

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Selin Bani
Student number	5946875

Studio	
Name / Theme	Cross Domain City of the Future
Main mentor	Johan van Lierop Architecture
Second mentor	Florian Eckardt Building Technology
Third mentor	Aksel Ersoy Urban Development Management
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My decision to join the City of the Future studio stems from the unique freedom it offers to explore topics that genuinely fascinate me. The studio allows me to engage with themes that align closely with my passion, fostering a sense of curiosity and creativity in my work.

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Embrace future without erasing the past
Goal	
Location:	Küçükçekmece, Istanbul, Turkey
The posed problem,	<p>The Küçükçekmece area appears to be under pressure from the rapid urbanization of Istanbul and large-scale urban development projects such as the Istanbul Canal Project. These processes accelerate the loss of Küçükçekmece's cultural and historical identity, which is already threatened by the tension between traditional ways of life and the forces of modernization. The fishing community in Küçükçekmece faces the looming threat of urban expansion.</p> <p>Modern urban development accelerates the commodification of space, where economic priorities dominate, marginalizing traditional communities</p>

	<p>and their cultural heritage. This process results in the replacement of diverse, meaningful spaces with generic and placeless landscapes, designed for efficiency and mass consumption, leading to a loss of social cohesion and connection (Relph, 1976; Harvey, 1989). Furthermore, the spread of globalized culture and centralized authority amplifies this placelessness, further eroding the unique character of places like Küçükçekmece and threatening their identity (Relph, 1976; Harvey, 1989).</p>
research questions and	<p>Till what degree can architecture contribute to counteract placelessness and preserve the unique identity of Küçükçekmece in the context of the Istanbul Canal project?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How can we identify and preserve the unique cultural and historical identity of Küçükçekmece, considering its historical development, current threats, and the role of architecture?2. What daily practices or traditions in Küçükçekmece can contribute to preserving the community's identity?3. What are the main causes of placelessness in modern urban development, and which methods can be used to analyze and address its impact in Küçükçekmece, specifically in the context of the Istanbul Canal project?4. Which architectural and urban strategies can enhance the experience of Küçükçekmece's identity while linking historical aspects to modern needs?5. What if we reframe placelessness as an opportunity for creating new layers of identity in Küçükçekmece?

design assignment in which these result.

The design assignment aims to anchor the history of Küçükçekmece, which residents feel deeply connected to, and link its historical aspects to modern needs. Central to this project is the revitalization of a highly significant historical building, the first match factory ever established in Turkey. Once a cornerstone of the region's economy and social fabric, this iconic structure has remained unused for a considerable time, leaving its potential untapped.

The proposal seeks to breathe new life into this historic building by integrating its unique identity with a contemporary, forward-looking design. By creating a high-quality architectural and urban environment, the project aims to transform the area into a central hub where people are encouraged to spend time in both the revitalized building and the surrounding public spaces.

Moreover, the design emphasizes fostering interaction and connection among diverse stakeholders, resulting in a more dynamic and inclusive area. This new space will provide locals with opportunities to engage with the waterfront, while also preserving a functional space for the fishing community, ensuring that Küçükçekmece's historical and cultural identity is sustained in a rapidly modernizing urban context.

Process

Method description

To understand the impact of urban transformation on the historical and cultural identity of Küçükçekmece, research methods and design strategies were carefully selected to ensure a comprehensive and contextual approach. The research focuses on the interplay between heritage, urban development, and the role of architecture in preserving identity amidst changes.

A literature review formed the basis of this research. Key theoretical frameworks, such as Kevin Lynch's theories of urban identity and Edward Relph's phenomenological approach to place identity, were studied to establish a solid conceptual foundation. Additional perspectives from Violic and Burgess provided insights into the human experience of place and its transformation over time. Specific sources related to the Istanbul Canal project and its proposed master plan were analyzed to understand the broader urban, environmental, and economic implications.

To contextualize these findings, a site analysis was conducted in Küçükçekmece. This included direct observation and mapping of significant historical locations, such as the Mimar Sinan Bridge and the Menekşe Match Factory, as well as modern interventions in the area. The analysis examined the physical, social, and economic characteristics of the site to better understand the dynamics between tradition and urbanization.

To integrate diverse perspectives, semi-structured interviews were conducted with local residents, craftsmen, and stakeholders. These interviews revealed both pride in the historical identity of the area and concerns about the changes brought by the Istanbul Canal project. This qualitative data highlighted the emotional and cultural attachment of residents to their environment, as well as their fears and expectations regarding future developments.

Parallel to this, architectural and urban strategies were explored to enhance the experience of Küçükçekmece's identity while linking historical aspects to modern needs.

Finally, the design phase will emphasize materiality and craftsmanship as a means to reconnect with Küçükçekmece's historical identity.

With this methodological framework, the project brings together theoretical insights, local narratives, and speculative design to explore how architecture can serve as a bridge between preservation and progress. This approach ensures that Küçükçekmece can maintain its unique identity amidst urban transformation.

Literature and general practical references

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Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

- The City of the Future studio focuses on addressing the challenges of urban environments shaped by growing populations, with an emphasis on transforming cities into attractive, inclusive and sustainable spaces. A key aspect for the studio is to ensure that cities retain their unique identity rather than becoming generic. This dovetails seamlessly with my graduation project, which focuses on the revitalization of Küçükçekmece, Istanbul, by linking historical aspects with modern needs. The project aims to anchor the history of the area while responding to contemporary urban needs and future demands, preserving the city’s unique cultural and historical fabric.

The Architecture track encourages students to engage in creative and innovative construction projects, using design as a tool to address technical, social and spatial challenges in the built environment. My project embodies these principles by integrating heritage conservation with modern urban development, creating a space that bridges historical significance and contemporary functionality.

In line with the MSc Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences programme, my project takes a multidisciplinary approach combining architectural design, urban analysis and cultural preservation. The focus is not only on revitalizing a historic building, but also on reconnecting the local community with their heritage, while promoting a dynamic and inclusive urban environment. This project encompasses the broader mission of addressing urban challenges through innovative, context-sensitive and meaningful design.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

- The relevance of this graduation work lies in its contribution to preserving urban identity while addressing the challenges of modernization and urban transformation, which are critical issues in contemporary urban design and planning, as well as for the future, since every city aspires to progress.

Socially, the project aims to create a bridge between the past and the future in Küçükçekmece by revitalizing Turkey's first match factory. This approach allows the community to honor and reflect on their heritage while creating opportunities to move forward without compromising their cultural identity. By transforming the factory into a multifunctional space, the project fosters social cohesion, facilitates interaction with the waterfront, and ensures that traditional activities such as fishing remain integral to the area's character.

Professionally, the project serves as a model for the adaptive reuse of historical buildings, offering strategies to respect the past while meeting the demands of modern urban life. By repurposing an underutilized yet historically significant structure, the design demonstrates how heritage can coexist with progress, ensuring that historical narratives are not lost but rather integrated into future urban development. This balance provides a framework for architects and urban designers to address similar challenges in other cities.

From a scientific perspective, the project builds on urban theories such as Kevin Lynch's *Urban Identity Theory* and Edward Relph's *Sense of Place* to explore how historical preservation and forward-looking design can complement each other. By examining how a historic building can be reimagined to serve contemporary needs, the research contributes to the academic discourse on sustainable urban development. It provides a case study demonstrating how cities can embrace the future while retaining and respecting their unique identity.

This relevance positions the project as a meaningful contribution to addressing contemporary urban challenges, creating a blueprint for navigating the delicate balance between preserving the past and embracing future opportunities without eroding cultural identity.