

Chapter 6

Modelling Citizenship in Turkey's Miniature Park

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The Golden Horn (Haliç) suffered over a long period from industrial pollution. Its rehabilitation became an issue as early as the 1960s. In the second half of the 1980s, the government carried out a 'cleaning' operation which also involved major and swift demolition of properties crowding its shoreline. Green parks were created on reclaimed land along the shores but they remained desolate because of the lack of activity. Then the government started encouraging cultural investment around the Golden Horn. Miniaturk, Turkey's first nation-themed park of miniature models, which opened in 2003, is part of the latter phase of this urban regeneration campaign which focuses on culture-led revitalization (figure 6.1). As its name makes plain, Miniaturk presents a 'Turkey in miniature'. Its main outdoor display area features 1/25-scaled models of architectural showpieces chosen for their significance in the city's and Turkey's history. As a site of architectural miniatures, Miniaturk provides an escape from the experience of the everyday. But it must also be understood in dialectic relation to gigantic new sites of global capital as well as to gigantic older sites of nation building. This chapter seeks to interpret why a miniature Turkey appeared in 2003, and why it has been received with enthusiasm across the political spectrum.¹

Similar miniature theme parks abound around the world and reveal much about the contexts in which they are situated. Private enterprises like Disneyland have become hallmarks of national experience. Other, state-controlled examples may attempt more explicitly to reconfigure the relationship between a nation and its citizens. Ultimately, the tradition of open-air cultural parks can be traced to the international exhibitions which provided a venue for expressions of national identity in the nineteenth century (Bennett, 1995; Çelik, 1992; Kaufmann, 1989).

Nation-themed miniature parks – such as Miniaturk, Madurodam in The Hague, Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park (Taman Mini Indonesia Indah) in Jakarta, or Splendid China (Jīnxiù Zhōnghuá) in Shenzhen – show what their producers (increasingly state enterprises) think their country ought to be rather than how it is (Anagnost, 1997). They seek to represent the nation-state, invite

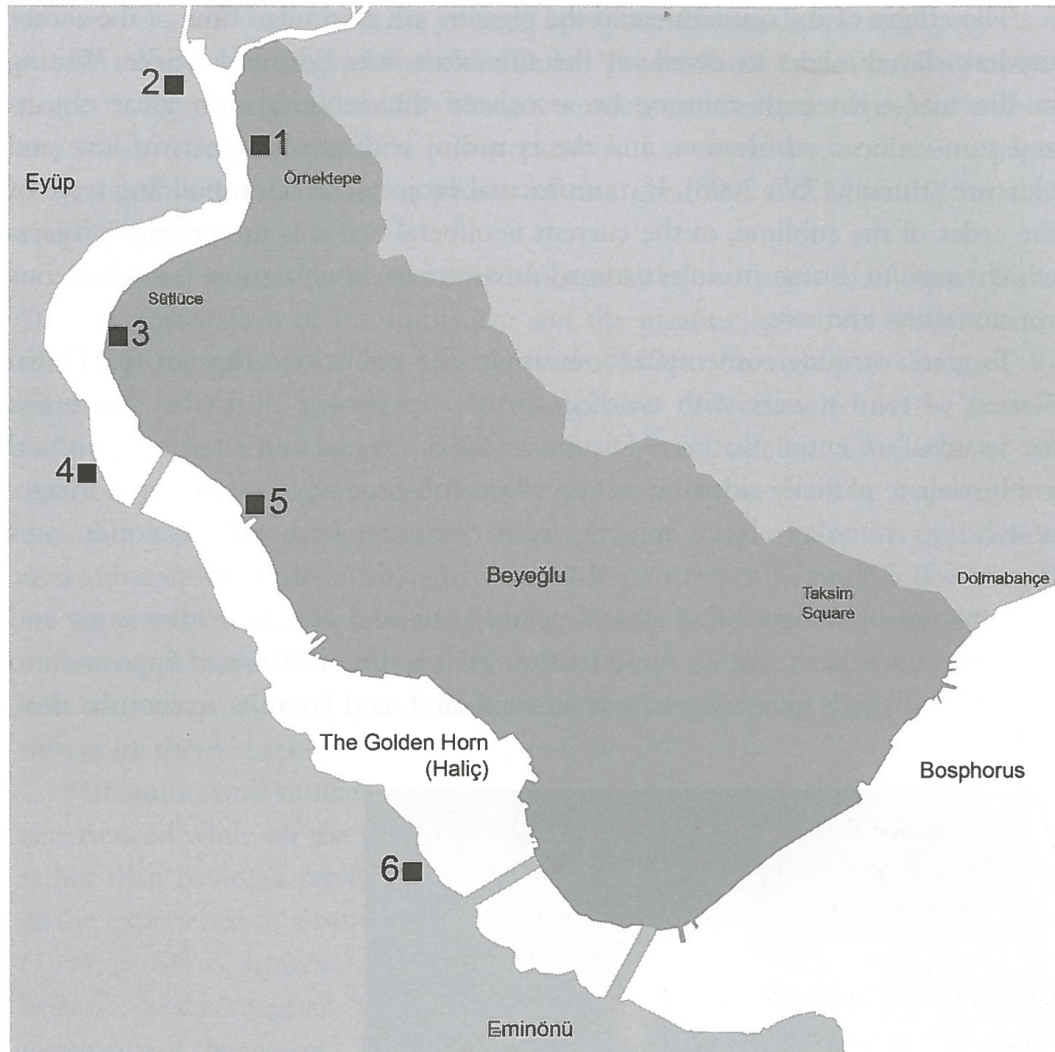


Figure 6.1. Relatively recent institutions of culture located on the banks of the Golden Horn include: Miniaturk in the Örnektepe neighbourhood of the Beyoğlu Municipality (1); Bilgi University's campus on the site of the city's first electric power plant, Silahtarağa (2); Söğütçe (or Haliç) Congress Centre, on the site of the city's former slaughter house (3); Feshane International Fair Congress and Culture Center adopted from the imperial *fez* (hat) factory (4); Rahmi Koç Museum which focuses on transport, industry and communications, adapted from Lengerhane, the Ottoman Navy anchor foundry, and the Hasköy dockyard (5); and Kadir Has University, adapted from the state-run tobacco depot and cigarette factory (6). (Source: adapted from aerial photography provided to the general public by Istanbul Municipality, available at: <http://sehirrehberi.ibb.gov.tr> and from neighbourhood maps provided by Beyoğlu Municipality on its website at: <http://www.beyoglu.bel.tr/beyoglu/taniyalim.aspx?SectionId=78>)

citizens to believe in the benevolence of the state, an ideological effect similar to that of monumental capitol complexes, especially in the modern capital cities of nascent nation-states. Cities such as Ankara and certain monumental building complexes within them aim to display and legitimize the authority of nation-states. The experiencing of their gigantic scale socializes citizens to internalize the projected nationalist narrative (Vale, 1992). National miniature theme parks, on the other hand, adopt a different palette of spatial techniques of simulation and miniaturization.

The effects of the miniature and the gigantic are dissimilar. One of the earlier modern-day thinkers to dwell on the miniature was Edmund Burke. Writing in the mid-eighteenth century, he associated the sublime with great objects and pain-induced admiration, and the beautiful with small objects of love and pleasure (Burke, 1757, 2008). If monumental projects of nation building were of the order of the sublime, in the current neoliberal era, it is the prestige projects which aim to bring in international investment which cause simultaneous consternation and awe.

To give a striking contemporary example, the publicity campaign for ‘Dubai Towers’ – twin towers with twisting torsos – proposed by Dubai Properties for Istanbul’s Central Business District in 2005, created animated reaction and public debate partially aided by its very own, full-page advertisements of images of twisting everyday objects ranging from computer keyboards to coffee cups (figure 6.2). Designed to promote the ‘innovative’ form of the proposed towers, these blown-up images of small and painfully twisted objects inadvertently and ironically exacerbated public consternation. As a result of sustained opposition to the Municipality’s give-away of state-owned land, and lawsuits against the deal,

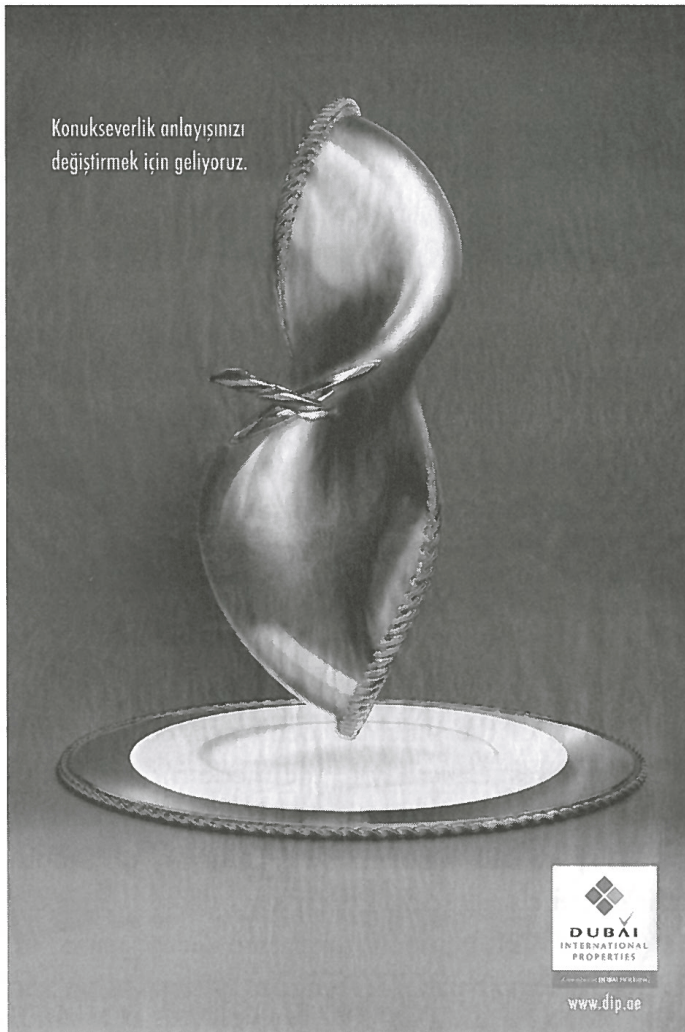


Figure 6.2. Full-page newspaper advertisement by Dubai Properties for its ‘Dubai Towers’. *Milliyet*. 24 November 2005. This twisted coffee cup was intended to demonstrate the ‘innovative’ form of the twin-tower complex proposed by Dubai Properties for Istanbul’s Central Business District between Levent and Maslak along the Büyükdere Asphalt. The caption reads ‘We are coming to change your understanding of hospitality’ [Konukseverlik anlayışınızı değiştirmek için geliyoruz]. The massive advertising campaign backfired.

the investor withdrew from the project. I propose to consider prestige projects of neoliberal urbanism, especially of the Dubai Towers kind, where publicly-owned property is marketed and sold by the government to international capital without any concern for transparency, public participation or debate, and monumental projects of nation building as phases of the 'gigantic', and Miniaturk as their counterpart.

A national miniature themed park is not an 'easy' miniature to interpret. Susan Stewart's discussion of the miniature and the gigantic is helpful in delineating the subjective affects of the two (Stewart, 1984). According to Stewart, the miniature is usually associated with the private collection, while the gigantic with the public. The latter symbolizes authority – i.e., the state, masculinity, and exteriority – and is experienced partially while on the move. The miniature, on the other hand, presents popularity, femininity, and interiority, and is experienced as a transcendental space frozen in time. Miniatures such as miniature railways are appealing partly because their locus is nostalgia for childhood, and (pre-industrial) history (and artisanal labour rather than alienated labour). Such a neat dichotomy, as in gigantic versus miniature, is difficult to apply to the case of miniature theme parks.

Miniaturk and similar nation-themed miniature parks are designed to be experienced while on the move and visitors are immersed in their environments rather than having a privileged and dominant view from above which is typical of the experience of a miniature railway or dollhouse (Errington, 1998). Stewart (1984, p. 64) is, however, helpful in thinking about the miniature theme park because, as she suggests, 'the interiority of the enclosed world tends to reify the interiority of the viewer'. The miniature park appeals to citizens by helping them to imagine their nation in its entirety as an uncontaminated and perfect 'island'.

Since its opening in 2003, Miniaturk's success has been enormous. It has found a place in the city's popular landscape, and Istanbul's guided tours and printed guides now incorporate it next to well-known historical sites. As the press gave it keen and enduring support, the total number of visitors rose to more than two million by the end of its first two years. Following the success of Istanbul, the southern tourist city of Antalya built its own 'Mini-City'.² In contrast to the controversy around other global-city projects, however, Miniaturk has not triggered any visible opposition.³ It was built on publicly-owned land by the Istanbul Municipality's Kültür A.tür A.⁴ Even though its construction cost was reportedly acquired from corporate sponsors, it did not appear to represent any particular private interest. Instead, it was presented as a cultural heritage site.

This chapter argues that understanding the place and significance of Miniaturk in the popular historical landscape can shed light on the public reaction to other building projects in Istanbul. The park can also be seen as demonstrating a turning point in Turkish politics, as the 'vernacular politics' (White, 2002) of Islamism moved to the centre, into party politics. Here, Islamism refers to a diversity of outlooks that collectively adhere to the notion that Islam is not

private but a public matter and political. Finally, Miniaturk illuminates changing notions of citizenship and national identity in a globalizing city.

The Design of the Park

Miniaturk is located on the banks of the Golden Horn in the Örnektepe neighbourhood of the Beyoğlu district municipality. In addition to being part of a local revitalization campaign that concentrates on the Golden Horn (Bezmez, 2008), it was presented by the officials as participating in a larger process that seeks to establish Istanbul as a 'global brand' (Özdemir, 2003, p. 8). With the rise of tourism worldwide since the late 1970s, places are increasingly turning to theming to compete in a crowded field (Gottdiener, 2001). Whole countries are creating images, icons, and advertising campaigns to turn themselves into 'destination museums' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Marketing requires easily identifiable signs or images; and nation-themed miniature parks are readily used to market nations. Miniaturk's agenda is to provide a marketable image of Turkey, not only to foreign tourists but also to Turkish citizens.

Miniaturk's site is a strip of infill land between the water and the motorway (İmrahor Avenue) (figure 6.3).⁵ In terms of its design, Miniaturk aims to abstract itself from its surroundings. In the words of its architect, Murat Uluğ (2003), the park deliberately seeks to create a 'fairytale-like environment'. A tall fence blocks off all external views of the interior, and the entrance complex, with administrative and commercial functions, a restaurant and a shop, faces a parking lot rather than the street (figure 6.4). From here a carefully controlled entry sequence reinforces the sense of separation. First, a ramp takes visitors to a large raised terrace over a mini-botanical park. And it is only after paying the



Figure 6.3. The location of Miniaturk highlighted in its urban context. (Source: Adapted from aerial photography provided to the general public by Istanbul Municipality. Available at <http://sehirrehberi.ibb.gov.tr>. Accessed 20 December 2009)

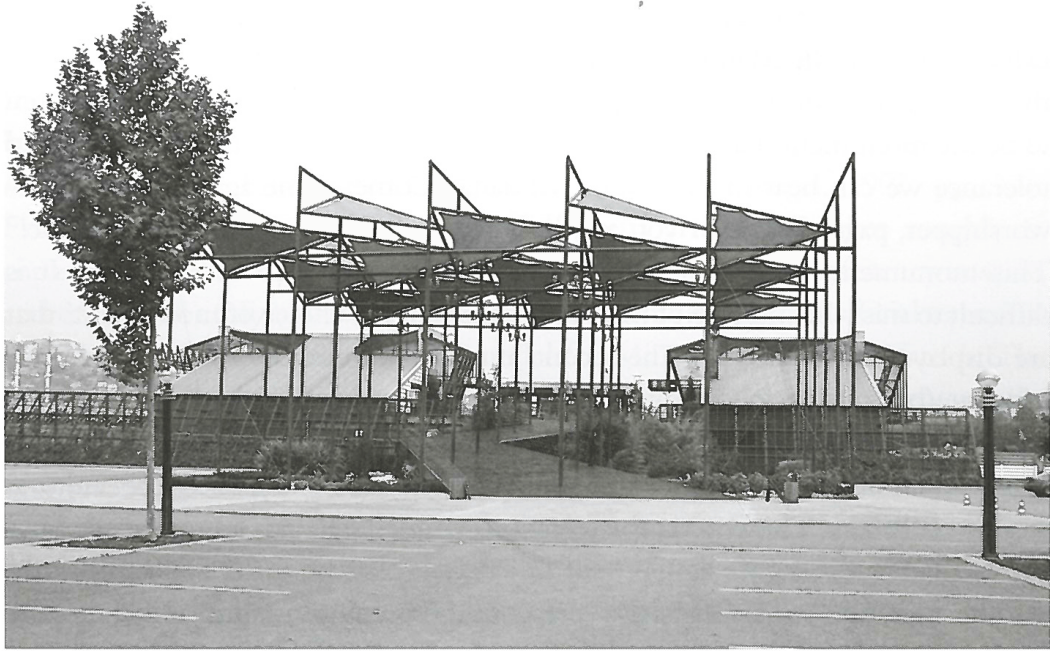


Figure 6.4. The entrance complex faces the parking lot. It houses administrative and commercial functions including ticket booths, a restaurant, and a shop. An angular ramp takes visitors up to a raised terrace over a mini-botanical park. (Photo: İpek Tureli)



Figure 6.5. After paying the entry fee, visitors are treated to their first overview of the exhibition site from the entry terrace. (Photo: Ömer Faruk Şen)

entrance fee and passing through the entry gates that visitors arrive at a vantage point where Miniaturk is revealed to them. From this elevated location, visitors can enjoy a view of the entire park from behind a long balustrade, or take one of two symmetrical ramps down to the ground-level walkways (figure 6.5). The main exhibition area is roughly divided into two by external circular paths within which are meandering paths along which the models are distributed.

Where the ramp to the right, to the side of the motorway, meets the ground/exhibition level, the Mausoleum of Mevlana (built in 1274, Konya) is placed as the first model. This is very symbolic indeed, as the guide explains it was ‘chosen to be the monument that greets the visitors in Miniaturk because of the love and tolerance we can hear in the call of Mevlana “Come, come again! Infidel, fire-worshipper, pagan/Whoever you are, how many times you have sinned, come!” This monument bears witness to the multi-cultural nature of Anatolia’.⁶ It is difficult to miss the message of multiculturalism in the choice of monuments that are displayed in Miniaturk. The second model is of the Ottoman-era Selimiye Mosque (built between 1568 and 1575, Edirne); the third, of the Republican-era Anıtkabir (1944–1953, Ankara), the Republic’s leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s mausoleum. The diversity of the buildings modelled signifies the cultural wealth of Turkey. The criteria for selection, visitors are told, are originality and representativeness (figure 6.6).⁷

The literature on theme parks presents these environments as heir to the workings of print in the imagination of people as a nation *à la* Benedict Anderson (Anagnost, 1997). The nation is mapped in these spaces and reproduced through consumption. The designs of nation-themed miniature parks display



Figure 6.6. The models do not all replicate their originals in the same way. In the foreground is the model of Hacı Bektaş Veli Dervish Lodge near the city of Nevşehir. In the immediate background is the model of the Church of Virgin Mary near the city of Izmir. The printed guide says of the latter building that ‘only its apse stands today’. Nevertheless, the complete church was modelled in Miniaturk on the basis of references and other resources. This photograph also shows the audio-information panel that is activated by each visitor’s smart ticket. (Photo: İpek Tureli)

diversity in the way this mapping is materialized. Beautiful Indonesia orders its imaginary nation according to official geographical divisions. Thus, each Indonesian province is represented by a pavilion around a central artificial pond. In the middle of the pond are artificial islands in the shape of the Indonesian Archipelago (see Hitchcock, 1998; Pemberton, 1994; Siegel, 1997, pp. 3–5; Errington, 1998, pp. 194–198). Splendid China arranges its sites roughly to correspond to their relative locations in real life, but without consistency in scale, and the overall outlines of the park somewhat resembles China's official territorial boundaries.⁸ The officially declared model for Miniaturk is Madurodam in The Hague. A comparison, however, reveals that the only real similarity between the two is that both display building models at 1/25 scale. Madurodam's major claim is to present a complete built history of The Netherlands. To accomplish this, it takes the form of a city that has grown outward radially from a medieval core. In Miniaturk there is no formal reference to the map of the nation-state, nor was the possibility of growth designed into the site plan. Only seventy-five models were listed in the park's 2003 visitor's guide (thirty-six from Istanbul, thirty-one from Anatolia, and eight from 'abroad') and 105 are listed in its 2010 website.⁹ Additions over time have increased the total number and density of the models, and transformed the spatial experience of the exhibition space, making it denser. The overall boundaries and thematic groupings of the park remain.

It is interesting to find in Miniaturk that the exhibition space is organized into two main circular areas, which separate Istanbul from Turkey – the circular area closer to the entrance terrace contains 'Anatolian', and the other, 'Istanbul' sites (figure 6.7). The Istanbul part is organized around a pond that stands in for the Bosphorus. A model bridge, on which visitors can walk, connects across the pond to an elevated restaurant on the roof terrace of a small building which defines the rear edge of the park (figure 6.8). This building is stepped towards the exhibition area to provide outdoor seating, an amphitheatre for special events such as concerts, and inside it are service areas, and a 'Panoramic Museum of Victory' where miniature figures re-enact the War of Independence in 'Anatolia' complemented by a soundtrack. My analysis here is limited to the outdoor areas.

Outside the two circular exhibition areas, of Istanbul and Anatolia, on the bank-side of the park, a third group of models presents a curious selection of buildings dubbed 'Ottoman Geography' ('Abroad' is the title used in the English guide). These models – which include, among others, the Ecyad Castle in Mecca, Damascus Train Station, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, Mostar Bridge in Bosnia-Herzegovina – replicate in miniature buildings outside the current boundaries of Turkey. They were selected, promotional publications state, because they were 'built or renovated during the Ottoman Empire'. This third group clearly seeks to demonstrate the idea that Turkey not only appreciates multiple cultures within the present-day borders of the country but also those once contained within the larger administrative umbrella of the Ottoman Empire.

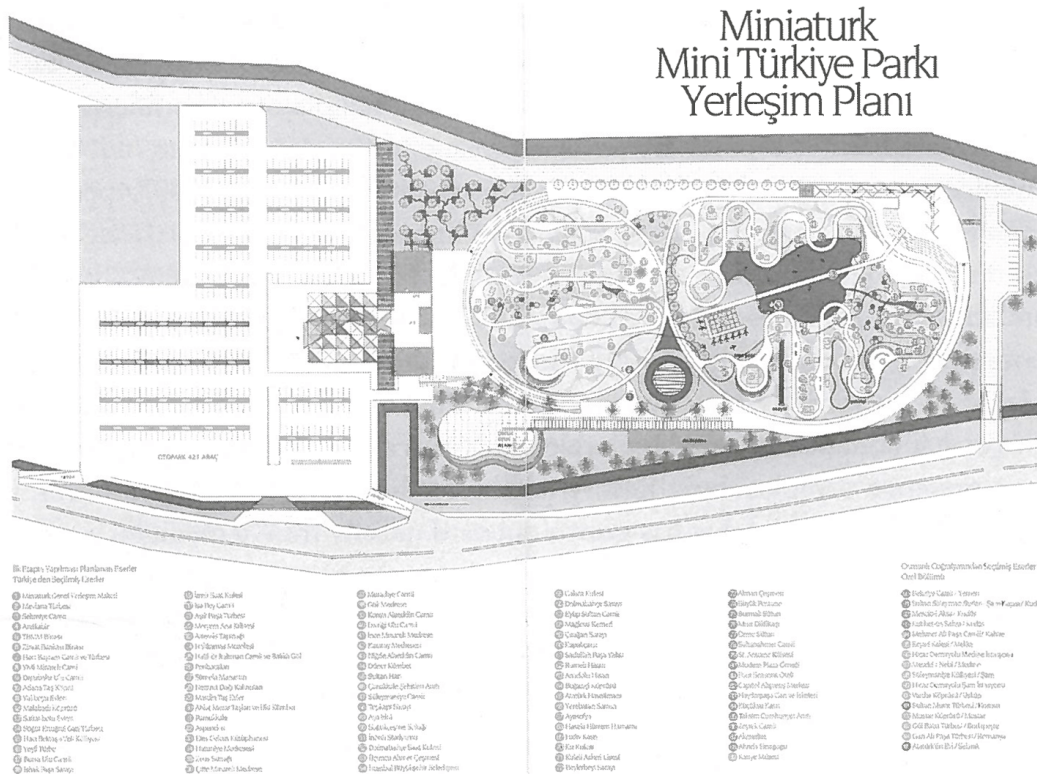


Figure 6.7. Plan published by Miniaturk to solicit models from model-makers. (Source: *Miniaturk, Mini Türkiye Parkı Sponsorluk Rehberi*, 2002, by courtesy of Kültür A.Ş.)



Figure 6.8. The only model visitors can touch and walk on is that of the Bosphorus Bridge, which crosses the artificial pond on the site. (Photo: İpek Türel)ı

Overall, the models do not simulate the conditions of original structures in any consistent way: models that are replicas, restorations, and restitutions of their referents are presented together. Most buildings and sites are presented

in ways that rid them off their symbolic content. Little attempt is made to distinguish between the sites based on the communities they serve(d). Some models depict sites that are currently in use, while others are purely historical. Perhaps most startlingly, most of the models are divorced from their original urban contexts. Even buildings located literally next to each other in Istanbul may thus be dislocated and separated in their miniature displays. The most pointed examples of this are from the Dolmabahçe and Sultanahmet areas of Istanbul. In Dolmabahçe, the palace and the clock tower, and in Sultanahmet, the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Topkapı Palace, and the Cistern share tightly knit urban contexts. However, in Miniaturk these structures are positioned without reference to each other.

Had the main goal simply been to demonstrate multiculturalism, then for instance, Taksim Square – with the Atatürk Cultural Centre (Atatürk Kültür Merkezi, AKM, 1969), Cumhuriyet Anıtı (Republic Monument, 1928) and the Ottoman water distribution (taksim) reservoir (1732) on the square, and the Greek Orthodox Church Ayia Triada (Holy Trinity, 1882) and the French Consulate (formerly Plague Hospital, 1719) nearby – would have been another striking example to demonstrate the complexity and layered nature of the urban fabric in contemporary Istanbul, but in Miniaturk, only the Republic Monument (dubbed Taksim Monument) is reproduced as a singular item, detached from both physical and social contexts. By evading all such contextual references the effect is to ‘naturalize’ the originals. Another effect that I bring out in my analysis is a tension between the representation of the Republican and Ottoman eras. Nevertheless, it is through tensions and contestations that a consensus can be built.

The Political Context

The decision to build a bounded miniature park where the nation could be viewed in its entirety may be seen partially as a response to anxieties about Turkey's future. As elsewhere, national unity has long been a source of collective paranoia in Turkey. Following World War II, fears for national sovereignty were fuelled by Cold War politics. Since the early 1990s, separatist movements and violent developments in the Balkans and the Middle East have again exacerbated such fears. As a result, the rise of Islamist and Kurdish movements at home have been regarded as threats to national sovereignty, rather than a call for social justice and democracy.

Two principal observations reinforce the notion that Miniaturk may be responding to such anxieties. At the level of image, Miniaturk stage-manages history by painting an ambiguous picture of societal harmony. At the level of production, it attempts to provide a showcase for both the quality and effectiveness of local and the central governments' mutual political vision for the country and the city. The version of history presented at the park is open to

different readings according to the visitors' 'viewing positions', influenced among other factors by personal background and the political context. Those involved in creating the park may also have interpreted its purpose dissimilarly. Ultimately, its form has embodied negotiation between a range of politicians, administrators, designers, engineers, builders, consultants and sponsors.

Despite these interpretive ambiguities, Miniaturk has been successfully promoted through advertising and word of mouth. Stories have been written in local magazines and newspapers; articles have appeared in tourist and architectural guides to the city; and images of the park have been posted on billboards (managed by Kültür A.Ş.). With so much coverage and so many actors, it is understandable that certain discrepancies surfaced in terms of credit for its design and realization. This led to multiple opening ceremonies. Miniaturk was opened three times: first, on 23 April 2003; second, by Prime Minister Erdoğan on 2 May 2003; and finally, by the then Mayor Müfit Gürtuna on 29 May 2003, for the commemoration of the 550th anniversary of Istanbul's conquest (Kültür A.Ş., 2003*b*, p. 13). The architect is not usually named in official publications of Miniaturk, but he has published his design drawings in local professional journals of architecture, without reference to the political actors who commissioned the project.

Significantly, the first opening coincided in the official calendar of the Republic with 'National Sovereignty and Children's Day'. By conflating national sovereignty with a celebration of the child, the date not only implies that the preservation of sovereignty should be a concern of children, but casts adult citizens in the role of children in relationship to the state. By comparison, Istanbul's conquest commemoration date, 29 May, is not listed in the official calendar of the Republic (Çınar, 2001, p. 365) but nonetheless is celebrated at the local level with minimum official participation. Instead, the marketing of Miniaturk as a conquest-commemoration project by Mayor Gürtuna must be viewed in relation to public discussions and competing claims on national history.

As Republican history is commemorated via days such as 23 April, 19 May (Atatürk Commemoration, Youth and Sports Day), and 29 October (Republic Day), Muslim civil society groups and Muslim-oriented political parties have demonstrated a need to establish alternative days commemorating important events from Turkey's Ottoman past. The counterpart of this commemoration has been growing nostalgia for the early years of the Republic among citizens who identify with 'Kemalism' (after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding figure of the Republic, around whom a leadership cult developed) and its doctrine of secularism. Esra Özyürek and Kimberly Hart observe the 'miniaturization', commodification and consumption of Atatürk insignia among a variety of strategies through which the early Republic is remembered and politics is privatized in line with neoliberal symbolism of privatization and market choice (Özyürek, 2005; Hart, 1999). According to Özyürek, Kemalist and Islamist

versions of the early Republic in the 1990s competed but provided comparably homogeneous, dominant narratives (Özyürek, 2007).

The backdrop for competing programmes of commemoration involved the reluctance of official nationalist history to recognize the accomplishments of the Ottomans. Especially in its early decades, the Republic attempted to establish itself as a secular, West-oriented nation-state, in historic opposition to the old, Islamic, 'Eastern' Ottoman Empire. And by downplaying conquest-commemoration festivities, it has also sought to avoid upsetting the 'European club' by conjuring memories of a past when the Ottoman Turks were a rival power in Europe.¹⁰ For their part, 'Islamists' in local government have turned to neo-Ottomanist nostalgia precisely because of, and as a reaction to, the secular Turkish establishment. The Ottomans had self-consciously promoted a multicultural society as well as claiming the leadership of Islam. In contrast, the Republican era (1923–1950) was characterized by disrepudiation of the public display of religion. The nascent Turkish state promoted civic nationalism, manufacturing homogeneous national identity out of a very diverse population, but ended up imposing the language – Turkish – and the religion – Sunni Islam – of the majority (Smith, 2005). Accordingly, citizenship emphasized the individual's duties to the nation-state over his or her rights (Kadioğlu, 2006). However, market reforms in the 1980s, political liberalization in the 1990s, and the EU membership process at the beginning of the 2000s have all contributed to a re-evaluation of accepted norms of citizenship, national identity, and the assumed correspondence between them.

This relationship between the state and the citizen is perhaps nowhere more spatially expressed than in the siting and design of the Anıtkabir. On Atatürk's death, his mausoleum was constructed on an imposing hill crowning the capital city of Ankara. Various features of the building sought to embody and define early Republican ideals about the correct relationship between citizen and nation state (Meeker, 1997; Bozdoğan, 2001). In the years since it was built, the Mausoleum has served as Turkey's official nationalist pilgrimage site. It is where state ceremonies are held, and private and public associations gather there to pay their respects to Atatürk and display their commitment to protect the nation. In the 1990s protests also took place there against such perceived threats to the secular establishment as the headscarf.

One result of the rise of Islamism in the public sphere in the 1990s has been to challenge the state-sanctioned narrative of national identity, and the need to give physical representation to these forces has resulted in efforts to rediscover Istanbul's architectural and urban history as the former Ottoman capital (Jeremy F. Walton, Chapter 5). Alev Çınar argues that the substitute narratives of nationhood produced by Islamist political organizations sought to cast Istanbul as a 'victim' of the Republic – thus the re-enactment of its conquest symbolically served to 'save' it (Çınar, 2001, 2005). She explains that in 1994 the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality under Refah Partisi (RP, Welfare Party) and an Islamist nongovernmental organization, the National Youth Foundation,

jointly organized the conquest celebration as an event which would rival national commemoration days in scope and scale (*Ibid.*).

Among other things, this drew public and academic attention to Islamist claims to public spaces in the city. The victory of RP in the local elections in major cities, and specifically Tayyip Erdoğan's in Istanbul, raised further alarms. And when RP leader Necmettin Erbakan became Turkey's first Islamist Prime Minister in 1996 concerns mounted even further. Some even asked if Turkey was set to turn into a new Iran. In 1997, the army, which sees itself as the guardian of the secular Republic, intervened and ousted the RP (Cizre and Çınar, 2003). The constitutional court then closed down both the RP and its successor, Fazilet Partisi (Virtue Party). These moves by a coalition of the army and other secular elites to block the rise of Islamists swayed electoral support to a reformist faction within the RP. In 2002 this faction, now represented by the Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AKP, Justice and Development Party), won the general elections under the leadership of Istanbul's former mayor, and Turkey's current Prime Minister Erdoğan, in part by promoting an economic programme of 'communitarian-liberal syntheses' (Keyman and İçduygu, 2005, p. 16). In response to questions regarding his new 'reformed' position, Erdoğan defined himself not as an Islamist but as a 'conservative democrat'. Although he used Islamist devices in his daily performance as prime minister, he made it clear that he considered religion a private issue and that AKP would not conflate religion and government, Islam and democracy (Smith, 2005) and would operate within the nation-state's constitutional framework. AKP subsequently used the European Union membership accession process to negotiate and suppress potential threats to it from the secularist establishment. It advocated a much milder adherence to religion than its predecessor RP, and apparently recognized a need for societal plurality.

A Ground of Conversation?

In representing cultural 'wealth', Miniaturk seeks to build consensus from contestation. In its version of Turkey, it does not single out the Islamic Ottoman past but overtly privileges Istanbul over Ankara, the capital built to showcase nation-building in the early Republican era. The selection of models in Miniaturk aims to represent major religious communities that cohabited the land – in line with what is today perceived as Ottoman 'cosmopolitanism'. One of the forms of neo-Ottomanist nostalgia that manifests itself is a longing for the multi-congregational and multi-lingual composition of the city with its Christians, Jews and Europeans (Houston, 2001a, b; Komins, 2002; Mills, 2006, 2007; Özyürek, 2005, 2007; Marcy Brink-Danan, Chapter 16) For Muslim-oriented organizations and individuals, this expresses Muslim hegemony over others. For others, it demonstrates the cultural richness and tolerance of Turkey and its suitability to the new Europe. Miniaturk projects the message of multiculturalism by its selection of Ottoman-era monuments of Muslims and

non-Muslims, and pre-Ottoman sites from within the boundaries of Turkey. The incorporation of pre-Ottoman sites from Anatolia, especially those of antiquity, into national patrimony, is very much in line with Republican-era history writing. Yet, the selection constrains those from the Republican era by limiting their number. And the design of individual monuments and their siting negate all societal significance; this is especially true of Republican-era monuments, some of which have immense political significance. The inclusion of monuments from 'Ottoman geography' outside Turkey suggests the park extends the imagination of the nation-state beyond the current borders and claims the Ottoman Empire as historical precedent and cultural heritage, and this reflects the current government's (nostalgic) desire to extend Turkey's sphere of influence to that territory once more. The contradictions in design credits and inaugural dates notwithstanding, the embrace of the park by the Municipality, the visiting public, and the news media all suggest that it does facilitate a ground for conversation.

In a meeting with one of the model-makers and a public relations representative, I was intrigued to discover how the two identified with different versions of national history, even while working together. One of my questions was directed at the model maker.¹¹ When I asked specifically which his favourite model was, he replied that it was the Mağlova Aqueduct (1554–1562), and gave the following reasons:

Model-Maker: Not because it is a good model; in fact, it was one of our first... I like it because of the work itself. It shows they had the determination, the belief, and the will to work. I am not saying this because of indoctrination: 'Ottomans, Oh! Ottomans...'. However, every society, like an organism, has a period in which it is alive... For example, if we bring the first and last decades of the Republic together... [Laughs]

Public Relations Representative: Not even bringing the last century together would suffice... Once, I was leading a group of journalists [in Miniaturk]. One asked why there aren't many examples from the Republic. And I pointed to the squatter settlements [overlooking the park] and said, 'There!' He started exclaiming, 'You are indeed Ottomanists, you are this ... and you are that...'. His own cameraman reacted. 'Hold on a minute', he interrupted: '[as if] we have them [Republican landmarks worthy of display], and it is Miniaturk that does not display them?'

Model-Maker: But they [squatter settlements] are not the result of the Republic. They exist because of globalization, because of the conjuncture, because of the Cold War...

Public Relations Representative: They are the result of a homogenizing world. Look at a plaza. Is this building in New York, Paris, in Istanbul, or in Tokyo? One cannot tell. All look the same. But look at a structure from the Middle Ages, and you can tell at a glance where it's from. If one is equipped with some historical knowledge one can even identify the country where it is from. But plazas do not allow this.

In this partial exchange, the model-maker conflates the copy (model aqueduct) with the original (real aqueduct). He does not refer to the original as a functional architectural object or space, but as a symbol of technological superiority, as an artefact of cultural self-confidence. The model-maker also suggests that society is an organism, and that architecture is its reflection. Thus, when an organism reaches maturity, it produces monumental architecture and engineering. The Republic, in such a narrative, becomes a period of delayed replenishment that has been terminated by more powerful processes such as internationalization and globalization that have come from without.

For the public relations representative, however, the organism analogy does not work. Her understanding evolves more along an axis of tradition versus modernity. Once there was a time of heterogeneity, but this was defeated by modernization (which started with the Ottoman Reformations in the nineteenth century, but pursued forcefully under the Republic through the twentieth). She thus externalizes the Republic as an agent of top-down modernization. In this analysis, processes of modernization ultimately dictate cultural homogeneity, and Miniaturk becomes a project of ‘resistance’ because it reinstates heterogeneity (figure 6.9).



Figure 6.9. Even though the design of the park aims to abstract itself from its surroundings, the surrounding topography impinges in the form of nearby hillside apartment buildings that create an unavoidable backdrop to the models – the source of the public relations representative’s disturbance. (Source: *Miniaturk: Turkey’s Showcase*, 2003, by courtesy of Kültür A.Ş.)

Clearly, the model-maker and the public relations representative exhibit different ideas about Ottoman/Turkish history and how the present built environment has come into being. But they parallel each other in their understanding that architecture is an outcome (rather than, for instance, a cause or an agent) of social processes. Thus, while they do not agree at an ideological level, they have been able to work together to produce representations of architecture that not only display but prove Turkey's exceptionalism. In essence, then, Miniaturk offers a consensus ground for two people who do not share the same conception of history, but who have similar anxieties about cultural homogenization and decline. The exchange between them illustrates the park's potential to reveal political differences, just as it facilitates their concealment.

Prime Minister Erdoğan and his senior aides in the Istanbul Municipality, including the current mayor, are eager to shoulder the global-city project, and have been proud to initiate and build prestige projects – referred to as 'plazas' in the previous exchange – and to 'market' Istanbul to international investment. This administration is essentially continuing a project which began under Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party) with Turgut Özal as Prime Minister (1983–1989) and Bedrettin Dalan as Istanbul's mayor (1984–1989). The restructuring of the city's economy initiated with the touristification of the city's heritage with a renewed official focus on its Ottoman past, and the opening of numerous five-star hotels on prime sites overlooking the Bosphorus. Through the 1990s and 2000s, the city acquired numerous new hotels, gated communities, high-rise condominiums, shopping malls, entertainment venues, and a new skyline of high-rise buildings, especially in the new Central Business District which now characterizes the city's contemporary face.

Miniaturk has also been used to market the city, but its design and status as a 'heritage' site seem to set it in a different orbit. Thus, when the public relations representative refers to the homogenization of the built environment via 'plazas', she assumes that Miniaturk somehow resists this process. What she chooses not to see is that all projects involving prime sites offered to global capital or leisure environments such as Miniaturk are characteristic architectures of globalization. Both are domestic translations of global types; both entail the rerouting of public sources into private or privatized services; and both are designed to demonstrate Turkey's competitiveness in the global marketplace (figures 6.10 and 6.11).

Miniaturk reflects a desire to imagine a Turkey which displays its cultural wealth and influence with confidence and pride while being clearly bounded and secure. One image that Miniaturk repeatedly uses in promotional publications (possibly to represent its inclusive politics) shows Atatürk's Mausoleum and the Selimiye Mosque together. The coupling brings into mind the controversy around the Mausoleum and the new Kocatepe Mosque in Ankara (modelled on several Imperial Ottoman mosques, including Selimiye) as discussed by anthropologist Michael E. Meeker (1997). In reality, the Mausoleum and the Kocatepe Mosque stand at similar elevations, and crown the two highest hills of the capital city.

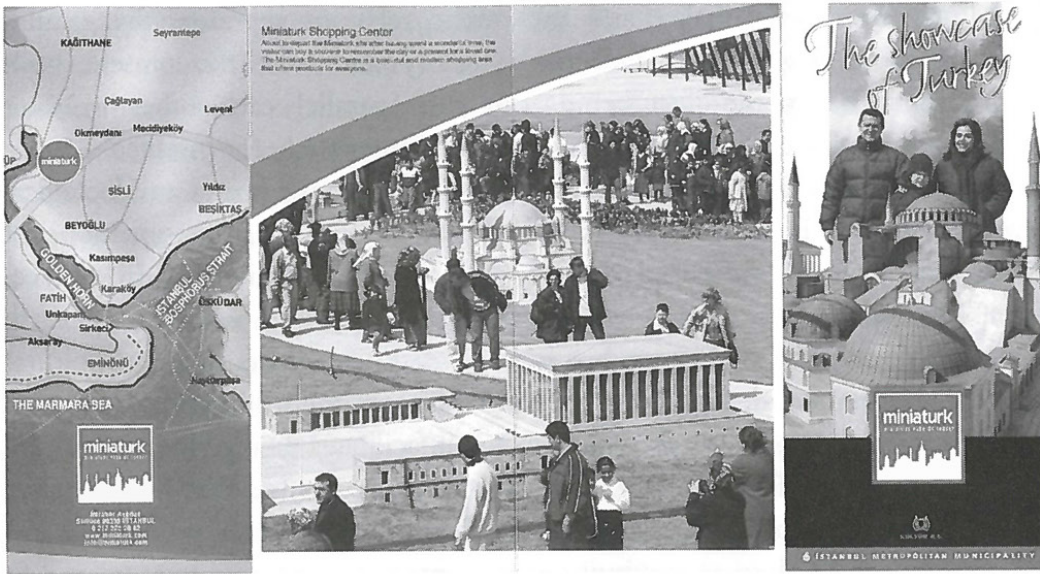


Figure 6.10. Miniaturk's 2003 brochure shows, from left to right, the diagrammatic location of the park in the city, an unstaged snapshot of visitors in the park, and a staged shot of an ideal family behind the Byzantine church-turned-mosque-turned-museum of Hagia Sophia under the words, 'The Showcase of Turkey'. (Source: By courtesy of Kültür A.Ş.)

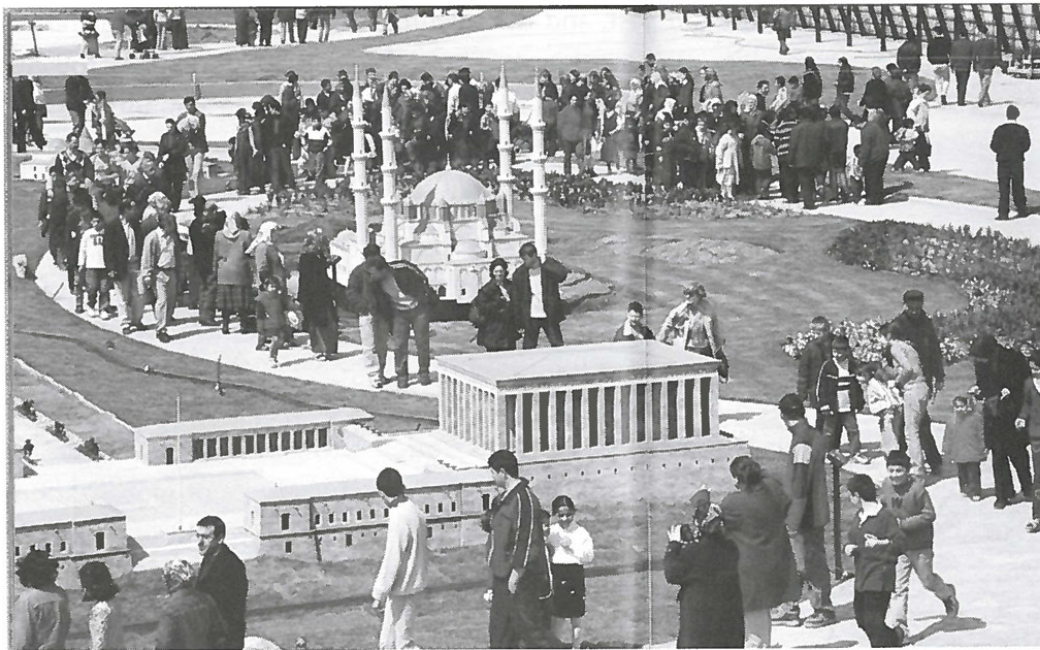


Figure 6.11. This photograph was used in several of Miniaturk's publications. The framing foregrounds the Mausoleum, yet establishes the imperial mosque as the centre of attraction. (Source: *Miniaturk: Turkey's Showcase*, 2003, by courtesy of Kültür A.Ş.)

They thus represent competing claims to Turkey's national imaginary – the Mausoleum standing for secular modernism, the mosque for a modern Islam. This 'controversy' is complicated today by the fact that army generals who visit the Mausoleum to pay tribute to Atatürk also perform the *namaz* in Kocatepe;

and when AKP leaders visit the Mausoleum, their members with headscarves will not be in sight. Both sides display reluctance but simultaneous consensus.

The composition of the Miniaturk promotional photograph is complex in symbolic terms, and yields two very different readings. According to one, the Mausoleum, the symbol of Republican nationalism, is clearly foregrounded. But the position of the Mausoleum model on flat ground can alternatively be seen as negating its elevated position in relation to the capital city and the nation. The photograph also shows a few spectators giving a passing glance to the Mausoleum while many more crowd around the Kocatepe Mosque. Could the implication be to point out that the Ottoman past is becoming increasingly attractive, in contrast to the Republican one? The angle of view and foreshortening in the image further contributes to this second reading by locating the mosque above the Mausoleum on the printed page. I am not suggesting that the photographer took this image with a definitive discursive claim; but the choice as publicity image suggests the photograph presents the institutional goal of Miniaturk, of building consensus from contestation.

The embodied experience of the park by the park's visitors does not privilege any static point of view. The layout of routes through the park is based on an assumption that visitors will stay for two hours (Kültür A.Ş., 2003*b*, p. 17). During this time, security personnel and visual and audio messages repeatedly remind them to avoid walking on the grass or touching the models. Meanwhile, a specially commissioned musical composition, by Fahir Atakoğlu (known for his patriotic works), is broadcast from disguised speakers, and detailed information on individual landmarks is provided in a booklet, as well as through an audio information system activated by the individual user (and again heard through disguised speakers). The lack of shade, lack of seating, narrow width of paths, and admonishments against touching the models (or even getting close to them) all lead visitors to view the models while in motion. Only on the model of the Bosphorus Bridge are visitors treated somewhat differently. The actual suspension bridge connects Asia and Europe and is traversed only by motor vehicles. But here it serves as a finale of sorts, raising visitors from the ground level to the elevated restaurant terrace, from where they can look back over the park and contemplate the miniature world which has just been presented to them.

Conclusion

The models in Miniaturk are devoid of social life, isolated from any urban context, and laid out in a seemingly arbitrary manner. Instead of trying to depict an overt normative Turkish or Islamic-Turkish character, the park's main rhetorical purpose thus seems to be to indicate the tolerance of Turkey to multiple cultures and ways of life. Miniaturk's final size has been predetermined; it does not allow for extension or change. Finally, Miniaturk differentiates between city and nation. It privileges one specific city, Istanbul, giving it almost equal space

in its representation as the rest of the national territory. What remains further peculiar about Miniaturk is that half the original structures modelled in it may still be found in Istanbul. Why would Istanbul be the locus for such a collection of representations when visitors could just as easily visit the originals? This condition suggests that while Istanbul seeks to be a centre of cultural imagination, it is a centre detached from the imaginary of the nation. Likewise, the nation is left with a displaced centre. In trying to re-present an ideal of Istanbul, the park also tries to detach itself from the reality of the city around it.

Visitors understand and judge the park according to their personal reference systems. They may also understand Miniaturk's inclusivity as a form of nostalgia. But, in the end, their appreciation of the park, demonstrated in attendance numbers and positive reviews, reflects a yearning for alternative modes in which to imagine the nation. As the ethos of Republican nationalism fades away, other sites have emerged to challenge Atatürk's Mausoleum as the centre of national symbolism. Miniaturk is clearly one of these. And since it is a miniature, it offers the possibility to grasp the entire nation as if it were an island separated from everyday reality and history.

In their use of scale as a representational strategy, miniature parks paradoxically work in tandem with the promenades of national capitals. In resorting to the

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Siz de bu tarihi fırsatı kaçırmayın, Boğaz'ın kardeşini ziyaret edin. Boğaz keyfinin misafiri değil, ev sahibi olun...

Rakamlarla İstanbul'un 2. Boğaz'ı

- Mülk: - 10.000
- Uzunluk: - 720 m
- Yüzölçümü: - 246.000 m²
- En geniş yer: - 70 m
- Raken: - 30 m
- En dar yer: - 20 m
- Boğaz: - 26.000 m²
- Köprüler arası mesafe: - 330 m

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Tarihi Fırsatla Sinpaş'tan Lüks Ev Sahibi Olun!

- %5 Peşinat, hem de 2 ay sonra.
- %5 Ara ödeme, yılda bir kez sabit.
- %15 Teslimde sabit.
- %0,91 Bakiye %0,91 oranıyla 72 ay vade.

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BOSPHORUS CITY
İSTANBUL

Figure 6.12. 'Historic Opening in Europe!' the title to this double-page advertisement in a Turkish newspaper exclaims to advertise a new housing development, 'Bosphorus City', and its theme of the Bosphorus surrounded by 'mansions'. The popularity of a miniaturized Istanbul has moved on from the representational realm of the exhibition to the world outside of it. *À la* Baudrillard, Miniaturk 'exists to hide' that some of what is outside 'belongs to ... the order of simulation'.

miniature and the gigantic, both disrupt the real and the experience of the everyday. The national promenade may present progress-oriented spaces in accordance with an official narrative. In contrast, the national miniature park may level history through the use of seemingly arbitrary layouts. Yet by bringing the lived spaces of the past into the present as precious objects to be looked at, or by removing living spaces from their present contexts, the miniature park may provide an illusionary field on which to imagine a common, nonetheless contested, future. At Miniaturk, citizens join together to consume culture voluntarily, without obligation. Further, Miniaturk is popular precisely because it flattens histories and geographies to bring them together without apparent hierarchy or conflict. Yet, in doing so, it also speaks to an imaginary that seeks to attach to a global world via Istanbul.

As the progressivism and secularism of the early Republican nation-building project is increasingly criticized from within and a new plurality emerges in its place, the national symbolic, the archive of official objects and narratives, is due for renovation through additions that cater for a new national polity. There are many potentially conflicting aspects of this new polity: the recognition of religion; a renewed interest in Istanbul as the potential gateway through which Turkey will join the multicultural European Union; a nostalgia for Ottoman cosmopolitanism; a drive for the bourgeois beautification of the city; and finally, a reconfiguring of the relationship between the state and its citizens in the midst of growing dissent towards the representational quality of the democratic process. Because Miniaturk seeks to fulfil all these criteria in a Turkey striving to reassert itself as one among equals in a globalizing world, it has potentially become a new nationalist pilgrimage site. It is in such contexts that discrepancies between people can be willingly suppressed, and memory, accordingly, stylized (figure 6.12).

Notes

1. An earlier version of this chapter was published in *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* (2006). <http://www.ced.berkeley.edu/iaste/tdsr.htm>. Accessed 12 March 2010.
2. Mini-City was designed by Emre Arolat Architects for Antalya Metropolitan Municipality and built in 2003–2004.
3. AKP-initiated prestige projects, such as the Haydarpaşa Port, Galataport, and the Dubai Towers all announced in 2005 and in which publicly-owned prime sites in Istanbul were to be privatized, were all met with criticism in the media and have been resisted by civil-society organizations. By contrast, there were few voices raised against public spending on a 'new' site such as Miniaturk, while 'real' heritage nearby awaits reinvestment. See Ekinçi, 2004, pp. 53–55.
4. Istanbul Cultural and Artistic Products Company (İstanbul Kültür ve Sanat Ürünleri Ticaret A.Ş. or Kültür A.Ş. in short) is a 'commercial corporation that was established on 2 October 1989, within the body of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality to offer cultural, artistic and tourist services'. It is one of the Municipality's numerous corporations. Available at: <http://www.kultursanat.org/kurumsal/?main>. And also at: <http://www.ibb.gov.tr/en-US/Organization/Companies/Pages/KULTURAS.aspx>. Accessed 20 December 2009.
5. Aerial photography of Istanbul and a close up of the site is available at <http://sehirrehberi.ibb.gov.tr/map.aspx>. Accessed 20 December 2009.

6. *Miniaturk Guide*. Istanbul: Kültür A.Ş., p. 3.
7. The official explanation regarding the selection of landmarks represented in the park states: 'Works that found a place in Miniaturk were ones that displayed peculiarities of the era in which they were built, ones that reflected the culture and art of a land that had witnessed thousands of years of heavy invasion, war and destruction, works that had not been destroyed simply because they had been created by those who came before, works that were protected, repaired and enjoyed' (Kültür A.Ş., 2003a, p. 27).
8. Promotional publication. *Shenzhen Splendid China miniature scenic spot* (1989) Hong Kong: Chinese Travel Service.
9. See official site of Miniaturk at <http://www.miniaturk.com.tr>. And <http://www.kultursanat.org/kurumsal/?kunyeen&sid=12>.
10. The first conquest commemoration festivities were held on its 500th anniversary in 1953. A dedicated association was set up to guide the festivities. The preparations were initiated officially; however, Turkey's President and Prime Minister at the time abstained from attending because, according to the general interpretation today, Turkey had just entered NATO and wished to keep its relations with its Western allies. Since 1953, the commemoration festivities have been repeated on different scales but with minimal state representation.
11. Interview conducted by the author with Miniaturk public relations representative and one of the model makers in Miniaturk. 4 November 2005.

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