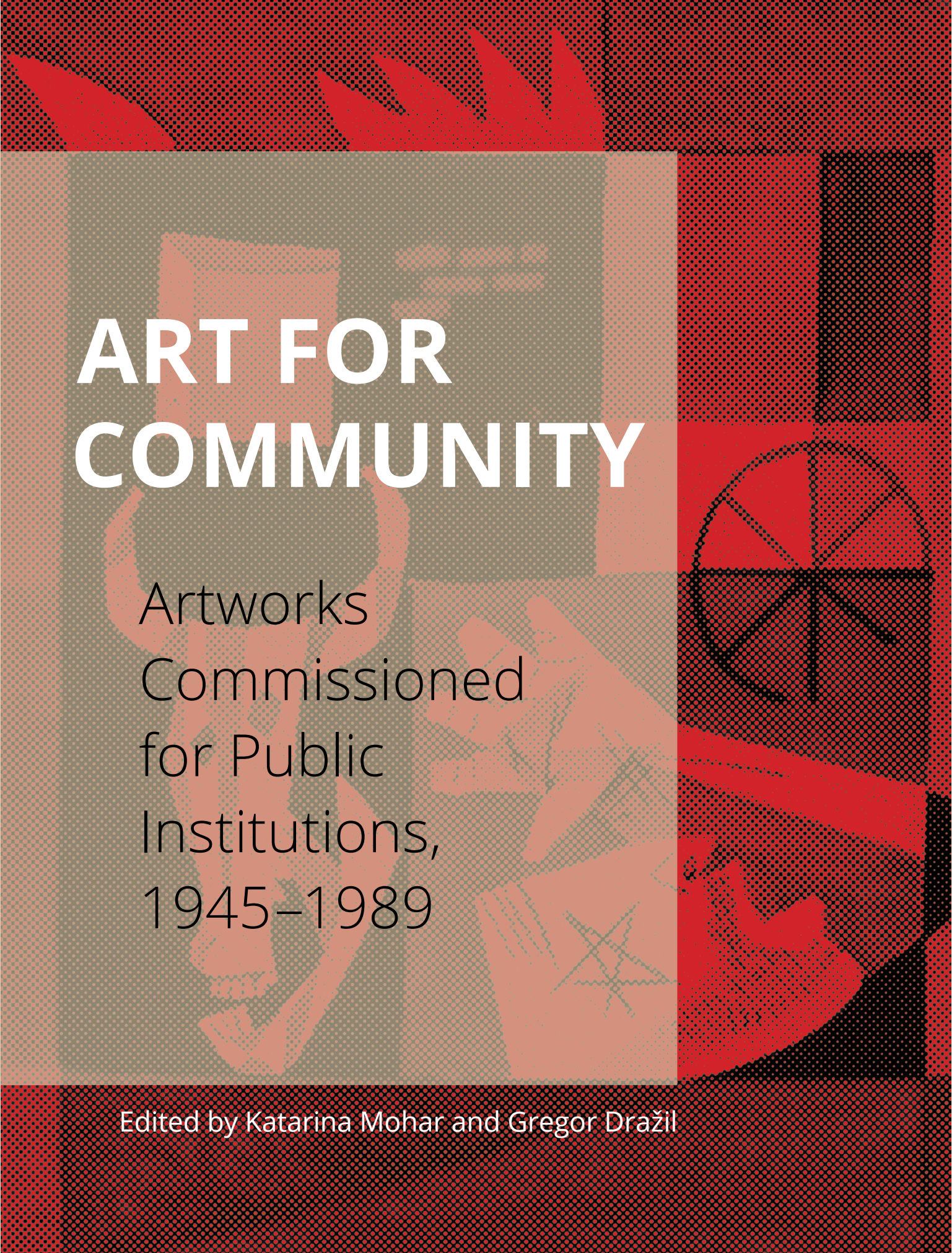




# ART FOR COMMUNITY

Artworks  
Commissioned  
for Public  
Institutions,  
1945–1989

Edited by Katarina Mohar and Gregor Dražil



Založba ZRC



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Ljubljana, 2026

Opera Instituti Artis Historiae

**Art for Community**

**Artworks Commissioned for Public Institutions, 1945–1989**

Edited by Katarina Mohar and Gregor Dražil

English proofreading: Ana Čavić, Donald Francis Reindl

Slovene proofreading: Darja Gabrovšek Homšak

Reviewers: Marjeta Ciglencički, Jessica Jenkins

Design, layout and photo editing: Andrej Furlan

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Cover image: Ivo Šubic, unrealised sketch for the mosaic in the building of the People's Assembly of the People's Republic of Slovenia.  
Photo: Andreja Rakovec, ZRC SAZU.

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# THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ART AND ARCHITECTURE DURING THE POSTWAR PERIOD IN TURKEY: CASES FROM ISTANBUL

Burcu Selcen  
Coşkun

Mimar Sinan  
Fine Arts  
University

Collaboration between architects and artists has emerged as a response to discussions around the loss of identity in architecture. Countries in North America and Latin America in particular have played important roles in putting these ideas into practice.<sup>1</sup> Turkey was among the countries that followed this path. Significant examples of collaboration between architects and artists were produced in Istanbul between 1950 and 1980.

The shift in Turkish state policy in the 1950s placed a heavy burden on artists that until then had mostly been commissioned by the state. They had to search for new means beyond canvas painting to continue their production. International-style public buildings acquired through competitions emerged as new platforms for artistic work. In addition to state commissions, artworks started to appear in private buildings and were installed in or on buildings such as factories, banks, cinemas, and swimming pools. The artworks integrated into buildings thematically reflected the artists' hesitation between identity and modernity while also bearing evidence of the industrialisation of new materials in the country, such as ceramics, glass, and paint, during the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>2</sup>

This study outlines a general framework for the integration of art and architecture based on the case of Turkey. Because there is extensive research on this topic by scholars,<sup>3</sup> this study approaches the preservation of this twentieth-century heritage from a holistic perspective. To familiarise readers with the context, a brief introduction to art and architecture dialogue is provided, followed by a section on emerging modernist approaches in Turkey during the founding years of the republic. I then focus on the 1950s through the 1970s and on Istanbul as a venue that nurtured the dialogue between architects and artists. Significant cases from Istanbul are introduced and discussed as examples. I conclude by examining common threats and maintenance issues affecting the artworks and the challenges involved in protecting the artworks together with the modernist buildings they form part of.

## International frame of the integration of architecture and art, 1950–1980

Art will not only continue but will realise itself more and more. By the unification of architecture, sculpture, and painting, a new plastic reality will be created. Painting and sculpture will not manifest themselves as separate objects, nor as “mural art” which destroys architecture itself, nor as “applied” art, but being purely constructive will aid the creation of a surrounding not merely utilitarian or rational but also pure and complete in its beauty.<sup>4</sup>

After the Second World War, the reconstruction of war-damaged cities was one of the priorities of the architectural agenda in Europe. It was increasingly argued that “industrialization and mass production had populated the world with ugliness and poor aesthetics.”<sup>5</sup> There was an evident crisis in architectural theory, and reactions soon triggered proposals on how to inspire a new aesthetic. This issue was placed on the agenda of the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (*Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne*, CIAM) during the late 1940s (Bridgewater, 1947; Bergamo, 1949) and early 1950s (Hoddesdon, 1951), and a synthesis of the arts and architecture was suggested as a solution. The same idea was intensely promoted in journals such as *L'architecture d'aujourd'hui* (The Architecture of Today).<sup>6</sup> These suggestions favoured the realisation of artworks as a mutual practice of the architect and artist, working on equal terms on the same project, with the architect taking the leading role. Le Corbusier was the “emblematic figure” that responded to the issue of integrating the arts into architecture and became its early defender.<sup>7</sup> He wrote the short article “Vers l'unité, synthèse des arts majeurs: Architecture, peinture, sculpture” (Toward the Unity and Synthesis of the Major Arts: Architecture, Painting, Sculpture), pointing out the great potential of collaboration between art and architecture.<sup>8</sup>

Among significant efforts in Europe to combine art with the community, an artists' initiative established in 1951 by André Bloc and Félix Del Marle, Groupe Espace, envisaged art as a social phenomenon and aimed to achieve the synthesis of the arts in everyday life. In the summer of 1954, the group's exhibition in an olive grove in the form of a festival [Figure 1] showcased its production to the public.<sup>9</sup>

World expos also became alternative platforms where architects and artists experimented with working together. Especially at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair, whose theme was the “evaluation of the world for a more humane world,” the Austrian, Yugoslav, and German pavilions focused on this concept, as did Le Corbusier's Philips Pavilion, where the building itself was a synthesis of the arts.<sup>10</sup>

Figure 1. Entrance to the exhibition held by Groupe Espace, Biot, 10 June–10 September 1954. Photo: Dimitri Tibislawsky. Source: Diana Gay, “Fernand Léger et le groupe Espace à Biot.”



Erkol notes that between 1960 and 1980 “new architectural discourses, formal strategies, and debates concerning localism and identity” were evaluated and studied worldwide using revisionist approaches.<sup>11</sup>

Among the best practices that came out of exchanges between artists and architects, UNAM in Mexico City, as part of the *integración plástica* movement in Mexico during the 1950s, Burle Marx’s designs in Brazil, and the Gustavo Capanema Palace (*Palácio Gustavo Capanema*) in Rio de Janeiro are worth mentioning.<sup>12</sup>

## Early practices of modernist art in Turkey

Although the presence of an independent artistic sphere<sup>13</sup> was felt strongly during the founding years of the Republic of Turkey, it would be meaningful to trace this back to the last decades before the decline of the Ottoman Empire for Turkish modernism – namely, the end of nineteenth century and onward.

As part of westernisation attempts in the second half of the nineteenth century within the Ottoman Empire, selected officers and bureaucrats of the Ottoman imperial army and those working for the state institutions were encouraged and sent to Paris and Berlin to study painting and art. This attempt caused the emergence of a new intellectual class, which was later criticised by another group of educated bureaucrats, who favoured a nationalist approach toward art and literature.<sup>14</sup>

*Figure 2. Galatasaray Exhibitions. Source: SALT Archive, ARTMH021003.*



Soon after the proclamation of the republic in 1923, politicians defined modernism as a new vocabulary for architecture. Similar to the other nation-building states of the same era, Turkey ordered the use of modernism for the public institutions of the capital, Ankara, which were concrete symbols of the commitment to the basic promises of the revolution, such as delivering education, healthcare, and mass housing. This deliberate shift toward modernism aimed at a departure from Ottoman culture and contributed to the new nation, which was being constructed according to the current political agenda of the Kemalist ideology. The new government was targeting rapid progress in society, so that Turkey would overcome the intellectual and economic gap with the Western nations through a series of reforms.<sup>15</sup> As early as 1923, Turkey's founder and first president, Mustafa Kemal, emphasized the role of art, sculpture, and science for a nation's progress in his speech at Bursa.<sup>16</sup>

During the 1930s, the state treated painting as a superior communication tool compared to other arts because of its potential to share modernist and nationalist values with society, and painting exhibitions became important activities for emanating the political messages of the state.<sup>17</sup>

Going back to the Ottoman period, the Galatasaray Exhibitions (1916–1945) were a valuable attempt to promote “state-sponsored modernism”

in art.<sup>18</sup> Paintings by eminent artists and their students were exhibited each year in August in Istanbul's Galatasaray district. The patron of the first years of these exhibitions was the sultan's son Abdülmecid Efendi, who was also a painter. Organised by the Society of Ottoman Painters, they became the first traditional group exhibitions in Turkey. They honoured and supported painters, whose pictures were sold according to the artist's choice. Starting from July 1923 until his death in 1938, Mustafa Kemal showed great care for and interest in these exhibitions, from which the state itself regularly purchased pictures. It is estimated that, during the thirty-five years the exhibitions were held, a total of 350 artists exhibited approximately six thousand pictures<sup>19</sup> [Figure 2].

In 1938, as part of the Kemalist state's policies, an act was declared to send selected artists, consisting mainly of painters,<sup>20</sup> to various rural provinces of the nation. The state organised and funded these "country tours" (1938–1946)<sup>21</sup> and asked the artists to reflect the essence of the national culture in their paintings. They travelled to various Anatolian towns and villages and, each in their own artistic way, documented what they had observed in those places. The paintings were honoured each year by a committee of politicians and exhibited at state galleries in major cities. Between 1938 and 1946, around 710 pictures were produced by fifty-four painters.

Although Turkey was neutral during the Second World War, the state struggled economically during these hard times. However, the promotion of artistic production by the Republican People's Party (CHP), the responsible government by then, continued without interruption. The significance of fine arts applied in accordance with the spirit of Kemalist ideology was emphasized in the party's programmes of 1931, 1935, and 1939, whereas in its 1943 programme the state even took more responsibility by declaring that it would play a major role in supporting and promoting fine arts.<sup>22</sup>

From the founding years of the republic, the Group D art initiative (1933–1951) is noteworthy for early modernist Turkish painting and sculpture. The group's members, including Nurullah Berk, Zeki Faik İzer, and Cemal Tollu, aimed to achieve "a synthesis between modern art and Turkish art," and, because almost all of them were tutors at the Academy of Fine Arts, they had a serious impact on future artists.

Another remarkable event of the 1940s was the Republican People's Party (CHP) Art Awards, which were given in seven areas of art by the government from 1942 to 1947.<sup>23</sup> For the CHP, these contests were vehicles

## The art and architecture scene in postwar Istanbul

of political propaganda to strengthen and disseminate its ideology. The winning artists and writers were paid quite a good wage and honoured with the awards. The awards system was cancelled in 1951, soon after the Democrat Party (DP) came into power.

During the first decades of the republic, the state was occupied with construction of the capital, Ankara, whereas Istanbul lost its glamour and national significance. With a shrinking population during that period, the city was facing important issues with “crumbling infrastructure, old buildings and empty plots that were not built after successive fires had taken their toll”.<sup>24</sup>

In 1946, the transition to a multi-party system opened up a new chapter for politics in the country and introduced a sharp turn in Turkish politics, when the Kemalist regime was defeated in the 1950 elections by the liberal DP. Having become a NATO member in 1952, Turkey started developing closer relationships with the United States.<sup>25</sup> There was rapid transformation in social and cultural policies throughout the country. The liberal politics introduced by the new government and the quest for finding adequate accommodation for people migrating to major cities such as Istanbul and İzmir led to an evolution in architecture. Istanbul started to gain a new momentum related to the DP's goals to distinguish itself from the former government, which focused on Ankara as the capital city. Holding the majority votes of the nation, the DP prioritized the former Ottoman capital, Istanbul, in order to use the city as a stage to demonstrate its achievements to the citizens. The redevelopment of Istanbul, already determined a decade earlier by the French urban planner Henri Prost, was one of the primary targets of the DP government.<sup>26</sup> To open new space for larger boulevards and public buildings, the municipality of Istanbul, supported by the DP, carried out excessive demolitions in historic quarters and allowed the construction of international-style modernist public buildings<sup>27</sup> on the empty plots created by these demolitions.<sup>28</sup> In addition to the attempts at urban redevelopment, the historic core of the city was damaged by the heavy infrastructure related to small industries and squatters as newcomers to the city.<sup>29</sup>

The patron of the artworks that appeared in these public buildings (such as the city council offices, hospitals, and universities) was the municipality or the government. Many of these buildings were acquired through architectural competitions, thus reflecting the contemporary understanding of architectural design very similar to what could be seen in the West.

On the other hand, private clients brought vitality to the architecture profession. New recreational and commercial complexes housing theatres, cinemas, and clubs, which preferred the use of the vocabulary of modernism, started appearing in the urban sphere.<sup>30</sup> Yasa Yaman<sup>31</sup> highlights the increase of tourism-oriented hotels and banks between 1950 and 1960 and mentions the role of artists in the creation of more humanistic<sup>32</sup> spaces inside these buildings.

An important initiative between 1955 and 1959 was Türk Grup Espas, which was initiated by the sculptors İlhan Koman and Hadi Bara,<sup>33</sup> together with the architect Tarkı Carım.<sup>34</sup>

Beginning with a coup d'état, the years between 1960 and 1980 were important milestones for Turkish history with regard to economic developments.<sup>35</sup> The shift in politics during these years was obvious in the overall cultural policies, including art. Especially throughout the 1960s, a departure was observed from figurative artworks of nationalist ideology and classicized examples of modern architecture of the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>36</sup>

The collaboration between architects and artists started toward the end of 1940s in Istanbul and continued through the 1970s. After 1980, artists started creating more conceptual art, and the relationship between art and architecture gradually faded.

I now present some cases from Istanbul, primarily focusing on public buildings that were built during the period discussed above.

### **The Lido swimming pool, hotel, and casino**

Although there were special recreational facilities during the Ottoman period, beaches and swimming were culturally marginal for the Ottoman Empire,<sup>37</sup> and it was a slow process until they started being enjoyed first by the elites and then by the general public following the foundation of the Republic of Turkey.

The Lido Club and Swimming Pool (1943) – like Florya Beach, the İnönü Promenade (today Gezi Park; 1940), and the club Taksim Gazino (1940) – was one of the early recreational spaces of the city, which offered the possibility of experiencing the city in a more democratic way. The project was developed and designed by Halit Femir (1910–1954) in 1942,<sup>38</sup> on the fire-damaged site of a seaside timber mansion, which then belonged to a wealthy businessman (the architect's uncle). Taking its name from one of the most popular beaches of Venice, the Lido Club soon became one of the “spaces of encounter and entertainment” for the Istanbul

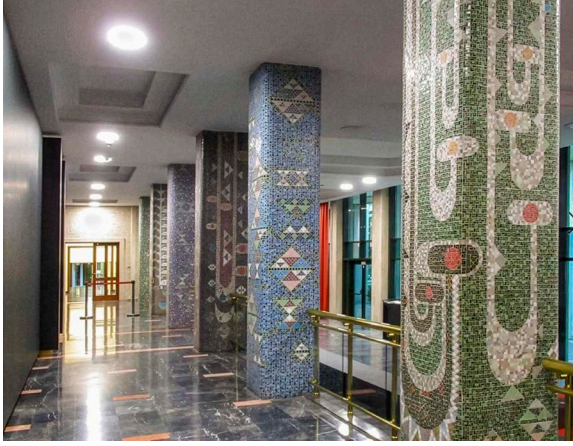
elites,<sup>39</sup> which it served until 1961.<sup>40</sup> It housed a hotel, a restaurant, and an Olympic-size pool, which brought men and women together and contributed to establishing socio-cultural norms in urban life.<sup>41</sup> After being purchased in the 1990s by another entrepreneur, the buildings suffered severe damage through excessive refurbishment and were almost demolished after the Istanbul nightclub shooting terrorist attack on 1 January 2017.

The Lido club project was an important case for Turkish art because it used to house one of the early examples of art integrated into a modernist building. Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu<sup>42</sup> contributed to the project with some murals, which were his initial wall installations. Placed behind the bar facing the swimming pool,<sup>43</sup> the artwork *Plajın Fethi* (The Conquest of the Beach) consisted of five murals produced using adhesive paint directly on the wall surfaces. Boats, mermaids, horses, and fish were depicted with the addition of angels parachuting from the sky onto the beach.<sup>44</sup> Although Femir published an article about his project in the architectural magazine *Arkitekt* as early as 1944,<sup>45</sup> with photos from the façade, staircase, and interiors, he included only one image, most probably Eyüboğlu's work, without any explanation about the artist. The other limited images of the works<sup>46</sup> dating from 1943 [Figure 3] were later published in the magazine *Ülkü* by the artist himself in his article "Yapı ve Resim" (Building and Picture),<sup>47</sup> with his complaint that he was displeased by the quality of the photos of his works. He also underlined that these works had been his first art for a public space. Eyüboğlu stated that he had difficulty in working with the new material he used for the Lido project and that during his production phase at the bar space he was annoyed by the columns that restricted his work.

Eyüboğlu's work was destroyed together with the swimming pool and the building that housed the restaurant, when it was decided to refurbish the site.



Figure 3. One of Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's murals for the Lido Swimming Pool. Source: Eyüboğlu, "Yapı ve Resim."



*Figure 4. Mosaic work on the columns by Atilla Galatalı.  
Photo: Burcu Selcen Coşkun, 2021.*



*Figure 5. The pool and the parliament block of the Istanbul City Hall complex. Photo: Burcu Selcen Coşkun, 2021.*

## Istanbul City Hall

In 1953, the project for Istanbul City Hall was acquired through an architectural competition. The building, which still serves as the headquarters for the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, is located at the historic core of the city. The complex consists of a pure international-style office block with a lower presidency block,<sup>48</sup> which followed the international style closely and was therefore criticised as being insensitive toward the dense classical Ottoman architectural texture of its surroundings. The complex houses various artworks. The two-storey-high stained-glass work designed by Nazım Koşkan in the parliament block is one of the remarkable artworks integrated into Istanbul City Hall. Facing the entrance hall and an upper foyer, it welcomes the people entering the space on the ground floor and accompanies them up to the first floor via a spacious staircase. As Yavuz states, Koşkan's artwork serves as a structural element and creates a unique atmosphere at the same time.<sup>49</sup>

Other artworks at Istanbul City Hall include Atilla Galatalı's mosaics on the columns [Figure 4] and Şadi Çalık's<sup>50</sup> pool with a ring motif at the entrance [Figure 5]. Both date from 1953, indicating that they were conceived as part of the original complex. Çalık's second work for the building, *Eti Güneş Kursu* (Hittite Sun Disk), dates from 1960 and was later relocated to the outdoor car park.<sup>51</sup>

## The Hilton Hotel

As part of the tourism development policies in Turkey, the Hilton Hotel welcomed its first visitors in 1955. This hotel, the first large-scale modern tourist enterprise in Turkey, had 258 rooms and was a rectangular prism measuring  $21 \times 100$  m. It occupied a green area, which had been designated as the second park area at Henri Prost's urban plan for Istanbul, and so the selection of this plot was controversial. As the first Hilton Hotel outside the United States, the budget for its construction was financed by the state and its administration was undertaken by the Hilton Company.<sup>52</sup> The project was developed in 1952 by the architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), and the Turkish architect Sedad Hakkı Eldem took responsibility during the construction phase in Istanbul. Eldem also designed a restaurant with a *divanhane* (a Turko-Islamic traditional reception room) theme, a concrete entrance canopy in the form of a "flying carpet" [Figure 6], and ceramic tiles to be used in the entrance area, whose patterns were an interpretation of the iconic Ottoman *çintemani* motif.

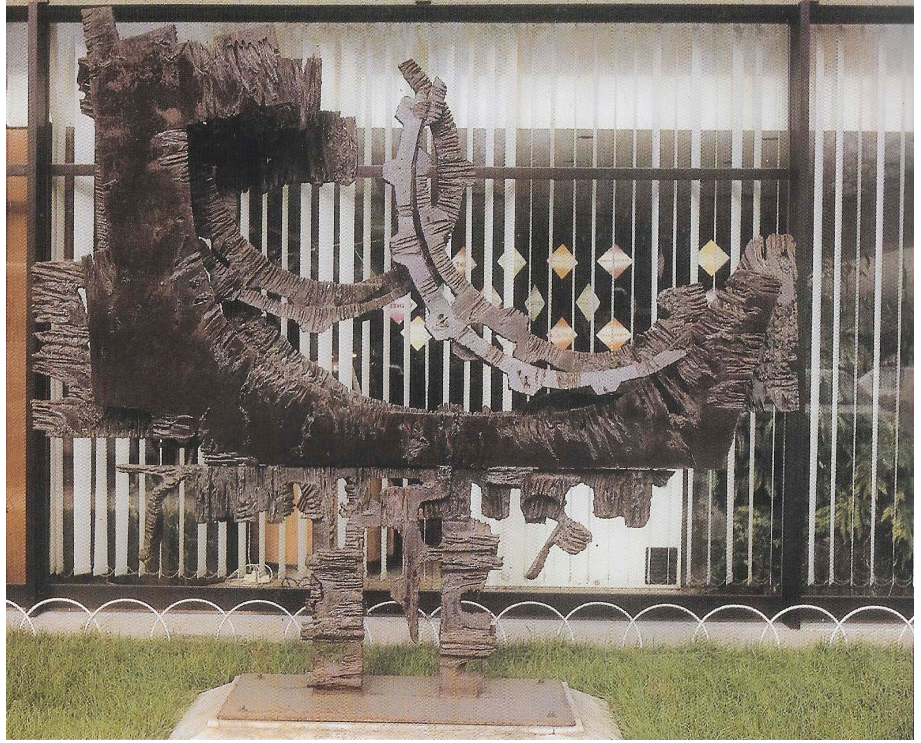
The Hilton Hotel introduced many new habits to social life in Istanbul, such as afternoon teas, fashion shows, and musical dinners, which shaped Istanbul during that period.<sup>53</sup>

Figure 6.  
The Hilton Hotel,  
1952–1955, entrance  
with Sedad Hakkı Eldem's  
canopy design. Source:  
Bozdoğan, Özkan, and  
Yenal, Sedad Eldem.



Figure 7. Füreyâ Koral with the coffee table she designed  
for the Hilton Hotel, 1954. Source: Aliotti, Şaşmaz, and  
Aksoy, Füreyâ Koral.

*Figure 8. İlhan Koman's sculpture from the lobby of the Divan Hotel, later moved outside close to the entrance. Source: Haydaroğlu and Torre, İlhan Koman: Retrospektif / Retrospective.*



Unfortunately, there are no images of the mural created by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu for the hotel. Only a low-quality photograph survives, showing the mural with traditional figures that Eyüboğlu created in 1954,<sup>54</sup> which was hung on the walls behind the counter of the Karagöz Bar. For the Hilton Hotel, the ceramic artist Füreyä Koral<sup>55</sup> also worked on a design for a coffee table for the hotel lobby [Figure 7].

## **The Divan Hotel**

Located close to the Hilton Hotel, the Divan Hotel was designed by Rüknetin Güney and Avedis Hubeser and built with local capital in 1956. During its refurbishment in 1966, the architect Abdurrahman Hancı preferred to invite artists to upgrade the profile of the hotel. He worked with Füreyä Koral, who created her ceramic mural *Kuşlar* (Birds, 1968) for the patisserie, which became a landmark for the hotel later, and with the sculptor İlhan Koman, who “came to Istanbul from Sweden specifically to create this sculpture in his studio” [Figure 8]. Koral’s mural *Kuşlar* (Birds) acted as “a welcoming element, which contributed significantly to the space.”<sup>56</sup>

In addition to Koral and Koman, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu contributed to the hotel with his gypsum relief, and Mustafa Pilevneli, Jale Yılmabaşar, Gencay

Kasapçı, and Balkan Naci İslimyeli also produced various artworks for the building. When the hotel was demolished in 2008 due to the needs of its owners, the artworks were saved and later exhibited at the new hotel, which was designed and constructed on the same plot.

### The residential complex in the fourth Levent district

The apartment blocks in the fourth Levent district of Istanbul are renowned for their artworks by eminent Turkish artists. Following the completion of the initial phases (starting in 1947), which had been the first housing units in Turkey designed for the middle class, the last (fourth) phase of the complex was built in the second half of 1950s.<sup>57</sup>

The principal architect, Kemal Ahmet Aru, invited his artist colleagues from the Academy of Fine Arts – Nurullah Berk, Sabri Berkel, Eren Eyüboğlu, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu,<sup>58</sup>ERCÜMENT KALMIK, and Ferruh Başağa – who all agreed to collaborate with the architect.

Eyüboğlu, who created five different mosaic panels for the facades of the residential units, explained his attitude toward working with architects: “It is a clear fact that it is the architect that supplies the greatest audience to any kind of painting, the will to be part of life. The painting is destined to live a nomad’s life; in other words, to be buried without living a life or to dive into deep sleeps in the museum corridors, if it is never touched by an architect.”<sup>59</sup>



The artworks were commissioned to be placed to the side façades of the modernist blocks, where no windows had been planned by the architects, so that the artists used these surfaces to mount their artworks [Figure 9]. Over time, seven of these were covered with simple insulation materials and six of them with commercial signboards. Two were unfortunately destroyed. Through the campaigns run by the Contemporary Levent Trust, the location was registered as an “urban site” and taken under legal protection. However, the buildings are still not individually listed and are at risk of demolition. In 2012, a total of twenty wall mosaics were registered by the Regional Conservation Board of Istanbul. After the preparation of a detailed survey and the approval of the conservation projects, they were recently restored.<sup>60</sup>

*Figure 9. Mosaic by Eren Eyüboğlu on one of the residential blocks, 2017. Photo: Eda Kılınç.*

*Figure 10. Sadi Diren's ceramic panel at the entrance of the AKM. Source: SALT Research, Hayati Tabanlıoğlu Archive, THTPAKMH040001.*



## **The Atatürk Cultural Centre**

Toward the end of 1960s, a new cultural centre at the heart of the city opened its doors. The project was designed by the architect Hayati Tabanlıoğlu, and the lighting design was carried out by Johannes Dinnebier, who also designed an illuminated column for the entrance space next to the freestanding spiral staircase. A competition for the artworks was held by the Ministry of Public Works for the Atatürk Cultural Centre (*Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, AKM*).<sup>61</sup>

Sadi Diren, a Turkish ceramic artist and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, created large-scale ceramic panels for hotels, factories, and office buildings, and a unique ceramic mural for the headquarters of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, some of which are still preserved intact.<sup>62</sup> Diren's lengthy ceramic wall at the AKM building acted as "a reference point that provided visibility" for the building itself and framed the entrance to direct the visitors<sup>63</sup> [Figure 10]. This wall continued throughout the inner and outer spaces of the building, acting as an element to divide the entrance hall. Diren also created ceramic tiles for the foyers of the large hall, which was partially saved when the building underwent extensive renovation in 2008.

## The Vakko Textile Factory

The Vakko Textile Factory, a fine clothing company in the Merter district, was designed by the architects Haluk Baysal and Melih Birsal, who had an active partnership throughout the 1960s. The complex was constructed in 1969, and both the notable architecture of the factory and the artworks, which reflected the style of the 1960s, were praised together as “constitutive elements of the original design concept”.<sup>64</sup> The abstract artworks fitted the space elegantly.<sup>65</sup> The architects stated that they invited artists to create artworks at this industrial site with the intention of providing a humanistic and inspirational space for the employees. The outcome of this collaboration proved to be one of the best practices of art and architecture dialogue in Turkey.<sup>66</sup>

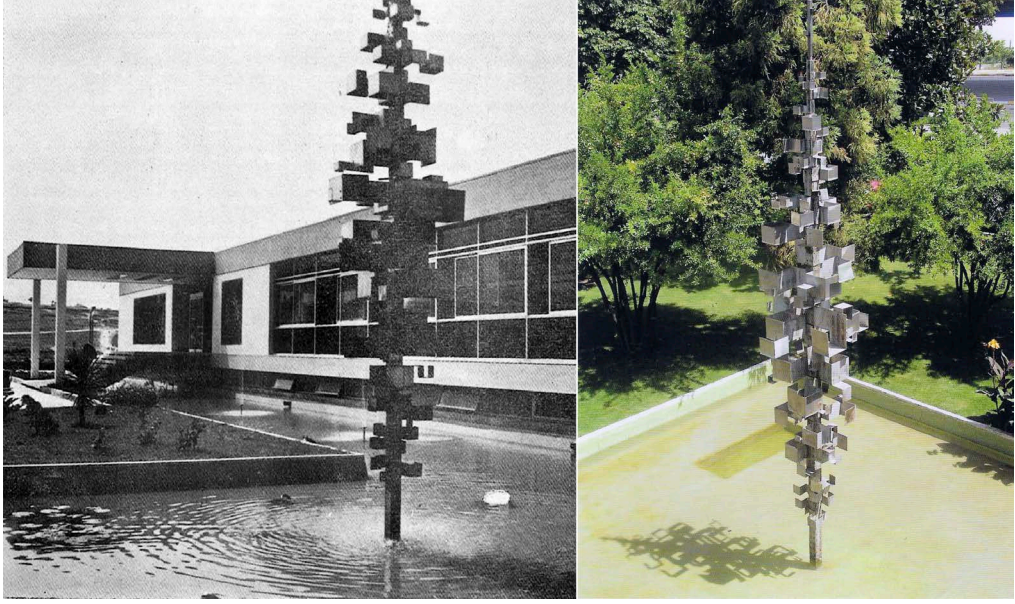
I would like to mention two artworks from the complex. Şadi Çalık’s<sup>67</sup> metal sculpture [Figure 11] was located inside the pool in the gardens of the factory, close to the entrance. Çalık’s work was an organic integration of abstract modern art in a neatly designed space.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu’s work at the factory stood next to the fence and one of the walls of the security post at the entrance gate, intended to designate the entrance of the factory. It contributed to the space as an artwork and enriched its environment.<sup>69</sup>

Unfortunately, the building was demolished in 2006, and all the artworks were relocated to Vakko’s new headquarters in Istanbul’s Nakkaştepe neighbourhood. Although the removal offered the artworks a new life, it can be questioned how well they fit into their new location<sup>70</sup> [Figure 12].

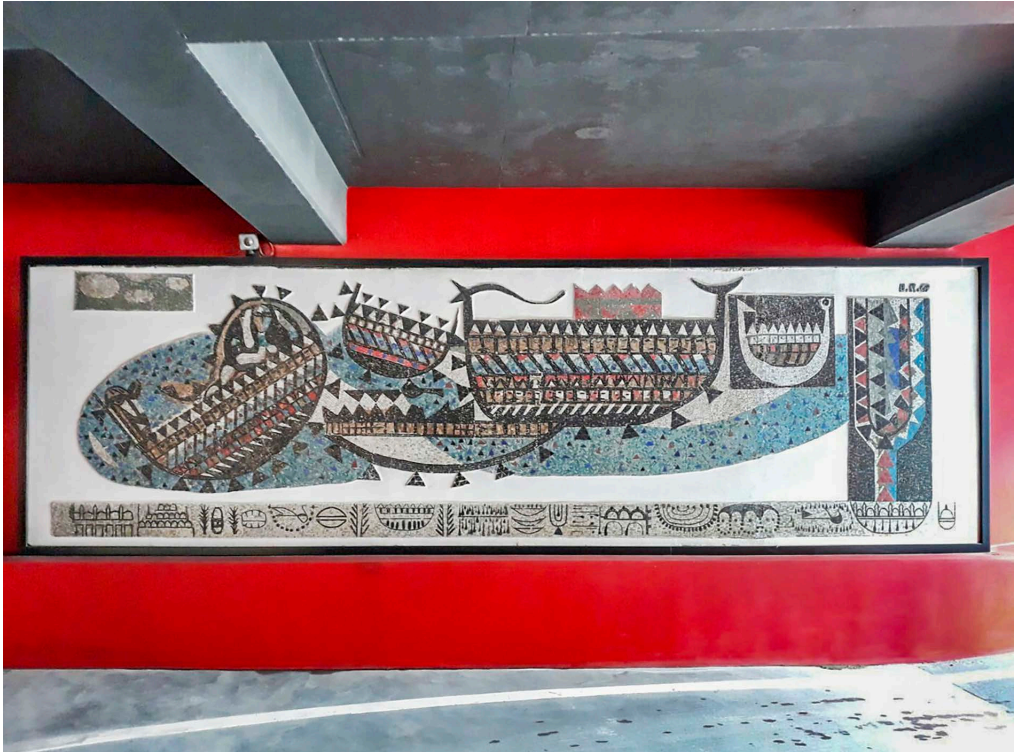
## The Istanbul Textile Traders’ Market

Some of the young architects of the postwar era were searching for creative modernist solutions in the historic core of the city and were eager to work with artists to enrich their design with artworks. Related to this fact, the Istanbul Textile Traders’ Market (*İstanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı*, İMÇ) is a special case. The artworks produced for the İMÇ turned the complex into a unique case that quickly distinguished itself from its contemporaries in Istanbul.

The brutalist complex (1961–1968), housing 2,300 shops, was obtained through an architectural competition in 1960, following the approval of the master plan for the site, which was also acquired through an urban design competition. The project is renowned for its historical references, respect for historic urban morphology, and, at the same time, its strict modernist character. Located on the outskirts of the sixteenth-century Ottoman complex, the young architects Doğan Tekeli, Sami Sisa, and Metin Hepgüler



*Figure 11. Şadi Çalık, Abstract Sculpture, stainless steel, 1969,  
620 × 90 × 110 cm. Source: Çalık, Şadi Çalık.*



*Figure 12. Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's mural for the Vakko Textile Factory, 1969,  
at Nakkaştepe Vakko Fashion Centre since 2019. Photo: Aynur Çiftçi, 2021.*



*Figure 13. The façade of Block 1 and Kuzgun Acar's iron relief Kuşlar (Birds).  
Source: SALT Research Doğan Tekeli Archive, TTSPIMCH012.*



*Figure 14. Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's mosaic mural integrated into the façade of a shop in Block 2.  
Photo: İnan Kenan Olgar, 2025.*

focused on a variety of references that they derived from the surrounding area.<sup>71</sup> They knew well that art would add value to their design, and so they held an invitation-only competition in 1964 for the selection of the artworks, whose locations were determined by the architects. Between 1965 and 1967, artworks created by the leading artists of the time, in the form of glass, mosaic, and ceramic panels, sculptures, and a sculptural relief, were installed at the determined locations. In time, they have become a valuable layer of the complex.<sup>72</sup>

The artists that contributed to the İMÇ were Kuzgun Acar [Figure 13], Füreyâ Koral, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu [Figure 14], Eren Eyüboğlu, Yavuz Görey (decorative pool sculpture), Ali Teoman Germaner, Sadi Diren, and Nedim Günsur.

Among these artists, especially Kuzgun Acar's metal relief contribution played a significant role and became a symbol. It was integrated onto one of the main façades of the complex, which the architects had left intentionally bare.<sup>73</sup>

The İMÇ case also shows that there is no holistic approach for the preservation of modernist creation in Turkey from the state's perspective. Several attempts at listing the complex by Docomomo Türkiye were turned down by the Regional Conservation Board of Istanbul. However, all nine artworks at the complex are registered in the national inventory of cultural heritage and thus are legally under state protection.<sup>74</sup>

There have recently been attempts to raise awareness of the public to the modernist values of İMÇ, such as using the place as a venue for the 10th International Istanbul Biennial (2007)<sup>75</sup> or public walks. Contemporary artists and architects rent shops at İMÇ to use these spaces as their studios or practices so that the complex will be occupied, busy, and lively, and to build an atmosphere for collaboration between various creative groups. As one of the best examples of Turkish modernist architecture, the complex attracts the attention of scholars and those fond of modernist art and architecture.

## **Preservation issues and concluding remarks**

In the second half of the 1940s, Turkish artists started collaborating with architects, who were also in search of references derived from local culture. By the 1950s, "architecture was assigned the role of providing a suitable location for the artwork."<sup>76</sup> Erkol states that the art and architecture dialogue in Turkey was an outcome of "revisionist approaches to

Modern Architecture" within the nation.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, this was the period when Turkey witnessed the rise of the private sector and industrialisation in accordance with the political agenda of the DP, all of which triggered the emergence of pluralistic vocabulary in architectural production.

Yavuz underlines the dominant role of the architects within these collaborations,<sup>78</sup> whereas Kaçel sees the art–architecture synthesis in Turkey as "a political device for artists to navigate beyond the cultural policies of the 1950s, and at the same time, as a professional device for initiating new collaborations with architects and designers".<sup>79</sup>

At first, the dialogue that emerged between architecture and artworks seemed to mimic the Western world in the way art was integrated into architecture. Yet, because of the way most of these artists were educated during the early republican period of the 1930s and 1940s, and the fact that they were asked to reflect the unique culture and traditions of the country, they were later inclined to interpret and use authentic Turkish elements and forms in a diverse and unique way by making use of folkloric elements, such as scenes of people from Anatolia or extracts from Anatolian landscapes, which they had intensely studied long ago. These contributions were to some extent narrative artworks, unlike the entirely abstract examples observed in the West. Therefore, the modernist artworks in Turkey during this period did not resemble cases elsewhere in the world. The artworks obviously reflected a dichotomy between local and universal – in other words, the hesitation of the artist between identity and modernity, while at the same time bearing evidence of the industrialisation of new materials in the country, such as ceramic, glass, and paint during the postwar era of the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>80</sup>

Since the 1970s, many important artworks on public buildings have been lost.<sup>81</sup> Although there are initiatives fighting to preserve the artworks, there is not a sufficient legislative framework to secure their future. The lack of governmental protection leads to decisions in favour of demolition. The decisions to demolish many modernist public buildings have had a significant impact on the artworks. Because it is a difficult task to move artworks to other locations, they are often destroyed. The current theoretical approaches in contemporary heritage studies demand that buildings and sites no longer be treated as isolated entities and that their tangible and intangible values be protected with a holistic understanding. ICOMOS (2017) emphasizes that "elements of a heritage place or site may include its layout/planning, interiors, fittings, associated furniture and art works," and thus, in any intervention to protect the building, the artworks and architecture should be treated as one entity.

Figure 15. Members of an NGO working on the preservation of Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu's mosaic. Source: Kültür Bilincini Geliştirme Vakfı, "İMÇ Sanat Eserleri Temizliği," accessed April 16, 2026, <https://kulturbilinci.org/tr-tr/projeler/imc-sanat-eserleri-temizligi>.



One of the most important preservation issues regarding modernist artworks in Turkey is their relocation to other places. As an example, the artworks commissioned for the Vakko Textile Factory were taken to another location and rescued. However, this is not a good solution with regard to place authenticity. Various international guidance documents such as the ICOMOS principles (Article 9.2) state that “contents, fixtures, fittings, machinery, equipment, artwork, plantings or landscape elements that contribute to cultural significance should always be retained on the heritage site where possible.”<sup>82</sup> Moreover, ICOMOS describes the detachment and transfer of artworks as “irreversible operations that severely affect the physical composition, material structure and aesthetic characteristics” and suggests in-situ treatment instead of detachment.<sup>83</sup>

One of the cases in this study, the İMÇ complex, has outstanding artworks such as Kuzgun Acar's iron relief *Kuşlar* (Birds) on the boulevard façade. The restoration of the relief was carried out through collaboration between the Sabancı Museum and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This restoration was recognized as an achievement in the artistic sphere.<sup>84</sup> Other artworks at İMÇ have also been conserved several times [Figure 15], most recently with collaboration between Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Restoration work

in 2022 became a platform for capacity building for many conservators and students of heritage conservation.<sup>85</sup>

There has also been positive news about artworks in and on modernist buildings in Kadıköy, a municipality and district of Istanbul, which declared a protective act for artworks attached to residential buildings that were to be demolished within its borders in 2014.<sup>86</sup> The municipality is responsible for dismantling works, classifying them in an archive, and protecting them in a warehouse, but it does not secure their reinstallation in a particular space, which means there is still a risk that the detached artwork may never be displayed again.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize once again that artworks and buildings should be protected together as socio-cultural elements of urban life. Artworks reflect the taste and aesthetics of a specific period in art history, and those installed in or on public buildings enrich society's life by providing easier access to art for everyone. To ensure their continuity, it is necessary to talk more about the modernist aesthetics and heritage value of these buildings. Users' consciousness should be raised through educational activities such as public talks, guided tours, and children's and youth activities, so that society can establish social and emotional bonds with these tangible assets of its recent past.

## Endnotes

- 1 Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); Horacio Torrent, "On Modern Architecture and Synthesis of the Arts: Dilemmas, Approaches, Vicissitudes," *Docomomo Journal* 42 (Summer 2010): 6–13, <https://doi.org/10.52200/42.A.CYZLHO7G>; Esra Akcan and Sibel Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012); Nikolaos Drosos, *Modernism with a Human Face: Synthesis of Art and Architecture in Eastern Europe, 1954–1958* (PhD diss., New York: City University of New York Graduate Center, 2016).
- 2 Ezgi Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge: Architecture's Dialogue with the Arts in Post-war Turkey* (PhD diss., Ankara: METU Architectural History Graduate Program, 2015); İdil Erkol, *Türkiye Mimarlığı'nda Modernizmin Revizyonları (1960–1980) / Revisions of Modernism in Turkey's Architecture (1960–1980)* (PhD diss., Istanbul: Istanbul Technical University, 2016), YÖK Thesis Center 444218.
- 3 Sena Özeren, *Mimaride kurgulanan sanatın tasarımda oluşturduğu bellek ve İMÇ örneği / Creation of the Memory through the Usage of Art in Architectural Design and İMÇ* (master's thesis, Yıldız Technical University, 2008), YÖK Thesis Center 230723; Yavuz, "An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge"; Selda Bancı, Turkish Pavilion in the Brussels Expo '58: *A Study on Architectural Modernization in Turkey during the 1950s* (master's thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2009), YÖK Thesis Center 250718; Erkol, *Türkiye Mimarlığı'nda Modernizmin Revizyonları*; Aynur Çiftçi, "Loss of Synthesis of Modern Architecture and Art in Istanbul: Case of İzzet Şefizade Villa," *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 28, no. 1 (2022): 46–68, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556207.2021.2010431>.
- 4 Piet Mondrian, *Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art: Six Essays* (New York: Wittenborn and Co., 1939).
- 5 Torrent, "On Modern Architecture and Synthesis."
- 6 Two volumes of the journal in 1945 included the essays by its founder André Bloc on the synthesis of major arts (architecture, painting, and sculpture). Erkol, *Türkiye Mimarlığı'nda Modernizmin Revizyonları*; Yavuz, "An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge," 139.
- 7 Torrent, "On Modern Architecture and Synthesis."
- 8 Ann Knoll, *The Synthesis of the Arts in the Context of Post-World War II: A Study of Le Corbusier's Ideas and His Porte Maillot Pavilion* (PhD diss., New York: City University of New York, 1999).
- 9 Diana Gay, "Fernand Léger et le groupe Espace à Biot: Un terrain d'expérimentation pour une modernité critique," *In Situ* 32 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.4000/insitu.14660>.
- 10 Bancı, "Turkish Pavilion in the Brussels Expo '58," 12.
- 11 Erkol, *Türkiye Mimarlığı'nda Modernizmin Revizyonları*.
- 12 Although it is one of the most remarkable modernist landmarks in Brazil, privatization attempts have placed the building at risk. The SAH (2021) Heritage Conservation Committee recently ran a campaign to raise awareness of the building's current situation. See SAH, "Statement on the Preservation of the Palácio Gustavo Capanema, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil / 2021," accessed March 31, 2026, [https://www.sah.org/docs/default-source/preservation-advocacy/sah\\_statement\\_palacio-gustavo-capanema\\_6-september-2021\\_as-approved.pdf?sfvrsn=64db279b\\_2](https://www.sah.org/docs/default-source/preservation-advocacy/sah_statement_palacio-gustavo-capanema_6-september-2021_as-approved.pdf?sfvrsn=64db279b_2).
- 13 There were some very talented painters working in the army during the Ottoman period, who mostly painted landscapes and portraits in an expressionist manner. For further reading about this period, see Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batı'ya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Erol Kerim Aksoy Kültür, Eğitim, Spor ve Sağlık Vakfı, 1995).
- 14 Güner states that this new approach in the empire during the beginning of the twentieth century had semantic similarities with Russia with regard to the artists' search for modernism. Opposing mainstream western imperial ideas, it sought to form a new language that reflected Turkish national identity, and it was

firmly connected with the ideas that fed the nationalistic resistance movement. Kağan Güner, *Modern Türk Sanatının Doğuşu Konstrüktivist Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Kültür ve İdeoloji* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2014), 63.

- 15 Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, 18.
- 16 Bengü Aydın Dikmen, *İnkılabı Nakşedecek Resimler, Tek-Parti Döneminde Resim ve Siyaset* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2023), 220.
- 17 Çağatay Olgun, "Perception of Modernism in Turkish Painting in the 1930s," *Ordu Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Araştırmaları Dergisi* 14, no. 1 (2024): 259–260, <https://doi.org/10.48146/odusobiad.1250650>.
- 18 Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*; Güner, *Modern Türk Sanatının Doğuşu*, 63.
- 19 Mustafa Berk, *Yurt gezileri ve resim sanatına yansımaları (1938–43) / Reflections of Country Tours to the Art of Canvas Painting* (master's thesis, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, 2018), YÖK Thesis Center 274468.
- 20 During these founding decades, monumental sculptures depicting the war of independence and the president at the time, Mustafa Kemal, as the leader of the Turkish army were the main topics for sculptures. Emel Coşkun, "1950–1960 Yılları Arası Türk Heykel Sanatı," *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 35, no. 2 (2011): 131–149.
- 21 A recent study by Aydın Dikmen (2023) indicates that the tours ended in 1946, instead of 1944, as was formerly suggested.
- 22 Hakan Uzun, "Türkiye'de Sanat ve Sanatçıların Teşvik ve Ödüllendirilmesi: 'Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi Sanat Mükafatı' Yarışması," *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 28, no. 1 (2018): 216–217, <https://doi.org/10.18345/iuturkiyat.437812>; Malike Bileydi Koç, "Cumhuriyet Dönemi Kültür ve Sanat Politikaları Bağlamında İnkılâp Sergileri ve Yurt Gezileri (1923–1943)," *Marmara Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 10 (Cumhuriyet'in 100. Yılı Özel Sayısı) (2023): 52–53, <https://doi.org/10.16985/mtad.1332286>; Aydın Dikmen, *İnkılabı Nakşedecek Resimler*, 264.
- 23 Uzun, "Türkiye'de Sanat ve Sanatçıların Teşvik ve Ödüllendirilmesi," 217.
- 24 Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, 109.
- 25 Elvan Altan Ergut, İpek Yada Akpınar, and Zafer Akay, "Architecture in İstanbul in the Republican Period," in *History of Istanbul from Antiquity to the XXI. Century*, vol. 9 (İstanbul: TDV Islamic Research Center and İstanbul Municipality, 2015), 578–640; Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey*, 114; Bülent Batuman, *New Islamist Architecture and Urbanism: Negotiating Nation and Islam through Built Environment in Turkey* (London: Routledge, 2018), 21–23.
- 26 Murat Gül, *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul: Transformation and Modernisation of a City* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 131–132.
- 27 Batuman suggests that the dissolution of the top-down nation-building project became evident with the ruling DP's attempts from 1950 to 1960 to reconcile it with Turkey's Islamic identity, with nationalist-conservative ideology emerging as a counter to the modernist secularism of the early republican years – this time through appropriating modernist architecture. Batuman, *New Islamist Architecture and Urbanism*, 21.
- 28 Gül, *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul*.
- 29 Starting in the 1950s, rapid urbanization was experienced throughout the entire country. The newcomers were mostly immigrants from Anatolian towns in search of new jobs. Burcu Selcen Coşkun, "Interventions in the Historic City: The Role of Three Women Conservation Architects during the 1950s," in *Transformations of Public Space: Architecture and the Visual Arts in Late Modern Istanbul 1950–80*, ed. İpek Akpınar, Elâ Güngören, Johan Mårtelius, and Gertrud Olsson (İstanbul: Swedish Research Institute in İstanbul, 2021), 124–125.
- 30 Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, 114.
- 31 Zeynep Yasa Yaman, "Monument and Sculpture in Public Sphere, As Political and Aesthetical Signs," *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture* 28, no. 1 (2011): 83.

- 32 By the term *humanistic*, one can understand “modern, healthy, and hygienic” urban areas designed for new social practices, where “different sexes could mix and move around freely”. Ceren Hamiloğlu, “Modernity and Leisure: The Construction of Florya Beach in Istanbul (1935–1960),” *Journal of Urban History* 48, no. 6 (2022): 1266, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00961442221089870>.
- 33 Kaçel states that Hadi Bara and İlhan Koman had been working intensely on abstract art that was based “on the search for spatially defined expressions of form, material, and movement”. Ela Kaçel, “Integration of Arts and Architecture in Postwar Turkish Modernism,” *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 28 (2016): 216–218.
- 34 Yasa Yaman, “Monument and Sculpture,” 82; Kaçel, “Integration of Arts and Architecture,” 218; Ela Güngören, “Reminiscences and Revivals: Reimagining the Public Square in Istanbul under Coups d’État,” in *Transformations of Public Space: Architecture and the Visual Arts in Late Modern Istanbul 1950–80*, ed. İpek Akpınar, Elâ Güngören, Johan Mårtelius, and Gertrud Olsson (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 2021), 85.
- 35 İdil Erkol, “In Search of Local Modernism: The Istanbul Drapers’ and Furnishers’ Bazaar,” in *Transformations of Public Space: Architecture and the Visual Arts in Late Modern Istanbul 1950–80*, ed. İpek Akpınar, Elâ Güngören, Johan Mårtelius, and Gertrud Olsson (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 2021), 45.
- 36 Kaçel, “Integration of Arts and Architecture.”
- 37 Hamiloğlu, “Modernity and Leisure,” 1266.
- 38 After his graduation in 1937, Halit Femir worked at the offices of Le Corbusier and Sven Markelius for two years. Returning to Istanbul, he began working as a teaching assistant at the academy and started his practice in 1943. He was known to be a strict functionalist. Bilge Ekin İnan, *Halit Femir’in (1910–1954) Hayatı ve Mimarlığı* (master’s thesis, Istanbul Technical University, 2020). YÖK Thesis Center (634590); Yavuz, “An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge.”
- 39 Altan Ergut, Yada Akpınar, and Akay, “Architecture in İstanbul in the Republican Period,” 580; Hamiloğlu, “Modernity and Leisure,” 1267.
- 40 Halit Femir, “Lido Yüzme Havuzu (Lido Swimming Pool),” *Arkitekt* 155–156, nos. 11–12 (1944): 244–249; İnan, “Halit Femir’in (1910–1954) Hayatı ve Mimarlığı.”
- 41 Meltem Ö. Gürel, “The Transformation of Seaside Practices from Sea Baths to Mid-Century Beaches in Istanbul,” in *Transformations of Public Space: Architecture and the Visual Arts in Late Modern Istanbul 1950–80*, ed. İpek Akpınar, Elâ Güngören, Johan Mårtelius, and Gertrud Olsson (Istanbul: Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 2021), 29.
- 42 Eyüboğlu was one of the most eminent Turkish artists. After dropping out of the academy, he went to Paris to practice French and to build contacts in the artistic spheres. He returned to Turkey in 1936 and started working as a teaching assistant at the academy in addition to practicing art. He was among the artists that went to small Anatolian towns as part of the state programme of the 1940s. His artistic approach usually included many local elements. He depicted folklore scenes and scenes of rural life and people in his own style.
- 43 Eyüboğlu published his important text “Yapı ve Resim” in the journal *Ülkü* in the same year that the swimming pool opened to the public. Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, “Yapı ve Resim,” *Ülkü*, no. 49 (1 October 1943): 1.
- 44 Eyüboğlu, “Yapı ve Resim”; Yavuz, “An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge”; İnan, “Halit Femir’in (1910–1954) Hayatı ve Mimarlığı.”
- 45 Femir, “Lido Yüzme Havuzu (Lido Swimming Pool),” 248.
- 46 In her dissertation on Halit Femir’s architecture, İnan points to other murals by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, such as one with women carrying food and a cat, which was intended to be placed on the wall behind a bar counter. İnan, “Halit Femir’in (1910–1954) Hayatı ve Mimarlığı.”
- 47 Eyüboğlu, “Yapı ve Resim,” 1.

- 48 Nevzat Erol, "İstanbul Belediye Sarayı," *Mimarlık*, no. 15 (1965): 9.
- 49 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*, 176.
- 50 The sculptor Şadi Çalık stayed in Paris during the 1950s and attended conferences at the Abstract Art Workshop (*Atelier de l'Art Abstrait*). As one of the most important sculptors of the modernist Turkish art and a professor at Fine Arts Academy in Istanbul, he produced many abstract sculptures for public buildings during the postwar period. Siren Çalık, *Şadi Çalık* (Istanbul: İş Bankası, 2004).
- 51 Erol, "İstanbul Belediye Sarayı," 9. Later in the article, the architect states that the inclusion of artworks was planned from the outset.
- 52 Hande Atmaca Çetin, *Reading the Modern through Hotel Interiors of the 1950s: Divan and Çınar Hotels in Istanbul* (PhD diss., Istanbul: Istanbul Technical University, 2019), 104, YÖK Thesis Center 605461.
- 53 Atmaca Çetin, *Reading the Modern*, 100.
- 54 Bancı, "Turkish Pavilion in the Brussels Expo '58," 78.
- 55 Füreyâ Koral was the first Turkish female ceramic artist. Raised in a family of intellectuals, she discovered ceramic art while she was undergoing treatment for tuberculosis in Switzerland in 1947. Having received support from the ceramic artist Georges Serré in Paris, she opened her first exhibition in 1951. A self-taught artist, Koral had a unique style that brought traditional and modern art together. Ayşe Kulin, *Füreyâ* (Istanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2012); Karoly Aliotti, Nilüfer Şaşmaz, and Farah Aksoy, eds., *Füreyâ Koral* (Istanbul: MASA/Kale Group, 2017).
- 56 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*.
- 57 Erdem Erbaş, "Örnek bir Prestij Konut Alanı olarak Levent Mahallesi," *Tasarım ve Kuram*, no. 8 (2012): 5–7.
- 58 After his work at the Levent complex, Eyüboğlu received the Grand Prix for his mosaic at the Turkish Pavilion at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair. Bancı, "Turkish Pavilion in the Brussels Expo '58," 79.
- 59 Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, "Mozaik Hakkında," *Cumhuriyet*, 13 March 1952.
- 60 Çiftçi, "Loss of Synthesis of Modern Architecture and Art"; Altan Ergut, Yada Akpınar, and Akay, "Architecture in Istanbul in the Republican Period," 580.
- 61 Kaçel suggests that in the 1960s more artworks emerged in public buildings, and a regulation on the provision of artworks was then announced, regarding the integration of art into public buildings. Kaçel, "Integration of Arts and Architecture," 216, 225.
- 62 Kaçel, "Integration of Arts and Architecture," 225; Emre Zeytinoğlu, *Sadi Diren Retrospektif 1957–2008* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2019).
- 63 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*.
- 64 Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, 132.
- 65 Artworks for the factory were produced by Bedri Rahmi, Eren Eyüboğlu, Metin Şahinoğlu, Nevzat Yüzbaşıoğlu, Jale Yılmazbaşar, Haluk Tezoner, Tankut Öktem, Şadi Çalık, Hasan Kavruk, Mustafa Pilevneli, and Teoman Madra. Kaçel, "Integration of Arts and Architecture."
- 66 Esen Özdamar, "A Small Loss for an Expanding City: Vakko Textile Factory," *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 25, no. 3 (2019): 192–210, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556207.2019.1631590>.
- 67 Çalık was a strong figure in Turkish art, who offered a new perspective about simplicity and purity in Turkish art.
- 68 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*.
- 69 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*.
- 70 The same question can be raised for Koral's ceramic works at the Başak Insurance Company's offices in the

Harbiye neighbourhood, designed by Asım Mutlu, Utarit İzgi, and Esad Suher. Koral was commissioned to produce a ceramic mural for the company in 1966; Kulin, *Füreya*. Due to the demolition of the building in 2013, the murals had to be taken down. They were preserved and installed at the new offices.

- 71 Doğan Tekeli, Sami Sisa, and Metin Hepgüler, "İstanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı," *Mimarlık* 3, no. 15 (1965): 23–25; Akcan and Bozdoğan, *Turkey: Modern Architectures in History*, 131–133; Erkol, "In Search of Local Modernism."
- 72 Özeren, "Mimaride kurgulanan sanatın"; Doğan Tekeli, *Manifaturacılar Çarşısı. Mimarlık: Zor Sanat* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2012), 161–183; Kaçel, "Integration of Arts and Architecture," 222.
- 73 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*.
- 74 Directorate of Conservation of Cultural Heritage, 2026.
- 75 Shops and common areas hosted twenty-seven art projects, which was an excellent contribution to the complex and the solidarity of artists against possible threats to the site. At the same biennial, the AKM was also selected as another venue for the same purpose.
- 76 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*.
- 77 Erkol, *Türkiye Mimarlığı'nda Modernizmin Revizyonları*.
- 78 Yavuz, *An Aesthetic Response to an Architectural Challenge*, 193.
- 79 Kaçel, "Integration of Arts and Architecture," 216.
- 80 Yavuz, "Mimarlık–Sanat Birlikteliğinde 1950–70 Aralığı."
- 81 As an unfortunate example, Rüknettin Güney's Konak Cinema in Istanbul's Nişantaşı neighbourhood was demolished to open space for new construction. The artworks were designed by Şadi Çalık (Altan Ergut, Yada Akpınar, and Akay, "Architecture in İstanbul in the Republican Period"). Another example is the extension of the Heybeli Island Naval Military Academy, which dates to 1955. Ferruh Başağa was commissioned to design a mosaic mural for one of the facades. It was the largest mosaic panel of its style in the nation, acquired through a competition, and it depicted a scene from a naval battle. When the earthquake-damaged building was demolished in 2000, the mural could not be detached because of a budget shortage and it was destroyed.
- 82 ICOMOS, "Madrid-New Delhi Document (2017)," accessed July 30, 2026, <http://www.icomos-isc20c.org/madriddocument/>.
- 83 ICOMOS, "Principles for the Preservation and Conservation-Restoration of Wall Paintings," accessed July 30, 2026, [https://admin.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/wallpaintings\\_e.pdf](https://admin.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/wallpaintings_e.pdf).
- 84 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, "Kuzgun Acar Birds, Story of a Restoration," 28 February 2024, video, 43 min. 9 sec., accessed July 30, 2026, <https://vimeo.com/917411064>.
- 85 "İMÇ Sanat Eserlerinin Restorasyonu," Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, accessed July 30, 2026, <https://imcsanat.msgsu.edu.tr/proje/>.
- 86 "Kadıköy'de Sanat Eserleri Yerinde Korunuyor," Kadıköy Municipality, accessed July 30, 2026, <https://www.kadikoy.bel.tr/tr/haber-detay/kadikoyde-sanat-eserleri-yerinde-korunuyor--5909>.

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## Dialog med umetnostjo in arhitekturo v poveljnem obdobju v Turčiji: primeri iz Istanbula

### Povzetek

Sodelovanje med arhitekti in umetniki se je sprva razvilo kot odgovor na vprašanje, kako preseči enoličnost modernistične arhitekture mednarodnega sloga, ki je do sredine 20. stoletja že odločilno zaznamovala arhitekturo po vsem svetu. Pri uveljavljanju novih zamisli so imele pomembno vlogo zlasti države Severne in Latinske Amerike. Podoben pristop se je uveljavil tudi v Turčiji, kjer so umetniki in arhitekti od petdesetih do osemdesetih let 20. stoletja modernistične javne stavbe uporabljali kot prizorišča za predstavljanje umetniških del.

Za razumevanje začetkov modernistične umetnosti v Turčiji so pomembna že zadnja desetletja Osmanskega cesarstva. Po razglasitvi republike leta 1923 je Turčija zapovedala uporabo modernizma na različnih področjih pod državnim nadzorom, med drugim pri gradnji poslopij za javne ustanove v novi prestolnici. Prvi predsednik republike Mustafa Kemal je v javnem govoru istega leta poudaril pomen umetnosti, kiparstva in znanosti za napredek naroda. V tridesetih in štiridesetih letih so turški umetniki ustvarjali predvsem figurativna dela, ki so odražala nacionalistično ideologijo države. V kiparstvu so prevladovali monumentalni spomeniki, posvečeni vojni za neodvisnost in Mustafi Kemalu kot poveljniku vojske. Od leta 1938 je država organizirala in financirala tudi posebna »potovanja po deželi«; na teh potovanjih so izbrani umetniki obiskovali manjša mesta in vasi ter ustvarjali slike s prizori tamkajšnje kulture. Te umetniške prakse so pričale o podpori mlade republike modernizaciji.

Vlada Demokratske stranke (DP) je med letoma 1950 in 1960 uvedla novo politično usmeritev, ki je pomembno vplivala tudi na družbeno življenje prebivalstva. Poveljno mednarodne politične razmere so ji omogočile, da je na novo načrtala smer notranje politike. Istanbul, ki je že v tridesetih in štiridesetih letih ostajal pomembno središče turškega intelektualnega in družbenega življenja, je v okviru vladne strategije dobil nov zagon in postal prizorišče predstavljanja kulturnih dosežkov države. Odprli so več novih bulvarjev, ob katerih so zrastle modernistične javne stavbe.

Politične spremembe so obenem ustvarile nove pritiske na turške umetnike, ki so se dotlej pretežno opirali na državna naročila ter na razstavljanje in državne odkupe štafelajnih slik za javne zbirke. Da bi si zagotovili

sredstva za nadaljnje ustvarjanje, so morali poiskati nove izrazne možnosti zunaj štafelajnega slikarstva. Ponudile so jih modernistične javne stavbe, ki so v Istanbulu nastajale na podlagi arhitekturnih natečajev in postale pomemben okvir novih umetniških praks. Od prve polovice petdesetih let se je tako spreminjal način naročanja in produkcije umetnosti: naročniki so bili država in zasebni investitorji, modernistična umetnost pa je v obliki mozaikov, keramičnih in steklenih stenskih panelov, reliefov in stenskih poslikav vstopala v javne in skupne prostore, kot so uradi, mestne hiše, univerze, kinodvorane, bolnišnice, banke in kopališča. Dela niso bila nameščena le na glavne fasade modernističnih stavb, kot v primeru Istanbulske tekstilne tržnice in stanovanjskega kompleksa 4. Levent. Nekatera so bila umeščena tudi v pritlične, javnosti dostopne lokale, denimo v kavarne in trgovine v hotelih Hilton in Divan, ter so bila tako v neposrednem stiku z obiskovalci.

Umetniška dela v javnih stavbah so izražala razpetost med lokalnim in univerzalnim ter med identiteto in modernostjo. Pri izbiri materialov in tehnik so umetniki pogosto posegali po keramiki, steklu in barvah, ki so jih proizvajale tovarne, ustanovljene v povojnem obdobju.

V poglavju je obravnavano sodelovanje umetnikov in arhitektov v Istanbulu od konca štiridesetih do sedemdesetih let 20. stoletja. Na izbranih primerih je prikazano, kako so bila dela turških modernističnih umetnikov, kot so Ferruh Başıağı, Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğılu, Füreyä Koral in Şadi Çalık, umeščena v različne dele javnih stavb. Hkrati je opozorjeno na današnje stanje teh del, osvetljena so tudi kompleksna vprašanja njihovega varovanja in konserviranja.

Raziskava temelji na podrobnem pregledu literature o arhitekturni in umetniški produkciji obravnavanega obdobja, zlasti v Istanbulu, na analizi arhivskega slikovnega gradiva ter na terenskem ogledu lokacij, na katerih so se obravnavana umetniška dela ohranila.

A substantial body of postwar art created for institutional environments remains hidden in plain sight: in schools, hospitals, municipal offices, factories, hotels, shops, and other spaces of everyday life. Some works remain intact, others survive in altered interiors or as partial material remains, and still others are known only through scattered archival records, photographs, and uncertain

memories. Many have been covered, relocated, destroyed or forgotten, even though they formed an important part of postwar public space and visual culture.

This volume contributes to the transnational study of art

commissioned for public institutions, a field that remains unevenly researched across national contexts. The chapters show how institutions used art to shape their environments and how later changes in use or ownership affected the works' meanings and prospects for preservation.

