

**DESIGN CHRONOLOGY TURKEY**

**TOYS**



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**ARE WE HUMAN?**

**The Design of the Species**

**2 seconds, 2 days, 2 years, 200 years, 200,000 years**

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# TOYS

## **17th CENTURY – 1940: THE PRE-INDUSTRIAL PERIOD**

Systematic production of toys in Istanbul begins in the Eyüp neighborhood in the 17th century. In this system, which continues for almost three hundred years in line with pre-industrial production practices i.e., through the repetition of traditional forms mostly by craftsmen using simple tools traditional toys are produced and sold mainly by reusing materials readily available in the vicinity.

### **1637 THE PARADE OF TOYMAKERS**

Evlıya Çelebi reports that around mid-17th century, there are approximately 100 shops and about 105 toymakers in the Eyüp Toymakers Bazaar. Toymakers were a guild that worked under the “chief architect”. Çelebi describes the parade that took place in 1637 before the Baghdad Campaign as follows: “Eyüp toymakers march with reed pipes, whirligigs, *def dümbelek* (tambourines and goblet drums), *kemençe* (a traditional lute), rats, birds, and other toys never seen before. Among the procession are gentlemen with white beards and Kohl-rimmed eyes; clean-shaven men with caps on their head, clogs on their feet; some dressed up as women, wearing women’s hats; some disguised as children, holding hands with pretend-nannies or clinging to their mothers and fathers; the big fellow wearing a woman’s cap yelling ‘O nanny! I want that toy,’ or ‘I do not want that toy;’ some crying, and marching with their hatchets in their hands, playing tambourines. Such weird impersonators they are, these craftsmen.”<sup>1</sup>

### **17th CENTURY – 1960 EYÜP TOYMAKERS**

Evlıya Çelebi recounts that the first toy in Eyüp was made by Dökmeci (Molder) Hasan Agha. Toys are produced and sold for many years in Eyüp, the social hub of the Ottoman Empire owing to its religious and symbolic significance, on a street named *Oyuncakçı Çıkmaızı* (Toymakers Blind Alley). Later on, Darbukacı (Goblet Drum-Player) Halil Effendi and Küçük (Little) İsmail Effendi, craftsmen of Gümüşsuyu, also open toy workshops, which helps the profession gain popularity. In this district where production and sales take place in the same shop, wooden peg tops, whistles, goblet drums and drums, pinwheels, roly-poly toys, wooden cars and boats, cradles, wooden swords, and tambourines are manufactured and sold. At the same time, traveling toymakers popularize the toys they procure from this district all around the city and across the country.

Waste/leftover materials coming from nearby neighborhoods constitute the basic raw materials of Eyüp toymakers: leftover timber and tin wastes from the heating-stove manufacturers of Tahtakale; excess animal skin and bowels from the Sütlüce Slaughter House together with the clay and sticky mud from brickyards dragged along by Kağıthane and Alibeyköy streams.

### **1840s OROZDİBAK**

Among other things, various toys could be found in Oroz dibak, one of Istanbul’s oldest known department stores. Oroz dibak was located in Bahçekapı, near the Grand Post Office in Sirkeci, and had then broken new ground in Istanbul by starting to sell bicycles in 1896.

### **1880s NİKO**

Niko Şehbellioğlu’s shop, which has assumed a significant place in Istanbul’s urban memory, remains active until the 1970s at its location in Acıçeşme, Fatih.

### **1896-1908 ÇOCUKLARA MAHSUS GAZETE (A NEWSPAPER FOR CHILDREN)**

*Çocuklara Mahsus Gazete* (A Newspaper for Children) is the weekly illustrated children’s magazine printed between 1896 and 1908 by İbnü’l- Hakkı Mehmet Tahir in Istanbul. It is the longest-published Ottoman children’s magazine. The first issue is published on May 21st, 1896 and the last on August 13th, 1908. Regularly published every Thursday save for the days which coincided with the Sultan’s birthday or the anniversary of his accession to the throne, a total of 627 issues are printed. The magazine includes early examples of children’s stories and novels, serialized works, poems, memoirs of interest to children, biographies and travel writings, and articles focusing on science. Articles appealing to children at every age can be found in the magazine; whereas fairy tales and magical / fantastic elements are altogether excluded. Authors contributing to the magazine are mostly unknown. Among those who were famous was Recaizade Ercüment Ekrem, who regularly contributed articles. The magazine is discontinued after the proclamation of the Second Constitution without any announcement pertaining to its retreat from the publishing world.<sup>2</sup>



**WOODEN FERRYBOAT, EYÜP TOY, ISTANBUL, 1930s**  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection  
Photo: Avşar Gürpınar

## 1900s

From the beginning of the century onwards, Istanbul's social structure also begins to change. With the introduction of novelties such as the opera, theatre, cinema and photography to daily life, and the opening of *bon marchés*, the shopping malls of the era, the city's center of socialization shifts from Eyüp to Pera. During this period, toy shops located in the Beyoğlu Bonmarché, Karlman Passage, the Japanese Bazaar and the Spiro Giokas Enterprise which were opened in old and new trade centers located mainly in Eminönü and Beyoğlu undermine the significance of Eyüp toy making.

### AFFAN EFFENDI

Affan Effendi is a *Mevlevi* dervish and toy seller with a shop in Üsküdar. Ruşen Eşref's description in the *Istanbul Encyclopaedia* gives an idea about the appearance of a toy store in the early 20th century: "His store was below his home. But it was such a narrow store that when Affan Effendi got up from the hump he was sitting on, the tip of his cap would brush the Eyüp cradles and *kaynana clappers* (a traditional clacker; literally translates as "mother-in-law's squabble") hanging from the ceiling. Yet in all honesty, he hardly ever moved from his spot!... Less than a dozen dark spice cans with their faded labels and a couple of jars for keeping roots, a few dozens of tin whistles with rattles and no more than ten earthenware penny banks, four or five Eyüp swings hanging from the ceiling and maybe six *kaynana zırlıtısı*, together with nearly half a dozen bird-crop whistles comprised the capital of Affan Effendi. He did not sell such stuff as bisque dolls, tin soldiers, *çengi* (dancers with jingles) figurines, or rubber whistle dogs. He was a proper Muslim. The only figure he kept was a *Karagöz* (a traditional shadow puppet character). And that I believe he deemed unobjectionable, since *Karagöz* is one of our long-standing customs." <sup>3</sup>

### 1918-1978 KOÇO

In the shop of Koço, one of Istanbul's most famous toymakers, in Karlman Passage<sup>4</sup>, all sorts of imported and locally manufactured toys could be found. Koço shows the imported "picture cube" toy to Hamdi Dünder, one of the first mass-manufacturing toymakers in Turkey, and suggests that he produces it.

### 1918-1947 ARAV

The company owned by the Romanian Davit Arav starts production in a little workshop in Tophane in its early days, and later moves to Okmeydanı Avenue in Hasköy. Famous for its tin vehicles (automobiles, trams, planes, race cars), and buckets and shovels, Arav's production is later carried on by his daughter Jüliet Altın.

### 1919-1952 KADRİ ŞENGÖZ

One of the last masters of toymaking from Eyüp, Kadri Şengöz manufactures wooden toys, cradles, cars and water whistles in his workshop in Eyüp until the 1950s. Taking over the production from his father, Halit Şengöz continues manufacturing wooden toys.

### 1921 THE EYÜP FIRE

Due to a fire in Eyüp, Toymakers Blind Alley is almost completely destroyed. Only two toymakers are spared. Kadri Şengöz, one of the last remaining Eyüp toymakers, summarizes the situation with the following words: "Eyüp toy making is dead now. All that is left today is my store, and another toymaker two stores down. I will dismantle the counter after making a few more camels from the remaining wood... People's taste has changed a lot. Back in the day we had a toy we called *kaynana zırlıtısı*; mother in law's squabble. Once it started clattering, it would not stop. New brides and new grooms bought it by armfuls; out of spite, I suspect, for their mother-in-laws. Yet the day has come when we can no longer stand up to the toy factories and tin toys of Europe."<sup>5</sup>

### 1923 FOUNDATION OF THE REPUBLIC

It can be argued that the foundation of the Republic, and the new social and cultural structure that subsequently took shape, mark the passage to a new phase in toy production. With the transition from a structure where the production of figurative objects and images were considered heresy to an altogether secular state and a secular cultural paradigm, there is a relative liberation in terms of toys' form and content.

## **1924 THE GENEVA DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

It is the first international document concerning the protection of children. The declaration states that children must be given the means requisite for their natural development; hungry children must be fed; sick children must be nursed; the orphan and the waif must be sheltered and succored; children must be first to receive relief in times of distress; they must be protected against every form of exploitation, and they must be brought up to devote their talents to the services of their fellow men. This declaration is ratified also by Turkey.

## **1929-1980 THE JAPANESE STORE**

The Japanese Store (Bazaar), opened in 1929 by Oscar Raymond in the Hrista Passage in Beyoğlu (Çiçek Passage, Balo Street 6), initially sells imported toys from Germany (Marklin, Duksa, Şuka, Gamma) and Japan (Nakamura). In the following years, Raymond's son Raul and grandson Waldemar take over the store. Previously selling only import goods, the Japanese Store later buys the neighboring store and begins to sell locally manufactured toys there. Unconventional toys such as wind-up chicks and roosters that can be fed and steam-powered toy boats are also found in the Japanese Store now purchasing products also from local manufacturers. The store, whose last manager was Süren Hamparsunoğlu, also commences production in the 1950s. In the 1980s, however, the store closes down due to disagreement between the owner's children.

## **1930s**

### **1930 KAZIM GÖKSEL**

Kazım Göksel was one of the oldest toymakers in İzmir. Among the toys he sold were wooden trucks and rag dolls. These dolls were manufactured by a man named Necati in Ortaköy, Istanbul. The faces of these dolls were made of cardboard, and the stuffing was sawdust. Kazım Göksel had the dolls brought over from Ortaköy to his own store. In 1939, he moves to Istanbul and continues selling toys there. He remains in business until his death in 1961.

### **1930-1950 BISQUE DOLLS**

The production of bisque dolls, with eyes that could open and close, and bodies made of plaster and stuffed with straw, continues in Turkey until the 1950s, and comes to an end

when the production of plastic dolls begins. The reason why dolls, whose history dates back several centuries in Europe, became popular much later in Turkey could be that figurative toys were not favored in Anatolia due to religious reasons. In times when there were no industrial dolls, girls would wrap rags around sticks to make their own dolls.

### **1930-1960 OSKAR KAZEZ**

Kazez, one of the first entrepreneurs who went into toy import business before World War II, not only sold imported German and Japanese toys, but also supplied toy manufacturers with tools and mechanisms.

### **1930-1942 GARBİS**

Garbis is known to have produced bicycles throughout the 1930s in his workshop in Kadıköy.

### **1932 THE SPIRO GIOKAS ENTERPRISE**

The toy store of Niko (Nikoli Mihalidis), of whom there is very little information even though his name is in several sources, is opened by the Greek Spiro Giokas in the 1920s initially as a butcher shop at Sabuncu Han in the Marpuççular district of Eminönü. With the arrival of Niko to work as a salesclerk in 1932, they go into toy business. This store mostly sells marbles, wind-up toys, cars, tanks, and dolls. Besides wholesaling, Spiro and Niko support local toymakers by supplying them with models and catalogues, and sometimes by assisting them financially.

### **1932-1933 YO-YO**

The yo-yo craze in the world spreads also to Turkey. The workshops in Tahtakale manufacture and sell thousands of yo-yos. In 1933, the Istanbul Municipality issues a ban on yo-yos. After World War II, the yo-yo regains popularity. Now produced from plastic, yo-yos continue to be sold until the 1960s.

### **1935 ENİS İPEKÇİ**

Enis İpekçi and his father close down their souvenir shop near Yenıcamı and open a toy store in Beyoğlu. They bring several toys from the Leipzig toy fair to Turkey. When Enis İpekçi dies in 1939, the shop is sold to the Japanese Store. In the same year, Enis İpekçi's sister and her husband (parents of Ferit Bey) buy back the shop and continue to run it as a toy store.



1



2

**1 - JAPANESE STORE, ISTANBUL**

Source: Onur, Bekir. *Oyuncaklı Dünya* [A World Full of Toys]. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2010.

**2 - BEYOĞLU BONMARCHÉ, ISTANBUL**

Source: Onur, Bekir. *Oyuncaklı Dünya* [A World Full of Toys]. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2010.



## **1935-1990 THE BEYOĞLU BONMARCHÉ**

In the Beyoğlu Bonmarché, a competitor of the Japanese Bazaar and one of the *bon marchés* that started to become popular in Pera as of the beginning of the 20th century, Rabia Baler and Murat Bey used to sell German and English import toys like Steiff, Schuco and Meccano. In later years this store is taken over by Ferdi Bey and Meline Topalyan.

## **1938-1984 HAMDİ DÜNDAR**

Hamdi DüNDAR, one of the first serial toy manufacturers in Turkey, starts to produce a version of the German Baukasten construction sets, "picture cubes" with six different pictures on each surface, and various wooden toys (village homes); he catalogues his toys and begins to sell them in toy stores and bonmarchés located predominantly in Pera. His toys are known to have been ordered especially by Karlman. The production initiated by father DüNDAR is carried on by his son Ertuğrul.

## **1939 ÖZLER**

Turgut Özler, who manufactured on Hoca Çakır Avenue in Edirnekapı was famous for his tricycles made in what can be called the Anatolian style, as well as his bicycles with wooden and metal frames. Özler expands his business when, following the Japanese Bazaar, the Beyoğlu Bonmarché and Karlman Passage also express interest in selling his bicycles.

## **1939-1945 WORLD WAR II**

The war years mark a period of economic and social destitution in Turkey as in many other countries. In their interviews, people whose childhoods coincide with this period mention making their own toys in their interviews. Rag dolls, wire cars, kites, marbles made of mud, and balls made from newspaper scraps and strings were the most commonly made toys.

## **1940s**

With World War II drawing to a close, industrialization attempts in toy making, centered in Istanbul, gain pace in Turkey. In the industrial period, the production assumes a structure that diffuses geographically to several different locations around the city. Initially transforming through the personal initiatives, production evolves over time in the direction of companies, most of which manufacture using industrial materials such as metal and plastic.

This development goes hand in hand with the changing urban structure. New venues/spaces for socialization and burgeoning shopping centers facilitate the user's access to industrial toys that begin to gain prominence. Furthermore, the typology of the toys also undergoes a transformation owing particularly to the cultural influences of the post-World War II period. Companies previously focused on reproducing foreign toys slowly start manufacturing their own authentic models and try to keep up with technological progress.

## **GLASS MARBLES AND TIN SOLDIERS**

In the early 1940s, glass marbles and toy soldiers are imported to Turkey from abroad. These toys, which were at first owned solely by the children of affluent families regularly traveling abroad, find their way into toy shops later on.

## **1940 PİLSAN TOYS**

Pilsan, founded by Yakup Çetinalp, enters the toy industry by manufacturing lead soldiers. The company faces reactions at the time on grounds that lead is poisonous, and struggles in court for years. The company becomes a giant when taken over by Yakup Bey's son, Faruk Çetinalp. Moving on to plastic due to difficulties in the provision of lead, the company continues to produce plastic soldiers and models of war scenes until 1970. Following the influence of China in the toy market of Turkey, Pilsan shifts its focus to producing large-scale plastic toys. Still in operation with almost 150 different types of toys today, Pilsan is also the first company in Turkey to have produced battery-powered toys.<sup>6</sup>

## **SABUNCU HAN**

Sabuncu Han housed several toy shops in Eminönü until the late 1970s. Significant among these were Ak Trade House where Öjen Amadeo sold local and imported pop guns, wind-up toys and dolls; Kaşif (Rıza, Hüseyin and Muharrem Kaşif) which sold balls; Sülün Co. owned by Kamil and Sülün Horozoğlu, and Kamil Göksel who had come from İzmir and started doing business in Istanbul.

## **SÜPÜRGEÇİ HAN**

In the shop of Mehmet, Hasan and Hüseyin Şekercioğlu, colorful rubber balls were sold alongside rubber dolls and animals.



1



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1 - CONSTRUCTION SET, BAUKASTEN, GERMANY, 1880  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection

2 - CONSTRUCTION SET, HAMDİ DÜNDAR, ISTANBUL, 1960  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection



### TOYS AS A PROPAGANDA TOOL, 1940s

Toys embody specific contexts and ideologies through their materials; modes of production; how they prompt play (individual vs. as a group), and their intended environment (indoors or outdoors). Meanwhile, toys and the world and concerns of adults may not always be as distinctly apart as we might presume. Toy sets with cowboy and Native American figures and tools present this historical relationship to children entirely stripped of its atrocities and skewed balance of power. In Continental Europe on the eve of the First World War, Germany produces Ottoman toy soldiers in order to win over the hearts and minds of their intended

ally. Albeit not as a direct result of this endeavor, the Ottoman Empire does enter and consequently lose the war alongside Germany. The same Germany that designs and manufactures an anti-Semitic board game in the years leading up to the Second World War in order to propagate this ideology among the young members of society. As an extension of its desire to pull the young republic of Turkey into the war as its ally, Germany—again—produces and exports toy soldiers in 1940. However, this time Turkey manages to stay out of the war, which the Germans will again lose. Hausser Toy Company, 1930-40s  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection

## **THE GRAND BAZAAR**

In the years when toy shops were concentrated in Tahtakale and Eminönü, the Grand Bazaar is known to have hosted the toy shops of Belkis and Çetin Ant, Ali Türer, Muammer Ulusoy, Stephan and Vahe Hıdıryan.

## **ANAPA CHILDREN'S BONMARCHÉ**

Tahsin Anapa's children's store, initially opened on İstiklal Avenue, continues to operate on Halaskargazi Avenue in Şişli after 1984. Anapa, which can be deemed the first genuine children's store of the modern times, sold all sorts of products and equipment for children along with toys.

## **MUSTAFA ESGİN - KADİR ESGİN**

Mustafa and Kadir brothers make traditional and modern wooden toys in their workshop in Tahtakale. Having started out by producing parts such as wheels (in a way sub-industry products) for toy manufacturers, they later on continue with toy production by manufacturing handles and peg tops in the traditional style. Initially making the peg tops from boxwood and hornbeam, they later use hornbeam only, since boxwood can no longer be supplied. Later on, a new kind of peg top hung on a string and swirled replaces the peg tops which were coiled with a string and spun on the floor.

## **MEHMET TÜTEN**

Mehmet Tüten works as a craftsman in his house on Darüşşafaka Avenue (Fatih, Istanbul), producing wooden cars.

## **1940 HALİT ŞENGÖZ - KADRI ŞENGÖZ**

Halit Şengöz starts working at his father's (Kadri Şengöz) store, and turns to plastic instead of the traditional wooden toys in 1952. Along with plastic toys, they produce whistle jugs, tambourines, horse-and-carriages, lorries, magicians, and cradles with mirrors.

## **1940-1946 MİKAIL KORZUN**

Mikhail Korzun, a Russian immigrant, has wooden toys (ducks, drummers, cars) manufactured by various carpenters across Istanbul, paints them at home with his wife, and sells them to the Japanese Bazaar.

## **1940-1942 THE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW**

This law, introduced by the Republican People's Party in order to alleviate the economic depression ensuing the war years, bestows the government and thus the state the right to intervene in all kinds of industrial, agricultural and commercial activities by means of price fixing, confiscating products, and forced labor.

## **1942 THE WEALTH TAX**

Justified by the prime minister of the time, Şükrü Saraçoğlu with the words, "This law is also a law of revolution. We are faced with an opportunity that would grant us our economic independence. Thus eliminating the foreigners who have been dominating our market, we will hand the Turkish market to the Turks.", the Wealth Tax particularly forces non-Muslims who were important actors in industry and commerce to sell off their assets, and thus causes capital to change hands.

## **1942 MEHMET TELMAN**

A pioneer toymaker of Turkey's modern period, Mehmet Telman produced wooden dogs that could move with wires, *jeu de quilles* (bowling), cricket sets, miniature sofa units, garbage trucks, and lorries.

## **1942-1982 HALİSE ERSAN AND HER BROTHER**

Having started toy production in July 1942 in İzmir with dolls that had faces made of cardboard press, bodies stuffed with straw, and arms and legs with sawdust, Recep and Halise Ersan settle in Istanbul in 1950 and produce various games and toys like rocking horses, stuffed animals made of Sümerbank (a state owned bank founded for supporting the textile industry) cotton flannel, traffic games, duck games, various vehicles, repair kits, quoits, and *kızma birader* (equivalent of Parcheesi). Initially using cardboard and ceramic as materials, and stuffing the dolls with sawdust and cotton, the Ersans turn to manufacturing plastic toys from 1960 onwards. Ersan becomes a pioneering company particularly for the production of board games.

## **1944 GÜREL TOYS**

Müstecap Baybörü starts to work as the apprentice of a Greek toymaker named Kiryako in 1944. They later begin to work together to produce toy molds. Gürel Toys, the company owned by Müstecap Baybörü who came to be one of the most significant actors in toy making in Turkey produces tin



TIN MOLDS OF GÜREL TOYS, ISTANBUL, 1960-1970  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection  
Photo: Avşar Gürpınar

vehicles in its workshop in Süleymaniye during its early years. Manufacturing the first large-scale toy model of a Plymouth car in 1957, Baybörü starts producing police cars and military vehicles in the 1970s. The emergence of wind-up and friction cars, together with the proliferation of plastic materials around 1975-1976, prompts Baybörü to start producing these toys. In the factory of Gürel Toys located in Yeni Bosna East Industrial Estate, the toy versions of popular automobiles of the era (Mercedes, Magirus) were being produced.<sup>7</sup>

### **1944 DERA ATAKAN**

In his workshop on Kalyoncu Kulluk Avenue in Beyoğlu, Atakan produced tin kitchen stoves, toy refrigerators, seating groups for living rooms and bedroom sets, as well as several model vehicles (planes, ships, ferries).

### **1945 ÇAKAR TOYS**

Founded by Artin and Avadis Çakar, Çakar Toys produced and sold steam-powered tin boats, tin peg tops, wooden toys and later on (in the 1970s) soccer balls in its workshop in the Carpenters' District in Eyüp.

### **1945 MEHMET SÜLÜN**

Doing both production and sales in his workshop in Baltalimanı, Sülün's array of products later taken over by his son Alişan spanned a diversity ranging from clay marbles to explosive toys (pop guns, firecrackers, fireworks), from wood to plush.

### **1946 ALASYA TOYS**

Abdürrahim Alasya starts production in Zaza Han on Tahtakale Avenue, and continues to work until the 1980s in the factory he opens in Gaziosmanpaşa. Offering a wide range of products, the company produces tin and tin-plastic wind-up miniature vehicles (jeeps, fire trucks, tanks, police cars, trains) and pop guns. This is also the company that produces the first metal toy telephone in 1946. The company's operations are later continued by Alasya's son Rauf and his nephews Vedat and Sedat. Alongside Gürel and Nekur which began production in the coming years Alasya is considered one of the three principal firms in industrial toy production in Turkey.

### **KEHRİBAR TOYS**

The first toys released by owner Cemal Annaç are a TV and a hay wain. Focusing on plastic toys, the company eventually cannot compete with imported toys, albeit producing eccentric toys such as Concorde, Dallas guns, and elephants ringing ding-dong.

### **1946-47 AŞIK HASAN**

The craftsman, who is first to turn crockery into a touristic business, manufactures various toys in Avanos such as duck-shaped penny banks, camel trains, whistle cups. He works with molds for some time, and produces animal-shaped penny banks.

### **1947-85 JÜLYET ALTIN TOYS**

Jülyet Altın's father Davit Arav, a toymaker of Istanbul since 1918, made toys in the workshop he set up in his house. Later on, Arav, founder of the Arav Toy Factory, passes away, Jülyet Altın takes over his business. Altın produces tin vehicles, buckets and shovels, drums, peg tops along with clockwork toys in her workshop on Alişan Street, Kumkapı. She closes the business down in 1985 due to her old age.

### **1948 ÇEVİK TOY HOUSE**

Wooden toys of all sorts were available in Muzaffer Neçevik's store in Eyüp, where he did both manufacturing and sales.

### **1949 TANSU TOYS**

Founded in 1949 by İbrahim Tansu, Tansu Toys enters business manufacturing prayer beads, whistles and buttons. Tansu later buys machines and expands his business. He always works with plastic. In this period, he produces animal figurines and various model cars. After 1965, his son Yücel Tansu also gets into the business. Following his entry, they begin to produce brain-teaser toys, wind-up and battery-powered models.

## 1950s

There is a visible paradigm shift in production in Turkey after World War II. The Marshall Plan and new urbanization and industrialization policies elicit momentous transformations in the toy industry as in others. While on the one hand the production of traditional toys continues, plastic and mechanical toys begin to dominate the market with an ever-increasing scale on the other. The first individual entrepreneurs who can be seen as pioneers establish larger-scale production facilities and begin to operate under the safeguard of import-substitution economic policies.

### 1950 GEAR PRODUCTION

With the advent of gear production in Turkey in the 1950s, the number of wind-up toys in the market rapidly soars.

### 1951 THE TOY INDUSTRY

Toymakers Association of Turkey appeals to the Regional Administration of Economy and Commerce and declares that the market is brimming with foreign-origin toys and their entry into the country must be prohibited, or otherwise the domestic toy industry would suffer serious damage.<sup>8</sup>

### PLASTIC BALLS

In the 1950s, İsmet Atanar produces the first color ball and Arif Ölçken makes the first velvet ball coating. Hasan and Hüseyin Şekeroğlu take up dyed rubber ball manufacturing. Rotoplast and Kamer Plastic, on the other hand, produce balls from PVC; this product becomes widely used in the market owing to the efforts of Rıza Kaşif and Sabri Erimel.

### KITES

In the 1950s, children make their own kites with papers or newspapers folded into a triangle, wooden sticks and tree branches. They use a mixture of flour and water to stick the papers together. With their colors and tails, kites become a means to show-off among children. Meanwhile, in the past, in Konya, kites were deemed sacrilegious based on the belief that flying a kite would cause the crops to dry and the rain to decrease.<sup>9</sup>

### JIGSAW PUZZLES

From the 1950s onwards, wooden cubes with pictures stuck on them enter Turkey with the name *yapboz* (literally “make-undo”). As they regain popularity after the 1980s, they come

to be called puzzles. Those with fewer pieces become the obsession of children, and those consisting of more pieces of adults; in fact even picture framers begin to sell completed and framed jigsaw puzzles.

### ALİ FAİK ARI

He crafts wooden toys in his workshop in Fatih until 1965. He produces peg tops, clackers called *laklak* and *kaynana zırlıtısı*, rattle wheels, carts, cork pop rifles, wheeled wooden cars, and in earlier times, yo-yos. Ari and his workers produce the parts; toymakers assemble and paint them and put the products on the market.

### 1950-55 HENRY WERTHER

A Hungarian/German immigrant, Werther produces dolls he calls Vena Dolls that can make sounds, with heads made of bisque, bodies stuffed with straw, and moving eyes between 1950 and 55. Henry Werther’s toys were among those sold in the Beyoğlu Bonmarché.

### 1950-55 FERDİNAND

Ferdinand Mikoğlu owns this store in Taksim that mainly sells imported toys but also operates as a barbershop.

### 1950-60 DOĞAN ÇALKOVAR

Çalkovar produces ceramic objects in his workshop in Kütahta. At the same time, he manufactures terracotta toys, such as whistle pitchers, penny banks, minarets, birds, and jugs.

### 1950-70 YALÇIN TOYS

Yalçın Özkazan produces tin toys. Among them is “Çakarmotor”, a very popular toy of the time; peg tops; clothes irons; chicken that could lay eggs, and ovens.

### 1950s HULA HOOPS

Hula hoops spread from the USA to the rest of the world in the 1950s. Koç Holding brings this plastic hoop twirled around the waist to Turkey. It is said that twirling hula hoops on the streets of Istanbul was forbidden in 1958. Although it makes a comeback in the 1980s and 2000s, it can never regain its popularity in the 1950s.



### **1951 ERKOL TOYS**

The company owned by Süleyman Erkol sold pop guns and guns shooting plastic darts wholesale. In 1960, the company's wholesale toy store opens in Tahtakale.

### **1954 KOSİF**

Mustafa, Muzaffer and Hasan Kosif sell toys wholesale.

### **1955 WOODEN TOY MAKING TRAINING COURSES**

The Ministry of Commerce opens training courses in various locations across the country to facilitate the advancement of small-scale handicrafts. In addition to the already established one hundred eighty or so trainings on carpet making and weaving, it is decided to open other branches on caning and wooden toy making.

### **1955 THE EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 6-7**

The events of September 6-7 are lootings and attacks which began in Istanbul and spread to different cities across the country. The attacks directed mainly at non-Muslim homes, businesses and sanctuaries cause serious physical, financial and emotional damage. Stores are destroyed in the lootings that also take place in neighborhoods like Sultan Hamam and Marpuççular in Eminönü, where toy shops (such as Süleyman Koyuncu) are located. Following the events, the non-Muslim population in Istanbul shrinks drastically.

### **1956-1960 THE NATIONAL SECURITY LAW**

Introduced in 1940 due to the downswing in national economy and originally in effect for merely two years, this law is put back into force. Despite all extraordinary measures, the shortage of important materials such as tin, nails, iron, horseshoe nails, gasoline, coal, rubber and kerosene cannot be overcome. Several toy companies cease production during this period.

### **1956 MELİH ARKAY**

Melih Arkay produces the first Lego-type construction toys in Turkey. Arkay also begins to manufacture tricycles, later on continuing production under the company Özler.

### **1957 SEBAHAT PLASTICS / AZİM SEBAT STORE**

Manuel Çukurel from İzmir is the first person to produce dolls using plastic inflation machines. These dolls are sold by a store called Amadeo in Istanbul. Marko (Manuel) and Mary Çukurel produce polyethylene dolls and blow molding toys, as well as the first examples of plastic (polyethylene blow up) dolls in Turkey. As doll manufacturing becomes widespread, Sebahat Plastics also begins to produce doll clothes from simple fabrics.

### **1957 NAL PLASTICS**

Plastic (polyethylene) balls are produced with blow molding in Nal Plastics' factory in Bomonti. The company currently manufactures plastic bottles and protective bottle nettings.

### **1957-1960 SİNAN KASALKAYA**

Sinan Kasalkaya makes small view-masters between 1957 and 1960. This toy is held up at the eye like binoculars, and the pictures inside can be switched as the user presses a button.

### **1958-1972 SEV-AL TOYS**

This toymaker owned by Hayri Neçevik and located on Fevzipaşa Avenue, Fatih sells toys by local manufacturers for over twenty years. During that period, they release wooden toys produced by Çevik Toyhouse, owned by Hayri Neçevik's brother Muzaffer Neçevik. They also merchandise imported and local toys. Among these toys are rag dolls, wooden lorries, jeeps, and cars. Later on, they begin to manufacture their own jeeps. At the same time, they sell toy cars and fire trucks produced by Alasya, and cars, fire trucks, vans and ambulances produced by Nekur. Most foreign toys they sell are battery-powered. Later, a wide selection of toys are imported from Germany and Japan. The first four toys produced by Fatoş Toys are also sold by this store.

### **1959 DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

On November 20, 1959, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, a ten-article extended version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is adopted by the United Nations.



## 1960s

In times when everyday life was brimming with automobiles, TVs, kitchen utensils, movies, newspapers, magazines, and products in Tetra Pak and plastic packages, Turkey also adjusts to this system. The influence of European and American cultures becomes pronounced also in toys. During the Cold War years and particularly the Space Race, albeit not a party to it, Turkey has toy companies producing tin and plastic laser guns, UFOs and spaceships. As part of the Marshall Plan put into action between 1948 and 1950 after World War II, in addition to financial aid, major appliances (refrigerators, ovens, washing/dish machines, clothes irons, etc.) become available for purchase. Thus they turn into a characteristic part of the material culture and domestic life in Turkey, and their miniature toys are also produced in large numbers.<sup>10</sup>

### PASCAL

He is known as the person to produce the first doll with hair in Turkey. Pascal, remembered by how he kept the recipe of his dough a secret, produces fragile dolls until the 1960s. Later, he improves the dough he uses and starts manufacturing dolls that don't smash when dropped.

### RAMİZ AKYÜREKLİ

Akyürekli, in addition to being a toy manufacturer, is the first importer of small wind-up machines that lend toys mobility; feeding sounds used in dolls; doll eyes, and fiber used for dolls with hair.

### BOGOS GÜLÜKOĞLU

He produces toy guns and clothes irons made of cast iron.

### CEMALETTİN KINAÇAY

The Electrical Quiz Game produced by Kınaçay is sold at the Japanese Bazaar.

### MUSTAFA KABAK

Mustafa Kabak is famous for the leather animal toys he produces in the 1960s.

### UFUK TOYS

Starting business in the 1960s, Ufuk Toys produces tin vehicles which are among the popular toys of the era.

## 1960-1980 NADİR ALTINTAŞ

Nadir Altıntaş produces plastic dolls and cars between 1960 and 1980.

### 1960 SOĞANLI DOLLS

Soğanlı dolls start with a doll a father made for his daughter in the Soğanlı Village of Kayseri. With both women and men starting to work together to produce dolls, the village succeeds in making 7,000 Soğanlı dolls ready for sale by 1985.

### 1961 NEKUR TOYS

This company in Sefaköy named after Nevzat Kurt produces the most interesting examples of tin toys for many years. It comes to carry a fairly wide array of products ranging from police cars, fire trucks, ambulances, lorries/vans, serving carts, motorbikes, jeeps, and jets, to models like jet cars and UFOs inspired by the Space Race in that period (although Turkey was not part of it). Following Kurt, his son-in-law Koral Bilimsel takes over the company. Nekur can be considered one of the three most prominent toy companies of the 1960s alongside Alasya and Gürel.

### 1962 AKÇİÇEK TOYS

Founded by Osman Urkaç, Akçiçek Toys produces the first plastic soccer set in Turkey. This game, played by dragging and releasing soccer players placed in sockets on a plastic surface, becomes part of the material culture for many years. Although established prior to the 1980s (see: 1980s), Akçiçek Toys is one of the few toy companies still manufacturing today.<sup>11</sup>

### 1962 FEN TOYS

Starting with wholesale trade and moving on to manufacturing in the early 1970s, Fen Toys produces Lego-like modular construction sets at a time when the originals were not imported to Turkey.

### 1964 ALAATTİN ZİNCİRKIRAN

He starts business with pocket mirrors and tin children's watches. He establishes a partnership with Gürel Toys in 1968, which lasts until 1982. They make tin toys until 1981 and move on to manufacturing plastic toys in 1982. Zincirkıran establishes Oğuz Toys in 1982. Named after his son Oğuz Zincirkıran, the company later confines its operations only to trade and distribution under the name Emre Toys.



**SPACECRAFT FEZA, NEKUR, ISTANBUL, 1960s**  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection  
Photo: Avşar Gürpınar

## **1964 HARDWARE AND TOY FACTORIES**

The company name of Hardware and Toy Factories LLC, established by Ahmet K rođlu and Cevher Enbiyaođlu, is later changed as Battery and Torchlight Industrial LLC.

This is testimony to the fact that several companies which had entered business with toy making have had to change sectors due to various reasons.

### **1965 VAHİT YALTA**

Yalta, whose workplace and activity period are unavailable, is known to have produced wooden bicycles.

### **1966 EMSA TOYS**

Having produced small-scale products with hand press previously, the company starts manufacturing toys as of 1966. After commencing the production of battery-powered toys in 1976, it specializes in battery-powered and mechanical toy production until 1982. Company owner Savař  ren, who later wants to produce brain-teaser toys, starts to produce Lego-like construction sets which he names Hobby known in Europe as *Noper*.

### **1967-1988 EGE TOYS**

Ege Toys is established in 1967 by Osman Erbelge and remains in operation until 1988. During this period, they manufacture over two hundred different toys, primarily PCV dolls and rattle toys. This toy shop located in 4. Levent sells all its machinery and closes down when production is halted due to a strike in 1988.

## **1970s**

The early 1970s can be seen as an extension of the previous decade. Possibilities of industrial production; the abundance and diversity of materials; and the availability of circuits which automatize sound, light and motion for use in toys allow toy companies—presently free from competition with the foreign market—to employ flexible, free and experimental strategies in design and production. Yet the increase in the price of several raw materials especially after the 1974 Oil Crisis, as well as the aftermath of the political crises following economic instabilities, lead to an atmosphere of social, cultural and industrial drought by the end of this decade, which is to last until mid-1980s.

## **İZZET URGAÇ**

Urgaç produces wooden rocking horses in his workshop in Kasımpařa.

### **BAŐARAN**

Fikri Bařaran produces wooden rocking horses in his workshop in K  kyalı.

### **MUSTAFA KANDEMİR**

Kandemir produces model tin planes and amusement parks in his workshop in the Carpenters' District in Ey p, which are sold at the Japanese Bazaar.

### **AFACAN TOYS**

Afacan Toys, owned by Mesut Turan, is especially famous for its tin violins. Toys produced in its workshop in Ey p are sold at the Japanese Bazaar in Pera.

### **LAKLAK (CLACKER)**

*Laklak*, a toy with two spheres attached by a string or wire, is named after the clacking noise these spheres make upon hitting each other when the toy is rotated. This toy, originally made with wire and wood and with roots far back in history, regains popularity in the 1970s; produced this time with plastic.

### **1971 FATOŐ**

One of the most longstanding toy companies in Turkey, FatoŐ is established to sell home-manufactured dolls when its owner Fatma İnhan, after becoming a mother in 1969, wants to produce locally made toys for her children instead of imported plush toys. She starts the business with her husband, and they conduct surveys with the 18 toy prototypes they produce in order to decide which to push to production and how. After manufacturing plush toys with models similar to those produced by the German company Steiff between 1971 and 1975, FatoŐ later starts using PVC, and commences industrial production upon moving to Zeytinburnu. Before FatoŐ Toys, children were not allowed dolls as they were considered hazardous, being seamed together with pins; also since they smashed when dropped, these dolls were kept as decorative objects on the upper shelves in the house.



**PLUSH CLOWN, FATOŞ, ISTANBUL, 1970**  
Source: A. Naim Arnas Collection

## **1972 DEDE**

Fevzi Dede produces various vehicles (most famously a Mercedes) in his workshop in Tahtakale using blow molding. The company is later inherited by his son Adem Dede, and develops into one of the prominent toy companies (Dede) still in operation today.

## **1973 ASLAN TOYS**

Owned by Vahit Aslan, Aslan Toys located in Yenibosna is known for its capsule guns and different gun models. An electrical engineer, Aslan produces various metal toy guns based on German models, inspired by the toy guns brought from Germany by his brothers in 1973.

## **1974 OIL CRISIS**

This global economic crisis, which causes inflation in oil prices as well as petroleum-based materials around the world, has a severe impact also on toy companies in Turkey, most of whom had been manufacturing with plastic. As a result of the crisis, the effects of which were felt particularly from the late 1970s onwards in Turkey, most of the toy companies either close down, or begin production in different industries.

## **1975-1976 WIND-UP CARS**

Around 1975-76, the production of wind-up and friction toy cars begins.

## **1977 BIG PLASTIC TOYS**

The company founded by Süheyl Erkman carries out production in Gebze and sales in Karaköy. Besides manufacturing toy vehicles, it sells franchise products and imports toy molds in partnership with the German Big Factory.

## **1977 ÜNSU TOYS**

The company, named after its owner Üner Göksel, produces plastic toys. Üner Göksel takes over his father Kazım Göksel's business after his death in 1961. He continues to sell toys purchased from the market, such as wooden lorries, horse-and-carriages, tin buckets, and bugles until 1977, when the company starts manufacturing under the name Ünsu Toys. They launch production with plastic tea sets, plastic guns, buckets, and cars.

## **1979 BEDİLOY**

Bediloy is a company founded by Yaşar Kaynar in the Bedil village of the Çankırı province in 1979, producing wooden toys and educational tools for preschools. Starting out with 13 people, Bediloy evolves into a company with the help of the villagers, joined by the imam, teachers, and carpenters. Becoming an official enterprise in 1981, the company also decides to merchandise books, stationery and other toys by the late 1980s. The company still continues production and sales in Istanbul.

## **1979 UNESCO INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD**

With a declaration signed by the then-United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim on January 1st, the year 1979 is declared the Year of the Child. The aim is to increase awareness towards the overarching problems of the child, such as lack of education and malnutrition. 1979 also marks the beginnings of the endeavor towards the 1989 Convention of the Rights of the Child, which would propose a more binding framework in terms of children's rights. One of the themes of the large-scale exhibition organized by UNESCO in Paris including 900 toys from 56 countries as part of these activities is children making their toys themselves.

## **1979-1986 İSO CHILDREN'S EXHIBITIONS**

The Istanbul Chamber of Industry (İSO) holds an exhibition for children in its office building in Odakule. In this first event, books, toys and furniture produced by over 30 companies are exhibited, and also film screenings and public conferences focusing on the topics of "The Significance of Toys in Child Development" and "Child Development" are held free of charge. The exhibitions hosted by the Istanbul Chamber of Industry continue until 1986.

## **1980s**

Making toys out of tin is prohibited in the 1980s out of concern that tin is hazardous for health. This ban renders the use of the material, which was used above all for producing toys, virtually impossible. Several companies face crises due to this prohibition and are forced to close down. Other companies in toy manufacturing switch to a different material and carry on with production.<sup>12</sup> These changes demonstrate the ways in which the country adapts to the economic activity in the period. Very few companies can survive this period without changing their internal structures while sustaining toy production.



**STAR WARS TOYS MADE IN TURKEY, 1980**  
Manufacturer unknown.  
Istanbul Toy Museum Collection

## **SEPTEMBER 12, 1980**

Coup d'état in Turkey

## **1980 THE DECISIONS OF JANUARY 24**

“The Decisions of January 24” is the name given to the economic stability program developed by Turgut Özal, who was promoted to Under Secretary of the Prime Ministry in 1979. Among these decisions are preventive measures for diminishing the role of the state in the economy, and the liberalization of foreign trade by means of export incentives and import liberalization. The most important aspect of these decisions for the toy industry is that imported goods begin to dominate the domestic market with substantial volume and diversity with the transition from import-substitution industrialization to a free market.

## **BARBIE**

First released by Mattel in 1959, the Barbie figure becomes one of the most influential icons of modern American life with her clothes, her accessories and even her boyfriend Ken. Available on the domestic market in Turkey after the Decisions of January 24, Barbie rapidly spreads through the market despite its high price.

## **ATARI**

The Atari 2600, a video game console developed in the 1970s by Ted Dabney and Nolan Bushnell, enters the market in Turkey in the 1980s with the slogan “Evinize koşun Atari'yle coşun” (“Rush home and go wild with the Atari craze”).

## **THE FRISBEE**

Emerging in the USA at a time when UFO news and films were popular, the Frisbee comes to Turkey in the 1980s. *Frizbi*, as it is called in Turkish, rapidly gains popularity. It is played by children in street alleys. Later on when going on vacations becomes a widespread practice, young people start to play Frisbee on the beach.

## **BİRLİK TOYS**

Entering the industry in the 1980s with toy manufacturing, Birlik Toys turns to toy import after 1990.<sup>13</sup>

## **1981 İBRAHİM YAYLIOĞLU**

With electrical circuits becoming cheaper and finding their way into toys, Yaylioğlu produces one of the first remote-control toy vehicles in Turkey.

## **1981 SELOPLAST**

Seloplast, initially located in Selamet Han in Tahtakale and later moved to Avcılar, produces a variety of plastic toy vehicles with mechanical parts.

## **1984 CHILDREN'S MAGAZINES WITH PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE**

The trend of magazines with promotional toys, spearheaded by *Pif* in France and *Yup* in Germany in the late 1970s, reaches Turkey in the 1980s. The magazine *Milliyet Kardeş* particularly stands out in those years as the only “magazine with toys”.

## **1983 BAŞAK ÇOCUK MAGAZINE**

*Başak Çocuk* (Başak Kids), a magazine owned by Ziraat Bank, first greets children in March 1983. The magazine is 36 pages in total, with 32 pages in color and an appendix of four pages of encyclopedic entries. *Başak Çocuk* remains in print until 2001.

## **1984 ERTUĞRUL DÜNDAR**

Taking over toy production from his father Hamdi DüNDAR in 1984, Ertuğrul DüNDAR manufactures bullfighters out of poplar tree.

## **1988 GALLERİA**

Turkey's first shopping mall is Galleria, designed by architect Hayati Tabanlıoğlu and opened in Ataköy, Istanbul in 1988. Galleria included the amusement center called “Fame City”. The coupons earned at the several gaming platforms and machines located inside (such as Whac-A-Mole, Basketball, Clock Tower, Ball Pit, Mini Golf) could later be converted into various toys.

## **1988 BİSİMEKS**

Bisimeks, owned by Yasef Levi, which initially produced a variety of jigsaw puzzles, nowadays manufactures various bicycles, motorbikes, baby carriages and toys, as well as their spare parts, wheels, and accessories.

## **1989 CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

197 countries are party to the convention adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, making it the human rights treaty ratified by the greatest number of countries.

## **1989 MAGIC BOX**

Magic Box, Turkey's first private TV channel, is launched in 1989. Simultaneously with the several cartoons aired on the channel, mostly of USA-origin (*The Flintstones*, *Ninja Turtles*, *Transformers*), action figures of the characters in the cartoons find their way into the toy market.

## **1990s**

The 1990s can be considered a unique period where analogue and digital games and toys coexisted in Turkey. While on the one hand a diverse range of electronic toys and gaming consoles were entering the market, on the other the practices of playing games at school and on the streets continued; which also kept toys that were part these practices alive.

## **TAZO**

Tazo (or POG) is a game played with the cardboard disks located in the bottle caps of fruit juices, also lending its name to the disks used in the game. Discovered in Hawaii in the 1920s and played throughout the 1930s, this game re-emerges in the 1990s after a long period of oblivion and spreads to several countries including Turkey.

## **TAMAGOTCHI**

Tamagotchi is a toy which entered the Turkish market in the 1990s with the name *Sanal Bebek* (Digital Dolls). Inside this electronic toy the size of a matchbox is a digital pet. The players feed, pet, or put to sleep their pets using the three buttons beneath the screen. The animal grows and develops when nurtured, and dies if left unattended. This toy, which sold in vast numbers until the 2000s, later loses its popularity.

## **SKATES AND SKATEBOARDS**

Roller skates fail to gain popularity in Turkey, being expensive toys. In the 1990s, young people in Ankara were trying out skateboards on avenues closed to traffic on Sundays. Nevertheless, skateboards did not become popular in Turkey

either. The skateboard track built by the Municipality of Çankaya in Ankara remains unused. These two toys/vehicles make a comeback in the 2000s and regain popularity.

## **K'NEX**

This toy produced in 1993 is a Lego-like construction set. It differs from Lego in that it contains linear and planar parts. The interlocking of these parts allows for the construction of different structures and vehicles. It arrives in Turkey in the mid-1990s, and is remembered as the toy given away by *Yeni Yüzyıl*, then a popular newspaper.

## **1990 THE ANKARA UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE TOY MUSEUM**

The Ankara University Faculty of Educational Science Toy Museum, opened on April 20, 1990 through the persistent efforts of Prof. Bekir Onur, is Turkey's first toy museum. It is still open as part of Ankara University under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.<sup>14</sup>

## **1992 SELAY TOYS**

The company, established in 1992, is among the prominent manufacturers of plush toys. The brand is registered in 1997 under the name Selay Toys, Gifts Manufacturing Marketing Industry and Trade. Ltd. The company manufactures in a 10,000 meter square indoor space in Arnavutköy. Among its clients are large domestic and foreign chain stores, retail shops across Turkey, and companies in wholesale and retail businesses.<sup>15</sup>

## **1993 HALLEY TOYS**

Halley Gift and Toy Corporation starts business in retail in a shopping mall in 1993. Initially manufacturing exclusively for its own product supply, the company expands its product volume and development over time, reaching its current status. Since 2000, it has been manufacturing plush toys under the brand name Halley.<sup>16</sup>

## **1994 OYDER**

Toymakers Association (OYDER) aims to bring together all actors of the toy industry under its roof, including manufacturers, importers, exporters, wholesalers, and retailers. The association has 148 institutional members as of 2016. As a non-governmental organization representing the industry, OYDER seeks to gain recognition in industry and in business life, and make its voice heard in the public sphere.<sup>17</sup>



## **1994 RAHMI KOÇ MUSEUM**

Established through the initiative of businessman Rahmi M. Koç, the museum exhibits several European toys, as well as a representative reconstruction of an old Eyüp Toymaker.<sup>19</sup>

## **1996 TOYS'R'US**

The first store of Toys'r'us, an international toy supermarket chain whose distributorship is acquired by Murat Beyazıt in October 1996, opens in Bakırköy Carousel mall. The store, which grows particularly in Istanbul with several branches, spearheads the entry of USA-origin licensed products into the market. Changing its name as Toyiki in 2007, this toy chain goes bankrupt in 2010 and closes down.

## **1996 TATILYA**

Located in the Beylikdüzü district of Istanbul, Tatilya is opened on April 20, 1996. It contains different attractions, such as *Alabora* (Capsized), *Tatilya Ekspresi* (the Tatilya Express), *Masalıcı Dede* (The Wise Old Storyteller). Tatilya is purchased by Malashin Barzani in 2006 to be relocated in Northern Iraq, and it is closed down in Turkey.

## **1997 OYUNCAK 97' (TOY 97') ISTANBUL – THE 1st TOY AND GAME FAIR**

The international fair organized through the initiative of OYDER at Tüyap, Istanbul on September 25-28, 1997, hosts establishments operating in industries like toy, children's accessories, children's bicycles, books, hobby materials, stationery, haberdashery, etc. Continuing to this day with the initiative of OYDER, the fairs are currently held under the names Toyzeria and Kids Turkey.

## **1998 BİLİM ÇOCUK**

*Bilim Çocuk* (Science Kids) is the monthly children's magazine published by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) since January 1998. It aims to popularize science for children and show that they can contribute to science; and to motivate them to question, conduct research, and read. Supplementary items for the articles are included with the magazine, such as decks of cards, board games, models, masks, posters, and booklets.

## **2000s**

### **TELETUBBIES**

This TV series catering to pre-schoolers, which was broadcasted in the UK between 1997 and 2001, is aired on the TV channel ATV in Turkey. Teletubbies and their toys gain popularity among teenagers and adults as well as among little children.

### **2002 OYUNCAKLI DÜNYA (A WORLD FULL OF TOYS)**

Prof. Dr. Bekir Onur's reference book devoted entirely to toys is published, in which he traces the footsteps of preindustrial and industrial toy making in Turkey and mainly in Istanbul, and enriches this track with his research on toy history and toy museums.

### **2003 YALVAÇ ABİ BOOKSTORE**

Yalvaç Ural, an author of children's books, opens Turkey's first children's bookstore with his daughter Burcu Ural in Nişantaşı to sell products for children. Among their products are all sorts of children's books, comics, children's magazines, foreign publications, educational toys, wooden toys, jigsaw puzzles, board games, products for the left-handed, books for the blind, publications on child development for adults, and cartoons.<sup>19</sup>

### **2005 ISTANBUL TOY MUSEUM**

The Istanbul Toy Museum is founded on April 23rd, 2005 by poet and writer Sunay Akın. The museum, exhibiting outstanding examples from the history of toys from the 1700s to the present day, is located in a historical mansion in Göztepe. Established with the toys procured by Sunay Akın from antique stores and auctions held in forty-some countries over twenty years, the Istanbul Toy Museum presents the history of the world to the visitors with a more entertaining and more memorable teaching method. "

### **2005 PROGRAM FOR CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

The project for providing vocational trainings in Eyüp toy making for women from Fener-Balat neighborhoods and building sustainable work relationships is launched through a partnership between the European Union and Turkish Employment Agency. The goals are the employment of local women and the revival of the toys. Eyüp Municipality devotes a section of Eyüp Sultan Mehterhanesi (historical Janissary

band quarters) as an education, workshop and training space. Shops are opened in the Toymakers Bazaar and Pierre Loti for selling the toys. After a three months' training period, two exhibitions are held in Darphane-i Amire and Taksim.

## 2010s

With Turkey's transition to liberal economy from the mid-1980s onwards, foreign actors begin to play a very different and much more significant role in the country's toy industry. According to data provided by the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (2007), as in Europe and the USA, toys made in China start to dominate the market in Istanbul and thus Turkey. With low costs and flexible methods of production, manufacturers in China become an important center of contract manufacturing for toy companies in Turkey. Toys made in China constitute eighty per cent of Turkey's toy import. This stems from the fact that several companies in Turkey close down their production facilities and move their production activities to the Far East.

### 2011 ÜMRAN BARADAN GAME AND TOY MUSEUM, İZMİR

The İzmir Konak Municipality Ümran Baradan Game and Toy Museum houses toys procured by Ümran Baradan from several countries around the world and works produced by the highest ranking participants in the competitions that Baradan has held, as well as a collection of Sunay Akın's toys made from tin, wood, paper and plastic materials, produced between the 1850s and the 1970s.<sup>21</sup>

### 2011 ANTALYA TOY MUSEUM

Following the toy museum established by Sunay Akın in Göztepe, Istanbul, a similar museum is opened in Antalya on April 23rd, 2011, also with the consultancy of Sunay Akın. The museum exhibits around 3000 toys produced domestically and abroad from the 1860s up until the 1990s.<sup>22</sup>

### 2012 TOYCO-2012 İSTANBUL

A first in the world, TOYCO-2012 Istanbul (the European Toy and Children's Museums Union meeting) is held in Turkey in November 2012, organized by the Istanbul Toy Museum. The Istanbul Toy Museum thus becomes a pioneer in establishing a union of children's and toy museums around the world, and brings the title of "the capital of toy museums" to Istanbul.

### 2013 REGULATION ON TOYS

The regulation prepared by the Ministry of Customs and Trade seeks to "define the basic requirements concerning the safety of toys; procedures and principles regarding their supply to the market, their distribution, as well as market surveillance and inspection" and consists of the following sections: "The Supply of Toys and Market Compliance", "Compliance Assessment Procedures, CE Marking and Certified Organizations", "Market Surveillance and Inspection", "The Prohibition of the Release of a Toy and its Recall", and "The Responsibilities of the Manufacturer, Authorized Agent, and Importer".

### 2013 GAZİANTEP GAME AND TOY MUSEUM

The Gaziantep Game and Toy Museum is located in a historical house in the Bey Neighborhood of Gaziantep. The building is expropriated by the Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality and the museum opens on April 6, 2013. A total of 573 handmade and factory-made toys and toy and game sets produced between 1700 and 1990 are exhibited in the museum.<sup>23</sup>

### 2013 VIALAND

Launched on March 26, 2013, Vialand is Turkey's first theme park. It is located in Istanbul's Eyüp and Gaziosmanpaşa districts. It has several attractions, such as *Saray Salıncağı* (The Royal Swing), *Nefeskesen* (The Choker a roller coaster), *Fatih'in Rüyası* (Fatih's Dream), *360* (a Ferris wheel), *Adalet Kulesi* (The Tower of Justice a free-fall game), *Viking* (a waterslide), and *King Kong*.

### 2014 1ST NATIONAL DESIGN CONTEST FOR NEW GENERATION TOYS

The Cemer Urban Equipment Company holds a toy design contest. The İzmir-origin company producing playgrounds for interior and exterior spaces identifies the theme of the first contest as "New Generation Toys", and the categories as "playground toys" and "exercise toys". The first prize in the playground toys category is awarded to Melisa Işık and Berk Kırmızı for their modular playing equipment *Bulut* (Cloud) and in the exercise toys category to Fatih Kurtcan and Mehmet Oğuz for their scooter track design *Kayray* (Skate-rail). The contest does not take place in the following years.<sup>24</sup>

## **2014 HYBRID TOYS**

Toymakers in Turkey follow different strategies in each phase of toy making in order to adapt to the changing social and economic conditions of the era. It is possible to read these different forms of adaptation through toy models also in our present day. Companies keep up with the contemporary dynamics with their different products, even if over the short term. In the face of rapidly changing tastes and needs, many toy companies choose to produce toys that can be produced fast and in large volumes to address the trends in popular culture instead of conducting long-term research and development projects or employing in-house designers.

# NOTES

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