| Reflection | by Helen Zhang, 1503901, 04-11-2014

| Introduction

The topic of the thesis "Shared Spaces" focuses on the interaction between the public (the observer) and the private (the user), which creates the in-between. The activities of public life and the appropriation by individuals for temporary uses encounter in the public domain of Istanbul, which displays a certain vibrancy of everyday life and a loose meaning in creation of space. The shared spaces provide the possibility for a continuous shift and interaction between the public and the private, the indoor and the outdoor spaces and become essential components in the contemporary city. The perception of in-between of the public and the private, the inside and the outside of architectural spaces is a sensual interpretation, based on spatial transitions and movement.
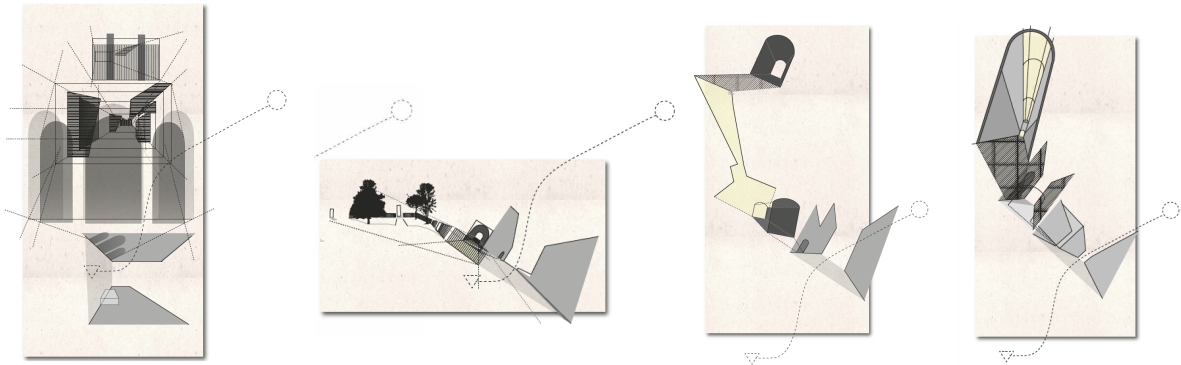
| The research includes four case studies, which all describe the in-between spaces on their own way. The temporary private extensions and a certain intimacy are the main characteristics of these spaces. These little spots, the alley, the garden, the courtyard and the passage are the marks of vibrancy of everyday life in Istanbul

| From research to design

The spatial findings of the "in-between" spaces are visualized through analytical diagrams, 2d/3d drawings, which are used to express the interpretation of the observer and translated into a new way of spatial representation. Through this method of investigation, a spatial language is extracted to create statements of intention towards a design approach. The relationship between research and design consists of translations of architectural themes, which represent the "in-between" spatial conditions, into the method of interweaving of spatial elements, which define the continuity of space (circulation), but at the same time traces discontinuity by interlocking of the same spatial elements (demarcated spaces). The method of interweaving will blur the existing spatial boundaries and create interplay between disaggregation and aggregation of space.
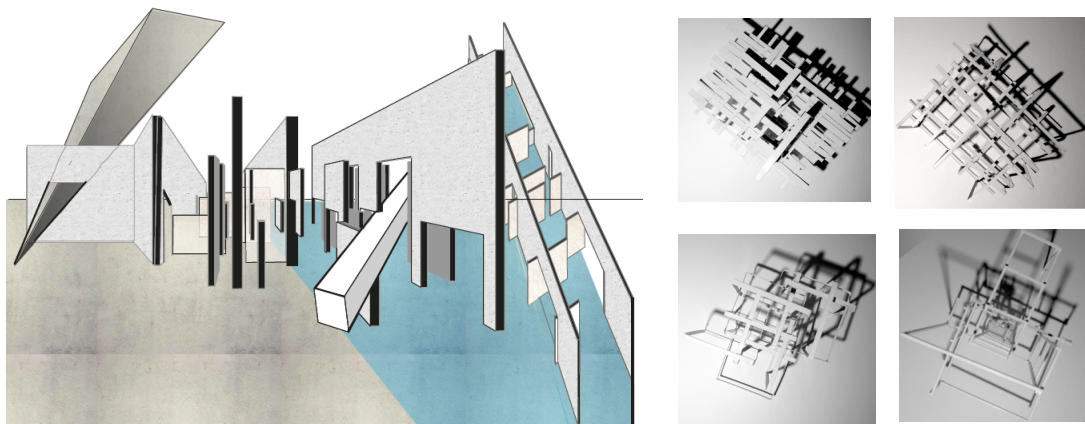

| A series of 3d-models are done to understand the spatial consequences of the method of interweaving of spatial elements, while translating the spatial conditions of the in-between space into a spatial language

| Design location

An old bridge along the Golden Horn is chosen as design location, which holds the potential to be transformed, is rather used as a "field" to explore the method of interweaving. Also, a critical understanding of the existing spatial conditions leads to different readings of the method of interweaving. The bridge is not more used for its original function and is left as floating platforms along the waterfront. It is seen as an extension of the waterfront, a horizontal surface between water and land. Interweaving of the existing surface and new interventions to transform the bridge also means creating ambiguity between surface and space, whereby the ground/the surface becomes an active constructed plane, which unfolds interactive events in time. A series of spatial explorations are done in 3D-models, using ribbons as spatial elements. The ribbons are crossing, overlapping and being folded along each other to provide a continuous circulation form different directions. The method of interweaving (crossing, overlapping, folding) of spatial element also leaves traces to be interpreted as unstable spatial boundaries, which are dissolved and fragmentized from time to time, depending on lighting, temporary uses and available routings.

| Introducing a new system in an existing structure

The intention of the design is to transform the existing spatial conditions of the bridge, which are purely based on a utilitarian system, into a flexible social space along the waterfront, by inserting new circulation systems to unfold the hidden spaces and architectural qualities on the different layers of the bridge. To develop the method of interweaving further, the exploration, based on the existing spatial conditions, goes on in different levels of scale, on the level of infrastructure (editing the road surface and walk paths on the barge), on the level of rooms (spatial organization between the existing structures) and on the level of furniture (possibilities for different uses and movements). In search for how the method of interweaving can be implemented for the opposing ideas of disaggregation and aggregation of space, the ribbons are translated into hanging walk paths through the bridge. These walk paths are crossing and overlapping each other to create continuous circulation and movement from different directions (aggregation). These elements are folded into/from the existing road surface to create an interaction between surface and space and the layer underneath becomes accessible for daylight and movement. The paths vary in widths, which will define the different tempos of movement and intensities of activities on the paths. Horizontal elements (seats) and vertical elements (walls/railings) on a smaller scale are folded from the surface of the walk paths. The continuity of material and movement will constantly be questioned during the walk, because of the folded planes, which pause the walk and introduce the awareness of a new space or movement directions to emerge (disaggregation). And at the same time, the routing changes due to the temporary acts of users. There is always a gradient of privacy created by the folded planes to trigger people to create a private time in public space.
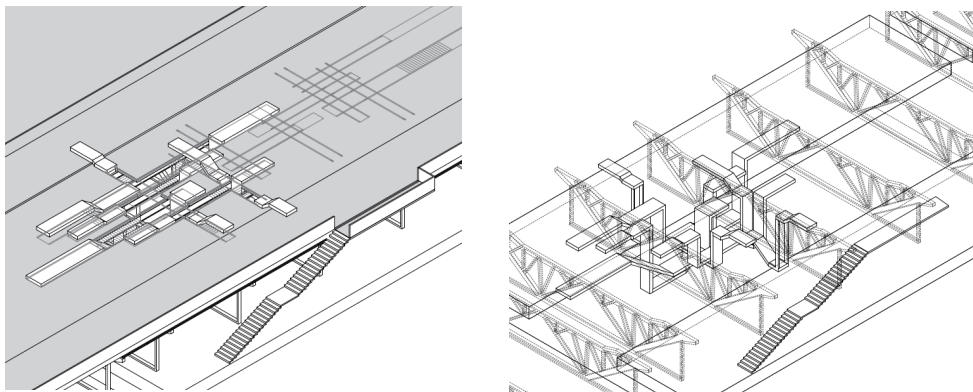
| Spatial experiments are tested in 3d-drawings to show the relationship between the new system and the existing structure.

Through these spatial explorations, the project evolves into a new routing along the waterfront, which bears a loose meaning in uses and movements. The interweaving of the new elements into the preserved spatial conditions creates a mysterious and hidden perception of the walk through/along the bridge. The urban scene (city) and the everyday life encounter in this shared space and become a flexible social space where people gather (with strangers, friends and one's thoughts), pass by (quiet strolling, jogging, cycling, sightseeing) and interact.