

The background of the cover is an aerial photograph of a city, likely Helsinki, with a rainbow color gradient overlaid. The colors transition from blue at the top, through green and yellow, to orange and red at the bottom. The city's street grid and building footprints are visible in white and light grey.

UNDERSTANDING GREEN URBAN LANDSCAPE

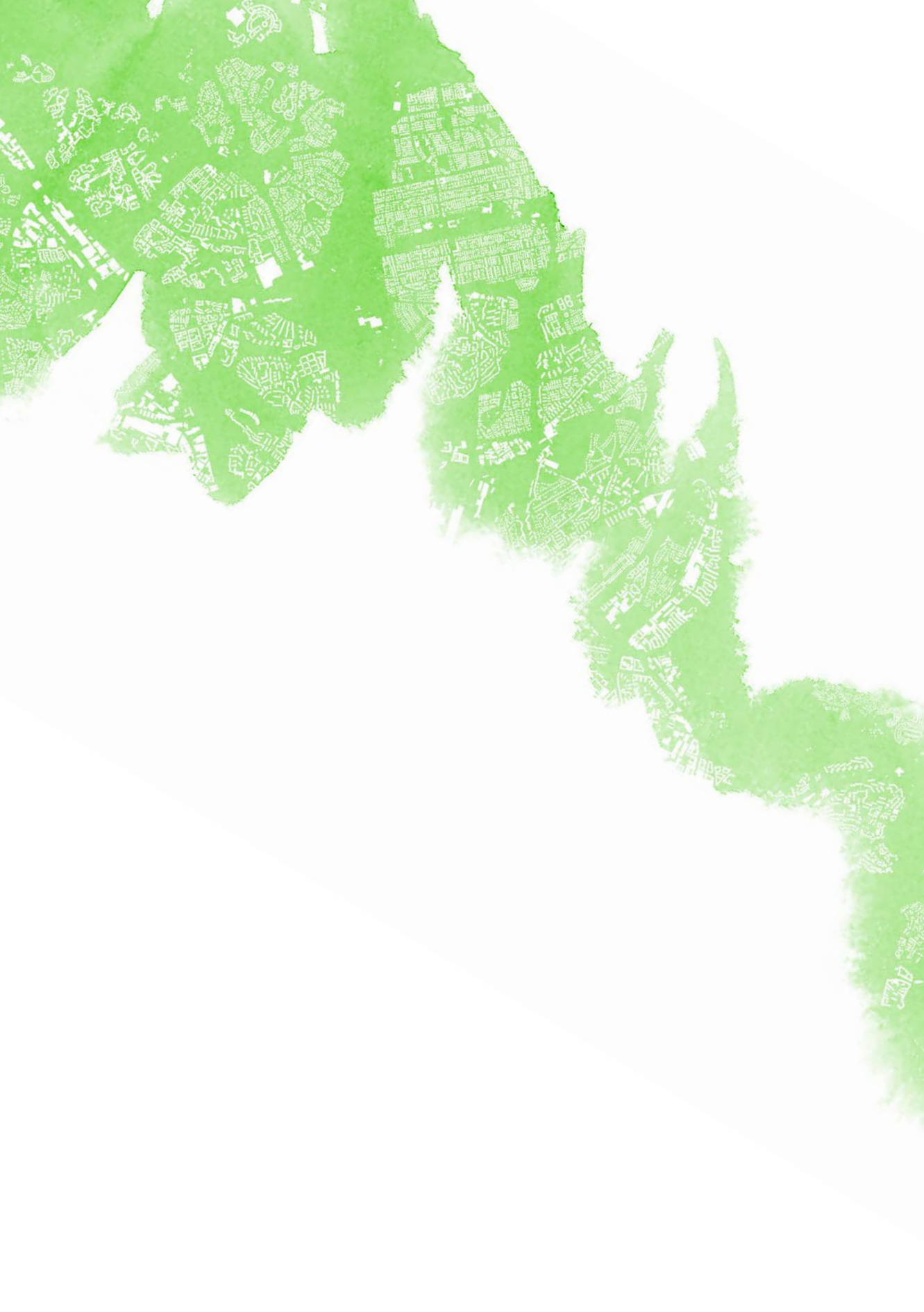
A Phenomenological Approach

Maria R. Jaakkola



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Understanding Green Urban Landscape
– *A Phenomenological Approach*



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Abstract

Understanding Green Urban Landscape — A Phenomenological Approach

The research grows out of an interest in green landscape in cities. The role of personal experience in shaping values is another important starting point. The aim is to understand green urban landscape profoundly, as multilayered totalities, in order to plan and design landscapes more empathetically.

The dissertation explores and develops ways that phenomenology can inform landscape analysis. Green urban landscape is explored in a cross-disciplinary manner using multiple methods. The ways to provide research material include arts-based research, analyses of the places' design history and the results of a map-based public survey. The research makes use of phenomenology as a theoretical frame of reference and explores well-known green areas systems as case examples, primarily in Boston and Helsinki.

To support a comprehensive understanding of landscape, the research introduces a phenomenology-inspired analysis framework. The analysis framework illustrates how phenomenological ideas, concepts and methods can be used in analyzing landscape, systematizing the exploration of its elements. The iteration of the framework illustrates the dimensions of landscape that different narratives make visible, seeking to capture the essential in these green sequences.

The analysis framework exposes the invisible that lies under and beneath the visible, and the interplay between them. The analysis draws primarily on the concepts and approaches introduced by Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, as well as their later interpreters, assuming that the essential in the analyzed places will reveal itself as a result. For instance, processes of becoming are essential elements in the interpretive interface between the visible and invisible in terms of landscape, as well as the research itself, manifesting both the development and iteration of the analysis framework and the added understanding of the particular case example landscapes.

The approach presented in the research, informed and inspired by phenomenology, seeks to recognize the multidimensional and multilayered character of landscape as fully as possible, acknowledging subjective experiences as intrinsic parts of landscapes' narratives. The approach considers the multisensory experience and embraces multidisciplinary in interpretation. The research contributes to the theory of landscape architecture by providing a starting point for holistic and empathetic landscape analysis, planning and design. As such, it adds to and complements the range of traditional methods of landscape analysis. Simultaneously, it ends up describing some particular, value-laden green urban landscapes as experienced places.

Tiivistelmä

Fenomenologinen lähestymistapa vihreän kaupunkimaiseman ymmärtämiseen

Tutkimuksen perustana on kiinnostus kaupunkien vihreää maisemaa kohtaan. Toisena keskeisenä lähtökohtana on henkilökohtaisen kokemuksen merkitys suunnittelunäkemyksiä määrittävien arvojen muodostumisessa. Tutkimus pyrkii ymmärtämään vihreää kaupunkimaisemaa syvällisesti, monitasoisina kokonaisuuksina, sen eläytyvämmän suunnittelun pohjaksi.

Tavoitteena on tutkia ja kehittää tapoja, joilla fenomenologia voi rikastaa maiseman analysointia. Vihreää kaupunkimaisemaa tarkastellaan tieteiden välisesti ja monimenetelmäisesti. Taideperustainen tutkimus täydentää mm. suunnitteluhistorian kuvaamista ja asukaskyselyn tuloksia tiedonkeruumenetelminä. Tutkimuksessa hyödynnetään fenomenologiaa teoreettisena viitekehystenä ja tarkastellaan tapausesimerkkejä tunnetuista viheraluejärjestelmistä pääasiassa Bostonissa ja Helsingissä.

Jotta maisemaa voisi ymmärtää mahdollisimman kokonaisvaltaisesti, tutkimus esittää tueksi fenomenologialähtöisen maiseman analyysikehikon. Analyysikehikolla osoitetaan miten fenomenologian ideoita, käsitteitä ja menetelmiä voidaan käyttää maiseman analysoinnissa ja systematisoida sen eri elementtien käsittelyä. Kehikko rakentuu tavoittaakseen olennaisen, kun eri ulottuvuudet näissä viheralueketjuissa tulevat näkyviksi erilaisten narratiivien eli kertomusten avulla.

Analyysikehikko tuo esiin näkymättömän näkyvän alla ja havainnollistaa niiden välistä, yhteen kytkeytynyttä vuorovaikutusta. Analyysi perustuu pääasiassa Husserlin, Heideggerin ja Merleau-Pontyn sekä näiden myöhempien tulkitsijoiden käsitteisiin ja lähestymistapoihin olettaen, että olennainen näistä paikoista paljastuu analyysin tuloksena. Esimerkiksi joksikin tulemisen prosessit ovat olennainen osa niin maiseman näkyvän ja näkymättömän rajapintaa kuin itse tutkimustakin, ja ne ilmentävät sekä analyysikehikon kehittymistä että tapausesimerkkimaisemien lisääntyvää ymmärtämistä.

Tutkimuksen esittämä fenomenologialähtöinen ja kyseisen filosofian innoittama lähestymistapa pyrkii ymmärtämään mahdollisimman täydesti maiseman moniulotteisen ja monikerroksisen luonteen tunnistamalla henkilökohtaisen kokemuksen arvon osana maiseman tarinaa. Lähestymistapa ottaa huomioon moniaistisen kokemuksen ja hyödyntää monitieteisyyttä tulkinnassa. Tutkimus osallistuu maisema-arkkitehtuurin teorian diskurssiin tarjoamalla lähtökohdan kokonaisvaltaiselle ja eläytyvälle maiseman analysoinnille ja suunnittelulle ja täydentää näin perinteisiä analyysimenetelmiä. Samalla se kuvailee eräitä vihreitä kaupunkimaisemia monia arvoja sisältävinä, koettuina paikkoina.

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Foreword

The characteristics of good, livable places have been of interest to me since the beginning of my career as a landscape architect and city planner, almost three decades ago. I believe that access to pleasurable experiences in the living environment plays an essential role in the quality of life. These experiences can come in many forms, but there is a particular kind - the kind that involves the glimmer of water, the fall colors of foliage or the deep blue of skies. I am firmly convinced that the kind of experience of beauty that landscapes, especially the natural world, evoke has no equal. From a tree seen through your bedroom window to rocky shorelines and neighborhood parks, experiences of nature may potentially be accessible everywhere, but are sometimes barely noticed. There is only the feeling of something missing when it is no longer there. Contact with living things, tinged by the consciousness of our own belonging to the organic realm, and finally, our dependence on their well-being for our own survival, evokes a very special kind of rootedness.

Green areas systems as part of the totality of a city's constitution have intrigued me throughout my career. The 'density limit for good life,' the balance between green and built-up areas, seems to me a key factor in making livable, functional, aesthetically and experientially pleasurable cities. The way open space is organized is essential - perhaps even more than its mere quantity. The diversity and experiential quality of public open spaces is not insignificant - where they are located and what they are like, if you find your way to them, and if you find them attractive enough to visit them. If there is no way to get to these places safely by foot or by bicycle in a pleasurable environment, it is almost like they didn't exist. Whenever I was living in other cities for a lengthy period of time, I missed the possibility to run from my doorstep in Helsinki along gravel paths in a historic park to reach the waterfront, and the expanse of the open sea with my feet touching the ice-worn bedrock warmed by the sun. I missed things that make manifest the qualities of the green and recreational network in our everyday experience and cocreate our existential foothold.

I am finalizing this dissertation for the first proofreading at a time of the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected everybody's life. A visible effect is that green areas, open space, urban forest and waterfronts - in other words the green and recreational system - has been in great demand as a place for escaping the circumstances of confinement when all other services are unattainable, and the density of cities appears as a threat rather than an asset. Exceptional situations make manifest the importance of having an accessible,

interconnected and diverse system of green and blue in the urban context, providing experiences of beauty and fulfillment where people can recreate and feel grounded in times of stress.

Another way of being in the world for me, for even longer than landscape architecture or city planning, has been to observe and interpret the surrounding world in creative forms, painting, drawing, writing and more. This silent action is communication of its own kind and a balancing act, keeping me tuned in to the world and myself. In my life's fabric, making art, music and landscape architecture are entangled together as a spiral, a fruitful dialogue with cross-cutting moments in time and space. Perhaps, for that reason, I also turn to writers that emphasize the interplay of different approaches as well as holistic and multi-layered, complex explanations of the world.

My background as a practitioner in landscape architecture and urban design and planning, with another career as an artist with never-ending explorations into various media, cannot fail to affect the experiential window through which any research finding is filtered. Now past my mid-career, I am grateful for having been able to do many of the things a landscape architect can do, from designing implemented parks and squares to drawing up city plans and strategies for the green environment, consulting, holding public office, teaching and beyond. Now I want to make my contribution to landscape architectural theory from another perspective, that of phenomenological philosophy. Hoping to combine the detached but comprehensive view of a planner, the curious mind of an explorer and the involved sensitivity of an artist, widely traveled with a watercolor block, I embarked on another journey to find something that is true about some specific places on earth - something analytical yet poetic to help understand them better.

The dissertation has come into being in a lengthy process, on and off alongside daily work and other endeavors, as a journey guided by interest and intuition, an exploration of places and texts. It consists of elements that are connected in various serendipitous ways. Circling through arts, sciences and humanities, it was embraced by the mother of all arts, theater - a performance on earth under the sky that led into the wrapping up of the thoughts that I had thought along the way.

I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to the following for making my explorations possible: the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard University in the academic year of 2014-2015 as well as the earlier scholarships from Helsinki University of Technology for the academic year 2000-2001 and six months in 2004, the Foundation for Aalto University Science and Technology (Teknillisen korkeakoulun tukisäätiö) 2000-2001 for studies abroad, the University of Virginia for receiving me as an independent student in the academic year 2000-2001, Finnish Cultural Foundation (Uusimaa Regional Fund) 2004, City of Helsinki research scholarship 2005 and City of Espoo travel grant in 2002. I am truly grateful for the support from Maiju ja Yrjö Rikalan puutarhasäätiö, Aalto

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I want to thank most warmly all the people who have supported my explorations and taken the time to read my thoughts and discuss them. Above all I thank the following for their understanding and patience: my main advisor Mira Kallio-Tavin for her supportive guidance and sensitivity, my other advisor Marketta Kyttä for her valuable advice and listening, and my supervisor Ranja Hautamäki for her insightful views and determination, as well as my examiners Pauline von Bonsdorff and John Wylie, also my opponent, whose invaluable guidance helped me reach the finish line. There are, in addition, numerous others throughout the years, to whom I am truly grateful for their contribution in this seemingly endless endeavor. Due to the timeline of the process, I cannot list them all, but they include prof. Reuben Rainey, Beth Meyer and Tim Beatley at the University of Virginia, Maija Rautamäki and Tom Simons, Anita Berrizbeitia and Maggie Janik at Harvard University, Juanjo Galan (trust the process), Paula Kyrö, Linda Ciesielski, Jeb Sharp, Janet Silbernagel, Laura Muukka and Arto Haapala, among many others - and finally, my parents and family, Petri, M. and all the rest of the people who believed in me. Better late than never.

In Helsinki, on my 50th birthday, 2020





The background of the page is an aerial photograph of a city grid, overlaid with a large, abstract, blue and white graphic that resembles a stylized cloud or smoke. The city grid is visible in the bottom-left and top-left corners, while the abstract graphic dominates the right and top-right areas.

1. Exploring landscape in phenomenological terms

This chapter aims to lay the ground for the study's purpose, and to present the scope and methods as well as the author's viewpoint in relation to the field of research. The key concepts for green urban landscape are explored and established, as a background for their application and further reflection through the theoretical frame of reference in chapter 2. The utilized methodology is discussed in the light of the research aims and the research process.

1.1 Introduction to the purpose of the study

This study emerges from the author's belief in the beneficial effects of green and blue environments, and in the importance of personal experience in shaping one's worldview and values. These values, for their part, define the actions of individuals and institutions. The importance of green environments for human wellbeing has been shown in numerous studies (Ulrich 1984; Tyrväinen et al. 2007; Tyrväinen & Korpela 2009; Hanski et al. 2012; Tyrväinen et al. 2014; Grahn et al. 2003, 2010; Hartig 2010; Africa 2015; Pasanen et al. 2018). The healing effects are both mental and physical. In addition to green environments and nature, the blue dimension, rivers, waterfronts, etc., also enriches the experience and adds to the quality of life in cities (France 2003; Schneider 2009).

The study aims to add a contribution to the ways green urban landscapes can be analyzed and understood. In order to plan them with more sensitivity to the experiences they evoke, new approaches are needed. I am particularly interested in approaches that consider all the aspects that contribute to the appearance and atmosphere of the urban landscape, not only the evident but also the hidden and concealed.

When experiencing public open space as pleasurable or high quality, one's image of a city's identity is influenced and its attractiveness is likely to increase. According to my experience, green urban landscape plays an important



■ Figure 1. "A park a day keeps the doctor away." Illustration by the author 2015.

role in the identity and experience of a city.¹ For that reason, the study focuses particularly on green areas as designed entities, however bearing in mind their context as part of a city's urban landscape and the society that produced them. To design for livable cities, the understanding of causal connections through well-informed analysis is necessary. This includes analyzing the landscape context and the green structure, from the systemic as well as the experiential point of view. Planning and designing cities is often approached in quantitative terms, as questions to be resolved with measurable data. It is necessary to complement the research with methods that can take into account the experiential realm, the way we react to urban surroundings with our senses and bodies.

Based on the author's experience in praxis, this study relies on the observation that the traditional planning and design views of urban landscapes might not always take into account the ways the end user eventually experiences them. Similarly, there are identifiable gaps between the reality that senses give information on, and the conceptual constructs and ideas that seek to describe that reality. To bridge the disconnects, ways of understanding landscape are explored in the study, aiming to make connections between various disciplines and approaches. Landscape, especially urban landscape, with its multiple layers, is a complex concept and phenomenon, and requires multiple methods, approaches and viewpoints to be thoroughly studied. For that reason, various narratives and research methodologies are used in the study.

The methodology is mostly inspired by phenomenology, but also relies on other methods that make use of intuition and personal involvement, in order to gain new knowledge of how to analyze and understand green urban landscape. For instance, Arts-Based Research (Leavy 2018), which examines phenomena outside the arts with artistic methods, by making art, acts as one of the inspirations. Art in many forms can act as a sensory activator, a catalyst, in the experiencing of spaces and places. It can provide ways of representing reality or one's perception and/or the interpretation thereof, and it can be a form of exploration.

Some layers of understanding are more obvious and some require knowledge to be perceived. Some experiences are shared and some individual. Experience is universal and subjective at the same time, a combination of particular/singular/subjective and common/plural/objective. For instance, a tree provides shade for everyone, but the quality of the experience of that shade

¹ It is difficult to imagine New York without Central Park, Washington D.C. without the Mall, Helsinki without the Esplanadi or Munich without the Englischer garten, just to name a few. When participating as the Helsinki city delegate in European Urban Landscape Partnership network in 2006, the researcher conducted a mini survey with the partners from different cities to find out that they commonly found a public space the most important identifying factor for their city. For the same questions, asked of students at the University of Virginia during a lecture in 2014, a public space or a green area came up in the responses.

depends on the circumstances and the observer. Most of us smell the scent of a rose but only some prefer it to other flowers.

It became evident during the course of the research that a philosophy and set of concepts such as phenomenology might provide concepts and tools to understand all these aspects, based on the emphasis of phenomenological writers on personal experience and multisensory sensitivity to the surrounding world. Living a landscape, trying to imagine the real, human-scale, grass-roots experience of places that one aims to create, is an important principle for a landscape architect in practicing the profession. A conscious designer mind-set focuses on the experience of places for their users. For the sake of its characteristics that respond to a 'place and people -sensitive' design approach, phenomenology is used as a theoretical frame of reference in the study.

The main reasoning for the study is a feedback loop to the makings of better planning and design for the environment, which presuppose decisions that are grounded in praxis and theory alike. They should be visionary, well-informed and conscious - not driven solely by personal preferences or the limits of our own knowledge and imagination, but based on a wider understanding of the landscapes and the people in them. In this study, an increased understanding of the essential in urban landscapes and their experience, is aimed for. Sensitivity to this experience is key in making better places.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 System and place, (dis)connected?

This dissertation aims, as established in the previous chapter section, to narrow the gap that seems to exist between the common approach in planning, where cities are looked at as systems or urban structures, and the more involved view of the living environment as an experienced landscape and a site-specific phenomenon. While acknowledging the difficulty in integrating, for instance, the systemic green infrastructure approach with concepts such as 'place' or 'experience,' it is maintained that these could be forged into a consistent whole that would add to the understanding of landscapes, especially urban and green ones. The gap might be filled by better understanding and making visible connections between the contextual understanding and subjective experience of a specific place. In order to integrate these realms, there is a need to communicate the interlaced entity consisting of what can and cannot be perceived by the human senses - in other words, that which the common language identifies as the invisible and the visible, and how they might comprise each other.

An example from public transit may shed light on the system-place gap: a route map of bus lines can give an impression of a comprehensive service, but it is only the experience of the so-called end user that actually defines whether the service really is successful in serving its purpose. Whether or not people

experience the public transit service as useful and would prefer it to a private car depends on how often the buses run, if they know when the next one will arrive, if they feel safe waiting at the bus stop and taking the bus, sitting in it, etc. In the same way, an entity of a blue-green network may appear interconnected and extensive on a map, and the conceptual entities logical in a designer's head, but does the entity make sense to the end user and give extra value to the experience – do these realms connect?

Another gap waiting to be filled is methodological and theoretical, but is however connected to what is described above. Some approaches are more appropriate than others for understanding experience, and phenomenological and hermeneutic methods are often used (Perttula 2008; Toikkanen & Virtanen 2018). A great deal has been written about architecture and phenomenology (Norberg-Schulz 1980, 1983, 1996; Pallasmaa 1986, 1996; Perez-Comez 1993; von Bonsdorff 1998), but not so much about the encounters between landscape architecture and phenomenology, how their interplay might position itself in the realm of research and how phenomenology could be used in analyzing landscape. Wylie (2013, p. 128) sets a recent example of a definition of landscape from a phenomenological perspective, arguing that landscape and phenomenology are conjoined.²

Phenomenology as a tradition of thinking and understanding is concerned with the multifarious relationships between culture and nature, and the concept of landscape stems from “phenomenological modes of thinking” (Wylie 2013, p. 128). In cultural geography, the phenomenological approach as “landscape phenomenology” (Wylie 2007) has re-emerged as an antidote to the idea of landscape as a “way of seeing” (e.g. Cosgrove 1984) and traditional dichotomies. The approach defines landscape primarily in terms of embodied practices of dwelling, where self and landscape are entwined and emergent (Wylie 2007, p. 14) and aiming to offer “something different from both empirical and discursive studies of landscape” (Wylie 2007, p. 139).

When the researcher started exploring phenomenology in the 1990s, there wasn't much research around about what phenomenology might mean to the discipline of landscape architecture, and little about landscape and phenomenology in general, apart from Tilley's and Foster's writings (Tilley 1994; Foster 1998).³ Even now, twenty years later, although phenomenology is discussed a great deal more in the context of landscape (architecture), and referred to in most unpredictable places, no thorough research within the discipline of

² The two concepts sharing a common origin in the romantic attitudes to nature and humanity (Wylie 2013, p. 128).

³ There are, additionally, writers who embrace the phenomenological approaches and concepts in building their theory concerning landscape's phenomena, such as the anthropologist Tim Ingold (2002, pp. 154, 168-171, 244-263), whose early writings drawing on the philosophy were published in the 1990s (Ingold 1993).

landscape architecture has been conducted that explicitly expresses phenomenological inquiry as its main theme.⁴

Norberg-Schulz's *Genius loci* (1980) set one early example about looking at architecture and landscapes through a phenomenological lens. In Norberg-Schulz's thinking, however, there are traditional binaries such as landscape and settlement, keeping human-made and natural places conceptually apart, even suggesting that the term landscape be used only for natural places (Norberg-Schulz 1980, pp. 10-12, 42, 58, 170). Norberg-Schulz writes about landscape as if it were a stable backdrop for architecture, which seems too simplified, since most landscapes are mixtures of human-made and natural places, combinations of both, often indistinguishable, elements.⁵ Although his relation to natural and human-made landscape shows itself as a Cartesian dichotomy that fails to address the complex realm of urban landscape, his book remains a rare tangible example of a phenomenology-inspired approach to architecture.

Phenomenology offers a versatile and flexible theoretical background and framework to study landscape, in its aim to get to the core of things, and its inherent interest in experience, the invisible act of human consciousness. The approach presents itself as a suitable method for bridging the gap between holistic constructs and individual experience. A landscape architect's viewpoint is informed by phenomenological concepts and ideas. The study positions itself in the tradition of analyzing landscape, however also trying to bring new aspects to the discussion of the role of experience and other possible phenomenological inspirations that may connect different kinds of data in unpredictable ways and enrich the way landscapes are studied.

1.2.2 **From beauty towards landscape experience and phenomenology**

For analyzing green urban landscape as a total phenomenon, in the previous paragraph, the need was expressed to discover an approach that bridges its different dimensions, and phenomenology was outlined as part of the solution. Other reasons for turning towards phenomenology have to do with its connections with aesthetics, especially "phenomenological aesthetics" (Haapala & Lehtinen 2000; von Bonsdorff 2009; The Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences 2020), which studies the consciousness and corporeal embodiment

⁴ An example of using a phenomenological approach in landscape design theory is found in the work of the art historian Anette Freytag (2018), who also links beauty with phenomenology. Freytag is, however, focusing on practical questions of vegetation, soil and terrain rather than phenomenology as a theoretical framework, seeking to return "to the tradition of designing with nature that is focused on the well-being of people" (Freytag 2008 p. 208). According to Freytag (2018), landscape architecture and urbanism ought to take into account the interaction of humans and nature, integrate the acoustic dimension and consider "the conditions and possibilities of a landscape, and the outcome may strengthen its beauty" (Freytag 2018, p. 18, 203).

⁵ For instance, large greenways or constructed parks do not seem to fully fall into any categories.

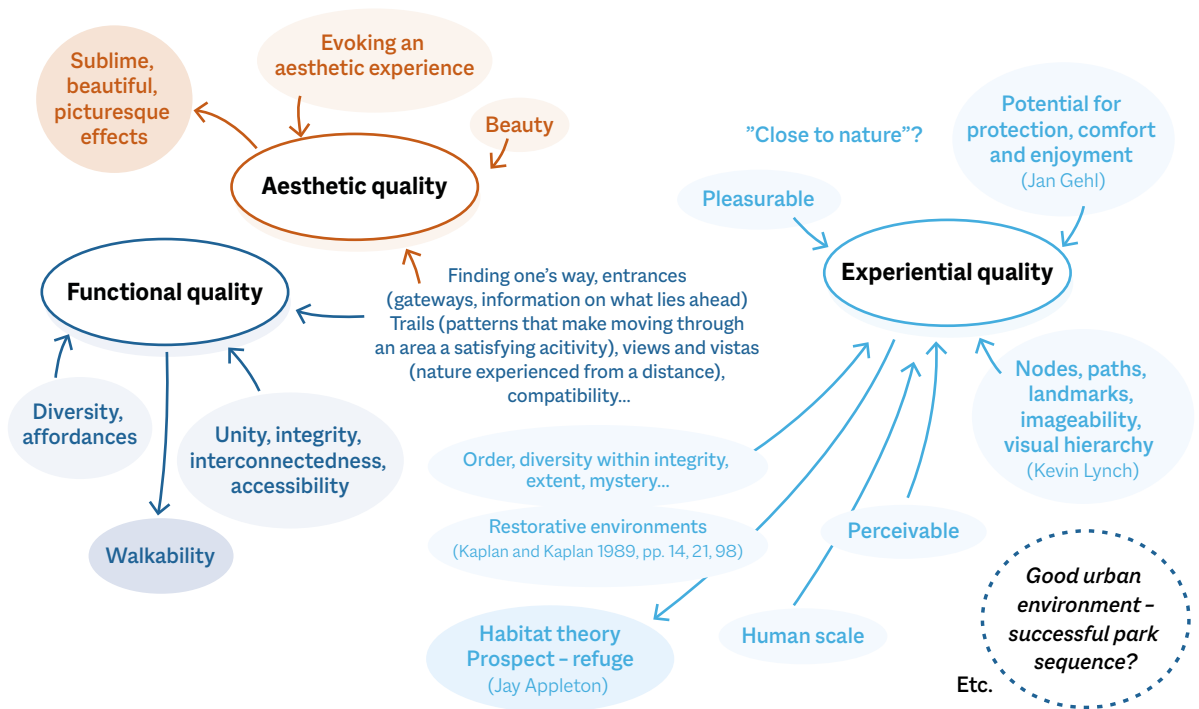
in the aesthetic experience. In the following, some ideas and starting points are outlined that have influenced the view of this research and led from the exploration of beauty and environmental quality to the discovery of the phenomenological approach.

The research started with an interest in the attractiveness of landscape – what makes a landscape an attraction as experienced by a dweller, a tourist, an occasional visitor. When trying to get to the core of attractiveness, ideas of beauty and the field of aesthetics follow. Aesthetics, which was traditionally mostly connected with artworks (Tillman & Cahn 1969; Thesleff 1977), has in the recent decades expanded to cover the phenomena of the everyday, including urban environments and landscapes (Sepänmaa 1986, 1991, 1994; Haapala 1995; Berleant 1997). Landscape architecture can be a work of art, although like architecture, not all of it deserves the title. The environment can, however, be looked at through aesthetic lenses (Sepänmaa 1981). Consequently, ideas about beauty by Plato and Aristotle and their successors in aesthetic thinking⁶ have been accompanied by modern interpretations of other positive qualifiers, such as livability or walkability in urban design (Abley 2005; Abley, Turner & Singh 2011; Livable 2020; Monocle 2020). In everyday language, we may refer to a place that draws our positive attention or that we respond to in a positive manner, as beautiful, without analyzing what that means. Besides beauty as aesthetic quality, other qualities can include dimensions such as functional, experiential or even ecological quality, referring to the characteristics of a place's ecosystem. Some characteristics of a good, livable environment are gathered into a mindmap in Figure 2.

Beauty is a characteristic of an object, but the experience of beauty requires a subject (e.g. Lammenranta & Rantala 1990), and this experience is pivotal in the perception of beauty.⁷ Reid (1785) who, according to Niiniluoto (1994), has offered the 'most beautiful' definition for beauty, states that there are two respects, in which beautiful things are similar: 1. "When beautiful objects are perceived, or even imagined, they produce a certain agreeable emotion or feeling in the mind" and 2. "this agreeable emotion is accompanied with an opinion or belief of their having some perfection or excellence belonging to them" (Reid, cited in Niiniluoto 1994, p. 2). This implies that both the

⁶ Beauty, virtue and truth were interlaced in the concept of a good work of art. Pleasure and/or benefit, fine, proper, good, appropriate were qualifiers of beauty. According to Plato, everything we experience as beautiful or pleasurable has something boundless controlled by order (Plato 26b, Sophist, cited by Thesleff et al. 1980). For Aristotle, beauty was pure and immediate pleasure by perception, a pleasure initiated by the acts of intelligence (Kaimio 1977, p. 69). Beauty evokes pleasure and/or is useful (Plato, cited in Thesleff 1977, p. 24). The organized, well-proportioned, adequately sized and easily perceptible is beautiful (Kuusamo 1989; Aristotle's Poetics 1450b35-145a5, chapter 7, cited in Kaimio 1977 p. 72). For instance, Kant describes the beautiful as the object of universal delight apart from any interest (Kant & Meredith 1911, p. 211), as awaking general and absolute pleasure (Kuusamo 1989, p. 229).

⁷ As observed, among others, by Hubbard and Kimball (1917, p. 20): "it is the pleasurable emotion which attracts our attention as the essence of beauty."



■ Figure 2. Perceived elements of quality in environment, mindmap from early research. Illustration by the author 2005.

approaches, beauty as qualities of an object and beautiful as an experienced quality, must be experienced by a human subject. In other words, the *experience* is at the core of observing beauty. Furthermore, aesthetic experience is relative, the “standards of each observer come from his own experience of the world, depend on the constitution of his own mind”... “therefore different for each observer” (Hubbard & Kimball 1917, p. 21). The more the experiencers and experiences, the more valid any conclusions on the qualities of the experienced landscapes may seem. As von Bonsdorff (1996a, p. 26) states, it is evident that in the individual act of experiencing landscape, only a portion of the qualities and potentials of the subject (or the object) are present, or in phenomenological terms, actualize. For that reason, explorations into landscape experiences as personal, as well as collective, of the self and others, are necessary in drawing a full picture of green urban landscape.

The definitions and ideas of beauty, the notions of what has been considered beautiful in each era, have been a defining element in the landscape architectural profession. The quest for the pleasurable and pleasant has been a guiding principle in designs. What, then, has been considered beautiful in a landscape? The progress of landscape gardening in 18th century Britain and consequently the Western world, which was manifest in the works of

Olmsted,⁸ among others, is closely connected with literary history (Hunt 1992 p. 75). In 18th century aesthetic theory there was vivid discussion in writings by poets, theorists, artists, garden designers and other writers on beauty and its subspecies.⁹ The characteristics of beauty were said to include at least the easily perceptible, enabling the flow of attention (Hubbard & Kimball 1917). The artist William Hogarth (1753, pp. 18-29) defined principles which “... make beauty and elegance and please and entertain the eye“ as fitness, variety (not uncomposed), uniformity, simplicity, intricacy, quantity and regularity. The qualities of beauty to the author and philosopher Edmund Burke were smallness, smoothness, gradual variation, delicacy, “colors of various hues, of low saturation and high brilliance” (Burke 1792, p. 164). Sir Uvedale Price considered the greatest beauty to be expressed in youth, health and rigor, having qualities like “smoothness and softness in the surface, fullness and undulation in the outline, symmetry in the parts, and clearness and freshness in the colour” (Price; Essay I, 9, 1794a, cited in Hipple 1957).¹⁰ Different effects evoking pleasures were to be designed into gardens.¹¹ Beauty in a landscape garden was achieved by congruity, utility - “everything that conduces to the purposes of habitation with elegance,” order, symmetry, intricacy, simplicity, variety,

8 A well-known design of Olmsted will be further explored in this study.

9 Sir Uvedale Price, Richard Payne Knight and the garden designer/early landscape architect Lancelot “Capability” Brown were particularly at the heart of the debate, as the former, promoting the Picturesque movement, criticized the pastoral style of Brown, who became known for numerous gardens such as Blenheim and Stowe (See Hunt 1992; Hipple 1957; Hubbard & Kimball 1917).

10 He also wrote that “each production of nature is most beautiful in that particular state, before which her work would have appeared incomplete and unfinished, and after which it would seem to be tending, however gradually, towards decay” (Price, Dialogue (“Introductory Essay on Beauty”) in Works, III, 203, cited in Hipple 1957, p. 205). Along these lines, landscape is probably experienced as beautiful when it seems to be complete and mature - when the trees are no longer twigs but not yet dead.

11 The *Sublime*, as the most powerful of the effects that create landscape experiences in the garden, can be achieved by being “conversant to terrifying objects without danger” (Burke, 1754, i 17, p. 102, cited in Hipple 1957). Burke describes (1792, p. 202) the sublime objects as “vast in their dimensions, ...rugged and negligent; ...dark and gloomy; ... solid and even massive”. Especially in the romantic period mountains represented a sublime character. The *Picturesque*, in turn, is defined by roughness and ruggedness (William Gilpin 1792, cited in Hipple 1957, pp. 193-194), as in gardening by neglect (Hipple 1957, p. 216) - where the uncontrolled element of nature is accepted as an integral part of the ‘performance’ (Meyer 2008) of a park. According to Price (1794) “...the effect of picturesque is curiosity; ... by its active agency [curiosity] keeps the fibres to their full, natural tone; and thus picturesqueness when mixed with either of the characters, corrects the languor of beauty, or the tension of sublimity.” Repton described the picturesque effect as one of the sixteen sources of pleasure in landscape gardening (Repton 1795, cited in Hipple 1957, p. 227), and it made the garden especially suitable for being represented in paintings, with beauty manifested in the natural world (Hipple 1957, pp. 200-215). Finally, the *Pastoral* has its origins in the Antique and the romanticizing of rural life, with its pastures, sheep and shepherds, in harmonious simplicity, pastoral scenes depicting harvests, manicured lawns with broad vistas and livestock in a tamed, beautiful and safe landscape (Arizona Art Museum 2019).



■ Figures 3 and 4. The origins for much of landscape architecture's sources of aesthetic pleasures stem from 18th century theories. These ideas have affected the design creations that are still enjoyed today. The ideas of the sublime, the pastoral and the picturesque were at the core of the English landscape garden style and have had the greatest effect on landscape architecture in general. The landscape of the steep cliffs in Normandy (Fig. 3) might evoke a sublime effect, while the gardens of Stowe by Brown (Fig. 4), represent pastoral beauty, characterized by clumps of trees, large undulating lawns and viewpoint-based design. Photos by Petri Kekäle 2013 (3) and the author 2008 (4).

novelty, contrast, continuity, association, grandeur, appropriation – “the appearance and display of extent of property” and the picturesque effect (Repton 1795, cited in Hipple 1957, p. 227). *Sublime* and *picturesque* were considered either ‘subspecies’ of beauty (William Gilpin), or fundamentally different sources of aesthetic pleasure (Burke).

The aesthetic of landscape has since diversified to include different ideas of beauty. Landscape can possess moral, knowledge-driven or functional beauty as well as aesthetic (Sepänmaa 1981, 1991). Landscape may be an idea in a perceptible form, as a design can be, or may awake pleasure as either scenery, a multisensory experience or a setting for activity. Nature’s aesthetic can be sustainable or sustaining, of enduring quality or at the same time, the sign of a sustainable landscape, although unsustainable or ecologically disastrous conditions can also be ‘beautiful’ in terms of shape or color. Hipple (1957, p. 20) quotes Addison: “we find the Works of Nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of art.” Nature imitating art and vice versa may sometimes have a hermeneutic feedback loop. Elizabeth Meyer, in turn, in her “Essay on Sustaining Beauty” (2008) argues that it will take more than ecologically regenerative designs for culture to be sustainable, and that designed, provocative landscapes are needed to make people more aware of their actions’ effect on the environment and to create agency for change. Meyer sees a role for “aesthetic environmental experiences, such as beauty” in this and believes that immersive, aesthetic experience can lead to recognition, empathy, love, respect and care for the environment (Meyer 2008, pp. 6-7). Both ecosystems and experiences are to be designed in landscape architecture and a new aesthetic recognized instead of the traditional emphasis on harmony, as



■ Figures 5 and 6. Series of paintings of a sulfur polluted lake, that “through both visible and invisible networks of influence, bring pressure to bear upon those responsible” (Lindquist 2015). Detail of the painting by Greg Lindquist, in his studio in New York. “Strange toxic beauty,” as Meyer puts it (2008) can be an inspiration for art that, at the same time, seeks to raise awareness of environmental issues. Photos by the author 2015.

sustainable beauty is particular and dynamic, and enduring beauty is resilient and regenerative (Meyer 2008, pp. 15-21).

If we were to argue that ‘nature is beautiful,’ ecological functionality would define beauty and a landscape with a purpose for the ecosystem would be beautiful. According to Sepänmaa (1981, pp. 200-203), aesthetics can be divided into normative and descriptive, where the latter has, to a great extent, replaced the former - apart from ecological aesthetics in environment and landscape architecture, where norms of the useful and appropriate, functional and healthy have in many cases taken the place of aiming at mere aesthetic pleasure. The quest for harmony in environment and landscape is largely based on the premise of harmony *with* nature, thus the aesthetic preference stems from an ethical judgment. Drawing on Aristotle, Sepänmaa also mentions *scale* (Sepänmaa 1981, p. 207) as one of the components of appropriateness in an ecological sense and thus of beauty in nature. And surely, a large enough size may be a prerequisite for certain experiences in nature, such as the ‘forest feel’ (a feeling of being in a forest, *metsäntuntu*). As Sepänmaa suggests (1981, p. 219), knowledge may deepen the aesthetic experience.¹²

In fact, as von Bonsdorff (1996a, p. 27) points out, the aesthetic experience of landscape is about how things appear to us rather than how they are, and is defined by an interactive act of experiencing, where openness and sensitivity to what is experienced, are important. The experience is openly explorative and synthesizing in character (von Bonsdorff 1996a, pp. 27-28). In other words,

¹² It may, however, also add a poignant element that turns the experience into one of sorrow rather than admiration - when the knowledge informs about harmful disturbance to natural processes, for instance.

the aesthetic experience of landscape can *contain* different kinds of perceptions and knowledge underneath. The experience of beauty and other qualities of landscape are interlaced with each other and all previous experiences and can be interpreted in phenomenological terms. Thus, something appearing to be 'natural,' for instance, might evoke similar pleasure in the experiencer to what they think they are looking at.

The discussion of beauty helps consider the different qualities that landscape may possess and the ways of evoking the various kinds of aesthetic pleasures characteristic of landscapes. These terms in the professional discussion of landscape architecture, however, have been replaced with sustainability or livability, even attractiveness, but the arguments often have their origins in the theories that affected the emergence of the English landscape garden tradition, and the well-known designs that still make up an integral part of our cities. Some examples of them in the urban setting will serve as case examples for this study. The beauty of ruggedness, expressed in the picturesque ideal, has again become appreciated when associated with landscapes' ecological values (biodiversity, ecological functionality), as well as on the other hand, the beauty of ugliness, the aesthetic awe of the chaotic urban.

Phenomenology provides, among other things, an intellectual setting for a manifold and interpretive understanding of experience. The experience of place is defined by the subject, i.e. the experiencer, the experience itself, its qualities and circumstances and finally, the object, i.e., the experienced. In the case of landscapes, the object is a place with its particular qualities, and, on the other hand, the interaction of the experiencer with that place. Place as a concept (Casey 1993; von Bonsdorff 1998) bears the connotation of site-specificity and the particular, which has inspired the phenomenological approach of this study. Therefore, the ideas and concepts are tested against some existing urban landscapes - in the following, called 'case examples', - in order to find something essential about the cases and, above all, about the way of analyzing urban green landscape.

1.2.3 **Case examples as a testing ground**

As mentioned in the previous section, for the analysis, a reference to a specific place or series of places, was needed. Ideas of beauty have defined, for their part, preferences for landscape in the era of the case examples' original coming into being. The places have transformed in time since, however, as well as their societies, which necessitates other approaches, permitted by the manifold character of the phenomenological approach. After establishing the importance of understanding the experience of beauty in landscape, the study directed itself towards a reference to real places that could exemplify the concepts. Park systems and their constituent parts are of specific interest to the study, having a scale and typology between individual parks and the planning of a city's urban fabric.

The case examples summarize some matters of professional interest for a landscape architect. They represent works of landscape architecture that symbolize the city they are in, and aim to form a chain of green areas in such a way that an experience of sequential spaces can be provided. The Emerald Necklace in Boston is one of the first interconnected chains of green areas that were intentionally designed to form a totality, central in location and designed by the famous landscape architect Frederick L. Olmsted.¹³ The case examples also represent, for their part, interpretations of natural beauty in the urban context. The English Landscape garden style was a dominant trait in garden design in the 1800s when Olmsted's best-known creations were made. Olmsted had 18th century aesthetic theory and the beauty of a landscape garden as his inspirations, especially aiming at pastoral and picturesque effects (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 34). Olmsted was also one of the first landscape designers to consciously aim at restorative experiences of landscape and nature - an important trait in the discussion of health and the environment today.¹⁴ Helsinki, in turn, is the city whose green areas system and the development thereof, the researcher is familiar with in praxis the most thoroughly of all cities. Its green network system is among the most extensive and determinately preserved in the world, and has a well-known strategic plan dating from the turn of the last century. The first designs of the original plan for the Central Park of the city (Jung 1911, 1918; Jung et al. 1988) also acted as a starting point for the strategic planning of green areas in the city.

The cases in this study that illustrate and help develop the use of phenomenology in analyzing landscape, are called 'case examples', instead of 'case studies.' The reason for this decision is based on the fact that case studies are generally identical and intended for consistent and premeditated evaluation and comparison (Yin 2014, see also section 1.5.2), whereas here cases are used as examples and specimens to illustrate some points, aiming to lead to a contribution to landscape architectural theory. The added understanding of the places or cities as such comes as a byproduct of sorts from using them as a testing ground in the process of developing analysis. The case examples are selected based on their ability to showcase elements relevant to the analysis and to bring up new aspects to enrich it. Although the case examples have certain similarities with each other, their significance is based on the study's interest in them as examples of urban landscapes rather than their comparable characteristics. It was interesting, however, to find certain similarities in

¹³ Olmsted is often considered the father of modern landscape architecture. For Olmsted, 'cultivating good taste' was an integral part of a civilized society, and landscape architecture was one method of doing that (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998).

¹⁴ In the 21st century we also finally have the means to actually study the effects of exposure to natural landscape on the human body and mind to prove his point and that of various theorists before his time.

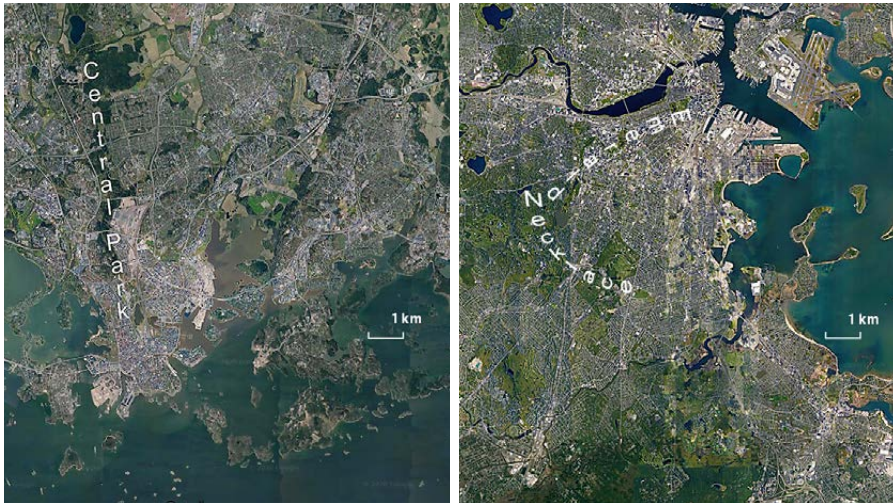
the contexts of the cities of Boston, Helsinki and even Washington D.C.,¹⁵ and the study includes some findings on the green areas of these cities. The *park systems* of Boston and Helsinki, especially some areas thereof, act as the main case examples that are studied the most. This is to emphasize a certain type of green urban landscape - that of a totality consisting of different but connected parts that were designated for recreation.

The main case examples are complemented with other references to existing places or plans when necessary to make a point about the phenomenological approach, or to illustrate points of representation or content. They include the National Mall in Washington D.C., which is also part of a comprehensive park system designed at the turn of the last century (McMillan 1901), and the Lapinlahti Hospital area, in Helsinki, which is an existing fragment of an English-style landscape garden on a peninsula, established between 1840 and 1880 (City of Helsinki 2002, 2012). These examples have some features in common, including their signature era, the tradition of landscape architecture and planning that they are attached to conceptually, and their physical situation at least partly by the water. They all have a multilayered character, which stems from their long enough history serving recreational purposes and the intensifying effect that a water element has for a green urban landscape. Although the inclusion of a water element is more or less unintentional, it is revealing, because for a green urban landscape to gain the status of being as well-known as the Emerald Necklace in Boston, the National Mall in Washington D.C. or the Central Park in Helsinki, a water element of some sort seems to be a necessity. The southernmost part of the Helsinki Central Park, the Töölönlahti Bay area, inhabits an inner-lake kind of landscape, and Lapinlahti nestles among rocks surrounded by water. The Mall in Washington D.C. has an iconic reflecting pool and major parts of the Emerald Necklace are entrained around the Muddy River.¹⁶

The experiential accounts are different in each city, and the methods of analyzing and making visible the landscapes and green systems of these cities may vary accordingly. Being a long-time resident and public official in Helsinki, the researcher had concerns about seeing behind the design views accommodated along the development of her own expertise. Hence it was necessary, for a more objective view, to include other professionals' writings as well as the results of participatory map-based questionnaires. Although it later became evident that a single experiential account might be sufficient for a

¹⁵ These three cities have around 600 000 inhabitants within the city limits, and strikingly, almost similar population densities. They all have a water element present in the city core, and a conscious and visionary early design for a park system. Helsinki and Boston are, in addition, both situated on a sea-protruding peninsula, and were urbanized mostly after the latter half of the 19th century.

¹⁶ However, the case examples could be accounted for by their differences as well, as they are included due to the dimensions or elements that they can bring to enrich the phenomenological analysis that is being conducted.



■ Figures 7a and 7b. The central areas of the main case example cities, Helsinki and Boston, and their pivotal green spaces that are used as case examples, presented in the same scale. City of Helsinki and Google Maps 2021.

phenomenological research approach, it was interesting to see the way others experience the landscape and green areas of the city that the researcher and others were planning. In Boston, the view on the areas remained free of pre-conceptions for longer, despite what was known beforehand about Olmsted’s designs, and as such more immediate.

1.2.4 **The multisensory landscape - beyond ocularcentricity**

One more reason for selecting, or rather, following and playing along with, the traits of phenomenology, has to do with the character of landscape as a phenomenon: A landscape, urban or other, is a phenomenon essentially and predominantly experienced with all the senses. The traditional approach to landscape has emphasized the visual over other senses - insomuch as to understand the very word landscape as ‘scenery,’ something that can be seen at one glance. Jacqueline Bowring (2007) writes about “sensory deprivation,” a dominance of the visual at the cost of other senses in representing landscape:

Landscape is a domain which is, arguably, necessarily attuned to the subtleties of locale, the very traces and experiences that are found in the full spectrum of the senses, the smell of place, the touch, the feeling of heat and shade, the sounds, even the taste. The phenomenological, haptic dimension of landscape is incredibly rich, yet is almost entirely edited out in many contemporary landscape designs, resulting in an impoverished connection between design and experience.

Other writers acknowledging the limits of the visual include Pellitero (2011), who emphasizes the societal and participatory aspect of landscape, as well as the character of the virtual realm to make all encounters flexible and unspecific to geographical location. However, it is important to acknowledge the limits of the virtual realm to describe landscape in a multisensory and tactile manner. In a virtual reality experience, it is, at least as of yet, impossible to recreate all the characteristics of a real-life experience. An example might be the act of picking up a pebble on a beach and throwing it in a lake to do stone skipping. The series of events and sensations where you first choose a three-dimensionally perfect, flat stone, then pick it up in your hand, feel its weight, shape and smoothness of surface in your grip, and finally whisk your hand sharply forward in a particular trajectory to make the stone recurrently jump across the surface, would be difficult to duplicate in a virtual model. Consequently, the water reacts by splashing sharply and making expanding circles that die out eventually. The whole act makes a sound characteristic of itself, resembling a light sound of snapping your finger on the water's skin. The whole event occurs with an accelerating rhythm as the stone uses the surface of the water as a platform to make its mysterious performance.

Scenery is assumed to be visual, but as a real-life phenomenon, *landscape* involves other senses in making sense of it. First of all, there is the sense of space - how we feel the space around us, its scale, the expanse and/or its boundaries. There are smells, sounds, tactile experiences of surfaces and forms, even atmosphere, if the air is moist or crisp, cold or warm. We perceive changes in the light circumstances, texture and levels of the ground, shapes of built elements and dynamics of natural ones, such as the movement of leaves or the flux of seasons manifested in many ways in nature, dying and rebirthing. The sun setting along a city street paints landscapes of light and changing realms of color and temperature, of shadow and form. We can touch earth and water, even the bedrock, feel it under our feet. We can also sense the space around us by the surrounding sounds, how near and far they appear. We even talk about soundscape¹⁷ as a sphere and realm of experience - as a defined entity extracted from all the other scapes and spaces in our minds. For instance Pallasmaa (1996) discusses the tactile and multisensory experience of architecture and landscape, and Bachelard (1983, p. 15) pays attention to the way, for instance, running water makes landscape audible. However, as Tim Ingold rightly argues (2011, pp. 135-139), the senses work together in an immersed and involved perception, with the body as the "undivided centre of movement and awareness" (Ingold 2011, p. 136), and for that reason Ingold rejects the terms soundscape or any other such expressions that seek to slice up

¹⁷ Soundscape as a term was first used by Michael Southworth (1969) in "The Sonic Environment of Cities" and followed by R. Murray Schafer (1977) in *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*.

the sensory pathways into separate realms. Consequently, it felt more natural than not, from early on, to approach the phenomena of urban landscapes with a view such as phenomenology, seeking to make use of an approach and methodology that would emphasize the role of multisensory experience, as well as bodily awareness and interpretation of place and its essential characteristics through individual perception.

1.3 Objectives and scope

The goal of this research is to add to the knowledge on *how phenomenology can inform landscape architecture*, and in so doing, contribute to the understanding of certain kinds of green urban landscapes¹⁸ as phenomena. The main concepts of phenomenology are filtered through landscape architecture's features as a design and planning discipline. Comparable waterfront cities in two continents are explored with the emphasis on particular green area entities that represent the core of their green areas systems. These are used as examples of urban landscape and place, specimens within the realm of these concepts. This is to emphasize the experiential approach as opposed to an area on a map, for which the concept 'green area' often bears connotation.

The main research question is: *How can phenomenology be utilized in analyzing and understanding green urban landscape?*

The subquestions include:

- *How can the essence of some green urban landscapes be depicted and represented, showing the visible as well as invisible elements within? How do we make visible the new knowledge gained with this analysis?*

I discuss whether such a thing as an essence of landscape exists and how it can be studied, presuming that, as a concept, it has a relationship with the identity, image and character of a city, however more profound. These concepts are explored using accounts of personal and other documented experiences of some case examples of green urban landscape, leading to the second subquestion:

- *How can we, with the help of these tangible case examples, tell a story, account an experience of a place? How do phenomenological methods come into play in doing so?*

The research aims to create a phenomenological approach and framework for analyzing landscape in a profound and multidimensional way, considering the concepts and methodologies that phenomenology provides. It is of concern to the study *how this experience and essence of a place can be made visible* with different narratives.

The research questions help to formulate the ways that new knowledge can be gained from experiential landscape and its essential characteristics.

¹⁸ The so-called green-blue sequences, see section 1.4 for key concepts.

The problematics is approached from different angles at the same time, aiming to bring together different ways of making sense of the world. One of the main approaches is inevitably that of a landscape architect, through a theoretical and practical understanding of the discipline. Another approach is an artistic one, to handle the questions as inspirations for art, and with art as a way to make sense of them. As such it is deeply personal, operating on a different level, as visual and verbal narratives. The case examples seek to demonstrate different ways to approach the questions, giving different pieces of information to deepen and widen the understanding of these places, hopefully leading into a coherent way to organize the knowledge created and brought together. The exposure is not comprehensive and does not aim to be, but seeks to illustrate some ways in which this understanding can be achieved. These approaches are complemented by qualitative and quantitative analyses of collective experiential data acquired through citizen involvement, with the help of other ways of gaining knowledge such as analyzing historic maps, texts and other documented sources such as site visits.

The study aims to both contribute to landscape architectural theory and methodology and apply them to specific examples of a particular phenomenon - defined entities of green places that are part of a city's park system, that in turn make up a specific kind of urban landscape. With this, it seeks to shed light on their essential characteristics as examples of how landscape can be studied with the help of phenomenological concepts and approaches, as described in the research questions. It is suggested that designed compositions of green and blue elements in the urban structure, such as the case examples, make up an essential part of the experience of attractive urban landscape. They are part and parcel of the urban structure of a city in its entirety, and in relation to it. However, at the same time, they are entities in themselves (in their own right) that also deserve to be studied separately from their surroundings. With the help of these case examples the study aims to formulate a framework for phenomenology inspired analysis, based on the exploration of central concepts of phenomenology as well as landscape analysis and planning.

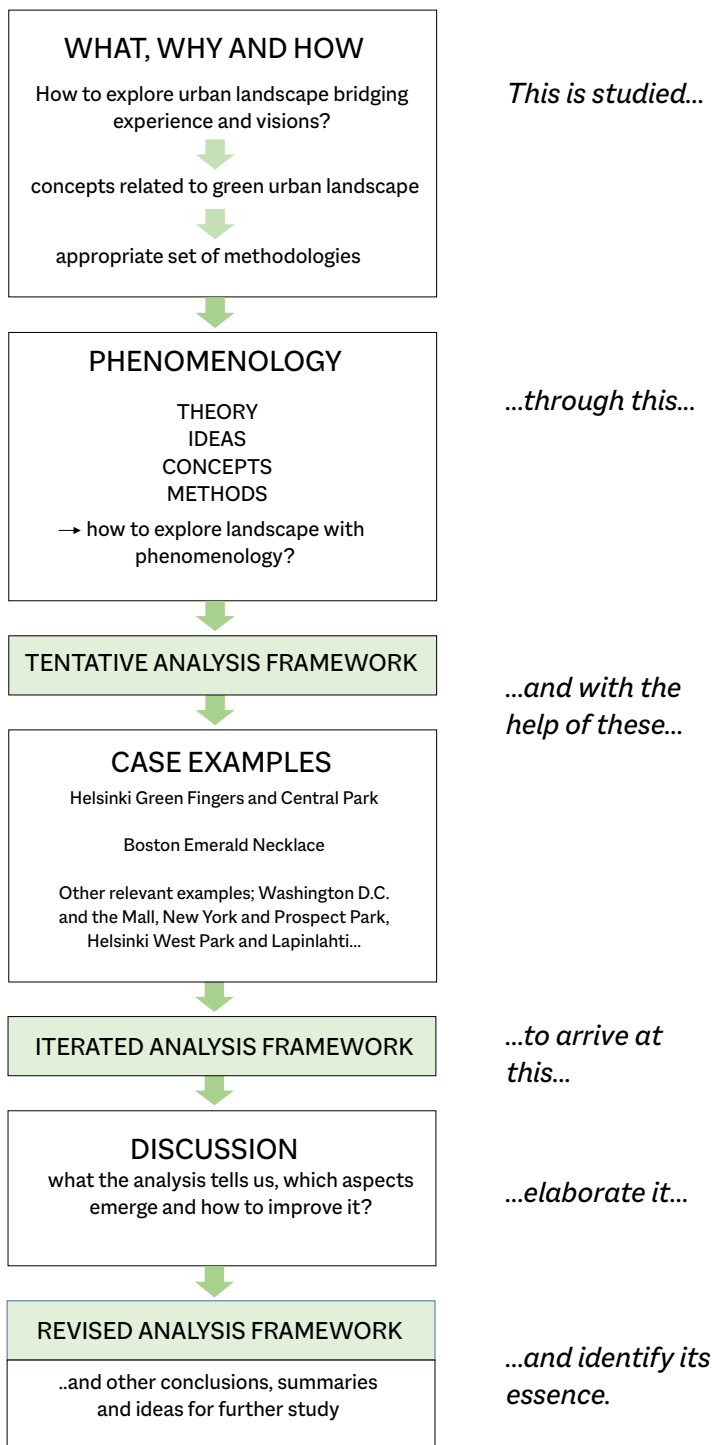
These places are considered as parts of a system, the *green areas network* or *park system*. The study is concerned with the 'defining landscapes' of this network or park system, as *places*. This refers to "subjectively defined locales" (Casey 1993), where individual places within a system are defined by a feeling of space apprehensible by the senses and/or by an entity that is given a name of its own. The experience of moving through these places is of particular interest. The experiential point of view entails the multisensory, bodily awareness of movement in a spatial realm. It is an account of a process of getting familiar with these particular types of green entities as chains of events and sequences of spaces. In an effort to analyze and understand the places and their users' experiences, artistic iterations and interventions are employed. An

art project by the author has its encounters with the research, when artistic performance of ‘non-acting’¹⁹ as a social experiment is used as an exploration method. In this study, a series of art interventions with the character “Dis” is shared, to consider how the experience of a green area entity may be explored, explained and even enhanced. Ephemeral art interventions are used to make important issues visible. In terms of the art project, a question worth considering in the future is whether awareness-raising and art can actually make a way to physical change in the environment.

This study describes a process of iteration to create an analysis framework inspired and informed by phenomenology, making it visible. It describes a process of experiencing and seeking for an essence in Boston’s Emerald Necklace, its original idea and form versus the current state. It also describes how the ideas for Helsinki’s green system have created an invisible layer, and the kinds of experiences it enables today. The latter is made visible mainly by speculating on citizens’ experience of Helsinki’s green areas, based on citizen survey data (City of Helsinki 2017; Mapita 2017; Nyberg 2018). As a result of these explorations, a framework for analyzing urban landscape is developed. Philosophical inquiries and their interpretations in the praxis and theory of landscape architecture, juxtaposed with actual case examples and their characteristics and narratives, feed on each other to make a renewed or at least complemented understanding of the phenomenological reading and understanding of landscape.

As presented in the diagram (Figure 8), the research questions are examined with the help of ideas, concepts and methods from phenomenology, complemented with other appropriate methods. An analysis framework for understanding landscape is iterated in the process, with the help of case examples representing green urban landscapes. The essential character of a phenomenological approach and potential for understanding landscape comprehensively are explored through different narratives.

¹⁹ Kirby (1972) uses the term Not-Acting when the performer does nothing to feign, simulate, represent or impersonate. There are different degrees along the scale from full acting (Complex Acting) to not acting at all (Non-Matrixed Performing), for instance that of Happenings. For instance a costume or a setting can create a character. ‘Non-acting’ has been used in other conjunctions (Merriam-Webster) to designate actions that do not involve any acting or (lexico) referring to acting that is poor, inexpressive or runs counter to traditional ideas of what constitutes acting. Non-acting in this context refers to performing that is inspired by place and circumstance, the random ‘audience’ on-site and the costume used as an essential part of creating the character.

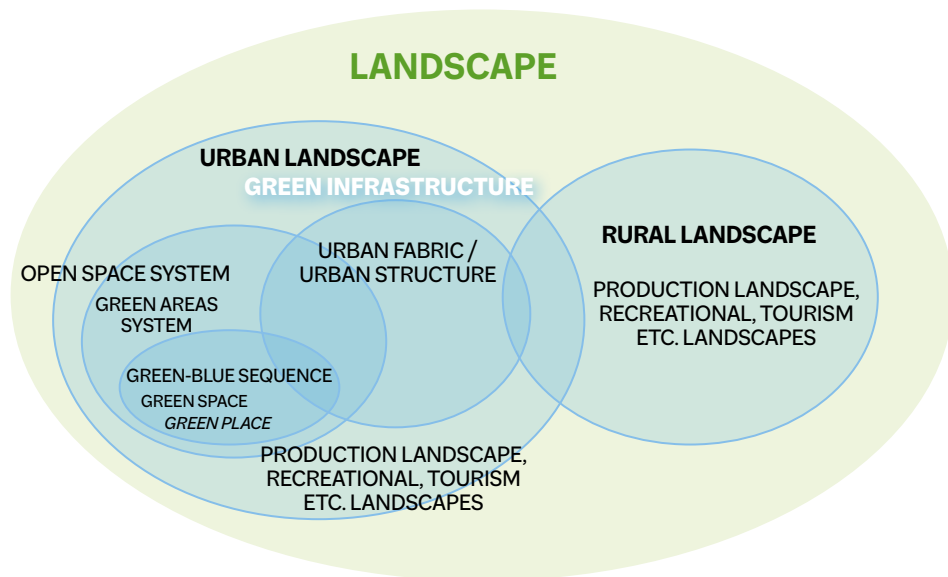


■ Figure 8. Structure of the research. The research questions are examined with the help of ideas, concepts and methods from phenomenology, complemented with other appropriate methods, to produce a tool for analyzing landscape, with the help of case examples representing green urban landscapes. Diagram by the author 2020.

1.4 Landscape concepts used - phenomena and their interrelations

1.4.1 Key concepts, introduced

The relevant landscape architectural concepts in terms of the subject matter, *green urban landscape*, that are used in the study are discussed in this chapter section (1.4). The set of these concepts is introduced in this section (1.4.1). Figure 9 shows the position of the key concepts in relation to each other. At the same time it illustrates how the idea of landscape may be divided into typologies. The concepts are explained in more detail with references in the following paragraphs (1.4.2-1.4.4), concluded in 1.4.5.²⁰ It must be noted that the *phenomenological* concepts are introduced in chapter 2, where the theoretical, conceptual frame of reference is laid out. The phenomenological concepts are based on a conceptual, philosophical approach, and require and deserve an introduction linked to the philosophy itself.



■ Figure 9. The understanding of landscape's constituent parts according to the study. The used concepts are partly embedded in each other, overlapping, nesting and stacked. The 'things' that the case examples represent are incorporated in larger 'things'. The concepts used also depend on the connection in which they are used; which position of a particular place or thing is emphasized in each given context. Illustration by the author 2020.

²⁰ Some concepts have references in literature but the use of others is based on their use in praxis, having an established significance but not necessarily an academic description.

Firstly, all green in a city is part of the citywide *green infrastructure*,²¹ and although only occasionally used in this study, it is an umbrella notion that deserves its place in the diagram. The study makes use of examples of *green-blue sequences*, by which is meant a series of *green spaces* comprising a significant water element. The word sequence emphasizes the interconnected nature of a series of these places, intended and/or experienced.

On some occasions, to emphasize the role of water, the term *blue-green* is used instead, to refer to landscapes dominated or defined by a water element of some sort. Green spaces are called *green places* when the experienced character is emphasized.²² They are part of a *green areas system* of a city or a region. The term *park system* has been used to describe interconnected chains of parks (Zaitzevsky 1982; McMillan 1901). *Greenways* do not appear in the diagram as such, but they are included in green areas systems, which are part of *open space systems*. Green areas systems form the green parts of open space systems, which comprise all public spaces, and in which squares and other hard surface public spaces are included. The distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' is unclear and not highly relevant in this classification. They are both part of the *urban fabric/urban structure*, because a prerequisite for a green system is to be in and of a city, intertwined with built masses and hard surfaces, such as houses or streets and bridges, etc. (so-called grey infrastructure). They are all part of *urban landscape*, which is a particular type of landscape – the landscape of a city. Rural and urban overlap, and there are also landscapes that are in between, e.g. transition zones or suburbs with a rural character.²³ The use of the notion 'green urban landscape' denotes that the green space described is situated in the urban context, often planned for the purpose of recreation.

²¹ Green infrastructure also comprises backyards, street trees etc. and stretches itself intertwined with other kinds of infrastructures in all kinds of landscapes. The concept is referred to in terms of restoration and social justice, as a medium to call for an “integrated action to plan, protect and manage our natural and restored lands” (Benedict & McMahon 2006). Green infrastructure refers to everything that is green and living in an urban environment (see for instance Raivio & Bumann 2019). The main components of this approach include stormwater management, climate adaptation, less heat stress, more biodiversity, food production, better air quality, sustainable energy production, clean water and healthy soils, as well as increased quality of life through recreation, shade and shelter in and around towns and cities (Pötz & Bleuze 2012, 2016).

²² When talking about *space*, it is a neutral depiction of a geographical location that has borders and a sense of space. A *place* (Casey 1993; von Bonsdorff 1998), in turn, refers to a lived space, a locale that has a meaning or use of sorts, a place where being and doing can happen (more about the concept of place in section 2.4).

²³ Natural landscape is not represented in this diagram as a separate typology, because it is considered as embedded and integrated in the urban and rural landscapes' matrix with varying dominance, as presented in the models in section 1.4.4 and appendix 1.

1.4.2 Green landscapes, systems and greenways

Green landscapes, systems and greenways are substantial and highly perceptible parts of a city's green infrastructure (Benedict & McMahon 2006; Pötz & Bleuze 2012), which is a concept often seen from a motivational point of view, "as a network of ingredients that provide tools to solve urban and climatic challenges by building in accordance with nature" (Pötz & Bleuze 2012). *Blue-green infrastructure* as a concept is often used along with an increasing awareness of climate change risks.²⁴ The qualitative evaluation of the ecological contribution of green elements or landscapes to the mitigation or adaptation of wicked problems such as climate change is not the main focus of this research, albeit a pressing issue. For that reason, the term blue-green is shifted into *green-blue*²⁵ when describing the case examples, to give the idea that the focus is not on the blue element for environmental reasons such as stormwater management, for instance, but on the appearance of these areas for human perception, where the blue is embedded in the green as an integral element. Understanding urban green-blue landscapes better and sensitivity to their nature-related and cultural connotations may, however, contribute to problem-solving environmental issues in a positive way, and be an important step on the way towards understanding and resolving them.

Green landscape is used in this research to refer to landscapes that are dominated by green, such as parks or green areas of a city, as experienced or as nominated totalities. The term is used in the context of this research to manifest the comprehensive and all-encompassing nature of what is described. Landscape is considered a scene of observation and, at the same time, a place to be inhabited, as described by Wylie (2007, p. 4).

When green spaces are organized, either planned or naturally, into a dynamic system that has interconnections and causalities, they form systems. *Green areas system* (see for instance Rautamäki-Paunila 1982) refers to the whole park system or network, often of a city or region, including its water elements, rivers, lakes, etc., which are embedded in the green areas. Drawing on Baljon (1992, p. 9), the totality exceeds the meaning of individual elements. The term emphasizes the network or organized system quality of areas that are intentionally designated as green space, much in the same way as grey infrastructure refers to the dynamic network of roads, brownfields, sewage

²⁴ The term BGI is used in the professional language and literature of landscape research and design (Lamond & Everett 2019; Deely & Hynes 2020; Ramboll 2020). For instance, in the aftermath of ecological disasters, solutions are sought from the so-called planned bluebelt approach, where sea level rise could integrate blue and green in the urban structure in new ways (see for instance City of Boston 2014). The roots of this idea in Boston can be traced to Olmsted, as he designed the Emerald Necklace, more precisely its first and most nature-imitating part, the Back Bay Fens, to act as flood control (Zaitzevsky 1982).

²⁵ Although Pötz and Bleuze (2012, 2016) also use the concept "urban green-blue grids" to explain the entity of green and blue elements in the city, in conjunction with planning sustainable cities, this paradigm is commonly referred to as 'blue-green.'

network, etc. The system consists of linked green area sequences and the routes that connect them to other green areas. In governmental documents (for instance McMillan 1901; Olmsted 1894; City of Helsinki 2002, 2016; Jaakola et al. 2013, 2016), these systems may consist of solely city-managed and -governed green space or also private and liminal green space.

The term *greenway* (Little 1990; Ahern 1996, 2003) is used in the study to refer to a linear open space or series or chain of parks, drawing on Little's first definition.²⁶ The concept is broadened towards Ahern's definition (Ahern 1995, 2003) while emphasizing the way the green spaces form a continuous and interconnected sequence, also when not uniform in the physical sense, but intended to do so conceptually. Ecological, cultural, and recreational values coalesce in greenways (Ahern 2003). According to Ahern (1995), greenways can be a strategy for planning, design and management of sustainable landscapes. Ahern and Fabos (1996) classify greenways according to spatial scale, purpose and goals, landscape context and planning strategy.

The case examples in this study are greenways of sorts, but at the same time, they are more than greenways, having a more dominant historic element and value than the definitions suggest. The idea of greenways is akin to the concept of *green wedges* (see next section), although more inclusive and less explicit. Greenways are characteristically integrated functional networks linking the urban and rural. In Helsinki, for instance, the largest ones, in addition, link the seaside with the forest.

1.4.3 **Park systems and green wedges**

The early park systems such as the 1829 plan for London by J. C. Loudon, the park system plan for Buffalo, NY, 1868, by Olmsted and Vaux, the McMillan plan for Washington D.C. (McMillan 1901) as well as the Plan of Chicago by Burnham and Bennett 1909, are precedents to the green wedge idea (Oliveira 2017, p. 26). By the end of the 19th century, park systems were "normative" in Europe and the United States, as Oliveira puts it (2017, p. 22). For instance, the McMillan plan for Washington D.C. by Frederick L. Olmsted Junior and Calvert Vaux sought to form a comprehensive green areas network along the major river corridors, and to link the battlefields together as a sphere around the city (McMillan 1901). As such, it is an example of a combination of green belt and green wedge. The Boston Emerald Necklace is similarly an example of a park

²⁶ Little (1990) defines a 'Greenway' as: 1. A linear open space established along either a natural corridor, such as a riverfront, stream valley, or ridgeline, or overland along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, a canal, scenic road, or other route. 2. Any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage. 3. An open-space connector linking parks, nature reserves, cultural features, or historic sites with each other and with populated areas. 4. Locally, certain strip or linear parks designated as parkway or greenbelt. Ahern proposes another greenway definition as "networks of land that are planned, designed and managed for multiple purposes including ecological, recreational, cultural, aesthetic, or other purposes compatible with the concept of sustainable land use" (Ahern 1995).

system (Zaitzevsky 1982; Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998), with regional ideas, as are some Olmsted plans for other cities that followed, such as Louisville and Rochester (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp. 94-96).

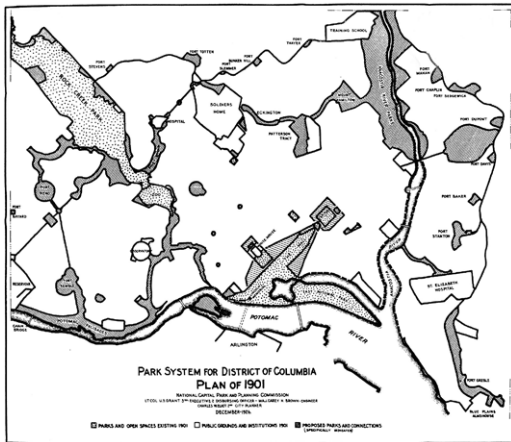
Oliveira (2017) lays out a set of cities, including Helsinki and Washington D.C., with their urban and green structures and policies, theorizing the agenda of green wedges and at the same time providing an overview of the concepts of green belts and green wedges in city planning. According to Oliveira (2017, pp. 2-3), the green wedge is an idea, concept, model or typology of green space, a principle with an assumption of implementation. While green infrastructure as a concept implies motivation, the green wedge is an operational and future-driven concept.²⁷ However, it also refers to the shape or form of the greenway. A green wedge, similarly to a greenway, refers to a green entity that is linear in nature, but more unified and homogenous. As a term, a green wedge is quite general and implies something that separates or connects urban areas on either side; but when theorized as a particular kind of urbanism, it becomes a concept in its own right. The historical background of this kind of urbanism lies in the needs for sanitation and recreation in rapidly industrializing towns. The idea has its roots in the industrial revolution and the disintegration of open space in the 1800s (Oliveira 2017, p. 12) where access to recreation and healthy environments was seen as crucial to the enhancement of living conditions for the working class, keeping them productive.

The central principles of the first antidote for urbanization's undesirable effects, the garden city idea (Howard 1902; Hertzén 1946; Howard, Osborn & Mumford 1965) already included a mixed structure and proximity to nature. Green belts and green wedges have since been a manifestation of bringing nature into cities. In the history of urban and green planning, the radial models (green wedges) challenged the concentric ring models (green belt), the perhaps best-known examples of which include the historic green belt of Vienna (Oliveira 2017, pp. 18-19). A green wedge is an abstract projection of built form. 'Green wedge urbanism' manifests itself in abstract models, such as Eberstadt's green wedge diagram²⁸ (Eberstadt 1911, p. 328, cited in Oliveira 2017, p. 33), the wedge model by Sanders and Rabuck in 1946 (Oliveira 2017, p. 99) and town plans following these principles. Copenhagen's finger plan 1947 or Helsinki's Green Fingers (developed since 1911, ratified in the 1992 then further 2002 Master Plans) are examples of the radial idea of organizing major green areas.

A green wedge can be presented as a single element, or linked to a green space strategy or network in a variety of scales (Oliveira 2017, p. 4). Although

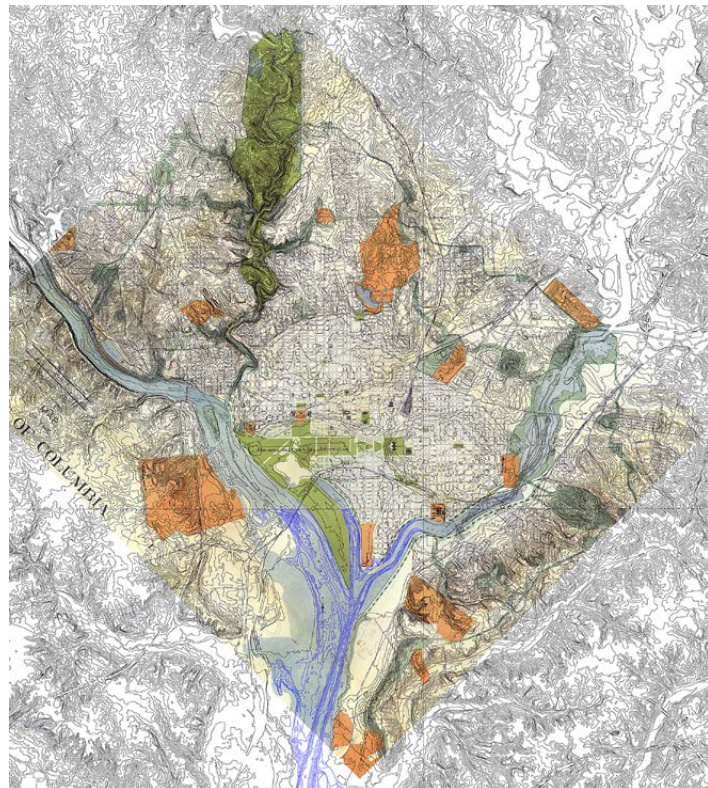
²⁷ As explained in the previous section, green infrastructure's motivational aspect implies sustainability aims. Instead, the green wedge is a planning and design policy, implying strategy of form and organization, and modes of operation such as policies to preserve green space in a specific location to form a wedge-like green space.

²⁸ This diagram is also referred to as the Radial Pattern for Town Extension Scheme of Möhring, Petersen and Eberstadt.



■ Figure 10. The original McMillan commission plan for Washington D.C. by Frederick L. Olmsted Junior and Calvert Vaux, referred to as a “park system” in its original plan documents, is an early example of an interconnected green areas system. McMillan 1901.

■ Figure 11. The McMillan plan of 1901 projected on top of the modern day topography. Illustration by the author 2001.



the green wedge was originally a competing idea to the ring model, many town plans and consequently, green systems are a combination of both. The ring model is represented as a regional green belt and the city is organized according to a radial green network, which is the case in Helsinki as well. Unified wedges towards a center are a possible scenario mainly in cities with a clear nucleus that these wedges can extend to from the surrounding natural areas. The theoretical composition is like a wheel where the hub is the city center, the green belt represents the ring, and the green wedges form the spokes.

In practice, however, green systems are often partial or somewhat fragmented applications of these ideas. Interestingly, for instance, the famous finger model of Copenhagen, when laid on an aerial map of today, shows that the conceptual model is embodied in the urban structure much more than the green structure, which is difficult to depict. The aerial photo shows what visiting the city confirms - that the real life experience of green spaces in the city does not necessarily embody the finger model. The theoretical models portray the urban structure as well as the green, but the urban structure seems to reflect the ideas better in praxis.

1.4.4 Urban landscape - landscape and the city

Landscape as a concept

As a multilayered, ambiguous and value-laden concept, *landscape* defies clear definition. Professionals in different fields have their own view, which is expressed either implicitly or explicitly in their writings, and might not respond to that of common language. For instance, *The Webster's Dictionary* defines landscape as an expanse of natural scenery seen by the eye in one view. This concept institutionalizes the traditional attitude towards the environment as an object, implying that it is based on visual perception: the view is framed and detached from the subject (Berleant 1997, p. 69). It is interesting that in everyday language, landscape is easily connected with natural or pastoral scenery, unless specified otherwise. This section includes views on landscape's definition, which have influenced the view according to which the concept is used in this research.

The European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe 2019) defines landscape as "part of the land, as perceived by local people or visitors, which evolves through time as a result of being acted upon by natural forces and human beings." This definition focuses on perception, what is perceived by humans, however recognizing the dynamic nature of landscape transforming as a result of different processes. It is interesting, however, that although the processes of becoming are verbalized, the definition only entails the perceptible part of the landscape. The Convention also positions citizens at a high significance, stating that landscape is "no longer the preserve of experts." "Landscape quality objectives" are, however, formulated for specific landscapes, by the competent authorities "of the aspirations of the public with regard to the landscape features of their surroundings" (Council of Europe 2019).

According to a common conception in cultural geography, expressed for instance by Cosgrove (1998, originally published in 1984), landscape is above all a social construct or product, a domain of power, an idea. This includes that landscape calls for a perceiving subject and does not exist independent of such. The very idea of landscape implies separation and observation (Williams 1973, p. 120, cited in Wylie 2017, p. 17). According to Wylie (2017, p. 16), it can be and has been argued that an evocation of distance and remoteness is foundational to landscape. For Cosgrove (1998, p. 13), landscape is a way of seeing, a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolizing surroundings. Cosgrove and Daniels (1988, p. 1) even argue that a landscape park is no less imaginary than a landscape painting or a poem. In later writings Cosgrove (1998, Introductory Essay), however, admits the possible limitedness of his former view. A landscape is a real phenomenon that can be experienced in everyday life. However, it contains many "landscapes" in the scenery sense of the word, experienced by the subject moving in space(s) within it. In other words, if a landscape is what is seen, then the landscape in a way moves along with the experiencer and constantly changes. When including elements in one's view and excluding

others, one constructs one's landscape as one goes along. The experience can be reconstructed by representations and documentations of the experience, such as photographing, sketching or even tweeting.

However, the idea of landscape having these invisible social and societal contexts and contents that Cosgrove (1998, pp. 13-38, 65, 161-188) talks about is an important view to this study, implying that there is more to *landscape* than meets the eye. In acknowledging the invisible, seeing landscape as an abstract concept and a domain of power structures that construct reality, Cosgrove's view is much deeper than seeing landscape merely as an image. Building on the ideas of landscape in cultural geography during the decades, Wylie (2007, pp. 1-11) defines landscape as a set of tensions, between proximity and distance, observation and inhabitation, eye and land, culture and nature. In other words, the idea of landscape is challenged through the way it is looked at, as an object or containing the perceiving subject as an active element *within* the landscape that surrounds the subject, defining their actions as much as being defined. Landscape is a setting for work for some, instead of a picture postcard to be gazed at.

Landscape perceptions are socially and culturally constructed, as observed by Jones (1991), who concludes that landscape is an intersubjective construct within different academic disciplines. The view of a designer is instrumental in its desire for transformation, which creates tension between aims such as preservation and development. Drawing on the same idea of different approaches, Meinig (1979) in his "Ten Versions of the Same Scene," a classic in its genre, describes ten of the possible approaches and ways to look at landscape. Landscape can be Nature, Habitat, Artifact, System, Problem, Wealth, Ideology, History, Place or Aesthetic.²⁹ The view of a landscape architect, which is the main approach in this study, is a combination or synthesis of these, with different emphasis depending on their orientation, and according to the subject-matter; the landscape at hand. 'Landscape as a system' stresses the knowledge behind what is seen, and 'landscape as a process,' in turn, wants to get to the core of things, under the surface, and as such comes close to the phenomenological view. However, it is too elementary alone and needs to be complemented by views of landscape as ideology, as history, and especially by those of landscape as a place and as aesthetic.³⁰

²⁹ As an example, a preservationist would perhaps see landscape as nature, essential and original. Compared to the philosopher Juhani Pietarinen's views on the relation of nature and human, this would be the 'biocentric' view where nature is seen as a value in itself (Pietarinen 2000). In the habitat view, in turn, landscape is defined from an anthropocentric point of view, making way to a positivist view where needs of human beings are dominant.

³⁰ The place view implies that every landscape is a locality, an individual piece in the infinitely varied mosaic of the earth. The latter, 'landscape as aesthetic', however, bears more potential than is described in Meinig's words, where the approach is limited to landscape as an image rather than a total work of art. Landscape as problem stresses the inclination towards action and is thus familiar to the practitioner.

The *process* view of landscape is emphasized in the phenomenological approach. Theories of phenomenology and hermeneutics value the individual over the collective, and support the postmodern paradigm of landscape as a process (Berrizbeitia 1999, p. 198). According to Berrizbeitia (1999, p. 198) landscape architecture may represent ecological processes. Human intervention may speed them up or slow them down, taking the role of time (J.B. Jackson, cited in Corner 1999, p. vii). Landscapes manifest the passing of time, which speaks itself in multiple ways in the features of landscape, including the dynamics of seasonal change, progress of vegetation and traces and layers of history. The Precambrian glacial landscape as worn-out and smooth speaks to the senses with a different tone than the newborn volcanic mountains, manifesting natural processes. Humans may affect and direct the outcomes as their actions are intertwined with nature's systems.

As Swanwick (2002, p. 2) observes, landscape is a combination of multiple factors, consisting of both natural elements and cultural aspects as well as aesthetic and interpretational approaches. Landscape implies natural as well as human-made elements. The human touch is present almost everywhere: even a wilderness has been preserved by humans, and included in the cultural realm by acknowledging its existence and value. Nature becomes landscape when a spectator is introduced. When a tourist spots a scenery, or a geographer gives a name to an areal entity, it becomes landscape, is encultured. In the primeval forest, there might be a designed and constructed path, and new nature is created in compensation for the loss of what is considered nature. Nature and culture are interlaced in landscape and no longer necessarily distinguishable. Landscape is neither nature nor not-nature. It can and need not be defined by those terms. As such, it is an in-between that resists Cartesian binaries and makes them unnecessary. Based on mere dominance and the ratio of the human-made and natural 'things,' however, it is possible to distinguish between human-dominant and natural-dominant landscapes. When natural processes remain the defining character, the human is just a visitor.

Landscape is traditionally presented as a (back)ground for a figure (for instance, Norberg-Schulz, in his description of the relationship between settlement and landscape, in Nesbitt 1996 p. 419). A more comprehensive view is indicated in Elizabeth Meyer's thinking (1997 p. 53). She wishes to expand conceptions of landscape architecture in relation to architecture in a new set of diagrammatic concepts, one of which is 'figured ground.' Instead of a backdrop for architecture, landscape itself becomes a thing and a place with absolute value.

Some current writings also state (Antrop 2013; Antrop & Eetvelde 2017) that landscape's heritage value, social and symbolic meanings demand a more holistic approach than has been applied before. In the face of modern-day challenges, the definition of landscape calls for an integrated approach. Modern geographers acknowledge landscape as the "whole that is more than the sum of

its parts” and write about the different perspectives embedded in the concept, ways of seeing including the interior, inner and meta-reality of landscapes (Antrop & Eetvelde 2017, pp. 62-70) which speaks to the invisible aspect introduced in this study.

Landscape is a text of symbolic meanings; it has its own language and semantics. For instance, a former field can be depicted from a grove by the shape of the canopy of an old tree individual. Anne Spirn goes so far as to claim that landscape *is* language (Spirn 1998, 2002). According to her, landscape contains the equivalent of words and parts of speech - patterns of shape, structure, material, formation and function. Like the meanings of words, the meaning of landscape elements is only potential until context shapes them (Spirn 1998, p. 15). Meaning is individual, read and written to the place. According to Spirn (1998, pp. 181-188), the “landscape grammar” can be observed or ignored, and the quality of actions that affect the environment can be evaluated by the way they follow or break the rules of that grammar. Spirn’s view is a vivid example of a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to landscape, as a text to be read, an entity with its own language that one can learn to understand.

Landscape is above all a comprehensive phenomenon, a totality comprising everything in a locality that we need to understand in order to plan and design it.³¹ Instead of asking “what is landscape,” it is preferable to rather ask “what is not landscape.” In this study, *landscape* is understood in wide terms. It not only includes townscapes and city skylines but their constituent components in their entirety - not only everything that can be seen, or an idea thereof, but also everything that it consists of, including the underlying mental and physical structures, visible and invisible. Landscape as a real-life phenomenon includes what is experienced of it through the senses and what is known and understood about it by the perceiving subject. Landscape as a concept in language is cultural, and although it does not require the physical presence of a perceiver to exist, it does require a perceiving subject to be defined as landscape.

City - landscape - nature

Landscapes can be characterized by various factors, for instance, *urban vs. natural*, or *urban vs. rural*, which are both simplifications of a complex reality, and often approached using qualitative terms. Urban landscape, the landscape of the city, and its designs are of particular interest to this study. Because of the complex nature of urban landscapes and the fact that conscious planning of green systems and networks is an issue concerning the urban landscape to a

³¹ In the Helsinki Green Areas strategy, for instance, landscape was defined as an environmental entity consisting of areas and shaped by geomorphological, ecological and cultural historic development (Jaakkola et al. 2013, based on Rautamäki 1997). According to Rautamäki (1997), a landscape is an entity in process that consists of the geomorphology, ecology and cultural history of a place. This definition summarizes, for its part, the comprehensiveness of the concept in landscape architectural use.

greater extent than rural, or at least the problematics dealt with are different, this study focuses on urban landscapes in particular.

Urban and natural are often presented as antidotes. Just as the cultural and natural are intertwined, however, in every urban landscape there are natural elements, and in every natural landscape some elements generally considered urban, or at least human-made. Settlements were once built in a natural landscape, and it is essentially a matter of scale when a landscape becomes urban, and the characteristics of a landscape setting become blurred behind the urban form.³² Besides being a setting for human activity, every landscape is also a biosphere, a locale for ecological processes and a habitat for the flora and fauna of a particular place.

The view of the urban/natural landscape depends on our conception of humans' role in nature. If the human species is regarded as part of the biosphere, then in fact all their actions would be 'natural.' Humans' very existence is an intrinsic part of the ecosystem almost everywhere, and yet a greater threat to the existence of other species than any other. Humankind is part of a global ecosystem, and at the same time, may disrupt its environs to a greater extent than any other. Human settlements are taking over the so-called natural landscape and forming a network, and as Meyer (1997) points out, we can no longer really talk about the figure and the ground in terms of either of them. The city is in a landscape and a landscape in a city. A city is built in the landscape (holistic view), part of which it becomes. Landscape (as something that is seen, a smaller-scale definition) exists manifold in a city. Green areas structures as well as open spaces are part of the 'cityscape' of a city. The shoulders of landscape carry the layers of nature and culture. This study recognizes the role of one in the other and their characteristics defined by an experience-based approach.

According to the anthropologist Tim Ingold, landscape is neither identical to nature (Ingold 1993, p. 154; 2000, p. 191), nor is it "on the side of humanity *against* nature." In fact, just as Ingold observes, it can be claimed that the whole concept of 'nature' as something outside or separate from humankind is a fallacy of sorts. "The rather specific sense whose ontological foundation is an imagined separation between the human perceiver and the world" (Ingold 2000, p. 191) generates concepts such as 'nature', 'biosphere' and even 'biodiversity'³³ that imply a dualism/dichotomy that does not respond to reality. This dichotomy would also be alien to the phenomenological thought that embraces a holistic explanation of the world, and an intertwined existence between the

³² It is possible to live in an urban bubble imagining nature to be a separate realm, until a natural disaster provides a grave reminder of how exposed we are to natural processes after all.

³³ According to Ingold (2000, p. 218) "species can only be enumerated in the natural world by a humanity that has set itself above and beyond it," simultaneously everywhere and nowhere.

world and its observer. It is equally false to assume that other living things than humans are a homogenous branch sharing the same experience of being alive. The only experience we can be sure of is our own, and the only one we can get even near to reliable accounts of, are those of our own kind, i.e. other humans. This is for the simple reason that we don't share a language or system of significances with other species. Consequently, as opposed to an ecocentric and anthropocircumferential vision common in conservation ethic, where nature is placed in the inside and humanity on the outside, we should perceive the world from within, as active and involved participants (Ingold 2000, p. 155).

The basic structure of landscape is formed by geomorphological processes and features over the course of time (McHarg 1969). According to McHarg's ecological method (orig. 1967), the place is a result and generator of causality, existing and "in the process of becoming" (McHarg 2002, p. 42) at the same time, another useful concept for this study. *Basic structure* is a much-used concept in landscape architecture.³⁴ It is often represented as a simplification/abstraction of topography and geology. *Greater landscape*, in turn, refers in landscape architectural language, to the totality that the basic structure and other spatial elements constitute, a manifestation of the landscape's most essential features. The concept has been used either landform-focused in geography for natural landscapes (Granö 1930³⁵) or sometimes in city planning, spatially focused (Wasastjerna 2011), where elements such as skylines, views and urban shapes and masses such as landmarks are given greater emphasis.

These physical landscape descriptions are only one aspect of urban landscape, however. It is important to note that the social, societal and power dynamic aspects of landscape that Cosgrove (1998) talks about, come more and more into play when exploring urban landscape, as do inclusion and exclusion. The economic and political aspects that affect urban landscape processes and the experience thereof deserve a research of their own, but are recognized in this study as part of the landscape's less-than-obvious, invisible aspects. In cities the parties/actors/stakeholders concerned are more numerous and diverse. In other words, there are more people, and they tend to spend time closer together, voluntarily or involuntarily. For that reason, potential tensions intensify. The urban landscape is no different than other landscapes conceptually; it is essentially a human-dominated realm, where other processes may have partly replaced or obscured the natural ones and built another cultural layer with its own logic to mix with them.

³⁴ In the Finnish glaciated landscape, the pattern of ridges, vales and the transition zone between them that make up the basic characteristics of topography, are easily described with this concept.

³⁵ J.G. Granö developed concepts for early landscape geography in his *Pure Geography* (1997, originally published in 1929 in German and in Finnish in 1930). He was also one of the first to focus on multisensory perception as a source of information in geographical landscape research.

We create an image of landscape in our minds that is defined by the way we experience it. Urban landscape consists of smaller ‘spaces’ than rural – think of a streetscape in a narrow street – and the experience is bound by the realm of perception. At the same time, however, there is a consciousness of a larger context, both social/societal and physical. We draw the image of the city in our heads and situate ourselves in that image, more or less consciously. Lynch (1960), among others, has discussed how this image is generated by physical spaces, their characteristics and perception. Other physical elements in the landscape can be divided into, for instance, green (vegetation), blue (water) and grey (concrete, asphalt, technical structures, but also natural stone in different grain sizes, which in fact is not entirely or at all grey). In an urban setting, the manifestations of these are often called infrastructure. In fact, the natural (or nature-dominated), rural, and urban all contain blue, green and grey elements, roughly speaking, and those elements may be different depending on the context and setting (see Figure 12).³⁶

Blue	Green	Grey	Blue	Green	Grey	Blue	Green	Grey
Urban			Rural			Natural		

■ Figure 12. All types of landscapes can contain elements in the scale of blue, green and grey. The horizontal characteristics are, in reality, somewhat blurred and the so-called ‘natural’ landscape can manifest itself in patches of varying sizes in both urban and rural settings. The Urban and Rural represent different typologies of the built environment. Diagram by the author 2019.

On an urban-rural scale areas may be evaluated in qualitative and experiential terms as well as quantitative ones such as plot ratio, sq.m. per plot or area, or density. The density of urban structure is one way of defining what is considered ‘urban’ as opposed to rural or suburban, but the big picture is much more complicated. Urbanity is defined by a ‘feel’ of urbanity as much as quantitative indicators. For instance, if there are places to do things you would

³⁶ In a city, the green landscape, such as a park, with everything it implies, may be entirely human-made – earth molded and paved, trees planted, thinned, felled etc., but still consist of elements that are growing and living, and as such (urban) nature. There are, of course, certain qualities that go closer together, such as natural and green, urban and built. It is challenging to model the idea of these concepts and their interrelations in a relevant and sufficiently accurate simplification. The ‘urban landscape cubes’ (see iterations in appendix 1) are an effort to visualize the entity of urban/natural landscapes and in-betweens, the way different kinds of places are part of a framework of green, blue and built environments in the urban setting, and to model their interrelations.

expect to be able to do in an urban environment, such as having a coffee or lunch by a paved square, shopping by walking or accessing points of interest with public transportation within a defined distance or timeframe, the place feels like a city. I have sometimes called it the “heel indicator”; in an urban environment you can walk to places wearing high-heeled shoes.³⁷

The observer’s ability to evaluate different factors’ role in the landscape’s process of becoming varies. A planted and managed forest or a designed and intensely maintained park is often taken for ‘natural’ and the naturally grown may appear human-made. The same applies for the relationship between the built environment and nature, which could be quantitatively measured but challenging to differentiate, especially when humans can ‘build new nature’ as well as preserve it. Theoretically, the essential measured character of any given phenomenon in the environment can be described based on the dominance of each kind of element or infrastructure they possess. When a scale is decided (a park, a square, a city quarter, a village, a forest patch), any area or view can be modeled in this way.³⁸

In theory, the experiential aspects of a place could also be modeled in a similar fashion. The place created is defined by the view and other sensual experiences you are exposed to, due to the setting of the observation. The qualifiers could thus include aspects like the microclimatic conditions (sun-shade, cold-warm, windy-calm, moist-dry), elements in the view you are exposed to, judged by the dominance of the green, blue and grey, roughly, that you observe.³⁹ A series or sequence of places, such as an entity of a park system, or a smaller place such as ‘a bench in a park,’ can be placed in a particular location in these diagrammatic models. Thus the model can describe both the landscape as experienced with the senses and the landscape as an area or entity, both of the aspects that are of interest in this study. With models such as these, we can potentially categorize or itemize landscapes in portions and features; in a way mathematically model a landscape, according to the share of the area on a plane two-dimensionally - or alternatively, in three dimensions (3D) from, say, point clouds or other numeral values of masses. One can present these shares with horizontal or vertical lines or points in space, and compare different landscapes with each other.

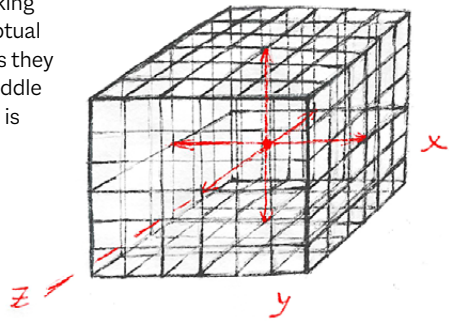
37 Trastevere in Rome is one of the exceptions. While obviously urban, its pavement is made of black rugged lava stones that are difficult to walk on with high-heeled shoes due to their wide tolerances in the layout - but it applies to new urban areas where an even surface is often desirable in public space.

38 For instance, a swimming pond area might contain one sixth green, one sixth ‘grey’ (sand), two thirds blue, etc., or a city land area, 40% green, 55% ‘grey’ (houses, roads, etc.), 5% water, and so on.

39 These, of course, vary, depending on the season or time of day: at times the ‘green’ or even ‘blue’ is replaced by white or other colors.

■ Figure 13. Theoretical model of landscape, seeking to recognize the simultaneous nature of the conceptual antidotes of landscape characteristics and the ways they may constitute reality. The origin is placed in the middle of this realm of observation and assessment, which is constructed of three-dimensional particles.⁴⁰

The horizontal axis (x) might represent the transposition between the **urban and rural** (by mere dominance of the element), the vertical axis (y) the **blue and green**, and the depth axis (z) the **built and natural**, for instance.⁴¹ A particular landscape or place could then be placed in a certain spot (a cube/pixel) in the three dimensional realm, depending on how much green there is, how urban the landscape is, and how many built/natural elements it contains. Illustration by the author 2019.



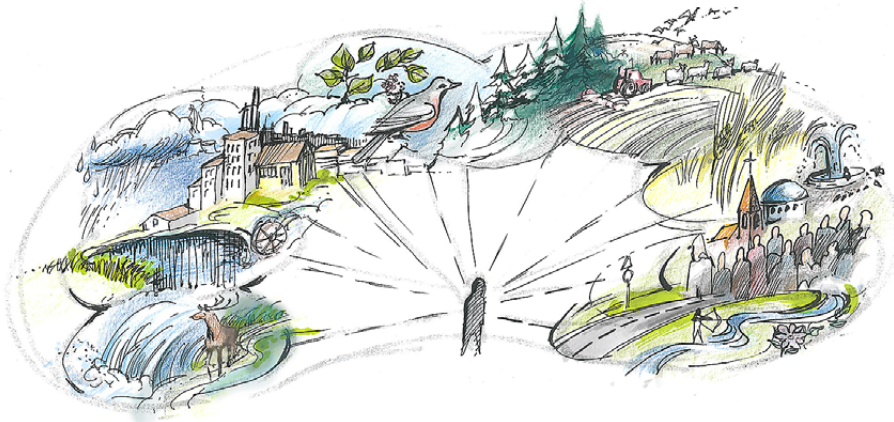
1.4.5 Conceptual setting, concluded

The theoretical background in terms of landscape architecture is based on green planning approaches and the concepts and terms used therein. The ideas of green in the urban composition, such as green wedge urbanism (Oliveira 2017) or landscape urbanism (Waldheim 2006), that the praxis of landscape planning draws on, recognize and acknowledge the role of landscape and green infrastructure, where the features of landscape act as the basis for land-use planning. These ideologies reflect that of this study, where green areas systems are seen as integral parts of city planning and urban structure.

Any numeric or mathematic models of the conceptual setting are, as seen above, a simplification and abstraction, and can merely complement or act as an aid for a phenomenological or phenomenology-informed/inspired approach such as that which this study is seeking to depict. Graphic representations have virtually infinite possible forms and combinations, but the ones above represent a few potentials. To be entirely useful in understanding landscape, such a model would require the recognition of invisible factors. Theoretical models, however, help to define what the phenomena of green urban landscape may consist of, in its physical appearance that consequently affects all the other dimensions it may have, and acts as a basis for understanding the conceptual realm the study is dealing with. They provide a way landscape can be modeled or characterized in quantitative terms, but fail to capture the landscape's essence in an experiential sense. The other models or frameworks, such as that presented as an outcome of phenomenological inquiry in this study, in turn complement this kind of models in the quest for deep understanding. Quantitatively geared measures need to be complemented by more

⁴⁰ Their resolution can be rough or finer grained depending on the desired scale and accuracy.

⁴¹ Besides buildings the 'built' includes grey infrastructure such as roads, bridges etc.



■ Figure 14. The anthropocentric approach of the study to the world bears not that humans would be the sole center of *attention* or above any other species but *within* the world and its holistic system. Human is the obvious experiencer, observer and perceiver and, at the same time, part of the world that consists of processes and interrelations that are commonly called ‘ecosystem,’ ‘culture’ or ‘nature,’ but in reality can and should not be strictly separated. Illustration by the author 2021.

qualitative, experiential ones, and vice versa, to achieve and communicate an understanding to the maximum effect.

Although landscape as a concept, in this study, is not limited to green and blue, but comprises everything and all the elements regardless of their nature – whether as a complex and inclusive term or a depiction of scenery – this study is for the sake of framing, focusing on the green and blue ones. With ‘green and blue’ it indicates that the part of the landscape is being discussed which consists of growing and aquatic elements and the spaces that they form for people. The different concepts introduced above are used in different conjunctions, depending on the aspect being emphasized or the relevant point of view for each argument. For instance, if the systemic view is essential, the green system is used (alternatively, green areas system or blue-green system, if it is essential to include the water element). The phenomena that the concepts seek to describe are studied with the theoretical concepts of phenomenology that are explained in more detail in chapter 2.

Because nature in some form, as a bare minimum the atmosphere (the physical one with air and light), is an intrinsic part of every landscape, even urban ones, the relation to nature is one that needs positioning. The position of this study in relation to nature has a close connection to Ingold’s arguments presented earlier (Ingold 1993, 2000). As Ingold observes: “... in landscape, each component enfolds *within its essence* [emphasis by the author] the totality of its relations with each and every other” (Ingold 2000, p. 191). Although the aforementioned models and iterations give the impression that landscape, including the nature it inhabits, can be reliably measured, it is essentially by seeking to perceive *from within*, that we can make sense of such a layered and laden concept.

In an understanding where landscape surrounds the observer, we are surrounded by the ecosystem, of which we are an intrinsic part. The position is, thus, *anthropocentric* in the sense that it perceives the studied phenomena from a human's perspective. Instead of, - or at least in addition to, - separation and observation, presented with the help of the signifying practice of maps and such representations, the viewpoint of the author on landscape is intrinsically one of involvement and participation, as a researcher, city dweller and professional.⁴² To make the totality of landscape's complex interrelations easier to understand in a planning language, however, and perhaps more useful for practical purposes, it is dissected in the study; segmented, if you will.

1.5 Searching for deep understanding of landscapes through multiple methods

1.5.1 The researcher's position

The study positions itself in the conceptual frameworks utilized in the landscape architectural discipline, such as the tradition of landscape analysis, which is further discussed in sections 2.1 and 4.1. At the same time, it is seeking to bring to discussion a less-used philosophical approach and theoretical framework to enrich that tradition. It also aims to test methods perhaps not conventionally used in landscape architectural research, such as arts-based research and art-making, as a first-person phenomenological method.

The researcher's position is one of a landscape architect's aiming to understand and contribute to her profession and its theoretical realm through the philosophical branch of phenomenology, juxtaposing and discussing its traditions with theoretical constructs of landscape architecture (e.g. Swaffield 2002) and nearby disciplines. In terms of this tradition, according to Swaffield (2002, p. 227), the early development of so-called ecological design and planning, triggered by the environmental movement, and social issues brought forth by communal activism, mark the professional discourse in the 1960s and 1970s, as a counter to the previous focus on aesthetics and formal or process issues. Whereas the 1980s were characterized by a renewed search for meaning from either ecological design or environmental and land art, in the 1990s, "language and representation, the aesthetics of ecological design, regionalism and infrastructure, as well as renewed interest in the nature and role of theory" (Swaffield 2002, p. 229) were dominant. The growing influence of phenomenology has highlighted the importance of place; a "locus of human experience and meaning" (Swaffield 2002, p. 229), making the interrelationship between dimensional site and experiential place central to theoretical thinking in the

⁴² In a sense, in such an approach, the ecological viewpoint should not need to be defined separately, but should rather be embedded.

discipline, however not so far explicitly reflected on in the landscape architectural theoretical discourse.

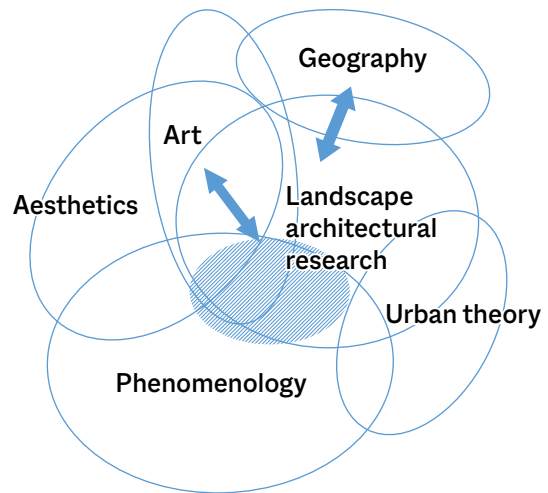
Although this characterization was written two decades ago, it makes manifest two things that are even more obvious today: the difficulty in defining the undercurrents in the present and the pluralization of issues inflicted on landscape architecture.⁴³ It seems evident that regard for resilience and sustainability has become a requirement and prerequisite for good landscape architecture in the 21st century. Other defining principles of our time include citizen involvement, which places experiential knowledge in the center, besides the scientific one, challenging the role of the expert in unforeseen extents. Digitalization has, furthermore, transformed design and planning – both in the ways of managing information, thinking and making designs and the ways of visualizing it, perhaps also affecting its content.

The basic principles of creating pleasurable landscape architectural places, nevertheless, have retained their actuality and accuracy. Landscape architecture has maintained two of its major characteristics: the need to reconcile the large and small scale to understand and influence their interrelations, and the quest for understanding, albeit superficially, a range of other disciplines to be able to practice one's own in an informed manner. Landscape architecture praxis is a gathering practice operating on multiple scales, and in the same way, the research thereof is essentially integrative in nature, if it aims at broadening understanding of the fundamental principles on which the profession is based.

In the aforementioned continuum, this study is positioned in a discourse emphasizing a holistic approach. It makes use of experiential as well as more traditional and measurable data, discussing notions of making livable environments in cities – aiming towards a phenomenology-based understanding and reading of urban green landscape, using particular places to exemplify and represent certain typologies thereof. While recognizing the pluralistic nature of the profession of a landscape architect, the research aims to broaden the perspective from traditional planning and design approaches towards one integrating disciplines. Instead of following a ready-made pathway to theories and methodologies in each discipline, it crosses them perpendicularly from one to another, hoping for connections and discoveries to happen. In so doing, it relies on the benefit of gathering and reconciling different methodologies, approaches and concepts into a comprehensible whole, to shed light on one of the fundamentals of the particular design profession of landscape architecture,

⁴³ Along with the increasing environmental urgencies and challenges such as climate change and loss of biodiversity, the theoretical setting as well as the operational field has become more and more global. Along with the everydayness of the Internet, gaining knowledge and processing data have been significantly facilitated since the research started, and at the same time, the amount of information has expanded uncontrollably, resulting in the fact that the scope of all disciplines, including this one, has diversified and fragmented.

■ Figure 15. Drawing on links between and within disciplines. The study positions itself in the intersection of various disciplines; art, cultural geography, urban theory and philosophy, especially phenomenology and aesthetics, focusing on landscape. Landscape architectural theory and praxis are the disciplines from which the research is conducted and which draw together influences from the other disciplines. Phenomenology forms the theoretical background and interactions from art and geography enrich the cluster. Diagram by the author 2020.



namely analyzing landscape. The study is interested in how landscapes' essential way of being, as experienced, can be depicted.

The research findings are inevitably explored as a long-time practitioner in planning and designing green urban landscapes, which may not fail to affect the research itself. At its best it may give welcome insight stemming from the author's expertise in planning and design processes in an urban context, including urban green strategies, and undoubtedly, as a worst case may result in a bias that would remain invisible to the author herself. In this study, the perspective on Helsinki is very different from that on Boston or any other city, due to my different relationship to these cities.⁴⁴ For that reason, my researcher position is one of a practitioner and public official as well as of an observer. However, the researcher, as a researcher, seeks to recognize and make visible any biases, and use the information gained in other parallel processes to the benefit of the study.

This study aims to contribute to the theory of landscape architecture, more precisely the methodology of the phenomenological research of green urban landscapes, also by testing new methods, such as site-responsive art as research. Examples of green urban landscape are studied to develop a model for analysis, a framework for their deeper understanding. At the same time, the study aims to build bridges between different approaches and ways of

⁴⁴ In Boston and Washington D.C., occasional fieldwork was conducted, but the view is of a visitor, whereas in Helsinki, the researcher has been a resident for three decades and a city official since 2002. During that time, she has participated in the detailed planning of the city and its green areas, first as a landscape architect for the inner city, and in 2008 to 2017 as head of the Environmental office responsible for landscape expertise in detailed planning and the city's green network strategies. Since 2017, the author has acted as a unit manager for ecological and recreational networks, green areas strategies and urban space expertise including lighting and public design.

exploration, to map and organize them into a consistent whole that adds to this understanding. Methodologically, as well as theoretically, the study positions itself at the intersections of landscape architecture, urban study, artistic exploration and philosophy, combining methods derived from each discipline.

1.5.2 Integrated methodology

In the following, an overview is presented of the methods applied in the study. Some are introduced in more detail, including the phenomenological methods and arts-based research in gathering and analyzing data, as well as the Public Participation GIS as a tool for mainly gathering data. Further interpretive methods are needed to analyze the data in a way relevant to this study, although potential for some, mainly quantitative and representational methods such as heatmaps are embedded in the GIS technology itself.

The methodology used is mainly phenomenology-based. The study does, however, make use of multiple methods, most of which are site-specific and qualitative in character. More than mixing different methods, however, they are used in a parallel and sequential manner to highlight different aspects of the researched material. In that sense, they are integrated into the multidisciplinary discourse that the study is anchored on, to reach a conclusion which can then be presented in a theoretical model (sections 3.1 preliminary and 5.2 final model). This model (a.k.a. analysis framework) is aiming to describe a real-life phenomenon and ways to interpret it. The methods used can also be called exploratory or explorative, loosely attached to the tradition of the *explorative* research approach,⁴⁵ where a deeper insight into a given matter or situation is aimed for.

Of the phenomenological methods (see 1.5.3 for a more detailed description of their use) *First-person phenomenological inquiry* is particularly made use of, utilizing artistic experience in *arts-based research* as a research method (see 1.5.4), and *art as research* as a data-gathering method. Observations from *site visits* at different times and seasons, and their documentation complement the data, as a designer's first-person approach. *Qualitative content analysis* is conducted, especially on the open answers to the map-based public surveys, inspired by the methods of *Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA)*. *Quantitative methods* for classifying data, such as heatmaps, data-mining of the quantity of responses and statistics thereof are used, and material created by these methods is analyzed. Some methods of *Historical analysis*, i.e. interpreting and comparative reading of original historical maps as well as texts written by the designers and texts they were inspired by is utilized in trying to understand the historical context and the process of becoming.

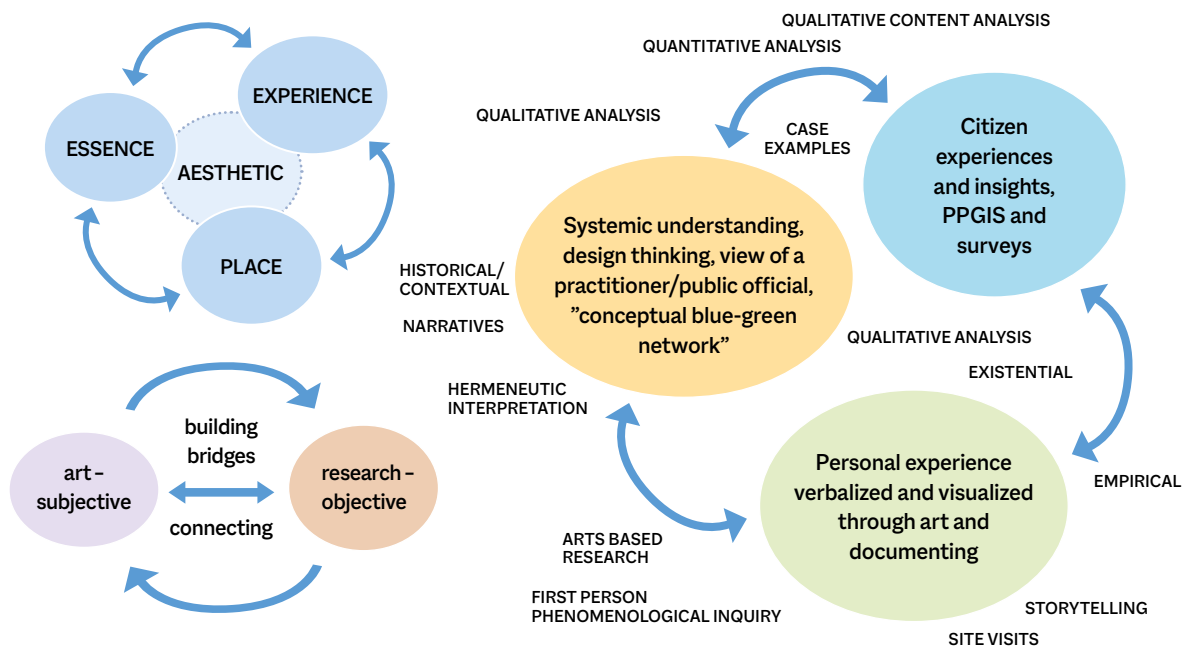
⁴⁵ In explorative research (Kyrö, Hägg & Peltonen 2013, pp. 291-293), an inductive, data-oriented process of discovery includes a holistic approach and openness as well as a drive to look for similarities, and theory will emerge from data.

Familiarizing oneself with the societal context of the time in history that the designs were created, as well as the policies that followed, is helpful in depicting the embedded contextual meanings. It is a *contextual* analysis of sorts, with views on history complementing other approaches, to create the story of a city's green area in question as part of the story of the city. *Storytelling* in the form of creative writing is practiced, and others' narratives are analyzed, to understand the experience and essence of the selected places. In that sense, a *hermeneutic interpretation* of text is drawn upon. *Literary reviews* and deep dives into phenomenological texts have been useful in developing theory. Theories, methods and concepts are tested against real-life phenomena in landscape architecture. Information is also gained through selected interviews.

The tradition of *narrative research* (Heikkinen 2010), albeit not explicitly utilized, is implicitly linked with the aims of this study, in its recognition and exploration of the significances of human actions and phenomena constructed in different narratives. The different stories from various viewpoints that build up the third chapter in this research are in a way all narratives of sorts, stories which each have their protagonist with their own intrinsic logic and which construct the understanding of the green urban landscapes examined. The narratives in this research can roughly be divided into contextual narratives (sections 3.2. and 3.3.), experiential narratives (3.4) and explicit narratives or 'key narratives' of sorts. The last ones can be called narratives of meaning (3.5), as well, due to their publically targeted meaning-making purpose and the section of the analysis framework that they represent and make visible, the underlying meanings as an invisible element.

Some methods were considered and then rejected or used as inspiration rather than a consistent methodology. Familiarization with the methods of IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009) and *case study research* (Yin 2014) was of interest and relevance in the process. IPA has mainly been applied in psychology and personal narratives that are gathered in interviews. In a way, however, the qualitative interpretation of open-ended responses to the citizen questionnaires such as the National Urban Park Maptionnaire survey that forms one section of the study's data, is akin to its methods. When reading the answers, the main principles of the IPA were kept in mind. The aim is to enter into the participant's lifeworld by letting them express themselves in their own terms (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009, pp. 65-67). The ideas of non-judgmental and open listening to what is said without preconceptions, and refraining from conclusions or over-interpretations that are not directly emerging from the narrators' account, are surely principles that can and should be applied to any interpretation of answers to specific questions. However, the semi-structured interviews and other IPA methods were not possible or practical to apply directly in this study.

The methods examined during the process included the *case study methodology* (Yin 2014). During the course of the research, it became clear,



■ Figure 16. Feedback loops of views, approaches and research methodologies. Essence is interpreted through experiences, which in turn construct the idea of an essence. The process interprets and creates places. The aesthetic dimension is in the background as implicitly intrinsic to the evaluation of phenomena, in its wider understanding (e.g. Sepänmaa) binding together the experienced essentialities of a place. First-person phenomenological method, including art as a method of making visible experience, analysis of case examples and the experiential knowledge of the survey respondents all contribute to a phenomenology-informed and -inspired model of a methodology that hermeneutically interprets ideas verbalized in text and/or visualized in designs and reality as well as narratives thereof. These feedback loops are filtered through a practitioner's experience, seeking to connect art and research, the particular and the general. Illustration by the author 2019.

however, that the actual case study methodology used in social science, among others, is not aimed for in this study, where cases are used as examples and specimens to illustrate some points, aiming to lead to a contribution to landscape architectural theory. The role of the case examples in this study is to enrich the development of a theoretical model rather than to study the cases per se, for example, in a comparative manner. The case study method as a sole method to gather and analyze data would require a consistent and premeditated evaluation process, unsuitable for the approach used, where different ways of depicting experience are mixed and tested against each other, trying to achieve a synthesis with representative examples, rather than to fit something into a premeditated model. Some elements of case study methodology are, however, made use of, such as rootedness in praxis and real-life situations.

The theoretical framework consists primarily of phenomenology, starting with the Husserlian concepts of essence and phenomenological reduction, through Heidegger's discussion of being(-in-the-world), Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the body as a main medium to interact with surroundings and ending with the later implications and interpretations of phenomenological approaches and methods in different disciplines. The theoretical frame of reference is discussed in more depth in chapter 2. As a result, phenomenological methods (Seamon 1991, 2000; Varto 1992a,b; Perttula & Latomaa 2008; Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009; Toikkanen & Virtanen 2018) are central to the study.⁴⁶ Characteristically, in phenomenological research, multiple types of methods are made use of, complementing each other. In this study, as well, various phenomenological methods are made use of, including *first-person*, *empirical*, *hermeneutic phenomenological* and *existential* ones.

1.5.3 Phenomenological methods and their application

In the following, some phenomenological methods are explored in more detail, indicating how they are used in the study. The so-called phenomenological method is essentially immersive. More than an explicitly defined method, it is a range of different methods and a way of reading and understanding phenomena. According to David Seamon's account of specific phenomenological methods, there are three core methods for using phenomenology in research; the *existential*, *hermeneutic* (von Eckartsberg 1998) and *first-person approach* (Seamon 2000a, pp. 12-17, 2000b), all of which are made use of in the study. There are also autobiographical phenomenological accounts that fall into the category of first person phenomenological accounts, such as the "narrative-poetic" form (Finlay 2012a).

Phenomenology-based methods have been developed mostly in the field of psychology (Perttula & Latomaa 2008; Toikkanen & Virtanen 2018), and the psychologists associated with the so-called Duquesne School of Phenomenological Psychology have sought to establish methods for conducting empirical phenomenological research (Seamon 2000b). There are also examples in educational research, among others. According to Arslan, Yildirim and Yildirim (2015), for instance, phenomenological studies are conducted in educational settings. The main purposes of phenomenological research in these settings are to seek reality from individuals' narratives of their experiences and feelings, and to produce in-depth descriptions of the phenomenon, and they generally embody the lived experience, perception and feelings of participants about a phenomenon (Arslan, Yildirim & Yildirim 2015). As the phenomenological approach in the study aims for a deep understanding of green urban landscapes as parts of peoples' lifeworlds, it appears appropriate,

⁴⁶ Phenomenological concepts and ideas in understanding landscape are discussed in more detail in section 2.2.2, and phenomenological methods in the following section 1.5.3.

albeit unconventional, to apply some principles used mainly in psychological research to interpret these landscapes as well as the views of the people that have designed them in the past or experience them in the present.

It is characteristic of public outdoor space that there are multiple and diverse groups of ‘users’ or ‘experiencers,’ whose experience is equally valuable. For one thing, a tourist and an inhabitant might experience things in a different way, starting from the length and frequency of the period(s) of time they are exposed to what they are experiencing. The factors that define the experience include aspects that depend both on the person experiencing and on the objective qualities of the place. How do we thus tap into this vague phenomenon of experience in the first place?

The study benefits, among other methods, from the so-called first-person approach that phenomenology provides, assuming that my own experience of those places is a specimen among other experiences and as such as valid – at the same time acknowledging the obvious limitations. For this reason, the process is made as transparent and accounted for as possible, and others’ experiences are included. As part of the first-person inquiry, artistic intervention is used for exploration.⁴⁷ Instead of art being the target and subject of research, art can also be a method of doing research. In a phenomenological approach, art may tell stories and depict a personal experience of a place, and through art the essential characteristics and experiences of places can be made visible for others.

To test the findings about landscape and green areas against a more representative sample, they are complemented by the accounts of different documents and narratives, including map-based Public Participation GIS -generated data about Helsinki waterfronts and green areas. People’s preferences in terms of green areas were asked for, in order to grasp what they find essential for the Helsinki story. The findings thereof became, towards the end of the research process, a crucial source of information, and helped in painting a fuller picture of the experience of Helsinki green areas.⁴⁸

What can be learnt from these experiences, both my own and other people’s, either of which can be preferred over the other, can be generalized to some extent to concern other similar landscapes, although it must be kept in mind that they represent the singular. As such, their contribution to the research’s phenomenological character is quite specific to their particularities. While an atmosphere, for instance, is invisible and non-tangible, the factors that contribute to the feeling of it include concrete and tangible objects. Similarly, the experience itself cannot be perceived by others, but the representations, narratives and accounts thereof can be analyzed and understood by those sharing a language.

⁴⁷ Jaakkola & Janik 2015; Harvard 2015a,b. The art project and its process of becoming are discussed in more detail in sections 1.5.4 and 1.6.2.

⁴⁸ The method and outcomes of the project are disseminated in section 3.5.5.

At the heart of the *existential-phenomenological* approach, a useful approach for the purposes of this study, is “the analysis of protocol data provided by research [subjects] in response to a question posed by the researcher that pinpoints and guides their recall and reflection” (von Eckartsberg 1998 p. 21). Von Eckartsberg refers to in-depth interviews that are a much more common way of gathering data in humanities such as psychology than environmental research (see e.g. Latomaa 2008, pp. 17-85 and Lehtomaa 2008, pp. 163-194). In existential-phenomenological research, the basis for generalization is the specific experiences of specific individuals and groups involved in actual situations and places (von Eckartsberg, 1998, p. 4). It involves gathering descriptive accounts from respondents regarding their experience of the phenomenon and carefully analyzing them with the aim of identifying any underlying commonalities and patterns. The existential-phenomenological approach makes the assumption of a certain equivalence of meaning for the respondents whose experience the researcher probes; that “people in a shared cultural and linguistic community name and identify their experience in a consistence and shared manner” (von Eckartsberg, 1998, p. 15), which in turn involves the careful selection of the respondents.

It is far more common for a phenomenological study of experience to use human contact such as interviews or, for instance, one’s own reflections, than, for instance map-based surveys such as PPGIS (Public Participation Geographical Information System) methods, the data collected by which is used as one of the data sources. The possibilities to ask more questions for deeper analysis to recall and reflect or to be able to connect the lifeworld of a particular respondent are, obviously, highly limited if not non-existent when using online queries and map-based tools. On the other hand, the data collected is immediate and independent, unaffected by the situation created by the interviewer as it is rendered anonymous by a digital interface, or irrelevant variables such as personal preferences or attitudes towards the persona of the interviewer. Other irrelevant variables can, however, come into play, because the situational context of responding is by no means controllable, not to mention issues connected with abilities or inabilities to use these tools and defects in the tools themselves and their usability. It is also possible to gather and analyze far greater masses of data using digital map-based tools than it ever was by interviews.

For the purposes of this study, which makes use of multiple methods but has a phenomenological undertone, there is a focus on qualitative analysis of the experiential accounts of the respondents’ free-range responses, where people were allowed to verbalize their mapped responses. They are complemented by quantitative data based on the number of mapped responses, to get an idea of their volume and comparability. As a method, the qualitative study comes close to depicting descriptive accounts of specific places in an interview - albeit with a silent interviewer merely listening instead of reacting

interactively. The careful selection of respondents, of course, is not possible and in fact not intended in such a survey, because what is aimed at is a generalization by way of a representative sample of a loosely defined group such as the inhabitants of a city or people with an interest in a particular subject. The selection is implicit, as those who take time to respond to the survey show an interest in the subject-matter of the survey by doing so. Thus, the selection of the respondents and consequently, the way cultures or languages are shared are self-defined but not restricted, and the common denominator is an interest in spending time being exposed to and expressing an opinion on the issue at hand. The language used in the query is either inviting or disengaging to an individual, and one might argue that those that already share and understand cultural concepts embedded in the preface are more likely to respond. Whether or not this method makes the research phenomenological or existential-phenomenological seems less relevant to the validity of the outcome than the sincerity of the way the responses are analyzed. The possibility to gain insightful data about how people experience particular places is valuable. It can be stated that the responses can also be regarded as representative of typologies of certain landscape places, while being cautious of possible false generalizations.

Hermeneutic phenomenological methods, in turn, emphasize the interpreting and attentive ‘reading’ of phenomena. Seamon (2000a, p. 15) mentions the work of Norwegian architect Thiis-Evensen (1987) as a useful example of a hermeneutic phenomenological approach in environment-behavior research. It demonstrates one researcher’s effort to look at a particular kind of ‘text’ – buildings in many different times and places – and identify a series of experiential themes. Some characteristics of hermeneutical processes have much in common with the approach used in this study, such as the sensitivity to let the story unfold from people and places, and the attempt to interpret them from their internal logic. In this study, the writings of the designers are read against their creations, and those creations themselves as well as experiences thereof, are interpreted and sought to be understood as deeply as possible, from their contextual settings to the other invisible factors that have made and are making them what they are.

In *first-person phenomenological inquiry*, the researcher uses their own firsthand experience of the phenomenon as a basis for examining its specific characteristics and qualities. In phenomenology, the researcher seeks to be open to the phenomenon and allow it to show itself in its fullness and complexity through their own direct involvement and understanding. Benefiting from firsthand, grounded contact with the phenomenon as it is experienced by the researcher, the approach can be called *radically empirical* (Seamon 2000a, p. 9). The understanding arises directly from the researcher’s personal sensibility and awareness rather than from the usual secondhand constructions of positivist science such as theory and concepts, hypotheses,

predetermined methodological procedures, statistics, etc. Working with phenomenological methods, the lived examples enrich the understanding. For example, a person with disability can describe how their loss of upright posture relates to Merleau-Ponty's broader notions of "bodily intentionality" and the transformation of "corporeal style" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 76; Seamon 2000). The work of Violich (1985), in turn, examines the qualities of place. Using such techniques as sketching, mapping, and journal entries, he immersed himself in each place for several days and sought to "read' each as a whole" (Violich 1985, p. 113). Norberg-Schulz's account of Rome in his *Genius loci* (1980) is akin to this approach.⁴⁹ This understanding is derived from a world of one, in this case a world of self; however, involving the worlds of others requires other methods, such as the existential method. In this study, the performance character's exploration of a place and an experience, as well as the documented account of it in moving images represent the first person phenomenological approach.

Phenomenological methods are not necessarily explicit, and although Husserl claimed that it is possible "to study experiences rigorously and systematically," he "did not give detailed instructions on how to conduct such research" (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016, p. 360). The methods are, however, used in economics, sociology and management studies besides psychology, for instance in a recent study (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016), where boundaries between different phases of opportunity processes [for entrepreneurs] were investigated with empirical phenomenology, using documentary videography and personal interviews to gather data. The study looked into how "different phases of the diverse opportunity processes evolve as an interplay between entrepreneurs' actions and the insights embedded within their experiences" (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016, p. 351).

Empirical phenomenology has been utilized in several social research disciplines, and as a research method it gives access to individual experiences, helping understand how a significant series of events and sequences in peoples' lives appears to them (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016, pp. 359, 374). The method overcomes the problem of internal and external viewpoints in science and the tendency to focus either on experience or behavior (Cohen & Daniels 2001, cited in Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016). Investigating both the internal (an entrepreneur's experiences with opportunity processes) and the external (behavior, actions) makes it possible to understand the interplay between them. This means that "the actions that are taken are representations of an entrepreneur's inner world (insights) and can be reached via their

⁴⁹ Photography or hand made drawings and paintings have been used to describe, interpret, study and document spatial and haptic experiences, including watercolors of landscapes made on the spot, or croquis drawings of the human body that seek to capture an *essence* of an object or a moment in time and space (see appendix 2). See also Cullen (1961).

experiences” (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016, p. 360). To understand the nature of experience, empirical phenomenology investigates both the inner world of appearances, and the outer, scientifically captured structures of reality (O’Brien & Opie, 2001, cited in Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016). An actor’s direct understanding of experiences and the assigned meanings make a *first-order* construct, based on which the researcher creates a *second-order* construct by interpreting and relating them to the research aims (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016, p. 360).

In phenomenological research, the actions are seen as bridges between the inner and the outer world, between what is perceived, and on the other hand, what lies beneath the perceptible, and what is manifested through it. This study explores specific landscapes and the possibility to analyze them phenomenologically, and the ways they appear and manifest themselves in different documentations and narratives. Examining the bridge between the visible and invisible, it considers the manifestations of the inner world of landscapes and their analysis in their outer appearances. In this study, the *first-order* construct consists of elements on many levels; there is the actual landscape, the experience of it and the account of that experience. Written anonymous accounts of survey respondents about their experience, the author’s own experience and the documentation thereof account for the places in question as a first-order construct. The second-order construct, in turn, is the understanding and systematization/reconstruction of the knowledge gained in the process, as well as the interplay between phenomenological concepts, experiential dimensions and what is known about analyzing landscape, together making a platform to interpret these findings.

The phenomenological method, according to Varto (1992b, pp. 86-90) consists of the following stages: 1. Singular phenomena are silently and insightfully (*oivaltavasti*) perceived free from preconceptions, disseminated and described. 2. The particular is looked at as a qualitative example of the general. 3. Significant relationships and characteristics within the phenomenon and outward to others are discovered. 4. How it appears and manifests itself, for instance as a part of a totality, is forced to be revealed, intuitively. 5. Signifying relations are constructed in the researcher’s consciousness. 6. The way of being is resolved; in reality, conceptually or in the imagination. 7. The not-given is unveiled, interpreting the invisible meanings, recognizing uncertainties. These findings are reported in a descriptive manner. The pre-interpretation and pre-understanding as well as the way the understanding has increased in the process, are made visible (Varto 1992b, pp. 111-114).

Along these lines, this study seeks to make visible how the phenomenon of green-blue sequences as part of urban landscape manifest themselves, what the characteristics are and *how they can be studied*, with the tools described above, what their way of being is, and so forth. At the same time, *landscape analysis* is studied making use of these principles and developed towards a

phenomenology-inspired form. The understanding of the structure of the essence and experience of these landscapes is increased and its elements made visible in the landscape analysis framework. The framework is iterated according to and along with the increasing understanding of the phenomena and their interrelations. The phenomena to be studied are in fact *both* the case examples that exemplify green urban landscape *and* a landscape analysis that aims for a phenomenological reading. The kind of data is collected and used which provides material for understanding both of these phenomena. The principles described by Varto above are used to analyze the data when applicable, for instance for the PPGIS survey responses or a historical context of a place.

In conclusion, the study makes use of all the methods mentioned above to an extent: the *first person* in exploring the landscapes through first-hand experience as a bodily subject, i.e. the *(Dis)connected* video piece and accounts of site visits; the *existential* in involving others' experiences and ideas; and the *hermeneutic phenomenological* as an exercise in the interpretation of different kinds of texts. Following a key aspect of all hermeneutical work that there are many ways to interpret the text, the analysis framework opens up an analytical horizon for green urban landscape, manifesting an effort but simultaneously an acceptance that "interpretation is never complete but always underway" (Seamon 1991, p. 17).

1.5.4 **Arts-based research as a method in the study**

There are artistic dimensions in the study, used as tools for the exploration of experience in an outdoor space.⁵⁰ Their role as arts-based research is described in this section, and the processes of the artistic intervention (the performance character Dis and the film *(Dis)connected*) are described in more detail in section 1.6.2.

Art, in its capacity to be "both immediate and lasting" (Leavy 2018 p. 3), can grab our attention, provoke, touch, creating a response that is visceral, emotional and psychological, before it is intellectual. Artworks involving more senses than one may be particularly captivating for a shared experience.⁵¹ According to Leavy, art may have unmatched potential for deep engagement and

⁵⁰ This is mentioned earlier in sections 1.3 and 1.5.3.

⁵¹ *The Visitors* by Ragnar Kjartansson, which the researcher experienced first in Boston in September 2014 and again on January 3rd 2020, in Helsinki, might be used as a reference. This artwork not only manages to build a serendipitous bridge between the two cities of the case examples but above all to evoke strong and seemingly shared emotions in its observers. It is a fully engaging multiscreen video piece despite its considerable length. In the work, people playing an instrument and singing, participate in an improvised piece of music, each from a different room. At the end, they walk together into a haze of a pastoral landscape.

has unlimited potential to educate (Leavy 2018).⁵² Arts-based research (ABR) is a transdisciplinary approach to knowledge-building that combines the tenets, that is, principles/doctrines generally held to be true, of the creative arts in research contexts (Leavy 2018 p. 4). The practices of ABR adapt themselves to address research questions holistically, and researchers engage in art-making as a way of knowing. These practices may draw on any art form and representational forms that include but are not limited to literary and performative forms, visual art, audiovisual forms and multimethod forms. Other terms are also used to describe artistic forms of research, for instance “performative social sciences” (Leavy 2018).

ABR is grounded in a philosophy, suggested by Gerber et al. (2012, p. 41), which includes sensory, kinesthetic and imaginary knowing and recognizes, among other things, that values preverbal ways of knowing. It is also characteristic of ABR to be one of the methods in interdisciplinary research and methodologically pluralistic efforts, instead of standing alone as the sole method (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018, p. 104), which is in line with the multiple method approach of this study. Finnish ABR has a theoretical emphasis on embodied phenomenology and sensorial knowledge, looking at experience through questions related to embodiment and founded on phenomenology (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018, p. 106). ABR offers ways to tap into what would otherwise be inaccessible, making new connections and interconnections, exploring old research questions in new ways and helping people seek and/or think differently (Leavy 2018, p. 9). ABR explores, describes and explains, forging micro-macro connections between personal lives and larger contexts.

The performance character that the author uses to explore and discover, and the narrative turned into fiction and personalizing the case example cities and their green sequences (see chapter 3, story of two cities) seem to fall into the category of arts-based research. They have the same objectives, making subjective experience visible to others and inviting them to share it. They aim to be holistic, evocative and provocative, raising awareness and empathy, by pointing out problems and asking for attention. ABR also includes marginalized perspectives and uses participatory approaches, just as Dis in making contact with the park-goers. The ABR researcher *thinks like an artist* and a public intellectual, involving many characteristics associated with art-making, such as intuition, symbolic, conceptual and metaphorical thinking, creativity

⁵² Written stories, for one, are powerful in conveying information and attitudes, and reading stimulates our brain, develops thinking, and facilitates creating images in a unique way, with a rhythm that is under our own control. As such it can hardly be replaced by verbal storytelling such as audio books (Lindstedt 2019), although as a social practice verbal storytelling has historically been and remains important.

and ethics (Leavy 2018, pp. 11-12).⁵³ In ABR, a researcher alters themselves as an instrument of the research process and project (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018, p. 104). In the same way, I use myself, my body and voice as the Dis character to gain more understanding about the landscapes I study.

ABR is for delivering content with a larger goal beyond making art for art's sake: it has a message to convey. It is judged by its usefulness rather than its mere craft of artistry, although aesthetics can improve its reception (Leavy 2018). The field of ABR is astonishingly wide and gives room for multifunctionality and meta-analysis. In Leavy's edited handbook close to 40 chapters describe the discipline of ABR in contexts from the natural sciences to teaching and beyond, which is interesting in terms of my own research, as it has features from many of the arts described. In chapter 4, "The Performative movement in Social Science," the authors use the term "research-based art," which, in my mind, might even better describe the *(Dis)connected* film that uses performative work to explore societal issues, also aiming for change in physical conditions. Poetry, writing with a lyrical nature, "narrative inquiry" as a research method, in turn applies to the fictional "story of two cities." In general, as mentioned in the foreword, I aim at creating something "analytical yet poetic."

Snowber (in Leavy 2018) points out moving and dancing as "embodied ways of inquiry." Embodiment means research with one's body as instrument, theorizing from that basis. To describe how ABR is used as a method in this study, it is also important to note that Dis's explorations are based on improvised movements and actions that convey the way she interprets the surroundings to others. Her reactions, feelings and moods are expressed by movements of the body.⁵⁴ The dialogue as well as mute mime in film are forms of theater. Dis only talks when there are others present: there is no monologue. The character is immersed in the landscape and speaking about the landscape, documenting it. In a way the landscape and its physical features⁵⁵ become a performance character and a dialogue partner in the mime parts without spoken word. The contact with the landscape, for one, and people, for another, is about exploring them, and letting them speak.

53 Interestingly, "thinks like an artist" was the expression used by Barbara Epstein in May 2015 when describing the *(Dis)connected* art happening in *LOEBblog* at Harvard University website (Harvard 2015a).

54 When she (and the author) accidentally notices the great echo under the bridge, she starts to sing, using her voice as a medium firstly to attract visitors to talk to her, and secondly, to explore the space that she in fact cannot see because of the full body cloak she is wearing. She also transforms into a living chair, by putting a folding chair inside her cloak and sitting on it, thus disguising furniture within her (outfit, which in fact is her) and disguising herself as furniture, at the same time. The boundaries between the creature and her physical equipment are blurred.

55 The bridge, Route 9, the gazebo a.k.a. Round House Shelter, the phragmites vegetation, etc.

Practices of ABR within academic contexts in Finland and elsewhere are relatively new ways to approach scientific knowing. Art has an “indefinite knowledge characteristic” (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018, p. 102) as opposed to the accuracy and explicitness that is generally connected with science. This is also because artistic, visual, multisensorial and practice-based knowledge are difficult to articulate, especially in terms of what sort of knowledge they introduce to the field of research (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018, p. 103). They operate on a different level than traditional research, in unpredictable and unspeakable realms of knowledge. According to Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández (2018) there has been debate about the singularity and particularity of this kind of qualitative knowledge based on experimental research data. However, this kind of material is not subjective, personal or impossible to share, out of other people’s reach, but quite the opposite, as the nature of artistic material is to be exposed to the public and shared, aiming to communicate ideas and sentiments to the audience. The deeply singular or personal can be claimed to be the most easily understood and emotionally lived for others as well. In fact, “personal narration and reflection combined with conceptual and theoretical analysis can afford others access” (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018, p. 103) to this kind of experiential data, and subjective experiences may become commonly shared, at least partially, as a tool for understanding *the world of the other*.

It is worth noting that ABR is different from Artistic research (AR) (Suominen, Kallio-Tavin & Hernández-Hernández 2018): AR is researching self, as in artistic processes and artistic phenomena, while ABR uses self as a tool to study a wider interest in phenomena within their sociocultural context. ABR is not necessarily or typically solely interested in artistic matters. Although skill and craftsmanship of art, mastering of a particular technique to realize the art piece is required to execute such research, it is about societal, cultural, political, philosophical, psychological, environmental and educational phenomena that are researched through and with art. In the case of a short film, for instance, this craftsmanship includes directing, storyboarding, shooting and editing a film. Creating an interesting plot and a credible character requires sensitivity for content that speaks to others. A film, in addition, is usually a group effort - there is a team working on it, which is often a practical necessity. Although there is someone with an idea, a director, main character and script, to one of whom the film is usually accredited, others add their own invaluable creative contribution.

The way ABR was used in this study, bears the following elements: an environmental/social phenomenon, concern for the condition of cultural heritage, and experimenting with a social dimension, i.e. people’s responses to the research subject (the landscape) and the character. In the *(Dis)connected* project, the ABR-related method is manifested in the primary interest in the

park environment and its effect on people, their reflections about it and their response to the character. The study includes an explanation about the artistic process and self-reflection (section 1.6.2), which, in turn, is characteristic of AR; hence, there are characteristics of both ways of doing research. However, an increased understanding of the subject is aimed for. It can be said that the researcher has engaged in ABR, although not entirely knowingly and consciously at the time.

1.5.5 **The world of other people - PPGIS as a data-gathering tool in the study**

Gaining information on other people's experiences happens only by the documentation they allow, and in a way one is always relying on assumptions when interpreting others' verbalizations or sentiments.⁵⁶ In the case of public space such as a green area, there are multiple others that use the space, a vast array of different experiencers and preferences: in other words, a great potential to take into account, in order to understand something essential about those places. For this reason, and to complement the beforementioned methodology and other methods used, tools such as map-based inquiries are also explored (see section 3.5.5). This knowledge is then looked at in phenomenological terms, through experience and essence. This section introduces the participatory map-based tool as a method of gathering data in this research.

The results of a map-based online survey are used in the study to better understand the experience and preferences of the public about Helsinki green spaces. In Helsinki, a survey utilizing a Public Participation Geographical Information System (PPGIS) about green areas was made in conjunction with the participatory pilot project around the National Urban Park⁵⁷ Initiative. The Helsinki City Urban Environment Division commissioned the survey from Mapita Ltd using the Maptionnaire tool in 2017. The data (markings on a map and open answers) are studied in both quantitative (statistic, heatmaps) and qualitative terms, using methods suitable for each particular issue. Other map-based surveys conducted by the city are reflected upon alongside the results of this main survey, when necessary. The results as well as the further details about the survey are disseminated in chapter 3, as this section focuses on the method and its use in this study.

Public Participation GIS, also known as Soft GIS, is a tool for gaining insights into how people experience places, by gathering what they share about

⁵⁶ At the same time, the self, I, might be one of the people experiencing those places, and an other to those who are not me. They are in an experiential sense others than the self although they are of the same human flesh, so to speak, and the way they experience things is probably in many ways akin to my own. Their experience needs to be interpreted in some way to the self to be understood.

⁵⁷ A concept introduced in the Finnish land use legislation by the Ministry of Environment to preserve specific landscapes, referred to also as the NUP.

them; their stories, opinions, tacit knowledge and preferences, and as such it complements phenomenological methods mapping individual experience. In PPGIS, place-based data are integrated into existing systems, such as statistical information or mapped and/or planned proposals (Kahila-Tani 2018). This provides information that is both map-based and experiential, in a way combining quantitative and qualitative data - providing statistics with peoples' own conceptions and perceptions of their environment. According to Kahila-Tani (2016), PPGIS fosters individual participation, as opposed to traditional collective participation methods which often turn private judgments into public ones. At public meetings, for instance, interest groups with an agenda may define what is felt to be suitable to express, and the 'mass opinion' becomes a discourse coalition of sorts where different opinions may not be tolerated. In individual participation, by contrast, peoples' opinions are not determined by those around them, there is less aggregation and decentralization, and diversity of opinion is fostered by freedom to express without peer pressure.

One might argue that the relevance of this kind of a method relies significantly on the data gathered; besides a representative sample, also acknowledging the biases created by the selection (or non-selection) of the respondent samples, and the goals set for the study. The former may define the responses based on values that are already inherently shared, and the latter may define the emphasis of the answers. What is being asked defines what the answers focus on. The results should not be used in an eclectic way out of context - which is, however, true for any other empirical research findings. One might also question whether it provides accurate information about what people *do or feel* rather than what they *think they should feel* or that they would *like to do* instead of what they really do. Another critique might be to question whether the place-sensitive data is in fact always accurate. According to the author's own experience as a planner, it seems evident that peoples' ability to relate real surroundings to the geographical representations thereof, such as maps, varies greatly.

Brown and Kytta (2014) in a study of the application of Public Participation GIS in conservation planning consider a significant barrier to its use to be uncertainty about the quality of the spatial data generated, and recall the integration of PPGIS data into spatial models for spatial accuracy and completeness. In Participatory mapping (PM, which PPGIS belongs to) challenges include achieving clarity in PM purpose and building trust in the process (Brown & Kytta 2014; Kytta 2018). Technology influences PM usability and user behavior, and developing and implementing appropriate technology is one of the critical issues for its success (Brown & Kytta 2014). Validity and credibility issues come to play in all research that relies on verbalized and documented data about experience. According to Brown (2017), the special strength of PPGIS is not in generating spatial data that identify physical

landscape features, but its capacity to generate spatially explicit, subjective descriptors of place. For most PPGIS applications, the relevance, representativeness and credibility of the participants to the mapping purpose is central to effective PPGIS outcomes. The validity of PPGIS results can be assessed from the perspectives of validity-as-credibility and validity-as-accuracy when evaluating the quality of the spatial data generated (Brown 2017, pp. 41-42).

Nonetheless, the digital applications of information posted on a map are so far among the best ways to gather site-specific information. Framing the questions in a way that gives as little room for error as possible, without simultaneously influencing people's preferences, could keep the information as valid as possible. Methods where participants are simultaneously forced to *name and pinpoint* a place, could eliminate or at least decrease the potential margin of error due to an inability to read maps. The potential flaw in data accuracy is assumed to be the less significant statistically the more substantial the sample group. The results of PPGIS surveys are increasingly applied to the design of cities in praxis. The inclusiveness and accuracy of conclusions drawn upon this kind of data are critical when they guide planning and design decisions. As a method, a public survey with map-based tools is the more useful the better the questions guide towards explicit outcomes. By using samples that are as representative as possible of the general public, the validity of results can be increased.

1.6 The research process

1.6.1 Overview of the process

The scope of the research has evolved along with the author's professional development in the course of the years in praxis, and the focus has shifted from aesthetics to urban planning related issues and green networks. Art explorations are entangled in the process. The research process is on one hand, a development of theory and a research approach drawing on phenomenology. On the other, it is about applying thinking and concepts to specific places, and studying them with different tools. It is grounded on literature in phenomenology and its interpreters (Husserl 1901, 1907, 1995; Heidegger 1926, 1955, 1962, 1971, 2006, 2013; Merleau-Ponty 1962, 1964, 1968, 1998; Bachelard 1969; Norberg-Schulz 1980; Tilley 1994; Pallasmaa 1996; Foster 1998, etc.) as well as writings and discussions on aesthetic and landscape experience (e.g. Meinig 1979; Kinnunen 1980; Haapala 1995; Appleton 1996; von Bonsdorff 1996; Berleant 1997, etc.).

The theoretical background was mostly laid out along with explorations into literature on landscape theories as well as those on phenomenology and aesthetics at the University of Virginia in 2000-2001, and shortly thereafter, including an article exploring the encounters of landscape architecture and

phenomenology.⁵⁸ The complexity of the landscape concept as well as its use in different disciplines became evident during these explorations. Consequently, it seemed impossible to use a single methodology or approach to conduct inclusive research with the complex, ontological and primary questions of landscape's essential being or experienced qualities. The wide range of landscape studies became evident in 2004 along with the Integrative Planning and Research of Sustainable Landscapes class at the University of Wageningen, the Netherlands (drawing on Tress & Tress 2001), as did the challenges of integrating different disciplines in a meaningful dialogue.⁵⁹

During the process, landscapes, green areas sequences and park systems have been approached from different ends and their connections sought, from the phenomenological, theoretical point of view (Jaakkola-Kivinen 2002), and from the praxis-oriented, systemic point of view, analyzing Helsinki as an example of a green city (Jaakkola 2012).⁶⁰ Along the course of studying Helsinki's overall sustainability for the article, the notion of the importance of the conscious planning of green systems as part of urban structure was reinforced. Working on these very different two articles also raised a consciousness of the potential gap that might lie between systemic planning thinking and the experiential accounts, as well as the necessity to connect them in some meaningful way to increase the integrated understanding of urban landscapes.

In addition, since the research was already initiated some time ago, an approach that was fairly undiscovered at the time, has diversified. Studying experience has evolved greatly since the beginning of the research process; hence, the data has also needed updating. New possible references have emerged, and, as keeping up with the widening range of literature has proved challenging, the conviction of the necessity of a multimethod and cross-disciplinary, perhaps a cross-artistic approach, has also strengthened. The fact that the research has been conducted as a sideline to other endeavors, including a career as a practicing landscape architect and city planner, means that the rhythm of the research cannot fail to affect the approach to the scope, which has been in close interaction with my other lifeworlds.

Significant traits for the research were the explorations into case studies conducted at the University of Virginia about the Washington D.C. green areas

⁵⁸ *Phenomenology as a means of understanding landscape* (Jaakkola-Kivinen 2002) published by the University of Art and Design (currently part of Aalto ARTS).

⁵⁹ During the years that followed, the research was largely on hold and replaced by landscape architectural and city planning praxis and art-making, until the Loeb fellowship in 2014-2015 allowed for further explorations on the subject, shortly after the first part of the Helsinki Green Areas Strategy had been published (Jaakkola et al. 2013).

⁶⁰ The first draft of the article about Helsinki's greenness and urban form (in Beatley 2012) was laid out in 2004 and a revised version was made in 2011-2012.



■ Figures 17 and 18. The real and the imagined, the visible and the invisible, on the Blue Ridge Parkway, which is simultaneously, on the surface, a leisure track for drivers and, in its invisible memory, an ancient Cherokee trail. Still images from the Blue Ridge Waltz short film by the author 2001.

system,⁶¹ including the discovery of green systems and their history as part of urbanization in cities and their situational context as visible outcomes of ideologies, of modern and postmodern thought. Landscape as a tourist attraction was another realm of exploration, within which video filming and editing were used as a media to convey a message about landscape architectural content, a method that later became a way of exploring the case examples of the research. These explorations resulted in a short film,⁶² combining music with a rhythmic account of an experience of driving on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The film depicts the visible in tourism scenery, and the poignant knowledge that lies underneath, behind the seen.

The concepts of Visible and Invisible, Meaning and Place became central to the study as a result of these explorations, combining the aforementioned traits. As in the case of the two landscapes that this study mainly relies on as case examples, also in a landscape primarily premeditated for the tourist such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, there are multiple levels of experience and thus of interpretation. Along with the landscape explorations for the film, the juxtaposition of visible and invisible aspects of a leisure landscape led into considerations of the two faces of landscapes. Green areas in motion have since also been a theme of interest in the research, as the experience of landscape is always dynamic and defined by the movement of the body - be the method of movement rapid and technology-aided or slow and muscular.

⁶¹ For the classes of Elizabeth Meyer (Theory of Landscape architecture) and Timothy Beatley (Sustainable communities), as well as the explorations of the moving image in Earl Mark's Moviemaking and Animation class.

⁶² Blue Ridge Waltz (2001), the synopsis of which is in appendix 3.

The latest steps towards a multimethods approach were taken during the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard in 2014-2015, where the objective was above all to cross-pollinate between the arts of landscape architecture, city planning, visual art and (musical) performance. Although doctorate-related research was not the main focus, the abundance of inspiration provided by the academic setting and professional context, the influence of the academic community and space for creativity had other effects on the research approach. Professionally it was possible to build layers of knowledge and deeper understanding, including the study of Olmsted's legacy and its present state in reality from an experiential point of view. The connections between health and green environments, that were also a well-discussed topic at Harvard, have been a trait behind the research, and although not directly connected to the final scope, have acted as an important reasoning in the background.⁶³

Revisiting the scope and methodology in 2015, descriptive and interpretive phenomenological approaches that are concerned with lived experience and heuristic research were looked into (Vagle 2014, p. 51), aiming to produce a composite description and creative synthesis of experience. The principles thereof are used in the notation of experiences, akin to the first-person phenomenological approach mentioned in the methodology section. Phenomenological concepts and methods are used in a way that is relevant to understanding the phenomena studied. Various artistic experiments and explorations have been entangled together with professional and research ones. For instance, the performance character Dis and the film *(Dis)connected*⁶⁴ were part of the exploration of how to make (dis)connectivity visible by a disruption in public space, and opened new horizons into making research about experience. Since the making of the short film, improvements have been made, including a pedestrian crossing of a highway that presents a significant obstacle for the continuous enjoyment of the park sequence.

Choosing the case examples is reasoned in more detail in section 1.2.3., but to conclude, the Boston Emerald Necklace was chosen due to its role as a well-known park system that had been of interest to my professional perspective ever since learning about it in 2000. The northern parts that are closer to the city center and the Charles River proved more important than others for the study along the course of the process, albeit also others were visited, including Jamaica Pond, Arnold Arboretum and Franklin Park. Dis's explorations at the Emerald Necklace happened mostly in the Back Bay Fens and Riverway parts of the totality, because they are the most central parts and in a way also the most obscured in terms of what is left of Olmsted's designs, having clear issues around connectivity and services. These parts are used as representative

⁶³ Discussions with experts along the years have supported this view (Julia Africa, Kalevi Korpela, Liisa Tyrväinen, etc.).

⁶⁴ Already touched upon in the methodology section 1.5., especially in 1.5.4 about ABR, and is described in more detail in the following sections 1.6.2, and 3.2.1.

samples of the whole sequence. The whole sequence is not covered, as the samples act as specimens for examining experience and finding out essential features to analyze in a landscape.

Reflections with others have been an enriching part of the process. The researcher gave a short and intensive workshop and lecture class (J-term) at Harvard Graduate School of Design in January 2015 about experiencing blue-green infrastructure. For and during the class, the Emerald Necklace was studied on-site, and thoughts on improving orientation, connections and lighting were further discussed and elaborated with the students. Although those findings and ideas are not used as part of the research, the process helped see the place with different eyes, and urged further exploration of the possibilities of understanding and potentially enhancing the experience of this greenway and its significance and meaning with the help of artistic interventions. The place where it connects, or in fact doesn't connect as intended, to the Charles River (Charlesgate portion) is of particular interest in this sense, because it creates a non-landscape, a forgotten realm of the city, under the highway bridges. The potential of such spaces to draw attention to other issues of importance - the unsustainable lifestyle of a car-dominated culture, the hidden gem of water in the city, or the sea-level rise in the future Boston, were dwelled upon but remain yet to be explored.

To make a reference to the Nordic context, a Finnish counterpart was to be found to study along with the Boston one. The Central Park of Helsinki has some similar elements in its design history, period of initiation and purpose, as well as connectivity and embodiment problems in its current state. As it was important to include a 'blue element' in the same way as in the Emerald Necklace, the Green Fingers totality is considered as well, as an example of a park system comparable to the Boston park system. The importance of the Central Park as a representation of nature in the urban context was reinforced along with the process of the citywide Master Plan (City of Helsinki 2016b) and its objectives to develop the edges of the greenway. Political debate and public opposition influenced the birth of the citizen-originated National Urban Park Initiative. This research uses the survey data of the related public participation pilot project as one of the data sources. In the course of the process, some places found in other Green Fingers, such as the Lapinlahti Psychiatric Hospital area, inspired me more as an artist, and findings thereof for the outcome of the research, the analysis framework, are included in the study.⁶⁵

The outcome of these explorations in the form of a matrix, like the analysis framework that will be presented in the final chapters, may seem surprising for a phenomenological approach that aims for a holistic rather than a segmented understanding of any phenomenon's being-in-the-world. However, many

⁶⁵ Footage on-site for a short film was completed in 2017 but the editing is still in the making as of 2020.

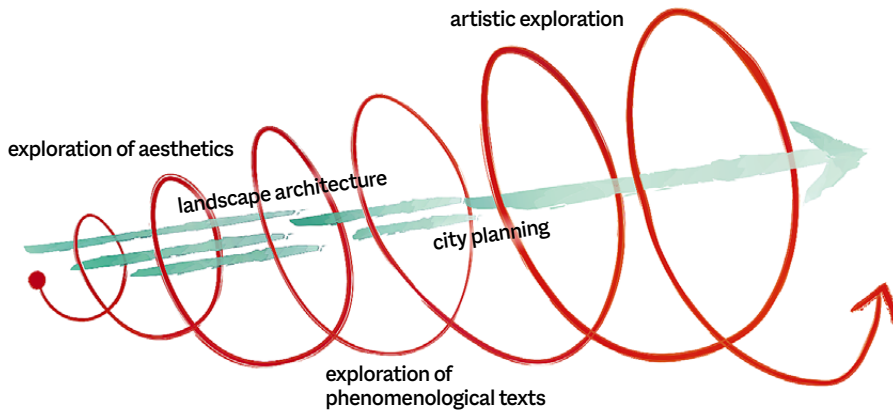
things along the process have led to unexpected traits, and new knowledge has emerged and experiences called to the researcher, serendipities that have spoken to the original quest to get to the core of things and to *understand* landscapes on a profound level. The multilayered nature of the phenomenon of urban green landscape encourages a complex description of its essential characteristics and started at some point to require an analytical framework to be organized into a comprehensible whole.

Furthermore, the temporal dimension of the research itself as a chiasmic evolvment called for the depiction of the research process as a narrative that includes some phases of the personal lifeworld. The approach as narratives embedded in each other includes the idea that certain turns and actors in the story and certain aspects of the landscape exploration reoccur from different angles and viewpoints as the story goes along, including the performance character's role from different points of view.

After the realization that analyzing landscape in phenomenological terms, leading to a meta-analysis of sorts, is in fact the main phenomenon studied, and the actual sites are merely an aid to do so, the framework emerged like a scaffolding to build and support the ambitious aims of understanding phenomenology. Phenomenology appeared as a philosophical thing that presumably is like a palimpsest itself, housing ever-new interpretations of ideas that become re-iterated so many times that they barely recognize themselves.

The elements in the process have included but not been limited to the following: fieldwork in Boston, continuous familiarization with the characteristics of the Helsinki green network, site analyses and site visits in Helsinki, Washington D.C. and Boston, making video pieces and reflecting on those, literature reviews, lectures, seminars, article drafts, and on the side, forging a monograph. Discussions with colleagues, city planners, academics and artists around the world have enriched the process. The process has been characterized by serendipitous encounters guided by inspiration that have led down a number of roads. One to mention was the involvement of Jeb Sharp, the radio reporter for "The World" (PRI/BBC), some of whose material is used in the study, as narratives and references, to provide another's view. Sharp contacted me on March 30, 2015, having planned a series on resilience, and having heard of me from Brian Swett of the City of Boston, who, in turn, had been on a panel discussion with me.⁶⁶ She then tagged along for the shooting of the *(Dis)connected* film and made a piece about it herself. This is just one characteristic example of how the whole research process and things that affected its directions have evolved and unfolded during the course of the years, at times more intensely and at times fairly dormant due to other involvements of the author.

⁶⁶ *Sea Level Rise and the Future of Coastal Cities* by the Boston University Initiative On Cities in November 2014, where the researcher had given a talk about Helsinki.



■ Figure 19. Simplified model of the iteration of the study. Thoughts and ideas gain momentum while the perspective widens.⁶⁷ Practicing landscape architecture and city planning have been circled by artistic and literary explorations. Illustration by the author 2018.

As a result, the process has unfolded both analytically and intuitively, in widening spirals as shown in Figure 19, tinged by different inputs from nearby disciplines.

To conclude on the essence of the process, an analysis approach to landscape aims to gather and explicitly express the points of view and elements that were encountered along the course of the process. The first version of a new analysis framework for landscape (section 3.1) was drawn up based on theory, and after applying and developing it further with the case examples (chapter 3), it was revised to include other aspects that emerged in that process. The final version is presented in section 5.2. The concepts of essence and experience have been central to the approach, and their interrelations are examined in chapter 2 and finally in chapters 4 and 5. It is important to note that these two concepts are intertwined in more ways than one.

⁶⁷ The model can be looked at the other way around as well, indicating that the scope of the research should get tighter along with the sharpness of the arguments and the clearer vision of what one wants to do and what is necessary to serve that particular purpose. A widening and deepening spiral, preferably with a third dimension, might represent the mechanisms more fully. The layers of knowledge are connected with each other, perhaps even with parallel tracks resembling a DNA double helix, but with even more than two parallel traits.

1.6.2 An artistic process as part of the research

Meet Dis, (Dis)connected

What later became the Dis character evolved during the Spring term at Harvard, as a comic figure inspired by the environment. The filming of a 10-minute short film was done in April 2015 on-site in Boston on one occasion and edited in the following two weeks by Maggie Janik. On May 5, 2015, I organized an integrated art event as part of the Arts First Festival at Harvard, where the film was first screened and the live appearance of Dis was part of the program. In the film, a chartreuse-colored character, which is me disguised in a spandex bag, appears on the Back Bay Fens and Riverway parts of the Emerald Necklace greenway. She appears in places that are significant for the mood of the place and places where some modifications are needed to make it more attractive to people. The places addressed are situated mostly on the Back Bay Fens, the old structures of the Round House Shelter (also referred to as the Gazebo), the historic bridges along the river and finally the spot between the Fenway/Riverway and Leverett Park (Olmsted Park) where Route 9 traverses the park. The synopsis in more detail is described in section 3.4.2 about Instant experience on the Emerald Necklace, along with the findings thereof.

The process of developing a performance character came together from two separate ends: on one hand, through an interest in the greenways that we draw on maps as landscape architects, imagining them whole - as if they were lives visioned and truly lived - and, on the other, from a passion for performing, and thus connecting to people, reaching out, moving them, with sounds, words, being, as a full person, body and mind. I wanted to find a way to make visible my own experience of some parts of the Emerald Necklace and, at the same time, explore how others may feel about it, by 'shaking' normality with a disruption in space that would hopefully attract them to respond. It was a social experiment as much as an effort to choreograph my own experience and communicate it to a wider audience. In this process, a few steps are analyzed, documented and described in the following, in order to better make visible how it served as a tool for exploration as well as disseminating the motivations and contradictions that it involved.

The process of becoming an alter ego was first a separate process of the research. Only at the end, by a meta-distancing of sorts, having in turn alienated myself from the character, and returned to the role of a public official, was I able to see it as a logical part of my journey to explore landscapes in a phenomenological context, a method to know more about landscape. The body and its conscious perception is a way of being-in-the-world (Heidegger 1962), situating oneself in it and interacting with it, directing oneself toward it. For this reason, I felt it necessary to involve my whole body in a performance piece, as a medium that at the same time was me and was not,

detached from the persona, visible and concealed at the same time.⁶⁸ The costume felt necessary in order to truly be exposed. By bringing an extra element to hide and disguise your face and body, you simultaneously become less and more of yourself.⁶⁹ By hiding you expose and by fading, effacing and obliterating you become an exclamation point (or a question mark, at times) in your surroundings.

I believe that in any creative process, one has first to answer two questions: What do I want the outcome to be, as in look like, feel, sound, etc., perceived by the senses of its experiencer, which senses to include/exclude; and on the other hand, what is it to be *of*, speak *of*?⁷⁰ Arriving at a decision on the subject-matter, method and media of the process - in common for both artistic and scientific research/explorations - is eventually guided by inspiration and serendipity, perhaps as much or even more than a series of conscious decisions. Making these steps in the process happen, I didn't aim at a particular outcome, something that was premeditated or conscious at all levels. I do think, however, that my subconscious was working towards the end that my intellect had defined, by feeding it material that was necessary for it. Cognitively, I was guided by inspiration, something that drew me to the things in question. When the Dis character took shape, I realized that it combined most of the things I was interested in. In terms of art, it involved humor, serendipity, openness for improvisation, interactivity, connecting with the 'audience,' anonymity, intimacy, use of sound and outdoor space, and in landscape architecture, greenways as a part of urban experience, park sequences, nodes, moving in space, experience, fostering interaction and sense of place. In the process, there is a lot that didn't happen. The path is probably as much defined by things that do, as things that do *not* get realized.

Reference and sensitivity to place as inspirations

An important inspiration for the Dis character and part of the process, besides humor and direct contact with the audience, was the site-specificity that was intrinsically part of the performance. In the ancient Greek theater, where

⁶⁸ I did not take on a role as in a theater play where the script creates a role and the director and actor interpret it, adding another layer to the representation, but rather used a role already within me, embedded as a hidden layer of my personality, expressing certain sides of it and omitting others.

⁶⁹ The same phenomenon of becoming another version of oneself happens when, for instance, moving to live in a different environment such as a foreign country: one becomes a version of oneself at will, defined by what one decides to expose. It is an addictive activity to be able to reinvent yourself, to take a holiday from your actual being, if you will. To perform is to speak out with the whole body an idea that is beyond, above and around yourself, larger than your being. To be a medium for something, much in the same way that a musician channels the genius of the composer or a 'source', rather than exposing themselves as a person, which at that moment is irrelevant.

⁷⁰ Or rather, the other way around; firstly, of what, and secondly, how.

performances happened in arenas that were outside in the open, theater was in direct contact with the earth and sky. Being located under the sky, in a landscape, outside, the landscape as a stage and backdrop, a performative art intervention outside in a park is close to the original artform.⁷¹

The surrounding space can act as an integral element of an artwork. The project *Post facto*⁷² (Harvard GSD, spring 2015) had a relationship with the architecture. The Bauhaus movement of the 1920s and its original ideas gave inspiration about the role of art in society, and the interrelations between art forms. Architecture, as well as the audience, can be immersed in the theater piece, but the basic task of theater to move and reach out remains. Walter Gropius wrote (1961, p. 12): “Some people believe that film and television have eclipsed the theater altogether, but is it not its present limited form only which is becoming obsolete, not the theater as such?” He aimed at a “total theater” where the scene and audience would essentially blur into a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a total work of art, an idea most relevant for landscape architecture.⁷³

Post facto was a happening or a flash mob of sorts, where a jazz band transformed the Gund Hall building at the Harvard Graduate School of Design into an instrument. The architecture with its particular acoustics and form, the space within a building, together with the performers and the audience, created a total theater in its own way. The happening was a great success among the students that were, on a Friday evening, probably exhausted from hard work, and welcomed a subtle yet overwhelming and involving disruption. Musicians coming together from different ends of the room played each in their corner, improvising, starting with a single tone and adding, making a sound piece the audience was immersed within, and then gradually came together one by one, walked down the ‘trays,’ a large space consisting of mounting terraces, until they assembled at the foot foyer. This disrupted a busy afternoon at school and evoked a standing ovation from students who peeked out from their tables to see and hear what was going on. In a way, the architectural space played its part in the performance. Like Gropius observes: “Thus the playhouse itself, made to dissolve into the shifting, illusionary space of the imagination, would become the scene of action itself. Such a theater would

⁷¹ Some examples of this can be seen in today’s theater world, for instance Juha Hurme’s *Operaatio Paulaharju*, performances where he takes the audience to a physical site in the fells and the experience of theater entails physical effort from the audience as well as the performers.

⁷² The project was realized with a student group as part of the Art, Design and Public Domain class by Krzysztof Wodiczko and Silvia Benedito, partly advised by Michael Craig-Martin.

⁷³ A product of landscape architecture, such as a park, may at its best form a total work of art, where land art or environmental art of sorts together with a usable and livable environment make an attractive place for people. In the same way, entities, such as a series of a neighborhood’s public space, should be designed to enable comparable positive experiences to those a good work of art may provide.



■ Figures 20 and 21. *Post facto* at Gund Hall, Harvard University. Photos by the author 2015.

stimulate the conception and fantasy of playwright and stage director alike; for if it is true that the mind can transform the body, it is equally true that structure can transform the mind” (Gropius 1961, p. 14). The physical reality of the surroundings can work as a stage, but also a character in a piece. For instance, the Emerald Necklace plays the main role in *(Dis)connected*, and the Dis character is just playing along and responding.⁷⁴

The process of becoming Dis

Along my exploration process, I had many interesting discussions about my work, including with Benedito (2015) and Wodiczko (2015).⁷⁵ A few points affected my research. Firstly, I found it interesting that the word ‘park’ seemed to irritate Wodiczko in the context of the Emerald Necklace. The view, which confused me at the time, makes sense if you regard ‘park’ as a controllable realm of experience, something that can be perceived as a comprehensible totality. The sequence of parks, conversely, that the Emerald Necklace forms, is embodied as a conceptual totality mainly in an abstract way, as opposed to the perceived reality. In addition, even if Wodiczko’s own work involves a strong societal aspect, art to him does not need to make a point. It can also just be beautiful, evoke pleasurable emotions. The difference between entertainment and art, however, lies in the ability of art to go beyond entertaining (Wodiczko 2015). Art should be twisting your mind, stretching it. It should be more than just ‘nice’: it should be discovering the strange and unknown. We also discussed the tension between ‘inhabitants’ (in this case, presumably, the

⁷⁴ The public realm could also be understood widely as the virtual space such as the Internet, besides physical public space in cities. Ephemeral pieces or pieces that are visible only through a digital interface, much like augmented reality games, could be the future of public art, especially in raising awareness of environmental issues. Not only are they cost-effective and definitely easier to mount and dismantle, but also socially unproblematic by not changing the physical surroundings in any way.

⁷⁵ The views of an artist experienced in creating work for public space was surprisingly practical, challenging me to think of what is technically achievable and yet powerful.

homeless people residing under the bridge in the Charlesgate part of the Emerald Necklace) and entertaining the 'public.'⁷⁶

There were some rejected ideas; however, they were important sidesteps in the process. At one point, I had ideas of livestreaming one place along the sequence to another, making the places exist within each other. Live screening of a green space may become a 'quotation of nature' in the space where the viewers are, a landscape of escape. I was interested in something that would be transmitted from the spot in real time, a live broadcast by a surveillance camera that would record what's going on on-site, having an interplay with the viewers, and that they could somehow, in turn, give some sort of input to what's happening on-site. I rejected the idea, as it would make the spectator part of a surveillance system but also as it had connotations of voyeurism that were not in accordance with the poetic quality that I sought.⁷⁷

After reading about used cell phones being dismantled in India and causing severe health hazards to those (usually children) doing the work, I thought of using discarded electronics in the *(Dis)connected* piece to make a statement. This included sketches about furnishing the Round House Shelter gazebo or a fence by the trail with mobiles that would, ideally, have electricity so that they could also 'shed light' on the path and equally the issue of poor lighting, as well as the global problem. The rising amounts of electronic waste we produce is shocking, affecting nature and people, and to increase the challenge, the lifecycle of electronics is shortening at an accelerating rate.⁷⁸ I wondered if E-waste could get a new life as part of an artwork raising awareness. Or what if you could address Olmsted, tell him what you think of his creation? The park(s) being dark and lacking amenities, I also explored a self-warming sculptural bench that would act as a lighting device, accompany the gadgets and become a destination, a place, together with them (see Figures 22 and 23). In the end, all of this seemed not only difficult to technically achieve, but also somehow pretentious. Adding an extra element in the physical space was just not poetic enough, nor did it rise above banality, not even in a humorous way. It also felt detached from the actual experience on-site.

The theme of connecting and disconnecting, being connected and disconnected, however, intrigued me throughout my residence as a Loeb fellow

⁷⁶ There are, obviously, other valid views on the purpose of art, but those are presented that have influenced the exploration process.

⁷⁷ One of the original ideas was an intervention with light and sound in some part of the park that literally illuminates the problematic issues, sheds light on them and helps people see them in a new way - perhaps even acting as a first gesture towards building a new connection or future park renovation. In a way you would want to overcome any technical obstacle (not always succeeding, obviously), instead of them guiding the process too much. At the end, the content and statement count, and the technical realization should just support it, not becoming the point. Neither technical difficulty nor technical expertise should, in my mind, override the process.

⁷⁸ The battery life of cell phones and light bulbs is victim to corporate greed that manifests itself in planned deterioration.

at Harvard. Being disconnected from your familiar surroundings and daily routines, at times you feel like you are floating in space, which is in its way, precisely the enchantment of occasional voluntary translocation. At times the sentiment of living in a bubble from which you need to actively reach out dominates your existence – and distances you from your essential being. The positive experiences of connecting to surroundings, with people around you, however superficially, as well as the negative experiences of being excluded, evoke much stronger emotional responses than they normally would. Things that anchor you in the world, can be found in surprising directions, and methods for channeling back to the world, to others, can happen, among other things, through art.

The missing piece was evolving, surprisingly, through a sidestep to the Bauhaus' ideas, that also inspired the *Post facto* mentioned before (Harvard 2015d). One of them was that the Bauhaus “embraced the whole range of visual arts,” including architecture, planning, painting, sculpture, industrial design, and stage work – and its aim was to “find a new and powerful working correlation of all the processes of artistic creation to culminate finally in a new cultural equilibrium of our visual environment” (Gropius 1961, p. 7). For instance, Oskar Schlemmer's work combines sculpture and choreography/stage work in an interesting way and makes architecture of the performers' bodies. According to Gropius, the most characteristic artistic quality in Schlemmer's work is his interpretation of space, which is easy to agree on.

The idea of total works of art and the use of body in space inspired me, and my own explorations of immersive theater⁷⁹ nourish the need to connect and involve, as well as the will to combine different art forms into an integral whole. I experimented with a colorful ‘thing’ that would manifest the way we take on different roles in different situations and react within them. It was meant to be ‘human furniture,’ sort of a Barbapapa (Tison & Taylor 1974) that takes on different roles (like we all do), something you could make contact with. Somehow this blob transformed into a living chair along the way. I started musing about humans acting as colorful objects in space, firstly inside, but somehow I eventually wanted to bring this creature outside. I needed a reference to locality, an outdoor Place. Having explored the Emerald Necklace throughout my time in Cambridge and Boston, in different ways, I knew I wanted to bring it there, to interact with the landscape.

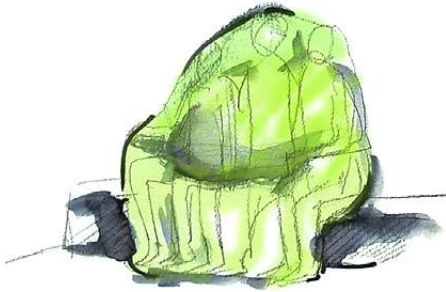
⁷⁹ Participating as an actress in *The Day the World Stood Still* (MIT Theater Arts January 2015, directed by Charlotte Brathwaite), and *Metsänpeitto* (Helsinki 2017, directed by Riikka Herva), among others. In the latter, we experimented with video art and creative collaboration combined into a visual and physical whole. In a devising method the script was put together on the go, based on improvisations on the set and practice sessions, including a song I wrote for the piece, based on the same Sibelius music I used for *Disconnected*. In hindsight, endeavors such as this one, made way for the understanding of the importance of Dis in conveying the message and in acting as a research tool.



■ Figures 22, 23 and 24. Preliminary ideas for an art piece at the Emerald Necklace, involving light and self-warming seating structures. Illustrations by the author 2015.

■ Figures 25-28. Sketches for a 'thing' made of people disguised in a cloth, and acting as some sort of furniture/element in space, inspired by Gropius (1961) as well as Barbapapa (Tison & Taylor 1974). Drawings by the author 2015.





STRETCH FABRIC

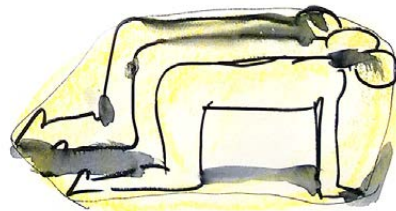
MATTRESS



CUSHION



CHANGING DECORATIONAL
PIECE...



BENCH/TABLE

In hindsight, impulses and inspirations came from seemingly disconnected endeavors. Discussions with designers and artists, and group work doing something else, acted as a reflecting platform. All was woven serendipitously together with little conscious predestination. Some people thought my idea of dressing in the spandex bag and “harassing” people in the park was “just strange,” and some were excited about it.

As I find working with other creative minds very inspiring, I tried to find a team to work with, some people I could reflect my ideas with, who could also help me realize them. I was lucky to come across a skillful cinematographer and film editor, Maggie Janik, who worked for the Loeb Fellowship, and was willing to sacrifice a couple of her weekends to go filming with me, believing in my wild ideas and helping make them visible, and Kolu Zigbi to help me with the set. David Pilz, as a student assistant, helped me organize the setup for the exhibit at the Arts First Event.

The filming was an interesting process, as it involved a lot of improvisation on-site. I had a broad storyboard and filming plan, as I like to work with a rough outline that gives structure but enables improvisation. The involvement of the people was all improvised on-site, as well as the actions in each place. The people who reacted and did not react became important coauthors of the piece. It became a social experiment in peoples’ reaction to a disruption in space, as well as a way to study the landscape.

DIS IS REPRESENTATION.

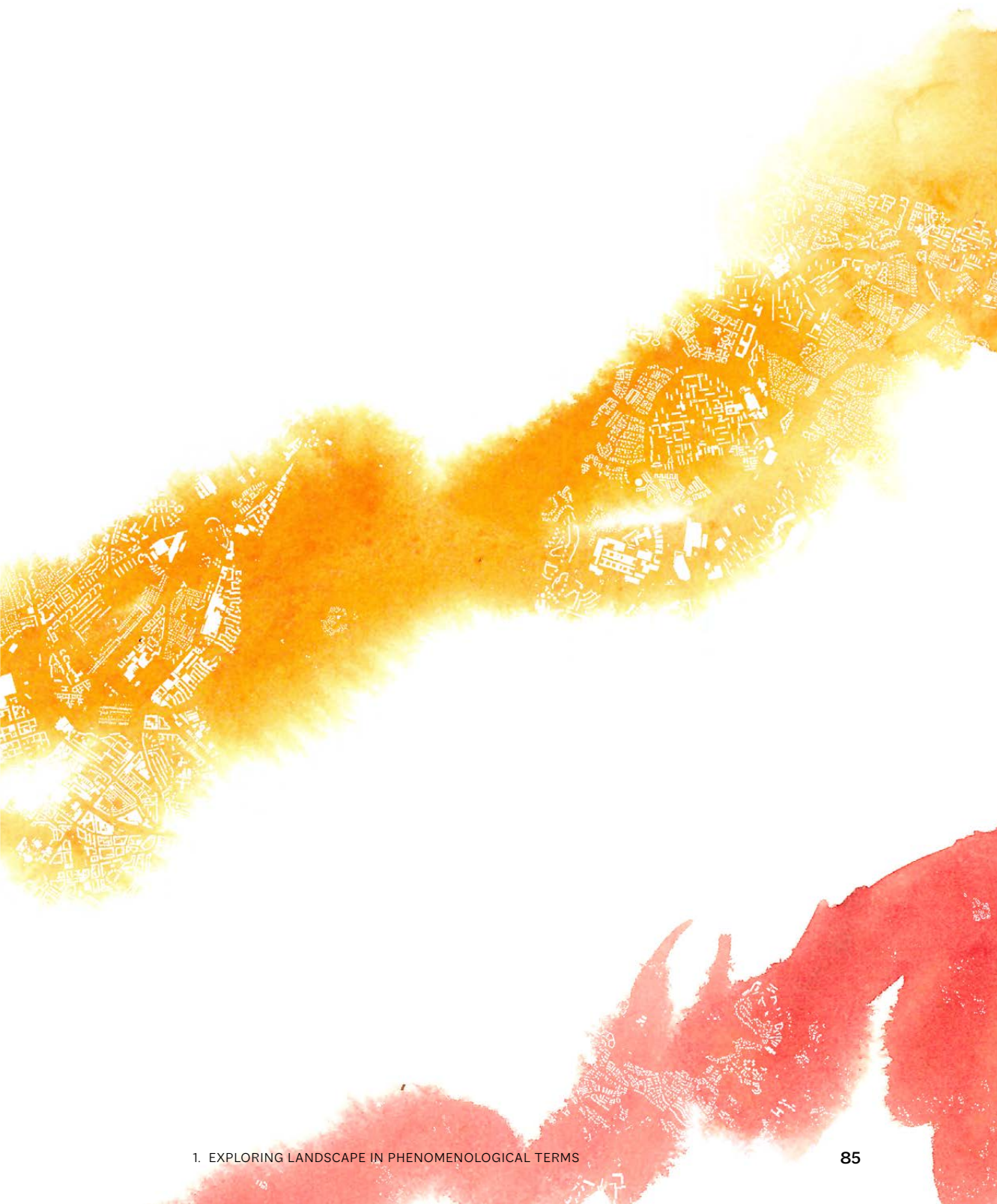
IT IS A WAY TO MAKE VISIBLE THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE.

IT IS A WAY TO EXPERIENCE.

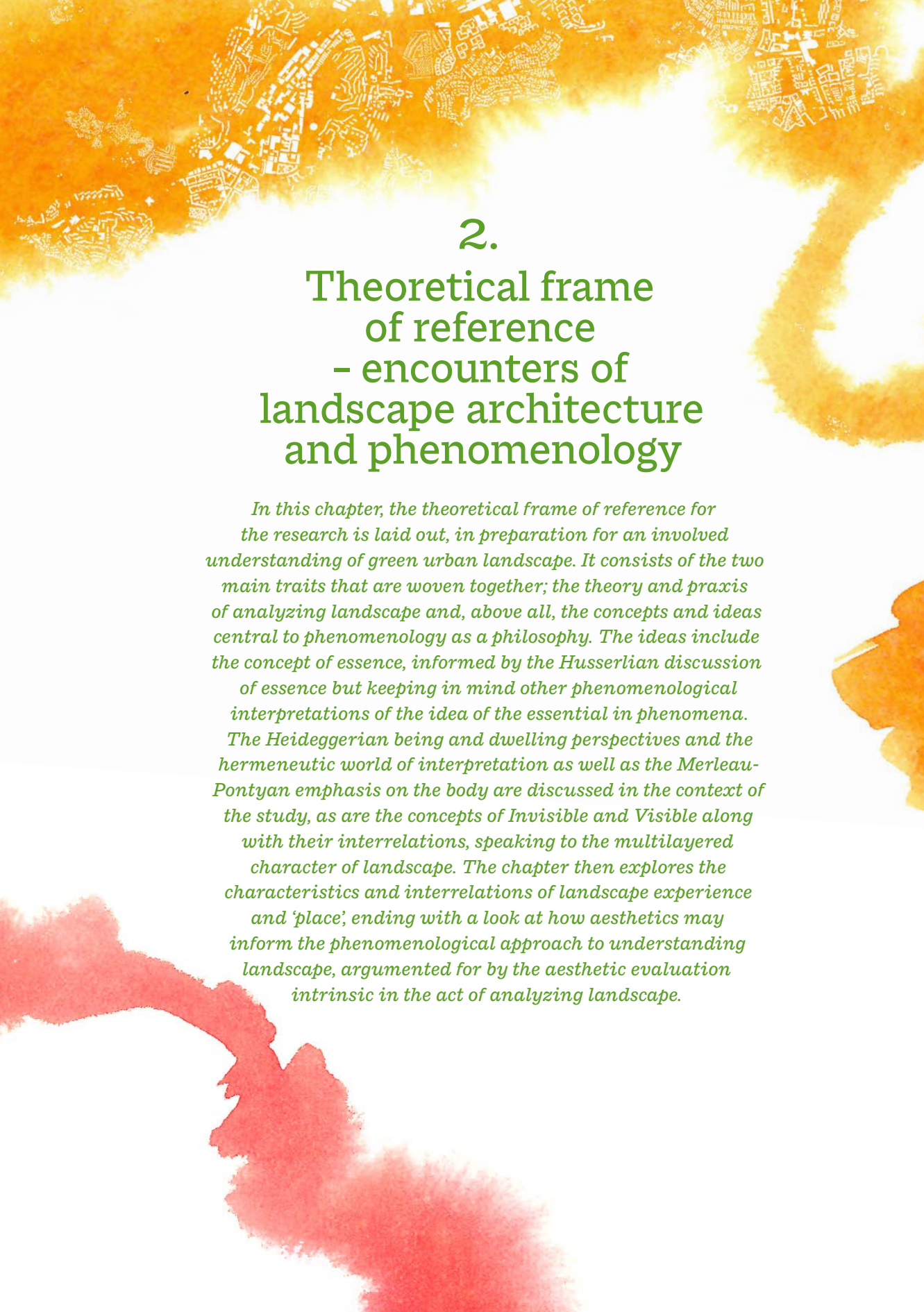
IT IS A WAY TO UNDERSTAND.

IT IS A WAY TO STUDY OTHERS’ EXPERIENCE, AND A WAY TO CONVEY AND EXPOSE MY EXPERIENCE.

DIS IS A RESEARCH METHOD, A (RESEARCH) SUBJECT AND OBJECT.







2. Theoretical frame of reference – encounters of landscape architecture and phenomenology

In this chapter, the theoretical frame of reference for the research is laid out, in preparation for an involved understanding of green urban landscape. It consists of the two main traits that are woven together; the theory and praxis of analyzing landscape and, above all, the concepts and ideas central to phenomenology as a philosophy. The ideas include the concept of essence, informed by the Husserlian discussion of essence but keeping in mind other phenomenological interpretations of the idea of the essential in phenomena. The Heideggerian being and dwelling perspectives and the hermeneutic world of interpretation as well as the Merleau-Pontyan emphasis on the body are discussed in the context of the study, as are the concepts of Invisible and Visible along with their interrelations, speaking to the multilayered character of landscape. The chapter then explores the characteristics and interrelations of landscape experience and 'place', ending with a look at how aesthetics may inform the phenomenological approach to understanding landscape, argued for by the aesthetic evaluation intrinsic in the act of analyzing landscape.

2.1 Analyzing landscape

To explore how phenomenology might inform landscape architecture and deepen the understanding of green urban landscapes, the concepts and methodology connected with phenomenology are filtered through the relevant theoretical backgrounds and practices of landscape architecture, especially those of analyzing landscape. The tradition of landscape analysis that precedes designs in the praxis of landscape architecture creates a point of reference to the phenomenological analysis. Concepts and discussions of aesthetics are included, to the extent they are connected with the phenomenological approach and the assessment and evaluation of factors contributing to the qualities of green urban landscapes.

Landscape analysis in the landscape architectural tradition is a process where different layers of a place (a city, a neighborhood, a park, to name a few examples) are consciously disseminated and made visible, including geomorphological features, climatic conditions, topographical features, characteristics of landscape space, vegetation, cultural history and hydrological context.⁸⁰ According to Stahlschmidt et al. (2017), landscape analysis and landscape planning, as key aspects of town planning, are to identify and use the distinctive features and characteristics of space, place and landscape to achieve environmental quality. The conscious evaluation of landscape's elements is an intrinsic part of the professional practice of landscape architecture. Analysis is "detailed examination of the elements or structure of something" (Oxford dictionaries 2011) and it should provide tacit, conceptual and systematic knowledge (Stahlschmidt et al. 2017, p. 181) in the same way that research does. There are two types of application: situation analyses aimed at gaining knowledge and understanding of the current landscape, its elements, appearance and functions, and action-oriented analysis,⁸¹ guided by particular proposals for landscape change (Stahlschmidt et al. 2017, p. 176). Landscape analysis is, in praxis, in most cases motivational and future-oriented, aiming to find the most suitable strategies in situations of potential changes concerning landscape; for instance, urban development.

⁸⁰ Catchment areas, blue structure a.k.a. the networks of creeks, rivers, ponds, etc.

⁸¹ Action- or future-oriented analysis may aim at environmental impact assessment (Harrop & Nixon 2005), where an impact of a particular measure such as planned infrastructure is evaluated. In Landscape Impact Assessment (Emmelin 1996), presentation in visual terms and scenario techniques, for example, are used in analysis to deliver policies, programs and plans. Environmental assessment (EA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) are developed to assess the environmental consequences of "proposed activities that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority" (United Nations 1992, Annex 1; Principle 17).

Landscape analysis can be defined as a process of mapping and analyzing different parts and aspects of landscape. Analysis is nowadays often considered to have three parts: the data collection phase, analysis and synthesis. As such, many landscape analysis techniques are based on the three steps in early regional analysis, the principles of which (Geddes 1915, cited in Vroom 2006) have impacted the tradition of landscape analysis. They were introduced by Patrick Geddes, whose suggestion for workflow in understanding landscape included a three-stage process of survey, analysis and synthesis, as well as a specific representational mode called 'the valley section' (Vroom 2006, p. 41). According to Stahlschmidt et al. (2017, p. 180), Hideo Sasaki reformulated the three-stage process in 1950 as a teaching approach for design students at Harvard University. The first stage of design included research in order to understand all the factors to be considered, followed by analysis to establish the ideal operational relationships of all the factors, followed by synthesis, leading into a spatial solution.

Different types of landscape analysis can further be divided into three categories: background analysis, action-oriented analysis and consequence analysis (Stahlschmidt 2001; Stahlschmidt et al. 2017). According to Stahlschmidt (2001; Stahlschmidt et al. 2017), background analysis can be further divided into three categories: historical, spatial and regional analysis, and action-oriented analysis can be divided into value and localization analysis. For instance, a historic landscape analysis must use different source materials to peel off, understand and explain the processes that change these time layers in the landscape, and demands a multidisciplinary approach (Stahlschmidt et al. 2017, p. 62).

Landscape analysis must be separated from landscape survey, which merely describes and explains landscape, instead of trying to map the interrelations between landscape elements and their significance in the totality. Surveys and inventories are about collecting data, but landscape analysis seeks to find the relevant issues in terms of each task at hand, in a systematic way, to support and inspire (Stahlschmidt 2001, p. 12). Landscape analysis is highly flexible and adapts to each case, as opposed to obeying a systematic, which does not necessarily provide relevant information (Florgård 2007, cited in Törrönen 2010, p. 31). Without a method, the process is intuitive, and Stahlschmidt considers it possible in a case where the analyst is involved in the planning process as well (Stahlschmidt 2001, p. 12). Landscape analysis often acts as a basis for landscape planning or urban planning projects, as their point of departure, or at least as a source of information, taken into account on varying levels.

In the context of this study, the most interesting analyses are those that combine different aspects in order to reach a holistic understanding of landscape. In addition, those focusing on interpretation and valuation, or describing spatial features and experience - especially those that recognize the importance of the dynamic character of landscape experience - are of interest. The

early analyses to consider are the *spatial analyses* (for instance Sitte 1901, Lynch 1960 and Cullen 1961) and the *layering technique*, especially the Ecological method by Ian McHarg (1969, 2002, pp. 38, 173), which has then been utilized and developed by practitioners to include also cultural and spatial aspects. Specific developments of these analyses into practical purposes include landscape character assessment (Swanwick 2002) and landscape impact assessment (Emmelin 1996).

Many later spatial practices in urban planning have drawn on Lynch's spatial analysis, which considers paths as channels of movements, edges (boundaries), districts (patches of significance), nodes (strategic points) and landmarks for orientation (Lynch 1960; Stahlschmidt et al. 2017, p. 87). Lynch's analysis of spatial elements is clearest for applying to the built environment. Cullen's analysis of serial vision (Cullen 1961, p. 90; Stahlschmidt et al. 2017) highlights the importance of movement in experiencing landscape and the spatial rhythm experienced during a walk, where movement is a critical variable in knowing and experiencing the spatial structure of a landscape. The analysis maps the experience by depicting it point-by-point in a series of viewpoints, by visual representation such as drawings and photos. Cullen has acted as inspiration for the SAVE system developed by the Danish Ministry of Environment, among others (Stahlschmidt et al. 2017, p. 89).⁸²

Ian McHarg, in his much-cited *Design with Nature* (1969, see also Swaffield 2002), visualized the different aspects of nature (vegetation, watersheds and creeks, typology of forest patches, etc.) with different layers. This sort of technique, where different aspects such as the ones above, complemented with topography or microclimatic conditions, steepness of slopes, visibility analysis, etc., are disseminated in layers imagined to be put on top of each other to make the totality of landscape features, has been used in landscape architecture ever since.⁸³ The analysis was practiced with literally layers of drafting paper, later with the help of digital layers in CAD and raster images, and lastly with GIS (Geographical Information System) based smart maps where metadata is included as an invisible layer, yet comparatively easily made visible. Spatial as well as other analyses are increasingly utilizing GIS in modeling landscape, as well as virtual models to make landscape

⁸² In Denmark, Landscape analysis is obligatory, i.e. legally enforced in land-use planning, which makes it interesting to approach the subject from the Danish literature. In Per Stahlschmidt's *Metoder til landskabsanalyse - kortlægning af stedets karakter og potentiale* (2001), the subject is presented perhaps the most extensively, and the structure of landscape analysis outlined. Similar methods are used in the landscape tradition of other Nordic countries. Other Danish sources include a guide for landscape consideration (*Vejledning om landskabet i kommuneplanlægningen*, 2007) and *Landskabskarakter - metoden* (Nellemann 2009).

⁸³ Drawing on similar principles, prof. Majja Rautamäki introduced a model and tradition of landscape layering that was widely taught in Finnish landscape architectural education in the 1990s and used in praxis.

dynamics visible. The layering technique, however digital to date, continues to be a relevant way of representing the waterscape, the ecosystems, vegetation and topography, etc., as separate elements and then synthesizing them into a whole. The representation of landscape analysis visualizes this data and often also makes visible the conclusions made based on these in the planning processes.

In landscape analysis, many different techniques aim at a similar outcome, to define the 'character' of the landscape in question. Character can be defined as a distinct, recognizable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape (Swanwick 2002) that makes one landscape area different from another. Landscape Character assessment (LCA) (Swanwick 2002; Nellemann 2009) is a method introduced in the British tradition and followed elsewhere. It is used for defining the essential features of landscape, usually for a project aiming to make changes in an area (Butler 2016). Character type maps (Stahlschmidt et al. 2017, p. 108) can be used to visualize the typologies that landscapes are simplified into by their main character. Landscape assessment is the stage of landscape planning where the landscape is framed and values are identified in order to inform the future development, management or preservation of landscape (Butler 2016). A practical guide for LCA (Swanwick 2002) breaks the process into stages: Defining the scope (step 1), Desk study (step 2), Field survey (step 3), Classification and description (step 4) and finally Making judgments based on landscape character.

In analyzing landscape, more crucial to the success of the outcome than following a set paradigm is recognizing the fact that things considered relevant to study in each case depend on the scale and character of the task and the place as well as the intention of the project. The approach may vary accordingly, as the activity is site- and context-specific. When designing in different contexts, different issues are given emphasis. It may not be relevant to map existing microclimatic conditions based on existing vegetation, for instance, if all the existing trees are to be felled. Similarly, the more urban a place is, the more relevant it is to study things like behavioral patterns and demographic features of the population. In terms of a design for a small park, for instance, local topography, individual trees, shadows cast from nearby houses or the location of the so-called 'desire paths'⁸⁴ may play an important role in analyzing a place. Conversely, different features, such as landscape ecology (see Clark 2010) or feasible connections to mass transit, may be considered essential to understand when planning for a completely new neighborhood. What already exists in, around or connected to a location is usually given a varying role and importance in the processes, depending on the basic premise of the project, although it should always be the starting point of any landscape change.

84 Routes to cross created by people, paths that are generated spontaneously through lawns and even plantings when possible and felt necessary, see e.g. Bramley (2018).

These methods form a theoretical background that has its roots in praxis, and the phenomenological inquiry seeks to shed light on what kind of added value might be gained by emphasizing the concepts and approaches provided therein. In this study, the take on landscape analysis is a meta-analysis of sorts, as the study is also trying to figure out which features and ways of knowing are relevant in an urban landscape analysis.

The following sections will discuss what the central ideas and concepts characteristic to phenomenology have brought and might bring in the context of analyzing landscape and developing the approaches of landscape architecture to green urban landscape.

2.2 Phenomenology's ideas - understanding landscape

Phenomenology provides a theoretical platform to study phenomena as they are perceived and experienced (Eagleton 1983, pp. 54-90; Perttula & Latomaa 2008; Varto 1992, 2003). The approach involves understanding and description of things as they appear in the realm of a subject's experience (Tilley 1994, p. 12). In this study, green urban landscape is explored with a phenomenological approach, utilizing phenomenological concepts and methodologies in a new context. Phenomenology can be practiced and identified as a manner or style of thinking, and "existed as a movement before arriving at complete awareness of itself as a philosophy" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. viii).

Edmund Husserl, who is considered the father of phenomenology, introduced the basic terminology (Husserl 1901) and the origins for the way of thinking that we now call phenomenology (Miettinen, Pulkkinen & Taipale 2010, p. 14). It is important to note that Husserl's original ideas have been taken down a number of roads, and also his own thinking transformed over time, from his early writings to the late works. There are numerous interpretations of the original ideas and their elaborations, apparently due to their complexity and somewhat ambiguous nature. Husserlian phenomenology is sometimes referred to as descriptive phenomenology.⁸⁵ As a practice that is descriptive by nature (Merleau-Ponty 1962, viii), phenomenology strives to capture essentialities and understand and describe how we experience reality - as a general structure of this experience, however, rather than individual acts of the mind (Miettinen, Pulkkinen & Taipale 2010, pp. 11-12).

Initially a "study of essences" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, preface to the *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. vii), phenomenology has an interest in the essential mode of existence for *things*. According to the so-called phenomenological reduction, all realities must be treated as pure 'phenomena', in terms of

⁸⁵ It acts as a basis for, for example, phenomenological psychology, which strives to describe phenomena in the way they are manifested in the experience of a subject (Latomaa 2008, pp. 46-47).

their appearances in our mind (Husserl 1995; Eagleton 1983, pp. 48–55). We are directing our observation to the constitution of things in our consciousness (Kauppinen 2004, p. 18). These appearances (*Erscheinungen*), are given in a lived experience, *cogitatio* (Husserl 1995, p. 99). The preconceptions are bracketed out to see the essential in anything (Juntunen 1986, pp. 73, 76, 94, quoted by Niskanen 2008). Like Merleau-Ponty states, phenomenology has contradictions in itself, being both a transcendental philosophy and one for which “the world is ‘already there’ before reflection begins - as an inalienable presence; and all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. vii).

Phenomenology is not a singular, unified philosophy and methodology, but rather a plural one (Vagle 2014). As mentioned earlier, the followers of Husserl made significant breaks into his ideas, which led into a rather heterogeneous branch of philosophy. Furthermore, the best-known early phenomenological writers (Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty) that this study seeks to interpret within the landscape architectural context each had different emphases in their approaches, not to mention the ones further inspired by their texts within different disciplines. According to Miettinen, Pulkkinen and Taipale (2010, pp. 9–10), no unanimity exists on its method, concepts or objects of research, but the tradition of phenomenology is defined by an interest in the lived realm in all its diversity and profundity, as well as the human lifeworld and its structures.

The idea of *essence*, or at least ‘the essential’ in a thing, is potentially valuable for the reflection and valuation of landscape. To grasp any phenomenon wholly is to grasp what is essential about it. Deep understanding of things includes the acknowledgment of their original core that makes a thing what it is, depicted by our senses, and experienced by us as intentional subjects. According to Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009, pp. 32–33), by going back to the thing itself, Husserl means lived experience as “the thing,” not the philosophical account of lived experience, i.e. on its own terms rather than according to predefined category systems.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945, 1962, 1968) is concerned in particular with perception and the experience of the bodily subject in order to fully understand the world around us. The experience of being is defined by human senses, the role of which in the act of being is recognized and emphasized particularly by Merleau-Ponty. The means for being-in-the-world, relating to it, is the body, and its spatiality is one of situation and orientation. The experience of the body is in fact essentially spatial. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 149), bodily spatiality is the deployment of one’s bodily being, the way the body comes into being as a body. There is the sensual, immediate perception, and then there is the mental understanding of meanings guided by association, memories, what is known about the place. Perceptual consciousness stems from the bodily awareness through which we are involved, in constant

interaction with the world (Tilley 1994, p. 102). Phenomenology has acknowledged the connections between lived experience and pre-reflective memory (Foster 1998b, p. 3; 2001), studying how the world reveals itself to us in its richness as perceived and immediately experienced, in the same way as art does.

Even natural science is ultimately rooted in the phenomena of direct experience of the world, of which “science is the second-order expression” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. viii). It may be difficult to grasp literally that our senses could give a full understanding of the world as it is, while scientific instruments and devices today allow us to see the world beyond what our senses or the immediate experience of our bodies can tell us, including things like other planets or microscopic organisms. One can argue, however, that these tools merely *help* us see and experience things. Merleau-Ponty describes further: “To return to things themselves is to return to that world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always *speaks*, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language, as is geography in relation to the countryside in which we have learnt beforehand what a forest, a prairie or a river is” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. ix).⁸⁶ The conceptual construct is built on top of the original reality that is given in perception. The idea gives an interesting parallel to the view in studying landscape as the original *thing*, of which sciences such as geography provide merely an abstraction, and at the same time hinting that there is more to that landscape than any science alone can ever account for.

Another relevant idea is the idea of a *transcendental intersubjectivity* (Husserl 1901, 1995; Sartre 2004; Taipale 2010), which is interesting in terms of this study, as it touches upon the idea of self and the other, and the possibility for shared experience. The idea of a transcendental ego is, at the same time, perhaps one of the most ill-conceived of Husserl’s phenomenological concepts, as Heinämaa suggests (Heinämaa 2010, p. 99). Transcendence as such refers to the actual act of crossing over (to the other side, if you will), and is thus almost synonymous with intentionality, the direction of consciousness towards something (Kauppinen, in his preface to Sartre 2004). All consciousness is consciousness *of* something; a thought is pointing towards an object. When we think, we think *of* something. The transcendental ego is not universal and does not presuppose a shared experience⁸⁷ a priori. Instead, the subjectivity that

86 It is interesting to note that in Hotanen’s study on Merleau-Ponty’s ontology (Hotanen 2008, p. 19), he translates the latter part of this sentence in Finnish as “in relation to the landscape, moving in which (*maisemaan, jossa liikkuessamme*) we have learnt beforehand, etc.” The French expression in the original text goes “à l’égard du paysage” (Merleau-Ponty 1945), which indeed translates to landscape instead of countryside, but without any indication of moving in the landscape.

87 At a concert, for instance, many people ‘share’ an experience in common, in time and place. However, the experience of each of them per se is individual. In the same way, an experience of something like a landscape or green area is individual, although it can happen along the same lines for most people, for instance if a majority of people would describe the same landscapes as beautiful, as may happen in surveys (see section 3.5.5).

Husserl talks about is above all intersubjective - in relation to other subjects, *with* others - as well as individual, temporal and dynamic (Heinämaa 2010, pp. 99-100). According to Sartre (2004, pp. 31-33), Husserl's idea of intersubjectivity requires the understanding and experience of one's own body's (*Leib*) dual nature as both a subject and a worldly object.⁸⁸ The perception of one's own body, in fact, calls for an environment, something that surrounds us, and experiences in and of landscape "become part of the landscape's sedimented meaning" (von Bonsdorff 1998, p. 32).

Roughly, phenomenological approaches can be divided into transcendental (Husserlian) and existential (Heideggerian), and, for instance, existential-phenomenological psychology is based on Heidegger's existential analysis (Latomaa 2008, pp. 48-49).⁸⁹ Martin Heidegger, as Husserl's student who later renounced and then re-established his teacher's heritage in his own work, expanded on and refocused the phenomenological ideas, emphasizing the relation between humans and the world they inhabit. The later developers of phenomenology have included a sensitivity for *places* that since then has been a defining feature encoded in the phenomenological approach.⁹⁰

Heidegger's (1962, 1971) writings on dwelling and building as well as the writings of Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1976) and Gaston Bachelard (1969) have inspired many architects and architectural theorists, such as Christian Norberg-Schulz (1980, 1983, 1996, orig. 1976), Alberto Perez-Gomez (1993), Kenneth Frampton (1974) and Juhani Pallasmaa (1986, 1996) to name a few. Bachelard, among one of the first ones, wrote about the importance of lived experience in architectural places and their contexts in nature, especially of the personal, emotional response to buildings. Pauline von Bonsdorff (1996, 1998, 2009) has also expanded on the issue of dwelling in architecture and the environment, in a phenomenological framework. Aesthetic theorists have drawn on phenomenological reading, for instance Ossi Naukkarinen, who focuses on the temporal and spatial aspects in the contemporary aesthetic (Naukkarinen 2014) and on sense based experience (Naukkarinen & Vasquez 2017).

⁸⁸ For instance, when one touches one's hand with the other hand, they are both objects to be touched and subjects that touch. One can presume other bodies to experience something similar when performing similar acts, based on the similarities between human bodies, although one can never obtain direct evidence of the experience of another - because they are the other with other transcendental egos, never the exact same. Sartre formulates that "transcendental consciousness is impersonal spontaneity" (Sartre 2004, p. 118), defining itself as existing at any given moment without anything preceding it.

⁸⁹ According to Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. vii), however, the distinction between Husserl's and Heidegger's phenomenologies may not be as great as it is often considered, as *Sein und Zeit*, the main body of work by Heidegger, amounts to an account of the "*Natürlicher Weltbegriff*" (natural attitude) or the "*Lebenswelt*" (lifeworld) which Husserl identified as the central theme of phenomenology.

⁹⁰ See section 2.5 for a more detailed account of the concept of place and its connotations in terms of landscape.

Besides existential, Heidegger's phenomenology has also been called hermeneutic phenomenology, where studying experience is always *interpretation*. The act of understanding is interpretation, seeking to reach worlds of others, things or people. Heidegger's meditative, descriptive - and even metaphysical (Gadamer 2004, p. 211) - language has often made his writings subject to deviation from the original meanings in later interpretations (Varto 2003, pp. 3-4). For instance, in his *Gelassenheit* (2005, orig. 1955) Heidegger describes a state of mind of a philosopher, which, instead of an active conquering of reality, should rather practice openness to the mystery (*die Offenheit für das Geheimnis*) - that which is intuitively known to exist but defies the acts of knowing, experience or control (Varto 2003, p. 5-7; Heidegger 2005; Heidegger 2006). Indeed, Heidegger dwells on the possibilities of language to achieve a full understanding of a phenomenon, and to understand landscape is to dwell on it, or even to dwell *in* it, and to interpret its essential features.

The hermeneutic approach is akin to phenomenological ideas and they feed on each other (Gadamer 2004, Vagle 2014),⁹¹ although hermeneutics is a separate form of philosophical inquiry that leads into semiotics and finally structuralism. In fact, Vagle (2014, p. 14) mentions as one of Heidegger's contributions that he put hermeneutics and phenomenology in dynamic dialogue with one another. Hermeneutics, a study of understanding and interpretation, recognizes the role of language in defining and constructing reality as well as depicting it, not only as a system but also in a dialogue - which in fact is its primary way of being (Gadamer 2004, pp. ix-xi, translator's preface). As the question of how phenomenological ideas of interpretation could inform research is of interest to this study, the following paragraphs will touch upon the main principles and questions of hermeneutics, and how they might inform the understanding of landscapes.

According to the hermeneutic rule, totality is to be understood from the singular and, on the other hand, the singular from the point of view of the totality. The significance of a totality is explicitly anticipated, for the parts that are defined by the totality also define it (Gadamer 2004, p. 29). This is true for learning and understanding foreign languages, as well as understanding urban landscapes. The particles that constitute a totality such as houses in a neighborhood or trees in a forest, are both *defined by* and *defining* the nature of that totality. The landscape context for a bench may be in a park in a district in a town in a valley in a country, and that bench, its location and appearance is, in turn, defined by the context of landscape architectural tradition, a project budget in city government, resources of maintenance, the network and hierarchy of green areas etc. The flux of understanding between totalities and their constituent parts is an ever-expanding set of feedback loops, or perhaps

⁹¹ Hans-Georg Gadamer, who is considered a key figure in philosophical hermeneutics, was a student of Heidegger.

a spiral, where new significances are created, widening and deepening the understanding.⁹² Participation in a shared understanding is the ultimate goal of hermeneutics (Gadamer 2004, p. 30).

The *Being* that can be understood is language, a hermeneutic layer. Thus what really *is*, can never be entirely understood. According to Gadamer (2004), Being is not just being exposed/visible but also avoids being exposed and conceals itself as originally as it shows itself, in meanings. Language refers beyond the expressed arguments, which become meanings in the language. The essential being hides itself behind language, in the same way that landscape's origins hide themselves behind its immediate appearance. Gadamer emphasizes "being-towards-text"⁹³ as a way of being-in-the-world (Gadamer 2004, pp. 212-213). In the hermeneutical process, one embeds oneself in the process of getting involved in the text, and begins to discern configurations of meaning, of parts and wholes and their interrelationships (von Eckartsberg 1998, p. 50). One receives certain messages and glimpses of an unfolding development that beckons to be articulated and related to the total fabric of meaning, and the hermeneutic approach seems to palpate its object and make room for that object to reveal itself to our gaze and ears, to speak its own story into our understanding (von Eckartsberg 1998).

By the same token, it can be suggested that the process of familiarizing oneself with the case examples through phenomenological reading unfolds a total fabric into which the different aspects of these landscapes are woven, portraying a full picture as well as developing a framework to expose them and others like them. Given that landscape is treated as a both-and concept in this study - that what is perceived by senses and that which lies beneath - these places are brought forth as landscapes as well as representing the texts of their kin, and as carriers of multiple meanings and significances.

Things in the world are bound up in temporality, where the past is present in the present as a dimension of *Dasein*, and consciousness of the subject about them derives from sense experience (Merleau-Ponty 1962, pp. 299-450). Temporal distance gives a possibility for the *historical consciousness* and critical evaluation of prejudice and pre-attitudes (Gadamer 2004, p. 38), increasing the validity of hermeneutical interpretation. Hence, critical historical accounts of a place as well as a quest for shared understanding of concepts

⁹² The research process in section 1.6.1, as well as the professional and personal development process alongside the research process is best presented as a spiral, gaining volume.

⁹³ It is important to note that when Gadamer talks about text, tradition and conversation with them, he means an all-encompassing term for "the text" in a wide sense, where a work of art, a building or even a natural phenomenon can be "texts" (Gadamer 2004, p. 262). Gadamer's idea (Gadamer 2004, p. 263) of signifying as a presence that allows the reality to speak itself to us, in languages of peoples' and nature's creations alike, is useful for the approach of this study seeking to make the landscape 'speak,' although the research material is not filtered through the whole body of this particular philosophical tradition.

ought to be part of meaningfully analyzing landscape in an interpretative manner. For Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 411), “the future is not prepared behind the observer, it is a brooding presence moving to meet him”.

For Heidegger, temporality is the “meaning of the Being of Dasein’s totality” (Heidegger 1962, p. 425).⁹⁴ It forms the connection between birth and death, manifesting our evident being-towards-death (*Zum-Tode-Sein*), as we are being-within-time in our lives, as a primal mode of our existence, traversing all layers of our being (Heidegger 1962, pp. 426-427). History is a dimension of the invisible that manifests itself in the visible features if we are able to interpret them. Time is the transcendental horizon of being and brings us in contact with our own mortality. Thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) into existence and that being-towards-death in which “one either flees it or anticipates it, form a unity; and in this unity birth and death are ‘connected’ in a manner characteristic of Dasein” (Heidegger 1962, pp. 426-427). Dasein is the ‘between’ of birth and death. Although Heidegger’s ‘being-towards-death’ is characteristic of people, rather than any other thing, it can be observed that things in landscapes are also inevitably and constantly growing or transforming ‘towards death’ in their life cycle as buildings deteriorate and trees mature to eventually die, as an integral part of their essential being. The temporary dimension is held in common with all living things, as well as those created by them.

Apart from *being* in its different dimensions, the concept of *dwelling* is also relevant to understanding landscape. Besides thorough exploration of a subject, as used in everyday language,⁹⁵ dwelling in phenomenology is first and foremost an act of inhabiting, both conceptually and practically. In Heidegger’s writings, besides *Sein und Zeit* (1926), particularly those in his late work about the relation of human existence and the environment are relevant to the aim of this research, such as *Bauen, Wohnen, Denken* (published in 1971). For Heidegger, building and dwelling are connected, and in fact building is really dwelling; dwelling is the way in which mortals are in the earth, and “building as dwelling unfolds into the building that cultivates growing things and the building that erects buildings” (Heidegger 2013a, p. 146), both of which have a connection with landscape architecture. The concepts of *Dasein*, Being(-there), ‘being-in-the-world’ (*In-der-Welt-Sein*), being with others and dwelling (Heidegger 1962, 1971, 2006) as acts of *belonging* to and with a setting, are central to Heidegger’s thinking.⁹⁶ Heidegger emphasizes dwelling as a way of being-in-the-world. This concept bears the ways we are under the sky,

94 Heidegger writes a lot about temporality and historicity (*Zeitlichkeit und Geschichtlichkeit*) in his *Sein und Zeit* (2006, orig. 1926).

95 The English language expression of ‘dwelling on a subject.’

96 In fact, in Heidegger’s original text (*Sein und Zeit* 2006, orig. 1926) there are various dimensions of Being (*Sein*) and *Dasein*, and often *Dasein* is not translated in the English versions, however *Da-sein* is translated into Being-there, and *In-Sein* into Being-In (*Being and Time*, 1962 translation by Macquarrie and Robinson).

on the earth as mortals. “On the earth already means under the sky,” and both mean to “remain before the divinities,” and being with one another (Heidegger 1971, p. 147).

Domesticating landscape is a way of dwelling, of making land our own. In a way, acts like gardening or even landscape architecture in its different forms can be considered ways to dwell, to define landscape into human use, acquiring nature into our existential foothold by making changes to it – or, by deciding not to. The fundamental character of dwelling is, after all, “sparing and preserving,” safeguarding to be at peace (Heidegger 2013a, pp. 146–147). According to Varto (2003, p. 3), apart from Nietzsche, Heidegger is the only modern philosopher for whom being human is about understanding one’s role as an elementary and responsible part of nature. For this reason, Heidegger’s stance is important for landscape architecture – as the sensitivities for people, places, nature, the environment, and the interrelations between those, are a defining factor for creating livable places. Attributes like ‘livability’ (e.g. Economist 2020) in fact refer to places that can be dwelled in, felt at home in as an ‘existential foothold’ (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 5)⁹⁷ in phenomenological terms.

The relationship between the *particular* and general, as well as the singular and shared, mark the phenomenological approach. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962, p. 450), every Thing appears to us through a medium to which it lends its own fundamental quality. A piece of wood is something from which there emanates a woody essence, creating a “horizon of significance” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 450). A *thought* as it is in one’s living experience is a certain “landscape to which no one will ever have access,” although there are particularities to this individuality that can stand out from generality and can be perceived by others (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 451). In other words, drawing on the idea of transcendental intersubjectivity that gives us an idea how others may experience things, our experience of, for instance, the passing of time, is unique to us, although the essence of time is shared. It can be argued that when something is deeply singular, it usually makes the most sense to us – a moving art piece stemming from genuine human experience can be shared by many (Kallio-Tavin 2013).

Due to the layered and multidimensional character of green urban landscape, it is to be interpreted in more levels than one, from singular to shared and back, and in the imperceptible realms as well as the obvious ones. Merleau-Ponty considered the world beneath the *visible* as important as the visible itself, as they constitute each other. In the world, “nothing visible shows itself without therewith hiding most of itself, and hiding more of the visible behind itself,” (Lingis 1968, p. xliii) and “the sensible thing is the place where the invisible is captured in the visible” (Lingis 1968, p. xli). In his writings

⁹⁷ Norberg-Schulz describes that architecture represents the means to give humans an existential foothold.

about visual art (*Cézanne's Doubt, Eye and Mind*) Merleau-Ponty, according to Smith (1993, pp. 192-211) shows that the fundamental bias of painting is that everything, in order to exist, must become visible. Analogously, the attempt of phenomenology *to translate the observation of lived experience into philosophical meaning* (author's emphasis) hopes to articulate truths whose authenticity is increasingly assured by their intimacy by making visible the invisible, by a return to the "hither side of experience" (Smith 1993, p. 211), the region that is so close or so familiar to us as to escape attention.

Whether or not it is indeed possible to capture the direct experience in a full philosophical account, which the critics of Merleau-Ponty have doubted, (Smith 1993, p. 211) at least it completes or prolongs and keeps open the original experience, as Smith puts it. Merleau-Ponty himself emphasizes the incomplete nature of the phenomenological reduction, as we can never entirely question the validity of our own experience (Miettinen, Pulkkinen & Taipale 2010, p. 12). For that reason, the first-person phenomenological account is used as merely one of the methods in the study, albeit one of the central ones.

A central aim in phenomenological research is to explore and interpret the mutual relationship between human and the material world through examining behavior, experience and meaning in a descriptive, interpretive manner as they happen in their everydayness (Seamon 2000a, p. 21). Finlay (2012b) suggests that the essence of the phenomenological research approach encompasses the *mutually dependent and dynamically iterative processes of embracing the phenomenological attitude, entering the lifeworld through descriptions of experiences, dwelling with horizons of implicit meanings, explicating the phenomenon holistically and integrating frames of reference* (author's emphasis). The elements in chapter 3 attempt to speak to these requirements. In terms of green urban landscape, instead of a detached viewing of it as an object, the phenomenological approach strives for understanding deeper meanings of a phenomenon, in this case by relating to and living a landscape as a place, and discovering and bringing to light the invisible behind the visible. This approach aims towards an all-encompassing view of entities, and acknowledges and makes use of the role of individual involvement and subjectivity in the evaluation of phenomena. *The approach of this study emphasizes phenomenology's aim to acknowledge meaning, understanding and individual experience of places in our being-in-the-world.*

The following sections (2.3-2.6) will discuss further in the context of landscape, especially green urban landscape when applicable, some central concepts that were introduced in phenomenological philosophy by Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty respectively. They include the concepts of *essence*, *experience* and *place*, as well as *visible and invisible*. These phenomenological or phenomenology-associated concepts are tested against the phenomena of urban landscape and green-blue places. In the process, they may transform



■ Figure 29. An example of a phenomenology-inspired reading of The Sheep Meadow in Central Park, NYC: Parks facilitate the being-with-others -dimension of *Being*, enabling to be alone or with one or many people, by choice, – separated but together, but also as a part of ‘a city’s/area’s inhabitants and visitors.’ One is *inside and outside* the city at the same time. The awareness that the city with its seemingly endless possibilities is close by gives comfort and situates to the place and context. We can observe the city skyline from afar like a sublime spectacle.

In architecture (as observed by Thiis-Evensen 1987, pp. 21–23), a building’s floor, wall and roof create an inside in the midst of an outside through motion, weight and substance. Similarly, a landscape has walls (borders and edges), a floor (ground) and a roof (the sky or a ceiling in an underpass, for instance) which have comparable qualities materially and spatially. In the Sheep Meadow landscape, the tree mass is a transition zone between the open space of the lawn and the space-defining wall of the building facades, being a spatial border itself. Photo by the author 2012.

into being phenomenology-inspired or -informed rather than strictly phenomenological. However, the main purpose is to add to the understanding of green urban landscapes, and the thinking behind these concepts bears certain analogies to the phenomena of these landscapes, as well as the phenomenon of analyzing them. To situate the findings in analyzing urban landscape and to return to one of the ‘invisible’ elements of experience, the intrinsic aesthetic judgment, the last section in this chapter (2.7) discusses assessing quality in the urban environment in the light of phenomenology.

2.3 Essence and landscape

2.3.1 Essence as a concept in the study

The use of the term 'essence' in the study is influenced by both the common language usage of the term and the concept in phenomenological texts. The essence of something has been used in phenomenology-informed literature to define an essential feature. Ingold uses the expression repeatedly, for instance for "the essence of humans' humanity" (Ingold 1990, p. 210, cited in Ingold 2000, p. 63), when stating that the "essence of trust is a peculiar combination of autonomy and dependency" (Ingold 2000 p. 69) or even for the inner or vital essence of a person (Ingold 2000, pp. 80, 92, 93). Ingold also states that "The nature of the things one encounters, *their essence* (author's emphasis), is not given in advance but is revealed only 'after-the-fact' and sometimes only after the lapse of some considerable period of time, in the light of subsequent experience – which of course may differ from one person to another" (Ingold 2000, p. 97). With this, he also refers to the role of experience and time in the emergence of essence.

Perhaps the most understandable, concrete definition of 'essence' can be found with Jean-Paul Sartre (2004, orig. 1937), who uses the example of a ball as an essentially round object. Sartre states that "it is essential for a ball to be a three-dimensional object in which every point of its surface is as far from the center as the next" (Sartre 1937, p. 24, preface by Kauppinen 2004). In other words, the essence of a ball is its roundness, and its essential way of *being* is to be round.⁹⁸

The understanding of essence predates a conventional notion of experience and requires a state of mind that opens up to the particularity of a given phenomenon. Liberation from captivation-in-an-acceptedness enables us to see (the world as a world of) essences, something prior to experience, disclosed in an act of constitution (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy IEP). The essential natures or essences of the objects and acts of consciousness are to be intuitively concentrated on (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy IEP). Merleau-Ponty (1968, 1976) uses the term *intuition of essences*. According to Merleau-Ponty (1968, p. xlv)⁹⁹ the "intuition of essences is produced out of an imaginary variation performed on the primal topography of the visible." This

⁹⁸ If, for instance, we were to describe the essence of a ball as an object, we can imagine balls of different colors, and realize that no specific color is essential to it actually being a ball. However, we cannot imagine a flat or oval "ball." Hence, other properties can describe it further, like color or texture, but without the roundness the object is something other than a ball.

⁹⁹ The manuscript for *The Visible and the Invisible*, which remained unfinished due to his untimely death. For that reason, in terms of the book and its content, posthumous editions need to be relied on.

refers to the direction of something implicit, perhaps a rather unconscious understanding of the essential characteristics as they are experienced by a bodily subject, predating thought and language.

If one were to establish an essence or something essential about such phenomena as landscape or place, another question arises: what that essence is in relation to concepts like *genius loci* (spirit of the place), character or identity, and whether it is universal, or beyond changes. These terms used in everyday language also depict essential characteristics and particularities. Identity as a concept can apply to both places and people. Merry (2010, p. 2) concludes that a person's identity "refers to the complex and ever-evolving expressions of self-understanding that describe how persons relate, and form attachments, to their historical-social-cultural environment." Place identity is connected with, or at least in some relation to, a person's identity (Fitch 2013, Qazimi 2014), and defined by the relationship with people and their environment, discussed in social science and environmental psychology.¹⁰⁰ According to Qazimi (2014), places have symbols of different social categories and concepts and "speak and preserve identity on various dimensions and levels."

The distinction between identity, essence and character is yet to be established beyond reasonable doubt. However, it seems that character of landscape is something that is created by its physical components, as expressed in landscape analyses and character assessment (Swanwick 2002; Stahlschmidt et al. 2017), while *genius loci* (e.g. Norberg-Schulz 1980) has more of a metaphysical nature, originally meaning an actual, spiritual being and nowadays thought to be triggered by some landscape properties and the reactions of the experiencer to the knowledge of a place's invisible aspects such as its past.¹⁰¹ Identity, in particular, is often connected with cultural heritage (e.g. City of Helsinki/Mapita Ltd 2017; Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 74). Perhaps it could be suggested, at this point, that *an essence of landscape is the intuition of a comprehensive character of landscape made up with the properties that evoke the feel of genius loci, and the shared experiences of people in that landscape or place make an identity*. The following sections elaborate the possibility and critique of an essence of landscape in general, or a landscape in particular.

2.3.2 **Essence of (a) landscape?**

One could argue that green urban landscape in particular is such a dynamic phenomenon, ever-changing and rich in sometimes contrasting values and ambitions, that it may be impossible to bracket out an essence that were somehow manifest in the experience of places within that landscape. Whether an

¹⁰⁰ Fitch (2013) specifies four areas of development in terms of place identity: (a) distinctiveness of the place, (b) continuity within the place, (c) self-esteem due to association with a particular place, and (d) self-efficacy.

¹⁰¹ Discussed further in section 2.5 Landscape as a place.

essence can be interpreted in a way that had any validity or generality to it can be debated. A character made up of the properties that evoke the feel of a genius loci may not be the same for everyone experiencing a place. It is important to consider, as well, how permanent, lasting or unchanging such an essence might be. Considering a complex concept more or less in a constant flux, can there be a defining factor, such as roundness for a ball?

Essence is a more powerful word than mere character. It is implying that there is something essential, universal and unchanging about the thingness of the thing in question. It is the quality that cannot be ignored without losing sight of what the thing essentially is. By the same token, in terms of landscape, it should be something that cannot be ignored in processes affecting the landscape, such as planning or construction, or taken out of the landscape, without losing the attractiveness and value of the landscape itself. At the same time, it is, however, not an individual feature but rather a totality. The experiences of attractive or valuable are individual, and even if they are shared by some, or widely recognized like so-called institutionalized values, they are never exactly identical between different observers.

It is, as a result, challenging to define what is essential for a comprehensive phenomenon such as landscape, all the more as the understanding of the very concept varies. 'Landscape' as a concept refers to the glimpse of a view, something perceived in a given moment in time and place, a way of seeing and also a totality with a common denominator or a physical area,¹⁰² and in this study (see section 1.4), it is understood as a manifold, comprehensive, and mentally and physically layered phenomenon. 'Landscape' for a landscape architect is everything that is perceived and also the invisible layers that constitute the totality, making it what it is. To omit any of the definitions, however, would be to deliberately exclude some characteristic of the word in its use in common language and professionally. Consequently, the concept of (a) landscape's essence must speak to this manifold character, as well, and one has to include all possible definitions in order to claim anything of the phenomenon of landscape.

It is in fact impossible to talk about the *essence of landscape* as such, as a concept that defines all landscapes equally, but instead we can discuss the essence of *a* particular landscape. In the same way, if we say "the essence of a ball is to be round" (Sartre 2004), it also means that the color, texture or softness/hardness of the ball is not the essence of the ball as any ball there is, but those qualities may be the essence of a particular ball, for instance a "soft red ball." The only essence of a ball in general is its roundness. As for landscape, the only essence of landscape in general is to be a multilayered, equivocal and ambiguous concept. It is characteristic of landscape as a concept and as a real-life phenomenon to be layered and complex in more ways than one,

¹⁰² Such as "the landscape of Finland," "the urban landscape of Helsinki" or "the landscape of the Emerald necklace."

and this is in common to all landscapes, especially urban ones. However, one may be able to capture or define *something essential* of a particular landscape that has particular qualities. These qualities may be known or experienced by someone, and some other qualities by someone else. The perception of essential characteristics can be partly shared, as some of the information about the landscape or area can be known or observed to all, but there are always subjective elements and views that are singular and particular to the experiencer. In that sense, an intuition of something essential generated by the immediate experience, might be the closest that one can get to the phenomenological concept of essence in terms of a landscape. The 'mapping' and definition of essential characteristics is likewise partly subjective, but can be communicated if made explicitly visible.

Essence, in a strictly phenomenological sense or in common language, should be something that makes a particular landscape what it is, its singular dimension among landscapes, something that could be called *the essential*. However, in an urban setting especially, hills are leveled and houses built. Consequently, changes in the physical landscape alone may be so dominating that the character that it had a hundred years ago or yesterday may not much resemble that of today. Landscape is essentially a phenomenon manifesting processes, both natural and human-inflicted. Who defines the essential? Who decides what is relevant about a landscape? Signifying or giving meaning to the essential in landscapes can also be seen as political. In everyday professional life, planners face the necessity to make decisions about the acts they propose on the land, based on a more or less subjectively defined emphasis on the factors known and analyzed, and a synthesis thereof. One has to choose which factors to emphasize over others to achieve certain goals. While acknowledging some facts and factors and making them visible, one inevitably excludes others knowingly or subconsciously, leaving them invisible. The presence of these factors in the subjective and, consequently, shared consciousness is an art of inclusion and exclusion, but always starts with recognizing or ignoring them oneself.

Or perhaps 'the essential' is created during the course of a long time, when the felt genius loci, the spirit of the place¹⁰³, together with what is known and understood about the place, is transformed into meaning. Meaning is represented and further created when it is analyzed, written down, photographed etc., documented and interpreted verbally and visually. Perhaps that essential is created both by the physical features of the landscape, and the experiences layered on it by the people who are in contact with it, perceiving it. Perhaps it is there, even if its physical features have disappeared. If bedrock is blown to pieces, it is still visible in the gravel of the road traversing the previous hills,

¹⁰³ The genius loci is in the design language often described more or less in the same way as atmosphere, an invisible dimension which, however, is constituted by visible things.

and if a town is bombed to oblivion, it is alive in the memories of the people who still remember it once being there. Perhaps that essential is gone when no one remembers what the town was like anymore.¹⁰⁴

In any case, the notion of essence as it was first introduced by phenomenology proves problematic in terms of landscape. The aims and context of the original Husserlian essence were different from those of this study, and as concepts are temporal and in flux,¹⁰⁵ a different approach to the essence or essential might apply better to landscapes. It would probably be more useful to talk about multiple essences experienced and understood subjectively by various subjects, the essential as suggested before, or an essential character, the important characteristics of a landscape that make up the synthesis of its interpretation. The essential characteristics (*olennaiset ominaispiirteet* in Finnish) of a landscape, an area or a place are often defined in praxis to initiate a design process, trying to understand the essential about the target area in question. This part of a design process can bear different names, according to its emphasis. Basically, practices such as landscape analysis or landscape character assessment introduced earlier, are seeking to depict these characteristics, and together they approach something that could perhaps be called an essence, the essential, or at least an intuition thereof.

Multiple experiences participate in the definition of a landscape's essential features. If permitted a reference to music, a musical metaphor; instead of a single-note melody, landscape is rather a chorus/orchestral piece with multiple voices and themes, a story that we need to listen attentively to understand how all its elements constitute the totality. Urban landscape can be a cacophony but it has an inner logic that opens up gradually - what happened here, why is this landscape the way it is, as a result of conscious decisions as well as nature's logic such as succession or haphazard and random occurrences. With empathetic understanding, something essential about it can be depicted, and with intuition the act of understanding is possible. Perttula describes the intuition, besides emotion/sensation, as constituting and specifying the act of immersed understanding, in the same way that (re)constructive understanding is structured by knowledge and belief (Perttula 2008, pp. 123-131), but intuition is impossible to conceptualize in language.¹⁰⁶

In the landscape architectural tradition, landscape analysis (section 2.1) is fundamentally about understanding the essential characteristics in a

104 One can also ponder whether or not places that people might not generally attach to, such as warzones or refugee camps have essential characteristics that can be defined, or if the existence of something essential requires attachment.

105 As Heidegger observes (2013b, p. 108), philosophy never comes to final results, but merely to "historical opinions or opinions conditioned by their milieu and to the convictions of individual 'thinkers'."

106 About intuition, see also Raami, A (2015). *Intuition unleashed: on the application and development of intuition in the creative process*. Helsinki: Aalto University.

landscape and seeking to conceptualize them as a 'text,' a written or visual language. In any case, a sensitivity for a place, an approach that enables deep understanding of the hows and whys of a place, is necessary to understand the essential about landscapes, which in turn enables a positive contribution to the experience of that place. Landscape architecture is as much about poetry as technique, - an activity where knowhow of technique is enhanced and flavored by things like understanding, sensitivity and creativity. Site-specific design seeks to understand the essential characteristics, to "consult the genius of place in all" as the poet Alexander Pope (1717, p. 261, reprinted 1995) puts it in his much-cited poem, by which Olmsted, the designer of one of the main case examples of this study, was also inspired (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 33). Instead of sketching new structures on white paper, detached from the surroundings, it lays the ground for a different sensitivity to a place. The poem describes the landscape designer's ways to achieve the effects of the English landscape garden:

*In all, let Nature never be forgot,
But treat the goddess like a modest fair,
Nor over-dress, nor leave her wholly bare;
Let not each beauty everywhere be spied,
Where half the skill is decently to hide.
He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
Surprises, varies, and conceals the bounds.
Consult the genius of the place in all;
That tells the waters or to rise, or fall;
Or helps th' ambitious hill the heav'ns to scale,
Or scoops in circling theatres the vale;
Calls in the country, catches opening glades,
Joins willing woods, and varies shades from shades,
Now breaks, or now directs, th' intending lines;
Paints as you plant, and, as you work, designs.*
(Alexander Pope 1995 (1717) p. 261: Epistle IV, to Richard Boyle,
Earl of Burlington)

In the poem he also gives his idea of a relationship with nature, where the "goddess" nature is to be handled with taste and moderation to be able to hear the genius's consultation. In terms of green urban landscape, the poem also presents a metaphor of the necessities of nature that are to be recognized in design. The unchanging truths about the context that a landscape designer is working with, include that water flows downhill and the woods are to be willing - for vegetation to thrive, its essential features and necessary circumstances are to be understood. Attention and movement can be directed by design.

Understanding the essential of a landscape in praxis means, for instance, that designing a new housing quarter in the landscape, one strives to understand the context of design tradition, of values, of the natural world. As established in terms of landscape analysis in general, it is necessary to first understand the characteristics of what there already is. Only then can you consciously either seek to make new additions subdued and in harmony with the existing, or to consciously contrast with it.¹⁰⁷ When all the information considered necessary has been gained and analyzed, planning decisions are based on the evaluation of different values against each other.

In conclusion, in terms of phenomena such as landscape, there is no one feature that would alone define its essential way of being in the same way as roundness of a ball. For landscape in general or a landscape in particular, there might not be an unchangeable core by nature, or a phenomenological essence, but by trying to find the essence it is certain that something that is essential will be captured, instead of just settling for the appearance or performance of landscapes.

2.3.3 In search of the essential - constituent parts?

It was established earlier that an essence of landscape might be defined as “the intuition of a comprehensive character of landscape made up with the properties that evoke the feel of *genius loci*.” In the previous paragraphs, it was further concluded that an essence of (a) landscape per se in a strictly phenomenological sense might not exist, although we can conclude certain things to be essential about landscape as a concept. For particular landscapes, in this chapter the expression ‘the essential’ is used as distinct from the phenomenological essence, although in everyday language ‘essence’ may refer to an essential characteristic.

To arrive at the set of these essential properties, I suggest an analysis of landscape inspired by phenomenology, as a first attempt towards a framework of analyzing landscape in the phenomenological context. (The revised models are presented in chapters 3 and 5). It is operating on two levels: the first level is the appearance and includes the visible, the evident. The second level includes both visible and invisible elements, the realm of the hidden stories of the landscape, physically (properties of the place) and mentally (properties of the observer) under the surface. This level denotes the uncovering of what is not physically evident. When making the invisible visible by narratives or representation, one actually makes the second level emerge as a meaning and become part of the first. They can be stories or experiential accounts of a

¹⁰⁷ Sometimes, the existing is not considered worthy of analysis. Such is the case in, for instance, projects where the existing structures are demolished, either because they are not considered as having relevant value, the values are not even discussed, or the economic value of new development is considered greater.

place, but also other things that are known about the place, such as the geomorphological features - how the landscape base was created in time.

For instance, the functional character of a landscape may be observed as part of the meaning. It is manifested in places that are there for a distinct purpose, such as an agricultural field or an industrial site, a marketplace or a playing field, a housing area, or even a primeval forest in a national park that is preserved for recreation and ecological significance. The questions can be posed, what if the field or industrial site has been abandoned and is closing in? When a landscape has lost the evident, long-time purpose, it could be called a *transitional* landscape, where the functional character part of the essential is in transition. If the functional character is a defining feature in terms of the other elements (spatial, meaning), the essential may be in transition as well. On the other hand, cultural heritage may define an area for a long time, if a landscape is preserved on that basis.

When new settlements are introduced in cultural landscape in a way characteristic to the place, the way they have been built for centuries,¹⁰⁸ the essential character is altered little. If, for instance, a block of flats is introduced in an open clay field on a littoral plain, it may be in contradiction with the essential character of the landscape, whose spatial composition is the interplay of open slopes and canopied, inhabited hills. Another example: if the attraction of a landscape (for instance as a tourist attraction) is based on a wildlife sanctuary or a nature preservation area, the ecological functionality is an important component of its essential character. Building a polluting factory in it or next to it is an act in contradiction with it. This analysis, however, need not entail judgment and is not aimed to do so, but merely to observe. If judgments are made, such as in factors like 'aesthetic quality,' it is important to note the biases they are made on.

Landscape character is, however, not necessarily stable, and the spirit of the place needs to be reinterpreted, sometimes even reinvented. As Norberg-Schulz puts it, "to protect and conserve the genius loci in fact means to concretize its *essence* (author's emphasis) in ever new historical contexts" (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 18). The essential is concretized, the invisible read and interpreted over and over again, creating historical layers of natural and cultural acts on the land. A landscape is in Daniels' and Cosgrove's terms no more a palimpsest - a page that has been scratched and reused - "whose 'real' or 'authentic' meanings can somehow be recovered with the correct techniques, theories or ideologies, but a flickering text (displayed on the word-processor screen) whose meaning can be created, extended, altered, elaborated and finally obliterated by the merest touch of a button" (Cosgrove & Daniels 1988, p. 8).

¹⁰⁸ For instance, in Finnish rural landscape, on the outskirts of an esker in recognition with the features of the landscape and microclimate.

The essential characteristics of a landscape can be described as consisting of both physical and mental elements, where the physical ones are the properties of the place, and the mental ones the subjective evaluations and valuations of the observer. They may contain at least the following and be thus categorized and discovered:

1. basic structure (geomorphology, ecology)
2. spatial character (open, enclosed, etc.) with skyline, views, orientation
3. meaning to individuals and recognized values (part of what totality/continuum, association, knowledge, experience, traces of the passing of time - cultural and historic value)
4. functional character - what is the landscape for, why does it exist in the first place, and
5. aesthetic quality (sublime, beautiful, ugly, striking, insignificant, ordinary, etc.).

These features can be evaluated and valued according to their dominance, which makes up the appearance of the landscape in our consciousness. This evaluation is somewhat subjective as it involves inclusion and exclusion. What would the intuition of an essence be, then: what is its role in landscape analysis? Perhaps it is the subjective component in the understanding of landscapes - an openness to the 'genius loci,'¹⁰⁹ spirit of place, a true nature waiting to appear along with the phenomenological reduction, when bracketing out preconceived ideas. Essential characteristics are also partly generated by the meaning of a landscape, its visible features or what it symbolizes. As a "whole that is more than the sum of its parts" (Antrop & Eetvelde 2017), landscape requires an analysis that thrives at depicting the essential that is constituted by an array of aspects, explored as thoroughly as possible and recognizing the multiple experiences embedded in the development of its meaning. Some examples of the elements that may together partly constitute the essential character, when landscape is concerned, have been discussed in this section. In the following, one of them, meaning, is discussed some more.

2.3.4 In search of the essential - meaning in landscape

The concept of meaning is interesting to a phenomenologist. A landscape architect, however, wonders if meaning can be designed into landscape (e.g. Treib 1995, 2002; Olin 1988, 2002), or if designs solely interpret meanings somehow

¹⁰⁹ Some tourist attraction landscapes (e.g. Niagara Falls) may inhabit a powerful genius loci. Powerful landscapes may or may not become tourist attractions, as it is also a question of marketing, but they are often recognized as sacred sites by earlier civilizations, as is the case in Ayers Rock (Uluru) in the Australian outback. These landscapes are experienced as significant or unique in the aesthetic sense because they have a sublime quality in their essence that attracts people to them - their basic structure is visible without further study. The process of becoming is still visible.

inherently embedded in the landscape. According to Baljon (1992), parks are places where objects have been put together so that their meaning exceeds the meaning of a single object. According to Cosgrove (1998, p. 13), “landscape carries multiple layers of meaning.” The knowledge about the meanings written in the landscape deepens the experience, but on the other hand, adds to it an element of consciousness by which the Aristotelian pure and immediate pleasure is transformed into analytical or at the very least conscious. Perhaps understanding of meaning can solely be achieved by representing the knowledge behind the seen in some way or the other, and the ‘meaning’ in a landscape is generated in the subject’s mind, based on their experience of the place and what is known about it by each experienter. It must be noted that meaning and knowledge are not identical, as meaning is based on subjective understanding and perception, but knowledge can presumably co-create meaning for places. The depiction of an intended meaning can be guided by design by way of inclusion, exclusion, emphasis, creating space and atmosphere with design elements or ways of orientation, but it cannot be written to places explicitly so that the experience or understanding of others is always the same.¹¹⁰

Treib (1995, 2002) is quite critical towards the potential of designers to build a semantic dimension into landscape architecture (Treib 2002, p. 89),¹¹¹ for one, and to create meaningful landscapes by reflecting the pre-existing conditions (Treib 2002, p. 93), for another. Landscape architects and other designers can, however, help create significant places, by not only speaking to the mind through the senses but by satisfying the senses themselves. Potteiger and Purinton (2002, p. 143) talk about “open landscape narratives,” places where the pleasure of the unexpected is still possible, and not everything is defined and premeditated - places that recognize the discursive aspect of landscape. Structuring sequences also structure time, and *narrative* is a language to depict them (Potteiger & Purinton 2002, p. 138). Narratives have a strong connotation in the social context. Reading the landscape is intertextual, and that realm of “dispersed and unstable meaning” can be grounded in the specific social contexts where it is gathered - hence the better imbricated the narrative is, the stronger it is (Potteiger & Purinton 2002, p. 141). According to Swaffield (2002, pp. 228-229), instead of singular design decisions or static absolutes, meaning and significance in landscape architecture emerge and are determined within a field or fields of potential relationships which include, but are not limited to, concepts of nature and culture, and can be transformed in representational means.

¹¹⁰ Although it can be read, like the example of depicting a former clearing in the woods from a shape of a tree suggests, and the history of an area can be made perceptible by various ways, including signposting, marking elements and traces of history with a design or an art intervention in space.

¹¹¹ He admits, however, that there are strategies that designers have, to address this. Treib mentions six approaches, calling them neoarchaic, worshiping the genius loci, zeitgeist, landscape for the people, didactic and theme park strategy (Treib 1995, pp. 50-52).

As for designing meaning, a designer may not be able to lay out a meaning for anyone experiencing their products, but those products can evoke emotions and refer to something, and that can be guided to some extent in a more or less conscious way. Places may have a certain atmosphere to an experiencer and in that way be associated with something. The means to achieve this are rhetorical, when the rhetoric leads the recipient to complement the thought with an evident or logical way. The rhetoric consists of effects whose task is to evoke certain attitudes towards the thing in question; a certain feeling, not just an understanding of what one should feel (Olin 1988, p. 163; Olin 2002, pp. 77-79). In the same way as a beholder perceiving an artwork participates in its making and recreates the piece by responding to it in a particular way (Gombrich 1960, 1982), the actual meaning of landscape is generated in the experiencer's mind as an interaction between the qualities of the landscape and the qualities (state of mind, associations, etc.) of the observer.

Meaning in a landscape is an expression of its essential quality, whether it be a coastal plain, a glacial formation or a garden of ideas. The designer's intention is interpreted through a design's meaning - it is either visible for the experiencer or not, but a good design, like a good work of art, is experienced as meaningful. The meaning can be a trace of history, a functional purpose, beauty in one of its forms, or, for instance, sustainability - or those can and rather should be interlaced. As a complex phenomenon, landscape has a multitude of meanings overlapping and appealing to different individuals. As observed by Thayer (2002, p. 106), a cognitive framework of subjective meanings is created through repeated experience with landscapes, based on perceptual, functional and symbolic dimensions.

To find the essential and to design accordingly, one should, as said, "consult the genius of the place" (Alexander Pope 1717, cited in Hunt, p. 229) or "explore the capabilities of the landscape" as Lancelot "Capability" Brown has been said to express it. The ideal of landscape architecture includes the concept that when listening to a place's potential, the natural way of responding to it will almost miraculously emerge. The creative process will follow, as Richard Payne Knight writes in his famous poem ("Landscape, a didactic poem" 1794):

*First fix the points to which you wish to go;
Then let your easy path spontaneous flow;
With no affected turn or artful bend,
To lead you round still farther from the end;
For, as the principle of taste is sense,
Whate'er is void of meaning gives offense.*

In the praxis of planning and landscape architecture, the achievement of such natural ease in design, as well as the experience of the result afterwards, is probably an outcome of a long series of efforts. It involves immersing oneself

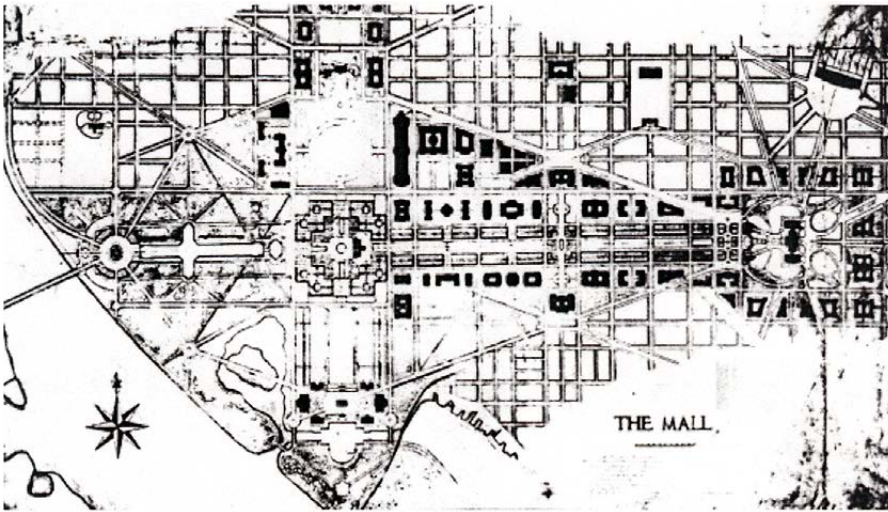


■ Figures 30 a and b. Landforms in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, by F. L. Olmsted, are an essential trait made visible by design. The ridge is such a dominant feature that it was taken as a basis for the design and has created the visible image of the park's totality. Photos by the author 2015.

in the morphology, in the time and space of a particular place - and successfully synthesizing them with present-day challenges, skillfully using the techniques that help create places to pause. Design is the imagining of possible futures based on that process. The real meaning emerges in that same time and space, afterwards, as a result of a process in its experiencers' minds.

In Elizabeth Meyer's writing about Olmsted's Prospect Park in Brooklyn, New York, design allows the "silent ground" to speak the "formal language of glacial geomorphology" (Meyer 1997). The meaning of the landscape is visualized when the esker formation is taken as a basis for the plan, embraced and enhanced in land forming and by a spatial composition. The ground becomes figured and a site (or a place) emerges from the "frame of a landscape" (Meyer 1997). The essence of the landscape is here defined through the esker formation that gives the landscape its essential landforms and has guided the design to respond to it.

Sometimes the essence or essential meaning of a landscape is to be a representation of ideas or a national symbol, and the meaning has overcome the attraction of the actual physical landscape. The National Mall in Washington D.C., designed by Daniel Burnham, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Charles McKim and Augustus Saint-Gaudens, for the McMillan Commission in 1901-1902, built in the 1920s to 40s, included the monumental core of The Mall System, but also a comprehensive city plan for refurbishment of the green areas system in the capital. It is a product of its era, an era of progress and self-consciousness - in its sovereignty of conquering nature and natural form. It is an expression of aesthetic modernity, in its conscious relation to the past and the present, in its object-subject duality in perception, as a scene and an artifact. Meanings that can be read in this landscape are ones of romantic nationalism, such as a look towards the western land to be conquered, the axis of democracy, etc. The Mall System is part of a national legacy of its country that is



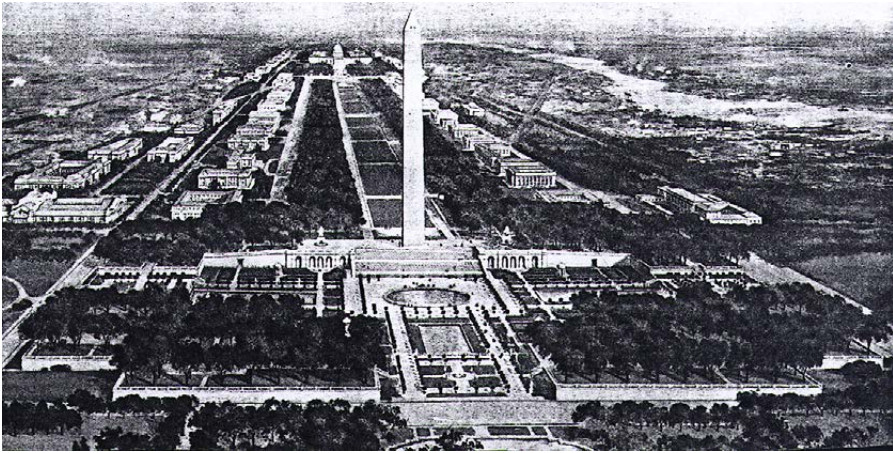
■ Figure 31. Plan of the National Mall in Washington D.C. McMillan 1901.

emphasized from time to time by placing monuments of bygone statesmen, as well as more recent wars.¹¹²

Drawing on Cosgrove and Daniels (1988, p. 8), The Mall, as a classic in its genre, also deconstructs the modernism of its design, and rewrites it towards heterogeneity, including the marginal and underprivileged. This is manifest in its function as a scene for democratic expression, such as the famous speech by Martin Luther King Jr. Its fertile ground for a rewritten meaning is impregnated with time. However, the basic features of its essential character, like the topography molded by more ancient forces can still be depicted from it, some easily, some with more effort.

The multiple layers of symbolic meaning, however, are not something that people cover their environment with (or strip them off of) but the *discovery* of meaning in the landscape has to begin from a recognition of its temporality (Ingold 2000, pp. 154, 208), and one needs to know how to attend to it. With narratives and representation, stories that help open up the world, it is possible to pick up information of the landscape and to render this knowledge explicit (Ingold 2000, pp. 90, 208).

¹¹² The meaning is manifest in conflict; placing another object in this setting can bring about much controversy, as was the case of Maya Lin's work, sort of a whisper among the shouts, at the Vietnam War Memorial.



■ Figure 32. Illustration of the National Mall in Washington D.C., aerial view. McMillan 1901.

2.4 Visible and invisible, fold of the flesh

“...seam is the fold of the flesh... an inside fold comparable to an outside one, the implicit in the explicit, the invisible in the visible, the untouched in the touchable, the unconscious in the consciousness, unthought of in the thinking and silence in the speech.”

(Merleau-Ponty 1968)

In the above sections, the visible and invisible in landscape have been touched upon on several occasions. These concepts were originally introduced in the phenomenological literature by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, whose unfinished manuscript was titled accordingly (Merleau-Ponty 1964, 1968).¹¹³ The following weaves together his concepts and discusses whether there are parallels to be drawn when analyzing landscape, in the way they can inform, inspire or be applied to the phenomenon of landscape, especially green urban landscapes.

A landscape, a place, has visible and invisible, perceptible and imperceptible components - those that can be perceived by the senses and those that cannot. The imperceptible are equally true. Merleau-Ponty states in his *Le Visible et l'Invisible* (1964) that what we see in the “flesh” contains the evident as well as the existing but hidden, which conceals itself in the “folds

¹¹³ This work is sometimes (for instance finna.fi) accredited to both Merleau-Ponty and its editor Claude Lefort. Merleau-Ponty died before being able to finish his manuscript. In the translated version, the translator Alphonso Lingis's preface is also often quoted.

of the flesh” (Merleau-Ponty 1968; Hotanen 2008), the “*plis de chair*” (Merleau-Ponty 1964). The “*flesh*” he calls all the worldly things. When one touches oneself with one’s reflective body, touching something, *se toucher touchant* (Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 176), all are the same flesh in the worldly existence.¹¹⁴

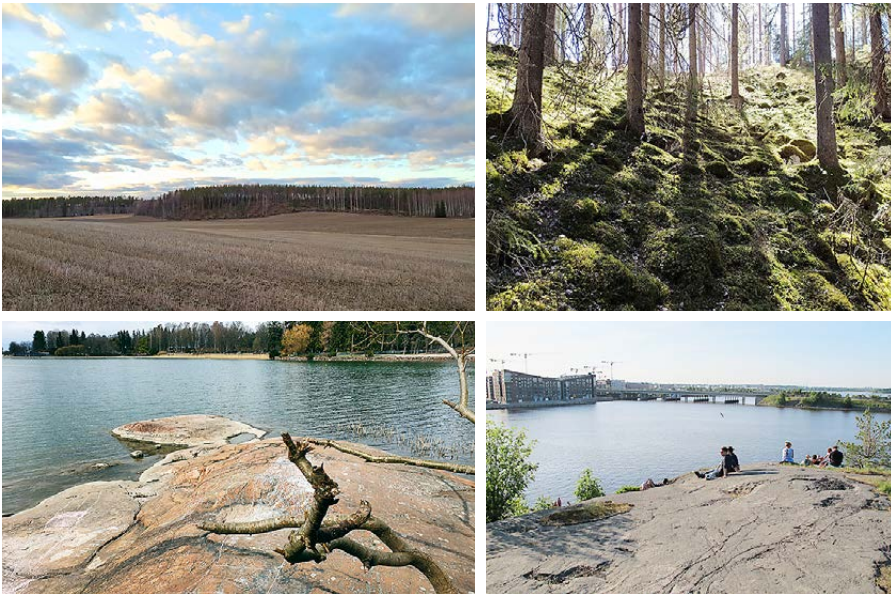
The invisible is, however, not beyond the visible, absolutely invisible, because between the visible and the invisible there is a fold, a seam, a bond (Hotanen 2008, p. 129), and in relation to self there is a cavity (*creux*), a positive and active nothing. The body is captured in dimensionality. It is the differentiation of a sensing and perceptible dimension, and their seam is the fold of the *flesh*, not an aperture or a gap in the being (Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 313). Merleau-Ponty (1964, p. 317) uses the metaphor of a glove, whose inside and outside are intrinsically connected but never visible at the same time. Although the inside of the fingers of the glove are invisible to the outside and the reverse to it, they are still the same flesh and exist connected with each other, dependent on each other’s movements. The flesh represents a “wild being” or the nature, the flesh of the present being a manifestation of the “there is” (*il y a*) (Merleau-Ponty 1964).

In the working notes of the unfinished *Visible and Invisible* (Merleau-Ponty 1964; 1968) the concept of *The Intertwining - the Chiasm*¹¹⁵ is also introduced with which to explore the production of visibility and “the metaphysical structure of our flesh” (Lingis 1968, p. xl). The flesh is carnal, corporeal, living in a concrete presence, “*en chair et en os*,” in flesh and bone, neither mind or matter, but actually given in perception like Husserl’s “*leibhaft*” (Hotanen 2008, p. 84), and its tissue (*tissu, étoffe, texture*) is thick (*épais*). In the visible, the invisible is intrinsic. The things are transcendencies, each promoting a “singular style of being across time and space; and the flesh can capture in itself the allusive, schematic presence of the things” (Lingis 1968, p. xl).

As it is understood here, the thingness of the thing can obscure the true essence of it, and yet, the invisible is part of the visible. The parallel could supposedly be drawn that the process of becoming that molded the landscape is intrinsic in its essential being, although not evident from the outside: all is part of the same ‘flesh’, existent and present universal matter, from where the singular things emerge. The Chiasm, as a crossing over, combines intertwining flesh, visible and invisible, subjective experience and objective existence. In order to discuss these concepts in the context of this study, they need to be transferred into the physical world, where they are applied to landscape as an object of perception (rather than the constituents of human consciousness, for instance). In an urban landscape, the invisible appears as part of the visible,

¹¹⁴ See also Husserl and Biemel (1984, Husserliana IV, p. 145) for a similar idea. In fact, to be perceived is to be perceptible, the body is both a subject and an object, and in order to perceive and sense, it needs to be perceptible (Hotanen 2008, p. 10; Merleau-Ponty 1945).

¹¹⁵ According to Moran (2013), Husserl’s idea of “intertwining” (*Verflechtung*), a radical phenomenology of the lived body (*Leib*), is the original inspiration for Merleau-Ponty.



■ Figures 33a, b (top), 34 (bottom left) and 35 (bottom right). The invisible appears as part of the visible in landscapes where the process of becoming is depictable, such as an agricultural field surrounded by glaciofluvial geomorphological formations, Precambrian granite bedrock with present day carvings, or a construction site. Salpausselkä's esker formation (33a and b.), a rocky shore in Lapinlahti, Helsinki (34), and the emerging city quarter of Kalasatama, Helsinki (35). Photos by the author 2020.

when a process of becoming is depictable. Signs and traces of the Ice Age in landscape include eskers and other ice margin and/or glaciofluvial formations, or ice-worn bedrock that is exposed and further worn out by water. The language that tells these narratives can only be read through knowing the vocabulary and syntax. In addition, multiple layers of processes happen on these landscapes - from agriculture and forestry to architecture to unfinished artistic processes like drawings on the rock (see Figures 33-35). Construction sites are also processes of becoming, still in motion, where an architect already sees the finished product in the mind's eye.

Seeing presupposes a reflective relation, the intertwining of the seer and the visible world, much as in Husserl's concept of *Ineinander* (Merleau-Ponty 1998, in his *Notes de Cours sur l'origine de la geometrie de Husserl*, pp. 16, 79-88, cited in Hotanen 2008). The world is pressed against one's flesh and one is part of the world's flesh (Hotanen 2008, p. 85). The hidden and concealed sides are revealed along with the movement, when changing the viewpoint (Merleau-Ponty 1989, pp. 45-46, cited in Hotanen 2008). As in an artwork, where the experiencer and the piece emerge, producing the actual artwork,

similarly the actual experience that unveils the essence may be created in the intertwining and merging of the experiencer and the landscape. And the changing viewpoints along with the movement in space provides us with endless unfolding of new horizons, into both the visible and the invisible realms of landscape.

The essential conceals itself in the invisible. For instance, in a certain piece of music, the essence of an emotion or concept such as love is present, but cannot fully be described with words, or any other means than the music itself (Hotanen 2008 p. 134). In the same way, the essence of some landscapes can perhaps only be sensed by intuition and cannot fully be expressed in words. *An experience* is the lived relationship with being, the way of being (*Sosein* rather than *Sein*, Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 148). The way of being in space and time, and the space and time themselves, are shreds/fragments (*lambeaus*) of the visible, its spatiality and temporality (Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 153).

For Merleau-Ponty, the invisible is not absolutely invisible, but it opens up in the first experience as a dimension that can no more be closed. An essence or being [*olemus/oleminen*] can only be captured as an unconscious dimension of being. We can only get to the essences of things because we are the same perceptible tissue [*kudos*] that we can perceive and sense. Expression brings forth and verbalizes the essence, the things speak through us, and the language and the perceptible are intertwined into a disclosure and articulation of being (Hotanen 2008, pp. 136-137). The invisible can and must, thus, be made visible in order to be perceived, by language and verbal expression, for instance. When a phenomenon or experience thereof is described, the flesh is sublimated. Merleau-Ponty states (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 145):

At the frontier of the mute or solipsist world where, in the presence of other seers, my visible is confirmed as an exemplar of a universal visibility, we reach a second or figurative meaning of vision, which will be the intuitus mentis or idea, a sublimation of the flesh, which will be mind or thought. But the factual presence of other bodies could not produce thought or the idea if its seed were not in my own body. Thought is a relationship with oneself and with the world as well as a relationship with the other; hence it is established in the three dimensions at the same time. And it must be brought to appear directly in the infrastructure of vision.

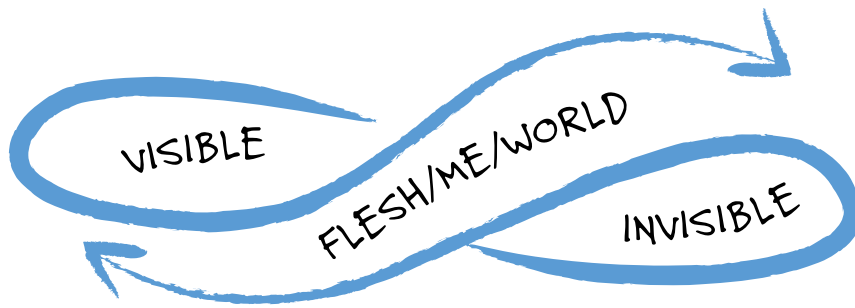
The ideas are produced in and of one's own experience, but in relation to others. In terms of landscape, representation, such as design and other communication from self to others, may make the invisible visible. The world of one cannot, however, be fully embraced by another, but only a fraction thereof, whereas the rest is concealed in the folds of the flesh. For that reason, "understanding" can never be complete.

Merleau-Ponty (1968, p. 146) also explains how the flesh and its relationship with the world is intersubjective in character. The invisible, and the fold, where inside and outside are inseparable, are intrinsic in the visible. The subject is a perceiving body, a texture that returns to itself, as it is perceiving the world which is the same flesh. The visibles of different subjects are part of a larger visible. The subjective belongs to a group of subjectives, a layer of subjective others. The flesh, the body as its manifestation, represents a visible, and at the same time, all the visibles of that realm. Since the same body sees and touches, the visible and tangible belong to the same world. Merleau-Ponty (1968, p. 134) states that “every visible is cut out of the tangible, every tactile being in some manner promised to visibility,” and besides the touched and the touching, there is also encroachment, infringement between the tangible and the visible. There is double and crossed situating of the visible in the tangible and of the tangible in the visible (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 134).

It is tempting yet perhaps too concrete or literal - to be aligned with what Merleau-Ponty originally meant - to think of a landscape or a sequence of landscape spaces such as a chain of parks as an allegory of this thought. They can be thought of as spaces that mean and exist on their own, but belong to the same essential Being, just as the global ecosystem, as fragments of its flesh. However, it is useful to ponder the visibilities and invisibilities of the green urban landscape, at least in the sense of understanding that which is concealed within the ‘folds of the flesh,’ and to realize that the living share the same flesh. This sets a new responsibility to the world that is then “my next of kin, my flesh and bone” (*Voices*, by the author). In Goethe’s lines about the enchantment of a landscape experience (1827, p. 576, see footnote in section 2.7.2), a verbalization of the sentiment of oneness between *the flesh of me and the flesh of where I am* can be found.

Merleau-Ponty states in his essay “Eye and Mind” (Merleau-Ponty 1993b, 1961, pp. 16-17, cited in Hotanen 2008, pp. 88-89) that the body reveals the things by sensing and moving amongst them, and the movement of one’s body happens amidst the visible, at the same time part of that visible world. The seeing does not stop in the visible, but protrudes into the invisible, yet never getting into the thing itself (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 245, cited in Hotanen 2008, p. 89). The invisible is not only the concealed side of the visible, seen from another angle, but in the visible there is intrinsically an inner horizon, the invisible articulation of the visible, that which is a cavity, absence, lack of something, but not empty or a nothing. The invisible is another dimension, the potential for transcendental being (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 281).

Being and Essence reach coherence in a sentient body finding corporeal relevance, in a realm beyond the visible and objectifying, but of solidarity and intertwining with the significant and signified, with the language expressing as well as the thing expressed. In the chapter “Interrogation and Intuition” of the *Visible and Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty writes about the relationship with



■ Figure 36. The chiasmic relationship between the perceptible and imperceptible in phenomenology-inspired landscape analysis, drawing on Merleau-Ponty, whose idea of the flesh includes that the world and I are the same flesh and the visible and invisible components or dimensions of that world are mutually intertwined. The relationship between them is dynamic and produces a process in flux where the relationship is constantly reiterated, rediscovered and transformed. Illustration by the author 2021.

essence, language/communication and flesh (Merleau-Ponty 1968, pp. 118-119; Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 156). A few things in particular speak to the essence and experience, as well as their connection with expression. For Merleau-Ponty, the “landscape” of one’s being is “opened to the universal, precisely because it is rather an unthought,” an idea not yet expressed with words, because “ideas that are too much possessed are no longer ideas; I no longer think anything when I speak of them,” and because “it is essential to the essence that it be for tomorrow.” So perhaps the essence that this study is trying to map is an idea in the strictest sense, something that loses its original being when made visible. Perhaps a thing retains its genuine character, its essence, if there is such, only as an unthought, unspoken, not explicitly expressed, hiding in the folds of the flesh, and yet constituting the truth of the matter. With making the invisible visible, a designer, for instance, writing a text in their characteristic way, as in drawing, visualizing, not only gives a tangible form to “his “ideas,” but also his obsessions, his secret history which the others suddenly lay bare by formulating them as ideas” (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 119). “Life becomes ideas and the ideas return to life” (Merleau-Ponty 1968, pp. 118-119; Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 156) could also be describing a creative process, creating something out of having lived and channeling them back to another life in words or artistic creation.

The representation of ideas in a tangible form and the verbalization of experiences are pivotal for the study, in terms of the understanding and interpretation of phenomena. Merleau-Ponty says further that “in discussion or in monologue, the essence in the living and active state is always a certain vanishing point indicated by the arrangement of the words, their ‘other side,’ inaccessible, save for him who accepts to live first and always in them” (Merleau-Ponty 1968, pp. 118-119; Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 156). One can also

read into these words, in addition to what was said above about the fleeting nature of essence, that when accounts of certain places are put forth against each other in dialogue, the way this is done is greatly defined by the way the being is captured in words, the *poésie*, “arrangement of words.” In describing something, trying to capture the essential from fragmented pieces of perception and unfinished thoughts vanishing to the horizon, we rearrange reality for someone to see, to sense. The success is defined by the way the other is able to receive and respond, to live in the words. Experience happens in us, triggered by the perceived, where the ideas stem from. Its account to others makes it visible, and its shape is defined by the manner it is done in each case – and that manner is in turn defined by the way each specific experience finds its expression in a tangible form.

In the same way, the past is a thing of the invisible (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 122):

... if the pure memory is the former present preserved, and if, in the act of recalling, I really become again what I was, it becomes impossible to see how it could open to me the dimension of the past. And if in being inscribed within me each present loses its flesh, if the pure memory into which it is changed is an invisible, then there is indeed a past, but no coinciding with it – I am separated from it by the whole thickness of my present; it is mine only by finding in some way a place in my present, in making itself present anew.

Only in a remade present can a thing of the past be perceptible. The account of history in the present makes these two worlds collide and the invisible emerge from the folds of the flesh. Hence, a narrative made visible in text or design may bring forth the flesh of the past experiences and ideas into the light of today.

While Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty are concerned with how we as humans exist in the world, this study seeks to make connections between phenomenological thoughts and concepts and landscape analysis, discussing them in the context of understanding green urban landscape as a phenomenon, and certain types of landscapes as specimens. The study uses these reflections of ‘how I am with the world’ as allegories or pathways into ‘how a landscape is’ and how something essential can be seized of it. This is presented as a recapitulation or a reinterpretation of thoughts that bear the holistic understanding of the experiencer and the world (the landscape in this case) as well as their interrelations. They are applied in a way that might seem unconventional in phenomenological research, but is hopefully worth the effort, if added value to landscape architectural theory and praxis is possibly gained.

In the sections 2.3 and 2.4 the phenomenological concepts of *essence*, as well as the *visible* and *invisible*, have been discussed, reflecting them in their context of phenomenological philosophy. Informed and inspired by their use

in the phenomenological texts, in the following sections, the concepts are used in a way that is useful for the purposes of this research, analyzing landscape. Instead of the strictly Husserlian *Essenz*, in this conjunction the word essence is occasionally used, analogous to the everyday expression, to describe 'the essential' in the particular landscape concerned. The Visible and Invisible refer to what can be immediately perceived by the human senses and what, on the contrary, requires something more to be perceived (as in understood). The fold or seam between them (the interface) is the mediator in-between, their means of communication, referring to the way that Merleau-Ponty describes the 'flesh' and the fold in it (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 135). It must also be noted that although the elements are presented as classified in a framework and separated for clarity, they are in many ways intertwined and mutually embedded, just like the Visible and Invisible that Merleau-Ponty discusses. In the following sections, the concepts that occur the most in later architectural and landscape theorists' texts drawing on phenomenology, namely *experience* and *place*, are discussed in the context of this study.

2.5 Landscape experience

The later interpreters of phenomenological ideas in particular have emphasized the significance of experience by the multisensory body in our relation to the world, often drawing on Merleau-Ponty (see for instance Pallasmaa 1996; von Bonsdorff 1998; Ingold 2000), making this view the smallest common denominator for phenomenology's contribution to landscape architecture. The essential in landscape and its experience are entangled together in the signifying and meaning-making practice that denotes attributes into landscapes. Experiences may together constitute what we call knowledge, and in fact the other connotation of the word refers to deep knowledge and understanding of something.¹¹⁶ Experience in the other sense, an act of perception (Oxford Dictionary of English), feeling or senses, can be evoked by a powerful sensation. The Finnish words *kokemus* and *elämys*, which are both translated as 'experience,' distinguish between the aforementioned meanings of the word and, on the other hand, the more powerful concept to indicate a strong sensation – often the objective of a traveler to exotic places or enjoying culture. In the German language, similarly, 'experience' may be either *Erlebnis* or *Erfahrung*,

¹¹⁶ Multiple experiences of having done something somewhat similar many times in different circumstances turn into 'experience,' the connotation of the word that denotes qualifying professionally – as in the notion 'experienced planner.' Perhaps this experience gives a certainty to depict 'essential' from 'irrelevant,' and to achieve the set goals with an increasing efficiency – or perhaps it makes the decisions even more difficult, as the more we know, the better we know how little we in fact know; we recognize the limits of our knowledge.

depending on the context and intended meaning, as von Bonsdorff also observes (von Bonsdorff 1998, p. 51).¹¹⁷

There are certain things characteristic of the experience of landscapes. In the following, they are discussed in the light of some writers that have inspired this study. According to Merleau-Ponty (1962), experience can be divided into sensation, association and projection of memories. As in an aesthetic experience of an art object, in landscape experience there are at least three levels of interpretation: the possible designer's interpretation of the place, and the way the experiencer lives and 'reads' the landscape - both in the present and in the memories rewound. Photos, footage and stories told afterwards are the reality caught, sometimes even more real than the reality itself, as they may define what is remembered. They reconstruct the experience afterwards and on the spot. Representation is remaking of reality. Besides levels of interpretation, there are also several levels to experiencing landscape (Muir 1999, p.115):

In experiencing places, we simultaneously encounter two closely related but different landscapes. The real landscape, the objective one made by soil, vegetation and water. The other is the perceived landscape, consisting of senses and remembrances, a selective impression of what the real landscape is like... When the one departs, the landscape enduring in the memory to be recalled and recounted will be the one founded on perceptions, not the real landscape.

Landscape experience is essentially and characteristically multisensory and physical. We relate to landscape through the senses, and it is equally characteristic of a landscape experience to be dynamic, entailing moving in space. Experiencing landscape through the stress on our bodies is universal by the sameness of bodies, and different by the way our bodies differ. In the understanding of the particularities of a landscape, experience is interwoven in the process. Experience entails the sensual, immediate perception of the bodily subject, and the mental understanding of meanings guided by association, memories and what is known about the place.

The five senses (sight/vision, hearing/audition, touch/somatosensation, smell/olfaction, taste/gustation), are complemented with the sense of gravity and direction. The senses can be complemented by the so-called sensory modalities. These include thermoception (feeling of temperature), kinesthetic sense or position sense (proprioception), sense of pain (nociception), balance (equilibrioception), vibration (mechanoreception) and various internal stimuli, e.g. the chemoreceptors for detecting salt and carbon dioxide concentrations

¹¹⁷ Hägg and Kurczewska (2019, p. 6) distinguish between *Erlebnis* as a primary experience (in the moment experience) and *Erfahrung* as a secondary one (reflective and cumulative experience) as discussed by Jay (2005).

in the blood, or sense of hunger and sense of thirst (Pediaopolis 2020; Wolfe, Kluender & Levi 2012, pp. 5-10). However, in terms of experiencing outdoor places, the senses of sight, hearing, touch and smell, and the sensory modalities of thermoception, kinesthetic sense and balance are probably of the most relevance.¹¹⁸ Perception is obtained by involving sense of space and direction.

Physical effort of some sort is often characteristic of or associated with landscape experience. Reality is experienced kinesthetically by a multisensory, bodily subject. As Pallasmaa (1996) observes, drawing on Merleau-Ponty, our bodies are involved, in constant interaction with the environment. In Merleau-Ponty's philosophy, the body is in the world as the heart is in the organism (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 203), and sensory experiences become integrated in the body. There is a body-image or a "body-subject" (Foster 1998b, p. 11). The body and the world become intertinged and interlaced; they are inseparable. The self and the world interpenetrate and mutually define each other in an 'osmotic' relationship (Foster 1998a, p. 11). The perception of the body and the image of the world turn into one continuous existential experience, and there is "no body separate from its domicile in space, and no space unrelated to the unconscious image of the perceiving self" (Pallasmaa 1996, p. 27, 2005, p. 39).

Pallasmaa, in his *Eyes of the Skin* (1996) poetically embraces the world of the seven senses in terms of creating spaces and places in architecture. Architecture is a mode of human existence in space and time, expressing people's being-in-the-world (Pallasmaa 1996, p. 8) beyond "ocularcentricity." This realm includes, among others, soundscape, smell and the tactile world of touch. Various sensory inputs are taken in when strolling along a path, a street or a cliff on the water's edge. Perception entails other senses accompanying that of the visual, for instance smelling the scent of the ocean, lilacs or a coffee roastery - typical smells in Helsinki, for instance - hearing birdsong, vehicles or people and feeling the elevations and surface materials of the ground.

Soundscape is a dimension of landscape that defines space and atmosphere alike. The way one experiences space through sound is also significant - and how sound, in turn, can create spatial experiences.¹¹⁹ The oral world, including music and poetry, as opposed to that of sight, is in Pallasmaa's words (1996, p. 51), a world with a sense of connection and solidarity - applause unites the crowd, but looking at a painting is an act of solitude. Without sound, the movement in a video, for instance, is a detached floating over the space, but as soon as an actual sound is added, the totality starts to exist in a more

¹¹⁸ Others can be imagined in terms of landscape, as well, for instance the sense of pain when detecting sharp objects in the ground walking barefoot or a twig hitting in the face when running through the woods.

¹¹⁹ For instance, sublime sentiments are difficult to imagine in a flat, shallow void - the effect requires something like the dreary mountain that extends sharply to the sky and makes echoes go around unanswered.

poignant way. Some sounds – of music, of language, for instance – associate us with the past, bringing memories back to life. The shape can be touched and heard, often more than seen. The sense of smell, in turn, is a powerful means to connect to associations, and to bring us back to lost spaces and emotions.¹²⁰ In a landscape experience, smell may play a crucial role in defining whether a landscape is to our liking in its ability to make lasting impressions and associations.

In addition to the visual, oral landscapes and the landscape of the nose, there is the tactile, haptic experience – the experience of the body as a whole, as a caressing hand and a foot hitting a stone. The level of the ground, the grade and the texture define the way we touch the earth under our feet and relate to it. Sense of gravity defines the directions of the spatial dimensions. Experience of nature, like that of a walk through the woods, for example, stimulates all the sense modalities in a polyphony of senses. A sensory balance strengthens one's experience of being in the world. For a child, experience of environment is mainly tactile and dominated by details (Tuan 1977, pp. 19–25). This 'childlike' – or rather genuinely human – approach is often applied by writers who draw on phenomenological ideas. For instance, von Bonsdorff (2009) has written about phenomenology and the aesthetics of childhood, that this particular aesthetics should follow the phenomenological path indicated by Merleau-Ponty. This means focusing on the characteristic of the Dasein of childhood, (von Bonsdorff 2009, pp. 63–65) the tactile, based on the language of the body, where learning takes place in physical acts like doing, testing and playing, in the intersubjective realm of action and reaction. According to Pallasmaa (1996, p. 58), tactile body-consciousness has a direct implication to a place or placelessness. *Home* is the pleasure of the skin, a cradle, a womb, sense of security.¹²¹

The senses, however, work together in creating our understanding of landscapes,¹²² and for this reason, notions such as 'ocularcentrism,' the unnecessary emphasis on vision, or 'soundscape,' the landscape of sound, have been argued to be too segmentational (Ingold 2011, pp. 136–139). The world surrounds us, and drawing on Merleau-Ponty, Ingold argues as well that *light* and *weather* are fundamental to the "experience of being *in* the world that is ontologically prior to the sight of things" and "though we do not see light, we do see *in* light. Since weather, as a phenomenon of the medium, is an experience of light, to

120 An individual experience can be, like that of my own, that there is no aphrodisiac more powerful than the scent of male cologne – and no scent more homely than that on the doorstep of Grandma's house. The nose makes the eyes remember (Pallasmaa 1996, p. 54). The word 'spring' starts to trigger the nose's sensitiveness to the smell of freshly plowed dirt – and the 'fall' equals something spicy and mature.

121 In contrast, losing a loved one is ultimate homelessness, floating in the universe – not touching anything, a total disconnect.

122 As observed earlier (in section 1.2.4).

see in the light is to see in weather” (Ingold 2011, p. 97). Being exposed to the elements, landscape has varying faces in varying times, and the experience thereof varies accordingly. Most animal species, presumably, ‘analyze’ their landscape and its microclimate in some way, in order to inhabit it, and their size defines the kinds of contours and features of topography and vegetation that are suitable for each.¹²³

Furthermore, our hands and feet (through hand/footwear) are the primary medium with which we are in touch with our surroundings. According to Gibson, we perceive, not from a fixed point but along a “path of observation,” a continuous itinerary of movement (Gibson 1979, pp. 195-197). Perception is a function of rhythmic movement, a pattern of lived time and space, and depends on how we move (Ingold 2011, p. 46). Through walking, landscapes are woven into life, and lives are woven into the landscape, in a process that is continuous and never-ending (Tilley 1994, pp. 29-30). Our relationship with the environment is involved and intentional. As Ingold also observes and mentioned before, movement is the very *essence* of perception (Ingold 2000, p. 203, author’s emphasis), and it is felt in the body. The contours of landscape enter into our muscular consciousness (Ingold 1993, p. 167); paths and tracks define places, as destinations and points of departure.

The language in a phenomenological reading of experience is descriptive and immersively intuitive. In great architectural spaces, according to Pallasmaa (1996, p. 47), there is “a constant, deep breathing of shadow and light; shadow inhales and illumination exhales light” - as if the place itself became a bodily subject - or rather a part of the comprehensive entity where subject and object emerge. This, evidently, is true for landscape architecture, too - even in a deeper and more dynamic way. The earth and sea really breathe in tides and seasons, and the seasons are depictable for all the senses, the more so, the greater the share of living things in the landscape. A designer interprets their own being in the world by giving an expression of their bodily experience of it, and architecture is communication from the body of the architect directly to the body of the person encountering the work. In the green urban landscape, nature and human communicate, with the possible designer as a medium. The interplay of light and shadow revealing shape and texture cocreate the realm experienced with the tactile body in motion and in stillness.

The generality of landscape experience is connected to its possible innateness for the human species. Pallasmaa (1996, p. 60) refers to the primordial hunter and farmer concealed in our body that makes us function and feel in

¹²³ One is tempted to imagine the choices of location that snakes or hedgehogs make for hibernation, for instance, compared to the landscape preferences of the moose or deer. Interestingly, we easily assume that these instinct-intuitive (Raami 2015) actions in the “inner logic” of nature are flawless. However, sometimes birds may migrate back too early in the spring to survive, for instance.

certain ways. Jay Appleton (1996, pp. 52-72) introduced “habitat theory” about innate tendencies to prefer landscape settings with “prospect” and “refuge.” These tendencies are embodied in all acts of humans, of which the most essential are wanting to see and not to be seen – to hunt, mate and seek shelter. In his much-cited book *The Experience of Landscape* Appleton (1996, orig. 1975) suggests that people act biologically and as such do not differ much from other animals in terms of primal needs. They seek a balance between a field of vision and intimacy.¹²⁴

To conclude, there are certain things characteristic of a landscape experience that are missing in merely or mainly visual experiences, like looking at a landscape painting. In addition to other sensory receptions, one experiences the force of gravity. The perception of the environment comes to a person not solely through the conventional senses, but also “because his muscles and his sense of balance tell him at every instant exactly in what relation his body stands to the horizontal” (Arnheim 1957, p. 18). The physical perception of space is defined by the movement of the body. When you walk up a mountain, you use certain muscles which produce a certain tension in the body, and when you are coming down, you use the opposite ones. Everything in the real world exists in relation to other objects – that is the way one can tell the size and shape of anything.¹²⁵

Landscape is bound up with time and temporality in many ways.¹²⁶ Similarly, landscape experience is temporal by nature. There is an interdependence of time, effort and space in human activity, such as climbing a hill or walking across a square (von Bonsdorff 1998, p. 33). Experience is an immediate response to the world as perceived, however intertwined with what was before and what may lay ahead. Moving in space is, at the same time, moving in time, and everything we occupy ourselves with as humans has a duration and rhythm that defines our experience thereof, as Ingold (1993, 2000, pp. 189-208) observes – to be alive is to inhabit both time and space.

Temporality and historicity merge in the experience of those who, in their activities, carry forward the process of social life (Ingold 2000, pp. 194-195). This realm, defined by life and activity *in* and *with* the landscape Ingold calls the “taskscape.” The landscape as a whole must be understood as the taskscape in its embodied and congealed form: “a pattern of activities ‘collapsed’

¹²⁴ For example, sailing on a boat offers security and adventure, sheltered ‘inside’ and outside in the open at the same time. Comparable ideas to those of Appleton were introduced in Wilson’s *Sociobiology* (1975).

¹²⁵ For instance, in a virtual experience this relation is obscured. More importantly, as virtual reality is a representation of reality, it cannot replace the real landscape. A consciousness of ecological functionality, for instance, can be evoked through it, but it is still but an image of concrete, living things, and the awareness of something living is missing.

¹²⁶ As observed in section 1.4.4.

into an array of features” (Ingold 2000, p. 198).¹²⁷ Just as the activities that comprise the taskscape are unending, the landscape is “never complete: neither ‘built’ nor ‘unbuilt’, it is perpetually under construction” (Ingold 2000, p. 199). Drawing on Heidegger, the temporality of the landscape might be understood by way of a “dwelling perspective” (Ingold 1993, 2000, pp. 168-169, 189-208), where the taskscape denotes a pattern of dwelling activities. The intrinsic temporality of the taskscape lies in its “rhythmic interrelations or patterns of resonance,” a network of interrelationships between the multiple rhythms of which the taskscape is constituted (Ingold 2000, p. 154), an array of related activities.¹²⁸

The human experience of the environment is defined by conscious and subconscious interaction with the surroundings. James J. Gibson coined the term “affordances”¹²⁹ (Gibson 1979, p. 127), which are what the environment offers to the animal. They include the physical properties of the terrain in relation to the animal, the potential for rest, nutrition or manufacture, as well as cooperation and communication with others, although he also states that they are objective, real and physical (Gibson 1979, pp. 128-129, 131); for instance, water affords drinking.¹³⁰ Affordances can be both positive and negative, beneficial or injurious (Gibson 1979, p. 137). Human activities are “moments of the unfolding of organism–environment relations” (Ingold 2000, p. 199). The world appears as a totality, where each form takes shape in continuous relation to those around it, in “a total movement of *becoming* (author’s emphasis) which builds itself into the forms we see” (Ingold 2000, p. 200), hence in dwelling in the world, “we do not act *upon* it, or do things *to* it; rather we move along *with* it.” In this movement, our actions do not transform the world but they are part of the world’s transforming itself, within time. Through living in the landscape, the landscape becomes a part of us, just as we are a part of it (Ingold 1993, p. 154).

In a landscape experience, objects such as a landmark or an ancient tree may form a focal point (Ingold 1993, p. 167), with which the place comes into being, like Heidegger’s bridge (see section 2.6). A distinct tree individual is

¹²⁷ Ingold represents his argument through an analysis of the scene depicted by Pieter Bruegel the Elder in his painting *The Harvesters*, where a lot can be read about the temporal dimension in humans’ relation to the surrounding landscape, as an example of the Being-with that Heidegger refers to (1962).

¹²⁸ Heidegger distinguished two ways the world may ‘show up’ to a being that is active within it: availableness and occurrentness (Ingold 2000, 168-169). For those who dwell, things are initially encountered in their availableness, as already integrated into a set of practices for coping.

¹²⁹ In his 1966 book, *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*, and it occurs in many of his other writings, including the 1979 book, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. In Gibson’s approach, the environment is described as consisting of opportunities for perception, of available information, of potential stimuli (Gibson 1966, p. 23, cited in Bonsdorff 1998, p. 30).

¹³⁰ In a sense, Gibson’s affordances are a prelude to the idea of ecosystem services, from this particular point of view.

unique among trees, embodying its entire history and the landscape around it (Ingold 1993, p. 168). From its shape, the spatial history, for instance, can be read. The tree, however, did not just happen: it might have been planted by humans (still ‘nature’, however) as well as sprung up spontaneously, but its present state is a result of both its growing and the acts around it, of preserving, if not more. Significant human-made and other elements are monuments of the passage of time (Ingold 1993, p. 169) in the landscape experience.

Perception is in itself temporal. What we perceive in the now is the obvious visible, also in the landscape, and the invisible layer is perceived when the present is deepened by other temporal horizons. Foster draws on Aristotle’s *Poetics* by stating that “the perception of the ‘visible’ (*what* something seems to be) is inseparable from knowledge of ‘that which is invisible at present’ (*how* something is)” (Foster 1998b, p. 14). The notion *at present* could, in addition, be emphasized in this perception, as it denotes the temporal horizon of every experience that happens here and now but might carry significance to the future.

Place, the concept of which the next section will address, is a manifestation of time, as spent and as interpreted. According to Tuan (1977, p. 179), time and place are related in three ways: In the temporal current, time is motion or flow and place is pause, attachment to place is a function of time – it takes time to know a place – and place is *time made visible* (author’s emphasis), a memorial to past times. The past constitutes us (and the places we inhabit), whereas the future is a vision.

2.6 Landscape as a place

“If we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place.” (Tuan 1977, p. 6)

The sense of place is central for the phenomenological approach (Casey 1993; Norberg-Schulz 1980, 1996; von Bonsdorff 1998; Seamon 2018) and for an experiential understanding of landscapes and public space. Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) indicates that place as a concept emphasizes the experiential aspect of spaces, and the feel of having arrived, of wanting to stop in a particular location. Sense of place as a qualifier has re-emerged in landscape architecture towards the beginning of the 21st century (Swaffield 2002, p. 229; Relph 2002, orig. 1993). According to Larsen and Johnson (2012), an embodied awareness of place is a kind of “affinity politics” enabling self-determination through deep relationships with other human and nonhuman beings. The approach that they call “open sense of place” is revealed in a mode of being that is tinged by wonder and compassion, watchfulness and connectedness. A place is more than a location, as Tilley (1994, p. 15) suggests.

Place reclamation and placemaking (Relph 2002) has recently gained momentum in urban design as the participative paradigm has become intrinsic in city planning.¹³¹ 'Placemaking' is increasingly popular as a practice, and refers to a community-based and collaborative process of reinventing public spaces in cities, as a way of strengthening the connection between people and the places they share (Project for public spaces 2020), focusing on creating destinations and function before form, among other things. The new paradigm is in sync with Relph's idea that the genius loci cannot be "designed to order," but has to evolve, to be allowed to happen, to grow and change from the direct efforts of those who live and work in places and care about them (Relph 2002, p. 103). However, as place is an experienced, lived space, it can hardly be deliberately 'made' by anyone for anyone else, but is generated by each individual experience.

In Jane Jacobs' classic book, *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), urban landscape is understood as "place," a social and architectural necessity in cities. The book has acquired a new phenomenological reading (Seamon 2019) where the doctrines presented are interpreted as a phenomenology of the city and urban place. According to Seamon (2019), some aspects of Jacobs (1961) relate to a phenomenological approach. They include the mode of seeing and understanding the essential particular being in and of cities, the "citness" and the portrait of urban experience and place as they are founded in environmental embodiment, among others.

In assessing and analyzing landscapes, whether or not a sense of place is created - a feel of a comprehensible "space that has a character or an identity" (Norberg-Schulz 1996) is something to consider. It can be seen as a way of articulating quality and specificity. A landscape, urban or otherwise, can be evaluated by its ability to make one feel 'in a place' in a phenomenological sense, that one is 'there.' The Finnish word "*perillä*" expresses explicitly the feeling of having arrived where you were headed, and on a more profound note also indicates that you have arrived *where you want to be*, feeling satisfied so that you can stop looking for something. It has a deeper connotation than 'there' that resembles that of 'home.' As such it is akin to Norberg-Schulz's "existential foothold" (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 5, 1983), the place where one is rooted in an emotional sense - which can be a physical place or a state of mind, a state of affairs or the constituents of your company in a given moment. "*Perillä jostakin*" also refers to a conceptual term, as in knowledgeable *of* something, comparable with having arrived at a conclusion.¹³²

¹³¹ In addition to societies where public involvement is a legislative activity, others have adopted these ideas as a bottom-up approach, which has, in turn, challenged the former to find new ways for participatory processes - processes where the methods and initiatives are also citizen-initiated, proactive rather than responsive.

¹³² In the Italian language, as well, the expression of being 'already there,' ready, finished or experienced, found something, is expressed with the terms, 'In x you have arrived,' "*nell'x sei arrivata,*" for instance in some activity where one has achieved something.

Interpreting place and experiential quality is in the core of the phenomenological approach to landscapes. To create a 'place' is to relate to surroundings and to take a stance in terms of the characteristics of the place. Heidegger (2013a, pp. 143-160) states that the human way of being in the world is to domesticate it, to dwell and build, which in fact are the same, etymologically to 'remain,' but also how this remaining 'in peace' is experienced - preserved from something, safeguarded. As mentioned before, "building as dwelling unfolds into the building that cultivates growing things and the building that erects buildings," and the "fundamental character of dwelling" is "sparing and preserving" (Heidegger 2013a, pp. 146-147). For Heidegger (2013a, p. 147) "on the earth" and "under the sky," includes belonging to people's being with one another, and all of this belonging together in one.

According to Norberg-Schulz (1980), human-made places relate to nature in different ways. He uses the terms visualizing, symbolizing and gathering (Norberg-Schulz 1996, p. 421). Humans visualize their understanding of nature - what nature suggests, one will express. One symbolizes by translating the experienced meaning into another medium or gathers them into an *imago mundi* or microcosmos (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 77). Heidegger (2013a, p. 150) expressed this interpretation with an example of a bridge that gathers the earth as a landscape around the stream. The thingness of the landscape becomes visible - it emerges as a landscape as it is taken into the realm of human perception by the bridge. By placing an object in a landscape one creates a place:

The bridge swings over the stream 'with ease and power.' It does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge. Nor do the banks stretch along the stream as indifferent border strips of the dry land. With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape lying behind them. It brings stream and bank and land into each other's neighborhood. The bridge gathers the earth as landscape around the stream. Thus it guides and attends the stream through the meadows. Resting upright in the stream's bed, the bridge-piers bear the swing of the arches that leave the stream's waters to run their course. The waters may wander on quiet and gay, the sky's floods from storm or thaw may shoot past the piers in torrential waves - the bridge is ready for the sky's weather and its fickle nature. Even where the bridge covers the stream, it holds its flow up to the sky by taking it for a moment under the vaulted gateway and then setting it free once more. (Heidegger 2013a, p. 150)

Heidegger says a lot with this paragraph, things relevant for landscape architecture. Firstly, the banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream - the bridge "causes [the banks] to lie across from each other" (Heidegger 2013a, p. 150). The meaning of the landscape was hidden, and the building of a bridge brings it out into the open, makes it visible. The place "proves to be" such because of the bridge (Heidegger 2013a, p. 152). It makes a *place* of that particular location but could do so in a different one - someone chose to put the bridge there, but it could be put in another location as well and thus would have revealed its placeness.¹³³ Secondly, by placing something in a landscape, one creates an existential foothold for oneself. Thirdly, at the same time, while the bridge is an object of human creation, it is in dialogue with the landscape, lets the stream run its course, protecting it and the people using it, leading them to places, working together with the landscape to create a place to be, and to find one's way somewhere.

Place is also a central concept in Norberg-Schulz's thinking, insofar as to claim that it is meaningless to imagine any happening without reference to a locality (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 6, 1996, p. 412).¹³⁴ Norberg-Schulz (1983, p. 433) states that "landscape is a space where human life takes place. It is therefore not a mathematical, isomorphic space, but a "lived space" between earth and sky." Norberg-Schulz (1996, p. 412, 1976, p. 414) defines 'place' as a totality made up of concrete things that determine an environmental character, an atmosphere, as the "*essence of place*" (author's emphasis). To dwell is to belong to a given place. Place is a qualitative, total phenomenon, which cannot be reduced to any of its properties "without losing its concrete nature out of sight" (Norberg-Schulz 1996, p. 412). Places can be analyzed by the relationship with earth and sky, and in terms of things (what), order (where), character (how), light and time (when), and elements in human-made places as settlements transform 'nature' into 'cultural landscape' (Norberg-Schulz 1980, pp. 10-12, 39, 42). In these foci (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 176), the environmental character is condensed and explained. Buildings inhabit the land and bring it closer to humans. Phenomena, as constituents of our existence consist of things happening in a place. They include acts of the sky and the earth like the

133 The image of an old-fashioned stone bridge that serves as a focal point in a landscape seems to fit this idea much better than highway bridges of modern times that often quite brutally dominate the landscape.

134 However, in today's world this has become a more complex issue along with internet and virtual realities. One can question where they happen - in one's mind, on the web, in the computer or in an invisible cloud. Or in some bit space incomprehensible to human sense and senses, in the same way as the constitution of outer space is incomprehensible for us? (Nevertheless, the material in network locations, however immaterial in nature, presumably is located physically somewhere, in a server room or data center.) We may be outsourcing the data processing and governing for the digital twin or artificial intelligence, and giving away control as we go along. As long as we have physical bodies, however, we also have a reference to the setting where we and our creations happen in.

sun, moon and seasons. The geomorphology of landscape as the form-giving process is an example of such a phenomenon.

Places may be embedded in landscape, which is something that consists of them, as well as paths to lead to the places and monuments to identify them. According to Tilley (1994, p. 15), 'places' have distinctive meanings and values for individuals, and personal and cultural identity is bound up with place. Knowledge of place stems from human experiences, feeling and thought. Space, by contrast, is a far more abstract construct, while landscape is a "series of named locales, a set of relational places linked by paths, movements and narratives" (Tilley 1994, p. 15). Part of the sense of a place is the action of approaching it, and movement through space constructs "spatial stories, forms of narrative understanding" (Tilley 1994, p. 28). That is why the path is important in defining the experience. A path defines movement, and a walk is always a "combination of places and times" (Tilley 1994, p. 28).

Besides the act of arriving *to*, the act of moving *in* a place is also important. Tilley (1994) refers to the ancestral connections between living populations and the past, stating that they were embodied in the Being of the landscape and an emotional attachment to place, and concludes that paths of movement denoted their significance. Later in time, these relationships were actively appropriated by building monuments, and it stabilized cultural memory of place when significant places were "visually drawn out for perception" (Tilley 1994, pp. 202-208). Along the same lines, Tuan (1977) suggests that places can be made visible by visual prominence and the evocative power of art, architecture, ceremonials and rites, in other words, with "dramatization," where through "aspirations, needs and functional rhythms of personal and group life" identity of place is achieved (Tuan 1977, p. 178). The constructed features signify a will to make ancestral powers in the land visible, to be seen and remembered, but always from a given perspective, which thus was 'frozen' as the observation point (Tilley 1994). The same happens in the experience of a tourist: the points to observe and document are quite thoroughly premeditated and canonized, at least in sequential experiences like that of a tourism landscape such as a scenic parkway.

Creating destinations that evoke the feeling of place or a series of places are thus considered desirable in planning cities for people. Frampton, in his essay "On Reading Heidegger" (1974), is concerned with humans' inability to create places. For him the minimum pre-condition for place is the conscious placement of an object in nature, and nature itself does not include 'places.' Place, however, it can be claimed, does not require 'placement of an object,' but rather placement of the perceiving subject, in order to become a 'landscape' or a 'place,' and in a natural landscape, places may exist, if human experience is so inclined. One may inhabit a nook in nature for temporary lodging, for instance, as in activities such as camping, where one creates a place for oneself

out of a natural landscape. The site exists with its things without human intervention.¹³⁵

Place has been described as a qualitative concept, implying a historical and social context, belonging and identity (von Bonsdorff 1998, p. 124). Although the meaning of a place is largely cultural, according to von Bonsdorff (1998) this does not mean that a particular meaning exists only thanks to the present experiencer. It is equally mistaken to locate the meaning of a place simply in its natural or cultural givens (von Bonsdorff 1998), in a defined *genius loci*. As von Bonsdorff (1998, p. 124) defines place, it “includes locality and given characteristics which are actualized in experience but based on what is there before and regardless of a particular instant of perception.” Von Bonsdorff also states (1998, p. 119) that place is an inhabited space, a space understood through a body. Place in turn inhabits personal and social meanings, defined by the plurality of various others inhabiting it. Edward S. Casey (1993) also puts a greater emphasis on the body and present experience and understands place more broadly than, for instance, Norberg-Schulz. Casey considers place as a central ontological structure founding human experience: “place... is at once the limit and the condition of all that exists... [P]lace serves as the condition of all existing things... To be is to be in place” (Casey 1993, pp. 15-16).

According to von Bonsdorff (1998), areas or landscapes appropriate for people's use can be called human habitats. They are areas which individuals visit, pass through, spend parts of their life in and recognize as human. This involves adaptation and often, but not necessarily, cultivation and building. For instance, a park space, although open in a functional and social sense, is not uninhabited, but has human presence in it, and it is open in relation to the surrounding urban fabric where symbolic and actual ownership and a stricter definition of functions prevail (von Bonsdorff 1998, p. 185). In a designed landscape, such as a park or a green-blue sequence, however, the invisible dimension includes that someone has premeditated certain areas for certain uses. The smaller the area, the more defined the activity and the intended use, which, of course may not be consummated as planned, but often remains highly flexible.

Place as a phenomenological concept emphasizes the experienced realm. The essential in a landscape is revealed through experience, in both senses of the word, and sense of place interprets and embodies the understanding that is then gained about it. Landscape architecture, both landscape planning and design, in all its forms is interpretation of place. It is often also an attempt to create places that are meaningful and/or capable of evoking pleasurable experiences. It is, however, always about evaluating and choosing the way and extent of human intervention in a certain place. Landscape, in relation to place as a concept, is made up of concrete things and places, which in turn have places

¹³⁵ It can be argued, as well, that a hare's form for it is a 'place' as well, if we acknowledge the hare as a perceiving subject.

in them (e.g. a bench under a tree in a park in a green areas network in a town in a valley). Landscape as a place is a lived space defined by humans. In that sense, the understanding of green urban landscapes and green-blue sequences from a layered, multimeaning point of view, as a phenomenon expressed in different narratives, is about understanding those landscapes as places. The green-blue sequences in this study have interconnected places in them, and some nodes and nexuses within those places – foci for activity or pause, where experience tends to condense. Experience of those places, as is visible in the first-person accounts as well as, for instance, the PPGIS survey responses, is defined by some particular places that hence become meaningful in representing a larger area.

2.7 Towards a phenomenological reading and analysis of urban landscape

2.7.1 Parallel tracks of aesthetics and phenomenology

Above, the concept of essence was discussed, including its relevance and use in assessing urban landscapes. It has been concluded that an intuition of essence,¹³⁶ referred to as the essential in landscape, is somewhat subjective, and a personal (but documentable) account of it can be obtained through individual experience, which, in terms of landscape, is kinaesthetic and multisensory by nature, and moreover, defined by bodily involvement. The nature of the visible and invisible – connected by folds within the universal flesh of things – in phenomenological constructs of thought has also been demonstrated, and connections as well as contingencies and discrepancies mapped, in their juxtapositions with landscape in general and landscape architecture in particular. The following will discuss the aesthetic dimension in analyzing landscape, focusing on urban landscapes and keeping in mind the connections between phenomenology's emphasis on experience and the role it may have in a phenomenological analysis. Aesthetic experience has common denominators with landscape experience.

Another reason to include the aesthetic discussion to the extent that it is done is that in analyzing landscape, some sort of aesthetic judgment is at least implicitly expressed in every account of place. Consequently, it is found necessary to tap into the aesthetic dimension of landscapes and urban places. Beauty and the experience of it can be seen as an element of the essence of a place, or at least as a defining element when analyzing it – whether or not experiencing beauty is possible in a particular place. The concept of beauty,

¹³⁶ In a more common meaning of the word, used by for instance Ingold (2000, p. 97) and Norberg-Schulz (1976, p. 414), as opposed to the entire metaphysical significance of the original Husserlian expression.

as it forms a value basis for landscape architecture, and has a connection with phenomenological theory, is approached in the study through the multisensory understanding of place.

Moreover, phenomenology and aesthetics have a historic connection, as Ingarden (1975, 2005) points out (Ingarden 1975, pp. 258-259). Becker (1929) argues that phenomenology is an ontological enquiry in the realm of aesthetic problems. According to Ingarden, phenomenology was inclined towards subjectivist-oriented aesthetics (Ingarden 1975), and tended to consider specific works through an analysis of the general content of a work of art. Ingarden considers it a “mistake to set against each other the two lines of enquiry; a) the general enquiry into a work of art and b) the aesthetic experience, whether in the sense of the author’s creative experience or as a receptive experience of the reader or observer” (Ingarden 1975, p. 259). Phenomenological aesthetics either analyzes a work of art or investigates the activity of the artist-creator and the behavior of the spectator, the recreator and the critic. Artworks are products of a behavior in which the essential role is played by “conscious intentional experiences,” and in their capacity as such products, these experiences may acquire only a certain particular mode of existence and, derivatively, of acting in human communities. Because of this mode of existence they must, when contemplated by a spectator, be “brought to him to a phenomenal immediate perception, to a concretion and a self-presentation of aesthetically significant qualities, and of the aesthetic value resting upon them” (Ingarden 1975, p. 268).

The debate over ‘subjectivist’ and ‘objectivist’ views of aesthetics, to Ingarden (1975, p. 257) underlines the difference between the aesthetics focusing on creative experiences and activities that give birth to works of art, or their reception and sensations evoked, and that which focuses on distinct objects such as mountains, landscapes, sunsets and works of art. The former’s relevance to this inquiry lies on the focus on the experiential dimension, and the latter’s in the notion of landscape architecture as an art form. Furthermore, Merleau-Ponty, one of the main references for the phenomenological approach, also integrates phenomenological ideas into his aesthetic theory (Smith 1993, pp. 192-211; Johnson & Smith 1993), making these two discourses inseparable - the notion of art and aesthetic and the bodily involvement and interpretation of phenomena.

Recently, as mentioned in section 1.2.2, the field of aesthetics has increasingly recognized aesthetic dimensions in everyday phenomena, as well as other values than aesthetic ones in the discussion of aesthetics, especially that of environmental aesthetics (see Berleant 1997, 2002; von Bonsdorff 1996b; Sepänmaa 1994, 2018, for instance), which studies the aesthetic value and experience of environment (Berleant 1997, p. 81). Consequently, phenomenology and aesthetics have intertwined in interpretation and meaning-making to include the concepts discussed before, such as experience of environment or qualities of places in architecture. Phenomenology, with its objective as a

holistic approach, stresses the interplay of people and their environment, the merging of subject and object. The current phenomenological aesthetic is more inclined to this kind of view of the world than to the traditional look at an object as a work of art. In this study, holistic aesthetics is embedded in the phenomenological approach.

2.7.2 Aesthetic assessment in experiencing landscape

In a phenomenological account of experience, a qualitative judgment is not necessarily explicitly intrinsic. However, when describing an experience of a place, or essential characteristics of a place or series of places, such as a green-blue sequence of a recreational entity, we often include some sort of assessment of the place in question. We observe qualities and make judgments, to an extent that it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between a mere observation and an aesthetic or other qualitative judgment. In layperson's terms we might describe a place as being "nothing special" or "boring" or "dull/blunt"¹³⁷ without analyzing why. We might complement this by saying it is "bare" or "bland" and meaning it has no details to attach your attention to, or no boundaries to evoke a sense of place, or "unfinished" (*keskeneräinen*), if something seems to be missing. As professionals of spatial planning we may use terms like "*jäsentymätön*" (unorganized, undefined) or "*hahmoton*" (disembodied), but may in fact mean the same thing.

It's easy to agree with Berleant (1995, 1997) and others with the same idea (Haapala 1980; Beardsley 1982; Sepänmaa 1986, 2017, 2018) that everything within the realm of human experience, the lived world, has an aesthetic dimension. This means that one has to distance oneself from the traditional concept of aesthetics, connected with artwork (Berleant 1995, p. 74), and expand it into an all-encompassing general concept, which includes the phenomena in the commonplace and everyday. Even the ugly and disgusting have an aesthetic dimension, and to use these words to describe something in fact only means that they are judged in aesthetic terms.

According to Berleant (1997, p. 80), aesthetics is above all cultural. Cultural aesthetics means that every culture has their own way of structuring and experiencing reality. Aesthetic experience always takes place in a cultural realm with a history and a tradition (Berleant 1997, p. 80). The culturality of aesthetic preferences can be debated, however. There is certainly a context that defines to an extent the ways we embody things, but there might also be a certain set of innate tendencies common to all humans that guides our perception and preferences, as suggested earlier by Appleton (1975), Wilson (1975) and Pallasmaa (1996). This is not to say, however, that it is self-evident or even possible beyond any doubt to define what they would be. But arguably most people may lean towards some elements in the surrounding reality when the

¹³⁷ The Finnish word "*ankea*" often used in this context.

experience of beauty in landscape is concerned.¹³⁸ While preferences and conceptions of reality vary, obviously, the majority of people may also have a common observation of certain qualities, such as “noisy,” “green” or “historic.” In general, views or landscapes with natural elements seem to have a high preference, connected to the access to green space and well-being (De Vries et al. 2010; Dzhambov et al. 2018; Tyrväinen et al. 2014; Pasanen et al. 2018). Some other preference studies show unanimity in certain attributes, at least in some homogenous groups. For instance, in Häfner (2017), where preferences in agricultural landscapes are studied, a majority of about 70% of respondents favor higher landscape attribute levels. Landscape attributes that are widely preferred, include point elements and livestock, and moreover, education, gender and age specifically influenced preferences, but no significant differences could be found between residents and visitors of the region (Häfner 2017).¹³⁹

Above all the experiential dimension of aesthetic quality is of interest for this study, and thus the characteristics of aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience has been defined as concentration on the object for the sake of the object itself, where perception and feeling are focused in concentrated, undisturbed pleasure (Beardsley 1982; Kinnunen 2000) and to some scholars, analogous to the mystical experience of nature (Kinnunen & Oksala 1976). Landscapes that are able to evoke this kind of pleasure are experienced as beautiful. It could even be said that the physical elements of such landscapes, urban or other, fail to mean as much as the experience itself.¹⁴⁰

An experience evoked by landscape can be an ‘aesthetic experience,’ especially if we consider landscape an aesthetic object in the traditional sense, but also in the frame of a broader conception of aesthetics. Experience is contact between the viewer/senser and the object that is being experienced. The knowledge of meanings readable in the landscape deepens the experience but on the other hand adds an element of consciousness and awareness along with which a pure, immediate, even meditative experience turns analytical.

138 I tend to show a pair of slides in my lectures; one of a parking lot and another of a lush archipelago on a sunny day, and with some very rare exceptions, most people consider the latter more beautiful than the former.

139 Traditionally, preference studies have used images of landscapes, apart from some recent studies where the subjects were brought on-site, such as Tyrväinen et al. (2014). Images are, however, already a representation and not equal to the landscape itself. As a result, the reactions are, in a way, reactions to the image as opposed to the landscape itself. The same goes for all pictorial representation, as a projection of something on flat surface.

140 J. W. von Goethe (1827, p. 576) wrote one of the most pertinent descriptions of aesthetic experience, or at least a very powerful experience of landscape, an embodied experience that sounds phenomenological: “*Ich sah die welt mit liebevollen Blicken, und Welt und ich wir schwelgten im Entzucken; so duftig war, belebend, immer frisch, wie Fels, Wie Strom, so Bergwald und Gebusch.*” It is also an interesting account of the merging of object and subject, almost an intertwining or chiasm, in a powerful sensation, stating that “the world and I dwelled in enchantment.” The subject is no longer an observer, nor relevant, but loses themselves in a powerful sensation and there is a strong feel of belonging.

However, since landscape here is understood as a lot more than a pure aesthetic object to look at, the concept of landscape experience involves aspects excluded from the aesthetic experience as such. As ways of making art have diversified and aesthetics is used to describe all kinds of phenomena in society, multiple types of things can be recognized to have aesthetic value.

Some theorists, including anthropologist Jacques Macquet (1986), claim that aesthetic experience requires a contemplative mode of consciousness and the symbolic meanings attained in a contemplative perception afford a deeper understanding of the depicted situation than intellectual knowledge. Aesthetic or any experiences vary, however. There can be all degrees of intensity and complexity involved in the aesthetic experience (e.g. Kinnunen 2000, p. 242) from fragile and ephemeral to fundamental and memorable, be it art or the environment. It appears that aesthetic experience can also be a conceptual interpretation of something lived – an immediate sensation is evoked by that ‘something,’ and it is established, relived, intensified, with more layers added, when documented, repeated in words, described, accounted, perhaps reorganized or even reshaped – transformed into a memory.

The question of landscape experience versus aesthetic experience leads to questions of involvement and its role in the aesthetic assessment of landscape. According to Berleant, approaching environment or nature in aesthetic terms entails that a disconnected view, where something is looked at as an object for aesthetic evaluation, is no longer valid, but is replaced by an “aesthetics of commitment” (Berleant 1995, p. 74), defined by attachment rather than detachment. To reflect the involved approach, landscape aesthetics as a term might in fact be more appropriate when discussing environmental aesthetics in the sense of this study, in accordance with Spirn’s view (Spirn 1998, p. 126).¹⁴¹ The aesthetic dimension of landscapes, cityscapes included, necessitates the involvement of humans in both the act of understanding the aesthetic and as an integral part of the landscape itself. The word environment seems more detached and scientifically objectifying, failing to carry the multiple layers of meaning that the world landscape does, depicting the rich and profound sense of place.

In this study, however, to emphasize the importance of devoting attention to each aspect of landscape separately, the aesthetic dimension mostly denotes a view on the quality described as beauty or other positive qualifiers in appearance. It, however, recognizes the relationship of aesthetic assessment

¹⁴¹ The term ‘environment’ is often used in conjunction with the aesthetics of landscape. According to Anne Spirn (1998, p. 126), however, the words environment and place, commonly used to replace landscape in 20th century English, are “inadequate substitutes,” for they “refer to locale and surroundings and omit people.” “Environment and place seem more neutral, but they are abstract, disembodied, sacrificing meaning, concealing tensions and conflicts, ignoring the sensual and aesthetic, the embeddedness in culture” (Spirn 1998, p. 126).

to humans' nature relations that is often part of landscape discourse. The relationship to nature brings to light ethical issues, which have become an intrinsic discourse in environmental aesthetics. Brady (2000, p. 131) notes that an ethic based on aesthetic and "relational value" is closely tied to positive human experiences. On the other hand, according to Brady (2000, p. 131), such "environmental ethics of positive desire" is dependent on current aesthetic preferences, or even contingent on changing tastes, and a more permanent ethic such as respect for life should replace it in defining an ethic in the aesthetic field as well.

2.7.3 **The experienced quality of urban landscape**

Some theorists believe there are universals that define to an extent people's response to a landscape, classics as well as more modern thinkers. The following will cover some references and aspects that seem relevant for (green urban) landscapes, both theories of landscape preferences and evaluations of real cities in terms of their experienced quality, although they do not necessarily represent the phenomenological view. Designers and planners often ask themselves questions of what (or who) defines what a 'good' city is like. In city planning, the good and beautiful for all is aimed for, and a somewhat shared understanding of what it means is needed yet not self-evident, in order to assess and strive for the qualities required.

There are regular studies aiming to measure the good city. For instance, the magazine *Monocle's* Quality of Life Survey for the most livable cities (Monocle 2020) uses indicators such as safety/crime rate, international connectivity, climate/sunshine, quality of architecture, public transportation, tolerance, environmental issues and access to nature, urban design, business conditions, proactive policy developments and medical care. The EIU's Global Liveability Ranking (Economist 2020), in turn, measures availability of goods and services, low personal risk and an effective infrastructure, and the Mercer Quality of Living Survey (Mercer 2020) emphasizes safety, education, hygiene, health care, culture, environment, recreation, political-economic stability and public transportation. Although all of these have at least safety in common, it is probably impossible to find a comprehensive set of criteria to compare something as complex as cities. They are different and have different identities and landscape settings, for one, so it is like comparing apples and oranges - there is always something one prefers.

Sasaki Associates made a study of American cities in 2014, interviewing a thousand people in Boston, Chicago, NYC, Austin, San Francisco and Washington D.C. (Sasaki 2014; Hellendrung 2014). They found that people valued above all great food, waterfronts and historical architecture in those cities. Eating was the most popular 'outdoor activity' in public spaces such as parks. Only New Yorkers preferred green areas to waterfronts, which is quite interesting, as there are many waterfronts in New York but besides Central Park, there is less

green area than in many other cities. Bostonians were least satisfied with their green areas, which is interesting to this study. It may indicate that although there are historic parks, they are not accessible nor very well maintained except for the Boston Common, an observation we will cover in more detail in chapter 3. Favorite city experiences took place outdoors, which stresses the importance of public space. The appeal of historical architecture, especially for Bostoners, was about stories, details, character, identity and quality.¹⁴²

Kevin Lynch in his *Image of a City* (Lynch 1960, p. 4) emphasizes wayfinding as an important part of getting a positive sense of a city. Disorientation and getting lost are negative qualifiers in an urban experience. Legibility, imageability, a structure and identity are important in making sense of a city's form (Lynch 1960, pp. 3-13). A good city is somehow comprehensible. On the other hand, the forest feel, for instance, that can be desirable in a green area, can entail the possibilities of not knowing exactly where you are, which increases the feeling of being outside the city in a wilderness. Although a disadvantage for many, the danger of getting lost may be a potential for adventure for some, and the experience thereof may bear some cultural connotations. In terms of Boston and Helsinki's green areas, these aspects surfaced in the study.

Lynch (1960, pp. 105-108) also mentions "form qualities" that a designer should consider: singularity or a figure/background clarity, form simplicity in a geometrical sense, continuity, dominance of one part over others, clarity of joints such as intersections, directional differentiations such as gradients, visual scopes such as vistas, motion awareness, time series and names and meanings. The latter two in particular are interesting to this study, implicating first of all, that a sequence of space is sensed through a temporal quality of moving in spaces, making a particular rhythm or even a 'melody' of the experience of a series of landmarks, following each other, in a way intensifying the experience (Lynch 1960, p. 107). This creates a sort of a hermeneutic circle where the individual nodes inform the totality, which in turn becomes *more* along with every new step on the way. At the same time, the significance of each node increases as the totality intensifies. The invisible realm of given and known names and meanings, in turn, 'crystallize identity' by adding a layer of imagination, memory and associations. Some of these qualifiers make places more functional, usable or accessible, which in turn helps make sense of the environment.

Jan Gehl, in his twelve quality criteria for urban environment (Gehl 2017), structures urban quality around three main themes; *protection* against unwanted occurrences, *comfort* including affordances and potentials, and *enjoyment* of microclimate, scale and sensory experiences. A good environment is a combination of options (seeing, talking/listening/hearing, for play, exercise and activity, for sitting, standing/lingering, mobility), protection (against traffic

¹⁴² The preferences of Helsinki city dwellers and visitors are discussed in depth in section 3.5, but they generally showed high regard for green areas.



■ Figures 37a and b. Cityscape in Florence, Italy. Lynch (1960) uses Florence as an example of a city that has clear identity-creating nodes to orient with and to identify by, such as the Duomo, Giotto's Campanile and Palazzo Vecchio, as well as the landscape setting in the Arno river valley. Photos by the author 2006.

and accidents, harm by others and unpleasant sensory experiences) and enjoyment (Gehl 2017, p. 3). Gehl's checklist for designing urban space includes, among other things, whether or not there are interesting things to look at, but other senses are not directly referred to, except for as a chance for conversation or in terms of microclimatic conditions that allow for comfortable passing of time. Beauty and "experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences" are referred to in conjunction with the question: "Is it evident that there is good design both in terms of how things are shaped, as well as their durability?" (Gehl 2017). Human scale as well as accessibility and evident ways to move through a space are important for Gehl, as well, relating to the wayfinding emphasized by Lynch.

As mentioned before (section 2.5), some theorists (Appleton 1996; Wilson 1975; Pallasmaa 1996) have suggested that people act according to a biologically determined code, and in so doing are not much different from other animals. The human species is constantly seeking a balance between prospect and refuge, feeling the most comfortable in places where they can have an extensive view of the surroundings, and at the same time, be relatively unseen themselves, or least have their back covered. Aesthetic and other preferences stem from satisfying these innate needs. For instance in the Helsinki urban landscape, open fields, park lawns and the sea represent expanded views; sitting areas, forests and dense urban fabric in turn provide shelter. The balance between these makes up a pleasurable landscape. Inner bays and open sea views framed and structured by islands are combinations of the two.

According to an increasing body of research, mentioned in the previous section, nature has a restorative effect on people, with which people's preferences are connected. Ulrich's studies (Ulrich 1984) were among the first to show that people with a nature view recover better from surgery, and since then the restorative effect has been studied further (e.g. Hartig et al. 2010). Kaplan and Kaplan (1989, pp. 178-182) conclude that experience of nature will provide remedies from the mental fatigue which results from the attention and effort in dealing with information and maintaining focus. Activities providing quiet fascination (attention not demanding mental effort) function as remedies (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989, p. 172; Kaplan, Kaplan & Ryan 1998, pp. 6, 69). Urban green and blue space have later been linked to health (Dzhambov et al. 2018; De Vries et al. 2010). Julia Africa at Harvard University has studied the connection between well-being and nature (Africa et al. 2014; Africa 2015; Africa et al. 2015), and Tyrväinen and Korpela (2009, see also Tyrväinen & Miettinen 2000; Tyrväinen, Mäkinen & Schipperjin 2007; Tyrväinen et al. 2014) have shown similar results for mental and physical health, especially about forested areas in the city. For instance, landscape travel and outdoor life in green areas with their varying forms not only bring people to nature but also provide them exercise. The resulting well-being is both mental and physical, especially in activities where exposure to the beauty of nature is combined with physical effort, such as hiking, sailing or cross-country skiing, for example.

Based on these effects, Kaplan and Kaplan (1989, 1998) have developed theories and practical advice on a pleasurable environment. They conclude some characteristics: Some degree of challenge (as in activities that require courage, e.g. mountain climbing) and extent (a sense of a large enough place that its boundaries are not evident) result in fascination (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989, pp. 98, 183; Kaplan, Kaplan & Ryan 1998, p. 18). For instance, the sea in the experience of sailing provides extent enhanced by the ability to transcend what we perceive. "Being away in a nice place" is essential, as well as compatibility between one's inclinations and environmental circumstances

- there is a balance between what the setting requires from an individual and what it offers in terms of information and opportunities; predation, domestication, observation, shelter, locomotion (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989, p. 183; Kaplan, Kaplan & Ryan 1998, pp. 21, 147). Restorative environments provide potential for, besides quiet fascination, also wandering in small spaces and separation from distraction. High preference is given to spaces with trees and even ground, rather than undifferentiated landcover, dense vegetation and obscured views (Kaplan 1989, p. 11).¹⁴³ These respond to the ideas of pastoral beauty that for instance, Olmsted, the designer of the Emerald Necklace that we use as a case example, considered worth striving for. Moreover, one of Olmsted's main inspirations was the recuperative, even transformative, power of aesthetic experience in nature. This remedial process he called the "unbending" of faculties that had been bent by pressure and exertion (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 35).

Factors to make landscape pleasant according to the Kaplans include, additionally: Coherence as in orderly and organized into clear areas (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989, p. 14), repeating themes, unifying textures and complexity, which means a moderate richness of elements. The idea is that "too little is boring but too much is overwhelming" - a landscape of high complexity and still coherent, and rich textures that are added without compromising the coherence are of high preference. Unity and integrity are qualities often associated with a good park or chain of green infrastructure. Unity is said to be characteristic of objects that provide pleasure in landscape (Hubbard & Kimball 1917, p. 17), where it means completeness of organization. Aesthetic unity in aesthetic expression and impression means "unity of the relation of the parts of the object" (Hubbard & Kimball 1917, p. 19).

Landscape elements that are particularly important for making environments supportive of people's needs (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989, p. 221; Kaplan, Kaplan & Ryan 1998, p. 85) include finding one's way, entrances (gateways, information on what lies ahead), trails (patterns that make moving through an area a satisfying activity), views and vistas (nature experienced from a distance). Other qualifiers include (Kaplan & Kaplan & Ryan 1998, pp. 14-16) *Legibility*, distinctiveness, memorable components to help orientation; *Familiarity*, with it one learns to distinguish patterns in what seemed to be disorder; and *Mystery*, which denotes exploration and promise, that there is more to see (a curved path, partially obscuring vegetation). A curved path is considered more exciting than a straight one, except for certain styles of design such as the baroque garden or others where a monumental grandeur is sought after

¹⁴³ This is interesting and might be highly cultural, because a forest for some is experienced as scary and for others, restorative, although studies show (Hanski et al. 2012) that exposure to nature is beneficial regardless of one's own attitude.

rather than the pleasantness of the walking experience.¹⁴⁴ The architect Le Corbusier opposes this, stating that “man walks in a straight line because he has a goal and knows where he is going” as opposed to “a pack-donkey that meanders” (Le Corbusier 1929, pp. 11-12). This, as well as some other theses of the modernist era, have since been questioned in praxis, when cities designed according to them may have proved unsuccessful or even unpleasant in terms of experiential quality.

Like Gehl also suggests (2001), it seems evident that a desirable urban environment can be described as something that makes it possible to choose – where to go, what to do. A sense of options is a factor often associated with living in the center of the city – even if you don’t use the amenities, the awareness of them being there at your disposal, were you to so desire, adds to the quality of life. Qualifiers commonly associated with a ‘good town’ may include concepts like safety, interconnectedness, diversity, accessibility, uniqueness or the abundance of not only private realms and personal space but also of public places to spend time, and the affordances, choices of activities, what the environment offers the individual. Edward Soja talks about ‘thirdspace,’ where subjectivity and objectivity, abstract and concrete, real and imagined, knowable and unimaginable, mind and body, etc., come together in the spirit of Lefebvre (Soja 1996, p. 57). Tim Beatley, in turn (Beatley and Manning 1997) talks about ‘thirdplaces’ with a much more concrete note; as social spaces to gather, and to feel a social sense of community and belonging.

It is important to note as well that the image of the environment seldom corresponds exactly to the so-called measured reality, but personally important things, hopes and wishes are emphasized in one’s perception. For example, areas that are experienced as quiet and peaceful may not necessarily be so in reality (see Figure 38). A continuous, steady background hum of water or traffic can be experienced as less disturbing than sudden, loud noises, even if their measured decibels are the same. On the other hand, even loud noises that one is used to can become a familiar soundscape that is experienced as secure and agreeable.¹⁴⁵ The sense of place is generated by these invisible elements that are difficult to measure scientifically.

Whatever the dominant theory at a particular time, a good cityscape is also beautiful. At times it is not fashionable to talk about beauty, but when asking a so-called layperson, a resident, or a politician, for instance, it is almost without exception one of the terms used. Professionals prefer terms such as pleasurable or livable, aesthetically pleasing, or able to evoke an aesthetic

¹⁴⁴ These findings seem quite traditional, but not much new theoretical knowledge has been established since about these preferences nor as focused and integrated as the account by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989, 1998), bearing in mind that these arguments have been formed in terms of landscape in general rather than urban landscape in particular.

¹⁴⁵ The researcher once knew a man in Italy living next to the railroad tracks, who said that he would wake up at night if the 4 o’clock train was not on schedule.

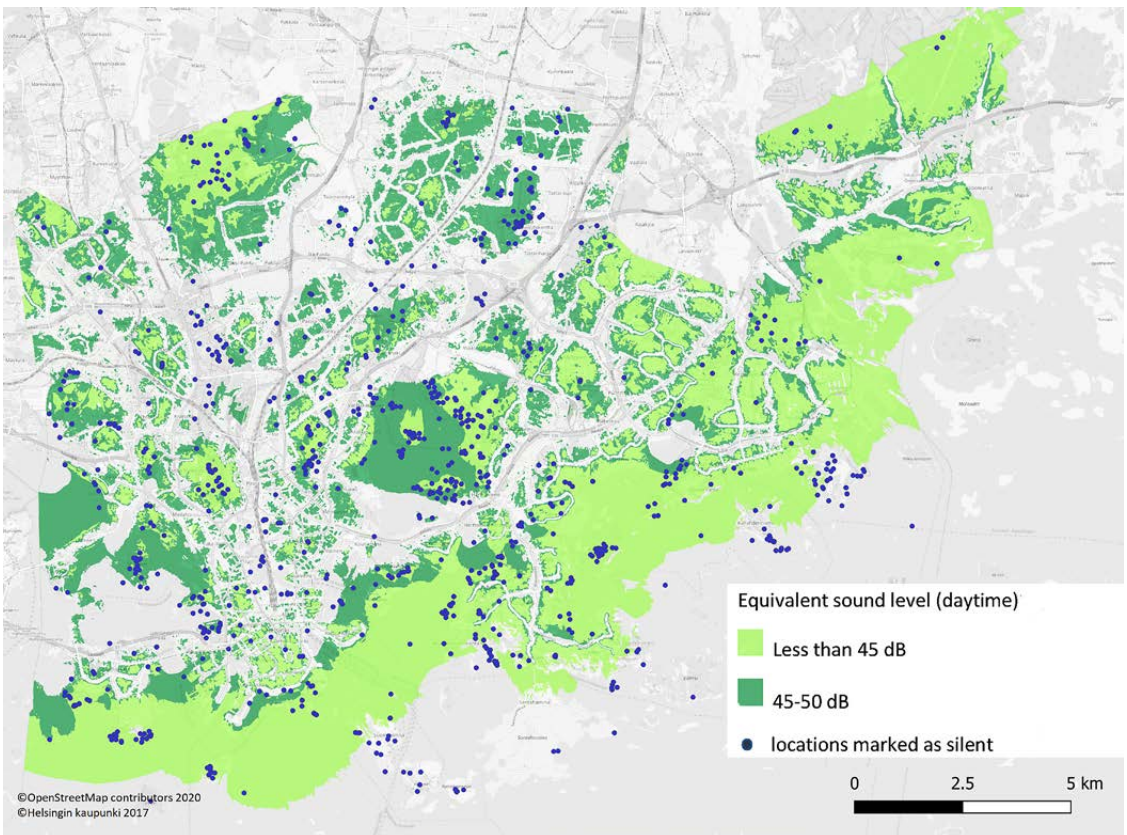


Figure 38. Experienced vs. measured reality. Green zones denote areas of “natural silence” (less than 45dB, pale green) and “urban silence” (less than 45–50dB, dark green). Blue dots indicate locations that people marked as silent in the conjoined PPGIS questionnaire. People’s mapped responses conflict with the measured noise levels typically in green areas. Especially forested ones are experienced more “silent” or “tranquil” in terms of soundscape than other areas, although they might have similar noise levels. This is probably due to the character of the landscape and the fact that the source of noise is not visible. Perhaps there are also other sounds with positive associations, such as birdsong, present. Leppänen & Kuja-aro 2020, p. 19.

experience, but the conceptual frame of reference is the same.¹⁴⁶ The concept, however important in everyday language when talking about a city, is often either omitted or replaced in urban planning language with terms like pleasurable or attractive (*viihtyisä*).

In the Finnish legislation (Land Use and Building Act, Environmental Protection Act 1 S), for instance, it is firstly emphasized that a healthy, safe,

¹⁴⁶ Beauty is sometimes considered too subjective to make it into strategies, as we can observe for instance in the Helsinki City Strategy of 2017–2021 where the “most functional city” is set as a goal, and beauty as a concept is not mentioned once.

attractive and socially functional environment must be secured.¹⁴⁷ Only the supplements with more specific objectives mention beauty, in conjunction with the following: firstly, promoting the “protection of the beauty of the built environment and cultural values” (132/1999, No 132, Chapter 1, Section 5), secondly in terms of National Urban Parks¹⁴⁸ (Chapter 9, Section 68), and thirdly about buildings (Chapter 17, Section 117 and Section 139, Chapter 22 Section 166), where it states, for instance, that “a building must fit into the built environment and landscape, and must fulfill the requirements of beauty and proportion.”¹⁴⁹ Interestingly, the act does not mention beauty of urban landscape as an objective in any other conjunction than the National Urban Park.

Accessibility may be emphasized in city policies (City of New York 2010; Helsinki 2016), but access to places is not enough if those places are not attractive to people. Beauty or ‘high aesthetic quality’ or ‘a source of aesthetic pleasure or aesthetic experience’ ought to be one of the qualifiers when looking for best practices for creating livable cities.¹⁵⁰ A good environment and a good landscape to live in, not just to look at, may have the same qualities as a good park – a park is a miniature landscape. It is comprehensible and imageable like Lynch (1960) states, or like a good tragedy by Aristotle (1953, 1997); its ‘events’ seem evident and necessary, and can be controlled by human memory.

It has been said that true nature is always beautiful, or that the ecological quality defines by definition what is valuable, aesthetically or otherwise. Sepänmaa, however, (2017, 2018, p. 22) has questioned the notion that we need qualifiers such as biodiversity or indicators such as protected species to value nature and landscape – it should be possible to preserve landscapes just because they are beautiful. We have even established concepts such as

147 The Land Use and Building Act (Ministry of Environment 2020a, Finlex 2020) aims “to organise land use and building to create the basis for high quality living environments, to promote ecologically, economically, socially and culturally sustainable developments, to ensure that everyone has the chance to participate in open planning processes and to guarantee the quality of openly publicised planning decisions and participatory processes, and to ensure that a wide range of planning expertise is available.”

148 “A national urban park may be established to protect and maintain the beauty of the cultural and natural landscape, and historical characteristics.”

149 The content of the excerpts in Chapter 17 Section 139 is that a demolition permit may not destroy values pertaining to the beauty of the built environment, and in Chapter 22 it is stated that the condition and maintenance of buildings may not damage the beauty of the environment.

150 The difference between a beautiful image and a livable place must equally be noted: for instance, the picturesque (as a lay term) beauty of misery (broken, worn-out, dirty) that we may admire in art doesn’t necessarily make a good environment to live in. Moreover, horrifying objects and events like natural disasters may give an aesthetic (sublime) experience from a distance, but living in such circumstances is generally less desirable. Buildings in decay, chaos, noise and pollution may be attractive to a visitor as an exotic change from normality. Kinnunen states, however, (2000, p. 353) that in human environments, ugliness is a sign of a “negative lifestyle” such as negligence and lack of taste, leading to disaster, and the reasons for ugliness are visible in the ugliness itself, which leads into a negative emotional response.

“cultural ecosystem services,” referring to the aesthetic, spiritual, educational and recreational (Corvalan et al. 2005, p. 13), to justify the fact that nature or landscape can provide the quiet fascination that the Kaplans talked about, or that they can function, not only ecologically, but also as an inspiration for artists and poets. Moreover, to consider the environment beautiful or ugly based on ecological arguments (like saying a contaminated lake is not beautiful), is no longer an aesthetic judgment and hence no longer an argument within the field of aesthetics (e.g. Kinnunen 2000, p. 359). It is another question altogether if ecological quality, functionality in that sense, is a qualifier of a good city. The awareness thereof may, as mentioned before, add to the experiential quality as well, and ecological aspects may affect the aesthetic experience. Similarly, qualifiers such as easy accessibility and interconnectedness of the green network may add to the experiential quality of a city by enabling the enjoyment of nature and landscape experience for as many as possible, and encourage healthy and fulfilled lifestyles.

Experienced quality can be an indicator in monitoring the success of design and planning solutions - bearing in mind, however, that the implementation and maintenance have a crucial role in the outcome as well. The essential characteristics and attractiveness of urban landscape have been approached in experiential terms for instance in the *Urbaani onni* [Urban Happiness] project (Kyttä et al. 2016), carried out in collaboration between Aalto University and the Helsinki City planning department in 2009. Factors contributing to the experiential quality of environment were studied in a PPGIS survey directed to the residents of certain Helsinki suburbs and later complemented in various inner city districts. The quality factors of experienced environment were grouped based on appearance, social atmosphere, activities and feel/flair. The quantity of green structure contributes to the environment being felt as relaxing. Experiential quality did not, however, in the Urban Happiness study (Kyttä et al. 2016), have a direct correlation with the quantity of green. Socio-economic factors were also found to affect the experienced quality. At its best, a dense urban environment can provide both relaxing and restorative experiences, above all finding new and surprising ones (Kyttä 2011, 2013, 2018; Kyttä et al. 2016). The overall covariation between urban density and perceived environmental quality (Kyttä et al. 2016, p. 45) indicates that the qualifiers (overall perceived quality, appearance, functional possibilities, atmosphere and social life) were experienced to be at their best in 100-120 housing units per hectare. The most important positive qualifier was notably beauty in environment, which makes all the more reason to talk about beauty as well, when seeking urban qualifiers. Closeness to nature was the third positive qualifier after beauty and access by foot or bicycle (Kyttä 2011, 2013, 2018; Kyttä et al. 2016).


None of the specific qualifiers, be it density or greenness, accessibility to attraction landscapes or biodiversity - aspects that can be measured, formal or more qualitative qualities - can alone define environmental quality. They

can provide a platform for analysis, when combined and prioritized and their interrelations studied, but they need to be complemented with experiential accounts; in other words, a phenomenological approach. A synthesis of those may start to give an idea of urban environmental quality and potential for the predictability of its reoccurrence in similar conditions.

It can be assumed, as well, that if the idea of an essence or essential characteristics of a landscape and its potential to be experienced in a positive way are given thought and respected in the planning and design of the environment, this will intrinsically contribute to experiential quality as a result. If new developments are made in a fashion that takes the essential characteristics of a landscape with high experiential quality into account, they are presumed to be experienced as beautiful and in harmony with the surroundings. Obviously, landscapes and their elements, also natural ones, can be ugly or scary for some, but those features would hardly be the ones considered essential for future potential.

I also argue that an experientially high-quality environment offers something on all the experiential levels: attraction for the first-time visitor as well as new things to discover for someone already familiar with the place. For that reason, it is necessary for successful city planning and urban/landscape design to recognize the aspects, as widely as possible, that might create a landscape's or place's essential characteristics, and the way they are experienced by different people.





3.

Essence and experience, visible and invisible

- analyzing the case examples
through a preliminary
phenomenological framework

The aim of this chapter, manifesting the study's objectives, is to deepen an understanding of landscapes, in order to grasp the essential in a particular place.

Based on the phenomenological concepts and ideas presented in the previous chapter, and drawing from the tools and methodologies described, the researcher has developed a tentative framework for exploring the different aspects in landscapes. Green urban landscapes in Boston and Helsinki are used as case examples and studied with the help of different narratives and representations. Each narrative adds an element or a layer to the analysis framework, which is iterated based on these findings.

3.1 Introducing a phenomenology-inspired analysis framework for landscape

The analysis framework is phenomenology-inspired, as it makes use of central concepts in phenomenology. The idea of the visible and invisible and their encounter in the “fold of the flesh” (Merleau-Ponty 1968) proved important for the development of the analysis framework during the course of the research. Furthermore, landscape is approached as a *Place*, which in this context refers to the emphasis of phenomenology on the place-world, the experienced realm and the particularity of each landscape as human habitat, a place to be attached to, as opposed to a location (Casey 1993; von Bonsdorff 1998). Perceiving landscape through these lenses of exploring and experiencing, aspects emerge that are either visible to the eye (or possible to sense with the other senses at the same time), concealed from perception but still existing, or in some cases both. The introduced phenomenology-inspired landscape analysis framework is referred to as the Visible-Invisible framework. It will hopefully give new tools for interpreting landscapes from a phenomenological point of view.

Landscape is constituted by both visible and invisible elements. The invisible becomes part of the visible realm by way of representation. These representations could be writings and illustrations, art or performance, design and implementation, or tangible ways of bringing forth ideas and experiences connected with the physical setting.¹⁵¹ In addition, when drawing boundaries on a map, an area in our physical reality is defined and made visible in our representational or conceptual reality, with the act of defining its extents, and by giving it a name, distinct from others.

It was concluded in the section 2.3, that an essence of landscape might be the intuition of a comprehensive character of landscape made up of the properties that evoke the feel of *genius loci*. In this chapter, the term ‘essence’ is used to denote the essential in a landscape. The framework seeks to recognize those properties, aspects or elements. An overall character of landscape, an ‘intuition of essence’ of sorts is thought to emerge from the depicted aspects

¹⁵¹ The history of a landscape can be ‘made visible’ in a concrete way, as well, when a pre-existing condition is marked on the grounds with a design element (the composition/direction of housing in a former airfield is defined by a former runway, a historic shoreline is marked with lighting or figures on a pavement, etc.). In a more subtle way, this is done by retaining a character of landscape space, vegetation or landforms when transforming a site into a different use, - for instance, when a former agricultural field is transformed into a lawn in a park, or when trees of a grove are kept, to be included in the design of a new play area.

and elements, and the experience thereof. However, details are considered to be secondary to an overall character.¹⁵²

A framework seems necessary, in order to label the essential characteristics in a way that is consistent in each place, and to emphasize factors that may not otherwise be taken into account when considering urban places. It is a way of conceptualizing something that may or may not already be part of a designer's thinking. By providing a framework, it is easier to ensure that these elements and approaches are considered, much in the same way as, for instance, with the concept of ecosystem services (Corvalan et al. 2005 pp. 12-26). In 'ecosystem services', familiar aspects of nature, things that we already should know about, are given a new conceptual framework, as the elements and things are approached from the angle of their importance for the well-being of people. The analysis framework presented here works as an apparatus to discuss the essential characteristics, or essence in a wider sense, of landscapes. It does not, as such, aim to be a comprehensive and all-encompassing listing, but to complement the existing patterns and prevailing discussion in terms of landscape and its components, which tend to focus on material and physical elements and at best, their interrelations, but ignoring much of the 'invisible.'

The visible and invisible based on and inspired by phenomenological concepts, could entail the following matters:

1. "The Visible" includes elements, characteristics or features that constitute a tangible, perceptible appearance that can be seen or perceived by the senses on-site and can include:
 - Basic structure (greater landscape, visible features of geomorphology and ecology such as the form of hills, material of rocks, main tree species of a forest).
 - Spatial structure (open, enclosed, semi-open, etc., skyline, views, orientation, bordering with vegetation or structures, etc.).
 - Instant experience (pleasurable/not, multisensory, kinaesthetic experience, in other words, what the place looks, smells, sounds, feels like to the human body, steepness of slopes, etc., do we experience the place as pleasurable and describe it with some e.g. aesthetic assessment such as 'beautiful' (see invisible)).
 - Evident functionality (what it seems that can and cannot be done in the place, potential affordances).
2. "The Invisible" consists of associations, knowledge behind the seen (behind what is seen), things read and interpreted, what we know and think about the place, requiring knowledge and/or understanding of how the place has come into being, what the place is made of, but also outcomes inspired by the place, and can include:

¹⁵² As such, the framework is in keeping with the Olmstedian thought of a totality's required dominance over details (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998).

- Situational context (part of what mental/physical continuum, the place's connection to surroundings, physical, social and societal context, process of becoming something or coming into being, including history, what happened here, how is it visible today, and for instance, urban structure of a city).
- Underlying meanings, analyzed: character, image, narratives, past and previous experiences and representations thereof (contemplative), designer's intentions by documentation, often in textual or pictorial form.
- Values (cultural, ecological, historic, recreational, aesthetic, etc.) of the place, as expressed in its qualities and assessment thereof, such as traces of the passing of time, dynamics and activity; what does the historic connotation mean in relation to other places. Denoting a value is an analytical signifying/meaning-giving activity where for instance an experience of beauty is expressed in aesthetic value that can be measured and tested against other places. Includes so-called landscape values, which is a combination of perceived aesthetic and what is known about other comparable places.¹⁵³
- Quality as perceived subjectively, evaluated/assessed by a subject and based on a set of personal or shared criteria: aesthetic, ecological, experiential and functional, content, coherence, integrity and diversity of affordances.¹⁵⁴

The visible and invisible aspects together constitute the idea of an essence (the essential in a landscape), which is then manifest in the individual experiences of places. The analysis is looking to capture something that is essentially ephemeral and unreachable, but each effort draws closer to understanding, as an intuition of essence.

Some notions concerning the aforementioned list are in order. Firstly, the instant experience,¹⁵⁵ subjectively perceived quality, values and underlying meanings are linked, as means to an end. Immediate reactions to a place are, obviously, individual and created by a multitude of factors. It is impossible to extract, for instance, the effect of one's preconceptions, as opposed to factors like the experienter's state of mind in any given circumstance. These reactions

¹⁵³ Value, a degree of importance, as opposed to a perceived quality, is here understood as a notion or concept based on a set of explicit criteria, often shared or institutionalized and as such more powerful and defined than a personal preference.

¹⁵⁴ This quality is invisible, as opposed to the 'visible' immediate reaction, because it is invisible to others, and only perceptible by the senses when made such by the subject, in a literal, verbal or other form.

¹⁵⁵ It can be debated whether this kind of first impression should rather be called 'immediate'. In this study, however, the term 'instant' refers to the very first impression that happens instantly, whereas experience is by nature 'immediate'. There are multiple levels and durations of experience, including the contemplative as Macquet (1986) suggests. One can discuss the 'experience' of things like a country or a year abroad, which hints that experience can also be cumulative and can be analyzed and concluded – however consisting of multiple experiences that are more or less immediate or instant. The term instant is used in this study to refer to the most immediate reaction one may get to the landscape, without contemplation or further elaboration in consciousness.

include things such as sense of place, associations, feelings and thoughts evoked, as well as inspirations that one feels an urgent need to express.¹⁵⁶ Specific places in specific time and circumstances in one's life are capable of evoking stronger responses than others, depending as much on the characteristics of the place itself as much as on factors that are independent of it. Sometimes the experience can be affected greatly by the context, for example who one is experiencing it with. It is difficult to fully and reliably separate the significance of these different elements in the experience.¹⁵⁷ It is probable, however, that certain attitudes might affect the perception in a certain way. For instance, if environmental concerns are an important part of a guiding set of values to an observer, and it is known to the observer that something is a sign of a damaged ecosystem on a site, then the feeling evoked by such landscapes cannot fail to be affected by that fact, although the place may look beautiful on the outside. If one, analogously, is unaware or ignorant of such attributes, one's reaction might be more 'pure' and stripped of such meanings or instead replaced by some other associations. It can, similarly, be debated whether an experience of art or landscape or anything experientially rich, is in fact contemplative as Macquet (1986) suggests, or of a more conscious or immediate nature.

I find it probable, similarly to aesthetic preferences, that there are certain similarities in different people's reactions to landscape that have to do with our physicality and ancestry as humans, but also an immense variety of subjective responses that can probably never be entirely mapped in a way that would be understood by everyone equally. Individuals' backgrounds, experiential histories or cultural contexts affect the way they respond to landscapes, and the particularities of these responses are as interesting as their similarities. The instant experience of whether or not a place is pleasurable to an individual, and with which adjective an individual would describe it, or how to verbalize it, belongs to the 'visible' part of the analysis - or rather, perceptible by senses, although it has some invisible components to it. All the senses and sensory modalities are included in the analysis.

Secondly, it must be noted that the notions *Process of becoming something* or *Coming into being* used in this study are inspired by the way McHarg (2002 p. 42) and Ingold (2000) use the term,¹⁵⁸ and must be separated from the strictly Deleuzian notions *Process of becoming* or *Becoming*, as introduced in Deleuze and Guattari (1987, originally written in 1980). They are similar in describing something constituent of things transforming into something

¹⁵⁶ For instance, an aesthetic experience of place that is so strong that it requires an emotional response of some sort, or even an artistic or other output. Many poems and paintings have been created inspired by scenery.

¹⁵⁷ Not to say, either, that these responses and their intensities could not be affected or guided by, for instance, how a place is designed.

¹⁵⁸ See Ingold (2000, p. 201) on process of becoming, and pp. 98, 155, 242, even p. 348 on coming into being, as well as p. 168 for both expressions.

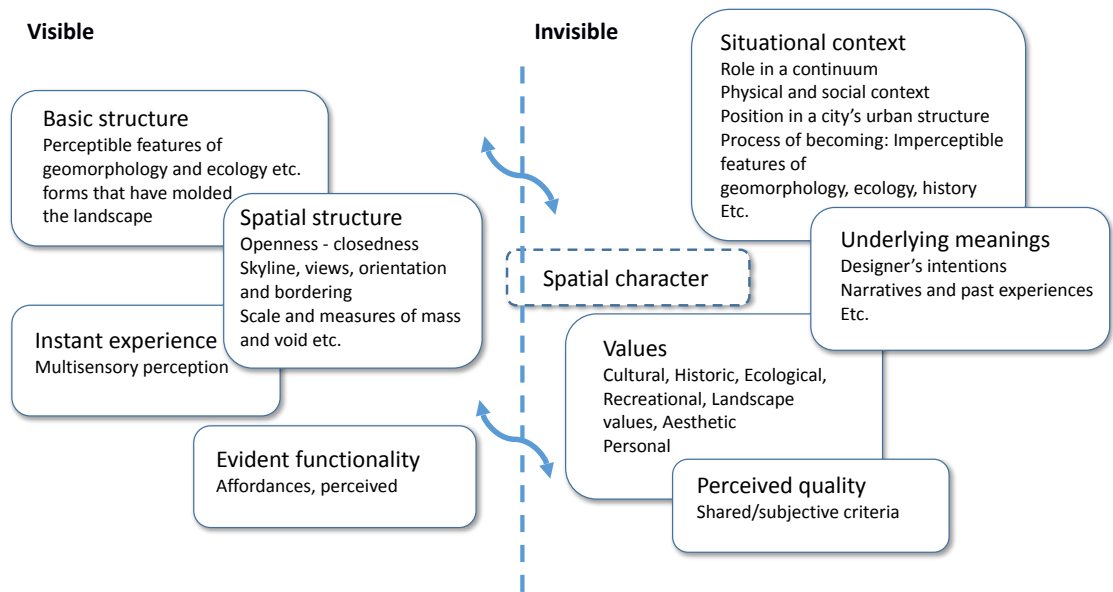
else, but Deleuze's definition bears yet other connotations, such as the ideas of *assemblage* and symbiosis (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, pp. 225-310).¹⁵⁹ The reforming of rock particles into glaciofluvial landscapes, for instance, is comparable to the idea of assemblage that, however, appears more conceptual than what is meant in this study. Besides the expressions of becoming something or coming into being, which are occasionally used in the text, the term *process of becoming* is used in the framework and titles because of its unsurpassed ability to briefly describe something becoming something else by way of development or transformation in time, which is considered important in this context.

The following sections represent and elaborate the analysis framework and illustrate its use by case examples of real-life landscapes and projects, focusing on selected green-blue sequences in an urban setting. Seeking to demonstrate the realm of Essence and Experience by Visible and Invisible components in the case examples, the framework is tested against these examples and iterated further based on the findings. An example of exploring and making visible an individual experience by art is also introduced. The sections additionally focus on the *interface* between the Visible components and the Invisible, by seeking to demonstrate and discuss how different ways of representation and narration may shed light on the essentialities of a particular urban landscape, and how the visible and invisible are in relation with each other.

I am exploring the green areas systems of cities that have a documented history of a designed park system, Boston in the U.S. and Helsinki, in Finland, occasionally complemented by observations from Washington D.C. The focus is on representative parts of those green areas systems and further on places within these parts, narrowing down until it is possible to find a section that can relatively reliably be described in experiential terms, using on-site methods. In addition, open responses to a PPGIS map-based survey about Helsinki green areas are used as a data source, to expand the understanding of green area experience using data containing other peoples' experiences.

The preliminary framework develops alongside each aspect discovered. First, examples are presented that illustrate the landscape context in which these green urban landscapes are situated. *Basic Structure*, *Spatial Character* and *Situational context* are aspects that are Invisible for the experience in the city scale until made visible by representation, but Visible on a smaller scale. The ends of sections 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 (in the paragraphs Findings for the analysis framework) emphasize the aspects in the framework that each section speaks to or illustrates (indicated in italics), as well as the new aspects that

¹⁵⁹ In *Becoming*, two or more systems “come together to form an emergent system or Assemblage” and in an assemblage or consistency, the ‘becoming’ or relation of the terms attains its own independent ontological status (Deleuze & Guattari 1987; Stanford 2020). “Becoming is a process of change, flight, or movement within an assemblage” (Rhizomes 2020). *Becoming* is not an evolution by descent and filiation but symbiosis and alliance (Deleuze & Guattari 1980 p. 238).



■ Figure 39. First version of the Phenomenology inspired analysis framework (The V-I framework) to be tested and complemented with the case examples. The dashed line and the arrows in the middle divide represent the “fold of the flesh,” the seam where the invisible and visible encounter and appear in each other. The aspects described and discussed on the previous pages in this chapter are represented, abbreviated, as a diagram, to make it easier to embody them and observe in the following. Diagram by the author 2020.

emerge from the examples (indicated in bold text). Some aspects are explored in more detail than others, to demonstrate their significance in the particular case example. It needs to be kept in mind, as well, that in terms of different landscapes, slightly different aspects might be emphasized, and different data or narratives used, due to relevance and availability.

A summary of the places’ history, their *Process of becoming* what they are today (a.k.a. *Process of coming into being*), represents one aspect of the *Situational context*. Then, some experiential narratives such as my *Instant experience* of some parts of the Emerald Necklace and some parts of the green areas system of Helsinki are accounted for as one experience among many others, as such Invisible to others until represented in documentation. These documentations represent the Invisible made visible by different kinds of other *Narratives*. Another’s account of this kind of experience (for instance a radio piece by a reporter) adds another layer of a public narrative of a private experience that was, however, made public in publishing it on YouTube. Other narratives, that are in this conjunction called ‘narratives of meaning,’ include the official public narratives such as descriptions and strategic plans for the green areas, the academic and professional narrative that is inherently critical towards the ‘official’ one, complementing and challenging it with different views, and finally, the citizens’ responses to a public survey. The last one in particular enriches the image

of a landscape or an area by adding a multitude of first-person experiences (as in the first-person phenomenological approach). These different narratives are examples of Invisible aspects of landscapes made visible by narration.

A phenomenology-inspired analysis looks at landscapes as experiential places, however bearing in mind that they are parts of a larger system, both physically and mentally, in the visible and invisible sense, or rather, perceptible to senses. It searches for the essential, expressed in these terms. The collection of various narratives that the different aspects represent and make manifest, is not a comprehensive compilation but an eclectic one, to demonstrate some relevant examples, excerpts if you will.

3.2 A city's landscape context in the framework

3.2.1 The Basic structure, Spatial structure and Situational context - examples of the Visible/Invisible

In the phenomenology-inspired analysis framework (V-I framework) introduced in the previous section (3.1), three concepts in particular are useful on the scale of a whole city, the *Basic structure* (also sometimes called 'greater landscape,' visible features of geomorphology and ecology), *Spatial structure* and *Situational context*. The *Basic structure* gives, at the city scale, a physical reality context, a larger entity than what can be perceived. It entails an understanding of how landforms and the geological/geographical position have defined and determined the way an urban landscape is structured. In a form, it creates a geographical narrative.

The *Basic structure* of landscape can be made visible in map illustrations about geology, topography, etc., features of the landforms and the relationship with land and water, and can be overlaid with the urban structure to juxtapose and make visible their interplay. The *Spatial structure*, in turn, consists of the constellation of landscape space, and is punctuated and defined by physical features standing out such as landmarks as well as skyline, views, orientation and bordering of space, which can be of different natures.¹⁶⁰ *Spatial character*, which positions itself towards the invisible realm, is a term coined in architectural theory and tradition.¹⁶¹ According to Norberg-Schulz (1996, 1980, pp. 28, 32, 35, 142, 148), the spatial qualities of 'space' and 'character' are interdependent. However, the notion of 'spatial character' is an interpretive and somewhat subjective observation that stems mainly from the visible features

¹⁶⁰ For instance, a soft edge with vegetation, a sharp edge with buildings, etc.

¹⁶¹ Norberg-Schulz (1996, p. 148) defines "space" as the "three-dimensional organization of the elements which make up a place" and "character" as the "atmosphere which is the most comprehensive property of any place," emphasizing the Sense of Place (Norberg-Schulz 1996, p. 412) and that spatial character is a key factor defining Place. See also Zumthor (2006).

of the spatial structure, i.e. visible qualities, but is also “defined by the type of human engagement it solicits,” as DeKlerk (2015) observes.¹⁶² *Situational context* refers to the ‘situation’ of a landscape, in a large sense, both mentally and physically, for instance how a landscape or a green area is positioned in a city’s urban structure or an ideological or design continuum. The term has been used by the landscape architect and theorist Elizabeth Meyer,¹⁶³ among others.

Visible features are based on sensory observation and Invisible ones on interpretation. In that way, they represent both the approaches of phenomenology; the descriptive and the interpretive.¹⁶⁴ Features or characteristics of both the *Basic structure* and *Spatial structure* can be experientially visible in smaller scale, but invisible on a larger, for instance, city scale, until they are made visible by representation and interpreted into common language. A city-wide mapping of the *Basic structure* is invisible to an observer ‘on the ground’ until it becomes embodied in visuals, unless it is a very visible feature that is obvious from the cityscape scale, such as a row of mountains or a river defining the orientation and interrelations of city quarters.¹⁶⁵

The perception that visual mapping explains is based on what the senses can perceive on the surface in an observation, or as a series of observations if exploring a larger area. In that sense, it is visible, not hidden or concealed, although it cannot be perceived at a glance. The *Basic Structure* of landscape constructs a physical *Situational context*, and in this sense the terms in the analysis framework diagram may be overlapping and may include each other. The division is mainly to explain a transition - for instance, physical observation of the basic structure becomes an understanding of a particular *Situational context*, and, for instance, *Spatial structure* is an important element of an understanding of a *Spatial character*.

3.2.2 Examples of representation, landscape setting

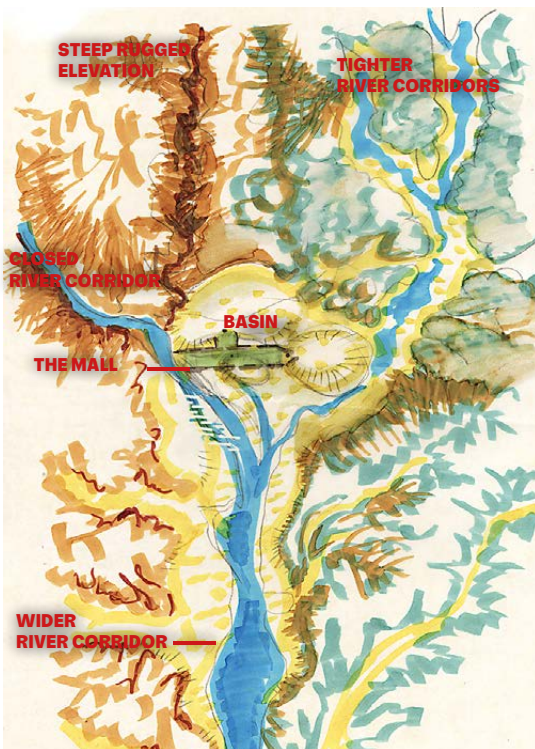
The *Situational context* refers to how the landscape and its design are situated in a historic, idealistic or physical context, and in the analysis framework includes what one can call the *Process of becoming*. Landforms are visualizing the process of becoming something, for their part, as is the written or visual documentation of history. The situational context also bears the understanding of what larger-scale system or entity the phenomenon or place studied

¹⁶² Based on Norberg-Schulz and Heidegger, DeKlerk (2015) proposes an “interdependent eco-system defining the relationship between the Context, User and Built Fabric,” considering spatial character’s tangible and intangible qualities.

¹⁶³ Elizabeth Meyer is Merrill D. Peterson Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Virginia School of Architecture. Landscapes were analyzed in her class of Theory of Modern Landscape architecture at the University of Virginia term 2000-2001 in terms of situational context.

¹⁶⁴ For instance DeKlerk (2015, p. 87) differentiates between these two, referring to Husserlian and Heideggerian.

¹⁶⁵ The city of Paris, France, with the *rive gauche* and *rive droite*, for instance.



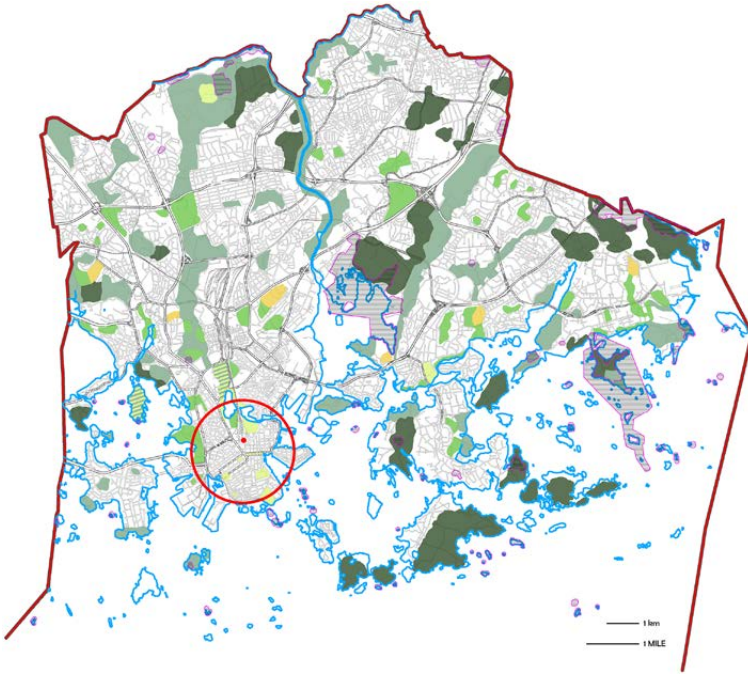
■ Figure 40. An example of representing a physical situational context of landscape, the National Mall in Washington D.C.'s greater landscape (basic structure). The city is situated on the mouth of the junction of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers, in a basin bordered by rugged landforms and on the edge of a Fall Line, a geomorphological feature dividing the bedrock into the Coastal Plain (yellow and green) and the Piedmont rocks (orange). The visible (spatial) features are juxtaposed with the invisible (geology). The basic structure, sometimes referred to as greater landscape, shows geomorphology and landforms represented in a way that would show both the origin of the land forms (colors representing different origins) and the form and topography, with traditional methods (hand drawing). Illustration by the author 2000.

belongs to.¹⁶⁶ These can include, for instance, a park system, a green areas system or network, a matrix, which may be one of a whole city, and requires an approach where a particular landscape is understood as part of an area belonging to a larger entity. The landscape and historic context as well as the social/societal context should be considered in this context. This entity of information entails factors like, for instance, why a city was built in a certain location, and what kind of society produced this particular landscape and why. When looked at in conjunction with the architectural and city planning features, such as urban typologies, the result gives an understanding of the invisible that produced the visible. The *urban structure of a city* is Invisible on the city scale and needs interpretation and representation to be perceived, but it is in fact also an element of the situational context that has visible components on a smaller scale.¹⁶⁷

Spatial structure is the third of the characteristics that can be visible on a small scale and almost invisible on the city scale. *Spatial structure* may strongly define the intuition of the essential in a landscape, from an experiential point of view, as it enables (or not) to experience a place as an entity.

¹⁶⁶ For instance, the Boston Emerald Necklace is a remarkable example of an early park system, or Franklin Park is a fine example of the English landscape garden style.

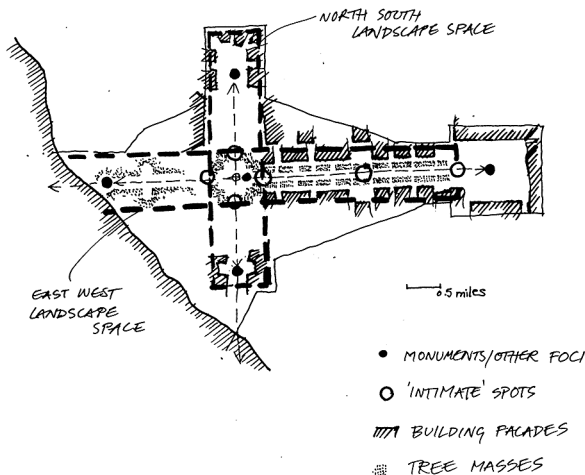
¹⁶⁷ Such as the architecture of a place, shapes, colors and sizes of buildings, their composition and alignment with the urban space between them, and the measures of spaces between the buildings, etc.



■ Figures 41 a and b. Another example of representing situational context; a specific place as part of the matrix of a city's existing green areas as a collection of typologies (forest parks, other forested areas, historic parks, other forested areas, high maintenance parks, and particular ones such as allotment gardens and nature preservation areas). At the same time, the scale of the networks can be observed. Helsinki and Washington D.C., capitals juxtaposed. Illustration by the author 2001, remade by Sirpa Törrönen 2009. Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 126.



- Forested parks
- Other forested areas (liminal/private)
- Historic parks
- Other parks of high maintenance
- Community gardens/cultivating lots
- Nature preservation areas (Helsinki)
- Parkways (D.C.)
- Central core (2 mile diameter)
- Railway station



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■ Figure 42. An example of an effort of mapping spatial features. Illustration by the author 2000.

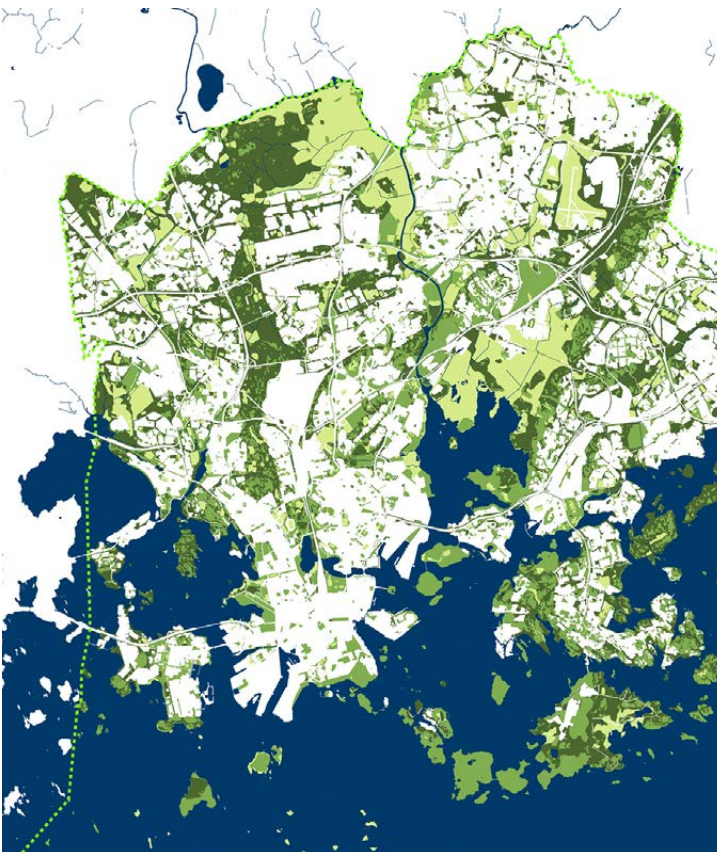
The way a landscape is bordered and its spatial configuration, a set of landscape types, can be perceived on multiple scales, starting from a city scale and ending with what is seen sitting on a bench under a tree. The spatial image of vegetation on the city scale, for instance, is an abstraction of classifying the dominant overall appearance, judged from aerial photos and based on the knowledge of each particular patch of landscape. On a smaller scale, things like views, vistas and obstacles of perception and embodiment - in other words, where an area can be seen from, how widely it is exposed, how high one must position oneself to observe a certain area entity, come into play in making sense of the place. Spatial analyses such as Lynch's (1960) or Gehl's (2001, 2017) help in phenomenological readings of place, as they emphasize the experienced spatial impression as well as the functional affordances, by disseminating space into understandable elements such as landmarks, nodes or paths.

Spatial structure includes observations of scale, of the relation of landscape elements' dimensions compared to that of the human body, and of relationships between mass and void that may result in different characteristics of the space. For instance, if a green space is very large, it may become an obstacle, a 'no man's land,' especially if attractions and facilities are few.¹⁶⁸ The appropriate scale for a park, especially on flat ground, may sometimes be less than for an urban forest, for instance, which requires extent to maintain the 'forest feel'.

¹⁶⁸ This is based on my own personal experience and observations. For instance, in October 2017, I went to see Olmsted's South Park in Chicago, as well as other parks in town, such as Garfield Park, to notice that large green spaces may sometimes be difficult to embody and appreciate as totalities, and the lack of everyday use (especially children or families) may affect the feeling of safety.



■ Figures 43 and 44. The spatial structure of Esplanadi park in Helsinki, resembles that of the National Mall in Washington D.C., although the scale differs. Photos by the author 2001.



■ Figure 45. A mapping of landscape space on the city scale, Helsinki. Spatial character can be analyzed on a large or a small scale. On the city scale, the landscape space of open (fields, pastures, etc.), closed (dense forests, urban structure) and semi-open (between the two, such as some parks) can be depicted from aerial photos and based on the knowledge of the purpose and use of each place. On a smaller scale (a city quarter, a park, etc.) spatial character is mostly perceived at a glance, such as views, skyline orientation, bordering with vegetation or structures, etc., although some of them require observation from higher ground or buildings. Map from Sirpa Törrönen's Master's thesis *Helsinki landscape analysis* 2010.



■ Figure 46. The landforms in the Viikki-Kivikko Green Finger, Helsinki, define the landscape space quite clearly. As the topographical map shows, there is a visual boundary created by a granite rock's edge bordering a clay field, the river valley of the Vantaa River. Photo by Iida Juurinen 2012.

Furthermore, if a large park is situated in an area with little social control or public amenities, it does not seem to attract people and may become intimidating for some user groups. Based on my observations in Franklin Park in Boston's Emerald Necklace park system, for instance, when the zoo in the grounds is closed, the users are scarce, affecting the atmosphere. The pastoral beauty described in the accounts of its design (Zaitzevsky 1982, pp. 65–80; Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998) alone does not seem to attract people to use the park, when, for instance, accessibility by public transit is very limited.¹⁶⁹ On the other hand, sometimes a large expanse is needed to accommodate space-consuming functions such as sports facilities, tracks for distinct purposes (horseback riding, mountain biking, skiing, just to name a few) or retention ponds for stormwater, for instance, or if a certain spatial impression or atmosphere is aimed for.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ However, in terms of the parks mentioned in this paragraph, I recognize the fact that my experience is based on a very limited time spent in each of them and is, obviously, subjective and superficial, albeit perhaps more informed than that of an occasional visitor about park issues, yet not representative of anyone else's experience than my own.

¹⁷⁰ The appropriate scale for each park or recreation area also depends on the landscape features such as topography, – which can make an illusion of a wider space and also omit noise – density of vegetation, and the overall design. A forested area that you can't see through appears larger. These factors need to be further considered and weighed against the urban context to define the balanced size. On the Emerald Necklace, at times the park sections are too large to embody, and other times, they narrow down to non-existent. The spatial experience of Leverett Pond (Olmsted Park) and Jamaica Pond are clearer, however, and they seem appropriate in scale, due to the effect that the water surface may have on the contrast in landscape space.

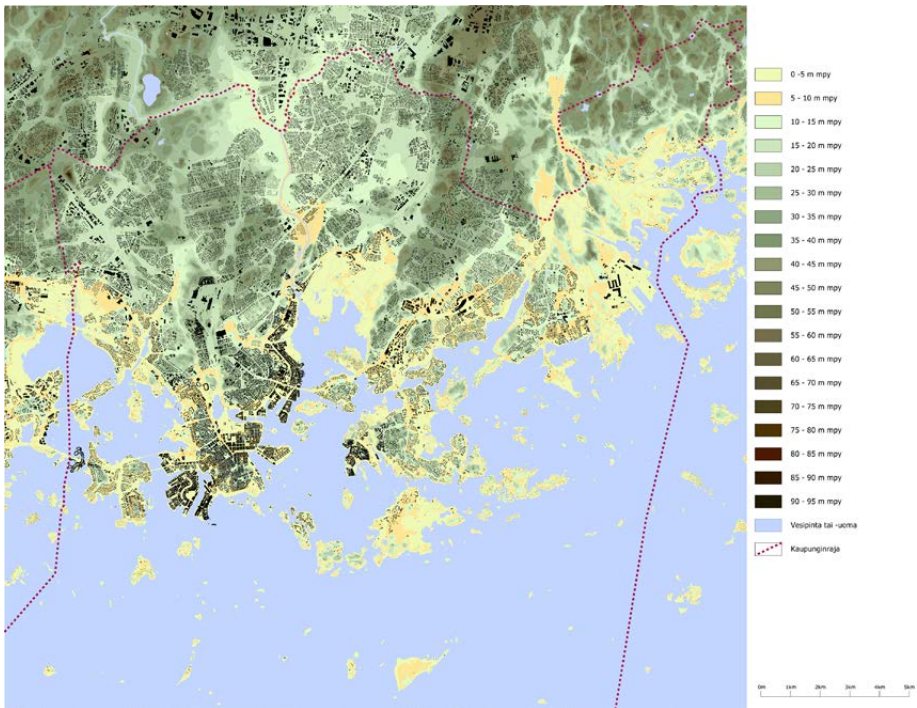
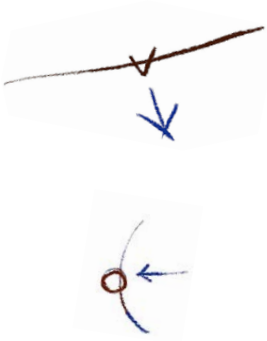


Figure 47. Topography overlaid with urban structure in Helsinki shows, among other things, a city by the sea edge with a defining river valley, and demonstrates where neighborhoods are built on flat (clay fields) or rocky areas, or where a defining landscape edge lies. City of Helsinki, Jaakkola et al 2013, p. 58-59 (Mari Soini based on Törrönen 2010).



Figure 48. The topography of Boston, in turn, shows a basin of sorts, and knowledge of history combined with the existing topography reveals that the urban nucleus is greatly made by infill. Also in Helsinki the biggest isles around the city center peninsula are connected to the nucleus by infill which can be judged by the awkward (as in not natural) shapes of the adjoining areas. The topographical map also shows the connection with water – a matrix of rivers and an array of hills around the city, as well as how the Emerald Necklace embraces the Muddy River, extending from the lowland city core to the surrounding hills. United States Geological Survey 2015.



■ Figure 49. A simplification of the landscape context of the two cities, in relation to the sea as a defining element, showing the situational context of Helsinki (top) as a peninsula on the edge of the sea, facing south, and Boston (bottom) facing the Atlantic to the east in a more sheltered cove. Illustration by the author 2014.

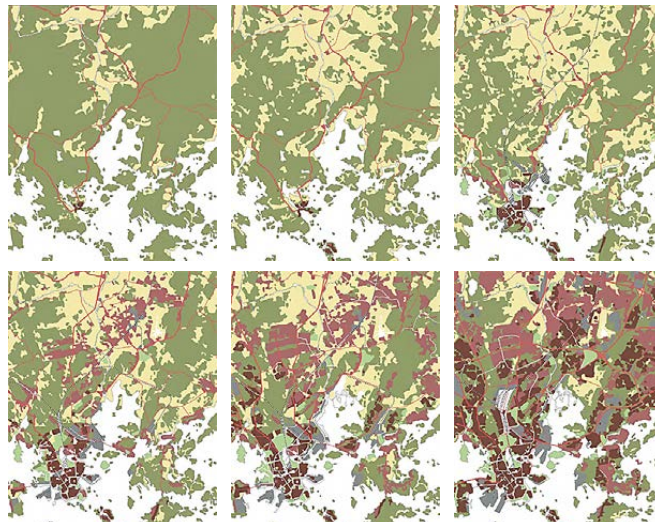


■ Figure 50. Boston archipelago skyline. Photo by the author 2014.



■ Figure 51. Helsinki opens to the sea. City of Helsinki 2014.

■ Figure 52. Urban development of Helsinki provides an urban context for the park system, as part of the situational context. The city was established in 1550 but only relocated to the existing location in 1640. Suomenlinna fortress was the first urban city quarter. Suburbs have been constructed on the outskirts much like annual rings of a tree, and most of the urban structure dates from the 20th century. Sundman 1982, complemented by Törrönen 2010.



3.3 Situational context - history as an example

3.3.1 Description of landscape history as a narrative

Documentation of history acts to illustrate and help understand how the knowledge of what has been, as a layer of the Invisible, is visible in the present. Heidegger emphasizes the role of memory and considers history “the guiding experience [*Leiterfahrung*]” for phenomenological research (Heidegger 2013b, p. 190). Visible features of landscape in the present day, such as fragments of structures or vegetation of different ages, give information of the stratifying layers of the past. The description and interpretation of how the case examples have come into being illustrate how the findings of this encounter of the visible and the invisible can make manifest and complement the aspects in the analysis framework. The examples in this section make visible the *process of becoming*, as well as the connections of past and present.

Historical analysis relies on documents and observations as well as their interpretation. Documentation, such as drawings, photos, maps or, for instance, correspondence between key figures, gives information on what has happened but also recreates the atmosphere and context of an era. Besides documenting, it gives insight into the experiential realm. Writings such as letters or diaries are someone’s perceptions of a phenomenon, sometimes memories, and thus subjective, in the spirit of the first-person phenomenological approach. Published writings may have political or marketing purposes. Different people’s recollections of the same events may differ considerably, depending on the viewpoint and subjective experience. The embedded power structures may become defining elements in the documentation, as archiving is an act of exclusion and inclusion. For that reason, it is important to rely on multiple sources and seek to understand the societal context when making conclusions and establishing narratives on historic events and their significance.

The historic description/analysis situates areas in a continuum and presumably adds to their experience, by enabling a deep and empathetic (as in *eläytyvä*) understanding of their meaning and significance. The designer’s intentions expressed in their writings and documented ideologies exemplify the *underlying meanings*. In terms of park systems and green-blue sequences of a city, different narratives of people’s experiences and ideas for planning act in the same way, making manifest the invisible layer of aspirations and hopes for an area’s future. At the same time, they contribute to the shared understanding of *values*.

Criticality is in place, however, in terms of the reliability of the kind of knowledge that a designer’s writings about their own work represent - of how a visual craft is verbally described. As Wäre (1988, p. 43) points out, when looking at designers’ writings about their work, it is important to keep in mind that the writings are not necessarily akin to their actions or thoughts, and no action can be fully explained by looking at writings only. Early writings may

not reflect later actions or vice versa, as thoughts change and evolve. Every decision is made bound by the requirements of reality, for instance economic factors. Hence, every act needs to be interpreted against the context, the time and place they were created in, and against what is known about the issue itself in the light of today's knowledge. It is important to understand this aspect of historical texts when interpreting designers' intentions, especially if there are multiple years or decades of distance between the texts and designs.

Similarly, when looking at maps, it is important to differentiate between designs and measured reality, as designs may have been implemented only partly or not at all. The further away from the present, the more difficult it is to judge reliably how illustrations correspond to the reality of the time, although historical maps are remarkably accurate at times, considering the measuring technique, and depicting landforms and other distinct features in a pictorial way.¹⁷¹ It is also notable that for every design there is usually a commission, hence the result is one of collaboration between a number of parties, rather than the act of one designer.¹⁷²

I am seeking to depict one aspect of the *Situational context* of the Emerald Necklace and Helsinki Central Park with a description of the historical context, to see how it might complement the analysis framework. The underlying meanings emerge partly through the designer's intentions or an understanding thereof, accompanied by notes on the traces of the passing of time: What happened here, how is it visible today and what does it mean - in relation to other places - to explain part of the values of the place. The description is not meant to be a comprehensive account of all matters or designs related to the Boston or Helsinki park systems or any of their parts, but is targeted to illustrate some factors in history as an example of a process of becoming/coming into being - analysis in the Situational context section of the V-I framework. The analysis relies on the designers' own writings as well as interpretations thereof and about the events by historians, complemented by an extensive collection of published as well as some archived maps. The description aims to provide an exemplary overview of the relevant occurrences of the Emerald Necklace's northernmost sections' process of becoming what they are today. In Helsinki, comparably, the most influential stages of the process of creating the first Green Finger are considered. In both cases, the designers' texts and ideologies are interpreted against their designs.

¹⁷¹ This can be observed, for instance, overlaying the *Kuminkaankartasto* (Alanen et al. 1989) and the Senate map of Helsinki 1870s, see appendix 4, with modern day maps, as unchanged features are identical.

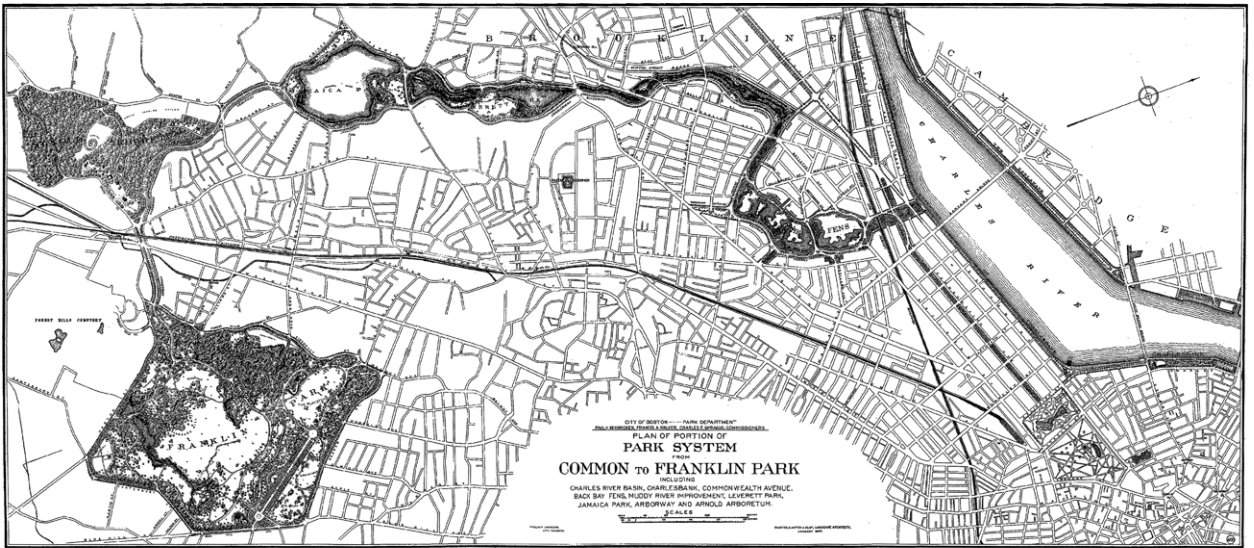
¹⁷² Design history is, in contrast, often depicted in such a way that the role of one designer, especially a well-known one, is emphasized, rather than the team or the commissioner, who often has a crucial role in the initiative and possibly in the outcome as well. At times, in addition, only the final commission or the politically verified plan is documented, instead of other stages in the process, although they may be important.

3.3.2 **Process of becoming - past and present of the Boston park system**

The sequence of interconnected green space known as the Emerald Necklace, an essential part of the entity of Boston parks, was commissioned by the cities of Boston and Brookline, between which the park system is situated, as a sort of divider between the two cities. The process of commissioning and selecting the sites started in 1875 and the eventual designs were made by Frederick Law Olmsted's (1822-1903) firm, at the time employing Charles Eliot as a partner as well as Olmsted's stepson John Charles Olmsted. The firm dedicated continuous effort to finishing the Boston park system for the last twenty years of Olmsted's career (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 83).

The Emerald Necklace is one of the oldest strategically planned greenways in the world, but also an instrument, way ahead of its time, of stormwater management and flood resilience, issues that are all the more current today along with climate change and its effects on Boston's shores. In a seaside town, the rising tides and increasing fluctuations in seawater levels are a natural power that needs to be regulated or accommodated to prevent damage to structures, ecosystems and economies. Besides an improvement for a deteriorating marshland after landfill in a growing city, it was a "prototype" for "comprehensive, regional planning of open space" and a manifestation of the value of natural scenery near densely settled urban areas, principles which later became established precepts in landscape architecture, as Zaitzevsky (1982, p. 4) describes. The project was also one of the most massive public projects ever undertaken by the city. It was a response to public awareness, which was fueled and articulated by the Boston Park Movement and inspired by New York's Central Park (Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 33).

The core of the park system consisted of five major parks (north to south, in Figure 53, right to left) Back Bay Fens, Muddy River Improvement, Jamaica Park, Arnold Arboretum and Franklin Park, as well as their connecting parkways, Fenway, Riverway, Jamaica way and Arborway (Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 3). In the plan, the Commonwealth Avenue complemented the park system into an interconnected chain with the proposed sections and connected to the existing Boston Common and Public Garden (in the lower right-hand corner of the illustration in Figure 53). The sequence starts from the city center's oldest parks and extends into the outskirts of the city. It is notable that the map also shows designs that were made to include the Charles River banks into the realm of recreation and chain of parks. These plans, such as Charlesbank (1892) were either not implemented or have transformed in time and are no longer recognizable (Zaitzevsky 1982). This plan was part of an even larger open space system that Olmsted's firm also drew up (signed Charles Eliot for the Metropolitan Park Commission, Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 122; Krieger, Cobb & Turner 2001, p. 157, see Figure 54). The comprehensive plan for a green areas system for the whole city and metropolitan area of Boston aimed to create an interconnected continuum of parks along the waterways around the urban core.



National Park Service Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site

OLMSTED ARCHIVES

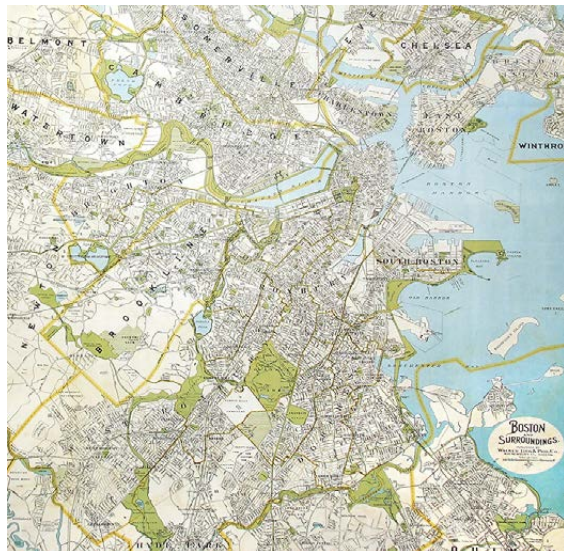
99 Warren Street Brookline, Massachusetts 02146

■ Figure 53. Emerald Necklace plan (combination of plans made between 1878–1894). City of Boston, Park Department; Paul H. Kendrick, Francis A. Walker, Charles F. Sprague, commissioners: Plan of Portion of Park System from Common to Franklin Park, by Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot, and William Jackson, city engineer of 1894. The Olmsted Archives, Brookline, MA.



■ Figure 54. Situational context in the urban structure and planned regional green system, plan of 1893. Map of the Metropolitan District of Boston, Massachusetts (1893), by Charles Eliot, who worked for Olmsted's firm. The plan sought to expand Olmsted's ideas for a metropolitan-scaled open space system. The Emerald Necklace is sort of an inner sphere, sheltering the City of Boston in its lap, inside the larger green belt that follows the banks of the Rivers Charles and Neponset. A fair amount of the green areas along the sphere still exist to this day. Reprint by Krieger, Cobb & Turner 2001, p. 157, Figure 16.

■ Figure 55. Open space and street system, the implemented reality in 1927, shows that the Emerald Necklace has been completed quite thoroughly to the extent proposed by the plan. The other largest public green areas are by the Neponset River, and many others are now private country clubs or golf courses, a common feature in American society. The Forest Hills Cemetery (in white, southwest of Franklin Park) extends to border to the Franklin Park, and in aerial photos, for instance, blurs into the Emerald Necklace - obscuring the defining role thereof in the urban structure.



Note also the yellow line to indicate the city limits. Boston and Surroundings by George Hirma Walker. Boston: Walker Lithograph and Publishing Co. 1927. Reprint in Krieger, Cobb & Turner 2001, plate 46, p. 219.

The present-day character of the totality of the Emerald Necklace is mostly natural in appearance, consisting greatly of the riverbanks of the Muddy River in varying widths, but highly constructed and dotted by original structures. In fact, Olmsted refused to use the word ‘park’ for any other of its parts than Franklin Park, which is an example of English-style landscape garden with its long vistas, rolling meadows and clumps of trees dotting them. Other parts of the greenway he rather called “sanitary improvements” or sanitary engineering (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp. 83-90; Zaitzevsky 1982, pp. 83-85), as the design of gradually shelving banks and soft edges with nature-imitating vegetation was meant to regulate the tide, surf and occasional flooding. This idea was introduced in the design of the Back Bay site first, and then adopted along the waterway. Olmsted’s ideology entailed creating a place with a natural appearance, in accordance with the particularities of the landscape.¹⁷³ Instead of imposing styles on the site, he generally chose a treatment consistent with the original character of the land (Zaitzevsky 1982; Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 33). The design was to “heighten the natural qualities of the scenery, stripping away distracting elements and realizing *the essence* (author’s emphasis) of the

¹⁷³ For instance, in the Back Bay Fens, the approach resulted in something that could be called ecological restoration of a salt marsh that had stagnated and been polluted in the early 19th century.



■ Figure 56. The situational context in the ecological sense includes that the northernmost part of the Emerald Necklace was intended for flood and water quality control as well as enjoyment. A present-day map for the high tide (or sea-level rise, 5 m, calculated) in Boston shows that the whole of Back Bay Fens would act as a tidal basin of sorts in such occurrences. Essentially all of the northern part would be under water. Harvard University 2015c.

place more clearly than nature had done unaided” (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 34). It included vegetation that would naturally occur in a mudflat and salt marsh, instead of a deliberate and elaborately designed park with exotic decorations, as was the spirit of the time, and that people were used to in places like the Boston Public Garden (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998). However, in appropriate contexts, Olmsted was not against the use of exotic plants. For instance, in the design of the Muddy River valley between Back Bay and Jamaica Pond, Olmsted got into disagreement with the Arnold Arboretum director and horticulturist Sargent,¹⁷⁴ who wanted to use exclusively native plants (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp. 88-89).

Olmsted’s designs for the park systems and large parks in the 1800’s can be called the beginning of landscape architecture as a profession, as the term was then introduced. What made landscape architecture different from gardening, in his view, was the element of design, the creation of a consistent whole in which the parts were subordinated to an overall conception. Individual plants or any other details were not the crucial element for Olmsted’s landscape architecture, the name he and Calvert Vaux started to call the art they were engaged in when designing Central Park in New York (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp. 30-37). The idea of educating people through arts such as landscape architecture, was part of Olmsted’s ideology about the necessity of civilization and cultivation of taste. His design ideology had its basis on philanthropic and societal ideals - the wellbeing of citizens, to which beautiful landscape and public greenery would contribute by providing restorative effects of landscape and nature.

¹⁷⁴ Arnold Arboretum, albeit part of the park system, is owned by Harvard University, and in its design and construction, Sargent was responsible for selecting the plants and Olmsted for producing the desired landscape effect (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 87).



■ Figures 57–60. Muddy River bridges, past and present. Figure 57 shows the Longwood Avenue Bridge in 1901 (Zaitzevsky 1982, fig. 149, p. 175) and in 2014 (Fig. 58–90). The place is very similar today, apart from the vegetation that has grown to make the water's edge on the banks of the river much less depictable. Modern day photos by the author 2014.



■ Figure 61. Past and present encountering, modern-day traffic traversing a historic bridge. Photo by Jeb Sharp 2015.



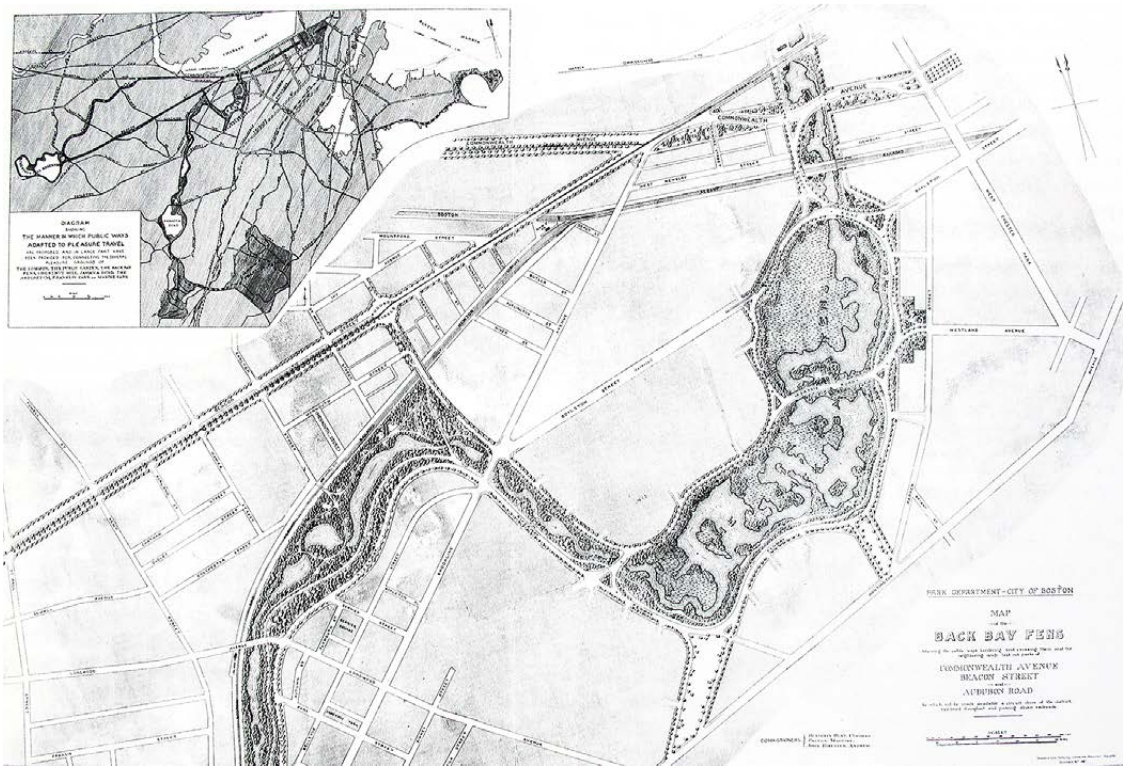
■ Figure 62. Grading in progress in the 1890s on the Muddy River Improvement near Longwood avenue, looking downstream towards Boston. A railway has been constructed to bring the large amounts of landfill to the site. Zaitzevsky 1982 p. 157 fig.122.



■ Figure 63. Grading nearly complete in 1892, note the sharper meanderings of the river and two stages of leveling. Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 158 fig. 123.



■ Figure 64. The Riverway finished in 1920. Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 86.



■ Figure 65. The design by Olmsted’s firm (1887) for the Back Bay Fens section was one of the first designs of the totality implemented on-site. The contour designs were very detailed, as were the plantings, and molded during the construction. Reprinted in Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 141 and Krieger, Cobb & Turner 2001, p. 9.

A strong single purpose was important for landscape architecture as a fine art, in Olmsted’s view, with unity and harmony of the whole, and a controlled variety for the subordinate (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 34). Like landscape painting, the practice made use of space and perspective (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp. 30-37). The two principal landscape styles, the pastoral and the picturesque (see section 1.2.2), made use of the principles of painting: a forefront with rustic details blending gradually into a more obscured backdrop, through an elementary middle ground. Olmsted wrote: “The quality of beauty in scenery lies largely in the blending in various degrees of various elements of color, texture and form, and often more largely than anything else in the obscurity and consequent mystery, giving play to fancy, of parts of the field of vision” (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp 30-37). According to Zaitzevsky (1982, p. 186), Olmsted practiced “a modified version of the Capability Brown pastoral style, varying this with frequent picturesque passages” and his greatest opposition to the so-called gardenesque style used in public parks at the time was the abundant use of details that diluted the large scheme. Olmsted’s first

concern was to achieve visual unity, in terms of organization of space, perspective and vistas, creating atmospheric perspective, placing dark, intricate forms of foliage in the foreground, with simpler and lighter forms farther away from the obvious viewpoints, and even when planting very densely, open views were carefully considered (Zaitzevsky 1982). In this sense, the overgrown reed-beds on the Back Bay Fens are not in accordance with all the original ideas, although the idea of naturalness in general has maintained its appearance and layered over time. While the original planting was of naturalistic style using native plants, it was not natural in the strictest sense, but instead more variety of scenery was compressed into the design that would ordinarily be found in nature (Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 187).

Frederick Law Olmsted made a Grand Tour to Europe and Great Britain for inspiration before starting the design of the Emerald Necklace. The ideas stemming from that journey he puts into words in his “Walks and Talks of an American Farmer” from 1852. The trip was an important phase on his journey towards what became his mission of social awareness and action in the form of providing green places for people. He was a strong advocate of equality and one of the pioneers in realizing the significance of public spaces and nature, whose unique combination the phenomenon of a public park was, for the well-being of city residents, a train of thought that has been elaborated since during the centuries in different forms. He wrote about Birkenhead Park, which he had visited during his tour, manifesting the social and societal aspect (Olmsted 1852, p. 73):

And all this magnificent pleasure-ground is entirely, unreservedly, and for ever the people's own. The poorest British peasant is as free to enjoy it in all its parts as the British queen. More than that, the baker of Birkenhead has the pride of an owner in it.

The passage also clarifies the emphasis on creating, in phenomenological terms, a feel of existential foothold for people, something that they can call their own. Olmsted was further interpreting the idea (Sutton & Olmsted 1979, p. 75):

Consider that the New York Park (Central Park) and the Brooklyn Park (Prospect Park) are the only places in those associated cities where, in this 1870th after Christ, you will find a body of Christians coming together, and with an evident glee in the prospect of coming together, all classes largely represented, with a common purpose, not at all intellectual, competitive with none, disposing to jealousy and spiritual or intellectual pride toward none, each individual adding by his mere presence to the pleasure of all others, all helping to the greater happiness of each. You may thus often see vast numbers of persons brought closely together; poor and rich, young and old, Jew and Gentile.

Olmsted's statement was societal and political, in believing that common green space must always be equally accessible to all citizens, and to be enjoyed together as a restorative experience free of everyday burdens. It is about connectivity of places and equity of people: all people coming together, regardless of race, color, social standing, class or other differences. It is about social justice and environmental awareness: Everyone should have equal access to greenery and the experience of beauty in nature, the restorativeness of nature, of rural scenery, expanse and beauty.¹⁷⁵

Olmsted put these ideas into practice in his designs for Central Park and Prospect Park in New York, as well as in Chicago's South Park¹⁷⁶ and the design of Boston's park system that followed. Olmsted aimed to create a pastoral landscape above all, as the pastoral scenery was the most valuable for him for counteracting the debilitating influences of urban life (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, pp. 34-35). For Olmsted, nature itself provided sublimity that the works of an "artist's hand" could not measure against (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 73). The notes for the plan of Franklin Park (Boston 1886, p. 106) include writing about the flowing sensation of a landscape that opens up with ease:

The chief end of a large park is an effect on the human organism by an action of what it presents to view, which action, like that of music, is of a kind that goes back of thought, and cannot be fully given the form of words.

Olmsted considered Franklin Park as manifesting the design ideals of a "park," which the lengthy philosophical reasoning in the notes for the plan of Franklin Park (Boston 1886) illustrates. At the end of the plan description, it is noted that nature is to inform art, as art-loving people should be taken to see, enjoy, learn and be inspired by nature. The inherent natural quality of art as a defining inner character is critical to the success of parks like the Franklin Park, unlike in projects like the Back Bay, "where the justifying end is to be

¹⁷⁵ In the light of recent studies (Tyrväinen et al. 2014; Hanski et al. 2012) where it has been shown that the effect of nature is not only mental but also physical, and beneficial even for those who don't believe in its power, these thoughts seem very much ahead of their time. The effect of "beauty" by Price (1794b) suggests that the effects that now have been proved, the lowered blood pressure and levels of stress hormones were something intuitively perceived but not scientifically explained at the time they were written. Just as Sir Uvedale Price wrote in the 18th century: "... the effect of picturesque is curiosity; an effect, which, though less splendid and wonderful, has a more general influence... by its active agency [curiosity] keeps the fibres to their full, natural tone; and thus picturesqueness when mixed with either of the characters, corrects the languor of beauty, or the tension of sublimity."

¹⁷⁶ In Chicago's South Park, he was able to finally associate passages of his favorite styles of park landscape, the pastoral and the picturesque, with an expanse of the sublime created by Lake Michigan (Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998, p. 73).

reached wholly by engineering skill, and into which art enters only as a process of dressing” (Boston 1886, p. 115).

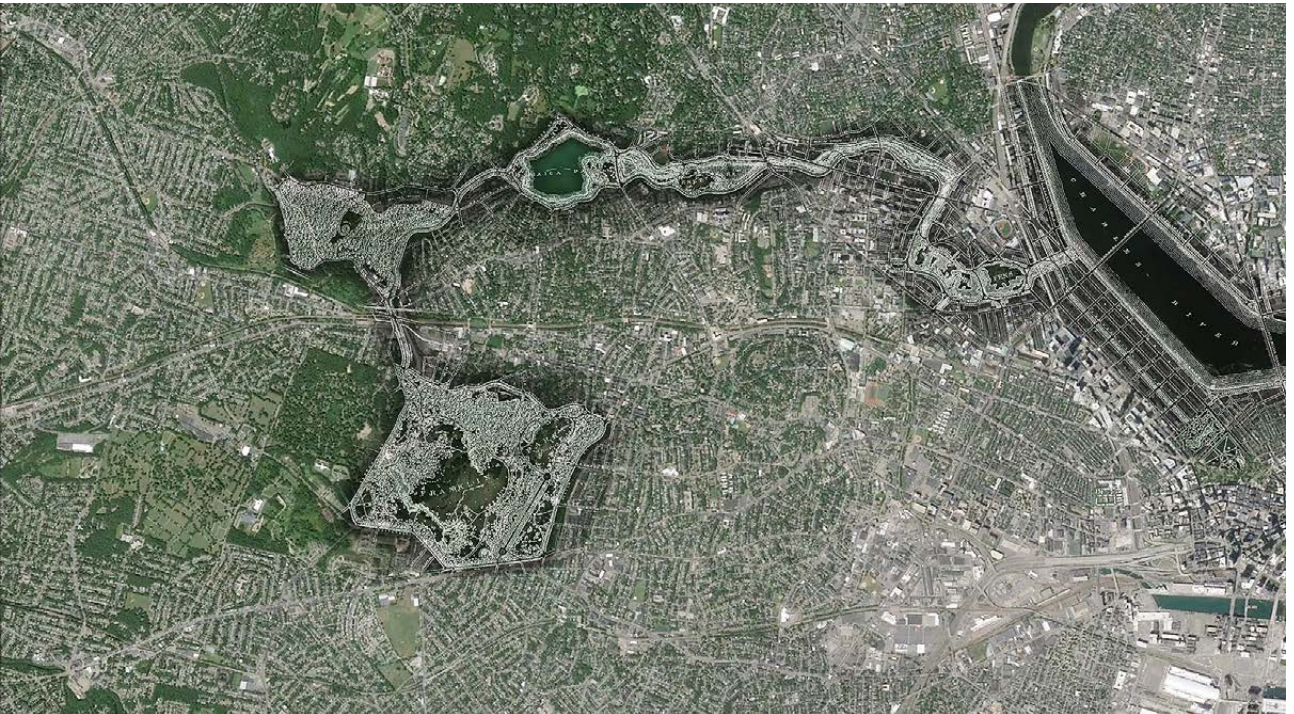
It is interesting to consider the process of the particular landscape of the Boston park system’s coming into being, in the light of some phenomenological ideas. The deliberate gesture of designing an interconnected sequence of green space within the urban fabric of a city is akin to the introduction of a bridge that connects and in Heidegger’s words (see section 2.6), makes a place out of a landscape or a site. In the same way that the bridge gathers the earth into an encultured landscape of humans, so does the Emerald Necklace design make a specific place out of the Muddy River running its course to the Charles River. It gathers the landscape around the stream, making out of it a landscape to be enjoyed and used by visitors. By giving a name to an area or landscape, considering it as a totality with parts that have a relation to each other, and by taking concrete measures to transform a landscape accordingly, humans seek to gather a *microcosmos* around an idea or a feature in the landscape. As a result of these human gestures, be it a bridge or a park sequence around a river, with bridges traversing it, a place or a series of places open up where the sky can be perceived and experienced, framed by green, that causes the riverbanks to lie across each other like Heidegger (1971, p. 150) describes. While a bridge helps to connect these banks, a designed park meant to facilitate its enjoyment, makes of them a recreational landscape.¹⁷⁷

Green spaces such as the Emerald Necklace’s park system can be a unifying, connecting factor between housing areas that are different from each other in socio-economic status and demography, services and appearance. The city districts on either side of the Emerald Necklace are very different, from high-end museum quarters to working and middle class neighborhoods. In fact, in Olmsted’s designs, economic considerations were already important, as the improvement of the Muddy River banks at the Back Bay Fens was to encourage the development of attractive neighborhoods and thereby increase the tax base (Sutton & Olmsted 1979, cited in Zaitzevsky 1982, p. 85). A substantial part of the Emerald Necklace is situated in and between two different towns, Brookline, MA and Boston, and extending from the commercial city center to the edge of mixed-use residential areas including middle- and lower-income neighborhoods in the south.

In order for people to use public space, however, the experience thereof must be something they want to replicate. The contact with nature and other people should be a pleasant one. A pleasurable experience in the outdoors also entails feelings of safety and orientation; not getting lost, finding one’s way and safe connections along the greenway.

When considered from the perspective of *essence and experience*, the analysis framework, and the factors described earlier, the Emerald Necklace, as well as many of its counterparts, has lost some of the qualities and intentions

¹⁷⁷ In addition, the numerous bridges across the river make this happen in a literal sense.



■ Figure 66. The historic park design (1894) projected on top of an aerial photo of 2015 shows that the outlines of the park system have almost astonishingly retained their original shape and extent, apart from some minor sections. Illustration by the author, based on Olmsted et al. 1894 and Google Maps 2015.

expressed in its design, such as continuity and unity, but retained and gathered others. The layers of time and temporality have obscured and punctuated the elements of its character. A naturalistic design has merged into the urban ecosystem, and the traces of human intervention have been obscured apart from carefully designed structures, some of which have lost their functional purpose and remain historic fragments. The park system has become a representation of nature in an urbanized and urbanizing setting. Its other essential purpose as a place for different people to come together, however, has yet to fulfill its full potential.

The Emerald Necklace can be described, in essence, as a greenway or sequence of green space that has been created into the Muddy River valley by leveling, landfill, digging and other measures molding the landscape of what originally was a riverbed connected to the tidal basin of Charles River. In the ecological sense, it is a human-made image of nature, but at the same time, nature. Looking at the landscape today, settled and overgrown over time, it is easy to forget that the natural beauty of the Emerald Necklace is entirely designed and human-made. It is an illusion of what it represents, but at the same



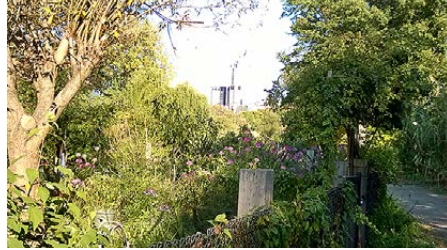
■ Figures 67-70. Along the Back Bay Fens, structures such as bridges accentuate the experience and guide the narrative of moving between narrow and wide landscape space, by providing viewpoints. The succession of vegetation has added a layer of nature as well as visible signs of design history such as old trees. Photos by the author 2014.

time, real nature to enjoy. It is artificial but natural-looking, to the extent that some natural elements such as the reed beds (*Phragmites*) have overgrown to affect the spatial character, and despite the open water surface, the area is quite closed in character in terms of *landscape space*. The totality consists of separate parts that have very varying *spatial* configurations. Views to the river are blocked in many places because of vegetation, but the surrounding urban landscape with an urban structure and roads is quite embodied and present in the experience. The landscape is defined by fully grown trees and varying landscape space in different parts of the sequence. The fragments of old buildings and bridges mark the intended functional and landscape nodes, attaching the visitors to the past with their appearance and material. The visible includes the natural beauty, such as the glimmering of the water, or the interplay of sun and shade in different hues of green.

The *designer's intentions*, as invisible, are made visible and manifest in Olmsted's designs and his writings about the design ideology, the pastoral ideal, the quest for forming a defining element in the urban structure and landscape of Boston, as well as the purpose to create a place for all kinds of people to get together. In a sense, the designer's intentions are in the fold of the flesh where the visible and invisible encounter one another.



■ Figures 71-73. Victory Gardens on the Back Bay Fens are a feature added in 1942 for additional food supply during the Second World War, diversifying the functional content of the park. Photos by the author 2014.



■ Figure 74. Playgrounds, such as this one on the Riverway, are also a later addition. Only since the reformistic movement in the first decades of the 20th century has physical exercise and outdoor play been in a major role of cities' park design (see Häyrynen 1994). Photo by the author 2015.

3.3.3 Process of becoming - Helsinki Central Park as the first Green Finger

The design history, from past to present, of the Helsinki Green Fingers is very different from that of the Emerald Necklace. The green areas system is a result of urban planning and park design development, including a number of unrealized plans, over many decades and many phases, as well as spontaneous elements. The Green Finger system was established over the course of the 20th century as a result of conscious strategies, as will be briefly demonstrated. However, the implemented appearance of the system of the six radial green area entities is a result of various occurrences in history rather than one deliberate design, and some of them have been formed by a more conscious process than others. The *designer's intentions* are thus visible in the existence of every Green Finger as such, although their appearance may have ended up in another form and scale than intended, embodying the creation and preservation of green since 1914 and up until the 21st century. The original Central Park (Töölönlahti and Kaisaniemi plans) acted as a starting point for the whole Green Finger system, and the ideas presented at the time for green space initiated what later became a defining element of the urban structure. For that reason, Helsinki's Central Park and some defining elements in its design history will be focused on.

The awareness of the underlying principles helps in understanding the invisible behind the visible and some features of the green areas system today. By looking at the background of the Helsinki case example, some new aspects may emerge, compared to that of Boston - or there might be some similarities. The designer's intentions are manifest in the planning architect Bertel Jung's plans for Central Park from 1911, as well as his writings about the design ideology. The Central Park, as an urban forest, was in its own way, a Finnish interpretation of the City Beautiful movement of the beginning of the 19th and early 20th century.¹⁷⁸ Jung sought to form a defining element in the urban and recreational structure and landscape of Helsinki as well as a place for all kinds of people to get together. The idea of an inner green belt that he introduced was also meant to bind together the shoreline with the green wedge as well as the housing areas (Jung et al. 1988, pp. 110, 113, 119-120). The knowledge of this background may add another layer to the experience of the Central Park urban forest.

Generally, philanthropic ideals, industrialization and the need for urban parks and park systems acted as a starting point for the birth of public green areas systems in both Helsinki and Boston.¹⁷⁹ After the appointment of the first city gardener, Svante Olsson, in 1889, a conscious park policy commenced and many new parks were created as parts of the urban structure along with the rapid urbanization (Häyrynen 1994, pp. 74-78). Private villas since the 1870s and the folk parks in the 1880s for the working class on surrounding islands, such as Korkeasaari, Seurasaari and Kivinokka with rental huts and swimming beaches, complemented the recreational system, and so did the allotment gardens (Karisto 2013, pp. 78-81; Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 74).¹⁸⁰

Bertel Jung (1872-1946), as the first appointed city planning architect [*asemakaava-arkkitehti*] in Helsinki and in Finland in 1908-1916, was a central figure in the birth of the Helsinki Green Finger system. The dialogue, even debate about the design of Töölönlahti area (Häyrynen 1994, pp. 174-179; Nikula 1988, p. 27) between Olsson and Jung contributed to the formulation of

178 Design of urban parks at the turn of the 20th century was connected in the United States with The City Beautiful movement, which believed in the cultivating effect of environmental beauty (Häyrynen 1994, p. 39).

179 In Helsinki, the 'golden era' of the art of creating parks can be identified from the latter half of the 1800s until the winter war in 1939 (Second World War). The philanthropic ideas were best manifested in the actions of the tobacco tycoon and patron Henrik Borgström, who was proactive in creating many remarkable parks in the growing city, including Kaivopuisto Park in 1834, the largest public park, i.e. Eläintarha Park, and Tullisaari Manor Park (Häyrynen 1994; Karisto 2013; Salastie et al. 2014).

180 Allotment gardens with huts were established during the decades after 1918 as a special feature of Helsinki's 'landscape culture' (City of Helsinki 2002; Karisto 2013; Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 74; Salastie et al. 2014), and the eight first ones still had their original function in 2020. The criteria for defining landscape culture areas include the historicity as well as the aesthetic, garden architectural, and cultural values of the place. The term refers to their use as well as their history.



■ Figure 75. City gardener Svante Olsson's designs played an important role in defining the future core of the Central Park, in terms of its design. Olsson's 1910 designs for the area surrounding the bays of Töölönlahti and Eläintarhanlahti, including the oldest city park and botanical garden Kaisaniemi. Helsinki City archives.

the design aims in the area. Jung was, due to the nature of his occupation, responsible for the city structure, whereas Olsson's contribution was more about the management and actual design of green spaces, a practice that applied until 2017 in the Helsinki City government between the city planning and public works departments, manifesting the difference between landscape planning and landscape design.

The context of Jung's era was one of rapid urbanization in the nation's capital - or what was to be a nation in 1917 along with Finland's declaration of independence. At the time of Jung's appointment as the city planning architect, Finland was still an autonomy under Russian rule. The civil war of 1918 could not fail to affect the development of the city, and the context of Jung's grand

designs, at least in the form of a disillusionment. In his text for the design report of the famous *Pro Helsingfors* comprehensive plan 1918 (Saarinen 1918; Jung & Saarinen 1918; Jung et al. 1988, pp. 105-120, 34-35), he envisions a redeemed greatness of the newborn nation's capital and its future, stating that after a regression caused by the civil war, wounds of violence will heal sooner or later (Jung & Saarinen 1918; Jung et al. 1988, p. 105). Helsinki had doubled its population every twenty years starting from the 1860s. There was an urgent need for housing, not to mention room for the development of city planning as an art form as well as a means of economic speculation in the growing city.¹⁸¹

Jung's proposal for "Great Helsinki" of 1911 (Jung 1911) was joining the suburbs with each other with the help of a sphere of park and green areas, a gesture that was later to become the first of the Green Fingers that the city's urban structures is defined by today. The same and following years Jung drew up proposals for Central Park (Jung 1911; Jung 1912; Nikula 1988, p. 30). At the same time, there occurred a paradigm shift in the design ideology for parks. Häyrynen (1994) describes the transformation of the park policy in Helsinki at the turn of the 20th century, from scenic parks to reform parks, as the landscape garden ideals were replaced with the emphasis on sports facilities, and urban flaneur and nature admiration with exercise. The 1911 comprehensive plan comprised a green wedge that was to combine the center with countryside without obstructing the growth of the city (Häyrynen 1994, p. 174, figure 136 caption). Jung also emphasized the possibilities that the park provided for play and sports (Mustonen 2010, p. 336). Jung's monumental design for the entrance to Eläintarha Park and its formal basin to replace Töölönlahti Bay was one step in the process to arrange the inner city anew (Häyrynen 1994, pp. 176-179, see also Figure 77). They, however, gave way to a more realistic design retaining the bay area's shorelines, formulated in Olsson's designs for Eläintarha Park between 1904 and 1910 (Häyrynen 1994, p. 203). The consequent comprehensive city plan *Pro Helsingfors* that was drawn up by Eliel Saarinen in 1918, was largely based on the work of Jung in the previous years (Hedman 1988), and Jung wrote the explanation of the report. For the first time, the plan gathered together ideas for the land-use arrangement of the whole city and beyond, in what can be called one of the first citywide Master Plans in the Nordic countries (Hedman 1988), only parts of which were realized, however.

It is notable that a blue-green circle within the city (that now is formed by Central Park and Helsinki Park, since the Master Plan 2002, City of Helsinki)

¹⁸¹ It is interesting to note Jung's role and involvement in the later 1918 plan, for instance, in terms of context. First as a public official, he was later the founding member, architect and resident of the *Kulosaaren huvilakaupunkiosakeyhtiö* (development agency). One might be tempted to speculate on the effects of ensuring the potential for profiting from the growing city. Mikkola (1984, p. 75) has also noted that the comprehensive plan was an attempt to reconcile the interests of the city administration as well as profit-seeking private developers.

was already envisioned back then, but with a different outline, to form a smaller sphere (see Figures 76 and 78). It included parts of the currently existing Central Park, starting from Töölönlahti, as well as parts of the series of green areas that comprise Kumpulanlaakso valley, now housing the Kumpula allotment garden, Käpylä sports park and shores of the Vantaanjoki River. On the northern side, it connects to the Vantaa River through the former Oulunkylä Manor grounds. The original Central Park that Jung proposed in 1911 was in fact more related to the idea of an inner blue-green circle than that of the Central Park of the 1970s local plan (City of Helsinki 1974), which has now established the boundaries of the Central Park. The existing inner circle is wider, however, and no longer includes all the green area entities in Jung's plan.

In Jung's thinking, even the densest city can be well-organized and provide quality of life, if its green areas are taken into account to provide healthy environments. He was an active writer, and frequently presented his ideas and critiques in architecture magazines. For Jung, the ideal development model for Helsinki was the radial model (Jung 1911; Nikula 1988, p. 26), using Berlin and Stockholm as references. Different land uses were to expand between green areas. Both forest and parks had their place in the growing city (Nikula 1988, p. 27; Jung & Saarinen 2018, p. 119).

Jung's time brought architects into the center of the planning profession that was forming. Jung considered city planning to be comparable to a large-scale design for a house - he considered the same principles important in both the art of architecture and that of city planning; healthy, practical, simple and beautiful combined, guided by an artistic plan and hierarchy (Nikula 1988, pp. 9-10, 19). He also firmly believed in the importance of aesthetics as one of the guiding principles in city planning (Nikula 1988). In much the same way as Olmsted defined landscape architecture as a profession, Jung expanded the notion of architecture to include city planning and relied on the architect as a multitasking, solving societal and aesthetic problems alike. Interestingly, however, according to Häyrynen (1994, p. 176), the "park" in his schemes reflects a "non-design," a backdrop for architecture or a forest left untouched. Later it has become evident, as well, that city planning challenges are far too complex to be solved with any one profession or discipline alone.

Much like Olmsted in his time, Jung drew inspiration from his study trips to and connections with European cities, above all the 1910 city planning exhibition in Berlin and the ideas for greater Berlin, as well as the green belt of Vienna (*Wald- und Wiesengürtel*, literally forest and meadow belt, Nikula 1988, pp. 23-25). Camillo Sitte's *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen* from 1889 was one of his main inspirations, and Werner Hegemann's writings about American cities, such as *Ein Parkbuch* greatly affected Jung's thinking, especially in the 1910s (Nikula 1988, pp. 9-10, 19). In fact, it wouldn't be surprising if knowledge of Olmsted's designs had acted as one inspiration for Jung and Olsson, as well, at the time of vivid international exchange of ideas.

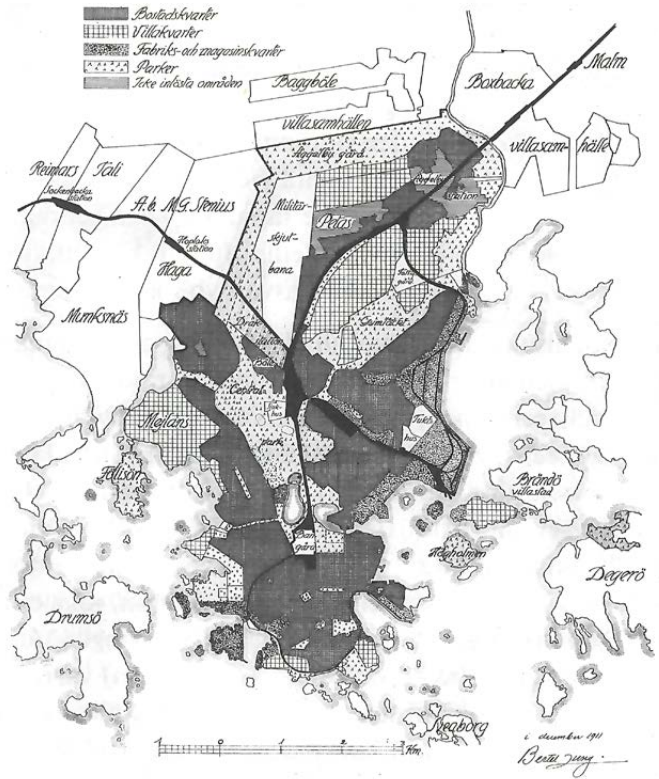
■ Figure 76. The inner blue-green circle of Helsinki is formed by introducing the concept of Helsinki Park around the Vantaa riverbeds and on to the sea and islands, and connecting it south and north with the Central Park. As such it is akin to Jung's ideas of an interconnected green entity between Central Parks and the shores of Vantaa river. City of Helsinki, Jaakkola et al. 2013 p. 62.



■ Figure 77. City plan of Central Park 1914, a first stage, as proposed to the city council. City Planning Department archives.



■ Figure 78. Jung's city plan of 1911. Together with the Pro Helsingfors plan of 1918 plan that followed (see Fig. 79), it outlined the idea of a chain of parks that would define the city and connect its different parts to each other and the continental parts to the maritime ones. Nikula 1988, p. 28.



■ Figure 79. The Pro Helsingfors plan of 1918 by Jung and Saarinen attempted to solve the “problem” of the landscape context of the city on a peninsula limiting its growth, as well as the disconnect between east and west that the central railway created, by relocating the railway station. The plan features a non-implemented idea of filling in the Töölönlahti Bay area to create a monumental street (“King Avenue”), the crossing of which with the existing Hesperianesplanadi makes up an axial composition. The street and the blocks on each side are framed with chains of parks coming together and leading north to the forerunner of Central Park. The sequence accommodates the oldest park in town, Kaisaniemi with its botanical section and Alppipuisto Park, but partly obliterates Eläintarha Park, the largest public park of its time. The plan, however, embraces the Seurasaari Bay area, framing its shores with parkland (including the Lapinlahti Hospital area and Hietaniemi). Jung & Saarinen 1918.



■ Figure 80. The finalized design for the Central Park's southern end (Jung 1911), like any other city plan, is a compromise between grand schemes and what was economically, technically and socially possible and rational at the time, considering the main purpose it aimed to achieve. For instance, it was probably a blessing for the enjoyment of today, that Töölönlahti Bay was retained as a recreational area reminiscent of a lake, instead of the proposed fill. Helsinki City archives.

It is known that Jung's designs for the monumental core of the Töölönlahti area along the lines of the City Beautiful Movement were inspired by grand designs such as those for Cleveland 1902 and Chicago 1909, and that before being involved in the Berlin exhibition Hegemann had written about *Amerikanische Parkanlagen* [American Parks] and curated an expo in Boston (Standertskjöld 1988, p. 79). Otto Wagner's writings about the necessary unity, simplicity and tranquil silhouette in the modern era, where the pace of movement is so fast that there is no time to observe detail, (e.g. 1895 *Moderne Architektur*, cited in Standertskjöld 1988, p. 83) also had an effect on Jung's design thinking.

Jung was pioneering in Finland in his writings to defend the modern ideas in the architectural field¹⁸² and early thoughts of functionalism (Wäre 1988,

¹⁸² Such as *art nouveau*, in Finland usually referred to as *Jugend* according to its German name *Jugendstil*.

pp. 47–50). In the latter, purpose was to define form. Jung appreciated reason and practicality, his key concepts being the Swedish expressions “*innerlighet och ändamålsenlighet*,” deep spirit and appropriateness (Jung 1902, cited in Wäre 1988, p. 49). In his writings, Jung often referred to “the great cultural nations” such as England, Germany and the United States, whose development was to be monitored while having interaction between the other Nordic countries: urban design was to be visionary, based on solid knowledge about the present and assessment of the future (Wäre 1988, p. 52). Jung stressed the importance of fresh air and working in the garden for people’s well-being, but rarely mentioned the beauty of nature (Wäre 1988, p. 64), except for his report for the design of Central Park (Jung 1911, p. 138) where he mentioned the need to “be close to nature and enjoy the beauty of the landscape.”

In his design ideology and working method, Jung valued being acquainted with the existing situation, landforms and urban structure (Jung & Saarinen 1918; Wäre 1988, p. 65), a landscape analysis of sorts. In the 1918 plan (Jung & Saarinen 1918; Jung et al. 1988, p. 113), he pointed out the importance of the citizens’ access to water, to get “in touch with it.” For that reason, numerous islands were also left for recreation in the plan, although most of the other shores nearby were reserved for harbor functions. Korkeasaari, Mustikkamaa, and the islands in front of Merisatamanranta, that together with Kaivopuisto Park were to form a green entity, were mentioned to serve recreational purposes, and they still do to this day. In his ideas for continuous shoreline promenades (Jung 1908), he studied the totality of shorelines and their views.¹⁸³ To leave space for the citywide radial structure where the green extended from the city core and its shores to the “open fields and withering woods” of the countryside was a guiding principle in the arrangement of green as part of the urban realm (Jung & Saarinen 1918, pp. 119–120).

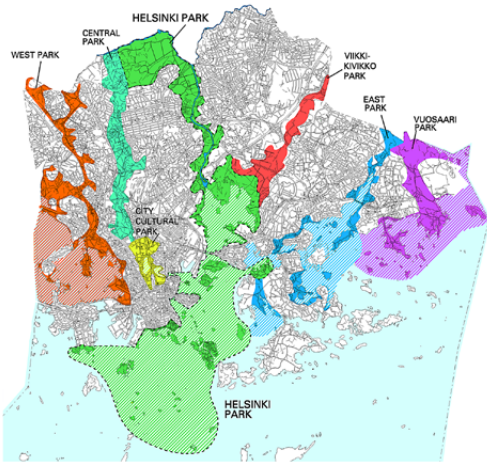
Especially after the wars,¹⁸⁴ in 1946 Helsinki enlarged manifold, when areas from neighboring towns were adjoined to the capital. The societal structural change from agriculture to industries and service economy led to increasing migration to cities and a need for affordable housing. In the Master Plan for green areas of 1945 (Brunila 1945) the future green areas structure was largely defined, acting as a basis for the development that followed. According to Birger Brunila (1947, pp. 195–201), the successor of Jung, as the city grows, it cannot become a densely populated overcrowded town of stone, but it ought to, rather, form an organic open society with a close connection to nature, and a city that residents can enjoy and in which to experience the joy of living.

The Master Plans of 1923 and 1932 further strengthened the Central Park idea and expanded it in the 1950 update, and in 1974 the local plan was ratified for the park, cementing its borders for decades to come (City of Helsinki 1974;

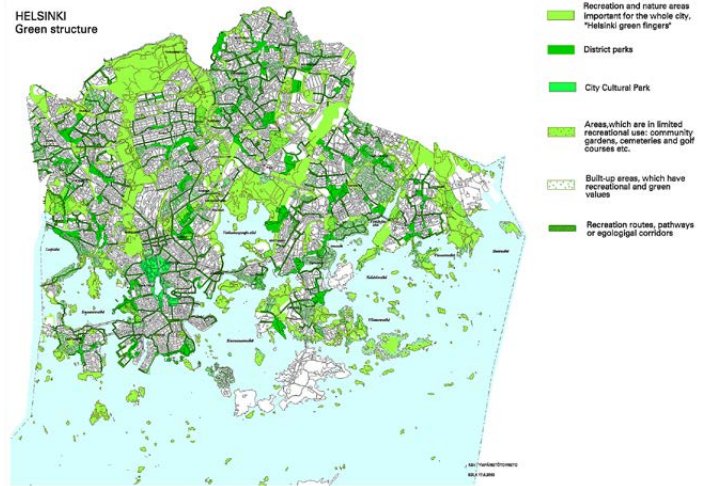
¹⁸³ He even suggested that the city should buy new islands for recreation (Jung 1916).

¹⁸⁴ The 1939–1941 winter war and 1941–1945 continuation war against Russia.

HELSINKI PARK AND OTHER "GREEN FINGERS"



HELSINKI Green structure



Figures 81 and 82. Green Fingers and the green structure in the 2002 Master Plan, introducing the concept of Helsinki Park. City of Helsinki 2002.

Mustonen 2010, pp. 338, 345). The 2002 Master Plan introduced the Helsinki Park as an identity-gathering concept of different landscape types in Helsinki “from the archipelago to the forest” (City of Helsinki 2002) and as the largest of the Green Fingers. The plan also gave names to the other Green Fingers, making them visible as green wedges, and ratified their role in the city development, although some minor areas in them were proposed for housing development.¹⁸⁵ The Master Plan of 2002 introduced the biggest land-use change in a century as the former harbor areas in the inner city were planned to be developed for housing. This was enabled along with the relocation of the commercial harbor, which, on the other hand, by setting the focus on brownfield development, facilitated densification without the need to designate housing areas on top of green areas.

When considered from the perspective of *essence and experience*, the Helsinki Green Fingers and the Central Park have retained for the most part their essential character as green wedges, although their experience on-site may not necessarily reflect the determination in the planning tradition to preserve them as such. The current state of the *Keskuspuisto* Central Park reflects Jung’s principles, but in a somewhat different physical form than intended, as the decades have each added a layer to the content and narrative of the area. The large outline represents an idea of a totality, but consists of a patchwork of different parts. Apart from the historic designs of its very southern end (Hesperianpuisto Park and *Kaupunginpuutarha* City Garden), the appearance of

¹⁸⁵ In the latest Master Plan of 2016, Central Park’s area was proposed to decrease significantly, to accommodate new housing areas. However, these suggestions (the so-called city boulevards along Hämeenlinnanväylä) were left unratified in court due to public opposition and appeals.



■ Figures 83 and 84. Töölönlahti Bay, the starting point of the Central Park. The current solutions have enforced and strengthened the idea of a green oasis surrounding a bay, as opposed to the plans of Jung and even Alvar Aalto, who later in his plan of 1961 proposed heavy development on the shores as well as a parking deck where a parklawn is now situated (Aalto 1961). As the southernmost end of Central Park, where it connects to the urban core, the park is strategically important for the whole green areas system.

The development of the Töölönlahti area has seen a transformation on its shores from a villa milieu through an industrial site with a sugar factory, railway yard and barracks to a city park, housing cultural institutions such as the Finlandia Hall, the National Opera and the Music Hall (Jaakkola 1997, pp. 95–111). Photos by the author in 2019.

the greenway is dominated by natural-like forest scenery, active tracks as well as sports and other facilities, and is heavily used in all seasons, facilitated by its extensive track system, over- and underpasses and lighting. The Central Park can be described, in essence, as a strip of forest, extending from a river landscape, arboretum and primeval forest in the north to the city core in the south, and housing a host of different activity nodes, characterized by nature and exercise.¹⁸⁶ The landscape space varies from closed spruce forest views and pine-dominated stone mounts to open agricultural fields and occasional other openings for different functions. These make up the visible layer, and the invisible include, besides its planning history, the controversies in planning objectives and the range of stories which will be touched upon in section 3.5.

3.3.4 Findings for the analysis framework

The situational context described in the previous sections; - the landscape setting as well as the historic background, - provides some fundamental knowledge for understanding particular landscapes in terms of a phenomenological analysis framework. There are aspects that may deserve attention in analyzing green urban landscape by way of its design and planning history. Firstly, different aims, verbalized or not, might sometimes define the future and essential features of an area and should be included in a comprehensive analysis, and secondly, an understanding of the design processes behind the implemented reality adds to the contextual understanding.

¹⁸⁶ The amenities include, among others, huts housing cafes, a swimming hall and basin, an outdoor adventure park, a pet cemetery, a horseback riding area, an archery field, cultivation lots, and tracks for skiing, cycling, running and horseback riding. The area is used, for instance, for happenings such as orienteering as well as commuting by bike and foot.

A historic approach gives a valuable context but alone fails to reach the particularities of the essential, let alone the experience. Its role is to provide knowledge behind the seen and otherwise perceived, and to remind of the layers of time, to give tools to understand what happened and how it is visible today, and based on what kind of premises. It is important to note in what kind of societal circumstances the landscapes have been formed, as they do not happen in a vacuum detached from the history of transformation, often urbanization in a location. Reflecting on the present state of the landscape, parallels to its process of becoming and potentials of the future can be drawn. Thus, it should be done at least on a summary level to get the big picture of an area's meaning.

From a point of view informed and inspired by phenomenology, the essence and experience of an area stem from the invisible aspects that have been the essential narratives behind the planning and design. The larger societal context that events are connected with includes the global history setting, such as conflicts between and within nations and groups, the economic potentials for implementation in a given time and space, and financial and political speculations or controversies in the design process that have guided the outcome to varying extents. These may still affect the experience of today. The societal context includes things like the emergence of a nation or profession¹⁸⁷ or implementation of new philosophical or societal ideas of their time. This happened in both Boston and Helsinki, where the design might have had a role larger than its content. The purpose for which the place was created, and whether that original meaning has changed over time, also define the essential and should be included in the analysis. Strategic aspirations and objectives as well as the development of the city's urban structure and green systems help in understanding the reasoning behind design solutions.

The new perspectives added based on the analysis in this chapter bring to light the significance of economic restrictions and potentials - what it is possible to achieve in reality - and political controversies that may sometimes be a defining factor. Schemes and designs are left unrealized or greatly altered due to political decisions, which are an integral part of design processes. Sometimes what did not happen - for instance plans that were not implemented - is as influential to the outcome and its evaluation as what eventually happened. Furthermore, the creative powers behind achievements might be indebted to a more complex set of stakeholders than credited in the official historical narrative.

Based on the findings in the case examples' design history, **Economic potentials** are to be added to the *Situational context*, and *Designer's intentions* broadened with **ideologies**, as well as **Political controversies** in terms of *Underlying meanings*.

¹⁸⁷ In Jung's case, establishing architects as primary city planners in the Finnish tradition, and in Olmsted's, enlarging the scope of designing landscape from landscape gardening into landscape architecture, e.g. the planning of green urban systems.

3.4 Instant experience and perceived affordances - narrating the Visible

3.4.1 Site visits and their documentation, Boston Emerald Necklace

The ideas of primary and secondary experience (Hägg & Kurczewska 2019, p. 6; Jay 2005) as well as first and second-order constructs of understanding experience (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016, p. 360) entail different levels of experience as well as its interpretation, as noted in section 3.1. There is the immediate first impression of a first or one-time visitor, where certain things are noted. On another occasion, or reflecting on the experience later, replicating and seeking to understand it, another level emerges, based on the knowledge gained on the first exposure. This notion is inspired by, for instance, Hägg and Kurczewska (2019, p. 8) who, in turn, drawing on Dewey (1958, pp. 4-5) state that: “when only addressing the aspect of primary experience, we are left with just our *instant* (author’s emphasis) sense of the experience and do not grasp the essential understanding of what we have experienced. To understand the possible consequences of what we have experienced, we have to add the element of thought.” The added level of experience appears in the analysis framework as the kind of affordances that require knowledge to be perceived, among other things.

The experiential realm as well as the spatial structure and affordances, can be observed on site visits. Issues to look into on a site visit, when making an experience-oriented analysis, include things such as connectivity: whether or not there are bridges or overpasses/underpasses/crosswalks that connect to the surroundings and ways to orient to them. What happens on and under the bridges contributes to the overall feel of the area, including the feeling of safety. Lighting also affects the feeling of safety, although sometimes on somewhat irrational grounds. Things to facilitate orientation and wayfinding, besides signage, include visibility and clearness of paths as well as their hierarchy.¹⁸⁸

Possibilities for fulfillment of basic human needs such as eating, drinking and restrooms contribute to the overall pleasantness of a green urban landscape experience, as people tend to want to know when and where the next potential place/moment/possibility for fulfilling these needs might be. This factor contributes to the feeling of security for its part. Visual and functional integrity help embody and structure surroundings, to make sense of them. An analytical approach entails observing multiple ways of motion, whether they conflict with each other, and how well-organized and comprehensible they seem. A functional park has activities for all ages, as well as places to sit and look at something beautiful. The ‘desire paths’ (Bramley 2018) give an idea of where people want to go and which ways they use. When one has entered a

¹⁸⁸ It must be noted, as well, that a designer’s gaze such as my own tends inherently to be one of seeking possible problems or issues to develop. Another experienter might point out very different factors.

place in the park, it is necessary to look out, and from the outside, to look in the park to get a full idea of its physical context - how does it relate to its surroundings? Are there places to be, to go to and to spend time doing something or enjoying scenery, and does one know how to get there?

The data for the notion of the 'instant experience' of the Emerald Necklace was gathered by numerous separate site visits, the first of which were the most immediate ones and without much contemplation, taking in the situations and places as they came. The following ones were, most probably, tinged by the preconceptions gained through the previous visits - although seeking to keep an open mind for new discoveries, I already had an idea what to expect, at least subconsciously. On different occasions, different aspects were observed. The first of what became altogether eight site visits was made in June 2002. I walked along the Emerald Necklace's northern parts, taking old-fashioned slides, a year after conducting independent study for this research at the University of Virginia,¹⁸⁹ where the importance of the park system dawned on me and was embodied in a more concrete way than before. The first impression then was that it was surprisingly unkempt. I remember paying attention to things like paths being narrow, overgrown and also a little wet, as it had been raining. I walked without a map and was quite disoriented. The main things that remained in my memory about the trip were the river and the Victory gardens, which are community gardens with fences around them. On the same trip, I walked to the Olmsted historic site in Brookline to study the historic maps.

Another trip didn't happen until September 2014, along the Charles River and on to Back Bay Fens and Riverway. It became dark earlier than expected¹⁹⁰ and the fact that there was no lighting in the green area sections themselves forced me to walk back along the streets. This time the areas seemed more comprehensible, I had studied them better and had a better idea where I was. On October 7, 2014 I took a bike ride with my partner from Boston Common along Commonwealth Avenue, from there to Back Bay Fens and on via Riverway and Olmsted (Leverett) Park to the northern shoreline of Jamaica Pond (ca 7 miles and back). Taking photos and making observations,¹⁹¹ I discovered the beauty of the historic structures, but at the same time, the visual obstacle of the reed beds that obscured the open landscape space. The lack of services was striking, as well as the discontinuity in some sections where it was difficult to embody the entity and to orientate yourself, to find which way to go next. As a result, we constantly had to jump off the bikes and check the map.

¹⁸⁹ Albeit at that time, mostly about Washington D.C.'s urban structure and green areas.

¹⁹⁰ Not taking into account the time of sunset, which is earlier in Boston than in Helsinki in September.

¹⁹¹ In hindsight, I could have used a sports tracker or activity bracelet to track my path - but it was not as common at the time, and in a way I felt I also wanted an immediate experience as well as the recollection of it, to be guided by the place and its character alone, as opposed to a premeditated or fully traceable scheme.



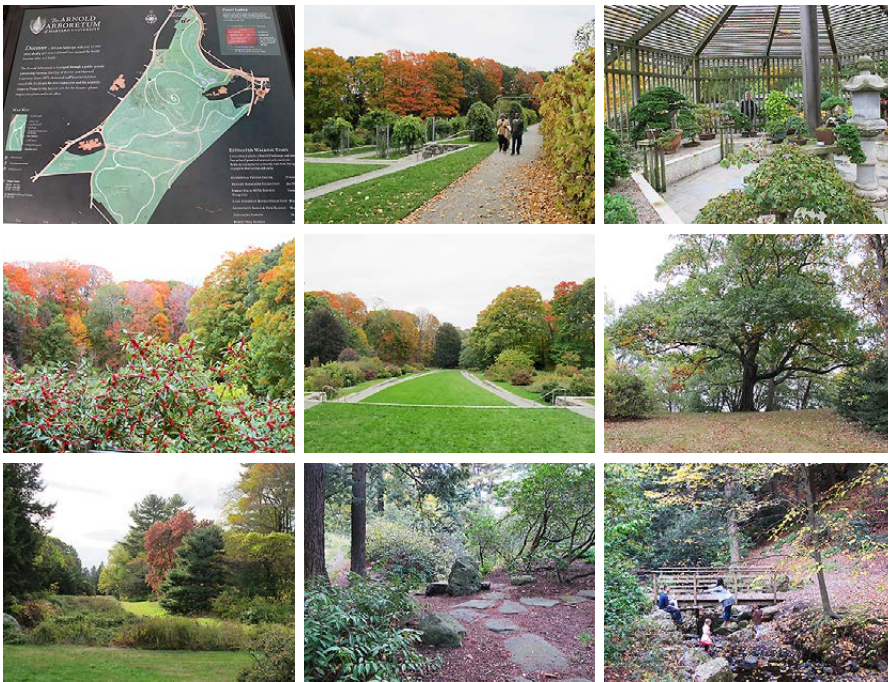
■ Figures 85–87. Fall colors on a bike ride in Leverett Park and Jamaica Pond, the most park-like sections of the green-blue sequence. Photos by the author 2014.

The reflections on the waterbeds by lush vegetation, glimmering surface between the shades of the fully grown trees, however, gave an impression of a natural area and provided a pleasurable landscape experience and an agreeable microclimate, sheltered and a little moist. The openings in between provided lawns spotted by the flickering sunlight between the lush canopies. On October 14 (trip no 4), we took the Orange Line tube to Forest Hills to circle around the Arnold Arboretum. The Fall colors and abundance of details made the Arboretum alive, as did the different age layers of vegetation, diversity of seasonal bloom and colors of foliage, and the careful arrangement of clumps of trees and open space.

The fifth trip occurred on January 12, 2015, to prepare for the class I gave to the Harvard students, this time by rail (Green D line to Brookline village/Longwood), complemented by audio documentation with a recorder. The sixth, a site visit with two students, occurred two days later, on January 14, an exceptionally chilly and windy day, and we could not stay for long. The Riverway section was under construction and made the sequence slightly uninviting by obstructing the flow of movement. The image of a whole area easily gets dominated by such details. In the northern part where the Muddy River dives under Mass Pike and Charlesgate, eventually vanishing under grey infrastructure, we observed the obvious deterioration and disembodiment of the section, contemplating how to improve the pedestrian and bicycle experience there and connect the Fens to the Charles River bed. When walking through the different sections of the Emerald Necklace, one sees the contrast between the highlights such as the Arnold Arboretum, Boston Common or Victory Gardens, and the neglected parts.

In Spring 2015 I rented a car to visit some sites outside the Boston/Cambridge area and drove down to Franklin Park.¹⁹² The overall impression was that the park did not correspond to the impression I had received from the writings by Zaitzevsky (1982, p. 65) where it is stated that it is one of Olmsted's

¹⁹² Unfortunately no photos of the visit remained and hence the recollection is accordingly vague, as the digital camera ran out of battery and my partner's mobile phone images later disappeared as a result of the memory card corrupting: almost as if my documentation was meant to be relying on memory only.

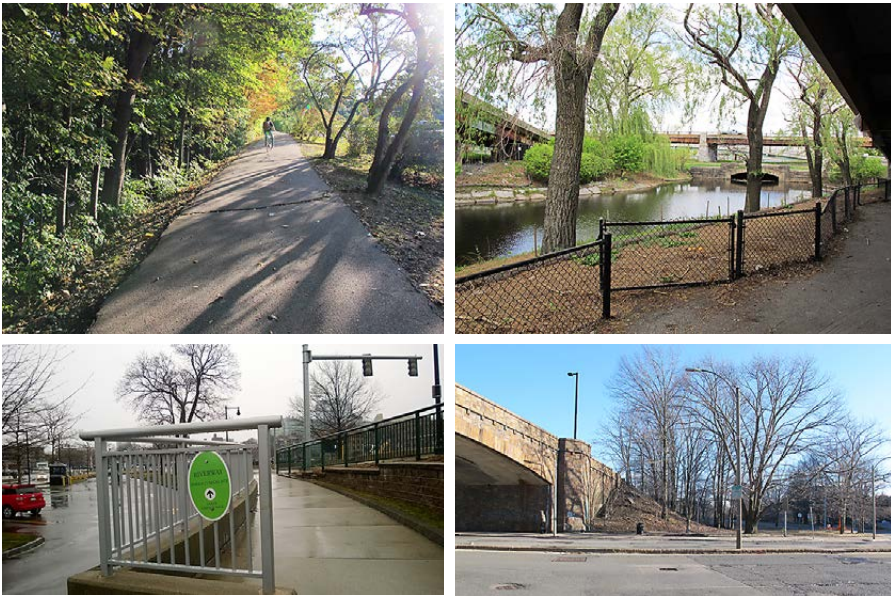


■ Figures 88–96. Arnold Arboretum, run by Harvard University, the most visited and best-known part of the green sequence. Photos by the author 2014.

most notable works. The unfortunate occurrences with photos and the state of mind that followed might have affected the impression but I remember that the park seemed somehow too large – the entrance was not very inviting and most notably, the park was completely empty. The landscape space was impressive, but opened up all at once, and somehow it appeared to me as something designed for merely aesthetic purposes failing to fully satisfy the expectations for a spatially coherent or functionally interesting, meaningful narrative of a park.

I visited the Arnold Arboretum again on May 10,¹⁹³ 2015 to witness the ornamental bloom of the *Syringa* species and saw a different face of the park, this time with food trucks and families picnicking. It must also be noted that the experience of a place can be affected by the company with whom a place is visited, as well as the number of other people there. One may, for instance, get a feeling that one is where one should be, when many others share a space, or see them as a distraction, or some other alternative. The trip was somehow very emotional; to see the beauty of the flower petals with their purples and endless pink hues, tinged by the personal situation. On that and other

¹⁹³ The park was crowded because it was Lilac Sunday, publicly designated for admiring lilac blooms. I visited the park with a friend whom I had met during the year, and the beauty of the park made a contrast to the poignant awareness of my time at Harvard coming to an end.



■ Figures 97-100. Some challenges observed on the northern part of the Emerald Necklace. The Emerald Necklace's instant experience is a collection of distinct spaces and places and sequences between them, some of the links quite vague, – not much more than what appears to be leftover land along a ditch. The parts connect with each other only in the minds of the people who are familiar with the design, and the entity as a whole does not have a 'park' appearance, other than through the map and concept. Although the view is beautiful in late autumn light, thanks to the lush surroundings, the Muddy River hides itself behind its bank and the river dives under the bridge to connect to the south behind a fence through a narrow opening that seems to lock it away (photo top right by Jeb Sharp 2015). Orientation is sometimes challenging, as the signage to find your way to the area and the disconnect at Route 9 (bottom right) illustrate. Photos by the author 2014 and 2015.



■ Figures 101 and 102. Cherry blossom and lilacs in bloom, a popular season in the Arnold Arboretum. Photos by the author 2015.

occasions I have observed that landscape experience in a park can be a source of something not short of Stendhal's syndrome, or at least a very powerful sensation, for instance the kind that the Japanese term "*mono no aware*" (Stanford 2021) describes - a sensitivity to ephemera and the impermanence of the beauty of things.¹⁹⁴

Another totality of site visits consisted of trips made with a clear purpose to prepare for and execute the filming of *(Dis)connected* (see section 3.4.2). This time I already knew about some of the issues, and the image of the totality had been formed in my head by those that I wanted to focus on, which were situated mostly in the Back Bay Fens section. The current state and history of the Emerald Necklace had inspired me to develop the performance character and document the experience in some parts of the green-blue sequence. On April 5, 2015, my partner and I went to take test footage at the sites I had pre-selected based on earlier site visits. The final footage for the short film was made on April 12, 2015,¹⁹⁵ and a site visit with the Boston Public Radio international journalist Jeb Sharp followed on May 13, 2015, where we took photos, and discussed some more sites not included in the Dis footage. She conducted an interview which then aired on Sept 28, 2015 (Sharp 2015).

Site visits were made along the whole sequence of the Emerald Necklace from the Charles River to Franklin Park, but the most intensely on the Back Bay Fens and Riverway parts which received the most of the trips, being closest and best accessible. Not all parts were covered at once, but on different occasions, and an audio recorder was used to document observations and transcribe them later in written form. Part of the audio was dictated in Finnish and part in English, which easily happens when using a foreign language in the everyday; one starts to mix it with the mother tongue. Those instant responses originally in Finnish have been translated (*italics to indicate another level of interpretation*).

For instance, the accessibility issues were observed upon arrival. Factors helping orientation, like landmarks, contribute to the experience of access. Striking natural features such as a water body can act as a landmark of sorts, or at least help with orienting, although landmarks are generally thought of as something rising above the skyline or otherwise standing out. Views across

¹⁹⁴ Stendhal's syndrome, normally associated with experiencing great artworks, is a physical condition involving palpitations and weakness, originally described by Stendahl in 1826 (reprint in 1964). For me, personally, recent strong emotions triggered by landscape experience have included, besides the Arnold Arboretum, the cherry blossoms in Japan in 2013, Fallingwater building by Frank Lloyd Wright with its surrounding landscape in 2001 and the Taj Mahal in 2015.

¹⁹⁵ With Maggie and Rob Janik in charge of the videography and photography, Kolu Zigbi assisting, and the radio reporter and Nieman fellow 2006 Jeb Sharp observing and taking more 'making-of' photos.

an area can function as an orientation aide, and structures such as bridges are considerable nodes only if they are distinguishable from each other.¹⁹⁶

The first observations include:¹⁹⁷

“Brookline avenue, crossing over to the Fenway part. Right here nothing tells you there’s the river... bike path on the other side, the continuity at the end of the... *fence, there’s a desire path, people have gone there, it can be a small thing that is needed, for instance, traffic light priorities changed in a way that pedestrians can cross easier. Around there’s industry, could it somehow inform or inspire, the interventions... and in the previous part there was the access to water, how it could be taken care of, it’s quite a sad ‘pipe’ there, should it be on two levels, there are certain places that trees could be cleared, landscape opened up. The biggest problem is at the end, how does one cross safely, in what way it could be indicated.*”

“*And at Longwood Avenue there is no other access to the park than only one staircase, so that is that like adequate accessibility?*”

The observation of a place based on the mode of transit is a remarkable part of experience. For instance mobility by public transit, bike or foot, gives a very different impression of arriving at a place than the use of a car, when the path is defined by the direction of roads or the location of parking:

“*And then there is the relation to the railway tracks here. When one comes to the section before Longwood station, this is bordered with a chain link fence, in one spot with a board fence, this is precisely the part where the bridle path runs, but there is no lighting whatsoever...*”

“*There is no access from the park to the Fenway stop, you have to cross the road and there is not as much as a crosswalk in the place where it crosses... here is another one of those accessibility problems.*”

Many of the wayfinding problems are due to the dominance of car traffic. The invisible entails the cultural context, such as the prevailing mode of transportation, as it may define the physical reality in many ways. By car, it is characteristic to reach one spot or attraction, such as the Fenway Park Stadium, unaware of the immediate surroundings, as the experience is defined by the field of vision and pace of movement. One is passing something quickly, instead of being able to stop and linger. It was also interesting to note that some people that I talked to along the course of my time at Harvard (August 2014 to May 2015) who live in Boston or nearby, hadn’t heard of or visited the Emerald Necklace, although they might have known the Stadium, which is two blocks away from the Back Bay Fens.

¹⁹⁶ The orientation problems were also indicated by the fact that even I as a foreigner was asked for directions by random passers-by on site visits.

¹⁹⁷ In the following, there are transcripts of site visits as direct quotations and their explanation, the ones originally in the Finnish language translated and indicated in italic. It must be noted that these excerpts only represent a part of all the oral documentation of several site visits.

Undersides of bridges are, in many places, a neglected part of experience: *“And then these bridge undersides, could they be lit somehow, for instance indicate... on the bridge there would be written, for one, which street crosses it... or something... that some environmental art piece could be there.”* In making *(Dis)connected*, I also noted their acoustic potential.

Apart from the orientation and access, the *knowledge* that something to look at or experience is there also adds to the quality of an experience on the spot. While some well-designed and much-used parts of the Emerald Necklace are pleasurable and seem polished and well-kept, such as the Rose Garden or the Orthodox Church side, and others have an intimate nature feeling, like that in front of the Art Museum, some are very different in character. They might even evoke feelings of anxiety, getting lost or the feeling that one should not be there, like the Charlesgate and Mass Pike area:

“... you can't get anywhere from like the eastern side, so if... so you can like go down... and then if you go down there... where the river goes... like the road along Mass Pike... so then you... then you are there... stuck... and you have to go round the whole block, behind Fenway high school... to get back up... so there is one connectivity problem sure like indeed... is there on the other side, by the way, even a sidewalk at all?... now I came again to this junction... yes there is but where will you get from there... you end up in some weird place... well I don't know, I have always gone from this side... maybe that side would be smarter...”

When structures that were originally meant for accommodating functions are disused like those of the Fens (Round House Shelter and the rectangular buildings by the river), they give a feeling of unkempt appearance, although in this case the buildings themselves seem to be in good or acceptable condition. Their connection to the surroundings affects the experience, as well as the masses bordering the park on either side:

“... but these are somehow empty and there are boards on the windows in one of these brickhouses... but so yeah... so a hint of blue-green somehow should be obtained from this bridge because there is none whatsoever... this just looks like a bunch of parking lots and you don't embody at all like that there is somewhere a canal... it's still hard to believe it is there.”

“This waterscape somehow [should be made into] part of the pedestrian experience... as it is entirely... you don't get it at all that you are coming along like a canal shore... the house is there sort of blocking it... one of those four-five-six-seven-story houses and then like no clue... and then all of a sudden it opens up really windy and exposed...”

Factors outside the parks themselves affect the experience, such as loud traffic noise that can only partly (mainly psychologically) be omitted by obstruction of views to its source by vegetation.

Reading the documentation of the audio tapes afterwards shows how difficult it was to keep to the perception and refrain from further analysis or design



■ Figures 103–108. Site visit images, January 2015. The openness of the landscape in a different season surprises although it is commonly known, being in contrast with the image of the place that the immediate first impression engraves in the mind. Site visits should be made in all seasons and weathers to manifest the possible problems. Photos by the author 2015.

suggestions. In that sense, these depictions are a mixture of both the instant experience and perception of features and possibilities, and a more analytical yet random account of the problems that are evident in these places. It is also very challenging to try to remember where the audio tracks were made exactly along the park entity.¹⁹⁸ Looking at the photos after five years, it is also very interesting, how there are some places I don't remember at all, and I notice that the image of the place in my head has changed accordingly - it is dominated by the places that Dis encountered and left her invisible 'mark' on my memory. The landscape is much more open, although it needs to be kept in mind that a park in January is also different as an experience from that of the summertime. In spring, the budding green and seasonal bloom such as cherry trees gradually take over the other impressions of a place, and the same happens in

¹⁹⁸ If their significance had dawned on me at the time, I would probably have used a tracker of some sort.

the autumn, when one's attention is guided towards the colors of the foliage. In the summer, the lushness, scents and the interplay of light and color engage the senses. In the winter, the landscape is bare and all possible problems more poignantly observed.

As pointed out in the site visit audio tapes, there are distractions that make the enjoyment of the green spaces challenging. This is manifest especially in the northernmost part, the Mass Pike and Charlesgate areas, where the park sections do not connect to the Charles River anymore like Olmsted intended, due to the newer car-dominated implemented layers that have subdued the green space and its connection to the riverfront. Instead, a large highway bridge traverses the Muddy River. An interpretive and experiential reading reveals that the original idea of a continuous greenway has been dominated by a technical traffic infrastructure, and the section has become a non-place, lacking access and social control. It is, at the same time, a temporary home for the homeless to sleep in, on observation distance from the high-end residents to the side, but a detached world of its own.

There are both nature places with wildlife¹⁹⁹ that may be attractive as representations of 'genuine nature' for some, but at the same time unkempt and undesirable to others, and places that are actively used by some age groups such as the playground in the northeastern end. The character of the place is largely defined by the original stone structures that punctuate the experience of moving through these spaces, the bridges you pass under or over, and the benches along the path. Somehow the structures are, however, not as rewarding as they could be, as pointed out in the interview with Jeb Sharp in section 3.4.3. In terms of wayfinding, it is symptomatic that Google Maps does not recognize the Riverway section from Route 9 to the Netherlands Road as a park like the rest of the area, which is indicated in green in the online map. When driving along Route 9, the whole park is easily ignored as well. Route 9 is also known as Boylston Street, Huntington Avenue and Washington Street - the multitude of street names does not facilitate wayfinding and underlines the issues of orientation for their part.

This is not to say that this area is in any way particular in that sense - it is undesirably common that the potential of outdoor places is not fully benefited from. In Helsinki's green areas, too, there are issues with visual and functional integrity, connectivity, experiential quality, services and proper orientation. In any case, every visit adds to the mosaic of thought that engraves a fuller picture of a place or series of places in one's mind, and the one-dimensional scenery becomes a multidimensional *landscape*.

¹⁹⁹ Such a place is, for example, the isolated small island in the middle of the stream in Back Bay Fens.

3.4.2 The Emerald Necklace, the Dis dimension

The making of the short film, and the explorations that the film is based on, are an example of the first-person phenomenological approach, and an account of a personal experience as a method of gaining information about a place. Although I had made several site visits and documented the site, as well as having given a short January class to students about design interventions on-site, I felt I needed an unorthodox approach to make the landscape more profoundly reveal its secrets to me and to complement its narrative. At the same time, I was exploring ways to connect with art, which gradually developed into a performance character that I used to explore the site from an experiential point of view. The process of becoming of the Dis character is described in section 1.6.2 and this chapter focuses on the findings on-site, how the visible was narrated and the actual act of filming on-site.

The spots that were selected for the footage were those where some challenges were identified on the site visits, by bike and foot. Those places haunted me, because they were potential nodes but had some issues. The issues I wanted to address with a tangible character that would be in touch with the actual site, first-hand, are listed on the map in Figure 109.

Elements of the social aspect of the *(Dis)connected* project were: touching people, reaching out, anonymity and interactivity with passers-by, through a disruptive anomaly that invites to pay attention, notice and experience. In an aesthetic and experiential sense it wanted to be removable, mobile, recyclable, ephemeral and humorous, pointing out disconnectivity and detachment of places and people, nature and city, with reoccurring emergences involving movement and color, accommodating and facilitating encounters, and working with the power of stillness versus sudden movement of the body.

The plot of the film is as follows:

In the film of 10 minutes, the spectator is first situated in the context by showing the old map by Olmsted of the Emerald Necklace and providing basic information about it. The old map is then overlaid on top of an aerial photo. While I am playing Sibelius's piano piece (*Kuuski*, Spruce), Dis is introduced. Dis first emerges from the reed bed vegetation by the Charles River, bewildered, trying to orientate herself, like someone coming to the light from the darkness. There is me singing the song *Lastu* (Woodchip by the water) by Sibelius in the background soundtrack. The music is soon replaced by a whimsical, fast-paced soundtrack to better suit the way she is moving around, taking sudden leaps and looking around. She climbs the tree a little to see better, peeking from behind it.

A transition with an aerial photo brings us to the junction of Route 9 where the Back Bay Fens and Leverett Park used to connect with the southern parts. The next thing we see is Dis standing by the busy road, scared and hoping to cross. A lady and then a couple help her across the street when she asks,

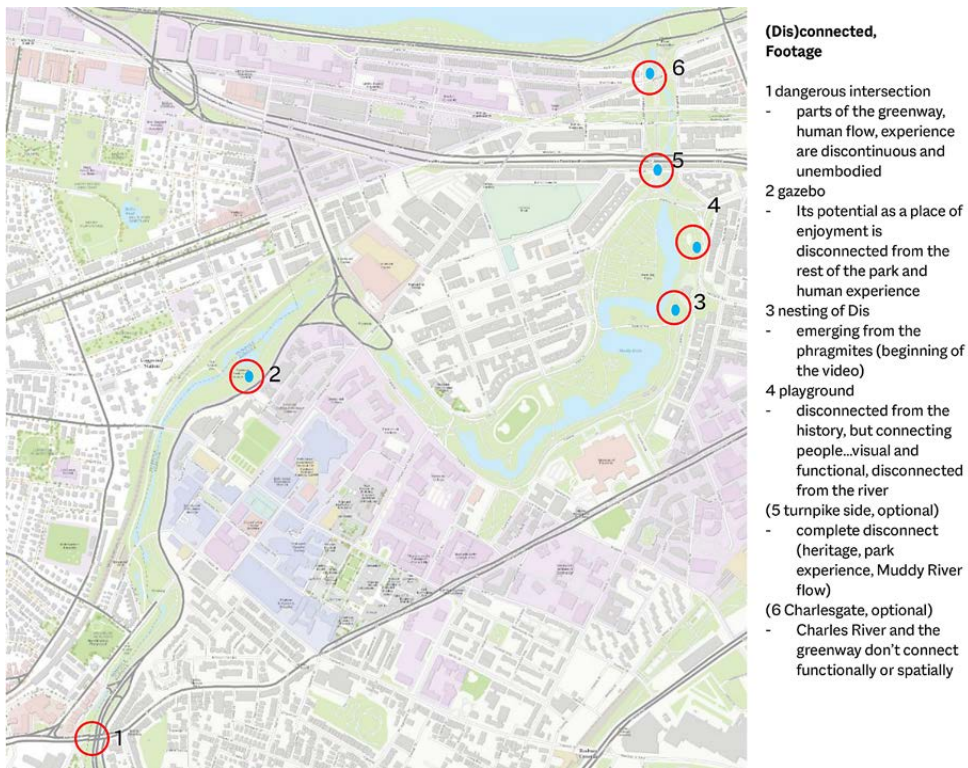


Figure 109. The *(Dis)connected* filming plan. Spots 1 to 4 were used in the final video. The crossing of Route 9 (nr1) later proved to be the culmination of the disconnection problems, although 5 and 6 had the most issues in terms of the essential character of the park system as Olmsted intended it to be. After filming for a day, and editing the first draft, it became evident that the first four were sufficient to make the points I wanted, and also in a way kept the desired mood in the film in a more organized and coherent way. Illustration by the author, on Harvard University 2015c.

chitchatting with her. The next place shown is the Round House Shelter,²⁰⁰ which has no functional purpose, although it is a preserved structure of beautiful limestone work. Dis peeks out of there, around the corner, hesitant, and jumping up and down inside to see out from the windows but they are too high because the wooden floor has collapsed, it seems like long since.

The tone changes along with the music, more contemplative and a little melancholic, when she suddenly appears on top of the old bridge above the bridle path. There is something ephemeral about her appearing and disappearing from a distance, then reappearing under the bridge. Then we find her sitting there in a closer shot, singing *Lastu* again. The first people just pass her by, minding their own business, which makes a funny scene, as if it were a normal thing for a chartreuse-colored creature to sit under a bridge singing

²⁰⁰ the name of which I only discovered later, until then I called it a folly or gazebo



■ Figures 110 and 111. The site of the Round House Shelter (nr 2 on map, figure 109) is along the bridle path. The contours show the steepness of the slope that makes manifest the elevations of the ravine from the surrounding urban structure. They facilitate the two-level design solution as well as the spatial and experiential impression, where in the park one is in a different world, aware of the surroundings but undisturbed by them. Map by United States Geological Survey 2015, photo by Jeb Sharp 2015.



■ Figures 112-114. The Charlesgate area (nr 5 and 6 on the map in figure 109). A base map overlaid on contours (Figure 112) and photos from site visits (figures 113 and 114) make manifest how the Muddy river is overrun by technical infrastructure and fragmented into disconnected sections. The designs for the park-like sections seem to be from the 80's, judging by the style of the armature. The footage did not extend to include the site but it was discussed a lot in different conjunctions, being the most problematic of all the sections. Map by United States Geological Survey 2015, photo by the author 2015.



■ Figures 115–117. Photos from the making of the footage for *(Dis)connected*. Maggie Janik shooting the video initial scene, Dis emerging from the reeds (figure 115), the Round House Shelter from the inside (116) and the scene on the bridge (117). Photos by Rob Janik 2015.

in a weird language. She leans forward and ‘looks’ around (it is impossible to see more than chartreuse-hued shapes and light and shadow from inside the cloak), in the high hope of catching someone to talk to, humming another Finnish song in the joy of the soundscape qualities under the bridge. She invites people to sit on her lap to talk about the place around them (as she is in fact live furniture – saying to people “sit on me, I am a chair”). Finally, delighted, she gets someone to try and sit. A young man sits on her lap, first a little hesitant, but then more relaxed, and chats with her about the park. We find out that he and his friends are looking for a place to have lunch but haven’t really found one, and she agrees there are issues with services and orientation. This is the most intense, intimate and actually the final scene of the film, which states at the end the summary of what Olmsted intended the park to be and how his ideas connect to the current state of the park, needing our help to reconnect, thus reflecting on a wider meaning of parks.

The connections with the music are more than it appears at first. One is that Olmsted was the same age when Sibelius was born as I was while making the video. Another bears the background information that Sibelius was synesthetic, hearing notes and chords as colors. His favorite color was yellowish green,²⁰¹ which, as music, is somewhere between D (yellow) and E (green),

²⁰¹ Like the main hue in his favorite painting *Hautajaisaatto* (Funeral procession) by Oskar Parviainen 1906–1908) in his home museum Ainola at Järvenpää, Finland, a place I often visited as a child.



■ Figures 118 and 119. People helping Dis to cross the Route 9. Stills from *(Dis)connected*, footage by Maggie Janik, 2015.



■ Figures 120–122. Bridge and the bridle path, where Dis emerges in the film and under which the interaction with the passers-by as well as the singing scene were filmed. The first passers-by did not stop. Still image from *(Dis)connected*, footage by Maggie Janik (120), photo by the author (121) and by Rob Janik (122).



hence *D sharp* (Dis in Finnish). I didn't know that when picking the color for Dis, as I just chose something that appealed to me as bright and striking. This is one of the astonishing serendipities along the process.²⁰² The most important personal connection with the music to the film was, however, that Sibelius' music has helped me feel grounded at the times of disconnectedness. Listening to, singing and playing it has given me consolation and helped feel rooted in the universe again.²⁰³

²⁰² Also, the journalist inspired by my piece was called *Jeb Sharp*, something I also realized later.

²⁰³ Sibelius' music has connections with Finland's history, as well. Much of his well-known work was composed during the years of oppression, before Finland became independent in 1917. Sibelius helped build the identity of a newly born nation with his music. However, it is my personal relation to and experience of the music that have affected the film. The *Spruce* is one of the piano pieces that a starting piano player is soon introduced to – just as I was in the 70s as a child. In a way, the piece has lived with me for almost fifty years, and I have made different interpretations of it – like in *Metsänpeitto* (see 1.6), where I added lyrics and solo singing to it, about trees like humans standing together and being supported by one another (just like spruces that might fall if left completely alone).

The description above is, of course, my account of the story that in fact needs to be seen first-hand, in order to avoid premeditated interpretations and sentiments. Although much in the same way as when reading a book or listening to music, while watching a film one can let associations flow freely, in a video piece a lot is premeditated and premade, including the rhythm as part of the narrative. Nevertheless, another person's account of the same experience is different. In the following section, for instance, there is a journalist's view,²⁰⁴ which in turn is her work of art, adding yet another layer of interpretation to Dis's experience. It is in a sense, also a phenomenological analysis, as it is an account of an experience, representing yet another experience, interpreting others' experiences, in a literary form.

I made some interesting observations about the social dimension: it was difficult at first - people were hesitant to make contact. Once people's attention was gained, and the first barrier of talking to a stranger in a strange outfit was overcome, the people who responded were very friendly. The male subjects or male-female couples were generally more open to make contact than females alone or in groups of two.²⁰⁵ In addition, the young men seemed to move around in groups of two or more, while women were seen mostly on their own or in pairs. It seemed as if they were a little wary to talk to strangers in a park environment, let alone touch one by sitting on her lap, perhaps due to cultural connotations of not feeling safe and comfortable enough to 'play.' The character is, in essence, about playfulness. When talking to the people, I found out that they did not really know the green area very well and found the same issues problematic (lack of amenities, disorientation, unkemptness at places, disrupted views), especially at Route 9, where I asked people to help me across the street.²⁰⁶

Being inside the chartreuse cloak was comfortable, as I could hide behind it and gain attention at the same time. It was also somehow comforting, as the reactions of people varied from disinterested to a polite helpfulness and a sort of shy need to connect and understand the person inside the cloak. I could not see much, so my other senses were tuned to the max and it also made the presence even more focused.

The interaction between the experiencer and the environment, and the relationship that is building between them, are important parts of the film. There were features that were known to me in advance, ones that had been discovered on previous site visits - such as the transformation over time of the

²⁰⁴ Excluding the photos there were online to accompany the piece.

²⁰⁵ Apart from one woman, who was playing along and is shown in the video.

²⁰⁶ At some point, the police stopped us, questioning our presence there. When we said this was for an art project, they let us continue, on the terms that we make it quick. It was interesting that they were not concerned about the welfare or safety of the people trying to cross every day without a crosswalk, but an anomaly like this would raise their attention to the fact that we might obstruct traffic. It is so common that cars dominate, to the point of not even being considered an issue anymore.



■ Figures 123-125. Dis looking out of the Round House Shelter, and talking to visitors on the video. Photos by Rob Janik 2015.

Round House Shelter into a floorless building or the sheltering and concealing quality of the reedbeds - and others that struck me while filming, such as the tempting acoustics under the bridge.

The kind of approach and experience described above, which is akin to the first-person phenomenological approach, gives a subjective look on the area. Using a medium, as a token, in the form of a character that at the same time is me as a landscape architect, and is not, dimensions are reached that might otherwise be hidden. These dimensions include the potential for showing bewilderment, immediate reactions to objects and people, and room for sudden improvisations.²⁰⁷ Reactions to people passing by were not originally intended, but instant reactions to the moment in a place. Like improvisations in general, it was about setting the stage and letting go, jumping into the deep end with not much more guiding light along the way than the reactions on the other side. In that way, there is a similarity to a design process, which is partly guided by intuition - by what an individual or a group makes of a particular situation, a situational context and dependencies and preconditions set by the reality of a task and place. The will for play and improvisation depends a lot on the reactions of the audience, so in that sense it is a play for many instead of one. If someone is not willing to play along, there is a risk of it setting the mood for the whole session or process.²⁰⁸

Another layer of interpretation is added to the Dis experience of the Emerald Necklace when it is screened to an audience that has not been involved in the process or does not know the place. The first public screening happened in the Arts First Event at Harvard campus, in the Dudley House Dining Hall on

²⁰⁷ The improvisations included the way Dis reacted to the Round House Shelter and the tree as well as the reed beds, and singing under the bridge where the soundscape 'affordances' of the place attracted to a play with sound, multiplying sounds and making them fuller.

²⁰⁸ For instance, the Route 9 scene was the first to be filmed so it took a while for the film crew as well as the trial group of individuals on the receiving end to warm up.



■ Figures 126–127. The Arts First Event at Lehman Hall. Photos by Jeb Sharp 2015.

May 5, 2015 from 12 to 5 pm.²⁰⁹ The audience that came mostly understood what the film was about, although the live appearance of *Dis* in the exhibit got a curious but wary reception. Some people were very natural around the character that then dismantled herself out of the cloak and started performing in another way, but some clearly did not know how to respond. Surprising encounters happened as some more elderly people with a distant connection to Finland showed up to discuss their heritage. Most visitors were, however, students passing by, open to the new experience. The film was also published on Harvard University YouTube channel and as part of the LOEBlog in May 2015. The film was again screened on Sept 7, 2016 in San Francisco at the AIA Film Festival (Architecture and the City).²¹⁰

3.4.3 Boston Public Radio account as a narrative of experience

An experiential narrative by someone else can give different emphases and issues otherwise easily left unnoticed, and as such an enriching element to the interpretation of places. Jeb Sharp, a journalist and radio reporter for Public Radio International in Boston, provided a valuable account and documentation of the particular green urban landscape and our experience of it. She made a story of the experience and the representation thereof in the form of a radio piece, including an audio interview on-site in the park and a written journalistic piece with images she had taken (Sharp 2015). After filming (*Dis*) *connected* and having shown it at the event, I was asked by Sharp, who had accompanied us to the filming session in April 2015, to revisit the place with her for a radio piece she wanted to make. The piece aired on September 28, 2015 when I had returned home to Helsinki.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ The short film was looped as part of an exhibit that accounted my experience as a Loeb Fellow, including impressions in watercolor and pencil, and a matinee of Sibelius solo songs performed by myself and accompanied by Henry Chu.

²¹⁰ There were plans to include my talk as part of the screening, but unfortunately I could not be there and also missed the opportunity to hear the reactions of the audience.

²¹¹ <https://www.pri.org/stories/2015-09-28/finnish-landscape-architect-tries-connect-broken-pieces-bostons-emerald-necklace>



■ Figures 128–130. Photos from May 13, 2015 show the current state of the northernmost part of the Emerald Necklace; the roads on top and the missing connection to the Charles River. Photos by Jeb Sharp 2015.

The radio piece at *pri.org* (Sharp 2015) is a narrative by a very involved other about an experience and its representation, hence a meta-interpretation of sorts. At the same time, it is another perspective on the story and her interpretation of the place and the experience. It is written in her words, and, as such, not necessarily with the words or expressions that I might have used, although most of her statements I can definitely share. In the following, her written story on the *pri.org* website is quoted in full, to represent her narrative of a 'first person account' of her experience, in her words and emphases:

(start of quote) “On a Sunday morning last April, Maria Jaakkola stood on a sidewalk next to a busy road in Boston. She stepped into what looked like a giant neon-green pillowcase, pulled it up over her head and zipped it shut. Then she contemplated the six lanes of traffic before her.

“I can see a little, but not too much. I can’t see people’s faces,” she said.

Jaakkola is a landscape architect from Helsinki, Finland. She was here in Boston on a yearlong fellowship at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design. And on this particular day she was busy shooting scenes for a nine-minute film about Boston’s Emerald Necklace – a system of interconnected city parks designed by the great Frederick Law Olmsted in the late 19th century. She first learned about the Emerald Necklace as a landscape architecture student many years ago.

“It was always this iconic example of a greenway,” Jaakkola told me.

Jaakkola couldn’t wait to get to Boston to see it last year. She thinks about parks a lot in her work as head of the Environmental Office in Helsinki’s City Planning Department. She was eager to compare Boston’s green spaces to Helsinki’s. The cities are similar sizes, they’re both on the ocean, surrounded by forest, and both have much-loved green spaces in their urban centers.

But to her dismay, Boston’s Emerald Necklace was not at all what she imagined.

“It’s really hard to find the beginning,” she said. “And it’s really hard to get from one place to another.”

Disconnected

“Olmsted dreamt up the Emerald Necklace at a time when America was growing rapidly. He believed city dwellers needed places to escape from urban life and find respite in nature. The five-mile long system he designed still exists. Many parts of its parks and ponds and pathways are as beautiful as ever. But Jaakkola expected a triumph of cultural heritage, treasured and cared for. Instead she found a series of disconnected pieces that were difficult to navigate, especially on bike or foot.

So she decided to make a film about it. Which is how she found herself in that bright green costume one day last spring, standing at the edge of a busy road that cuts off one piece of the Emerald Necklace from the next.”

“There’s no safe way to cross the street so we kind of wanted to make that visible by this creature wandering around and being bewildered and a little scared of the cars and then waiting for someone nice to come and help,” Jaakkola explained to me afterwards.

Eventually a couple did come by, and, with a little urging from Jaakkola’s film crew, escorted the creature across the road.

“It helps if you explain to people we’re doing an art project,” Jaakkola’s friend Kolu Zigbi said afterwards. “And that she can only take little steps.”

It was a little terrifying to watch the scene unfold, but the reactions were interesting. Some people stared. Some turned their heads. Some took a wide berth around Jaakkola and her strange garment. Others pretended not to notice. At one point a police officer pulled up and questioned Jaakkola and her colleagues.

“I said we’re trying to show how hard it is to cross the street,” Jaakkola recounted. “And how hard it is to connect parts of the riverway. He said, ‘Will you be quick?’ We said, ‘Yes.’ He said ‘Ok then.’”

“The resulting film, “(Dis)connected,” is fun and whimsical and deeply personal. It’s also a stinging critique of what has become of a Boston treasure. Jaakkola’s green character, “Dis,” darts about the Emerald Necklace, struggling to make connections with the landscape and its inhabitants.

We see Dis emerge from the towering, invasive phragmites grasses that are choking the Muddy River, the waterway at the heart of Olmsted’s designs.

We see Dis visit a gazebo-like structure called the Round House Shelter near a beautiful stone footbridge over an old bridle path. The shelter feels abandoned, and there’s no floor anymore, so Dis stretches up on tiptoe, jumping up to try to see the view out of the high windows.

In the most poignant scene, Dis forms a human chair under the footbridge and invites strangers to sit on it. A student comes by and sits on Jaakkola’s knee and they chat. Their interaction ends up emphasizing both the alienation, and the potential for connection, that Jaakkola feels in these public spaces.

Jaakkola screened the film at an art show at Harvard in May. She also showed her watercolor paintings and performed songs by the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius. For her, art, music and landscape architecture are all intertwined. It was all lovely, but the reporter in me still needed a more prosaic explanation of her strong reaction to the Emerald Necklace.

Seeing the Emerald Necklace through European eyes

We return to walk the northern end of the Necklace a couple of weeks later. She takes me to a maze of roads at a place called Charlesgate, where Olmsted's design began. You can find traces of a once-lovely stretch of park, but mostly it's cars and noise and concrete and graffiti. There's no historical plaque, nothing at all mentioning the Emerald Necklace.

"You don't know where you're supposed to go," Jaakkola tells me. "You have to look at the map to figure out where the greenway actually starts. It's a bit of a shock to realize this is what it has transformed into."

She shows me a little slice of park a bit further south, strewn with trash.

"It's very unkempt," Jaakkola says. "There's been some attempt to make a place for people but there are no benches. There is a light but it's broken. No one is ever here. I've been here several times and I've never seen anyone."

She points to a nearby tree. "It looks sad here in the middle of everything and it's being strangled by the pavement. It's like one of the emeralds in the necklace is a little stained."

Her frustration is palpable. It's clear she feels we Bostonians have neglected our cultural heritage, not understood the beauty of Olmsted's vision, taken it completely for granted. She wants us to love the Emerald Necklace more. And to show that love with more stewardship, better signs, more amenities.

We wander through the Back Bay Fens. There are wooded pathways and beautiful stone bridges with graceful arches and overlooks. The famous WWII Fenway Victory Gardens are here, still thriving, as well as playing fields and a rose garden. But there are plenty of rough edges too. At one point we come across a handsome old building, now boarded up.

"You get the notion right away this is not a place to be," Jaakkola says. "This used to be something, but it's no longer anything. It doesn't even have a sign saying 'Closed for the Season.'"

We both agree it's the perfect setting for a café. Because that's what we need right now: a cup of coffee and a place to pee.

"That is one of the problems," Jaakkola says, laughing.

"Why would you even go and walk along the Emerald Necklace if there is no place where you can eat and drink and sit down or go to the restroom?! You kind of panic, 'Where can I find the next restroom?' Sometimes I feel like American people have a different bladder than Europeans, because you know in Europe, every hundred meters there's something. Sometimes it's even a little over the top."

When we do spot a sign for the Emerald Necklace, not far from Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, it has a list of "Don'ts" that include No Rollerblading and No Biking.

"Why no rollerblading? Why no biking?" asks Jaakkola. "I've violated that rule. The way the park sequence works, if you want to enjoy the whole Emerald Necklace, you need a bike!"

The sign also says the park closes at night.

“How do you close the park?” she asks. “Are you going to be arrested if you come after dark? For me that’s really weird coming from a Nordic, welfare society. Everything should be open for everyone. We make a really big deal about the parks being open for everyone, always.”

To a Finn, our rules make no sense. To Jaakkola, closing the park at night keeps out the right mix of people and attracts the wrong crowd instead. That’s made worse by the fact that the greenway isn’t well lit. During her year in Boston she tried to ride a stretch at night once, but it proved too dangerous, even with a bike light.

“I was astonished,” says Jaakkola. “In Helsinki there’s so much darkness during the winter [the pathways] are always lit.”

A reality check

A few months after this outing, I return to my notes about Jaakkola and the Emerald Necklace. I need a reality check, so I go visit Julie Crockford. She’s president of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, a nonprofit that works with the city of Boston, the neighboring town of Brookline, and the state of Massachusetts to look after Olmsted’s park system.

“We have a lot of work to do,” Crockford tells me. Her office is located in a beautiful restored pump house from the Olmsted era, designed by the famous architect H.H. Richardson. Crockford can stand at her desk in the heart of the city and look out over the river and watch hawks and blue herons. She’s met Jaakkola and seen her film so I ask what she thinks of Jaakkola’s critique.

“It’s really good to have an outsider point out the disconnects in our park,” Crockford says. “Not that we didn’t know about them! We’ve had advocates working on some of those disconnects for decades and I guess I’m just delighted to be able to respond that there are fixes in the works.”

During her time in Boston, our Finnish visitor had zeroed in, almost uncannily, on some of the biggest sore spots among Emerald Necklace advocates. As it turns out, there’s no shortage of passionate activists who want to make the park system work better. Happily there are several capital projects either slated or underway that will improve things, including stretches of river restoration, a crossing for cyclists and pedestrians on that busy road in Jaakkola’s film, and new connections between the pathways of the Emerald Necklace and Boston’s Charles River.

Crockford’s own top priority is the health of the trees in the Emerald Necklace. She wants to make sure the old growth is preserved and that new trees are planted for future generations to enjoy. An extensive inventory and mapping project is underway.

And as a cyclist herself, Crockford knows the paths and signage and lighting all along the Emerald Necklace could be improved. As for more restrooms, they’re in the Conservancy’s new strategic plan as a goal, but Crockford acknowledges it’ll be a tough goal to achieve. Even the Emerald Necklace Visitor Center that houses her office doesn’t have public restrooms.

Postscript

Before Jaakkola returned to Finland in late spring. I asked her what she would say to Olmsted.

“It would be so great to talk to him,” she says. “I would like to ask him, ‘Is this what you intended?

Did you anticipate this?’ I think he would be horrified by the speed of everything, the cars.”

And what if she could address the Emerald Necklace itself?

Jaakkola thought a while. “I wish you would be appreciated the way you could be, the potential of you, and embraced and considered and not ignored,” she muses.

“It’s like it’s been sleeping for a hundred years,” she says.

“I wish you would find your prince who would kiss your lips and bring you alive again,” she laughs.

“Yes. Bring it back to life with a kiss.” (end of quote, Sharp 2015)”

It is always fascinating to read someone else’s impressions – exclusions and inclusions – about something one has experienced oneself. The new layer added to the interpretation covers different parts of the experience, complementing it with both the other’s experience and her edited interpretation of it. The view is one of an outsider and insider at the same time. A professional writer may remake the whole experience more captivating, even another experience altogether, recognizable yet clearly her experience. In addition, the cultural connotation of representing Europeans, Finns and Nordic landscape architects as a sole sample gives a different context to the interpretation of my experience.

As Sharp describes, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy that is managing the area had already noted some of these problems and was working towards resolving them. It was easy to get the impression from the interview, and also from later discussions (Crockford 2015) that their interest seemed to lie mostly in conservation, paying considerable attention to nature values such as wild-life and vegetation. However, as I found out later,²¹² a cross walk has since been added to where we tried to cross Route 9.

3.4.4 Dis in Helsinki

Returning to Helsinki in June 2015, I was inspired to test the Dis character in Helsinki’s Central Park (*Keskuspuisto*). I went with my partner and a camera under the bridge of Metsäläntie underpass and, dressed in my chartreuse cloak, asked people whether they knew where they were. Turned out that

²¹² From Matthew Kiefer, a former Emerald Necklace Conservancy board member and a Loeb Fellow.

some of them didn't really know, in terms of labeling the street they were under, at least.²¹³

In footage filmed in Central Park, I am trying to talk to the passers-by that all happen to be in groups of two. The first ones ignore me completely, the second ones are almost hostile, and only the third couple respond to my greeting and engage in a conversation, although they also do it with some hesitation, which can be judged by the way they talk to me over their shoulder. The soundscape of Nordic walking in the soundtrack adds to the atmosphere which makes it manifest we are no longer in Boston but in Helsinki's central forest. The woodland sequence is a little disembodied and perhaps the mentioned underpass not so inviting as a milieu although it is quite open as landscape space instead of being dark and gloomy, as is sometimes the case with underpasses. The character of the particular part of the area seems to be more one of passing by, and people are not prone to stop easily, as it is not meant for lingering but rather motion, going to and from. The young couple that stops for a while, chats friendlily and I tell them I am lost and ask if they could help. They respond that I do look like I am lost, and like a green teletubby. The situation is relaxed and they play along, but they are not staying for long, and it becomes clear they are not exactly certain where they are and I just wish them a good day and they respond accordingly.

It was interesting to note that the people in Helsinki were quite timid to make contact, compared to the Bostoners, who, after a short hesitation, engaged in conversation for a longer time. It might have to do with a more extrovert culture, but it must also be noted that the situation was different. In Boston, I was sitting and inviting others to sit with me, and the location was more about being there than traversing through. In general, the Central Park in Helsinki is essentially a place for motion and activity, whereas at least the particular spot on Boston Emerald necklace is neither a significant thoroughfare or designated for any activity in particular.

The organic process of becoming an art piece is not always in accordance with other things, however, in this case the research aims. In fact, I became far more inspired to film in the Lapinlahti former psychiatric hospital area than the Central Park. This was partly because I was very familiar with its history, having drawn up the legislative city plan for its restoration (ratified in 2012),²¹⁴ and partly because of the beautiful English style landscape garden setting with old trees, that in character, in fact, resembles that of some parts of the Emerald Necklace. Somehow the Central Park forest did not appeal to me for footage, although I had enjoyed skiing there in the wintertime and

²¹³ It was far more difficult to do this in Helsinki, where I might theoretically have been recognized as one of the city officials. Although I wasn't seen as myself, I was heard in my own language, and somehow felt more exposed and with the loss of a secure role, nonetheless.

²¹⁴ The city plan (City of Helsinki 2011) designated the surrounding green area for a public park but the plans for the reuse of the buildings later fell through.



■ Figures 131-133. Helsinki Central Park is essentially a central forest by character, used for exercise in all seasons. Photos by the author 2015.



■ Figures 134-136. Dis in Helsinki Central Park under the bridge, puzzled by a random pole with a displaced mitten on top, and making contact with people. The couple Nordic walking have a conversation with Dis. Photos by Petri Kekäle 2015.

orienteeing in the summer. The Lapinlahti Hospital area, and the surrounding parkland as a healing landscape were built in the 1840s to 1880s, its buildings designed by C.L. Engel in 1835. It is the most urban and southernmost part of the westernmost Green Finger of Helsinki, the West Park.²¹⁵ In that sense, it is an integral part of the green areas system, and the Green Fingers as its most defining feature.

I planned a sequel to Dis's adventures in 2017, and it was filmed in the summer of 2017 in the Lapinlahti Hospital area.²¹⁶ Lapinlahti is the oldest hospital entity and the first psychiatric hospital in Finland, with an abundance of cultural historic and landscape values, protected by law and city plan, and at the center of a heated public discussion in 2020 after a competition for its development.²¹⁷ The survival of its cultural historic values are under debate.

²¹⁵ As it happens, the place has a connection with the composer Jean Sibelius, as well. During the Civil War in 1918, he spent some time there for his and his family's safety - as his brother was head doctor of the institution (Ackté 1991, p. 96).

²¹⁶ by videographer Mikael Leinonen

²¹⁷ The city was preparing in 2020 to sell the buildings to an international investment company as a result of a real estate development competition. The plans, however, including substantial development on parkland, were not politically ratified due to public opposition, and the future of the area remains unclear; the garden is currently a city park, and the buildings are rented to a foundation by the city, but their renovation and maintenance in the future has not been resolved (as of December 2020).



■ Figure 137. Patients in the psychiatric institution's inner yard in the 1930s. Achté 1991, p. 119; Archives of the Lapinlahti Hospital.



■ Figure 138. Lapinlahti Hospital area in the 1930s. City of Helsinki.

The area has already been reduced to one-third of its original size by urban development since the beginning of the 20th century, having lost pivotal parts of the English landscape garden style park surrounding it that used to belong to the grounds. With future real estate development, it is possible that the parkland will be further diminished. The area has its problems of connectivity in its southern part due to a large distant heating pipe that obstructs mobility, besides being an eyesore. The pipeline was put in a temporary location in the 1990s, to dodge construction of an office building that seized the latest fragment of the original parkland (City of Helsinki 2011).

The piece is tentatively called *(Dis)sociation*, as it is much more somber in tone than the one filmed in Boston, drawing on the features and atmospheres of a former psychiatric institution, a place for the fragile, dissociated, disconnected and marginal. Juxtaposing the history with the problems and threats of today, at the same time recognizing the healing capacity of the beautiful environment by the sea, it is connecting to and documenting the people who use it now for their enjoyment, as well as the lush milieu. The existing buildings, as



■ Figures 139–140. Dis making contact in the form of a dance, as people were dancing to ‘silent music’ (earphones) in the park. Stills from *(Dis)sociation*, footage by Mikael Leinonen, 2017.



■ Figures 141–144. The former therapeutic landscape garden from the 1840–80s on the West Park Green Finger has a distant heating pipeline in the place that is now facing possible infill development, next to the overlook on the cliff, a spot that houses a stone table. Dis has an improvised game with a young man who happened to do boffing (soft fencing) with his friends, and afterwards they have a chat on the stone table. A healing environment has become a public park by conscious planning effort, but facing an uncertain future. The place of innocent enjoyment is dissociated with the future plans and the remnants of its somber past. Stills from *(Dis)sociation*, footage by Mikael Leinonen, 2017.

well as many vanished ones - such as the chapel whose basement used to be a mortuary, and is now covered in *Rubus odoratus* and hardly depictable, give off the air of a place with many stories to tell.

The footage is yet to be edited, but the elements are the same as in Boston; wandering around and wondering about the present state of affairs in a green area, and connecting to people - this time, a group of dancers and boffers. The phenomenon of people dancing in somewhat synchronized movements to the



■ Figure 145. Lapinlahti garden overlook. The linden arc and the stone table are fragments of the original park design of the hospital garden, a fact of which the visitors are generally unaware. A still image from *(Dis)sociation*, footage by Mikael Leinonen, 2017.

same music but from headphones,²¹⁸ in the park, was a performance itself in which Dis was inspired to join, communicating with them by improvised dance movements. She also played boffing with a young person who was practicing in the park. At one point, Dis climbs on a tree trunk but falls off the pipe that brutally traverses the park's open areas.

3.4.5 Findings for the analysis framework

The *Instant experience* (multi-sensory, kinesthetic) and *Evident functionality* (what can and cannot be done in the place) of places within this system, are based on the 'visible' (perceptible) elements. They are open to the senses, here and now. The ways to tell a story that are described in this chapter, all make manifest the visible and invisible in different ways. The site visits and documented representations thereof speak to the *Instant experience*, *Evident functionality* and *Underlying meanings*, by introducing new narratives and representations of experience, as well as ways to describe and reflect about them. The *Values*, such as the importance of preserving heritage and providing amenities and enjoyment of nature's beauty for people, proved to be somewhat shared when discussing with others experiencing the same thing from a different professional and experiential background. In terms of the Emerald Necklace, it seemed that when an outsider, kind of a proxy of conscience, makes these things visible, it becomes easier to bring them up and agree, and perhaps

²¹⁸ A semi-organized group, which consists of people doing improvised dancing, inside and outside.

commit others to the cause, albeit the issues were known. In Lapinlahti or Central Park this might also happen, or alternatively, evoke different kinds of responses, if an insider is in a different role, but this aspect remains to be tested.

The Dis dimension speaks to the instant experience and how the place's affordances and potential for use and enjoyment display themselves and are manifest in the physical reality. It also makes manifest *how it feels to be in the place*, as her reactions respond to these and make them visible, as do the reactions of the other subjects on site or test audiences. The narrative is repeated and different aspects added, like hues and layers to a painting, when another documents the experience (e.g. Sharp 2015) and the reflections thereof, and makes it a story to be shared with others. The underlying meanings multiply in the process.

When experiencing some parks on the Emerald Necklace as Dis, it was clearly visible how difficult the totality is to embody in one take, as it is large in scale and provides some challenges to moving around. When concealed, one is exposed, and at the same time disconnected from the immediate perception, trapped inside the costume, experiencing the landscape and other people through a sort of veil, a medium or a proxy. By not seeing other than light and dark through a chartreuse curtain, I was more clearly seen, more fragile and even more poignantly experiencing the defects in connectedness. This kind of approach affected my understanding and made the experience fuller by giving certain features of the landscape deeper personal meanings – like a personal experience does to an individual. Before making the film and the site visits, I had read about the Boston park system. It has been interesting to see the reactions of people who do not share that background knowledge; on the one hand, they look at the film with a fresh eye, focusing on the humorous and comical side, and on the other, some of them may not catch all of its content, especially the landscape architectural aspect. Some admit to not understanding it completely.

In Lapinlahti, as a background I consciously or subconsciously used the knowledge gained while drawing up the city plan a decade earlier. This included information on the history of the site; the process of becoming. I was aware that the patients participated in the building of the park and its upkeep (Hemgård 2002, p. 18; Achté 1991, pp. 63, 65, 76), and that the methods used in the early days of the hospital to treat psychiatric patients (Achté 1991, pp. 54, 111) would be considered cruel in today's world.²¹⁹ The powerfulness of the experience in the milieu was partly because of the things known about the

²¹⁹ Although Lapinlahti Hospital sought to practice advanced psychiatry, manifested in the understanding of a therapeutic meaning of landscape and outdoor activity, for instance, the conditions were obviously subject to the restrictions of early medicine, beliefs and conventions. According to Achté (1991, pp. 54, 111), in the lack of antibiotics and sedatives, in the early decades patients were treated with coercive means such as binding to a chair, locking into a dark room, or baths up to six hours long, as well as with dangerous substances and treatments such as insulin shocks or doses of mercury.

past and all the suffering that had happened there, as well as my personal involvement by being part of the process to preserve the cultural heritage of the site. The details of the area's past are not necessarily known or seen in today's image of the park as a public area for recreation. As Sepänmaa observes (1981, p. 219), the knowledge makes the experience fuller but also more poignant. The hidden stories about the characters who lived there and the discussions that have followed the city plan, added another layer to the invisible-visible axis. The Lapinlahti example also made manifest the fact that in a creative process, defining experiences may come from elsewhere than first intended.

The Lapinlahti experience of Dis makes manifest a few things: The essence of the landscape has been a healing environment. It is also in essence a part of a totality of which only a fragment is preserved, and the rest exists only in stories and documents. They form the knowledge, based on which the visible layers of history can be depicted, recognized and identified, and their significance evaluated. These constitute an invisible layer that is in constant interplay with the visible of today - especially when made manifest in images, still and moving.²²⁰

Although the full understanding of the process of becoming is mostly invisible, as concluded in the previous chapter, it is evident that some layers of history are visible in the present. However, the interpretation of their significance is part of the invisible realm. Seeing something brings forth associations, impressions and visions that may or may not correspond to the facts, but influence the experience nonetheless. The levels of the powerfulness of experiences may vary, according to different circumstances and things like personal involvement, or, for instance, knowledge of future plans that may add other levels to the experience. The term experientiality connected with intensity/powerfulness might best describe this idea in the framework. In addition, based on the site visits on the Emerald Necklace, the evident functionality needs to be broadened to include things that speak to connection, access, orientation and wayfinding, and the intended and implemented functions of structures and elements.

Based on the findings in the case examples' experiential first person accounts, **Experientiality** and **powerfulness** are to be added to the *Instant experience*, as well as **Knowledge of future plans**, **Experiential accounts**, **Discussions** and **Associations** to broaden the *Underlying meanings*. **Connections to/from and inside** and **Usability to purpose** should further be added into the *Evident Functionality*.

²²⁰ Furthermore, the recent events make manifest as well that the values that are shared and institutionalized in the preservation plan, become visible when challenged. The project proposing land use change that would have altered the area, faced public opposition. People had learned to use the park for recreation and felt it their own, opposing acts that seemed alien to their purposes. The public interest towards the park was raised in the process.

3.5 Narratives of Meaning - examples of the Invisible

3.5.1 Storytelling narrative of the city context, Boston and Helsinki

Besides the narratives described above, other kinds of narratives can help build the body of experiential and essential knowledge of places. In the following, an example of storytelling and creative writing is used to introduce another layer of the first-person phenomenological approach, portraying the similarities and differences in Helsinki and Boston, and the Dis experience in the Emerald Necklace and Central Park in the previous sections. By personalizing the cities, it is possible to imagine an interaction in dialogue between them, and to make visible the comparison in the situational context as well as the physical features of these two human-mapped entities. It is based on observations of visible things that the story itself reveals as a layer of experience that is individual and tinged by personal experience, thus invisible to another. By describing the visible, someone's narrative reveals a glimpse of the invisible layer. The "Story of two cities" is summarized in the form of a fairytale:²²¹

Once upon a time there were two cities, like twin sisters, of the same size and age. Let's call them Brenda and Hilda. Both were lying with their heads and noses in the water - one facing the Atlantic, the other one the Finnish Gulf. Green veins ran down their limbs. Brenda had received a necklace of green jewels, like emeralds, from her uncle Frederick. Hilda, in turn, called hers the green fingers.

There were more and more little bugs living on them. And the jewels got a little stained. But they had to learn and live in a symbiosis, since they needed each other.

The sisters had a sort of a fairy godmother, a very dear friend of mine called Dis. Her name is an abbreviation of a Disruption in space that points out disconnects between us and our environment, nature and each other, trying to reconnect them. Dis enjoys exploring. This Spring she was rummaging around Brenda and tried to connect to her inhabitants. She helped them notice disconnects and dysfunctional spots on the green veins. Here she tries to find her way along the green corridor by crossing Route 9... It was very comforting that the strangers passing by were so eager to help her across the street...

²²¹ Written by the author for a seminar pecha kucha LOEB45, the 45-year anniversary seminar of the Loeb Fellowship program, and presented in Boston in Oct 2015, accompanied by a slideshow.

After her experience in Brenda Dis came to Central Park, the oldest of the green fingers... in the core of the sister Hilda. Orientation is a problem there too. She couldn't see but by the sound of some Nordic walking she could spot some natives... She asked if they knew which street they were under but no one really knew. They told her she did seem lost, and looked like a green teletubby.

Dis was also useful as a living chair. The young inhabitants of Brenda had no problem connecting to her, but Hilda's Central Park had more rabbits than people and they were harder to connect with, just looked at her like she was out of her mind.

Dis said to the sister cities: Both of you have beautiful islands, but it should be easier to get to them. The competitive sisters argued: See, my bridges connect and yours disconnect... said Hilda. But they look exactly the same, yelled Brenda. And we both have winter but my bugs just grab their skis and go instead of shutting everything down! said Hilda. But my bugs enjoy each other's company, instead of lying around half naked on their own, said Brenda.

But there was something they could agree on: the lesson of this fairytale, that the green and blue spaces of a city need to form an interconnected network of continuous entities and nodes, places to do things... exercise sports or even have a flea market if you want. This network, as we get more and more showers, can also hold a lot of the water. The symbiosis between a city, nature and its people is fostered by accessible, diverse and beautiful green and blue space - with inviting entrances - like a nice door to a house. A door that is open.

And they all agreed it's good for bodies as well as souls to spend time in green space.

... and you also need places where you can stop for a treat (Carelian pirogis, said Hilda - Oysters! said Brenda). Or even grow your own.

And then Dis fell asleep and had a beautiful dream about cities in which everyone can live in harmony happily ever after - no matter what you look like or what you enjoy doing.

This is how the two cities expose themselves to me in a fairytale fashion, and can be reflected against how they are written about elsewhere. The story was complemented by a visual comparison where the character - an intuition of an essence for the cities, if you will - was depicted in images that tell their part of a subjective story, based on the experience of one subject (myself). Living in one of them, and spending a year very close to the other, makes one embody certain things that may be juxtaposed. Knowing one city much better than the other, certain characteristics are bound to be based rather on a first impression or image than an objective reality.

The figures below represent a collage of images as a pictorial narrative about the character of the cities where the case examples are situated, and it tells some of the fairytale's situational landscape context in another way.



■ Figures 146–147. Uunisaari Island, Helsinki (left) and Boston waterfront (right). In both cities, people enjoy waterfront areas to gather together, although in Helsinki they tend to spend time in smaller groups and in solitude on the recreational islands, whereas in Boston the waterfront is a place for big gatherings. Photos by the author 2014.



■ Figures 148–149. Vallisaari island, Helsinki (left) and Georges island, Boston Harbor Islands (right). There are military islands in both cities, outside the city core as part of the archipelago, and they have been taken into recreational use quite recently. In Boston's islands and green areas, however, it seems the services are more limited.²²² Photos by the author 2014.

In terms of interconnectedness, as well as from a phenomenological point of view, bridges are symbolically and physically important, as they may obstruct movement or connect, gather or disperse. In addition, the archway bridges on the Emerald Necklace are made of beautiful stonework and have a historic character, as opposed to the bridges in Central Park that are born of a necessity for the park to extend over or under a major street or road, and lack the character of a historic milieu. One feature of the Central Park is that, in spite of its historic origin, the appearance doesn't give away a hint of this, and in the scarcity of structures, for instance, that might bind into the past, the appearance of the green wedge is in some places, one of leftover woodland rather

²²² Based on my experience as a visitor to Boston Georges Island at the beginning of September 2014, to find there were no restaurants open and the boat connections were quite scarce. This was, however, off season. In addition, Helsinki islands are better known to me. Hence, these observations are subjective and not representational of more than my impressions.



■ Figures 150–151. Undersides of street bridges may look very much the same in different places. In Helsinki Central Park (left) the underpass connects different parts of the park. A somewhat similar-looking bridge can be found near the Charles River (right) where it conceals the northern end of the Emerald Necklace under a highway junction. Photos by the author 2014.



■ Figures 152–153. Bridges in Central Park, connecting sections for pedestrians and cyclists (left) and traversing the park from above (right). Photos by the author 2014.

■ Figure 154. A bridge on the Emerald Necklace, where there is no lighting, as opposed to the Helsinki Central Park pathways. Photo by the author 2015.



than a designed park. This might be one reason why, in the densification discussions, it seems easy for planners to propose new development on the outer areas of the park – the appearance of Central Park does not always embody or reflect the value of the areal entity as a greenway.

The bridges, roads and other physical structures that function as connections, much like topographical features, are visible from the ground, but their big picture, the context they create by connecting to other similar features, making a totality (a topography of a city/area, or a network of connections) is invisible to observation unless interpreted and visualized. Materials, organic

and inorganic, human-made and self-generated, are also an important part of a park's tactile realm and constituents of its character, like the example of bridges illustrates. Park furniture, lighting armature and other outdoor public designs reflect the era and the desired image. Their state and condition, in turn, reflect their use and the maintenance of a particular place. The composition of mobility networks, over- and underpasses, signage and overall design create the potential for orientation. Besides observing these elementary aspects, the personalizing narrative of the fairytale illuminates things that might connect the two different green urban landscapes in both a conceptual and physical way, let alone the role they might play in tackling larger ecological or societal issues.

3.5.2 **The official public narrative of the Emerald Necklace park system, Boston**

Another narrative, one that deliberately addresses a wider public audience or, alternatively a selected professional one, is the so-called official public narrative that is out of necessity *involved* (seeking to understand and interpret certain characteristics of a place) but still *detached* (aiming for objectivity). It is written according to a certain norm or vocabulary, a tradition of other similar narratives. As such it reveals different faces of the place than those individually experienced. In terms of Boston, the views of different actors, mainly the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, are here used as an example of a public narrative.

The information given online (City of Boston 2015; City of Boston 2019; Emerald Necklace Conservancy 2019; MMOC 2018) about the Emerald Necklace park system consists greatly of numbers, on one hand, and of beautiful park images on the other, as well as of information for users.²²³ The historical map is also quite well presented in different conjunctions. What we call the Emerald Necklace today covers 450 hectares, comprising approximately half of the city's park acreage, according to the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, - a non-profit that is responsible for the park system's management, including its financing and fundraising, - and Boston Parks and Recreation.²²⁴ The park system stretches to the length of around 11,3 km (7 miles).²²⁵ It is understood today to include the Boston Common dating from 1634, and Boston Public Garden from 1837, as well as the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, a tree-lined street and parkway connecting the above to the Charlesgate area and the Back Bay Fens. Olmsted made designs for the sections of Back Bay Fens and Arnold

²²³ Interestingly enough, however, on the city's webpage (City of Boston 2020) the parks are not presented as a subject item but one needs to use the search engine to find them.

²²⁴ Boston Parks and Recreation (City of Boston 2019) also gives information on the parks' functions and amenities on its website but their exact role in the parks' governance is difficult to grasp from the outside. In the USA, there are numerous stakeholders, including NGOs involved in the financing of parks, as opposed to the Finnish system where the City of Helsinki, for instance, is responsible for all the governance of the city's parks and the public official acts as a commissioner for the park designs' acquisition.

²²⁵ And as such is fairly comparable to the extent of the Helsinki Central Park north-south.

Arboretum (1879), the Sanitary Improvement of Muddy River (1881, including Leverett Pond), Franklin Park (1885) and Jamaica Park (1892). Olmsted was also involved in the design of the Newton section of the boulevard. The sections of the park system between the Back Bay Fens and Arnold Arboretum are nowadays referred to as Riverway, Olmsted Park and Jamaica Pond (Emerald Necklace Conservancy 2019; City of Boston 2019; MMOC 2018).

In online sources the Boston park system is often presented in conjunction with Olmsted's work. The Boston Common, which is the oldest part of the Emerald Necklace totality and the starting point for Olmsted creating a park system, is similarly publicly presented by way of its historic significance. Information on a forthcoming Master Plan, whose introduction presents the Common as "America's First Public Park" and "one of the most treasured green spaces in the world" (Boston Common Master Plan 2019), envisions "an atmosphere of civic access and engagement with a profound sense of identity and a deep-rooted connection to this vibrant city." To gain insight in preparation, a survey for park users is conducted for the Master Plan, realized by the SurveyMonkey service and consisting of twenty questions about the park, including frequency and reason of visit, preferred activity, wishes for refurbishment and preferences in terms of the park's appearance. On the conservancy's webpage (Emerald Necklace Conservancy 2019), parks are described with the help of the range of experiences they provide, and the diversity of amenities as affordances:

In the heart of Boston and extending to Brookline, the historic Emerald Necklace park system serves as the backyard for city residents and a destination for more than one million visitors each year. Stretching from Back Bay to Dorchester, this inviting green space connects people and nature, just as landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted intended when he designed it more than 100 years ago.

Today, the six parks under the Emerald Necklace Conservancy's stewardship offer a range of experiences - from quiet time on a shaded bench to recreational activities like sailing, hiking, golf or softball. With an arboretum and a zoo, the Emerald Necklace's attractions are as diverse as the New England seasons. Come explore the many things to do in Boston!

In June, 2015, the researcher had a conversation with the president of the conservancy, Julie Crockford, who was also interviewed by Sharp in the 2015 radio piece (see section 3.4.3). The resulting impression was that there are improvements in the works, but as the conservancy is a non-profit organization whose activity is based at least for the most part on private donations, the means for considerable improvements are limited and difficult to predict. For instance, collaboration with possible entrepreneurs to provide services is not something that would have been widely considered to enliven the places within the park system.



Figure 155. The Emerald Necklace Conservancy on its webpage portrays an image of the park system as a place for activity, for people of all ages and backgrounds. The pictures reflect the beauty of nature with their image of a constant, sunny summer day and green lush vegetation, as well as the social dimension with images of happy people using the park. It is a very typical way of ‘marketing’ green areas for people to use them; solely in the summer, although the climate might in reality provide different and more diverse potential. Emerald Necklace Conservancy 2019.

3.5.3 The city official’s narrative, Helsinki

An important layer of understanding landscapes and places is built by situating them in a continuum of other similar places and design ideologies, but also the planned or occurred systems of cities. Strategic aims and plans for cities and their green areas are an example of the *Invisible*, as in something that cannot be seen, resembling ideas and thoughts although visualized or expressed in words. Strategic plans operate on a very conceptual level and do not necessarily result in anything that would end up being visible in the landscape.

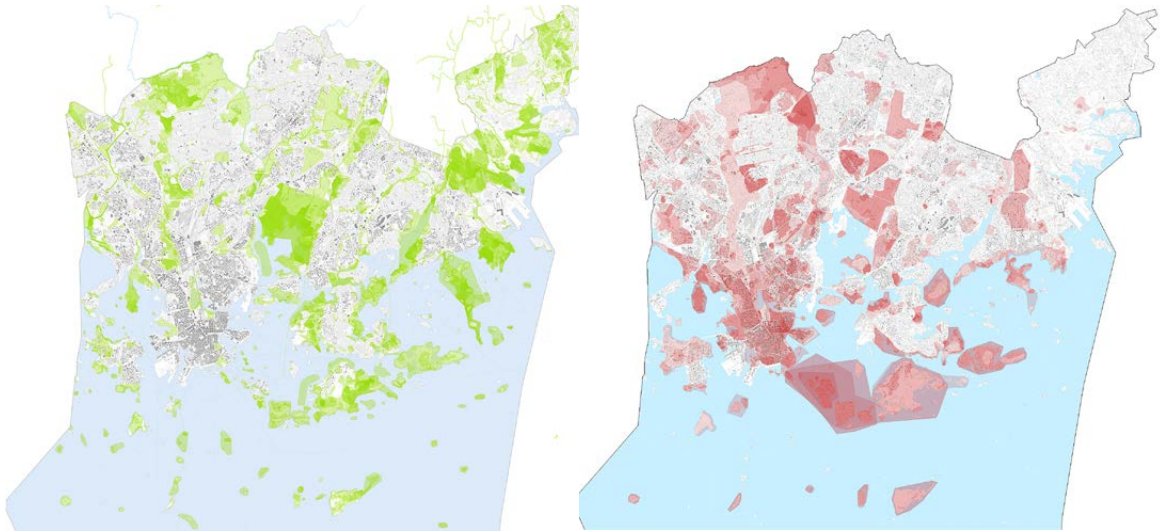
They remain invisible unless acquainted with, and interpreted into the next planning phases or action. Often their representation also remains abstract for the expert's eye.

The dimension of future strategies makes visible and verbalizes narratives of hopes and aspirations, often called *visions* for a city or a place. Construction of value systems and analyses of assessed characteristics translate into potentials for future appearance and activities. In a green areas system, some characteristics can be seen, belonging to the *Visible* realm, whereas others are observed intermediately and with secondary tools, with the help of statistics, for instance, interpreting the *Invisible*. Eventually, both personal and institutionally shared *Values*²²⁶ define the factors that are included in the official narrative, and in a city government operational system they are weighed politically to reflect the values of the voters. Values are the basis for action for city officials as well as other actors in the operational realm of city and green areas planning. Filtered through value systems, with the accumulated information and knowledge of places that a city consists of, a map in mind, public officials base their judgement on observations and narratives, ones they have heard, read and created.

The official narrative of the City of Helsinki, guiding the actions of all city officials, is expressed in the city strategy ratified by the city council and drawn up every four years. For the period 2017–2021, it is called “The most functional city in the world” (City of Helsinki 2017). While taking densification and democratic values, or biodiversity and climate mitigation well into account, the strategy omits some other values important for some, for instance the cultural environments. The targets for green space in the current strategy include (City of Helsinki 2017): “A moving and healthy city for all” that promotes mobility in services provided by the city.²²⁷ However, the fact that most of the exercise happens outdoors in the open space system (Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 13), is not explicitly stated. About the green and blue areas it is stated that “The ecological quality, accessibility and health effects of green and blue areas will be ensured,” Helsinki cherishes its valuable wildlife and acts to increase the diversity of the urban natural environment and that “diversity will be enhanced in city parks.” To further a cost-efficient management of rainwater run-off, “green areas will be increased in the urban structure.” The aims reflect the values and issues promoted by the politically dominant parties. Collaboration and multidisciplinary are often emphasized in promoting the ideologies as well as the larger objectives that the city is committed to, such as carbon-neutrality or tackling climate change. Obviously, economic realism and ensuring economic success as a “spearhead of the

²²⁶ In ethics, value denotes the degree of importance of some thing or action.

²²⁷ The Helsinki City Health and Welfare Promotion Project (City of Helsinki 2020b) highlights increased exercise and mobility as a spearhead pilot project in its health and welfare work.



■ Figures 156 and 157. Nature values and cultural values made visible, collected from the GIS based Nature Information System and cultural heritage data gathered by the city. These values are abundant along the large green corridors, city core peninsula, coastline and islands. City of Helsinki, Jaakkola et al 2016, pp. 18–21.

country’s economy” is part of the narrative for the capital city, providing potential for implementing the aims (City of Helsinki 2017).

In terms of landscape planning, the concern for landscape-embedded values and their preservation is a starting point for making strategies for their future. The assumption that in fact forms the basis for the need for preserving landscape values, weaving them to be a part of a vibrant and alive future city, is the conviction of green environments’ importance. The view entails that planning for a “green network city with no equal” is essential for the quality of life in the city, and that the contact with “living things” in a particular Helsinki way must be cherished for its healing capacity (Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 103).

In landscape planning, values are most often associated with things that are considered desirable in an environment; for instance recreational or landscape values being based on experiential and aesthetic evaluation. Values that can be ‘measured’ by local, national or regional criteria that are based on expert evaluation include ‘ecological’ (or nature values) and ‘cultural’ values. For instance, ICOMOS²²⁸ has defined sets of values that landscapes ought to be evaluated against. Beauty is similarly a value, albeit considered a subjective experience. The values are recognized and depicted in the design process, often divided for instance into nature values and cultural values, in terms of landscape, as these two have a legislative status.

An example of a value, a vocational imperative, that defines actions in the strategic planning of green areas, is the conviction of and belief in the positive

²²⁸ International Council on Monuments and Sites.

and beneficial effects of nature,²²⁹ which is often shared in the professional field of landscape architecture. Another one is the belief among city planners in the dense city as a method to mitigate climate change (City of Helsinki 2013; City of Helsinki 2016b) and as such the ultimate ecological city in the paradigm of planning.²³⁰ Furthermore, other views that have become a narrative of the organization, include the 'green network' narrative (as part of a 'network city' narrative, City of Helsinki 2013), where the connections from one green area to another are seen as a value in itself, promoting accessibility. Accessibility and quality are seen as important due to their potential to compensate for the loss of green space in area. At least this is the narrative that helps adapt to and reconcile between conflicting aims - those of preservation and those of continuous development for increasing populations. Interconnectedness and accessibility of green and blue areas embody in the everyday experience in possibilities and affordances.²³¹ Similarly, the integrity of green areas is a value. For instance, the *City plan Vision 2050* states that in the future, green spaces, the sea and outdoor services are easily available to city residents and there should also be 'green connections' from all parts of the city to larger green areas. The report formulates (City of Helsinki 2013, pp. 5-6) that "the green vision emphasises the importance of Helsinki's proximity to the sea and that of its green spaces" and that "in 2050, Helsinki will be a green-network city, in which green spaces, the sea and recreational services are easily available to city residents." Rapid urbanization and public transit in a network city is the main goal, and Helsinki will be an urban "rail transport network city with expanding central areas coupled with other developing centres" where "commuter trains and the metro will offer fast rail connections between the central areas and other parts of Helsinki" (City of Helsinki 2013, pp. 5-6).

The strategic aims and a consequent strategic plan for the green areas system of Helsinki were outlined in the *Green Areas Strategy* a.k.a. *VISTRA* reports, based on the premise that densifying the city requires that the green areas network be consciously planned as part of the city structure (Jaakkola et al.

²²⁹ that could in the professional vocabulary be called the ecosystem services -narrative, emphasizing all the beneficial services that nature produces for humanity

²³⁰ Although implementation of both of these aims simultaneously may in practice result in controversies, as is the case when decreasing valued green area for infill development. The original suggestion of the newest master plan aims for a significant densification along rail lines. It plans to provide housing for a 39% increase in population, and with its full implementation, green areas may diminish up to 20% (from 40-46% to "a little over 30," City of Helsinki 2016b). One-third of new development would happen along the new city boulevards, transforming the radial main traffic corridors into urban streetscape, and by building up edges of some of the Green Fingers, including Central Park.

²³¹ In personal experience of living in Helsinki city, the fact that one could reach attractive places in a continuously green environment from home, still being in an urban environment, 'where everyone else is,' and the possibility to take the tram to go skiing in the Central Park, are practical examples that embody the interconnectedness in the experiential realm of a citizen

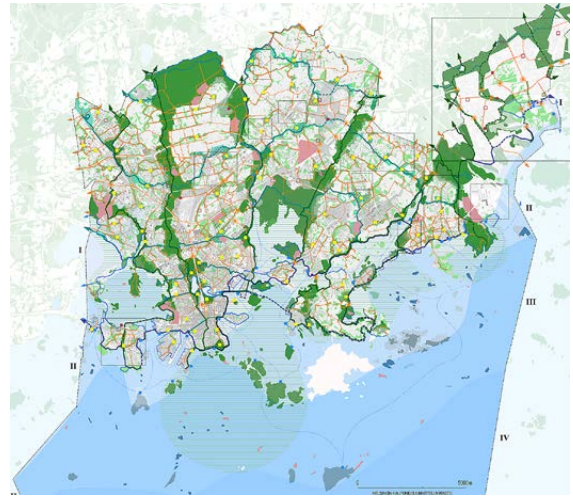
2013; Jaakkola et al. 2016). The project was made in conjunction with and as a background for the Master Plan (City of Helsinki 2013; City of Helsinki 2016b), as a development scheme for the future of the city's green areas. The main thesis of the strategic vision is as follows: The defining feature of the green areas system is formed by the consciously planned radial green wedges, the 'Green Fingers,' connecting to the region and stemming from the so-called 'Blue Palm' (Jaakkola et al. 2016, pp. 68–77). The Blue Palm, as in the seashores and archipelago that make up another wide entity, connect the Green Fingers to one another.²³² The green wedges are connected by the transversal Green Lines as green corridors. By verbalizing the green system in the form of a visual image of fingers and a palm, the central principle of green wedges that has been part of the public narrative since 2002 (City of Helsinki 2002), was reinforced and hues added. Radial green wedges in one form or another have been a structuring element in the city planning since the Master Plan of 1970 (City of Helsinki 1970), following either a natural feature, such as a river corridor, or conceptualizing a symbolic entity, such as the *Keskuspuisto* Central Park.

In the public narrative (City of Helsinki 2002; Jaakkola et al. 2013, 2016), the Green Fingers are meant to both provide recreational possibilities and promote diversity by each having a distinct character according to their situation in the landscape and the urban structure, and to act as ecological corridors. They are envisioned as interconnected by a “network of square parks, boulevards, pedestrian walkways, seaside promenades, narrow strips of nature, greenbelts, and green corridors, and serve recreation and outdoor activities as well as everyday life connections to schools, shopping areas, and workplaces” (City of Helsinki 2002).

To situate the aforementioned public narrative in the city's strategic aims for green areas, its main points are summarized in the following paragraphs. The *VISTRA* project²³³ consists of *Part I Objectives and vision* (Jaakkola et al. 2013) and *Part II Open Space Plan* (Jaakkola et al. 2016). The report attempted to bring forward a holistic vision of how to develop the green areas system in the future, from three different perspectives: access to recreation, city identity and the sustainable city paradigm. The value basis lies in the benefits of green areas for human well-being, including health effects as well as social, experiential and functional qualities. The starting point is that since green areas and nature provide a multitude of resources and advantages, as many people as possible should have easy and sustainable access to them.

²³² The Blue Palm idea has recently been complemented by a wide recognition of the significance of the maritime character for recreation (City of Helsinki 2020a), a maritime strategy where the aim is to improve the accessibility to maritime areas, to develop services in the islands and promote seaside events.

²³³ [*Viheralueiden strateginen kehityskuva*], literally translated as: “the strategic guidelines for the development of green and recreational areas”

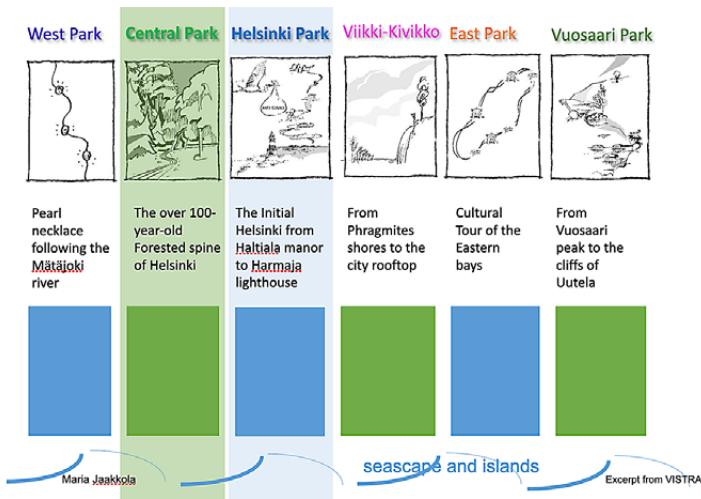


■ Figures 158–159. The latest representations of the Helsinki citywide green system. The backbone of the green areas system (Fig. 158), complemented with neighborhood parks, green connections and local parks, form an integrated and cohesive green and recreational network (Fig. 159). Illustration by the author based on Jaakkola et al 2016, pp. 30–31 (158) and Jaakkola et al. 2016 (159).

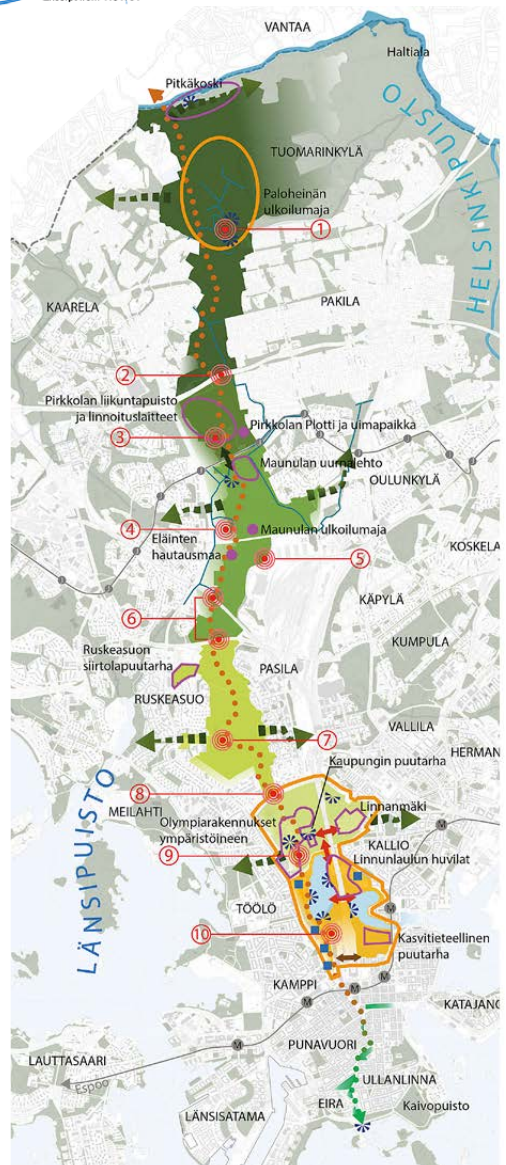
The first 2013 report outlines a vision for green areas²³⁴ that, besides the “green network city” idea (City of Helsinki 2016b) with an interconnected green system, emphasizes the coexistence of cultural heritage and the new landscape, as well as both natural and cultural characteristics, whose values should be recognized, preserved and strengthened as part of Helsinki’s identity and attraction. The multilevel approach denotes the role of green areas in current ecological challenges, including climate change adaptation and mitigation in the city scale.²³⁵ The second part from 2016 aims for a situational and localized interpretation of the principles laid out in the first report, concretizing and visualizing the objectives. According to these objectives, Helsinki green areas will form, in conclusion, an easily accessible interconnected network that consists of a diverse and historically layered cityscape fostering identity as well as a resilient green and blue structure helping to adapt to the effects of climate change (Jaakkola et al 2016).

²³⁴ VISTRA-VISIO stating that Helsinki be a [“Green network city with no equal; with Diverse recreational possibilities and a Livable and beautiful milieu, as well as accommodating Diverse Landscape that is Maritime and green, multi-layered and sustainable/resilient]. “Viherverkostokaupunki vailla vertaa; toimivat ja palvelevat viheralueet ja viihtyisä ja kaunis ympäristö” and “Monimuotoinen maisema; merellinen ja vihreä, kerroksellinen ja kestävä.” (summarized in Jaakkola et al. 2016, p. 9).

²³⁵ Such as buffer zones along river corridors, natural management of storm water in public outdoor space, increasing green infrastructure for better microclimate and air quality and permeable surface to manage the natural water cycle, green shoreline and biodiversity for resilience.



■ Figure 160. Green Fingers presented as a diagram where the essence of each and their role in the totality is captured in key words and symbols. Their overall character as 'more green' or 'more blue' is indicated as well. Illustration by the author based on Jaakkola et al. 2016.



■ Figure 161. In the Green Areas Strategy, for each Green Finger, main attractions, essential landscape types and needs for improvement such as disconnects were recognized, and a desirable future character and functions envisioned. The role of Central Park in the Green Finger entity is verbalized to be an urban forest that gradually transforms from an urban core park into a recreational primeval woodland. Jaakkola et al. 2016, pp. 38-43.

The idea in the strategic plan entails that the resourcing of and investments in open space would be an integral part of the overall implementation of city development. The principles were ratified by the City Planning Committee in 2016 (City of Helsinki 2016a) to act as a basis for future planning, but the knowledge of the decision has not necessarily been widely shared within the whole operational realm, especially after the 2017 merging of different departments and other significant changes that were made in the city government. The report and the visualization of the green network, the so-called megastructure of the green and blue entity, as well as the general plans for the Green Fingers are, however, used in the city government to support landscape designs and city plans in different areas, as well as political aims emphasizing green areas. The hierarchy of the green areas system can potentially promote their understanding, articulate programming and aid in investment prioritization, with an eye on equally distributed recreational diversity.

As part of the process of strategizing green areas along the master planning process, the Environmental Office of the City Planning Department of Helsinki commissioned a Master's thesis to explore the potentials and limitations of housing development in terms of retaining the forest-like character of the central section of the Central Park (Peltomäki 2017). The project aimed at making visible in design the challenge to simultaneously fulfill the aims of densification development and to maintain the 'forest feel' and recreational value of the oldest of the Green Fingers. The outcome and conclusion of the thesis, made in close discussion with the city planning department, an urban and landscape plan, suggested different housing typologies and experimented with varying masses and treatments of the adjoining creek, with the help of an adapted scenario-building technique. The project had an impact on the political discussion.

3.5.4 **The professional and academic narrative, Helsinki**

The views of so-called outsiders in terms of city government, in other words, academics and professionals that are familiar with the conceptual realm but not directly involved in the envisioning, verbalization and representation of a city's future, provide a platform to observe one's own work and the work of colleagues from another viewpoint and emphasis. They provide a perspective of the 'other' and complement the analysis framework with another experiential realm. These views are objective in the sense of not being bound with and dependent on political decisions or strategic aims, but biased in the sense that they are written from a specific viewpoint of a particular expertise. Being part of the academic discourse, their intrinsic character is to be polemic and to question also the generally accepted notions. Some views on Helsinki's green areas system and the Central Park are described in the following to give an example of another kind of professional narrative than that of a public official of Helsinki, and to see what this approach might gain for the development of the analysis framework.

Helsinki's green system has been discussed in the professional literature about green or green wedge defined cities, for instance in *Green Cities of Europe* (Beatley 2012) and *Green Wedge Urbanism* by Oliveira (2017 p. 174–182), as well as some critical academic publications (Häyrynen & Hautamäki 2017; Hautamäki 2015, 2019).²³⁶ The narrative of the green system and Central Park is constructed based on the green areas' role as a representation of nature (Hautamäki & Donner 2019), and a healing environment, among others. For instance a survey (Tyrväinen et al. 2007) about the general attitudes towards and benefits derived from the green areas of Helsinki, showed the most important benefits being outdoor recreation opportunities, contact with nature, stress relief and aesthetic experience. Forested areas were valued more than urban parks, a shared characteristic with other Nordic countries (Oliveira 2017 p. 181). Tyrväinen (2014) uses the Central Park as one of her test sites in a field experiment on stress-relieving environments, as an example of urban woodlands. Oliveira (2017, p. 178) considers Helsinki's Central Park an example of an "internationally recognized multifunctional green wedge that encapsulates the potentialities of proactive and positive planning."

According to Oliveira, the 2002 Master Plan "over-relied" on large-scale green spaces (2017, p. 176) whereas the 2016 vision of a green network city for 2050 is for a more comprehensive, complex and multi-scale open space structure embedding the patch-corridor-matrix approach from landscape ecology. Oliveira also considers the "commitment to enhance the cohesiveness of the green wedges worth noting, both in terms of the promotion of recreational spaces and ecological habitats and corridors" (Oliveira 2017, p. 176). Oliveira describes further how the Central Park's connection to the sea creates a continuous, and yet varied, landscape strengthening the links between green and blue spaces. According to Oliveira (2017, p. 178) the Central Park is "putting in evidence the delicate relationship between urbanization and natural environment in the light of potential future climate-related changes." Green wedges continue to be the fundamental backbone of the city's green infrastructure, accommodating a forest network (Oliveira 2017, p. 181) where core areas are connected by ecological corridors and green nodes provide recreation.

The motorway-like areas transformed into 'city boulevards' include Hämeenlinnanväylä thoroughfare, whose construction into 'Mannerheim Boulevard' would considerably diminish the area of the now existing Central Park, as mentioned earlier. It is interesting how Oliveira aligns the green

²³⁶ The new Master Plan of 2016 has also been criticized by prof. Lapintie (Häkkinen 2016; Lapintie 2016, 2018; Malmberg 2018). Lapintie pays attention to two things in particular: the lack of a regional understanding of the densification based on the 'city boulevards' along greenways and the misunderstanding of "strategy" and "strategic" to mean only the proposed solutions and the technical representation of the Master Plan. He does not, however, touch upon the Green areas strategy (Jaakkola et al. 2013, 2016) about the development of the Green Fingers or the green network.

network with the transport strategy, stating the expectations to enhance access via public transport to green and blue spaces. Although admitting the challenges of the integration of the green wedge model and the transversal rail line plans across them, Oliveira sees the whole system as a systemic interrelation promoting places for people and improving connectivity for green space, “remodeling the relationship between these spaces and high-speed vehicular routes” (Oliveira 2017, p. 176). To a certain extent this is true, as densification brings more housing to the Green Fingers’ edges. The traffic nodes are, however, primarily designed for access to housing and services, and they may constitute obstacles for the green areas they are traversing, unless tunnelized.

Hautamäki (2015, 2019) and Häyrynen (2017) in turn provide a very critical angle towards the Master Plan of 2016 and the way landscape values are taken into account in the development pressure, in terms of both sustaining cultural heritage and considering the green network system. According to Hautamäki and Donner (2019), both forest and compact cities and their green areas embody cultural values that require recognition. In Hautamäki’s doctoral thesis (2015), the emphasis is on manor milieus and their “urbanization, preservation and integration within the urban structure” of Helsinki (Hautamäki 2015, p. 356). She states that the paradigm has shifted from preservation to “development” and improvement, where the change in environment is dynamically guided and affected, aiming at integration, adaptation and transformation rather than restoration (Hautamäki 2015, pp. 42-44).

In the city documents that verbalize the vision for the densifying, increasingly “urban” and compact city (City of Helsinki 2016b; Santaoja et al. 2008), the redefinition of the green network is called for. According to Hautamäki (2015, p. 214), however, the quest for a “European park hierarchy” for Helsinki suburbs (Santaoja et al. 2008, pp. 20, 36-37) is a simplification and conceptual misjudgment. The paradigm analysis is based on the Master Plan 2016 documents for development rather than the Green Areas Strategy, where the role of cultural landscape heritage is recognized, both in the informational content (Jaakkola et al. 2013, pp. 74-83) and the vision section of the first report, as well as in the plan report.²³⁷ Despite the political ratification (City of Helsinki 2016a), the green network planning goals only partly penetrate the governmental processes. Neither do they necessarily prevail in the process of reconciliation or in the cases of conflict instead of economic values, as the case studies of Tuomarinkylä Manor and Central Park (Hautamäki 2019) also illustrate.

The development policy of Helsinki is seen as a conflict between nature and the city (Häyrynen & Hautamäki 2017; Hautamäki 2019), and the

²³⁷ It is stated that the future city aims at being a historically layered one, where landscape heritage and new landscape live harmoniously side by side as parts of the developing city. Creating attractions for each area, the stages of the city’s development are visible in the landscape, as an important part of a city’s identity (Jaakkola et al. 2013, p. 85; Jaakkola et al. 2016, p. 9)

conclusions drawn emphasize the need for redefining urban and rural, as well as their interpretation in the urban context. Green areas are sometimes seen in the “new urbanism” paradigm (Uggla 2012, cited in Häyrynen & Hautamäki 2017, p. 9) as an obstacle for a unified urban structure, especially if they are less functional in character. Although “urban nature” as such is sought for, it is too abundant, the wrong kind, or in a wrong location (Häyrynen & Hautamäki 2017, p. 9). However, praxis has shown that the urban forest that for instance Helsinki Central Park represents is in fact functionally diverse and used in many more activities than an average traditional parklawn.

3.5.5 Citizens’ narratives and experiences as an example of the Invisible

Survey results as a source of information

The last section of the data analysis is the world of others, which is represented by the views of citizens from a map-based PPGIS survey.²³⁸ Attention is paid to how the respondents see the Helsinki park system and its essential characteristics in general, and how they recount their experience thereof. The quantitative data were analyzed in a qualitative manner. Firstly, the numeric emphasis of certain markings on the map were analyzed, as well as the occurrence of keywords. Finally, all the open questions were read in an interpretative way to deepen the analysis.

This chapter mainly examines a recent (December 2017) PPGIS survey associated with a project involving active citizen groups. At the beginning of 2017, a public participation pilot project was launched to examine the possibilities to pursue a National Urban Park (later referred to as NUP) in the future Helsinki. The city administration, together with a grassroots movement (*Kansallinen kaupunkipuisto Helsinkiin!*) was (2018) in the process of defining the outlines and content of the park, the way it is supposed to reflect the ‘Helsinki story’ and making suggestions regarding its physical boundaries. As part of the process, a public survey was conducted, to find out people’s thoughts on the possible outlines of the park, and at the same time, to gather other relevant data about how they see Helsinki’s green areas, its values and the potential to use them.

A National Urban Park (Finland 1999; Ministry of the Environment 2019, 2020a) is a totality of parks and public areas “established to protect and maintain the beauty of the cultural or natural landscape, historical characteristics or related values concerning the townscape, and social, recreational or other special values of an area in an urban environment.” This kind of “park” is essentially a collection of areas, mainly consisting of publicly owned areas,

²³⁸ The experience of others is accounted for as a collective other, as opposed to the previous sections.

constructed and natural, and is established by the Ministry of Environment, based on an application drawn up by the city administration. In a way, it could be said the NUP initiatives make manifest a quest for preserving particularities and defining boundaries for city growth within the city.²³⁹ The concept of a NUP is about gathering and articulating a “story of a city,” as expressed in the preparative documents of other cities (e.g. Hautamäki 2017). According to the common rhetoric used in conjunction with the preparatory process, a NUP tries to identify the signature landscapes and essential features of a city as experienced by citizens. As such, it is of relevance to the phenomenological understanding of landscape that this dissertation is focusing on. The concept resonates with the idea of an essence or essential characteristics of a city, its urban landscape and its green space, because it is aimed at embodying something that is essential about a city, something unique and rare that only this particular city represents through its green areas, landscapes and public space.

The survey with a questionnaire was commissioned by the city of Helsinki from Mapita Ltd. using the so-called Maptionnaire tool, and it was open to be responded to online for one month. The particularities could thus be seen both from the inside and the outside, by citizens and tourists alike. There were 1416 respondents, the vast majority of whom were Helsinki city dwellers, with a 41-48 female-male ratio; 40% of the respondents fell into the age group 50-59, and 60-69 year olds were the second-largest group, followed by the age group 30-39 (summaries by Mapita Ltd and Nyberg 2018).²⁴⁰

The survey results are here used as a source of information about the urban experience and essential characteristics of the city and its green areas. The discovered aspects are then used to complement and iterate the analysis framework, along with other narratives. The analysis of the responses provides an example of how this kind of data can inform a phenomenological approach. The knowledge the results of the analysis may yield in terms of how people regard particular green areas or the idea of a National Urban Park in Helsinki, is hence not the main concern of the study. The process of the NUP merely acts as the context that the survey was initially made for. The results are discussed with an emphasis on the relevant aspects for the research question of

²³⁹ In the Master Plan of 2002, the concept of Helsinki Park, as the largest and most central of the Helsinki Green Fingers, was in fact initiated as a Helsinki version of a NUP as a response to the political aims. Since 2017, however, a participatory process, as a result of a city council initiative, involving the citizen activist group, has looked into the possibilities of establishing a NUP in Helsinki, too. As of 2020, the political process is still ongoing. Based on my observations of the preparatory process, in which I have been involved as a public official, the NUP criteria are used by urban activists as a way to further reinforce the perception of natural and cultural values, and call for the city’s responsibility in preserving them. The initiative arose as an antidote to the infill development policies (including the Master Plan of 2016), which were seen to threaten the green network, including the Central Park.

²⁴⁰ However, only approximately half of the respondents answered the background information in the survey, so these numbers have a margin of error.

this study; how can a phenomenological approach inform the understanding of green urban landscapes. Phenomenology provides methods to study experience, as well as useful concepts such as essence and place. Special attention is paid to specific expressions and data that focus on the experiential dimension.

To interpret, understand and complement the quantitative data gathered and analyzed in the heat maps (Nyberg 2018; Mapita 2017),²⁴¹ a qualitative assessment of the written responses, linked with the map markings, was made with an experience-focused perspective. The researcher executed the qualitative research of the open answers in the summer of 2019, by reading and analyzing a total of 12 225 individual replies (126 pages of A3 horizontal excel tables, 8 pt rows). The length of the replies was interesting to note. Most of them were less than 25 words, but there was a total of 118 replies (40 pages in A4, 10 pt single space) that extended to more than 25 words, some even up to a whole page. I read all the responses through actively pointing out the responses that were verbalized with the use of the term experience (*kokemus, elämys*) or otherwise indicating an experiential point of view. Factors re-emerging and occurring repeatedly were included, as those reaching a saturation point. Another vocabulary that I paid attention to was that of aesthetic evaluation, indicating the word “beautiful” or alternatively, containing descriptive language that manifested a powerful aesthetic or other experience about a place. A third point of view was to see what kind of verbalizations were indicating an understanding of Helsinki identity. These expressions were very frequent in the outlining of a possible NUP, a question where people were pushed to think what is special or essential to Helsinki character. Some even used the word *olemus* or *ydinolemus* (Finnish for “essence,” or “core essence”) in their response, describing what they thought was essential, special or characteristic about the city. In addition, data mining of sorts was done with the help of an embedded Linux function (Bash) to detect the frequency of the occurrence of some descriptive keywords.²⁴²

The questionnaire asked about specific things concerning the NUP and its boundaries but also general things that have to do with experience in terms of green space, such as activities and perceptions of significant places. The questions asked (see appendix 5, p. 1) were about the essential places for Helsinki identity, experiences provided, and the development of the possible NUP.²⁴³ As the researcher was involved in the preparation of the survey questions as

²⁴¹ The quantitative analysis of maps was based on those drawn up either by Mapita Ltd or Elina Nyberg in 2018, a student at Aalto University whom we employed as a trainee from January to June 2018, to disseminate the findings of the survey by QGIS software and to prepare maps for communicating the NUP project and survey results to stakeholders.

²⁴² Keywords were selected as a combination of the vocabulary used in general and that which was relevant to the character of the green areas

²⁴³ Every question included an open subquestion where the respondents were asked to argument and elaborate why they chose this particular place and if it should be part of a possible future NUP.

someone responsible for the citywide green network, it was important to include questions that would also give insight that is more general about the green areas, in terms of their experienced values and possible futures. When reading the responses for this study, each response was given an equal emphasis, regardless of the question it responded to. It must be noted that in the context of this study, it was more important to focus on the content and the wording of the responses than to differentiate for which question it was used as an answer. An important aspiration in many responses was, for instance that a place would retain its significance and character, stay beautiful or pleasurable and keep evoking the experiences it does if developed/changed in some way.²⁴⁴

The context of the NUP obviously may have affected the way people responded to the survey, but as the questions were on a fairly general level, it can be considered likely that they would have responded in a sufficiently equal manner had it not been connected with this particular NUP project. To provide further context, occasional references to other recent surveys with the same theme are briefly looked into when applicable.

Findings in the survey

Based on a quantitative wordcount analysis (their occurrence in different modes), it is possible to get information about the specific things that the respondents found worth mentioning. Complemented with the spatial map analysis and thorough reading of the open answers, this constitutes the data for this section. The word “park” (*puisto*) was mentioned the most frequently, receiving 1912 mentions. “Forest” (*metsä*) was mentioned a total of 906 times, “history” (*historia*) 853, “shore” (*ranta*) 731 times, “rocks” and “cliffs” (*kallio*) 587. The Central Park (*Keskuspuisto*) alone received 554 mentions, being the most-mentioned specific green area, referred to by name. Although the sea (*meri*) was mentioned only 339 times, together with the shore (*ranta*) it made 1070, based on which it can be said that the thematics of *forest* and the *sea* are particularly worth looking into.

The open answers, in turn, were read keeping in mind the principles of the phenomenological approach and methods, such as empathetic listening (reading) to the narratives as they are described with people’s own words, refraining from over-interpretation or preconceptions (Varto 1992b, pp. 86–90;

²⁴⁴ It was seemingly also less important to the respondents in the answers, whether a place should be a part of a possible NUP, than the fact that a place which is significant to them in one way or another be preserved and its values cherished. Some even said the place should not be included within the boundaries of a NUP, because they do not want too many other people discovering it, perhaps in fear of the place overcrowding and losing its essence as their personal haven. Many replies were identical to each other, regardless of the question. Some people had in fact copied their previous answers to several consequent questions - suggesting that if a place is significant personally, it is, again, less important, whether it responds to the particular question posed.

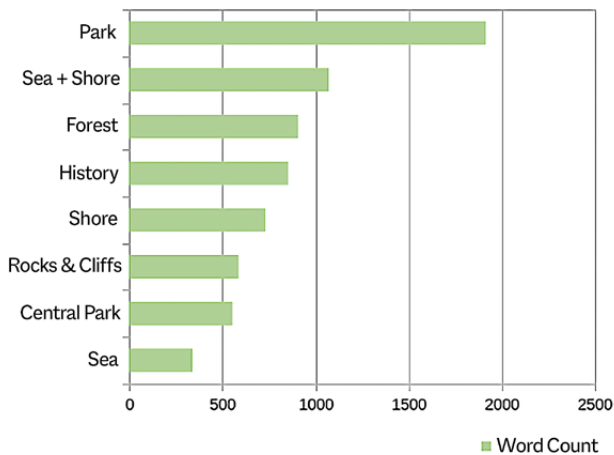


Figure 162. The word count of the open answers reveals that besides park, with its evident dominance, sea-related expressions, forest and history are the most used words. Table by Mikko Mäkelä 2019.

Lehtomaa 2005; Perttula & Latomaa 2008; Latomaa 2008; Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009; Toikkanen & Virtanen 2018). The findings of the qualitative content analysis suggest the following: 1. Openness is appreciated. 2. Places of calm and tranquility as well as activity are important. 3. Nature observation is an experience for all the senses. 4. Nature and urban, open and enclosed mixed represent balance. 5. Experience of beauty is found in both urban and natural landscapes. 6. Sea and forest act as main qualifiers. 7. Temporality and historicity are sources of powerful experience, and 8. Knowledge behind the seen adds to the experience and vice versa. In the following paragraphs, each aspect is further explained and described, with the help of the responses. Further quotes, including some long ones relevant to each point are included in appendix 5. It was possible to reply to the questions in Finnish, Swedish²⁴⁵ or English. In the following summaries of the answers and in appendix 5, these replies are provided as direct quotations (in italics). Translations when needed are in parentheses or, when as a part of text, also with quotation marks.

1. Openness is appreciated.

Extended views, especially those of maritime character were given a lot of emphasis in the responses. The number of times each word was used supports the finding by suggesting a shared vocabulary. The word “*näkymä*” (Finnish for a view or a scenery) was used 176 times and “*avara*” (wide, expanse) 28 times, but the idea was expressed in many different ways with a rich set of analytical and descriptive vocabulary. Opening up to the sea and scenery involving the seaside, manifested e.g. in the axis of Esplanadi - Kauppatori Market place were seen as characteristic of Helsinki in many ways. Long vistas, views to all directions, from high cliffs and across the sea or fields/pastures are appreciated, and were described, for instance with the terms: “*näkymässä sielu lepää*” (*in this view the soul is resting*).

²⁴⁵ Swedish is the second official language in Finland

Expanse is observed from high places or edges of open areas, as a symbol of freedom or an *association* of another place having the same characteristics. The feel of Lapland fells or places that remind of Koli's national landscape were mentioned with expressions such as "*lappimainen tunnelma*" (*Lapland like atmosphere*) or with sentences such as:

"*Korkeuserot tuovat mieleen Kolin näkymät*" (*differences in altitude remind me of the views at Koli hill*) or "*Näkymät ovat merelle päättymättömään vapauteen*" (*views open up to the sea into the endless freedom*).

This aspect was also described with metaphors and equivalences, for instance that Malmi Airport is "*the sea of northeastern Helsinki*," a part of the city which is further away from the actual seaside. ("*Malmin lentoasema on Koillis-Helsingin meri*").

Expanses are pleasurable with urban elements and natural ones alike. They seem to strengthen the feeling of being outside and inside the city at the same time, which was mentioned as my own observation earlier as a characteristic of parks, especially open areas and lawns within them.²⁴⁶ This quality is presumably about combining the best parts of the countryside landscape and the cityscape. For instance:

"*Aukeaa näkymä jokilaaksoon ja yli rakennetun kaupungin. Rauhoittaa ja antaa samalla energiaa.*" (*A view to the river valley opens up over the built up city, which is calming and energizing at the same time*).

"*Kuin pala rauhallista maaseutua.*" (*Like a piece of the peaceful countryside*).

2. Places of calm and tranquility as well as activity are important.

Attention restoration theory (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989; Kaplan, Kaplan & Ryan 1998) suggests that mental fatigue can be eased and concentration improved by time spent in, or looking at nature. References to nature in this context were numerous. The restorativeness of the experience in nature and green places was also verbalized in the responses. It involved the health effects of nature, and the calming effect of urban forest was given particular emphasis. The word peace or peacefulness (*rauha*), tranquil, especially "peace of nature" (*luonnonrauha*) was frequent in describing green places. The rhetoric included references to the idea of "being away" (Kaplan & Kaplan 1989) in a nice place, in a mental haven:

"*Näissä paikoissa unohtuu kaupungin häly ja melu*" (*the urban commotion is forgotten in these havens*).

"*... mieli/silmä lepää*" (*the mind/eye is resting*).

"*... näkymä hivelee sielua*" (*the view is caressing the soul*).

²⁴⁶ The Long Meadow in Prospect Park or Sheep Meadow in Central Park, NYC, both mentioned earlier in this study, can be used as examples, perhaps seen as a counterpart to the dense city with high-rise buildings.

The mind is resting and the body is relaxing, when exposed to the elements and natural waters - swimming in the seawater or skiing in the virginal snow is an experience in itself, of being close to nature. Physical shelter was mentioned too, although less frequently: "... *suojaa paahdavalta auringolta*" (*provide shelter from the blazing sun*).

There is room to breathe, space to look afar, room to think ("*tilaa hengittää. tilaa katsoa kauas, tilaa ajatella*"), it is possible to let the gaze rest ("*antaa katseen levätä*"). The soundscape was referred to as an experience but silence was associated with tranquility, and the connection to domestic animals in the landscape adds to a pastoral sense of tranquility (see appendix 5:1-5:2 for more quotes).

Adjectives used described a feeling with positive connotations and included words like calm, restorative, romantic, magical, quiet and attractive ("*kiireetön,*" "*elvyttävä,*" "*romanttinen,*" "*taianomainen,*" "*hiljainen,*" "*viehättävä*"), and descriptions included passive 'activities' such as "*horisonttiin tuijottelu*" (*gazing to the horizon*). Places where one can "catch the last rays of the sun" are restorative, such as westward/northwestward-looking rocks and hills, e.g. the Linnanmäki hill next to the amusement park, where one can see far, a view including Töölönlahti Bay and adjacent parkland but also the railway, a busy road and buildings. Green places are described as "oases" ("*keidas*"), refreshing/recreational ("*virkestävä*"), restorative ("*elvyttävä*") or places to do "oxygen leaps" ("*happihyppely*") and to sense the seasons and "breathe along with nature" ("*tuntee vuodenaajat ja hengittää luonnon mukana*"). Feelings evoked can remind of childhood and bring associations with the past, like that of going to the Korkeasaari zoo: "*mennessä jännittää ja tullessa väsyttää*" (*going there one is excited, coming back exhausted*).

Besides havens of tranquility and solitude to observe nature, green areas were also seen as potential places for various kinds of activities, from thoroughfares to active play and sports. Although calming effects and "places to stop" were appreciated, experiential quality was also linked with activity; places where people can meet each other (swimming beaches, or a rendezvous point under Stockmann's clock) were given extra value, even for only "raising a beer can" ("*kohottaa oluttölkkiä*"). Some mentioned going berry picking or flyfishing, bathing in public saunas or canoeing, and doing sports was even given a giddy, accessible note: "*luistimet jalkaan ja menoksi*" (*put your iceskates on and go*).

A particular Helsinki character is manifest also in activities like "rug washing and beating," things that can only happen in Helsinki like "a naked man sawing wood in a public place" or getting apples for your cider from the city apple trees. Asked about activities in the city in different seasons, people reveal their patterns of behavior, but perhaps also their preferences in terms of public space. In the winter, skiing tracks are important, in the summer, unsurprisingly, beaches.

Paths or bridges to green areas can be transition zones to tranquility or something exciting, and the journey a calming or uplifting experience in itself (quotes in appendix 5:2). Routes to places make manifest the experience of spaces and places in a sequence and, as such, the dynamic character of landscape experience. In the questions asked to describe and draw on a map the most important routes used, the findings included: Condensations of documented routes are circular around bays, or linear along river corridors and coastline. Mostly cycling and walking, but also ferries and boating/canoeing were brought up. Winter routes across frozen sea and skiing along Central Park expand the experiential horizons, giving a different view of the familiar city. Central Park is important for commuting by bike, and shoreline, green connections and circular routes for recreation and exercise. Looking at the dynamic use of green space, cycling is one of the most popular activities for moving in the park. Routes along the Central Park and the waterfront (river and sea) routes of Helsinki Park proved the most popular routes of the Helsinki Green Fingers in the survey. The popularity of the inner green belt (Helsinki Park - Central Park) along riverways and coastlines for cycling revealed that the Green Fingers have a significance in commuting, exercise and leisure travel. Views to see along and from the route seem to be important for an agreeable experience in moving in space, and an important way of experiencing green-blue infrastructure is dynamic - doing something or going somewhere.²⁴⁷

Elements of surprise, constantly finding new things in the different islands and other corners of the recreational realm, even close by, were also mentioned as a source of pleasure. Mystery, as the Kaplans observe (1989, 1998), and joy when discovering something, are valued experiential qualities, such as exploring across the frozen sea or the Vallisaari former military island that contains parts not yet widely known and inaccessible patches (see appendix 5:2). An urban landscape can also be a setting for nature's 'theater performance', as one can observe the spectacle of the sea freezing over ("*seurata meren jääty-misen näytelmää*") or being freed from ice ("*jäidenlähtö*"). Both "sporty and spiritual experiences in nature" were considered ("*liikunnallisia ja henkisiä elämyksiä luonnossa*"), and "outing and fresh air are always a pleasure without a greater purpose" ("*ulkoilu ja meri-ilma on aina nautinto ilman suurempaa tarkoitusta*") as it is not necessary to always do something outside but just to enjoy it, contemplatively.

3. Nature observation is an experience for all the senses.

Observing nature's elements, flora and fauna is experientially rich and considered an asset in the urban landscape. That applies to both wild animals and farm animals. The "concert of spring birds" ("*peippojen ym. kevätlintujen*")

²⁴⁷ In future surveys it would be interesting to find out the ratio of active use of parks for motion versus mere enjoyment of beautiful scenery.

konsertti”) makes waiting for the bus pleasurable, and nesting birds even in the most urban of places are noted, for instance Töölönlahti Bay being like “a large pond” to observe “life”.²⁴⁸ Observing other living things may also involve a sort of transference. Observing the “springy ecstatic dance of cows” (*lehmien keväinen riemutanssi*) involves empathetic understanding of how the cattle feel when running out to the pasture after a long winter, or a sensitivity to how birds might feel: “*The sea and the land blend together to form a birds’ heaven.*” Special kinds of vegetation are similarly a source of pleasure: “*käppyrämännyt,*” pines characteristic to windy seaside cliffs, “*kilpikaarna-männyt,*” pines old enough to have grown a cracking bark, as well as species of moss, bats, owls, etc.

Nature is experienced with all the senses. The multisensory quality of the urban green environment came up in many ways, from the nightly concert of the nightingale or the sound of trees swishing (*puiden havina*) to “hearing the silence,” and:

“*Näkymä Helsinkiin silhuettina avaa kaikki aistit, tämä on minun Helsinkiäni*” (*a view to Helsinki as a skyline silhouette opens up all the senses, this is my Helsinki*).

Besides the common nature sounds like birdsong or purl of the creek (*puuron solina*), more particular ones like lions’ roars from the zoo or the purr of small airplanes in the sky (*pikkukoneiden pörinä taivaalla*) can also be experientially valuable. The sense of touch, the tactile feel as a sensory pleasure was included in many responses. Sunbathing on windy rocks is a characteristic pleasure for Helsinki, and an act in which one is in touch with nature (*kosketuksissa luontoon*), used in both a tangible and figurative sense. Sensual pleasures include taste, such as “*forest raspberries in the summer!*” or more urban ones, such as:

“*kuppi teetä puuhuvilan kahvilassa ja katse kaupungin valoihin. Kaupunkilaiset hölkkää ja pyöräilee ohi - kaupunkilaisten elämää*” (*a cup of tea in the wooden villa’s café and a gaze towards the city lights. Citizens jog and cycle by - city dwellers life*).

The visual stimuli appreciated and mentioned were the most numerous, however, and included saturation/flamboyance (*värikylläisyys, väriloisto*), glimmer of water (*veden kimallus*), stars at night or even the colorful parachutes at the domestic airport. The sense of smell was not as frequently mentioned but when it was, it is a powerful and full experience, such as the “scent of spring” (*kevään tuoksu*) which can have multiple sources such as newly plowed fields, spring bulbs or mowed grass, or an undefined ‘feel’ of different scents blending together and marking a new season. The element of water,

²⁴⁸ Some of wild nature is also considered less desirable, however, such as the barnacle geese: “*toivottavasti rantapuisto saadaan vallattua takaisin asukkaille valkoposkihahilta,*” (hopefully the seaside park can be reclaimed for the (human) inhabitants from the geese).

still or in motion, was explicitly expressed to be “for all the senses” (“*kaikille aisteille*”). This includes the visual experience of reflections in the water as well as stimuli for other senses. The language used to describe visual stimuli was rich and descriptive, and some was pure poetry, challenging to capture the meaning of in translation, such as “*rehevä satumetsä*” (*lush fairytale forest*), “*kevään viherrys*” (*greening/faint hue of green of spring*) or “... *talven valkea kuulaus*” (*the pale delicate clearness/purity/translucence of winter*). See appendix 5:2-5:3 for more quotes on different sensual pleasures described.

4. Nature and urban, open and enclosed mixed represent balance.

Urbanity with closeness to/in contact with nature was a positive qualifier, although also the possibility to “lose oneself” in the ‘forest feel’ is appreciated. This, however, does not entail literally getting lost. The people who mentioned the forest were referring to their nearby forest and seemed to know their way around it, based on how knowledgeable the place markings and descriptions were. The absence of the buzzing city may be a positive qualifier:

“From this location, it’s only about sea, archipelago, islands, trees and animals. Buildings are not visible. In winter the sea froze and in summer boats pass by. It feels like humans are strangers.”

A feeling of picturesque scenery, “a true postcard,” or fascination or, again, being away in a nice place (according to Kaplan, Kaplan and Ryan 1998, a restorative experience) is verbalized literally in “feels like being on holiday.”

On the other hand, some sort of balance or “harmony” between natural elements and urban cityscape is sought as it also came up frequently. The uniqueness of having “real forest” and agricultural landscape²⁴⁹ within the boundaries of the city and in close reach was often mentioned, for instance “*keskellä kaupunkia luonnon helmassa*” (*in the middle of the city in nature’s lap*). The fact that there is diversity is appreciated, that natural and urban elements, cultural and natural remnants are present in the same scenery: “*Historiaa, tykistö paikalla, ja voi jopa haukkoja pöngätä*” (*history, artillery present, and one can even spot some hawks*).

In addition, it is interesting to note that “landscape” often entails a sense of space, an expanse, depth of field, as opposed to enclosed forest scenery, which was just called forest. In the following quote about a ‘beautiful landscape,’ the balance between open landscape and forest is highly appreciated. “*Aukeaa maisemaa ja metsää sopivassa suhteessa*” (*landscape and forest with a good ratio*).

Closeness to home was often emphasized, and “nature” observed to be available literally from your doorstep:

“Luontokokemuksia lähellä kotia” (*nature experiences close to home*).

“Luonnon rauha niin lähellä kotiovea!” (*peace of nature so close to your home entrance*).

²⁴⁹ This kind of place is for instance Viikki area, or the Haltiala farm.



■ Figure 163. A view from Kivinokka Island towards the city. Views from the isles and inlets surrounding Helsinki city center, such as Kivinokka or Melkki, or green areas where the city can be seen in the background, such as from Linnanmäki Hill towards the railway are examples of viewpoints where it is possible to be ‘in nature’ and ‘in the city’ at the same time. One is in contact with the sunwarmed bedrock, in the shade of trees, but at the same time, in a place or at least seeing a place where others are too. The consciousness of the surrounding city may give comfort and sense of belonging, but it is possible to enjoy the nature experience, a contact with living things. Photo by the author 2013.

“Close to the city center and still wild nature.”

Being close but far, inside and outside was a way to express the balance between urban and green. For instance, the skiing track around Malmi Airport is special, because one can “observe the lights of runways and planes while enjoying exercise in nature.” Nature experience easily accessible by foot or public transport is appreciated;

“Mahdollisuus vaipua luonnon rauhaan mutta päästä myös nopeasti urbaaniin sykkeeseen – ja ilman omaa autoa ja parkkipaikkojen etsiskelyä!”

(Possibility to sink into nature’s peace but get to the urban pulse quickly – and without your own car and looking out for a parking spot!)

The simultaneous presence of the city and nature is an asset:

“... metrojen ääni taustalla. Helsingin upeus: kasvava kaupunki jossa luonto on läsnä” (... the sound of the subways in the background. The greatness of Helsinki: a growing city where nature is present).

One stated about Vartiosaari island that *“for urban people from large cities such a tranquil and wild place quite in the middle of town was something unknown and made them jealous.”*

Nature is a balancing factor:

“rikas ja elävä maisema on hyvää vastapainoa rakennetun ympäristön suoraviivaisuudelle” (rich and living landscape offers a good counterpart to the straightforwardness of the built environment).

Places where sea and forest can be seen simultaneously, are of special character, observed as vulnerable:

“On ilo liikkua Helsingissä näissä luvattoman harvoiksi käyneissä paikoissa, joissa yhä näkee samanaikaisesti sekä metsää että merta” (it is a pleasure to move around in Helsinki in these places where one can see forest and sea at the same time, places that have become far too scarce).

5. Experience of beauty is found in both urban and natural landscapes.

Nature is a source of aesthetic experience, but beauty is seen in urban elements as well, such as well-designed parks and plantings as well as buildings/architecture. Sources for aesthetic pleasures include for instance the Christmas lights in the city center or the domes of the Suurkirkko Church with its gilded stars, the sight of which, while abroad, one respondent described as giving a twinge of homesickness (*“koti-ikävä vihlaisee”*). Human made elements are an essential part of city identity, for instance Kauppatori or Senaatintori market place or landmarks such as churches. A feeling of freedom was also connected with the expanse of space in the city, *“avaraa alaa” (open area)*, as opposed to being too cramped (*“ei täyteen ahdettua”*). This brings us back to the observation at the beginning, that besides forest and natural elements, open areas and views are appreciated.

“Modern” experiences (*“moderni elämys”*) such as design museums, especially “next to nature” are appreciated. Old buildings and natural features such as rocks represent beauty. Even Itä-Pasila, often considered a concrete jungle, and not in a good way, was humorously described as *“rumanhauska”* (ugly funny). Agricultural fields were described as “visually significant,” *“visuaalisesti merkittäviä.”*

Small urban maritime pleasures such as a glass of wine in hand, observing afterwhirls of boats in the harbor were appreciated, too:

“Med vinglasen i handen är det möjligt att sätta sig vid bänkarna invid den prydda kanalen. Små och medelstora båtar går förbi och bilder ringar efter sig, vilket är otroligt vackert” (with a wine glass in hand, it is possible to sit down by the canal. Small and middle-sized boats go by, making twirls, which is unbelievably beautiful).

The results reinforced some observations in the Urban Happiness -study (Kyttä et al. 2016, see section 2.7.3), where findings suggested that *beauty* is the main factor for livability and perceived environmental quality, and easy walking and cycling and presence of, or closeness to, nature also dominate as positive quality factors. Generally, positive places are significantly more green than negative ones (Kyttä et al. 2016). A beautiful place or environment in the

NUP responses included mostly sea and rocks/cliffs both inland and along shoreline and forests, landscapes and open views, extent, waterfronts and hill-tops with lookouts, as well as historic parks (Esplanadi and Tähtitorninvuori) and manor milieus (Tuomarinkylä and Annala). (See appendix 5:3, Figure A14 for the heatmap of mapped responses for a beautiful place.) Here it must be noted that most of the markings were situated in the green areas, although the question did not so imply.²⁵⁰

In the open questions about beauty, references to parks were the theme that occurred the most frequently (63 or 74 mentions, depending on the data analysis method, the larger number considering all forms of the word). The next popular themes were rocks (*kallio(t)*, 46 mentions), the sea and landscape, history, forest/woodland, nature as well as manor and villas. In the rock-theme category rocky areas in seashores, parks and islands, as well as views opening from them to the open sea and archipelago dominated. References to parks around Helsinki were numerous. In addition to the Central Park, the Annala Manor garden and riverside parks in Keravanjoki were pinpointed as 'beautiful places,' as well as Stansvik Manor milieu with its cultural history and oaks, Haaga Rhododendron Park, the Botanical Garden in Kaisaniemi and Tullisaari Manor Park. The nature theme included nature experiences and woodlands. Besides sea landscape, historic parks and environments are considered beautiful.

6. Sea and forest act as main qualifiers.

When it was considered, which elements were the most significant in terms of green space, one can see that a lot of the experiential quality was in some way linked to the maritime character and closeness to the sea: *"Meri ja sen rannat ovat Helsingin sydän"* (the sea and its shores are the heart of Helsinki)

"Coming from a large landlocked city in Germany for me the most unique aspect of Helsinki nature is the islands of the archipelago with its forests and rock-cliffs. It makes Helsinki really special."

Besides places and features associated with the characteristic sea landscape, the (urban) forest is another meaningful typology of green areas. It is loved for its personal meaning, memories of childhood or connotations it is given in one's personal life, or the experience it evokes or is hoped to evoke: *"Rakastan metsää, muistuttaa kotiseudusta"* (I love the forest, it reminds me of my homestead.)

²⁵⁰ If one takes the liberty, for illustrational purposes, of excluding the controversial land use areas of Malmi Airport and Vartiosaari island, in which an active response has been initiated among certain groups to preserve them, - as they are among the new development areas in the Master Plan, - condensations of responses appear with a slightly different emphasis; Haltiala fields, Seurasaari, forested areas as well as historic parks in the center show more clearly.

"Lapsuuteni ja nuoruuteni tärkeä paikka, oli helppo mennä, auttoi luontosuhteen kehittymisessä" (an Important place of my childhood and youth, was easy to go to, helped develop my nature relationship), about Central Park.

Keskuspuisto, Central Park, was mentioned a lot to describe a place where you can "breathe freely," "breath fresh air" or "loosen up/relax" (*"hengittää," "hengähtää," "hengittää raikasta ilmaa"*), "roam freely" (*"kulkea vapaasti"*), have "room to breathe," (*"tilaa hengittää," "henkireikä"*) or escape from noise (*"pakopaikka metelistä"*). Interestingly enough, the park is seen as a remote forest, *"umpimetsä,"* a word that suggests it is at the same time far away from everything and dense in terms of vegetation, although the actual physical reality does not always support that observation. The Central Park is about 300 meters at its narrowest point of width, traversed by major highways and translucent to the surrounding city in places. Also its noise levels are quite high in reality - hence "silence" or "naturelike" is, in many places within the park, an image or memory rather than a fact. It is possible that the image is based on personal experiences in certain significant nodes such as the *Pirkkola* and *Paloheinä* sports parks, areas where sports activities happen, or *Haltialan aarnialue* (a primeval forest patch) rather than the totality of the whole area. As long as buildings or roads are not seen or heard in certain patches, one feels like one is in the "middle of wilderness" (*"tuntee olevansa keskellä erämaata"*), and one can capture the 'forest feel' (*"metsäntuntu"*). Large green places feel remote and "like you traveled far" (*"kuin olisit matkustanut kauas"*). The words atmosphere and feeling (*"tunnelma," "fiilis"*) are repeated a lot (see appendix 5:4-5:5 for more quotes about the *Keskuspuisto* Central Park).

In at least two responses, the word 'essence' (*"ydinolemus"/"perusolemus"*) was used, referring to the fact that the NUP is a way to designate a signature landscape, something representing both a city and a nation, its essence, so to speak, and the forest has a perhaps nostalgic connotation of an original or traditional landscape:²⁵¹

"Metsä on kuitenkin Suomen maiseman ydinolemus, minkä vuoksi mitään muuta maisemaa ei mielestäni voida valita kaupunkipuistoksi kuin Keskuspuiston, joka on jo sellaisenaan valmis" (forest is, however, the essence of the Finnish landscape, which is why no other landscape can, in my mind, be selected as [National] Urban Park than the Central Park, which is complete as such).

²⁵¹ It was also interesting to note that one particular place can manifest the essential for a larger area, like a hill where the attraction of a ski track is embodied:

"Juuri tähän uhanalaiseen kohtaan sijoittuu kaunis kallioinen mäkimaisema, josta lasketellaan suksilla alas Pirkkolantien suuntaan. Tämä on minulle kohde, johon on päästävä ainakin muutama kerta vuodessa aurinkoisena talvipäivänä. Ilman tätä valoisa luonnonkaunista maisemaa Pirkkolan hiihtoladut menettäisivät olennaisen houkutuksensa." (Right at this threatened point a beautiful rocky hilly landscape is situated, from where one skis down to Pirkkolantie Street. This is for me a place, where one needs to go to, at least a few times a year in a sunny afternoon. Without this bright and naturally beautiful landscape the ski tracks of Pirkkola would lose their essential attraction)

7. Temporality and historicity are sources of powerful experience.

The word “history” appeared in the open answers a total of 853 times. When this is combined with the mentions of the words “manor” (293) and “villa” (129), the second most popular words connected with historical landscapes, together they were mentioned 1275 times. There were numerous other words as well, describing things connected with cultural history. It may be fair to say that history is an important factor in the significance of places to people, and often linked with identity. Temporality found its expressions, firstly, in the way that the respondents talked about traces of cultural and natural history, secondly, in stories and personal narratives and, thirdly, in the description of seasonal change or times of day in the landscape. The first aspect is represented by such things as fully grown ancient trees or old structures present in the current landscape, the second is manifesting the history of the place linked to family history and significant places, and the third shows itself with signs of seasons, such as fall colors or migrating birds.

Granite cliffs, hills and rocks, the visible part of the ancient Precambrian Fennoscandia bedrock, exposed in many places within the urban structure, especially in the seashore, are part of a unique nature. They represent encounters of the past, and are present in unexpected places. Geomorphological processes, visible signs of the process of becoming, are seen in relation to how time has molded the environment:

”kalliot ovat muinaisten vuorten juuria, jotka ovat syntyneet kymmenien kilometrien syvyydessä ja nousseet miljardien vuosien kuluessa pintaan vuorten kuluessa pois päältä” (the rocks are roots of ancient mountains born in the depth of dozens of kilometers and exposed along billions of years as the mountains have eroded).”

A respondent stated that: *”graffitien peittämässä huviloissa kohtaavat menneisyys ja nykyisyys” (past and present encounter in old villas covered in graffiti).*

There is also concern for the remnants of history being preserved: *”on anteeksiantamatonta jos keskiaikaiset pellot tuhotaan” (it is unforgivable if medieval fields are destroyed).*

Bygone times are sensed in their fragments and evoke a relationship with nature and an empathetic understanding of how it used to be. Rare trees like large oaks are seen a sign of past glory in manor house gardens (see appendix 5:5). Layers of history from different eras were mentioned, from ice age to bronze age to modern monuments. Consciousness of continuity intensifies, as *”people lived here before us”* is the message of seal hunters’ gravemounds,²⁵² and visitors can imagine themselves “in a laid back Sunday summer day in a Wright painting” and travel a hundred years back in time, triggering

²⁵² ”Muutamilla kalliolla on pronssiajan hylkeenpyytäjien röykkiöhautoja kertomassa meille, että elettiin alueella ennenkin.”

imagination (Stansvik manor).²⁵³ A place can also “ooze memories” (*“henkii muistoja”*), often of a happy childhood or other pleasurable memories such as from summer holidays or first encounters. Landscape of personal experience or a unique Helsinki landscape is accounted for as a “landscape of the soul” or soul landscape (*“sielunmaisema”*).

Living history alongside the modern city was mentioned several times with poetic expressions such as *“historian havinaa”* (wings of history beating). The remnants of industrial or traffic history are also appreciated in the urban scenery, such as cranes, ice breakers or harbor structures, or plane-spotting at the Malmi Airport throughout the decades. “Scent of the railroad tracks” was mentioned in the same sentence with the tranquil of a lazy summer evening, associated with its feel. One respondent commented that “the layers of history should be brought visible” with appropriate signage,²⁵⁴ as a time travel to history. The context is seen as a value in itself, and the buildings are useless remnants without their original context, as the example of Malmi Airport illustrates (see appendix 5:5).

Effects of the seasons such as fall and winter storms may be sources of (sublime) experiences. The fiery storms of the autumn can be attractive:

“Syksyn myrskyssä ja hurjuudessa on jotain kiehtovaa” (there is something fascinating about the storms and ferociousness of the autumn”).

The cycle of seasons is visible in deciduous trees (*“Lehtipuiden luonnon kierto”*), from bareness through “chartreuse lace” (*“vaaleanvihreä pitsi”*) to lush greenness (*“tuuhea vihreys”*), yellow and red hues and back to bare. In places pregnant with history “time stands still” (*“aika on pysähtynyt”*). Orange leaves in certain scenery mark a start of the autumn (*“Laakson ruska aloittaa syksyn”*) and watching the sunset from an outlook wraps up the day.

“Kaivopuistossa käydään korkkaamassa kevät ja hyvästelemässä kesä,” (in Kaivopuisto Park the spring is welcomed, [literally] “popped” like a champagne cork, which happens in that particular place in 1st of May), and the summer is bid farewell.)

8. Knowledge behind the seen adds to the experience and vice versa

In historically significant places and nature equally, the experience of their value is largely based on the knowledge about the places that makes up a value system. It is interesting to look into the role of background knowledge in the responses. Some approached the subject quite scientifically, grounding their positive experience on awareness of ecology, for instance the significance of green infrastructure in terms of climate change, biodiversity or the well-being

²⁵³ “Kävijä voi kuvitella itsensä Magnus von Wrightin maalausten leppoisaan sunnuntai- seen kesäpäivään ja siirtyä ainakin sata vuotta taaksepäin ajassa.”

²⁵⁴ “Historian kerrostumat Vallilanlaakson alueella voisi tuoda näkyviksi historiasta kertovilla kylteillä”

of people as well as fish in the rapids. “Pure nature” (*puhdas luonto*) and “real forest” (*oikea metsä*) were often mentioned, or feeling small in front of the grandeur of nature (referring to flowing water, natural forest with fully grown trees or extended views to the horizon from the seashore). Experience adds to understanding, and vice versa.²⁵⁵ (See appendix 5:5-5:6 for more quotes.)

There was a lot of information involved, and the respondents seemed very knowledgeable about the city’s history. Stories behind the places they mapped seem to add to the personal meaning they attach to a place as well as its general significance. National significance was mentioned as such a value (Olympiakylä and -puisto, i.e. Olympic village and park, Malmi Airport, Suomenlinna). Typical ways of spending summer holidays were considered a part of culture, such as summer huts and urban gardening, which were frequently mentioned as experiential assets as well, and as places of shared experiences (*“yhteisen kokemisen paikka”*).

The invisible, the knowledge behind the seen, includes the societal context and tradition. The social aspect, a democratic ideal, was verbalized in many responses: *“kaikki antavat tilaa toisilleen siellä,”* everyone is given and gives room to each other, and people from all age groups and interests can come together in peace:

“Täällä tapaavat kaikki vauvasta vaariin, koiran kävelyttäjistä golf-faajaan, huippufutaajasta metsäkuntoilijaan, seikkailijasta rauhottajaan, ja kaikki sovussa” (here everyone meets, from baby to grandfather, from dog-walker to golfer, top football player to forest runner, adventurer to peacelover, and everyone in peace).

For instance, the joyous hospitality of locals in *Kumpulan siirtolapuutarha* (community garden, cultivation lot with huts) is described as an antithesis to sulking, as they are “happily greeting a visitor and invite to visit their lot if you are lucky”:

²⁵⁵ *“Merelle Viikinkikalliolta avautuvat näkymät saavat ymmärtämään meren merkityksen Helsingille, kautta vuosisatojen, lähes luonnontilaisessa metsässä käyskenteley puolestaan saa ymmärtämään luonnon merkityksen terveydelle ja mielenrauhalle”* (Vartiosaari). (The views opening up to the sea from Viikinkikallio rock make you understand the significance of the sea to Helsinki, throughout the centuries, walking in an almost primeval forest, in turn, makes you understand the significance of nature for health and peace of mind)”

A response given in English: *“The view from the boat helps to understand how important the sea is for Helsinki.”* Others: *“Faasimuunnos”* (the moment of transformation from ice to water and vice versa), *“jään sulamisen ja meren jäätyksen hetki”*, as well as the origin of the word *“kluuvi”* (in many old names for places, meaning bays and wetlands closing up by vegetation) were explained. A park may fulfill the “identifiers/features of paradise as it is defined in cognitive theology”: *“Paratiisin tunnusmerkit kuten se on kognitiivisessa uskontotieteessä määritelty,”* and topographical features, changes in elevation were given meaning: *“korkeuserot hyppyrinmäen alueella tekevät siitä kiinnostavan paikan”* (variation in elevation in the skijumping area make it an interesting place).

"Täällä ei tapaa jäyhiä murjottajia vaan iloisia ihmisiä, jotka tervehtivät ystävällisesti vierailijaa ja hyvällä onnella vielä kutsuvat käymään tontilleenkin."

Knowledge of planners' intentions and the continuum of the conceptual green network was also perceptible in the replies and manifested in the way they were written about. The Green Fingers were mentioned as the "former backbones of Helsinki City planning" (*"Helsingin kaavoituksen aiemmat selkärangat"*).

The comments included some suggestions how to enhance the experience, and thus also the view of citizens is analytical and future-driven, having that invisible layer embedded. It was repeatedly noted that Helsinki green areas are not necessarily valued the way they should be. There is concern for preservation of values in the future, densifying city:

"3-400 vuotiaat männyt odottavat kaarna kylmänä mitä tapahtuu," (the ancient trees are expecting the worst, "with cold bark" vs. "with cold heart" - "sydän kylmänä" as in scared of what is to happen)."

Summary and discussion of the survey results

1. Essence, essential characteristics, identity

Helsinki's character, an essence, if you will, was verbalized as maritime features, seaside, forest, cliffs, pine trees, but also as modern city living, and consisting of particular and distinct historic places, parks and buildings. The co-existence of nature and city came up repeatedly. Nature's art as "sculpture and theater" form a spectacle in a unique way, and people are at their best giving off an easygoing atmosphere. Central places that tourist and locals visit, such as the axis of Esplanadi park and Kauppatori, Senate Square and Suurkirkko Dome Church, exemplify the image of the city, although the comments were very conscious of the multitude of different areas and the abundance of suburban areas, depending on each respondent's own sphere of life.²⁵⁶

Feeling of identity can be thought to equally stem from social interaction. Public spaces, especially in the central parts of a city, are places of encounter, where people come together, and as such are evidently important for city identity. When looking at three kinds of surveys,²⁵⁷ it can be noticed that places of

²⁵⁶ About the characteristics of Helsinki and its nature it was said for instance:

"Meri on osa meidän sisimpäämme" (the sea is part of our inner self).

"... helsingiläinen identiteetti on yhdistelmä fiksumaa kerrostaloasumista ja kaupunkimetsää lähiluontona" (Helsinki identity is a combination of smart living in blocks of flats and urban forest as nearby nature).

"Helsingin luonto on pienipiirteistä, sitä luonnehtii jatkuva äkkinäinen korkeusvaihtelu, kuivempien kallioiden ja niiden kosteiden juurten epätasaisesti kirjoma paikallinen monimuotoisuus." which summarizes the range of landscape types; (delicate/small scale, characterized by sudden changes in elevation, the local diversity unevenly embroidered by drier rocks and their moist "roots").

²⁵⁷ NUP survey; contact with others, *Helsingin Helmet*; fostering being together and *Aluesuunnitelmien käyttäjäkyselyt*; best place for encounter, maps by Nyberg 2018.

encounters were registered mostly in urban historic parks in the city center peninsula. Although natural landscape dominates in every other response category, and makes up almost identical heatmaps, this does not apply to responses about places of encounters with other citizens, where central places dominate. This may not come as a surprise, as these are places with the most diversified and intense user groups, local and visitors alike.²⁵⁸

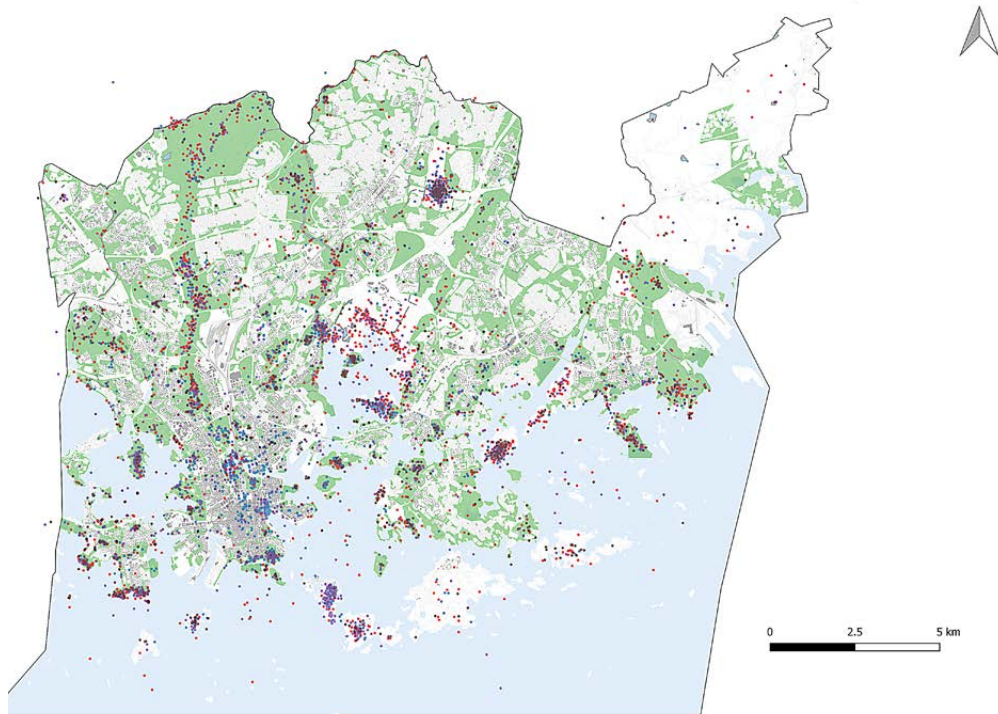
When asked about a place that exemplifies Helsinki, the city center and its immediate vicinity were emphasized, as well as, outside the center, some islands and the Central Park. The sense and feel of Helsinki stems from maritime character, public access for everyone and history. Lynch's notion of the importance of landmarks is reinforced, and the fact that places of shared recognition are the places of frequent encounter and as such generally more central than peripheral. The question "A place that I would proudly present to my foreign guests" reflected ideas of places that are considered significant in the Helsinki narrative, and pinpointed mostly nature-related places, coastline, urban woodland and recreational areas and routes, such as the Central Park.²⁵⁹

People's responses to the outline for the possible future National Urban Park reflect the idea of places that are, in their mind, significant for the Helsinki story, and the city's identity. Seascape, islands and coastline, as well as the Central Park, Helsinki Park and other Green Fingers, were included when people were asked to draw the outlines of the possible NUP. Urban forests as well as a unified green network supporting mobility were given emphasis. It is interesting to note that the 'blue-green inner circle' formed by the two biggest and most central of the Green Fingers, a feature that has a reference to the idea of the original Central Park outlined by Jung at the beginning of the 20th century (see section 3.3.3), came up in the responses.

Extended views, often represented by sea views, were brought up as often as the forest, the restorative quality of which is often emphasized by professionals. The NUP survey responses as well as other recent survey responses support the fact that in citizens' experience of Helsinki identity, maritime character and extensive views are pivotal. In experiencing beauty, however, natural places dominate. Historic parks of the city center were well represented in all categories, as appeared also in other surveys, such as the *Helsingin Helmet* -survey ("Helsinki Pearls," Lahtinen 2017).

²⁵⁸ The findings of the Urban Happiness study also suggest that although green structure was valued experientially, densely built areas were also meaningful for inhabitants, especially concerning social quality (Kyttä et al. 2013).

²⁵⁹ In addition, Vanhankaupunginlahti Bay, Seurasaari, Suomenlinna, Kaivopuisto, Lautasaari southern shores, Vartiosaari. The historic Malmi domestic airport in the northeastern part of the city stands out in both questions, as a separate area from other popular categories. It stands out especially in land-use planning -related surveys. The city is planning a new housing area to replace the airport in the 2016 City Plan (Master Plan).

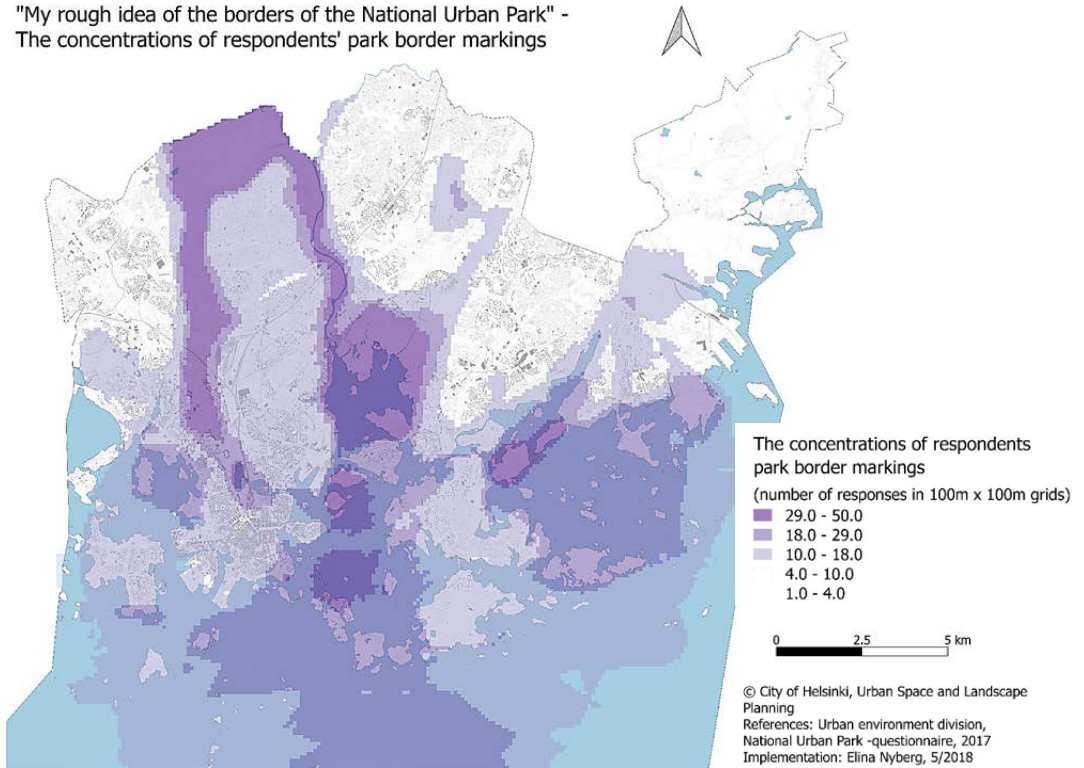


■ Figure 164. Hidden gems, a Place that I would proudly present to foreign guests, Places exemplifying Helsinki, and Special features of Helsinki nature put together show an overrepresentation of the Green Fingers, seashores and islands, plus the Malmi Airport area. Map by Nyberg 2018, based on the data in NUP survey 2017, Mapita and City of Helsinki.

To conclude on the question of identity, akin to essence, it can be said that certain areas such as the city center and the sea as well as green areas and historic parks are seen as exemplifying Helsinki, but traditions, features of society and social interaction have their part in creating identity. One of the most important ones, affecting peoples' experience, is the public access to parks. The concept of a National Urban Park as a basis for the survey made the respondents think which features define a city, including some and excluding others. Essential characteristics or an 'essence' of places are akin to concepts of image and identity. The factors that contribute to identity, have former been considered mainly those of physical or visual appearance, real or imagined (e.g. Lynch 1960).²⁶⁰ In PPGIS surveys as well as other accounts of individual perception,

²⁶⁰ According to Lynch, environmental image can be analyzed into three components, identity, structure and meaning (Lynch 1960 p. 10) and the visual image of a place or a city can be defined by paths, edges, nodes, landmarks and perceptible entities. Lynch (1960) also talks about imageability and illusory images that may not change even if proved otherwise.

"My rough idea of the borders of the National Urban Park" -
The concentrations of respondents' park border markings



■ Figure 165. A grid analysis created to examine in more depth the responses concerning possible outlines of the NUP, shows that the most responses were given to Central Park, the Vantaa River environs and Vanhankaupunginlahti Bay with its islands (the inner blue green circle formed by Helsinki Park and Central Park). The largest single value related to these areas (of recreational, nature, culture) were the natural values. Nyberg 2018.

the response may equally be based on perception and impressions as on memories, sometimes even illusory images of places that have or have not been encountered.

2. Experience

Grahn and Stigdotter write about Perceived Sensory Dimensions (PSDs), which are based on the affordances they can offer (Grahn, Stigdotter & Berggren-Bärring 2005; Grahn & Stigdotter 2010). The PSDs correspond to basic human needs: 1) “serene” - places where we can hear the sounds of nature; 2) “wild” - places where we can be fascinated by untouched nature; 3) “lush” - places where we can experience the variation in vegetation and animal life across the seasons; 4) “space” - places that allow us to enter into another world without sharp contours, disturbances or signals that demand attention; 5) “common” - places where we can engage in common activities; 6) “pleasure garden” - enclosed and secure places where we can enjoy a feeling of safety; 7) “center/fest” - squares, meeting places and cafeterias/restaurants we can

visit with other people; and 8) “culture” - places where we can experience traces of previous generations’ lives (Grahn, Stigsdotter & Berggren-Barring 2005). In a 2015 study (Skärbäck 2020) about Russian and Chinese students, “Serene” is the most preferred, and “Space” is also very much in demand, while there are low demands for “Festive” and “Culture”; just as in the Swedish studies (e.g., Grahn & Stigsdotter 2010).

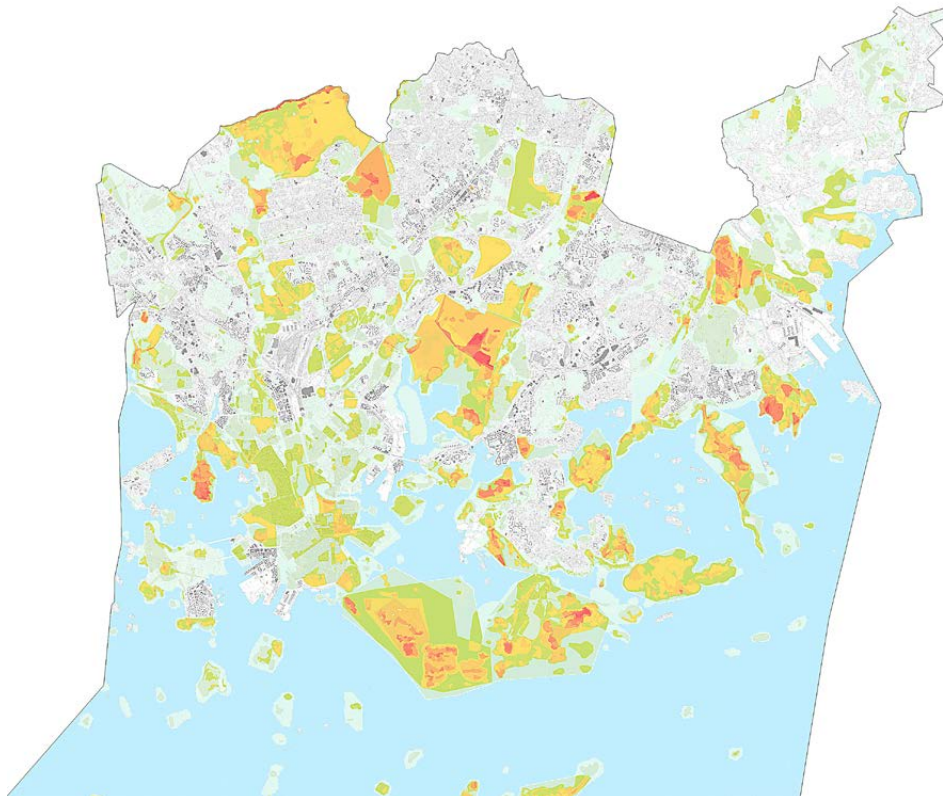
These categories are visible in the NUP responses as well, although the serene and wild are overrepresented. “Lush” and “space” were possible to depict from the data, as were meeting places, not the least because of the questions posed. The experience of traces of previous generations’ lives is clearly an asset, too, although not necessarily verbalized with the word “culture.”

In terms of experience, nature observation and historic places are sources of powerful landscape experience in the green areas system. The experience of calm and tranquility is sought after, involving serenity as an all-encompassing experience, as well as elements and details of flora and fauna. Nature and urbanity mixed, and in close contact with each other, represent balance, as does the juxtaposition of different landscape types. Nature is experienced with all the senses, and considered beautiful. Beauty and sensory pleasures are, however, found in urban elements as well. Urban forests represent ‘Finnishness’ and Helsinki identity for many. Experience of places, be they remembered or imagined, constructs our perception.

3. Values

The responses give insight into the idea of values behind the preferences, and it is interesting to reflect the findings of the survey with other surveys, for one, and with institutionalized values such as the public officials’ value systems, for another. Looking at both natural and cultural values put together (Figure 166) it can be seen that the Green Fingers of Helsinki (large wedges of green extending radially from the city center to the outskirts and beyond) as well as the maritime area with its islands, are valued, in both professional evaluations with a legal status and citizens’ experiences. They are also the places that exemplify Helsinki according to the NUP survey. Citizens’ concerns around losing some values embedded in the green landscape of Helsinki were visible in the National Urban Park survey results, perhaps more than other comparable public surveys, although areas considered at risk are generally heavily represented in the survey responses.

In mapping and understanding the experiential value of green areas, their essential characteristics, and the ideas of places’ identity, map-based questionnaires offer valuable insight, when one remains aware of possible biases and limitations within the method. Moreover, mapping citizens’ experience and preferences of green space help understand the values that these conceptions are based on. Many responses were very analytical and well informed, which is not a surprise as the experiential knowledge of residents is an abundant



■ Figure 166. Value condensations, based on the intensity of their occurrence on top of each other. The warmer the color, the more coinciding are institutionally recognized values, cultural and natural combined. City of Helsinki/Juha Niemelä, in Jaakkola et al 2016 p. 22-23.

resource, albeit often focused on their own neighborhood and everyday environment and defined by the activities they are engaged with. The view of the city's assets and defects is greatly affected by the major means of transport or hobbies of the respondent.²⁶¹

The findings suggest that there is significant overlap in the areas that are experientially valued, compared to the ones that are evaluated in other mapped data provided by authorities and experts on the national, regional and city levels, such as preservation legislation (see the city official's narrative).²⁶² Mapped and experienced 'nature values' for instance, according to this and

²⁶¹ A biker, car driver and frequent sailor or kayaker sees the city from a different perspective and tends to pay attention to the things that facilitate or hinder their own everyday or holiday experience in particular, which is of course only natural and not limited to so-called laypeople. The expert (city planner for instance) should, however, recognize their own biases more clearly.

²⁶² This is true with the slight exception of some outer islands with restricted accessibility and generally rather unfamiliar places, such as the newly acquired Östersundom area.

some other surveys,²⁶³ coincide greatly with the value condensations based on mapped data of areas with a nature preservation status. Large green areas, the historic city center and islands are places of natural and cultural value condensations as well as places that citizens experience as beautiful and meaningful. They appear in most of the other response categories as well. What is known and mapped elsewhere is perhaps observed and may affect the informed citizens' view, consciously or subconsciously, and result in these two greatly coinciding. Thus there may be a positive mutual feedback loop involved.

3.5.6 Findings for the analysis framework

From the material in the previous sections (3.5.1-3.5.5), it can be concluded that different narratives enrich the understanding of both visible and invisible factors, and contribute to how a phenomenological analysis framework should be constructed to better take into account 'all sides of the story' and show the places' different faces. The different narratives described speak first and foremost to *Values* and *Underlying meanings* but also interpret *Instant experience* and *Evident functionality* into *Perceived quality* of the green urban landscape. Besides the narrative of the past and the immediate experiences on site, other narratives such as city officials' publicly stated visions and strategies, the writings of academics and the results of public surveys can provide useful information for a phenomenology-inspired analysis and deepen the analysis framework. All of them are in fact *public* narratives, as well,²⁶⁴ in their own particular manner. Professional articles are targeted to a selected audience, and results of public surveys are nowadays available online (Helsinki Region Infoshare).²⁶⁵

First of all, the way things work governmentally are different in different contexts, depending on the societal structure and the characteristics of the regime. This has an effect on how public spaces such as parks are governed. It must be noted, as well, that the public narrative often remains an 'insider' one, as the citizen as an 'outsider' has difficulty in grasping the role of each actor, department or governmental body in the way things work. On the other hand, they should not need to, if a city government's processes are designed with the customer (the inhabitant) in mind. In that sense, those managing and governing green space control the narrative and have the power to form it, at least in the eyes of the citizen who is not aware of the multitude of power structures within the city government and between them and the politicians.

²⁶³ Replies to the questions on 'special characteristics of nature' in the NUP survey, 'unique urban nature' in Helsingin Helmet -survey, and in *kerrokartalla* -survey (*Yleiskaavakysely 2013*)

²⁶⁴ Especially in today's world the individual, private narratives are made public in varying degrees by sharing them online.

²⁶⁵ Apart from detailed open responses or anything that might connect persons to the information they have given, and not interpreted or classified but as raw data.

The governance, the whys and hows of green systems, for instance, are invisible to the outsider, and only different sections of it are visible to the different public officials themselves, as well. Especially in large and complex organizations such as the one in Helsinki, and probably Boston, as well,²⁶⁶ a sole actor only sees a fragment of the totality and often imagines the rest of it from their own point of view.²⁶⁷

The academic and professional discourse and debate, both in history and in the present, are influencing the processes of becoming in the planning and perception of green urban landscapes. Public opinions expressed in surveys are narratives that together enable a wider understanding of 'how it is to live in a place'. They are often calling for stronger measures for the preservation of landscape values and may even be suspicious of the motives for the actions of the city, especially when the explicitly expressed values and the concrete decisions of the planning apparatus seem to be conflicting with each other. All of these narratives provide the kind of information that helps evaluate strategies and plan reports from the point of view of how successful they are in bringing forth and influencing the recognition of the values that they claim.

The narratives of future plans and their evaluation in academic and professional contexts, that the excerpts exemplified, speak to the *Invisible*. They provide new insights to mostly the *Situational context* and *Underlying meanings*, presenting the historical and ideological context, the original design ideas, and their reflections in the professional discourse. As such they provide another layer for understanding the significance of certain perceptible layers and their role in the totality. A city government's policies for urban structure and green space are representations and manifestations of *Values*, and together with the political bodies and citizens' views, they make a narrative of the values' dominance over each other, their interrelations, so to speak. The future visions are often based on assumptions and interpretations that are further based on each author's and group's value systems, their ideas of essential qualities of places and aspects to strengthen or replace with others.

The view of an insider, as self-reflection, can similarly be a part of phenomenological analysis. It is in a way a first-person phenomenological inquiry, and an account of the invisible, the visions and objectives that have taken form as a result of processes with varying durations, and often as an interlacing narrative that reinforces itself and gets reinforced by the parallel narratives in the operating environment. A career working for the city government for a lengthy period of time, like my own, involves participating in many parallel processes and projects concerning the green urban landscape of a city. While following and initiating these tracks, one forms a viewpoint of the totality that

²⁶⁶ although the researcher is not adequately familiar with it to make an informed statement,

²⁶⁷ If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail (trad.)

is nourished by the information gained along with the endeavors that one is involved with, directly or indirectly. This narrative is enriched and challenged by others' experiences who have a different view, such as citizens and academics.

Similarly, a familiarization process happens for someone living in a place and being exposed to its landscapes. Having access to this kind of experiential information gives a kind of a 'sneak peek' into the other parallel narratives, although it needs to be kept in mind that other narratives exist that never get expressed and thus never surface from the invisible. Consequently, the overall understanding is collected from fragments - and just like in other collages, the way the parts are organized or what kind of emphasis each particle is given, is a subjective decision. The fairytale and juxtaposed images are, in turn, making visible the similarities and differences on the first visible and perceptible layer between the case examples and between the cities they are situated in. They tell a story about the *Situational context* and character of those places, and as such reflect personal values and observations, distanced and subjectified at the same time. Personal narratives and ones that are meant to be shared are creating as well as documenting the official narrative.²⁶⁸

The physical features and details of landscape such as landforms, materials or vegetation as well as characteristics of landscape space, may define the multisensory experience, and act as nodes attaching memories and associations. They may be considered too trivial and be overlooked in analyses, but may play an important role in citizen experience as well as designers', planners' and their critics' perception of places. Details may also attach strategic thinking into the experienced reality, as they help profile and clarify the objectives and assess their realism. Plans stem from strategies, whose role may not be recognized in the design history, because they are invisible and often only expressed in words. The words, however, are embodied in plans, whose origin may not get documented. The invisible layer of strategies, plans and discourses inspired by them, as well as the tactile layer of materials and details, vegetation, etc., are enriched and enriching each other in a phenomenological analysis. By exploring different narratives consequently and in a parallel manner, one can let them inform each other and reveal the essential elements for the experience of places.

Finally, the PPGIS survey responses deserve some further contemplation in terms of the analysis framework. The aspects brought to light with this data, have their role as examples of the *Invisible* - personal preferences,

²⁶⁸ It must be noted, again, that my experience in Boston is a first (or one of the first) impression(s) of a visitor, and in Helsinki, a more experienced one of a public official and a long time resident. As a result, the impressions are not comparable in their profundity. In addition, in choosing certain photos or key words to describe something one selects how to tell a story, what to emphasize or omit. This is the power and weakness of experiential narratives - they can be powerful and interesting at their best, but also misleading and biased at their worst.

memories and experiences of others, and efforts to make them visible. This kind of material appears in the V-I framework in numerous ways, and the analysis is complemented along with the phenomenological reading of the citizen survey responses with a number of aspects; many aspects are deepened and personal hues of others' experiences and verbalizations added. In addition, notions of identity and values (personal, shared and institutionalized) add to the understanding. The immediate aesthetic assessment of whether something is beautiful or ugly nourishes the *Instant experience* and is a common way of describing landscapes, as well as the observation of possibilities and affordances. The connections between the invisible and visible aspects are strengthened by way of interpreting these into qualifying factors. Connections happen when verbalized, represented and interpreted, - when knowledge transforms the instant experience into values, meanings and significances. *Perceived quality* is an interpretation of a set of criteria, more analytical than just the instant experience of a place.

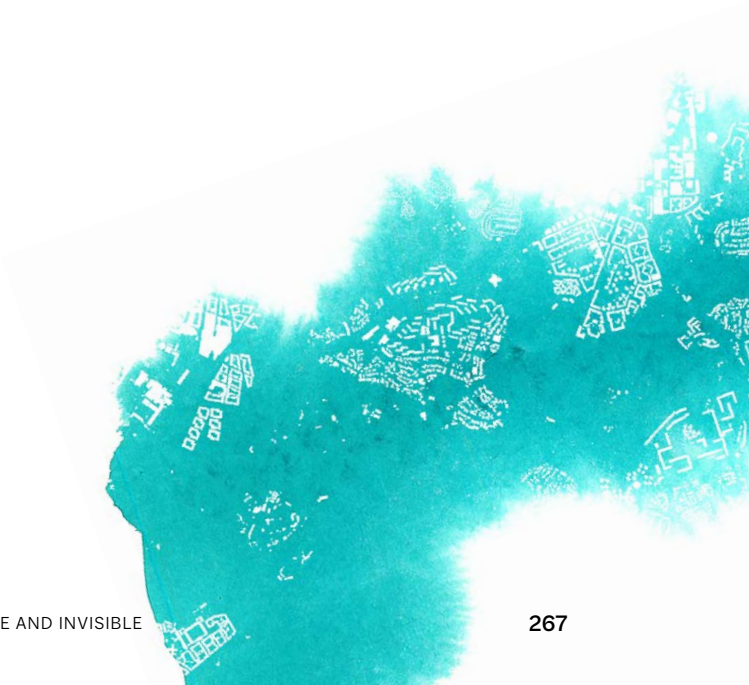
The documentation of the instant experience, however, easily seems to include at least some notions of the aesthetic, ecological, experiential and functional quality and content. Coherence and diversity of affordances are evaluated/assessed by the personal experience and manifested in the responses. The *Underlying meanings*, even *designer's intentions* that are known about, and especially *narratives and past experiences* are important material for people responding to surveys. They verbalize their *Instant experience* and *multisensory perception* by *associations* and stories, and describe *material and spatial details*. The experience perceived and depicted is multi-sensory and includes ideas of *evident functionality*, *perceived affordances*, what can and can not be done in a place, how they are using the space and what they wish they could do there. The *perceived quality* is based on shared as well as subjective criteria, and reflects the learned as well as personal values.

The world of others is revealed to some extent with the help of surveys, and the meanings behind the vocabulary used can be interpreted, although the objectivity of qualitative analyses can be debated. Empathetic reading of what others have written, opens up a realm that deepens the understanding of the experience of others, as expressed by themselves in their words. As such, this kind of data is valuable for phenomenological analysis in providing "tacit knowledge" (Polanyi 1967) that may otherwise be unattainable, but its weaknesses lie in the abundance of data, for one, which makes a balanced and thorough reading challenging, and for another, in the challenge to provide a representative sample. It must be noted that the knowledge of experienced professionals, about processes and aspects to consider in planning for an area, an embodied understanding of an area that can only be gained through familiarization over a lengthy period of time, is a form of tacit knowledge as well. Furthermore, a phenomenological understanding of a green urban landscape aiming towards a full understanding can never rely on sole sources of

knowledge and data such as single interviews emphasizing only one point of view or selected sources that may have a political goal invisible to an outsider. For that reason, the ways to reach the tacit knowledge of all of those involved is valuable.

Summarized, the framework is complemented with the following aspects as a result of the last narrative section (3.5): Firstly, stemming from the official narratives, as well as their criticism, further aspects should be added to the *Situational context* in the *Invisible*, such as the understanding of the **meaning of the perceptible layers and their role in the historical totality**. The *Underlying meanings* should be broadened from Knowledge of future plans to that of **future plans, visions and strategies**. The *Values* that many notions and endeavours are based on, are often **Institutionalized** in public office, by governmental bodies, and also **Shared** by different actors, hence these aspects should be added to the framework. The phenomenological reading of the PPGIS survey responses brings **Notions of Identity** into focus, as an important part of *Underlying meanings*.

Narratives and past experiences in memories and associations are attached to places by personal experience. *Instant experience* is enriched by the evident **Immediate aesthetic assessment** that easily happens when describing responses to an area, as the survey findings suggest, as well as **Fragments of occurrences** that include signs of things that happened in the past or are happening at the moment - fragments that are referred to in many accounts of places' appearance. The **Materials and details** of the tactile world, in the immediate realm of experience - how things feel when touched and sensed with other senses - are an extension of bodily awareness, and they are referred to in citizens' experiential accounts although their role in defining experiences are easily forgotten. These include the **Living things** that are often called 'nature' and may define a green landscape to a large extent. The narrative analysis emphasizes the interface between the *Visible* and *Invisible*, adding the **verbalization and representation of values, Knowledge and Interpretation** into the set of tools to bridge the gap between these two realms.







4. Discussion

In this chapter, a phenomenological approach to analyzing green urban landscapes is discussed and developed further. The Visible-Invisible analysis framework is iterated with the help of the findings from the narratives presented in the previous chapter. The analysis is reflected upon in terms of connections to theory, its development and its possible application, including a role in the tradition of landscape analyses and the praxis of landscape architecture. As such, it seeks to lay out once more, explore in more depth and start to draw together the themes and concerns of this study, based on the findings.

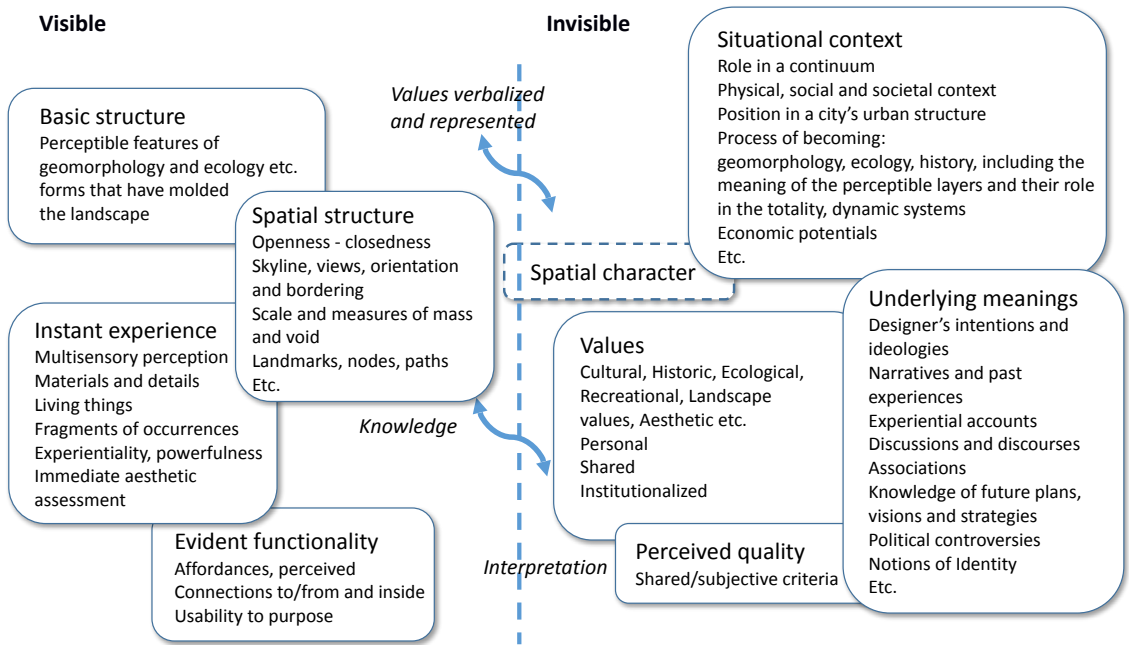
4.1 Iteration, evaluation and use of the analysis framework

4.1.1 Analysis framework reasoned and developed

The analysis framework (Visible-Invisible framework or V-I framework introduced in section 3.1) aims to provide a way to analyze urban landscape. It makes visible in written form the elements that in turn ought to be made visible in other ways to add to the understanding of landscapes. Besides writing, the invisible can be made visible for instance in diagrams, figures or images. Much in the same way as other conceptual constructs provide frameworks for understanding things and phenomena, the V-I framework makes a sort of theoretical and practical tool to understand landscapes, with a focus on things that may be familiar, but now organized in a new conscious systematic. Landscapes are understood as places that have essential characteristics and can be experienced, that consist of a visible and evident layer as well as a more invisible yet equally important and true layer.

In the name of phenomenological terminology, it is tempting to use the terms *perceptible* and *imperceptible*, instead of the Visible/Invisible (Merleau-Ponty 1968), to point out the importance of involving all the senses, just as Merleau-Ponty describes in his other texts (1962/1976). The analysis framework would in that case accordingly be called the *P-I analysis framework*.²⁶⁹ However, the terms Visible and Invisible, as well as “visual” are used in the art research literature (as referenced by Tuovinen 2016, p. 36) to refer to the entire sensual realm, including other senses besides vision. Similarly, ‘making visible’ is referred to as signifying the array of ways to bring forth or to make things emerge from concealedness and come to the realm of our perception and understanding. Furthermore, the concept of ‘perception’ in the English language is also about a concept, a paradigm of reality. Consequently, to *perceive* is in fact wider in context and meaning than the Finnish word “*havaita*” and refers to ‘understanding’ or ‘making sense of’ rather than just observing. Based on the above, the terms 1. Visible and 2. Invisible are used in the framework, to refer to 1. perceptible to one, some or all of the human senses and 2. things that can not be perceived by any sense alone but need analysis, knowledge or interpretation to be perceivable. However, the terms perceptible and imperceptible may be used in the text to refer to sense perception, especially when the multisensory aspect is emphasized.

²⁶⁹ More importantly, the letters P-I refer to, not only the Perceptible-Imperceptible juxtaposition, but also to “Phenomenology inspired” and serendipitously bears a twofold meaning.



■ Figure 167. Iterated analysis framework, complemented by the findings in chapter 3. The different narratives illuminated different aspects of visible and invisible realms. Illustration by the author 2020.

Chapter 3 provides a number of examples of the ways that landscape can be analyzed, in the phenomenological frame of reference. The process of analyzing the case examples has helped develop the analysis framework. The analysis framework iterated based on the empirical data is presented in Figure 167. Studying the data with the framework, the case examples are, in turn, illuminated from different sides and viewpoints, like a sculpture that gains its form and shape when light is shed on it from different angles, or when it is sculpted with various approaches and tools. The potential for a phenomenological reading of different ‘texts’ is explored, in representational rather than comprehensive accounts of experiential and other narratives.

As a result, the analysis is not comprehensive, nor does it aim to be. Along the course of the process, it became clear that firstly there are already so many different landscape analyses that use some parts or elements of the framework that it seemed futile to bring forth all of them in this context. Secondly, some of the aspects bore more novelty than others, and something not yet tested in landscape analyses seemed more relevant and appropriate than others in terms of providing new knowledge in the discourse of landscape architecture from a philosophical and theoretical point of view. For instance, the artwork process of *(Dis)connected* provides a method for first-person

phenomenological analysis and, at the same time, an example of arts-based research and art as a medium to bridge the invisible and the visible. This happens by pointing out the problematic and the potential in the art of concealing and exposing. An object acts as a subject, and a subject becomes an object, simultaneously providing a way of reflection for others, making them step outside their comfort zone and see things that might otherwise be missed. In the same way, site visits, creative writing, process-oriented historical summaries and critical reading of official professional documents, as well as approaching citizen survey data with particular emphases, give new viewpoints on the existing knowledge.

The representational view entails that the study of case examples is not identical or symmetrical but using the different narratives to improve the analysis framework, as a tool or set of tools for exploration for landscape architectural theory. Different types of data and narratives were available in Helsinki and Boston. The purpose is not to compare these two cities per se but to illustrate different ways to test the content of the preliminary analysis framework (the V-I framework) introduced in section 3.1. These bits and pieces of illustration that contribute to the growing understanding about some aspects of particular landscapes function in many ways as building blocks for a fuller picture of those particular landscapes as well as the analysis framework itself. They also make preliminarily manifest how the analysis framework might be made use of; what kind of landscapes can be analyzed with the help of such a phenomenology-inspired framework, and how it could be executed. In other words, the purpose of this study is to develop an analysis framework suitable for analyzing green urban landscape based on phenomenological reading and concepts, instead of presenting a comprehensive understanding of their green areas or people's experiences thereof, as such. Consequently, it seeks to illustrate how these case examples and the narratives about them enrich and develop the analysis framework as a phenomenological endeavor, rather than describing the places or their experiences, narratives or views themselves as a research subject. However, one easily embeds oneself in the particularities of the places, including their experience, especially in terms of the citizen survey results, because an empathetic interpretation is characteristic to the phenomenological approach.

Besides revealing something of the visible and invisible dimension of urban green landscapes,²⁷⁰ the experiences and characteristics of the explored

²⁷⁰ For instance, the significance of a historic analysis for a phenomenological analysis is to provide some insight or at least a summary of the process of becoming in the invisible/visible frame of reference; how things have come into being and which elements are left of original ideas or historic development in the experience of a place. It explains, for its part, the visible dimension of the invisible. Visible signs of temporality and the deep understanding of the historicity of the context we are thrown into enables a fuller understanding of ourselves. It is evident also in the account of the experiences of others, such as in the PPGIS survey used as a source of data, that temporal and historic evidence has a profound significance in the experience of place.

landscapes make manifest the concept of *place* as more than mere location. According to Casey (1993, pp. xv, 16), to be in the world, situated at all, is to be in a place, which is the “phenomenal particularization of being-in-the-world.” Human and space are in relation with each other through dwelling, belonging to a given place (Casey 1993, p. 109, drawing on Heidegger 1962, 1971 and Norberg-Schulz 1980). The writings of people about their familiar surroundings speak to the concept of place as an existential foothold, which, as a feel of belonging, is connected to identity (Lynch 1960; Norberg-Schulz 1980; von Bonsdorff 1998 and others), and image of places. As concluded by Fitch (2013) and Qazimi (2014), identity is formed in sort of a person/place interface. An image of a city is defined both by the features of a physical environment, people’s experience of them and things one has read or heard. Identity is likely to be something more permanent in nature, stratifying by one’s experiences of a place – and as such closer to ‘character’ or ‘essence’: or rather, an intuition of essence, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty puts it (Merleau-Ponty 1968) or essences as Thao (1986) observes.

Identity as a concept is useful in the framework, as it bears the connotation of significant experiences and views of existential foothold.²⁷¹ Identity can, simultaneously, be understood as another wording or at least an important aspect for the essential in a landscape that in fact can be considered to emerge as a result of the synthesis of the entire framework’s aspects. It can also be said that shared experiences of people in a particular landscape or place make an identity. Temporality and historicity, for their part, contribute to the sense of identity, which stems from social infrastructure (e.g. democratic ideals) as well as the physical realm and the stories behind it. There is a societal context and dimension in urban landscape, which, in its own way, constructs the layers of history and the present. Knowledge may add to the experience, and make the invisible visible by manifesting the concealed in the perceived reality. As Ingold observes, meanings are gathered from the lived world: “A place owes its character to the experiences it affords to those who spend time there – to the sights, sounds and indeed smells that constitute its specific ambience. And these, in turn, depend on the kinds of activities in which its inhabitants engage. It is from this relational context of people’s engagement with the world, in the business of dwelling, that each place draws its unique significance” (Ingold 2000, p. 192).

²⁷¹ However, it can be speculated, whether or not an identity of a place can be in any way a shared or common experience. Are there some physical features of a place that evoke a certain ‘identity’ for an area perceived by more or less everyone, or is it always a subjective experience – are there as many ‘identities’ as experiencers? Do the identity of an area and the identity of its inhabitants merge? And furthermore, how large an area can have an identity in people’s minds. Sometimes it seems that peoples’ identities can largely be defined by the smaller area they come from. Perhaps there are rather identities of a certain area, place or district that people can call their own.

The terms identity and character, which people used in their responses in the PPGIS Survey of NUP (City of Helsinki/Mapita 2017), may help in approaching the concept of essence. The responses to the questions “*places that I would proudly present to my foreign guests* and *places that exemplify the city,*” give insights into what kind of places people find special in and characteristic to the city. Essence and identity are connected as concepts, although they are not essentially identical. Essence (as in ‘the essential’) emerges from the aspects of the framework that emphasize experience and the role of invisible in understanding the visible. However, essence is here described with a collection, or perhaps an assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari 1987), of nouns attached to a landscape, whereas identity can be described with adjectives such as “green” or “maritime.” Identity tells how a place is, genius loci gives an idea of a spiritual, original content and stability (Norberg-Schulz 1980, p. 18) and character is a lukewarm version of all of the above, albeit used in professional conjunctions of landscape analysis (LCA, Swanwick 2002).

The essential in a landscape, its inherent core, is perhaps best understood intuitively, albeit based on a careful exploration and examination of the visible and invisible aspects as presented in the framework, recognizing the dynamic and flexible character of urban landscapes. As concluded a couple of times before, the ‘essence’ of landscape in this study refers to the intuition of a comprehensive character of landscape. That ‘comprehensive character’ is here called essence rather than, for instance, essential characteristics, based on a concept more powerful than what is generally meant by character. It is built by properties that evoke a feel of genius loci, and the shared experiences of people in that landscape or place will, in turn, make an identity. The findings for the framework by the narratives did not seem to challenge the basics of that notion but merely to enrich the idea based on the premise.

The involvement of self and the other have significance from the phenomenological perspective, as well. The being-in-the-world of self and others is an expression of the multitude of values but sameness in humanity. The other is not someone other but rather others (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 113, cited in Hotanen 2008, p. 121), truth about a manifold diversity and variety, where I am an *other*, one of the others. By the same token, my experience as expressed in a way characteristic of me is a voice in the larger discussion, and no less significant than someone else’s, another other. This aspect of the phenomenological approach is manifest in the use of oneself as a medium and source of data, besides the account of others’ experiences. The visibles as well as invisibles vary according to the observer, even when provided the same information. People with different professional backgrounds pay attention to different things. This may lead to different conclusions on the essential elements, but at its best, adds to the potential of added conceptual understanding in general, enriching the conception of phenomena.

For instance, the issues of accessibility and connectivity were poignantly emphasized in the experience of the Back Bay Fens and other parts of the Emerald Necklace. In contrast, the PPGIS data from Helsinki green areas focused much more on details of nature or other things in the immediate experiential vicinity, reminding of their importance in the landscape experience, as well as the importance of the journey, the path itself, as a transition to tranquility, mystery or surprise. However, there were also things that were manifested in all of the material and narratives. They included the role of appropriate amenities in the experience, the integrity of green areas evoking a feeling of harmony – and the *meaning* of urban green areas; the urge of being outside and inside, away in a nice place but at the same time, together with others, conceptually if not physically. The social aspect of a city's parks was brought forth in designers' writings as well as citizens' experiences.

The findings in the survey responses make manifest what can be assumed about the instant experience; you know something is “wrong” or “right,” and yet the reasons are not necessarily consciously observed and analyzed but rather intuitively perceived. The accessibility of a park becomes manifest in very concrete ways in the residents' experience, with paths, bridges and familiar routes – some elements that many landscape or townscape analyses also recognize (for instance Lynch 1960; Tilley 1994). In Helsinki, the network-like character is emphasized in planning (City of Helsinki 2016b), and consequently over- and underpasses on the main Green Fingers seek to ensure the interconnectedness, rather than, for instance the experience of beauty, although there are some exceptions as well. The cultural context of one's familiar surroundings, for instance of extensive public transit and a bike-oriented traffic policy, may have an effect on the perception of places. The view of an ‘insider,’ for instance someone involved in city planning, tends to be more positive than that of the ‘outsider’s, who is not equally aware of the totality or of improvements in the works.

In the following, the points expressed in the various stages of the development of the V-I analysis framework diagram are emphasized to illustrate and summarize how the elements expressed in the framework were manifest in the data that was analyzed and the narratives presented (expressions used in the framework and its iterations in italics):

The Invisible, consisting of things like the situational context, values, underlying meanings and perceived quality, speaks to the *knowledge behind the perceived, things read and interpreted, what we know and think about the place, discussions*. To be observed, they require knowledge and/or understanding of what the place is made of, but can also entail outcomes inspired by the place, such as poetry or art, that in turn mold the experience. The *situational context* as part of this realm explains things like what *mental/physical continuum a place is part of*, in connection with its surroundings. For instance city policies, design history and intentions of city planners shed light on this

and hopefully help understand some conscious decisions behind the exposed reality. The representations of basic structure or spatiality in an urban landscape give information on the Visible features that may only be fully perceived in certain ways of representations such as maps.

Knowledge of the *underlying meanings* can be gained, and the meaning represented by *narratives, past experiences* and representations thereof as well as documentations of *designer's intentions*. The narrative of intention, of what *societal context* the invisible and underlying meanings contain, the writings and drawings of the strategists/designers/planners help understand where the appearances of today are coming from. They also help to understand the tradition of landscape and city planning in each city. The *process of becoming* is to be depicted from visible and invisible sources, such as landforms, archival data, studying maps, old and new, and a critical reading of writings of those involved. The meanings and narratives are also depicted from the questionnaire results. The designs/plans and their present day appearances are an expression of *values (cultural, ecological, historic etc); traces of the passing of time, dynamics and activity*; "What happened here, how is it visible today and what does it mean - in relation to other places" is visible in the invisible. The narratives about the visible (already built appearance) and invisible (what is possibly to come, what might have been, knowledge behind the appearance) of public officials, academics (or other commentators such as journalists) bear witness to the professional interpretation of the dominance of each factor, and not unlike any other narrative, they employ the art of inclusion and exclusion and express values.

In the PPGIS results aesthetic, experiential functional and even ecological evaluation, as well as some assessment of the content, coherence and diversity of *affordances* were made while things like the identity of a city was evaluated, and the data yielded both visible and invisible aspects. The PPGIS survey method, by introducing a world of others, brings added value to the analysis by providing information about the *Instant experience* of the human body, its *multi-sensory perception and immediate aesthetic assessment* in general as well as in distinct places. The elements written about were both *spatial* and about *details*. It also provides useful information about the *evident functionality, what can and can not be done in the place*, as a lot of the comments were associated with activities that the green areas facilitate or enable. Site visits to the place, with documentation, including my own, provide an account of the instant experience as well as analytical view thereof, based on the knowledge behind the perceived. Site visits, with and without art as a research method and subject yield *experiential, tactile* and *functional* aspects to the framework, exposing the *values* and *narratives*.

Two things are particularly worth noting that complemented the framework along the process; firstly the social/societal contextual aspects such as economics, politics, plans and visions, and secondly, the physical reality

influencing the experience on-site. The significance of the invisible narratives of the contextual realm as well as the building blocks of landscape design such as surface materials, plants etc. were missing or partly ignored in the first versions of the tentative framework.²⁷² The survey responses, others' narratives and site visits, however, made manifest their importance. Another aspect that was emphasized along with the case examples, especially after analyzing the survey responses, was that the *social* and *societal* element may be crucial in defining an urban landscape; the people using the places make for their part the essence, the character, the atmosphere. This particular aspect should be emphasized more in the final framework.²⁷³

The *contextual* analysis, of origins, reasons, situations and consequences, helps to assess text within the context [*asiayhteys*] of its historical and cultural setting. Situating the 'text' (writing, verbalization, design etc) within the milieu of its times, a study of social, political, economic, philosophical, aesthetic, etc., conditions that were in place at the time it was created, gives perspective to the analysis. In complex and multidisciplinary endeavors such as city planning, in particular, or planning of green systems or landscape analysis to prepare for those, in order to understand the context, a wide view on these issues is in order. The *social* context entails the study of how people act, interact and react in a setting, and the *societal* and *political* context could include things like park politics, decision-making, economic background for the political decisions, etc. The societal context also entails connections between relations of significance, such as a societal role of a design or philanthropic ideology, and their effects on the development of the urban landscape. A political conflict such as war or other circumstances such as disasters, shortages, recessions or poverty can have an effect on landscape.²⁷⁴

Values, less or more intrinsic, expressed implicitly or explicitly, stem from knowledge, education and upbringing as well as experience and personal experiences - in all meanings of the word -, and can be shared or personal to varying extents. They may also be institutionalized, not to mention politicized. In the analysis, it may be necessary to differentiate between values according

²⁷² Of the latter, it is perhaps symptomatic of a landscape architect's as an 'insider's' view that such essential features be accidentally left out in the first readings, much in the same way that tourist attractions of one's own city may easily be ignored, and something that is close can only be clearly observed from a far.

²⁷³ For instance, a place such as Montmartre in Paris is as much defined by its architecture and urban structure, as the fact that it has inspired artists over several decades and they have created well-known works of art in its vicinity. These actions have left their mark on the spirit of the place, the invisible as well as the visible.

²⁷⁴ For instance, one can observe from historic aerial maps that in the 1930's the area of open fields was at its largest in Finland, and the landscape much more open, also because of tree-cutting for warming houses. Forest cover has gradually increased as energy forms have transformed and agriculture has become a marginal livelihood. During and after the wars of 1939-1945, in turn, kitchen gardens were a dominant feature in the landscape even in public parks, as there was shortage of food and self-sufficiency was a necessity.

to their origin, or at least to be conscious of the basis they arise from and the criteria by which they are attached to something. They are important, as they act as a background, starting point and driving force for design and planning decisions, policies and political views on various levels, individually and collectively in communities.

4.1.2 **A practitioner's view**

Reflecting on the research critically over the course of time with academia and other practitioners, some things emerged that had not been given particular emphasis before, also revealing the researcher's own biases. For instance, there was perhaps a reluctance to include the ecological and nature discourse to a greater extent. This has been a conscious choice due to the phenomenological literature's take on the concept of nature (see for instance Ingold 2000), scope management and the extensive research done already on the subject of, for instance, stormwater issues in the current landscape architectural field in Finland, – but possibly also a subconscious one for other reasons. There is a strong political emphasis both on intense densification and housing aims and so-called measured (institutionalized) nature values in the city of Helsinki. This sometimes results in a situation where even on a national or international level evaluated historically valuable heritage areas must house some protected species or another to be preserved from infill development. There is, as well, an antagonism between ecological networks promoting biodiversity and the development of the urban environment, which may result in anything between a fruitful reconciliation and a counter-productive confrontation.

This kind of juxtaposition is very different from the theoretical constructs that represent the ideal view of mutual harmony and coexistence of human and nature also presented in this study as an objective. More often than not, as reasons for such antagonism, the values of novelty, urbanity or economic growth alone seem to define the future of a place. In these processes, other values such as cultural historic, aesthetic or even ecological ones, may go unnoticed and remain invisible. A phenomenological approach might be able to bridge these oppositions with a common understanding of the importance of experience and a holistic view seeking to understand the particularities, whether they originate in urban amenities and affordances or the beauty or benefit of nature. In fact, in reality, the positive experiences often stem from both being present in the lifeworld at the same time. If we observe the world and ourselves as the same flesh and “as a total movement of becoming which builds itself into the forms we see, and in which each form takes shape in continuous relation to those around it, then the distinction between the animate and the inanimate seems to dissolve” (Ingold 2000, p. 200).

Another observation along the process was that sufficient emphasis needs to be placed on a holistic analysis of the fact that the ecological, historic, social and societal processes of becoming are constantly ongoing, and the becoming

is not towards a finished product, because such a thing hardly exists in green urban landscapes, or any landscape, for that matter. The processes of nature (growth, water cycles, evolution of species, climatic changes, the earth reacting to things happening underneath, etc.) coexist with the ones initiated by humans, and they have an effect on each other at varying levels and intensities, disrupting or supporting each other. All of this happens in time as well as in place, in varying rhythms that also need to be understood even conceptually to comprehend, contribute to or control in any way.

In order to test the usability and possible adaptability of the analysis, it was discussed with a colleague involved in the city planning of Vantaa (Muukka 2021), from a need to reflect the findings with a fellow landscape architect who in their daily life deals with analyzing landscape.²⁷⁵ The multisensory sensitivity to the bodily relation to landscape is, according to this discussion, a welcome addition to the way landscapes are studied. An essential starting point and objective for a landscape architect is to reach a holistic understanding of the particularities of environmental entities, whereas architecture is often seen as an artistic endeavor where an object is placed in the landscape (Muukka 2021). The talk of designers and planners is invisible, and the way it appears in the visible, may not correspond to the ideals of, for instance, the human scale – the reality may be designed based on technical equipment instead, such as the action range of construction cranes. Nature, with its climatic conditions etc, is the basis for quality in both professions, however. As practitioners, we ourselves partake in creating the values that are called “institutionalized” in this research. Through values we exercise inclusion and exclusion, and through communities’ values the invisible transforms into the visible. Whose values determine the future of a city?

4.2 Relation to the tradition of landscape analyses

The other theoretical basis besides phenomenology and comparable philosophy references presented, a sounding board to test and complement the findings, is that of landscape architectural theory, especially other ways of analyzing landscape (see section 2.1 for an introduction to landscape analysis). The tradition of best practices in landscape analysis provides a context for the evaluation and application of the presented framework. The introduced phenomenology-inspired way to understand landscape situates itself in the tradition of landscape analysis, although it seeks to emphasize particular aspects from the viewpoint of phenomenological concepts and methodologies.

There are at least three aspects in terms of which the proposed analysis framework or model differs from the traditional models to analyze landscape. Firstly, the emphasis on experientiality and perception is intrinsic and more

²⁷⁵ The conclusions of this discussion are presented as part of the findings in section 5.3.

significant to the analysis than usual. The experiential dimension, of oneself and others, as well as the perceptibility and perceivability of landscape elements, are discussed in depth and given a crucial role in the analysis framework. The analysis framework seeks to recognize and classify the elements due to their perceptible or imperceptible nature, drawing on phenomenology's ideas of visible/invisible and a reciprocal seam (fold) between them. The seam is, in fact, an interface that transmits the interaction and becoming of one to another – when the concealed is interpreted and represented to become understood, and on the other hand, when the narratives and things known enhance the experience.

The analysis operates on contextual, spatial, tactile/multisensory and functional levels. Immediate experiential can be identified as one of the levels, but at the same time, all the levels or entities are considered from an experiential viewpoint, and classified according to their perceptible or imperceptible nature. For instance, spatiality, which is overemphasized in many townscape analyses (Lynch 1960; Cullen 1961; Gehl 2017), is observed as one of the aspects to construct experience, and from a multisensory experiential point of view, as part of experience. If landscape analysis is to identify and use the distinctive features and characteristics of space, place and landscape to achieve environmental quality (Stahlschmidt et al. 2017), in this analysis especially those aspects of them are focused on that are given information through experiential accounts and perception.

Analysis techniques and ways of representation such as the layering technique have traditionally focused on one set of aspects, for instance ecological (McHarg 1969, 2002), and although experience and social/societal aspects are increasingly included in landscape architectural analysis, they are usually looked at from a natural scientific perspective. Things that can be mapped or visually represented tend to dominate. This analysis framework or model, in turn, seeks to include other methods of representation, keeping it open which those methods might be, including different narratives, arts or interactions, as relevant methods depend on the essence of the particular landscape and may be intuitively found.

Secondly, as a result of the above, the analysis framework is multidisciplinary – and consequently, uses different ways to gather data – from societal understanding to art and landscape theory, as well as tools for historic analysis or tools to map, data-mine and interpret mapped responses. The focus areas are at the intersection of the disciplines of aesthetics, art, landscape architecture, city planning, social science, cultural geography, ecology, geomorphology and more, all bound by a phenomenological approach and knowledge of its main principles. It is not probable that a landscape architect, planner, architect or member of any other discipline could alone comprehensively apply the framework and systematically fill in all the blanks, so to speak. Instead, an integrated approach is needed, and the role of the 'owner' of the task is, above all, to

understand the interrelations and relevances between the different aspects to study. It is not necessary for that person, however, to be knowledgeable about phenomenology as a theory and philosophy, but the framework aims at highlighting aspects *for* that person, to help make a phenomenological reading of a landscape. As mentioned before, a good analysis adapts to the things that one needs to know in order to perform the task or address the design or planning problem successfully. On the other hand, there is always the danger of excluding things that matter if only focusing on the outcome. It is advisable that the whole analysis framework is addressed in one way or another, especially if there is a very controversial target in hand, or if the objective of the use of such a framework is merely to enlarge and deepen the understanding, and not to prepare for action.²⁷⁶

The analysis framework also hints that there are multiple methods for data collection and analysis within the set of elements, or this is in fact necessary, in order to widen the repertoire of making sense of places. They can be phenomenological or phenomenology-inspired, such as in this study, but it is not certain that they need to be, although phenomenological methods are useful in studying the mentioned aspects, - as the whole framework and its structure is based on phenomenology. The layering may be verbal (as it is in essence in the framework itself) and the mapping experiential.

Thirdly, the subjective and objective interlace in many ways and feed on each other in this kind of framework, where the simultaneous existence of both kinds of data is considered in parallel universes, and where the intersubjective nature of phenomenology and its methods entail the merging of subject and object. In research, the intrinsic call is for objectivity. As stated by Stahlschmidt et al. (2017, p. 181), landscape analysis is akin to research by aiming to provide tacit, conceptual and systematic knowledge, examining elements or structures of something in detail. However, views on landscape can never be entirely objective, unless a specific detail or, for instance, a natural scientific aspect is examined, like stormwater runoffs measured, plant species observed or such. Any conclusions or qualitative assessments made based on these observations entail a subjective evaluation of some sort. According to Varto (2009), although scientific activity strives towards the universal, it deals with particular events. It is a question of what can be known, and if we can in fact identify the particular (Varto 2009, p. 124-128). Science does not make any claims of reality; it only creates what we think reality is (Varto 2009, p. 129). The relationship of the particular, singular and subjective to the universal, plural and objective is a complex one. Phenomenological methods and constructs such as the V-I analysis framework seek to bridge the gap between them and recognize something essential about those interrelations and the phenomena studied.

²⁷⁶ It is common with planners and designers to focus on and rush to the planning issue, whereas in some cases a shared understanding of essential features is the prerequisite for a successful dialogue.

The landscape analysis' stages (Sasaki 1950; Geddes 1995; Vroom 2006) of data collection/survey, analysis and synthesis are embedded in this analysis framework; the data is collected in numerous ways, making use of multiple methods. The data is analyzed with a phenomenological reading of the material, and the synthesis created is a depiction of the (intuition of the) essence based on the findings. Whereas, for instance, landscape character assessment (LCA) aims at defining a "character" which is equally an art of inclusion and exclusion, this analysis framework aims at arriving at a conclusion of an 'essence'. As the essence in the sense intended is a subjective reading of the material, it is important to make the process visible. This entails that all the aspects that have affected the outcome are traceable, and it is ensured that as many aspects of landscape as possible are covered, bearing in mind, however, their relevance to the particular place and setting.

Comparing with other analyses, it is noted that in some, the same elements are partly present, but in most, a systematic way to look at perceptible and imperceptible realms is not explicitly expressed, nor are the value systems made visible. A meta-analysis of sorts is provided in Butler (2016) in terms of landscape analyses, especially the landscape character assessment (LCA). According to Butler (2016, p. 243), the LCA approach comprises two parts, characterization and judgment-making. Butler (2016) studied ten different cases of LCAs that recognize landscape as "a perceived entity by people" and appear to operationalize landscape in such a way through attempting to attain an understanding of how the public perceive the landscape. Ten assessments were identified from the period 2007 to 2012. Based on his findings, it can be noted that some notions used were in common with the studied LCA analyses and the framework presented in the study. The studied analyses included factors like everyday experience, sense of place (although not differentiated from sense of space), values, and, for instance "what makes a landscape special" (Study of Peak District LCA, cited in Butler 2016, p. 247) - that seeks for similar essential features as the V-I framework's quest for essence. The essence, however, in the V-I framework, is thought to emerge from the studied aspects, rather than being a separate notion. Furthermore, the social/societal, political or economic aspects or underlying meaning including designers' intentions were among the ones not included.

The values behind and triggered by experiences are another important part of the framework. Butler (2016, p. 246) identifies a multitude of the so-called landscape value categories intrinsic in LCAs; the Economic, Natural Significance, Aesthetic/Scenic, Recreation, Cultural Significance and Intrinsic. All (besides Economic as a *value*) are included in the framework of this study in one way or the other. More importantly, the importance of personal experience in forming values became evident in the research, confirming what has been an observation in praxis. In design and planning discourse and praxis, conflicts and disagreements are often the results of a clash of values. In those

cases, it is necessary to try to see and perceive what is behind the values. Personal experience precedes values; if one has a positive or negative experience of something, it is likely to guide one's values in a direction that then further gets enforced by the new information gained on the subject. In the circumstance of disagreement, the question remains as an interesting topic for further study - how one best might reach that realm of the origin of values.²⁷⁷

In the LCA guidelines (Swanwick 2002) Butler (2016) identifies a shift in how landscape is conceptualized, recognizing those who directly experience it and their interactions and associations with it rather than just the aesthetic qualities. In that sense, the experiential dimension is increasingly recognized in LCAs as well, although it is not explicitly expressed or thoroughly studied, as opposed to the V-I framework where the view is intrinsic and verbalized. Multisensoriality is also mentioned, as Swanwick (2002) considers "the way that different components of our environment interact together and are perceived by us as not just about visual perception" - "but also how we hear, smell and feel our surroundings, and the feelings, memories or associations that they evoke" (Swanwick 2002, pp. 2-3). The V-I analysis framework emphasizes the multi-sensory, seeking to add another layer to the deeper understanding of different senses and the body in understanding landscape.

Unlike Swanwick (2002) suggests, according to my experience the assessment of aesthetic qualities always reflect personal perception and values, albeit defined by professionals. According to the LCA guidelines, characterization should be represented primarily through a written description providing a supposedly *objective and value-free* basis for making judgment: "Subjective value judgements should be avoided and a distinction drawn between adjectives which seek to convey the aesthetic qualities of a landscape and those which deal with personal perceptions or values. Terms such as bland, beautiful, attractive, degraded and ordinary should generally not be used since such judgments tend to be very subjective and "in the eye of the beholder" (Swanwick 2002, pp. 44-45). Instead, in the V-I analysis framework, it is assumed it is relevant how people verbalize their experience, and a landscape expert's view on the aesthetic assessment is valuable, but not objective. The

²⁷⁷ For instance, if one has an unpleasant experience of the natural world, such as barnacle geese excrement, one is inclined towards intolerance against seeing them in one's close environment. Green areas may also cause a person to feel unpleasant and yearn for urbanity, for multiple reasons, one of which might be security; a city is perceived as safe, defined and structured, whereas an experience of an urban forest may be disembodied, one of getting lost or the image does not correspond to the conception that one gets from knowing the nature preservation 'values' that are supposed to be there. Feeling of unsafety is the anticipation or assumption of having unpleasant or unwanted encounters with something or someone when there is no one else present to help. Attitudes towards places stem from experiences, and every unpleasant experience of a place raises the threshold to go there. Consequently, the personal value of the place diminishes. Similarly, positive experiences build a positive image and idea of the value of a place.

contrasting views and the bridging between them, as well as the recognition of personal or shared values behind a statement, make way for a synthesis that might take the analysis further than the futile quest for unconditional objectivity, in terms of a phenomenon that is intrinsically manifold and largely defined by experiences such as landscape.

The importance of the singular and particular can give valuable insights into a phenomenon when not assumed universal. Furthermore, based on both personal observation and the PPGIS results for Helsinki, it seems that similar things tend to attract people to an extent. Some theorists (Appleton, Wilson, Pallasmaa) also suggest that there might be something genuinely or innately human in some preferences for landscape. As a bare minimum, there are some similarities in people's preferences, at least by people with similar environment contexts and somewhat similar backgrounds, a cultural bias or other reasons. This might be another interesting subject that requires further study outside the scope of this research.

Butler (2016) is also quite critical towards the presumed objectivity in LCAs, and concludes that the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity is an oversimplification: "Such a view typically equates objectivity to accuracy, representativeness and impartiality, with subjectivity linked to approximation, idiosyncrasy and bias" (Butler 2016, p. 243). Yet a statement can draw on a combination of these adjectives. "For example, a statement can be objective, approximate and idiosyncratic, e.g. I watch birds here quite often; or they can be subjective, approximate and representative, e.g. everyone agrees this is the best area for watching birds. This points to a blurring of the boundaries of what is recognised as a subjective statement and thus what is seen as acceptable to represent in an LCA description of the landscape" (Butler 2016, p. 243).

The invisible bias or subjective view is more or less evident, as is the role of knowledge in making judgements. Similarly, one can observe that "trees grow in this spot," but if one is to say "spruces grow in this spot," the statement already entails one needs to know spruce from other species. The conclusion that the trees are spruces and not, for instance, pines, is based on a subjective evaluation and bias, as one might not be entirely sure which species it is. Someone reading the statement afterwards may not necessarily be sure if the judgment was made by a qualified person, or if someone else would make the same judgment based on the same information. Nevertheless, information is needed to be able to make that evaluation, and the invisible comes into play.

When the PPGIS survey responses are concerned, for instance, they are subjective and recognizedly so. A judgement is easily made that an experience meaningful to an individual would be equally so to another, which of course is not self-evident. In a phenomenology-inspired analysis, it is possible and even necessary to describe the subjective and possibly biased take on places, at the same time being conscious of their role in the totality and of its understanding

- as supporting and enriching that understanding rather than providing an explicit or self-reliant argument. Furthermore, nothing can be profoundly known until it is personally experienced. We might *know* how something feels, out of logical reasoning or making observations from the outside. But it is only the multisensory, bodily experience with our own body and mind, or rather the totality thereof, as a medium that tells us what an experience is really like. Knowing becomes a deep and personal understanding of the meaning of something when individually experienced. One can seek to capture the realm of others' experience but it flees from comprehensive understanding. Through experience, *knowing* becomes *understanding*.

In landscape analyses in praxis, generally, the experiential dimension is less focused on, as it is not something easily measured, monitored or visualized. If an aesthetic or sensory evaluation is included, it is mostly the ocularcentric field of vision. The requirement for scientific accuracy reading as objectivity, is visible in the analyses. Subjective evaluations are, however, sometimes presented in such a form that they resemble other, more scientific ones. Something that cannot be measured in reality, may be approached quantitatively, and result in an illusion of accuracy. Many aspects in traditional landscape analysis, for instance that of 'landscape space' or microclimatic conditions, are in any case abstractions of a much more complex reality.

This research offers a definition of landscape that emphasizes its multilayered nature. In line with what Wylie (2013) suggests, phenomenology offers a particular approach to the study of landscape, and as such it shapes both what is studied as 'landscape' and how it is studied. As Wylie (2013, pp. 130, 135-136) states, studying landscape from a phenomenological perspective "involves foregrounding lived, embodied experience and perception" and the phenomenological idea of landscape denotes involvement. Landscape "may be defined, phenomenologically, as the creative tension of self and world," considering the mutual interaction between people and landscape (Wylie 2013, pp. 135-136).

In many ways, the V-I framework, while adding to the phenomenological reading of landscape, is part of the continuum of methods for landscape analysis, seeking to find a deeper understanding, something that would be objectively true. At the same time, it is noting systematically the invisible that is often ignored, such as the multisensory realm, the instant experience as a first impression, the evaluation of powerfulness of the sensations, and an intrinsic assessment trying to tap into the future potential, expressed in hopes and expectations. In a first person phenomenological evaluation, the 'subjective' is recognized for what it is, a source of insight into the particularities of a place and a wider understanding of experiences' true nature.

It is interesting to note as well that design of places with the help of views and their sequential experience was a principle in early landscape architecture (Gilpin 1792; Repton 1795; Hipple 1957). When mapped representations were scarce, the *experience* on site in fact acted as a basis for its design, and many

remarkable creations of landscape architecture²⁷⁸ were or may have been created without a map but rather improvising on site, as a process of imagining, narrating and building by hand. They were based on reading and interpreting the site's potentials and limitations, as well as essential characteristics such as water cycles, soils and landforms. A phenomenological analysis, for which the framework provides a tool, is in a way a present-day interpretation of the body and senses -involved design awareness.

4.3 Visions and experience, (Dis)connected

As examples from the world's best-known and most celebrated green systems illustrate, to achieve a high-quality green network, both a holistic far-reaching vision and a successful implementation are needed, as well as sensitivity to the pre-existing conditions and particularities of each place and city. Prospect Park was visualizing an esker formation and pastoral ideals (Meyer 2002), the Emerald Necklace wanted to celebrate a tidal marshland, control flooding and, at the same time, provide beauty, health and enjoyment for all citizens alike (Zaitzevsky 1982; Olmsted 1852; Beveridge & Rocheleau 1998). The Washington D.C. green system (McMillan 1901) embraces the L'Enfant axis system²⁷⁹ as well as the shores of the Potomac and the Rock Creek. Helsinki's Green Fingers connect the maritime and the forested characters of the city, and Central Parks, be they in Helsinki or in New York City, reflect and are a manifestation of the essential characteristics of a particular city and its ideas of green space as an integral part of urban planning.

Green areas of a city are at their best interconnected and diverse - much like human beings. Sometimes, however, the entities that these landscapes are supposed to form, are theoretical and conceptual more than real components in the everyday experience. Attempts towards an interconnected network or green belt are numerous (Besides Helsinki, Boston and Washington D.C., at least Hamburg, Copenhagen and Vienna). However, in how many of these cities have the conceptual visions of a planner or landscape architect become a reality that can actually be perceived by the residents or visitors as intended? And how important is it, in fact, that this happens? Disconnects between the areal representation of the green-blue sequences illustrated on a map, and the reality, real-life experience of moving in space along these green sequences, can be poignant, as the example of the Emerald Necklace illustrates. The feeling of not being able to get from one part to another where one wants to, or not being able to orient oneself according to the understanding of the surroundings, triggers a feeling of being lost or in danger of getting lost. The disconnects

²⁷⁸ such as some Japanese gardens (Makuoka 2003) or the works of English landscape garden designers (Hunt 1994)

²⁷⁹ designed by Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791



■ Figure 168. The disembodiment of Helsinki's Central Park may be due to factors like its boundaries being blurred with the other greenery surrounding it, or its entity being traversed by roads, further confused by its orientation problems. City of Helsinki 2013.

in mobility and embodiment veil our understanding of a perceivable entity, and the loss of defining boundaries obliterates the sense of place. The fragmentation of the healing landscape in Lapinlahti or the development plans and orientation problems along the Central Park make manifest the disconnects between strategic aims and citizen perception.

The same happens if, for instance, *in* or *on* a conceptual entity such as a Green Finger, it is impossible to depict where this entity starts and ends in relation to its surroundings. The figure and the ground, the object and the backdrop, get confused with each other. One can question, of course, whether this is indeed relevant to the experience itself. It is relevant to the landscape planner but not necessarily to the occasional visitor, other than in the sense of situating oneself and not getting lost. The beauty of a place, its ability to evoke a pleasurable experience, does not depend upon its conceptual understanding, but on other qualities such as sensual pleasures, views, smells, sounds, affordances, sense of place and security. Nevertheless, if there is an attempt involved of *getting somewhere* or *being somewhere*, that can solely or mostly be defined by understanding the mentioned entity, then it can be frustrating and disturbing to fail to do so. In addition, if the immediate surroundings of the particular entity are very much like the entity itself, then the understanding of the thing or phenomenon that is trying to be a designed entity in essence, can be very difficult. This may result in confusion, and further the need for a

planner to seek better definition, or even lead to complete ignorance of the values of the entity. If these values do not manifest themselves to us in an understandable and controllable form, the risk of losing them in our perception of the reality and image of an area is much greater. If a phenomenology-inspired analysis framework is helpful in making visible these values, it is worth involving in the process of planning into these landscapes.

The experience of the Emerald Necklace and the ways to make it visible, presented earlier in this study, may be considered a subjective view of reality. That reality manifests itself to different individuals in different ways, according to the way they can or can not relate to their surroundings with their own bodies. Making a representation is as much about *making* an experience as depicting one. An individual experience becomes collective when made visible with art or other ways of representation. The boundaries of own experiences and the understanding of another's or others' experience become blurred, and own associations merge into the representation experienced. An 'experience of a place' may indeed become an experience of its representation. It is crucial to consider and determine which elements are included in the analyses and which are represented and how, as they define to a great extent, what is emphasized and included, and conclusions for planning purposes, for example, are drawn from the information represented.

On the other hand, in a creative process, be it art, landscape architecture or research, the outcome does not necessarily correspond to the vision with which the process was initiated, but instead, can lead to something better or at least more interesting. It is characteristic of many creative processes that they are by nature organic, allowing random occurrences and serendipities, encounters and unforeseen turns that may turn into benefits. In trying to make better environments, however, it is usually desirable to control the changes in some way or at least to be conscious of their consequences, as they are at worst undesirable, diminishing the attractiveness of places. Successful planning and design contribute to the kind of changes that respond in a positive way to the views based on shared values or the community's needs, wishes and/or visions of the future.²⁸⁰ Places become complete only when people start using them for their benefit or enjoyment. In addition to a far-reaching vision and skillful implementation, it is an increased requirement to understand the community for which a design is made. Public space in particular only serves its purpose if people are using it, much in the same way that an artwork is only complete if someone is experiencing it.

Participatory design processes and codesign are increasingly becoming a significant paradigm in urban planning and design in many countries, and experts' knowledge and views are challenged along with open access to data and

²⁸⁰ Complemented with the intellectual and physical space for the designers that allows for creativity.

the organized social media platforms. This may add to unpredictability, instead of commitment to long-term processes. The 'public' is also not a homogenous group of people, so it may prove difficult to integrate all views into the outcome. The most critical groups or the ones making the most effort to be heard may also not necessarily represent the majority's opinions. For all the more reason, in the current operating environment, all the invisible ambitions are to be made visible and understood by as many as possible. Trust is built between different actors along with transparent and successful processes.

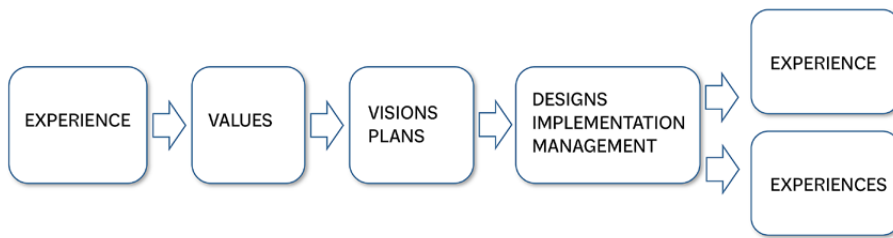
Map-based tools may help better understand what people really desire in terms of urban places, what they prefer about them and how they experience their surroundings. In this research, experiences of Helsinki green areas were looked at in light of some recent surveys, to give an example of how such a tool could be used as part of a phenomenology-inspired analysis of places. Although they are not explicitly verbalized as part of the suggested V-I analysis framework, surveys and questionnaires are relevant to researching experience with a phenomenological approach, as they focus on perception and representation of experience, and are in fact collective interviews of sorts, aiming at deep understanding of lifeworlds. Visions and experiences may be connected through visual representations and their interpretational tools such as maps, questionnaires and interviews.

The Dis art project, *(Dis)connected* and its further explorations, seek to connect people to place. Art in its diverse forms shows itself as a natural and grounded medium to study and represent places that are designed to be works of art themselves such as public green spaces or cities. Usable artifacts such as public space or cities are results and manifestations of design philosophies that are akin to the artistic process.²⁸¹ Places that are disconnected from their past, their context or purpose, or from each other may be reconnected by bringing the invisible realm into the visible, by different ways of representation, of which art is one. There is potential to help people reconnect to each other and their environment with the help of public space, and particularly through art in public space.

The findings suggest that firstly, some sort of aesthetic evaluation is intrinsic in the experiential account, and secondly, that it is connected with functional content and dimensions of use. The aesthetic dimension in the analysis framework, added by studying the case examples, makes manifest its relevance in the phenomenological approach. Experience of beauty in a park is entangled with the functional quality and usability, and the observation of affordances in a place. The beauty of a park is not observed if the area is not used, unless it is a baroque-like *tapisserie*²⁸² meant to be and possible to be

²⁸¹ as in a process of creating art pieces

²⁸² Referring to a design feature of *parterre de broderie*, a plan in a French style Baroque garden, containing decorative plantings and resembling a tapestry.



■ Figure 169. The chain from experience to values and back to experience. Illustration by the author 2020.

observed from afar. The connection with utility, usefulness versus beauty and other experiential pleasures have been debated over the course of the history of architectural theory since Vitruvius.²⁸³ Nevertheless, the virtues of beauty and usefulness, as well as a scale appropriate for humans, remain qualifiers for good architecture. For the functionalists, focusing on utility instead of disconnected ornamentation, form followed function (Sullivan 1896). The Bauhaus movement in the 1920s and 30s was one of the most significant interpreters of these ideas (and has worked as inspiration for the creation of my performance character Dis). An aesthetically pleasing, perceivable and functional green sequence that is so both on maps and when experienced in reality would be a perfect interpretation of these ideas. The aim for total works of art (Gropius 1961), where space and people merge, the physical reality feeds back on the people using it and vice versa, is of relevance in a phenomenological approach and a suitable aim for a park.

Personal experiences contribute to values, which act as a basis for the planners' and designers' visions and plans (see Figure 169). When implemented and managed accordingly, including upkeep and maintenance, they turn into experience of such places in one sense of the word, and multiple personal experiences, reflecting the designer's experience and aims in the other. Sometimes visions collide with one's personal experience and values. In Helsinki, not unlike any other cities, there are difficult decisions involved in every planning effort. Infill development is fitted into landscape with experiential values for inhabitants as well as canonized historic and/or nature values, and traffic

²⁸³ He formulated in his *De architectura libri decem*, Ten Books of Architecture, the aims of architecture to be “*venustas, firmitas, utilitas*” (translated as “strength, utility, and aesthetic effect” or (Sir Henry Wotton 1568-1639) by “commodity, firmness and delight” (Thayer 2020). Based on the original Latin, however, it might be more appropriate to translate this into “beauty, firmness, usefulness” (“*kauneus, kestävyys, käyttökelpoisuus*” in Finnish) or, instead of “firm” use another term, perhaps even the modern term “resilient” of something that bears for years to come by being flexible to change. This word is often used in conjunction with climate change (climate resilient), meaning solutions that by flexibility, can endure or sustain changes of condition. Perhaps Vitruvius also referred to the effects of time.

connections are drawn through woodlands or open landscape spaces that have been kept open by agriculture since medieval times.²⁸⁴

More efficient and functional bicycle connections, for instance, facilitate and increase sustainable shares of traffic and are thus desirable. They may, however, in some places disrupt the experience of landscapes that have been essentially those of recreation and enjoyment of nature for people, the essence of which has been experienced as *places to be* instead of ones for going somewhere. In these cases, the *dominance* of factors in the analysis framework comes into play. In a historic park, for instance, that has been enjoyed for centuries or generations by residents and visitors, the intuition of essence, based on experience, is that of a stable, historic place of recreation and aesthetic value. The dominant feature of the character is historicity, and plans to change it into a thoroughfare may be conflicting. The same happens, in terms of historic buildings, when the experienced essence of a streetscape is its bordering historic facades or a familiar landmark that defines a skyline. If other towering buildings suddenly dominate the defining and identity-creating landmarks such as church towers, or if buildings that have been there for the duration of one's life are no longer there, the conflict is easily experienced and expressed. The understanding and appreciation of historic buildings as well as beautiful landscapes tend to increase when changes are planned that threaten their role in the realm of shared experience.²⁸⁵

4.4 Of making visible beyond the 'folds of the flesh'

For an occasional visitor, an observation of a landscape is often a view, a frozen image of reality. Both the visible, evident and the invisible, concealed it reveals are a snapshot of that particular moment. There may be no knowledge or understanding of how the situation has been reached, what kind of phases it involved for a landscape to come into being. The living and the stable, the organic and inorganic, natural and human-made are invisible until the processes that created them become visible. It is only through the traces of the passing time, footprints of human and nature, that they tell their stories, making them visible to us. Stone pavements wear out in a certain life cycle, vegetation grows, dies and is reborn. The cycle in vegetation is much shorter, seasonal and leaving sometimes ephemeral marks, but both of them have an invisible dynamic that our perception can only catch a glimpse of at a time. Visiting a park regularly gives a wider perspective, but unless one comes to the same place season after season, year after year, most cycles remain invisible. The ongoing process of becoming is invisible, as well as the process of coming into being.

²⁸⁴ Resulting to challenges observed for instance in Hautamäki (2015, 2019) and Häyrynen & Hautamäki (2017).

²⁸⁵ As for instance Helander and Sundman (1970) have observed and the current discourse (Helander 2020) further observes.

There is a possibility that the essence can be invisible when it is in the fold of the flesh. Capturing the essence of a person, a landscape, an emotion, is not about imitating or copying reality. It's about making visible the essential, all of it and nothing but, according to an interpretation of reality. Merleau-Ponty (1993a, b) says that the painter asks with their gaze, how things appear/manifest themselves (*ilmenevät*), and the art of painting approaches the secret that something exists before we can tell what it is, the painter seeks the secret of appearing (*Erscheinung*). The art of painting has to do with the visible world, but instead of copying the visible, it aims to discover the things that the usual seeing omits; light, shadows, reflections, colors per se. The painter's gaze "asks the objects what they do to suddenly cause something to be and to be *this* thing, what they do to compose it, to make us see the visible" (Merleau-Ponty 1993b p. 128). In order to see these dimensions, one must refrain oneself from seeing the thing they constitute. In order to see how a red house comes into being through colors, hues and shades, one must refrain from seeing the red house (Hotanen 2008 pp. 73-75). "If the painter is to express the world, the arrangement of his colors must bear within [the] indivisible whole" of an object's being (Merleau-Ponty 1993a p. 65).

According to Merleau-Ponty, cited by Hotanen (2008), *a painting is a visible trace of the painter's seeing* (author's emphasis) of which also others can seize something. The art of painting brings forth the act of seeing between outside and inside, visible and invisible, something in the painting ripples internally and reminds us of something external (Hotanen 2008, p. 78). There is no seeing without a veil, the visible that veils the thing, covers and discovers, veils and unveils, at the same time, and the visible is a dense tissue, an image that folds itself around the carnal being (Hotanen 2008, p. 78). As Merleau-Ponty observes (1993b, p. 130), "Essence and existence, imaginary and real, visible and invisible - painting scrambles all our categories, spreading out before us its oneiric universe of carnal essences, actualized resemblances, mute meanings."

In the same way, performance art with the body as a medium, such as Dis, acts as a fold of the flesh, concealing and revealing at the same time. When a sentient body lives and experiences a perceptible landscape space, the true essence emerges and appears from the concealed reality when the dense tissue of fact and fiction is drawn aside and the true experience is revealed in the realm of imagination and poetics. Analyzing and visioning for landscape is also about bridging the gap between the visible and invisible, the perceptible and imperceptible. Landscape architecture, in turn, is about making visible the intrinsic values constituting a place in its essence, making visible the subjective, as well as shared and collective preferences and ideas.

When reading the PPGIS responses, one inevitably reflects on Merleau-Ponty's (1964, 1968, p. 145) idea of verbal expression as the sublimation of the flesh. The flesh transcends the sphere of visibility as speech, expression,



■ Figures 170 and 171. People looking, and what they are looking at. The urban landscape along a busy street becomes a framed 'landscape' to look at, when provided a viewing platform and designated as something to look at. High Line, New York. Photos by the author 2012.

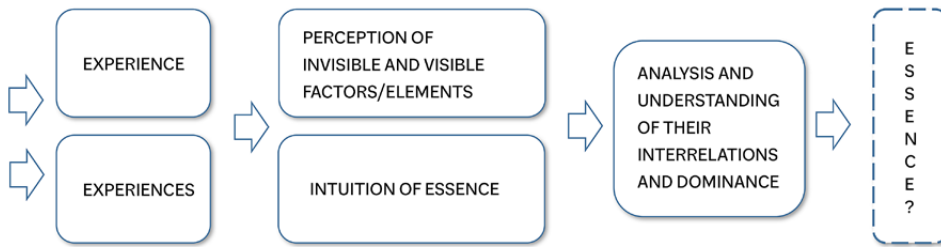


logos, and they are intertwined in the same being.²⁸⁶ The significance or essence of a visible thing is invisible, and is captured in the visible of the invisible (*l'invisible du visible*), observed from without as well as from within.²⁸⁷ The movement of speech is the voice that “the ringing flesh of my body” formulates as an echo of what it is touched by (Merleau-Ponty 1964, p. 191, cited in Hotanen 2008, pp. 123-124). The documented speech is the written word.

Experiences that are not documented or shared, may hide in the folds and seams of our enduring impressions of places. The question remains of to what

²⁸⁶ The Flesh is an uncomposed notion thinkable by itself (Merleau-Ponty 1968 p. 140) and a prototype for being universally, a phenomenon, where “the subject’s own corporeity is given to him as his lived body, and the body inasmuch as it is the visible seer, the audible hearer, the tangible touch, the sensitive sensible” (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. liv).

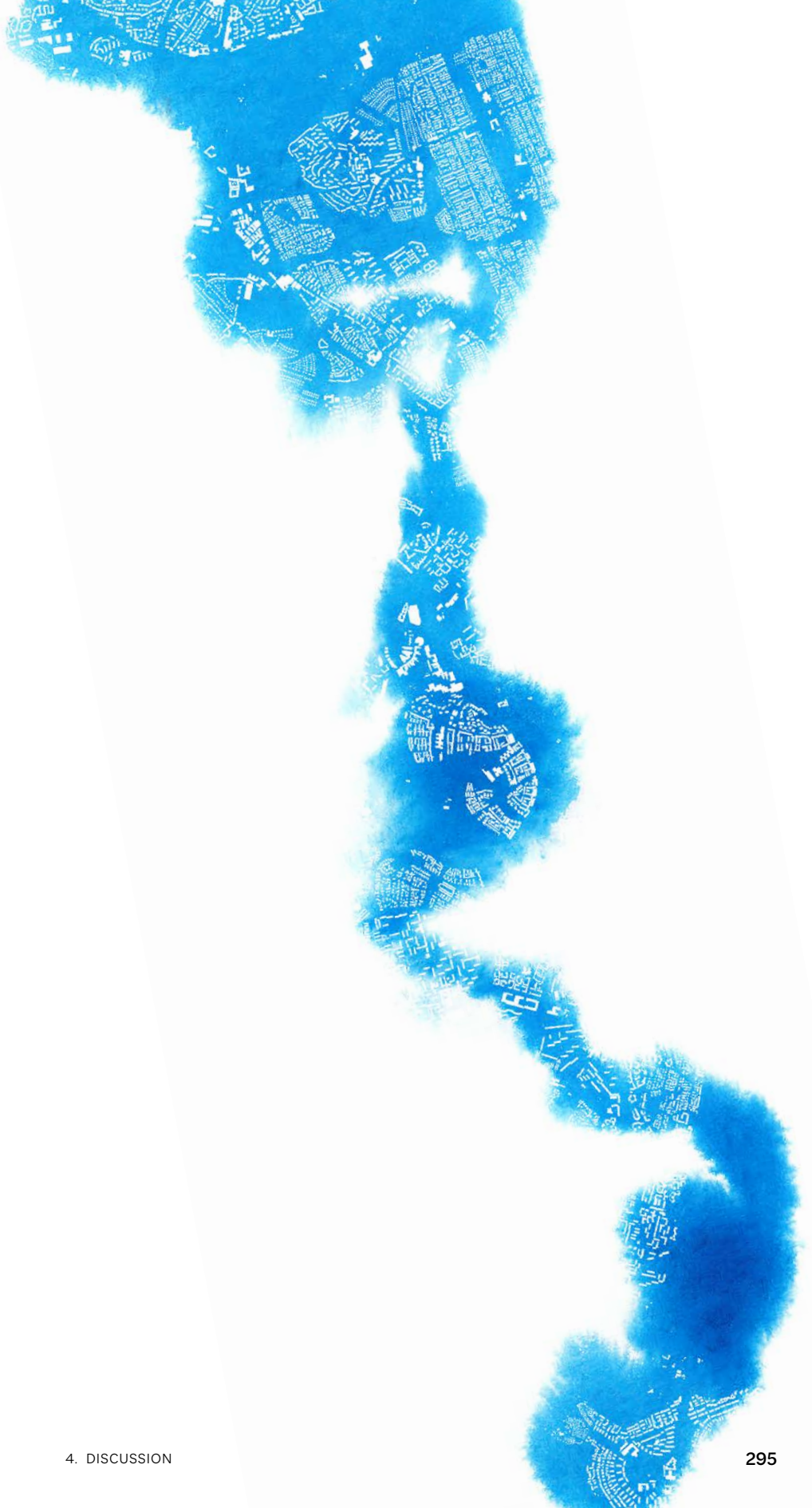
²⁸⁷ In his working notes for the Visible and Invisible (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 274, March 1961), Merleau-Ponty states; “to say that the body is a seer is... not to say anything else than: it is visible. ... it is ‘from somewhere’ (from the point of view of the other...) visible in the act of looking... More exactly: when I say that my body is a seer, there is, in the experience I have of it, something that founds and announces the view that the other acquires of it or that the mirror gives of it. It is visible for me in principle or at least it counts in the Visible of which my visible is a fragment. I.e. to this extent my visible turns back upon it in order to “understand” it... It is through the world first that I am seen or thought” (Merleau-Ponty, 1968 p. 274).



■ Figure 172. Building on the previous diagram, the experiences are constituted by visible and invisible factors that are perceived, analyzed and disseminated to build the essence of the landscape. The intuition of essence is based on the experience and contributes to the understanding of the essential in each landscape. Visions and experience are connected through understanding and making visible the essence. Illustration by the author 2020.

extent the intuition of essence of a landscape, or the concept of landscape at large, is connected with the aesthetic evaluation. A view might be called ‘a landscape,’ if it evokes a pleasurable experience, and ends up shared with others (see Figures 170 and 171). The landscapes (for instance streetscapes) that do not provide a stimulating experience are often overlooked/ignored, but on the other hand, in the urban setting, unconventional landscapes can be enjoyed (e.g. trainspotting, planespotting). In the PPGIS results, as well, it could be seen that although nature is considered beautiful, the city is, too. Making visible is also about authoring a landscape significant in our minds and for others. Do we signify a landscape by representing it, taking a photograph, sketching, painting it? An undocumented landscape may remain uncanonized, or at least it might require a lot more effort to remember.

The idea of the fold hints at the connection between the subject and object, as well. The subject and object merge as the visible is not in front of the one who sees, but around them, the one who sees is not outside the visible but attached to it, and they are the same tissue (Merleau-Ponty 1962; 1968). According to Merleau-Ponty, “I am outside myself and the landscape is within me” (cited in Hotanen 2008, p. 75). Landscape in landscape architecture is a comprehensive phenomenon, everything that is perceptible and also all relevant things that are not, including the landscape within the spectator, their perception of it, the invisible, invisible and the fold in between. The realm beyond the fold is made visible by different ways of representation, visual and other narratives that describe and construct reality as well as one’s own perception thereof. That perception may become somewhat collective and shared by processes that affect the physical reality, and define others’ experience for its part. In order to understand landscapes fully, the experiential realm, as well as a conclusion of what is essential, should be part of analyzing landscapes for their planning and design. Phenomenological concepts and approaches may provide useful tools to do so.





5.

Conclusions

In the final chapter of the dissertation, a summation of the work and contributions of the thesis are provided, in order to restate the concerns and the ways they are addressed in the research. Based on the observations in the previous chapters, the refined analysis framework is explained and possible uses outlined, including a critical view and needs for further development, for instance of possible usable tools for practitioners. An epilogue complements the conclusions from the point of view of an everyday user of green urban landscapes.



5.1 Summary of pivotal findings

Based on the author's experience as a landscape planner, there is an identifiable gap between the perception of planners and designers about conceptual entities, and their experiences on site, independent of the implementation of ideas. Phenomenology may provide a platform to bridge the gap, as it seeks to understand totalities and essences through bodily experience. Husserl talks about going to the things themselves with the help of pure consciousness, and later interpreters, especially Merleau-Ponty, emphasize the way a bodily subject experiences places by relating to the world by experiencing it with the body as a medium. The body, and the world it is in, cannot be separated from each other. The visible and the invisible, the perceptible and imperceptible reality connect, come together and encounter each other in and through the so-called fold of the flesh, in the part that is concealed but real. In the same way, the perceptible and imperceptible aspects of a landscape encounter, interpret and affect each other.

In the study, a phenomenology-inspired framework for landscape analysis (the so-called Visible-Invisible analysis framework) was developed, illustrated and deepened by testing it with particular green-blue sequences as case examples of green urban landscapes. The author's own experience, others' experience and explanatory data of park systems designed alongside a water element, the Emerald Necklace in Boston/Brookline and the Green Fingers in Helsinki, were used as the main study material and narratives to draw from. The case examples were studied in a phenomenological frame of reference, making use of the concepts of essence, experience and place. The study aimed at contributing to landscape architectural theory, simultaneously adding to the understanding of these places in particular and green urban landscapes in general.

The research questions were: *How can phenomenology be utilized in analyzing and understanding green urban landscape?*

The exploration of the main question included trying to seize *how the essence of these landscapes can be depicted and presented*, considering the visible as well as invisible elements, and *how this experience and essence of a place can be made visible* with different narratives.

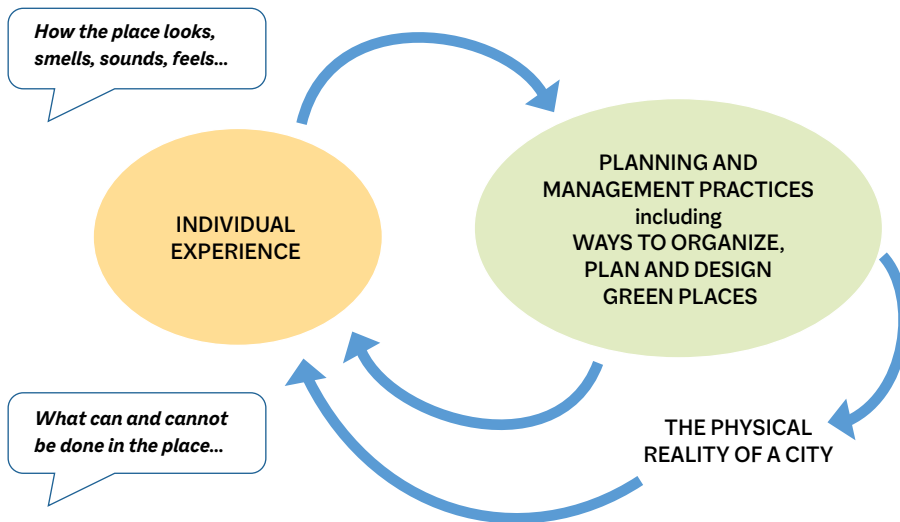
The fundamental concern is thus *the added value that phenomenology can produce in the assessment and analysis of landscape, and further the planning and design of better places*. The resulting analysis framework also recognizes (*tunnistaa* as well as *tunnustaa*) the invisible under and beneath the visible, the hidden meanings and stories, subjective experience and memories, valuations, appreciations, including aims of a designer - the way the

invisible is manifested in the visible. It was assumed that the essence of these places could be depicted and made visible by the understanding of this kind of totality.

Along the process, it was discovered that phenomenology can be used 1. as a theoretical frame of reference, through the concepts of which landscapes and green-blue places can be analyzed, and made use of in constructing an analysis framework, 2. as inspiration for a research approach, and 3. as a methodology, benefiting from various phenomenological or phenomenology-inspired or informed methods. The used methodology is integrated, making use of various methods from arts to statistics, as well as phenomenological methods including first-person phenomenological inquiry and hermeneutic interpretation. The data explored was analyzed in both quantitative and qualitative ways, also making use of the principles of arts-based research. Storytelling was a way to bring forth information, and a performance character was a way to both represent ideas and test them with a wider audience, a way to make visible the individual experience and a way to experience. The use of Dis was a way to try to understand and study others' experience by making contact with park users, a research method, and thus a subject and object at the same time. The results of the PPGIS surveys represented the world of others, and were used to enrich the view on landscape, to develop the analysis framework.

The building of the theory and the way data informed it, were worked up in feedback loops where the theory informed the relevance of the data and the data informed the theory, as well as different methodologies feeding on each other in hermeneutic circles, details to totality, and back again. The various sources of data and the different narratives informed the tentative framework and the framework informed the way the data was analyzed in this study. Hence it was a mutual feedback loop where the findings enriched the structure of the framework and the framework acted as an aid to consider various factors. Each element in the material and narratives brought forth things that made the understanding of the landscapes in question more manifold, revealing their further complexity. The revision and iteration of the analysis framework based on each finding is left open for everyone to see, and thus the *process of becoming* is made visible in the research process, as well, exposing the seam between the visible and its other side, the invisible.

There were various other mutual feedback loops that informed and affected each other. They included, for instance, the contextual feedback loop of research and praxis, of strategizing and envisioning Helsinki's green areas that inevitably involved self-reflection as a form of a first-person phenomenological approach. The different layers of inside and outside became evident in the process. In seeking to gain a thorough understanding of the visible and invisible forces behind the physical and contextual reality of these layers, ideally a feedback loop of better urban landscapes follows, where the analysis of experience and essence and the resulting enriched understanding can inform landscape



■ Figure 173. The feedback loop between the individual experience and the planning and management practices of a city, including ways to organize, plan, and design green places – be they green belts, fingers, or networks, as part of urban structure. They are informing each other, and at their best, making a positive hermeneutic circle, enhancing the actual physical reality of a city. Analyzing and trying to understand experience, making it visible, is connected with successful planning and design and efforts to make cities more livable through this mutual feedback loop. Illustration by the author 2020.

architectural theory and practice. By seeking to understand and make visible a personal experience, we can improve design practices, improving the physical reality of cities, which, in turn affects the experience of them and feeds back to our understanding. Analyzing and trying to understand experience, making it visible, makes a feedback loop to good design.

For instance, for people to experience a place as beautiful, planners and designers must understand what the elements and mechanisms are that those sentiments are based on. They must empathize with inhabitants' experiences and ideas of beauty, usefulness and other positive qualifiers of the environment, and be knowledgeable about the means to achieve design solutions that may result in these sentiments in the appropriate circumstances. To imagine oneself in others' shoes, sometimes literally, as pedestrians, to empathize with how they experience the landscape, and to consult the insight thus gained, is key to contributing to better places. This sensitivity should also include an understanding of the significance of time and temporality, as a nature and dynamics of experience but also in the notions of changing preferences and circumstances. The layers of time and place interpenetrate by creating ongoing processes of becoming. Both of these loops and the landscapes change, affected by us and the world around us, of which we are part.

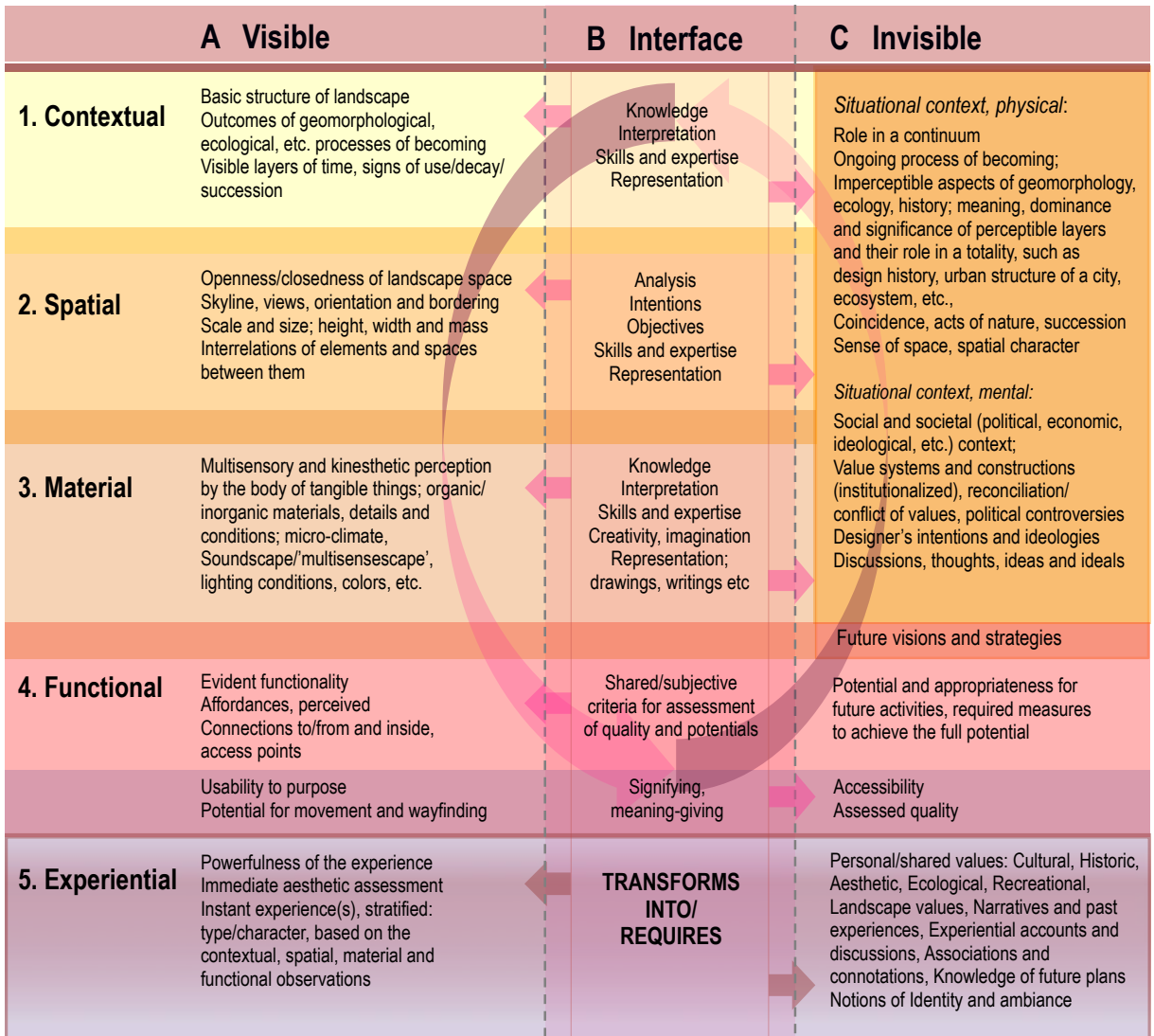
The question remains whether or not any universal or shared essences or essentialities exist within the design paradigm of today that operates with tools such as participation and cocreation and agrees to disagree. Perhaps an essence or something of the sort, an intuition of essence, can only be captured by personal experience, remaining a personal glimpse of reality that can only partly be shared. The world of one and the world of others can never be identical, but can meet at times, and this encounter evokes a pleasure similar to finding your way out of the dark, or away from the situation that Casey states (1993 p. 109), being lost at sea, lacking place in an endless place-world, experiencing unbearable emptiness. Just as sketches on the spot in a landscape, these encounters are ephemeral glimpses to reality, living a place and a moment in time of a shared realm.

To conclude, phenomenology can be used in various ways in building bridges between planning of places and their experience, adding to the mutual understanding between them. In order to understand urban landscape and to make this understanding visible, an analysis framework such as the one introduced in this study may be useful. This research provides an example of the use of phenomenological ideas, concepts and methods in analyzing landscapes. It is making visible a process of developing an analysis framework that benefits from the phenomenological approach emphasizing essence, experience and place, their visible and invisible dimension as well as their *interrelations* understood with the help of these concepts. As Ingold observes, in a landscape, each component enfolds *within its essence* the totality of its relations with each and every other (Ingold 2000, p. 191). In this study, the phenomenological approach entails the quest for a deep holistic understanding of a lived landscape through narratives from various viewpoints and disciplines, with a focus on the experiential aspects and drawing on phenomenological concepts and methods, while recognizing the intersubjective, multilayered and process-like nature of both the approach and the phenomena.

5.2 The revised analysis framework

The final version of the V-I analysis framework acts as part of the conclusions of the study, based on the explorations above and the observations of the latest version of the framework in section 4.1. Some further iterations have been made: The horizontal tables are now classified according to their dominant character, recognizing entities that the aspects fall into.²⁸⁸ The visible and invisible have an interface through which they are transformed into each other. Knowledge and interpretation, complemented by skills, abilities, creativity, etc., make a transition medium in the transformation process.

²⁸⁸ At the same time admitting the difficulty of such a task, as the call for a holistic understanding characteristic of phenomenology makes it virtually impossible to classify items that are intertwined in so many ways.



■ Figure 174. The revised Phenomenology-inspired landscape analysis framework. The factors presented in the previous chapters can be presented as a matrix, where the first column (numbers 1,2,3,4 and 5) represents the different aspects (contextual, spatial, material, functional, experiential) of the essential features. The horizontal rows present the perceptible and imperceptible features/elements of each aspect. The vertical columns (A, B and C), in turn, refer to the perceptible-imperceptible aspects. The area in the middle (B) is the interface and conveyor between the two where A transforms into C and vice versa, mainly through knowledge and interpretation. The B cells have a feedback loop to both dimensions, to A and to C. Illustration by the author 2021.

The analysis framework is in fact a matrix with complex interrelations. The invisible, imperceptible is manifest in the visible and the perceptible; it is the concealed and hidden that can be made perceptible by design and projecting knowledge. The essential in a landscape is the interplay of visible and invisible, perceptible and imperceptible. Experience is where it becomes perceptible, when captured in representation, such as in art, for instance. The essential is manifest in the experience. The analysis framework, with its layers trying to depict the perceptible and the imperceptible, is an attempt to make visible the invisible, and to explain what is behind the experience. The framework's aspects or elements together constitute an idea of an essence. The findings of the analysis make manifest the essential in a place; thus it can be argued that the intuitive understanding of something akin to essence in a phenomenological sense is a result of this kind of analysis, making visible and seeking to understand what an intuition of essence might be constituted by. This intuition stems from the process of analysis, which is by nature asymptotic, as perfection can never be reached. The willingness to seek deep understanding, however, is in turn *the essence of the process*. In landscapes, there might not be an unchangeable or fully sharable core by nature, but by trying to find an essence, something is captured that is essential for their understanding, instead of just settling for the appearance or performance of landscapes.

The Visible represents the 'objective' view, something that one perceives without further judgment, physical elements of the landscape. The quotation marks (irony punctuation) are used to highlight that full objectivity might be possible in very few observations. The Interface makes visible the ways in which the 'objective' observations may be transformed into Invisible judgment, speculation or understanding of a totality or a concept, that they are becoming a part of. The conclusions drawn always contain interpretation of causalities, reasons and consequences and involve a process of inclusion/exclusion to define what is relevant. In this way, they define and rewrite the significance of something. On the other hand, the understandings and narratives in the imperceptible realm may transform into tangible outcomes, like in the process of strategy-vision-policy-plan-design-implementation.

The matrix features the aspects or elements of the perceptible and imperceptible dimension of landscapes and an interface between them. The vertical columns represent the different dimensions or aspects of the essential features, and the horizontal rows present the perceptible and imperceptible features/elements manifesting these dimensions. Between them, there is the fold/seam, an interface and conveyor, "a means of communication" (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 135). Rows 1 to 4 constitute the experiential (row 5) for their part. It must be noted that any classification of the elements remains theoretical, albeit the aspects have been grouped according to their connection to other aspects, as well. For instance, future visions and strategies operate a lot in the functional realm, and observations of movement potentials contribute to the

judgment of accessibility. Furthermore, the Invisible aspects that correspond to the contextual, spatial and material understanding, are difficult to separate or align with the visible ones, and as such remain in the matrix as a totality that can be rather characterized as the situational context, physical or mental, affected by and affecting contextual, spatial, material and partly also functional elements. The visible layers of history, for instance, such as ancient trees or partly hidden structures, are perceived and, through knowledge (B1), they are interpreted to be a part of a certain era (C1). The form of a ridge can tell us about the geomorphology, or the age of a tree can be depicted with technical equipment or from old photographs/text, structures from dated designs, archival texts, radio carbon dating, etc., and can thus be positioned in a particular context. The social, societal, political and economic aspects and contextual elements are included in this part of the analysis, as well, and they can be depicted with conceptual knowledge. Observations such as an ambience/atmosphere of a place are invisible but are at least partly composed by visible elements in the landscape.

The designers' intention(s) (C2) can result in certain spatial features and can be traced into the design itself. Sometimes, or in fact mostly, the process involves multiple actors, and instead of one particular design, the manifestation in real life is a result of multiple complex decisions and processes. The role of coincidence and mistakes in the course of the process of becoming must be recognized as well. The interface of transformation (B2) may, however, include professional skill, knowhow or personal ability such as creativity or imagination to come into being, and some monetary resources are required in the transformation. In fact, the economic aspect is often a defining factor in what has been, is and will be. Sometimes, there is no 'design' as such, or it is not the defining factor of the appearance, but the landscape is a result of interplay between natural and human-made occurrences and interventions (see the 'urban landscape cube' in section 1.4). 'Design' and 'designer' here refer to any kind of deliberate attempt to mold the landscape, and anyone to whom the outcomes can be accredited, like a farmer that affects the landscape by plowing and cultivating it. The relevance of this cell and its dominance in the final analysis depends on what kind of landscape is being dealt with. Many landscapes have in fact evolved gradually without much human intervention, although urban landscapes tend to be dominated by it.

There is a loop between the knowledge behind the perceived and the physical reality in many ways: for instance, (B1) when there is understanding of what certain perceptible elements in a landscape mean, then their perception further adds to the understanding of the totality they are part of and enhances the understanding of those elements in the process. Bits and pieces are gathered together to fill a contextual totality, and could not be understood in terms of their significance in that totality without being aware of its existence. A historic park such as the one in the Lapinlahti Hospital area might be used

as an example. On a site visit, what one sees is perhaps clumps of old trees and a lawn. Only knowledge of how the place is situated - 1. in the green areas system, on the westernmost Green Finger as a nearby green area of a densely populated neighborhood, 2. in the continuum of historic hospital areas in the world and in Finland, 3. in the design history of English landscape gardens, 4. in the urban history of the city, as a last remnant of a garden mostly perished, 5. spatially and geomorphologically, a landform protecting the core of the park, and 6. botanically, based on the rarity of certain species and so on - helps in understanding what the value of the place is. If one is not familiar with these aspects, one's perception of the place is lacking an essential part of the imperceptible; the plants are just what they are, and the lawn not unlike any other. In addition, when looking for signs of those above, for instance in old villa gardens, one needs knowledge, expertise and experience, to know what to look for, how to read the landscape. Similarly, the Helsinki Central Park or Boston Emerald Necklace, someone unfamiliar with its value as part of a value system for planners and residents, or its role for the biodiversity or hydrological cycles of the city, may perceive it solely in terms of its physical appearance, instead of its hidden potential.

The spatial features and tangible, material elements (A2, A3), whether they are used deliberately to create a certain effect or whether they just happen, are relevant for most landscapes, and are the subject-matter that is used as building blocks in designs. Organic material includes the texture of living organisms, such as vegetation cover, and inorganic human-made structures. The systems that these organisms create, in turn, are presented in C1 and C2, as they are invisible in the immediate visible. The waterscape and water features belong to the A3 category, although they can be functional as well, and contribute to the experiential. An invisible dimension is added when knowledge increases about the process of becoming (ended or ongoing) of these features as constituent parts of the landscape. Other analyses, such as the layering technique or an analysis of ecosystem services, for instance, speak to this realm of the landscape. The spatial features such as scale and measures compared with human dimensions, masses and spaces between them, their interrelations, results in what we observe as townscape or streetscape, evoking feelings and emotions. Spatial and material elements together may create recognizable features that facilitate wayfinding, or an overall impression that might strengthen or compromise a feeling of security. If a mass is much taller than others, for instance, it may create what is often called a 'landmark,' and a large opening may appear disembodied, etc. Balance between these elements is an element of experiential quality. Spatial analyses (Lynch, Gehl, Tilley) that are based on elements such as nodes, landmarks, paths, borders, etc., are dealing with this aspect. Sense of space and spatial character are interpretations of the features observed in the perceptible dimension.

The rows in the matrix are slightly overlapping to indicate their overlap and interdependence in reality, and there are features or dimensions that fall into both adjacent categories, so the matrix should be understood as a rough classification. Signs of the passing of time in spatial and material features, their decay, for instance, manifests the visible layers of the historic or other context (A1). Woods, for instance, that are at the end of their succession, can be understood as part of a place's history or a societal context as preserved landscapes. The functional dimension, easily overlooked in a phenomenological approach, is, in turn, in a sense overlapping with the experiential. The evident functionality (what can and cannot be done in a place) is instantly experiential, and although these aspects may belong to affordances, the concept of affordances (Gibson 1979) is essentially more extensive, containing things like air to breathe and water to drink.²⁸⁹ They may become thoughts of the potential of each place (C4), when filtered through an assessment process (B4), with a set of criteria for multi-functionality and/or of suitability to (a) certain purpose(s).

The experiential dimension is the most interesting one, in terms of the phenomenological approach, and in a way summarizes or translates into experience the aforementioned aspects (rows 1 to 4), which can also be thought of as elements in the experience. The experiences of positive qualifiers turn into values. The shared values (C5) may end up institutionalized, as is the case in legislatively protected nature areas such as European-level Natura areas or the listing of the Finnish Heritage Agency of historic remnants, the UNESCO World Heritage List, the listings of ICOMOS etc. The assessment is affected by the intensity of the experience (A3) and the knowledge of context (B3). Places are evaluated and analyzed against a set of institutionally defined criteria and then added to the canon of significant and valuable places with one or another value.²⁹⁰

5.3 Applicability and future potentials

Three things in particular may be perplexing in terms of a phenomenology-based approach such as this one, and the application of the analysis framework. On one hand, what kinds of landscapes it is suitable for, and on the other, the usability of such an extensive and laborious endeavor in practical situations, can be critiqued, given its calling for deep understanding and

²⁸⁹ The concept of affordances (Gibson 1979) is explained in section 2.5. Affordances may or may not actualize. Kyttä (2013) uses the concept of actualized affordances, for their part motivating a child to move around more in the environment, and thus creating more possibilities for new affordances to become actualized. A substantial body of literature (for instance Heft 2003) studies the concept of affordances and contradicts its interpretations.

²⁹⁰ See, for instance, City of Helsinki (2002), Salastie et al. (2014) and Muukka and Mäkyänen (2005) where valuing of cultural landscape is made according to a set of criteria, including factors such as originality, the manifestation of which may include, for instance, how long agricultural fields have been continuously cultivated (Muukka & Mäkyänen 2005, p. 12).

requirement of extensive expertise. Thirdly, in order to function as a fully formed aide for a landscape analyst or planner/designer, the presented framework that focuses on the human dimension of experience, needs to be complemented with systemic knowledge, for instance from ecological or nature scientific viewpoints,

The analysis has here focused on green urban places within a larger entity - both of which can be defined as landscapes with the wide understanding of the concept. As for the application of the analysis framework, to determine to what kind of landscapes it can be applied, the question of *scale* requires further exploration, among others, of how the 'altitude of observation' should be defined.²⁹¹ Presumably, the factors are given a different dominance in terms of different landscapes, or the landscape is evaluated by the relevance of each factor. Different factors are rendered visible from different 'altitudes.' When looking at, for instance, the Helsinki green areas system in this framework, a question arises of whether all the elements in the framework, or *things* in a phenomenological sense, can be analyzed on such a wide scale, and to what extent smaller places within the system can represent its experience. A green areas system or even a green sequence such as the Central Park of Helsinki is an abstract concept to grasp and embody as, or in terms of, an experience or some visible characteristics. Hence, what is an appropriate scope or scale of landscape for this kind of analysis? Perhaps the relevant aspects of the analysis vary slightly according to the size and type of the area that is being analyzed.²⁹²

On the other hand, when talking about 'experiencing a city,' for instance, what is meant by the 'city' in that context? We may say in the common rhetoric things like "what was your experience of India?" referring to an experience of a country or even a continent. In that case, our experience of that large entity is defined by the fragments that we encounter, the path that we follow. The experience, of course, is very different for each individual, and even for those that follow the same path, it varies, although there are some common denominators, defined by what is humanly possible; for instance, for how long we can walk at each given time, or cover by other means, that permit observation and experience. Consequently, every experience, including that of a conceptual entity, is composed of fragments that are defined by the route we choose or are thrown into.

The chains of parks as green-blue sequences and a series of landscape spaces that can be experienced, appear suitable for assessing factors that

²⁹¹ In terms of 'landscape', at one end, there is the macro-scale all the way to the earth seen from outer space, and at the other, the microscopic image of a cell.

²⁹² It is interesting to speculate about experience in terms of a bigger entity like a Green Finger, for instance, or the Emerald Necklace chain of green space. How big an area can be experienced, and does it require a controllable space, that can be seen in one glance, or experienced in a defined time, say one day by bike or foot or car, for instance, to be defined as an experience?

affect the essence and experience, with a phenomenological analysis framework. In the case examples, the urban context and character as designed landscapes has been a defining factor, and for that reason, things like designer's intentions or political power structures have deserved a focus. However, it might be useful to test the framework in the future with some entirely different landscapes, such as wilderness patches or urban places that have no green or blue elements.

The second point about the practical application was touched upon in section 4.1.3, based on which it can be concluded that the V-I analysis framework does not omit the need for multidisciplinary expertise in analyzing landscapes. On the contrary, other analyses may fit into one or some of its compartments. The framework is, rather than being a practical tool, to be regarded as a conceptual framework, a checklist of sorts, of things that it is important not to forget in analyzing landscapes. The idea is for the matrix to be useful in other purposes, too, than aiming for land-use change or other acts on the landscape. To achieve a deep understanding of a landscape, something like this framework/matrix can be used as a tool, and a second-order (Kurczewska, Kyrö & Moisala 2016) intuition of essence emerges. It is yet to be tested in practice, and for the most part it remains to be seen what the future applications, connotations and limitations may be for its use. Some ideas have, however, already been reflected on (Muukka 2021).

The first reaction to the analysis framework by a practitioner outside of the research process as such (Muukka 2021) was that although the analysis framework presented looks clear and well-argued, having welcome emphases on things that may go unnoticed in traditional landscape analyses, its extensive character, width and profundity are both its benefits and drawbacks.²⁹³ The traditional landscape analysis gives a narrow view on landscape, focusing on the aspects that it is possible to measure or to ground on scientific knowledge, but in the practical work it is 'more usable' (*käyttökelpoisempi*) than a framework of this sort (Muukka 2021). As future aspirations, in our discussion we outlined options such as a more limited version that would be easier to use. Alongside the reflection, however, we were inclined to agree that a result of academic research, if grounded heavily on philosophy, need not necessarily be a ready-made and concrete tool for praxis, although that is often the expectation, especially in a very practical field such as landscape architecture. Useful future applications to develop might include tools to map experiential aspects on, for instance site visits - a map-based tool that every practitioner could use to complement traditional ways to explore landscape. In today's world it would be possible to develop such a tool with digital appliances and metadata. Science should, at the end, be able to help support planning and

²⁹³ Interestingly, however, the simpler version presented in section 4.1.1 she considered "more familiar" to a landscape architect (Muukka 2021).

design solutions. The strategies that planning and design decisions are based on need arguments based on research rather than assumptions.²⁹⁴

In addition, a critical evaluation of the matrix afterwards revealed that aspects of nature such as vegetation, soils or hydrological cycles were first not explicitly stated, although they can be part of a place's essential characteristics - which brings us to the third point. It became evident in the process of iterating the framework and discussing it with colleagues that ecological awareness, filtering any landscape planning through the sustainability paradigm, is an imperative within the profession.²⁹⁵ The ecological approach is not particularly emphasized in the framework, because it focuses on human experience and perception, but the ongoing processes studied and understood must contain those of the natural world, intrinsic parts of any green urban landscape. Furthermore, the phenomenological view on the world entails the understanding of human and nature as a non-polarized entity. Although the revised version contains the mention of organic and inorganic details and processes, their role in the totality should probably be better understood to contribute to informed design decisions. This is especially true for greener or more rural landscapes than the case examples, but also in the urban context, where nature-based solutions will be pivotal in the future to help mitigate impacts of climate change, for instance. Reconciliation and compromise are needed to give way to all functions in the city; living, working, ecosystem services, recreation and mobility. Growing cities face challenges in reconciling nature and city, old and new, and in preparing proactively for a resilient future. The framework complemented with ecological aspects would create a fairly comprehensive tool to understand both humans and nature.

This analysis is, however, by no means sufficient by itself for understanding each and every aspect of landscape, nor is it a ready-made tool to be used for praxis, but rather a conceptual framework to remind of the aspects that are to be taken into account, and a framework to situate other kinds of landscape analyses. Hopefully it adds to the understanding of things that often go unnoticed, such as the power structures embedded in the green urban landscape or

²⁹⁴ As an example, we discussed the need for housing in the capital region and the resulting densification that sometimes conflicts with landscape values, and the measures with which this shortage could, in reality, be addressed. For instance, lowering the cost of living should not be based on a mechanism where housing areas become undesirable. Research is needed to determine with which terms it is possible to create areas which are both attractive and affordable, and in which landscape values may coexist.

²⁹⁵ Sometimes even to the extent that the human perspective may remain subordinate. This may be the case, for instance, when a small backyard of a residential block in the city is firstly regarded as a potential for ecological stormwater management, - and only secondly, if at all, as a place for people to spend time in, grow food or dry their laundry, a place for supportive functions such as sanitation or parking or for children to play, - and lastly an aesthetic/cultural manifestation of the era that the house was built in. In an optimal case and skillful design, it may be successful in all of the above, but in reality, when space is limited, some aspects have to be subordinated to others.

the significance of personal memories and associations alongside the natural scientific knowledge and its interpretation. It places an emphasis on understanding of the interrelations between the visible and the invisible in the landscape, as well as the importance of dwelling on essential characteristics before taking action. The praxis community often expects instant solutions to complex problems, but this framework is but the first step in a process that needs further elaboration into practical tools for mapping experiential values. When used systematically, the process of analysis may result in useful methods. It is to be tested more in real-life cases with different contexts and objectives, and further discussed with practitioners involved in different situations within the fields of landscape-related explorations and planning.

The basic problem that phenomenology as an attitude might help to solve, is the disconnect from nature. The world with its living things may appear to us merely as a spectacle, a generator of experiences, of recreation, providing 'cultural ecosystem services' such as inspiration and mental well-being. This kind of view of nature may be based on nature documentaries or other second-order narratives rather than our own commitment or closeness to nature as a real-life phenomenon, and might be idealized, failing to see the actual connections between our choices and the natural world. Instead, a connected and constructive relationship with nature and landscape ought to be responsible but realistic. Humans are part of the totality, which is often called 'nature', that functions in its own terms, - by participating in its processes, contributing to them, regardless of whether we want to or not. A holistic and involved view that many phenomenologists describe, is akin to the attitude of someone who needs to take nature into account, to be able to read the landscape and the elements, and live with its processes to thrive.²⁹⁶

The practitioner involved in the changes within the green urban landscape, - the planner, the architect, the landscape architect, the politician, - is inherently responsible for the living environment, having to make difficult decisions of what to value over something else. Someone is going to make those decisions anyway, whether or not landscape experts are involved. The better they can learn to argue for landscape values, the better they are heard. For political decisions, the responsibility of experts is to bring forth the aspects that affect the lifeworlds and experiences of people and other species. The task of the academic community, in turn, is to criticize and challenge these arguments and actions, and to aim for increased understanding and consciousness of the results of the choices that are made. It remains to be further explored how, if in any way, the gaps between these worlds might be bridged, and if this kind of approach will be helpful in doing so.

²⁹⁶ Such as a farmer, for instance. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that 'nature' can be hostile and scary, as well, like in a desert or an impenetrable jungle, for instance, where a river is the only means of transport. One's experience, viewpoints and values are defined by the 'nature' that one knows, the requirements set by it, and the ways to cope with it.

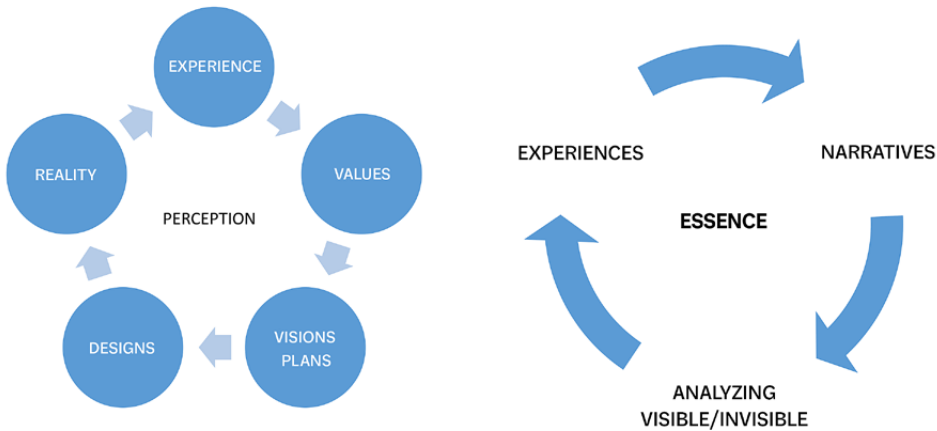
5.4 Essence of the analysis

The framework presented in the study resembles the way a landscape architect would approach an area in the design tradition. The mentioned aspects are the elements that one needs to understand in order to get a full picture of a landscape's essential features. The process, in most cases, evolves more or less organically, and some of its aspects are based on theory and others on praxis. Certain aspects, however, make the framework and the analysis *phenomenological*.

Earlier it was established that the defining factors of the analysis compared with the tradition of landscape analyses, are those of emphasizing experientiality and multisensoricity, multidisciplinary manifest in different narratives, and the relationship between subject and object. In addition, the phenomenological aspect in the analysis framework is manifest in the recognition of the invisible/imperceptible underneath the visible/perceptible, and the fact that these conclusions of essential features in an analysis were arrived at with methods that are either phenomenological, or inspired by phenomenology and its concepts. A *phenomenological reading* of material focuses on aiming to get a 'full' picture - if not a comprehensive, then at least a diverse one. Phenomenological analysis recognizes and identifies the role of experience in making sense of phenomena. It is descriptive, interested in the singular and aims for understanding phenomena through their ontological being. This bears trying to understand a design from the starting points of its makers' perspective and people that are involved in making or using landscapes. Although interpretive, it refrains from imposing preconceived attitudes on the interpretation but pays attention to the particular and personal. Seeking an essence by intuition and interpretive understanding, it considers multisensory dimensions as well as bodily involvement and perception. Because the process of becoming is an essential element of the invisible in landscapes, as well as its visible mode of appearing into the realm of perception, the process of becoming of the analysis framework itself has been presented as part of the research.

It was concluded in the previous chapter that values, which guide our perception of reality, are generated largely through personal, individual experience and experiences of places. It was further observed that through an analysis that fully recognizes the invisible behind the visible, and the multilayered nature and complexity of green urban landscapes, essences may be understood and further interpreted into action, such as more site-specific and context/people-sensitive plans and designs. These observations put together in fact make a circle rather than a line as presented earlier (see Figures 175a and b).

The phenomenological approach implies sensitivity to an experience of a place. This experience is deepened by depicting the invisible behind the visible. As a phenomenologically oriented model, the phenomenological analysis of landscape in this study involves both these levels of perception and



■ Figures 175a and b. The interrelations of experiences and design actions, and the process of understanding the essential in a landscape. Illustrations by the author 2021.

understanding, the mental and physical realm. Landscape is dynamic and, in the end, dependent on subjective understanding. This basic structure of a landscape, however, is the unchanging framework that houses the stratifying layers of nature and culture, the social and societal. The basic structure of landscape as a concept in fact resembles the description of the original phenomenological essence. From the human perspective, the geomorphological features of a landscape, the so-called greater landscape, is unchanging - unless drastically molded by humans, as is the case in constructing motorways and blowing up ancient bedrock. One needs to be conscious of these essential characteristics when practicing landscape-related professions. Furthermore, phenomenology as an approach takes into account the human dimension of experience, and includes that a planner/designer working with landscape is interested in what people feel and experience while being in a place.

Art may be one of the ways to capture the essence of a thing or an experience and make it visible to others. One may seek to capture the experience itself or the essence of the thing evoking that experience - with a few lines, other visuals, a melody. In a croquis drawing or a landscape sketch, with minimal means a maximal effect is gained, or perhaps a given moment in time and space, a place, is captured, a personal window with frames of experience through which the artist sees the world, and may help others recreate that experience. Although landscape architecture or city planning are not art for art's sake but a form of public service for general happiness, the same principles may apply - a phenomenon such as landscape is interpreted through one's own understanding and further made visible in representations, such as the designs of public space in cities or the green networks thereof. Places are interpreted by thorough analysis and something essential is captured, something we can preserve, enhance or convey into the design of new places.

Although both endeavors require a sensitivity to be attuned to ‘humbly listen to the earth and skies’ (as is the spirit in, for instance, Heidegger 1962, or Norberg-Schulz 1980), one of the differences between art and landscape architecture is the conscious effort of landscape architecture to understand others’ aspirations and hopes, synthesize different views and turn them into designs. As such it is, like all planning, a form of negotiation as well as an iteration of physical solutions to design problems – as opposed to art, which may willingly be subjective and oblivious of contrasting views. Much in the same way as in art, in landscape architecture, the designer also seeks to evoke an experience, a deep understanding, even, and the actual artifact or work of art is finally only created when someone experiences it. That experience can and need not be premeditated or guided, but remains personal. Unlike in art, however, where the emotions sought are not specified, the experience sought in designing the living environment is generally a positive one.

Instead of a detached view of landscape as an object, the phenomenological approach strives towards an involved understanding of its deeper meanings by relating to and living the landscape. It acknowledges the role of individual involvement and subjectivity in the evaluation of phenomena. Consequently, if planners and designers see themselves as part of the entity of landscape and people their acts will be more responsible, and their touch on landscape more understanding – as well as the effect of their actions on the lives of people sharing that landscape.

The symbolic importance of bridges dawned along the process. Just as bridges connect different realms and make places out of landscapes, understanding green urban landscape with a phenomenological approach at its best bridges the gap between the invisible and visible; experiences and visions, ideas and realities, – and between one and the other. The phenomenology-inspired analysis recognizing the perceptible and imperceptible and their interrelations can be helpful in bridging the gap between *knowing* and *understanding*. From perceiving a thing or a phenomenon, the road to deep understanding may lead through a framework such as the one developed and presented as an essential part of the research.

After all, the aim is to retain the values we hold precious. A phenomenological analysis may serve in the process or chain of action that involves Investigate – Analyze, Evaluate – Value, Preserve, Reconcile and as a last resort perhaps Compensate/Produce. Values need to be recognized and evaluated against each other, in every process involving change in the environment. This requires a comprehensive understanding of the essence and context of each place, of what is valuable and impossible to recreate.

“It is at the same time true that the world is what we see and that, nonetheless, we must learn to see it”
(Merleau-Ponty 1976 p. 4).



Epilogue

Since March 2020, running and walking along Helsinki's shores and green areas, it has become ever more obvious that we need places *in* the city (not just outside somewhere in the wilderness), where we can see the earth and sky meet, let our gaze sweep across the horizon, breathe freely. As well as coming together, public space is equally about being able to distance oneself from the crowd, quite literally. It is perhaps time to cease fearing the open space, the expanse, and to enjoy it without always filling it up with something. Perhaps we Finns are too close to our agricultural past to appreciate rolling expanses, perhaps the agoraphobia is about agrophobia, who knows. The human species, however, loves the sea, the views from a mountain top or from a high landmark building. On the other hand, along with changing climates, we will need shelter from the sun and the winds, habitats for us as well as other species. We need to be able to plan for cities with landscape diversity - where the desires of freedom as well as needs for community are met. There needs to be a choice, and sometimes our lives depend on it.

What makes a landscape distinguishable from another, then, to ensure this diversity? Whether or not Husserl would agree, I am inclined to think that there is an essence to every green area, as much as there is an essence to green areas in general, as places for human recreation and nature experience. The essence of blue-green sequences that are designated to contribute to the urban structure and experience of a city in their own particular way, such as the Green Fingers of Helsinki, is that they are continuous and connected. This I have come to believe on my explorations to green areas in Helsinki and other cities, on foot, by bicycle, and occasionally on skis or in a kayak. It is essential that you can enjoy them on your morning run with a continuous flow with minimum obstacles and interruptions, and at the same time, enjoy the beauty of sunrise or the gradual transformation from early spring chartreuse to the maturity of fall colors in the foliage. I believe that the essence of the Lapinlahti former hospital area is to continue to be a therapeutic environment, nesting in the cliffs' bosom on a sea bay's lap. And I believe that the essence of Helsinki's Central Park is the 'forest feel', where one is inside and outside of the city at the same time. Other places have other essential characteristics that every individual defines by experiencing them in their everyday life, actively and involved. To read and understand these landscapes is to appreciate them. Above all, I believe these landscapes with their living things should be real, and can never be replaced by mere images or virtual realities.



■ Figure 176. Taivallahti bay and Toivo Kuula Park at sunset. Photo by the author 2020.

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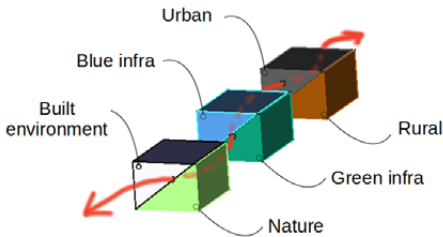
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Appendices

APPENDIX 1

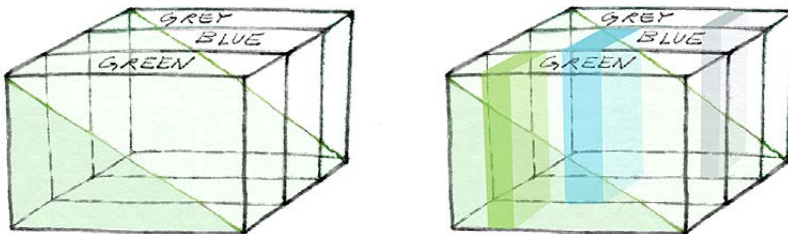
Iterations of the landscape diagrams, 'the urban landscape cubes'



■ Figure A1. The conceptual setting of landscape in the study. The Urban Landscape Cubes by the author attempt to describe the phenomena or elements in the study, by way of depicting them in three different juxtapositions. The dominance of the elements can be presented in three conceptual frameworks, where the built environment (buildings, roads, bridges etc grey infrastructure) and nature (natural elements) can be juxtaposed, on

the other hand the share of blue (water elements) and green infra and thirdly the rurality and urbanity of a landscape.

The landscape cubes can together present a particular landscape, for instance a designed and constructed park in a city with a dominant water element and mostly natural appearance, and the landscape it creates and entails. The x and y axes represent the relation between built-natural, green-blue or rural-urban elements in the landscape. The z axis is, in turn a temporal representation in a narrative form, a serpent running through the different elements, touching upon them in a differing ratio and making a path. It is theoretical because we observe and assess these elements in a random order, but it is temporal, because landscape is equally defined by the movement of our bodies or our senses; for instance, how the eyes receive and manage information, conveying it to the brain as fragments. In the same way, we observe the landscape space in sequences. The 'landscape' represents the whole park, a conceptual entity, and the micro-landscapes within it are the ones perceived at each time and combined in our mind to create a totality. The totality thus created in our minds in itself is invisible as well as the process leading to this understanding.



■ Figures A2 and A3 (above). The urban landscape cube, iteration. The mostly built, 'urban' environment and, on the other hand, the natural, rural 'nature' dominated realm are presented, if not as antidotes, as opposite ends of an axis, where the former is in the lower left hand corner of the cube. Different landscapes can be modelled in the scale of the dominance of these elements - and at the same time, the share of different infrastructures (green, blue, grey), to form a visual representation of the character of the landscape at hand. The cube on the right hand side, for instance, could represent the Back Bay Fens on the Emerald Necklace in Boston. The green area's overall image is more natural than urban, it has a fair amount of vegetation, the natural elements dominate the landscape, but there is a large, partly human-made, partly natural river as part of the landscape, and the green area's grey elements are human-made bridges, paths and roads. These could, obviously be defined mathematically, by counting their areal or mass, but the representation here acts as a mere example. Illustrations by the author 2019.

APPENDIX 2



■ Figures A4 – A11. Interpretation of landscapes and humans on the spot by sketching and making watercolors is akin to phenomenological methods of narrative and, in their way, a form of first-person phenomenological inquiry. Through them one is experiencing things first-hand in pictorial form, seeking to capture the essence of beings and places, and at the same time, to interpret and express a meaningful experience, convey it to others. A human figure in a croquis-drawing, with a minimum of lines, touches of pen on paper, seeks to picture form, posture, movement or other dimensions of the flesh. A painting seizes a specific moment in time and space, an atmosphere, color and light, which is not imitated but interpreted through oneself – in a way looking at a landscape through an opening bordered by one’s self (*‘minuuteni rajaama aukko josta maailma näkyy’*). They are ephemeral glimpses of reality, representing and recreating imagery of experiences: a sea lion touching your toe with his whiskers in Galapagos, water freezing on the paper in Lapland... Close to nature, In the landscape., near and far. Landscape architecture and landscape painting are both interpretation of places as well as creating places. Drawings and paintings from “Matkalla” and “Héliotropismes” travel diaries by the author 2003-2011.



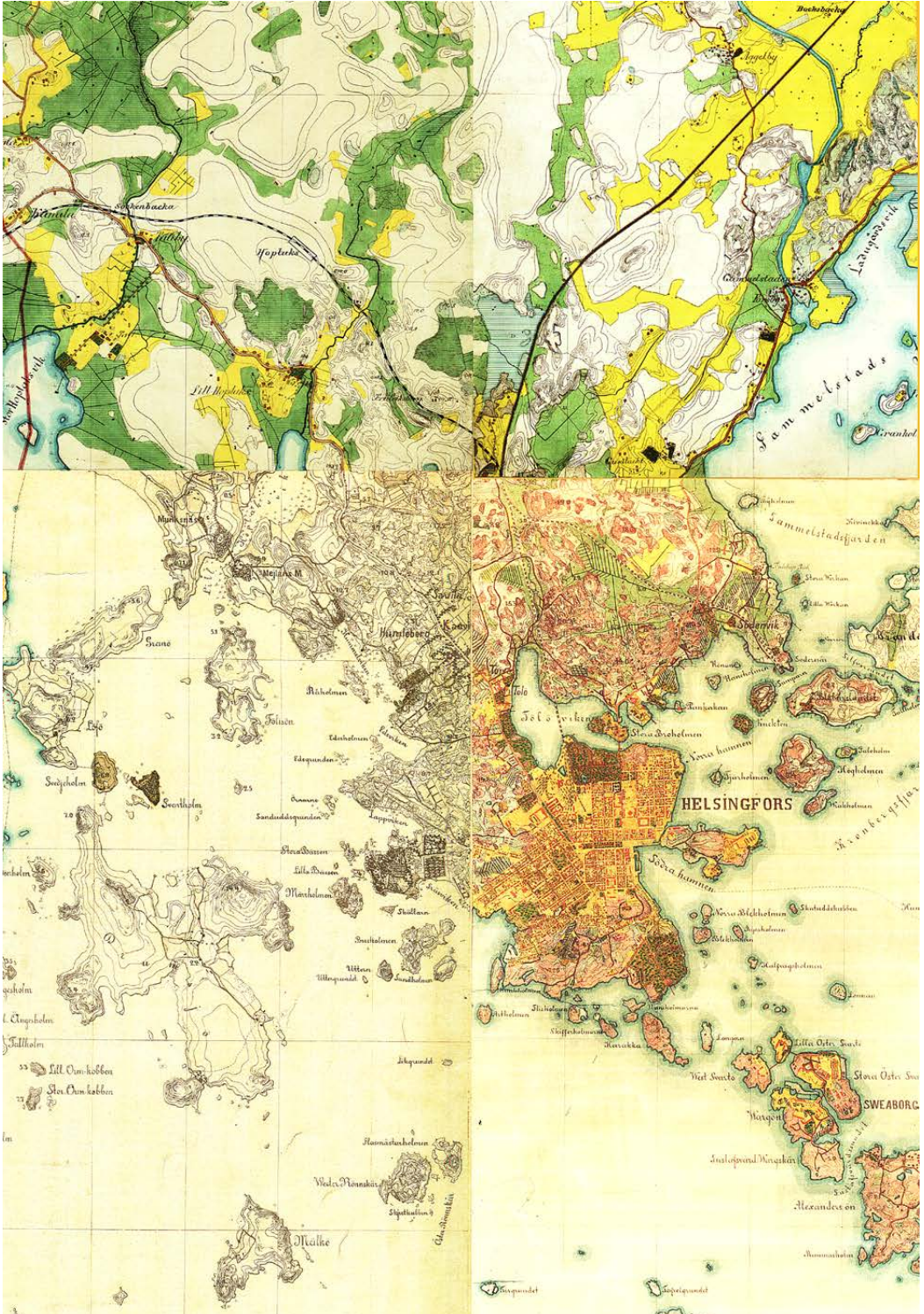
APPENDIX 3

In the synopsis for the Blue Ridge Waltz it states:

“The Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia, USA, is a scenic route of 469 miles and a characteristic way of leisure activity in its country. With its curvilinear alignment and considerate adjustment to the mountain landscape it was one of the first of its kind, designed by Stanley Abbott, landscape architect. It is an example of a collision between the two phenomenological levels of interpretation. The physical and mental elements of this landscape may result in a very different experience. The subjective experience of the route includes an immediate, contemplative experience, things seen, immaculate presence of things in the field of vision. A road trip is fun, dynamic, defined by constant movement and flashes of picture-postcards on the overlooks. It is detached – the bodily subject is conscious of their own tactile experience, but unconscious of the things that constitute it. It is a landscape of leisure – a scenery, an image, observed as stable.

Understanding the invisible is about recognizing the reimagined realm, the framed experience that was premeditated for the tourist. The invisible includes the background controversies. A road was constructed in pristine nature, the farmers were persuaded to grant control over their lands and the Cherokee were bypassed by legislation to obtain their lands. It is a landscape of inclusion; the masses have access to the beauty of landscape. But it is also a landscape of exclusion – of those farmers that do not fit in the tourist scenery, the times in history that were not taken as a part of the ‘official picture window’ on the Appalachian life, and of those travelers with no automobile, – as such a creation of a culture. It is a landscape of work, for those living along and taking care of the cultural landscape and for those working for the National Park Service managing it. For them it is the landscape of attachment and involvement. This way of seeing makes the experience more interesting but sometimes more painful – for example, when the water in a stream is no longer fit for drinking.”

APPENDIX 4 Helsinki in historic maps before the 1900's



■ Figure A12 on the previous page: The Senate Map 1871–72. The map shows the newly established parts of the Central Park’s predecessor, the Eläintarha (Djurgården) Park north of Töölönlahti Bay and how the railway built in 1862 has cut it in half. The forested areas are shown in white, pastures in green and fields in yellow in the northernmost parts. The center of the city and most of its Central Park areas (Kaivopuisto and Kaisaniemi) are shown as planted areas, as well as the western shore of Töölönlahti Bay, and the urban structure is depictable in red, as are the cliffs that define the landscape forms. The Senate map shows the most important parks of the time (Kaivopuisto, Lapinlahti Hospital area gardens, etc.) and differentiates between fields and pastures. Making maps is an art, where inclusion/exclusion and evaluation happens. City of Helsinki archives, combined by the author.



■ Figure A13. The King’s map (*Kuninkaankartasto 1776–1805*) shows Helsinki in the Swedish era, when the urban fabric was limited to Kruununkartasto and Suomenlinna Fortress. Landforms, roads and cultivable land are given emphasis. The map is a land survey of southern Finland commissioned by the Swedish king for military purposes, where landforms as well as their origin are represented in a pictorial way that makes them visible without topographical contours, in a watercolor illustration. Marshland and moraines are represented in different colors and techniques. Villages and remarkable houses are illustrated in red ink. *Kuninkaankartasto Suomesta 1776–1805*, Alanen et al. 1989.

APPENDIX 5

Additional information about the PPGIS survey about the national urban park

The questions asked were (Helsinki Region Infoshare, reaccessed in November 20, 2019), with their possible further explanation and subquestions:

1 Places that exemplify Helsinki

What places or areas in Helsinki are essential parts of the city's identity and story? Have you identified places in your own environment that you consider important in regard to their cultural or natural values? Could these places serve as parts of the National Urban Park? (subquestions to pinpoint at the map were:) An undiscovered gem, A place that exemplifies Helsinki, A place that I would be proud to present to my foreign guests and Special characteristics of Helsinki nature.

2 Activities and experiences

A National Urban Park is not just about cultural history, impressive park architecture or areas that are considered significant due to their natural values. It's also about activities and events as part of urban life. What places do you consider important due to the experiences that they provide or the activities that can be held there? Should these places also be integrated into the National Urban Park? (subquestions to pinpoint at the map were:) A beautiful place or environment, A place for recreation, Seasons in the city, Connecting with other residents and The most important routes.

3 The future of the National Urban Park of Helsinki (subquestions to pinpoint at the map were:) Future potential, Places that should be preserved and Needs to be made more accessible.

4 Feedback and background information

Quotes and observations in the PPGIS responses:

Concerning item 2.

Places of calm and tranquility as well as activity are important.

"... mitään muuta ei kuulu kuin tuulen suhinaa paitsi rannalla toisinaan laineiden liplatusta.... Viltti mukaan ja pitkäkseen. Hiljaisuus ja tuulenvire auttavat huomaa-matta nukahtamaan. Lampaiden yksitoikkoisen elämän ja loputtoman syömisen seuraaminen on rauhoittavaa." (... nothing else is heard than the wind and the ripple of the waves. Bring your quilt and lay down. The silence and the breeze help you fall asleep without noticing. Observing the monotonous life and endless eating of the sheep is like a calming form of meditation.)

"Kun saareen astuu, alkaa rauhoittua" (when entering the island, one starts to calm down).

"Lastenvaunuja työntävät äidit (ja isät) saavat hetken itselleen ja voivat lepuuttaa silmiään ja katsoa kauas yli metsän ja merenlahden, pienokaisen nukahdettua

soratien mukavan rauhoittavaan rahinaan pyörien alla” (mothers (and fathers) pushing trolleys can have a moment for themselves, may rest their eyes looking far across the forest and sea bay, while the little one has fallen asleep in the comforting rattle of the gravel road under the wheels).

The journey, being on the way to a place, can be an uplifting experience as well, to the extent that one might change the route to a longer one from one place to another, if that route provides something more interesting to observe.²⁹⁷ Walking along the duckboards to Lammassaari Island, or just walking on the icy cover of the sea in some winters, was described an experience in itself, valued as either a transition zone, or an experience in its own right. An overpass may be “my fastest route to the forest,” a wardrobe to Narnia (“*Vaatekaappini Narniaan*”), or gravel paths as “pleasurable to walk or cycle on while enjoying diverse nature”: “*Hiekkatiet ovat ilo kävellä tai pyörällä ja nauttia samalla monipuolisesta luonnosta.*” Surprises and new experiences add to the valued activity:

“... jäätä pitkin pääsee seikkailuille lähisaariin. Voi löytyä uusia yllätyksiä ihan kotikulmilta” (across the ice you can embark on an adventure to the nearby islands. Surprises can be found around the corner (close to home).

“sinne pääsee omalla veneellä iltapurjehdukselle” (you can get there with your own boat for an evening sail).

“... salaperäisyyttä luontokokemuksena niin että siellä yllättyy ja ilahtuu” (mystery as a nature experience so that you get surprised and delighted).

“Really relaxing and interesting to look for the hints and stories.”

“Raitiovaunut; voi rauhassa istua kyydissä ja katsella maisemia ja rakennuksia ja ihmisten eloa” (Trams; one can just sit there and watch the scenery, buildings and people).

“Itse reitti on jo arvo” (the route is a value in itself) [re: Haltiala to Arabianranta Park].²⁹⁸

Concerning item 3.

Nature observation is an experience for all the senses.

“voi kohdata huuhkajan ja peuroja” (one can encounter an eagle owl and deer).

“taimenen kuduntarkkailu” (observation of rainbow trout spawn).

²⁹⁷ Which the popularity of the Central Park for commuting suggests. The responses to the question in the NUP survey asking about peoples’ routes also supported this assumption. This can include an expectation of a pleasurable experience, for instance through a green sequence of parks and shade on hot weather or beautiful places on the way. This applies to recreational routes but also to other ones, for instance commuting by bike or walking, modes of transport that involve exposure to the elements, naturally provided that the weather or at least preparations are appropriate.

²⁹⁸ The places are also defined by the way they can be reached. Pikku-Hattu Island is accessible by (dry) foot (“*kuivin jaloin*”) when the water level is low or “rubber boots are perhaps needed” there sometimes as the path may be flooded, islands and nature experiences are “a short boat trip away” or “a side step to nature” (“*hypähdys luontoon*”). The scale is important, and that the route is of appropriate length. For instance, about Seurasaari island it is said: “... *saaren läpi on juuri sopivan mittainen kävely*” (the walk across the island is just of a convenient length).

“pääsiäisenä pääse katsomaan karitsoja” (at Easter one can go and see little lambs) at Haltiala Manor.

“Peurojen näkeminen täällä oli iso elämys!” (seeing deer here was a great experience), at Kivinokka Island.

“... luonto tulee sisälle sydämeen” (nature comes inside into your heart).

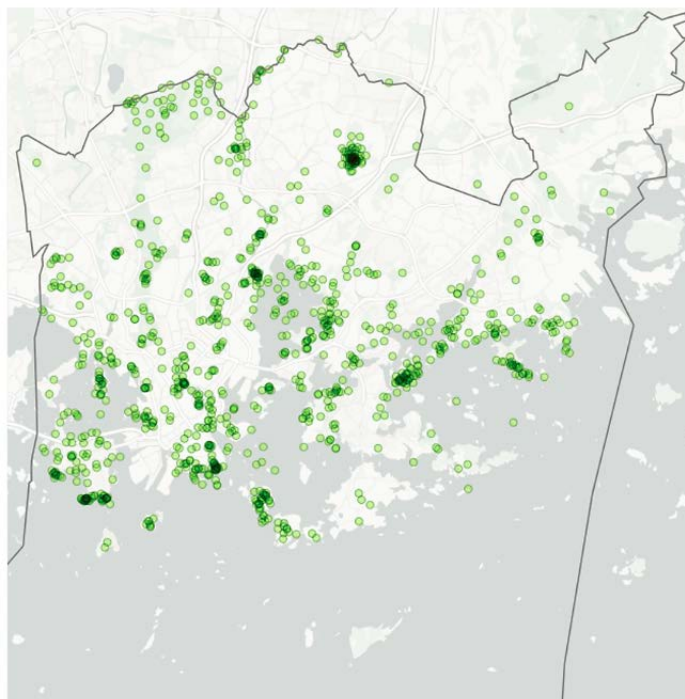
“se hento, kuuluu vihreä valo, joka suodattuu juuri puhjenneiden hiirenkorvien katveen läpi ja merituuli on vielä viileä mutta aurinko jo lämmittää” (that delicate green light filtering through newly budded dogears, and the sea breeze is still chilly but sun has started to warm).

“... tiheät kaislikot soivat iltaisin erilaisten kerttusten laulaessa” (the dense reed beds are ringing with birdsong).

Tasty pleasures also included hot juice, coffee with donuts/buns after a ski trip (*“munkkikahvit hiihtoretken päätteeksi,”* Pitkäkosken maja) or frying sausages by the fire. Swimming in the cold water invigorates the body and mind in all seasons, with a scenery in the background: *“kylmään veteen pulahtamiselle hienot puitteet” (fancy backdrop for dipping in cold water).*

Concerning item 5.

Experience of beauty is found in both urban and natural landscapes.



■ Figure A14. A beautiful place or environment, summary of the NUP survey results. The controversial Malmi Airport area shows clearly in the northern part of the map. The overrepresentation of certain areas is explained in analyses of surveys by the targeted marketing of the survey (Lahtinen 2017, p. 3). Mapita Ltd 2017.

Concerning item 6.

Sea and forest act as main qualifiers.

Central Park represents a "real Finnish forest," a remote one ("*kaukometsä by the poet Aleksis Kivi*"), its essence, "perusolemus," which word is in fact used in this description:

"Keskuspuisto on kansainvälisesti ainutlaatuinen melkein keskellä kaupunkia sijaitseva puisto eli pikemminkin oikea perisuomalainen METSÄ, jonka perusolemus uinuu melkein jokaisen suomalaisen sielussa. Metsästä – sen korkeista puista, terveistä metsäntuoksuista, ainutlaatuisen kauniista aluskasvillisuudesta, kivistä ja kannoista – nauttivat täysin sydämin myös sinne käyskentelemään pääsevät ulkomaalaiset, jotka eivät muutoin pääse tutustumaan suomalaismetsiin, joita on koko maamme täynnä. Metsä on se Suomen ydinmaisema, josta on siis sellaisenaan edes pieni osanen Keskuspuistona säilytettävä nykyisessä laajuudessaan – ehkä vielä laajennettunakin – meille, ja tuleville, kaupunkilaisille vähäisenä muistona muualla Suomessa humisevista kaukometsistä."

(Central Park is an internationally unique park located almost in the middle of the city, i.e. rather a real Finnish FOREST, whose essence slumbers in almost every Finn's soul. Forest – its tall trees, healthy forest scents, uniquely beautiful undergrowth, stones and stumps – is also enjoyed wholeheartedly by the foreigners who get to saunter there and are otherwise unable to get to know the Finnish forests that the whole country is full of. Forest is the essential landscape of Finland, of which as such must even a small part as Central Park be preserved in its present width – perhaps even widened – for us and the future citizens as a minor remembrance of the remote forests wuthering elsewhere in Finland.)

Central Park inspired respondents to long descriptions, and was seen as having value for tourists as well, and exemplifying Helsinki in a unique manner:

"Viekkä turistibussit turisteineen kerran vaikkapa Keskuspuistoon, sen metsiin, sen kallioille ja sen pururadoille. Rakentakaa sinne laavu, ja keittäkää siellä heille suomalaiskahvit ja syöttäkää heille sen kanssa kunnan suomalaismunkit. Se muodostaisi varmaankin vaikuttavan muiston. ainutlaatuisen muiston maassamme ja sen mahtavassa kaupunkimetsässä eli kaupunkipuistossa = Keskuspuistossa käynnistä ja siellä käyskentelystä kaikkine siihen liittyvine yksityiskohtaisine luontoelämyksineen ja metsän tuoksuineen. Viekkä heidät myös katsomaan Keskuspuiston komeita kallioita ja kertokaa heille kallioittemme iänikuisuudesta, niitten 2,5 miljardin vuoden iästä, kertokaa heille jääkaudesta ja näyttäkään kallioista jääkauden meille jättämät "kirjoitukset" eli jään repimät urat kallioiden pintaan, joita siellä on runsaasti nähtävissä..Näyttäkää heille kallioon kaiverretut Helsingin puolustuskäytävät poteroineen, jotka on sinne tehty, jopa kiinalaisten toimesta, viime vuosisadan alkupuolella.

Kaikki se kiinnostaisi turisteja varmaan paljon enemmän kuin esim. ostoksilla käynnit, koska tavarat nyt vain ovat melkein samoja maassa kuin maassa..."

(Take the tourist buses for once to Central Park, its woodlands, its rocks and running tracks. Build a lean-to and prepare some Finnish coffee for them and feed them proper Finnish jam donuts with it. It would probably make a powerful memory, a unique memory in our country and its great urban forest, i.e. urban park = visit

to the Central Park and wandering around there with all the conjunctive detailed nature experiences and forest scents. Take them also to see the handsome bedrock/cliffs of Central Park, and tell them about the ancient/eternal character of them, their 2,5 billion years of age, about the ice age and show the “writings”/“inscriptions” in the rock, left to us by the ice age, i.e. the abundantly visible lines torn by the ice in their surface. Show them the defense structures carved in the rock, made there at the beginning of the last century, even by the Chinese. All that would surely interest the tourists much more than for instance shopping, because goods just are almost the same, no matter which country..)

Concerning item 7.

Temporality and historicity are sources of powerful experience.

”Vanhat puutalokorttelit kertovat jälleenrakentamisen ja kaupungin perustamisen ajasta, metsässä ollut hökkelikylä on vielä aistittavissa. Hiljaisuudessa aika katoaa ja suomalainen luontosuhde herää.” [part of a long narrative.] (Old wooden quarters speak of the era of reconstruction [after the Second World War] and the times of the establishment of the city, the shack village that used to exist in the forest, are still to be sensed. In the silence time disappears and the Finnish relationship with nature awakens.)

”silmä lepää sen suurissa puissa, jotka kaareutuvat Stansvikintien ylle, siellä on Hgin komein tammikuja” (the eye is resting on its large trees that arch over Stansvikintie, there is the most handsome oak allée in Helsinki).

”voi eläytyä viime vuosisadan vaihteen huvilaelämään,” (one can imagine oneself in the life in villas as it used to be at the turn of the century).

In many different categories, Malmi Airport and concern about its future was tangible, be it “a place to present to my foreign guests,” “a place exemplifying Helsinki” or a “beautiful place or cultural historic value. One respondent described its significance, stating:

”Tänne laskeutui valvontakomissio sodan jälkeen, tänne tuotiin marsalkka Mannerheim kuolemansa jälkeen” (... here the supervising commission landed after the war, here was Mannerheim brought after his death).

Referring to the plan of the City of Helsinki (City Plan 2016) to build housing in place of the existing runways and transform the place completely: *“En rund byggnad mitt bland en massa höghus är ett helt dödfött historiskt minnesmärke, om flygandet försvinner från Malm” (one round building conserved amongst new blocks of flats is a ‘an entirely still born monument’ if the aviation activity is to disappear).*

Concerning item 8.

Knowledge behind the seen adds to the experience and vice versa

Different species of animals or vegetation were mentioned and their rareness emphasized. Awareness of maps and distances was evident, for instance it was pointed out that one can travel through the whole city north-south via the Central Park.

Nature was personalized: *“... kalliot kutsuvat istahtamaan ja ihaillemaan luontoa ja ympäristöä” (... cliffs invite you to sit down and admire nature and the environment).*

The "democratic city ideal is manifested" in a Helsinki way, when also the inhabitants in areas of a "lower public image" are able to enjoy nearby nature "normally reserved for the wealthiest elsewhere in the world":

"Ne ovat erityisen helsinkiläistä luontoympäristöä myös siksi, että ne kuvastavat demokraattista kaupunki-ihannetta, jossa myös imagoltaan heikompien kaupunkialueiden asukkaat saavat nauttia elämänlaatuun keskeisesti vaikuttavasta lähiluonnosta, joka muualla maailmassa tavallisesti on varattu ainoastaan varakkaimmalle väestönosalle."

The natural phenomena were seen connected to life in general, evoking thoughts, for instance a freely flowing rapid as a metaphor of life's complexity and whirling diversity:

"vapaana virtaavan kosken seuraaminen on monimutkaisuudessaan mykistävää katsottavaa. Maailma ei ole mustavalkoinen eikä staattinen, ei myöskään virtaava vesi. Virtavaa vettä katsellessa voi ymmärtää miten monta pyörrettä jokaiseen päivään kuuluu." (Observing a free flowing rapid is stunning to watch in its complexity. The world is not black and white or static, nor is the flowing water. Watching it, one can understand how many whirls are included in each day.)

More new amenities like cafes, benches and docks, and better accessibility to existing services were wished for. On the other hand, the tranquility was appreciated that comes along with not having services or other people around, and the attraction of the places was feared to get "ruined" by too many visitors:

"El rantaa eikä palveluita, siis taattu rauha (Harakka island)" (no beach nor services, hence peace guaranteed).

"Ei kiitos mitään lisäaktiviteetteja niille, jotka ovat liian tylsistyneitä omaan itseensä" (no extra activities, thanks, for those that are 'too bored with themselves').

Although conscious design or refurbishment of areas was wished for, there was also criticism involved, mostly about "greenwashing" efforts of the city government with projects like the NUP, while diminishing the park's area with infill development or destroying cultural historic or natural values. The criticism was expressed by way of experience, among other ways:

"Viikinmäen asuinalueen brutaali rakentaminen on heikentänyt maisemakokemusta" (the brutal development of the Viikinmäki housing area has deteriorated the landscape experience).

Teiden laajennukset ovat aiheuttaneet "aukon luontokokemukseen" (expansion of roads has caused a hole/break/void in the natural experience).

"autojen stressaava melu + visuaalinen häly rikkovat muuten idyllisen kieroksen" (the distressing noise and visual commotion of cars obstruct an otherwise idyllic tour).



Understanding green urban landscape connects the philosophical realm of phenomenology with the field of landscape architecture, building bridges between disciplines. Green urban landscape is explored with case examples of well-known park systems in Boston and Helsinki. Different narratives illuminate the landscapes from different angles; performance and movie-making inform the research, and a map-based public survey provides the perspective of others. As a result, the visible and invisible aspects of landscape emerge, including personal experiences and the processes of becoming – how the landscapes have come into being.

The approach is theory-based but practice-oriented, emphasizing the multisensory experience and multidimensionality of green urban landscape. The research provides a tool for analyzing landscapes – an aide to understand them more profoundly and in a more empathetic way – towards both the landscapes themselves and the people living and using them.

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