

PHD PROJECT

THE LANDSCAPE OF POSSIBILITIES

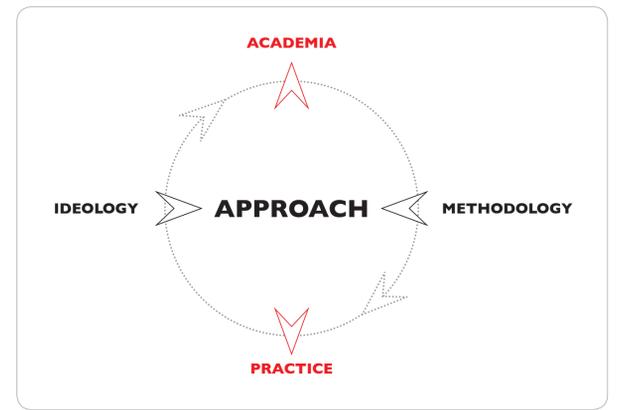
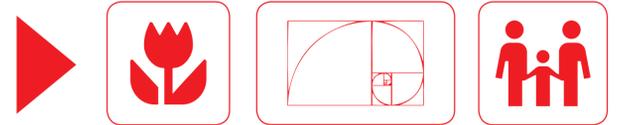
Exploring landscape urbanism in Denmark and its practicality in relation to the Danish urban production system



This PhD project explores the orientation towards landscape and the landscape architecture practice in contemporary urban planning and design.

The project focuses on the landscape-orientated approach to urban design, often referred to as landscape urbanism, in relation to its Danish practitioners and the Danish urban production system.

By framing the underlying theories (ideology and methodology), analysing trend-setting Danish planning projects applying landscape and natural processes as vectors for design (Danish practice), investigating and evaluating the implementation process (municipal and local plans), it is the intention to frame and discuss the problems and potentials of conceiving and processing the city as a landscape within Danish urban context and if landscape urbanism is practicable in relation to the Danish urban production system, at all.



HYPOTHESES

SUSTAINABILITY

Traditional urban design has typically relied on top-down strategies, regulations, and policy to dictate manifestation, whereas landscape-orientated urban planning/design employs a more dynamic and site-orientated approach, where the dominant forces influencing the planning are landscape features and natural processes.

Due to its careful contextual considerations and focus on site-readings, it is plausible that a landscape-orientated approach to urban design can infuse the traditional Danish urban production system with alternative and possibly more sustainable and environmentally sound planning principles.

Is landscape urbanism theory present (at all) in the minds of Danish practitioners when designing landscape-orientated planning proposals? Is landscape urbanism purely an "academic framework" for discussing the contemporary city? What are the practitioners' incentives for approaching urban planning and design by the landscape, if the knowledge of landscape urbanism theory is not present in the Danish practices?

Does a landscape-orientated and site-dependent approach to urban planning/design provide a more sustainable model for Danish urban planning? How to define sustainable urban planning?

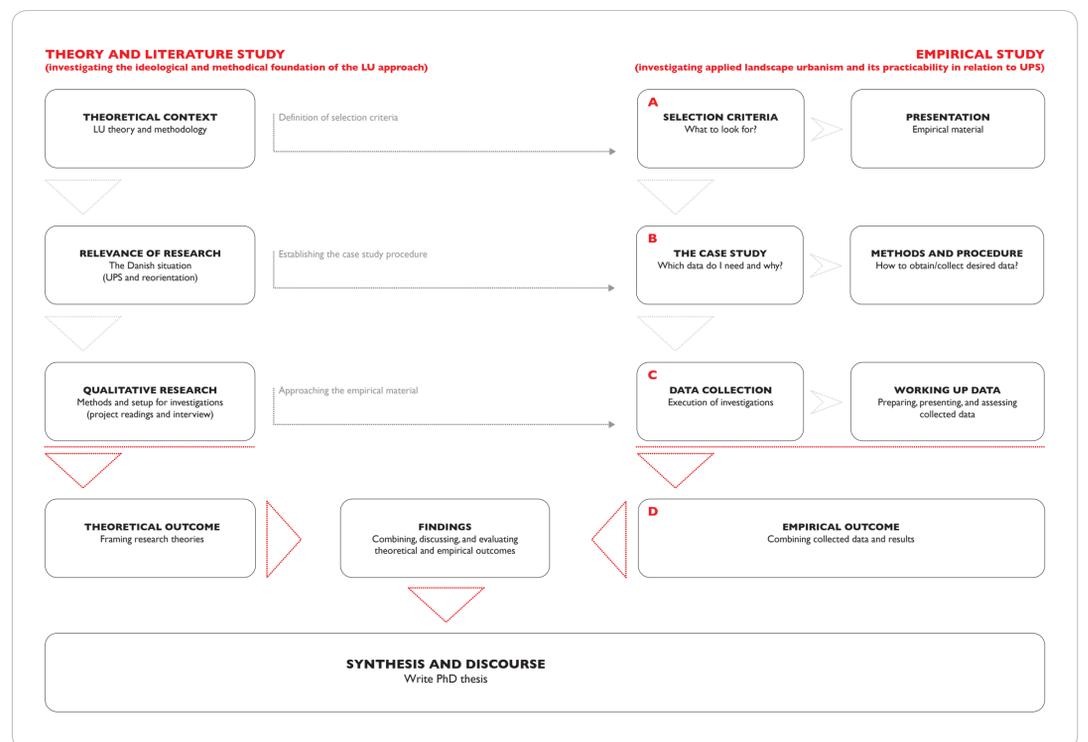
THEORIZING ON PRACTICE_VICE VERSA?

Landscape urbanism can be traced to the (postmodern) critiques of modernist architecture and urban planning and it has its own "theory" and key theorists. Landscape urbanism (eco-urbanism, green urbanism etc.) theory is based on a "research by design" and "design by research" approach and the majority of the key theorists in landscape urbanism are also practicing urban planners or landscape architects (e.g.: Corner (Field Operations), Sieverts (S.K.A.T), Girot (Atelier Girot), Koolhaas (OMA/AMO), Geuze (West 8), etc.); As such, landscape urbanism theory is linked to the urban planning and design practice.

FRAMEWORK



PROJECT KEY



PHD COURSE

PHILOSOPHY & AESTHETIC_AAU 28th-29th of January 2013

I tend to call my research an argued (by theory) narrative about a specific urban planning and design approach (landscape urbanism), which is illustrated by specific urban planning projects (the case studies) and analysed on a qualitative basis (subjectivity) in order to give insight and contribute to the on-going discussion on the contemporary city and its processing (postulated conclusions). Cf.: Archer, 1995, p. 8.

ABOUT RESEARCH

I characterize my research as "research about practice" seen in the light of a given urban planning/design theory; thus, one of my greatest challenges is to establish a link between the ideology and the practicing of the theory since my investigations so far (qualitative research interviews) has shown no knowledge/or interest in "landscape urbanism" theory among the urban planners proposing landscape orientated urban planning/design projects! Is it two separate phenomenon or..?

I see this duality as typical for the designer/architect; there is a given theory/codec but he/she does not feel obligated to follow the principles of a theory when designing! Choices can often be argued as more "aesthetic" (the sovereignty of the designer). A "research through practice" pitfall?

Literature: Archer, Frayling, Friedman

SUSTAINABILITY AND ATMOSPHERE

Sieverts (2012): '[...] skønhed er en af de vigtigste ting for en bæredygtig by. Hvis omgivelserne ikke er smukke eller meningsfulde, tager folk ikke hensyn til det og udviklinger derfor ikke nogen ansvarsfølelse [...] En anden ting er det direkte kropslige og kinæstetiske forhold til deres by [...] Den bæredygtige by handler i mindre grad om byens hardware, og i højere grad om adfærd i byen og hvordan folk behandler deres by. Den bæredygtige by har noget at gøre med adfærd, vaner og et simpelt regelsæt til at retningsgive (og uddanne) folk til at handle og agere på en bæredygtig måde.'

See: www.dac.dk/da/dac-cities/baeredygtige-byer

In contemporary urban planning/design, it is notable that the increased focus on sustainability seems to have resulted in an unfortunate orientation towards solving specific problems (technical solutions, CO2-neutrality, local rainwater drainage (LAR), etc.) without considering the spatial qualities; To some extent, it appears that the site and its natural processes are neglected in the name of sustainability, which is somehow paradoxical. In the quotation by Sieverts, the sustainable city is linked to "beauty" and to the "bodily" experience of the city; this opens up for the discussion of sustainability in relation to sensuousness and atmosphere, which I consider more promising for designing liveable and lively cities for the future.

Literature: Sieverts, Albertsen, Böhme, Jantzen

