

Workshop on the epistems of the urban landscape

How do we as designers see, think and represent urban landscapes?

PhD candidates:

Fatma Tanis
Lu Li
Mei Liu
Sitong Luo
Yan Song



UNIVERSITY OF
COPENHAGEN



Introduction of Katwijk Coastal

Katwijk Coastal Works is a joint partnership project of the the Rijnland district water control board and the Katwijk municipality. The purpose of the project was to create a safe and beautiful Katwijk coast with ample parking space.

Katwijk Coastal Works is a project in the Flood Protection Programme 2, aimed at improving primary dikes in the Netherlands at 89 different places. Katwijk Coastal Works was one of the Weak Links on the coast. Now, following the completion of Katwijk Coastal Works, the last Weak Link in the province of South Holland is safe again.

In the period between October 2013 and April 2015, a dike-in-dune construction and an underground parking garage were built in front of the Katwijk boulevard. The dune has been lowered to boulevard level at the southern end of the dune. The most natural-looking, undulating dune landscape possible has been created across the entire dune area. The whole dune landscape was replanted with marram grass. Wisps of marram grass was brought in from the dunes near Katwijk. In addition to the marram grass, the top 10 cm of sand from the original dunes was also spread out across the new dunes. The sand contained the seeds of dune plants, including the indigenous blue thistle that grew in the original Katwijk dunes. The Katwijk Coastal Works project has changed the view of the sea from the boulevard. To compensate for this, a number of new lookout points were created in the dunes. These points are also accessible to the disabled from the boulevard. The 900-metre long dike is buried below the dunes. The dike, in conjunction with the dune forms the dike. The dike is marked by a row of stones along the top of the dike at the dike crossings. The entry/exit points from the underground parking garage to the boulevard are designed to blend as effectively as possible with the undulating dune landscape. The colour of the steel emergency exits blends with the colours of the landscape. Katwijk Coastal Works has radically changed the face of the Katwijk coast.



Tuesday May 1

TU Delft, Room y

- 11.30 **Welcome and introduction to the course**
by *Ellen Braae*
- 11.45 **Lecture 'Beyond 'ism's' - epistemes in the Urban Landscape'**
by *Ellen Braae and Tom Avermaete*
- 13.00 **Lunch & Bus to Katwijk**
- 14.00 **Briefing and on-site survey**, venue: xxxx
Recapturing the *phenomenological* episteme by *Klaske Havik*
Recapturing the *praxiological* episteme by *Ellen Braae*
Two-person groups, bring sketch book, camera, model material, recorder etc
- 16:00 **Show around** by the architects, OKRA landscape
- 17.00-18.00 **Pitch** of findings, pitching epistemes and tools, discussion
- 18.30 **Dinner** at Zilt, Katwijk aan Zee
- 20.30 Drive back to Delft

Wednesday May 2

All day at TU Delft, Room x

- 9.00 **Recapturing** the morphological episteme by *Inge Bobbink*
followed by a workshop on the morphological episteme: building model, making diagrams of elements and syntax, drawing sections etc.
- 11.00 **Pitch** of recent findings, pitching the episteme and tools, discussion
- 11.30-12.00 **Lunch**
- 12.00 **Recapturing** the semiological episteme by *Ellen Braae*
and recapturing the ecological epistemes by *Fritz van Loon* followed by
a) exercise on Enghaveparken
b) workshop each of the two final epistemes (groups)
- 14.00 **Pitch** of recent findings, pitching the epistemes and tools, discussion
- 14.30 **Break** The Berlage Zaal
- 15.00-18.00 **PoP: Perception of Places**, seminar and book presentation (see specific program)

Thursday May 3

TU Delft, Room x

- 9.15-10.00 **Compiling and displaying the material** produced on the Katwijk project
- 10.00 **Lecture on 'the Delft LA-Method'**
by *Saskia de Wit or/and René van der Velde*
- 11.00-13.00 Joint instant **comparative analysis** between the episteme approach and the Delft LA-method
- 13.00-14.00 **Lunch and course evaluation.**
End course.

Introduction of epistemes of the urban landscape

How do we as designers see, think and represent urban landscapes?

Description:

Reading existing landscapes is just an integrative part of the work of designers as remodeling them into new design. Designers analyze landscapes on a daily basis although such processes are often presented as self-evident and unnecessary of discussion, yet the ways in which designers read landscapes are all but neutral.

Certain methods of analysis for urban landscapes rely on certain frames of thought – or as labelled here, epistemes. Philosopher Michel Foucault's use of the concept episteme has inspired how we have adopted the term to discuss frames of thought in mainly landscape architecture yet also in architecture and urban design. Epistemes are linked to certain values, discussions and even to certain tools and techniques of representing urban landscapes.

Although highly operative in design thinking and practice, these epistemes often stay mute and implicit. The course makes the five most dominant and long-lasting epistemes within the urban landscape explicit and open for discussion and further thinking: morphology, praxeology, semiology, phenomenology and ecology. We will also discuss how the tools and techniques – mapping, drawing, photogramming etc. – that we use to analyse and design landscapes relate to different epistemes.

Learning goals:

The course aims at identifying and repositioning already existing knowledge frameworks in a relational framework. The participants will thus be able to

- Position the epistemes within the heterogeneous framework of various kinds of knowledge
- Identify each of the five epistemes within projected and built work spanning architecture, landscape architecture and urban design
- Characterise each of the five epistemes and get familiar with their theoretical backgrounds
- Understand the tools and techniques that sustain each of the epistemes and identify how several epistemes may be communicated simultaneously
- Use the epistemes within both descriptive and prescriptive perspectives

Prerequisites:

Enrolment as PhD student at TU Delft. The course doesn't require preparation. The only thing we ask is that you show up at the Architecture Faculty at TU Delft and engage from Monday May 1 at 13:00 to Wednesday May 3 at 13:00. And after attending the workshop a written reflection will provide the basis for evaluation as either passed or failed.

Program and methods:

The course is structured as a three-day workshop followed by a written reflection.

Day one will take place on the chosen site for analysis as a combination of lectures and group work. Day two will be at the studio and be a combination of lectures, readings and group work conducted by design tools. Day three is mini seminar with presentations and critique followed by a discussion of the embedded strengths and weaknesses of the approach to the urban landscape for designers. One week following the three-day workshop part, the PhD-participants must submit an approx. 1,000 words reflection sheet positioning their own PhD-work within the theoretical framework provided by the course.

Seeing, thinking, designing urban landscapes with epistemes

Notes to Episteme Lecture, 01.05.18 held by Ellen Braae & Tom Avermaete

The notes are written by Svava Riesto, Ellen Braae & Tom Avermaete

The lecture presents concepts from a research project, in which the three of us, Tom, Svava and Ellen, are writing a book. It presents a framework for thinking about the methods, tools and techniques that designers of the urban landscape use in daily practice. This is work in progress and thus not officially published yet. We look forward to exploring it with you!

Introduction

The ways that landscape architects see, think and design are all but innocent. When we analyze the condition in which we are going to intervene and when we design for a particular landscape setting, we always start from a set of values. They may be more or less explicit, yet they are always there. Landscape architectural culture has certain frames of value and thought – or epistemes – which drive how we see, understand and design landscapes. Sometimes these thoughts frames are explicit and articulated in texts and design practices. At other times, they remain silent and are not questioned, debated or reflected upon.

What is an episteme?

The French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) has written about epistemes in his book *The Order of Things* (1966):

“I would define the episteme retrospectively as the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the epistemes which are possible those that will be acceptable within, I won't say a scientific theory, but a field of scientificity, and which it is possible to say are true or false.”

Foucault sees epistemes as frames that influence how we think and what we know, and this is what makes his concept so relevant to understand the praxis and thinking in the field of landscape architecture, urban design and architecture. The thought frames – epistemes – that we use act as vast comprehensive frameworks for our analysis, understanding and projection of the urban landscape. Yet there is also a difference between how Foucault thinks about epistemes and the way that we do it in this lecture. That difference concerns the temporality of epistemes. Foucault's epistemes are historical; he writes how the frames of Western culture change over time, for example from the renaissance to the modern world.

The epistemes that are operative in landscape architectural culture, on the other hand, and which we will present here, do not limit themselves to one time-period, but are rather long-lived frames of thought that can be traced through history. These epistemes are simultaneous and complementary; each of them enabling us to discover some aspects of the urban landscape we study and design for, while leaving others to blind alleys. In some historical periods or strains of landscape architecture, some of the epistemes will have more weight than others, yet they will all be there as possible frames of thought. In design and analysis, we always apply a combination of epistemes, yet we chose to let some of them be more guiding for the analysis design than others. These choices depend on the questions we ask and on the tools and techniques that we use (such as serial vision, modelling, plan drawings, texts, photographic studies etc.) as well as the specific characteristics of the urban landscape that we study (for example a post-industrial landscape, a classical town in Italy, a social housing estate, an informal settlement).

Why do epistemes matter?

It will never be possible for a designer (or anyone else) to see a full picture of an urban landscape and to know it all. Rather, we always choose different lenses, and these lenses are – no matter how conscious we are about it – connected to certain epistemes. If landscape architects can become more aware of the epistemes that their design and analyses rely upon, then they can get a broader scope of possibilities and a more substantial ground on which to make choices in their daily practice. Epistemic perspectives are sometimes tacit and implicit, and thus difficult to discuss. Being explicit about the epistemes from which we work can also strengthen designers' argumentation and ability to establish a dialogue with people from other fields.

Each episteme relates to a specific set of tools – ranging from drawing, to collage, serial vision, specific diagrams and texts as well as methods for mapping, charting and fieldwork. Epistemes are the bridges between investigation and projection – between analysis and design. They are specific thought frames from which landscape architects operate and that provide them a basis for analysis, comprehension and intervention in the built environment. Epistemes – sometimes one used almost exclusively, but most often a combination of many – offer a horizon for the delineation, formulation and composition of architectural projects.

Five epistemes in the urban landscape:

In the following we will outline five epistemes that have been around in landscape architectural and architectural culture for a long time and which have informed the thinking and practice in these fields during the past centuries, even though they may not at any time have been labelled as epistemes as such.

- Morphology
- Phenomenology
- Semiotics
- Praxeology
- Ecology

Postscript

The word episteme originally comes from Greek philosophy, which differentiated knowledge into four basic forms: *phronesis* is knowledge about acting wisely in life; *sophia* is knowledge understood as insight into philosophical truth; *téchne*, refers to craft, skills or art and knowledge about how something should be done; and is often connected to the final form of knowledge, episteme, which meant science; a justified true belief out of theoretical knowledge.

Our current knowledge society is a child of science, as in the greek episteme, ruled by the mind and rational intellect. What we today call design practices such as architecture and landscape architecture have been considered within the realm of *téchne* and *phronesis* for most of Western history. Yet although the *téchne* and *phronesis* are still inherent in design thinking and action, increasingly, people conceive of design as an academic activity and focus on epistemic based knowledge – in the Greek sense of the word, as theoretical falsifiable knowledge. We want to stress that our understanding of the concept episteme relates to Foucault's "frames of thought" and that it is no attempt to participate in the downscaling of other types of knowledge than the theoretical and intellectual. Thinking of the Greek root of the word is thus with hesitation that we are naming the following thought frames epistemes, but we are sure that our readers will join us in the exploration of what it can do for landscape architecture in order to strengthen our understanding of the frames of thought, which we so easily take for granted.

Morphology -noun

*The study of form and structure
(Websters New World College Dictionary)*

A first episteme that we can discover in landscape architectural culture, morphology, means the study of the evolution of forms and structures within the urban landscape.

*As Charles Moore et al. states in their opening chapter to *The Poetics of Gardens* (1988), it may be either a disappointment or a relief to acknowledge that there exist only two basic morphologic schemes within landscape architecture: the orderly paradise and the 'natural' world. The Danish landscape architect G.N. Brandt presented a similar idea in 1946 framed as the 'architectural' and the 'landscape' garden art. Danish landscape architect, Professor Malene Hauxner (2003) reformulated this theory as *Hortus Conclusus versus Pastoral* and linked them respectively to the culture of the gardener and the sheppard. These two basic schemes can either exist independently of each other or be mixed thus creating tensions and contrasts. The designerly language of the hortus and the pastoral may be superimposed or constituting the framework for the other. Despite how natural or pastoral a garden may appear its forms and structures are just as intentional and artificial as the geometrical, enclosed and architectural garden of the hortus.*

*Similar ideal types exist within urban design theory. In their seminal book *Collage City*, Colin Rowe and Fred Coetter (1978) even show this basic concept exemplified by the figure-ground plan of the German city Wiesbaden c. 1900. This plan consists of two halves; a modern city part and a medieval one; almost looking like their mutual inversion of each other. Rowe and Coetter label these types *fora* and *acropolis* referring to Rome and Athens, respectively. *Fora*, the Roman urban model, can basically be understood as a massive form from which squares, streets and plazas are 'cut' out of the volume. *Acropolis* on the contrary, can be resembled by a surface on which singular objects are put allowing space to flow freely in between these volumes. These two models characterize the basic spatial typologies in both the pre-Modern and the Modern, industrialised city.*

*Turning from landscape architecture/garden art and urban design to architecture, the focus can also shift from contextual relationships to the singular objects. In morphological terms the focus is often addressed as types and typology. In the field of architecture there is a long history of looking at the built environments through the lens of types. The 19th century architect Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand was one of the initiators of this way of looking. In his *Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre anciens et modernes* (1801) Durand illustrates what this could offer. He investigates churches from different periods and illustrates how they can be understood as belonging to the same family because they share certain characteristics. For Durand some Gothic churches and some of his own time belong to the same typology because they share certain characteristics of spatial disposition and form.*

*Morphology was not only an episteme of the 19th century but also had great importance in the 20th century. Around 1960 it reappeared in the Italian architectural and urban debate on typo-morphology. A group of Italian architects was reacting against the hypothesis of international style modernism. They made a plea to reconsider the principles and rationales of the historical urban tissue. The Italian typo-morphological school not only use this episteme for analysis and critique, but also for design intervention. An example is Saviero Muratori's design for the Venetian neighbourhood *Barene di San Giuliano* (1959), where he defines a new project not through functional zoning, as would have been the case in a modernist plan, but rather through a clear description of the morphology and typology. Other Italian architects like Aldo Rossi and Carlo Aymonino work in the same episteme as from the beginning of the 1960s, but also the French school of Versailles with Pannerai and Castex would work in the footsteps Muratori.*

More recently Italian Urbanist Paola Viganò has described urban spatial relationships within the framework of typology. She upscales the Rowe/Coetter models and reflects the current suburban condition in the acropolis model, the 'inverted' city expanding the dense city into the surrounding region, the urbanized territory. Viganò presents a typology for the relationship between the open spaces and thus not a typology for the spaces as such. Yet, contrary to the compositional rules practices within Beaux-Art and Modernism her 'inverted city' is not ruled by similar structuring and diachronic orders, but by relationships. Open spaces can thus for instance: lay side by side, be interwoven, or they can be placed disparately. Despite these differences they may still produce tactic tensions by means of both their function and placement.

phe·nom·enol·ogy -noun

the philosophical study of phenomena, as distinguished from ontology, the study of being; specif., such a study of perceptual experience in its purely subjective aspect
(Websters New World College Dictionnary)

A second episteme that has dominated landscape architectural and architectural thinking and practice can be described as phenomenology. It has played a crucial role in landscape architecture and garden art long before this aspect was labelled phenomenology. It is closely connected with aesthetics, a word which is derived from the Greek *aisthetikos*, and in its original sense means "esthetic, sensitive, sentient, pertaining to sense perception". Yet, aesthetics has since the 18th century has become closely linked to specific categories of the beautiful: the sublime and the picturesque. These aesthetic categories were developed together with landscape painting and landscape gardening in the 1700s and focused on the emotions that the exterior in casu the landscape or the garden may reveal at the spectator; the interest was not in the form of the landscape as such, but in the relationship between person and landscape. The new aesthetics that was formulated on canvas by landscape painters as Claude Lorrain, Poussin and Salvator Rosa helped shape the ideals of nature's appearance that were later transferred to the design of new landscapes itself.

Chinese gardens much older than the advent of the sublime, the beautiful and the picturesque were designed with the purpose of preparing one's mind for the next sequence, when experienced over time by someone who is walking, and as such they mirror, create, prepare and stimulate the visitor's mind and emotions.

Atmosphere is an aesthetic notion that is rooted in phenomenological thought and which has gained much attention in the design disciplines during the last three decades. In his 1995 book *Atmosphere:*

Essays zur neuen Ästhetik, philosopher Gernot Böhme elaborates on this notion. And in a text from 2006 he brings it close to the field of design, arguing that atmospheres are central to understand the relationship between spatial characteristics and conscious physical presence in space. Böhme argues that the attention for atmospheres will open up a new level of creative potential for architecture. This notion has already fostered new discussions and design projects that focus explicitly on the qualities of light, air, scent, materialities and more.

Indeed it is not a new thing that designers and landscape scholars are interested in how spaces are perceived and experienced. An early example of such an approach can be found in Auguste Choisy's *Histoire de l' Architecture* (1899). In his study Choisy investigates the Acropolis in Athens, yet not from a morphological perspective describing formal structures in a precise and distant way, but rather from the perspective of the walking person who experiences the Acropolis in motion.

In contrast to Durand, Choisy is not so interested in the actual built form, but much more in how the site and the buildings are experienced. This is also reflected in the tools that Choisy is using. In a combination of a movement diagrams (with numbers indicating the different vantage points) and perspectives, Choisy attempts to convey the sequence of experience while moving on the Acropolis. Architecture is investigated as a landscape of perception.

In the 20th century the episteme of phenomenology would also be used by British architect Gordon Cullen in his well-known book *Townscape* (1961). Cullen's book was a critique on modernism and made a plea to return to the urbanity of the historical city. The qualities of the historical city were not depicted through morphological analysis, but rather through a so-called 'serial vision' which combines perspectives and a diagrammatic plan. Perspectives and plan suggest together the perception of a citizen walking through the city. They depict movements and altering perception.

The American architect Kevin Lynch would draw so-called 'mental maps' of the city in his seminal publication *The Image of the City* (1960). These maps were based on interviews that probed into the perception and mental representation of the urban environment by citizens. Lynch held that these mental representations, along with the actual city, contain many unique elements, which could be understood as a network of paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Lynch complemented maps with photography and drawing in order to articulate the citizens' perception and mental mapping. Consequently Lynch defined design as intervening in the mental maps of citizens. In his view the designer should work on the categories of paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks to make the city more legible.

se·mi·ot·ics -noun

Philos. a general theory of signs and symbols; esp., the analysis of the nature and relationships of signs"

(Websters New World College Dictionary)

A third important episteme is semiotics and concerns symbols and their meaning, which is a dimension in any designed landscape. The garden as a cultural phenomenon emerged as a micro cosmos, a piece of heaven on earth. Medieval monastery gardens used a specific symbolism that was known to all its users. The gardens were laid out in square shape with a round pool and a pentagonal fountain became a microcosm, illuminating the mathematical order and divine grace of the macrocosm (the universe). In the renaissance, when also private mercants like the Florentine Medicis laid out large gardens, religious symbols were combined with political ones that signaled power and wealth. Yet typical for the pre-modern garden is that its symbols were relatively stable. Textbooks existed and the educated visitor knew what the symbols meant and there was an agreement on how a garden could be "read" by the perceiving person – from its overall geometry and shapes, to sculptures and fountains, specific plants and later grottos, follies etc.

Symbols and signs have always also been important to the layout of cities. In the new urban plan for Rome, made by Pope Sixtus V (1585-90) demonstrated power and the strength of the catholic church, which had recently been challenged by the reformation. He removed buildings to make linear streets to point towards the most important churches, and made obelisks and new churches into large symbolic viewpoints at the end of the new streets. His use of obelisks also tells us something else about symbols; their meaning is not necessarily stable. When moved from their ancient Egyptian context to baroque Rome, the obelisks became symbols of Rome's central position and they became Christian symbols, now often also topped with a cross and heraldic symbols. In other words, symbols can change their meaning over time – intentionally, as with the Roman urban plan, or just slowly over time. Symbols can have different meaning for different viewers, within a disciplinary field or across different fields.

And symbols can refer to a shared culture of scholars as in the pre-modern examples, or they can be from popular culture. Two designers that have explored symbols from popular culture are Venturi and Scott Brown in their study *Learning from Las Vegas*, (1972). In their analysis of Las Vegas, Venturi and Scott Brown do not read the urban condition as built form, but rather as an assembly of signs. The instruments are adjusted to this particular episteme. Venturi and Scott Brown use diagrams to investigate the urban condition of Las Vegas from this semiotic perspective. The well-known the distinction between a 'duck' and 'decorated shed' is a prime example of this approach.

In 1970, Venturi and Scott Brown used a similar method to investigate Levittown. This housing estate was planned, built and sold by a single developer, the company of Abraham Levitt and Sons. The Levitts devised a mass production scheme that allowed them to build inexpensive housing for the post-war flood of veterans and their families. Levittown was characterized uniformity, but also by many small and large interventions by inhabitants. In their investigation 'Learning from Levittown' Venturi and Scott Brown analyze the built environment through the use of symbolic decor attachments, the wagon wheels, post and rail ranch fences, coach lights and flagpoles that were becoming the standard appliqué of middle-class American homes.

The analysis used very specific instruments and focused on the changes that owners have made: "how they have decorated them on the outside and dealt with their lawns in individual ways." In large collages Venturi and Scott Brown confront

Drawings and photographs of these signs of the middleclass with the way in which houses were represented in television commercials, home journals, car advertisements, cartoons, films, and even soap operas. As Scott Brown puts it, they did "lots of content analysis looking at what we called literature, but the literature was Disney cartoons on Daisy Duck, sitcoms, ads on television, articles in Popular Mechanics magazine or builders' journals." In this comparative way they are able to illustrate the symbolic charge of the different signs that people are adding to their homes. In the designs for buildings and neighborhoods by Venturi and Scott Brown signs -both popular and disciplinary- would get a paramount place. They were a means to situate their buildings and cities both in the world of users and of architects.

Praxeology -noun

*from praxis-logy the study of human action and conduct
(Websters New World College Dictionary)*

In the field of architecture we also have a long tradition of looking at the urban landscape through way that people do things in the landscape - or the way that they practice it. Planner and sociologist Patrick Geddes (Evolution 1915) was interested in how a place acts thorough environmental and climatic processes, while also people act upon place by such processes as farming and construction. His famous Valley Section drawing from 1909 was a way to show the relationship between what he called people, work and place; between the topography and geology of place and people's occupations such as miner, shepherd or fisher and the human settlements that arose with them.

Within the same episteme, but from another intellectual perspective, are a set of studies that appeared on the 9th Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) in 1953. This main platform of modern movement in architecture experienced a set of studies that were looking into spatial practices in the built environment from their "socio-spatial" character. CIAM architects normally used a system that Le Corbusier had introduced in 1946 as the CIAM Grid or Grille; a large matrix composed according to fixed CIAM categories that allowed for the presentation of an avant-garde urban project in a standard fashion. They believed that the Grid was one of the tools by which different modern design solutions could be compared and thus would offer the basis for finding universal solutions for the future city. However, instead of showing a hypermodern design for a new urban neighbourhood—as was normally done in CIAM Grids—two North African groups at CIAM 9 in 1953 focussed on a completely different urban environment: the bidonville or shanty town.

Praxiological studies often reveal knowledge about dissonances and conflicts of interest, which are inevitable in the urban landscape. And praxiological studies can be used to show such tension and ways to handle it. There is also a long tradition for designers to use studies of praxiology to shed light on groups that are underexposed in the standard design and planning practice at a certain period of time and who may therefore be marginalized in decisions about the development of public spaces. In this perspective, Danish garden architect C. Th. Sørensen is interesting. In the 1950s he made detailed studies of the practices of children in public playgrounds. He marked on a map which parts of the playground different children were visiting and how long they would stay there. He used his knowledge about children, for instance in his designs of the landscapes of large-scale housing, which included sand-boxes and places for play.

Sørensen's map of a playground in which he counted the users is an example of a quantitative investigatory technique, which as opposed to a qualitative one, focusses on what can be measured. Danish architect Jan Gehl in his famous book *Livet Mellem Husene* (1971)/[Life between the Buildings], also used a quantitative approach to study human conduct in urban spaces. Gehl combined detailed studies of architectural form with insights from environmental psychology and sociology. He measured how many people would use spaces and counted how many would sit down or hurry on, and thereby developed a critique of the urban spaces of the modern city, which he thought did not accompany basic human needs. His office, Gehl Architects have dedicated decades of work to study the praxiological aspects of cities, and the book *How to Study Urban Space* (Gehl, Svarre 2014) gives an overview of quantitative, but sometimes also qualitative methods of studying people's conduct in the city. What is common to most of Gehl's studies is that they are interested in what humans have in common and he does not pay so much attention to differences and even dissonances between different users of the city, such as homeless, children and shop owners.

A qualitative approach to urban space is for instance offered by the Japanese architecture studio Bow Wow, who conceive of their design practice as ethnographic work. Their contribution to the 2016 architecture biennale in Venice, called The Timber Network is an example of such a study. Working with a local NGO, Atelier Bow-Wow suggested to create a firewood supply plant in Kurimoto that simultaneously repairs the damaged woodlands in case of forest fires and provides a safe workplace for elderly and disabled urban citizens, helping them to reconnect with the forest and sensations of nature. Instead of offering charity or aid, Bow-Wow carefully studied the social and economic context and registered changes in the social fabric. Their project, then was an intervention into those. The project includes a set of simple drawings that resemble the drawings in the manual of an IKEA-furniture. Bow Wow use such drawings to show different practices connected to making firewood, which they stimulate locals to do. In other places, Bow Wow have developed techniques to show the qualitative relationship between urban spaces and what people do in urban spaces in what they call Public Drawings, often together with other co-drawers. A drawing they made for the Dronning Louise's Bro [Queen Louise's Bridge] in Copenhagen reveals the close relationship between the spatial articulation of this bridge; how its high broad edges has an affordance to allow you to sit in the sun and watch people move by.

Ecology -noun

Derives from the Greek oixoc (oikos, "household") and logos, "study"

A branch of science concerned with the interrelationship of organisms and their environments
(Websters New World College Dictionnary)

Obviously, the epistemes we have outlined here do not offer a total picture in the sense that there cannot be others. Yet, while working with the four other epistemes (for two years now in various courses in Delft and Copenhagen), we have especially discovered that one frame of thought was missing. That is ecology, which is an important and long-lived episteme for landscape architectural thought and praxis that we have realized that we must now include. In this lecture, we do that for the first time by showing examples etc., yet we have not yet written a section about it in this text. Looking forward to discussing it with you.

Morphological episteme

Morphology means the study of the evolution of forms and structures within the urban landscape. It exists two morphological schemes. In landscape architecture domain, they are described as the orderly paradise and the natural world (*Charles Moore et al., 1988*), or the architecture and the landscape garden art (*Brandt, 1946*), or Hortus Coclusus and Pastoral (*Hauxner, 2003*). Rowe and Coetter (1978) describe them as fora and acropolis in urban design. In architecture, they tend to focus on singular objects instead of contextual relationship.

On the 2nd day of the workshop, we tried to recapture the morphological episteme by building model, making diagrams of elements and syntax, drawing sections etc. Base on the discussion during the workshop, several design points related to morphology are listed:

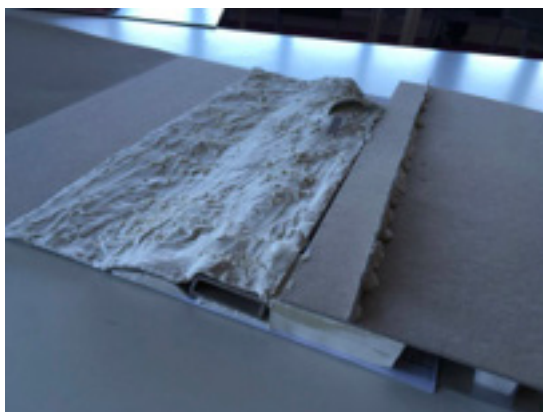
- View of Coastal Work Katwijk is framed by topography. Visitors can experience the hide and seek feeling while wandering.
- Dune landscaping is squeezed between the top of the parking garage and the desire for unobstructed view from the village.
- Dune paths are connected to the village streets
- The dune terraces are connected to sea water levels.
- Sea culture are strengthened by the design of facility shape, pavement material, and design colours.



Three groups using three different ways to present the morphological episteme:

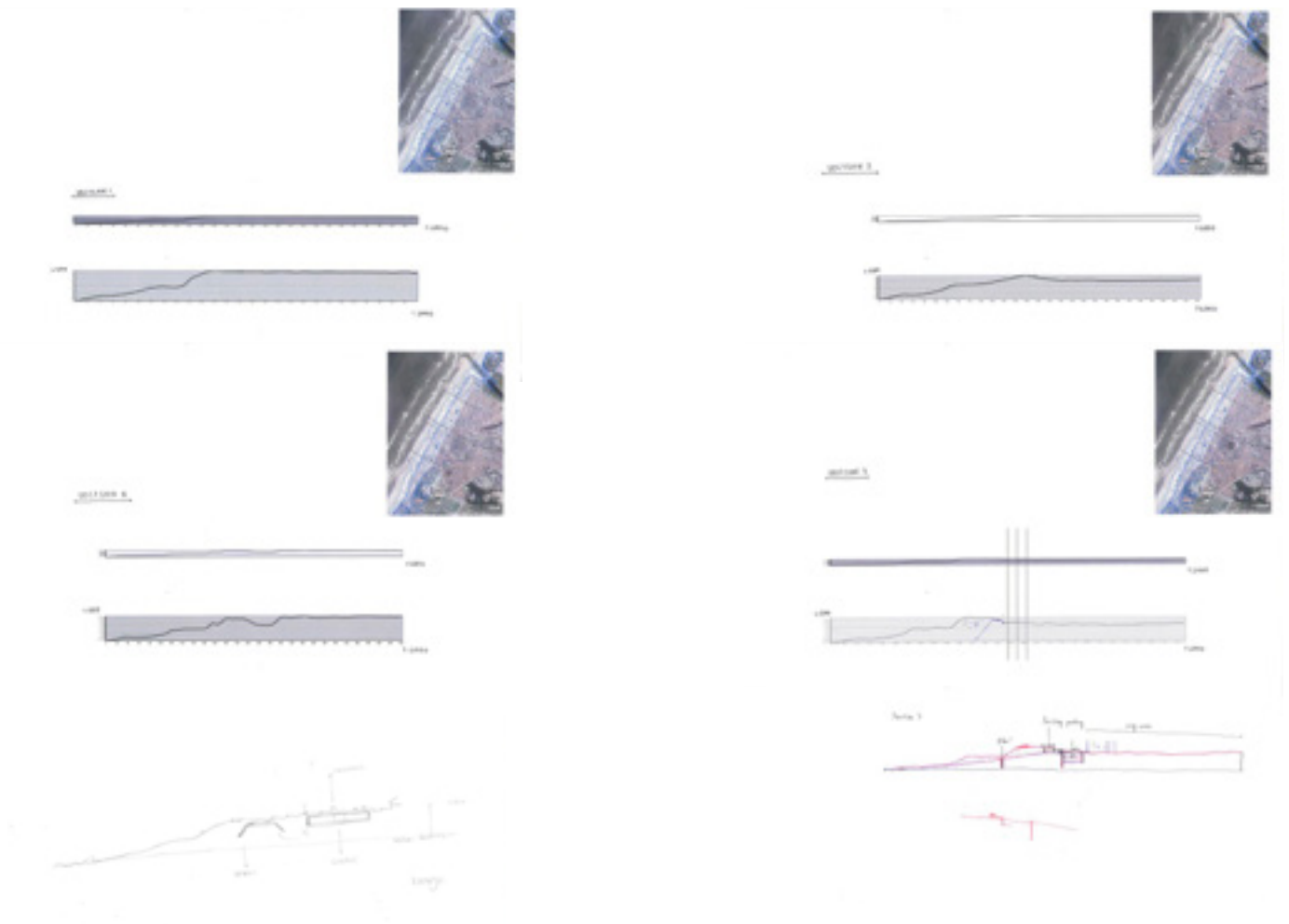
MODEL

Model is the most direct way to reflect the morphological episteme. A clay model is made to show the structure and topology of the site. Participants used paper board to form all concrete construction (dam and parking garage). Skyline of the village is also made to present the view from the beach. During the handmade procedure, participants discussed using different materials to present different surface (sea, beach and ground).



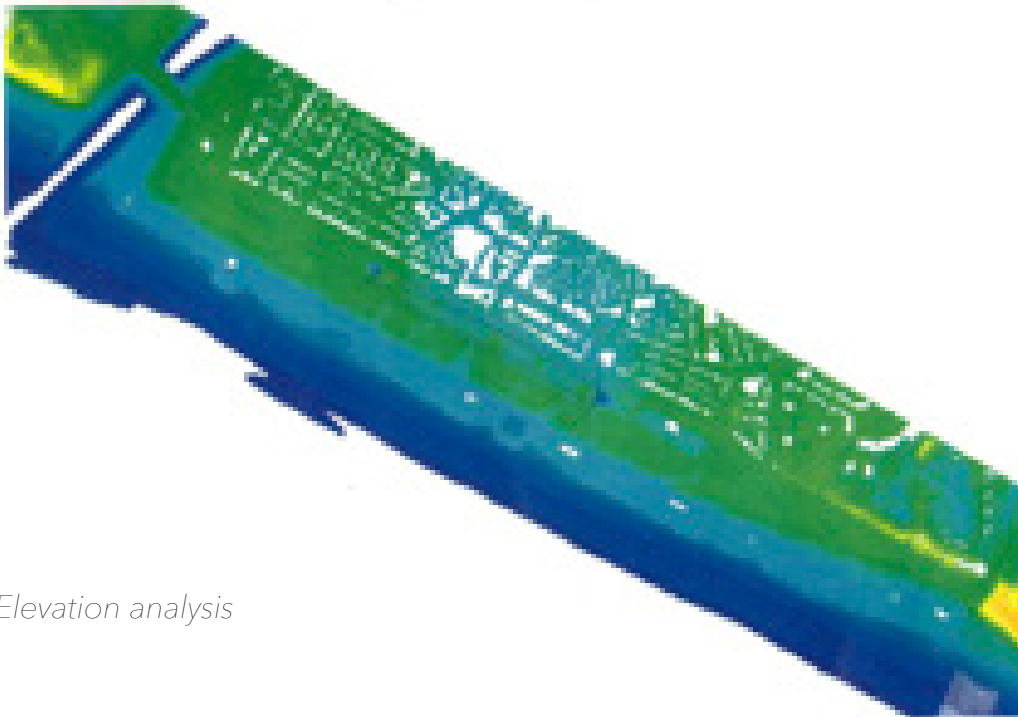
SECTION

Sections are described by two ways: hand drawing and computer drawing. Several sections are made to present the organisation of parking garage and landscape surface. On the result from the GIS outputs, hand drawing of the sections are made. GIS output can only present the surface of the area, underground constructions can be viewed from the hand drawings.

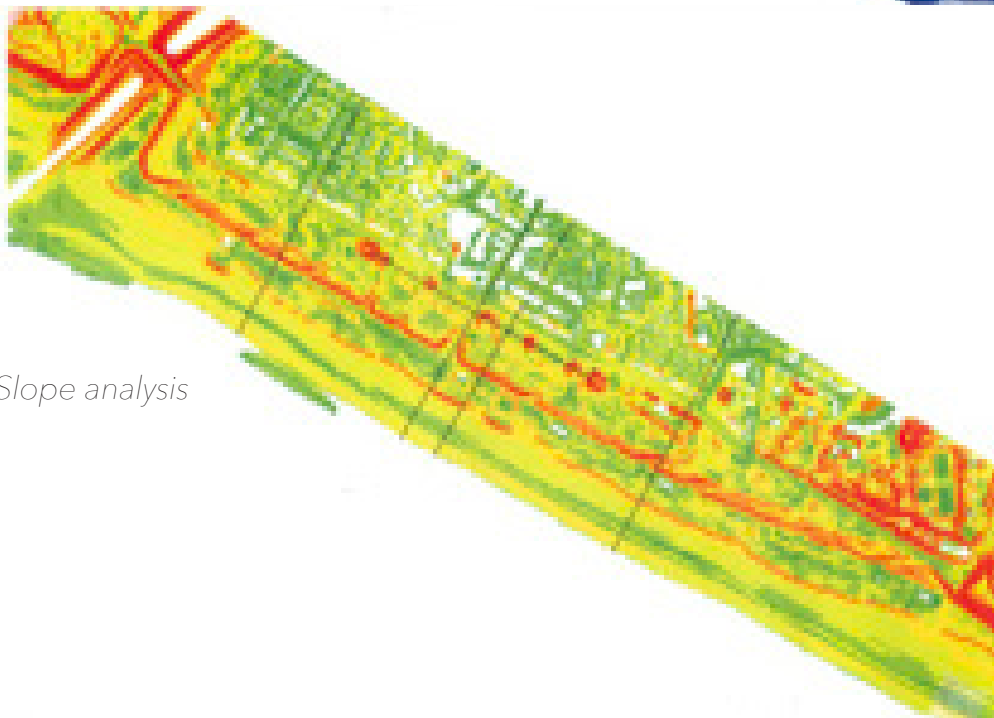


GIS INFORMATION

Based on the database of the area, GIS analysis can be done. For this workshop, participants conducted two results: elevation analysis and slope analysis. Surface morphology can be directly indicated from the maps exported.



Elevation analysis



Slope analysis

Phenomenology episteme

Phenomenology

A second episteme that has dominated landscape architectural and architectural thinking and practice can be described as phenomenology. Phenomenology, as the philosophical study of phenomena, involves the study of perceptual experience. Edmund Husserl is regarded as the founder of phenomenology, and Martin Heidegger became one of the most influential successors that greatly developed phenomenology. However, phenomenology has played a crucial role in landscape architecture and garden art long before this aspect was labelled phenomenology. It is closely connected with aesthetics, a word which is derived from the Greek *aisthetikos*, and in its original sense means "aesthetic, sensitive, sentient, pertaining to sense perception".

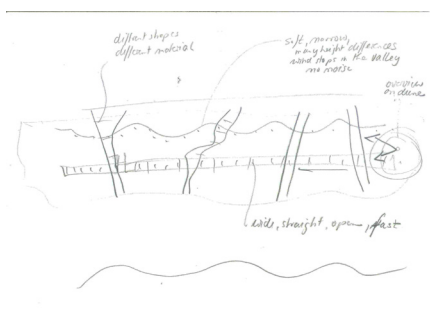
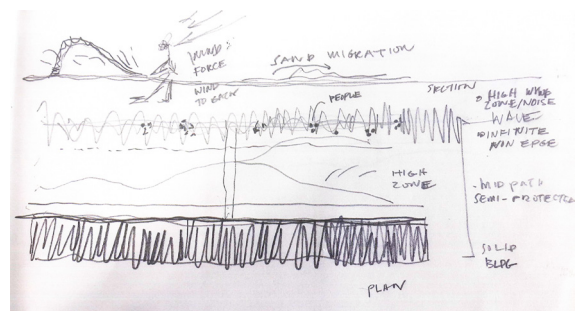
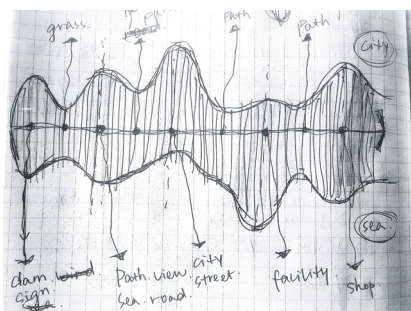
Task

The episteme of phenomenology was the first practice of the workshop, during which participants were divided into four groups to explore the site through phenomenology episteme. Specifically, two tasks were set up:

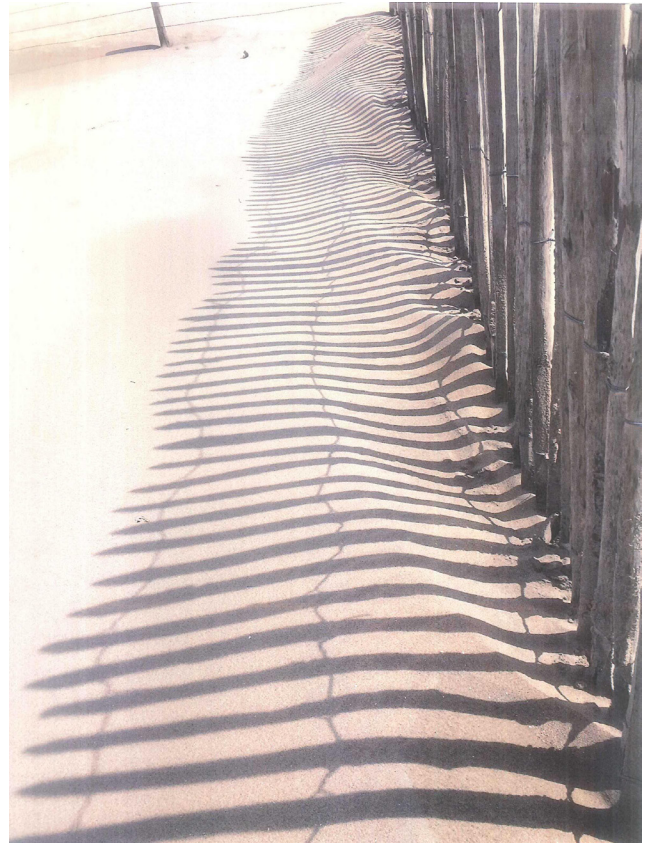
- 1) explore a part of site at the large scale, keeping openness and perceiving whatever the site communicates to us;
- 2) focus on an object to gain deep and detailed perception of the site.

Discussion

After the site exploration, a discussion followed. It sees diverse ways of exploring the site based on the phenomenological episteme, as well as different forms of expression as the outputs, such as video, picture, sketch, sound recording, textual descriptions, mind map, analytical diagram, etc. It is also interesting to see that a wide range of phenomena were noticed: sound of the wind, shadows of the fence, movement of grass, waves, birds, topography, etc. In addition, we also realised that sometimes it became difficult to practise pure phenomenological episteme, since we were designerly trained and it seems a challenge to intentionally give up the analytical thinking of design and only focus on the phenomenon itself.



Analytical drawings



Pictures

Semiology episteme

The third episteme that we have worked on the field is semiology.

Semiology deals with the symbols and their correspondence in our minds. The symbols have always been important and help to constitute the culture in several ways.

In order to establish our understanding about the landscape through exploring the site

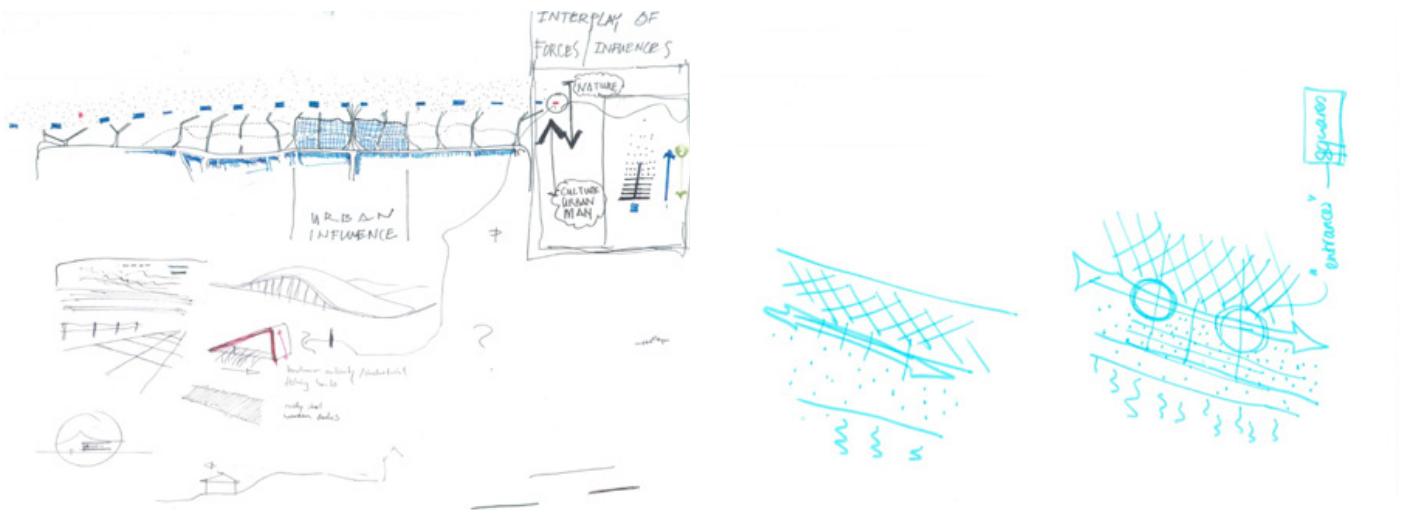
In order to understand the meanings of the signs in the site, we have experienced the locus individually.

One recognized the perpendicular axis toward to the sea are corresponding to main axis of the existing urbanized area, the city of Katwijk. Another outcome of this experience is understanding the role of the wide boulevards. The cross-sections of the perpendicular boulevards have with the main road which is parallel to the sea and the city invites the users and the inhabitants of the city to the sea.

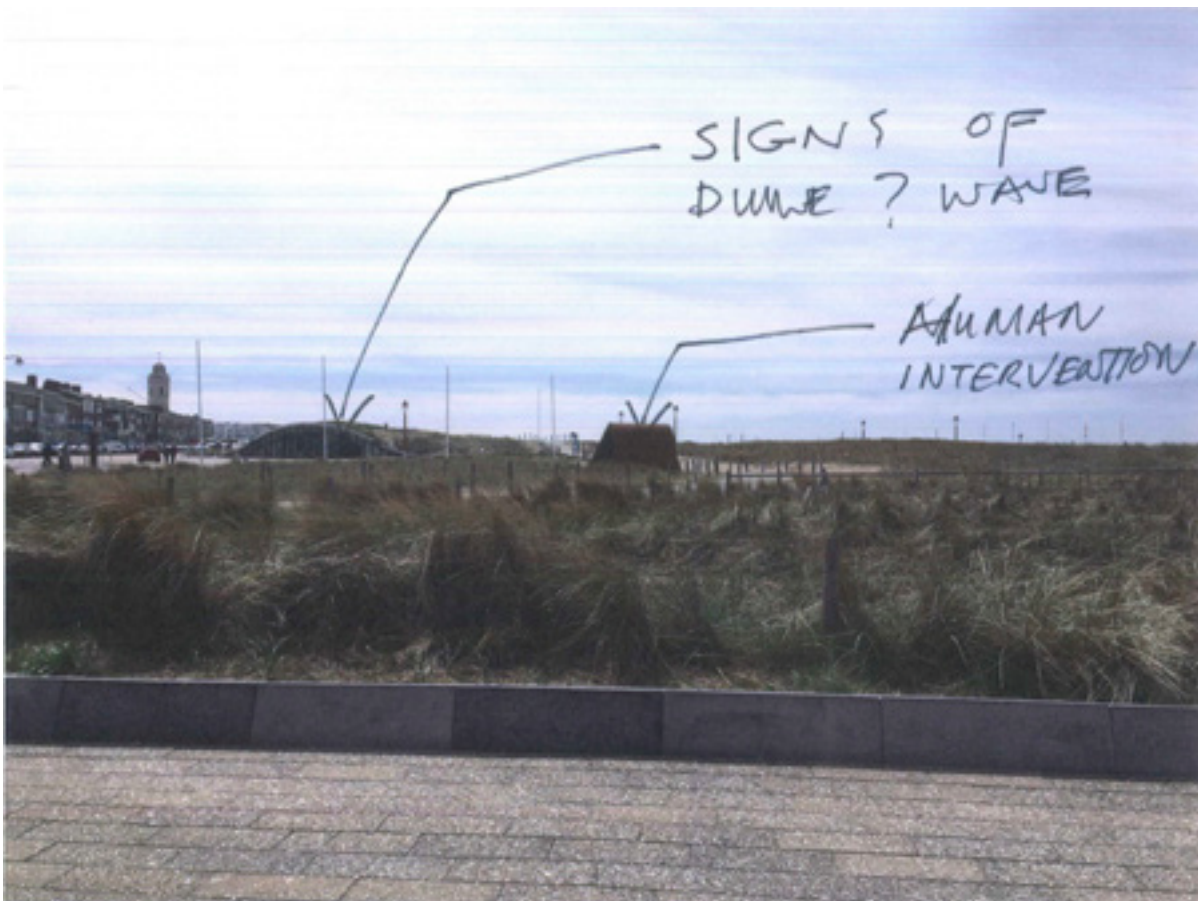


The cross-sections of the perpendicular boulevards

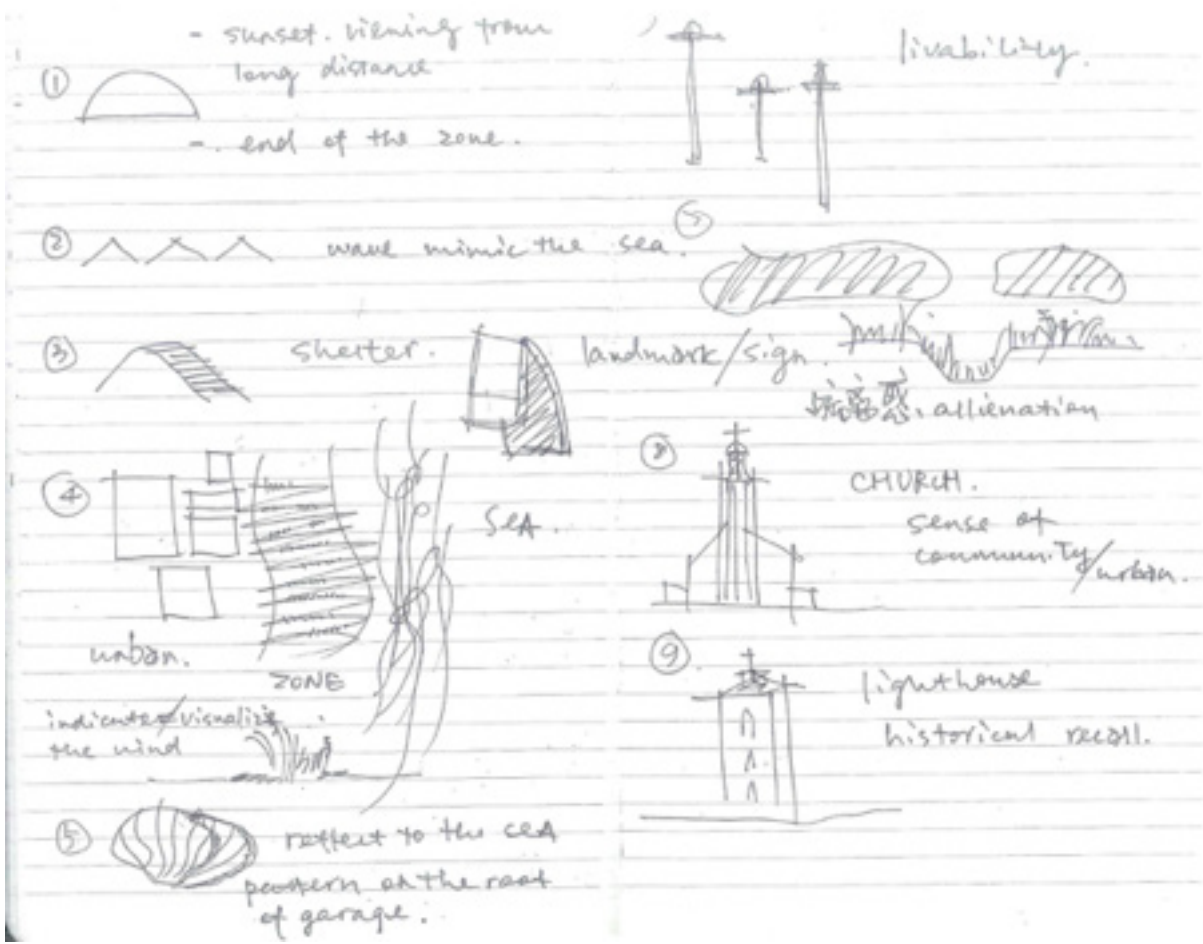
As an in-between area, the site is located between the natural border defined by sea and the man-built area. Following the awareness, we could then easily see the differences on the design by looking at the material choices of the designers in twofold: On the seaside, the designers decided to have more natural materials like the wooden along the pedestrian paths while they were choosing compound material which consists of stone & shells and also concrete on the city side.



By looking at the buildings on the landscape, we understand from the wave-shaped lines that they reflect the humble attitude of the designer in the project. They tend to be more respectful to the nature.



We understood from the shape of the exits that mimicry is continued here in the design process too. If you would observe the winds' direction and if you could follow the smooth moves of the yellowish grasses, then it would be very clear that the exits took their shape from the wind. Moreover, their color calls more attention as the oxidised color is a contrast to the calm and light color of the sand and the grasses of the dominant landscape. No doubt, this is an important attempt in the case of emergency.



After the discussions on the experiences of semiology in Katwijk, we reached to the conclusion that the symbols and their meanings are perceived by the users subjectively and it is highly depended on the users' cultural background.



Praxeology episteme

Praxeology the study of human action and conduct

This Episteme has a long tradition in the field of architecture, looking at the urban landscape through the way that people do things in the landscape – or the way that they practice it. For example, how a place acts through environmental and climatic processes, while also people act upon the place by certain processes like farming and construction. Or, others looking into spatial practices in the built environment from their “socio-spatial” character, as CIAM architects used a system known as CIAM Grid that allowed for the presentation of an avant-garde urban project in a standard fashion.

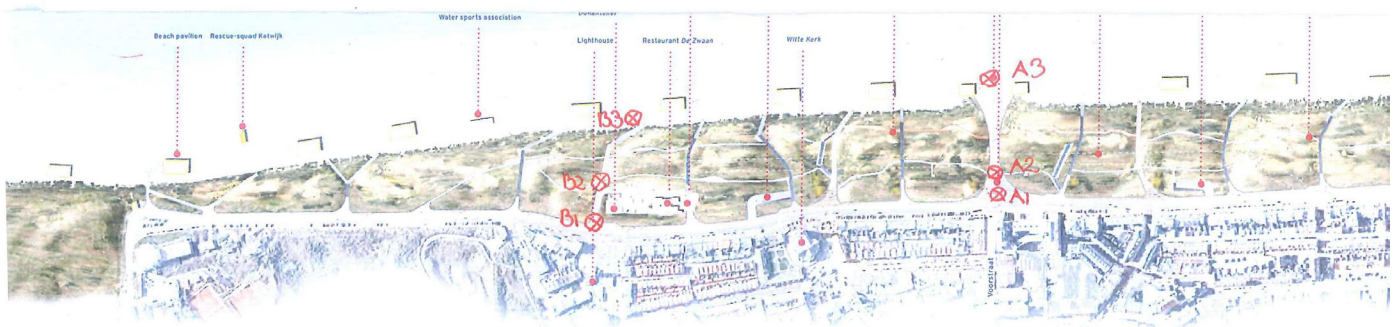
Praxeological studies often reveal knowledge about dissonances and conflicts of interest, which are inevitable in the urban landscape. And praxeological studies can be used to show such tension and ways to handle it. There is also a long tradition for designers to use studies of praxeology to shed light on groups that are underexposed in the standard design and planning practice at a certain period of time and who may, therefore, be marginalized in decisions about the development of public spaces. The well-known practices are Danish garden architect C. Th. Sørensen’s detailed studies of the practices of children in public playgrounds; as well as Danish architect Jan Gehl in his famous book *Livet Mellem Husene* (1971)/[*Life between the Buildings*], who used a quantitative approach to study human conduct in urban spaces. A qualitative approach to urban space is for instance offered by the Japanese architecture studio Bow Wow, who conceive of their design practice as ethnographic work. In their project *The Timber Network* the architects create a firewood supply plant in Kurimoto that simultaneously repairs the damaged woodlands in case of forest fires and provides a safe workplace for elderly and disabled urban citizens, helping them to reconnect with the forest and sensations of nature.

Reading the site

In the practice with the episteme of praxeology, we focus on different categories of visitors: who are they, where they come from and what they are doing on the site. Each group developed their own analytical method, from the quantitative approach of counting the number of different types of activities to the qualitative approach of interviewing, asking people about their use and opinions of the site.

1. Counting activities

The group chose 6 spots on the site and stay for 10 minutes observing what kinds of activities happened and how many times they took place.



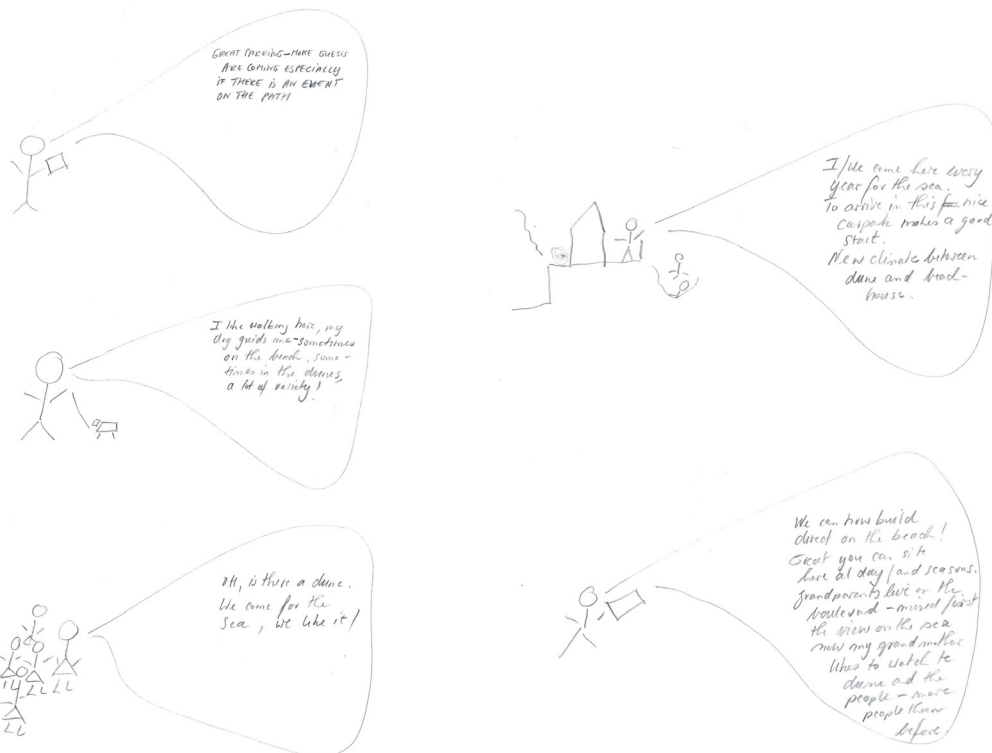
3. Tracking people

The group followed a small boy from the moment he entered the site to the time he arrived to the beach. They pictured series of activities he conducted and edited them into a sequence.



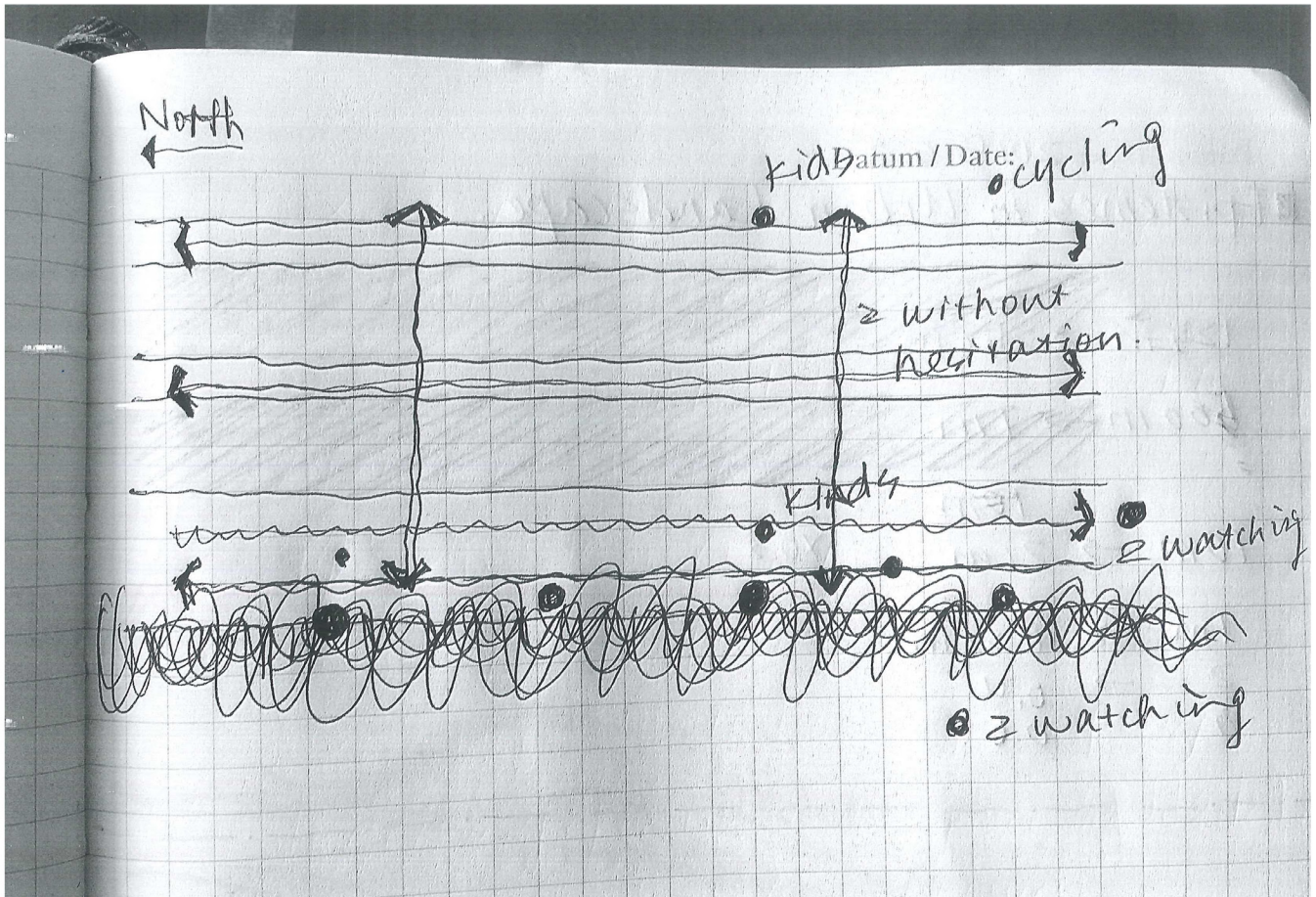
4. Interview

The group interviewed five types of visitors, asking where they came from, what they are doing here, how they like the design, and for people living near around, how the design influenced their use of



5. Mapping

The group walking through the whole site and tries to map what kind of activities is happening where. Further, they try to find how these activities relating to spatial characteristics of the site.



Discussion

The site exploration let us focus on the visitors, their use and activities of the site. It sets contrast to the design approach that tends to impose the designer's ideas and concepts to the site without figuring out what are the users and how they like to use the space. The observation of different users and their activities reveals us the site's social context and the different ways the users interact with the design. It is interesting to interpret these activities in line with different spatial and physical conditions of the site: are they provide people a spatial enclosure so that they would like to stay? What kind of texture of the road and how the roads are placed and offering different path of travelling? And how the spatial sequence influence people's choice of the route? The episteme of praxeology is both a lens to design with and to feed back to the design once its accomplished.

Ecology episteme

Ecology is an important and long-lived episteme for landscape architectural thought and praxis. Landscape ecology is the science of studying and improving relationships between ecological processes in the environment and particular ecosystems (Wu, 2006). As the first time to discuss it, we use Coastal Work Katwijk as a case study to elaborate it further:

1. Zoom in - Dune Landscape

The location of the dune limits the types of plant that can thrive there. Plants that thrive on the dune landscape must be tolerant to salt spray, strong winds, and burial by blowing/accumulating sand. The whole dune landscape was replanted with marram grass. Wisps of marram grass was brought in from the dunes near Katwijk. Typical vegetation in the Katwijk is Ammophila, also called "Beachgrass". We also see Taraxacum appears in the site. De Blauwe Zeedistel (an Indigenous Thistle) is a protected species found in the dunes at Katwijk. After the new dune had been constructed, the top layer was distributed over the dune to ensure that the dune flora would regrow as quickly as possible.



The dune strip is shaped with small 'natural' patches. It might work as a north-south connection for small animals/insects. These natural patches are fenced to protect them from human access. The integral coastal dune landscape also provides habitats for birds to live. Detailed info of bird species in Katwijk can be found through: <http://www.birdclubkatwijk.nl/index.php/author/bckmenno/>

2. Zoom out - Ecological System

When we zoom out and discover the ecological effects from a big scale, the coastal dune landscape becomes an crucial ecological part linking the green and blue infrastructures of Katwijk into a whole.



Reference

Wu, J. (2006). Cross-disciplinarity, landscape ecology, and sustainability science. *Landscape Ecology*, 21, 1-4.

