

Contesting claims on public space: The case of the Gezi Park Protests (Istanbul, 2013).

Şirin Fulya Erensoy

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Fig 1. Taksim Square from above

Introduction

The Taksim Gezi Park Protests broke out in May 2013 in reaction to urban development plans. The protests led to the Occupation of the Park for two weeks, followed by ongoing protests, characterized by extreme police brutality. The initial reaction was against Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's plans to replace the Park with a reconstruction of the former Taksim Military Barracks, which would then house a shopping mall. These developments were part of the "Taksim Square Pedestrianization Project", where the whole of Taksim Square has been subject to urban renewal, with the traffic being taken underground and supposedly making the Square 'pedestrian friendly'. However, the insistence on Military Barracks in lieu of the Park is more a spatial manifestation of the government's resurgence of interest in the Ottoman Empire through Neo-Ottoman policies applied to all aspects of society, culture and space.

This paper will look at Taksim Square as a historic space which has seen various ideological groups lay symbolic claims on its configuration, so as to have monopoly over its cultural and national significance. In this sense, it will be argued that this space is seen as a social property, whose symbolism and iconography are constantly being redefined and recreated by their users. [1]

In this context, the Gezi Park Protests will be analyzed as a collective movement demanding the right to public space by occupying it and its surroundings. The current spatial occupation of Taksim Square by government forces will be taken into account, underlining the limitations and restrictions made upon mobilization within this space.

Furthermore, the work of scholars analyzing the Gezi Park Protests through Henri Lefebvre's concept of "right to the city" and Hakim Bey's "temporary autonomous zone" will be evaluated in terms of citizens and their right to participate in the formation and usage of public spaces within cities. [2]



Fig 2. Istiklal Avenue right next to Taksim Square breathes life into the city

New Symbols for a New Republic

Taksim Square, adjacent to Gezi Park and which opens up to the pedestrianized Istiklal Avenue, has long been the center for cultural and social activities (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). Located in the Beyoğlu district of the European side of Istanbul, it is enlivened by pubs, restaurants, night clubs, as well as shopping, exhibition and screening venues, cultural institutions and

consulates: “it is a place which maintains a reciprocal *daily* relationship between its space and the crowd’s trajectories”.[\[3\]](#)



Fig 3. Military barracks before they were torn down to make space for what is now Gezi Park

With the declaration of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, an urban renewal of the city was declared, aimed at symbolically transforming the Muslim-Ottoman realm into a secular-national one. Indeed, the new Republic had to have new symbols of its own, representing the values and the new ideological direction the country was going to take, in contrast to its Ottoman past. While public spaces were namely used for Muslim practices during the Ottoman Empire, the aim was to leave these behind and transform the cities of the new Turkish republic, especially Istanbul, which was no longer the capital but held symbolic significance, according to the processes of modernization into a “secular, modern, civilized, European city”.[\[4\]](#)



Fig 4. Gezi Park today

The monument that is currently on the Square was the first monument to be planned and designed for the republic, and was built in 1928. Later, in 1936, the French urban designer Henri Prost was invited to Turkey to prepare a new plan for the new design of the Istanbul city space. The most significant change that Prost commissioned and that drew a definite departure from the Ottoman Empire and its monuments, was the demolition of the Artillery Barracks (Fig. 3). **Constructed between 1803 and 1806 on top of Protestant and Catholic graveyards, its courtyard was being used as a football stadium since 1921; but the building itself, no longer fulfilling its purpose, stood "as a haunted reminder of the Ottoman past during the early years of the republic".**^[5] The Barracks were destroyed in 1939, and replaced by a park. Named the İnonü Esplanade in 1943; today it is called the Gezi Park, and is the only green space in the center of the city, the only breathing point in an area surrounding by buildings and cars (Fig. 4). **Furthermore, it also became an area where men and women freely enjoyed a mixed social life; participating equally in a secular atmosphere of social and recreational activities, one not possible in the traditional and restrictive neighbourhoods of old Istanbul.**^[6] Moreover, in order to further objectify the new discourses in circulation of the republic, the name of the main avenue Caddesi (meaning Big/Main Street) was replaced with İstiklal (meaning Independence). Indeed, Turkey's image was actively being transformed from a Muslim conservative image into a secular and national one, where Taksim Square functioned "as the central public square of the biggest city of the new state and was to be appropriately decorated to manifest the modernization project hailed by the new republican order".^[7]

Taksim Square and Political Expressions

As the city with the largest population and number of social organizations, Istanbul was inevitably the stage for demonstrations of all kinds, which, during the 1970s, were frequent, large and well organized. Political rallies, public meetings and demonstrations as well as

official ceremonies and parades were organized in Taksim, as it was easily accessible by public transport, making it a focal point for people to converge.

The event that would change the way the citizens would interact within the public space of Taksim Square was the May Day celebrations of 1977. These celebrations were periodically allowed during the Ottoman rule but had been prohibited since the establishment of the Republic. Spontaneous demonstrations did occur, but they were severely repressed and punished by the government. In 1976, May Day celebrations were permitted once again. That year, the demonstrations occurred without any problems nor clashes, leading the way to its permission in 1977 as well.



Fig 5. Image of 500,000 people gathering for May Day celebrations in Taksim Square

The 1970s saw political instability, where militant left-wing and right-wing groups were in constant clashes, creating chaos and anarchy in the streets. These clashes would eventually culminate in the coup d'état of 1980, where the military took over order and repressed any political dissident voices. In the midst of this political atmosphere, 500,000 people gathered for the May Day celebrations of 1977 that would be held in Taksim Square (Fig. 5). However, the event ended in tragedy. Shots were fired by an unidentified assailant, which caused mass panic. Security forces intervened, entering the crowd with armored vehicles and spraying pressurized water in order to disperse crowds. The panic caused by police intervention led many to be trampled. It is said that between 34 to 42 people died due to gun shot wounds, and suffocation due to trampling, while hundreds were injured. No perpetrators were caught or held responsible.

This event led to restrictions and outright bans on public protests and demonstrations in the years to follow, with curfews imposed on the city and the occupation of the Square by soldiers and police forces. In 2010, for the first time after 32 years, the Square was open for May Day celebrations. Yet, in 2013, once again, the celebrations were not allowed, due to construction taking place in the area. **Today, every May Day, all roads going up to Taksim Square are blocked, the metro and buses do not go to the Square. This show of political force**

intends to threaten and challenge all groups who dare question the decisions of the governing party.

This event was pivotal and established a strong physiological link between Taksim and leftist ideology in Turkey.[8] Through the media, the general public is alerted by images of violence, and believe there is a threat coming from extreme left-wing groups, disrupting the order of the city, damaging public property etc.

In this sense, Taksim Square region is a space of political practice where the political willpower of the masses has been played out. This willpower has been met by forces of authority, for whom the public outburst of this demand of political expression is seen as a direct threat to their governance.

Neo-Ottoman Policies of the AKP

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) was elected to power in 2002. They had a conservative agenda, with neo-liberal economic tendencies. Their conservative agenda included an interest in reviving the history of the pre-Republican Ottoman era.[9] Indeed, Erdoğan aligned himself with this identity, as he was often referenced by his predominantly rural conservative supporters, as sultan/emperor. This systematic approach had an effect on all policies, and was further reinforced by Turkey's distancing itself from Europe and forming closer ties with Muslim countries in order to solidify its regional influence.

Although urban regeneration is described as ideas and activities to improve the economic, physical, social and environmental conditions of an area,[10] this was not the approach that was taken for the plans of Istanbul. For Erdoğan, this was an opportunity to build a new Turkey, with new lasting symbols in major cities. Indeed, major projects, including urban infrastructure projects such as the 3rd Bridge over the Bosphorus (opened in August 2016), the new airport (opened in November 2018) and Canal Istanbul (planned construction beginning 2019), have shown that the motivations behind these decisions are more in line with "transforming the urban land into commodity for investors and city management" rather than the "preparation of the urban infrastructure for a potential earthquake, development of the economic conditions of people, preservation of the historical-cultural assets of the city, and improvement of poor living conditions and declined physical environments are crucial for a more safe, liveable and resilient city".[11] Thus, along with ideological motivations, it can be said that the public realm was being sold and privatized, becoming completely built around and at the service of consumerism.

Lefebvre has pointed out that creating your own mark in space is a method to show who is in power. These projects demonstrate that Erdoğan actively pursued this as a goal. Moreover, he promoted an Ottoman-Turkish culture as opposed to a Republican-Secular one. This new cultural policy manifested itself in the spatial presentation and architectural expressions of cities. Projects such as Miniatur, a Turkish miniature theme park and the Islamic Science and Technology Museum aim to represent golden ages of Ottoman Turkish and Islamic civilization. New high-end residential developments such as Panorama 1453 have used Ottoman style facades and architectural examples.



Fig 6. Computer rendering of planned proposal to reintroduce barracks to this public space

This approach to using space symbolically was aimed to be carried out for Taksim as well. The AKP has a problem with secular, republican ideology, for which Taksim was the emblematic symbol. Thus, it had to change. According to Mücella Yapıcı, member of the Chamber of Architects, “the visibility and symbolic significance within the broader public imagination of this particular square is the reason for the government to want to leave its mark there”.[\[12\]](#)

When Erdoğan announced plans to replace Gezi Park with the Artillery Barracks, the symbolic reference and the continuation of Neo-Ottoman policies was not lost on anyone (Fig. 6). As a matter of fact, the reconstruction project was developed, approved by the local municipality in 2011 and kept a secret from the people living in the area, architects and city planners, or conservation specialists.[\[13\]](#) Like many of the other decisions taken in regards to urban space, the project did not aim to benefit the city and its people, but were tied to politically motivated decisions to honor and make connections with the glory days of the Empire. Indeed, during the Protests, Erdoğan addressed the protestors by stating: “Do whatever you like. We’ve made the decision, and we will implement it accordingly. If you have respect for history, research and take a look at what the history of that place called Gezi Park is. We are going to revive history there”.[\[14\]](#)

The Protests

The Gezi Park Protests have added another layer to the historical significance of Taksim square as a public space where political practices are played out and contested.

The possible destruction of the Park lead to immediate reactions by environmentalists. Gezi was an important and unique space, one of the rare green spaces in the central area of the city, a non-commercial space where locals, especially the urban poor, can spend time without having to spend any money. Moreover, as was seen during the earthquake of 1999, Gezi Park served as an important secure and gathering point for those living in the neighborhood.

A group of 10-15 environmentalists put up their tents in the park, the night of 27 May, 2013. **That night, undercover police came and burnt the tents of the environmentalists, when they were sleeping inside.** As the news spread via independent outlets, more people started to flood to Gezi. On 30 May, 2013 the photograph of the ‘Woman in Red’ went viral: in this photo of Ceyda Sungur, an academic at Istanbul Technical University’s urban development department, where she is wearing a red summer dress, a police officer is spraying tear gas right in her face (Fig. 7). It was impossible not to identify with this photo - it had a universality to it: a peaceful protestor standing up for basic human and green values.



Fig 7. Ceyda Sungur (The woman in red) is sprayed with tear gas by unknown police officer.

This image became a catalyst and soon after thousands were at Gezi. The outrage spread to the other cities around the country and support internationally. Occupation of other parks such as Kuğulu Park in Ankara slowly began to shape. The protests were no longer just about protecting the trees and green spaces in cities: what had started as “peaceful environmentalist protestations in central Gezi Park [have] turned into a countrywide upheaval against the neo-liberal and conservative policies of the government” [\[15\]](#)

The protests are characterized as a spontaneous citizen revolt, rather than a politically organized revolution. Youth not part of a civil society organization or a political party: basically not involved in classical ways of political participation. Technically considered to be a ‘depoliticized’ youth, for most of them, it was as the first time they are out on the streets, fighting for a cause. It was the first time they were coming face to face with police brutality. **Eventually citizens of different political and cultural backgrounds joined in; Muslim, secular, LGBT activists, ultra nationalists and trade unions all set their differences aside and rallied together to protect their individual freedoms and values, which they felt were being excluded**

in Prime Minister Erdoğan's neo-Islamic social agenda and ruling style. They felt that the government was dismissing their democratic rights and their way of life.



Fig. 8 CNN Turk during the events of Gezi Park (Left) compared to national CNN coverage of the events.

Saktanber explains the protests through the concept of the “right to the city”, put forth by Lefebvre in 1968, where it equaled sharing the life space of the city, living with differences. Lefebvre argues that, the right to the city should modify, concretize and make more practical the rights of the citizens as urban dwellers and users of multiple services. It would affirm, on the one hand, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in the urban area; **it would also cover the right to the use of the center, a privileged place, instead of being dispersed and stuck into ghettos.** In other words, the right to the city imagines inhabitants to have two main rights: (1) the right to participate centrally in the production of urban space; and (2) the right to appropriate urban space.^[16] Harvey further develops this idea by stating: “To claim the right to the city in the sense I mean it here is to claim some kind of shaping power over the processes of urbanization, over the ways in which our cities are made and remade and to do so in a fundamental and radical way”.^[17] **Indeed, Gezi was a mass response to the privatization of a public space, confiscating this space from the hands of the public. The confrontation between the public and the forces of authority were taking place on this very space; each claiming ownership over it by their physical presence within its borders.**



Fig. 9 The image of the penguin that came to represent the issues of media and the movement to resistance.

As police brutality in Istanbul spiraled out of control on the night of Friday, 31 May 2013, CNN Türk chose to broadcast a documentary on penguins instead of informing the public about the events at Gezi Park (Fig. 8). From this, a penguin wearing a gas mask raising the left fist became a national symbol of media complicity and resistance (Fig. 9). This new caricature spread all over social media and covered the walls of major cities in Turkey as graffiti. As events spread across the country, media channels could no longer ignore the protests. In their reports, media outlets such as Akit blamed extreme left wing organizations for the developments to justify the police brutality and verbally attacked the lifestyle of some protestors in order to win sympathy.[18] They also made sure to always underline was how the protesters' occupation prevented Gezi Park to be used by the public as a public space. Furthermore, they also emphasized the harm done by the protestors to public property.[19] This led to the blossoming of social media use, and the creation of an alternative media. As in the case of the penguin, critical humor was further developed as the protestors appropriated

terms such as ‘Çapulcu’, referencing the Prime Minister’s denunciation of protestors as ‘looters’, and turning it into a collective identity (even Noam Chomsky made a YouTube video where he declares he is a ‘çapulcu’).

The protestors made their physical presence in the Park and surroundings evident by filling up the space with symbols of their resistance: tents to sleep in, art and flags, and eventually forums where the next steps and decisions to be made were discussed in an open manner. Furthermore, the Park became a sharing space, where there were food services offered, cleanings organized, booths were established including a library and a revolutionary museum. Nilüfer Göle summarizes this physically transformed space as “a kind of communal life reminiscent of the peaceful gatherings of the '68 counter cultural movement, with music, environmentalism, politics, flowers and beer”.^[20] More than this however, Gezi managed to organize itself in a way to be self-sufficient: the protestors received medical help and transportation from volunteer doctors, advice and consultancy from volunteer lawyers for judicial cases, the library was established thanks to donations. Broadcasting channels and a bulletin was published. Murat Çetin states that in a sense, Gezi was able to give services in education, health and justice, free of charge; just like the services provided by any social state.^[21] Senem Zeybekoğlu Sadri describes this new configuration of Gezi Park through Lefebvre’s concept of *oeuvre*, which entails that space is an outcome of collective and social production, the Park representing “the free will of people co-existing inside the commune, against social hierarchical order, social norms and social factions dictated by abstract space of ruling power and capital”.^[22] In this sense, the protestors insisted on their right to participate in the decision-making process of future projects within the city.

The transformation of the Gezi Park space can also be characterized as a **temporary autonomous zone**, as defined by Hakim Bey, in which a temporary space is created independent from the institutions in charge of controlling it. He states: “TAZ has a temporary but actual location in time and a temporary but actual location in space”.^[23] This concept seeks to celebrate the creativity, energy and enthusiasm of autonomous uprising, where new ways of being human and co-existing despite differences can be explored.

End of Park Occupation

The Park was evacuated by police forces on 15 June, 2013. They blocked the entrance to the Park, which has been the immediate response to any possible form of mobilization since.

As a result of the evacuation and shut down of Gezi Park, the expression of discontent and the will to find solutions shifted form and adapted to the disruption of existence within the park: forums started to take place in parks across Istanbul and other cities. Claiming green areas, occupying green spaces throughout the city as a symbolic space to find solutions to problems within the country. Furthermore, ‘standing man’ protests, which began in Taksim Square, but then were reported to take place in a variety of different cities, where protestors stand spontaneously for hours in silence (Fig. 10). In other words, Hakim Bey states that the Temporary Autonomous Zone “by its very nature seizes every available means to realize itself”^[24] – that is until authorities notice and crush it.



Fig 10. Image of “standing man” protests in Taksim Square.

It wasn't too long thereafter that Erdoğan went on a 'revenge spree'. There has been an immense crackdown by the government, where they have pursued protesters, media workers, civil society representatives, health workers, lawyers, teachers and many others. They have been subjected to intimidation, investigation and condemnation. Measures were taken, aimed to dissuade people from providing support to any anti-government movement in the future. The media especially was affected by this clampdown: a large-scale purge of journalists critical of the government was undertaken, where, according to TGS (Turkish Journalists' Union), 59 journalists have lost their jobs in connection to the protests.[\[25\]](#) However, Ercan İpekçi says this number is higher, closer to 200 journalists, if you include those pressured to resign.[\[26\]](#)



Fig 11. The current concrete park that greets guests in Taksim square.

Moreover, the state forces have since been trying to keep any type of demonstrations out of Taksim. This is the case every year for the anniversary of the Gezi Park protests, where the police close Gezi Park and block access to Taksim Square. Similarly, while the annual Istanbul Pride attracted thousands in 2013, in 2016 it was officially banned by the governor's office "for the safety of our citizens, first and foremost the participants", and for public order".[\[27\]](#)

Moreover, another recurring demonstration is that of the Saturday Mothers. Every Saturday at 12 pm since 1995, this group has gathered in Galatasaray Square, located on Istiklal Avenue, holding the photograph of their loved ones who have disappeared in police custody since the 1980s, in the Kurdish regions of Turkey. The silent sit-in and peaceful vigil, which demands accountability for politically motivated disappearances and murders, has been interrupted by police violence in the past, but have resumed in 2009. However, in August 2018, the day of the 700th vigil, police forces used water cannon and tear gas as well as detained participants. Since, the gathering on the Square has not been allowed, with police forces blocking access to the location.

The Feminist Women's March (8 March) is the only mass demonstration allowed to be organized on the Avenue, under strict police surveillance, while demonstrations of the same purpose are broken up and restricted in other regions of the country. In any case, it would not be wrong to say that any form of dissent has been classified as unreasonable and outrageous, leading to the necessary punishments.



Fig. 12 Cultural Centered Turned Into Police Base.



Fig.13 Taksim Square mosque under construction.

Today, Taksim is oversaturated with the presence of police cars, fences and barricades as part of the scape. Furthermore, constant ‘construction work’ being conducted in the surroundings has made the Square look uninviting and unpleasant to walk around. Part of the Taksim Pedestrianization Project has been realized, bringing traffic underground, turning the Square into a concrete plane (Fig. 11). Gezi Park has been used as a storage space for construction tools, while the Atatürk Cultural Center remained closed, turning into an informal police base (Fig. 12). It has since been demolished, with plans to build an opera house in its exact quarters. Needless to say, the destruction of the Atatürk Cultural Center, the iconic emblem of the modernization process of the republican era is quite a win for Erdoğan.[28] The Islamization of the the Taksim region has been in the works over the years, with restriction brought upon alcohol consumption in public spaces; chairs and tables in front of bars and restaurants were removed so as to restrict the visibility of such practices to confined and enclosed areas. Since February 2017, the construction of a mosque in the space, on the exact opposite side of the Square, where it would have faced the Atatürk Cultural Center, has begun. Various mosque proposals for Taksim have been put forth during almost all election campaigns since the 1960s. In essence, the conservatives see the mosque as the signature of Istanbul’s Turkish-Islamic culture and as such it has been a recurring theme for Taksim in the speeches of Islamist politicians. Finally a reality, the mosque, which is yet to be finished but which has rapidly come to dominate the Square, was made sure to be as big and as high as two of the historic churches located in the area (Fig. 13). Thus, Erdoğan’s ideological dominance and will power is clearly displayed, with this grandiose symbol in Taksim Square. This cultural reconstruction of the space will further render the Square into a space of prayer and piouness, removing it even more from expressions of alternate voices.

Conclusion

The Gezi Park protests mark an important instance in the Turkish history of social movements where people from different political, ideological, and religious background found themselves together in such large numbers. It further highlighted the deep discontent a large portion of the population felt towards Erdoğan’s method of rule.

It has been 5 years since the Gezi Park Protests have taken place, and Erdoğan has not forgotten about this mass objection to his rule. He is adamant on holding someone responsible, implying that the Protests were an organized attempt against him. In a recent wave of detentions, including staff of Anadolu Kültür, an organization led by Osman Kavala[29], alongside prominent civil society actors, allegations included were “organizing meetings to deepen and spread the Gezi Park protests, inviting trainers and moderators on the subjects of civil disobedience and non-violent activism, carrying out media activities to continue the Gezi Park process and activities to stop the export of tear gas to Turkey”. [30] Whether these allegations are true or not seems to be beside the point: all fall into activities that are legitimate and are protected under the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Thus, political motivations still reign as a dominant factor for urban renewal decision-making processes. If the original Barracks had survived up until today, surely they would be protected as any other historical structure still existing in the city. Yet their reconstruction to house cafeterias, trendy clothing stores and other services in a region of the city where there is an abundance of these consumerist activities, would not seem to fit the needs of the inhabitants, but would rather satisfy the political strategy of one man. Furthermore, this intervention will

result in the elimination of the Gezi Park; a survivor in a context of the loss of green areas in the whole Beyoğlu area.

Public spaces often become victims of political showcase, transformed in order to rewrite histories. However, decisions regarding common spaces should not be made from the top-down, without consulting professionals or the people making use of them. Otherwise, and as the slogan often used during Gezi indicates: ‘Her Yer Taksim, Her Yer Direniş! /Everywhere is Taksim, Everywhere is Resistance!’ People will air their grievances and concerns and demand accountability and their right to have a say in decision-making processes. After all, is this not the basis of a democracy?

Notes

[1] Ayşegül Baykan and Tali Hatuka, “Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977, Istanbul”, *Planning Perspectives* 25, no. 1 (2010): 49-68.

[2] Henri Lefebvre, *Le Droit a la Ville*. Paris: Edition Anthropos, 1968 Hakim Bey, *Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy Poetic Terrorism*. Second Edition. New York: Autonomedia, 2003.

[3] Baykan & Hatuka, “Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space”, 58.

[4] Birge Yıldırım, “Transformation of Public Squares of Istanbul between 1938-1949”, 15th International Planning History Society Conference Sao Paulo, Brazil (2012): 3-4.

[5] İlay Romain Örs, “Genie in the Bottle: Gezi Park, Taksim Square and the Realignment of Democracy and Space in Turkey”, *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 40, no. 4-5 (2014): 5.

[6] Murat Gül, John Dee & Cahide Nur Cünük, “Istanbul’s Taksim Square and Gezi Park: The Place of Protest and the Ideology of Place”, *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* 38, no. 1 (2014): 68. It is important to note here that historically, Beyoğlu’s Pera neighborhood in particular was populated by Levantines and non-Muslims since the 19th century. Pera held a cosmopolitan nature, which came into decline due to the Turkification policies of the Turkish Republic. The new state saw the diversity within this space as a threat to nationalistic purity, implementing discriminatory practices as early as 1932. Eventually, these practices paired with racist attacks led many to leave Beyoğlu.

[7] Örs, “Genie in the Bottle”, 5.

[8] Gül, Dee & Cünük, “Istanbul’s Taksim Square and Gezi Park”, 69

[9] Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had been elected mayor of Istanbul in 1994, when he was part of the Welfare Party, an Islamic party that was later shut down. During his time as mayor, he was already engaged in Islamic discourses with the political aim to Ottomanized Istanbul, namely Taksim, by building a mosque and an Islamic Cultural Center. He often expressed these wishes, saying his aim was to reconquer Istanbul a second time, referencing the conquest of Constantinople by Fatih Sultan Mehmet from the Byzantines (Tanıl Bora, “Fatih’in İstanbul’u”, in *İstanbul Küresel ile Yerel Arasında*, ed. Çağlar Keyder (Istanbul: Metis Yayınları, 1999), 71.

- [10] Peter Roberts, “The Evolution, Definition and purpose of Urban Regeneration”, in Urban Regeneration a Handbook, eds. Peter Roberts, & Hugh Sykes (London: Sage, 2003), 9-36.
- [11] Senem Zeybekođlu Sadri, “Oeuvre vs. Abstract Space: Appropriation of Gezi Park in Istanbul”, Contemporary Urban Affairs 1, no. 2 (2017): 3.
- [12] Glden Erkut, ed., The Case of Beyođlu, Istanbul: Dimensions of Urban Re-development (Technische Universitat Berlin, Urban Management Program, January 2014), 137.
- [13] Zeynep Ahunbay, “Taksim Meydanı ve Toplu Kışlası’nın Yeniden Yapımı: Rekonstrksiyon Tutkusu/ “Hortlatılmak” İstenen Yapılar”, Mimarlık Dergisi 364, March-April 2012,
<http://www.mimarlikdergisi.com/index.cfm?sayfa=mimarlik&DergiSayi=378&RecID=2898#>
- [14] Thomas De Monchaux, “The Mixed-Up Files of Taksim Square Architecture”, The New Republic, 10 June 2013, <https://newrepublic.com/article/113410/taksim-square-protests-over-new-building>
- [15] Sadri, “Oeuvre vs. Abstract Space”, 1.
- [16] Ayşe Saktanber, “Sosyolog’dan Gezi Eylemleri Yorumu”, Cumhuriyet Newspaper, 4 June 2013,
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- [17] David Harvey, “The Right to the City”, New Left Review 53: 24.
- [18] Press release, “Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: Gezi Parkı Pislikten Geçinmiyor!”, online video, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YPJpAoZN90>
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- [20] Nilfer Gle, “Gezi-Anatomy of a Public Square Movement”, Insight Turkey 15, no. 3 (2013): 12.
- [21] Murat Çetin, “Diren-ç-Mekan Taksim Gezisi’nde Kamusal Mekanın Stratejik Gcnn Yeniden Keşfi”, Panorama Khas Bilim Sanat Kltr Dergisi, 11 (July 2013): 26.
- [22] Sadri, “Oevre vs. Abstract Space”, 2.
- [23] Bey, Temporary Autonomous Zone, 108.
- [24] Ibid., 110.
- [25] “Turkish Journalists fired over coverage of Gezi Park Protests”, Independent, 23 July 2013, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/turkish-journalists-fired-over-coverage-of-gezi-park-protests-8727133.html>

[26] Ethical Journalism Network, Censorship in the Park: Turkish Media Trapped by Politics and Corruption. 2014, 10.

[27] T.C. İstanbul Valiliği, Basın Duyurusu, 17 June 2016,
<http://istanbul.gov.tr/tr/guncel/haberler/basin-duyurusu-17062016>

[28] The Atatürk Cultural Center was first opened in 1969 as the Istanbul Cultural Palace. It was shut down due to a fire in 1970 and reopened as the Atatürk Cultural Center in 1978. The building has had its fair share of infrastructural problems, which have led to discussions about its demolition since 2010. Government officials have stated that renovation work would cost as much as demolishing it and replacing it with a stronger structure. On the other hand, architects and city planners have underlined the Center’s symbolic and architectural value in modern Turkish architecture (Murat Tabanlıoğlu, “AKM Salt Bir Bina Değil Bir Simge Yapıdır”, Radikal Gazetesi, 19 March 2007,
<http://www.arkitera.com/news.php?action=displayNewsItem&ID=15245>).

[29] Osman Kavala is a businessman who has made significant contributions to the cultural sphere in Turkey, since the 1980 coup d’état. He has dedicated himself to civil society work, where in 2002 he founded Anadolu Kültür, aimed at enabling “the production, viewing and sharing of arts and culture in Turkey, supporting local initiatives, emphasizing cultural diversity and rights and strengthening local and international collaborations.” (Free Osman Kavala, <https://www.osmankavala.org/en/about-osman-kavala>). He was taken under custody on 18 October 2017, and has since been kept behind bars without having been charged with an offence.

[30] Andrew Gardner, “Turkey’s Brutal Crackdown Continues with New Wave Detentions of Activists and Academics”, Amnesty International, 16 November 2018,
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/11/turkey-brutal-crackdown-continues-with-new-wave-of-detentions-of-activists-and-academics/>