

THE CONTEMPORARY
TURKISH POSTER
AND ITS EVOLUTION IN PARALLEL
WITH THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
GRAPHIC DESIGN
AND THE INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS
OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

By

Emrah Yücel

March, 1992

Thesis
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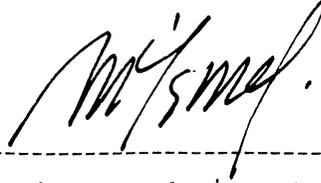
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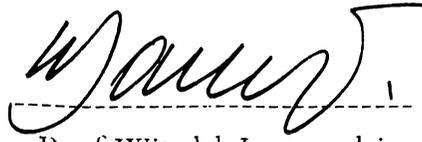
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Prof. Mürşide İçmeli

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ÖZET

GÜNÜMÜZ TÜRK AFİŞİ VE EKONOMİK YAPIYLA PARALEL OLARAK GELİŞİMİ

Emrah Yücel

Grafik Tasarım Bölümü Yüksek

Lisans

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Emre Becer

Mart, 1992

Bu çalışmada amaç ,Türkiye'de afişin ekonomik yapının gelişimi ile paralel olarak oluşumunu incelemek ve bugünkü problemlerine eleştirel bir bakış getirmek olacaktır.

Bu tez çalışması Türkiye'de eksikliği görülen sosyal nitelikli bir afişle desteklenecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Afiş, ekonomik yapı, grafik tasarımcısı

ABSTRACT

THE CONTEMPORARY TURKISH POSTER
AND IT'S EVOLUTION IN PARALLEL
WITH THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Emrah Yücel

M.F.A. in Graphic Design

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Emre Becer

March, 1992

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the development of the 'Turkish poster' in connection with the development of the economic structure and to take a critical look at its contemporary problems.

This thesis will be supported by the inclusion of a poster with social content; a genre which I find to be lacking in our country.

Keywords: Poster, economic structure, graphic designer.

FOREWORD

Despite the fact that Turkish poster design began its existence with the conversion to the Latin alphabet, it gained its distinctive structure only recently, that is in the last 10 or 20 years. During this very short period of time (compared with the Western world where this medium has a past reaching back to the French Revolution) Turkish poster designers have created some very important work and have reach the level of their peers in the Western world. However, it is difficult to say that researches into the subject of graphic design have not kept pace with this rapid development. There have been a few researches into the subject during the past few years; however, they all lack a global perspective.

This is the main reason why I chose the modern Turkish poster as the subject of my thesis. When I started my researches into the subject I immediately noticed the deficiency of prior researches which consisted of four or five articles, a few interviews conducted with graphic designers and repetitive and generalized information to be found in encyclopedias.

Although there are some references to be found in the printed media; of certain spheres connected with poster design (such as advertising, cinema etc.) these references are very indirect. However, logical inferences based on the information given to us by these materials concerning the economic and social structures of the period in question allow us to form an accurate picture.

I must emphasize the difficulty I encountered trying to write this thesis with so little information to go on. On the other hand, I am aware that my thesis, being the first in the field, will have many aspects which will be found lacking and will therefore draw adverse comment. Despite

this, I chose this subject with the hope that it will be a starting point for others and will encourage further researches.

I would also like to emphasize here that some of the designers I aimed to speak with were retired, some were no longer alive and only had relatives available for interviews and some were simply hard to get hold of.

I must thank all the practitioners and thinkers who have contributed directly or indirectly to the art of graphic design and apologize to those whose names I may have skipped or have left unemphasized.

It is also important to stress here the importance of the poster archives of the National Library which I believe to be the richest in Turkey. I hope that this archive will be appreciated and will be compiled in printed form. It is very interesting for a profession which is the creator of media to have so little printed material about itself.

Some designers who have created seminal works in the field of poster design and were still alive granted me interviews. At certain points in my thesis I refer to such personal interviews. I especially owe thanks to Mengü Ertel and Yurdaer Altıntaş who both contributed to poster design between during 1960-1970; to Prof. Mürşide İçmeli who gave me valuable information on the subject; my advisor Assoc. Prof. Emre Becer who helped me through every stage of my thesis, giving me his valuable time.

I would like to emphasize that this work, apart from being the first thesis on the subject of poster design, will also constitute the first printed document on the subject.

The Graphic Designers Union, which is formed of the professionals of graphic design in Turkey, is about to publish a book called Posters From Türkiye, a book which will incorporate my thesis as its text. The Union has recently published two other books: Türk Grafik Sanatçıları

and Logotürk. It is also hoped that the posters to be included in Posters From Türkiye will also become an international exhibition.

The book and exhibition projects include 136 examples of Turkish poster design chosen by a jury of 26 professional graphic designers. 13 of these posters were designed by me. The exhibition will travel to Germany, Great Britain and Canada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

My thesis is concerned with contemporary Turkish poster design which began to develop with the declaration of the Republic. I will start my thesis with a section in which I will take a general look at the poster, as a phenomena, describing it, its position in our world and its various qualities. In this section I aim to start from the general, going down towards the specific, making the subject more comprehensible and accessible. Some points I have raised in this section are important in that they indicate the deep rooted design traditions of the western world and how western designers have reached a high level of sophistication as a result of the demand/supply cycle.

Posters, graphic designs and works of art are a visual history of global culture. The close relationship of art and design stem from their fundamental interconnection with economic structure.

Graphic design in the world started to develop with the industrial revolution. The reason that graphic design is held to be an applied art by so many sources stems from the fact that it is very closely connected with art but on the other hand that it supplies a demand. This aspect of supplying a demand has been steadily accelerating, starting with the industrial revolution. The similarity of graphic design to art can also be found in the social function of the artist who basically marches at the front, who has his finger on the pulse of society and who gives it impetus and direction thanks to his avant-garde makeup. When the artist applies these advantages to a commercial sphere, the similarity is further emphasized. When we take a global look at graphic design, this interconnection is very noticeable. Many artists have executed works which have supplied commercial demands. Important examples can be found in France: the fine posters designed by Daumier and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec are a case in point. Many contemporary sources refer to such

works of Toulouse-Lautrec as the starting point of poster design. When we consider our own country we can see a similar fashion of development also taking place.

One of the main reasons why I have taken the declaration of the Republic as a starting point is that the westernizing movements which began in 1923 are still a live issue in my field of interest. With the new Republic, our country made many new beginnings but many of these took the form of copying the west. The development of the poster, as a result of its function, has always paralleled economic development. Economic circulation, the introduction of commercial goods, social events and cultural or ideological responsibilities have created a demand for the poster. For this reason, taking a critical look the past and the present of this medium also entails a look at the economic, social and cultural developments and events of the period in question. Therefore, it is wise to display some of the factors which form an environment for the medium.

With the adoption of the Latin alphabet in 1928, Turkey entered a completely new mode, turning its back on a rooted tradition. This section, which examines the structure and important landmarks of this conversion process, continues with a critical look at the contemporary poster design in Turkey. Main headings are: the commercial poster, the cultural poster, the billboard as a new medium, and the star system which underlies the implementation of these various forms. Thoughts on the much discussed problem of Turkish identity and whether it is to be found in Turkish poster designs will be included here. A comparative look based on the physical characteristics of the poster, its contemporary condition, the structure of painting and art based graphic design education in Turkey; social posters (of which very few examples can be found in our country), examples and proposed solutions to the problems outlined above will also be found in the final section.

2. A DESCRIPTION OF 'THE POSTER'

This section naturally necessitates an introduction to the concept of the poster by making a description. However, such a description is sure to create arguments as to the limits of its borders, as is the case in almost any other description of a complex subject. A solution to this problem can be citing both a description given by an international source and a description of a designer.

In Meydan Larousse the poster is defined asan announcement printed on paper whose purpose is to convey news or information concerning an event. However, we can easily say that a stamp, for example, fulfills the same function. On the other hand, Akiyama, the Japanese designer who received one of the first prizes at the 1986 Warsaw Poster Biennial, when asked for a description, said: It is a work which will please its designer to know that it has been hung somewhere, even though the place it has been hung may be the wall of a toilet.

In the Turkish language, the word affiche was used initially. This word was borrowed from French, where it refers to both arts to both a public announcement and a work with artistic content. However, the meaning of this word degenerated and is currently interchangeable with the word ilân. The current word is also a borrowed word (taken from English the universal language): poster. Even though this new word has not found its way into the texts written on the subject, it is enjoying popularity with the young generation of designers.

3. TYPES OF POSTERS, THEIR FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Another constraint apart from the descriptive one is concerned with the types of poster. Fixing a standard is necessary even though this too will create dissension. This necessity stems from the need for a fixed point of reference among all the different types of posters created. I will take as a basis the classification which is utilized at poster museums and biennials. In the framework of such a classification, it is possible to group posters under three general categories:

- 1) Posters with social or ideological content
- 2) Commercial posters (Advertising)
- 3) Cultural Posters

Explanations about the structure of such a classification will be made further on, where appropriate.

Whatever the type of a poster, it should claim the attention of its target audience. Whether it is of social, commercial or cultural content it should hold in harmony the elements which constitutes it. A source has this to say on the subject :

The word poster brings to mind two things: a very short text and an image which can be seen from a distance, which is capable of attracting attention and which is plain enough to be understood immediately. The whole skill of the poster designer lies in blending these two elements so that they complement each other. The detachment of the poster from the public announcement and its gaining esthetic values was took place at the end of the last century with the close interest displayed by artists, especially by the Impressionists, towards lithography (Page 48) [1].

This observation gives us clues concerning the interconnection between the designer and the artist which started with the Impressionists. Shiego Fukuda says :

“Both the artists and the designer describes the current conditions in their country, the reasons for these conditions and the structure of their society with the works that they produce. If these works are posters, they then give us information concerning the cultural events, the cinemas etc. while giving us a visual feast at the same time” (Page 31) [2].

Questions concerning the formation of the poster and what demands it supplies can be answered by Koos Van Wengen in a passage taken from his book, *Grapus* 85 :

“When looked at from the point of view of time, the poster has a past which goes quite a back. Like in all other subjects, it is easy to start a involved and complicated argument concerning the starting point. In 1953, in Paris, there was an exhibition called Cinq Siècles d’Affiches Illustrées Françaises (Five Centuries of French Illustrated Posters). It was apparent that a wide choice was exercised in selecting the posters. There certainly were announcements which aimed at attracting attention with text and images 500 years ago. During the Reformation, Flugblatters which denounced the Papacy were displayed on walls, distributed by itinerant salesmen who travelled all over Europe. I find arguments concerning the origin of the poster unnecessary because each researcher proposes a different date. Max Gallo, who made an in depth analysis of the poster points to the French Revolution of 1789 during which the authorities posted announcements in order to inform the public of developments. This method gained in popularity from then on. Another important development was the discovery of

lithography at the beginning of the 19th Century. The advantages of the poster were increasingly used outside of artistic concerns. Shops, insurance companies, theaters and all kinds of social and cultural organizations realized the potential of the poster to communicate its message to a large audience. Art had found an application in daily life. This created new probabilities for the artists. Especially, Daumier produced works in this genre, but others like Jules Cheret, Eugene Grasset and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec were also important figures. The prestige of the poster had increased and whatever its nature, it was accepted as being an important medium for conveying messages. Of course, it was on the way to becoming a colorful part of the street life (Page 3) [3].

The development of the poster did not halt at this point. The socio-political, economic and cultural developments of the last century, created both a demand and an audience for the medium. Increasing social and political awareness gave rise to political parties and syndicates which in turn increased the awareness of the masses. As a result, there was a demand to inform society of the ideals and aims of such political movements. At least, there was a demand to compete with other parties during an election. As can be seen, the poster, which is a medium created by graphic design, owes its development to a constant demand. Demands made upon this medium vary from the political to the economic and the cultural depending on the period of time in question. This cycle of supply and demand, whatever its basis, shows similarities and common properties in different periods of time and in different parts of the world. The designer of a poster, begins with the advantage of being a part of the society which will receive the message the poster will convey. Different societies perceive things in different ways. This variations shows the designer what methods and styles to use when designing a poster. On the other hand, economic factors can also change the face of a poster. Technical superiority and technical

deficiency both affect the organism of the medium.

When all these factors are added to the geographical one, it becomes apparent that all these are the main factors which give a poster its character.

All these are a departure point for the emergence of a national character in poster design.

It is possible to assign a local character to Japanese, Cuban, Mexican posters and even to posters designed in various parts of the U.S.A.

When we take a look at Japanese poster design, the first thing that we notice is a visual superiority stemming from technological superiority. Japanese posters are distinctive because their designers have very easy access to images that they need, they have a superior photographic technique, they are very advanced in computerized imaging techniques. But do all these properties risk giving the posters a mechanical feel? Whatever the answer, this question brings us to the Polish poster, where designers are up against technical deficiency.

Despite the fact that Poland is very much behind in printing and typesetting technologies Polish posters have gained themselves a very distinctive place in the global history of the poster. This prominence stems from both the intelligent handling of the subject matter and clever solutions to technical problems. Looking at examples of Polish posters which almost all are illustrative, one immediately notices their deep sensitivity. Polish posters are fine examples of turning disadvantages into advantages. Expanding the examples, the deficiency of typesetting technologies in Poland naturally forced Polish designers to use hand-written type, which brought a natural, dynamic and sensitive character to Polish posters. Therefore, Polish posters have become the mirror of Polish national identity.

As I have exemplified with Japanese and Polish posters, the formation of a national identity in design is directly connected with economic structures.

Now, with common economic trends creating common and universal aims and directions, national identities are in danger of disappearing with every passing day.

This process is described in a book called Megatrends 2000, researched and written by John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene :

"Today, thanks to a thriving world economy, global telecommunications and expanding travel, exchange among Europe, North America and the Pacific Rim is happening at an unparalleled pace. In the urban centers of the developing world signs of the international youth culture are almost everywhere. So, enthusiastically are we swapping food, music and fashion that a new universal international life-style reigns in Osaka, Madrid and Seattle.

It is consumer driven: Drinking capuccino and Perrier; furnishing the apartment with IKEA; eating sushi, dressing in the United Colors of Benetton, listening to US-British rock while driving the Hyundai over to Mac Donalds" (Page 118) [4].

Designer Paloma Picasso says :

"The world is becoming more and more cosmopolitan and we are all influencing each other (Page 118) [4].

Our time is a very lucrative one for the corporations who market their goods internationally and who view the whole world as one market.

These corporations which are on the way to globality are becoming

one name, one trademark in each sector.

“Among the worlds 40 best known brands are Coca-Cola, IBM, Sony, Porsche, Mac Donalds, Honda and Nestlé according to a survey of 3000 consumers in nine countries (Page 118) [4].

As can be seen, there is a general shift from national and local identity and language to a universal identity and language. One of the most important outlets of this international language is undoubtedly the poster.

In this section I have introduced the medium of the poster and taken a look at its variety. The particular idiom of this medium, the passage of this idiom from the local to the universal in Turkey will be discussed further on in my thesis.

4. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PRESENT STATE OF THE TURKISH POSTER IN THE LIGHT OF ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

4.1. The Turkish Poster in the Light of the Economic Structure of the First Years of the Republic

It is extremely hard to assign a precise starting point or date to the Turkish poster. In the previous section, I had also mentioned a similar difficulty concerning 'the poster' in a universal sense.

However, it is practical to assign the date 29 October 1923 as a starting point. This date constitutes the beginning of a cycle of renewal for the Turkish Republic, and although such efforts did not immediately manifest themselves in certain posters, they did create a demand for them.

It is accepted practice in the history of art to exemplify a certain work as the starting point or source of an artistic movement. There is no such example for the Turkish poster, however.

The Kemalist Reforms of the day were changing the whole country from head to toe. On one side, the entrenched traditions of a six hundred year past; on the other, the conversion to the standards of the contemporary West. Although such efforts often resulted in directly copying the West, we know that such things happen in periods of reform. During this period of reform new foundations were being laid and the young Turkish Republic brought its people dynamism.

If we want to take a look at the connection between the development of the poster and economic structure, we should consider the industry of

the period in question.:

“In 1923, the country was in ruins and the people were tired. There was only a 12 million population left within the borders of the ‘Misak-ı-Milli’. Economic life was paralyzed. The industry, which consisted of primitive agricultural methods and a few textile factories was far from able to supply the demands of the country” (Page 9) [5].

The inheritance of the young republic consisted of 386 primitive industrial establishments which had a work force of only 76.216 workers. The Ottoman Empire had been considerably weakened by World War I and the existing economy was confined to the larger cities. The second war of independence which the Turkish nation was to wage was the war of economic independence. The general direction which the Turkish economy was to take were defined during a break in the Lausanne Conference, in January 1923. During the opening of the Turkish Economic Congress which convened at İzmir, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said:

“To propel our new Turkey forward to the level of evolution of which she is worthy we are obliged, whatever happens to put the economy first... However great may be the political and military victories, the success achieved can not last unless it is crowned with economic victories, and will soon vanish (Page 35) [6].

“It can be said that the Economic Congress has convened for two reasons. The first is to determine the specific problems and desires of the traders, farmers, industrialists and workers; and to ensure their integration with the political cadre. The second is to define the attitude which the economy will take towards foreign investment in the future. When looked at from another viewpoint, the aim of the

congress is to ensure the trust of interior and exterior sources of investment ” (Page 33) [7].

However, the resolutions and precautions adopted during this congress were unimplemented until 1927 and the world-wide depression of 1929 rendered many of these resolutions impotent:

“The real applications of this period consisted of social and cultural reforms which aimed at establishing bourgeois values. The practical results of these revolutionary endeavors in the superstructure were to set up the conceptual basis of the shift towards a secular life-style” (Page 46) [8].

In a country with such an industry, the necessary measures consisted of : The abolition of the office of the *khalifah*, the establishment of democratic law, the reforms concerning dress, the emancipation of women, and most important of all, the adoption of the Latin alphabet. All of these reforms were changing the face of Turkey.

Probably the most consistent and well-planned of these reforms was the conversion to the Latin alphabet.

The new alphabet of the young republic constituted a point of origin for the poster which is one of the media of communication and propaganda. This shift was very important from the viewpoint of Turkish graphic design as it implied the rejection of arabic calligraphy and a shift in logic based on a new way of typesetting; which brought new problems in its wake.

This rejected tradition has a very important and undeniable place in Turkish design. An American designer says:

“Of special interest to designers, it was in Turkey that calligraphy, the parent of typography, was developed and

extended as an art form. It was there that the beauty of letters and writing was given its most eloquent form in the context of religious meaning. Because the Koran restricted the depiction of living creatures, the arts of decoration and calligraphy became the central and predominant forms of artistic expression in the Islamic world and were developed to a high degree of refinement. Writing was considered a sacred act, an expression of the Koran, and the best calligraphers were highly respected and esteemed members of society.

A well known dictum in Moslem countries observes the Koran was revealed in Arabia, recited in Egypt and written in Istanbul. Indeed, it was in Istanbul, between the 15th and 18th Centuries, when the Ottoman Empire and the arts of its court reached their peak, that Islamic calligraphy flowered and reached new levels of sophistication and beauty. Turkey gave up the Islamic script over 60 years ago, but calligraphy as an art form is still practiced there, still taught at some universities, and Turkish calligraphers are recognized as among the best in the world. In annual international calligraphic competitions, with entries from all Moslem and many non-Moslem countries, Turkish artists regularly walk off with a large share of the awards. One of the best known and revered of contemporary Turkish calligraphers, Emin Barin, extended the art form with a series of modern interpretations of the traditional forms" (Page 80-92) [9].

In short, a nation which had developed an artistic identity based on calligraphy and decorative art of Islamic origin had to reject these traditions and adopt a new one based on the Latin alphabet. Despite the efforts of certain masters of typography, such as Emin Barin, the basic differences of logic and form between the Arabic and Latin letter-forms prevented the extension of this fine traditions into the new age.

Therefore, Turkish graphic design was unable to share the past of its Western counterpart. Other Western countries had experienced first hand the organic development of the latin alphabet, whereas the Turkish Republic adopted the already developed alphabet, and looked up to Western examples.

If we take another view of the situation apart from the typographic approach, we can also see that the poster, which is a product of graphic design, is the direct result of certain economic demands. We already know that industry in the Ottoman Empire was underdeveloped and that whatever industry existed was in the hands of minorities. This minority, centralized in Istanbul, had the aspect of a colony closed to the outside. As a principle, Ottoman Turks did not deal in commerce or industry. The peasantry, on the other hand an economy based on agriculture and livestock. As can be seen from this social profile, there was almost no need for the poster as a commercial medium. Apart from this, there was almost no printing technology to speak of.

As a result of the lack demand and the lack of technology, it is impossible to speak of a past of the Turkish poster in the Western sense because the society did not have a tradition of promotion.

The date of 29 October 1923 should be taken as a starting point of not only Turkish graphic design but also as a new start which included almost all fields and levels of daily, economic and political life. In such a structure where nothing can be abstracted from the influence of other elements, it will be easy to give similar examples from other fields.

For example, it can safely be said that Turkish painting also started with the imitation of Western painting and, despite the fact that unique examples exist, it is also still face to face with a problem of identity. Despite the fact that there was a tradition of decorative and miniature painting, it is generally accepted that Turkish painting (like the Turkish poster) started producing examples at about the same period of time.

The search for a unique identity in the Turkish poster and Turkish painting in the traditional sense of the word has not gone beyond a few usages of folkloric decorations and motifs. I shall examine this problem further on in my thesis.

The new alphabet brought with very basic change to the structure of the general organization of the country, which was going through a period of rapid metamorphosis. The teaching of the new alphabet was implemented in primary schools:

“Newspapers, magazines, store displays were changing all over the world. At last, the bill which enforced the conversion passed through the parliament on November 3 1928. This bill recognized no such thing as a period of transition. As from February 1928, all signs announcements, newspapers and magazines were to be in the new alphabet and as from January 1 1928, all books were to follow, and so was the educational curriculum.

A few days later, the ‘Law of National Schools’ was accepted and a campaign to spread the usage of the new alphabet was started” (Page 126) [5].

Suddenly, a demand was created for the medium of the poster. Posters which aimed at informing the public that centers for the teaching of the new alphabet had opened and which called for enrollment were designed. On the other hand, the text of these posters were also in the new alphabet. [Plate 1].

Although there are not many examples of posters at this period of time, it is important to consider and outline the conditions and supply-demand cycles of the period.

As I have mentioned above, the period of 1923-1933 was mainly

characterized by social and cultural changes, rather than economic ones. Therefore, the posters of this period are mainly of social and cultural content.

The message contained in the posters concerning the teaching centers reached the target audience directly. Attendance to these teaching centers, where the grandfather often sat with his grandchild, was obligatory and there was no chance of obtaining a job without a diploma from one of these centers. In a relatively short period of one-and-a-half years, a total of 1,090,978 people received diplomas from these centers.

As a result of the Westernization of the larger cities, the introduction of foreign goods, various agreements of economic cooperation and foreign investment, the whole country was adopting a totally new identity. [Plate 2]. This was also a result of certain needs. These needs naturally brought with them new products and the need to promote, or advertise, them. The posters of the period, which were generally re-presentations of foreign originals with the substitution of Turkish slogans were a mixture of signs, announcements and posters which were produced by hand due to the primitivity of the technology. [Plate 3]. This new visual variety resulted in interesting sights in terms of the silhouettes of the larger cities.

The life-style of the population was also changing rapidly. The city dweller of the period was developing new interests, new tastes, new styles of dress. These also demanded new styles of promotion and advertising. [Plate 4]. shows Şehzadebaşı, one of the main entertainment centers of Istanbul. The first operettas and vaudevilles were staged at this locale. Also, mobile theaters were touring Ankara and Istanbul, creating additional demand for posters. [Plate 5].

It can easily be said that the posters of the period were being produced as an essential part of the colorful daily life. However, one can sense

that such color and excitement is transitory compared to the need to implement a more substantial economy and industry.

The economic tableau following the foundation of the new republic was sad. Existing industry consisted of small workshops, and shops. The Turkish economy started to display an upward trend after 1926 and stabilized during a 10-15 year period:

“The most important aspect of the economic war was to show the population the need to conserve and to promote the consumption of domestic goods in order to strengthen the economy. The increasing economic depression, inflation and cost of living which affected the whole world was also affecting Turkey and called for radical measures” (Page 118) [5].

As in the previous example of the educational campaign, ‘The National Association of Economy and Conservation’, which was created in order to supply such needs, was trying to inform the public of such issues using slogans, jingles and even posters [Plate 6]. [shows posters designed for the ‘Domestic Products Week’ in 1933.

Just at this period, the Turkish poster and the history of Turkish graphic design was witnessing the emergence of one of its first stars: İhap Hulusi.

İhap Hulusi Görey, who formed his own studio in 1927, is accepted by many sources as the starting point of the Turkish poster.

Hulusi was born in Egypt in 1896. He received his education in this country until 1920. He went to Germany for reasons of health where he received instruction from Ludwig Hohlwein for a period of five years. These five years spent in Munich allowed Hulusi to attain a level and style comparable to that of his teacher. He developed the technique

of using insubstantial outlines and produced many posters in this mode [Plate 7].

One source has this to say about Hulusi:

“ He returned to Turkey in 1925. In those days, there were no examples of graphic design except newspaper ads. His family wanted him to become a public servant but he rejected this because he was in love with graphic design. He started by producing illustrations for ‘Akbaba’ magazine and made a name for himself” (Page 48) [10].

Posters produced by Hulusi during this period were aimed at the promotion of state organizations which were emerging as the result of new economic measures.

When we take a look at the economy of the 30’s, we see the emergence of the first five-year plan and the ‘State’ policy. This policy, which began after the world-wide depression of 1929, was an indication of economic and political philosophy.

This statement made by Prime Minister Ismet İnönü concerning the ‘State’ policy, can be read as one of the most important documents of a conversion to capitalist economy:

“The crafts and the trade, which are thought to be the most independent, need the help and the intervention of the State. Being at the source, I can see this need everyday” (Page 48) [10].

Such activities which were based on the ‘State’ policy, began to produce concrete result with the foundation of the public organizations: A total of 1667 kilometers of railways were appropriated; electricity, gas and tram lines were nationalized. The industrial office,

which was soon to become Sümerbank was founded during this period [Plate 8].

İş Bankası, the first private bank of the period, was founded in 1924 and the Turkish Bank of Industry and Mines was founded the year after

Ziraat Bankası, which was to support agriculture, started its activities in 1924.

The economic activity of the period was reflected in the posters. İş Bankası, which was trying to communicate and promote the concept of banking to the public was organizing lotteries and announcing these lotteries with posters. Until now, the general populace, which was uninformed of modern banking, was using traditional methods. İhap Hulusi and his posters were instrumental in establishing the new habit. [Plate 9].

The National Lotteries was also founded during this period and benefited from an association with Hulusi, an association which lasted for 45 years [Plate 10].

Hulusi also produced symbols and logotypes for many state organizations:

“The excitement of the new Republic and the efforts to create a new environment gave Hulusi the chance to do great things. This artist, who started out by producing posters which were in line with Western tastes and traditions and which also gained him recognition in foreign countries, was one of the first specialists of our country and the only signature on the walls of our cities for many years” (Page 47) [1].

We can consider Hulusi as being the first Turkish graphic designer in the professional sense of the word.

Despite the fact that such posters were initially financed by the state, we can see that the genre also evolved under the subsequent funding of the private sector.

There were also developments in the educational system. The 'Sanayi-i Nefise' of Ottoman times had changed into the Academy of Fine Arts and a Department of Poster Design was opened(1930).The first head of department was Mithat Özer who had just completed his fine art education in Paris:

“This well-meaning venture, incorporating talented students following Western examples, dissappeared in the narrow framework of academe because of the lack of technology and the means to spread itself” (Page 48) [1].

This is a fine example of the fact that a media will not be able to develop without economic demands and funds.

Two prominent names of the period are Yusuf Karaçay and Selahattin Bey.

The most important period of the years 1933-1938 was the Tenth Year of the Republic. These years saw the formation of the 'Halkevi' institution and increasing social activity. In 1934, the bills concerning surnames, dress and the emancipation of women were passed. The Ankara Faculty of Language, History and Geography and the State Conservatory were opened.

The enlarging state was still financing and controlling the industrial sector. The foundation of Sümerbank in 1933 and M.T.A. and Etibank in 1935 was a direct result of this control.

The products and the demands of these institutions created the need for posters. The developing economy was producing more and more

domestic goods and was promoting these goods with posters. A fine example is the poster designed by İhap Hulusi for the Beykoz Shoe Factory which displays both Hulusi's illustrative style and the mood of the time [Plate 11].

The poster also designed by Hulusi, depicting the first national census in 1935 is another example [Plate 12].

If we take a look at the social psychology of the age we see that positivism and humanism forms the basic concept of all kinds of media. An article in the 15 April 1938 issue of the 'İnsan' magazine, which reflected the styles of thought and the moods of the period ran an article which claimed that a Turkish Renaissance had started with the Kemalist Revolutions:

"For the last hundred years, the Turkish nation has been waiting indecisively between two worlds. It perceived the technological superiority of the civilization confronting it but it also could not forsake the values of the old world. This indecisiveness left it in a state of contradiction and depression. It finally became necessary to break the shell which prevented movement and to go down to the deep reasons which gave Western civilization its superiority. This was achieved by the intensive application of sheer willpower" (Page 90) [11].

The renaissance which should have taken place during the 'Tanzimat' period was a hundred years late.

Due to the heavy tolls extracted from the economy by World War II, no one owned up to the Turkish poster. The poster lived with the support of certain artists such as Tarık Uzmen, Faruk Morel, Atif Tuna and Orhan Omay, one of the first graduates of the Poster Design department of the Academy of Fine Arts. These artists represented the

Turkish poster during 1930-1945.

One of the most important enterprises of the 1938-1946 period was the implementation of the laws concerning the 'Village Institutes'. Hasan Ali Yücel was the Minister of Education during this period. In 1940, the state started the translation of world literary classics, in keeping with the 'State' policy. Also, the names of the months and the language of the 1924 Constitution were updated.

During the period of 1946-50:

"The triumph of the democracies at the end of World War II affects our country as well. Elections are being held with a view toward a conversion to the multi-party political system. The commercial bourgeoisie and land-owners are gaining in power in C.H.P.. and are entering the parliament" (Page 101) [11].

The poster regained importance with the emergence of a commercial bourgeoisie and new economic and political endeavors.

Many graduates of the academy made names for themselves during the period: Mesut Manioğlu, Natik Soyeren, Namık Bayık, Vedat Sargin, Gevher Bozkurt, Selçuk Önal, Ayhan Akalp. Among the new generation which followed this one are: Fikret Akgün, Rauf Alazan, Atilla Bayraktar, Yurdaer Altıntaş, Mengü Ertel, Erkal Yavi, Turgay Betil, Sungu Çapan, Ahmet Güleriyüz and Metin Edremit.

At this point, it will be instructive to go back to a name which is very important for the poster in both a local and a universal sense: Kenan Temizan.

Temizan studied poster design in Berlin for 18 years and made a name for himself there. Like İhap Hulusi, he produced posters with an illustrative style and also made extensive use of photographic images.

The influences of these two masters can be discerned in other works produced by this generation.

Such a well-known designer was a great boon for the development of the Turkish poster. With his return to Turkey he was given the title of Professor of Fashion Illustration at the Academy of Fine Arts where he remained until his death. The Poster Studio of the academy was then being run by Zeki Faik Izer, a painter. It is a great loss that Temizan was not allowed more freedom in his profession.

“Turkey, which entered the republic period with a lack of specialists in important areas, gave control to many persons who were lacking in education” (Page 47) [1].

The years 1950-1960 were the years of Democratic Party rule. The administration which at first deployed an open approach started to tighten its hold on many aspects of life. The ‘Village Institutes’ and the ‘Halkevi’ institution were abolished.

The posters commissioned by the Democratic Party for election propaganda are typical examples of the political poster. The ‘Enough-It’s the turn of the people’ poster designed by Selçuk Milar is a fine example of the social and political activity of the times [Plate 13].

“The economic policies adopted after World War II have a certain importance attached to them. This importance stems from the rapid expansion of private investment which was being fed from new sources. This created a clearer picture of social and economic development. This pool of private investment, especially trade investments, gained an unprecedented power with the help of domestic and foreign influences. This process allowed the provincial areas to open out to the market, faster development of the cities and the creation of new areas of investment. The transition to a

multi-party system and the opening of the economy to foreign aid and investment created new styles of consumption, feeding the pool of investment. A process whereby the pool of investment, with the administration on its side, was able to fully include social and economic development” (Page 79) [7].

These developments increased the demand for posters.

In the posters of this period, we can clearly see the influences of printing technologies:

“In the designs of the generation of poster artists after the year 1945, the influence of the French poster designer Cassandre can be felt. His style, which was in tune with the printing technology of the day, has been lost with newer technologies. In this style, the poster is sub-divided into areas of color, certain edges of these areas were softened and a lot of weight was given to composition. The typography has been researched and has become an important element of the composition” (Page 48) [1].

Despite the bright and hopeful start of the Democratic Party, its erroneous and unplanned administration weakened the economy. These years were years during which the population was advised of the advantages of savings accounts and the purchase of bonds. The posters commissioned by the ‘Amortisman Kredi Sandığı’ from San Organization are documents of the economic problems of the period.

In the 60's we see another period of change and movement during which the revolution of 27 May took place and the Democratic Party was removed from power and abolished. A new constitution was written in 1961.

A name which consistently crops up in the poster designs of the 60's is Mengü Ertel who produced unique examples of the genre. This period is when the National Theater was bureaucratized and private theaters were formed. Or, in the words of Yurdaer Altıntaş, these were the days of 'the procrastination' of the city theaters and the split of Muhsin Ertuğrul, Yıldız and Müşfik Kenter from these theaters, forming, their own companies. In 1959, the Karaca theater commissioned a poster from Mengü Ertel for their play 'Two People on a Swing' displaying the increased awareness of the potential of the poster as a promotional medium. The poster for the play, 'Desert Rat' which was also designed by Mengü Ertel is another important example of the genre. [Plate 14].

In the following years, the poster was used in a large variety of ways. New products of such firms as Arçelik were featured in posters. On the other hand, cultural posters such as those of the Istanbul City Opera, financed by Aydın Gün and Muhsin Ertuğrul were decorating the walls of Istanbul. Examples are 'Madame Butterfly', 'The Masquerade' and 'The Consul'.

These years are years during which the power of the poster was discovered and used extensively. If we consider that TV had not yet taken up a large portion of advertising budgets, we see a reason for this popularity.

"After a decline following World War II, advertising expenditures rose slowly, reaching 1,500,000 TL in 1948. The first radio adverts started in 1951 and the first TV adverts started in 1972. However, large advertising budgets began to form only after the 60's. The reason for this was the changes in the economic structure. In the 50's, the private sector preferred the production of goods (with both its own efforts and the help of foreign investment) which could be sold directly to the consumer, which would also need a minimum

of investment, bringing in maximum profit” (Page 1191) [12].

Here, we can also see the foundation of many advertising agencies where graphic designers were to find work. Examples are: ‘Reklamcılık in 1943, ‘Faal Ajans’ and ‘Grafika’ in 1944 and ‘Reklam Moran’ in 1952. Many other agencies followed suit. The number of agencies in 1960-1965 was 40. In the next five years, this number rose to 50.

These years were the years of the transition to professionalism in graphic design. This professionalism naturally necessitated to formation of professional groups. The Association of Graphic Artists, formed in 1968 by Yurdaer Altıntaş and his friends, was closed down in 1973 both of financial and legal reasons.

In this period, the works of such poster designers as Mengü Ertel, Yurdaer Altıntaş and Atilla Bayraktar were displayed in Western professional magazines. Such designers joined the First and Second Warsaw Poster Biennials (1966-1968) and the Brno (Czechoslovakia) 4th Graphic Biennial (1970). The poster of Mengü Ertel were made a part of the permanent collections of the Wilanow Museum (Warsaw) and the Munich City Museum [Plate 15].

In the beginning of the 70’s, Turkish economy was suffering a depression in the sales of industrial goods:

“The economy is face to face with a problem concerning the sale of products such as refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and ovens. The industry is in a state of over-production. The stocks of such products has increased and production had slowed. The industry is face to face with a crisis” (Page 318) [13].

This crisis precipitated the coup of 12 March in 1971 :

“12 March was a result of the crisis which Turkish capitalism had

entered and was implemented to solve the economic problems which had accumulated and which remained unsolvable until 1971 by the administration. This is the basic and objective reason All of the other reasons can only have meaning if they complement and fit this basic reason.

“Student activities are often shown as the culprit. This has nothing to do with the reality of the situation. Student activities cannot constitute the reason of the coup of 12 March, they can only be the result” (Page 318) [13].

With 12 March, the 1961 Constitution was being re-written. However, the 1973 elections which followed brought a new vitality to cultural and social levels with the increasing opposition of society. This vitality is reflected in the posters of the period.

There were approximately 340 large and small advertising agencies in Turkey at this point in time, and 250 of them were located in Istanbul. The most prominent of these were: Ilançılık, Yeni Ajans, Reklamcılık, Manajans, Reklam Moran, Grafika, Radar and Istanbul Reklam.

With the start of television advertising in 1972, large portions of the advertising budgets were set aside for this new medium. One of the most vital aspects of the period, which came with the new administration of 1973 was undoubtedly the theater. Theater became one of the most popular forms of artistic entertainment. Especially prominent are ‘Dormen Tiyatrosu’ and ‘Kent Oyuncuları’ which staged many plays and commissioned many posters for the promotion of these plays. Here, I would like to include the name of Kamuran Yüce with respect.

Yurdaer Altıntaş, who designed many posters during this time, recounts that the student matinees of these theaters were full-house and that many of the spectators watched the plays standing. Examples

commissioned by 'Kent Oyuncuları' are: 'Aptal Kız', 'Beşyol', 'Ölümü, Yaşamak', 'Mary Mary' and 'Ben Anadolu' [Plate 16,17,18,19,20].

One of the most famous posters of the time is undoubtedly Mengü Ertel's poster for the play 'Keşanlı Ali Destanı'. This poster was initially produced by hand for exhibition in a private exhibition. Afterwards, this poster was printed in Czechoslovakia and the twice in Turkey by the State Theater in 1972 [Plate 21].

Important examples of the political poster during the period of 1975-1980 include the May 1st and DISK posters, which accurately reflect the political and social climate of the time. In these posters, which were chosen for printing in competitions, we can see the direction society was taking.

In the meantime, I should include here a passage from the TÜSIAD (The Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen) '1975 Report on Turkish Economy' in connection with the bureaucratic obstacles which I will outline further on in my thesis:

"A large portion of the bureaucrats and the technocrats have been pushed into the political arena, creating a new class of technocrat/bureaucrat. This class which may be called 'polucrat' is very much affected by political fluctuations and changes of administration cause the birth and activation of new 'polucrats'" (Page 4) [14].

This passage is an evidence of the erroneous bureaucratization which started during that period. The results of this miscalculation were to manifest themselves in the 80's.

However, during a period when these results were not yet manifest (1976-1979), the illustrative posters designed by Mürşide İçmeli for the National Opera and Ballet and the Ministry of Tourism are unique

examples of the genre: 'Carmina Burana', 'Giselle' etc. [Plate 22].¹¹

The first understanding to be gained from this short look at the Turkish poster is that it holds a place as a vital medium for Turkish society. The genre saw rapid development into the 80's and this development does not seem to be slowing.

A happy observation is that the Turkish population has come to accept this media in a relatively short period of 60-70 years. At this stage of my thesis, I will follow this historic view of the Turkish poster with a critical look at its present.

4.2. Turkish Posters in the Light of Contemporary Economy

In the previous section I examined the development of the poster in Turkey and its connection with social and economical events. Poster design was being directly influenced by the advertising sector and with the financial sources created by this sector. I think it is wise to begin this section with a comparison on an international scale. Numbers representing the advertising expenditures of certain countries will fix the position of Turkey in this hierarchy :

“Advertising expenditures in Turkey are very low compared to those of Europe of North America. For example in 1987, this expenditure (per person) was 180\$ in Great Britain, 76\$ in Italy, 32\$ in Greece and 164\$ in Germany while the figure for Turkey was 3.8\$” (Page 80-92) [9].

As can be seen from this example, the circulation of capital in the advertising sector of our country is quite low. However, it is also apparent that the advertising sector is one sector which is open to development in the framework of a developing economic structure. Especially in the last two years, international advertising firms have set up operations in Turkey in various fashions, giving us a clue of this tendency to develop. The investments and the attitudes of these international firms is concrete evidence that this sector has a hopeful future in Turkey. We can also expect positive developments in graphic design and the increasing importance of the poster as a medium. On the other hand, other media, such as TV advertising are taking up increasing amounts of the expenditures of the sector. Even though such other media cannot take the place of the poster, they do have priority. What other alternatives among new media can take the place of the poster? The answer is: the billboard.

Sadık Karamustafa has this to say on the subject of billboards :

“After 1980, the walls in the larger cities were cleaned and were brought under the control of the government. The most prominent evidence of this control is the billboard. Municipalities began to rent the city to outdoor advertising which until then used the walls of the city in a piratical fashion. City walls, parks bus stops, train stations, ports were filled with billboards. Brands which found TV and press advertising too expensive all started to use this medium. People were no longer able to see each other. Our ability to see if a bus is coming or not was taken from us. Billboards came between us. A visual murder started. While cinemas, concerts, theaters, sports and festivals were unable to find display areas on walls, refrigerators, detergents, ovens started to crop up on billboards whose weekly rent was measured in the tens of thousands (in 1980). The whizz kids of the advertising sector did not pause to think of better and more attractive ways of using this medium. They did not consider how to create better designs using ten 70 x 100 cm pieces of paper which enter the printing press 4 times each, that is 40 times in all. The kitsch of color photographs and four-color printing became the new city aesthetic. The mentality which closed walls to city culture for fear of the return of anarchy, abandoned the city to the culture of the billboard” (Page 19) [5].

These words of Karamustafa reflect the distress of a responsible citizen of the city in view of the rise and the misuse of the billboard which is increasingly becoming an alternative to the poster. It is important for the advertising sector to keep in mind that the poster is an important ingredient of city culture and that a larger share of advertising expenditures should be put aside for the development of the medium..

On the other hand, spaces for the display of posters should also have

been designed and reserved. However, as the poster is not a lucrative medium for the municipalities, no consideration was given to their style of usage and as they were forbidden on walls, the poster became a medium without room for implementation. There are ways of obtaining permission to use posters; however these ways are so bureaucratically tangled that they automatically abort the poster from the media plans of advertisers.

At this point, let us look at important events that give the period its characteristics. The coup of 12 September was a significant factor in the reduction of social activities and economic investments. This event can therefore be considered as a barrier to the development of the poster as well. In a world which is in the throes of incessant development, any small and local halt of development naturally brings with it a rapid and relative decline. These years can be seen as an important loss for Turkish graphic design.

The transitory period after the coup of 12 September ended in a tentative and turbulent return to democracy and the people preferred one consistent party for a long period of time.

The liberalist economic system implemented by the Özal government in the years succeeding 1980, were extremely important in defining the new directions of the poster in Turkey, which, after a period of decline started to reform itself in conjunction with a liberal economic structure.

Even though such developments also took place in the macro, or global, scale, the effects of such changes were nowhere more noticeable than in Turkey.

The increasing distinction of social classes have naturally been reflected in poster designs and each social class has created its own distinctive style and its own audience.

When we take a look at poster designs produced in our country we can immediately notice some extremely good examples of the genre; however we also see how few these examples are. [Plate 23]. If we also considered the limited number of printings of these posters were face to face with an important problem. Fine examples of the genre are produced but these disappear against the relatively large number of inferior posters. A large portion of these are posters for interior display only [Plate 24].

The larger portion of the posters seen daily by the people in the city are designed by people which we can easily call invisible designers.

These invisible designers do not design in a professional sense; they see this process as subordinate to the process of printing. In fact, a large portion of the design process, which still is not viewed as a professional profession in our country, is executed by such anonymous persons. As a result, the poster in Turkey became something which contributed to visual pollution.

Apart from the impressive and expensive advertising posters, the posters in the street are far below the required standards of design.

The case of the commercial poster is much more interesting. For some reason this sub-genre adopted a style based solely on photographic images and they too are almost never designed in the real sense of the word.

If the responsibility of a poster is to convey information then commercial posters in our country are lacking a lot.

These words of Nazar Büyüm, one of the important figures of the Turkish advertising sector, throw some more light on the matter:

"Thankfully this false idea is losing ground in Turkey: The

graphic designer displays his art in concert or cinema posters because these are important, artistic forms; whereas his/her hands are tied when it comes to the design of a commercial poster... For this very reason, Turkish graphic designers disregarded the commercial poster for years.

It is not sufficient for a commercial poster to be beautiful; it also has to be impressive and push people in a certain direction. We have never gone to a concert in the Istanbul Festival just because the poster was beautiful, in fact there were no individual posters for such events. However, if a poster is being designed for a car, a brand of food or a service, these have to carry the basic message, they have to impress people, such that it is would not be difficult to say that the commercial poster should be sufficient from both the graphic design and the commercial function points of view” (Page 25) [16].

If we combine the words of Nazar Büyüm and Sadık Karamustafa, it is readily apparent that graphic designers do not give enough emphasis to the design of the commercial sector. However, the solution to this problem should not only be expected from the designers but also the client should be educated and taught to forget his/her misconceptions and set ideas of what is correct. Despite all this, it must again be emphasized that the liberal economic structure of the post-80's brought impetus and variety to the Turkish poster.

The development and the financial backing of the commercial sector has increased the importance and attractiveness of the graphic design profession. a very important indication of this trend is the steadily increasing number of departments which give education in this field and the increasing number of pupils which receive this education. Despite the fact that faults in the Turkish educational system have made it very difficult to achieve results from such efforts, the facts that more

and more people want to receive education in this field, that there are more and more professionals in the field and that there are more and more clients with increasing demands all show the importance given to the profession.

Apart from the attitude of the commercial sector and the function of this sector in making the profession of graphic design more attractive, we can easily say that the best examples which characterize the Turkish poster can be found in examples of the cultural poster.

Turkish posters that have participated in biennials, rewarded by the Graphic Designers Union and exhibited in foreign publications are almost all examples of the cultural poster. These posters all concern artistic exhibitions, competitions, private theaters and festivals. There are fine examples of work produced in our country in this context.

If we take a close look at the attitudes that underlie the production and success of these posters we become aware of two main themes [Plate 25].

1) The private sector finances the venture of producing cultural posters. Such sponsors gain notice with their support of such posters which aim for high standards of design. This approach, which can be also seen in the West, brings many advantages to both sides on one hand and succeed in giving impetus and dynamism to cultural activities. However, the target audience of these posters constitute a small percentage of the total population; an audience which is elite and who have a say in the directions many institutions of the country take. Generally, the content of these posters are not easily understood. This kind of an approach is readily visible in the attitude of some organizations.

In art festivals and exhibitions, an organizational committee finds sponsors and acts as as in-between, transferring funds from the

sponsor to the designer.

2) After fixing supportive firms and corporations as the main ingredient in the development of the cultural poster, we can fix the second one as being the star designer system which is effective in our country.

The graphic design profession, which has only become a profession in Turkey, has immediately created its own stars. There are prominent names -who have promoted Turkey in foreign countries- which immediately spring to mind when one mentions the cultural poster in Turkey. Sometimes these star graphic designers even take upon the organizations of certain artistic activities. They therefore not only bring artists and audience together but they promote their own images. What should be discussed here is the correct balance between personal promotion and the promotion of the activity and the work informing of the activity. The designer should be included in a professional evaluation in exchange for this function. The list of minimum payments which graphic designers should receive from clients (updated every year by the Graphic Designer's Union) should be applicable by every graphic designer in the country. However, the subordination of the work to personal promotion by designing for free at very low prices creates a star system which has no foundation to speak of.

Naturally, this system of self-finance and self-promotion where the designer has his/her own private audience becomes desirable in the eyes of young and up-coming graphic designers and the efforts of such designers result in inappropriate and unconsidered designs.

Naturally, my intention when mentioning the negative results of the star system is not to ascribe these results to individuals or groups who produce correct designs with their personal efforts. It is simply to observe the incorrect designs which this hierarchical structure produces.

These incorrect designs can be grouped under two headings:

- 1) Posters which have not been designed,
 - 2) Posters produced with the personal financing of certain designers and posters designed by those who take such posters as an example.
- Film posters are an example which will clarify these ideas. Vecdi Sayar, who is a renowned film critic, says :

I do not believe that we can evaluate a film poster without discussing its ability to condense and reflect the content of the film it refers to. However perfect it may be from the design point of view, a poster whose connection with its subject matter is under question must be a very hard product to defend.

The images of so many important films remain fresh in our memory along with memories of their posters. Is it possible to forget those posters which carry the signatures of Polish, Hungarian or Japanese masters or those American film posters with their nostalgic illustrations.? Photographs have a place in a poster; so does a pencil or a collage, as long as they don't turn their backs to the white screen.

A junta leader in a Santiago Alvarez film says: The tiger has attacked and killed...but one day it will itself be killed. My memories of this film consist of Victor Jara's songs and the lines used in the poster. In the poster of the film One or Two Things I Know About Her Godard uses the technique of collage. Bunuel's posters carry the mystery and symbolism we associate with him. Polanski's posters give us all the clues we need to enter into his world of passions and nightmares. In all of these examples, the intentions of the directors are in an eternal union with the hand of the designer.

When we consider Turkey however, things don't look so hopeful. For many long years we have had to make do with terrible copies of American and Italian posters. There were of course a few unique examples (Mengü Ertel, Sadık Karamustafa, Yurdaer Altıntaş, Bülent Erkmén) but these posters not only could not communicate their message to the population at large, they became festival posters in that they deliberately avoided the population (Page 11) [17].

As a poster can be judged from its content or its ability to convey a message, it can also be judged from the standpoint of its physical characteristics. The development of printing technologies is very important from the point of view of the designer in that this development affords him/her a wider perspective of application. The number of colors the designer can use, the choice of paper, intermediate steps in the preparation of the final artwork, the technique of printing all contribute to the final physical structure of a poster.

Our country -which progressed from hand-printing to lithography, from the letter-press to offset machines capable of printing four or five colors at the same time- has recently experienced the Desk Top Publishing revolution at the same time as the rest of the world. We now have access to Macintosh computers capable of producing color-separated output in conjunction with computer-controlled film-setters. Naturally the prices of production follows this upward trend.

It is also important to note that these technologies are continually developing and are very hard to keep up with.

Ray VarnBuhler, who also taught in our university, says :

"Most Turkish designers feel that there are a number of good support services (printers, typesetter etc.), but not enough; they point out the demand usually exceeds what's available

and good suppliers are hard to find. Furthermore, designers in Turkey don't as yet have some of the luxuries we Western designers are accustomed to. Things we take for granted -an extensive selection of quality printing papers, thousands of typefaces to choose from, image banks, technology at the leading edge and more- are not common yet in a country still in the process of moving towards a more Western level of development. For example, I was told that the number of type fonts available in Turkey is fewer than 300, compared to roughly 8000 in the U.S. Also, in a country that just recently opened its trading doors wider, Turkish clients are often not fully aware of the potential and standards of graphic design and advertising in the international marketplace (Page 80-92) [9].

Probably the problem most argued by Turkish graphic designers is the problem of identity. Should Turkish graphic design, the Turkish poster have an identity? There are clearly two answers to this question.

When posed this question, Yurdaer Altıntaş replies :

The imposition of such a question is an embargo applied by the West to the East. [18]

This answer implies a universal language, increasing globality and the exclusion of the East from this globality. Ray VarnBuhler asked Turkish designers if such a thing as a Turkish look in design existed. He describes the answers he received as follows :

However, some Turkish designers questioned the question itself, seeing in it preconceived Western ideas about discovering some kind of unique Eastern look -a position mildly amusing to designers fully aware of Western design, styles and trends. They asked how, in the smaller

communication-linked we live in today, can good design be nation-specific? How can (or why should) a designer close his eyes to outside influences from abroad? Why should anyone expect a Turkish designer's work to have a Turkish look? The question of a nationalistic design identity and the adoption and use of non-Turkish influences find a supportive parallel in fine art according to one designer, who started, 'Nobody asks how Spanish or French Picasso is nor are they disturbed by African or Oriental influences in some of Picasso's work. Another remarked, 'Unless there is some kind of national relevance in the subject matter, then national design characteristics are irrelevant'. As a group, they were fairly unanimous in stating that except for some types of illustration, or applications involving Turkish calligraphy. There is only good design or bad design, not Turkish or Western (Page 80-92) [9].

If answers to such a question are so forceful, one begins to wonder whether the allegations of an embargo are really true. The Picasso example given by one Turkish designer is very relevant in this context. Extending such an example one may ask: How Tahitian was Paul Gauguin?

This problem can also be evaluated from not only from the point of view of designers but also from the point of view of the clients, or the financial sources behind the demand :

"One designer, alluding to an increasing number of international clients, stated, 'I still haven't discovered how I can feel Turkish about subjects like IBM, Woody Allen, Shakespeare, ITT, Philip Morris, Star Wars etc.' Another commented, 'Since we deal with a highly developed communications network, the important thing should be human characteristics rather than national ones " (Page 80-92) [9].

Almost all designers are agree that human characteristics and not national characteristics should be emphasized. The trend towards globality is accelerating at an unstoppable pace. In this context, both the human and the global factor push designers towards more social approaches. The search for a universal language reveals itself in every level of human activity. :

In the film Blade Runner which Ridley Scott's science fiction thrilling of life in the XXIIth Century , Los Angeles is a city without a nation ; an eerie post megalopolis formed by; converging cultures - Tokyo's Ginza, New York's Times Square, Berlins K irfstendamm ...and the sunset strip. Contributing to the surreal aura of the setting are digitized illuminated signs advertising an array of multinational products ,hanging from the futuristic 100-storey buildings and blaring a stream of pulsating international visual icons Though the plot is fiction , the idea of a universal graphic language is more fact than fantasy. Today,the world is so unified by satellite communications that swift access to data has not only made cultural collide - anew global language is now compulsory. However even though the profound distinctions between national styles are beginning to blur. Certain regional characteristics have not and perhaps never will , became a universal standard. (Page 85) [19].

We have not yet touched upon the subject of the social poster. The content of these this sub-genre basically consist of problems we come across in our day-to-day, social lives. Despite the fact that this type of posters requires responsibility from the designer, social posters in Turkey do not reach the quality of cultural posters. The reason for this is readily apparent: There are no specific sources of finance for the solution of such problems in our country. There are very few organizations to be persons to be promoted by designers. One of the organizations to address social issues is The Association for the

Preservation of Wildlife which has commissioned some poster in the past. Two of these posters attracted attention in the 1990 exhibition of the Graphic Designers Union. These posters, designed by Mehmet Ali Türkemen, are titled 'The Sea Has Come To An End' and 'The Bird Heaven Is Waiting' They are important steps for the social poster in Turkey [Plate 26].

When one thinks on a global scale, peace posters immediately come to mind as addressing the most universal social issue. Such posters have almost always been participants in international competitions. Which client would pay a designer for a poster about peace?

One of the most important problems confronting the social poster in Turkey is the problem of financial resources. The fact that this problem remains unresolved and that potential sponsors are largely unaware of the self-promotional possibilities of such ventures creates a large vacuum in the are of social posters.

However, the responsibility of financing posters which exhibit social concerns is not solely that of the designer nor of private organizations. A large part of this responsibility falls on the shoulders of ministries which perform social services, state organizations and local jurisdictions. Looking at Turkey as a whole, we see that such organizations which have the power and obligation to commission social posters do not do so. These organizations have also not fully understood the potential of self-promotion and in places where this has been understood the power is in the wrong hands. It is vitally important to purge the large number of bureaucrats who supposedly work as designers at various levels but who, in fact, do nothing; to commission professional graphic designers for such projects and to create serious budgets for the implementation of these projects.

The Turkish economy as a whole is suffering from a similar problem and the proposal of privatization for the economy has many similarities

to the proposals I have outlined above, that is, the State should dissolve its monopolies and each job should be given to a professional of that job.

The State Opera and Ballet, The State Theater, The Ministry of Health and Social Aid, The Ministry of the Environment, The Ministry of Sports, Kızılay... and many other state organizations have the need, the content and the resources for social posters.

It is necessary for the state sector to mobilize financial resources for the implementation of social posters and to speedily pass and finalize new resolutions to this effect.

In this section, I have outlined the Turkish poster, its structure, its present state, its specific problems and solutions to these problems. The next section of my thesis, which is an applied section, will be concerned with the design and analysis of a poster with social content.

5. A PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY; THE USAGE OF RECYCLED PAPER

This section of my thesis will consist of an applied exercise aimed at alleviating the problem of the social poster in our country and its explanation.

As I have outlined in the previous section, the most important problem confronting social poster design in Turkey is a lack of funds. Therefore it is a natural result that a social poster should be included with a thesis such as mine.

When searching for the content of this poster, I selected one of the many environmental issues, all of which I believe to be the most serious of our day and time: the issue of recycling reusing and paper :

Energy, the lack of raw materials and environmental pollution constitute the main problems which confront us today. These problems are the direct result of the increasing population, industrialization and the rapid consumption of resources which cannot be renewed or replenished. (Page 41) [20].

These problems pose a serious threat to the living standards of the future. One solution to these problems is to reconsider the product which we used to view as waste in the past; to make maximum usage of these products in both the pre and post-production processes.

In the past, these products were either dumped, channeled into rivers and seas or were burnt in open air. Such practices were permitted because the recovery of the usable portions of such waste products was considered to be a financial burden. This situation has completely changed in our day. Scientific and technological advancements are being applied to the reclamation of the usable portions of waste

products with a view towards the balancing the state of the ecology with the unending demands of the human race. Here, one must make a distinction between the concepts of waste products and waste. When a certain material is not ideally processed, that is when its entire physical mass is not completely converted into the desired end-products, waste products ensue. Depending on the constitution of these products and the processes applied to them, a portion (or all) of these products can be reclaimed for reusage. The side products of this second process have no economical or practical value and are called waste.

The intentions of recycling are twofold: Reducing environmental pollution by reducing the amount of waste and increasing the amount of raw materials.

In terms of volume, waste paper and cardboard probably constitute the largest portion of all waste products. We use paper in every level of our daily lives. Advancing packaging technologies which permit even liquid goods to be marketed in paper-based packages, is increasing the usage of paper. In fact, it is an international convention to evaluate the level of civilization of a certain country by its consumption of paper.

The raw material which is used to produce paper is cellulose, which in turn, is produced from wood. Looking at it from another point of view, we can easily say that the raw material for paper is the forests of our planet. The increasing consumption of paper is therefore endangering the future of our planet. Recycled paper, therefore, is both a necessity and a precaution. Such a precaution will not only result in the protection of our forests but will also decrease pollution and increase energy conservation :

In principle, it is possible to reclaim 85 % of all consumed paper and cardboard; in practice, however, 15 % is either used for books, records and other products which are impossible to reclaim; are too soiled or are completely destroyed during consumption. With the proper

organization, a larger portion can be reclaimed.

In our country, there are currently a total of 33 paper mills, 26 of which are owned by the private sector. SEKA, which is the only state-owned venture, on its own produces more than 50 % of the paper output of Turkey.

In 1988, Turkey was in 34th place in the world in terms of paper-cardboard production and in 31st place in terms of consumption. However, a very large portion of the paper consumed in our country is imported.

As can be gathered from the above examples, we are destroying our forests in order to fulfill our paper demands. Such resources are becoming more and more scarce in Turkey, necessitating the reclamation of paper.

5.1. A Report on a Poster Designed to be Printed on Recycled Paper

Designers, especially graphic designers, are at the forefront of professionals who consume large amount of paper. A graphic designer consumes a very large amount of paper when he is preparing mock-ups or a presentation for a client. But this is nothing compared to the amount which is consumed when the final design is printed Today, when a design has been approved by a client, it is printed in the thousands or even tens of thousands. Some designers even find the quality of paper produced in Turkey insufficient for their needs and import paper from other countries. Therefore, the graphic designer has an important say in the consumption of a large percentage of the total paper consumption.

Looking at this problem from the point of view of the casual consumer, all paper products except toilet paper, tissues and blank writing paper are printed materials. Being printed, we can assume that all of these products have been through a process of design. Daily papers, magazines, brochures, posters, tickets books have produced by a group of people which includes graphic designers. The responsibility of choosing the type of paper to be used in such extensive consumption and recommending the usage of recycled paper to the client falls largely onto the shoulders of the graphic designer. It may take a long time for all graphic designers to become aware of this responsibility, however setting such aims is necessary for the conservation of the environment.

Therefore, the poster I have designed for my thesis has as its target audience graphic designers and design bureaus. It embodies an attempt to remind graphic designers of the responsibilities mentioned above and to caution them concerning their important role in the conservation of the environment. The second paragraph of the text

incorporates small tips and reminders which can be applied in design studios [Plate 27].

This poster was primarily designed for interior usage, to be hung on the walls of design studios and to be read from a distance which this usage implies. The text was typeset in Helvetica Black, extended by 60%. As the text is to be read in interior conditions, the perception time of the viewer is increased compared to that of a poster to be hung street or a bus stop. The point size of the text can be easily read from a distance of 40-50 cm under normal lighting conditions [Plate 28].

The poster has been printed on recycled paper.

There is a decorative feel to both the typeface chosen and the placement of the recycle symbols in the four corners. This feel is intentional: It is aimed at demonstrating to designers the fact that impressive and attractive designs are possible on recycled paper [Plate 29].

There is a black border around the poster. This has been put there as a frame which will increase the importance of the message, giving the feeling that its message is important enough to frame.

The slogan is a play on words incorporating the main points of the longer text. Here, the form Happy New Year has been shifted and adapted to a new style of usage. When seen from a distance, one immediately perceives the slogan as reading Happy New Year, a situation which resolves itself and divulges its message when viewed from a closer distance [Plate 30].

I must add that editions of this poster were sent to graphic designers all over the country at new year.

The slogan Happy New Cycle was used to convey several meanings or messages:

1) The celebration of a new cycle, that is, a new year; therefore giving the same meaning as Happy New Year.

2) The wish that recycled paper should be used more extensively; which is enforced by the usage of the recycle symbols and the text.

3) A reference to the turning or spinning of our globe (enforced by the drawing in the background) and a wish that this spin should continue in a healthy fashion [Plate 30]. This final message is actually a logical result of the wish in the second message. If the second wish is fulfilled then the third one will also be automatically fulfilled.

The color of the freehand drawing in the background was intentionally chosen, firstly because it is an earth-color and secondly in order to complement the color of the recycled paper. The reason I used a freehand drawing instead of a photograph or a ready-made symbol was to lend the poster a sensitive and emotional dynamism. The poster was printed as a limited edition (200) and posted to graphic designers, studios and universities which incorporate graphic design departments. My wish is that social posters which carry the awareness of professional responsibilities become more and more popular.

6. CONCLUSION

The young Turkish Republic, emerging from the rubble of the Ottoman Empire, aimed at creating a new structure for itself. The Ottoman Empire had for many centuries set an example for other countries. However, it had started to fall behind the scientific and cultural developments of the times and was therefore doomed to destruction. The new republic adopted the policy of severing all ties with the past by following the example of Western countries and by assuming a new identity. We tried to experience the Renaissance of Europe in the cultural and economic revolutions of Atatürk. This policy has resulted in some changes which are merely cosmetic, but has largely succeeded. However, the pains and problems associated with such a sudden shift are still felt in the present.

I believe that the question whether the Turkish poster should have a distinctive identity is one of the most central ones outlined in this thesis. The Turkish poster was born with the adoption of the Latin alphabet, developed under Western influences and has arrived at its present state of development under the influence of a gradually extending universal language. In fact, the poster takes us to the center of the problem of change by being the barometer of economic and social structure; by being the medium of the city; by being the voice of the population and its expression.

In John Naisbitt and Patricia Abuderne's book 'Megatrends 2000' two main trends are described as being a trend towards globality and universalization and, opposed to this, a trend towards cultural nationalism. Turkey is cited as an example of a country experiencing both trends :

"But Turkey's case is particularly illustrative. Although only a small percentage of the nation's 52 million, predominantly

Moslem people are fundamentalists, Turkey will, over the next decade, represent a textbook arena for the interplay between the trend toward a global life-style and the counter trend of cultural nationalism.

Turkey's rich contradictions symbolize its geographic position as the link between Europe and the Orient: Writes Washington Post foreign correspondent Edward Cody: "Imams in minarets look East toward Mecca while businessmen in office towers look West towards Brussels".

Prime Minister Turgut Özal is a business-oriented technocrat and a devout Moslem. Even as Turkey petitions to join the Common Market, its young college women are enthusiastically wrapping their heads in Islamic scarves, which have been banned at public universities as part of an official discouraging of religious practices dating back to the 1920's, when Kemal Atatürk introduced secular reforms. Enrollment in Muslim schools has increased six times in 15 years. Which will win out? The Islamic revival or the European Community? Or a creative combination? (Page 121) [4].

These observations and questions concerning conflicting trends are also applicable to the attitudes of Turkish graphic designers. The example of religion given in this passage should not be taken as the sole arena of cultural nationalism. Either we accept the passage to a universal culture and a modern life-style (providing we can absorb it) or we remain a transitory society by continuing a search for the 'Turkish identity'

In the light of the problems outlined above and viewed from the angle of the Turkish poster, all structures which contribute to this institution should be created professionally, official organizations contributing to the field should be privatized and should be careful not to endorse

designs and designers which are capable of conveying false or easily misunderstood messages to the public.

Posters, which are the voice of the city and the public, should also incorporate apart from the slick and kitsch designs of the advertising sector, social poster which address universal, environmental and social problems.

Despite all the problems plaguing Turkish poster design, it has proved itself capable of accomplishing universality and its present development seems to indicate hope for the future in this context.

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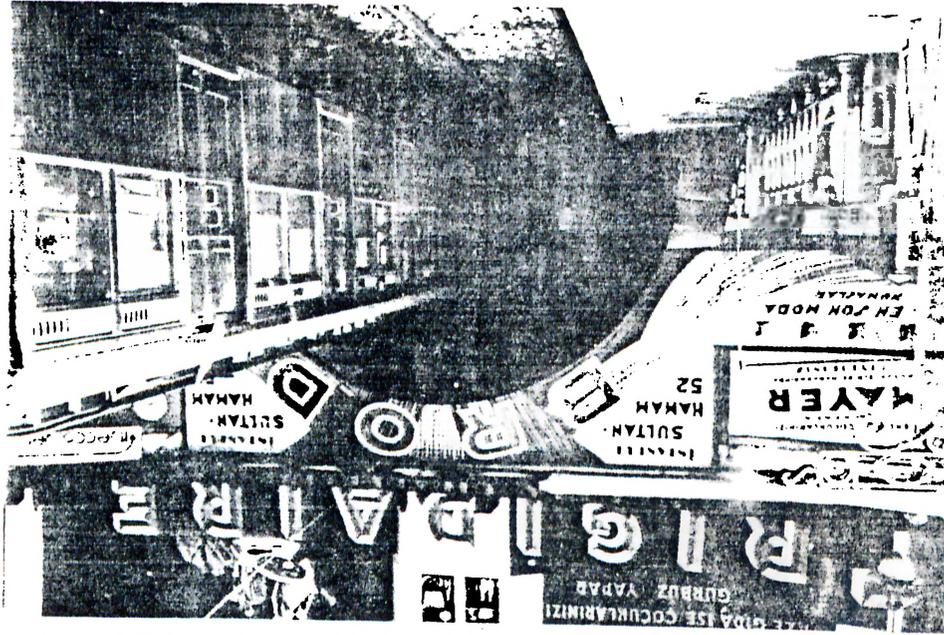
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PLATES

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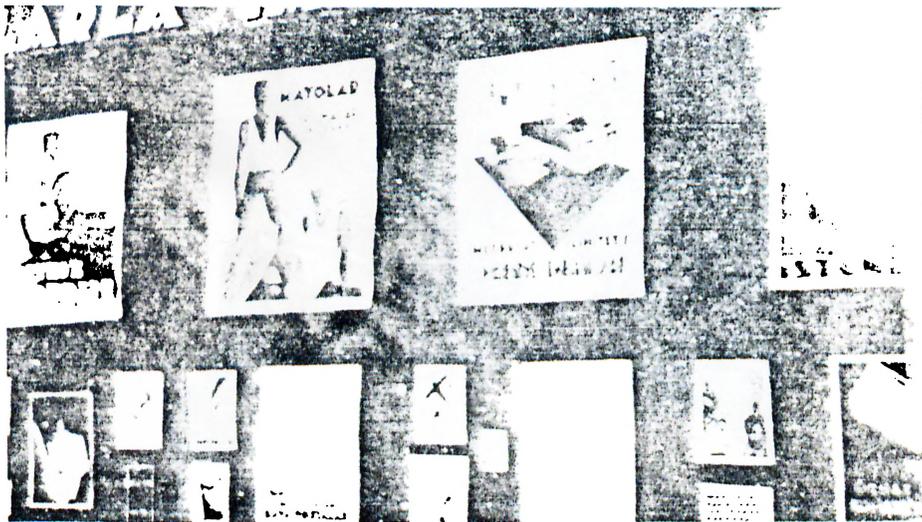
















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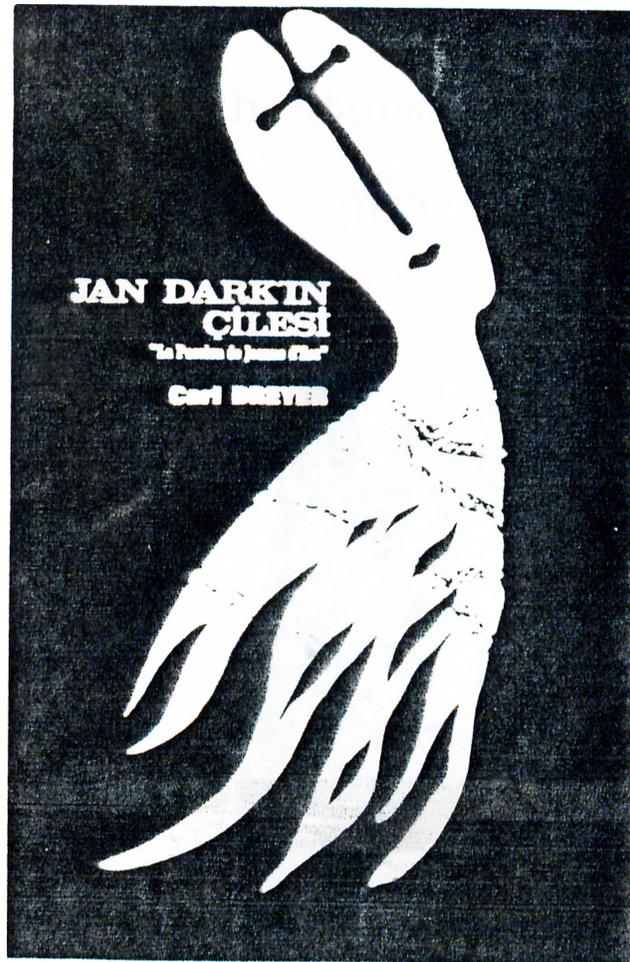
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Theatermuseum

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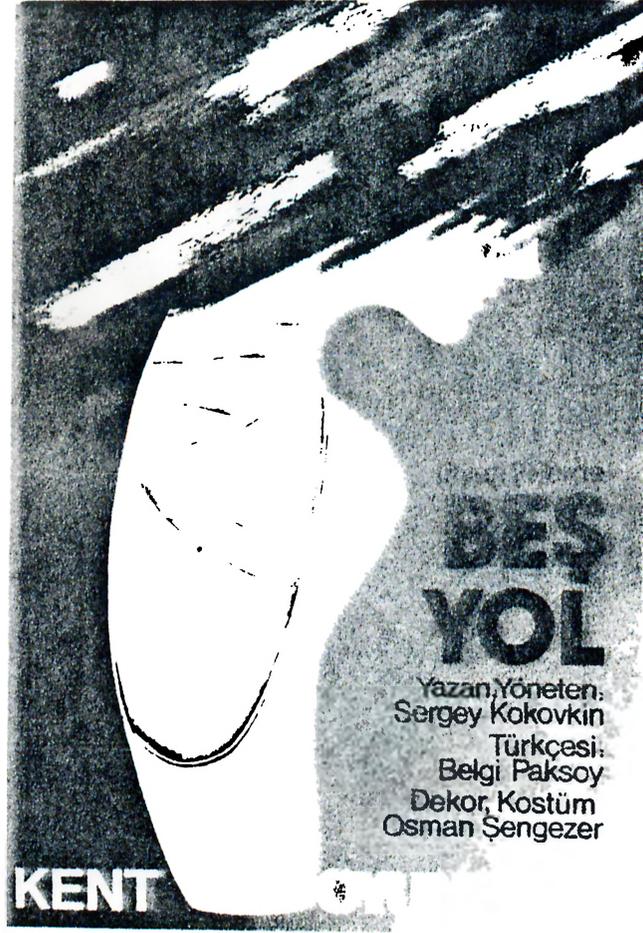
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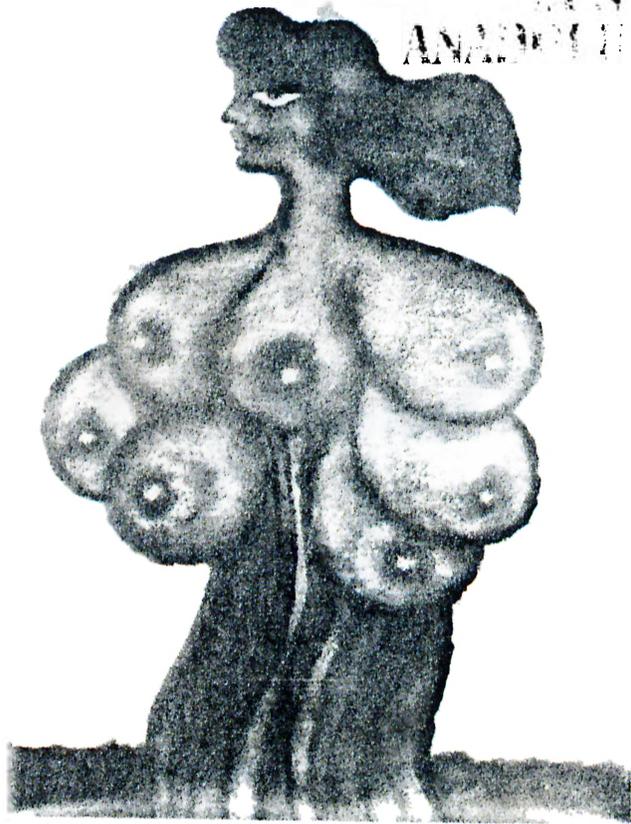


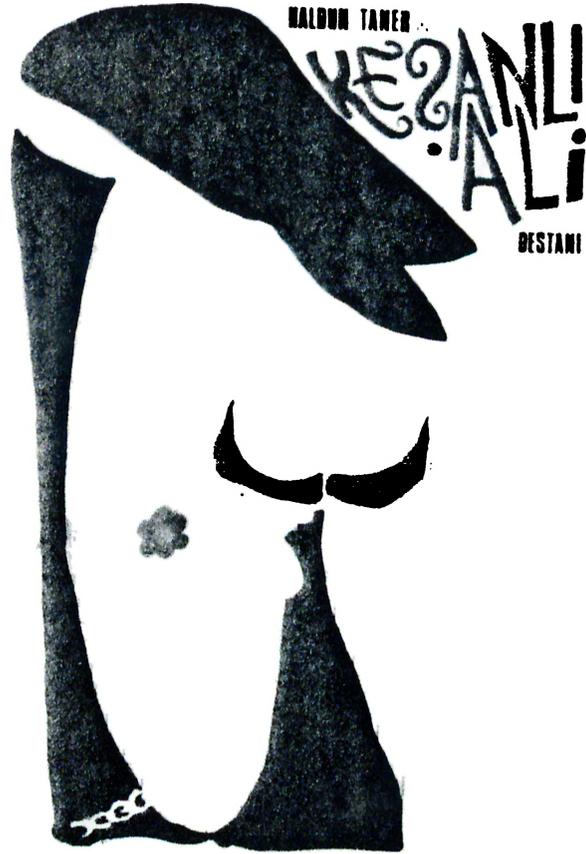




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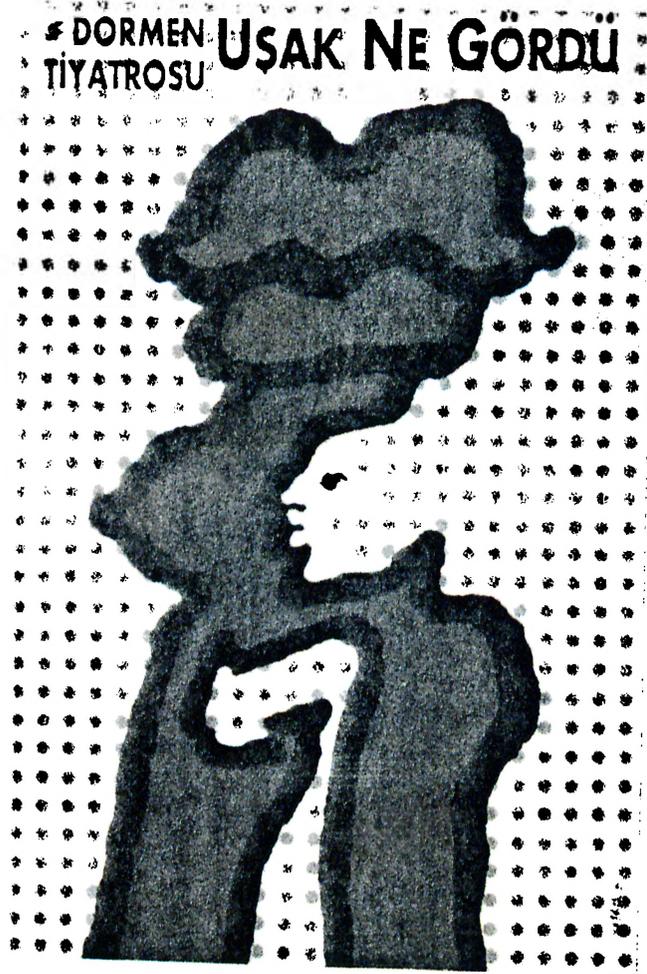


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gruplar, ürün tasarlama ve tasarlanmış ürünü müşteriye sunma aşamasında büyük miktarda kağıt tüketirler. Ama grafik tasarımcılarının tüketimi bununla da bitmez. Tek bir kartvizit ya da afiş tasarlamak için gereken kağıt, müşterinin bu ürünü kullanabilmesi için yüzlerce hatta binlerce bastırılmasıyla ortaya çıkan kağıdın yanında pek önem taşımaz. Demek ki, grafik tasarımcısının seçtiği müşteriye sunulması gereken kağıt o kadar önemlidir.

Müşterilerinizin kullanacakları kart, mektup kağıdı, afiş, reklamlar ve yıllık firma raporları için geri-kazanılmış kağıdı önermek, yani bir pazar oluşturmak, sizin sorumluluğunuz olacaktır. Doğal olarak bu bir anda gerçekleştiremeyebilir, ama zamanla bunu gerçekleştirmek için de geçerli hiçbir neden yoktur.

Öte yandan bu konuda stüdyo sahiplerinizin dikkat edeceği

