences. (Başaran & Karan, 2016, p.6)

3.2.1.2. Açık Masa

Firstly, Açık Masa was the proposal to come together with the initiative of Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz in 2000. It had no format but generally the guest artist invited four friends related to the period or art works. There was mutual dialogue between the inviters and the audience. The first conceivable reason for the proposal to gather around this table was the creation of a dynamic memory from the recordings of the speeches and discussions. According to Türkyılmaz, another aim was to create a space for sharing and discussion, and to realize the postponed gatherings that everybody lacks (M. Türkyılmaz, personal communication, June 3, 2021). There was a wide audience participation with important figures from the art world around the opening table where Hale Tenger was a guest. This first period of Açık Masa took a short time but it was integrated into Açık Kütüphane project at Platform Garanti in 2007 by being formed more formal series. The structure of Açık Masa consisted of talks focusing on the production process and becoming an artist.

Then, Açık Masa, started to create an organic ground open to other ideas with the cooperation of Elmas Deniz and grew with the participation of the guests and those who came to listen, within the framework of the program titled “İştirak” in 2010. When the program started, the contemporary art was controlled by art institutions and artists had difficulty in finding an area where they could resist in the name of the art economy. There was a state of confusion in its internal dynamics. This is actually the starting point of the state of poverty that Elmas Deniz mentioned in the discussions, because as the artist's money decreases, the intervention space is limited.

The platform differs from other formations at one point. The fact that Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz did not have a workshop at that time, it caused her to look at production, exhibition, space and relations network from a different perspective. Changing within the art market has damaged democratization and reduced the visibility of labor. Like the artists who thought about these issues at that time, she took the step by believing that the process of exhibiting was artificial and it was necessary to discuss the reasons behind it. To quote Türkyılmaz's own words:

> Now I need Açık Masa even more, which has been slowly opening since 2000, seeking support for its short leg from time to time. I have been asking these questions for a long time:
>
> Where and when do people talk the most?
>
> Where do most people gather?
>
> To whom do people tell their problems, and from whom do they hold accountable?
>
> How the phone, the internet, the social network make people open?
>
> What speed are people trying to catch?
>
> Can the collective mentality, labor, occupation, production and job definitions be redefined?
>
> How is coexistence possible?
>
> In the art history of the West, the trauma of the First World War on artists caused the Dada attitude to explode. Although many social traumas experienced in Turkey have stratified and turned into a war, why has there not been an explosion in art?

> What kind of socialization is the crowd coming together in open or closed areas?
>
> Is it possible to rediscover the autonomy of art?
>
> ...
>
> Is ‘iştirak’ possible? (Blogspot, 2011)

Differentiating from its previous structure, it gathers people who produce in different practices such as writers, sociologists, educators, curators and critics, as well. Inviting people from various disciplines was a new experience for that period. Professionals of art and other fields were meeting with artists. Discussions took place around questions such as the role of the artist in the global art system, cooperation with different disciplines, the sources of art and the impact of the art system on life. It wants to open up discussion space for small groups around the same issues. Thanks to the enduring meetings of Açık Masa, a bridge was built between everyday life and art, and the visible and the invisible were discussed. It was a source for new formations in the area and its increasing collective structure was dominant.

The program was held from 2010 to mid-2013. Among the participants, there were groups examined within the scope of the thesis such as Siyah Bant and Kamusal Sanat Laboratuvarı. Murat Germen, with the speech title "Searching for independence within the framework of art and capital relations", Arzu Yayıntaş and Neriman Polat, with the speech title "Where have we been thrown?", Zeyno Pekünlü as working on artists' rights and organizational forms were among the speakers. As can be seen from the speech titles and the participants, Açık Masa became an event for three years, where artists and people from other disciplines came together to discuss about rights- based issues and transfer information among them in a comprehensive way.

3.2.1.3. Sanat Emekçileri

Sanat Emekçileri was a formation whose seeds were sown with the discussions that started after the censorship incident between Istanbul Modern Museum and Bubi in 2011. The censorship discussions started through the censorship in art mailing group created by Siyah Bant, and as the discussions extended to the content of the contract and insecurity, it turned into a group that gathered to realize the idea of establishing a professional association for artists (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022).

Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz, who was active in Sanat Emekçileri and Bubi discussions, narrates that period within the scope of the thesis interview:

> At that time, there was an exhibition in Istanbul Modern in which I was a part. I've decided to remove my name. Later, a group of my artist friends also took their jobs and we published a joint statement. We took the risk by withdrawing our works from the exhibition. We showed a reflex in the moment of crisis. We saw support and hindrance from the art community, and there were also neutral ones. So, the possible effects and reactions that are already known have arrived. Immediately after, Açık Masa, which I have been leading since 2000, opened this issue for discussion in Depo. As a result of a large participation, Sanat Emekçileri was established. When we started the preparations for the association, wounds were opened in unity on the issue that we were criticizing and looking for solutions this time. (Personal communication, June 3, 2021)

The e-mail group, who continues discussions through the regular meetings held every two weeks and prepared a draft of a policy document, adopted the idea of establishing an association at the first stage in order to postpone the bureaucratic difficulties of being a professional union, but has not been able to realize logistical obstacles. The organization changed its name to Sanat Emekçileri after giving up the idea of being a professional union.

In the meeting notes of Sanat Emekçileri on May 3, 2012 shared by Zeyno Pekünlü within the scope of the thesis, the aims of the organization were determined as follows:

- To act together and take sides against censorship, mobbing, sexist, discriminatory and racist behaviors and hate speech
- To be against violations of rights and to represent its members on legal grounds when necessary
- Informing and advising art workers about their contracts and legal rights
- Producing policies and actions and providing legal support to improve the working conditions of art workers
- Demanding transparency in the decision-making mechanisms of arts institutions and arts events, and fair distribution between expenditures and labor
- To be involved in the culture and arts policies of the state and private institutions

In-group working methods are as follows:

- Bylaws are determined unanimously. While making decisions, it is aimed to reach a common conclusion. If a consensus cannot be reached, the decision is taken with the majority of votes and the persuasion of the minority.
- There are no hierarchical mechanisms, rotation is applied in terms of authority and responsibilities based on a horizontal organization.
- Meetings are run by a rotating facilitator
- The group is not open to attitudes such as prejudice, stigma, judgment, mobbing, accusation, discrimination and racism.

Sanat Emekçileri emerged from the discussion of institution contracts because artists could not withdraw their works due to the contract they signed. At that time, the desire for justice was prominent in the legal, economic, institutional and relations within the art sector in the thoughts among the art workers. In order to create a common attitude, high-participation meetings were held for six months around the subjects of censorship, freedom of expression, targeting artists, difficulties in working conditions, and artist fees.

Examining the differences in topics discussed between the period when Uluslararası Plastik Sanatlar Derneği and other artist associations were active and the period when Sanat Emekçileri were formed, it can be seen that the idea of organizing exhibitions among artists has not been discussed anymore, and they are completely focused on how to protect the rights of art workers. The alternative globalization movement in the world started to show its effects especially in Istanbul during 2010. Zeyno Pekünlü explains effects on artists' status and working condition as follows:

> The artist identity created the expectation of working with the gallery. In addition, an artist without a gallery was not considered prestigious. Each

> gallery seemed to show their artists' works, initially it gave the illusion that everything was going well. Unfortunately, the reality was not like that because there has been no change in living conditions among artists. The supposed expansion in the market had no monetary value. All artists still earn their living from other works. Insurance and retirement could not even be things that have been already thought of. All of these created labor awareness among artists and that many issues were discussed in the art environment under the roof of precarity during this period. (Personal communication, January 17, 2022)

Due to the partnerships of white-collars, freelance workers and art workers, the need for unity arose during the period. The cooperation was made with many associations such as Açık Masa, Siyah Bant, Kamusal Sanat Laboratuvarı. The concept of labor was often discussed over non-profit institutions that make labor relations invisible by not giving artist payments.

When the sensitivities of Sanat Emekçileri are listed, titles can be censorship, artist fee, contracts, visa, relations with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022). For the censorship issue, it was determined that self-censorship mechanisms were activated in order not to be censored, and meetings were held with lawyers, especially with the contribution of Siyah Bant. As a result, it was concluded nothing is legally censorship as we described, so something must be made invisible in all areas in order to be defined as censorship, and that private institutions' removal of works of art from the scope of the exhibition is not considered censorship. On the issue of non-profit institutions not paying artist fees, it was emphasized that labor has a symbolic

value and artists should insist on payments. At the same time, one of the aims of art workers was to produce suitable contracts, especially for young artists, but also contracts with institutions about what will be exhibited where and when, what will happen if sold, what will happen in the second sale. Later, the aim was to post contracts on the web site. The awareness among Sanat Emekçileri turned into raising the awareness of the art community. The documentation of every action laid the groundwork for legal discussions. The visa problem cannot be considered independently of precarity. The absence of a fixed job, payroll, money in the bank or health insurance makes it difficult to obtain a visa, especially considering the military status of male artists. Finally, titles such as lack of definitions of new types of works (installation, video or new media), definitions of copyright or originality of works causing problems in legal cases, how to get funding and support from the state, how to get involved in the state's cultural policies were determined within the framework of relations with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and state institutions.

The idea of organizing was frequently discussed by the members. The first goal was to establish a professional association, not an organization, because when there is a professional association, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has to invite directly to the meetings (Z. Pekünlü, personal communication, January 17, 2022). However, the obligations required for the establishment of a professional association are very strict. For example, since the law on associations has been changed, a place without its own door is not accepted, so space sharing is eliminated. Residences cannot be shown either without all neighbors's permission. When combined with stoppage and dues issues, the situation creates economic congestion. For these reasons, they wanted to establish themselves as an organization first.

Even though Sanat Emekçileri has no longer exist, they opened new discussions, conversation topics emerged, and acquaintances were made. This incident has

shown that there can be momentary unions. Zeyno Pekünlü emphasized that Sanat Emekçileri, then the Gezi protests and Turuncu Çadır as the subsequent forum structure have become an anonymous form of organization for artists, and that this form of association creates a network among them that they can connect when needed (Personal communication, January 17, 2022).

3.2.2. Economic Solidarity

As the contemporary art scene in Turkey is so connected with politics and economy, the dependency on the art system has increased. The COVID-19 outbreak reminded us of the uncertainty and urgency in the field of art. In Yiğit's recent research, it is stated that "artists exposed to effects loss of income, psychological collapse and increased labor force in home during the pandemic" (Yiğit, 2021, p. 55). This is not a new crisis for the art scene. However, the first thing that is discarded in times of crisis is the art disciplines, and the artists who go through the creative processes are affected by the situation. Young artists, in particular, are working on part-time or project-based jobs for art production while trying to make a living. However, periodic projects of artists have been postponed during the pandemic process (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022). While support funds were created for institutions and artists in most countries, state-sponsored studies were not carried out especially in the field of contemporary art in Turkey. It shows once again the order of neoliberalism, which has already abolished emergency social security structures, left social rights at the mercy of market forces, and thus created widespread devaluation and a sense of expendability in society. Questions such as which of the art formations are more independent and which develop addictions to what come to the surface.

Since there is no enough professional organization in the field of contemporary art and unregistered work is common, the functioning of the support mechanisms cannot be programmed. In the contemporary art world, the pandemic became a

period when alternative economies and solidarity mechanisms were constructed and discussed by art actors.

According to the conclusion part of the report (2021),

> As a result, the dangerous conditions and risks created by the epidemic agenda for the art field workers have become more visible. It seems that there has not been a large, effective and inclusive organization that can analyze its own conditions and reality well and in line with expectations. Although the subjects of the art field belong to different classes, it is essential to consult with the different dimensions of the needs regarding the conditions of precarity and fragility and to make the invisibility visible. In the field of art, there is always and will continue to be a need for solidarity, alternative and creative methods, and the realization of collective ideals, not just because the needs become vital in times of crisis or under extraordinary circumstances. (Yiğit, pp. 59-60)

Moreover, Omuz Solidarity Network and Artist Support Pledge were created due to the concept of urgency as solidarity networks among art workers during the pandemic period.

3.2.2.1. Omuz Solidarity Network

Saliha Yavuz explained the important thing is to develop and maintain new models of solidarity, to stand side by side despite everything when they decided to establish Omuz (Personal communication, April 13, 2022). Omuz's one of the

English meaning is to help (to something done), to support, to stand behind (something done), so this explains why they chose it.

The first steps for Omuz have been taken in April of 2020 when the quarantines began and art laborers either lost their side income or were send on unpaid leave from works. During this process, artists asked for help from acquaintances and friends in order to support each other on the basis urgency and need (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022). At first, 30 people were approximately supported where they were paid a certain amount for three months. They came together and started to talk about what they could do subsequently in the future.

> In the first period of *Omuz, To Receive Support* applications were made between 1 - 30 June, while *To Give Support* commitments were received between 1 June - 15 July. On July 17, the people who received support were determined with the automatic matching of the excel software, and an informative e-mail was sent to the people who provided and received support between July 15 and July 30. The IBAN and name information of the person to be supported was sent to each person to be supported by e-mail. Volunteer facilitators followed up the receipts. At the end of the process, while applications were received from a total of 329 people, including artists, curators, writers and art professionals working and producing in the field of visual arts, resources were shared with 92 people among these applications within the scope of *To Get Support.* (Unlimitedrag, 2020)

It is a formation that believes in the urgency of unrequited resource sharing and solidarity consisting of art laborers who have come together because of

economical insecurity which has became all the more visible during the pandemic period with COVID-19, particularly in the visual arts field. They are art laborers who have come together with a focus on unrequited resource sharing and the urgency. Omuz has an organic and crowded structure. Although there are 10-12 people working on its operation part, there are about 40 people who come together when necessary. Among the culture and arts laborers of Omuz there are people who have attempted to found associations, or have thought about how occupational organizations can be formed. Different facilitators are formed in each period, and the facilitator group of each period may present a new system. No matter how flexible it is, the subject of unrequited resource sharing remains unchanged. It has regular 15 supporters and this means supporting some kind of organization because they ensure that Omuz is sustainable. At the same time, most of them support more than one person. The whole 6th term applicants received support. Normally, applicants can only get one-time support within 1 year is currently being discussed among Omuz members. The communication with the applicants are limited due to the impartiality of the process, and they do not prefer having personal contact because they do not consider themselves as a jury. At the same time, when people in other sectors such as music applied to Omuz for support, instead of leaving them unanswered, they researched and directed groups organized in the field of music. In this case, it shows that although Omuz includes the visual arts, it is intertwined with the precarious problems of other sectors. Or, especially in the first three periods, queer artists frequently applied to Omuz because they could not perform their performances and generate income, and their professions were not wide. They were able to get support because of the urgency of the situation and most of them were already artists. In the current perception, Omuz is thought to function like an institution that provides support and funding. Filling form is to understand what people really need, to gather information and to make people perceive the concept of urgency and need. Therefore, there are options such as bills, accommodation, and nutrition. Athough systems with decision mechanisms are always realized through someone, Omuz, refuses to be in such a structure.

When looking at Turkey's past, organizations, approaches, solidarities or support mechanisms in artistic fields, art laborers had to struggle for their rights through the lack of any occupational organizations. The aim was to form Omuz in a way such that it was flexible, variable, and people could transfer the facilitating duties to each other from time to time. One that focuses on unrequited resource sharing, asks questions about how we can build mutual trust, and what urgency and need mean because of the experiences of the past (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022). Another goal of Omuz is to act together instead of criticizing institutions, because during the pandemic period, non-mainstream institutions also had difficulties. However, such a partnership with institutions could not be established. In the first period of the pandemic, they could not get an answer from them. Afterwards, meetings were held and they were content to give an idea about the structure of Omuz.

As a fluid dynamic, Omuz is not a legal entity. It doesn't have a bank account, and rather than gathering the support in its own structure, it assumes the role of an intermediary that only distributes it. In this sense, it doesn't have the aim or duty to accumulate the money in itself in any way at all. The goals of Omuz are to introduce the concept of unrequited resource sharing, to express the precariousness of art workers and to produce solutions, and to make the concepts a little more visible within this framework. One of its aims was to create an atmosphere of conversation and discussion; it achieves this with 'Omuz is Talking' series. Also, they introduced the concept of unrequited resource sharing to other institutions. Due to the fact that it has a fluid dynamic structure, it can still change form, and looks at other issues under the umbrella of precarity apart from unrequited resource sharing.

They talk about what issues are still a point of discussion among the facilitators. The first one is the issue of how Omuz will exist as a legal entity. The question of what being a legal entity will change or not is important. How can we provide

different support mechanisms, how can we think about this within the Omuz network, not just as financial support, but in other ways, too? And one of the other issues is what could happen between those who have got support and those who have agreed to give it until now. How can we get into contact with similar structures at home and abroad? There is an effort to increase communication with different artistic institutions, initiatives and so on in Turkey.

They are trying to include more commercial structures on behalf of different support mechanisms. Omuz acts as an intermediary in this position and they try to reach different institutions that can provide support by specifying the supporting institutions. For example, artists sell and support their own productions and announce that this support will be made on behalf of Omuz. The target point in the future is the emergence of labor as a support. That is, for example, a doctor's examination of a certain number of people per year for free, because health insecurity for those working in the field of art is certain. This idea is still in the thinking stage, both because they are not in a formal structure and they are still arguing about how to identify those in need (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022).

Omuz doesn’t let a hierarchy be formed between those that get and give support is the only thing. Its relationships with the galleries, other artistic institutions, museums during the production of content or communicaton process, as well.

According to one of the founders of Omuz, Saliha Yavuz, the artist professional association cannot be only with artists. It is more effective at this point that art critics, artists and galleries can make a claim on their rights together. Also, it should also be given in terms of the motivation of the labor reward of the supporter who puts effort in its simplest form (S. Yavuz, personal communication, April 13, 2022).

3.2.2.2. Artist Support Pledge

Artist Support Pledge emerged with the adaptation of Matthew's Burrows Artist Support Pledge by visual artist Seçil Erel during the pandemic process. It continues to grow with the philosophy of give support-get support mechanism. A solidarity movement that turns into a worldwide artist experience, showing us the art without limits, what creative human intelligence can do, and offering the possibilities of reaching the other end of the world with a post or a hashtag. Artists have difficulty in talking about the price of their work in the art circle due to the problem of not being able to organize, and this situation causes certain standards not to be established. This experience is important as the artists realize their strengths, open their productions and works generously by sharing. It is an independent artist initiative focused on encouraging artists to put their work up for sale and to support them.

Seçil Erel set out with the question of how Turkish artists can represent themselves in global, and realized that the Artist Support Pledge structure was missing in Turkey. Thus, she introduced this alternative field by shooting a video. Mentioning that accessibility and sustainability are intertwined, Erel points out that most young artists sell abroad, especially to collectors. Artists post their works with hashtags to create an invisible support chain between each other. Seçil Erel aims to expand Artist Support Pledge in Turkey without being separated from its global scale, thus she met with the creator of Artist Support Pledge and shared a text on how to use the platform for artists.

How to join the Artist Support Pledge?

1. Anyone can participate in any type of business.

2. Post pictures of your works on your Instagram account.

If possible, use the ARTIST SUPPORT PLEDGE and ARTIST SUPPORT ASSOCIATION logo and text by reposting or using a screenshot.

3. Enter the job and price details (Maximum 200 pounds / 1,750 Turkish lira).

4. Keep sending DMs (messages) to people who are interested in your business.

5. Add the hashtag #artistsupportpledge #sanatcidestekbirligi. You may not be able to see your own work as there are too many images, but a photo of your work is posted. We don't choose what to see.

6. Follow the hashtag (#) to see newly published content.

7. When you sell £1000 / 8750TL worth of work, keep the promise and spend £200 / 1.750TL on another artist(s) work(s).

8. If in doubt, remember that you are doing it in a spirit of generosity, that is what counts.

9. Follow @artistsupportpledge @sanatcidestekbirligi and stay connected for more opportunities. (Artdog İstanbul, 2021)

Eda Yiğit evaluates Artist Support Pledge as a good example among important exemplary solidarity practices as follows:

Finally, the emergence of a structure that started with the initiative of a single artist and was fed by volunteers is a good example of how in some cases, acting with a well-designed and courageous step in line with the need,

not with many people and with great effort, can yield unexpectedly positive results in terms of solidarity practices. (Yiğit, 2021, p. 77)

CONCLUSION

The gap that the thesis aims to fill in the academic field is to examine the artists groups who focuses on contemporary artists' status and working conditions after 2010 in Turkey, even if they do not have legal rights. In line with this purpose, the thesis has been prepared to reveal the theoretical discourses in the background such as neoliberalism, post-Fordism and precarity, to show its effect on individuals with its social context on visual artists, and to evaluate the interventions of power and its mechanisms on artists. The intervention of neoliberal regulations on the labor force after the 1980s, the new definitions of labor that started to show their effects not only in the world, but also in Turkey and its contemporary art. In order to understand the reasons for this transformation and to make an assessment specific to Turkey, the thesis first tried to examine the effect areas of neoliberalism around the world.

It was concluded that the reason why neoliberalism attracted attention in state policies increased with the idea of spreading economic freedom. However, neoliberal governmentality differed from liberalism in terms of its impact on individuals. With the post-Fordist production models emphasizing symbolic values, labor power has turned into a trend that oversees the interests of companies and governments such as competition, creativity and flexibility over capital.

The precarity began to be discussed as the increasing competition changed the working style and intervened not only in the work environment but also in the social lives of the individuals. In the study conducted within the scope of the thesis, it was seen that the definitions of precarity were quite complex. Although the concept of precarity has a common theoretical definition, it has been concluded that the way it is applied and the perspective of precarity are affected by geographical differences, social changes and historical processes. Reaching

this conclusion was important in terms of evaluating the concept of precarity over Turkey within the scope of the thesis.

Since the main point to be examined in detail is the artist's labor and the changing status of the artist, how the definition of an artist is made in international reports was examined. Also, it was concluded that the concepts can define the status of artists are immaterial labor, affective labor or mental worker with the transformation of labor definitions. The concept of precarity in the artistic field, due to its flexible working conditions, created a perception by liberating artists and therefore its adoption in the art world led to a paradoxical situation. For this reason, some resistance groups formed by artists against situations that affected working conditions from the historical period to the present were examined. The aim was both to see the changing art market activity in the world from the perspective of the artists and to obtain information about how the artist groups represented themselves.

The concrete effect of neoliberalism in the field of culture and art in Turkey occurred when the state and its institutions adopted privatization policies by isolating this field. The second part of the thesis started by examining the impact of neoliberalism on Turkey, especially after the 1970s. The large companies' investments in the field of culture and arts, and the globalization steps taken by Turkey for its candidacy to the European Union, have affected the field of contemporary art in line with the needs of neoliberalism. At this point, those who were affected were artists who wanted to carry out their productions independently. Artists who did not want to produce or exhibit their works in the sterile environment of companies and banks started to form associations as a result of their own efforts. Sales-based printing applied to artists in art institutions creates an atmosphere of pressure by manipulating the artist in art productions, and the collective understanding reappears within the framework of this thesis. While the art scene continues to gain ground in Turkey within a narrow environment, artists are trying to find a place for themselves within the

functioning of art institutions and galleries. It is seen that artists have an obligation to maintain their lives in the order established by neoliberal policies. Artists who aim to provide a specific career are trying to struggle with the approval mechanisms of galleries and art institutions, and they are gradually moving away from the context and producing branded indicators. Artists are trying to pursue their own careers in the global art scene also reflect their own contradictions in their productions. Such an artistic environment, on the other hand, continues to serve neoliberalism by containing contradictions. This situation actually occurs as a result of an intervention in the minds and labor processes of the artists. However, this intervention is not based on resistance, but through various approval mechanisms.

Uluslararası Plastik Sanatlar Derneği was founded by artists and took important steps in its own period. Hafriyat, Apartment Project, Oda Project, Karşı Sanat Çalışmaları and Diyarbakır Sanat Merkezi were also important steps as artists' expression fields in the period before 2010. The change in the attitude of the ruling party in the field of culture and arts and the pressure atmosphere caused by the one-man regime with the conservative understanding of art provided a more precarious atmosphere for the artists especially after 2010. In this thesis, the political and social events from the 90s to the present were examined with their impact on the contemporary art by considering the precarious situation of the artists. It is not a coincidence that the number of artist organizations in Turkey has increased after the 2010s and that they are generally rights-based and economic solidarity organizations. The subtitles that visual artists have determined within the scope of their precarity in the organizations they have established in Turkey can be determined as follows for the purpose of the thesis:

- Censorship/ self-censor
- Working conditions
- Artists’ rights
- The role of state’s institutions in artists’ rights

- The lack of professional organization and legal difficulties

Some art organizations worked on these subtitles such as Kamusal Sanat Laboratuvarı, Anti Istanbul Biennial 2013, Turuncu Çadır, Açık Masa and Sanat Emekçileri. The reason why these groups are not active at the moment can be counted as the fact that they were established on the basis of urgency due to the needs of the period, and then the decrease in the number of participants due to loss of motivation, the inability to provide diversity by the same people taking part in these organizations, and various economic problems to coninue their activities. At the same time, they were not visible to the state at that time, as they could not be included in the legal status. However, they have also been influential in the artist organizations established at the same time or in the following periods, both in terms of ideas and organizational structure.

Siyah Bant, Omuz Solidarity Network and Artist Support Pledge organizations continue to work actively. Siyah Bant’s reports and researches form the basis for most research including mine. Omuz Solidarity Network continues to provide periodic support with applications made to artists who produce in the field of visual arts. At the same time, side activities such as 'Omuz is Speaking' and 'Omuz Dictionary' bring together people from different fields and offer a field of struggle. Although Artists Support Pledge is not an active field of practice unlike other organizations- an effect of which may be the artist's individual initiative- it can be said that it was quite active in Turkey during the quarantine period due to COVID-19.

Due to the increasing political pressure, which increased after certain political events such as the Gezi Park protests or the attempted millitary coup in 2016, the concept of claiming rights is getting harder in today's Turkey. Although professional organization is seen as a definite solution considering the laws, there is a problem of recognizing and registering contemporary artists in Turkey. In order for the artist organization to spread to large masses and take a solution-

oriented step, an environment where art critics, artists and galleries can discuss and demand together should be established because the struggle of artists is not limited to their own fields within the neoliberal governmentality; they also have to deal with many corruptions. Since everything is connected or dependent on each other, it is necessary to establish organic unity. It is impossible to reach a solution without making labor relations and processes transparently visible. There is no professional organization in the field of contemporary art and unregistered work is widespread, so the functioning of the support mechanisms cannot be programmed.

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LIST OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Akay, T. (03.06.2021), “Interview with Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz”, İstanbul.

Akay, T. (04.11.2021), “Interview with Neriman Polat”, İstanbul.

Akay, T. (10.11.2021), “Interview with Burak Delier”, İstanbul.

Akay, T. (17.01.2022), “Interview with Zeyno Pekünlü”, İstanbul.

Akay, T. (13.04.2022), “Interview with Saliha Yavuz”, İstanbul.

APPENDIX

SERGİ SÖZLEŞMESİ

İş bu Sergi sözleşmesi (bundan böyle kısaca "Sözleşme" olarak anılacaktır) bir taraftan …….adresinde yerleşik ……. Sanat Galerisi A.Ş. (kısaca "Galeri" olarak anılacaktır) ile diğer taraftan.....,adresinde mukim ..... (kısaca "Sanatçı" olarak anılacaktır) arasında aşağıdaki şekil ve şartlarda imzalanmıştır.

1- TANIMLAMALAR

1. SANATÇI; Eser meydana getirerek, sergilenmek üzere Galeriye teslim eden gerçek kişi ve/veya kişilerdir.
2. GALERİ; Sanatçının meydana getirdiği eseri, yukarıda belirlenen adreste sergileyen ve satışa sunan tüzel kişiliktir.
3. GALERİ TEMSİLCİSİ; Sözleşme kapsamında Sanatçı ile Galeri arasındaki ilişkileri yürüten .....adlı kişidir.
4. YAPIT; Sözleşme kapsamında sergilenmek ve satışı yapılmak üzere Galeriye teslim edilen Sanatçı tarafından meydana getirilen eserlerdir.

2- SÖZLEŞMENİN KONUSU VE AMACI

İşbu sözleşmenin konusu ve amacı, sözleşmede adı geçen Galeri ile Sanatçı arasında .....tarihleri arasında yapılması mutabık kalınan serginin yapılış esas ve şartları ile tarafların yükümlülüklerini düzenlemektir.

3- TARAFLARIN HAK VE YÜKÜMLÜLÜKLERİ

3.1.Sanatçı, Galeriye .....ile .....tarihleri arasında Galeri'ye sergilenmek ve satılmak amacı ile .....adet yapıt teslim edecektir. Yapıtların listesi sözleşme ekindedir.

3.2 Yapıtların sergi tarihleri Galeri tarafından belirlenecek olup, bu tarih Sanatçı tarafından değiştirilemez.

3.3 Sanatçı, mücbir sebepler haricinde sergi tarihinin değiştirilmesini talep edemez veya yapıtların tesliminden imtina edemez. Sanatçı mücbir sebep niteliğinde olan nedenlerle sergisini gerçekleştiremeyecek ise bu durumu en az 3 ay önceden Galeri'ye yazılı olarak bildirecektir. Sanatçı, iptal bildirim tarihine kadar sergi için Galeri tarafından yapılan masrafların ve uğranılan zararların tamamını nakden ve defaten ödemeyi kabul ve taahhüt eder.

3.4. Galeri, eserleri Pazar, Pazartesi, Ulusal ve Dini bayram günleri dışında her gün saat 10:30 – 19:30 arasında sergileyecektir. Galeri gerekli gördüğü durumlarda sergiyi kapalı tutma hakkına sahiptir.

3.5. Sanatçı, Galeri tarafından sergilenen yapıtların tamamını satışa sunacaktır. Sanatçı, sözleşme kapsamında satışı gerçekleşecek yapıtların satış bedeli üzerinden Galeri'ye …… komisyon ödeyecektir. Sanatçının yapıt satışından elde edeceği kazançla ilgili olan tüm vergiler Sanatçı'ya ait olup, bu bedeller Sanatçı tarafından ödenecektir. Sergilenecek yapıtların fiyatlandırılması sergi başlangıç tarihinden iki hafta önce belirlenecek olup, bu fiyatlandırma Galeri'nin onayına tabidir.

3.6. Sözleşme kapsamında yapılacak sergi için en az 32 sayfalık Türkçe-İngilizce sergi kitapçığı hazırlanacak olup bu masraflar Sanatçı tarafından karşılanacaktır. Bu masraflar; metin telif ve çeviri ücreti, kitapçıkta kullanılacak görsel malzeme (dijital olarak) ve baskı gibi masraflardır. Bu kitapçıktan Sanatçı, yazılı ve görsel basında dağıtılmak üzere Galeri'ye 250 adet verecektir. Sanatçı, kitapçığı satış amaçlı olarak hiçbir yere veremez ve kullanamaz.

3.7.Sözleşme kapsamında sergilenecek yapıtların Galeri'ye kadar taşınması ve sergi bitiminde teslim alınan yere iade edilmesiyle ilgili ambalaj ve taşımacılık masrafları Galeri tarafından karşılanacaktır. Ancak sergilenecek yapıtların sigortalanması ve sigorta bedelleri Sanatçı'ya aittir.

3.8. Sergi için yaptırılacak olan afiş, davetiye, sergi açılışı ulusal ve uluslararası medyada tanıtım masrafları Galeri aittir.

3.9. Galeri, Galeri'nin imajına ve politikasına ters düşecek eserleri sergilememek hakkına sahip olup, Sanatçı bu konuda Galeriden herhangi bir talepte bulunamayacaktır.

3.10. Sanatçı aynı dönemler için başka sanat galerileri için sergi sözleşmesi yapamayacaktır.

3.11. Sanatçının sergilenen eserleri ile ilgili olarak 3 kişiler tarafından ortaya atılan herhangi bir Fıkri Sınai Hak ihlali nedeni ile meydana çıkabilecek hukuki sorumluluklardan ve tazminatlardan münhasıran Sanatçı sorumlu olacaktır.

4- İHTİLAFLARIN ÇÖZÜMÜ

İşbu sözleşmeden doğan her türlü anlaşmazlıklarda İstanbul Mahkemeleri ve İcra Müdürlükleri yetkilidir.

5- TEBLİGAT ADRESLERİ

İşbu sözleşmenin başında belirtilen adresler, tarafların tebligat adresleridir. Adreslerdeki değişiklikler karşı tarafa yazılı olarak bildirilmedikçe, bu adreslere yapılacak tebligatlar geçerli sayılacaktır.

Taraflar arasındaki her türlü ihbarname, iadeli taahhütlü posta yoluyla, faks ya da kurye servisiyle, tarafların bilinen en son adreslerine gönderilecektir.

6- DİĞER HÜKÜMLER

6.1. İşbu sözleşmedeki herhangi bir maddenin ve/veya cümlenin ve/veya kelimenin herhangi bir şekilde geçersiz ve/veya hükümsüz sayılması halinde, bu husus sözleşmenin devamına ve/veya geçerliliğine etkilemeyecektir.

6.2. İşbu sözleşme, taraflar arasında daha önceden yapılan yazılı veya şifahi diğer bütün sözleşmelerin yerini almaktadır. İşbu sözleşme, ancak yazılı olması ve her iki tarafça imza altına alınması halinde, tadil edilebilir.

6.3. Taraflar, işbu sözleşmedeki hak ve yükümlülüklerini üçüncü kişiye devir ve temlik edemez.

6.4. İş bu sözleşmenin tarafları, sözleşmeden doğacak her türlü ihtilafta Galeri'nin her türlü defter ve kayıtlarının geçerli, kesin ve münhasır delil teşkil edeceğini ve bu hükmün HUMK 287 maddesi uyarınca bir delil sözleşmesi niteliğinde olacağını ve bunlara ilişkin her türlü itiraz ve defi hakkından gayri kabili rücu olarak vazgeçeceğini kabul ve beyan eder.

6.5. Sözleşme'nin uygulanması sırasında, TARAFLARDAN herhangi birinin, herhangi bir hakkını kullanmamış olması, bu hakkından geçici veya süresiz olarak vazgeçtiği biçiminde yorumlanamaz. Ayrıca, Sözleşme'nin herhangi bir hükmünün TARAFLAR arasında adi ortaklık, halefiyet, vekâlet, temsilcilik ilişkisi bulunduğu şeklinde yorumlanması da mümkün değildir.

6.6.Bu sözleşmeden kaynaklanan damga vergisini, taraflar eşit olarak ödeyecektir.

İşbu sözleşme; altı maddeden ibaret olup, iki nüsha tanzim edilerek, taraflarca .....08.2011 tarihinde imzalanmıştır.