# Analyzing Time and Space to Understand Social Change with the Contributions of George Simmel and Gaston Bachelard

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## Abstract

The research problem addressed in this cultural sociological study pertains to the conventional separation of time and space in the examination of social change. The primary objective of this research is to undertake a generational comparison regarding the significance of specific spaces in daily life, thereby illustrating the interconnected analysis of time and space. A secondary objective is to explore the responses of young generations to Gaston Bachelard's metaphorical concept of the "drawer" in "The Poetics of Space," by drawing parallels with pertinent examples. Employing a qualitative research approach within a relational sociological framework that rejects dichotomies and essentialism, the study derives its data from participant narratives. The qualitative analysis, informed by Simmel's conceptualization of space, reveals that, based on participant narratives, the home emerges as the most significant space for both young students and their parents. Furthermore, the findings, contextualized through the perspectives of spatial theorists such as Harvey and Lefebvre, indicate that students exhibit concerns not only for absolute spaces but also for relative and social spaces. Consequently, the study underscores the importance of examining time and space in tandem for a nuanced understanding of social change. In light of the research outcomes, it is suggested that contemporary public health plans incorporate investments in alternative socialization opportunities, such as gyms. This recommendation is particularly pertinent given the substantial amount of time young individuals dedicate to online gaming in virtual environments at home, which may contribute to their social isolation.

**Keywords:** Time, Space, Social Change, House, Relational Sociology.

## 1. Introduction

The primary foundational element in this investigation is the notion of space. As articulated by Bourdieu (1984, 1989) in elucidating symbolic power, the interchangeability of social distance and spatial distance in everyday discourse belies

a nuanced reality. Contrary to colloquial usage, spatial segregation manifests across various realms of social existence, wherein individuals in apparent spatial remoteness maintain close interactions. The recognition of such spatial distance assumes significance equal to the physical distance itself. In the allocation of economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital, social space assumes a pivotal role, as these forms of capital are inherently distributed within the social space. The second salient concept in this inquiry is time, which exhibits interrelatedness with space. This association is particularly pronounced in the articulation of social space through language and temporal considerations. As posited by Giddens (1984), time is construed as a sociological phenomenon and represents an indispensable condition for human existence. Despite its crucial significance, the concurrent understanding of time and space has been inadequately developed. Nevertheless, the nexus between time and space stands as a focal point in social theory, constituting a construct elucidated by proponents of social space interactionism. In the context of social change, the third fundamental concept in this investigation, culture emerges as a factor of equal or even greater importance than structure. This proposition gains clarity when one acknowledges that distinctions between specific social classes are rooted more in variations of social tastes than economic considerations. Moreover, in accordance with Bourdieu's assertions (1984, 1989), while it is widely acknowledged that the lower socioeconomic classes are subject to the influence of the preferences of their higher-status counterparts, it is imperative to recognize that the dynamics of influence are not unidirectional. Another pivotal concept central to the scope of this inquiry is the notion of the home, which holds paramount significance for both young individuals and their parents. In this investigation, the home is scrutinized not solely as a physical setting but also as a social space. The underpinning framework of the entire study adheres to a relational sociological perspective. This perspective, rooted in relational sociology as advocated by scholars such as Kasapoglu (2019), eschews dualistic and essentialist paradigms like structure-individual and time-space, emphasizing a process-oriented approach. The study's orientation towards problem-solving, rejecting unilateral determinations based on uncertainties and disparities, has played a pivotal role in its execution.

**Theoretical Framework**

The progenitors of sociology, notably Marx, exhibited a proclivity for examining historical transformations (temporal dimension) while largely neglecting spatial considerations. Historical materialism, foundational to Marx's approach, primarily hinges on societal changes over time and emphasizes macroeconomic analysis. However, the paradigm shift ushered in by relational sociology has rendered many traditional dualities untenable. Foremost among these is the dichotomy between time and space. In essence, it is posited that historical and geographical materialism are inherently interconnected and should not be treated as discrete entities (Kasapoglu, 2019).

From its inception, sociology has been preoccupied with the phenomenon of population migration from rural regions to urban centres, concomitant with the transition from traditional to modern societal structures. Notably, founders of sociology such as Tönnies, Weber, and Durkheim consistently acknowledged the significance of this spatial reconfiguration, particularly emphasizing the dynamics within urban environments. However, despite their recognition of the importance of spatial displacement, there has been a dearth of specific studies explicitly centring on the spatial dimension in the field of sociology (Fox, 2007; Kesteloot, Loopmans, & De Decker, 2009; Tuan, 1977).

As Fearon (2004) states, George Simmel stands out as a prominent figure in the 20th century who provided insightful perspectives on the concept of space, significantly contributing to sociological classifications. Simmel's theoretical framework revolves around the construction of space, a subject he delved into in his seminal work, "Sociology of Space," published in 1903. Subsequently, in his 1908 work, "Social Boundaries," Simmel expanded on the discourse by incorporating sections dedicated to space, wherein he explored three key aspects: a) the social dimensions inherent in space; b) the impact of space and social conditions on social interaction; and c) the diverse manifestations of social, physical, and psychological distances. While Simmel's contributions do not crystallize into a comprehensive theory of space, his work undeniably serves as a valuable project, shedding light on essential facets. Simmel propounds the foundational elements of human socialization, conceptualizing them as formal categories—namely, time, mass, and numbers—which he terms as social geometry.

Drawing from his examination of the spatial dynamics inherent in social existence, Simmel delineates five distinctive attributes characterizing space: a) The singularity or distinctiveness of space; b) The partitioning of space for social objectives rather than conforming to natural demarcations; c) The emergence of social structures as a consequence of social interactions; d) The social engagements of individuals marked by their proximity and the relational interplay of distance among groups; and e) The association of specific relationships with distinct and discrete locales (Lechner, 1991).

Post-World War II, European sociologists immigrated to America, instigating urban sociology in the Anglo-Saxon realm with a keen focus on city inequalities. Pioneering this movement, the Chicago school, notably through social ecology studies, laid the foundation, inspiring contemporary followers. Subsequently, in the 1960s and 1970s, neo-Marxist thinkers, recognized as radical sociologists, broke new ground in the study of space within sociology. The most famous among them are Lefebre (1991) and the geographer Harvey (1973, 2006).

During the 1980s and 1990s, Giddens emerged as a key figure in the paradigm shift known as spatial turns, while Bourdieu (1984) pioneered spatial studies, introducing pivotal concepts like field and habitus. It is instructive to discern the nuances in the approaches of Harvey (1973, 2006) and Lefebre (1991), who revitalized spatial studies within sociology. Harvey, for instance, conceptualizes space in a three-dimensional framework encompassing absolute space, relative space, and relational space, respectively (Kesteloot et al., 2009).

For instance, while an individual classroom constitutes absolute space in isolation, conglomerates of spaces such as classrooms, libraries, and other campus cafeterias collectively form relative space. The dynamics between students and teachers within the confines of a classroom can be construed as relational space. Delving into the intricacies of the social space arising from student-teacher relationships is undeniably more intricate and challenging. It is noteworthy that absolute space aligns with Newtonian physics and Euclidean geometry, whereas relative space finds resonance in Einstein's theory of relativity. Conversely, the roots of relational space trace back to Leibniz, renowned for his philosophical concept of monads.

Contrastingly, Lefebvre's spatial framework places considerable emphasis on dimensions. Primarily, Lefebvre explores space through three dimensions: the mental dimension involving conceptual understanding, the physical dimension pertaining to perceptual experiences, and the social dimension encompassing actions, practices, lived experiences, and utility. In Lefebvre's perspective, space is acknowledged as both a means of production and an integral component of societal dynamics.

In the realm of sociology, there exists a periodic relegation of space to a secondary status, alternating between urban and rural sociological contexts. The intrinsic spatial nature of social relations is frequently overlooked, despite the undeniable fact that all social interactions inherently occur within spatial contexts. Giddens (1984) emerges as a preeminent contemporary sociologist who engages substantially with the significance of space in the realm of social studies, elucidating its pivotal role in shaping and influencing social relations.

Giddens pioneered structuration theory to transcend the dichotomy of structure and agency. In this framework, practices, systems, and institutions unfold in both temporal and spatial dimensions, exhibiting a structuration process that spans from micro-individual to macro-social levels. Graphically represented, space is along the x-axis, and time spans along the y-axis, illustrating the ascent from micro-individual to macro-social levels. Giddens underscores the interaction between structure and individuals, emphasizing the reciprocal influence, avoiding unidirectional determinations. In his examination, the agent, whether an individual, company, or larger unit, such as a tribe or family, is seen to impact structure dynamically in both time and space.

Bourdieu incorporates spatial considerations into his relational sociological inquiries, evident in his conceptualizations of field and habitus. In his analyses of symbolic power and social space, he underscores the significance of competition and negotiation within urban life (Bourdieu, 1989). Bourdieu contends that in consumer societies, such as the capitalist system, our purported freedom in tastes, whether in the domains of food, music, or home decoration, is illusory. Instead, he posits that our preferences are intricately determined by the underlying social structure (Bourdieu, 1984). Within the consumer society, the interplay between

subjective and individual tastes, particularly in the realm of symbolic goods, is shaped by societal forces. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) highlight the foundational role of constraints in the sociology of consumption, elucidating the study of tastes within limitations.

Indeed, Simmel, with his Formal sociology, significantly contributes to the sociology of space, extending his influence into the realm of the sociology of music. Collaborating with Simmel and Wolff (1950), Simmel identifies time, mass, and numbers as essential prerequisites for human sociality, characterizing them collectively as social geometry. In essence, Simmel endeavours to systematize the more abstract considerations of Kant regarding the spatial reality of social life. Within this context, he articulates five fundamental features, as elucidated in works by Simmel, Frisby, and Featherstone (1997) and Fearon (2004):

a)    Exclusivity and Uniqueness: Simmel's conception of this attribute underscores the necessity for two entities to inhabit distinct positions within the social space. For instance, during the construction of entities such as the Catholic church or a nation-state, their respective locations within the social space are disparate. The configuration and specificity of groups contribute to the variability of the social space.

b)    Subdivisions of Space: In Simmel's perspective, space can undergo subdivision based on social objectives and demarcated boundaries. Unlike natural boundaries, social space is not merely a spatial phenomenon; rather, it constitutes a sociological phenomenon shaped by spatial considerations. This is due to the meaningful demarcations provided by boundaries within social interactions, where factors like social class and ethnic characteristics may establish such delineations. The political drawing of borders by people for the maintenance of social order, such as those of a nation-state, involves tangible meanings like race or ethnicity for those within or outside these demarcations. However, Simmel does not extensively delve into this aspect.

c)    Influence of Localized Interaction: Simmel contends that anchoring social interaction within a specific spatial dimension or localizing it therein exerts

an influence on social formations. For instance, a church serves as a congregational space, bringing together individuals who may not intersect under different circumstances. In urban environments, residences are numerically designated, streets are named, settlements are demarcated, and people establish habitation. Conversely, contemporary transformation and communication technologies facilitate more flexible and abbreviated contacts in diverse modalities, eliminating the necessity for physical proximity (Lechner, 1991).

d) Influence of Distance: All social interactions are intricately shaped by the spatial dynamics of proximity and distance, a concept underscored by Simmel. In urban life, Simmel accentuates the salience of the distance effect, particularly highlighting the heightened significance of private space as physical distances decrease. The allocation of private space is crucial as individuals experience an emotional need for personalized environments. In the bustling milieu of large cities, excessive social interactions can overwhelm individuals, leading to negative stimulation and a desire for retreat. Simmel posits that individuals, in pursuit of anonymity, even meticulously attend to their attire, opting for uniform, contemporary, and inconspicuous attire. The urban personality, as discussed by Simmel in "Money and Modern Culture" (1896), encapsulates these dynamics. This feature assumes particular importance in the context of the present article.

e) Influence Changing of Locations: The unique relationships that arise as a focal point of spatial transformations constitute the fifth dimension accorded significance by Simmel. In this context, Simmel provides intriguing illustrations, citing nomadic tribes as instances of collective entities undergoing such spatial shifts. Additionally, he offers toddlers as an example representing individuals with specific functions within this dynamic spatial paradigm.

As widely recognized, Simmel's noteworthy contribution includes the seminal article titled "Strangers." In his conceptualization, the stranger occupies a paradoxical position, being both proximate and distant from the social group. The stranger exists

at the threshold of group inclusion or exclusion, embodying a liminal state that holds profound significance in the realm of relational sociology. Urban sociologist Park, aligning with Simmel's ideas, provides illustrations of immigrants and marginalized individuals as exemplars of this concept. Simmel, in contrast, underscores that the notion of strangeness permeates all social interactions to some extent, serving not merely as a determinant of interpersonal relations but also as a symbolic representation thereof. In essence, the concept of the stranger functions as a symbolic expression elucidating aspects that remain concealed within our interpersonal dynamics.

Contrastingly, in his 1908 article titled "On the Projection of Social Forms," Simmel explicates the manner in which social interactions give rise to spatial effects and configurations. He posits that the formation of spatial forms is encapsulated within three distinct domains (Fearon, 2004):

Despite perceptions that these considerations may hold diminished relevance in contemporary circumstances, the imperative to underscore the significance of the third dimension in solidarity has surfaced. This emphasis arises as young participants in this study articulate their homes and personal spaces as paramount in their daily lives.

a)   Primarily, the organization of space is an essential prerequisite for social organization, with particular pertinence observed at the economic and political institutional levels. For instance, within a nation-state, individuals may be allocated distinct positions based on their origins.

b)   Secondly, authority and dominance can manifest across diverse spatial dimensions, with a particular emphasis on territorial control.

c)   Thirdly, Simmel elucidates the spatial dimensions of social solidarity, emphasizing that the strength of social boundaries within a group is often heightened when there exists a tangible centre, such as a physical home. However, exceptions to this generalization exist, as illustrated by Simmel's example of the robust cohesion within the Jewish diaspora despite lacking a distinct physical centre. In contemporary society, the traditional role of physical spaces is being supplanted by more virtual and abstract realms

facilitated by communication technologies. This shift is evident, for instance, in the virtual circulation of the money economy. In the realm of the internet society, there is a diminished necessity for concrete spaces to facilitate economic transactions, with a notable preference for internet banking among individuals.

In conclusion, while Simmel's theoretical and methodological contributions regarding space may not have been extensive, his sociological emphasis on the significance of space has been noteworthy, prompting contemplation. The re-examination of his ideas has proven to be particularly beneficial.

Beyond Simmel, another influential figure inspiring this study is the French philosopher Bachelard (1958, 1995). Renowned for introducing the concept of epistemological break to the philosophy of science and engaging with poetry, Bachelard, as an antipositivist thinker, rejects conventional epistemological foundations like rationalism and empiricism. Instead, he delves into the non-scientific metaphysical realm of the past. Four years prior to his demise, Bachelard published "The Poetics of Space" (1958), a work emphasizing consciousness, infinity, creativity, daydreaming, and literature. In this seminal work, he contends that the house serves as a dynamic space for the soul, a realm where individuals engage in dreaming, fantasizing, and daydreaming. "The Poetics of Space" intricately explores how individuals attribute meaning to space through dreams while simultaneously elucidating how space, in turn, stimulates emotions, memory, and fantasies.

Bachelard elucidates the reciprocal relationship between a physical space and emotional states, demonstrating the interplay of place and feelings. Throughout this exploration, he prominently employs the metaphor of small corners, drawers, and rooms within grand houses, a metaphor he borrows from Henri Bergson. Bachelard posits that memories are akin to stored possessions within these drawers, each drawer representing a distinct compartment of our memory — paralleling the furniture in our homes or the drawers in our cabinets. Moreover, Bachelard underscores that the mind inherently integrates space and time, contending that the recording of memories invariably intertwines with specific spatial contexts such as childhood homes, schools,

or workplaces. Therefore, Bachelard advocates for the concurrent consideration of time and space in understanding the intricacies of memory.

## 1.1. Research Problem and Objectives

Bachelard emphasizes that the recording of time by the mind is intrinsically intertwined with space. However, classical sociological inquiries, grounded in dualistic frameworks, often address time and space as distinct entities, resulting in inadequacies in studies on social change. In this study, the inherent limitations of classical sociological macro, micro, or meso analyses, rooted in dualistic paradigms and essentialism, are recognized as a problem, prompting an exploration for innovative approaches.

To address time and space through a relational sociological lens, it becomes imperative to transcend dualistic perspectives, eschew essentialism, and adopt a process-oriented approach.

**Objectives:** The aim of this study is to explore responses to the following inquiries within the scope of this article.

a)     In contemplating the convergence of time and space within the context of social change, this study aims to examine the similarities and distinctions among generations concerning the significance attributed to particular spaces in their daily lives.

b)     What novel metaphorical depictions of space emerge within the framework of the unity of time and space? In essence, what has supplanted Henri Bergson's drawer metaphor in the realm of Entivisionist discourse over the last century?

## 1.2. Methodology

This cultural sociology investigation draws upon prior research on space, notably incorporating insights from Simmel. As evidenced in Simmel's formal sociology and Sociology of Space writings, the study delves into a comprehensive exploration of five fundamental spatial features (Allen, 2000; Fearon, 2004; Lechner, 1991; Simmel et al., 1997). The prioritization of Simmel's

formal sociology becomes evident in the discussion of findings, particularly regarding the identification of the house and its private rooms as the most significant spatial entities.

While the anthropologist Douglas (1984, 1986a, 1986b, 1991) is recognized for pioneering studies on the home, the philosophical discussions of Langer (1957) occupy a central position in shaping her ideas. Langer posits that the house should be conceptualized as the organization of space over time. For instance, she perceives various rules within the home, such as meal times and order of meals, as a form of tyranny. Douglas diverges from the functional definition of the house, arguing that features such as these can also be found in places like hotels or wellness centres. Proposing a novel perspective, she suggests defining the house as the "embryonic community." Influenced by Durkheim, Douglas contends that the house fosters solidarity within a spatial context. However, she emphasizes the dynamic nature of this space, asserting its aesthetic and moral dimensions as it unfolds in time and space. Contrary to the conventional notion of a shelter, Douglas posits that the house does not guarantee happiness, acknowledging that individuals can find contentment in settings like camps or hotels. Drawing inspiration from philosophy, particularly Langer, Douglas advocates for the conceptualization of virtual space and time in artistic creation. The central idea is to eschew cognitive dichotomies and embrace a unified "presentational" thought, representing Douglas' (1984, 1991) crucial relational sociological aspect. Notably, both Douglas and Langer emphasize the significance of analogies, rejecting the dichotomy between the real and the virtual. This rejection holds particular relevance for the study, as it underscores the interconnectedness of art and logical reasoning.

Within the literature, numerous studies adopt a relational perspective in examining social space with a focus on the home. Notably, works such as those addressing modelling and scientific inference (Hesse, 1963, 1974), encompassing considerations of the house as encompassing rights, duties, budgeting, debts, receivables, and gift economies (Mauss, 1990), as well as examinations of speaking order and table manners (rules) by Ingals (1953), complexity of coordination by Gross

(1984), latent and manifest functions by Merton (1968), and the significance of emotions and music by Meyer (1956), contribute significantly to this discourse.

Modelling, a concern shared by Douglas (1991), emerges as a fundamental aspect in theory construction. Meyer (1956) underscores the enduring importance of the models employed in theoretical work, emphasizing their sustained relevance. This perspective holds particular relevance for the present study, as it aligns with the interconnectedness of theory and practice within relational sociology, emphasizing their inseparability. The application of this relational approach to the realms of time and space serves as a fundamental illustration of this integration.

This study primarily adopts a descriptive research design and is grounded in the qualitative research approach of narratives (Creswell, 1998). The participants, students, were tasked with providing comparative accounts of their own perspectives and those of their parents regarding the concept of space.

The students enrolled in the Cultural Sociology course willingly provided verbal consent to participate in this research, following comprehensive information disclosure about the nature of the study as an assignment. Subsequently, they conducted interviews with their parents to gather information on open-ended questions. The utilization of the collected data in the article ensured the preservation of anonymity for all participants.

**Limitations:** A significant limitation of this study is its focus on middle-class families, with an omission of children residing in challenging living circumstances within impoverished families, particularly those lacking an individual private room, from the analytical framework.

**Significance:** This study's significance lies in its rejection of the dualism inherent in time and space, opting instead for a relational sociological analysis of social space within the home, rooted in original empirical data. Furthermore, its uniqueness is underscored by its endeavour to uncover temporal changes and explore the predominant space in a non-Western society, drawing upon Western literature. Additionally, the study distinguishes itself by concluding with problem-solving recommendations, aligning with its problem-oriented design.

## 2. Findings and Discussion

The Exploration of Space and Time in The Poetics: To elucidate social change, an analysis of the spaces and places deemed most significant by sociology students and their parents is conducted in a comparative manner, as delineated in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Intergenerational Attitudes on Space.

| Students/Youngsters | Parents/Adults |
| --- | --- |
| A: "The most important place in my life is my home. If I need to personalize it even more, it is my own room—a free space where no one sees me and where I can experience all my feelings without hesitation. It is a special place for me where my life philosophy is formed, and I dream about the future. Another significant place for me is school. School always reminds me of the future, what I will become, what I will do, and why I need to strive for improvement." | A: "The living room is important to my father; he reigns in one corner of it. For my mother, her own room is important—a space where she freely makes her own individual wishes." |
| B. "The most important place in my life is my home, specifically my room. Here, I can be as free and comfortable as I want because I have my own rules. The rules and order in outside social environments do not apply in the home environment. An important aspect for me is feeling mentally comfortable and at ease. In a similar vein, another significant place for me is the school environment, given its importance in shaping my career. My teachers and friends contribute to my social development. While school is the most crucial place for my overall development, the one I hold above everything else is my room." | B: "The most important space for my mother is the kitchen and a chair there. For my father, it is the workplace and office, as well as the comfortable chair opposite the TV in the living room." |

A: Space is everything. Because memory cannot save time. Memories merge with space. The most important place in my life is my dorm room. I live in a dormitory in Ankara, I am far from my home. It's like my new home is here. That's why the dormitory is important to me, I spend my time here. Whatever I live, what I feel, I experience my emotions there. My home is also very important. I have family and lots of memories there. When I go to my room, I can remember the things I experienced and felt there. These are very special things. In fact, every place I go with my friends is important and valuable to me. Because my friends are also very valuable to me, and every place we go is special to me. (Attention she is away from home, friends included)

D: "For every individual, the most important places in their lives are often the places they frequent the most. One of the most significant places for me is our family home in my hometown—the environment where my loved ones reside and where I grew up. As a student in Ankara, on the path to becoming an individual, this place holds great importance for me, adding significantly to my experiences. The kitchen is the area in this house where I spend most of my time. Being someone who appreciates food greatly, sitting in the kitchen brings me peace. There is no other place as important in my life.

Moreover, the house serves as the shell for people. Within this shell, individuals develop and likely spend the majority of their lives." (Note, she used a metaphor for home).

A: "My mother is a housewife and uses all parts of the house. For her, the entire house is important. For my father, the living room holds greater significance."

D: "My parents work. Therefore, both home and the workplace are the most important places.
The home is significant because it holds memories. At work, they spend a considerable amount of their time and socialize with co-workers."

E: "Because business life is essential for us to have a more comfortable life and fulfil our wishes, but home comes first in terms of importance.

Also, the most significant place in my life is the study room. It feels good to find myself there, listen to my thoughts, and connect with my inner world. Sometimes, reading a novel and daydreaming while immersed in it or visualizing the content of the book I'm reading brings me happiness. Like Bergson's metaphor of a drawer, every corner of a house provides solitude for our imagination."(Attention, this student is married).

F: "Actually, every place I am in is important to me because I don't like being in a place where I can't be comfortable, be myself, talk freely, and express myself. Therefore, the people I am with are as important to me as the place itself. I feel unhappy in crowded and tense environments with new people. In this context, the most important place for me is my home. In any case, I value having my own space. I prefer to create a safe space and retreat to my room, as even one person can be overwhelming in my house. My home, especially my room, holds significant importance to me. It is my safe space, and home, in general, brings me a sense of peace. I believe this holds true for most people."

E: "It is important for my mother and father that the family relationship at home is characterized by solidarity and integrity, such as when everyone gathers at the table simultaneously, for example. It is also important for me to eat together and gather around the table to maintain family integrity and foster warmer relationships within the family."

F: "My mother likes to communicate and talk to people. However, her home is as important as mine. She feels very comfortable at home, but she also relieves stress through conversations. Returning to the topic of closets, my mother keeps her troubles stored away. When she finds the strength to solve them herself, she removes them and puts them away so that they will not resurface.

My father loved to talk to people and communicate. But he did not like to talk about himself. He wouldn't even put his troubles there in case someone opened that closet, he would hold on tight. Even if he somehow put it in that closet, I'd say it would have been a locker that could never be unlocked, neither by anyone nor by himself." (Attention. Her father is passed away)

G: "Among the places that are important in my life, the house comes first because comfort is crucial for people, and individuals are most comfortable in their own homes. When I reflect on my life, I realize that the place where I feel most comfortable is my home. Although my house is a space where I can be alone with myself, it also provides an environment where I can easily meet my basic needs. At home, people find the opportunity to retreat into their own shell. Even in more comfortable places, I always refer to my home as 'my beautiful home.'
School comes second because I spend more time there than at home. Additionally, education is essential for earning a living, making school a significant part of my life; most of my day is spent there."

G: "Both of my parents have said that the most important place is the house, as it is where they share laughter and tears within these walls. It is not possible for a person to give up a place where their memories reside. For better or for worse, I believe home is the most important place for everyone."

The comparative data elucidated in Table 1 indicates that, despite certain generational disparities, the consensus remains that the residence, specifically the house, is unequivocally the most significant for both cohorts. However, a more intricate examination of this matter is warranted, as the younger generation, represented by the students, accentuates their individual rooms within the house as distinctive private living spaces.

Indeed, while the participants discuss the overarching concept of the house, their emphasis leans notably towards a specific domain within the household. To elucidate, their individual rooms take precedence over communal spaces. In this context, the conceptualization by Harvey (1973, 2006) becomes pertinent, where he distinguishes between absolute and relative space. For instance, the house as a whole represents absolute space, whereas the significance attributed to the rooms of the younger demographic reflects a more pronounced importance as relative space.

The narratives provided by the youth predominantly encapsulate notions of personal identity, freedom, solace, and contentment when characterizing their rooms. Conversely, the overarching sentiment among the youth towards their homes encompasses ideological nostalgia, sacrifice, solidarity, tranquillity, paradisiacal connotations, happiness, communal sharing, and trust. A limited subset acknowledges the possibility of conflict, stress, or anxiety associated with home, suggesting a reluctance to engage in discussions pertaining to generational discord or a propensity to refrain from articulating challenges. This tendency resonates with the perspectives advanced by Lefebre (1991), who underscores the primacy of mental or ideological space before delving into the physical attributes of space. In alignment with these expressions, the participants articulate preferences for homes in close proximity to schools, detached structures, featuring a garden, situated within secure complexes, and conveniently located near transportation hubs such as metro facilities.

The students predominantly depict their homes as spaces of comfort akin to palaces, hotels, and restaurants. However, negative characterizations, such as likening their houses to prisons, caves, or symbols of tyranny, are reported at a lower frequency, aligning with concepts introduced by Douglas (1991) and Langer (1957) in the literature. Additionally, the participants describe their homes as venues for activities like watching television, playing games, and hosting friends. These articulations underscore the significance of the shared concept of social space, a notion resonant in the works of both Harvey and Lefebre.

When examined through the lens of Simmel's perspective, it is pertinent to acknowledge the significant role attributed to the room in the regulation of emotions. Simmel's emphasis on the value of physical space for fostering solidarity should also be duly considered. Notably, the majority of the participating youth underscored the indispensable role of family and solidarity in their discussions about home. This inclination may be attributed to their status as students, currently lacking the opportunity to reside in independent houses. Furthermore, it is imperative to note that these students hail from middle-class families attending a private foundation university, where they possess individual private rooms. It is reasonable to posit that individuals in different economic conditions may not exhibit similar attitudes. However, in alignment with the theoretical framework, it was deemed appropriate to include students with these specific conditions in the sample.

**Alternative of Bachelard's Drawer Metaphor:**

The second research objective delves into exploring contemporary alternatives to Bachelard's drawer metaphor. The students' narratives on this topic are succinctly presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Alternative metaphors

| Material | Non-Material |
| --- | --- |
| A. Computer: "Computer memory can be used as an analogy instead of the drawer metaphor. At the core of our lives, we have conscious thoughts stored in our desktop computer. In other sections, there are files containing thoughts we prefer not to confront—placed in different folders within the subconscious, left closed and untouched. These thoughts have been tucked away because we don't want to face them, and they remain dormant when we turn on the computer, analogous to when we wake up." | E. Smell-Feelings: The term 'metaphor' refers to expressions used figuratively. I would opt for the concept of smell or sensation rather than the metaphor of the drawer. This is because the scent and our immediate senses, although intangible, are highly effective in transporting us to the past. Our memories persist with us, but when we and the individuals who share these memories are no longer present, our memories may fade away. Nonetheless, our memories can serve as living examples. |
| B. Library: "If I were to use a metaphor, it would be a library. A huge library with lots of books. Each library section represents a year, the books on each shelf contain the memories we lived in that year. A 23-year-old person has 23 library sections. Each year has its own experiences. Bad memories or secrets that we don't want to remember are found in the dust-covered, out-of-reach area on the top shelf of that section. We throw the book where the memories we don't want to see are written, to the top. They rot over time in a narrow space covered with dirt, dust and spider webs. This library metaphor is a foundation of the human mind." | F. Rose: "Instead of the metaphor of furniture, a rose can be given as an example from living nature. Each leaf of the rose represents our memories of particular places, and these leaves combine to form the rose, which is our memory." |

C. USB: Computer memory, USB, flash drive—like drawers, everything is stored in them.

D. Telephone: "Although it is not a natural element, I believe the telephone can serve as an example. In this modernizing world, it can be argued that technology has distanced us from nature, as we strive to control it. Nowadays, we preserve our memories in the photo albums inside our phones, reflect our personalities through the applications we download, and record our memories."

G. Music: Music is very important in my life; a piece of music I listen to immediately triggers memories. My mother's speech sounds like a lullaby to me. The sounds and laughter in my grandmother's house from our childhood, or even the radio, often bring back memories of my old days. For instance, when I hear religious prayers, I am reminded of neighbours who used to listen to mevlit at home and make roasted halvah. "

H. Colours: "Colours are very important to me. Sometimes, pale colours and black-and-white photographs remind me of our past home. I feel free under the blue sky. The sunrise marks the beginning of the day, and the sunset makes me think that evening has arrived, signalling the time to go home. These, instead of drawers, are the first things I thought of."

**Examples of Material Metaphors:**

Table 2 encompasses eight metaphors drawn from everyday life, delineating four material and four non-material metaphors. Notably, it aligns with contemporary trends for students to highlight the technology products they predominantly utilize (Hall & Jefferson, 1993). In the present era, smartphones, laptop computers, and mobile memories have become integral aspects of daily life. The normalization of relying on Google for retrieving forgotten information is also notable. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that this prevalent reliance on technology may yield adverse effects, such as social isolation and alienation.

The utilization of the library and toolbox metaphors by two participants invites diverse interpretations. Notably, in an era dominated by digitalization, the reference to a library with tangible dusty shelves suggests a metaphorical approach. One participant, aged 23, emerges as an avid reader who actively acquires a shelf of books annually. A poignant observation within this metaphor is the indication that distressing memories are preserved untouched, akin to books placed on the upper shelves, introducing a dramatic dimension to the narrative.

The metaphor of the toolbox, drawing inspiration from T. Veblen, appears to have been interpreted expansively. The toolbox is portrayed as a repository encompassing a diverse array of items, bearing a resemblance to the drawer metaphor. It underscores the notion that the human mind comprises distinct sub-sections, likened to a comprehensive assortment of tools such as nails, screwdrivers, rulers, drills, and glue.

**Examples of Non-Material Metaphors**

The metaphors employed by other students, categorized as non-material and outlined in Table 2 (e.g., smell, music, colours), carry significant importance. Herz (2008) delved into the impact of odours on both physiological and psychological well-being. Findings from research exploring the correlation between odours and memory reveal that odours have the potential to alleviate negative mood, physiological stress indices, and even systemic markers of inflammation when they evoke positive autobiographical memories.

Let us not overlook the direct connection between emotions and smells. Smells, akin to colours and sounds, consist of numerous vibrations and waves. Our brain processes all information, including input from the five senses, as waves. Each scent possesses a distinct number of vibrations per second. Smells serve as a potent tool capable of triggering specific memories. Indeed, scents are incorporated into therapeutic practices to evoke recollections. Consequently, smell equates to memory. The fragrance of a childhood cake baked by one's mother or the perfume of a beloved individual can transport a person to the age of 10, regardless of being 60 years old, rendering 50 years of time ephemeral. Similarly, encountering the smell of soil or dampness experienced in the past instantly transports one back to that specific place, even after years have passed. Notably, a Kangal dog can identify its owner, unseen for a decade, through scent, and this olfactory imprint remains indelible in its memory. Law enforcement agencies also deploy dogs to locate criminals and criminal elements based on their scent. The sense of smell plays a crucial role by evoking memories. As individuals age, the functionality of the sense of smell diminishes, often accompanied by complaints of memory impairment. Moreover, the loss of our sense of smell has been more readily diagnosed, particularly during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Similar to smells, music serves as a catalyst for memory retrieval, prompting recollections of our past experiences. Whether it be the lullabies from our infancy, familial tunes, or the popular music of our youth, each musical note carries a nostalgic weight. Notably, our recollections of the past often skew towards positive memories, a phenomenon attributed to defence mechanisms. Psychologists posit that this inclination towards remembering the positive aspects of the past serves various functions, giving rise to the concept of nostalgia. For instance, roses frequently symbolize positive events, contributing to the widespread usage of metaphors such as "looking at life through rose-coloured glasses."

Psychiatrists contend that nostalgia enables individuals to acknowledge their past relationships rather than negating them, facilitating an understanding of what was valued in the past. Furthermore, nostalgia prompts individuals to seek connection with others as a means of alleviating loneliness. Consequently, heedful attention to cues such as pictures, sounds, or smells that evoke memories becomes paramount (Awad & Hohmann, 2011).

A relational sociological perspective reiterates the holistic nature of health, encompassing mental, physical, and social dimensions. Consequently, comprehensive exploration of all facets of daily life is deemed essential.

## 2. Conclusion

First and foremost, it is imperative to highlight that this study draws inspiration from Simmel (1908), who, long before contemporary sociologists delved into the commercialization and management of emotions within the context of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1974), underscored the significance of space in emotional regulation. In essence, this work, grounded in Simmel's insights, presents an original contribution by emphasizing the crucial role of space in emotional management. Furthermore, it enriches the literature by demonstrating that, in a non-Western context like Turkey, the home emerges as the paramount space for both generations. Delving into mental, physical, and social space akin to Lefebvre, the study elucidates that relative and social space carry comparable importance to absolute space, as posited by Harvey. Additionally, akin to Giddens and his structuration theory, the examination of the home's structure, familial

unity, and the relational dynamics of individuals—students and/or their parents—unveils the interconnectedness of these elements. The achievement of the second objective, pertaining to elucidating how today's youth articulate the renowned drawer metaphor from Gaston Bachelard's "The Poetics of Space," inspired by Aristotle and Bergson, sheds light on contemporary expressions. Moreover, the study's revelation of the usage of both material (computers, phones, etc.) and non-material (smell, sound, colour) metaphors holds considerable significance in the realm of relational sociology. Ultimately, this study demonstrates the viability and importance of considering time and space concomitantly for comprehending social change.

This study has brought to light that the youth who perceive their homes as the most significant spaces tend to spend extended periods therein, particularly in the seclusion of their private rooms, navigating social media or engaging in virtual gaming. Recognizing the proclivity of the youth, commonly referred to as Generation Z, to grapple with issues of social isolation, it becomes imperative for local authorities and educational institutions to devise initiatives that furnish cost-free alternatives for socialization, particularly in the realms of sports and arts. Presently, sports and art facilities in Turkey cater to a limited membership base with substantial fees, and university facilities fall short of meeting the diverse needs of all students. Hence, there is a recommendation to expand the scope of the study by including young participants from various socio-economic strata.

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