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"Everywhere Is Taksim": The Politics of Public Space from Nation-Building to Neoliberal Islamism and Beyond

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Abstract

This article discusses the politics of public space through the particular example of Taksim Square in Istanbul. Tracing Taksim's history since the early twentieth century, the article analyzes the instrumentalization of public space in nation-building, the socialization of politics within the context of postwar rapid urbanization, and the (re)politicization of public space under neoliberal Islamism. Finally it arrives at an assessment of the nation-wide antigovernment protests that centered on Taksim Square in May–June 2013. Throughout this historical examination, the politics of public space is discussed with reference to the work of Henri Lefebvre, in order to scrutinize the spatial aspects of the relation between state and society. Accordingly, the rise of democratic public space is defined as a result of the mutual interaction between two bottom-up impetuses; the immanent politics of the social (the political character of everyday life) and the socialization of the political (civil political action).

Keywords

public space, right to the city, banal politicization, Taksim Sqaure, Gezi Park

The last days of May 2013 witnessed an unprecedented event in Istanbul. What began as a simple environmentalist protest grew rapidly and spread across the country as a result of police brutality faced by the small group of activists. It all began with the appearance of dozers in Gezi Parkı (literally "esplanade"), the seventy-year-old park adjacent to Taksim Square, the major public space in Istanbul. The government had previously announced a number of projects towards the renewal of the square, which included the pedestrianization of the square (requiring the expansion of streets to be reorganized underground) and the reconstruction of an eighteenth-century building (Artillery Barracks), which had been demolished for the construction of Gezi Parkı. While the street work would cost a few trees along the side of the street, the reconstruction of the Barracks would mean the total destruction of the park. Activists resisting the operation camped in the park to obstruct the construction work. The next few days witnessed police raids on the encampment and finally the evacuation of the park by the police. However, the protests turned

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Figure 1. Signboards in Kızılay Square overwritten "Taksim."

into a small-scale riot in and around Taksim, spreading into the streets. After May 31, the riots spread to other cities and drew attention from international media.

The square was occupied by the protestors during the first two weeks of June (together with the central squares of other major cities), until its evacuation by the police. During this time, Taksim Square became the heart of the nationwide protests. The centrality of Taksim was probably best expressed with the slogan "Everywhere is Taksim, resistance everywhere." A common scene from the protests was signboards with district names overwritten with the word "Taksim," indicating that every location as well as every destination was Taksim now (Figure 1). While the prevailing clash over Taksim has become a hot topic for political analysts as well as scholars, my intention in this paper can be summed up as simply tracing the very phrase "Everywhere is Taksim": why is it that Taksim continues to be the reference point even though the protests gained antigovernment character across the country? To answer this question, I will discuss the historical transformation(s) of Taksim Square as a major public space throughout the twentieth century. I believe that such discussion is necessary to understand the current political clash in Istanbul.

In the case of the Gezi protests, public space was both the locus and the focus of conflict; it was both the site of political action and the cause that triggered it. In this regard, Taksim presents an interesting case that could enrich our understanding of the politics of public space, especially in regards to the spatial manifestations of state-society relations. As I will detail below, state

control denying ethnic and political differences was a constitutive element in the making of Taksim and it was a major dynamics to be contested in its later history. Political action contesting state domination reproduced itself in the public space where the transgressive character of everyday life weakened it. That is, public space was produced not in a dichotomy of state control versus resistant political action, but was mediated by the mundane practices of urban daily life. Thus, public space cannot be reduced to either the political symbolisms it embodies, or the everyday life it accommodates. Rather, the politics of public space, as I will trace through the history of Taksim, comprises these two components and this juxtaposition is also the key to understand the recent clashes in Istanbul.

Below I will discuss the history of the Square in three main phases: its instrumentalization for nation-building in the early republican years; the rise of democratic public space through the socialization of politics and its subsequent suppression within the Cold War context; and finally the recent history of the Square under the influence of neoliberal Islamism. I will arrive at an evaluation of the recent clashes over the Square and what they mean in terms of contemporary politics of public space.

Unfolding Public Space

City squares function as primary public spaces in different parts of the world. They act as key urban nodes where everyday activities coincide with political events. This overlapping leads to the politicization of otherwise mundane daily practices, transforming the city dwellers into political subjects even if they do not directly involve in political actions. The politics of public space has been under scrutiny for the past two decades.[1] While the neoliberal deterioration of public space especially in the Western metropolises via privatizations was a major topic in the 1990s, the first decade of the new millennium witnessed the emergence of global movements against neoliberal capitalism. The use of public spaces by these movements, together with the growing means of surveillance over public space in the post 9/11 era made the politics of public space a favorite research topic.[2]

Hannah Arendt has famously defined public space as "the space of appearance" where individuals appear to each other as active agents.[3] For her, appearance is a signifier of social existence, hence interaction. Henri Lefebvre similarly proposed the concept of "encounter" to define the social character of existence in urban space. There are a few important issues proposed by these two thinkers that are crucial to discussing the spatial character of public sphere. Arendt emphasizes that public space does not always exist; that is, its existence is contingent on the performance of social actors. In addition, she underlines that human existence in public space is always temporary; we cannot live in it all the time. These two statements point to the fact that public spaces require repetitive spatial practices in order to be reproduced. This is in tune with what Lefebvre indicates with the concept of rhythmanalysis.[4] Accordingly, everyday life has a multilayered character, which is a result of the overlapping repetitive cycles that occur in urban space. The same is valid for social events: it is the repetition of such activities in certain spaces that makes them public spaces in collective memory. Then, public space is defined by, on the one hand repetitive spatial practices of similar kind and on the other, the juxtaposition of social relations of different kind.

Its multilayered nature gives public space political character in two ways. Being a focal point in physical and mental topographies of the city, the public space attracts political action as well. Secondly, the juxtaposition of social and political domains in this way politicizes mundane activities in public space. The political character of public space, in return, inevitably results in the intervention of state power in its (re)production. Here, it is worth mentioning that some scholars have argued that political action precedes public space and is in fact the original constituent of public space.[5] However, my argument here is that, in the case of Taksim, it was the politics of

everyday life that preceded and attracted overt political action. Below I will analyze this complex interplay of politics of public space between state control, everyday life and (resistant) political action through the example of Taksim Square throughout its history.

Public Space in Nation-Building: Politics of the Social

The name Taksim comes from the "Maksem," the water distribution chamber located in the area in the eighteenth century. By the early nineteenth century, there was no settlement beyond today's Taksim, and the area's peripheral character was spatially reflected with the second important structure erected here in the early years of the century. The Artillery Barracks, together with a number of other military structures, marked the city limits and functioned for the defense of the Yıldız and Dolmabahçe palaces built further northeast along the Bosphorus. The vast open space to the west of the barracks was used as a drill field. At the turn of the century, Taksim became an urban joint tying the newly developing areas in the north to the old city via Grand Rue de Pera.

Grand Rue de Pera was the "modern axis" serving as the backbone of Beyoğlu on the northern side of the Golden Horn.[6] The district developed under the influence of non-Muslim bourgeoisie as well as foreign residents.[7] Although the urban historiography of Istanbul traditionally depicted the relation between Stamboul—the historical peninsula—and Beyoğlu in binary opposition with each other (i.e., traditional-modern, Oriental-Western), recent scholarship has shown the validity of the urban spatial dynamics of modernization on both sides of the Golden Horn in mutual interaction.[8]

Nevertheless, the social and cultural significance of the non-Muslim minorities prevailed and proved a crucial determinant of urban life in Beyoğlu. As I will discuss below, this would be a major political challenge to the nation-building process in the early republican years. Perhaps it was the short period of Allied occupation of Istanbul in the wake of WWI (1918–1923) that triggered the rapid politicization of ethnic differences embodied in Beyoğlu. As the memoirs of foreign functionaries testify, Grand Rue de Pera was "the center of gossip" and the best place "to get a good feeling of the day-to-day changes in the temper of the great sprawling city" with its "crowd and chaos."[9] The uncontrollable heterogeneity of the district was a problem for the occupation forces who were concerned not only with the growing resistance of the nationalists based in Ankara and their compatriots in Istanbul but also the Bolshevik spies propagating communist ideas among the British and French soldiers in the Beyoğlu cafés.[10]

For the nationalists, on the other hand, Pera was an object of both love and hate. It had long been the space of social emancipation and a symbol of (modernist) destruction of traditional customs especially for the younger generations of Turkish upper-class families.[11] Hence, it was the locale of modern lifestyle that they desired to spread across the country. Yet Pera was also the seat of the occupation forces resting on a social base of non-Muslims and foreigners settled here. The memory of Greeks and Armenians in British uniform in the streets of Beyoğlu would not fade easily in the upcoming years.[12] As soon as the occupation was over, the British flag at the naval quay was replaced with a very large Turkish flag, and another one was raised at the corner of Grand Rue de Pera and the street leading to the British Embassy.[13] Moreover, Grand Rue de Pera was soon renamed İstiklal (Independence) Street with a gesture to seize the space. Nevertheless, all shops, stores and entertainment facilities were owned by minorities at the time of the proclamation of the republic.[14]

Taksim in the Making

The transformation of the open space in front of the Maksem wall (Figure 2a) into Taksim Square occurred through the spontaneous growth of certain activities as an extension of İstiklal Street and the intentional implementation of others by the state to mark it as a symbol of

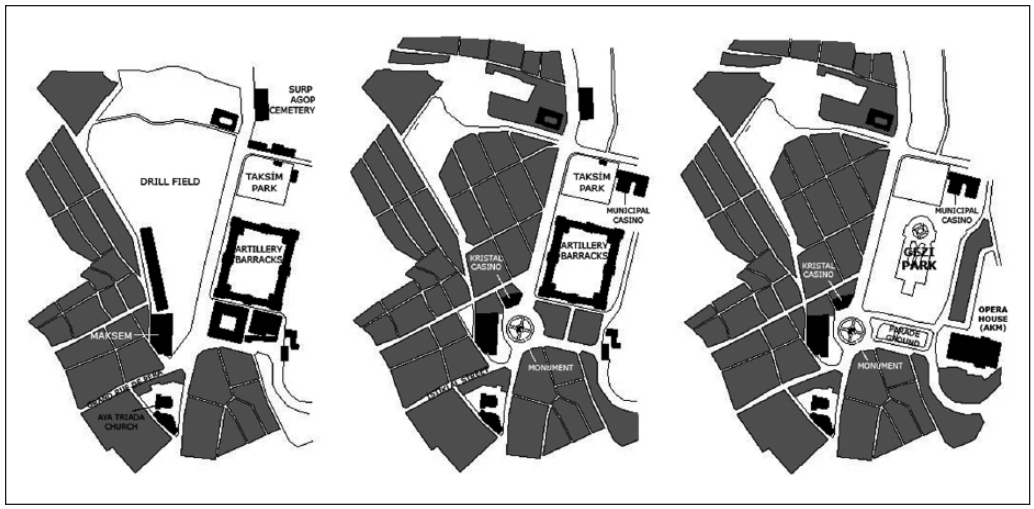

Figure 2. Taksim Square in (a) early 1920s, (b) mid-1930s and (c) 1950s.

nation-in-building. It is possible to divide the history of the making of Taksim Square into two phases. In the first phase, the spontaneous development of the open space into a Square was mediated by the newly born nation-state with the erection of symbolic elements. This intervention aimed to create a modern public space that would connect the modern everyday lives of citizens and the practices that make the citizens into political subjects. At the very moment in which the republic was coming into being, the open space between the Maksem, the Artillery Barracks, and its annexes (the drill field was still empty) contained an ill-defined junction. Hence, the first phase of the Square witnessed de facto transformation aiming at the reinforcement of the physical closure of the space and the regulation of the traffic junction around a symbolic focus. The first step was the erection of the Independence Monument at the center in 1928. Then, traffic was organized around a roundabout surrounding the monument. Finally, the façades of the annexes to the south of the Barracks were reconstructed along a curvilinear border to define the circular Square. These transformations took place within the short period between 1926 and 1928 (Figure 2b).[15]

This phase can be compared to the transformation of Taşhan Square in Ankara into Hakimiyet-i Milliye (national sovereignty)—later Ulus—Square. In contrast to Taksim, Taşhan Square was already the central space of the town, which was experiencing rapid growth with the arrival of the republicans after 1919. Serving as the base of the War of Independence, the city center rapidly transformed into a political space and required new elements along these lines. Hence, the transformation of Taşhan Square into Hakimiyet-i Milliye Square was similar to that of Taksim with the regulation of traffic around a triangular island and the erection of the Victory Monument at this location in 1927. Despite the differences, the two squares went through similar processes; both were experiencing a certain degree of development with the urban dynamism surrounding them and both were subjected to conscious interventions by the state in order for them to embody certain representational aspects. Both were intended to become modern squares sheltering modern lifestyles and represent the newly born nation-state. In morphological terms, both of the squares were traffic nodes at the end of major axes: Taksim at the end of İstiklal Street and Hakimiyet-i Milliye at the end of İstasyon Street. In the upcoming years, the spatial enclosure of both of the squares would be reinforced with buildings with curvilinear facades.

What we find in both of these cases is spontaneous urban development in a dynamic locale and the involvement of the state to inject political representations into this development.

Obviously, this is a typical situation where a nation-state undertakes a project towards modernization and nation-building.[16] However, it is crucial to see the dialectical tension between the two dynamics. Although nation-states imagine a fresh start and couple the process of modernization with a particular agent—the national(ist) elite—the historical background of this agency often conflicts with the idea of a tabula rasa. The result is generally the emergence of a gap between an emergent bourgeoisie and the traditional middle classes. İstasyon Street in Ankara, for instance, was a space illustrating this gap. The street running between the National Assembly and Ankara Palas, the most prestigious hotel in the city housing all the major balls, parties and celebrations was a stage for official display. Parades and political meetings organized by the government took place here. But also the new bourgeoisie going in and out of either the National Assembly or Ankara Palas with their unusual dress styles and rituals provided a spectacle for the locals watching them from a distance.[17]

In the case of Taksim, this tension was all the more problematic since it embodied an ethnic dimension. The non-Muslim bourgeoisie was still present as a modern(izing) agent, and was seen as a threat to the nation-building project. The elimination of this threat would require the repression of this agency, which until then gave Beyoğlu its identity. A discussion of the repressive policies faced by the minorities throughout republican history is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, one component of these policies was the exclusion of the minorities from public spaces. A major means of being visible in the "space of appearance" was the use of language. The spoken language (French and especially Ladino in the case of Beyoğlu) ethnically marks the bodily existence in public space and politicizes the social encounter within the context of nation-building. Moreover, the differences signified through language were also inscribed in urban space through signboards. Campaigns demanding the citizens to speak Turkish and the changing of company names into Turkish were organized beginning from 1928.[18]

A tragic event illustrating the politicization of ethnic confrontations in public space was a murder case in 1927. When a young Jewish girl was the victim of a crime of passion in the hands of a wealthy Turkish man in Beyoğlu, the Jewish community organized protests demanding justice. However, these protests became an issue bigger than the murder itself and some of the protestors were arrested. In the end, the Jewish community had to donate money for the construction of the Independence Monument in Ankara in order to prove their loyalty to the republic and save their members from prosecution.[19] The irony linking public spaces of Istanbul and Ankara through the forced contribution of the Jewish community to the first public monument of the new capital, in fact, represents a prototypical solution to the tension between modernization and nation building in the production of Taksim Square. The minorities would henceforth be subject to *assimilation by dispossession* especially in spatial terms.[20]

Designing Public Space

It is typical to see the state coming up with more comprehensive projects toward reorganizing urban space after consolidating its power. In the case of Taksim Square, this corresponds to the second phase of its making, within which the Square extended to the east with the demolition of the annexes of the Artillery Barracks and met with the newly built İnönü Gezisi (today's Gezi Parkı, which was originally named after President İsmet İnönü) (Figure 2c). This phase of the history of Taksim presents parallels with another urban space in Ankara: Kızılay Square. Since it was envisaged as the representational focus of the capital—hence the nation—Kızılay contained elements that would be taken as model in the planning of Taksim Square. Therefore I shall briefly discuss Kızılay as the archetypal public space before analyzing the second phase of the making of Taksim Square.

Kızılay Square was called Tosbağa Yatağı in the early 1920s, and the space gained importance after the expropriation of lands to the south of the railway, which until then served as the border

of the city. Suddenly, this empty lot became an important junction leading to the new areas opened to settlement. Villas began to rise around the square, which was now called Havuzbaşı (poolside), thanks to the fountain erected here in 1925. Havuzbaşı was the open space where the new bourgeois socialized and listened to the concerts of the Presidential Orchestra playing Western classical music. Nevertheless, this social space was also envisaged as the major component of the new Government District and was accordingly designed in various proposals.[21]

There were a number of similarities between Taksim and Kızılay districts. Both were the developing areas of their respective cities, and the two squares served as traffic nodes connecting these areas to the old centers. Hence, the organization of traffic flow was an important aspect of their design. Neither was the major political space in its city; in Istanbul Beyazıt Square and in Ankara Ulus fulfilled this function. Regardless, both were seen as "new" public spaces that would break with the old traditions, house modern lifestyles, and accommodate enlightened citizens. The planned development of these urban spaces would take place under the guidance of urban master plans, produced by Hermann Jansen in Ankara and Henri Prost in Istanbul. Although his plan was approved in 1928, Jansen began working in Ankara in 1932 and Prost was invited to Istanbul in 1935. Both of the experts proposed new development areas as well as proposals for the renewal of old quarters.[22]

In Ankara, Havuzbaşı was transformed into Kızılay Square with the removal of the fountain and the erection of the new Security Monument in Güvenpark. The newly constructed building of the Kızılay (Red Crescent) Headquarters both added another park to the Square and gave it a new name. This transformation took place between 1929 and 1933. The new Hippodrome, which was to house major rallies and parades, was constructed in 1934–1936. In addition to these public spaces, Gençlik Parkı (Youth Park) was begun to be constructed in 1936 and was finished in 1943.

In Istanbul, equivalent spaces were produced with the Prost plan, which was finished in 1937 and approved in 1939. The plan affirmed the development of a new center around Taksim and proposed to connect this new center to the historical peninsula via direct routes. Accordingly, the Square was to be redesigned with theaters, conference halls, exhibition halls, gyms, clubs and parking garages.[23] If we look at the 1/5000 plan prepared for Beyoğlu, we see that the Square is detached from the traffic and moved to the lot where the Artillery Barracks were. A large building creates background for the new Square, across which two smaller buildings define a vista towards the Bosphorus.

Meanwhile, Prost proposed a Great Republican Square in the place of the ancient Hippodrome (At Meydanı) at the heart of the historical peninsula. This space was to house major parades and military processions, and it would also include a colossal monument that would be visible from the Bosphorus as well as Marmara Sea.[24] According to Prost, who witnessed the Republican Day parades in Beyazıt Square in 1936, this new Square would fulfill this task and "compete with the Red Square in Moscow." However, the required demolitions took too long to realize the Republican Square, and the new governor, Lütfi Kırdar, was anxious to create a space greater than Beyazıt Square to house larger ceremonies. Prost responded with a proposal to transform Taksim Square by clearing the site of the annexes of the Artillery Barracks.[25] The Republican Day celebrations of 1940 took place in the processional ground built in Taksim.

Meanwhile, Prost was working on a proposal to connect the Square with Park no: 2, a wide green area proposed between Dolmabahçe, Maçka, and Harbiye in the 1937 plan. This wide green area was to be created at the expense of the dispossession of minorities. The north side of the Artillery Barracks was Surp Agop (Saint James) Armenian Cemetery since the sixteenth century, although burials had been terminated due to the cholera epidemic in 1865. There was also a church—Surp Kirkor Lusarovich (Saint Gregory the Illuminator) Church—which was built here in the nineteenth century. In 1931, the whole site was handed over to the municipality despite the objections of the Armenian community. The community took the matter to the court, yet they lost the case in 1934. When they filed a new case, the municipality responded with a counter case

demanding compensation for the profit they lost due to the legal procedure. The Armenian community had to settle and give up their claim on the land. By 1939, both the cemetery and the church were demolished to open room for the park, yet the valuable land was soon open to development.[26] The reorganization of Taksim Square and its surroundings was another case of assimilation by dispossession.

Interestingly, although Prost had decided to demolish the Artillery Barracks as early as 1937, his proposal was to re-create its wings with multiple blocks along the long sides of the lot. While these blocks would contain the functions Prost envisaged for the Square, the ones facing the Square were assigned to house the Party Headquarters and Kızılay Building. These two buildings represent the nation-state's approach to public space in terms of the relation between society and state. While the headquarters of the single-party ruling the country served for the politicization of the Square, the role of Kızılay Organization is also significant. If we remember that the transformation of Havuzbaşı in Ankara into Kızılay Square occurred through the location of the Kızılay Headquarters in the Square in 1929, it becomes clear that it is not a coincidence to see another Kızılay Building proposed for another major public space ten years later. Kızılay Organization was founded in 1868 and maintained a special status during the Republican period. Since it was a nonprofit charity organization working for public benefit, it required the participation of wealthy citizens for both organizing and attending its events. The identity of Kızılay as a nongovernmental organization so close to the state created a semiautonomous sphere to encourage civil contributions for national development, while also functioning to disseminate the state ideology. In this regard, Kızılay was a station that provided occasions for the citizens to participate in public space, and also integrated them into the social order imposed by the state.[27]

The republican elite had already a clear idea regarding the modern lifestyle expected to flourish in public space. This ideal lifestyle composed of certain degrees of socialization, entertainment, and recreation, blended with high culture and politics. The republican public space was always conceived as a pedagogical space, in which the daily practices of the individuals transformed them into conscious (Turkish) citizens. An important component of such pedagogical space was the Opera House, both a space and an architectural representation of high culture. The idea to build an Opera House was formalized with a decision of the Municipality in late 1930s. Yet in his 1939 proposal for Taksim, Prost insisted that a Theater House would be more appropriate to revive the Square. This structure would also be a major element in defining the morphological boundaries of the Square. The organization of the esplanade between building blocks was left aside and İnönü Gezisi assumed its contemporary form. The colossal monument proposed for the Republican Square in At Meydanı was replaced with a monument of İnönü himself. While it had been located at the center of the esplanade in the 1939 proposal, it was relocated closer to the Square at the entrance of the park in 1942. Although the monument was finished in 1944 and its base was built, it was never erected.

If we look at Taksim and Kızılay, the two republican squares of the 1940s, we see that they share certain elements despite differences of scale. An emerging bourgeois lifestyle was promoted to the degree that it fit the political limits dictated by the state. Photographs accompanying newspaper articles showed men and women in modern clothing strolling in both of these spaces. Both of the squares were defined by parks including new monuments representing state power (although the İnönü Monument for Taksim was never erected). The addition of the ceremonial Republican Square to Taksim Square can be paralleled to the proximity of Kızılay Square to Vekaletler Mahallesi, the new government district. In both cases, state oriented politics was both represented via monuments and also reproduced via state sponsored ceremonies.

Transgressing Public Space

Although the state was a major actor defining the politics of public space for a long time in the case of Taksim, it was not the only agent capable of producing representations of space and trying

to reproduce the social space accordingly. Yet, it is necessary to differentiate the means and methods of politicization utilized by the state and by other actors seeking participation in public sphere. Lefebvre proposes the concepts of "domination" and "appropriation" of space for this distinction. According to him, "domination of space" refers to the reproduction and re-organization of space via state policies, regulations and along the dominant determinants of social organization such as capital accumulation.[28] Domination of space is about the top-down control of space, of both its initial production and later use.

The second, on the other hand, namely, the bottom-up politicization of space, can be defined as "appropriation." The subordinate social groups do not have the means to participate in the formal processes of the production of space. However, they reproduce the space and appropriate it through their everyday practices. Appropriation for Lefebvre, does also operate representationally: "Appropriation, … even if it is concrete and effective, ought to be symbolizable—ought, that is, to give rise to symbols that present it, that render it present."[29]

Considering this conceptual pair, it is possible to detect a constant struggle between the forces of domination and appropriation in Taksim Square. While the nation-state sought to fit social life into a political framework, the spontaneous dynamics of social life clashed with this blueprint. Popular culture rapidly grew in and around the Square as early as the 1920s, and its physical improvement only accelerated this process. The Artillery Barracks, for instance, began to be used as a stadium as early as 1921 and soon assumed the name Taksim Stadium. It housed bicycle races as well as soccer and boxing games, with spectator seats built on the longer sides of the field. The first game of the Turkish national soccer team was played here in 1923.[30] Similarly, the circular plaza around the monument housed popular entertainment facilities. Famous cafés had been established here in the early years of the century. Moreover, the newly constructed buildings with curvilinear facades facing the monument housed terrace cafés watching over the square (Figure 2b). The most famous of such establishments was Kristal Casino with its curvilinear façade complementing the circular form of the square on the northern side. The building had a portico with shops on the ground floor and a casino on the upper floor. It was famous for catering popular entertainment such as Turkish music and belly dancing.[31] Together with the terrace cafés surrounding the circular Square, the Casino represented the influence of popular culture and the dominance of uncontrolled everyday practices in the Square. In this respect, the proposal to build the Kızılay Headquarters in Taksim Square has to be understood as a response to the flourishing social life in the Square. The state responded to the appropriating forces of everyday life occupying public space with spatial means to control the social domain.

Moreover, the state was also after exemplifying "proper" entertainment in public space. The northern part of the future Gezi Parkı was already designed as a Municipality Park (later known as Taksim Park) in the late nineteenth century. There was a timber casino building, which was frequented by the non-Muslim minorities and the corps diplomatique. It was a favorite place for those seeking a modern environment to socialize even after WWI. This casino was torn down in the 1930s to create room for a new Municipal Casino, which was opened in 1939. This new casino was targeted for the new bourgeois and their refined taste in contrast to Kristal Casino and its "low" strand of entertainment. Republican balls, occasions honoring foreign guests, parties of charity organizations (such as Kızılay) were all organized here.[32] Nevertheless, the ethnic difference embedded in public space was still a major issue. Hostility towards non-Muslim minorities was expressed in response to their existence in Taksim as late as 1942: "We [Turks] are a minority. … If you don't believe me, go to Taksim [Municipal] Casino or … Ankara Palas in Ankara! We are a minority, we are awfully marginal! No matter we are a majority in number. … It is crucial to consider quantity and quality."[33] The appearance of the minorities as modern social agents in public space was a constant reminder of the failure of the young republic to transform the Muslim population into refined citizens. Hence, it is not surprising to see Mayor Kırdar proudly emphasizing that the owner and the manager of the Municipal Casino were of Turkish

origin; and courses were organized to train Turkish waiters to serve here.[34] The Casino itself represented an attempt to appropriate the entertainment habits as well as public spaces of the Westerners/non-Muslims, and served as an apparatus to transform the population into the nation; individuals into citizens.

Hence, there is an obvious tension between the symbolic meanings of public space and the everyday life eroding these meanings. In fact, this is the true nature of public space, where spontaneous social interactions assume political character due to this very tension. Moreover, there is also a clash over the social sphere; on the one hand the nation-state attempts to mold social life into an idealized framework. On the other hand, the emerging (Turkish) middle-classes pursue their own ways of socializing while the non-Minorities persistently exist in public space. Here, we encounter the coexistence of actual spaces and their representations in collective consciousness. In order to address the real and imagined components of urban space, Lefebvre proposes a conceptual triad, to understand space as physical, mental and social at the same time.[35] He suggests the concepts of spatial practice, representations of space and spaces of representation to refer to these three dimensions of space.

This triad allows us to consider the (not dialectical but) trialectical tension between physical space, its mental representations and the social life that occur in it. Within public space, these tensions assume a political character, since mental representations propose political statements to be materialized, whereas the everyday practices may fit into these representations or resist them sometimes through semiconscious transgression and sometimes simply through unintentional negligence. And obviously both the mental representations and the everyday practices are shaped by the physical spaces and in turn shape them. If we turn to Taksim, we see that the physical space allowed for the flourishing of social life and was further transformed to fit this lifestyle. And later, the spaces of popular entertainment (such as the terrace cafes and the Artillery Barracks—now the Taksim Stadium) were demolished to open space for the Republican Square and the İnönü Esplanade.

Political Action in Public Space

The transgressive potentials of everyday life are an important component of the politics of public space; in this regard, social space is always already political. Yet, it is also crucial to consider the spatial practices of political action. Since Taksim Square was a representational focus since the erection of the Independence Monument and was visited for ceremonies, it was also a site for pro-state rallies. Although mostly promoted by the state towards nationalist sentiments, these events were important in opening room for civil politics in the upcoming years. The nationalist rallies represent an attempt towards the domination of public space targeting the repression of ethnic differences embodied in Beyoğlu. A significant example of such demonstrations was the Wagon-Lits incidence in 1933. When a Turkish officer working in the French railway company Wagon-Lits was fired—allegedly for speaking in Turkish on the phone—students provoked by nationalist media gathered in Taksim and marched along İstiklal Street where they attacked the company's office.[36] It can be said that the vision of the nation state provided the basis for the nationalist imagination regarding Taksim. Imitating state-sponsored nationalist ceremonies with practices such as paying tribute to the monument with a wreath, civil demonstrations with nationalist sentiments chose Taksim as their stage. If one reason for this choice was the ceremonial significance of the Square, another was the existence of non-Muslim minorities in Beyoğlu as discussed earlier. Hence, the nationalist demonstrations easily localized themselves in Taksim as they shared with the state the concealed hostility towards the non-Muslim other(s). Nationalist political demonstrations generally began at the monument and moved down along İstiklal Street. This repetitive spatial practice was an act of reconquering Beyoğlu, reflecting the desire to repress the difference that troubled the fantasy of a homogeneous nation.

Moreover, since the youth was an important social actor (a prototype for ideal citizens) for the state, students were the major leading group in pro-state nationalistic rallies. Hence rallies also took place in Beyazıt Square, the major political space in the historical peninsula, which was close to Istanbul University and made it convenient for the students to gather. Even in cases where large rallies were organized in Taksim, students met in Beyazıt to go to Taksim in larger groups. This particular route from Beyazıt to Taksim would represent a distinct spatial form of political protest in the 1960s.[37]

Socialization of Politics

The appropriation of urban space is closely related to what Lefebvre calls "right to the city." According to him, the right to the city implies the right "to freedom, to individualization and socialization … to participation and appropriation," which also includes "the right to the use of the [city] center," which he views as "a privileged place." This privileged place is the space of difference, exchange, communication, and encounter.[38] If we return to the history of Taksim Square, two major developments related to the global postwar context significantly influenced the use of public space and opened room for the (legitimacy of) heterogeneity Lefebvre emphasizes. The first of these was the end of the single-party regime and the establishment of the Democrat Party government in 1950. The party liberalized economy and pursued populist policies responding to the discontent of the popular masses against the radical modernization efforts of the early republican era.[39] The second development was the unprecedented pace of rural-to-urban migration, which drastically amplified Istanbul's population.

For the Square to become a terrain of contesting representations, it had to first divorce itself from the image of the ceremonial space of the single-party period. The end of the single-party regime and its radical methods in nation-building meant the decline of large scale political ceremonies. Moreover, the DP government was also eager to eradicate the political use of the Square in an attempt to eliminate the association of the space with the single party period. An article from 1955 stated that it was intended to build "the largest pool of the Balkans" in the place of the processional ground.[40] The most important step towards this transformation was the opening of Vatan Street in 1957. In 1959, it was announced that the official parades and military processions were henceforth to be organized in the newly opened Vatan Street.[41] In May 1960, another newspaper article contained information regarding a new design for the Square together with an image of a model. Accordingly, the Taksim Monument would be relocated in front of Gezi Parkı and a meeting hall was proposed for its site, reorganizing the flow of traffic.[42]

This does not mean that the state withdrew from the public space during the DP rule. As witnessed by the 1955 anti-Greek pogrom, the non-Muslim minorities were not accepted as a legitimate component of heterogeneous public space; nor was the DP government after promoting a public domain free of state control. Moreover, especially with the intensification of Cold War politics and the role of Turkey as a critical battlefront due to its geopolitical position, the state would constantly intervene in national politics, at times via direct military interventions. A significant spatial expression of such intervention towards the domination of space was the erection of a new monument in Taksim right after the military intervention in 1960. The strange-looking militaristic monument composed of a menacing bayonet wrapped with olive leaves. That is, it supposed to represent peace brought by military power. If we remember that the İnönü Monument was never erected, the new monument represented the state's attempt to symbolically dominate the Square once again.

Despite the government's attempts to the contrary, the identity of Taksim Square as a civil political space would gradually solidify in the upcoming years due to two factors. The first of these was the subtle politics of everyday life; the appropriation of space by diverse social groups subverting the defined uses of the square. The uncontrollable diversity in the Square led to the

erosion of bourgeois manners and morals as well. For instance, a small newspaper article from 1957 informs us that two lovers were sentenced to pay a fine for kissing in public in Taksim Square. The deviant character of the act is evident in its finding place on the front page of a major daily newspaper.[43]

The second factor was the rise of civil political actions. The Square—and even the monument—began to be used for civil ceremonies and celebrations. For instance, the Square was the scene for both the celebration of the foundation anniversary of a private bank and the Veterans' Day on August 27, 1951.[44] While it was used for mass rallies by the political parties, civil organizations began to perform political activities in the Square. Working class rallies as well as anti-communist demonstrations began to be seen here.[45] As discussed above, Taksim was a major stage for pro-state political actions since the earliest days of the republic. Yet independent political groups also began to emerge and demanded democratic participation in the public realm in the 1950s.

A major theme of the nationalist rallies in the 1950s was related to Cyprus, calling for the partition of the island between Turkish and Greek populations. While such rallies took place in Beyazıt Square occasionally between mid-1950s and mid-1960s, a striking example was one organized in 1964. The event began in Beyazıt and ended in Taksim after a long march across the city. This movement across city also marked the shift of the political focus from Beyazıt to Taksim and represented the widespread perception of the latter as a political space. The particular route cutting through the city not only disrupted the everyday urban life but also defined new scales of protest. The rallies of this scale could not be confined in certain sites but were now visible in city scale. Moreover, a protest paralyzing life in the largest city inevitably attracted nationwide attention and found place in the agenda. From then on, political actions would target Taksim as a central public space of not only Istanbul but the whole country. The nationalist rallies materialized mass politicization, which led to the rising initiative of various actors in the upcoming years. The most significant ideological channel within which mass politics would flourish was socialism, which proved that mass politicization was growing beyond the control of the state.

Socialism

The socialist movement in Turkey gained impetus in the 1960s. Although there was some level of working-class movement and active socialist organizations, the major momentum would come from the student youth in the second half of the decade. The nationalistic rallies of the previous decade assumed an anti-imperialistic character and were easily incorporated into the socialist repertoire of political action. The most significant of these was the student rally in 1969, which is known as the "Bloody Sunday." University students protesting the U.S. Sixth Fleet visiting Istanbul gathered in Beyazıt Square on February 16 and marched to Taksim Square. Here they were attacked by a group of counterprotestors organized by the Society for Struggle against Communism. Two students were stabbed to death and more than one hundred were wounded before the eyes of the police standing by in the Square. Here, a comparison with the 1964 rally is illustrative. For the students, protesting for Cyprus and against U.S. imperialism might have been compatible on the grounds of nationalism, and we can speculate that a considerable number of protestors attended both of the rallies. Yet it was not the case for the part of the state. As a result, civil violence organized and/or overlooked by the government turned for the first time to the (Turkish) youth. What they encountered was not very different from that faced by the Greeks in the same space in 1955. Moreover, it was a signal that the state was determined to maintain its domination in public space through violence, and the demand for democratic participation would lead to violent confrontations. This event marked Taksim as a symbolic battlefield: contesting political views would from then on try to appropriate the space confronting each other. For the emerging left-wing imagination, Taksim was the public space of appearance where

demonstrations should direct themselves and culminate in. The interruption of everyday life in the city and the recognition of the political statements put forward by these demonstrations politicize the space in a different way. While the state-sponsored ceremonies dictated top-down politicization of the social sphere, these oppositional rallies socialized politics with a bottom-up impetus. The socialization of politics was also different than the political character of everyday life since it overtly targets participation in democratic public space.

After the "Bloody Sunday" in 1969, political rallies targeted Taksim. The historic workers' strike on June 15–16, 1970, witnessed mass demonstrations on both sides of the Bosphorus. When the strikers gathering in Aksaray and Sultanahmet marched towards Taksim, the governor ordered the two bridges across the Golden Horn to be opened so that the historical peninsula and Beyoğlu were disconnected. Soon afterwards, the largest May Day celebration until then was organized with the participation of around four hundred thousand people in Taksim Square in 1976. This was followed by the infamous May Day in 1977, in which thirty-four people died in the chaos following the gunshots fired on the crowd.[46] The May Day was once again celebrated in Taksim in 1978, which was the last officially permitted rally until 2010. In 1979, martial law was declared and demonstrations were banned in Istanbul. After that Taksim was closed to political rallies. The ban on Taksim Square would only be challenged in the 2000s.

Within the context of the Cold War, Turkish political system was deadlocked with the rising popular opposition and the severe economic crisis by the end of the 1970s.[47] The military intervention in 1980 suppressed popular movements as well as any means of democratic politics. This also meant the suppression of public space as a terrain of bottom-up politics. Implementation of surveillance systems in public space was proposed for the first time during the military regime. In 1982, the Minister of Interior announced that 278 junctions in Istanbul, together with the major ones in the four largest cities were to be monitored with CCTV systems.[48] Nevertheless, Taksim Square prevailed as the most important political space of the country and was associated with the May Day especially owing to the memory of 1977.

Neoliberal Islamism and Banal Politicization

The military coup in 1980 introduced a new constitution and institutionalized state control over democratic processes while also laying the foundations of necessary regulations for the neoliberalization of economy.[49] Mainstream political parties pursued neoliberal policies throughout the 1980s and the 1990s. However, the Turkish political establishment encountered a hegemony crisis in the 1990s under pressure from two political forces. One of these was the armed Kurdish rebellion that erupted in the mid-1980s. It gained particular impetus after the First Gulf War due to the power vacuum created in northern Iraq. The second was political Islam, which expanded its sphere of influence gradually through electoral victories. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss Islamic politics in Turkey, it is crucial to underline that urban politics was a major factor in the Islamists' success, juxtaposing neoliberal policies and social welfare mechanisms.[50]

The Islamists' long march through the past two decades started in the local administrations, when the Welfare Party (RP) took over most of the major cities in 1994.[51] From then on, political influence of Islam gradually increased primarily through the municipal policies of the RP and finally resulted in the AKP's coming to power in 2002.[52] I define the particular strand of pro-Islamic politics of the AKP as neoliberal Islamism, since the party is not after transforming the state structure into a theocratic one but rather seeking to reorganize civil society in Islamic terms to the extent that the economic relations allow. Meanwhile, urban space had become a significant means of capital accumulation during the same period.[53] The role of urban development in neoliberalism has been discussed extensively.[54] In tune with these trends, urban politics took a drastic step in terms of the production of space in Turkey after 2002. This was the end of urbanization

through the populist overlooking of squatting.[55] Now market dynamics were extended to the peripheries and a total commodification of urban space was in order.[56] Vast areas have been designated as renewal zones in all of the Turkish cities and the regeneration projects are marked by lack of participation in decision-making processes. While the renewal operations primarily targeted the squatter areas that emerged in the postwar era, the city centers and particularly the ones with historic value were also designated as renewal zones. This is significant for our discussion, since the neoliberalization of urban space has consequences regarding public space.[57]

It was not only the gentrification of the city center that has affected Taksim during the AKP reign. The political scene in Turkey in the 2000s witnessed a constant struggle between the AKP government and the state power mainly represented by the military and the judiciary.[58] As a result of this conflict, the AKP pursued a liberal agenda claiming to expand democratic rights. As a token of goodwill, Taksim was opened for the May Day parade in 2010. In fact, workers' unions had attempted to celebrate the day in Taksim in 2007, 2008, and 2009; and their attempts were met with police brutality. While the day was celebrated peacefully in 2010, 2011, and 2012, it was once again banned in 2013. While officials declared that this was only a temporary ban due to the ongoing construction work in the square, Prime Minister Erdoğan refuted their statements and declared his intention to build two new rally grounds in Istanbul (one on each side of the Bosphorus) and to ban political meetings in Taksim Square.[59]

To enforce the ban, the governorship of Istanbul deployed police forces transferred from other provinces as well as gendarme units for the May Day in 2013. The cityscape was remapped in tune with a military defensive in order to prevent a rally in Taksim. Checkpoints were set up at the city gates and the security forces stopped buses carrying union members from other cities. The traffic on the bridges across the Bosphorus as well as sea transportation linking the two continents were limited and strictly controlled to prevent the arrival of demonstrators to the European side. Moreover, the historical peninsula was also cut off from Beyoğlu by opening the bridges across the Golden Horn. Public transportation routes running along Taksim were halted and police barricades were erected in the main thoroughfares arriving in Taksim. The Square itself was further fortified to make sure there was no entry. In addition, the police forces brutally dispersed even the smallest of groups gathering to march towards Taksim. The workers were stopped at the gates of their union buildings with water cannons and tear gas, not even being able to set foot in the street. The day witnessed excessive violence exercised by the police forces and the brutal dispersion of demonstrators.

The strategy of the police forces to control cityscape on the May Day illustrates once again the centrality of Taksim. It displays a comprehensive territorial scheme built on concentric lines of defense radiating from the focal space of Taksim Square. This very scheme can be understood as the superimposition of two aspects of the Square; its physical space as an important urban node and its conceived space in political imagination. Both of these aspects point to Taksim as the center of the city: on the one hand it is the physical center of a system of networks through which people, vehicles, goods and information move across the city. On the other hand, the Square is the central space of the mental topography of Istanbul as well as the whole country within collective memory, which has come to being through the accumulation of historical events and their representations.

Now I shall return to the AKP's vision towards Taksim Square, which reflects the complementary—yet at times conflicting—components of neoliberal Islamism, namely the coexistence of neoliberal accumulation strategies and Islamist ideological inclinations. In fact, both of these components have been rooted in the previous decade. While Istanbul was seen as a globally marketable asset by the governments, Taksim was envisaged accordingly. The rundown residential districts adjacent to the area were torn down and gentrified in 1986. Similarly, Taksim was designated as a touristic center by the government in 1989. From Habitat II in 1996 to the NATO Summit in 2004, Istanbul gradually assumed significance in terms of housing international

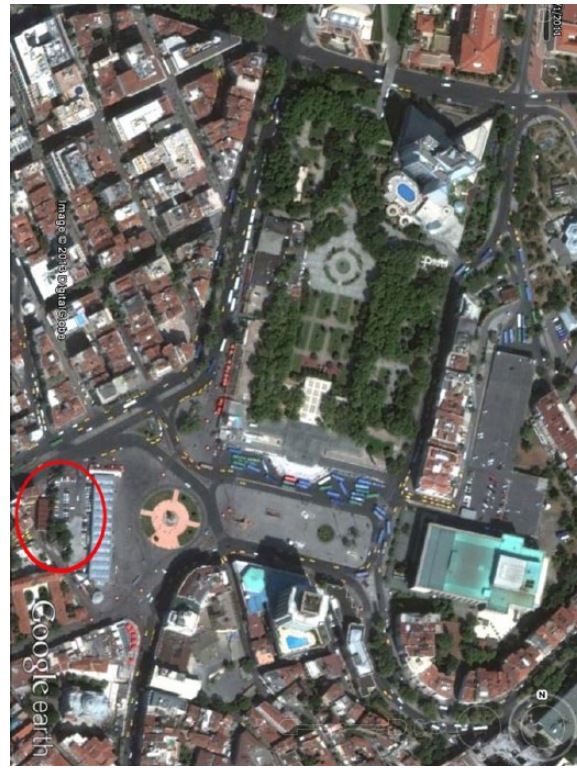

Figure 3. Google Earth image showing the square in 2011. The location of the proposed mosque is shown with a circle.

congresses and events. In 2005, Istanbul ranked thirteenth among cities that hosted the largest number of international congresses in the world.[60] Prost's historical Park No: 2 was reorganized as a Congress Valley, and a new Congress Center was built in 2009. That is, the commodification of Taksim had already begun in the early 1990s under the pressure of globalization.

Meanwhile, the Islamist imaginary towards Taksim was also rooted deeply in (political as well as urban) history. The Square as the prime public space of Istanbul was also momentous for the Islamists, for whom the utmost symbol of "appearance" was the mosque. Therefore, the building of a mosque in Taksim was a major spatial element of the Islamist imaginary in Turkey since the 1950s. A Taksim Mosque-building Society was established as early as 1952 (Figure 3). From then on, Islamists often raised the demand for a mosque in Taksim, which has to be understood as an attempt to appropriate public space along ideological lines. The mosque was a hot topic in the 1990s, while Prime Minister Erdoğan was serving as the mayor of Istanbul. Within the political turmoil that led to the outlawing of the RP, the Taksim mosque was out of the agenda, only to be revived during the reign of the AKP.[61] Moreover, the Islamist takeover of Istanbul Municipality was envisaged as the second conquest of Istanbul, and the memories of 1453 were reproduced in performances for the anniversaries of the conquest. For instance, in 1996, mock ships pulled by men in Janissary costumes were moved across Taksim for the celebrations.[62] In response to the Islamist ceremonies, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the republic was organized as a performative display of secularism with exhibitions in İstiklal Street and popular concerts in Taksim Square.[63] The display of political identities continue to occur in

public space in private ways. A major signifier of the clash between Islamism and secularism in public space was the appearance of the *turban* (headscarf) as an Islamic symbol. Taksim was a stage for rallies protesting or supporting the turban ban in public institutions.[64] Moreover, it was the stage for the embodied use of turban by women as well as its visual promotion in advertisements on billboards.[65]

AKP's Taksim

Nevertheless, the AKP represented the conciliation of neoliberal trends and Islamist visions. That is, the party's vision towards Istanbul (and Taksim) was not one of intolerant conquest, but an original blend of market requirements and ideological desires. This vision has crystallized in four recent projects: the pedestrianization of the Square with the reorganization of vehicular traffic underground, the reconstruction of the Artillery Barracks, the demolition of Atatürk Cultural Center (AKM) and the building of a mosque. Below I will briefly discuss each of these components and then analyze the overall vision.

During the election campaign in 2011, Erdoğan declared one of his projects as the pedestrianization of Taksim Square. Following the elections, The Greater Municipality of Istanbul accepted a plan reorganizing all vehicular traffic in the Square underground. The project was approved rapidly, neglecting objections and protests raised by various organizations. It proposed seven different underground tunnels with ten meter height and at least one hundred meter length, which cut through the main arteries arriving into the Square. As a result, sidewalks would significantly narrow, trees would be destroyed and pedestrian access to the Square would considerably diminish. Some of the organizations opposing the project took the matter to the court on these grounds. Nevertheless, construction began by the end of October 2012. The slowness of the legal procedure resulted in the formation of the Taksim Solidarity Platform, which would later organize the protests that triggered the events of May–June 2013, in March 2012. The Platform protested the lack of participation in the decision making processes and called for the cancellation of the project.

The idea to reconstruct the historical Barracks was also a decision within the above-mentioned plan approved by the Greater Municipality. The original building was a 146- by 176-meter structure with a large courtyard. It had gone through renovations throughout the nineteenth century, and the final version displayed a combination of Arabic and Indian architectural motives with horseshoe-shaped arches and onion domes. The Orientalist architecture of the building was an exceptional example in Ottoman architectural history. Since there is no official document detailing the original structure aside from limited number of photographs, a professional reconstruction of the building is virtually impossible. Nevertheless, the Greater Municipality of Istanbul began to publicize 3D images of the future Taksim Square containing both the Barracks and the tunnels, which displayed an enormous empty surface (Figure 4). It was soon announced that the blueprints of the new Artillery Barracks were already prepared. Accordingly, the project a contained 22,300-square-meter floor area and underground parking. I will shortly return to the architectural significance of the building below.

As I have discussed earlier, Prost had proposed a Theater House that would mark the eastern edge of the newly constructed processional ground. Nevertheless, the Municipality decided that this building should be an Opera House and its construction began in 1946. As the technical details of the project slowed the construction process and proved that the Municipality would not be able to finish the job, it was handed over to the Ministry of Public Works in 1953. The program was then further expanded and it was opened as Istanbul Cultural Center in 1969. The building is a fine example of the modernist architecture of its time, with an iconic curtain wall façade of sunshades. It was destroyed by an unfortunate fire in 1970 and took another eight years to renovate. Reopened in 1978, it was renamed Atatürk Cultural Center (AKM).[66]

Figure 4. The Municipality's proposal with the reconstruction of the Artillery Barracks and the pedestrianization of the square.

The building was a hostile symbol in Islamic imaginary, to some extent due to the perception of Western classical art as an instrument of republican authoritarianism. But in an interesting way, this hostility was expressed through distaste towards its modernist architecture, which was seen equally alien. As a result, the Islamists vocalized the idea to demolish it from time to time. The most serious attempt to knock down the building was made by the Minister of Culture in 2005, during the first Erdoğan government. This attempt was blocked by a decision of the Conservation Board registering the building as cultural heritage. After that, a refurbishment project was started in 2008. Interestingly, with the beginning of the riots in Taksim, the construction work was suspended and Erdoğan announced that the building will be demolished since it was earthquake-prone. He also stated that the building will be replaced with another cultural center, designed in "Baroque architecture."

The final component of the AKP's vision for Taksim, the proposal to build the Taksim mosque, was also brought to the public agenda by Erdoğan himself after the 2011 general elections. In the meantime, he also proved to be a fan of neoclassical architecture, supporting the construction of two grandiose mosques imitating sixteenth-century Ottoman mosque architecture. The first of these, the Mimar Sinan Mosque, was built in 2010–2012 in Ataşehir, the Anatolian part of the city. While this mosque was advertised as an important achievement, the second one was more controversial. The mosque is currently under construction in Çamlıca, a district closely associated with the Prime Minister himself, since his residence is located there. It is situated on a hilltop and is going to be "among the largest in the world and would be visible from everywhere in the city."[67] The construction of the Çamlıca Mosque was begun in March 2013 after a contentious architectural competition. Boycotted by the Chamber of Architects and prominent architects, the chosen project (incidentally by Erdoğan himself among two second prize projects since none was deemed worthy of first prize) was also revised along architectural suggestions from the Prime Minister. His suggestions given to the architects in a private meeting mainly required the mosque to look more like classical Ottoman mosques.

All four of these projects were spelled together for the first time by Erdoğan in a statement putting fuel to the growing protests: "We are continuing with the pedestrianization project. That is going to finish. Second … we will reconstruct the historical barracks. … The AKM will be torn down inşallah [God willing]. … And yes, we will build a mosque too."[68] They should be understood as components of a larger scheme related to the world-city vision of the AKP towards Istanbul. These projects juxtapose neoliberal requirements towards transforming the city center into a space of consumption, strictly disciplining the spatial practices to take place in the Square. Architecture, here, is an important means to transform Islamic identity into a brand to sell the space globally. In this regard, it is possible to argue that a different type of politicization is at stake here. As I have discussed domination and appropriation as strategies of using and controlling public space, here I propose to define this as *banal politicization*, which rests on *the banalization of urban space* and *the hyper-politicization of architecture*. It was Guy Debord, writing about the effect of tourism on space, who claimed that the capitalist mode of production produces a unified and homogenized space, the unification of which is "an extensive and intensive process of *banalization.*"[69] The socio-spatial diversity contained within Taksim, where pedestrians and vehicles exist together creating a dynamic environment, is destroyed and flattened in a vast surface out of proportion. This image can be seen as a fine illustration of what Lefebvre defines as abstract space: "Formal and quantitative, it erases distinctions, as much those which derive from natural and (historical) time as those which originate in the body (age, sex, ethnicity)."[70] Here, politics as spatial practice is excluded with both the impossibility of mass movement into the Square and the changing of the user demographics. The transformation of the park into the courtyard of the Artillery Barracks serves similarly for the disciplining of the practices in the park.[71] Surrendering the Square to tourism and consumption, this vision transforms every activity in public space into a spectacle.

On the other hand, politics as representation is an important component of this vision. Architecture becomes hyper-politicized; it turns into an instrument to reproduce ideology through the architectural distortion of history. It is not that the architectural style of a "golden age" is reproduced to glorify the past. On the contrary, architectural styles of previous eras are reproduced together —an Orientalist military structure, a Baroque cultural center, and a neoclassical mosque. The familiarity of this imagery for an observer is crucial for building an architectural image in the present. What is at stake here is *self-orientalization* as a conscious strategy to create an image to identify with. Self-orientalization inevitably refers to existing stereotypes which is crucial for the other's gaze to recognize.[72] Hence, the orientalized subject voluntarily assumes this identity, only to utilize it as a brand. This is all the more true when the issue is to sell a world city. Self-orientalization serves for the marketing of the city, and the city center is obviously the main showcase for such marketing project.

Within this scheme, the production of public space occurs through the interactions between the state, capital and the social domain. Accordingly, while the symbolic space is under the dominance of state, capital works through the organization of physical space and social space is the main locus of everyday life. Needless to say, all three are under constant interaction and influence each other. The crucial aspect here is the ways in which these forces affect each other: the physical spaces created in tune with the logic of capital tend to promote consumption in everyday life and its architecture provides ideological legitimacy for the state's involvement in the production of public space. The state provides the basis for gentrification in return and controls everyday life in public space through the growing means of surveillance systems. The response of everyday life to the forces of state and capital occurs through the political organization of social movements targeting state power and assumes the form of bodily occupation towards appropriating the physical spaces produced by capital. To put it differently, these two aspects of social life influencing physical and mental spaces correspond to the subtle politics of everyday life and the overt

politics exploiting public space, respectively. Here, we arrive at the point we began our discussion on Taksim Square: the sudden eruption of the protests and the occupation of the Square, which should be understood as the juxtaposition of everyday resistance and political protest.

Occupation as Production of (Public) Space

While the government was carrying out a grand vision towards Taksim Square, an unexpected opposition emerged with the events erupted in relation to Gezi Parkı. The two-week period, during which the whole Square was occupied by protestors, witnessed a communal encampment in the park. The encampment was similar in spirit to the protest camps which have been the trademark of the global tide of protest that has become effective since late 2010. Yet there were important differences as well. While the organization methods, the role of the unorganized youth and especially the role of social media were common traits, it is crucial to note that the economic situation in Turkey was not as severe as the other places where economy was also a reason for the revolts.[73] The major cause of the widespread riots was the Islamic interventions in everyday lives rather than economic hardships. Such interventions are a direct reflection of the growing oppressive character of the government and its intolerance regarding freedom of speech as witnessed by the dubious legal cases against journalists, university students and even lawyers. Moreover, a significant difference of the Turkish case in comparison to the similar protests is the strength of the government's political hegemony, as witnessed with the recent election results as well as the polls still showing a considerable support (around 50 percent) for the government.

Nevertheless, the government's mistake was to assess only the political significance of Taksim and the potential opposition that would be organized with reference to it. What they failed to see was the possible resistance to the gentrification of the city center and the politicization of everyday life to defend public space—the very locale in which it flourished. The earliest protests literally aimed to defend the park; and the violence they faced rapidly marked the very public space as a locus and a focus to raise and represent diverse issues of contestation.

Within the two weeks it prevailed, the Gezi encampment was a beacon of hope for the rest of the country, but it was also a real space that transformed those who participated in it. With the lack of a central organization, the young activists developed their own practices in accordance with what they were protesting for. While some distributed the leaflets of revolutionary organizations, some vocalized environmentalist concerns and even created a small garden. Solidarity tables were organized to provide food and basic needs for the campers and a communal library was set up. A makeshift infirmary was also built where voluntary doctors tended to the injured. A container that had been used by the construction workers was occupied and transformed into a "Revolution Museum," in which photographs of the moments of fighting with the police as well as trophies (such as helmets and pieces of armors that belonged to the police) were exhibited. An architectural reflection of the occupation was the decoration of the façade of the AKM building with banners and posters right after Erdoğan's announcement that the building was to be demolished. Taksim Square was appropriated by diverse groups protesting distinct issues. Soccer fan organizations protested police violence side by side with the clandestine revolutionary groups and the LGBT associations protested homophobia together with *anti-capitalist Muslims* protesting the neoliberal economic policies.

Although the range of issues of discontent and protest was wide, it is clear that the protest itself was an urban phenomenon. Regardless of their individual concerns, diverse actors shared and reproduced public space through their existence in it. David Harvey has recently defined this as the manifestation of the Lefebvrian right to the city: "Spreading from city to city, the tactics of Occupy Wall Street are to take a central public space, a park or a square, … and, by putting human bodies in that place, to convert public space into a political commons—a place for open discussion and debate. …"[74]

While the protestors experimented with new methods of occupying and reproducing public space, the government also retaliated in spatial terms. Detecting the coexistence of unorganized (and mostly apolitical) protestors and the militants of organized revolutionary groups, the security forces differentiated and separated these two groups. While the unorganized activists were mostly settled inside the encampment in the park, the organized groups were in the Square rather than the park and had already built and fortified barricades for the police assault that would eventually come. When police action began on the morning of June 10, the governor of Istanbul announced that the police would only clean the monument and the façade of the AKM building; the groups in the park and the Square were not to be harmed. However, a few hours later, the police raided the Square while the government officials were claiming that the peaceful demonstrators in Gezi Parkı was not a target but the "marginal groups" in the Square resisting police forces were to be dispersed. The differentiation of the Square and the park as the spaces of two different groups served as an effective strategy to destroy the diversity of the public space.

In the following days, Erdoğan met with some of the representatives of the resistance, including the members of the Taksim Solidarity Platform. The representatives declared their demands as the cancellation of all projects regarding Gezi Parkı as well as the AKM building, the lifting of all bans on the use of public spaces including Taksim Square in Istanbul and Kızılay Square in Ankara, the resignation and prosecution of those responsible for the police brutality witnessed in Istanbul as well as other cities, and finally the release of those who were detained during the demonstrations. Erdoğan's response was a proposal to take the matter of Artillery Barracks to a plebiscite if the court ruled in favor of the project. Since accepting a delegation was the greatest compromise for his part, he asked the camp in the park to be dismantled immediately. The Platform responded by saying that this was a decision to be made by the protestors and the issue was debated at seven different spots inside the park the next day. This was a striking confrontation over democracy; while the Prime Minister defined democratic participation with the ballot box, the protestors responded with a deliberation process forging direct democracy.

Nevertheless, Erdoğan was determined to evacuate the park within the weekend in which he organized two spectacular rallies in Ankara and Istanbul. In his speech in Ankara, he signaled that the police raid was in order: "it is either evacuated voluntarily, or our security forces know how to evacuate the park."[75] The police stormed the park with the utmost aggression a few hours after Erdoğan's speech on that Saturday afternoon, although the protestors had already made a decision to dismantle the camp and leave only one symbolic tent. Together with the park, the hotel across the street, which was also used as an infirmary, was also raided with excessive use of tear gas. Doctors tending to the injured protestors were arrested together with their patients. The violence exercised on the encampment once again escalated tension across the country. There were protests in almost all cities. Taksim Square was a no man's land throughout the next day since neither vehicles nor pedestrians were allowed into the Square.

Beyond Occupation

In the weeks that followed, the protests gradually faded; this was due in part to police brutality that resulted in six dead and more than eight thousand injured. It was also due to the suppression of the protests via subsequent arrests and legal cases. According to the General Directorate of Police Forces, there had been 5,532 protests in eighty of eighty-one provinces across the country, and the number of people that attended these protests was 3.6 million. The number of detainees as of the first week of September was 5,513, and 189 of these were arrested.[76] Nevertheless, if we turn to the politics of public space, the evacuation of the Square led to the emergence of different means of pursuing the protests. While frequent attempts to organize demonstrations in the Square were dispersed by the police, the most significant thing was the emergence of forums for discussing how to continue with the protests and to turn it into a long lasting political mechanism.

Especially in Istanbul and Ankara, neighborhood forums organized among themselves as well as with each other through a network in social media. The website serving to communicate the forums with national and international supporters is appropriately named everywheretaksim.net. The repetitive use of the parks for political action turns them into public spaces of appearance transforming its users into political subjects demanding democracy and their right to participation. Moreover, this situation is the materialization of the slogan "Everywhere is Taksim"; the spirit of occupation in Taksim is alive despite the government's attempt to crush it. The protests have found a way to retreat without being defeated. While these micro-public spaces emerge through their repetitive use, Taksim is still the center keeping this network of public spaces in place.

Castells notes how the New Yorkers occupying Zuccotti Park and the occupiers of Catalunya Square in Barcelona both named their first encampments "Tahrir Square." According to him, this is the result of the feeling of empowerment transmitted and shared through networks; "through togetherness built in the networks of cyberspace and in the communities of urban space."[77] In a similar way, the name Taksim continues to inspire the forums all around the country and the production of new public spaces. Moreover, Taksim is also still the focal point for both the protestors as well as the government. While there have been numerous demonstrations quickly put up by the police, the government attempted to use the month of Ramadan to introduce spatial practices to reproduce the Square in Islamic terms. The Square was used as the location of free fast breaking meals in the evenings. While the Square was filled with tables and fifteen hundred people were served dinner every evening, the *anti-capitalist Muslims* responded with "earth tables" they established on the ground along İstiklal Street. The two versions of breaking fast were in stark contrast. The former reflected state authority both in terms of the organization of dinners (in the form of charity provided by the powerful and received by the powerless) as well as the strict control of the space by police forces. The latter, in contrast, was a potluck expressing humility and solidarity. The disruptive character of the "earth tables" shared by hundreds of people sitting shoulder to shoulder on the ground in İstiklal Street was illustrated with the police barricades blocking their access to the Square. While the state tries to dominate the public space by controlling the spatial practices occurring in it, as proved by the "earth tables" and the network of ongoing forums, the appropriation of public space does not even require its physical occupation; the public space can even function as a central lacuna serving to create new public spaces by using it as a signifier.

Conclusion

Above, I have discussed the politics of public space through the history of Taksim Square. Designed as an instrument of nation-building, Taksim Square reflected the tensions inherent to the project of nation building. The nation-state aimed at social engineering towards creating politically conscious citizens, yet narrowly defined the limits of politics excluding minorities and silencing opposition. Nevertheless, the political potentials of urban everyday life always eroded the codes and conventions defined for public spaces by the state. This intrinsic tension is a key to the politics of public space and generates dynamism expanding civil society, which has often met with state intervention especially in the developing world and particularly in the context of the Cold War. In this context, the rise of democratic public space has been the result of the mutual interaction between two bottom-up impetuses; the immanent politics of the social (the political character of everyday life) and the socialization of the political (civil political action).

The neoliberal era we live in seems to once again bring the politics of public space to the foreground. The commercialization of urban space, together with inner-city gentrification projects led to the decline of public space as a domain of heterogeneity and free access. Moreover, the introduction of control measures with increasingly technological surveillance systems

brought the state back into the (re)production of public space with the justification of public security. In other words, state control (re)emerges as a major force in public space. The peculiarity of the Turkish case in this context is the political dominance of neoliberal Islamism, which utilizes state power to institute an ideological framework to the neoliberalization of public space. I have defined the particular strategy of neoliberal Islamism in producing public space as "banal politicization," which is a combination of the *banalization of urban space* (through its commercialization) and the *hyper-politicization of architecture* serving for self-orientalization.

When the government came up with a comprehensive transformation project regarding Taksim Square as the urban center of the world city of Istanbul, public space emerged as a focus of spontaneous resistance. Moreover, the square became the symbol of opposition against the Islamization of social and cultural domains as a result of Taksim's historical memory. In other words, the reaction to the domination of everyday life through Islamization juxtaposed with anti-gentrification protests. The right to the city, that is, the right to enjoy public space freely turned into an overarching demand amplifying the protests beyond the original environmentalist cause. The conclusion we can derive from the case of Taksim regarding the politics of public space is its irreducibility: public space cannot be reduced to either its social centrality in urban life or its political function. On the contrary, the dialectics between the immanent politics of the social and the socialization of the political can turn the public space into a focal point juxtaposing diverse issues of contestation even beyond urban politics. As the recent episode in the history of Taksim Sqaure has illustrated, public space also exists as a virtual space in collective consciousness and can prevail as a political focus despite its strict control and the restriction of any kind of political action in it.

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Notes

1. S. Low, *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2000); D. Mitchell, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2003).
2. A. Madanipour, *Whose Public Space? International Case Studies in Urban Design and Development* (London: Routledge, 2010); J. Hou, ed., *Insurgent Public Space: Guerilla Urbanism and the Remaking of Contemporary Cities* (London: Routledge, 2010).
3. H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
4. H. Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, transl. S. Elden and G. Moore (London: Continuum, 2004)
5. N. K. Lee, "How Is a Political Public Space Made? – The Birth of Tiananmen Square and the May Fourth Movement," *Political Geography* 28/1 (2009): 32–43.
6. L. İ. Baruh, "The Transformation of the 'Modern' Axis of Nineteenth-Century Istanbul: Property, Investments and Elites from Taksim Square to Sirkeci Station" (PhD dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2009).
7. For the nineteenth-century development of Pera-Beyoğlu, see Z. Çelik, *The Making of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993);

M. Cezar, *XIX. Yüzyıl Beyoğlusu* (İstanbul: Akbank, 1991); N. Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera* (Istanbul: Literatür, 2002).

8. L. İ. Baruh, "The Transformation of the 'Modern' Axis."
9. J. G. Bennett, *Tanık: Bir Arayışın Hikayesi* (Istanbul: YKY, 2006), 54 [original edition: J. G. Bennett, *Witness: The Story of a Search* (London, Hodder and Stoughton 1962)]; H. C. Armstrong, *Turkey in Travail: The Birth of a New Nation* (London: John Lane, 1925), 72–75.
10. N. B. Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation, 1918-1923* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 87.
11. G. H. Shaw, American Ghargé d'Affaires ad interim in Istanbul, provides interesting cases illustrating the Turkish family life in transformation in his "strictly confidential" report sent to the U.S. State Department in 1933. See G. H. Shaw, *Family Life in the Turkish Republic of the 1930s*, presented and annotated by R. N. Bali (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2007). See pages 27, 30, 81, 95 for cases particularly mentioning the Pera district.
12. N. B. Criss, *Istanbul under Allied Occupation*, 66.
13. N. Henderson, *Water under the Bridges* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1945), 126.
14. A. Mills, *Streets of Memory: Landscape, Tolerence and National Identity in Istanbul* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 52.
15. For the history of Taksim Square, see Ç. Gülersoy, *Taksim: Bir Meydanın Hikayesi* (İstanbul: İstanbul Kitaplığı, 1986); H. Kuruyazıcı, "Cumhuriyetin Istanbul'daki Simgesi: Taksim Cumhuriyet Meydanı", in O. Baydar, ed., *Bilanço '98: 75 Yılda Degişen Kent ve Mimarlık* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yay, 1998), 889–98; and M. Öztaş, *Taksim: Bir Şenliği Yaşamak* (Istanbul: Heyamola, 2010).
16. See L. J. Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* (London: Routledge, 1992). The utilization of public spaces in nation-building has been discussed in distinct cultural contexts. For example, see G. Shatkin, "Colonial Capital, Modernist Capital, Global Capital: The Changing Political Symbolism of Urban Space in Metro Manila, the Philippines," *Pacific Affairs* 78, no. 4 (2005): 577– 600 on Manila; H. H. Khondker, "Dhaka and the Contestation over the Public Space," *City* 13, no. 1 (2009): 129–36 on Dhaka; A. Z. Khan, "On Design and Politics of Co-producing Public Space: The Long Marches and the Reincarnation of the 'Forecourt' of the Pakistani Nation," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 2, no. 1 (2013): 125–56 on Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad.
17. Karaosmanoğlu depicts a scene in his novel, where the local people watched the new bourgeoisie attending a ball at Ankara Palas with curiosity. See Y. K. Karaosmanoğlu, *Ankara* (Istanbul: İletişim, 1999), 116–17.
18. See R. N. Bali, *Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni, 1923-1945* (Istanbul: İletişim, 1999); S. Cagaptay, "Race, Assimilation and Kemalism: Turkish Nationalism and the Minorities in the 1930s," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 3 (2004): 86–101.
19. For details, see R. N. Bali, *Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni*, 109–31.
20. I owe this phrase to Barış Ünlü who had proposed it during a discussion.
21. For a detailed study on Kızılay Square, see B. Batuman, *The Politics of Public Space: Domination and Appropriation in and of Kızılay Square* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2009).
22. For detailed analyses on the planning processes of the two cities, see G. Tankut, *Bir Başkentin İmarı – Ankara: 1923–1939* (Istanbul: Altın Kitaplar, 1994); and A. Cengizkan, *Ankara'nın İlk Planı: 1924–25 Lörcher Planı* (Ankara: Ankara Enstitüsü Vakfı, 2004) on Ankara; İ. Y. Akpınar, "The Rebuilding of Istanbul after the Plan of Henri Prost, 1937–1960: From Secularization to Turkish Modernization" (PhD dissertation, Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, University College London, 2003); and P. Pinon and C. Bilsel, eds., *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City: Henri Prost's Planning of Istanbul (1936-1951)* (Istanbul: Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2010) on Istanbul.
23. F. C. Bilsel, "Henri Prost's Planning Works in Istanbul (1936-1951): Transforming the Structure of a City through Master Plans and Urban Operations," in P. Pinon and F. C. Bilsel, eds., *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City: Henri Prost's Planning of Istanbul (1936-1951)* (Istanbul: Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2010), 101–66.
24. F. C. Bilsel, "European Side of Istanbul Master Plan," in P. Pinon and F. C. Bilsel, eds., *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City: Henri Prost's Planning of Istanbul (1936-1951)* (Istanbul: Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2010), 250.
25. F. C. Bilsel, "Espaces Libres: Parks, Promenades, Public Squares…" in P. Pinon and F. C. Bilsel, eds., *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City: Henri Prost's Planning of Istanbul (1936-1951)* (Istanbul: Istanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2010), 337–48, 356–57.

26. For a detailed account, see A. Miroğlu, "Pangaltı Ermeni Mezarlığı," *Toplumsal Tarih* 187 (2009): 34–39.
27. For the role of Kızılay headquarters in Kızılay Square, see B. Batuman, *The Politics of Public Space*, 45–46.
28. H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Blackwell, 1991), 164–65. For a discussion, see D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 220–21.
29. H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 310.
30. M. Öztaş, *Taksim*, 108–9.
31. Ç. Gülersoy, *Taksim*, 62–68.
32. İ. Bilgin et al., *Istanbul 1910-2010*; Kent, *Yapılı Çevre ve Mimarlık Kültürü Sergisi* (Istanbul: Bilgi); Öztaş, *Taksim*, 78–85.
33. O. S. Orhon, "Azlık Meselesi," *Akbaba* 443, 10 September 1942, quoted in R. N. Bali, *Tarihin Ufak Bir Dipnotu: Azınlıklar* (Istanbul: Libra, 2013), 110.
34. L. Kırdar, *İstanbul İl ve Belediyesi 8 yılda neler yaptı? 1939-1946* (Istanbul: Istanbul Municipality, 1947), 34.
35. Lefebvre's conceptual triad has been discussed by numerous scholars since the English publication of *The Production of Space* in 1991. For instance, see Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 218–22; E. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell. 1996), 2–13; S. Pile, *The Body and the City; Psychoanalysis, Space and Subjectivity* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 145–74; K. Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 21–24; R. Shields, *Lefebvre, Love and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 160–69; A. Merrifield, *Metromarxism: A Marxist Tale of the City* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 89–90.
36. For details of the Wagon-Lits incidence, see V. İlmen,"Vagon-Li (Yataklı Vagonlar) Olayı," *Tarih ve Toplum* 189 (1999): 25–29; and R. N. Bali, *Bir Türkleştirme Serüveni*, 164–81. A similar but much more tragic event was the anti-Greek pogrom on September 6–7, 1955. Riots were organized in response to the false news that the family home of Kemal Atatürk in Salonika was bombed. Aside from the dead and the injured during the two days, the horrible events accelerated the emigration of Greeks from Istanbul. For details, see S. Vryonis, *The Mechanism of Catastrophe: The Turkish Pogrom of September 6–7, 1955, and the Destruction of the Greek Community of Istanbul* (Greekworks.com, 2005).
37. Eli Shaul, a Turkish Jew accounts his experience in one of these nationalist rallies where the students gathered in Beyazıt and went to Taksim for a rally demanding the annexation of the sanjak of Alexandretta in 1938. His confrontation with the police illustrates both the boldness of nationalist youth and the ethnic limits of nationalist sentiments:

> Now we were part of a crowd. We enjoyed shouting, and we weren't ashamed. A police captain planted himself in front of us. "Pull back from us, what are you doing?" we yelled. And he replied very excitedly: "Am I some Yanni [derogatory term for a Greek]? This is my duty." Beside me was my Greek fellow medical student Tanaş. He looked at my face, I looked at his. "Let's go back," we said. That police had reminded us we were not Turks. (E. Shaul, *From Balat to Bat Yam: Memoirs of a Turkish Jew* [Istanbul: Libra, 2012], 91)

38. H. Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 147.
39. Ç. Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey* (London: Verso, 1987).
40. "Taksim'de Işıklı Reklam Panoları İnşa Edilecek" [Illuminated billboards will be constructed in Taksim], *Milliyet*, 13 April 1955, p. 2
41. "Resmigeçitler Vatan caddesinde Yapılacak" [Processions will be held in Vatan Street], *Milliyet*, 28 July 1959, p. 3
42. "Taksim Meydanı Yeni Bir Şekil Alıyor" [Taksim Square is getting a new shape], *Milliyet*, 14 March 1960, p. 1
43. "50 Liraya Mal Olan Öpüşme" [The Kiss that cost 50 Liras], *Milliyet*, 1 February 1957, p.1.
44. "İş Bankasının 72. Kuruluş yıldönümü törenle kutlandı" [72.Anniversary of İş Bank celebrated], *Milliyet*, 27 August 1951, p. 1; "Malül gaziler şeref günü Taksim Meydanında merasimle kutlandı"

[Veterans' Day celebrated in Taksim Square], *Milliyet*, 27 August 1951, p. 1.

45. "Demokrat İşçi Partisi Mitingi" [The Meeting of the Democrat Workers' Party], *Milliyet*, 25 May 1952; "İşçi sendikaları dün komünizmi tel'in etti" [Workers' Unions condemned Communism yesterday], *Milliyet*, 5 October 1953, p. 1.
46. For the impact of this event on the socialist political consciousness in Turkey, see A. Baykan and H. Tali Hatukab, "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977, Istanbul," *Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 1 (2010): 49–68.
47. Ç. Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey*.
48. E. Coşkun, *Küresel Gözaltı: Elektronik Gizli Dinleme ve Görüntüleme* (Ankara: Ümit Yay., 2000), 32.
49. For the neoliberalization of the Turkish economy, see S. Çam, "Neo-liberalism and Labour within the Context of an 'Emerging Market' Economy—Turkey," *Capital & Class* 26, no. 2 (2002): 89–114; and Z. Öniş, "Beyond the 2001 Financial Crisis: The Political Economy of the New Phase of Neo-liberal Restructuring in Turkey," *Review of International Political Economy* 16, no. 3 (2009): 409–32.
50. I have discussed urban politics of Islamism in Turkey elsewhere; see B. Batuman, "Minarets without Mosques: Limits to the Urban Politics of Neoliberal Islamism," *Urban Studies* 50, no. 6 (2013): 1095–11.
51. J. White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002); C. Tuğal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).
52. The Islamist movement has gone through a significant transformation in the 1990s. This was a result of, on the one hand, the military intervention in 1997 and, on the other, their experience in local and central governments leading them to reconciliation with the market if not with the state. After the outlawing of the RP in 1998 and its successor the Virtue Party (FP) in 2001, the Islamists split into two fractions. While the older generation maintained the radical Islamist discourse of the 1990s, the younger generation led by Erdoğan established the AKP. The party broke away with the anti-capitalist, anti-Western discourse and embraced an agenda of democratization in the face of constant threat from the military. From then on, the AKP strengthened its hegemony through the zealous fulfillment of neoliberal market demands and a populist welfare system utilizing Islamic social networks.
53. Ö. Ünsal and T. Kuyucu, "Challenging the Neoliberal Urban Regime: Regeneration and Resistance in Başıbüyük and Tarlabaşı," in D. Göktürk, L. Soysal, and İ. Türeli, eds., *Orienting Istanbul: Cultural Capital of Europe?* (London: Routledge, 2010), 51–70.
54. D. Harvey, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism," *Geographiska Annaler Series B* 71 (1989): 3–18; N. Brenner and N. Theodore "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism,'" in N. Brenner and N. Theodore, eds., *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe* (London: Blackwell, 2002), 2–32; J. Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology and Development in American Urbanism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).
55. Ç. Keyder, "The Housing Market from Informal to Global," in Ç. Keyder, ed., *Istanbul: Between the Global and the Local* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 143–60.
56. Ç. Keyder, "Istanbul into the Twenty-First Century," in D. Göktürk, L. Soysal, and İ. Türeli, eds., *Orienting Istanbul: Cultural Capital of Europe?* (London: Routledge, 2010), 25–34.
57. M. Sorkin, ed., *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992); A. Light and J. M. Smith, eds., *The Production of Public Space* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998); Mitchell, *The Right to the City.*
58. The conflict escalated in the 2007 presidential elections when the military intervened with a memorandum to prevent the election of an Islamist president. The AKP responded with early elections and won a clear victory, which was followed by the election of Abdullah Gül, formerly the Minister of State and the second man of the party, to the presidency. The final blow was the referendum in 2010, which reorganized the judiciary system and subjected it to government control. This, in return, resulted in the concentration of excessive power in the hands of the government, particularly Prime Minister Erdoğan himself.
59. "Erdoğan'dan Taksim Açıklaması" [Taksim Statement from Erdoğan], *Stargündem*, 4 May 2013, http://www.stargundem.com/siyaset/1314564-erdogandan-taksim-aciklamasi.html (accessed on 18 June 2013).

60. H. A. Yalçıntaş, "Evaluating the Impact of Urban Competitive Advantages on Economic Revitalization of Deprived Inner Cities through a Case Study Held in Istanbul" (PhD dissertation, İzmir Institute of Technology, 2008), 208.
61. I shall take a moment to assess the meaning of mosque proposal in terms of the politics of public space. It is clear that this is an attempt to appropriate the image of public space in response to the exclusion of Islamists from the secular public domain. On the other hand, the demand to build a mosque in Taksim has been manipulated by the mainstream right-wing parties since the 1950s. Although it is beyond the scope of this analysis to discuss the multiple—and at times contradictory—functions and representations of Islam in Turkish politics, it is sufficient to say that political Islam has always been a force moving in and out of mainstream politics defined by the state. In this respect, it is also relevant to say that in terms of the politics of public space, the mosque as an urban intervention swings between domination and appropriation. Moreover, if one considers the current situation in Turkey, political Islam has turned into a hegemonic force in Turkish politics, and it has even become a means of domination over the secular public domain. For the prevailing political role of the mosque in urban politics in Turkey, see S. Şimşek, Z. Polvan, and T. Yeşilşerit, "The Mosque as a Divisive Symbol in the Turkish Political Landscape," *Turkish Studies* 7, no. 3 (2007): 489–508.
62. A. Çınar, "National History as a Contested Site: The Conquest of Istanbul and Islamist Negotiations of the Nation," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, no. 2 (2001): 364–91.
63. E. Akyürek, *Nostalgia for the Modern: State Secularism and Everyday Politics in Turkey* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 125–50.
64. "Taksim'de Türban Eylemi" [Turban Rally in Taksim], *Hüriyet*, 5 February 2008, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/8171749.asp (accessed 11 January 2014).
65. E. Selen, "The Work of Sacrifice: Framing Gender Politics, Racialization and the Significance of Islam in the Lives of Ajda Pekkan and Konca Kuris," *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 17, no. 3 (2007): 347–68. For the confrontations triggered by the entry of the emergent Muslim bourgeoisie into the secularist spheres of consumption, see B. Turam, "The Primacy of Space in Politics: Bargaining Rights, Freedom and Power in an Istanbul Neighborhood," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37, no. 2 (2013): 409–29.
66. H. Kuruyazıcı, "Cumhuriyetin Istanbul'daki Simgesi," 95–96.
67. "İstanbul'a Dev Cami Geliyor" [A colossal mosque is on the way for Istanbul], *Radikal*, 30 May 2012, http://www.radikal.com.tr/politika/istanbula_dev_cami_geliyor-1089547 (accessed 18 June 2013).
68. "Erdoğan: Taksim'e Cami de Yapacağız" [Erdoğan: We will build a mosque in Taksim as well], *Hürriyet*, 2 June 2013, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/23419723.asp (accessed 18 June 2013).
69. G. Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle* (New York: Zone Books, 1994), thesis 165.
70. H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 49.
71. Supporters of the project claimed that the park was used for deviant practices (such as alcohol consumption) and by "marginal groups." Internet forums contain interesting comments regarding the project. For an example, see "Topçu Kışlası Yeniden İnşa Ediliyor," http://wowturkey.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=668&start=270 (accessed 13 January 2014).
72. P. K. Georgiev, *Self-Orientalization in South East Europe* (Berlin: Springer VS, 2012).
73. It is also worth mentioning that the Gezi encampment was not the first protest camp witnessed in Turkey in the recent years. For a discussion of the TEKEL workers' protest camp in Ankara that preceded the Gezi protests, see B. Batuman, "The Political Encampment and the Architecture of Public Space: TEKEL Resistance in Ankara," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 2, no. 1 (2013): 77–100.
74. D. Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso, 2012), 161. Here it is also worth mentioning a somewhat opposing view which also departs from the work of Lefebvre. According to Andy Merrifield, the recent protests should be understood with another Lefebvrian concept, that of the *encounter*: "the recent tumult in Tunisia, Egypt, Greece and Spain, as well as that of the Occupy movement, expresses itself as a dramatic politics of the encounter"; and although these encounters occur in the city streets, "the stake itself isn't about the city per se; rather it's about democracy, … about something simpler and vaster than city politics as we once knew it." See A. Merrifield, *The Politics of the Encounter: Urban Theory and Protest under Planetary Urbanization* (Athens: University of Georgia Press,2013), 33.

75. "Erdoğan: Güvenlik Güçlerimiz Parkı Boşaltmasını Bilir" [Erdoğan: Our security forces know how to evacuate the park], *Radikal*, 15 June 2013, http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/erdogan_guvenlik_guclerimiz_parki_bosaltmasini_bilir-1137753 (accessed 18 June 2013).
76. T. Şardan, "Gezi'den Kalanlar ve Farklı bir Analiz," *Milliyet*, 25 November 2013, http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/gezi-den-kalanlar-ve-farkli-bir/gundem/ydetay/1797280/default.htm (accessed 14 January 2014). See also Amnesty International, *Gezi Park Protests: Brutal Denial of the Right to Peaceful Assembly in Turkey* (London: Amnesty International, 2013).
77. M. Castells, *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), 21.

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