

Metaphorical and Analogical Thinking

in Urban Design & Planning

RUIYING LIU
Master Thesis | July 2017



complexity" was a
human intelligence
complex issues of the
ent. One of its tricks is
nd analogical

evolved mechanism
we do? What would
ur evaluation of
ks, our focus in
the way technology
support us?

We still know very little about its roles in
real-world phenomena, esp. in *urbanism*

OBSERVATION IN DESIGN

Creative strategy (Antoniades, 1990)

A way to grasp the essence (Ungers, 1982)

Origin of many theories, models and design methodologies
(...)

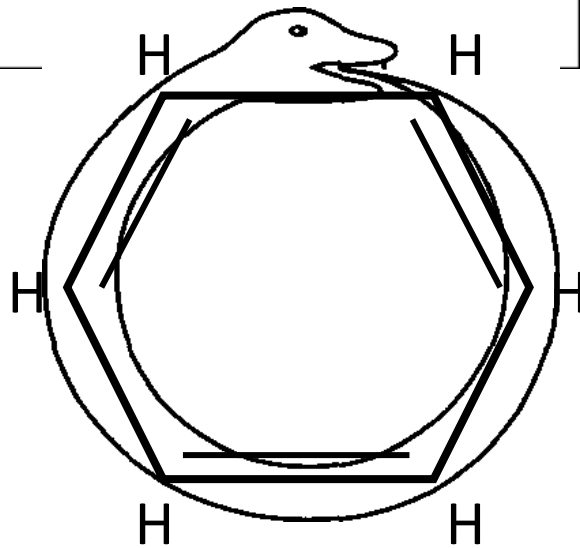
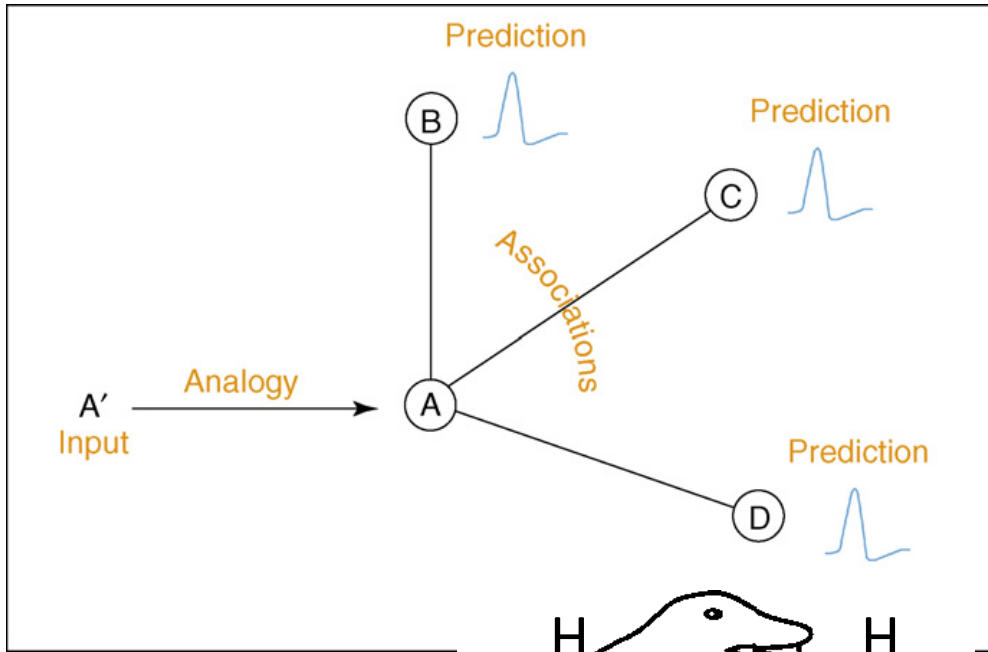
EXPLANATION IN DESIGN

Heuristic reasoning for ill-defined problems (Rowe, 1982)

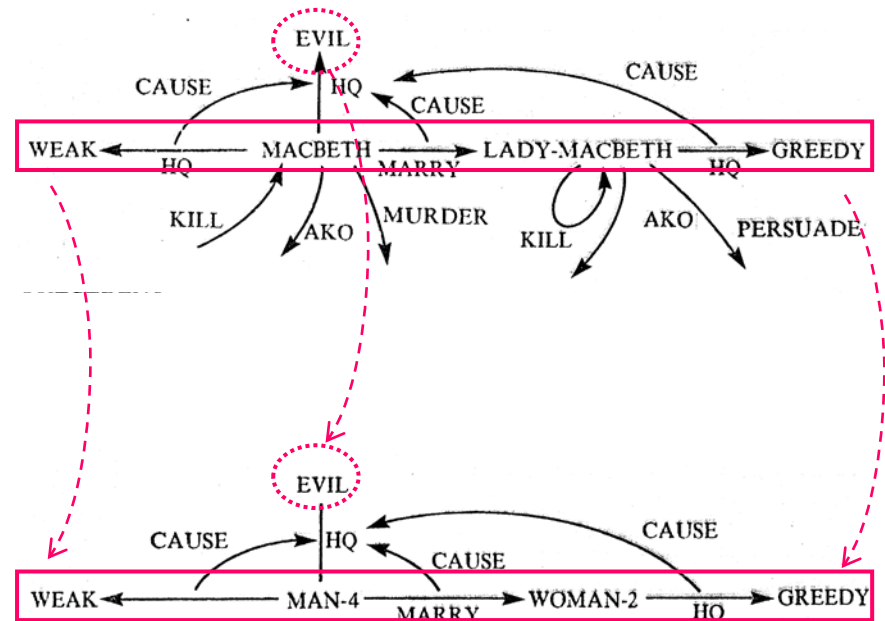
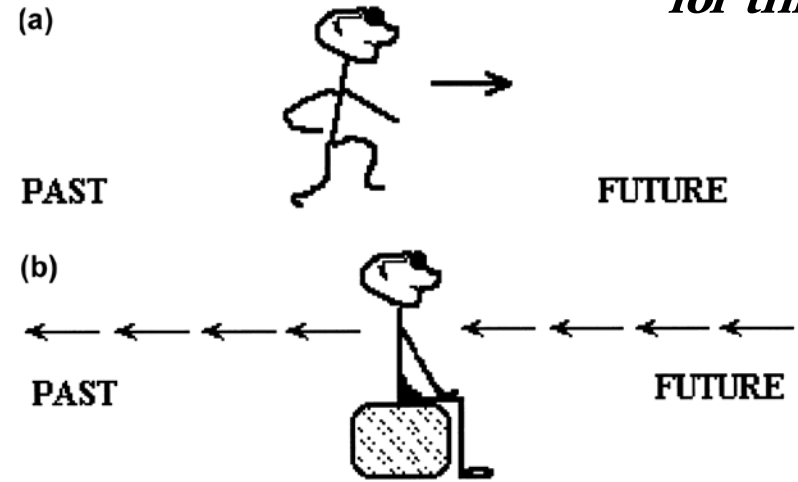
Displacement of concepts for innovation (Schön, 2001)

Cognitive strategy for morphological design
(Tzonis, 1992)

SCIENTIFIC THEORIES



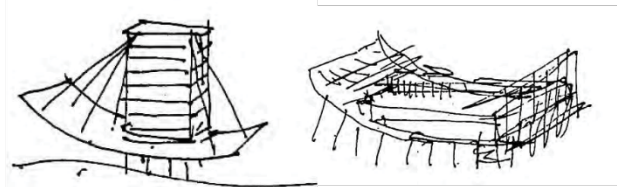
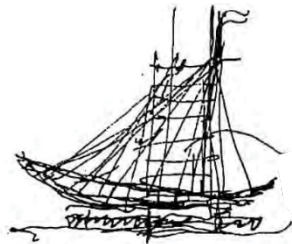
Spatial metaphors for time



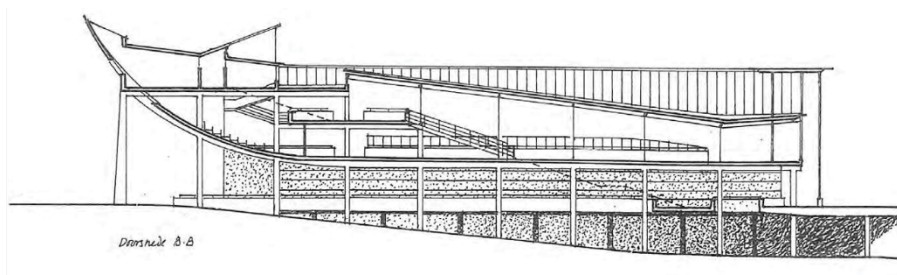
COMPLEX M-As



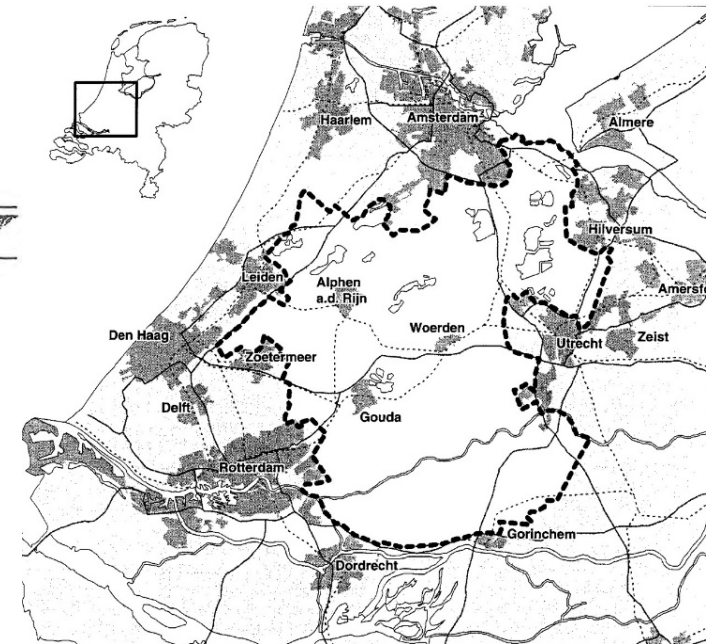
Superficial appearances—
can it be used for design?



Just a story—what scientific reasons
does it have?



Exploiting public sentiments?



Maybe we have the wrong expectations for them ...

*Because we don't know what **roles** they play and **why**.*

What if it is indeed an evolved mechanism to handle what we do? What would that mean for our evaluation of intellectual works, our focus in education, and the way technology should support us?

Strategy

Research goals

Output format

Structure of communication

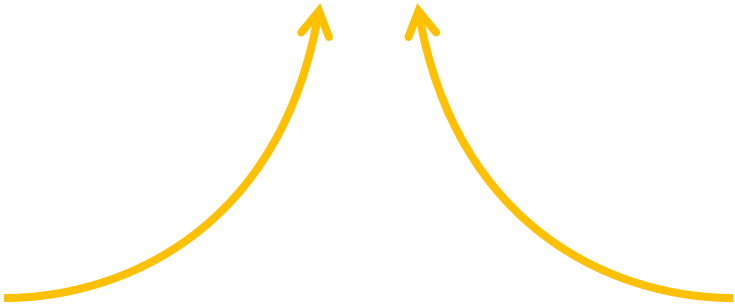
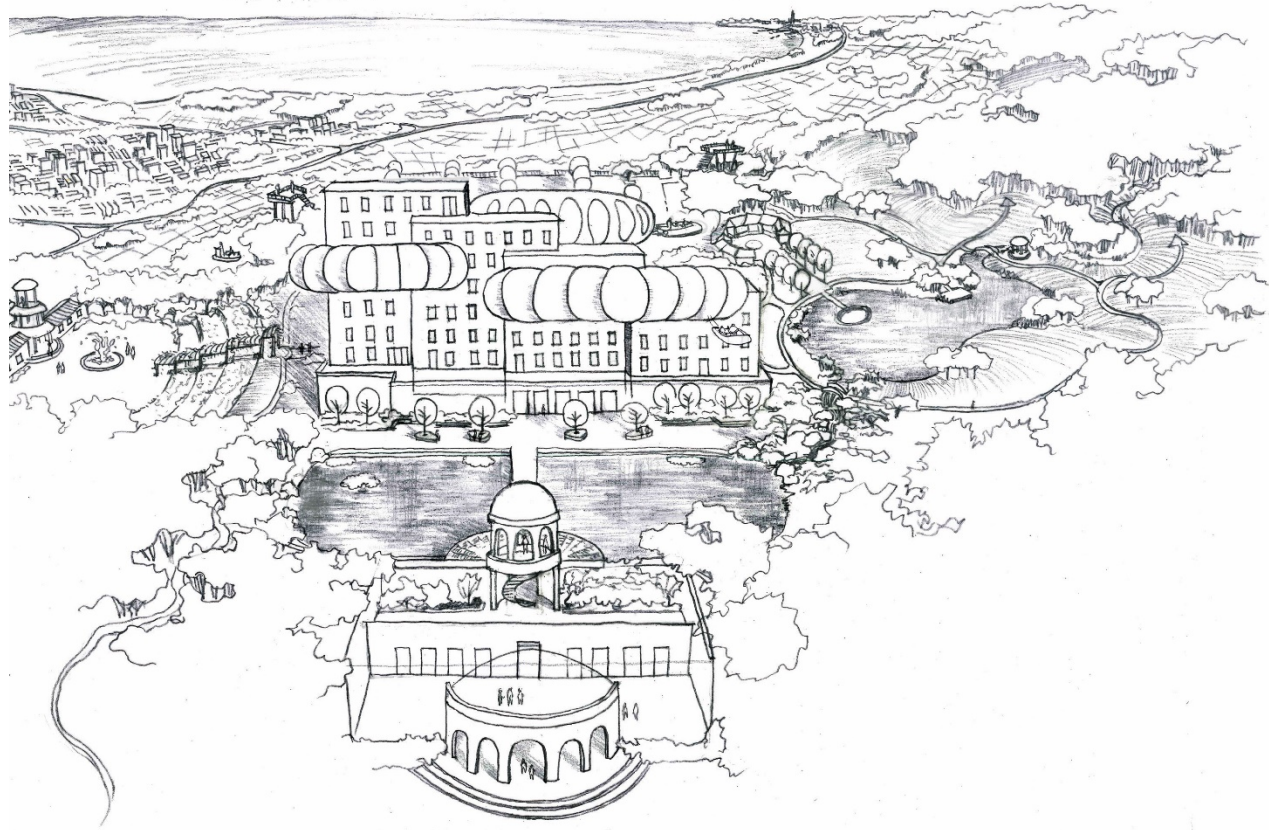
RESEARCH GOALS

- A framework to structure M-A phenomena based on scientific theories
- Further demonstrate how complex M-As work

OUTPUT FORMAT

- **Journal paper**
Single line of reasoning, for reporting and recording findings.
- **Book**
Chapters afford building up more than one plot/perspective.

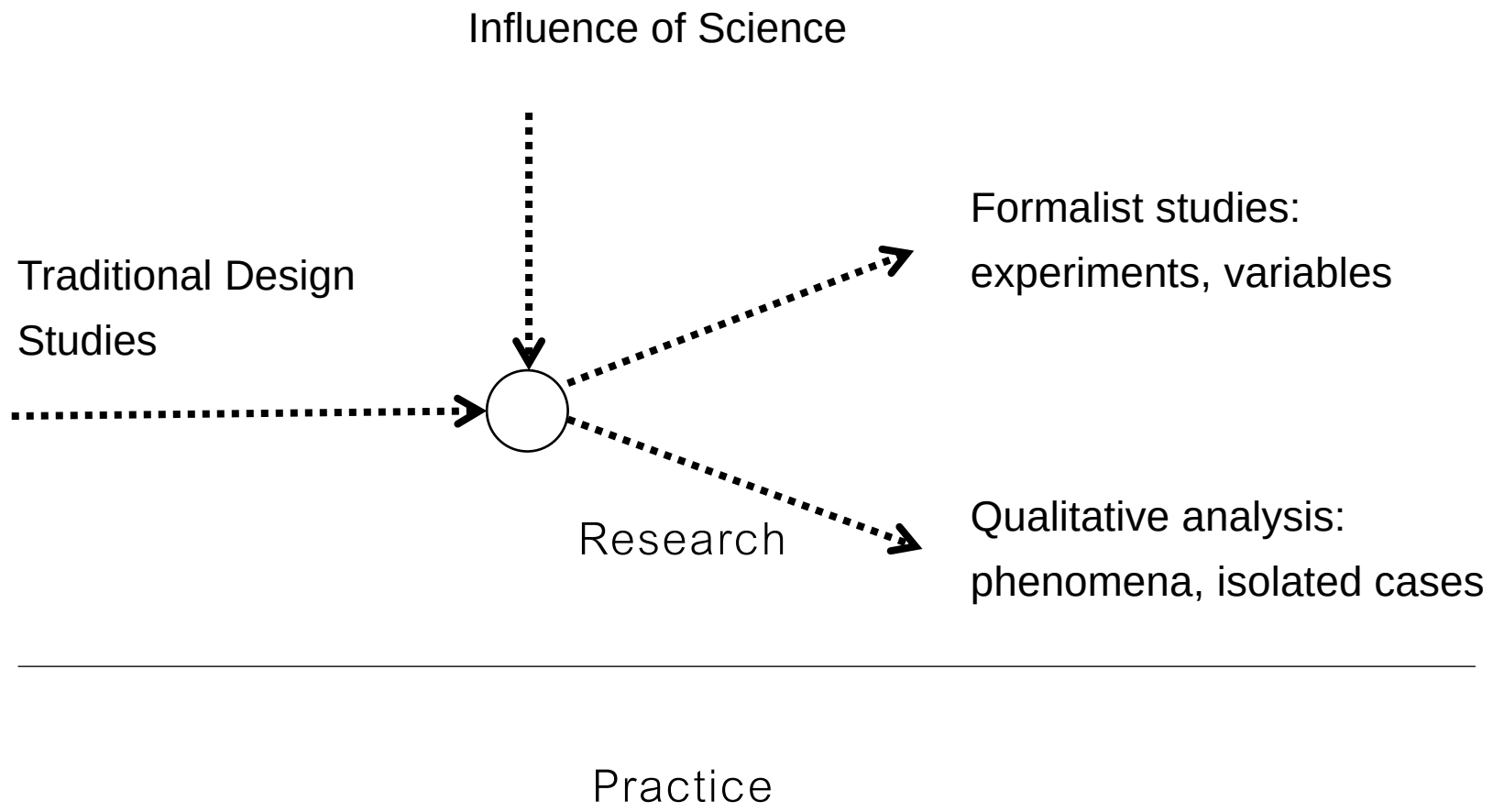
7 CHAPTERS, 3 PARTS



Design Frame- work

Theory construction as design.

Phenomena detection & structuring



Research

Practice

Het Parool
Enz
het
het

Rotterdam
by Els Bet

The A4 Corridor
of Zuid-Holland



Italian square
Dutch city



Precedent
reference
Amstelveen city center
design,
Paul Broekhuizen and

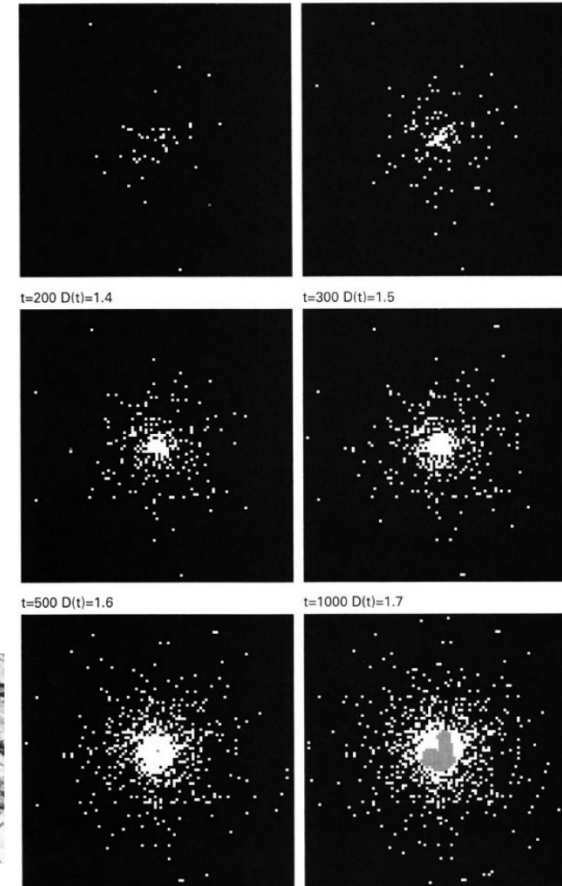
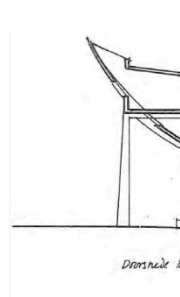


Building
Amstelveen city center
Hans Ruijssenaars (At

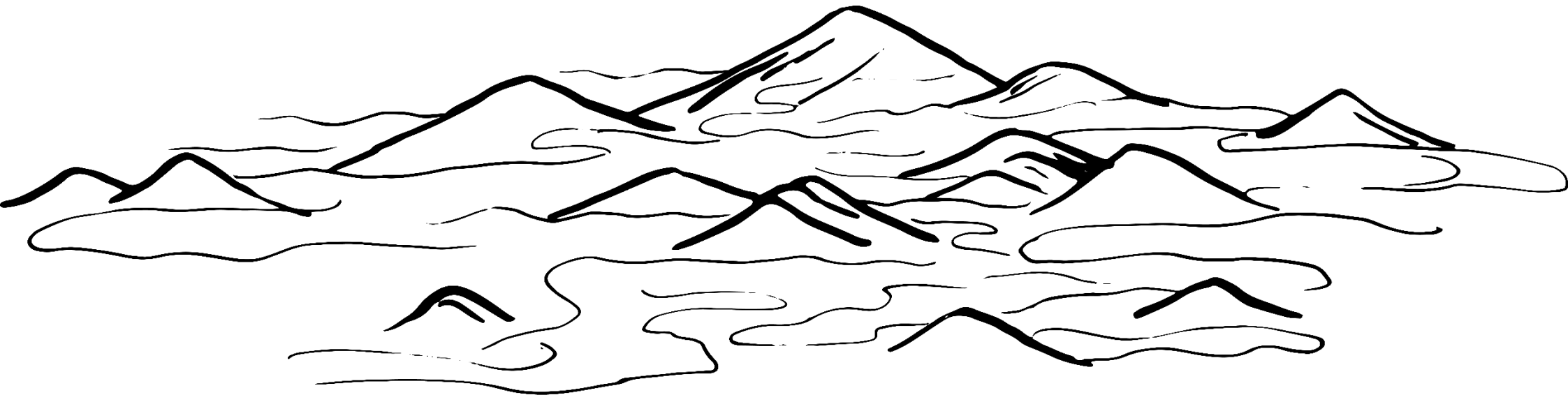


Sand pile
model for
urban growth
simulation

in complexity theories of cities
(Batty, 2005)



We need an overview that *connects* the formalist findings, the qualitative analyses, and practical processes.



Deriving own structure & data through interview: everyone's opinion is a structure, cases they provide are data

*Different M-As play different **roles** to support different **processes**.*

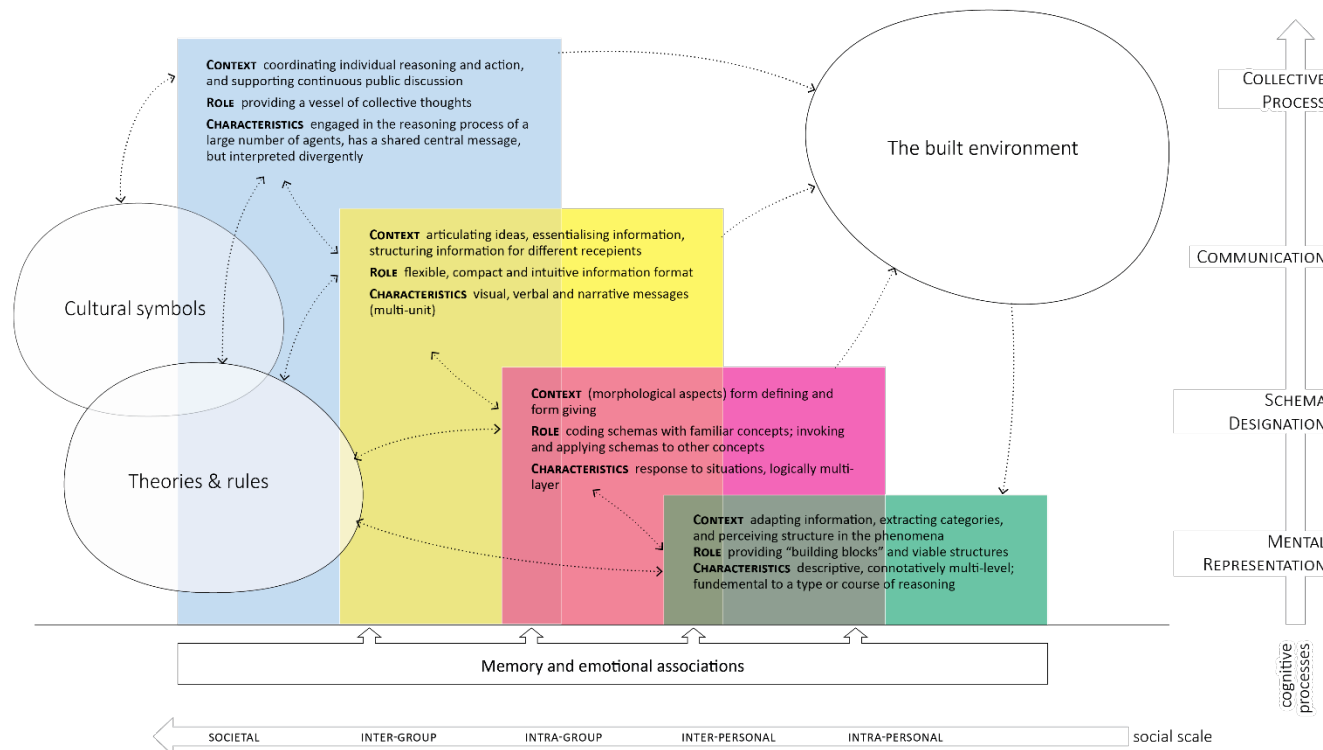
*Different M-As play different **roles** to support different **processes***



Differentiating
Characteristics

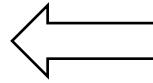
Mechanism
(in context)

Cognitive processes
in design & planning



Mental representation

Representing complex phenomena with the thinker's own knowledge, to achieve certain reasoning.



Information, scale, novel nature, etc.

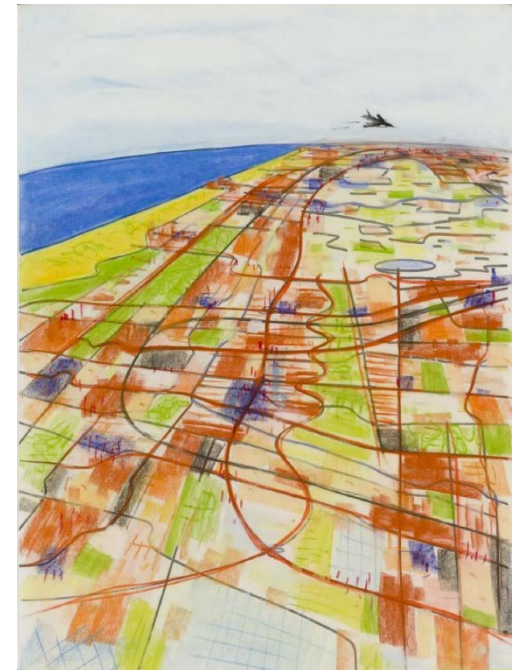
*The highway is a **barrier** between the two areas.*

*The shoreline is not a monolithic whole, but a **thread with beads**.*

*The highway experience is like that of **music**.*

The Carpet Metropolis

Willem-Jan Neutelings, 1989



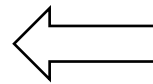
Mental representation

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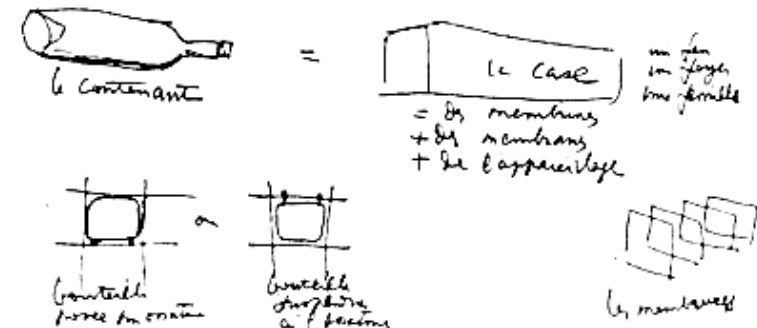
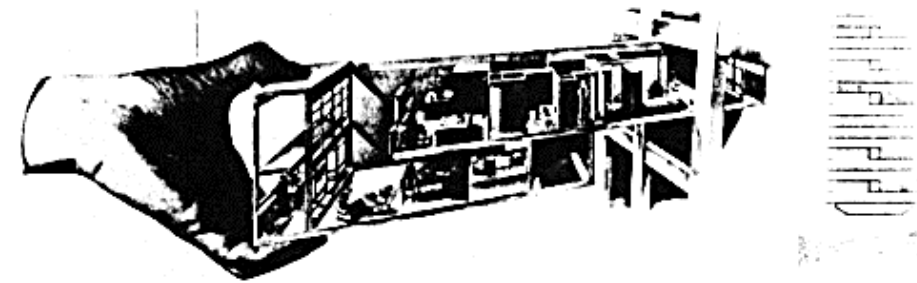
Schema* designation

Applying **procedural knowledge** to translate abstract needs into material objects (or the reverse).



(For spatial design) variation, non-verbal, acquisition, organising & retrieval of knowledge

*schema is procedural knowledge: something does something to achieve something



Unite
d'Habitation

Le Corbusier

Mental representation

Representing complex phenomena with the thinker's own knowledge, to achieve certain reasoning.

Schema* designation

Applying procedural knowledge to translate abstract needs into material objects (or the reverse).

Communication

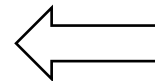
Conveying the essence of design/planning in common terms; interpreting cross-disciplinary ideas.

Het Parool HOME AMSTERDAM STADSGIDS OPINIE

En zo wordt Noord het Manhattan aan het IJ

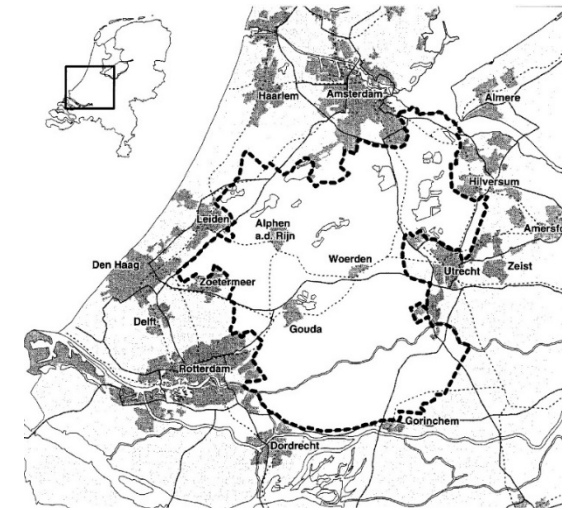


Zo ziet de IJ-oever in Amsterdam Noord er in 2019 uit. Naast de A'damtoeren (voorheen van Shell) komen twee woontorens en een hoteltoeren van congreshotel Maritim (rechts). Uiterst links filmmuseum Eye. © Team V Architectuur



Making explicit,
synthesising;
implications, limits

The Green Heart of West Holland



De metropool dankt aan zijn historische grotere en kleinere agglomeraties, en biedt als **het groene hart** van het gebied mogelijkheden die niet anderszins kunnen aangeven voor de oplossing.

Sandpile model

Metabolism



Mental representation

Representing complex phenomena with the thinker's own knowledge, to achieve certain reasoning.

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Applying procedural knowledge to translate abstract needs into material objects (or the reverse).

Communication

Conveying the essence of design/planning in common terms; interpreting cross-disciplinary ideas.

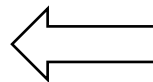
Collective process

Through which the collective imposes **control and plans** on its large-scale environment.

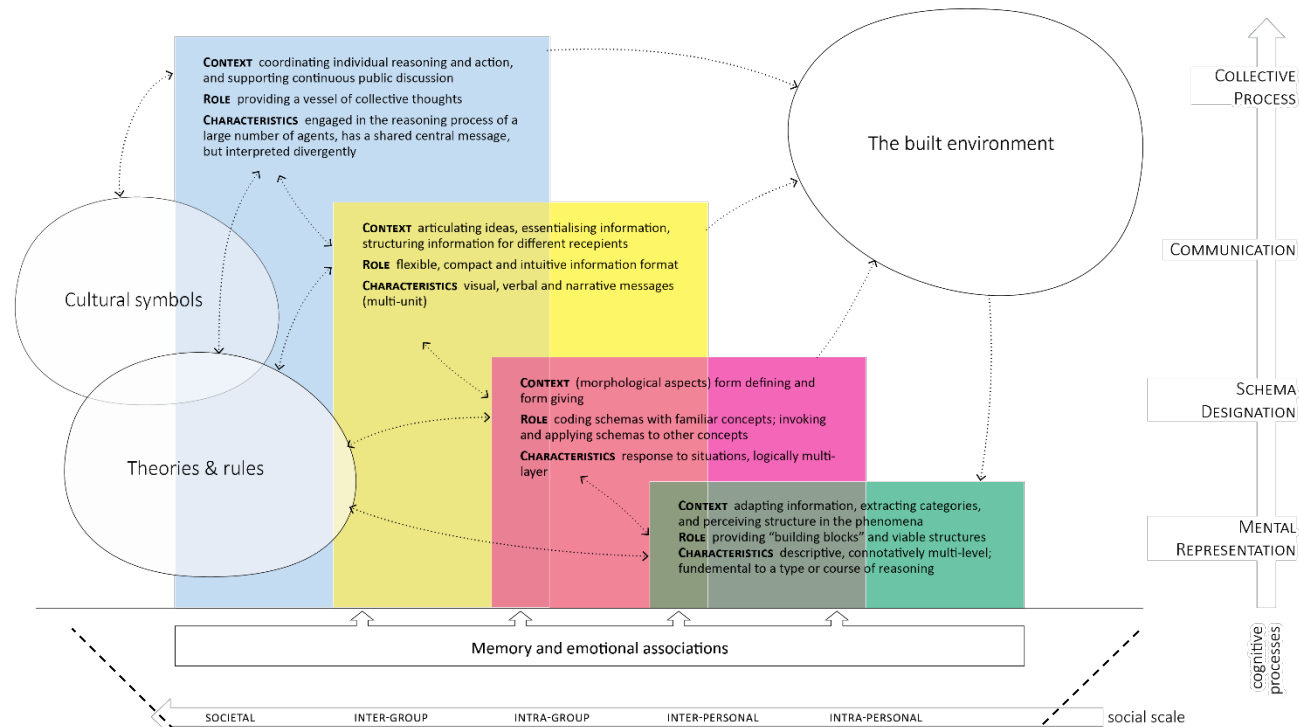
The Green Heart of West Holland

The Finger Plan of the Greater Copenhagen

A “vessel” concept for collective interaction



conscious agents, individual reasoning, organised action, collective reflection



Categories are inter-connected; M-A mode exits into other modes.
Looking from the outside at a distance reveals how parts fit together as a whole; but looking inside reveals how it works



Design Dyna- mics

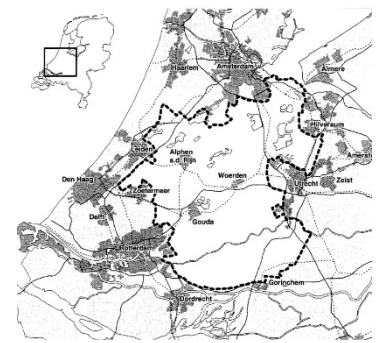
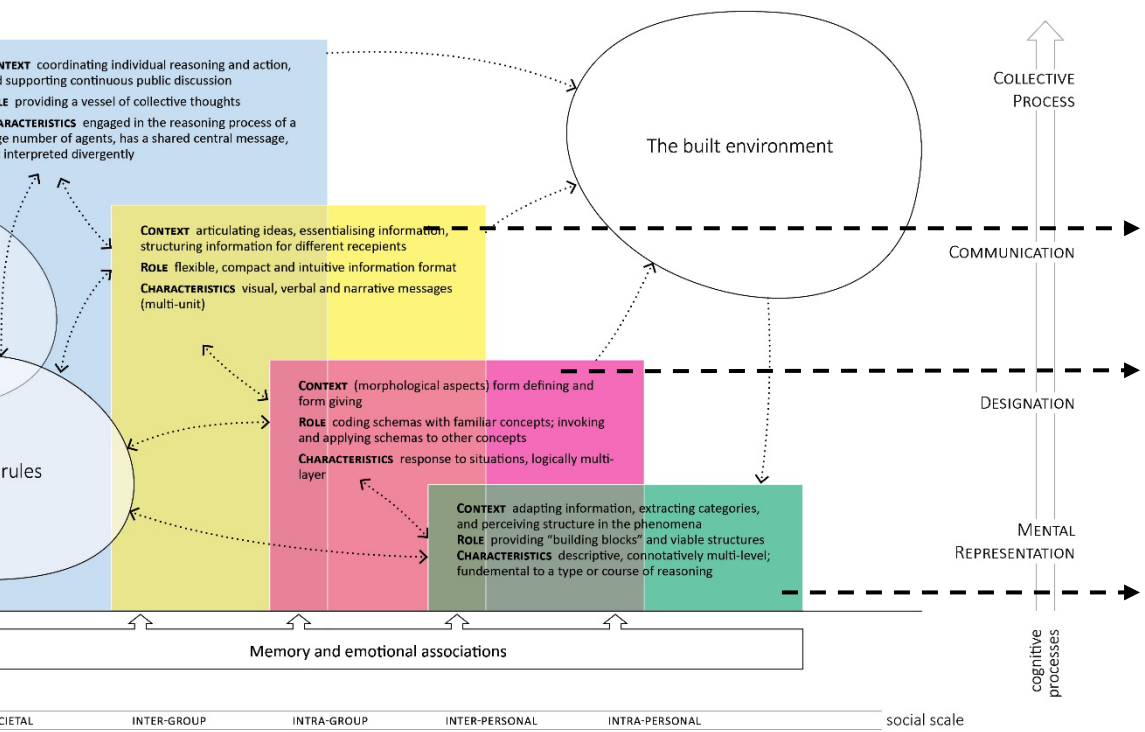
Theory construction as design.

Mechanisms

Patterns

Dynamics of phenomena

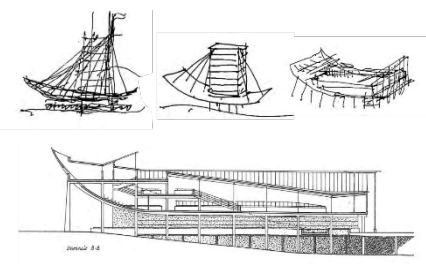
Chap. 3 COGNITIVE PATTERNS IN M-A THINKING



The Green Heart

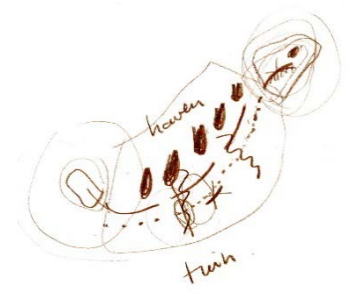
Building as Ship on Water

Amstelveen city centre library design by Hans Ruijssenaars (Atelier Quadrat)

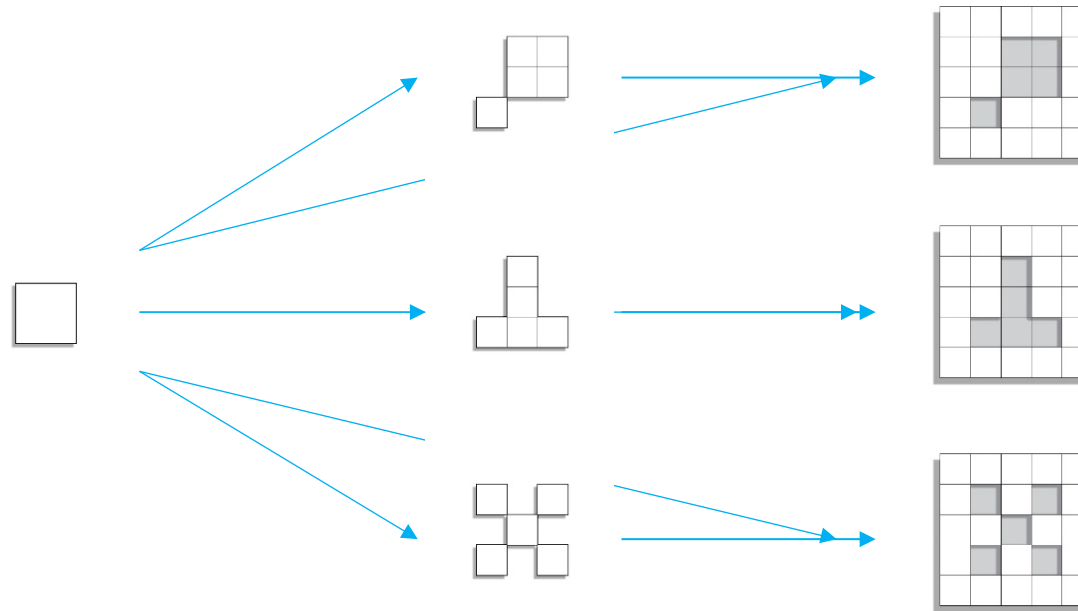


Rotterdam South as a Fish

from cultural-historical survey of pre-war neighbourhoods in Rotterdam South by Els Bet



*Three **cognitive patterns** that build up complex M-As from basic building blocks.*



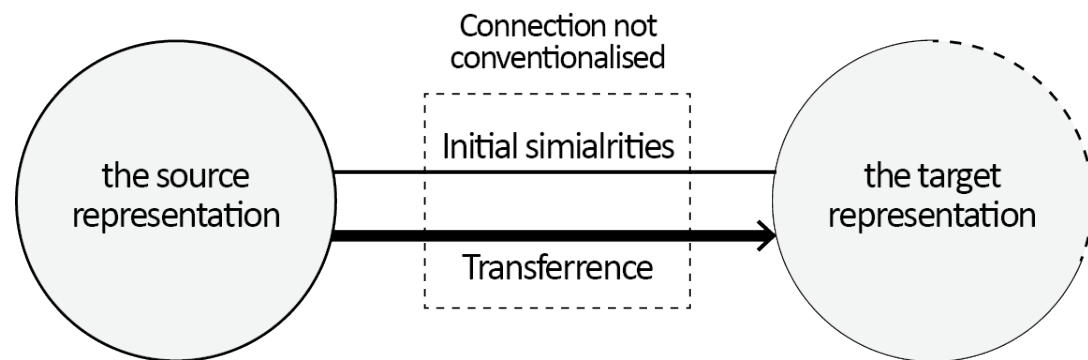
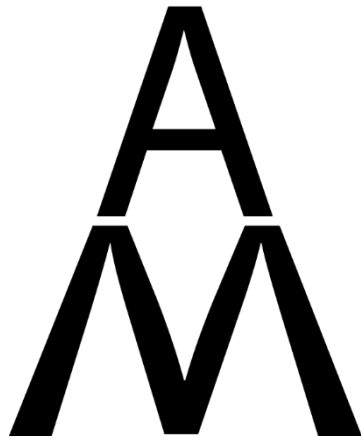
- Accounts for the different characteristics of M-As, and how one thinking mechanism fits into various situations.
- Reveals the manoeuvrability—or, the window for creativity—in making M-As.

1. BASIC FORM

Simultaneously involving **two concepts**, one better known than the other;

Contents of the better known one is **transferred** to the other, creating inferences or reasoning possibilities;

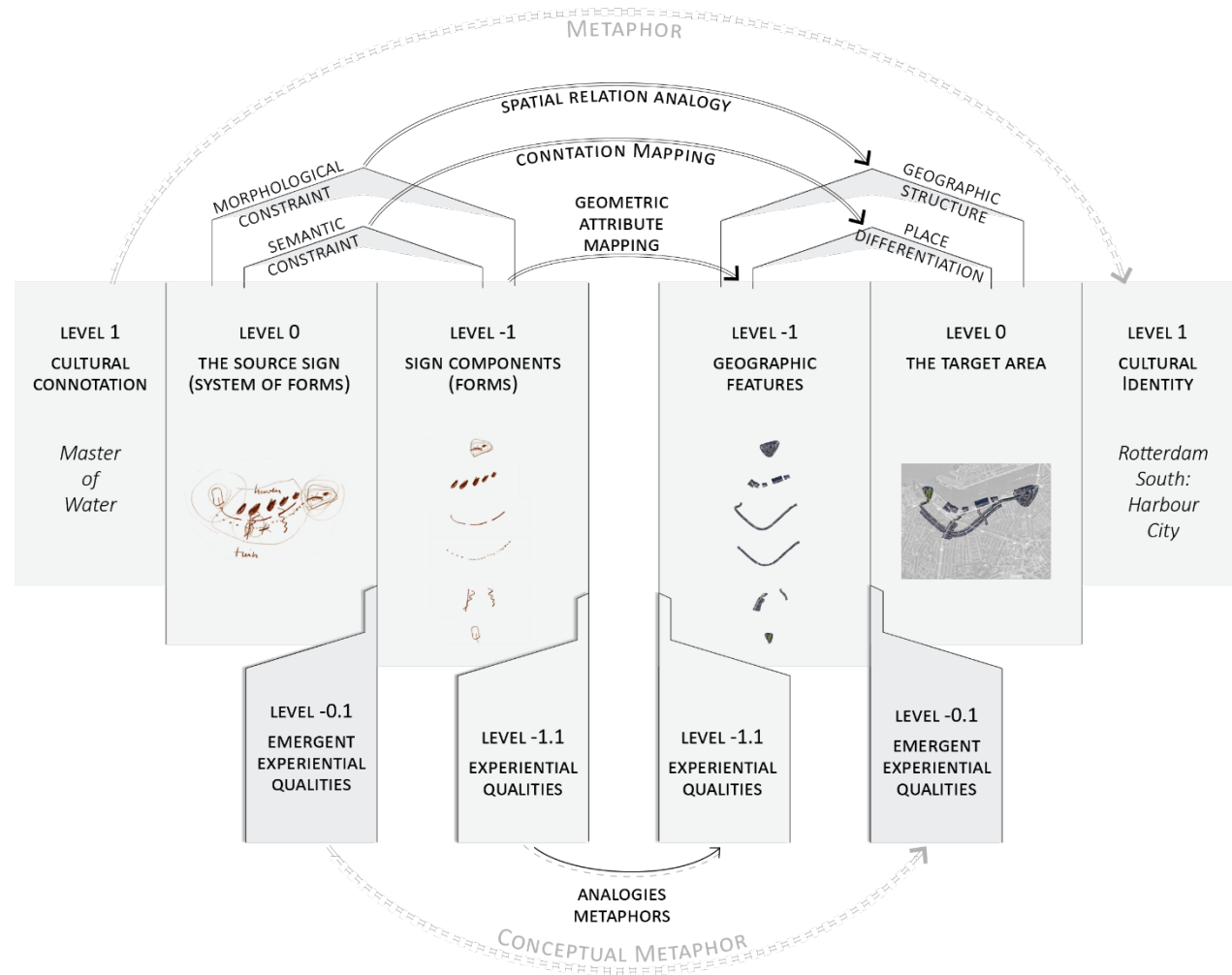
The transference is guided by **similarities** between them.



2. PATTERNS

Multi-level

Multiple levels of meanings regarding the same objects are superposed.



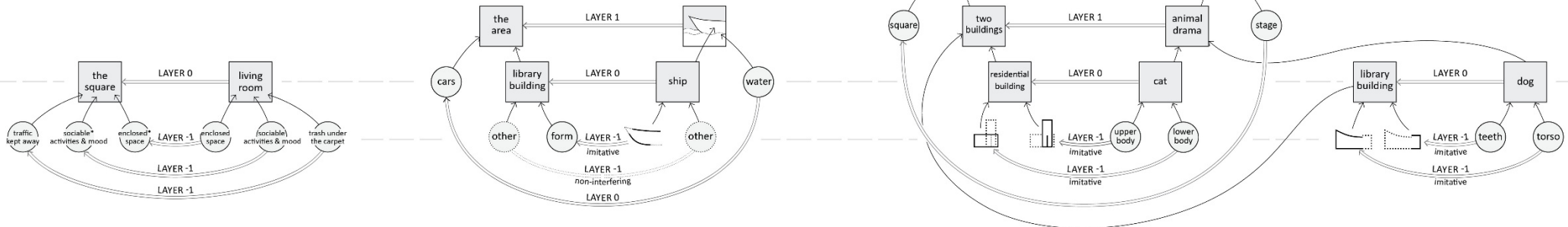
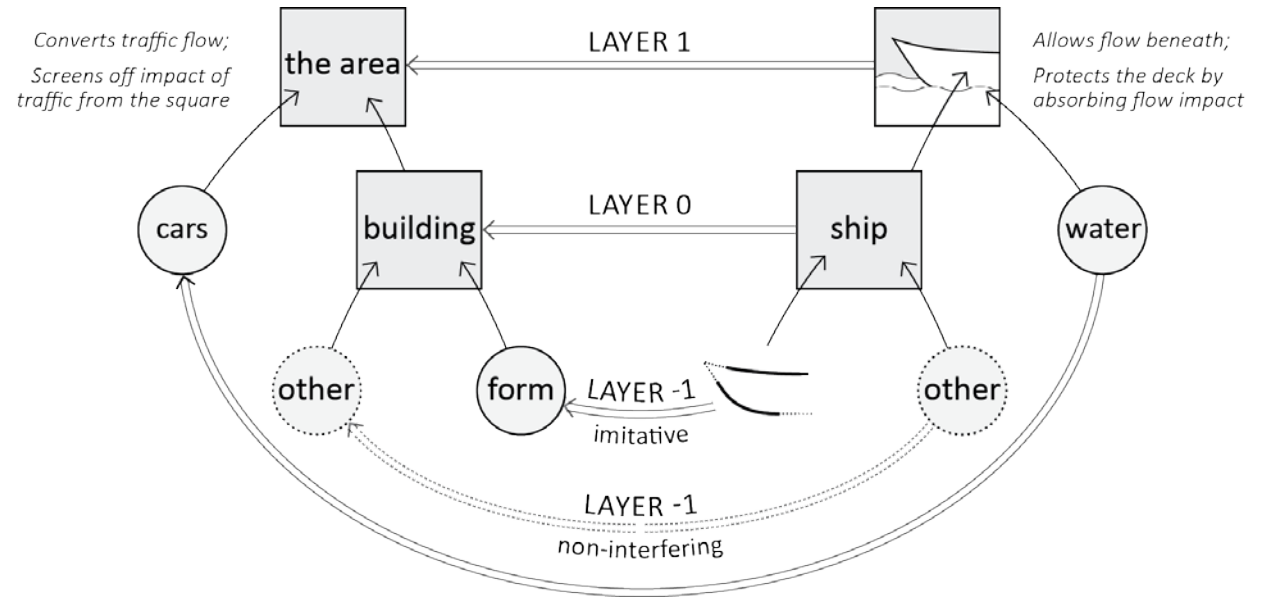
2. PATTERNS

Multi-level

Multiple levels of meaning regarding the same objects are superposed.

Multi-layer

Objects take up different roles in a logical hierarchy to form one narrative.



2. PATTERNS

Multi-level

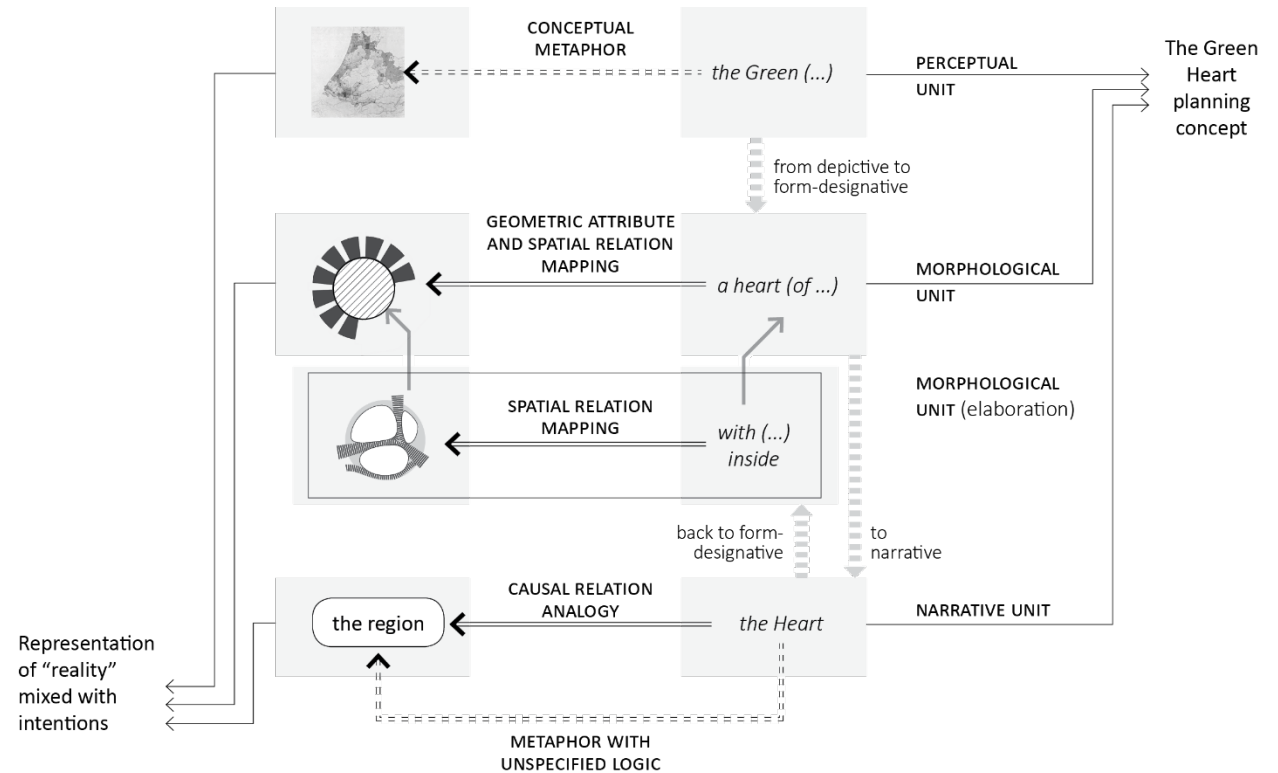
Multiple levels of meaning regarding the same objects are superposed.

Multi-layer

Objects take up different roles in a logical hierarchy to form one narrative.

Multi-unit

Units are relatively independent M-As and have complementary relationships.



2. PATTERNS

Multi-level

Multiple levels of meaning regarding the same objects are superposed.

Multi-layer

Objects take up different roles in a logical hierarchy to form one narrative.

Multi-unit

Units are relatively independent M-As and have complementary relationships.



3. TRANSFORMATION

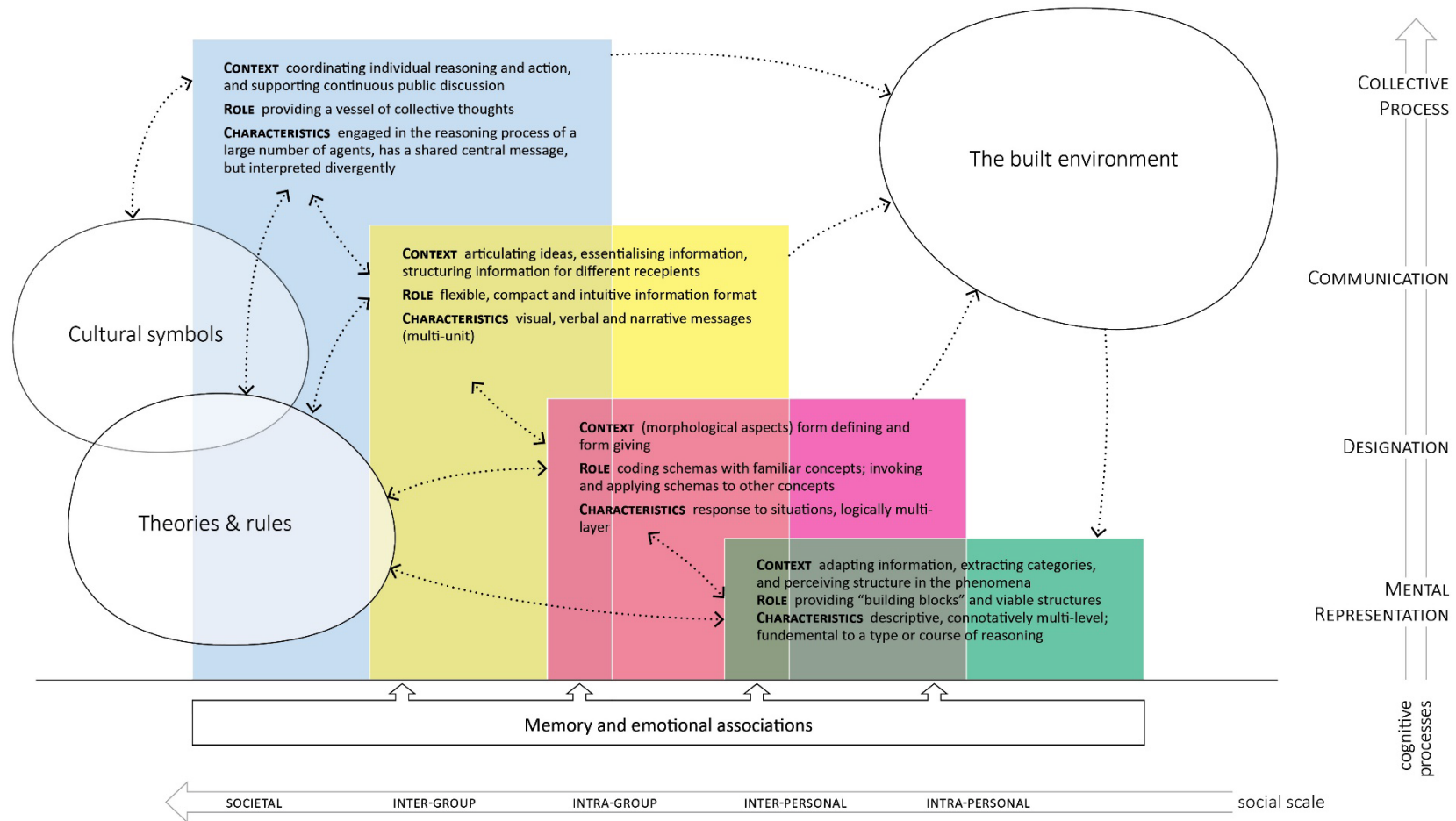
Schematising

The context-response relationships among objects are identified so that a matched context can prompt the transfer of the response.

Developing verbal narrative

The narrative is made more prominent as a relatively independent unit (often by naming).

4. INSTANTIATING LINKS through case studies



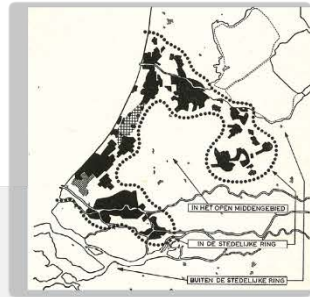
LONG-TERM

Transformations of the Green Heart

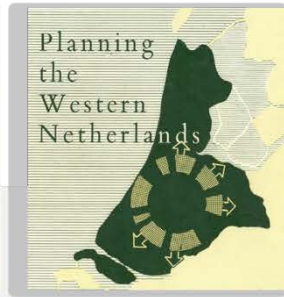


1924, mapping urbanisation pattern²

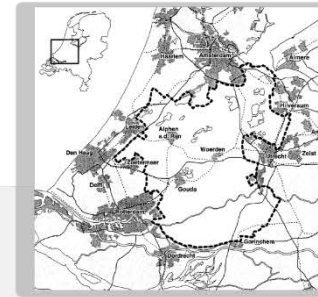
ca. 1935, "randstad" named by KLM founder A. Plesman³



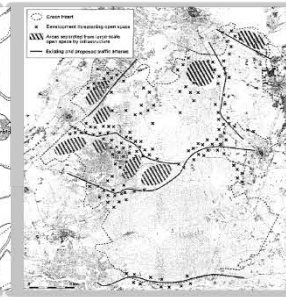
1958, "green heart" = the open central space/Hollands-Utrechtse weidegebied⁴



1966, Greenheart Metropolis⁵



1990, Borders designated by VINEX⁷



1995, Public debate on the concept^{6, 7, 8}



2004, A differentiated Green Heart³

PRECONSCIOUS STAGE

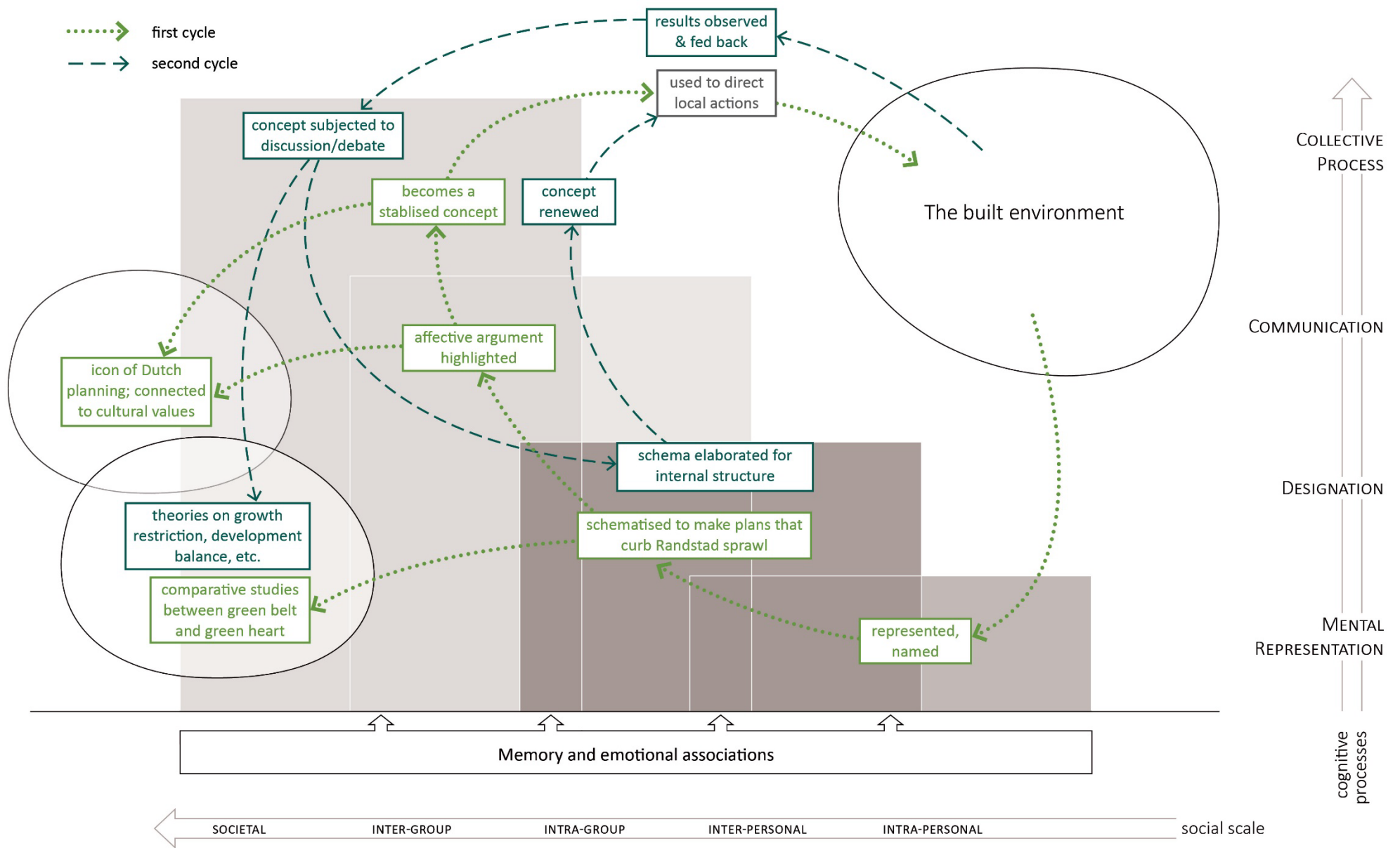
'30S-'50S AWARENESS

'60S, '70S PRESERVATIVE POLICY, AND GROWING INTERNATIONAL FAME

'80S, '90S DOUBTS, OPPOSITION

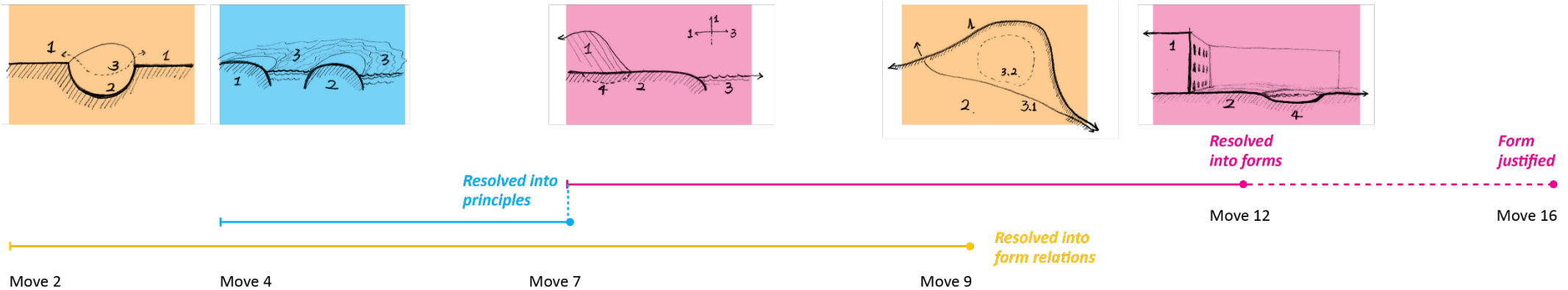
MID-'90S ON, CALL FOR REALISTIC MEASURES, AND CONCEPT RENEWAL

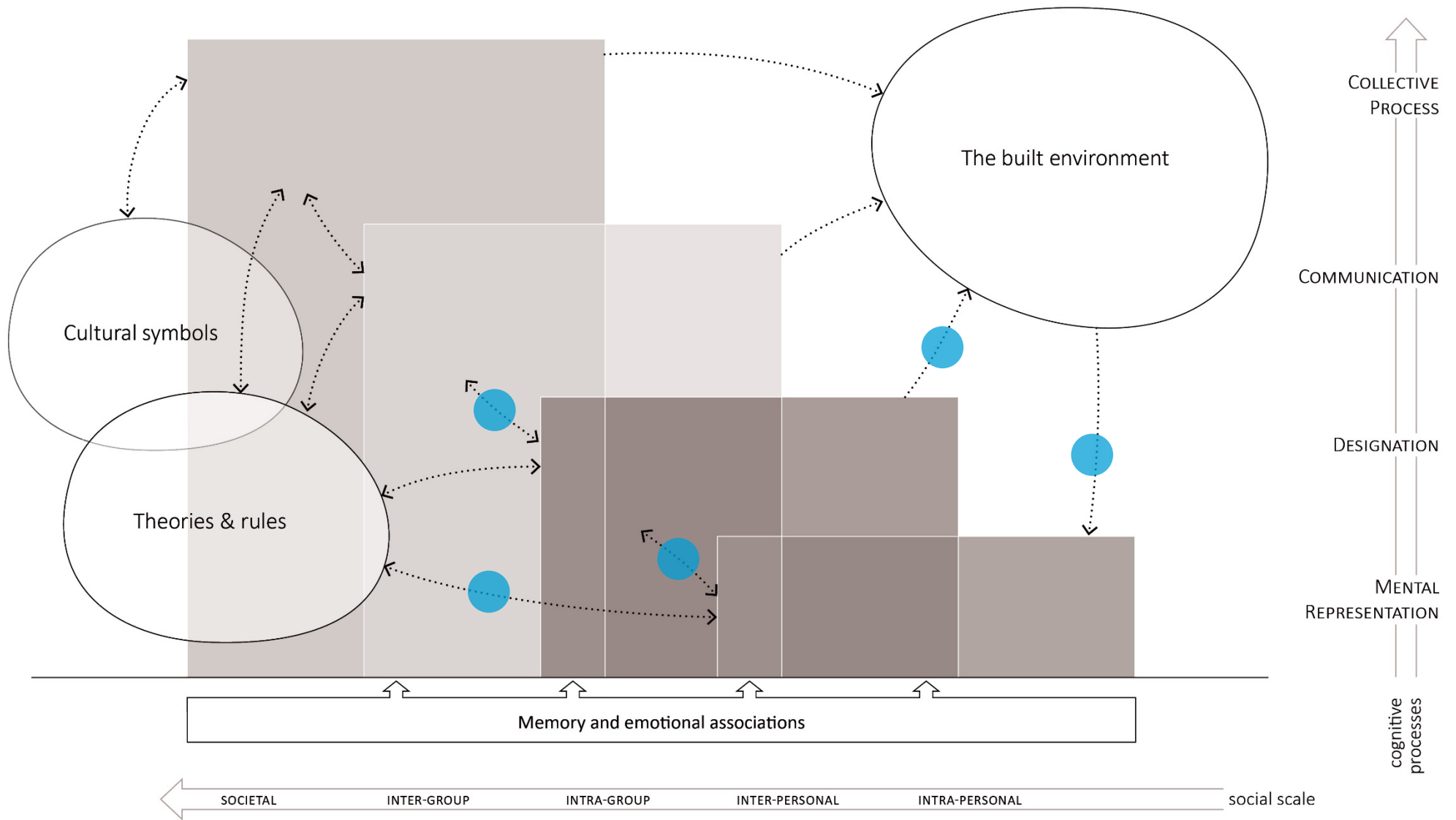
2000S DECLINE OF NATIONAL PLANNING



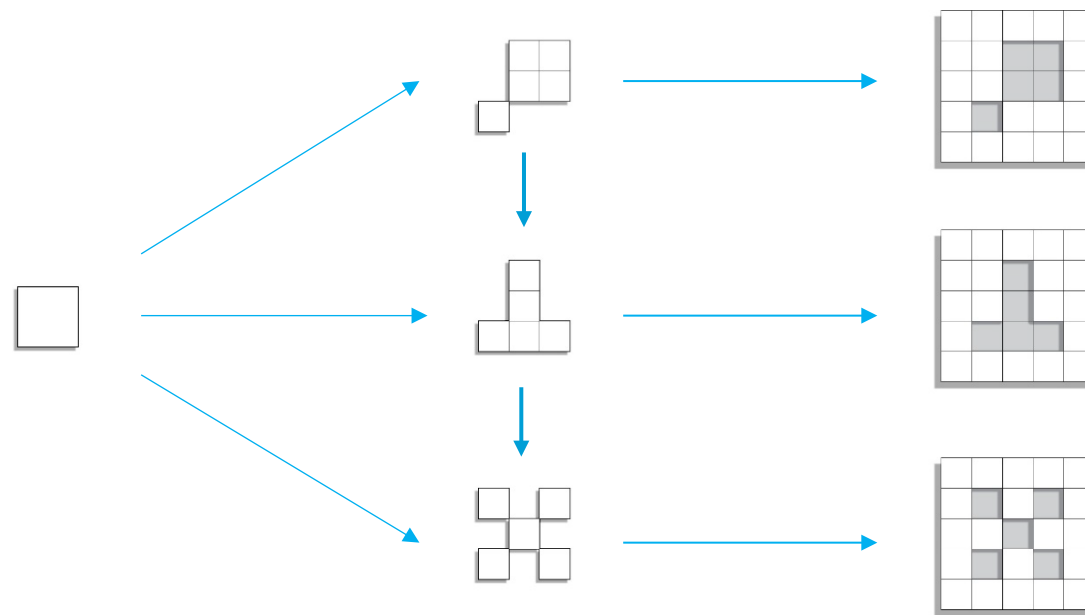
DESIGN CYCLE

Capelse Put by Frits Palmboom, 1981





*Design creativity is not just about generating ideas from our own direct experiences, but also **appropriating** and **transforming** existing ideas.*



Expe- rience

Addressing practical perspectives as
experience of theoretical work.

Interpretation

Find out the **implications** and **opportunities** of M-As by giving them context.



The human body metaphor
in urban metabolism
Rotterdam Circular Economy Conference (2014)



Rotterdam as Islands/Floes

- **Islands**—*isolation: design for accessibility*
- **Floes**—*homogeneous, segregated parts: modify the dividing structure*
- **Archipelago**—*diverse, complementary parts: harmonious interaction*

Chap. 4 WORKING WITH M-A

Interpretation

Find out the implications and opportunities of M-As by giving them context.

Analysis

Dealing with complex cases: a series of paradigms for reflection on & in action.

inherited.



What *source* analogues does each designer tend to use?

Interpretation

Find out the implications and opportunities of M-As by giving them context.

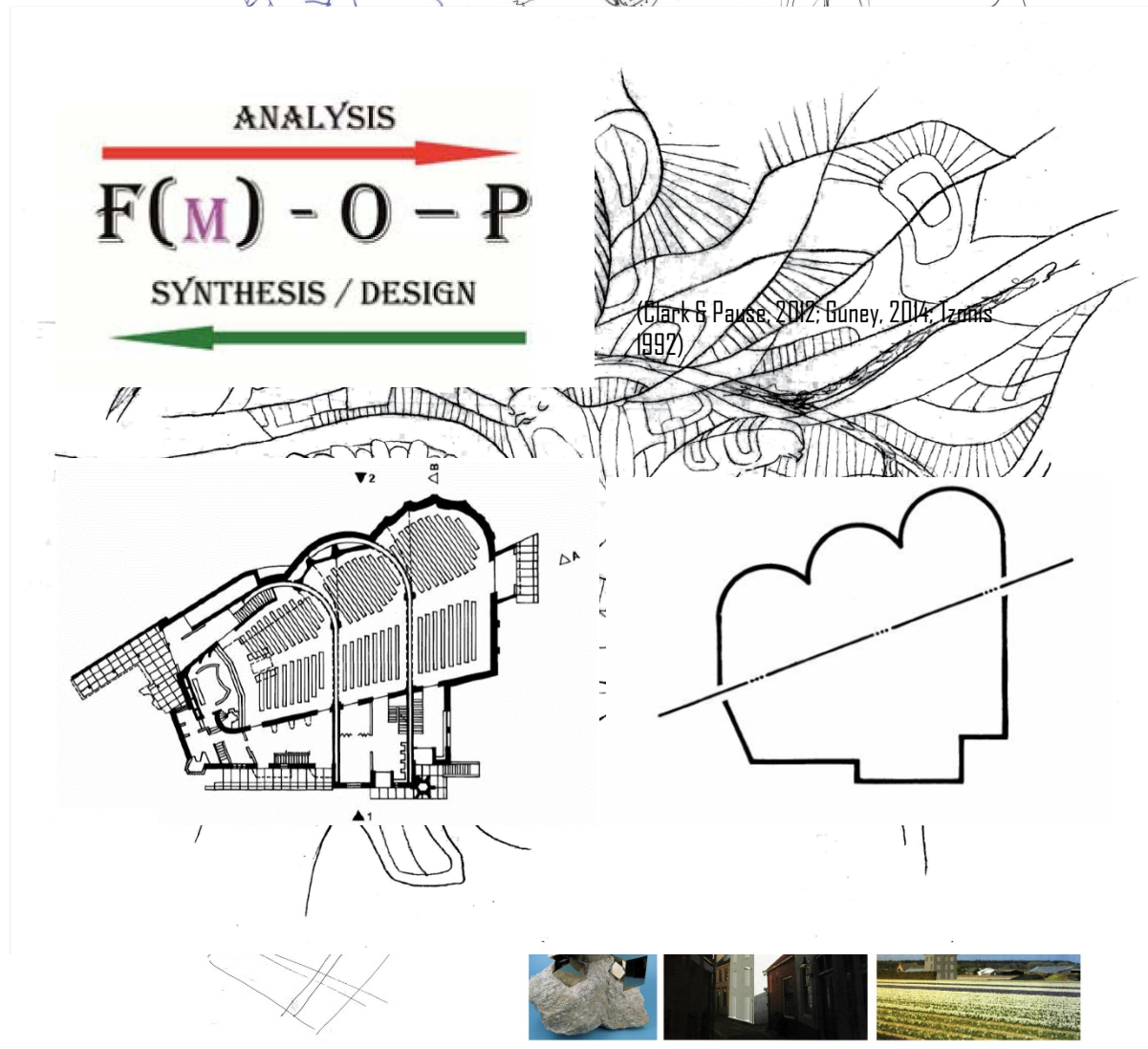
Analysis

Dealing with complex cases: a series of paradigms for reflection on & in action.

Making

Reference patterns for inspiration and self-reflection.

Method/system for routine analogies
Playing with the *limits of common sense*



One way or another, we all have to deal with M-A thinking.

Education should *not just teach, but teach about*. It needs to explain the phenomena, and present the possibilities.

What questions can be answered by a course in M-A, based on this research?

Why is M-A thinking practised in urbanism?

How does it meet the various needs in urbanism?

What characteristics do the M-As of different roles have?

How to synthesise knowledge in correspondence to phenomena with M-A?

How to interpret descriptive M-As and develop them into design intentions?

What are the general focuses in schemas of urban designers/planners?

How do they develop and use them?

How to interpret cross-disciplinary concepts critically and find out their limits of validity?

How to synthesise information in correspondence to design/planning intention?

What historical lessons do we have on (un)anticipated societal outcome caused by M-A interpretation?

How are M-As transformed to support various cognitive processes?

Why is M-A thinking practised in urbanism?

How does it support design, planning and theorisation?

What characteristics do M-As have?

What cognitive patterns underlie their differences?

Implications for our evaluation of intellectual works, our focus in education,
and the way technology should support us.