

# Rethinking Taksim Square With Temporary Uses





**Politecnico  
di Torino**

**POLITECNICO DI TORINO**  
Department of Architecture and Design  
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Master's Thesis

# **Rethinking Taksim Square With Temporary Uses**

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## **Abstract**

Istanbul is one of the oldest cities in the World, famed for its historical significance, natural beauty, and vibrant multicultural districts. Among these districts, in Beyoğlu, Taksim Square has captivated visitors since the 16th century. Originally situated on hills overlooking the Bosphorus, the square offered a picturesque view that delighted countless individuals over the centuries. However, as the World evolves, Taksim Square has confronted a lot of developments and changes that define the place now. This thesis aims to assess the historical trajectory of Taksim Square, examining its consequences with its opportunities. Furthermore, it endeavors to produce an alternative design approach through the perception of the concept of temporary use of spaces. Eventually, by bridging the gap between the past and present, the study seeks to create designs that respect the square's multilayered history and embrace its rich underground connections, fostering an environment that blends with history and modernity.

keywords: Taksim Square, historical significance, past and present, temporary use of spaces, alternative design approach

**to my beloved ones...**

## Acknowledgements

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# Chapter 1

## **Urban Transformation of the Taksim Square**

## 1.1 Historical and Architectural Transformation



- Graveyard
- Residential Area
- Urban Blocks
- Sea of Marmara
- Conceptual Boundary
- Project Site Boundary
- Green Area

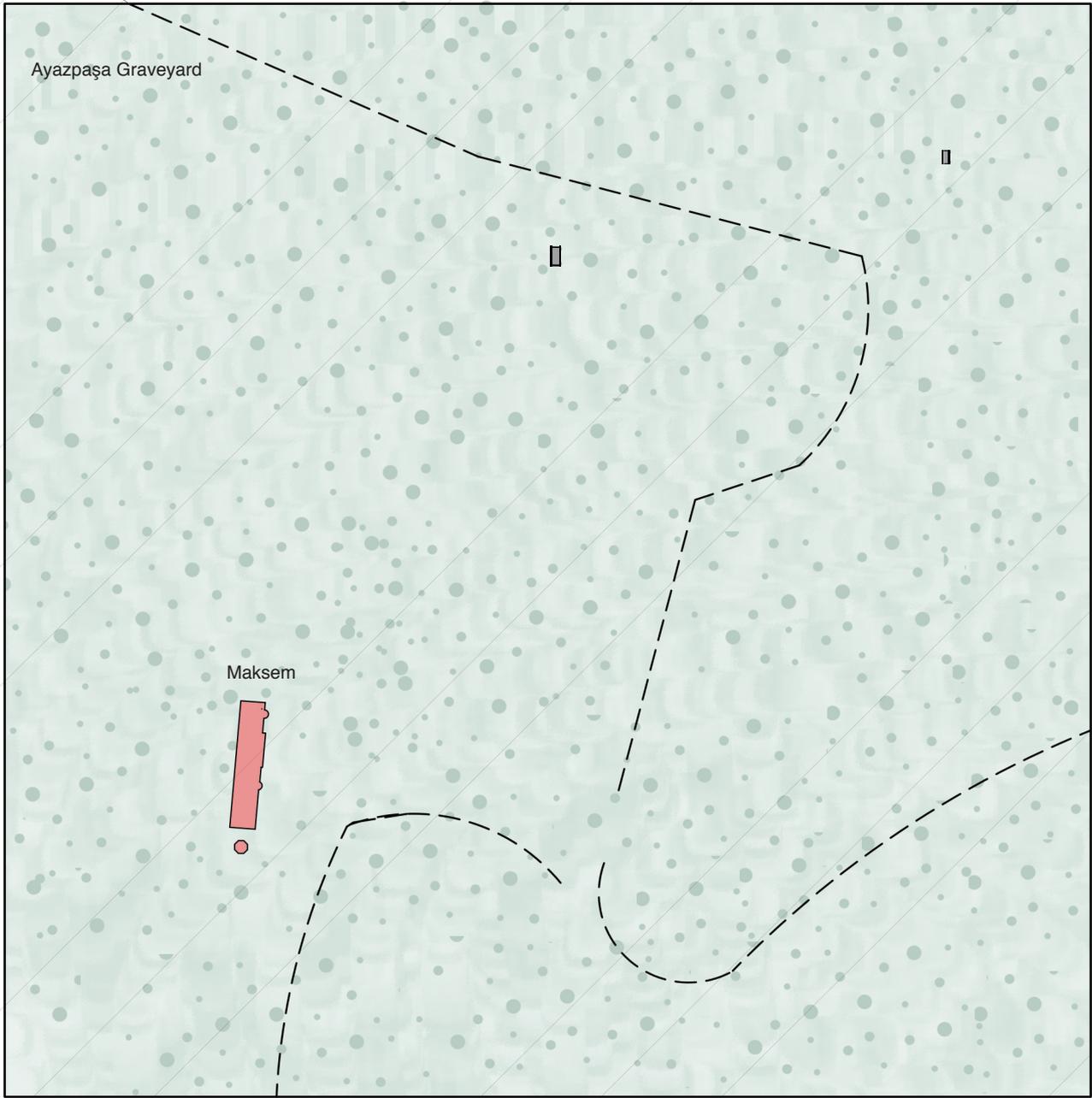
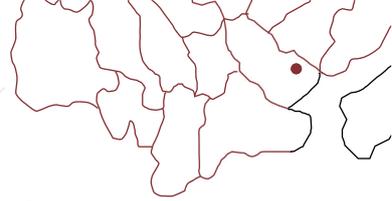


### 1.1.1 From Graveyards to Picnics

Istanbul's main residential areas were initially located within the city walls. After the city's expansion, in the 15th and 16th centuries, the empire's authorities built around the coasts of Europe and Asia and it kept growing continuously. On the map, they are illustrated as urban blocks. Beyoğlu with its formerly name Pera was located above the coasts of Haliç (Golden Horn) and it is now the district where the Taksim Square is located. But in the 16th century, Pera was only a rural settlement above Galata. Being far away from the 16th century's main city center, probably Pera was considered a great place to locate cemeteries (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021; Gölönü, 2020).

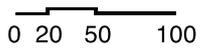
Eventually, burial sites were set in the eastern and northern parts of the area and were called Ayazpaşa Graveyard or Great Cemetery. Cemetery descriptions from the year 1864's, explain graveyard's borders approximately. But its precise borders and dimensions are not known today due to a lack of documentation. Conceptually it was divided into some parts to separate the burial sites of people from different religions. There were located Armenian Gregorian, Armenian Catholic, Latin Catholic, Protestant, and Greek Orthodox cemeteries and a Muslim cemetery due to people from different backgrounds who used to live together during the empire era (Gölönü, 2020).

Besides of being a cemetery, Ayaspaşa Graveyard, along with the greenery, was hosting a great panoramic view upon its slopes towards the Bosphorus including the Üsküdar landscape of the Asian shore and Topkapı Palace within the city walls. It was said that even the highest trees couldn't obscure the beautiful view. So in time the area became very popular among the inhabitants. They have started to go in their spare times and have picnics there (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021; Gölönü, 2020).



Ayazpaşa Graveyard

Maksem



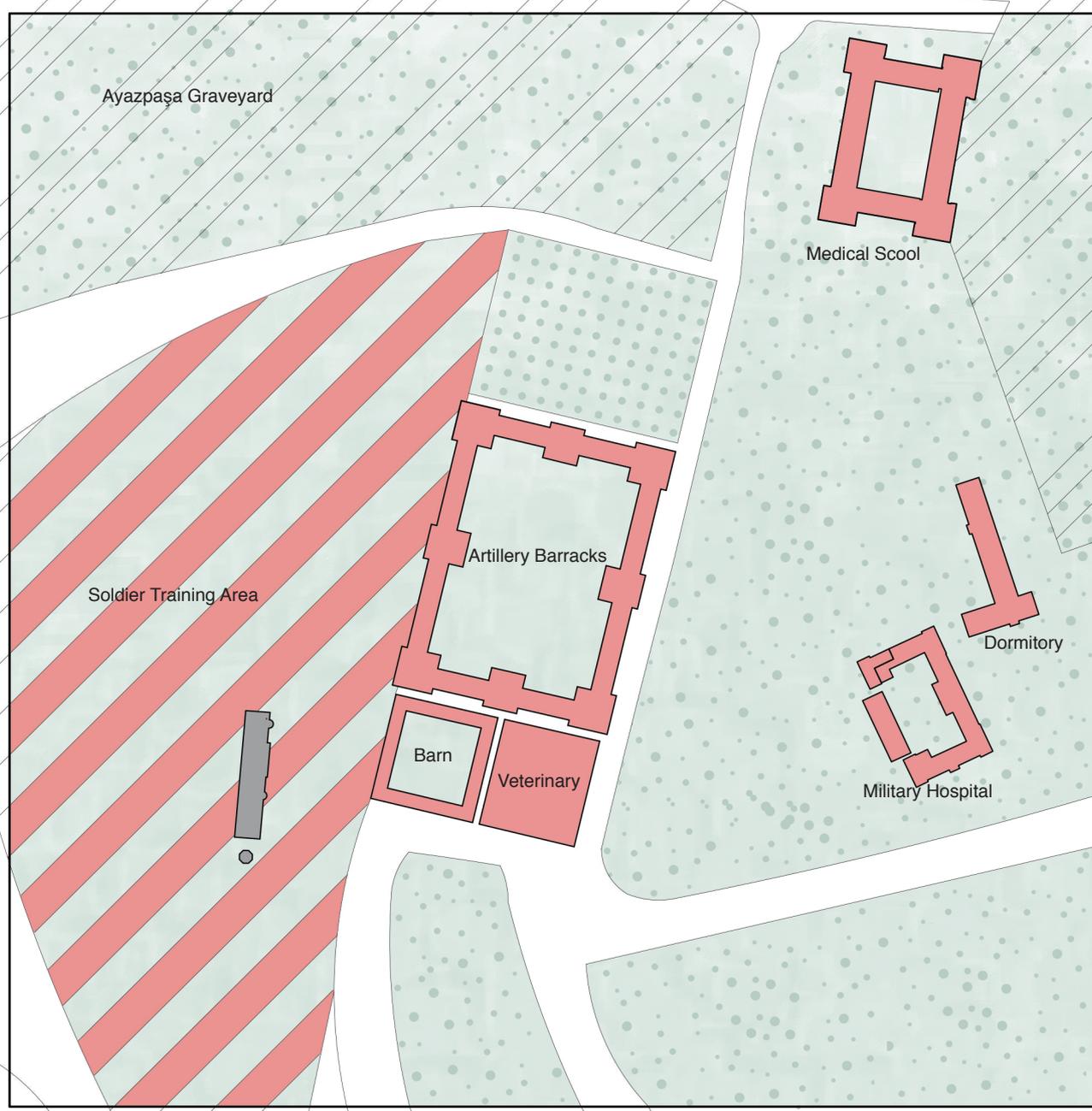
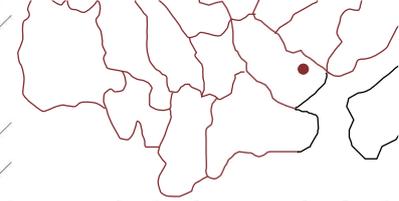
- Buildings
- New Elements
- Graveyard
- Project Site Boundary

## 1.1.2 First Construction

Extensions of the settlements around the Bosphorus in the 16th century came with a problem. The present water system was not enough anymore. Accordingly, in 1732, the first construction of a water reservoir and distributing network took place in the multifunctional area. It was distributing water coming from the European part towards the three other parts of the city that were newly built. The building was named Maksem and it has given its name to the area in the district as Taksim which means 'to divide'. The building's latest form was reached in 1839 and its later restorations were held accordingly without changing its form.

The building has two stories and an octagonal plan and a pointed dome. External walls are mainly built in stone with some marble parts where the fountains and the entrance door are located. The design of the fountains is according to the period's traditional fountain designs. Above the main entrance, two traditional, palace-shaped birdhouses are present to host birds passing by. The interior is mainly built of marble and decorated with traditional Turkish embroidery. Inside the building, there is also a marble box with rolls on it to direct the coming water to the right positions with the right amount.

Maksem, the water reservoir building, was the most noticeable building that marks the area until the 19th century. The function of being a picnic area and its natural beauty changed the point of view of the graveyards and probably overcame the sadness that cemeteries mostly produce and that phenomenon had facilitated the area's transformation into a public space. People from the upper classes had started to construct villas in the 17th century in Beyoğlu near the graveyards. Followingly, in the 18th century, Pera's population had increased and more construction works took place. Eventually, in the same era, coffee houses were built to serve people who spent their free time there and the passive green land turned into active green areas.



Ayazpaşa Graveyard

Medical School

Soldier Training Area

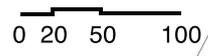
Artillery Barracks

Dormitory

Barn

Veterinary

Military Hospital



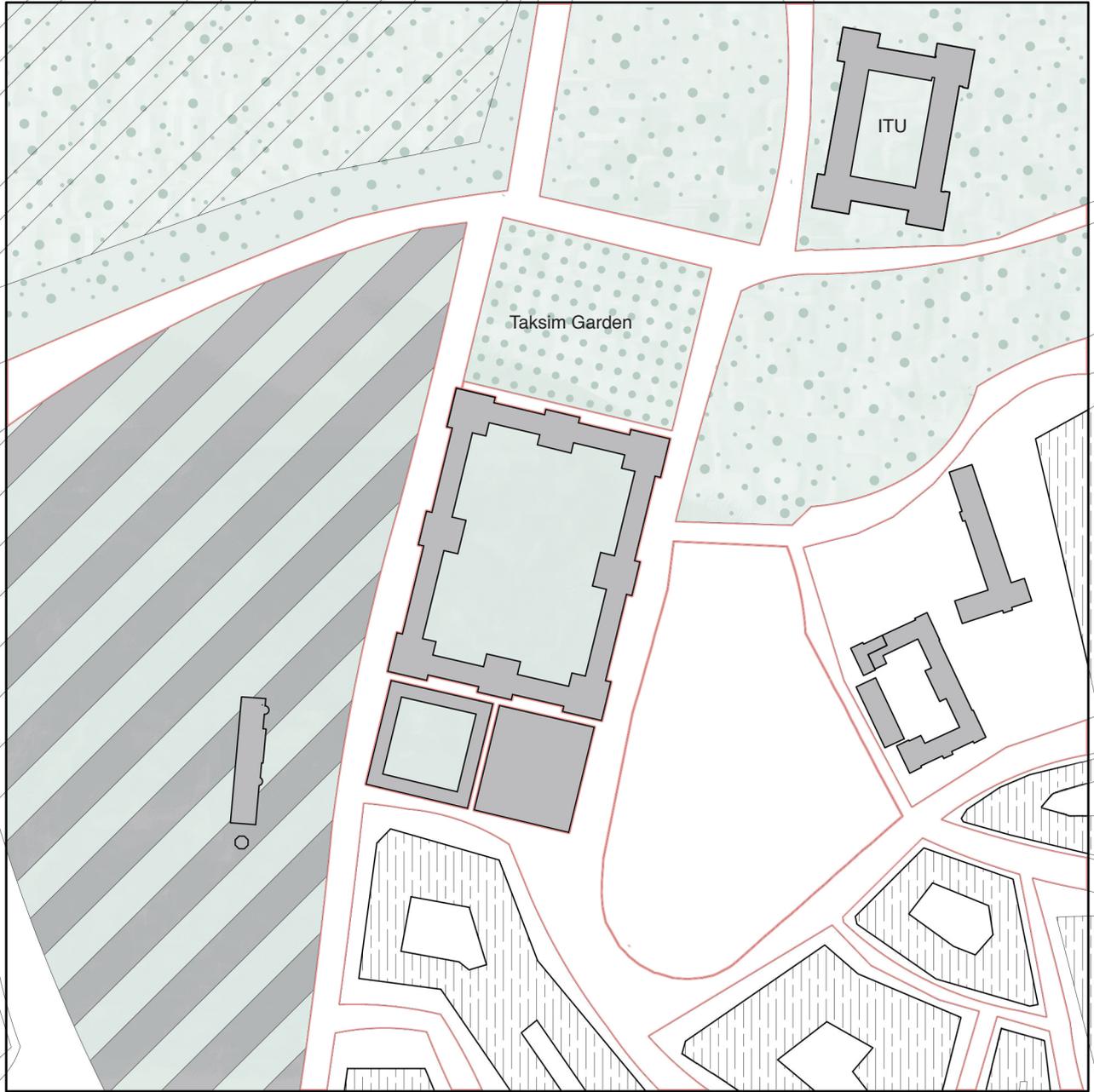
- Buildings
- New Elements
- Graveyard
- Project Site Boundary
- Green Area

### **1.1.3 No More A Common Space**

In the 18th century, Ottoman Empire had first developed its military reforms. And the existing buildings were not enough to accommodate the new military force and personnel. Thus large-scale state constructions had eventually started. Places to be built were being selected outside the historical cores of the city. Pera, now called Beyoğlu, was one of those areas considered suitable, and then in 1806 Taksim Artillery Barracks was built in the place as known as “Gezi Park” today. To do that, some parts of the graveyards were moved to other places around the city. Next to the barracks, there was an open training area for soldiers, and below there was a barn for the horses, veterinary, and an arsenal. On the right side of the buildings military hospital, medical school and dormitory were built (T.Üzümkesici, 2010).

The plan of the barrack is rectangular with a courtyard in the middle. According to Üzümkesici, it measures approximately 146 m x 176 m and its central courtyard is 110 m x 140 meters in size. Two storied barracks have four towers in their corners. On the second floor, there was a room for the sultan which was facing the west facade towards the training area (Talimhane). There were four entrances in the middle of the walls that were slightly extended out with colonnades towards the courtyard. The main entrance was the one on the west facade and it was highly decorated with horseshoe arches, ornamented moldings, railings with geometrical patterns, and traditional floral ornaments. There was empire’s emblem above the entrance towards the ceiling (T.Üzümkesici, 2010).

Considering the graveyards and military services, the area was not allowed for residential purposes. But besides the military, the place had also side functions from time to time such as celebration of national festivals. During the mid-19th century, at first, the training held some festivals and sports organizations open to the public and then the many different events and organizations were accompanied on particular days (T.Üzümkesici, 2010).



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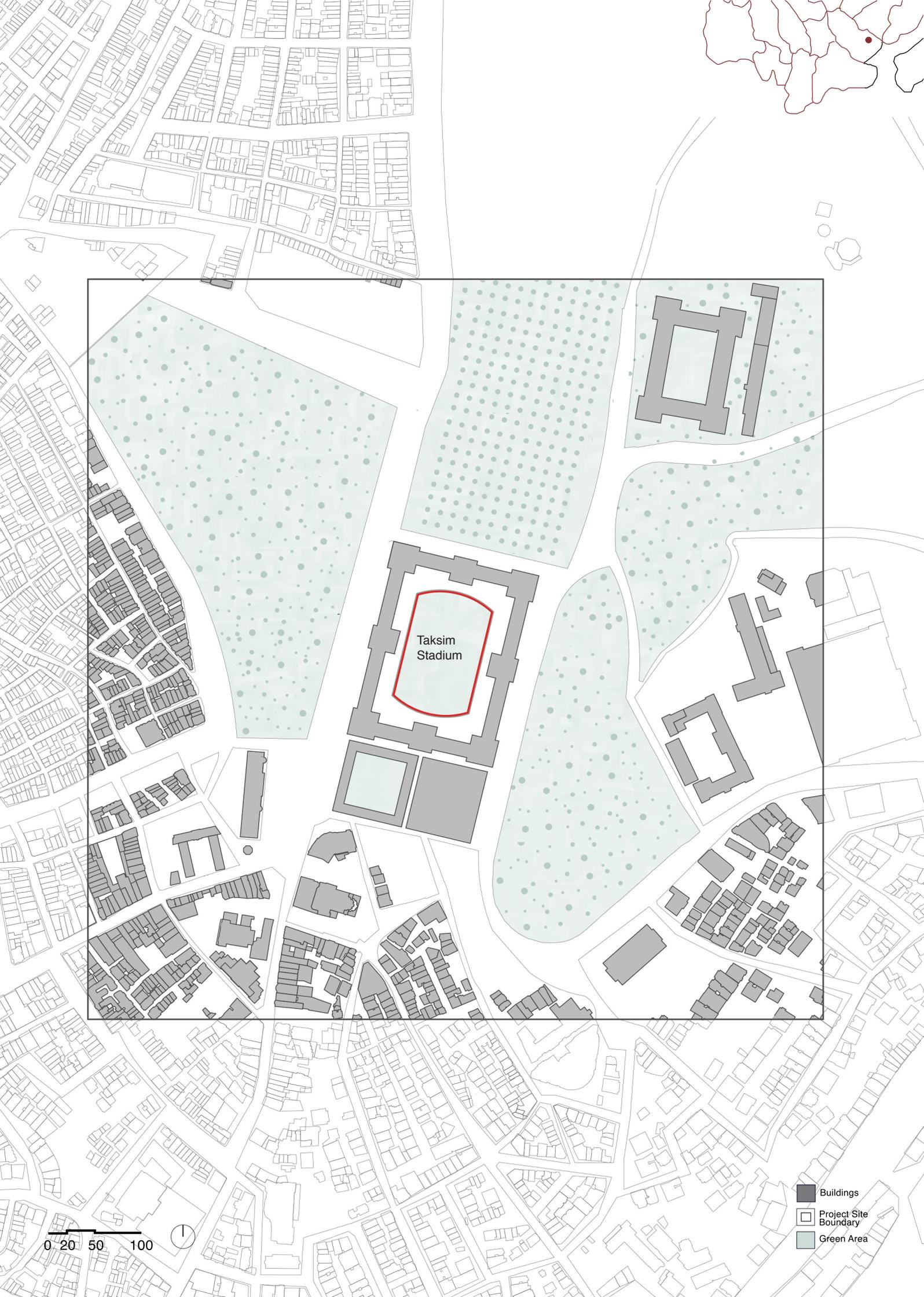
- Buildings
- Urban Blocks
- Graveyard
- Project Site Boundary
- Green Area

## Gates Are Opening To Public

In the late 19th century, the idea of parks for public recreation was developed by the municipality of Istanbul in Pera. The requirement for more roads led more other parts of cemeteries to move from Taksim to Şişli in 1864 and in the following years tramline had built by the city municipality. In the meantime, the studies for a city park - later to be called Taksim Park - had begun in the space on the north side of the artillery barrack. It took five years to finalize the construction phase (S.Polvan, N.A.Yönet, 2010). Considering the new roads and the new urban plots around demonstrates the beginning of the urbanization process of the region. There was more demand in the development of the site and the zone became more popular due to the events such as sport activities and national festivals held in the artillery barracks garden. The number of those events had increased respected to the previous decades. And the barrack had been taken modifications and adjustments by keeping its original shape (T.Üzümkesici, 2010; S.Polvan, N.A.Yönet, 2010). In the same period, While the military hospital and dormitory kept their original function, the medical school turned into an engineering and architectural school that is now still functioning as an architectural school and is called Istanbul Technical University (ITU).

In contrast to what was there before, with the park the zone became a much more crowded and urbanized place. European style gardens and parks were modelling Istanbul's new recreation spaces. Trees were planted in tidy lines to create promenades and to have the landscaping highly rationalized geometry. The ground was paved and street lamps were on the way. Well-dressed visitors were the center of attention and thus coffee houses and shops were established in the park to serve food and beverages for those wealthy visitors (Gölönü, 2020).

Eventhough muslim, catholic and protestan communities did not object to move their graves into an another cemetery, orthodox communities responded to that with protests. Gölönü thinks that the one of the aims of creating a city park was a response to the protests. Subsequently most of the orthodox communities responded positively to the idea of creating a city park by thinking that a religiously impotent space will be served to citizens to benefit. It was assumed that transforming informal, pastoral landscapes into formal, manicured urban gardens would be a measure of reaching standards of modernity. During its use, the space became more segregated for upper class then before, as it was a graveyard and a picnic space. Thus, some amount of fee were applied, in order to have elite social classes enjoy in recreational activities without the interference of the poor ones. Although how those fees were applied is not certain, from the photographs of the time, the fences are visible to seperate the garden from its surroundings. Considering the panoramic view due to garden's location, in her essay, Gölönü indicates that upper classes who went there would spent most of the day there, overlooking to the Bosphorus. Eventually, the process between early and the late 19th century presents the changing the perspective of gardening culture (Gölönü, 2020).



Taksim Stadium

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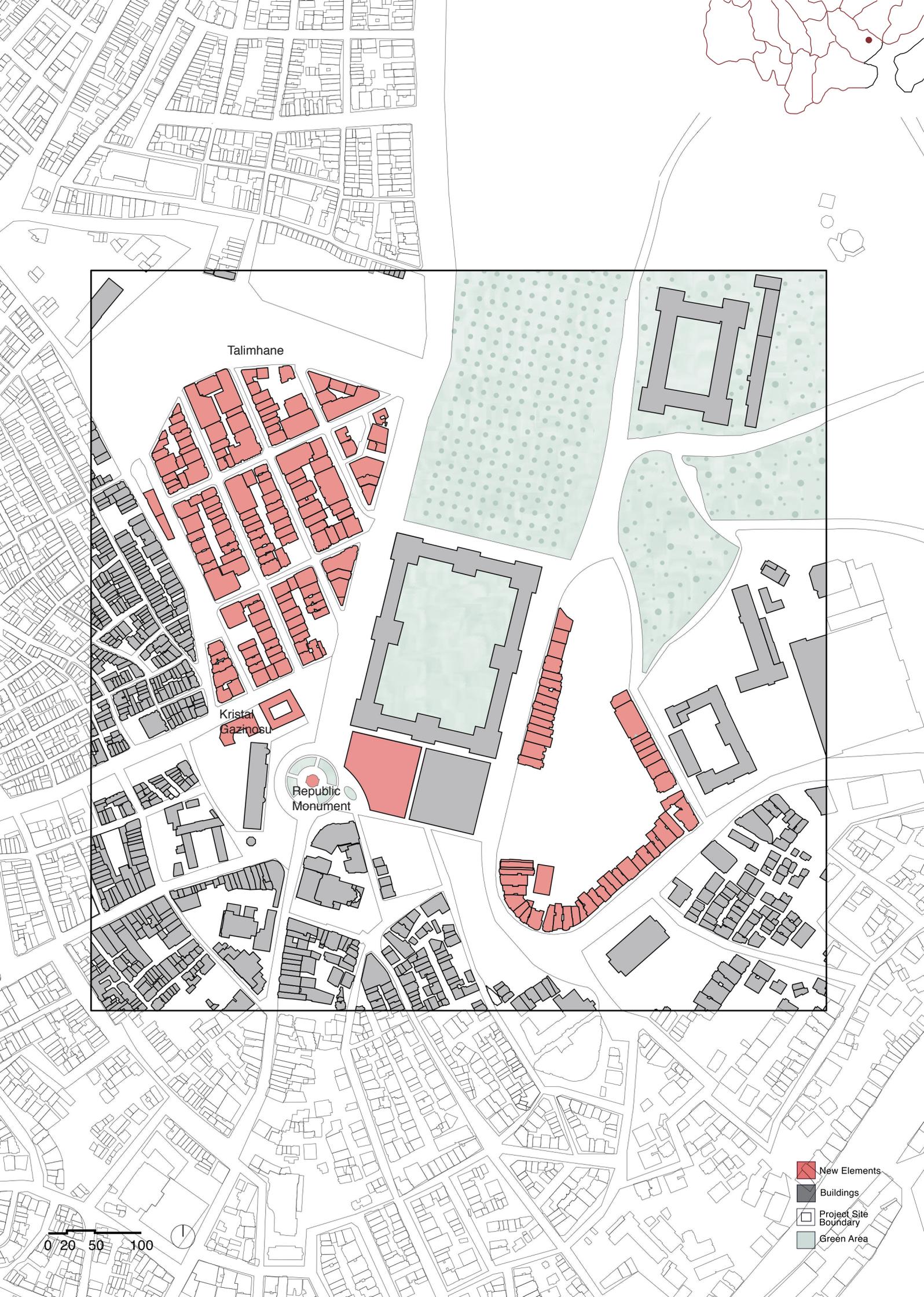
- Buildings
- Project Site Boundary
- Green Area

### 1.1.4 Turning Into A Public Space

Taksim Square's urbanization in the 19th century, like the rest of the city, had continued. The municipality had built even more dwellings and the inhabitants started to reside more around Taksim. Having in mind that the old city core was extending beyond its ancient walls of Istanbul, Beyoğlu district got closer to the center and Taksim became a place where people gather and have different social activities, particularly sports, until the start of World War I. Training area and the barrack had relatively lost their main military functions and turned into a place where sport activities were held. During the world war 1, the Entente powers of the war took the building and so they were abandoned by the local people. When the war was over, barrack's new function as urban stadium began. The building turned into a Stadium with its new tribune and had enlarged its sport activities such as tennis, horse races, bicycling and golf. Ultimately barrack's name had changed into Taksim Stadium.

Events that were held from the 19th century at barracks and at training area contributed a lot to the development of Taksim. Most of the graveyards were taken to other regions and most of the huge spaces were divided into urban plots with more complex road systems. Studies of urban planning have shown that Beyoğlu was developed as convex spaces that are easier to perceive by people (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021). Residential buildings were mostly concentrated around the training space Talimhane.

During the war, the barrack complex and surroundings were popular among the international soldiers of the Triple Entente who were using the complex to play different kinds of sports, particularly football. After the war, locals were even more interested in football and other sports so the stadium and Taksim continued to be a popular urban space.



Talimhane

Kristal Gazinosu

Republic Monument

- New Elements
- Buildings
- Project Site Boundary
- Green Area

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### **1.1.5 Taksim As The New Republic's National Symbol**

In early 20th century between the years 1920 and 1940, Türkiye changed a lot. The republican administration became the new governmental system in 1923. That brought several developments with it. The city was not a capital anymore but continued to be in demand as before. In the city, Taksim was seen as an opportunity to reflect republic's architectural style. It can be remarked that there were three new main elements to study. One is the urbanization of the training area Talimhane in 1920s and the others were erection of the Republic Monument and building a music hall called Kristal Gazino in 1928. In fact, Taksim obtained its city square statues by erecting the monument and it continued to be a region where people spend time to have entertainment.

The urbanization of Talimhane is made by dividing the space into several parcels with a grid plan by the municipality. The water reservoir building Maksem remained in one of those parcels. The rest of them had new constructions of residential buildings. Eventually, the training area turned into a neighborhood by keeping its original name Talimhane (S.Polvan, N.A.Yönet, 2010). It was constructed under the influence of Art Nouveau as the first planned example in Istanbul (D. Erbey 2017). In the following years, the barn of the barrack was been modified to obtain enough space for the monument, and the historical tram line started to pass around the monument (T.Üzümkesici, 2010). The intersection of the monument and the music hall defined the square's geometrical shape (M.Ö.Özbek, 2021).

After the foundation of the Republic, the citizens were in demand to have a monument for the sake of Atatürk who was the founder of the Republic and the first president. The community was even contributing voluntarily by collecting amounts of money to help its erection. When the monument was finally inaugurated, on 8 August 1928, thirty thousand people gathered in the square, with a powerful manifestation of the visual impact of its spacefully occupied by Turkish citizens. Afterwards, around the monument became a new space to celebrate national festivals. The aim of the governors of the young republic was to establish a new Istanbul that was previously exhausted, worn out by the first World War, foreign occupation, frequent fires, and economic problems (S.Polvan, N.A.Yönet, 2010).



Taksim Belediye Gazinosu

Park No2 (Gezi Parkı)

Atatürk Public Library

Opera House

Marmara Hotel

-  New Elements
-  Buildings
-  Project Site Boundary
-  Green Area

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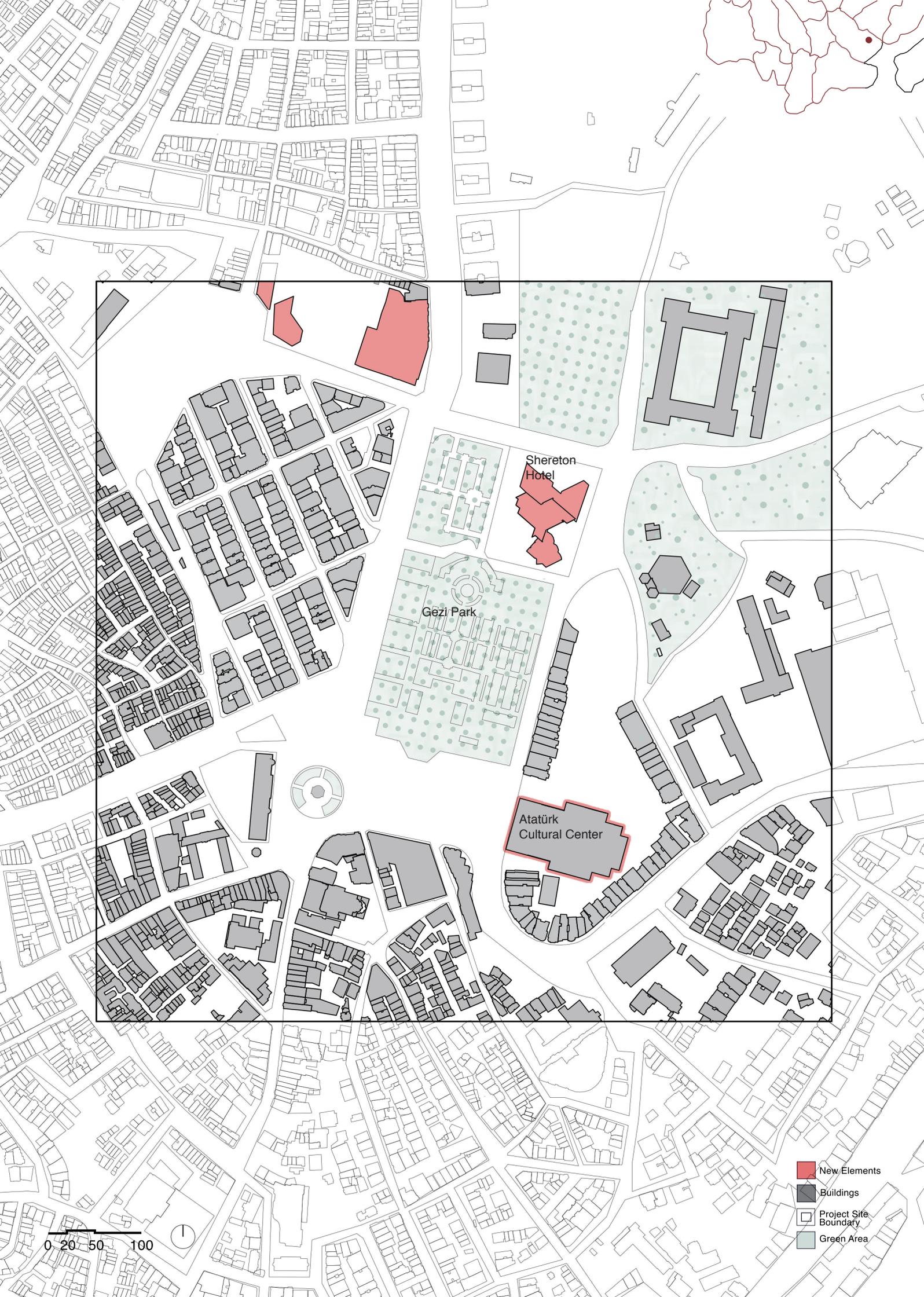


## 1.1.6 A City Park

In 1940, the second president of the Republic and the mayor of Istanbul decided to contribute to the development of the city for public use thus the French architect and urbanist Henri Prost was officially invited to Istanbul. He was asked to design large-scale city parks and open spaces and the largest one of them was called Park No2 including the area from Taksim Square to Maçka Valley. The first step was to demolish the Taksim Artillery Barracks and construct a park for public use and host several events like national festivals. It was located at the core of new residential areas (P. Bolca, R. Tamborrino, F. Rinaudo, 2017). The background idea behind turning the Taksim and Maçka into a park was that there were already parks previously existing and also had the dense and deeply rooted tree pattern from the graveyard era. Eventually, the Park No2 which contains nowadays called Gezi Park, became Republic's first national park and it contributed to the development of the nearby settlements and became the center of Taksim Square (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021). Afterward, in the 1950s new government abandoned the secular attitudes, stating economic policies and nationalist self-sufficiency of the previous government. Some of the reflections of that ideology were the construction of luxury hotels in the city. For one of the hotels, the location of Prost's Park No2 was chosen. As for the high-level buildings, hotels were not the only ones. An opera house, which was going to be damaged heavily due to fire, was also started to be constructed. Atatürk Public Library is also built in the part of the park to serve community which is located close to the technical university.

Having a large and important document collection from the Byzantine era to nowadays, Atatürk Library has a significant role also in terms of its architectural design for reflecting the Republic's architectural style. It was built near the Sheraton Hotel, towards the west. It sets an essential example of the contemporary architecture of the Republic (Atatürk Kitaplığı online website). Considering the park, Prost highlighted some principles for his master plan and design of the park. Those categories were the conservation of monuments, enlargement and adaptation of existing roads to the topographic geography, and improvements of unhygienic old buildings and neighborhoods without sun or air circulation by public open spaces (İ. Akpınar, 2010). The park was designed as a place for parades with its terrace opening to the square. It is elevated from the square by its stairs and ramps. After the park, there is the Taksim Garden located on the north side of it (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021). Its design contains an axial and at the same time an organic layout. It contains another music hall, apart from Kristal Gazinosu, called Taksim Belediye Gazinosu. The design process reflected the memory of the area and its inhabitants and its construction was completed in 3 years (D. Erbey 2017).

After its implementation, the Park No 2 has adopted and started to use in everyday life by the community. In addition, the following years, Prost's plan for Istanbul continued to affect the city's urban formation/ transformation process (P. Bolca, R. Tamborrino, F. Rinaudo, 2017). Considering the previous use of park's site for celebrations of festivals and having the monument in the square led the park became not only a green space but also a place of the national parades such as Republic Day Festivals. Having the park elevated from the square by its marble stairs, highlighted the joy of the reaching the panoramic view of the Bosforus.



-  New Elements
-  Buildings
-  Project Site Boundary
-  Green Area

0 20 50 100

### 1.1.7 Constructing For The Jetset

During the 1950s, the ideology and perspective of the new government were already had started to appear. The perspective that had been created was changed over time. Studies of constructing hotels are demonstrating the shift from collective monumental significances to touristic and private target such as jetsets (P. Bolca, R. Tamborrino, F. Rinaudo, 2017). In the early 60s the music hall Kristal Gazinosu, which was located at the edge of the Talimhane neighborhood, is demolished and it caused the square to enlarge towards the north without a strategy (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021; D. Erbey 2017). Afterward, in 1969 the construction of the opera house is completed but it went under serious modifications due to the fire in the building in 1970 and re-opened as Atatürk Cultural Center in 1977 (S. Polvan, N.A. Yönet, 2010; D. Erbey 2017). In 1975 Sheraton Hotel (now Intercontinental Hotel) is constructed in the area of Prost's No2 plan and it caused the division of the northern part of the park. In the same period, another tall building was constructed as a hotel at the southern part of the square.

After the fire, the new Atatürk Cultural Center gave a strong boundary. Its modern facade around more historical and cultural buildings gave a contrast to the square. Regarding the Republic Monument, Erbey thinks that the square has lost its monumental character under the shadow of vertical development (D. Erbey 2017).

Construction of new hotels were celebrated among some of the citizens during that period, thinking that those buildings are presenting the development and modernity. They were on the newspapers with jetsets making their advertisements.



Barcelo Hotel

Grand Hyatt Hotel

Underground Connections

-  New Elements
-  Buildings
-  Project Site Boundary
-  Green Area

0 20 50 100



### **1.1.8 Towards The Kapitalism**

Starting from the 1980s, with a process that continued all over the 1990s, a wave of district revival started. Many buildings had been restored and in 1986 Istiklal Street has been pedestrianized and re-arranged its shops on the ground floors of buildings. It became one of the cultural axes of the city with its art galleries and theaters together with the stores (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021). But on the other hand, the spatial layout had been changed into an internationalized marketplace. A production-oriented structure, a tourism-oriented urban economy, foreign capital investments, and the number of foreign-owned shopping centers increased. Another re-arrangement was done by bringing the historical tram back to carry people and making it start to pass from the Republic Monument through Istiklal Street. In the 2000s metro line is constructed in Taksim (M.Ö. Özbek, 2021; D. Erbey 2017).

New hotels and conference halls were constructed in the region where originally was a public park from Prost's plan No 2 (P. Bolca, R. Tamborrino, F. Rinaudo, 2017). Some of them called Grand Hyatt Hotel was located in the northern part of the park which now became Kongre Valley, eventually, the park is reduced even more. Barcelo Hotel was constructed at the northern part of the Talimhane neighbourhood. According to Erbey, due to the efforts to pedestrianize Istiklal Street and the extension of Tarlabası Boulevard in 1986, the Republican Monument has a position as an undefined empty space (D. Erbey 2017).

Besides the cultural buildings, most of the new constructions became prominent. Formal memories of the Taksim remained in the background. (D. Erbey 2017).



## 1.1.9 Pedestrianization Project and Gezi Protests

Beyoğlu Urban Site Area Conservation Development Plan was approved in 2010. Its main purpose was to demonstrate the connection between past and future and erase - as much as possible - existing negativities while highlighting the historical structures and its regional culture, science, art, trade and tourism. In 2011, Taksim Square Re-arrangement Project was announced by the Prime Minister. In the explanatory report of Beyoğlu Urban Site Area Conservation Development Plan, it was declared that the Tarlabaşı Boulevard traffic should be removed from Taksim Square. This process caused a fundamental change in Taksim Square. The project was adopted unanimously by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Assembly, and it approved that all existing traffic will be taken underground of the square along with the 04.12.2012–165 dated and numbered decision of number II Regional Committee for the Conservation of Cultural Assets. Furthermore, it was mentioned in the approved plan notes that Taksim Artillery Barracks, which was registered by decision number 4225 of the Istanbul Number II, The Regional Committee for the Conservation of Cultural Assets dated 09.02.2011 will be approached in integration with the urban design project, and it was noted that implementation within the boundary of plan approval would be carried out in the direction with the urban design project that is to be approved by committee. Along with such an application, a large part of the Gezi Park designed by Henry Prost - which is actually a small portion of what was remained from the original plan of NO 2- was to be removed (D. Erbey 2017).

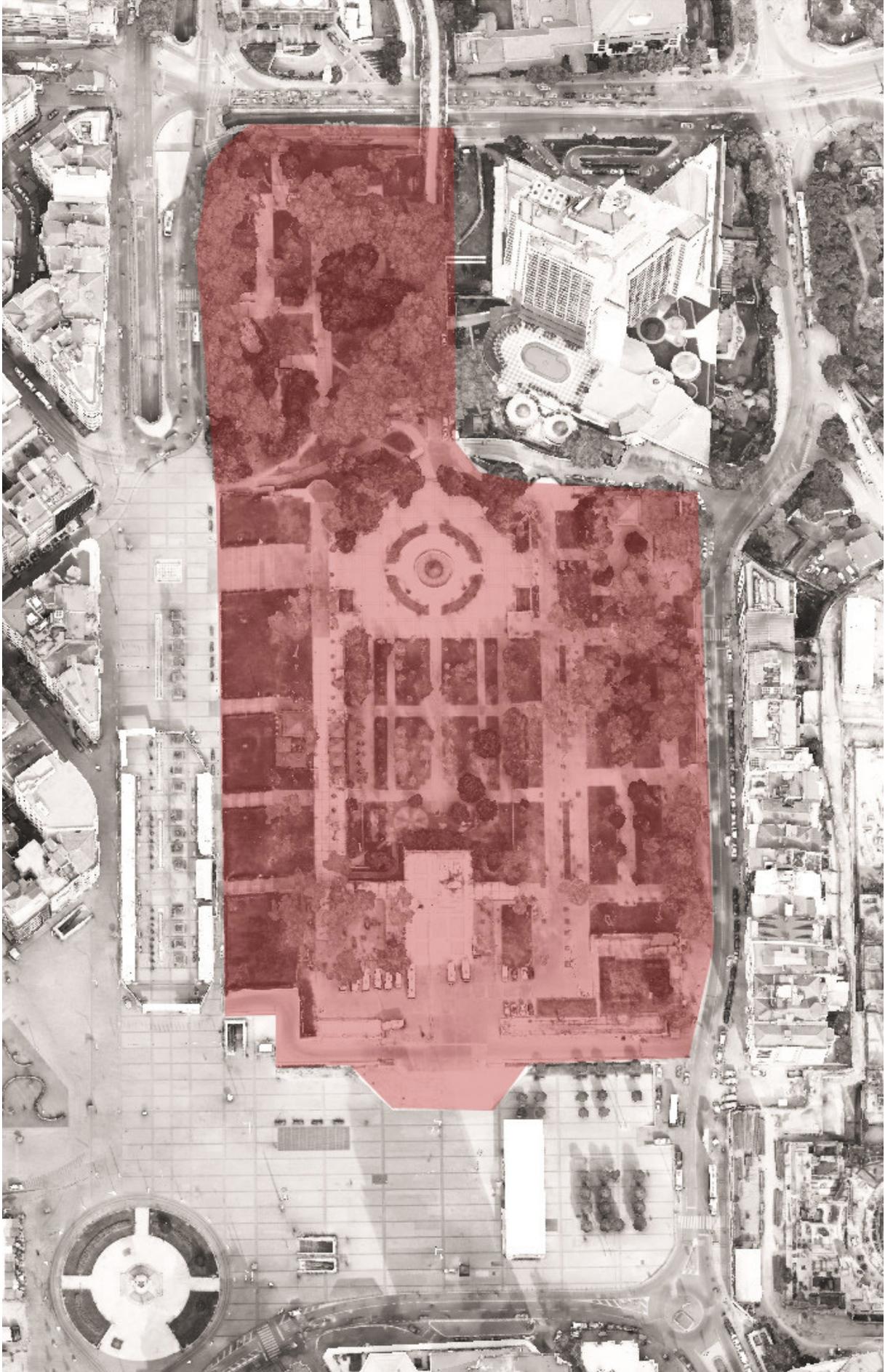
During 2012 construction of tunnel had started as a part of pedestrianization project. In the following year, another step was taken to construct a new barrack to serve as a mall and some new hotels around it. To do that, on 27th of May 2013, some of the trees of the Gezi park were cutted. 50 citizens including architects, urban planners, academists and students, opposed to such actions, starting the protest that had ample resonance in the following days. The amount of people joining the protests increased in time and it even widened around the whole country. They started to make tents and camp there to protect the park. While the protests started to increase, police started to evacuate the area by tear gas and water cannons. The protestors started to develop tactics to overcome the attacks. Meanwhile, Gezi park started to turn into a big commune with tents, an infirmary, food and medicine supply zone, an open library, a children's area. Everything was working voluntarily for others. Needed materials like food, medicine, books, were supplied from supporters in Istanbul (S. Z. Sadri, 2017). Eventually despite the difficulties, the people who joined the protests became succesful to provent the construction and the mall projects was canceled.

A few years later, in 2018 Atatürk Cultural Center was enlarged to create a large axis of culture starting from its original location towards the ITÜ - Faculty of Architecture building. It consists of a theater with 804 seat capacity, a music hall with 2040 seats, art galleries, book shops, and cafeterias. The design is done by following the horizontal hierarchy of the blocks that are connected to each other. Its original contemporary facade was preserved. The complex was opened on 29th October 2021 which is the national festival of Republic Day (Mimarizm).

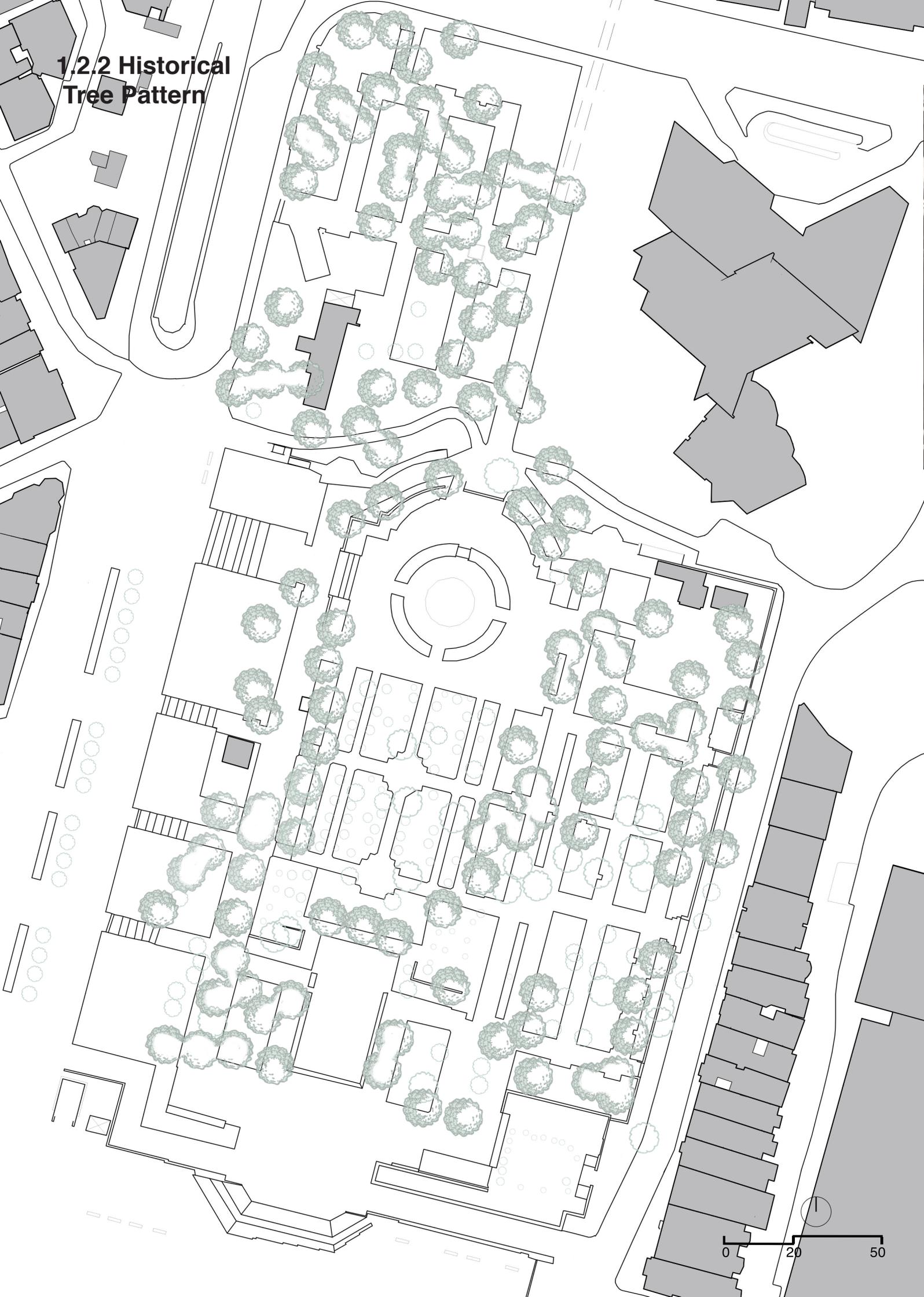
For more than a decade, a number of conservative people were in demand of building a mosque in Taksim Square. They were averted by the government and secular groups of citizens. In 2015, this controversy was concluded by the decision of the administrative court that opens a way to build it. In 2017, the mosque project which can host around 1000 people, including car parks, conference and exhibition halls in the empty area behind the Maksem building, has approved by the Istanbul number 2 District Council of Preservation of Cultural Heritage (S. Z. Sadri, 2017).

## 1.2 Gezi Park Protests in Visual Appearance

## 1.2.1 Gezi Park Boundaries



# 1.2.2 Historical Tree Pattern



0 20 50



### 1.2.3 The Protests Through Photos



Photo by : Osman Orsal / Reuters Press



Photo by : Fatih Keçe / İhlas News Agency



Photo by : Gürcan Öztürk / Agence France Press

Photo by :Bülent Kılıç / Agence France Press



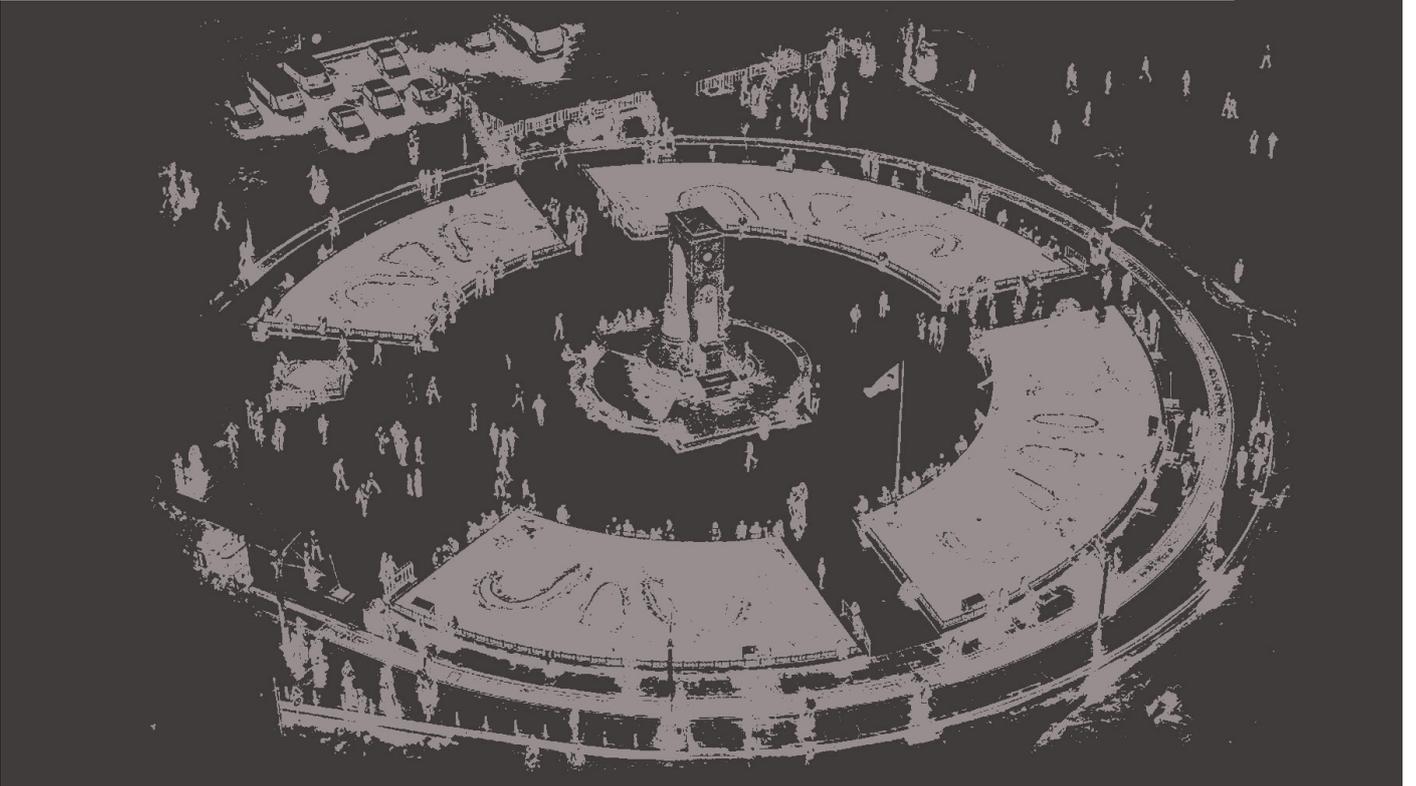
## 1.3 An International Design Competition

# TAKSİM

## URBAN DESIGN COMPETITION

Submission for Stage 2

Deadline : **11 September 2020**



DEPARTMENT OF  
CULTURAL ASSETS  
CONSERVATION

## 1.3.1 Taksim Urban Design Competition Results

### EQUIVALENT PRIZES

PROJECT NUMBER 15  
Alias 46Q35YX7

Team Leader  
Şerif SÜVEYDAN

PROJECT NUMBER 16  
Alias 48P12T05

Team Leader  
Bünyamin DERMAN

PROJECT NUMBER 19  
Alias 79CS5H8Y

Team Leader  
Kutlu İnanç BAL



### EQUIVALENT MENTIONS

PROJECT NUMBER 14  
Alias 31ne58fi

Team Leader  
Elmira JAFARİ

PROJECT NUMBER 35  
Alias AAT4KS1M

Team Leader  
Jaime Daroca GUERRERO

PROJECT NUMBER 52  
Alias ct914736

Team Leader  
Zuhal KOL

PROJECT NUMBER 54  
Alias D5A2H9P4

Team Leader  
Hayriye ESBAN TUNCA

PROJECT NUMBER 80  
Alias LF125TVP

Team Leader  
Sinan GÜNAY



### **1.3.2 Taksim Urban Design Competition: Guideline and Unexpected Challenges**

In the year 2020, Istanbul's IMM Department of Cultural Assets and Conservation announced the Taksim Urban Design Competition, an international event organized by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, in accordance with the Public Procurement Law. Considering the Taksim Square's multi layered history and its extensions of Atatürk Cultural Center and Gezi Park, the competition's guideline emphasized this layered history of urban spaces, drawing on their evolving narratives of change, destruction, and reconstruction.

There were no rigid design solution rules by allowing participants to expand according to their vision. The competition's goal was to obtain a suitable approach for societal integration, focusing on strengthen relationship systems through open negotiation, substituting the present architectural, urban, and landscape design proposals. The aim was to enhance a democratic urban public space that respects the diverse sensitivities of society. Requirements included reinforcing the public space values, increasing the urban life quality, facilitating the usage infrastructure, by having sensitivity towards the site's historical and cultural heritage, urban values, collective memories, and ecological concerns. Rather than a rigid program, a flexible framework was suggested. According to Istanbul's deficiency in terms of green spaces, there was a demand to incorporate public green spaces, preserving existing historical trees while addressing applicability, and sustainability in line with modern urbanism principles.

The selected design was to be exposed revisions based on stakeholder feedback during the project implementation. According to the feedbacks, the development plan was to be renewed and supported by the necessary plan notes proposed by the designer. Eventually for the evaluation process a broader group, along with the jury, was to be select the project to be implemented, following a transparent scoring system.

Unexpectedly, a few months later, the land ownership transferred from the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality to the Sultan Beyazıt Hanı Veli Hazretleri Foundation. Despite the land belonging to the municipality when the winning project was chosen, it was announced that the project couldn't proceed as it wasn't transferred to the General Directorate of Foundations. Consequently, the municipality submitted the selected project to them and is currently awaiting a response.

### 1.3.3 Projects of Equivalent Prizes and Mentions



Project Number 15

Project Number 35





Project Number 52

Project Number 54

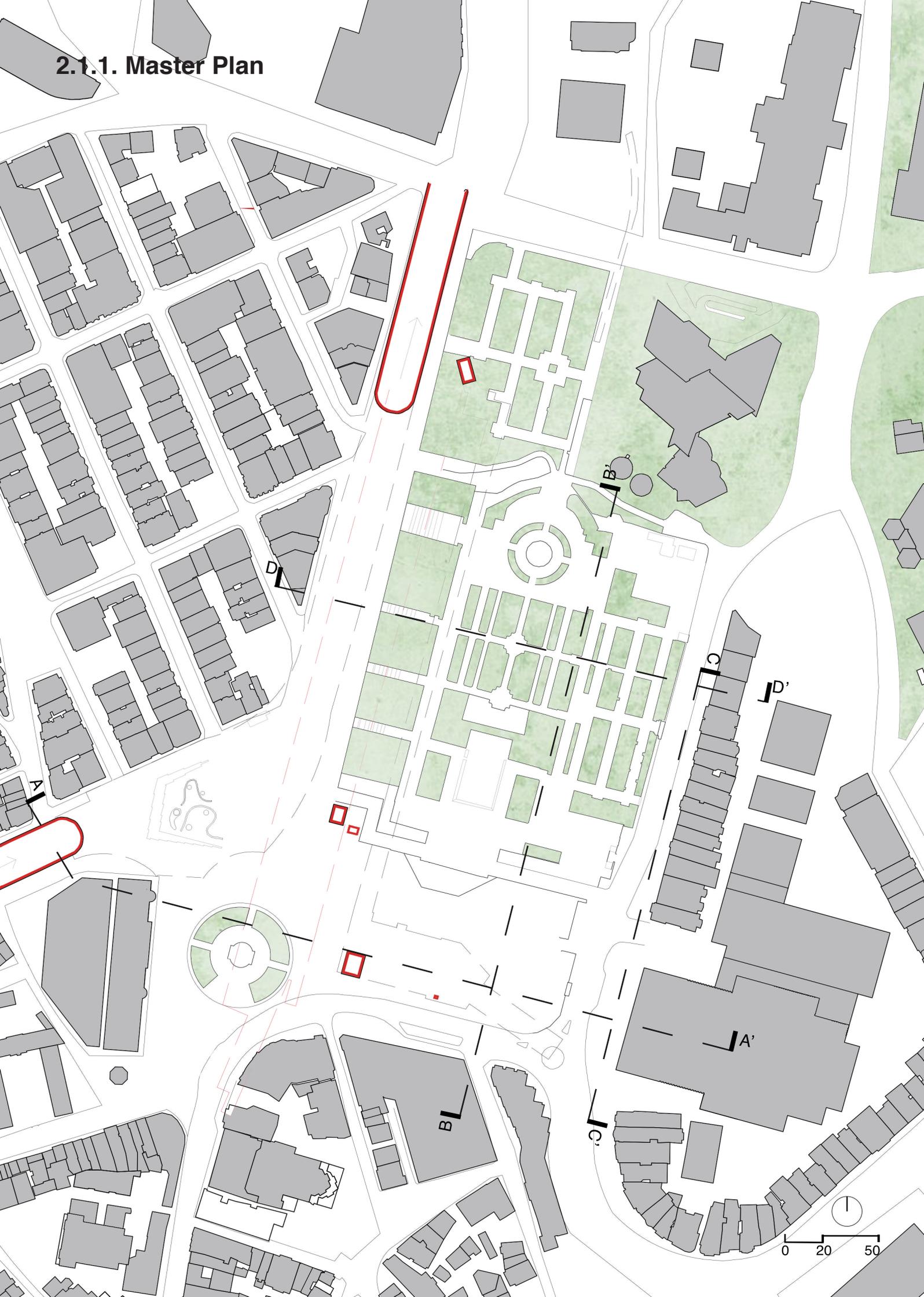


## Chapter 2

### **Current Situation of Taksim Square**

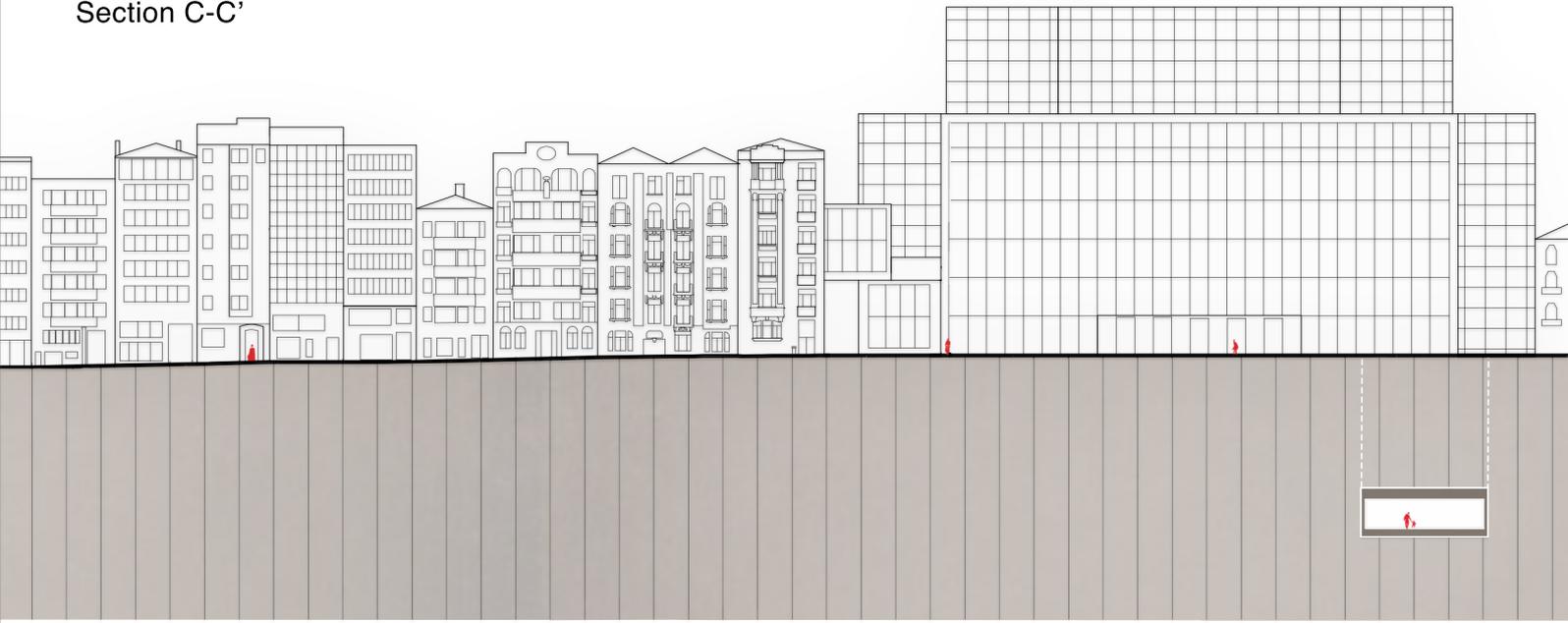
## 2.1 Architectural Drawings

# 2.1.1. Master Plan

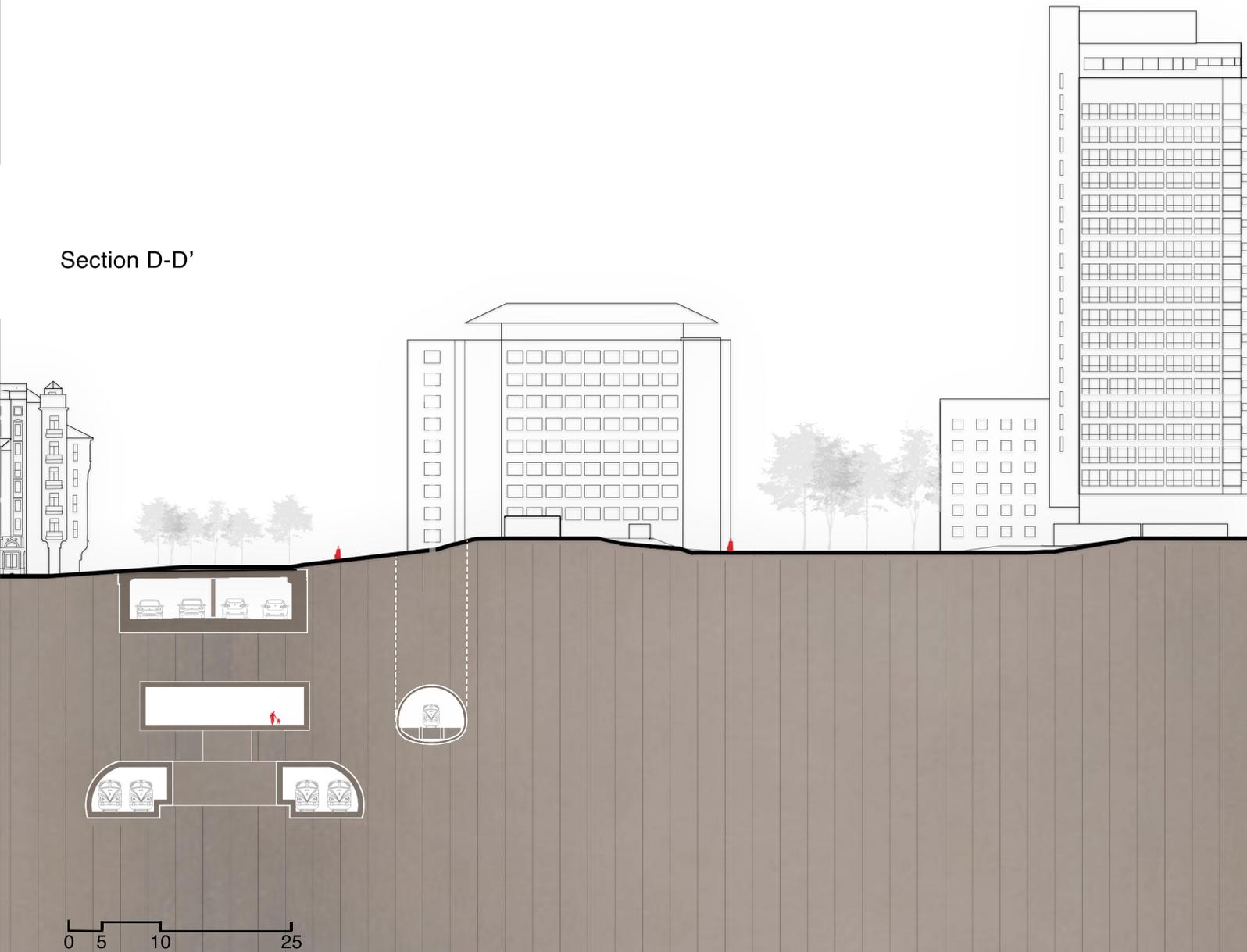


# 2.1.1. Sections

## Section C-C'



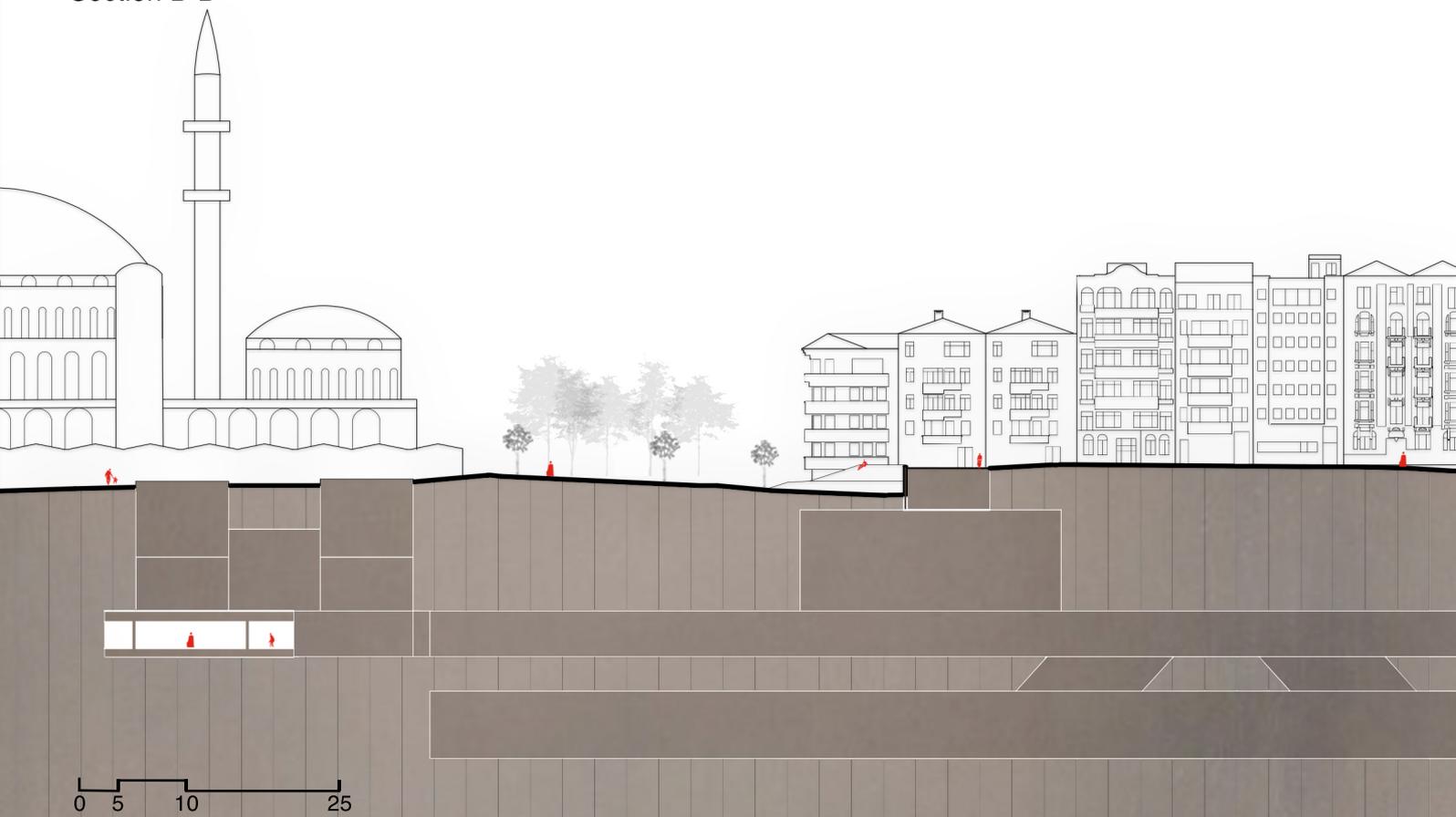
## Section D-D'



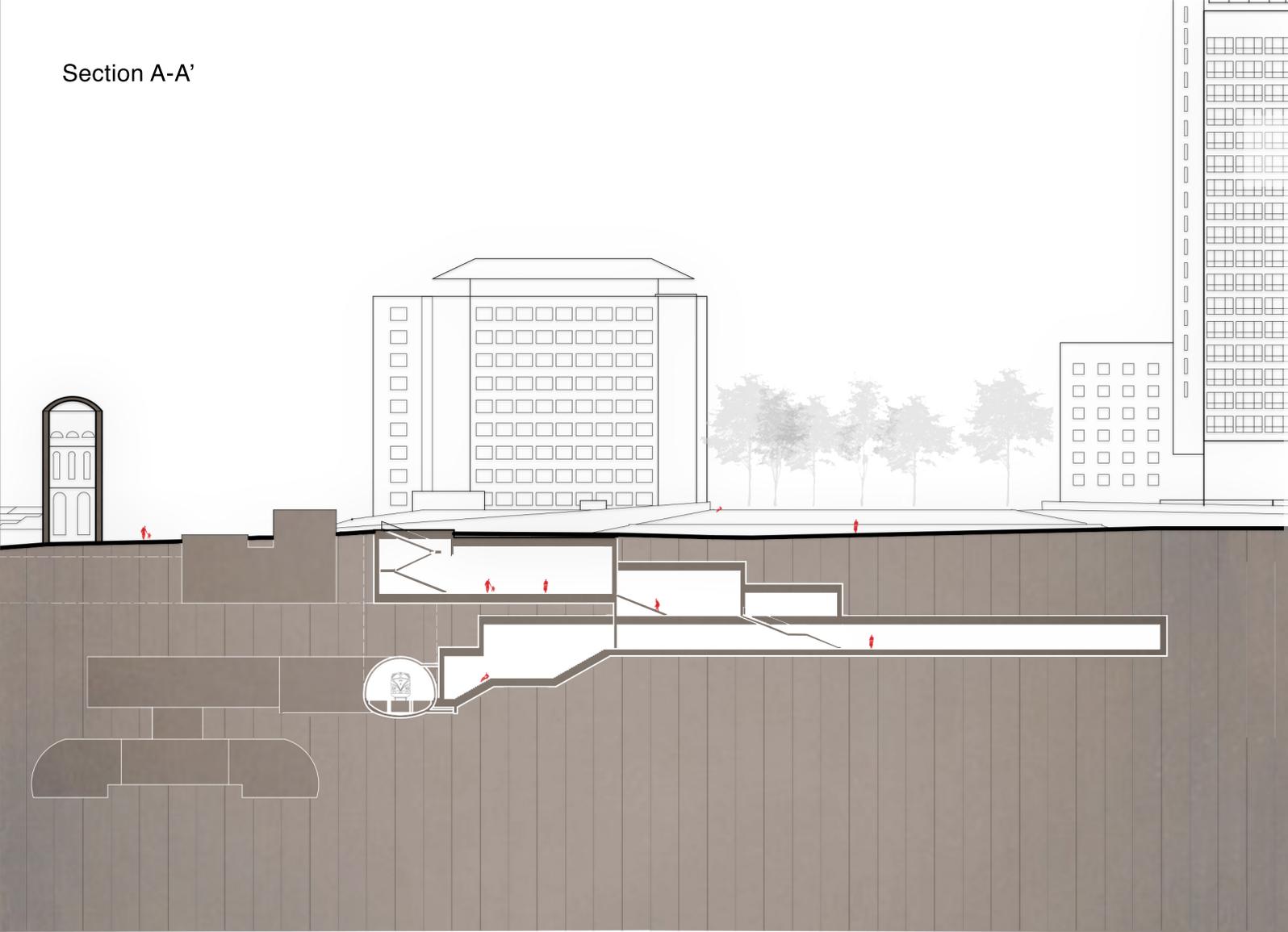
Section A-A'



Section B-B'



Section A-A'



Section B-B'



# Chapter 3

## Temporary Use Of Spaces

## 3.1 The Concept and Its Suitability To Taksim Square

### 3.1.1 “Wicked Problems”

Temporary use of spaces is becoming a relevant part of urban life with its innovative way of thinking and quick solution-oriented style. Initially, to understand its meaning in the field of urban studies and its theorization process by the scholars - even though they are very few now - it is worthwhile to take a look at its grounds and reasons to consider them in basic life throughout the world. Since the term itself is evaluated as fast solutions to urban problems by scholars, it requires figuring out what are the issues to clear up. Sometimes those issues are coming in a way that there is no permanent solution. This does not mean that they are bad for urban life but complicated and intangible. As Rittel and Webber define them, they are “wicked problems” and both in the Global South and the Global North, it is possible to observe them very often (Rittel and Webber, 1973). In the MoMA exhibition, Harvey elaborates on this concept of wicked problems by giving it another name called “the crisis of planetary urbanization”, which claims the stress of living under those negative circumstances in basic life. A crisis that people are a part of it. No matter what and how they are called, mostly in the mega-cities they are more common and can be shortly exemplified as effects of rapid population increase, lack of facilities and services, class polarization, deficiency of preparedness for the environmental disasters, dispossession, and social unrest (Brenner, 2015). Those issues play a significant role in the daily life quality in the cities and having no certain final solution, lets scholars think of alternative attempts. Sometimes the correct way to interfere with them might not be even as rapid as the problem occurs itself. At that point, it is significant to cogitate the temporary use of spaces as a counter-reaction.

### 3.1.2 Origins of the Temporary Use of Spaces

The roots of the temporary uses are mainly seen in the industrial areas of the cities during the 20th century mostly due to the market crises. It has grown continuously since the 1950s and 1960s when the city extensions and suburbanization process increased. Followingly in the 1970s, squatter movements took place by taking advantage of vacant spaces. During the 1980s buildings and co-operations between public and private emerged to transform industrial areas into residential ones and office spaces. Since then, there is a trend to go back to centers which are related to urban revitalization, requalification, renovation, and redevelopment by using unused terrains and buildings. Temporary use tends to take place outside of the ordinary functioning of the real estate market. Abandoned buildings which are in mostly postindustrial areas, were the most suitable ones due to their low cost considering the economic crisis. However, it is important to note that, temporary use of space is not only for using the vacant, abandoned spaces or buildings. It can be a diverse use of space or building for a limited period. For instance, bringing a new form and function to an existing in used squares - creating temporary parks like the PARK(ing) DAY initiative where the citizens create temporary parks on parking slots – could be another way to interface (Suc 2016, Andres, 2013). It may be seen as a way to strengthen the bonds between the community or to serve a specific need like in the case of environmental disasters. Eventually, it became a major urban trend that offers opportunities to revive and gives time-saving feedback. It has also depicted as a critique of the current negative issues and their quick fix. (Madanipour, 2018) It has been evaluated as a productive way of purposing alternative urban explication and as an urgent urban design experiment serving several urban issues to have a contemporary affirmative answers (Brenner, 2015).

### 3.1.3 Framing The Concept

Some of the leading scholars like Neill Brenner, Barry Bergdoll, Ricky Burdett, Teddy Cruz, Saskia Sassen, and Nader Tehrani have put their hands together to frame this concept in the catalog of MoMa exhibition in 2015. They gave it a name called “tactical urbanism” and defined important features of it. They agreed that tactical urbanism occurs within the context of a broader governance crisis in contemporary cities that the states and markets have failed to provide public goods to rapidly extending urban populations. It is a general way of emergent, provisional, experimental urban projects rather than a unified movement or a technique. It contains diverse cultural, organizational, and ideological interventions to confront emergent urban issues and proposes immediate on-target interventions concerning local urban issues which are considered urgent by its proponents therefore its time scale is relatively short and spontaneous while its space is usually well-defined like parks, buildings, streets, or the neighborhood itself. Regarding these characteristics, it envisions a hands-on, do-it-yourself vision of urban restructuring therefore an open-source model of action and as a form of reappropriation of urban space by its users (Brenner, 2015).

Many scholars have agreed that temporary uses of spaces are solving the difficulties in several ways and chose to describe the ideology by selected words. One of the main terms “do it yourself” is becoming part of the common perspectives that purposing a place as a resource, which is available with a reasonable or even no cost. Individual initiative, sociocultural capital, and the idea of minimum intervention take the place of financial means (Oswalt, Overmeyer, Misselwiltz 2013; Brenner 2015; Harris 2015). Having the project easy to assemble makes the process even faster. For some cases where the inhabitants or the authorities have more time, “do it yourself” may not be so crucial. But if the temporary use of space, is planned to serve an immediate issue without having much time like in the case of emergencies, also considering the stress of the situation, then making them easy to build brings people already one step forward and it can even reduce the cost. In other words, the DIY concept fits very well with the nature of the temporary use of spaces. It can be said that an experimental way of designing an urban space with an experimental way of building it, creates harmony as an ideology. But the critical issue is that, if a consideration is done by making the term DIY one of the main characteristics of the temporary use of spaces, then the concept gets very limited. It turns into a kind of paradox like having a wider point of perspective, trying to go beyond the edges of neoliberal urbanism, and then limiting its way of building.

Eventually, there are other scholars, but very few, who disagree with generalizing the concept by some specific terms. Andres and Kraftl are some of them who tried the frame the concept while complaining about its lack of studies and they criticize those different terms that are used previously. Firstly, they focus on the names of ephemerality, transience, liminality, pop-up, tactical, and DIY. They think that by using those words, the conceptual focus is on the limited duration of use and initiative set up on specific spaces, thus the word duration itself tangles with the concept of time. The crucial part to be considered here with the time figure is that the prospect of thinking “what will happen next?” can misguide the concept. Using those terms as an umbrella framework is deconstructing the spatial and social-economical components of temporary use. That’s why as an initial step, the presence of the systematic theorization and conceptual language of temporary uses, leads the scholars to unwrap its complexity and evaluate better with everyday dynamics. Then secondly, they criticize the use of different empirical and conceptual themes to describe the temporary use of spaces by some researchers. To Andres and Kraftl, this occurred in two ways: first how the concept responded to the specific needs and shocks as a transition and eventually appeared as a solution to an issue within the urban making process; second, in terms of analysis by the actors of its leading case studies.

Those case studies became the core of the many research on, the conflictual and sometimes illegal process of appropriation of buildings. In parallel, those kinds of experimental ways of building and using spaces by experiencing developments of deadlocks were examined within a context of “laissez-faire”, meaning like “better than nothing” solutions for both landowners and authorities. Third, most of the studies explored the process and have generated perceptions of the differential nature of temporary urbanism but those studies have not been systematically analyzed, compared, or criticized (Andres, Kraftl 2021).

Regarding the economic point of view, Andres has deepened the concept by dividing the temporary use of spaces into two categories in his previous essay in 2013. He names them as cultural spaces and squats; and temporary, economic, and cultural activities in abounded areas. Based upon those categories, those kinds of temporary uses are topical to aim the austerity whereas the other possibilities are provocative resulting from changes in the real estate market and economy. In other words, apart from quick solutions to several urban issues and crises, temporary use contributes to the economy. In this incident, giving free or low-priced lands to the people in need – who are unfortunate to obtain a place in the existing markets to develop their jobs- can produce a lucrative business to extend and pay taxes. This could be a huge opportunity for both the users and landowners whose lands were left empty. By making them in use again with any function, the lands are gaining more value. For that kind of situation, there is a necessity coming from the need of affordable work, or gaining back the unused areas, which is turning into opportunity. (Andres, 2013; Madanipour, 2018). Madanipour’s opportunity concept may sound redundant for the ones that cannot afford to set up a business in a permanent space because they may feel like their business will be limited and come to an end eventually. But here, the opportunity doesn’t refer to building a long-lasting business. It mostly relates to the possibility to gain power for future attempts. While for the urban point of view, it intends to revive the area by taking the attention of the people and giving it a chance to be a part of city life.

According to Madanipour, in some cases, temporary use of space finds a cultural value by turning into a choice, rather than a necessity. Trying to benefit it while it lasts for a limited time, is the case for the ones that are not having the lack of opportunities, so the temporary use is no more a necessity but a choice. Temporary shops and stands of major companies are making a suitable example of that kind of situation. They are not creating those stands to make more money only, but to be a part of the trend, a fashionable idea, and gain more visibility (Madanipour, 2018). In short, Madanipour uses the word opportunity with its prementioned subcategories as necessity and choice. He clarifies the differences between them very well. Even though the fact that the aim of his essay was more into the market-driven approach, there is a sensation of needing to hear more about the opportunity term itself apart from the economic point of view. There is no doubt that the economy is one of the biggest opportunities for the people, but not the only one.

Nevertheless, literature on the temporary use of spaces has focused on areas neglected by the state, capital, and planning. It has been considered a response to uncertainty and market failures to meet the facilities that people miss (Dovey 2014; Bishop, Williams 2012). Consequently, temporary use of spaces is shown as a mechanism for activation. Even though the concept here is temporary, the expected result is permanent in terms of reviving the selected area (Andres, Kraftl, 2021; Oswalt, Overmeyer, Misselwiltz 2013). The parameter of reviving the area might be critical here. It has been treated as a temporary use of space, a place that is neglected suits perfectly in turn the area gets alive and even the project ends it will be alive again as expected. It is a beneficial point of view and quite normal that designers or authorities may want to have their urban environment as welfare as possible. But considering the temporary use of space with its features, expecting something permanent from a temporary phenomenon, might not always encounter the desire.

In his essay, Brenner explains that issue very clearly. He agrees that even though all the characteristics of tactical urbanism are fully respected in a project, yielding a vision of an urban future appears entirely compatible with most versions of neoliberalism. Focusing on the future may let pass the current intricacies of exploring real alternatives to the currently dominant system of market rule (Brenner, 2015).

### **3.1.3 Temporary Uses For Taksim Square**

Taksim Square, due to its vast dimensions and natural beauty, has always been a renowned and highly visited area throughout the centuries even when it was occupied with graveyards of Ayazpaşa Cemetery. It has always maintained its allure and became a tourist spot. Therefore, since the 16th century, the square has never been a place that had an unused state. Eventually, this matter of fact underscores the notion that selected spaces for temporary use do not need to be abandoned areas or buildings. They can be already popular and well-maintained spaces.

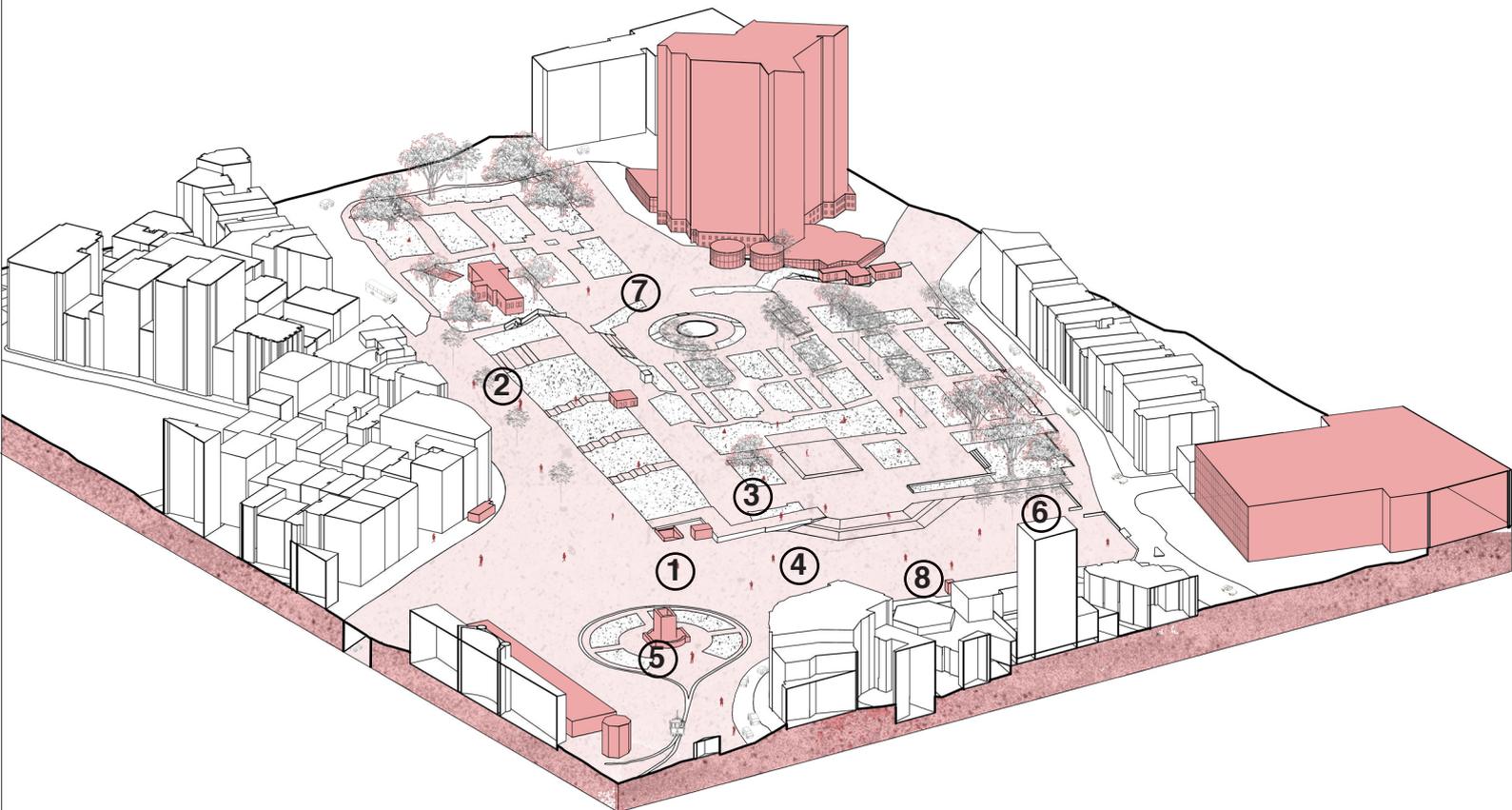
Additionally, as Brenner suggests, the focus does not have to consider the urban future but rather on the moment of its life. In general, if a temporary project, even after its life span, contributes to embellishing the place, it is a plus for both the site and the project but it is not the purpose of the temporary use to go beyond its limited time and try to have permanent effects. Thus the perspective of the design proposal highlights these ideologies for temporary uses.

# Chapter 4

## Concerns Related To Square

## 4.1 Architectural Concerns

## 4.1.1 Categorizing the Issues



Taksim Square has undergone several alterations in its spatial borders and characteristics over the centuries due to the construction and demolition of buildings. Originally, it was not intentionally designed as a square; rather, it emerged as an open area that remained around constructed elements of time, gradually transforming into a square over time. In 1928, with the installation of the Republic Monument, it was officially recognized as a public square. After several years of the erection of the monument, an official design for the square is implemented. However, the space continued to evolve and expand over the decades, resulting in undefined spaces, as discussed in Erbey's studies. These undefined spaces became the starting point for further evaluations along with the individual elements. Eventually, the square has confronted several challenges in terms of its development and organization.

In order to be cognizant of the site and assess its impact and impression on the community, it is crucial to identify the potential challenges before proceeding with the design process. This initial step allows to uncover and explore the untapped possibilities that the square contains, waiting to be discovered. By conducting a profound analysis of the historical background of the project site, it is possible to gain valuable insights that facilitate the identification of these challenges. Furthermore, comprehending the reasons behind their occurrence enables us to evaluate them more comprehensively and in their entirety.

In conjunction with the accompanying photographs, the utilization of the 3D model of the site enhances the accuracy and appropriateness of this analysis. A visual representation of the 3D model is featured on the page situated on the left side. Within the model, a several prominent buildings that symbolize their significance in defining the square and its characteristics are highlighted. In addition to that, the numerical labels ranging from 1 to 8 represent the specific locations where issues have been identified. It is evident that the concerns predominantly pertain to the square itself, although there are also a few present within Gezi Park.

In the subsequent pages, each photograph of the identified issues is presented with clarity. These mentioned photographs are specifically highlighted in red color to emphasize. The corresponding numberings align with the numbers assigned to the elements within the 3D model. The scale of the images has a variety between them, depending on the nature of the subject matter. For instance, in cases where the single element effectively demonstrates the present issue, a smaller scale is employed. Conversely, for the issues that more overarching around the site, a larger scale preferred to provide comprehensive coverage.



1

Empty Esplanade



Isolated Park

2



**Police and Security Cars Patrol The Main Entrance**

**Lack Of Urban Facilities**





Losing Monument's Statue As A Landmark

Use Of Landscaping To Fill The Space

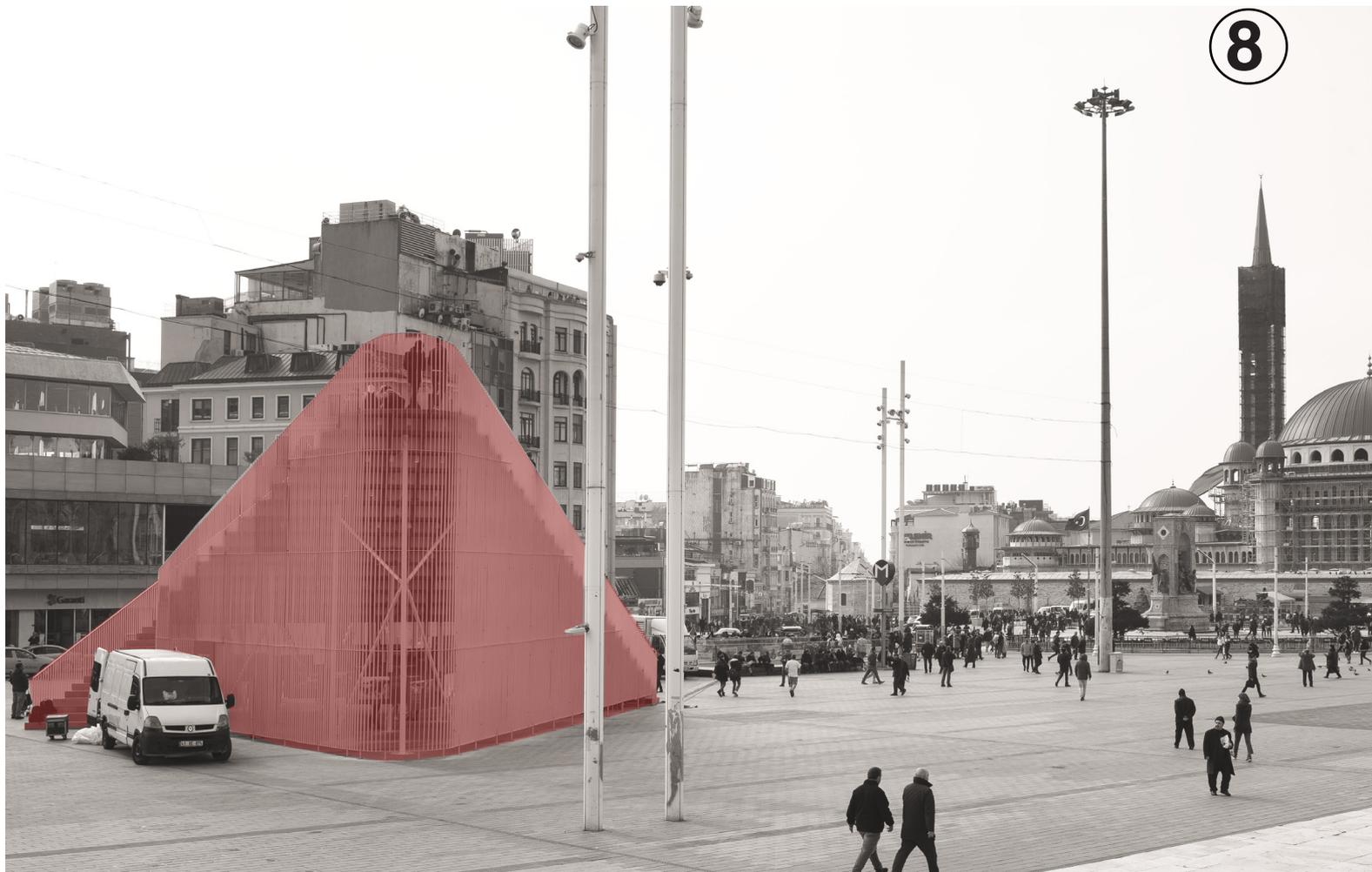
6





**Tall Buildings Obscuring The Panoramic View**

### Implementing Massive Temporary Structures



# Chapter 5

## **Alternative Design Proposal**

## 5.1 Technical Drawings



Page 1

Page 2

Page 3

Page 4

## 5.1.1 Proposed Master Plan

The project site is organized into three categories, spanning from the northern to the southern part. Within the north section, a communal vegetable garden is established. This garden encourages citizens to grow their natural vegetables. Considering Istanbul's winter climate, to be able to grow vegetables in any season, a greenhouse made of steel structure is constructed. The greenhouse is designed within two levels: the first level contains the space for vegetables, while the second level features a suspended ceiling that can be utilized as a kitchen or café for the gardeners. Additionally, in the land near the greenhouse, a rainwater harvesting system is proposed to fulfill the water requirement of the vegetables and promote sustainability.

The central part of Gezi Park is proposed to be preserved as a resting area for visitors. The greenery is maintained in its natural state as much as possible. Moving towards the western section, which is close to the cultural spot of the region starting from Atatürk Cultural Center to ITU, is envisioned as an expansion of cultural activities that harmoniously blend with the park's natural ambiance. Therefore, temporary wooden modules were introduced as workshops and activity centers. Among these modules, the largest ones function as a youth center while the relatively smaller ones serve as galleries and workshops separated for children and adults. The galleries intended to exhibit the crafts of participants made in the workshops. In addition to the galleries, the park hosts a pre-existed platform that can serve as another exhibition center. For the periods that there is no exhibition held, alternative use of the platform is suggested. A frame of steel structure has covered by mirrors positioned strategically to reflect the surrounding greenery. In front of them, several benches were arranged to give visitors a sensation of sitting along with lush vegetation, despite actually being on an elevated platform without any plant

The southern part of the site's southern section contains the iconic Taksim Square. The vegetation is intentionally kept to a minimum level to obtain an open space that hosts a variety of activities. Beside the east entrance of the square, an open library is designed to complement the Atatürk Public Library and encourage increased reading among the public. Across from the open library, the existing trees are utilized as a pattern to obtain a picnic area, complete with tables and benches. As a link between Gezi Park and the square, the main staircase is not only designed as a passage but also as a modern amphitheater, providing a space for the people to appreciate live performances on the platform across from the stairs. Thus, the stairs became a significant part of the square. Close to the staircase, towards the monument, two distinct playgrounds are provided to offer the opportunity to engage in various sports and physical activities. Additionally, at the end of Playground II, in the dead-end street, it is suggested to create an open market that enables people to sell their crafts or vegetables that they produce, aiming to contribute local economy considering the region's high tourism.

The master plan on the left is divided into four parts, as indicated on pages 1 to 4. This page serves to demonstrate a zoomed-out portion of the master plan presented in the following pages.



Vegetable Garden

Green House

Rainwater Harvesting Area

Open Market

Fountain

Basketball Court

0 20 50



Grand Hyatt  
Hotel

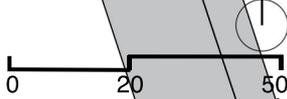
ITU

Atatürk Public  
Library

Youth  
Center

Kids  
Workshop

Workshops





Open Market

Resting Area

Playground II

Resting/Exhibition Area

Galleries

Workshop Modules

Playground I

Republic Monument

Open Library

Stage

Picnic Area

Seperation From The Street

Istiklal Street





Atatürk  
Cultural Center

## 5.2 3D Views of the Proposal





1

## 5.2.1 Play Time For All

One of the first concerns regarding the square revolves around the neglected human dimension. As a consequence of the pedestrianization project, a considerably large axis is formed between the Republic Monument and the dead-end street on the western side of the park towards the tunnel. The axis does not offer any urban facilities except the benches scattered throughout. The space is enormous and the benches along with the trees resemble like they are there to mask the emptiness.

Within the Talimhane region, an innovative open market concept, constructed from lightweight grid elements is suggested. However, a considerable void remains between the monument and the market area, prompting the introduction of another exciting addition as a dedicated playground zone. To realize this vision, a grid system comprising steel columns and beams is proposed. Rather than traditional walls and ceiling coverings, the design incorporates ropes that are not only dividing the spaces but also act as interactive elements of dynamic play within the playground. These ropes attract people to climb, hang or swing. Their easy installation and removal processes facilitate maintenance and lead to free changes according to their use in time. Many of the elements that create this playground are necessarily the construction materials, now serving as engaging playing tools. Since the space requires active movements of people, the paved area has been covered in rubber to prevent the risk of injuries. The color is chosen differently from the square's ground to attract attention and for visual contrast.

The purpose of the playground can be versatile and satisfy individuals of all ages. It serves as a testament that anything can become part of the game without any extra furniture or objects. This phenomenon encourages young minds to use their imagination and explore possibilities within their surroundings. For those who seek to be active without being specialized in any kind of sport, the playground warmly welcomes their participation. Another notable aspect is the playground's strategic location near the Republic Monument and the metro entrances. These areas often serve as a gathering point where people tend to sit and wait. According to this context, the playground system serves as an attractive alternative by inviting individuals to engage in swinging activities as they wait or rest. It offers an enjoyable way to pass the time, and transforms a banal situation into a playful memorable experiences.

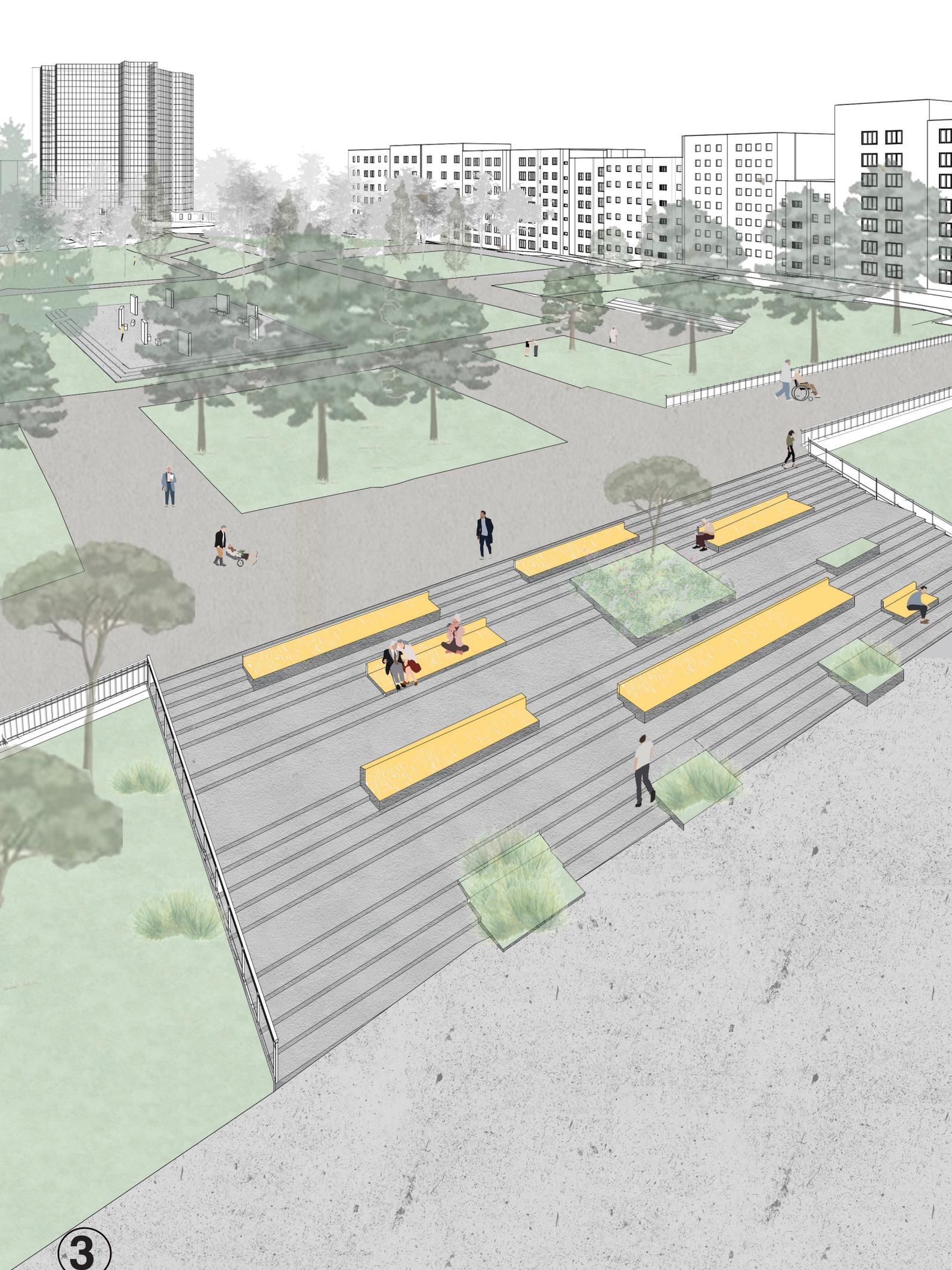


## 5.2.2 From Garden to The Community

This part of the project makes a continuity between the upper west part of the square and side entrances of the Gezi Park. Thinking back of its previous condition with a dead-end street without any facilities except the benches and highly elevated pots for the present trees which are acting like a barrier to human eye, were not being an attractive feature towards the park. Having the park already elevated from the ground makes to think some visual and conceptual relationships that can be held to make both the park and street more alive.

An open market was one of the suitable options for this part of the square. It is located close to the vegetable garden which is in the northern site of the park near to Intercontinental Hotel. Therefore it enables to sell growing vegetables directly from the region and materials can be produced from the workshops. To host such an event, a timber grid structures are designed. Timber is chosen to create a light weight structure and to be more sustainable. The timber columns that reach four meters high host a metal elements designed as large tables. Metal seating benches are not connected to the main structure to be able to move them freely. In this case, metal as a main material is chosen for easy maintenance issues.

The designed elements are not only serving to the open market, but can be used as a tables and benches when the market does not take a place. So that the structure has many alternative uses for the community without putting at the risk of present underground layers.

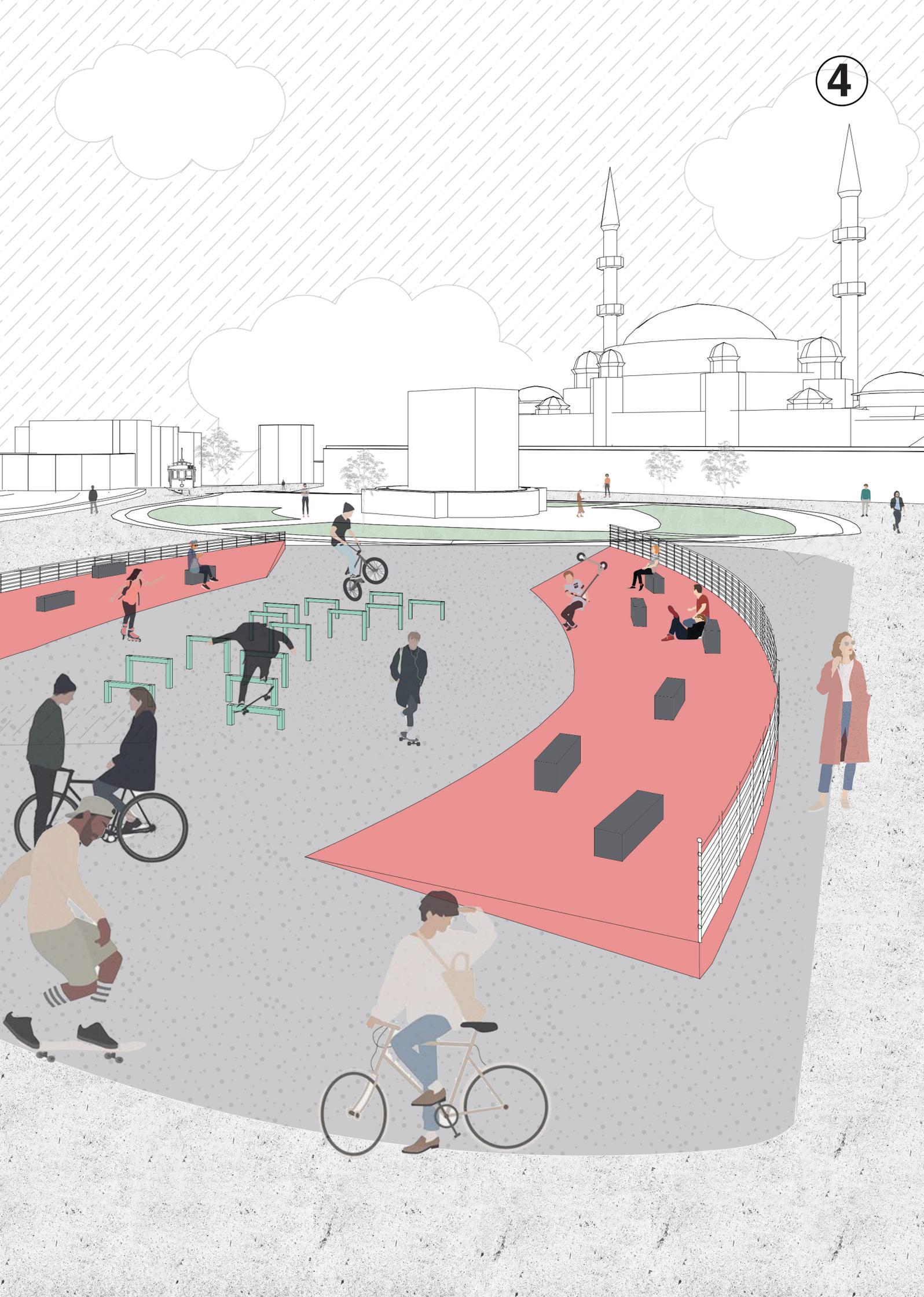


### 5.2.3 Stairway To Rest

Gezi Park is situated at three meters above Taksim Square and they are connected each other through a grand staircase. This pre-existing staircase is beckoning visitors to the park with its symmetrical design. Once ascended, it was leading the individuals to enjoy nice panoramic view of Bosphorus. However, due to the tall buildings in the vicinity, this picturesque view is obscured from the site. Consequently, the park's elevated layout no longer serves as a place to appreciate the distance, but rather as a passageway between the park and the square. Unfortunately, the vast area starting from the final step of the staircase has now been transformed into a parking area exclusively reserved for police and security vehicles. This development altered the perception of the park and the staircase is became far from the welcoming element as it was before.

The new design proposal for the stairs is multifunctionally approached, aiming to maximize its utility. Instead of the existed symmetrical design, a more linear layout has been proposed. The steps themselves have undergone a transformation with placed concrete seating elements of concrete covered by laminated timber. Even though the individual steps may not be so spacious enough to relax, these seating elements span more than one steps to make sure that the people can comfort well. Towards the middle section of the stairs, a large concrete pot is entegrated to the design. Additionally, three other pots are placed along the lower steps. Thus the stairs contributes to a visual connection between greenery and paved areas of the stairs.

The design proposal introduces a platform spanning across the stairs to host various events such as concerts and shows. The inspiration derives from the street musicians who often performs along the Istiklal Street. The platform enables the stairs to turn into a modern-day amphitheater, inviting people to gather and enjoy the live performances.

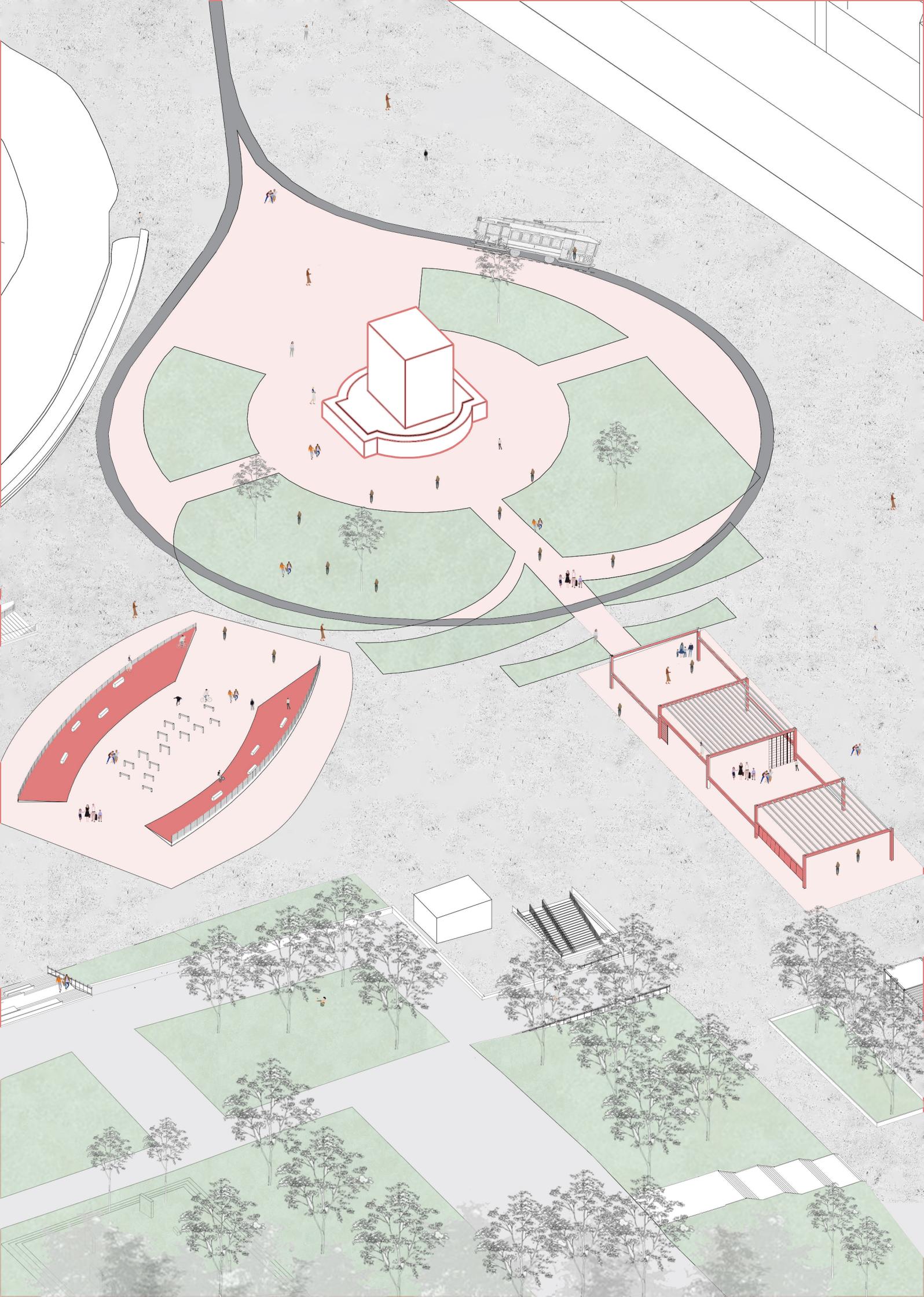


## 5.2.4 Towards the Underground

In contrast to the previous state, a new alternative design approach has introduced innovative urban facilities to the site. One of those facilities is established between the entrance of Gezi Park and the Republic Monument. The chosen location serves a conceptual role by connecting these two significant elements. A careful intention is done for not embowering those two elements. Thus there is a slight level difference from the square by going a half-meter lower. At the same time, the rich underground layer of Taksim Square is highlighted.

As it is demonstrated in the previous page by a three-dimensional perspective, this area functions as a playground. Descending playground creates a slope for activities like skateboarding and rollerskating. In the middle of the recreation area, there are metal structures that serve as integral components for these activities. These structures can be utilized individually or incorporated into the skating experience. Additionally, two ramps with inclined slopes lead towards the heart of the area and serve both as elements of the game and as seating areas with benches. The ones who sit there, revel in the dynamic movements happening around them, or simply take a moment to rest. These benches also establish a visual connection with the ones found on the stairs of the main entrance of Gezi Park. The pavement is laminated to create a soft ground in case of injuries. A different color from the square's ground is used to create a contrast and pop out towards the eye of the inhabitants.

Reflecting upon the historical presence of Taksim Stadium in the park, these newly provided sports facilities bridge the gap between the past and the present. Apart from the traditional square designs, this approach encourages people to engage in physical activities beyond mere relaxation or passing through the square during rush hour.



## 5.2.5 Nothing Stands By A Chance

Initially, the Republic Monument was a remarkable landmark taking the attention of all who passed around it. However, as the cityscape gradually transformed with the construction of tall buildings, the monument's significance as a prominent landmark faded into obscurity. It now exists as a curiosity that tourists notice as they pass around it by the historical tram. Despite the grand effort and citizens contributions involved in during its construction, its original purpose to celebrate the republic seems to be forgotten. Now it stands alone, lacking any meaningful connection to its surroundings.

Endeavoring to bring its attractiveness back, a strategic approach has been engaged by ensuring it as central element in relationship with the Gezi Park, the eastern part of the square and the street above the tunnel. Two proposed playgrounds act as connecting elements that facilitate this vision. They are oriented towards the monument, effectively transforming it into a focal point. Regardless of one's position in the square, the natural inclination became towards the monument. It serves as the initial point of interest for those who arrive to the Taksim Square from the renowned Istiklal Street. It becomes a central point during the proposed activities within the playgrounds. This arrangement provides a harmony and cohesion among every aspect of the square.

Although, after a century after the foundation of Republic, the monument's significance may decreased to the citizens, a careful approach is offered upon its historical significance.



## 5.2.6 Picnics From Memories

The current state of the square is characterized by immense vacant areas that are disconnected from daily use. These empty spaces stretch in two different directions from the monument leading towards the tunnel and Atatürk Cultural Center. The section across from the Atatürk Cultural Center contains significant importance as it serves as one of the direct entrances to the square. Therefore, it bears a first impression for the visitors coming from the cultural center. Unfortunately, it is presently occupied by small excavated spots for the trees. The visible soil around the trees is so minimal that the trees appear to be growing directly from the pavement. Apart from these trees, there are few benches placed. Overall, it is possible to say that the square is scattered with trees and benches.

To address this issue, an initiative is taken to establish a stronger relationship between the trees and the square, inspired by the historical memory of the region that served as a picnic area for centuries. To realize this vision the green space for the trees is enlarged and light structural elements are designed concerning them. Consequently, a short framework of columns and beams surrounds the trees, extending towards the sides to form tables or seating benches. While the directly connected elements to the mainframes are not movable, additional elements are separate, allowing free movement. The design concept and structural arrangement resemble the grid structures found in the open market, but no coverings are placed overhead, aiming to evoke the similar feeling that citizens used to experience while picnicking around the graveyards. As a result, those who sit in this area can feel immersed in nature.

Although it is already possible to have picnics in Gezi Park, the structural frames are not implemented within the trees of the park to preserve its natural appearance through its unpaved land parts. While nature takes precedence in the park during picnics, having the picnic, a comfortable experience awaits in the eastern part of the square. Eventually, even if the same activity of picnicking is enjoyed, the sensation differs based on their different locations.



## 5.2.7 Revaluation of Taksim Square

Taksim Square, renowned for its mind-blowing views of the magnificent nature and the Bosphorus, has long served as a gathering place. Eventually, the architect Henri Prost was designed the park within the harmony of its captivating view. However, starting from the 1950s, high-rise buildings have appeared around the area and the grand visual spectacle became concealed among those structures. Nevertheless, Taksim Square, much like during the Gezi Protests, has overcome the challenges that it faced throughout its history and always managed to retain its identity as a public space.

Nowadays, Taksim Square continues to attract people not primarily for its natural vista, but for its values as a public space. Consequently, any endeavor to construct a high structure to re-obtain its panorama could be an attempt that doesn't contemplate its changed offerings as a public space. Eventually, such a pursuit would result in the erection of additional high-rise buildings, a prospect that is not favored by locals anymore. Instead, the square could be regarded as a place dedicated to facilitating public activities, as proposed by the alternative design suggestion. Therefore, the proposed design approach involves minimizing the use of deep foundations and prioritizing the alterations that can serve in the most beneficial way to the community.

In addition to its role as a public space with facilities, Taksim Square become an essential transit center, serving as a connection point for passengers utilizing public transportation to reach their destinations. The presence of rich underground in terms of the subway line, funicular, and bus stop within the tunnel demonstrates this phenomenon. Consequently, a significant amount of individuals always pass through the square while using these transportation systems. Therefore, the proposed design solution allows the flow of people and their potential needs during transit. It does not only aim to create an inviting ambient for people who come from the neighborhood but also seeks to provide a welcoming first impression for the passengers arriving from the underground connections. Eventually, it aims to ensure a pleasant experience for those who come by Taksim Square for any motive.



## 5.2.8 Integration of Temporary Structures and Open Library Provision

Various attempts have been made in the past to incorporate temporary structures or elements in Taksim Square. These attempts often involve exhibition panel installations throughout the vacant areas in the square. On occasions, as demonstrated in photograph number 8 in chapter 4, substantial elements have been employed. In this instance, a massive wooden structure consisting of stairs implanted to establish a seating area. While it potentially aimed to encourage activities such as climbing, its height can not serve to offer a panoramic view of the Bosphorus due to its positioning and the surrounding environment containing the tall buildings. Consequently, these imposed structures do not seamlessly integrate with the overall organization of the square.

The alternative design proposal primarily involves temporary elements incorporation, strategically implemented with careful considerations for their height, thickness, and size efficiently integrate with the project site. Their tactical approach, characterized by simple implementations, eventually allows for further potential adjustments as needed. Timber is utilized predominantly as a structural material, except in cases such as Playground II, where a more durability is required due to the structure's use as a play element that leads to the selection of steel. Furthermore, lighter metals such as aluminum are utilized in the furniture design to facilitate their cleaning, maintenance, and mobility when required. Despite variations in the functions of these structures and their dispersed positions, across the broad project site, they all exhibit a cohesive design harmony. Eventually, both visually and conceptually, they can be regarded as an integral part of the square, effectively integrated into the entire area. In addition, beyond their primary functions, these temporary elements and the use of spaces may serve as alternative measures in emergencies such as earthquakes, which occur frequently throughout the country.

On the left page within the view of the alternative design, an open library is presented as a provision for visitors. Several reasons justify the inclusion of an open library in the design. As previously mentioned, that area extending from Atatürk Cultural Center to the ITU is acknowledged as a cultural extension of the region. Therefore, the placement of the open library near the western entrance of the square ensures its integration with the overall concept. Additionally, the open library can incorporate with Atatürk Public Library across Gezi Park, thereby reaching broader visitors and encouraging citizens to engage in reading. The library can accommodate a diverse range of books, encompassing literature, the history of Taksim, and touristic guidebooks. Individuals desiring to read can utilize the grid structure provided for them to decide to read among the surrounding trees. Furthermore, aside from reading books, the open ambiance of the library also provides an environment for studying that offers an additional option for visitors.

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