WORLD IN DENMARK:

Travelling Ideas About Open Space Design Conference in Copenhagen 12th. & 13th. June 2014

Track 2: Liveability, welfare, and democracy

**Designing Urban Bikescapes – a new Urban Typology**

***Abstract by* *Gitte Marling, professor PH.D. Department of Architecture & Media Technology, Aalborg University***

**Prologue**

*”A young girl is sitting on the top of the black hill. She hardly moves, as she is very occupied sketching and writing in her notebook. Now and then she looks down over the square below her. Down the hill some children are playing with a ball – around and around it goes. Others are experiencing a play-sculpture. They climb on, into and out of the huge black octopus, while a woman with a scarf is watching them from a nearby bench. The atmosphere is relaxed and lazy.*

*Commuting bikers are crossing the eastern part of the square. They have just left the Red Square. They are in a hurry. Some are looking around. On the move they get a quick glimpse of the black octopus, the scarf and the girl sitting on the top of the hill. The tiny body forms a fascinating silhouette against the blue sky like a beautiful little sculpture.*

*After a while, the scenery changes. The girl’s father is approaching the hill and is shouting her name. She smiles, slowly rises and walks down towards him”* (observations, Copenhagen August the 14th 2013)

**Abstract**

This article presents analyses of the ‘Nørrebro Bike Route’ as an ‘urban bikescape’ consisting of a mixture of lanes and coupled urban places and small parks. It is a place to sit, to play and to relax, but at the same time it also a place for mobility. It is a social-technical assemblage (Urry 2007, Latour 1996), or a zone for social interaction, where commuters meet local everyday life. In this respect the research relates to theories of ‘the mobility turn’ (Urry 2000, Vannini 2012, Lassen 2011, Jensen 2013, 2014, Olesen 2014).

It is the thesis that ‘urban bikescapes’ such as Nørrebro Bike Route can play an important role in the future welfare city, not just as infrastructure bringing citizens from A to B in a sustainable way, but also as an new urban typology providing citizens with diverse urban cultural experiences.

The aim of the research is, through analyses of cases, to investigate how to design bike lanes in dense cities in such a way that they open up the city and function as new zones for social and cultural interaction, or as new public domains (Haajer & Reijndorph 2001).

The article presents the theoretical approaches and results of the mapping in relation to following research questions:

What role does the layout & the connections play in this regard (Lynch 1960; 1995, Cullen 1971/1996, Hvattum 2010)?

What effect do the programs have for urban life (Waltzer 1995, Sennett 1995, Haajer & Reijndorph 2001)?

And last but not least, to what extent are urban architecture (scale, rhythm, content) & aesthetics developed? (Thies- Evensen 1992, Venturi 1972, Rasmussen 2003, Thrift 2004, Merleau-Ponty 2009, Pallismaa 2005, Pink 2009)?

Finally the article addresses the travelling ideas of ‘new urban bikescapes’ and Nordic urban space design.

**5 Key Words:**

Urban Bike Scapes

Urban Design

Urban Architecture

Liveability

Public Domain

**Note:**

*The article is part of the research project: Urban Bike Scapes – Architecture & City Life (2012-2014) conducted by professor Gitte Marling. The research has been conducted in New York (2012) and in Copenhagen (2013). It is sponsored by ‘Det Obelske familiefond’ and Aalborg University.*

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