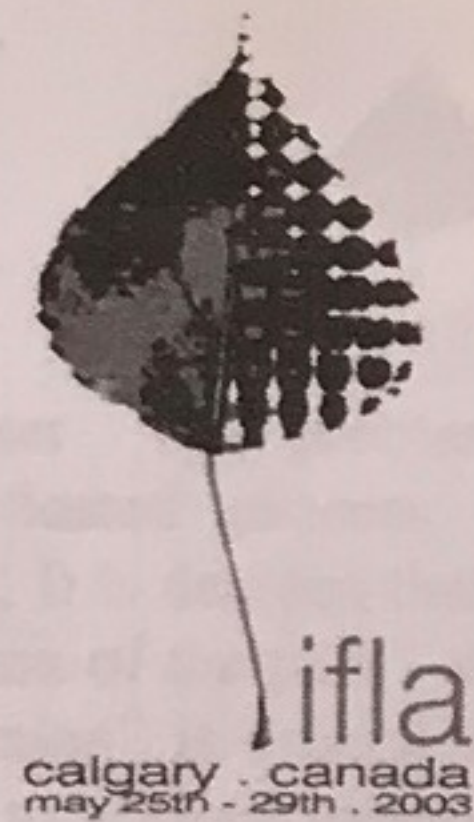


40th ifla world congress

Landscapes On The Edge

Session Theme: Landscapes of Transformation



Landscapes of Superimposition on the Edge of Mediterranean Sea

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Abstract

The study presents a landscape design project with a set of preliminary morphological analyses. Karaalioglu Park, in South Anatolia, is squeezed between a dense urban fabric and the irrevocably transformed edge of Mediterranean Sea. Globalisation, rapid urbanisation as much as other socio-cultural imperatives and natural processes paved the foundations for dilapidation of the park. The project cautiously revives the principles of classicism through the forms of modernism in order to achieve a manifestation of an ecologically sensitive and societally relevant place making on a valuable yet problematic green belt. Urban design principles of the City States, which are the symbols of democracy of the Hellenistic Era, are reinterpreted in this urban park (including the town hall) in the centre of Antalya, an Antique city. Urban elements of Antiquity, such as Promenade, Stoa, Bouleuterion, and Prytaneion are respectively transformed into the main alley, cultural axis, arcades, amphitheatre and the town-hall. Besides, the gridal plan, which is another reminiscent of the antiquity, is multi-layered in accordance with the growth and transformation of this particular landscape. Thus, two different gridirons, first referring to the original landscape of the Early Republican Era, and other to the proposed landscape, are overlapped with an angle in order to echo the ongoing superimposition as a means of re-constructing the history of the city. Thus, the project provides a new medium for public life and democratic interaction in an ecologically sensitive landscape within the very heart of a densely built city laid along a Mediterranean waterfront. The boundaries of the disciplines of landscape, architecture, urban design and conservation are questioned with particular reference to Karaalioglu Park in Antalya.

Today the boundaries between the disciplines regarding the physical environment are rapidly blurring. For instance, landscape designers are incorporating architectural concepts, features and components in their designs as much as architects are utilizing nature in architectural spaces. Similarly, well-known architects are also commissioned for large-scale landscape design projects. Examples of this sort can be endlessly extended. Moreover, ongoing developments towards an interdisciplinary understanding in the study and solution of various matters seem to have further contributed to toning down the polarity between landscape designers and architects. Therefore, today, we are at the point of reviewing the long-lasting diversion of architecture from landscape particularly after the modernist urban planning principles. Thus, the initiatives to overcome the barriers between

professional territories should be studied and encouraged. In this scope, as a matter of fact, architects should not deny the sheer fact that landscape conditions, if not determines, architecture, and that there has always been a complementary interaction between architecture and landscape, city and country throughout architectural history. Also, the current state of ecological awareness, which is eventually reached in the evolution of humankind, unavoidably drives professionals in the built environment to collaborate with nature and natural processes. Hence, today architecture can only respond to the ensemble of *natural* and *man-made*, simply by incorporating landscape in architectural programs and vice versa. Here, in this paper, a new approach, by which landscape is conceived in terms of architectural composition, will be presented and analysed with particular

reference to a historical park [Karaalioglu Park] in South Anatolia [Antalya, Turkey] at the very shore of Mediterranean Sea. In this approach, we as architects aimed to revitalise social life, encourage public participation and enhance civic-urban life through reconstruction of the equilibrium of *natural* and *artificial* according to the planning principles of Antiquity. One of the best ways to achieve this civic ensemble is assumed to superimpose *natural* and *artificial* aspects of design along this very special waterfront. Along this purpose, landscape elements are tackled as devices to rewrite the very history of this specific site. It must be emphasised, at this point, that landscape elements and architectural elements are treated as entities of equal weight and importance. That is to say neither of them is superior to the other.

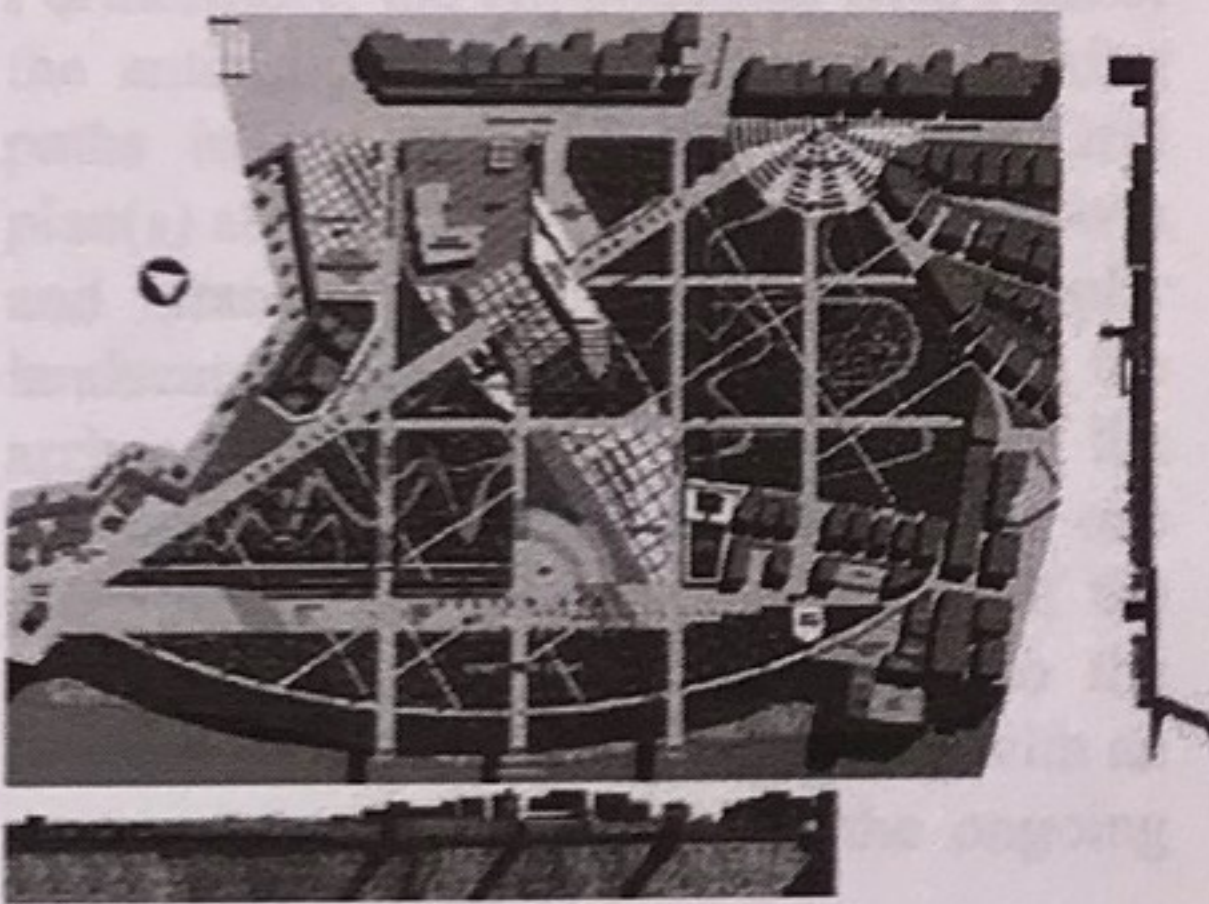


Figure 1

The project questions the boundaries of the disciplines of landscape, architecture, urban design and conservation, for a particular piece of land, a historical park in South Anatolia (Figure 1). Karaalioglu Park is squeezed between a dense urban fabric and the irrevocably transformed edge of Mediterranean Sea under various socio-cultural imperatives, natural processes and rapid urbanisation & globalisation. Thus, the park seems to have witnessed dilapidation at serious levels.

This complicated set of problems necessitated a sophisticated process of diagnose and treatment. It is decided that a “judicious deconstruction of the park” and its “critical re-construction” is crucial for the design of this park to achieve intended quality of civic life. Such a “critical re-construction” is searched through complex treatment of geometry at various scales. This compositional program is further enhanced with the balance of *natural* and *artificial*. Therefore, in this park, we as architects intervened into the existing landscape by converting the composition of landscape components into an extension of our proposed urban-architectural entity. That we admitted the dominance of existing landscape can be considered as a quite modest architectural approach simply because brief is essentially interpreted as a landscape design project. One may clearly observe that the project tackled the brief not only as a contemporary landscape design problem but also as an urban-scale environmental art-object. Therefore, the abstract and tectonic use of landscape and urban-architectural elements is intended to serve this artistic purpose.

The proposed design also attempted to reconstruct a small-scale model of deconstructed historical urban layout, taking its references from historical architectural and urban elements (particularly from Hellenistic and Roman eras due to the ancient past of the city). Hence architecture and landscape are intended to reconcile within the very same historicist discourse in this particular *genius loci*. The project not only involves architecture and landscape but further brings them together through tectonic use of landscape along with the aid of the conservation of the traces of initial landscape. Seen in this context, the municipal building, which takes a major part in the brief, is designed so as to act as a minor performer within a greater

ensemble of “nature, building, and humans”.

The project synthesises the principles of classicism with the forms of modernism. The project also puts an emphasis on ecologically sensitive and societally relevant place making on this valuable green belt. Here, urban design principles of the City States of the Hellenistic Era are reinterpreted in this urban park (including the town hall) in the very centre of Antalya roots of which dates back to Antiquity because these City States are considered as typical representations of democratic public life. Therefore, spatial dimensions of such public realm are analysed and adapted to the overall design of this landscape project. In this context, antique urban components, such as Stoa, Promenade, Bouleuterion, Prytaneion are also recreated in the arcades, cultural axis, main alley, amphitheatre and the town hall. Furthermore, the Hippodamus Grid Plan of the antiquity is reutilised for the walking paths in the park (Figure 2). The Grid plan(s) are stratified referring to the growth and transformation of this particular landscape. Hence, in the context of the archaeological process of re-writing of the history of the city, two different grids, one referring to the original landscape of the Early Republican Era, and other to the future landscape, are superimposed with an angle of 30 degrees to echo the ongoing palimpsest (Figure 3).

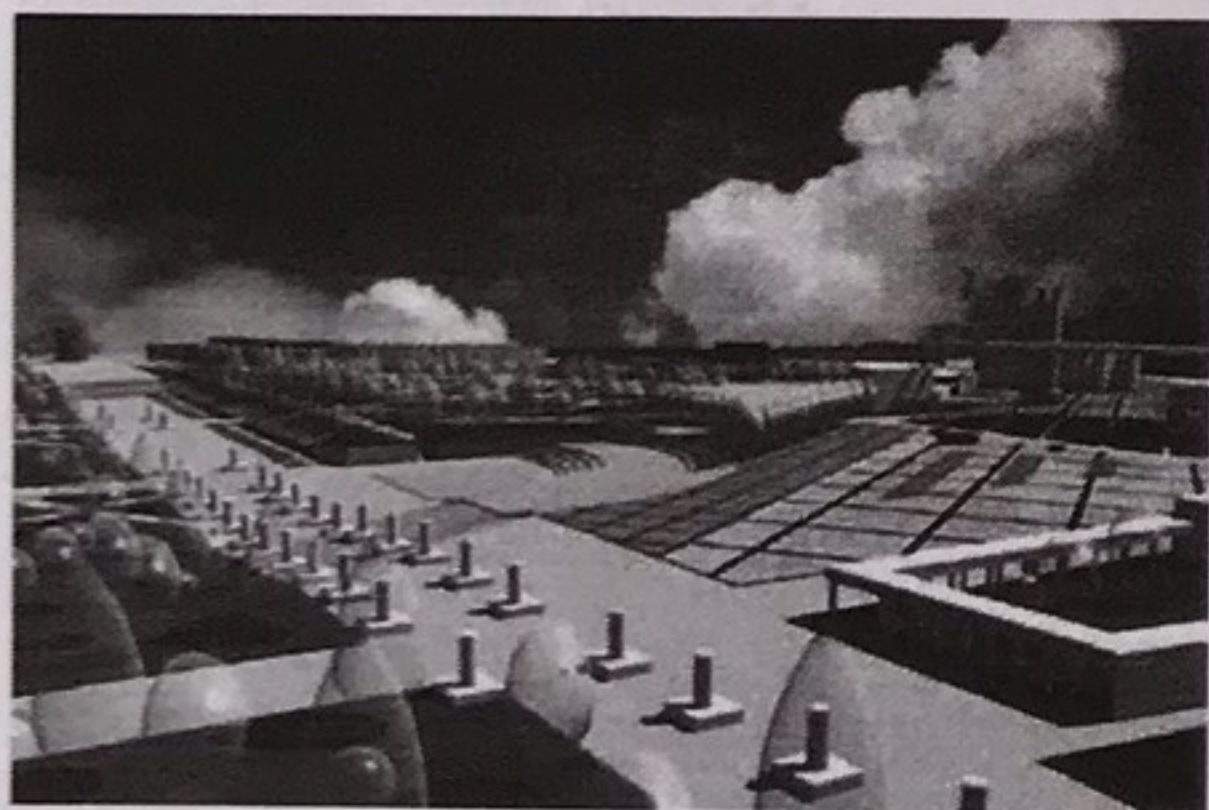


Figure 2

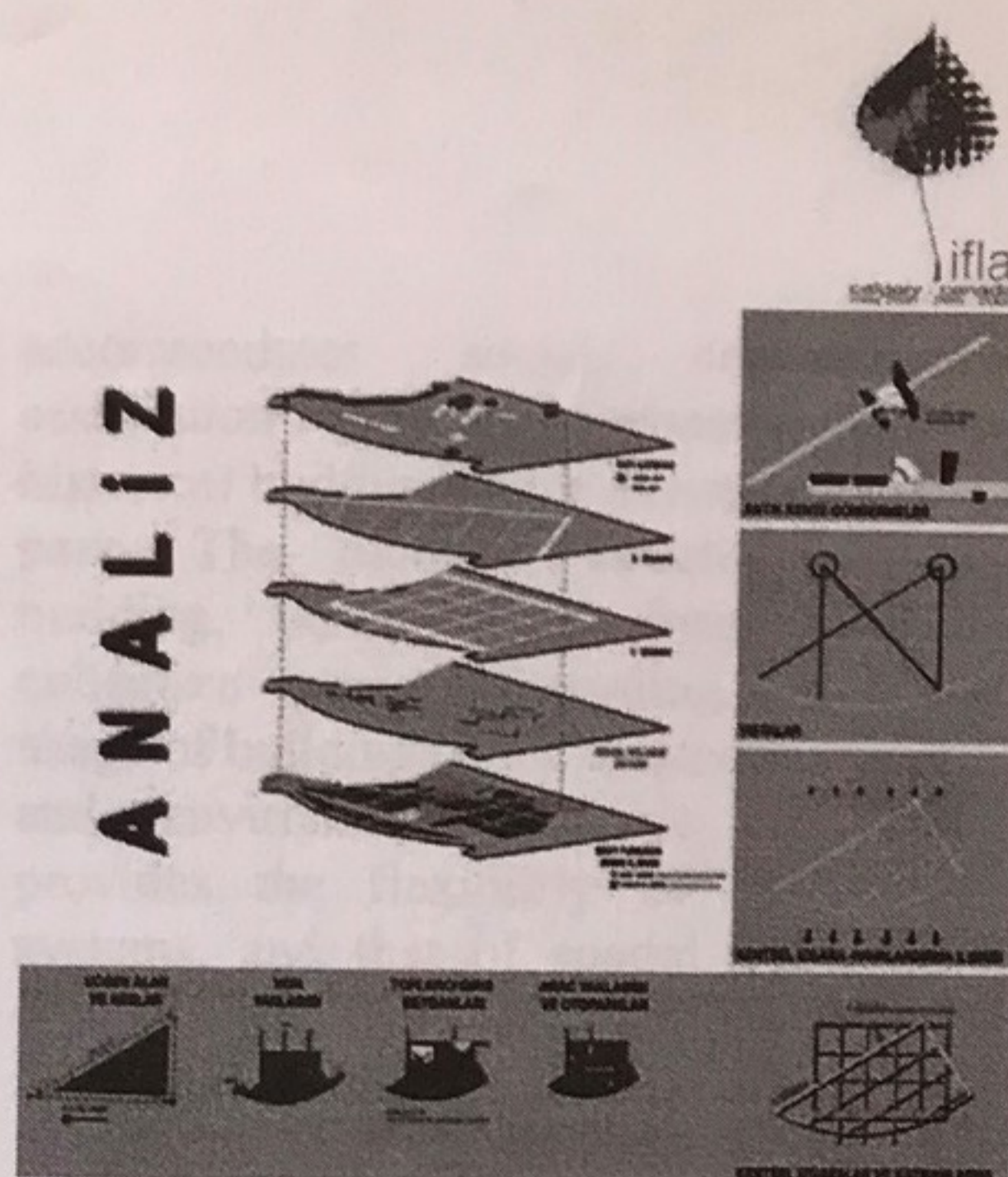


Figure 3

A series of morphological analyses is given in this study. These analyses may help to reveal the main principles of the project. These diagrams illustrate the layering of the principles and decisions given at different scales; that is *urban, landscape, architectural*. These analyses also exhibit how these different layers are unified within the intended ensemble. They can be briefly summarised as follows; Firstly, urban design comprises of two major *axes* connecting entrance plazas, two *gridirons* superposed with the angle between these axes, *triangular recreation area* in between these axes, the *forum*, which is arranged in combination with existing historical buildings from early 20th century, in the central part of this triangle, and the *Town Hall* surrounding this forum. The following landscape design principles are appropriated in order to complete these urban components with the delicate touch of nature. First of all, it is intended to increase the surface of green areas in the park (Figure 4) and implement additional lines of trees to accentuate the differentiation between the grids. That is intended to help the expression of layering via these grids. Some of the age-old trees will be carried into the botanical gardens proposed in the west side of the park. They are intended to take place in a relatively

free piece of nature in combination with the Arboretum. Other green areas are re-functioned with public-paths, bicycle routes, recreation areas and service cubicles. These cubicles are also designed to perform as *follies* to unite the contemporary elements of the overall design with its historical components.



Figure 4

Furthermore, the park is conceived as a new and alternative type of landscape which is ecologically sensitive. The design is also intended to be the first in Turkey in that sense. Therefore, the building is designed so as to make advantage of solar energy for heating. Most of the electrical energy required for the operation of the building is obtained through photovoltaic panels located on the outer surfaces of the building. Rainwater is also drained and collected throughout the park, including the building itself, for purifying and then re-using it in the irrigation of the park as well as in the flush-water needed in the sanitary parts of the building.

When it comes to architectural design principles, one of the most important criteria is that building should complete the overall composition while maintaining its own integrity. Thus, the building, on the one hand, displays a spatial configuration that is integrated with superposed grids; while on the other hand; it is united with the forum that is the reminiscent of antique, administrative urban space. This administrative building complex also

accommodates social services in association with the reconstructions of historical buildings once existed within the park. The modular structure of the building, which stems from both the collective memory regarding the former usage of buildings once existed in the area, and environmental-climatic conditions, provides the flexibility of construction systems, and that of spatial usage. It is quite important to emphasise that municipal building constitutes the key figure in uniting the landscape and conservation programs with the architectural program.

In addition to various aspects mentioned above (such as urban, landscape, architectural and ecological etc.), a comprehensive program of revitalisation of the nearby area and rehabilitation of the park is conducted through conservation, restoration, and reconstruction of various urban components, buildings and landscape elements. A comprehensive program of reconstruction of two-storey traditional houses is proposed in the northern periphery of the project area. Additionally, re-functioning of the major historical buildings in the centre of the project area is also suggested to integrate the conservation program to the overall design. Minor interventions are suggested particularly in the facades of few historical buildings to establish the unity in the overall design concept. Two major historical buildings (*Elhamra Cinema* and *Vatan Café*) are revitalised. Firstly, the historical Cinema (*Elhamra*) is reincarnated within the body of new Multi-Purpose Hall. The exterior wall of this building is designed to perform as a projection-wall in order for the open area to be used as a massive outdoor cinema. It was then possible to turn the new building into an icon making references to the "Annual Antalya Golden-Orange Film Festival" as well as to the *Elhamra* building in which the foundations of this

worldwide festival is paved. Thus, the park is intended to honour the memory of *Elhamra Cinema*. Secondly, the facade of *Vatan Café* is also rebuilt within the shopping complex proposed in the western part of the municipal complex. Consequently, it is intended, in this park, to establish the socio-economic foundations of a regeneration program within the heart of the city. Yet, what is much more important is that it is achieved through the use of landscape in this urban design problem. Regarding the conservation of landscape heritage in the park, significant measures are also taken. For instance, original axes (i.e. line of palm trees) of the very first landscape design executed here are preserved through the first grid, which represents the layer of Early Republican Era as the basis of overall layering. The building also reflects this layering (Figure 5), which constitutes the main theme of the overall design, on its facades through neutral language of the building with its panels fragmenting the reflections of historical buildings around. Thus, principles of landscape design are totally in parallel with those of architecture and those of conservation.

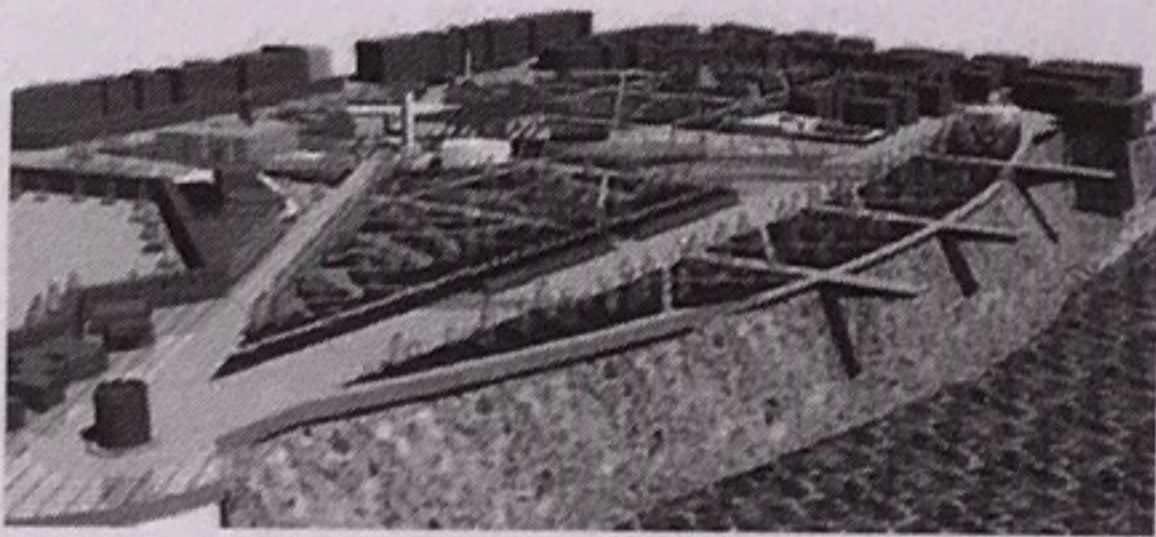


Figure 5

In conclusion, one cannot fail to notice that all these principles are orchestrated towards the ensemble of urban components, architectural elements and landscape features. Thus, the project achieves to establish a context for social life and political participation in this

ecologically sensitive piece of nature within the very core of a densely built city laid along a Mediterranean waterfront. In essence, the project can be conceived as an intervention into the urban environment, in order to bring the humane nature of the society in harmony with landscape. Although the project is not built, and thus, it is not possible to test whether the social goals are achieved, it is still an intriguing experiment regarding the use of urban design principles, architectural design criteria, geometric composition, landscape elements along a critical edge.

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