



KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

**SPECTACLE-CITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL:
ISTANBUL IN CONTEMPORARY MEMOIRS**

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MASTER'S THESIS

ISTANBUL, NOVEMBER, 2021



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Master' s Thesis

2021

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SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN
COMMUNICATION STUDIES OF KADİR HAS UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
ART IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES UNDER THE PROGRAM OF
COMMUNICATION STUDIES.

ISTANBUL, NOVEMBER, 2021

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ÖZET

Geçtiğimiz son yıllarda belirgin bir şekilde İstanbul’un “eski günleri” kültür-sanat alanından medyaya ve akademiye önemli bir ilgi alanı haline geldi. Özellikle 1990 sonrasında İstanbul’a dair birçok kitap yayımlanmaya başladı. Bu kitapların bir birçoğu kentin geçmişine dair kitaplardan oluşmaktadır. 1990’larla birlikte dünyanın pek çok ülkesinde olduğu gibi Türkiye’de de “anı patlaması” yaşanır. Bu dönemle birlikte anı kitaplarını içinde “İstanbul” belirgin bir tema olarak ortaya çıkar; kent anılarına olan ilgi artar. Bir dönem İstanbul’u ziyaret etmiş gezginlerin, görevlilerin, yazarların ya da sanatçıların anılarından, İstanbul’un gayrimüslim topluluklarının anılarına ya da “sıradan” İstanbulluların anılarına, bugün çok sayıda İstanbul’un eski günlerine odaklanan ve kişisel anlatılardan oluşan kitap bulunmaktadır. Bu kitaplar tarih ve bellek çalışmaları için önemli kaynaklar ve edebi ürünler olmalarının yanı sıra, kentin dönüşümü bağlamında ele alındıklarında kent ve gösteri arasında yeni bir ilişki biçimi olduğunu gösterir. 1990’larla birlikte “gösteri”yle birlikte ve gösteriye dönüşen kentlerin yalnızca makro seviyede “mega” projelerle değil, birey seviyesinde de gösterileştirildiği görülür. Bireyin toplumsal organizasyonun merkezine geldiği bir toplumda artık gösteri-kent “birey” ile yeniden üretilmektedir. Birey, gösteri-kentin yalnızca “izleyicisi” değil, bu süreci yeniden üreten önemli bir kaynaktır. Bu tezin konusu İstanbul anı kitapları ve İstanbul’un gösteri-kente dönüşümü arasındaki ilişkidir. Gösteri-kentin birey üzerinden yeniden üretildiğini tartışan bu çalışmada anı kitapları, bu yeniden üretimin bir örneği olarak ele alınmaktadır. İstanbul anı kitaplarının “kaybolan eski güzel İstanbul” söylemi üzerinden “dünya kenti” söylemine uygun bir biçimde “çok-kültürlü, çok-etnikli ve çok-dinli” İstanbul imajına nasıl katkı sunduğu gösterilmektedir.

Keywords: Spectacle-city, The Individual, City Memoirs, Istanbul

SPECTACLE-CITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL: ISTANBUL IN CONTEMPORARY MEMOIRS

SUMMARY

In recent years, the "old days" of Istanbul has become an important area of interest from the field of culture and arts to the media and academia. Especially after 1990, many books about Istanbul began to be published. Many of these books consist of books about the past of the city. With the 1990s, there was a "boom of memories" in Turkey, as in many other countries in the world. With this period, "Istanbul" emerges as a prominent theme in his memoirs and interest in urban memories increases. From the memories of travelers, officials, writers or artists who once visited Istanbul, to the memories of Istanbul's non-Muslim communities or to the memories of "ordinary" Istanbulites, today there are many books that focus on the old days of Istanbul and consist of personal narratives. These books, in addition to being important sources and literary products for the study of history and memory, show that there is a new form of relationship between the city and the spectacle when considered in the context of the transformation of the city. It is seen that the cities that turned into spectacles with the "spectacularization" in the 1990s not only with "mega" projects at the macro level, but also at the individual level. In a society where the individual is at the center of the social organization, the spectacle-city is now reproduced with the "individual." The individual is not only the "spectator" of the spectacle-city, but an important resource that reproduces this process. The subject of this thesis is the relationship between Istanbul memoirs and Istanbul's transformation into a spectacle-city. In this study, which discusses that the spectacle-city is reproduced through the individual, memoirs are considered as an example of this reproduction. It is shown how Istanbul memoirs contribute to the image of "multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious" Istanbul, in line with the "world city" discourse, through the discourse of "lost old good Istanbul."

Keywords: Spectacle-city, The Individual, City Memoirs, Istanbul

ABBREVIATION LIST

ECoC	European Capital of Culture
TLA	Turkish Language Association



1. INTRODUCTION

*“(...) I have neither a shelter nor money, but still,
what a beautiful city Constantinople is! ⁱ*

– Alexis Gritchenko, The Constantinople Years.

On 7 February 2020, “Alexis Gritchenko – The Constantinople Years”ⁱⁱ started in *Meşher* – a brand-new arts and cultural institution on Istiklal Street in Taksim, Istanbul. The exhibition focusing on painter Gritchenko’s stay in Istanbul between the years 1919-1921 showcased over 150 artworks, depicting the city in his drawings and paintings, and his memoir (*Deux ans à Constantinople - Journal d’un peintre*) which was first published in 1930 in Paris. An original copy of his memoir was standing in a glass case at the entrance of the exhibition, excerpts from his memoir was accompanying his artworks on walls and a digitalized version of his memoir was available on the first floor. Within the scope of the exhibition, his memoir was translated and published by Yapı Kredi Publications as *İstanbul’da İki Yıl: 1919-1921* (Two Years in Istanbul: 1919-1921). Although the exhibition coincided with the pandemic and suspended for a while, it had reached the audience through online media as well, including video discussion sessions, online tours, podcasts and social media. *Meşher* also invited people to share their own experiences on Instagram during the lockdown saying “join the collective diary experience: #MyDiary. With the hashtags of @mesheroofficial and #MyDiary, share your day, your feelings and things that you dream of on your story. We keep track this period together.”ⁱⁱⁱ In short, one more exhibition related to past days of the city had taken place. More to that, one more Istanbul memoir had taken its place in the annals of memoir literature.

Gritchenko’s memoir -which was published in 1930s for the first time in France and translated into Turkish almost a hundred year later- is just one of the examples among the memoirs related to Istanbul which have started to proliferate in Turkish literature

(from translated or edited memoirs to contemporary ones) since the late 1980s – the decade that has marked with rapid transformation in social, cultural and economic fields of society globally. From translated or edited memoirs to memoirs of contemporary authors, an “Istanbul memoir” genre has emerged. Categorically speaking, Istanbul memoirs consist of the memories of various writers, poets, painters or officials who lived in Istanbul for a while, as well as the memories of Istanbulites who left Istanbul for a reason and people still living in Istanbul today. Therefore, some of the books consist of translated texts, some are the serialized (*tefrika*) texts, and the others memories written by a contemporary authors themselves. More to that today, when Istanbul is searched on any online bookstore, thousands of books are listed. Some bookstores even have a separate section dedicated to Istanbul. It is possible to come across at least one Istanbul book in display window of almost every bookstore in Istanbul. Not only memoirs but also Istanbul books in general gained a popularity in any field of publication for the last decades.

In fact, the rise of memoirs in the 1990s is a global phenomenon. According to some scholars, the rise of memoir is a discovery of book industry as memoir is an easy-to-consume genre. For some, it is about the development of memoir as a literary genre. For others, it is just a matter of the "culture" of the time (Rak 2013, Couser 2012, Yagoda 2009) (See Chapter 3). In any case, 1990s is the decade of “memoir boom.” Both in academia and book industry the personal narratives become popular. Micro-narratives had become more important rather than macro-narratives. Historitians and social scientists started to focus on “personal” or “individual” stories. However, when we consider the increase in urban memories together with the transformation of contemporary cities, we see that it is not enough to evaluate urban memories as only a literary genre or resourses for memory studies^{iv}. It needs a compherensive analysis in the context of urban transformation and world city^v discourse created by transnational or international organizations and reaches to public through media.

In the 1990s, both everyday life in the cities, and built environment have undergone a rapid transformation in relation to political, economic and technological developments of the post-Cold War era. At macro-level, cities have gained importance beyond borders

of nation-states and organization of new world order. The global cities (Sassen 2001 [1991]) has become the new centers of the world, which they compete. The urban transformation strategy has taken a new form, which is based on “aesthetics” and “visuality.” From transportation to architecture, from “leisure time activities” to “heritage”, everything about city become related to its “spectacular” value. As Debord (2005 [1967]) has predicted in the late 1960s, the rising power of “spectacle” in organization of social life, the spectacle-city (Soysal 2010) has become the space of manifestation of spectacle. With collective efforts of public and private sector, a “spectacle-industry” has emerged since the 1990s and spectacularization has become a norm for urban transformation, not only for world cities but also for all.

Today, with the rise of iconic architecture, new buildings, museums, theme parks, natural parks, gentrified neighborhoods, heritage sites, and events in the city (Soysal 2010), the spectacle-city continues to claim its age. More to that, with the development of new media technologies and advertising industry, there is continuous production of visuals and discourses, which built the “city image” in total (Soysal 2010). Building a spectacular city image has become a collective task for both public and private sector in order to attract more capital and people to the city. So that there is an immense production of images, texts and stories about the city^{vi}. These images most of the time comply with the world city discourse (which make cities the same and different at the same time) which emphasize the “livability” of the city considering its potential of “cultural diversity”, “natural resources”, “uniqueness” and so on.

However, the relationship between the spectacle and the city is not new to contemporary society. This relationship can be traced back to development of ancient cities. With the rise of capitalism and emergence of modern cities in the 19th century, it is remarkable that the new forms of spectacles had emerged and the city itself started to become a spectacle. This convergence between the spectacle and the city has reached a new phase with the neoliberal urban policies in the 1980s (Soysal 2010). The “visual, cultural, communicational” aspects of the city have come front due to the rising competition between cities (and countries through the cities). The border between the two concepts of city and the spectacle has blurred, and city become the spectacle itself.

More to that, due to the direction of social change in the society where “individualism is institutionalized” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), the spectacle that organizes social life has also individualized. The individual who previously was just a spectator or participant of the spectacle has turned into a *resource* for spectacle that help its perpetuation. In other words, the new role of the individual for perpetuation of spectacle is the fundamental characteristic of contemporary spectacle-city.

Nevertheless, spectacle-city is not a destination. Spectacle needs to be continuously reproduced (both environmentally and visually) (Debord 2005 [1967]). Spectacle-city needs to offer “exotic” or “new” or “old” but new spectacles or experiences at all the time to perpetuate and compete other spectacle-cities (at local, regional, global level). In accordance with the norms of contemporary society (where the individual is at the center of social organization), the individual appears as a *resource* for spectacle-city. The relationship between spectacle and city now turned into spectacle-city and the individual. “Personal gaze” or “experiences” of someone in the city has become content for spectacularization.

Studies about the relationship between city and spectacle studied by both social geographers, and sociologists, mostly in the context of spectacles in the city^{vii}. However, in contemporary society where the individual is situated at the center of social organization (Giddens 1991, Bauman 2005, Beck and Gernsheim 2002, Nuhoglu Soysal 1995) the production of spectacle is not limited to works of “mega” size architecture or events. There are also micro-level spectacles, which are not as obvious as mega-size spectacles or do not always meet mass audience. In this respect, social media content produced by the individuals, books about the city based on personal narratives, or any kind of individual intervention to the city could be considered as micro-spectacles. Thus, the individual appears as an actor of spectacularization, rather than just being a spectator of the city. Most of the time, the content produced through the individual, complies with macro-level strategy of spectacularization of the city. In compliance with the logic of spectacle, all these micro-level spectacles help continuity of spectacle-city as they create *abundance* of content.

In this respect, if I go back to urban memoirs, I point out that analysing the relationship between rise of urban memoirs and spectacularization of cities reveals a new relationship between city and spectacle. I argue that, although spectacularization of city is not new to contemporary society, it has taken a new form with the rise of “the individual” in society. Not only mega-projects and events or big-budget advertising campaigns spectacularize the city, but also any content produced by or about the individual has become a resource for spectacularization. In accordance with discourse of world city, in the name of “uniqueness”, “diversity” or “difference,” and the content produced by/through the individual regarded as “valuable” for the “city” contribute to spectacularization of the city. In this respect, urban memoirs are the examples of spectacularization of city at the individual level. Even though memoirs usually regarded and studied as resources for (micro) history and memory studies, here I emphasize that these memoirs are “resources” for spectacularization of city. All these memoirs creates an abundance of content on “(good) old days” of the city.

Since the 1990s, like in other world cities, an institutionalized spectacularization has been undergone in Istanbul. From changes of built environment to creation of city image through media, spectacularization has become the strategy of urban development. Thus, the growing interest on Istanbul among various professionals and city dwellers should be reconsidered in this context. From travel books to novels and history books to memoirs, and to academic studies, the literature on Istanbul has been growing. Every detail about the city has become a specific field of interest such as everyday life of Istanbul, painters of Istanbul, historical buildings of Istanbul, restaurants of Istanbul, Istanbul in certain period, and more. Even monographies on neighborhoods of Istanbul have been proliferated. More to that these contents are used for other forms of spectacles like exhibitions as in the example of exhibition on Gritchenko’s stay in Istanbul.

In this study, I examine the relationship between the rise of Istanbul memoirs and spectacularization of Istanbul for the last decades. This study seeks to answer questions about the relationship between spectacle-city and the individual. Is the individual just a spectator, or a contributor to spectacle-city as well, if yes, in what ways? How the rise

of memoirs on city could be understood in the context of spectacle-city. I argue that spectacularization of city, do not only happen at macro-level, rather, the contemporary spectacle-city is reproduced through the individual. In other words, the individual has become a resource for spectacularization of contemporary city that helps its continuity by creating the abundance of content. I show Istanbul memoirs as examples of spectacularization of Istanbul through the individual that contributes to the image of “good old days” of Istanbul.

In the following chapter, in order to explain the relationship between spectacle-city and the individual, I first briefly explain the concept of spectacle as a general phenomenon. I show how the concept of spectacle is conceptualized by Debord and various other contemporary scholars from different disciplines. Then I explain the relationship between the city and spectacle and show how contemporary studies elaborate spectacle in the context of urban transformation at macro-level. As a characteristic of contemporary spectacle-city, I explain the changing role of individual. Finally, I go over the background of spectacularization of Istanbul considering neoliberal policies of urban development has paved way to emergence of contemporary spectacle-city Istanbul.

In the third chapter, I explain contemporary Istanbul memoirs as an example of spectacularization of the city through the individual. First, I briefly explain the development of memoir as a literature genre in the world and in Turkish literature. Then I analyse Istanbul memoirs in the context of spectacularization of Istanbul. I show how the rise of Istanbul memoirs contribute to the image of spectacle-city Istanbul. I emphasize that although all memoirs that belong to “different” people, in fact, contribute to the discourse of “good old days of Istanbul” in a similar “nostalgic” way – explicitly or not. Based on a narrative of “...that is no longer exist” or “the lost of...” old days of Istanbul is aestheticized and spectacularized. Still, I emphasize that spectacularization of the past is a matter of today, not the past as these books also provide a “touristic gaze” (Urry 2002) for the readers on city. More to that they create an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983) among readers through an “imagined city.”

The data analysis is based on bibliographic research on Istanbul books and content analysis of selected memoirs. For bibliographic research, I scanned the websites of publishing houses, and online bookstores. As there is not consistent genre categorization by publishing houses and online bookstores, I looked at related categories such as Istanbul, city-guide, city culture, reference, city history, city books, city culture, documentary, narrative, memoir, research and history, and diary. To limit bibliography for memoirs, I excluded the books in categories of touristic city-guides, academic, macro-history of city, novel, poem, and story, and the books published before the 1990s as 1990s is turning point for the development of spectacle-city. Still, I have reached more than a thousand book. Among the books that I categorized as city memoirs, I overviewed almost a hundred of them from different publishing houses and memoirs of people from different socio-cultural, ethnic backgrounds and the books covering different period of Istanbul to understand how they spectacularize the city in a similar way.

Istanbul memoirs that published after the late 1980s can be categorized into two categories. First category consists of memoirs translated, edited or republished memoirs by someone different than the author. Second category consists of contemporary writers that publish their Istanbul memoirs by themselves. Regardless of which past is being told, and by whom, all these books contribute to the image of “diverse” Istanbul and its “good old days” by aestheticizing the past of the city. Although all these books are presented as showing a “different” or an “authentic” past of the city through “the eyes of someone” because it contains a personal narrative, in fact all of them reproduce the similar images of the city and most of the time by aestheticizing the past^{viii}. Thus, I claim that they spectacularize past days of the city through the individual by creating a nostalgic discourse -explicitly or not. Today, as this nostalgic discourse is so powerful, it conceals the “diversity” of Istanbul’s today. In this context, the memoir of Alexis Gritchenko -which was first published a hundred years ago in Paris but translated into Turkish today, the memoir of Emre Kongar that has been recently published, the memoir of Orhan Pamuk which is also translated into different languages, and memoir of any “unknown” people are not different than each other in terms of their contribution to the spectacle-city of Istanbul.^{ix}

2. SPECTACLE-CITY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

“What strange phenomena we find in a great city, all we need do is stroll about with our eyes open. Life swarms with innocent monsters.” Charles Baudelaire

The spectacle speaks the language of command. The command of the concentrated spectacle was: OBEY! The command of the diffuse spectacle was: BUY! In the integrated spectacle the commands to OBEY! and BUY! became interchangeable. Now the command of the disintegrating spectacle is: RECYCLE! (Wark 2013, 3)

In order to understand contemporary spectacle-city (and its relationship with the individual), it is important to look at how spectacle evolves and relates to the city throughout the time. In this chapter, I go over the concept of spectacle, and explain spectacle-city. Then I explain the position of the individual as a resource for reproduction of spectacle-city. Finally, I overview the spectacularization of Istanbul for the last decades.

2.1 Spectacle in Contemporary Society

In descriptive terms, *spectacle*, coming from the Latin word *spectaculum* (public show), and from *spectare* (frequentative of *specere* ‘to look’) means that a visually striking performance or display; or an event or scene regarded in terms of its visual impact (Lexico 2021). From an anthropological point of view, the spectacle has always been a universal social institution in society that organizes certain social relations since the early communities in the various cultural forms such as plays and games, sports, contests, verbal art, theatre, music (Beeman 1993, 369). Rituals, ceremonies, celebrations, festivals, carnivals, parades and architecture could also be regarded as spectacles. Although a broad literature has been developed for each of them, today, all these categories^x can be considered under the umbrella of spectacle (Soysal 2005).

A comprehensive analysis of spectacle as a general phenomenon was developed by Guy Debord in 1967. In his seminal work, *Society of The Spectacle*, Debord claims that in the modern society the organizing principle is the spectacle. According to Debord, “spectacle” is the new form of capitalism in contemporary society (2005 [1967]).

Rather than focusing on the performative aspect of spectacle, Debord takes it with its abstraction aspect in the context of the development of media technologies. For Debord, the distinctive characteristic of modern society is that social life has turned into a “representation” with the development of modernity. “In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, life is presented as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived is now merely represented in the distance” (2005 [1967], 7).

Although Debord does not describe the spectacle precisely, he uses the term in a dual nature. On the one hand, the spectacle is a “social relationship between people mediated by images” and a “worldview that has been actually materialized.” On the other hand, spectacle refers to the images themselves produced by the mass media (Debord 2005 [1967], 7).

Debord emphasizes that in the society of the spectacle, the social life which transformed from *being* into *having* in the early capitalist society, now transformed from *having* into *appearing* (Debord 2005 [1967], 10-11). The power of spectacle stems from the idea of “what appears is good; what is good appears” (Debord 2005 [1967], 9-10). Thus, contradictions of capitalism are concealed by the discourse of spectacle, and the audience never questions it. According to Debord, the individual is just part of the mass audience in such an organization of social life. The audience passively “spectate” the spectacle and is not aware of this passive spectatorship.

For Debord, “the spectacle was born from the world’s loss of the unity”; however, it appears as a form of unity. “Spectators are linked solely by their one-way relationship to the very center that keeps them isolated from each other. The spectacle thus reunites the separated, but it reunites them only in their separateness” (Debord 2005 [1967], 15-16).

In other words, in the society of the spectacle, there is no way to create a collective consciousness, as spectacle has taken control over everyday life. The spectacle first creates a world that is disconnected from the real world. Then it appears a means of unification.

Debord considers that in “bureaucratic” and “liberal” capitalist societies, the spectacle has developed in two different forms. He conceptualizes two forms of spectacle based on their existence in society as a way of concealing poverty. The *concentrated spectacle* is a form of spectacle that exists in bureaucratic capitalist society. In such societies, the spectacle concentrates on a single individual, and “concentrated spectacle is the police state” (Debord 2005 [1967], 31-32). On the other hand, the *diffuse spectacle* is a form of spectacle associated with commodity abundance in modern capitalism. He states that:

“Here each individual commodity is justified in the name of the grandeur of the total commodity production, of which the spectacle is a laudatory catalog. Irreconcilable claims jockey for position on the stage of the affluent economy’s unified spectacle, and different star commodities simultaneously promote conflicting social policies. The automobile spectacle, for example, strives for a perfect traffic flow entailing the destruction of old urban districts, while the city spectacle wants to preserve those districts as tourist attractions. The already dubious satisfaction alleged to be obtained from the consumption of the whole is thus constantly being disappointed because the actual consumer can directly access only a succession of fragments of this commodity heaven, fragments which invariably lack the quality attributed to the whole.” (Debord 2005 [1967], 32)

In his later work *Comments on the Society of Spectacle*, Debord (2002 [1998]) defines the third form of spectacle, the *integrated spectacle*, which is the combination of former forms. Integrated spectacle tends to impose itself globally. It has emerged as a result of the change of former forms. As Debord explains, for concentrated spectacle, the controlling center has been changed. It has become occult, rather than “being occupied by a known leader or clear ideology.” Diffuse spectacle has also changed in the way of putting its mark on “full range of socially produced behavior and objects.” In Debord’s terms, “for the final sense of the integrated spectacle is this -- that it has integrated itself into reality to the same extent as it was describing it, and that it was reconstructing it as it was describing it” (Debord, 2002 [1998]).

Debord's analysis of spectacle have been revisited by the contemporary scholars in the context of media technologies, globalization and advent of the experience economy. Best and Kellner (1999) consider Debord's analysis of the spectacle is still relevant in contemporary society, but with some differences. According to them, in a globalized capitalist society, spectacle sustains its importance, and a variety of "mega spectacles" has been emerged. Superhyped films, theme parks, and media-generated passion plays are just some of the examples of mega spectacles that define an era of culture (Best and Kellner 1999, 135).

In contrast to Debord's perspective on the passivity of the mass, Best and Kellner suggest that now it is the age of *interactive spectacle* (1999). According to them, "interactive spectacle involves the creation of cultural spaces and forms that present exciting possibilities for creativity and empowerment of individuals, as well as novel forms of seduction and domination" (Best and Kellner 1999, 144). They claim that in the new stage of the interactive spectacle, as a result of new communication technologies, the individuals are more active and participatory, rather than simply being passive consumers (Best and Kellner 1999, 145). It can be said that although the spectacle continues to exist today, it can be transformed and therefore, it is a contested concept.

Kellner (2003) also conceptualizes a specific form of spectacle that is the media spectacles. "Media spectacles are those phenomena of media culture that embody contemporary society's basic values, serve to initiate individuals into its way of life, and dramatize its controversies and struggles, as well as its modes of conflict resolution" (Kellner 2003, 2). He considers media extravaganzas, sporting events, political happenings, and news as a media spectacle (Kellner, 2003). In contrast to Debord's abstraction, Kellner focuses on specific examples to explain how media spectacles are produced, constructed, circulated, and function today.^{xi}

Penner (2019) in his book called *Rethinking the Spectacle* looks at the tension between spectacle and political agency in today's hypermediated digital society. He says that:

"Spectacles are a necessary means to persuade, prod, and mobilize the public to support egalitarian causes; however, a spectacle will succeed in promoting radical

political agency only if it is closely connected to longer-term processes – to democratic institutions and organizations in which members of the public can actively and continuously agree to disagree” (Penner 2019, 4).

In other words, he suggests that the spectacle can also be the means of egalitarian purposes in digitalized society. Yet, spectacle should be considered with the processes in which they are produced and the contexts in which they are perceived.

Another important comment on Debord’s analysis in the context of new media technologies provided by Wark. According to Wark (2013), the integrated spectacle, in Debordian terms, has come to the endpoint. However, the spectacle is not disappeared. Its form has changed into a fragmented one with the development of new media technologies. In other words, the spectacle is not in the integrated form anymore; rather, it appears in a disintegrated way. Here the role of the individual in the reproduction of the spectacle is essential:

The disintegrating spectacle chips away at centralized means of producing images and distributes this responsibility among the spectators themselves. While the production of goods is out-sourced to various cheap labor countries, the production of images is *in-sourced* to unpaid labor, offered up in what was once leisure time. The culture industries are now the *vulture industries*, which act less as producers of images for consumption than as algorithms that manage databases of images that consumers swap between each other—while still paying for the privilege. Where once the spectacle entertained us, now we must entertain each other, while the vulture industries collect the rent. The disintegrating spectacle replaces the monologue of appearances with the appearance of dialogue. Spectators are now obliged to make images and stories for each other that do not unite those spectators in anything other than their separateness. (Wark 2013, 6).

In this context, Wark’s analysis draws attention to how production of spectacle is decentralized in contemporary society like other industries; in this case, the individual appears a reproducer of the spectacle. With the digital media, there is not only one-way communication between spectacles to spectator. Rather, there is a dialogue between them.

In the light of these discussions mentioned above, it can be said that the spectacle still constitutes in contemporary society with growing influence although its form may

change in relation to development of communication technologies and other developments in contemporary society.

2.2 The Spectacle-city

Today for many cities, 'the spectacle' has become the focal point for urban development. No matter its population, size, or influence every city apply spectacularization tactics for economic growth and development. Yet, the relationship between spectacle and the city is not new to our society. It can be said that the roots of convergence between spectacle and the city could be found in the emergence of modern city in the 19th century, which is started to be shaped under the conditions of developing capitalism. The insights on the relationship between spectacle and the modern city could be seen in the Simmel's (1995 [1903]) *The Metropolis and Mental Life*, Benjamin's (2006 [1938]) *Paris the Capital of Nineteenth Century*, and T.J. Clark's (1995) *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers*. Simmel (1995 [1903]) -unlike the other thinkers of his period-, provides an analysis on modern city at micro level by examining the impacts of the modern city on the individual. He claims that as modern city is full internal and external *stimuli*, the individual develops a *blasé outlook* which is a unique attitude of individual in modern society (Simmel 1995 [1903], 30-45). Benjamin (2006 [1938]) describes the transformation of Paris in the context of arcades, panoramas, world exhibitions, interior, streets and barricades. He explains *flâneur* as a character in the big city who strolls around in the crowd and has a gaze on the city. Benjamin regards the city as a landscape and room for the *flâneur* (Benjamin 2006 [1938], 40) that is the new phantasmagoria. More to that, T.J. Clark (1999) provides an analysis on Impressionist painting in the context of Paris and speculates that impressionists have an impact on spectacularization of the city. All these writings provide a perspective on how modern city has been developed in relation with emergence of new spectacles in the city.

If the emergence of the modern city in the 19th century under the conditions of the development of capitalism is considered as the first phase of spectacularization of the city, it can be said that with the transformation of cities that has been started in 1970s, neoliberal policies applied in 1980s and development of global cities 1990s has paved

the new phase of spectacularization of cities. Capitalism's discovery of *space* to sustain itself (Lefebvre 1976, 21), the reorganization of the space with the increase of mediatization and aestheticization, and even the aestheticization of everyday life (Zukin 1997) have been paved way to emergence of contemporary spectacle-city. The city itself has become an object which is open for visual consumption (Urry 1987, 1995).

Moreover, with the rise of global cities in 1990s (Sassen 2001 [1991]), cities have started to compete to raise their share in global economy. Spectacularization has become a focal point in this competition. It can be said that spectacularization has become a necessity for cities. As Urry says:

“It seems that ‘spectacle-ization’ is necessary in order for places [...] to somehow be ‘recognized’ as places to enter the ‘global stage’. Such cities can only be taken seriously in the new world dis/order if they are partly at least places of distinct spectacle, through events, museums, ancient remains, festivals, galleries, meetings, sport events and iconic [...] shops, universities, and especially new and refurbished iconic buildings.” (Urry 2007, 134).

Spectacle-city inherits dichotomy of universal and particular at the same time. On the one hand cities reshaped to meet global standards in transportation, events, and tourism. On the other hand, they reinvented their “particular” features. As Gotham (2005) suggests in the context of tourism that spectacularization is a conflictual and contradictory process because it functions at both sides as disempowering localities on the one hand and creating new pressures for local autonomy and resistance to hegemonic images on the other hand. He considers that tourism is important as it implies both global homogeneity and local heterogeneity that is the distinctive feature of modern capitalism” (Gotham 2005, 226). He says that:

“On the one hand, tourism is a global process of standardization and uniformity in which trans-national hotel firms, marketing corporations, airlines and global entertainment firms predominate. On the other hand, tourism accentuates local particularity by making possible unique appropriations of culture and heritage, thus encouraging the proliferation of difference and diversity.”

Moreover, Gotham and Krier (2008) analyze spectacle in a broader perspective in relation to Frankfurt School’s analysis on consumption and offer a plural and multidimensional understanding of spectacle rather than an understanding spectacle as a totality. They define *spectacularization* as “conflictual and contested process by which

the major institutions of society are adopting the logic and principles of entertainment and spectacle to their basic operations and organization” (Gotham and Krier 2008, 161). They suggest that “different forms of spectacle (political, economic, and cultural), different types of spectacles (shopping malls, casinos, world fairs, sports, theme parks, tourist-oriented celebrations, media spectacles, and so on), and different technologies of spectacle (theming, simulation, virtual reality, and so on)” should be considered in order to be understood the spectacle at macro and micro level (Gotham and Krier 2008, 178).

Soysal (2010), analyzes contemporary city in the context of civilizing process and points out that convergence between spectacle and the city, *SpectacleCity* in his terms, is one of the elemental components of today’s world city which is specific to the neoliberal milieu (Soysal 2010, 302), and now every city applies spectacularization as a development strategy. He explains spectacle-city as follows:

SpectacleCity underwrites the re-organization of public spaces and the proliferation of public spectacles in metropolitan centres. [...] On the one hand it suggests the emergence of a new performance genre located in the city. On the other hand, SpectacleCity suggests that the city has become a novel spectacle in its own right. [...] not only ‘capitals of modernity’ (Harvey, 2006) like Paris, but every city emulates spectacle and competes with the spectacular performances taking place on its terrain (Soysal 2010, 306).

By looking at the cultural topography of the city, Soysal defines five more key features of what makes a contemporary city a City today. These features (gentrification, heritage displays, design-city, culture incorporated, and sociality amplified (Soysal 2010, 303-308) are worth to mention here as they are all ‘spectacular’ aspects of the city at some point. *Gentrification and urban development* refer to the transformation of the urban area into real estate, especially after 1980 (Ibid 303). Luxury high-rise residence, office towers, gated communities, shopping and entertainment centers, five-star hotels, parks, roads, urban infrastructure and public housing complexes falls into this category. *Heritage displays* refers to the transformation of the city's “historical” elements into attraction points for both the tourists and locals (Ibid 304-305). It reveals the “surviving” elements of the city's “magnificent” history. *Design city*, on the other hand, is about the present and future of the city (Ibid 305-306). Following the “creative city discourse,” it showcases the “creativity” potential of the city. *Culture incorporated* draws attention to private takeover culture where the “production of culture” is not the

responsibility of government anymore as it is apparent that, private sector from various industries has become an inseparable part of culture industry (Ibid 307). *Sociality amplified* means that social life is lived now outside the “home” as it had never happened before (Ibid 308). Today, it can be said that spectacle-city is not just one of the characteristics of contemporary city. Spectacle-city is the contemporary city itself which encompasses all the other features.

I consider spectacle as a logic of development, management and organization of contemporary city where its contemporaneity is mostly defined by its compliance with “world culture” (Lechner and Boli 2005)^{xiii}. Industries of construction, architecture, real estate, transportation, marketing, communications, environment protection, media, design, entertainment, art and heritage (culture and nature) become more related to the spectacular aspect of the city. So, a spectacle industry has created its own domain. Categorically speaking, it can be said that spectacle industry works in two ways. The spectacles in the form of material structure and events (Soysal 2010), could be considered as *spectacles-in-the city*. Spectacles-in-the city showcases the physical potential of the spectacle-city. They are “the markers” of the city’s contemporaneity as they show how the city is capable of building modern architecture and facilities at global standards, having entertainment sites, preserving heritage, hosting global events and so on. Thus, the main elements of the spectacle-city could include the following: the high-rise buildings, renovated buildings, and rare-old buildings (even ruined buildings), heritage sites, theme parks, recreation areas, museums, galleries, street-art works, outdoor advertisements, shopping malls, airports and other transportation hubs, vehicles, monuments, hotels, cafes and restaurants, waterfronts, the radio and television towers, and high-ways, and non-humans. It can be said that *spectacles-in-the city* works with the logic of “aestheticization” of built environment and everyday life. Transforming urban elements and spaces which are “not attractive” and do not “strengthen sociability” (Soysal 2010, 308) has become the focal point of urban transformation.

Buildings as individual ones or as complexes with different functions have increasingly become a tool for spectacularization of cities. According to Lehrer (2003) image

production starts long before the building can speak for itself. He calls this process as "spectacularization of the building process" (Lehrer 2003, 384). For Lehrer (2003), the design jewel; the large-scale project; and the mega-event are the three distinct expressions of the city's "symbolic politics." (Lehrer 2003, 388). The design jewels are the buildings that are designed by well-known architects (Lehrer 2003, 388) or "starchitects" like Frank Gehry or Zaha Hadid. They are usually built as transportation hubs or cultural centers (Lehrer 2003, 388). All these constitutes a leverage effect on rebranding cities.^{xiii}

Not only brand-new buildings, but also historical buildings are also regarded as "icons" of the city. It can be said that old buildings are rediscovered in the spectacle-city. As a single building or as a site, "glorified past" of the city is presented through renovation projects for the gazers. Gentrification projects help spectacularization of the city.

Museums of classical and contemporary artworks, nonhumans, technology, heritage or also museums of some historical happenings have gained popularity for the last decades. This popularity is called as "museumization" or "musealization" process in the city. For example, 9/11 Memorial Museum in New York, House of Terror in Budapest, July 15 Memorial Museum in Istanbul, Anna Frank Museum in Amsterdam are some of the examples. Moreover, some places built for different function like airports, hotels, in-city transportation hubs, shopping malls may also include display areas. Dulles International Airport, Washington D.C., Rijksmuseum Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam, Charles de Gaulle Airport Art Museum, Paris and Istanbul airport, Istanbul are examples of airport with museums or galleries. In other words, not only the building itself, but also what is inside the building is part of the spectacle, including the experience in the building.

Among from the museums, theme parks are also another component of the spectacle city. Disney-like theme and amusement parks, water parks, zoos are everywhere around the world. According to Hannigan (1998), the rise of theming, branding and experiential storytelling strategies in the city has created a new urban form, as he calls, the "fantasy city." He defines the six key features: themo-centric, aggressively branded, active day

and night, modular, solipsistic, postmodern (in their reliance on simulation and spectacle). He considers that contemporary fantasy city differs from the early examples, as it is more pervasive and portable, its construction has been undertaken on an unprecedented scale and its development has spread to everywhere in the city like exurban malls, sports complexes, and lifestyle centers, as well as port lands and other reclaimed waterfront locations. More to that, it is conceived, branded, and managed by a new set of corporate players (Hannigan 1998, 2-3).

Events are the inseparable part of the spectacle-city. Spectacles in the form of events - both international and local ones, mega or small ones- create an endless event agenda of festivals, sports and other competitions, exhibitions, fairs, conferences, gatherings, congresses, shows, parades, seasonal activities, and so on. Hosting such events has become a promotion for cities to label themselves as “eventful cities” (Palmer 2010, 2). On the one hand, mega-events and “prestigious” international events are prepared for the global public. On the other hand, the yearly events agenda is full of various forms of events. These events do not always concentrate only in certain locations in the city but compete to find “new” venues in order to attract the audience. In the city, there is no distinction between everyday life and leisure anymore (Lefebvre 1998, 31), it can be said that events have become part of daily life, or the daily life has become part of the spectacle.

Moreover, another component of the spectacle-city could be considered in the context of displays of diversity and conservation. General conversation discourse is based on “the world is losing its biodiversity” (Sullivan 2011, Lousley 2015, Igoe 2010). Both nature and animals in the city has become spectacles that complies with the diversity discourse. Construction of “natural” parks or preservation of “natural” sites for both humans and nonhumans become a tension for urban development. Following Berger’s (1980) analysis on spectacularization of animals, that points out animals are turned into spectacles as objects to be observed, (Berger 1980,16) it can be said that animals in the city have become spectacles-in-the-city in compliance with the biodiversity discourse.

The spectacle-city itself is defined with its capacity of having “difference”, “particularity”, “uniqueness”, or “diversity” or “life-styles” as all these concepts has become “the new catch-cry” (Eagleton 2003, 46) for the economic development. The global identity politics that emphasize “diversity, differences, multi-culturalism, cosmopolitanism” has also impact on cities to create “cultural diversity” displays. Cultural diversity spectacles are based on “identity” discourse. Spectacles of identity (Soysal 1993) turns a site for affirmation of multi-culturalism and diversity. So, the religious places like mosques, churches, synagogues, cem houses and more, and neighborhoods which are considered as reflecting multi-culturalism becomes part of the diversity spectacles in the city (Michi Knecht and Levent Soysal, 2005). In fact, it should be noted that diversity is related to the urban economic development in the long run (Putnam, 2007). With the rise of discourse of multiculturalism in the early 1990s (Bannerji, 2000) and its use as a spectacle it can be said that it conceals the class differences in society by putting forward the “diversity” and “multiculturalism.” In line with that, restoring or re-inventing cultural aspects of the city related to “difference”, “diversity”, and “multi-culturalism” has become an important component of spectacle-city.

It should be noted that, spectacularization is not a process that can be completed. It requires to continuous reconstruction. So, on the one hand, continuity is provided by endless reconstruction of built environment and organization of events. On the other hand, the city becomes an “agenda” for not only for the policy makers, politicians, architects, city-planners, social scientists, or activists, but also for the travelers and inhabitants of the city. With the proliferation of content on the city by communication professionals and advertisers, writers, and academics, the “visibility” of city maintained for the general public. With continuously creation of mediatized images, texts and narratives which constitute the “image of the city” spectacularization process perpetuates. The representation of the city in the form of painting, maps, literature of course is not a new phenomenon. But what makes spectacle-city distinctive today is that, I suggest, the “individual” appears a resource for spectacularization of the city. I claim that proliferation of “micro” narratives on city contributes to the reproduction of spectacle-city at micro-level although which is not as “apparent” as macro-level/mega

spectacles. The narratives of individuals as a resource, focusing on specific time or place of the city, are regarded as a fruitful potential to create endless spectacles of the city. In sum, with the reproduction of *spectacles-in-the city* and *spectacles-of-the city*, spectacle-city is constantly reconstructed. In the following section, I discuss how the individual become a resource for reproduction of the spectacle-city.

2.3 The Individual: A Mere Spectator or the Contributor

Spectacularization of the city is not always based on “mega” spectacles, but also based on micro-spectacles as well. As micro-spectacles I consider spectacles that do not have to meet mass audience and spectacles that are produced through “the individual.” At the micro-level spectacularization, I argue that the individual appears as the main resource. Spectacularization of the city through the individual works in two ways. On the one hand, the spectacular image of the city is created based on giving the appearance to the individual in the context of city. In other words, the spectacle-city is presented in the “personalized” way. The city is told or shown through the individual. Hanging signs on buildings mentioning who lived there, giving names of certain people to places, explaining city as “city of someone” or books consisting personal narratives on city are just some of the examples. On the other hand, the individual produces her/his own content through various media no matter if s/he is publicly known. Sharing the “beauties”, “vivid social life”, “diversity” and “history” of the city as a content that is told or shown by the individual through books, personal websites, blogs, and social media accounts shows that spectacularization of the city is reproduced through the individual.

It can be said that the relationship between spectacle-city and the individual has transformed in contemporary society. The role of audience is not only the spectator anymore. At the individual level, the audience has become the producer of spectacle at the same time. The changing role of the individual in spectacularization process could be understood in the context of changing relationship between the individual and the society.

In contemporary society, “the self” -including appearance- is not given anymore, rather it has become a task or a project for the individual that must be constructed by herself (Giddens 1991). The relationship between the individual and society is based on a multi-layered and reflective form (Bauman 2005). Beck and Gernsheim (2002) states that the individual is the main element of structure of contemporary society, but not in the sense of *free-market individual*. They use the concept “institutionalized individualism” to point out that “human mutuality and community rest no longer on solidly established traditions, but, rather, on a paradoxical collectivity of reciprocal individualization.” They state that “central institutions of modernity are geared to the individual and not to the group” (2002, xxi-xxii).

Thus, in spectacle-city, the individual is not just a spectator of city or consumer of spectacles *in* and *of* the city, but s/he is someone who contributes to spectacularization of city at micro level by curation of content based on her/his personal narratives, memoirs or images. In other words, the individual appears in spectacle-city as a “resource” for creation of abundance of content that contributes to the continuity of the spectacle-city. It can be said that the main actors of spectacularization of the city are not only transnational organizations, central governments and, local governments but also the individuals as well.

2.4 Making Istanbul a Spectacle-City

Gül (2018), who comprehensively explains the modernization history of Istanbul from the mid of 19th century to 1960s from an urban development point of view, considers that Istanbul was a chaotic and overcrowded city in the middle of the 19th century. There was almost no sewage system, and the city was struggling with fires and an inadequate transport system at that time. However, a century later, the urban form had changed with wide streets, post-war modernist architecture, and blocks that destroyed the previous traditional street texture, and Istanbul has become a metropolis (Gül 2018, 15). Istanbul, in the first years of Turkish Republic (1923-1933) was a “neglected city” as Ankara became the capital of Turkey (Gül 2018, 96). Between the years 1933 and 1950, the city had been shaped with Kemalist principals. In 1936 urban planner Henri Prost took the office for urban planning of Istanbul. His plan was mainly focusing on

the Historical Peninsula and Beyoğlu (Gül 2018, 125). In this period, although all the projects offered by Prost fully were not accomplished, many new roads were built, streets were widened, new public squares and recreation spaces were created (Gül 2018, 139-147).

After the Second World War, the mechanization of agriculture financed with the Marshall Aid, and transition to multi-party system in Turkey had been a great influence in determining the urban policies of Istanbul. Especially since the 1956, the prime minister Adnan Menderes was focused on macro level transformations in Istanbul. Menderes' Haussmannian perspective on city were projecting the city like a "display window" with its wide roads, streets, squares and beautification projects. In a press conference in 1956, he stated that:

Our ambition is to revive the historical character of Istanbul and its great monuments, the values that have been hidden among the ruins until now and to reveal them as if "showcasing" them. [...] Since the city without beautiful and big squares cannot be imagined, all squares of Istanbul will be made worthy of its glory and will be surrounded by large buildings. (Cumhuriyet 23 September 1956).

Starting with this period, Istanbul has undergone a "beautification" process to make city like a touristic attraction. First, international hotels were opened. First garden-city concept was built in Levent. With the construction of squares and wide roads, a macro-scale transformation took place in Istanbul.

Since the first years of the Republic, Ankara has been accepted as symbolizing the modern city of the Republic and Istanbul as the ruined city of the Ottoman Empire, however, according to Keyder (2009) with the 1970s the dichotomy of Istanbul-Ankara was not relevant anymore. Istanbul's supremacy over Ankara was acknowledged. Moreover, Istanbul has become a world city with its own dichotomy of East and West (Keyder 2009, 18). In 1973, the first bridge of Bosphorus was built which is not just an infrastructural facility but turned into an "iconic" element of the city, which connects the "east and west."

Yet, the 1980s was the turning point for Istanbul like other cities in with global importance as well, as neoliberal policies had been accepted for not only as an ideological transformation but also for the urban transformation. *Making Istanbul a contemporary spectacle-city* started with the efforts of private and public sectors since the 1980s. Although 1980 started with a military coup in Turkey, social life and Istanbul has been integrated to neoliberalism quickly with the prime minister, and later president, Turgut Özal, who could be considered as an “architecture of neoliberalism” in Turkey and Istanbul.

The “success” of Özal’s policies was relied on urban populism. Integration to world economy had been accelerated. Exports were raised. Foreign companies started to open offices in Istanbul. Bedrettin Dalan, who was the first mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, were also focusing on macro projects that would enhance global image of Istanbul. The municipality law in accepted 1984, paved way to municipality’s act of entrepreneurs of the city. In this period, first mass housing projects were completed. Housing projects for middle class flourished. Apartments turned into high-rise buildings and gated communities. The second iconic bridge of Bosphorus was built. Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) was constructed. Hausmannian projects were continued (like in Tarlabaşı). The first shopping mall, Galleria was opened in 1988. Infrastructure of the city (water, electricity, sewage and transportation) had also been developed in global standards.

Starting with this period, the urban transformation in Istanbul has turned its direction to spectacle-industry in 1990s like in other global cities. It has opened the way for integration to global economy to attract global networks for capital, consumption and culture. New hotels with Bosphorus view were opened. Besides the modern office buildings and five-star hotels, “luxury consumption temples” like shopping malls for upper class and luxury brands shops were opened in the city center. Global fast-food restaurants and world cuisine restaurants were increased. Nightlife had gained popularity. Concerts, festivals, and other events in Istanbul starts to take place in international event calendars. International media like New York Times, Wall Street Journal and Financial Times regularly writes about Istanbul’s economy, politics and

cultural life (Keyder 2009, 24-25). City centers were devoted to high-rise buildings like in Levent-Maslak line. Real estate sector has expanded all parts of the city. Highways was constructed to connect privileged locations (Yardımcı 2005, 42). Especially after 2000s, the image of high-rise has been changed. The shape and visuality have become forefront (Sarı & Dülgeroğlu 2019).

Not only new buildings but also regeneration projects have also changed the landscape of Istanbul. Cihangir, Arnavutköy, Kanlıca, Balat, Yeldeğirmeni and Kuzguncuk are some of the neighborhoods regenerated in the last decades. Removing shipyard from Haliç to Tuzla, and cleaning Haliç is another example of regeneration. Function of buildings around this area has been transformed from factory to culture and entertainment centers, like other examples in different cities (in example Tate Modern, Big Dit, Gar D'orsay, Birmingham Back to Backs and Red Chocolate Gallery).

Private galleries, museums, cultural and event centers increase since the 1980s. Nora Şeni (2011) states that the museum has been a new paradigm of urban transformation since the 1990s. Sadberk Hanım Museum (1980), Sabancı Museum (2002), İstanbul Modern (2004), Pera Museum (2005), Rezan Has Museum (2006), santralistanbul (2007), Elgiz Museum (2008), Arter, Meşher are some of the examples. It can be said that investments of capitalist families like Eczacıbaşı, Koç and Sabancı into culture, art and education, had changed cultural aspect of the city. As Şeni points out that Eczacıbaşı started to work like “Ministry of Culture” by organizing several cultural events (Şeni 2011, 53).

Professionalization of private galleries also starts in 1980s. Especially from 2000s, the number of private galleries has increased and opened in new locations around Istanbul. New entertainment places like Zorlu Center and UNIQ Istanbul have also launched. Moreover, Miniaturk, Madame Tussauds Istanbul and Istanbul Cinema Museum are the examples of thematic museums.

Numerous large-scale cultural and art events have begun to be organized in Istanbul. A period of “festivalism” in Yarımcı’s terms has started (Yardımcı 2005). Istanbul Music

Festival, International Istanbul Opera Festival, Istanbul Biennale, International Istanbul Film Festival, Istanbul Jazz Festival, Design Week, Contemporary Istanbul, Akbank Jazz Festival, Efes Pilsen Blues Festival, Istanbul Sahaf Festival, Istanbul Shopping Festival, Chill-Out Festival, One – Love Festival are just a few of them. The first art fair held in Turkey, was first held in 1991 with the cooperation of TÜYAP and Plastic Art Association. Contemporary Istanbul Art Fairs organized since 2006. Art International fair started to be organized in 2013.

In 2010, spectacularization of Istanbul has reached at its best with European Capital of Culture (ECoC) project. As culture and entertainment have become a trend in place branding (Kavaratzis 2005) within scope of the project, numerous renovation projects and events were held. Publications on Istanbul have been raised. “Europeaness” of the city was spectacularized.^{xiv}

The spectacularization of the landscape followed its course with the proliferation of spectacles *of* the city including mediatized images, texts, narratives of Istanbul’s past, present and future. Undoubtedly, visual, auditory, printed and digital media play an important role in the spectacularization of Istanbul. It can be said that with the 1990s, it became both the center of the media industry and the media content itself. From this period, Istanbul began to appear frequently in visual, audio, printed and digital media. Istanbul is presented either as a decoration of the presented as the content itself. For example, in the movie “Organize İşler” (2005), Istanbul is not only the city where the story takes place, but also one of the spectacle elements in the movie with its bird's-eye view of the city. With the opening of the Turkish TV series industry abroad, it is seen that Istanbul is presented as a spectacle not only for the audience in Turkey, but also for the audience abroad. It is not surprising that *The Protector* (2018), the first Netflix content from Turkey, also focused on Istanbul.

These contents create an “image of the city” directly or indirectly in the eyes of the audience. A city image -in most of the case- created around discourses of “Istanbul as a bridge between continents”, “the intersection of civilizations”, “the capital of empires”, “a cultural mosaic”, “the intersection of East and West” and so on. Especially since the

mid of 2000s Istanbul started to be mentioned in the international press as “cool” city (Özkan 2012, 76). Due to the fast changes in Istanbul, especially “lost city” has become a content for many exhibitions, restoration projects and theme parks based on a nostalgic discourse. Besides the city managers, political parties or groups; artists, artists, curators, non-governmental organizations also contribute to the production of “old Istanbul” discourse by organizing events, exhibitions and so on. More to that, by consuming these images, ordinary Istanbulites contribute to imaging the city (Türeli 2021, 39-40).

The events also contribute to the production of spectacular images of the city as well as creating a spectacle in the city. The theme of the event, the speeches of the speakers, the catalogs and brochures of the events, the advertisements of the events create a city image. Here, what is interesting is that “the individual” appears as in such events. I would like to draw attention to some of them.

In 2010, within the scope of Istanbul Capital of European Culture project, an exhibition was organized in Büyükdada called as “Adalılar” (Islanders). The biographies of many Islanders, from grocer Necmi to Bahçıvan Taso, to Uncle İsmail, from Arabacı Memiş to Angelos Kalfa and Ciğerci Altan, were exhibited in this exhibition. As is seen, in this exhibition, the individual has become the spectacle itself, in the context of an exhibition related to city’s past.

Another example is an international symposium about Istanbul organized in cooperation with 29 Mayıs University and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (osmanliistanbulu.org). In these symposiums, the talks in which the city is told through individuals and individual experience are remarkable. Contemplating Aziz Istanbul with Tanpınar – Seyfi Kenan (2013), Evliyâ Çelebî’s A Few Views on Constantine - Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont (2014), “Diplomatic Memories” of Alka Nestorof - Klara Volarić (2015), Mehmed Istanbul in the Light of Atif Bey's Memoir – Nurettin Gemici (2015), Istanbul in the Memoirs of Iraqi Scholar Mahmud al-Alusi - Süheyl Sapan (2016), Ottoman Istanbul in the 19th Century from the Pen of a Siamese Prince - Mansod Lambensa (2016), Abdullah Uçman - Longing for Istanbul in Rıza Tevfik's

Poetry, Memoirs and Letters (2016) are some of the examples in which Istanbul is told through people.

In addition, the theme of some closing sessions is focused on the individual city narratives. The closing session held in 2013 under the name of "Living Istanbul", in the words of the moderator Uğur Derman, "Istanbul that no longer lives" is narrated by the "three unique Istanbulites" Sadettin Ökten, Orhan Okay and Semavi Eyice. The closing session of the 2014 symposium was "Istanbul with Memories". Mihail Vasiliadis, Ahmed Güner Sayar, Erol Memberpazarcı and Mıgırdıç Margosyan were the speakers. The moderator of the session Beşir Ayvazoğlu said, "[This session] is not an academic session. Istanbulites who know, love and live by savoring Istanbul will tell about the Istanbul in their memories." The closing session in 2015 is "Istanbul through the Eyes of Literary Artists". In the session where Ahmet Ümit, Beşir Ayvazoğlu, Mario Levi and Selim İleri were speakers. The moderator of the session İskender Pala states:

"It is very difficult to write every city, but it is even more difficult to write about Istanbul. Because you hear his voice, you feel his smell, you want to see his color, you get to know his people, you want to breathe in his building, walk in its streets, walk around in its history, and know its identity. All of this requires research. You put a different place, a different image, a different face, a different voice on your agenda again and again for all of them. You write your sentences, you break them, you rewrite them, then you break them again and you rewrite them again. Istanbul is worth it because Istanbul forces you to do it. The value of Istanbul, the meaning of Istanbul in history means this. For this reason, very valuable writers, whom I will invite to your presence a little later, did not write Istanbul so that we could write Istanbul. The sweat of each of them, perhaps the beauties and aesthetic feelings dripping from their hearts, poured into the lines with their pens. They did not just write about Istanbul, they traveled from street to street, even from district to district, they guided their readers, they breathed Istanbul with their readers. That is why we are convinced that they know Istanbul with the truth."

Another recent example can be found in the MARKA Conference (International Brand Conference Istanbul) (markaconference.com). In 2019, 20th anniversary of the event was "proudly dedicated to Istanbul; the most profound and powerful brand Turkey has to offer." It is stated on website that:

"The MARKA Conference strives to be just as bold, creative, magnificent and embracing as the host city; equally driven by constant momentum and energy fuelled by intrinsic diversity, and a wonderful melange of ideas and faiths. The city is one of the world's most outstanding and unique places; a remarkable

history and an unrivalled potential to offer so much more to the local and global ecosystem.”

Although every section of the conference is interesting for spectacle-city point of view, "Istanbul in Memories and Far Away" by Kenize Murad, the princess of Kotwara, a member of the Ottoman dynasty, is one of the examples of spectacularization of the Istanbul through the individual.

Besides the events that focus on Istanbul, in the field of academia, it is seen that studies on Istanbul from different disciplines have increased. In fact, institutions focusing directly on Istanbul studies were established. The Istanbul Research Institute was opened in 2007 by the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation, which also established the Pera Museum. In 2009 Kadir Has University opened the Istanbul Studies Center “to provide an interdisciplinary forum for innovative research on socio-economic, political, and cultural processes in world cities, with a focus on Istanbul.” In 2010, many academic publications on Istanbul were prepared by Bilgi University within the scope of Istanbul European Capital of Culture.

Moreover, since the 1990s, Istanbul has become a popular topic in the book industry. Until this period, one of the most comprehensive books about Istanbul was Reşad Ekrem Koçu's *Istanbul Encyclopedia*. Çelik Gülersoy's *Istanbul Encyclopedia from Past to Present* was another comprehensive content on Istanbul. Gülersoy also wrote and prepared many more books about Istanbul. He collected the memories of travelers who had visited Istanbul. In the 1990s, History Foundation's *Istanbul* magazine began to be published. Later on, other publishing houses started to prepare special collection books on Istanbul. İletişim Publishing has prepared many resources about Istanbul, such as personal memories, and other more specialized works, under the title of Istanbul after the mid-1980s (Tekeli 1996, 119-120). Novels set in Istanbul began to be reprinted, city guides increased, and city monographs increased. In other words, the city was literally scrutinized by dividing it into different layers and times. Municipalities have also started to publish publications about Istanbul or a district. After Istanbul became the European Capital of Culture in 2010, new books continued to be published in the context of cultural heritage. The European Capital of Culture publishing house was

established and many research and collection books were published under the name (and logo) of this publishing house. The Hundreds' of Istanbul (Istanbul's 100 Authors/Sailors/Routes/Painters...) series printed by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality-Kültür A.Ş. is one remarkable example for this.

It can be said that a popularized "old Istanbul" narrative has emerged in the 1990s, especially with the books focusing on the city's past. This old Istanbul narrative has developed in a way that focuses on the individual as well as history-research sources. Books that look at the city through the individual or that consist of individual city narratives have increased. Istanbul is presented as either someone's Istanbul or "my Istanbul". Although it is not possible to name all the books here, books such as *Sait Faik's Istanbul*, *Ahmet Rasim's Istanbul* (2008), *Samiha Ayverdi's Istanbul* (2014) can be given as examples. The writings of people who lived or were visited Istanbul for a reason have also started to be (re)published.

On the other hand, books in which today's writers tell the history of the city through their personal past have begun to be published. It can be said that an Istanbul memoir genre has emerged among other memoirs which has become a popular genre in the 1990s. Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memories and the City* is one of the most well-known examples. These books have started to be published by publishing big publishing houses such as İletişim, Yapı Kredi, Doğan Kitap, as well as by small-size publishing houses. Within the scope of Istanbul European Capital of Culture, the "*Istanbulum*" (My Istanbul) series, which describes the 40 districts of Istanbul, was published by the Heyamola Publishing house. This series, which continued later, has reached over 80 books today. In short, telling the past of the city through the "individual" has formed an Istanbul memoir genre.

At this point, I consider proliferation of Istanbul memoirs since the 1990s as a case of spectacularization of city through the individual which contributes to city's "good old days" image based on the discourse of "lost of multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural" life in Istanbul. In the next chapter, I show how these books spectacularize the city based on this "lost city" discourse.

3. CONTEMPORARY ISTANBUL MEMOIRS

“Learning about this city from a single writer is the greatest injustice to cosmopolitan Istanbul.”
(Doğan Hızlan 2019, 89)

Previously, I explained relationship between spectacle-city and the individual. I emphasized that in the contemporary society where the individual is situated at the center in organization of social life, the individual has become a resource for reproduction of spectacle-city. I analyze the rise of Istanbul memoirs after the 1990s in this context and show how these memoirs contribute spectacularization of Istanbul. In this chapter, first, I explain the development of memoir. Then I focus on Istanbul memoirs to show how they contribute to spectacle-city Istanbul.

3.1 The Development of Memoir as a Genre

To begin with a general definition, memoir is one of the forms that are generally categorized as "life-writing", such as biography, autobiography, diary, travel writing, letter. Expressions about life-literature began to develop especially in the 18th and 20th centuries (Winslow, 1995). In Turkish, memory (*hatıra*) and memoir (*hatırat*) are used synonymously. Memoir (*hatıra*) comes from the Arabic word “hutur,” and its meaning is “thought and emotion awakened in the human soul, what comes to mind” (Özdemir, 1972, 398). Memory or memoir as a literary genre is "the type of writing in which lived events are told" and "the common name of autobiographical works in which lived events are told" (TLA, 2021).

The first memoir in the West is Xenophon's *Anabasis* (Birsell 1972, 381). There are writings written by the Romans in the second century BC. The books written by chroniclers in the Middle Ages can be considered as the first examples of memoirs. Memories of artists can be found in the Renaissance period. In the 17th century in there were memories of the noble and rich, and memories gained importance especially in this

period. Some authors wrote novels in the form of memoirs (ibid., 381-383). J.J. Rousseau's *My Confessions* is considered a different and important work in terms of the richness of its content. J.J. Rousseau said in the introduction to his book *Confessions*: "I am designing such a work that it has never been seen before, nor will anyone think of doing it this way. I want to show my likes a human being in all the reality of nature, and this person will be me." For some, it is considered the first autobiographical work of Rousseau's *Confessions*, while for others it is the first memoir. In the 18th century, apart from the memoirs written by literary figures, it was the period when the memories of people in the field of politics and military increased (ibid, 386). In the 20th century, there are both art and literature and war memories.

However, starting from the 1990s, it is considered as the "contemporary moment" period of the 21st century. The 1990s marked the beginning of a period referred to as the "boom of memories" (Rak, 2013). D. Thomas Couser (2012) states that memoirs have been increasing since the 18th century, and this has developed in relation to autobiography writing (Couser 2012, 145). Ben Yagoda says that (2009) "Memoir has become the central form of the culture: not only the way stories are told, but the way arguments are put forth, products and properties marketed, ideas floated, acts justified, reputations constructed or salvaged" (Yagoda 2009, 7). The peculiarity of this new period is that not only the memories of "heroes" or masters of letters in history have emerged, but also the memories of "ordinary" people, who were considered "other" according to the political agenda of the period. ^{xv}

The first examples of memoirs in the Western sense in Turkish literature belong to the Tanzimat period (Öztürk 2011). Memories that increased after the Second Constitutional Monarchy were written by the criticized state officials to defend themselves (Altınova, 2003, 11). In this context, it can be said that in general, memories are written in relation to historical events that determine a period; in addition to the memoirs written by literary figures, there are often political and military memoirs. This situation continued in the Republican period; again, memories written on or by the decisive events. The establishment of Turkish Republic, the transition period of the multi-party period, coups, exiles and migrations are generally the themes of memories.

With the 1990s, Turkish literature has also experienced a growing interest on memoirs. A large collection of memoirs appears in different forms such as memoirs consisting of serial writings (*tefrika*) of an author, narratives collected as oral history, translated memoirs, and the memoirs published by author herself in her lifetime. When a rough categorization is made by looking at the diversity of memories written and (re)printed in the 1990s, the memories of professions (teaching, embassy, civil servant, journalism, authorship, agency, etc.) and institution; memories of politicians and soldiers; memoirs of writers, thinkers and artists; There are many categories such as memories of women, minorities, memories of people living in another country, magazine and television memories, health/awareness memories, parents' memories. With the publication of Mina Urgan's "Memoirs of a Dinosaur" book, first published in 1998, its popularity created an interest in memoirs among writers of the period. Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memoirs and the City* can be considered another milestone in memoir literature that has gain popularity with Istanbul.

The emergence of contemporary urban memoir, in this case Istanbul memoirs, require a further analysis in relation to spectacularization of Istanbul which accelerated since the 1980s and become a norm in the 1990s with the collective efforts of public and private sector. In other words, Istanbul memoirs requires an analysis in the context of spectacle-city Istanbul.

3.2 Contemporary Istanbul Memoirs: Good Old Days of Istanbul

For the last decades Istanbul has become a prominent theme among memoirs published in Turkish. Although there is no consistent categorization about memoirs among publishing houses, when a comprehensive search is conducted online, it is seen that there are more than thousands of books, which can be categorized as a memoir. Istanbul memoirs consist of the memories of various writers, poets, painters or officials who lived in Istanbul for a while, as well as the memories of Istanbulites who left Istanbul for a reason and people still living in Istanbul today. Therefore, some of the books consist of translated texts, some of the serialized (*tefrika*) texts, and some of the

memoirs written by contemporary author itself. In other words, on the one hand, contemporary writers publish their own memoirs about Istanbul. On the other hand, publishing houses -big or small- translate or reprint Istanbul memoirs of people who lived in Istanbul before. At the end of the day, these books consist of memoirs variety of people. From Muslim communities to Non-muslim communities, from memoirs of travelers to artist or people who once lived in Istanbul begin to find a place in Turkish literature.

Gürpınar (2012), in his article “The Politics of Memoirs and Memoir-Publishing in Twentieth Century Turkey”, in which he deals with memoirs published in Turkey within the framework of political purpose, refers to the increase of these books published since the 1990s to the emergence of academical and popular historical revisionism and the rise of heritage discourse. He says that the discourse of “our past” is consecrated and aestheticized. On the one hand, the memories of the non-Muslim communities of Istanbul increase. For example, Istanbul Magazine, which started publication in 1992, started to publish the memoirs of bygone minorities. On the other hand, with historical revisionism, memoirs emerge accordingly with different political agendas. Kemalist and nationalist history is questioned, and the myth of the official history is challenged by Islamists, leftists, and liberals. More to that, books that highlight the early years of the republic and the civilian aspects of Mustafa Kemal, presented to the Kemalist middle-class as a nostalgia. However, according to Gürpınar, this increasing interest in the past “rather than precipitating a critical engagement with the past, this new curiosity reinforced the received cliché’s and dispositions for many” (Gürpınar 2021, 552).

It would not be wrong to say that with Orhan Pamuk's memoir *Istanbul: Memories and the City*, published by Yapı Kredi Publications in 2003 has made it obvious that Istanbul memoirs has gained a popularity. This book, which came to the top of the "bestseller" list in a short time, globally, continued to be published by İletişim Publishing between 2006-2012 and has reached its 22nd edition.

Another important development in memoir publishing was the serial of “Istanbulum” published by Heyamola Publishing in 2010 the time when Istanbul was branded as European Capital of Culture 2010. In this serial at first 40 memoirs of Istanbul by 40 different writers published. They all focus on different parts of Istanbul. Later, more than 40 books were added. In this serial, from Pendik to Şile, from Çarşamba to Pera, many neighbourhoods of Istanbul is covered.

Publishing houses focusing on minorities of Istanbul also started to publish Istanbul memoirs. Adalı Publishing started publishing memoirs of Prince’s Islands. Kültür AŞ (company of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality) also publishes variety of Istanbul books and memoirs. Serial of “My Istanbul” is an example for this. These books most of the time take place in media as “look at Istanbul from the eyes of(someone).”

Today many other memoirs are continuously published. Considering that there memoirs not only for certain neighbourhoods, or popular people but also all neighbourhoods and “ordinary” people create an abundance of memoirs that help perpetuation of spectacle-city Istanbul highlighting its diverse past. Again, in general, all these books contribute to discourse of “good old days of Istanbul” by emphasizing “the lost” of diversity, nature and the aesthetic in Istanbul.

The nostalgia^{xvi} of “good old days” is a well-known strategy that applied advertising, TV and film industry for years as a form of using “history” or “past” in an easy to consume form to reach large audience. For the last decades, responsible bodies of spectacularization of cities use this strategy as well. Growing heritage industry is also part of the spectacle-industry of the city. The past days of the city, regardless of it was true or not, and regardless of if it was common for all or not, usually glorified and presented as “good old days of Istanbul” based on the discourse of “Istanbul that we lost.”

In the case of Istanbul, beginning from 1980s, the city’s Ottoman-Greek-Jewish past started to emerge again for public consumption as nostalgia (Soysal 2010, 304-305). In other words, the “old Istanbul nostalgia” started to develop and, since then it has been

reinforcing the spectacular *value* of the city. Therefore, old sites of Istanbul, not only “historical peninsula” but also other neighborhoods like Kuzguncuk and Fener-Balat had become popular places to visit after renovations held by organizations from all levels (local, national and international) for both outsiders and residents of the city. In the name of longing what is lost, “the lost” becomes available more than it was, also for the ones who never had it. In that sense, of course, media industry is a significant instrument to reinforce this relation between people and the city.

3.2.1 The Lost of Joyful Living in Istanbul

Istanbul memoirs reflect the past days of Istanbul based on what is “lost.” This lost might be a natural “beauty” of the city, a routine of everyday life, shops, means of transportation, houses, buildings, spaces or places, or a group of people. In fact, the changes in the city are represented as the “values” or “culture” of the city that no longer exist today. In this respect, regardless of which period of Istanbul has been told, it is always about the lost and glorification of this lost.

Changes of the spaces and places are told as a “lost” of good old living in the city. In example, wooden houses are part of the “good old days” of Istanbul when compared to apartments that changes social life in the city. Low-rise apartments are also part of the “good old days” of Istanbul when compared to high-rises. Changes in the streets, squares, boulevards, roads, or buildings that are the elements of built environment of the city, are told in terms of the city is destroyed. Even the changes of means of transportation are told in a nostalgic way. What is old is told as it is good or more aesthetic.

“Integrating with the black coal fumes they spew from their chimneys; these beautiful ships are important symbols of the Bosphorus's identity. Nowadays, going to the Islands by sea bus does not appeal to me; yes it's fast, but that's it!” (Kortan 2009, 118)

Another component of the “good old days” of Istanbul is about shopping. Again, regardless of the period, “old” shops or the ways of shopping are represented as a part of “good old days” of Istanbul. The goods and shopkeepers are told as ornaments of the good old Istanbul.

Rituals, festivals and entertainment in the city is another important theme to narrate “good old days” of Istanbul. Sometimes the author talks about how they used to enjoy in the city in a story, or sometimes the author writes about rituals, festivals and other events of entertainment as a separate section.

More to that, cafes and restaurant or the food is an important theme that is used to show how old days of Istanbul was good. Sometimes, the names of cafes and restaurants are mentioned in the stories, sometimes the author directly focus on the history of a restaurant or a café. Sometimes they give a separate section for how they eat and they eat.

“We used to go to Yedikule from Narlıkapı to eat lettuce with kith and kin, and kit and caboodle... Today, nobody understands what it means to go to eat lettuce.” (Boysan 2018, 94)

More to that vendors, hammals are represented as the part of joyful living in Istanbul. In example, even the call of vendors for selling goods or foods is explained in this manner.

“We used to listen to these sounds from morning to evening. The streets were in a festive mood.” (Topuz 2011, 43)

In short, shopping, entertainment, or socializing experiences as a part of daily life or shops, patisseries, local markets, cinema, theatre, festivals, bayrams, beaches, and street vendors and porters are reflected in memoirs as a part of joyful days of old Istanbul. It is almost impossible to find a narrative about how life in Istanbul in the past was difficult or not “beautiful.”

3.2.2 The Lost of Diversity in Istanbul

The other major theme in memoirs is about lost of diversity in the city. Spectacles of diversity that are presented in memoirs could be grouped in two categories. On the one hand, there is the narrative of old Istanbul with its “multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-language” past. Family members, neighbors, friends, and shopkeepers are mentioned in the context of their “identity.” On the other hand, diversity is represented in the context of non-humans like nature and animals. Street dogs and cats, any kinds of animals in parks, and yards, gardens, forestry are represented as spectacles old Istanbul.

In memoirs, Istanbul is told as a lost city as it has lost its “multi-cultural” or “cosmopolitan” population. The “multi-cultural, mutli-religious and multi-ethnic” past of Istanbul is narrated in the context of friendship and neighborship without any contradictions between “different” groups.

“In the summer, on Sunday mornings, pastries, apple and cinnamon pastries were bought from the cookie oven opposite the Greek church, and a table was chosen by going to the coffee shop with other breakfast items. Turkish, Armenian, Jewish, Catholic villagers and Levantines, mostly Greeks, greet each other, chatted, had breakfast together in a warm, big, colorful family atmosphere, drank coffee, looked at fortune-tellings, and boiled conversations. [...] a fairy tale was lived in which true friendship, warmth and human values were always prioritized.” (Ruhan Okyay 2012, 71)

In some stories “diversity” is highlighted obviously. In example:

“ (...) All the children on the ferry went to different schools, and those from different ethnic backgrounds dispersed to schools in different parts of Istanbul or outside the city. For example, my Greek friend Kimon Ayanoglu used to go to Robert College, the American School, to Bebek on the Bosphorus..” (Vitti 2017, 62)

On the other hand, most of the time, the “identity” of “ordinary” people is mentioned even it is not a related detail for the story. This person could be a vendor, shopkeeper, janitor, teacher, neighbour, or just someone from the neighbourhood. The “identity” of the person is mentioned as a prefix like “Greek shopkeeper, “my Armenian friend” or “Kurdish hamal”...

Moreover, religious places like churches and sinagogs took place in many books even if the author does not explain a religious ritual. The features of the building are described. Sometimes they explain the rituals they witness as a beautiful image.

“Once I saw four or five men in black suits and women wearing black tulle, in front of Maksim, walking across the road towards the church door, avoiding the gentle wind with their other hands so that their candles would not go out. I stopped and watched this beautiful image.” (Öztaş 2010, 161)

It is also interesting that the narrative of living in old Istanbul without speaking Turkish is another topic that can be evaluated in the context of diversity.

“Saban Baba did not know a word of Turkish. “Kıtu, lugat tıhu tangırı kokme, miho,” I would say to him in a few Albanian words I had learned. He would laugh.” (Mintzuri, 59).

Beyoğlu, İstiklal Street and other districts of Istanbul where non-muslim communities used to live, is one of the common themes in the books. It is important to highlight that they are mentioned in the context of “Europeanness” of the city.

“Indeed, until 1953, Beyoğlu had the appearance of a European city, mostly due to the architecture of its buildings, the culture of eating, drinking, having fun, and the majority of our non-Muslim citizens.” (Kortan 2009, 63)

More to that, beside the narratives on “multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural” past of Istanbul, there is also spectacularization of nature and animals that also reflect the diversity in the city. The spectacularization of nature is usually based on the attractiveness of the landscape and diversity. The variety of fruits and fish, which will be an element of nature spectacularize in the memoirs. For instance, stray dogs are mentioned in almost every book, regardless of time.

“Street dogs, which are frequently seen in packs on period cards, were indispensable for 'local colors'. Just like groups of orphaned children with bare feet, squats, torn clothes and misery waiting for porter jobs in market places.” (Vitti 2017, 119)

“Dogs were a part of life in Istanbul. [...] Although the Turks were fierce and ferocious warriors, the dogs that followed them were so accustomed to humans that they were civilized. The people of Istanbul also loved them because they did not touch anyone.” (Sparatis 2004, 62).

As can be seen from the examples above, memoirs containing memoirs of different authors portray old Istanbul through the same perspective that aestheticize the old days of Istanbul based on what is lost.

3.2.3 Visualizing Istanbul’s Past and The Gaze on The City

The images are strong components of the books. They help visualize the city in the mind of readers. Photographs and visuals constitute an important space in the books.

Those visuals are from either postcard collection, family albums, or archived images. Most of them are black and white photos as they present the “old days of Istanbul. There are also rare books with colored and contemporary photos. Some of them presented as important as including photos “published for the first time.”

It is important to note that as in the example of these books, the books are not related to Istanbul’s past, but also today. They invite readers to see the places mentioned in the books. On the other hand, Aydın Boysan in his book “İstanbul’un Kuytu Köşeleri” states that:

“It is not enough to describe cities and city corners with words. It is obligatory to present photographs of those corners as well... [...] For this reason, we have included photographs in the book. We especially added from such ancient times that pictures that will no longer be seen now can be presented to the reader...” (Boysan 2019, 9).

Anadol who is the publisher of *Biz İstanbullular Böyleyiz! Fener’den Anılar 1906-1922* by Haris Spataris (2004) says, “We have also included some insurance maps dated 1929 prepared by Jacques Pervititch so that our readers can visualize the streets and walk around if they want” (2004, 6). Similarly, in Hüseyin Irmak's book, *İstanbul’da Bir Kadim Semt: Yaşadığım Kurtuluş*, publisher note says, "taking into account that many readers do not know the Kurtuluş district, a primitive sketch of Kurtuluş was added to the end of the book” (2003, 2). The last pages of the book also devoted for the photos of families from Kurtuluş.

Orhan Pamuk’s *İstanbul, Hatıralar ve Şehir* (2017) also presents many photos from Pamuk’s personal family album and old Istanbul photos taken by Ara Güler known as photographer of Istanbul.

In the light of these examples, it can be said that visuals are important components of the memoirs as they help creating an image about the city. These visuals might be personal family photos, city landscape or city maps.

Besides the visuals that are used in the books, the narrative of watching the city as a spectacle is one of the prominent themes. The city is “watched” from a vehicle from a window, bridge, hill, terrace or a balcony.

“Some days, after going to the park, we would take a break in this garden and have a cold drink at the tables under the trees against the magnificent Bosphorus view.” (Sarısayın 2009, 38)

Pamuk writes about Pamuk Apartment and says “[m]y uncle has moved the first floor where he would live for half century by watching people from the window” (Pamuk 2017, 17). He also watches the ships passing through Bosphorus from his window in their house in Cihangir (191). Vitti also looks from his room’s window, describes what he sees, and watches. “[...] I was little, but I go out the terrace with my cousin and watch Istanbul; I detect Haliç, Sarayburnu, Galata Tower and distant islands” (Vitti 2018, 35).

In some, there are many other examples that the author describe Istanbul as picturesque together with photos, images, illustrations or narratives. It should be noted that all of these help readers to construct an image of Istanbul in their mind. More to that, they do not only create an image of Istanbul for the readers to be consumed, but also encourage readers to create their “own.” In other words, all the stories and images continued to be reproduced by the readers as well.

4. CONCLUSION

Twenty years ago, the Whitney Biennial 2000^{xvii} that was curated by Michael Auping, Valerie Cassel, Hugh M. Davies, Jane Farver, Andrea Miller-Keller, and Lawrence R. Rinder had the theme of retrospective of Whitney biennials and annuals that has been organized since 1932. The exhibition included works of almost a hundred artists. Yet, the remarkable point about the exhibition was that besides the artworks displayed, the biographies of the artists were also part of the exhibition. They were showcased at the bottom floor. Similarly, those biographies were also included into biennial catalogue and in text of inner cover page it is stated that "...a valuable reference section at the end the book offers biographical, bibliographical and exhibition data on each artist." In other words, not only the artworks they produced but also their life story was considered as spectacle –or source for the spectacle- that could be shown as a part of exhibition. In this respect, Whitney Biennial 2000 is one of the pioneer example of individualization of the spectacle. Many other exhibitions that focuses on the individual -like the exhibition of "Alexis Gritchenko - The Constantinople Years"- shows that the individual is still at the center of contemporary spectacle.

When it comes to the relationship between spectacle and the city, I show that the relationship now has turned into the relationship between spectacle-city and the individual. Since the 1990s while the urban transformation has taken a new form – where spectacularization becomes a norm for all cities-, the individual has become at the center of spectacularization. Spectacularization happens at not only macro level but also at (micro) individual level as well, as spectacle is individualized in contemporary society where the individual is at the center of social organization. Individualization of spectacle means that the reproduction of spectacle happens through the individual. It may happen in two ways. On the one hand, the individual is "shown" as the spectacle. On the other hand, the individual joins the reproduction of spectacle by creating content for the spectacle. In both ways, the individual "appears" as a resource for the spectacle

that help perpetuation of spectacle as any “personal” content creates an abundance of content.

Since the 1990s, spectacularization of city happens not only in the area of built environment of the city. Together with the macro urban transformation projects, conservation and renewal projects, and brand new projects that are looking for adding superlatives for the city (like the biggest airport in Europe...) the city image is continuously reproduced. Yet, city image is not produced only with the project of built environment, but also with the reorganization and reproduction of texts, images and discourses. At this point, “city image” is the spectacle-city itself. The transformation of Istanbul to spectacle-city in this respect happened not only with the change of built environment but also with the image of the city.

The nostalgia has become a popular tool for spectacularization of the city’s past. Glorification of the old days of the city, without any contested topic and contradictions, has become a strategy for spectacle-city. From books to web sites, columns, videos, blogs, personal social media accounts “the old but good Istanbul” discourse has been emerged. In this respect, Istanbul memoirs that has been growing in number since the 1990s are the examples of spectacularization of Istanbul through and by the individual. On the one hand, memoirs of people collected, edited and (re)printed since the 1990s. On the other hand, contemporary writers started to write their memoirs about Istanbul. Today with more than thousands of memoirs, annals of Istanbul has been emerged. Although these memoirs are presented as “personalized” Istanbul of someone, they all contribute to the discourse of “good old days of Istanbul” when the city had not lost “diversity” yet. In these memoirs, “multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious” population of Istanbul is narrated as the main characteristic of good old Istanbul. The changes in the city, (the changes of streets, houses, buildings, nature, roads, and so on) reflected into memoirs as the city “destroyed” and got lost.

Although memoirs look like they are about past of the city, from the perspective of spectacle-city, in fact they are related to today of the city. Glorification of the past of the city attracts readers to look at the city like a “tourist.” The proliferation of guided city

tours show how the past of the city (so called “the lost”) becomes “visible” more than ever. With the discourse of “seeing” a place before it disappear, or “knowing” your “own” city better, the spectacle-city is now not for just tourist but also for the people living in that city. In this respect, all these memoirs also help to contribute this touristic gaze on the city.

More to that, the “ordinary” readers or visitors are do not only consume the content. The nostalgic content that are created through memoirs also reach larger audience with the social media. On the one hand readers share the content from the books, on the other hand they share their own memories about the city. In this way, the spectacle-city Istanbul continues to be spectacle with the volunteer efforts of individual users of social media. Many social media accounts managed by individual, not corporate bodies, could be found. Those accounts that are sharing old photos of Istanbul or stories of old Istanbul sometimes even devoted to particular neighbourhood of the city. Some accounts share the comparison of good and old look of some places. The continuous reproduction of memoir happens, individually or collectively: but through the individual. So, the spectacle-city Istanbul perpetuates.

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Endnotes

ⁱ An excerpt from Gritchenko's dairy showcased at the exhibition.

ⁱⁱ Virtual tour is available at: <https://www.dreamreality.com.tr/3d-model/mesher-alexis-gritchenko-istanbul-yillari/fullscreen>

ⁱⁱⁱ During the pandemic, even at the metros, there was advertisement to call for collecting pandemic memoirs.

^{iv} With the 1990s, a field called memory studies emerged. Micro-historical studies began to become popular. Scholars such as Nora Pierre can be cited as pioneers of this field.

^v With the worldwide economic and social transformation experienced in the 1980s and the acceleration of globalization, discussions such as global-city and world city came to the fore in the urban studies literature.

^{vi} The proliferation of books on cities can be seen other cities around the world such as Berlin and Dublin. (See the article of Kincaid, Andrew. 2005. "Memory and the City: Urban Renewal and Literary Memoirs in Contemporary Dublin." *College Literature* 32 (2): 16-42.)

^{vii} For further reading please see Gardiner 2000, Gotham 2005, 2008, Ritzer 2002, Bonnet 1989, Pinder 2000, Sadler 1998, Syngedow 2002.

^{viii} "Food culture" is also a related topic to spectacularization of city through variety of foods. I do not discuss this topic in this study however "İstanbulum, Tadım, Tuzum, Hayatım" by Meri Çevik Simyonidis is an example among the books that I analyzed.

^{ix} Memoirs reach larger audience with other forms of spectacles like exhibitions or autograph session, or talks. I visited autograph session of Emra Kongar's book "*İstanbul-1940'lardan Bugüne Efsaneler Anılar İzlenimler*" in Suadiye, İstanbul. I waited more than two hours for my turn to come. The people in the cue were talking about "how old days were good."

^x Beeman (1993) categorizes spectacles based on the categories of media (music-text-dance theater, dance theater, textual theatre), performers (human actors, masked theatre, animated objects, mixed forms), content (scripted, unscripted, mixed forms), and audience role (audience as a participant, audience as witness, audience as evaluator) (Beeman 1993, 381-384).

^{xi} *The Spectacle 2.0: Reading Debord in the Context of Digital Capitalism*

^{xii} Lechner and Boli (2005) also develop a perspective on "world culture" which basically means anything that make the world one including infrastructure, economy, state system, law, and global problems. They state that: "The culture of world society, comprising norms and knowledge shared across state boundaries, rooted in nineteenth-century Western culture but since globalized, promoted by nongovernmental organizations as well as for profit corporations, intimately tied to the rationalization of institutions, enacted on particular occasions that generate global awareness, carried by the infrastructure of world society, spurred by market forces, riven by tension and contradiction, and expressed in the multiple ways particular groups relate to universal ideals."

^{xiii} For more examples, Tom Dyckhoff: *The Age of Spectacle: The Rise and Fall of Iconic Architecture*. 2017. Windmill Books.

^{xiv} More information can be found in *Cultural Economy Cophemidium İstanbul 2010* by Asu Aksoy and Zeynep Enlil 2010. İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi University Press.

^{xv} For more sources on memoirs, see De Man 1984; Pleasance 2015; Scott 1998; Singer and Walker 2013; Stacey and Wolff 2013; Stanley 1992.

^{xvi} For more information about nostalgia discourse, see: Svetlana Boym. 2001. *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York: Basic.

^{xvii} I would like to thank my advisor Levent Soysal for sharing this anecdote with me.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Kişisel Bilgiler

Adı Soyadı : CEREN GÜLER

Eğitim Durumu

Lisans Öğrenimi : MARMARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ - SOSYOLOJİ

Yüksek Lisans Öğrenimi :

Bildiği Yabancı Diller :

İş Deneyimi

Çalıştığı Kurumlar ve Tarihleri: İstanbul Planlama Ajansı – İletişim Koordinatörü

