Globalization in the Neighborhood

From the Nation-State to Bilkent Center

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abstract: The main premise of this article is that globalization is both a universal phenomenon with common characteristic tendencies and a condition of plurality defined by the historical and geographical specificities of particular localities. This paradoxical point is explained in the theoretical context of the spatial configuration of globalization. The main concepts used to that end are Robertson's notion of glocalization, Castells' notion of polarization, Sassen's notion of global city and Appadurai's conception of imaginary worlds. The main objective is to elucidate, both in theory and in practice, a series of contradictions, ambiguities and irregularities that result from particular articulations of global and local developments. Turkey is used as a case study in order to analyze the practical implications of globalization(s) at both the national and local levels and at the level of neighborhoods. Borrowing from Appadurai's distinction between a locality and a neighborhood, the article argues that an empirical analysis of globalization(s) in neighborhoods helps us problematize the unsettling consequences of practical modes of glocalizations. Such problematization is necessary to understand the universal condition of globalization as an open-ended process that shapes and is shaped by particular cultural, political and spatial patterns.

keywords: global city ✦ global culture ✦ globalization ✦ glocalization ✦ Turkey

In its singular form, globalization stands for both a multitude of historical processes and an ongoing conceptual renaissance. As to the former, globalization takes place at economic, political and cultural levels, entailing a multiplicity of agents, institutions and organizations that range from

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supranational bodies, international financial markets to nation-states, NGOs and innumerable social and political movements. As a conceptual tool, it both utilizes the existing theoretical frameworks, especially those concerning world capitalism, neoliberalism, liberal democracy, nation-state and modernity, and it challenges these frameworks by taking into account disjunctures, conflicts, tensions and paradoxes in the spatial dimension of globalization. The theoretical renaissance brought by the concept of globalization is, in many ways, a continuation of debates on modernity as a universal condition and as vernacular articulations of modernity in different historical, social and cultural formations.

At the outset, to address the broadly defined parameters of globalization in its singular form, it might be useful to conceptualize it as a historical and geographical condition which, in its present phase, affects the whole world in different ways. The characteristic features of this universal condition can be summarized as follows. First, economic globalization, defined by both the growing structural power and mobility of capital in production and financial markets, is articulated with neoliberal policies of privatization, deregulation and significant structural changes in national bureaucracies, welfare programs and public services (Gill, 1995a, 1995b). Second, economic globalization, defined by the liberalization of trade and monetary policies, the growth of transnational networks of investment, finance, advertising and consumption markets, as well as the rise of transnational networks of illicit drug trade, money laundering and Mafia activities, imply that in the current condition of globalization the parameters of politics go beyond national premises (Strange, 1995, 1996).

Third, and related to that, such conventional institutions as the nation-state, national military, police force, political parties, legislative and judicial bodies now face new challenges posed by this interactive, mobile transnational network (Held, 1991, 1995). Fourth, the rise of regional economic and political bodies as well as supranational bodies introduces new agents into decision-making processes with which the conventional centers of political power (e.g. political parties, top-level state bureaucracies and national parliaments) have to negotiate and contend. Fifth, the growing influence of electronic media and the penetration of information and communication technologies into everyday life has the net effect of creating multiple forms of 'imagined communities'. Following Benedict Anderson's astute remark on the present conjuncture of nationalism, one can identify electronic media and communication technologies in constructing images of 'home', 'community' and 'nationhood' and produce virtual loyalties via Internet, fax and cellular phones (Anderson, 1992: 13; Robertson, 1995: 30).

In combining all these tendencies, McGrew defines the universal condition of globalization in terms of 'flows . . . and connections in trade and

finance'. This also implies 'a significant shift in the spatial form of human social organization and activity to trans-continental or inter-regional patterns of relations, interactions and the exercise of power' (McGrew, 1997: 8). The most significant transformation that has been brought about by globalization is a disruption in both the physical and cultural constructions of space. Appadurai refers to this novel feature of globalization as the construction of 'imagined worlds', which he analyzes under five categories:

1. ethnoscapes of tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles and guest workers;
2. technoscapes indicating the mobility of technology;
3. financescapes indicating the disposition of global capital in currency markets, national stock exchanges and commodity speculations;
4. mediascapes implying the distribution of electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information and provision of large and complex repertoires of images, narratives and ethnospaces;
5. ideoscapes which include political images, ideologies of states and counter-ideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capturing state power or a piece of it (Appadurai, 1996: 33–6).

In Appadurai's conception what is new and critical in global cultural process is the imagination as a social practice. Each of the five 'imagined worlds' are characterized by 'fluid irregular shapes' and they denote disjunctures of the present global condition. In his words 'people, machinery, money, images and ideas now follow increasingly non isomorphic paths' (Appadurai, 1996: 37). For the purpose of this study, Appadurai's problematization of globalization is significant for three reasons. First, it enables us to view globalization both as a universal condition and as a disjuncture. As a universal condition, the common characteristic features of globalization have been responsible for the world becoming more homogeneous. Yet, simultaneously with this tendency to homogeneity, globalizing forces – especially in finance, trade and information technologies – are articulated with regional, national and local politics. In the process of this articulation we come across a multitude of contradictory and paradoxical forms of globality. One of the most enigmatic dimensions of globalization is that it exists both as a singular, universal phenomenon and a condition of plurality characterized by historical and geographical specificities of particular localities.

Second, in viewing globalization as both a universal condition and a plural construction, Appadurai's conception of imagined worlds enables us to scrutinize particular cultural expressions of globalization. In this respect, the role of global cultural process in the present conjuncture is also contradictory and paradoxical. While it introduces universal lifestyles, habits, modes of expression via mediascapes, technospaces and

financescapes, it also meets with resistance at national and local levels (Cvetkovich and Kellner, 1997). Throughout the 1990s such resistance has been formulated under the rubric of cultural/identity politics and, more specifically, with reference to the upsurge of national, religious and ethnic nationalisms.

Third, when we analyze globalization from the purview of 'imagination as a social practice', it then raises the possibility of conceptualizing globalization as an innovative force that produces new disjunctures, tensions and contradictions.

As is explained shortly, Turkey has been globalized through a series of contradictory and paradoxical imperatives of economic, political and cultural globalization. In the open-ended process of globalization, Turkey has been following non-isomorphic paths. Its idiosyncratic receptivity and resistance to globalizing tendencies has been most notable in the imagined worlds of financescapes and ideoscapes. Before analyzing this process, it will be useful to contextualize the aforementioned points in relation to the spatial configuration of globalization(s).

In addressing the question of universal and plural manifestations of globalization, Robertson argues that the problem is not to choose one or the other, but rather to 'spell out the ways in which homogenizing and heterogenizing tendencies are mutually implicative' (Robertson, 1995: 27). This, in his view, is both a theoretical and an empirical question. The condition of globality facilitates the interaction between global and local forces, and it needs to be examined in concrete localities. His notion of glocalization aims to elucidate two interrelated theoretical points: 'the relatively independent significance of space and geography' and 'making the concern with space as important as the focus upon temporal issues' (Robertson, 1995: 25, 40). In this framework, glocalization is the site where homogenization and heterogenization take place simultaneously, complementing each other in interpretative modes. This implies that globalization involves many different modes of practical glocalizations (Robertson, 1995: 40–1).

Following a similar framework emphasizing the significance of local spaces, Castells and Sassen examine particular configurations of globalization at the city level. Castells analyzes the relationship between informational technologies and economic globalization in the context of two metropolitan cities: New York and Los Angeles. According to Castells, the key dynamic in the interaction between information technologies and global economic developments is the 'dialectic between centralization and decentralization' which, on one hand, paves the way for the elimination of middle-level jobs in the traditional manufacturing sector simultaneously with the proliferation of unskilled, low-paying jobs both in service and manufacturing sectors. On the other hand, the same dynamic

also results in the emergence of highly skilled jobs in high-tech industries. Although his main focus is on the segregation of job markets and the polarization of inner-city structures in conjunction with the mobility of information technology, he briefly mentions the role of culture in reshaping the urban setting. In his words, 'an urban social structure that exists on the basis of interaction between opposite and equally dynamic poles of a new informational economy whose developmental logic polarizes the society, segments social groups, isolates cultures and segregates the uses of a shared culture' (Castells, 1991: 218).

Sassen, in her more comprehensive analysis of urban restructuring, addresses transformations in job markets in relation with the growth of the finance sector and new technologies as well as the informal economy. She also mentions the role of migration and the emergence of immigrant communities together with the rise of new growth sectors in electronic media, business associations and in legal, accounting and managerial tasks, all of which have been instrumental in changing the urban structure (Sassen, 1994, 1996). The main question underlying her conception of 'global city' is similar to that of Robertson's, that is, to 'examine the particular ways in which the conditions of globalization are produced' (Sassen, 1998: 173).

Unlike Castells' analysis of globalization at the city level, which manifests itself in a polarization between centralizing and decentralizing forces around information technologies, Sassen's empirical works on major metropolitan cities present more complex urban structures. This complexity stems from two reasons. First, a 'global city' contains many different cities, notably the 'corporate city of high rise office buildings, the old dying industrial city and the immigrant city'. Each of these cities within a global city corresponds to different connotations of space, namely those of power, labor and machines and the third world (Sassen, 1994: 23). Second, the production of such plurality in the concrete space of an urban structure involves a complex process of economic transactions. Sassen argues that a portion of economic transactions occur through information technologies and 'virtual offices' which 'neutralize distance and place' on a global scale.

According to Sassen, this raises the question of 'what constitutes centrality' in today's economic system. In her words, 'centrality has historically been embodied in certain types of built environment and urban form, i.e. the central business district'. In the present configuration of global cities, economic transactions 'lack points of physical agglomeration' (Sassen, 1998: 174). The implication of this novel development is twofold. While 'certain types of economic activities can be run from a virtual office located anywhere', 'many types of firms, workers, and places, such as industrial services, which look as if they do not belong in an advanced,

information-based, globally oriented economic system, are actually parts of such a system' (Sassen, 1998: 175).

Works cited on the spatial configuration of globalization raise the importance of concrete localities as both production sites and imaginary spaces in which globalizing forces move freely with certain goals. These macro-level analyses fall short in addressing particular tensions, contradictions, ambiguities and irregular flows which are the characterizing features of 'practical glocalizations'. As a matter of fact, one of the perplexing dimensions of globalization(s) is that in spite of a number of identifiable developments that are associated with economic and cultural globalizing tendencies, their interaction with vernacular, particular norms, values, lifestyles and politics creates a rich, diverse landscape that defies existing conceptual frameworks.

Turkey is a case in point. Since the mid-1980s, Turkey has joined economic globalization by means of government policies and the structural adjustment programs prepared by the IMF and World Bank. In political terms, it joined the 'waves' of the transition to democracy as has been the case in Latin America, Eastern Europe, South East Asia and Africa. Following the post-1980 military regime, the civilian government under the leadership of the late Turgut Ozal introduced a platform for the transition to democracy. The political economy of the transition period (approximately from 1985 to 1995) consisted of neoliberal privatization as well as the maintenance of a strong central state at the political level. This paradoxical development is still in practice and it manifests itself in two ways.

First, while most state assets in public enterprises have been in the process of privatization, the military remains an influential economic force in terms of both its purchasing power of military equipment and technology and as the most powerful political force in the country that interferes with contractual agreements and bidding processes concerning foreign trade and investments. Second, since the mid-1980s, liberalization of finance and trade and privatization schemes have paradoxically led to a growth in public deficit and a broader scope of rent creation. More specifically, 'neoliberal' policies have been effective in:

1. stock exchange operations;
2. fiscal incentives and bailing out of firms and banks in distress;
3. government tenders;
4. the formation of speculative urban and tourist rents; and
5. the illicit appropriation of export subsidies through fictitious exports (Boratav et al., 1996: 378).

Rent-seeking activities have been taking place in conjunction with the erosion of the well-established functions of the traditional bureaucracy.

In the mid-1980s, as part of the platform for transition to democracy (also known as reducing the size of state bureaucracy), the decision-making process with regard to privatization, state tenders and fiscal incentives is being shifted from top-level state bureaucracy to the government. Those who have been on good terms with cabinet ministers have benefited from speculative deals in real estate, fictitious exports and the development of tourist resorts.

In trade policy, Turkey has pursued an export promotion strategy that results in a trade deficit. Between 1983 and 1990 there was a noticeable increase in the import of consumer goods and investment goods which went hand-in-hand with the 'maturing of the trade structure' in the export sector. Since the early 1990s, chronic economic instability in terms of high and fluctuating inflation rates and erratic changes in the balance of payments has adversely affected the export sector (Boratav et al., 1995, 1996; Balkan and Yeldan, 1996). According to the under-secretary of the State Planning Department, in 1998 the decline 'in producer prices in Germany and the United States [which are] Turkey's most important trade partners and the substantial depreciation of East Asian currencies have put strains on Turkish exports'. Coupled with these developments, the economic crisis in Russia (which is another important trading partner) contributed to a decline in the rate of growth in export earnings.[1]

While these idiosyncratic economic developments in Turkey do not correspond to the universally explained global tendencies, liberalization of the financial system has been more on a par with the globalization of neoliberalism. This is mostly due to the fact that in 1980 financial liberalization policies (including the elimination of price controls, phasing out of subsidies and the gradual removal of trade restrictions) were introduced by means of an IMF-assisted structural adjustment reform program. Subsequent policies of the liberalization of foreign exchange regime (in 1984), the opening of the Istanbul Stock Exchange (in 1986) and deregulation of all capital movements facilitated the process of external and internal financial deregulation under conditions of high inflation (Balkan and Yeldan, 1996: 8–14).[2] These neoliberal initiatives, however, were not accompanied by an increase in foreign investments in Turkey, nor did they result in sustainable economic growth nation-wide.

This brief survey of the national economy is misleading in understanding the impact of globalization on Turkish society. Turkey has never been fully integrated into the international economic system. Since the 1930s industrialization was carried by means of *dirigiste* state planning policies which resulted in an economic structure based on state subsidies as well as the creation of a bourgeois class that was heavily dependent on state protection against internal and external competition. Since the mid-1980s, the rise of consumption culture, introduction of information

technologies and the encouragement of a business-oriented lifestyle interrupted social and political values in the country. Introduction of neoliberal policies since the 1980s produced a 'hybrid' bourgeois class structure. While unregulated financial transactions, fictitious exports and the imposition of a free market mentality contributed to the formation of a newly rich class, the established bourgeoisie continued to rely on state policies especially with regard to foreign trade.[3]

In political terms, the role of the military, strong state tradition and recurrent questions on the violation of individual and human rights put Turkey in a precarious position vis-a-vis Western European and North American standards of liberal democracy. In Turkey, there is a tense relationship between a seemingly capitalist formation and a repressive political and moral structure which, in everyday life, manifest themselves in unregulated economic freedom on the one hand and strictly prohibitive laws and rules on the other. In the meantime, since the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, under the rubric of westernization there have been numerous developments in education, broadcasting, arts and urban restructuring which have created a stratum of society that is fully integrated with European and global trends. This group which consists of professionals and new business people has been most adaptive to globalizing trends. To borrow Appadurai's concepts, they are the constitutive elements in the ethnoscapes of tourists, technoscapes of cellular phones, Internet and information technologies and mediascapes of art and entertainment. Although this group is the most visible indication of globalization, it remains a minority in relation to the overall national, social and political formations in Turkey.

It goes beyond the scope of this article to analyze the remaining majority, which is also heterogeneous in terms of their positioning in class, education and regional backgrounds. Suffice it to note that the working class and low-level state functionaries have been adversely affected by neoliberal policies. In regional and social terms there has been a strong resistance to the introduction of so-called global trends. This resistance has been captured by political Islamic groups and nationalist discourses which, under the convenient political label of anti-westernism, anti-imperialism and state-centered nationalism mobilize people on a platform to protect 'traditional Islamic values' and 'the territorial and national integrity of the Turkish Republic'. Paradoxically, such political resistance has not prevented the spokespersons of Islamic traditionalism from effectively using financescapes, mediascapes, ethnoscapes and technoscapes. Politically active Islamic groups established their own private television stations, private schools, universities, banks and business associates. They have also engaged in frequent travel to and from other Islamic countries in an attempt to promote cultural, political as well as business exchanges. As

for nationalist discourses, in spite of their effective use of ideoscapes in print and on television and strict laws on freedom of speech, access to information via the Internet, business-related travel, frequent visits by 'western pop-rock singers' and heightened consumption (especially among youth) contribute to a culturally and socially open understanding of individual rights and freedoms. These only scratch the surface of contradictory forms of glocalization in Turkey.

In spatial terms, the diversity and contradictions of global and local trends express themselves not so much at the level of city but in neighborhoods. To use Castells' frame of reference, in Ankara and Istanbul, as a result of social/cultural differences and the segregation of job markets there is a stark contrast between the newly rich neighborhoods and those neighborhoods where working-class, internal immigrant communities and lower classes of people working in the informal economy live.[4] But this polarization cannot be explained in the context of the 'dialectic between centralization and de-centralization'. For one thing, due to rapid suburbanization, the spatial proximity of these polarized neighborhoods is becoming less nuanced. The development of high-rise buildings for different income groups on the outskirts of cities contributes to the creation of adjoining neighborhoods for different class and social backgrounds. In addition, due to rapid economic transformation since the 1980s as well as a chaotic approach to urban development, in Ankara and Istanbul (and elsewhere for that matter) there are no clearly defined business and finance districts, nor is there a clearcut separation between business districts and residential areas.

To illustrate the idiosyncratic spatial configuration of glocalization in Turkey, I use the neighborhood in which I live and work as a particular example. This neighborhood is provisionally called Bilkent. By municipal criteria it is part of the adjacent village (Beytepe Köyü), but by global standards it is on the way to becoming a self-sufficient global city within the capital city, Ankara. It is located approximately 15 km to the west of the national head offices of the Navy, Airforce, Gendarme and General Staff, and 10 km also to the west of the National Treasury and other state bureaucracies. The road from 'downtown' to Bilkent used to be an intercity highway (*Eskisehir yolu*), but the rapid pace of suburbanization in the last two years has turned this highway into a jammed road during any hour of the day, except after midnight. The phenomenon of suburbanization to the west side of the city includes the development of both high-rises for middle-class, waged employees and luxurious homes for the very rich, the construction of high-rises for state bureaucracy as well as shopping centers and private schools.

Bilkent University has become part of this phenomenologically fast pace of suburbanization. Until three years ago, in the near vicinity of

Bilkent there was absolutely nothing except for a village, another university (METU) and a military base. As one of the local residents, I watched, observed and was amazed by the transformation of a vast land filled with lush fields and a few trees into a mega commercial center, together with residential developments. The residential development consists of high-rises (with varying rental rates) and separate houses that sell for exorbitant prices. The commercial center consists of three separate developments: Ankuva, a smaller shopping mall of 12,000 m^2, Bilkent Center (50,000 m^2) and Plaza (90,000 m^2). In Ankuva, in addition to the shopping mall there is Europe's second largest bowling salon. Bilkent Center contains three hypermarkets, a movie theater complex of five movie theaters with 950 seats in total, three banks, local fast food and pastry stores. Inside the center there are also Marks and Spencer, Toys R Us, Burger King and some other franchises of international firms. Plaza contains office buildings and a residential area.

Of these three developments, Ankuva and Plaza are co-owned by Bilkent Holding and a Turkish Bank (Emlak Bankası). Bilkent Center is owned by Tepe Group of Companies and Metro AG. Tepe Group is a Turkish conglomerate of firms in construction, furniture, insurance and private security. The conglomerate also has shares in a private sports and fitness complex (Sports International, an American chain), a hotel (Bilkent Hotel), a catering firm (Bilintur), a smaller construction firm (Dilek Grubu) and a paper mill (Meteksan), all of which are located within the university campus. Metro AG, on the other hand, is a German firm which owns two of the hypermarkets at Bilkent Center (Real and Practiker). The movie complex within Bilkent Center is co-owned by Tepe and an international firm, Cinemaxx.

The chairperson of the Tepe Group, Ali Kantur, has played an important role in the development of this 'neighborhood' since its inception. In an interview he reminded me of other major developments within the university campus, which include private schools (kindergarten, elementary school, junior and senior high schools), an international symphony orchestra which is part of the Faculty of Music, as well as the hotel and sports complex. He claimed that this neighborhood is on the way to becoming a self-sufficient city. The only facility missing, so far, is a hospital. In his view, there is also more room for entertainment facilities, which will encourage people to go out more. Kantur sees all these new developments in the neighborhood as a means to introduce a different lifestyle to people who live in the nearby residential area. The type of lifestyle he refers to includes fitness, entertainment, the convenience of living and working in the same neighborhood as well as an environmentally friendly approach to production.[5]

I personally witnessed the transformation of my neighborhood within

a very short period of time. The main parts of the commercial center were completed in April–May of 1998. It first became a site for shopping, window shopping and sightseeing. According to a rough estimate at the time, a daily average of 20,000 people visited the center, of whom only half actually shopped. At the time the only means of transportation to the center was by private car. A year later, Bilkent Center Management Office produced more reliable figures. A weekly average of 126,095 people visit the commercial center and 71,534 cars enter the parking lot.[6] Bilkent Center recently started a free transportation service to and from nearby suburbs where the demand is the highest. There is also public transportation from the city, but the number of people who come to the commercial center by public transportation is negligible.[7] Since public transportation in Turkey is used mostly by low-income people, the means of transportation to Bilkent Center is a good indicator for drawing a profile of customers. They include professionals, 'new' business people and their families, faculty and students from the university and nouveau riche.[8]

To go back to Robertson and Sassen's problematization, this neighborhood provides us with an empirical case study to spell out the particular ways in which global and local factors communicate with and interpret each other. As was noted earlier, however, their problematization remains at a macro-level. To address the same question at a micro-level, I return to Appadurai's framework of global cultural processes that are defined by fluid and irregular shapes and non-isomorphic paths in the ways in which imaginary spaces are constructed. Unlike Robertson and Sassen, Appadurai does not take locality for granted. Instead he poses the question of the production of locality. He does so by distinguishing between a locality and a neighborhood and examines how locality relates to neighborhoods.

For the purpose of this analysis, a locality is defined as 'a phenomenological property of social life, a structure of feeling that is produced by particular forms of intentional activity and that yields particular sorts of material effects' (Appadurai, 1996: 182). As a phenomenological quality, locality expresses itself in certain kinds of agency, sociality and reproducibility. As such, it is relational and contextual rather than scalar or spatial. The latter point is important to underline because in concrete terms locality is produced, transformed, constructed and felt by the agents, who participate in a series of concrete activities. Neighborhoods, on the other hand, refer to the actuality of existing social forms, spatially or virtually (Appadurai, 1996: 178–9). As a geographical site, a neighborhood is multiplex and interpretative. As Appadurai puts it, when 'local subjects engage in the social activities of production, representation and reproduction . . . they contribute, generally unwittingly, to the creation of

contexts that might exceed the existing material and conceptual boundaries of the neighborhood' (Appadurai, 1996: 185). This problematization of neighborhood entails the fleeting moments of everyday life experiences through which local subjects get to know their surroundings. The production of neighborhood implies turning a space into place which, according to Appadurai, is 'a conscious moment'. It is 'inherently an exercise of power over some sort of hostile or recalcitrant environment' (Appadurai, 1996: 183–4). In brief, neighborhoods are paradoxical 'because they both constitute and require contexts' (Appadurai, 1996: 186).

Seen from this perspective, Bilkent neighborhood is both a locality and a neighborhood in which glocalization is produced. As a locality, the opening of the commercial center introduced a series of intentional activities with particular effects. Although this is not the first mega shopping center complex in Turkey, it took some time for customers to get used to the particular shopping habits introduced by the center. In this day and age, speed is supposed to be the 'primordial dimension that defines all temporal and physical measurement' (Virilio, 1991: 18). Yet neither the national culture in Turkey nor the infrastructure of Bilkent neighborhood is conducive to speed. Similarly, even though modern consumption was introduced as early as the mid-1980s, customers in Turkey have been foreign to the type of consumption habits which emerge from efficiency and a fast-paced life. When the commercial center was first opened chaos reigned in the neighborhood. There were minor traffic accidents in the parking lot, new employees in the commercial center resisted full automation and customers were not receptive to the impersonal style of management.

After less than a year, the German management introduced an orientation program to the employees and gave in to some of the local customs. With regard to the orientation program, the employees are taught how to serve customers as well as the specific expressions used in sales. Although these are expressed in Turkish, they initially sounded like a foreign language, since most of the expressions have been directly translated from English. In the absence of a service industry in Turkey, the Turkish language does not have phrases and words intended for use in everyday business interactions. In this regard, the orientation program designed by the center contributed to the formation of a new language geared toward service and sales. Since it would have been most impolite to teach customers how to shop in the center, the management had to accede to some of the local requests, such as hiring a local/private police force to direct the traffic during rush hours and employing more personnel to answer customers' questions and lead them to the proper aisles. Other ways in which the two hypermarkets (Real and Practiker) in the center accommodated local customs was to play Turkish music inside the stores, to

decorate the outer facade of the center with Turkish flags on the national independence day and to install private security, especially at times of bomb scares such as during PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan's trial in May–June 1999.

In short, Bilkent Center as a locality introduces a new understanding of service, transforms shopping habits, the language spoken and the value of money. Hypermarkets in the center use the North American gimmick of sales by reducing the prices of some items in order to encourage more buying. Local customers, who are not used to this culturally specific gimmick, end up spending more money than initially intended. At the same time, the center is also being transformed by the constant flow of shoppers and sightseers as well as by the surrounding national culture and politics. Yet to many customers, the transformation goes unnoticed, as if Turkey in general and the locals using the commercial center have known and lived in this environment all their lives. To paraphrase Appadurai, this commercial center is relational and contextual rather than spatial or scalar. In this context, the commercial center is also an integral part of Bilkent neighborhood.

Since it was built on empty land, the neighborhood has no history or memory of its own. This, at one level, contributes to the production of a global culture and lifestyle in conjunction with developments in the physical space, and at another level it creates a neighborhood both as a physical and an imaginary place. Such facilities in the neighborhood as shopping malls, mega markets, offices, the symphony orchestra and the sports complex serve the purpose of imagination as a social practice. They become the symbolic means of introducing a lifestyle which is individualistic and on a par with a North American way of living for the upper middle class. The university, designed after American universities, is a contributing factor to the creation of this neighborhood as both a physical and a virtual reality. In this respect the locals of the neighborhood include both Turkish and foreign faculty who communicate in English within the campus.

When I claim this concrete site as 'my neighborhood', the first thing I wish to note is my personal role as a user/spectator of this phenomenology of neighborhood. To this day, it remains a virtual reality for me. I have no control, no say and no power in this development while it transforms my lifestyle. This is to reiterate an earlier point on globalization: that it signals a series of flows and shifts including those of power. In this neighborhood the distinction between the global and local collapses and a new form of glocalization emerges in the spatial production of an almost global city within a city. The employees of this neighborhood – the cleaning staff and low-wage employees of the commercial center – constitute the third-world space of labor, whereas the faculty (both local and foreign)

of the university and the managers of nearby facilities are the constitutive elements of information space. Capital is capital as everywhere else, hence it occupies the space of power in international partnership.

To reiterate Apppadurai's and Robertson's remarks, this neighborhood, on the one hand, requires the context of globalization, and on the other hand it constitutes glocalization as a disjuncture. It came into existence in the political-economic context of neoliberal policies and effectively used privatization, consumption and transnational transactions. In the meantime, it produced a particular form of glocalization by physically, socially and culturally transforming an empty space into a lived-in place. In the process of transformation it gained an identity of its own that is neither national nor global. It borrowed elements from global, national and local cultures and produced a communicative, interpretative character of its own by means of concrete activities and social modes of interaction.

It goes beyond the scope of this article to situate this neighborhood in conjunction with the political landscape in Turkey. Suffice it to note that the 'magical' transformation of local subjects who visit the commercial center is, in part, a function of the ongoing process of depoliticization since the military coup in 1980. In other part, it is reflective of the postmodern character of global cultural processes which transform conceptions of time and space via the virtual realities of shopping malls and politically induced symptoms of amnesia and schizophrenia. In a place like Ankara, such disjunctures in temporal and spatial dimensions of globalization are more stark than in comparable neighborhoods and mega commercial centers in any North American city.

Within a distance of 15 km (which takes an hour to drive) from downtown to Bilkent neighborhood, one moves away from timid looks on people's faces, anger and frustration in everyday life, on the streets, in stores and in public transportation to a place of order, efficiency and a plenitude of cordiality and smiles. On both sides of a long stretch of the road from the intercity highway to the virtual neighborhood of Bilkent there are barbed wires demarcating the boundaries of METU University and the military base, with signs that warn against trespassing. Upon one's arrival in Bilkent neighborhood one enters into a timeless sensibility of a place. In the downtown area time is measured by traffic jams, frequent traffic accidents, as well as the diversity of clothing that people from different income groups wear and the models of the cars they drive, whereas in Bilkent neighborhood temporality is much more uniform and geared toward the 'looks' of the upper middle classes and professionals.

As the colloquial expression goes, the moral of this story of globalization in the neighborhood is that a neighborhood – both as a theoretical construct and as the paradoxical ensemble of the actually existing social, economic and political relations – calls into question meta-theories of

globalization as a universal phenomenon. Since the development of Bilkent neighborhood is still underway, it raises the possibility of viewing globalization as an innovative force in creating new constellations of contradictory spaces. In this respect, more empirical work on practical modes of glocalizations at the level of neighborhoods help us to problematize globalization as an open-ended process that is shaped by recurring universal tendencies as much as by irregular, vernacular, ambiguous and schizophrenic patterns.

Notes

1. See *Turkish Daily News* (1998).
2. In 1984 liberalization of the foreign exchange regime enabled banks to accept foreign currency deposits from citizens and to engage in foreign transactions, whereas the establishment of a capital market board in 1986 to regulate and supervise the capital market was accompanied by a policy to exempt all dividends and capital gains from personal taxation (Balkan and Yeldan, 1996: 8–9).
3. The 'hybrid' character of the bourgeoisie in practice is more complicated than a simple division between the new rich and the established bourgeoisie. The regional differentiation, referred to as 'peripheral capital' in provinces outside major cities, as well as the rise of 'Islamic capital' have been two recent developments which led to the ongoing formation of a politically and culturally diverse bourgeois class.
4. In Turkish these neighborhoods are known as *gecekondus*. Their development dates back to the 1960s when internal migration from rural areas to major cities in western provinces started. Since then *gecekondu* structure has changed in terms of their constituency, lifestyles and internal differentiation. People living in these neighborhoods have their own particular histories (some of which concern forced migration from southeastern provinces), but at the same time they are an integral part of city life. See Tok (1999).
5. The factories located within the university campus use environmental regulations, health and safety rules of their own choosing. The paper mill has started a paper recycling program. The installation of a new central heating system in the university uses an elaborate mechanism of recycling 'wasted' energy in the factories.
6. This figure includes the number of cars in the parking lot of Ankuva shopping mall, but it excludes those parked on the surrounding streets.
7. Information provided by Filiz Ozek, coordinating manager of Bilkent Center, 14 May 1999.
8. In Turkish the term 'nouveau riche' refers to a vernacular interpretation of social and cultural standards and signifies a newly rich class that lacks proper manners.

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