

New Inclinations in the Museumification Process of Private Museums in Turkey After 2010

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Abstract

This study comprises the development of art collectorship in Turkey through the concept of collections and in comparison with the Western world, the transformation of these art collections into private museums in the 2000s, and the new inclinations regarding the location choices of private museums after 2010. Ever since the prehistoric period, humans have researched, discovered, and collected, evolving over the centuries to do it consciously and consistently, becoming collectors, and later, with rational categorization and institutionalization, secularizing their collections, thus establishing museums. Becoming wealthier through commerce, while collectorship developed in Europe starting with the Renaissance in the 15th century, leading to collections becoming public in the 17th century and the start of modern museumification in the century that followed, it was the bourgeoisie that birthed European collectorship. The foundations of art collectorship lay with the autonomy and the commodification of art, which created its own market. Thus, art collectorship and the art market always progress simultaneously. In the Republic of Turkey, liberal economic policies starting in the 1980s allowed private capital to take over from the state, launching a period where artworks and collectorship increased. Attempting to integrate itself with the world as a result of the globalization policies of the 1990s, the 2000s for the Turkish art market, dominated by private capital, coincide with a highly dynamic period when the recently growing population of art collectors founded private museums in İstanbul by which they could receive exposure and recognition. This period saw the emergence of culture and arts events and activities in the periphery. After 2010 this was followed by collectors who wished to bring their collections to the lands where they were born and dreamt about showing revealing the existence of a culture outside the center, who then established museums towards that goal.

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

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

The study aims to utilize its limited subject of "new initiatives after 2010" to draw attention to these new and indubitably important trends in regard to the development of Turkish art collectors, cultural memory, the art market, and art collections, from a unique perspective that may contribute to future studies.

The Act of Collecting, And The Advancement Of Private Collection In The Western World (From Antiquity Through The 16th Century)

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

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

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

Object collections became more common during the Hellenistic period with the emergence of the Aristocracy, and objects produced for religious or political purposes, as well as war spoils were preserved in palaces, underground or in temples and shrines closed to the public as court collections meant to display the power of its ruler or the wealth of its people (Serpil, 2006)

In the Middle Ages, churches and monasteries functioned as both collectors and museums. Spoils of the Crusades, as well as objects brought back from missionary activities were

collected in churches and palaces, and sculptures, icons and murals commissioned from artists to spread and glorify Christianity and to best spread the teachings of God held an important place in these collections (Baraz, 2010).

A milestone for conscious and systematic collectorship, the 15th century saw the emergence of the bourgeoisie spurred on by the innovations of the Renaissance era. This new social class completely uprooted the preceding eras' traditionalist notions of collectorship. As trust in the Medieval theological values and perceptions about the universe and the world waned, the Renaissance followed with a spirit of humanism, and it led to increased exploration of new lands and increased emphasis on history and knowledge. Thus, this period saw notions about object collection and collectorship evade church dominance and take on a new form (Uçar, 2019). This new form is *Cabinets of Curiosities*, which allow collecting to find its true meaning (Artun, 2006). They were meant as a smaller copy of a chaotic world a microcosm (Yılmaz, 2020). Built in the 1440s, the Medici Palace held a place between curio cabinets and the modern museum paradigm regarding exhibition and aesthetics, but their later attempt with the Uffizi Gallery (1581), into which the collection was moved in the 16th century, came closer to modern galleries with its special placement and exhibition layout.

The Museumization of Private Collections In The Western World (From The 17th Century To The Current Day)

The 17th century was a period wherein the reform movements of the preceding century began a decrease in church influence over the European society, against which the church commissioned religious art from many artists as counter-reform propaganda. Geographical discoveries led to colonialism in Europe, through which France became the predominant economic, political, and cultural force in continental Europe, also replacing Italy as the center of the art world.

The 18th century was a period of changes whose seeds were planted during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. These changes concerned both social structure and collectorship and would have far-reaching consequences. A bourgeois taste for art collection arguably

developed during this period (Serpil, 2006). As private and royal collections which first appeared in the previous periods as curio cabinets turned into modern museums the notion of “museumification” was realized with the first ever example of a public and contemporary (to the period) museum in the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris in 1750, followed by the British Museum in 1753 (Artun, 2006). The process of the secularization and categorization of collections whose hints we saw in the Medici collection came to life in France with the Louvre, wherein we witness the first true transition from the mysticism of the curio cabinets of the Renaissance to rationalist museology (Bulduk, 2018). The foundations were thus laid for modernism, and the resulting emergence in numerous avantgarde movements added variety to the art market, causing soaring artwork prices and giving the collections of the period an eclectic nature (Serpil, 2006). This century was named the Museum Age due to the very rapid increase in the number of public/private institutions as wealthy collectors began donating their collections to the state or founding their own museums (Baraz, 2010).

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

The 20th century began with a period of universal decline stemming from the two world wars in Europe. Sensing an opportunity in the near half-decade long Nazi occupation of Paris, the United States, as a country that was relatively minimally affected by the war—which it later entered—became the preferred destination of many a modern artist who were fleeing Fascist pressure in Europe, thanks to its active collectors, and private and well-funded galleries and museums (Üstünipek, 1998). Thus, after the war, five centuries after Florence and one after Paris, New York was declared the center of modern art (Artun, 2006).

Near the end of the 20th century, as we approached the 1980s, the capitalist social structure evolved into a global one, also changing the balance in the art market. The biggest reason for these circumstances were the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the US President Ronald Reagan and their administrative policies. The two leaders' neo-liberal privatization policies aiming to expand the private sector's presence in the economy affected many dynamics both in and outside the art world, at a global scale (Akdede, 2014). The globalization turned art collectorship into a competitive struggle for prestige, ultimately turning artworks, and art products and services into commodities (Wu, 2019). This period's notion of contemporary art gave art collectorship pluralist, eclectic, heterogenous, popular, hybridized, dynamic, and materialistic qualities. As we transitioned into the 21st century, the effects of globalization and technological advances caused museums to also take on the role of an institution that not only collects, and conserves and keeps these collections in public consciousness but one that also researches, educates, and entertains (Graf, 2012).

The Development of Art Collectorship In Turkey (From Ottoman to 2000s)

Founding various states in different periods in history over a wide geography, the Turks, with their long-established and rich cultural past, did not begin collecting until their transition to a sedentary lifestyle. Collectorship in Turkey during the Ottoman era differed in quality and content from Europe, which existed since the Roman Empire and became commonplace during the Renaissance, due to the Islamic prohibition of depictions of any living beings, instead developing as an act of aggregation based on the tastes and special interests of the Sultan (Levi, 1997).

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

like books, manuscripts, porcelain, Arabic calligraphy, and miniature. Increasingly growing with the addition of Sultans' objects of interest, as well as diplomatic gifts, the Ottoman dynasty's "Topkapı Palace Collection" was rich and extensive enough to compete with the most glorious European imperial museums and was similarly a symbol of the ruler's power (Artun, 2019).

The 18th century was a period of Enlightenment for Europe after the French and the Industrial Revolutions, while the Ottoman Empire lost influence due to military losses and land losses.

The 19th century is a period where Ottoman relations with the West were officialized as a result of the Imperial Edict of Reorganization (1839) and the Imperial Reform Edict (1856); an era of change for the political atmosphere of the palace as well as the cultural/artistic scene (Sülün, 2018). Commonly considered the first museum institute of Turkey, the Müze-i Hümayûn or the Imperial Museum was established in 1869. In 1882, Osman Hamdi Bey was appointed as its director to achieve a more systematic means of collection management. This period's collectors comprised statesmen, high-income families, and non-Muslims (Özkan, 2004).

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

The 1950s saw Turkey enter the multi-party period, and economic growth took the place of cultural growth. Though Turkey did not take part in the Second World War, it was still affected by the process of recession. The new process that began with the US's Marshall Plan resulted in rural flight, as well as the emergence of new job fields and a new camp of

capital owners (Sülün, 2019). The near complete dissolution of the state's support for the arts and artists, and the development of the private sector which turned Turkish businessmen into great business magnates and started the first sparks of collectorship in Turkey did not begin until after the 1950s (Erten, 2017). Not many private collections existed during this decade, and as the state pulled back, banks began to play an important role as buyers in the art market (Serpil, 2006).

The 1980s saw the capitalist system skyrocket in parallel with the rest of the world as a result of the Prime Minister Turgut Özal's free market economy and privatization focused neoliberal policies. The 1970s arabesk culture was replaced by popular culture, and the bourgeoisie which prospered in this liberal environment became the largest source of demand for the art market (Serpil, 2006). The free-market economy led to the first high-priced sales of paintings, and the increasing number of collectors caused a boom in the number of private art galleries. This earned the 1980s the moniker of "The Age of Galleries" (Erten, 2017). Artworks started to become commodified, turning into a means of prestige and investment for their collectors. This period saw an ever-widening wage gap, as the middle class eroded and lost their position as art buyers to the quickly multiplying high-income population (Üstünipek, 1998). In this context, the collectors of the decade consist almost exclusively of businesspeople.

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

The 1990s saw increased collaboration between the state and the capital owners, who then dominated the art market and made efforts to remain visible through their cultural and artistic activities in order to maintain close ties with global capital (Sülün, 2019). Despite the country's economic and political instabilities and the widening income gap, the 1990s saw an increase in collectorship, as well as institutions, banks, and the private sector taking a more active role in the art market. Artworks were now valued as a commodity, causing a steep rise in artwork prices.

Art Collectorship's Transformation into Private Museums In Turkey (2000-2010)

The first decade of the 21st century, starting in 2000, was a period where the prevalence of the internet allowed globalization to truly gain momentum. This great technological leap, which was the main propulsive force behind globalization, irresistibly turned the whole world into a single market (Kongar, 2018).

Until 2008, the world economy maintained a more-or-less normal course. However, starting in the US real estate market and spreading to its financial sector before quickly affecting Europe and plunging the world into a very unstable and tumultuous period, the 2008 financial crisis was the greatest financial crisis since the Great Depression in 1929 (Doğruel & Doğruel, 2011, pp. 177-197). Meanwhile, Turkey entered the 21st century with the greatest recession it had ever faced except for the periods of war (Savran, 2004). Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's disagreements with the President Ahmet Necdet Sezer culminated in February 2001 with the latter throwing the constitutional code book at Ecevit, which triggered massive financial devastation in Turkey.

In 2002, the uncertainty surrounding Ecevit's health led to early elections, culminating in Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's AKP getting 34.28% of the votes to become the majority party (Özsoylu & Metin, 2019) starting a whole new period in Turkey. Until 2008, the EU the Harmonization Process allowed the administration to take many radical actions, providing tax incentives for private capital owners which would open the door to a completely new period for the Turkish art. With that, private collections expanded, private art galleries, exhibitions, festivals, sponsorships, and auctions multiplied, the private sector became a force that directed cultural/artistic trends, and finally private collectors brought their collections to the public by opening private museums (Sülün, 2018).

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

Another unusual development of the 2000s was the "peripheral" art activities. While İstanbul, as the subject of most exhibitions, and the city where most artists lived and worked, in addition to being the center of art activities and the art market, had a crushing superiority over other cities, the 2000s broke the mold with the Sinop biennial called the

“Sinopale” in 2006, notable as the first of these peripheral biennials in Anatolia (Madra, 2015); It was followed by the Antakya Biennial in 2007 and the Çanakkale Biennial in 2008.

For collectors and institutions, in light of the events mentioned above, the 2000s would be a period of transformation for galleries, auctions and collections. Traditional methods in art gave way to new methods of expression that went outside the canvas and included technology and new creations and even interactive applications were introduced. Meanwhile, this triggered a period of growth and evolution for art collectorship as contemporary art galleries, new art centers, and private art museums, which multiplied (Sağbaşı, 2013).

Private museums emerged right at this moment in the 2000s as collectors had become an important force in the art market and provided additional momentum to the culture and arts scene by bringing their collections to the public. Collectorship first emerged in the 16th century in Europe and the bourgeois class’s donation of collections led to a great increase in private museums. In Turkey, however, although private museums did not emerge until the 21st century, the 2000 signify the start of a new golden age of private museums and a turning point for museology in Turkey (Konukcu, 2007).

These private art museums that opened during this ten-year period between 2000-2010 are, in order of establishment: The Elgiz family’s Elgiz Museum (2001/İstanbul), the Sabancı Family’s Sabancı Museum (2002/İstanbul), the Eczacıbaşı family’s İstanbul Modern (2004/İstanbul), the Koç family’s Pera Museum (2005/İstanbul. Additionally, though they were not collectors, artists Burhan Doğançay and Süleyman Saim Tekcan founded the private art museums Doğançay Museum (2004/İstanbul), and İMOGA (2004/İstanbul), respectively. As apparent from the list above, the private art museums that opened in the first decade of the 2000s are all located in İstanbul.

Private Museums In Turkey, And New Establishments Based In Anatolia After 2010 (2010-2022)

The 2010s were a period where the conditions for a return to the “cold war” began to slowly rear. The societal incidents, technological advancements, and political turbulence of this period triggered milestones that would shape the coming years.

The *Arab Spring*, a wave of uprisings throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa in response to poverty and oppression later gave way to years of bloody civil wars in Libya, Yemen, and Syria, which was one of the bloodiest stops of the uprisings in particular and causing a huge immigration wave (Kaygusuz, 2019). *The Migrant Crisis* was the largest of wave of migration since the WWII, with the relocation of approximately 60 million people, which especially affected European politics, triggering a wave of ultranationalism and political polarization (NTV, 2019). The 2010s was a period where *global terrorism* pervaded from Asia to Africa to the Middle East to Europe, becoming an international concern. The 2010s, were marked by *the climate crisis* on one front, while on the other front, the unstoppable *rise of technology* in all fields, from health to education, and from politics to economics brought new concepts like “artificial intelligence”, “augmented reality (AR)”, “robotics”, “the Internet of Things (IoT)”, “the blockchain”, and “metaverse”, as well as “post-truth” and “fake news” into our lives, making establishing the universal truth difficult as the world rapidly digitized, turning into an empire of data. Money was also affected by these developments with the creation of “cryptocurrencies”. As the 2010s ended, the world encountered the *global pandemic* which broke out in 2019 in the Chinese city of Wuhan before quickly spreading to the whole world as of January 2020. The Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) was a “black swan” that made all expectations and plans completely meaningless. Adding to the already heavy losses of the pandemic, the first months of 2022 shocked the world with *Russia’s invasion of Ukraine*, which is still ongoing, with reports stating that this is the largest conventional war operation since the Second World War.

Turkey, within the global conjuncture, managed to recover from the 2001 financial crisis by 2010 and even displayed growth figures that were comparative to China. However, the

2010s, especially the latter half, would be a tumultuous period, especially economically. In **2010** İstanbul became a “European Capital of Culture”. In **2011**, Turkey rose to the 17th place on a ranking of the largest economies in the world and began considering megaprojects. In **2012**, Republican-period export records were broken. However, country distancing itself from its EU objectives, as well as a slowdown in institutional reforms, and the increase in political tensions sent Turkey on a course of economic contraction and loss of momentum (Kılıç, 2021). **2013**, the “Gezi Park Protests” started in İstanbul before spreading across the country, causing great chaos, and leading to important economic losses. **2016**, the July 15 coup attempt was a turning point for the Republic of Turkey, A State of Emergency (OHAL) was declared and then extended by three-month periods for a total of seven times. After terror attacks, the coup attempt, and the OHAL periods, caused sharp increases in exchange rates, economic contraction, a decreasing credit score, the withdrawal of foreign capital, and the rise of unemployment (KPMG, 2017). As we entered a new decade with the **2020s** the “black swan” destroyed all financial predictions. After the first case of COVID-19 appeared, the lockdown measures brought simultaneous contraction in both supply and demand, bringing all economic activities to a stall, causing a loss of momentum in the economy (Elyan, 2021).

The art market also became affected by these political, financial, and social developments. Although the market had a fairly positive spell, especially between 2010-2013, the changes in Turkey’s political atmosphere, the numerous terror attacks, security concerns, the Gezi protests, and the coup attempt in addition to the currently ongoing global pandemic had certain negative repercussions, and the resulting financial contraction and the devaluation of the Lira triggered a period of stagnation in the art market. New media art was transformative for artists, leading to new masterpieces that used new technological potentials (Belgen, 2019); allowing artists to display their work on platforms like social media, virtual art galleries, and virtual museums—being able to reach a wide audience in the border-free exhibition spaces of these digital platforms (Keleş, 2021).

Following COVID-19's worldwide spread in March 2020, the resulting lockdowns created shockwaves in the art market. Galleries and institutions rapidly began to take action to reach art buyers via digital platforms.

Starting with the 2010s, although the art market saw some amount of financial contraction because of the slowing economic growth and the uncertainties in the global economy, a report by the French financial institution Credit Suisse art as an investment asset was safer and more appealing than the capital market, especially during crisis periods, and performed better than the stock market in inflationist environments, making it a very important asset for diversifying one's portfolio (Küçük, 2013). Despite a decade of contraction, the art market regained momentum with the pandemic, with auction houses having to transition from physical auctions to online auctions. This dramatic inclination towards online art purchases, a result of the purchasing behavioral changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, turned digitalization and technology into common language for art institutions. In online sales, auction houses followed art fairs (Kaprol, 2021). Although Turkey had a good period between 2010-2013 with regard to its art market, which even reached its peak in 2010-2011. However, with the Gezi Park protests in 2013 creating tension caused both Turkish art buyers and foreign investors to act cautiously towards Turkey. This lack of confidence only became more intense with the Syrian War in 2011, the clashes in Eastern Anatolia between 2015-2016, and political unease in the region, ultimately culminating in the coup attempt in 2016, causing massive devaluation for the Turkish Lira against the US Dollar, which triggered a financial contraction in the art (Bayrak, 2019).

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

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

RESULTS

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

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

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

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

The study answers to;

“Why” humans collect,

“When” it was that arbitrary collections transitioned into secular collections,

“How” collectorship evolved in Turkey from the Republican period to the current day,

“What” caused the museumization trend for Turkish collectors,

“Where” and “why” private museums outside İstanbul are established, and by “whom”, through literature review, compilation, and inferences.

CONCLUSION

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

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

while simultaneously acting as silent guides for different fields and disciplines. They will undoubtedly become a source of inspiration for new private museums to follow.

As it stands, private collections being presented to the public, donated to museums, or becoming museums helps spread humankind's creativity to the people, while also broadening their horizons—thereby immortalizing the collectors who made it happen.

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