



## **Story of Taksim Square's Transformation: "From Death's Stillness to Life's Hubbub"**

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The study will comprise Taksim Square's transformation from the 16th century to the present day. Maps and plans of the periods will provide bases of comparison for the land use patterns. This rural area on the outskirts of the Pera region of the Ottoman capital initially served as the graveyard for the plague victims of the 16th century and was referred to as "Grand Champs des Morts". This area with its superb position overlooking the entrance to the Bosphorus became public promenade grounds where people strolled along the paths separating graves of Moslems and of different Christian sects. This use soon covered the entire area so as to obscure its original function. The "Maksem" - the water distribution system for the area, built within the first half of the 18th century and giving its name to the region, stood as the sole edifice of the area for many years. Construction of the Dolmabahçe Palace and the army barracks also conferred an official identity to the region. However, the barracks' location shows that this district was considered to be on the city's outskirts even during the 19th century. First years of the Turkish Republic witnessed the city square's development with its monument which marked the beginning of the actual and important construction activities. Soon, Taksim became the new city centre with its ever continuing dynamism. Today, Taksim is a focal point of entertainment, art and cultural activities.

**KEY WORDS:** Taksim, transformation, graveyard, centre.