

## Introduction

At the historical brink of a grand-scale environmental disaster that is characterised by an ongoing process self-destruction of humanity dragging along all other species, the given site in Bandırma presents an opportunity to *re-think* the essence of 'design' in relation to 'nature'. The design concept of the proposal intends not only to question the stance of design in regard to nature, but also to deliberately *de-construct* the components and processes of design to reveal its misconducts in performance so far. Along this aim, the proposal addresses the problem of designing an urban park (with a quite heavy building brief) through the metaphor of "wounded organism" which is in the process of gradual self-healing. Indeed, the existing state of the site exhibits a scene which epitomizes the *poetics of nature reclaiming from the man-made intervention*.



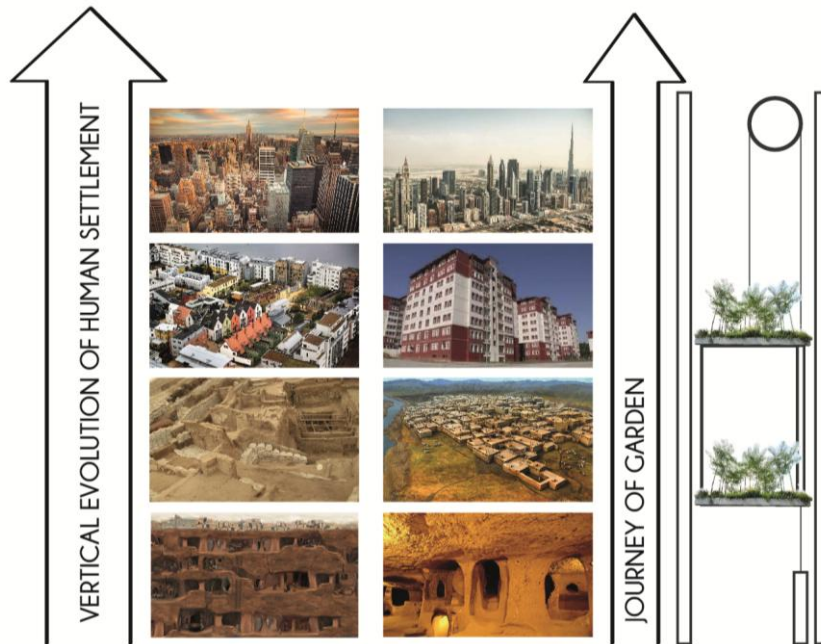
### Site as a wounded organism



### Nature reclaiming the 'man-made'

The vanishing traces of human intervention (that have *dissolved* into the landscape *in time*) give not only the impression of 'man-made' is fading away into 'nature', but also the impression that soul of the terrain is overcoming the trauma of her injury and the bizarre pleasure of its *pain*. The resultant imagery displays the dignified *beauty of agedness* and *that of suffering*. The existing plantation, which is intertwined with the remains of both concrete and stone-masonry, already paves the way for questioning design and technology in relation to our natural habitat. Therefore, the proposal takes the notion of "duality of 'man-made' versus 'natural'" as its underlying theme. In that context, the proposal accommodates a series of dichotomies such as; rational vs irrational, reason vs intuition or artificial vs natural etc.

Design as one of the salient instruments of human (*yet destructive*) civilisation has had the leading role in the rhetoric of modernity which has always been associated with human progress and growth. In that sense, designers have been the perpetrators while the developers were the instigators in this rigorous endeavour to elevate the human civilisation. However, it has become an adventure, thus failure, of dominating the nature. In doing so, humans try to imitate nature. Here, constructional frames act as skeletons. The skeleton (*i.e. frame*) transforms its own morphology and creates certain voids (*i.e. sub-spaces in the body*) in accordance with the requirements of vital organs for survival. Above all, however, in addition to creating a skeleton, construction of a *spine* (as the core of a central nerve system which is essentially *rhizomatic*) is very essential for creating (*i.e. imitating*) a living and conscious organism as a design product. Along this path, humans have craved for overcoming their own physical limits, by means of extending their bodies and senses through mechanical and analogue tools first and electronic and digital tools later almost evolving into *cyborgs*. In that context, stages of human revolution on earth have gone through the phases of; agricultural revolution, industrial revolution, and finally digital and information revolution. On a parallel track, the evolution of human settlement on earth can be summarized as a vertical process starting from the caves and underground cities towards high-rise buildings and mega-structural complexes. Along this evolutionary process, it can easily be seen that nature and green components of our physical environment have always accompanied this vertical process (*e.g. hanging gardens, roof gardens etc.*).



*Verticality of human settlement evolution*

A journey starting from the *Caves of Cappadocia*, *Underground City of Derinkuyu*, or *settlement of Çatalhöyük*, not only heading towards the *Skylines of New York, Shanghai and Dubai* but also pushing the frontiers of *outer space* tells a lot about the dangerous ambition of the phenomenon of design at the peril of our own existence on earth. Indeed, *Babylonian Tower and its hanging gardens* [as an attempt of mortal humanity to challenge the immortal divinity of the universe] epitomize the aforementioned process of ascending from the earth.



*Verticality of Human Settlement Endeavours and Babylonian Tower*



*Example of Architectural Layering on the site*



Moreover, a historical overview of human settlement and processes of 'construction' (or the act of building in particular) reveals the logic of 'stratification' whereby edifices are accumulated through juxtaposition and superimposition of the layers of human intervention. Thus, the parallelism among; these vertical processes, layering of both construction and urbanisation, and the transition between different scales of human intervention are quite clear.

## Concept



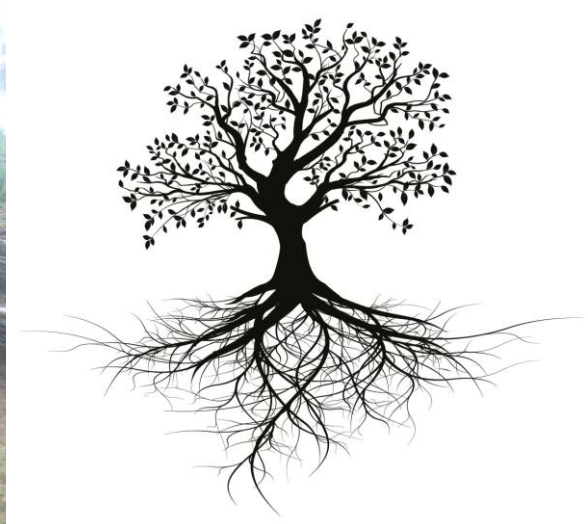
*Aesthetization of Wound & Pain (Pain, Doubt, Belief, Eternity)*

The story of human civilisation appears to be a process of tackling a peculiar sort of masochist '*pleasure of the pain*' that is caused by the '*wounds*' that humanity made on its own organism and its own habitat. Therefore, the proposal aims to address the issues of '*aesthetics of wound*' and experience of the '*pleasures of pain*' associated with it.



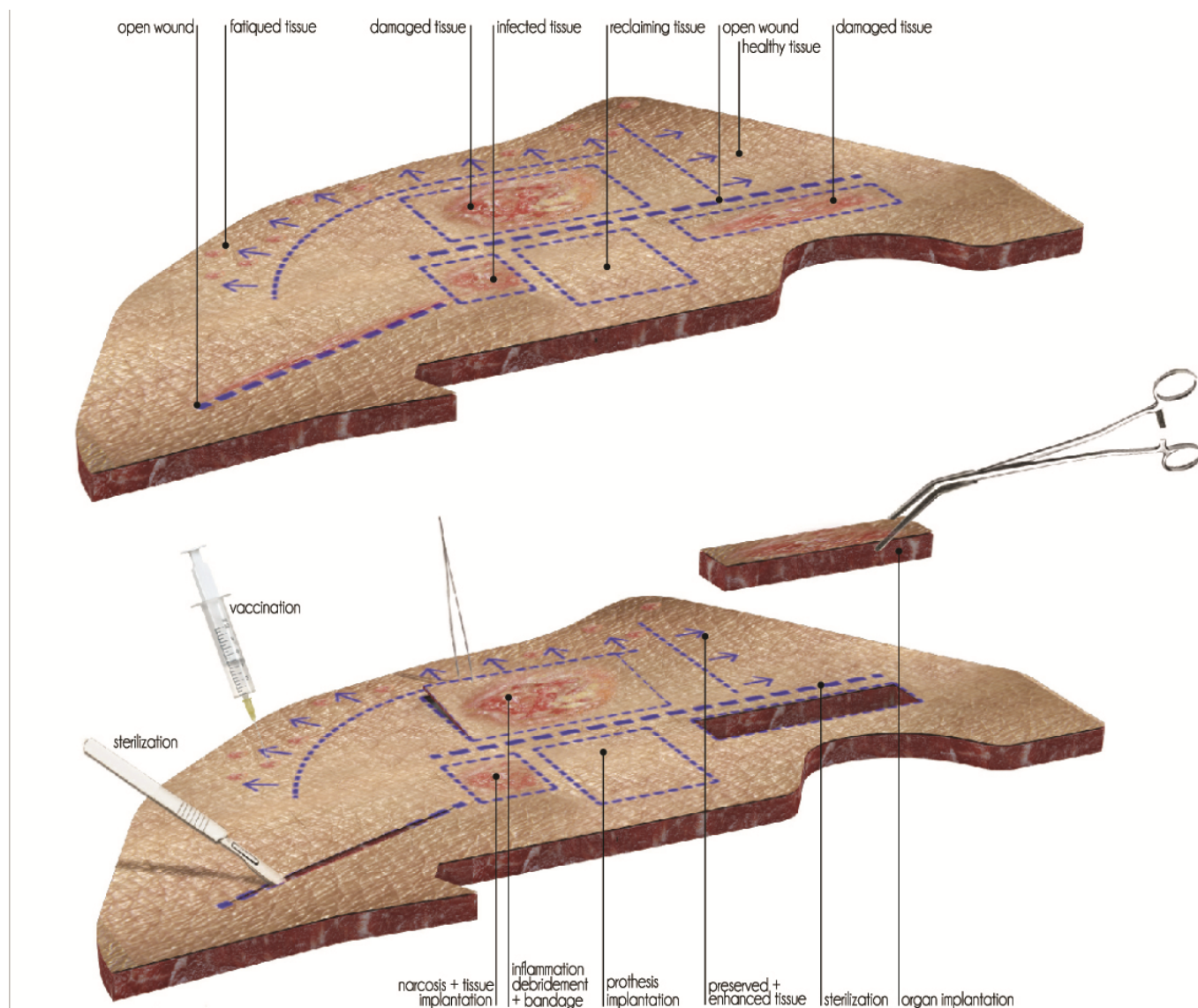
*The notion of 'Wound' (body and nature)*

In the light cast by the above-mentioned conceptual framework, the design concept for this park is grounded on the metaphor of "**wounded organism**". In addition to the notion of 'wound', **tree** (which is the most salient feature of the given terrain) and particularly its **roots** are taken as the starting point for the concept of the proposal. From a Deleuzian perspective, **roots**, particularly as **rhizomatic** formations, are shaped in a complex fashion according to the conditions of the context underground. In this way, it determines the 'growth of the tree' itself in association with the **conditions and forces of the nature** above the ground. The ongoing yet slow process of self-healing (wound) that can be observed in the site is taken as a potential value.



*Nature (earth, tree & root) as the genesis of design*

A provocative yet effective approach of **'surgical intervention'**, as a derivative of 'inflammation debridement' for gradual draining off the infection, is appropriated as a *conceptual strategy* for the *treatment* of such a sensitive piece of nature, a unique terrain entrapped within an ill-developed urban-scape.



*Site as an ill-developed organism and the proposed urban-architectural intervention as a 'surgery'*

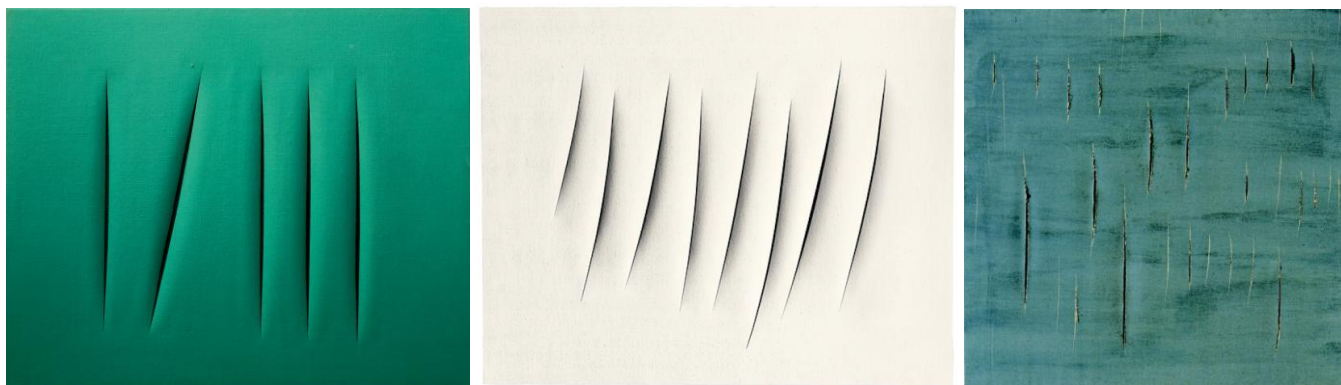
The concept is further enhanced along two parallel strategies; one of which is a 'gentle touch on surface of the earth' that is already wounded, and second of which is to enable an accelerator by means of a 'judicious surgery' (in form of a *urban-architectural laparoscopy*) to re-open up the wound and to implant further hostile organism (i.e. *architecture*) in a controlled dosage to activate and encourage the resistance of the hosting organism until the tissue repairs itself under the skin.



*Urban-Architectural Laparoscopy*



Having inspired by Fontana's paintings, a series of *scratches* over the 'existing green canvas' via an 'architectonic bistoury' are proposed over the *existing scars* (i.e. traces of previous urban interventions). This architectonically tailored surgical operation accommodates the duality of; old and new, rational and irrational, control and freedom, artificial and natural.

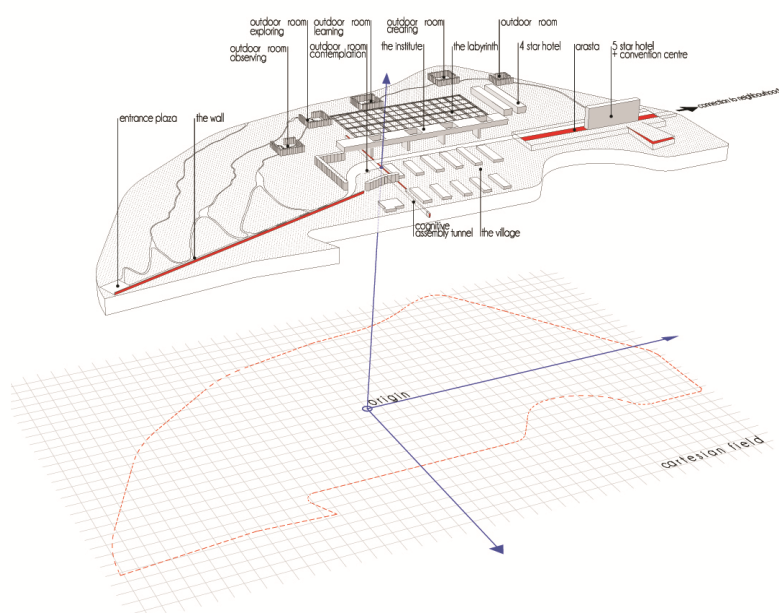


Fontana's Paintings and 'cuts'

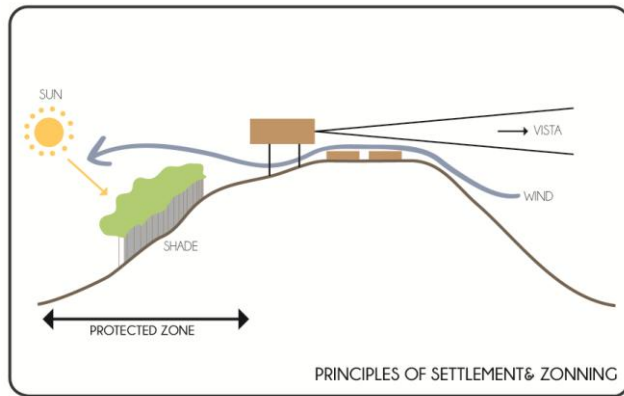


The Notion of 'Cuts' on site as means of the intended surgical strategy

The proposal takes the existing traces on the site and develops them into a new and healthy scheme by laying a 'central spine' along which the activities of *design institute*, the *convention centre* and the *accommodation facilities* (hotels) are strategically organised taking the 'environmental input' into consideration. This *spine* is tackled as a medium of the continuous flow of activities and experiences (which, in fact, starts from the town centre and extends to the lower reception plaza via the help of proposed 'waterfront renovation project') along a scenario by integrating the remains of the heritage buildings into the institute.

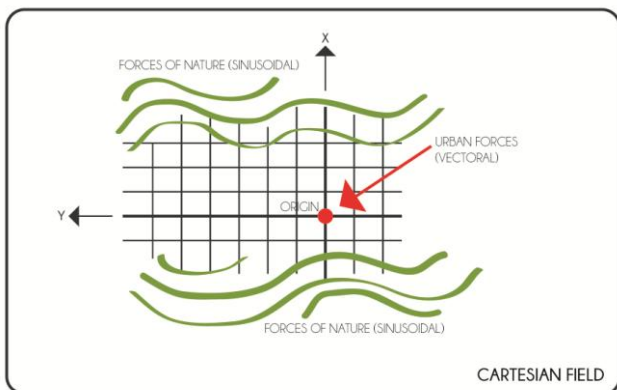


Spinal organization of spaces within the park



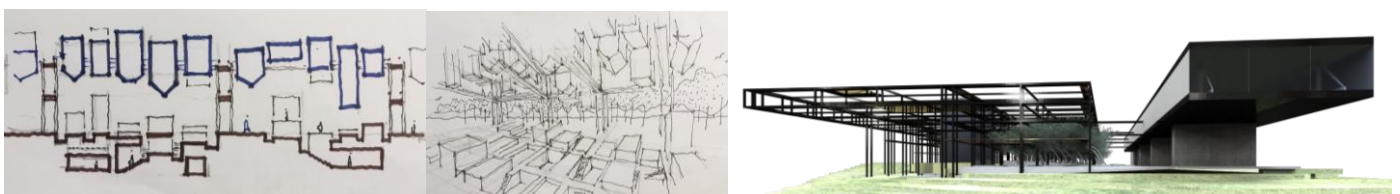
*Settlement Principles for the Site in regard to Existing Environmental Inputs*

The intended scenario by the proposed scheme is based on understanding, respecting and surrendering to the nature. Therefore, the story starts with a rigorous and mysterious ascend from the town to the hill via the main stairway leaning on a monumental wall cutting through the hill like a bistoury. On the arrival to the hill, the visitors are taken into a grand scale room of nature defined by a pond where they are isolated from the urban context for an initial contemplation. Then, they are pulled by a gently curved path into the main spine where the 'institute' and the 'design village' (injected into the remains of the heritage buildings) embrace them on both sides of the main axis. The elevated and linear building of institute invites the visitor underneath to the mysterious 'journey of design' through the proposed 'design labyrinth' wittily hidden behind the institute building. Later the axis rides them towards the other end where required retail facilities are buried underground with an open atrium in form of an 'arasta' which connects the main axis to the 'convention centre'. The axis is extended to the adjacent neighbourhood through the underground 'arasta' with the projection of the spine will integrate nearby vicinities to the town centre without interruption.



*Site as a Cartesian Field*

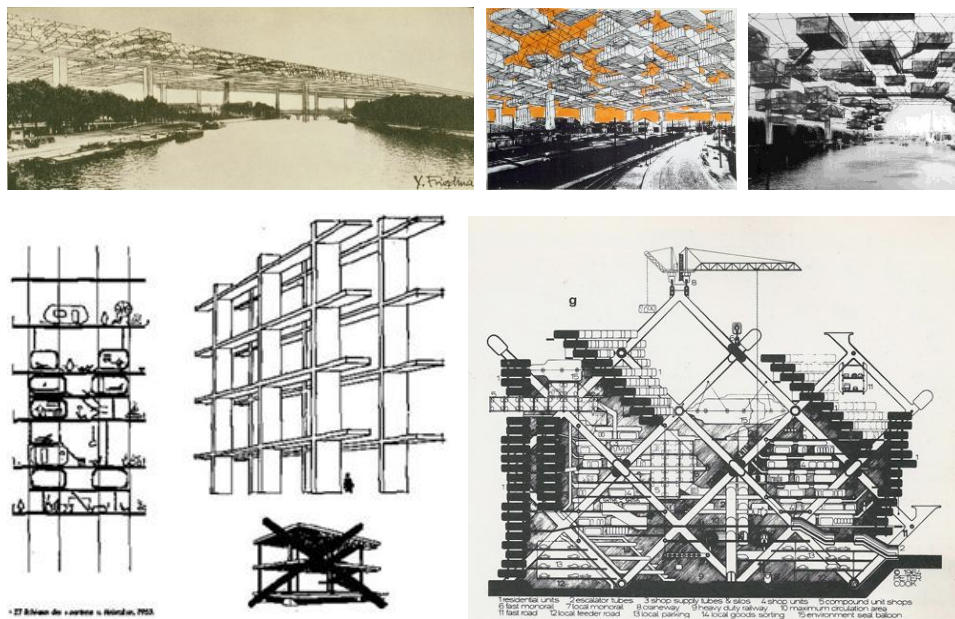
The underlying logic (*raison d'être*) of such a judicious intervention is essentially *Cartesian* as a deliberate expression of the rationality of human mind over the complexity of nature. The existing, and in fact quite legible, trace of the grid on the site displays a common ground or a universally shared medium for an underlay guiding all phenomena related to the evolution of human settlement and design history. Therefore, it provides a conceptual as well as physical framework for expressing the notion of 'layering' in the act of designing and in the mechanisms of transition among different scales. For this reason, the notion of design is depicted as a *journey 'from scale to scale'*, and displayed as an experience of *'scale within scale'* in the design labyrinth.



*Design as a process of transition from Scale to Scale*



Vertical processes throughout these acts and mechanisms are intended to be conveyed to the user/visitor in a narrative manner through proposed 'spatial matrix' the ideological roots of which can be found in Habraken's supports, Yona Friedman's skeletal layers over existing urban contexts, as well as in Archigram's Plug-In City.



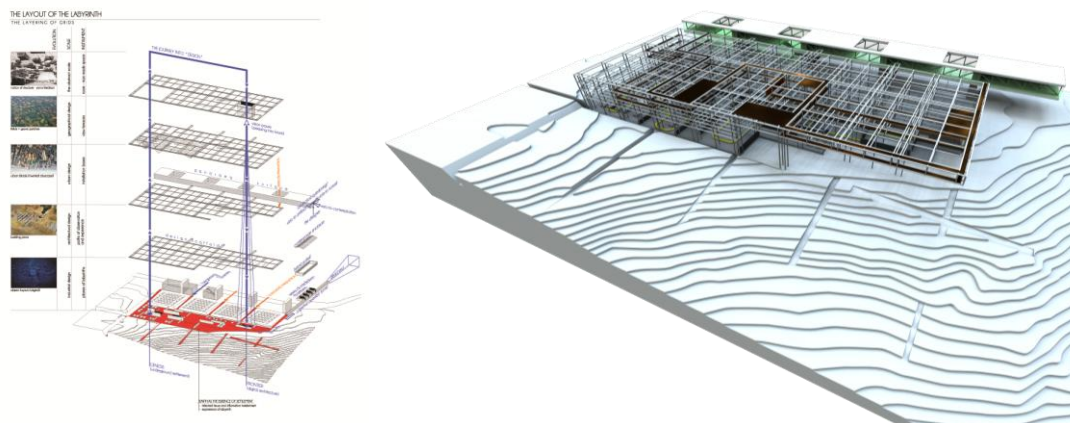
Notion of 'Structure' by Pioneers such as Habraken, Friedman, Archigram

In other words, particularly moving from the phenomenon of *grid*, an age-old archetype (roots of which can date back to Far-Eastern *Manadals*, or to *Hippodamos Plans* of Western Antiquity), '**the maze**', is taken as the core concept for the proposal developed for the design park in Bandırma, particularly for the design labyrinth at the very heart of the scheme.



Maze, Mandala and Grid-Iron Plans of Antiquity

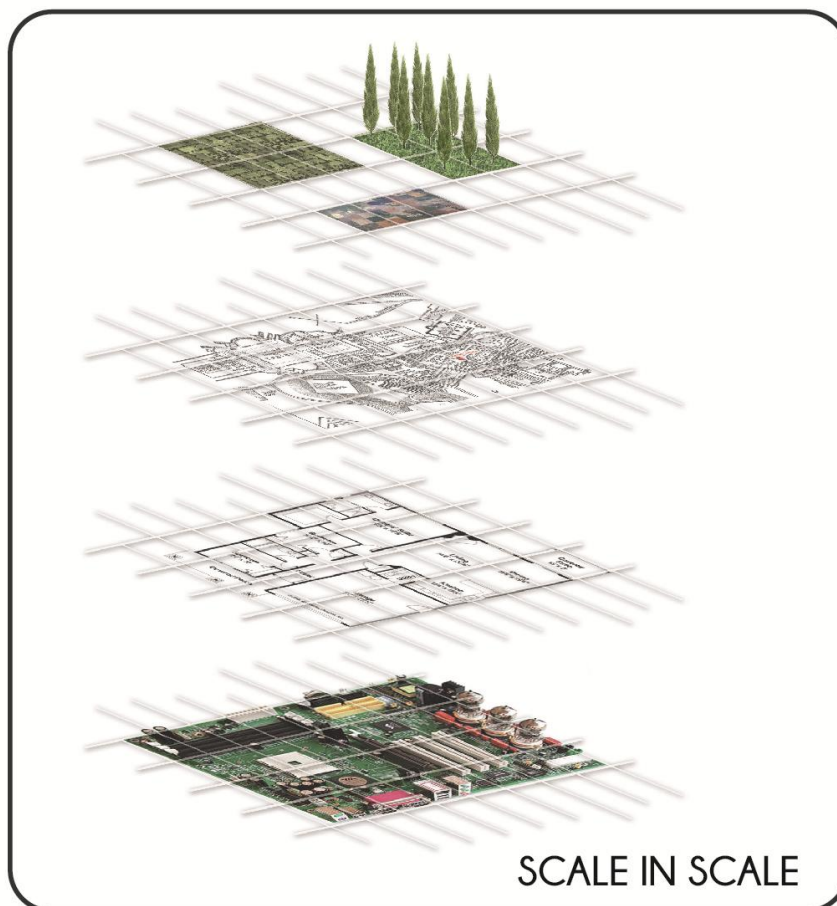
Yet, it is further extended to the third dimension so as to constitute a 3D 'design labyrinth' which will be completed into the intended 'spatial matrix' in the fourth and further dimensions by the human motion, sequential perception and bodily sensation. When this frame (*labyrinth*) is conceived as an *imitated skeleton* with its vital organs and central spine, the way proposed labyrinthal framework is integrated with the main spine of the park becomes crucial.



Spatial Matrix

This is where existing remains of buildings, nature, proposed institute building are all met and merged very similar to the core of the central nerve system in an organism in a rhizomatic understanding. In that context, users and visitors of the park will experience the transition between 'scales and layers of design' [as the marvels of 'design'] through their senses during their motion within this spatial matrix. The labyrinth consists of a series of *lines, planes* and *volumes* as the basic components of design that are perceived differently depending on the position (*perspective*) of the viewer throughout his/her movement.

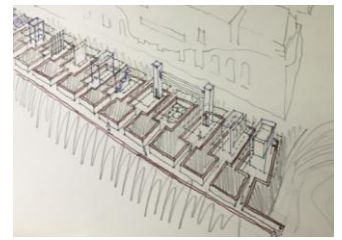
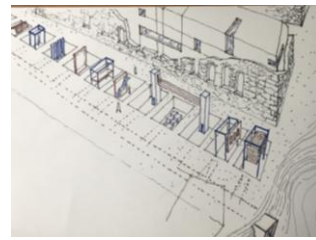
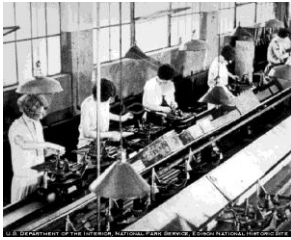
These components can be reorganised / reassembled by users over and over in time, reanimating the recurrent cycles of 'construction-and-destruction'. This design labyrinth contains four major layers (*i.e. levels*) to express the *multi-scaled* nature of design. These layers are also organised as an expression of human settlement layers as discussed above; At the topmost level, an elevated landscape (*i.e. plantation*) layer takes place as an abstraction of the *scale of geographical morphology* that is the reminiscent of gridal pattern of farming lands and grove patches. The next layer underneath is the 'inverted city-scape' suspended within the proposed 3D labyrinth and represents the *urban scale*. This layer is inspired by the typology of tree-house and is also intended as an irony and critique of current urbanisation policies over the natural lands. The existing concrete plaques on the ground level constitute the next layer in the sequence of spatial matrix. These modular plaques are taken as the base module of the matrix and they are re-interpreted as spatial units -added onto or subtracted from- the surface of the earth. They are re-organised to express the *architectural scale*. This level of the grid is also used to organise the voids which enable the user to enter the lowest and final layer of the labyrinth under the ground. That layer refers to the *industrial design scale* which manifests itself with the grid of the main-board of various electronic and digital devices such as computers and android cellular phones.



*The Layers of Spatial Matrix (Labyrinth)*

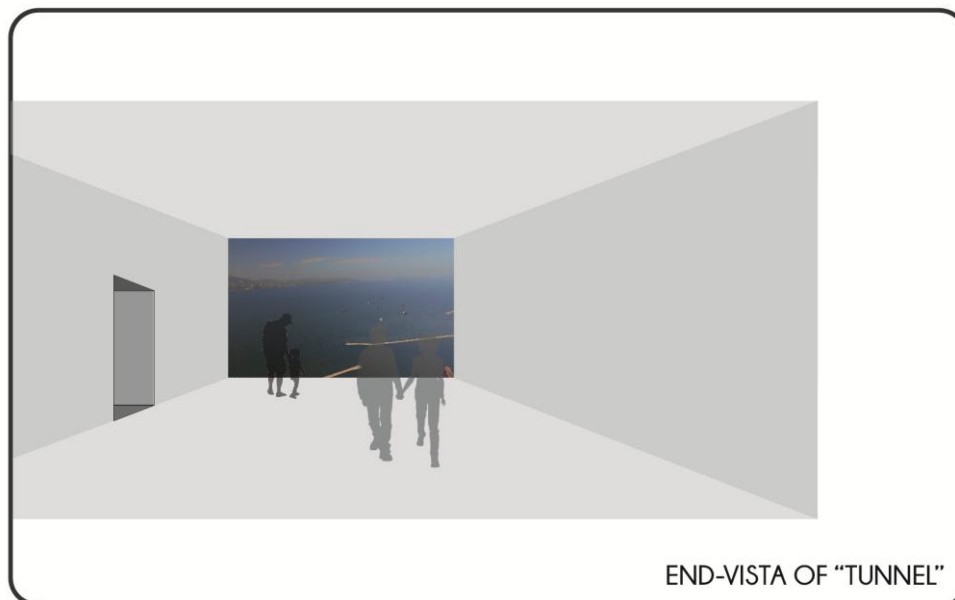
As mentioned above, this matrix is an ironic and critical re-reading (and thus re-writing) of urban-architectural settlement and industrial production story of humanity. The tectonic articulation of the skeletal framework of the labyrinth in which all these layers that are accommodated helps to turn this spatial matrix into a 'ghost building' that gives the impression of it vanishing into the air as if it never existed; as if the wounds on the nature have eventually vanished, too, and never existed.





*Assembly Line as a symbol of industrialisation and human destruction of nature and 'cognitive tunnel' proposed on site*

The whole processional ritual of experiencing the matrix reaches its climax with the transfer of user/visitor to the 'underground tunnel' which operates as a 'cognitive assembly line'. The symbol of 'assembly line' as an extremely rational model to achieve the greed of humanity for over-production (and thus excessive consumption at the peril of controlling, dominating and eventually destroying nature) via industrialisation, is buried underground as the final stage of our urban-architectural laparoscopy for critically depicting the cognitive process of designing and building our physical environment by using the abstract concepts of basic design along the route of the tunnel. At the end of this tunnel, visitor is left alone with a framed view of the Bandırma Gulf for a self-contemplation in which the relation between the design as an instrument for excessive production and the design in cooperation with nature can be questioned. The proposal is a combination of visual, verbal and textual art.



*The framed view of sea at the (dead)end of 'cognitive tunnel' as a pause to question industrialisation and a call to return to nature*

Thus, the project and this report, as complementary components of the rhetoric on the issue of the relation between design and nature, are essential parts of a *construct*. Both the project and this very text put the reader (i.e. end-user) into a conceptual labyrinth without an actual end-product. The proposal expects the project to be 'completed' by the reader through perception, through experience and through reading and contemplating.

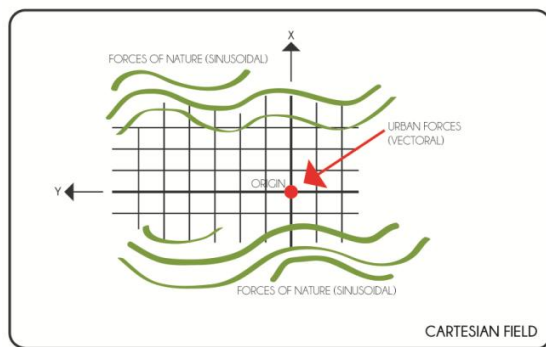
### **Urban Design Principles**

City is a whole with streets, buildings, walks and parks together. All gives city its own unique identity and sense of place. When it is connected it becomes more supportive and liveable and we more understand and appreciate it. Principally with a broad view, city is connected with vicinity (Kapıdağ Peninsula and Mudanya line) by green belt which also embracing city centre when zoomed in. Green belt refuses vehicle-oriented flow from place to place, and it represents human-scale activities and life space along waterfront. Under the light shed by the main concept, the site is intended to be a continuous part (and destination point) of the green waterfront belt which will start from the main square of Bandırma in front of the ferry-port.

This new green zone is proposed as an urban spine which will direct people from the town centre to the lower end of the park complex in its western wing. Spine as fundamental and integrative element of urban life and contains path, portal and place (E.White, 1999). City square and park are main places and connected by inspirational *paths* and metamorphic *portals*. Each path and portal prepares and transform user's perception for urban-natural transition step by step by its unique "*container*", "*ambiance*" and "*activity*". Journey begins with city square and ends at park then restarts again along the way. Another story, paths and portals begins in the park. Hereby journey becomes a loop '*from scale to scale*'.

Industry is a significant element of urban identity of Bandırma. The current industrial zone in port area is proposed to be converted into a waterfront that is rehabilitated and equipped with cultural and recreational facilities and unified with public spine. All sections of port area redesigned and partially protected to serve historical, analytical, experimental and poetic understandings of users and visitors in order to raise awareness. Evolution of usage and activities in industrial area provides more liveable urban area for users/visitors and honours the industrial heritage as a crucial part of urban identity. Consequently, each part of public area is linked and enhanced physical and mental contents.

From this point onward, a grand stairway to the top of the hill is proposed to transfer the visitors to the park complex where they are met with a lyrically enclosed space as an entry hall to the park. Then, within the complex, existing axiality is taken as a given input and the proposed scheme is developed along this linear axis lying in east-west direction. The field of intervention suggests a Cartesian impact area whereby urban forces manifests themselves as a *vector* acting upon the western end of this field particularly to the entry hall that is deliberately designed with a dignified natural atmosphere. Along the main axis of the complex, the eastern end, on the other hand, operates as another entry point to the complex from the new urban development areas of the town. The proposed Cartesian field is surrounded by green buffer zones as *sinusoidal* forces both on the northern cliffs and on the southern slopes of the hilly site.



*Site as a Cartesian Field*

### Architectural Design Principles

Within the scope of the conceptual framework and the urban design principles above, buildings required by the brief are located in a linear manner along the main spinal axis of the complex. Eastern and western ends of this main spine are designed as main gates. Particularly the one on the west, in other words at the beginning of the main promenade, a subtle pond (over which visitors are gently admitted to the experience through a pathway among the reed-bed) is introduced for creating an abrupt feeling of idleness and purification, and thus, a temporary isolation from the urban aura so as to prepare them for the forthcoming experience of *nature-architecture synthesis*.



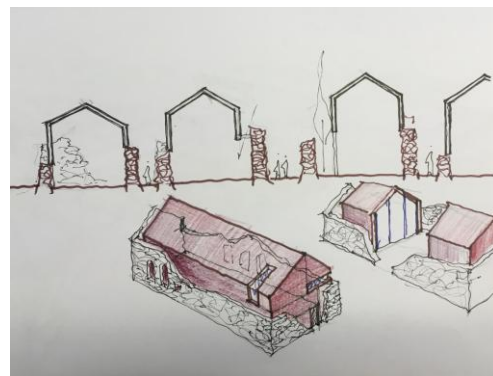
*'Contemplation Room' at the start of proposed 'experience' on the site*



This very point generates the procession of the visitor along the narration into which the whole terrain is converted. Convention centre and hotel and retail facilities associated with it operate as another portal complex at the other end of the main promenade. The design institute building is located centrally along the main spine. It is deliberately elevated from the ground, and thus, opened up into the terrain both on the northern and southern directions for establishing organic ties with the workshops proposed within the existing heritage buildings in the front and with the 'design labyrinth' proposed on the flat land at the back of the institute. The duality of vistas on both sides of the linear building epitomizes the constant dialectic of a designer in between nature and man-made. The linear formation of the building refers to a two-way process between acquiring knowledge (*with the library on one-side*) and turning the knowledge into production and disseminating it (*with workshops and auditorium at the other end of the building*). Retail facilities are primarily (and deliberately) organised underground (*in form of arasta – as a vernacular typology*) as an integral part of the convention-centre/5-star hotel complex, again in a linear fashion aligned with the main promenade. A certain proportion of retail activity is distributed among the modular units planned within the existing heritage buildings. The proposed scheme deliberately intends to honour the institute building by elevating it despite its secondary role in the brief. In doing so, the retail facilities, which constitute the majority of the building program is set underground as a display of respect to not only nature but also to the institute of design education.

### Heritage Conservation and Restoration Principles

In parallel with the philosophy behind the proposed design concept for the park, 'ruin aesthetics' is appropriated as a pedestal for conservation/renewal strategies in interpreting the building brief. Remains of the existing masonry are completed with subtle and minimal architectural interventions that are made of contemporary materials and techniques in order to create the duality of new and old, and to express the passage of time and persistency of nature. Here, an inner skin is re-fitted into the existing historical shells. These inner skins are designed on the basis of a specific figure-ground (solid-void) relationship in accordance with both the proposed gridal system and the pattern of existing trees that have grown within the historic outer skins, and thus already reclaimed the site. The emergent building complex is re-functioned as a 'design village' according to the size and position of the units as either retail or workshop activities.



*Heritage Strategy on the site; Ruins to be completed as a reflection of the duality of new and old*

### Landscape Design Principles

In parallel with the main concept explained at the beginning, the site is taken as a vulnerable organism and is rehabilitated according to the principles given below;

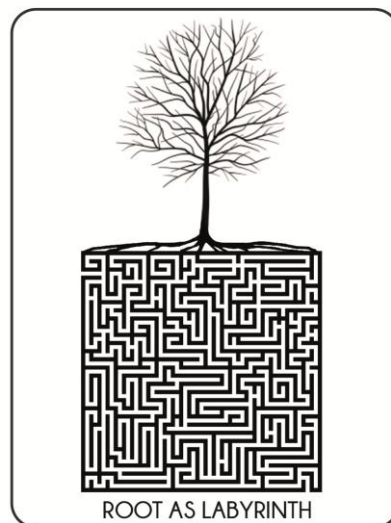
Change in landscape is inevitable. Sometimes these changes are so slow or so infrequent that we do not perceive them. As our knowledge expands, we develop a pattern for changing landscape. These patterns are the simplifications that emerge from complex interaction of large or different causes or elements. The initial landscape principle is to emphasize change patterns and to inspire from them. Outdoor rooms of remnants, borrowed seascape and aeolian iconoclastic vegetation define as patterns of existing landscape to preserve. Additionally, according to biotic and abiotic surveys and landscape heritage assessments, proposed landscape principles are authenticity, connection, multi-functionality and productivity. Authenticity as a safeguard of monumental effect; connection as a link of places, ecologic nodes and communities; multi-functionality as a diversity of outdoor activity scenarios; productivity as a remedial landscape are indicated in landscape design context.

Tree different habitats: prairie, wetland and grove, are designed to increase biodiversity. Planting design includes over thirty new native species addition to existing vegetation. *Salvia sp.*, *Thymus sp.*, *Acanthus sp.*, *Daphne sp.*, *Rubus sp.*, *Lavandula sp.* are some prairie species; *Cortaderia sp.*, *Hordeum sp.*, *Lagurus sp.*, *Mischanthus sp.*, *Stipa sp.* are chosen

species for wetland; and, Acer sp., Betula sp., Fraxinus sp., Liquidambar sp., Quercus sp., Prunus sp., Salix sp. are species for urban grove. Reuse, up/down/re-cycling, mulching, rainwater harvesting are permanent practices to increase awareness and basic knowledge about recent environmental issues. Sufficient amount of edible plants is included in planting design to offer extra daily nutrition for users/visitors. Plant info labels are located to explain history and information about plants and their habitats that host fauna for each season. Therefore, holistic landscape design introduces an interactive medium for community, culture and nature.

## Conclusion

The proposal is an attempt to *re-think* the notion of 'design' *vis-a-vis* 'nature'. Having seen the existing terrain as a "**wounded and entrapped organism**", a radical yet judicious '**surgical intervention**', is implemented as a *conceptual strategy* for its *treatment*. Having embodied the duality of; old and new, rational and irrational, control and freedom, artificial and natural, this strategy depicts and narrates the role, tools and mechanisms of design in the evolution of human settlement from a critical standpoint. Having read the existing traces of human intervention as the generators of a Cartesian grid, the proposal re-writes the existing text on the terrain in form of a new spatial matrix in which the notion of 'layering' in the act of designing and in the mechanisms of transition among different scales are experienced, perceived, sensed and questioned by the user in motion. Therefore, the proposed '**design labyrinth**' is a conceptual and physical installation for a *journey 'from scale to scale'*, and an experience of '**scale within scale**'. The *wound* can be seen as a phenomenon that nature has to 'solve' as a self-regulating organism. It is a process between survival and extinction. Similarly, *labyrinth* is in fact a 'wound' slashed into the modern world. Therefore, *labyrinth* is a phenomenon that modern human has to solve. Finally, at the end of '*underground tunnel*' which operates as a '*cognitive assembly line*', a framed view of the sea and horizon line for a self-contemplation about the design and nature is submitted to the visitor. The labyrinth as a 'construct' (or as an organisation) regulates the dynamics that interact with nature. So, the existing wound is turned into a puzzle to be solved.



*Earth as the Genesis, Root as the Labyrinth*

Thus, in other words, the **root** becomes the **labyrinth**. Eventually *the wound and the root become the labyrinth* which humanity needs to solve in cooperation with nature. With its proposed rhetoric and conceptual labyrinth to be solved, Bandırma Design Park is intended to be a unique landscape as a graft to generate a futuristic alternative settlement pattern.