

From dystopia to utopia: Kocaeli

Nevnihal ERDOĞAN¹, Hikmet Temel AKARSU², Büşra ÖZAYDIN ÇAT³

¹ nevtrakya@gmail.com • Department of Architecture, Architectural and Design Faculty, Kocaeli

University, Kocaeli, Turkey

² htakarsu@gmail.com • Author, Architect, İstanbul, Turkey

³ ozaydin.busra@gmail.com • Department of Architecture, Architectural and Design Faculty, Kocaeli University, Kocaeli, Turkey

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to discuss and evaluate a dystopia future scenario for year 2049 in Körfez Bay Region of Kocaeli Province.

Industrial identity of Kocaeli has accelerated in the first years of 20th century. Urban image of the city has long been shaped by unplanned development, unauthorized buildings, and shanty houses. Especially morphological deformities between industry and housing zones gave way to environmental and health problems. These ongoing urban problems shape a precursor character for a 2049 dystopic future.

In this context 2012-2013 spring term Architectural Design Studio of Kocaeli University- Architectural and Design Faculty has selected “Utopia” as design theme in research&design and intellectual inquiry basis. Definition of the “2049 Dystopic Future Scenario” was given as; İzmit city completely collapsed, historical layers are still under the surface, İzmit City Center is nothing more than a ruined wasteland, high levels of water pollution in Körfez Bay area and Sapanca Lake, emptied industry complexes baring no social or cultural meaning. The design problem has been formulated as; “developing scenarios for designing livable cities”

Groundbreaking utopian thinkers and new life systems designers were thoroughly analyzed and tracked down in the design studio process. The students participating in the studio passed through various idea generating phases and evolved towards building new architectural design projects which imagine a brand new world.

Keywords

Dystopia, Kocaeli, Urban structure, Utopia.



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1. Introduction

Those born to a bad world or whose world gets uninhabitable have to create a new world. The first step to create a new world is to design utopias. World, environment and life are face to face with an overall deterioration. It seems that countdown has started for ecological and biological breakdown. Does it have a meaning that the architect designs his unique parcel in his personal island in a holistically apolitical adventure? Doubtless, there isn't, because it is meaningless anymore. An architect has to think holistic and design not only a place but also a complete future perception and a lifestyle. Because, issues have completely poured out of functional solutions present in primitive life circles and have ended up comprehending all the life. Then, there needs to be a futurist plan, a utopia, a holistic life fiction in the mind of an architect who wants to design a minimal spatial unit. Otherwise, it will be a futile struggle.

The purpose of this declaration is to handle the urban transformation problematique within the frames of utopia-dystopia concepts. In this sense, moving from intellectual architecture and ideas forwarded on utopia, our aim is to discuss the 2049 dystopic future scenario designed for the Körfez region of Kocaeli city and to discuss the proposed project.

"Outopia" or "eutopia" is a Greek origin word and means both nothing (outopia), and a nice place (eutopia) (Hançerlioğlu, 1977). The core of the word utopia that Thomas More invented and used (Kılıçbay, 2003), in Kumar's words, means the impossible, yet, to live in a world where human desires (Kumar, 2006). Though contextually philosophical, yet stylistically a literary genre and a design of an ideal society (Akatlı, 2003), utopias reflect a critical attitude against societal and political relations the writers are in and aims to reach the ideal one, in other words, socially and politically ideal (Atayman, 2004).

In utopia, various subjects appealing to the all areas of life such as family, sexuality, pedagogy, architecture, town planning, management, religion, technology, ecology can be covered. Based

on these definitions, it can be advocated that utopias are alternative lives formed against existing orders that are out of right path. We can say that utopias are fictitious ideals. The intrinsic wish to 'better' inside humankind from the early ages forms the basis of utopias. That wish towards better brings two acceptances with itself. While one of these two is the fact that the moment undergone is bad, the other one is the belief that future will be nicer. The belief of a nicer future is caused by the fact that 'good' was encountered somewhere and sometime in a bad moment in the past.

Robert Fishman refers to three urban planners and their works, Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier in Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century. He said that today these studies determine most of the cities and it will be effective in the future. Fishman associates the reason why these studies very effective to hope and fear which are commonly shared. He said these studies show:

- Fear and disgust in the 19th century metropolis,
- The feeling that modern technology makes exciting new urban forms possible,
- A revolutionary fraternity and the expectation that the time of freedom is about to come.

It can be said that the concept of utopia is corresponded in the city. When we analyze the book about urban utopias, we can understand that the concept of utopia is approached two different ways. In one of them the city is the place where the imagined happy society lives there. In the other one the city is designed as a utopia (Yüksel 2012).

And dystopia is a term created from Greek 'dus'='zor' and 'topos'='place' words. Just as utopia indicates a 'non-existing place' with negation prefix 'u' and word 'topia'; term 'dystopia' indicates 'hard/hard place' (Sarcey 2003). According to Krishan Kumar, anti-utopia(dystopia) has been following utopia secretly from the very beginning (Kumar, 2006). The reason why Kumar says so is caused by the fact that utopia holds anti-utopia deep inside. In utopias, a system believed to be perfect is built by limited minds. To keep the

order of this system intact, people need to comply with the order. It is an overall problem in itself that utopia, in this way, removes the will of people. It can be said that ideal order supposed to exist in utopias has overlooked the probability of human will to make mistake. In a sense, the will to live, to work and to have joy in a certain order deprives human of his freedom. Moving from these definitions, utopias can be said to bring dystopias with it. According to Tuna Ultav (2015) dystopia displays how the society described as promising future by "utopia", is reversed in an ironical way. The perfectionists that wake up from the utopian dream suddenly find themselves in the midst of a terrifying land. Once the utopia is realized, it is transformed into dystopia.

Jacoby (2012) defend that it has to be understand that dystopias are not only opposite of the utopia but also they are logical complementary of utopia. While utopias describe and liberate it the world which based to the new ideas, dystopias frighten people by using the tendencies that threaten the freedom (Jameson, 2009). According to Akkoyunlu Ertan (2003) even so the dystopias seem like disaster scenario, it should be evaluated that they are warnings for these scenario.

In 19th century cities are very important to product utopias. The idea of ideal city is one of them. But in 20th century due to rapid urbanization the effect of the idea of ideal city decreased. So the idea of ideal city gives way to dystopian urban scenario. In this study firstly a dystopian urban scenario is emerged then some utopian projects are developed by the students. To better understand here are the first utopias studied within the project and each emerging as a literary text;

Plato (2006)-State; He defined how an ideal state should be in his work 'State'. People have been classified into three classes in this state; workers (farmers, craftsmen), guards (soldiers) and managers (scholars, esp. philosophers). Labor class works, produces and meets the material/tangible needs of the state. Guards defend the security inside society and protect the state against outsiders. Managers' class governs the state. This utopian state of Plu-

ton has found representatives both in East and West philosophies afterwards.

Thomas More (2006)-Utopia; He presents a utopian state design in his novel-like work. In this state, no private asset exists because it is banned. Everyone produces in the name of the state. Currency is not valid. From what is produced, everyone gets as much as they need. Individuals work 6 hours a day and spend the rest busy with art and science.

Tommaso Campanella (2008)-The City of the Sun; While Campanella presents a utopian state in his work 'The City of the Sun', he is under the influence of Platoon. Everything in the The City of the Sun is shared. There is no family. Couple choice is made by the government. The city is governed fairly by a saint. The authority of the governor is absolute. He has three vices named 'Power', 'Wisdom' and 'Love'.

Francis Bacon (2010)-New Atlantis; Bacon presents his utopian state in his work. An intact moral prevails in the island of 'Ben Salen'. A special organization plans and manages this high knowledge and culture of the people. Here, 'New Atlantis' has been designed as a knowledge state.

This study aims to approach the urban transformation process through utopian and dystopian. In this context in the second part of the study the scope of the 2049 dystopian scenario will be determined. After this part it will be explained how the process of project is developed. Then in the fifth part of the study the utopian projects which the students develop for 2049 dystopian scenario will be exemplified. In the last part all these concepts will be evaluated with architecture education.

2. 2049 dystopian scenario

Industrial identity of Kocaeli province has gained pace in the early of 2000. Unplanned enlargement of the city during the industrialization, constructions against the architectural order and shanties have built the new identity of the city. Especially the intertwining of industrial areas and the habitation places has brought environmental and health-related problems. Today, the continuation of these prob-

lems with their causes is thought as the precursor of 2049 distopian future. In this frame, '2049 distopian future scenario' in atelier study where utopias will be produced is as following;

- Izmit is the province city center fabric has been completely devastated.
- Historical layers are still under the ground.
- Bay/Korfez coast and city center are seen as a ruined topography.
- There is a contaminated bay and the lake Sapanca.
- What dominate the city are unfortunately the burnt forests, empty factory buildings and meaningless historical constructions.

Some suggestions have been developed against this dystopian scenario to make Kocaeli a livable city again:

- To go into a radical regulation including the districts Izmit, Kartepe, Başiskele, Karamürsel, Gölçük, Derince, Körfez, Dilovası, Çayırova, Darıca, Gebze and Kandıra that that all form the city Kocaeli.
- Clear and reformation of the bay into a habitation.
- Clear of the lake Sapanca and revitalization of the natural environment, regaining natural sources and formation of new life units.
- To prepare revitalization projects to unearth the historical layers in the city center, to get iconic structures as reference, to construct and build new occupation areas, healthcare centers, areas of education and art to advance the city.
- To transform heavy metal industry into sustainable energy production areas,
- To redesign Izmit, rising from its ashes, in the sense of historical and natural sustainability.

3. Studio work

Kocaeli, a 'transit' city being as a crossroad opening way to Anatolia, an industrial city, a 'coastal' city in the sense of trade and tourism with its shores to Blacksea and Marmara Sea. Yet, due to its closeness to Istanbul and its highway-railway-seaway transportation facility, its 'industrial' side has come into prominence. Thanks to its geographic location being an attention point, industrial development and the



Figure 1. General view of İzmit.

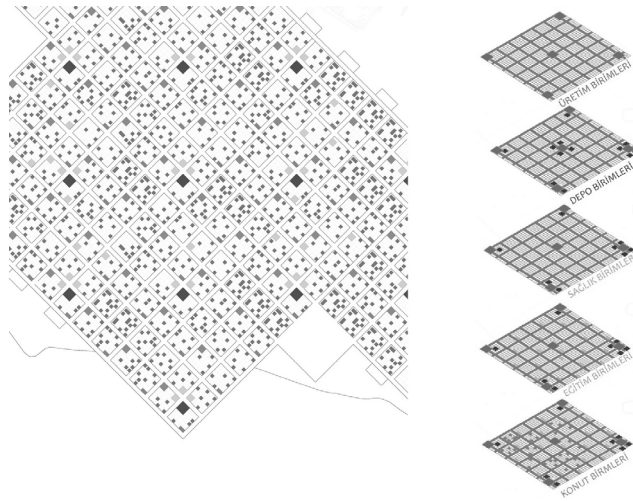


Figure 2. Plans of Melike Çeliktas's project.

increasing job opportunities; internal migration has rapidly increased (Figure 1).

4. Purpose and method

In Kocaeli University, Faculty of Architecture and Design, term 2012-2013, in Architectural Design Studio, within a study with the main theme utopia, the subject has been researched and evaluated intellectually and its spatial matches have been searched for. In this context the subject is discussed and developed with the author Hikmet Temel Akarsu (1989, 2012, 2013, 2017) in workshops.

Firstly, the subject has been discussed and developed by doing utopian-dystopic literary readings. In this sense, 2049 dystopian future city scenario has been fictionalised for Korfez region. Today's architecture has a struc-

ture that advances through feeding on various disciplines. Thus, the discussion of subjects (by students) like utopia-dystopia based on philosophy and the transfer of the perceptions from these discussions into architecture are thought to be an important experience.

During the studio, utopia texts such as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar *Beş Şehir*, Francis Bacon-New Atlantis, Thomas More-Utopia, Tommaso Campanella-Sun Country, Homeros-Odysseus, Daniel Defoe- Robinson Crusoe, Jonathan Swift- Gulliver's Travels and Platoon-State were read. In this context it will expected from the students to develop new utopian ideas for 2049 dystopian future city scenario.

5. Student projects

5.1. Theme one: Flexible city

Distopian scenario of the project has been formed this way; Huge metal and concrete masses are taking the place of exhausting green and the world is rapidly moving towards the end of ecological devastation. While the population rises chaotically, streets are flooded with people every day. People who work much and spend much time before screens cannot allocate time for themselves. They have duties in daily life and the reason and logic behind most of these duties are not known.

Communication is done solely on screens, and a society is being formed with decreasing reactions and emotions. An unhappy society whose responsibilities, is increasing. Everybody resides in high-rise buildings regardless of their financial situations. Life units are highly protected and closed. That people, for centuries, move without taking the world and the nature into consideration leads to natural calamities going more and more violent each passing day. This situation that brings the world to the end brings us to the 'New World' step by step (Figure 2).

Utopian scenario is like this;

Nature has waged war on humankind and kept its war until it destroys all the cities and itself. With this war of almost 1 year, most people were erased on the earth and cities were eradicated. Rest of the people on the earth plans to establish a new city. While doing this, they got far far away from the soil/

earth that is regarded as an alive enemy. People erected the first habitation and production unit out of metal and wood piles left out on the world which turned into a wreck yard. The most important trait of this city is that, if needed, its units get enlarged with articulation. The city consists of mobile units of education, housing and information production and it again consists of fixed units of health, food production, storing and energy.

In the newly-established worlds, instead of stable relationships among individuals, what exist are relations that constantly change, thus decreasing the sense of responsibility. The authority intervenes in the social life at a minimal level. Education system is quite flexible. Everyone can register for any available classes and gets recruited in line with their educational background. There is no fixed work hour. Everyone has duties out of their job. If they do not accomplish their duties, they are aware that the system they have created will crumble. Transportation network is sustained by highly-enhanced rail systems and personal mini flyers. Transportation consists of multi-level ways just as housing/residence units. Vertical transportation is made in large stations.

5.2. Theme two: Protection of nature

Distopian scenario of the project has been formed this way; The universe is in a constant cycle. The collapse firstly starting in human soul has turned out to be taking the whole globe in. That housing, as our most basic and simplest need, gets wholly concrete is one of the precursors of this collapse. Each passing day, human gets a little further away from the nature. Coming together with the nature has become now a vacation and an award for people anymore. What is worst is that this collapse makes people forget the past. The line between the nature and human has gone thicker day by day. Nature that we could hardly reach in the past is a concept that our people are unaware today. Over-intervention to life spaces has caused the individual to not even remember the past life. People feel the suffocation by this life, yet they cannot discern what is wrong. (Figure 3).

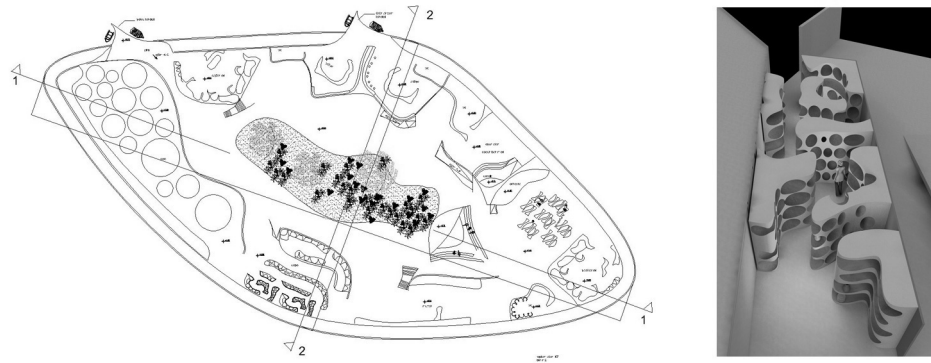


Figure 5. Plans of Sinan İriş's project.

and their jobs are exploited. With this technology, individual and self-concepts have been accepted as a match for selfishness and that anyone sacrifices himself/herself for the available system without questioning is praised. Authorities have intervened via the use of technology weapons in the memories of people so that they make any decision they wish and they remove the conflicts in these decisions. Each new idea has been reckoned as an intellectual crime without examination and this kind of crime has been punished with death just as any vandal acts. These punishments have been performed before the society so that everyone gets happy with that.

Wars, hunger, suicides, murders have caused mass deaths. Restriction of individual rights, oppression and punishment regulations have made it all impossible for people to develop, produce ideas and have access to sustainable life facilities. (Figure 4).

Here, formed utopian scenario is like this; after all this destruction, the authority weakened and a group of people from inside the government got organized and staged a coup and a human-centered, wise, highly ethical and sustainable life base was laid. As the smallest unit, ideal family was conceptualized. Purpose in these families is to meet the daily needs of the individuals who set up and advance the society. Around 10-12 'ideal families' make up the 'large family'. These united ideal families share the daily tasks and earnings. Each year in a large family, an ideal family is chosen as the managing family. Large families come together and set up a village. As they do not use money in shopping and each family is

specialized in a branch, they socially need each other by exchanging services. Villages form the districts. Some of these districts by contributing to agriculture, some to industry and some to energy production, all these districts form a whole city.

5.4. Theme four: New source; alternative energy

Dystopian scenario of the project has been formed this way; all usable natural sources have been consumed. Countries, to use more of the sources for themselves, are in a constant war against other countries. Wars have caused a psychological and spiritual collapse on people. This collapse is seen not only on human but also on the overall nature, dwellings, animals and all physical environment. People anymore want the war to end and to find a few source among the consumed natural sources. They want to remove the marks of the war and open a new door to a different world. They want to set up a new world over the war-weary old world. (Figure 5).

Here, formed utopian scenario is like this;

People are in a retrospective pursuit of a usable energy source that will influence almost all areas of their life. They regard that 'Alternative Current' used centuries ago in Egyptian pyramids is the energy source they have been searching for. They have learnt that in the near past century, Nicola Tesla succeeded in producing energy by using alternative energy. They want a type of healthy energy that does no harm to nature unlike charcoal, natural gas. Using this energy, people started to set up new cities. They thought that

dwelling in the city work using this energy. This way, they will get rid of being stable and they will have a more vivid life. Also, they aim to produce vehicles using 'Alternative Current' and thus easing the transportation. The hardship to produce dwellings during the pre-war period is attempted to be overcome by producing light materials suitable for alternative current. Within the framework of these ideas, dwellings in the utopia are designed to move on the granite rails and to be carried away by cable car.

5.5. Theme five: Lost words and lunatics of lost era

Lost Era/Lost Word, Dystopia;

An era when humanity went through lost era. Anything visual, auditory, sensory is gone. During the nights, there is no light other than screen light, yet, none is uncomfortable with darkness as they live in a world where nothing is worth seeing. Daytime is no different than night at all, people live in closed 'boxes' and they go out to meet their needs and turn back to their 'boxes'. Music in this era is just a noise. No one bears any interest in anything happening around the world. Their memories are so weak that in the evening they forget whatever unwell happened in the morning. They have no tolerance against anything that may ruin their order and so they prefer to forget about. They do not accept more information than that of their need to survive. Human memory does not remember further than what they underwent and saw three years ago. Communication is at minimal level. People do not talk to each other, they do not need it. Because, they can reach anything they wish via high technology. To commute, they do not even need to get out of their 'boxes', they can handle their work stuff on the screens in their rooms. Daily life is established on minimum motion. They get up, eat their fill with ready-made food, they do their work 'usually sitting down', and if they want to have fun, they do it sitting in front of a screen. Wandering, meeting with friends, exercising, reading books, watching movies are actions from which today's people are away. Yet, there is no real place to tour virtu-



Figure 6. A collage from Sena Sena Yardımcı's project.

ally; all of them are images that are perhaps remnants of ancient eras by luck. What those who want to have a real tour may see is the buildings that have been demolished and re-erected in 25-year of routines. Many words like theatre, painting, sculpture, poem, pencil, books are not in use anymore. People do not go to school, as well. Anything they would like to learn is presented to them virtually and so they do not need to go out. Words like community, company, class, togetherness are all lost. Individuals marry virtually in these new lives. In case these virtually-married have children, their responsibility to care is up to 6 years. Later, children staying in education dormitories where reading-writing and other basic disciplines are given and intelligence measure, character and skill analysis are made accomplish their education at 17 and leave the dormitories. Meanwhile, if wished, families can keep on seeing their children and some others leave them there. Already having a memory inclined to forget, feelings of longing of people in this era are blunted together with forgetfulness.

'Lunatics' of Lost Era, Utopia; a group of unlucky children born in the middle of the lost era comes across. This minority consists of a group of 'lunatics' who are curious, action and speaking-writing loving, miss the images seen on virtual tours of the old world, listen to the music they fished out from centuries ago. This community of lunatics is not even discerned by the people of lost era. This carelessness

Table 1. 2049 dystopian future scenario and developed utopian proposals.

2049 Dystopic scenario topics					
	1	2	3	4	5
	Izmit is the province city center is completely devastated	Historical layers are still under the ground	Bay/Körfez coast and city center are seen as a ruined topography	Körfez and lake Sapanca are dirty	Burnt forests, empty factory buildings and inactive historical constructions dominate the city
Utopian proposals developed against dystopic scenario	1	Design a new city	Resuscitate of the missing building	Design a new living place	Managed by the nature philosopher
	2	Design a developed transportation system		Building their own house by each family	Punishment of harmful people to the nature
	3	Nature protection priority		The aim of generating new types of energy	Build new forestland
	4	Classification of cities according to industry, agriculture and energy production		Design mobile house	Expensive based growth
	5	The aim of generating new types of energy			
	6	Construction of social and cultural structures			

gives birth to a cause for saving the era. This way, lunatics that are not discerned come across with no barrier to regain old eras they long for. (Figure 6).

First, they find and unearth the lost words one by one, and they try to keep the actions that are matches of these words. This is constantly increasing, without notice, silently. This time, carelessness of the era works for them. When they reach an unstoppable number, they set up a memory center. Here is a center to collect the people of the era who are not lost same as themselves. Aim is to initially raise awareness. They arrange real tours to find out any intact place still existing. This more talking and researching community is trying to regain the nature as well. They would, in the early times, plant saplings any room soil they find,

and now they continue this work with forest projects on the empty fields they have bought even if those are far away from the center.

People going out of their one-eye boxes live at most 3-floor houses, at most 6 families. There are no high-rise buildings. Private car use is in minimal level in cities, and for short distance they use bicycles and for long distance they use railway systems having a large network. Each individual is accounted in city designs; the disabled, the old, children, the young, mothers...

Each city consists of neighborhoods, each of them meeting all their own needs. Religious structures, educational and health-service structures and trade areas exist in the center in each neighborhood. Activities such as cinema and theatre, seminar and ex-

hibition are all presented in memory centers that finished the lost era two centuries ago by emerging as an idea. These efforts having started 100 years ago could start to speed up only after long years. Even if they are minority, people anymore prefer remembering against forgetting. Now they have a memory center standing for 45 years.

6. Findings and results

In Kocaeli where industrial identity has gained momentum in the early 2000s; unplanned enlargement of the city, structures that do not comply with architectural regulation and shanties have all formed the new identity of the city. Especially environmental and health-related problems as a result of intertwining of industrial sites and residence dwellings are seen as one of the most important consequences of the transformation of the city.

In Kocaeli University, Faculty of Architecture and Design, term 2012-2013, in Architectural Design Studio, within a study with the main theme utopia, the subject has been researched and evaluated intellectually and its spatial matches have been searched for. Today's current data of the city has helped form the 2049 dystopian future scenario that forms the base of atelier work. Against this dystopian scenario, suggestions have been developed to turn Kocaeli into a livable place again.

In this study the process of urban transformation of Kocaeli is thought as a dystopian scenario. During the term the students develops new ideas for dystopian scenario. First of all most remarkable point of the projects is passion for the new one: new living space, new way of thinking or producing... On the other hand the project is fictionalize with preventions that limited the over production and over consumption. Management is limited and administrators are out of conventional identities. Individuals are free in their social life, they have flexible working hours. Also the using the technology and money is limited. Most of the projects aim to back to old better days. On the other hand the mobility of people and place is very important for most of the projects.

The aim of these utopian proposals

is revitalization of the city center. In this context developed transportation system was designed, given the priority for agriculture and new energy production in the new living places. The city was classified according to industry, agriculture and energy production. New buildings for social and cultural structures are designed. But in design process there is only one suggestion for the missing historical layers. This is not enough for the Kocaeli city. In some projects the mobile structure and building are suggested for the city. On the other hand the most important suggestion for the dirty nature space likes the lake Sapanca and bay of Izmit is a good manager related with nature. Also it is suggested that people who harm to nature are punished. One of the other decisions is the using of production space efficiently.

As a consequence it is seen in developed 2049 dystopian future scenario that all cities in general and Kocaeli in particular exposed to the transformation are in a similar situation with these cases. And unfortunately it can be claimed that as long as cities are exposed to these interventions under the name of 'transformation', these utopian scenarios produced in the atelier will be needed.

On the other hand when considered that today's architecture is developed feeding up on various disciples, it is thought as an important experience that students discuss subjects like utopia-dystopia based on philosophy and that transfer of the impressions gained over these discussions to architecture. To advance in the way of scholars that produce new lifestyles by establishing utopias has helped students to develop a new perspective on architect. Students, passing through various intellectual phases, have realized architectural design projects with different qualities where a new world imagination is examined.

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