

English edition

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Student motivation is that dimension whose true value needs to be recognised in order for it to be taken into consideration in research on the academic educational environment and for its explicit role to be acknowledged in the success of university studies as well as in the attainment of a high level of competence and professional achievement. Prompted by these initial considerations, we began the study with the aims of understanding the need for change in the teachers' visions and attitudes and of explaining the potential future needs of the students currently embarked on architectural studies.

The present-day academic environment must undergo transformations, under the influence of the constant challenges from the technological field (in particular digitalisation), which have an impact on almost all the areas that influence the architectural profession as well as the construction field. Other unexpected challenges, such as the recent pandemic wave, have led to major changes in the manner of conducting teaching, studio supervision and other design-related activities.

The obvious imperative of being a good teacher entails the capacity of being a tireless seeker whose critique can contribute to refinement, discoveries and guidance with a view to advancing in the domain of knowledge and in the understanding of the world we live in. A good teacher is, in many circumstances, seen as someone who is very knowledgeable and well-informed on the latest studies and research in their field. And more than this, a good teacher, in the current context, must be willing to learn constantly, to question and to think critically together with the students. The most appropriate support they can offer students is to give them confidence in their capacity to tackle diverse topics with the knowledge acquired up to that moment, to instil them with the courage to search for new ideas, solutions and opportunities, to train them to work or to lead work teams with a view to constant optimisation of the flow of information and of efforts.

The architectural design studio is that marvellous place where students, guided and supervised constantly by teachers, evolve gradually, over the course of the years of study, by perfecting various competencies and abilities, in order to become professionals who are capable of examining the project context in a multifaceted and exhaustive manner, of empathetically considering the different factors and categories of users involved in the project and of having the ability and the autonomy to create, on the basis of research-derived premises, viable architectural solutions for a sustainable future.

The trajectory of the research project that is developed and explained in this chapter contains a sequence of activities marked by the attempt to answer several questions connected to the practical activity of the design studio. **QUESTION 1** – How do we guide students in approaching the research of a particular theme and the presentation of its results, even when the themes are very different from the point of view of work duration, of complexity or of the degree of detailing?

ACTIVITY: WEBINAR Teaching methods in the design studio



Fig. 1. Webinar poster. Design: Ioana Boghian-Nistor and Diana Rusu.

To answer this question, we organised an online discussion/roundtable with teaching staff from the architectural design and the urban planning studio (Scholar Architect, 2022). The first step of the research was to explore, via comparison, different teaching and supervision methods of studio work, together with the colleagues we invited from ETH Zürich: Ileana Apostol and Panayotis Antoniadis, as well as with colleagues from the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning - Bucharest (UAUIM): Vlad Eftenie, Dragos Popescu, and Alexandru Brătescu and the undersigned, who takes this opportunity to renew her thanks for their participation and support. The discussions highlighted supervision and working methods employed for various student projects at the UAUIM Faculty of Architecture and at the ETH Zürich Department of Architecture (D-ARCH). Projects with a wide range of themes were presented: urbanistic approaches which propose something akin to designing a choreography of passersby's movements, thus determining urban public space; conceptual projects for the functional conversion of a disused water tower that is nevertheless significant to place memory; finally, projects where students were directly involved in designing and arranging the interior of the faculty work spaces.

Remodelling of a public space in Zürich

Concepts like place, site, context, regionalism must not merely be understood but also approached through practical study. It is necessary to find the optimal solutions, with an extremely wide register being available to those involved in implementing them. It is also necessary to infer the nature of these spaces in the future rather than attempt to define them in a precise, restrictive manner. In imagining spaces, the dimension given by movement over time is more important than their geometrical shape since this is in fact the dimension of the multiple configuration possibilities that generate a diversity of events. The proposed interventions must embody the special, essential "state" rather than a materialised physical space.

Based on free research methods derived from sociological studies, the project relies on interviewing passersby and the users of the chosen urban space in order to decide what would be optimal to implement in the studied place. The comparison of the students' initial design intentions with those derived from the questionnaires brings up the true value of design created for community beneficiaries.



Fig. 2. Characteristic image of the urban space proposal. (c) Olga Cobuscean, ETH Zürich Department of Architecture (D-ARCH)

Conversion of the "Favorit" water tower from Drumul Taberei, Bucharest

The vastly different solutions proposed by the students for this conceptual project demonstrate the benefits of not having a preset function at the initial stage. The initial moment is dedicated to the multiplicity of modes of looking at this stage of researching the context before adapting the design to as many scenarios as possible: some feasible, viable, others bold but unlikely to be built. The way in which students decide upon the design and chosen functionality in completing the studio brief enables them to consolidate an independent position while also giving them the possibility to justify their choices on the basis of multiple criteria. Some of the project themes proposed by the students are shown below: vertical garden, interactive exhibition, memory tower, waterfall-instagrammable place, interactive educational space, gravity tower, etc.



Fig. 3. Field trip with the student group.

COMMUNITY HUB FAVORIT

Turnal de apå din Drumal Taberei a fost primul martor al apartije cartierului. Un cartier dezvoltat rapid, unitar, dupå un plan pre-stabilit pi care infolgs o nouå viziune, un experiment social, un micro-oraș utopic, bazat pe nevole loculatorice, to care dezvoltarea tehnologică și cele mai mesonte tori u branistice promieua atraperea uni potențal marám al caltății veții. In tot carest context, turnul de apă a rămas o mătruire à teoculuu înte ne los bound dourie. Di totate socies, magnesa as discitata la înteprint rapid în memora celectivită a volace de enpri-o-social, temporal, spația și - artezului, de mai ale sin cauză fipătului că a fost inaccestă publicului, existență as în memoria colectivă s-a rezumat doar la aspectul exterior - un livelis upor recognostabil și o prezență puternică în cardu urban, de rapă ai carterului, der mai ale sin cauză fipătului că a fost inaccestă publicului, existență as în memoria colectivă s-a rezumat doar la aspectul exterior - un livelis upor recognostabil și o prezență puternică în cardu urban, de rapă ai carterului.



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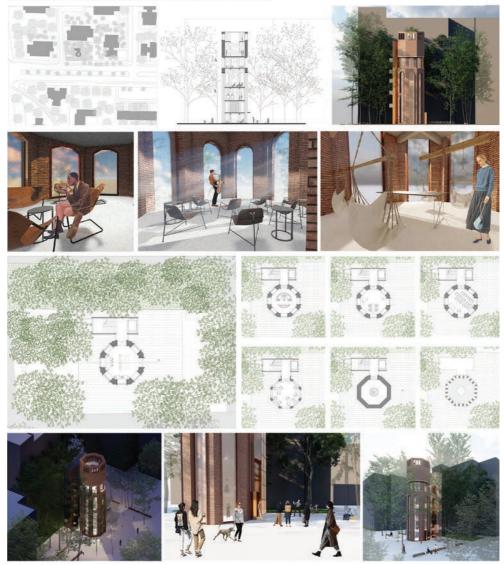


Fig. 4. Conversion proposal - Alexandra Ghiță.

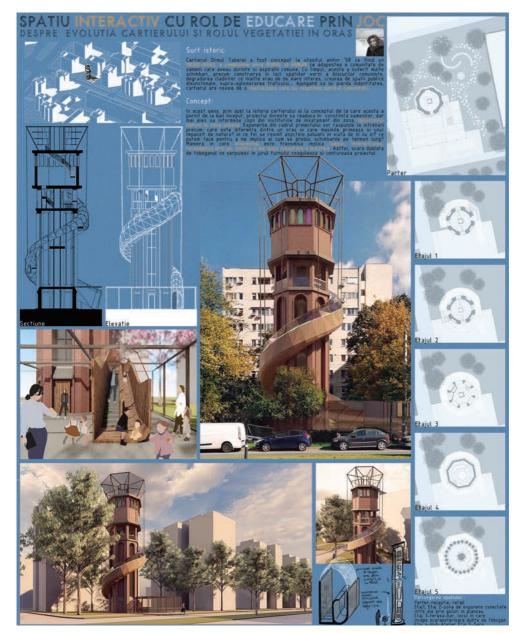


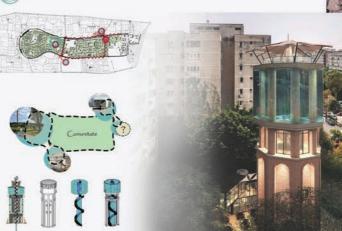
Fig. 5. Conversion proposal – Mara Albescu.



Conceptul propus are ca scop intregirea unui par-curs perimetral al cartienului, marcal de puncte de interes, precum Parcul Moghieso, Centrul conercial Favorit si Centrul conercial Drumul Taberetor, puncte ce deserves in primul rand conunitatii create in lnima cartierului, dar si vizitatoritor.

Pornind de la functiunea principala, cea de castel de apa, propunerea de acvariu ca nous functiune a urondu este o metafora a functiuni initiales are ca scop atat transformanea turnului intr-um punct de interess at zonas cast a pastrarea in memoría locatar-itor o parte din isforia functionala a turnului.

ter e parte din istoria functionala a turnului. Cele dous accari din interiorui turnului uremaza traneul initial al geo Primul accerule este sinat con-tral, astfel traseul propu, este perinetral acetului. Uneraza e zona libera de pomenedia inches vitra in registral mijociu, creand astfel un popos intre cele dous acvari. Tel de-al dollea acvariu is local vechiuli rezervor de pa, traseul de vititare la acetaria esti el-orisi, mijocut acvaridu so tel vititare la acetaria prim mijocut acvaridu ya den traditi den esterior, marcada in acest fel. Garte curajos nous functione. Peste acet ultim acvari este propusa o zona de belvedore spre intregia cartiari. De assemes en seguitari public idexent turnului. De assemes en seguitari public idexent turnului.



I want to redesign myself with every project

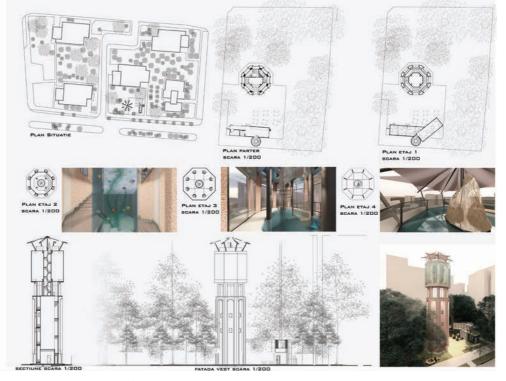
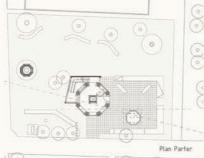


Fig. 6. Conversion proposal - Lavinia Erceanu.

THE WATERFALL



Idea principala acestui proiect era reabilitarea turnului de apa din cartierul Drumul Taberei. Astfel am propus sa creezi niste spati publice pentru a atrage interesul locuitorilor cartierului. Avand in vedere functia initiala ale turnului de apa, am incercat sa il readuc prin introducerea unei cascade digitale. Deasupara turnului am introdus spatiu de observatie cu functinina de ca inde unde su pate conservatie cu functinina de ca inde unde su pate cu da digitale. Sassana de unde su pate conservatie cu functinina de ca inde unde su pate cu da digitale. Sassana conservatie cu norden su pate cu da digitale associa existente convertit intro-oliside nu cantani interactive. Interiorul turnului este muzeul cartierului.





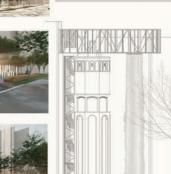
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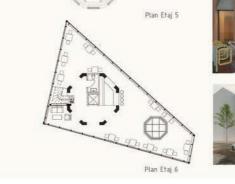


Fig. 7. Conversion proposal – Anastasia Shcherbak.

GRAVITOWER



Fig. 8. Conversion proposal – Maria Claudia Matache.

TURNUL MEMORIEI



"Fiecare cladire trebuie sa aiba.. propriul suflet"



Fig. 9. Conversion proposal - Cristina-Ionela Nistor.

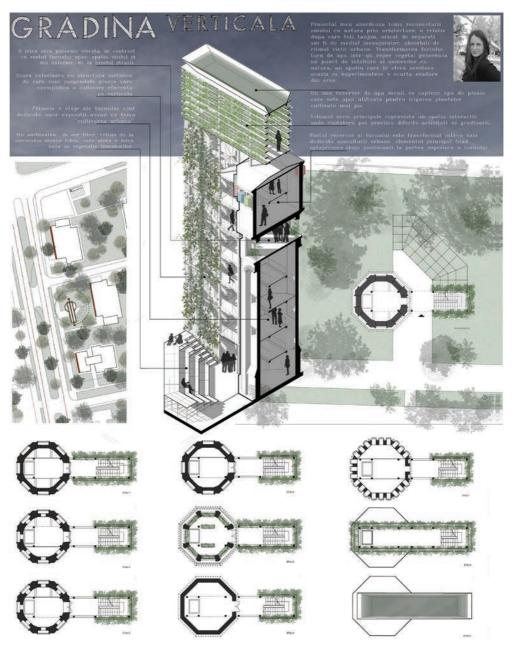


Fig. 10. Conversion proposal – Teodora Anghelache.



Fig. 11. Conversion proposal – Teodora Anghelache.

Remodelling and configuring the work studio of the Design Dialog LAB of the Faculty of Architecture at ETH Zürich

The aim of this project was to impress upon the students the fact that good results can be achieved even if less is built, that a maximum of comfort can be obtained with a minimum of effort. The study is a eulogy of the exceptional versatility of free space. New methods of space exploration via sensory perception such as sound listening or movement/dance were introduced into studio activities in place of traditional methods. The discussion/debate space was configured in the manner of an experimental theatre stage. The final presentation focused on summarising the work process and the experience gained by each student in the course of designing the interior.

Sketch-by-sketch brief of a real-life project at UAUIM

In this project, year 5 students came in contact with the reality of a call for proposals launched by the City Hall of District 6 of Bucharest, which asked for the detailing and functional compartmentalisation of interior space and the imagining of a landmark structure for the conversion of an abandoned underground tunnel into *Saltcave – a therapeutic and leisure space*. The students attempted to provide coherent answers to the multiple constraints of the linear subterranean space, with very disproportionate dimensions and lacking light and natural ventilation. This was an individual project without teacher guidance since the exercise was intended to simulate the real-life situations which require finding a quick answer to a design brief, in eight hours of intensive work.



Fig. 12. Sketch - Alexandra Ghiță.

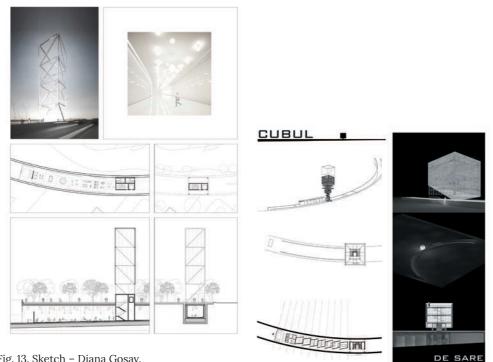


Fig. 13. Sketch – Diana Gosav.

Fig. 14. Sketch – Sabina Sabotnicu.

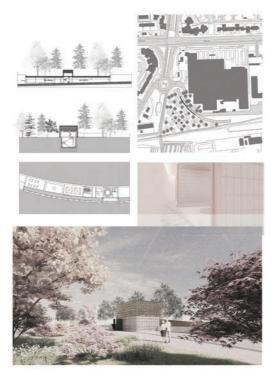


Fig. 15. Sketch – Nela Mihaela Andrieș.

The expansion of the Museum of Technology through the conversion of the Electric Power Plant, Bucharest

This is an example of a large project, studied over a semester and covering all study stages. In its initial stage, the research examined the urban, functional, volumetric, qualitative, legal, historical context, etc. before progressing to more sensitive analyses related, for example, to architectural image and reference points or routes linked to the nearby Carol Park. The architectural solutions proposed by the students also considered connecting the district to the park, reconfiguring car and pedestrian traffic as well as proposing a master plan for the unbuilt areas. The repurposing of the museum, which develops into several distinct volumes, has also led to different connecting solutions: underground, via a public urban space, or via skywalks. All proposals included detaillevel solutions by technically explaining a bay. This type of project comes closer to real-life design through its complexity and multi-stage planning, but also through the combination of teamwork (in groups of four or two students) for certain parts of the project with individual work for some detailings.



Fig. 16. Analysis – Mara Albescu, Teodora-Andreea Anghelache, Florin Cătinaș and Claudia Maria Matache

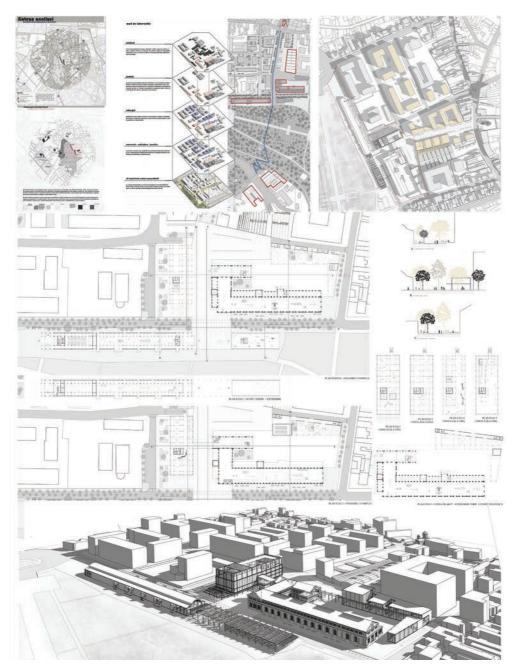


Fig. 17. Expansion proposal – Teodora-Andreea Anghelache and Florin Cătinaș.

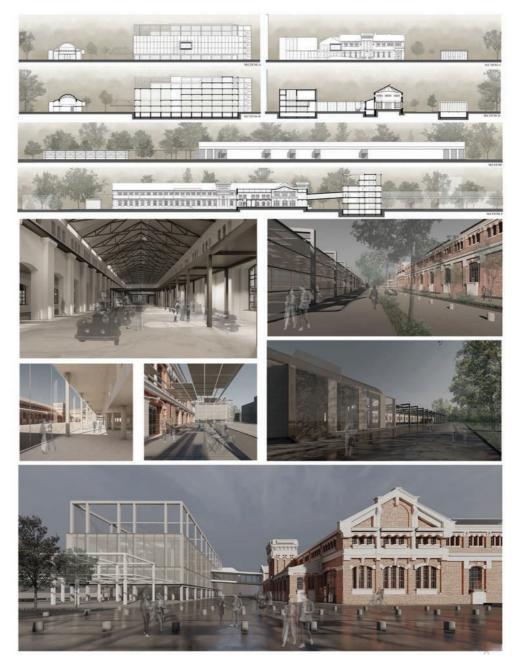


Fig. 18. Expansion proposal – Teodora-Andreea Anghelache and Florin Cătinaș.



Fig. 19. Expansion proposal – Cristina-Ionela Nistor and Angeles Irene Pla Arenas.

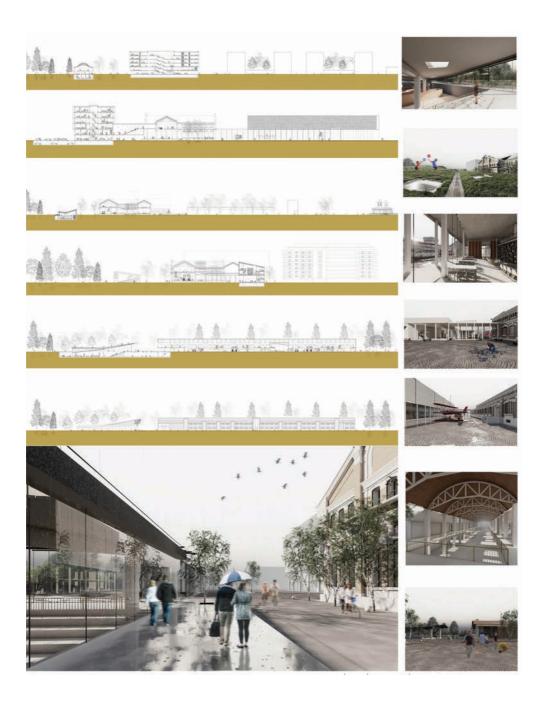


Fig. 20. Expansion proposal – Cristina-Ionela Nistor and Angeles Irene Pla Arenas.

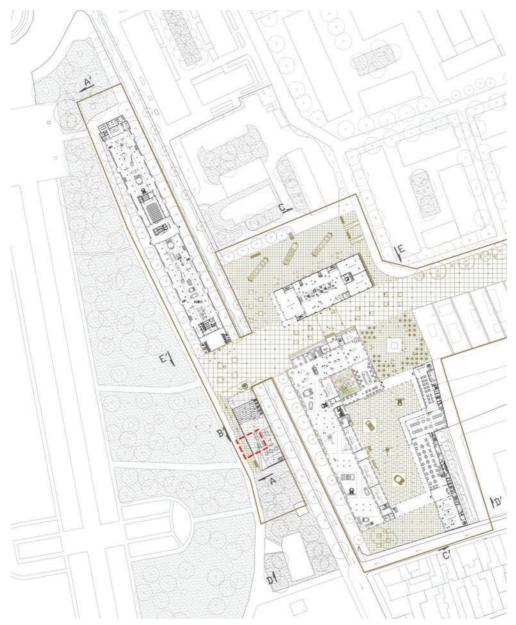


Fig. 21. Expansion proposal – Cristina-Ionela Nistor and Angeles Irene Pla Arenas.

The exchange of ideas at the roundtable was beneficial to the teaching staff of both universities as well as to the attending public.

 $QUESTION\ 2$ – What kind of space is well-suited for the architectural studio, how can it be configured and how does it influence the way the activity is conducted?

ACTIVITY: WORKSHOP Re(in)novating the workspace in the architectural design studio



Fig. 22. Workshop poster. Design: Ioana Boghian-Nistor and Diana Rusu.

To determine what those redesigns might look like, we need to understand how places, crowds, views, architecture, and ways of moving influence the way we feel. We need to identify the unseen systems that influence our health and control our behaviour. Most of all, we need to understand the psychology by which all of us comprehend the urban world and make decisions about our place in it. (Montgomery, 2013, p. 78)

> Starting from this quotation and relating everything to the scale of a studio-shared space for a student group, we launched, via this workshop, the challenge of re-examining, renovating and innovating the space of the design studio. The workshop was organised by Magdalena Stănculescu and Alexandru Brătescu, who were joined by Vlad Eftenie, Dragoș Popescu and Paul Hîrtiescu as guest tutors.

> Reinventing the familiar, we discussed in the workshop the fact that multiple activities benefit from game change, whenever necessary, provided this change is made easily and flexibly. The impact of design, of interior design and of furniture arrangement on user behaviour was discussed and tested in practice. Other topics, brought up for discussion in the brainstorming type of activity or proposed by the students

themselves, were: the sense of identification with the used space, the sense of control over its quality, enhancement through small doses of views and greenery, the adoption of sustainable design or the use of recycled materials.

The presentation of the activity and its results are the subject of the following chapter.

QUESTION 3 – How could the manner of working be improved from the perspective of the ideas presented in the previous activities?

ACTIVITY: EXPERIMENTAL PROJECT

INSIDE – OUTSIDE – IN BETWEEN. UAUIM – Public-private connections with the adjacent urban spaces



Fig. 23. The poster of the presentations session. Design: Ioana Boghian-Nistor and Diana Rusu.

The cognitive error that may have had more influence than any other on the shape of our cities is known as presentism: we let what we see and feel today bias our views of the past. This commonly expresses itself as a tendency to assume that the ways we think and act will not change as time passes. (Montgomery, 2013, p. 98)

The current urban context of Bucharest city centre opens up opportunities for the regeneration of the historical area. "Reconquering" the historical centre should not be superficially understood through the lens of already completed operations – of the restoration of the street profile and of exclusive orientation towards the leisure/food supply function. Urban regeneration – via specific complex operations – brings out the potential of the studied area (from the historical, cultural, architectural and social point of view) through the re-examination of built heritage from a contemporary perspective, given that the city is a perpetually evolving and transforming organism. The city must be given back to its residents and visitors; pedestrian or environmentallyfriendly traffic can mark the beginning of an active, positive urban life, befitting a contemporary metropolis. The space of the city thus requires a lucid overall perspective since it is important to reconcile its spirit, characterised by apparently contradictory juxtapositions, with the necessity of its coherent organisation from the configurative-spatial and functional point of view.

The design brief proposed the spatial-functional investigation of the site of the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning and of all the adjacent public spaces. The project entailed handling concepts based on a complex system of spatial connections between existing and proposed functions, of different types, and the adjacent urban spaces. The aim was the study and creation of coherent configuration, use and connection scenarios of spaces of a public-private character, which determine organisation, ranking and the articulated spatial-functional correlation. At the same time, the specificity of the site, user needs as well as architectural-structural, aesthetic, legal and other constraints were taken into account.

The proposals developed by the student teams highlighted relationships and connections to recreate the architectural-urban image of the analysed site and they reinvented, (re)activated and conferred new attributes to the public-private space relationship.

In the context of sequential analysis, a well-argued and appropriate approach to the built environment was proposed - at the level of the facade, overall dimensions, style and function, via unitary treatment, coherent transition with an integrative aim, taking into account the historical significance of the area and of the buildings in the studied ensemble. The proposals aimed at the systemic reconsideration of the architectural and urbanistic framework - in its public/semi-public/ private dimension - through rehabilitation/completion/construction of the built environment (defined by fronts/buildings) and of the unbuilt environment (defined by pedestrian areas, pavements, alleys, squares), as well as through the proposal of adequate urban furniture. The main learning objectives related to the project include: understanding the spatial complexity determined by the public-private correlation; the capacity of developing a system of coherent relationships between spaces and functions with specific purposes and dimensions and their clear transposition into an architectural concept; enabling students to adapt to working in larger and smaller teams as well as individually in the course of the same project.

The study relied on direct observation, on specialised background research, on photographic analysis at eye and aerial level, on surveys and questions addressed to passersby and to the users of the different spaces, referencing their positive and negative experiences in these contexts. The presentation consisted in screening the following elements: _documentation and research notebook;

_list of criteria proposed in the context of site analysis;

_summary image of the proposal in context and of the publicprivate space relationship, *croquis*, spatiality sketches, photographs, 3D renderings, key images, collages, videos of movement in space, etc.;

_massing model or 3D conceptual renderings;

_photo/video montage – with the presentation of a pre- and post-intervention comparison.

The results were publicly presented by the students in the design studio and formed the subject of the joint exhibition proposed for the subsequent activity.

The tutoring group of the experimental project consisted of Magdalena Stănculescu, Vlad Eftenie, Dragoș Popescu and Alexandru Brătescu.

Now it is possible to actively plan to reinforce life in the cities, or, at a minimum, to ensure that a public space is useable and pleasurable for urban inhabitants. (Gehl & Svarre, 2013, p. 159)

QUESTION 4 – How can the ideas and projects be disseminated?

ACTIVITY: JOINT EXHIBITIONS

Current studio work trends bring together a series of working methods, some of them considered old-fashioned at some point, yet rediscovered, reinvented in a contemporary key (clay and plaster models, polystyrene), and others in step with the avantgarde in relation to the latest digital developments (virtual exhibitions, 3D models visualised with VR sets, 3D printed models etc.).

Within the context of innovative activities, we propose the setting-up of virtual exhibitions to be co-hosted by the two universities involved in the "Methods of teaching in the design studio" webinar presented at the beginning – namely ETH Zürich and the "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning Bucharest. We propose exhibitions featuring the conversion projects of the water tower in Drumul Taberei and the results of the experimental project INSIDE – OUTSIDE – IN BETWEEN. The spaces allocated for public presentation via projection are the exhibition hall of UAUIM and Space L200 in Zürich.

Finally, let us not forget that, for the strategic development process, regardless of study field, it is the people and the ideas that matter since they provide the infrastructure and the necessary resources for contributing in an appropriate manner to the building of a harmonious future.



Fig. 24. Image from the exhibition.

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