

THEATRE AND STRUGGLE: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POLITICAL THEATRE
IN TURKEY BETWEEN 1960-1971

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis investigates the relationship between the social movement and theatre art in Turkey between 1960 and 1971 and investigates how the development of a dependent capitalism influenced the development of the classes and the political theatre. It tries to reveal the convergences between the political ideology of the classes, their organizations and the aesthetic ideology of the field of cultural production. While doing so it investigates the ties between the ideological and practical aspects of the class struggle, the artists' aesthetic views and their relations of production.

Key words: Political theatre, art, ideology, class struggle, sociology of art

ÖZ

TİYATRO VE MÜCADELE: 1960-1971 ARASINDA TÜRKİYE'DEKİ POLİTİK TİYATRONUN SOSYOLOJİK ANALİZİ

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Bu tez Türkiye’de 1960 ve 1971 arasında sol hareket ve tiyatro arasındaki ilişkiyi çözümlemekte, dışa bağımlı kapitalizmin gelişiminin sınıfların ve politik tiyatronun gelişimini nasıl etkilediğini incelemektedir. Araştırma Türkiye’deki toplumsal sınıfların ve sınıf örgütlerinin siyasi ideolojisi ile kültürel üretim alanının estetik ideolojisi arasındaki yakınlaşmaları ortaya koymaya çalışmakta ve bunu yaparken sınıf mücadelesinin ideolojik ve pratik yönleriyle sanatçıların estetik görüşleri ve üretim biçimleri arasındaki bağları incelemektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Politik tiyatro, sanat, ideoloji, sınıf mücadelesi, sanat sosyolojisi

To those who keep the hope alive

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Numerous scholars of the theatre in Turkey stated the period that started with the military coup of May 27, 1960 and terminated with the military intervention of March 12, 1971 to be an exceptional era for the cultural and artistic field. The rising number of publications and translations from all fields of science and literature, increasingly politicized tone of the scholars and artists were the 'spirit' of the period. The art of theatre went through a deep change as well, producing many of the best plays and most skilled playwrights of its history in Turkey.

Despite these important points that differentiate it from other historical periods of Turkey, the theatre in Turkey had never been studied from a sociological perspective. There's no detailed Marxist analysis that searches for the interconnections between the economic development, class struggle, cultural transformation and theatre in Turkey.

This thesis aims to contribute to the filling of this gap. I wanted to place the political theatre of the 1960s to its complex social context by revealing the multi-dimensional relationship between the socio-political conditions and the field of theatre. I tried to problematize the following: "What is the relationship between the class struggle, its organizations and the field of theatre between 1960 and 1970?" and "how were the artists influenced by the growing politicization and by the ideology of different social movements and how were these ideologies transformed into an ideology of aesthetics in this ten year period?"

In order to answer these questions, I investigated the events and structures that transformed the class positions and the political power structure in Turkey. Basing my analyses on a Marxist-Leninist conception of the society and art, I claim that the influence of US in the economic and political affairs of the country played a fundamental role in the transformation of the society and politics of Turkey and therefore, it should be taken into consideration if one wants to talk about the political theatre in Turkey. Because especially after 1965, the role played by the foreign capital,

organizations and ideologies in Turkey would trigger a political reaction that would be formulated as anti-imperialism.

As it will be explained in the next chapters, my claim is that the class-based organizations have a fundamental role when it comes to political art, which I define as an art form that attempts to raise the consciousness of the oppressed and exploited classes in their struggle against the existing order. I consider the class-based organizations to be the important ideological and cultural centres of the society which produce and promote not only a political ideology but also an aesthetic ideology in line with its purposes. Especially in periods like that of 1960-1971 in Turkey, when the society becomes highly politicized and a tendency to get organized against the political power starts to dominate minds of the individuals, it is the case that some artists who look for a broader recognition and legitimacy usually start to develop some relations with these left-wing organizations.

The role of the organizations of the ruling classes and the dominated classes can be seen even clearer in the transformation of the artistic field if we are talking about the theatre art between 1960 and 1971 in Turkey. That is why their ideological and organizational role needs to be emphasized. In this thesis, I will also mention the emergence of various left-wing organizations and their political orientations in order to prove that their existence was one of the most important factors that paved the way for a left-wing political theatre in Turkey.

I will also pay attention to the artistic field in Turkey itself, since it is not the historical heritage of the political ideology alone but also the heritage of the aesthetic ideology which had a significant effect upon the formation of a revolutionary perspective of theatre. The development of the infrastructure of the cultural field, the conditions that paved the way for a “reserve army of intellectuals”, their first frictions with the ruling classes will be explained.

And finally I will focus on the art of theatre. After explaining the general infrastructural developments like the increasing number of theatre halls, schools and audiences, I will try to show how it was influenced by the political agendas of the time, by the conflict among the ruling classes and, eventually, by the growing and strengthening institutions of the ruling classes and of the masses.

Without a doubt, the first generation of historians of the theatre in Turkey, especially the figures like Metin And, Sevda Şener, Ayşegül Yüksel and Özdemir Nutku, made important contributions that allowed us to have an idea regarding the general theatrical landscape in Turkey. Their works, however, were far from being able to place the Turkey's theatre in its social and political context, apart from their short references to the structural changes in the society.

In And's case, for example, theatre was isolated from significant socio-political events and organizations of the period; the revolutionary political and organizational commitments of the artists were totally ignored and the main ideological trends that influenced the theatre in Turkey were not even mentioned at all. In addition to such gaps, there is also the problem of nationalism in And's work that remains silent about the Kurdish theatre. It is understandable, if we know that And's main book on this subject, *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk Tiyatrosu 1923-1983 (The Turkish Theatre of the Republican Period)* was published in 1983, just 3 years after the military coup of September 12, 1980. Moreover, he had a typical bourgeois conception of art, as the reader will see in the following pages. When reading And's book, therefore, one must be aware of the fact that his book hides as much as it reveals.

Another trend in Turkey's theatre studies has been to summarize and analyse the dramas in terms of their subjects, characters, symbols and the plots through the framework of structuralist analyses, idealist philosophy, psychoanalysis, semiology, intertextuality and alike. I can say that this trend was initiated by the journal called *Tiyatro Araştırmaları Dergisi (Journal of Theatre Research)* of Ankara University Department of Theatre, which had been the main scholarly theatre publication for several years after its foundation in 1970. Various books were produced in line with this trend: Metin And devoted half of his book to summarizing the plots of the republican period dramas; Sevda Şener's book titled *Cumhuriyet'in 75. Yılında Türk Tiyatrosu (Turkish Theatre in the 75th Year of the Republic)* was almost completely about nothing but the summaries of the plays; Uğur Akıncı, Özlem Belkıs and Semih Çelenk's series titled *Kaleminden Sahneye: Türk Oyun Yazarlığında Eğilimler (From Pen to the Stage: Tendencies in the Turkish Playwriting)* again summarized and classified the plays according to their themes. Fortunately this time, the books had a chapter that was about the general political and social situation of the country.

Even from this short review of the sources, it can be understood that the theatre historiography in Turkey was reduced to an analysis of the plays. As the documents of the past, these plays were expected to provide us with the information that was necessary to understand the historical development of the theatre in Turkey. The issues like the relationship between capitalist economy and the theatrical infrastructure of Turkey, the influence of the social movements upon the theatre, the interaction between the political groups and the artistic circles, the debates inside the theatre field, the conditions of the formation of a “national theatre” or a “revolutionary theatre” discourse were never taken into consideration. As if the effort to reveal the real social relations underlying the art of theatre had been replaced with an effort to read and reread the texts.

It would be unjust, however, to claim that this tendency to interpret the written texts was a unique characteristic of the theatre scholarship in Turkey. Even a quick literature review could show us that this desire for interpreting the artworks without a dedicated effort to place them into their social and political contexts has been an international phenomenon that started to dominate the theatre studies after 1980s.

In order to avoid these gaps, I attempted to write this thesis from a Marxist-Leninist perspective and by using the historical and dialectic materialist concepts and method and tried to provide a multi-dimensional interpretation for the period. However, keeping in mind that the deep-rooted materialist conception of history and society has never been a close-circuit method but a roadmap that is open for new contributions, I tried to employ new concepts that were developed by the contemporary social thinkers of the world. It is no surprise that many of these new concepts carry the burden of one-sided and mistaken perceptions of their western petit-bourgeois creators. Therefore, I never employed them as they were employed by their creators, but rather I exposed them to Marxist criticism, tried to extract their progressive essence that may contribute to our understanding of art, while I rejected their dull and reactionary parts that would mutilate the materialist conception of the society and art.

I want to briefly mention the contents of my chapters. Chapter 1 is the theoretical framework chapter under which I will explain my scientific perspective of society and art. Here I elaborate upon the general Marxist understanding of sociology

of art, upon the concepts that I will be employing in the next chapters. The role and importance of the capitalist urbanization, the place of the left-wing organizations as the ideological and political centres of the political aesthetics and the issue of how the artists are politicized by the rising social opposition will be dealt here. To prove my propositions, I will show some examples from the Soviet Union, Germany, South America and South Asia where the political art emerged as a result of the organized class struggle against the ruling classes and the state.

In Chapter 2, I will deal with the sociology of Turkey between 1950 and 1971. The developments like the dependent industrialization and the urbanization, the superstructural changes like the birth of a petit-bourgeois cultural field and the emergence of first private theatres in Turkey's 1950s are important in order to arrive an understanding of the political art of the 1960s. I will also give a review on the economic and political changes in the country after 1960, the development of different classes and strata with their organizations throughout the decade. I will also focus on the cultural field as a whole and investigate both the infrastructural changes between 1950 and 1971.

Chapter 3 constitutes the main body of this thesis. Here I provide an explanation on how the field of theatre transformed politically from a pro-state ideology to a revolutionary one thanks to the external and internal dynamics of the field. I review the theatre journals of the period and also investigate some important events that might be considered as the milestones in the transformation of the field.

Chapter 4 will be the conclusion part of the thesis, where I will summarize the general findings within the framework of my theoretical propositions.

I am aware that this study has many limitations stemming both from the nature of the theatre studies in Turkey. As I have already said, theatre studies in Turkey has always avoided from archival work, it left many parts of the history of Turkey's theatre unexplored. We don't have the biographies of the preeminent theatre artists from which any researcher of Turkey's theatre can extract information; neither we have the well-researched histories of the theatre companies that left their marks on the historical development of Turkey's theatre that might help the future researchers in their quest to establish connections between the various social factors and the field of theatre.

All these limitations, however, could not prevent me from providing the answers to my questions. I hope it will be a small but important contribution to a usually ignored field, and will show the strength of historical and dialectical materialism in art studies.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIOLOGY OF POLITICAL ART: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the explanations on my theoretical perspective and on the concepts that I will use in the analysis of the relationship between the political theatre and the social movement in Turkey, between 1960 and 1970. I will try to construct a general framework from which all the social factors that are involved in the formation of a political theatre in Turkey will be interpreted. Starting from the effects of urbanization on the classes, I will talk about the developments that formed the infrastructure of an artistic field. I will investigate the effects of the market over the artists. And then I will focus on the political and organizational side of the issue, on how the social movements influence the way the theatre artists think, act and produce.

The political theatre stands in the middle of a complex relationship between the various factors that operate inside and outside a society. These factors vary from country to country and even from city to city. Some social facts are more dominant than the others in the formation of a theatre field. Some factors lay the base of the field and some factors constitute its ideological aspect. Also there is the issue of fourth dimension, the time. Therefore, a similarly complex theoretical network of concepts must be employed in order to provide a proper explanation to this social phenomenon. As Janet Wolff had said, a social analysis of the art “should be able to incorporate all the levels and factors which have contributed to the production of works” (Wolff 1993, p. 140).

Before I start to explain my theoretical approach towards the issue, I want to dwell on the concept of political theatre as one of the most obscure concepts of the field of theatre that is very difficult to find to scholars who agree on a single definition. This is because the concept of “political” fills all the aspects of the social life without leaving any gaps and from this point of view, the entire theatre art might be

considered as “political art”. In this case, there would be no need for a concept of “political art” to distinguish some works from the others. Second problem is that, since this concept was coined by the socialist artists and developed throughly in 20th century by them, the term “political art” has been historically loaded with a left-wing socialist tone. Therefore, although there might be socialist and fascist political stances, there is only a left-wing political theatre.

Kirby (1975) states that the “theatre is political if it is concerned with the state or take sides in politics” intentionally. He also says that the “political theatre is explicit in pointing out the institutions and aspects of government that should change” and that it “attempts to change the beliefs and opinions of the spectator. In Kirby’s conceptualization, the scope of the “political” is narrowed down with the emphasis on conscious and intentional engagement and he preserves the left-wing tone that is attributed to the concept.

Patterson’s (2003, p. 3) definition of political theatre is as follows: Political theatre “is defined as a kind of theatre that not only depicts social interaction and political events but implies the possibility of radical change on socialist lines: the removal of injustice and autocracy and their replacement by the fairer distribution of wealth and more democratic systems.” Another definition can be found in Brecht (1993, p. 59) whose conceptualization is similar to the Patterson’s: “We need a type of theatre which not only releases the feelings, insights and impulses possible within the particular historical field of human relations in which the action takes place, but employs and encourages those thoughts and feelings which help transform the field itself.” However, this definition is obscure in explaining the “transforming the field itself,” because it does not mention the characteristics of this transformation.

In this thesis I consider all forms of theatre that raise the awareness of the exploited and oppressed classes in their struggle against the existing social order, reinforce their consciousness of claiming their rights and that create and encourage the feelings and thoughts that are needed to change the order in favor of them. In addition to this definition, I will be using the concepts of revolutionary and progressive political art, which means that it is not a necessary condition for a political theatre to be revolutionary.

2.2 Capitalism and the Field of Art

A number of studies mention the importance of the city for the art of theatre. The urbanization under capitalist relations of production, the growing population of the cities, the diversity brought by the new division of labor, the emergence of new institutions, the formation of contradictory class interests and class tastes were all reflected on the art of theatre (Berghaus, 2005; Schwartz, 2009). From the mode of producing artworks to the artists' choice of their subjects, from their relationship among themselves to their relations with the political power and the audience, the art of theatre started to change and to become diversified together with capitalist urbanization.

During the development of capitalism in the West, it was the era of post-French Revolution period and the period of industrialization which triggered a huge migration towards the cities. New methods of mechanized agriculture diminished the need for farm workers and forced tens of thousands peasants to migrate into the cities, where the various capitalist corporations were looking for cheap labor force of all kinds (Hohenberg & Hollen Lees, 1996, p 184). This means that, not only the hand labor of the unqualified workers, but also the mental labor of the educated engineers, managers, clerks, teachers, scientists were needed to keep pace with the gradually diversifying capitalist competition in all fields. Combined with the growing literacy among the population, increasing number of universities, companies and the newly established institutions, this capitalist urbanization created not only the factory workers but also large masses of intellectuals in the city centers, whose duty was to produce, process, classify and distribute knowledge and information.

In large cities especially, we would need to add the raffish or showy population of artists and entertainers, as well as the many who worked behind the scenes in the arts; also students, teachers, and intellectuals of every stripe (Hohenberg & Hollen Lees, 1996, p. 210-211).

Not only in terms of the workforce, but also in terms of the means of artistic production and reproduction, capitalism facilitated the production and distribution of artworks through new technologies. The widespread use of the press, the rise of the journalism in connection with the developments in transportation and communication infrastructure should be mentioned here. As Bourdieu emphasized, the development of the press brought an unprecedented production of cultural goods causing,

the inflow of a substantial population of young people without fortunes...who come to Paris trying for careers as writers and artists - careers which until then had been more strictly reserved for the nobility or the Parisian bourgeoisie (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 54).

The state apparatus was expanding, there were many new positions in the industry and education, but still the number of inflowing intellectuals to the cities was so high that, it was impossible to employ all of them. The result was the “intellectual reserve army” that was left to the mercy of capitalist market (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 56).

Russia and Germany could be shown as examples to this case. By the end of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century these countries went through a deep transformation that changed their urban structure. Increasing number of workers, public workers and students were accompanied by live artistic activity as a result of newly flowering artistic circles. These two countries had the most developed theatre infrastructure throughout the Europe (Berman, 2004, p. 238, 310, 333; Grant, 2005, p. 61; Fritzsche, 1996, p. 7; Charle, 2004, p. 58).

In Brazil, we see an example similar to the Turkey case. As the country became more and more dependent on the foreign capitalists and especially of US, its increasing industrial production triggered a huge population increase in the urban areas (Abreu, 2008, p. 326; Fausto, 1999, p. 256; Silva, 2005, p. 456). This urbanization was followed by a live artistic activity in the cities (Boal 2001; Fernandez 1968; Peixoto, Epstein ve Schechner 1990).

Before proceeding with the effects of this transformation upon the artists, it is better to have a look at its effects on the general population, namely on the consumers of artistic works. The capitalist urbanization turned the cities not only into the industrial but also the cultural centres of a society. In the history of humanity, it was the first time that huge number of individuals from various classes and strata started to live side by side. Many factors like their ownership of the means of production, their place in the production cycle and their share from the income determined their class positions and shaped their way of living and interpreting the relations inside the society.

Inevitably, these classes developed their own tastes and cultures in conflict with each other's tastes and culture; and, therefore, they developed contradictory patterns of aesthetic mentality as well. As these classes became the potential audience of the artistic works, their tastes and aesthetic views determined the artistic

production and were influenced by it. Considering the fact that there were contradictory political positions because of the class struggle in the society, I claim that the capitalist urbanization prepared the ground for the emergence of a revolutionary aesthetic view that could be supported by the revolutionary classes inside the society and of a reactionary aesthetic view that could be supported by the ruling classes inside the society (Shiner, 2004, p. 306-307; Wolff 1993, s. 37; Lane 2005, s. 33-36).

It was this environment that changed the production relations and the position of the artists inside the field of art. Various artistic schools and conservatories undertook the duty of educating new artists. Cities like London, Berlin, Petersburg became the capitals of culture in which hundreds of actors, actresses, musicians and writers could make their living through their artistic production for the market. Shiner summarizes this transformation as the following:

In the old system of art, patrons or clients normally commissioned poems, paintings, or compositions for particular places or contexts... The "price" of the resulting piece was usually determined by materials, difficulty, and time, along with the reputation of the workshop or master...

In the purest form of a market system, in contrast, writers, painters, and composers produce in advance and then attempt to sell their work to an audience of more or less anonymous buyers, often using a dealer or agent. The absence of a specific order or a prescribed context of use gives the impression that the artists are completely free to follow their own inclinations (Shiner, 2004, p. 202-203).

According to art historian Arnold Hauser, this change towards the free market of arts was "one of the most important turning points in the social history of art" (Hauser, 1982, p. 294). This "emancipation" of the artist from the patrons, landlords or the church changed the relations of production in the artistic field. Both the methods of oppression and the resistance have changed for the ruling classes and the artists. According to Hauser,

Artists achieved what is in principle an unbounded liberty of conscience at the price of total objectivization and of offering their works for sale as goods... The writings of Rousseau, Voltaire, and Diderot, David's *Horatians* and Beethoven's *Fidelio* or *Eroica* as examples of this sort of committed art have no counterpart in earlier history... [The artist] had the mere fact that he could freely commit himself, form bonds, and remain true to himself to thank for the prestige which he enjoyed... (Hauser, 1982, p. 293-294).

Historical evidence suggests that Hauser was partly right in claiming that the artists were emancipated to a certain degree. But he also made a very common mistake by attributing this emancipation to the introduction of capitalist relations in the field of art. He ignored the role of the class struggle and the emancipatory social movements that influenced, spread and stood by the writings and compositions of Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot and Beethoven. Against this view of spontaneity in the artists' freedom of expression, I claim that it was not *per se* the capitalism, but the social movements that liberated the artists from the ruling classes.

The bitterness of the class struggle did not permit the petit-bourgeois artists to exist as isolated individuals and to freely express their ideas. Either through the direct financial or judiciary control of the ruling classes or through their ideological hegemony, the artists were forced to produce art works in line with the bourgeois ideology. Sometimes the artists internalized this ideological hegemony so much that, many of them started to believe that they are producing artworks freely without any external control.

The situation, however was not that pessimistic as well. As I said, this new artistic relations of production paved the way for the new forms of resistance and commitment as well. Especially in the capitalist societies where the social movements were organized and widespread, the artists now had the opportunity to find a mass basis for their politically engaged artworks. As I will try to show throughout the thesis, the intellectuals attempted to form an alternative aesthetic ideology that was planned to serve the interests of their political causes and was backed by the various left-wing institutions, parties and organizations of the dominated classes.

2.3 Class Struggle, Left-Wing Organizations and the Field

Many social thinkers and art historians attribute a great importance to the concept of class struggle in their analysis of the artworks. The ideologies of the classes are given a central role when they were to analyse the bourgeois and proletarian art (Hauser 1982; Lukacs 1987; Hadjinicolau 1978). These scholars attempted to emphasize the social origins of aesthetic values, however, their explanations usually tend to ignore the ideological and political importance of the class-based organizations in the formation of these political and aesthetic ideologies. Some other scholars, despite their contributions to our understanding and their tendency to partially accept the interferences between the art and politics, focus more on the field

of cultural production and they are willing to isolate the cultural field from the class struggle (Becker, 2008; Bourdieu, 1993 and 1996). Very few studies actually deal with the interaction between the progressive political movements and political artworks (Van Erven 1992; Schlossman 2002).

Even a short look to the role of the organization of the ruling classes could prove this wrong: The bourgeois state. State plays a decisive role in shaping the individuals' political and aesthetic choices from the beginning through various educational, juridical and oppressive measures. Through the state apparatus, the ruling classes identify some "good" political and aesthetic ideologies, train or influence the artists with these ideologies, provide financial support to them in order to spread their pro-order ideology. For example, Cavallo (1996) gives a detailed explanation on how the Mussolini's rule in Italy changed the theatre landscape in the country. Strobl's (2007, p. 57-60) analysis shows how the Nazism in Germany gave way to new forms of theatre like *Thingspiele*, and Clinefelter (Clinefelter 2005, p. 83, 90-91) exposes the Nazi policies of oppression against the artists. Not only the fascist regimes, but as thoroughly explained by Peacock (1999) the bourgeois democratic regime of United Kingdom played an active role in mitigating the domination of left-wing political art through financial, ideological and political means of oppression after 1980s.

These states discredited the revolutionary politics and ideologies, hindered the revolutionary artists through financial or physically oppressive means, like bans, arrests and torture. Under these regimes the political art became something dangerous for both the producers and consumers of it. As it was experienced in UK under the Thatcher regime, the ruling classes dissolved the left-wing organizations and imposed the market rules over the politically engaged artists, which undermined the financial conditions of existence of the progressive political companies.

This indicates that, there is a strong relationship between the political organizations, the society and the political art. It is very hard to find a dynamic political art movement, in the countries where the oppressive and exploiter ruling classes managed to dissolve the left-wing organizations and to establish their hegemony over the dominated classes through oppressive measures. Some politically engaged artists may still continue to exist individually, but the political art loses its strength. On the contrary, if a strong social movement starts to develop and if the left-wing organizations manage to organize a considerable part of the dominated classes

and the intellectuals through their struggle, then we see a quickly developing political art in such a country. This reality, however, has been mostly taken at face value and the underlying dynamics have been mostly ignored.

The relationship between the class struggle and the artistic field is the main subject of this thesis; therefore I want to elaborate on the various aspects of it. In the highest level of abstraction, it is clear that the rising social movements have their effect on the field of art, but the dynamics of this effect need a further investigation because the influence of the left-wing organizations over the field of art, artists and their works is much more complex. I need to include more parameters and to establish a more complex set of relations in order to understand the interaction between the social movement and the field of theatre. In order to construct this framework I am going to borrow some concepts and formulations from the famous sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. His concepts and formulations, however, beg a Marxist critique in order to be operationalized in the analysis of the interaction between the social movement and the political art, because, as some critiques of Bourdieu already stated, Bourdieu's formulations have a space neither for a theory of revolutionary transformation nor for an analysis of political art. Despite this fact, his concepts widen our understanding regarding the field of art and can be operationalized to expand the horizon of Marxist-Leninist analysis of art.

2.3.1 Critique of the Thesis on "The Autonomy of the Fields"

Almost all the contemporary social thinkers and academicians agree on the fact that Bourdieu's most important contribution to the sociology of art has been his theory of fields. Emphasizing the importance of analysing the field of art, Bourdieu criticized Lukacs and Goldmann as reductionists, because of their tendency to establish a direct relationship between the social classes, their ideology and the artists of a certain society. Bourdieu stood against the idea that the artists simply pick up concepts from the political ideology of social classes and integrate them into their aesthetic understanding without any mediation (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 202).

Against this view, he defined an historically shaped autonomous field of art, in which a group of artists come together and compete for the limited sources of the artistic field. If we keep in mind the fact that the introduction of capitalism into the production relations of art brought also the capitalist mentality of competition and profit, this makes even more sense. According to Bourdieu, these artistic fields have

their own hierarchy between the artistic styles, genres and artists who have competing ideologies and values. In an artistic field, these ideologies and values constantly contradict with each other and try to persuade the others that it is the best and the most correct artistic approach. As a result, even seemingly the most radical form of art comes into existence not as a result of some external political needs, but as a result of the need to distinguish oneself from the representatives of the other forms of art. Usually, the underlying purpose is to make the most “profit” by posing oneself as the most radical, most innovative, most contemporary form of art. Therefore, Bourdieu states that the relations inside the field are primarily determined by the internal motivations of the field, rather than external ones (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 31, 34; Inglis, 2005, p. 22, Lane, 2005, p. 32).

Bourdieu does not reject the fact that the external factors, the countrywide political developments and power balances between the classes might play a role in the creation of cultural and aesthetic values. He says that there’s a homology between the field of cultural production and field of class relations and states that “the struggles within the field of power are never entirely independent of the struggle between the dominated classes and the dominant class”. Bourdieu, however, considers these relations as relations of “solidarity” and “alliance”, claiming for example the dominated factions of the field of cultural production might “feel solidarity” towards the dominated classes in the society (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 44). He claims that the external influences are only absorbed inside the field of art through some transpositions the nature of which is determined by the various factors like the historical formation of the field, its possibilities and the relations inside the field. But in all his studies he gave a secondary role to all of these external factors and when it came to the revolutionary political art, he hardly spoke on it, other than a few short references like the ones he made about the shifts brought by 1848 revolutions in French literature (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 216-217; Bourdieu, 1996, p. 58).

Bourdieu claims that the autonomy of the fields increase as the institutionalization of these fields develops. Fields become more and more autonomous as they develop their own organizational and professional interests and eventually they may deviate from external interests (Swartz, 1997, p. 126-127). Eventually, these fields become “relatively autonomous” fields the inner contradictions of which differ from the external ones.

According to him, “the structure of the field of cultural production is based on two fundamental and quite different oppositions” (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 53). These fundamental oppositions are as follows. The first opposition is between “the sub-field of restricted production and the sub-field of large-scale production”. On the one hand, there are the cultural producers who have the necessary infrastructure for the mass production and able to dominate the commercial mass culture. On the other hand, there are the individual artists or circles who do not have the capacity to be involved in the production of mass culture. This second group, claims Bourdieu, is against the “bourgeois economic order” and want to legitimize their own existence by looking down on the commercialized mass culture. Second opposition that Bourdieu identifies in the field is between “the established figures and the newcomers” of the field. Since there are limited resources in the field, these groups fight against each other by trying to show their artistic attitude as the most innovative and correct attitude in the field to gain legitimacy (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 53).

In another passage, Bourdieu brings another temporary contradiction to the fore and states that the field of culture is “the site of a double hierarchy”. First one is the heteronomous principle of hierarchization that favours those who have the biggest economic capital in the field, and the second, autonomous principle of hierarchization that favours those who stand against the commercial art and try to protect their autonomy by consecrating their position (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 38-39).

It is interesting how the idea of autonomy and the absence of a revolutionary alternative in his theory caused Bourdieu to identify the artificial contradictions inside the field as “fundamental oppositions” without any alternatives. Totally ignoring the revolutionary political art, he splits the field into two between the commercial mass art and the petit-bourgeois avant-garde that has a shallow and depressed opposition against the capitalist interferences towards the field of culture. Of course, the commercial mass culture, bestselling books, albums and blockbuster movies are under the full control of capitalist mentality and they are among the tools that propagate the bourgeois ideology. However, to claim that the petit-bourgeois attitude towards the capitalism and such forms of artistic production are the only opposition towards the capitalist system is a huge fault and its not only Bourdieu’s but of many thinkers who contemplated on avant-garde.

Obviously, for Bourdieu the intellectuals' attempt to establish autonomy in their fields is driven by the urge to get away from the struggle between the two contradictory classes inside the society. Those who manage to form their own interests, namely those who succeed in creating another system inside the bourgeois system can be counted as autonomous. For me, such kind of autonomy may give the impression that the petit-bourgeois artists succeeded in forming an alternative field to capitalism, that is like a "liberated zone" in the society. I think, contrary to their claims of autonomy, they are totally embedded in the bourgeois order through a different connection. I claim that the attitude of the petit-bourgeois intellectuals and artists is the evidence of their total ideological dependence on the contradictory classes of the society, rather than their being relatively independent from them.

On the one hand, they agree with Marxism in standing against the capitalist relations of production in the artistic field, because they are also the victims of the capitalist competition and exploitation in the field as the members of petit-bourgeoisie. They are right in saying the commercial mass culture degenerates the culture of the masses. But at the same time, their negative attitude towards the revolutionary struggle and the masses, their unwillingness to sacrifice their privileges to live, think and produce art as they wish and their insistence on living as isolated individuals are the proofs that they internalized the bourgeoisie's propaganda that the capitalist system cannot be overthrown. It shows the fact that bourgeois ideology convinced them that the capitalist order is unshakeable and the revolutionary organizations are unable to overthrow the system through organizing oppressed and organized masses. It also shows that they cannot totally remain indifferent to the Marxist ideas regarding the nature of capitalist relations. By not completely supporting these two contradictory classes and by not totally embracing their ideas, the petit-bourgeois intellectuals might have the illusion of autonomy and objectivity, but in reality they are totally immersed in the bourgeois order.

Engels's words on the autonomy various institutions in *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* may provide an insight regarding the Marxist conception of autonomy. When analysing the state, he claims that,

Society creates for itself an organ for the safeguarding of its common interests against internal and external attacks. This organ is the state power. Hardly come into being, this organ makes itself independent vis-a-vis society; and, indeed, the more so, the more it becomes the

organ of a particular class, the more it directly enforces the supremacy of that class... The consciousness of the interconnection between this political struggle and its economic basis becomes dulled and can be lost altogether (Engels, 1994).

Here Engels states that, once the state is established it becomes something independent from the society and “it produces forthwith a further ideology”. Politicians and lawyers may start to assume that they are taking action with juristic motives, independent from economic interests of the classes. Engels says that in such cases “public law and private law are treated as independent spheres” by the actors inside the field, which are, in reality, not independent. Actually, their existence is the result of the class divisions inside the society. In such cases, the seeming autonomy of the field could be the proof of its not being autonomous but its being bound by the class struggle. Moreover, the ruling classes benefit from the seeming autonomy of these institutions, because the class quality of the laws and the state could be hidden behind this veil of impartiality.

Without a doubt the field of cultural production is different from the field of law, which is under the continuous supervision of the state. As I have indicated, the introduction of capitalist relations of production and the capitalist mentality of free market into the artistic field gave the artists a chance to be liberated from the direct influence of the state. This chance for liberation, however, does not mean that the petit-bourgeois artists might exist as they were without the influence of any bourgeois or proletarian ideology. The political ideology in general is so pervasive that it does not only produce ideas and concepts regarding the social system, but it covers all the fields of the daily life and takes unique shapes depending on the needs and the existing relations of that field. As a result, the field of cultural production, for example is also influenced by its strength. This causes the individuals inside the field to reevaluate their relations, ideologies and concepts of their own field. As Marx said, the monetary relations are themselves “the community and can tolerate none other standing above it” (Marx, 2009). In a former article, I showed that the domination of the monopolist capital in the field of art and the state oppression against the left-wing politics changed the artistic landscape in United Kingdom, proving that the field is not autonomous but totally dependent on the class struggle (Buğlalılar, 2008).

I think, when analysing the field of cultural production, Bourdieu tends to forget the temporary and conjuncture-dependent nature of some contradictions

inside the field. He overlooks the role of the revolutionary and democratic organizations in shaping the interests and hierarchy in the field of culture production. In the periods when the social movements were oppressed and dissolved and the political scene was dominated by the exploiting and oppressing classes, it may look like the petit-bourgeois avant-gardists form the only opposition centres in the field of culture against the commercial mass produced art with their “radical” thoughts and autonomous positions. In the absence of a revolutionary perspective, their position might be reinforced by the society and they can win a great respect from the population as well. But as soon as the revolutionary and democratic organizations start to emerge and mobilize large sections of the society, among them the artists, this ostensible autonomy is exposed. As the revolutionary artists start to dominate the field, all the artificial oppositions are replaced with the fundamental opposition between the pro-order and pro-revolution artists. In such an atmosphere, the “autonomous” position of the petit-bourgeois artists may become an undesired and discredited position to take and the petit-bourgeois artists may change sides, as I will show with the Turkey example.

Another question might be the following: Why should we believe the artificial contradiction that the books should either be bestselling and banal in order to be consumed by the masses, or they should be written by very elite intellectuals for an elite audience, so that nobody but only the individuals inside the autonomous field of cultural producers could understand? There are many historical examples which smash this heteronomous and autonomous principle of hierarchy like the works of Bertolt Brecht, Nazım Hikmet, Orhan Kemal and Grup Yorum. The artistic works of these authors and groups became a part of the mass culture, they are read and listened by the dominated classes, and they became bestsellers of their period. Yet, the artistic level of their works remained exceptional, their innovativeness and elegant style was undisputed. All of them were politically progressive or revolutionary, and instead of locking themselves up in an autonomous field of production, they continued to be in touch with the political and artistic needs of the masses and revolutionary organizations. Where do they fit in Bourdieu’s principles of hierarchization? Should we classify them as commercial mass culture producers because of their bestselling artworks, or should we call, say, Nazım Hikmet, as the member of an autonomous sub-field of restricted production because of his revolutionary avant-gardist poems?

I agree with Bourdieu that the field of cultural production has its own history of development, relations and contradictions. This theory of field is deepening our understanding towards the various relations inside the society. That is why I am not only focusing on the development of theatre in Turkey, but also tried to include various factors which determine its development.

I looked how the possibilities inside the theatre were formed, how these possibilities conditioned the later developments and how the aesthetic ideas of the past influenced the future ideas. Therefore, I recognized that the artistic field has its own historical conceptualizations, has its own problems of form, content and audience. Keeping in mind that the field of cultural production is a whole with various artists, authors, directors and critics, I tried to involve the development of the private publishing houses, journals and the cinema sector in my analysis.

Contrary to Bourdieu, however, I claim that the relations and ideologies inside the field of cultural production are determined by the class struggle inside the society. The possibilities of the field and the aesthetic ideas are mobilized according to the conditions of the struggle and the balance of power between the class-based organizations, depending on their strength, material possibilities and ideological capabilities.

Historical evidence and especially those after the October Revolution, strongly suggest that under the apparent autonomy of the field of cultural production, lies the active role played by the organizations of the ruling classes and the exploited and oppressed classes. Although it is the artists in the field of art who produce the aesthetic ideology, the class based organizations intervene, change the attitude and values of the artists and encourage them to produce artworks or theories in line with the needs of their struggle. The rise of a social movement in a certain country affects the way the artists live, think, interact and produce. The left-wing organizations do not only change the artists' relations with the other artists, classes and organizations, but also with the state institutions and ruling classes.

2.4 The Role of the Left-wing organizations

In the era of imperialism, the role of the left-wing organizations such as political parties, labor unions, associations, popular assemblies and all other forms of organizations that were shaped in order to defend and expand the rights of the

dominated classes and groups got bigger and bigger in terms of their effects on the formation of political ideologies and aesthetic ideologies. Their ability to shape new values and objectives, to mobilize large masses and to establish an ideological hegemony over them; their actions ranging from street demonstrations to armed actions against the forces of the state which could set the agenda of the society; and their influence over the artists' habitus make them one of the most important elements of the sociology of the political art. My claim is that, the left-wing organizations, as the most dynamic social structures of the era of capitalism, should be given a central role in analysis of the political art.

Together with the monopolization of capital, what we see is the increasing concentration of all kinds of capital in the hands of a few. A diversified and monopolized capital dominates various fields of production, turning almost all the sections of the population into laborers. It is not only the proletarians, however, who are being exploited and oppressed in the era of capitalism, but there are the petit-bourgeoisie, small and middle peasants, students, public workers. And the capitalist relations of production gave birth not only to the problem of exploitation, but also to the problems like national oppression, the sexual discrimination of the genders, the environmental issues etc. This multi-dimensionality of the class struggle paved the way for various left-wing organizations whose purpose is to carry out a struggle in economic, political and social fields to defend the rights of the working class and its allies. In some cases these left-wing organizations might act as revolutionary organizations and want to mobilize certain sections of the society against the political power, and in some cases they might run after some reforms and only deal with professional interests.

With the concepts of "dominated classes" or "exploited and oppressed classes", therefore, I am referring to a certain section of the society which is composed of various classes that are being exploited and oppressed by the social system ruled by the international monopolist capital and its local allies. To put it another way, the dominated classes are those whose interests are contradictory to those of the ruling class or the classes in a certain country. This means that the definition and the content of the dominated classes and the ruling classes should be identified according to the specific conditions of that country.

What I mean by left-wing organizations needs further explanation. In today's capitalist societies, a huge majority of the population is composed of dominated classes. As it can be seen from the aforementioned figures, only a very small minority of the population is benefitting from the system. For this group of ruling classes, this system of exploitation cannot be maintained unless the dominated classes are mobilized under some organizations like the state bureaucracy, the army, the corporations and various institutions of the ruling classes. This means that through coercion, education and ideological manipulation that go on in an uninterrupted manner, the ruling classes establish their hegemony in the minds of the people. The fact that almost all of the institutions of the ruling classes are constituted by the individuals from dominated classes do not automatically turn these institutions into left-wing organizations.

Therefore, it is the history, the ideology, and the actions of these organizations against the the ruling classes and the state, and their approach towards the other sections of the society that determine whether they should be considered as left-wing organizations or not. The left-wing organizations may or may not be revolutionary in their aims and methods they use. Neither they should have a consistent worldview in their struggle in order to be counted as left-wing organizations. It is the objective interests of the dominated classes under a certain social formation that make some organizations left-wing, if they struggle to protect or to extend these interests. And since the objective interests of the dominated classes are not independent from those of the ruling classes but shaped in contradiction with these, the class position of an organization is also determined by the struggle they carry out against the state. Thanks to this struggle, the political position of the left-wing organizations may change in time, and they can take more radical and revolutionary or more reconciliatory and reformist forms. As all the social structures, these organizations are always dynamic and respond to their environment.

These explanations might be illustrated through historical examples. A wide discussion of these movements is not necessary for the purposes of this thesis, but it might be useful to remind the reader about the fact that the Soviet, Chinese and Cuban and Nicaraguan Revolutions took place under the leadership of communist parties and armed organizations that managed to unite and mobilize the dominated classes against political power. Apart from these successful revolutions, in Algeria, Brazil,

Phillipinnes and El Salvador, the communist parties, labor unions, student unions were supported by the large sections of the dominated classes and they became powerful enough to determine ideology and the lifestyles of hundreds of thousands of individuals, among them the intellectuals and the artists.¹

These examples clearly show how important is the left-wing organizations in shaping the relations and ideologies inside the society. Therefore, in order to understand the sociology of political art, the left-wing organizations role, their relations with the field of culture, the artists' approach towards these movements should be analysed in depth.

By saying all these, I think I have clarified the following points. I recognize that the art and the relations of artistic production have their own characteristics. This field converts the social problems and contradictions like the class struggle into its own language and analyses them in its own relations of production. Therefore the historical development of the field and its ideology must be paid a special attention. I suggested, however, contrary to Bourdieu who claims that this field is autonomous and underestimates the role of left-wing organizations in shaping the ideology of the field of cultural production, that the agenda of this field is determined by the balance between the left-wing organizations and the organizations of the ruling class.

Now over this general abstraction about the influence of the social movements, I want to elaborate on how the left-wing organizations change the production relations in the field of art and how they force the artists to start contemplating about their place and role inside the society in a radical way. These will be the questions that I will attempt to answer in the next part.

2.5 Changing Aesthetic Ideology and Changing Habits

I will try to explain the direct influence of the left-wing organizations over the field of art under two titles. The first one will be the left-wing organizations' ideological influence over the field of art. By focusing on the ideological aspect, I will

¹ For further information on these social movements, see Eley (2002) for a historical narration about the development of the left-wing movements in Europe; Quartim (1971) and Therry (1965) for the development of the armed struggle and student movements in Brazil; Zimmermann (2000) for the historical course of the Nicaraguan Revolution and the role played by the armed organization FSLN in the mobilization of the masses; and Parsa (2004) for Phillipinnes.

try to explain shortly the dynamic behind the new values, understandings, concepts, contents and forms introduced into the field by the social movement. Second one will be about the new habits, new ways of behaviour and producing art that are introduced by the social movement.

In emphasizing the unity of ideological and behavioural changes, I am influenced by Bourdieu's concept of habitus. According to Bourdieu's theory, habitus is the thinking and behaving patterns that we gained historically while we are living inside the system. The different people, events, and institutions that we faced bring us a general sense about the possibilities and limitations of the world we are living in. Therefore, as the time passes we understand and bodily internalize the limits of the society that we are living in. Slowly we learn how to restrict or expand our expectations and our behaviour in various social situations. We cannot give automatic and pre-programmed reactions in the face of different situations that we are in. Rather we improvise everyday in our relations. Habitus brings a consistency to these improvisations and allows us to act and think harmoniously with the social position that we are placed. The institutions and the fields of the system implant these attitudes and ideas in the minds and bodies of the individuals, so that the system can continue its existence, regardless of individual differences in the characters of the people in the society (Wacquant, 2007, p. 61; Bourdieu, 2000, 148-149; Calhoun, 2007, p. 79-80)

Another important aspect of the habitus is that, it does not take the structures and the institutions as unchanging and constant things that stay the same once they are formed. Habitus is not only structured by the system, but also it continuously structures the institutions in order to get them adopted to the new needs of the system. Therefore, the habitus of the individuals allows them to identify some urgencies, needs and to do or not to do; through their habitus, the individuals also learn how to make small changes and thus update the structure, while they still act and think in line with the structure that they are acting in (Swartz 1997, p. 98-103).

As it can be seen, Bourdieu's conceptualization analyses the influence of the social relations and structures over the individuals. The concept of habitus expands the limits of our understanding by exposing the integration dynamics of the order and showing how the individuals learn to live together with the existing order of inequalities by legitimizing it in their minds and bodies. However, it is impossible to

find in Bourdieu an analysis of a revolutionary habitus that is the result of the struggle of the revolutionary organizations. My argument is that to understand the fact that there is a struggle going on among the class-based organizations to determine the dominant habitus and values of the individuals inside the society is extremely important in understanding the social factors that shape the political art.

I will elaborate on the ideological influences that the social movements have on the field of art. I am using the concept of “ideology” as the entire set of thoughts and emotions through which the social classes in a class society understand and act to change the material world and social relations in which they live (Marx, 2009a). As Mannheim puts it, “in every concept, in every concrete meaning, there is contained a crystallization of the experiences of a certain group” (Mannheim, 1979, p. 19). Therefore, according to this Marxist-Leninist conception of ideology, there is no single idea in the world that is free from the historical and intellectual perspective of the classes, namely from the collective subjectivity of the individuals of that class (Lenin, 1987, p. 82).

In his famous article “The Ideological State Apparatuses”, Althusser (1971) claimed that the ideological impositions of the ruling classes are necessary to ensure the continuity of the capitalist mode of production. The ruling classes produce and spread their own ideology in order to defend their own interests. But this ideology is not something that is produced automatically once the contradictory class interests are formed. Althusser also made it clear that the ideology of the ruling classes is not developed and spread automatically but through their various institutions and organizations that are intentionally established for this purpose. This means that, contrary to the general belief that the individuals of a class, or a class as a whole automatically form an ideology thanks to their living conditions and without any organizational activity, the Marxist-Leninist conception of ideology claims that the class ideologies are produced inside the various class-based organizations of the ruling classes and the dominated classes, because the fluid nature of the reality demands the conscious and continuous activity of the class-based organizations in order to be revealed. Therefore, the organizations of the dominated classes form their own ideologies in order to fight against the mentality domination of the ruling classes (Lenin 1998, p. 27; Lenin, 2009).

I must also add the fact that the formation of this ideology is not independent from the cultural field. The cultural products of a certain period, like books, articles, journals, newspapers, movies, songs etc. influence the way how an ideology is structured (see the subsection 3.2 for the Turkey case). The ideology of the left-wing organizations is formed as a result of an encounter between the physical reality in the social arena and the existing written literature on the field of culture. Namely, the left-wing organizations interpret the existing conditions through the lens of their historical accumulation of knowledge and concepts. And also, they tend to continuously transform or to get rid of the former explanations that fail to explain the reality at the desired level by producing new concepts, new cause and effect relations and thus changing the way they think.

The formation of the ideologies is just one aspect of the issue. The left-wing organizations are not just think-tank institutions that analyse the society and do nothing else. In order to fight off the hegemony of each other the left-wing organizations also spread their ideology through organizing more and more people by using the methods they think to be appropriate. Not only the dominated classes, but also the ruling classes are obliged to legitimize their existence and activities in the eyes of the majority of the population by making more and more people believe the rightfulness of their actions. The social classes and the groups that the left-wing organizations want to mobilize might differ according to their targets; but all the left-wing organizations attempt to spread their ideology in order to defend and extend their position against the ruling classes.

When I am talking about the spread of an ideology, I am not only talking about the number of the people that this ideology reaches. The spread of an ideology is mostly understood as the number of individuals who accept and repeat the ideology as it was. The individuals, however, are not merely the passive receivers and repeaters of the ideology. They take the ideology and reorganize it according to their own world and own relations. People depend on their own personal history, level of education, political tendencies and their own problems when they are to engage with an ideology. They harmonize the ideology with their own lives and the internalization is realized in this way. As Stuart Hall noted, the ideology is present “in all manifestations of individual and collective life” including “art, law, economic activity”, (quoted in Purvis and Hunt 1993, p.494) which can be interpreted to claim that even there are

separate fields of human activity, they can still act in line with the class-based ideologies and the capitalist order. Such a conception of ideology is implicit in the writings of Bourdieu, who claimed that the habituses of the individuals allow them to make improvisations and bring a consistency to their class-based attitudes in the face of different situations (Wacquant, 2007).

Therefore, the spread of an ideology also means its being reshaped in a way that it can answer the needs of different fields; it can provide solutions to the contradictions and problems that are peculiar to the field in the formal sense. That was what I meant when I claimed that the field of cultural production has its own characteristics but it is by no means autonomous from the classes. Different fields take and operationalize the class ideologies in line with their relations and needs. They modify the fundamental arguments of the class ideologies to decipher the relations in the field.

Same is valid for the field of art as well. Together with the growing strength of the left-wing organizations, a struggle begins in the cultural field as well. The political ideology that the left-wing organizations create interferes with the aesthetic ideology of the artistic field and contradicts with the other aesthetic ideologies that are under the influence of the bourgeois ideology. Borrowed from Eagleton's *Criticism and Ideology* (1998, p. 60), I use the term "aesthetic ideology" to indicate the "theories of literature, critical practices, literary traditions, genres, conventions, devices and discourses" about the definition of art and artist. This definition includes the good practices in art, what is to be a good artist, for whom the art should be produced, who or what should be the object of artwork, which forms could be used, what makes an artwork good and vice versa.

Naturally, the contradicting analyses and values of the contradicting classes give way to contradicting ideologies in the field of art. As Inglis stated, "Some social group always stands to gain in some way or another by a particular object being labelled as 'art', or conversely, another object being denied that label" (Inglis, 2005, p. 12). Because backed by the mass opposition, some artistic works might contribute to attempts to undermine the legitimacy of the actions of the ruling classes or vice versa. This makes the field of art a site of struggle "to impose the dominant definition of art" in the field (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 80).

This had been the case in all the historical cases that I have mentioned. In them, we witness the rise of a circle of political intellectuals and artists who were either directly organized under the social movements or influenced by them. These artists closely followed the actions of left-wing organizations, were transformed by them, and they harmonized their artistic ideologies with those of the organizations by bringing different aesthetic values in the agenda of the artistic field through their works, critiques and articles. The left-wing organizations also played a huge role in changing the habitus of the artists.

For example, the social movement under KPD became the most important source of politicization for the theatre artists of the period. Famous German director Erwin Piscator, who was also the inventor of the term “political theatre”, had been deeply influenced by the November revolution of 1918-1919, and he got into contact with KPD after he arrived into Berlin in 1920. In 1924, he even produced a theatre play called *The Red Revue* to make election propaganda in favour of the KPD. Another famous socialist theatre director, playwright and theoretician Bertolt Brecht was also influenced by the rise of KPD after the second half of the 1920s. Brecht started to participate the lectures in Marxist Workers’ College of the KPD between 1928-1929 and he regularly followed the publications of the party after 1929, though he never became a member (Innes, 1972, p. 19, 42; Völker, 1979, p. 115; Rosenhaft, 2006, p. 12).

The change in Brecht’s attitude after he got politicized by the KPD can be observed in his writings: “There is only one ally against growing barbarism - the people, who suffer so greatly from it. It is only from them that one can expect anything. Therefore it is obvious that one must turn to the people, and now more necessary than ever to speak their language” (Brecht, 1980, p. 80).

In Brazil, Augusto Boal had been deeply influenced by the Cuban revolution and the rising class struggle in his country. Boal says that when the students, peasants and workers were getting organized and taking action against the state at the beginning of 1960s,

Our discussions turned more on the political than the aesthetic. The most urgent question that exercised us was: To whom should our theatre be addressed? ...What was the point of representing working class characters and serving them up, as a pre-dinner treat, to the middle class and the rich?... We longed for a popular audience, without

ever seeing it in flesh and blood... We wanted to be at the service of this mysterious and much loved people but... we were not the people (Boal, 2001, p. 175).

A similar transformation in the artists' perspective can be observed in Turkey as well. As I will explain in the next chapters, Turkey went through a similar process like Brazil did, and the artists of the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu (Ankara Art Theatre) would declare in 1970 that the ongoing class struggle in Turkey and all around the world forced them to get rid of the "petit-bourgeois ideology" and to change towards a revolutionary ideology (AST Çalışanları, 1970).

In all these examples, we observe that the theatre artists try to align their aesthetical ideology with the revolutionary political thought led by the left-wing organizations. As a result their priorities and their audience that they targeted had changed. These changes could be classified as the following: i) The artists gradually change the content of their works towards more political subjects in which the characters, events and places are organized in order to raise the consciousness of the people, to expose the class struggle, to clarify the underlying causes and relations behind the problems of the day and to point a new direction towards a better society. ii) The artists start to be influenced by the popular forms of art in their novels, poems, songs and theatre pieces in order to "speak the language of the people" and sometimes historical popular figures and tales are used to emphasize this. iii) The targeted audience changes. The dominated classes, and especially the proletariat and in some countries the small peasants and the rural proletariat are identified as the target audience. The issue of audience is very important, so that I will analyse it under a separate title. iv) The artists' method of producing and performing the artworks changes. As a result of the changing perspective towards the artwork and the audience, the artists also question the way and the locations in which they perform the artwork. They consider the theatre halls at the city centre to be inappropriate places to reach their target audience. Theatre pieces are performed in factories, the buildings provided by the left-wing organizations, in the slum districts or in the villages and most of the time on the street. So I can say that there is a direct relation between the rise of the left-wing organizations and the artists' urge to perform out on the streets. The artists also feel an urge to know the living conditions of the dominated classes for whom they are producing artworks for. The kind of artistic attitude that

isolates itself from the society and that is only interested with own problems is discredited.

Another aspect of this ideological hegemony is that the left-wing organization could also change the hierarchy of knowing in the field. With the term “hierarchy of knowing” I mean the totality of socially created and class-based ideas about what kinds of knowledge and information are correct, worthy of learning and must be prioritized over the others. My claim is that left-wing organizations do not exert their hegemony by legitimizing certain concepts and political views alone. They also promote some types of information, some artists, writers and thinkers over the others. They publish or disseminate the books and journals on certain issues. Naturally this atmosphere deemphasizes other types of information, discredits some writers, books and journals. For example, it might be important to learn about the historical development of the class struggle, international revolutionary experiences, the positioning of the classes in a country, Marxist-Leninist classics if an intellectual wants to be taken serious and to be recognized. For the politically committed artists, in addition to these, it might become important to read about the most prominent figures of the socialist art and their theories. It might become a political responsibility to be informed about the national popular artistic heritage and to be competent about its artistic forms.

The perception of Brecht and his theories can be mentioned as an example here. As one of the playwrights from Turkey stated, in 1960s there was a cultural pressure on the artists of the period that forced them to learn more about Brecht’s theatre (Sara, 1999). A British theatre historian Stephen Lacey, who wrote about the development of the British realist theatre between 1956-1965, reaches to the conclusion that for the British theatre artists of the period “to be Brechtian was to be politically concerned, theoretically bold and artistically disciplined” (Lacey, 1995, p. 54).

I also claim that the social movements and left-wing organizations do not change only the ideas of the artists and intellectuals. Perhaps more importantly, it is change in the living styles, the behaviour and the attitude of the artists that create the biggest effect on their art. Together with the expansion of the social movements’ network towards the artistic field, the artists try to break their shell to meet with the ongoing class struggle. The former isolated petit-bourgeois artistic life style is

replaced by a more sympathetic and more sociable attitude towards the people and its organizations, and by a more militant and audacious attitude towards the institutions of the ruling classes.

Two of these attitude changes should be emphasized. First of all, as I have shown with the example of Augusto Boal, the artists tend to get into contact with the dominated classes as their ideas change. Learning the living conditions, problems and the customs of the people becomes an important activity for the artists. In examples like Philippines, Brazil and Nicaragua, we see that the theatre artists go to the slum districts and villages to live with the local population for several weeks, despite the extreme poverty that those people have been in (Van Erven, 1992; Versenyi, 1986; Boal 2001). These conditions could be unbearable for the petit-bourgeois artists who claim autonomy for their works. So it is important to understand that this change in the attitude of the artists is not a problem of ideology or individual effort alone, but it has some practical and organizational aspects that involve a web of relations between different social actors like the group of artists, left-wing organizations and the local population.

Secondly, a rising movement changes the artists' attitude towards getting organized under their own organizations and in political parties. The self-organizations of the artists take the form of unions to defend their professional, economic and democratic rights, and to promote their views. In some countries, the artists form associations that operate as the cultural centres that train new artists, produce and perform artworks in line with the demands of the social movements. This is an important change because it shows the artists' struggle against their petit-bourgeois individualist habits of isolating themselves from the people and against their almost allergic attitude towards getting organized. In Turkey's example I will also show how the theatre artists, under the influence of the rising workers strikes, managed to organize theatre artists' strikes against the municipalities and private owners under their own labor unions. An attitude that would be impossible to adopt without a radical change in the ideologies and behaviours of the artists.

Not only the actions by the self-organizations of the artists but also by the other left-wing organizations are important to understand the transformation. The artists' participation and support to the worker strikes, factory and university occupations, street demonstrations, resistances and clashes directly influences the

daily experiences, priorities and relations of the artists. Because of the fact that in the underdeveloped countries that act in line with the interests of international monopolist capital, such kind of actions are usually met with police violence, the artists take their share from the reactionary violence and they either witness the beating, arrests or tortures of their friends or themselves are tortured, arrested or sometimes killed, as we can see with the examples of torturing of Augusto Boal, oppression faced by the theatre artists in Philippines and the murder of Safdar Hashmi in India (Boal, 2001; Van Erven, 1992).

Perhaps even more important is the artists' changing attitude towards the political left-wing organizations. In the aforementioned cases-and as I will show in the case of Turkey-the artists established a relationship with the political organizations that advocate the rights of the dominated classes. This relationship might take the form of being a follower of the organization's ideology and producing artworks in line with it. In some cases the artists become a member of the left-wing organization, participate to its campaigns, propagate its ideology and they might be arrested because of it. In the example of Turkey, Labour Party of Turkey and Turkey's People Liberation Party-Front (TPLP-F) we will see that the artists actively supported, hid and provided arms and ammunition to the revolutionaries.

All these facts prove that the change is not limited with the ideology of the artists. The ability of getting organized and maintaining those organized relations, providing support to the illegal revolutionary organizations need something more than the ideas but also some settled habits like being used to the procedures of illegality, which emerge as a result of holistic changes in the artists' environment. This alone can show the extent of the left-wing organizations' influence over the artists.

For the artists, there are other more logistic benefits of the left-wing organizations. Especially for the left-wing theatre artists it has always been a problem to find some indoor spaces to carry out the rehearsals and to find some halls to perform theatre pieces. In most of the examples, we see that the left-wing organizations allow the artists to carry out their regular gatherings, rehearsals in performances in their own buildings. Through a network of left-wing organizations, the theatre companies could find it easier to tour around the country to perform their plays, which otherwise would be impossible. As I will show later, the left-wing

organizations could and did provide legal assistance to the artists in troubled situations.

Finally, the left-wing organizations operated as a contact point when the artists wanted to get into touch with the dominated classes. Of course the artists might have the idea of getting to know the living conditions of the people. But it is very hard for individual artists of petit-bourgeois origins to go to the slum districts or to villages alone to learn about the people. In almost all international cases of political theatre, it was the existence of left-wing organizations that allowed the artists to interact with the dominated classes by providing them the necessary credibility in the eyes of the local residents. This fact even strengthened the ties between the artists and the left-wing organizations.

The combination of all these factors constitute the direct influence of the left-wing organizations over the field of art. They change the terms of the game, bring in new concepts, reevaluate the already existing ones, establish new cause and effect relations, identify new enemies and allies and as a result they trigger a change in the artistic field as well. Even going beyond this, they establish connections with the artists, change the way they used to live, behave and produce. They are also important in logistic terms and expand the material possibilities of the field of art.

There is, however, another underlying mechanism that must be paid attention. Although I explained a part of it when I was explaining the changing values of the artists, the fact that was called the symbolic production of art has a wider scope that demands a separate analysis. In the next part, I would like to elaborate on it.

2.6 The Left-wing Organizations and the Symbolic Production of Art

In my explanations I tried to show how the artistic perceptions of the artists change thanks to the influence of the left-wing organizations. It must already be seen that as this change occurs, the value that the artists attribute to certain kinds of artworks increase while for certain artworks it decreases. Because the producers of the field of culture start to believe that some artworks serve their interests, adopt a better political attitude and take a better aesthetic position compared to the others. This shows how important is the role of the left-wing organizations in promoting the belief towards the superiority of the political artworks and in encouraging new analyses, references and discussions about it.

However, it is not only the artists which contribute to this belief about the value of certain artworks. Actually, this belief is collectively produced by everybody who contributed to the perception that certain artworks should be more important while others are less. As Inglis indicates, “‘canon’ of ‘great works’ of art is a social fabrication, dependent on what particular people... at a particular time think is ‘great art’” (Inglis, 2005, p. 15). Influenced by Pierre Bourdieu, therefore, I will adopt the concept of “symbolic production of art” in order to indicate the efforts like analysis, praise, discussion and criticism which contribute to the value or to the belief in the value of artwork, an artistic style, current or a stance. Bourdieu explains the necessity of analysing the symbolic production of the artworks as the following:

The sociology of art and literature has to take as its object not only the material production but also the symbolic production of the work, i.e. the production of the value of the work or, which amounts to the same thing, of belief in the value of the work. It therefore has to consider as contributing to production not only the direct producers of the work in its materiality (artist, writer, etc.) but also the producers of the meaning and value of the work –critics, publishers, gallery directors and the whole set of agents whose combined efforts produce consumers capable of knowing and recognizing the work of art as such (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 37).

Here again Bourdieu does not make a single reference to the left-wing organizations in terms of their role to “produce consumers of capable of knowing and recognizing the work of art as such”, even he mentions the role of the systemic institutions like the schools and the family. However, as I have already shown, Bourdieu usually tends to ignore the revolutionary social transformation in his analysis, so it is not strange that he ignores it again in his theory of symbolic production. But based on Marxist theory of labour theory of value, Bourdieu’s theory leaves an open door for a Leninist attachment: The inclusion of the organization in the symbolic production of art. I will claim that the left-wing organizations do not influence the material production of the artwork alone, but they are able to determine the conditions of its perception and symbolic production as well.

The concept of symbolic production of art involves all the activities that produce a belief towards the value of the artwork. For example, the books, articles, critiques on an artwork; the evaluations about the symbols that the artwork employs, the attempts to attribute new meanings to the symbols, the production of new artworks inspired by it, different interpretations, new contextualizations; they all

increase the symbolic value of the artwork. This means that a number of people should dedicate a considerable amount of effort and produce separate works that promote the value of a certain artwork.

Societies might give birth to politically progressive and even radically revolutionary artists. And these artists might produce excellent examples of political art. However, their success does not only depend on the excellence of their work but also on the political and aesthetic assumptions and values of the audience. If the ideology of the ruling class is hegemonic among the population and in the field of art, if the concepts that the artist is using does not correspond to the concepts that are being used by the population and if the political concerns of the artist are not echoed to a significant degree, than this might be even disastrous for the artist. As Bourdieu said, "the work of art exists as such (i.e. as a symbolic object endowed with meaning and value) only if it is apprehended by spectators possessing the disposition and the aesthetic competence which are tacitly required" (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 257). The institutions of the ruling classes day by day create an audience for the bourgeois art through different methods. This means that the potential spectators of the arts are given the "disposition and the aesthetic competence" that are required to understand the bourgeois art better, which loosens the ties between the progressive and revolutionary artworks and the people.

That the bourgeois art is successful in reaching a wide audience is not only because this class has the means of communication and distribution at its service, but also because this class imposes its own artistic tastes over the population in a way that people tend to understand and sympathise with bourgeois art more than the revolutionary artworks. It symbolically produces and reproduces the artworks that are in line with its ideology. The ideological hegemony of the ruling classes is also reflected in their ability to symbolically produce the pro-bourgeois-order artworks. As a result of this, the majority of the population would start to consider the politically committed artworks as worthless, senseless and irrelevant for their own lives and the progressive and revolutionary artists as people dealing with utopian issues or as traitors that disturb the harmony of the population.

This is not only valid for the general audience who has a limited aesthetic education but also for the people who are actively involved in the symbolic production of art. In periods when there is no strong social movement and left-wing organization

to set new agendas for the society and when there is a few number of consumers who are interested with politically engaged artworks, the publishing houses, the artistic journals, newspapers, scholars, critics and authors are less ambitious to carry out the symbolic production of artworks under the oppression of the ruling classes.

Writing on the relationship between the politics and art, Schlossman indicates the importance of having an audience that has an ideological and political background for the politically engaged artworks:

An individual's political engagement (i.e., her or his recognition of and action regarding a problem that requires an organized response and systemic change) does not spring forth fully formed, but arises from the accumulation of experiences and thoughts... For a spectator who has already assembled a personal political puzzle, the performance may provide further links, or could be viewed by the spectator as old news. For still other spectators, a performance will be their introduction to an issue—the first piece in a puzzle that may initially appear insignificant because it lacks context. Such audience members may later accumulate other experiences that, along with the performance, offer a picture that inspires action, or the performance may remain a random and irrelevant piece (Schlossman, 2002, p. 50-51).

That is why the progressive and revolutionary political artists and artworks depend on the left-wing organizations' ability to shape the ideology and behavioural habits of the dominated classes: The left-wing organizations provide the potential audience of the political art with the "disposition and the aesthetic competence" that allows them to understand and sympathise with such kind of artworks. Political art might fill the missing pieces in this puzzle and provoke new connections to the extent that social movement manages to create an actual puzzle with already present pieces.

In many societies, however, the balance of power between the classes is artificial. Some strong and well-organized left-wing organizations could shift this change in favour of the dominated classes. If they manage to mobilize large sections of the society through various actions like the strikes, occupations, demonstrations and clashes and various cultural products like the books, journals, articles and declarations, then they might exert their influence in the ideas and lifestyles of the masses. Then the social mechanism of symbolic production is turned upside down, and as I will show with the example of Turkey, the politically engaged artworks start to be considered as valuable, prestigious and worthy of analysis.

Similarly, together with the worker strikes, university occupations and slum district resistances, the masses accumulate a considerable amount of experience which in turn influence their priorities, political views, concerns, enemies and allies. The general demand for politically engaged artworks increase, laying the ground for the existence and appreciation of progressive artists. And although the intolerance against the political art might survive in the artistic circles that are closer to the dominant classes, their criticism could be replied by the growing number of enthusiastic audiences in the halls of the political theatre companies. The physical oppression might escalate as well, but the artists would feel the support of the general population and the left-wing organizations behind them, which reinforces their belief that they are fulfilling their duties to the people and the struggle. Under these circumstances, to be in prison, to be banned by the state authorities might even become a sign of prestige showing the dangerous boldness of the artist and contributes to the value of her works to some extent.

Generally, the rise of the social movement causes politicization in the field of culture as a whole. This means that, not only the field of theatre or literature, but also other artistic fields and other cultural fields like publication, journalism, criticism and art history experience a shift towards the class politics. Therefore, I should talk about a mutual interaction and a mutual effort to increase the symbolic value of progressive artworks and progressive aesthetics in general. The critics, various literary research articles and other activities that are under the influence of the social movement increase the value of not only a specific artwork, but also a specific aesthetical understanding and extend the grounds over which the political art stands, while the good examples of political art show the validity of the class perspective in aesthetics and contribute to the formation of class consciousness among the masses.

Taking into consideration the importance of the symbolic production of art, I will also investigate a similar development in Turkey between 1960-1970. For this purpose I will not only focus on the field of theatre but also on the fields of publication, journals and cinema as well and will try to reveal the dynamics behind the symbolic production of art in order to show how the social movements contribute the conception of art beyond influencing the individual artists.

2.7 International Influences

Another important aspect when analysing the political art is the element of international struggles. As I have emphasized, the development of capitalism also meant the development of means of transportation and communication. These means shortened the distances between the countries and beyond facilitating the commerce and business for the bourgeoisie, it also allowed the social movements all around the world to get into touch into one another. It is no coincidence that the first international alliance of the oppressed and exploited, The First International was established as the capitalism became the dominant mode of production. The increasing possibilities of education, rising journalism and publication and the formation of a reserve army of intellectuals facilitated the interaction between the social movements in the different parts of the world as well.

Without a doubt this development had found its echo in the field of cultural production as well. Beginning from the avant-gardists, various artistic styles and currents, especially in Europe had already gone through a period of interaction in which they influenced each others' political thoughts and aesthetic views. In the field of political art and theatre, moreover, this is felt even stronger. For example, the revolutionary victory as well as the new revolutionary aesthetics of the Soviet Union influenced the German political artists of the 1920s to a great extent. Inspired by the Soviet "Blue Shirts" cabaret company, similar theatre companies were established in Germany. Bertolt Brecht met with the famous Soviet director Eisenstein and his cinema in 1929 and he integrated the concept of "montage" into his theory after this encounter (Stourac & McCreery, 1986; Brecht, 1974, p. 51).

After the Second World War, Bertolt Brecht himself became the idol of political theatre and influenced a wide range of artists from South America to South-eastern Asia. Among these theatre artists there were Augusto Boal, from Brazil, Utpal Dutt from India, Alan Bolt from Nicaragua and the artists of PETA from Philippines (Boal, 2001; Van Erven, 1992; Versenyi, 1986; Gunawardana & Dutt, 1971).

This thesis will also consider the international social movements as parts of a whole struggle against international ruling classes. Therefore, I will also involve the influences by these movements upon the artistic field in my analyses and show how their struggle and their artists and artistic currents influenced the political theatre in Turkey.

2.8 Conclusion

These would be the general parameters and the concepts that I will be using when I am investigating the development of political theatre in Turkey. Before I go on with my investigations on the social and artistic situation in Turkey, I want to make a short remark as to my sources of information as well.

In order to understand the infrastructural setting of Turkey between 1960-1970 I felt obliged to go ten years back, because this would allow me to create a contrast between the artistic field of 1950s and 1960s. Fortunately, in terms of the socio-economic analyses of this period, there were a rich number of books and articles that meticulously analysed these two decades.

The same thing, however, cannot be said about the studies on the development of the intellectual field in Turkey in general and of the field of theatre in particular. While it is possible to find a huge number of resources in English about the yearly development of the theatre in European countries and detailed analyses and biographies of the important theatre figures, it was almost impossible to find such kind of studies for Turkey either in English or Turkish. Neither extensive biographies of famous figures of the political theatre like Sermet Çağan, Vasıf Öngören, Mehmet Ulusoy, Erkan Yücel and Genco Erkal, nor the individual histories of the most important theatre companies like Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu [Ankara Art Theatre], Halk Oyuncuları [People's Actors], Dostlar Tiyatrosu [Friends Theatre], Ankara Birliği Sahnesi [Ankara Unity Stage] etc. are available for those who want to analyse the political theatre in Turkey.

Because of these reasons I was faced with the danger of arriving to shallow conclusions about the relation between the left-wing organizations and artists. In order to overcome this difficulty, I spent a considerable amount of time in the archives of the National Library in Ankara, dealing with the old newspapers and political and artistic journals of the 1960s. Most of my analysis, therefore, is based on the first hand material derived from this research. I also reviewed many interviews done with the intellectuals of the period in order to identify to what extent the left-wing organizations had been influential over them. But unfortunately, between 1960-1970, there was only one theatre journal that followed the political agenda of the country and reflected the ideas of the progressive artists of the period. I reviewed neither all the theatre companies of the period nor all the plays that were written during the

decade. Rather I have focused on the most important theatrical events, be them theatre plays, artist strikes and the attacks against the theatre performances or the artists, which might be considered as the milestones of the development.

Even with the limited accessible material, the reality appeared so clearly before me that sometimes I was surprised with the fact that in the past 50 years nobody attempted to reveal, combine and analyse these data that are extremely important to understand a certain period of the history of theatre in Turkey.

CHAPTER 3

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN TURKEY BETWEEN 1950-1971

A major section of the theatre artists in Turkey began to be influenced by the class struggles that started to rise in Turkey and in the world general after 1960. The people who were interested in the art of theatre met with new events and new concepts which would challenge their general understanding about the society and the art. This challenge had affected their art in various ways. On the one hand, the discussions about the form and content and the mode of production in art gained a new dimension, and on the other hand the artists' view about the social dynamics had fundamentally changed, which brought into the agenda the issue of the actual audience that the artists wanted to address.

In order to understand the changes in the theatre in Turkey during 1960s, we have to go back and to deal with how the social change, class struggle and political agendas took shape and in what ways those social facts influenced the artists. Additionally, we know that the change can only exist with its opposite. I, therefore, am going to present a general overview regarding the cultural and social developments between 1950 and 1971 in order to clarify the historical background in which the artists produced their ideas and artworks throughout 1960s.

The social transformations occur in a very complex environment where numberless individuals from different social backgrounds interact with and change each other simultaneously. The field of artistic production stands in the midst of this social transformation and interacts with its social environment. The following quotation from Howard Becker explains the complex set of social determinants around an artwork:

For a symphony orchestra to give a concert, for instance, instruments must have been invented, manufactured and maintained, a notation must have been devised and music composed using that notation, people must have learned to play the notated notes on the instruments, times and places for rehearsal must have been provided, ads for the concert must have been placed, publicity arranged and tickets sold, and an audience capable of listening to and in some way understanding and responding to the

performance must have been recruited. A similar list can be compiled for any of the performing arts. (Becker, 2003)

It can be understood that the artwork, which is wrongly thought to be as the product of the relation between the producer and his raw material and means of producing this artwork, is actually a historical and collective activity. There are, for example, complex historical and social ties between a theatre play and a book that analyses the economy of Turkey, although these ties might not always be clear.

3.1 A Milestone: Intellectual Meets the Market in 1950s

General elections of May 14, 1950 brought a landslide victory for the DP and winning the 396 chairs of the total 487 in the parliament, for the first time a party different from the RPP became the ruling party in the history of Turkey. DP started to make the reforms that would develop a capitalism that was aligned with the interests of United States. Bourgeoisie was ready to start a breakthrough after years of stagnation but its place in politics would be different from the past.

The agricultural policy adopted by DP played an important role in turning İstanbul and Ankara to the intellectual centres of the country after the 1950. Funded by the Marshall Plan of US, a plan to mechanize the agricultural production was put in force, increasing the productivity in the sector. As a result of this policy, the landlords started to demand less and less labor force. The rate of landless peasants increased as well. These structural changes in the agriculture sector initiated a migration towards the urban areas. "While the number of migrants from villages to the cities were 214.000 between 1945 and 1950, it rose to 904.000 between 1950-1955" (Koçak, 2008, p. 103; Avcıoğlu, 1968, p. 284; Çelebican, 1970).

Urban areas and especially the big cities were attractive destinations for the migrants because of the increasing industrialization. The number of big enterprises rose from 712 to 1268 between 1950-1954. The bank deposits of these capitalists made a three folds increase between 1950-1955. As a result, in 1963 the biggest 278 companies of Turkey would own the 64.2% percent of the total industrial production in Turkey (Öztürk, 2010, p. 80, 87).

Combined with the population growth in general (rate of urban population growth rose from 1.3 percent between 1940-1945 to 7.4 percent between 1950-1955, Keleş, 1973, p. 4, 10), this migration towards the cities increased the general urban population, making the rate of urban population to the total population rose from

25% to 31% between 1950-60 and the number of people living in the cities rose to 9 million thanks to a two fold increase (Keleş, 1973, p. 10).

Inevitably, these developments changed the population profile of the cities in Turkey. Side by side with the increasing number of manual workers, a significant population of intellectuals started to appear. The transformation of merchant capital into the industrial capital and the increasing number of private companies needed more and more secretaries, engineers, accountants and managers, bankers, traders, advertisers and marketing experts as the vital elements of the production line. The expanding state apparatus also needed more people to employ. The state became the employer of many university graduates by opening new posts for the civil servants, the number of which had increased from 174.000 in 1950 to 314.000 in 1960 (Jacoby, 2004, p. 111).

Another aspect of this demand for qualified workers in the various parts of the production line, was the growing number of universities, lecturers and students in the urban areas. Karadeniz Technical University in Trabzon and Ege University in İzmir were opened 1955. They were followed by the Erzurum Atatürk University and the Middle East Technical University in 1957 and by Economic and Commercial Sciences Academy, which would become Eskişehir Anatolian University later on in 1958. Teacher Colleges in Ankara and İzmir were opened in 1956 (Katoğlu, 1988, p. 410).

These schools were responsible from educating people that the private and the state sector would need in this era of capitalist expansion. This would mean that the number of the intellectuals who must be kept under the hegemony of the state had been increasing. The relationship between the state and the intellectuals was taking a new shape.

During the first years of the republic, most of the intellectuals of the country were employed in the various offices of the state. These people had been the active participants of the “nation building” attempts of the post-War of Liberation period. They did not have any deep ideological contradictions with the regime and the artists of that period produced their artworks either under the support or supervision of the state. An example to this is Münir Hayri Egeli, who was ordered by Mustafa Kemal to use the phrase “if only I collect the lights from the rivers”, instead of “if only I collect the stars from the sky” in his dramas, the subjects of which were again being proposed by Mustafa Kemal (Egeli, 1934, p. 12). This quotation clearly shows how strict was the

state supervision over the artists: “Bayönder” was not the first theatre piece over which Atatürk had worked. I know that formerly he added a sentence to one of the dramas of Akagündüz and worked on to Faruk Nafiz Çamlıbel’s “Akın”. He also worked on Behçet Kamil’s “Tünübük” (Egeli, 1934, p. 12).

The fact that this situation was accepted by the cultural workers as an ideal and the lack of social dynamics that would encourage the intellectuals to stand against the ruling classes, caused the intellectuals to become the mere extensions of the official ideology of the state. It was impossible for the intellectuals who had such close ties with the system to act independently and be critical against the regime.

Now, after the 1950, together with the growing number of intellectuals that were coming from all parts of the country to the city centers, it was obvious that the majority of them would be relatively free from the direct control and supervision of the state. Of course the state would invent new methods to control them, but still it can be claimed that the loosening ties between the intellectuals and the state increased the intellectuals’ possibilities of free thinking to some extent. The intellectuals now were able to form “decentralised literary networks” (Jacoby, 2004, p. 110). Murat Belge says that “While it was possible to see only a few dissident artists and all the culture and thought workers were being employed inside the state before 1950s, this began to change” (quoted by Özata Dirlikyapan, 2010, p. 26).

This transformation was accompanied with the developing infrastructure of transportation, communication and press. During the ten years rule of the Democrat Party, the total length of the asphalt highways rose by four fold (Zürcher 2004, p. 225). Thanks to the widening distribution network of cultural goods and the high urban literacy “the demand for newspapers had increased daily circulation from 241,000 in 1948 to 412,000 by 1951” and more than a million by the early 1960s (Jacoby, 2004, p. 110; STMA, 1988, p. 1957). The market for the cultural and literary products was increasing. For example, while there were only five new journals in the country between 1940-1950, this number rose to 11 between 1950-1960. While the number of literary works published in 1950 was only 337, it became 827 by 1960 (Özata Dirlikyapan, 2010, p. 168). Another indicator which shows that the demand for cultural products increased together with the increasing population was the libraries. While the number of libraries was 88 before 1950, it rose to 152 at the end of the

decade and the number of books rose to 1.3 million (Tahir Gürçağlar, 2008, p. 88; Ünal, 2006, p. 36).

There was another aspect of the DP's cultural policy that accelerated the commodification of the cultural products. Abandoning the state's official policy of translating and publishing tens of books every year, DP left the intellectuals vulnerable for the fluctuations in the market. This can be seen from the following table:

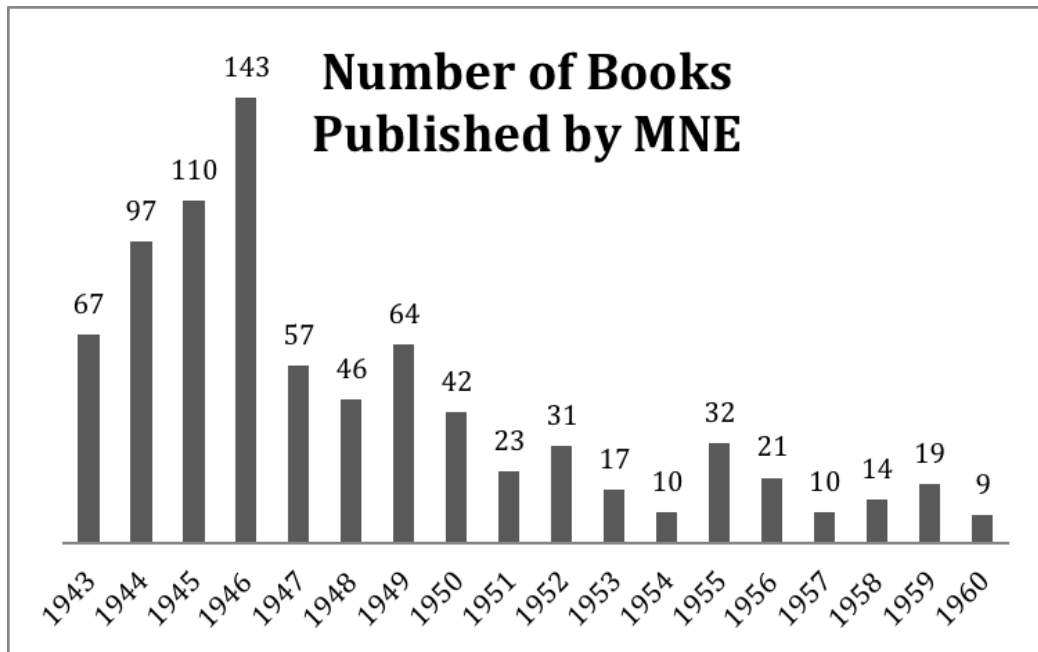


Figure 1. The yearly distribution of the books that were published by the Ministry of National Education between 1943-1960(Katoğlu, 1988, p. 469).

As it can be seen from this table, the number of books that was published by the Ministry of Education between 1943-1960 followed a gradually decreasing tendency after the 1947. The numbers even went down after the DP was elected in 1950. This situation brought standstill the activities of the Translation Bureau that ideologically and financially dominated the book sector. Considering the increasing number of general publications during 1950s, it can be said that "Private customers, especially the banks, enterprises and companies emerged as the primary patrons which sponsor the art exhibitions, organize architectural competitions and appoint artists and architects," (Bozdoğan, 2008, p. 445). Also some independent publishers and newspapers became the patrons of the authors by publishing serial (tefrika) novels.

The rapid development of the market of cultural goods gave a boost to the profession of journalism and authorship, a somewhat similar to the French case during the mid-19th century (see the subsection Capitalism and the Field of Art in Chapter 1). There was an unprecedentedly growing demand for the cultural products in Turkey which indicated an important opportunity for the "reserve army of intellectuals" to meet this demand.

Cultural products started to be produced in a network of capitalist relations and this allowed the artists to free themselves from the direct supervision of the state as it was during the early years of the Republic. However, they were now being dominated by the laws of the system and the rules of the market which is under the control of the bourgeoisie. As the artworks became a commodity, a new concept was introduced to the field of art: Competition. The producers now had to compete with each other in order to secure their places in the market. It was impossible, however, to compete with the products which were identical. Therefore, the cultural workers had to legitimize themselves and had to prove that they were more preferable, innovative, skillful or genius. Other than that, the competition between the producers brought the discussion about what was old fashioned and shallow and what was not.

This was what the artists had been experiencing in Turkey after the 1950. The concerns about the "personal style" and artistic debates now emerged as the element of competition was introduced in the field of culture and it is observable in the architecture, painting and literary works as well. The art historians claim that the tendency of "artistic schools" was transformed into the tendency of "individual artists" and styles after 1950s (Bozdoğan, 2008, p. 445). And among the most important features of the period was the artist's level of "individual freedom in the style". In the field of literature it was reflected as the contradiction between the old writers who dominate the market and the young ones whose possibilities are limited. In 1955, when Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Peyami Safa, Haldun Taner and Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, the most famous writers of the period, found the Turkish Literary Association, they were thinking on "spreading a genuine understanding of art". A year later, however, a group of young writers like Atilla İlhan, Hilmi Yavuz, Ferit Edgü and Hasan Pülür "raided" an event of the Turkish Literary Association with the purpose of "booing the 'idols' of the old generation" (Özata Dirlikyapan, 2010, p. 39-40).

The famous writer and anti-communist of the period, Peyami Safa wrote an article about this event in Milliyet newspaper. Titled as "The Second Çiçek Palas", this article shows the pro-state intellectuals' political paranoias about the existence of the communist ideology in the cultural field:

Some journalist colleagues see the events that occurred day before as the second Çiçek Palas event. This is a correct comparison. In the first Çiçek Palas event, leftist students, Nazım Hikmet fans most of whom are students of the Faculty of Literature clashed with nationalist youth. Some of these leftists (for example Sevim Tanrı) who organized this conspiracy were arrested, tried and sentenced. In the event in Dram Tiyatrosu, there were some registered communists who were known closely by our journalist colleagues (Safa, 1956).

These extensive debates among the various literary journals and intellectuals of the period prove that the cultural networks and the number of intellectuals in the cultural field had been growing throughout the 1950s and the general cultural landscape had been changing. This change was reflected in the cultural field in the form of the competition between "new" and "old", between the supporters of social art" and "individual expression", between "social realists" and "existentialists" (Özata Dirlikyapan, 2010, p. 46-62). These debates also show that the intellectuals from various classes and strata of the society had started to form contradicting aesthetic values and ideologies that were trying to break with the official state ideology. I can say that it was not only a matter of quantity, but also the quality of the cultural products was being diversified. Now the phrase of "classless, unprivileged and merged mass" was unable to catch the attention of the intellectuals, because the social contradictions were very clear. Under the influence of the past heritage of realist art, the novelists, poets and dramatists painted a colorful picture of the changing social relations. Although it did not have a revolutionary content, the increasing number of art works, which were focused on the exploitation and oppression in both the rural and urban areas, clearly show the changing perspective of the artists (Türkeş 2008, p. 1054)

It is true that DP's indifference towards the statist policies of culture diminished the state's direct supervision over the intellectuals. The government, however, tried to fill this authority gap through bans and oppression. Actually DP had been an oppressive regime from its beginning. For example, just one year after it became the ruling party, in 1951, 184 Communist Party of Turkey members were

arrested and heavily tortured. One year later, the party issued a law under the name of “Law on Protection of Democracy” and aggravated the legal penalties against the expression of socialist thought (Atilgan 2007, p. 186-187).

The increasing contradictions between the impoverished dominated classes and the order, the attempts of the opposition that was assembled under the umbrella of RPP and the army and the bourgeoisie’s complaints about the DP’s economy policy started to become a burden on the shoulders of DP power after the second half of the 1950s when the first economic crisis of 1954 appeared (Ahmad, 2007, p. 180-181).

In the face of this situation, DP started to attack against the bureaucracy, army, intellectuals and the media that aligned themselves with the political line of RPP. Between 1954 and 1958, 1161 journalists were prosecuted and 238 of them were sentenced (Oktay, 2009, p. 351). In 1954, a law which allowed the government to retire the high judges and university professors after they completed their 25 years term of office. Some 15 days later, the condition of 25 years of term of office was removed from the law as well. These laws would be used to liquidate the university professors and judges who tried to establish some ties with RPP (STMA, 1988, p. 1953). After the events of September 6-7 in 1955 Menderes government accused the communists and arrested more than 40 people, among them there were progressive journalists as well (Öztürk Ş. , 2004, p. 307). On December 1957 police forces arrested 9 military officers who resigned from army in order to join the RPP (Ahmad, 2007, p. 200).

The terror of DP gradually escalated throughout the first 5 months of 1960 and as a result the sides of the battle became clearer and clashes took place. DP established an investigation commission and banned all the opposition party activities, congresses and publications. Backed by the DP majority in the National Assembly, this commission gathered all the powers in its hands after an assembly meeting on April 27th. This situation triggered a social mobilization that would invite the military coup of May 27th. This mobilization would continue to exist after the military coup as well (STMA, 1988, p. 1973).

Young students and intellectuals played an active role in the incidents of April 28-29, in which two people were shot dead by the police and a military officer who refused to open fire upon the students was arrested. Alper (2009, p. 175-197) provides an extensive analysis about how the relationship between the Kemalist

students, professors and the DP power became more and more tense until 1960. Although these intellectuals would tend to become more independent after the 1960s, they had been mostly dominated by a Kemalist ideology represented by RPP throughout the 1950s. That was why the artists mostly avoided from a political art that openly declared itself to be socialist and revolutionary but instead they preferred to side with the bourgeois opposition of the RPP.

The politicization of the university professors, intellectuals and the youth laid the ground for the university youth of 1960s, who would break with the policies of the RPP and become revolutionaries. But in this period, the intellectuals mostly thought and acted inside from a Kemalist perception of the world, which was revised by RPP in line with the circumstances of the time and the interests of the classes and strata that were involved in the anti-DP block. Due to a series of reasons like the oppression of the regime, the lack of Marxist literature and the non-existence of independent left-wing organizations, it was inevitable that petit-bourgeois intellectuals of the period would prefer to side with the parties and organizations of the establishment instead of creating their own independent organizations.

The commodification of art, the competition and the contradictions among the artists were important in the sense that, after the 1960s, this competition would also led to an increasing number of left-wing publications as the society became more and more politicized and as the demand for socialist and anti-imperialist publications increase. Also, a more conscious class based competition would rise among the artists and the debates would take the form of political debates instead of arguing about which was old fashioned and which was not. As the number of theatre companies increased in 1960s, this competition and the demands of the consumers would also be more relevant for the theatre artists.

3.1.1 The Developments in the Field of Theatre in 1950s

1950s also created some developments which indicated that the field of theatre would also be transformed, albeit slowly. Küçük Sahne was opened as one of the stages in İstanbul. It was a good example which showed that the developing private capital started to become the patron of the art apart from the state, because the costs of the stage was being covered by Yapı Kredi Bank. Muammer Karaca Theatre was opened and Dormen Theatre, one of the first private theatres, was established in 1955. In 1957 Ahmet Vefik Paşa Theatre was opened. There was also a

dramatic increase in the number of amateur theatres during the 1950s. Metin And mentions the names of more than 15 active theatres (And, 1983, pp. 75-76). The fact that the first theatre festivals started in this period also indicates the relationship between the different groups in the field. The demand for artists which was followed by the proliferating theatre companies brought the two theatre institutions: Istanbul State Conservatory in 1951 and the Theatre Institute in Ankara University in 1958.

In terms of the progressive theatres, the most important development of the 1950s was the formation of two theatre companies Gençlik Tiyatrosu [Youth Theatre] and Genç Oyuncular [Young Actors]. These companies crystallized the contradictions of the artists of that period who were attempting to get politicized and making investigations about the quality of the audience that they want to address. The theatre artists like Genco Erkal, Mehmet Akan, Arif Erkin, Mustafa Alabora, Sermet Çağan and Vasif Öngören, who would become the most important figures of the post 1965 period of the political theatre in Turkey, met with the art of theatre in these companies for the first time.

The Young Actors theatre company which was established in 1957 gathered together the increasing number of high school and university students. Apparently it did not have a clear politicized attitude in its first year. The first play of the company, *Tavtati Kütüpatı* gives a clear idea about the world views of some of the intellectuals of that period. Heavily influenced by the existentialism, which was very widespread among the intellectuals of the 1950s, the play mostly dealt with philosophical and psychological investigations (Karaboğa, 2002).

In 1958, the Young Actors started to organize the Erdek Festival in order to make theatre more accessible for the lower classes. This shows that even the young theatre artists wanted to stage existentialist plays, which did not have close connections with the political problems of the period, they still attach a certain importance to making popular theatre. Theatre historian Sevda Şener says that this festival was “an important step towards transforming theatre to something other than the cultural richness of a couple of privileged big cities and making it accessible for the popular masses” (Şener, 1998, p. 117).

We have already mentioned above how the youth branches of RPP mobilized the university students when the political crisis gained depth after the 1958. As the country approached towards May 27, the youth was politicized and it had a direct

influence over the theatre artists, which can be understood from the words of Mehmet Akan, who was a member of Young Actors at that time: “We were all inside the student protests. During the widely known Beyazıt incident, half of the group was inside the Technical University in the midst of the demonstration.” Ali Taygun, a theatre artists and then the member of Young Actors says, “We were assuming that we did the May 27 [coup] by ourselves.” (quoted by Karaboğa, 2002, p. 2).

This politicization would of course reflect upon the artistic understanding of the group. The Young Actors explained their purposes in their foreword to one of their plays, *Vatandaş Oyunu [The Citizen Play]*, which was published by Günay Akarsu’s publishing house that would become one of the left-wing publishing houses of the 1960s and 1970s:

- a) [Our purpose is] to present and to make the theatre loved by the popular collectives that are kept away from it, because we consider the theatre as a cultural institution, as a cultural event.
- b) To carry out studies to form a Popular Theatre movement which is based on our own traditions of theatre (Genç Oyuncular, 1962, p. 76).

Vatandaş Oyunu, which was staged in 1962, was also the open proof of the gradual politicization of the company. Their journey, which started under the influence of Ionesco and dealt with the issues of being and nothingness, now would end with this play which used the traditional forms of the theatre in Turkey and which adopted the issue of poverty of the ordinary citizen as a subject. This would be the last performance of the play, because a lawsuit was filed against the company, with the accusation of “making communist propaganda” and the Young Actors were banned (Karaboğa, 2002, p. 16).

The experience of Young Actors paints a typical picture of the artists between 1950 and 1960 and provides us with an insight about the way followed by the gradually politicizing art: The intellectuals of the society who had the skills, information, will and leisure time to produce art gather together under the influence of the social agenda of the country and start to look for ways to get into touch with the lower classes, their language and their problems. At that point, the answers to the questions about the most suitable forms of art and about the actual audience that the theatre must address start to differentiate from each other. And the theatre artists also give up seeing the population as a monolithic unity and classify the population as urban-rural, rich-poor and boss-worker. The audience is no more a nation but the

oppressed sections inside this particular nation. The mode of production of the art had also changed and the theatre artists adopted a more collaborative stance towards the way they organized themselves, which was called by the Young Actors as the “collaborative understanding”.

The transformation brought by the Menderes government throughout the 1950s, had a series of components that would highly influence the art and theatre of the next twenty years. Firstly, the capitalist policies followed in the agricultural sector increased the poverty of the rural areas and the population in the urban areas so much that, this situation laid the ground for the emerging worker and peasant protests of the 1960s, which would develop under the influence of socialism. Without a doubt these developments had their effects upon the production habits of the artists. The plays started to show the rich bosses, poor workers, landlords and peasants as the main characters of their plots more often (And, 1983, p. 524-541).

Secondly, 1950s was a period when the country’s dependency on US gained a significant depth. Apart from its economic effects over the oppressed and exploited masses, it also had an important ideological implication. As the national liberation movements against the US and other international capitalist powers started to rise all around the world, the intellectuals in Turkey would day by day oppose the US existence in Turkey. 1950s prepared the objective conditions for this anti-imperialism that had an important place in the post-1965 plays.

Thirdly, the expanding state apparatus and the growing industrial capital triggered three important developments. One of them were the developments in the educational infrastructure in the form of universities and artistic schools. Second development was the increasing number of intellectuals who were not under the direct control of the state and who would form the political and artistic circles of the following period. And third development was the improvements in the transportation and communication infrastructure of the country which made the news about national and international events more accessible, allowing the artists of the 1960s to access the recent artistic and political developments in the world and in the country and that expanded the market for cultural goods.

Fourthly, the intense anti-communism and pro-Americanism during the Menderes period functioned as an ideological oppression tool and consequently the society’s and the artists’ encounter with the social movements and Marxism was

postponed. It was only towards the end of the 1950s that the intellectuals met with the social movements and after the second half of the 1960s that they met with Marxism. But still, the power block failed in this plan oppression. First of all, the societist (not socialist) tendency was very dominant in the artistic activities of the former intellectuals. The image of societism almost “had pervaded the cultural life” of the 1930s and 1940s (Oktay, 2008, p. 373). It was not that easy to get rid of it. Authors and poets like Nazım Hikmet, Aziz Nesin, Orhan Kemal and Yaşar Kemal; and the critics like Fethi Naci, Asaf Çiğiltepe and Asım Bezirci continued the advocacy of social art. Although this advocacy took the shape of left-wing interpretation of a Kemalist “populism” of 1930s and 1940s; but the ideas that would take a more radical shape were rooted in this left-wing Kemalist sensitivity towards the masses.

It can be said that the 1950s were very important in terms of the formation of the infrastructure and the ideological framework of the progressive theatre movements of the future. When the social and political mobilization gained a momentum in the second half of 1960s, artists would not be as deprived of their means of production and communication to support this social movement as their former generation had been.

3.2 Cultural Field is Developing Further after 1960

That the 1960s were initiated with a military coup was indicating the fact that it would be a period that was different from the previous years of the republic. The events that followed the military coup triggered a profound change in the Turkey’s culture in general and especially in the field of theatre.

Before I thoroughly analyse the relationship between the political movements and the theatre in the next chapter, I want to mention the changing class relations inside the cities, the increasing population of the dominated and oppressed classes and how these economical and social changes influenced the cultural infrastructure.

When the economic infrastructure that prepared the basis of a new aesthetic ideology is investigated, it can be seen that the 1960s was important because of the ruling classes’ attempts to establish a planned economy. This policy trivialized the landlords and agriculture in general and emphasized the cooperation between the foreign capital, industrial bourgeoisie and the state in the capitalist development plan. The representatives of the ruling classes openly stated that the state would help the

industrial bourgeoisie to develop (Yerasimos, 1989, p. 250; Öztürk, 2010, p. 85; Ahmad, 2007, p. 336).

Thanks to this state supported industrialization, the number of the holding companies had dramatically increased. While there were only two holding companies established between 1949 and 1962, there were now 39 holding companies established between 1963 and 1971 (Gültekin-Karakaş, 2009, p. 115). The attempts of the capitalists to form holding companies were also being supported by the state through laws and tax reductions, which strengthened the economic domination of the monopolist capital: "A handful of monopolists who employ more than 200 workers, 278 businesses in 1963 and 387 businesses in 1967 dominated the 64.2% of the total production in 1963 and 71.5% in 1967" (quoted in Öztürk, 2010, p. 87).

This planned industrialization was mostly focused on a couple of big cities and naturally, depended on a large population of manual and intellectual workers. As a result the population density in the cities has increased. The statistics show that total population of the country and the rate of city population to the village population had increased between 1960-1970. In 1960, there were 27 million people in Turkey, and approximately 31% of the citizens were living in cities. This number increased to 35 million and the percentage to 38% in ten years. This urbanization was very unbalanced, so that in 1970, the 31% of the total population was living in three big cities, İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir. Ankara's population doubled between 1960 and 1970, from 650.000 to 1.2 million. İstanbul's population rose from 1.4 million in 1960 to 2.1 million in 1970 (Güzel, 1996, p. 229; Keleş, Urbanization in Turkey, 1973, p. 52; TURKSTAT; Demir & Çabuk, 2010, p. 206).

I have already pointed out the fact that the capitalist developments of the 1950s increased the urban intellectual population and thus the overall cultural demand and supply, changing the entire cultural landscape. This tendency continued all along the decade. Throughout the decade, the population of the students escalated. As the state's and the capitalists' demand for intellectuals increased and diversified as well, the number of the university students almost tripled from 65.000 in 1960 to 97.000 in 1965 and to 159.000 in 1970 (Alper, 2009, p. 151). Apart from the diversification of the capitalist production, there were the factors like the expanding state apparatus and media, opening of the new schools, the increasing demand for the

teachers and school staff that made their impacts on strengthening İstanbul and Ankara as the cultural centers of the country.

The reflection of these economic and social changes over the quantity of the cultural products was clear. Just in ten years, the number of libraries rose from 152 in 1960 to 327 in 1970. The number of books almost tripled as well: From 1.369.760 in 1960 to 3.034.387 in 1970. Another important indicator is the number of library users, which rose from 1.300.000 in 1960 to almost 4 million in 1970. Similarly, the number of translated books followed a steady growth line and rose to 800 in 1971 from 400 in 1960 and the total number of books produced between 1960 and 1971 was 64.461 (Ünal, 2006, p. 36-37). The total number of journals rose from 1153 between 1950-1960 to 1406 between 1960-1970 (Kocabaşoğlu, 1984).

Cinema went through a similar process as well. Although the period between 1950-1960 marked a deep-rooted change in the society of Turkey, it was only after the 1960 that the art of cinema experienced a serious boom. While the number of movies produced between 1950 and 1960 was 540, it became 1903 between 1960-1970, a dramatic increase. Most of the movies were produced after 1965, when the first signs of the radicalization of the social movement appeared. Başgüney states,

The 1960s and the early 1970s marked the golden age of Yeşilçam cinema, due to economic growth in the cinema industry, the increasing numbers of the audience, its relative respectability among Turkish people, and increasing numbers of film journals and critics (Başgüney, 2007, p. 42).

3.2.1 Development of the Theatre Field after 1960

Theatre field was also influenced by these developments in the general cultural infrastructure. The most significant indicator for the infrastructural development was the increasing number of theatre halls and theatre companies. Without a doubt, Ankara and İstanbul became the theatrical centres of the country during 1960s due to their populations and to the fact that these two cities were the educational, commercial and the bureaucratic centres of the country. In these cities dozens of theatre halls and theatre companies were established, some of which could only survive for a single season.

In İstanbul the biggest institution for the theatre art was the İstanbul City Theatre (ICT), which started to open new theatre halls throughout the 1960s in Kadıköy, Üsküdar, Fatih, Rumelihisarı and Zeytinburnu neighbourhoods of the city. In

Ankara the state theatre opened two new halls in 1960 and 1964 and other halls to other cities in Turkey (And, 1983, p. 291-301).

The number of private companies was on the rise during this period. And from Metin And's narration of the theatre companies between 1960-1970 I identified a total number of 41 public and private companies, which were mainly focused in Ankara and İstanbul. In 1970, a journal wrote that the number of private companies rose to 29 (And, 1983, p. 227-242). This was incomparable with the pre-1960 period, where there were only a couple of private theatre companies.

Although there are no consistent yearly figures regarding the number of audience between 1960-1970, we can still reach to some pieces of information. Just to give an idea, İstanbul City Theatre performed for a total number of 30.400 audiences during the 1927-28 season. Between 1960-61, this number rose to 305.320 and between 1970-71 to 321.000; a ten fold increase despite the growing number of private companies which attracted even more audience. The development of the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu's audience is worth to pay attention in order to see demand side of the theatre art: During its first year, between the 1963-64, Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu performed for 44.676 audiences. Next year, in 1964-65 the company saw an almost four fold increase with 169.466 audiences. This growth continued in the next two seasons with 184.079 and 193.931 audience respectively. Considering Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu's growing pro-socialist political attitude, and the rising social movement during those years, it can be concluded that there was a mutual relationship between the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu's engagement and the audience's politicization, which strengthened the theatre artists' confidence to their position (And, p. 80-83; Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, 1969).

Another development that contributed to the formation of a field of theatre was the foundation of the first theatre departments inside the university: Ankara University Theatre Institute in 1964. This institute hosted many important theatre scholars, directors, critics, writers and actors of the period who lectured in various fields. In 1964, many left-wing writers like Çetin Altan, Orhan Asena and Refik Erduran gave classes on playwriting, and one of the lecturers of the institute, Özdemir Nutku had also lectured for the TÖS Theatre, one of the left-wing theatre companies of the period (Sarioğlu, 2006, p. 145).

Among the dozens of newly formed commercial theatre companies, there were the political theatre groups as well. The following chart shows the main progressive theatres of Turkey between 1960 and 1971:

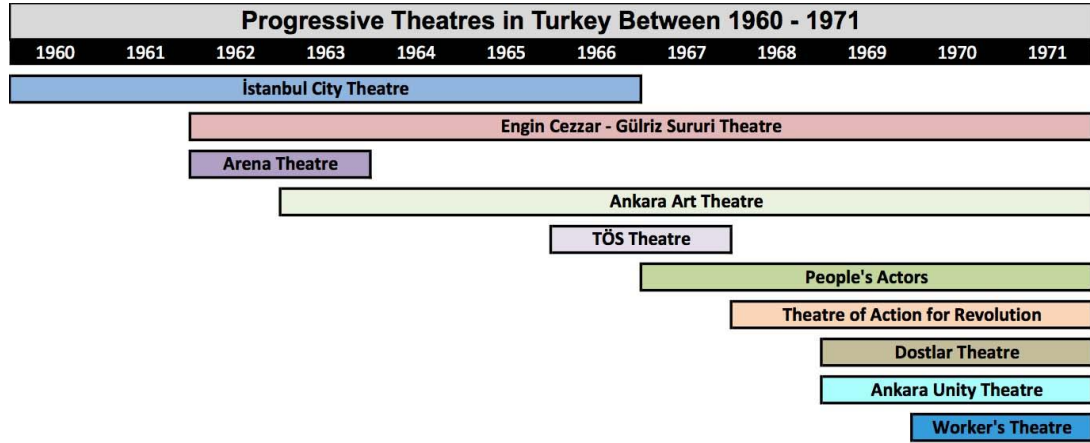


Figure 2. Political Theatres' Timeline 1960-1971(And, 1983; Şener, 1998).

As it can be seen from the chart, the number of progressive theatres doubled after 1965, the year in which the left-wing movement became more and more organized. Moreover, I have to say that between the progressive theatres of the pre-1965 period and post-1965 period, a thick line must be drawn in terms of their attitude towards the economic and political situation of the country, the idea of revolution, the struggle and art. Therefore, the concept of “political theatres” should be taken in its widest sense to cover all the efforts that criticized the establishment in favour of the dominated classes and strata of the society.

Istanbul City Theatre and Cezzar-Sururi Theatre, for example, were not politically engaged in their plays, neither they had followed a consistently progressive path; but in the sense that they employed some progressive artists and gave place to some progressive theatre pieces in their repertoire it can be said that they had a contribution in the formation of a politically engaged theatre in the post-1965 period. As I will explain in the following pages, for example, a play named *The Ballad of Ali of Keşan* that was staged by Cezzar-Sururi Theatre played an important role in provoking the discussions on the socialist playwright Bertolt Brecht and his aesthetic views. That's why I won't mention all the plays and activities of all the theatre companies, but only those which are more important to show the relationship between the social movements, political and ideological climate of the period and the field of theatre.

ICT provided the most important progressive-theatre-artist-friendly environment before the 1965, thanks to the extremely respected theatre figure Muhsin Ertuğrul. Important left-wing, democrat playwrights like Çetin Altan, Haldun Taner, Aziz Nesin and Orhan Asena found the opportunity to see their plays staged. But in terms of the progressive theatre productions, the most influential event of the period was *The Good Person of Szechwan* (staged in 1964) that was written by the famous German socialist playwright Bertolt Brecht. We will soon go into the details of this production which sparked a wide intellectual discussion on the Epic Theatre of Brecht and which was one of the first victims of the slowly rising oppression of the ruling classes. In 1966, ICT staged Haldun Taner's *Shadow of the Donkey*, which the well-known theatre critique Ayşegül Yüksel called as "one of the most striking examples of the political theatre in our country". The play was criticising the social and economic structure of the country through a conflict of interest case between two persons about a donkey and it was banned by the authorities because of the alleged claim of "provoking the social classes against each other (Belkıs, 2003, p. 119, 66; And, 1983, p. 359). This progressive focus was dealt a big blow, however, when the JP government of Süleyman Demirel started to be disturbed by Muhsin Ertuğrul's presence in the ICT. I will mention the details in the next section.

Arena Theatre, which was established in 1962, was based on İstanbul and it can be considered as the first private theatre, which attempted to bring together the progressive artists of the period. In one of his interviews, Genco Erkal, who was then one of the leading figures of the political theatre of the period, claims that "In Turkey, the social-activist theatre movement began at the end of 1962 in İstanbul with the founding of the Arena Theater." (Nekimken, 1998, p. 65). This comment might be somewhat an exaggeration, but considering the fact that the journey of many theatre artists who were involved in performing political theatre in the end of 1960s began in Arena Theatre, Erkal's words were partly true.

The Arena Theatre was able to perform for only two years and when we look at the contents of the plays, we can see the influence of the avant-garde and western theatre on the company: *Ubu Roi* by Alfred Jarry, *Other People's Heads* by Marcel Aymé and *The Lost Letter* by Ion Luca Caragiale (Baykam, 2002). These plays were criticizing the bourgeois society from an idealist perspective that was far from being socialist. But still these reflected the intellectuals' quest towards a critical ideology. The theatre

artists who formed the Arena Theatre would leave İstanbul and come to Ankara to establish the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu.

Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu was one of the earliest founded progressive theatre companies of the period. When the company was established in 1963, the social movement was still underdeveloped, the socialist literature was very limited and the level of revolutionary consciousness was low. This was the case for the intellectuals as well. That was why the first play of the company was rather an apolitical play by Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (staged during the 1963-64 season). In 1964-65 season the company staged the *Foot and Leg Factory* by Sermet Çağan, a play which would be very famous among the left-wing circles during the decade. In 1965-66 season there were two political plays on the stage, one of them was named as *The Corrupt Order* by Güner Sümer and the other one was a Brechtian production, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, a play about the Hitler's rise to power. 1966-67 season witnessed the *72nd Ward* by Orhan Kemal and *The Petit Bourgeois* by Maxim Gorki. Parallel with the rising workers movement in 1967-1968 season, Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu staged the *Durand Boulevard* by Salacrou and according to the bulletins of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu every single performance of the play attracted the attention of a gradually politicized mass of workers, who turned the theatre hall into a political rally "with the never ceasing applause and the marches that were sang and many times the soirees started late because the audience did not leave the hall after the matinees" (S. Şener 1998, p. 154; Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, 1969).

A play that was about the utopian socialist of the Ottoman period, *Şeyh Bedreddin of Simavna* was staged during the 1968-69 season and it was followed by Kerim Korcan's play *The Lynch* in 1969-70. During the 1970-71 season Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu staged *The Dusty Boots* by İsmet Küntay, who drew a parallel between the conditions of pre-National Liberation War period and 1960s (Küntay, 1970). These kinds of references to the National Liberation War as the proper example of anti-imperialist struggle were very common among the intellectuals who were affiliated to Kemalism, *Yön* journal and to the theory of NDR.

In 1966, one of the left-wing organizations, Union of Teachers of Turkey (TÖS) decided to form a theatre company under its umbrella. Led by the chair of TÖS, Fakir Baykurt and the famous playwright Sermet Çağan, this theatre could only survive for two seasons, but the company's will to tour beyond the big cities was the indicator of

its sympathetic attitude towards the lower classes. TÖS Theatre was also important as the only example of performing theatre under a left-wing institution.

In 1966 and 1967, the company performed two plays in various provinces of Turkey. One of them was Sermet Çağan's aforementioned play *Foot and Leg Factory*, and the other one was *Sacco and Vanzetti*, an adaptation of Howard Fast's novel with the same name. Both of them were dealing with the negative effects of the capitalist system (Başkaya, 2006).

Halk Oyuncuları was formed in 1967 and until the time it was banned by the military junta of 1971, the company performed many plays, some of which created a widespread discussion in the agenda of the society. Halk Oyuncuları started to perform a political play by Erol Toy named *Pir Sultan Abdal*. In August 1969 they toured to Dersim province of Turkey with this play, and actors and actresses of the company met with police violence after a series of clashes between the people of Dersim and the police. The echoes of this incident, which I will mention in detail, were very widespread. In 1968 the company staged *Devr-i Süleyman* by Aydın Engin. As a critique of the ruling government of Süleyman Demirel, the play was banned by the governorship of Ankara but the company continued to perform the play under different names like *Devri Küheylan*. Among the other political plays of the company, there were *The Canister* by Yaşar Kemal and the *141st Step* by Vedat Türkali. Both of the playwrights were known with their political involvement in the Labor Party of Turkey and the Communist Party of Turkey (S. Şener 1998, p. 156; And, 1983, p. 239; 358; Halk Oyuncuları 1969).

Another important progressive theatre company was the Action Theatre for Revolution (DİHT) which was formed in 1968, during the university upheavals, by the theatre artists who were the members of TÖS Theatre before it was closed down. Compared to other progressive theatre companies of the decade, DİHT had a more radical and politically enthusiastic attitude which rejected to perform plays in the theatre halls and chose to perform street plays. Even the names of DİHT's plays indicated this attitude: *The Bridge*, which was protesting the construction of Bosphorus Bridge in İstanbul because of the fact that the slum districts would be destroyed. *The America* was a play about American imperialism. *The Strike*, which dealt with the subject of escalating workers' strikes of the period and *The Slum* as the name suggests. According to the estimations of the members of DİHT, the company carried out 360

performances with these plays for an audience of 115.000 in three years (Mater 2009, p. 307; Çelenk 1992, p. 71-82).

After working in İstanbul City Theatre, Engin Cezzar-Gülriz Sururi Theatre and Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, Genco Erkal, Arif Erdem, Mehmet Akan, Şevket Altuğ, Ferit Erkal and Nurten Tunç decided to establish their own theatre company, the Friends Theatre in 1969. The company staged 7 political plays between 1969 and 1971: Among them *The Rosenbergs Should not Die* by Alain Decaux, *The Havana Inquiry* by Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *How can Asiye Survive?* by Vasıf Öngören, the famous *Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Bertolt Brecht and *The Investigation* by Peter Weiss were worth to pay attention (And,1983, p. 241; Kurhan and Mordeniz 1996; Dostlar Tiyatrosu Webpage, 2012).

1969 witnessed the formation of Ankara Birliği Sahnesi by Halil Ergun, Vasıf Öngören, Mustafa Alabora and Erdoğan Akduman who left the Halk Oyuncuları in the same year. Possibly the founders were influenced by the Unity Theatre movement under the Communist Party of Great Britain. Parallel with the atmosphere of the post-1968 movement, the company had close ties with the national democratic revolution movement and staged three important political plays before the military junta closed it down. One of them was *How can Aliye Survive* by Vasıf Öngören. Obviously the play was very popular among the theatre artists of the period. The other two plays, *Man Equals Man* by Berthold Brecht and *The Germany Diary* by Vasıf Öngören were staged in 1971. As a hardcore Brechtian Vasıf Öngören had left his mark on the productions of the theatre, which, as I will show, was attuned to the spirit of the decade (S. Şener 1998, p. 156; Ankara Birliği, 1970; Başkaya 2006, p. 89-95).

Obviously the year 1969 was very fruitful in terms of the newly emerging theatre companies. Another company named The Theatre of the Workers was formed by Mehmet Ulusoy who left the Action Theatre for Revolution in the same year. There is very few information about the theatre apart from some newspaper columns and a series of articles signed as The Theatre of the Workers. According to these pieces of accessible information, the company staged five plays between 1969-1971: *The Homeland or the America*, *The Slum*, *The Strikes*, *The Spongers* and *Şeyh Bedreddin* and the left-wing intellectuals like Haldun Taner, Cevat Çapan, Ayla Algan and Beklan Algan gave support to the theatre (Milliyet, 29.10.1969, p. 8).

There were some other progressive companies too between 1960-70 like Gen-Ar Theatre and Ulvi Uraz Theatre; but because of their relative insignificance and of lack of documentation about them compared to these main progressive theatres I felt no need to mention them here.

When these theatre groups are investigated in detail, it can be found out that they were mostly led by a very limited number of individuals who had the necessary financial and intellectual means to survive. Although there were a huge number of actors and actresses and other technical staff due to the increasing number of theatre groups during the period, the leading artists of the progressive theatre in Turkey remained the same. But on the other hand, every new theatre company brought forward some new theatre artists. And as the result of sometimes economical and sometimes political debates, most of the companies were split into two or gave birth to new ones. This web of relations and the mobility of the actors and actresses can be seen from the following chart:

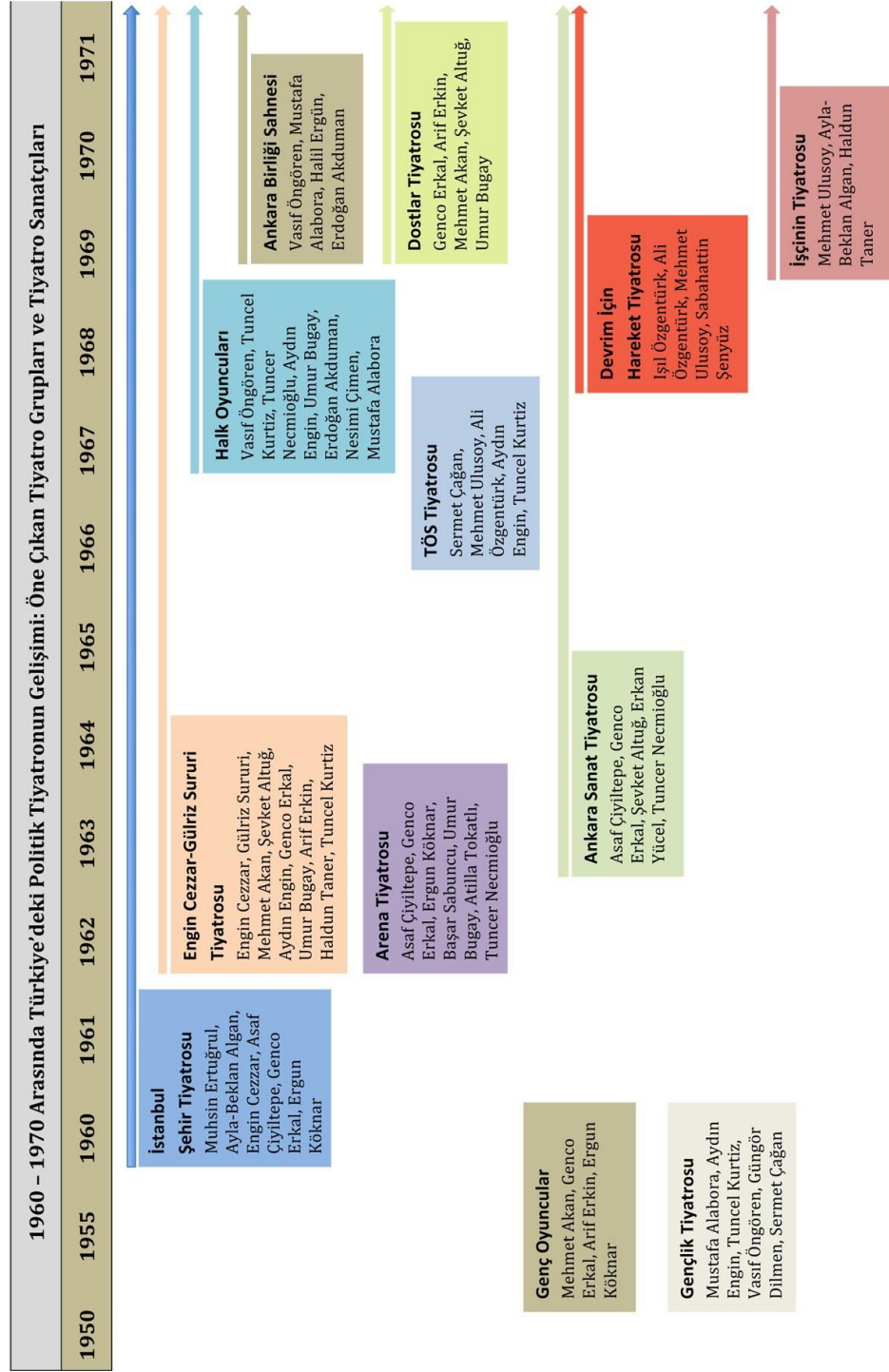


Figure 3. The Theatre Companies and the Most Prominent Artists(And, 1983; Şener, 1998; Belkıs, 2003; Mater, 2009; STMA, 1988; Baykam, 2002; Ulutepe, Saral, Kurhan, & Mordeniz, 1995, Web Site of Dostlar Tiyatrosu, Web Site of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu; Ofluoğlu, 1996.)

The general picture of the main political theatre companies of the period was like this. They were mostly formed and administered by a handful of educated and experienced artists who had the necessary social, intellectual and economic capital to operate these companies which were centered in İstanbul and Ankara. The influence of the social movement and of the growing Marxist ideology among the intellectuals caused them to gather together in more politically engaged theatre companies, while the economical and political positions of some theatre companies like Cezzar and Sururi Theatre drove them away from the political engagement as the movement was radicalized.

The increasing number of publications, translators, writers; the growth of the movie industry, newly emerging directors and actors; university departments and their students from various fields; playwrights, theatre critics, theatre scholars and directors, actors, musicians: Without their existence, the period between 1960-1970 would not be the same. The developments in the cultural field occurred simultaneously and affected many artists from different branches of art. In turn, these artists got into contact with each other and a mutual interaction began which formed the cultural and theatrical field of the period with its peculiar relations of production. Newly published books helped the artists to develop their artistic and political understanding, while the playwrights and theatre artists contributed to the body of publications with their own products.

Not only the artists of the period, but also the audience were affected. From various interviews and historical texts, we can easily see that between 1960 and 1970, many sections of the society were very enthusiastic about reading, watching and learning. Although centred only in biggest cities, it can be claimed that the publications, theatre companies and movies played an important role in spreading some ideas to the society.

It is fair to say that, without these infrastructural developments the evolution of the revolutionary and progressive theatre would follow a very different path. The developments in the field of culture and theatre, however, were not only limited with these quantitative changes in the population, buildings and in the number of publications. Next chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the relationship between the social movements and the political theatre in the country.

CHAPTER 4

STAGING THE STRUGGLE: POLITICAL THEATRE IN TURKEY DURING 1960S

In terms of the development of the political theatre in Turkey, the decade between 1960 and 1971 can be divided into three: The years between 1960 and 1964, when the theatre artists and critiques were focused on the role of theatre in the developing Turkey from a Kemalist and nationalist perspective. This was also a period in which the theatre artists in Turkey met with Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre. The years between 1965 and 1968, when the theatre artists witnessed the emerging left-wing organizations and a fervent anti-imperialism. During these three years, the artists also met with the concepts of Marxism-Leninism and started to lose their faith towards the state apparatus in the development of Turkey as the RPP stopped being an alternative for the intellectuals and replaced with LPT and as the JP became the ruling party. And the third period took place between 1968 and 1971, when the movement radicalized itself through anti-fascist fighting, university and factory occupations in the cities and peasant demonstrations in the rural areas. The development of international struggle in the oppressed nations and in Europe and the clashes with the fascist militants of the Nationalist Movement Party were also important factors which contributed to the formation of a militant political theatre. In terms of its targets and its concepts that it employed the third period of the political theatre was totally different from the first two (see subsection 3.2 for a detailed summary of the events that played a role in the formation of a political theatre).

4.1 First Period: Confidence in the State between 1960-1964

The years between 1960 and 1964 were mostly shadowed by a military coup, instable coalition governments, liquidations and by political debates, although especially towards 1964 the worker actions and strikes, the student demonstrations against US were brought into the agenda. It was very rare, however, that the theatre could set itself free of these bourgeois agendas to deal with socialist politics. Because, due to a series of reasons that I will mention in the next pages, the socialist consciousness was very weak among the intellectuals. Not only the political ideology,

but also the aesthetic ideology of socialism was underdeveloped due to lack of translations. There were no independent left-wing organizations on which the artists could depend both financially and ideologically. The number of private theatre companies was still few and as the newcomers of this area, they were not attuned to the general mood of the audience. The journal named *Şehir Tiyatroları*, which had been published by the Istanbul City Theatre and the *Oyun* journal issued by Günay Akarsu between 1963 and 1966 were not intellectually deep and informed to spread the idea of a socialist art.

On the other hand, the relationship between the democrat intellectuals and the political parties of the establishment started to become more and more problematic during that period because of the growing ideological disunity between the two. First of all, the populist intellectuals in the State Planning Organization, who drafted more egalitarian and statist economic demands for the first Five Year Development Plan (FYDP) had been strictly opposed by the state and the bourgeoisie. In September 1962, when the FYDP's egalitarian and workerist style was replaced with a pro-bourgeois style, the technocrats inside the SPO collectively resigned from the institution, which initiated a widespread discussion among the intellectuals of Turkey (Göker, 2006, p. 107-140; Ahmad, 2007, pp. 270-271). As the political differences between the RPP and the DP was resolved in favour of the bourgeoisie and as the RPP turned towards right-wing politics, further gaps opened between the intellectuals and the state. For example, after an amnesty was approved to release Celal Bayar on March 22, 1963, a group of 10.000 students protested against this decision, the head of the RPP's youth branch openly criticized İnönü and a group of students resigned from the RPP (Alper, 2009, p. 224).

I have to mention the Constitution of 1961 as an important factor that facilitated the actions of the left-wing forces towards establishing a more independent attitude against the state apparatus. Through this constitution came the right to strike and collective bargaining for the workers and the freedom of association for the rest of the society. The civil rights brought a more autonomous structure for the universities and the closure of the political parties was made difficult. The state-broadcasting agency TRT was made more independent, and the general freedom of press was improved (Yerasimos, 1989; p. 248; Ahmad, 2007; p. 235-236; Güzel, 2007; p. 115).

The first attempts to fill the political gap between the state ideology and the dominated classes and strata came from the *Yön* journal and its circle of intellectuals which formed the most important ideological opposition centre of the pre-1965 period. The founder of the journal was Doğan Avcıoğlu who was an ex-RPP follower and he used to write for the party's publication *Ulus* [Nation]. Avcıoğlu founded *Yön* journal in December 1961 together with some other Kemalist and democrat intellectuals of the period like Mümtaz Soysal, İlhan Selçuk, Sadun Aren who are still affiliated to the political line RPP. The journal soon became influential among the democrat intellectuals of the period, among them the artists.

Yön attempted to combine the concepts of Kemalist tradition like economic development, statism and national modernization with the socialist and anti-imperialist ideology, which was gaining international significance. *Yön* circle was emphasizing the importance of a planned national economy in order to develop the country. According to them the role of the private investment should be restricted and the domination of the state in this field should be increased. In this way, the concept of development became a catchword among the *Yön* circle. Alper (2009, p. 248) indicates that the discussion on the idea of economic development started to become one of the biggest concerns of the newly developing left in Turkey, and not only *Yön* but also the other left-leaning newspapers like *Cumhuriyet*, *Vatan* and *Akşam* were all contemplating on this issue. The *Yön* declaration was claiming that the democratization and justice "all depend on a fast development in the economic field, namely on our success to quickly increase our level of national production" (*Yön*, 1961, p. 12-13).

Yön had brought important influences on the theatre of Turkey as well. Most importantly, the journal introduced new concepts and new ways to see the relationships inside the country. The concepts like imperialism, feudalism and socialism started to be discussed among the critics and playwrights. As I will show, the concept of "development" would be the theatre artists' and critics priority between 1961 and 1965. The journal's attempt to provide a materialist analysis about the economic situation of the country encouraged the critics and artists to adopt such a materialist approach, which would lead the artists to question the class quality of the state after 1965. However, as the most dominant left-wing ideology among the intellectuals of the period between 1961-1964, *Yön*'s political line also prevented the

intellectual discussions from going beyond a social-democrat criticism against the state and the ruling classes.

The few accessible articles on political theatre of the period, which allows us to understand the influence of the political ideologies over the theatre, came from the *Oyun* journal and the program magazines of the theatres like Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu. When these articles are read, it can easily be seen that their subjects were mostly focused on the duties of the theatre, and on the target mass. Second feature of these articles is that the writers mostly employed a moderate and obscure style, reflecting their still continuing confidence over the state.

The articles of the director of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, Asaf Çiğiltepe were an example to the general mood of period. In 1963, he wrote,

There is a kind of theatre, which makes its audience happy for a single night. It gives a flavour to his monotonous and soulless days. There is another kind of theatre which brings plenty of happy days and longings. Our theatre is a theatre of such kind of long-term happiness. Are there anybody who would not want the theatre of not only the emotions and sincerity but also of praising the reason, resistance and the human rights? (Çiğiltepe, 1963, p. 5)

The editor and the owner of *Oyun* journal, Günay Akarsu however, had a more precise language which emphasized the educational role of the theatre in the development of Turkey. In his article titled “Like Every Branch of Art, It is Theatre’s Duty to Educate as well” he claimed that, “Like every branch of art, theatre has some responsibilities: to educate, to cultivate, to enrich while it satisfies the audience in terms of artistic taste and affects them emotionally...”

As a member of LPT and possibly as one of the readers of *Yön* journal, Akarsu also mentioned the economic problems of Turkey, but without making a reference to the concepts like imperialism or capitalism yet:

As an underdeveloped country, Turkey has many social, economic, political and psychological problems. When these problems are solved, it would develop and it would attain the humanitarian living conditions of the contemporary civilizations, both in economical and cultural terms. In today’s Turkey, the people cannot live like human beings in the 20th century sense, apart from a very small minority... We are obliged to use all the tools, and the theatre in the education of the people (Akarsu, 1963).

In the January 1964, he was again focused on the issue of development and education through the example of Germany and said that Germany “succeeded in quickly developing” because the Germans managed to use the theatre in this way after the war and in March 1964 he emphasized that the country expects the contributions of theatre to the “efforts of development and educating the people” (Akarsu, 1964a and 1964b).

In his articles Akarsu seems more or less aware of the class divisions in the society but he thinks that this gap could be closed through educating the masses. It can be said that Akarsu was under the influence of a left-wing interpretation of a developmentalist ideology which was widespread even among the politicians of the ruling classes. This reflects the influence of *Yön* circle among the intellectuals, among them possibly Günay Akarsu. But despite this influence, *Oyun* was not as bold as *Yön* in emphasizing the importance of socialism for the economic development of the country. Neither the dependency of Turkey on US became an issue for the writers of the journal until 1964.

This pro-*Yön* focus on the concepts of development and planning in the field of theatre was carried on by Özdemir Nutku, one of the lecturers of the aforementioned Ankara University Theatre Institute, in his article titled “Private Theatres in Cultural Development”. Nutku stated that,

The first thing that should be done in terms of cultural development is to plan and implement a country-wide educational system... In my various articles I emphasized that theatre would be very beneficial for the country-wide cultural development (especially in poor regions)... If the state agrees to provide financial assistance to the private theatres with a good and long-term plan, it would mean that the state could kill two birds with a stone (Nutku Ö. , 1964).

Nutku believed that through state assistance the private theatre companies could develop while they performed for the poor people who had no access to the theatres. This shows that the intellectuals still had a certain confidence on the state apparatus to develop the art of theatre and did not question the class character of it yet.

The attitude of Mehmet Akan, a member of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, towards the amateur theatres was another example of this. In his article titled “My Amateur Theatre Artist Friend”, Akan urged the amateurs to learn the past achievements of the former state institutions like Village Institutes and People’s Houses:

Do you know what had the People's Houses and Village Institutes been doing in order to allow to people build themselves, to bring them a joy of life and power to work? You should start by learning these... The only way, only rational way for you to make your voice heard is to make us walk in the path of Village Institutes and People's Houses again (Akan, 1964, p. 17).

That Akan pointed the former state institutions as a proper way of developing theatre was an indicator of the artists' persisting hopes about the state institutions. As the left-wing organizations adopted the Marxist ideology, the artists would replace this statist perspective with a more class conscious one, especially after 1968.

Side by side with the debate on the development of Turkey and theatre, there was another ongoing debate about the sources of popular theatre. While the international examples of a popular and political theatre and the possibilities to adopt them to Turkey were being discussed, it became problematic to what extent Turkey can benefit from these foreign forms of theatre.

Interestingly, when we look at the political discussions of the period, we see a similar discussion going on regarding the social and economic conditions of the country. Headed by again the Yön circle, the political discussions on the "peculiar conditions of Turkey", has also influenced the cultural debates of the decade, and encouraged the theatre artists to look the traditional forms of theatre in Turkey and to change the way they produce art. The defenders of this approach also developed a hostility towards the "western" influences in the culture and accused the individuals who aspired the western theatres of being slavishly mimicking the art forms which are alien to people.

In one of his aforementioned articles, Akarsu also explained his ideas regarding foreign adaptations in theatre:

The conditions of Turkey are not exactly similar to the conditions of any other country. Therefore we cannot expect that it would be beneficial for us to completely transfer a different type of theatre to our country. We will create our own theatre. Until that day comes, it could be appropriate to select the successful and the most suitable examples of the world theatre... (Akarsu, 1963).

I can say that Akarsu's position can be considered as one of the temperate approaches towards the foreign theatre adaptations compared to the other writers of the first half of the 1960s. For example in February next year, an article by Ali Dilber titled "A Popular Theatre cannot be Translated" defended a different approach. After

complaining about the apolitical stance of the theatre and criticizing the artists' tendency to perform foreign plays from "Paris" and "New York", Dilber suggested:

We cannot grow new Yaşar Kemals while we are living in the city center of Ankara and İstanbul. We should go to Anatolia, new writers would come from there. The own children of this people would contemplate on the problems of this society. The intellectuals would only lead the way... Dear intellectuals do not give us a headache with Planchon, Vilar and Brecht. What they did is valid for their own country alone. Our conditions are different, our problems are different (Dilber, 1964a, p. 14).

This article can be seen as the first attempt to translate the discourse of peculiarity from the field of politics and social sciences to the field of political theatre in Turkey after 1960. Merged with Kemalist nationalism and the populist attitude of the period, Dilber's position was progressive to the extent that he criticized the intellectuals' distance from the common citizens, but it was also conservative and formalist for he saw the foreign theatre examples as totally irrelevant. This debate about the national aspect and the class aspects of the theatre would continue until the March 12, 1971 military coup and as the socialist consciousness developed it would take a revolutionary form and for example, a left-wing playwright, Vasıf Öngören, would claim that the real national theatre could only be the revolutionary theatre (Öngören, 1970a).

The debate on peculiarity, gained a new dimension when Metin And, the famous theatre historian, issued an article on Brecht and traditional theatre in Turkey in the same issue. Complaining that in the last years the intellectuals always talked about Brecht and his epic theatre, Metin And tried to show the similarities between the Brecht's method and the traditional theatre in Turkey. Despite that similarities, And added that "the road that attempts to establish a partnership, or a bridge between Brecht's epic theatre, what he really wanted to do, and our own traditional village spectacle plays, is closed." Because according to And, these traditional forms were unsuitable to be used for the purpose of raising the consciousness of the audience (And, 1964a).

The final contribution to this issue was from Mehmet Akan in his aforementioned article titled "My Amateur Theatre Artist Friend". Here, Mehmet Akan criticized the professional theatres because of their adaptations of Western plays that

had nothing to do with the social structure of Turkey and then he made the following suggestion,

You should avoid from being a theatre for the minority... You should be in the midst of the people. The members of your theatre should be not only students, young people and the teachers. Carpenters, public workers, mukhtars and provincial governors should work in your theatre in this or that way... You should continue your relationship with the audience outside the stage (Akan, 1964, p. 20).

The discussion on the proper sources of the theatre perished towards the end of 1964 and it was replaced by another debate, a debate on political theatre, which started just before a reactionary attack towards a play by Bertolt Brecht titled *The Good Person of Szechwan*. On 22nd of March 1964, a group of Islamists raided one of the halls of İstanbul City Theatre, interrupted the performance of *Szechwan* and attempted to rush into the women's dressing room at the backstage. They were mostly shouting anti-Communist slogans. One of the witnesses claimed that the police and the soldiers did not intervene while the provocateurs were shouting "They are making propaganda of communism. God damn it. All the artists should be beheaded, we know who is who, they all should be exiled to Moscow" (Asilyazıcı, 1964, p. 11). *Szechwan* incident served as a catalyser and helped the theatre artists to draw the attention on Brecht, triggering a huge interest towards the artist in the following months. Apart from this, the incident was also the sign of the growing anti-communism that would be unleashed against the left-wing theatre companies in the following years.

It was not a coincidence that in the month when this attack occurred, *Oyun* journal's headline was "Theatre Policy – Theatre of Politics". Considering Metin And's complaints regarding the intellectuals' curiosity about Brecht, it can be said that, the political theatre was already on the agenda of the intellectuals in Turkey before this attack took place. In this issue journal had focused on the political theatre and brought forward one of the most important figures of the political theatre of the post-First World War: German socialist director Erwin Piscator. The writer of the article, Teoman Aktürel, provided a summary of Piscator's artistic journey and articulated for the first time that "progressive theatre embraced the reality as a starting point, concentrated the social disharmony as an element of accusation and aimed at preparing the revolution and the new order" (Aktürel, 1964, p. 13-14).

Th *Szechwan* incident marked a change in the agenda of the field of theatre. Newspapers gave a significant place to the attack and the unique theatre journal of the

period, *Oyun* dedicated its April 1964 issue to this incident. It is not surprising that the authors of the issue generally employed a Kemalist rhetoric that contrasted the attack of the Islamists with the enlightenment of the Republic of Turkey. Günay Akarsu wrote,

The young generations who benefit from the war of Atatürk without participating to it should at least undertake the duty of protecting its gains,” and added that “this incident once again proved that there are two poles in this country who always go against each other and who cannot get on well... namely the progressives and the reactionaries; Atatürkists and bigots (Akarsu, 1964, p. 4).

As the topics of interests changed, the debates also took a different shape; this time the subject was the engagement and theatre. The first polemic was written by Metin And, who dealt with the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu’s attempt to perform foreign plays and its quest for performing a political theatre. In his polemical article titled “From Arena to Ankara Art Company”, And criticized the company as follows:

The idea that the theatre is not an entertainment is a view that goes against the entire history of humanity and especially the history of theatre. Socialism is a worldview which seeks the happiness and an humanitarian life for the humanity, it is a fight for this sake. Theatre, however, is the decent life, is the destination itself... Theatre is a place of illusions, a place for distraction. Those who have preferred to ignore or have no idea about the history of theatre want to turn the theatre into a weapon of socialist fight and into a tool for agitation. And as they do this, the theatre becomes ignoble; it consumes itself (And, 1964b).

And’s timing was very wrong, for the political atmosphere in Turkey was getting tense since 1963, when a large number of young people left the RPP and participated to LPT and to the Socialist Culture Associations and started to follow *Yön* journal closely. The Associations to Fight against Communism were reactivated in 1964 (and from his column in *Milliyet* newspaper, Çetin Altan alluded that the attack against the *Szechwan* had been backed by the state, (Altan, 1965)) and a couple of months after And’s article the Cyprus issue would politicize the society against US.

Cyprus issue was an important turning point in the intellectual’s political journey, because it triggered a change of attitude against the USA and thus bringing the issue of anti-imperialism into the agenda of the intellectuals. When the Greek nationalists attacked the Turks of the island, Turkey wanted to intervene but this intervention was prevented by US, who warned Turkey of a possible defeat. That the prime minister İnönü went to USA to negotiate the Cyprus issue and gave up the idea

of intervention severed the ties between RPP and the youth (Alper, 2009, p. 253). The most influential youth organization of the period was Turkish National Students' Federation (TNSF), which organized some rallies against the USA throughout the 1964 and 1965. The disunity between the students and the RPP played an important role in promoting the socialist views among the youth: "The socialist formulation of the Cyprus crisis and the critique of Turkey's dependence on NATO were welcomed by the young nationalist Kemalists" (Alper, 2009, p. 244).

Metin And's article had appeared in such an environment when the left-wing intellectuals started to become politicized and declared themselves to be anti-imperialist. Naturally, the other intellectual figures reacted against this article with criticisms in *Oyun* journal. One month after And's article, when the Cyprus issue began to stir the public opinion, Ali Dilber wrote a polemical article against And, titled "We don't Care about You". In a rather sarcastic manner, Dilber emphasized the gap between the rich and poor making an allusion to Metin And's class position (And's family was the owner of Kavaklıdere Wine Estate, thus he was a member of bourgeois class):

You speak German, English and French. We have a Karabalçık Turkish in which we communicate clearly without any insincerity. You travel to Europe but we visit our towns from time to time... You study in colleges. We in half-built schools... You work in big cities, do this or that job and earn thousands of liras every month. We pick over stones and thresh wheat... So Mr. Metin And and other great artists; while this is the situation you still talk about your artistic concerns. When we say that we want native theatre pieces, we ask for plays that tell all these and that bring forward all the contradictions. This society is in the midst of a fight for life, we are pursuing the theatre of this fight... WE WANT A THEATRE THAT WOULD LIBERATE TURKEY (Dilber, 1964b).

Another interesting point in Dilber's article was his emphasis on anti-imperialist struggles in colonial countries, which showed the growing influence of anti-imperialist struggles around the world:

We cannot be deceived by the tactics which were whispered into our ears by the American News Agency. We don't care about them, our fate is united with other countries. With India, Syria, Egypt, Algeria, Guinea and with all other oppressed and exploited countries. We are revolting not because we want to replace the American rulers with Russians; we want to get rid of all masters, we want an Anatolian Republic in which the peasants would become masters (Dilber, 1964b).

Next month, in June the editor Akarsu participated to the polemic on political theatre with his short article titled “A Theatre in the Service of the Society”. After saying that the journal allowed the different ideas to be shared as well, Akarsu told that he didn’t agree with And’s statements about the relationship between politics and theatre:

Theatre is not a place for distraction, it should not be. Theatre should make an effort not to make forget the inhuman sounds of the bombs but to reach a world in which these sounds are not heard. It could also teach its audience about some realities without making agitation, without losing its artistic value (Akarsu, 1964d)

Metin And’s reply to these claims was published in September 1964 issue of the journal and it was a dull article which avoided to stand against the accusations and postponed the polemic to his future articles which would be named, according to him, as “Dilemmas of Political Theatre”, “Is Theatre a tool of Entertainment” etc. (And, 1964c). Metin And, however, never wrote on this issue in the following months.

This enthusiasm towards political theatre was also exploited by the commercial theatre companies of the period. When the Szechwan incident stirred up the artistic agenda of the country, some commercial theatre companies also started to be interested with Brecht. Groups like Kent Oyuncuları and Dormen Tiyatrosu, which had nothing to do with political theatre, attempted to perform two Brecht productions: *Three Penny Opera* and *Mr. Puntila and his Man Matti* respectively. *Three Penny Opera* received a harsh criticism from *Oyun* journal and was accused of lack of understanding towards the purpose of Brecht:

Three Penny Opera is now being performed for the bourgeoisie for 12.5 liras. To tickle them in the best way. Before they go to bed, the beggars, prostitutes and thieves on the stage entertain and feed the kind emotions of them... Brecht... is a thinker and he is a theatre artist before he is a writer. A theatre artist who is against the bourgeois order. Since he knew that it was impossible to stand against the bourgeois order with bourgeois theatre, he brought new forms of narration and realized the most important revolt. Apparently Kent Oyuncuları did not care about it at all (Nutku, 1964, p. 17).

It was not only Brecht, but also Brechtian Epic Theatre which was more and more attracting the attention of the theatre artists and critics of the period. At this point, mention must be made of *The Ballad of Keşan of Ali* by Haldun Taner. Taner was a famous and award-winning short story writer and a playwright of the 1950s and 1960s. He spent two years in Max Reinhardt Theatre Academy in Vienna between

1955 and 1957 and found the opportunity to travel along the Germany where he had met with Brecht's epic theatre. Between 1956-57, he suggested a translation of Brecht's *Szechwan* in Turkish and he wrote a foreword to Adalet Cimcoz's translation that explained the contours of epic theatre. In that sense Haldun Taner could be considered as the first theatre artist of Turkey who publicized Brecht among the theatre laborers in the country (İpşiroğlu, 1992, p. 214 and Nekimken, 1998, p. 106-107).

Although Taner attempted to promote Brecht between 1956-1963, Brechtian theatre did not attract the close attention of the theatre artists until 1963. The social structure, however, was in a deep transformation throughout these years. As I have shown, the distorted urbanization was effectively changing the urban landscape of the big cities like Ankara. The number of slum-dwellers were increasing up to a point that almost 60 percent of the city was composed of slum districts. Considering that the belief that the artists should focus on the people's living conditions, instead of a "happy minority" was the general tendency among the left-wing artists of the period, it was very normal that Taner would try to adopt what he learned from Brecht into the conditions of Turkey. In his foreword to the third edition of *The Ballad*, he expressed his interest towards the slum-dwellers as such:

As a guest lecturer of Language and History-Geography Faculty during 1960s, I used to lecture in the Theatre Institute. Therefore I used to visit Ankara every last week of each month, to stay there and then to turn back to my faculty in İstanbul. That was when my friendship with Altındağ (a slum district in Ankara, where the hero of Taner's *Ballad* was living, e.n.) started. I spent many evenings and nights there... That was when I started to design a theatre play that would take place in the slum universe (Taner, 1984, p. 5).

In another article Haldun Taner openly expressed that he wanted to arrive at "an epic theatre style" which took the traditional theatre in Turkey as a basis and which was "harmonious with the substance of the period" (Taner, 1984b).

As a result, Taner managed to create a magnum opus, which combined the elements of the popular theatre tradition with the elements of Brechtian epic. And in line with the arguments put forward by the theatre critics who demanded that the playwrights should pick their own people's concerns as the content of their plays, Taner also chose the slum-dwellers as the characters of his play.

Taner's *The Ballad* was staged in March 1964 by Cezzar-Sururi Theatre, just after the attack against Brecht's *Szechwan* took place. The production was welcomed with an unprecedented enthusiasm both inside the country and outside the country. Only in 9 months, Cezzar-Sururi Theatre made 250 performances, toured across Germany, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia and won some awards (Gülriş Sururi-Engin Cezzar Küçük Sahne Dergisi, 1964 and 1965).

The success won by *The Ballad* gives us an idea about the choices and tastes of the audience at that time. Although *Ballad of Ali of Keşan* was not a political play in the exact sense of the phrase, it still attracted the attention of the masses because of its realistic atmosphere and of its attempt to draw attention to a new phenomena: The new world of slums as an unknown but continuously growing fact.

In an interview about the *Ballad of Ali of Keşan*, for example, Gulriş Sururi, the co-owner of the Sururi-Cezzar Theatre, makes the following thought-provoking statement:

It is strange that we performed various plays throughout the year. This year we are earning money from a play for the first time. We are able to pay our debts and to breath. We are making money by telling their [slum-dwellers'] horrible life. For me it is very strange. We almost went bankrupt when we were performing the plays about the wealthy lives of Americans and French; but we made money when we performed the lives of them [the slum-dwellers] (Akarsu, 1964f, p. 27).

In reality, the slums and slum-dwellers were among the biggest problems of the non-planned urbanization of the 1960s. In a short period of time, the peripheries of the cities were covered by the slum districts. Although this goes back to 1950s, the reality of slums became clearer throughout the 1960s and, according to some sources, 60 percent of Ankara was composed of such kind of buildings. In Ankara, the number of slums reached by 30.000 and became 100.000 between 1960 and 1966 and in the next ten year period it would reach to 240.000 (Keleş, 2004, p. 560-562). Taner's *The Ballad* was the reflection of this urban phenomena in the field of art.

We can say that, together with the agenda set by the attack against *Szechwan*, the success of *The Ballad* had put an end to the discussions on the possibility of combining traditional popular theatre in Turkey with the epic theatre and it had set new standards. Because it showed the possibility of being local and universal at the same time. In that sense, *The Ballad* registered the place of Brechtian epic theatre in the theatre field of Turkey for the following years, contributed to the prestige of the

socialist aesthetics and encouraged many playwrights to attempt to create an epic theatre peculiar to Turkey.

The critics of the play, however, were not completely happy with the production. Although the play was praised because of its realism and its choice of slum environment, the critiques were mostly focused on Taner's unwillingness to point any way of liberation in his play. In his review of the play, Akarsu wrote that,

[Haldun Taner] exhibits the slum district for those who do not know it. He is no more than an observer. He does not go into the issue of analysing the fact of slums, he does not look for the reasons and the ways to solve it. He does not criticize, he just shows (Akarsu, 1964e).

A foreign critic of Taner, Bruce Robson also claimed that the humorous elements of the play brought levity for the audience:

That is not to say that humor is out of place in treating social shortcomings, only that when the result of levity encourages the audience to make light of the problem, some serious disservice to the community has been rendered (quoted by Nekimken, 1998, p. 110).

Similarly, in *Dönem* journal Mete Polat asked,

What does Haldun Taner want to say? As you watch you expect, anticipate events, saying, 'Now he will put his finger on the wounds of society,' but then the play ends. In fact, you don't confront any substance at all... He was content to remain a witness, and didn't examine the roots and primary causes of the situation (quoted by Nekimken, 1998, p. 111-112).

Obviously, although the general realist and popular tendencies of *The Ballad* were appreciated, the critics were still expecting a more politically engaged play that also examined the "root causes" of the problems and criticized them. This may give an idea about the latent politically engaged tendencies among the theatre artists and the critics of the period.

Such was the general reflection of the weakness of the independent left-wing organizations between 1960-1964. The discourse of the political theatre was mostly based on an idea of development, which would be backed by the state institutions and funding. When they talked about a popular theatre, it was not something against the state, but actually something would flourish only thanks to the state support for the sake of developing the country. The idea of socialism was not pronounced either and instead a populist nationalism dominated the aesthetic ideology of the intellectuals.

This populist and nationalist ideology had its own aesthetic values. On the one hand it promoted an artistic production that is sympathetic towards the lower classes, concerned with their problems. In a similar manner, this perspective also looked down on the artistic productions that ignored the conditions of the dominated classes and limited itself with the city centres. On the other hand, this ideology brought with itself a depreciation towards the foreign theatre theories and plays, claiming that the conditions of Turkey was totally different from the other countries and thus, their practices cannot pose proper examples for the theatre in Turkey.

The case of Bertolt Brecht stands in the intersection of all these debates. Introduction of Brecht into the agenda of theatre artists and critics was the indicator of the slow politicization of the intellectuals. It can be said that the intellectuals translated a left-wing political discourse into an aesthetic one through Brecht's epic theatre. What made Brecht so attractive for the theatre artists despite their peculiaristic views was that Brecht's theatre met many of the aesthetic demands of the theatre circles of the period. As I have shown Metin And indicated the similarities between the traditional theatre of Turkey and Brecht's epic theatre. The open form of the Brechtian plays, their episodic structures and the attitude of the Brechtian actor had parallels to the traditional theatre of Turkey. This made the theatre artists and critics more friendly towards the German playwright, while they were calling for the creation of a national theatre. Another aesthetic requirement, namely the idea of people's theatre was also met by Brecht's socialist approach.

As I will show, these aesthetic requirements would take a more radical form after 1965 due to various reasons. We will also see that not only the ideology of the theatre, but also the practice of theatre artists would go through a deep change in the second period.

4.2 Second Period: First Steps towards Socialism 1965-1967

The cultural field as a whole started to change after 1965, indicating the beginning of mobilization among the social classes. For example, as can be seen from the Figure 4., by 1965 the number of left-wing books that were translated into Turkish from other languages started to increase.

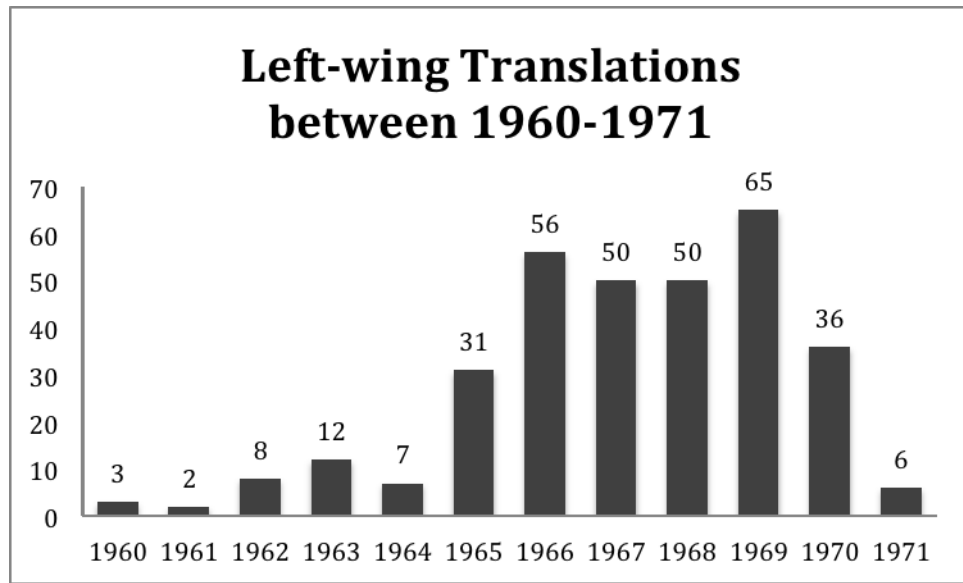


Figure 4. The yearly distribution of left-wing translations between 1960-1971 (Ünal, 2006, p. 39).

Among these books, there were the classics of Marxism-Leninism, histories of socialist revolutions and uprisings and the socialist theories of culture, art and literature (Ünal, 2006, p. 145-163). These indicate a cultural leap towards the socialist culture among the intellectuals. A similar movement towards the left-wing culture and art was also obvious in literature and cinema. When the literary journals of the 1965-1967 period are investigated, a gradually radicalized discourse can be spotted. *Devinim* journal was established in 1965, in the wake of rising anti-imperialism but it showed no signs of political radicalism. One year later in 1966, another journal named *Yordam* declared its foundation with the phrases “*Yordam* is a literary journal. It would deal with the educational aspect of literature. Its purpose is to improve the understanding and taste of literature.” Apparently, the influence of the new translations and rising social movement started to be felt among the literary circles after 1967. The journals *Alan 67* and *Yeni Gerçek* journals clearly show that. “The revolutionary development in Turkey seems to be resting on a foundation which could gather the four generations of literature around common problems,” wrote the foundation declaration of *Alan 67*. Established in the same year, *Yeni Gerçek* declared that “In parallel with the social and political development that was formed, this journal is a socialist and realist art journal.” (Kılıç, 2007, p. 37, 56, 59, 68).

Sinematek association was an important example to this transformation in the field of cinema. The association was established in August 1965 and succeeded in

recruiting thousands of members in a short period of time. The members of the association started to write articles for various left-wing publications, among them *Ant* journal that brought together many pro-LPT intellectuals from various fields like politics, literature, theatre and cinema. The leader of LPT, Mehmet Ali Aybar, novelist Yaşar Kemal, story writer and dramatist Aziz Nesin and Çetin Altan were writing for *Ant* journal together with the members of Sinematek like Onat Kutlar, Hüseyin Baş and Ferit Edgü. Besides, many intellectuals who had a close relation with Sinematek were also the members of LPT (Başgüney, 2007, p. 44).

This change could be partly attributed to the introduction of Labour Party of Turkey (LPT) into the political arena: In the general elections of 1965, the Labor Party of Turkey managed to win 15 seats in the parliament. It was the first time in the history of Turkey that a self-proclaimed socialist political party entered into elections and parliament. This success gave a boost to the social movement, which was becoming more and more militantly anti-imperialist and socialist:

The new discussions were now focused on the “power”. While, until 1965, the subjects like models of development, implementation of the constitution and the formation of the legal basis of the rights of the workers that were provided by the constitution constituted the main agenda of the debates; after 1965, the agenda of the left would be determined by the discussions on socialism understandings, the ways to seize the political power, parliamenterism, strategies of revolution, class struggle and on the issue of leadership (Sevli, 2007, p. 52).

Important intellectual figures of the time, Mehmet Ali Aybar, Kemal Sülker, Behice Boran and Sadun Aren were some of the intellectuals who were affiliated with the party. Soon, Aybar and Boran became important leaders in the party. Through the image of these intellectual figures, the LPT managed to create an atmosphere where “to be an intellectual was equal to be pro-LPT”. So, considering the increasing number of intellectuals and the importance attributed to them by the society of the post-1960 period, it can be said that LPT contributed to the formation of the mentality which saw the intellectual as a per se socialist (Ünsal, 2002, p. 383). During its years in the parliament, LPT attracted intellectuals from various cultural fields. The novelist Yaşar Kemal and Aziz Nesin, musicians like Ruhi Su and Tülay German, various movie directors and theatre artists were either members or the followers of the political line of LPT.

The party was also a step towards changing the old traditional political habitus of the intellectuals. As I have shown, the artists had a very individualistic and independent attitude towards politics all along the 1950s. And those who had a political engagement were mostly the members of RPP, which was focused on ensuring the continuity of the system rather than asking for a radical social change. With LPT introduced was a different type of intellectual, who was a member of a socialist political party and who mobilized her artistic or intellectual skills to organize the people towards the cause of socialism together with others under a loose or strict hierarchy. The consciousness that a certain attitude could gain significance only if it was organized started become widespread.

During the next few years LPT would be influential over the student movement as well. Through a pro-LPT student organization called Idea Clubs Federation (ICF), LPT was partly present inside the student movement and thus “a new generation of socialist students, close to the LPT and less official in their outlook, became more visible in the student politics at the end of this period.” (Alper, 2009, p. 246). Beginning with 1965 ICF members were now being selected as the leaders of various student unions inside the universities; and by 1967, many LPT member students became the leaders of student unions.

The reflections of the gradually legitimized socialist ideology can be observed in the theatrical writings of the post-1965 as well. The first signs of it came from *Oyun* journal's February 1965 issue. There, the writers of the journal articulated for the first time the concepts like capitalism as the main problem of the age and socialism as the main solution to it. The short-lived polemic between the columnist of *Milliyet* newspaper, Refik Erduran and the writers of *Oyun* journal clearly shows this transformation.

On the 23rd of January, Refik Erduran wrote an article titled “On the Left-wing Theatre” which was questioning the notion of left-wing theatre. He was complaining that the leftists of Turkey have been accusing each other of not being a proper leftist enough. And in line with this attitude, Erduran claims that they even started to judge the artistic works with political terms, rather than artistic terms. He asked,

For example, think about a performance that convincingly explains the experiences of a child who sells flowers on the streets and that makes a humanitarian call towards the people through their emotions rather than giving a conference, is it a leftist performance? Or to be leftist, is it

a condition to mention the plans behind the flower trade, to articulate the “exploitation” by using the word “exploitation” and to call the audience to support the economic reforms? Which is harder to do, the first one or the second? (Erduran, 1965)

Next month, an article titled “Follow the Lady”, Ali Uzunisa answered the questions of Erduran in a rather sarcastic manner:

Look Refik Erduran; if you don’t know, please learn. Socialism is a whole. You cannot make a separation like “I will put the arts on my right pocket, and the politics on my left.” If we are talking about a leftist critique, then it must be within the borders of the rules of socialism. There are no separate rules and universe for the arts. Socialism is a method, a worldview. Economics, science, arts and politics are analyzed, interpreted and applied from a single angle. Socialism is a moral understanding. Bourgeois moral rules are invalid here. You cannot close your right eye and open the left.

And he added:

The author would explain both the child who sells flowers on the street and the mechanism of the flower trade that lies behind. (Uzunisa, 1965, p. 19).

In his article Refik Erduran had also questioned the class character of the state, and criticized those who asked for the state support for the art of theatre:

Last week, one of those allegedly left-wing articles was attacking our private theatres as “business places” and calling for no financial aid to these companies. At first sight, this demand might seem harmonious with the statist ideology of the leftist thought, but if you think for a second you may understand how wrong it was. Yes socialism depends on the state, but it depends on the state that is being ruled by the socialists. Do the Turkish socialists believe that they have captured the power of the Turkish state in an irreversible manner, so that they are hostile against the non-official theatre companies? (Erduran, 1965)

The polemic continued as Ayperi Akalan answered these questions in her article “Writing on the Left, Punching with the Right Fist” in the March 1965 issue of Oyun journal. Socialist state, said Akalan,

Is the only form of state that could really ensure the happiness of the entire society. The contemporary administrative body which we used to call as state, however, is an organization which was conditioned by the obligation of legally determining its political structure according to a certain constitution. The fundamental principles and rights of our constitution foresee a state which acts in favour of the society. Under these conditions, it is clearly not contradictory to socialist ideas and purposes to foresee that the “already existing” government, namely the

state should act in harmonious with the interests of the society (Akalan, 1965, p. 29).

Akalan also added that, if the state became more and more right-wing, it would also be impossible for the private theatres to perform freely, because the state had the power to limit their actions through financial measures as well.

Another article by Aziz Nesin, titled "Reflecting the Age" in the February issue of *Oyun* dealt with the issue of capitalism and socialism as well. Focused on the problem of what the playwrights' artistic attitude should be, Nesin presents a general analysis of the social and economic conditions of the world from his perspective. He claims,

Those who show capitalism as the way of developing as a society are the ones who live in the past times. Because it is impossible for the countries that did not arrive at a capitalist stage to become capitalists again... Now a country does not have the possibility to become capitalist... Those who do not know that this age had passed, show the America, Germany and Sweden as examples for the development of underdeveloped countries... In the last twenty-thirty years, however, you cannot show a single country that managed to redevelop by means of capitalism. The developed countries are the ones that have been walking on the road of capitalism earlier. Those countries now blocked the way for the others (Nesin, 1965).

Not surprisingly, the discourse of Günay Akarsu, the editor of *Oyun* journal, had undergone a similar change. The concepts like capitalism and petit-bourgeois, which we didn't observe in the pre-1965 period were now a part of his analysis of the theatre in Turkey. In his short remarks for the *ABC* journal in October 1966, he claimed that,

Of course the state-subsidized theatres would not be exceptions to the general policy by which the country is being ruled. They are the theatres of the petit-bourgeoisie; they can be progressive to the extent that the petit-bourgeoisie allowed them to be. They share the audience by making a division of labor among themselves according to the agreement which is called competition in the capitalist order. Some looks more progressive, some are more artistic. So they muddle along (Akarsu, 2009, p. 72).

This change can be observed in the October 1965 bulletin of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu. As I have already shown, the director of AST, Asaf Çiyiltepe had been using a temperate and obscure language in his writings before 1965. By 1965, however, a change in his attitude could be observed as well. He stated that,

If the artist of AST forgets the urgency of the work that he is doing for their homeland, if she postpones it whatever the reason or harms it, then it would mean that she secretly placed rotten stones to the GREAT STRUCTURE that is being built. The artist of AST is supposed to make an effort to prepare the future, instead of being naïve to think that the existing status-quo could be adjusted further. If AST does not get tired to death, it cannot win the future. The tiredness of the socialist cannot be paid back in this age. Today's institutions are weak stages for a socialist. They are absolutely insufficient orders. The remedy is in the future (Çiyiltepe, 1965).

While a general socialist and anti-capitalist tendency became more and more obvious among the theatre people of the field, a separate but connected area of concern, namely, getting organized was introduced to the agenda. In that sense, the year 1965 was also marked by the discussions on unionism. What would be the status of the artists, should they be considered as workers or public laborers? Would they be allowed to get organized in the labor unions to defend their economic rights?

Apart from the political rise of the LPT, there were important motivations for the artists to consider the issue of workers' rights and of getting organized. Because between 1965-1967 the other sections of the society were getting organized and carrying out various actions as well. The worker movement was among the most active movements of the period. The planned industrialization of the post-1960s had increased the number of workers sharply in a couple of years, from 2.7 (according to some sources 2.1) million in 1963 to 3 million in 1965 and to 4 million in 1971 (STMA, 1988, p. 2146 and Koç, 2003, pp. 101-102), paving the way for the more independent worker organizations.

The workers' actions had started just after the military coup of May 27, 1960, and brought the issue of workers' right into the agenda of the country through some effective strikes and actions like Saraçhane Action in 1961, "March of the Starved" in 1962 and the Kavel Resistance in 1963. However, these actions managed to attract the attention of the intellectuals in the theatre field only after 1965. Before 1965, the workers movement was carrying out its actions under its legal organization called Turk-İs, a pro-government worker organization, which was established before May 27, 1960 thanks to the US aid. The radicalization of the class struggle also opened a crack inside the Türk-İş administration, and led to the creation of a left-wing labour union named Progressive Workers' Unions Confederation, DİSK in 1967 with the

participation of 17 labor unions. Next year DİSK enlisted 67.000 members and in 1970 it would reached up to 100.000 members (Koç 2003, p. 125).

Increasing number of worker actions, some which ended up with bloody clashes against the military forces of the state, like the Zonguldak mine workers' resistance of 1965 influenced the field of theatre as well. For example, a short article on unionism in theatre by the editorial board appeared in *Oyun* journal's June 1965 issue. Pointing at the confusion about the legal status of the theatre artists, the article was focused on the benefits of unionism:

The fact that the Ministry of Labor recognized the theatre as a separate branch of work is a step taken in order to eliminate this irregularity. From now on, the laborers of the theatre will establish their own labor unions, they will defend and get their rights thanks to the power of being a collective. Indeed, the laborers of theatre are taking important steps in order to establish a labor union. The İstanbul branch of TOTSIS, which is centred in Ankara and which involves mostly the artists of the State Theatre, is getting prepared for positive works. A group of artists from İstanbul City Theatre joined to the GENEL-İş, labor union of the municipality workers (Oyun, 1965).

The issue of unionization was also in the agenda of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu. In his aforementioned article, Çiyiltepe touched upon the importance of unions as well:

All the artists of AST are unionized and they have social insurance. Namely, they accepted to act collectively instead of individually. Our artists are obliged to know why a labourer enters into a union and why she contemplates on the problems of the homeland (Çiyiltepe, 1965).

It was not mere rhetoric when the theatre artists of the post-1965 period talked about getting organized in labor unions. As it can be seen from Akarsu's statements, the theatre artists were getting organized and they were under the influence of the worker demonstrations in which the workers claimed their economic rights. And in November 1965, a group of theatre artists from the State Theatre who were members of TOTSIS (Union of Opera and Theatre Artists and Assistant Workers of Turkey), decided to carry out a strike (Milliyet, 16.11.1965, 18.11.1965).

This strike stirred the newspapers and many commentators, among them Metin And who wrote about the conditions of the state theatre and the situation of the theatre artists. The strike was mostly focused on the economic demands of the artists and the individuals who took part in it sometimes directed a number of criticisms to the director of the State Theatres, Cüneyt Gökçer. There is no indicator, however, that

pointed to the political orientations of the artists. It can be said that the general tendency of the society in terms of getting organized was reflected on the artists who did not have any militant political engagement yet (Milliyet, 14.07.1965, 29.01.1966).

The first signs of the politicized debates with the state institutions, however, came with the Muhsin Ertuğrul incident in 1966. That the JP had won the elections in 1965, marked a change in the state's attitude towards the political connotations in the art of theatre. When JP came to power, it drafted a law regarding the status of İstanbul City Theatre. This draft foresaw a change in the inner regulations of ICT and attempted to make the institution dependent on the Municipality Council of the city of İstanbul, which have been dominated by the pro-JP members. Under the name of Supervisory Board, now the ICT would be open to any censorship by the JP government.

In October 1965, Muhsin Ertuğrul wrote an article that condemned this censorship attempts by the government. He emphasized the critical role of the theatre in leading the society and said that the theatre has always been critical towards the governments and the bureaucrats.

First of all this must be known: Theatre is an institution which is above the governments that change everyday and the parties that are now full of self-seekers... If we wish, we perform *An Enemy of The People* by İbsen and expose the examples of ignorant majors that deceive the majority. If we wish we take the corrupt civil servants and the uninformed ministers of education on the stage (quoted from Belkıs, 2003, p. 57-58).

Ertuğrul's dreams of autonomous art that was free from all state oppression had shattered when the city council decided to fire him from his position in February 1966. This act triggered a series of reactions from the artists, playwrights, media and intellectuals. Six artists of the Istanbul City Theatre left their positions inside the institution, a group of progressive playwrights decided to boycott the city theatre by not providing the ICT with their new plays. The declaration of the Association of Turkish Playwrights was undersigned by the famous left-wing playwrights of the period, among them Çetin Altan, Refik Erduran, Rıfat Ilgaz, Güner Sümer and Haldun Taner (S. Şener 1998, p. 164; Belkıs 2003; 55-58).

In an article on this incident Haldun Taner expressed that the decision about sacking Ertuğrul was completely political:

When a generation of playwrights and directors, who undertook the duty of awakening the underdeveloped and hypnotized Turkish people, had matured and started to warn the people on the basis of the ground that was prepared by the teacher [Muhsin Ertuğrul e.n.], the things have turned upside down, and the eyes of the politicians were wide open (Taner, 1966).

The two-day strike of TOTSİS and the protests against Muhsin Ertuğrul's discharge from his position were the first signs of an encounter between the theatre artists and the state institutions in the post-May 27 period. In this way, the artists would feel the sword of the state above their heads. Their hopes that they can depend on the 'revolutionary' state of May 27, 1960 in their quest for development, were proved to be false.

This fact was expressed by one of the playwrights of the period, Cevat Fehmi Başkut in his article "M. Ertuğrul Incident" in *Milliyet* newspaper. Pointing out that there was a general tendency to equate the JP of Demirel with the DP of Menderes, Başkut explained that Muhsin Ertuğrul was appointed to his position by Menderes in 1958 but now he was discharged by JP of Süleyman Demirel, which, for Başkut, indicated that the JP was even worse than DP (Başkut, 1966).

Taken together with the aforementioned discussions on the state, one can clearly see that the intellectuals of this second period started to gradually break up with the idea of a state as the supporter of theatre and the development. And for the first time in the post-1960 period, the artists contradicted with the artistic decisions of the state and felt excluded.

While the state institutions became uneasy places for the democrat intellectuals of the period, another option was brought into the agenda of the artists: Performing theatre for and under left-wing organizations and being financially supported by them. TÖS Theatre, which was established in 1966 was the first example to this new opportunity.

TÖS or the Labour Union of Teachers of Turkey, was the result of the raising awareness among the population to get organized. In general Turkey, the public servants had established 439 labor unions, 18 federations and 3 confederations only between 1965-1968. TÖS was the most preeminent union operating in the field of education until it was closed down after the coup of March 12 (Altunya, 1998, pp. 77-79). TÖS was established in July 8, 1965 and only a year later after it was established,

the number of branch offices of TÖS rose to 252 and the number of the members became 21.000. Five years later these numbers would become respectively 522 and 72.000 (Altunya, 1998, p. 85).

TÖS was mostly led by the left-wing intellectuals of the period who were involved with artistic activities like poetry and novel. The directors of the union decided to host a theatre company in 1966 and to this aim the playwright and theatre director, Sermet Çağan was asked to recruit young left-wing theatre artists from different private theatre companies in the country. Figures like Aydın Engin, Ali Özgentürk and Mehmet Ulusoy who would later on be radicalized further, worked in TÖS Theatre under the direction of Sermet Çağan. Çağan had explained the objectives of the TÖS Theatre as “Taking the theatre to the people” and in line with this idea, the company sent a questionnaire to the 270 branch offices of TÖS in various cities to learn the conditions and possibilities of these provinces (Başkaya, 2006, p. 55).

Obviously Çağan was also under the influence of the left-wing discourses of the period, which urged the artists to go beyond the cities for a greater understanding of the society. This position of the theatre company was backed by Günay Akarsu in his article to the special edition of *Oyun* journal:

However favourable might a theatre be, if it is stuck inside the borders of a city, it cannot be beneficial except for a narrow circle. But it is the first and necessary condition of thinking about being useful in Turkey-wide to go near that majority who did not even see a theatre performance or who misjudged the theatre after they saw and heard terrible groups in the name of theatre (Akarsu, 1966a, p. 3).

Foot and Leg Factory, as the first production of the TÖS Theatre, was a play written by Sermet Çağan in 1964. The play, however, became popular in 1965 when Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu staged it.

Çağan’s play was a reaction against the increasing dependency of Turkey upon the foreign capital and it attempted to show the relationship between them and their local allies. There were many parallels between the ideology of *Yön* and of *Foot and Leg Factory* in terms of their understanding of the conditions of the country: In this play too the main characters of the play were the peasants, landlords, politicians, collaborator capitalists and the imperialists.

The play was about the peasants of a village who are forced to eat “black seed” in a time of economic crisis. The peasants become disabled as a result of this nutrition

regime but some capitalists get richer thanks to the black seed trade that they are involved. The landlords also profit from this crisis because they have a huge amount of black seed in their warehouses, that needed to be sold. When this issue of peasants' disabilities come into the agenda, however, the capitalists and the politicians recognize another profit opportunity: To produce and market artificial feet and legs to the peasants. So with the support of the politicians and the local collaborators, the imperialists manage to make an economic agreement, which promises to provide artificial feet and legs in return for wheat. All in all, nothing changes: The villagers still cannot eat wheat, because it should be exported to the imperialists but now their conditions are worse, because they don't have limbs anymore (Çağan, 1965).

If we take into consideration the process of dependent monopolization of the country, the increasing reactions against the US especially after the protests of 1964 and *Yön* journal's formulations about it, it can be said that the overall influence of the social movement in Turkey was crystallized at the *Foot and Leg Factory*. The play was a break from the pre-1965 period when the theatre artists and critics still had organizational and ideological expectations from the state.

The period between 1965 and 1967 was marked by a radicalizing social environment in which the left-wing organizations developed in terms of their numbers and populations, the contradiction between them and the state widened. And parallel to their development, the field of culture and especially the theatre started to adopt more radicalized ideas which were focused on socialism, anti-capitalism, as I have shown. Unfortunately, *Oyun* journal stopped publishing in 1966 until it appeared again with the title of *Tiyatro 70* in 1970, therefore it is hard to identify further the topics of debate after 1966.

Another aspect of the period was the writers' stress on the importance of getting organized for certain right claims. This was a new phenomenon compared to the artists of the 1950s and pre-1965 period. This urge among the artists to get organized can be interpreted as a first step towards changing their habitus. The intellectuals were formerly living and producing in an isolated manner and their places of socialization mostly were coffeehouses, bars and possibly the offices of their literary journals, if not the state-supervised theatre halls, especially in 1950s. But now the socialist political parties, unions, various cultural associations and private theatre companies became their places of socialization.

These two years were just a preparation for the stormy social and aesthetic agenda of the period between 1968 and 1971, where the ideological and aesthetic choices of the artists had totally changed and they began to face the oppression of the state in a more serious manner.

4.3 Third Period: Revolution and Theatre between 1968 and 1971

The years between 1968 and 1971 were full of student demonstrations, workers' strikes, factory occupations, boycotts, clashes, oppression and resistance. The calendars were full of extensive actions and demonstrations and their power to set the agenda was so significant that, intellectuals and the artists were forced to have their say on the ongoing struggle. In a period when the organized social opposition openly stood against the state and its institutions through democratic or revolutionary means, a transformation was also experienced in the field of theatre as well. The forms of making theatre and the aesthetic values had changed, while the artists concretized the type of audience that they want to address. Artists' perception of society as a contradictory whole was crystallized and the classical pre-1965 dichotomy of "happy minority" in the cities and "poor masses" in the countryside, was now replaced with a class conscious perspective that classified the oppressor and exploiter classes and the oppressed and exploited masses as opposing poles that could not be reconciled.

Of course this change did not occur overnight. The independent left-wing organizations like TLP, FKF, DİSK and TÖS had organized a significant population in line with their political perspectives and had succeeded in creating a certain awareness about socialism and the struggle. Moreover, there was the influence of the international revolutionary struggles, and particularly of Vietnam War which made a single spark enough for the more militant struggles of the post-1968 to be triggered.

Three focuses of the social movement need to be mentioned here.

First one was the workers' movement that started to escalate after the DİSK was found in 1967. Just between 1968 and 1969, 21 factory occupations took place, some of which contributed to the visibility of the workers movement. From 1968 until the March 12, 1970 coup, there were a total of 349 strikes and the bourgeoisie had lost approximately 1.2 million working days (STMA, 1988; p. 2014). In the face of these developments the JP government attempted to make some amendments in the

Labor Unions Law in 1970 in order to prevent the DİSK from leading these mobilizations. As a reaction against this attempt, some 100.000 workers started to make demonstrations in İstanbul In 15-16 June 1970. Without the leadership of any organization and thanks to the participation of the workers who witnessed the marching workers, these demonstrations grew bigger and turned into an uprising. A state of emergency was declared in the country. Workers and students clashed with the police and the army (STMA, 1988; p. 2154). 25 unionists were arrested; raids were carried out against the houses of the students and the workers. Approximately 6 thousand workers were blacklisted and banned from working other factories (Güzel, 2007, p. 133-134).

The second most active social force was the student movement that initiated a series of university occupations by the June 1968. In these university occupations, where the TNSF and LPT chose to stay hesitant, Idea Clubs Federation came forward and became the leader of student movement with its militancy (Mater 2009, p. 296; Alper 2009, p. 367). In July the events took more violent forms where the policemen raided the dormitories, arresting 30 students and badly beating 47. A university student, Vedat Demircioğlu, sank into coma and passed away as a result. On the other side, the students organized the US 6th Fleet protest actions and in a very dramatic event, the students threw the landed American soldiers back to the sea.

The Idea Clubs Federation or FKF started to take a more militant shape throughout the 1968 and 1969, organizing peasant and worker actions and clashing with the police forces and paramilitary. The federation changed its name to Revolutionary Youth Federation in October 1969. Youth Federation carried out another dramatic action in which the students burned the automobile of an American bureaucrat in the campus of Middle East Technical University (Alper 2009, p. 396-399; STMA, 1988, p. 2084-2085). As I will mention in the following pages, Youth Federation would gave birth to other revolutionary organizations by 1970 and 1971 which would radicalize the theatre artists further.

A mention must be made of the public servants, and particularly the teachers as another organized and highly intellectual group. As I have already shown, the teachers became an important social force after they were organized under TÖS. Just before the military coup of March 12, 1971, TÖS had 72.000 members and 522 branch offices all around Turkey (Altunya, 1998, p. 85). TÖS started a series of mobilizations

and campaigns in order to claim the democratic and economic rights of the teachers and gathered together the Revolutionary Education Council in September 1968. In 1969 it started to organize mass rallies, the first of which was the “Great March for Education”, which gathered together 40.000 teachers from every corner of the country in January 1969.

The gradual rise of the organization faced with the violence of the state, as every resisting left-wing organization of the time did: The General Assembly of TÖS, which gathered together in Kayseri province in July 7-9, 1969 was raided by the fascist militants of the Nationalist Movement Party and the meeting hall was burned. When, in December 1969, the TÖS organized a Teachers’ Boycott, which gathered together 110.000 teachers as the biggest teachers’ boycott in the history of the republic, the state launched a campaign of prosecution against 50.000 teachers, demoting, exiling and laying off thousands of teachers.

In line with this radicalization in the social movement, various artists and intellectuals changed their attitude from moderate socialism to a revolutionary and fervently anti-imperialist one. The attitude of the political journals of the post-1968 period had changed and they were followed by the literary magazines like *Halkın Dostları* that began to be published in March 1970. The first issue of the journal brought forward the slogan “Rush Against the Reactionary Art” and declared that “The passive attitude adopted by those “artists”, who still continue their domination, against the revolutionary struggle in Turkey accelerated our revolutionary struggle in the literary field. We are the response against this passive attitude. We are the result of the new conditions, the revolutionary struggle.” (Kılıç, 2007, p. 99).

When the translated books of the post-1968 are investigated, it can be seen that the field of publication had been radicalized in line with the social movement. Apart from the books by Marx, Engels and Lenin on the general theory of Marxism and economy-politics, Mao’s and Che’s writings on guerrilla warfare, Alberto Bayo’s selected writings with the title *What’s Guerilla?*, Marighella’s *Manual of the Urban Guerilla*, Vietnamese commander Vo Nyugen Giap’s book *The Military Art of Popular War*, Castro’s *History would Absolve Me* were among the translations that were published after 1968.

Cinema was no exception. Criticizing the passivist attitude of Sinematek, a group of young moviemakers decided to break with the association and formed Genç

Sinema circle that reflected the influence of Youth Federation's radical struggle upon the field of cinema. This circle started to publish a new journal with the same name, *Genç Sinema* and accused Sinematek of "petty-bourgeois opportunism." They made calls to "take our cameras and go on to the streets" and considered the cinema to be a tool for social justice. In their declaration Genç Sinema circle also emphasized the importance of having an organization by saying that "In order to wage a war that is oriented towards these purposes, we believe that the necessity of an organization is inevitable." As I will show in the following pages, this mood was very widespread among the artists of all the branches of cultural field and gradually the artists were looking for ways to become a part of left-wing organizations. One of the members of Genç Sinema circle, Ahmet Soner wrote about their role in the anti-imperialist mass demonstrations and the attacks of the militants of NMP:

"That year the youth movement escalated through marches, boycotts and demonstrations and ultimately peaked with the coming of the Sixth Fleet. That day, which would later be referred to as "Bloody Sunday", people walked from Beyazıt to Taksim and they were attacked while entering the square. Kuzgun Acar, Engin Ayça and I tried to display what was going on with our 16 mm cameras and Ömer Tuncer tried to the same with his 8mm camera." (Başgüney, 2007, p. 74-78)

This urge towards radicalism and going outside the streets to produce hand in hand with the social movement was the general mood among the left-wing artists of the post-1968 period. Leaving the theatre halls, performing and producing art outside the streets and the search for a new audience would become the new aesthetic ideology.

4.3.1 A Change in Paradigm: Action Theatre for Revolution

If we consider that the class struggles did and still do take aesthetic and artistic forms as well, it must be noted that not only the daily political and military clashes against ruling classes but also new artistic forms employed by the struggling left-wing forces had their effects upon the theatre art of the post-1968 period in Turkey. Extensive translations were made and long articles were written in the theatre journals regarding the situation of the revolutionary art in other countries.

Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu's bulletin of September 1968 was an example. In an article titled "Surprising Developments in the Field of Theatre", Semih Tuğrul provided a very short summary of the new forms of theatre in US. He said that,

The horrible war in Vietnam, the insolvable social problems, conflicts on race, the solidarity among all the young people and other issues led to the formation of unconventional theatre groups and to the brand new experiments in this field. These revolutionary theatre groups have some points in common: They perform their plays on the streets, in the factories, in front of temples and at the public parks (Tuğrul, 1968, p. 17).

Tuğrul also mentioned a new type of theatre named “Guerilla Theatre”, which clearly reflected the influence of the guerrilla wars all around the globe on the field of theatre:

In America we see other institutions that are following the trend of revolutionary theatre. One of them is the “GUERRILLA THEATRE”, a discovery of Peter Schumann. The artists of the Guerilla Theatre, most of whom are amateurs but highly successful and passionate, disperse through the city when strikes, faculty occupations, student boycotts and protests organized by the blacks break out and they perform plays in a simple order in the places where these actions take place (Tuğrul, 1968, p. 18).

It was not a coincidence that the Action Theatre for Revolution (DİHT) was formed in September 1968, when the discussions on the alternative forms of theatre were just brought in. The summer of 1968 had witnessed the university and factory occupations in the country, while the mass uprisings shook the world. In the midst of such developments, a number of theatre artists and intellectuals came together to form DİHT with a different idea of performing theatre: On the streets, factories, universities instead of theatre halls (DİHT, 1970).

From its begging DİHT attempted to base itself on the left-wing organizations. Its first meeting was held in one of the branch offices of Union of Teachers of Turkey and afterwards the Union gave them a working space for their rehearsals. Group also took support from the worker unions and worked in an organic relationship with them by performing plays like *The Strike* (Çelenk 1992, p. 71-82; DİHT 1970).

That the first play of the company, *The Bridge*, was about the slums in İstanbul, tells many things about the priorities and conceptions of the left-wing artists of the period. Mehmet Ulusoy, then the member of company expressed the group’s purpose as “to perform a theatre which directly gets into contact with the people” (Çelenk, 1992, p. 80). The company’s words about the quality of the audience that they want to address, reflected the clarified ideological positions of the artists:

The exploited popular masses are living on the streets, in the slums, on the soil and in the factory spaces. And the revolutionary thought has leaked in there. Slum-dwellers and the revolutionary classes are going out on the streets and a new possibility emerges: THE STREET. If one truly wants to perform a theatre of them, this theatre should be performed where they actually live (quoted by Çelenk, 1992, p. 74).

The artists of DİHT performed some short plays for the workers who were looking for jobs in the job markets (amele pazarı). Crowded by poor laborers who have nothing but their labor force to sell, these job markets have been the signature of poverty among the people in Turkey. Waking up early in the morning, DİHT toured various districts of İstanbul, where there were other job markets, to get into contact with the workers, who watched them curiously and asked questions. Sometimes artists of DİHT were invited by the peasants, whose actions turned into land expropriations by the second half of 1969 and they performed the play titled *Land Occupation* (Milliyet, 24.11.1969; Milliyet, 18.06.1969).

The working methods of the company were also quite different than the other conventional groups of the time. They carried out sociological surveys and made literature reviews before they collectively wrote their plays:

We at once hit the road. Teams of three went to the two shores of the Bosphorus. We carried out surveys with the people whose slums would be evacuated because of the bridge construction. We recorded the interviews and identified the coffeehouses and the open air locations that are suitable for the performance. We researched about for whom the dependent industrialization would be beneficial (STMA, 1988, p. 2074-2075).

Left-wing intellectuals and the political figures also supported the company through various lectures on Marxism, class struggle, economy, unionism, aesthetics and the art. Among these intellectuals, there were Fethi Naci, Can Yücel, Kemal Sülker, Kuzgun Acar and others (Çelenk, 1992, p. 73).

The new form that the theatre art took after the 1968 can be clearly seen from the development of DİHT. From its name –Revolution– to its organization and performances, DİHT indicated a break from the past tradition. In line with the left-wing ideology of the 1960s, but pushing it further under the influence of Marxism and the radicalized social movements, DİHT was the product of this period: It had a clearer conception of class society and capitalism, it identified the working class and the poor

peasants as its target mass and it was more audacious in terms of getting into contact with the masses.

4.3.2 Halk Oyuncuları and the Oppression

A fervent revolutionary discourse, merged with a Marxist emphasis on the economic structure of the country and metaphors of weapon and warfare were very widespread among the theatre artists. November 1969 bulletin of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu was no exception:

Without the knowledge of the country's economic and social structure, an artist cannot know and explain the cause of her country's backwardness, the problems of her people and the solutions to them... Now it is an inevitable duty for us to... shout and expose these truths. We are the nameless recruits of a merciless war. And we are trying to learn properly how to use our weapons to win this war (Öner, 1969, p. 15).

And this quotation is from the bulletin of Halk Oyuncuları, which was published just after the company was formed:

In our war to change this worth-to-destroy order, we need a force, an ORGANIZATION that goes beyond our individual forces. This power can only be realized if our generation which feels the same responsibility unites and choses to take action in the same organization (Halk Oyuncuları, 1969)

Whatever the similarities between the discourses of different theatre companies were, the distinctions among the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu and Halk Oyuncuları should be emphasized anyway. Because in terms of its political discourse, its plays and its experiences Halk Oyuncuları occupied a more radical space than Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu.

Halk Oyuncuları was formed during the last days of 1967, on December 21st by the politically engaged intellectual figures of the period: Among others, Vasıf Öngören, Tuncel Kurtiz, Aydın Engin and Mustafa Alabora had ties with either LPT or with the National Democratic Revolutionaries around Mihri Belli. In its bulletin published in the second year of the company in 1969, the group explained its political-artistic line as the following:

We believe that the revolutionary national Turkish theatre would be formed inside our fight to change the order. And in this stage of our people's revolutionary fight, the path that would be followed by a socialist theatre that pursues such a purpose should be to fight for the

formation of an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist culture. HO would follow this path (Halk Oyuncuları, 1969).

The first production of Halk Oyuncuları was *Devri Süleyman* by Aydın Engin. It was a humorous criticism against the government of Süleyman Demirel's JP. The play was banned many times first in March 7th, 1968 in İstanbul by the Governorship of İstanbul. The company toured to Ankara next day, and the Governorship of Ankara banned the play as well. The company changed the name of the play to *Devri Küheylan* and performed it on March 21st, 1968. Next day however, the governorship decided a new ban on the play. This ban was lifted with the decision of Council of State on March 26th (Yetkin, 1970, p. 206).

A couple of months later, on December 24th when the company was performing the play in İstanbul, the artists were attacked by a group of 50-60 people who had smoke bombs, iron sticks and nitric acid bottles in their hands. They did material harm to the settings of the play and injured a couple of people among the audience. As an answer to this attack, Halk Oyuncuları issued a declaration which claimed that their "faith of revolution is so deep rooted and firm that it can allow us to fight against the attackers by using their methods when necessary," and that they will go on their activities in a more enthusiastic manner. The police forces could arrest nobody, indicating that it was yet another state-backed attack against the left-wing artists. Next month, in January 1969, came another and more serious threat. The theatre hall of Halk Oyuncuları were set on fire by unknown individuals. And the company lost its permanent place for staging their plays (Yetkin, 1970, p. 206-215).

None of these attacks against Halk Oyuncuları was as cruel as the case of *Pir Sultan Abdal* in Dersim region of Turkey. And beyond setting an example of state's attitude towards the political theatre, *Pir Sultan* case also became a proof of the close relationship between the social movement and theatre.

Halk Oyuncuları started to perform *Pir Sultan Abdal* by Erol Toy in the 1968-1969 season. Their choice of this play was meaningful itself. I have showed that, there was a tendency among the left-wing artists to create artworks using the culture of their own people both in form and in content. Together with the developing class struggle, this idea of basing the art on the culture of one's own people was translated into a revolutionary one. This time, basing one's own culture meant basing on the revolutionary elements of one's own culture. It was no coincidence that, by 1968 two

plays appeared on the stages of the left-wing theatres: Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu staged *Simavnalı Şeyh Bedreddin* by Orhan Asena and Halk Oyuncuları *Pir Sultan Abdal* (And, 1983, p. 358; S. Şener, 1971; Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu Web Page, 2012).

These two plays were focused on the dissident heroes of the Ottoman period. Bedreddin and Pir Sultan were both executed by the rulers of the Ottoman empire because of their communitarian views and their leading and participation to the anti-Ottoman struggles. Reviving their memories would be used to indicate the rebellious history of the country's people. Apart from being a dissident figure, *Pir Sultan Abdal* was also a religious figure for the Alevi people living in Turkey.

On 23rd August 1969, the artists of Halk Oyuncuları toured to Dersim to perform *Pir Sultan Abdal* for the public. The governorship of Dersim and the Provincial Director of Security, however, banned the play. Then the provincial head of LPT, Ali Gültekin and the left-wing Kurdish lawyer Kemal Burkay intervened, called the Minister of Interior and asked for the ban to be lifted. Relying upon the promise given by the Minister of Interior Ragıp Üner, the artists of Halk Oyuncuları prepared the stage for the performance and the people of Dersim started to come to the theatre hall (Milliyet, 9.9.1969).

In front of the hall, a quarrel with the police forces turned into fighting and clashes between the people of Dersim and the police. When the police forces attempted to take Kemal Burkay and Ali Gültekin under custody and took them to the police station, the people gathered and organized a demonstration against this. As the crowd gathered in front of the police station and to ask for the release of the people under custody, police met them behind barricades, and pointed their guns at the people, which made the crowd even more angry.

After two hours of clashes between the police forces and the people, one person was killed, 11 people were wounded. The crowd had dispersed and the police forces started a two-day campaign of terror throughout the city, arresting 80 people and torturing dozens of them, among them the provincial representatives of LPT. And since the gendarmerie had arrested the artists of Halk Oyuncuları as they were trying to leave the city, the fate of the artists would be no different then the people of Dersim.

The details of the police torture were published in *Milliyet*, *Cumhuriyet* and *Akşam* newspapers of August and September. From these reports we see that even the

small children were exposed to psychological torture, beating and anal rape. The policemen were making reference to Dersim massacre of 1938 by saying to the tortured “Do you know, a new ‘38 incident started, your friends are being executed outside and we will break your bones here.” (Cumhuriyet, 10.09.1969).

The female artists of the company had been harassed and abused while the male artists were physically tortured. In a press conference held in August 29th, 1969, a member of Halk Oyuncuları, Umur Bugay explained the torture sessions as the following:

Torture chamber is in the bottom floor. We were being laid for the bastinado one by one. I cannot even tell the swearwords and there were 10 year-old children among the tortured... Person who was taken to the torture chamber was being punched by a number of people. Then he was laid for the bastinado and beaten until he went unconscious. Afterwards they were getting on our backs and we were forced to walk inside salty water... Ayberk Çölok, Nesimi Çimen, Tuncer Necmioğlu, Kemal Burkay, Ali Gültekin were taken down to the torture chamber more than once... Spitting into our mouths, ramming clubs into anuses and pulling out hair were among the tortures (Akşam, 29.08.1969)

Another artist from Halk Oyuncuları, Elif Türkan Çölok made the following explanation regarding the harassment that the female artists faced:

They took us into a separate room in police station and the softest swearword was “bitch”. A policeman pulled my hair. Another policeman said “You’ll see what a police beating and police would mean”. For a moment, they took 15-20 gendarmerie inside the room. They said “Policemen get out! Gendarmes, you can do whatever you want to these bitches” and turned off the lights. I was very scared, and I screamed (Milliyet, 29.08.1969).

I should also mention the left-wing organization’s reaction against this torturous attack. Actually, this incident stirred the left-wing organizations and triggered a series of condemnations from various locations, showing the close connection between the theatre companies and the organizations of the dominated classes. From three newspapers that were published between 24th of August to 11th of September, it can be seen that the following organizations condemned this attack and accused the government: Labor Party of Turkey, Labor Union of Theatre Workers, Union of Turkish Authors, Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearths, Association of People’s Poets, Student Union of İstanbul Technical University, Tunceli Higher Education Youth Culture Association, METU Students’ Union and the Labor Union of

Teachers of Turkey (Cumhuriyet, 25.08.1969, 30.08.1969, 11.09.1969; Milliyet, 27.08.1969, 28.08.1969).

Pir Sultan Abdal case indicated a very important turning point in the history of political theatre in Turkey. It was for the first time that a theatre company faced with such a violent oppression by the state. On the other hand, it was for the first time that a theatre piece triggered such a firm reaction by the masses as well. It worked as a catalyser for the already accumulated tensions between the people of Dersim and the government. This case should be seen as the proper example of the interaction between the political theatre, the masses and the state.

4.3.3 Tİ-SEN: Artists on Strike

Between 1968 and 1971, two important theatre strikes took place, one in 1969 and the other in 1970. Compared to the strike that took place in 1965, these two strikes were more determined and more organized, reflecting the general militant tendency of the class struggle of the period. The rhetoric was more militant and they managed to mobilize a wide support from the other artists.

The first rumours of the strike in İstanbul City Theatre started to be expressed on February 1969 but the actual decision was apparently made on 3rd of April, 1969 by Tİ-SEN (Labor Union of Theatre Workers) according to a news report on *Milliyet* newspaper (Milliyet, 4.4.1969). Later on the strike was dated to April 15th (Milliyet, 11.4.1969). The demand of the strikers was as the following:

The municipality recognized us as workers, but resists in not giving our social rights. Some of our friends are receiving only 5-8 liras daily wages. Most of the time we buy the costumes and wigs with our own money. Plus, our future is not guaranteed (Milliyet, 29.3.1969).

On 13th of May, 1969 the representatives of the municipality and the striking artists came together and made a protocol regarding the demands of the strike. According to the news reports, the strike was a victory for the strikers and they managed to sign a collective agreement. A news report published by Milliyet said that a new agreement would be on force by 1st of May, and that the wages of the artists would be increased and their transportation costs and other demands would be covered (Milliyet, 14.05.1969).

The second strike was of the artists of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu. Possibly it was encouraged by the strike of İstanbul City Theatre's artists' victory. This strike was led

by Tİ-SEN as well; however it was different in the sense that it was the strike of the artists of a private theatre company. And moreover, the artists of AST were more militant compared to the artists of İstanbul.

Thanks to the *Tiyatro 70* journal, again owned by Günay Akarsu and appeared as a successor of *Oyun* journal, the discussions around this strike could be followed without the censorship by the bourgeois newspapers of the period. Therefore, through this strike it becomes easier to follow the influence of the social movement upon the theatre.

On 21st of March, 1970 the actors of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu decided to go on a strike and on the 25th of March the strike began (Milliyet, 22.03.1970). In the April issue of *Tiyatro 70* journal, an article by the Ankara branch of Tİ-SEN, which was headed by Erkan Yücel of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, appeared. After summarizing the development and the success of AST throughout the years, the article explained how the idea of strike was shaped in the minds of the actors:

The first collective working agreement that was made for the season of 1968-69 was not put into practice by the employer and the faulty operation of the theatre company, while another fact became clearer in the theatre: When the REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE waged against the political, economical, cultural oppressions of imperialism inevitably brought a change and an advance in the consciousness of the REAL OWNERS of AST who followed the line of “Asaf Çiyiltepe Thought”, the employee-employer struggle inside AST took a REVOLUTIONARY SUBSTANCE (Tİ-SEN, 1970, p. 27).

It was not the only time that the artists of AST paid homage to the revolutionary struggle in Turkey. Same year, in their 23rd bulletin a short declaration signed as “Workers of Art” mentioned the transforming role of the class struggle with the following words:

The petit-bourgeois ideology which we were exposed to since our birth and which we could not get rid off even now, led us to adopt a silence although we knew everything and sometimes it turned us into “foxes”... Of course we would not always stay in this position, at least a newspaper that we read, a friend of us who were shot in front of our eyes, the good news about the victories won against imperialism from every corner of the world would change us. It was only possible to get out of this pit through struggle (AST Çalışanları, 1970).

In the following days of the strike, Güner Sümer, who was then the director of the company, accused the strikers of being the followers of a political purpose rather

than of their economic rights and said that the strikers wanted to “place the slogan of democratic revolutionism in the AST’s artistic action. Today, under the cover of strike, what they want to do is a junta as a result of the provocations of a group.” (Milliyet, 5.4.1970). According to Sümer, some artists were trying to capture the company with the purpose of using it in line with their political line.

The claims of Sümer were answered by Erkan Yücel again in *Milliyet* newspaper. Yücel emphasized that being involved in politics was not a crime, but rather the duty of the contemporary artist. He said that “the reactionary forces cannot hide the fact that art is for the sake of the society.” (Milliyet, 5.4.1970).

An interview with the artists that was issued on the May 1970 issue of *Tiyatro 70* said that this strike “is not only for economic benefits but also, as part of our people’s revolutionary struggle, it is against the culture of imperialism and its “dividing” and “degenerating” tendency via non-national bosses towards the revolutionary art institutions” (Çetin, 1970, p. 31).

The attempts of the artists to make connections between the revolutionary struggle in Turkey and the strike in Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, however, brought some problematic conceptualizations which might be attributed to a pragmatist approach by the artists. The distinction between national and non-national bosses, for example, was an indicator of it. When the interviewer emphasized the “non-national quality” of the owner of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu (according to the jargon of the national democratic revolutionists, this meant that owner of the theatre was actually a collaborator of imperialism) and said that it was now impossible for the artists to work with the same boss after the strike, the interviewees strongly rejected it. Erkan Yücel, one of the strikers, said that “If the employer undersigns the collective agreement, he might gain a national quality and it might be the case that we can work with him again” (Çetin, 1970, p. 33). Here the artists reduced the non-national quality of the owner of the theatre into a matter of undersigning the collective bargaining, abusing the theory of national democratic revolution in favour of their benefits.

The strike of AST ended on 27th of September after a 182 day-long struggle of the artists, a record for the artists in Turkey, which was unbroken until now. Tİ-SEN organized a press conference and declared that “with the signed collective agreement the workers earned a wage increase, they won’t play more than ten plays a week and will have a week holiday” (Milliyet, 28.9.1970).

These two strikes showed that the organizational habits of the theatre artists and their capacity to carry on collective actions had largely increased after 1968. I am not only speaking for the artists in İstanbul City Theatre and Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, who actually took part in the resistance but also for the other theatre companies and artists who supported the strike. A declaration appeared in the April issue of *Tiyatro 70* journal clearly showed this spirit of solidarity among the theatre groups.

Stating that the struggle of the workers of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu was “a part of the revolutionary movement of the people”, the declaration said that this strike was against the AST employer who tried to destroy the “ASAF ÇİYİLTEPE THOUGHT” which is in the development line of the “REVOLUTIONARY NATIONAL THEATRE MOVEMENT”, who accepted to advertise an American bank inside the theatre, who did not accept the collective agreement and who tried to split the “revolutionary unity” of AST workers.

The declaration insistently claimed to be “a part of the revolutionary movement of the theatre forces which were hegemonized by the culture of imperialism and semi-feudalism,” and it ended with slogans:

LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE AST WORKERS
LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITY OF THEATRE FORCES
LONG LIVE THE STRUGGLE OF REVOLUTIONARY Tİ-SEN
LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF OUR PEOPLE
DOWN WITH IMPERIALISM AND ITS CULTURE (*Tiyatro 70*, 1970, p. 27).

The following theatre companies undersigned the declaration: Halk Oyuncuları, Dostlar Tiyatrosu, İşçinin Tiyatrosu [Worker’s Theatre], ODTÜ Tiyatro Kulübü [METU Theatre Club], Hacettepe Üniversitesi Devrimci Oyuncular Sanat Topluluğu [Hacettepe University Revolutionary Actors Art Collective], Tİ-SEN, Ankara Birliği Sahnesi, Ayfer Feray Tiyatrosu [Ayfer Feray Theatre], Tarsus Meydan Oyuncuları [Tarsus Arena Actors], Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Tiyatrosu [Faculty of Political Science Theatre]. In their interview, the artists of AST stated that the companies like Ayfer Feray Tiyatrosu, Dostlar Tiyatrosu and İşçinin Tiyatrosu would support them financially by performing one of their plays (Çetin, 1970, p. 32).

The support to this strike did not come only from the theatre companies and artists in the field. But also other left-wing organizations from the field of politics, labor and culture had expressed their solidarity with the strikers. Let me mention the

names of these organizations: Dev-Genç, the Families of Revolutionary Martyrs, *Proletarian Revolutionist Aydınlık* journal, Sosyal-İş Labor Union, Maden-İş Labor Union, The Chamber of Electrical Engineers, Genç Sinema and Sol Publishing House (Tiyatro 70, 1970, p. 27).

An early conclusion might be drawn from these three examples regarding the influence of the relationship between the social movements and artists upon the field of theatre. Post-1968 period class struggles and their ideologies changed the way the artists lived and produced art, because they changed the artists' worldview, the way they understood the social relations. As a result their audience choices, their preference of play locations, their forms of organization had changed. This new stage was marked by a deep change in the artists' perception of the state and struggle, leading to direct clashes with the law enforcement bodies of the ruling classes.

4.3.4 TPLP-F and the Artists

The aforementioned changes in the social movement brought about other types of political organizations as well. Before 1968, the social movement's political organizations were peaceful and legal in their methods. Although there were some attempts like that of the Communist Party to go beyond this legalism, none of the left-wing movements had thought of forming an armed organization. This option was brought forward by the intellectuals and students after 1968 and first military-political organizations that aimed a radical transformation started to be formed by the year 1970. Turkey People's Army of Liberation, Turkey People's Liberation Party-Front (TPLP-F) and the political parties called Communist Party of Turkey-Marxist Leninist and Turkey Workers and Peasants Liberation Army were such organizations that emerged from the militant atmosphere of the post-1968 period. Although all of them deserve a special attention in terms of their analyses of Turkey and of their strategies and methods of revolution; I would like to dwell on TPLP-F, which was formed around the ideological and practical leadership of Mahir Çayan. Because this organization has been the most influential revolutionary political party of the period both because of its actions and ideology and of its relations with the intellectuals and artists of the country.

Instead of a political line that avoided the direct encounters with the state apparatus and blaming the foreign powers, TPLP-F claimed that the foreign capital

and its local allies were a whole and therefore the anti-imperialist reactions should be directed against the state.

It might be appropriate to provide some examples about the actions of TPLP-F to give an idea about the attitude it promoted among the intellectuals. On April 1971 TPLP-F kidnapped a businessman named Mete Has in return for ransom. On May of the same year, the organization kidnapped and killed the Israeli ambassador to Turkey, Ephraim Elrom. On the same month, the leader of the organization, Mahir Çayan and Hüseyin Cevahir clashed with the police forces. Cevahir was killed and Çayan was captured wounded. The imprisoned militants of TPLP-F escaped from the prison on November 1971 and decided to carry on the activities of the organization. On March 1972 the militants kidnapped the British agents in Ünye Radar Base and they were killed in the clashes with the military forces in Kızıldere province of Turkey (Feyizoğlu 2007, p. 356, 372, 471, 530).

The relationship between the TPLP-F and the artists was an interesting example but it was not subjected to any academic study perhaps because of the politically “dangerous” content of the issue. However the logistic and organizational support to an armed revolutionary organization by the famous artists and intellectuals of the period was not an ordinary event for the history of many social movements.

According to the interviews with various leftist theatre artists of the period, TPLP-F’s first contact with the theatre field had occurred through the artists of Halk Oyuncuları, Halil Ergün and Mustafa Alabora. TPLP-F militants, Mahir Çayan and Ulaş Bardakçı got into contact with these names.

I was performing in a play named “Devri Süleyman” in Ankara. We met with Halil Ergün there... I spent 2-3 years in Ankara. And because Halil Ergün was studying in the faculty of political science, he introduced me to Mahir Çayan, Ulaş Bardakçı and Ertuğrul Kürkçü. That’s how our revolutionary adventure started (İşeri, 2005).

The details of this relationship can be found in Yılmaz Güney’s statements in the court hearings about the “Çayan Trials”. In these statements Güney expressed that he met with Yusuf Küpeli, Ertuğrul Kürkçü and Sinan Kazım Özüdoğru thanks to Mustafa Alabora. Later on Yusuf Küpeli introduced Ulaş Bardakçı to Yılmaz Güney:

On September 1971 Küpeli sent to me a 7.33 caliber gun as a present for the birth of my son, via Mustafa Alabora. And I have sent to Küpeli a

38 caliber revolver. Since I heard from Alabora that he needed money I have sent 3 or 4 thousand liras... A while after they escaped from the prison Alabora brought me a letter from Bardakçı. They were asking for 50 thousand liras, 5 guns and 5 wigs... Over Alabora's request I packed one gun, 50 bullets, 1 wig and 5 thousand liras and gave it to Güven Şengün in order to be given to Alabora (Milliyet, 11.6.1973).

In his various interviews Halil Ergün also states that he introduced Mahir Çayan and Yusuf Küpeli, two militants of TPLP-F to Yılmaz Güney (Ergün 2008; Takvim, 15.11. 2009).

The scope of the relations of TPLP-F among the artists and intellectuals was not limited with these three figures alone. According to the data gathered from various sources like the indictments, legal statements and newspapers there were other artists affiliated with the organization as well. According to Milliyet newspaper, on 10th of July 1971, 9 Revolutionary Youth Federation members had been arrested and among them there were three theatre artists: Ayşe Emel Mesci, Avni Yalçın and Mustafa Coşkun (Milliyet, 1971). According to their statements, these three artists had been tortured in the police station to where they had been taken (Amaç, 1971).

Apart from these theatre artists, many writers and intellectuals were either taken under custody or arrested after the armed actions of the organization. Just to mention some of their names: Azra Erhat, Yaşar Kemal, Vedat Günyol, Sabahattin Eyüboğlu, Fakir Baykurt, Mümtaz Soysal were such intellectuals who were taken under custody after The Operation Sledgehammer.

The importance of TPLP-F in terms of its influence over the theatre was not ideological in the direct sense. Because the ideology of the organization differentiated itself from the theory of national democratic revolution only after when the Çayan's work Uninterrupted Revolution I-II-III was completed in February 1972.

The existence and the actions of TPLP-F, however, could be said to have made a significant impact on the artists' and intellectuals' habitus. It can be observed even from this short summary of events that the relations and the habits of the artists deeply differed even in a couple of years. In TPLP-F case the artists did not hesitate to get into contact with armed militants, to hide them in their flats and to support them logistically. In many cases these intellectuals and artists faced violence and torture. I claim that these indicate a clear change in the attitudes of the artists towards the state and the struggle. Their conception of the petit-bourgeois intellectual who was isolated

from the practical militant struggle had been replaced by a militant conception of artist who actively takes part in the legal and illegal activities of the political organizations. This also shows how the artists went beyond the traditional set of knowledge they accumulate through the years. Procedures of illegality, general knowledge about the needs of the militant struggle, the experience of spending some time in the prison: these became the kind of information that characterized the artists of post-1968 period.

4.3.5 Turkey As Perceived by the Companies and Artists

It can be seen from this summary of the events that the attitude of the theatre artists of the post-1968 period had significant differences from that of the first and second period. Their views about the social structure of the country and its problems; their perceptions of the enemy as the real creators of this problem and their proposals for the solution had changed deeply. This transformation influenced their artistic views as well. Under this section, I will analyse the artistic discourses of the various individual artists and companies depending on the texts published in various journals.

Before the explanations on the aesthetic and political ideology of the artists, it will be better to give a short summary about the most influential political theory of the post-1968 period, the theory of national democratic revolution. The founders of the NDR claimed that Turkey was a semi-feudal country that was dependent on imperialism. Apart from the feudal landlords, there were the collaborator capitalists which shared the same interests with the imperialists. These tripartite block was exploiting the resources of the country while they prevented the development of a national economy that is based on the own demands of the nation: "Imposed by the imperialist block and primarily by America on Turkey, the economical policy strengthens the situation of our country as a dependent agricultural country" (Belli, 1970a, p. 202).

Profiting from this situation were the collaborator capitalists that based their wealth on this dependency. They had a certain interest from the underdevelopment of the forces of production in Turkey. Therefore, the collaborator capitalists were non-national and they were rather acting like the extensions of the imperialists (Şener M., 2006, p. 166-167). Another class, the feudal landlords were also involved in this reactionary power block, because they were also benefiting from the anti-democratic order of Turkey, which have been ignoring the basic rights of the citizens and thus

allowing the feudal class to maintain its exploitation and status quo. Also as a reactionary and obsolete mode of production the feudalism was a huge barrier in front of the national development.

Theorists of NDR claimed that under these conditions it was impossible for the left-wing social forces of Turkey to directly fight for socialism. The historical development of the forces of production was making it impossible to make a socialist revolution in Turkey before the national independence was gained and a national democracy was established. The working class was weak in number and in consciousness; the other dominated classes and sections like the peasantry, petit-bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie would only be pushed towards the reactionary block, if the revolutionaries talked about a socialist revolution. The ground for a socialist revolution could only be set after a national democratic revolution that would gather together all the progressive dominated classes under a “national front” and overthrow the reactionary power block just to nationalize the non-national components of the economy and democratize the country (Lipovsky 1992, p. 111-112; M. Şener 2006, p. 177-178).

This theory became the mainstream among the theatre artists of the period as well. Almost all the left-wing theatre companies were under either the direct or indirect influence of the NDR and they used the main concepts of it in their analysis about the conditions of Turkey.

The declaration of the Stage Theatre of Political Science Faculty of Ankara University (STPSF) that was published in May 1970 issue of *Tiyatro 70* could be a good example to the direct influence of the theory of NDR over the theatre.

STPSF's views about the social and cultural structure of Turkey was directly taken from the theory of NDR. It had an openly pronounced anti-imperialist tone and it called for national independence. It also denounced “semi-feudalism and its reactionary culture”. In the paragraphs devoted to the analysis of the role of the bourgeoisie and proletariat, STPSF made the following statement:

In the age of imperialism, bourgeoisie is out of its revolutionary gunpowder and it has lost its historical power to make the revolutions (BOURGEOIS DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONS) which would advance the societies, namely increase the level of the production relations compared to the past, would settle the independence and democracy and would make the property relations dependent on more

humanitarian principles. In the age of imperialism, ideological, political and organizational leadership and the ability to command the popular masses now belong to the working class, which is the most revolutionary and consistent national liberationist class of the history.

In this case, the national democratic revolutions that must be made are the part of PROLETARIAN REVOLUTIONS but not the bourgeois democratic revolutions... The leader of the national theatre movement will be the proletariat and its ideology which have the feature of national liberationism and which wages an uncompromising war against the imperialism and its collaborators in all the fields of the society (SBF Sahne Tiyatrosu, 1970, p. 35).

Apart from the proletariat, the other class allies of the STPSF were the peasants and the military-civil intellectuals. Therefore it claimed that the liberation struggle against imperialism would be waged by “all the national classes that have a naturally revolutionary aspect.” In the same line, STPSF proposed to form a “National Theatre Movement” and a “United Front” that would be composed of all the “national classes” to fight against imperialist culture (SBF Sahne Tiyatrosu, 1970, p. 35).

Another adaptation of the NDR to the field of theatre, came from Tİ-SEN, the labor union which organized the ICT and AST strikes of 1969 and 1970. In a short article which explained the main principles of the organization, Tİ-SEN presented a short analysis regarding the class positions in Turkey as they were perceived by them:

In our age, the “NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONS”, which would take place under the leadership of the ideological and political organizational leadership of the working class, are the part of the proletarian revolutions. In this struggle waged against imperialism, the vanguard proletariat collaborates with the all other pro-national social strata whose benefits objectively contradict with imperialism. Naturally, among them there are the ones who have petit-bourgeois longings but also a pro-national potential.

Tİ-SEN also suggested an analysis of the political positions in the field of theatre, which divided the field into two as “the theatres which are ruled directly by the imperialism” and the ones “that the imperialism cannot rule directly”:

It is possible to win the theatres, which are ruled directly by the imperialism, to the ranks of revolution only after the national democratic power is realized. It is a fact that the interests of the bourgeois-origin employees and employers of the private theatres which the imperialism cannot directly rule but kept under its hegemony, are objectively in contradiction with imperialism (Tİ-SEN Ankara Şubesi, 1970, p. 20).

In another declaration Tİ-SEN attempted to clarify the class positions of these theatre owners with reference to the theory of NDR and said that such kind of theatre owners should not be confused with “collaborator bourgeoisie – feudalism (imperialism)”:

Today in Turkey, our labor union is addressing the theatre owners who have the status of employers but cannot be considered to be in the counter-revolutionary ranks. Because, to compare an American employer or an holding employer with the aforementioned employers, to consider them to be in the same ranks would only make the things easier for imperialism, it is to be deceived (Tİ-SEN, 1970, p. 15).

The influence of NDR could not be felt more anywhere else than it had been in Ankara Birliği Sahnesi (ABS). Established by a group of artists who left Halk Oyuncuları in 1969 as a result of a political dispute, ABS started to publish its own journal called *Ankara Birliği Dergisi* and there they gave place to the writers like Vasıf Öngören, Gün Zileli and Halil Ergün, among others. The most interesting thing, however, was that, in the first issue of the journal an article by Mihri Belli, the famous theoretician of the theory of NDR, appeared.

The editorial article of the first issue of *Ankara Birliği Dergisi* made an explanation regarding their perceptions of the recent conditions in the world and in Turkey. No wonder that the journal emphasized the importance of national democratic revolutions and culture against imperialism and its allies:

In our age, the most important problem is the struggle between the oppressed nations and imperialism... The centers of war against imperialism appear in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The liberation of Turkey depends on the liberation of the peoples of the world... Turkey is under the guardianship of imperialism and hosting semi-feudal relations, and here the next revolutionary step before us is the National Democratic Revolution. The main enemy of our struggle for independence and democracy is the imperialism, which is the main supporter of the world-wide reactionism. The imperialist front headed by America is the enemy of all the peoples of the world... Our age is a time where the revolutions led by the bourgeoisie have vanished and where the proletariat as the most revolutionary class left its mark on the revolutions... This struggle can only be waged with the leadership of its ideology –the theory of socialism... Under the leadership of this proletarian ideology, the entire national classes and strata should struggle for the sake of national revolutionary culture (Ankara Birliği, 1970).

Seven pages long, Belli's article was the longest in the journal. Here Belli emphasized the vanguard role of the proletariat but in line with the theory of NDR, he also brought forward the importance of "petit-bourgeois origin civil-military intellectual group" and their "revolutionary ideology Kemalism" as the allies of proletariat (Belli, 1970b).

Belli also made an extended analysis of the cultural field in the same article. This Marxian analysis was a reminiscent of the former pre-1965 discussions on the concept of popular theatre and on to what extent the foreign examples could be adopted by the artists in Turkey. We see, however, a more class conscious and elaborate evaluation compared to the former discussions on the same topic.

Belli separated the field of culture into three: Imperialist culture, semi-feudal culture and national revolutionary culture. Contrary to the critics who strongly rejected any foreign influence, Belli warned the reader about rough generalizations on any of these cultures. He said that one should be very careful about the reactionary and progressive contents of any cultural product regardless of its country of origin:

The awareness against the imperialist culture does not mean to adopt a negative attitude against everything of imperialist western origin... In the imperialist west there is also the progressive culture as the reflection of the struggle of the revolutionary forces. And it is a must to establish ties with the revolutionary cultures all around the world to stand successfully against the degenerative effect of imperialist culture... Regardless of its origin, every culture that inspires the revolutionary consciousness and the longing for an honoured life is revolutionary culture (Belli, 1970b, p. 9).

Same perspective was applied on the issue of feudal culture as well. Belli stated that the feudal culture must be evaluated from a Marxist framework and its reactionary and progressive elements should be separated. Thus he brought forward a dialectical understanding regarding the quality of the historical and popular aspects of culture:

To turn our backs to the old culture cannot be a revolutionary attitude. Every national revolutionary culture should be based on its historical roots. We have a great folklore and a great popular culture which has both the feudal elements and popular elements. We should sort out the rotten elements and adopt the strong ones (Belli, 1970b, p. 9).

The famous playwright Vasıf Öngören, in his article titled "The National Theatre is Revolutionary Theatre", attempted draw a general outline for an alternative

political theatre and based his understanding on an analysis of the conditions of the country, again in line with NDR. He also stated that Turkey should wage a war of national independence against imperialism and its collaborators. According to Öngören, “the struggle against the oppression of imperialist and feudal culture can only be waged under the leadership of the cultural views of the working class, namely of socialist ideology” (Öngören, 1970a, p. 14).

In the light of Belli’s arguments and of theory of NDR, Öngören analysed the historical development of the theatre in Turkey as well. According to him, the art of theatre was introduced to the country in a period when the Ottoman Empire started to be hegemonized by imperialism. Therefore, he concluded that the development of the art of theatre in Turkey was under the supervision of non-national, collaborator classes. That was why the theatre of that period was mostly composed of translations and adaptations of foreign plays at that time.

Öngören also tried to explain the increasing number of private theatres and the plays written in Turkish. He argued that the proliferation of private theatres and the Turkish plays after 1950s coincided with the newly rising collaborator bourgeoisie of the Menderes period: “This parvenu class did not have any kind of ties with the globe, except the economic ones and could only understand those who speak their own language,” he said. His claim was that, although the new plays were in Turkish, they were still serving to the interests of the collaborators. He emphasized that the birth of national theatre “should be grasped in class terms”; therefore the emergence of Turkish-writing playwrights was not a per-se indicator of a national theatre. The theatre of 1960s, according to Öngören, was “non-national in terms of its purposes and of the needs that it tries to satisfy,” (Öngören, 1970a, p. 16, 25).

Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu was no exception to this general Marxist and anti-imperialist tendency. Actually, the head of Ankara branch of Tİ-SEN, Erkan Yücel was one of the actors of AST. And as I have shown, the elements of the theory of NDR could be easily spotted in the declarations of this labor union of the artists. Like Ankara Birliği Sahnesi, AST published the articles of the foremost theoreticians of NDR in its bulletin. An article by Gün Zileli, a member of Revolutionary Youth Federation, titled “Proletarian revolutionary Culture and Art” was an example to this. He started his analysis of culture and art with a general evaluation of the conditions of the country:

Our country is a semi-dependent, semi-colonial country which is under the oppression of imperialism. In line with this, the dominant culture is the imperialist and semi-feudal culture in our country today. The culture of the imperialist monopolist bourgeoisie and the reactionary culture of the residues of feudalism and of brokers and merchants are allied against the revolutionary culture of our people.

In this article, Zileli also attempted to make a general evaluation of the field of culture and arts from a class perspective and diagnosed a general petit-bourgeois tendency in the field:

When we look at many theatre pieces and literary works, which came forward with the claim of being socialist, we see that they are originating mainly from the petit-bourgeois ideology, although they are influenced by the proletarian thought (Zileli, 1970, p. 13).

The prevalence of Marxism and its pro-NDR interpretation among the theatre companies can be clearly seen from these quotations. In one sense, these analyses reflected the growing power of the left-wing organizations and of their actions among the artists.

The article was published in the October issue of *Tiyatro 70* journal under the title of “A Critique of the Declaration of Stage Theatre of the Political Science Faculty” and undersigned as İşçinin Tiyatrosu. Mehmet Ulusoy was the founder and the foremost figure of İşçinin Tiyatrosu and possibly it was him who wrote the article. As the title suggests, the article was criticizing the thoughts of the STPSF by attacking its nationalist deviation and it was bringing forward an alternative strategy of revolution: Democratic popular revolution instead of national democratic revolution.

Arguing that “some theatres are escaping from the word “class” as if they are escaping from the devil”, the article devoted a number of paragraphs to criticize the concept of nation, “national classes” and “national democratic revolution” as used by STPSF and introduced the concept of “uninterrupted revolution”.

The article stated that the STPSF was confused when it said that it wanted a “culture of national democratic popular power”. Because although the proletariat would form a “united front” together with its allies, the ideology of this front should not be considered as a mixture of the ideas of different classes and strata under the name of “national culture”:

In the popular power, where the working class would dominate the political, ideological and organizational fields, the other allied forces of the working class would be represented. But all these would take place

in the process of uninterrupted revolution... The thoughts, perceptions and worldviews of the classes, groups and strata that form this “united front” cannot be merged and shown as single “common thoughts”... Let us repeat, inside the process of uninterrupted revolution, the popular power that would ensure the pre-conditions of the “socialist power” is not permanent (İşçinin Tiyatrosu, 1970b, p. 11).

By making reference to Lenin’s words which claimed the national culture to be a “deception”, İşçinin tiyatrosu warned that the idea of “national culture” as a classless unity which united the different worldviews of different classes did not exist. İşçinin Tiyatrosu also added that the concept of “national classes” was problematic:

According to us, the main reason why they used the concept of national classes is that they are implying the existence of “national bourgeoisie”, through which they covertly isolate the liberation struggle for popular power from class struggle (İşçinin Tiyatrosu, 1970b, p. 11).

Rejecting the possibility of a “national bourgeoisie” in Turkey, the article claimed that the “exploiter local finance-capital, which is the toy of universal finance-capital” is among the primary enemies of the “revolutionary popular front”. İşçinin Tiyatrosu did not reject the leadership of the proletariat in the struggle for liberation but the only problem was the concepts used to describe it:

To describe it as “national liberationist class” and to flood it with the lullabies of nationalism, however, is a costly attitude that harms the universal alliance of the working classes and isolates it within its own limits (İşçinin Tiyatrosu, 1970b, p. 11).

This article was the only criticism directed towards the nationalist and Kemalist tendencies of the theory of NDR from the theatre field. It was correct in emphasizing that there was no national bourgeoisie in Turkey that can be an ally for the struggle for liberation and in saying that the process of uninterrupted revolution for the popular power should not be mistaken with national democratic revolution, for it was just a previous step for the socialist revolution. The writer of the article, however was mistaken in totally rejecting the national aspect of the struggle. It was possible that this rejectionism blinded him/her to the fact that in Turkey there have been a national problem that must be solved as well.

Unfortunately, the theatre artists and critics of the period ignored the Kurdish question either by resorting to a national liberationism influenced by Kemalist discourse that focused on the national liberation of Turkish people alone; or by resorting to an anti-national class perspective that completely missed out the national

question. As I have shown, the Pir Sultan Abdal incident was one of the cases in which the Kurdish problem came to the fore, but still a silence was kept regarding the Kurdish issue. One of the rare references to the Kurdish question, came from the Union of Artists' of Turkey in its founding declaration and they said that they were protesting the "inhumane torture and oppression launched against the people living in Eastern Anatolia" (Türkiye Sanatçılar Birliği, 1970, p. 38).

I hope that the radical transformation of the artists' perspectives on the conditions of the country can be clearly seen from this narration. New concepts were introduced from the growing body of Marxist literature; the perception of the artists regarding the social structure of Turkey and the way they chose their friends and enemies had changed. Even the artists' and critics' habit of writing was transformed and their articles had become full of economic and political analysis, leaving aesthetic concerns behind. Of course, all these changes triggered a reformation in the artistic choices of the population. The concepts of artistic discourse had changed, and eventually the artists redefined the role of the art in the face of the new allies and new enemies stemming from their analyses.

4.3.6 New Spaces, New Audience and New Responsibilities

Reading the long pages of the theatrical articles that were written in 1970, one can be amazed with the enthusiasm among the theatre artists. The search for a new audience, the call to replace the conventional theatre halls with the streets, villages and slums and the duties attributed to the theatre artists can be seen in every single page.

Özdemir Nutku's article, "What should be the socialist theatre's strategy of turning to the people?" might be an example that investigated the aesthetic strategies for the socialist theatre. In this article Nutku asked: "What should we do to make the socialist, namely the revolutionary theatre more effective?" His answer started from a general evaluation of the economic conditions of the dominated classes and the oppressions of the state. Nutku approvingly quoted Nesin's words on these issues:

... the first obstacle that comes to my mind is that the economic conditions of the people might prevent them from going to the theatre. While the people cannot go to the theatre because of economic concerns, the revolutionary theatres cannot go to the people again because of economic conditions... And there is the attacks and raids of the reactionary forces... But the bigger and more important thing is

what we call as “the reverse accumulation”, the fact that the people stand against their own interests as a result of the education and propaganda of the ruling classes for centuries (Nutku, 1970, p. 5).

Here Nutku attempted to find the ways for the theatre to change the society in a revolutionary way. In line with this idea, he suggested that in order for theatre to be capable of changing the people, it should understand the characteristics of the each popular class and divided the dominated classes into three: The peasants in the villages, the middle-class and the working class who lived in the slum districts of the cities. He claimed that each of these classes had their own artistic habits and should be treated accordingly, if the theatre was to be effective (Nutku, 1970, p. 6).

Take the peasants. Nutku indicated that the artistic habits of the peasants are mostly in favour of village spectacles, a traditional and popular form of performance by the peasants themselves. He suggested that if a theatre company could combine the elements of village spectacles with contemporary elements that would be the best way to address the audience. He proposed, on the other hand, a totally different approach for the urban middle class. Nutku said that the urban middle class mostly liked “realist” theatre productions which had the element of illusion in them. So, in contrast to the demonstrative [göstermeci] theatre, the urban theatre companies that addressed to the middle-classes should perform realistic [benzetmeci] plays (Nutku, 1970, p. 6).

Coming to urban working classes, Nutku proposed an “entertaining” theatre, in which the songs, melodies and dances would be performed for the audience in an open form. He considered the “cabaret theatre form” to be the most suitable form for these classes. In the conclusion part Nutku emphasized that “We cannot suggest a single form of theatre for a class society; we have to identify the separate forms that are most suitable for each class.” (Nutku, 1970, p. 6).

While the other politically oriented articles of the period that tried to define the role of the theatre had an enthusiastic and style, as I will show soon, Nutku’s article employed a more neutral style that tried to be “scientific”, possibly because of his academician role. But still, the changing values, concepts and responsibilities attributed to the art could easily be spotted. For example, he accepted the idea of Marxist theatre to be the correct perspective without any doubt:

As the artists of country which is semi-dependent and still not achieved a economic and political autonomy, we can’t think of any

other theatre view apart from the one which is the dynamo of its people and which carries out its duties within the contemporary worldview and under the light of materialist dialectics (Nutku, 1970, p. 5).

The influence of Marxism and the rising social movement over the theatre critics is obvious here. Compared to the former articles, here the writer used the concepts of Marxism and of the theory of NDR in his aesthetic formulation. It proves that not only the general understanding of society, but also the artistic mentality of the period had been under the influence of the ideology of the left-wing organizations. It must be, however, said that Nutku's approach towards the classes and forms was very mechanic and obviously it was basing on some patterns in his mind.

Without a doubt, there were more radical positions regarding the role of culture in the revolutionary struggle. One of them was represented by Mihri Belli, in his aforementioned article. As the theoretician of NDR, Belli loved to stress the national aspect of art if it wanted to be revolutionary proper. His claim was that "having a massive quality means that a culture is nationalized" and added: "In this historical period, in terms of the revolutionary form, our culture is obliged to be national and to have a quality that quickens the process of being a nation." But still, despite his Kemalist tendencies, Belli was a communist and aware of the class aspect of the art. Thus he said that "inevitably the national revolutionary culture has a class quality... and as the culture of a certain class, the national revolutionary culture is obliged to reflect the social struggle of the proletariat of Turkey and of the petit-bourgeoisie, primarily the peasants" (Belli, 1970b, p. 12).

Another article, the declaration of STPSF, which I have already analysed, was more enthusiastic and politically engaged in terms of its style and of the duties that it attributed on theatre. It was clear that the group was under the influence of NDR in terms of its artistic position as formulated by Belli. They coined the term "National Theatre Movement" and talked about turning it into one of the "weapons of the struggle for the liberation" and defined its role as such:

...to bring anti-imperialist, anti-feudal consciousness to the audience, to call them (the audience) to the struggle for independence and real democracy by exposing the mechanism of exploitation, to tell that their real longings and interests could be realized only through an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle by criticising and by convincing the audience (SBF Sahne Tiyatrosu, 1970, p. 35).

The group stressed that the “national theatre movement and its aesthetic dimensions that it will take on should be a part of the proletarian aesthetic” and stressed that “the theatre forces are to and obliged to take their place in this struggle.” No different than what Belli said.

This emphasis on the national aspect of the culture, however, had nationalist tones and I had also shown how it was criticized in an article by İşçinin Tiyatrosu. Rather than emphasizing the national aspect, this company carried on its consistently class based perspective in its aesthetic ideology as well. Maybe that was why they were more audacious in challenging the conventional forms of theatre. After making an extended quotation from an unknown book on the Vietnamese artists during the Vietnam War of Liberation, İşçinin Tiyatrosu problematized the issue of the performance space and criticized the companies that still performed their plays in the theatre halls for a petit-bourgeois audience:

Some so-called revolutionary theatre artists imagine that they would form the revolution and revolutionary theatre together with bourgeois and petit-bourgeois audience between four walls. But in an environment which was attuned to the consumption needs of the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie, they are performing a theatre of consuming the revolution. The degeneration of the revolutionary theatre this way is alienating the function of the art –standing by the labourer masses and raising their class consciousness (İşçinin Tiyatrosu, 1970a, p. 45).

This quotation might be seen as the reflection of a political dispute in the field of revolutionary politics: Should the revolutionaries focus on the petit-bourgeois military-civil intellectuals or on the proletariat? İşçinin Tiyatrosu answered this question as the following:

The claim of performing a revolutionary theatre is only possible by standing by the classes which could make the revolution and by being taking place in their fight. We can find these people only in slums, in front of the gates of the factories and on the muddy streets, not on the velvet seats, with a price of 10-15 liras per person. Just like the revolutionary theatre artists of Vietnam have found their audience not in the Saigon palaces full of America and its bastards but among the Vietnamese who wage a war of liberation consciousness (İşçinin Tiyatrosu, 1970a, p. 45).

Obviously, the political perspectives of the artists played an important role in shaping their aesthetic ideologies. And by saying that, I don’t mean only the content of the plays but also the artists’ choices of audience and location were determined by

their position and by the parties that they were affiliated in the field of revolutionary politics.

The search for a new aesthetic position in line with the needs of the developing social movement can also be spotted among the pages of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu's bulletin, in the article written by Gün Zileli. In the second part of his article, Zileli outlined the main roles and responsibilities of the revolutionary culture:

An author, a poet, a theatre actor should become the student of the masses before it teaches something to them with the play that he plays. She should learn from the masses by living inside the struggles of the masses. She should systematize the things that she learned from the masses under the light of the revolutionary ideology, she should gather together dispersed ideas and facts and should transfer the systematized ideas and facts again to the masses inside her work. Proletarian art will absolutely develop in the midst of the revolutionary struggle of the masses. There is no other way (Zileli, 1970, p. 14).

The continuity and the discontinuity in the aesthetic discourse of the theatre artists can be spotted clearly here: The aesthetic discourse of the pre-1968 period, which emphasized the slogan of "art for society's sake", which urged the artists to be with the lower classes was still alive among the theatre artists. This time however, this left-wing attitude was stronger with its awareness of the different classes among the dominated sections of the society and with its emphasis on the art of the struggle, revolution and liberation, instead of former's dependency on the state apparatus for the development of theatre.

The most comprehensive, but still disputable, analysis regarding the politics of theatre aesthetics came from Vasıf Öngören in his two part article titled "National Theatre is Revolutionary Theatre", some part of which I already explained. In this article Öngören too points to a revolutionary direction in the theatre by claiming that:

Of course it is very hard to write plays in contemporary level...by answering the needs of the non-national dominant classes. It is very hard to make interventions to the conditions of our country through a non-contemporary stage. And actually, to intervene to the conditions of the country is to stand against the dominant classes (Öngören, 1970b, p. 40).

According to Öngören, the class aspect was at the heart of all the discussions on the theatre. It was the main reason why the theatre in Turkey was underdeveloped: Because it was serving to the non-national, collaborator classes. Against it, Öngören

suggested that the theatre art should be politically revolutionised, if the artists wanted to create an aesthetic innovation and to become a part of the contemporary international theatre art. To revolutionise the theatre meant to change its non-national class status. Öngören asked whether it was possible for the national bourgeoisie to lead the society or not, and he answered that the quality of national leadership belonged to the working class:

This means that, the first thing to do in order to bring a national quality to the theatre is to change the stage in line with the ideas of the working class. It is necessary that the dialectical understanding of history and the dialectical method, which are the guides for the actions of this class, should be used by the stage as well (Öngören, 1970b, p. 40-41).

One can observe the changing values of the artists here. From a classless Kemalist perspective into a Marxism which called for a dialectical approach in the theatre. Öngören does not only emphasize the ideological aspect of the political theatre, but urges the theatre artists to take part in the class struggle: "Theatre becomes a national theatre by physically participating to this struggle, by carrying out its duties in it and by contributing to it," (Öngören, 1970b, p. 40-41).

Öngören made another separation between the class position and ideology of the state and of the audience. While he stated that the stage can only be national and revolutionary by adopting the ideology of the working class, he suggested that the audience could be composed of all national classes and strata. According to him the revolutionary stage had the responsibility of raising the consciousness of the all these classes in line with the ideology of proletariat: "The purpose of the revolutionary stage is clear; to raise the consciousness of the national forces and to canalize them" (Öngören, 1970b, p. 43).

The playwright was also aware of the fact that these ideas about the revolutionary theatre in general were the products of the social movement. In another passage, Öngören indicated how tight was the relationship between the politics and theatre:

The national theatre cannot be thought separately from the general actions and cannot be isolated from this struggle. It is the conditions of the period that we are living in, which made us feel the need for a national theatre. Only after the national struggle for liberation started that the non-national quality of the current theatre was felt. Even the

high number of statements about the national theatre is a proof of this (Öngören, 1970b, p. 43).

Just like the declaration of Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, which admitted the transforming effect of the class struggle upon the theatre, Vasıf Öngören too had a self-awareness and pointed to the importance of the social movement in the formation and the future of revolutionary theatre.

It was not only the private theatres that were assigned new responsibilities, but also the amateur theatres were called for an action. Remember the article by Mehmet Akan in the July 1964 issue of *Oyun* journal, in which he made several suggestions for the amateur theatre artists. I have shown that Akan's thinking was typical for the pre-1965 period, when the intellectuals still had expectations from the state. Together with 1968, however, the amateurs were assigned new duties; and this time they were expected to serve the revolution:

Now the revolutionary amateurs should find a brand new way of telling, a brand new aesthetics... to warn the labouring classes and to raise their consciousness. They are obliged to not to go inimical to the their own people's historical accumulation, culture and art even for a single moment (Tiyatro 70, 1970, p. 40).

This quotation is from an announcement made by *Tiyatro 70* journal about a playwriting competition the purpose of which is to "provide the revolutionary amateurs with new plays". This announcement called the amateur theatre artists to stand "side by side with the revolutionaries".

In the same issue of the journal another article by Üstün Kırdar, titled "To the Revolutionary Amateurs of Anatolia" was also dealing with the tasks of the amateur theatre artists. Two themes are worth to pay attention because they show how the former aesthetic ideology was given a new shape under the influence of revolutionary ideas. One of them was the duty of being among the people and enlightening them and second was the issue of finding popular forms instead of foreign adaptations. Kırdar stated that,

If we are revolutionaries, if we want to reach to the revolution that we are longing for and want our society to reach the order that we believe, then we are obliged to work for this purpose in all our efforts, in every single work we do even for pleasure and to join this war as much as we can do... [T]o direct all the power, all the creativity and all the skills towards the revolutionary action should be the primary duty of all the revolutionaries (Kırdar, 1970).

Kirdar suggested that the amateurs had to have a revolutionary perspective when they were to choose the social events and situations as the content of their plays. And when it came to the appropriate form of theatre that the amateurs should adopt, Kirdar warned the youngsters about the dangers of petit-bourgeois aesthetic views on the superiority of Western forms of theatre: "Never forget that an essence that was wrapped with forms that were imported from Germany and France would always fall short, would lose its effectiveness..." Instead the amateur artists had to follow the values and aesthetic tastes of the people if they really wanted to perform a revolutionary and left-wing theatre: "Not the western thinkers and the data from the western culture, but it is you who will find the best and most correct form that conveys the revolutionary essence to the labourer people of Turkey..." (Kirdar, 1970).

When the aesthetic ideology of the pre-1965 period and post-1968 period is compared, the changing worldviews and artistic values could easily be spotted. From their perceptions of the conditions of the country to their aesthetic judgements, the artists went through a deep transformation. The conception of a society that didn't have any irreconcilable contradictions was replaced by a class society understanding that opposed the various classes and strata against each other. This led to the conclusion that institutions of the ruling class should be stood against, while the left-wing institutions should be backed and developed.

When this was the case, the artists were urged to perform a theatre that would fight side by side with the classes and groups that would solve the contradictions of the society. To an extent, the left-wing discourse of the pre-1965 period served as the seed of this revolutionary attitude. Theatre artists and intellectuals departed from the old Kemalist idea of working among the people and with the state apparatus to develop the Turkish society, and thanks to the growing influence of Marxism-Leninism and the strengthening left-wing organizations, they elaborated their conceptions of the masses and the state and arrived to the conclusion that to be with the people, to develop the country would only be possible through revolution. And the art of theatre had to play an active role in this struggle for revolution by addressing the concerns and problems of the people, by pointing out the causes of these problems in order to raise their consciousness.

Aware of the dialectical relationship between the revolution and the large masses, and thanks to their historical sensitivity towards the problems of the lower

classes, the artists knew that this new content needed a new form which would be accessible and appreciated by the dominated classes. That was why the discussion on the “national” theatre came to the agenda and sometimes it took the form of hostility towards “non-national” forms and techniques of theatre.

It must be said, however, that compared to the first half of 1960s, such kind of reservations were less in quality and quantity. After all, the influence of the international revolutionary struggle and its artistic experiences were among the main sources of the political theatre in Turkey. Therefore, before concluding this chapter, I must mention the effects of the international artistic experiences upon the theatre art in Turkey.

4.4 The Impact of International Artistic Movements

Political theatre in Turkey owed very much to the developments in the international arena. Due to the fact that the art of theatre in Turkey was dependent on the theories and the practice of the imported from the developed capitalist countries and it had no established national theatre tradition compared to the German, French and Italian examples.

This inexperience led the artists to look for international theoretical resources and practical examples of the theatre, even to establish a national and political theatre. Despite all the reservations expressed in various media about the alien character of foreign forms of art, they still had a great influence on the artists’ perception. The global rise of the national liberation movements by the colonized countries, however, extended this sphere of influence and it became easier for the artists’ to learn from others by overcoming their prejudices. The internationalist emphasize of the theory of NDR played a role in this tendency.

Two ways of international influence can be identified. One of them was through the artists of Turkey who spent a certain amount of time for their education. It is an interesting fact that the many of the preeminent left-wing theatre artists of the period took a formal education from various theatre institutes in Germany, France, Austria and USA.

It might be useful to briefly mention these individuals and their international sources of influence. I have already shown that Haldun Taner was among the most influential playwrights of the period and he went to Vienna to study theatre in Max

Reinhardt Theatre Institute, where he spent two years and he turned back in 1957. While he was abroad, he saw Brecht productions and tried to introduce the German playwright into the Turkey's theatre literature.

Vasif Öngören was among the most 'hardcore' Brechtian playwrights in Turkey. He too was influenced by the socialist playwright when he was in East Germany between 1961 and 1966. He worked with the Brecht's company Berliner Ensemble and thoroughly studied the Brechtian epic (Yüksel, 1999). When he came to Turkey he worked in Halk Oyuncuları and afterwards he found, together with his colleagues Ankara Birliği Sahnesi, where he staged his Brechtian plays. Öngören was repeatedly emphasizing the uniqueness of the epic theatre in his interviews and articles. He claimed that,

The revolutionary classes are absolutely will be using, or at least will take as a starting point the epic system as a system. Because the epic system is the only Marxist theatre system that can be used for revolutionary purposes (Öngören, 1970c).

In another article he again said that "From a Marxist angle, the system which is the fundamental condition of the contemporary theatre, is the epic system," (Öngören, 1970b, p. 41).

As one of the neglected figures of the political theatre in Turkey, Asaf Çiyiltepe was among those theatre artists who were influenced by the western theatre as well. Different from Taner and Öngören, Çiyiltepe had studied in Paris, with a left-wing theatre company called as National Popular Theatre which was being directed by Jean Vilar. Demir Özlü said that "After each France journey, he came back as a person whose socialist ideas got stronger," (Özlü, 1977, p. 16). Çiyiltepe was in Paris at the end 1950s, when the post-war pessimism among the French intellectuals was being replaced with a fervent Marxism headed by intellectuals like Jean Paul Sartre and by events like Algerian War of Independence against France (Edgü, 1977).

Another theatre artist, Mehmet Ulusoy who was among the founders of Action Theatre for Revolution and İşçinin Tiyatrosu, had spent a considerable amount of time in abroad during his studies of theatre. Between 1963-68, Ulusoy had been in Brecht's Berliner Ensemble, studied theatre in Sorbonne University in Paris and then worked as the assistant of Giorgio Strehler, famous Italian theatre director who was politically and artistically affiliated with Bertolt Brecht. The period when Ulusoy had been in France and Italy was also the eve of the uprisings of 1968. Apart from the intellectual

hegemony of Marxism among the Western intellectuals, there was the haunting ghost of uprising over France and Italy, which must have forced Ulusoy to come back to Turkey and participate to the formation of Action Theatre for Revolution. I think the fact that the style of Action Theatre for Revolution was very different that of its contemporaries could be attributed to Mehmet Ulusoy who found the opportunity to witness different radical street theatre groups in France and in Italy (Candan 2007, p. 1).

Apart from such kind of direct interactions, the international political theatre movements influenced the artists in Turkey through the articles which were translated or written by the researchers from Turkey as well. *Tiyatro 70* journal and the journals and bulletins of the other left-wing theatre companies were the primary media that spread the information. As I have said as the infrastructure of transportation and communication developed and as the number of educated intellectuals grew, such kind of materials became easier to access and publish.

Giving some examples may help the reader to understand how the interest towards the international forms of political theatre increased after the politicization of the theatre artists reached its climax. This process can by no means be separately thought from the increasing interest towards the international revolutionary experiences. The intellectuals and the left-wing organizations were looking abroad to learn from the experiences of other countries who managed to make their revolutions. Theatre artists too wanted to understand what kind of artistic forms their revolutionary colleagues had been employing.

As I have indicated, the theatre in Turkey was always under the influence of Western theatre. The search for politically significant artistic alternatives during 1960s, however, went back to the discussions on Brecht at the beginning of 1960s, continued with Asaf Çiyiltepe's Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu, which was modelled on French NPT. This was followed with some written observations on Piscator's political theatre. It was only after 1968, that the theatre artists in Turkey started to keenly investigate international alternatives.

Semih Tuğrul's article in Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu's bulletin of September 1968 can be considered as the first gaze directed towards international radical theatre. Here Tuğrul presented a short survey of the recent developments in the political theatre in USA, which emerged as a response to Vietnam War and to the inner

contradictions of the country. The article mentioned the influential companies of USA, like Living Newspaper, Bread and Puppet Theatre and Guerrilla Theatre by Richard Schechner and focused on their political content. Considering that this bulletin was published only a couple of weeks after the university occupation of 1968 in Turkey, it is no coincidence that the article mentions the role of the political companies in “strikes, faculty occupations, student boycotts and demonstrations organized by the black people” (Tuğrul, 1968, p. 18). I have already said that, at the time this article was published, an alternative company, Action Theatre for Revolution was about to be established in Turkey, based on these models. Haldun Taner was also interested in the new international forms of political theatre. In article to *Tiyatro 70* journal, he mentioned the French and American experiences as well and hailed the young artists’ attempts to employ this form in Turkey (Taner, 1970, p. 41).

Actually, the period between 1960 and 1970 was very rich in terms of international political theatre. In the countries like USA, France and Great Britain, there were political theatre companies which sought new ways of making theatre. On the other hand, the growing interest towards the political theatre in these countries revived the Brechtian theatre, which the artists in Turkey had already started to be pay attention. One of the British theatre journals argued that “to be Brechtian was to be politically concerned, theatrically bold and artistically disciplined” (quoted in Lacey, 1995, p. 155). It was these movements that the theatre artists in Turkey paid the most attention.

As the revolutionary politics in Turkey started to radicalize itself, its artists’ started to turn their eyes on the countries like USSR, China and Vietnam in order to understand the role of the artists in these countries.

For example, in the April issue of *Tiyatro 70* a translated article by Edgar Snow, the famous American journalist who extensively wrote on China, appeared. The article was titled as “The Red Theatre”, and it was about the theatre experiments in the communist China. The article was mostly about the self-sacrifices of the theatre artists in China, who worked under difficult conditions while they tried to raise the consciousness of the peasants. No surprise that the emphasis was on the importance of being among the people and performing for them (Snow, 1970).

Apparently, the theatre artists in Turkey were following the political theatre in Vietnam as well. An article by İşçinin Tiyatrosu made an extensive quotation from an

unknown book, which gave information regarding the activities of the revolutionary artists in Vietnam under war conditions. Vietnamese artists had been working in small groups throughout the battlefield and they used to perform small pieces for the fighting soldiers. The article pointed that, despite all the illness, natural disasters and the threats of war, the artists were very active and self-sacrificial to fulfil their duties. When the quotation ended, İşçinin Tiyatrosu asked if the theatre artists in Turkey were waiting to be bombed to use their art in favour of the exploited and oppressed masses (İşçinin Tiyatrosu, 1970a).

The reflections of the international struggle could also be observed in the artists' choice of their plays. Dostlar Tiyatrosu could be the most significant example to this tendency. In two years, between 1969-1971 the company staged six plays and four of them were from foreign playwrights. The founders of the company were not militant like that of Halk Oyuncuları and Ankara Birliği Sahnesi, but obviously they were under the influence of the rising social opposition as well. Therefore, among the foreign plays that they had staged, some of them were worth to pay attention to show the influence of international political and artistic influences (Dostlar Tiyatrosu Webpage, 2012).

In the season of 1969-1970, Dostlar Tiyatrosu staged a play by Alain Decaux, titled *Rosenbergs should not Die*. The story that this play was based on was a true story of a communist Jewish couple in US, who were accused of involving espionage activities on behalf of USSR. Rosenbergs were found guilty and executed in 1953 and this case had stirred the public vote all around the world. The choice of Dostlar Tiyatrosu to stage this play was possibly determined by the rising anti-imperialism of the period. In the season of 1970-1971, the company staged *Havana Inquiry* by H.M. Enzensberger. This play too was an example of documentary theatre and as the name suggested, it was about the post-Cuban revolution trials against the Cuban counter-revolutionary conspirators who were sent by USA to Cuba. Hailing the Cuban revolution, and condemning the US intervention, *Havana Inquiry* was in line with the political atmosphere of Turkey in which the revolutionary groups were more and more focused on armed struggle against the state. No surprise when the play was banned by the March 12 regime of 1971 (Yüksel, 2012).

As it can be seen, despite all the debates about establishing a national theatre
As it can be seen, despite all the debates about establishing a national theatre and

avoiding from what was “alien” to the people, the theatre art in Turkey continued to take its intellectual support from international political theatres. This tendency to overcome the aesthetic conservatism was backed by the internationalist revolutionary sentiments of the post-1968 period. When the artists’ perception of the country’s conditions had changed, new alliances against the common enemy were brought into the agenda and the aliens turned into allies. Therefore, the change in the political ideology affected the artists’ perception of foreign art.

4.5 Conclusion

Under this chapter I have tried to show the data regarding how the economy of the country was transformed into a dependent capitalist one and what kind of social dynamics was created by this transformation.

I have said that the military coup of May 27 emerged as a contradictory alliance between the petit-bourgeois elements inside the army, bureaucracy, intellectuals and the collaborator bourgeoisie. As the contradictions became clearer, left-wing organizations, their political ideologies and the social events shaped the art of theatre. Obviously in the absence of independent organizations and of a Marxist political and aesthetic literature, the left leaning theatre artists depended on the state ideology, shaped their values accordingly and preferred to not to contradict with it.

It was only after 1965, when the JP government came to power after the elections and the LPT won 15 seats in the parliament that the Marxism became a legitimate ideology among the intellectuals. Apart from the translations, the social movement became more and more independent at this period thanks to its various political and professional democratic organizations. That was why the artists’ started to stand against the policies of the state through strikes and protests and to openly pronounce socialism as an alternative to the existing system. The play by Sermet Çağan, *Foot and Leg Factory* was the result of such a political environment.

Between 1968 and 1971, theatre field of Turkey experienced a change more than it did in past 20 years. The militant struggle waged between 1968 and 1971 forced the artists to change their former thinking and acting habits, gave them a new enthusiasm that was supported by various left-wing organizations and a large mass base. As I will investigate further in the following chapter, this change created its own

political and aesthetic values that emerged as a result of the changing targets and methods of analysing the country and the redefinition of the enemy and the allies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In every field of human activity, there are some historical periods in which the quantitative accumulations lead some qualitative transformations. These transformations open up new possibilities, bring new perspectives and change the relations and habits of the members of the field. The period between 1960 and 1971 in Turkey was such a moment of transformation for the field of cultural production. A wide range of studies were made in order to analyse the political landscape of those years, but unfortunately such kind of studies remained very limited for the field of theatre. Very few studies focused on the issues like the infrastructural development of the theatre in Turkey, the relations between the economic field and theatre. Almost all of them ignored the political aspect or made some abstractions on the relationship between the social movement and the field of theatre. The scholars mostly tried to arrive some conclusions through the interpretation of the plays that were written in those years, reducing the theatre scholarship into a literary criticism. One can clearly see that, there is a big gap in this field in Turkey in terms concretizing the relations of the artists, of studying on their biographies and of producing some theatre company histories that might extend our horizons as to the theatre in Turkey.

Taking this gap into consideration, this thesis aimed to frame these ten years of the theatre in Turkey. During these ten years the most important theatre companies, artists and playwrights that would shape the next years of the Turkey's theatre appeared. New styles, new sources of influence and new ideas differentiated this period from its predecessors. Moreover, these developments were not limited only with the theatre field, but rather there was a cultural movement that pervaded in all the branches of cultural production.

My aim was to go beyond the traditional textual analysis and to cover the issue in a multi-dimensional manner. Since the art of theatre was not something isolated from its political and social environment, a holistic approach was needed to see the big picture. In that sense, a Marxist-Leninist perspective regarding the social relations became my guide throughout the study, saving me from drowning in the details. It

was, however, necessary to develop this framework in line with the new findings and new approaches of the social sciences. My readings in the sociology of art showed that among other figures, Pierre Bourdieu had made the most important contributions that expand our understanding. Criticizing and adopting some of his conceptual tools, I think I managed to make my contribution to the Marxist-Leninist view of arts.

From the very beginning of this study, I had two simple questions in my mind: Did the social movement between 1960 and 1971 play a role in the ideological and physical development of the theatre and if yes, how? For me, it was not enough to resort to the abstractions that claim the theatre field was influenced by the rising social movement. I wanted to see how the real interaction between the two took place and what kind of transformations might have been occurred in the artistic field as a result. My general readings on Marxism-Leninism and on the international political theatre and its relation with the politics, allowed me to arrive at general theoretical conclusions at the beginning.

Analysing the period between 1960 and 1971 allowed me to verify these theoretical conclusions. Moreover, witnessing some concrete examples helped me to concretize and advance these assumptions.

First of all, the fact that there was a direct relation between the left-wing organizations and the artistic field became clearer. The historical development from 1960 to 1971 clearly indicates that the artistic field was transformed as the social movement got stronger. However, the nature of this transformation proved to be more complex than I expected. It became obvious that many historical and social factors should be taken into consideration when the transformation in the artistic field would be analysed.

In order to explain this complex set of relations, first I elaborated on the general economic and political history of the country between 1950 and 1970. I focused on the production relations, the qualitative and the quantitative conditions of the social classes. This was to provide a general information about the class contradictions and the peculiar political positions in the country. Through this analysis, it became obvious that the dependence of Turkey on the US capital escalated during the DP government period, preparing the basis of the anti-imperialist reaction during the 1960s. Moreover, with the planned capitalist industrialization of the post-

May 27th coup, not only the population of the industrial proletariat but also of the students increased significantly.

All these analyses could be seen as the basis of the transformation in the artistic field. Frankly, it is easy to establish a direct relationship between the changed class positions and the field of theatre and to say that the field of theatre was transformed because of these general changes. However, these statements could only be the beginning of an analysis. My further research on the issue showed that, although the analysis of the production relations and the general political landscape is important to understand the main actors in the field, the left-wing organizations have a decisive role in the transformation of the artistic field.

Therefore, the conditions of the class struggle, the strength of the class-based organizations and their attitude against the state should be analysed in detail. It is important to understand the historical formation of their ideology in order to identify the level of the interaction between the artistic field and the left-wing organizations. Otherwise, many of the transformations in the artistic field would lose their meaning or would appear as if they took place in an isolated manner without the influence of any external forces, which may lead us to think that the artists might sometimes be autonomous from the class struggle. Therefore, I focused on the left-wing organizations of the 1960-1971 period, explained their mass basis, their actions and their ideological statements in detail.

This study also showed that it is important to not to treat the artworks and artists in only individual terms when talking about their relations with the left-wing organizations. That is, the role of, firstly, the field of cultural production and, secondly theatre, their historical development, its physical and ideological possibilities should be taken into consideration when analysing the transformation of the artists. Therefore, the historical development of the cultural field, formation of its ideological and physical possibilities should be located within the development of a certain mode of production and of the class struggle in a certain society. This historical background is important because it is the already existing consciousness of the artists that change during the periods of transformation. But despite this transformation, the old concepts, old perspectives old worldviews do not perish at once, but usually people make a mixture of their existing ideas and new ideas. In Turkey's example, we see that

the artists' Kemalist and populist backgrounds had influenced their radicalization both in a negative and positive way.

The fact that the artists' consciousness is dependent on the other cultural products forces the researcher to investigate how the introduction of new concepts, new perspectives and new agendas in the field of theatre takes place through this cultural field. What are the general political tendencies among the publishers and journalists? On what subjects do they mainly make publications? What is their relation with the social movement and its organizations?

My research, for example, showed that the development of capitalism increased the need for educated intellectuals in various branches of production and of state institutions like the bureaucracy, education and law. The distorted capitalist development extended the material possibilities for the intellectuals. But it was the left-wing organizations that inspired the intellectuals to use these possibilities in favour of the class struggle. Books, journals, newspapers and the movies produced in or translated into Turkish were extremely important in the radicalization of theatrical field. Especially after 1965, the cultural field's choices changed towards Marxism-Leninism, many books were issued either on this subject or on the other subjects but with Marxist or pro-Marxist perspective. The literary and theatre journals started to deal with the issue of political art.

The role of the left-wing organizations in the development of the physical and ideological possibilities in the field of theatre should be paid a special attention. Historians usually tend to take the theatrical infrastructure as given, but without the existence of new theatre halls, urban transportation, conservatories, theatre schools and universities, many of these changes would not occur. In terms of ideological aspects it is obvious that the artists' priorities, target mass, their selection of plays and location are all the indicators of the changes in the worldviews of the artists. Therefore, if the discourse of the artists would be analysed, it is not enough to work on the final product, namely the artwork in terms of its content and form, but also on the places in which they stage their plays and the audience to whom they address, because they result from the artists' ideological choices.

This study also showed that the ideology of the artists was not the only thing that was transformed by the struggle of the left-wing organizations. Side by side with their way of thinking, their way of living, behaving and producing their artworks

changed as well. Compared to the other artists who had no interest in getting into touch with the dominated classes and who carry out their rehearsals in the theatre halls and again perform in there, the politicized theatre artists got up early in the morning, went into the slum districts and factories, made surveys among the people. Their plays were performed on the streets, in the factories, villages and in the theatre halls of the labour unions. They organized or established some relations with various left-wing organizations in various levels. They were submitted to violence, the police or the fascist militants of the NMP raided their performances. Some of them were even tortured and imprisoned. This would of course have its effect on their artistic works and that is why it is important to focus on the transformation in the artists' living and producing habits.

This thesis points out that, apart from bringing such kind of ideological and physical changes in the artistic field, left-wing organizations promoted a radicalism in the field of culture through other means, namely through the symbolic production of art. With reference to Bourdieu, I used this concept in order to refer to the activities that contribute to the perceived value of the artwork. Apparently, the cultural field does not only introduce new concepts and new perspectives for the artists, but also, depending on the strength of the contradicting class organizations' influence in the field, it promotes some certain artistic practices and emphasizes some certain artists by analysing, criticizing and praising them, thus increasing their value. It does the reverse for unwanted practices and depending on their quality, it either condemns or ignores these works. If an artist's works are in line with the general values and aesthetic ideology of the field, then the other members of the field, like the other artists from all branches of arts, publishers, critics and gallery owners etc. would attempt to contribute to its value.

I claim that the values of the audience are also important in terms of the symbolic production of art. The ideology and the living habits of the dominated classes are formed by the mode of production in general, and by their class positions inside the society in particular. But the class positions of the individuals do not automatically produce an ideological position for them. The struggle between the class organizations, their strength and capability of setting the agenda of the society through their actions, their success to form a mass basis that can be mobilized in line with the ideology of these organizations influence the political ideology, values,

priorities, attitudes of the dominated classes, which may also transform their aesthetic values without them being aware.

For example, in times when social movements succeed in mobilizing the dominated classes for general strikes, factory, university and land occupations and street demonstrations, then the audience's demand for the cultural products that address to their needs would increase. This means that the artistic circles that could meet such kind of demands by the audience could gain financial benefits and symbolic legitimization in the field of culture as well. The rise of a certain aesthetic ideology in certain periods might have something to do with the political and aesthetic priorities and needs of the masses.

Despite its contributions and strengths, this thesis has its limitations as well. The absence of biographical data and of historical narrations about the companies restricted my conclusions about the issue. As an indicator of the left-wing organizations' role, for example, I could have documented the exact political commitments of each theatre company. The reader will identify that the inner contradictions, splits and debates inside the companies could not be documented because of this. Another missing point is about the degree of the political commitments of the artists. Did they become members of any political organizations? Did they take part in their activities, what was the composition of their circle of friends? Unfortunately, the fear and depoliticization created by the military coups of 1971 and 1980 prevented the artists from revealing their political ties and the scholars from investigating the political side of their stories.

Another missing point is about the inner contradictions of the field, namely the contradictions between the artists who follow different political and aesthetic ideologies. Although it is a fact that even the non-existence or the invisibility of the right wing intellectuals of the period is an indicator showing the extent of the hegemony of the left-wing politics, the question about the contradictions between the left-wing and right-wing artists and artistic circles still remain as an issue that must be investigated.

Despite its weaknesses, this thesis is an important contribution in two terms: It is the first example as a study in the field of sociology of theatre. And it is the first example that investigated the ties between the politics and the theatre in Turkey

closer than any study in the literature. I hope its contributions inspire other similar studies for other periods of the history of Turkey.

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