
Berin F. Gür

*Space and Culture* 2002; 5: 237
DOI: 10.1177/1206331202005003004

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://sac.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/5/3/237

Additional services and information for *Space and Culture* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://sac.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://sac.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

Citations http://sac.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/5/3/237
This study focuses on the problem of the reconstruction of urban space through discursive representations. Understanding how discourse is spatialised will provide a conceptual ground for the discussion of the problem. The evaluation of knowledge, power, and representation in spatial terms becomes the fundamental premise in the study. Urban space is the space where discursive representations have a social and spatial existence. Here, urban space is approached as an archival space that renders spatial-social-political information visible. The problem is studied in reference to the Sultanahmet district in Istanbul. The Sultanahmet district is an urban palimpsest whose archival structure has been made through discursive representations, each constructed on the preceding one.

As is implied in the title, this study will concentrate on two mutually reinforcing points. My first point focuses on how discourse is spatialised, and the second discusses the reconstruction of urban space through discursive representations. Spatialisation is political; it is both a cause and an effect of relations of power. Spatialisation as a term puts space at the centre of the arguments on dialectical relations between power, knowledge, discourse, and representation and inserts space into social thought and imagination. In so doing, it helps us to explain the manner in which social and spatial relations are mutually inclusive and constitutive of each other and how society and space are simultaneously realized by thinking, experiencing, and making social actors. This entailment in spatialisation connects mental and material space with spatial metaphors/symbols of the social.
This article argues that space is constituted by process-based relations that are heterogeneous and fluid. The dialectical associations of social and spatial relations, which are inherently historical, become the fundamental premise in the understanding of (social) space. As formulated by Lefebvre (1976), “it is space that produces reproduction of socio-spatial dialectics by introducing into it its multiple contradictions” (p. 19). In this sense, space, as a dialectical component of the inseparable (social and spatial) relations of production, is where these relations are reproduced in “a socially concretized and created spatiality.” As social space embraces both mental-ideological and material-physical dimensions of space, it also moves through social imaginations, charged with signs and symbols of ideologies. It is filled with politics and ideologies. This article argues that urban space theory in particular should try to understand the processes and social forces that constitute the city and urban space. Specifically, it is the knowledge or discourse of productive processes that constructs spatiality-sociality-historicity of urban space—the collective memory of urban space and its spatial metaphors embracing a social thought and embodied in a physical form.

These two mutually supporting and inclusive points will be discussed in reference to a particular case study, namely, the urban space in Sultanahmet, Istanbul-Turkey, where the world famous Byzantine edifice Hagia Sophia and the Ottoman feature known as the Blue Mosque are located. Attention will be given to the dominant social processes operating with the intervention of political power, as they would affect, shape, reconstruct, and transform the urban space of Sultanahmet.

**Terminology**

Before moving on to Sultanahmet, I will first attempt to clarify how this study defines the terms power, knowledge, discourse, and representation. In reference to Foucault, power is a transformative and productive social force. It appears as the main feature of social life, yet it is structured differently depending on geography, society, and historical contingency. Power is a relative and spatio-temporal concept that cannot be thought apart from knowledge. Power and knowledge are mutually constitutive and inclusive. They are both constitutive of—and themselves constituted by—contradictory social relations. Knowledge is made meaningful through relations of power. They function simultaneously in two distinct ways. That is to say that knowledge either increases or subverts power’s most dominant effects. By amplifying power, knowledge serves and controls power and in turn appears as a symbolic form of power. On the contrary, subversive forms of knowledge are resistive (e.g., feminism). The social construction of these two modes of knowledge is realized only through the mediation of power; they are, in fact, simultaneously existing modes of power: struggles of reaction and struggles of resistance.

The way in which knowledge operates in conjunction with power is material and symbolic (of which discourse is the political, social, cultural, economic instrument). As stated by Foucault in the book *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), “knowledge” and “reality” produce discourses that are inseparably connected to the exercises of power. This study believes that discourse is a constructed knowledge formulating tactics and strategies of power and acts as a socially institutionalized device for operations of power. It is shaped to a certain degree by the uneven exchange with power political, power intellectual, power cultural, and power moral. In this sense, discourse
becomes a cultural and political-ideological fact; it comes up with supporting institutions of political, economic, cultural, and social structures with vocabulary, imagery, doctrines, and modes of behaviour. It inserts a kind of geopolitical awareness into mental, material, and imaginative realms that make up representations. Representation is a contextual and space-bound concept that is first embedded in language and then in the institutions of culture and political domain. It refers to a geography, social identity, social thought, and imagination. “Orientalism,” for example, as a discourse becomes the enormously systematic discipline by which the Orient as a representation is produced politically, sociologically, ideologically, militarily, scientifically, and imaginatively (Said, 1995, p. 3). Of course, the Orient also indicates a specific geographical region, namely, the East.

Representation rests on the dialectical associations between discursive and nondiscursive, real and imaginary. The dialectical associations fluctuate in respect to the dominant mode of production, the mode of social formation and time in question, which in turn makes the representation inherently paradoxical and unsettled. Then, each representation is involved in a process that continuously constructs and reconstructs the borders and the framework of what is real and what is to be expected from what is real.

In other words, it constructs the way in which we should act toward what is real. That is, in fact, the production of imaginary solutions: With an engagement in a discourse through the mediation of power-knowledge, each representation produces imaginary/symbolic solutions to the real demands of social life. This engagement is inherently political and social and directs our sensations of real and imaginary, of material and symbolic. Discursive representation becomes dominant in any society by constituting an order through control over knowledge, signs, and codes. The controlling power of any discursive represen-
tation depends on the ideology of the spoken word and written word, between lan-
guage and discourse.

To understand the dialectical relations between power, knowledge, discourse, and
representation, it might help to think through spatial terms. The reassertion of space
into the critical thought and imagination helps us understand the activities in mental,
material, and imaginative realms. Foucault’s (1980) insistence on the fact that “a whole
history remains to be written of spaces—which would at the same time be the history
of powers . . . from the great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habi-
tat” (p. 149) opens up the spatiality of representations in conjunction with the ques-
tions of power-knowledge-discourse.

The Spatialisation of Discursive Representations

Today in Turkey, Islam, as a global religious discourse, is becoming a social-political
force in localizing the global and globalizing the local. The rise of religious discourse
is a part of the politically conscious counter-hegemonic effort, which offers individual
subjects a place and a social identity with an adherence to Islam in the national-yet-
globalizing Turkish society. Islamic discourse comes out of an alternative project of
civilization, one of secularization. As such, urban space, in particular, becomes the
principal stake of goal-directed actions and struggles of representations; it is both con-
stituent subject and constituted object of discursive acts. Urban space, concurrently, is
represented and itself becomes the representation; it is where the power of spatial rep-
 resentation and the spatial representation of power reinforce each other. For example,
the city of Istanbul is the last and only capital of the Islamic world and is the focus and
locus of the political Islamic discourse in Turkey.

Conceptually, this study approaches urban space as the materialization of discur-
sive representations, of power struggles through using the means of architecture. Disc-
cursive operations with their extensions of spatial practices expose arguments over the
construction of collective memory and the spatiality-sociality-historicality of urban
space, which will be evaluated in the case of the Sultanahmet district.

Framing the Study Area: The Sultanahmet District

Today, three columns and a fountain form an imaginary longitudinal axis—
spina—along the Sultanahmet Square (the historical centre of the district). The Bur-
mali Sütun (the Serpent Column) was brought from Delphic Apollo in 325 A.D.,
whereas Dikilitash (the Obelisk) came from Karnak, Egypt, in 390 A.D. Örme Tash
(the Obelisk) is thought to have been constructed in the 10th century A.D., whereas
Alman Çешmesi (the Fountain of Kaiser Wilhelm) was constructed in 1900 A.D. In
addition to those surviving monuments, there were demolished pointal monuments
that were, like the surviving ones, “spoils from treasures of the past, their relics, their
memories” (Erkal, 1998).

Through dislocating history, the city constructed its own history and also its sym-
 bolic and mythical repertoire. To the north is Hagia Sophia constructed in 537 A.D.
by Justinianus. In the 1610s, the Sultanahmet Mosque (the Blue Mosque) was built.
Together, they have become prominent architectural features of the silhouette of Is-
tanbul. To the west is the Ottoman grand vizier’s Ibrahim Pasha Palace constructed in the 16th century, now converted into the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art. To the south, at the curved end of the square, is the remaining part of the Constantine’s hippodrome: the splendone, the arcade substructures, which still rise 20 meters high from the slope. From the northernwestern corner of the square starts the ritual-royal way of the major powers (the Byzantine-Ottoman Empires): the Mése in Byzantine and Divanyolu in Ottoman periods. At the starting point of the Mése-Divanyolu is the monument known as Milion (i.e., zero point). On the northeasteren side, the Topkapı Palace—the residence of the Ottoman Sultans—stands itself as an isolated urban complex that forms a strong border to the historical centre through its fortified walls. The periphery, particularly the area between the square (i.e., the centre) and the Marmara Sea, contains a mixture of residences and tourism-based activities such as hotels, pensions, cafes, and shops.

Sultanahmet: An Urban Palimpsest and an Archival Space

The Sultanahmet district has a strategic positioning in the urban-spatial history of the city of Istanbul-Constantinople, which “experienced almost 1700 years as a caput mundi, metropolis mundi” (Ortayli, 1996, p. 54). The city was the capital of such major powers as the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires and in turn the capital of different world religions, namely, the Pagan tradition, the Christian world, and the Islamic world. Having been located at the meeting point of the important trade-transportation routes from different directions, during the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires the city developed as a decision-making centre whose circle of influence extended from the limits of the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

Sultanahmet was the monumental locus from which urban-spatial developments in the city started. The district (and the square) was named hippodrome during the Byzantine period and atmeydani during the Ottoman period. The urban space of Sultanahmet was always the space of the central authorities, of political-religious powers. Through history and still today, its urban space has always been the constituent subject and constituted object of discursive representations. The urban space of Sultanahmet stands as the materialization of the city’s historical identity and global image. Today, what makes it the focus and locus of strategies of political powers is its historic global image constituted through the layers of civilizations.

Sultanahmet is an urban palimpsest. Each layer is “constructed upon the ruins of the previous one” (Kuban, 1996, p. 1) and continues to survive with their imprints on today’s urban fabric (see Figure 1, the map of the superimposed layers of the Sultanahmet district by Müller-Wiener 1977). These layers together form the collective memory of the district and provide continuity in the social-spatial history of the district. The archival content (physical-social-political) of the district has been made through the knowledge of successive representations. Each discursive representation initiated by the patriarchal societies—namely, the Byzantine-Christian and Ottoman-Islamic hegemony—as part of the Turkish Republican ideology (that is nationalist and secularist) and by the consumer society has inscribed its social and spatial existence in Sultanahmet and in turn has contributed to the construction of the knowledge of this particular urban space. Thus, the Sultanahmet district whose earliest layer goes back to the date 330 A.D., to the period of “Romanization,” is an archive of visual evidences embracing the layers of physical-social-political information.
Here, urban space is approached as an archive, an archival space that is made and created through discursive representations. The term *archival space* is employed to refer to the making of history with the social production of space, which cannot be considered apart from the power struggles. The Sultanahmet district that appears as an archival urban space superimposes layers of heterogeneous information: From the foundation of the city to our day, it juxtaposes and combines all the physical and spatial evidences as the reflections of its social-political topography. Sultanahmet illustrates how society and power are simultaneously represented in a spatial sense. It is a concrete example of the spatial representation of sociality and power. Changes in the social-political topography of the hippodrome-atmeydani-Sultanahmet have been mirrored by visual evidences, architectural structures, and monuments. The location of buildings and the urban texture are representative of politics and ideologies (such as the church Hagia Sophia, the Sultanahmet mosque, the Great Palace—today under the foundations of the Sultanahmet Mosque, the hippodrome, the procession road, Mése, or Divanyolu).

**Evaluation of the Spatialisation of Discursive Representations in Sultanahmet**

The material practices entailed in the reconstruction and experiential qualities of the urban space of Sultanahmet are dialectically interrelated with how spaces are represented in a discourse and how spaces are used as representations. Actually, this recalls the Lefebvrian dialectical matrix, “thematic dialectical triple of spatiality” that is so primary to the reading of his book *The Production of Space* (Lefebvre, 1991). The matrix is the most creative contribution to an understanding of social space which dialectically links spatial concepts, namely, “representations of space,” “spatial practice,” and “representational spaces/spaces of representation.” It provides a framework that treats the activities of materiality, representation, and imagination as dialectically constitutive of each other. Representations of space are presuppositionally connected with social thought and imagination. Thus, to understand how urban space is materialized and experienced, one should look into how urban space is constituted in the mental realm. In combining physical and mental, things and thought, real and imagined, the significance of the power is simultaneously embodied within lived spaces of representation, namely, the symbolic spaces. The lived symbolic urban spaces of Sultanahmet in particular are both real and imagined, both represented by and representation of politics.

Being an urban palimpsest and an archival space, Sultanahmet calls for a study that presents the political-social-physical topography of its particular location. Then, the study itself becomes a reconstruction which is grounded on the knowledge of the district, its archival (both written and visual) sources. This is in fact the reconstruction of the historical knowledge superimposed on each other, which is presumably social and spatial.

The policies of Romanization and Christianization, Ottomanization and Islamization, Westernization and modernization, civilization and nationalism, and capitalism mark the ruptures in the continuity of the spatial-social-political history of this particular area. Being the most prominent open public space of both the city and the Mediterranean world during the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, the hippodrome-
atmeydani was constructed to represent sovereign and sacred power and authority. As the social space of control, this particular urban space was transformed by the policies of modernization and civilization within the context of the “Kemalist project” of the early Republican era. However, particularly after the 1980s, it has become a centre of consumer society. Through the physical and social layers of discursive representations, the historic global image of the Sultanahmet district has been replaced by a more local one. Today, the urban space in Sultanahmet has become the spatial representation of the local with tourist-based strategies attracting global capital. This discussion will be further developed toward the end of the study.

Each political domination comes with its own constituted social norms—modes of social relations and knowledge and practice involved into the reconstruction processes of urban space. The specificity of spatialisation of the dialectical associations in urban space is dependent on the mode of production imposed by each domination. In relation with their ideas, ideologies, and representations mutually constituted with politics, they determine the styles of the production. Each has produced its own spatial and social lexicon, architectural index of signs and symbols; in other words, each constitutes a social thought having an existence in space through architecture. Then, each political and in turn social domination has marked its existence on the urban space in the Sultanahmet district by erecting its own architecture and by converting the existing ones in accordance with the norms of the new domination. The Byzantine built a hippodrome, a forum as the material evidences of the Roman city, whereas the Ottomans built a külliye as a religious and imperial complex, as the material representation of the Islamic Empire. And the capital-based mode of production has used this architectural inheritance by converting them into the service of the global capital.

Spatialisation of the Policies of Romanization and Christianization

Constantine the Great’s construction program made the hippodrome and its nearby environment the main centre of administration, religion, and entertainment. The hippodrome served as the main stage for the emperor as well as for the public disciplining of criminals. In the course of time, the hippodrome with its institutional buildings turned into the political arena of the city where political-administrative decisions were discussed and where people revolted against the central authority.

The discourse of political domination accepted the city as “a step from paradise,” “a paradise of artifacts, not given but made” (Miller, 1969, p. 7). It was the emperor metaphorically equalized to God, who created and recreated the city as a sacralized place of God. Formation of the city’s identity as the Christian-Imperial city was reflected in a distinct spatial pattern, the materialization of the central authority, the ruler-God. For example, the Mesé, the hippodrome, the church, and the palace altogether stood for the solidification of power-referent ideology in the material and social sense. The Mesé was established as a royal-ritual street for “an instrumentality of power” that began at the Milion—erected as a monument for the “materialization of the power of measurement”—marking the zero point of the world from which all secular distances must be calculated (Miller, 1969, pp. 15, 17). The hippodrome was constructed as a socializing centre for concentration and control of population. It was the great popular locus of concentration where the orderer-protector emperor met his
ordered-protected subjects/citizens and controlled the ritual and social activities (such as ceremonies and sport games) displayed by the constitutional people called Deme.7

The placement of the church, Hagia Sophia,8 in a prominent position together with the Imperial Palace, known as the Great Palace, and the hippodrome was equally loaded with political considerations. This was the result of Constantine’s “political theology” (Krautheimer, 1983, p. 3) aimed at the reconciliation of the Christian faith and belief in Imperial dignity. As the ruler of world and the representative of God on earth, Constantine monopolized all the powers of state and the church.

The hippodrome together with its environment was not merely the administrative, religious, entertainment, cultural, and ritual centre; it also formed a synecdoche.9 The site became a rhetorical figure metaphorically compressed so as to include all and recapitulate the city. By reconstructing the district, it became both represented by and a significant representation of Constantinople. Empire was concentrated and symbolically and iconically represented through material-architectural edifices, namely, the church and the palace. The hippodrome area was symbolically a ceremonial space dedicated to the divine ruler, a sacred space dominated by the religious monument, and a political arena.

Spatialisation of the Policies of Ottomanization and Islamization

With the conquest of Istanbul by the Ottomans in 1453, the city’s identity was transformed by Ottoman and Islamic influences. The prominent spatial focus in the city was once more the hippodrome, now called atmeydani. It provided a space for imperial events, rituals, circumcision feasts, wedding ceremonies of the relatives of the Sultan, exercises of the military personnel such as javelin games (cirit in Turkish), the display of criminals condemned to death, and once again uprisings and revolts against the central authority (such as the Janissary revolts).

Such activities were determined in accordance with the patrimonial structure of the Ottoman society, which was ruled by a sovereign associated with a religious status (Khalife of the Islamic world). The structure was embodied in the supporting administrative organs and particularly in the institutions of religion. The Islamic institution of waaf, a pious foundation, constituted the basis of the Ottoman urban-spatial pattern and played an important role in the physical and social materialization of Islamic central authority. This political structure constructed a centralist discourse that declared the political authority and the religion as equal and accepted them as sacralized. The discourse imposed the policies of Ottomanization and Islamization and manifested a will toward making Istanbul the capital of the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world. The verbal signs were accomplished with a spatial and social existence through the practices of architecture enforcing the projects of Ottomanization and Islamization. Thus, the architecture would represent the sacralized power of the central authority, the greatness of the empire, and the religion. Istanbul, as the seat of the Ottoman Sultan-Khalife, gained a special character and sacralized itself as the capital of the Islamic world.

In constructing “a global city,” the Ottomans continued to use the existing Byzantine urban-spatial features by extending, restoring, rehabilitating, and converting them in accordance with the needs of the Ottoman society. In particular, Byzantine structures of the Mesé, now called Divanyolu (which was extended, and still the city
boulevard was used as the procession road of the ruler-sultan), and the hippodrome (as the entertainment, religious, and administrative centre) formed the basis of the spatial developments in the Ottoman period.

Reconstruction programs and projects of Istanbul during the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires were, in fact, the construction of dialectics of spatiality-sociality-historicality by the central authority. Architectural representations—such as the hippodrome, church, imperial palaces, and mosque—embodied a social thought expressed in signs, symbols, and metaphors, commonly associated with social practices and social/political messages. The construction of space-society-history was defined particularly with local characteristics (with Roman and Christian aspects in Byzantine, and Eastern, Turkish, and Islamic aspects in Ottoman). Thus, it remains local within a world scale, yet it remains global within the territory of the empire. The hippodrome-ameydani was architecturally globalized through the Hagia Sophia, the Great Palace, and the Sultanahmet Mosque.

Patriarchal epistemologies characteristically accept the central authority—the state as the owner, controller, and order of geography and populations. This would suggest an institutional structure linking common people to the centre and, in turn, controlling and not permitting them to act as self-generated political powers. In linking his investigation of the production of discourse with questions of power, with play of domination, Foucault (1973) accomplished “an archaeology of social subject” in relation to the space, its “historical constitution” both as the subject and object of the dominant power relations in an organized space. This is, in fact, the constitution of sociality, of social beings (actors), through a discourse by the intervention of the dominant political power. The patrimonial structure that accompanied the Byzantine and later Ottoman society through the institutionalization of taxation and a guild system created its own actors (the intellectuals, administrative, military personnel). These social actors took their roles in the formation of the city and defined the city’s spatial structure and social life. Until the 18th century and the Ottoman Empire, the city was “a global market” providing a space for concentration of global relations between the West and the East (Eastern and Islamic characteristics). Similar to the constituted people of the Byzantine society (Demes), the constituted city dweller of the Ottoman society obeyed the superiority of the central authority. By the mid-18th century, which marked an important breaking point in the spatial-social-political history of the Ottoman Empire, policies of Westernization and modernization took hold. Adjusting itself to the new
system of world power, the central authority began to reconstruct Islamic administrative structures with European ones. This would embrace the constitution of new social actors, a new type of citizen known as the “Westernizer.” These actors (intellectuals, administrative personnel) were reformist yet remained attached to the central authority. Within a patriarchal framework, these new policies were controlled by the central authority, the Ottoman sultan who, despite the implications of the term modernization, was still a sacred figure.

From the time of Istanbul’s capture, atmeydani was the most prominent focus and locus of centralist discourse. Spatial devices (such as the Imperial Palace, the religious complex), together with the surviving Byzantine structures (Hagia Sophia), became instrumental representations. Here, we should insist on the fact that the space of political power is, at the same time, a constituent subject of a definite type of discourse. As the largest open area of the city, where the world famous Byzantine structures were located, it had the power to manipulate the discourse and control of reconstruction processes. It became the social space of the control where policies of Islamization and Ottomanization were solidified both physically in terms of architectural features and socially in terms of the practice of the social being (see Figure 2).

Continuing the Byzantine tradition, atmeydani remained the central administrative core of the city, a space that included the sultan’s Topkapi Palace and also the residences of both the members of the government and the relatives of the sultan (resembling the Imperial Residence and the Senate House in the Byzantine period). It should be noted that in Byzantine time, the hippodrome together with the surrounding administrative institutions served as a political ground where administrative decisions were produced, whereas in the Ottoman time, the decision-making centre moved into the Topkapi Palace, which itself formed an institutional network. The palace housed the principle spaces where the military, administrative, religious, and financial superstructure of the empire was accommodated. As the administrative centre of the empire and the residence of the sultans, the Topkapi Palace strengthened the global character of atmeydani and made it a rhetorical feature that symbolically represented the Ottoman Empire. However, as the sultan no longer resided at the Topkapi Palace (1850s), atmeydani became an urban space designating the local and comparatively lost its representational potency. This period corresponded to the Westernization of Istanbul. Both Hagia Sophia and the Sultanahmet Mosque architecturally enforced the sacredness of both atmeydani and the city. In particular, Hagia Sophia served as a physical-architectural symbol. It has not only become generic in the history of world architecture but has also been charged with political messages that make it an instrument of power politics. The conquest of the city also meant the conquest of Hagia Sophia as the symbol of the Byzantine Empire and Christian world. In this sense, Hagia Sophia became the constituent subject and the reconstituted object of the representation imposing the policies of Ottomanization and Islamization. Then the church was converted into a mosque as a symbol Ottoman and Islamic victory over the Christian world.

The Sultanahmet Mosque together with its complex, Sultanahmet Külliyesi, was built as an Ottoman feature to rival the Hagia Sophia. What should be derived from Foucault’s arguments on “heterotopia” is productive capacities of power that heterotopia internalizes (Foucault, 1993). Power is productive. The knowledge or discourse of productive processes is a constituent force in a concrete domain; it establishes an organized space as a spatial means of social control. Here, Foucault (1993) made a comment on the dialectical link between power, knowledge, and space. And space is
posited as the most fundamental of all in any exercise of power. Departing from this argument, the centralized imperial and religious ideology of Ottoman domination constructed the külliye, and the Sultanahmet Külliyesi in particular, as an organized space. With its size, the arrangement of its buildings, and its effective visibility, the külliye closely fitted with the imperial idea and corresponding social practice of religious and ceremonial crowd. The Sultanahmet Külliyesi was an architectural reaction to the world-renowned structure Hagia Sophia.

The reconstruction programs of the Ottoman sovereigns, which centred on the question of the “representation” and in turn on the search for symbolic resistance (realized through the architectural projects), made atmeydani both represented and the representation of the political authority. Atmeydani was the ceremonial and processional space dedicated to the Sultan-Khalife and provided for imperial events, the sacred space dominated by religious buildings (Hagia Sophia and Sultanahmet Mosque), and the display area of the military personnel. All these symbolic spaces, charged with political and religious messages, were in fact combined within the social urban space of atmeydani. We should note that the specificity and character of this urban space was determined in accordance with the norms of the dominant policies. In this sense, by the mid-18th century, the physical structure of atmeydani became Westernized.

The project of converting the Byzantine capital into the Ottoman capital through the policies of Ottomanization and Islamization was itself subsequently transformed by the project of Westernization and modernization. The strengthening of relations with Europe accelerated discursive modifications. As the representation attempted to adjust its knowledge to the dominant social processes of Westernization and modernization, Western patterns of social-spatial practice were adopted. The architecture of this revised representation sought to replace the Ottoman-Islamic image with the Western image. Institutionalization of administrative organs was an important step that transformed the urban fabric and architecture of the city. In particular, throughout the 19th century, atmeydani was the main administrative and business centre of the city and was reconstructed with visual and architectural evidences of the modernization project. The area housed newly established ministries, administrative organs, and institutions.

Atmeydani, now known as the Sultanahmet Square, appeared to be reorganized as the most prominent square of the city—not unlike similar spaces in European cities. Paradoxically, the new Westernized square would also represent the nation. It was no longer an area for horse races, cirit games, ceremonies, and processions; rather, it became a Western city park. Sultanahmet was still the sacred space and also the recreation space dedicated to the nation. It also provided national events such as the international exhibition known as the Grand Ottoman Exhibition in 1863. By the end of the 19th century and particularly the early 20th century during the period of wars and occupation, the sacramal was not only religion but also Turkish nationalism. The city of Istanbul became the headquarters of the revolution, and Sultanahmet Square was the political arena of this revolution where social reactions arose and protest meetings took place.

Spatialisation of the Policies of Civilization and Nationalism

During the last stages of the Ottoman Empire, Westernization/Islamism/Turkism formed the imperial ideology invigorating the empire. Representations embodied Westernization within the framework of Islamic identity. However, after the founda-
tion of the Republic, Westernization/secularism/civilization were trends, which formed the central ideology. Representation of the republican idea sought to differentiate itself from the Ottoman. Although it appeared as a resistance to the Ottoman Palace, it continued the Ottoman policy of Westernization. The declaration of the Republic marked a transition from the Islamic Empire to the secular national-state. Turkish nationalism replaced the sacred Islamic religion. The project would suggest “limiting the efforts of Westernization within the context of Turkish national identity” (Göle, 1991, p. 45).

The discourse brought forth by the civilization project was utopist and reformist yet centralized. It constituted its own actors, the ideal citizen of the Turkish Republic (reformist and modernist). The discourse was constructed around notions of civilization, modernization, and nationalism. Tension between these tropes, in fact, formed the paradoxical structure of this dominant process: state-oriented modernization grounded by national profits versus a liberal-pluralism that valued personal profits.

The discursive act used spatial-social symbols of modernization adopted from the West. It particularly imitated the modernist understanding of time, which suggests “temporariness,” turning back to the past and looking to the future for novelty. The spatial-social materialization of power-knowledge was manifest in the museum of the spatial instrument of not only conservation, presentation, and reconstruction of the past but also the construction of a national identity for the new Republic. One consequence of this discursive act was to convert Hagia Sophia mosque into a museum (1935) on Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s request. It was a political decision which has (re)made Hagia Sophia the possession of world culture and assigned it a secular function. The Sultanahmet square as an archive of physical-social-historical evidences was turned into an open-air museum and an archaeological park. And, symbolically, it became the memorial space of the representation, which was attached to the making of the national identity (Gür, 1999, p. 161).

**Spatialisation of Tourism Strategies**

Emerging With Capital-Oriented Policies

The 1950s marked an important turning point in the political history of Turkey, a tendency toward a liberalized economy and multipart policy. With the introduction of the idea of civil society and its acceleration after the 1980s, there emerged various social identities with different political-cultural-economic trends. Particularly after the 1980s, with the influence of globalization in the late 20th century and the increasing power of the capital, Turkish society has become a form of “capitalist-consumer society.” Tourism has become an important investment of capital-based policies. As the privileged area of tourism-based investments, the Sultanahmet district has been reconstructed as an authentic space; as such, it cannot be considered apart from capital-based strategies of the consumer society. With its historical global features, Sultanahmet paradoxically also represents the local. The political-economic power uses culture and history as a medium to legitimize its operations. In so doing, the monumental buildings around the square were restored to house a museum, exhibition hall, shopping, workshops, cafes, and pensions. This transformation has radiated from the centre and extended into the periphery.
There is an important decree (dated August 2, 1975) issued by the Higher Board of Monuments in connection with the Ministry of Culture, which has influenced the reconstruction and restoration activities in the Sultanahmet district. The decree permits demolition of the houses constructed before the end of the 19th century and their reconstruction in conformity to the original outer facade, yet the interiors can be reorganized according to the intentions of the designer. Even for the newly constructed buildings, the facades are so articulated as to imitate the local-traditional houses. This so-called search for authenticity depends on the symbolic notions of the spatial established at the historical square (i.e., centre) and in turn reconstitutes the symbolic repertoire and social metaphors of the centre. This calls for the transformation of archival-visual documents made through a series of discursive representations. The spatial search for difference, for authenticity, ends up with homogenizing repetition that copies the past: reproduction of stereotypes and fabricated images of the local, such as projections on the facade, long eaves, pitched roofs, and wooden facings. Actually, this homogenization does not provide an authentic basis for this particular area. The copied past exists by demolishing its own past.

Radiating from the centre into the periphery, Sultanahmet becomes “the other space of the representation,” which is created to simulate the local and differentiate itself by elaborating the so-called authentic experiences of space (Gür, 1999, p. 165). At a conceptual level, being a deglobalizing struggle of the local in a globalizing world, “authenticity” in fact becomes a global practice in an architectural-spatial sense. Thus, the more actors explore the historical-architectural-cultural values of that particular space, the more they tend to come into agreement with the cultural politics of the dominant political-economic power.

Conclusions: Archival Space

The hippodrome-atmeydani-Sultanahmet square as the space of political domination symbolizes the Byzantine-Christian, the Ottoman-Islamic, the Early Republican (that is nationalist and secularist), and the liberal (that is capitalist and individualist). This demonstrates a historical transformation in the nature of political domination: from the repressive mode of domination that suggests the patriarchal mode of domination with the acquiescence to the superior force to the hegemonic one that suggests the prevailing mode of production, namely, capitalism. The breaking points marked by each of these eras indicate changes in the social processes that become hegemonic, sometimes dictated on and sometimes received by the larger part of the society. This, in turn, prepares for the generation of social resistances (in conjunction with the subversive form of knowledge) and struggles (in conjunction with knowledge in the service of the dominant power) along with their extensions of suggested spatial practices and organizations.

As an archival urban space, Sultanahmet suggests the power of existing urban spaces and architectural structures in the formulation of policies involved in social processes of space reconstruction. In this sense, an urban space or a building with its historical attributes becomes simultaneously both the cause and the result of the knowledge or discourse of the productive processes. Hagia Sophia, for example, has been the rhetorical figure conquering the city. Originally built as a church, the building was converted into a mosque by the Ottomans. Today, the operations of the Is-
Islamic discourse to reopen it as a place of worship indicate the political tactics deployed through taking control of urban spaces and/or buildings. Hagia Sophia becomes the fundamental concern for the exercise of the political religious power wishing to reconquer Istanbul and to remake it the capital city of the Islamic world.

Conceptually, this study accepts that urban space is the space of discursive representations. The reconstruction of urban space is not an independent act: Urban space is the hegemonic construction of politics, of the representations that seek to constitute a social identity. And architectural structures stand as the materialization of these politics, of these representations. The conscious intervention of the political domination into the social processes of urban space reconstruction can be recognized by referring to architectural evidence. In the particular case of Sultanahmet, each political authority has marked its social and physical existence by rebuilding on the previous one. The common point shared by these authorities is that the location, articulation, and restoration of the buildings and monuments are determined by politics either spiritual or secular yet political in their effect. These visual evidences illuminate the way in which the social construction of the discourse is realized by the social production of the urban space. In this sense, the urban space of Sultanahmet becomes an archive that juxtaposes the layers of heterogenous information. Its archival structure, which is simultaneously constituted by and constitutive of the politics, renders Sultanahmet as the material-visual form of the knowledge of the productive processes.

Accepting the Lefebvrian argument, an urban space is not created in a single moment and with a single idea. Yet it is constantly reconstructed through processes emerging with the acts of discursive representations. It is transformed and socially concretized space that is involved in the dialectical mode of relations between spatiality, sociality, and historicality. It is this dialectical relation that links the urban space to its past and to its future and makes it a dynamic and not static product of discursive representations.

Notes

1. In the metaphor creating Byzantian culture, spina, a metaphorical nexus, was created to be a line across which a series of courses and races invested with powerful metaphoric resonance were held.
2. There have been calls for anachrony in this particular space. As exhibited in “Timescapes: Spolia on Spina” by Namik Erkal for Anytime Exhibition held in 1998 in Turkey, the hippodrome displays the monuments from earlier periods than the date of its construction (330 A.D.). For example, the Serpent Column from Delphic Apollo dates back to 495 B.C., and the Obelisk from Karnak dates back to 1500 B.C.
3. Atmeydani is a Turkish name for hippodrome.
4. ”Topography . . . is a scholarly discipline given over to the description or the discovery of a particular locality and location within it of specific sites. It thus identifies a structure or its remains. . . . Topography . . . combines a knowledge of the terrain, its monuments, and archaeological evidence with that of the historical written sources . . . they illuminate one another and thus make essential contributions to such fields as archaeology . . . to the history of city planning” (Krautheimer, 1983, p. 1).
5. At the groundwork of the spatial triad, “three moments of social space” is the critique of double illusion: the “illusion of transparency” (that is, subjectivism/idealism) and the “illusion of opaqueness-opacity” (that is, objectivism/materialism) (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 27). Departing from the double illusion, Lefebvre (1991) built a “non-illusion spatial triad” by dissolving the physical (objective-material) and the mental (subjective-idealism) space into the social space.
He went on to argue that the spatial triad could be understood by considering the body, the space of a subject. Approached this way, Lefebvre (1991) coincided the spatial concepts of spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces, respectively, with "the perceived (space)," "the conceived (space)," and "the lived (space)" (p. 40).

6. The name of the project comes from the name of the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

7. There were four Demes, each referring to a residential quarter identified with colour: blue, green, white, and red. The colours helped to differentiate the political-religious-social stances of people.

8. The first Hagia Sophia was developed around 326 at Constantine the Great's court, which became a generic spreading all over the Aegean coast. It was rebuilt by Justinianus, after it burnt down in the Nika revolt in 532.

9. The term is used in reference to Miller (1969, p. 193). It means "a kind of metonymy in which a part is used to signify the whole" (Mautner, 1997, p. 554).

10. "Ottomanization" was of Eastern character. It was not "Turkification" because it allowed the existence of multiple local identities yet controlled (or patronized) them through the system of taxation.

11. The Reform Decree played an important role in the process of change and in the modernization of the Ottoman society. The decree formulated the modernization and reorganization of all official bodies and institutionalization of the legal system. It was the project that proposed severe restrictions on the royal right and introduced the rule of law and equality before the law for all citizens without making religious discrimination.

12. For example, the Sultanahmet complex, which was built over the ruins of the Great Palace; the Ibrahim Pasha Palace, which was constructed on the tribunes of the hippodrome; and the Topkapi Palace, which was constructed on the Byzantine Acropolis.

References


Berin F. Gür studied architecture at the Middle East Technical University (METU), Ankara, Turkey. She received the degrees of bachelor of architecture in 1989, master of architecture in 1991, and Ph.D. in architecture in 1999. She was given a 1-year scholarship for postdoctoral research from the Scholarships Foundation of Greece and made her postdoctoral research in 2001 at Athens. Currently, she is a member of the METU Department of Architecture, where she has been teaching architectural design since 1992.