

Fırat Erdim

Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü and Peregrine Projections

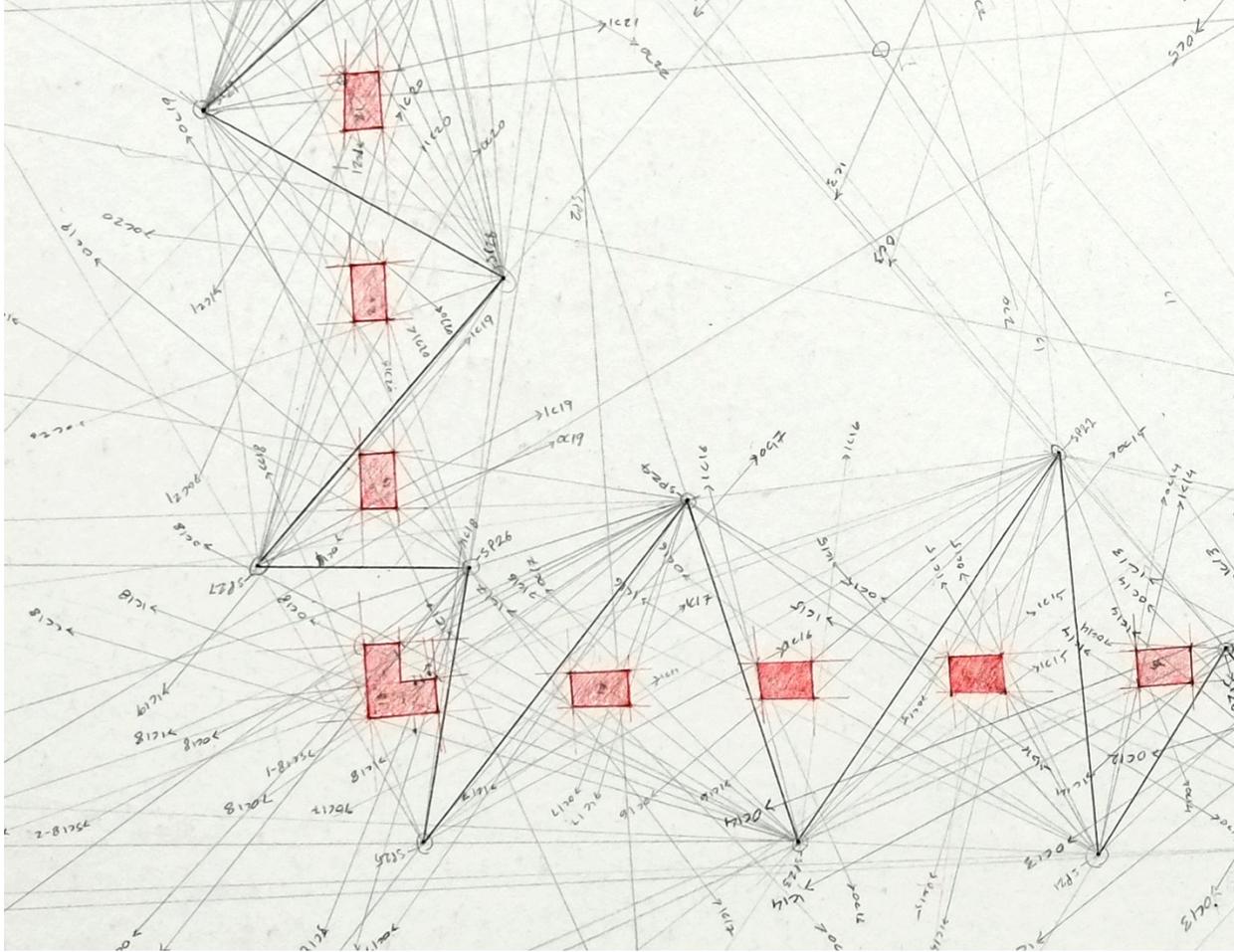
The Liberated Potential of Projection

7 Documentation of the process of tracing projected photographs to accumulate horizon lines.





fig.7



Today, as the instrumental links between design and fabrication are streamlined through digital modeling and CNC tools, the instrumentality of projection in architectural thought is increasingly questionable. This text is an account of two related projects that explore the potential of projection as liberated from its conventional role in the architectural imaginary.

The two projects, *Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü* and *Peregrine Projections*, follow the premise that orthographic projection, rather than conventionally rotating an object to reveal different views, could instead be seen as the navigation of a nomadic subject around a sedentary object. Both projects employ methodologies derived from plane table surveying, which utilizes the principle of stereoscopic vision to survey space. In plane table surveying, a plan is constructed through extending the visual sense of the body to the measure of architecture. The drafting table, made mobile, becomes a literal vessel of navigation and measurement [fig. 1]. The nature of a plan delineated through such a stereotomy of sight lines is situational, depending on the

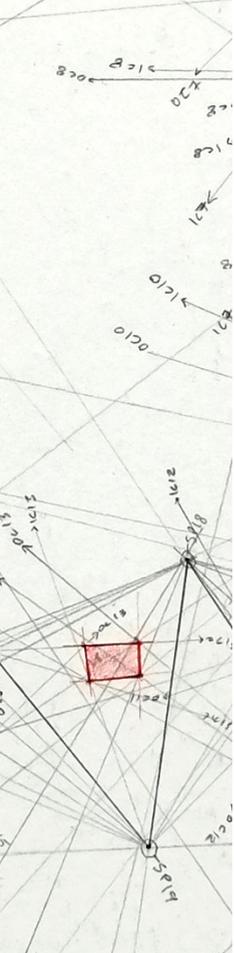


fig. 2

2 **Fırat Erdim**, detail of plane table survey drawing, 2014. Graphite and color pencil on paper, 56 x 76 cm.

order of movement and duration of time between station points along a journey [fig.2].

The two projects use similar means to unfold the dialogue between the nomadic and the sedentary. This dialogue encodes how the significance of monuments is continually reactivated or transformed by the occupation of their territory through processions, marches, pilgrimages, and parades. Such ambulatory actions are usually collective, arising from and expressing shared identities and concerns within a community. In both projects, the particular dialogue with a monument unfolds through the actions of a single protagonist within collective space.

Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü took place in Izmir during the Gezi Park Protests of 2013. Initially, the protests were aimed against the government's plans to redevelop Gezi Park, one of the few remaining green spaces in Istanbul, into a shopping center. The brutality of the police response led to a much larger wave of protests throughout the country, voicing discontent with the autocratic and authoritarian attitude of the government toward public space and public life. The Duran Adam (Standing Man) form of protest, emerging in response to police brutality, was emblematic of the tension in public space at that time. Whether there were one, five, or 100 people at the plaza, each individual stood apart from and did not speak to others. By standing upright, still and silent in the plaza of a monument, each person made themselves a part of the space of that monument. *Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü* took on this idea of becoming a "satellite monument," with a plane table circling the Izmir Clock Tower and surveying the path of the sun across the sky on the summer solstice of 2013.

The Clock Tower stands in Konak Square, at the center of state authority in the city. It was a gift, in 1901, from Emperor Wilhelm II to Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who abolished the fledgling Ottoman Constitution and Parliament. It complements the investment made by both rulers toward the construction of railroads across the Ottoman Empire to the Arabian Peninsula. As much as a symbol of modernization and westernization, connecting the East to the West spatially and relating them temporally, it is also emblematic of the role of autocratic rule in this modernization. Over the last two decades, the plaza has been widened and pedestrianized, isolating the clock tower in a square surrounded by headquarters for the governor, mayor, police, and government ministries. Ironically, widening the plaza has opened up the alternative possibility that the clock tower could function in a more archaic manner, as a sundial.

During the performance on the summer solstice, I used the radial pattern of the paving in the plaza as regular intervals by which to circle the tower and record the shadow cast by a small, souvenir version of the tower



fig. 3

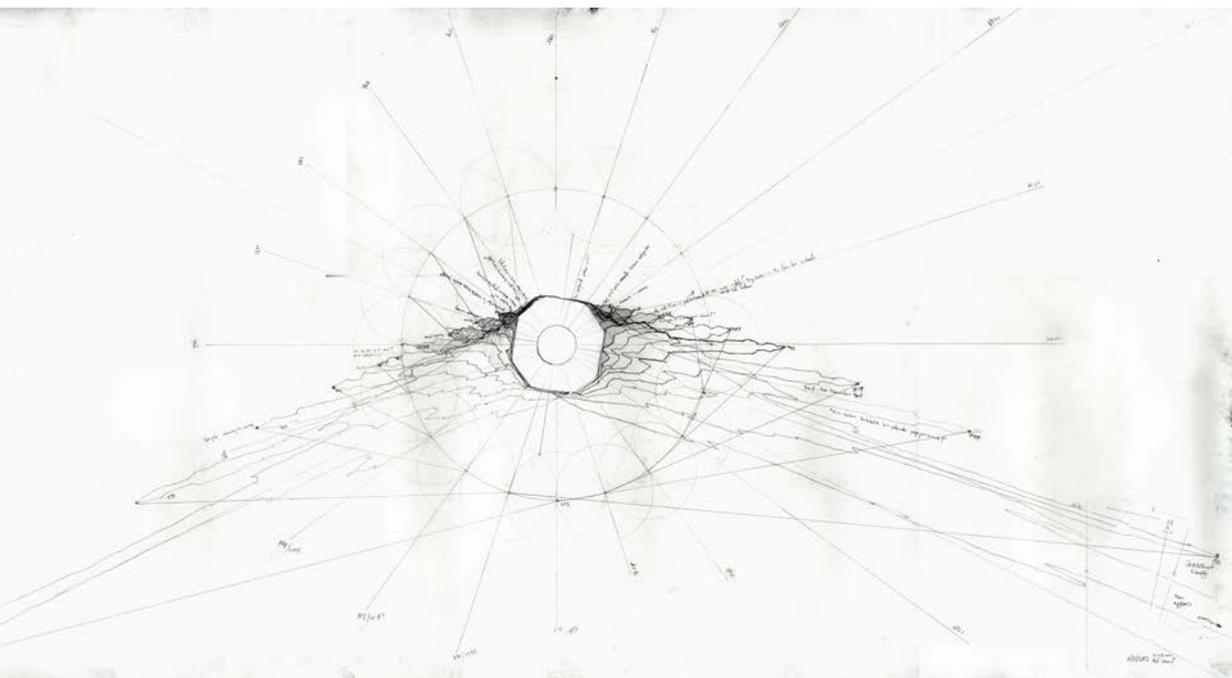


fig. 5

fig. 4



- 3 Fırat Erdim, *Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü*, 2013.
Plane table, plumb bob, compass, souvenir clock tower, graphite on paper. Documentation of surveying performance at the Izmir Clock Tower.
- 4 Fırat Erdim, *Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü*, 2013.
Plane table, plumb bob, compass, souvenir clock tower, graphite on paper. Detail of surveying performance at the Izmir Clock Tower.



5 Fırat Erdim, *Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü*, 2013. Graphite on paper. Completed survey drawing.

placed on a surveying table [fig. 3–4]. The drawing utilized the same intervals to notate conversations with journalists, passersby, undercover policemen, and fortune-tellers on the plaza over the course of that day [fig. 5]. These artifacts were then used to construct an installation, re-projecting the path of the sun across the sky that day, weaving together the geometries of encounters, my revolution around the tower, and the earth’s rotation about its axis [fig. 6].

Peregrine Projections was initiated in the Spanish city of Segovia, where, in the incessant cycle of parades and marches, the numerous bell towers act as navigation points across the city, structuring routes of procession, while the bells count time through day and night. These communal processions seemed to me to engage the city in a way that touched on something at its core, able to read or “play” the city as a turntable plays a record. Being a resident yet an outsider in the city, it seemed appropriate to invent my own processions. The drawings document these solitary walks, each



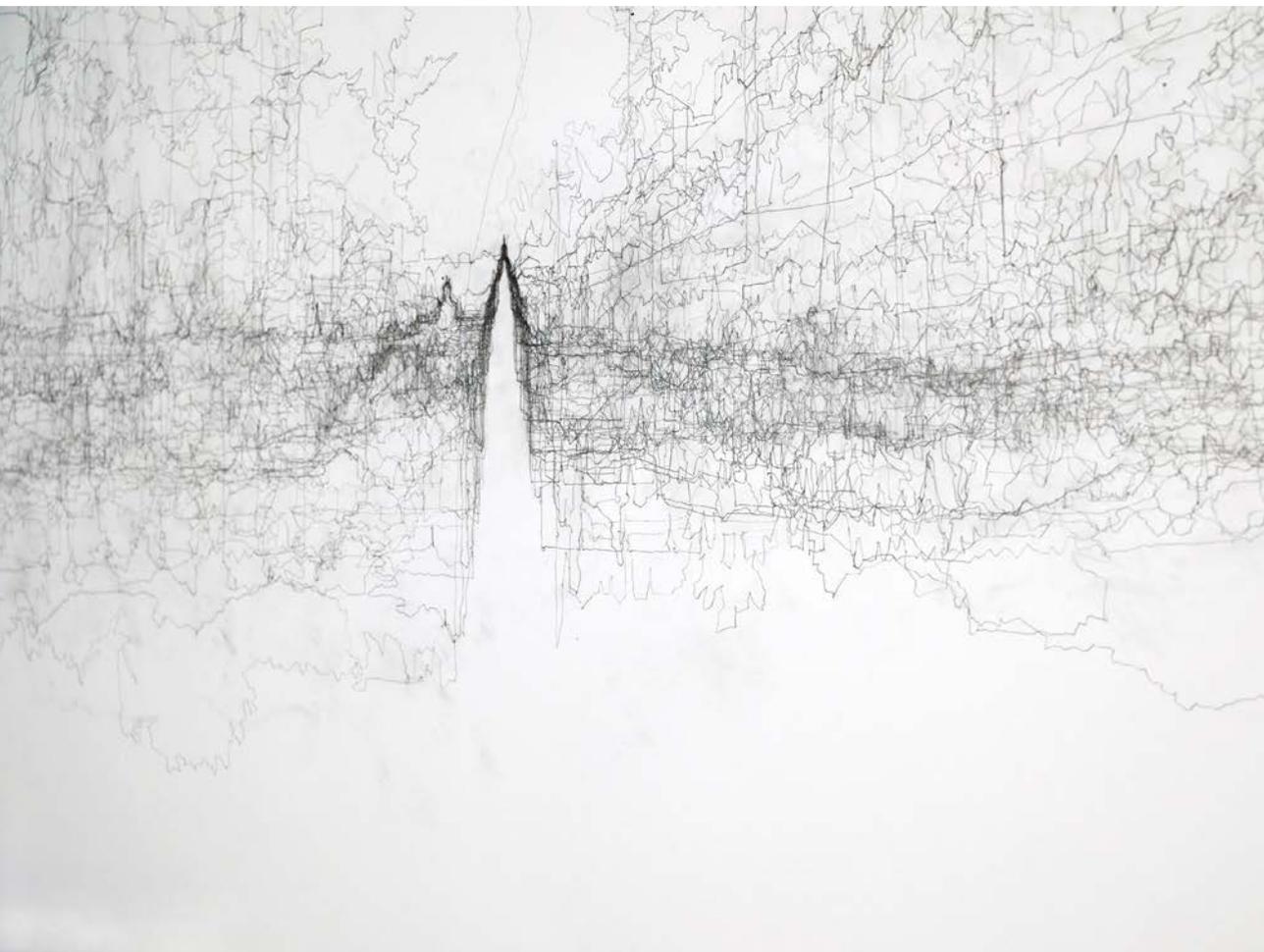
stalking a single tower from within and beyond the city walls. Each drawing generates an “automatic cartography” of the city, an accumulation of horizons traced from photographs taken at regular intervals during each walk [fig. 7–8]. The process of tracing is a secondary walk, in the space of the projection, with pencil across the horizon.

This project was continued and developed further in Rome.¹ While the drawings from Segovia are centered on individual points of reference, this more complex, labyrinthine context led to a multipoint drawing that combined numerous walks centered on different monuments throughout the city [fig. 9]. Over time, walking became analogous to drawing, as if I were the tip of a pencil moving along the edge of a parallel ruler or drafting triangle. The anticipation of drawing started to direct the walk itself, driving me to roam the city through unlikely paths, while remaining tethered to the steeple, dome, or obelisk by the tenuous thread of a sight line.

fig. 6

- 6 Fırat Erdim, *Yeryüzü + Gökyüzü*, 2013. Plane table, drawing from surveying performance, souvenir clock tower, weaving thread. Documentation of installation at 49A, an artist-run project space in Izmir, Turkey.

¹ This phase of the project was supported by a Rome Prize Fellowship at the American Academy in Rome.



8 Firat Erdim, *Per-
egrine Projections:
Cathedral of Segovia
(Circumnavigation)*,
2014. Detail,
graphite on paper,
150×250 cm.

9 Firat Erdim, *Per-
egrine Projections:
Palatine Hill + Forum*,
2015. Detail,
graphite on wall,
490 cm wide.

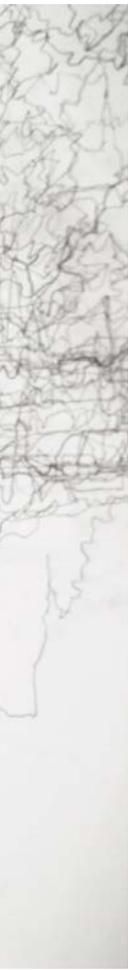


fig.8

fig.9

