

Does “Embeddedness” Create Miracles? The Case of the “Anatolian Tigers” in Turkey

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Abstract

Drawing on different forms of embeddedness, this study critically examines the so-called economic miracles in the Anatolian region of Turkey, which are commonly known as the Anatolian Tigers. By decomposing the stories of the Anatolian Tigers as new loci of economic growth since 1990s, forms of embeddedness illustrate the spatio-institutional factors affecting both economic and non-economic realms with varying distillations from local institutional assets. These conditions became instrumental for both collectivizing interests of the leading local capitalists and disguising the negative consequences of the rapidly industrializing and urbanizing cities of Anatolia. Through open ended in-depth interviews conducted with leading actors in the cities of Anatolia, content analysis of the available resources published by local organizations and media, this study illustrates the role of multiple forms of embedding mechanisms that orchestrated “fragile” local economic miracles in Turkey.

Key words: Anatolian tigers; Forms of embeddedness; Turkey; Urban transformation

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INTRODUCTION

At the outset, complexities between the culture and the economy, the role of culture, particularly religion, are

evident in the rather distinct growth of Anatolian cities since the 1980s. Yet, the economic, political and social transformations that occurred in Anatolia throughout the 1990s and 2000s sheds light on the dynamics of neoliberal growth of socially embedded economic relations. A crucial facet of this transformation has been the rapid industrialization of the Anatolian cities, commonly referred to as ‘Anatolian Tigers’, and their opening up to world markets. Overall, investigating the urban political economy of rapidly growing Anatolian cities offers a unique opportunity to better understand the dynamics of the interplay between globalization, local dynamics and urban transformation.

The rapid transformation during the modernization period in the early 1920s was followed by increasingly neoliberal development policies accompanied by high levels of urbanisation and industrialisation in 1980s. Following the 1980 *coup d’etat*, which brought a shift towards flexible production, a group of Anatolian businessmen and a new discourse of representing conservative/Islamic business people’s interests emerged.

Against the historically established Turkish Industrialists and Businesspeople Association (TUSİAD), many city-based interest representation organizations flourished throughout the Anatolian region, such as the Industrialist and Businesspeople Associations (SİADs), Chambers of Trade/Industry and civil society organizations. In this context, the buoyance of the emerging conservative bourgeoisie brought in train a new term, which captured the economically booming cities of Anatolia, fuelled by the bourgeoisie and their interest representation organizations, namely the Anatolian Tigers. The Anatolian Tigers refer to the cities of Kayseri, Gaziantep, Çorum, Konya, Eskişehir, and Denizli, all of which have experienced notable economic growth beginning in the 1980s. Flexible production, as Buğra (1998, p.522) argues, played a central role in the

resurgence of local and regional development by enabling “a strategic fit” between traditional structures and global conditions. This refers to ability of local firms, mostly Small-Medium-Enterprise, to respond quickly and flexibly as market conditions change (Satoğlu, 2009, pp.14-16).

Many scholars have studied the city of Denizli, Turkey, one of the earliest Tigers. They identified a “strategic fit” between the local collaborative structures of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that allowed for an articulation to global production networks, especially in the textiles sector, which in turn led to unprecedented economic development (Mutluer, 1995; Eraydın, 1998; Erendil, 1998; Küçükler, 1998; Pınarcıoğlu, 2000). Atasoy (2007), Adaş (2006), Yavuz (2003), and Toprak et al. (2005) focused on the process of agency formation of the Anatolian Tigers. These studies argue that there have been a number of important endogenously driven dynamics in the Anatolian cities. They focus on the emergence of a synergy between Islam and capitalism within which the definitions of the economy, the market, entrepreneurship and work ethic are reconstructed, reworked and contested by Islamic businesspeople. Bayırbağ’s (2007, 2009) studies of Gaziantep have shown, through local business associations, the inter-scalar dynamics of the new political spaces that have been constructed for local and urban actors. Hoşgör (2011) brings a rather different perspective, critiquing these efforts to theorise culture – in this case, Islamic culture – with the aim of constructing a new form of growth. She presents a historical discourse analysis of neoliberal growth of Anatolian cities since 1980s.

Overall, whether these cities are the outcome of a successful use of Islamic capital implying a Calvinist approach or whether they are pure products of neoliberal urban growth is still open to discussion. Against this background, the broad objective of the paper is to critically examine the notion of embeddedness within the versatile context of neoliberal growth through case-studies on three cities in the Anatolian region of Turkey: Kayseri, Gaziantep and Eskişehir. In doing so, this paper responds to a laudable call for the reciprocity between nation-centric political economic approaches and multi-scalar explanations offered by economic geographies in a political context (Peck & Theodore, 2007). We argue that the societal, territorial and network embeddedness of “Anatolian Tigers” can, in fact, be challenged with the structural factors as the main factor behind their particular growth patterns. This is the most evident in how family firms in Anatolia has mutually evolved with the structural reforms and social policy changes at the national state level. In doing so, we also point out how the notion of embeddedness is articulated in these businessmen’s perceptions of their practices while the reality turns out to be otherwise.

1. METHODOLOGY

In conducting the study, I first reviewed national newspapers and magazines¹ from 1990 to 2012. To help compare national and local policy discourses, I also reviewed three local newspapers (the total number published in each city) for the same period in Kayseri, Gaziantep and Eskişehir, the cities investigated in this study.

It is important to note that these newspapers were owned by local entrepreneurs and locally prominent families and were thus rich sources for understanding how local growth projects have been communicated to the local public through the families. This study compared these publications and perspectives with the national ones, which helped us to situate local dynamics within a more complete framework. The local sources were also useful in capturing certain power dynamics not covered by national sources. Unlike local newspapers, the national newspapers tended to portray the locality as a unity. Although this is partially correct, it is also important to take note of the power struggles and asymmetries between local actors, which in turn lead different local newspapers to produce different stories about the same issue. Sometimes, problems between a municipality and a civil society organization, or a municipality and a specific family holding or Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) can generate considerable and insightful local discussion that is not picked up by national media. Likewise, different local actors often have different perspectives on important external processes such as globalization and Europeanization. Local sources were thus consulted to capture and portray these local dynamics, power struggles and institutional/organizational discrepancies. It is also equally crucial to note that local newspapers in the cities investigated have often stayed mute towards the issues pertaining to the poor conditions of workers, unregulated/informal contracts and safety.

The official publications of the municipalities, chambers of commerce and industry and the partner organizations (local offices of the European Union Business Development Centres, European Union Info Offices, The Economic and Social Integration Project in Major In-migrant Destinations [EKOSEP],² and university research centres) also shed light on the discourses, perceptions and strategies of different actors, and provided insight into their institutional identities and goals.

Finally, open-ended interviews were conducted with municipal officials, representatives of chambers of

¹ The national newspapers and magazines reviewed included the *Dünya*, *Milliyet*, *Hürriyet*, *Sabah*, *Zaman*, *Yeni Şafak*, *Radikal*, *Referans*, *Kapital*, *Platin*, *Ekonometri*, *KobiEfor*, *Business News Turkey* and *Newsweek Turkey*.

² EKOSEP refers to the technical Assistance for Supporting the Municipalities of Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa and Erzurum for the Solution of Economic and Social Integration Problems.” The project is financed by the European Union with co-financing from Diyarbakır, Gaziantep and Erzurum Metropolitan Municipalities and Şanlıurfa Municipality.

commerce and industry, free trade zone administrators, organized industrial zone administrators and prominent business leaders. These interviews sought to discover the lived everyday meanings and experiences of key actors in the three Anatolian cities and provided important insights into the manner in which growth coalitions utilize local cultural characteristics. Interviews also provided a rich understanding of how the entrepreneurial class view themselves and conceive of what they have been doing. Around the same time, surveys were also conducted in each city in different organizational settings³. These interviews and surveys are primarily used to support the claim that the economic success of the three Anatolian Tigers needs to be understood in terms of the way they have drawn on, developed and embedded their growth strategies.

2. 'EMBEDDEDNESS' IN ANATOLIA

This section focuses on how different forms of embeddedness have shaped local economic and social actors' initiatives to establish intersolidarity and interdependence and engender a mindset for the sake of collectivizing resources. It shows that local actors and their embeddedness very often take advantage of the socio-economic bases and historical-cultural characteristics of the cities. By presenting the different forms of institutional embeddedness and their societal manifestations as conditioned by local socio-economic characteristics and cultural practices, we intend to contribute to our understanding of how cities of Anatolia excavate local resources as well as how they embed their growth oriented projects.

2.1 Societal Embeddedness

In the cities investigated, the major indicators of societal embeddedness that were identified correspond to the existence of locally strong families in these cities. Hence, the concept of family is at the centre of societal embeddedness. Local families play a critical role in coordinating and mobilizing other families in creating a collective effort. In Kayseri, the Boydak family is at the centre of historically established societal power relations. The Boydak family's well-established presence in the city is rooted in the district of Hacılar, the hometown of

Hacı Boydak, founder of Boydak Holding⁴. Currently, Boydak Holding employs more than 70, 000 workers in 32 companies operating under the umbrella of Boydak Holding⁵. What does the presence of the Boydak family, as a strong local establishment, mean for the local ethos of the city? As Doğan (2005, pp.105-9) indicated, the Boydak's existence brings important material benefits to other families. For instance, as Özcan (2008, p.23) indicated, *ev oturmaları* (home gatherings) are the most effective instrument of socialization for these local families and these gatherings act as useful venues for discussing economic actions and strategies (Özcan 2008, p.23). Eighty percent of respondents to the survey claimed that family linkages and interdependencies organize and discipline business relations in Kayseri.

This claim may imply that Kayseri's economic success can be linked to the efforts mobilized through closely-knit families who socialize economic decisions and can collectivize their actions. The stability of the demographic conditions also requires attention, however. Unlike Gaziantep and Eskişehir, Kayseri has a very low rate of in-migration⁶. The disciplinary and regulatory impact of local institutions in Kayseri also means that economic decisions are made collectively. In Kayseri, 72% of the respondents indicated that they avoided using bank credit since interest payments were forbidden in Islam. When they ran into financial difficulty they generally borrowed money from family and other kin. Nevertheless, these social dynamics do not always operate on the inclusion side of the spectrum. As Bazzal (2004) identified, economic and political interests that lay outside the local family centred coalitions are doomed to be excluded and forced to survive without societal embeddedness.

Family ties also play an important role in embedding Gaziantep's economic relations. In Gaziantep, the Konukoğlu family owns SANKO Holding, the largest economic establishment in Kayseri which employs more than 125,000 workers. In terms of philanthropy, well-established local families, such as the Konukoğlu and Nakıpoğlu families⁷, engage in philanthropic activities; the scope of these activities is more modest than in Kayseri. Abdulkadir Konukoğlu states that it is their responsibility, a responsibility with strong historical roots, to support Antebians. Recently, the foundation established

³ Surveys were administered in each city to make comparisons among different forms of institutional embeddedness and examine the role of culture in empowering city-based growth projects. The surveys, comprised of eighteen questions, pertained to the analytical categories of institutional embeddedness: social/cultural embeddedness, network embeddedness and territorial embeddedness.

⁴ Many enterprises including Istikbal, Bellona, Merkez Çelik, Boyteks, Boydak Foreign Trade, and Boytaş were established by the Boydak family, who were among the founding partners of HES Cable Systems, and united under Boydak Holding. Hacilar District is of crucial importance to Turkish political life since there are many Hacilar-born politician and statesmen, such as the current President Abdullah Gül.

⁵ Daily Radikal Newspaper, Dossier on Rising Anatolian Cities: Kayseri Case – June 14th, 2007.

⁶ Turkish Statistical Institute, http://www.tuik.gov.tr/AltKategori.do?ust_id=9.

⁷ Osman Nakıpoğlu and his family own one of the 500 largest companies in Turkey.

in memory of Sani Konukoğlu provided assistance to 1,200 university students and financed the establishment of fourteen schools, stadiums, and emergency health centres. As in Kayseri, 90% of survey respondents indicated that family businesses are vital for the “moral” economy. In fact, “moral” is a very loaded term for the respondents, for when we requested clarification, 75% pointed out that family enterprises belong to the city and contribute to its development rather than transferring profits to other places. The difference between local capitalists and international capital that has invested in the city was striking. Respondents underlined that while foreign capital is concerned only with profit and lacks any moral attachment to the city, it is not the same for Gaziantep-born investors. According to respondents, family owned enterprises are aware that employing more local labour and contributing to the city economy is vital. Therefore, morality implies attachment and emotional connection to the locality. This perspective resembles Kayseri, in the sense that the economic dominance of locally powerful families in economy and family-owned SMEs reveal that economic activity is embedded in societal structures, which not only regulate and organize business life, but also envision a “fair” market system from the perspective of respondents. It is important to note that this is how these firms identify themselves and their functions within the local economy and as will be illustrated, the role of societal embeddedness does not only entail increasing effectiveness of economic transactions and helping collectivize the commercial interests of the leading capitalists, but it also creates an insurmountable burden on certain social groups. Furthermore, as Bedirhanoglu and Yalman (2009, p.16) noted, heavy reliance on family enterprises can be problematic under certain circumstances, as owners depend intensively on family ties and refrain from building corporate culture.

To understand the role of families in embedding markets, in Gaziantep, it is important to recognize the socio-historical and cultural practices that help better decipher forms of societal and cultural embeddedness. The first form of societal and cultural embeddedness is the tradition of *tesanütçülük* (a kind of ombudsmanship). This tradition is closely related to what survey results indicated regarding the disciplining of business life and markets. This tradition is an example of how markets and market-based economic activities are embedded in socially and culturally “invisible” codes and traditions. The *Tesanüt* tradition is one of these inter-subjective practices of embedding markets into historical cultural traditions (Arolat & Bozkurt, 2009, pp.56-58). The *Tesanütçülük* tradition is the social practice which most closely resembles the role of Islam in Kayseri and is the most visible materialization of societal embeddedness without an Islamic connotation. Rather than simply solving problems among different actors and building

consensus, the *tesanütçü* is responsible for inducing other actors that their actions and strategies should conform to the “common good” and benefit of the whole society. In certain cases, the *tesanütçü* identifies people who are in need of support and initiates support for these families. In fact, the word *tesanüt* means solidarity and *tesanütçü* thus refers to a person who works to sustain networks of solidarity. This mechanism of cultural solidarity becomes functional through the generosity of locally strong families. In part because of prominent families, the *tesanüt* tradition, and the search for and identification of those in need of financial support and assistance, this societal tradition remains a mobilizing instrument for certain social and economic interests through the *ad hoc* compensation. In certain cases, if a worker is no longer able to work, the *tesanütçü* identifies his/her family and regular income is granted to the family.⁸ In cases such as death, the *tesanütçü* uses his/her network to generate support.

Sani Konukoğlu, the founder of the SANKO Holding and his son, Abdulkadir Konukoğlu, the current head of the company and head of the Gaziantep Chamber of Industry (GSO) congress, reflect the practices of *tesanütçülük*. Media interviews with representatives of the Nakipoğlu family reveal what is understood as *tesanütçü* differs from the historical understandings encountered in the local newspapers and municipal archives. The interviewees indicated that the idea is still functional, but due to the rise in population, it is relatively limited. It was also argued that now the *tesanütçü* tradition is a mechanism to create solidarity among the people that you “know”.

In comparison to Kayseri and Gaziantep, the role of local families in Eskişehir is rather limited although there are prominent local families such as the Sarar family, which own Sarar Holding, employing more than 25,000 workers. Similarly, the Kanatlı family and the Zeytinoğlu family are well-known and well-entrenched in Eskişehir. Unlike in Kayseri and Eskişehir, however, these families are closer to the socio-economic and ideological profile of Istanbul-based holding companies than to the conservative family style that exists in Kayseri and Gaziantep.

The results of both the surveys and semi-structured interviews suggest that the role of religion and conservative social values in Eskişehir is also quite limited. In fact, the institutional dynamics and societal representations forged around religious conservatism in cities like Kayseri and Konya are viewed as a threat in Eskişehir as 85% of respondents perceived conservatism as social repression. Consequently, unlike the examples of family-based forms of sustaining social solidarity through charity in cities like Kayseri and Gaziantep, in Eskişehir, there are more institutionalized forms of support, such as

⁸ Gaziantep Municipal Library Archival Research.

the central role of a social democrat controlled municipal government rather than families building schools or dormitories for the students in need. This was especially true under the Büyükerşen administration, which developed more systematic and municipally administered social programs such as food/coal distribution, establishment of housing units for the homeless, training programs for the low-income segments and support to under-privileged students.

Broadly, the social and cultural embedding of markets and business in Eskişehir contrasts sharply to that in Kayseri and Gaziantep. According to a study by Bialasiewicz (2006), societal embeddedness in the Anatolian cities also maintained significant social asymmetries and burden, which was mostly borne by the workers. Detrimental side of embeddedness manifests itself in varying forms and degrees. For instance, the casual employment in Kayseri and Gaziantep has remained higher than the national average. At the same time, unionization levels in Kayseri and Gaziantep remained significantly below national figures in the post-1990s period. Low unionization rates and increasing casualization suggest that Kayseri and Gaziantep benefited considerably from labour exploitation. In Eskişehir, however, unionization rates remained higher due in part to the higher number of publicly owned enterprises such as Turkish Locomotive and Motor Industry Corporation (TÜLOMSAŞ) and partly due to the reluctance of the social democratic mayor and key industrialists to resort to employing casual labour. The most visible societal manifestation of casualization and de-unionization of workers was the practice of worker exchange. Local factory owners, particularly within the Organized Industrial Zones, often resorted to “borrowing” workers during peak production periods. Thus, these factories were able to satisfy their need for extra labour through close relationships with other capitalists⁹. Generally, although the success of these firms is attributed to social and cultural embeddedness, the implications of the lack of fair regulation in the local labour market are evident in these trends.

2.2 Territorial Embeddedness

Territorial embeddedness refers to the city identities, in other words, the extent to which an actor is anchored in a particular territory or place. This type of embeddedness

refers to the extent to which an actor is anchored in a particular territory or place. In Anatolia, territorial embeddedness manifests as strong “city identities”. Many of the businessmen surveyed noted that their primary motivation was to improve their city. Economic actors become embedded in the city in which they live and work, and in some cases, become constrained by the economic activities and social dynamics that already exist in those places. When the attachment to the locality is strong it can increase the efficiency of cooperation and coordination among businesspeople and help to mobilize their philanthropic agendas. Serving the homeland or the “*ata toprağı*” (ancestor land), is perceived as altruistic and connections to the city are reinforced through the willingness to better serve this land (Bedirhanoglu and Yalman, 2009, p.13). Prominent local families interviewed for this research repeatedly noted that they chose to stay in their home city rather than move to Istanbul or other metropolises because of their attachment to the city. Through the survey and the semi-structured interviews, multiple indicators of territorial embeddedness were collected such as reinvesting profit in the city rather than looking for opportunities in other localities, a duty to contribute to the city as a pay back to their ancestors, such as the city history.

Territorial embeddedness manifests itself most often through economic decisions, which express local entrepreneurs’ intention to stay in their home cities and employ local labour rather than to look for opportunities in other cities. In Kayseri, for instance, 85% of survey respondents indicated that investing in a neighbouring city, such as Nevşehir, Yozgat or Sivas is not a consideration. Similarly, many entrepreneurs preferred to invest in Kayseri because of family traditions and historical attachment, “to make the motherland fresh and shiny”¹⁰. These emotional sentiments reveal that the duty of contributing to the “homeland” is seen as virtuous and differentiates between a “good” Kayserian and “bad” Kayserian. The profile of Kayserian entrepreneurs also supports this claim: 94% of entrepreneurs in Kayseri are Kayseri-born and 78% of them are carrying on their fathers’ businesses (The Chamber for Mechanical Engineers, 2007). Entrepreneurs are attached to their current locality by their family links and background. The downside is that, for immigrants from other provinces it is not easy to obtain credibility in the market. Our interviews in Kayseri revealed that Kurdish immigrants and immigrants from other cities often encountered difficulties in finding employment¹¹.

In Gaziantep, territorial embeddedness is similar in that local families and family owned SMEs choose to stay and re-invest in their cities rather than search

⁹ The fason production style has been a source of dynamism for these capitalists. Fason production generally refers to the informal knowledge transfer among local capitalists where the low technological content of production allows them to copy one to another. Fason production also involves the main producer (capital owner) assisting “trustable” and “hard-working” co-workers to establish their own *ateliers*, mostly by assisting with small machinery and capital. Most of these new establishments in turn benefited from unpaid family labour. These relationships among local capitalists and between local capitalists and workers can be characterized as a solidaristic type of industry type, albeit with a serious societal burden.

¹⁰ Interview with Nihat Molu, Erdal Çınar and Hüsametin Toprak.

¹¹ Interviews with Minibus Drivers in Melikgazi and Kocasinan Districts.

for alternative locales for investment. Unlike Kayseri, however, the rising immigrant population in Gaziantep has led some entrepreneurs to invest in neighbouring cities, such as Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman and Kahramanmaraş, which benefited from state support especially during the 1990s and 2000s through subsidized energy consumption. Tax incentives provided serious inducements for some Antebian entrepreneurs to transfer some of their production units to these cities. Such relocations, however, constitute a small portion. In the survey conducted, 90% of local entrepreneurs stated that their primary investments are in Gaziantep. Fifteen per cent stated that they established joint companies with their neighbouring counterparts.

In contrast to Kayseri, attachment to the territory has strong connections to Gaziantep's "veteran city" status¹². In Gaziantep, the survey, semi-structured interviews and the findings from the local newspaper archives reflect an interesting aspect of territorial embeddedness. In the survey, 68% of respondents indicated that given the absence of a social and caring state, the attachment of local entrepreneurs to their home city and the desire of local workers to contribute to the city engender a special connection. Respondents claimed that they perceive their presence as the only source that sustains city livelihoods. Abdulkadir Konukoğlu explains his family's role in Gaziantep by stressing that the name has become almost synonymous with the name of the city - in the last 100 years they have invested considerable earnings back into the city by building factories, schools, and hospitals. For instance, he declared that "when we have money, we invest in the city, we love the sounds of the working machines, the factories..."¹³ This perspective is crystallized through the rhetoric based on the local families' central role for the cities investigated. Often local families view themselves as immensely dedicated to the local communities. This picture, however, fails to capture socio-economic asymmetries and various forms of worker exploitation, who are, in the words of Bialasiewicz (2006), the "real architects" of the Anatolian cities' economic boom in Turkey. Moreover, these family firms provide unregulated financial support for the local public to prove their "dedication" to their homeland, thus rendering the Welfare State secondary and making the unionization less relevant. This may have negative implications for the long term as such support is not binding, and may therefore be inconsistent.

Numerous stories in the local newspapers refer to the well-known Gaziantep Chamber of Industry motto,

"Turkey in the World, Gaziantep in Turkey" (www.gso.org.tr, accessed 19 December 2012). This motto is one of many examples indicating that local entrepreneurs and workers see the success of the city as the success of the nation and *vice versa*. In this sense, what creates local economic success, generating economic development and employment is the power of local families, such as the Konukoğlu family. The existence of these families therefore replaces the need for the state as a social and economic institution, establishing a formal relationship with the citizens. The local families are regarded as *pseudo* state. Hence, the relationship between the local public and the territory is sustained through the power of these families.

While some of these practices are broader, such as distributing food on a regular basis, providing shelter and generating employment, in some instances, the way territorial attachment is sustained involves more specific and exclusionary arrangements. For instance, in the case of the Nakipoğlu family and their Naksan Holding, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Cahit Nakipoğlu, initiated a project, which aimed to provide affordable housing for the employees¹⁴. Employees were provided with low-interest mortgage loans. This could be seen as a particularly strong example, a special bond between the employers and employees in Gaziantep, but it is possible to come across similar reciprocal, "non-economic" arrangements in other family owned enterprises. The commonality is the idea of territorial attachment, both on the side of capitalists and workers.

In Eskişehir, territorial embeddedness emerges through "*Eskisehirlilik*" (sense of belonging to Eskişehir), as a form of city identity. While it is evident that the existence of a city identity emerged in the other cities investigated, in *Eskisehirlilik* identity is that it is rooted neither in the existence of locally powerful families engaging in philanthropy, nor historical events which engendered strong nationalist discourses. In Eskişehir, unlike Kayseri and Gaziantep, locally prominent families are not generally viewed as *de facto* "state" as a result of their donations, foundations, and employment creation. Here, although the winners may acknowledge that they need to reciprocate and "pay back" the city because of their opportunities and good fortune, *Eskisehirlilik* means that they are to do so by good citizens, paying taxes, fostering city dynamism, and supporting of art and other activities in the city. Thus, territorial embeddedness in Eskişehir reflects an indirect relationship between local entrepreneurs and city inhabitants, whereas in Kayseri and Gaziantep, prominent families engender this relationship through everyday life, by providing direct and tangible benefits to the local people. When survey results are analysed, 70% of respondents indicated that the major determinant of economic success is the amount of tax paid

¹² While serving the homeland with strong nationalist feelings and with a national duty is verbalized by 73% of respondents, half of them revealed that serving the city is in modern times (referring to 1990s and 2000s) more urgent than ever because of the increasing Kurdish population. In this sense, territorial attachment to the city represents attachment to the secular nationalism and the "Antep defense" during the War of Independence is often cited in the interviews as the basis of patriotism.

¹³ Interview with Abdulkadir Konukoğlu.

¹⁴ Interview with Cahit Nakipoğlu.

to the government. It is not a coincidence that when top-100 tax payers are announced each year in January, local televisions and newspapers in Eskişehir produce extensive coverage and glorification of the leading tax payers¹⁵.

Unlike in Kayseri and Gaziantep, entrepreneurs are not opposed to investing in neighbouring cities. For instance, the Eskişehir Chamber of Industry (ESO) president indicated that “the local industrialists used to consider other neighbouring cities’ organized industrial zones (OIZ), but now everybody wants to stay in Eskişehir[’s] OIZ.” Özyadınlı’s claim suggests that local industrialists in Eskişehir are not as strict as their counterparts in Gaziantep and Kayseri, but would consider moving and relocating their activities in accordance with market incentives.

Territorial embeddedness, however, often had to constrain and repressing effects on the workers. Workers in Gaziantep and Kayseri reveal a discomfort with the increase of the Kurdish population in the city. Interviewees often referred to the concept of “city nationalism” or “regional nationalism” to imply that national unity in Gaziantep suggests a conception in which Gaziantep’s peculiar historical trajectory has led to a search for solidarity that unites different actors for the betterment of the city. Despite the differences in terminology, whether respondents invoked city nationalism, regional nationalism or national unity, all referred to the shared value of patriotism, with reference to Gaziantep’s heroic past. This rhetoric contains some important ambiguities leading to questions such as whose nationalism, whose common good, whose city nationalism. In this context, a different version of social exclusion based on territorial forms of attachment persists in the cities of Anatolia. For instance, ultra-nationalist labour unions in Kayseri, as in Gaziantep, have become visible during the miracle.

The reactionary actions taken by Eğitim-Sen, a nationalist labour union in Kayseri reflect this discontent (Kayseri 38 Local Newspaper, year?). Two oppositional activities organized in downtown Kayseri in 2009, in front of the Republican Square, suggest that urban space in Kayseri, is also a space of contestation. At the beginning of these gatherings Eğitim-Sen representatives began by distributing halva in accordance with the traditions around the souls of the dead (Kayseri 38 Local Newspaper year?). This time, however, specific remembrance was made for the soul of Adolf Hitler to protest Israel’s attacks on Palestine. The second gathering was a nationalistic response to the Armenian Prime Minister, who was invited to Kayseri for a soccer game, as a diplomatic maneuver to ameliorate relations between Turkey and Armenia (Kayseri City Portal). These demonstrations confirm that based on the findings of liveability indices (CNBC-e Business Magazine 2008-2012) published annually, Kayseri ranks poorly as a result of decreasing levels of tolerance, the

recognition of differences, and low possibility of co-existence. The difficulty of non-Kayserian labor to attain employment in Kayseri, hostility towards non-conservative forms of life, ethnic discrimination against non-Kayserian entrepreneurs were identified as the main sources of city-nationalism by the interviewees. In Gaziantep, the primary source of conflict stems from the flood of Kurdish and Arab populations into the city. More recently, especially Gaziantep has been witnessing negative consequences of city-nationalism in articulation with the triumphing regional instability in the Middle East. For It has been reported by many local newspapers that antagonism towards the Kurdish population has become more overt particularly after the march against the Kurdish population to protest the bombings in the city centre (Açık Gazete, 23-08-2012).

2.3 Network Embeddedness

Finally, network embeddedness describes networks of both formal and informal actors. For cities which benefit from strong societal/cultural and territorial forms of embeddedness, networking can be an end result of these relationships and interdependencies. Network embeddedness benefits from the informal links, mutual trust and solidaristic relationships among its members. The source of network embeddedness thus depends on the other forms of embeddedness. The strength of societal embeddedness, in Kayseri and Gaziantep with well-established local families, and the strong connection between families and between families and workers, are important sources of network building. In Gaziantep, attachment to the city, the social memories of the veteran city — in other words, the territorial embeddedness of actors — is instrumental to collectivizing the interests of the economic actors to better serve the city, where serving the city is seen as a duty, inherited from ancestors who fought for the soil of Gaziantep. This duty is important to accomplish so that the wealth created is being returned to the Antebians, rather than immigrants.

In Kayseri, conservative outlooks and Islamic identity represent the most important source of networking along with *ev oturmaları* (home gatherings) and other cultural practices mentioned earlier. For instance, the Boydaks often consult with each other, lend and borrow, develop new partnerships and make philanthropic decisions in the company of Özhaseki who has been mayor of Kayseri Metropolitan Municipality since 1998. It is not coincidental that the Boydak’s (and therefore Kayseri’s) most distinct economic boom took place under the ongoing Özhaseki administration. In addition to the joint businesses established between the Boydak family and Özhaseki, both share a strong adherence to capitalist values. In a press interview, Özhaseki declared that the municipality is like his own “firm”. “We administer here as we work in our firms and try to make profit to improve and make new investments.” In another interview, he

¹⁵ Various local newspapers and television channels.

reiterated this mentality: “We govern our municipality as a modern business, thus, as I tried to reduce expenditures stemming from over-employment in my own business, I do not let to over-employment in this municipality. Instead of enlargement in size, I prefer to buy services at auction, which would be less costly” (Aksiyon, 2005, p.33).

Özhaseki’s municipal administration is an example of a local government internalizing market-based practices and implementing policies through privileging market-based interests over societal ones. Privatization of local transport systems, new zoning regulations to implement urban generation projects in certain districts and relocation of certain social groups, provision incentives for the implementation of “income-generating” projects despite their social consequences, reflect the plethora of market-based policies implemented in this period. These market-based policies resemble what Gough (2002, p.407) referred to as “forms of urban socialization”.

Where the relations between the municipality/local government and Kayseri’s industrial base are concerned, the role of the Kayseri Chamber of Industry (KAYSO)¹⁶, as another key actor, deserves attention. This organization is a crucial part of the network capacity of the Boydak family and other industrialists of Kayseri, Mustafa Boydak¹⁷. The institutional activities of KAYSO reflect the intensification of assistance to Kayseri’s SMEs in orienting their exporting activities. In addition, bilateral agreements with other Chambers of Industry in Europe, Asia and elsewhere reveal that KAYSO plays a key role in bolstering the exporting potential of the city through the new partnerships and opportunities.

The scope of activities and missions of KAYSO reflects the ambitions of the conservative Islamic network pioneered by the Boydaks, KAYSO does not operate an open/voluntary membership system where all entrepreneurs and SME representatives benefit equally from the joint efforts centred on the Boydak family. For instance, the SMEs of Alevi¹⁸ and Kurdish entrepreneurs (who are mostly migrants in Kayseri) are largely excluded from harnessing the community-based efforts.

As Mark Granovetter states, “many business groups have some sense of identity based on common social bonds” (2005, p.433). In Kayseri, Islam is the common social bond that provides a sense of identity and the leading members of this coalition, KAYSO, Boydak Family and the Kayseri Young Industrialists and

Businesspeople Association [GESIAD] gain strength through the networks based on religious values. By utilizing Islam as social capital and trust, shared Islamic values create “a ‘powerful network based upon trust-relations’ among Islamic economic actors” (Keyman and Koyuncu, 2005, p.117). Emin Baki Adaş provides additional evidence for Islam as a form of social capital: due to shared Islamic values and trust stemming from these shared values, the networks and solidarity among Islamic firms are more developed than others. They involve joint investments, borrowing money from each other and joint purchase of machinery, industrial inputs and other commodities in order to reduce costs and survive in a highly competitive globalized economy (Adaş, 2006). Thus, Islam as a common bond functions as the key element by engendering cooperation and collaboration among small or medium-sized organization” (Çemrek, 2002; Buğra, 1999; Öniş, 1997).

In Gaziantep, networking power has been sustained through the collaboration and coordination between Abdulkadir Konukoğlu head of SANKO Holding, and head of the Congress, Nejat Koçer, President of the GSO, Mehmet Arslan, President of GSO and Asım Güzelbey, municipal leader. Hence the institutional collaboration between the Gaziantep Greater Municipality (local state representation), GSO (as a non-state actor representing interests of local industrialists) and the Gaziantep Young Businesspeople Association (GAGİAD)¹⁹ and Abdulkadir Konukoğlu, the influential local businessman who pioneered the foundation of Gaziantep Economic Development Foundation (GAGEV). GAGEV was founded in the mid-1990s, during Gaziantep’s taking-off phase, and played a decisive role in attaining an institutionalized and organized collective capacity. The organization was indicative of territorial embeddedness, as it acquired collective capacity by demonstrating that actors could work together for the sake of making Gaziantep a more competitive city. At the same time, GAGEV has helped to forge the institutional framework required for urban actors to collaborate in pursuit of their capitalist interests (Özcan, 2000). In this sense, GAGEV has been an important initiative for merging the historically established potential of the city with the interests of contemporary actors and their networks (Özcan, 2000).

Like territorial embeddedness discussed above, network embeddedness sustained through the institutionalization of GAGEV reflects certain exclusionary tendencies. The major beneficiary of

¹⁶ Tradesmen and industrialists operating in Kayseri were united under the framework of the Kayseri Chamber of Trade and Industry until 1966.

¹⁷ Along with Mustafa Boydak’s presence, the contribution of other Boydak family members in the Chamber of Industry is significant. For the complete organizational structure of KAYSO, please see www.kayso.org.tr.

¹⁸ Alevi refers to the community of Shia Muslims in the Anatolia region. The Alevi constitute the second largest religious community in Turkey (following the Sunnis). The religion of the Alevi, though to some extent Islamicised, differs considerably from Sunni Islam.

¹⁹ GAGİAD can be seen as a supportive institution to GSO in the sense that GAGİAD has become the place where the leaders of these chambers are educated and prepared for leadership. GAGİAD is another organization through which we have the opportunity to observe how “common reason” articulates itself to the city’s institutional fabric.

Gaziantep’s experience with globalization has been the coalition established around the GSO, Gaziantep Chamber of Trade (GTO), GAGİAD, Gaziantep Municipality and Abdulkadir Konukoğlu (*tesanütçü*). Other economic interests, economic actors with more conservative Islamic backgrounds, benefited from the process, but to a lesser extent. These interests coalesced around the Nakipoğlu family. In terms of institutions, the emergence of the Gaziantep Inter Solidarity Young Businesspeople Association (GAPGIAD), Gaziantep Free Industrialists and Businesspeople Association (HÜRSIAD) and Gaziantep Independent Industrialists and Businesspeople Association (MÜSIAD), while minor organizations, collectivized the interests of local religious entrepreneurs. As the existence of these different institutional fractions illustrate, divergences among conservative religious businesspeople in Gaziantep creates a weaker institutional context. This is in stark contrast to Kayseri, where conservative religious business networks are the dominant mode of institutionalizing forms of embeddedness.

In Eskişehir, network embeddedness was attained in the post-1980s era through two key players: (a) Büyükerşen and his municipal vision; and (b) the city’s key local industrialists, including the Sarar family, Özyaydınlı family, Kanatlı Family and Zeytinoğlu family. In terms of the former, the city has benefited considerably from the manifestation of social democratic ideals in its urban space. Mayor Büyükerşen led took part in several initiatives that sought to realize social democratic ideals and objectives, including promoting collaboration between actors and providing the foundations for reorganizing industrial structures in Eskişehir. Along with members of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and leading industrialist families, Yılmaz Büyükerşen initiated the dividing of the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Industry into two separate bodies to bring further dynamism to the city economy and foster greater professionalization of both chambers. As Bayırbağ (2007) explained in the case of Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Industry experienced institutional separation in 1987, and as can be seen in the case of Eskişehir, this separation was a crucial milestone that allowed industrial and commercial interests to be defined separately. This was especially crucial for local industrialists who had closer linkages with the state. In contrast, commercial capitalists were less attuned to state interests. Their objective was to increase their national competitiveness because under the import substitution strategy, exporting opportunities were almost non-existent, with the system considerably favouring industrialists. The institutional manifestations of this separation of commercial and industrial interests led to two strong local capitalist formations. While not necessarily in conflict, these formations were in search of different trajectories.

Following the separation, Büyükerşen, along with leading economic actors and members of the Chamber

like Mümtaz Zeytinoğlu and Orhan Erden, initiated the “Social Industry Manifesto” [*Topluma Dönük Sanayici Bildirgesi*], a guiding document for Eskişehir, which outlined industrial and political-economic path of the city (Taşçı, 2009, p.212). The Manifesto touched upon several issues such as a common market of the European Union, taxation policies based on social justice, the promotion of industrialization, union rights, and fair income distribution (Taşçı, 2009, p.213). According to Büyükerşen, this initiative, which was based on strong social democratic ideals, proposed a socialist approach to the current political and economic dilemmas (Taşçı, 2009, p.213). Industrialists in the city, who supported the Manifesto, found themselves at odds with the commercial capitalists, who were contesting the import substitution strategy and the national development model, and instead supported an export-oriented economic model based on trade liberalization and foreign investment.²⁰ The state’s industrial strategies were not helpful to the commercial capitalists. Therefore, their only viable route was to orient their trade to international markets. Furthermore, ESO, through the “Social Industry Manifesto,” was a strong proponent of a nationally-oriented industrial strategy, opposing Turkey’s engagement with the European Union and participation in the Custom Union’s Agreement.

Under the leadership of Sarar family, the ETO laid out a comprehensive plan for Eskişehir’s economy in the post-2000 period. The preparation of this plan was a result of collaboration between the ETO and ESO though the Eskişehir Municipality was also very supportive. From a broader perspective, this initiative can be seen as a milestone in the implementation of market-based policies. The plan not only prescribed increasing the privatization of municipal services, increasing the provision of auction-based services, and granting more publicly-owned land to developers in order to construct additional consumption-oriented multi-purpose malls, but also, in more general terms, designing strategies for adapting to changing global economic conditions and further implementing the liberalization of the economy.

In a way, ESO and ETO were dissatisfied with the level of openness in the Turkish economy, and pointed out that the nation-state should more actively help them to benefit from the fruits of globalization. The leaders of both organizations believed that further liberalization of the economy and sustainable growth would be possible through better incentives and support mechanisms in both cities. Both the ESO and ETO envisioned two types

²⁰ From the perspective of commercial capitalists, including the most well known out of Eskişehir, the Sarar Group, the liberalization efforts and policies of the Özal government and the January 24, 1983 decisions marked a critical cornerstone in Turkish economic life. Commercial capitalists, like Sarar pushed for market centred reforms because, as he argued in the interview, the state had been effective in building a domestic industrial bourgeoisie since the 1970s through the formation of organized industrial zones.

of state behaviour: one that is more attuned to the urban scale and provides a well-functioning economic incentive schedule and one in which the state would alleviate all impediments to the implementation of a liberal trade system, to help local capitalists better integrate into the world economy. The ETO and its president Cemalettin Sarar more ardently advocated this latter vision.

While the role of the state in the perception of local capitalists is quite apparent, it is important to note that the degree of collectivization among them is less systematic. The head of ESO, Özyaydemir, noted that unlike Kayseri, Konya and Gaziantep, the ability of Eskisehir entrepreneurs to collaborate and “do something” is low.²¹ This suggests that the forms of embeddedness hold less power in Eskisehir but network effectiveness is sustained through other factors, such as the role of a mayor, with a strong networking power, and institutionalization of social democratic ideals.

3. BROADER IMPLICATIONS

The investigation of three Anatolian cities from societal, territorial and network embeddedness perspectives provides valuable insights into how urban economic and social transformations do not occur independently of national state policy. As our investigation shows there are clear links between national state policy and the urban growth phases of these Anatolian cities. We also demonstrate that these economic and social transformations occur independently of societal embeddedness that is supposedly the main factor of these cities’ success. In other words, the impact of social and cultural conditions is significantly influenced by structural reforms and social policies. Furthermore, the exploration of these cities also sheds light on the inconsistencies between the positive shared values expressed by the interviewees and what is actually happening in the cities. There is, however, a stark difference between the way economic growth stories are portrayed in rhetoric (locally and nationally) and the reality of the booming cities of Anatolia region. Some members of the “community” who engage in an effort to make the city more competitive end up with an asymmetric relationship to the end product economic “miracles.” In other words, different actors very often derive unequal benefits during the economic growth experiences of the Anatolian cities. In this vein, family holdings, for instance, have most often been the primary “winners” of new prosperity while other social groups, such as the workers who form the production bases of the cities, especially those without any social protection, become the “invisible” architects, and ultimately the “losers”, in this process.

This observation resembles Bialasiewicz’s (2006) study of regional economic development in the Veneto region in

Italy that highlights the links between the transformations in Veneto’s production landscapes and an increasingly exclusionary identity politics. In other words, Bialasiewicz warns us that local networks of trust, and the embeddedness of local economic development that paves the way for local economic miracles, also have dark sides. Likewise, Clark et al. (2004) presented doubts about the value of regional development strategies that rely exclusively upon clusters and embeddedness in the face of globalization. While globalization placed a premium on the adjustment capacities of SMEs and helped local economies flourish through unprecedented economic growth, it is also evident that the same processes lead to more vulnerability. This article reveals how economic growth and increasing vulnerability took place in variegated channels in the cities of Anatolia as the nature of embeddedness changed from one locality to another. Despite higher levels of economic growth; enhancing labour productivity, innovation and increasing technology content of exports have also varied across different cities, Eskişehir being the forerunner, whereas Kayseri and Gaziantep could not translate local economy based on low technology content production to emulating higher technology. It is crucial to note that labour-intensive industries leveraged the economies of these cities but it was not based on a sustainable growth pattern as advancing economic growth did not produce a trickle-down effect. Furthermore, it allowed for societally devastating practices.

In this study, it is also clear that membership in the community is not necessarily based on rights, freedoms or tolerance of differences of any kind. Rather, the collective spirit has likely benefited from the repression of certain social groups including factory workers, seasonal workers, informal workers and immigrants. As we have seen, while there has been economic growth, rising export levels and economic dynamism, the dark side of the “Anatolian” miracles has manifested in exploitation, social exclusion and an asymmetric distribution of wealth.

From a policy perspective, the rapid growth of these cities requires even more careful consideration. The definition of ‘success’ matters a great deal in formulating fair state policies in the areas of development and structural reform. For instance, if societal and territorial embeddedness are taken for granted without consideration of the equity effects for certain social groups, the implications of the growth of these cities are likely to lead to mis-guided development policies. This may, in turn, result in certain social norms being an important factor in social policy, perhaps irrevocably.

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²¹ Interview with Savaş Özyaydemir.

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