

# Taksim Square after 1950

BİRGE YILDIRIM OKTA

This chapter examines various fragments which reveal the impact of urban interventions in the development of Taksim Square from the mid-twentieth century. Situated at the end of the Beyoğlu neighbourhoods – the main arena of change and modernity in late Ottoman Istanbul – and at the beginning of the expanding new neighbourhoods of Şişli, Harbiye, Nişantaşı and Maçka, in the Republican period Taksim became an arena where ideologies such as nationalism, secularism and cosmopolitanism competed to find spatial forms. This article explores the shifting political powers that would mark the later part of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Istanbul by studying the urban interventions on Taksim Square.

In the mid-20th century, Turkey underwent a transition from single-party to multi-party rule. The ruling Republican People's Party, founded by Atatürk, made changes to the constitution and paved way for the Democrat Party, a moderately right-wing political party whose leaders were land owners and whose main power base was the rural voter<sup>1</sup>. The Democrat Party (DP) won the elections in 1950 with a promise of liberalisation. It had a strong appeal among rural people who had struggled economically during the Second World War. Under the slogan “one millionaire in every neighbourhood”<sup>2</sup>, the DP government succeeded to achieve an uncontrolled economic boom in the Turkish economy with a 13% growth rate.<sup>3</sup> The international atmosphere of the Cold War era also helped the DP to gain foreign funds from the USA, and Turkey was one of the first receivers of the US Marshall Aid. Turkey's membership to NATO in 1952 further helped the DP government to gain economic growth and implement the liberalisation policies they had promised during the election campaigns.

Soon after the transfer of power, the DP government, led by prime minister Adnan Menderes, began to implement wide-ranging initiatives such as investments in infrastructure, energy production and the industrialisation of agriculture<sup>4</sup> (a main objective of the US Marshall aid), increasing investments in agriculture and

---

<sup>1</sup> For further reading please see, Akpınar, İpek. “Urbanization represented in the historical peninsula: Turkification of Istanbul in the 1950s 1” (2018) and Pelt, Mogens. “Adnan Menderes, Islam, and His Conflict with the One-Party Era Establishment” in: Jung D., Raudvere C. (eds.) *Religion, Politics, and Turkey's EU Accession*. Palgrave Studies in Governance, Security, and Development. (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> “Her mahalleye bir milyon”, election slogan of Adnan Menderes.

<sup>3</sup> Akpınar, İpek Yada. “İstanbul'da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes'in İcraatı”, In *İmparatorluk Başkentinden Cumhuriyet'in Modern Kentine: Henri Prost'un İstanbul Planlaması (1936–1951)*, ed. .C. Bilsel and P. Pinon, (İstanbul: Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2010), 167–199.

<sup>4</sup> Baykan, Ayşegül. and Hatuka, Tali. “Politics and culture in the making of public space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977”, *Istanbul, Planning Perspectives*, 25:1, (2010), 49–68.

providing cheap credits to farmers. During the first term of the DP rule, the agricultural area increased to 25.3 million hectares from 16 million in 1948. Investments in infrastructure were mainly directed to the construction of roads. 6415 km of road was built between 1948 and 1961, the majority during Menderes' government. This period also saw a remarkable improvement in energy production. Several dams were built and the total electricity production was increased from 790 million kWh to 2,815 million kWh by 1960.<sup>5</sup> Production of crude oil increased by 343,000 tons between 1948 and 1959.

Istanbul was a focal point for the majority of government investments. Workers employed by the new initiatives started living in the city. The number of workers in Istanbul grew to four times its previous number. As the production increased significantly, so did the consumption. Industrialisation and unplanned urbanisation of the major cities resulted in massive internal immigration from rural areas and towns. Between 1950–1955 the population of Istanbul saw an increase of 55% reaching 1.5 million. Parallel to the increase in population, the number of motor vehicles rose dramatically from 1,971 in 1944 to 20,868 in 1955.<sup>6</sup> This increase created a chaotic situation in major cities, especially in Istanbul. Traffic congestion was a frequent occurrence and public transport was poor. As a consequence, Menderes announced an urban renewal program which he said would aim to “reduce traffic congestion, regularising existing street patterns, demolishing buildings in the vicinity of the grand mosques, opening large avenues, and increasing Istanbul's attractiveness for foreign visitors”.<sup>7</sup>

While Istanbul was once more becoming the centre of commerce and industry, it also served as a stage for a demonstration of the DP's nationalist and religious discourse helping to consolidate its conservative vote base. Prime minister Menderes not only transformed Istanbul with massive urban reconstruction projects but also managed to transform the social character of the city by homogenising the ethnically heterogeneous population. Although the roots of this can be found in the nationalist agendas of the new republic, during Menderes' rule the large Greek minority of Istanbul became target of Islamic and nationalist mob violence.<sup>8</sup> It was a forceful nationalisation of the Turkish middle class.<sup>9</sup>

Menderes initiated many social changes, taking several symbolic decisions such as lifting the ban on the call to prayer in Arabic (which was performed in Turkish

<sup>5</sup> Gül, Murat. *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul*, (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2009), 129.

<sup>6</sup> İstanbul Belediyesi Neşriyat ve İstatistik Müdürlüğü, *Cumhuriyet Devrinde İstanbul*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1949).

<sup>7</sup> Akpınar. “İstanbul'da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes'in İcraatı”, 167–199.

<sup>8</sup> The 6–7 September Riots (1955) were triggered by the growing Greek demands that the still British-controlled Cyprus should be united with Greece. While the matter was about to be discussed by the United Nations, Turkish demonstrators in Istanbul started expressing their discontent with Greece and Greek Cypriots, especially in the Taksim area. On September 6, 1955, the protesting crowd was enraged by a false evening press story claiming that the birth house of Atatürk in Thessaloniki had been the victim of a Greek bomb attack, and started attacking the Greek neighbourhoods of Istanbul, vandalising properties and businesses belonging to non-Muslims, killing and injuring dozens. In the aftermath of the riots thousands of Greeks left Istanbul for Greece, followed in 1964 by 9,000 Greek nationals living in Istanbul who were deported as a retaliation to new developments in Cyprus. Thousands of Greek family members with Turkish citizenship also left with them. As a result, the non-Muslim population was greatly reduced and their properties were appropriated. The neighborhoods they vacated, mainly around Taksim Square, were filled by Kurds and Turks who migrated from rural areas. The cosmopolitan culture and socio-economic landscape of the city changed irreversibly. Many of the merchants, artists, shopkeepers and tradesmen were gone.

<sup>9</sup> Bozdoğan, Sibel. and Resat. Kasaba, *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* (University of Washington Press, 1997), 3.

during the previous two decades) and also lifted the ban on religion programs on state radio. These were symbolic but still very visible changes. In addition, 15,000 mosques were built throughout Turkey, together with 16 schools for the education of Islamic clergy, contributing to the physical and social change in urban centres.<sup>10</sup>

Another significant decision taken by the DP government was decommissioning Prost and cancelling his planning project for Istanbul. Henri Prost (1874–1959), a French architect, had been the chief planner for Istanbul since 1936.<sup>11</sup> The new government considered him a foreigner who did not appreciate the needs of the city, and wanted Turkish experts to prepare the plans for Istanbul. The new municipal council and the city's revision committee accused Prost for being under the influence of the previous government, for not training Turkish planners and failing to complete his work on time. They also criticised his planning work and relieved him of his post.<sup>12</sup> As the revision committee started to revise the Prost plan the demolitions of infrastructural constructions were already under way.

It was not a coincidence that newspapers of the period announced Istanbul as the most modern city of the near future. The dream was to build a motorised city, with large boulevards, high-rise buildings and modern apartments. Menderes implemented his utopian dream for Istanbul through and across the historic quarters of the city. Several neighbourhoods, historic areas and monuments were erased in the process.<sup>13</sup> As a result of Menderes's redevelopment program, 7,289 buildings were demolished and 5,540 properties expropriated.<sup>14</sup>

During the Menderes period, Taksim Square continued its role as a stage for the demonstration of political ideology. Closer relations with the USA influenced not only economic policies but also cultural life in general and some fields, such as architecture, in particular. The design of the new structures built in and around Taksim Square had an unmistakeable internationalist style. An opera house at the northern end of the square had already been included in Prost's Plan and was eventually realised as a cultural centre (see below). The construction of major hotel

<sup>10</sup> Gül. *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul*, 130.

<sup>11</sup> Prost's planning principles can be summarised under three fundamentals concepts; transportation, hygiene and aesthetics, as can be seen in his plans for Taksim Square as well: around the Square, new roads were opened and some were enlarged to enhance transportation. Park No.2 and the İnönü Esplanade – the later Gezi Park – were opened as recreational areas for city dwellers and in order to promote a healthier lifestyle. These so-called *escapes libres* were not only open spaces for recreation and beautification but also representations of a new concept of liberal movement and a secular public space where men and women enjoyed a mixed social life. For further reading see Akpınar, İpek Yada. "The Rebuilding of İstanbul After the Plan of Henri Prost, 1937–1960: From Secularisation to Turkish Modernisation", PhD thesis, Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, (University of London); Bilsel, Fatma Cana. "Shaping a Modern city out of an Ancient Capital: Henri Prost's plan for historic peninsula of İstanbul", IPHS Conference Proceedings, Barcelona, July 2004; Bilsel, Fatma Cana. "Remodeling the Imperial Capital in the Early Republican Era: the Representation of History in Henry Prost's Planning of İstanbul", In *Cimrina Power and Culture: Identity, Ideology, Representation*, ed. Ausma Cimrina and Jonathan Osmond, (Pisa University Press, Pisa, 2007), 83–97; Bilsel, Fatma Cana. "Henri Prost's Planning Works in İstanbul (1936–1951) Transforming the Structure of a City through Master Plans and Urban Operations", In *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City*, ed. C. Bilsel and P. Pinon, (İstanbul: İstanbul Research Institute, 2010), 101–168; Bilsel, Fatma Cana. "Escapes Libres: Parks, Promenades, Public Squares...", In *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City*, ed. C. Bilsel and P. Pinon, (İstanbul: İstanbul Research Institute, 2010), 353–362.

<sup>12</sup> Gül. *The Emergence of Modern Istanbul*, 137; Akpınar. "İstanbul'da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes'in İcraatı", 178.

<sup>13</sup> Baykan. "Politics and Culture in the Making of Public Space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977", 49–68.

<sup>14</sup> Kuban, Doğan. *İstanbul An Urban History*, (İstanbul: The Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey, 1996), 417–457.



Fig 1–3. Transformation of Taksim Square, 1943–1983. © the author, reproduced from Urban transformations in Istanbul during the term of mayor Cemil Topuzlu (2017).

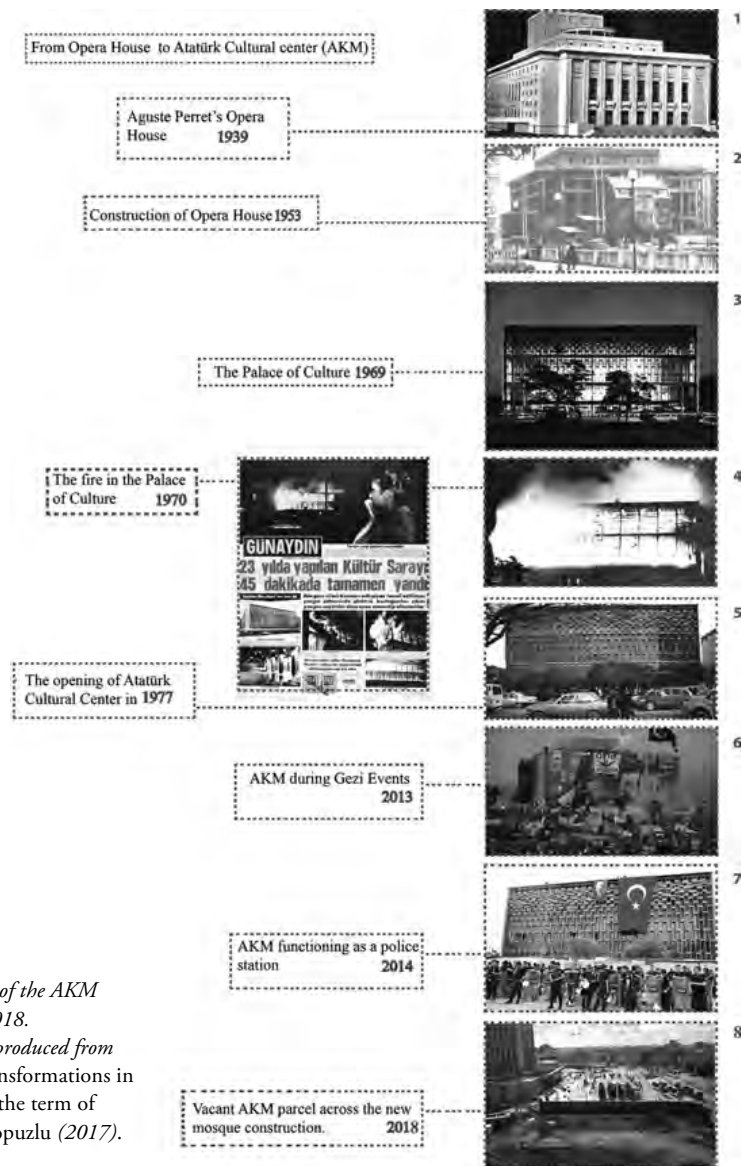


Fig. 4. Timeline of the AKM project, 1939–2018.  
© the author, reproduced from *Okta*, Urban transformations in Istanbul during the term of mayor Cemil Topuzlu (2017).

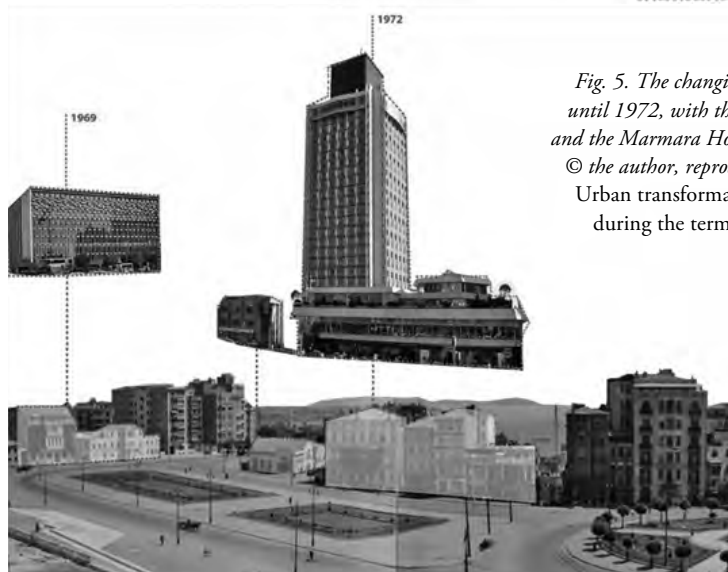


Fig. 5. The changing face of Taksim until 1972, with the AKM to the left and the Marmara Hotel in the middle.  
© the author, reproduced from *Okta*, Urban transformations in Istanbul during the term of mayor Cemil Topuzlu (2017).

buildings such as Hilton Hotel, Intercontinental hotel (today's Marmara Hotel), and the Sheraton hotel (today's Ceylan Intercontinental Hotel) took pace in this period. These grand buildings stood on or in adjacency to Taksim Square as visible manifestations of the global economic policies of 1950s.

Istanbul's new urban transformation process was a result of the liberal economic policies of the Menderes government and financed by foreign loans. The transformation of the square continues today, albeit with new actors. The current AKP government sees itself in continuity with Menderes's Democrat Party,<sup>15</sup> and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as prime minister and currently president, has kept initiating changes to the physical environment. A mosque on Taksim Square was first proposed by the Menderes government; although other conservative political leaders tried resuscitating the proposal, it is only now, under Erdoğan's leadership, that the plans have been realised.

The current Taksim Square seems like the embodiment of Lefebvre's theory of how 'abstract spaces' – which serve the joint interests of capitalist investors and the state – replace public spaces.<sup>16</sup> At Taksim, profitable transformation projects have produced an abstract space, destroying the public aspect in the process. While the square has suffered from neverending demolition and construction work ever since the days of the Menderes government, profit seeking interventions and ideological urban policies compete for a prominent self-representation on Taksim Square. The transformation of the square over decades can be traced by followed in the fate of three major projects. The first one is the Atatürk Kültür Merkezi (Atatürk Cultural Centre, AKM). The original plans for a city theatre and an opera house here were suspended when the Menderes government came to power and the building was only finished in 1969 as a cultural centre. Beginning in 2008, the AKM was demolished, silently and piece by piece, at the same time as new the Taksim mosque was being built on the opposite side of the square, finally bringing the plan of the Menderes era to realisation. The third transformation of the square – after the AKM and the Taksim mosque – begins with the Hilton Hotel. The Hilton was the first large hotel to be built in the vicinity of the square and led the way for the construction of other large and small hotels turning the neighbourhood into a hotel district.

## From Istanbul opera house to Atatürk cultural centre

The first internationalist proposal for Taksim Square, included already in the Prost plan, was the construction of an opera building.

Theatres and opera houses were central features of 19<sup>th</sup>-century European city planning and considered basic components of a modern city. Already in the late Ottoman era, the mayor of Istanbul Cemil Topuzlu (1866–1958), had toyed with the idea of a city theatre and invited the famous French theatre manager André Antoine (1858–1943) to Istanbul.<sup>17</sup> His initiative was noticed by Henri Prost who began his work on the new Istanbul master plan in 1936. He was supported by Lütfi Kırdar, the then governor of Istanbul, and the choice of location fell on the Taksim Square.

<sup>15</sup> AKP Lideri Erdoğan: DP'nin devamıyız (2003, 16 May) *Hürriyet*, Accessed August 15, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Lefebvre, Henri. *Production of Space*, (Malden MA: Backwell Publishing, 1991).

<sup>17</sup> For wider reading on period of Cemil Topuzlu see Yıldırım Okta, Birge. *Urban transformations in Istanbul during the term of mayor Cemil Topuzlu*, 2017.

The first design, made by the French architect Auguste Perret, was in the form of a city theatre; comments published in the newspapers at the time expressed a wish for a grand design of the façade facing Taksim Square.<sup>18</sup> Due to the economic strains of the World War II, however, the plan was never realised. The next noteworthy attempt was made by the Turkish architects Feridun Kip and Rüknettin Güney in 1946, who envisioned it as an Opera House. Construction works started but were, again, suspended because the municipality lacked funds. The prevailing political powers of the day considered the building of an opera house “too luxurious for a city which didn’t have proper roads or a sewer system”.<sup>19</sup>

The project was then transferred to the Ministry of Public Works, which commissioned the architect Hayati Tabanlıoğlu to design it as a cultural centre. This time, the construction was interrupted by the changing political realities of the 1950s. After Adnan Menders and the DP came to power, Lütfi Kırdar was removed from his office and the new government initiated a number of inquiries investigating allegations of corruption in the process of major construction works in Istanbul.<sup>20</sup> Just before decommissioning Prost as chief planner for Istanbul, the new municipal council called for an inquiry to investigate the expropriation of land acquired for City park no. 2.<sup>21</sup> The proposed park stretched from the Maçka valley and joined the green areas of the so-called İnönü Gezisi or İnönü Walk at Taksim. Some members of the council alleged that Prost secretly worked for former president İnönü and on December 30, 1950, *Cumhuriyet* reported Prost’s dismissal from his job at the city council.<sup>22</sup> The entire project that included City Park no. 2, the Cultural centre and a statue of İnönü was cancelled, and the name of the İnönü Gezisi was changed to Gezi Park.

The plans for a cultural center at Taksim did not disappear from the agenda<sup>23</sup> but construction was interrupted for ten years. The Menderes government prioritised infrastructure projects such as roads and highways or homes for middle-class families. In his visions for Istanbul, Prost had prioritised Istanbul’s Greco-Roman heritage in the desire to create a European city;<sup>24</sup> the Menderes government, by contrast, tried to emphasise its Turkish and Islamic legacy by clearing structures around Ottoman monuments and erecting new mosques.<sup>25</sup> Constructing an opera house or cultural centre was not a main priority.<sup>26</sup> It was only after the overthrow of the Menderes government in 1960 that the plans were taken up again, and it was not until 1969 that the Palace for culture could open its doors. Within a year of its opening, a fire badly damaged the building. Repairs took a long time; it opened again in 1977 as Atatürk Cultural Centre. For three decades it hosted many performances of opera, ballet and concerts, becoming a leading producer of per-

<sup>18</sup> Şehir tiyatrosu, *Akşam*, 1939, December 3, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Sayar, Zeki. “Opera Binası”, *Arkitekt*, 1953-05-06, (259–260), 94.

<sup>20</sup> Akpınar. “İstanbul’da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes’in İcraatı”, 176.

<sup>21</sup> Prost’un mukavelesinin uzatılmaması kararlaştı, *Cumhuriyet*, 1950, 27 December, 1, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Şehir meclisinin dünkü toplantısı, *Cumhuriyet*, 1950, December 30, 2.

<sup>23</sup> İstanbul Operası 1962 senesinde açılacak, *Cumhuriyet*, March 3, 1960, 5.

<sup>24</sup> Bilsel. “Henri Prost’s Planning Works in Istanbul (1936–1951) Transforming the Structure of a City through Master Plans and Urban Operations”, 73; Akpınar, “İstanbul’da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes’in İcraatı”, 180.

<sup>25</sup> For annual reports of the period please see *İstanbul’un Kitabı*. For the Ottoman-Islamic discourses of the Menders government see Akpınar. “İstanbul’da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes’in İcraatı”. For the deconstruction of “parasite buildings” surrounding mosques and making mosques visible see the daily newspaper of the time, *Havadis* 05.08.1957, 25.10.1956, 08.12.1956.

<sup>26</sup> Akpınar, 176.

formative art in Turkey, at the same time as it offered a main backdrop for Taksim Square as a symbolic stage for the republican city.

At the beginning of the 21st century, it became increasingly difficult to find financial resources for maintaining the building. In 2005, Istanbul's Council for the protection of historical monuments decided to list it as a Grade 1 cultural heritage, seemingly ending a period of controversy which threatened the building with demolition. Nevertheless, the building was closed in 2008. Hopes that it might open again were briefly raised in 2011, when a company was commissioned with its restoration. The company was given 540 days to fulfil the contract so that the building could be reinaugurated on 29 October 2013, the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Republic. The restoration work, however, seemed more like a demolition project to those passing by it; the place looked even more abandoned and derelict than before. In 2013, some of the Gezi Park protestors occupied the building; once they had been evicted by the security forces, it was used for some while as a logistical headquarters for the police. It was finally demolished in 2018. Currently, a new AKM, designed by architect Murat Tabanlıoğlu – the son of Hayati Tabanlıoğlu – is under construction on the same site.

The story of the AKM is a story of the changing ideologies, governments and political priorities of recent Turkish history. In the early Republican era, successive governments pushed for a westernisation of Istanbul and subsidised western-style arts and culture. The cultural centre at Taksim was a product of these endeavours, the symbol of a modern, secular Republic. Its demolition has taken place simultaneously with the building of the new mosque on the opposite side of the square, a celebration of the pious, conservative electorate that brought first the DP and then the AKP governments into power. The drama unfolding at Taksim Square thus manifests the passing of political power from secular to conservative circles.

## The construction of a mosque in Taksim Square

The DP government played an important role in the restoration and renovation of Ottoman mosques. Monuments from the Ottoman period were not only used to strengthen the city's Turkish and Islamic image, but also to appeal to tourists. In the 1950s, as wholesale demolitions of neighbourhoods in the historical peninsula were undertaken as a means to modernise the city, historic monuments, especially Ottoman ones, were selected for preservation. Structures neighbouring mosques were demolished to achieve a clear view to the mosques. Akpınar argues that these changes were deliberate policies for two reasons. Firstly, the ruling party hoped to gain political support from conservative voters. Secondly, the DP believed that they would help establish closer links with Middle Eastern countries.<sup>27</sup>

Taksim did not fit into this vision. It did not have any monumental mosques – instead, a monumental Christian church, the Greek Hagia Triada cathedral, dominated the skyline to the south, reflecting Taksim's cosmopolitan past. As political power swung from supporters of a secular nation-state to supporters of liberal conservative policies under the DP, proposals were put forward for building a large mosque in Taksim Square.<sup>28</sup> Kemalists, who felt marginalised by the DP,

<sup>27</sup> Akpınar. "İstanbul'da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes'in İcraatı", 182.

<sup>28</sup> Evliyagil, Necdet. "Taksim'de Büyük Bir Cami Yapılacak", *Cumhuriyet*, February 14, 1952, 3



saw the principles of the secular state at stake<sup>29</sup> and claimed that the DP was trying to roll back the modernisation projects of the republic.<sup>30</sup>

The Menderes government was overthrown in the 1960 military coup and a new constitution was adopted in 1961, which weakened the power of majority governments. After the return to civilian rule, in the late 60s and during the 70s, most governments were coalitions made up of several political parties. In contrast, the power of civic organisations grew as a result of increased democratic, economic and social rights provided by the new constitution. In this period the country suffered a growing economic crisis, as well as violent tension between opposing political convictions. Public spaces and institutions, and especially universities became battle grounds between left- and right-wing groups.<sup>31</sup> Taksim, as the centre of the city, with its vast open plateau, became a stage for political demonstrations. Taksim was easily accessible thanks to the road system designed during the Prost period, and had been further enlarged during the Menderes years. In the 1970s, Taksim was the recurrent scene of large demonstrations, and came to be accepted as the city's main stage for political action.

This changed with the Labour Day celebrations on May 1, 1977. On that day, unknown perpetrators opened fire on an assembly of the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DISK) in Taksim, killing and injuring dozens. It went down in history as Turkey's Second Bloody Sunday (a similar event having taken place at Bayezid Square just a few years earlier).

Only twelve days later, an application was handed in to the High Council for the Preservation of Monuments and Cultural Assets proposing the building of a mosque and shopping centre immediately next to the historical wall of the old *maksem* (water reservoir) on the western side of Taksim Square. This move was perceived not only as an attempt to distract attention from the tragedy but also as an effort to curb the power of the square as a rallying-point of social solidarity and political change. The applicant was the ruling Nationalist Front government, led by prime minister Süleyman Demirel (1924–2015). The mayor of the Beyoğlu municipality enthusiastically referred to the mosque as “our grandest project”.<sup>32</sup> Still, the application for the ‘Sacred Taksim Mosque and annexes’ was merely a preliminary one, as it was unclear who owned the land. The Government hoped to secure permission from the High Council for the Preservation of Monuments to join together several parcels of land owned respectively by the State Directorate of Historical Trusts (100 sqm), the Greater Istanbul Municipality (180 sqm), Ziraat Bank (1624 sqm) and the Treasury Department (795 sqm), all behind the wall of the *maksem*. Two months after the application, the High Council for the Preservation of Monuments announced:

There is no objection to building a new mosque from the perspective of the preservation of historical monuments. A mosque can be built without any restrictions on the proximity to the historical *maksem*, on the condition that the *maksem* water system is not harmed and the surrounding rubble and garbage dump is removed.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Ekinci, Oktay. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*, (İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1997), 14

<sup>30</sup> Tanju, Bülent. “Asıl Yakan Temsilîyet”, in *İmkânsız Değil, Üstelik Gerekli: Küresel Savaş Çağında İyimserlik*, ed. İ. B. Ayvaz, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları / İKSV, 2007), 90–105.

<sup>31</sup> Baykan, “Politics and culture in the making of public space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977”, 49–68.

<sup>32</sup> “Taksim’e cami yine gündemde”, (1996, 13 Temmuz), *Cumhuriyet*, July 13, 1996, 17.

<sup>33</sup> Ekinci, Oktay. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli* 14.

After the announcement, the Ministry for Public Works proceeded to acquire the required permits to build the ‘Sacred Taksim Mosque and annexes’,<sup>34</sup> including car parks, banks and a shopping centre. However, despite there being no more administrative obstacles at this point, the project was blocked again as a result of the military coup on 12 September 1980.

In the aftermath of the 1980 military coup, İsmail Hakkı Akansel (1924–2016) was appointed mayor of Istanbul. He declared Istanbul’s biggest problem to be the lack of car parks, triggering a campaign for building car parks at various locations in the city. A car parks project, developed at the mayor’s office, saw Taksim as a prioritised area, and the land reserved for the proposed mosque was requisitioned for the car park project. The Ministry of Housing and Urbanisation approved the application and the previous proposal for a mosque cancelled. In response to the decision, an appeal was sent to the city municipality by the chief executive of the State Directorate of Historical Trusts, Süleyman Eyüboğlu, who explained why building a mosque in Taksim was a necessity:

The Taksim neighborhood is a crowded touristic center with high-rise hotel buildings. The foreign policy of the current Turkish government includes intensive initiatives targeting the Islamic world and the Arabic countries. Building a mosque in Taksim will draw the attention of the Arabic countries to Turkey and Taksim will gain an international identity. In recent years a conference by the member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation was held at the Istanbul Sheraton Hotel (today’s Ceylan Intercontinental Hotel). Members who attended the conference mentioned the need for a mosque nearby and furthermore, we heard that some Arabic states talked about providing funds for the construction. All of this evidence shows how much of a necessity the mosque is for the Taksim district”.<sup>35</sup>

As seen from Eyüboğlu’s comment, it was seen as a major argument for the mosque that it would boost attraction among tourists from Arabic countries, and that even the funding of it may come Arab sources.

Being rejected by the Istanbul municipality, the State Directorate of Historical Trusts took their case to the High Court of Appeals in 1983, which upheld a lower court decision that the proposals for a “Sacred Taksim Mosque and annexes” did not meet planning principles, did not satisfy planning requirements and did not contain a strong argument for the good of public interest. The political scene, however, changed yet again after the military handed the power back to civilians after the general elections on November 6, 1983 and the Motherland Party (ANAP) formed a new government. The following year saw the ANAP winning local elections in Istanbul and their candidate, Bedrettin Dalan, becoming new city mayor. Dalan announced that he intended to “take over Taksim Square”.<sup>36</sup>

Dalan’s visions were in line with those of his government: that is, they would now occupy the square with their projects. Soon the mosque project was back in the agenda, this time with a larger shopping centre. Dalan commissioned the architect Ümit Yurtseven to study the existing proposals for the mosque, and Yurtseven reported back with a new proposal that enlarged the area for the original project to include the *maksem* water reservoir. But Dalan’s administration was pressured to subject such major initiatives to democratic procedures, and when it eventually

<sup>34</sup> 1923’ten 1996’ya gelişmeler. *Cumhuriyet*, July 19, 20.

<sup>35</sup> İkinci. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*, 20.

<sup>36</sup> “Taksimi alacağız”: İkinci. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*, 22.

announced a competition for an urban design project for Taksim Square, the rules and design specifications did not include any mosque at all and furthermore stipulated that the *maksem* should be preserved.<sup>37</sup> As it were, neither the winner, Vedat Dalokay, nor the runners-up proposed any mosque on the area of the *maksem*. Regardless, Dalan expressed his hope that a mosque could be built in a design that would not clash with the modern features of the new project.<sup>38</sup>



## Taksim'e yeraltı trafiği

İstanbul'un "prestij alanı" olarak seçilen Taksim Meydanı'nı düzenleme projesini kazanan Vedat Dalokay, pek çok sorunu yer altında çözüyor. Trafiği, otobüs ve taksi duraklarını tamamen yer altına alan projede, Güneşsuyu yönünden gelen araçlar yer altına girerek Sheraton Oteli'nin yanında yüzeye çıkıyorlar. Şişli yönünden gelen araçlar da Divan Oteli'nin önünden yer altına girerek Siraselviler caddesinde yüzeye çıkıyorlar. Bu arada Kazancı yokuşundan Siraselviler'e kadar pek çok bina yıkılarak "Marmara penceresi" ve AKM'den Sheraton Oteli'ne inen Mete caddesinin bir cephesi yıkılarak, "Boğaz penceresi" adı verilen seyir pencereleri açılıyor. Şimdiki sular idaresinin bulunduğu

yer sergi ve kültürel faaliyet alanı olarak değerlendirilip hemen arkasına bir gökdelen yapılması planlanıyor. Dalokay'a göre gökdelen ya uluslararası kongre ve kültür sitesi olacak ya da belediye sarayı. Bu arada aynı alan için uzun yıllardır cami yaptırma yönünde de çalışmalar sürüyor. Taksim Meydanı'ndaki Atatürk büstü de (Cumhuriyet Anıtı) yükseltilerek ışıklandırılıp ön plana çıkması sağlanıyor. Dalokay'ın projesinde cami bulunmuyor. Beyoğlu Belediye Başkanı, Taksim'e yapılacak caminin alanın şanına yaraşır, "şahane" bir yapı olması gerektiğini belirtirken, Dalan, yeni projenin modernize yapısına ters düşmeyecek bir cami yapılabileceğini belirtiyor.

Fig. 6. Project by Vedat Dalokay, winner of Urban Design and Project competition for Taksim Square. Cumhuriyet, Jan 4, 1988, 14. Courtesy of Cumhuriyet, reproduced from Oka, Urban transformations in Istanbul during the term of Cemil Topuzlu (2017).

During the next local election, in 1989, some conservative candidates tried to gather votes by speaking out in favour of a Taksim mosque, but the election was won by Nurettin Sözen from the Social Democratic People's Party (SHP). His priority was to build a metro system for Istanbul, with Taksim as its central station. The mosque project was dismissed since the existing proposals did not include a metro station. In response, supporters of the mosque project founded a private

<sup>37</sup> İşören, Erol. *Taksim Meydanı Kentsel Tasarım Proje Yarışması Şartnamesi*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediye Başkanlığı, 1987).

<sup>38</sup> Çakır, "Taksim'e cami tartışması", 14.

trust named the Taksim Mosque Arts and Culture Centre on July 16, 1992. Its objective was registered as “building a centre that includes a mosque, shopping centre and a carpark with arts and culture centre on the land which is known as Taksim Mosque land and owned by the State Directorate of Historical Trusts”.<sup>39</sup>

In a protocol sent to the State Directorate of Historical Trusts, the trust listed all the obstacles they intended to overcome. The list included difficulties related to the legal ownership of the land, convincing the municipality to make changes to the planning, making the Ziraat Bank rescind its legal application to the courts for the repossession of the land parcels it had leased to the State Directorate of Historical Trusts ten years earlier, commissioning detailed architectural plans for the mosque to be drawn, and acquiring the approval from the Committee for the protection of Istanbul’s historical heritage for the plan. But since the Ziraat Bank’s legal case for repossession continued without a decision, and the Committee required archeological excavations before it could examine the case, the Taksim Mosque Trust failed to fulfil its objectives. Instead, it pinned its hopes to a conservative victory at the next general elections.

In 1994, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected city mayor of Istanbul for the Islamist Welfare Party. On 21 June 1994, the municipality council approved a planning permission which earmarked the land next to the *maksem* water system for a mosque and shopping centre. At a press conference, Erdoğan said, “we will give planning permission for a mosque, and its foundation stone will be laid by President Süleyman Demirel”.<sup>40</sup> An excavation permit was given to the High Council for the preservation of Monuments in the hope that an archaeological investigation would speed up the building process. Instead, the excavation brought Ottoman and Byzantine finds of great archeological value to the light, including a



Fig. 7. The AKM in 2017, shortly before demolition. Photo: Olof Heilo.

<sup>39</sup> İkinci. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*, 26.

<sup>40</sup> İkinci. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*, 30.

necropolis and a part of the *maksem* water system, making construction on the site impossible, at least temporarily.

A entirely new design for the Taksim Square was commissioned and other sites for the mosque were proposed.<sup>41</sup> The leader of the Welfare Party, Necmettin Erbakan (1926–2011), prime minister in 1996–97, suggested the Gezi Park on the northern side of the square.<sup>42</sup> The plans polarised the public and the tone in the debate was harsh. The minister of culture for the Erbakan government, Ismail Kahraman, said “we are going to build a very large mosque in Taksim Square” and Erbakan himself was quoted saying “the mosque will be built no matter what”<sup>43</sup> and “they are like mad dogs when it comes to objecting to the mosque”.<sup>44</sup> Daily newspapers<sup>45</sup> give a glimpse of the struggle between conservatives and secularists over the symbolic space of the square. Kemalists saw the mosque as an offense against the secular reforms of Atatürk, a step towards radicalism.<sup>46</sup>

New projects for the Taksim mosque were put forward, carrying additional functions such as conference and exhibition halls and bigger car parks. At last, on 19 January 2017, the Committee for the protection of Istanbul’s historical heritage discussed the enlarged project and approved it. Construction started immediately, on 17 February 2017, and is almost finished by the time when this is written. The latest stage in a seemingly neverending feud, the construction of the mosque has radically changed the face of the square.



Fig. 8. The new mosque shortly before completion in 2020. Photo: Frederick Whitling

<sup>41</sup> Ekinci. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*, 34.

<sup>42</sup> Ekinci, Oktay. “Taksim düzenleniyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 1997, July 23, 18.

<sup>43</sup> Cami bal gibi yapılacak, *Cumhuriyet*, February 19, 1997, 6.

<sup>44</sup> Camiye kuduruyorlar, *Cumhuriyet*, February 5, 1997, 4.

<sup>45</sup> Sey, Yıldız. “Taksim Camisi Üzerine”, *Cumhuriyet*, February 22, 1997, 2 and Camiye kuduruyorlar, *Cumhuriyet*, February 5, 1997, 4.

<sup>46</sup> Dilipak, Abdulrahman. “Terbiye sınırını zorlamak”, *Vakit*, July 13, 1994, 3.

## Three Hotels in Taksim: Hilton, Sheraton, Marmara

The international tourism industry underwent a major surge about the time when Turkey adopted its multi-party political system, and prime minister Menderes saw a great opportunity in attracting foreign visitors to Istanbul. He supported the construction of large hotels and wide boulevards that connected the city center to the airport, and – a centerpiece of the Menderes era – centrally located hotels for tourists.

The first one of these was built in the middle of what would have been Prost's City park no. 2: the Hotel Hilton.<sup>47</sup> Construction started in 1952 and the official opening ceremony on 10 June 1955 was attended by Conrad Hilton himself. In his opening speech, Conrad Hilton claimed that the international chain of Hilton hotels was a challenge to the communist world. As a matter of fact, building the hotel in the middle of the green corridor was made possible by privatising Prost's city park. The fact that the hotel was an invasion of public space with no respect to the users of the city could be heard between the lines in his speech:<sup>48</sup>

These hotels are not a front to the people who welcomed us with open arms but a challenge to the supporters of the lifestyle that is propagated by the communist world.<sup>49</sup>

Incidentally, the construction of the hotel had been financed by the Turkish State Pension Office.<sup>50</sup>

The building of Hotel Hilton was the first major step in the transformation of Taksim Square and its surroundings into a hotel district. In 1975, a historical building on the southern side of Taksim Square was demolished. This building had been designed as a large house by Alexandre Vallaury for the chief executive of the Ottoman Bank, and had many original features reflecting the architectural style of the 19th century. It was replaced by what was first known as Intercontinental Hotel, then Etap Hotel, and is now known as The Marmara Hotel. This huge building radically changed the perception of the square.<sup>51</sup>

Taksim Casino, an entertainment hall which had staged music and cabaret shows and been frequented by the republican elite, was also pulled down in the same year, erasing another piece of urban memory. The hall stood in the middle of the Gezi Park and was replaced by the Sheraton Hotel, now known as the Ceylan Intercontinental Hotel. In 1991, the TED Club opposite of it vacated its grounds to be replaced by the Hyatt Regency Hotel.<sup>52</sup> The cluster of skyscrapers received a particularly controversial addition in 1998 with the Ritz-Carlton Süzer Plaza, popularly known as *Gökkafes* (sky cage) just down the hill towards the Bosphorus. It was built despite widespread objections and cemented Taksim as an area of hotels dominated by international chains.

<sup>47</sup> Akpınar. "İstanbul'da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes'in İcraatı", 182.

<sup>48</sup> Wharton, Annabel Jane. *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

<sup>49</sup> Mehmet Altun. *Hilton İstanbul*, (İstanbul: Ofset Yapımevi, 2010), 7.

<sup>50</sup> Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry General Directorate of State Archives, Hilton Oteli, Fon no: 30 18 1 2 - Kutu no: 124 - Dosya No: 86 - Sıra No :4, 1950, 26 Nov.

<sup>51</sup> As can be seen from drawings on panoramic pictures, Prost had envisaged this part of the square as a viewing terrace, overlooking the Bosphorus.

<sup>52</sup> Güney, Ruknettin. and Aysu, Fazıl. "Tenis, Eskrim ve Dağcılık Kulübü", *Arkitekt*, 1945-05-06, (161-162), (İstanbul: Nurgök Matbaası, 1945), 97-99.



Having started with larger hotels, the building boom around the Taksim area continued with smaller ones.<sup>53</sup> Neighbourhoods next to Taksim, such as Talimhane, İstiklal, Galata and Siraserviler, were soon full of hotels appealing to foreign tourists and the area became the target of capitalist investment for temporary users. Squares, parks, and streets were privatised and filled with consumer goods and services and the area was simultaneously gentrified and cut off from the urban landscape of Istanbul at large. The stage of the public space was dominated by hotels and tourists, to be followed by restaurants and bars, shopping facilities and other consumer activities.

A key factor in all of this was the 1980 military coup. The years following the coup saw the rapid dismantling of foreign exchange controls, controls on imports and national development plans, including measures for protecting the local economy from international competition.<sup>54</sup> From now on, all main Turkish cities and especially Istanbul were to be shaped by private investors in accordance with the logic of global capital, and all that was expected from the government was to create a suitable climate to attract foreign investors.<sup>55</sup> According to Brenner and Theodore, transformed cities of this kind become incubators of ideological and political strategies.<sup>56</sup> Liberal economic policies accelerated the transformation of Taksim: beginning with the large hotels, the square and its surroundings became a part of the global economy, and its public spaces gained a sterile and manicured look, ready to be commercialised.

## Conclusion

Although Liberalism advocates a free system and the rule of market economy with minimum state intervention it still expects the state to control and manage the consequences and contradictions of the system.<sup>57</sup> The liberalisation process feeds on inequality and crisis and thus becomes a permanent process transforming the society and its spaces guided by the market.<sup>58</sup> As liberalism takes advantage of socio-spatial inequalities, cities become stages for both the demolition and reproduction of public space and for movements, which resist this process.

Government officials adopt creative destruction processes for their advantage. Their objective is not solely capital growth. Instead, they use the process to create powerful new actors so they can divert and manage possible political and economic crises and thus protect the system from collapsing.<sup>59</sup> All these views and quotations are very relevant and help us understand several transformations that Istanbul had to endure, especially all the controversial projects in and around Taksim – the

<sup>53</sup> Tanju, Bülent. "Asıl Yakan Temsiliyet" In *İmkânsız Değil, Üstelik Gerekli: Küresel Savaş Çağında İyimserlik*, edited by İ. B. Ayvaz, 90–105, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları / İKSV, 2007.

<sup>54</sup> Keyder, Çağlar. "Arka Plan", In *İstanbul Küresel ile Yerel Arasında*, ed. Ç. Keyder, (Istanbul: Yayılcık Matbaacılık Ltd., 2000), 23.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>56</sup> Brenner, Neil and Theodore, Nik. "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism'", In *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*, ed. Neil Brenner and Nick Theodore Chichester, (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2002).

<sup>57</sup> Brenner. Brenner, Neil and Theodore, Nik. "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism'"

<sup>58</sup> Theodore, Nik. Peck, Jamie. and Brenner, Neil. "Neoliberal Urbanism: Cities and the Rule of Markets", In *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, ed. G. Bridge and S. Watson, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 17.

<sup>59</sup> Theodore. "Neoliberal", 21.

building and destruction of the AKM, the new hotels, the planning and dwindling of the (İnönü) Gezi Park and the proposal to rebuild the old Artillery Barracks that had preceded it, which triggered the 2013 Gezi protests, the Demirören Shopping Centre, Emek Cinema, Markiz Mall, Tarlabası 360, and the Taksim Mosque.

An examination of local neoliberal policies as a part of related global strategies, the source of finance and the creation of a legislative framework that makes transformation of the space possible, reveals more than one purpose in Taksim Square. Current developments are not merely aimed at attracting investment or creating more capital but also used to justify conservative visions of an “Ottoman” Turkish identity. At the end, however, even these transformations of Taksim Square may be expected to be all provisional. For the last hundred years, an abstract space has been continuously produced in Taksim, in different guises representing various interests. It is an ongoing struggle that has been manifested in both demolitions, demonstrations, and in the construction of new buildings.

## Bibliography

- Akpınar, İpek Yada. “İstanbul’da Modern Bir Pay-ı taht: Prost Planı çerçevesinde Menderes’in İcraatı”. In *İmparatorluk Başkentinden Cumhuriyet’in Modern Kentine: Henri Prost’un İstanbul Planlaması (1936–1951)*, edited by C. Bilsel ve P. Pinon, 167–199, İstanbul: Research Institute, 2010.
- Akpınar, İpek Yada, “The Rebuilding of İstanbul After the Plan of Henri Prost, 1937–1960: From Secularisation to Turkish Modernization”, London PhD thesis, Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, University of London.
- Altun, Mehmet. *Hilton İstanbul*. İstanbul: Ofset Yapımevi, 2010.
- Baykan, Ayşegül., Hatuka, Tali. “Politics and culture in the making of public space: Taksim Square, 1 May 1977”. İstanbul, Planning Perspectives, 25:1, 2010, 49–68.
- Bayhan, Bahar. “Taksim Camisi'nin İnşaatı Yarın Başlıyor”, Arkitera. 16 February, 2017 Retrieved: <http://www.arkitera.com/haber/28422/taksim-camisinin-insaatı-yarin-basliyor>
- Bilsel, Fatma Cana. “Henri Prost's Planning Works in İstanbul (1936–1951): Transforming the Structure of a City through Master Plans and Urban Operations” In *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City*, edited by C. Bilsel and P. Pinon. İstanbul: İstanbul Research Institute, 2010a, 101–168.
- Bilsel, Fatma Cana. “Escapes Libres: Parks, Promenades, Public Squares...”, In *From the Imperial Capital to the Republican Modern City*, edited by C. Bilsel and P. Pinon. İstanbul: İstanbul Research Institute, 2010b, 353–362.
- Bilsel, Fatma Cana. “Shaping a Modern city out of an Ancient Capital: Henri Prost's plan for historic peninsula of İstanbul”, IPHS Conference Proceedings, Barcelona, July 2004.
- Bilsel, Fatma Cana. “Remodeling the Imperial Capital in the Early Republican Era: the Representation of History in Henry Prost's Planning of İstanbul”, In



- Cimkina Power and Culture: Identity, Ideology, Representation* edited by J. Osmond, A., Pisa University Press, Pisa, 2007, 83–97.
- Brenner, Neil and Theodore, Nik. “Cities and the Geographies of “Actually Existing Neoliberalism””. In *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*, edited by N. Brenner and N. Theodore Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2002. Ltd. Doi: 10.1002/9781444397499.ch1
- Bozdoğan, Sibel, Kasaba, Resat, *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*. University of Washington Press, 1997.
- “Cami bal gibi yapılacak”, *Cumhuriyet*, February 19, 1997, 6.
- “Camiye kuduruyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, February 5, 1997, 4.
- Cansever, Turgut. “Ülke Ölçeğinde İstanbul’u Planlamak”, İstanbul, 4, İstanbul: Profil Yayıncılık, 1993, 48–60.
- Çakır, Yalçın. “Taksim’e cami tartışması”, *Cumhuriyet*, January 4, 1988, 14.
- Dilipak, Abdulrahman. “Terbiye sınırını zorlamak”, *Vakit*, July 13, 1994, 3.
- Ekinci, Oktay. *Bütün Yönleriyle Taksim Camisi Belgeseli*. İstanbul: Çağdaş Yayınları, 1997.
- Ekinci, Oktay. “Taksim düzenleniyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, July 23, 1997, 18.
- Ekinci, Oktay. “Taksim üzerine imar oyunları”, *Cumhuriyet*, February 24, 1997, 18.
- Ekinci, Oktay. “Taksim’de kimlik yarışı”, *Cumhuriyet*, June 25, 1994, 6.
- Ekinci, Oktay. “Taksim Camisi Belgeseli: Hem ibadet hem ticaret”, July 31, 1994, *Cumhuriyet*, s.4.
- Evliyagil, Necdet. “Taksim’de Büyük Bir Cami Yapılacak”, February 14, 1952, *Cumhuriyet*, 3.
- Gülersoy, Çelik. *Taksim: Bir Meydan’ın Hikâyesi*. İstanbul: İstanbul Kitaplığı, 1986.
- Güney, Ruknettin and Aysu, Fazıl. “Tennis, Eskrim ve Dağcılık Kulübü”, *Arkitekt*, 1945-05-06, (161–162), 97–99. İstanbul: Nurgök Matbaası, 1945.
- Harvey, David. *Paris, Capital of Postmodernity*. New York: Routledge, 63–76, 2003.
- İstanbul Belediyesi Neşriyat ve İstatistik Müdürlüğü*. Cumhuriyet Devrinde İstanbul, İstanbul: İstanbul Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1949.
- “İstanbul Operası 1962 senesinde açılacak”. *Cumhuriyet*, March 3, 1960, 5.
- İstanbul’un Kitabı* (1950–57), <https://archive.org/details/IstanbulunKitabi1950-1957Yillari/page/n5/mode/1up>
- İşözen, Erol. *Taksim Meydanı Kentsel Tasarım Proje Yarışması Şartnamesi*. İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediye Başkanlığı, 1987.
- Keyder, Çağlar. “Arka Plan”, In *İstanbul Küresel ile Yerel Arasında* edited by Ç. Keyder. 9–40, İstanbul:Yaylacık Matbaacılık Ltd., 2000.
- Kuban, Doğan. *İstanbul An Urban History*. İstanbul: The Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey. 1996, 417–457.
- Kuyucu, Ali Tuna. “Ethno-religious ‘unmixing’ of ‘Turkey’: 6–7 September riots as a case in Turkish nationalism”, *Nations and Nationalism*, 11(3), 2005, 361–380.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *Production of Space*. (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Malden MA: Backwell Publishing, 1991.
- Okta, Birge Yıldırım (2017). *Urban transformations in Istanbul during the term of mayor Cemil Topuzlu*. METU JFA, (34:1) 1–19.  
doi: 10.4305/METU.JFA.2017.1.2

- “Prost'un mukavelesinin uzatılmaması kararlaştı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 1950, 27 December, 1,6.
- Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry General Directorate of State Archives. Opera Binası İstanbul Opera Binası VI. Kısım İnşaatına ait Mukavele Tasarısı, Fon no: 10 9 0 0 - Kutu no: 408 - Dosya No: 1232 - Sıra No: 1, 1960.
- Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry General Directorate of State Archives. Hilton Oteli, Fon no: 30 18 1 2 - Kutu no: 124 - Dosya No:86 - Sıra No:4, 1950, 26 Nov.
- Sayar, Zeki. “Opera Binası”. *Arkitekt*, 1953-05-06 (259–260), 94.
- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Eldem, Sedat Hakkı. “Turistik Otel”. *Arkitekt*, 1952-03-04 (243–244), 56–63.
- Som, Deniz. “Taksim Alanı'na bir dernek cami yaptırmaya çalışıyor”, *Cumhuriyet*. March 8, 1979, 1.
- ”Şehir meclisinin dünkü toplantısı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 1950, December 30, 2.
- ”Şehir tiyatrosu”, *Akşam*, December 3, 1939, 1.
- Tanju, Bülent. “Asıl Yakan Temsilîyet” In *İmkânsız Değil, Üstelik Gerekli: Küresel Savaş Çağında İyimserlik*, edited by İ. B. Ayvaz, 90–105, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları / İKSV, 2007.
- “Taksim’e cami yine gündemde”, *Cumhuriyet*, July 13, 1996, 17.
- Theodore, Nik, Peck, Jamie and Brenner, Neil (2011). *Neoliberal Urbanism: Cities and the Rule of Markets*. In G. Bridge and S. Watson (Eds.) *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, 15–26. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. doi: 10.1002/9781444395105.
- Wharton, Annabel Jane. *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011.
- “Yeni Taksim Camii Başbakan’ın masasında”, *Radikal*, September 22, 2013  
Retrieved:[http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/yeni\\_taksim\\_camii\\_basbakanin\\_masasinda-1152005](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/yeni_taksim_camii_basbakanin_masasinda-1152005)
- Sey, Yıldız. Taksim Camisi Üzerine, *Cumhuriyet*, February 22, 1997, 2.
- “1923’ten 1996’ya gelişmeler”, *Cumhuriyet*, July 19, 1996.