

TAKSIM URBAN DESIGN PROPOSAL



TAKSİM

Taksim square is one of the most important massive flow nodes in İstanbul. This very position firstly begins with the formation of Pera becoming a financial center in the south. Then, the area gained its name after the water reservoir which used to supply water to new settlements of İstanbul at that period. Firstly, the financial flow, then the flow of the water; nowadays the "flow" as a concept bearing all the literal and metaphorical meanings, is the most basic characteristic of Taksim. Even though the quality and content of the concept change, "flow" is a conceptual constant. A classic example of a public space; a square. Economical, sociological and political flows intertwine together, being visible or hidden rapidly. But the "flow" event is still in its proper place.

Physical components that are fixed within this flow by the way, are accumulating throughout the course of history, becoming and surrounding the space with the very clues of their own times. The older examples such as Hagia Triada Greek Orthodox Church and the Taksim water distribution building and newer examples of civil architecture such as Atatürk Cultural Center, The Marmara Taksim, Ceylan Intercontinental and Divan Hotel, and of course the Gezi Park, maybe the most symbolic and the most iconic public space among of all the other above thanks to the struggle given for its preservation. With all of these structures, we are speaking of a space accumulated by and within this flow. To design and reorganize such a space, one has to grasp all of the symbols here. There needs to be a solution which brings the historical, sociological and philosophical awareness with a technological infrastructure as much as possible in contemporary conditions. On the one hand, this solution needs to feed on universal values as well as national ones, and it also could be implicated simply and affordably. It needs a design which can reorient the flow with the flow itself, not against it.

"The main purpose of the men is to beautify the world". Having this very idea as our point of origin, we followed a tranquil, calm and hopeful manner. We believe that the right and elegant solutions are the ones that are modest, simple and affordable solutions.



SUBREGIONS OF THE PROJECT AREA

We considered the project area as four separate sub-regions both spatially and conceptually, and inspected the present conditions and needs of each one. Our suggestions about these parts are then again considered as a whole with their relation with each other.

1. TAKSİM SQUARE (WEST)

- 1.1. Hagia Triadi Church and its environs
- 1.2. The Maksem, Taksim Mosque and its surroundings
- 1.3. Taksim Republic Monument and surroundings

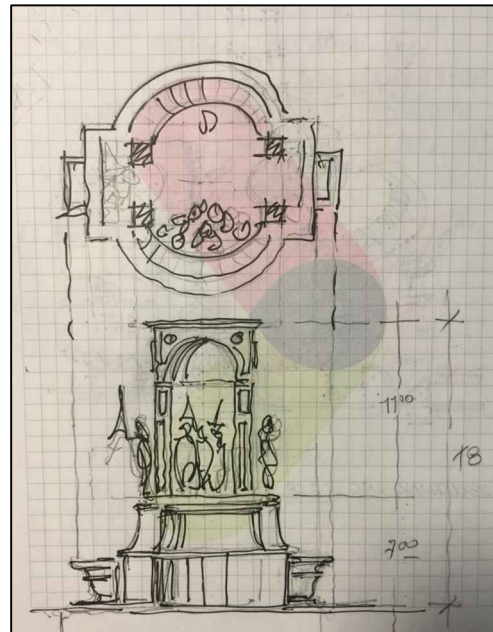
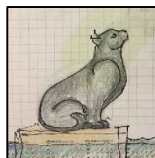
2. TAKSİM SQUARE (EAST)

- 2.1. The Marble Stairs (Gezi Exit)
- 2.2. Public Assembly Area

3. GEZI PARK

- 3.1. Themed squares
- 3.2. Water structures
- 3.3. Green areas and flora

4. ATATÜRK LIBRARY

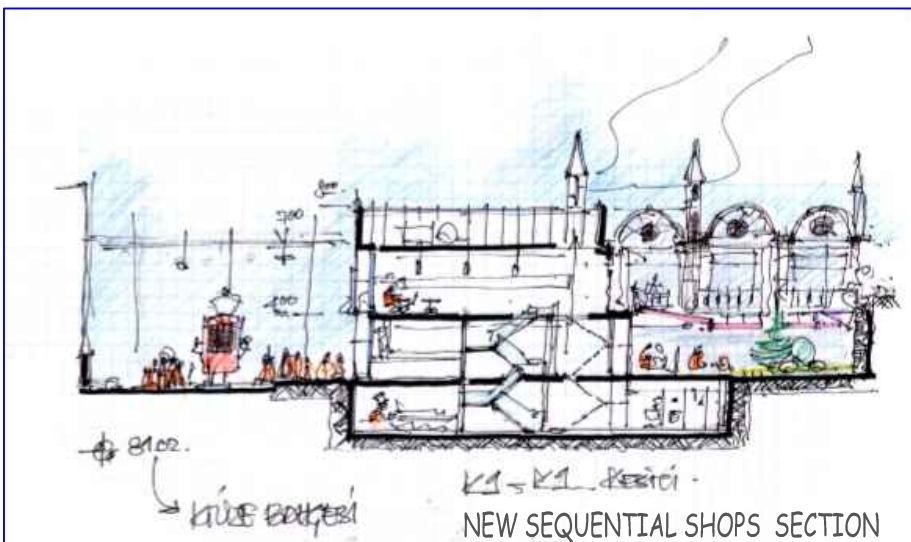


0.1 TAKSIM SQUARE (WEST)



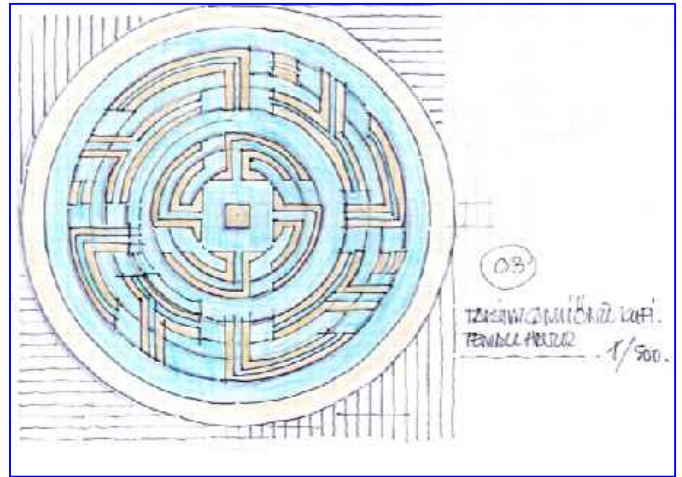
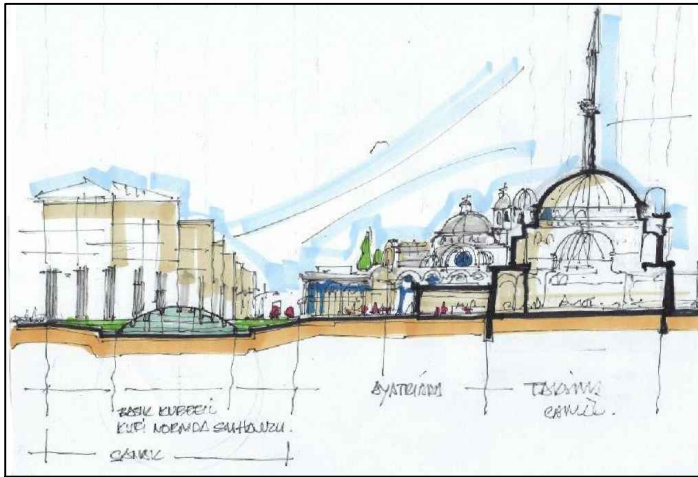
1.1. Hagia Triadi Church and its surroundings

One of the most important nodal points of the project is the Hagia Triadi Church which is a nineteenth century structure. We consider this magnificent example of Greek Orthodox church architecture with a Neo Byzantine architectural form as the ring stone of this square. Unfortunately the monture of this stone formed by the surrounding additions is so effite that it obstructs the visibility of the church. The ward at the front facade of the church onlooking to the square is nestling a pack of private real properties with high income values. We are suggesting to design a new monture in order to make this precious stone visible and increase the income of these commercial properties further.



Having the axis of the position of the church in this space as reference at hand, we consider this area as an organic attachment of the church. We designed a structure with basement, ground and first floors, consisting of thirteen independent units and having a roofage decorated with tunnel vaults of which we are familiar from the church structure. Ground floors are opening to the inner courtyard, forming a surprising, cosy and green breathing area.

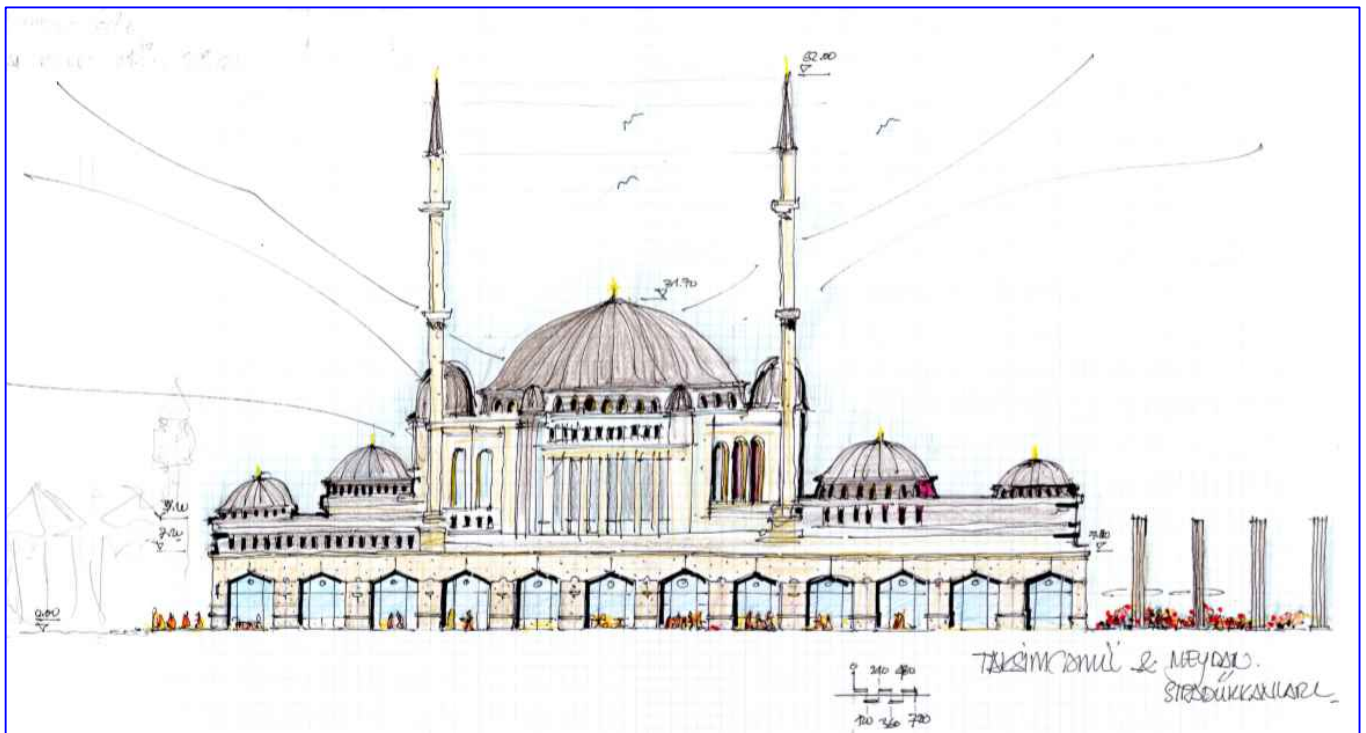
0.1 TAKSIM SQUARE (WEST)



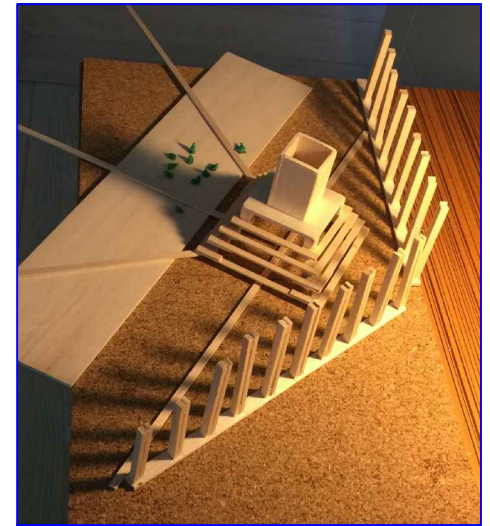
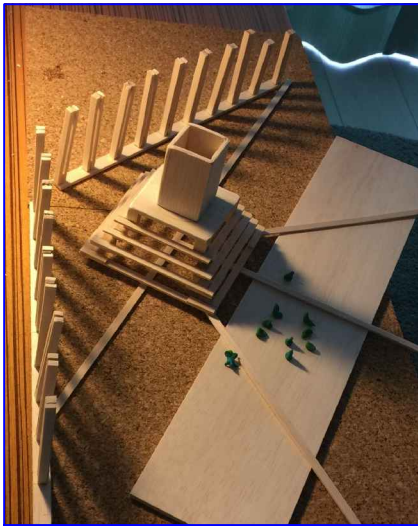
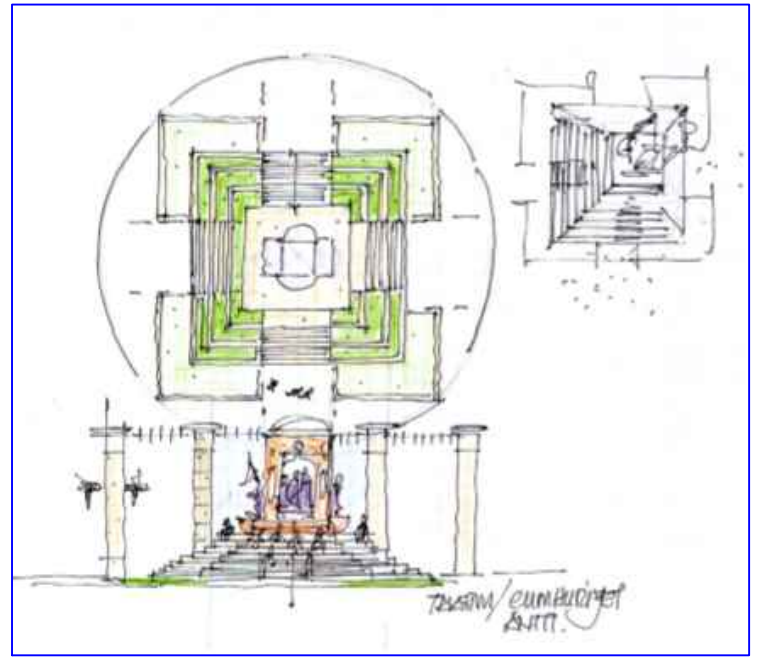
1.2. The Maksim, Taksim Mosque and its surroundings

Forming a brand new countenance and silhouette to Taksim Square, the new mosque has a proportional harmony together with the Hagia Triadi Church, forming a spiritual concept. Right in between the mosque and the square stands the famous Maksim building which is the origin of the name of the area; "Taksim". Right in front of the Maksim there stands the Republic Monument with its round surrounding and the o turn of the nostalgic tram line.

We are proposing to turn these row structures with twelve independent parts into a commercial axis integrated with the mosque structure as a continuation from the church and its surrounding structures. We are therefore willing to form a cheery liveliness in the square and ensure strong economic support.



0.1 TAKSIM SQUARE (WEST)



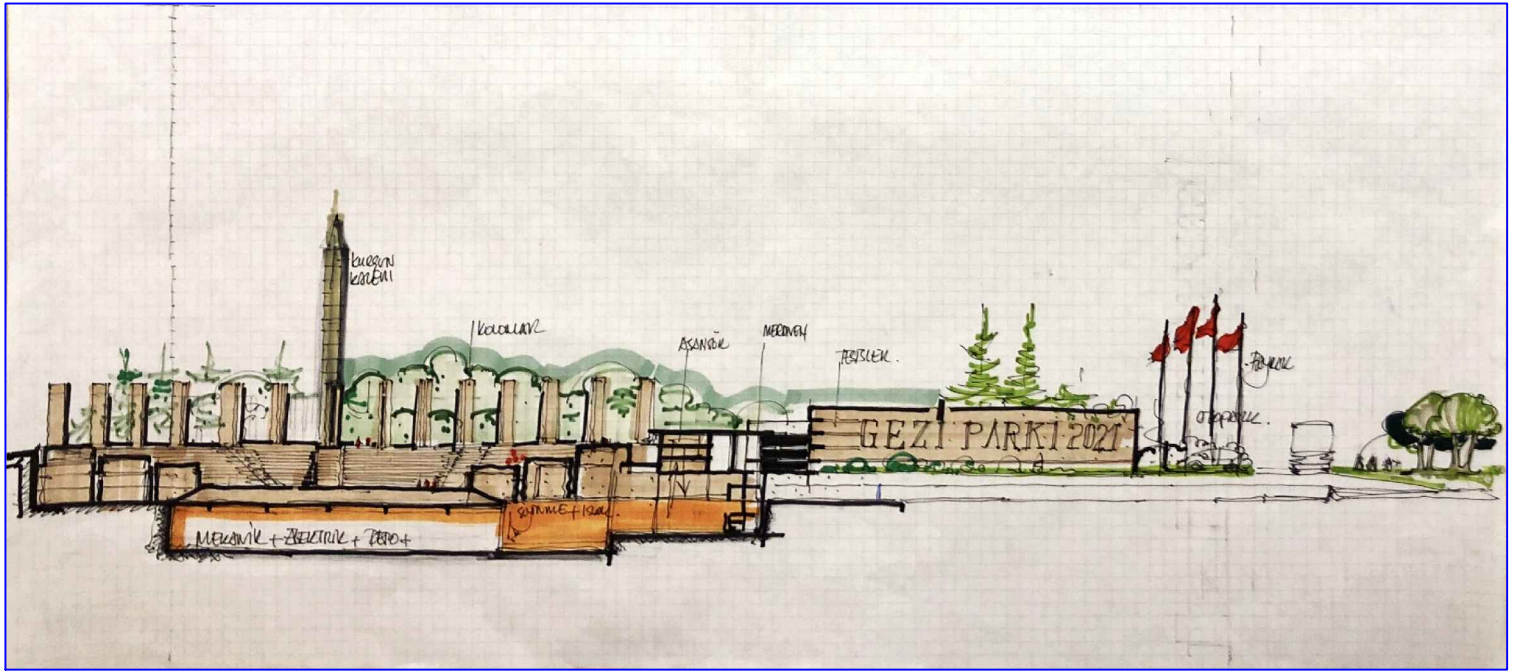
1.3. Taksim Republic Monument

This monument is one of the most characteristic symbols of Turkey and Istanbul. Its historical and political meaning is indisputable. This monument has been a meeting, a triangulation point that made Taksim a "square" during the republican period. It is our primary priority to show the necessary care and precision in this monument. Today, the monument is on the axis of the main dome of the Taksim Mosque, with a tram around it and a superficial landscape in the form of a circle. However, it stands as a sole object floating in an undefined space in the clearance of the square. Due to this location, the monument has much less visibility in comparison with its size.

In the design, we moved the monument to the axis of Tarlabası street and used the space behind it as a background. To increase the effect and visibility of the monument, we will raise it on an ambulatory semi-open plinth structure with a steel carrier system in which activities will take place. We support this new mass with nineteen columns to be placed around it. In this way, we may screen the visual mess consisting of undefined structures with different heights starting from the end of Taksim Mosque in the background.

With the replacement of this monument, with such a historical value, an empty space of fifty meters in diameter remains. We considered crowning this area with a water structure with a diameter of thirty meters. For this, we designed a three-dimensional water structure in geometric kufic font form carved into a flat dome structure.

0.2 TAKSİM SQUARE (EAST)



2.1. Marble Stairs (Gezi exit)

The imposing marble staircase, which has a semi-hexagonal form and a two-stage structure, is a transition element and a call area connecting the Gezi park and the square. It has been functioning since the square was first organized. During this period, he witnessed many leaders, rallies and historical events.

Due to its central location and mass area dominance, we have developed a radical structural change proposal in this area, in order to maintain its functionality for multi-purpose use. The difference of the elevation between the square and the park is about 3.5-4.0m. The stage platform with convex circular steps from the square reaches the 2.00 m plane. Just behind this platform, you can reach the 5.00 m plane with stepped seats in a concave circular form. After leaving a walkway width, the circle is limited to columns, and the place is ending with a water pool parallel to the form.

0.2 TAKSİM SQUARE (EAST)

2.2. Public Assembly Area

Vehicle and pedestrian traffic intersects in the square. The course of the flow can be summarized as follows; it continues all along the Siraselviler avenue and passes in front of the The Marmara Hotel. After the Gümüşsuyu junction, Atatürk Cultural Center stands on the right hand side and this intersection continues along Mete avenue until the border of the Gezi Park.

We are aiming to pedestrianise the square and create a defined space perception. In order to achieve this we will connect the entrance facade of the AKM facing the square directly as a pedestrian axis to the square. An underpass will be designed to regulate the flow of vehicles. We also suggest that the columns located at the background of the Republic Monument continue all along through the front of the Marmara Hotel.

We are considering all the elements offered by Kevin Lynch; the regions, paths, borders, nodes and references in order to achieve a spatial image. Using these elements, we are aiming to transform the square into a definitive, distinctive and iconic space.

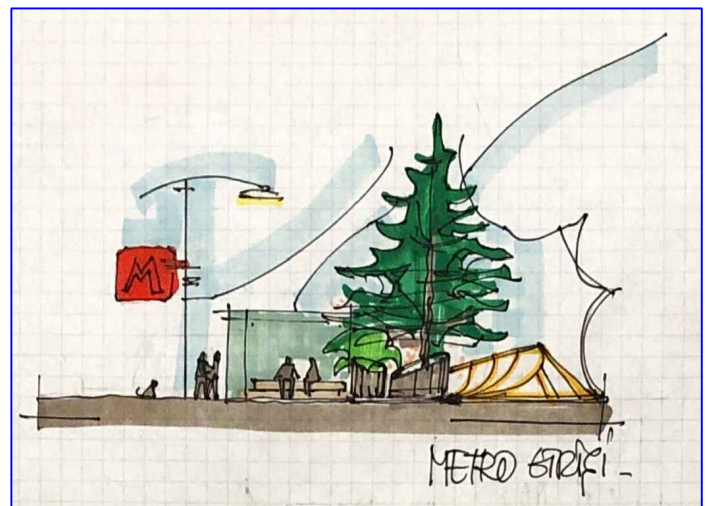
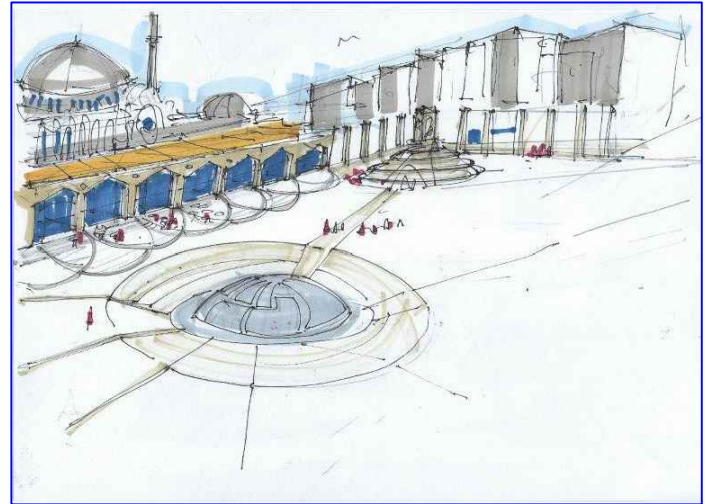
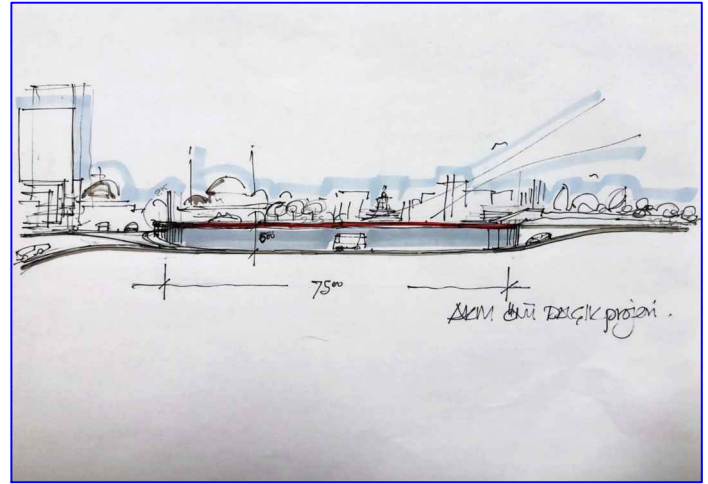
Taksim Square will host rallies to be held again for rights and freedom and many celebrations for and full of peace and democracy.

As for the structural pattern of the surface of the square, we suggest a solution that is both durable against the wearing of time and long enough to become a classic. It's our most important objective to make this pattern original, significant and permanent in every aspect.

The most unique floor covering in Turkish art history is undoubtedly the mosaic floors. Based on this aspect, we considered using circular forms and radial combinations designed as a reflection of sound and water waves in the entire project area. All of these elements should be perceived as a part of the ground texture.

As it is well known, olive and laurel branches are the symbols of peace and victory in the Mediterranean geography. Flooring will be made in two different colors and using local granite tile stones as proposed in the styles and forms shown in the drawings. We are of the opinion that a mosaic floor decorated with laurel leaves and fruity motifs will be quite unique and significant.

The design has a principle that prioritizes user satisfaction and targets a high number of users. Accordingly, the age groups, social structures and physical abilities of the individuals who use this very square should be examined correctly. We are building a social space that is child, young, old and disabled friendly. First of all, accessibility to all planes will be resolved with ramps, and ground guides will be laid for visually impaired citizens.



0.3 GEZI PARK



3. Gezi Park

"Trees are the friends of human, symbols of every organic creation; a tree is an image of a complete construction. Human should be provided with sun, space and trees; even at the very center of the cities."

L. CORBUSIER

"The one who constructs a building, have to plant a tree."

Turkish Proverb (quotation: Turgut Cansever)

Although Gezi Park is one of the rare green areas preserved in the center of Istanbul, it exhibits an irregular and complex structure. The aim is to transform this green fabric into an organized, pleasant, exciting living space.

0.3 GEZI PARK

3.1. Themed Squares

The accumulation of works created in the historical layers of a city's existence process creates the image of that city. It can be said that this image is the corporate identity of that city. Those who brought this identity to that city were the architects and engineers who deserved to be known and memorialized, together with the political figures such as emperors, sultans, prime ministers and mayors who decided to reveal these works.

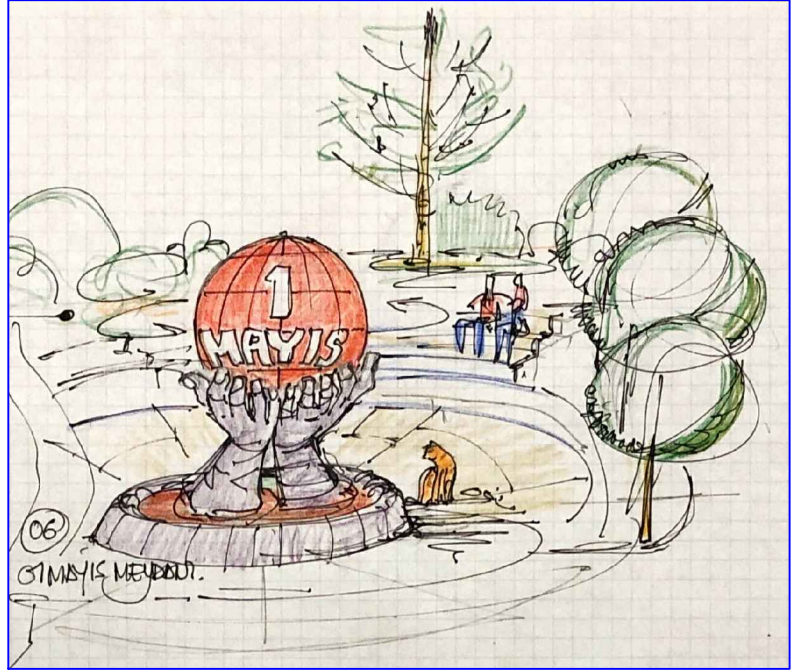
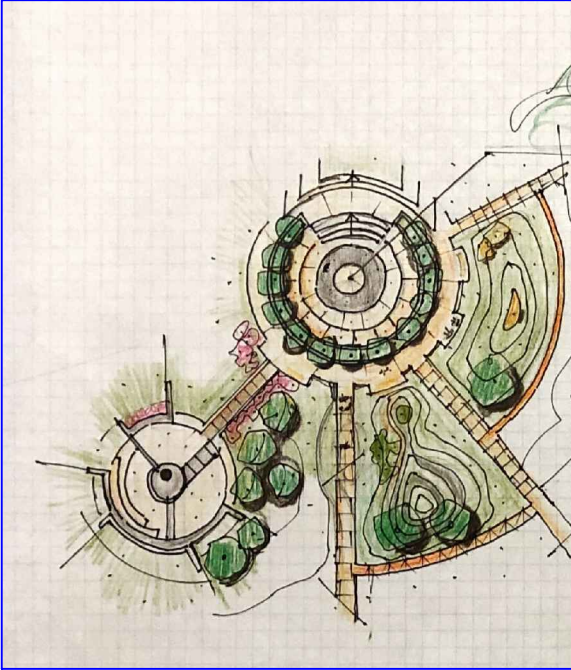
The cornerstone of the Istanbul city image is undoubtedly Hagia Sophia. Mosques, baths, and külliyes, which are religious and civil architectural works that developed as an architectural synthesis in the Ottoman period with a respect for the spirit and past of the city, form the unique appearance of Istanbul. With its flat domes formed by its reflection on the outside, as if air has been blown into a soap bubble, the elegant towers rising with the Byzantine columns turning into minarets and the column heads overlapping the minaret balconies were crowned with a thin, long conical prism, creating a unique silhouette. In this respect, Le Corbusier's very description about Istanbul is wonderful; "The past, the present, the beyond, the immutable: an elegy of prisms. The fervour of minarets, the calm of the flattened domes ... Turkish cupolas, daughters of Byzantines ..."



Sermimarlar Square

Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus, the architects of Hagia Sophia, which we call the ancestor of this powerful image, deserve to be remembered and known eminently. Considering İstanbul, there is of course Sinan the Architect whose works are world-renowned and who had carried the flag he took over to the summit. We suggest designing a sculptural composition that brings these three masters together. We think this exhibition will be an interesting attempt to spread tolerance and create a sense of history.

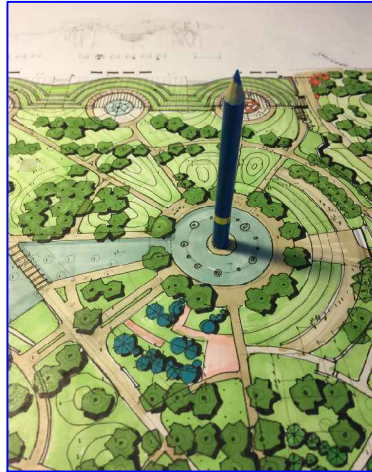
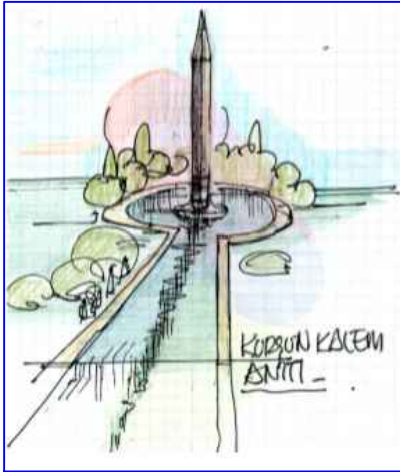
0.3 GEZI PARK



1 Mayıs and Gezi Square

May 1, which is accepted as the day of workers' right to seek and fight, has been celebrated in Istanbul since 1910 with various restrictions and legal changes. Taksim Square is a square of democracy, which is historically and politically integrated with these rallies.

For remembrance of this day, we propose to make a three-dimensional installation of the symbol on the famous poster made by painter Orhan Taylan which is identified with this day and to deploy this work to the center of the square. This landmark will revolve around itself with a mechanical system simultaneously with the rotation of the world and will complete its tour at the same time with the world during the year. This installation will be surrounded by seating steps like an amphitheater and the name of this thematic square that we have constructed will be 1 Mayıs ve Gezi Square.



Kurşun Kalem Monument and Democracy Square

May 27, 1960 is the starting date of military interventions against parliamentary politics in our country. These interventions were repeated every ten years and marked a period of approximately 40 years. The monument of bayonet wrapped in the laurel branch, which is the symbol of this intervention, remained as a symbol of strict control and intimidation in the heart of the square for 20 years and was ironically removed by the 12 September military regime.

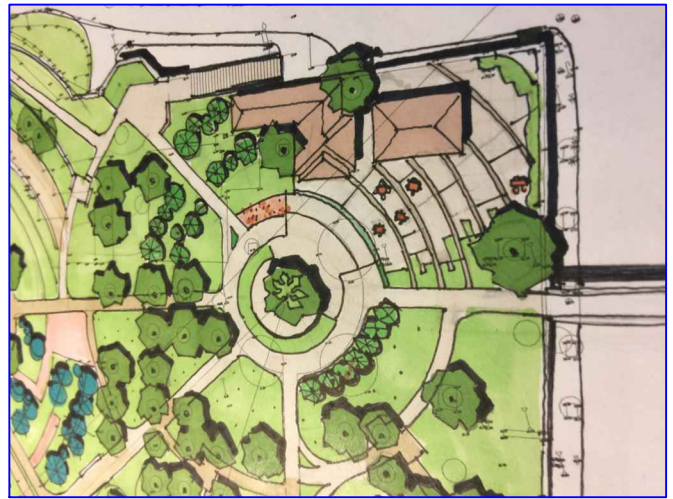
During this interim regime, two figures stand out in the democratic politics of our country; Bülent Ecevit and Süleyman Demirel. The relationships that these people, who have now belonged to history, have established with Taksim square, are the skills to gather the most masses of people in the rallies held in this square. Based on the principle of "the coexistence of real elements in conflict, a dichotomy, unity of opposites", we hope that a sculptural composition shot at the election rally held by these people, standing side by side with inspiration from the pictures they smiled, will suit Democracy Square.

0.3 GEZI PARK



Stelo like high monuments are among the indispensable objects of the squares. Sometimes they take their places in memory of a victory, sometimes as a symbol of a historical period. We can consider examples such as the Theodosius Obelisk in Sultanahmet Square and the Serpent Column right next to it, the Washington monument located in the capital of the United States, the victory monument "Admiral Nelson" in Trafalgar Square in London, the capital of United Kingdom.

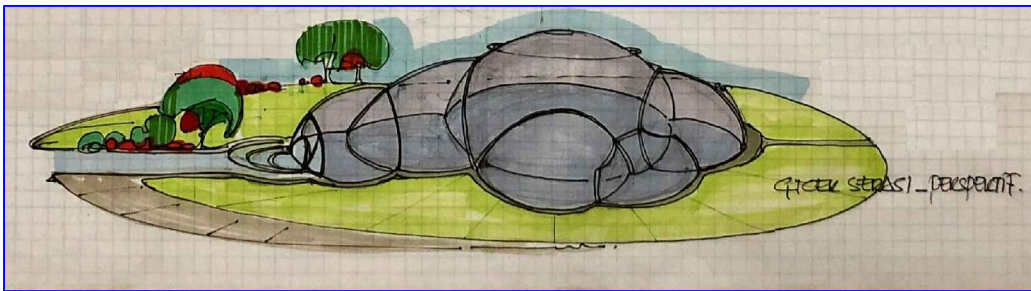
Our aim is to emphasize the importance of education, the need for writing and the longing of a uncensored press by placing a Pencil Monument instead of bayonet and soldier with reference to the word "The Pen is Mightier than the Sword". The monument will be at a visible height from all points of the square. Its location will be at the midpoint of the existing pool in the park, it will rise on an island surrounded by water. Thus the square will be called "Kurşun Kalem Anıtı and Demokrasi Meydanı".



Çınaraltı Cafe and Köprülü Meydan

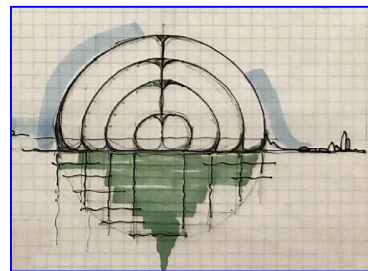
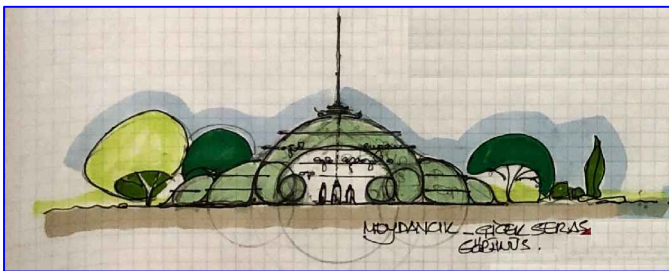
In the design, what we call Çınaraltı cafe is a resting place with a view of the Bosphorus, with its two-storey structure and still serving as a cafeteria. It is a calm and peaceful place that remains in the shadow of a plane tree, which we think will continue its function after the necessary arrangements are made. This node is located at the beginning of our proposed bridge that connects Gezi Park to Atatürk Library. For this reason, we found it appropriate to have the name "Köprülü Meydan".

0.3 GEZI PARK



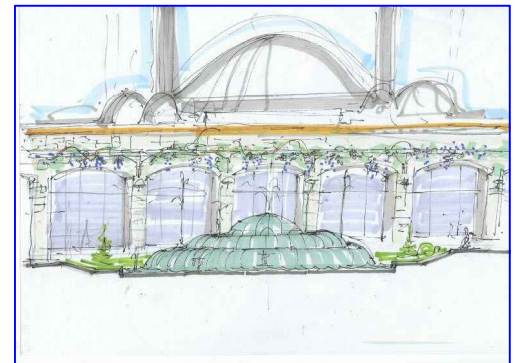
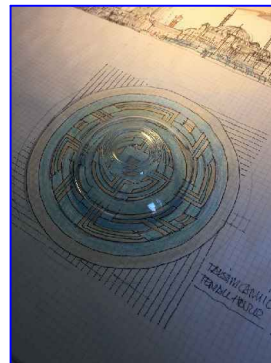
Smaller Squares

There are nine more smaller squares connected with these squares. Electrical, mechanical and sanitary installation infrastructure suitable for different uses will be taken to these squares, which will be planned in different forms and functions.



3.2. Water Structures

At the back of the amphitheater, which connects Taksim Square and Gezi Park, there is a pool shaped in accordance with the circular form of the building. The water flowing from the two different ends of the pool to the other pool in the lower level passes through three bridged stages and ends in the circular shaped pool where the Pencil Monument is located in the center. Water structures are complementary to green areas. The perception of the walking person is enriched by the diversity of the facts that he encounters during the walking action. A humble, simple, shy, dignified and natural design has been tried to be presented in giving this wealth.

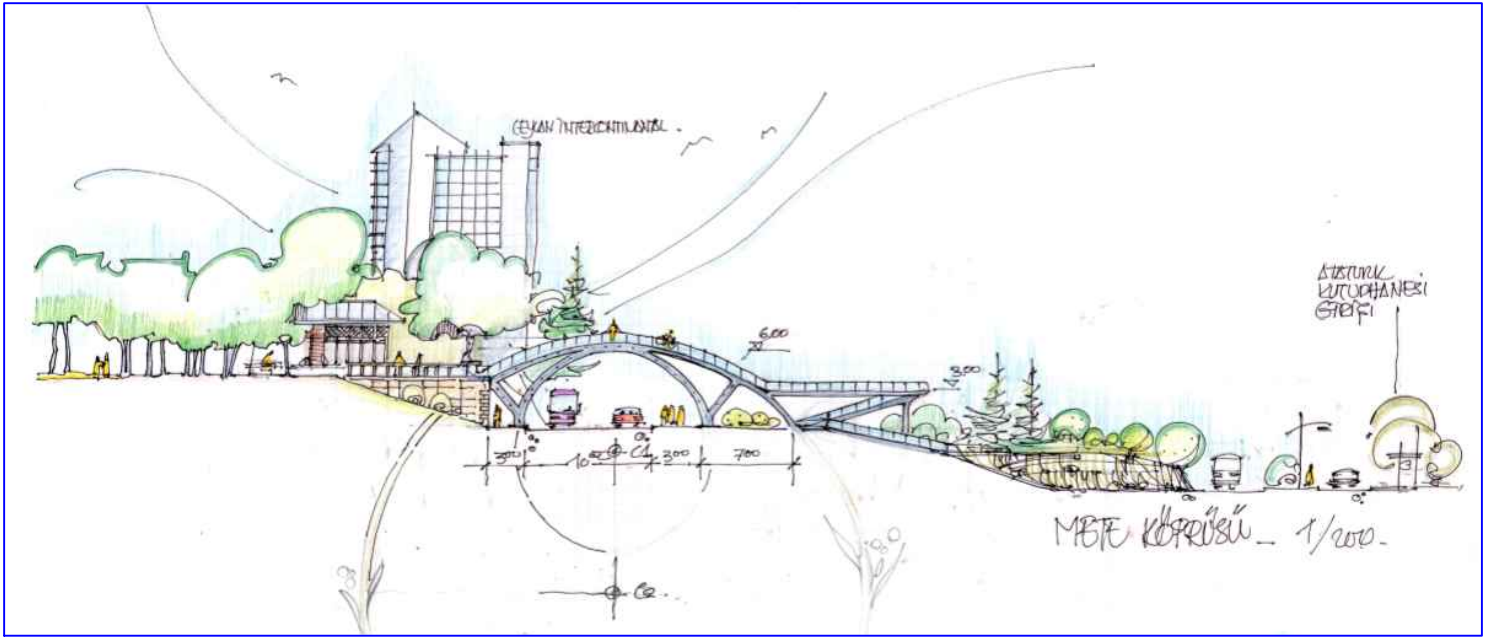


3.3. Green areas and flora

Considering its history, Taksim Square and its surroundings have served as a commercial and social center. But in recent years, the square has lost its intensity of public use. With the project prepared we are planning to regain the square to the city, to increase its seasonal and daily use periods, and to become a point of attraction again. In this respect, it is necessary to contribute to the conservation and renewal of the heritage flora as much as possible, to redefine the borders of the square with formal monumental trees and to create a new identity of landscape in the area. In order for the square to regain its lost identity by becoming an unplanned giant roof garden, instead of making nodal interventions, we aim to soften the large hard ground areas by creating plant hills/islands and to regain the square its spatial value.



0.4 ATATURK LIBRARY

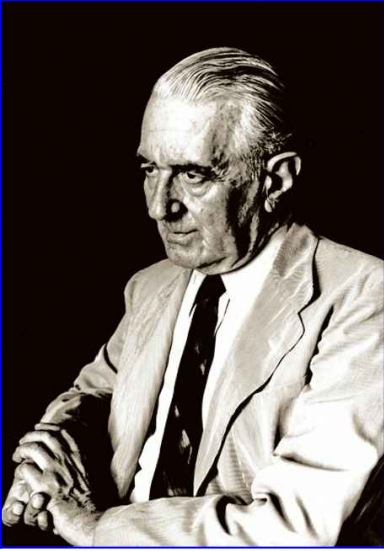


4. Mete Bridge and Atatürk Library

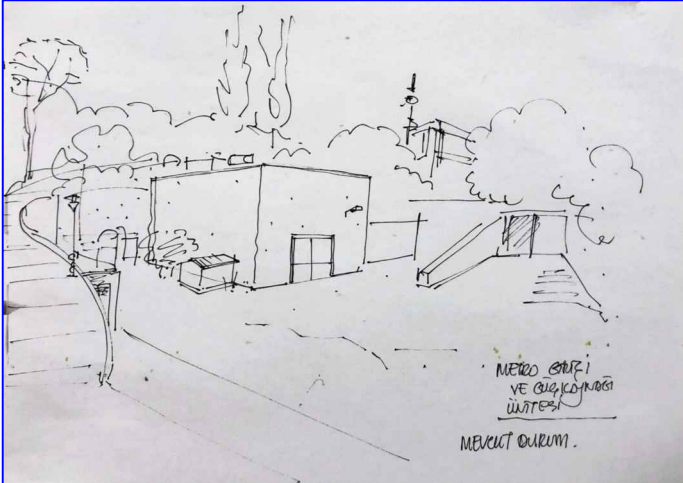
Designed by Sedat Hakkı ELDEN and built by Koç Holding AŞ, this structure as a piece of art and the ward on which it is located undergoes an unfortunate process, far from being an urban focus as it deserves. In order to re-enrich this cultural structure and increase its usability, the primary goal should be to eliminate transportation difficulties and make it easily accessible. For this purpose, we suggested providing pedestrian access to this area by crossing over the Mete Street with a pedestrian bridge (as shown in the project) from the monument plane tree located in the cafe section of the Gezi Park.



0.4 ATATURK LIBRARY



Due to the volumetric insufficiency of the structure, the additional structures are sprinkled randomly in the area independently to each other. The car park and administrative building located in the southwest of the area are far away from the main building and lost in a green cover and can be preserved. We are removing the physician, security and worker shelters, as well as the prefabricated warehouse adhered to the main building and proposing an additional unit in a similar form, which will accommodate these very functions. In addition, we are proposing that the area, which has a complex landscape structure with a self-developed vegetation and pavilions made in different styles, to be reconsidered with a landscape-oriented arrangement. Ward is a continuation of the sightseeing park and is planned to be created with similar lines and materials. The subway generator building, located at the northern end of the island and at the lowest level of the plot, resembles a rough plastered slum building. This structure will also need to be converted visually into a more proper building for the main structure. Our suggestion about the main building is to replace the Atatürk bust placed on the white marble base at the entrance of the building with a sculpture of art value that emphasizes Atatürk's relationship with the books. Also, the name of Sedat Hakkı ELDEM, the architect of this work and the pioneer of the republican national architectural movement should be written in the entrance of the building and there should be an area with a bust of him and reserved to exhibit his works.



REFERENCES

Yerasimos, S. (2000); İstanbul İmparatorluklar Başkenti, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul.

De Botton, A. (2010); Mutluluğun Mimarisi, Sel Yayıncılık, İstanbul.

Kortan, E. (2013); Le Corbusier Gözüyle Türk Mimarlık ve Şehirciliği, Boyut Yayınları, İstanbul.

Cansever, T. (1992); Şehir ve Mimari Üzerine Düşünceler, Ağaç Yayıncılık, İstanbul.

Barillari, D.; Godoli, E. (1997); İstanbul 1900, Art Nouveau Mimarisi ve İç Mekanları, YEM Yayınları, İstanbul.

Haneman, J.T., (1984); Pictorial Encyclopedia of Historic Architectural Plans, Details and Elements: With 1880 Line Drawings of Arches, Domes, Doorways, Facades, Gables, Windows, etc. (Dover Architecture), Dover Publications Inc., New York.

Pfeiffer, B.B., (2004); Wright, Taschen, Köln.

Erbay, A.Y., (2016); Çok Yüksek Çözünürlüklü Uydu Görüntüleri Kullanarak Taksim ve Civarı Değişiminin İzlenmesi, İstanbul

