

Reviewing *Landscape Fieldwork: How Engaging the World Can Change Design*—On the Transcendent Action Potential of Fieldwork

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ABSTRACT

Written by Gareth Doherty, *Landscape Fieldwork: How Engaging the World Can Change Design* elevates fieldwork from a preliminary data-gathering step to a core methodological framework and ethical stance that run through the entire design process.

Through five representative cases, Doherty demonstrates the diverse trajectories of fieldwork and the critical role of embodied engagement, emphasizing a shift in the role of landscape architects from external planners to insider participants. He advocates integrating anthropological thick description with the projective capacity of landscape design, positioning relationship-building as the foundation for addressing complex challenges. Building on the book's arguments, this article further distills a series of practical insights for field-based teaching and investigation, including the promotion of multi-modal documentation, the introduction of "minimal scene writing," and the reinforcement of reflexive evaluation, all aimed at cultivating reflective practitioners. In response to the limitations of the long-term immersion emphasized in the book within real-world educational and professional contexts, the author, drawing on extensive teaching and research experience,

proposes adaptive strategies such as "agile deep engagement," "capacity co-building," and "timely intervention." These approaches seek to shift fieldwork from knowledge extraction toward community empowerment, thereby enhancing its action capacity and ethical responsibility and enabling a deeper integration of research and design.

KEYWORDS

Fieldwork; Embodied Engagement; Reflective Practice; Interdisciplinary Integration; Ethical Stance

HIGHLIGHTS

- Synthesizes key methodological and pedagogical insights from *Landscape Fieldwork*
- Proposes agile deep engagement, capacity co-building, and timely intervention to address challenges
- Explores to transform thick description into actionable approaches and ethically grounded design knowledge

1 Introduction

At a time when landscape planning and design are increasingly shaped by digital tools, globalization, and standardized workflows, Gareth Doherty's *Landscape Fieldwork: How Engaging the World Can Change Design* offers a clear and compelling argument: landscape is not an object that can be fully abstracted and

analyzed from a distance, but a complex living system that can only be understood through bodily immersion, multisensory perception, and sustained interaction^[1]. Through a series of practice-based cases, the book demonstrates that fieldwork is not merely a tool for information collection in the early stages of design, but a foundational method, methodology, and ethical stance that permeates research, teaching, and design practice as a whole.

2 Fieldwork: From Professional Method to Ethical Stance and Way of Life

2.1 A New Position on Fieldwork

Through five carefully selected cases—ranging from rural plazas in Ireland and the paradox of green in Bahrain, to collaborative research in the Bahamas and slow ethnographic work within Afro-Bahian communities and religious sites in Salvador—Doherty systematically reveals the diversity and flexibility of fieldwork practices. Rather than offering a “universal recipe” or standardized procedure, he emphasizes the need to calibrate research approaches in response to variations in site scale, cultural context, and design challenges. The concept of “embodied engagement,” repeatedly highlighted in the book, is particularly significant. It can be understood as a concrete elaboration of Günther Vogt’s assertion that “You must expose yourself, as a body, to this landscape. What are your impressions, your feelings? And then you can start to design with it.”^[2] In this sense, the role of landscape architects needs to shift from an external planner to an insider participant. Through full bodily presence and prolonged interaction (walking, observing, conversing, participating in daily activities and even rituals), one becomes one with the site and its users, thereby transcending purely rational data analysis to gain a bodily, emotional, and multi-sensory deep understanding of the landscape.^[1]

2.2 Disciplinary Connections Grounded in “Relationships”

Drawing on the sociological notion of “bridging”^[3], one of the book’s major contributions lies in its ability to bridge the gaps between description and prescription, reflection and action, and between landscape planning and design and anthropology^[4–6]. Doherty argues for combining ethnographic “thick description” and participant observation with the inherent projective quality of landscape planning and design—understood here as a future-oriented, constructive imagination^[1]—as well as its imaginative capacity. As the book states, “Anthropology is about understanding relationships, and what is landscape architecture if it’s not about the construction of relationships?”^[1] This interdisciplinary synthesis offers a richer toolkit for addressing complex challenges such as climate change, cultural conflict, and social injustice. Thick prescription is the most crucial instrument for forging such connections. It proposes that design actions aimed at spatial change must be rooted in a profound understanding of the ecological and social relationships embedded within a site; design, therefore, emerges as a responsible intervention that arises naturally from a thick description of the place.^[1]

2.3 Fieldwork as a Way of Life

The deeper significance of *Landscape Fieldwork* lies in its elevation of fieldwork from a professional technique to an ethical stance, and ultimately to a way of life for landscape practitioners. It calls on designers to become “perpetual students,” continually learning from land, communities, and non-human life. In an era marked by the simultaneous pressures of climate change and civilizational conflict, such a humble yet resilient mode of practice may be closer to the root of contemporary challenges than any single technical solution. Doherty reminds us that landscape is not an object for detached observation, but a substrate that demands deep engagement and co-existence. To value observation is to relinquish the illusion of control and to embrace the complexity inherent in participatory processes. The book thus stands not only as an essential text for Landscape Architecture, but also as a methodological and ethical guide for practitioners seeking grounding in an unstable world: only through the honesty of stepping barefoot onto the land and the patience of listening to all forms of life can we design communities, ways of living, and futures that do not impose themselves upon the earth, but grow from within it.

3 Practical Pathways for Planning and Design Disciplines

Landscape Fieldwork offers a range of valuable insights for educators and practitioners in fields like urban and rural planning, and landscape planning and design.

1) From site survey to engaged fieldwork: redefining the pedagogical starting point. Traditional site surveys should be upgraded into immersive fieldwork studios, requiring students not only to engage with sites at the outset of a project but to return to them at regular or irregular intervals throughout the entire design process. Deliverables should extend beyond a single analytical report to include continuously updated field journals incorporating sketches, photographs, interview excerpts, and personal reflections. By breaking the linear procedure of “survey–analysis–design–representation,” this approach establishes a cyclical, iterative workflow in which design decisions remain in constant dialogue with evolving site understanding.

2) Promoting multi-modal documentation to overcome the limits of single-media representation. Students should be required to employ at least three different media in field documentation—such as hand sketches, thematic photography, audio interviews, short videos, and material samples—and to analyze and synthesize

insights across media through structured workshops. As digital tools such as CAD and GIS become ubiquitous, students' sensitivity to real environments may be diminished; guiding them to recognize that no single medium can capture the latent cues embedded in a site is therefore essential.

3) Introducing "minimal scene writing" to cultivate narrative capacity and critical imagination. Drawing on Doherty's discussion of the "minimal scene" approach, students may be assigned specific micro-sites (e.g., a street-corner bench, a newsstand) and asked to observe them within a limited timeframe (e.g., 15 min), followed by a short narrative text of approximately 300 words describing events that may occur or have occurred. This exercise directly links description with projection, encouraging students to develop grounded imagination based on close observation, and serves as an effective means of fostering humanistic awareness and critical imagination.

4) Designing role-playing and scenario simulation in class. Classroom settings can simulate public consultations or stakeholder coordination meetings, with students assuming the roles of developers, officials, local residents, environmental advocates, and others. Debates and negotiations are then conducted based on insights derived from fieldwork. This approach concretizes the multiple—and often conflicting—meanings^① attributed to field-based information, enabling students to grasp the political and governance dimensions of design: design is not merely the shaping of space, but the mediation of social relationships.

5) Advocating collective rather than isolated fieldwork through team-based investigation. Inspired by Doherty's practice in the Bahamas project, students from different disciplinary backgrounds—such as Planning, Architecture, and Sociology—should be encouraged to conduct fieldwork in teams and to compare and integrate their findings in subsequent stages. Cross-disciplinary co-observation helps overcome the limitations of individual perspectives, fosters more comprehensive site understanding, and anticipates the collaborative conditions of professional practice.

6) Positioning reflexivity as a core criterion in fieldwork assessment. Evaluation frameworks should assign significant weight to reflexivity, focusing not only on what information students have collected, but on how they understand their relationship with the site, how they critically examine cultural biases, and how they

document uncertainty and transformation during the research process. This shift supports the transition from technical executors to reflective practitioners and plays a critical role in cultivating professional ethics and social responsibility.

7) Requiring thick prescription as a foundational component of final outcomes. Doherty's contribution to fieldwork in planning and design lies mainly in his proposition and emphasis on thick prescription. Design delivery should be accompanied by a thick prescription report that clearly demonstrates how the proposals emerge from specific field findings, with corresponding evidence traceable within field journals. Planning and design documents should move beyond purely formal solutions and avoid self-generated problem statements, self-imposed constraints, and self-referential narratives. Fieldwork should no longer be treated as an isolated, dispensable preliminary phase, but as a core method that persists throughout the entire process, thereby enabling a genuine integration of research and design.

4 Transcendent Action Potential in Balancing the Tension Between Ideals and Reality

While *Landscape Fieldwork* strongly advocates immersive field-based investigation, it also inevitably reveals certain internal limitations. First, the method's heavy reliance on time and resources renders it relatively "uneconomical" in practical terms. Long-term immersion—such as the year-long study described in the Bahrain case—is difficult to replicate within conventional planning and design cycles, a constraint that may discourage early-career researchers and practitioners operating under tight schedules and limited budgets. Second, methodological tensions also emerge. Although in-depth case studies can generate thick description, their context-specific nature constrains the generalizability of findings, making direct transfer to other projects challenging. The third, and more profound, limitation lies in the disjunction between knowledge and action. The slow tempo of ethnographic research often conflicts with the urgency of planning and design decision-making. The reflection presented in the Bahrain case is particularly telling. While researchers were still engaged in deep interpretation, date palm groves with significant ecological and cultural value had already been destroyed. This reality underscores the potential lag of fieldwork in influencing real-world decisions. Moreover, although the book emphasizes reflexivity, it pays insufficient sustained attention to the researcher's own positional power and to the challenge of maintaining "role neutrality" during processes of knowledge extraction, leaving the ethical question of "who has the

① Referred to here as "tension," a dynamic yet generative state of balance between two or more contradictory or even opposing forces, a concept widely discussed in Anthropology and Sociology.

authority to speak for the landscape” only partially addressed.

Taken together, these limitations point to a core dilemma: a persistent gap exists between idealized immersive research and the constraints of real-world projects, ethical complexity, and the effectiveness of action. These issues neither diminish nor negate the scholarly and practical value of the book; rather, they create critical openings for further exploration. Building on Doherty’s methodological insights, and from the perspective of exploring possible solutions, this article therefore proposes several fieldwork strategies more closely aligned with planning and design practice^[7], seeking to transform idealized thick description into a practical tool that integrates ethical responsibility with action capacity.

4.1 Methodological Strategies: From Long-Term Immersion to Agile Deep Engagement

To mitigate tensions between time and resources, an agile fieldwork strategy based on layering, phasing, and focusing can be adopted. In practice, project timelines may be divided into research stages of varying depth. In the initial phase, the objective is wide-angle scanning and hotspot identification. Within the first one to two weeks after project initiation, a basic cognitive framework of the site can be rapidly established using multi-source data. This may include “digital fieldwork,” such as systematic analysis of satellite imagery, geotagged social media content, local news, and online forum discussions, to quickly locate spatial patterns, build preliminary understanding of cultural and historical contexts, and familiarize the team with public issues. In parallel, focused group reconnaissance can be organized: cross-disciplinary teams with ecological, social, and economic expertise conduct intensive joint site visits (Fig. 1), resident discussions, and random on-site interviews. Through the rapid exchange of multiple perspectives, key zones of tension—such as ecologically sensitive areas, zones of social conflict, and spatial use bottlenecks—can be efficiently identified.

The intermediate phase may then shift toward in-depth investigation. Short-term but high-intensity investigations can be conducted around identified hotspots or critical issues. For example, several consecutive days of behavior-mapping observation can be carried out in specific residential neighborhoods, public squares, or rural settlements, supplemented by focused micro-interviews (15 ~ 20 min each) or deliberative meetings. This approach enables deeper understanding of the drivers behind observed spatial phenomena, residents’ demands, and future expectations.

In the later phase, a mechanism of sustained dialogue can be established by maintaining long-term contact with key informants

through regular communication or online community platforms. In this way, one-off field investigations are extended into an ongoing process of social learning, partially compensating for the limitations imposed by insufficient immersion time.

4.2 Ethical and Practical Strategies: From Knowledge Extraction to Capacity Co-building

To address the challenge of researcher neutrality in knowledge production, the core orientation of fieldwork should shift from knowledge extraction toward community empowerment (Fig. 2). During the early and intermediate stages of fieldwork, spatial cognition workshops can be organized for local residents, reinforcing participation through co-production and ensuring that lived experience and local knowledge are meaningfully recognized^[8].



Fig. 1 In July 2004, Dihua Li, the author of this article, led nearly 30 students on a field investigation in groups by bicycle along the Beijing–Hangzhou Grand Canal, observing and engaging with residents along the route (total length of approximately 1,760 km).

Fig. 2 In November 2015, Dihua Li and students conducted in-depth fieldwork in a mountain village in Lingchuan County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, sharing tea by a fire with village representatives on a cold winter night to discuss rural development.

Participatory resource mapping is an effective method in this regard. Research teams provide simplified base maps and invite residents to mark places and routes of importance using symbols or sticky notes—such as safe activity spaces, areas causing disturbance, heritage trees, children’s informal play areas, viewpoints, and daily movement paths. In doing so, professional investigation processes are transformed into collective knowledge-building activities.

At the same time, the democratization of design tools should be promoted. Certain basic analytical instruments—such as simple devices for measuring wind speed, noise levels, and light intensity, along with cameras and audio recorders—can be entrusted to residents, accompanied by necessary training. This enables communities to gradually develop the capacity to monitor and evaluate their own environments. In this process, establishing a complete “feedback–iteration” loop is crucial. Research outputs, including preliminary analytical diagrams and design concepts, should be communicated back to the community in accessible formats—such as diagrams, models, and short videos—and feedback should be actively collected. Subsequent design revisions should explicitly respond to this feedback, forming a transparent cycle of “research–feedback–refinement” that ensures outcomes genuinely serve local needs.

4.3 Action-Oriented Strategies: From Delayed Interpretation to Timely Intervention

To overcome the disconnection between research and action, it is necessary to introduce an “action–research” model that tightly integrates field investigation with micro-interventions and prototype testing (Fig. 3). On the one hand, drawing on practices from tactical urbanism, low-cost and short-cycle spatial prototypes can be designed and implemented during fieldwork to address identified issues. Through co-created temporary installations—such as informal chess corners—“fieldwork in action” generates knowledge that is more immediate, vivid, and directly grounded in lived experience^[9]. On the other hand, final deliverables should not be limited to comprehensive research reports. Instead, they should include a set of operational knowledge products that communities and subsequent designers can directly use, such as community space management guidelines, concise manuals or activity toolkits derived from field findings, and briefing documents tailored to different decision-making actors (e.g., subdistrict offices, property managers, local businesses). In this way, core insights are translated into clear and actionable recommendations.

The “transcendent actions” proposed here do not seek to negate existing methodologies, but rather to reframe the role of fieldwork by



Fig. 3 Through “light-touch interventions,” Dihua Li and students effectively reduced illegal parking in waiting areas for pedestrians at traffic signals. The before- and after-intervention photographs were taken in October and November 2025, respectively.

articulating a form of practical wisdom in which action, experience, imagination, and cognition are interwoven. Fieldwork should be understood as a collaborative and action-oriented framework that permeates the entire design process, rather than as an isolated preliminary phase. Through methodological optimization via agile deep engagement, ethical practice through capacity co-building, and action orientation through timely intervention, fieldwork can continue to function as a bridge between profound understanding and effective action under complex real-world constraints, fulfilling its promise to reveal realities, empower communities, and catalyze positive change. *Landscape Fieldwork* provides a transformative core framework for landscape architecture education, elevating fieldwork from a technical tool to a mindset of design thinking and professional ethics. It points the way toward pedagogical innovation to cultivate future designers capable of grounding themselves in reality, connecting all things, and taking responsible actions.

5 Conclusions

Approximately three months ago, shortly after reading *Landscape Fieldwork*, the basic structure of this article had already taken shape. However, the formal writing process was abruptly interrupted by the unexpected passing of Professor Kongjian Yu. Several weeks earlier, as emotions gradually settled and the author



Fig. 4 During the Liangshui River project investigation in September 2024, Professor Kongjian Yu engaged in on-site discussions with designers.

Fig. 5 Completed first phase of the Liangshui River project in November 2025, exemplifying the transformative potential from fieldwork to design.

prepared to revisit and refine the manuscript, an alumna shared a personal account of professional experience. She sorrowfully yet vividly recounted a young engineer's memory of participating in fieldwork alongside Professor Yu: during a site investigation for the Liangshui River waterfront enhancement and ecological restoration project in Beijing, the engineer encountered Professor Yu in person for the first time. From the outset, Professor Yu led the group with visible enthusiasm, often requiring others to quicken their pace to keep up. He continuously documented the site through photography, alternately pausing to observe from afar, surveying the surroundings, stepping off the riverbank to explore adjacent spaces, and engaging in animated discussions around drawings with team members (Fig. 4). The entire site walk covered more than 10 km along the river (approximately 11 km of the total length). By lunchtime, most participants were visibly exhausted, yet Professor Yu remained energetic, systematically sharing his on-site observations and key principles of fieldwork methodology. Even before the meal was served, an entirely new vision of river governance had begun to take shape within the collective imagination of those present. The engineer later reflected that such an intensely immersive, field-driven cognitive experience was unprecedented in his own educational and professional background. Today, the first phase of the Liangshui River project has been completed. What was once a site people hurried past while holding their breath has been transformed into a vibrant waterfront space, warmly embraced by local residents (Fig. 5).

There is little doubt that Professor Yu was a fieldworker endowed with exceptional capacity for transcendent action. The ideas and practices articulated in his works—*Landscape: Culture, Ecology, and Perception*; *Tracing the Roots of the Ideal Human Settlement: From the African Savanna to the Peach Blossom Spring*; *Returning to the Land*; among others—are deeply grounded in his sustained and immersive field experience. Every page of these

writings bears clear witness to the profound influence of fieldwork on the generation of thought and the enactment of practice.

Competing interests | The author declares that he has no competing interests.

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评《景观田野工作：沉浸真实世界如何改变设计》 兼论田野工作的超越性行动可能

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摘要

由加雷斯·多尔蒂撰写的《景观田野工作：沉浸真实世界如何改变设计》一书，将田野工作提升为贯穿设计全流程的核心方法论与伦理立场，而非仅将其视作数据收集的环节。多尔蒂通过5个代表性案例，展示了田野工作的多元路径与“具身沉浸”的关键作用，强调景观设计师应从外部规划者转变为内部参与者。他主张将人类学的深描与景观设计的投射性相结合，以关系构建为核心来应对复杂挑战。基于该书的论述，本文进一步归纳了作者对田野教学与调查的若干实践性启示，如推行“多媒介记录法”、引入“最小场景写作”、强化“反思性”评估等，以培养反思性实践者。针对原书所强调的“长期沉浸”在现实教学与实践中的局限性，本文作者结合自身的长期教学与研究经验，提出“敏捷深耕”“能力共建”“即时介入”等优化策略，尝试推动田野工作从“知识提取”转向“社区赋能”，以增强其行动效能与伦理责任，实现研究与设计的真正融合。

1 引言

在景观规划设计日益受数字工具、全球化趋势和标准化流程主导的当下，加雷斯·多尔蒂撰写的《景观田野工作：沉浸真实世界如何改变设计》（以下简称“《景观田野工作》”）一书清晰而有力地指出：景观并非一种可以被完全抽象化、从远距离加以分析的客体，而是一种唯有通过身体沉浸、多维感知和持续互动才能被理解的复杂生命体^[1]。借助一系列实践案例，本书阐明，田野工作不仅是设计前期用于收集信息的工具，更是贯穿研究、教学与设计实践全过程的基础性方法、方法论与伦理立场。

关键词

田野工作；具身沉浸；反思性实践；跨学科融合；伦理立场

文章亮点

- 在评析《景观田野工作》的基础上，系统总结其对田野教学与实践的关键启示
- 针对长期沉浸式田野的现实局限，提出“敏捷深耕”“能力共建”“即时介入”等实践路径
- 探讨如何将“深描”方法转化为兼具伦理责任与行动效能的规划设计工具

2 田野工作：从专业方法到伦理立场与生活方式

2.1 田野工作的新立场

多尔蒂通过5个精心选取的案例——从爱尔兰的乡村广场到巴林的“绿色”悖论，从巴哈马群岛的协作研究到巴西萨尔瓦多的巴伊亚非裔社群及宗教圣地的慢速民族志——系统展示了田野工作的多样性与灵活性。他并未试图提供一套“万能食谱”或“标准答案”，而强调应根据场地尺度、文化背景和设计问题的差异，综合考量、调整研究方法。书中反复强调的“具身沉浸”（embodied engagement）概念，其论述是对冈瑟·沃格特所提出的“你必须将你的身体暴露于这片景观中。你的印

象和感受是什么？然后你才能开始与之一起设计”^[2]这一观点的具象化。在此意义上，景观设计师的角色需从外部规划者转变为内部参与者，并通过身体的完全在场和长时间互动（行走、观察、交谈、参与日常活动甚至仪式），与场地及其使用者融为一体，从而超越纯理性的数据分析，获得对场地的身体化、情感化、多感官的深层理解。^[1]

2.2 基于“联系”的学科关联

借用社会学中的“桥梁性”概念^[3]，该书的重要贡献在于有效弥合了描述与规范、反思与行动，以及景观规划设计与人类学之间的鸿沟^[4-6]。多尔蒂主张将民族志研究中的深描和参与式观察，与景观规划设计固有的投射性（可理解为“一种面向未来、具有建设性的想象力”）^[1]和意象性相结合。正如书中所言，“人类学致力于理解关系，而如果景观设计学不是关于构建关系的学科，那它又是什么？”^[1]这种跨学科融合为应对气候变化、文化冲突和社会不公等复杂挑战提供了更为丰富的工具箱。“厚预设”（thick prescription）正是促成这种连接的核心工具：它强调，任何引发空间转变的设计行动，都应建立在对场地所承载的生态与社会关系的深刻理解之上，设计是从对场所的深描中自然生成的一种负责任的干预。^[1]

2.3 作为生活方式的田野工作

《景观田野工作》的深层意义在于，将田野工作从一种专业方法提升为伦理立场，乃至景观设计师的生活方式。它呼吁景观从业者成为“永远的学生”，持续向土地、社区与非人类生命学习。在气候变化与文明冲突并行的时代，这种谦卑而坚韧的实践，或许比任何单一的技术方案更接近问题的根本。多尔蒂提醒我们，景观并非仅供外部审视的对象，而是一种需要被深度介入、与之共生的基质。重视观察意味着放弃对掌控一切的幻想，转而拥抱参与过程中的复杂性。本书不仅是景观设计学科的重要读物，也为所有试图在充满不确定性的世界中寻找立足之地的实践者提供了方法论与精神指引：唯有基于赤足踏入土地的诚实与倾听万物的耐心，才可能设计出并非强加于大地，而是在大地之中自然生长的社区、生活和未来。

3 面向规划设计学科的实践路径启示

《景观田野工作》为城乡规划及景观规划设计领域的教育者和实践者提供了诸多田野工作建议。

1) 从场地调研转向沉浸式田野工作（engaged fieldwork），重塑教学起点。将传统教学中的场地调研升级为沉浸式田野工作坊，要求学生不仅在项目初期介入场地，还应在整个设计周期中定期或不定期地反复返回场地；作业成果不再局限于单一的分析报告，而是形成持续更新的

“田野日志”，涵盖草图、照片、访谈片段与个人反思等；通过打破“调查—分析—设计—制图”的线性流程，建立循环、迭代的工作模式，使设计决策始终与场地认知的动态变化保持对话。

2) 推行“多媒介记录法”，突破单一表达方式的局限。要求学生至少使用3种以上的媒介开展田野记录，如手绘草图、主题摄影、音频访谈、短视频或实物收集等，并通过工作坊训练借助多种媒介的交叉分析和综合表达能力。随着CAD、GIS等数字工具的普及，学生对真实环境的感知能力在一定程度上被削弱，引导其认识到单一媒介难以捕捉场地中的潜在线索尤为必要。

3) 引入“最小场景写作”，培养叙事能力与批判性想象。借鉴多尔蒂提到的“最小场景”方法，为学生指定具体场地节点（如街角长椅、报亭等），要求其在限定时间（如15 min）内进行观察，并完成约300字的叙事性写作，描述可能或已经发生的事件。这项训练直接连接描述与预设，促使学生基于细微观察展开合理想象，是培养人文关怀和批判性想象的有效手段。

4) 设计“角色扮演”与“场景模拟”课堂。在课堂中模拟公共咨询会或利益相关方协调会，安排学生分别扮演开发商、政府官员、本地居民、环保人士等角色，基于田野调查获取的信息展开辩论和协商。通过这种方式，将田野调查中了解到的信息及其被赋予的（甚至相互冲突的）多重含义^①具象化，使学生切身理解设计所涉及的政治与治理属性——设计不仅是塑造空间，更是调解社会关系。

5) 倡导“集体而非孤立”的田野模式，组织团队式调查。借鉴多尔蒂在巴哈马项目中的实践经验，鼓励不同学科背景（如规划、建筑、社会学等）的学生组成小组，共同进入场地，并在后续阶段对各自的发现进行比较与整合。跨专业的共同观察有助于突破个人视角的局限，形成更全面、立体的场地认知，同时提前模拟未来跨学科协作的工作状态。

6) 将“反思性”作为田野教学评估的核心指标。在评价体系中显著提高“反思性”的权重，不仅考察学生获取了何种信息，更关注其如何理解自身与场地的关系、如何审视文化偏见，以及如何记录调查过程中的困惑与转变。此举有助于引导学生由“技术执行者”向“反思性实践者”转变，对其职业伦理和社会责任感的培养具有重要意义。

7) 将厚预设作为最终成果的基本要求。多尔蒂对规划设计中田野工作的贡献，集中于他对厚预设的主张与强调。设计成果需配套提交一份厚预设报告，清晰说明设计方案如何从具体田野发现中生成，并在田野日志中找到相应依据。规划设计文本不应仅呈现形式化的方案，而应摆脱“自设命题”“自我设限”“自言自语”的工作状态，认识到田野工

^① 即所谓“张力”，指两种或多种相互矛盾、甚至相互对抗的力量之间既紧张又充满生机的平衡状态，备受人类学和社会学学者关注。

作并非前期孤立、可被抛弃的环节，而是贯穿始终的核心方法，由此实现研究与设计的真正融合。

4 平衡理想与现实之间张力的超越性行动可能

《景观田野工作》在推崇沉浸式田野调查的同时，也不可避免地显现出其内在局限性。首先，该方法对时间与资源的高度依赖使其在现实操作层面显得相对“不经济”。长期沉浸式研究（如巴林案例为期1年）在常规规划设计周期内难以复制，这一点尤为可能令初入田野的研究者及需要在紧凑时间和有限预算内开展工作的实践者望而却步。其次，在方法论层面亦存在张力：深度个案研究虽能产生深描，但其情境特异性限制了结论的普适性，难以直接应用至其他项目。最后，也是更为深层的局限，体现在知识与行动之间的脱节。民族志研究的“慢节奏”与规划设计决策的紧迫性之间存在矛盾。书中的巴林案例所呈现的反思尤为尖锐——当研究者仍处于深度解读阶段时，具有重要生态与文化价值的海（椰）枣林已遭破坏。这一事实清晰地揭示出，田野工作在影响现实决策方面可能存在滞后性。此外，尽管该书强调反思性，但对研究者自身权力位置的持续审视及在知识提取过程中对“角色中立性”的把握仍显不足，因而难以彻底回应“谁有权代表景观发言”的伦理难题。

上述局限共同指向一个核心困境，即理想化的沉浸式研究与现实中的项目约束、伦理复杂性及行动有效性之间，确实存在一道亟需被持续审视与跨越的鸿沟。这些问题并不削弱，亦不会否认这本书的学术与实践价值；相反，它们的存在为进一步探索提供了重要契机。基于此，本文在多尔蒂所提出的田野工作方法论启示之上，从“探讨问题解决方案”的角度出发，提出若干更贴近规划设计实践的田野工作建议^[7]，尝试推动理想化的深描方法转化为兼具伦理责任与行动效能的实践工具。

4.1 方法论层面：从长期沉浸到敏捷深耕

为缓解时间与资源之间的矛盾，可采用“分层—分期—聚焦”的敏捷型田野工作策略。在实践中，可将项目周期划分为不同深度的研究阶段。初期以“广角扫描”和“热点识别”为目标，在项目启动后的一至两周内，利用多源数据快速构建场地的基础认知框架。具体方式为开展“数字田野”，通过系统分析卫星影像、社交媒体地理标签、本地新闻与论坛讨论等，快速完成空间定位，建立对场地文化和历史的认知，熟悉公共议题；同时组织由具备生态、社会、经济等不同背景的成员组成跨专业团队，开展高强度联合踏勘（图1）、居民座谈与随机访谈，通过多重视角的快速碰撞，识别关键矛盾区（如生态敏感点、社会冲突带、空间利用痛点）。

中期阶段可转向“深度钻探”，针对已识别的热点或难点问题，开展短期但高强度的集中研究。例如，围绕特定的城市居住小区、公共广

场或乡村聚落，进行连续数日的“行为注记图”观测，并结合针对性较强的微访谈（每次15~20 min）或议事会等形式，深入理解特定空间现象背后的动因、居民诉求与未来预期。

后期则可通过“持续性对话”机制，与关键信息提供者建立长期联系，如定期通讯或线上社群互动，将一次性的田野调查延展为持续的社会学习过程，弥补沉浸时间不足所带来的限制。

4.2 伦理与实践层面：从知识获取到能力共建

为回应知识生产过程中研究者因角色中立性而难以把握的问题，田野工作的核心应当从知识提取转向社区赋能（图2）。在田野工作的初期和中期，可组织面向社区居民的空间认知工作坊，通过共同产出强化参与感，使居民切实感受到自身经验与知识被重视^[8]。其中，资源地图共创是一种行之有效的方法：研究团队提供简易底图，邀请居民用图标或便签标注他们心目中的重要地点与路径，如安全的活动空间、扰民区域、珍贵古树、儿童秘密花园、观景点及日常出行线路等，从而将专业调研过程转化为集体知识建构活动。

与此同时，应推动设计工具的民主化，将部分专业分析工具（如简易风速、噪声、光照强度测量仪，以及相机、录音机设备等）交由居民使用，并进行必要的培训，使社区逐步具备监测和评估自身环境的能力。在此过程中，建立完整的“反馈—迭代”闭环尤为关键。包括初步分析图、设计概念在内的研究成果应以通俗易懂的形式（如图示、模型、短视频等）及时反馈给社区并收集意见；设计方案的调整应清晰回应这些意见，形成“研究—反馈—优化”的透明循环，确保成果真正服务于在地需求。

4.3 行动导向层面：从滞后解读到即时介入

为应对研究与行动之间的脱节问题，有必要引入“行动研究”模式，将田野调查与微干预及原型测试紧密结合（图3）。一方面，可借鉴“战术都市主义”的实践经验，在田野工作过程中针对已识别的具体问题，设计并实施低成本、短周期的空间原型，与居民共同开展“临时性搭建”活动（如象棋角），通过“行动中的田野”生成更直接、丰富且鲜活的知识^[9]。另一方面，最终交付成果不应仅停留于厚重的研究报告，而应形成一套社区和后续设计者能够直接使用的“可操作知识产品”，如基于田野发现编制的社区空间管理导则、简明工作手册或活动指南，以及面向不同决策主体（街道、物业、商户等）的简报，将核心发现转化为清晰、可执行的行动建议。

以上所提出的“超越性行动”并非追求对既有方法的否定性超越，而是试图通过重构田野工作的角色定位，呈现行动、经验、想象与认知互相交织的实践智慧。田野工作应被理解为贯穿设计全过程的协作与行动框架，而非任何意义上的前期孤立阶段。通过“敏捷深耕”的方法优

化、“能力共建”的伦理实践和“即时介入”的行动导向，田野工作方能在复杂的现实约束下，持续发挥其连接深刻理解与有效行动的桥梁作用，并兑现其揭示现实、赋能社区与催化积极改变的承诺。《景观田野工作》一书为景观设计教育提供了一个将田野工作从技术工具升华为设计思维与职业伦理的核心框架，并指明了如何通过教学革新，培养能够扎根现实、连接万物并付诸负责任行动的未来设计师。

5 结语

约三个月前，在阅读完多尔蒂的《景观田野工作》一书后，本文的基本构架已初步形成。然而，正式的写作进程因俞孔坚教授的意外离世而被迫中断。数周前，在情绪逐渐平复、准备重新梳理和润色文章内容之际，收到一则校友的工作经历分享。她转述一位青年工程师回忆与俞孔坚教授共同开展田野工作的片段。据其回忆：在北京凉水河滨水空间提升及水生态修复项目的现场踏勘中，他第一次近距离接触俞教授本人。自踏勘开始，俞教授始终兴致勃勃地走在队伍前列，同行者需快步才能跟上。他一路拍摄记录，时而驻足远眺、环顾四周，时而大步离开河堤深入周边空间查看，时而与团队成员围着图纸展开讨论（图4）。整个踏勘过程持续行走十余公里（河段长约11 km），午餐时分，团队成员多已疲惫不堪，而俞教授依然精神饱满，系统分享其现场观察所得及田野调查的方法要点。餐食尚未上桌，一幅此前未曾设想过的河流治理后的蓝图，已在他的叙说中逐渐浮现。他坦言，这种高度沉浸、由田野激发的认知体验，在其过往学习与工作经历中从未出现过。目前，凉水河项目一期已经建成，原本让人“掩鼻而过”的场地变成了富有活力的滨水空间，深受周边居民欢迎（图5）。

俞孔坚教授毫无疑问是一位极具“超越性行动”能力的田野工作者。他在《景观：文化、生态与感知》《理想人居溯本：从非洲草原到桃花源》《回到土地》等著作中所呈现的思想与实践，无一不根植于他持续而深入的田野经验。书中的每页文字都清晰地呈现出其田野经验对思想生成与实践行动的深刻影响。

图 1. 2004 年 7 月，李迪华带领近 30 名学生分组骑行考察京杭大运河，沿途观察并与居民交流（地图标示全程约 1 760 km）。

图 2. 2015 年 11 月，李迪华带领学生深入广西壮族自治区灵川县的山村，于凉冬寒夜与村民代表围炉煮茶，共话乡村发展。

图 3. 李迪华和学生通过“轻介入”方式，有效减少了行人等候绿灯区域的乱停车现象（改造前后照片分别拍摄于 2025 年 10 月和 11 月）。

图 4. 2024 年 9 月，凉水河项目调研过程中，俞孔坚教授与设计师们现场交流。

图 5. 2025 年 11 月，凉水河项目一期建成实景，该项目见证了从田野工作到设计的力量。