

still walking through h or engagements of an architectural educator

Aslihan Senel A few months ago, I was asked to write a text on the place of mapping in architectural education. So, one afternoon, I started collecting the mappings we completed with the students. I took most from the blogs we published during the courses, some from my own archive, and others I reacquired by writing to the students. I noted down the ones which I couldn't find. A mapping I have never seen being made, supposedly was posted to me by the student who made it, I didn't receive. But, one day after the classes finished, a new mapping arrived. It wasn't made in the context of our course. I added it to my archive anyway. I gathered from different places various pieces of a mapping which different students produced its parts at different times. I saw that some parts were produced multiple times and some others were missing, I didn't manage to complete the whole. I thought it is best to start the text with this fragmented, multiple and unfinished mapping, as it may remind us the ways in which mapping emerges in opposition to maps that claim comprehensiveness and unity.

This mapping reminds me of Taksim Square, working there many times with students, and the pains and joys of collaborative work in large groups. The complexity and contradictions of different parts of the mapping might have made me think of that. Who knows, I might have seen some of the pieces at Taksim Square. It doesn't matter. Mapping is less a representation of a place, and more an operation, it produces the operation of the place we study in a new medium, moreover, it produces a new reality within the possibilities of that medium.

One day while I was chatting with a philosopher friend at my office at the university, she told me walking through H is like being unable to step into a flowing water twice. I vaguely remember hearing about H before. She didn't tell me where H is, claimed that I would figure out while walking through. I thought it was meaningless to question further at that moment. I continued to examine the mappings.

There are several movements around, I can describe only some of those that are simultaneous and successive, others that are rhythmic and directional, some that move individually or collectively, some that stop at certain intervals, others that are slow and slight, fast and sharp, repetitive, remembered or imagined. Each part of the mapping offers a new place, a new experience. If drawing is to take a line for a walk as Paul Klee says, following a drawing is to walk with that line.

First walk: Here is the square of fluid movements and long waitings. A determined line swiftly breaks through dots, a quick one turns around them and finds its way like the flowing ink that draws from one end to the other, another winding one touches the ground softly, tens of equally thick others crowd the central void by almost blocking the way, but some of these thicken at certain places and stops the viewing eye for a while in order to make one

to read the adjacent words: "Let's sit for two minutes," "I am tired," "Where have they been?" (1)

Second walk: Here is the square of rhythmic progressions and periodical stops. The friction of the pencil over the paper hints at the different places that each line had difficulty, accelerated and decelerated while being drawn from one end of the paper to the other. While some lines almost scratch the ground, others slip over. Disrupting the lines were dots, which continued to be drawn and grew as the pencil hesitated at a point. I reproduce the temporality of a line by viewing it. I follow: gooo, stop, goo, stop, go, stop, go, stop, go, stoppp... (2)

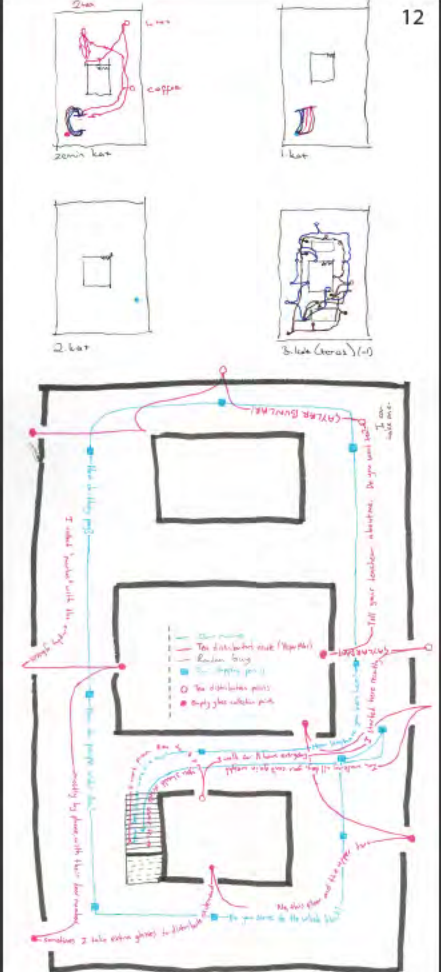
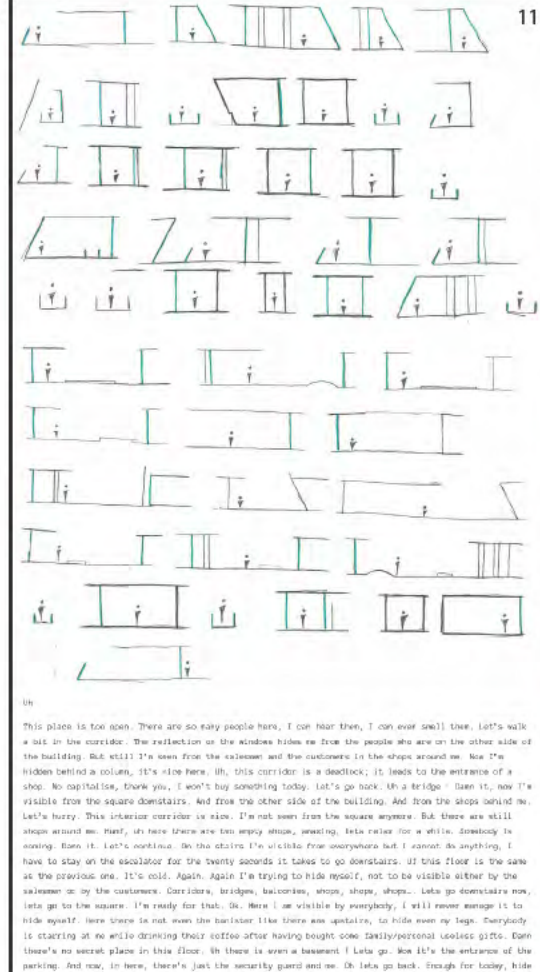
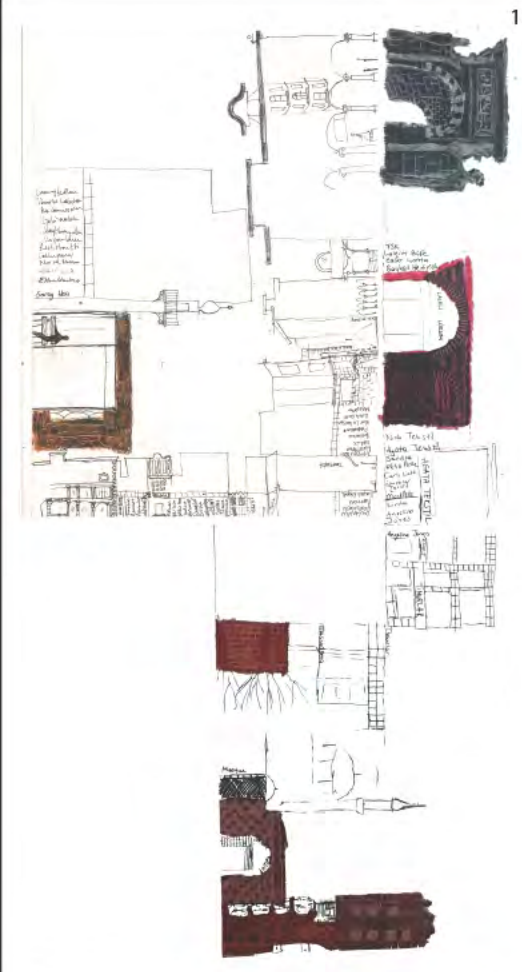
Third walk: Here is the square of crowded gatherings and noisy transitions. This mapping is about lined-up and focused assemblies that last about 3 or 5 minutes each. Another piece reads expansive, focused and directional noises. In assemblies and noises alike, short durations of times must have been referring to the cyclical repetitions of these movements and sounds. (3, 4)

Fourth walk: Here is the square of past, present and future occupations. A rectangle and a circle are here not only with a single space at where they are located, but also with the trace of the area they just left and the possible territory they are about to be. It seems as if there is no space for another, this place is just as big as these many to fit. (5)

Fifth walk: This is a square where it is nearly impossible to stand still. Here the movements are almost like waves, some are diffused into each other and some start other movements or directs them. There are ones that seem to avoid the waves or take refuge in the corners. It also seems possible to go through the waves in perpendicular direction. (6)

Sixth and seventh walks: This is the square of here and now. Each present action diffuses the effect of the previous one. The effects of actions stay suspended for a while but then they fade when a new one appears, they fade more when new ones happen in succession, and consequently they disappear in a few seconds. Yet, a replication of the lost effect is going to be left by another action that is to happen a few seconds later, maybe another will leave the same effect just before the previous one disappears. The first action will never be remembered, neither there will be a need to be remembered. Someone who sees this map will swear that an action she witnessed 2 years ago is here and now. (7, 8)

I had to take a break from the walks at this moment, a map-maker friend had popped-in my office. As usual, there were mappings at the top of my large table in the middle of the room, more were laid on the shelves and floor. And also on the walls, there were an accumulation of mappings of several years of teaching. With a short glance, he argued that the subjective differences



possible stories hidden behind the dislocated/ re-located materials



the legend

nida —
gance —
tayan —

the stories and ideas lying behind the re-located and dislocated trapezoidal sheets are imaginary with the aim of creating alternative realities and possibilities

route the numbers may be connected to follow the same route as we did but other routes are also possible since each space is interconnected

these tens of mappings contain, the changing line qualities, differing approaches to the place and the multiple knowledges they produce due to varying makers, in short all the qualities that excited me were invalid. He pointed out that the traditional maps have gained their claims of objectivity in hundreds of years through numerous difficulties, and tried to convince me that a map-maker should avoid all subjective mistakes and for that a plan view is ideal as it shows everything simultaneously from a single viewpoint. How could knowledge change according to the one who produces, then how would we be able to agree on the boundaries, name, ownership, and the use of a place? An architect friend who agreed him claimed that we could not pursue an architectural practice if everyone questioned the knowledge of place and produced from personal views. She added that she found it useful when an authority monopolize the production of maps, because objective maps show us the empty plots that are available to be constructed upon. This argument lasted for longer.

After a while, I asked these two knowledgeable friends of mine, the place of H, did they come across a place called H during their works in the city? Did they know where it is? No-one saw this place, which I first heard of in Peter Greenaway's film, *A Walk through H: The Reincarnation of an Ornithologist* (1978). My ambitious map-maker friend immediately went away to search for it in the atlases, he was sure that it would have been drawn somewhere. The architect friend, who loves traveling, also left me in order to search for H in her photos and sketches, she was sure that she had passed through it one day in one of her trips. After they left, I continued to compile the maps and note down rigorously the names of the students who made them. But as we have discussed a lot in the courses and searched for other ways of being there while making maps, mappings cannot be merely defined by makers' names but they included qualities that reflect their makers' other peculiarities, actually they had to in order to gain a critical stance. As I continued to examine the details, I started to realize who saw what, how, and why they have drawn as such. All clues were inserted in the maps by the makers. The makers aimed that the ones who view these maps would form their own interpretations and question the knowledge of the particular map.

One of the mappings was made by Nida on 15 February 2016, at the late hours of our architectural design studio. Due to her observer personality and rigorous working habits, she has produced a good example of map-maker being mapped while mapping. Disrupting the controlling and distanced plan view, she documented where she stands and what she sees and hears from there. I read the question she was asked of another park while she was sitting at a corner in Gezi Park at 16.30, her recordings of sounds and routes of airplanes above, her observation of a woman standing on the stairs with a baggage, and her mixed thoughts about the pedestrian who walks up and down the stairs. I understand that she walked towards the square at 16.43 and someone wished her good for her mapping. I realize that she has drawn herself at the lower left corner, but apart from that I can understand where she stands at which minute, looking at the documented details which could only be seen or heard at an intimate distance. The map also shows the things that affected her and gets more detailed when she could stay longer at a certain

place. Lastly, her recording of the other students' locations makes this mapping a key to all the others made at the same studio. (9)

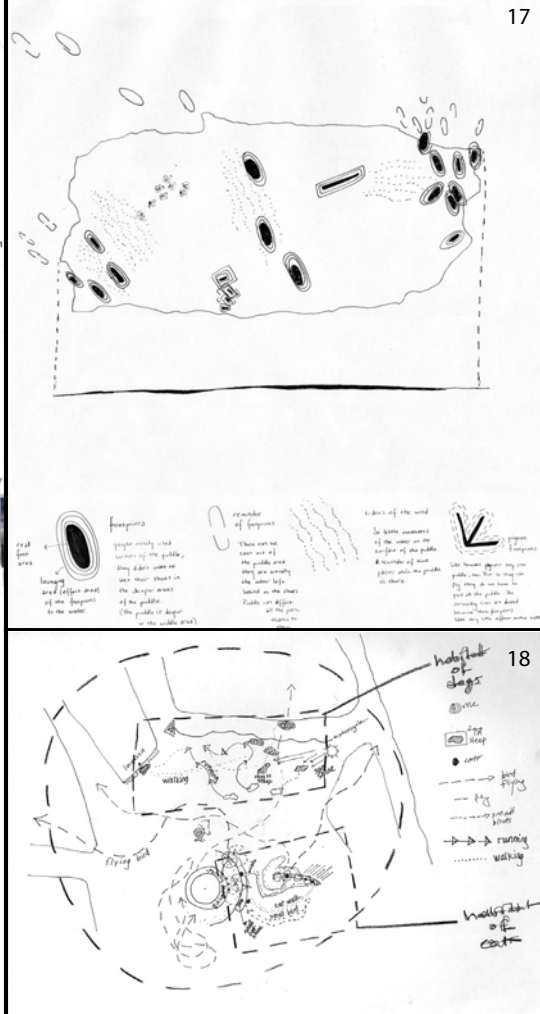
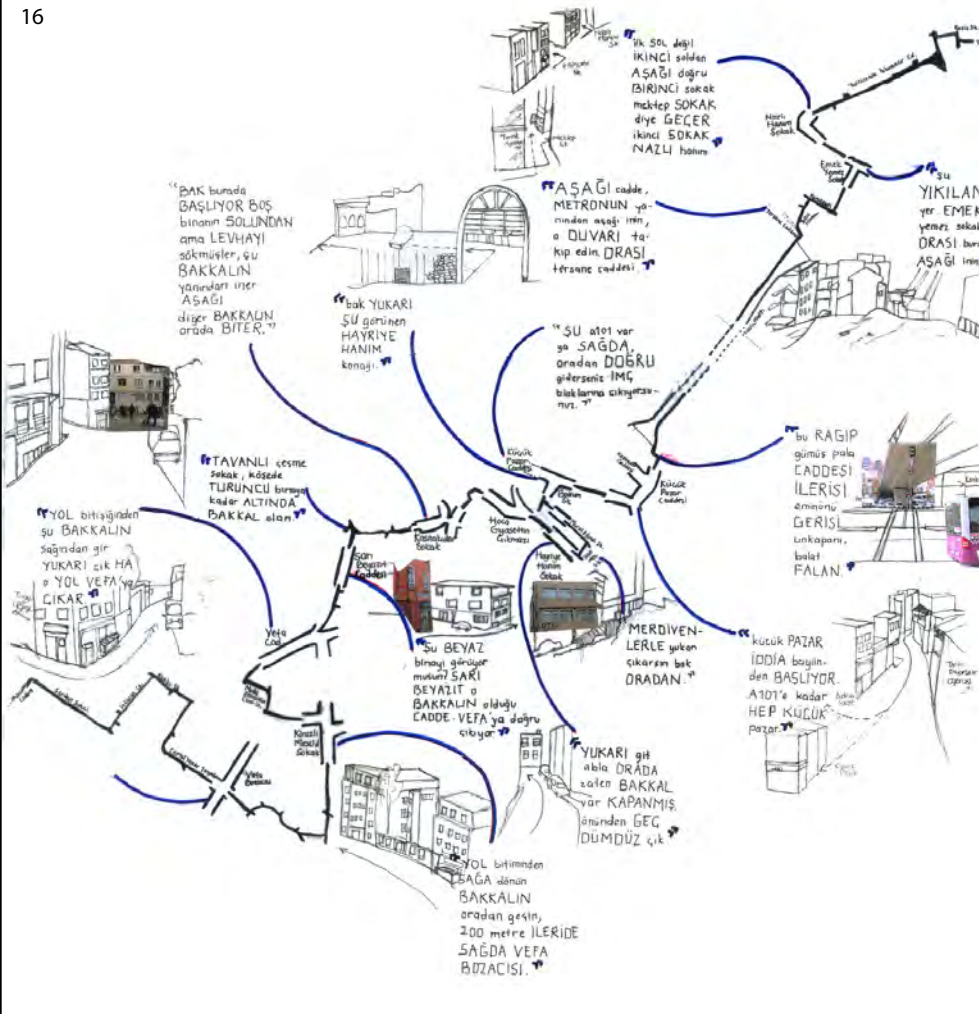
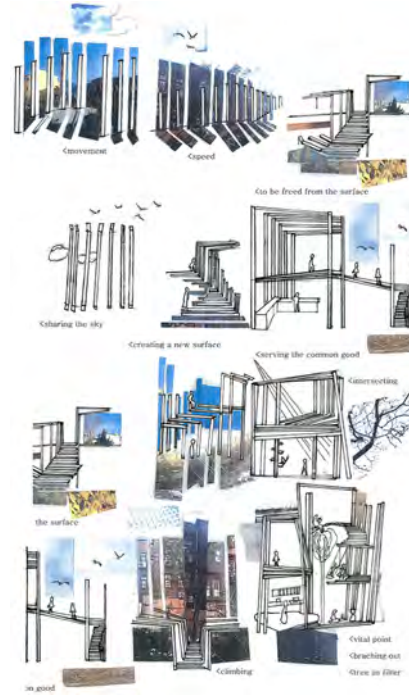
Another mapping was made by Ekin and Elif at our elective course where we walked from Laleli to Çemberlitaş on a cold Tuesday in March in the same year. Their sensitive and sentimental personalities were reflected in the mapping in different ways. While walking the same route, one has noted down all the name plates of shops, the other one documented the wall textures in between those plates. One got lost in the chaos of the city, the other found materials that she could connect within that complexity. The drawing maps the makers twice by mapping their divided perception between signs and materials and by including their changing point of views. (10)

Katerina made one of the mappings at the course of the week after, in Levent at Kanyon Shopping Mall, which is advertised as the extension of the street. The mapping, which reflects Katarina's critical personality, documents the controlling views she faces at each step in the mall, her awareness of her visibility on reflective surfaces, her desperation when she realizes that she is under control of the security people even when she could hide between columns, at the underground carpark, and in the dead-end corridors. She avoids a singular representation and shows in multiple sections the ways in which her body is surrounded or exposed at each location. (11)

Another map was made by Sena, Alperen and Eva at one of the open courtyards of Istanbul Textile Market (İMÇ) during a course in the second half of April. In this mapping, which shows the route of the tea deliverer and the route of the map-makers drawn parallel but in different colours, one can observe the correspondences between them: the map-makers ask questions and the tea deliverer answers, the tea deliverer distributes teas to shop owners and the map-makers wait outside, the tea deliverer moves around the market and the map-makers follow him. We can think of the ways in which the form of the correspondence and the events of the moment define specific knowledges produced at a time and place. (12)

This mapping was produced by Nida, Gamze and Taylan in Süleymaniye in the same course I teach this year. The mapping is about the disappearances and unexpected appearances of metal sheets, which were used to surround the large demolition sites of urban regeneration in the neighbourhood. I see that each one of the three focused in different details and mapped from different viewpoints. The fictional stories they wrote on the ways in which the metal sheets are displaced seem to be an act of resistance against the large-scale demolitions and disappearance of all traces of life through a call for imagination. (13)

It took longer than I thought to order the mappings, I had to find the best way to categorize for further research, analysis and arguments about architectural education. I tagged the mappings according to these data: date of production, name of producer, place name, subject of study, and production technique. In addition, referring to the Chinese Encyclopedia of Borges, I classified the maps according to being critical, informative, entertaining, imaginative, incomprehensible, unbearable, distorting the reality, about the



dead, about the stray dogs, colourful, incomplete, superfluous, irrational, and forgotten. In each classification some mappings remained outside and most probably I made mistakes as I hardly remembered or understood some. Therefore I decided to acknowledge where I stand as an educator, I was going to handle the mappings according to which roles and purposes I proposed in architectural education.

I proposed one of the mappings to be able to communicate with people. The market was crowded with all kinds of people, buyers, sellers, just lookers, those who were leaving the prayer at the mosque, carriers, tea-deliverers... How does an architect get involved in this scene? A cry like "Come and have a look, I have fresh plans and models!" would hardly work. Mapping was only possible through helping people in their work, handing-over the pen or camera in order for them to have their say, and having a conversation by asking the way. Different profiles of people could work in collaboration through this mapping which was made by handing over the pen; adults expressed their thoughts and feelings by writing, children painted their favorite places, and my students drew the locations they met others. (14) A collective memory of Vefa was revealed through the mapping of way-finding questions and the answers of local people. Merve, the student who made this mapping, continued to map the collective memory of actions in Vefa through her architectural design project. The proposal mapped the way-finding of people and animals in the labyrinthine structure while they were continuously becoming aware of each other's existence and activities at another part of the site. (15, 16)

We completed some mappings for remembering. This city is transforming rapidly, things may be demolished, covered, displaced, and replaced overnight. A mapping of deconstructing the additions to a traditional Balat house and comparing different additions in the neighbourhood allowed us to study the connections between past and present spatial habits. (17) We made many maps to claim a place in the public space. One of them was the mapping of traces of life at a puddle in Gezi Park and another was mapping the negotiations of people and animals in the street. These mappings allowed us to understand the present limits of urban spaces and also participate in the everyday life of those places. (18, 19)

We started many mappings to question the agendas of architectural education and the ways in which architecture is practiced. We made mappings in order to strengthen each participant in a collaboration and suggest an egalitarian working environment. Arguing for the value of experiential knowledge, we explored new methods that allow everyone to have subjective experiences of place. We pursued dynamic mappings that reproduce concept and material, and narrative and place through a dialectical relationship between them. Mappings allowed us to draw attention to social inequalities and to criticize top-down construction decisions.

The narrative mappings I include here, simultaneously produce multiple views of places through involving the maker and viewer in the three-dimensional world of models. Each reading of the stories collected at an empty plot in Vefa allowed us to imagine

dynamic architectures that gather different inhabitants at different times of the day and year: a mobile vegetable seller who comes in the mornings, starlings that spend the winter in Istanbul, children who come to play after school, cats who wander around at night and visitors like us passing by. (20) A mapping of a trip around the new Haliç metro bridge, which caused an unexpected gap within the traditional neighbourhood, produced an accumulation of hundreds of years of spatial imagination through a subjective experience of the place and inscription of collected stories on the map. (21) In contrast to the top-down construction decisions of municipalities, the proposal includes a transformable architecture that hardly changes the place of a single piece of dust and invites inhabitants to construct and deconstruct through negotiations. This proposal aims to respect the continuity between the past and future, and the long-time relationships of people and place. (22)

A mapping that reflects on the exchange of furnitures and building elements as a result of regeneration projects in Süleymaniye, that which cause large-scale demolitions and displacement of local people, allowed us to relate with other lives and propose a commoning architecture to resist displacements and socio-spatial segregation. The proposal was about a hidden garden for storing furniture and building elements, that which transforms into a place of inhabitation at night time by turning the whole structure over. (23) At another demolished corner of the same neighbourhood, an architecture without doors was proposed as a mapping of activities related with food preparation, and exchange and eating, those already took over the previously private site after its demolition. The proposal offered a mapping of the temporary activities at the site, with an intention of not fixing the locations and subjects of them. (24) Another mapping suggested connections between the stories of displaced societies and today's inhabitants in Beyoğlu though the topological possibilities of a textile: folding, layering, and gathering. I remember that this mapping allowed us to think of site as an accumulation of different lives rather than an empty plot and architecture as a peacemaker between those lives. (25)

The possibilities of new thinking and producing in architectural education has multiplied since I proposed these mappings. Mapping doesn't seem to be a method that could be applied more than once and result in the same way. It may rather be a part of a new understanding in architectural education and suggest new probabilities in practice and thinking. Mapping could be a search for new architectures through collective working, playful learning, knowledge sharing, knowledge production through experience, common belonging to a place rather than owning, and problematizing the inequalities. While I was sitting at my office at the university and thinking, I remember that all the mappings we produced for three years and a half completed their mission, except that they remind us the excitement of production. We need to make new ones for new discussions. I am looking forward to the studio Thursday and the elective Friday in order to go to H and start new mappings.

Mappings:

1. Taksim Square mapping of fluid movements and long waitings, Ayşe Tuğçe Pınar, 2016
2. Taksim Square mapping of rhythmic progressions and periodical stops, Özlem Dobrçan, 2016
3. Taksim Square mapping of crowded gatherings, Youenn Gourain, 2016
4. Taksim Square mapping of noisy transitions, Youenn Gourain, 2016
5. Taksim Square mapping of past, present and future occupations, İlgin Hancıoğlu, 2016
6. Taksim Square mapping of impossibility to stand still, Tildem Kırtak, 2016
7. Taksim Square mapping of here, Mirko Schütz, 2016
8. Taksim Square mapping of now, Tuğçe İpek, 2016
9. Map-maker being mapped while mapping in Taksim Square, Nida Ekenel, 2016
10. Mapping the walk from Laleli to Çemberlitaş, Ekin Sıla Üstüner and Elif Turgut, 2016
11. Mapping the experience of a Shopping Mall in Levent, Aikaterini Karagiannakidou Samsarelou, 2016
12. Mapping the everyday life of a tea deliverer in Istanbul Textile Market (İMÇ), Sena Tansık, Alperen Genç and Evangelia Theodorakoglou, 2016
13. Mapping of the disappearances and unexpected appearances of metal sheets in Süleymaniye, Nida Bilgen, Gamze Kaya ve Taylan Karabaş, 2018
14. Mapping to communicate with people in the Women's Market, Anella Agic, 2016
15. Architectural proposal that maps the way-finding of people and animals in the labyrinthine structure, Merve Bıyık, 2016
16. Mapping the way-finding in Vefa, Merve Bıyık, 2016
17. Mapping the additions of a traditional Balat House, Başak Karabulut, 2016
18. Mapping of traces of life at a puddle in Gezi Park, Aysima Yavuz, 2017
19. Shared street: mapping the negotiations of people and animals, Nil Karacaoğlu, 2017
20. Mapping the everyday life routines in Vefa, Tildem Kırtak, 2016
21. Section that maps the everyday life routines, Tildem Kırtak, 2016
22. Mapping hundreds of years of spatial imagination through a trip around new Haliç metro bridge, Nida Ekenel, 2015
23. Hardly changing the place of a single piece of dust: Plan that maps the spatial negotiations, Nida Ekenel, 2015
24. Hidden garden of day-night shift: Mapping of the changing uses of second-hand furniture and building elements, Seçil Yatan, 2015
25. Open Kitchen: mapping of the temporary activities at the site, Cansu Özay, 2015
26. Site as an accumulation: Mapping of past and present inhabitants in Beyoğlu, Sıla Avar, 2017