

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Let's Eat Together

Methods and Tools for Inclusive City Design Practice

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CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Gothenburg, Sweden 2019

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CHOTIMA AG-UKRIKUL
ISBN 978-91-7905-183-9

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Doktorsavhandlingar vid Chalmers tekniska högskola
Ny serie nr 4650
ISSN 0346-718X

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Cover:

This photograph shows two men (architects/researchers) that sit on a bench chatting with a stranger who stopped by. It was an architectural installation 'sit-in commensality' at the Koninginneplein, Brussels in November 2015. It was part of a three days eatscape catalytic act. More information can be read on page 41. Photographer: Chotima Ag-ukrikul.
Participant: Burak Pak.

Chalmers Digitaltryck
Gothenburg, Sweden 2019

Abstract

This thesis studies how the practice of eating together impacts on liveable city making. In this thesis, the practice of eating together is called *commensality*, which is a collective action that creates shared environments. Through time these environments are turned into recognized meeting places where locals gather. They are called *eatscapes* in this thesis. People who use eatscapes develop urban rituals and collective experiences that later become urban vernaculars in their localities. These eatscapes and urban vernaculars are essential material agents for turning a locality into a liveable city. Thus, this thesis studies the relationships between the practice of commensality, the urban vernacular and liveable city making.

The studies were done through case-based explorations of existing food entrepreneurs in real-life contexts to understand how eatscapes are structured and shaped by commensality or vice versa. Exploring the relationship between the practice of commensality (social) and the built environment (spatial) in a real-life context requires researching *design* in real life. Consequently, the explorative and experience-based methods and tools of *eatscape typology, checklist, catalytic act* and *matrix* were developed in this thesis. These designerly methods and tools are not only based on the specific skills that are traditionally used in the practice of architecture and urban design, but also on experience-based methods that involve interaction with subjects in real life for learning, reflecting and knowing. The results from the explorations show that designers can learn a lot from food entrepreneurs, who have insights on the urban vernacular and the production of eatscapes that have an impact on liveable city making. Furthermore, the concepts of eatscape and commensality are much more than room-shapers for liveable cities; more importantly, they are instruments for building community and making city design more inclusive.

This thesis is not a how-to guide for designing eatscapes or for inclusive city design, but rather a reflection of designers' explorations. This way of approaching *city design*¹ is an opportunity for architects and urban designers to engage and embed social sustainability into the design practice by establishing design ritual. Ultimately, this thesis calls for designers to shift the focus of their design practice from primarily visual-based to a more explorative and experience-based approach.

Keywords: Commensality, Liveable City, Eatscape, Urban Vernacular, Design Ritual, Experience-based, Inclusive city design

¹ *A design practice, which reconciles the intellectual abstraction of urban design and the formalism of architecture with the plural forces of the everyday city. (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008b) p. 104*

Acknowledgement

This thesis project was initiated as a joined PhD study between the Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering Chalmers University of Technology and the Faculty of Architecture Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven). I wish to express my gratitude towards the former head of the Faculty of Architecture KU Leuven and my supervisor Professor Johan Verbeke as well as the current head of the Faculty of Architecture KU Leuven Dag Boutsen for giving me the time and the financial support to start with this project. The gratitude also extends to the Swedish Research School in Architecture (ResArc) who sponsored and facilitated the development of my scholarly craft.

I wish to thank all three of my supervisors, Professor Johan Verbeke and Professor Maria Nyström Reuterswård, who believed highly in this project. Especially my co-supervisor Marie Strid who tirelessly supported in all means and shared her precious time with me. Without her this thesis would not have come so far. Furthermore, I also wish to thank Professor Halina Dunin-Woyseth from the Oslo School of Architecture and Design as well as Professor Fredrik Nilsson and Professor Catharina Dyrssen from the Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering Chalmers University of Technology for their continuously believe and support in this project even before it started. My gratitude extend to Professor Gunnar Sandin and Professor Mattias Karrholm from the Department of Architecture and Built Environment Lund University for their constructive inputs on this project during the ResArc seminars.

At the Faculty of Architecture KU Leuven, I want to thank all the students and the colleagues who took part and showed their interest in this project. Especially I wish to thank Burak Pak, Livia de Bethune, Nel Janssens, Caroline Newton, Koen de Wandeler, Wim Goes and Hanne van Reusel for generously offering their helps and sharing their insights. At the Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering Chalmers University of Technology, I wish to thank Professor Inga Malmquist who gave me the opportunity to roll out my first eatscape experiment with her students.

This project has taken a decade of my life, I would like to remember two people that I lost during this period: my daughter Nanah Hansen and Professor Johan Verbeke. Fortunately, I was surrounded by warm family and friends, who supported me to go through all these events and to keep focus on this project. Thank you, Rene Hansen, Odessa Hansen, Gerrie Brugging, Remy Kinma, Yang Sun, Shaaf Milani-Nia, Chutinunta Ag-ukrikul and Pek Mahajuntanaporn. I feel very privileged to have been able to learn, develop and share this work with all of you.

Chotima Ag-ukrikul

Amsterdam 2019

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Summary

Eating did not simply satisfy a bodily urge but transformed the act into a social and communicative event (Flandrin, Montanari, and Sonnenfeld 2001).

The practice of eating together often takes place in a shared environment where an individual is placed in the presence of others. Consequently, these individuals make both direct and indirect contact with one another through conversation, visual contact, sharing a common table or even a dish (menu). The boiling pot of noodle soup at the street vendor stand (Figure 1) is one such meeting place in which the soup is the common interest that brings together strangers to gather around a table. Such a meeting place becomes a node where in-depth relationships can take root. It is the place where strangers can establish their first encounters and gradually turn their brief encounters into opportunities for exchange. Through time, the accumulation of knowledge through such exchanges transforms strangers into people who are familiar with the local context for entering a locality.



Figure 1: Noodle soup street vendor at Sathorn Road Soi 10 in Bangkok, Thailand. The individual customers sit at a continuous table and take their own portion of a shared soup. (Ag-ukrikul, 2013)

Vernacular is what ordinary people do in their everyday lives. It is a form of local practice that is ephemeral and temporal, just like street performers, street vendors and children at play occupy space precariously (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2008). In this thesis, the practice of eating together is regarded as a form of urban vernacular which is called *commensality*.

The term *commensality* comes from sociology and anthropology studies in which habits, ritual, religion, society and culture (Fischler 2011) (Grignon 2001) are the common context for its use. However, in this thesis, the focus for exploring the term is limited to its spatial and social aspects to stay within the field of architecture and urban design. Thus, the focus is on exploring the relationship between the practice of commensality (social) and the built environment (spatial) to recognize and understand how the use of the space is structured and shaped by commensality or vice versa. The *social* aspects are action and interaction between people as well as between people and things, whereas the *spatial* aspects are the form and materiality that make up a place. Let us return to the long blue table in Figure 1 and recognize the social and spatial aspects that are the focuses of this thesis. On the individual scale, it is about understanding the interactions and space between the cooking pot and the long blue table. On the collective scale, the attention is moved to the interaction and the space between the soup stand itself and the other vendors, and eventually to the interaction and the space between the street and the neighbourhood where the soup stand is situated.

Commensality describes the sharing of a common table (or space) while eating together. Through the exploration in this thesis, it becomes clear that *sharing* and *recurrence* are the two aspects that connect the practice of commensality with the subject of architecture and urban design. The aspect of *sharing* makes the practice of commensality into a form of urban vernacular, an act of room shaping (placemaking). This is because the practice of commensality brings people together – it is a plural way of eating. Another aspect is *recurrence*, which is about the frequency in time that commensality occurs. The recurrence of everyday commensality makes such action capable of producing identity and memory for a locality.

The physical record of everyday acts and counteracts in the present city² can offer clues about the decision-making by those who use the locality (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008a). The practice of commensality is one of the everyday actions that is spontaneous and fluid, but through time it leaves traces on the physical environment. Acquiring such a user's knowledge, this thesis employs experience-based research methods and tools – just as archaeologists use artefacts to trace human history. Data that is present in this thesis is based on my first-hand experience of localities, which provides significant clues for piecing

² *The present city is the take-for-granted every day that is surrounding us. Those places that one encounters by foot, public transit, car, while sitting, listening, observing, or participating with the world around us while in the city. (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008b)*

together the understanding of how commensality happens, why a certain space or an object is needed, and how people relate to the context through everyday commensality.

... studio-based reflexivity can be followed in many architectural schools today and is commonly privileged by the professional schools of many research universities. If reflection-in-action stands against the systematic, scientific, linear way of knowing, what kind of inquiry could complement the systematic way of knowing about architectural theory? (Yaneva 2011)

As an architect who designs and teaches in the field of architecture reflecting on my own practice, like other scholars (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008a) (Gehl 2011) I have found the practice of architecture and urban design to be often static and unable to deal with the constantly changing conditions in real-life urban situations. This thesis responds to this issue by taking on board fieldwork, deploying architects and designers to be in the field as well as using everyday practice as a way to rethink research and design practice. This is the basis to be further developed into the explorative and the experience-based research and design approach in this thesis. One of the many everyday practices, commensality, will be the focus of this thesis. I will also focus on the designerly methods and tools used for observation, reflection and design in order to know. My role as a commensality researcher in this thesis was to gather *situated* and *embodied* knowledge (Thrift 1996) (Haraway 1990). Choosing commensality as my way of knowing the world allows me to become answerable for what I have experienced. I have been constantly reminded that the routine and the habit of the everyday should not be taken for granted.

Like architecture without architects and urban spaces without planners (Bernard Rudofsky 1964), commensality involves enormous numbers of strangers³ in producing improvised action based on their tacit understanding of a place for producing an *eatscape*. *Eatscape* is a construction of *eat* and *landscape*, and defined here as a fluid landscape which is shaped by people and their performance in shared physical and social settings while the practice of commensality occurs. It is not a matter of localizing a need or a function in a pre-existing space; it is the spatialisation of a *social activity* that ties in to practice by producing an appropriated space (Cupers 2013) (Lefebvre 2000). Food pioneers, entrepreneurs in the restaurant business, seem to understand and take good advantage of such eatscape knowledge. They often act as designers and architects themselves when it comes to creating and running a successful food business in cities – especially those with businesses in thriving urban places. Evidently, their insights of a locality let them produce architectural concepts, services and products that are to their customers' liking. However, their knowledge of a locality and urban vernacular are embedded in their businesses, often making it difficult to transfer by verbal means (not everyone is trained to communicate verbally). I consider this type of know-how *tacit knowledge* (Polanyi 2009) born of expertise by running successful businesses. The food pioneers know what to look for and they also have ideas about what else they may want to know to bring their customers back to visit their businesses again and

³ I use the word *strangers* here to mean people who might or might not know each other. It is more than a mass group of people; the term *strangers* here emphasises the publicness of such a gathering of people.

again. The cases from such food pioneers were selected as real-world study cases in this thesis not only to acknowledge the food pioneers but, more importantly, to transfer their tacit knowledge to the design community.



Figure 2: Brussels Stock Exchange (Brussels, Belgium)

Urban functions such as commercial area, residential area, and circulation area, though commonly used in the field of architecture and urban design, are rather dull and static. They do not specify the presence of people (users), but rather the usage of these spaces. Contrarily, eatscape is an *alive* urban function. It requires the *use, occupation* and *presence* of people for claiming its existence. Human and non-human aspects tie together because people use them. People and food, spatial settings, social settings and time are its attributes; an eatscape that misses out on any of them simply does not even exist. For example, placing tables and chairs along a pavement does not make it an eatscape. Whereas people munching sandwiches on the steps in the front of the Brussels Stock Exchange (Figure 2) does make it an eatscape. Thus, on top of the urban function commonly labelled as *eating area, restaurant* and *cafe* in architectural and urban design drawings, the label *eatscape* implies that commensality is *alive* with *vitality* and *conviviality* in such a space. For this reason, the suffix *-scape* in eatscape is more than the static definition of space; it refers to the fluid, irregular shapes of a landscape (Appadurai 1996) (Brighenti 2014) in which the presence of people is inseparable from its description.

Eatscapes are places where people meet, share, and co-produce places. Commensality connects people with their senses and emotions, enabling users to be momentarily social. Using these two concepts to approach architecture and urban design connects urban research and design with the senses, emotions, and ordinary human and social meanings.

They can become instruments for the socially inclusive use of urban spaces, design methods and tools because they enable people to express and eventually transform cities more after their hearts' desire, which allows urban commons (Harvey 2008) and public domain (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001) to take form. This is one way for architects and urban designers to engage in the discussion of social sustainability. As a consequence of this new understanding, this thesis moves away from its initial focus on searching for the *what* and the *how-to* in design (an encyclopaedia of eatscapes) to focus instead on establishing a new concept of the inclusive design practice.

Through my practice in designing and teaching architecture and urban design, I was always asking myself what more I need to know about the activity that people do on site. How do I engage in their practice and knowledge? How do I as an architect learn from a situation? What is the context about? This thesis explores other ways of learning and knowing about situated knowledge for city design, exploring ways of acquiring situated knowledge by practicing everyday commensality and making eatscapes. These ways of approaching city design have changed my design practice. I began to develop rituals that connect research and design with my everyday life. My body becomes a tool that is deployed in the field. The practice of commensality becomes my method for connecting me with the ordinary context. This way of researching and designing makes it impossible for me to avoid thinking *inclusively* in the process of city design.

Ritual takes time to recognize and develop. It is a slow approach that might not seem suitable for architects and urban design professionals, since the pressures of time and resources are high in everyday professional practice. However, the slowness invites professionals to take time to experience, distil and explore new ways of practicing. Establishing design ritual is an opportunity for designers to develop their expertise in a new way (different from before) over a period of time, just as I turned commensality into my everyday research and design ritual. Because I have changed through the making of this thesis, I hope that the methods, the tools, the cases and the reflections presented in the thesis will provide guidance and inspiration.

1. Introduction

Urbanization has been one of the most significant driving forces of recent global development. According to the World Bank, cities currently account for approximately 80% of GDP generated worldwide and more than half the world's population now lives in cities. This proportion will continue to increase rapidly and reach 70% of the population by 2050. Urbanisation has the potential to make cities more prosperous and countries more developed. According to the *World Cities Report 2016* from UN-habitat, many cities all over the world are grossly unprepared for the multidimensional challenges associated with it. Examples are environmental challenges such as pollution and climate change as well as social challenges such as inequality, exclusion and deprivation, which create spatial inequalities and divided cities (UN-Habitat 2016). Particularly challenging is how such inequalities impact the growing difficulties of cities in integrating different social groups, migrants and refugees so that they equitably share in the human, social, cultural and intellectual assets of the city, and thus have a sense of belonging.

Urban design is where design connects people and places as well as movement and urban form in a way that works for people (Carmona 2003:3). This statement accentuates that urban design depends on *people* to hold together the field of practice with a focus on common placemaking through people's experience, perceptions, mental images (Lynch 1960) and social usage traditions of urban spaces (Alexander et al. 1977) (Whyte 2001) (Jacobs 1992). Carmona sums it up nicely by saying that urban design is *for* and *about* people, operating in the *real* where *making a better place* is its normative goal. This thesis aims at approaching the challenge of urbanization from urban design's perspective, which views cities as hubs for social encounters. They provide conditions for the meeting between strangers from different backgrounds, ethnic groups, genders and religions. Cities with these conditions are considered *inclusive* cities in this thesis.

On one hand the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs)⁴ to 'make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' drives the call for making cities accessible for all. On the other hand, such a vision is challenged by the increasing demand from both inhabitants and city authorities to defend their neighbourhoods from unwanted groups of users (Omid 2014). The growing demand for defensive urban design (Campbell-Dollaghan 2017) in public spaces reflects the development of an increasingly segregated society. Architecture and urban design professionals are often caught up in such contradictions. According to urban scholars Everyday Urbanism, the design approach that these professionals are using is too static and to deal with the constantly changing conditions of real life in urban situations.

⁴ *The eleventh of seventeen UN-habitat goals for sustainable development.*

They suggest that professionals should pay attention to the street level. Following this suggestion, I looked at the everyday spaces in cities and came across lively places such as cafés, restaurants and street vendors where people meet, gather and socialize. As German sociologist Georg Simmel once said, the magic of eating together lies in how people who in no way share any special interest can gather together. These everyday, small-scale, collective and informal places interested me – with the hope that looking at a simple thing like the everyday practice of eating together might lead to the development of a new design approach that is bottom-up and inclusive.

Knowledge Landscape of Eating, Food and Architecture

Connecting the subjects of eating, food and architecture together has not been a tradition in the field of architecture and urban design. In 2007, amongst the many popular publications on design for eating places was the *Cool Restaurants* book series, which covers international cities with titles such as *Cool Restaurants: Berlin* (Fischer 2004) and *Cool Restaurants: London* (Olbrich and Kunz 2006). These were photography books presenting the design and the image of architecture focused on entertainment and nourishment. The projects included in these publications were strictly restaurants where people pay to sit, eat and meet. Design and interior writer Bethan Ryder (2007) claimed that restaurateurs, architects and designers were producing theoretical themes and spectacular interiors to seduce diners.

Nonetheless, the subject of food in sociology is more common than in the field of architecture and urban design. The book *The Sociology of Food and Eating* (Murcott 1983) already existed in the early 1980s. In fact, the sociology of food is an established field of study that relates food with the history, progress and future development of society. It also includes production, consumption, distribution, ritual, spirituality, ethics, culture and much more. In the field of architecture, the work of Karen A Franck (Franck 2003) (Franck 2005) unveiled another side of the relation between food and space with her extensive history of food and the city, dining out, quick service food, eating outdoors, buying and growing, a sense of community and continuity as well as the pleasures of food in relation to the built environment. Franck urged architects and planning professionals to pay attention to the fact that the space of food concerns not only the spatial design but more importantly the social exchange and interaction that bring vitality and conviviality to urban life. In other words, the space of food is a tool of urban regeneration.

The awareness of the link between food and the built environment became more pronounced with the media's attention to food and its social, economic and urban environment in the international documentary film *Our Daily Bread* (Wagenhofer and Geyrhalter 2005), the comedy-drama *Fast Food Nation* (Linklater 2006) and other television programs like *Jimmy's Global Harvest* (Burke 2010). In the United States in 2008, a Los Angeles politician acted against the growing problem of obesity by banning new fast-food restaurants from opening in some of the city's poorest neighbourhoods (Severson 2008). This brought the question of food, health, and justice to light for architects, planners and

designers to consider. Michael Pinto⁵, a Los Angeles-based architect, acted by leading both his teaching and professional practice to challenge the impact of food production in neighbourhoods. He started an architectural design studio with SCI-Arc⁶ students as a think tank collaborating with residents of the Watts neighbourhood to integrate urban farming into community design (MacVean 2010). At the same time, the book *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (Steel 2009) was raising awareness about the association between food and cities. Her notes on how cities develop were fundamentally shaped by foodways⁷ helped kick-start the enthusiasm for urban agriculture we see today. Amongst many that followed was the Xianqiao sustainable community project on Chongming Island, Shanghai (Yongqi, Valsecchi, and Diaz 2013), where food was involved in the bottom-up approach to sustainable development as urban and rural resources.

In Europe, architectural researchers Marie Fisker and Tenna Doktor Olsen established the interrelated field of design, architecture and food with the design of the culinary pavilion NoRA (Fisker and Olsen 2008) at the 10th International Architecture Biennale in Venice in 2006. The interior functions, the building design and the performative activities of the pavilion facilitated the social relations of the visitors by means of the digital mediated layer with the interactive projection, the physical furniture in the lounge, and a kitchen that was adjustable based on the body movement generated by the city and its visitors. The project claimed to connect the performative elements of an architectural-food-based approach to the generation of new experience-related spaces that potentially contribute to the future city making – to the creation of social bonds and citizen relations by means of temporary public meal events and small-scale food activities. However, the culinary pavilion hosted meal events that followed the theme of the Biennale. Furthermore, the motivation of the people eating at the culinary pavilion was unclear to me. Was it the invitation or the quality of the place that drew them there? How did food and foodways impact the relationship between people and space? These questions were not pronounced in their work, but they led me to pay attention to what makes people go to eat in a particular place. Since many eating places function as popular gathering places in cities, could the understanding of the qualities of everyday places reveal ways of making liveable cities?

The scholars at Everyday Urbanism reminded us that architects and urban design practitioners should pay great attention to the street level and how urban design relates to life on the street – to the lives of the people who really use the streets, such as pedestrians, vendors and people from the neighbourhood. Sharing the same criticism as Everyday Urbanism allowed me to look for the answers on the streets in cities, where I found that connecting the everyday subject of food, foodways and eating together with the practice of architecture and urban design seems to provide a way forward. The study of Bangkok's urban food system by Gisèle Yasmeen recognized the impacts of small, usually family-based everyday public eating outside of homes, the autonomy and the power of women who often

⁵ Michael Pinto's lecture *Urban Farming: Why is LA a Hungry City?* on www.aialosangeles.org

⁶ The Southern California Institute of Architecture

⁷ Foodways are the eating habits and culinary practices of a people, region, or historical period. From www.merriam-webster.com

run these businesses, and their impacts on the way urbanites have negotiated access to public space to sell and consume prepared food (Yasmeen 2007). The exploration in this thesis started with site visits to explore thriving areas in cities to understand how and why eatscapes work as liveable city makers. The study of the street food scene in Mumbai (Ray 2018) through the lens of food study also resonated with the study of the street food scene in Shanghai (Greenspan 2018) through the lens of media arts, both suggesting that street food is an interconnecting web of social relations across different classes. The role of streets and street food as people connectors is a valuable point of entrance for making the connection between eating, street and collective space making (Solà-Morales, Frampton, and Ibelings 2008).

Through my site visits, it became apparent that knowledge of the use of a site is not exclusively reserved for professional architects and urban designers. Quite the opposite, the restaurant managers, the customers, the workers who use, own, maintain and operate a food business successfully at a locality often have insightful knowledge of that locality. With their intense experience of using and providing food service and their determination for their business to thrive in that locality, these food pioneers⁸ are the experts, the contributors and the designers of liveable cities. Their eatscapes are recognized as real-world cases and explored in this thesis to learn the tacit knowledge that is embedded in them.

Exploring the subject of commensality and eatscape from the street level makes my knowledge inquiry a bottom-up, hands-on, explorative and experience-based practice. It responds to the criticism from the scholars at Everyday Urbanism that the practice tradition in urban design professions overlooks the reality of the everyday life of the ordinary people who live in cities (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008a) (Gehl 2011). This thesis was initiated during my time as a design studio instructor for both Bachelor and Master level students in the School of Architecture at the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) in Belgium between 2006 and 2015. The methods and tools for the explorations in this thesis were therefore developed for the educational purpose, based on field-specific knowledge in architecture and urban design – on *architectural thinking* (Fisher 2000) (Dunin-Woyseth and Nielsen 2004) (Sullivan 2010). Architectural thinking requires thinking in three dimensions, regardless of scale, and actively dealing with complex spatial situations that are constantly changing over time. The practice revolves around artefacts, spaces, processes and systems, which range from a detailed to a global scale (Dyrssen 2011). When a painter gains knowledge while painting, the painting itself is the knowledge (Scrivener and Chapman 2004). The same can be said of the relation between designers and artefacts such as text, drawings, models and installations: they are inseparable, expanding on the designerly way of knowing (Cross 2006) of the professionally trained skill for reading and writing in *object language* into methods and tools. Knowledge productions in this thesis involve physically experiencing and interacting with the material space. It is an experience-based knowledge inquiry for tracing tacit knowledge of use that is embedded in the built environment.

⁸ Food pioneers refers to entrepreneurs in restaurant businesses that are often started or established in new and emerging area of cities.

Furthermore, participation is considered fundamental to fair and representative decision making in contemporary urban planning practice (Mahjabeen, Shrestha, and Dee 2009). The role of a designer in a participatory process is more than coordinating amongst specialists and stakeholders to produce a satisfying design outcome while externalizing the design process (Jones 1992). According to Jones, it is essential to accept the roughness, the unprofessional character and the improvised initiatives of users so that designers can see new life in the design. Can commensality (eating together) in shared spaces become participation methods and tools for producing urban commons, public space and a liveable city?

By sketching out the knowledge landscape of eating, food and architecture, I have gradually moved my focus away from the initial aim of producing guidelines for how to design a place for eating together. Instead, I aim at building an understanding of the practice and the process of knowing. This is because, through the practice of knowing the connections between eating, food and architecture, I began to see the connection between commensality (eating together) and liveable city making through community building and inclusive city design. Initiated in the field of architecture and urban design, this thesis will explore alternative methods and tools for city design with these research questions:

1. What (if anything) can architects and urban designers learn about inclusiveness from looking at an everyday practice such as eating together in a shared space?
2. How can we embed inclusiveness in the practice of city design?
3. Could this way of approaching city design become a way in which architecture and urban design engage and contribute to (the UN-Habitat development goal of) social sustainability city making?

Motivation – My Personal Story

The term *foodway* is the collection of food traditions, culinary practices, nutritional practices and social practices that are related to food for a group of people (Lévi-Strauss 1983). Navigating through the unknown world using Foodways was my approach, and it became the motivation for initiating this thesis.

I was born and raised in a typical Thai-Chinese entrepreneur family in Bangkok, Thailand. When I turned eleven, I had the opportunity to attend a boarding school in Taipei, Taiwan. Together with my older sister, I attended high school in the 1980s and 90s in Taipei. It was not common practice for children to leave the family home at such a young age, and many lessons in real life demanded improvisation and instinctive reflection. Being far from home in a foreign environment was difficult for me. I can still recall my first months there. With my limited Chinese and Taiwanese language skill, integration into the community was a struggle. Following my instinct and upbringing in the importance of food and eating in Asian cultures, I turned to foodways as an instrument for navigating through an unfamiliar world.

As an experience-based approach, foodways required a combination of senses and embodiment as a tool to help me to connect with the teachers, the other foreign students and the local students. I observed others' behaviours through our communal meals, re-enacting their body language and occasionally playing with the situation out of the youth's curiosity.

At the age of eleven I needed to learn how to eat all over again when I realized the Taiwanese use chopsticks for eating almost everything. Unlike stainless steel forks and knives, Chinese chopsticks are often made of bamboo, wood or plastic, making them less a cutting tool than a pinching tool (Wang 2015). I needed to master pinching food from grain to non-grain dishes, and deboning an entire fish from head to tail, while keeping the hygiene and the seniority of sharing food in mind. It was one of the basic benchmarks to be accepted into the local community. Adopting chopstick into my everyday life transformed the way I connected to the world around me. I began to deterritorialize (Deleuze and Guattari 1972) with the world through my embodiment of a new type of tool. Eating with chopsticks implies that my body, eye and hand levels align with the chopstick through the motion of pinching of the food, which is very different than the body posture of eating with a spoon or fork. The deterritorialized experience gave me a new perspective on the world, the people and the built environment, and a new relation and connection to them.

American philosopher John Dewey wrote:

the human way of learning is not only about acquiring a set of additional skill but more importantly, it is about developing an effective sense of being and individually a distinctive member of a community through the give-and-take of communication.
(Dewey 1927:154)

Foodways is a practice that requires a human way of learning for an individual to be accepted into a community. I became one of them after nine years of countless meals shared with friends, neighbours and even strangers from the cafeterias to their homes, in restaurants and on the streets. It led me to see the world through the eyes of the Taiwanese, the teenager, the student and the foreigner. I learned the distinctive characteristics of different communities not only on taste and foodways, but over time I began to connect culinary and eating culture with social and political meanings (Mennell, Murcott, and Otterloo 1992:20). For example, back in the 1980s in Taipei, I would go to a late-night 'rice porridge restaurant' (吃稀飯), where people would come with scooters and gather at street restaurants/stalls, usually open from evening until dawn. These places usually occupied a shop house with a semi-open space toward the street where the kitchen with the display of food could typically be found. It would be filled with bright light, sometimes with colour brightening up the streetscape. The light, the smell and the poster display of food could be detected miles away; it was difficult not to take notice of them. Customers who sit down to eat were often under the spotlight and could easily be seen by the passer-by and vice versa. The 'night cats' (夜猫子), which were people with the late-night lifestyle, were considered 'cool' because they hung out with people of the night. I

acquired a late-night appetite and got a seat on the back of a scooter, not only to secure a place to eat but, more importantly, to take part in the political discussion and gossip of the community. Unlike the European-style café or restaurant, small dishes for sharing were served in several batches throughout the night, with people dropping in and out of a table the typical custom.

Habits are formed under the influence of the customs of a group and it is the habit that keeps people acting within the bounds of the ordinance of a group that they identify with. (Dewey 1927:159)

Being accepted as a night cat was my ticket to take part in the community. Today, looking back at the spatial and social settings of the rice porridge restaurants from a distance, they communicate broader meanings to me than the glitter of the nightlife of Taipei.

Seeing and making sense of the world through foodways did not stop after my years in Taiwan. It came with me throughout my pursuit of architectural design in Glasgow, Berlin, London, Rotterdam, Barcelona, Brussels, Luxembourg and finally Amsterdam, the city where I live today. Through these experiences, I could see the link between how eating brings people together and city design. It echoes my vision of how the architect and urban designer enable the social, the collective and the liveable city. In 2009, I came across the book *Hungry Planet* (Menzel and D'Aluisio 2007), in which Menzel, a photographer, presents a photographic study of the foodways of families from around the world. It showed the connection between the choice of food and everyday life by revealing detailed descriptions of what people purchase weekly. Families in their own home, at their market, and in their community were presented in the book, which reminded me of my foodways experiences.



Figure 1: Photographs show what a household consumes in a week from different cultures (left to right): California, USA; Kouakourou, Mali; and Kuwait City, Kuwait (D'Aluisio and Menzel 2008). The actual homes of families were used as the background of these photographs. My curiosity about the relationship between the foodways and the built environment began with my observation that the more packaged food a family consumed, the more industrial their built environment looked.

My trained eyes brought immediate attention to the peripheral environment (Pallasmaa 1996:10) in the photographs. The unfocused view of the space and the objects surrounding the families interested me. With limited information in the book, I could not make further

connections between food, people, objects, body posture, space, food habits and the urban forms that they inhabited. Nevertheless, the book inspired me to question if there is a connection between commensality and liveable city making.

Development of Eatscape and Commensality

The practice of eating together is recognized as commensality in this thesis. Commensality outside the home produces eatscape, a place for encountering amongst individuals. Since the Middle Ages in Europe, it has been common practice for urban residents to purchase professionally cooked food and eat it outside their homes. Originally it was often because most of the commoners had to rely on collective cooking facilities, unlike the rich, who had adequate means of cooking in their larger houses. The facilities existed in great variety, including cook shops, restaurants, taverns and street food (Tinker 1987) (Habermas 1962). The emergence of these places was also a significant manifestation of the social development of the public sphere, where people of different social background gathered and interacted. Although these places were and continue to be good meeting places for commensality, because they are privately owned they offer limited access to those who cannot afford to pay. However, public spaces such as streets offer an alternative opportunity for those without the means to dine in. Eatscape on the street is freely accessible to all, a public domain where an exchange between different social groups is possible and also actually occurs (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001). Street food is a good example eatscape that has long been associated with workers and poverty.

There was a huge variation of cheap fast-food for consumption while standing, walking and sitting in the open air especially convenient for outdoor workers such as builders, labourers, dockers, carters and cabmen as well as the crowds of casuals, itinerants, unemployed and homeless [...] the group of customers were children, young people, servants and more [...] in London in the 1850s the ratio was 1 street food seller to every 68 inhabitants. (Burnett 2003)

By 1914, fish-and-chip shops were almost universal in Britain, wrapped in paper and with newspapers as outer insulation, catering for takeaways to eat at home or while walking along the street, and were particularly popular in the poorer districts (Derek J. Oddy 2003). Street food is also served sit-down places. Originally the Thais cooked at home, only buying the dishes they were not familiar with from vendors. No fee was charged to the vendors for using the pavement in the past, so they were popular and many of them became reputable for their good-tasting food street food (Sukphisit 2012). Street food in such a context was a social melting pot where the rich and the poor shared their experience of enjoying good food (see Figure 79).



Figure 2: Breakfast at an open-air food court in Lumpini Park Bangkok, Thailand (Ag-ukrikul, 2013). Lumpini Park is a popular place for sports and recreational activities, especially in the early morning before it gets too hot from the sun. This is one of the many sit-down street food areas which offers shared tables with self-service style meals. It is a popular meeting spot for people who use the park, a place where people from all walks of life meet.

In the Netherlands, the number of Chinese-Indonesian residents increased by 59% between 1959 and 1962 because people considered Dutch restaurants too expensive, too chic, too stuffy and too stingy (Bruheze and Otterloo 2003). The immigration from Italy and Greece in the 1970s and 80s brought the popularity of other ethnic restaurants to the Netherlands. These places offered takeaway meals, adding a new choice for eating out as eating habits in the Netherlands grew increasingly informal. Takeaway and home delivery were considered a new way of eating out, regarded by many in past decades as a treat for special occasions such as weekends, holidays and social gathering occasions. Today the distinction between appropriate places and times for eating has become blurred. Even eating out has become much more informal, and is now considered an everyday event. The highly integrated use of social media in everyday life is expanding the consumption of conventional takeaway and delivery food – to be eaten anywhere and anytime. In 2011 alone, Takeaway.com handled over 100 million euros' worth of orders from over 3 million unique customers in Europe (Groen 2014). In 2014, the explosion of takeaway apps and home delivery business was worth over \$100 million on the New York Stock Exchange (Buhr 2014). The development of takeaway and delivery meals shows the explosion of new territories where commensality produces new types of eatscapes. Where are these meals being eaten outside the home? What impact do they have on city making?

Toward Inclusiveness

Connecting people through design is what urban design should do. Facing the global challenge of inequalities today, this thesis aims at contributing to social sustainability in city making through architecture and urban design. Inequalities exacerbate the difficulties cities face today in integrating different social groups to share assets, and this thesis searches to build a sense of belonging across different social groups through design. The environmental psychologist Karen A Franck raised my awareness that the space of food is not just spatial, but also the social that brings vitality and conviviality to urban life, adding to my own experience of the foodways that enabled me into integrate into foreign communities. Food and eating drive the social and bring people together. Could the use of the everyday practice of commensality and eatscape making become a new way to approach city design that is inclusive?

Outline

The introductory chapter will present voices from scholars in the field who raise awareness amongst architects and urban design practitioners to pay great attention to the street level and to relate to life on the street – to the lives of the people who really use it. This chapter reflects on and discusses the development of the relationships between food, architecture and urbanism; my motivation as a practitioner, researcher, designer; and the educator's perspective that makes the connection between the everyday practice of commensality and inclusive city design. Ways of exploring eatscapes that were adapted from other fields of research to merge with an architectural and urban design practice in this thesis will be presented in Chapter Two – Making Eatscape Research. It is told as a sequence of stories following the timeline of the making of this thesis, which involved the iterative process of observation, reflection and design. The aim of this chapter is to share my experience as a designer and an educator doing research. It is followed by Chapter Three – Searching for Inclusive City Design Approaches, in which the concepts of commensality and eatscape, the products of this thesis, will be presented. The reader will be taken on a tour through the development of these concepts, which will provide guidance for navigating through the actual explorations in the following chapter. Chapter Four – Getting to Know Eatscape is based on the four methods and tools used in the explorations in this thesis: eatscape typology, checklist, catalytic act and matrix. How the cases are explored and the methods and tools are developed is presented in this chapter. The fifth and final chapter, Conclusion, presents how inclusiveness can be embedded in the practice of city design.

2. Making Eatscape Research

The making of eatscape research was not a linear process; it involved a back-and-forth process between literature review, observation, reflection and design that gradually adapted research knowledge from other fields to merge with architectural and urban design practice. The roadmap of the making of eatscape research will be presented in this chapter, and we will follow its chronological development as well as the causes and the results of the theories and methods used. The journey began with actor-network theory (ANT) and moved on to fieldwork and ethnography before ending with experience-based research. It was intention to share my experience of doing research from someone who teaches and designs.

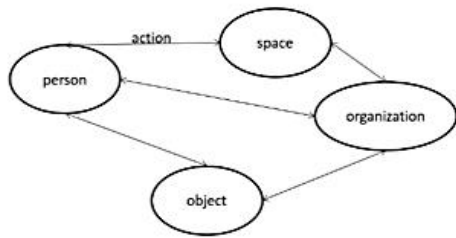
Actor-Network Theory – The Start of My Research

This thesis was initiated with the question, ‘What can architects and urban designers learn by observing people eating in urban settings?’ with the aim of producing a how-to guide for designing architecture and urban design that impacts the liveable city as the outcome. At the time, the focus of the research was on building an understanding of what aspects contribute to making a place convivial and liveable. I used a book of photographic inquiry into social theory about the city of Paris called *Paris: Invisible City* (Latour, Hermant, and Reed 2004) to extract theories and methods for my research. Latour claims that the social association or relationality between actors (things/elements/nodes) can be researched by using *sociology of associations* – the approach that is commonly known as *actor-network-theory*, or ANT (Latour 2005) (Mol 2010). Since actors can be human and non-human, ANT can explain the *social* relation between people and space. In order to understand the social relation between people and things in an eatscape, a café in Paris (Figure 3) was selected as a test case where I spent an afternoon during my visit to Paris. ANT strives to identify the actors and traces what they do to understand the relationships between them. The chair at the street terrace of the café was identified as the actor that connected people (human) to its adjacent street (non-human). The chair acts as the affordance for both human and non-human actors. It enables people to stay on the street at the same time that it makes the street known as a place to meet. The presence of the chairs marks the opening and closing of the café with its presence on the street – it becomes a landmark and collective memory for a locality. The multiple roles of the chair transform the strip of the pavement that stretches between the façade of the café and the kerb into liveable space – an eatscape.

What is ANT?

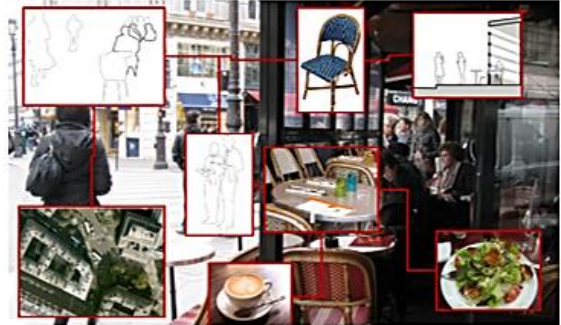
A for Actor : human & non-human

N for Network : it is the "work". How it does that connect different actors together



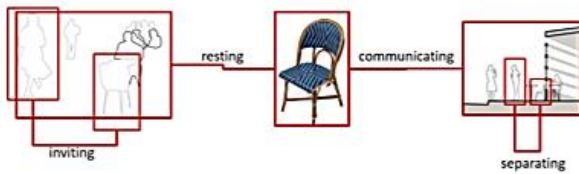
ANT as analyzing theory

Follow & Describe : Paris street cafe



Chair as Actant

"As an "affordances" of the table as it becomes a social prop, a resting area, an obstacle, an invitation..... And even if the chair does not act, it affords many different interactions" by Liam Heaphy



An affordance is a quality of an object, or an environment, that allows an individual to perform an action. by wikipedia

ANT urban scale

How public eating contribute to the characteristic of a place?

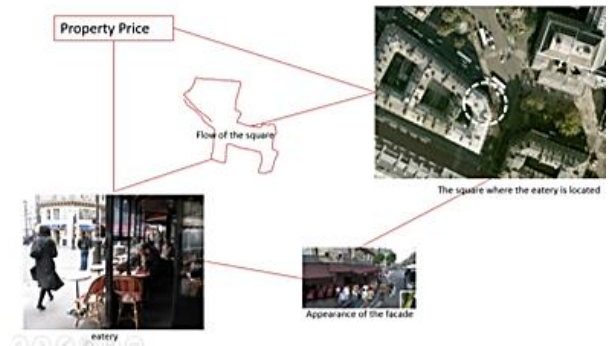


Figure 3: Exploring real-life cases using actor-network theory (ANT) by Ag-ukrikul, 2010. Top left: identify the actors and their networks – a street café in Paris. Top right: follow and describe the actors and their relationships. Bottom left: the analysis shows the chair as the key actor and its networks. Bottom right: its network on the neighbourhood level.

Before wandering much further into the research, I stopped and asked myself, 'Whose perspective am I tracing? What is the societal problem that needs this knowledge?' There was no clear reason for the research, which made me realize that it was rather early for me to use ANT at the time. Without answers to these questions, I could not focus on *tracing the effects* of the chair, let alone the questions of its impacts on the neighbourhood and the city of Paris.

According to Mol, 'ANT is not a "theory", but an adaptable, open repository. A list of terms. A set of sensitivities' (Mol 2010: 265).

Using ANT requires the researcher to be sensitive, capable of seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling the actors, their actions and their association with each other (Mol 2010: 261). This way of tracing the relation between things requires a researcher to be proactive to go out there where the subjects are. The experience of using ANT on the test case of the Parisian café impacted my view on data collection in research. I began to move away from literature readings and to go out and immerse myself in real-life situations.

Fieldwork – From One Visit to Everyday Visits

After shifting my research to real-life situations, I noticed that the architecture and urban design students I came across in the teaching I was doing in parallel to the writing of this thesis were still being trained to view real life from above, static and top-down. It was particularly obvious in the material they brought back from their site visits and their site analyses. Knowing that the field is the place where the users are and where the designs are being used, the students were rather reluctant to deploy into the field. They were not alone: many scholars had confirmed that the professionals also share the same view (Gehl 2011) (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008a). With my previous experience of the Paris café test case and the ANT attitude in doing research, I had learned the importance of the time that is needed for seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling the actors. For this reason, I decided to replace site visit with fieldwork as the method for collecting data in this thesis. Fieldwork is a research method that comes from ethnography and is practical work conducted by a researcher in the natural environment rather than a laboratory or office. At first glance, site visit and fieldwork are the same things, but the two are rather different when it comes to their focus and the aspect of time. A fieldworker sees a distant geographically bounded place containing 'a social world' in which one is immersed for 'prolonged periods' (Kellett 2011). Fieldwork focuses on observing 'the social' and 'the prolonged time' that is needed for data collection.

Long before the start of this thesis, I documented places that were interesting to me, particularly those that are related to eating, cities and urban life. Over time, 25 places were identified (Appendix A: Real-World Case Studies) as qualitative, thriving urban places in different cities. There were places I had first-hand experience of visiting spread throughout North America, Western Europe and Southeast Asia. These collected materials came into the picture again when I decided to start with fieldwork in this thesis. Sketchbook and smartphone were also used to document during walks in urban areas around lunch hours in search of places that interested me. I spent time *being out there*, developing general impressions and being absorbed in the atmosphere of these places in real life. I noticed that thinking of such activities as fieldwork instead of site visits made me more relaxed and open to what I came across. In contrast, a site visit is a task-related action that I tend to relate to focusing on knowing about something or producing an outcome. Furthermore, immersing myself in the field made it possible for me to experience the micro-publics (Amin 2002), which is the human scale and the face-to-face interactions with people and things with no preconceptions. With enough time to sink into the environments and the situations, I started to pay attention to the details that I would otherwise not have noticed. For example, repeating visits to the same location for a prolonged period, I began to take notice of the *food pioneers*, their businesses and their contributions to making liveable cities. I started to make the connection between eatscape, liveable city making, food pioneers, and their urban vernacular knowledge.

In 2012, I had the opportunity to organize a fourteen-week design studio on eatscape with architecture students at Kirchberg (Figure 4), a new urban development in the European quarter of the city of Luxembourg. Even though most of the buildings in Kirchberg were

constructed with the highest quality of the time, there were concerns of boredom, emptiness and feelings of loneliness amongst both passers-by and my students. One student remarked that the streets in Kirchberg seemed 'dangerous and unfriendly'. The development of the Kirchberg Plateau started in the 1960s during the peak of the car-based urbanism, when the streets were made more for cars than pedestrians. Office workers in the area still prefer to go to nearby shopping malls by car rather than on foot.

Without such convivial spaces, cities, towns and villages would be mere accretions of buildings with no deliberate opportunities for casual encounters and positive interactions between friends or strangers. The trouble is that too many urban developments do not include such convivial spaces, or attempts are made to design them in but fail miserably. (Shaftoe 2008:5)



Figure 4: General impression of Kirchberg, Luxembourg (2012). Kirchberg was filled with large building blocks, mostly developed by a single developer, that each occupies an entire plot as one single building. The result was mono-functional building and inward-looking planning, where the entire program of the building was cut off from the street level, leaving only the entrance and emergency exits connected with the street. Most of these blocks were self-sufficient, so that all the facilities that a worker needed during a working day could be found within the building complex. There was no need for one to leave the building complex until the end of the day. Life in Kirchberg's communal areas, such as streets and squares, appeared to be very lonely and empty.

Kirchberg is one of the areas that suffered from such a lack of liveability. Months before and during the design studio, I carried out fieldwork beyond the area of Kirchberg, collecting real-life references from food pioneers in the city of Luxembourg as the study material for the design studio's students. The fieldwork helped me to generate the design studio brief: 'Can the creation of public places for people from all walks of life to practice everyday eating together become the instrument for community building and place-making in Kirchberg?' The brief questioned concepts of the common good, public space, socially inclusive and accessibility for all.

The combination of fieldwork on the 25 places and teaching the Kirchberg design studio allowed me to piece together the missing reason that kick-started the search for this thesis that I had not been able to advance using the ANT: *Are we designing a liveable city?*

The results of the design studio showed that designing a liveable neighbourhood is certainly not only about producing a high-quality plan, façade and material space to satisfy the design's brief. The liveable city needs people. This is because people are attracted to other

people and the surrounding social environment. Thus, Kirchberg seems unliveable when the streets are empty. Thus, being able to see other people in action is essential for activating a liveable city. It is people and their lives that make a liveable city.

Life in buildings and between buildings seems in nearly all situations to rank as more essential and more relevant than the spaces and building themselves. (Gehl 2011:29)

What I have learned by making the shift from site visit to fieldwork was to put *everyday practice* into this thesis. The regular, the everyday and being in the field of practice bring me closer to the core subject of architecture and urban design, which is *people*.

Ethnography – From Observer to Actor

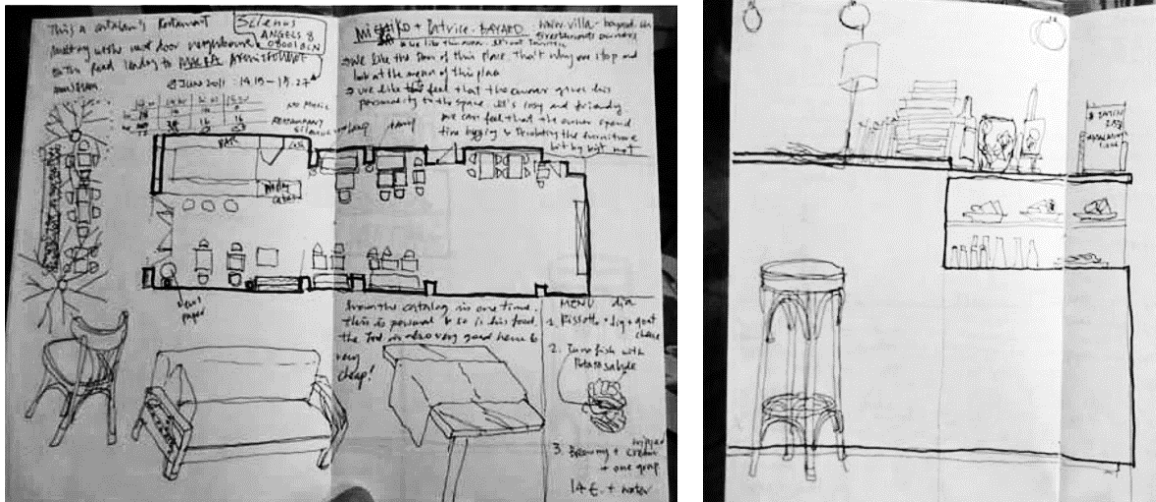
... our analyses and interpretations of the places and sites of others often rely on a different range of skills in which 'objectivity' is privileged over personal responses. Such approaches usually rely on short visits in which hard 'factual' and visual data is collected quickly. Rarely in architectural or urban studies do researchers live in the field. (Kellett 2011: 341)

This thesis replaced site visits with fieldwork, an anthropologist's approach that regards time spent *living* in the field as essential. The shift allowed me to release the grip of time that I spend at a site, which made it possible for my visit to the site to be without a specific goal. Obviously, *life in the field* is an intensive observation method that has not been common practice in the field of architecture and urban design tradition. Stepping into the field and 'becoming one of them' (Yaneva 2009) – one of the subjects I was observing – was an eye-opening step for me.

Because I contribute to the definition of 'the field' I become a part of it; I become a part of the social reality I am investigating. (Collins 1998: 32)

In contrast to the site visit in architecture, where the centre of the observation is often the material culture, fieldwork is centred on people as its object of observation. It was rather new to me, and required me to reposition myself in the field. It was about turning my anthropological gaze also upon myself before investigating the other. During fieldwork, I was open and clear in the documentation as well as my contact with the others that I came across in the field about my role as a researcher and a designer doing fieldwork. The clarity in positioning myself stopped me from worrying that my presence in the field would transform it. In contrast, it inspired me to be active in the field. As a designer, I needed to know what experience I am designing in order to design it. I gathered small accounts of different trajectories, reminiscent of short stories combined with images. These narratives are conscious ethnographic accounts that rely on a fold in time and space (Yaneva 2009). I could describe the moment of myself and the others in the process.

I used both drawings and short text to take notes from the observations, and I interviewed informants to develop insights that would not otherwise have been possible. An example from my fieldwork is when I came across Patrice and Misako, a successful duo of food pioneers who own five restaurants in Switzerland, at a café in Barcelona in 2010 (Figure 5). We met while sitting next to each other there, where I was not hesitant to approach them. Through informal conversation, I was open and direct about my role as an eatscape researcher doing fieldwork at the place. Our conversation was a quick review of the area of my interest – what was the reason for their choice to be at the café? Based on their expertise, they claimed that ‘a restaurant is about people’. It needs to reflect people’s personality, from its spatial design to its food and service, which summed up the reason that we all ended up sitting in the same café on the day. We all shared our appreciation of the charm and the personality of that café. It was the space, the objects, the menu and the people that come together to form the character, the personality and the atmosphere that one could feel.



These are the people who I interviewed : Patrice and Misako Bayard
 They are 5 restaurants owners from Genève Switzerland from more than 20 years

Business card of the Silenus restaurant , Barcelona.
 The places of this study



Figure 5: Ethnography fieldwork in Barcelona, Spain (2010). Top two: The sketches of the café. Bottom two: The front and the back of Patrice and Misako's business cards, which express the character of their restaurants.

Adopted fieldwork and its research approaches had transformed me from an observer to an actor in the field. After turning the anthropological gaze upon myself, I am ready for the explorations.

Experience-Based Research – The Thinking Body

There is something about our ability to know a person, a situation and a place beyond our rational thinking. When everyday fieldwork became part of my research practice for this

thesis, I began to reject assumptions of the reality and to lean instead on knowing by experiencing it. In order to understand the character, the personality and the atmosphere of a place, I needed to extract information not only from people through participant observation and a key informant interview, but also from things that cannot speak for themselves through verbal communication.

Building that manages to move or to touch someone and what on earth that made that building perform or appeal to that people in such a way. (Zumthor 2006b:11)

Peter Zumthor has claimed that *atmosphere* sums up how people experience quality in architecture. It is the human instinct, the first impression of people, things, and the environment. People perceive the atmosphere of a place through emotional sensibility, and this *intuitive* sense is built into our bodies to that make us aware of our environment. In many cases, the *quick decision* becomes our survival instinct. Zumthor's work reminded me to learn and know about a place through physical engagement with the environment. This way of knowing requires the use of my body as a research tool. It requires both body and mind to carefully observe and not take anything for granted. My entire body becomes the locus of perception, thought and consciousness (Pallasmaa 1996), which is more than visual observations and verbal interviews. It is experience-based ways of knowing that prevents a researcher from generating an internally abstract conclusion without experiencing it first-hand.

I enter a building, see a room and – in the fraction of a second – have this feeling about it. (Zumthor 2006b: 13)

Between 2013 and 2015, this thesis included the use of the human body as the research tool and every day became a research day. This line of thinking was my way to reconnect architecture and urban research to ordinary everyday life. Starting in this period, that eatscape fieldwork includes the practice of walking, lingering, and commensality in a real-life situation. I call it *the thinking body*.

... a bodily labour that produces nothing but thoughts, experiences, and arrivals. (Solnit 2001:9)

The thinking body is where I use my body to think, to connect, and to touch the immediate environment. It is knowing through experiencing the world. As Dora Haydeé⁹, an architecture student, put it, 'The sound was never a noticeable part of the site analysis before'. Her collage work (Figure 6) expressed the co-existence of the church bell towers, the Catholic community, the youth, the tourist, and the stage performers in Sainte Catherine Square, which she had observed during an eatscape workshop. The image revealed her experience of the sound in the square, which allowed the viewers to take notice of the people, actions and life there through her hearing sense.

⁹ Haydeé was an architecture student who participated in the Eatscape Workshop, which was an international collaboration between the International Master of Science in Architecture program at the Catholic University Leuven School of Architecture, Brussels and Ghent, and the Master of International Architectural Design program at Tunghai University in Tai Chung, Taiwan, in both 2014 and 2015.

Sound of the Space

- People talking
- Bell of the clock
- Music
- Cars



Figure 6: 'Sound of the space' by Dora Haydeé, produced for the international Eatscape Workshop 17–24 March 2015. This image describes the soundscape in Sainte Catherine Square, which she expressed the co-existence amongst the different stakeholders of the square, including both human and non-human actors.

Lin Yu Chieh, another participating student in the same workshop, recognised the quality of the facades by spending her entire two workshop days sketching the façades and making charcoal tracings of the material surfaces of the surrounding buildings by hand. She expressed her haptic experience of the place, the texture and the details of the stone façades as in Figure 7, as if the sky had come down onto the street's level where she was sitting during her fieldwork. In these images, she took away the busy cafés and the pedestrians, leaving us to enjoy the calmness of the silhouette where the facades and the sky met.



Figure 7: Results from Eatscape fieldwork checklist: Body of Architecture (left), the beautiful forms (middle) and experience expression (right) by Lin Yu Chieh from the international workshop on Eatscape 17–24 March 2015.

Space is the generic description of three-dimensional volume; context is where the volume is situated. People transform the generic meaning of space into specific one; thus, people

make a space into a place. Both Haydeé and Chieh's works expressed their personal experience of a place. They used their thinking bodies to capture and express the unique character of those places. Experience allows a designer to think of a design problem in terms of designing an integrated experience rather than one or more specific artefacts (Buchenau and Suri 2000). The works of Haydeé and Chieh communicate the atmosphere of these places instead of showing certain artefacts. The experience is inherently subjective, and the best way to understand the experiential qualities of interaction is to experience them subjectively. Experience-based research focuses on what was experienced and in what way, then communicates about it. It is the 'use-before-use' (Redström 2008) where the researcher and designer can meet unattainable design challenges. The opportunity for the designer to fully anticipate, or envision, use before actual use takes place in real life. One of the eatscape methods developed in this thesis involves experience-based research, which will be presented in the chapter knowing through making on page 41.

Reflections on the Making of Eatscape Research

There are two things about designers doing research that I have to learn from the making of eatscape research in this thesis. One is to stay within the repertoire that I already know, which is architecture and urban design, but to be open to new ways of doing it. Two is to find a focus and stick with it throughout the process.

This is research for design. It follows an architectural design practice repertoire based on comparisons between known cases either from designers' own experience or from reference cases established within the profession (Schön 1983) (Johansson 2003). It is knowing through interaction with real life that is case-based. Examples include knowing about ANT through the making of Parisian café case, knowing about the aim of this research by reflecting of the collection of the 25 reference places as well as Kirchberg studio with the students, and finally knowing about research methods and tools by running a workshop with international students in Brussels. The case-based way of knowing was what came naturally to me as a trained architect and urban designer to look and compare evidence as well as making sense of the knowing through the making of the cases. The knowledge produced in this thesis was made by designers for designers, which makes it accessible for designers who wish to do research for their design practice.

Furthermore, this research started with designers looking at experiences in real life and wondering about what can be learned from them. Several different approaches – ANT, fieldwork, ethnography observations, atmosphere and the thinking body – were adopted and combined to explore experiences. This is just one of many ways of exploring the experience-base problem. But there has been only one focus as I have followed the making of eatscape in this thesis: how to know about people through people.

3. Searching for an Inclusive City Design Approach

Inclusive design means designing products, services and environments that as many people as possible can use, regardless of age or ability, which is sometimes called universal design or design for all (Burton and Mitchell 2006). It emerged out of the two major trends: the ageing of the population and the desire to bring disabled people into mainstream society.

City design is design practice which reconciles the intellectual abstraction of urban design and the formalism of architecture with the plural forces of the everyday city. (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008b: 104)

Inclusive city design is an attitude or approach to urban design developed in this thesis by applying the concept of inclusiveness in the context of city design. It is where design connects people and places as well as movement and urban form to work for people in their *everyday* lives. The role of 'the everyday' is the key for connecting inclusiveness with city making, just as the *alltagsgeschichte* (German for 'history of the everyday') movement in human history has drawn attention to the importance of the minutiae of everyday practices in understanding recent history (Pollock 2012). Everyday action contributes to deep time archaeological and historical accounts that begin to unravel the intricate webs by which ordinary people's mundane acts constitute in history. Cities and places are shaped in the same way – they bear the record of everyday use by all. Inclusive city design pays attention to the common and the collective that slowly emerge through everyday life. This echoes geographer Davide Harvey's concept of urban commons, in which cities are places that enable people to express themselves and eventually to transform them after their hearts' desire.

Commensality, just like walking or sitting, is one of the many practices that are performed by all who live in or use cities. It is one of the urban activities that take place every day. This chapter will present the search for inclusive city design by exploring commensality.

3.1. Everyday Urban Vernacular

Everyday Urbanism (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008b) sees the present city, *the taken-for-granted everyday that surrounds us*, as a physical record of everyday acts and counteracts of decision making by people who use that locality. These everyday actions are spontaneous and fluid, but through time they leave traces on the physical environment. Just as archaeologists use artefacts to understand human history, the traces of everyday actions in the present city are significant clues for architects and urban designers to enhance their

understanding of the actual use of cities. My conclusion that the practice of commensality brings together people who in no way share any special interest implies that the everyday practice of commensality can allow people from all walks of life to come together and share their ways of using a place through time. Thus, exploring cities through the everyday practice of commensality can give architects and urban designers clues for tracing the common and the collective use experience of a place – and potentially for finding inclusive city design.

Vernacular is what ordinary people do in their everyday lives. Commensality is a form of urban vernacular, a form of local everyday practice and improvisation that is ephemeral and temporal, just as street performers, vendors and children at play occupy space precariously. Commensality is a performance that produces spatial forms.

The places of the urban vernacular – of architecture without architects and urban space without planning – is the urban vision of exhibition. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2008:19)

Such performance involves enormous numbers of strangers in producing an improvised performance based on their tacit understanding of space that is not always designated for commensality. But it results in producing an appropriated (temporary) space for commensality. The appropriated space is not a matter of localizing a need or a function in a pre-existing space; it is to spatialise a social activity, tied to practice as a whole (Cupers 2013) (Lefebvre 2000). In this thesis, it is called *room shaping*. The practice of commensality in cities can often be found in this kind of space, in which the practice itself provides underlying structures and conditions to shape a locality. I will present my own lunch experiences from the late 1990s early 2000s in Rotterdam and Bangkok to illustrate this claim. I will present what, how, where and when I ate, which impacts my experience and understanding of these two cities.

In Rotterdam, I had less than an hour lunch break (for most of my Dutch colleagues, even thirty minutes was plenty of time), so I usually joined the lunch table organised in the office (Figure 8). Whereas in Bangkok I usually had lunch outside the office in a temporary semi-outdoor marketplace where food was sold alongside small office gadgets, clothing and DVDs.

My typical Dutch lunch was a sandwich with ingredients purchased from local supermarkets. Everyone assembled ingredients on a common table in the office for a do-it-yourself style meal. The reason behind the organised shared-lunch culture was that it allowed employees to get an nutritious, economical and efficient lunch. The lunch table was a moment for social exchange between colleagues where short, efficient and cosy interaction were expected around the common table. After cleaning up the lunch table, most of us would go back to work, but some would take the chance to get out of the office for fresh air or for personal matters. Our office was located on the tenth floor of a former grain storage tower right in the heart of the former port area of Rotterdam, rather isolated from shops and public transport. With the lunch break organised in this way, it was not a big issue for the office workers to be in such a remote part of the city.

In contrast, it was much harder for my Thai colleagues to swallow DIY-style sandwiches as my Dutch colleagues had. Eating homemade or self-assembled food was an uncommon practice in Thailand, where labour cost was still affordable and service was still expected for lunch. This was a culture in which spring rolls and fish cakes are considered a snack, not a real meal. A freshly prepared meal was essential as lunch for the Thai. An example would be the dish Kanom-Jeen-Nam-Ya (noodles with fish curry sauce). This dish consists of warm curry sauce on fermented rice noodles served at room temperature and topped with freshly chopped vegetables and herbs. Serving this kind of dish requires a full-scale kitchen that can provide both hot and cold preparation, intensive labour supply to make sure the food is served fresh and warm at the same time. This is just one of many favourite lunch menus in Thailand. For this reason, the streets of Bangkok are literally filled with open-air kitchens where meals that are freshly prepared by specialised vendors are ready to serve around meal times. These kitchens are often street vendors and eat-shops that are assembled under parasols that fill up any possible open space between buildings. These places could be legally as well as illegally occupied, while their temporary appearance is strongly permanent. If the Thai continue to have their lunch this way, these kitchens will continue to expand. This is simply because the population will always need the cooks, the kitchens and their services to be nearby where there are. Mobile kitchens, temporary eat-shops, temporary markets and small restaurants will continue to mushroom up on every corner of the streets. Food courts, supermarkets, convenience stores and community malls will also continue to emerge to suit different budgets, tastes and classes of people.

Rotterdam Lunchscape 13.00 – 14.00



Dish Sandwich
Preparation time 5 mins - mainly off the shelf
Eating time 5 mins

MENU / White bread / Brown bread / Buns
Butter / Jam / Peanut butter / Salt / Pepper / Chili paste
Hard cheese / Ham / Tomato / Cucumber
Milk / Yogurt / Butter milk



Table setting - Off the shelf ingredients



Eating at one of the meeting rooms in the office



The Office was located on the top floor of the grain storage building, it is located in the industrial sites – the street in this photograph is Veerlaan in Rotterdam

Bangkok Lunchscape 12.00 – 13.00



Dish Knom –Jeen-Nam-Ya
Preparation time 45Mins - mainly need locally preparation
Eating time 10 Mins

MENU / Fermented rice noodles
Fish curry sauce (served hot)
Pickled mustard/ Pickled lemon basil / Chinese water spinach /
Bitter melon / Bean sprouts / Banana flower



Table setting - Freshly chopped vegetable and herbs



Eating at the street vendor



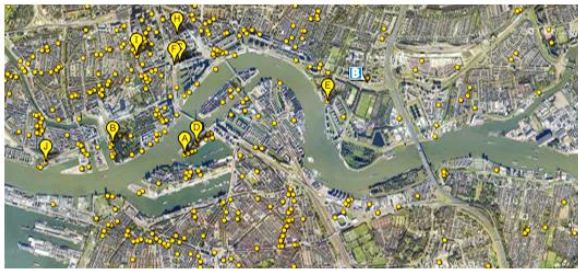
The office was located in the business area similar to what is shown in this photograph, adjacent to a temporary semi-outdoor market – the area in this photograph is Phloen Chit in Bangkok

Figure 8: Comparison between my two Lunchscape experiences from Rotterdam and Bangkok that are opposite of each other. Rotterdam: (top left) packaged food and self-catering style; (middle left) commensality in the enclosed (indoor) environment; (bottom left) the location of the office was in an industrial area of the city. Bangkok: (top right) freshly prepared food; (middle right) served in an open-air setting; (bottom right) in an urban area of Bangkok.

When it comes to the number of meals in a day, the Dutch have a three-meal system (Jacobs and Scholliers 2003). In contrast, the Thai value *snacking* so highly that it extended into a meal, resulting in a regime of four or more daily meals despite the globalised way of living today. The distances between where the food was made, where it is eaten, and where people work must be small when the frequency of meals is high and they need to be eaten fresh. The meal regime together with the location of the eateries (food suppliers) highlights the close relationship between the agglomerations of city life supported by the eateries. A 2011 comparison of the Google maps showing the location of eateries in the central areas of Rotterdam and Bangkok (Figure 9) made it clear that Bangkok had a much higher density of eateries. The map also reflected my own memory of the bodily (sensuous) experience of walking through these two different cities. Bangkok's streets were filled with people sitting, walking, eating and cooking along the streets. The sight of street food vendors, the smell of cooked food and the displayed of food on the footpath often continually interrupted my walking. This also corresponded to the fact that Bangkok's people were much more dependent on its eateries. In my personal impression, people tend to linger on the street

more than they do in Rotterdam. When comparing the morphology of these two cities on a plan view, Rotterdam had much more obvious centres where all the shops and high streets were concentrated, and the streets' pattern was clearly readable. In contrast, Bangkok had multiple centres with the extremely complex fabric of informal sectors clinging to its streets' pattern and making it at times unreadable. When I took a closer look into the informal sectors that made up much of the fabric of Bangkok, amongst many types of vendors, food and eating were very visible.

Rotterdam Eatscapes



Bangkok Eatscapes



Figure 9: Comparison of Google maps showing the density of eateries in Rotterdam vs. Bangkok. These images are shown at the same scale. Maps of Rotterdam and Bangkok retrieved 19 September 2011 from www.google.com.

In this example, understanding what, how and where I engage in commensality helped me make the connection between the use of a place and its appearance. Recalling my commensality experiences in these two cities helped to raise my awareness of the connections, the conditions and the impacts between commensality and city making. Could the practice of commensality, a form of everyday urban vernacular, be one way of revealing the underlying structures and conditions that shape the environment of a locality?

3.2. Commensality – A Room-Shaping Way of Eating

Definition of commensality

The term *commensality* comes from Medieval Latin *commensalis* – *com* means *sharing* and *mensa* means *a table*. Commensality was first discussed in a religious context as early as 1894 by W. Robertson Smith (Smith [1894] 2002), who described *commensals* (shared meals) in the setting of God, worshipers and their sacrificial meal as the very bond of friendship and mutual obligation that tied them together. In biology, *commensal* organisms are two different species of plant or animal that live in close association with each other such that one species benefits without harming the other. In social science rhetoric, commensality is a communicative act that has significance for the social relation (Tan 2015).

It describes a person or groups of people not competing while residing in or occupying the same area as another individual or group having independent or different values or customs. Commensality is seen as bringing people together and, since eating the same thing means producing the same flesh and blood, it means symbolically building or rebuilding a common destiny (Fischler 2015). Thus, the meaning of the term commensality covers sharing a table, close association, and bringing people together through eating. As French social scientist, Claude Fischler, reminded us the essential roles of commensality and table manners have on health through its social function - commensality ties the bond between people. This thesis uses *commensality* in its anthropological meaning of eating and drinking together in a common physical and social settings (Fischler, 2011) (Pollock 2012).

Development of commensality

Reading the book *Eating Out in Europe* (Jacobs and Scholliers 2003) shows that a dense network of inns has existed throughout most of the European towns catering to locals and travellers since the late Middle Ages. They supplied food and drinks to individual patrons for consumption on the premises, offering banquets and takeaway food. In Germany, the *Gastung* (hospitality) supplied food and drinks to pilgrims and the ill as well as poor people on the move (Teuteberg 2003). These early modern inns played a crucial role in social interaction, increasing spatial mobility and long-distance trade in Europe. The places were born out of necessity, and they offered a fixed time for serving meals, which were shared around a single table (*table d'hôte*, see Figure 10), and diners had no choice of food. From the historical records¹⁰, even if one arrived at four o'clock, he still wouldn't dine before nine (Kumin 2003). The inn wouldn't prepare anything before everyone was present. These establishments were often interfered with by feudal lords, Church bodies and secular authorities, which suggests that food service in these places followed rules¹¹. All diners were assigned to one single table to share with no distinction between rich and poor. At the table, everyone got to choose a seat as they pleased, and gentlemanly behaviour was expected at the table. However, the back or the upper rooms also allowed for a more intimate dining arrangement, with room service and an à la carte menu. At the table, the dinners were eaten from shared bowls using loaves as plates. Only the better establishments offered individual crockery for eating and drinking, such as wooden or clay plates with a spoon, knife or fork and a glass or a cup. The single table, and bowl for sharing a meal amongst people expressed the social inclusiveness of commensality of the time.

¹⁰ Account from Erasmus's *Diversoria*, where a character named Bertulf describes the eating experience in an early-sixteenth-century German inn (Kumin 2003).

¹¹ As for the quality and quantity of meals, there were legal standards prescribed by feudal lords, the Church and secular authorities. Meals at inns included two different wines and no more than six dishes with cheese and fruit served at the end (Kumin 2003).



Figure 10: Thomas Rowlandson, British (1756–1827), *La Table d'Hôte*, published 1792

Apart from the inns, there were also cookshops, coffee houses, cafés (in the seventeenth century) and taverns (in the eighteenth century). These were the popular gathering places in many important cities throughout Europe. Eating out during this period was also related to political patterns. For instance, during the annual meeting of Parliament¹² in the winter and spring of each year, the leading families of the English upper class migrated from their homes to lodgings in London, where they often ate out in taverns (Mennell 2003). The emergence of these places was a significant manifestation of the social development of the public sphere (Habermas 1962) – the opportunity to meet others outside the domestic and private settings.

These early modern inns primarily served the pre-modern European society with communal (collective) manners and met the demand of those days to supply meals for those who were far from home. They temporarily reassembled a home environment for foreign visitors by offering the communal experience of meal sharing and socialising. The concept of communal space and meal sharing as an occasion to publicly encounter strangers is still intriguing and drives great commercial success today. The examples such as Wagamama¹³

¹² *The seventeenth-century English upper class practice in London* (Mennell 2003).

¹³ Created by Alan Yau, the first Wagamama opened in 1992 in Bloomsbury. The chain now includes over 140 restaurants, with 110 in the UK (*"Caterlyst"* 2015) (Armstrong 2009). Johan Pawson is among the well-know architects who have been commission to design franchises for the brand.

and Belgo¹⁴ in Figure 11 were rolled out with great commercial success in many European cities.



Figure 11. Left: Long table for sharing with different customers at the Wagamama in Lexington Street, London (Armstrong 2009) designed by John Pawson. Right: Belgo Centraal at Covent Garden, designed by Ron Arad with the same concept of table sharing.

Commensality – A Room-Shaping Way of Eating

It is the ‘sharing’, which is at the heart of the commensal act, that produces the co-presence (Goffman 1963) (Pollock 2012) between people. This co-presence is an integral part of the routinisation of specific social gatherings that are crucial to the existence of society. The coming together of the individuals requires routine and trust for creating the common ground that enables socialization. The routine, the trust and the community bond between people are developed on the level of the micro-public, which is the face-to-face and everyday (mundane) experience between people. In this thesis, commensality is understood as not only a plural and a collective way of eating, but as a bonding way of eating. Furthermore, the physical presence, movement and interaction of people together can shape spaces. It relies on the collective performance of people squatting, sitting, leaning, or standing through the course of commensality. Enormous numbers of strangers produce an improvised performance based on their tacit understanding of spaces shaped by their physical usages –what I call *room shaping*. Of course, room shaping is also the process of giving shape to a space conventionally using wood, bricks or furniture as material for walls and ceilings to shape an enclosure. But by understanding commensality, I could see that the room is shaped by the people in it as well, and it made me look further into understanding its attributes: what is a space for commensality made of?

¹⁴ A small chain of London restaurants specializing in simple Belgian cooking and Belgian beer. Belgo Centraal is noted for its arresting 1990s design and architecture, including kitchens viewable by customers entering the restaurant and its waiters and waitresses, who dress as monks. Ron Arad and Foreign Office Architects designed different branches of the chain.

3.3. Eatscape and Its Attributes

Definition of Eatscape

Literally, *eatscape* is a combination of 'eat' and 'landscape'. *Eat* in its plural form of eating together is *commensality*. As defined by Google dictionary (2019), *Landscape* is the visible features of an area of land (physical) as its aesthetic appeal. In cultural geography, Carl O. Sauer defines it as a man-made cultural process that has worked to shape the natural environment to create the world that is visible around us. However, combining the two terms *eat* and *landscape* together is not as simple as it seems. This is because commensality is a plural, temporal, human and performance-based activity that is rather unstable and slippery. This makes it rather problematic to combine commensality with the conventional and static definition of landscape given above. We will need to view landscape beyond physical human vision, as more than just the 'portion of the earth's surface that can be comprehended at a glance'.

The field of cultural geography sees landscape as 'fluid constructs that are continually in the process of cohering and collapsing as we move through space' (Oakes and Price 2008, 151). The suffix *-scape* is taken from the five factors (*-scapes*) that contribute to the global exchange of ideas and information¹⁵ as defined by social-cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, who describes fluid boundaries that are constantly shifting, just as cultures are (Appadurai 1996). In his view, each space exists in multiple realities, as an idea or image changes its context depending on the spectator, just like the term *territories* in the context of 'mobilising territory and territorializing mobility' (Brighenti 2014). Both Appadurai and Brighenti's views on the boundary of a landscape challenge the conventional perspective that is often limited to the physical space. The boundary changes depending on the person or things perceiving them, so there are multiple and fluid boundaries.

Eatscape as a noun is a *fluid landscape* of commensality: ***a fluid landscape shaped by people and their act of commensality in temporarily shared physical and social settings.***

Eatscape as a verb is *eatscaping*. It is *the room shaping* through commensality. The German version of the suffix *-scape* is *-schaft*, which is used in *Landschaft* (landscape) and means 'a long, narrow part or section forming the handle of a tool or club, the body of a spear or arrow, or similar'¹⁶. *Eatscaping* is an inclusive action. This is because it connects the outcome of design to action. Landscape as 'land' and 'tool' inspires architects and urban designers to make the connection between a space and its making as one thing. Using the terms in the process of the design stimulates participation in the process of the making, and thus it is inclusive.

What do eatscapes look like?

¹⁵ Five factors that contribute to the global exchange of ideas and information: *ethnoscape, technoscape, finanscape, mediascapes and ideoscapes.*

¹⁶ *www.oxforddictionaries.com* taken on 8 June 2018.

Eatscapes are everywhere surrounding us in our everyday life! The places that are marked by people carrying out commensality particularly appear during the mealtimes – the places locals (inhabitants) in an area recognise as ‘the place to be’ when it comes to commensality. Eatscapes are the urban infrastructure, the basic physical and organizational facilities that allow commensality to take place in the localities. The passage in Figure 20 would be one of many barriers between city blocks in Gothenburg if not for the presence of people occupying the seats carrying out their commensality. The Victoria Passage, once a dangerous hidden street filled with drug users, prostitutes and criminals, was claimed by the café’s owner, Mats, when he first started serving coffee from a hole in the wall back in the 1980s. Today Café da Mateo is a place filled with everyday commensality where passers-by linger, slow down, and take part in the spontaneous meetings. The success of da Matteo as an eatscape makes Mats one of the pioneers in regenerating of the inner city of Gothenburg.



Figure 1: Da Matteo in the Victoria Passage, Gothenburg, Sweden (photographed in June 2012).

Today commensality is carried out in a large variety of places and comes in many varieties. It takes place beyond the conventional private establishments, from collective spaces (Solà-Morales, Frampton, and Ibelings 2008) such as food courts, restaurants and cafés to public spaces (Franck 2005) and public domain (Hajer and Reijndorp 2001) such as bus stops, the steps in front of the stock market in Brussels (see Figure 116, page 179) and even on pavements where food is bought from street vendors to be eaten at the curb or on benches. Eatscape is performance-based, which includes the non-visual (can’t be captured with a

camera), non-human and relational. Eatscape is made with fluid material. Its attributes consist of people and food, space, social characteristics and time. The first three attributes are like three layers structuring one on top of the other that spend over time as in Figure 12. Time is the attribute that pulls them together. Thus, eatscape is a fluid landscape that is momentary and ephemeral.

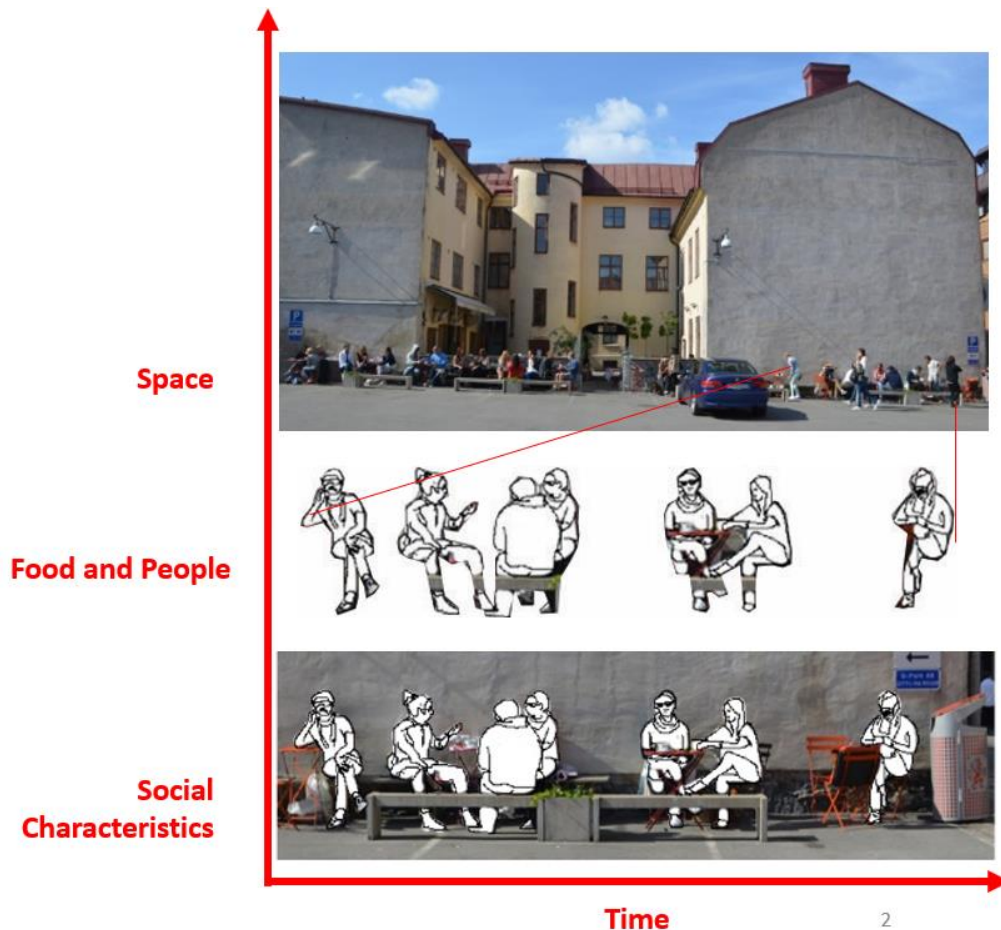


Figure 12: Eatscape attributes: people and food, space, social characteristics and time. The image is based on da Matteo (Gothenburg, Sweden).

Food and people are the core components of an Eatscape – the type of food (menu) that is eaten and the type of people who eat it. For example, Figure 12 shows people between 25 and 35 years old taking coffee and cakes.

Space consists of both the tangible and the intangible materiality that make up a place. The tangible material is wood, stone, glass etc. The intangible material is light and shadow, a reflection of images, the smell of the air, sounds and air movement. They can be experienced not only through the eyes but also through human haptic and sensuous experience (Pallasmaa, 1996). Furthermore, a piece of material can be modified in thousands of ways (Zumthor 2006a). For example, a piece of wood can be sanded, carved, polished, drilled, cut, sliced etc. These different modifications give very different

appearances to the materials and experiences to people. It is both the material and the form of the physical setting that impact people's sensuous experience of Eatscapes.

The **social characteristics** consist of the social interactions between people, between people and their physical environment, and between people and food through commensality. The term *social* is used here following Latour's usage, which means 'the association' or 'the relationality' between actors (things/elements/nodes) that can be researched by using the *sociology of associations* (Latour 2005). In this thesis, the focus on tracing the association of 'life' between actors is done by analysing the trajectories between them. The body and the moment (interaction) projected over time of people in a place which produces spatial forms (Chase et al., 1999).

Time ties together the food and people, space, and social characteristics that make an Eatscape. The key temporality dimensions concerning *eating* proposed here are (a) duration, (b) sequence, (c) tempo, (d) frequency and (e) synchronisation, following the work of scholars who look at rating practice (Southerton, Diaz-Mendez, and Warde 2012) (Fine 1990).

Duration: the length of time spent.

Sequence: how often does it occur – routine implies sequence, informing patterns of succession. It determines whether soup comes before pudding, cooking before eating or work before lunch, all of which matter.

Tempo: the speed – can be found in different types of meal events. For example, one is relatively fast when eating alone and slow and leisurely when eating in a group.

Frequency: links with the nutritional content of the food: hence eating many small meals per day (i.e. snacks) as opposed to two or three prepared meals is widely regarded as unhealthy. It applies to foods that are associated with times of the day and mark the passing of periods of time (breakfast–lunch–dinner), although the order and timing (i.e. sequence) of such meals is neither consistent across cultures nor over time.

Synchronisation: the relation with the context – the coordination of people and their practices. Eating is usually synchronised with other practices such as social events and rhythms of work.

Reflection of the Search

Commensality is a plural and collective way of eating in a shared space that is formed in the course of it. This is because, as a practice, commensality brings people together is thus a room-shaping way of eating. This way of seeing architecture and space for commensality broadens my perspective to see it beyond its conventional limit of cafés and restaurants, which results in the creation of the term *eatscape* for naming the space for/of

commensality. The concepts of commensality and eatscape in the design context trigger designers like me to include people, their practices and their communal experiences as material agents for city design. Two aspects of the everydayness of the everyday practice of commensality relate to inclusiveness. First, the everyday allows chance to make its mark on the fabric of a locality. Tracing the accumulated collective marks of commensality on eatscapes allows architects and urban designers to learn about the collective knowledge of the use of commensality for a locality. Second, the everyday is the routine, the trust and the community bond between people that develop on the level of the micro-public. For this reason, exploring commensality could provide clues for architects and urban designers to work with inclusive city design. How to extract knowledge that is embedded in a practice?

4. Getting to Know Eatscape

Before and during the early phase of this thesis, twenty-five identified places were selected. To me, they were interesting eatscapes even though I could not put into words what was so interesting about them. But I knew that I wanted to find out the skills (how an eatscape is made), the idea (what it is about) and the experience (why are people attracted to it) behind each of these places. Intuitively, my search for these answers started with exploring tacit knowledge.

We can know more than we can tell. (*Polanyi 2009, 10*)

Tacit knowledge is the type of knowledge that is not easily formalized or put into words. It is knowledge that we process but is not codified and may not necessarily be easily expressed. We are not often aware of the knowledge we have or how it can be valuable when it is recognized and used. My experience visiting and using many of the identified places told me that there was something about them I could not put into words, but my body just recognised. Reflecting on my own experience as an architect, I know about how space works in quite the same way that any other skilled person knows how to perform that skill (Cross 2006). Thus, my search for the answers requires the searcher to be conscious of the knowledge that is embedded in people, experiences and materials. A designer knows about space by making it; a user of knows about a place by using it. Getting to know eatscapes is about both making and using them.

This chapter will present the ways and the process of knowing through the exploration of eatscapes in the section Knowing. Furthermore, the methods and tools that were developed in this thesis for exploring eatscapes are *eatscape typology*, *checklist*, *catalytic act* and *matrix*, which will be presented in the final section of this chapter, Components of Knowing. Knowing and Components of Knowing sections can be read independently.

4.1. Knowing

Making and using eatscapes in order to know about them makes this research a field which relies on the source of the data that comes from the field. Field research has a long tradition in social science and involves the in-depth study of real-world phenomena through direct

contact with the organizational participants (Yin 2009) (Merchant and Stede 2006). However, transferring field knowledge (tacit knowledge of the field) generally requires extensive personal contact, regular interaction (K Goffin and U Koners 2011) and trust between people. Field research usually examines multiple forms of evidence, including archival data, interview data, memoranda and other internal company records as well as observations of employee actions and interactions to hopefully reinforce each. In contrast to field research that is done in social science, this research does not seek the generalization or validation of the result nor the proof of a certain phenomenon. This research uses field research for designers to raise awareness, to develop an attitude and sensibility that enables the designers to develop design practices that include the others. Thus, the first-hand experience of people and things is the key for developing design approaches in which designers include the others (which can be people or things).

Furthermore, there is a difference between conducting a knowledge inquiry using knowing through making and knowing through using an eatscape. The knowing through making requires a more active and constructive attitude where I bring in action, device and organization for generating an eatscape in order to know about it. It is making it in order to know about it. Whereas the knowing through using is a more passive and responsive attitude in which I act or respond to an existing eatscape in order to know about it. It is using the eatscape to know about it. In this section, I will describe my journey of knowing in both ways, but in reverse chronological order: I will start with one single case in the sub-section *Knowing Through Making (Acting)*, then develop the story of it backwards to give the overview of how the knowledge from one case contributes to the other cases in the sub-section *Knowing Through Using*. The conclusion of both the knowing through making and knowing through using will be presented in the sub-section *An Inclusive Way of Knowing*.

4.1.1. Knowing Through Making (Acting)

Making as a way of knowing is essential for a designer's tacit way of knowing. This section will present the in-depth story of one single case the *Koninginneplein* in Brussels, a design case in which I tested the knowledge gained from exploring an eatscape. *Koninginneplein* is a non-eatscape place that turns into one temporarily through the exploration. The story will be told backwards in the section *Eatscape Catalytic Act at the Koninginneplein*. What was done to make a place into an eatscape, and what was learned? Both will be presented here. In addition, the knowledge transfer between the cases will be presented in the following section *Knowledge Transfers Between the Cases*.

4.1.1.1. *Eatscape Catalytic Act at the Koninginneplein*

The Koninginneplein (King's Square) is located in the Schaarbeek district of Brussels, Belgium. The square is dominated by St. Mary's Church, with the Paleizenstraat on the west side of it and the Haachtsesteenweg on the east (left Figure 14). Together they form the triangular shape of an open square that is filled with bus and tram stops, small cafes and businesses. The picturesque Koninginneplein has its significance in the making of Brussels as the capital city of Belgium since the 1820s. Together with the Royal Palace of Brussels and the castle of Laeken, it forms the 'royal route', a route of about seven kilometres which gives St. Mary's Church the grand position it has today (Figure 13). However, today the area of the west and north of Schaerbeek, which includes the area surrounding the Koninginneplein, has a large immigrant population that stands in striking contrast to the more affluent neighbourhoods and streets of Schaerbeek, such as the Josaphat Park area and the villas along the Lambermontlaan.

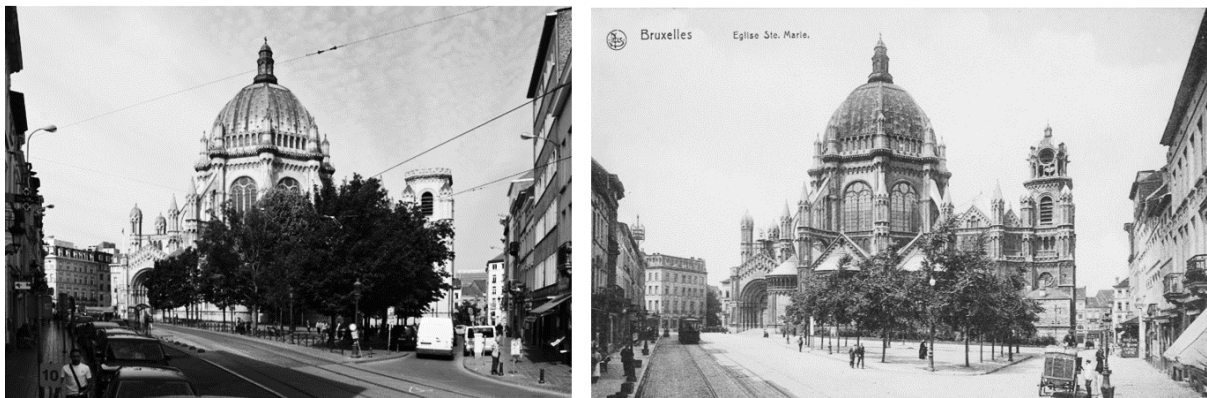


Figure 13: *Koninginneplein in Brussels today (left) and in history (right). Images taken from www.wikipedia.org.*

Segregation between ethnic groups of migrants, genders and age groups are visible problems in the everyday life of the Koninginneplein. The square is located within five minutes walking distance from the School of Architecture on the KUL Brussels campus, where I worked as a design studio instructor between 2006 and 2015. The problem of segregation and the unpleasant atmosphere for its use were not unfamiliar to me, nor to most of my KUL students and colleagues during this period of time. For most of us, the square was used as a node for transfers of public transport but not as a place where we would consider lingering or even going for lunch.



Figure 14. Left: aerial view of the Koninginneplein. Right: view from St. Mary's Church toward the east corner of the square.

To understand the quality of the square, we need to take a closer look at the elements that make it up. The oversized St. Mary's Church, the tram tracks and the line of the facades of the adjacent building such as bakeries, cafes and small shops (Figure 14) are the three elements that come together to form a large enclosed square (Figure 17). Direct sunlight can cover the entire space on a sunny day. For the neighbourhood, such a sunny and large enclosed space should be a perfect setting for a public space for people to linger and encounter. However, commensality was not a common sight at the Koninginneplein despite the lushness of the trees, the neighbourhood shops and the pedestrian-only zone. Occasionally, some solitary eaters could be spotted individually at some of the benches on a sunny day. In contrast, groups of students could be spotted from time to time eating their lunch packages on the steps of the main (south) entrance to St. Mary's Church, which faces the much smaller open space adjacent to a street with busy car traffic. I remember being surprised at the sight. But why wasn't the Koninginneplein a place for commensality?

To find the answer to that question, commensality was used as the method for investigating the quality of use at the Koninginneplein. The concept of a *catalytic act* developed by the artist Adrian Piper became the basis for developing the designerly research method for the case of Koninginneplein: *commensality catalytic act*. The catalytic act is an action performed on site to create conditions necessary for understanding a phenomenon (Steinmetz 2009). Commensality catalytic act involves not only commensality but also setting up installations to facilitate the act. It helped me to translate the abstract ideas and imagined features of a design into concrete actions. There were two reasons that the Koninginneplein was chosen as the test case¹⁷: It is a non-eatscape place and it is close to the KUL, where I worked for many years. I was familiar with its problems and had long wished to do something about them. In early November 2015, three eatscape catalytic acts spreading over three consecutive days were carried out. They were (1) the stand-up commensality act, (2) the sit-in commensality act and (3) the group commensality act (Figure 15). The aim of the three days of action was to investigate the problem of segregation of the square by creating the conditions for commensality.

¹⁷ It is called a design case in this thesis because it is the case where the design was applied.



Figure 15. Top left: the first eatscape catalytic act – the stand-up commensality act. Bottom left: the second eatscape catalytic act – the sit-in commensality act. Middle: the first eatscape catalytic act – the group commensality act. Right: the preparation for an act at the Koninginneplein.

The first installation was **the stand-up commensality act**, in which a standing-height table was placed three footsteps away from one of the existing benches in the square. A group of four researchers (including myself) were invited to eat at the table during the lunch break. The KUL students and faculty knew of the low quality of food supply in the area, so it was a common practice to pack a lunch or just eat in the KUL canteen. Since the designated location of our lunch was the Koninginneplein, each of us brought our lunch boxes and found a spot the table. The rectangular shape of the table used for the act did have an impact on our experience with the surroundings. Since we stood face-to-face across the table, our backs were turned towards the rest of the people in the square. I briefly informed the participants at the table about the acts, but the conversation quickly turned to other topics commonly shared amongst colleagues. Looking at the table from afar (top left in Figure 15), it was an unusual object at the square. With the white tablecloth hanging on it, it stood out and caught the attention of the regulars in the square. But I do not recall the act engaging any of the strangers in any kind of interaction, although there were a few moments of eye contact. However, this impression was proven wrong when I checked the photographic record of the event. People who were sitting at the nearby benches were looking curiously at us, though they did not approach us directly during the time of the act. The result was obvious: the choice of using the stand-up position for commensality failed to enable social interaction with other people in the Koninginneplein. Was it because of the shape, the size or the position of the table?

On the following day, we performed a second installation, **the sit-in commensality act**, in which a larger and lower table was positioned next to an existing bench in the square. A tablecloth was used to cover the table and pair it with the existing bench. Together they formed an instant dining table in the square. Before the new group of colleagues who volunteered to participate in the act could arrive, a group of migrant job-seekers already sat down at the table with their own food brought from the Eastern European grocery store in

the vicinity. Through an exchange of conversation with them, I learned that they were very curious about the acts and eager to find out the motivation behind them. They were aware of the previous act because they had been observing the action from the benches. The benches, they explained, were their waiting places to be picked up to work as day labourers. The presence of a sit-in dining table, an abundance of food, and an urban design researcher added a new function to the bench – a meeting space with strangers. These social devices provided the conditions for commensality to take place in the square. The space between the table and the bench, where we sat resting our hands and feet, and the space above the table top, where our upper bodies, heads and arms were in motion, were social spaces. They thereby became the new physical boundary in the square defined at a human scale. This was the scale at which commensality could accrue and personal encounter could blossom. In contrast with the rest of the Koninginneplein, where few benches could be found, we sit-in participants opened up a more intimate conversation amongst ourselves. With such a social setting, people around the table turned their faces inward, toward each other, rather than outward toward the passers-by. To a certain extent, it impacted on the atmosphere of the square. For a moment, the passers-by could walk by the square and watched by this group of men.

The experience of commensality with the group of migrants gave me the opportunity to experience what geographer Ash Amin calls the micro-public (Amin 2002). It is the human scale and the face-to-face ways of meeting between people with no pre-conceptions. It was the condition and the setting that brought the migrants and me to come together without an appointment. The face-to-face encounter was my opportunity to form my own opinion about them (the migrants, namely middle-aged men) who used the benches in the square as their job office. My observation of their regular movement between the tea houses, the benches and the migrant stores around the square became answerable as their search for warm shelter or a toilet break while waiting for work. As a designer, I could start making a list of urban installations, facilities and programs to accommodate the needs for these people so that the other social groups could be included in the use of the square. Some of the migrants expressed awareness of their dominant position in the square and how it pushed away other users. However, they expressed a willingness to share that square with others. Looking at the limited number of benches as well as the way these benches were placed, it was clear that the design of the square was not intended for people to linger. If nothing were changed, these migrants would continue to dominate the square, which brought me to the motivation for the third installation. The aim was to break the domination of the migrant job seekers in the square.

The last day of catalytic acts was **the group commensality act**, which involved thirty architecture students from the KUL eating pre-ordered sandwiches in the Koninginneplein. Three units of tables that were enclosure by transparent plastic sheets and attached with wheels were pushed up the street from the KUL campus to the square together with the entire group of students. They were positioned end to end to form a line of tables six meters long. One large transparent plastic cover was clipped at the top end of each of the wheeled tables to protect the participants from the rain, while at the same time forming an enclosed space. With the rain protection, participants were able to linger and commensal at the

square for the entire lunch hour without interruption. Just a few moments after the last group of the participants disappeared from the square, a manager of a nearby bank approached me. The manager mentioned two things that had made an impression on him: the rain protection devices and the tablecloth that was covered with a scribbling of texts. They both had the appearance of *art*, which caught his attention. The students left messages all over the tablecloths with the markers I had placed at the tables. The manager was eager to read the messages – the notes interested him in the same way the act did. He finally commented, ‘It’s such a good idea to have lunch in this square. I’ve been curious about it since I saw you guys the other day. I know some investors who would be interested in taking this idea further.’

The table, the tablecloth and the rain cover are props that I have called *scaling devices* or *social devices*. They tune the scale of the space to the human one as well as triggering social interaction amongst people. Where do I get all these ideas? They did not come to me overnight; they came a long way – from way back at the beginning of this thesis.

4.1.1.2. *Knowledge Transfers Between the Cases*

Five of the twenty-five identified places collected at the start of this thesis were further explored as comparative cases. They were Noordzee in Brussels, the steak vendor by the Ratchathewi Sky-train station in Bangkok, the food truck event Off the Grid in San Francisco, Café da Matteo in Gothenburg, and Konrad Café and Bar in Luxembourg. Application of the *eatscape typology* method (Chapter 4.2.3) in the comparative cases helped me to define and distil the essence of each of the cases. An outline of my own personal experience of the eatscapes was produced to respond to the questions of what makes an eatscape and how and why eatscapes impact on liveable city making. Only two of the five comparative cases, the Noordzee and the Café da Matteo, were eventually developed into in-depth cases in which *checklist* (Chapter 4.2.2) was used to explore them. The checklist was my guidance for staying focused and relevant to the field of architecture during fieldwork.

There is a difference between *knowing how* and *knowing that* (Cross 2006). Up until the exploration of the Noordzee and da Matteo, I only explored ‘the best practices’ of eatscapes. This was because the initial aim of the exploration was only to produce *knowing how* – the type of knowledge that is based on the physical experience of how to make a certain thing. I was focusing on knowing what makes an eatscape and ways of knowing it. I looked for good examples of eatscapes that work and studied them in both breadth (comparative cases) and depth (in-depth cases). After the process of extracting the knowledge, it was time to validate and test the knowledge. Following Cross, it was time to move on to the *knowing that* part of the designerly way of knowing. Since I was being conscious of the aspects that make up an eatscape, I needed to do something about it in

order to develop my *knowing that*. In other words, I needed to use, test and experiment on the *knowing how*. A typical step in the design process involves a series of analyses, syntheses and evaluations (Lawson 2006). *Knowing that* is about making synthesis and, more importantly, evaluation. For this reason, non-eatscape cases also needed to be included in this thesis. They were used as the test case to reflect and expand the *knowing how* that was learned from good practices, namely the Noordzee and the da Matteo. Consequently, two more cases, the Byparken in Ørestad, Denmark and the Koninginneplein in Brussels, were added to explore based on the *knowing that*. The eatscape catalytic act was developed as the method for developing *knowing that* in this thesis in the two test (design) cases.

An eatscape catalytic act combines the act of commensality and the making of eatscape installation. The information and the decision about the design of the action (how to commensal) and the installation setting (what to set up) came from the exploration of eatscapes using the checklist. A checklist (Appendix D: Eatscape Fieldwork Checklist) consists of a list of fieldwork questions (themes). In this section, I selected only one question out of the checklist to illustrate how I transfer the *knowing how* from one case to *knowing that* in the other cases. The theme that will be used in this example is 'the body of architecture', which is the construction, the anatomy and the tangible material of an eatscape.

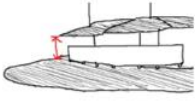

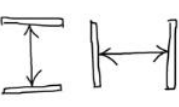



Observation cases			Design cases		
(1) NoordZee specific	(2) Da Mateo specific	(1)+(2) generic	(3) Byparken (Ørestad) existing situation specific	(3.1) Byparken (Ørestad) Design case specific	(3)+(3.1) generic
1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5	1-2-3-4-5
					
in-between cover and uncover spaces	in-between enclosed and unenclosed spaces	define the boundary of the in-between space	open field	drawing the boundary onto the open field	Define physical boundary on human scale

Figure 16. A partial extraction from the eatscape matrix. This section of the matrix shows only the results of Part 1 of 'the body of architecture'; Part 2 continues in Figure 17. A case is organized vertically as a column. The top row indicates the name of the case. The second row's numbers indicate the intensity of the result from low (1) to high (5). The following row is descriptive images. The bottom row is text boxes with descriptions of the result. The number, the sketch and the text are the same result of the exploration in different formats for validating the results. Furthermore, the generation of the results is categorized into two types: the specific and the generic. The specific outcome is the specific characteristic of each case, in which the results also reflect on its context. The generic outcome is the characteristic that is shared amongst the cases.

The results from the exploration of the Noordzee and da Matteo showed that framing, creating and **defining the boundary of the in-between space** is the key to constructing 'the

body of architecture' for an eatscape (the left three columns in Figure 16). A boundary of an eatscape could be defined vertically as in the case of the Noordzee, where people find themselves tucking under the canopy and above the bar top (Figure 70). It could also be done horizontally, where people tuck themselves between a parked car and the gable wall at da Matteo (Figure 72). Although the location of both Noordzee and da Matteo are adjacent to relatively large and open public squares in which car traffic was a very presence, I still experienced a friendly atmosphere in these places. This was because they paid attention to the aspects of 'human scale', which is a key for enabling commensality to take place. These two examples clearly showed the need to define the boundary for the human scale to existing and for commensality to take form. Thus, eatscape making is about in-between space making. The design strategy for using, testing and experimenting at the Byparken and the Koninginneplein was about producing the in-between space that focused on the human scale to accommodate humans and their actions in these places.

Byparken is a relatively large, open, green field that is surrounded by ten-storey-high residential buildings, many of them with mixed-use functions on the ground floor. Picnic seems an appropriate choice for commensality in such an outdoor setting. However, my previous experience of the area told me that it would be a rather intimidating experience to picnic in such an open field for a midweek lunch. Does this park have eatscape quality? The eatscape catalytic act at Byparken focused on testing if it was a commensal-able place. We picked the designated picnic area of the park. It was an area in the middle of the grass field where the picnic sign was placed between a few tables. These tables rested slightly elevated from the ground on a large circular wooden platform. The wooden tables were relatively far apart from one to another (Figure 16). Looking from a distance, the materialization of these tables created the visual impression of one large object that could be spotted from afar. In such a large park, this design strategy helped us to find a picnic area. But when we reached the table, we found space less intimate than we would have liked for a picnic. This was where the design strategy of creating in-between space was put to the test. We wrapped up one of the existing picnic tables with our striped tablecloth to articulate the boundary for commensality. The striped pattern on the tablecloth was much finer than the striped pattern created by the wooden boards used to make the picnic tables. Thus, the tablecloth introduced a new scale to the space. The waterproof material on the surface of the tablecloth made it thicker and heavier than a regular tablecloth, which gave it a sense of durability and resilience unlike the temporary concept of a picnic, which is typically a meal packed to go and eaten outdoors. The thick and heavy tablecloth and the ceramic cups and dishes used for this picnic kept everything from being blown away by the strong wind in an open field setting. This gave the sense of serenity and rest to the entire experience. In addition, the smoothness and the thickness of the woven texture of the tablecloth gave a pleasant feel to my haptic experience when I rubbed my hands against the surface of the tablecloth. The familiar sense reminded me of home.

The introduction of the in-between space with the tablecloth drew up the boundary for commensality in the vast area of the park. My fellow researcher and I sat on opposite sides of the table, facing each other. With the presence of the striped pattern of the tablecloth, our eyes could focus on the objects and the interactions that took place on the table. The

familiar texture and the calmness of the atmosphere helped us to anchor ourselves at Byparken, and we ended up lingering there for a few hours. Thus, the human scale is more than the dimensions of things but also the texture and sense that people can experience and associate with.

From my experience of visiting the Koninginneplein for several years, I am familiar with the unwelcoming atmosphere of the square. The problem of segregation in the square was reflected in the relatively small number of benches and how they were positioned. These benches tended to create exclusive islands where only small groups of people could occupy them. It had long been my wish to do something about the Koninginneplein, and I could not have found a better test case for the eatscape catalytic act. Opposite of the Byparken, the Koninginneplein is in an old area of the city. My aim for using an eatscape catalytic act here was to understand the challenge of segregation in the square. Does the square have eatscape quality for people to linger and interact? The three-day eatscape catalytic acts were rolled out to test if it was a commensal-able place. Day One of the act started with introducing commensality into the square, setting up the high table for people to stand around (Figure 17). It was my way of introducing a new activity that was not really being practiced in the square. The new boundaries for commensality were introduced in the square during the lunch hours. The high table with its white tablecloth was eye-catching and an unfamiliar object in the square, but the reaction of the people who used the square was rather subdued. The table was left in isolation. My conclusion was that placing an eye-catching object in the middle of the square was too bold; the Koninginneplein is a neighbourhood square used mainly by local residents, and a subtler approach would have been better. A new practice (activity) should be introduced with a much quieter approach that could blend in better.

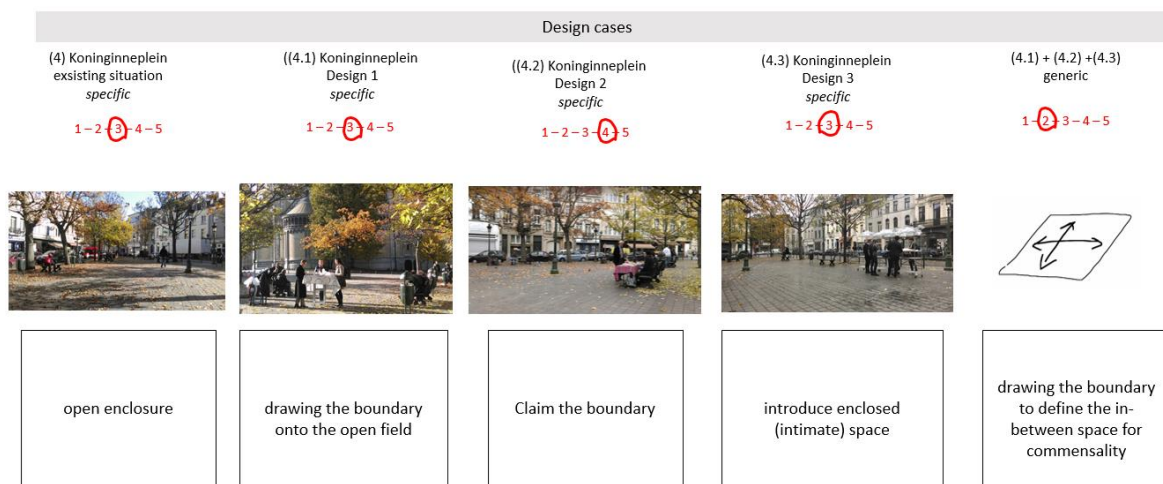


Figure 17. Eatscape matrix showing only the results of the Body of Architecture Part 2, the continuation of Part 1.

On Day Two of the act, I turned the existing situation into space for commensality with just one move. A table was inserted next to one of the existing benches in the square. It was

covered with a tablecloth to create an instant dining table in the Koninginneplein with the yellow leaves from the autumn tree as a backdrop. The diners could only be seated on one side of the table, so people who commensaled here would face anyone who passed by. The reaction from people in the square was positive. They came by and lingered at and around the new boundary for commensality. It showed that commensality was possible in the square. Through the interaction with the people who linger in the square during the act, I learned that many of those who appeared to be the dominant users were willing to do something about it. Their willingness led me to design the third act, which involved bringing a new group of users (students) to the Koninginneplein. The intimate and enclosed units for commensality were installed at the Koninginneplein. Within the boundary of these units, the students were able to stay and commensal at the square while it was raining.

The table, the instant dining room and the enclosed units for commensality are all space-making devices. They are the in-between spaces that are made for supporting people and their activity (commensality). At the table, I found the instant dining room and the enclosed units for commensality to be familiar and intimate spaces, which made me momentarily forget about being in a public space. It was an in-between space that was neither entirely public nor entirely private. Koninginneplein and Byparken were both problematic places in my eyes with no eatscape qualities. An eatscape catalytic act uses *design* as a method and means for me to build an understanding of what was at stake both in Byparken and in Koninginneplein. It was the non-place where I lost the sense of belonging.

4.1.2. *Knowing Through Using*

Who actually develops the vast array of new products, process equipment, and services introduced into the marketplace? The answer is clearly important: an accurate understanding of the source of innovation is fundamental to both innovation research and innovation management. (Von Hippel 1988:11)

It is the user of a product, a process or a service who has accurate knowledge of the use. Through the use experience, the user develops insight and possibly feedback on the product, the process or the service – if there are the means for one to do that. Von Hippel's reconditioning of the role of the user as the innovator is essential to much innovation in research and practice. The concept of user-driven innovation, which implies that end-users, rather than manufacturers, are responsible for a large amount of innovation, is turned into the *use as a creative practice*. In this thesis, the process of knowing is based on the unfolding of the experience of use as well as the impact of playing the role of the user when searching for innovations in the field of architecture and urban design, as Olli Sotamaa, a researcher from game culture, states: 'Games, in general, cannot [...] simply be read or watched: they must be played' (Sotamaa 2005:106).

In order to know how a city is used, one must use it and use it the way that one wants to know about it. Reflecting on this statement, such an approach has been with this thesis from the start in my walking through different cities and experiencing and observing commensality to know about eatscapes. These actions resulted in the collection of twenty-five identified places and the photographic accounts of them. It was the summary of the user experience that gradually became the method that I called *eatscape typology* (Chapter 4.2.1). Eatscape typology is based on different modes of reflection. Reflection in the field involves bodily intelligence (Wilcox 2009) for reflection, in contrast with the reflection in the studio environment that involves mind intelligence. It is the reflection of the photographs of the experience. Through the back and forth reflections (Figure 18) between the real-life use experience (fieldwork) and photographs of the eatscapes (studio work), I produced a collection of codes, concepts and keywords that express my personal sensorial experience of the eatscapes. The process of reflection and production of the codes is called *eatscape typology*. The code is a product of the reflection. It describes a specific quality that makes a place an eatscape, also called *eatscape typology*. Thus, eatscape typology is both a method and a design tool, research and exploration of eatscapes.

The more that I repeated the reflection processes in more places, the more that I began to identify the specific characteristic that shares amongst eatscapes that were interesting to me. Eventually, six eatscape typologies were identified and they are *(in)formal*, *(im)perfect*, *Intimacy*, *Shift in Time or Place*, *Discovery and Ephemeral* (Figure 22). Coincidentally, each eatscape typology also represents different types of spatial typologies, which earned them the term 'typology' to reinforce their usages as a spatial typology in the field of architecture and urban design. For examples *(in)formal* is related to street food and *(im)perfect* is related to post-industrial and rustic cafés (Table 2).

The identification of the six eatscape typologies helped me to generate the focus for this thesis. Why do these eatscapes interest me? Reflecting on this question had led me to realize that it was the charm that attracted people to go back again and again, like myself, that interested me. I call it 'liveable city making' – the condition for making a place alive and liveable. The process of developing eatscape typology had led me to identify the focus of the search for this thesis: If eatscapes enable liveable city making, what are these eatscapes?

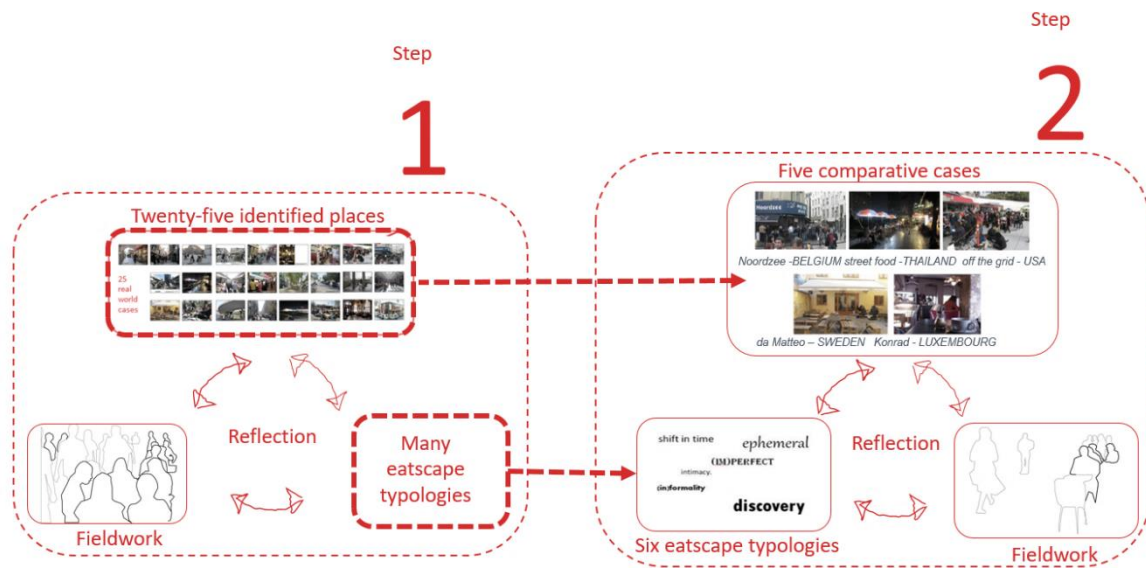


Figure 18. Eatscape typology: from Step1 to Step2. Through the iterative process of reflections between fieldwork typology making, twenty-five identified places were reduced to five comparative cases; many eatscape typologies were reduced to six eatscape typologies.

As in game design and user innovation, to get to know the quality of an eatscape, I must commensal in it. Thus, commensality as a practice is a knowledge inquiry practice that requires my body and senses to articulate, store and process our sensuous responses and thoughts. This is not a common practice in the field of architecture and urban design, in which ‘distraction’ occurs easily when it comes to fieldwork. For this reason, an *eatscape fieldwork checklist* (Chapter 4.2.2) was developed to keep the investigation relevant to the field of research. This checklist is based on the works of scholars in the field of architecture and urban design who focus on the use of the human body for knowing the world. The Noordzee case was further explored as the (in)formal in-depth case and the Café da Matteo case was further explored as the (im)perfect in-depth case both using the checklist as their exploration tools (Figure 19). The results of that exploration produced the insight into what aspects impact on liveable city making (Appendix B: Exploring (In)formal and Appendix C: Exploring (Im)perfect).

In aiming to develop knowledge for design, the eatscape typology and the checklist are both effective methods and tools for identifying the focus and collecting data for design use (all appendices). Apart from Byparken and the Koninginneplein, all the other cases included in this thesis are observation cases. Thus, the majority of the data collected in this thesis is observation-based, and was based on the personal and the internal ways of distilling data that was rather dominant in this thesis. The data need to be synthesized and evaluated. One way of doing that is to externalize the knowing.

To explore formlessness of design is not necessarily to forgo form altogether, which would be impossible. [...] What distinguishes this approach is the abandonment of form as the first principle of design success. Instead, designers are venturing into the

muddier regions of design's impact on our social life. They are exploring alternative ways of using the process to address social, emotional, and political ends. Again, the transformation of the social environment – not just the built environment – emerges as the focal point of the project. (Hunt 2003:69)

Hunt shows the externalization of knowing through design. He suggests that design as a process, instead of form, can address social, emotional, and political ends. In other words, design can be a method for inquiry, the means of communicating the idea and the knowing. The eatscape catalytic act (Chapter 4.2.4) was developed based on the perspective of externalizing the knowing. It combines the practice of commensality and the making of the installation on site to translate the abstract ideas and imagined features into concrete actions (see the right side of Figure 19), showing to the world all that I was thinking about and using the space to do the thinking. The source of the design strategy came from the descriptions that were listed in the matrix (Chapter 4.2.4). The eatscape catalytic acts took place in real life (in real places), which produced the use experience as its outcome. The use experience was then further reflected once again into the matrix. This is a process of knowledge-inquiry by externalizing the knowing – by commensaling with others and making installations in which design is used for synthesizing and evaluating one's knowing.

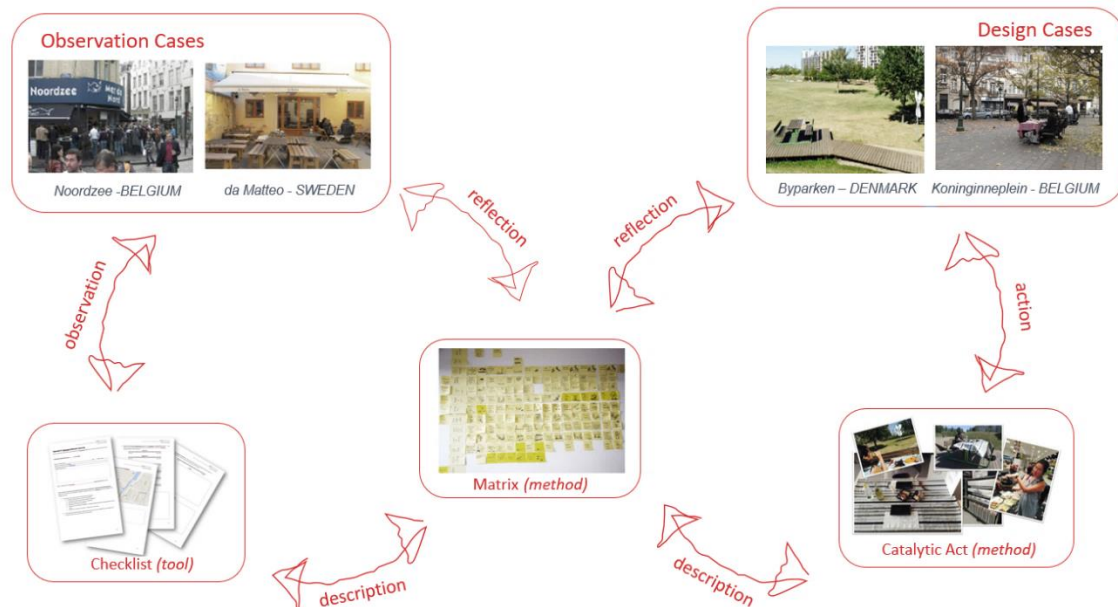


Figure 19. Knowing through using. On the left side of this figure, the checklist is used as observation guideline during the fieldwork of the cases to keep it relevant to the field of architecture and urban design. The results of the checklist are descriptions, which are then consolidated in the matrix. These descriptions are not fixed, but constantly being modified through the back-and-forth reflections between fieldwork and reflection of the material to re-describing and sharpening them. On the right side of this figure, the catalytic act relies on the back-and-forth action, reflection and description between the design case, the matrix and the catalytic act for knowing and decision making for the use strategy of the upcoming act.

4.1.3. An Inclusive Way of Knowing

Getting to know eatscapes through making and using them enables me to gain knowledge from multiple perspectives. This is because the ways of knowing involve actions, reflections and descriptions in real-life situations. In the observation cases, I reflected on the knowing internally, which allowed me to focus on the intake of the knowing. I was the listener, the witness and the discoverer in those situations. In the design cases, I reflected on the knowing externally, which allowed me to focus on the expression and communication of the knowing. I was the maker, the doer and the communicator in those situations. Because they took place in real-life contexts, these experiences enabled me to become one part of the subject that I study, which will in time also include my emotions and feelings. The experience of the micro-public benefited me by shifting back and forth between designer and fellow participant, researcher, pro-user with insight knowledge, and newcomer with discovery as my interest. I became empathetic, the one who shares the feelings which could be the same or different than those who I studied. It was an embodied way of knowing which included lived experiences, performance, and bodily intelligence (Wilcox 2009). Following the sociologist Hui Niu Wilcox, this way of knowing fosters a sense of community. The catalytic act involves the others to achieve bodily intelligence through the shared experience. Everyone involved in the act can learn something about it through their participation. This way of knowing is not a top-down means for developing empathy from an outsider point of view toward a situation, but rather a bottom-up way of developing empathy from within that produces community-based knowledge. In this thesis, this is considered an inclusive way of knowing. Can commensality, as a method for inquiry, become a way for architects and urban designers to embed inclusiveness in the practice of city design? Chapter 5 will present the answer to this question. But in the next section, the methods and the tools that were developed for the exploration of the eatscapes will be presented in Components of Knowing.

4.2. Components of Knowing

The four components that are listed in

Table 1 – *eatscape typology*, *checklist*, *catalytic act* and *matrix* – were developed as methods and tools for the eatscape explorations in this thesis. The *eatscape typology* is based on codes, concepts and keywords that are the artificial languages for architects and urban designers to describe the quality, characteristics and building typology of an eatscape. It is both a tool and a method. The *checklist* provides the basic guidelines to help fieldwork stay relevant to the field of architecture and urban design. The *catalytic act* is a method for knowledge inquiry through design. Finally, the matrix is the place for comparing and

generalizing all results from the explorations. These four components are developed for and through the course of the eatscape explorations. All four will be presented in this section. They can be read independently from each other.





	Components	Exploration formats	what was done?
Observation case	<p>Typology</p> <p>It describes quality, characteristic and building typology of an eatscape.</p>	<p>Codes, concepts and keywords</p> 	<p>Both the spatial condition the social condition of eatscapes was explored to distil the specific quality and characteristic to produce a description for each typology.</p>
	<p>Checklist</p> <p>It is the guideline for keeping fieldwork relevant to the aspects that concern architecture and urban design.</p>	<p>Printed checklist</p> 	<p>These four eatscape attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and people • Physical settings • Social settings • Time <p>are the base of the checklist to keep fieldwork relevant to the field of architecture and urban design.</p>
Design case	<p>Catalytic act</p> <p>It combines the practice of commensality and making installation in the field.</p>	<p>Photographic essay</p> 	<p>Commensality, role play and installation set-up were carried out on site.</p>
	<p>Matrix</p> <p>It is the framework for comparison and generalization of all results putting together.</p>	<p>Post-it table</p> 	<p>Each result of the exploration was made in three formats: text, images and rating. Post-it was to allow the flexibility for the modification of the results.</p>

Table 1. Left column: components of the knowing shows the connections between the components and the type of cases. Middle column: the illustrations of the explorations' formats, the example of the different types of typography represent the different moods and feels for the different typologies. Right column: the short descriptions of what was used in the exploration.

This thesis was initiated during my time as a design studio teacher for both Bachelor and Master level students in the College of Architecture at the Catholic University (KUL) in

Leuven, Belgium between 2006 and 2015. The students' works and my experience working with them became an important part of testing, developing and reflecting ways for exploring the eatscapes in this thesis. The results of their works will be presented and discussed in this section. However, there are many more ways of exploring eatscapes beyond what is presented in this thesis. The purpose of this section is to share and reflect my experiences as a designer as well as a design instructor who practices research. For this reason, these components of knowing should not be read as a methodology with step-by-step instructions for how to develop or use them, but more as descriptions and reflections of how a designer, an educator and a researcher develops ways of knowing that enable and inspire the inclusiveness in the design practice.

4.2.1. *Eatscape Typology*

When I started working on this thesis back in 2009, popular places that were recommended by locals as the best places for eating together were identified as the potential real-life cases for conducting eatscape fieldwork. The aim of collecting these places was to explore the intrinsic interest that people shared in them to select the best practices. The selection process started by identifying popular areas where tourists and locals alike gathering in different cities that I visited. For those cities that I was familiar with, the selection relied on my own experience as a reference. In those cities where I was not familiar with the selection, I relied on references from local informers who have lived or worked in those cities for more than five years. In this way, the focus areas were narrowed down to a handful of neighbourhoods in a city where I would then explore personally on foot.

Walking allows us to be in our bodies and in the world without being made busy by them. (Solnit 2001:9)

Gradually a routine for exploring eatscapes developed. It starts with a *sensuous walk* – a walk in which one connects with one's senses and physical sensation. The aim for a sensuous walk was to immerse the walking body with the rhythm of the landscape and the encounters along the passage. 'There is nothing to win and bring home' (Lagerström 2015) becomes the attitude for eatscape explorations. The sensuous walk helped me to become familiar with a place by acquiring the *first-hand experience* and *being present*, like strolling around foreign neighbourhoods during a holiday or walking in the woods without a travel guide or map. The sensuous walk as my way of exploring a neighbourhood allows me to do my research without the burden of the research tasks, meaning making sure of taking notes or photographing the subject; it allows me to be present and take notice of my body and my sensuous experience of the journey.

Through the sensuous walks, the number of identified places reached twenty-five toward the end of 2011. The star marks on the maps in Figure 20 indicate the cities where the twenty-five identified places are located. From west to east: San Francisco, London,

Brussels, Gothenburg, Vienna and Bangkok. Photographic accounts of these places were brought back into the studio so that revisiting and reflecting was possible for me. One image was selected and used to represent each identified place, and with it one description was made to describe the quality of that place. This process is called *eatscape typology making*. A description is a code, a concept or a keyword. It is an artificial language that is commonly used in the field of architects and urban designers. A description should be a summary of one's experience of an eatscape, which is the translation of the object language into the abstract requirements (Cross 2006). There are no rules or guidelines for how to make up an eatscape typology. The key is that both the photograph and the description should express my personal sensorial experience of that eatscape. Eatscape typology becomes a tool to communicate about the quality of eatscapes. Eatscape typology making is a process of the back-and-forth reflection between fieldwork and code-making to sharpen the descriptions. Eatscape typology becomes a research method that is based on reflections. Thus, eatscape typology is both a research tool and a research method.



Figure 20: The collection of 25 identified places.

Out of the twenty-five identified places, six eatscape typologies were the results of the exploration. They are *(in)formal*, *(im)perfect*, *intimacy*, *shift in time or place*, *discovery* and *ephemeral* (Figure 22). However, there is no limit to the final number of typologies; what will be presented in this thesis are those that I have identified within the limited material that I could gather for this thesis.



Figure 21. Out of the twenty-five identified places, six eatscape typologies were produced.

Coincidentally, two of the six eatscape typologies are synchronized with existing building typologies, which initiates the naming connection between eatscape typology and building typology. It is good to know that not all eatscape typologies are synchronized with building typologies. Some of them are synchronized with the specific function of eatscapes, but some of them describe the specific quality of eatscapes that later can be linked with existing building typologies. For example, *(in)formal* and *discovery* are functionally specific (Table 2). The *(in)formal* eatscape typology is synchronized with the street food function and the *discovery* eatscape typology is synchronized with the marketplace function. *(Im)perfect* is a quality-specific type of typology. It is associated with places that have ‘the quality of rustic and hidden places that make people feel at ease’. Even though eatscapes that are categorized as *(im)perfect* eatscape types are often cafés, not all cafés are *(im)perfect* eatscapes.

(in)formal



Belgium / Brussels / Noordzee
 Friday 8 April 2011 12:03



Thailand/Bangkok/Skytrain Ratchatheevi
 Tuesday 3 Feb 2011 18:34



USA /SAN FRANCISCO /OFF THE GRID/
 fort mason center parking
 Friday 23 Jul 2010 17:37

(im)perfect



Sweden/Gothenburg/ Magasinsgatan
 Friday 21 Jan 2011 12:11



Luxembourg/Konrad Café
 Thursday 28 March 2013, 14:41

Intimacy



Austria/ Vienna / Café Central
 Saturday 2 Apr 2011 11:25



Sweden/Gothenburg / Victoria Passage
 Saturday 22 Jan 2011 12:07



France/ Paris/ Brasserie les Eux Palais
 Thursday 24 Jun 2010 10:13

Shift in Time or Place



Belgium / Brussels / Beenhouwerstraat
 Friday 8 Oct 2010 14:53



France/Paris/Musée d'Art Moderne de la
 Ville de Paris Thursday 8 Apr 2010
 12:58

Discovery



Austria / Vienna / Wienzeile
 Saturday 2 Apr 2011 14:22



USA / LOS ANGELES / Grand Central
 Market Tuesday 3 Aug 2010 15:41



Austria / Vienna
 Friday 1 Apr 2011 17:28

Ephemeral



NL/Delft/ Burgwal
 Wednesday 14 Jun 2010 16:18



Thailand/ HUA HIN/ Naret Damri road
 Friday 4 Feb 2011 18:24



Belgium / Brussels/ Het Warm Water
 Sunday 10 Oct 2010 14:00

Figure 22: Six eatscape typologies with eatscapes from various locations (2012).

The written form of both '(in)formal and (im)perfect' with the (in) and (im) came from the iterative process of distilling the descriptions of these terms with a team of students¹⁸ during the eatscape design studio in 2010. (In)formal and (im)perfect are the two oxymoron eatscape typologies which describe a place that is both informal and formal; imperfect and perfect. Oxymoron¹⁹ is one word that combines two contradictory or incongruous words together. In this thesis, only two of the six eatscape typologies are oxymoron words, which makes them stand out amongst the other typologies. Such contradictory concepts of wording are appealing for designers because they are stimulating for design. At the same time, these two typologies are identified as different specifics. *(In)formal is street food and (im)perfect is the rustic quality* in which each of them represents a specific function and quality. These two reasons make the two typologies the same but different. Since the aim of exploring eatscapes is to enable design, it makes sense to further explore (in)formal and (im)perfect in both breadth (comparative cases) and depth (in-depth cases) in this thesis. The aim of exploring comparative cases in this section is to understand the common or the distinctive characteristic of an eatscape typology. The aim for exploring in-depth cases is to extract the understanding of a specific eatscape.

Eatscape typology	Description	Spatial typology	specific
(in)formal	The experience of being both formal and informal at the same time.	Street food	function
Discovery	The experience of being foreign to a place which triggers one's urge for exploration.	Marketplace	
Intimacy	The experience of feeling a sense of belonging to a place.	Hidden well-known places that are known amongst the locals	quality
Shift in time or place	The experience of being transported from the current time or place to another.	Thematic places and historical buildings	
(im)perfect	The experience of being both perfect and imperfect at the same time.	Post-industrial and rustic cafés	
Ephemeral	The experience of being a witness to a transformation of the environment by nature, such as the tide, the time of day or the season, that affects the experience of a place.	Places that are surrounded by natural elements such as a square that is surrounded by trees, places along the rivers or the sea etc.	

Table 2: Function and quality specific of the six eatscape typologies.

¹⁸Catholic University Leuven campus Brussels/Ghent, Belgium, design studio on Master 1 International Master of Science in Architecture 2010 by Filipa Tabor, Ralitsa Dilova and Kristel Niisuke

¹⁹ From www.merriam-webster.com date 2 April 2018.

(In)formal

(In)formal describes the experience of being both formal and informal at the same time. Street food is a typical typology of this type of eatscape. Street food is often found in an informal setting where food is made and eaten right away on the spot where it was made and sold. It associates with the appropriation of streets or public spaces. As a form of food consumption, it turns a space momentarily into a collective place – *an urban dining room*.

Street food is not a topic that one would immediately associate with Belgian culture – only if one pays attention to the queues of people in front of the pommes frites vendors, waffle stands and bakeries. These sights make up not only the frequent street food scene but also the expression of liveable places in Belgian cities. In contrast, grabbing a seat at one of the countless street vendors along the pavement in Bangkok is an everyday experience for visitors to Thailand. Eating off the street is a way of life that is inseparable for the Thais. Crossing over the continent of the United States, the birthplace of food truck culture regards eating off a food truck as a cheap, fast and social way to try new things. Three places out of the twenty-five I identified during my sensuous walks in cities were street food. They are in Brussels, Bangkok and San Francisco (Figure 23). They will be used as comparative cases.



Figure 23. (In)formal comparative cases. Left: Noordzee, Brussels; middle: steak vendor by the Ratchathewi sky-train station, Bangkok; right: Off the Grid food truck event, San Francisco.

The exploration of the (in)formal eatscapes involved the following three places. The Noordzee was a fishmonger, a fish restaurant and takeaway. It was a three-in-one establishment with a history dating back to the 1980s. It was situated at the Sint Katelijne, the central area of the city known as ‘the stomach of Brussels’. The Noordzee was known for the quality, the freshness and the craftsmanship of their products. The steak vendor could be found under the Ratchathewi sky-train station in the heart of Bangkok. At nightfall, under the lighted parasols on one of the busiest roads of the city, this no-name place served pieces of sizzling steak on the pavement to the passers-by. Finally, Off the Grid²⁰ is a food truck gathering event at Fort Mason centre parking lot in San Francisco which started in June 2010, grouping vendors together like an Asian-style night market. At the time of this writing, the organiser of the event already ran fifteen markets with more than a hundred vendors

²⁰ www.offthegridsf.com

weekly. The details of the exploration of these comparative cases can be found in Appendix B: Exploring (In)formal.

(Im)perfect

(Im)perfect describes the experience of being both perfect and imperfect at the same time. - It is found mostly as post-industrial and rustic types of cafés where primarily hot beverages, snacks, and light meals are served. Not all cafés and coffee houses are (im)perfect eatscapes, which makes (im)perfect non-functionally specific (Table 2). Coincidentally, the two (im)perfect cases that are included in this section were both Swedish by origin, but they are found in two different countries. As early as 2009, the Café da Matteo on Vallgatan in Gothenburg was already identified in this thesis, whereas the Konrad café and bar in Luxembourg was selected only in 2010 as one of the fieldwork sites in the eatscape urban architecture design studio with the students from the KUL. For this reason, I decided to investigate the Swedish concept of *fika* lightly as an introduction to this typology. *Fika* means ‘to drink coffee’ and is a Swedish cultural concept dating back to 1913 (Brones and Kindvall 2015). One can do it alone or in company with others, but it is essential to make time to take a break. *Fika* carries Swedish social engagement as food customs, with its heritage not only of recipes but also the emotion that invokes a sentiment with it. Perhaps the exploration of the (im)perfect of these descendants of the Swedish *fika* (Figure 24) will shed light on the emotional aspects of the places for *fika*.



Figure 24. Left: Café da Matteo, Gothenburg, Sweden; Right: Konrad Café and Bar, Luxembourg.

The exploration of the (im)perfect eatscapes involves the following two places. The Café da Matteo is owned by Mats Johansson, who first started serving espresso and latte out of the window of a one-room business in 1993 in Gothenburg. In 2003, the current da Matteo took shape and today there are six branches spread across Gothenburg, Stockholm and Borås. Today, the da Matteo runs not only the café, but also a bakery and roastery. I visited four of their branches in Gothenburg and I selected the Vallgatan branch for this thesis. This was because I came across it during my sensuous walk. On the other hand, I was introduced to

the Konrad Café and Bar through a local friend²¹ of mine who is from the city of Luxemburg. She was very proud of seeing me at this small and hidden place in the city. Spreading over the ground floor and the basement of an old building in a small hidden street in the least popular corner of the city centre. A simple menu of coffee, cakes and food were on offer throughout the day until they ran out of the supply. The details of the exploration of these comparative cases can be found in Appendix C: Exploring (Im)perfect.

The spatial and social conditions were explored for both (in)formal and the (im)perfect eatscape typologies. The spatial condition includes the quality of the built environment that supports the physical act of commensality. The social condition looks at the interactions between human individuals and between humans and non-humans. The results from both explorations are compared to identify qualities that are shared between the cases. The common aspects that are shared between the two eatscape typologies are listed in Table 3, the specific aspects about the locations for each case are listed in Table 4 and the two are summarised in Table 5.

	(In)formal	(Im)perfect
Spatial condition	<p>It specializes in serving specific meals, which makes people relate to it for a specific food, occasion or time. It is located in easy-to-find places with an informal and casual atmosphere which draws people to them. Moveable, flexible or transformable architecture is used to give it flexibility to appear and disappear completely. The flexibility also includes adjustability in size to allow it to host anything from a small everyday event to a large community event for a whole neighbourhood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a place marker and a landmark that occupies a highly visible location. • It is an attraction and an urban generator for a locality – a motor for attracting visitors to an area. • The informality of the eating in the place turns the space into a recognizable place for an area. • The location relies on good foot traffic to survive. • The shape of the adjacent public space impacts on its space use. • Flexible, movable and transformable devices allow the architecture to adapt its program, use and size to its changing contexts. • Its opening hours connect with its specialised food (menu), occasion, and mealtime. 	<p>It is likely a café, but not all cafés are (im)perfect eatscapes. The location is often hidden, it is found on a small street that relies on word of mouth to find it. It is a place that offers a specific quality, food, product or characteristic that people come specifically for. Through time this type of place could become an urban generator. With its popularity, an (im)perfect eatscape can be transformed into something other than the (im)perfect – for example, by changing the style of the interior objects. The material and texture of the place express the craft (made by hand), homey feeling (back to home), the unfinished, and well-used (loved) that welcome the users to make them as their own places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is situated in a hidden, small and easy-to-miss location that often relies on word of mouth to get there. • It is an attraction and an urban generator for a locality. • Rustic material and texture of a place express the craft (made by hand), the homey feeling (back to home), the unfinished, and the well-used (loved) from its users. These qualities make people take ownership of a place, like a private living room in a city. • Opening hours fill the gaps between meals – a place for a break or snack time. • It is a place for long stays where time seems to stand still.
Social condition	<p>It is a place with an informal atmosphere that stimulates and enables its social interactions. The non-hierarchical interaction between people, such as name calling when they order a dish, the stand-up commensality and the face-to-face interaction between people are visible examples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The non-hierarchical interaction and 	<p>The bar surface, the seats, and the menu board are social devices. They are used to connect people and stimulate interaction between people. People's body posture impacts, triggers, supports and sustains the social interactions amongst people as well as between people and things.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The non-hierarchical interaction and

²¹ Shaaf Milani-Nia

	<p>horizontal physical condition between the customers and the staff make people feel easy and welcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objects and spaces can become social devices. • Commensality is the means for an appropriation of space and things. 	<p>horizontal physical condition between the customers and the staff makes people feel easy and welcome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum interruption between customers and staff. • Wide range of seating choices to suit different moods and encourage a long stay. • Bar, menu board and collective sofa are the social devices.
Common aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are the attractions and the urban generators in their localities. • They offer snacks with opening hours that bridge the gaps between meal times. • The non-hierarchical interaction and horizontal physical condition between the customers and the staff makes people feel easy and welcome. • Object (material), space and time are used as social devices. 	

Table 3. Comparative cases between (in)formal and (im)perfect eatscape typologies.

The result of the exploration of the (in)formal and the (im)perfect eatscapes showed that they are the places that offer casual food such as coffee and light meal that are available anytime during the day. With such an offer, it is possible for these eatscapes to open long hours which extends outside the meals' time.

Besides, both types of eatscape typologies are places that promote non-hierarchical interaction amongst people by providing the horizontal physical condition for the interaction between the customers and the staff in an equal manner. The interactions are often mobilized by the surrounding objects (material), the space and the time. For example, the round tables at the Noordzee allowed not only for people to stay and experience the square, but also triggered the association between people who were standing around them with the round shape as well as the height of the surfaces. The circular space that was formed by people standing around the tables shortened the distance between them, making it easy for people to move around to have face-to-face interactions. Another example was the condiment²² containers that were being passed from one person to another and in some cases from one table to another, at the steak vendor in Bangkok. These containers worked as the initiator for the social interactions between people – they were the social devices. The same was true of the pavement at Off the Grid, the concrete benches that were placed along one side of the parking lot at da Matteo, and the time that people spend for waiting in queues. These social conditions enable the social relation amongst people as well as between people and things to take place, which I call the social condition in this thesis. These conditions trigger and support the interaction amongst humans and between humans and non-humans. Although the objects, space and time are generally regarded as 'spatial aspects', in this context, the focus on defining them is on *what they do*. Their impact on the social interaction made them 'social conditions'. Both (in)formal and (im)perfect eatscape typologies are non-hierarchical interactions, and they both use social devices to make people feel easy and welcome. Eventually, the social conditions turn the eatscapes into extensions of people's homes. They become people's places.

The differences between (in)formal and (im)perfect is the type of location (Table 4) that they are found in and the time they appear. While they are both popular places, the

²² Used to enhance the flavour of food.

locations chosen for the two are almost opposites. The (in)formal is found in the most noticeable location possible, but the (im)perfect is found in the least visible. They both work as meeting places regardless of the differences in their spatial conditions, which makes them both become popular places. They are the attractions and the urban generators in their locality. (In)formal time (Figure 43) is short in its duration, where people tend not to stay there long, whereas (im)perfect time (Figure 55) is again the opposite – people are encouraged to stay as long as they can.

	(in)formal Eatscape typology			(im)perfect Eatscape typology	
Reality cases	Noordzee Brussels, Belgium	Street food at Sky-train station Ratchathewi Bangkok Thailand	Off the Grid in the parking lot of the Fort Mason Center San Francisco, USA	Café da Matteo Vallgatan Gothenburg, Sweden	Konrad Café and Bar Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Location type	Easy access with good visibility from and around the square.	Easy access with good visibility on street level.	Easy access with a good and visible location.	A hidden place between city blocks but from 2012 onwards it became increasingly visible.	A hidden place on a narrow and dark street at the edge of the centre. It is known amongst the locals.

Table 4. Location comparison between (in)formal and (im)perfect eatscape typologies.

I will now return to what was learnt about the oxymoron terms and the function and the quality specific from the exploration of the (in)formal and (im)perfect eatscape typologies. An oxymoron is a word that carries completely opposite meanings, like (in)formal is neither formal nor informal and (im)perfect is neither perfect nor imperfect. The ‘neither one nor the other entirely’ is a stimulating term for Japanese architects like Sou Fujimoto who claimed that the *in-between* is a *rich* condition, especially if the definitions are two opposites – for example, nature and architecture or inside and outside (Hobson 2013). The exploration of the Noordzee eatscape shows that the act of commensality itself turns a place into an ‘in-between’ place (Table 5). Groups of people commensal turned the street and the surrounding square of the Noordzee from a place for walking or passing through into a place for eating, meeting and staying. The informal act of commensality alters the function of the use of these places from a formal and public place into an in-between one where private and intimate gathering occur temporarily. It is noteworthy that *time* plays a pivotal role in the making of the *in-between* place. While the (in)formal time tends to be short and lively, the (im)perfect time tends to be slower (prolonged) and calmer (rustic) than the (in)formal. The in-between is not a stable and permanent condition; it also has a time constraint. It exists temporarily. The *temporary* existence of the (in)formal eatscape depends on the collective action of commensality to turn a space into an eatscape (an alive and fluid landscape). The imperfect quality of the (im)perfect eatscape can only be experienced through *slow* and *prolonged* use of the place. For this reason, I replace the term *oxymoron* with *in-between*, which better resonates and inspires designers when it is used in the architecture and urban design context.

Eatscapes are less stable than it seems. Just like ordinary places, the characteristic or the quality of a place can change. The eatscape typology of a place can also be changed. This is

because the quality of an eatscape typology is fixed, but not for an eatscape. For example, (im)perfect is ‘a *hidden place* where *time stands still* and *things are always on-going (unfinished)*’. The transformation of da Matteo and its neighbourhood from 2009 to the present day, the increasing popularity and visibility of it and its neighbourhood through the local media, word of mouth and its own branding efforts. From 2012 onward, it was transformed into a highly visible place (even a destination) of the city. Its popularity was noticeable from the oversized poster that was hung in the arrival hall of Gothenburg’s international airport to showcase the lively atmosphere of the city. In real life, da Matteo also gradually introduced the vibrant colour of chairs and tables that came from a designer’s catalogues following the renovation and expansion of their business. These small changes contributed to the transformation of da Matteo from an (im)perfect eatscape into a new eatscape typology. The same happened to many other businesses in the neighbourhood as part of the gentrification process.

Coincidentally, both (im)perfect eatscapes that are included in this thesis are cafés, but this does not mean that all cafés are (im)perfect eatscape. This is because not all cafés are hidden and rustic, which are the two key aspects for an (im)perfect eatscape. As for the (in)formal, the exploration did not specifically explore *street food* cases that are not (in)formal eatscape typology. Up until the writing of this thesis, I have not yet come across a non-street food (in)formal eatscape. Perhaps it is too early to draw conclusions differentiating between the function and the quality specific, and more typologies should be explored before concluding this issue.

	(In)formal	(Im)perfect
	A place that is very visible (easily accessible) in a neighbourhood where commensality momentarily transforms a public space into an eatscape.	A hidden place where time stands still and things are always on-going (unfinished), which invites people to engage and prolongs its existence.
Specific	It is street food, which is typology specific.	It is quality specific.
Stage of the in-between	The act of commensality establishes the stage of being in-between (formal and informal or neither of the two).	The expression of craft (made by hand), homey feeling (back to home), unfinished, and well-used (loved) of a place establishes the stage of being in-between (perfect and imperfect or neither of the two).
Relations with the surroundings	It turns the adjacent public space into an eatscape by appropriating it through the action of informal commensality. It results in the formalisation of the place into an eatscape even temporarily. It employs flexible devices to support and extend its boundary to formally make commensality possible and enjoyable.	It is the imperfection of objects, material, texture and setup that makes them perfect for people who like them that way. From the tableware to the lighting fixtures, the material and texture of the furniture and the architecture, all these items have a rustic and unfinished feel.
Location	It operates during a specific meal (time), which relies on tapping into the existing urban infrastructure to draw passers-by into the eatscape and vice versa.	It characterizes itself as the hidden, the unnoticeable and the anonymous place in a neighbourhood, which relies on word of mouth to make it visible. It perfectly serves a specific group of people who wish for its imperfect quality that offers privacy, a location off the beaten track and a feeling of time standing still.

Service	It lives on the non-hierarchical relationship between the customers and staff and between people insider and outsider the establishment. This is achieved by making people meet in a standing posture, which promotes face-to-face interaction and freedom of movement. The objects, the spaces and even the queuing time become social devices for triggering interaction between humans and between humans and non-humans.	Its non-hierarchical relationship between customer and staff create a relaxed and friendly interaction. It minimizes interruption and maximizes support (service) to get people to stay as long as possible.
Urban common	The experience of commensality in the (in)formal eatscape is about enabling people to expand their personal space into a collective sphere. It is the space that is suspended space between the individuals and the collectives which makes the (in)formal eatscape act like a parasite living on public space.	
Social device		The bar, the menu board, the seats and the collective sofa work as social devices for triggering and supporting the encounters and interaction between people. The lighting and the music are also used to neutralize the passing of time. The combination of these is for prolonging the length of stay for their customers.
Challenges	The problem of the right to the city for the other stakeholders who do not participate in commensality.	As soon as an (im)perfect eatscape typology becomes a popular destination, it is no longer a hidden place and thus no longer an (im)perfect eatscape.

Table 5. Summary of the (in)formal and the (im)perfect eatscape typologies.

4.2.2. Eatscape Fieldwork Checklist

The checklist (Appendix D) is a list of questions and open fields of answers to be filled in. It looks like a questionnaire with questions ranging from general simple facts about the user of the checklist to more specific details that include personal feelings. The answers also range from straightforward simple facts to those that require three different formats of response (text, image and rating) for validation. However, the three formats of response achieve more than they intended to (a validating tool). It provokes the user of the checklist to note certain small aspects that might otherwise be overlooked. A fragment from Stammitti's checklist (Figure 25, left) where she highlighted the site's strong sense of collective space, with paint marks on the ground indicating the multiple and flexible uses of the space. These details show that the space was used as a regular market, a parking place and more daily functions that might not be visible at first glance. Without the need for showing the evidence from the three formats of response, which include an image, Stammitti might not have noted such a subtle, small and vague element at the place. Another example from Stammitti was when she captured her experience of being at the edge of the square, lingering between the columns of trees (Figure 25, right), which she claimed to be the best position for a spectator to observe the everyday life unfolding in the square. These small accounts were made visible with the help of the three formats of response.

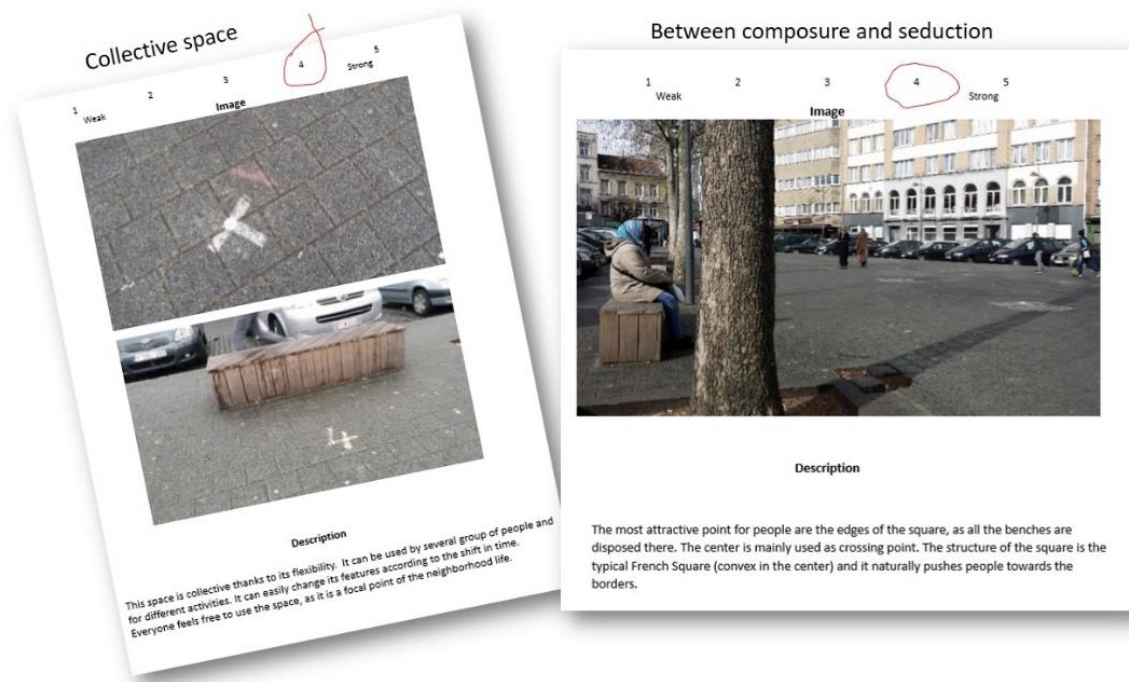


Figure 25. These are fragments from the eatscape designerly checklist by Virginia Stammitti.

The checklist was developed as a tool for not only building an understanding of *how* and *why* a place works as an eatscape but also as a guideline for keeping fieldwork focused on aspects that are relevant to the field of architecture and urban design. For this reason, the source of materials that are used in the checklist was based on the literature from the field of architecture and urban design.

Atmosphere (Zumthor 2006a), *Eyes of the Skin* (Pallasmaa 1996) and *Everyday Urbanism* (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008a) are works from scholars that have their roots in the field of architecture and urban design, and were used as the basis for developing the checklist. They will be briefly introduced in this section. Moreover, the common characteristic of this literature is that they promote the role of the body as the locus of perception, thought and consciousness. This approach brings out the significance of how architects and urban designers can articulate, store and process the knowledge of the world around us with our sensuous responses and thoughts. This approach becomes the basis for developing eatscape fieldwork methods and tools that require one to pay attention not only on the visual sense but also the haptic, the hearing, the smelling, the tactile and other senses for experiencing, understanding and designing.

The checklist is organized into six parts. The first two parts are the background and the basic site information to clarify the facts about both the eatscape and the users of the checklist. The food and people, the physical setting, the social setting and the time are the eatscape attributes (Chapter 3.3) – in the absence of any of these aspects an eatscape cannot exist. Below are the explanations for each of the attributes that make up the checklist.

Background – Eatscape exploration requires the explorer to play an active role as one of the participants in real life by becoming ‘one of them’ (Collins 1998) (Yaneva 2009) – one of the subjects of the investigation. The key to becoming one of them starts with raising self-awareness (Kellett 2011) from the beginning and throughout the fieldwork. For this reason, the checklist includes the background of the person who uses it for the purpose of self-reflection. The personal description and the professional statement should be made even before starting with fieldwork (Figure 26) – the explorer could benefit from mind tuning for the coming fieldwork. Two students, Stammitti and Kim (Figure 26), responded to their roles as the *architects for the people* during and after the investigation of an eatscape using the checklist. They claimed that the role they would like to see architects play was ‘those who offer their service for the people and for a better city life’, and they maintained this view through their final design proposal. Their work questioned the authority of the public space in their project area of the Noord quarter of Brussels – for whom was the public space designed? In their final proposal, Stammitti proposed a scheme called *Sex and the City: From the Sidewalk to the Community and Culture Centre* (Figure 33) in which sex workers share the community and culture centre with the artists and the inhabitants in the area. Kim proposed opening the ground floor of the adjacent city administrative building into a public library for all to access. The aim of this section of the checklist is to make the individual explorer visible in the exploration. These examples show the positive impact of such visibility.

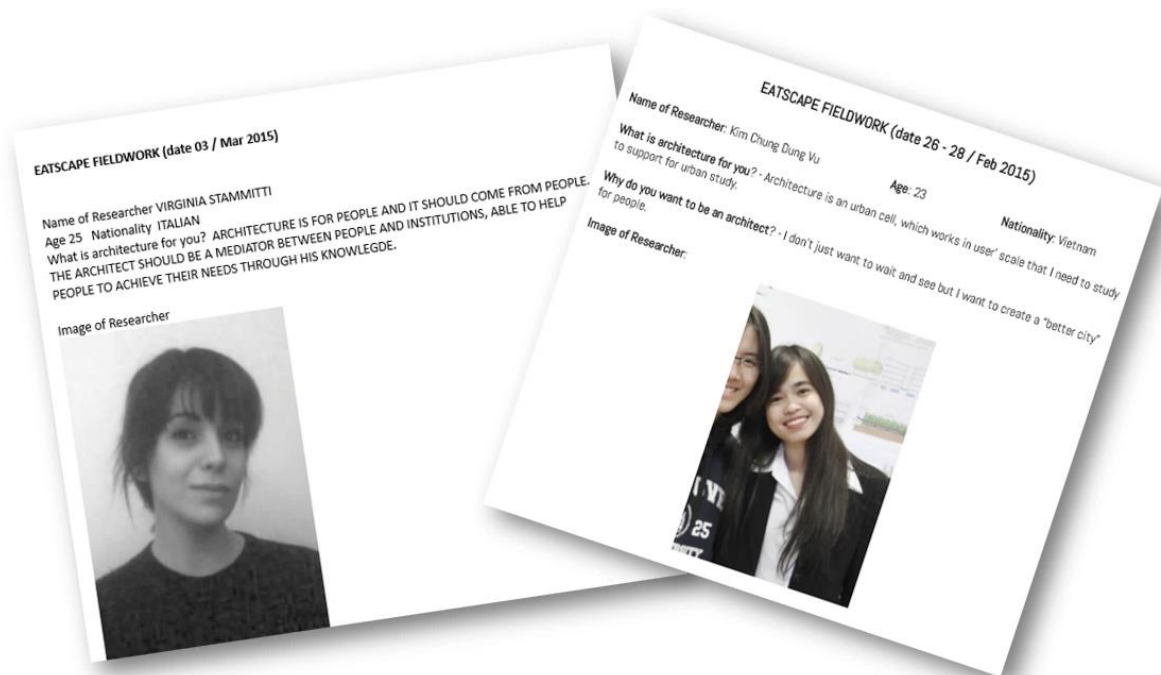


Figure 26. A fragment from the Eatscape Designerly Checklist. Left: Virginia Stammitti. Right: Kim Chung Dung Vu.

Basic site information – It is the physical record of an eatscape, such as plans, sections, exterior elevations and area maps. The aim of this section of the checklist is to clarify the physical setting of the site location.

Food and people – They are the photographic accounts and descriptions of people and food at an eatscape. The aim of this section of the checklist is to get the feel of the type of people who use the place and the type of food they consume.

Physical setting – The theories about architecture and urban design are bundled together here, from the quality of material and space in Zumthor's *Atmosphere* (Zumthor 2006a) and from Solà-Morales's *Material Urbanity and Collective Space* (Solà-Morales, Frampton, and Ibelings 2008). The aim of this section of the checklist is to trigger attention to specific details, the feeling one has in a fraction of a second as one enters an eatscape. The theories that are drawn from the atmosphere and the material urbanity are used as follows.

Atmosphere is the word that sums up how people experience quality in architecture, according to the architect Peter Zumthor. It is about human instinct – 'the first impression' of people, things, and the environment. People perceive the atmosphere through emotional sensibility and this type of intuition – the sense that is built into our bodies that makes us aware of the environment and makes up our mind in a flash to help us to survive in critical situations. The following concepts developed by Zumthor are included in the checklist: Body of Architecture/ Material Compatibility / Sound of a Space / The Temperature of a Space, Surrounding Objects / Between Composure and Seduction / Tension Between Interior and Exterior / Levels of Intimacy / The Light on Things / Architecture as Surroundings / Coherence and the Beautiful Form

Material urbanity and collective space are aspects that concern the quality of a space that is used by the public. It is based on Solà-Morales's view of form and materiality that impacts social behaviours and collective uses of spaces. The following questions are included in the checklist: What physical materiality makes urbanity? How does it work? And what is the collective image of the place?

Social settings – It is based on the view of the association and the relationality between actors (both human and non-human) developed by scholar Bruno Latour (Latour 2005). It is the social interactions between people, people with their physical environment, people with food through commensality. The checklist includes an approach from *Everyday Urbanism* (Chase, Crawford, and Kaliski 2008a) which pays attention to the interactions at the face-to-face and street levels. It pays attention to how urban design relates to the life of people who really use eatscape, such as people who commensal, pedestrians, vendors and people from the neighbourhood. The aim of this section of the checklist is to build an understanding of the impacts of the foodways, body posture and movement within the built environment that triggers the encounter.

Everyday urbanism was initiated by Margaret Crawford, John Chase and Johan Kaliski from the fascinations of their daily life experience in Los Angeles. It is an alternative urban design concept that aims to reconnect urban design and research with everyday ordinary people, events, and social meanings. It was not intended to overwrite the traditional urban design discourses but functions more like an attitude and sensibility about the city. In practice, they move away from theory building and

toward making approaches that can be applied to a variety of situations – approaches to looking at the city and making the city.

Time – Eatscape is time-based. It appears and disappears with time. The key temporality dimensions concerning eating are *duration, sequence, tempo, frequency* and *synchronization* (Southerton, Diaz-Mendez, and Warde 2012). Through the iterative designerly process of developing this thesis, the aspect of time came much later in the process. For this reason, the aspect of time is not yet fully developed in the current checklist.

My experience from the explorations made me reflect on the limitation of basic site information that I could gather about an eatscape. The drawing of plan and section cannot reveal the impact of use (commensality). Knowing the use, one needs to explore the actions. This led me to develop the eating activity chain, which was inspired by mixing together two models that were developed by architecture and design professor Maria Nyström: *the interaction of systems on different levels* and *the culinary activity chain* (Figure 28). They examine the range of activities, the conditions and the devices that are needed based on the original model that was developed for understanding the impact of the cooking stove design (Nyström 1994). The eating activity chain reveals the relationship between the use (commensality) and space (its infrastructure) (Figure 29). Even though it was not originally a part of the checklist, it was used in the in-depth observation cases such as the Noordzee and da Matteo.

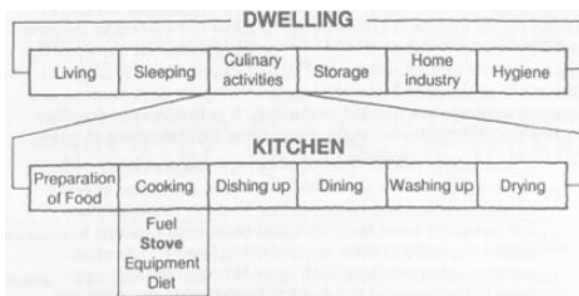


Figure 27. Interaction of systems on different levels: dwelling, kitchen and cook stove (Nyström 1994).

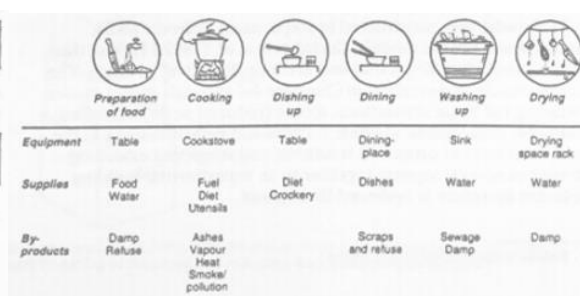


Figure 28. Culinary activity chain showing process and the relations between different activities and the devices required while carrying out these activities (Nyström 1994).

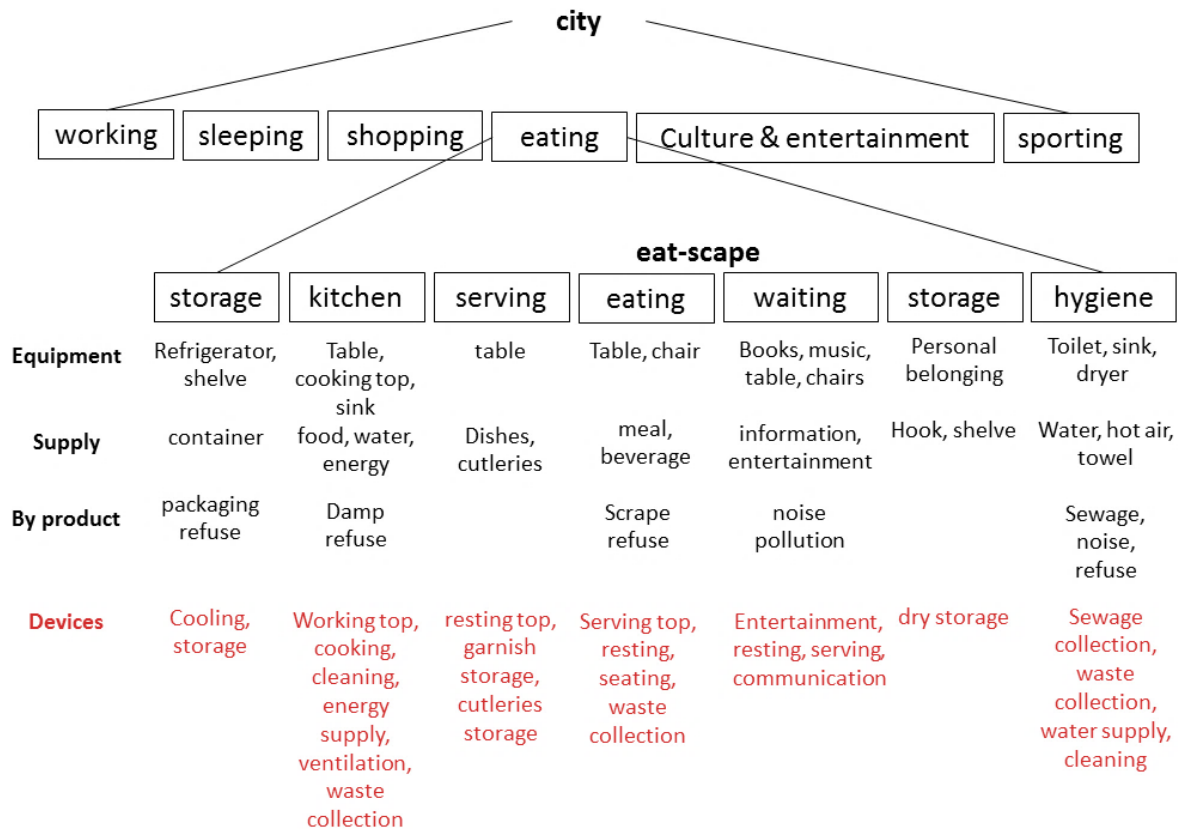


Figure 29. Eating Activity Chain diagram: this example is a test case that shows a typical lunchroom setting in Brussels.

How was the checklist used? The checklist was developed during my teaching²³ with the architecture and urban design students. It was given to the students on several occasions as a part of the site analysis toolkits they use during site visits (fieldwork). The following is a description of the instructions the students were given with the checklist to illustrate how it was used.

Preparation – The preparation work before the use of the checklist aims at raising students’ awareness of what we are going to do out there. Three books – *Atmosphere*, *Eyes of the Skin* and *Everyday Urbanism* – are given to the students and a discussion of the reading planned. After they have become familiar with the literature, the checklist printed on A4 paper is handed out. The aim is to make sure that the students can physically study the site’s maps, making notes and sketches on them before they go out into the field. The intention is for the physical interaction with the preparation material to help the students with the processing of the information. Moreover, this preparation step also includes time to reflect alone or with peers to settle questions and tasks that are listed on the checklist. The preparation step normally comes one week before the actual date for the fieldwork. With the length of the checklist and the introduction of many new terms that need to be reviewed before using them, the preparation step becomes crucial. The printed checklist

²³in the College of Architecture at the Catholic University in Leuven (KUL), Belgium, between 2006 and 2015.

was bound together in a ring binder that allows individual sheets to be removed and brought to the fieldwork separately in sections. The loose pages make theme-specific fieldwork possible, because students can focus on the part of the exploration they bring with them. However, filling in the checklist is a time-consuming process that requires students to return to the field as many times as possible to acquire in-depth experience while focusing on their sensuous memories and sensibility. Filling in the entire checklist all at once is not advisable; instead, it should be done anytime during, after or away from the site visit. The aim is to let the answers settle before filling in the checklist. However, the choice of filling in the checklist on site does impact on the method of documentation. For example, the quality and details of hand sketches made directly on the checklist during the fieldwork is different than hand sketching from memory or photographs afterwards. All these choices impact the focus and the way of doing fieldwork. Thus, the key to using the checklist is to be very conscious and specific about the subject and the chosen method for the fieldwork. The use of the checklist can be found in two of the observed cases of this thesis: Noordzee (Appendix E) and da Matteo (Appendix F).

Results - Using the checklist enables me to identify that (in)formal eatscapes are found in locations with good access and visibility. They transform public spaces into meeting places for lingering and encountering through commensality. An example is the scene of people standing around Sainte Catherine Square eating together in front of the Noordzee, which raises the curiosity of passers-by even on a rainy day. Using the checklist during fieldwork also enable me to identify (im)perfect eatscapes as hidden places that are known amongst the locals. The magic of these places is their atmosphere, which makes it seem like time is almost standing still. The craftsmanship of these businesses is expressed through their materiality and the unfinished (open-ended) feeling of the places and the things. These aspects make them attractive places as catalysts to engage and to explore. Thus, a checklist helps to maintain a common thread throughout the fieldwork, which results in revealing *how* and *why* a place works as an eatscape.

Challenges – Consolidating the outcomes (data) from different explorations is a challenge. Microsoft Word and Excel files were used in this thesis to consolidate the outcomes, but this is far from effective because the material comes in a variety of formats: hand sketches, handwritten notes, videos capture of real-life situations, voice recordings of personal talks and more. It is a time- and labour-intensive process to transfer, transform and consolidate the data. A smarter digital toolkit is needed for uploading, processing, and consolidating the data faster and more easily. Furthermore, neither Stammitti nor Chung could complete their checklist. The reason was not only that the checklist was offered to them just one week before their site analysis presentation, but in conversations I noticed that the three formats of response required by the checklist make it too time-consuming to work through all questions. The feedback on the three formats was that it was both the best and worst aspect of the checklist. It helps me to see what I would otherwise miss, but at the same time it was rather a tedious procedure to follow.

Opportunity – Scheduling the reading and discussion in the introduction to the checklist is my opportunity to include *theory thinking* in my site visit preparation routine. My initial site

visit preparation work is often limited to practical matters involving gathering information about the site's history, background, future plans as well as setting up an appointment for the visit to the site. Going through the checklist before visiting the site allows me to pre-select and develop methods for the exploration. This impacts not only the way a site is visited but also the way a project is approached. In this thesis, the reading of the atmosphere, the material urbanity and the everyday urbanism resulted in the use of bodily thinking as the method for exploration. Consequently, the paper format of the checklist also helped me incorporate my body as the tool for researching by engaging with things in physical ways. Consequently, it expanded the scope of my fieldwork to include human and non-human interactions using the bodily, the sensuous and the haptic ways of knowing. As a result, the exploration method was further developed into the eatscape catalytic act, which will be presented in the next section.

4.2.3. *Eatscape Catalytic Act*

Architecture is knowledge about how to satisfy certain requirements, how to perform certain tasks and how people live their lives in those spatial settings (Douglas and Isherwood 1996). From this perspective, architectural knowledge is embedded in the object, material and form that make up those spatial settings. The relation between architectural knowledge and the architecture is like the relation between the artist and the artefact (Scrivener and Chapman 2004) – they are inseparable. The artefact generates apprehension for the viewers through object experience, and thus the knowledge of the artist is embodied in the object – just as architectural knowledge is transferable through bodily experience of the actual material, the form and the space of architecture by visiting, making or using it. This explains the importance of both site visits and project-based learning for architects and urban designers' training today. However, in practice, there is limited accessibility for gaining physical experience of places in real life. This is because it is impractical for one to spend multiple days, weeks, seasons and occasions to experience and learn about a place. The experience of the architectural visit in real life is often reduced to a one-time visit or no visit at all, and we are forced to rely on second-hand experience through reading the written reviews, the photographs, the replicated drawings and models of the actual spaces. These are the common practices today, which presents a challenge as confirmed by the Belgian architect Wim Goes²⁴. According to Goes, mastering the sense of scale (dimension) of a place has been a challenge even in his own experience converting an old warehouse into the Johann König Gallery in Berlin, which he has spent several years going back and forth to visit. Even though he has been physically walked through this space many times over consecutive years, he admits that he still has a hard time getting the feel of dimension right.

²⁴ *Architect and founder of Wim Goes Architectuur in Ghent, Belgium.*

My concern is that in relying entirely on abstract information such as written texts, scale drawings and models to get to know a work of architecture, architects and urban designers risk working on / from a speculative reality.

Experiencing the architecture in real life allows us to interact with and through the material culture. The concept of *rehearsing the future* (Halse 2013) proposed to extend the ethnographic gaze not just for describing a here-and-now but a projective future. Halse used drawing and model-making in the context of ethnographic events such as collaborative doll scenarios²⁵ and full-scale enactments in the setting of participatory workshops. He cross-referenced research techniques between anthropology and design to help the informers to materialize their ideas, concerns and speculations. Equally, the ethnographic account also helped designers to critically engage with the design.

In my experience of being in the field and using the checklist, bodily, sensuously and emotionally I become the means of knowing. It was my way of becoming one of them (Yaneva 2009) – one of the informers in the field. Commensality was my way of producing a bodily experience in the field. After a long period repeatedly carrying out commensality on site, it became clear to me that commensality was the method of knowing came naturally to me. Essentially, it was personal: just as Halse cross-referenced research techniques from different fields of knowledge, I adopted the performative art form for staging commensality as my way for knowledge inquiry. In this thesis, I have called it the *eatscape catalytic act*. It is my approach for bridging the gap between speculation and reality.

The concept of catalysis is taken from life science (chemistry), where 'the process of catalysis is providing the chemical system with the conditions necessary – via a catalyst – but not by itself sufficient to aid in the chemical production of substances and chemical change in the rate of reaction' (Cabell 2011:3). The main function of catalysis is a *helper* in a reaction process by *activation*. The catalytic act is an action that is performed on site to create the conditions necessary for understanding a phenomenon. Artist Adrian Piper says of the capacity for art to act as a catalyst, '... it promotes a change in another entity (the viewer) without undergoing any permanent change itself [...] the work as such is non-existent except when it functions as a medium of change between the artist and the viewer' (Steinmetz 2009).

The catalytic act uses the performance and the installation set-up on site to help designers to translate the abstract ideas and imagined features into concrete reactions. The catalytic act is my opportunity to interact with the subject of my research or design to learn more about it. It is the space for me (maker) and my subject (human and non-human) to share physical experiences and to engage my whole body in the thinking process (thinking physically).

²⁵ *Using dolls for acting out during the participation process (Halse 2013).*



Figure 30. Still shots from the experimental film *4 Concepts* by Chotima Ag-ukrikul (2012). The film was made during a PhD course on 'Approaches to Research' that took place in 2012 at Chalmers University of Technology's Department of Architecture in Gothenburg, Sweden. The images show actors improvising the four eatscape typologies (from left to right): *(in)perfect*, *intimacy*, *discovery*, and *(in)formal*.

In 2012, I had the opportunity to produce and capture a catalytic act on film, realising how it could become a method and a tool. The film *4 Concepts*²⁶ showed how designers communicate through physical interaction with artefacts. It was filmed at an indoor studio space at the Chalmers University of Technology. Four fellow PhD students in architecture were invited as actors to freely use the five different spatial settings that were given to them for an eating occasion. These settings reassembled different types of dining tables, such as lounge-height dining (61 cm table height), standard dining (73 cm), standing dining, etc. *(Im)perfect*, *intimacy*, *discovery*, and *(in)formal* – four out of the six eatscape typologies – were handpicked by the actors themselves. The performance script was based on the actors' personal interpretation of the typologies. The only instruction given to the actors was to follow a set of counting rhythm which starts from counting 1 until 7 seconds. At the end of each interval of the set of 7 second everyone moves from one spatial setting to another one. This instruction resulted in the actors acting sometimes alone and sometimes together collectively. The verbal explanation of each typology was communicated through an interview with each of the actor individually after the performance took place. The text was subtitled onto the film during the editing process.

The absence of verbal dialogue for these actors (architects) impacted what they did. During the filming, the actors focused on their *physical* engagement to express their interpretation of the chosen typology, the spatial settings, and, to some extent, how they could do it differently from the other actors. Their physical engagement clearly revealed the tacit knowledge they held. For example, the actor who picked the *intimacy* eatscape typology stated that *intimacy* was a *very personal experience*, so he altered the table layout from the way it was given to him to the new layout that he was familiar with (see Figure 31). The intention was to transform everything according to his personal values, requirements, and taste. Even the brief encounter with the other actors did not disturb his on-going activity. The act of altering the installation through performance showed how thinking can be expressed as an action that includes physical activity. Thus, understanding, thinking and communicating can be based on physical experience.

²⁶ The experimental short film can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRnaVVj8BNk>



Figure 31. *Intimacy: breaking the rule and returning to one's familiar condition.*

This echoes Cross's claim about the challenge of the criteria of *knowing that* on top of *knowing how* in design education and research. *Knowing how* is based on the physical experience of how to make a certain thing. *Knowing that* is being conscious of *knowing how* and taking action about it, which results in using, testing and experimenting with knowledge (Cross 2006). The catalytic act as a method as well as a tool does exactly that. *Knowing how* to build an installation to achieve a specific result is one thing. Having the consciousness that one can try out many ways of making, using or even misusing installations for developing new skills, processes and insights is the key for designerly research. The open-ended script which required actors to use physical (bodily) means for communicating their ideas allowed both the actors and the viewers to develop new insights. For example, the *intimacy* defined by the actor as 'very personal experience' could be understood by one designer (viewer) as a 'personal rule' but by another designer (viewer) as 'enclosed within the personal sphere'. Both viewers' interpretations can be developed into design briefs, e.g. eatscape designs in which *the act of eating can be developed according to the personal rule* would focus on personal material, ritual and social preference. Whereas *the act of eating is enclosed within the personal sphere* could produce a design with a focus on scale, movement and sight as the main theme of the design criteria.

The catalytic act engages the actor's (the researcher-designer's) body in *thinking* physically. According to the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, the detachment of the prosthesis²⁷ liberates the body from its limitation and enables it to go beyond its physical limit. From this perspective, my installation on site is an extension of my body, the externalisation of my bodily organs in the site location, to provide physical interactions with the other to communicate and develop the findings. Installation making is an experience-based knowledge production that uses the medium for embodying the messages between the

²⁷The externalisation of bodily organs to extend our bodies.

makers and the users of it. Today, the popularity for using installations in real life for research is not limited to the design field, but is also used in scientific study.

[R]esearchers involved in ANT²⁸ are amateurs of reality [...] ANT resembles the props, equipment, knowledge and skills assembled by other amateurs. It helps to train researchers' perceptions and perceptiveness, senses, and sensitivity. (Mol 2010: 261)

The eatscape catalytic act is a knowledge production method that is developed for designers, works through physical thinking and is experience-based. It is a way for designers to engage, experiment and test their knowledge and passion in the real-life context. Using eatscape catalytic act helped me, as a designer, to expand new perspectives in my design work while mobilizing the social intention of the design with the community it is designed for. In this section, four examples of eatscape catalytic acts will be discussed to illustrate this claim. Two are my own experiences using catalytic act at the Byparken in Ørestad, Denmark (Appendix G), and the Koninginneplein in Brussels, Belgium (Chapter 4.1.1.1). The other two are the cases from my architecture students²⁹ who used catalytic act in their work in the cities of Brussels and Ghent, Belgium.

The strategy of playing a tourist going on a picnic for my architectural site visit was a new and liberating experience that provided the setting for my catalytic act at the Byparken. The use of role play shifted my attention away from doing conventional research and site visit protocols to a more open and unexpected way of doing a site visit. I needed to look out for what I would encounter while being in the field. Because I played the role of a tourist on that visit, I purposely rented a bike to go from my hotel to the area of Ørestad, where I experienced the quality of its proximity to the city of Copenhagen. On that day, I started early and had no shortage of time, so I could observe the friendliness of the inhabitants I encountered as well as the beautiful natural area along the route. All these personal circumstances transformed my attitude to the Ørestad as I approached the site area. It was not my first time visiting the place, and I had already learned about the area through online research from my desk. The social world is open-ended; research methods that involve the social should focus not on how to draw conclusions (Lurt and Wakeford 2012) but on allowing us to have different perspectives. The role play revealed the change of my perception of the Ørestad because I was a tourist rather than a researcher. The experience of the eatscape catalytic act gave me the opportunity to see the same place from a different perspective but with the same pair of eyes. My conclusion from the act was that perhaps the current promotional campaign of the Ørestad was producing a false image of itself; I perceived the place as an experimental, over-sized and over-designed new town. The scale of architecture it represents, together with my own walk-through experience of the Ørestad, was rather intimidating at first glance. The overly published, perfect images of the design objects, the street furniture, the artificial hills, the signage and the public art make Ørestad an over-designed place. Not everyone can relate to this type of setting.

²⁸Actor-network theory (ANT) is an approach to social theory and research, originating in the field of science studies, which treats objects as part of social networks.

²⁹At the Catholic University in Leuven (KUL) during the spring semester in 2015.

For the architectural design assignment in Brussels's northern quarter, a group of four master students explored their project site using both the checklist and the catalytic act. One member of the group, Virginia Stammitti, identified the existing public benches as a public meeting point in the neighbourhood. The central role of the benches as the mobiliser for spontaneous gathering in the neighbourhood was developed into the group's urban design strategy. During the group discussion, another member, Justin Wong, brought the sex workers to the group's attention through his fieldwork at a local restaurant called the Flamingo. Although the sex workers looked no different from the others at first glance, he recognized them when we spent an afternoon lingering at the massive window of the restaurant. He noticed the customers use the place for 'people watching', especially those who were involved in the sexual transactions. Wang revealed the underlying identity of the neighbourhood. Eager to get feedback of their urban strategy, which focuses on 'design for better and safer work environment for the sex worker', the group turned to the out of used square on Lakensestraat, where they found the disused bus stop. They turned it into a temporary urban living room for meeting with the people in the neighbourhood. The aim of the installation was to communicate what the architecture students' project could mean to the inhabitants as well as the sex workers in the neighbourhood. 'Designers meeting with their potential clients' was the theme for their catalytic act in which they produced 'the urban living room'.



Figure 32. Urban Living Room installation in Brussels (2015) by Fadi Belouni (Syria), Kim Chung Dung Vu (Vietnam), Marina Fernandez Rodriguez (Spain), Virginia Stammitti (Italy), and Justin Wong (Hong Kong).

'There is a lot of suspicion and distrust among people here', said an anonymous sex worker. 'People just complain and judge us, but nobody is doing anything to change the situation'.

Stammitti saw the sex workers as one part of the everyday life in the neighbourhood and she integrated them into her new community centre proposal (Figure 33). The community centre featured a public staircase/walkway stretching from the ground floor to the top floor wrapped around the large courtyard at the centre of the building. Commercial functions such as hairdressers, shops and cafés filled the ground floor. The culture centre started with artists' workshops in the middle floor and the sex workers' space on the top floor. In her plan, the walkway connecting the entire building would become the spontaneous meeting space for all users. Just like the benches in her observation case, the walkway is where everyone can rub shoulders and share perspectives.



Figure 33. Sex and the City: from the sidewalk to the Community Centre, Brussels, by Virginia Stammitti. This architectural design project is the results of the fourteen-week design studio in the Catholic University Leuven School of Architecture, Brussels campus, first-year International Master of Architecture program during Semester 2 (10 Feb – 26 May 2015).

Another example is from the Ghent studio, where a group of students asked the question, *what makes a community?* They selected Willem de Beers Park as their working site because the park appeared to be lacking a sense of community following their experience of

interviewing informants on site and an archive study of the history of the area. The group was determined to build a sense of community for the neighbourhood as their design's aim. But they struggled to come up with *how* to do it. The breakthrough came when the group decided to spend more time in the field during the workshop³⁰, and then spent the entire week using the checklist. Consequently, one group member, Elisa Monge, recognised graffiti as the potential communication tool with the youths from the local high school adjacent to the park. Graffiti manifested the presence and the identity of the youth at the park, which sparked her intention to include the youths as members of the community in their project. The group invited the residents and the youths around the Willem de Beer Park for *the open fridge*, the eatscape catalytic act in which they graffitied the community kitchen in the park and placed an old refrigerator with food to share with the visitors. The pop-up community kitchen was intended for people to share their leftover food, drinks as well as creating a space for the encounter. Through the process, the four students grew their bond with one another. With this experience, they recognized that the making of a community is the constant engagement on site (the common project). As a result of the act, the group started their community building proposal with the suggestion of buying back one of the last remaining workers' dwellings in the park and converting it into a community centre with the concept of *Open House*, referencing their experience making the community kitchen. The Open House would be a place where people in the neighbourhood could start a common project, such as sharing space, objects and tools with one another. The hope was that, bit by bit, the sense of community would begin to emerge through the process of the making of such a community centre. The façade of the building, following the concept of graffiti, was composed of large open storage shelves where objects donated by the community could be displayed to manifest the presence, idea, and identity of the community. The community building is a collection of a common process.

³⁰ It is a special study week where the students get one week in-put and assignment to do with no relation with their normal design studio work. It normally takes place on the eighth week of the fourteen-week design studio curriculum.

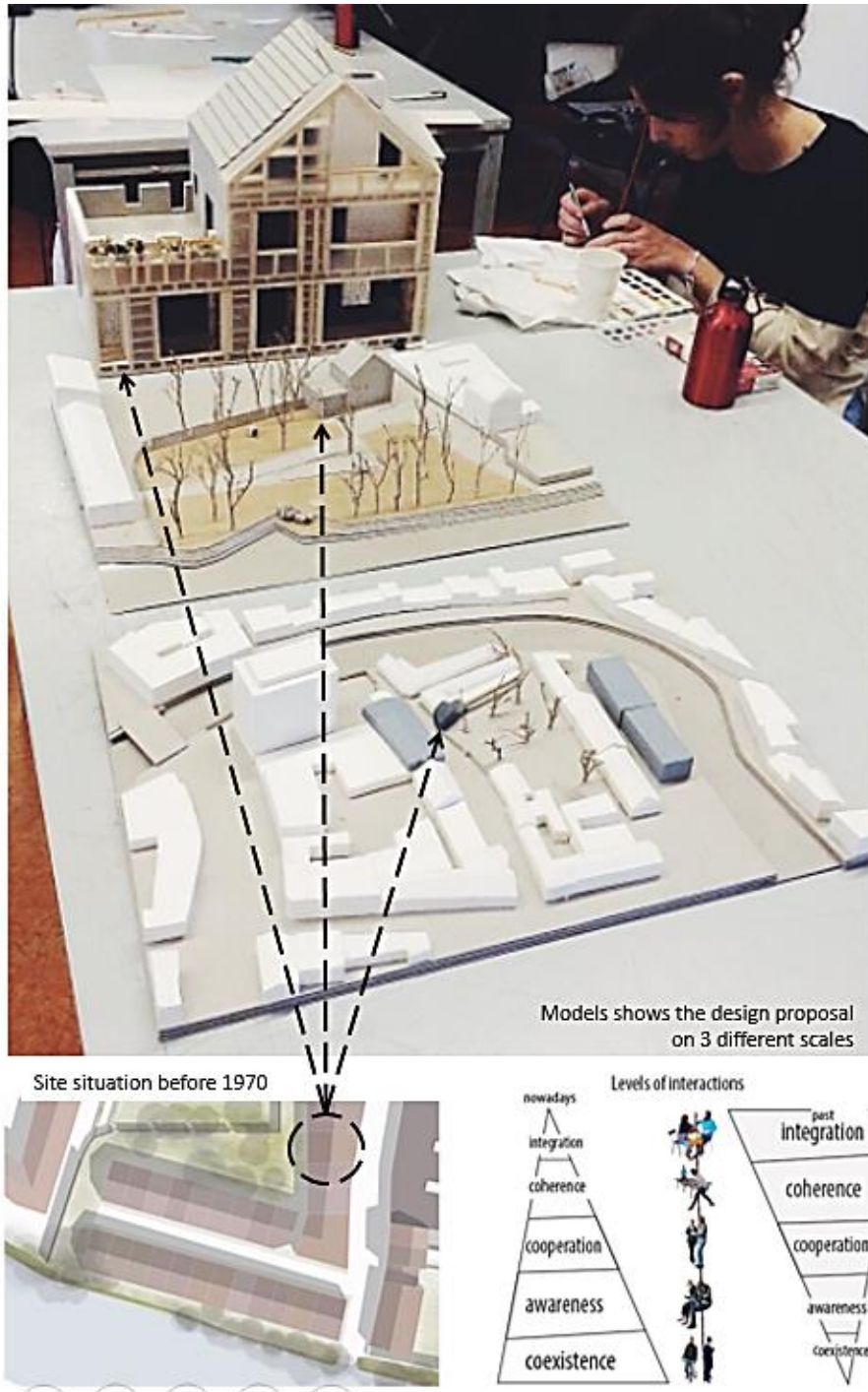


Figure 34. Community centre proposal, called Open House, for the Willem de Beer Park, Ghent, Belgium (2015) by Elisa Monge Moreno (Spain), Kasper Denayer (Belgium), Dariia Spytka (Ukraine), Qiaolin Wang (China) and Lukas Kubik (Slovakia).

The catalytic act as a method should not be seen as a *scientific* experiment in which a researcher manipulates behaviour directly, precisely, and systematically (Yin 2009:12) in a field setting. It should be seen as a *design* experiment aimed at raising the awareness of the subjects, discussing what is at stake and what has been transformed in the field through the act of design (Brown 2013). Stammitti found her sex workers through her group's checklist

and fieldwork at the Flamingo restaurant. Through the urban living room, she recognised that the spontaneity and social inclusiveness of the public space around Brussels's northern quarter was at stake. In fact, her catalytic act already has transformed the field around the square. The installation made the locals, the sex workers and the students (designers) themselves believe that a more socially inclusive interaction should become a part of the definition of public space.

In Ghent, Monge developed her understanding of *interaction* through material culture and everyday engagement with the site. It was both the coming together of people and their common project that developed her understanding of community building. Knowing that making graffiti was illegal and a punishable act in Ghent, the group risked painting graffiti on top of the existing graffiti in order to reach the local youth. Through their urban kitchen, the graffiti installation and the food exchanging event, Monge and her group could develop the new role of architects as community building process facilitators. They fed common projects for building up the community centre. Eventually, they even caught the attention of the local newspaper, which reported the possibility of community building through a community kitchen in the park for the city of Ghent (Figure 35). Both Stammitti and Monge managed to raise the awareness of the present, the interpersonal relationship with the subject of their design (social mindfulness) and the expansion of their own perspective for design, and they even transformed themselves with their multiple roles through their eatscape catalytic act experience.



Figure 35. Ghent's newspaper Nieuwsblad.be reports on the group's catalytic act of sharing the leftover food at the Willem de Beer Park with the graffiti community kitchen painted in the background (April 2015).

Both cases demonstrate the benefit to designers of allowing themselves to be situated in the field and to physically engage with real life as one part of their design practice. It enables them to heighten their awareness of who the design is for. Being in the field and spending time with the material culture can help a designer bring out an in-depth understanding of a site. These are ways of sharpening the designer's instinct in the reading of the material culture – like how Wong felt the friendly, the casual and the welcome atmosphere of the Flamingo restaurant. It was his safe anchor in the alienated neighbourhood of the Brussels's north quarter. The body of architecture at the Flamingo, with the unusually large window at that location, means public visibility, which equates with

safety for Wang. Similarly, Monge's exploration was a quest for *how to make a community* by reading the façade, the material and the plan of the former workers' housing, the conflict between the old and new buildings as well as the graffiti on site, which pointed out the problem of the community conflict between different social groups in the neighbourhood. These examples demonstrated the skill and the instinct that is specific to the field of architecture and urban design – tacit knowledge or architectural knowledge. The eatscape catalytic act was developed with the intention of sharpening such architectural knowledge, which is the knowing through material culture that is specific to the profession.

4.2.4. Matrix

All exploration results from this thesis are gathered in a matrix. It is the place where the results are written, drawn, reflected, rewritten and redrawn to generate insights. With the growing number of results and insights from the increasing number of the cases, the matrix gradually took the central role of the knowing process in this thesis. The production of the insights involves an iterative process of observation and development of the design cases. That process produced the constantly consolidated and reflected new results, which were added onto the matrix (Figure 19). They are listed and compared side by side on an organizational structure that consists of rows and columns – a matrix grid. Two formats of the matrix were made for this thesis. One was sketched out using post-it notes stuck onto a wall in real space (Figure 36); the other was produced digitally using Microsoft Excel (Figure 37).



Figure 36. The matrix as a work in progress (December 2015). The text and image are recorded on post-it notes with the rating written in red on the top-right corner of each.

The two formats of the matrix share the same basic layout. The questions extracted from the checklist were filled in the vertical columns and the cases were filled in the horizontal rows of the matrix grid. The results from each case were organized case-by-case starting from the left and ending with the right column. Each post-it was a data field where results were filled in. The result consisted of three formats: text, image, and rating³¹. The same organisation was used for the Microsoft Excel file, where each cell also showed the three formats of a result. The Microsoft Excel file matrix grid is a flexible space where the data field allows long descriptions. The results of the explorations often contained extended pieces of information with details. On the other hand, the limited space of 76 mm x 76 mm post-it means that a result needs to be short and thus sharp – clear in a glance – so that it could fit the limited area.

The making of the two formats of the matrix formed the basis for the knowledge production of this thesis. As soon as the post-it stickers started to settle onto the matrix grid that I set up on a wall, an Excel sheet with the more detailed information of the fieldwork reflections was created in a digital format. This is where more details can be added, and the descriptions can be expanded. The back-and-forth reflections, drawings and rewritings between the post-it format and the Excel sheet format of the matrix was a process for distilling insights. This process makes the task of describing what was learnt from an exploration rather time-consuming.

³¹A ranking of the strength of the quality.

5. From Commensality to Inclusiveness in City Design Practice

Good everyday places where people come together to eat are fascinating because they make spaces come alive. On top of the regular restaurants and cafés, places like family restaurants, street food vendors and festival stands are eating infrastructure that maintains life in cities. More than places for eating, these places bring people together, where seeing and being seen by the others make them public spaces even if they were not intended to be. These are collective spaces that give public value to what is private. They are neither homes nor workplaces, but 'third places' (Oldenburg 1999) where people who enjoy them ration the time, they spend there. They become people's own remedy for stress, loneliness, and alienation. The Noordzee and da Matteo, which were presented earlier, are examples of such places. They impacted the public life of the surrounding community through people's appropriation (Lefebvre 1991) of these places for commensality. One example is the adjacent space across from the Noordzee, which was turned into a square with people standing in groups eating (standing eating). It was often mistaken by visitors to the area as 'some kind of festival is going on' with its festival-like atmosphere. Another example is the parking space adjacent to da Matteo, which was turned into an outdoor drinking terrace, with more tables and chairs placed along the side from the nearby food trucks as well as the boutiques, and became a popular hangout for hipsters. Looking at the impacts of commensality from this perspective, the public stairways, the sidewalks, the parking spaces, the bus stops and even the riverbanks (Figure 38) are already eatscapes. They are essential communal spaces for maintaining convivial life that keeps people present between the buildings (Gehl 2011). They offer relaxation and opportunity for people to rub shoulders with others (Alexander et al. 1977). These eatscapes are common spaces shaped by people and their common desire in their everyday lives. Thus, the practice of commensality and the production of eatscape together have the capability of enabling commons and liveable city making.

Commensality, a plural way of eating, connects people and places through senses and emotions. *Eatscape* is a place where strangers meet, share, and co-produce through practicing commensality. Exploring and developing the two concepts 'commensality' and 'eatscape' in this thesis was my search for commons and liveable city making.



Figure 38. Different foodways in cities using commensality as a way of appropriating spaces.

Without good urban public spaces for the commons, our society becomes increasingly privatised and polarised. (Shaftoe, 2008)

Looking at the global development of a relentlessly neoliberal climate today, the public is in retreat, with public services at the mercy of austerity policies (McGuirk 2015) and public spaces increasingly struggling for their existence. In this climate, the concepts of collective space and the commons³² seem to offer an alternative to the battle between public and private. They are produced by people in an effort to establish a common world that houses, supports and expresses the community they are part of. I found extending the term ‘the commons’ to ‘the right to the city’ is motivating. The right to the city is far more than the right of the individual to access the resources that the city embodies; it is the right to change ourselves by changing the city after our hearts’ desire (Harvey, 2008) (Lefebvre, 1991). Although the concept was born in the context of political manifesto toward access for all (inclusive), literally aiming at an economic disadvantage and minority groups of people in society, I found that connecting urban commons and liveable city design encourages me and my students to think more in terms of social inclusivity in our design work. A small example that I came across in 2009 illustrates the potential of eatscape as an instrument for enabling urban commons from a Finnish blogger who posted about her annual commensality act in her neighbourhood. ‘Every August, my community reclaims the street that I’m living on with dinner tables. The only one in Finland!’ wrote the blogger Goddess of Cake. She was proud that her neighbours prepared food and ate together on the street (taking over the parking lane) in her neighbourhood once a year in the summer. My architect and urban designer repertoire led to my immediate response to produce the image in Figure 39 that projected a possible new scenario for the neighbourhood: ‘What if the parking lane were reserved permanently for commensality?’ Through the production of

³² [C]ommon spaces should be distinguished from both public spaces and private ones. Public spaces are primarily created by a specific authority (local, regional or state), which controls them and establishes the rules under which people may use them. Private spaces belong to and are controlled by specific individuals or economic entities that have the right to establish the conditions under which others may use them.’ (FOOTPRINT 2015: 10)

this image, it made me rethink the connections between eatscape making, community building and liveable city making.



Figure 39. Left: RECLAIMING THE STREET WITH BOULGUR SALAD retrieved on Aug 18, 2009, from goddessofcake.wordpress.com. Right: the illustration of the possible architectural intervention by Chotima Ag-ukrikul. Changing the reservation of the space from car parking to commensality impacts on the individual family home. There is the potential for using the reclaimed space as an in-between space between interior and exterior, public and private, personal and community, etc.

Another example is the movement in 2010 in major American cities to create a legal process to extend the pedestrian zone into the parking lane. San Francisco's Parklet program³³ aimed to reclaim one parking space at a time by promoting the use of public space. The initiative from the San Francisco Department of Planning looked to temporarily transform parking spaces into communal spaces. These reclaimed spaces would remain entirely public and benefit the surrounding businesses and neighbourhoods. After a quick and inexpensive transformation, the parklet creates a comfortable atmosphere with seats, bike storage and planters. The permit for a parklet lasts for one year and is evaluated based on usage and function. Potentially, these public spaces can become a permanent asset for the city. The Walklet project by Rebar (Figure 40) was one of the many parklet projects implemented that was an eatscape. It functioned like today's bus stop, but it was an eat stop where people could linger and carry out commensality. The place for people to eat their homemade food, sandwiches on the go, or simply linger. Consequently, it encouraged home cooking, urban agriculture and communal gathering as a part of the everyday working life of the city.

³³ <http://pavementtoparks.org/parklets/>

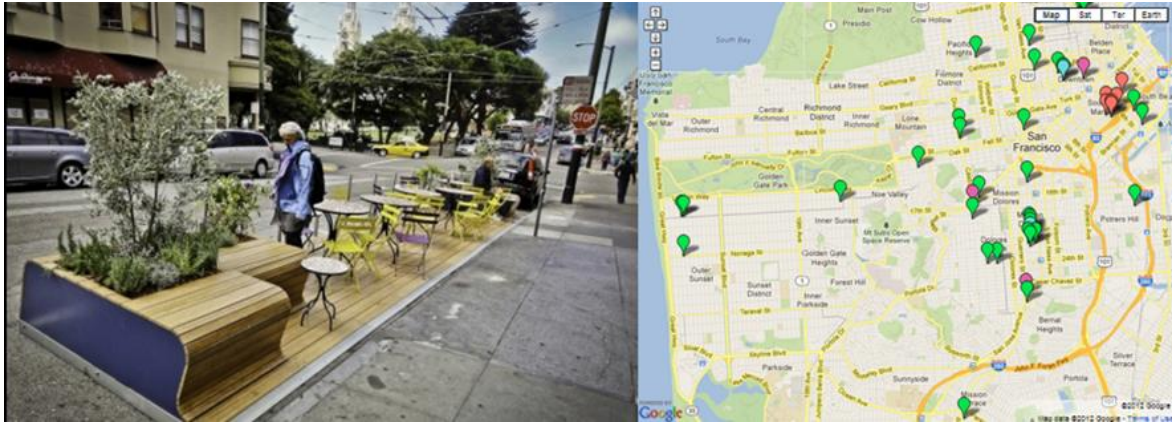


Figure 40. Left: Walklet project by Rebar, retrieved on 22 June 2012 from rebargroup.org. Right: Map of the Parklets & Projects, San Francisco 2010.

Both the Walklet project and the Goddess of Cake examples are eatscapes where the sharing of tables with strangers, the community building and the urban commons were implemented on the neighbourhood scale. Moreover, they were initiated from the people themselves to claim public spaces for their use in community building. The implementations of these examples was bottom-up by practicing commensality. They were no big parks or large-scale street festivals, but small pockets of spaces and events which operated on the street level. They were small enough to be managed by the local inhabitants, authorities or businesses, which supported small and everyday encounters. These projects supported not only the stakeholders who were already known; they also became opportunities for those who were not yet known. Just like the migrant job seekers that I met at the Koninginneplein, these eatscapes provided the opportunity for breaking the formality between people momentarily. They showed the potential for becoming instruments of inclusiveness in city design. The experience and field-based research in this thesis made me aware that the practice of commensality was at the centre of my explorations. Here I would like to present my understanding of commensality as a method of inquiry and how it impacts my design practice.

Commensality as a Method of Inquiry

The practice of commensality is collective action that takes place in collective spaces. This setting becomes my opportunity to meet and interact with others (human or non-human) in a mutual condition. I am, like the others, a participant in the making of a place. I am not the designer who tells others what the best way to use a space is, nor the researcher who examines how people use a place. The practice of commensality was my way of participating in the field in the explorations of this thesis, which required the use of my body as the tool to experience places in real life to know about them. The practice enabled my

body itself to become the methodological tool for knowledge inquiry. Through the explorations, I came to notice that commensality is a sensuous and a social way for me to connect with others for a moment. These are essential aspects for enabling experience- and field-based explorations. Commensality as the method for knowledge inquiry helped me to learn not only about the spatial settings of a place but also, more importantly, about the social exchange and the interaction among humans and between humans and non-humans.

Commensality is *sensuous* because it involves our bodily encounters – the type of encounter that requires the senses to make a connection with our experiences internally, like the concept of internal time (Sokolowski 2000). Internal is imminent or subjective, which is produced by one's mental acts and experiences, the events of conscious life. Thus, my body can remember my interaction with the world through commensality from the inside, and I can then re-enact the perceptions I had. Such experience is hard to measure with a ruler or other measuring device; we must use our bodies and senses. The practice of commensality involves body movements, senses, emotions and feelings. These come from the inside of us. The practice is a physical engagement between me and the others. It triggers my physical and mental perception to experience the surrounding environment differently than just simply observing and recording an event. It enables me to 'touch' the world that surrounds me, just as tactile senses inform experience and understanding of one's own world through architecture (Pallasmaa 1996). Material and scale are measured equally by the eye, ear, nose, skin, tongue, skeleton and muscle. The practice of commensality requires the human body and its senses to measure, evaluate and record the places.

Commensality is *social*. The subject of food and eating has long been the subject of study in the social sciences, including how these choices reflect the individual's life, the collective value and culture (Mennell, Murcott, and Otterloo 1992). Eating is more than simply satisfying a bodily urge; it can be transformed into a social and communicative event (Flandrin, Montanari, and Sonnenfeld 2001). It *is done in a social context*. The procurement, distribution and sharing of food and the social regulation thereof are the basis for much of social organization in human societies (Fischler 2011b). Thus, eating is possible with the collective effort from preparation and being served. It regulates social life and individual behaviour in a society. Looking at the everyday practices of commensality from this perspective, commensality is a social event in everyday life. Such plural action is the occasion where a social encounter is not awkward nor considered strange. On the contrary, it is even expected and beneficial to make a connection with the others.

Commensality is *momentary*. People spend an average of 70–135 minutes per day eating and drinking (OECD 2009). As eating and drinking time can be spread throughout a day, it only takes an average of 20 minutes to have a sandwich on a bench, according to my own fieldwork. This is considered a relatively short amount of time to spend in a day in comparison to sleeping, working or commuting. In this thesis, the time for commensality is considered a momentary rather than permanent event.

Recalling my own experiences from the exploration of eatscapes in this thesis, I have never been refused to commensal with anyone that I came across in the field. Possibly it was my translation of sensuous, social and momentary into the fieldwork approaches of keeping it

personal, open and brief. In this way, the practice of commensality as a form of knowledge inquiry could enable me to fully and effectively emerge myself in the field. Consequently, I was able to develop empathy with others. Design scholar Jos Boys explored how ethnomethodology³⁴ can provide a constructive framework for thinking about the intersections between everyday social practices and physical space by engaging the real people acting in a real-life context. Such an approach is shared with the design approach of the SESC Pompéia (Pompéia Factory Leisure Centre) by Lina Bo Bardi in São Paulo and the Byker housing by Ralph Erskine in Newcastle, where architects worked in the field with the people that would become the residents of those projects. Such a design approach articulates the unspoken conventions and considerable effort through the daily actions by which designers become part of the local everyday life. The same is true for the practice of commensality, with the sensuous, social and momentary (short or recurrent time) approach it requires. It creates a window of opportunity for encounters, interactions and even co-productions. Thus, the practice of commensality is a mode of knowledge that is plural (collective). In this thesis, such a collective form of knowledge production is considered an inclusive way of knowing. What more of the everyday practices that can be developed as a method for knowledge inquiry? Can they inform inclusiveness in city design?

Design Ritual that Informs Inclusiveness

Reflecting on the link between commensality and inclusiveness, I could clearly see the shift of the focus in this thesis. Over time, this thesis moved away from its initial focus on what and how to design eatscapes to focus instead on developing a design approach that has an impact on design practice. It became clear to me that, in researching liveable city design, it is more effective to find ways of practicing design inclusively rather than showing what inclusiveness should be. For this reason, I started to focus on the *practice* itself. Gradually, the practice of commensality was developed into a method of knowledge inquiry in which inclusiveness was identified as the result of the search and the reflection.

Looking back since the start, the practice of commensality was always a presence in the making of this thesis. It started as a non-method and eventually developed to become recognized as 'the method' in this thesis. I practice commensality to extract knowledge from product design, material culture and architecture – not as an over-night action, but as a recurrent event. Because I practice commensality recurrently throughout the process of the making of this thesis, I eventually adopted it as my personal habit, routine or even better design ritual. A design ritual is a way of designing that involves a series of actions performed

³⁴ 'Occupying (Dis)ordinary Space' (with Pam Shakespeare) at *Occupations: negotiations with constructed space*. College of Arts and Humanities (Interior Architecture), University of Brighton, 2–4 July 2009.

according to a prescribed order. From sensuous walks to commensality, my design ritual focuses on bodily senses and micro-public encounters. It becomes one important part of my design practice, a way to touch and interact with the world.

Tadao Ando Architect and Associates has a life-long passion for the city of Osaka in Japan. Designers in his office are assigned the task of planting new plants anywhere in the city possible and also of maintaining them. The office views it as their contribution to green and liveable city making for their city. In my view, planting is a design ritual. It is their office's practice of knowledge inquiry, which allows the architects to understand their working context through their personal, emotional, bodily experience. They could gain knowledge about existing vegetation, soil condition, weather, biodiversity, people, way of life and more. The mundane and the routine of going out into the field every day, week and season to plant and maintain the plants is a design ritual which allows the practitioners into the world (field) that they are working in. I consider the recurrent, the experience-based and the field-based knowledge production to be the sustainable and inclusive way for the architects and urban designers to build our professional expertise, rather than a one-time exploration that ends once the project is over. A design ritual takes time to develop. Could developing design rituals be a way to embed inclusiveness in city design practice? What other rituals can be developed as a part of city design practice?

Future Research

This thesis explored the link between commensality and liveable city making in which the ways for embedding inclusiveness in the practice of city design was developed. I identified two key aspects for enabling a practice to be inclusive in the context of city design: the everyday and the sharing of things, space, time, etc. The practice of commensality presented in this thesis is just one of many everyday practices (planting is another) that trigger inclusiveness. What other practices can enable inclusiveness in city design practice? Perhaps it is time to start again on the search for how to describe an inclusive space. What is it made of?

Describe Inclusive Space

The practice of commensality is my way to identifying and support the production of urban commons in a locality. Looking at the commons as a verb – *commoning* – helps me to connect with a process, a set of social relations by which a group of people share responsibility (Linebaugh 2010). An urban gardening movement that is known today is one such commoning process. Exploring the relationship between commensality and inclusivity through commoning is about identifying a society's common wealth and embracing difference, not commonality, in order to bring people together (Stavrvides 2016). This thesis had explored the micro level on a collection of design cases in which the results and the reflections were case-specific. Exploring commensality, commoning and inclusiveness on the macro level will allow collaborations with more fields, people and networks. This is because commoning is done by maintaining a collective struggle to re-appropriate and transform a society's common wealth by continually expanding the network of sharing and collaboration. What can be learnt by exploring commensality and inclusiveness through commoning at large?

Perhaps starting with concrete architecture and urban design projects is a good way to further explore. A few examples that emerged from the Far East illustrate the potential for turning inclusiveness into an asset (society's common wealth) for a neighbourhood, a city, a region or a nation in the context of city design.

Hiro Sano, the TV host for the Thai youth TV program, described his first impression of the city of Manila:

I can only see a fast-food chain and another fast-food chain. They come in all shapes and sizes, from the simple local ones to the well-known international ones, while I'm looking for a place to eat this evening here in Manila. [...] my impression of the city is about traffic jams and the colourful lights of these fast-food chains all over the city of Manila. (Sano 2012)

Images of fast-food restaurants filled with people of all generations as night fell accompanied with the above quotes in his TV documentary. Sano claimed that people who ate at these fast-food establishments appeared to be neither poor nor lower-educated; they were the ordinary population of all backgrounds, including retired couples. They were all enjoying their night out. In the same documentary, a 7-Eleven convenience store in Jakarta, Indonesia offered both grocery shopping and eating areas in the brightly lit environment with free wi-fi access. Customers who purchased merchandise from the store were offered access to those services. It appeared to be a popular venue among young people for chilling out and working on their laptop computers (Figure 41). This trend is not limited to Indonesia; Youthology, a Shanghai-based research company focused on Chinese youth culture, indicates that convenience stores like 7-Eleven and Family Mart provide an important 'extra space' outside the home and serve as 'private spaces in the public to soothe empty stomachs and souls' (Yeast +SPACE10 2018).



Figure 41. Right: Fast food is the typical eating out choice in Manila, Philippines. Left: 7-Eleven convenient store in Jakarta, Indonesia (2012) jam-packed with people on a Friday evening.

Food courts, shopping malls, convenience stores and tables on the sidewalk are public domains which are already rather limited spaces in the context of the Far East today. These are significant places where public life is played out. '[P]eople go in the street not only for budget considerations, but also for the lack of spaces at home or work, and often for a way to escape the homogeneity of food habits and options', according to Ael Thery, a food anthropologist who has studied Chinese street-food culture for years (Duarte 2019). In Bangkok, street food makes all the inner workings of the city possible, according to

Chawadee Nualkhair, author of *Thailand's Best Street Food*. Many office workers eat all their meals on the street because it is cheap and convenient. The street food also acts as social glue where people talk about their favourite vendors like others talk about their favourite sports teams, she says. These eatscapes are places for potential social encounters across different social groups, even though they are literally found on the streets. They are inclusive places where people from all walks of life traditionally come together. But recent developments show that they are increasingly under threat as cities are being developed and modernized. The recent struggle between the authorities and the street vendors following the ban of street vendors (Ellis-Petersen 2018) in Bangkok, Thailand is one example. The gaps between the haves and the have-nots are increasing rapidly, which is visible in everyday life where there is less and less common ground for people from all walks of life to rub shoulders. The reality is that it becomes increasingly difficult for street foods to compete with the slick and the comfort that the air-conditioned environment of food courts and restaurants in malls is offering today. Street food once enjoyed a convenient location right in the street, where people could easily stop by; today the street is often a polluted environment where the hygiene of food preparation is questionable, and vendors are struggling to attract customers who can afford a better environment and higher price.

Recalling watching and experiencing people commensal under the tree as in Figure 1, it was a pleasant surprise to me to find such a place in the middle of busy Bangkok. It works because of the magnificent tree that provides some cool shade under the midday sun of this tropical climate, its green leaves and roots painting its surroundings with freshness, and the neighbourhood that still holds onto its street food culture. Commensality in the street with neither air conditioning nor background music was a pleasant experience for me. As Dunlop wrote, 'If the vendor is good enough, it brings all the classes together, sharing the same foods' (Dunlop 2017).

Both examples of the fast food in Manila and the street food of Bangkok seem to tell us that the love of food and the customs of eating out have made them the everyday practice of these places. Could the casual, informal, street-food type of eating out be the common cultural heritage for these places? In addition, could the existing trees and plants that take root so rapidly anywhere in the city of Bangkok be the natural heritage of the city? If so, could the aspects of culture and nature be the seeds for inclusive space making?

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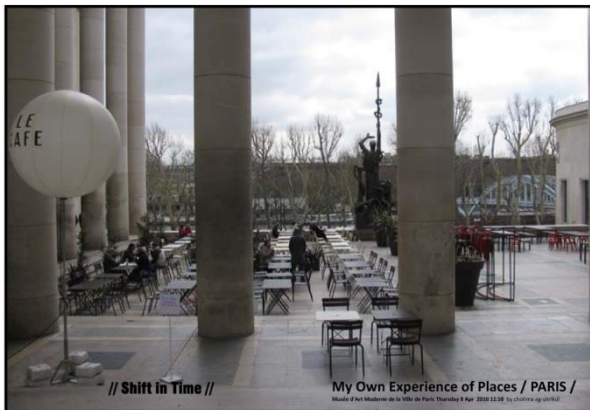
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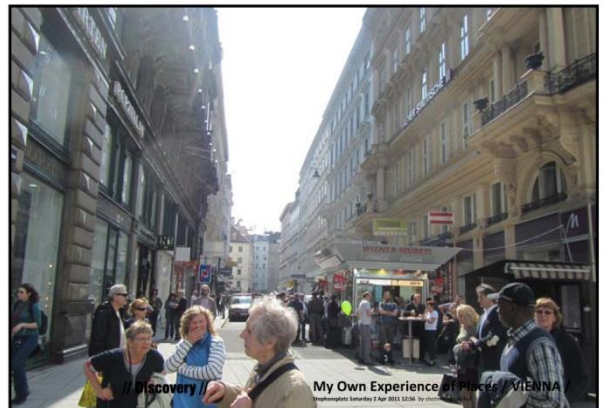
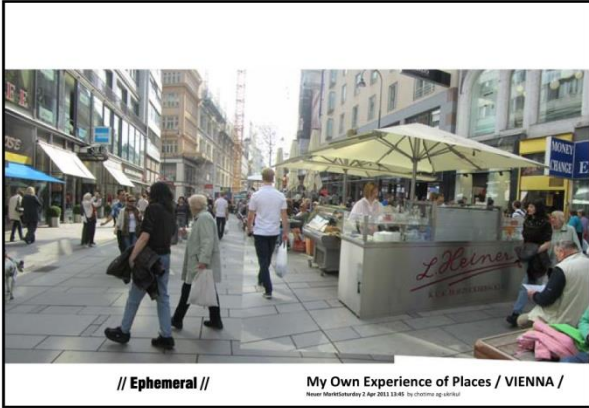
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Appendix A: Real-World Case Studies

This list was put together in December 2011 at the very start of this thesis.







Appendix B: Exploring (In)formal

(In)formal describes the experience of being both formal and informal at the same time. Street food is a typical typology of such an eatscape. Street food is the informal appropriation of a street or a public space. As food is prepared, cooked, sold and consumed, it turns the space momentarily into a collective place – *an urban dining room*.

Street food is not an immediate association for Belgians – only if one pays attention to the queue of people getting their food from pommes frites vendors, waffle stands and bakeries. They make up the frequent street food scene in Belgian cities. In contrast, grabbing a seat at one of the countless street vendors along the pavement is an everyday experience for visitors to Thailand. Eating on the street is an inseparable part of life for the Thais. In the United States, which is the birthplace of food truck culture, eating off a food truck is regarded as a cheap, fast and social way to try new things. Cases from these locations were collected in the twenty-five cases identified during my sensuous walk exploration. They are all street food cases from Brussels, Bangkok and San Francisco (Figure 42).



Figure 42. (In)formal: comparative cases. Left: Noordzee, Brussels. Middle: the steak vendor by the Ratchathewi Sky-train station, Bangkok. Right: food truck event Off the Grid, San Francisco.

The *Noordzee* is a three-in-one fish shop, restaurant and takeaway establishment with a history dating back to the 1980s. It is situated in Sainte Catherine, the central area that is known as ‘the stomach of Brussels’. The *Noordzee* is known for the quality, freshness and craftsmanship of its products. The steak vendor is situated under the Ratchathewi Sky-train station at the heart of Bangkok, a no-name place serving steak on the pavement under a lighted umbrella on one of the busiest roads in the city. The third case is Off the Grid³⁵, the food truck event at Fort Mason centre parking lot in San Francisco, which started in June 2010, grouping vendors together like an Asian night market. At the time of this writing, it operates fifteen markets and more than a hundred vendors weekly. The *Noordzee*, the steak vendor and Off the Grid are the three (in)formal eatscape cases will be explored as comparative cases for defining the (in)formal eatscape.

³⁵ www.offthegridsf.com

1. Spatial Conditions

The three eatscape cases are fast meal-vendors specializing in serving specific meals, which makes people relate to them as the place to go for specific kinds of occasions. They create informal relationships with the public space by using flexible devices and creating an informal atmosphere for promoting informal interaction among people.

When there is no presence of people, eatscape does not exist. For this reason, the opening hours of a place are included in the spatial condition. Outside of opening hours, the eatscape disappears. Comparing the opening hours between the three cases, there is a correlation between opening hours and the type of customers who visit the (in)formal eatscapes. They relate to specific meals in a day. The Noordzee specialises in weekday lunch and snack, but it also operates now during the weekend as its popularity has grown. The opening hours also relate to the fact that it combines three different businesses together – fishmonger, take away, and restaurant. The fishmonger opens first, at around 9:00 AM, and the other two businesses start at around 11:00. It generally takes one or two hours to close up the place, with cleaning starting around 6:00 PM. The steak vendor in Bangkok specialises in daily dinners for workers and students on their way home, with its peak traffic between 6:00 and 8:00 PM. Off the Grid has many market events all over the city of San Francisco. The Fort Mason centre parking lot specialises in weekly Friday dinner between 5:00 and 10:00 PM, except in winter. All three are fast meal vendors with an average of 25 minutes (see Figure 43) duration of stay for the customers. They all have their place in people's day: the Noordzee is a place for lunch and snack, the steak vendor is a place for dinner and Off the Grid is a place for Friday dinner get together.

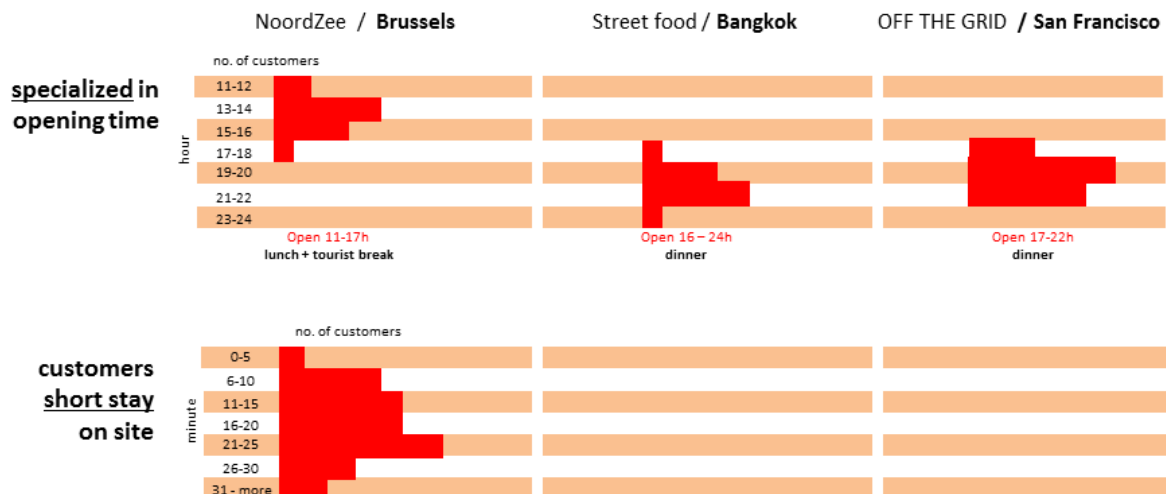


Figure 43. Specialized opening hours. Top row: the opening hours of the three cases. Bottom row: the data collected on 21–24 February 2012 showed the number of customers and the duration of their stay at the Noordzee. There was no data for the other eatscapes because I was not able to re-visit them.

The short duration of the fast meal creates the (in)formal relationships between the eating bodies and the public space that impact the *unclear boundary* between the eatscapes and

the adjacent public space. Commensality, an action, becomes the instrument to publicize the place, which results in turning the street and the square into commensality places. Placing the kitchen and the service areas head-to-head with the public space (street, square, parking space), which is quite the opposite of a formal restaurant's planning, also amplifies the blurring effect. This is because the cooking area becomes visible to the public, where the sight of cooking and the informal way of commensality attracts the attention of the passers-by. The human interactions with food and people who walk by occur along the border between the business and the public space. The boundary is easily stretched or thickened, which results in a grey area where inside and outside mix together. Such space opens the opportunity for the people on the inside and outside to meet and interact (Figure 44). Solidary eating (people eating alone) is never entirely found in these examples.

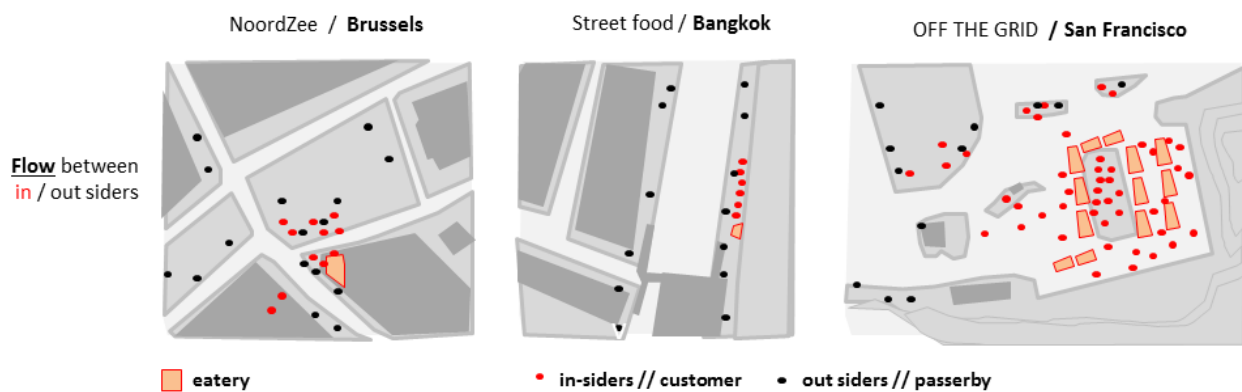


Figure 44. Plans show the interaction between people inside and outside the establishment. There are more other types of street vendors and eateries in the areas of the three cases, but only the selected cases are shown in these plans.

Commensality in all three cases takes place outdoors in an environment that is exposed, exhibited and uncontrolled – the reverse of commensality in most restaurants, where it takes place indoors in a protected, segregated and controlled space. While I was standing on the pedestrian footpath where the Noordzee was located, the texture of the cobblestones that I physically experienced through my leather soles reminded me of my stand-up commensality at the Noordzee. The view looking up from below at the surrounding environment reminded me of a conversation that took place at Off the Grid. These unusual physical and informal commensality experiences, though they were outdoors and exposed to the environment, created places with identity and memories in me.

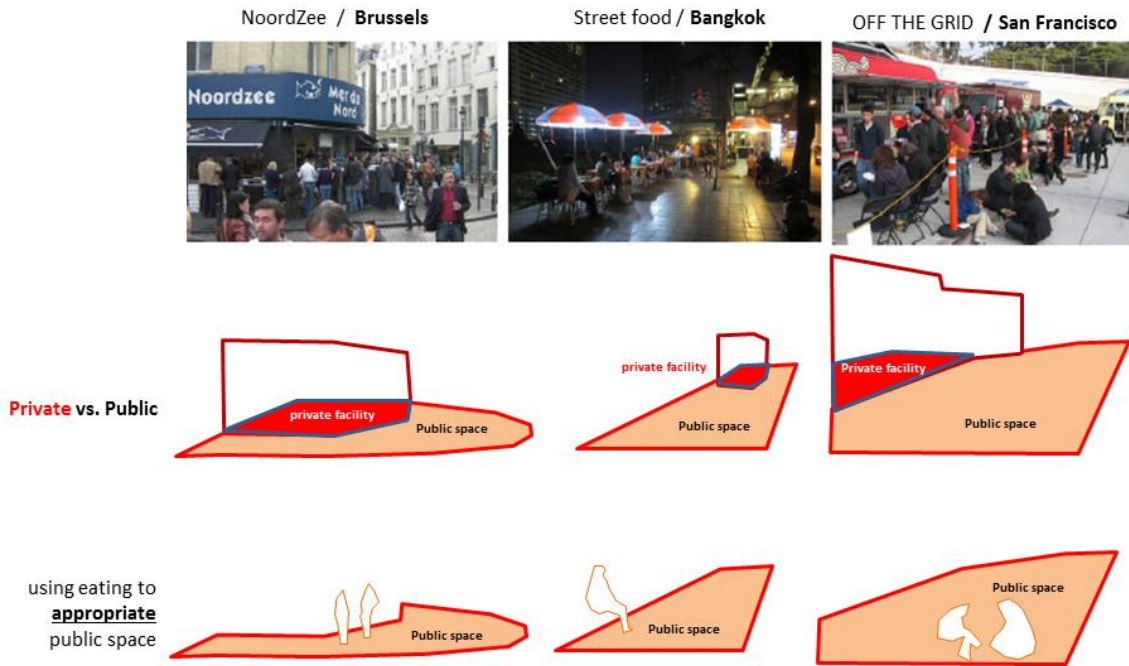


Figure 45. Relationship to the adjacent public space. Top row: snapshots of the three eatscapes. Middle row: private facilities such as kitchen and serving areas vs. the adjacent public space. Bottom row: the area where the appropriation of public space was used for commensality.

Comparing the areas of the establishment between the three (in)formal eatscape cases, they are all relatively small in comparison with their adjacent public space (Figure 45). The brief act of commensality becomes the opportunity for the three establishments to expand and to appropriate the surrounding public space for private use. This is achieved by exploring the concept of *flexibility* both in terms of device and space. The Noordzee (Figure 46) uses the large awning attached to the façade of the shop and the movable cooking, storing and serving devices for modifying the space. The steak vendor uses the umbrellas that pair up with the tables and the chairs as well as the cooking station on wheels for modifying the space. Off the Grid uses the food trucks with the openings on two sides of the vehicle's walls as the shading and the serving devices for modifying the space.

The shading devices in the three cases are used not only for protection from rain and sun but also for making space, characteristic and identity of the places. They are used to expand, occupy and transform a proportionally larger adjacent public area into the eatscapes. These spaces become places people use, making them into points of reference in the neighbourhoods. The adjustable design of the shading device is used in various ways, such as signalling that the business is open or closed, forming the ceiling/roof and contributing to the flexible room shaping outside. More adjustable furniture such as a bar on wheels, tables and chairs are used to make the boundary between the public and private unclear. They are room shaping devices which can be placed loosely or densely together with people, topography, traffic, lighting and adjacent programs. Space can be shaped to fit small usage

for private dining on a cosy day to the large-scale usage such as the annual event³⁶ for the neighbourhood.

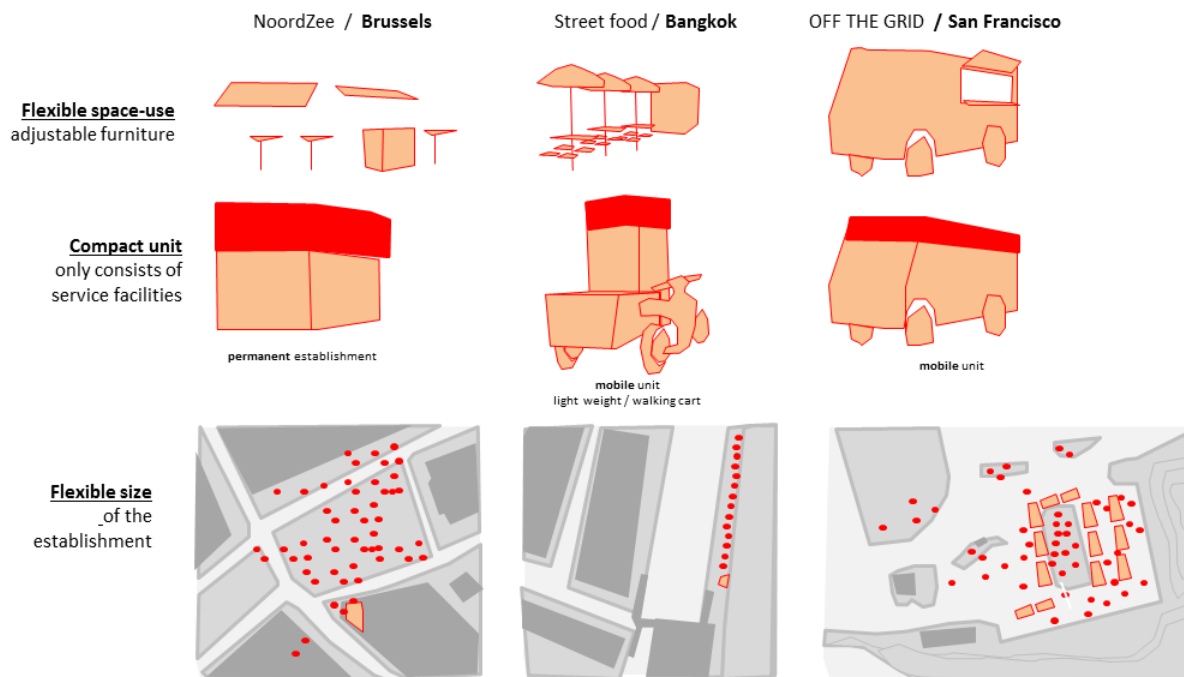


Figure 46. Flexibility. Top row: outline sketches of the main flexible devices used in different cases. Middle row: outline sketches of the service facility units when they were in the most compacted form. Bottom row: plans for the locations showed how these three different eatscapes were shaped in each of the contexts.

These three eatscapes are in invisible locations. The locations are within relatively close distance to the main road, since they rely on the traffic and interaction of people to survive. Over time, these easily accessible locations have made them into popular hangout places because they are in the network of good people traffic for food (Figure 47). The Noordzee is found on the corner of Sainte Catherine Square known to local foodies and tourists alike as ‘the stomach of Brussels’ for its density of popular restaurants and shops. Market stalls regularly take place a few days a week on this square. One of the Noordzee’s competitors, the mussel and oyster vendor, is open every Thursday, Friday and Saturday 7:00 AM – 8:00 PM, and the organic food market is open every Wednesday 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM. The area surrounding this square is packed with well-known groceries where the local foodies and the chefs get their ingredients. As Noordzee also supplies fresh fish and takeaway, it draws in customers with purposes other than eating there. Sainte Catherine Square is well known for its popular restaurant street terraces flooded with people during the summer months (March–October). Many small streets surrounding the area are only two lanes wide, pedestrians often sharing them with cars. Noordzee benefits from connecting to the open square. It not only allows it to informally expand its territory but also provides views out and

³⁶During the month of June the Noordzee organizes yearly new herrings’ food event with music for the area of Saint Catherine, Brussels.

visibility in. The view for its customers is onto the open square, the church and the lively passing of people as well as the sight to be seen by the others who use the square.



Figure 47. Eatscape in the urban context. The small red dots indicate the other restaurants in the surrounding area. The big red dots indicate the three study cases for street vendors.

The steak vendor in Bangkok is in Ratchathewi, the old neighbourhood established first along the Saen Saeb Canal³⁷ and later the Payathai and Petchaburi Road as the city developed its road network during the 1970s toward the modernization of the country. Today the Skytrain stop at Ratchathewi links to a stop on the express boat service in Khlong Saen Saeb Canal in this location. Ratchathewi is the crossroads between the old and new parts of Bangkok and hosts major commercial centres like mega malls and theatres as well as transportation hubs like airport links, Skytrain, and buses all within walking distance. The gentrification of the 70s, in which most of the old six-storey townhouse³⁸ blocks were rebuilt into a gated community of high-rise apartment complexes of forty or more storeys, is very visible today. These new developments targeted the upper end of the housing market with high fences and guarded security services controlling people's interaction between the property and the pavements. The steak vendor has placed a couple of tables and chairs alongside an empty lot where the property is changing hands or the old buildings have been demolished and the new have yet to be built, pending legal cases related to the

³⁷Bangkok's Saen Saeb Canal connects the Chao Phraya River to Prachin Buri and Chachoengsao. A portion of the canal is used for public transport by an express boat service that provides fast, inexpensive transportation in traffic-congested central Bangkok.

³⁸Townhouse is typical building type in Thailand, a two- to six-storey free-standing building with a single owner. It is often built as rows of terraced blocks in dense neighbourhoods with common walls between the neighbours. The main characteristic is multiple stories, and it can be converted into office or businesses.

development. Its location at one of the main entrance to the Ratchathewi Skytrain³⁹ station is highly visible and convenient for attracting customers during the peak hours of travel.

The Off the Grid food truck market was located at Fort Mason, the former San Francisco Port of Embarkation for the US Army during World War II, in the northern Marina District alongside San Francisco Bay. It served as an army post for more than a hundred years, and today it is part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the site of several cultural facilities. Some of the old officer housing remained in use by the Army, while some were rented to the public. A portion of the site is the Fort Mason Centre, where the eatscape Off the Grid is located, which houses the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Artists Gallery and many more cultural and youth facilities. One of the larger buildings has been converted into a youth hostel amidst a mix of parks and gardens and late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century buildings. The Marina District has also been undergoing demographic change since the 1980s from mostly middle-class families and pensioners to young urban professionals in their twenties and thirties who now make up more than half of its population. The Off the Grid food truck sits between the park and the main road, the transition point between the open space and the built area. Nearby, the Fort Mason farmers market is held every Sunday from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM, with beautiful views of the Golden Gate Bridge as its backdrop and California fruits and vegetables on offer.

Conclusion. Four common (in)formal spatial conditions are shared by the three cases: they specialize in serving specific meals, which makes people relate to them for a specific occasion and time; they are easy-to-find places in an informal and casual atmosphere that draws people to them; they are moveable or transformable units that can appear and disappear completely; and they are also flexible in their capacity, able to host groups from small everyday events up to large community events for the entire neighbourhood.

II. Social Conditions

The interaction among individuals (customers and staff) in the three cases is *non-hierarchical*. My experience in these places led me to notice that the surrounding objects, space and waiting time are mobilised as *social devices* to initiate such interactions. This section will explore these contributors to the social condition of the (in)formal eatscape.

The interaction between customer and staff is non-hierarchical – *horizontal, direct* and *face-to-face* interaction. It is possible because of the stand-up posture of people, which is a typical and significant physical condition for enabling and stimulating social interactions. I was able to experience the horizontal and face-to-face contact with the staff as well as the other customers in all three cases because I was in the stand-up posture. Stand-up commensality, stand-up conversing, and stand-up observing all triggered informal feelings and behaviour during my interaction with people in the three cases. Even though the spatial configurations of all cases is slightly different (Figure 48) in detail, they all support stand-up

³⁹The Bangkok Mass Transit System, commonly known as the BTS Skytrain, is an elevated rapid transit system.

posture and face-to-face and shoulder-to-shoulder (side-by-side) interaction among the people (customers and staff). Stand-up posture allows more body movements, such as turning, swinging and bending, so that people in different roles can more freely adjust their body positions in the space to find the right position, make space for others, and see what interests them within an eatscape.

The impact of the stand-up posture also extends to the experience of the meal. At the steak vendor, I was able to stand side-by-side at the cooking station and experienced the street view from the vendor's perspective with the backdrop of the traffic, the passers-by and other life on the street while watching the food being prepared. I watched people looking at me and the food that was prepared for me. At the Noordzee, I ate with stand-up posture directly at the cooking station, where the preparation of the food was literally at my table. They take even one step further in establishing a non-hierarchical relationship with their customers by calling out their first names to pick up their orders. The first names are often heard across the square. My name was called, and I felt at ease to pick up a conversation with people from and at my table because they already knew my name. The social condition developed at the Noordzee makes it an accessible place amongst people who go there. In time, I developed bonds with the staff and customers whose names I had already learnt.

Surrounding objects and street profiles are mobilized as social devices in the three cases. The condiments (small pots and jars of sauces or spices) on the table top of the steak vendor become objects for social interaction when someone asked to pass them on. People, food and dishes for commensality rested on the tables (see the social device in Figure 48). They make it possible for people to stay on site for a period of time. Even when there is no table available, such as in Off the Grid, the open space that is absent of rules (no furniture to suggest how space should be used) can itself become a social device. The pavement is used for waiting, gathering, resting and commensaling, and thus it is the social device.

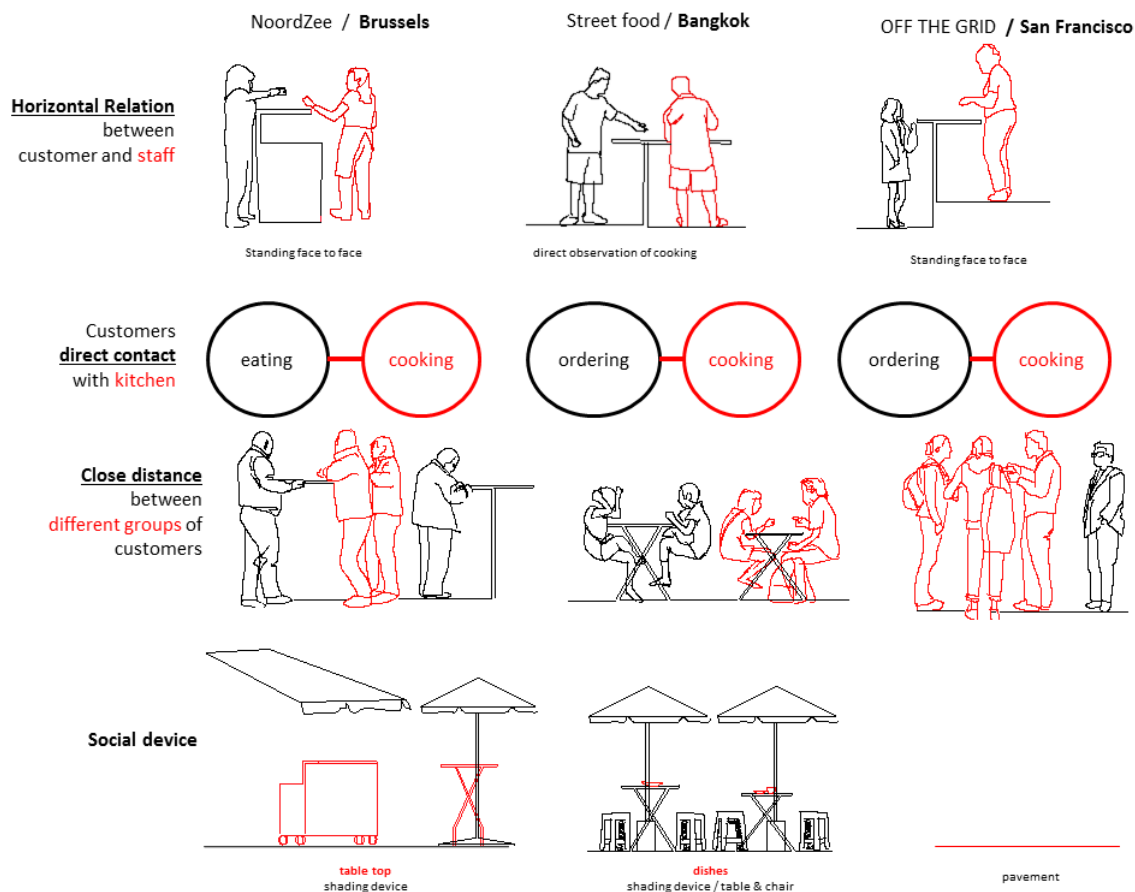


Figure 48. Social conditions. These diagrams explain the conditions that enable the social interaction among humans and also between humans and non-humans.

The food and how it is eaten (foodways); the dimensions of objects, street profiles and how they are arranged. These are the aspects that impact how food is viewed, smelled and eaten. They impact on how commensality is experienced. The Noordzee serves fish soup, deep-fried seafood and fresh salad arranged in small ceramic dishes, often accompanied by glasses of wine. This type of menu can be eaten by hand, but here a set of stainless-steel fork, knife and spoon packed in paper packages with napkins are handed over to the customers. I used these utensils to transport food into my mouth while anchoring myself in a stand-up posture at the cooking station. My back was straight with my head looking slightly downward while I used the fork and knife to cut the food on my plate and bring it to my mouth. I was in a forward-looking posture (Figure 49) while chewing and looking at the events around me.

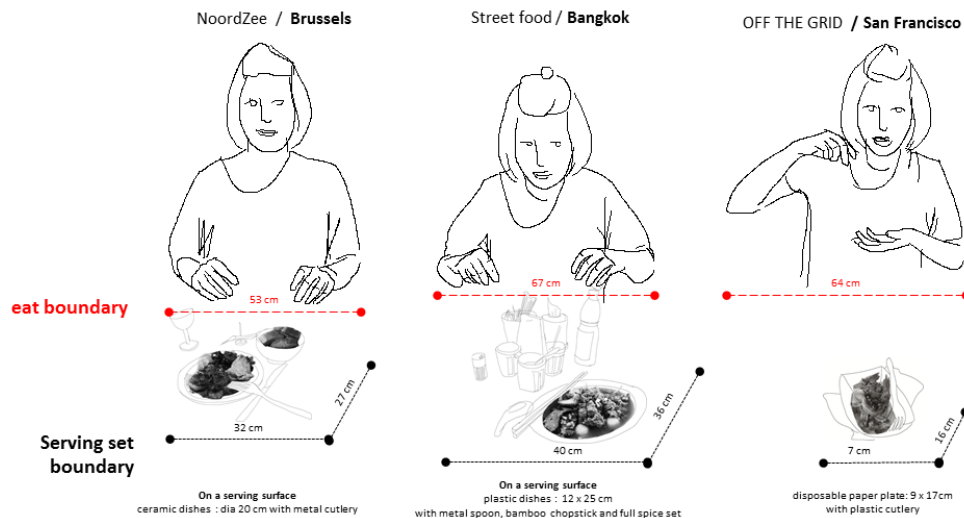


Figure 49. Personal space: the menu affects the method of eating, the experience of the environment and the social encounters.

The cooking station (Figure 50) is literally set on the pavement, which allows interaction between the street and the kitchen. People who eat at the Noordzee and people who just pass by can mix. I regularly came across people sticking their head through the crowd of people commensaling at the Noordzee, many of them curious why there were so many people gathering there and wondering if the food was free. The stand-up posture makes the interaction among people easy – they can pay attention beyond their personal space by shifting a little across their personal boundary. I had an experience similar the one at Noordzee when I ordered takeaway food from a food truck at Off the Grid. It was eating with hands while sitting on the pavement of the car park (Figure 50). The freedom of movement because of the non-confined space of the pavement allowed relaxed and informal interaction, which extended my interaction among the people who sat nearby. These were in contrast to the eating body at the steak vendor, which I found to be the least social triggering among the three cases. Sitting on the small stool there confined my body to the seat and the table. As the result, I stayed within my own personal space and did not actively interact with the others. Thus, foodway and body posture impacts our interactions.

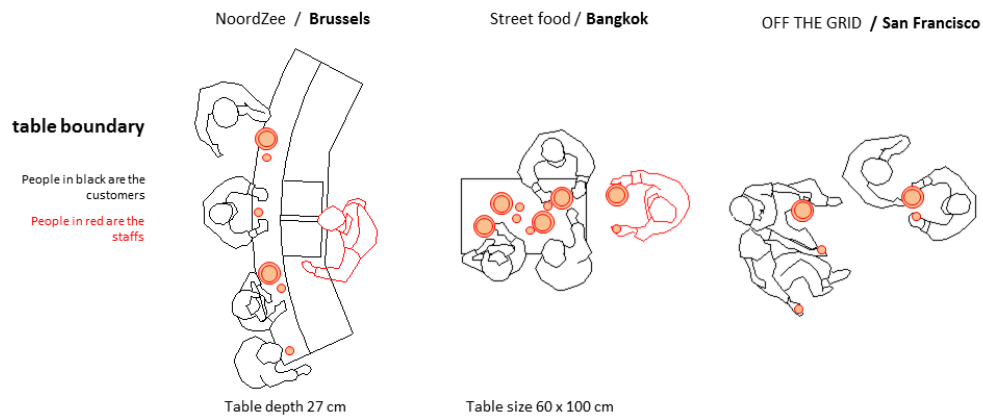


Figure 50. Collective space: staff stands behind the cooking station, providing both service and social support to the customers in the Noordsee case; staff walk back and forth to serve the customers in the Bangkok noodle stand; and there is no staff service at all at Off the Grid.

All three cases are street food where people place and wait for their orders. People wait for the food to be ordered, prepared and served while standing in the queue or in a reception space, which makes *queuing time* as a social device. I queued while standing which allowed freedom of movement and interaction with the surroundings, such as glancing at the menu board that was hanging behind the cooking station at the Noordzee, where I picked up a conversation with other customers who were also looking at it. I merged my personal space with the collective sphere at Off the Grid when I was looking and asking for free space to sit amongst the people who were already there while my friend was picking up the order.

Conclusion. Non-hierarchical interaction between people and stand-up commensality are the typical and significant physical conditions for producing a social condition that enables and stimulates the social atmosphere of the place. From calling out first names to face-to-face interaction, the foodways, people, food and material objects are mobilised and used for interaction.

Appendix C: Exploring (Im)perfect

(Im)perfect describes the experience of being both perfect and imperfect at the same time. It is found mostly in post-industrial and rustic cafés, where primarily hot beverages, snacks, and light meals are served. But not all cafés and coffee houses are (im)perfect eatscapes, and thus (im)perfect is non-typology specific (Figure 22). The two (im)perfect cases included in this section were coincidentally both Swedish by origin, and for this reason I will briefly introduce Swedish the concept of *fika* here.

Fika means 'to have coffee', but is also a Swedish culture concept and a common social event in everyday practice in the workplace. It involves two short breaks around 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM every day. The Café da Matteo (Vallgatan) in Gothenburg and Konrad Café and Bar in Luxembourg are coincidentally both owned by Swedes in two different places that share the (im)perfect eatscape concept (see Figure 51). Da Matteo was identified as early as 2009, whereas the Konrad was selected only during the fieldwork for the Eatscape urban architecture design studio in 2012.



Figure 51. Left: Café da Matteo, Gothenburg, Sweden. Right: Konrad Café and Bar, Luxembourg.

Background

Café da Matteo, Gothenburg: The owner, Mats Johansson, started the café business in 1993 where the first espresso and latte were served in Gothenburg from a one-room business. Since 2003, the current da Matteo café has taken shape, and today there are six branches spread over Gothenburg, Stockholm and Borås. Da Matteo stands not only for the café, but also the bakery, and the roastery. I visited the four branches in Gothenburg and selected the Vallgatan location for this thesis. In my opinion, the Vallgatan location best represents the da Matteo concept, and I came across it during my sensuous walk in the city of Gothenburg looking for eatscapes.

Konrad Café and Bar, Luxembourg: The establishment is spread over the ground floor and basement of an old building in a small hidden street in the centre of the city of Luxembourg. A simple menu of coffee, cakes and food is on offer throughout the day until supplies are finished.

1. Spatial Conditions

It was not easy to find either case. Although da Matteo has several branches within walking distance of one another in downtown Gothenburg, the common characteristic of the locations is the small and the *hidden street* in which they are situated. Even their signage is small and nearly undetectable (Figure 52). The Victoriapassagen location of da Matteo, for example, was hidden among many small shops in a pedestrian alley, and I only took notice of it because of a couple of chairs set out in the passage. The same goes for the Konrad Café and Bar in Luxembourg, which is found on a narrow, one-lane street (Rue du Nord). Its shadowed façade and easy-to-miss yellow signage are among the few visible signs of its existence. People come to find the place through word of mouth. Over the years, they have accumulated a list of regulars who come back and bring more of their people with them. The (im)perfect eatscapes become the attraction and the urban generators.

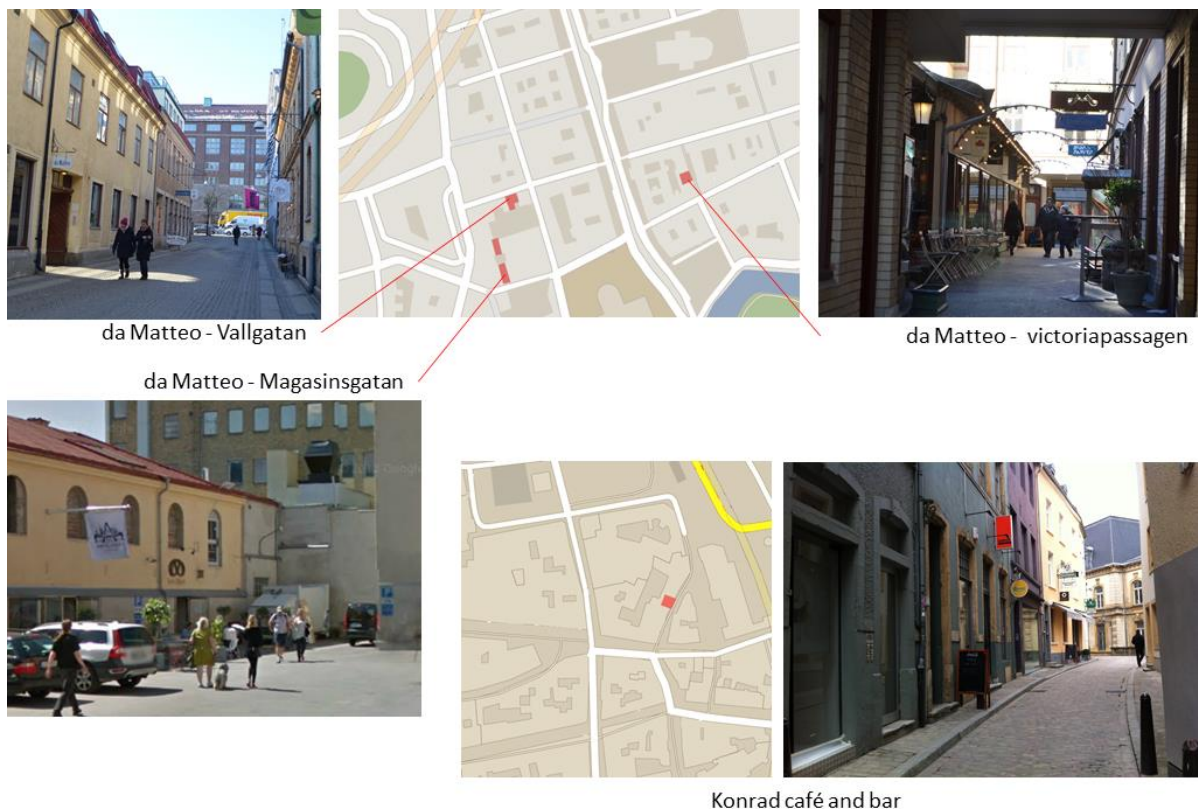


Figure 52. Plans indicate the location of Café da Matteo and Konrad Café and Bar.

Both Gothenburg and Luxembourg are cities with pedestrians shopping streets (Figure 53) that are popular with shoppers and café-goers. Both the Café da Matteo and the Konrad Café and Bar offer freshly brewed coffee at the edge of such pedestrian areas to the customers who are looking for something different from the mainstream places. They appear to offer different qualities than those of the high-street chain stores. Da Matteo is known for the best-quality Swedish blended coffee, whereas the Konrad Café and Bar is known for its

healthy, simple and relaxing environment. They both attract catalysts who know hidden gems in the city and have established themselves in places that are on the way to becoming *the* place. They have impacted the increasing traffic in these areas, which leads to a rise in the number of small boutiques and entrepreneurs. Having followed da Matteo since 2010, I have witnessed the impact it has on surrounding businesses between Magasinsgatan and Vallgatan with more designer boutiques and trendy hangouts.



Figure 53. Diagrams show the relationship between the eatscape and its urban context. The two plans are on the same scale, with high streets coloured in magenta.

The built material and texture of the furniture and the architecture play a vital role for the (im)perfect eatscape. Almost nothing is new in either case. From the chipped tableware to the lighting fixtures, everything has signs of being well-aged and repaired. They clearly express a do-it-yourself feeling in the construction of the chairs and tables, the rustic feeling of the solid wooden slab surfaces, the heavy steel sheets for the table top, the old grandmother's leather sofa and the aged carpet. These were the expression of *craft* (made by hand), *homey feeling* (back to home), the unfinished, and *well-used* (loved), which welcome users to make them their own.



da Matteo – victoriapassagen + Vallgatan branches



Konrad café and bar

Figure 54. Material and texture of Café da Matteo and Konrad Café and Bar.

Both cases have long opening hours because they fill the time slot between meals (Figure 55) and combine multiple businesses together. Da Matteo serves coffee with light meals, whereas the Konrad even serves alcoholic drinks later into the evening. Da Matteo’s branch on Magasinsgatan, which is located across the car park from the one on Vallgatan, also includes the roastery and bakery along with their regular functions, which gives it the earliest opening hours among all the branches. The difference between the two cases is that da Matteo’s opening hours synchronize with shopping hours, but the Konrad Café and Bar do not. With the current data, it is too early to conclude that these two cases rely on shopping traffic.



da Matteo - Vallgatan / Goteborg

da Matteo - Magasinsgatan

da Matteo - victoriapassagen

Konrad / Luxembourg

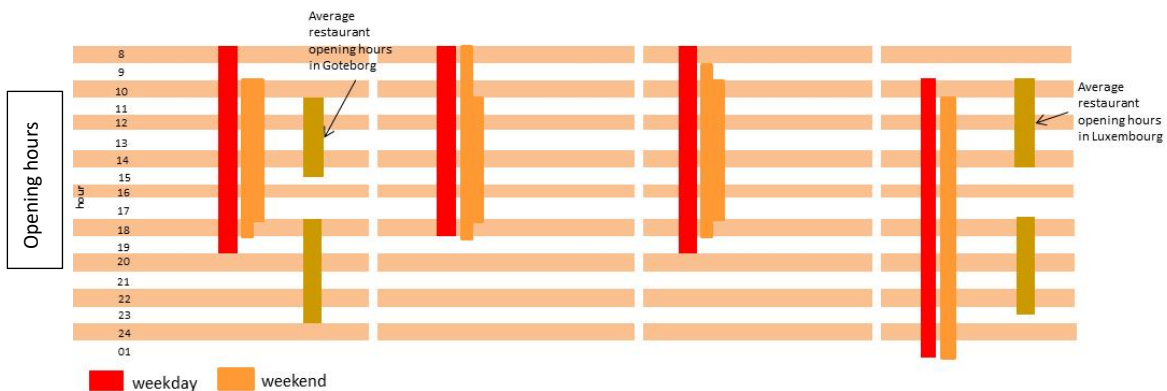
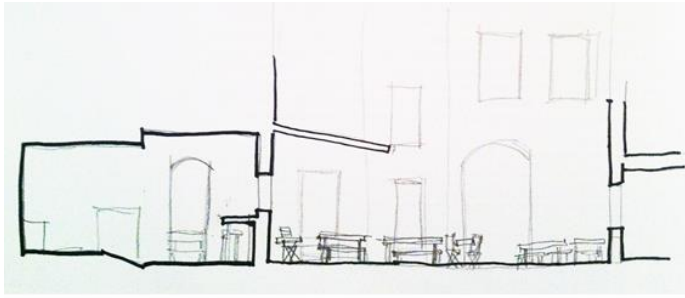


Figure 55. Opening hours comparison between the three da Matteo cafés, which are all close together, and the Konrad.

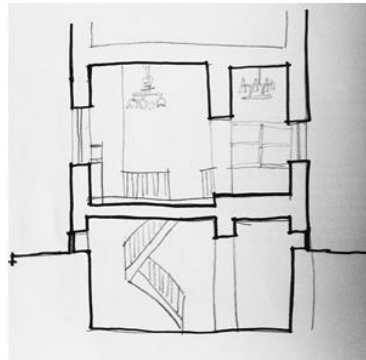
However, the average time that customers spend at the Konrad is around 50 or 60 minutes (Figure 55) for reading, playing with their mobile phones or socialising with one another when they come in a group. This is considered a *long stay* in comparison to the (in)formal time of 25 minutes (Figure 43). The reason for such a long stay is the philosophy of letting the customers spend as much time as they wish without being disturbed. The experience of *time standing still* is very present in both cases, but with different spatial design approaches for dealing with the time dimension. The Konrad Café and Bar's approach uses the constant dim lighting theme for their interior in combination with north-orientated natural lighting from the back façade that faces the narrow street to produce diffuse and dim light for the interior space. Being in a constantly dimmed interior space like this makes a person pay less attention to the difference between inside and outside, and the notion of time becomes less important. Another technique used at the Konrad Café and Bar is the use of the music. During my fieldwork in March 2013, a single type of music was used continuously in the background at Konrad Café. It was calm and somewhat edgy music with no switching between different types, rhythm, or playing them in a loop. The approach for achieving a time-stands-still experience at da Matteo is about the sight and the view of the interior spaces. Customers never face a blank wall; there are always things to look at, so one can never be bored. Every space at da Matteo comes with a view to contemplate. A solitary eater at da Matteo would never feel intimidated by being alone, and it is filled with books, magazines, and the sights, sounds and smells of people and coffee.

The dim lighting theme at the Konrad refers to the time before spotlights became popular for interior use. The Konrad could be referenced to domestic living – like a *private living room in the city*. Unlike most commercial coffeehouses and restaurants, no spotlights at all are used in the interior during the regular day, only low-voltage light bulbs; however, the Konrad does turn into a bar in the evening and occasionally for concerts and personal events, when coloured spotlights are used. The *sense of intimacy* and privacy in the two cases is created by breaking the space down into pockets of smaller places by introducing differences in floor levels and ceiling heights, the grouping of tables and seats, and the play of the transition spaces between inside and outside (Figure 56).

They could be totally enclosed, like the Konrad with only indoor spaces and a small window with no view, or totally open like da Matteo, which brings in natural light and views from outside into the interior and has half of its seats out in the open air.



da Matteo – Vallgatan



Konrad café and bar

Figure 56. Sections show different pockets of spaces.

Conclusion. (Im)perfect eatscapes are often cafés, but not all cafés are (im)perfect eatscapes. They are found in small and hidden locations. They rely on word of mouth about their specific quality of product or characteristic ambiance to attract people to come to find them. Through time they could become urban generators, which can change their eatscape typology into something other than the (im)perfect. The materials and textures used in these places express *craft* (made by hand), *homey feeling* (back to home), the unfinished, and *well-used* (loved), which welcome users to make them their own.

II. Social Conditions

The interaction among individuals (customers and staff) in both cases is *non-hierarchical*. The *horizontal, direct* and *face-to-face* interaction with minimal interruption between customer and staff, the use of social devices, and the service concept together form the basis for the (im)perfect social condition.

The kitchens in both da Matteo and the Konrad are not designed for cooking and food preparation purposes; they are used only for heating up, assembling and putting final touches on pre-cooked food. The washing-up area is the main feature of these kitchens. The staff is stationed mostly at the bar to interact with the customers, which turns the kitchens into social spaces. The staff at the (im)perfect bars stand slightly higher than those of the (in)formal, where customers cannot view what is behind the bar (Figure 57). The stand-up posture allows face-to-face contact, and the freedom of movement made me felt at ease when I was there. The staff limited their interruption of me by walking through the space

only to collect used cups and dishes, never asking for new orders and waiting for me to notified them.



Figure 57. Diagrams show the relation between customer and staff.

At Café da Matteo, I could choose between indoor and outdoor seating; at the Konrad Café and Bar, I found myself sharing my seat at the collective sofa set located right in the middle of the room. The individual seats at da Matteo are spread all over, so people can find a comfortable place, whereas the collective sofa set at the Konrad is well positioned with good visibility and views, which is popular among its customers. Four or five different types of seating (Figure 58) in both cases create different moods and posture relations between bodies, which stimulates interactions.

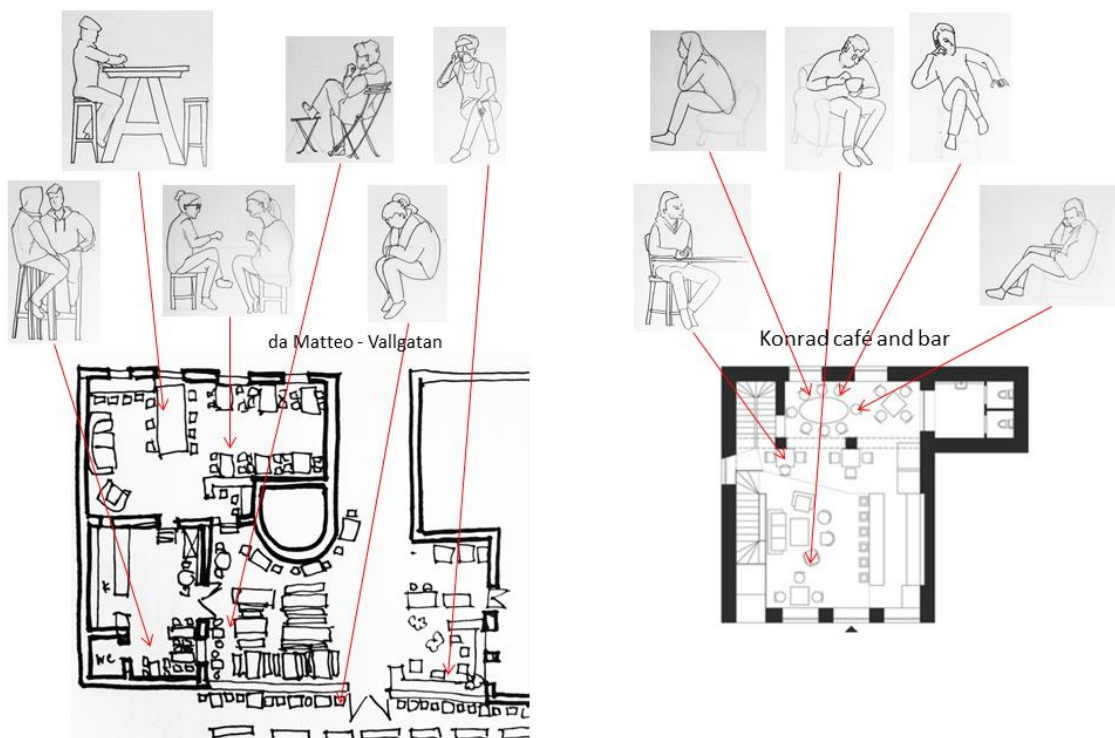


Figure 58. A diagram shows different typologies of seating and their locations.

The different seat typologies impacted on my experience and interaction with the environment. The seat affected my body posture, eye levels and thus my view of the surrounding environment. I do not recall the view from the window at back of the Konrad (Figure 59); perhaps the sill height was relatively high in relation to my seat along the window, blocking my view. I lifted my face up toward the sky in front of me, and with this posture my face was lit differently than those who were looking down or sat with their backs to the window. That small detail did make an impact on the personal appearance and how people might interact with one another while in the place.

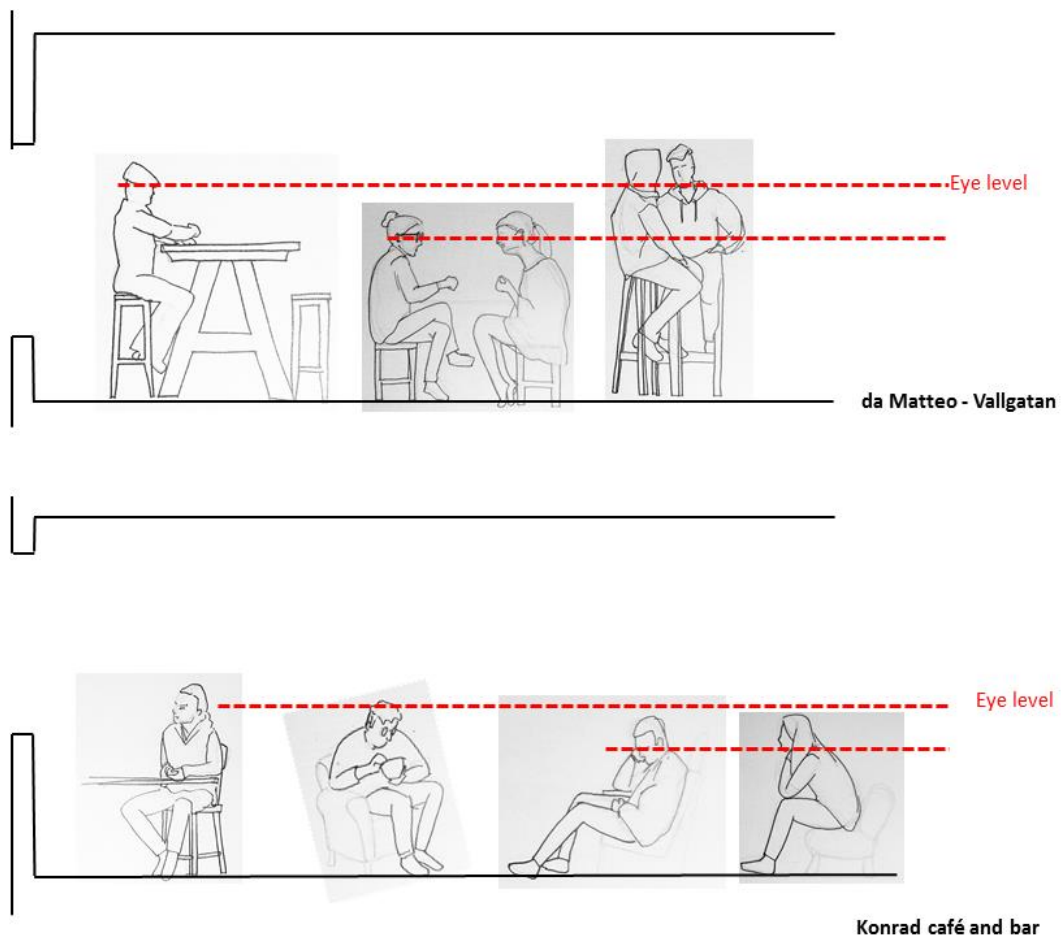


Figure 59. Diagram showing the relationship between different seating typologies.

The menu board at the Konrad hangs on a wall further away from the bar, which requires new customer to step further into the deeper part of the café to find out more about the menu. This condition creates an opportunity for newcomers like me to explore the place, occasionally leading to interaction with strangers.

Conclusion. The bar surface, the seats, and the menu board are social devices that affect people's body posture, which triggers, supports and sustains the social interactions amongst them.

Appendix D: Eatscape Fieldwork Checklist

Below is the blank version that was made for the eatscape fieldwork in Brussels between 2013 and 2015.

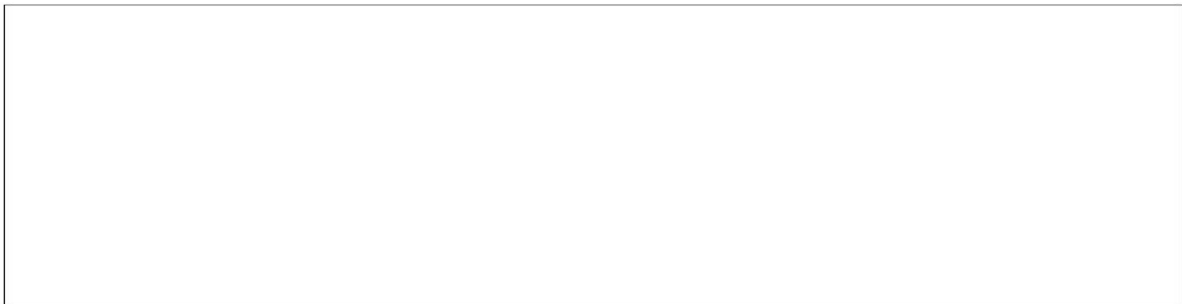
EATSCAPE FIELDWORK (date __ - __ / Feb 2015)

Name of Researcher _____ Age ____ Nationality _____

What is architecture for you? _____

Why do you want to be an architect? _____

Image of Researcher



Name / Address of the Eatscape _____ **Noord district** (Brussels)

All researchers should bring the following items for your fieldwork: camera and drawing pens.

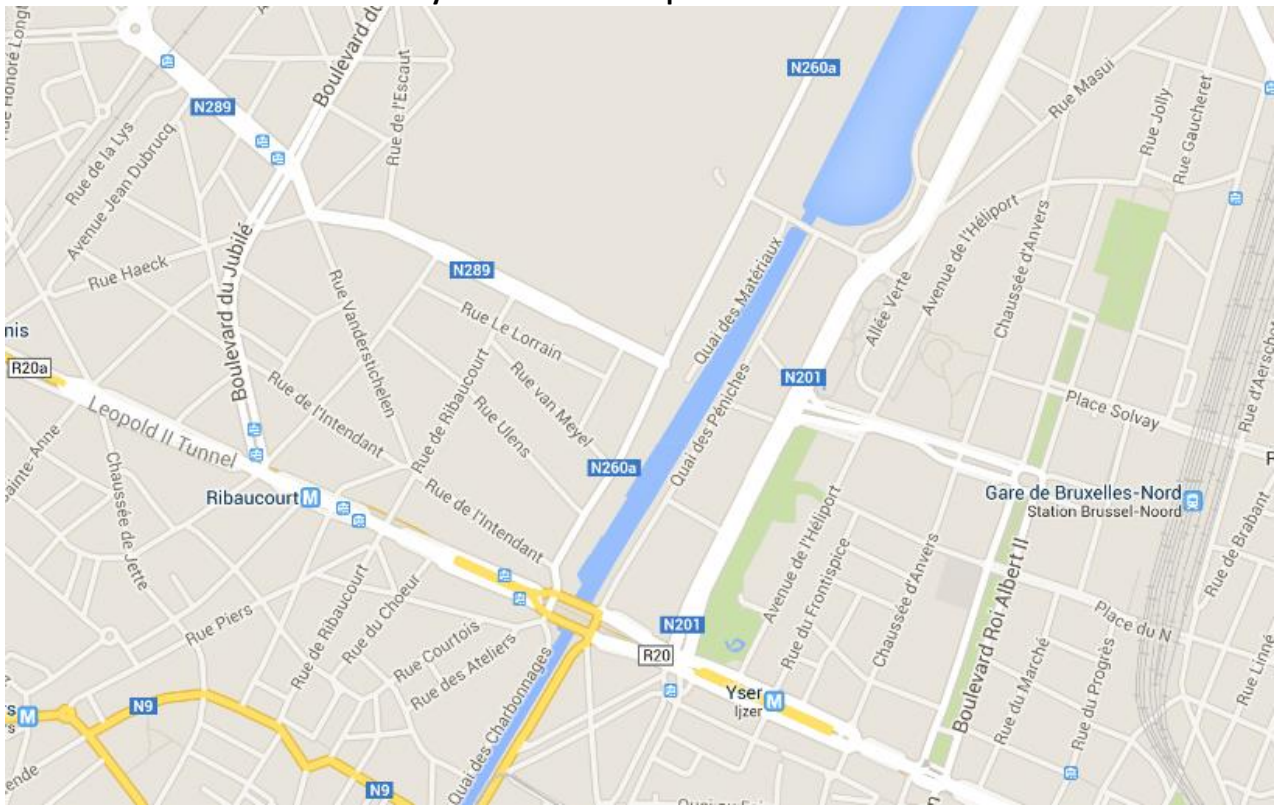
There are two tasks for the fieldwork study (1) photo essay of the eatscape and (2) complete this fieldwork form.

1. The photo essay should contain the following chapters:
 - a. Façade/Elevation (min 1 and max 5 photos)
 - b. The essence of the place (min 1 and max 5 photos)
 - c. Boundary and limit (min 1 and max 5 photos)
 - d. People (min 1 and max 5 photos)
 - e. Activities (min 1 and max 5 photos; 1 image should describe the way people eat in this place)
 - f. Food (min 1 and max 5 photos; 1 image from top view)

2. All researchers should prepare and print the base map/plan needed for your fieldwork to be able to draw the plan and section of the place.

1. Sketch the place from your memory (close your eyes).

2. Sketch + Describe how you find this eatscape.



Describe in words how you chose this eatscape.

3. Sketch the plan and section of the eatscape.

4. **How suitable is each of the following eatscape keywords, in your opinion, for this site?**
(Give your own definition for each of the eatscape keywords in the text box at the bottom.)

(in)formal

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

(im)perfect

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

Intimacy

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

Discovery

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

Ephemeral

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

Shift in Place / Time

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all				Very much

Describe in words the definition of your chosen eatscape.

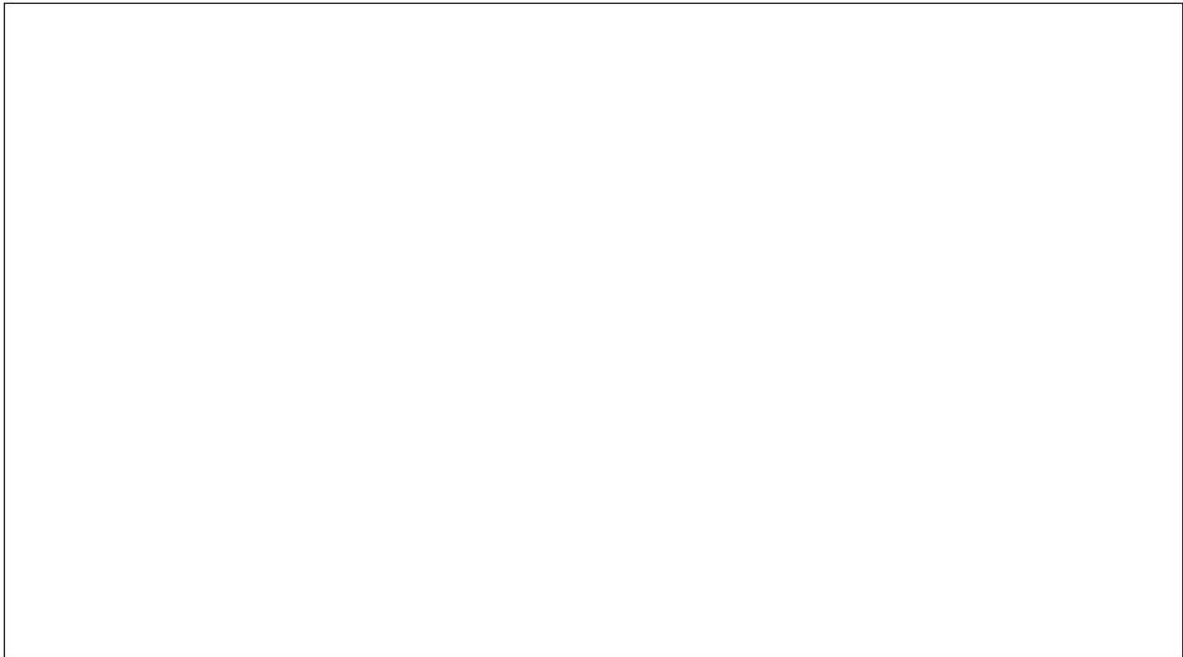
5. **The body of architecture** – the construction, anatomy, the tangible material such as a membrane, a fabric, a kind of covering, cloth, velvet, etc,

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



Description



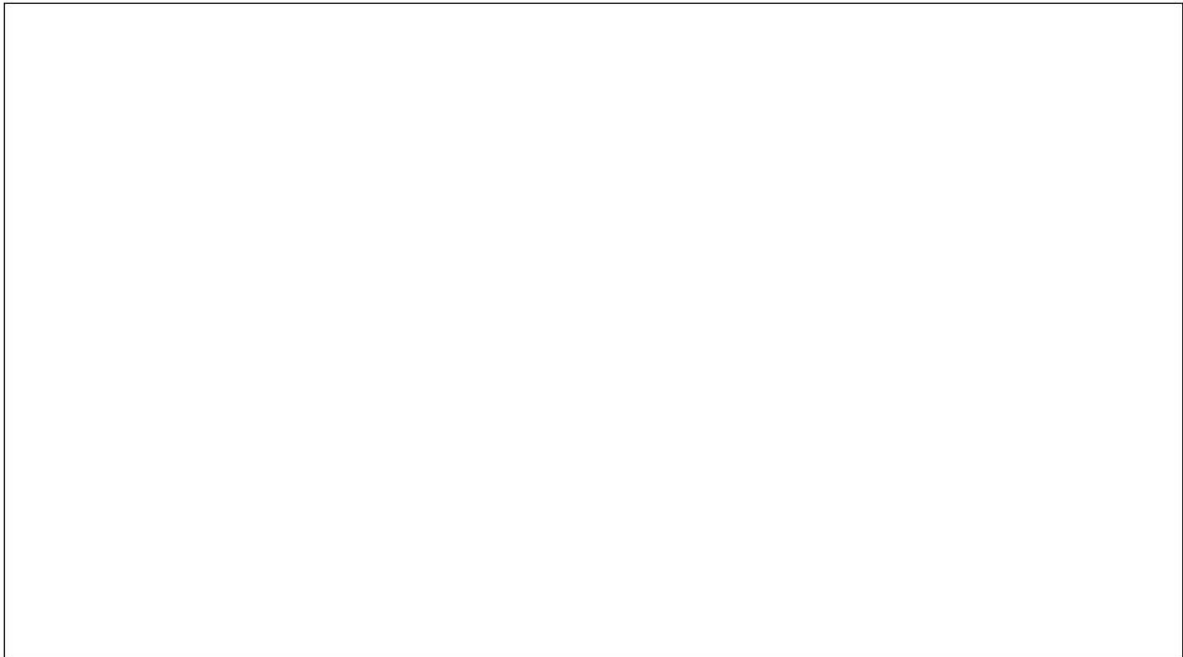
6. **Material compatibility** – the choice of building material. It is the play with materials by combining different types of materials and seeing how they give rise to the atmosphere in space.

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



Description



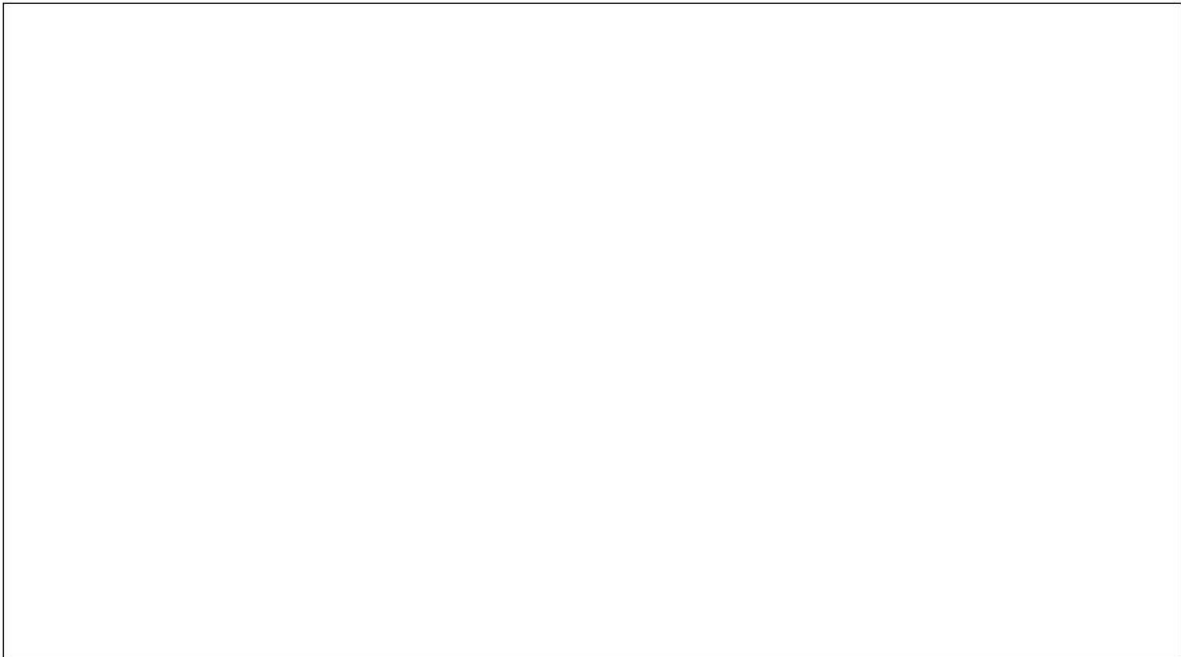
7. **Sound of a space** – interiors are like large instruments, collecting sound, amplifying it and transmitting it elsewhere. The type of sounds these interiors can make depends on the shape, size and material applied.



Image



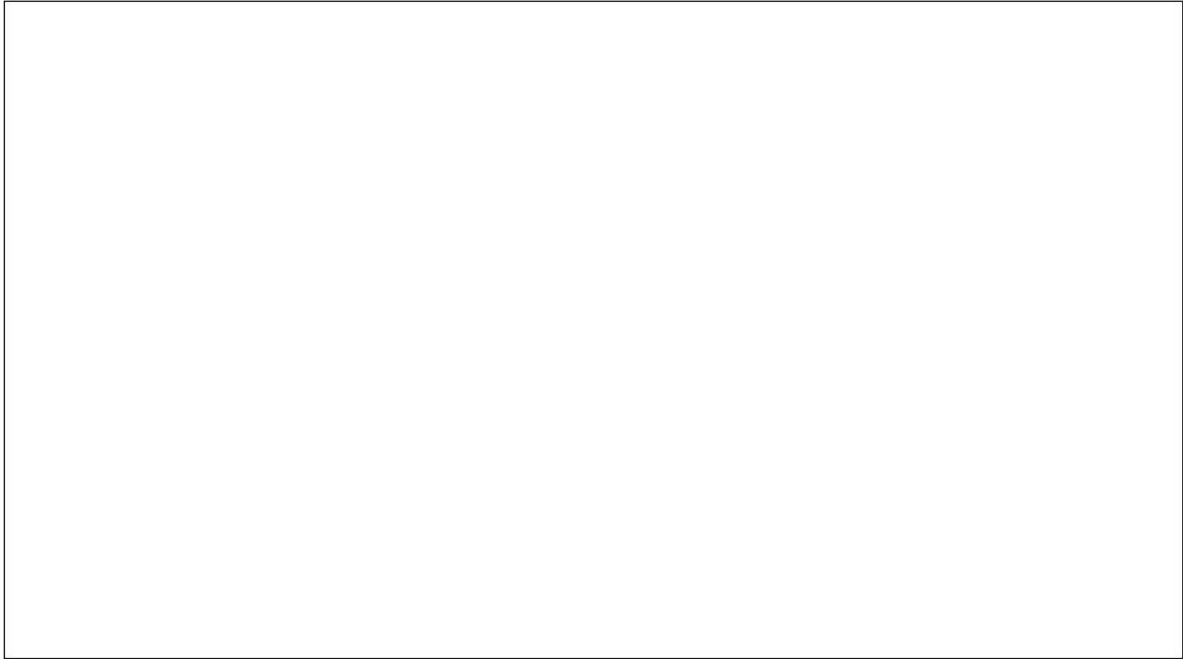
Description



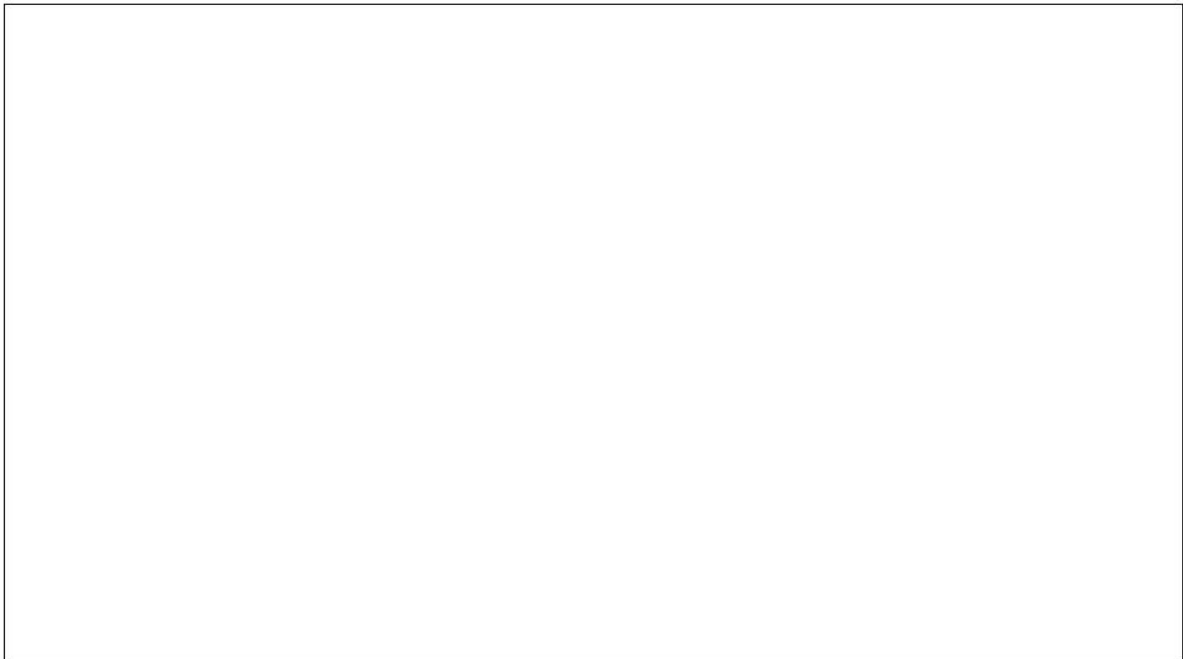
8. **The temperature of a space** – Every building has a certain temperature. For example, wood is known as a material that extracts less heat from the human body.

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

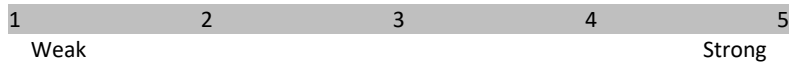
Image



Description



9. **Surrounding Objects** – the ordinary objects that will fill the space when the building is handed over to the clients, ranging from books to flower pots. In many home, people fill in such objects to give the place a 'sense of home'.



Image

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing an image.


Description

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a description.

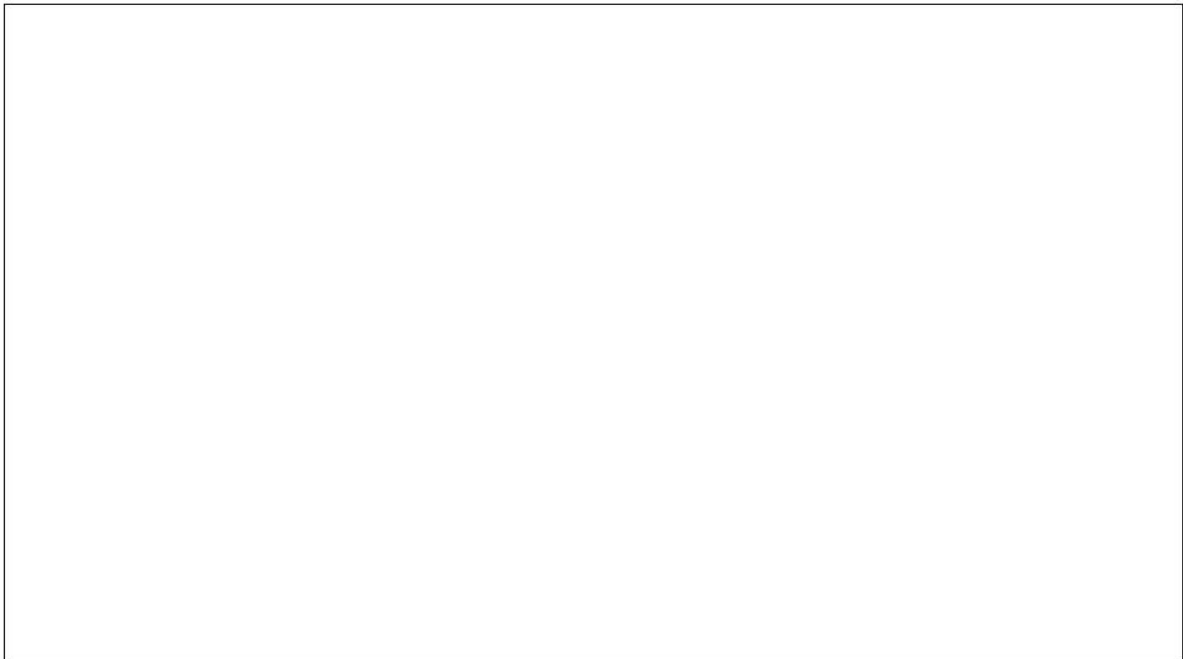
11. **Tension between interior and exterior** – it is about the transitions between the inside and the outside.

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



Description



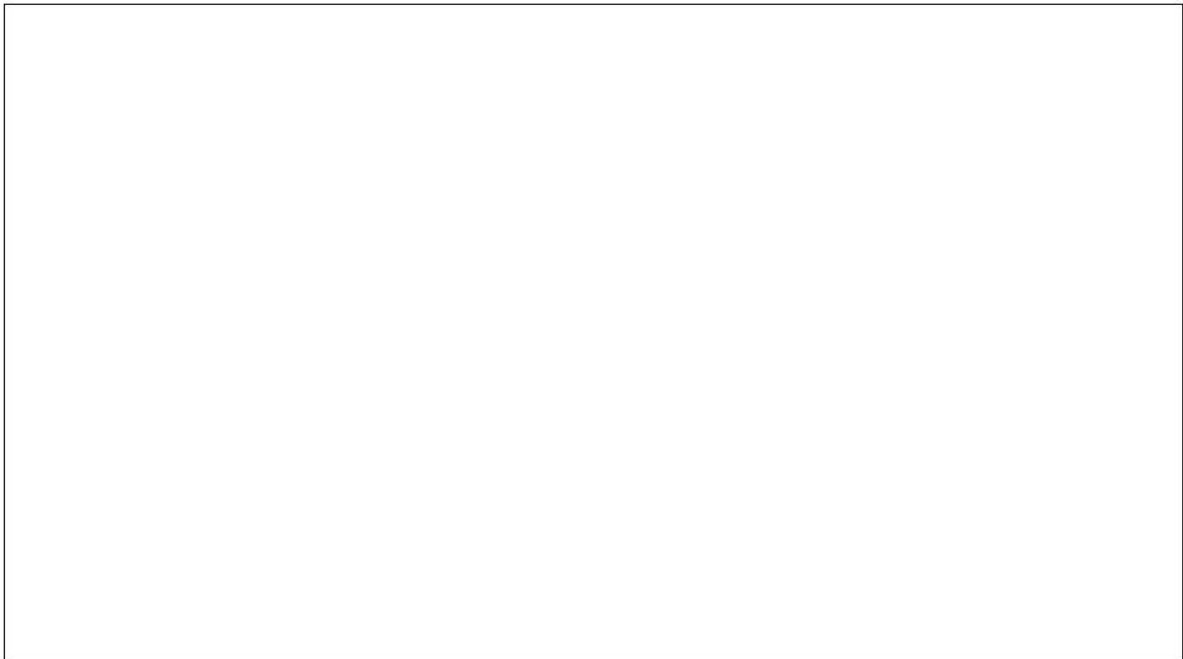
12. **Levels of intimacy** – it is about the two things: (1) the scale and (2) the proximity and distance.

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



Description



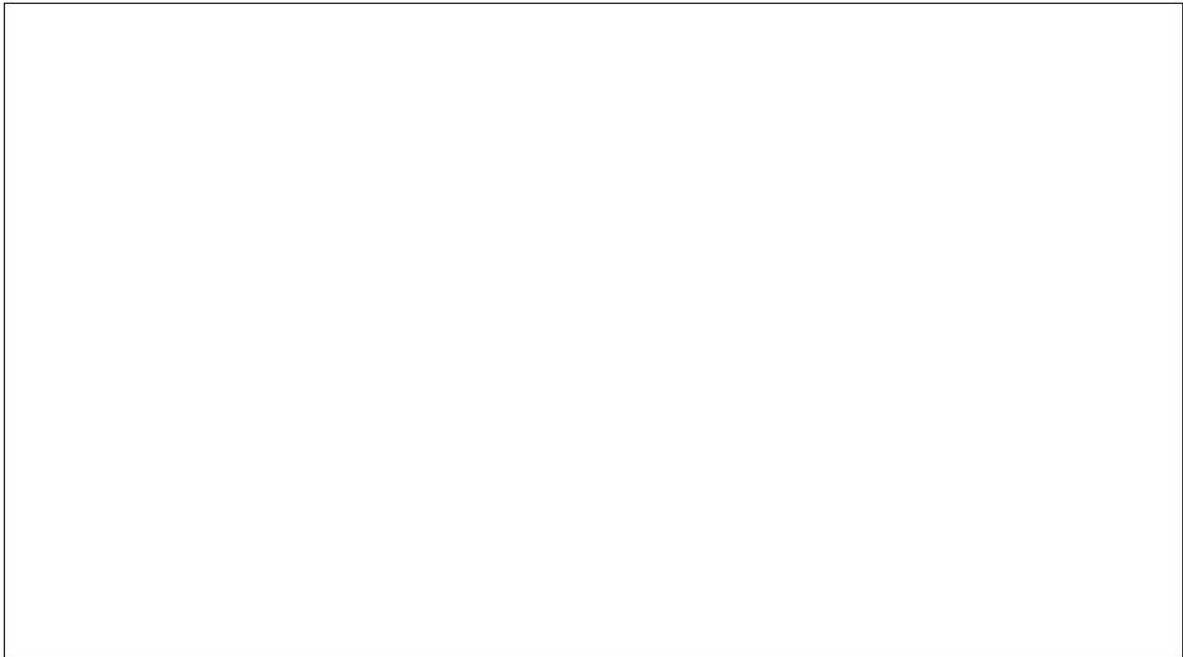
13. **The light on things** – how light falls not only on things and objects but also on the materials of the architecture. It is about where the shadows are, whether the surfaces are dull or sparkle or show their own depth.



Image



Description



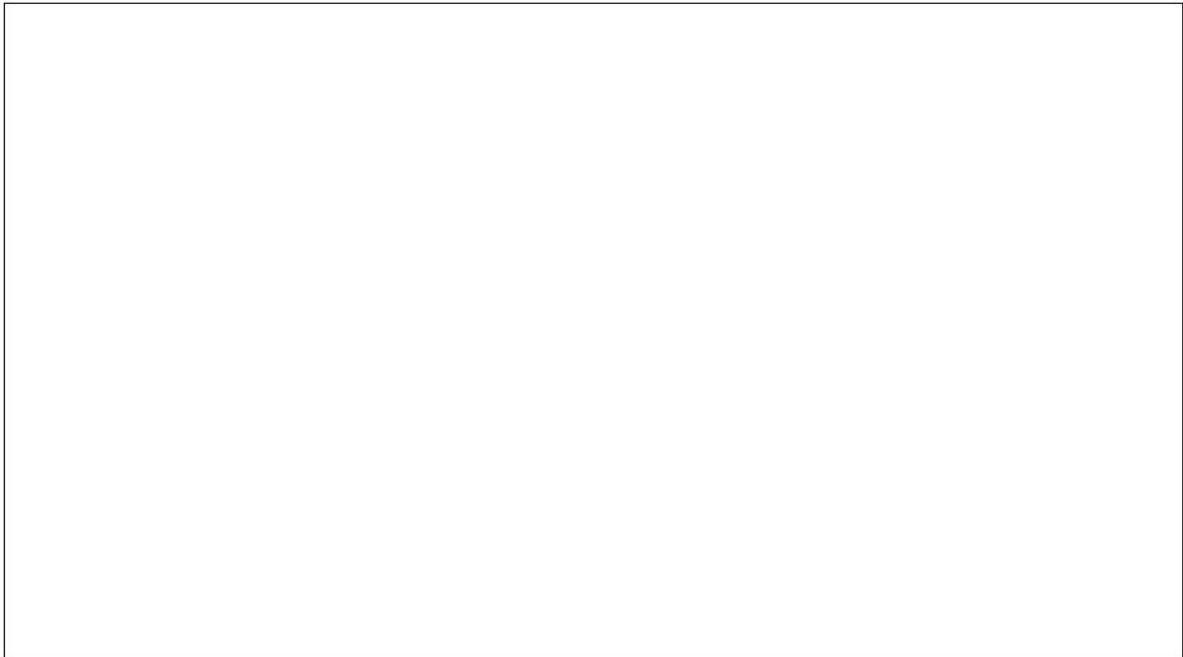
16. **The beautiful form** - architecture sometimes turn out surprisingly or unexpectedly different from the intention of the architects who created it. Sometimes its beauty happens many years after it is used – slow architecture.

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image




Description



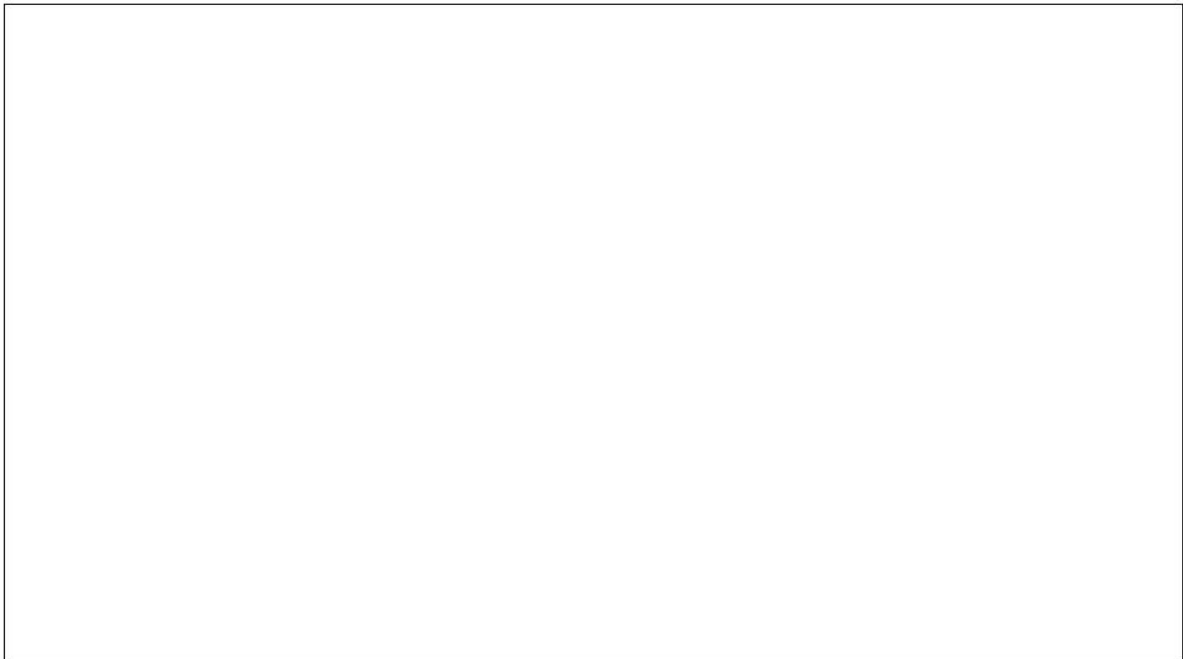
17. **Urbanity** - what makes the place urban?

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



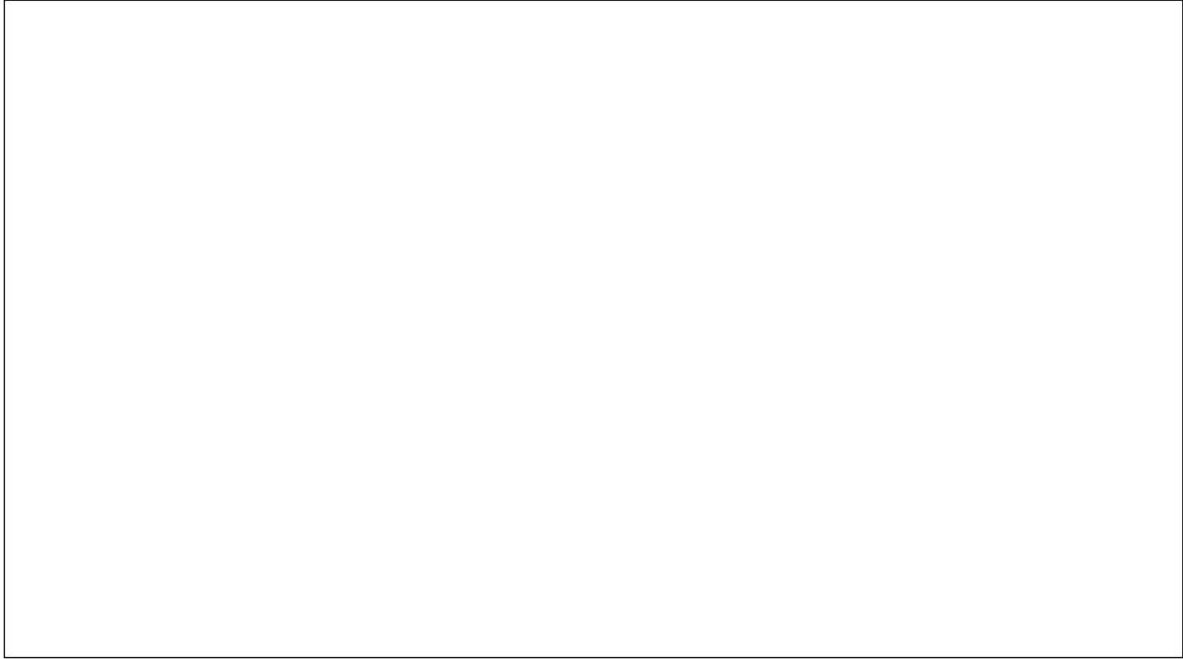
Description



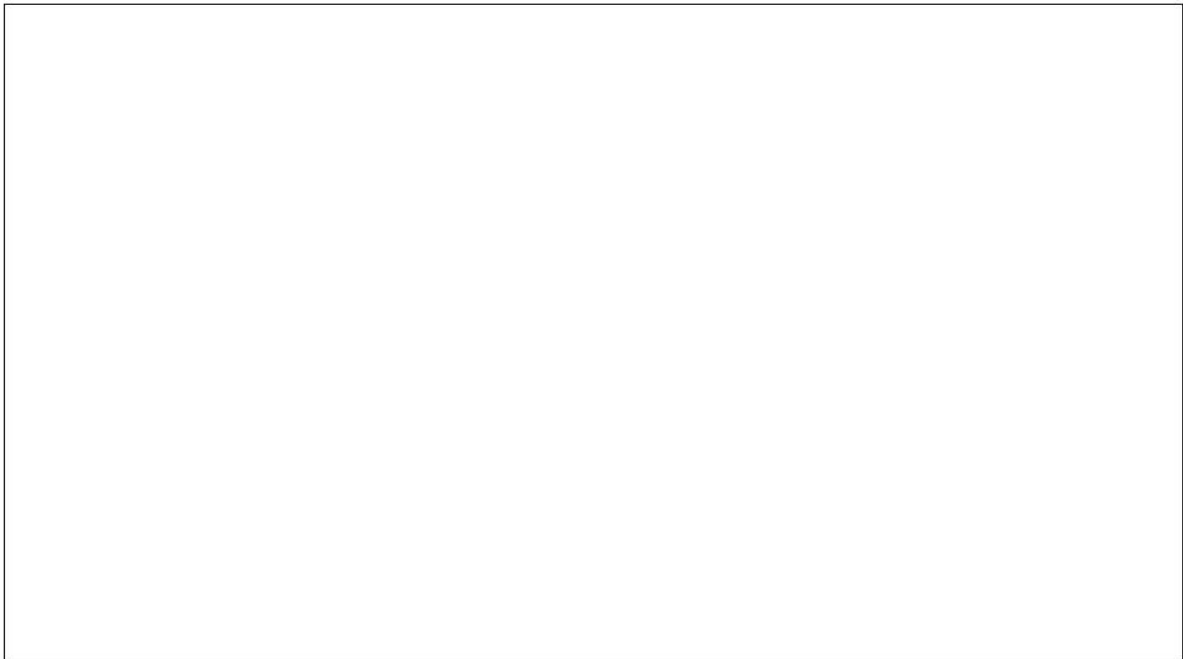
19. Collective image

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



Description



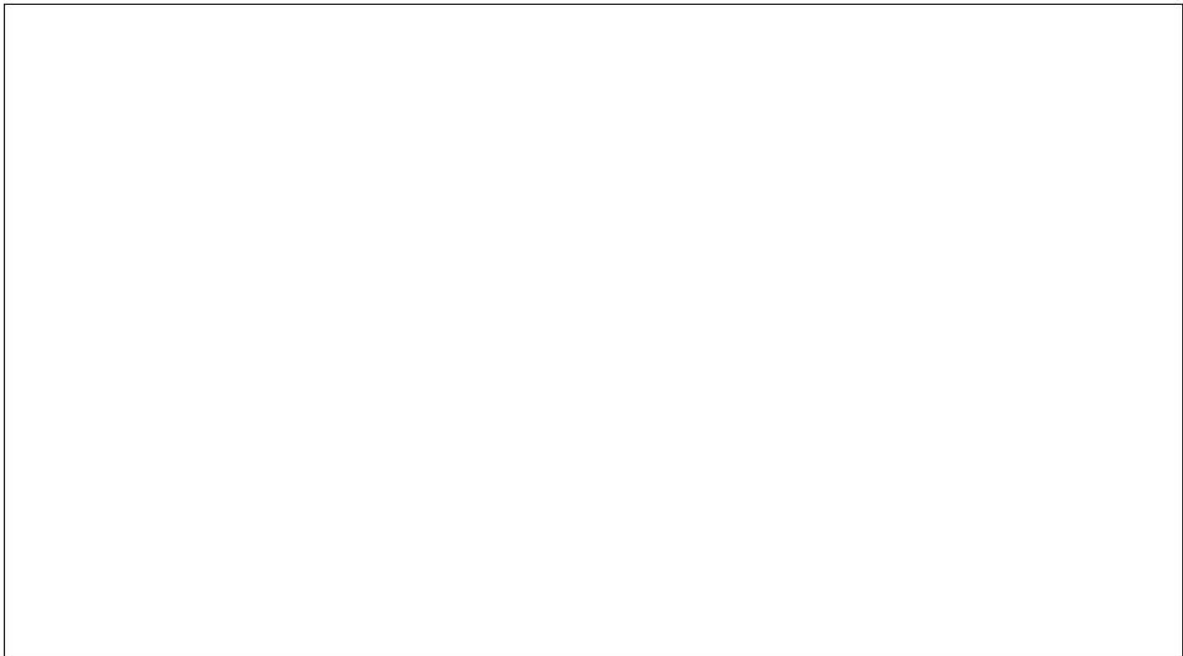
20. **Everyday spaces** - give examples of how people use the space, place or area.

1 2 3 4 5
Weak Strong

Image



Description



Appendix E: Observation Case – Noordzee, Brussels



Figure 60. Noordzee, Brussels

Background

The loss of a humble vendor of sea snail soup (*caricoles comme à Bruxelles*) in 2006 kick-started the Noordzee eatscape we know today. According to Wouter, the owner of the Noordzee, he was approached by the customers of his former neighbour to supply them with the sea snail soup. Wouter did not reject the idea, and has been offering cooked food ever since. Today the Noordzee is known for its seafood freshly prepared ‘live’ in four different ways – raw oysters, sea snail soup, fried calamari and grilled shrimp – served right on the pavement. The sight and smell of white smoke rising from the grilling station from the Sainte Catherine Square have become its trademark. Sainte Catherine Square is known as ‘the stomach of Brussels’, and is where the port of Brussels lies. It was and remains a crossroads where discerning customers find a market for a variety of fresh food items. Today the area is known for its open-air terraces serving food between March and October. More restaurants, like the Noordzee, offer standing-only service, which extends the open-air terrace to be a year-round event in Sainte Catherine Square (Figure 61).



Figure 61. Restaurant terraces around Sainte Catherine Square, Brussels. Eatscapes from A through E with stand-up commensality around the Sainte Catherine Square (2012). Image F shows the general atmosphere of the square.

Noordzee Checklist

Eating – stand-up commensality. The sea snail soup is eaten from a steaming pot while standing on the pavement. Customers line up side by side to commensal at the Noordzee, an extension of its street food tradition, which has become the identity of the Noordzee (Figure 60). The absence of seats at the Noordzee produces the condition for free movement and informal interaction among people. For these reasons, the physical contact between people tends to be spontaneous and dynamic. It is a matter of bending one's body a little to the left or to the right, passing on the dishes and moving over to another table while overhearing someone. From the borders between the tables and the cooking top, between the kitchen and the street, between the residential and the commercial areas, the commensal bodies give form to the room (Figure 62). Another benefit of the absence of seating is to make solitary eaters less visible. This is because the space between standing bodies can easily be bridged, so strangers are more likely to rub shoulders with each other, trade observations about the food, and have other unintended physical contacts. With the rising number of single households in Belgium, the stand-up commensality around Sainte Catherine Square is an opportunity for solitary eaters⁴⁰. Eating alone is not an individual choice, but rather an adaptation forced by changing household situations. Although more

⁴⁰ People who eat alone.

than half of Belgians claim they do not mind eating alone, in practice eating alone on regular basis is a matter of not having a choice, of lacking a primary commensal circle (Mestdag 2006). These single people prefer to turn the meal into a commensal occasion whenever they get the chance. The everyday stand-up commensality in Sainte Catherine Square offers solitary eaters a table to eat their weekday lunch at instead of a public bench or desk at work.

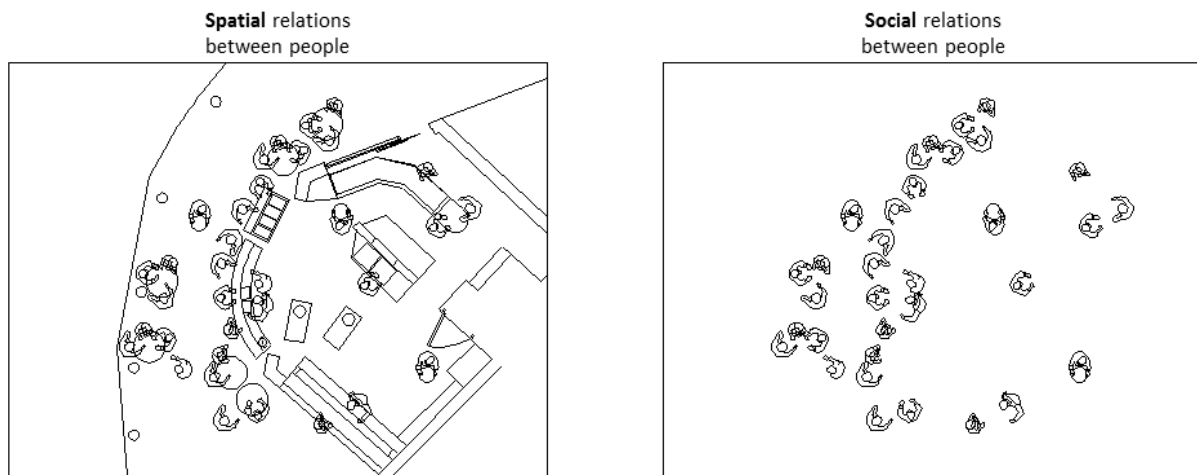


Figure 62. Room shaping commensality. Plan views of the Noordzee, Brussels, show (left) people interaction in the spatial setting and (right) the same people interaction without the context.

The act of commensality at the Noordzee is (in)formal because people eat standing up, street-food style, on the street rather than in a designated space. It becomes formal again when the proper tableware, cutlery and glassware are used. This set-up confirms that commensality is no longer a momentary, casual and disposable action by drinking wine out of wine glasses, eating soup with a stainless-steel spoon from a ceramic bowl accompanied by a side plate with bread and butter (Figure 63). Furthermore, shouting customers' names when their orders are ready, rather than giving them a number or calling out the name of the dish, creates a special atmosphere.

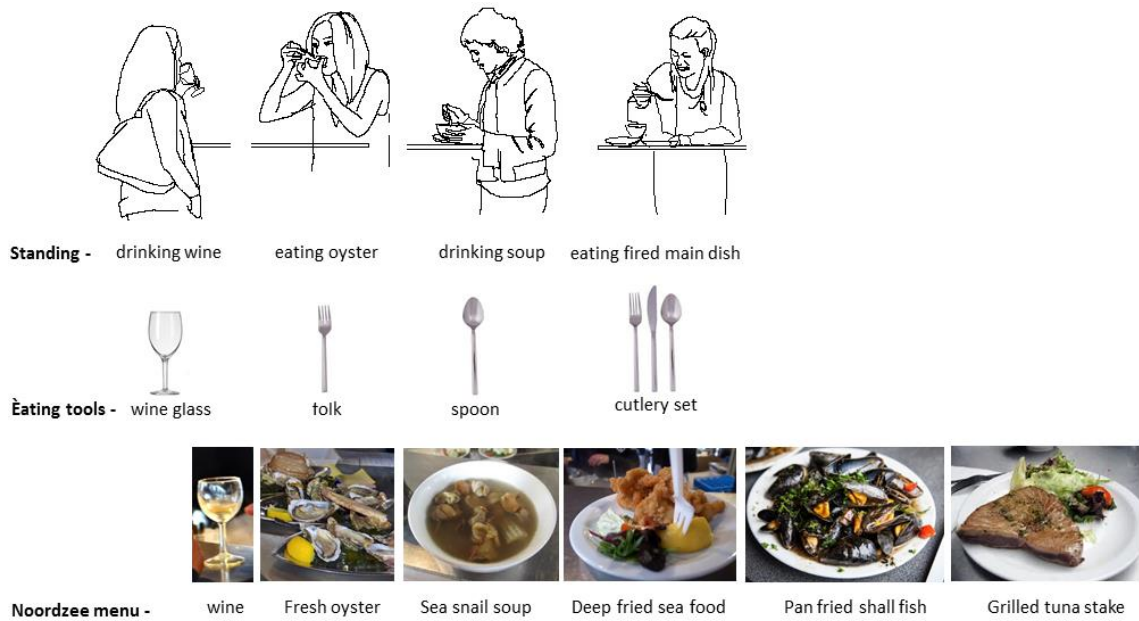


Figure 63. Food, utensils, and foodways at the Noordzee.

Food – seafood dishes from raw to cooked. The typical menu at the Noordzee was fresh oysters, fish soup, sea snail soup, deep-fried fish and grilled fish (Figure 63).

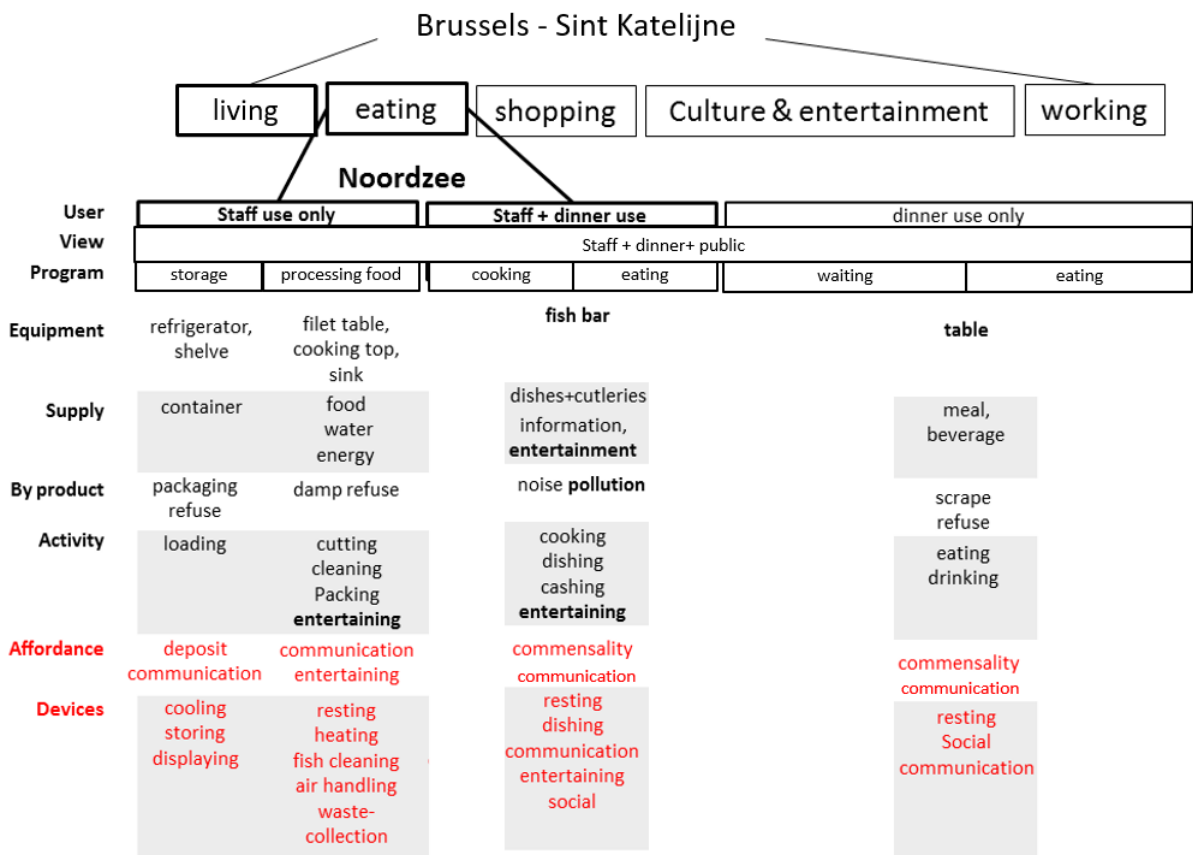


Figure 64: Noordzee eating activity chain diagram. The affordance refers to the quality of an object that invites an individual to perform an action. The affordances and devices indicate designs for enabling social interaction.

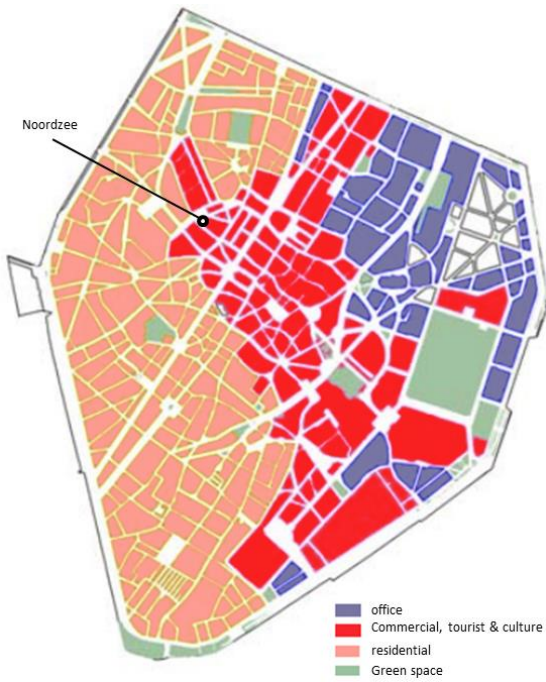


Figure 65. Noordzee is located between the residential and the commercial, between tourism and culture, in downtown Brussels.

Eating activity chain – in-between. Sainte Catherine Square is situated between commercial and residential areas in one of the most popular places for both visitors as locals, including the 350,000 daily commuters of Brussels (2011 data). In this in-between neighbourhood, the Noordzee is sandwiched between living and shopping functions.

The interior space of the Noordzee is a staff-only area equipped for storage, processing food, cooking and eating. The identity of the Noordzee is its opening up of the *professional control* spaces such as the kitchen to allow the processing of food to be seen by everyone. Opening these spaces communicates to the public that the Noordzee is open, informal and accessible. Watching food being prepared and talking to the people who cook the food is entertainment that is an integral part of the Noordzee experience. According to Solà Morales, ‘a good collective space is one that gives public value to what is private.’ The colourful display of seafood in the storefront window

and the vibrant scene of cooking and commensality in Sainte Catherine Square is how Noordzee shares the value of commensality with the public.



Figure 66. Plans of the Noordzee.

The tables mark the presence of the Noordzee in Sainte Catherine Square. They provide the anchor point for people and food to meet in the public space. Both the long, curved fish bar and the round tables (Figure 67) are shaped to promote the gathering of people. The

shallow dining surface (21 cm depth) at the fish bar is just large enough to accommodate eating, but there is no room for laying a book or a phone. There is no waiting room and not bathroom, which reminds the customers these tables are for fast commensality. However, there is the possibility of using the toilet at the Monk, the bar across the street (Figure 66).

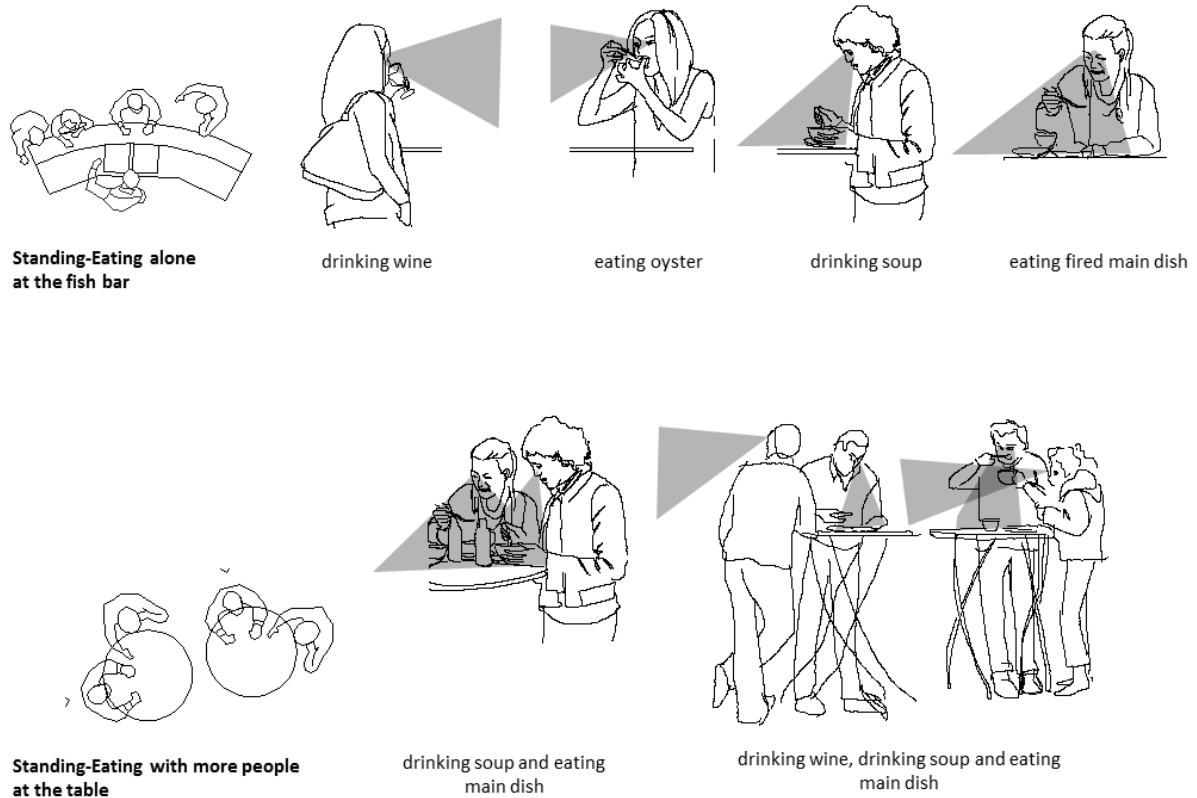


Figure 67. The shape of the table impacts on relations between people.

The body of architecture – in-between covered and uncovered spaces. The larger blue awnings with the logos printed on them and the large umbrellas covering the tables in the square are shading devices that define the Noordzee. They are points of reference on Sainte Catherine Square when the Noordzee is open. The ephemeral floating structures at eye level create a sequence of spaces (Figure 68) in which their colour and size dominate the memory of the square.



Figure 68. The NoordZee eatscape fieldwork checklist (part 1) shows the three different formats of the data collected from fieldwork: text (bottom), image (middle) and rating (top).

Material compatibility – contrast at eye level. It is the play between materials that reflects (stainless steel) and absorbs (blue canvas) the light. The brush-finished stainless steel surfaces of the fish bar catch the light and create visual attention at eye level for passers-by. The blue canvas hanging above the fish bar both absorbs and reflects light from the lamp under the awning, which gives a sense of calm for the eyes.

The sound of a space – in-between the kitchen and the cobblestones. The dining space of the Noordzee is exposed to the outdoors with neither partitions nor roof. On one side, the sounds of tyres rubbing against the cobblestones constantly reminds us that we are outside. On the other side, the sizzling sound of frying fish, the hammering sound from the cutting board, the voices of people greeting each other, calling names, reminds us that we are in the kitchen. It is the experience of being in-between the kitchen and the cobblestones.

The temperature of a space – cold face and warm back. Standing at the fish bar is a chilling experience, with the stainless-steel surface drawing the body heat from my hands when I reach out to my dishes. In contrast, I feel the warmth of the sun on my back despite being in the shade of the awning.

Surrounding objects – plentiful – food, wine and dishes. It is a commercial restaurant, and the objects on display have a professional and uniform look, from the pots and pans and the utensils and bottles to the ready-to-serve food. They communicate clearly that food can be eaten here even on the street. Most of the surfaces available are filled with food, wine bottles, glasses and dishes. Customers are left with the minimum surfaces for commensality.

Between composting and seduction – the smell and sight of food is sensuous. It is the combination of the open-air kitchen, the canopy and the narrow street together forming the smell channel. The smell of cooked food spreads the presence of the Noordzee throughout the surrounding area. When I get out of the Beurs metro station, which is 50 meters away from the Noordzee, my nose is guided by the aromatic smell of the grill and the fried fish. From the square, the aroma and the colourful sight of the cooked seafood mobilise people's physical movement, including turning their heads toward the source of the smell. Such experiences and memories of the place are sensuous.

The tension between interior and exterior – constantly change. Commensality takes place at the border between public and private space (*Figure 69*). This borderline is constantly being modified to be sometimes as thin as the width of the pavement, and sometimes as thick as the width of the square. The awnings, the fish bar and the tables are the movable devices for setting up different borderlines. On a sunny day, the border of the Noordzee expands across the square into the exterior. On a gloomy day, the border is limited along its pavement where the awning is opened wide, the lamps are illuminated, and the customers are lingering against the fish bar. The interior space is present along the pavement (see highlighted area in yellow in *Figure 69*).

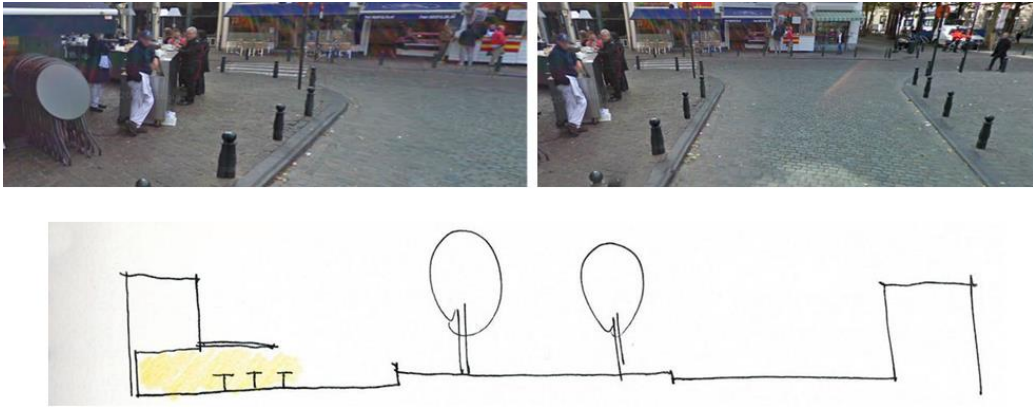


Figure 69. The continuation of the paving material, as well as the levelling between the pavement and street, extend the space across Sainte Catherine Square. The section was drawn by Cláudia Martins Diniz.

*The level of intimacy – a **new scale**.* The space under the awning is a covered space that offers the possibility for people to be tucked away from passers-by. The covered space recreates a new scale that does not exist in the interior. The small and intimate space brings together strangers to stand shoulder to shoulder with each other (Figure 70).

*The light of things – **warm light vs. sharp light**.* The downward lamps are placed high above the fish bar. They illuminate the covered area under the blue awning. People's faces are illuminated by the warm light bulbs at the almost the same level as their faces, which creates soft shadows on their facial expressions. In contrast, the reflected light from the stainless-steel surface of the fish bar is sharp, upward and uncomfortable for the eyes. People tend to keep their vision up to avoid the glare from the reflection, which contributes to people keeping their interaction at face-to-face level (Figure 70).

*Architecture as surrounding - **cosy atmosphere**.* The blue awning catches both the warmth from the lamps and the aroma from the cooking station. It enhances the cosy atmosphere, promoting a good mood and interaction among people (Figure 70).



Figure 70. The usage of the awning. Top left: front façade view of the Noordzee restaurant, Brussels. The other images show how the awning works as a light catcher, rain protector and smoke/scent catcher.

Material urbanity – continuous paving material with movable devices. The continuity of the paving material and the smooth transition across levels unites the square, the street and the pavement into one single place (Figure 69). The awning, the parasols, the standing tables and the fish counter are movable devices that produce different combinations of space according to the distance, the rhythm, the continuity, the sequence and the conflict between them.

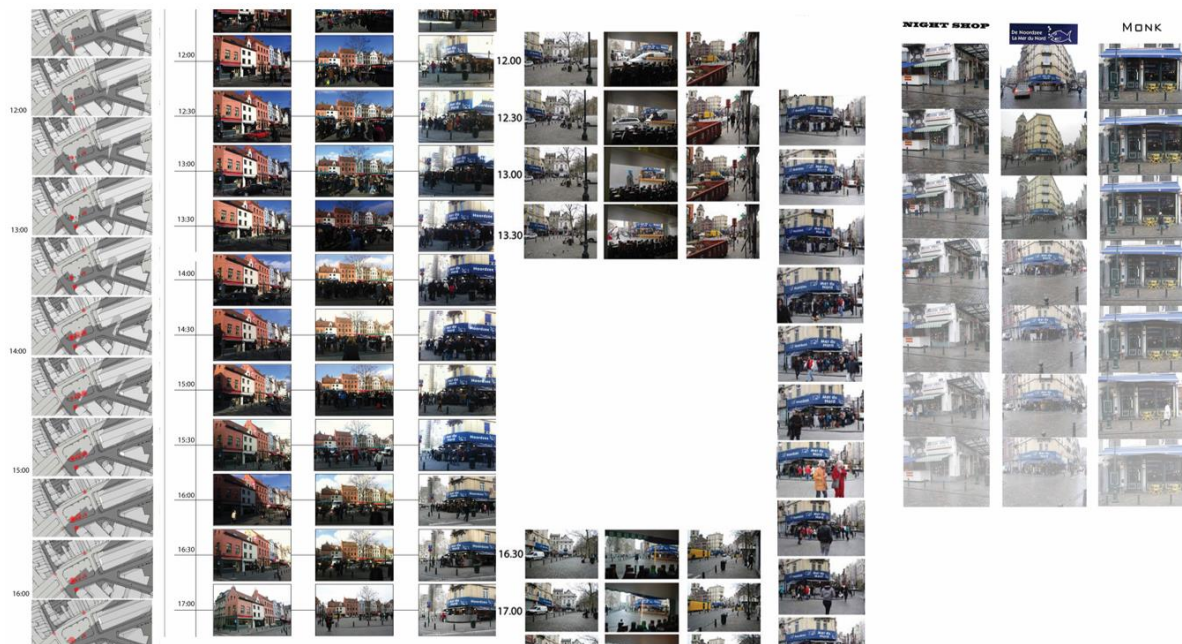


Figure 71. Noordzee time-lapse photographs – understanding how people improvise based on their tacit understanding at the Noordzee. The 24-hours time-lapse photographs were taken in February 2012 during the design studio with students from various angles as well as the 3D modelling of the site (far left column) to study light and shadow on the site (the red represents the positions of people).

Urbanity (urban vernacular) – stand-up commensality. The busiest time at the Noordzee is lunch between 11 AM and 2 PM; however, the quality of sunlight seems not to have much impact on the commensality (see far left column in Figure 71). The key is the good visibility of the Noordzee's kitchen. Noordzee, ABC vishandle, Jaloa brasserie and the weekly market together form the stand-up commensality identity of Sainte Catherine Square.

Temporality – tempo. Eating at the Noordzee is generally casual and fast. The duration of a meal is between 15 and 25 minutes, with a frequency of once or twice per week for the regular customers and once every visit to Brussels for visitors from other cities. The customers were already waiting at the kitchen, which reduces the service time to around 5 minutes. The opening hours are between 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM, which synchronizes with lunch and snack times in the everyday life of Brussels. At the end of the day around two hours are spent cleaning up the place.

Appendix F: Observation Case: Café da Matteo on Vallgatan, Gothenburg, Sweden

Background – The Café da Matteo is a place for *fika*, a coffee break, coffee date, or just a cup of coffee in Sweden. *Fika* performs an important social function as the ‘non-date date’ with colleagues, friends, or family members. Often two *fikor* are taken in a day at around 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Accompanying the beverage is light fare such as cookies, cakes and sandwiches. Bread, sandwiches and pizza are also on offer at da Mateo on top of the coffee and pastries. Da Matteo has several locations in Gothenburg, but this thesis only focuses on the one on Vallgatan.

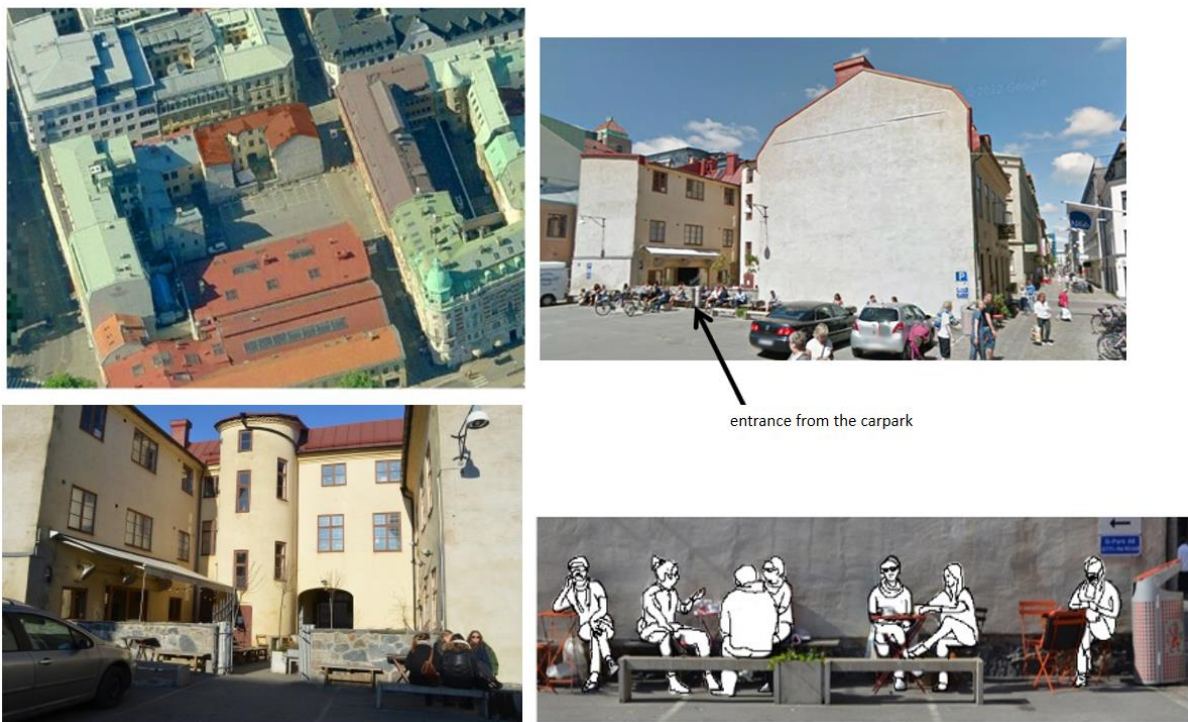


Figure 72. Café da Matteo, Vallgatan.

Da Matteo checklist

Eating – laid-back commensality. Food and beverage are consumed in the resting, laid-back and tranquil way such as sitting on the benches or at the coffee table (Figure 77).

Food – coffee and snack. Coffee, cookies, and pastries are available throughout the day, while bread, sandwiches and pizza are served during lunch and dinner hours. Finger foods dominate the menu, so utensils rarely need to be offered to customers (Figure 73). Eating with the hands does impact the informal table manners and table settings at da Matteo. Because the tables are not set in advance, customers are encouraged to use the table spaces however they like. They are used for waiting (resting arms, coffee cups, books), for working in a team or alone with one’s computer and for commensality. Just like an empty

canvas waiting for interpretation, the empty tables invite participation and co-production of the place with the customers. However, not all tables at da Matteo were left empty; some do have small objects such as flowerpots in the non-smoking area and ashtrays in the smoking area. These were visual indicators of the distinction between smoking and non-smoking tables.



Figure 73. Food, utensils, and foodways at da Matteo.

Self-service at da Matteo allows the customers to experience the products (coffee and snack) and the eatscape at their own tempo. With the open shelf, the freedom to pick up any merchandise and move anywhere within the property is at the heart of da Matteo's customer service strategy. Non-refrigerated food is displayed at the bar on the customers' side. The customers are free to move anywhere with minimum interference from the staff. All the basic supplies like utensils and drinking water are provided at a separate self-service station (Figure 74). The positive impact of the self-service is less tension and interdependence between staff and customers. All formal business, such as placing orders and paying for them, is conducted at the reception bar. The customers can spend the rest of the time at ease and at their own tempo. This type of service is commonly seen in low-budget restaurants in Sweden, but is not common for a coffee house. My assumption is that at da Matteo the focus is on their product, so they only need a handful of workers to

manage all their spaces which are difficult to reach. They are multiple small rooms on one floor that spread over several floors as well as both in-and outside.



Figure 74. Self-service.

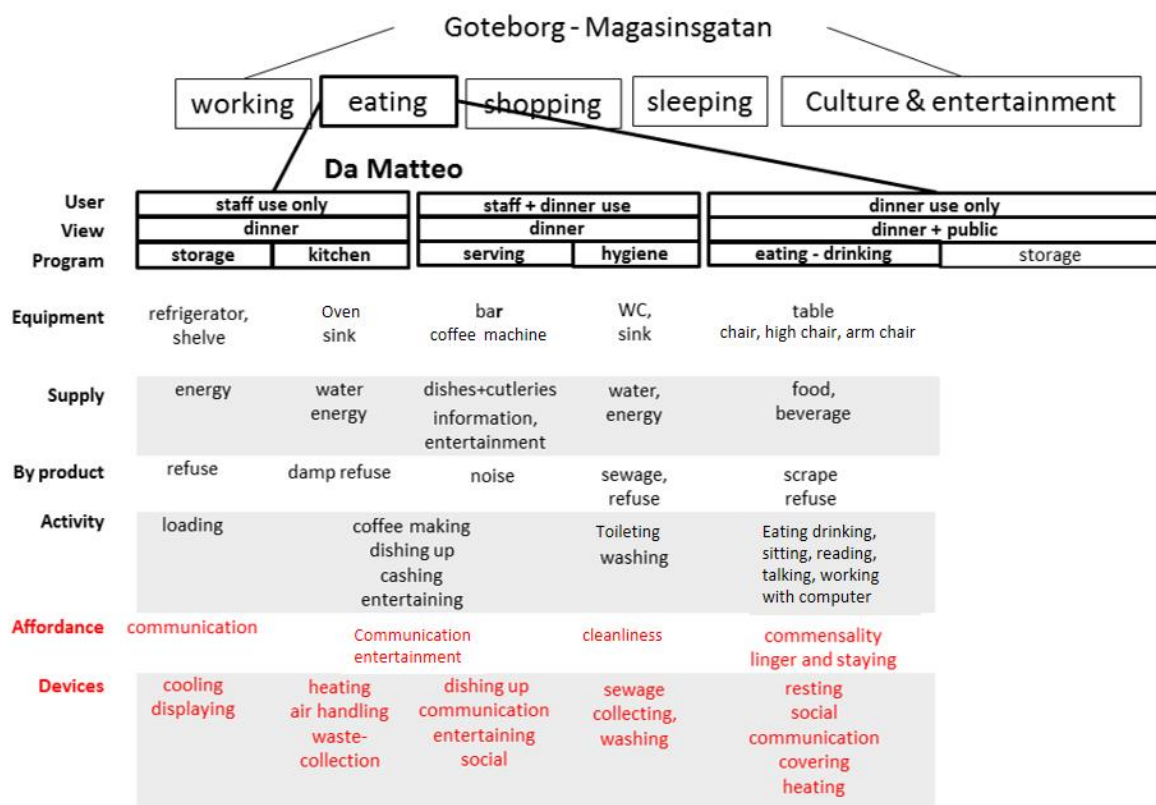


Figure 75. Café da Matteo eating activity chain diagram. The affordance (in red) is the *quality of an object*, which invites people to perform an action (to interact with it). The affordance and devices are designs that enable social interaction.

Eating Activity Chain

The Café da Matteo is a meeting place located between city blocks on a narrow shopping street called Magasinsgatan. It is sandwiched between work and life worlds, blurring the boundary between eating, working and living (Figure 75), which serves the need for communion and informal public everyday life. More precisely, it is located in-between

educational, office and commercial land uses, thus in the heart of everyday working life in downtown Gothenburg (Figure 76).



Figure 76. Café da Matteo is located in the central business district of the city amidst offices, retail and restaurants. Two high schools are located nearby.

Commensal in biology means two different species of plant or animal living in close association with each other such that one species benefits without harming the other. This description reflects the relationship between the entire city block where da Matteo is located and its adjacent car park. One side of the perimeter block is unbuilt, leaving a U-shaped group of attached buildings around an open courtyard that is exposed to the surrounding streets. Two da Matteo branches are located on opposite sides of the car park. The Magasinsgatan location not only serves coffee, but also houses the roastery and bakery (Figure 77). Da Matteo has taken advantage of the open space of the car park by making an extra entrance to its outdoor terrace. Over time, the boundary of da Matteo's exterior terrace has pushed beyond its limit and out onto the adjacent car park. The strip of seating area has grown along its outer walls and stretched along the entire length of the car park. In fact, the whole block of buildings where both da Matteos are located and the car park between them are all owned by the same private property owner. This makes the negotiation of such an arrangement less formal under the private arrangement. Da Matteo has placed permanent custom-made concrete benches along the side of the car park parallel to its own coffee tables and chairs, which are folded away daily. The concrete benches also work as barriers to cars. The sharing relation between da Matteo and the car park is defined by these parallel seats and the strip of *in-between space* where people from inside and outside the café can meet. It makes possible the interaction among people parking their cars, passers-by and the customers of da Matteo. The natural condition of its south orientation with sunlight filling a large open space enclosed from the wind is very pleasant. Cars are parked only along either side of the square, which is not an efficient use of space at all. However, it appears to be pedestrian-friendly, with a lot of open space for walking around, which benefits the commensal businesses around the area. Food trucks and

a fashion boutique around the car park offer seats for people to commensal. The car park can be very lively when filled with people. The landlord and businesses around the car park know well that liveable city making where people hang out, meet, linger, and gather to see and be seen is vital to their business. It is *micro-publics* (Amin 2002) at the human and local scales, where regular and face-to-face engagement between individuals takes place. The *prosaic public* (Hall 2012), where habitual and up-close forms of contact occur, can also emerge.

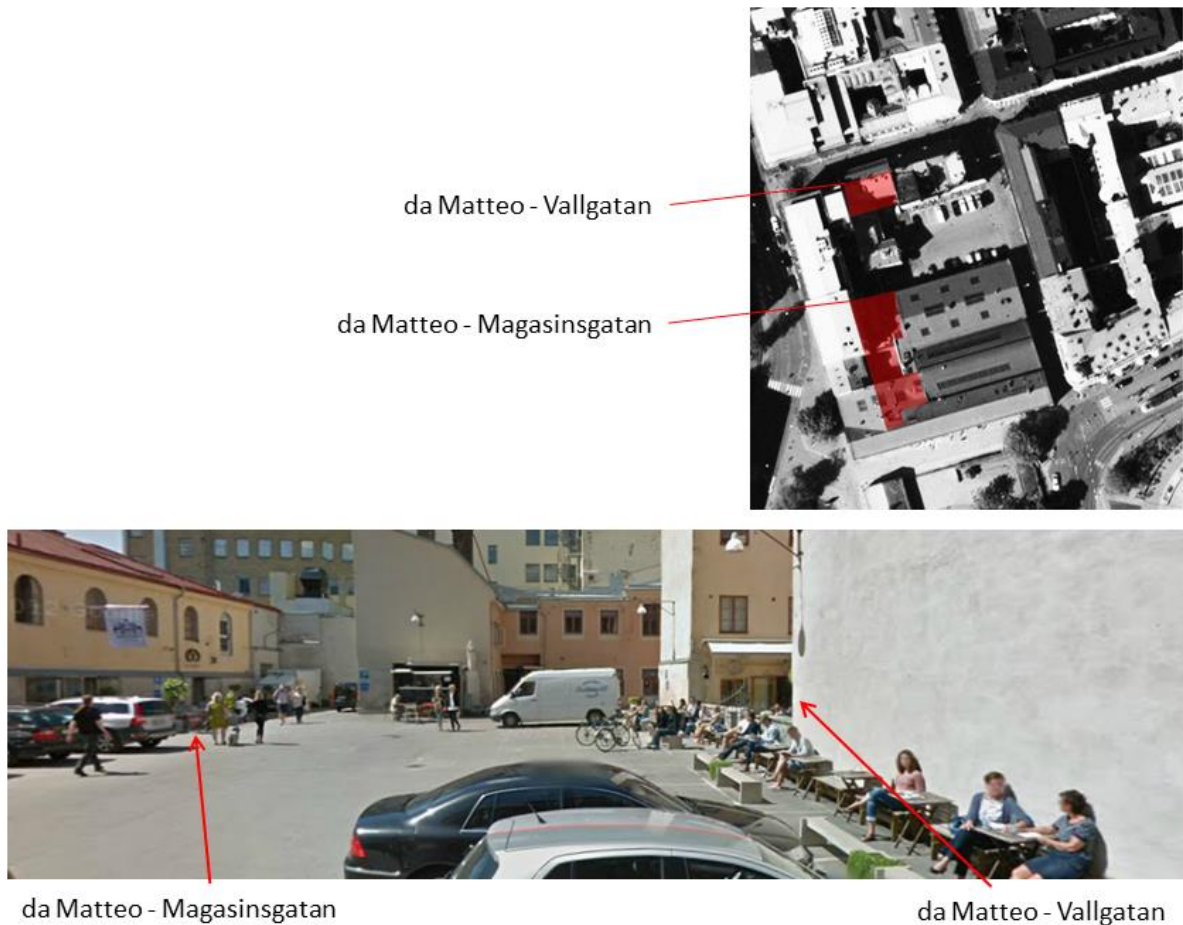


Figure 77: Panorama view of da Matteo from the car parking area.

The affordance at da Matteo is about communication of the idea of a place for people to linger – the joy of lingering in the sun, seeing and being seen. Unlike typical street terraces, where the seats are often street-facing, the outdoor seats at da Matteo are enclosed spaces (Figure 78) within its courtyard walls, under the arcade, and between cars. They offer a different level of intimacy.



Figure 78. View of the outdoor spaces at da Matteo, Vallgatan. The photographs were taken at different times between 2011 and 2013.

The body of architecture – The space between the blank gable wall (right image in Figure 72) and the car park is filled with concrete benches along the base of the wall. The open-plan interior space, with several small rooms, the courtyard, the space under the arcade, and the space between the parked cars together form the identity of da Matteo as a collection of varied and fragmented spaces. Furthermore, the blank gable wall suggests the possibility of future expansion and the ambiguous use of open space as a car park (Figure 79). Commensality takes place between the wall and the parked cars, where people and cars have constantly modified the space. Thus, da Matteo is the architecture of the in-between, of open and enclosed spaces, of constantly being *in progress*, which reflects the on-going redevelopment of the neighbourhood.

Material compatibility — wood, concrete and steel are the primary materials for the interior, with simple, do-it-yourself methods. Da Matteo had a tight budget when it started, which required making improvements one small step at a time, according to Johanssen, one of the original employees. He claims that was the strategy and the only way to improve and maintain da Matteo. The up-cycled high chairs and in-situ concrete benches have the characteristic of *found objects* where ‘the notion of attribute contributes of positive quality to the pre-existing’ (Lichtenstein 2006). I experienced the place, the objects, and their texture with an appreciation for the people who produced them, and for the production process itself. The rawness of the way these materials were handled gave da Matteo a *home-made* and *craft* texture. The history of the place and the objects was readable through the imperfection of the material and its construction because of their use or *misuse*. Nothing is in perfect condition, which reminds visitors of *home*. This is where I developed the sense of *feeling at ease*, *trust*, and *belonging* to the place. However, during the interview with Johanssen, he was not aware of the impact of the introduction of catalogue furniture to the recent transformation of da Matteo at that time. I will further discuss this issue later in the discussion part of this chapter.

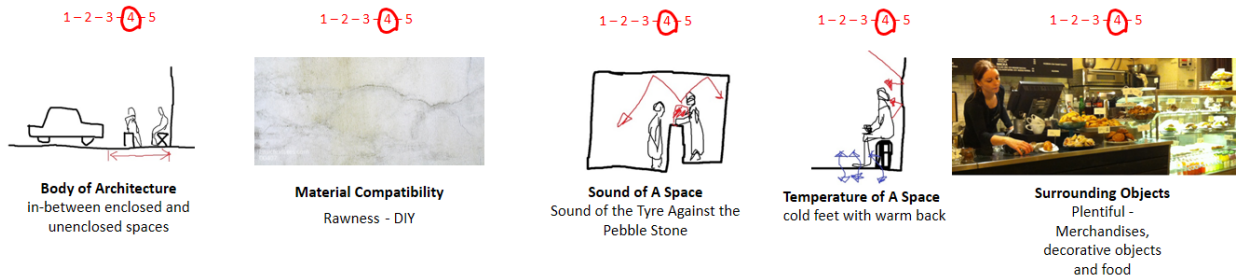


Figure 79. Café da Matteo eatscape fieldwork checklist (part 1) shows the three different formats of data collected from fieldwork: text (bottom), image (middle) and rating (top).

The sound of a space – The sounds of coffee being made include the machine grinding the beans, the boiling water, the steaming water rushing through the filter, the hot steam frothing the milk, and the beating of the coffee filter’s handle against the rubber beam over the refuse container. These sounds became the backdrop of the place, and I got used to them while waiting in the queue to place my order. Quickly they merged together with the commercial music from the radio that was playing through the speakers. However, the low ceiling at the bar area made it a relatively enclosed space, which amplified the sound of the coffee making when sitting near the area. In contrast, the sounds of footsteps and talking between people was hardly noticeable.

The temperature of a space – The blank wall along the car park that was made of bricks worked as a temperature regulator, releasing warmth absorbed from the sun, and a back rest for people to lean against. At the time I was sitting in this space, the concrete floor absorbed my body heat, leaving me cold on my feet and, in contrast, warm on my back.

Surrounding objects – The interior gives a feeling of plenty, with merchandise and displays of food in front of, behind and even along the passageway of the reception bar. There are bookshelves with selected books and magazine with coffee and food-related themes filling the walls of the interior. They make visitors feel welcome to work, read, or contemplate. The wooden chairs with comfortable seats and lots of table surfaces are a welcome sight for placing laptops or reading materials on them. The same concept applies to some of the interior walls where flyers and posters of local events can be found. These objects are invitations to interpretation and appropriation, making da Matteo the living, meeting and working rooms for many who come to use this part of the city. Interestingly, the reflection list (Figure 80) an industrial design student put together includes words that reassemble the experience of the place as a mixture of raw, warm and robust texture.

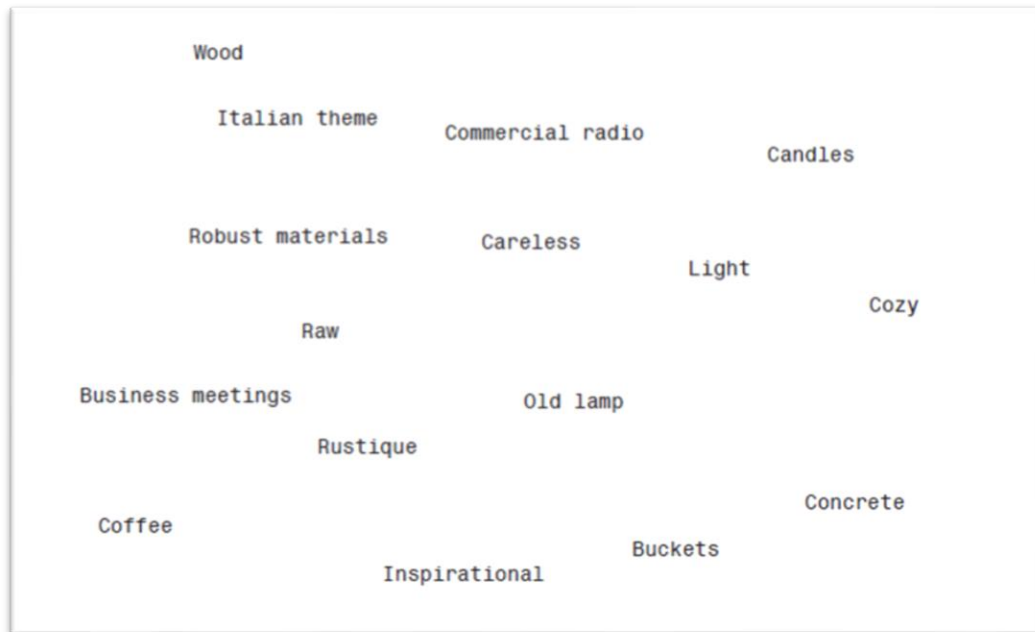


Figure 80: result from exploring da Matteo Eatscape with students (Chalmers) Feb 2012.

Between composting and seduction – The Café da Matteo literally reused an existing residential building as a coffee house. The space is composed of many small rooms, which makes walking through da Matteo feel like visiting an old home. We move through room after room, through big spaces and small spaces, odd spaces and surprising spaces, a play between layers of walls and openings (Figure 81).

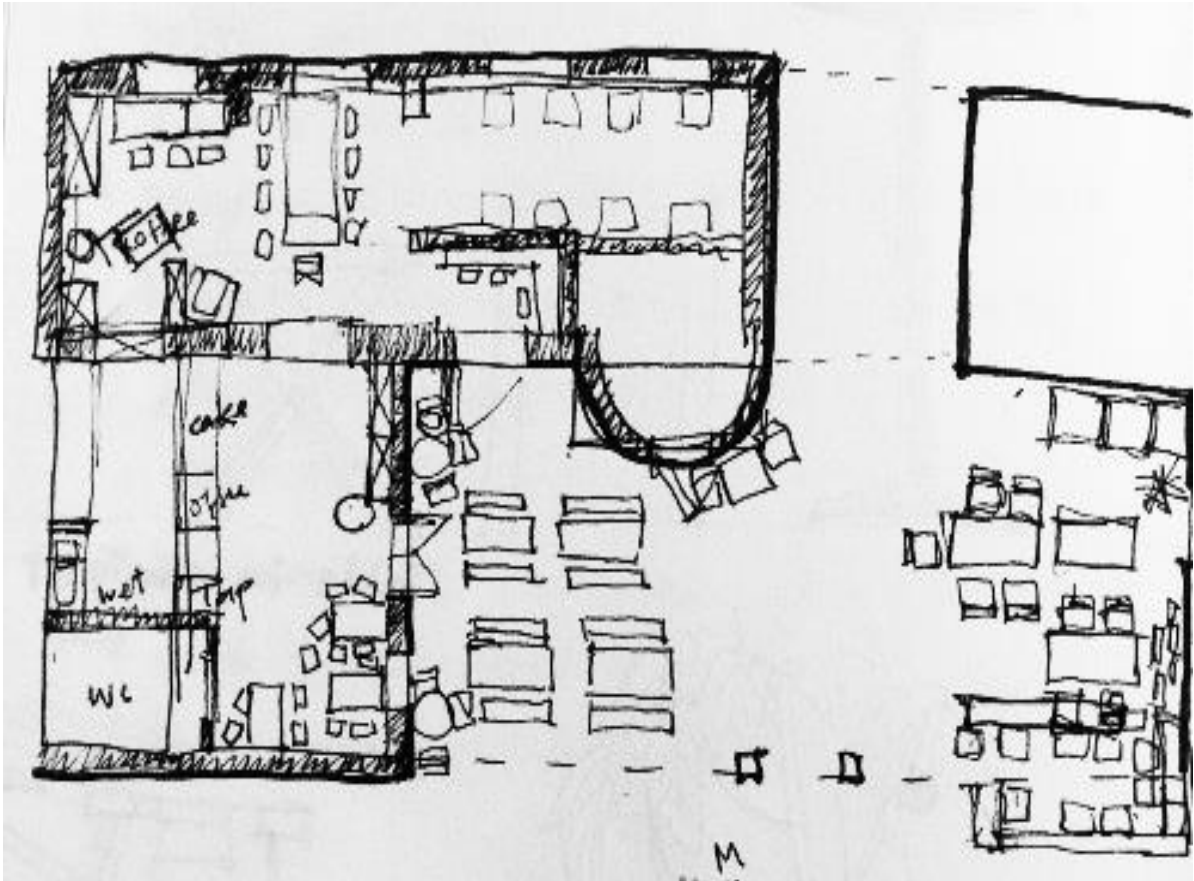


Figure 81: reception and bar area (images by Chotima ag-ukrikul).

Tension between interior and exterior – The visual connection between interior and exterior – The view of the outside spaces and the natural light are brought into the interior through the windows. The seats are aligned in front of the windows. The relationship between people inside and outside is literally *to see and be seen*.

Level of intimacy – The suspended space created between the parked cars and the wall is an intimate space. It is the product of the contrast between two very different scales. On one hand, the concrete seats are lined up to mark the limit of the car park; on the other hand, these are seats where people lean back against the blank expanse of a five-story gable wall. Such an un-noticeable and tug-away space makes it - an intimate space. The people sitting in the two lines of seats can relate to a different level of intimacy than those who just walk by. However, this intimate space disappears if there are no parked cars: with the combination of the large space and the large blank wall, it is no longer an intimate space. It is an example of adding objects that contract the scale, like cars in this case, to creating a new scale that does not exist in this space alone.

The light of things – The warm, natural light of the interior was the result of defused daylight filtered through a white awning in the front of the main entrance to the courtyard

(Figure 82) after being reflected from the surrounding yellow facades. The effect of the light makes the interior space feel warm, mellow and relaxed.



Figure 82. Warm and mellow light effects from the courtyard.

Architecture as surrounding – Da Matteo appeared to be a surreal place when I first saw it in 2009 with people sitting in the car park as if sunbathing along the coast or looking out over the harbour (Figure 83). The contrast between the scale of the people and the open space facing the gable wall was so large that it seemed to blur the line of seats in front of the large blank gable wall. This was perhaps a side effect of the figures of people being too small in comparison for me to focus on anything in detail. I do not recall seeing anyone familiar, or perhaps the lack of visual clarity has blurred my memory too. It was a relaxing experience to be at and around the open site (car park) and to interact with people and things (cup of coffee) along the broken wall with unfocused and peripheral vision (Pallasmaa 1996).



Figure 83. View of the seats along the side gable walls.

Coherence – The co-producing that creates a sense of belonging. The self-service and open plan at da Matteo allow the customers to experience the products and the place at their own tempo. The unfinished, casual, do-it-yourself attitude of the place invites people to engage and co-produce the place – makes it into their own space. When it becomes their space, people also feel that they belong to the place.

Beautiful form – The sight of people’s faces lining up while they seated along the blank gable wall (Figure 12). People sit side-by-side on the benches facing passers-by with their backs leaning against the wall. Pausing along the wall, one can observe people’s faces, and the face-to-face visual communication left a positive impression on my memory of the place.

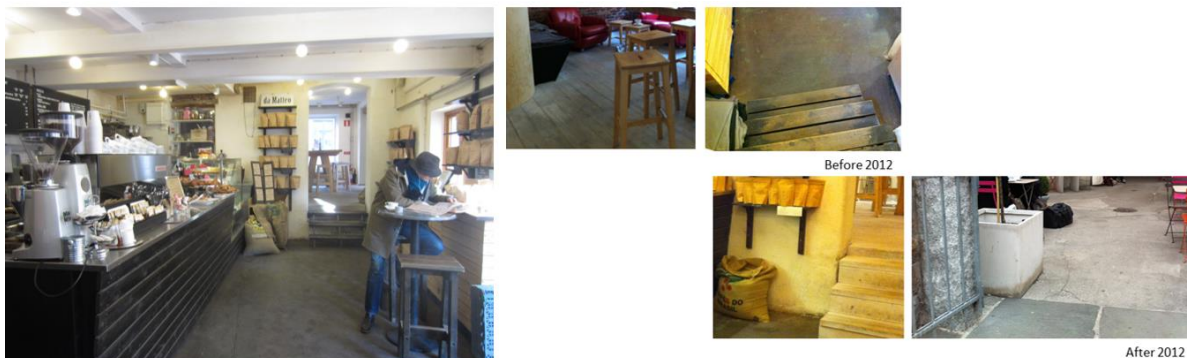


Figure 84. Reception bar area: the wooden floor and steps were replaced with concrete in 2012.

Material urbanity – The smooth transition between indoor and outdoor spaces. It is accomplished by the continuation of the flooring material and floor elevation from da Matteo into the adjacent public space (car park). The wooden floor continues from the most intimate reading room in the deepest part of the plan up a few steps and into the bar area (Figure 75). From here the level of the floor continues all the way into the courtyard area. The transition between the courtyard and the parking area is marked by stone slabs, the same material used in constructing the garden wall. Even though the flooring material is somewhat different, a mixture of natural stone and concrete slab, the elevation is all the same, which makes walking from one area to another smooth and relaxing.

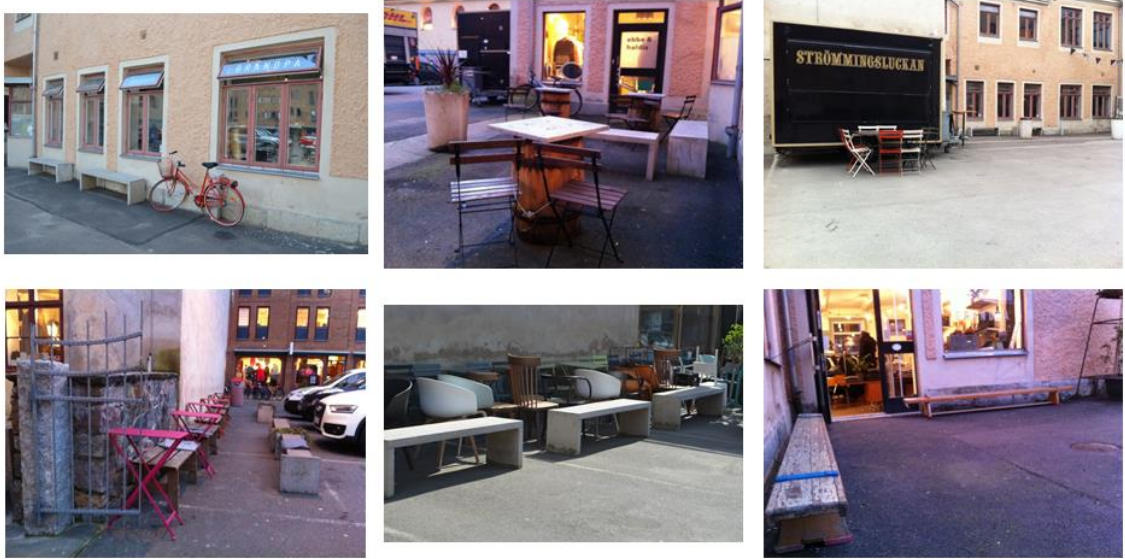


Figure 85. The adjacent car park becomes a public space for leisurely sitting.

Urbanity (urban vernacular) – Sipping coffee and sitting and lingering on the benches around the square form the identity of the place (Figure 12) in my memory. Each time that I visit da Matteo, I see more people lingering in some kind of sitting place, including from the other businesses around the adjacent car park. It is the ‘sit around square’ where lingering commensality becomes one of the community’s life makers. Even the boutiques offer seats in front of their storefronts (Figure 76). The community life is people sitting around and sharing the sun, the view (people watching), and the space (open space at the car park). sBased on the time-lapse photograph (see Figure 86), direct sunlight is a very important factor that contributes to the popularity of the space around the car park and of da Matteo. It shows people’s tacit understanding of da Matteo – for example, how they improvise and act under the sun.



Figure 86. Time-lapse photography of da Matteo, Vallgatan, in February 2012 by Yanan.

Temporality – Typically, the duration of stay at da Matteo is 15–30 minutes for people taking a coffee break, but there are also many who choose a longer stay of an hour or more for working, reading and meeting. The opening hours on weekdays are 08:00 AM – 7:00 PM, which synchronizes with breakfast and break times between working hours. It is a place that has a constant flow of people.

Appendix G: Design Cases – Byparken in Ørestad, Denmark

Byparken, a park in Ørestad, Denmark, was my own exploration case that was initiated in the context of the Exploring Fieldwork PhD course⁴¹ to discuss the *catalytic act* as a fieldwork method. It was done in a tandem setting in which two PhD students teamed up to discuss fieldwork methods. I partnered with Essi Kuure, a service design researcher from the University of Lapland, to study Byparken as our fieldwork site for testing the combination of the catalytic act as a method and the commons as a concept. Byparken (Figure 87) is a relatively large and open green space that is surrounded by ten-storey residential buildings, many with a mix-use function on the ground floor. The research question ‘Does common good exist in Ørestad?’, which came from Kuure’s research focus, was relevant to both of us after visiting the place. We further agreed on *commensality* as the catalytic act to be our fieldwork method for understanding if there is a connection between what is considered common (shared) good and the natural conditions in a public outdoor space in Ørestad.



Figure 87. View of Byparken, Ørestad.

It was the first collaboration between Kuure and myself, so it was necessary to think aloud and assign clear roles for each of us to play during our fieldwork. We agreed that the scenario of our catalytic act would be a lunch appointment in Ørestad between two design researchers who do not yet know each other – we both played ourselves in real life. The Byparken was chosen as the picnic site following previous fieldwork by Kuure, who claimed

⁴¹ *Exploring Fieldwork 2015: a critical consideration of empirical methods and habits of mind in design research. Tutors: Thomas Binder (course leader), Joachim Halse, Marias Hellström (Malmö University) and Andrea Kahn (Columbia University).*

that the 'common good' seemed to be at stake there. The catalytic act in Byparken consisted of four acts: the tourist, the preparation, the picnic and the reflection.

The tourist act started in the early evening before the day of the fieldwork, when we exchanged WhatsApp⁴² messages, acting as tourists seeking to make an appointment for a picnic on the following day. Being the tourist, I took a bike ride the next morning to enjoy the sights of an environment that was foreign to me. Eventually, I turned up at Kuure's hotel lobby in Ørestad, arriving late after taking a detour bike through Amagerfælled⁴³. The detour fulfilled my tourist's curiosity and totally changed my perception of Ørestad from my preconception of the out-of-scale and lifeless new town on the outskirts of Copenhagen to a great location in proximity to both city and nature. With my late arrival, **the preparation act** didn't start until 11:00 AM, when we went shopping for the materials needed for the picnic at the Field shopping centre. Even though we were tourists having a one-time picnic, we explicitly indulged ourselves with stainless steel cutlery, ceramic plates, drinking glasses and waterproof tablecloth. Our focus was more on enjoying the day out as tourists rather than being cost-conscious about buying research equipment. As a consequence of this decision, we spent equal amount of time on preparing and buying these items at the Field shopping centre as our time being at the Byparken.



Figure 88. The picnic at Byparken on Wednesday, 19 August 2015.

⁴² WhatsApp Messenger is a cross-platform mobile messaging app that allows users to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS.

⁴³ The large recreation area situated between the centre of Copenhagen and Ørestad.



Figure 89. Back in the seminar room, the presentation of the picnic at Byparken on Thursday, 20 August 2015.

It was not until 1:00 PM that **the picnic act** finally started. We wrapped one of the picnic tables with the thick waterproof tablecloth from the Field shopping mall. Our initial idea was to use it for sitting on the grass, but we discovered a few picnic tables on the site. Wrapping the table worked well against the strong wind, thanks to the choice of the solid cutlery and plates that were heavy enough to hold everything in place without blowing away. We used three cameras to record the performance: one on the tripod shooting long video clips from an elevation view at a distance of five meters from the picnic table and two other smartphone cameras for taking snapshots at the table. No sketches or written notes were produced during our fieldwork; instead, we were thinking aloud to each other.

Finally, **the reflection act** took place in the seminar room where we reconstructed and re-enacted our fieldwork scenario for the other participants (Figure 89 and Figure 89). It might sound like a big failure to admit that ‘no informers’ actually came to our table except one family that passed very close by. That was the only moment during the picnic act that we exchanged looks with the possible informers. Both Kuure and I could describe every member of that family in great detail even without photographs to remind us. With this experience, we asked ourselves, ‘Was the urban commons at stake here?’ The answer was a surprising ‘no’. Even the brief encounter with the family left a positive impression of Ørestad and its people on our memory. It became clear that people don’t just stop and

greet strangers even when they have the opportunity. I recalled that we came across two teenagers who looked curious about us when they saw us unwrapping the table at the end of our fieldwork. Was the fact that we were reclaiming the 'urban commons' by wrapping up public property what sparked their curiosity? As one of our fellow researchers, Aditya Pawar, put it, '... by the personalisation of the picnic table with your tablecloth. You are not only expressing your individuality, but you are also recruiting people who share similar values.' We had an in-depth conversation with these girls in which we were able to discuss 'the common good' issue with them though it was only a brief encounter.

