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To Flow, to Settle — on Belonging to the Seashore

Tides are the rise and fall of sea levels caused by the gravitational forces from the Moon and the Sun, and the rotation of the earth. This liminal world — the land between wet and dry — churn a kaleidoscope of life, of biological and experiential richness.

Proceeding from an arts-based doctoral study, this essay explores urban foreshore design through a transdisciplinary approach; including fields such as landscape architecture, geology, oceanography, marine biology, city planning and development. Moreover, the essay revolves around the inherent structure and dynamics of the littoral zone — as *to flow*, *to go forth* and *the going away*, hence the *edge* — as a landscape *belonging to the seashore*. With regard to the urban shore face, the text discuss how to provide for landscapes of human belonging.

The urban foreshore is an *edge* — often seen and represented as a narrow hard line. In a case study, this edge is analysed as it manifests today along the new Harbour Promenade, perceived by many as one of the Norwegian capital's most significant urban development projects. Thus, the essay examines the urban shorefront as a *landscape* on the edge.

The sea washes the coastline, going forth and *going away*. Along the urbanized waterfront, humans have removed themselves from the natural shore environment's functions and qualities. As is the case of so many of the Worlds harbours, the former industrial port of Oslo is redeveloping into residential and recreational areas. On this point, it is pertinent to question the transformation practices per se and the seeming lack of design of the space between land and sea. The study seeks to take a fresh gaze upon this transitional space; Envisioning a regaining of some of its richness.

Humans use intertidal regions for living, livelihood and recreation: “Nearly 40% of the global population lives within 100 km of the coast, and population densities in these areas are generally high” (Firth et al. 2016: 191). This is a fact that is not necessarily in favor of the intertidal organism inhabiting this zone, where topographical complexity and slope determines the area available for the littoral species. Thus, the essay elaborates on littoral habitat functions and qualities, as they might be beneficial to all — as we are all creatures connected to the seashore.

For the sake of arriving at new solutions and some basic tools, a transdisciplinary team currently develop demo-cases adapted for the inner Oslo Fjords urban rim. The short-term goal is to design and test interventions that enhance algae, animal and eventually human experiential diversity. The long-term aim is to disseminate a landscape perspective and ecosystem engineering techniques in the marine environment in Norway. The underlying PhD-study is design driven, seeking new approaches and design propositions for this specific landscape; Going away from established practices and suggesting a new way of *going forth* ...

[466 words]

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