ITU A|Z • Vol 14 No 3 • November 2017 • 143-163

Learning from the 'Re-PUBLIC': Remaking the public space as a medium of knowledge transfer in design education

Zeynep GÜNAY[1], Handan TÜRKOĞLU[2], Burak PAK[3], Thomas KNORR-SIEDOW[4], Meriç DEMİR KAHRAMAN[5], Özge ÇELİK[6], Christine FUHRMANN[7]

[1] gunayz@itu.edu.tr • Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

[2] turkoglu@itu.edu.tr • Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

[3] burak.pak@kuleuven.be • Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, KU Leuven, Brussels, Belgium

[4] knorrsie@tu-cottbus.de • Department of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Planning, Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany

[5] mericdemir@gmail.com • Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

[6] ozgecelik187@gmail.com • Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

[7] fuhrmann@tu-cottbus.de • Department of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Planning, Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany

Received: May 2017 • Final Acceptance: November 2017

Abstract

This paper presents the learning outcomes of the international project, 'RE-PUBLIC: Remaking the Public Space', funded by European Union Life Long Learning - Erasmus Intensive Programme. It focused on complex and diversified layers of public space within the context of the place-making logic. Istanbul's Taksim region including the Taksim Square, Gezi Park and Istiklal Street acted as the core problem area with its disintegrated and segregated physical and cultural territorial borders. The participants were invited to develop their own understanding of public space and jointly produce their own place-making strategies on possible alternatives for the process of planning, designing and implementing change in public spaces in accordance to their scope, use and meaning. As a result, the Re-PUBLIC Programme tested a number of innovative research and planning methods to improve teaching in planning and design studies. A major impact was expected from the cross-country approach and joint-learning. It is hoped that the experience of Re-PUBLIC will provide a critical medium of knowledge transfer in design education.

Keywords

Public space, Urban design, Place-making, Design education.

doi: 10.5505/itujfa.2017.07108

1. Introduction

Throughout the world's cities, public space is playing an ever more important role in the production of places. At the same time, it has become the core of contradicting demand. Commodification, commercialisation and even militarisation of public space are indicators of its declining quality as a factor of urban identity, culture and the freedom of communication. While neglect and deterioration are among the factors for this withering; the transformation into pseudo-public spaces is also effective in conjunction with privatisation and an extension of market principles to the provision of public space (see Punter, 1990; Crawford, 1995; Defilippis, 1997). On the one hand, they have come under the influence of a neo-liberal commercialisation of the cities, while on the other; they have increasingly been adopted by civil society as a space of self-definition and cultural action. The old role of public space as a set format of the state and the government's self-representation is obsolete and new approaches for a co-production of public space are needed to turn contested public space into an element of inclusive urbanity. The relations are manifold and reciprocal: Public space is designed and made by people and at the same time, public space by its design and form influences people in their everyday and political life. Citizens contribute to the identity of the places and places are influencing the spatial reality and the social life of the cities. In this sense, we should develop a thinking of space with reference to the different levels of collectivity as defined by Morales (2008), democracy by Fraser (1993), Parkinson (2012); social integration (or disintegration) and borders as described by Madanipour (2003); and territorial organisation including physical, territorial and cultural order by Habraken (1998). Place-making is therefore of major importance in re-creating interrelations between buildings, time and space, institutions and people. Regarding the socio-spatial literature (Butler, 2013; Baumann, 2000; Snow, 2001 [1959]), we, today, aware that people (and communities) are making place and people (and communities) are made by space.

Regarding this conceptualisation, 'The Re-PUBLIC: Remaking the Public Space' focused on complex and diversified layers of public space within the context of the place-making logic. The Workshop, which took place in Istanbul from 18 to 29 July 2014 in Taskisla – Istanbul Technical University (ITU) Faculty of Architecture as part of European Union Life Long Learning Erasmus Intensive Programme, was a joint undertaking between four higher education institutions including ITU (coordinator), Brandenburg Technical University, KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture and Politecnico di Torino with 12 tutors[1] and 31 participants[2]. The participants of the workshop were 3rd or 4th year students of the undergraduate programmes and the students of graduate programmes in partner institutions. The core idea was to respond to the above mentioned issues regarding Istanbul's Taksim region including the Taksim Square, Gezi Park and Istiklal Street as a core problem area that has been disintegrated and segregated with specific physical and cultural territorial borders (Adanali, 2011; Uzumkesici, 2011; Erkut, 2014). The participants were invited to develop their own understanding of public space and jointly produce their own place-making strategies on possible alternatives for the process of planning, designing and implementing change in public spaces in accordance to their scope, use and meaning.

Among the key questions the intensive programme intends to respond to are: What role does public space play in defining the urban cultural, social and spatial identity of cities in rapidly transforming societies? How is public space transforming cities and citizens in the interplay of the public and the private in cities at a time of increasing marketisation? What is the role of the citizens in the using and making of the public space? How to research and map the various actors and influences shaping public spaces? What are the meaning and role of public space in building democracy, cultural identity and in reviving city's image, economy and liveability? How can public space be qualified to build a bridge between the past, the present and the future?

[1] *ITU Department of Urban and Regional Planning (Coordinator): Handan Turkoglu (Project Coordinator), Zeynep Gunay, Meric Demir Kahraman, Ozge Celik; Brandenburg Technical University, Department of Landscape Planning and Urban Design: Carlo Wolfgang Becker, Christine Fuhrmann, Thomas Knorr-Siedow; KU Leuven Department of Architecture: Johan Verbeke, Burak Pak, Livia de Bethune; Politecnico di Torino, Department of Urban and Regional Studies & Planning: Alessandro Fubini, Emanuela Saporito as tutors.*

What are the driving and restraining forces in remaking public space? What are the characteristics of good quality public space? How should design, planning process and maintenance of public space respond to the changes in society and to the current financial crisis of the public sector? How can the theories and concepts of place-making be utilised to improve the relations in the triangle between urban politics and planning administration, the economic realm, and the citizens as owners?

By responding to these questions, the Re-PUBLIC tested a number of innovative research and planning methods to improve teaching in planning studies. A major impact was expected from the cross-country approach and the joint learning of students and teachers with the partly diverse background of the professions and experiences in the various countries taking part. Knowledge transfer and management played an important role and the experience of the Re-PUBLIC filtered into the teaching and learning methodologies of the universities taking part. This paper presents the outcome of this intensive workshop.

2. Re-PUBLIC methodology

The methodological approach of the Re-PUBLIC was based in a cross-disciplinary collaboration of researches and planners, as it is characteristic of place-making based projects. The Workshop incorporated qualitative as well as quantitative methods, and had a strong analytic and design-oriented basis grounded on various scientific foundations of socio-spatial research. Taksim region was analysed according to the agreed research strategy with a student empirical research programme and hands-on design practice, including developing various pathways of implementation. The student *empirical research* phase of the workshop was a 'pre-preparation' phase with empirical research on the subject and on the spot prior to the starting date of Workshop. Local meetings were provided before the workshop in each partner university. The teaching materials were made available through the website. The *hands-on practice* part of the workshop was a 10-day joint working phase. It was structured through empirical research and analysis, seminar series, mapping-oriented field studies, discussion sessions, studio work, frequent presentation of the findings and the preparation of design boards and power-point presentations. An intensive programme of *seminars* was provided by the tutors of the four participating higher education institutions who are highly involved with public space and place-making. They were thematic and methodology-oriented with the target of finding evidence and success oriented methodological innovations in teaching and research, especially with regards to a cross-cultural environment of an international collaboration. *Panel* was organised with the contributions of Ipek Akpinar and Murat Guvenc to help students to gain acknowledgement on recent developments in the Taksim square, Gezi events and their relation to general idea of place-making, in contrast to the lectures aiming at providing thematic and methodology-oriented discussion on place-making. The main component of the workshop was *Field studies*. This helped participants to observe, analyse and assess the meaning and role of public space as well as the current challenges in the remaking of these spaces.

Design workshop was conducted in 3 stages: (i) analysis, (ii) evaluation/synthesis and (iii) place-making. (i) There is a long tradition of analysing public spaces from various research perspectives, theoretically grounded and empirically performed. The realm is wide, from understanding the psychological impact of various spaces on the user and on looker to finding out about the pedagogic meaning of certain place patterns. Descriptive analyses of the use of various spaces are also well-known and used in teaching and designing of open spaces, as in the literature on public space as it was developed with regards to the iconic as well as the everyday places and gardens since the second half of the 20th century a broad body of knowledge has been built up (e.g. Gehl, 1987; Carr, 1992; Sachs Pfeiffer, 1995; Kayden, 2012 and many others), from which a process of theory-based, and at the same time, practice-oriented learning

[2]ITU: Huma Sahin, Sezen Turkoğlu, Eda Uraz, Merve Kadaifci, Gorsev Argin, Zeynep Ozdemir, Tugce Tezer; BTU: Florian Hotzkow, Daniel Phillip Krause, Sebastian-Alexander Grunwald, Alina Swana Wilkending, Daniel Skrobol, Ammar Horia, Nicole Torres Mailleux, Ozge Yuzbasli, Leonie Vanessa Hagen; KU Leuven: Alexander Davey Thompson, Alexandru Ivan Greceniuc, Anca Paninopol, Andreea Mocan, Daniela Schuchmannová, Stefana Laschevichi, Roberta Zvirblyte; PoliT: Marco Nicastro, Eleonora Bonino, Stefano Franco, Giacomo Rio, Annalisa Rossi, Marco Orsello as the participants.

can be facilitated. The approaches to analysing public spaces are based upon a variety of observations. Sounds, the boundaries towards other sorts of use and between public and private, the embeddedness in the surrounding built environment, the observation of how the places are used, sigh-lines, the textures and materials, including greenery (flora and fauna), and their meaning for the usability and image, are of as much importance as the typologies of use from representation to pleasure and (often) undesired uses by homeless or other people. The genealogy and history of the places are as much of importance for the analysis as the history of decisions, management and maintenance and who takes up the responsibility of place-keeping for the present and the future. As it is claimed in Madanipour et al. (2014), analysing the public space is a crossroad in which different stakeholders interact within the context of economic, political, social, environmental, and cultural challenges. (ii) The approaches to evaluating public spaces are social science based (evaluation theory and research) as well as founded in the analysis of concrete places and the effect they have internally and externally. Procedures of decision making and design, public participation and residents' and civil-society's interests and responsibilities are playing a role as does the itemised check of usability on the regional, urban and neighbourhood level (the 'meaning of place'). (iii) Theories and practices of place-making are the final turn from analysis and evaluation to finding out about the planning methodology that can lead to better places based upon professional planning knowledge and the participation of residents, users, economic actors and politics. Planning in this sense is not a finalised piece of work, but a process oriented form of action, which continues during the use-period of spaces and includes collaborative running and maintenance of public places.

The studio work was supported by *Discussion – Forum* and *Knowledge Cafe* sessions to evaluate up-to-date progress. The method of 'knowledge café' was used to introduce a focused form of cross-disciplinary learning aiming at providing an open and creative conversation on a topic of mutual interest to utilise their collective knowledge, share ideas and insights, and gain a deeper understanding of the subject and the issues involved. The dialogue between students and staff was mediated in various ways using social software, mapping and information aggregation services; and brought to a level where the web environment supports, augments and enriches the reflective learning processes. As part of 'web-based social geographic platform' (see Pak and Verbeke, 2012; 2013), participants were required to prepare blog diaries to ease the follow-up of the progress and make them judge the relevance and contribution of the subject (See, http:// republicip2014.wordpress.com and http://www.archtheory- flanders.be/istanbul/).

3. Re-PUBLIC scope: Taksim

Beyoğlu has been the cultural and economic heart of Istanbul since the 19th century through its European/Levantine population, architecture, and everyday life facilities including hotels, theatres, cafes. It was within those circumstances that the proposal to create a public square as the symbol of new republic was appeared in Henri Prost Plan in Lutfi Kirdar Period of 1939. The plan proposed the demolition of Taksim Artillery Barracks (1806) to build the Inonu Esplanade 'Gezi Park' and new Republican Square around Monument of Independence (1928) (for an overview of history of square, see Yildirim, 2012; Demir Kahraman, 2017). He designed Taksim Square with Inonu Esplanade over Topcu Barracks to be integrated with a grand park stretching through the valley between Dolmabahce, Macka and Harbiye. It was considered as the lungs of surrounding residential area. Another attempt towards the spatialisation of this semantic accumulation of republican ideology became visible in the selection of Taksim as the location for the Republic Monument that was opened in 1928 in dedication to the foundation of the Republic designed by Italian sculptor Pietro Canonica. As a part of this secular life scenario, three of the other surrounding military

barracks in the region were then allocated to Istanbul Technical University (Macka, Gumussuyu and Taskisla) and the one in Harbiye was converted into a military museum during this period (Demir Kahraman, 2017). Prost also proposed another representative and iconic implementation project at Taksim, which was the Grand Theatre or Palace of Culture (Ataturk Cultural Centre) built between 1946 and 1969 by Hayati Tabanlioglu. Besides its power in symbolizing Republican era and Independence War, Taksim Square and Gezi Park had also become the symbol of new society, a new secular and European society through geometric architecture, sculptures, trees, pools, and of course women next to men as a response to 19th century characteristics of Beyoglu - but this time redefined through the 'Turkish' identity (Gunay, 2015). Not only the name Grand Rue de Pera was replaced by the name 'Istiklal Avenue' (Independence Avenue), the surrounding region as a whole with its new public buildings, neighbourhoods, avenues, parks acquired the names from the vocabulary of Republican Period in time, reflecting the semantic accumulation there such as Ataturk Cultural Centre, Ataturk Library, Cumhuriyet (Republic) Avenue, Inonu Stadium, Democracy Park, and Kurtulus (Independence) and Harbiye (Military) Neighbourhoods (Demir Kahraman, 2017).

The next reidentification occurred in 1955 (September 6-7) after the ethnic tensions between Turkish and Greek populations, resulting in abandonment, displacement, in-flow of the poor. The socio-spatial decay had continued until the 1980s. Then it became the symbol of public, the middle class, and the workers class. It was the symbol of democracy - the power of public especially after the 1st May Massacre of 1977. These made this unique public space an expression space for political movements. Through its intangible heritage, it became the space of 'tolerance'. It was for that reason the public space was closed for public protests until today. In the 1980s, the use of power has changed pace through the increasing privatisation – Istiklal became the ideal public space for cultural production and consumption as accompanying this role since the 19th century. The pedestrianisation of Istiklal Street in 1988 was a major attempt to give strength to that role. Regarding being an area of tolerance, an expression space for political actions, today, over two million people walk up and down Istiklal Street, which is about two kilometres long, every day. This massive human flow is accompanied by a massive capital flow and its transformative effects. However, radical changes have being observed in the region since the 2000s (See Gunay, 2015 for more information) - everything that gives identity to the space -including the announcement of the construction of a mosque, the commercialisation via shopping malls replacing historic cinemas, theatres, independent bookstores or cafes (such as Demirören, historic Cercle D'Orient building hosting Emek Cinema, İnci Patisserie), the gentrification in the near surrounding (Cihangir, Tophane), the amalgamation of real-estate projects (such as Tarlabasi, French Street or Talimhane), and lastly the pedestrianisation of Taksim Square and the reconstruction decision for the Topcu Military Barrack, together with the destruction decision for the Ataturk Cultural Centre by 2017, which in total have recalled a significant ideological intervention to transform this unique landscape in accordance with the increasingly authoritarian and neoliberal formations of urban power (Gunay, 2015).

4. Re-PUBLIC thematic projects

Four teams gathered around the following themes: (i) Urban interface; (ii) Defining connections; (iii) Green Istanbul; and (iv) See the memory / look into the square.

4.1. Urban interface

"At the present moment, Taksim Square is not a square; but instead, it is an urban platform, containing different spaces with their own character and different uses. By identifying the existent and potential edges, we create a strategy of activating Taksim as 'one' square. Being aware that the edges of Taksim Square are in people's memories, we have the intention to materialize them. Edges are not obstacles, but

rather spaces to generate life. Besides the physical and social ones, in Taksim's undefined perimeter, the sensorial edges played an important role. They are the tools to analyze the perception of space, intuition within orientation, smell, as well as textures. The physical edges are treated in two ways: sharpening or blurring them. They become interfaces! By restructuring the traffic around the northern entrance in the tunnel, the pedestrian surface adjacent to the park increases. By inserting wooden structures for resting on the western slope of Gezi, the park's edge becomes an opportunity for introducing new functions. The problematic South-West corner of the park initiates the participation process in Taksim and this concept extends from the park to the square. This is achieved with furniture modules, which can be placed by the users according to their wish anywhere in the square, thus appropriating the space. The participation through design is considered to be embedded in the (young) square due to the ironic way it was born: a plate of cement created byte apparatus of control, after the Gezi protests to facilitate their access, has been taken over by the daily move of the Istanbul citizens. In the spirit of giving back to the citizen the city, Taksim is the place where to initiate the process of participation in decision-making. The tramline is extended towards the north following the historical route, linking visually Istiklal to the newly formed promenade alongside Gezi. By uncovering the historical layer, the relationship with water is accentuated. A line of water flows through the tramline, passing by Maksem to Istiklal. The Maksem becomes more visible after clearing the facade from street vendors. The surface ending on the Tarlabasi Street hosts new water works, strengthening the importance of water in Taksim's history and at its present. An important part of our design is that it has no borders and it doesn't end with the urban platform. We include the surrounding streets, Istiklal being one of them, which in the past was separated from the Taksim area, having certain physical and cultural territorial borders. For this, we form a visual connection in the pavement by extending

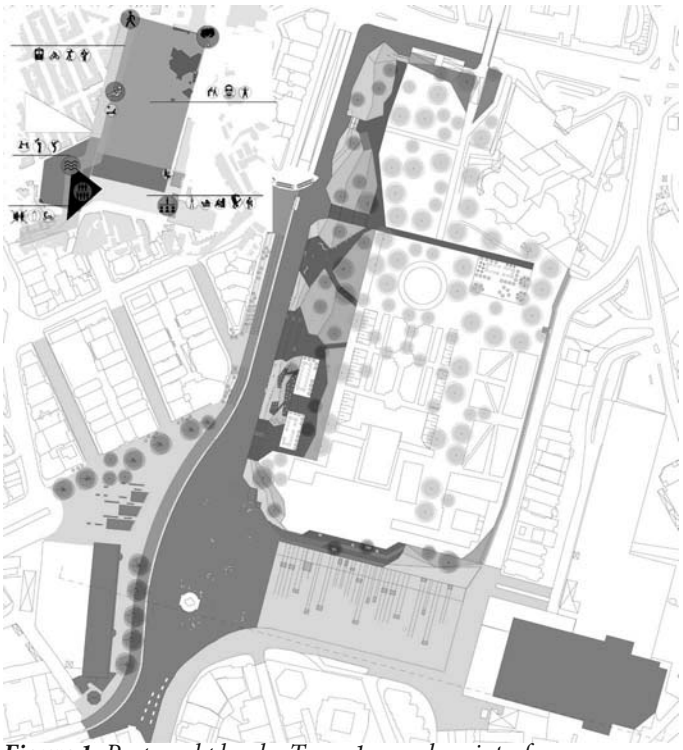

Figure 1. *Proposed plan by Team 1 on urban interfaces.*

the tramline on the historical route instead of keeping the current loop. In Taksim Square, we try to highlight the empty urban platform by underlining the quality of the polyvalent space. We create a stage where different kind of activities can be accommodated – forums, open-air cinema, concert, press conference, sports. While designing we also question ourselves - How to redistribute the place in order to invite different users? We want it to be a space of self-expression. In this sense, the proposal contains changeable modules, which people can transform and build up according to their perception. These modules consist of wooden cubes and movable platforms on rails with different textures suitable for resting. We were inspired by one of the statements forwarded in discussion sessions: "If people can build houses themselves, what can they do if you let them build in Taksim square?" Our project is not a finalized work, where everything is defined, it is a process, a background for further development. "Times are a changing" as Bob Dylan says…"[3]

Making an explorative analysis of the social, physical, sensorial and perceptual edges around the Taksim Square, team 1 based their design on the idea of developing 'urban interfaces'. They

[3] *By Huma Sahin, Anca Paninopol, Daniela Schuchmannova, Roberta Zvirblyle, Florian Hotzkow, Daniel Krause, Marco Nicastro, Eleonora Bonino*

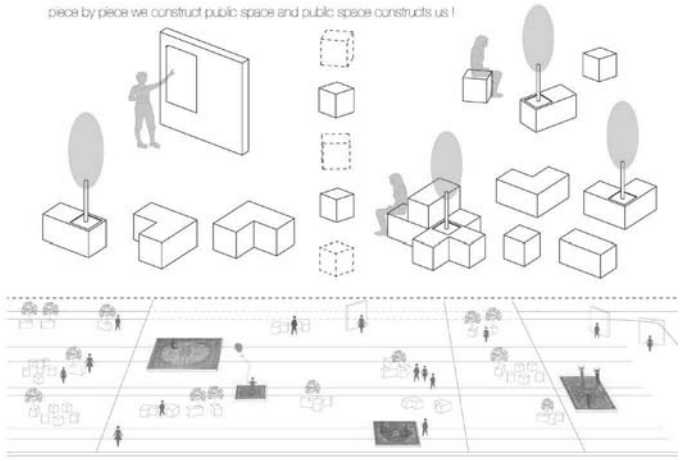

Figure 2. *Process design by Team 1 on urban interfaces.*

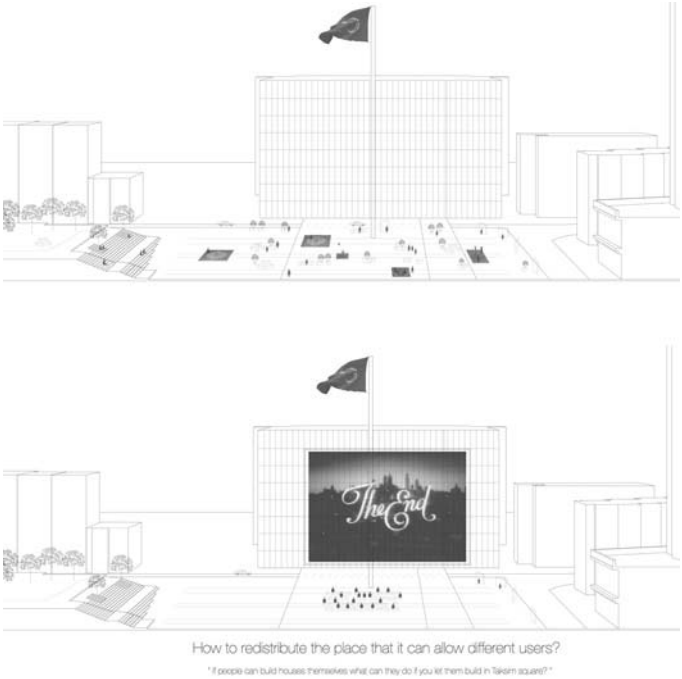

Figure 3. *Proposed model by Team 1 on Urban interfaces.*

have recognized numerous types of surfaces on the site and identified their users, which came from various social groups, ages and gender backgrounds. The main aim of the design was to create urban interfaces to (re)activate Taksim in a holistic manner. In order to accomplish this, team 1 successfully employed several design strategies. Among those were: (i) Connecting the park with the undefined promenade emerged after the tunnel construction, (ii) Creating a gathering and communication space opposite and around the Taksim monument, (iii) Reframing the center of Gezi Park using the 'artistic backstage' as a metaphor, (iv) Reconfiguring the square in front of AKM Ataturk Cultural Centre as an open participatory front stage. Overall, the treatment of the currently undefined space around the Gezi Park was effective at several levels. First, the creation of intervention zones with blurred edges enabled a meaningful combination of spaces with various dynamic functions. Second, the design solutions offered by the team effectively addressed multiple scales, ranging from topographical interventions to the urban furniture. Some of the inspiring intervention proposed by this team was to use dynamic 'flying carpet' platforms, portable walls and cubical seating elements in front the AKM, which can potentially enable the users configure space according to their needs. The team purposefully designed these as a response to the existing problems of self-expression in the area. They skillfully illustrated several scenarios of use such as an open-air concert hall, cinema, demonstrations and small-scale group interactions. These ideas were perceived as quite applicable in real life. Furthermore, by respectfully (re) appropriating the existing elements of the square such as the stairs leading to the park, the area around the Taksim monument and the Maksem was (re) activated as space for alternative forms of participatory urban life. Another positive aspect of the team was the careful incorporation of ideas introduced during the lectures provided at the beginning of the workshop.

4.2. Defining connections

"Istanbul is a city with a very diverse and intense population growth in the last decades. From almost one million inhabitants in the 1950s, Istanbul's population increased to 15 million people without informal residents. Beside the historical city core, another city centre developed at the heart of city, which was influenced by western cultures and ideologies. During the last centuries, Taksim Square became one of the most meaningful places in Istanbul. At the top of one of the seven hills, it served for water distribution and was a relevant component of physical city growth. The Gezi Park with its historical meaning on the area of the old castle has also changed in the field of social aspects, especially during

the riots in the last years against political actions. Located at the north end of the Istiklal- Shopping-Street, which was closed for motorized traffic since the 1990s excluded the historical tram which brings people from Taksim to Galata, it is the spatial connection between any kind of city functions and well connected by Metro, Funicular, Tram, Bus and Dolmus. Taksim was in the firing line of different actors of diverse interests consistently. In 2012, the Turkish government realized its project to keep the traffic out of Taksim Square and constructed a tunnel for motorized vehicles beneath the Taksim. Since that intervention, Taksim Square became a concrete flat unstructured space with no kind of qualities and got the risk of losing its very special character and meaning. Accessibility from each side is needed, according to the pedestrian flow and the major merging points. Barriers as roads are reduced in our design. The square will be divided into three main areas with imperceptible boundaries, but it will still be consistent throughout its surface. We've noticed that some areas suffer from exclusion, so we will try to ensure an inclusive design. Our goal is to enhance connections in the square creating paths and defining directions and new meeting points. Connectivity is crucial and will lead the design for the whole square. Physical connections between Gezi Park, AKM Ataturk Cultural Center, the northern Metro entrance, Taksim Square Monument, old water distribution building - Maksem and Istiklal Street must be reinforced. The aim is to create interactivity between the fragments of the Taksim area. Multifunctional use in the sections of our design is our purpose and also including all types of interests with recreational space and event space and moreover keeping the function as a transition area between different functions and uses. Street-vendors and informal use are integrated in our vision in order to get a balanced design."[4]

The analytic studies of Team 2 led to the recognition of mobility issues and connectivity around the project site. Focusing on these matters, they aimed at reinforcing the physical connections between Gezi Park, AKM Ataturk Cultural Center, the northern underground entrance, Taksim Square Monument, Maksem and the Istiklal Street. They suggested a supporting 'backbone' along the new promenade, which emerged as a result of the tunnel construction. This backbone starts

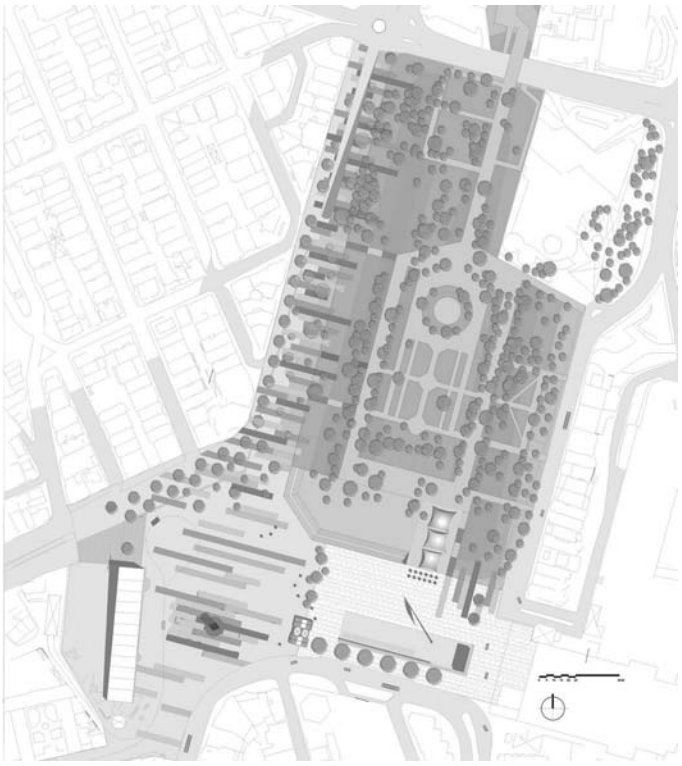

Figure 4. *Proposed plan by Team 2 on defining connections.*

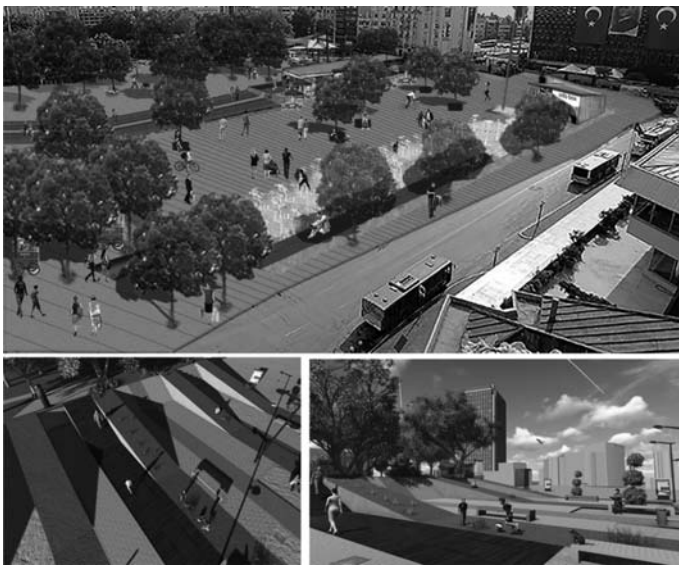

Figure 5. *Proposed design by Team 2 on defining connections.*

Figure 6. *Section from the proposed design by Team 2 on defining connections.*

[4]*By Daniel Skrobol, Alex Greceniuc, Stefana Iaschevici, Nicole Torres, Eda Uraz, Merve Kadaifci, Marco Orsello, Sezen Turkoglu*

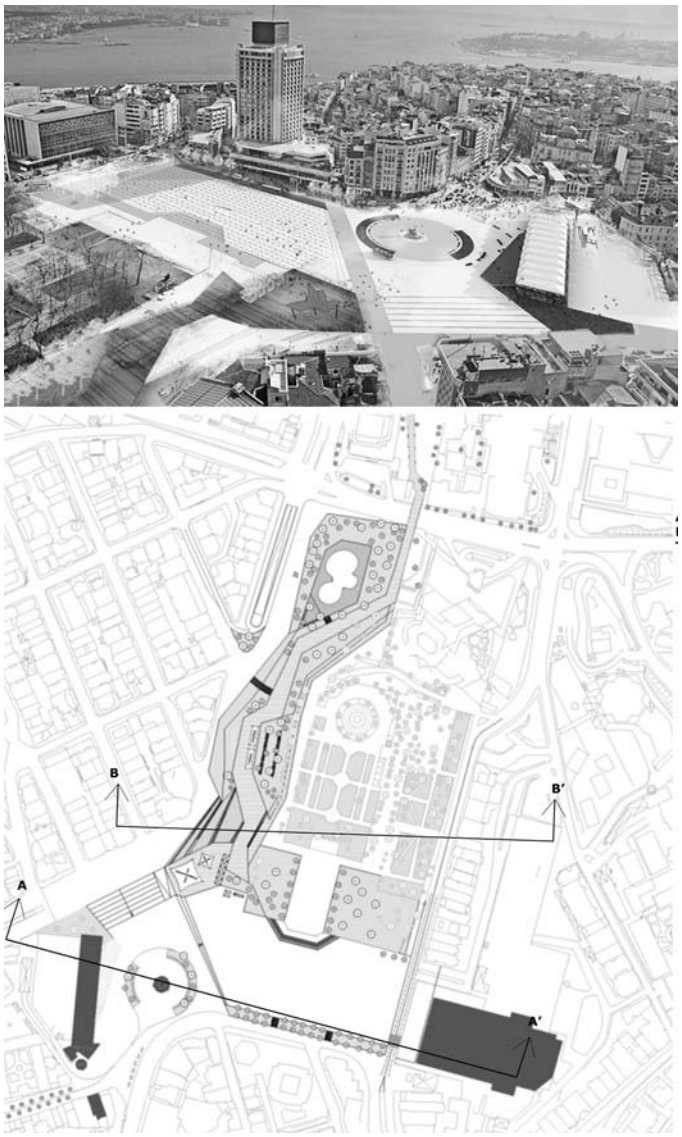

Figure 7. *Proposed design by Team 3 on green Istanbul.*

across the Gezi Park along a new bridge which joins the two sides; extends further towards the Istiklal street, serving as a collector, connector and distributor of the pedestrian flow. The potentials of this intervention were numerous. On one hand it channeled the flow towards the Gezi Park, on the other hand it created interactivity between the fragments of Taksim, thus connecting them in alternative ways. Furthermore, various other design solutions were developed for connection and interaction: (i) Through the Integration of street vendors and informal uses into their proposal, the team intended to break the monotonous character of the existing promenade, (ii) Using several interventions they have differentiated the space in front of the AKM as a multifunctional recreational/event space, (iii) Along the aforementioned space, an inspiring 'virtual water wall' was proposed to separate it from the busy road while creating an interaction opportunity in hot summer days. As a result of the design interventions above, Team 2 demonstrated the potentials of making multi-dimensional connections along, around and through the project site. Jury members noted that the design proposal could be improved through a better integration of the underground transportation points and stops. Moreover, the clear-cut definition of functional zones could be improved to enable a more flexible use of space.

4.3. Green Istanbul

"When you arrive Taksim for the first time, you notice that it's one of the busiest places in the Beyoglu district both for tourists and locals. Taksim is also a gigantic public transportation hub. What you perceive first is that it's a really crowded undefined public space both from pedestrians and cars. It is impossible to find your way, to understand where you are going to, and also Gezi Park is not well-connected with the lower level. The AKM Ataturk Cultural Centre facing the square is not used nowadays. It's a pity, because it's the cultural centre, and without it the place lose its identity. After this first visit to the area, we decided to call our project "Taksim Square is everywhere" in relationship with our idea of the green loop. The green area analysis shows us that there is a great potential in this part of Istanbul city because there are lots of green areas around Taksim Square that we'd like to connect to each other to create a big green loop that could finish on the seaside. The neighbourhood analysis shows us different type of activities around the square: On the north, mostly offices and hotels are located, conversely on the south, there are residential uses, offices and important landmarks such as Maksem and the Monument of the Republic. According to our SWOT analysis, we found out that the square is not exactly a good example of well-used public space. There is a huge empty space, which is not appropriate to be a meeting point. Accordingly,

we determine our vision with three keywords: 'reconnection', 'define the entrances' and 'reactivate'. We particularly focused on reconnection because of the lack of green relations. In order to improve this aspect, we designed a vast green loop, which collects the European part of Istanbul city. The main point of this loop is Gezi Park, which nowadays is not related with Macka Park because of the break down bridge. As a result of our loop, pedestrian ways will be created to connect seaside with the square. In order to make the loop accessible, entrances will be designed and Gezi Park will become the main green entrance. Our project will define how a good public space should be: (i) Attractive and more interactive (ii) Safe in a greener city (iii) Cleaner, better-maintained. To respect this purpose, the square is divided in different functions for different users according to our vision about how people move inside the square. The four zones to define the needs of the different users are: (i) Long stay zone (ii) Short stay zone (iii) Event space (iv) Gezi Park. As a last step, Taksim Square was designed to equalize the level of Gezi Park with the level of the rest of the square through a path. As a result it formed a green trail that connect the entire green ring to the rest of the city."[5]

Team 3 made a large-scale analysis of the green areas and different type of activities around the project site. They found that Gezi Park was not well connected with the larger and 'lower' scale. Accordingly, the team has focused on three main themes: reconnection, defining entrances and reactivation. Based on these themes and inspired by the urban plan proposed by Henri Prost in 1940, they have developed solid strategies regarding Gezi Park's relation to the city. Among those were: (i) Making a new ecological system which can be connected to other parks, (ii) Connecting all parks together to make one green system, (iii) Giving an individual character to each park. The focal point of this system would be Gezi Park. It was suggested to be reconnected with the Macka Park, creating pedestrian routes linking the Bosporus with the square. Furthermore, the team identified key connection points and reframed them as 'entrances'. In this context, Gezi Park was proposed as the main green entrance. The design suggestions were not only limited to large-scale strategies. According to the project, the square was divided into different functions for different uses and users: long stay and short stay zones, event space and the Gezi Park (as a special category). Specific urban interventions were chosen to facilitate these functions: sitting, lighting elements, floor material, canopies for creating shadow. The team also developed more detailed plan drawings regarding the square, but these were conceived as underdeveloped by the jury members. However, the aforementioned suggestions were welcome.

4.4. See the memory / Look into the square

"Our investigation into Taksim square was guided by the following founding principle: 'See the Memory, Look into the Square'. In its current form, Taksim exists as a palimpsest of deconstructed historical elements. The intention of our project, therefore, is to re-appropriate the layers of historical identity, which exist around the public space so as to define a more structured and identifiable public space. Two categories of historical interventions have been identified: The ancient history of Taksim is one of large scale underground infrastructures, a water distribution centre along with subterranean public transport connections, which allowed for an open flat space in the centre of the city's difficult topography. The contemporary history, on the other hand, is informed by the Gezi Park protests where the symbolism of open space in Istanbul was inverted from a militaristic space for control to a democratic space for bottom up representation. Our intervention, therefore, had to respond on these two levels. Firstly, the below ground aspect of the space, the access to the metro and bus links, was to be revealed and celebrated as the founding forms of Taksim. Secondly, our project had to provide a new kind of urban space, which allowed for a bottom up form of appropriation, which could counteract the chaotic neo-liberal interventions cur-

[5] *By Zeynep Ozdemir, Annalisa Rossi, Leonie Hagen, Stefano Franco, Nese Cakir Ozturk, Ozge Yuzbasli, Ammar Horia*

Figure 8. *Proposed plan by Team 4 on see the memory, look into the square.*

Figure 9. *A view from the proposed design by Team 4 on see the memory, look into the square.*

rently defining Istanbul development. We concretized these aspects into a singular line that could define space in and around Taksim Square with a more manageable scale. The line would remain entirely permeable so as to define without dividing, and active interface, which would bring commercial, design friendly, zones to Cumhuriyet Avenue and the two zones of Taksim Square. The square in front of the AKM Ataturk Cultural Centre is now redefined as a space for repose, with a softer groundscape intervention connecting it to the Cultural Centre and, importantly, the disused zone to the north of the AKM where a great view over the city can be found. The pavilion bookending the south of our Line is an interface between the square and the monument where market stalls are moved from wall of the Maksem - Water Distribution Centre (thereby returning it to its symbolic importance) and entrances to the underground are congregated. The northern pavilion serves the same function whilst reclaiming pedestrian space from the street and acting as an entrance to the park. Finally, our structure for appropriation has been designed as a hierarchy between enclosed, defined space, which supports a forest of columns, which may be overtaken by the public as they see fit. This forms a new kind of public space, which has extended Gezi Park and activated Cumhuriyet Avenue. The columns are given a series of corbels, which can be used to define programmatic relations unforeseen by any top-down intervention."[6]

Team 4 focused on the historical aspects of Taksim Square and created a conceptual discourse on the accumulation of these elements. In this sense, the square was interpreted as a 'palimpsest' made of two layers: (i) ancient archaeological remains and (ii) contemporary events in the memories of the people. In relation to these, the proposed design suggested interventions at the level of two layers: below ground and the social space for bottom up appropriation while extending the Gezi Park and activating the Cumhuriyet Avenue. First, Maksem was coupled with water features and underground entrances. In this way the team aimed at returning its symbolic meaning back. Second -and the most important- layer of the proposal involved the development of a novel social urban space for bottom up appropriation as a means to counteracting the existing gridlock situation. In order to serve this purpose, the team established an interaction-axis along the Gezi Park, next to the Cumhuriyet Avenue. This axis was enforced by a flexible structure facilitating various functions emerged before and after the manifestations. The potentials of this structure were recognized by several Jury members but the decisions regarding its implementation were found underdeveloped in general. Another interesting aspect of the proposal was rescaling and redefinition of square in front of AKM Ataturk Cultural Centre as a space for 'repose'. It successfully connected the underutilized area at the back of the center with the rest of the square, demonstrating a significant potential as a vista point.

[6]By Gorsev Argin, Sebastian A. Grunwald, Lorena Andreea Mocan, Giacomo Rio, Tugce Tezer, Alex Davey Thomson, Alina Wilkending

5. Re-PUBLIC evaluation and impact

Re-PUBLIC constructed an inter-active research and hands-on practice platform to understand the complex and diversified relations in the triangle between city, citizens and planners, and the logics of place-making. It explored the cultural, historical, economical, ecological and political spheres of remaking the public space. While it questioned the way in which the public space is transforming the cities, it identified the diversified, multi-layered and complex meaning and role of public space including the revival of cities' image, improvement of quality of life and liveability, influencing economic value, building inter-cultural dialogue and democracy etc. Taksim Square was used as a platform to discuss the future of public spaces. By doing so, it tested a number of innovative research and planning methods to improve teaching in planning studies. A major impact was rooted from the cross-country approach and the joint-learning of students and tutors with the partly diverse background of the professions in the various countries taking part. Knowledge transfer and management played an important role and the experience of the Re-PUBLIC hoped to filter into the teaching and learning methodologies of the universities taking part.

Expanding upon the collaborative relationship between ITU, Brandenburg Technical University, KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture and Politecnico di Torino, the Re-PUBLIC enabled cultural and academic exchange as an everyday experience through studying the multi-contextual spheres in the remaking the public space. The intensive ten-day studies increased insights, perspectives and experiences of participants in terms of culture – society – everyday life and public space providing an innovative approach through which public space was observed as a place of society and cultural experience. Both the fundamental aspects of urban planning and design and personal perception of public space were central to the Workshop as the critical dimensions. To improve the quality and to increase the volume of student and teaching staff mobility throughout Europe, the hosting of participants from different countries allowed to examine and to discuss different types and uses of public spaces and culture while experiencing them as the real users. The workshop used necessary ICT tools not only in teaching programme but also in conducting systematic dissemination and exploitation of results. Project website and blog diaries helped to disseminate the results throughout the planned process with the active participation of students and tutors. Website introduced all the materials on the workshop to increase the e-learning capacity. A web-based social geographic platform was utilized for the enhancement of design-learning before, during and after the IP workshop. The platform provided various opportunities for enhanced integration and improving the learning processes. In the erasmus IP context, the dialogue between the design students and studio tutors were mediated in various ways using social software, mapping and information aggregation services; and brought to a level where the web environment supports, augments and enriches the reflective learning processes. Increasing the quality and quantity of multilateral co-operation between the IP partners, interdisciplinary aspects of urban design was reinforced and the importance of collaborative communication processes within city planning, urban design, architecture, civil engineering, landscape architecture was emphasized.

Re-PUBLIC was a call for rethinking the public space as a bridge between the past, present and future, while emphasizing the current economic-political processes and socio-spatial challenges. The outputs included a geographic web platform as a knowledge-base with an integrated learning/mapping tool reflecting different stages of the workshop, a thematic workshop report providing guidelines for future development, an exhibition during the World Planning Day, November 2014 (hosted by ITU). The intensive programme has contributed to the cohesion of the academic realm concerned with the analysis and planning/development of public space in the societies of the 21st century (study, teaching, research). Sharing the outputs of this intensive programme that include the examining process of the use and making of public spaces in

terms of everyday life as a design value, both the higher education institutions and enterprises gained and will gain an improved perspective on this subject as a development theme within urban design, city planning, and landscape architecture. Thus, 'RE-PUBLIC: Remaking the Public Space' provided a critical medium of knowledge transfer in design education.

Acknowledgement

This paper is based on the international project, 'RE-PUBLIC: Remaking the Public Space', funded by European Union Life Long Learning - Erasmus Intensive Programme, Contract no. 2013-1-TR1-ERA10-48749. The programme took place in Istanbul from 18 to 29 July 2014 in Istanbul as a joint undertaking between four higher education institutions including Istanbul Technical University (coordinator), Brandenburg Technical University, KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture and Politecnico di Torino. We would like to thank to Ipek Akpinar and Murat Guvenc for their time and contribution in our programme. Sadly, our friend Johan Verbeke deceased in August 6, 2017. We will never forget his contribution to this unique project.

References

Adanali, Y., A. (2011), De-spatialized Space as Neoliberal Utopia: Gentrified İstiklal Street and Commercialized Urban Spaces, *Red Threat*, 3.

Altman, I., Zube, E.H. (1989), *Public Places and Spaces*, NY: Plenum Press.

Baumann, Z. (2000), *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.

Butler, C. (2013), *Henri Lefebvre: Spatial Politics, Everyday Life and the Right to the City*, Routledge-Cavendish.

Carr, S., Francis, M., Rivlin, L.G., Stone, A.M. (1992), *Public Space*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crawford, M. (1995), Contesting the Public Realm: Struggles over Public Space in Los Angeles, *Journal of Architectural Education* 49 (1), 4-9.

Defilippis, J. (1997) From a public re-creation to private recreation: The transformation of public space in South Street Seaport, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 19 (4), 405-417.

Erkut, G. (2014), *The Case of Beyoğlu, Istanbul: Dimensions of Urban Re-development*, Technische Universität Berlin Berlin.

Fraser, N. (1993), Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy, in: B. Robbins (ed) *The Phantom Public Sphere*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Gehl, J. (2007), Public spaces for a changing public life, in: C.W. Thompson, P. Travlou (eds) *Open Space: People Space*, London: Taylor& Francis, 3- 22.

Gunay, Z. (2015), The power of the public in remaking the space: Reflections from Istanbul's Gezi, *6th Asian Conference on Arts and Humanities*, 351-364, Osaka, Japonya, 2-5 April 2015.

Habermas, J. (1989), *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Habraken, J. (1998), *The Structure of the Ordinary*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Healey, P. (2002), On creating the city as a collective resource, *Urban Studies* 39 (10), 1777.

Demir Kahraman, M. (2017), *Reclaiming The City Square; Social Production Of Public Space Sultanahmet-Beyazıt-Taksim Republican Squares*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, ITU Institute of Science and Technology.

Kayden, J.S. (2000), *Privately owned Public Space: The New York City Experience*, New York.

Madanipour, A. (2003) *Cities Actions Against Social Exclusion*, Brussels: Eurocities.

Madanipour, A., Kneirbein, S., Degros, Aglaee (2014), *Public Space and the Challenges of Urban Transformation in Europe*, New York: Routledge.

Pak, B, Verbeke, J. (2013), Redesigning the urban design studio: Two learning experiments, Journal of Learning Design (6) Special Issue - Design Education, 45-62.

Pak, B. Verbeke J. (2012), Design studio 2.0: augmenting reflective architectural design learning, *ITcon* (17), 502-519.

Parkinson, J.R. (2012), *Democracy and Public Space – The Physical Sites of Democratic Performance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sachs Pfeiffer, T. (1982), *The City Lived*, Berlin: C.F. Müller, Grossdruckerei und Verlag GmbH.

Snow, C.P. (2001 [1959]), *The Two Cultures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sola-Morales M. (2008), *Public and Collective Space: The Urbanisation of the Private Domain as a New Challenge, A Matter of Things*, Rotterdam: Nai Publishers.

Punter, J.V. (1990), The privatisation of public realm, *Planning, Practice and Research* 5 (3), 9-16.

Uzumkesici, T. (2011), Taksim Topçu Kışlası, in: I. Ünal, C. Kozar, T. Saner (eds), *Hayalet Yapılar*, Şan, 102-112.

Appendix

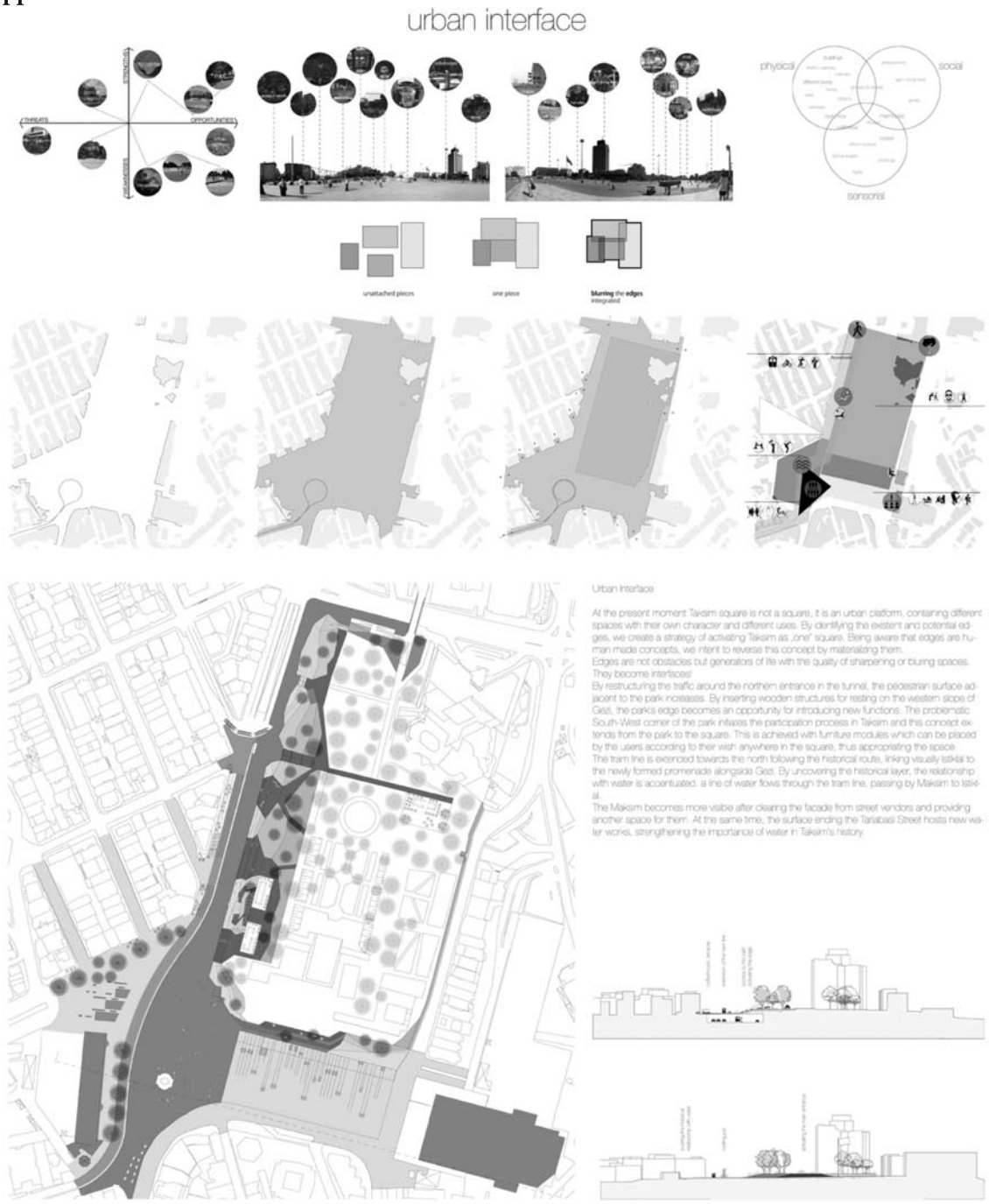

Figure 10. *Poster of Team 1 on urban interfaces.*

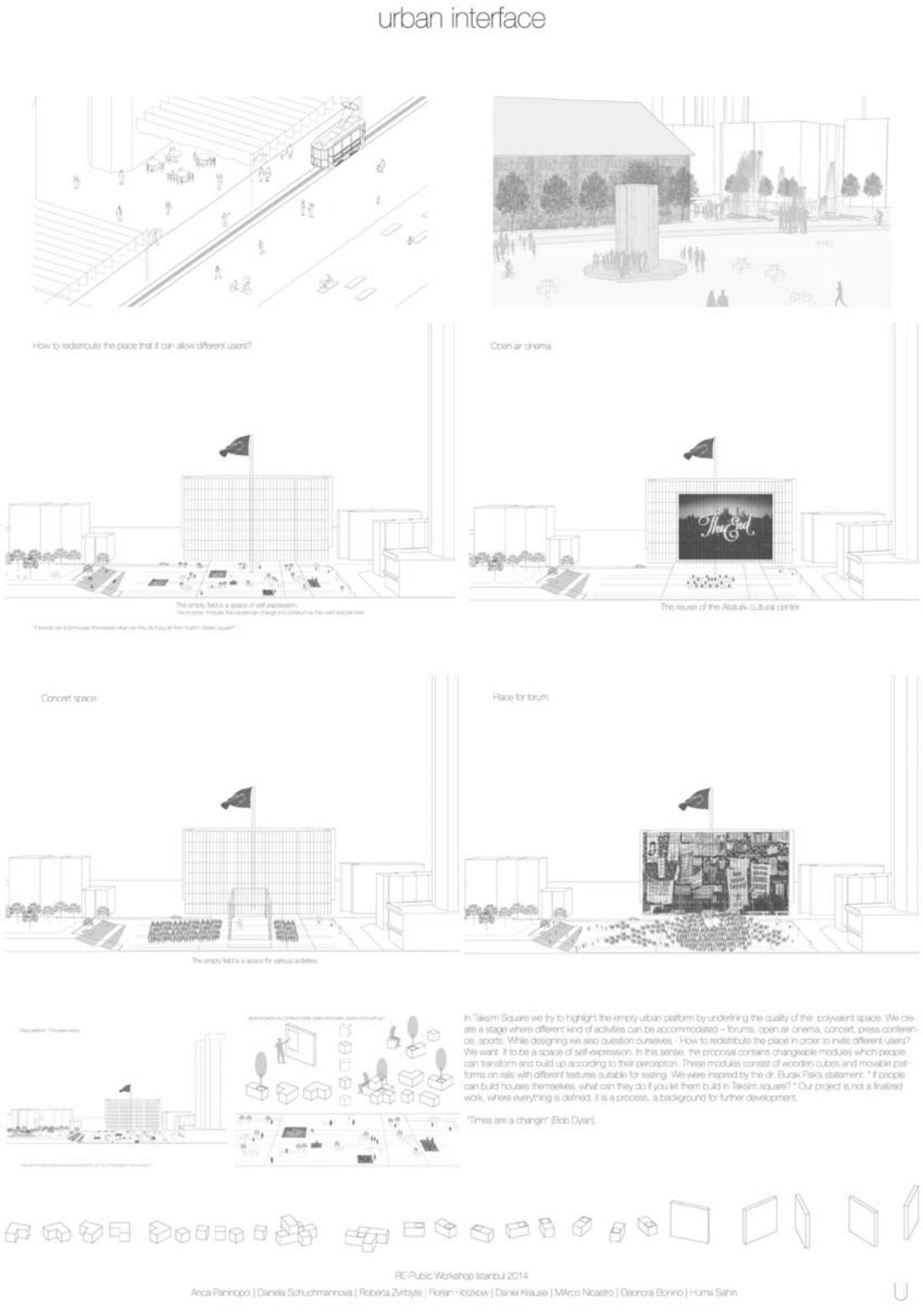

Figure 11. *Poster of Team 1 on urban interfaces.*

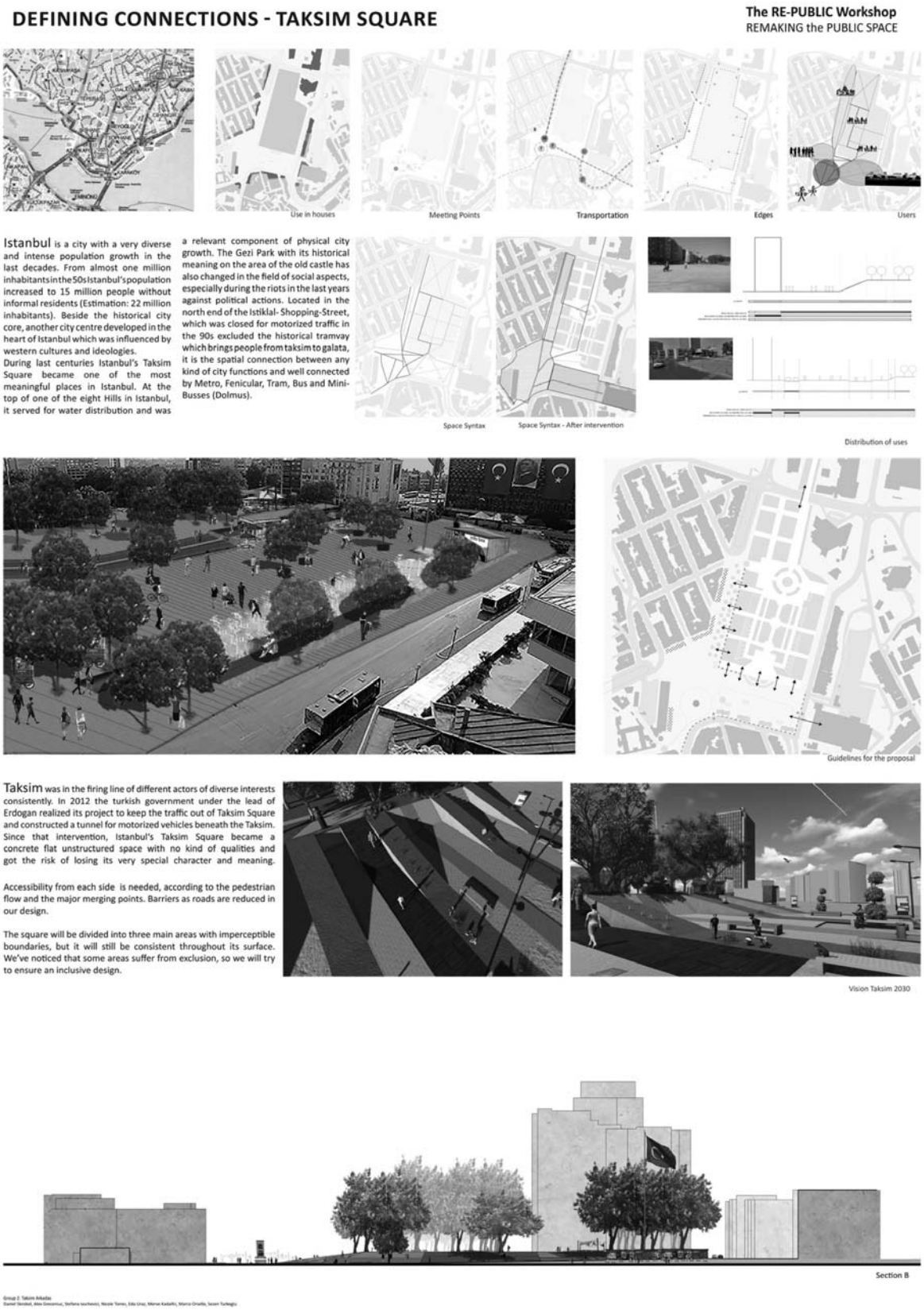

Figure 12. *Poster of Team 2 on defining connections.*

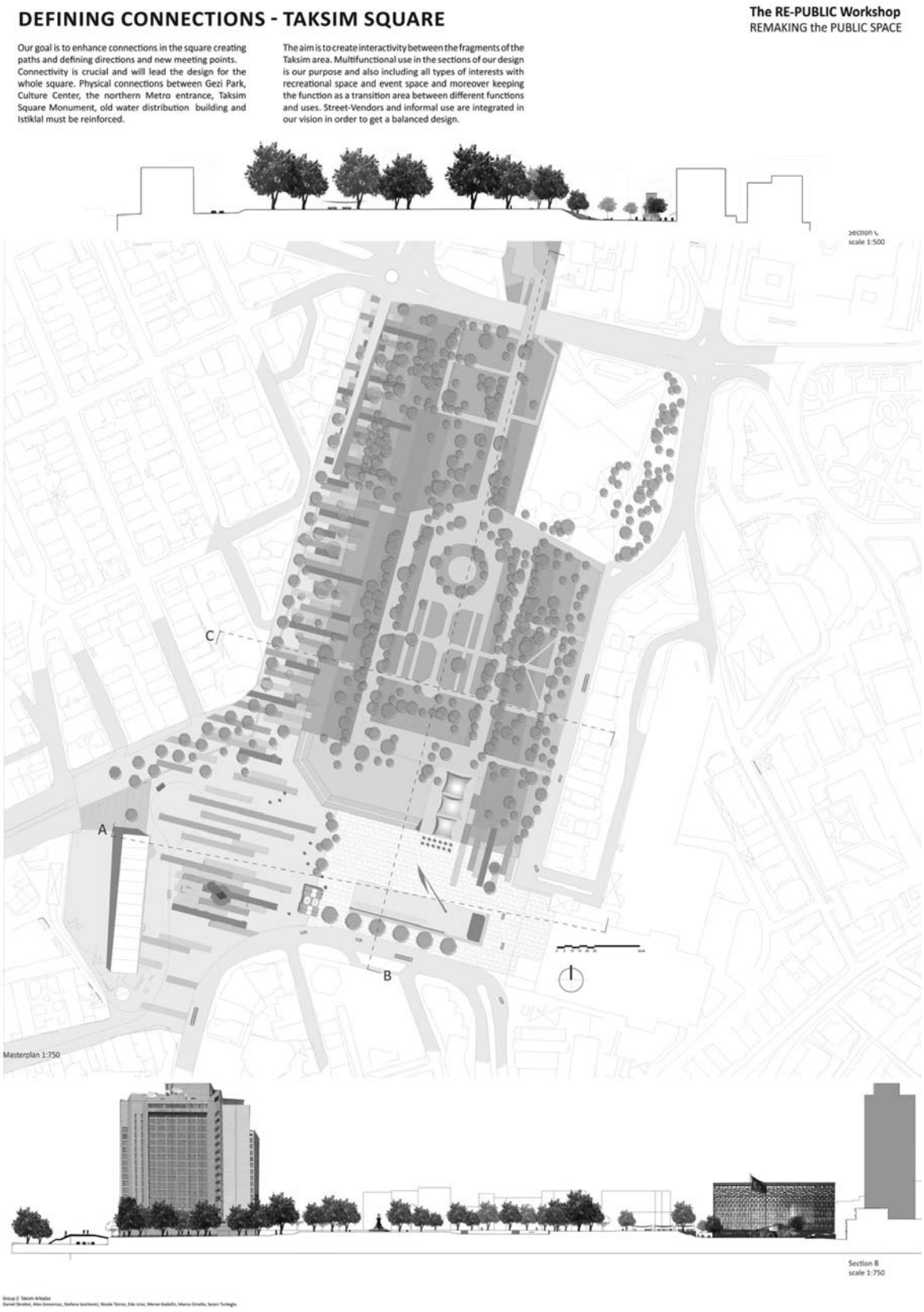

Figure 13. *Poster of Team 2 on defining connections.*

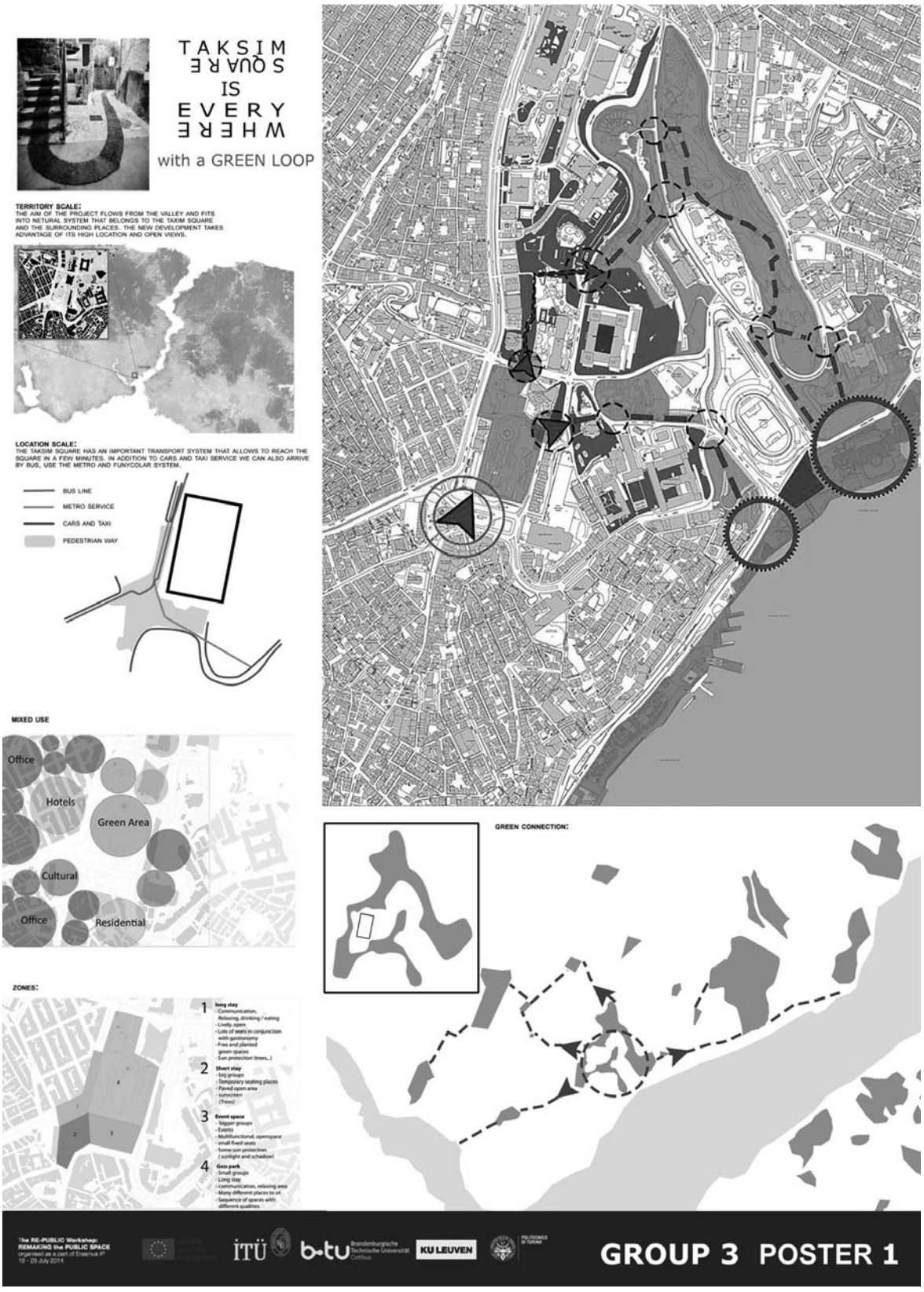

Figure 14. *Poster of Team 3 on green Istanbul.*

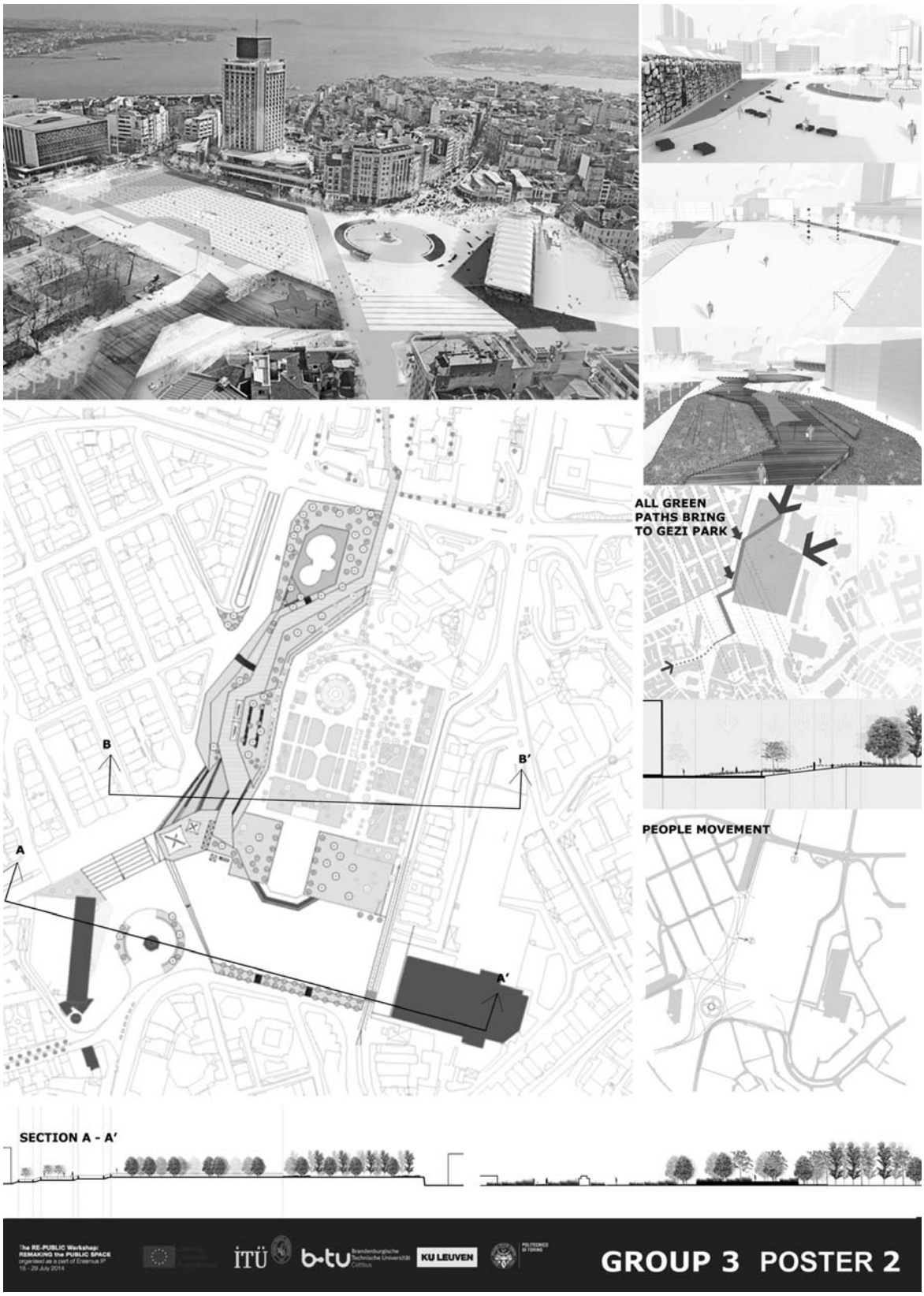

Figure 15. *Poster of Team 3 on green Istanbul.*

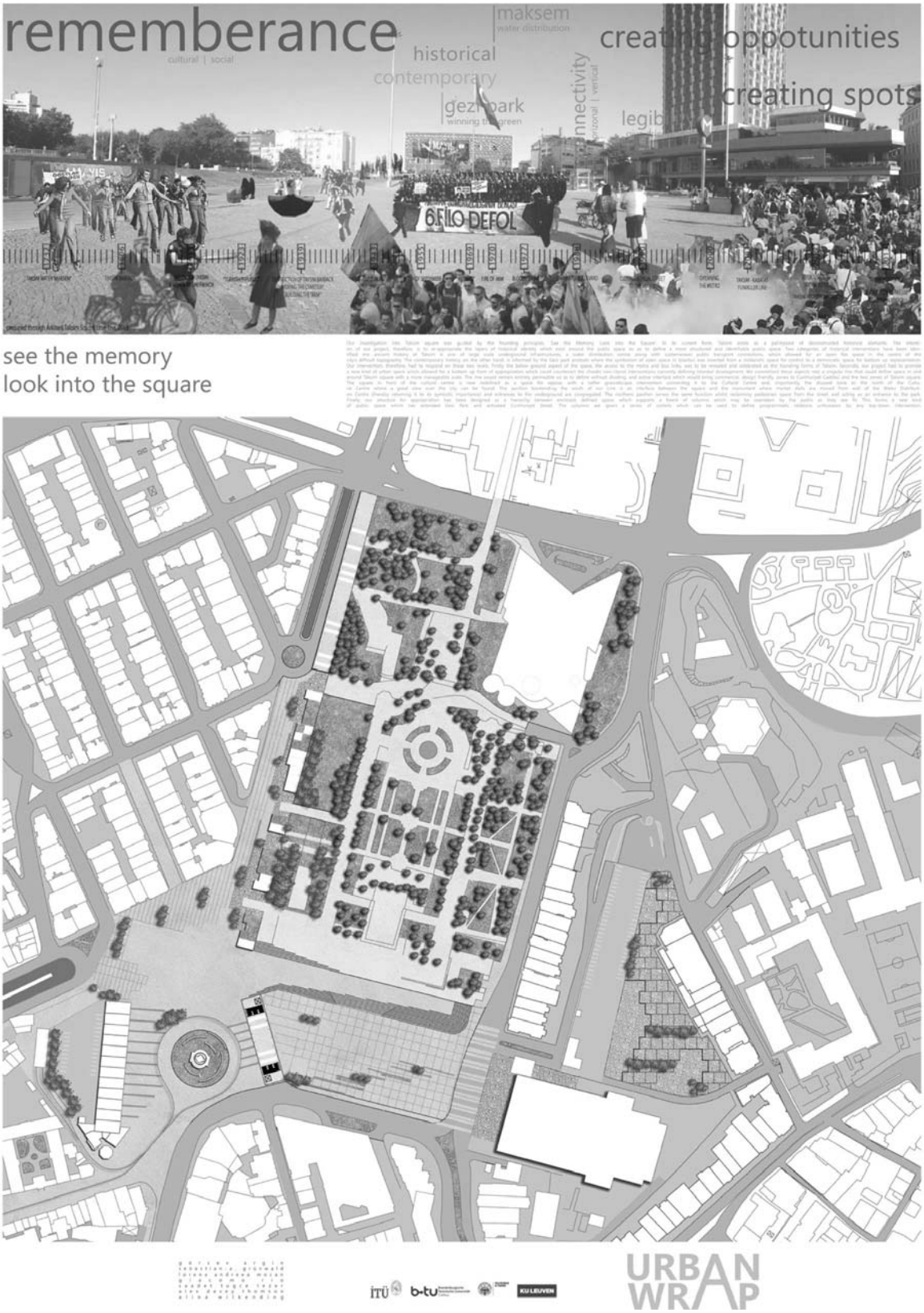

Figure 16. *Poster of Team 4 on see the memory, look into the square.*

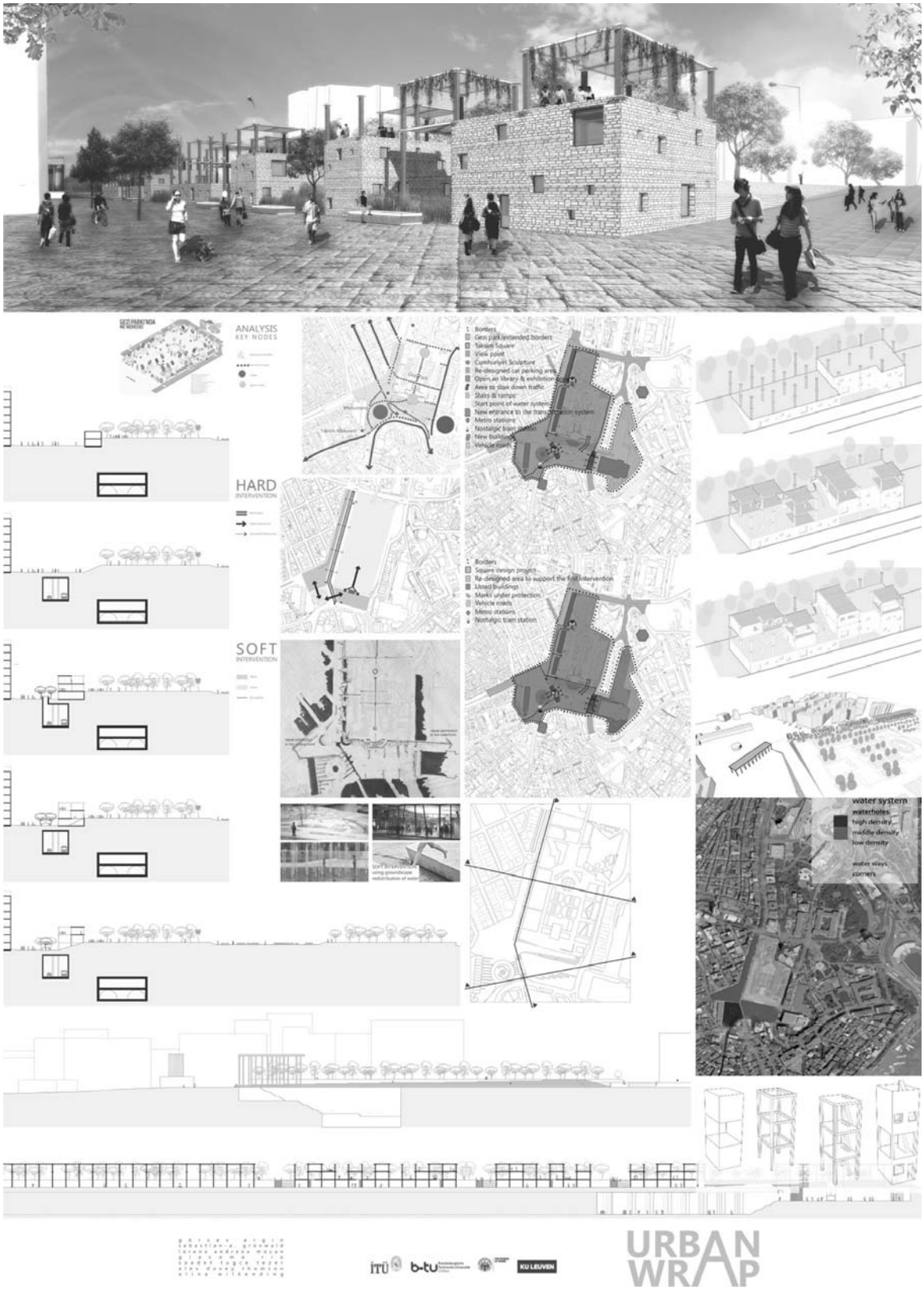

Figure 17. *Poster of Team 4 on see the memory, look into the square.*