

REGENERATIVE PLACEMAKING

Ecosociospatial Practices Beyond Conventional Sustainability

Doctoral Thesis by Sigrid Laurel Östlund

Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering – Chalmers University of Technology

ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand and develop a designerly interpretation of the growing call to move *beyond (conventional) sustainability* that emerged in the late 1990's. It does so through a theoretical and practical exploration of the implications of regenerative design principles for placemaking. As a testing ground for this mode of working, it explores publicly shared spaces that treat waste as a resource. More specifically: placemaking practices that try to make sense of, and adjust, people's relationship to waste-making practices.

Public space and waste management are generally considered to be on the opposite ends of the spectrum of what is to be seen and unseen in the built landscape. But as we move towards more regenerative modes of waste management, where waste is treated as a resource, human interaction with the conversion of waste into a resource becomes ever more present in societies and built environments. It is therefore relevant to investigate how spatial design can contribute to developing and supporting a culture and system of reuse.

This design inquiry develops design theory, practices and places that communicate regenerative ways of relating humans, nonhumans, societies and ecosystems to each other through *ecosociospatiality*. It explores ways to foster a regenerative society through embodied encounters with spatial practices and places that foster such a mindset. It does so through pondering, experiencing and generating these types of places. It also does so by considering their implications for design thinking and spatial practices beyond conventional sustainability, i.e. the regenerative spatial practices and design thinking involved in regenerative placemaking and spatial design.

The study identifies ecosociospatial forms and practices where *waste-resource relationships* are involved in *spatial narrativity*. It delineates the nonmodern *ecosociotechnic ontology and approach* as well as different scales of regenerative (design) thinking and practice. It also suggests the implications of these for *regenerative spatial poetics* and their implications for advancing discourses and enactments of sustainability. The study does so by testing and developing research methodologies that fit into what could be considered a *prospective method assemblage for design-oriented performative research*.

Key words: *beyond sustainability, placemaking, regenerative (spatial design) thinking, spatial narrativity & poetics, waste-resource, nonmodernity, ecosociospatiality, ecosociotechnics, performative research*